



جامعة محمد بن زايد  
للعلوم الإنسانية  
MOHAMED BIN ZAYED UNIVERSITY FOR HUMANITIES



# ISLAMIC CULTURE

Prepared by

Mohamed bin Zayed University for Humanities

First Edition  
2026 AD - 1447 AH



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



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# ISLAMIC CULTURE

2026









## INTRODUCTION

In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad b. Abd Allah, the Seal of the Prophets, and upon his father, Abraham, and his two brothers in prophethood, Moses and Jesus, and upon all God's messengers and those who follow their guidance until the Day of Judgment.

Mohamed Bin Zayed University for Humanities is proud to publish this work, covering the accredited course in Islamic Culture for higher education institutions in the UAE, under the Ministry of Education. It was prepared, authored, reviewed, and proofread by a select group of specialists, using a methodology that promotes positive religious discourse. This book embodies the values defined in the UAE's Principles of the Fifty, in its dedication to a society "based on openness and tolerance, the preservation of rights, the consolidation of a just state, the preservation of human dignity, respect for cultures, the enhancement of human brotherhood, and respect for national identity."

Each unit of the book focuses on building the values of knowledge (*ilm*), purification of the soul (*tazkiyya*), wisdom (*ḥikma*), mercy (*raḥma*), peace (*salām*), and citizenship (*muwāṭana*). These values contribute to the formation of a person who (1) sincerely believes in his Creator, (2) whose soul is pure, (3) whose thinking is moderate, (4) who is proactive in helping others in society, (5) is tolerant, (6) honest in their dealings, (7) aware of their responsibilities towards their country, (8) loving of others, (9) modest and constructive in their achievements, (10) pioneering

in their thinking, (11) competitive in growth and advancement, (12) preserves authentic customs and traditions, (13) is proud of their heritage and national belonging, (14) interacts positively with other cultures, and (15) respects privacy and differences.

## **Course Description**

This course examines the importance, main characteristics, sources, components, and impact of Islamic culture on the world. It presents Islam's most essential values, such as knowledge, mercy, peace, citizenship, and tolerance. It also discusses critical challenges facing Muslim societies, such as challenges to family life, extremism, and violence that undermine intellectual security.

## **Course Objectives**

1. Introduce Islamic culture, its cultural sources, and characteristics.
2. Explain the components of Islamic culture: faith, values, and moderation.
3. Identify the connection between Islamic civilization, the humanities, and physical sciences, and demonstrate the contribution of Islamic culture to building human civilization.
4. Clarify the place of human and ethical values in the structure of Islamic culture.
5. Emphasize Islamic culture's impact on shaping a sound intellectual identity and promoting moderate behavior.

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## Course Outcomes

**After completing this course, students will be able to:**

1. Define Islamic culture, including its characteristics, sources, and main content.
2. Identify essential components of Islamic culture, its moderation, and its impact on the relationship between the Creator and creation.
3. Demonstrate the impact of Islamic culture in achieving intellectual security and moderate behavior.
4. Understand that Islam's teachings are embodied in positive, constructive interaction with societal norms and shared human values.
5. Employ the contents of Islamic culture in communication and openness to other civilizations.

## Textbook Units and Content

**The book was developed according to the approved model for the Islamic Culture course, with units covering the following:**

- Unit One: Introduction to Islamic Culture
- Unit Two: Sources of Islamic Discourse
- Unit Three: Components and Issues of Islamic Discourse
- Unit Four: Intellectual Fortification: Foundations, Means, and Benefits

The book's content is distributed over sixteen (16) weeks, at a rate of three (3) teaching hours per week. The content provides ample space for the application of constructive learning strategies that enhance student understanding, with a focus on critical interaction and discussion, diversifying teaching methods and interactive activities, and encouraging students to read external articles that will deepen their understanding of the course topics and support self-directed, sustainable learning.

## DETAILED CONTENTS : ISLAMIC CULTURE COURSE

- **Introduction to Islamic Culture**
  - **Defining Islamic Culture and Identifying the Features of Islamic Discourse**
- **Sources of Islamic Discourse**
  - **The Holy Qurʾān**
    - » **Definition and Objectives**
    - » **Methodology for Understanding**
  - **Prophetic Guidance and the Prophet’s Biography**
  - **Islamic Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*)**
    - » **Definition, Schools, and Main Features**
  - **Fatwa**
    - » **Definition, Importance, and Controls**
    - » **National Institutions**
  - **Islamic Civilization**
    - » **Definition – Components – Ethics**
    - » **Relationship of Islam to the Humanities and Natural Sciences**
    - » