

Holistic Life: Prof. Muhammad Younush Rana
Learning from The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

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The life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) offer a comprehensive framework for living a holistic life, emphasizing a balance of physical, mental, spiritual, social well-being and as administrator. This concept, known in Islam as *ihsan* (doing what is beautiful and good), is reflected in his exemplary conduct and teachings.



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The Objective of the Book

The objective of a book detailing the Prophet Muhammad's teachings on holistic living is to demonstrate and promote a divinely inspired, comprehensive model for human well-being. It is intended for both Muslims seeking to deepen their understanding of their faith and non-Muslims interested in the Prophet's exemplary life.

Primary objectives

- **Present a holistic paradigm for living.** The book would aim to show how the Prophet's life and the concept of *ihsan* (excellence) provide a timeless blueprint for achieving balance in all facets of life: physical, mental, spiritual, social, and even administrative.
- **Bridge historical teachings with modern life.** It would connect 7th-century guidance to 21st-century challenges, making the Prophet's wisdom relevant to contemporary readers seeking solutions to issues like stress, consumerism, and fractured communities.
- **Educate and inspire self-improvement.** The book would serve as a practical guide for personal development, offering insights and actionable steps based on Prophetic teachings to help readers improve their character, habits, and overall quality of life.
- **Showcase the Prophet as a universal role model.** By highlighting his leadership and compassion in administrative and social contexts, the book would present the Prophet as a model for ethical conduct in all human interactions, from family to governance.
- **Counter misconceptions and promote dialogue.** For non-Muslim audiences, the book could help address stereotypes by providing a nuanced and positive portrayal of the Prophet's character, fostering greater understanding and interfaith dialogue.

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Secondary objectives

- **Connect faith and science.** The book could demonstrate how many Prophetic teachings on diet, hygiene, and health align with modern scientific findings, reinforcing their timeless relevance.
 - **Illustrate practical application.** By including stories from the Prophet's life and his companions, the book would make abstract concepts accessible and show how his followers practically applied his teachings.
 - **Empower readers with agency.** It would empower individuals to take control of their well-being by presenting health and virtue not as burdens but as achievable goals that bring both worldly contentment and spiritual reward.
 - **Offer hope and resilience.** By drawing lessons from the Prophet's patience in adversity, the book would provide guidance and reassurance to readers struggling with personal or societal challenges.
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Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is considered by Muslims to be an exemplary teacher who conveyed God's message through his actions and character, a social reformer who eradicated injustices like female infanticide and tribalism while championing the rights of women and the poor, and an administrator of a state who established a just, organized, and tolerant society in Medina. However, the title "administrator of the universe" is inconsistent with the core Islamic belief of *Tawhid*, which asserts that only the one God, Allah, has power and control over the universe. The Prophet's role was to be a mortal messenger and an ideal human model, not a divine being

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Chapter 1: What is Islam

Human Development of Universe

In Islam, the concept of "human development of the universe" does not exist; instead, Islam teaches that God (Allah) alone is the creator of the universe. Humanity's role, as appointed vicegerents (*khalifah*) on Earth, is to act as conscientious stewards of creation, not as its developers. While humans are encouraged to study the universe to appreciate God's wisdom and majesty, their primary development is spiritual and moral, centered on worshipping and obeying God. This perspective promotes a balanced, holistic view of well-being that includes spiritual, moral, and socio-economic dimensions, emphasizing harmony with nature rather than the exploitation or physical "development" of the cosmos.

Islam is a monotheistic Abrahamic religion based on the revelations received by the Prophet Muhammad in 7th-century Mecca. The Arabic word *Islam* means "submission to the will of God," and followers are called Muslims. With over 2 billion adherents, it is the second-largest religion in the world.

1) Core beliefs: Muslims believe in one, all-powerful, and all-knowing God, known in Arabic as Allah. This core monotheistic belief is known as *tawhid*, or the Oneness of God. The central beliefs include:

- **Belief in God:** The one true Creator and Sustainer of the universe, who is merciful and compassionate.
- **Belief in angels:** Spiritual beings created by God to carry out His commands.
- **Belief in revealed scriptures:** God sent his revelations through different prophets, culminating in the Quran, which Muslims consider to be the complete and unaltered word of God.

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- **Belief in prophets:** Islam respects a long line of prophets sent by God, including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. Muhammad is revered as the final prophet.
- **Belief in the Day of Judgment:** On this day, all of humanity will be judged for their good and bad deeds and consigned to either paradise or hell.
- **Belief in divine predestination:** Everything, both good and bad, is decreed by God.

2) The Five Pillars of Islam: The religious duties of Muslims are summarized in the Five Pillars, which serve as the foundation of their faith and practice:

1. **Shahada (Declaration of Faith):** The profession of faith that "There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God".
2. **Salat (Prayer):** Muslims perform five daily prayers while facing the Kaaba in Mecca.
3. **Zakat (Almsgiving):** A fixed portion of one's wealth is donated to those in need. It is seen as a way to purify one's wealth.
4. **Sawm (Fasting during Ramadan):** During the holy month of Ramadan, healthy adult Muslims fast from dawn until sunset. This practice encourages self-discipline and empathy for the less fortunate.
5. **Hajj (Pilgrimage to Mecca):** Every Muslim who is physically and financially able is expected to make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their lifetime.

3) The Quran and Hadith: The primary holy texts in Islam are the Quran and the Hadith.

- **The Quran** is the central religious scripture, believed to be the verbatim word of God as revealed to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel.

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- **The Hadith** is a collection of sayings and traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, which provides further guidance on Islamic law and practice.
 - 4) **Major branches:** Following Muhammad's death in 632 CE, the Muslim community divided over who should succeed him as its leader, leading to the formation of two major branches:
 - **Sunni Islam:** Comprising 85–90% of Muslims, Sunnis accept the authority of the first four caliphs who succeeded Muhammad.
 - **Shia Islam:** Making up 10–15% of Muslims, Shias believe that leadership should have stayed within Muhammad's family and followed his cousin and son-in-law, Ali.
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Core beliefs of Islam: Muslims believe in one, all-powerful, and all-knowing God, known in Arabic as Allah. This core monotheistic belief is known as *tawhid*, or the Oneness of God. The central beliefs include:

Belief in God in Islam

The one true Creator and Sustainer of the universe, who is merciful and compassionate.

For Muslims, the belief in God (called Allah in Arabic) is the most fundamental and central pillar of faith. At its simplest, Islam is the belief in one, unique, and absolute God. This is called *Tawhid*, meaning "oneness".

Here is a detailed and simple breakdown of what this means.

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The absolute oneness of God (Tawhid)

- **One and unique:** Muslims believe there is only one Creator and Sustainer of the universe, and nothing is like Him. He has no partners, equals, or rivals.
- **No physical form:** God is not a human, a man, or an idol. He is beyond human imagination and senses. This is why Islam forbids making pictures or statues of God.
- **No family:** God does not have parents, a spouse, or children. The Quran directly rejects the Christian idea of a trinity and the concept of God having a son.
- **Eternal and self-sufficient:** God has no beginning and no end. He does not need anyone or anything, but all of creation depends on Him for survival. The Quran calls him *al-Samad*, "the Absolute" or "the Self-Sufficient".

The attributes and names of God

To help humans understand His nature, God revealed his names and attributes in the Quran. While there are said to be 99 names, some of the most important include:

- ***Al-Rahman*:** The Most Compassionate
- ***Al-Rahim*:** The Most Merciful
- ***Al-Ahad*:** The One
- ***Al-Khaliq*:** The Creator
- ***Al-Alim*:** The All-Knowing
- ***Al-Hakim*:** The All-Wise

God's relationship with humanity

- **Involved in our lives:** Although God is transcendent and beyond our world, Muslims believe He is personally involved with His creation. The Quran describes God as being "nearer to him than [his] jugular vein".

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- **Merciful and forgiving:** God's mercy and forgiveness are boundless. Islam teaches that even though humans are prone to sin, they can always seek God's forgiveness through sincere repentance.
- **Just and accountable:** On the Day of Judgment, every person will be held accountable for their actions. This belief encourages Muslims to live a moral and responsible life.
- **Source of guidance:** God sent many prophets and holy books throughout history to guide humanity back to the right path of worshipping only Him. The Quran is believed to be the final and complete revelation.

How Muslims express this belief: Belief in God isn't just an idea; it is meant to shape a Muslim's entire life. This is shown in:

- **The Shahada (Declaration of Faith):** The core creed of Islam is "There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger". A person becomes a Muslim by sincerely stating this.
 - **Worship:** All acts of worship, from prayer (*Salat*) to fasting (*Sawm*), are performed for God alone. This prevents a Muslim from worshipping anything in creation and ensures their devotion is directed only to the Creator.
 - **Trust in God:** Muslims are encouraged to say "*Insha'Allah*" ("if God wills") when speaking about future events. This shows their trust that everything happens according to God's plan.
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Belief in angels in Islam

Spiritual beings created by God to carry out His commands

In Islam, angels are beings of light created by God (Allah) to serve and worship him perfectly

They are different from humans because they have no free will, meaning they cannot disobey God and only do exactly what they are commanded.

Here is a breakdown of the nature and roles of angels in simple terms:

Nature of angels

- **Made of light:** Angels were created from light (*nur*) unlike humans who were created from clay and jinn who were created from smokeless fire.
- **Genderless:** Angels are not male or female.
- **No physical needs:** They do not need to eat, drink, or sleep.
- **Invisible:** Humans cannot see angels in their true form, but angels can take on different shapes, like a human, when God commands them to.
- **Sinless:** Because they have no free will, they cannot do anything wrong or sinful.
- **Innumerable:** There are so many angels that only God knows their exact number.

Roles and duties

Angels perform a wide variety of tasks throughout the universe and are involved in human life from birth to death and beyond.

Famous angels and their roles

- **Jibril (Gabriel):** The angel of revelation who delivered God's messages, including the Quran, to the prophets.

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- **Mika'il (Michael):** The angel of mercy who controls rain, plants, and provides for creation.
- **Israfil (Raphael):** The angel who will blow a trumpet to announce the Day of Judgment.
- **Malak al-Mawt:** The Angel of Death who takes people's souls when they die.

Everyday duties

- **Recording deeds:** Two angels, the *Kiraman Katibin* ("honorable scribes"), sit on each person's shoulders to record all their good and bad deeds.
- **Guarding people:** Guardian angels protect believers throughout their lives.
- **Questioning in the grave:** After a person dies, two angels named Munkar and Nakir question them about their beliefs.
- **Managing nature:** Some angels are responsible for running the universe, such as controlling the weather and seasons.

Importance of Belief

For Muslims, believing in angels is one of the six core pillars of faith.

This belief helps to:

- Remind people that everything they do is recorded, encouraging them to do good.
 - Reassure people that they are protected and watched over by God's beings.
 - Show that God has a perfect plan for how the universe works, with each angel fulfilling its specific role.
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Belief in revealed scriptures in Islam: God sent his revelations through different prophets, culminating in the Quran, which Muslims consider to be the complete and unaltered word of God.

For Muslims, the belief in revealed scriptures is a central article of faith, built on the idea that God has guided humanity throughout history with divine messages sent through prophets. The Qur'an is the final and complete revelation in this chain, and Muslims believe it has been perfectly preserved and unaltered.

The chain of divine revelation

1. Earlier scriptures: Muslims believe God revealed scriptures before the Qur'an, and they accept the validity of these original, uncorrupted texts. These include:

- **The Scrolls of Abraham (*uuf Ibrāhīm uuf Ibrāhīm*) and Moses (*uuf Mūsā uuf Mūsā*):** Early scriptures given to the prophets Abraham and Moses.
- **The Torah (*Tawrāt Tawrāt*):** The Law revealed to the Prophet Moses.
- **The Psalms (*Zabūr Zabūr*):** The holy songs revealed to the Prophet David.
- **The Gospel (*Injīl Injīl*):** The teachings bestowed upon the Prophet Jesus.

2. The belief in human alteration: Muslims believe that while the original messages of the earlier scriptures were divine, they were later subject to human alteration and distortion. This meant the full, original guidance was compromised over time.

3. The Qur'an as the final word: The Qur'an, revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, is considered the final and complete scripture.

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Muslims believe it confirms the truth found in previous divine books and corrects the human-introduced errors.

The unique status of the Qur'an

1. Divine preservation: A core belief in Islam is that God promised to protect the Qur'an from any distortion, ensuring it remains in its original form until the end of time. This stands in contrast to the perceived alterations of previous books.

2. Methods of preservation: The Qur'an's preservation is attributed to two factors:

- **Oral transmission:** It was meticulously memorized by a vast number of companions of the Prophet and has been passed down through an unbroken chain of memorizers for centuries.
- **Written compilation:** The revelations were recorded by scribes during the Prophet's lifetime and later compiled into a standard text under the caliphs Abu Bakr and Uthman to prevent any variations.

3. The Prophet's role

The Prophet Muhammad served as the messenger who conveyed the Qur'an, but Muslims believe he was not its author.

- **Illiterate Prophet:** The Qur'an refers to the Prophet as "unlettered" (*ummi*), which is seen as proof that he could not have authored such an eloquent and comprehensive text himself.
- **A messenger, not an author:** The Qur'an itself contains verses rebuking the Prophet, which Muslims cite as evidence that he had no control over the content of the revelation.

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The purpose of revealed scriptures: According to Islam, the scriptures were revealed for several key reasons:

- **Guidance:** They provide a roadmap for humanity to understand God, their purpose, and how to live a righteous life.
 - **Rule of Law:** They establish a basis for divine law, or *sharia*, to resolve disputes and regulate society.
 - **Proof:** They serve as God's conclusive proof and evidence against humanity on the Day of Judgment.
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Belief in prophets in Islam: Islam respects a long line of prophets sent by God, including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. Muhammad is revered as the final prophet.

The Islamic belief in prophets is a core tenet of faith, holding that God sent a long line of messengers to guide humanity throughout history. This succession of prophets includes figures revered by Jews and Christians, such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. In Islam, all these prophets preached the same fundamental message of monotheism and submission to God. Muhammad is honored as the final and most comprehensive prophet in this lineage.

The purpose of prophets in Islam: Prophets (*nabī*) and messengers (*rasūl*) are human beings selected by God to deliver His divine message and provide a moral and practical example for humanity.

- **Conveying guidance:** Since God is unseen, prophets act as a vital link between the Creator and His creation, ensuring humanity is not left without divine guidance.

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- **Reinforcing the same message:** Islamic tradition holds that all prophets delivered the same fundamental message: the oneness of God (*tawhid*) and the call to righteous living.
- **Finality of prophethood:** Muslims believe that the line of prophethood ended with Muhammad. The Quran and his teachings, known as the *Sunnah*, provide a complete guide for all times, meaning no new prophet is needed.

Prominent prophets in Islam: The Quran mentions 25 prophets by name, but Islamic tradition holds that many more were sent throughout history. Some of the most significant prophets are:

- **Adam (*Ādam*):** Considered the first human and the first prophet. God created him and taught him the names of all things.
- **Noah (*Nūḥ*):** Warned his people about their idolatry and built an ark to save the believers from the Great Flood.
- **Abraham (*Ibrāhīm*):** Often referred to as the "father of monotheism," he is revered for his unwavering faith in one God. He is a key patriarchal figure for Muslims, Jews, and Christians.
- **Moses (*Mūsā*):** Was given the Torah (*Tawrat*) by God and led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. He is known for speaking directly with God and for the miracles he performed.
- **Jesus (*ʿĪsā*):** Muslims revere Jesus as a major prophet and the Messiah, born of the Virgin Mary. However, Islam rejects the Christian doctrine of his divinity and crucifixion, instead believing he was raised to heaven by God.
- **Muhammad:** Is revered as the "Seal of the Prophets," meaning he is the final prophet sent by God. He received the

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final and complete revelation of the Quran and established the model Islamic society in Medina.

The finality of Prophet Muhammad: A central aspect of the Islamic belief in prophets is the finality of Muhammad's message.

- **The "Seal of the Prophets":** This title, mentioned in the Quran, signifies that no prophet will come after Muhammad.
 - **A universal message:** While earlier prophets were sent to specific communities, Muhammad's message is considered universal, meant for all people and all times.
 - **Complete and perfect guidance:** The revelations given to Muhammad in the Quran are believed to be perfectly preserved and provide all the guidance necessary for humanity, completing the long chain of divine messages.
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Belief in the Day of Judgment in Islam: On this day, all of humanity will be judged for their good and bad deeds and consigned to either paradise or hell.

In Islam, belief in the Day of Judgment (*Yawm al-Qiyamah*) is a fundamental article of faith. It is the culmination of life on Earth, when all of humanity will be resurrected and judged by God (*Allah*) for their deeds, with their eternal fate in either paradise (*Jannah*) or hell (*Jahannam*) determined as a result. This belief is a central theme in the Quran and the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (*Hadith*).

The process of judgment: The Day of Judgment is not a single event but a process consisting of several stages:

- **The blowing of the trumpet:** The angel Israfil will blow a trumpet twice. The first blast will mark the end of the world and the death of all living creatures, while the second will signal the resurrection of all humanity for judgment.

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- **The gathering (*al-hashr*):** All resurrected human beings will be assembled in a great plain to await God's judgment.
- **The Book of Deeds (*Kitab al-A'mal*):** Throughout their lives, angels record every person's good and bad deeds. On this day, each individual will receive their personal record. The righteous will receive their book in their right hand, while the wicked will receive it in their left.
- **The Scales of Justice (*Mizan*):** The deeds recorded in the books will be weighed on a scale to determine their worth. According to the Quran, "whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it".
- **The Bridge (*Sirat*):** A bridge will be set over hellfire that all souls must attempt to cross to reach paradise. The righteous will cross swiftly, while the wicked will fall into hell.

Eternal consequences: Based on the outcome of the judgment, souls are consigned to their final destination:

- **Paradise (*Jannah*):** A garden of eternal bliss and reward for the faithful and righteous. The Quran describes Jannah with flowing rivers of water, milk, wine, and honey, as well as fruits and beautiful companions. The greatest reward for the inhabitants of Jannah is attaining the pleasure of God.
- **Hell (*Jahannam*):** A place of punishment and torment for those who disbelieved or committed great sins. The Quran depicts hell as a place of scorching fire and boiling water. In mainstream Islamic belief, hell is temporary for Muslims who sinned but permanent for those who died without faith.

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Preparing for the Day of Judgment: Belief in the Day of Judgment profoundly affects a Muslim's daily life, serving as a constant reminder of accountability. This motivates Muslims to live righteously, seek forgiveness for their shortcomings, and be mindful of God in all their actions. Repentance for one's sins is possible throughout one's life, showing that God's forgiveness is greater than any sin, except for *shirk* (associating partners with God), which is unforgivable.

Belief in divine predestination in Islam: Everything, both good and bad, is decreed by God.

In Islam, the belief in divine predestination, known as *al-qada wa al-qadar*, is one of the six articles of faith for Sunni Muslims. It is the belief that everything that happens—both good and bad—is decreed by God (*Allah*). This doctrine encompasses God's all-encompassing knowledge and will, and it includes both aspects that are beyond human control and those in which humans exercise their free will.

The belief in *al-qada wa al-qadar* is comprised of four main components:

- **Knowledge (*Al-‘Ilm*):** God has eternal, all-encompassing knowledge of everything that has happened, is happening, and will happen. This knowledge is detailed, and nothing is concealed from God's view.
- **Recording (*Kitabah*):** God wrote everything that exists, including the destiny of all creatures, in a "Preserved Tablet" (*al-Lawh al-Mahfuz*) before creation.
- **Will (*Mashii'ah*):** Nothing occurs in the universe, whether related to God's actions or the actions of his creations, without his permission and will.

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- **Creation (*Al-Khalq*):** God is the creator of everything, including people's actions and the means by which they are performed.

Free will and human accountability: The relationship between divine predestination and human free will is complex and has been a topic of theological discussion throughout Islamic history. In mainstream Sunni Islam, the two concepts are not seen as contradictory.

- **Human choice exists:** The human ability to choose between right and wrong is acknowledged. On the Day of Judgment, people will be held accountable only for their own choices and intentions, not for things forced upon them.
- **God's foreknowledge does not negate free will:** God's knowledge of a person's choice beforehand does not force that choice. From God's eternal perspective, all events have already occurred, but for humans operating within time, the present moment is a matter of active choice.
- **Effort is still required:** Belief in *qadar* is not a form of fatalism that leads to helplessness. Instead, it is meant to provide peace of mind when facing trials, reminding believers that even hardship is part of God's plan. Muslims are commanded to make efforts toward their goals and leave the final outcome to God. A well-known prophetic saying explains that nothing can repel a divine decree except for supplication (*du'a*).
- **Divine wisdom:** In Islamic theology, God allows both good and bad things to occur in this world of trials, but his ultimate will and plan are based on perfect wisdom and justice. For example, a hardship can be a test of faith, a chance for forgiveness, or a redirection from something worse.

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Impact on daily life: For Muslims, belief in divine predestination shapes their daily life by:

- Promoting a sense of peace and contentment, knowing that what was meant for them will not miss them.
 - Encouraging perseverance in the face of adversity, as trials are seen as opportunities for reward and spiritual growth.
 - Cultivating humility, as any success is recognized as ultimately a result of God's will.
 - Motivating sincere effort and prayer, despite knowing God's ultimate plan, because one's actions and prayers are also part of that divine decree.
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The Five Pillars of Islam: The religious duties of Muslims are summarized in the Five Pillars, which serve as the foundation of their faith and practice:

***Shahada* (Declaration of Faith):**

The profession of faith that "There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God".

The *Shahada* (or *Shahadah*) is the Muslim declaration of faith and the first of the Five Pillars of Islam. It is a creedal statement that affirms the two most fundamental tenets of the religion: the absolute oneness of God (Allah) and the acceptance of Muhammad as God's final messenger.

The phrase is recited in Arabic: *Ash-hadu an la ilaha illa Allah, wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan rasul Allah.*

It is broken down into two distinct parts:

- **Part 1: *La ilaha illa Allah***—"There is no god but God". This is an affirmation of *Tawhid*, the Islamic concept of monotheism. It declares that Allah is the one and only

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Creator, Sustainer, and Lord of the universe and the sole entity worthy of worship.

- **Part 2: *Muhammadun rasul Allah***—"Muhammad is the Messenger of God". This acknowledges that the Prophet Muhammad was chosen by God to deliver His final message and serves as the ultimate human example for Muslims to follow.

The significance of the Shahada

- **Entry into Islam:** Reciting the Shahada with sincerity and conviction is the only formal requirement for a person to convert to Islam. Upon saying it, all previous sins are forgiven.
- **Core of belief:** For Muslims, the Shahada is the bedrock of their faith, and it is recited daily during the five ritual prayers (*salah*). It is also the first words a Muslim child hears and, ideally, the last words uttered before death.
- **Unifying principle:** By declaring the same profession of faith in Arabic, the Shahada serves as a unifying force that binds the global Muslim community (*ummah*) together, transcending cultural, linguistic, and national differences.
- **Guidance for living:** The Shahada is a constant reminder for Muslims to live their lives according to Islamic principles and to prioritize their relationship with God.

Variations in Shia Islam: While Sunni and Shia Muslims agree on the two main parts of the Shahada, some Shia Muslims add a third phrase to honor Ali ibn Abi Talib, the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad. This addition, *wa 'alīyun walīyu llāh*, translates to "And Ali is the friend of God," reflecting their belief in Ali as Muhammad's true successor. However, this extra phrase is not considered a requirement for conversion.

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Salat (Prayer): Muslims perform five daily prayers while facing the Kaaba in Mecca.

Salat (or Salah) is the ritual prayer and the second of the Five Pillars of Islam. It is an obligatory act of worship for Muslims, performed five times daily at prescribed times, which depend on the position of the sun.

The five daily prayers are:

- **Fajr:** The dawn prayer, performed before sunrise.
- **Dhuhr:** The midday prayer, performed after the sun reaches its zenith.
- **Asr:** The late afternoon prayer.
- **Maghrib:** The prayer just after sunset.
- **Isha:** The night prayer, performed after dark.

Purpose and practice of Salat

- **Direct communication with God:** For Muslims, Salat is a direct line of communication with God (Allah), providing a constant connection throughout the day.
- **Remembrance and purification:** It serves as a reminder to turn away from daily distractions and focus on the worship of Allah, thereby helping to purify the mind and heart.
- **Spiritual discipline:** The structure of the prayer, which involves a specific sequence of physical movements and recitations, instills discipline and humility. The practice also fosters a sense of unity, as millions of Muslims around the world pray facing the same direction.
- **Facing the Kaaba:** When praying, Muslims face the Kaaba in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. This direction is known as the *qibla*. The Kaaba is a cube-shaped building considered the most sacred site in Islam, which was purified by the Prophet

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Muhammad and is believed to have been originally built by the Prophet Abraham. Facing it serves as a focal point for the worldwide Muslim community.

- **Communal prayer:** While an individual can pray anywhere that is clean, communal prayer in a mosque is encouraged, particularly for the midday prayer on Friday (*Jumu'ah*).
- **Preparation:** Before performing Salat, Muslims must be in a state of physical and spiritual purity. They achieve this by performing a ritual washing known as *wudu*.

Structure of the prayer (Rak'ah)

Each of the five daily prayers consists of a set number of units, called *rak'ahs*, which include a specific sequence of actions:

- **Standing (Qiyam):** Reciting verses from the Quran, including the first chapter, *Al-Fatiha*.
- **Bowing (Ruku):** Bending forward at the waist to show reverence.
- **Prostration (Sujud):** Kneeling with the forehead, nose, palms, knees, and toes touching the ground in a gesture of complete submission to God.
- **Sitting:** A seated position between the two prostrations.

The prayer ends with a greeting of peace (*taslim*) while turning the head to the right and then the left.

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Zakat (Almsgiving): A fixed portion of one's wealth is donated to those in need. It is seen as a way to purify one's wealth.

Zakat is a mandatory annual almsgiving for eligible Muslims who possess wealth above a minimum threshold known as *nisab*. The standard rate for zakat is 2.5% of one's total savings and wealth, held for a full lunar year. The purpose of zakat is to purify a person's wealth, promote economic justice, and support those in need.

Key Aspects of Zakat

- **Obligatory, not voluntary:** Unlike *sadaqah*, which is voluntary charity, zakat is a compulsory act of worship and one of the five pillars of Islam.
- **Purpose:** The word *zakat* means "purification" or "growth." Giving zakat is believed to purify wealth and bring blessings to the giver.
- **Nisab threshold:** To be eligible to pay zakat, a Muslim's wealth must be equal to or exceed the *nisab*, which is the value of 87.48 grams of gold or 612.36 grams of silver. The specific value in a local currency changes with market prices.
- **Calculation:** The zakat amount is 2.5% of the total eligible wealth (including savings, gold, silver, investments, and business inventory) after deducting liabilities.
- **Timeframe:** Zakat is due after one lunar year has passed with a person's wealth remaining at or above the *nisab*. Many choose to pay during the holy month of Ramadan for increased spiritual reward.
- **Recipients:** The Quran specifies eight categories of people who are eligible to receive zakat funds:
 - The poor (*al-fuqara*)
 - The needy (*al-masakin*)

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- Zakat administrators (*amil*)
 - New converts to Islam (*mu'allafatul qulub*)
 - To free those in bondage (*riqab*)
 - Those in debt (*gharimin*)
 - For Allah's cause (*fi sabilillah*)
 - The stranded traveler (*ibn al-sabeel*)
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Sawm (Fasting during Ramadan)

During the holy month of Ramadan, healthy adult Muslims fast from dawn until sunset. This practice encourages self-discipline and empathy for the less fortunate.

Sawm, the practice of fasting during the holy month of Ramadan, is one of the Five Pillars of Islam and is observed by Muslims worldwide. The ritual, which entails abstaining from food, drink, smoking, and sexual relations from dawn until sunset, encourages self-discipline, spiritual growth, and empathy for the less fortunate.

What the fast entails

Fasting during Ramadan is more than just abstaining from food and water; it is a spiritual detox that includes refraining from sinful behavior such as anger, lying, and arguing.

Daily elements of the fast include:

- **Suhoor:** A pre-dawn meal eaten before the fast begins.
- **Iftar:** The evening meal that breaks the fast at sunset. Following the practice of the Prophet Muhammad, the fast is traditionally broken with dates and water.
- **Intention (niyyah):** The fast must be performed with a sincere intention to obey God's command.

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Spiritual and physical benefits: The spiritual rewards of fasting are believed to be multiplied during Ramadan. It is considered an act of worship that helps Muslims draw closer to God and increase their taqwa, or God-consciousness.

The practice also fosters:

- **Empathy:** Experiencing hunger and thirst helps observers better understand the struggles of the poor and needy. This often encourages increased acts of charity.
- **Self-discipline:** Fasting helps train the soul to resist its desires and focus on spiritual well-being.
- **Spiritual purification:** It is a time for self-reflection and seeking forgiveness for past sins.

Exemptions from fasting: While fasting is obligatory for all adult, able-bodied Muslims, Islam provides compassionate exemptions for those who face genuine difficulties. This is based on the Quranic principle that "Allah intends ease for you, not hardship" (2:185).

Valid exemptions from fasting include:

- **The ill:** This includes both those with temporary illnesses, who must make up the missed fasts later, and those with chronic illnesses, who may compensate by feeding the poor.
 - **The elderly:** Individuals who are too frail to fast are excused and can feed the poor as compensation.
 - **Travelers:** Those on long journeys can choose to break their fast and make up the missed days later.
 - **Pregnant or breastfeeding women:** Women who believe fasting could harm their health or their child's are exempt but must make up the fasts later.
 - **Menstruating women:** Fasting is prohibited during menstruation, and missed fasts must be made up later.
 - **Children:** Children who have not reached puberty are not required to fast.
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Hajj (Pilgrimage to Mecca): Every Muslim who is physically and financially able is expected to make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their lifetime.

The Hajj is an annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca that every adult Muslim is expected to perform at least once in their lifetime, provided they are physically and financially able. It is one of the Five Pillars of Islam, which are considered the core obligations of the faith.

What the obligation means

- **A once-in-a-lifetime duty:** Hajj is a mandatory religious duty for capable Muslims that must be carried out once in their lifetime.
- **Timing:** The pilgrimage takes place during a specific time each year, from the 8th to the 12th or 13th day of Dhu al-Hijjah, the 12th and final month of the Islamic lunar calendar.
- **Symbol of unity:** It serves as a unifying force, bringing together millions of Muslims from diverse backgrounds in a powerful display of equality and solidarity.
- **Spiritual renewal:** The Hajj is viewed as a spiritual journey that allows pilgrims to seek forgiveness for their sins and renew their commitment to God.

Conditions of eligibility: For Hajj to be obligatory, a person must meet the following conditions of capability, known as *istita'ah*:

- **Muslim:** The person must be a Muslim.
- **Adult and sound mind:** They must have reached puberty and be of sound mind.
- **Financially able:**

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- They must have sufficient funds to cover the costs of the journey, including travel, food, and accommodation.
 - This money must be surplus to their basic needs and the needs of any dependents left behind.
 - Any significant debts must be settled first. A loan involving interest (riba) is strictly forbidden and must be repaid before undertaking Hajj.
 - **Physically able:**
 - The individual must be healthy enough to endure the physically demanding rituals and extended travel.
 - Muslims who are chronically ill, very frail due to old age, or have other permanent incapacities are exempt. In some cases, a proxy (known as *Hajj-e-Badal*) may be appointed to perform the Hajj on their behalf.
 - **Women with a *mahram*:**
 - A woman must travel with a *mahram*, which is a close male relative she cannot marry (e.g., her husband, father, or brother).
 - In recent years, Saudi regulations have been updated to allow women to perform Hajj without a *mahram* if they travel with a trustworthy group.
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The Quran and Hadith: The primary holy texts in Islam are the Quran and the Hadith.

The Quran is the central religious scripture, believed to be the verbatim word of God as revealed to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel.

The Quran is the central religious scripture of Islam, which Muslims believe is the verbatim word of God (Allah) revealed to the final prophet, Muhammad, through the archangel Gabriel (Jibril). This process of revelation occurred incrementally over a period of approximately 23 years, from 610 CE until Muhammad's death in 632 CE.

The first revelation

- **The Cave of Hira:** Muhammad was 40 years old and would frequently retreat to a cave on Mount Hira, near Mecca, for meditation and reflection.
- **Encounter with Gabriel:** During one of these retreats, the angel Gabriel appeared to him and commanded him to "Recite!" (in Arabic, "*Iqra*").
- **The initial verses:** Muhammad replied that he could not read. Gabriel squeezed him tightly three times before revealing the first five verses of Surah Al-Alaq (Chapter 96):

"Read! in the Name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists), He has created man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous, Who has taught (the writing) by the pen, He has taught man that which he knew not".

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The process of revelation

- **Diverse experiences:** The experience of receiving revelation, known as *wahy*, took several forms. According to Aisha, Muhammad's wife, it could be as intense as the ringing of a bell, leaving him covered in sweat on even a cold day. Other times, the angel Gabriel would appear to him in the form of a man.
- **Overcoming distress:** The initial revelation left Muhammad deeply distressed and fearful, and he was consoled by his wife, Khadijah. She took him to her Christian cousin, Waraqa ibn Nawfal, who recognized the experience as the same kind of divine inspiration received by Moses.
- **Resumption of revelation:** After a temporary pause, or *fatra*, the revelations resumed with the first verses of Surah Al-Muddaththir (Chapter 74).

Compilation of the Quran

- **Memorization and transcription:** During Muhammad's lifetime, the revelations were memorized by his companions, and literate ones wrote them down on various materials such as palm fronds, stones, and bones.
 - **Standardization:** The complete Quran was not in book form at the time of Muhammad's death in 632 CE. The first Caliph, Abu Bakr, ordered the compilation of the text into a single volume to preserve it. Later, the third Caliph, Uthman, commissioned a standardized text, known as the Uthmanic codex, to address variant readings.
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The Hadith is a collection of sayings and traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, which provides further guidance on Islamic law and practice.

The Hadith are the recorded sayings, actions, and approvals of the Prophet Muhammad, which serve as the second most important source of Islamic law and guidance for Muslims, after the Quran. They provide essential details and context for understanding the broader teachings of the Quran.

What is included in the Hadith?: The content of a Hadith report generally consists of two parts:

- **Isnad (chain of narration):** The list of people who transmitted the report, tracing it back to the Prophet Muhammad. For a Hadith to be considered authentic, the narrators in this chain must be trustworthy.
- **Matn (body text):** The main content of the report, containing the words, actions, or silent approval of the Prophet.

Scholars classify Hadith reports into different categories to determine their authenticity, including:

- **Sahih (authentic):** Reports with a strong and reliable chain of narrators.
- **Hasan (good):** Reports with a chain of narrators that is slightly less reliable than a *sahih* report.
- **Da'if (weak):** Reports with a questionable chain of narration or other inconsistencies.
- **Mawdu (fabricated):** Forged reports falsely attributed to the Prophet.

The Hadith's relationship to the Quran: For the majority of Muslims, the Hadith is necessary to properly understand and apply the principles of the Quran.

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- **Explains the Quran:** The Quran often contains general statements that are elaborated upon in the Hadith. For example, the Quran commands Muslims to pray (*salat*), but the Hadith details the specific movements and words involved in the five daily prayers.
- **Provides a model for conduct:** The Hadith documents the Prophet Muhammad's own life, establishing the *Sunnah* (his practice and example). This gives Muslims a practical blueprint for ethical behavior, daily worship, and other aspects of life.

Compilation and debate

- The Hadith was primarily transmitted orally for decades after the Prophet's death in 632 CE. It was eventually compiled and documented in authoritative written collections by Islamic scholars during the 8th and 9th centuries.
 - **Sunni collections:** The most authoritative Hadith collections for Sunni Muslims are the *Kutub al-Sittah* ("The Six Books"), especially the *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*.
 - **Shia collections:** Shia Muslims rely on different collections, such as "The Four Books," compiled by their own scholars based on narrations from the Prophet's family.
 - **Criticism of Hadith:** Although a cornerstone of Islamic law for most Muslims, the Hadith has faced criticism. Some scholars and groups, known as Quranists, question the reliability of the collections due to their late compilation and the possibility of fabrication. These groups argue that Islamic guidance should come from the Quran alone.
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Major branches: Following Muhammad's death in 632 CE, the Muslim community divided over who should succeed him as its leader, leading to the formation of two major branches:

Sunni Islam

Comprising 85–90% of Muslims, Sunnis accept the authority of the first four caliphs who succeeded Muhammad.

Based on the information provided and general knowledge of Sunni Islam, here are 10 trivia questions.

Question: What is the largest branch of Islam, comprising 85–90% of the world's Muslim population?

- **Answer:** Sunni Islam.

Question: What Arabic term, meaning "people of the tradition and the community," is used for adherents of Sunni Islam?

- **Answer:** *Ahl as-Sunnah wa l-Jamā'ah*.

Question: Which four figures, accepted as legitimate successors to Muhammad, do Sunnis refer to as the "Rightly Guided Caliphs"?

- **Answer:** Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali.

Question: While Sunnis accept the authority of the first four caliphs, what is their contrasting view with Shia Muslims regarding the succession to the Prophet Muhammad?

- **Answer:** Sunnis believe that Muhammad did not appoint a successor and that the community rightfully elected Abu Bakr. This contrasts with the Shia view that Ali was the divinely appointed successor.

Question: What is the name of the holy book that, along with the *hadith*, forms the basis of jurisprudence within Sunni Islam?

- **Answer:** The Quran.

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Question: The practices of Muhammad are known as the *sunna*. Which word is the term "Sunni" derived from?

- **Answer:** *Sunna*.

Question: What are the four recognized legal schools (*madh'habs*) within Sunni Islam?

- **Answer:** Hanafi, Hanbali, Maliki, and Shafi'i.

Question: In Sunni tradition, what is the term for the six pillars of faith (*iman*)?

- **Answer:** There are six pillars of faith in Sunni tradition: belief in God, angels, prophets, holy scriptures, the Day of Judgment, and God's divine will.

Question: What was the name of the meeting where Abu Bakr was appointed as the first caliph?

- **Answer:** The meeting of Saqifa.

Question: In addition to the Quran and *hadith*, what source of religious law, based on scholarly consensus, is utilized within Sunni Islam?

- **Answer:** *Ijma*.
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Shia Islam: Making up 10–15% of Muslims, Shias believe that leadership should have stayed within Muhammad's family and followed his cousin and son-in-law, Ali.

The 10–15% figure for the Shia population is significant because it highlights their status as a minority within the global Muslim community, which is predominantly Sunni. This demographic reality has historically contributed to sectarian differences in Islamic theology and practice. The division between Shia and Sunni Muslims originated after the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632 CE over the question of his succession. The majority, who would become

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Sunni ("People of the Tradition"), believed the new leader should be chosen by consensus from among the Prophet's closest companions. The minority, the *Shi'at Ali* ("Party of Ali"), insisted that leadership should remain in Muhammad's bloodline and pass to his cousin and son-in-law, Ali ibn Abi Talib.

Ali and the early Caliphs The key theological and political differences emerged from the outcomes of the succession dispute.

Ali's disputed inheritance: Shia Muslims believe that Ali was divinely appointed as Muhammad's successor at Ghadir Khumm, an event they celebrate as Eid al-Ghadeer. The first three caliphs—Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman—are therefore viewed as illegitimate rulers who usurped Ali's rightful position.

The path of the Sunnis: Sunnis, by contrast, recognize all four caliphs as the "Rightly Guided Caliphs," accepting Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and finally Ali, as legitimate successors based on their selection by the community.

The significance of Imams For Shia Muslims, the concept of the Imamate is a core belief.

The Imams are seen as the spiritual and political successors to the Prophet, believed to be divinely appointed, infallible, and possessed of special spiritual knowledge.

This lineage continued through Ali and his sons Hasan and Husayn. The martyrdom of Husayn at the Battle of Karbala in 680 CE is a seminal event in Shia history that cemented their distinct identity and tradition of mourning. The largest branch of Shia Islam, the Twelvers, believes there were twelve such Imams, with the last one currently in a state of occultation, or divine hiding, awaiting his return as the Mahdi.

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Variations in religious practice The historical split also led to differences in religious practice, law, and jurisprudence.

Hadith collections: While both sects use the Quran, they rely on different collections of hadith (narrations of the Prophet's life and sayings). Shia Muslims primarily accept hadith transmitted by the Prophet's family and their close associates.

Prayer rituals: Shias have distinct practices for prayer. Some combine certain prayers, though both sects typically pray five times a day. Shias also often place their forehead on a clay tablet (*turbah*) during prostration.

Holy sites: In addition to the common pilgrimage to Mecca (*Haji*), Shia Muslims undertake pilgrimages to the shrines of their Imams, particularly in the Iraqi cities of Najaf and Karbala.

Chapter 2: What is Sunnat in Islam

Human Lifestyle of Universe

In Islam, the Sunnah is the body of traditions, practices, and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad that serve as a model for Muslims. It encompasses his sayings (*Hadith*), his actions, and his silent approvals, providing a practical guide for how to live a life aligned with the teachings of the Quran. By following the Sunnah, Muslims aim to emulate the Prophet's character and conduct in all aspects of daily life, from fundamental religious rituals like prayer to ordinary activities such as eating, sleeping, and social interactions. This practice enhances their faith, fosters personal development, and ensures their actions lead toward a successful and fulfilling life. The phrase "Human Lifestyle of Universe," while not a standard Islamic term, can be interpreted as the ethical and purposeful way of human existence within the cosmos, as guided by the Sunnah and the Quran.

Islam, the Sunnah refers to the teachings, actions, and approvals of the Prophet Muhammad, which serve as the second-highest authority for Muslims after the Qur'an. It is a model for living a righteous and fulfilling life and provides practical guidance on how to implement the principles of the Qur'an. The Sunnah is preserved in hadith, which are the recorded narrations of the Prophet's words and deeds.

Types of Sunnah Scholars categorize the Sunnah into three types based on how the Prophet's example was established: The Sunnah is preserved in hadith, which are the recorded narrations of the Prophet's words and deeds.

Types of Sunnah Scholars categorize the Sunnah into three types based on how the Prophet's example was established:

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Sunnah Qawliyyah in Islam (Verbal Sunnah): The recorded sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. These are the verbal instructions and advice he gave on various matters of faith and daily life.

Sunnah Fiiliyyah in Islam (Actions): The actions and practices of the Prophet that were observed by his companions. This includes how he performed acts of worship like prayer (*salat salat*), as well as his daily habits.

Sunnah Taqririyyah Islam (Tacit Approvals): The Prophet's silent approvals of actions or practices performed by his companions. If he witnessed something and did not object to it, his silence or smile was taken as a sign of his approval.

Importance of the Sunnah: For Muslims, the Sunnah is a vital and essential source of guidance for several reasons:

Clarifies the Qur'an: The Sunnah provides context and practical examples for the general principles laid out in the Qur'an. For example, while the Qur'an mandates prayer (*salat salat*), the Sunnah details the specific way to perform it.

Serves as a role model: The Qur'an states that Prophet Muhammad is an "excellent example" for believers (Qur'an 33:21). Emulating his character and conduct is a way for Muslims to draw closer to God.

Provides a complete way of life: The Sunnah offers guidance on every aspect of a Muslim's life, from worship and personal hygiene to social interactions, business dealings, and ethics.

Completes religious practice: Many aspects of Islamic ritual and law, such as the details of prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage (*Hajj*), are derived from the Sunnah. A Muslim's worship would be incomplete without it.

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Distinction between Sunnah and Hadith

While the terms are often used interchangeably, there is a key difference:

The Sunnah is the practice and example of the Prophet.

Hadith are the written records or narrations that preserve the Sunnah for later generations. A hadith is a report with a chain of narrators (*isnad isnad*) that authenticates its source.

Levels of obligation in the Sunnah

Not every act of Sunnah is considered obligatory (*fardh fardh*). The Sunnah is further categorized by scholars to distinguish between different levels of recommendation:

Sunnah Mu'akkadah (Emphasized Sunnah): Practices that the Prophet performed regularly and rarely abandoned, such as the voluntary prayers before and after the obligatory ones. Though not compulsory, omitting them without a valid reason is disliked.

Sunnah Ghair Mu'akkadah (Non-Emphasized Sunnah): Practices that the Prophet did, but less consistently. Following these actions is meritorious, but there is no blame for leaving them.

Actions based on custom: Some actions were simply personal habits or part of the local culture and are not considered part of the Sunnah to be emulated. An example is the Prophet eating with his fingers, which was a custom of his time.

Sunnah Qawliyyah in Islam (Verbal Sunnah):

The recorded sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. These are the verbal instructions and advice he gave on various matters of faith and daily life.

Sunnah Qawliyyah, or Verbal Sunnah, refers to the recorded sayings, instructions, and advice of the Prophet Muhammad. These are a primary source of Islamic law and guidance, second only to the Quran, and are preserved in collections of hadith. They offer Muslims a practical model for implementing the principles of the Quran in daily life.

Key characteristics of Sunnah Qawliyyah

- **A source of law and explanation:** Sunnah Qawliyyah provides rulings and clarifies the more general verses of the Quran. For example, the Quran mandates prayer (salat), but the Prophet's verbal Sunnah details the specific way it should be performed.
- **A record of personal guidance:** The sayings of the Prophet were not just for legal purposes but also served as moral and ethical advice for his followers on matters of faith and daily life.
- **Recorded in hadith:** The verbal Sunnah is transmitted through hadith, which are the narrations compiled by scholars from the testimonies of the Prophet's companions. For each hadith, a chain of narrators (*isnad*) is documented to establish its authenticity.

Categories of sayings: Scholars generally categorize the Prophet's sayings in the verbal Sunnah into two types:

- **Legal (*tashri'iyyah*):** These are rulings intended to establish Islamic law and are binding on Muslims.

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- **Non-legal (*ghayr tashri'iyah*):** These are sayings related to the Prophet's personal customs or human nature and are not legally binding. For instance, expressing a liking for certain foods or preferences for clothing are considered non-legal.

Examples of Sunnah Qawliyyah

- **The importance of intention:** A famous hadith illustrates this core Islamic concept. Umar ibn al-Khattab narrated that the Prophet Muhammad said: "The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions".
 - **On social character:** Another example emphasizes good morals and family ties. A hadith, narrated by Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi, states: "The most perfect believers are the best in character, and the best of you are the kindest to their families".
 - **Controlling one's temper:** The Prophet also taught about personal conduct, such as in this hadith: "The strong person is not the one who can wrestle someone else down. The strong person is the one who can control himself when he is angry".
 - **The Last Sermon:** The verbal Sunnah also includes entire addresses, such as the Prophet's Farewell Sermon. In it, he advised the community to follow the Quran and his Sunnah, declaring: "I leave behind me two things, the Quran and the Sunnah and if you follow these you will never go astray".
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Sunnah Fiiliyyah in Islam (Actions)

The actions and practices of the Prophet that were observed by his companions. This includes how he performed acts of worship like prayer (*salat salat*), as well as his daily habits.

Sunnah Fiiliyyah refers to the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) observed actions, which provide a practical model for Muslims to follow. Narrated through hadith (oral traditions) by his companions, these actions encompass both his religious practices and his daily habits.

Examples of Sunnah Fiiliyyah in religious worship

- **Performing prayer (*salat salat*):** The most detailed example of *Sunnah Fiiliyyah* is the Prophet's method of prayer, as the Quran commands prayer but does not specify its mechanics. Companions carefully observed and narrated his actions, which established the standard form of prayer, including the postures, movements, and recitations. He also performed and encouraged optional (Sunnah) prayers before and after the obligatory ones.
- **Wudu' (ablution):** The Prophet's manner of performing ablution, a ritual washing performed before prayer, is also established through his actions. This includes his practice of washing his hands, mouth, and nose three times and wiping his head.
- **Hajj (pilgrimage):** The Prophet demonstrated the rituals of the Hajj during his pilgrimage to Mecca, providing a practical guide for Muslims to follow.

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Examples of Sunnah Fiiliyyah in daily habits

- **Eating and drinking:**
 - Eating with the right hand.
 - Starting a meal with "Bismillah" and ending it with "Alhamdulillah".
 - Sitting down while eating and drinking.
 - Never complaining about food.
- **Oral hygiene:** The use of a *miswak* (a natural toothbrush) to clean his teeth was a consistent practice and highly recommended by the Prophet.
- **Dressing:** He would put on a garment starting with the right side first.
- **Sleeping:**
 - Sleeping on his right side.
 - Performing ablution before going to bed.
- **Personal interactions:**
 - Greeting others with a smile.
 - Initiating the greeting of *salaam*.
 - Showing humility and helping with household chores.
- **Toilet etiquette:** His actions established protocols such as entering with the left foot, exiting with the right, and using water for cleansing.

The significance of Sunnah Fiiliyyah: The Prophet Muhammad's actions are a cornerstone of Islamic guidance and law for several reasons:

- **Clarification of the Quran:** His practical application helps to clarify and elaborate on the general principles outlined in the Quran.
- **A perfect example:** The Quran itself describes the Prophet as an "excellent example" (*UswatunHasanah*)

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UswatunHasanah), making his life a model of ideal conduct for Muslims to emulate.

- **Timeless moral guidance:** Beyond ritual worship, his habits and conduct serve as a moral compass, encouraging virtues like honesty, compassion, and patience in all aspects of life.
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Sunnah Taqririyyah in Islam (Tacit Approvals):

The Prophet's silent approvals of actions or practices performed by his companions. If he witnessed something and did not object to it, his silence or smile was taken as a sign of his approval.

Sunnah Taqririyyah refers to the Prophet Muhammad's tacit approvals of actions or practices performed by his companions. When he witnessed an action or learned of it and did not object, his silence or, in some cases, a smile, was taken as a sign of his approval and became a part of the Sunnah. It is one of the three types of Sunnah, along with *Sunnah Qawliyyah* (his sayings) and *Sunnah Fi'liyyah* (his actions).

How Sunnah Taqririyyah is established

- **The Prophet's silence:** The Prophet's silence on an action in his presence, when he had the ability and reason to object, is considered an implicit approval.
- **His express approval:** In some instances, his approval was more explicit, shown through his pleasure or a smile regarding a companion's action.

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- **The condition of awareness:** For a practice to be considered a *Sunnah Taqririyyah*, it must be established that the Prophet was aware of the action or statement.

Examples of Sunnah Taqririyyah

The prayer at Banu Qurayzah

During the Battle of the Trench, the Prophet told his companions, "None should offer the 'Asr prayer but at Banu Qurayzah".

- One group of companions interpreted the command literally and delayed their prayer until they reached the destination, even though the prayer time was ending.
- Another group understood the Prophet's instruction as an encouragement to hurry and prayed at the proper time on the way.
- When the Prophet was informed of both groups' actions, he did not blame either of them, implicitly approving both interpretations.

The prayer after finding water

On a journey, two companions who could not find water performed *tayammum* (purification with sand) and prayed. When they later found water, one repeated his prayer while the other did not. When the Prophet learned of this, he approved both men's courses of action.

The eating of dhabb (spiny-tailed lizard)

One of the companions once brought a cooked lizard to the Prophet. The Prophet did not eat it, stating that it was not forbidden but that it was not the food of his people. Seeing his companions eat from it, he did not forbid them, indicating that it was permissible.

Importance in Islamic jurisprudence

- **A source of Islamic law:** Sunnah Taqririyyah serves as a significant source of Islamic law, providing guidance on how to act in situations not explicitly addressed in the Qur'an or the Prophet's sayings.

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- **Guidance on permissible actions:** It clarifies that many everyday actions and social practices performed by the companions were considered acceptable. This is especially useful for matters not directly addressed by the Qur'an and Sunnah Qawliyyah (sayings) and Fi'liyyah (actions).
 - **Refinement of understanding:** It helps interpret the broader context of Islamic teachings by confirming that certain practices and interpretations are valid, even when companions' approaches to a single command differ.
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Sunnah Clarifies the Qur'an

The Sunnah provides context and practical examples for the general principles laid out in the Qur'an. For example, while the Qur'an mandates prayer (*salat salat*), the Sunnah details the specific way to perform it.

The premise that the Sunnah clarifies the Qur'an is a cornerstone of Islamic theology, which views the Qur'an and the Sunnah as complementary sources of religious guidance. The Qur'an provides the foundational principles and general commands, while the Sunnah—the traditions, actions, sayings, and silent approvals of the Prophet Muhammad—offers the necessary details and practical applications.

Example: The prayer (*salat salat*)

The Qur'an mentions the obligation of prayer multiple times, affirming its importance and specifying certain times for it. However, it does not provide explicit instructions on how to perform the ritual itself.

The Sunnah, as preserved in the Hadith (recorded narrations of the Prophet's teachings and actions), fills these crucial details:

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- **Number of prayers:** The Qur'an indicates prayer at certain times, but it is the Sunnah that establishes the five daily obligatory prayers (*fard fard*).
- **Physical movements:** The Sunnah demonstrates the precise movements of the prayer, such as standing, bowing (*ruku' ruku'*), prostrating (*sujud sujud*), and sitting.
- **Specific recitations:** The Sunnah teaches the phrases and verses to recite during each stage of the prayer.
- **Related practices:** The Sunnah also details the ritual ablution (*wudu' wudu'*) that precedes prayer, including the steps and what invalidates it.

The Sunnah's role in interpreting the Qur'an: The example of prayer demonstrates the various ways the Sunnah clarifies the Qur'an:

- **Clarification of general verses:** The Sunnah elaborates on general Qur'anic instructions, detailing the practical requirements for fulfilling them.
- **Explanation of unclear text:** The Prophet's words and actions serve to interpret passages that may be unclear in the Qur'an.
- **Independent rulings:** The Sunnah also establishes legal rulings on matters not explicitly covered in the Qur'an. This is based on the belief that the Prophet's teachings are also a form of divine guidance.

For most Muslims, a holistic understanding of Islam is achieved by following both the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The Qur'an sets the laws, while the Sunnah provides the essential methodology for their application.

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Sunnah Serves as a role model

The Qur'an states that Prophet Muhammad is an "excellent example" for believers (Qur'an 33:21). Emulating his character and conduct is a way for Muslims to draw closer to God.

The Quran and Sunnah establish Prophet Muhammad as the central role model for Muslims, making the emulation of his character and actions a primary path to drawing closer to God. This is a foundational aspect of Islamic belief, with his life serving as a practical and comprehensive guide for daily living.

The Quran's divine endorsement: The Quran explicitly states the importance of following the Prophet's example.

- **"An excellent example":** The verse you cited, Quran 33:21, declares, "Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for whoever has hope in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often". This verse was revealed during a time of great adversity and emphasizes the Prophet's patience, conviction, and steadfast faith as the model for all believers.
- **Obedience to God and His Messenger:** Other Quranic verses command believers to "Obey Allah and obey the Messenger," positioning the Prophet's guidance as a direct extension of God's will. The Sunnah, which details his words and deeds, is therefore considered a second source of divine law after the Quran itself.
- **Love of God:** The Quran ties the love of God to the emulation of the Prophet. A verse states, "Say, [O Prophet] 'If you [sincerely] love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins'" (Quran 3:31).

The practical example of the Sunnah: The Sunnah provides Muslims with concrete examples of how to apply the abstract principles of the Quran in all facets of life.

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- **Moral and ethical character:** The Sunnah illustrates the Prophet's compassion, justice, humility, and honesty, qualities that Muslims strive to embody. He was known for his forgiveness toward his enemies, his kindness toward the poor and orphans, and his fairness as a leader.
- **Spiritual life:** The Prophet's life exemplifies dedication to worship, from performing prayers on time to frequent remembrance of God (*dhikr*). It provides guidance for daily rituals, such as the proper way to perform ablution (*wudu*) and specific supplications for various occasions.
- **Personal and social conduct:** The Prophet's conduct offers a model for personal life, including family relationships, and for social interactions, including leadership and compassion for others. He led by example, sharing in manual labor with his companions and treating everyone with equal respect.

The link between emulation and closeness to God: For Muslims, emulating the Prophet is not an act of worship toward him, but a devotional act of obedience to God, which deepens a believer's faith and connection to the divine.

- By following the Prophet's example, Muslims demonstrate their love for God and their submission to His commands.
- The Sunnah acts as a spiritual compass, guiding believers toward a purposeful and meaningful life that aligns with divine pleasure.
- Through this process, a Muslim's faith is strengthened, leading to a more profound and intimate relationship with God. As the Prophet's wife Aisha reportedly said, "His character was the Quran," illustrating that his entire life was a practical embodiment of Islamic principles.

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Sunnah Provides a complete way of life:

The Sunnah offers guidance on every aspect of a Muslim's life, from worship and personal hygiene to social interactions, business dealings, and ethics.

The Sunnah provides a comprehensive and practical model for life based on the teachings, actions, and approvals of the Prophet Muhammad. It elaborates on the general principles found in the Quran and offers detailed guidance on every aspect of a Muslim's existence, from personal conduct to social, economic, and ethical matters.

Guidance on personal hygiene and health: The Sunnah provides meticulous guidance on personal cleanliness and hygiene, viewing it as an integral part of faith.

- **Wudu (Ablution):** The Prophet's example details the proper method of performing *wudu* before prayer.
- **Siwak (Tooth-stick):** He strongly recommended using a *miswak* for oral hygiene, a practice believed to have both physical and spiritual benefits.
- **Hygiene practices:** Regular hand washing, cleansing with water after using the toilet, and adhering to the "ten acts of *fitrah*" (natural cleanliness) are all practices emphasized in the Sunnah.
- **Moderation in eating:** The Prophet encouraged a balanced diet and moderation in consuming food and drink.

Principles for social interactions: The Sunnah provides a clear code of conduct for respectful and compassionate social interactions, which strengthens community bonds and promotes peace.

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- **Greeting with peace (*salam*):** Muslims are taught to greet each other with "As-salamu alaikum" ("Peace be upon you"), a practice that fosters love and goodwill.
- **Kindness and mercy:** The Prophet Muhammad was a model of kindness and mercy towards all people, regardless of their status. The Sunnah emphasizes the importance of showing compassion to the poor, orphans, and even animals.
- **Good speech:** Believers are encouraged to speak kindly or remain silent, and to avoid harmful speech such as gossip, slander, and harsh words.
- **Smiling:** The Sunnah teaches that smiling at another person is an act of charity.
- **Respect for elders and kinship:** The Sunnah stresses respecting elders and maintaining good relations with relatives, viewing severance of family ties as a major sin.

Ethical guidelines for business dealings: Islamic business ethics, reinforced by the Sunnah, prioritize honesty, fairness, and social responsibility over pure profit maximization.

- **Prohibition of exploitation:** Practices such as usury (*riba*), hoarding, and monopoly are strictly forbidden.
- **Fair dealing:** The Sunnah promotes fairness in trade, such as giving full measure and weight to customers and disclosing any product defects.
- **Honesty and trustworthiness:** Prophet Muhammad was known as *Al-Amin* (the Trustworthy) before his prophethood. His example emphasizes the importance of being truthful in all business transactions.
- **Leniency:** The Sunnah encourages being easy-going and generous in buying and selling.

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A blueprint for ethics and character: The Sunnah serves as a moral compass, encouraging the development of noble character traits.

- **Honesty and integrity (*Sidq*):** Muslims are commanded to be honest in all aspects of life, including speech and actions.
 - **Justice (*Adl*):** Upholding justice is a foundational principle, even when it goes against one's own interests.
 - **Humility (*Tawadu'*):** The Prophet's humility inspires believers to avoid arrogance and pride.
 - **Patience and forgiveness:** The Sunnah teaches Muslims to control anger and to pardon others, rising above personal grievances.
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Completes religious practice: Many aspects of Islamic ritual and law, such as the details of prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage (*Hajj Hajj*), are derived from the Sunnah. A Muslim's worship would be incomplete without it.

The Sunnah, or the teachings, practices, and approvals of the Prophet Muhammad, is essential for completing a Muslim's religious practice by providing the practical details for implementing the principles laid out in the Quran. While the Quran is the highest source of Islamic law, its guidance is often broad. The Sunnah acts as a practical guide, demonstrating how the Prophet Muhammad embodied these teachings in his daily life and rituals.

How the Sunnah completes Islamic rituals Prayer *Salah* *Salah*): The Quran mandates the five daily prayers but does not provide specific instructions for how to perform them. The Sunnah details all the components of the prayer, including:

- The proper number of units (*rakat rakat*) for each of the five daily prayers.

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- The specific movements, such as bowing and prostrating.
- The recitations and supplications (*duas duas*) to be said during the prayer.

Fasting (Sawm Sawm) The Sunnah completes the ritual of fasting in the month of Ramadan by providing practical guidelines, such as:

- Clarifying the timing of the fast, from dawn until sunset.
- Establishing the importance of eating a pre-dawn meal (*suhoor suhoor*) and breaking the fast immediately after sunset (*iftar iftar*).
- Explaining the details of fasting, such as what is permissible and what breaks the fast.

Pilgrimage (Hajj Hajj) The Quran instructs Muslims to perform the Hajj, but it is the Sunnah that lays out the intricate sequence of rites and actions, such as:

- The method for entering the state of ritual purity (*ihram ihram*).
- The seven-time circumambulation of the Kaaba (*tawaf tawaf*).
- The seven-time journey between the hills of Safa and Marwah (*sa'i sa'i*).
- The observance of key events outside Mecca, including the vigil on the plains of Mount Arafat.

Almsgiving (Zakat Zakat) The Sunnah provides the specific details for fulfilling the obligation of paying *Zakat Zakat*, including:

- The minimum threshold of wealth (*nisab*) that must be reached for *Zakat Zakat* to become obligatory.
- The specific percentage to be donated, typically 2.5%, on annual savings.
- The categories of people who are eligible to receive *Zakat Zakat*.

The Sunnah as a model for moral excellence

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Beyond specific rituals, the Sunnah provides a comprehensive ethical and moral framework for daily life, serving as an excellent pattern of conduct for all Muslims. By imitating the Prophet Muhammad, Muslims strive to embody virtues such as:

- **Kindness and compassion:** He was known for his merciful treatment of others, including family, neighbors, and the needy.
- **Honesty and integrity:** The Prophet was famously known as *Al-Ameen* ("the trustworthy"), setting the standard for ethical business dealings and truthfulness.
- **Humility:** The Sunnah offers countless examples of humility, such as the Prophet's simple lifestyle and his kindness even to those who wronged him.

The Sunnah versus Hadith: It is important to understand the distinction between these two terms:

- **Sunnah:** Refers to the **way of life** of the Prophet Muhammad—his teachings, actions, and approvals.
- **Hadith:** Are the **recorded narrations** that serve as the primary source for preserving and transmitting the Sunnah.

The Sunnah was transmitted orally before being systematically documented in Hadith collections. These Hadith compilations, such as *Sahih al-Bukhari*, are used by Muslims to authenticate the Prophet's practices and ensure they are following the true Sunnah.

Sunnah Mu'akkadah (Emphasized Sunnah):

Practices that the Prophet performed regularly and rarely abandoned, such as the voluntary prayers before and after the obligatory ones. Though not compulsory, omitting them without a valid reason is disliked.

Sunnah Mu'akkadah refers to the "emphasized" or "confirmed" practices of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). These are acts he performed consistently and almost never abandoned, underscoring their great importance in Islamic worship, though they are not considered obligatory (fard).

Omitting a Sunnah Mu'akkadah practice without a valid reason is disliked and can be blameworthy, especially if done habitually. Practicing these acts offers significant spiritual rewards and helps a believer draw closer to Allah.

Key examples of Sunnah Mu'akkadah prayers: The following are the regular voluntary prayers (known as *Sunan al-Rawatib*) that complement the five obligatory daily prayers:

- **Fajr (Dawn Prayer):** Two rak'ahs before the obligatory prayer. The Prophet (PBUH) never missed this Sunnah prayer, even while traveling.
- **Dhuhr (Noon Prayer):** Four rak'ahs before and two rak'ahs after the obligatory prayer.
- **Maghrib (Sunset Prayer):** Two rak'ahs after the obligatory prayer.
- **Isha (Night Prayer):** Two rak'ahs after the obligatory prayer.
- **Witr Prayer:** This is a special, emphasized night prayer. While considered Sunnah Mu'akkadah in most Sunni schools of thought, the Hanafi school classifies it as *wajib* (necessary) due to its strong emphasis.

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Importance of Sunnah Mu'akkadah

- **Completes and perfects worship:** On the Day of Judgement, if there are any deficiencies in a person's obligatory prayers, voluntary prayers, including Sunnah Mu'akkadah, can be used to complete them.
- **Improves relationship with Allah:** A hadith states that performing voluntary deeds, such as Sunnah prayers, is a way to gain Allah's love.
- **Brings closeness to the Prophet:** Consistently following the confirmed Sunnah is a sign of love for the Prophet (PBUH) and brings a believer closer to his example.
- **Builds a consistent routine:** The regularity of these practices instills discipline in a Muslim's worship, aligning their daily life with the prophetic example.

Sunnah Mu'akkadah vs. Sunnah Ghair Mu'akkadah: It is important to distinguish Sunnah Mu'akkadah from *Sunnah Ghair Mu'akkadah* (non-emphasized Sunnah).

- **Sunnah Mu'akkadah:** Performed consistently by the Prophet, with habitual neglect being blameworthy in the Hanafi school and strongly disliked in others.
 - **Sunnah Ghair Mu'akkadah:** Practices that the Prophet performed occasionally, indicating they are recommended but less emphasized. Omitting them is not blameworthy, though performing them earns reward. An example is the four rak'ahs of voluntary prayer before Asr.
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Sunnah Ghair Mu'akkadah (Non-Emphasized): Practices that the Prophet did, but less consistently. Following these actions is meritorious, but there is no blame for leaving them.

Sunnah Ghair Mu'akkadah refers to non-emphasized voluntary acts that the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) performed on some occasions but not with the same consistency as Sunnah Mu'akkadah actions. While performing these acts is meritorious and earns reward, there is no blame or punishment for leaving them.

Key characteristics of Sunnah Ghair Mu'akkadah

- **Occasional practice:** Unlike the emphasized Sunnah (Mu'akkadah), which the Prophet (ﷺ) almost never omitted, he sometimes did and sometimes left these practices.
- **Less emphasis:** These actions are recommended but hold less religious weight than Sunnah Mu'akkadah.
- **Voluntary reward:** You gain a reward from Allah for following these actions, but there is no sin in neglecting them.
- **Difference in legal standing:** Because of the Prophet's occasional omission, scholars consider these acts to be from the *mustahab* (recommended) or *nafl* (voluntary) category, rather than strongly recommended.

Examples of Sunnah Ghair Mu'akkadah: A significant portion of non-emphasized Sunnah practices involves extra prayers (*rak'ahs*) around the five daily prayers:

- **Four rak'ahs before the 'Asr (afternoon) prayer:** The Prophet encouraged praying between the call to prayer (*adhan*) and its commencement (*iqamah*), but his practice of four rak'ahs before 'Asr was not completely consistent.

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- **Four rak'ahs before the 'Isha (night) prayer:** The two rak'ahs after 'Isha are an emphasized Sunnah, but praying additional optional rak'ahs beforehand falls into the non-emphasized category.
- **Additional rak'ahs with other prayers:** Some scholars mention additional optional prayers that can be performed, such as extra rak'ahs after the confirmed Sunnah of the Dhuhr prayer.
- **Tahiyyatul Masjid:** This is the two-cycle prayer performed upon entering a mosque, preferably before sitting down.

How to practice Sunnah Ghair Mu'akkadah: You can follow these actions to earn additional blessings, but they should not be confused with obligatory duties (*fard*). The Prophet (ﷺ) said that the most beloved deeds to Allah are those done regularly, even if they are small.

You can approach them by:

- **Gradual integration:** Start by incorporating a few practices into your routine and increase your commitment over time.
 - **Sincere intention:** Perform these acts with a sincere intention to follow the Prophet's example and draw closer to Allah.
 - **Flexibility:** Understand that omitting these occasional Sunnah actions does not carry blame, allowing for flexibility in your worship.
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Chapter 3: Hygiene in Islam

Scientific and Securance

Hygiene in Islam is viewed as a fundamental aspect of faith, encompassing both physical and spiritual purity and offering a significant scientific basis for promoting public health and securing well-being. Islamic teachings emphasize cleanliness as a core tenet, with the Prophet Muhammad famously stating, "Cleanliness is half of faith". This principle translates into daily rituals and guidelines that promote personal and environmental sanitation, with many of the practices aligning with modern scientific understanding of disease prevention. For example, the obligatory act of *wudu* (ablution) before prayer requires Muslims to wash their hands, mouth, face, and feet several times a day, which is now recognized by global health organizations like the CDC as one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of infection. The practice of a full-body bath (*ghusl*) on a regular basis, and after specific events, further promotes physical cleanliness and minimizes the risk of infection. Beyond personal hygiene, Islam encourages communal cleanliness by forbidding the pollution of public spaces and water sources, outlining responsible waste management, and even teaching proper etiquette for coughing and sneezing. In addition to prescribing specific practices, Islamic teachings also provide a framework for securing public health through preventive measures like quarantine during an epidemic, which the Prophet Muhammad advocated long before modern epidemiology. This holistic approach not only aims for spiritual purification but also provides a powerful, divinely motivated incentive for Muslims to actively contribute to individual and collective health and security.

In Islam, hygiene is a fundamental aspect of faith that includes physical, spiritual, and environmental cleanliness. The Prophet Muhammad stated, "Cleanliness is half of faith," emphasizing its importance for all aspects of a Muslim's life.

Physical and ritual purification

Physical cleanliness is a prerequisite for worship, particularly the five daily prayers. The following are key practices:

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- **Wudu (partial ablution):** Before each of the five daily prayers, Muslims must perform *wudu*, a ritual washing of the hands, face, arms, head, and feet. This ensures that Muslims maintain a state of physical purity throughout the day.
- **Ghusl (full-body ablution):** A full ritual bath is required after specific events, such as sexual activity or menstruation, to restore a state of ritual purity.
- **Dental hygiene:** The Prophet Muhammad was particularly keen on brushing his teeth and used a small stick called a *miswak*. Using a *miswak* is considered a recommended practice (*sunnah*).
- **Grooming (Fitra):** Specific grooming practices are considered part of a person's natural state of cleanliness (*fitra*). These include trimming the mustache, clipping the nails, and removing armpit and pubic hair.
- **Hygiene after using the toilet:** It is a requirement (*sunnah*) to wash with water after using the toilet, a practice known as *istinja*. The right hand is reserved for eating and handling clean objects, while the left hand is used for cleansing.
- **Handwashing:** Muslims are advised to wash their hands upon waking, before and after meals, and before prayers to prevent the spread of germs.

Environmental and social cleanliness

Islamic teachings extend beyond personal cleanliness to encompass one's surroundings and community.

- **Cleanliness of environment:** Muslims are instructed to keep their homes, places of worship, and public areas clean and tidy. The Prophet Muhammad forbade actions like relieving oneself in public walkways or stagnant water.
- **Food hygiene:** Islamic law forbids the consumption of impure food and requires washing hands and food

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preparation areas to ensure cleanliness. For example, utensils touched by a dog must be washed seven times before being reused.

- **Clean clothing:** Muslims are encouraged to wear clean and modest clothes, especially when performing prayers.

Spiritual and mental purification

In Islam, a truly clean and pure person is clean in body, heart, and mind.

- **Spiritual purity:** Sincere repentance and seeking forgiveness from God are practices for cleansing the soul of sins.
 - **Purity of intention:** All acts of worship and good deeds should be done with a pure and sincere intention to please God, not for worldly recognition.
 - **Mental well-being:** Islam promotes mental hygiene by encouraging the avoidance of negative thoughts like anger, envy, and arrogance. Engaging in beneficial activities and seeking knowledge is recommended to nourish the mind and soul.
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Wudu in Islam (partial ablution): Before each of the five daily prayers, Muslims must perform *wudu*, a ritual washing of the hands, face, arms, head, and feet. This ensures that Muslims maintain a state of physical purity throughout the day.

Wudu is the Islamic ritual of partial ablution, a spiritual and physical act of purification performed by Muslims before prayer and other acts of worship. While it involves the cleansing of specific body parts with water, its significance goes beyond mere hygiene, serving as a preparation to stand before God in a state of purity.

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The procedure for wudu

Muslims must perform the steps of wudu in a specific order for it to be valid. The process generally includes:

1. Making the intention (*Niyah*) and saying "Bismillah".
2. Washing hands up to the wrist.
3. Rinsing the mouth.
4. Cleansing the nose.
5. Washing the face.
6. Washing the arms up to the elbow.
7. Wiping the head (*Masah*).
8. Wiping the ears.
9. Washing the feet up to the ankles.

(Note: Each step from washing the hands to washing the feet is typically performed three times, except for wiping the head and ears, which is usually done once. Ensuring water reaches between fingers and toes is also part of the procedure).

Significance and benefits

- **Spiritual purification:** Wudu is believed to wash away minor sins.
- **Physical hygiene:** It promotes cleanliness by washing hands, mouth, and face.
- **Reverence and focus:** It prepares Muslims for prayer, fostering humility and focus.
- **Preparation for worship:** Wudu is required before certain acts of worship, such as prayer and touching the Qur'an.

Nullifying and alternative options

- **Nullification of wudu:** Wudu is invalidated by actions like passing wind, urination, deep sleep, and loss of consciousness.
- **Alternative for lack of water:** *Tayammum*, a symbolic purification using clean earth or sand, can be performed if water is unavailable or cannot be used.

Ghisl in Islam (full-body ablution): A full ritual bath is required after specific events, such as sexual activity or menstruation, to restore a state of ritual purity.

Ghisl is an Arabic term meaning "full ablution" or "ritual bath," a full-body cleansing performed to restore a state of ritual purity after specific events. It is distinct from *wudu*, the partial ablution performed before daily prayers.

Reasons for performing ghisl

Ghisl is mandatory (*fard*) after certain events and recommended (*sunnah* or *mustahabb*) for others.

Obligatory reasons (*fard*):

- **Sexual activity or ejaculation (*ghisl janabat*):** This includes sexual intercourse and seminal discharge, for both men and women.
- **Menstruation (*ghisl hayd*):** Required for women after their menstrual cycle ends.
- **Postpartum bleeding (*ghisl nifas*):** Required for women after giving birth.
- **Death (*ghisl mayyit*):** Required for the body of a deceased Muslim, with the exception of martyrs.
- **Converting to Islam:** Some scholars consider ghisl mandatory for new converts.

Recommended reasons (*sunnah*):

- Before Friday prayers (*Jumu'ah*).
- Before Eid prayers.
- When entering the *ihram* for Hajj or Umrah.
- After washing a dead body.

How to perform ghisl

Muslims must first have the sincere intention (*niyyah*) to purify themselves for the sake of Allah. The simplest form of ghisl involves

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ensuring that clean, pure water touches every part of the body, including the hair roots, once.

A more complete and recommended method (*sunnah*) includes the following steps:

1. **Intention (*Niyyah*):** Form the intention in your heart to perform ghusl for purification.
2. **Say "Bismillah":** Begin by saying "In the name of Allah".
3. **Wash the hands and private parts:** Wash both hands, then clean any dirt or impurities from the private parts with the left hand.
4. **Perform *wudu*:** Complete a full *wudu* (ablution), as you would for prayer, though some delay washing their feet until the end.
5. **Wash the head:** Pour water over the head three times, making sure it reaches the hair roots and scalp.
6. **Wash the body:** Pour water over the entire body, starting with the right side, and rub the skin to ensure no part remains dry.
7. **Wash the feet:** Wash the feet if you delayed doing so during *wudu*.

For women with braids, it is generally not necessary to undo them as long as the water can reach the scalp and hair roots.

Effects of ghusl

After a proper ghusl, the state of ritual impurity is removed, allowing a Muslim to resume acts of worship that require purity, such as prayer (*salah*) and reciting or touching the Quran. According to some scholars, a mandatory ghusl replaces the need for a separate *wudu*.

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Dental hygiene in Islam: The Prophet Muhammad was particularly keen on brushing his teeth and used a small stick called a *miswak*. Using a *miswak* is considered a recommended practice (*sunnah*).

In Islam, dental hygiene is a highly valued practice that combines spiritual purification with physical health, centered on the use of the *miswak*. This small twig, used for teeth cleaning, was a regular practice of the Prophet Muhammad and is thus considered a *sunnah* (recommended practice) for Muslims.

The miswak: A traditional tool

The *miswak*, or *siwak*, is a teeth-cleaning twig traditionally cut from the *Salvadora persica* tree, also known as the arak tree. It gained widespread popularity in the Islamic world due to the Prophet Muhammad's emphasis on its use. Before the modern toothbrush, ancient civilizations used similar fibrous chewing sticks, but the *miswak* became deeply associated with Islamic tradition.

Importance in Islamic teachings

Several *hadith* (sayings and traditions of the Prophet Muhammad) highlight the importance of the *miswak* and oral hygiene:

- **Pleasing to God:** The Prophet stated that the *miswak* cleanses the mouth and pleases Allah.
- **Highly recommended:** He said, "Were it not that it would be difficult on my *Ummah* (nation), I would have commanded them to use the *miswak* for every prayer".
- **Spiritual reward:** Another tradition teaches that a prayer performed after using the *miswak* is better than 70 prayers performed without it.
- **Regular practice:** The Prophet used the *miswak* regularly, including before and after sleeping, upon entering his home, and before every prayer and ablution (*wudu*).

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When to use a miswak

Based on the Prophet's example, it is a *sunnah* to use a *miswak* in several situations:

- Before and after sleep
- Before and after meals
- Before performing the five daily prayers
- Before and during ablution (*wudu*)
- Upon entering one's house
- When the mouth has a bad odor
- For the recitation of the Quran

Scientific benefits of the miswak

Modern science has confirmed many of the benefits long known in Islamic tradition:

- **Antibacterial properties:** The *Salvadora persica* tree contains natural compounds that inhibit the growth of oral bacteria responsible for tooth decay and gum disease.
- **Plaque control:** Studies have shown that regular use of a *miswak* can significantly reduce plaque formation and gingivitis, sometimes with effects comparable or superior to a toothbrush.
- **Increased saliva production:** Chewing on the *miswak* stimulates saliva flow, which helps the mouth fight bacterial infection and naturally cleanses the teeth and gums.
- **Enamel protection:** The *miswak* releases minerals like fluoride and calcium that help strengthen tooth enamel and promote remineralization.
- **Breath freshening:** Its natural aromatic compounds help eliminate bad breath, leaving the mouth with a pleasant fragrance.

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Combining tradition with modern practice

Islamic scholars acknowledge that modern tools like toothbrushes and toothpaste can be used to fulfill the religious obligation of oral hygiene. Many Muslims today choose to use a toothbrush for a deep clean while also incorporating the *miswak* into their daily routine to revive the *sunnah*. The World Health Organization (WHO) has also recognized the effectiveness of chewing sticks like the *miswak* and encouraged their use in areas where they are customary.

Grooming (*Fitra*) in Islam: Specific grooming practices are considered part of a person's natural state of cleanliness (*fitra*). These include trimming the mustache, clipping the nails, and removing armpit and pubic hair.

According to the Islamic faith, specific grooming practices are considered part of a person's *fitra*, or innate human nature. The purpose of these practices is to maintain a natural state of cleanliness, hygiene, and well-being. The practices of *fitra* are derived from the teachings and example of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). While some scholars list five practices, others include up to ten in their interpretation. The core practices universally recognized are:

- **Trimming the mustache:** A Muslim man is instructed to keep his mustache short and prevent it from covering his lip. Some jurists allow for shaving it completely, but trimming is more widely recommended.
- **Letting the beard grow:** The inverse of trimming the mustache, growing out the beard is considered an important practice for men.

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- **Clipping the nails:** The nails should be regularly trimmed to prevent dirt from accumulating underneath them. It is forbidden to leave them to grow longer than 40 days.
- **Removing armpit hair:** The hair in the armpits should be removed, with plucking often described as the most virtuous method. However, shaving or using a depilatory cream is also permissible.
- **Shaving pubic hair:** The hair around the private parts should be removed to maintain a high level of cleanliness and hygiene. While shaving is the most common method, other means of removal, such as trimming or depilatory cream, are also acceptable.

Other practices often mentioned as part of the *fitra* include:

- Circumcision for males
 - Using a *siwak* or toothbrush to clean the teeth
 - Rinsing the nose with water
 - Washing the joints, such as knuckles
 - Using water to clean the private parts after using the toilet
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Hygiene after using the toilet in Islam: It is a requirement (*sunnah*) to wash with water after using the toilet, a practice known as *istinja*. The right hand is reserved for eating and handling clean objects, while the left hand is used for cleansing.

In Islam, the hygiene practice of cleansing with water after using the toilet is known as *istinja*. It is considered an emphasized *sunnah* (practice of the Prophet Muhammad) and is an essential part of maintaining ritual purity (*tahara*). The etiquette

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specifies that the left hand is used for cleansing, while the right hand is reserved for eating and handling clean objects.

Key principles of istinja

- **Use of water:** Washing with water is the preferred and most thorough method for cleansing after urination or defecation. Historically, this was often done using a small vessel (*lota* or *shattaf*).
- **Water and paper/stones:** It is also permissible and highly recommended to first wipe with an inanimate object, like toilet paper, stones, or leaves, to remove the bulk of the impurity, and then follow with water for a thorough wash.
- **The left hand for cleansing:** According to the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, the left hand should be used for cleaning the private parts. The right hand is to be kept clean for eating, drinking, and other respected tasks.
- **Final hand washing:** After performing *istinja*, it is recommended to wash the hands thoroughly with soap or another cleansing agent.

Hadith on istinja

The practice of using the left hand for cleansing and the right for other actions is supported by the Prophet's teachings:

- A hadith narrated by Abu Qatadah states that the Prophet (PBUH) forbade touching one's private parts with the right hand while urinating, or using it for cleaning.
- The Prophet's wife, Aisha, reported that the Prophet would always use water for cleansing after relieving himself.
- Salman al-Farsi also recalled that the Prophet forbade using the right hand for cleansing.

Etiquette for using the toilet

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- **Before entering:** It is recommended to say a short prayer seeking refuge from evil male and female jinn before entering the toilet area.
 - **Covering oneself:** A person should remain concealed and not uncover their private parts until they are seated and out of sight.
 - **Facing the Qiblah:** When in an open space, a person should not face or turn their back toward the *Qiblah* (the direction of prayer) while relieving themselves.
 - **Leaving:** It is recommended to leave the toilet area with the right foot first and say a prayer of thanks.
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Handwashing in Islam: Muslims are advised to wash their hands upon waking, before and after meals, and before prayers to prevent the spread of germs.

Islamic handwashing practices are based on prophetic tradition (Sunnah) and are rooted in both spiritual and hygienic principles. The ritual washing is a physical preparation for worship and serves to prevent the spread of germs, aligning with modern public health practices.

Washing hands upon waking

The Prophet Muhammad emphasized washing hands immediately upon waking, before putting them into a water container for ablution.

- **Reasoning:** He stated that a person "does not know where his hand spent the night". This advice is not based on the assumption of deliberate contamination but acknowledges that one may touch unseen impurities during sleep.
- **Significance:** The instruction is a precautionary measure, reflecting awareness of hygiene long before modern germ

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theory. It highlights that cleanliness is a spiritual matter beyond what is visible.

Washing hands before and after meals

Islamic etiquette dictates washing hands both before and after eating.

- **Before meals:** A tradition (hadith) states that washing hands before meals brings blessings (*barakah barakah*) to the food. It is also a practical hygiene measure to remove germs before handling food.
- **After meals:** Washing hands after eating removes food residue and further reinforces cleanliness. Some Islamic jurists consider it a recommended (*mustahabb*) rather than an obligatory act.

Washing hands before prayers

Handwashing is a key component of *wudu* (ablution), the purification ritual performed before prayer (*Salah Salah*).

- **Wudu procedure:** The process of *wudu* begins with the intention of purification, followed by washing the hands up to the wrists three times. This is an essential step that prepares a worshipper both physically and spiritually for prayer.
- **Spiritual significance:** Muslims believe they are standing before God during prayer, and ritual purity is a prerequisite for this act of worship. Handwashing is a physical and symbolic act of cleansing the body to prepare the heart and mind for communication with the Divine.
- **Invalidation of wudu:** If a person's *wudu* is broken by acts such as using the restroom or deep sleep, they must perform a new *wudu* before praying again, which includes washing the hands.

Health and spiritual connection

The Islamic emphasis on hygiene is both a health imperative and an act of faith.

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- The Prophet Muhammad said, "Cleanliness is half of faith".
 - During the COVID-19 pandemic, some Muslim leaders aligned religious opinions with public health guidelines, advising that while *wudu* is purifying, it should be supplemented with soap for 20 seconds to prevent the spread of viruses. This demonstrates the modern application of traditional Islamic principles.
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Cleanliness of environment in Islam: Muslims are instructed to keep their homes, places of worship, and public areas clean and tidy. The Prophet Muhammad forbade actions like relieving oneself in public walkways or stagnant water.

In Islam, cleanliness of the environment is an integral part of faith and a religious duty with both spiritual and practical implications. The Quran and the teachings (Sunnah) of the Prophet Muhammad establish Muslims as stewards of the Earth, responsible for protecting its resources and maintaining its purity. This applies to all aspects of life, from personal hygiene to the upkeep of homes, places of worship, and public spaces.

Theological basis for environmental cleanliness

- **Cleanliness is half of faith:** Famous hadith of the Prophet Muhammad states that "purity is half of faith" (*Sahih Muslim*). This elevates cleanliness from a mere habit to a significant component of a Muslim's spiritual practice, emphasizing its importance in earning God's pleasure.
- **Love of purity:** The Quran states, "Indeed, Allah loves those who turn to Him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves" (2:222). This verse shows that cleanliness is a

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quality God loves and is associated with spiritual purification.

- **Stewardship of the Earth (Khalifah):** Islam teaches that humans are the vicegerents or stewards of God on Earth. This role comes with the responsibility to protect and care for the planet's resources, including land, water, and air, rather than misusing or corrupting them.

Environmental cleanliness in practice

Homes and personal spaces

- Muslims are instructed to keep their homes clean and tidy, a command supported by the Prophet's guidance.
- Personal hygiene is emphasized through several rituals, such as performing a full-body bath (**ghusl**) regularly and ritual ablution (**wudu**) before each of the five daily prayers.
- Practices like brushing teeth (**siwak**), trimming nails, and washing hands before and after meals are also part of the prophetic tradition.

Places of worship (mosques)

- Mosques must be kept clean, and the Prophet forbade spitting in them.
- Worshipers are required to be in a state of purity when praying, which involves clean clothes, a clean body, and a clean place for prayer.
- The use of garlic and onions is discouraged before visiting the mosque to avoid offending others with bad odors.

Public areas and natural resources

- **Condemnation of polluting public spaces:** A well-known hadith warns against three acts that cause others to curse you, including relieving oneself in public walkways and shaded areas. This highlights the importance of not harming the public with unsanitary actions.

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- **Environmental protection is charity:** Removing harmful objects from a public road is considered a charitable act in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said, "Removing a harmful thing from the path is charity".
- **Water conservation and purity:** The Prophet forbade urinating in stagnant water or polluting water sources. This was a health measure to prevent disease and ensure clean water was available for everyone.
- **Planting trees:** Planting trees and cultivating barren land are considered acts of charity in Islam, with Muslims being rewarded for any person or animal that benefits from the shade or fruit of the plant. This promotes environmental health and combating desertification.
- **Waste minimization:** The Quran teaches against excess and wastefulness. The principle of moderation (**mizan**) applies to the use of all resources, with believers warned not to be wasteful, as "Allah loves not the wasters" (7:31).

Spiritual and moral cleanliness

Beyond the physical, environmental cleanliness also relates to spiritual and moral purity.

- **Spiritual purity:** Islam emphasizes purifying the heart and soul by repenting for sins and avoiding negative thoughts and traits like anger, arrogance, and jealousy.
 - **Moral conduct:** A clean environment is a reflection of moral integrity. The teachings link pollution and corruption of the Earth with wrongdoing by humankind.
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Food hygiene in Islam

Islamic law forbids the consumption of impure food and requires washing hands and food preparation areas to ensure cleanliness. For example, utensils touched by a dog must be washed seven times before being reused.

Islamic dietary law, known as *halal* and *tayyib*, emphasizes both the permissibility and purity of food. In addition to forbidding impure food and substances like pork and alcohol, Islamic teachings require high standards of cleanliness for the sake of health and spiritual purity.

Foundational principles of food hygiene

- **Halal and tayyib:** The Quran guides Muslims to eat what is "lawful (*halal*) and good (*tayyib*)". While *halal* means permissible under Islamic law, *tayyib* encompasses a broader meaning of "good, clean, and wholesome," covering all stages of food handling.
- **Preventing harm:** The core principle is to avoid anything harmful to the body, either immediately or over the long term. This covers avoiding foodborne illnesses from contaminants as well as refraining from intoxicants.
- **Separation of pure and impure:** To prevent cross-contamination, *halal* and *haram* (forbidden) items must be kept separate. In food processing and storage, this means using dedicated, sanitized equipment and preventing contact with impure substances.

What is Halal Food? A Comprehensive Guide - Crescent Rating

What is the meaning of Halal food? * “Eat of the good things which We have provided for you.” (Quran 2:172) * “O humanity! Eat from Crescent Rating

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The paradigm of modern food products and its relevance with ...

A conceptual approach was used to resolve these issues by applying the *mauḍu'i* (thematic) interpretation method and the healthy National Institutes of Health (NIH) | (.gov)

Rules for personal and equipment cleanliness

- **Hand washing:** The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) instructed Muslims to wash their hands before and after meals. Hands are considered a primary vector for germs, and this practice reinforces good health habits.
- **Washing after contact with dogs:** This rule, recorded in the *Hadith* (sayings of the Prophet), addresses a specific case of ritual impurity (*najis*).
 - If a dog licks a utensil, the vessel must be washed seven times, with the first wash using soil.
 - Scholars have noted that the use of soil acts as an abrasive and cleanser, a role that modern cleaning agents can also fulfill.
- **General sanitation:** Islamic jurisprudence extends the need for cleanliness to all food preparation areas.
 - Surfaces and equipment must be free of filth, and food handlers should wear clean clothing.
 - Food preparation and storage areas must be protected from pests like flies, rats, and roaches.

Implications for food preparation and processing

- **Halal slaughter (*dhabihah*):** This prescribed method requires the animal to be healthy and alive at the time of slaughter. The process is designed to be humane and involves draining the blood, which reduces bacterial growth in the meat.
- **Ingredient sourcing:** To be considered *halal*, food ingredients must be sourced according to Islamic rules and not be mixed with forbidden elements. This means that

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manufacturers of processed food must verify their ingredients do not contain prohibited substances.

- **Modern halal certification:** To meet the standards for a global market, modern halal certification bodies combine the religious requirements of Islamic law with international standards for food safety and good hygienic practices (GHP).
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Clean clothing in Islam

Muslims are encouraged to wear clean and modest clothes, especially when performing prayers.

In Islam, wearing clean and modest clothing is highly encouraged, especially during prayers, as a reflection of respect, purity, and humility before God. This practice is a physical extension of the spiritual purity required for worship.

Foundational principles

- **Cleanliness is a pillar of faith:** The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Cleanliness is half the faith". Muslims are required to be physically and spiritually pure before engaging in worship, which includes wearing clean clothes.
- **Adornment for prayer:** A Quranic verse instructs, "O children of Adam, take your adornment at every place of prayer" (Quran 7:31). This means presenting oneself in a dignified and pleasant manner for prayer and public gatherings.
- **Modesty and decency:** Islamic dress codes, for both men and women, emphasize covering the *awrah* (intimate parts)

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with loose-fitting, non-transparent clothing. This promotes self-respect and avoids drawing unnecessary attention.

- **Humility, not extravagance:** While it is encouraged to wear nice, clean clothes, they should be decent and without extravagance or arrogance. God loves for his blessings to be seen upon his servants, but this should be done with humility.

Specific rules for prayer clothing

For clothing to be valid for prayer, it must meet several conditions:

- **Purity (*Taharah*):** The clothing must be free from physical impurities (*najis*), such as urine, feces, blood, and alcohol. If a garment becomes impure, it must be washed.
- **Legally owned (*Mubah*):** The clothing must not have been acquired unlawfully, such as by theft or with money on which the religious poor-due (*khums*) has not been paid.
- **Permissible material:** The garment must not be made from the skin or parts of an animal not slaughtered according to Islamic law or from a predatory animal.
- **No silk or gold for men:** Men are prohibited from wearing pure silk or clothing embroidered with gold. This does not apply to women.
- **No distracting images:** It is disliked to pray in clothing that has distracting images, designs, or writing, as it can divert attention from the prayer.

Requirements for men and women

For men:

- **Minimum covering:** A man's *awrah* that must be covered is the area between the navel and the knees.
- **Ideal covering:** It is recommended for men to also cover their shoulders, back, and chest. Wearing a loose garment like a *thawb* is considered ideal.

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For women:

- **Full body covering:** During prayer, a woman must cover her entire body, with the exception of her face and hands. Some scholars also include the feet.
- **Non-transparent and loose:** Clothing must be loose-fitting and non-transparent to conceal the body's shape.
- **Head covering:** The hair and neck must be covered with a headscarf (*hijab*).

Practical application

These rules ensure that Muslims are in a state of physical and mental focus for their devotions, respecting the sacredness of prayer. While the core principles are consistent, local customs and interpretations may influence the specific style of modest dress in different Muslim communities.

Spiritual purity in Islam

Sincere repentance and seeking forgiveness from God are practices for cleansing the soul of sins.

In Islam, spiritual purity is achieved through *tazkiyah*, a lifelong process of cleansing the heart and soul of sins and negative traits. Sincere repentance (*tawbah*) and seeking forgiveness (*istighfar*) are central to this process and are considered the most direct way for a person to return to God.

The concept of sin and forgiveness

Islam teaches that every human is born in a state of purity and is not burdened by "original sin". However, because humans are prone to error, they will inevitably commit sins or make mistakes.

- **A personal matter:** The relationship between a person and God is direct. A Muslim can seek forgiveness for their misdeeds without an intermediary.

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- **Divine mercy:** The Quran and Hadith repeatedly emphasize God's boundless mercy. God loves those who turn to Him in repentance and will forgive all sins for those who genuinely repent, except for unforgivable sin of associating partners with God (*shirk*) if one dies without repenting from it.

The conditions for sincere repentance (*tawbah nasuh*)

For repentance to be sincere and accepted, specific conditions must be met:

1. **Cease the sin:** The person must stop the sinful behavior immediately.
2. **Feel sincere remorse:** There must be genuine regret and guilt over the past misdeed. The Prophet Muhammad said, "Regret is repentance".
3. **Resolve not to return:** The person must make a firm intention and commitment to never repeat the sin again.
4. **Repair the wrong (if applicable):** If the sin involved wronging another person, the transgressor must seek their forgiveness and restore any rights that were taken.

Practices for seeking forgiveness (*istighfar*)

Seeking forgiveness from God is a powerful act of worship that helps cleanse the heart and soul. Recommended practices include:

- **Reciting *Astaghfirullah*:** The simple phrase, "I seek forgiveness from Allah," is a common and powerful form of *istighfar*. The Prophet Muhammad himself sought God's forgiveness over 70 times a day.
- **The Master of Supplications (*Sayyidul Istighfar*):** This comprehensive prayer is considered the most superior way of asking for forgiveness. Reciting it with conviction promises entry into Paradise for those who die on the same day.
- **Performing Salat al-Tawbah:** After committing a sin, a Muslim can perform a special two-unit prayer asking for God's forgiveness.

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- **Following up with good deeds:** Good deeds are believed to wipe away bad deeds. Engaging in acts of charity, kindness, and other righteous actions helps to counterbalance sins.

The effects of repentance and seeking forgiveness

The process of spiritual cleansing through repentance yields both spiritual and material blessings:

- **Spiritual renewal:** Sincere repentance polishes the heart, which is described as being stained by sin, and brings one closer to God.
 - **Inner peace:** Forgiveness provides believers with relief from anxiety, worry, and the tightness of the chest that can result from persistent wrongdoing.
 - **Divine rewards:** God promises to forgive sins, transform evil deeds into good deeds, and grant blessings like increased provision and strength to those who repent and return to Him.
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Purity of intention in Islam: All acts of worship and good deeds should be done with a pure and sincere intention to please God, not for worldly recognition.

In Islam, purity of intention (*ikhlas*) is a foundational principle for all acts of worship and good deeds. It mandates that actions be performed with a sincere and singular focus on pleasing God (*Allah*), rather than seeking worldly recognition, praise, or gain. A deed's true value is determined by the intention behind it, not its outward appearance.

Core principles of intention

- **Deeds are judged by intentions:** The most famous hadith on this topic, narrated by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, states, "Actions are judged by intentions, and each person will be

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rewarded according to their intention". This means an action is either accepted or rejected by God based on the sincerity of the heart, regardless of how great it appears outwardly.

- **The heart's focus:** Sincerity requires turning one's heart entirely to God and freeing it from the desire for human approval. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Allah does not look at your bodies nor does He look at your faces, but He looks at your hearts".
- **Intention as the spirit of a deed:** An action performed without a sincere intention is considered an empty ritual. The correct intention (*niyyah*) is the spiritual engine that transforms ordinary, permissible acts—like eating, sleeping, or working—into acts of worship.
- **Intention must precede the act:** For worship and other righteous acts, the intention to do the deed for God's sake must be present before and during its performance.

The danger of showing off (*riya*)

The opposite of sincere intention is *riya*, or showing off. Islam strictly warns against this, considering it a form of minor polytheism (*shirk*) because it directs one's devotion towards other people instead of God.

- **Loss of reward:** A person who performs a good deed to impress others may receive the worldly praise they sought, but their reward from God is lost entirely.
- **A form of hypocrisy:** The Quran warns against the hypocrites who pray in a sluggish manner, "only to be seen by people—hardly remembering Allah at all" (Quran 4:142).
- **The fate of the insincere:** A famous hadith recounts how three people—a martyr, a scholar, and a generous man—will be cast into hell on the Day of Judgment, not for their

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deeds, but because their underlying intention was to gain human praise and recognition, not God's pleasure.

Cultivating sincerity (*ikhlas*)

- **Guard your intention:** Sincere individuals constantly monitor their intentions to ensure they remain pure. The companions of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ were acutely aware of this internal struggle.
 - **Do secret good deeds:** Performing righteous acts in private, where no one but God can witness them, is an effective way to cultivate sincerity. The story of Zayd al-Abidin, who secretly provided food to the poor of Madinah for years, is a prime example.
 - **Seek refuge in God:** The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ taught a prayer for protection against the minor *shirk* of showing off: "O Allah, I seek refuge in you from knowingly associating partners with you, and I seek your forgiveness for what I do not know".
 - **Don't give up:** The struggle for sincerity is a continuous process. If impure intentions arise during a good deed, one should fight against them and re-focus on pleasing God. Consistent effort and repentance are key.
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Mental well-being in Islam

Islam promotes mental hygiene by encouraging the avoidance of negative thoughts like anger, envy, and arrogance. Engaging in beneficial activities and seeking knowledge is recommended to nourish the mind and soul.

Mental well-being in Islam is a holistic concept that integrates spiritual, psychological, and physical health, considering the interconnectedness of the body, mind, and soul. The core of Islamic

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mental hygiene involves purifying the heart and soul through spiritual practices and avoiding negative thoughts and actions that cause psychological and emotional distress. This framework is not new; Muslim scholars explored the intersection of psychology, medicine, and spirituality centuries ago.

Combating negative thoughts

Islam provides specific guidance for managing and overcoming negative thoughts, known as *waswas* (whispers from Satan), which can lead to anxiety and despair.

- **Seek refuge in God:** The Quran and prophetic traditions advise Muslims to seek refuge in Allah from the whispers of Satan. Reciting phrases like *A'udhu billahi minash shaytanir rajeem* ("I seek refuge in Allah from Satan, the rejected") is a direct countermeasure against evil suggestions.
- **Praise God:** When assailed by distressing thoughts, reciting *SubhanAllah* ("Glory be to Allah") or *Alhamdulillah* ("Praise be to Allah") can shift focus back to God's perfection and away from the negative whispers.
- **Acknowledge and dismiss:** The Prophet Muhammad taught that the mere presence of terrible thoughts is a clear sign of sincere faith, as Satan only targets those he cannot easily tempt. The key is to recognize these thoughts for what they are—mere whispers—and not act upon them.
- **Avoid idleness:** Engaging in productive activities is a way to prevent the mind from dwelling on insecurities and negative impulses, as idleness provides an entry point for Satan.

Nourishing the mind and soul

Islamic practice emphasizes regular activities that provide spiritual and emotional stability, fostering a peaceful mind (*nafs al-mutmainna*).

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- **Daily prayer (*Salah*):** The five daily prayers provide structure and a rhythm for the day, serving as a mindful meditation that calms the mind and creates a direct connection with Allah. The prayer's focus on remembrance (*dhikr*) is a powerful antidote to anxiety.
- **Remembrance of Allah (*Dhikr*):** The constant remembrance of God is a central practice for finding inner peace. The Quran says, "Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest" (13:28). This can include reciting specific phrases, which can anchor one's thoughts and reduce stress.
- **Recitation of the Quran:** Reading and reflecting on the Holy Book is considered a source of healing and mercy for the heart. It provides guidance and solace, especially in times of distress.
- **Contemplation and self-reflection:** Islam encourages *muraqabah* (mindfulness) and *tafakkur* (deep contemplation), reflecting on one's purpose and God's creation. This practice enhances self-awareness and strengthens one's spiritual connection.
- **Gratitude (*Shukr*):** Focusing on blessings and expressing thankfulness helps to shift one's perspective from problems to opportunities, cultivating a more positive outlook.
- **Seeking beneficial knowledge:** The first word of the Quran to be revealed was *iqra* ("read"), highlighting the importance of learning. Pursuing knowledge, both religious and worldly, is recommended for mental well-being and personal growth.

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Practical and social activities for well-being

The Islamic framework also promotes a balanced lifestyle and a supportive social environment.

- **Physical health:** Taking care of one's body is considered a trust (*amanah*) from Allah. This includes regular exercise, proper nutrition, and adequate sleep, all of which have a direct impact on mental health.
 - **Seeking professional help:** Islam encourages seeking medical and professional assistance for both physical and psychological ailments. Early Muslim physicians established the first psychiatric wards and developed therapeutic techniques, recognizing mental illness as a legitimate medical condition.
 - **Community and kindness:** Acts of giving and kindness towards others, known as *sadaqah* (voluntary charity), not only benefit the recipient but also increase the giver's own happiness and well-being. Strong community bonds also provide social support and reduce feelings of isolation.
 - **Patience and trust in God (*Sabr* and *Tawakkul*):** Believing that all trials and hardships are part of God's plan and that He will not burden a soul beyond its capacity provides a powerful source of emotional resilience. This framework reorients thinking away from self-blame toward hope and trust in a compassionate God.
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Chapter 4: Food and eating etiquette in Islam-Medicated and Sustainable

Food and eating etiquette in Islam are grounded in principles of moderation, cleanliness, and gratitude, promoting health and sustainability. This framework dictates the consumption of *halal* (permissible) food that is also *tayyib* (pure and wholesome), encompassing ethically and sustainably sourced provisions. Islamic dietary laws prohibit harmful substances like pork and alcohol, a rule supported by modern science for its health benefits. Beyond what to eat, the *Sunnah* (the teachings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad) emphasizes hygienic practices like washing hands before and after eating, eating slowly, and avoiding wastefulness. This holistic approach transforms eating into an act of mindful worship, where a Muslim starts by invoking the name of God (*Bismillah*) and ends with gratitude (*Alhamdulillah*), all while avoiding excess to prevent health issues and ensure resources are available for all.

Islam provides comprehensive guidelines on food, known as *halal* (lawful) and *haram* (unlawful). These rules are derived primarily from the Quran and the teachings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (Sunnah). The principles of Islamic food law emphasize purity, wholesomeness (*tayyib*), and animal welfare, and they cover everything from prohibited substances to the proper method of animal slaughter.

The principle of *Halal* and *Tayyib*

Halal is an Arabic word that means "lawful" or "permissible," while its opposite, *haram*, means "unlawful" or "forbidden". A key principle in Islam is that all food is considered *halal* unless it is explicitly designated as *haram*.

However, the permissibility of food is also governed by the principle of *tayyib*, which means good, clean, and wholesome. This means that even if a food is technically *halal*, it may not be consumed if it is not clean, healthy, or nutritious. This holistic approach connects dietary laws with physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

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Categories of *haram* (forbidden) foods

The Quran and Sunnah explicitly prohibit the consumption of several types of food:

- **Pork and its by-products:** This is one of the most well-known prohibitions in Islam. All parts of the pig and its derivatives, including gelatin, lard, and certain emulsifiers, are strictly forbidden.
- **Intoxicants:** The consumption of alcoholic beverages, narcotics, and any other substance that intoxicates the mind is forbidden. This prohibition is explicitly mentioned in the Quran, which describes intoxicants as an abomination from Satan.
- **Carrion:** The meat of any animal that has died of natural causes is forbidden. This rule encourages proper animal husbandry and hygienic food practices.
- **Flowing blood:** Muslims are not permitted to consume blood. This is why the Islamic slaughtering method requires all blood to be drained from the animal's body. The liver and spleen, which contain blood, are exceptions.
- **Carnivorous animals and birds of prey:** Animals that hunt with fangs, such as lions, tigers, and dogs, and birds that hunt with talons, such as eagles and falcons, are prohibited.
- **Animals with specific circumstances of death:** A number of specific, unnatural causes of death render an animal's meat *haram*, including being strangled, beaten, killed by a fall, gored, or partly eaten by a wild animal.
- **Meat sacrificed to other than God:** An animal slaughtered with the name of any deity other than Allah is forbidden.

Conditions for *halal* meat (*Dhabihah*)

For the meat of permissible animals (like cows, sheep, and poultry) to be considered *halal*, it must be slaughtered according to the ritual

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of *dhabihah*. This process is intended to be humane and respectful to the animal.

- **Invocation:** The slaughterer, who must be a Muslim, must invoke the name of Allah immediately before the slaughter by saying "Bismillah" (In the name of God).
- **Method:** A sharp knife must be used to make a swift, deep incision across the throat, severing the windpipe, esophagus, and jugular veins. The spinal cord should not be severed.
- **Blood drainage:** The animal's blood must be completely drained from the carcass.
- **Humane treatment:** The animal must be treated well throughout its life and kept calm during the process. The slaughter should not be witnessed by other animals.

Special circumstances and clarifications

- **Food of the People of the Book:** The Quran states that food from the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) is lawful for Muslims, and vice versa. The majority of scholars interpret this to mean that the meat of animals they have slaughtered is acceptable, provided it meets the essential criteria of Islamic law, such as the draining of blood. However, with modern processing methods, many Muslims prefer to use certified *halal* meat to ensure all conditions are met.
- **Necessity:** In a life-threatening situation where no *halal* food is available, a Muslim is permitted to consume *haram* food to survive. This reflects the high value Islam places on human life.
- **Cross-contamination:** Beyond the food itself, Islamic law also requires that *halal* items are prepared, processed, and stored using utensils and equipment that have not been

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contaminated by *haram* products. This is why certified *halal* kitchens maintain separate cookware and preparation surfaces.

- **Moderation:** Regardless of the type of food, Muslims are encouraged to eat and drink in moderation and to avoid waste.

Eating etiquette

Beyond the legal permissibility of food, Islam also promotes specific etiquette for eating, based on the practice of the Prophet Muhammad:

- **Washing hands:** Hands should be washed before and after eating.
- **Saying grace:** A Muslim begins eating by saying "Bismillah" (In the name of God) and ends by saying "Alhamdulillah" (Praise be to God).
- **Eating with the right hand:** The right hand is preferred for eating and drinking.
- **Not criticizing food:** If a person dislikes a dish, they should simply refrain from eating it rather than criticizing it.
- **Eating together:** Eating with family and companions is encouraged, as it brings blessings.

Based on the Sunnah (the teachings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad) and interpretations from Islamic scholars, eating etiquette in Islam promotes gratitude, modesty, and moderation. Following these manners is considered an act of worship.

Before the meal

- **Wash your hands.** It is a recommended practice to wash your hands before and after eating to ensure cleanliness.
- **Say a prayer.** Begin by reciting "Bismillah" ("In the name of Allah"). If you forget, say "Bismillahi fi awwalihi wa akhirihi"

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("In the name of Allah at its beginning and at its end") as soon as you remember.

- **Sit properly.** Eat while seated, not standing or lying down. The Prophet (PBUH) forbade eating while standing, stating, "I do not eat while I am reclining".
- **Intend to eat in moderation.** Be satisfied with the food that is prepared and avoid being greedy for a variety of dishes. The Prophet (PBUH) recommended filling one's stomach with one-third food, one-third water, and one-third air to avoid overeating and its ill effects.
- **Eat together.** The Prophet (PBUH) stated that eating in a group brings blessings.
- **Lay a tablecloth.** Many Muslims follow the tradition of using a cloth or covering, known as a *dastarkhwan*, on the floor for meals, following the Prophet's example of humility.

During the meal

- **Eat with your right hand.** Use your right hand to eat and drink. The Prophet (PBUH) forbade using the left, saying that the devil eats and drinks with his left hand.
- **Eat from what is closest to you.** When eating from a communal dish, take from the portion directly in front of you. This is a sign of respect and proper manners.
- **Use three fingers for small bites.** The Prophet (PBUH) would often use three fingers to eat, which is considered the best way. For foods that require it, using more fingers or a spoon is acceptable.
- **Avoid criticizing food.** If you do not like the food, simply leave it without comment. The Prophet (PBUH) never criticized any food.
- **Compliment tasty food.** If you enjoy the food, it is good manners to compliment the cook.

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- **Use appropriate cutlery.** It is forbidden to use gold and silver plates or utensils, as this is a sign of extravagance. Otherwise, cutlery made from other pure materials is permissible.
- **Don't blow on food.** Wait for hot food to cool down rather than blowing on it. Do not breathe into a dish or cup.
- **Talk during the meal.** Engaging in polite and pleasant conversation is encouraged.
- **Eat fallen pieces of food.** If a morsel of food falls, you should pick it up, remove any dirt, and eat it, rather than leaving it for the devil.

After the meal

- **Lick your fingers and plate.** Licking your fingers and the plate is recommended to ensure no food is wasted and to get all the potential blessings from the food.
 - **Express gratitude to Allah.** After finishing the meal, say "Alhamdulillah" ("All praise is due to Allah") to thank Him for the sustenance. One of the recommended longer prayers is, "Alhamdu lillahil-ladhi at'amana wa saqana, wa ja'alana minal muslimin" ("Praise be to Allah who has provided us with food and drink and made us among the Muslims").
 - **Wash your hands and mouth.** Cleanliness remains important after the meal. Rinsing the mouth is also a good practice.
 - **Offer thanks to the host.** If you are a guest, make a special prayer for your host.
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Chapter 5: Business, Finance and Entrepreneurship in Islam- Truly Economic Growth

The foundation of true economic growth in Islam rests on a set of core principles that foster a just, ethical, and sustainable system. By prohibiting interest (*riba*) and excessive uncertainty (*gharar*), Islamic finance encourages risk-sharing instruments like *mudarabah* (profit-sharing) and *musharakah* (joint ventures), which directly link financial returns to tangible, productive economic activity rather than speculation. This approach promotes economic stability and mitigates systemic risk by preventing excessive debt accumulation. Furthermore, entrepreneurship is highly encouraged as a means of earning a lawful (*halal*) livelihood and creating real value for society. This framework reduces inequality and spurs consumption and investment across all socioeconomic levels, creating a vibrant, inclusive economy where financial success is intrinsically tied to ethical conduct and social welfare.

In Islam, business, finance, and entrepreneurship are guided by principles derived from the Quran and Sunnah, emphasizing ethics, justice, and social responsibility over purely material gain. These principles prohibit certain practices like interest (*riba*) and transactions involving excessive uncertainty (*gharar*), while promoting fairness, transparency, and the well-being of the community. Islamic finance offers Shariah-compliant alternatives to conventional banking, such as profit-sharing partnerships.

Islamic business and finance operate under a comprehensive set of ethical and moral principles derived from Sharia (Islamic law). These guidelines are designed to ensure justice, fairness, and social responsibility in all commercial and financial dealings, offering a distinct alternative to conventional systems. Key principles include the prohibition of interest (*riba riba*), risk and profit-sharing, investment in ethical sectors, and the avoidance of excessive uncertainty (*gharar gharar*) and gambling (*maysir maysir*).

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Key principles of business in Islam:

- **Lawful trade (Halal):** Business must involve goods and services that are permissible (halal). Prohibited (haram) items include alcohol, gambling, and pork.
- **Honesty and transparency:** Truthfulness in all dealings is fundamental, as is transparency about product quality, including any defects. The Prophet Muhammad famously reprimanded a merchant who concealed damp food at the bottom of a pile.
- **Fairness:** Exploitative practices like price gouging and unfair pricing are forbidden. Businesses are encouraged to be generous and fair in their transactions, including measurements and weights.
- **Fulfillment of contracts:** Adhering to agreements and commitments is a core ethical responsibility.
- **Social responsibility:** Businesses have a duty to contribute to the well-being of the community. This includes paying *zakat* (obligatory charity) and engaging in voluntary charity (*sadaqah*).
- **Employee welfare:** Employers must treat their employees fairly, provide reasonable wages, and ensure safe working conditions.

Core principles in detail

- **Prohibition of Interest (*Riba Riba*):** As a central tenet, charging or paying interest is forbidden in Islam, as it is considered exploitative. In an Islamic framework, money is treated as a medium of exchange, not an asset to generate wealth on its own. Financial returns must be linked to productive economic activity and shared risk, rather than a guaranteed, fixed return on a loan.

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- **Profit and Loss Sharing:** To replace interest, Islamic finance emphasizes mutual risk and reward. In partnerships (*musharakah*) or investment management contracts (*mudarabah*), both the financial institution and the client share in the profits and bear the losses of a venture. This principle promotes prudent investment and ethical business practices.
- **Asset-Backed Transactions:** All financial transactions must be tied to a real, tangible underlying asset or service. This prevents speculation and the creation of "money from money". For example, instead of lending money for a purchase, an Islamic bank will buy the asset and then sell it to the customer on a cost-plus basis (*murabaha*) or lease it to them (*ijarah*).
- **Avoidance of Excessive Speculation (*Gharar Gharar*) and Gambling (*Maysir Maysir*):** Islamic finance prohibits transactions with excessive uncertainty, ambiguity, or risk that could lead to disputes or exploitation. This rule prevents the use of certain derivatives, conventional insurance, and speculative activities. It ensures that all terms of a contract, such as price, quality, and delivery, are transparent and clearly defined.
- **Ethical Investments:** Investments are restricted to *halal* (permissible) industries that are considered ethical and beneficial to society. Investments in *haram* (prohibited) industries, such as alcohol, gambling, pornography, and conventional insurance, are forbidden. This promotes social responsibility and aligns financial activity with Islamic values.
- **Social Responsibility (*Zakat Zakat*):** Islamic business and finance emphasize social well-being through the practice of *zakat*, a mandatory charitable donation of a

portion of one's wealth to the poor. Financial institutions often incorporate *zakat* collection and distribution, promoting a more equitable wealth distribution.

Modern applications and products

Islamic finance has developed modern products to compete with conventional financial services while adhering to Sharia.

- ***Murabaha* (Cost-plus Financing):** A bank purchases an asset and sells it to the customer for a markup, which is paid in installments.
- ***Ijarah* (Leasing):** A bank leases an asset to a client for a fixed period and rental fee, with an option to purchase it at the end of the term.
- ***Musharakah* and *Mudarabah* (Partnership Models):** Used for equity financing, joint ventures, and working capital, these contracts enable profit and loss sharing among parties.
- ***Sukuk* (Islamic Bonds):** These are asset-backed certificates representing ownership in an underlying asset, with returns based on profits from that asset rather than interest payments.
- ***Takaful* (Islamic Insurance):** This cooperative system is based on mutual risk-sharing, where participants contribute to a common fund to provide financial protection against loss.
- **Islamic Fintech:** The sector is increasingly adopting technology to offer Sharia-compliant digital banking, crowdfunding, and peer-to-peer (P2P) lending platforms.

Challenges and considerations

Despite its growth, the Islamic finance industry faces several challenges.

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- **Standardization:** There is a lack of uniform regulatory frameworks and differences in interpretations among Sharia scholars across different regions.
- **Market Development:** Many jurisdictions lack well-developed Islamic money and capital markets, limiting investment options and liquidity for Islamic financial institutions.
- **Awareness and Perception:** Misconceptions about Islamic finance persist, especially outside Muslim-majority countries, and some potential customers may lack knowledge of its principles.
- **Regulatory Frameworks:** In some countries, existing regulatory systems are designed for conventional finance and do not fully accommodate the unique aspects of Islamic finance.
- In Islam, business, finance, and entrepreneurship are based on Sharia (Islamic law), which provides a comprehensive framework rooted in ethical conduct, social responsibility, and justice. Unlike conventional models that prioritize profit maximization, the Islamic approach views economic activity as a form of worship that contributes to the well-being of society and aligns with divine principles. This framework, which encourages fair trade and wealth circulation, is often referred to as "Halalpreneurship" in the modern context.
- **Foundational ethical principles**
- **Monotheism (Tawhid):** All economic actions are ultimately for God, establishing a clear link between business conduct and spiritual accountability. This inspires entrepreneurs to maintain high ethical standards, even when not under public scrutiny.

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- **Stewardship (Khilafah):** Humans are stewards of God's resources on earth. This perspective promotes responsible and sustainable use of resources, discouraging waste and exploitation of the environment and people.
- **Justice (Adl) and Benevolence (Ihsan):** A core principle is ensuring fairness in all transactions and interactions. This includes fair pricing, honest communication, and the ethical treatment of employees and other stakeholders.
- **Responsibility (Masuliyyah):** Individuals are accountable for their business actions both in this life and the hereafter. This requires transparency, accurate record-keeping, and full disclosure.
- **Prohibited activities (Haram):** To ensure fairness and avoid exploitation, Islamic law strictly prohibits specific practices in business and finance:
- **Interest (Riba):** All forms of usury or interest on loans are forbidden, as they are seen as unjust and exploitative. Islamic financial models replace fixed-interest payments with asset-backed transactions and risk-sharing partnerships.
- **Excessive uncertainty (Gharar):** Transactions involving excessive speculation or ambiguity are prohibited to protect against exploitation and gambling.
- **Gambling (Maysir):** Any form of gambling or unearned profit through chance is forbidden.
- **Unlawful goods and services (Haram):** Business activities related to prohibited items, such as alcohol, pork, and gambling, are forbidden.
- **Hoarding and price manipulation:** Artificially creating scarcity or manipulating prices to gain unfair profits is strictly condemned.

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- **Islamic financial instruments:** For entrepreneurs, Islamic finance offers several alternative instruments to secure funding and manage capital:
- **Profit-Sharing (Mudarabah):** The investor provides the capital (as a silent partner), while the entrepreneur manages the business. Profits are shared based on a pre-agreed ratio, while financial losses are carried by the investor, unless mismanagement is proven.
- **Joint Venture (Musharakah):** A partnership where all parties contribute capital and/or expertise. Profits and losses are shared based on contributions or a pre-determined agreement.
- **Cost-Plus Financing (Murabaha):** A financial institution buys a desired item on behalf of a customer and sells it to them for a fixed markup. The customer then pays the institution in installments.
- **Leasing (Ijara):** A financial institution purchases an asset and leases it to the entrepreneur for a fixed rental fee. Ownership of the asset remains with the institution until the lease ends, often with an option for the entrepreneur to purchase.
- **Islamic Bonds (Sukuk):** Represents ownership in a tangible asset or project, providing investors with a share of the generated profit rather than interest.

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The concept of "Halalpreneurship" The growing global halal industry has given rise to the term "Halalpreneurship," which specifically refers to entrepreneurs who build businesses that are compliant with Islamic principles.

Entrepreneurship in Islam is an encouraged, ethical, and socially responsible activity rooted in the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah (Prophetic tradition). Islamic principles view honest and fair trade as a noble profession and a form of worship, providing a framework for business practices that promote justice and the welfare of society.

Core principles of Islamic entrepreneurship

The following principles are essential to conducting business according to Islamic guidance:

- **Tawhid (Unity of God):** This principle emphasizes that all business activity should be done with an awareness of and for the pleasure of God. It places profit-seeking within a larger spiritual context.
- **Balance and justice:** Entrepreneurs must ensure a fair and equitable balance between the interests of the individual and society. This means maintaining justice in all transactions and interactions.
- **Responsibility:** Business owners are held accountable for their actions, both in this life and the hereafter. This motivates honest and transparent dealings.
- **Ihsan (Benevolence):** Going beyond basic obligations, entrepreneurs are encouraged to show kindness and do good to all parties they interact with.
- **Trustworthiness (Amanah) and honesty (Sidq):** These are cardinal virtues. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), known as "Al-Amin" (the Trustworthy), serves as the

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prime example of integrity in trade. Merchants must fully disclose all information, including any product defects.

- **Lawful earnings (Halal):** Business must operate within the boundaries of what is permissible (halal) and avoid what is forbidden (haram) in Islam. This applies to the product or service itself, as well as the method of earning wealth.
- **Social welfare (Maslahah):** The welfare of the community is a core objective. This includes using mechanisms like *zakat* (obligatory charity) to distribute wealth and support communal welfare.

Prohibited business practices

To protect against exploitation and injustice, Islam explicitly forbids certain business practices:

- **Riba (Usury/Interest):** Any form of lending or financing based on interest is strictly prohibited. Islamic finance instead uses profit-and-loss-sharing models such as *Mudarabah* (profit sharing) and *Musharakah* (partnership).
- **Gharar (Uncertainty/Risk):** Transactions involving excessive uncertainty or ambiguity are forbidden to prevent gambling-like outcomes. All contracts must have clearly defined terms regarding the product, price, and delivery.
- **Maisir (Gambling):** Speculative activities based purely on luck are not allowed.
- **Hoarding:** Storing essential goods to create artificial scarcity and drive up prices is condemned.
- **Deception and fraud:** Cheating, manipulation, and misrepresentation in marketing or sales are strictly prohibited. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stated, "He who deceives is not of me".

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- **Haram industries:** Engaging in business that deals with forbidden goods and services, such as alcohol, pork, and pornography, is unlawful.
 - **Knowledge of Shariah:** They possess knowledge of Islamic law, enabling them to produce products and services that are not only permissible (halal) but also of good quality (*toyyib*).
 - **Service to humanity:** Halalpreneurs view their businesses as a means to serve society and humanity, prioritizing collective needs over the pursuit of luxury goods when necessities are lacking.
 - **Ethical conduct:** The fear of God (*taqwa*) guides their decisions, preventing them from engaging in any unlawful activity and ensuring high ethical standards.
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Chapter 6: Educational Development in Islam-Realistic and Futuristic

Based on Islamic principles, the realistic development of education integrates spiritual, moral, and intellectual growth to produce virtuous individuals with a strong sense of social responsibility, just as historical Islamic civilizations did by teaching both religious doctrine and worldly sciences. The futuristic development of this education entails adapting these core values to modern challenges by leveraging digital technologies for wider access, fostering critical thinking to navigate a complex world, and addressing contemporary social issues while maintaining the integrity of Islamic teachings. This approach seeks to close the gap between traditional and modern methods by updating curricula, enhancing digital literacy among educators, and promoting collaboration to ensure Islamic education remains relevant, impactful, and globally connected for future generations.

Islamic educational development is a rich and multifaceted history spanning centuries, characterized by a holistic approach that integrates spiritual, intellectual, and scientific knowledge. Rooted in the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, it led to the establishment of sophisticated educational institutions that flourished during the Islamic Golden Age and significantly influenced global intellectual history.

The core principles of education in Islam are based on the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. Islamic *education* is a holistic process that seeks to achieve the balanced development of a person's spiritual, intellectual, and moral character to produce a good and righteous individual who is committed to God and capable of benefiting society.

Core concepts of the educational process

In Arabic, three terms are commonly used to describe Islamic education, each highlighting a different facet of the process:

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- **Ta'lim:** Refers to the teaching and learning process for the acquisition of knowledge (ilm).
- **Tarbiyyah:** Focuses on the nurturing and fostering of physical, intellectual, and spiritual growth, based on God's will.
- **Ta'dib:** Pertains to instilling good manners and ethical behavior, shaping a person to become cultured and well-socialized.

Objectives of Islamic education

According to the First World Conference on Muslim Education (1977), Islamic education should aim for:

- **Balanced growth:** Developing a person's total personality in all aspects—spiritual, intellectual, and physical—and motivating all these aspects toward goodness and perfection.
- **Submission to Allah:** Realizing complete submission to Allah, both individually and collectively, by understanding the Quran and Sunnah.
- **Righteous and ethical society:** Building a society founded on unity, equality, and fraternity, where social justice and moral values prevail.

Primary principles of education in Islam

- **Tawhid (Oneness of God):** The belief in the absolute unity of God is the foundational principle of all Islamic education. It provides a unifying framework for all knowledge, emphasizing that everything in creation, including human learning, ultimately comes from and points back to Allah.
- **Holistic development:** Islamic education aims for the balanced growth of the total personality—training a person's spirit, intellect, rational self, feelings, and bodily senses. It

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seeks to produce individuals who are intellectually capable, morally upright, and spiritually aware.

- **Integration of knowledge:** Islam rejects the separation of sacred and secular knowledge. It emphasizes the integration of revealed knowledge (*naqli*) from the Quran and Sunnah with acquired or rational knowledge (*aqli*) through empirical investigation.
- **Knowledge and action (*Ilm and Amal*):** In Islamic education, knowledge is not pursued for its own sake but must be coupled with action. True understanding requires not only intellectual recognition of the truth but also acknowledging it through behavior that reflects its proper place in creation.
- **Lifelong learning:** The pursuit of knowledge is a continuous duty for all Muslims, both male and female, throughout their lives. The Prophet Muhammad encouraged seeking knowledge from the cradle to the grave, and a hadith states, "He who leaves his home in search of knowledge walks in the path of Allah".
- **Ethical and moral guidance (*Adab*):** A central aim of education is the cultivation of good character and ethical conduct. The concept of *adab* is key, as it involves teaching individuals their proper place in relation to God, themselves, and society, thus preserving them from errors in judgment and conduct.
- **Knowledge for moral purpose:** The ultimate purpose of education is not merely to acquire facts but to cultivate morality and ethics (*adab*). Knowledge is viewed as a tool to draw closer to God and improve the community, leading to a strong sense of social responsibility.

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- **Universal access:** Islamic principles mandate education for all, regardless of gender or social status. While formal madrasa studies were often reserved for men, women of prominent families received private education and sometimes even granted diplomas (*ijazas*).

Key educational institutions

Maktabas (Primary Schools)

- Established in almost every town and village, often attached to mosques.
- Provided elementary education for young children in the Qur'an, reading, writing, and basic arithmetic.
- Memorization was a primary teaching method, emphasizing the perfect recitation of the Qur'an.

Madrasas (Colleges/Universities)

- Became widespread from the 11th and 12th centuries as public institutions for higher learning, often established by wealthy patrons or rulers through charitable endowments (*waqfs*).
- Supported students and paid teachers through these endowments, making education free for all.
- Early madrasas, like Baghdad's Nizamiyyah, focused primarily on Islamic law but also offered other subjects, including logic, medicine, and mathematics.
- Prominent early examples include:
 - **Al-Qarawiyyin University** in Morocco, founded in 859, which Guinness World Records recognizes as the oldest continuously operating university.
 - **Al-Azhar University** in Cairo, founded in 978, which became a world-renowned center for Islamic scholarship.

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Houses of Wisdom and Libraries

- Institutions like Baghdad's

Bayt al-Hikma

(House of Wisdom), founded in the 9th century, served as massive libraries, translation centers, and academies.

- Scholars from diverse backgrounds collaborated to translate and critique ancient Greek, Persian, and Indian texts, stimulating a vast amount of original research in mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and philosophy.
- Similar houses of knowledge were established in other cities, such as Cairo's Dar al-Ilm.

Diverse curriculum and intellectual activity

The educational system of the Golden Age was characterized by a broad curriculum that fostered both religious and secular knowledge.

- **Religious sciences:** Included jurisprudence (*fiqh*), theology (*kalam*), and the study of the Qur'an and Hadith.
- **Rational sciences:** Adopted and expanded upon from earlier civilizations, this category included mathematics, medicine, astronomy, optics, and philosophy.
- **Practical studies:** Applied knowledge was also central, leading to advancements in fields like irrigation, architecture, navigation, chemistry, and various crafts.

Influence on the West

The Islamic educational system had a profound impact on Europe's intellectual awakening, particularly during the Middle Ages.

- **Knowledge transfer:** European scholars traveled to centers of learning in Islamic Spain (Al-Andalus) and Sicily, where they translated vast numbers of Arabic texts into Latin. This provided Europe with access to classical Greek knowledge that had been lost, along with new Islamic advancements.

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- **University models:** Some scholars propose that the structure and academic practices of early European universities, including systems for awarding degrees and the tradition of public thesis defense, were inspired by the Islamic madrasa system.
- **Terminology:** Academic and scientific terms borrowed from Arabic, like "algebra," "algorithm," and "alchemy," entered European languages during this period.

Modern challenges and reforms

With the end of the Golden Age and the rise of colonialism, Islamic education entered a new phase of challenges and reform efforts.

- **Colonial disruptions:** The introduction of Western educational systems by colonial powers created a dual system that often de-emphasized traditional Islamic studies and created a schism between religious and secular education.
- **Relevance and integration:** A central modern challenge is to create a holistic curriculum that prepares students for a technologically advanced world while preserving Islamic values.
- **Digitalization:** Contemporary reforms are focused on integrating digital tools and methodologies into Islamic education to enhance access and engagement, though they face challenges related to infrastructure, digital literacy, and the potential dilution of traditional values.
- **Institutional modernization:** Many modern Islamic educational institutions are grappling with the need to update their administration, curricula, and teaching methods to ensure their graduates are equipped to contribute meaningfully to society and navigate contemporary challenges.

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Ta'lim: Refers to the teaching and learning process for the acquisition of knowledge (ilm).

Ta'lim refers to the teaching and learning process for the acquisition of knowledge (*`ilm` ilm*). While it can simply mean "education," within an Islamic context, it is one of three key educational concepts that work together to provide a holistic framework for human development.

Ta'lim vs. other Islamic education concepts

Ta'lim is often discussed alongside two other Arabic terms for education, providing different focuses:

- **Ta'lim:** Emphasizes the intellectual and systematic transmission of knowledge. It involves conveying information, understanding, and skills through direct instruction, reading, and discussion.
- **Tarbiyah:** Focuses on the nurturing and holistic growth of an individual—physically, intellectually, and spiritually. It involves upbringing and cultivating character over a continuous period.
- **Ta'dib:** Concentrates on the development of manners, ethics, and social behavior. It aims to produce a cultured and well-disciplined individual in accordance with Islamic values.

Key aspects of Ta'lim

- **Source of knowledge:** In an Islamic context, the ultimate source of knowledge (and therefore, teaching) is God (Allah). It is through God's teaching to the Prophet Adam that humanity received its first knowledge.

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- **Integrated approach:** Ta'lim applies to both religious knowledge (like the Quran and Hadith) and secular knowledge, aiming to form individuals with a deep understanding and appropriate skills grounded in Islamic morals.
- **Purpose:** The goal of Ta'lim is to acquire beneficial knowledge that can be put into righteous action. It leads to intellectual development, helping individuals learn from mistakes and become positive role models.
- **Active and reflective learning:** The process is not passive. It involves constant study, reflection, and practice so that learners are able to internalize and live by the knowledge they gain.

Examples of Ta'lim in practice

- **Community lectures:** A common format for Ta'lim is a *Majlis Ta'lim* or "gathering for learning," where community members meet for lectures and recitations to increase their religious knowledge.
 - **Formal education:** Islamic educational institutions like *madrasahs* integrate Ta'lim into their curricula to ensure students are well-versed in both religious and secular subjects.
 - **Teacher's role:** The teacher (*mu'allim*) is a crucial figure in the Ta'lim process. They are expected to demonstrate gentleness and guide students with clarity, serving as living examples of the knowledge they impart.
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Tarbiyyah: Focuses on the nurturing and fostering of physical, intellectual, and spiritual growth, based on God's will.

Tarbiyyah is an Islamic concept of holistic education that focuses on the gradual nurturing of an individual's physical, intellectual, and spiritual growth. The goal is to develop a person's character based on divine values, enabling them to live a purposeful life in accordance with God's will.

The term *tarbiyyah* comes from the Arabic root *rabba*, which means to increase, nurture, and develop. It is distinct from the term *ta'lim* (education through instruction) because *tarbiyyah* focuses on the foundational nurturing of a child's character and disposition before formal teaching is imparted.

Core components of Tarbiyyah

- **Spiritual growth:** This involves nurturing a person's connection with God through prayer, worship, understanding the Quran, and purifying the soul (*tazkiyatun nafs*). It helps develop a strong sense of purpose and a fear of God (*taqwa*).
- **Intellectual development:** This includes fostering critical thinking, curiosity, and a love for learning. While *ta'lim* (teaching) is a component, *tarbiyyah* ensures that the knowledge gained is balanced with wisdom and spiritual guidance.
- **Moral and ethical teachings:** Cultivating noble character (*akhlaq*) is a primary objective. This is done through leading by example, teaching ethics like honesty and compassion, and refining behavior.

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- **Physical well-being:** Tarbiyyah also involves caring for the body as a trust from God, which includes promoting physical health and a balanced lifestyle.
- **Social responsibility:** This aspect focuses on developing empathy and contributing positively to the community and society at large.

How Tarbiyyah is implemented

- **The home:** Parents are seen as the first and most important educators. They instill values through their own example and create a nurturing environment where children can thrive emotionally and physically.
- **The community:** Educators, schools, mosques, and community centers also play a vital role in reinforcing Islamic values and character-building.
- **Lifelong process:** Tarbiyyah is not restricted to childhood but is a continuous, lifelong quest for personal growth and improvement.
- **Holistic approach:** The process is gradual and comprehensive, addressing all aspects of a person's life in a balanced manner.

The neglect of *tarbiyyah* is seen as a key reason for the decline in Islamic moral and social values in some communities. By renewing the focus on holistic nurturing, the hope is to raise generations who are not only intelligent but also strong in faith and character, equipped to face modern-day challenges and serve their communities.

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Ta'dib: Pertains to instilling good manners and ethical behavior, shaping a person to become cultured and well-socialized.

Ta'dib is an Islamic concept of holistic education that focuses on instilling good manners (*adab adab*) and ethical character (*akhlaq akhlaq*). While it includes the acquisition of knowledge (*ta'lim ta'lim*) and physical nurturing (*tarbiyah tarbiyah*), the core of *ta'dib* is the moral refinement of an individual so that they may recognize their proper place in the world and their relationship with God.

Key components of *ta'dib*: The philosophical understanding of *ta'dib*, prominently articulated by scholar Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, integrates several elements:

- **Knowledge (*ilm 'ilm*):** The acquisition of beneficial knowledge is essential, but it is not neutral. Under *ta'dib*, knowledge is received and understood within the Islamic worldview, where truth comes from God.
- **Spiritual and ethical formation:** This is the most crucial part of the process, which aims to develop a noble character. It involves internalizing values such as trustworthiness, sincerity, patience, and piety. This aspect is guided by the example of the Prophet Muhammad, who was sent to "perfect noble character".
- **Right action (*amal 'amal*):** Education must translate into practical application in one's daily life. This is the harmonious combination of knowledge and manners that guides all of a person's deeds.
- **The recognition of place:** A central goal is for a person to understand their place in the hierarchical order of creation and their relationship to God. This awareness cultivates humility and guides their actions toward the pursuit of divine blessing.

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***Ta'dib* versus other Islamic educational concepts**

Ta'dib is often discussed in relation to, and is seen as more comprehensive than, two other terms in Islamic pedagogy:

- ***Tarbiyah Tarbiyah*** : This term refers to the process of nurturing and developing an individual's potential—physically, intellectually, and spiritually. However, critics argue that in modern usage, *tarbiyah tarbiyah* can be interpreted to focus more on material and developmental growth, potentially overlooking the spiritual dimension.
- ***Ta'lim Ta'lim***: This term focuses on the systematic transfer of knowledge and instruction. While a necessary component, it can sometimes emphasize cognitive skills without sufficient attention to the ethical internalization and application of that knowledge.

For scholars like al-Attas, *ta'dib* encompasses the best aspects of both *ta'lim ta'lim* and *tarbiyah*, ensuring that the goal of education is not simply a knowledgeable or physically capable person, but a civilized and morally excellent human being.

***Ta'dib* in a contemporary context:** In the modern era, proponents of *ta'dib*-based education argue that it is a potent framework for confronting the challenges posed by secularism, technological change, and the erosion of traditional values.

- **Countering moral crisis:** A focus on *ta'dib* seeks to re-establish the purpose of education by reconnecting knowledge with spiritual and ethical values. It is presented as an alternative to educational models that produce intellectually capable but morally ungrounded individuals.
- **Producing responsible leaders:** By producing individuals with noble character and wisdom, *ta'dib* can help address issues of false or unjust leadership.
- **Holistic character-building:** It promotes an educational approach where the home, school, and community

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collaborate to build character. For example, teachers serve as role models, and lessons extend beyond the classroom into daily life.

- **Balancing progress and principles:** It aims to integrate Islamic values with the needs of the modern world, making education relevant while remaining consistent with essential Islamic teachings.
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Chapter 7: Mahram-hijab and Women Empowerment in Islam

Equity and Diversity

While some interpret *hijab* as a symbol of women's oppression, restricting their autonomy and mobility through the enforcement of modesty rules, others view it as a source of empowerment rooted in faith, personal identity, and the rejection of objectification. The rule requiring a woman to travel with a *mahram* (a male relative with whom she cannot marry) is another area of diverse interpretation, viewed by some as an assurance of safety and dignity, and by others as an unnecessary constraint on freedom of movement. Islam itself promotes spiritual and human equality between men and women, with proponents arguing that perceived inequities stem from rigid cultural interpretations rather than core religious texts. These varying perspectives on *hijab* and *mahram* illustrate the rich diversity within Muslim communities and the different ways that women navigate their faith and identity, emphasizing that empowerment is often defined personally, not monolithically.

In Islam, a Muslim woman is required to observe the hijab in the presence of men who are not her *mahram*. A *mahram* is a male relative she can never marry, and in their presence, the hijab is not required.

Who is a mahram?

A *mahram* is unmarriageable kin with whom a woman has a permanent relationship, which can be established in three ways:

- **By blood (Qarabah):** This includes immediate family members she can never marry.
 - Father, grandfathers, and other direct male ancestors

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- Sons, grandsons, and other direct male descendants
 - Brothers
 - Paternal and maternal uncles
 - Nephews (the sons of her brothers and sisters)
- **By marriage (Sihriyya):** This covers in-laws with whom marriage is forbidden.
 - Husband's father and grandfathers
 - Husband's sons and grandsons from another marriage
 - A woman's own husband becomes her *mahram* upon marriage.
- **By breastfeeding (Rada'a):** If a woman breastfeeds a non-biological child under specific conditions, that child and their descendants become *mahram*.
 - Her foster sons and his male children
 - Her foster brothers

The relationship between hijab and mahram

- **In front of non-mahram men:** Islamic guidelines, derived from the Quran (24:31) and Hadith, require a woman to cover her hair, and in some interpretations, her face and hands, in the presence of non-*mahram* men. The purpose is to promote modesty, protect against unwanted advances, and prevent temptation for both men and women.
- **In front of mahram men:** A woman is not obligated to wear the hijab for her male *mahram* relatives. However, modesty is still encouraged. It is generally understood that a woman can expose her head, neck, hands, arms, feet, and calves in their presence, but should avoid wearing overly revealing or provocative clothing.

The purpose of hijab

Beyond the specific ruling regarding *mahram* and non-*mahram*, the hijab is understood by many Muslim women as a personal and spiritual practice.

- **Symbol of identity and faith:** The hijab serves as a visible expression of a woman's religious commitment and devotion to Allah.
- **Modesty and humility:** It encourages both men and women to focus on a woman's character, intellect, and piety rather than her physical appearance.
- **Protection:** The hijab can serve as a form of protection, limiting unwanted attention and promoting respectful interactions in public spaces.
- **Personal choice:** While forced veiling is considered against the spirit of Islam, many Muslim women choose to wear the hijab, viewing it as a source of empowerment and freedom from societal pressures related to physical appearance.

Empowerment for women in Islam stems from the Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad, which granted women rights and dignity over 1,400 years ago. These rights were revolutionary compared to the pre-Islamic practices of seventh-century Arabia, where female infanticide was common and women were often treated as property. Islamic scholars argue that a misunderstanding or misapplication of Islamic teachings, not the religion itself, leads to the oppression of women seen in some cultures today.

Islam granted women a host of rights and protections over 1,400 years ago that were revolutionary for their time. Empowering women is considered inherent to its message, establishing their dignity and independence. However, the reality of women's empowerment in Muslim societies varies widely due to cultural interpretations, political agendas, and historical contexts.

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Empowering rights in Islamic teachings: Islamic scholars and texts emphasize several foundational rights for women:

- **Spiritual and human equality:** The Quran states that men and women were created from a single soul and that piety, not gender, determines spiritual worth. Both are promised the same reward for good conduct.
- **Right to education:** The Prophet Muhammad declared, "Seeking knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim (male and female)". Early Islamic history includes many renowned female scholars, including Aisha, the Prophet's wife, who taught both men and women.
- **Economic independence:** Women in Islam have the right to own and manage their own property, enter contracts, and keep their earnings, even after marriage. A husband must provide for his family, but a wife is not obligated to spend her wealth on the household. Women are also guaranteed legal inheritance rights.
- **Consent in marriage and divorce:** A woman's consent is required for marriage to be valid. She also has the right to seek a divorce (*khul'*) if the marriage is not working.
- **Political participation:** Early Islamic society saw women participate in public life, including swearing allegiance and contributing on the battlefield. The second Caliph, Umar, even appointed a woman to supervise the marketplace.
- **Dignity and respect:** Islam elevates the status of mothers, with a famous saying of the Prophet stating, "Paradise is at the feet of mothers". It also strictly forbids the pre-Islamic practice of female infanticide.

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Contextual factors and misinterpretation: The gap between these teachings and the experiences of many women stems from various factors:

- **Patriarchal cultural traditions:** Many societies with Muslim populations have long-standing patriarchal customs that predate or misuse Islamic texts to suppress women. The historical marginalization of women has often been incorrectly attributed to Islam itself.
- **Patriarchal interpretations:** For centuries, the religious authority to interpret Islamic texts has rested primarily with men. This has led to certain patriarchal interpretations being widely accepted, which Islamic feminists are now challenging through reinterpretation.
- **Political agendas:** Extremist groups and political leaders have used oppressive, anti-woman rhetoric and practices to gain or maintain power, as seen with the Taliban in Afghanistan.
- **Unequal legal application:** Some countries with mixed legal systems may apply aspects of Sharia in ways that create legal disparities for women in areas such as inheritance or child custody.

Islamic vs. Western feminist perspectives: Islamic feminism offers a counter-narrative to Western feminists who sometimes view Islam as inherently oppressive. Key differences in approach include:

- **Religious framework:** Islamic feminists operate from within an Islamic framework, reinterpreting religious texts to argue for gender justice. In contrast, some Western feminist theories are rooted in secularism and criticize religion as a patriarchal institution.

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- **Complementary vs. identical roles:** While Western feminism often emphasizes identical roles for men and women, Islam emphasizes complementary, but equally valuable, roles.
- **Critique of Western paradigms:** Islamic feminists critique Western feminist approaches, viewing them as sometimes perpetuating Orientalist stereotypes and misunderstanding the agency of Muslim women. Many Muslim women, for example, view the hijab as a symbol of identity and empowerment, not oppression.

The ongoing struggle for empowerment: Despite the challenges, many Muslim women are actively working for gender justice by:

- **Reinterpreting Islamic texts:** Islamic feminist scholars and activists are providing new interpretations of the Quran and other sacred texts that challenge patriarchal readings and promote egalitarian ideals.
- **Using legal reforms:** In countries with dual legal systems, such as Malaysia, women's groups have successfully advocated for the appointment of female Sharia judges to address legal disparities.
- **Drawing on Islamic history:** Activists reference the historical roles of influential women in early Islam—such as Khadijah, Aisha, and female warriors and nurses—as models for women's leadership and participation in society today.

Islamic vs. Western feminism: Islamic feminist discourse challenges the perception that feminism is incompatible with Islam by reinterpreting religious texts to advocate for gender justice. This approach differs from some Western feminist perspectives, which

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are sometimes seen as critical of Islam and Muslim women without fully understanding the religious context.

Key differences between Islamic and some Western feminist viewpoints include:

- **Complementary roles:** Islam emphasizes complementary, rather than identical, roles for men and women, based on their distinct natures. This is intended to promote cooperation within the family, which is seen as the foundation of society.
- **Modesty:** While some Western feminists view Islamic dress like the hijab as oppressive, many Muslim women see it as a symbol of their faith, identity, and a rejection of the commercial objectification of women's bodies.
- **Religious vs. secular framework:** Western feminism often operates within a secular framework, whereas Islamic feminism works to achieve gender equality by drawing its mandate directly from the Quran and Islamic values.

Challenges to women's empowerment in Muslim societies

Despite the rights established in the Quran and by Prophet Muhammad, women's empowerment in many Muslim societies is affected by patriarchal cultural traditions and political agendas that contradict true Islamic teachings.

These challenges manifest in several ways:

- **Cultural misinterpretation:** The historical subjugation of women in some cultures has been mistakenly attributed to Islam, rather than to local traditions that predate or misuse religious texts.
- **Patriarchal interpretations:** Extremist groups often promote patriarchal interpretations of Islam that seek to

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disempower women and violate their rights, as seen with the Taliban in Afghanistan.

- **Unequal application of law:** In some countries with mixed legal systems, the application of Sharia law can result in legal disparities for women in areas such as child custody or inheritance.

However, many Muslim women actively use Islamic texts to challenge these injustices, arguing for a more egalitarian interpretation of their faith.

Chapter 8: Civilization, Justice and Social Development in Islam

Equality and Partnership

Islam's approach to civilization, justice, and social development is rooted in foundational principles of equality and partnership, emphasizing that all humanity is spiritually equal before God regardless of race, gender, or social status. This view is central to its concept of social justice (*qis qis* and '*adl*'), which mandates fairness and the distribution of resources to uplift the underprivileged through systems like *zakat* (obligatory charity), and prohibits oppression. Through mutual cooperation and complementing partnerships—such as the risk-sharing models in Islamic finance (*musharakah* and *mudarabah*) and the compassionate, respectful relationship between spouses—Islam promotes a cohesive society where individuals share responsibility for collective welfare. In this system, each member's rights and dignity are protected within a framework that balances individual freedom with mutual interdependence, making social justice an integral aspect of practicing faith.

Islamic civilization and development stem from core principles found in the Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad, including monotheism (Tawhid), justice, and the pursuit of knowledge. This foundation fueled a "Golden Age" of intellectual flourishing from the 8th to 14th centuries, which significantly shaped global science, art, and culture.

Islamic civilization are the core principles of justice (*adl adl*) and development, which are foundational in both spiritual and material life. The Quran and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad shaped a civilization that sought to balance material progress with a moral and ethical framework based on divine guidance.

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Foundations of Islamic civilization

Islamic civilization is built on religious teachings that guide both personal and societal life.

- **Monotheism:** The belief in one God (Allah) served as a unifying force, establishing equality among all people regardless of race or social class. This principle opposed the racial and social hierarchies of earlier societies and promoted a universal community open to all.
- **Emphasis on knowledge:** The Quran and prophetic traditions strongly urge Muslims to seek knowledge. This led to a high value placed on education and intellectual inquiry. Early Islamic rulers and institutions, such as the *Bayt al-Hikmah* (House of Wisdom) in Baghdad, actively funded and encouraged scholars.
- **Integration of faith and reason:** Islamic thought harmonized revelation with reason, viewing them as complementary paths to truth. This approach, championed by figures like Ibn Rushd, facilitated the absorption and development of classical Greek, Persian, and Indian knowledge.
- **Comprehensive legal system:** The Sharia, or Islamic law, offered a comprehensive framework covering a wide range of human affairs, from economics to international relations. It established a system of justice and order that helped govern the expanding empire.

Development and Golden Age (8th–14th centuries)

The Islamic Golden Age was a period of scientific, economic, and cultural growth centered in major cities like Baghdad, Cairo, and Córdoba.

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Intellectual and scientific achievements:

- **Preservation and translation:** Scholars systematically translated and preserved ancient works of philosophy, mathematics, and medicine from various civilizations. These texts were studied, critiqued, and built upon, preventing them from being lost to history.
- **Mathematics:** Muslim scholars made foundational advances in mathematics. The scholar Al-Khwarizmi is known as the "father of algebra," and his work was crucial in developing the discipline. The Arabic numeral system, including the concept of zero, was also introduced through the Islamic world.
- **Medicine:** Pioneers like Ibn Sina wrote influential medical encyclopedias, such as *The Canon of Medicine*, which were used as standard texts in Europe for centuries. They promoted empirical and experimental methods that laid the groundwork for modern medical science.
- **Astronomy:** Important observations and star catalogs were produced, improving upon classical knowledge. The work of astronomers like Al-Battani and Al-Zarqali influenced later European discoveries.
- **Optics and physics:** Scientists like Ibn al-Haytham made significant discoveries in optics and developed experimental methods.

Economic and technological advances:

- **Trade networks:** A vast and stable trade network spanning from Central Asia to the Atlantic allowed for the exchange of goods, ideas, and technologies. The practice of using checks (*ṣakk*) originated in the Islamic world.

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- **Paper manufacturing:** Muslims learned paper-making from the Chinese, which rapidly spread the technology and made books and knowledge more accessible throughout the empire.
- **Infrastructure:** Significant investments were made in economic infrastructure, including canals and irrigation systems, to support agricultural development.

Arts and culture:

- **Architecture:** Distinct and beautiful architectural styles emerged in mosques, palaces, and tombs across the Islamic world. The use of geometric patterns, calligraphy, and mosaics became a hallmark of Islamic art.
- **Literature and philosophy:** The Golden Age saw a flowering of literature, including the development of classic works like *One Thousand and One Nights*. Philosophers such as Al-Farabi and Ibn Rushd played a vital role in shaping both Islamic and European philosophical traditions.

Decline and modern challenges

Following the Golden Age, various internal and external factors contributed to the decline of the centralized Islamic empires, including political conflicts, invasions (such as the Mongol conquests), and later, European colonization. In the modern era, the Muslim world faces new challenges, but also continues to engage in innovation, intercultural dialogue, and development.

Development in modern Islam:

- **Economic diversification:** Some Muslim-majority countries have successfully invested in modern infrastructure, technology, and education to reduce dependence on traditional resources and compete in the global economy.

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- **Educational reform:** Efforts to revive the intellectual spirit of the Golden Age by reforming educational systems and promoting modern science coexist with the preservation of traditional Islamic scholarship.
- **Sustainable development:** A key concept in modern Islamic development is achieving balance and justice by focusing on spiritual, moral, economic, and civilizational growth for the entire society, not just an elite.

Justice in Islam

Justice is a central pillar of the Islamic worldview, considered a divine command and an essential condition for societal stability and well-being. Islamic teachings emphasize that justice must be applied impartially to all people, regardless of wealth, social status, or religion.

Foundational principles:

- **Divine command:** The Quran commands believers to be "persistently standing firm in justice, as witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or your parents and relatives" (Quran 4:135).
- **Universality:** Justice in Islam is comprehensive and for all of humanity. It is rooted in the belief that all people are equal in dignity and worth. A famous quote attributed to Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab exemplifies this, stating, "Since when did you treat people as slaves, when their mothers bore them as free souls?"
- **Protection of the vulnerable:** Justice is framed as a sacred duty to protect the oppressed and vulnerable, including orphans, widows, and the poor. The Prophet Muhammad's own conduct modeled this priority.
- **Ethical conduct:** Islam's concept of justice extends beyond the courtroom to all aspects of life, including social,

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economic, and political spheres. It opposes oppression (*zulm zulm*) and the excessive accumulation of wealth by a few.

Development in Islam

Islamic civilization fostered a dynamic approach to development by integrating spiritual and material aspects of life. It drew on existing knowledge from various cultures while being propelled by the Islamic worldview.

Holistic approach:

- **Spiritual and material balance:** Islamic civilization distinguishes itself by seeking a balance between the spiritual and the material, rejecting the notion that worldly life is to be neglected for spiritual pursuits. The Quran commands, "But seek, with the (wealth) which God has bestowed on thee, the Home of the Hereafter, nor forget thy portion in this world" (Quran 28:77).
- **Emphasis on knowledge (*ilm ilm*):** The Islamic tradition places a high value on education and intellectual inquiry. The first revelation to the Prophet Muhammad was a command to "read" (Quran 96:1), and Muslims were incited to seek knowledge in all fields. This led to a flourishing of science, medicine, and philosophy during the Islamic Golden Age.
- **Social and economic well-being:** The Islamic perspective on development focuses on creating an environment that promotes human flourishing and well-being in multiple dimensions: spiritual, educational, social, and economic. It seeks to remove sources of human deprivation and ensure the equitable distribution of resources.
- **Sustainable development:** Modern Muslim thinkers have connected Islamic social justice principles with sustainable development, arguing that wealth should not be acquired at the expense of spiritual health or the environment.

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Islamic Civilization

The historical manifestation of these principles created a rich and influential civilization that, at its height, stretched from Spain to the borders of China.

Key characteristics:

- **Synthesis of cultures:** Islamic civilization was not restricted to a single race or people but was the product of interaction and synthesis among diverse cultures that adopted Islam, including Arab, Persian, and others.
- **Religious tolerance:** Historically, Islamic civilization demonstrated a high degree of religious tolerance, coexisting with other faiths. The Constitution of Medina, established by the Prophet Muhammad, guaranteed the rights of Jewish and other non-Muslim communities.
- **Humanitarian ethos:** With principles like human fraternity and respect for human dignity, Islam helped cultivate a humanitarian tendency within its civilization, which contributed to social solidarity and the advancement of humanity.
- **Pioneering science and technology:** Driven by a passion for knowledge, Islamic civilization made significant advances in fields like mathematics (algebra), astronomy, and medicine, which were later transmitted to Europe.
- **Dynamic and adaptable:** Rooted in the Quran and Sunnah, the principles of Islamic civilization are not bound by a specific time or place, allowing them to remain relevant and adaptable to new circumstances.

Core principles of social justice

The core of Islamic teachings emphasizes social justice (*'adl*) and social development, viewing them not merely as ethical ideals but as religious obligations rooted in the Quran and the practices of Prophet Muhammad. The Islamic vision of a just and equitable society is built

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on principles of equality, universal dignity, and the redistribution of wealth to ensure the well-being (*falah*) of all members.

Divine command to stand for justice The Quran repeatedly commands believers to stand firmly for justice, even if it is against themselves or their own relatives. This reflects the foundational Islamic belief that justice is a divine command that transcends personal bias, class, race, and even religious differences.

- **Quran (5:8):** "O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness".
- **Quran (4:135):** "O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives".

Inherent human dignity and equality Islam teaches that all human beings are created from a single pair, Adam and Eve, establishing a universal basis for human dignity and equality. In his final sermon, Prophet Muhammad declared that no race has superiority over another, stating that greatness is determined only by piety and good deeds. The concept of human custodianship (*khilafah*) on Earth further reinforces the moral responsibility to uphold justice and combat oppression.

Accountability to God Islamic teachings instill a profound sense of individual and collective responsibility by emphasizing that all people will be held accountable by God for their actions. This applies to political and economic spheres, motivating believers to actively work to eradicate injustice and oppression. As the Prophet Muhammad said, "Whoever among you sees something evil, let him change it with his hand...".

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Social development mechanisms

Redistribution of wealth via Zakat and Sadaqah Islam combats wealth concentration through mandatory and voluntary charitable giving.

- **Zakat:** An obligatory annual alms tax of 2.5% on accumulated wealth is a central instrument for social security and poverty alleviation. Zakat funds are distributed to the poor, needy, and other specific categories to ensure equitable access to basic necessities.
- **Sadaqah:** This encompasses all forms of voluntary charity, which are highly encouraged. The Quran teaches that charity purifies the soul and grows wealth, while a famous hadith states, "He who sleeps on a full stomach while his neighbor goes hungry is not one of us".

Elimination of exploitative practices Islamic economic principles forbid practices that lead to social imbalance and exploitation, including usury (*riba*), gambling (*maysir*), and other fraudulent transactions. These prohibitions are aimed at creating an economy based on fair transactions and risk-sharing, where profit is not derived from the hardship of others.

Protection of the vulnerable Islamic law includes detailed guidance for protecting the rights and welfare of the most vulnerable members of society.

- **Orphans:** The Quran places a strong emphasis on caring for and protecting orphans, a vulnerable group in 7th-century Arabia.
- **Women:** Islam introduced revolutionary rights for women regarding marriage, divorce, and inheritance, overturning many pre-Islamic patriarchal norms.
- **Laborers:** The Prophet Muhammad emphasized paying workers their wages promptly, prohibiting exploitation.

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Universal social solidarity

The concept of the *Ummah* (global Muslim community) fosters a sense of universal brotherhood and collective responsibility, transcending national and tribal affiliations. The Quran also promotes cooperation with people of other faiths for the common good, emphasizing that righteousness should not be limited to one's own community. A famous quote from Imam Ali states, "People are of two kinds: either your brothers in faith or your equals in humanity".

Social welfare and justice

The concept of social development in Islam is comprehensive and holistic, aiming to build a just, balanced, and moral society rooted in spiritual principles. Guided by the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, it emphasizes the interconnectedness of individual righteousness with the well-being of the community, known as the *Ummah*. Social progress is not measured by economic growth alone but by the moral and ethical development of individuals, which in turn fosters social solidarity and justice.

Core principles of social development in Islam

- **Tawhid (Oneness of God):** The foundational principle of Islam, *Tawhid*, teaches that God is the sole creator, and all of humanity shares a single origin from Adam and Eve. This principle rejects all forms of social hierarchy based on race, class, or lineage, viewing righteousness (*taqwa*) as the only basis for superiority. This shared origin is the bedrock of universal human equality and brotherhood.
- **Khalifah (Custodianship):** Humanity is appointed as God's *khalifah* (vicegerent or custodian) on Earth. This role comes with the responsibility to cultivate and develop the world and establish justice. It requires managing resources and society in a righteous manner for the benefit of all creation, including the environment.

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- **Adl and Qist (Justice and Fairness):** Establishing justice is a central theme in the Quran, with Muslims commanded to stand firmly for justice, even against their own interests or those of their families. Islam condemns injustice (*zulm*) and calls for fairness in all aspects of life, including economic distribution and legal judgments.
- **Akhlaq (Character and Morality):** Moral development is a fundamental aspect of social progress, with Prophet Muhammad stating that he was sent to "perfect ethical conduct". Key virtues include honesty, trustworthiness, humility, kindness, and empathy. The emphasis is on developing inner faith that manifests in good deeds toward others.
- **Ummah (Community):** Islam places a strong emphasis on community and mutual responsibility. The *Ummah* is envisioned as a single brotherhood, where members support and care for one another. Communal prayers, fasting, and charity are ritual practices that foster social cohesion and solidarity.

Key areas of application

- **Zakat:** This obligatory annual alms-giving is a vital tool for wealth redistribution and social security. It is paid by the wealthy and distributed to eight categories of recipients, ensuring that the needs of the poor and vulnerable are met.
- **Sadaqa:** Beyond the obligatory *Zakat*, voluntary charity (*sadaqa*) is highly encouraged. The Prophet Muhammad taught that the best actions are those that bring happiness to others, feed the hungry, and help the afflicted.
- **Protection of the vulnerable:** Islam mandates the protection of orphans, the poor, and all marginalized individuals. Historically, figures like the Caliph Umar ibn al-

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Khattab established policies for social support, including stipends for newborns, to ensure the well-being of all citizens.

- **Civic activism:** Islam obligates believers to actively "enjoin good and forbid evil". This principle requires Muslims to not be bystanders to injustice and to work collectively to eradicate oppression and corruption.

Family and personal development

- **Family (Usrah):** The family is considered the cornerstone of society, with Islam providing detailed guidance on the rights and responsibilities of family members. It emphasizes kindness to parents, caring for relatives, and building a harmonious home based on mutual love and respect.
- **Rights of women:** Early Islamic society introduced revolutionary reforms regarding women's rights, including the prohibition of female infanticide and recognition of a woman's full legal personhood. Women were given the right to inheritance and property administration and played active public roles as scholars and market supervisors.
- **Child development:** Islamic law emphasizes the proper upbringing of children, teaching them good manners, etiquette, and social responsibilities from a young age. This focus on character-building from childhood ensures that individuals grow into productive and compassionate members of society.

Economic development

- **Ethical economics:** Islamic economic principles seek human well-being by pursuing spiritual, moral, and socioeconomic goals in a balanced manner. The system promotes ethical conduct and justice, condemning harmful practices like interest (*riba*), hoarding, and excessive speculation.

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- **Responsible resource management:** The concept of *amanat* (trusteeship) extends to the environment, requiring humans to manage resources responsibly and sustainably. Wealth is not to be amassed for personal greed but is to be used for the benefit of all, promoting social harmony.

The historical and contemporary context

While the principles for social development are rooted in the Quran and Sunnah, their application has varied throughout history. Some scholars believe that the full potential of Islamic principles for social change was only partially realized due to resistance from established power structures in conquered lands. In modern times, movements like the Muslim Socio-Religious Reform Movements in India have sought to use Islamic teachings to promote modern education and advocate for social reforms. However, implementing a fully functional Islamic system requires concerted, simultaneous changes in social, economic, and political structures.

Civic development in Islam is a comprehensive model of social organization founded on divine principles and historical practice. It is rooted in the concepts of justice, communal solidarity, and social welfare, which have shaped institutions, urban planning, and governance throughout Islamic history. The aim is to foster a cohesive and ethical society that balances individual freedoms with collective responsibility.

Philosophical and ethical foundations

Islamic civic life is built on core ethical tenets that originate from the Qur'an and the Sunnah (the practice and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad).

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- **Trusteeship (Amanah):** This principle holds that humans are trustees of God's creation and are responsible for nurturing it. This entails a duty to develop and maintain a just, orderly, and prosperous society.
- **Justice and equity (Adl):** Islam mandates justice in all dealings and upholds the equality of all people, regardless of their social status, wealth, or background. This applies to economic, social, and legal matters, and is intended to prevent oppression and ensure fairness for everyone.
- **Community solidarity (Ummah):** The concept of the *Ummah* fosters a strong sense of collective responsibility and mutual support. It is based on the idea that all Muslims are part of a single brotherhood, and historical examples show how this solidarity extended to non-Muslim communities as well.
- **Consultation (Shura):** The Qur'an encourages rulers and community leaders to engage in mutual consultation on public affairs. This participatory model of governance ensures that community interests are represented and that decision-making is not arbitrary or dictatorial.

The mosque as a center of civic life

From the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the mosque has been more than a place of worship. It has historically served as the epicenter of civic life, providing a wide array of public services.

- **Community hub:** The Prophet's mosque in Medina was a center for spiritual guidance, social gatherings, education, and political discussions for all members of the community.
- **Social services:** Mosques organized healthcare initiatives, provided aid to the poor, and functioned as shelters for the

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homeless, demonstrating a commitment to serving all community members, regardless of faith.

- **Judicial and political functions:** In early Islamic history, the mosque served as a court for resolving disputes and a public forum for discussing major community issues.

Institutionalizing social welfare

Social welfare is an essential component of Islamic civic development and is institutionalized through practices like *zakat* and *waqf*.

- **Zakat (Obligatory alms):** As one of the Five Pillars of Islam, *zakat* is a mandatory annual contribution from a Muslim's wealth to help the poor and needy. It functions as a mechanism for redistributing wealth and reducing economic inequality.
- **Waqf (Endowment):** *Waqf* is a charitable endowment of property or wealth for religious or charitable purposes. Historically, *waqf* institutions have funded schools, hospitals, bridges, and public water systems, providing perpetual public services.

Urban planning and civic spaces

Early Islamic cities were meticulously designed around civic principles that promoted communal well-being.

- **The central mosque (*Masjid-i Jami'*):** Typically located at the heart of the city, the main mosque was surrounded by the market (*sوق*) and served as the spiritual, economic, and institutional center.
- **Markets (*Suqs*):** These economic hubs were overseen by civic authorities to ensure ethical trade practices and fair prices, building on the Prophet's own supervision of the market in Medina.

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- **Water management:** Islamic urban planning included advanced water systems, such as public fountains and aqueducts, to ensure shared access to this vital resource.
- **Hierarchical street network:** Cities were characterized by a network of public streets, secondary roads, and cul-de-sacs that protected the privacy of residential neighborhoods.

The institution of *Hisbah*

The principle of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" (*al-amr bi al-ma'ruf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*) was institutionalized through the office of *hisbah*.

- **The *Muhtasib*:** This city official, rooted in the Prophet's own practice, was responsible for supervising the marketplace, ensuring honest trade, and upholding public decency.
- **Broad oversight:** Beyond commerce, the *muhtasib*'s role expanded to include public health, urban planning, and maintaining public order.
- **Collective duty (*Fard Kifaya*):** *Hisbah* was considered a collective duty for the community, ensuring that standards of ethical and moral conduct were upheld.

Modern civic engagement

Today, Muslim communities worldwide continue to practice civic engagement in various contexts, from Muslim-majority countries to pluralistic Western societies.

- **Contemporary roles of mosques:** Modern mosques serve as centers for interfaith dialogue, voter registration drives, and community service projects, adapting their traditional civic roles to modern societies.
- **Addressing modern challenges:** Islamic teachings are applied to address contemporary issues like social justice, environmental stewardship, and sustainable development.

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- **Grassroots activism:** Muslims engage in civic participation at local and national levels by advocating for social change, organizing community initiatives, and participating in the political process.

This detailed approach to civic development highlights Islam's holistic nature, where spiritual beliefs are woven into the practical, ethical, and institutional fabric of society.

The modern Islamic lifestyle is defined by the effort to live in accordance with Islamic principles and ethics while participating fully in the complexities of contemporary society. This balance, known as *wasatiyyah* (the middle way), requires applying timeless religious guidance to modern challenges in areas such as technology, consumerism, and work-life balance.

Integrating faith into daily modern life

Spirituality and worship

- **Balancing priorities:** A modern Islamic lifestyle integrates the spiritual with the worldly. Acts of worship like the five daily prayers serve as a spiritual anchor in a busy day, while remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*) is encouraged throughout daily activities.
- **Beyond ritual:** Islam is a comprehensive way of life, where ordinary routines can become acts of worship if performed with the right intention (*niyyah*). This mindset turns everyday actions into opportunities for spiritual growth.
- **Seeking knowledge:** The Islamic tradition emphasizes lifelong learning, encompassing both religious and secular fields. In the modern context, this encourages Muslims to pursue academic and professional development while staying within ethical bounds.

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Technology and digital ethics

- **A tool for good:** Technology is viewed as a gift from Allah that can be used for either good or evil. Muslims are encouraged to use it for positive purposes, such as education, communication, and organizing charitable work, while avoiding its misuse.
- **Navigating digital challenges:** Issues like misinformation, online privacy, and screen addiction are addressed through Islamic ethical guidelines emphasizing truthfulness (*sidiq*), honesty, and mindfulness. Muslims are advised to use technology responsibly, minimizing their digital footprint and being mindful of online conduct.
- **Ethical alternatives:** Concerns over surveillance capitalism and planned obsolescence have led some Muslim thinkers to advocate for supporting more ethical, transparent digital platforms and technologies with minimal environmental impact.

Business and finance

- **Halal earnings:** Earning a living through honest and ethical means (*halal*) is a core principle. This includes avoiding deceptive practices, treating employees fairly, and abstaining from interest-based transactions (*riba*).
- **Avoiding consumerism:** Modern consumerism, driven by the desire for material possessions, can conflict with Islamic teachings of contentment and moderation. The Islamic lifestyle encourages prioritizing needs over wants and directing surplus wealth toward charity (*sadaqah*) and community welfare.

Work-life balance

- **The middle way (*wasatiyyah*):** Islamic teachings advocate for balance in all aspects of life, including work and family.

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The Quran encourages believers to seek their portion in this world without forgetting the afterlife.

- **The Prophet's example:** Islamic history is full of examples of individuals, such as the Prophet Muhammad's first wife, Khadijah (RA), who successfully balanced business acumen with family responsibilities.

Social responsibility

- **Justice for all:** Islamic principles of social justice, equality, and compassion extend beyond the Muslim community to all of humanity. Muslims are encouraged to advocate for the rights of the marginalized and vulnerable, including the poor, orphans, and women.
- **Collective action:** The principle of mutual cooperation (*ta'awun*) in righteousness and piety is applied to modern issues like human rights, environmental conservation, and poverty alleviation. The charitable giving of *zakat* and *sadaqah* are institutionalized mechanisms for economic redistribution and social welfare.

Modern challenges

- **Reconciling faith and modernity:** A key challenge is navigating the fast-paced, secular world without compromising Islamic identity. Some Muslims address this by reviving *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) to reinterpret traditional texts in light of modern issues.
- **Cultural pressures:** Modern Muslim families, particularly in the West, grapple with external lifestyle choices that may not align with traditional values. This can create intergenerational gaps and challenges in upholding Islamic family structures, such as the importance of extended family.

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- **Combating misinformation:** In the digital age, Muslims face the challenge of countering misinformation and media bias against Islam. This is addressed by promoting digital literacy and empowering Muslim voices to present accurate portrayals of their faith.

Administration in Islam is a holistic system of governance rooted in Islamic law (Sharia) and guided by core principles derived from the Quran and the practices of the Prophet Muhammad. The ultimate objective is to serve the public good, establish justice, and ensure the welfare of all citizens.

Core principles of Islamic administration

- **Tawhid (Oneness of God):** The foundational principle is the belief that sovereignty belongs to Allah alone. Those in positions of authority serve as His vicegerents on Earth and are accountable to Him for their actions.
- **Amanah (Trust):** Public office is a sacred trust. Administrators must be trustworthy, honest, and competent. Their authority is to be used for the public interest, not for personal gain or corruption.
- **Adl (Justice and Fairness):** Justice is a cornerstone of Islamic governance, prohibiting injustice and discrimination. Rulers and administrators are mandated to judge and act with equity, regardless of social status, religion, or race.
- **Shura (Mutual Consultation):** Decision-making should be consultative, involving knowledgeable and experienced individuals. This principle promotes participatory and collective responsibility in governance.
- **Hesab (Accountability):** Administrators are accountable to both the people and Allah. This three-dimensional accountability system ensures that officials answer to their

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superiors, the public, and ultimately, to God on the Day of Judgment.

- **Maslaha (Public Welfare):** The government is responsible for providing for the well-being of all citizens and ensuring their basic needs, such as food, shelter, and education, are met.

The administrative system of the first four "Rightly Guided" caliphs—Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali—is considered a golden age and a model of Islamic governance.

- **Provincial division:** He divided the expanding empire into provinces, each with a governor (*Wali Wali*) personally appointed and held to a strict code of conduct.
- **Fiscal and financial systems:** He established the public treasury (*Baytal – Mal Baytal–Mal*) and developed a revenue office (*Diwan Diwan*) to manage the state's finances and pay stipends to soldiers and the Prophet's companions.
- **Judicial system:** He established a strong and independent judiciary and appointed judges (*Qadis Qadis*) to administer justice.
- **Welfare initiatives:** He created a social security system, provided for the poor and orphans, and oversaw public works projects like constructing roads and canals.
- **Accountability:** He set up a special department to investigate complaints against state officials, holding them personally responsible for their actions.
- **Standardizing the Quran:** He oversaw the definitive compilation of the Quran into a single text and had copies distributed throughout the empire.
- **Naval development:** He established the first Muslim navy to protect the empire's coastal territories.

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Features of the early Islamic system

- **Simplicity and transparency:** The early system was known for its simplicity and freedom from bureaucracy, with rulers and officials living modest lifestyles.
- **Rule of law:** Islamic law was applied equally to everyone, including the rulers themselves. Caliphs were not above the law and could be judged in court like any other citizen.
- **Merit-based appointments:** The appointment of officials was based on merit, competence, and trustworthiness, not on personal connections.
- **Public welfare focus:** Administrative efforts prioritized social justice and the well-being of all people under Islamic rule.
- In modern governance, Islamic principles are applied by integrating core values like justice, accountability, and consultation into contemporary systems. The resulting models vary widely, ranging from democratic frameworks with Islamic parties to hybrid systems that blend religious and secular laws. The debate continues among Islamic scholars and political thinkers over how to best reconcile traditional Islamic concepts with modern statecraft.

Core principles for modern application

- Drawing from the Quran and Sunnah (the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad), Islamic governance promotes a set of principles that proponents argue are highly relevant to modern societies.
- **Adl (Justice):** The Quran mandates justice in judgment and commands people to "be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice" (Quran, 4:58 and 5:8). In modern governance, this is applied through the promotion of social,

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economic, and legal equity for all citizens, regardless of their background.

- **Shura (Consultation):** The Quran encourages leaders to consult with the community on matters of public concern (Quran, 42:38). This principle is often cited by Islamic democrats as a basis for representative government and public participation in modern legislative and political processes.
- **Amanah (Trust):** Leaders are considered trustees of the people and are held responsible for their actions. This concept of accountability, or *hisab*, is seen as a strong ethical foundation for good governance and public service.
- **Maslaha (Public Welfare):** The principle of public interest and social welfare is a core objective of Islamic governance. Historically, caliphs created a public treasury (*Baitul Mal*) to fund provisions for the poor, orphans, and needy. Modern applications include robust social safety nets and a focus on equitable distribution of wealth.
- **Rule of law:** The principle that no one is above the law is a key feature, reinforced by historical examples of leaders subjecting themselves to the same laws as ordinary citizens. This underpins efforts to fight corruption and ensure judicial fairness in contemporary states.
- **Diverse models of contemporary Islamic governance**
- The application of these principles in the modern era has led to a spectrum of political systems across Muslim-majority countries.
- **Secular democracies with Islamic political parties:** In countries like Turkey and Indonesia, Islamic-oriented parties participate in democratic elections and parliaments, blending Islamic values with democratic processes.

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Tunisia's Ennahda Movement also exemplifies this approach.

- **Hybrid systems:** Nations such as Pakistan and Egypt incorporate elements of both religious and secular governance. While democratic principles and elections exist, Islamic law often influences aspects of the legal system, particularly in family and personal status matters.
- **Theocracies and states with strong religious influence:** Some states, like Iran and Saudi Arabia, base their legal systems heavily on an interpretation of *Sharia* (Islamic law), with religious authority having a paramount role in the government.
- **Islamic finance:** A practical application of Islamic principles is seen in finance and banking, which adhere to ethical guidelines such as the prohibition of interest (*riba*) and investment in socially responsible ventures.

Challenges and debates

- Implementing Islamic principles in modern governance presents complex challenges that are subject to ongoing debate.
- **Balancing tradition and modernity:** Reconciling aspects of traditional Islamic law with modern legal standards, such as human rights and gender equality, is a persistent issue.
- **Legal pluralism and secular friction:** Many countries experience friction where Islamic legal principles coexist alongside or conflict with secular laws.
- **Divergent interpretations:** The lack of a single, monolithic interpretation of Islamic law leads to varied applications across different countries and communities, making uniform standards difficult to establish.

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- **Politicization of Islam:** The rise of extremist groups claiming to represent Islam has created a negative stigma, fueling Islamophobia and requiring clear distinction from mainstream Islamic principles of governance.
- **Defining sovereignty:** The concept of ultimate sovereignty belonging to God in Islam can conflict with modern democratic ideas of popular sovereignty, though many scholars argue they are compatible within certain limits.

Islamic civilization is founded on the core principles of justice, proper administration, good governance, and holistic development derived from the Quran and the Sunnah (Prophet Muhammad's teachings)

- The ultimate goal is to create a well-rounded and prosperous society for all people.

Civilization

- Islamic civilization is not limited by geography but rather is defined by shared values that foster the advancement of knowledge, arts, and technology.
- **A rich heritage:** During its "Golden Age," Islamic civilization absorbed and expanded upon knowledge from ancient Greek, Roman, and Persian traditions.
- **A universal approach:** It emphasizes moral and ethical foundations for all aspects of society—whether political, economic, or social—rather than being bound by specific racial or national origins.

Justice is a foundational pillar of Islam and is the basis for a secure and stable society.

- **Impartiality:** Justice must be applied equally to all, regardless of religion, wealth, or status. The Quran commands Muslims to judge with fairness and to be

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upholders of justice, even if it is against themselves or their own family.

- **Balance and equity:** The concept of *'adl 'adl* represents a balanced approach to all things, while *qist* refers to fairness and equity in human and societal relationships.
- **Combating oppression:** Islamic tradition stresses standing against injustice and oppression, a principle exemplified by the Prophet and his successors.

Administration and governance

- Islamic governance focuses on ensuring the public welfare through a just and accountable system.
- **Consultation (*shura shura*):** The Quran encourages leaders to consult with the people on matters of public concern. This ensures leaders make decisions in the best interest of the community.
- **Accountability (*amanah amanah*):** Rulers are seen as custodians of public trust (*amanah*) and are accountable to both God and the people. Early caliphs established models of service-oriented leadership and checks and balances to prevent corruption.
- **Holistic service:** A key principle of Islamic administration is that government is a service to the people. This includes providing for the needy, the elderly, and orphans, often through a public treasury (*Bayt al-Mal*).

Development

- In Islam, development is a holistic process that seeks to improve the well-being of society on all fronts—spiritual, moral, and material.
- **Human-centered:** The focus is on nurturing individuals so they can drive their own social and economic progress. The Islamic Development Bank, for instance, focuses on

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promoting social and economic development in its member countries.

- **Ethical and sustainable:** Development is guided by ethical principles and aims to remove deprivation across multiple dimensions, such as spiritual, educational, and economic.
 - **Shared prosperity:** Islamic principles promote equitable distribution of resources and wealth to ensure the welfare of all citizens, moving society towards a better state.
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Chapter 8: Patriotism, Endorsement and Advocacy of Government in Islam-Rights and Action

In Islam, patriotism is a natural love for one's homeland, considered part of faith, while loyalty to the government is a religious duty as long as its commands do not contradict divine law. Citizens have rights, including justice, freedom of conscience, and privacy, alongside responsibilities like contributing to society's welfare and upholding the law. The relationship is based on a social contract where citizens owe obedience to rulers, who in turn must govern with justice and consult their people. In modern contexts, this involves being a constructive citizen, promoting positive change, and rejecting actions like rebellion or treachery that threaten a nation's peace and security

In Islam, patriotism is seen as a natural and permissible human emotion, so long as it does not conflict with one's ultimate loyalty to God and the broader Muslim community (the Ummah). Islamic teachings condemn the negative aspects of nationalism that promote superiority or division, while encouraging the constructive love of one's homeland that promotes social good. Primary loyalty is to God and Islam, and love for one's country should not conflict with religious duties or cause prejudice.

The Islamic position on loving one's country

Support for a healthy love of country

- **A natural human feeling:** Islamic scholars have noted that it is part of human nature to love one's home and place of birth. The Prophet Muhammad himself showed deep affection for his hometown of Mecca, even after he was forced to migrate. Addressing Mecca upon his departure, he said, "I know you are the most beloved of God's land to me. If your people had not forced me to leave, I would never have left you".

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- **Loyalty as a part of faith:** While scholars debate the authenticity of the specific saying, "Love of one's country is part of faith," the general sentiment is supported by Islamic teachings. True loyalty is manifested through sincere actions, such as working for the nation's betterment, upholding agreements, and rejecting hypocrisy.
- **Praying for one's nation:** The Prophet Muhammad also prayed for blessings upon the city of Medina, asking God to make it more beloved to the Muslims than Mecca. This demonstrates that a deep, spiritual connection to one's land is an encouraged practice.

Responsibilities of Muslim citizens

- **Beneficial citizenship:** Being a good citizen is considered an Islamic duty. This involves active participation in civic life, contributing to society's progress, and upholding the law, provided it does not contravene Islamic principles.
- **Defending the homeland:** Islamic jurisprudence makes it an obligation for citizens to defend their country from foreign aggressors. If a Muslim land is invaded, its inhabitants are required to fight in its defense.
- **Working for the greater good:** Rather than voting for personal or factional benefit, Muslims are instructed to cast their votes with the betterment of the entire nation in mind.

In Islam, the relationship between a Muslim and their government is complex, balancing duties of loyalty, active civic engagement, and principled dissent. Key Islamic concepts distinguish permissible patriotism from prohibited nationalism and mandate a qualified obedience to rulers based on the supreme authority of God.

Patriotism vs. nationalism

While a natural love for one's homeland is affirmed in Islam, it is distinguished from aggressive, chauvinistic nationalism.

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- **Love of country (Patriotism):** A healthy, innate love for one's land is permissible and is even exemplified in the Prophet Muhammad's own life. When forced to leave Mecca, he expressed his deep affection for his hometown. Similarly, upon returning to Medina after a journey, he would urge his mount to move faster out of love for his city. This love is expressed through contributing to the country's welfare, upholding its laws, and striving for its progress.
- **Rejection of nationalism:** Exclusive nationalism (or *asabiyyah*) that demands ultimate loyalty to a tribe or nation over God is forbidden. This ideology is seen as a source of corruption and conflict. Islamic teachings emphasize the universal unity of the *Ummah* (global Muslim community) and all of humanity, superseding artificial geographical or ethnic boundaries.

Endorsement and advocacy of government: A Muslim's obedience to government is conditional on that government not commanding sin. This principle establishes a framework for citizen engagement and holding leaders accountable.

Principles of governance

- **Conditional obedience:** A foundational principle from the Prophet Muhammad's teachings is, "There is no obedience to a created being in disobedience to the Creator". While obedience to the ruler is generally obligatory, it ceases if a ruler commands something that is a clear sin or violation of Islamic law. This, however, does not give a person the right to rebel against the ruler's overall authority.
- **Consultation (*Shura*):** The Quran emphasizes that governance should be based on mutual consultation. In practice, this means rulers are obligated to consult with their people or their representatives on matters of public interest.

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This aligns with modern democratic principles of representation and inclusion.

- **Justice (Adl):** Another core principle is the establishment of justice. Rulers are to be just in their dealings and ensure the rights of all citizens are protected, including minorities. Historical Islamic leaders, like Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab, are celebrated for prioritizing public welfare and holding themselves publicly accountable.

Methods of advocacy and change: Islamic teachings encourage peaceful methods for correcting injustice and advising rulers rather than open rebellion, which can cause civil strife and chaos.

- **Speaking truth to power:** The Prophet Muhammad said that "the best jihad is a word of truth spoken in the presence of an unjust ruler". This indicates that speaking out against injustice is a brave and praiseworthy act in Islam.
- **Patience and counsel:** Islamic tradition generally advises patience when dealing with an unjust ruler, recommending sincere, private counsel to the leader rather than public denunciation that could destabilize society.
- **Political participation:** In modern contexts, many Islamic scholars encourage Muslims to participate in democratic processes, such as voting and running for office. The goal is to elect righteous and competent leaders who will promote justice and public welfare.
- **Avoiding rebellion:** Rebellion against the state is forbidden, even if the ruler is tyrannical, because it threatens the peace and security of the nation. Islam views the greater stability of the community as paramount.
- **Migration (Hijra):** If persecution under an unjust government becomes unbearable and one's religious rights

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are curtailed, Islam permits migration to a country where one can practice their faith freely.

Different contexts of engagement: The application of these principles depends on the specific political environment in which Muslims live.

- **In Muslim-majority countries:** In these nations, the debate often focuses on implementing Islamic values like *shura* and *adl* within existing or reformed systems of governance. Some Islamic movements advocate for reform through peaceful political participation, while others reject secular-style democracy entirely.
- **In minority countries:** Here, the framework emphasizes responsible citizenship, adhering to national laws, and engaging in the political process to protect Muslim rights and promote the common good. Examples include voting for candidates who will best serve the nation and advocating for policies that align with Islamic values, as long as these efforts do not compromise core religious principles.

Condemnation of tribalism (asabiyyah) and negative nationalism

Islam strictly prohibits forms of extreme nationalism and tribalism (asabiyyah) that promote ethnic, racial, or national pride at the expense of others. This is because such sentiments contradict the universal brotherhood of Islam.

- **The rejection of tribalism:** The Prophet Muhammad reportedly condemned tribalism as an act of the pre-Islamic era of ignorance (Jahiliyyah). He is said to have declared that "he is not one of us who calls to tribalism".
- **The Ummah over nationality:** The Islamic concept of the Ummah, or global Muslim community, supersedes any national or tribal affiliation. The Quran explicitly states that mankind was created into nations and tribes to "know one

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another," and that superiority is only measured by piety, not by lineage or race.

- **Historical context:** Historically, the rise of modern, secular nation-states in the 20th century created tension for many Muslims who viewed them as conflicting with the ideal of a single, unified Ummah. Some Islamic nationalists try to reconcile the two by presenting nationalism within a religious framework.

Navigating conflicting loyalties: In an interconnected world, many Muslims live as minorities in non-Muslim countries. Islamic scholars have provided guidance on how to balance their faith with their citizenship.

- **Religious rights:** If a Muslim's religious rights are being oppressed, the best course of action is to migrate to a place where they can practice their faith freely. Under no circumstances should they engage in rebellion or take the law into their own hands.
- **Obedience to lawful rules:** It is obligatory for Muslims to obey the laws of the country they reside in, whether it is Muslim- or non-Muslim-led, as long as these laws do not force them to violate Islamic principles.
- **Harmony and mutual respect:** True loyalty and patriotism, from an Islamic perspective, involve fostering an environment of justice and truth. This means working with fellow citizens, regardless of their background, for the common good.

Islam has complex and varied perspectives on the endorsement and advocacy of government, with interpretations rooted in the Quran, the Sunnah (Prophet Muhammad's practices), and historical context. Core Islamic principles of justice, consultation (*shura*), and public welfare (*maslaha*) establish a framework for governance, though they do not mandate a single governmental form.

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Core principles of Islamic governance

- **Amanah (Trust):** Leaders are considered trustees of Allah and the people. They are entrusted with managing public affairs and resources for the common good and are held accountable to God for their performance.
- **Adl (Justice):** The principle of justice is central. Rulers are commanded to judge fairly between people and ensure economic and social equity. Islamic law (*Sharia*) is meant to be applied equally to the ruler and the ruled.
- **Shura (Consultation):** The Quran advises leaders to consult with one another on matters of importance. This principle has been interpreted by many modern scholars as justification for representative and democratic institutions. Early caliphs, such as Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz, practiced open governance by seeking public input.
- **Maslaha (Public Welfare):** The government is responsible for the welfare of all citizens, including providing fundamental needs like food, shelter, and healthcare. Public welfare is a key objective of Islamic rule.
- **Obedience to rulers:** Muslims are generally instructed to be obedient to the government. However, this obedience is conditional. There is no duty of obedience if the ruler commands something contrary to divine law, and some historical scholars argued for opposition or removal of an unjust ruler if peaceful means fail.

Different interpretations of government: Due to the absence of a single, prescribed system in Islam, various interpretations of how government should be endorsed and advocated have developed over time:

- **Traditionalist view:** This view, favored by supporters of absolute monarchy and some radical movements, rejects

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democracy as a foreign import. It instead advocates for traditional Islamic institutions like *shura* and *ijma* (consensus).

- **Moderate/Pragmatic view:** Many modern Muslim thinkers advocate for integrating Islamic values like *shura*, *adl*, and *maslaha* with democratic institutions. They believe this can produce a form of representative government that reflects Islamic, rather than Western, liberal values. Examples like Pakistan's founding "Objectives Resolution" and the constitutional frameworks of Malaysia and Indonesia reflect this blended approach.
- **Liberal/Secularist view:** A smaller group of reformers and thinkers argues for a secular state that does not impose a single interpretation of Islamic law. Proponents of this view, such as Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, advocate for constitutionalism, human rights, and full citizenship, arguing this aligns more with the spirit of Islamic history.
- **Rejectionist view:** Extremist groups reject foreign political ideas and advocate for a rigid, comprehensive implementation of *Sharia* in an "Islamic state." Critics argue that such groups often misuse concepts like *hakimiyyah* (sovereignty of God) to justify authoritarian rule and neglect the pluralistic spirit of early Islamic governance.

Endorsement and advocacy in practice

- **Citizen participation:** Islamic texts encourage active participation in the betterment of the nation. In modern democratic contexts, this can mean voting for leaders who are seen as most deserving and best suited to serve the public good.
- **Peaceful advocacy:** Islam forbids treachery or rebellion against the state, as it can threaten peace and security.

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Instead, peaceful means of advocacy are encouraged. In cases of unbearable persecution, some interpretations advise migrating from the country rather than taking up arms.

- **Critical engagement:** Islamic political theory emphasizes checks and balances on governmental power through principles like accountability, an independent judiciary, and the right to express grievances. Early caliphs were accessible to the public to hear complaints directly.

Modern challenges: In today's complex world, Muslims face challenges in navigating the relationship between faith and governance. These include:

- Contrasting traditional Islamic political theory with modern democratic norms, such as liberal democracy and secularism.
- Addressing issues like corruption, which plagues many Muslim-majority nations, by re-emphasizing core Islamic ethical principles of justice and accountability.
- Reconciling the diversity of opinions on governance, ranging from calls for religious democracy to secular models, within the Muslim world.

In Islamic political thought, endorsement and advocacy regarding government are complex issues with a wide range of interpretations, principles, and historical precedents. This diversity of opinion stems from variations in theological viewpoints, legal schools, and responses to modern political realities like colonialism and secularism.

Core principles informing endorsement and advocacy: Several key Islamic principles influence how Muslims approach politics and government:

- **Justice (‘Adl):** Ensuring justice is a fundamental goal of Islamic governance. The Quran commands Muslims to "be persistently standing firm in justice" (*Quran* 4 : 135*Quran*

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4: 135). This principle compels believers to advocate for fair and equitable treatment, and to oppose oppression and injustice in all forms.

- **Consultation (Shura):** The Quran advises leaders to consult with the people on important matters (*Quran* 3 : 159,42 : 38 *Quran* 3 : 159,42: 38). Many modern Muslim scholars interpret *shura* as a basis for representative government and democratic institutions. It provides a Quranic justification for the public's active role in political life through dialogue and participation.
- **Public Interest (Maslaha):** This concept refers to the overall welfare of the community. It gives Muslim leaders and citizens a basis for supporting or opposing government actions based on their benefit to society.
- **Accountability (Hesab):** In Islamic governance, rulers are considered accountable to both the people and God. This principle empowers citizens to express grievances and demand responsibility from their leaders, as exemplified by the practices of early caliphs.
- **Enjoining good and forbidding evil (Al-amr bi'l-ma'ruf wa'n-nahy 'an al-munkar):** This moral duty extends to the public sphere, compelling Muslims to speak out against injustice and corruption. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) described one of the best forms of *jihad* as speaking truth to a tyrannical ruler.

Differing approaches to government endorsement Contemporary Muslims hold various viewpoints on political engagement and government endorsement:

1. Moderate Islamic democracy

- **Advocates:** Scholars like Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Rashid al-Ghannushi.

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- **Position:** Argues that democratic procedures, such as elections, are compatible with and even required by Islamic principles like *shura* and accountability. This approach distinguishes between adopting democratic procedures and adopting a secular philosophy that may conflict with Islamic law.

2. Rejectionist Islamism

- **Advocates:** Islamist thinkers like Sayyid Qutb and Abul A'la Maududi.
- **Position:** Rejects Western-style democracy, viewing it as a foreign imposition. They advocate for a comprehensive implementation of Sharia law and often condemn governments that do not enforce it fully. Some strands, like Salafi jihadism, reject the existing secular system entirely, advocating for revolution to establish a Caliphate.

3. Liberal Islamic view

- **Advocates:** Intellectuals like Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im and Muhammad Asad.
- **Position:** Stresses democratic principles like pluralism and freedom of thought. An-Na'im argues for a secular state built on constitutionalism and human rights, believing it to be more consistent with Islamic history than visions of an Islamic state. Muhammad Asad considered democracy perfectly compatible with Islam, as long as it operates within the limits of divine law.

4. Quietist and Salafi views

- **Position:** Historically, some Salafi scholars have advocated for political quietism, advising against rebellion even against an oppressive ruler to prevent civil strife. However, attitudes have evolved, with some Salafi scholars now justifying participation in democratic processes as a means to vote for

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the "lesser of two evils" or to advance their agenda within a secular system.

Obedience to rulers and its limits: The question of obeying rulers has been a long-standing debate in Islamic jurisprudence:

- **The duty of obedience:** Many hadiths emphasize obeying the ruler to maintain civil order and prevent chaos.
- **The limit of obedience:** A crucial principle, universally accepted, is "there is no obedience in sin". If a ruler commands something contrary to divine law, Muslims have a duty to disobey.

Political Endorsement in a minority context: For Muslims living as minorities in non-Muslim-majority countries, political engagement involves different considerations, focusing on preserving their religious identity while advocating within the legal framework for the common good.

- **Protecting rights:** Participating in politics is a way to protect religious freedoms and ensure that laws do not discriminate against the Muslim community.
- **Promoting justice:** Engagement is seen as a means to promote justice and influence policies that align with Islamic values.
- **Selecting candidates:** Muslims are permitted to vote for candidates who best serve the interests of justice and the common good, even if they are non-Muslims.

Patriotism is loyalty to one's country and its core ideals, not blind allegiance to a specific government. True patriots can, and often do, criticize their government's actions to hold it accountable to the nation's values. Confusing unconditional government support with patriotism can enable authoritarianism, suppress dissent, and harm a nation's democratic principles. Advocacy for a government is only a patriotic act when the government is acting in the country's best interests.

Chapter 9: Science, Engineering and Technology Innovations in Islam-Humanity and Support

During the Islamic Golden Age (roughly 8th to 13th centuries), innovations in science, engineering, and technology led to major advancements that significantly supported and improved human life. Fueled by a cultural atmosphere that valued learning and inquiry, Muslim scholars drew upon the knowledge of ancient civilizations and introduced a new, empirical approach to science. Their work resulted in breakthroughs in mathematics, medicine, engineering, and optics that improved health, daily life, and intellectual pursuits

Science and technology in Islam underwent a significant "Golden Age," spanning roughly 750–1250 CE, during which Muslim scholars made foundational contributions to fields like algebra, medicine, optics, and astronomy. This era was driven by a religious encouragement to seek knowledge, a synthesis of ancient wisdom, and an environment of cultural exchange. Modern science continues to be encouraged in Islam, with a focus on using knowledge for the benefit of humanity and upholding ethical principles.

The Islamic Golden Age, from the 8th to the 14th centuries, was a period of extraordinary scientific and technological development that built upon and surpassed the knowledge of earlier civilizations. Islamic scholars and engineers made groundbreaking advancements in mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and chemistry, and introduced new technologies that were later transmitted to Europe, profoundly influencing the Renaissance and Scientific Revolution.

The Islamic Golden Age produced an array of prominent scientists and polymaths who made enduring contributions to mathematics, medicine, astronomy, and other fields. Their work built upon ancient knowledge and was influential in the development of science in both the Islamic world and Europe.

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Mathematics and astronomy

- **Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi (c. 780–c. 850):** A Persian polymath and the "father of algebra," he wrote the influential book *Kitab al-Jabr wa al-Muqabala*.
 - **Algebra:** His work provided the first systematic solutions for linear and quadratic equations and established algebra as an independent discipline.
 - **Algorithms:** The term "algorithm" is derived from the Latinized version of his name, and he was instrumental in introducing the Hindu-Arabic decimal system to the Western world.
- **Al-Battani (c. 858–929):** Known in the West as Albatennius, this astronomer and mathematician produced astronomical tables that improved upon those of Ptolemy. His work on trigonometry introduced the use of sines and tangents.
- **Omar Khayyam (1048–1131):** A Persian mathematician, astronomer, and poet, Khayyam made significant advancements in algebraic geometry. He also accurately calculated the length of the solar year, leading to the creation of the Jalali calendar, a precursor to the modern Persian calendar.
- **Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (1201–1274):** This Persian polymath made significant contributions to astronomy and mathematics, including the development of trigonometry as a separate field. His astronomical work at the Maragha observatory influenced later models of the solar system.

Medicine and chemistry

- **Abu Bakr al-Razi (Rhazes) (c. 865–925):** Considered one of the greatest physicians of the medieval period, al-Razi was a proponent of experimental and evidence-based medicine.

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- **Smallpox and measles:** His most famous medical work, *The Book of Smallpox and Measles*, provided the first clinical description of these diseases and differentiated them from each other.
 - **Hospitals and psychiatry:** As the chief physician in Baghdad, he is credited with establishing the first psychiatric ward, emphasizing a medical approach to treating mental illness.
- **Ibn Sina (Avicenna) (c. 980–1037):** A Persian physician and philosopher, his most influential work was *The Canon of Medicine* (*Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*).
 - **Medical encyclopedia:** This five-volume medical encyclopedia summarized all known medical knowledge of his time and remained a standard textbook in Europe until the 18th century.
 - **Experimental medicine:** He outlined criteria for conducting clinical trials to test the effectiveness of drugs.
- **Jabir ibn Hayyan (Geber) (c. 721–c. 815):** The "father of chemistry," Jabir emphasized systematic experimentation in alchemy, transforming it into a scientific discipline.
 - **Chemical processes:** He developed and perfected chemical processes such as distillation, crystallization, and evaporation.
 - **Chemical equipment and substances:** He is credited with the invention of the alembic still and the discovery of strong acids like nitric, hydrochloric, and sulfuric acid.

Optics and engineering

- **Ibn al-Haytham (Alhazen) (c. 965–c. 1040):** An Iraqi physicist and mathematician often called "the father of modern optics" and "the world's first true scientist".

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- **Theory of vision:** His *Book of Optics* correctly explained that vision occurs when light reflects from objects into the eye, debunking the Greek belief that the eye emitted light.
- **Scientific method:** Al-Haytham is considered a pioneer of the modern scientific method, emphasizing controlled experimentation to verify theories.
- **Al-Jazari (1136–1206):** A Mesopotamian mechanical engineer and inventor known for his book *Kitab al-Hiyal (The Book of Ingenious Devices)*. It described and illustrated numerous automated machines, including clocks, fountains, and other mechanisms.

Other fields

- **Al-Kindi (c. 801–873):** A polymath who worked in philosophy, mathematics, and medicine. He was a pioneer of cryptanalysis and cryptology, developing frequency analysis for breaking ciphers.
- **Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406):** A Tunisian scholar who is regarded as a precursor to modern sociology, historiography, and economics. His work *Muqaddimah* laid the foundations for historical analysis and social science.

The Islamic Golden Age

- **Foundations:** The development was spurred by the Quran and Hadith, which emphasize seeking knowledge and understanding the universe.
- **Knowledge synthesis:** Scholars translated and built upon the works of Greek, Roman, Persian, and Indian scientists, creating a new, expanded body of knowledge.

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- **Cultural melting pot:** A diverse population from various backgrounds within the empire shared, translated, and exchanged ideas, fostering scientific creativity.

Modern Islamic perspective

- **Religious encouragement:** The pursuit of science is often seen as a religious duty to understand God's creation, according to Wikipedia.
- **Ethical framework:** Technology is viewed as a tool whose value depends on its use. Islamic ethics guide its development toward sustainable and beneficial outcomes for all of humanity.

Factors driving scientific progress: Several elements contributed to the flourishing of science and technology in the Islamic world:

Catalysts for development

- **Religious impetus:** The Quran and Hadith encouraged Muslims to seek knowledge and reflect on the natural world, seeing science as a way to understand and appreciate the Creator.
- **Translation Movement:** Caliphs of the Abbasid Dynasty sponsored massive efforts to translate classical knowledge from Greek, Persian, and Indian texts into Arabic. The most famous center for this was the House of Wisdom (*Bayt al-Hikma*) in Baghdad.
- **Paper production:** The introduction of papermaking technology from China enabled the large-scale production of books, democratizing access to knowledge. This led to a thriving book culture that aided the spread of scientific and technological ideas.
- **Government patronage:** Rulers of the Abbasid Caliphate, like Harun al-Rashid and al-Ma'mun, actively supported scholarship. Al-Ma'mun founded the House of Wisdom in

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Baghdad, a renowned library, academy, and translation center.

- **Translation movement:** Scholars translated classic Greek, Indian, and Persian texts on science and philosophy into Arabic. This preserved ancient knowledge and made it available to a wide audience for the first time.
- **Universal use of Arabic:** With Arabic serving as the language of international scholarship across the vast Islamic empire, knowledge could be shared easily among different cultures.
- **Introduction of paper:** The diffusion of papermaking technology from China made books cheaper and more accessible. This led to a boom in intellectual activity and literacy.
- **Emphasis on experimentation:** Islamic scholars adopted and refined the scientific method, emphasizing empirical experimentation and quantification rather than relying solely on theoretical deduction.
- **Diversity and tolerance:** The House of Wisdom and other centers of learning were cosmopolitan hubs where scholars of different faiths and backgrounds, including Muslims, Christians, and Jews, collaborated peacefully.

Key scientific fields and achievements

Mathematics

- **Algebra:** Persian mathematician Al-Khwarizmi is credited as a founder of modern algebra. The term "algebra" comes from the title of his book, *Al-Kitab al-Mukhtasar fi Hisab al-Jabr wal-Muqabala*.
- **Algorithms and numerals:** Al-Khwarizmi's work also popularized the Hindu-Arabic numeral system, including the

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concept of zero, in the Islamic world and Europe. The word "algorithm" is a Latinized version of his name.

- **Trigonometry:** Islamic scholars like Al-Battani and Nasir al-Din al-Tusi developed trigonometry as a distinct field of study. They developed functions like sine, cosine, and tangent and established the spherical law of sines, which proved vital for astronomy.

Medicine

- **Clinical practice:** Islamic physicians established the world's first formal hospitals, or *bimaristans*, offering structured treatment and teaching.
- **Medical texts:** Ibn Sina, known as Avicenna in the West, authored *The Canon of Medicine*, a multi-volume encyclopedia that was a standard medical text in Europe for centuries.
- **Pharmacology:** Scholars compiled encyclopedias describing hundreds of drugs made from medicinal plants. Al-Razi systematically documented substances and recognized the contagious nature of diseases like smallpox and measles.
- **Circulatory system:** In the 13th century, Ibn al-Nafis correctly described the pulmonary circulation of blood, centuries before European scholars.
- **Surgery:** Al-Zahrawi, or Abulcasis, produced a 30-volume medical encyclopedia, *Al-Tasrif*, which included a detailed volume on surgery featuring pioneering instruments and procedures.

Optics and Physics

- **Scientific method:** Ibn al-Haytham, considered the "father of optics," pioneered the modern scientific method by emphasizing experimentation to test hypotheses. He

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famously challenged Greek theories of vision with his own research.

- **Camera obscura:** Ibn al-Haytham developed the pinhole camera (*camera obscura*) to demonstrate that light travels in straight lines.
- **Theory of motion:** Islamic scholars critiqued Aristotelian physics. For example, Ibn Sina's theory of *mayl* was a precursor to the concept of momentum, and Abu'l-Barakat al-Baghdadi correctly argued that force is proportional to acceleration, not velocity.

Astronomy

- **Observatories:** State-sponsored observatories were built to produce and verify astronomical data. These facilities became sophisticated research centers with large, precise instruments.
- **Accurate measurements:** Astronomers like Al-Battani and Al-Biruni made highly accurate calculations, including the length of the solar year and the radius of the Earth.
- **Revised models:** Scholars at the Maragha and Samarkand observatories revised and corrected the Ptolemaic model of the cosmos, with Nasir al-Din al-Tusi and Ibn al-Shatir developing new geometrical techniques that later influenced Copernicus.
- **Nomenclature:** Many star names still used today, such as Aldebaran and Vega, have Arabic origins.

Engineering and Technology

- **Automata and mechanics:** The Banu Musa brothers and Al-Jazari were prolific inventors who detailed their automated mechanical devices in texts like the *Book of Ingenious Devices*. Al-Jazari invented a crankshaft and built intricate clocks.

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- **Hydraulics:** Islamic engineers created sophisticated water management systems, including canals, aqueducts, and automated water-raising machines.
- **Architecture:** Islamic architecture developed new construction techniques, such as the pointed arch, ribbed vaulting, and intricate geometric tilework.

Decline and legacy

The scientific dominance of the Islamic world gradually declined due to political instability, including the Mongol sack of Baghdad in 1258, and a shift away from state patronage for empirical science.

However, the legacy of Islamic science was profound and long-lasting. Islamic knowledge was transmitted to Europe through trade and translation centers in places like Al-Andalus (Spain) and Sicily, where Arabic texts were translated into Latin. This rich body of work helped spark the European Renaissance and provided a critical foundation for modern science.

Islamic scientists and innovators made foundational contributions across numerous fields during the Islamic Golden Age, roughly the 8th to 14th centuries. Building on the knowledge of earlier civilizations, Muslim scholars developed a rigorous, experimental approach to science that profoundly influenced the European Renaissance and modern scientific method.

Science and Astronomy: Islamic astronomers advanced celestial mechanics and navigation for practical applications, such as determining prayer times and the direction of Mecca.

- **Astrolabe:** Muslim astronomers added angular scales and new functions to the ancient Greek astrolabe, turning it into a powerful navigational and astronomical tool for charting star positions.

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- **Observatories:** They established some of the world's first specialized observatories, which allowed for the accurate tracking of celestial bodies and the compilation of precise astronomical tables.
 - **Earth's tilt:** Al-Battani (c. 858–929) accurately calculated the tilt of the Earth's axis and the length of the solar year.
 - **Tusi-couple:** Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (1201–1274) created a mathematical model for planetary motion that influenced the work of Copernicus centuries later.
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Medicine: Islamic medical scholars and physicians laid the groundwork for modern medicine through systematic study and the establishment of dedicated hospitals and Institutions.

- ***The Canon of Medicine:*** Avicenna (Ibn Sina; c. 980–1037) authored this comprehensive medical encyclopedia, which served as a standard medical text in both the Muslim world and Europe for centuries.
- **Experimental medicine:** Avicenna pioneered experimental medicine by describing the use of clinical trials to determine the efficacy of new drugs.
- **Hospitals and mental health:** The first public hospitals (bimaristans) with dedicated wards for different ailments were built in the Islamic world. Ahmad ibn Tulun established one in Cairo in 872, offering free care and music therapy for mental health patients.
- **Surgery:** Al-Zahrawi (Abulcasis; c. 936–1013) is considered the "father of modern surgery." His 30-volume book, *Al-Tasrif*, included detailed descriptions of surgical procedures and diagrams of over 200 surgical instruments, many of which are still used today.

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- **Pulmonary circulation:** Ibn al-Nafis (1213–1288) was the first to accurately describe the process of pulmonary circulation.
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Chemistry: Islamic scholars transformed alchemy into the foundation for modern chemistry by emphasizing experimentation and quantitative methods.

- **Jabir ibn Hayyan:** Considered the "father of chemistry," he introduced experimental investigation and key chemical processes like distillation, filtration, and crystallization. He also discovered sulfuric and nitric acids.
 - **Al-Razi:** This Persian polymath (c. 865–925) pioneered practical chemistry by classifying substances and discovering kerosene and ethanol.
 - **Scientific equipment:** Islamic chemists invented and refined laboratory equipment such as the alembic and retort.
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Mathematics: Islamic mathematicians were instrumental in preserving and advancing Greek and Indian mathematical knowledge.

- **Algebra and algorithms:** Al-Khwarizmi (c. 780–850) gave his name to the algorithm and is considered the "father of algebra." His book *Kitab al-Jabr* provided the first systematic solutions for linear and quadratic equations.
- **Indian numerals and zero:** Islamic scholars adopted and enhanced the Hindu-Arabic numeral system, including the concept of zero, which was then transmitted to Europe.

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- **Trigonometry:** Muslim scholars developed trigonometry as a distinct field of study, making critical advancements like the tangent and sine functions.
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Engineering and Technology: Islamic engineers designed sophisticated mechanical devices for practical purposes, including timekeeping and water management.

- **Automata:** The Banu Musa brothers (9th century) and Al-Jazari (c. 1136–1206) created programmable automata and advanced mechanical devices. Al-Jazari's work is considered a precursor to modern robotics.
 - **Clocks:** Al-Jazari's elephant clock and water clocks employed sophisticated engineering, featuring automatons and weight-driven mechanisms.
 - **Crankshaft:** Al-Jazari's water-raising pump included the earliest known use of a crankshaft to convert rotary motion to reciprocating motion.
 - **Water management:** Engineers developed advanced irrigation systems, including waterwheels (norias), underground canals (qanats), and water pumps to manage water in arid regions.
 - **Windmills:** The first recorded windmills, with a vertical-axle design, appeared in Persia between the 7th and 9th centuries.
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Optics Ibn al-Haytham's work in optics established a new understanding of vision and light through experimentation.

- **Camera obscura:** Ibn al-Haytham (Alhazen; c. 965–1040) used the camera obscura (pinhole camera) to prove that light travels in straight lines and that vision occurs when light

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reflects off objects and enters the eye, overturning ancient Greek theories.

- **Magnifying glass:** He also provided the first description of a convex lens used for magnification.
- **Experimental method:** His work was a major step toward the modern scientific method, emphasizing hypotheses and controlled experimentation.

Other innovations

- **Coffee:** The earliest evidence of coffee drinking dates to the 15th-century Sufi monasteries in Yemen.
- **Fountain pen:** In the 10th century, a Fatimid caliph in Egypt commissioned a pen that held ink in a reservoir, allowing for writing without staining one's clothes.
- **Soap:** Hard, scented soap was produced in the Middle East during the Golden Age, promoting hygiene and inspiring European practices.
- **Music:** Musical instruments like the oud, a forerunner to the European lute, were refined and developed in the Islamic world.

House of Wisdom (*Bayt al-Hikmah*): Founded during the Abbasid Caliphate, the House of Wisdom was more than a library; it was a public academy and intellectual hub.

During the Golden Age of Islam, Baghdad's intellectual centers, particularly the House of Wisdom and the Mustansiriya Madrasah, played a transformative role. They served as engines of a massive translation movement, fostered original research and innovation, and created a dynamic, interdisciplinary academic culture.

The translation movement

- **Massive, state-sponsored effort:** Under Caliphs Harun al-Rashid and especially his son al-Ma'mun (reigned 813–833),

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the House of Wisdom became the center of a massive, well-funded translation project.

- **Preservation of ancient knowledge:** Scholars translated a vast range of ancient texts from Greek, Syriac, Persian, and Sanskrit into Arabic. This work preserved the knowledge of ancient civilizations, including the works of figures like Aristotle, Euclid, and Galen, from being lost to history.
- **High financial incentive:** The Abbasid state placed enormous value on this work. The Caliph al-Ma'mun reportedly paid translators the weight of the book they translated in gold. This attracted top scholars from all over the world, including Nestorian Christians, who were crucial to the process due to their command of Syriac and Greek.

Original research and innovation

- **Building on translated knowledge:** Scholars did not simply copy the texts. They corrected, critiqued, and built upon the ancient works, leading to significant new discoveries.
- **Diverse fields of study:** The House of Wisdom was a hotbed for original research across multiple fields, including:
 - **Mathematics:** The Persian mathematician Al-Khwarizmi, for whom the term "algorithm" is named, developed algebra there.
 - **Astronomy:** Caliph al-Ma'mun funded the construction of the first astronomical observatories in Baghdad to verify and update Ptolemy's data.
 - **Medicine:** The physician Hunayn ibn Ishaq translated nearly all of Greek medical literature into Arabic and oversaw a medical school and pharmacy.
- **"Big science":** Al-Ma'mun initiated large-scale, state-funded research projects, such as an effort to map the world

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and measure the Earth's circumference, considered an early example of modern scientific research.

Structured learning

- **Comprehensive curriculum:** The madrasah provided a systematic education that went far beyond purely religious study. It included:
 - Islamic law and jurisprudence for the four major Sunni schools of thought.
 - Secular subjects such as medicine, mathematics, literature, and philosophy.
- **State funding and welfare:** The institution, founded by Caliph al-Mustansir, offered free education and generous support to its students, including lodging, food, clothes, and monthly stipends.
- **Integrated medical practice:** The madrasah included a hospital on-site, allowing medical students to gain practical experience. It also housed a renowned, monumental water-powered clock.

Rich scholarly resources

- **Vast library:** The Mustansiriya housed an immense library, initially stocked with 80,000 volumes, which later grew considerably. This resource was crucial for the intensive research conducted at the madrasah.
- **Center for debate:** The university featured lecture halls (iwans) where students and professors could engage in scholarly discussion and debate.

Mustansiriya Madrasah: Established much later, in 1227 CE, the Mustansiriya represented the evolution of higher education into a formal university-like institution.

The Mustansiriya Madrasah, established in Baghdad in 1227 CE, was a pivotal development in the history of higher education in the Islamic world. Unlike earlier madrasahs, which focused primarily on religious

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sciences, Mustansiriya adopted a more comprehensive, structured, and institutionalized approach to learning, making it akin to a formal university.

Features that made Mustansiriya a formal university-like institution

- **Broadened curriculum:** Earlier madrasahs largely focused on Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh fiqh*) and theology. Mustansiriya expanded its curriculum significantly to include a wide array of non-religious subjects, such as medicine, mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy. This multidisciplinary approach distinguished it from its predecessors.
- **Formal structure:** The madrasah was designed as a unified complex, providing a formal setting for advanced study. It was organized with four lecture halls (*iwans*), each dedicated to teaching the legal doctrines of one of the four major Sunni schools of thought: Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali.
- **Integrated facilities:** The complex included a hospital (*bimaristan bimaristan*), a pharmacy, a public bath (*hammam hammam*), and a kitchen. This integration of medical education with practical hospital experience was a major step forward in institutionalizing professional training.
- **Extensive library:** The institution housed a massive library, initially endowed with 80,000 volumes by the caliph and reportedly growing to 400,000. This extensive collection supported a wide range of studies and academic research.
- **State-funded and endowed:** As a *waqf* (charitable trust), the madrasah received state support that provided free education, lodging, food, clothing, and a monthly stipend for its students. This financial security allowed students to focus on their studies without other concerns.

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- **Faculty and administration:** The institution was managed by a complex administration and featured a highly qualified faculty. A senior physician oversaw the medical school and trained students, and scholars were chosen based on their distinction.
- **Merit-based system:** Students entered Mustansiriya through a competitive examination and, upon completion, were qualified for prestigious government positions as viziers, judges, and professors.

Architecture and design

- **Built for purpose:** The madrasah was constructed between 1227 and 1233 under the Abbasid Caliph al-Mustansir, after whom it was named. Spanning 4,836 square meters, the two-story brick edifice featured a grand, central rectangular courtyard.
- **Four iwans:** The most prominent architectural feature was the presence of four *iwans* (vaulted halls), each dedicated to a specific one of the four main Sunni schools of Islamic law (*madhabs*): Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali. This design institutionalized the study of different legal doctrines within a single complex.
- **Integrated facilities:** The complex was designed as a self-sufficient campus. It included a public hospital (*bimaristan*), a pharmacy, a kitchen, a library, student residences, a bathhouse (*hammam*), and food storage. This holistic approach catered to the practical needs of its academic community.
- **Sustainable design:** The architecture also incorporated sustainable features, such as high ceilings and balconies for ventilation and natural light, and the use of thick brick walls for thermal insulation.

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Curriculum and scholarship

- **Broad academic program:** Beyond religious law and Quranic studies, the curriculum at Mustansiriya was remarkably broad. It included fields like medicine, mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, and Arabic literature.
- **Medical school:** The madrasah housed a dedicated medical school, where students learned from a senior physician and gained practical experience at the attached hospital.
- **Extensive library:** The institution was home to a massive library, which began with a collection of 80,000 volumes donated by the caliph and reportedly grew to 400,000. A large water-driven clock was placed at the entrance of the madrasah to indicate the hours of prayer and other functions.

Students and faculty

- **Exceptional scholars:** The caliph personally selected the "most eminent and distinguished" teachers for the school. Students who wished to enroll were required to pass a competitive entrance examination.
- **Financial support:** The madrasah operated as a *waqf* (endowment), providing students with free education, lodging, food, clothing, and a monthly stipend. It even housed and educated 30 orphans.
- **Career paths:** Upon graduation, students could access highly sought-after positions in the Abbasid government, such as viziers, diplomats, judges, or professors.

Historical context and legacy

- **Evolution of the madrasah:** The Mustansiriya is often contrasted with the earlier Nizamiya Madrasah (founded in 1067). While the Nizamiya established state-funded religious instruction, the Mustansiriya took the institution

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further by incorporating a wider array of scientific and medical studies.

- **Survival and legacy:** The Mustansiriya Madrasah was one of the few buildings in Baghdad to survive the Mongol invasion of 1258, albeit with subsequent reconstruction. Its legacy continues today, as the site of the original building now forms part of the modern Mustansiriya University. It stands as a testament to the intellectual and architectural achievements of the Abbasid era.

Significance in the evolution of higher education

The Mustansiriya Madrasah built upon the foundation laid by earlier institutions like the Nizamiya Madrasah (founded in 1067), which formalized and state-funded the Sunni madrasah system. Mustansiriya went further by incorporating scientific disciplines into its official curriculum and bringing them into a single, integrated campus.

While some debate exists over classifying medieval madrasahs as "universities" in the modern sense, institutions like the Mustansiriya represent a key stage in the evolution of formal higher education. They expanded beyond purely religious instruction to encompass a wide array of knowledge, feature a structured curriculum, and provide extensive resources for students and scholars. Mustansiriya's model of integrated learning and robust institutional support laid the groundwork for future educational institutions in the Islamic world and beyond.

Enduring impact

The destruction of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258, which included the burning of its libraries, was a tragic loss, but the legacy of its institutions lived on. The systematic, interdisciplinary approach to learning pioneered in Baghdad was replicated in other Islamic cities like Cordoba and Cairo and ultimately influenced the establishment and curriculum of European universities during the Middle Ages.

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During the Islamic Golden Age, a period from the 8th to the 14th century, the Islamic world became a global center for scientific, technological, and intellectual progress, driven by religious and governmental support for learning. Muslim scholars, operating from academic institutions like Baghdad's "House of Wisdom," actively translated, assimilated, and built upon the scientific heritage of ancient Greece, India, and Persia. This culminated in groundbreaking original research and invention across numerous fields, including mathematics, medicine, optics, and engineering. These innovations, such as the development of algebra, the establishment of the first hospitals, and the invention of the scientific method, were later transmitted to Europe, providing crucial foundations that helped spark the European Renaissance.

Chapter 10: Sustainable Development Goals and Islam-Adjunct and Participation

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Islam are highly compatible, with Islamic principles providing a strong ethical and moral foundation for Muslim participation in achieving the global agenda. Fundamental Islamic concepts, such as humans acting as a vicegerent (*khalifah*) or trustee over the Earth, and the objective of Islamic law (*Maqasidal – Shari'ah*) to promote public interest (*maslahah*), directly align with and reinforce the SDGs' goals for environmental stewardship, social justice, and economic well-being. This overlap encourages Muslim individuals and organizations to participate through various avenues, including utilizing Islamic social finance instruments like zakat (obligatory alms) and waqf (endowments) to address poverty and fund essential services, promoting ethical consumption and environmental conservation, and upholding justice and moderation (*wasatiyyah*) in all societal dealings. By drawing on these deep-rooted principles, Muslim communities are actively engaged in collaborative partnerships and institutional efforts to address global challenges, demonstrating that faith can be a powerful driver for sustainable development.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity for all by 2030. Key goals include No Poverty (SDG 1), Zero Hunger (SDG 2), Good Health and Well-being (SDG 3), Quality Education (SDG 4), and Climate Action (SDG 13). You can find a detailed PDF of the 17 SDGs on the official UN website for Sustainable Development and Scribd.

Islam's core principles of justice, social welfare, and environmental stewardship provide a strong philosophical and ethical alignment with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Islamic worldview sees humans as stewards (*khalifah*) of the Earth, entrusted with maintaining cosmic balance (*mizan*) and using resources responsibly for the benefit of all creation.

Here is a breakdown of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and Overview in Islam

SDG 1: No Poverty in Islam

Ending poverty in all its forms everywhere.

Islam addresses poverty through a multi-faceted approach that includes spiritual obligations and economic policies, such as making Zakat (obligatory charity) and Sadaqah (voluntary charity) mandatory, prohibiting usury (*riba riba*), encouraging hard work and [agriculture](#), and fostering social solidarity and collective responsibility to alleviate poverty in all its forms. This framework emphasizes redistributing wealth, promoting sustainable development, and providing for the needy through measures like [endowments](#) (*Waqf Waqf*) and microfinance.

Spiritual and social solutions

- **Obligatory and voluntary charity:** Zakat, a mandatory 2.5% annual tax on a portion of wealth, must be collected and distributed to the poor and needy. Voluntary charity (Sadaqah) is also strongly encouraged to further reduce inequality.
- **Spiritual refuge:** Muslims are taught to seek refuge in Allah from poverty and are encouraged to work and earn a living.
- **Social solidarity:** Islam promotes social cooperation and responsibility, with the belief that a community should support its members.
- **Prohibition of exploitative practices:** The prohibition of usury (*riba riba*) and gambling is a key principle to prevent exploitation and promote a fairer economic system.

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Economic and structural solutions

- **Fair economic system:** Islam advocates for a fair and equitable economic and financial system to combat poverty.
- **Waqf (endowments):** Creating endowments is seen as a way to fund projects like hospitals, schools, and other community services.
- **Promoting agriculture:** Islam encourages the noble profession of farming to provide food security and economic opportunity.
- **Empowering the poor:** Islamic principles are used to develop programs for sustainable human development, such as microfinance and vocational training, to help people break the cycle of poverty.
- **Good governance:** Islam promotes clean governance free from corruption and nepotism, which is seen as crucial for development and welfare.

Modern applications

- **Modern Islamic organizations:**
Many Islamic charities use Zakat funds for long-term poverty reduction efforts like scholarships, housing projects, and support for microenterprises.
 - **Islamic social finance:**
Concepts like Islamic social finance are being used to fund poverty alleviation efforts, aligning with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 1: No Poverty.
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SDG 2: Zero Hunger in Islam

Ending hunger, achieving food security, improved nutrition,
and promoting sustainable agriculture.

Based on the principles and teachings found in the Quran and the Sunnah, Islam provides a comprehensive framework for achieving SDG 2, which aims for zero hunger, food security, and sustainable agriculture. Islamic teachings emphasize social justice, compassion, and the responsible use of natural resources to ensure all members of society have access to nutritious food.

Ending hunger and achieving food security

Islam frames feeding the hungry as a moral and religious duty, not merely an act of charity.

- **Mandatory and voluntary charity:** The Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) call upon Muslims to provide for those in need through both obligatory (Zakat) and voluntary (Sadaqa) means.
 - **Zakat:** This is one of the Five Pillars of Islam, requiring eligible Muslims to donate a fixed portion of their wealth to the poor and needy each year. Zakat functions as a system of wealth redistribution to reduce economic inequality.
 - **Sadaqa:** Voluntary charity can take many forms, including food, money, or acts of kindness. Sharing food with neighbors, regardless of their faith, is a highly encouraged act of Sadaqa.
- **Emphasis on human dignity:** The Quran explicitly states that failing to feed the poor is a trait of a disbeliever. Prophet Muhammad stated that "the believer is not he who eats full while his neighbor is hungry".

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- **Responsibility for all creatures:** Islamic teachings extend the duty to provide food beyond humans. A famous hadith recounts a woman being condemned to hellfire for failing to feed her cat, highlighting the principle of feeding all living creatures.

Improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture

Islamic principles align with sustainable agriculture practices through stewardship (Khilafah), moderation (mizan), and responsibility.

Responsible stewardship and environmental balance

- **Trusteeship (Khilafah):** Humans are appointed as vicegerents, or stewards, of the Earth. This role requires the responsible and careful use of natural resources like land and water, rather than wasteful exploitation.
- **Ecological balance (Mizan):** The Quran frequently refers to the universe being created in a state of balance. Overconsumption, waste, and pollution are seen as transgressions that disrupt this divinely appointed order.
- **Conservation of resources:** Prophet Muhammad emphasized water conservation, advising against wasting water even when at a running river. This highlights a long-standing tradition of mindful resource management.

Fair and ethical production

- **Halalan Tayyiban:** Islamic guidelines require food to be not only permissible (Halal) but also wholesome and of high quality (Tayyib). This principle ensures food is sourced and produced ethically and is safe, clean, and nutritious.
- **Ethical treatment:** Islamic teachings protect the rights of agricultural workers by ensuring they are paid fairly and promptly. They also prohibit the unethical and excessive exploitation of animals and land.

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- **Protection of biodiversity:** Prophet Muhammad established protected zones known as *hima* for the conservation of rangelands and wildlife. Islamic law also protects the genetic diversity of plants and animals, and historical Muslim civilizations introduced innovations in agricultural practices.

Long-term solutions

- **Long-term endowments (Waqf):** Beyond immediate relief, Islam promotes sustainable support systems through charitable endowments known as Waqf. These can include funding agricultural schools, hospitals, or orphanages to empower vulnerable people and provide ongoing support.
- **Strategic food storage:** During times of famine, early Islamic leaders, such as Caliph Umar, implemented strategies like establishing flour banks to ensure a stable and equally distributed food supply.

In essence, the Islamic approach to zero hunger goes beyond charity by addressing the systemic issues of poverty and food insecurity. It integrates social justice, ethical production, and environmental stewardship, mirroring the holistic and sustainable goals of SDG 2.

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being in Islam

Ensuring healthy lives and promoting the well-being of all.

Islamic teachings provide a comprehensive and holistic framework for achieving the goals of SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being. The Islamic approach considers health a divine trust encompassing physical, mental, social, and spiritual dimensions. Key principles from the Quran and the Sunnah (Prophet Muhammad's teachings and practices) form the basis for promoting and protecting individual and public health.

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Physical health and well-being

Emphasis on hygiene and cleanliness

- **Wudu (Ablution) and Ghustl (Full-body wash):** Islam mandates ritual washing before prayers and after specific events, such as sexual intercourse or menstruation. The practice of *wudu* involves washing the hands, face, mouth, and feet five times a day, which prevents the spread of germs and infections.
- **Environmental cleanliness:** Muslims are instructed to maintain clean homes, neighborhoods, and public spaces and to avoid polluting water sources. This emphasis on sanitation prevents disease and promotes overall public health.

Diet and nutrition

- **Moderation and balance:** Islamic teachings forbid excess and encourage a balanced diet. The Prophet Muhammad recommended filling the stomach with one-third food, one-third water, and one-third air, a principle supported by modern nutrition science.
- **Halal (permissible) food:** Islamic dietary laws restrict the consumption of harmful or unhygienic substances like pork, alcohol, and blood, thereby protecting believers from various health risks.

Prevention and medical treatment

- **The principle of cure:** Islam holds that for every disease, there is a cure and encourages individuals to seek medical treatment. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) explicitly stated, "Make use of medical treatment, for Allah has not made a disease without appointing a remedy for it".
- **Quarantine:** Islamic history demonstrates an early understanding of contagious disease management. The

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Prophet instructed, "If you hear of an outbreak of plague in a land, do not enter it, and if the plague breaks out in a place while you are in it, do not leave that place". This guidance is consistent with modern quarantine procedures.

Physical activity

- **Encouragement of exercise:** The Prophet encouraged physical activities like swimming, archery, and horse riding to build a strong body, which is seen as a gift from Allah to be cared for.

Mental and spiritual well-being

Spiritual resilience

- **Prayer (*salah salah*) and remembrance (*dhikr dhikr*):** The five daily prayers provide a structured routine that offers spiritual solace, reduces stress, and fosters a connection with God. The practice of *dhikr* (remembrance of God) is a form of meditation that calms the mind.
- **Patience and gratitude:** The Quran and Hadith teach believers to view difficulties and illness as tests from God that can purify sins and build character. This perspective provides a powerful coping mechanism for dealing with life's adversities and promotes mental resilience.
- **Acceptance of divine destiny (*qadar qadar*):** Believing that all events, good or bad, are part of a divine plan can help individuals navigate grief and distress with greater peace and acceptance.

Addressing mental health concerns

- **Combating stigma:** Islam recognizes mental illness as a legitimate medical condition, not a sign of weak faith. Early Muslim scholars contributed significantly to the fields of psychiatry and psychology, establishing hospitals that offered humane treatment for mental health patients centuries before similar institutions existed in the West.

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- **The role of spirituality:** Modern research has found a positive correlation between religiosity and mental health outcomes. Spiritual practices rooted in Islam can be effectively integrated with clinical care to provide a holistic treatment approach for Muslim patients.
- **Prohibition of harmful substances:** Islam strictly prohibits alcohol and other intoxicants, known to have severely negative effects on both mental and physical health. This preventative approach helps curb related health issues and addiction.

Social and community well-being

Mutual support and responsibility

- **Importance of family:** Islam emphasizes strong family ties and defines the family as the foundational unit of society. The Prophet Muhammad's teaching, "The best of you are the best to their families," highlights the crucial role of a supportive family environment in promoting well-being.
- **Community engagement:** The Islamic concept of the *Ummah* (community) emphasizes mutual support, empathy, and collective responsibility. This social fabric acts as a protective factor against psychological stress and isolation.

The power of charity (*sadaqa sadaqa*) and care for the needy

- **Curing illness with charity:** Several traditions of the Prophet state, "Treat your sick ones with charity," indicating a spiritual link between giving and healing. This practice reinforces the community's role in caring for its most vulnerable members.
- **Healthcare funding:** Throughout history, Islamic societies have utilized charitable endowments (*waqf*) to fund

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hospitals and medical research, ensuring accessible healthcare for all, especially the poor.

Integration with modern medicine

Islamic teachings encourage the pursuit of knowledge, including scientific inquiry, and are not in conflict with modern medicine. A holistic, integrated approach that combines spiritual practice with evidence-based treatment is considered ideal. This enables individuals to take charge of their health while acknowledging the ultimate source of healing lies with God.

SDG 4: Quality Education in Islam- Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning.

Based on the principles found in the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, Islam strongly supports the goals of SDG 4, which calls for inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all . Islamic educational philosophy emphasizes the moral, spiritual, and intellectual development of every individual, regardless of their background.

Foundational principles from the Quran and Sunnah

Islamic teachings provide a robust framework for education that is inclusive, equitable, and promotes lifelong learning.

- **Command to read (*Iqra Iqra*):** The first word revealed in the Quran was "*Iqra Iqra*" (Read), establishing the pursuit of knowledge as a foundational and sacred duty in Islam.
- **Knowledge for spiritual and worldly benefit:** Islam promotes the acquisition of all forms of beneficial knowledge, encompassing both worldly sciences and religious studies. This ensures that individuals are well-equipped to contribute to society while also growing spiritually.

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- **Equality in learning:** The Prophet Muhammad declared, "Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim, male and female". This mandate guarantees equal access to education for all genders and, by extension, all people.
- **Lifelong learning:** A famous prophetic saying urges Muslims to "seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave". This reinforces the concept of education as a continuous, lifelong endeavor.
- **Holistic development:** Islamic education aims for the "balanced growth of the total personality," developing an individual's intellect, character, and spiritual self. This holistic approach goes beyond simple knowledge transfer to include the cultivation of moral integrity (*adab adab*).

Key themes and contributions to SDG 4

These core principles guided the development of Islamic educational institutions and practices, many of which align with and preceded the targets of SDG 4.

Inclusive and equitable education

- **Historically diverse institutions:** From the early mosque study circles (*halqah halqah*) to the renowned universities like Al-Azhar and Al-Qarawiyyin, education in the Islamic world was accessible to a diverse population, including people of various social classes and nationalities.
- **Education for vulnerable groups:** The Quran emphasizes giving special consideration and equal opportunity to those who are often ignored by society, including people with disabilities. In early Islamic history, the Prophet Muhammad demonstrated this principle by giving special attention to a blind person seeking knowledge.
- **Social justice:** The Quran and Hadith promote principles of equality, social justice, and respect for human rights, which

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are fundamental to providing education for all. These values create an inclusive environment where diversity is appreciated.

- **Breaking the cycle of poverty:** Historically, many poor students were able to gain an education and become eminent scholars, showing how the Islamic educational tradition provided social mobility.

Quality education and lifelong learning

- **Emphasis on critical thinking:** While memorization was a component, Islamic education also fostered intellectual curiosity, discussion, and critical thinking. Muslim scholars encouraged study, research, and reflection rather than unquestioning acceptance of beliefs.
- **Integration of disciplines:** The "Golden Age of Islam" saw the integration of both religious and secular knowledge, with madrassas and other institutions teaching a wide range of subjects, including law, medicine, mathematics, and philosophy.
- **Respect for teachers:** Islamic tradition places a high value on teachers and scholars, viewing them as heirs of the prophets. This fosters a culture of respect for the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.
- **Adult education:** The concept of lifelong learning extended to adults. Historically, scholars would hold study circles for adults in mosques, which sometimes attracted thousands of attendees.

Global citizenship

- **Cross-cultural exchange:** The Islamic tradition of seeking knowledge "even in China" encouraged travel and global interaction. This led to the translation and preservation of

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knowledge from Greek, Persian, and Indian sources, which later helped fuel the European intellectual awakening.

- **Building ethical citizens:** Islamic education aims to produce knowledgeable and morally upright individuals who contribute positively to their communities and the global society. Values such as integrity, justice, and compassion are central to this goal.
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SDG 5: Gender Equality in Islam – Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) within the context of Islam involves reconciling modern gender equality concepts with Islamic principles and confronting patriarchal interpretations and cultural practices. While the Quran promotes spiritual equality for all, diverse interpretations and traditions within Muslim communities have created a complex landscape for women's rights and empowerment.

Foundational Islamic texts on gender equality

Advocates for gender equality in Islam draw on foundational texts to emphasize egalitarian principles:

- **The Quran:** The holy book of Islam states that men and women were created from a single soul and that piety, not gender, determines a person's worth in the sight of God. In over 80 verses, the Quran pairs faith with righteous deeds, applying equally to men and women, and promises the same reward for believers of both genders.
- **The Prophet's teachings (Sunnah):** The Prophet Muhammad significantly elevated the status of women in 7th-century Arabia, banning female infanticide and recognizing women's rights in marriage, divorce, and

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inheritance. He emphasized treating women kindly, stating, "The best of you are them who behave best to their wives".

Areas of empowerment in Islamic teachings

Classical and modern Islamic scholars have highlighted specific areas where the religion empowers women:

- **Education:** Acquiring knowledge is a religious obligation for all Muslims, male and female. Women in early Islamic history were prominent scholars and teachers, serving as models for female education.
- **Economic rights:** Islam gave women the right to earn, own, and manage their own property and wealth centuries before Western societies did. This includes their dowry (mahr), gifts, and inheritance. They are not financially obligated to provide for their families.
- **Family and marriage:** Islamic teachings require a woman's consent for a valid marriage contract and recognize a woman's right to seek a divorce.
- **Political and public life:** Historically, Muslim women have been involved in political, economic, and social spheres. The Prophet (PBUH) consulted with his wife Umm-e-Salama in political matters, and Caliph Umar accepted the legal opinion of a woman, demonstrating early precedents for women's participation in governance.

Challenges to achieving SDG 5 in Muslim contexts

Despite the egalitarian principles in the Quran and Sunnah, several challenges persist in many Muslim-majority societies:

- **Patriarchal interpretations:** Many discriminatory practices and legal systems are based on patriarchal readings of Islamic texts, rather than the core principles of justice and equality. Critics argue that patriarchal forces co-opted religious discourse over centuries to protect male interests.

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- **Harmful cultural practices:** Misinterpretations and cultural customs wrongly associated with Islam can restrict women's freedoms. Issues like child, early, and forced marriage or female genital mutilation (FGM) persist in some communities despite being condemned or having no basis in core Islamic law.
- **Inadequate policy implementation:** In many Muslim-majority countries, a gap exists between international human rights standards (such as CEDAW, which many have signed) and their effective implementation in domestic law and policy.
- **Misogynistic ideologies:** Extremist and fundamentalist groups often use religion to disguise political agendas that actively seek to disempower women.

Initiatives bridging Islam and gender equality

Various movements and actors are working to harmonize Islamic principles with modern concepts of gender equality:

- **Islamic feminism:** This movement, rooted within an Islamic framework, advocates for women's rights and social justice by reinterpreting Islamic texts to align with egalitarian values. Scholars like Amina Wadud and Asma Barlas challenge patriarchal traditions and promote readings of the Quran focused on justice and human dignity.
- **Grassroots activism:** Organizations like Sisters in Islam (Malaysia) and Musawah, a global movement for justice in the Muslim family, challenge discriminatory laws and advocate for legal and social reform based on a progressive understanding of Islamic teachings.
- **International diplomacy:** The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has adopted documents that explicitly affirm women's rights, urge member states to abandon

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harmful traditional practices, and align policies with inherent Islamic principles upholding women's dignity.

- **Addressing economic disparity:** As studies from [Al Jazeera](#) and the IMF point out, empowering women economically is vital for development. Promoting fair labor practices, equal pay, and access to education are recognized as crucial for closing the gender gap and boosting economic growth in Muslim-majority countries.
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SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation in Islam

Ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation.

Based on the principles found in the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, Islam comprehensively supports and provides a moral framework for the objectives of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6. SDG 6 aims to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all people.

Islamic teachings cover core SDG 6 principles through the concepts of:

- **Trusteeship (Khilafah):** Humans are appointed as stewards, or *khalifah*, of the Earth. They are responsible for managing and caring for the natural world, including water resources, for present and future generations.
- **Divine Unity (Tawhid):** All creation is a unified whole created by Allah. This interconnects humanity with the ecosystem and establishes the preservation and protection of nature, including water, as a human responsibility.
- **Balance (Mizan):** God established a natural balance in creation. Human actions that disrupt this balance, such as

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wasting water or polluting sources, are a form of corruption (*fasad*) and are forbidden.

Islamic principles supporting clean water and conservation

Islamic texts and traditions provide specific guidance on water management and conservation:

- **Prohibition of waste:** The Quran forbids wastefulness, stating, "Eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess" (Quran 7:31). This principle is famously reinforced by a hadith in which the Prophet Muhammad advised against wasting water, even when performing ablution next to a flowing river.
- **Water as a common good:** Islamic law considers water a shared resource that cannot be monopolized. The Prophet Muhammad declared that "Muslims have common share in three things: grass (pasture), water, and fire (fuel)". In early Muslim communities, rulers and wealthy individuals often established *waqf* (charitable endowments) to build public wells, fountains, and aqueducts to ensure free access to water for the community.
- **Water rights and distribution:** Islamic jurisprudence outlines a hierarchy for water use, prioritizing drinking water for humans and animals, followed by agricultural and industrial use. Upstream users are prohibited from monopolizing water and must ensure its equitable distribution to downstream users.
- **Protection against pollution:** The Prophet Muhammad warned against polluting water sources, such as by defecating in them. This teaching emphasizes that maintaining the purity of water is essential for community health and well-being.

Islamic principles supporting sanitation

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Cleanliness (*taharah*) is a core tenet of Islam, encompassing both physical and spiritual purity. This concept directly supports the sanitation goals of SDG 6.

- **Purity is half of faith:** A famous hadith states, "Cleanliness is half of faith". This makes personal and environmental hygiene not merely a good practice, but an essential component of a Muslim's devotion.
 - **Emphasis on personal hygiene:** Ritual purification rituals, such as the full body wash (*ghusl*) and the partial ablution (*wudu*) performed before prayers, necessitate good personal hygiene. These practices require washing the hands, mouth, and other body parts multiple times a day.
 - **Cleanliness of surroundings:** The principle of cleanliness extends beyond the individual to the environment. Muslims are instructed to keep their homes and public spaces clean. The Prophet Muhammad taught that removing harmful or dirty objects from public walkways is a charitable act.
 - **Ethical waste management:** Islamic teachings prohibit actions that cause harm or corruption on Earth, including pollution and improper waste disposal. This encourages mindful waste management to prevent the contamination of the environment and water sources.
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SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy in Islam

Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

The pursuit of Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG 7) to ensure access to affordable and clean energy for all is strongly supported by Islamic principles. The Quran and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad establish core concepts of environmental stewardship

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(*khalifah*), balance (*mizan*), and the prohibition of waste (*israf*). These principles form a spiritual foundation for developing and using energy responsibly.

Islamic principles underpinning affordable and clean energy

- **Stewardship (*Khalifah*):** Islam designates humans as stewards, or *khalifah*, of the Earth. This role entails a duty to protect, maintain, and manage the planet's resources, including energy, for current and future generations. This principle obliges Muslims to manage energy resources wisely rather than exploit them excessively.
- **Balance (*Mizan*):** The Quran emphasizes that Allah created the universe in perfect balance and proportion (*mizan*). This concept applies to human use of natural resources, including energy. The balance is disturbed by unsustainable activities like excessive consumption, which leads to environmental degradation.
- **Avoiding Waste (*Israf*):** The Quran explicitly forbids wastefulness and extravagance. A well-known prophetic tradition warns against wasting water, even when by a running river. This principle directly addresses the importance of energy efficiency and the minimization of waste in energy production and consumption.
- **Energy as a shared resource:** Islamic law holds that basic natural elements like land, water, fire (energy), and light are the joint property of all humankind. This philosophy promotes equitable access to energy resources and discourages monopolization.
- **Public welfare (*Istishlah*):** The legal principle of *istishlah*, or promoting public good, is central to Islamic environmental ethics. The use of waste-to-energy technologies, for example, is seen as beneficial because it protects the environment and improves public welfare.

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Islamic finance and community action

Islamic economic principles and financial mechanisms offer a distinct pathway to promote SDG 7.

- **Islamic finance for renewables:** Sharia-compliant financial instruments, such as *waqf* (endowments) and crowdfunding, can be used to fund renewable energy projects, especially for communities lacking access.
- **Investment in green technology:** Islamic economic models emphasize ethical investment and sustainability. These principles can be integrated into green economy frameworks to drive investment in energy efficiency and clean technology.
- **Community empowerment:** Community-led initiatives, often supported by Muslim charities and faith-based organizations, promote grassroots sustainable energy solutions. These include providing solar lighting for remote households and installing solar irrigation pumps for farmers.

Practical applications and examples

Islamic principles are put into practice through various initiatives that align with the goals of affordable and clean energy.

- **Green Mosques:** Organizations like Ummah for Earth's "Green Mosques Initiative" install solar energy systems on mosques and encourage their communities to transition to renewable energy sources.
- **Advocacy and education:** Muslim climate activists and organizations raise awareness about environmental issues and advocate for a transition away from fossil fuels. The Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences (IFEES) works to educate and collaborate with organizations on environmental issues.

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- **Toolkit for Islamic finance:** In 2024, Greenpeace MENA and other partners released the "EDUCATE Renewable Energy Toolkit," a guide to help Islamic financial institutions integrate renewable energy initiatives.
 - **Community-scale projects:** Initiatives have provided clean energy solutions to deprived communities. In Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, thousands of households have received solar lighting systems and smokeless cookstoves.
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SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth in Islam-

Promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.

Based on the Quran, Hadith, and Islamic jurisprudence, Islamic teachings align closely with the principles of SDG 8, which promotes decent work and economic growth. Islamic economic principles emphasize a holistic approach that balances material prosperity with social justice, equitable distribution of wealth, and environmental stewardship.

Foundational Islamic principles and SDG 8

- **Human trusteeship (*Khalīfah Khalīfah*):** In Islam, human beings are considered trustees (*khalīfah khalīfah*) or stewards of Allah (God) on Earth. This concept implies a responsibility to manage and develop resources sustainably, ensuring the well-being of present and future generations and preserving the ecological balance.
- **The dignity of labor:** Islam regards earning a living through lawful and sincere work as a form of worship. Prophet Muhammad's own example of manual labor and sayings like, "No one eats better food than that which one has earned

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by working with one's own hands," highlight the dignity and virtue of labor.

- **Social and economic justice (*Adl 'Adl*):** Islamic economic principles demand fairness and prohibit exploitation, aligning with the "decent work for all" aspect of SDG 8.
 - **Prohibition of *riba* *riba*(interest):** Islamic finance is based on risk-sharing and profit-and-loss sharing rather than fixed interest, which is seen as exploitative and a cause of economic inequality.
 - **Prohibition of *gharar* *gharar* (excessive uncertainty):** Islamic teachings forbid transactions with excessive uncertainty or deception. This promotes transparency and fair contracts, safeguarding both employers and employees.

Promoting decent work and employment

- **Fair treatment of workers:** Islamic teachings provide specific guidelines for the employer-employee relationship, ensuring mutual respect and fair treatment.
 - **Prompt wage payment:** A famous hadith states, "Give the worker his wages before his sweat dries," emphasizing the importance of timely and full compensation.
 - **Reasonable workload:** Employers are instructed not to over-burden workers and to help with heavy tasks.
 - **Safe working environment:** Providing a safe workplace is considered a moral responsibility of the employer.
- **Encouragement of productivity and excellence:** Islam promotes the concept of *ihsān*, which is to perform one's work with the highest level of excellence and sincerity. This

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mindset improves labor productivity and creates a more positive and morally sound work environment.

- **Upholding labor rights:** Islamic law recognizes the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively to peacefully resolve disputes. It also encourages cooperative relationships between employers and employees.

Enabling inclusive and sustainable economic growth

- **Wealth circulation and redistribution:** Islam contains built-in mechanisms to prevent wealth from being concentrated in the hands of a few.
 - **Zakāh Zakāh (obligatory charity):** The annual payment of a portion of one's wealth to the poor and needy serves as a systemic tool for wealth redistribution and poverty alleviation.
 - **Waqf Waqf(endowments):** This mechanism involves dedicating assets for charitable purposes, often to fund public infrastructure like schools, hospitals, and clean water, which supports social and economic development.
 - **Inheritance laws:** Islamic inheritance laws ensure that wealth is systematically distributed among heirs, promoting its circulation across generations.
- **Ethical investments:** The Islamic emphasis on ethical and socially responsible business practices directs investments toward lawful (*halal*) and beneficial industries. This focus discourages harmful speculation and promotes investments that contribute positively to society and economic stability.
- **Protection of natural resources:** The concept of humans as stewards of the Earth implies a duty to protect the environment and manage natural resources responsibly. This includes prohibiting wastefulness and promoting

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conservation, aligning with the sustainability aspect of SDG 8.

- **Emphasis on social capital:** The Islamic family system and community-oriented values foster empathy and create a durable social safety net. This strengthens social cohesion, which is essential for stable and inclusive economic development.
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SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure in Islam-

Building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation.

Based on the Quran, Hadith, and Islamic legal principles (Shariah), Islam supports the core tenets of SDG 9, which focuses on building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation. Islamic teachings emphasize the concepts of *khalifa* (stewardship), *mizan* (balance), and *maslaha* (public interest) to guide responsible development that benefits humanity without causing harm.

Resilient infrastructure

Islam views infrastructure development as a virtuous act that provides essential services and improves the quality of life for the community (*ummah*). The institutions and principles of Islamic finance offer ethical frameworks for funding such projects.

- **Public welfare (*Maslaha*):** Islamic law prioritizes actions that bring benefits and prevent harm to the community. Infrastructure projects like roads, bridges, and public water systems fall directly under this principle.
- **Charitable endowments (*Waqf*):** The historical institution of *waqf*, a perpetual charitable endowment, was a key instrument for developing public infrastructure in Islamic

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history. These endowments were used to fund mosques, schools, hospitals, and water systems. Today, *waqf* can be adapted to finance modern infrastructure projects sustainably.

- **Islamic finance (*Sukuk*):** Islamic financial instruments like *sukuk* (Islamic bonds) are well-suited for financing asset-backed infrastructure projects. By operating on risk-sharing and ethical investment, *sukuk* ensure that projects are economically, socially, and environmentally viable.

Sustainable and inclusive industrialization

Islamic principles advocate for a balanced approach to economic activity, one that fosters prosperity while ensuring social justice and environmental protection.

- **Stewardship (*Khalifa*):** As stewards (*khalifa*) of the earth, humans have a sacred trust to use natural resources responsibly and not cause corruption or destruction. Industrialization must adhere to this principle, conserving resources and minimizing waste.
- **Justice and equity (*Adl*):** Industrial growth must not come at the expense of justice or marginalize the vulnerable. Islamic business ethics emphasize fairness, honesty, and just treatment of workers, ensuring that the benefits of industrialization are inclusive.
- **Moderation (*Wasatiyyah*):** Islam forbids extravagance (*israf*) and wastefulness. Sustainable industrial practices must prioritize efficient resource use and minimize harmful waste, reflecting the Quranic command to "eat and drink, but be not excessive".
- **Accountability (*Amana*):** Businesses have a moral and religious obligation to be transparent and trustworthy. This principle holds industries accountable for their social and

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environmental impact, requiring them to operate in a manner that serves the common good.

Fostering innovation

Islam has a rich history of scientific inquiry and innovation, famously during the Islamic Golden Age. The faith encourages the pursuit of beneficial knowledge and the application of intellect.

- **Seeking knowledge (*Iqra*):** The first word of the Quran revealed to Prophet Muhammad was *iqra* ("read" or "recite"). This places a high value on education, research, and intellectual development, all of which are essential for innovation.
- **Common good (*Maslaha*):** Technological innovation is encouraged when its purpose is to serve humanity and advance the public interest. Islam provides an ethical framework to evaluate new technologies, promoting those that align with Shariah objectives and forbidding those that cause harm.
- **Integration of faith and science:** Islamic scholars historically viewed science as a way to better understand God's creation. This tradition encourages a holistic approach to innovation that integrates ethical and spiritual values with modern scientific and economic strategies.

Examples of Islamic initiatives related to SDG 9

- **Green Sukuk:** Some countries, including Malaysia and Indonesia, have pioneered "Green Sukuk" to raise capital for eco-friendly infrastructure and green technology projects. These Shariah-compliant financial instruments fund initiatives like renewable energy and sustainable transport.
- **Waqf-based solutions:** Institutions are exploring modern applications of *waqf* for urban regeneration, funding low-income housing, and providing sustainable water infrastructure.

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- **Halal industry standards:** The global halal market is extending its ethical principles beyond food to include broader sustainability concerns, promoting transparent, high-quality, and ethical practices in manufacturing.
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SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities in Islam - Reducing inequality within and among countries.

In Islam, reducing inequality aligns with the core principles of social justice, compassion, and human dignity, which are central to Islamic theology and law. Islamic teachings address the various dimensions of inequality, including economic, social, and political disparities, both within and among countries, similar to the scope of SDG 10.

Addressing economic inequality

Islamic principles provide several economic mechanisms to reduce the wealth gap and prevent the concentration of wealth among a few.

- **Zakat (Obligatory alms):** As one of the Five Pillars of Islam, zakat is an annual mandatory tax on the wealth of eligible Muslims. The funds are designated for eight categories of recipients, including the poor and needy. Zakat ensures a regular redistribution of wealth from the rich to the poor, thereby stimulating the economy and improving the living standards of the less fortunate.
- **Sadaqah (Voluntary charity):** Beyond the obligatory zakat, Islam strongly encourages voluntary charity, or *sadaqah*. Muslims are motivated by the promise of divine reward to spend generously on charitable causes, including poverty alleviation and community welfare programs.
- **Waqf (Charitable endowments):** Waqf is a form of sustainable, ongoing charity where an asset, such as land or a building, is donated for a charitable cause in perpetuity.

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The income from a waqf can fund long-term community projects like hospitals, schools, and infrastructure, providing continuous support to the underprivileged.

- **Prohibition of *Riba* (Interest):** The prohibition of interest-based loans is a fundamental aspect of Islamic economic justice. This prevents the exploitation of the poor by charging excessive interest and encourages fairer, asset-based financial transactions.

Upholding social equality

Islamic teachings address various forms of social discrimination and emphasize the fundamental equality of all people, regardless of their background.

- **Universal human dignity:** The Quran states that all people were created from a single male and female, making all of humanity a single race. It explicitly rejects any basis for superiority based on race, ethnicity, or lineage, stating that piety is the only criterion for nobility in the sight of God.
- **Equal opportunities:** Islam mandates equal opportunities for all in areas such as education and employment. Historically, this led to women holding roles as market supervisors and scholars. The importance of seeking knowledge is emphasized for both men and women.
- **Rights of the vulnerable:** The rights of marginalized and vulnerable groups, such as orphans, widows, the elderly, and the poor, are particularly emphasized. The Quran and prophetic teachings strictly prohibit their exploitation and call for their protection and support.
- **Justice for all:** Islam commands believers to uphold justice impartially, even if it is against their own interests or those of their family. The rights of non-Muslims are also protected under Islamic law, ensuring their right to practice their religion and safeguarding their lives and property.

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Addressing global inequality

Islamic principles also provide a framework for addressing inequalities between countries and promoting global justice.

- **International cooperation:** The principle of mutual sharing and cooperation is a core tenet of the Islamic system of social justice. This spirit extends beyond local communities to promote humanitarian relief and alliances with other nations to protect the oppressed.
- **Fair trade and finance:** The prohibition of usury and exploitation promotes ethical business dealings and fair trade practices. Islamic economic principles advocate for a system where wealth is not confined to the rich, encouraging equitable distribution and benefiting all of society.
- **Support for developing nations:** The potential of instruments like zakat and waqf for poverty alleviation and economic development in Muslim-majority countries is significant. Mechanisms could include transferring surplus zakat funds from wealthier countries to poorer ones to ensure equitable resource distribution.

Potential challenges and modern application

While Islamic teachings offer a robust framework, modern application presents challenges. Issues such as weak governance, lack of accountability in some Islamic countries, and insufficient institutionalized support for zakat can hinder its potential. However, modern Islamic scholars and institutions are exploring how to apply these timeless principles to address contemporary issues like wealth inequality, social disparity, and economic instability.

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities in Islam

Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient,
and sustainable.

The core tenets of SDG 11—making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable—are deeply reflected in Islamic principles and historical urban traditions. Rooted in the Qur'an and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Islamic urbanism emphasizes social equity, environmental stewardship, and community cohesion. These principles offer a comprehensive framework for addressing modern urban challenges.

Islamic principles that align with SDG 11

1. Environmental stewardship (Khalifah, Mizan, and Amana)

- **Khalifah (Guardianship):** Islam designates humans as stewards (*khalifah*) of the Earth, responsible for its preservation and sustainable management. This responsibility is a divine trust (*amana*) and requires people to act as caretakers of the natural world.
- **Mizan (Balance):** The concept of *mizan* stresses the importance of balance in all things, including the use of natural resources. It explicitly forbids excess and wastage, aligning directly with sustainable consumption patterns.
- **Water management:** Historical Islamic cities developed sophisticated systems like aqueducts and cisterns to ensure sustainable and equitable water access for all residents, not just the wealthy. This echoes the Prophet's directive to protect shared resources, establishing "inviolable zones" (*haram*) around water sources.
- **Green spaces:** Islamic teachings promote green infrastructure and the creation of gardens, parks, and orchards to enhance the urban environment. The Prophet's

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own actions of creating restricted areas (*hima*) to protect forests and wildlife established an early model for environmental conservation within cities.

2. Social inclusion and equity (Justice and Neighborly Rights)

- **Social justice:** Justice (*al-'adl*) and equality are fundamental Islamic ideals for urban planning. The traditional Islamic city design typically integrated diverse socioeconomic groups into neighborhoods, ensuring equal access to basic needs and amenities.
- **Neighborly rights:** Islam places a strong emphasis on the rights and well-being of neighbors. This is evident in traditional rulings that protected neighbors from harm caused by excessive noise, heat, or vibration from adjacent properties. The compact and interconnected nature of historic Muslim cities fostered strong social bonds and mutual support.
- **Public spaces:** Public amenities like marketplaces, baths, and educational institutions were prioritized and designed to be accessible to all residents, irrespective of their social or economic status.

3. Resilience and safety (Order and Community Building)

- **Planned development:** The Prophet Muhammad's planning of Medina serves as a foundational example of Islamic urban development. He established an organized city with a focus on community and social interaction, demonstrating the importance of intentional urban design.
- **Security and privacy:** Islamic urbanism incorporates principles of safety and privacy in the built environment. Features like meandering street networks and segregated entrances in homes reflected these values. Early Islamic

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cities were also equipped with defense mechanisms like city walls and gates to protect residents.

- **Community cohesion (Ummah):** The city was designed to foster a sense of community (*ummah*), with the central mosque serving as a hub for spiritual and social life. The design of compact, walkable communities encouraged face-to-face interaction and social solidarity.

Modern applications and initiatives

Contemporary Muslim-majority cities and communities are re-evaluating these traditional principles to create modern, sustainable, and inclusive urban spaces. Examples include:

- **Eco-mosque programs:** Initiatives in countries like Indonesia promote environmental ethics within religious communities, with mosques implementing strategies for water conservation, waste management, and renewable energy.
 - **Green Hajj campaigns:** Efforts in Saudi Arabia seek to minimize the environmental impact of the annual pilgrimage by encouraging pilgrims to reduce waste and utilize sustainable practices.
 - **Islamic finance for sustainable development:** Islamic financial schemes, such as green *sukuk* (bonds), are used to fund renewable energy projects and other eco-friendly infrastructure.
 - **Multi-cultural urban centers:** Cities like Kuala Lumpur and Dubai have developed into multicultural hubs that balance modern living with an Islamic identity, offering examples of how religious values can be integrated into diverse, cosmopolitan environments.
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SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production in Islam -
Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns.

The core tenets of SDG 12, "Responsible Consumption and Production," are deeply embedded in Islamic principles, which emphasize stewardship (*khalifah khalifah*), balance (*mizan mizan*), avoidance of waste (*israf israf*), and the moral accountability of humans. Islamic teachings provide a comprehensive ethical framework that aligns with and reinforces modern sustainability efforts.

Core Islamic principles aligning with SDG 12

Several key Islamic concepts lay the foundation for sustainable and responsible consumption and production patterns:

- **Stewardship (*Khalifah Khalifah*):** Humans are appointed as God's stewards on Earth, entrusted with the responsibility of protecting and maintaining creation. This means that resources are a divine trust (*Amanah Amanah*) to be used wisely and not exploited, with an obligation to care for the environment for present and future generations.
- **Balance (*Mizan Mizan*):** The concept of *mizan mizan* refers to the balance and order that God has placed in the universe. Humans are commanded to maintain this balance and not cause corruption or destruction. This principle underpins the need for sustainable resource management and living in harmony with nature.
- **Avoidance of waste (*Israf Israf*):** Islam strictly prohibits wastefulness and extravagance in all aspects of life, including consumption. The Quran states, "Eat and drink, but do not waste by excess; verily, He does not love the wasteful" (Al-A'raf 7:31). This applies to all resources, from food and water to wealth.

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- **Lawful and good (*Halal Halal* and *Tayyib Tayyib*):** Islamic principles of consumption dictate that all goods and services consumed must be both lawful (*halal halal*) and pure, clean, and wholesome (*tayyib tayyib*). This encourages mindful and healthy consumption and discourages spending on things that are harmful or extravagant.
- **Accountability (*Muhasabah Muhasabah*):** Islamic teachings hold individuals accountable for their actions, including how they use and consume resources. This creates a moral incentive for responsible behavior, as a person's choices have implications not only for this life but also for the hereafter.

Alignment with SDG 12 targets

These Islamic principles translate directly into the specific targets of SDG 12.

Sustainable resource management (Target 12.2)

- **Water conservation:** The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) forbade wasting water even when performing ablution from a running river. This emphasizes the mindful use of all resources, especially in water-scarce regions.
- **Agricultural ethics:** Islamic law promotes ethical agricultural practices, such as giving to the poor during harvest and avoiding waste. It also forbids destroying crops or trees, even during times of war.

Food loss and waste reduction (Target 12.3)

- The Quranic prohibition of wastefulness is a direct injunction to reduce food waste.
- The emphasis on feeding the poor (*sadaqah sadaqah*) from fresh harvests, rather than leftovers, serves as a mechanism

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to minimize food loss and redirect resources to those in need.

Environmentally sound waste management (Target 12.4 & 12.5)

- Islamic principles of cleanliness and preserving the natural balance prohibit pollution and inefficient waste disposal.
- Scholars have used Islamic legal reasoning (*Qiyas Qiyas*) to argue that Hadith on hygiene also apply to contemporary issues of land, air, and water contamination.
- Practices like recycling and reuse are encouraged as an extension of the principle of avoiding waste.

Encouraging companies to adopt sustainable practices (Target 12.6)

- The emphasis on ethical conduct in Islam applies to business practices, encouraging sustainability and social responsibility.
- The halal industry has expanded beyond dietary rules to encompass broader ethical and sustainable practices in production and supply chains.

Promoting universal understanding of sustainable lifestyles (Target 12.8)

- Islamic teachings promote minimalism and modest living, in contrast to the excesses of modern consumerism.
- By encouraging contentment and focusing on needs over luxuries, Islam provides a framework for sustainable lifestyles rooted in moral and spiritual principles.

Implementing Islamic principles for SDG 12

Muslim-majority nations and communities can actively contribute to achieving SDG 12 by:

- **Integrating Islamic teachings** on environmental ethics into national and corporate policies.

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- **Leveraging Islamic finance** to fund green and sustainable projects.
 - **Raising public awareness** through educational initiatives based on Islamic principles.
 - **Supporting the halal industry** in its move toward a more comprehensive, sustainable, and ethical framework.
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SDG 13: Climate Action in Islam- Taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

Inspired by the principles of environmental stewardship embedded in Islamic theology, SDG 13's call for urgent climate action resonates deeply within the Islamic tradition. Islamic teachings emphasize humanity's role as protectors of the Earth and offer a framework for tackling climate change through principles of responsibility, balance, and conservation.

Theological basis for climate action

Several core concepts in Islam provide a strong ethical foundation for environmental preservation:

- **Tawhid (Oneness of God):** This central principle emphasizes the unity and interconnectedness of all creation. As everything in the universe is created by and belongs to God, disrupting the natural balance through environmental damage is a rejection of this unity.
- **Khalifah (Stewardship):** Humans are appointed as *khalifah* (stewards or vicegerents) on Earth, entrusted with its care and protection. This role is a divine trust, and people are accountable to God for how they manage the planet and its resources.
- **Amana (Trust):** This concept refers to the trust God has given to humanity to care for creation. Humans have

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accepted this responsibility, and their actions toward the environment are a test of this trust.

- **Mizan (Balance):** The Quran emphasizes that God created the universe in a delicate balance. Human actions that corrupt this harmony are strictly forbidden. The concept of *mizan* is a direct call to maintain ecological equilibrium and avoid excess.
- **Fasad (Corruption):** The Quran warns against causing *fasad* or corruption on Earth after it has been set in order. This includes environmental degradation, pollution, and the overexploitation of resources.

Guidance from the Quran and Sunnah

Islamic teachings explicitly encourage environmental mindfulness through its primary sources:

- **Quranic Verses:** Numerous verses call for reflection on the natural world, describe nature as a sign of God, and warn against destruction. A well-known verse warns that "Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by reason of what the hands of people have earned" (Quran 30:41).
- **Sunnah (Prophetic Tradition):** The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) demonstrated and preached conservation.
 - **Encouraged tree planting**, describing it as a charitable act.
 - **Prohibited wastefulness**, even when using water for ritual washing from a flowing river.
 - **Established protected zones (*haram haram and hima hima*)**, where resources were preserved and hunting or logging was restricted.
 - **Taught kindness to all living things**, including animals.

Contemporary Muslim climate action

Based on these theological principles, the Muslim community has undertaken several modern initiatives to address climate change:

- **The Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change:** Launched in 2015, this declaration was endorsed by prominent Islamic scholars worldwide. It called for the phase-out of fossil fuels, greater recognition of the climate crisis, and a shift away from human greed.
- **Muslim Seven-Year Action Plan on Climate Change:** This 2010 initiative aimed to mobilize the global Muslim community to implement climate-friendly policies and actions that reflect Islamic values.
- **Eco-Mosque Initiatives:** Projects around the world promote sustainability within mosques by installing solar panels, improving water efficiency, and using environmentally friendly materials. Indonesia's national Istiqlal Mosque, for example, has been environmentally certified.
- **Mizan:** Launched in 2021 by the UN Environment Programme, Mizan is an initiative to provide authoritative standards for Muslims based on their faith and mobilize action on climate and environmental issues.
- **Islamic Finance for Climate Action:** Financial instruments compliant with Islamic principles, such as *Green Sukuk* (bonds), are being used to fund renewable energy projects. This offers a culturally relevant way to drive climate solutions in Muslim communities.
- **Islamic Relief Worldwide:** This NGO incorporates climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction into its humanitarian and development projects, helping vulnerable communities cope with the impacts of climate change.

SDG 14: Life Below Water in Islam - Conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas, and marine resources.

The principles of Islam are strongly aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water, which emphasizes the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas, and marine resources. The alignment is rooted in core Islamic concepts such as trusteeship (*khilafah*), divine balance (*mizan*), and avoidance of corruption (*fasad*). The Quran and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (*Sunnah*) provide a clear ethical framework for environmental stewardship, which includes the marine environment.

Foundational Islamic principles for marine conservation

Trusteeship (*Khilafah*)

In Islam, humanity is appointed as *khalifah*, or vicegerent, on Earth. This role is a sacred trust (*amanah*) that comes with the responsibility to protect and care for creation, including the oceans, for present and future generations. This counters the idea of human domination over nature, framing humans as caretakers accountable to God for their actions.

Divine Balance (*Mizan*)

The Quran teaches that God created the universe in a state of perfect balance (*mizan*). This balance is visible in the interconnected ecosystems of the oceans, where every element has a purpose. Human activities that disrupt this balance, such as pollution, overfishing, and habitat destruction, are condemned as transgressions against God's order.

Avoidance of Corruption (*Fasad*)

Islam forbids causing mischief or corruption (*fasad*) on Earth, including in the seas. The Quran warns that environmental and social corruption is a direct consequence of human actions and will lead to ruin. This provides a strong motivation for Muslims to minimize their

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environmental impact and work towards restoring damaged ecosystems. The Quranic verse in Surah Ar-Rum 30:41 explicitly states, "Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned".

Respect for all creation

The Quran emphasizes that all living beings are communities (*ummah*) just like humans and deserve care and respect. Destroying a marine habitat or species is akin to silencing a community of worshippers of God. This worldview promotes empathy for marine life and is a call to protect biodiversity. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught that all living beings have rights and that showing mercy to creatures is an act of worship.

Practical applications for SDG 14

Reducing marine pollution: Islamic teachings strictly prohibit pollution and promote cleanliness, which is considered "half of faith".

- **Waste management:** Islamic principles encourage minimizing waste and are highly relevant to reducing plastic pollution, which devastates marine habitats and endangers species.
- **Preventing contamination:** The Prophet forbade urinating in stagnant water and taught that even during ablution, water should not be wasted. This extends to preventing the contamination of water sources with all kinds of impurities.

Sustainable fishing and resource use: Islamic law and tradition provide clear guidance on the ethical and moderate use of marine resources.

- **Prohibition of excess (*israf*):** The Quran warns against extravagance and excess. This principle guides against over-exploitation and destructive fishing practices that deplete fish stocks.

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- **Protected areas (*hima*):** The Prophet Muhammad established protected areas, called *hima*, where grazing and hunting were restricted to allow for the conservation of wildlife and vegetation. This practice serves as a precedent for modern Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).
- **Responsible consumption:** Islam encourages eating and drinking moderately and promotes local and seasonal consumption. These practices help to manage resources more sustainably and minimize food waste.

Protecting marine and coastal ecosystems: Islamic tradition calls for the protection of all elements of creation, including vulnerable ecosystems.

- **Coral reefs and mangroves:** Destructive practices like dynamite fishing, which harm coral reefs, are clearly prohibited, as they destroy vital habitats. Islamic teachings emphasize the protection of mangrove forests and other coastal ecosystems.
- **Ethical fishing:** In addition to sustainability, ethical considerations are central to fishing. Some Islamic legal schools, for example, consider catch-and-release fishing for sport without a valid purpose as impermissible, as it causes unnecessary harm to the animal.

Implementing Islamic environmental ethics today

Muslim organizations and scholars are increasingly applying these timeless principles to address modern environmental challenges.

- **Advocacy and activism:** Organizations like the Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences (IFEES) have published guidance on a Muslim theology of the sea to promote conservation. The 2015 Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change also brought Islamic principles to bear on climate action.

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- **Financing conservation:** Scholars have explored using Islamic financial instruments, such as *waqf* (endowment) and *sukuk*, to fund conservation efforts for marine ecosystems.
 - **Community engagement:** Mosques and community leaders play a crucial role in raising awareness and encouraging sustainable practices among Muslims, from conserving water to promoting ethical consumption.
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SDG 15: Life on Land in Islam

Protecting, restoring, and promoting sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably managing forests, combating desertification, and halting biodiversity loss.

Based on Islamic principles, the teachings of the Quran and the practices of Prophet Muhammad (Sunnah) align with and support the objectives of SDG 15: Life on Land. The connection is rooted in several core Islamic concepts that emphasize the human role as a steward of the environment.

Islamic Principles and SDG 15 Goals

- **Stewardship (Khalifah):** Islam teaches that humanity is appointed as a trustee or vicegerent (*khalifah*) on Earth, not its owner. This role comes with the sacred duty to protect and maintain the natural world and its resources for present and future generations. The misuse or destruction of the Earth is considered a betrayal of this trust.
- **Balance and Moderation (Mizan):** The universe is created in a precise and delicate balance (*mizan*) by God, which humans are warned not to disrupt. This principle strongly condemns wastefulness (*israf*) and extravagance, encouraging a moderate approach to consuming natural

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resources, which directly relates to sustainable use and conservation.

- **Protection of Ecosystems and Biodiversity:** The Quran states that all living creatures, including animals and birds, are "communities like you". This implies that they possess intrinsic value and rights, and harming them is an act of disrespect to the Creator. Islamic tradition, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad, also established protected areas called *hima* to conserve rangelands, forests, and wildlife by restricting grazing and hunting.
 - **Afforestation and Land Restoration:** Islamic teachings actively encourage planting trees and cultivating land. The Prophet Muhammad taught that planting a tree from which a human, animal, or bird eats is an act of charity (*sadaqah*) for which the planter is rewarded. He even advised planting a seedling even if the Day of Judgment is imminent, emphasizing the lasting importance of such an act. This directly supports the goals of combating desertification and halting land degradation.
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SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions in Islam -

Promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, providing access to justice, and building effective, accountable institutions.

Based on the principles and teachings of Islam, SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) finds profound resonance and comprehensive support. Islamic scriptures and the life of the Prophet Muhammad offer a robust framework for promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, ensuring access to justice, and fostering effective, accountable, and transparent institutions.

Promoting peaceful and inclusive societies

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Islamic tradition emphasizes the foundational role of peace (*salam*) and inclusivity in society.

- **The essence of peace:** The word *Islam* itself is derived from the Arabic root for peace (*salam*). The Islamic greeting, *As-salamu alaykum*, meaning "peace be upon you," is a daily reminder of this core value. The Quran encourages believers to build harmonious relationships with others, stating, "And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them, they say [words of] peace" (Quran 25:63).
- **Building inclusive communities:** Islam promotes the dignity and equality of all humanity, transcending distinctions of race, color, or social status. The Quran states, "O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allah is that (believer) who has At-Taqla (piety)" (Quran 49:13). This principle fosters a diverse and inclusive society where worth is based on character rather than background.
- **Condemning violence:** Islam places a high value on the sanctity of human life and strongly condemns violence and oppression (*zulm*). The Quran makes it clear that to kill a person unjustly is like killing all of humanity, while saving a life is like saving all of humanity (Quran 5:32). The Prophet Muhammad's peaceful conquest of Mecca is a prominent example of reconciliation and the avoidance of bloodshed.

Providing access to justice for all

In Islam, justice (*adl*) is a divine command and a fundamental duty for all believers, applying equally to both Muslims and non-Muslims.

- **Impartiality in judgment:** Muslims are commanded to be steadfast in justice, even if it is against themselves, their parents, or their relatives. The Quran instructs, "O you who

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have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives" (Quran 4:135).

- **Legal fairness:** Islamic law (*Sharia*) is built upon principles of equity and fairness. Judges are required to be unbiased, listen to all parties equally, and only rule based on clear evidence. The Prophet Muhammad's example demonstrated how justice should be applied regardless of social status, once stating that if his own daughter had committed theft, he would have cut off her hand.
- **Reconciliation and mediation:** The Quran encourages reconciliation (*sulh*) and emphasizes mediation as a preferred method of resolving disputes, especially within communities. The Prophet Muhammad often served as a mediator, such as in the case of the Black Stone, preventing potential conflict by devising a solution that satisfied all parties.

Building effective, accountable institutions

Islamic governance principles emphasize accountability (*hesab*) and transparency rooted in a dual responsibility: to God and to the people.

- **Dual accountability:** Leaders in Islam are considered trustees (*amanah*) of God, entrusted with the welfare of their people. They are accountable for their actions and will be questioned on the Day of Judgment. This spiritual dimension instills a deep sense of moral responsibility in a leader.
- **Transparency and consultation:** Islamic governance is characterized by transparency and consultation (*shura*), where rulers are instructed to consult with their people. Historically, this was demonstrated by the early caliphs, who were accessible to citizens and encouraged open discourse to address grievances.

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- **Combating corruption:** Accountability and transparency are crucial for combating corruption and promoting good governance. Islamic teachings lay down strict principles against bribery and unjust enrichment. The Prophet Muhammad and early caliphs, like Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz, set powerful examples of honest leadership and worked to abolish unjust taxes.
 - **Rule of law:** The Islamic legal tradition emphasizes the supremacy of the law, which applies equally to the ruler and the ruled. The principle that no one is above the law is a foundational aspect of Islamic justice.
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SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals in Islam - Strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development.

Islam aligns strongly with Sustainable Development Goal 17 (SDG 17), which calls for revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development. Rooted in the principles of justice, cooperation, and the common good, Islamic teachings provide a robust ethical framework for implementing SDG 17 through economic, social, and technological partnerships.

Islamic principles underpinning SDG 17

Several core Islamic concepts support the objectives of global partnership and sustainable development:

- ***Al – Tawhid* *Al-Tawhid* (The Oneness of God):** This principle establishes that God is the owner and ultimate provider of all creation, making humans his vicegerents (*khalifah khalifah*) on Earth. As stewards, Muslims are obligated to care for the planet and use its resources responsibly, which requires global cooperation.

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- *Taawun'alal – birri Taawun'alal-birri (Cooperation in goodness)*: The Quran commands believers to cooperate in righteousness and piety. This directly supports SDG 17's call for multi-stakeholder partnerships by encouraging people of all backgrounds to work together for social welfare and the greater good.
- *Al – Adl Al-Adl and Al – Ihsan Al-Ihsan (Justice and benevolence)*: Islam promotes fairness, equality, and compassion, which are critical for building just and inclusive societies. It requires working against inequality and exploitation to ensure resources are distributed equitably.
- *Al – Maslaha Al-Maslaha (Public interest)*: Decisions and actions should prioritize the welfare of the community. In the context of global partnerships, this means advocating for policies that benefit all of humanity, not just a select few, and considering the interests of future generations.
- *Mizan Mizan (Balance)*: The concept of balance is fundamental to the Islamic worldview, from economic activities to environmental stewardship. This provides a normative basis for managing resources justly and avoiding excess, supporting balanced development practices globally.

Islamic finance as a means of implementation

Islamic finance offers innovative and ethical instruments that can help fund sustainable development and strengthen global partnerships. Unlike conventional finance, it emphasizes risk-sharing, links financial activity to the real economy, and is guided by moral principles.

Philanthropic instruments

- **Zakat**: An obligatory annual alms tax on surplus wealth, Zakat is a powerful tool for wealth redistribution and poverty alleviation. By funding educational, health, and micro-

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enterprise projects, Zakat directly supports SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), and SDG 4 (Quality Education). Collaboration between Zakat institutions, governments, and NGOs can maximize its potential for sustainable impact.

- **Waqf (Islamic endowment):** As a permanent dedication of assets for charitable purposes, Waqf can provide sustainable, long-term financing for social projects. In line with SDG 17, modern Waqf funds are being used to finance infrastructure, renewable energy projects (Green Waqf), education, and healthcare.

Investment and commercial instruments

- **Sukuk (Islamic bonds):** These asset-based financial instruments can be used to raise funds for sustainable infrastructure projects, aligning with SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) and SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy). Green Sukuk have emerged as a way to finance environmentally-friendly initiatives.
- **Islamic Microfinance:** By providing accessible, ethical financing, Islamic microfinance helps empower marginalized communities, reduce inequality, and promote economic growth. It fosters self-reliance, rather than dependency, among recipients.
- **Profit-and-loss sharing:** Islamic finance models based on profit-and-loss sharing (*mudarabah mudarabah* and *musharakah musharakah*) create more resilient and stable financial systems. They link finance to tangible economic activity, avoiding the excessive risk and speculation seen in some conventional financial markets.

Strengthening global partnerships and implementation

To fully realize the potential of Islamic principles and finance for SDG 17, several strategic actions can be taken:

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- **Enhance global and local partnerships:** Collaboration is essential to effectively channel Islamic social finance toward development goals. The [United Nations Development Programme \(UNDP\)](#), for example, has successfully partnered with Indonesia's national Zakat body (BAZNAS) to fund SDG-related projects.
- **Modernize governance and regulation:** For Islamic finance tools like Zakat and Waqf to have maximum impact, they need efficient and transparent governance frameworks. Modernizing outdated legal and administrative practices and adopting digital platforms can increase efficiency and public trust.
- **Foster knowledge and capacity building:** Greater awareness and understanding of Islamic finance's potential for sustainable development are needed among governments, financial institutions, and the public. This includes strengthening expertise in Shariah compliance and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) integration.
- **Integrate faith-based approaches into national strategies:** Governments in Muslim-majority countries can integrate Islamic social finance instruments into their national development strategies. This provides a compelling, values-driven framework for pursuing the SDGs.

Islamic principles that support the SDGs

Social development

- **No Poverty (SDG 1):** Islam mandates *zakat zakat* (obligatory charity) to redistribute wealth to the poor and needy. Voluntary charity (*sadaqah sadaqah*) is also highly encouraged to foster social solidarity and reduce economic inequality.

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- **Zero Hunger (SDG 2):** Islamic teachings promote feeding the hungry and reducing food waste. The Prophet Muhammad emphasized moderation in eating and the importance of agriculture and fair food distribution.
- **Good Health and Well-being (SDG 3):** Health is considered a precious gift in Islam. The tradition promotes a holistic view of well-being, encompassing physical, mental, and spiritual health, and encourages seeking medical treatment and moderation in diet.
- **Quality Education (SDG 4):** Seeking knowledge is a sacred duty for every Muslim. The Quran's first revelation was "Read," and Islamic civilization has a rich history of promoting education for both men and women.
- **Gender Equality (SDG 5):** The Quran emphasizes that all people were created from a single soul, highlighting the equal spiritual worth of men and women. Islam grants women rights to education, inheritance, and work, and promotes their empowerment.
- **Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10):** Islamic tradition explicitly condemns racism and classism. The faith promotes justice and fairness for all people, regardless of their race, language, or social status.

Environmental sustainability

Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6): Islamic jurisprudence (*Shariah Shariah*) places great importance on water conservation and purity. The ritual of ablution (*wudu wudu*) teaches responsible water use, and the Prophet forbade wasting water even from a flowing river. The institutions of *waqf waqf* (charitable endowment) have historically funded public water sources.

- **Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7):** Islam supports responsible resource management and warns against

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wastefulness (*israf israf*). The principles of renewable energy align with the Islamic concept of environmental stewardship.

- **Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12):** Wastefulness and extravagance are forbidden in Islam. The faith encourages moderation and ethical consumption, with Islamic law providing guidelines for transactions and economic behavior that prevent corruption and harm.
- **Climate Action (SDG 13):** The Quran designates humans as stewards (*khalifah khalifah*) of the Earth and warns against causing corruption (*fasad fasad*) on it. Islamic teachings promote conservation and protecting nature.
- **Life Below Water (SDG 14) and Life on Land (SDG 15):** The Prophet Muhammad emphasized planting trees and protecting animals. He established protected zones (*hima hima*) to conserve natural resources and forbade excessive harm to ecosystems.

Economic and governance development

- **Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8):** Islamic principles prohibit interest (*riba riba*) to ensure economic fairness and promote fair trade and ethical labor practices. It encourages hard work and earning a lawful living.
- **Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9):** Islamic finance instruments like *sukuk suzuk*

(Islamic bonds) can be used to fund infrastructure projects. Islamic teachings also encourage innovation and technological advancement for the betterment of humanity.

- **Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (SDG 16):** Upholding justice (*adl adl*) and fairness is a primary goal of Islamic governance. The tradition promotes human rights, conflict resolution, and the rule of law.

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- **Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17):** The Quran encourages cooperation for the common good (*ta'awun ta'awun*). This principle aligns with the need for multi-stakeholder partnerships to achieve the SDGs.

Islamic instruments and institutions supporting the SDGs

- **Zakat:** As a mandatory annual wealth tax, *zakat* functions as a powerful tool for poverty alleviation (SDG 1), hunger reduction (SDG 2), and reducing inequality (SDG 10) by ensuring a baseline level of welfare for the most vulnerable.
- **Waqf:** This charitable endowment of assets can generate sustainable income for public services, such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. It directly supports several SDGs, including those related to health (SDG 3), education (SDG 4), and water (SDG 6).
- **Islamic Finance:** The ethical framework of Islamic finance, with its emphasis on risk-sharing, linking finance to the real economy, and prohibiting interest and speculation, enhances financial stability and supports inclusive and sustainable economic growth.
- **Islamic Development Bank (IsDB):** The IsDB actively works with its member countries to align its development-financing model with the SDGs. It supports projects covering a wide range of SDGs, from climate action to poverty alleviation.
- **Islamic Education Institutions:** Madrasahs and Islamic schools can serve as strategic partners in promoting SDGs by incorporating these modern goals into their traditional curriculum, fostering a generation that is both knowledgeable and ethically conscious of global challenges.

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- **Moderation (Wasatiyyah) and Conservation:** The Quran condemns excess and wastefulness (*israf*), and the Hadith warns against wasting resources like water, even when abundant. This principle directly supports SDGs for clean water (SDG 6) and responsible consumption and production (SDG 12).
- **Protection of Natural Resources:** The Prophet Muhammad established *hima* (inviolable zones) to protect water sources, forestry, and wildlife. Islamic jurisprudence extends the concept of rights to non-human elements of nature, emphasizing resource conservation. This directly contributes to goals concerning climate action (SDG 13), life below water (SDG 14), and life on land (SDG 15).
- **Restoration and Balance (*Mizaan*):** The Quran emphasizes the concept of *mizaan* (balance), indicating that God created the universe in perfect balance and that humans should not cause corruption on earth. The Prophet also encouraged planting trees as a form of *sadaqah jariyah* (ongoing charity), promoting reforestation and sustainable agriculture.

Alignment with social and economic goals

Islamic principles and institutions address social justice, poverty, and equitable distribution, providing powerful mechanisms to advance several social and economic SDGs.

- **Poverty Alleviation (SDG 1) and Zero Hunger (SDG 2):** Islamic social finance tools are designed to combat poverty and hunger.
 - **Zakat:** An obligatory annual alms payment, *zakat* redistributes wealth from the rich to the poor and needy, serving as a pillar of economic justice.
 - **Waqf:** A perpetual charitable endowment, *waqf* can fund schools, hospitals, and

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- social welfare programs, creating long-term income streams for community development.
- **Qard al-Hasan:** Interest-free loans support low-income individuals and entrepreneurs, helping them build sustainable livelihoods.
- **Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3) and Quality Education (SDG 4):** Islamic ethics encourage both physical and intellectual well-being.
 - Early Islamic societies established hospitals (*bimaristan*) and universities funded by *waqf*, reflecting a historical commitment to universal healthcare and education.
 - The first Quranic revelation commanded Prophet Muhammad to "Read!" (*Iqra!*), placing immense emphasis on seeking knowledge for all, regardless of gender.
- **Gender Equality (SDG 5) and Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10):** Islam introduced reforms that gave women rights to inheritance, property, and participation in society at a time when they had few rights. The Quran emphasizes the spiritual equality of men and women.
- **Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8):** Islamic economics promotes ethical business practices, risk-sharing, and bans speculative transactions and interest (*riba*), which contributes to greater financial stability and inclusive growth.
- **Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions (SDG 16):** The core of Islamic law, the *Shariah*, is built on justice (*adl*) and equity (*ihsan*). It emphasizes accountability, compassion, and the elimination of exploitation and oppression.

Chapter 11: The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)-A Teacher and Public Administrator of Universe

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a teacher for all humanity, acting as an exemplar not just through his words but through his entire life and character. He declared, "I was sent as a teacher". His teachings were comprehensive, covering all aspects of life, and his methods were wise and compassionate, making complex concepts understandable and inspiring deep, lasting change in his companions and followers.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was not only a religious leader but also an exceptional teacher and public administrator whose principles remain relevant today. His leadership was defined by compassion, justice, integrity, and a focus on community welfare, demonstrating a holistic approach to governance and education.

A teacher for life: The Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) role as a teacher extended beyond religious lessons to all aspects of life, including morals, ethics, and conduct. His teaching style was compassionate, practical, and highly effective.

- **Compassionate and patient pedagogy:** He did not shame or scold students for their ignorance. In one instance, when a Bedouin man urinated in the corner of the mosque, the Prophet calmly waited for him to finish before explaining that mosques are for worship, not urination.
- **Leading by example:** His own character embodied the teachings he delivered. A'isha, his wife, famously described his character as being the Quran itself, meaning he lived by its principles in every detail.

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- **Interactive teaching:** He often used questions, parables, and practical demonstrations to engage his listeners and encourage them to think critically, ensuring they would remember the lessons.
- **Inclusive education:** He ensured that everyone had access to knowledge, regardless of their age, gender, or social standing. He even appointed special times for women to receive his instruction.
- **Focus on character:** Beyond teaching religious doctrine, his mission was to perfect noble character. He emphasized virtues like humility, compassion, and patience as foundational to a person's faith.

A Master of Public Administration: In Medina, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) established the first Islamic state, laying down a foundation for governance that prioritized justice, equality, and the welfare of all citizens, regardless of their faith.

- **Founding document:** The Constitution of Medina, a document he drafted, laid the groundwork for a pluralistic society. It regulated the relationships between different tribes, including Muslims, Jews, and pagans, establishing them as "one community" and protecting their respective rights.
- **Merit-based appointments:** The Prophet rejected nepotism and selected officials based on their integrity and capability. This principle is a cornerstone of modern Human Resource Management.
- **Consultative governance (Shura):** He practiced consultative leadership, seeking the opinions of his companions on important matters. This participative approach empowered his followers and ensured decisions reflected the community's best interests.

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- **Ethical financial management:** He instituted a comprehensive and transparent finance management system. He appointed financial officers to oversee a taxation system that took from the rich and provided for the poor, ensuring economic justice.
- **Accessible leadership:** The Prophet used the mosque as the community's administrative center and was accessible to everyone. This open-door policy ensured transparency and accountability in governance.
- **Fair conflict resolution:** He was renowned as an impartial arbitrator, settling disputes with wisdom and fairness. His early life reputation as "Al-Ameen" (the Trustworthy) meant even non-believers would seek his judgment.
- **Humane war guidelines:** In the context of military administration, he established strict rules of engagement that emphasized humane treatment of all, including opponents, prisoners of war, women, and children. He forbade the destruction of property and natural resources.

Teaching by example: One of the most powerful aspects of the Prophet's teaching was that his actions were a living reflection of his message. His wife, A'ishah, famously said that his character was the Qur'an.

- **Humility:** Despite being a leader, he was humble, approachable, and would eat with the poorest members of society.
- **Kindness and forgiveness:** He demonstrated deep compassion, even to those who harmed him. He forgave his enemies after the conquest of Mecca and was known to be gentle and patient, never criticizing or shaming people.

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- **Justice:** His rulings and dealings were defined by fairness. He famously stated that even if his own daughter committed a crime, he would punish her justly.
- **Environmental stewardship:** He taught kindness to animals, forbade overloading pack animals, and condemned the shooting of birds for sport.

Effective teaching methods: The Prophet's teaching methods were designed to engage his companions and ensure the lessons were remembered.

- **Dialogue and questioning:** He often engaged his companions in a question-and-answer format to stimulate their thinking. For instance, he would pose a question, and when they struggled to answer, he would provide clarity, solidifying the lesson in their minds.
- **Analogies and parables:** He frequently used stories and relatable comparisons to illustrate abstract concepts. To explain the cleansing effect of the five daily prayers, he once asked his companions if a person bathing in a river five times a day would have any dirt left on them.
- **Gradual approach:** Recognizing that some lessons required time and preparation, he took a step-by-step approach. He focused on building a strong foundation of faith before introducing other obligations, preventing his followers from feeling overwhelmed.
- **Practical demonstrations:** For matters of worship, he would demonstrate the proper way to perform them, such as how to make ablution (purification) or pray.
- **Contextual wisdom:** He taught according to the needs of the individual. When a young man came seeking permission to commit a sin, the Prophet did not shame him but instead engaged him in a compassionate conversation, leading the

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young man to realize the ugliness of the act through empathy.

Universal and timeless teachings: His lessons went far beyond religious rituals, providing a blueprint for a meaningful life still relevant today.

- **Advocate of knowledge:** The first word of the Qur'anic revelation was *Iqra* (read). He declared that seeking knowledge is a duty for every Muslim, inspiring countless generations to pursue both religious and secular education.
- **Family values:** He provided guidance on building strong, loving family units. He emphasized respecting parents, with the mother deserving the greatest kindness. He was a compassionate father and husband, stating, "The best among you is he who is best to his family".
- **Business ethics:** He modeled and taught principles of honest and fair trade, condemning fraud, hoarding, and exploitation. He emphasized kindness in transactions and encouraged sellers to disclose any defects in their goods.
- **Social justice and equality:** He championed the rights of the poor, marginalized, and women, who had been disenfranchised in pre-Islamic Arabia. His final sermon famously declared that no Arab is superior to a non-Arab and that all humanity is from Adam.

A Social Reformer of Universe: While some might refer to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a social reformer of the "universe," the most widely accepted view emphasizes his transformative impact on 7th-century Arabian society and his establishment of principles intended for all of humanity. His reforms were groundbreaking for their time and addressed deep-seated issues of social inequality, women's rights, the welfare of the poor and orphans, and tribal conflict.

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Universal themes of reform: Although the Prophet's reforms were initiated in a specific historical context, the core principles were intended to be universal and timeless. His message of justice, compassion, and human dignity is seen as relevant beyond the Muslim world. This is encapsulated in his Farewell Sermon, where he stated that no race or ethnicity is superior to another, with the only measure of worth being piety and good action.

Specific areas of social reform

1. Challenging tribalism and promoting human equality

- **Abolished ancestral pride:** Pre-Islamic Arabia was defined by tribal divisions and loyalty based on bloodlines. The Prophet dismantled this social structure by establishing a community (*Ummah*) based on a shared faith, not kinship.
- **Stressed equality of all people:** He famously declared that "an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab... nor a white has any superiority over a black except by piety and good action". This was revolutionary and directly opposed the primitive racial biases of the time.
- **Forged brotherhood:** After migrating to Medina, he established a system of brotherhood (*muwakhath*) that integrated the emigrants from Mecca with the local population, creating strong community bonds.

2. Elevating the status of women

- **Prohibited female infanticide:** One of his most significant reforms was the abolishment of the pre-Islamic practice of burying infant daughters alive.
- **Granted property and inheritance rights:** He gave women the right to own property and to inherit wealth, which was an unprecedented move in that era and allowed for female economic independence.

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- **Secured marital rights:** The Prophet established that a woman's consent was mandatory for her marriage to be valid. He also gave women the right to seek a divorce if the husband was abusive.
- **Encouraged education:** He famously declared that "learning is obligatory upon every Muslim man and woman". His wife, Aisha, became a prolific scholar and teacher, demonstrating a living example of female scholarship.

3. Instituting economic justice and protecting the vulnerable

- **Implemented Zakat:** He established *Zakat*, an obligatory annual almsgiving, to ensure the fair distribution of wealth and provide for the basic necessities of the poor and needy.
- **Condemned exploitation:** The Prophet condemned usury (interest) and exploitation, establishing principles of economic fairness and honest business practices.
- **Protected orphans:** The Quran and the Prophet's teachings emphasize the immense reward for caring for orphans and warn against mistreating them or consuming their property unjustly.
- **Improved conditions for slaves:** While not abolished instantly, Islam introduced a gradual process of reform that included strongly encouraging manumission, forbidding the enslavement of free people, and mandating kind and humane treatment of existing slaves. The freeing of slaves was made a virtuous act and an expiation for certain sins.

4. Establishing a just political framework

- **Created a pluralistic state:** In Medina, the Prophet authored the Constitution of Medina, a social contract that recognized the rights and responsibilities of diverse religious and ethnic groups, including Muslims, Jews, and pagans, under a common citizenship.

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- **Promoted justice for all:** He established the principle of rule of law, ensuring that all citizens enjoyed equality before the law, regardless of their social status.

Reforms for women: Before the advent of Islam, women in Arabia had very limited rights and were often treated as property. The reforms championed by Prophet Muhammad dramatically elevated their status:

- **Established consent for marriage:** He made a woman's consent mandatory for her marriage to be valid, recognizing her autonomy in marital decisions.
- **Granted property and inheritance rights:** He revolutionized existing laws by granting women the right to own and inherit property, securing their financial independence.
- **Prohibited female infanticide:** He condemned the practice of burying baby girls alive, which was a common act of "honor killing" in pre-Islamic Arabia.
- **Expanded access to education:** He famously declared that "seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim, male and female".

Reforms for marginalization: Prophet Muhammad's teachings actively challenged the deep-seated class and racial hierarchies of his time.

- **Uplifted the poor and orphans:** He emphasized social security through institutions like *zakat*, an obligatory almsgiving designed to redistribute wealth from the rich to the poor. He also called for the protection and care of orphans and widows.
- **Promoted humane treatment of slaves:** While slavery was a deeply entrenched institution, he made significant reforms by promoting the compassionate treatment and

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manumission of slaves. He taught that freeing a slave was a virtuous act and set restrictions on who could be enslaved.

- **Denounced racism and tribalism:** In his Farewell Sermon, he declared that "an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab... except by piety and good action". He prioritized a community (*ummah*) based on piety over one based on tribal affiliation.

Establishment of a just society: The Prophet's reforms extended to creating a just and equitable society for all, regardless of creed or social standing.

- **Constitution of Medina:** After migrating to Medina, he established a new sociopolitical framework with the Constitution of Medina. This groundbreaking document united the city's diverse tribes and communities, including Muslims, Jews, and pagans, under a single state and guaranteed religious freedom and security for all citizens.
- **Prioritized impartial justice:** He rejected the practice of showing favor to the rich or powerful in matters of justice. In a famous instance, he stated that if his own daughter had stolen, her hand would be severed, underscoring the principle of equal application of the law.
- **Instilled civic responsibility:** He encouraged his followers to actively engage in creating a moral and just society. One well-known maxim states, "The best of people are those who are most useful to others".

Legacy of reform: Prophet Muhammad's vision initiated a comprehensive transformation of society that continues to inspire. The changes he introduced to address inequality, protect vulnerable groups, and establish a framework for justice created a lasting legacy that remains central to modern discussions of human rights and social justice.

About the Author:

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- Nodal Officer @FOEII University II Creator of the University Development Impact Bond (UDIB): a model designed to measure and enhance the social and economic outcomes of educational institutions II Author for 40+ e-books II Innovator of B. Skills and M. Skills II Executor of NEP, NHEQF, NSQF, ABC, NCrF, RPL, Impact bond, Invest ED-Infra and Developing a cultivational frameworks to design the UG-PG-PhD Programs with implementation of National Education Policy of VIKSIT BHARAT 2047.

A creator and innovator to establishing the Universities in India to work for National Education Policy of VIKSIT BHARAT 2047. A social reformer to create the educational infrastructures, operating systems and frameworks to lead the educational development of India and our development will be a visionary impact of futuristic vision of India. With a focus on shaping the future of education, his role as Pro Chancellor at FOEII University involves spearheading curriculum development and championing innovative funding models and leveraging skills in career development and employee training, he is committed to fostering an ecosystem that enhances skill acquisition and entrepreneurship with objective is to create lasting societal benefits through strategic educational reforms and the empowerment of learners to contribute meaningfully to national building.

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His aspirations are to be a creator and innovator to establishing the Universities in India to work for National Education Policy of VIKSIT BHARAT 2047 and his social reforms are to create the educational infrastructures, operating systems and frameworks to lead the educational development of India with a visionary impact of futuristic vision of India. **Prof. Younush is not just a name** but a force driving transformative change in education, skill development, and entrepreneurship, with a career spanning over 26 years, he has seamlessly blended his passions for education, leadership, and culinary arts into a mission to reshape India's future. He has established himself as a dynamic leader in the realms of corporate strategy, culinary innovation, education management and a sharp business acumen with an entrepreneurial mindset.

His expertise spans strategic management, IT & automation, entrepreneurship and reflects on a versatile and forward-thinking approach to solving complex challenges.

I love to become a Chef to cook food for family and friends with medically outcomes and this passion is recognized by Chef RANVERR and Chef KUNAL also with certifications of culinary and fusing of spices of India.

Note sheet:

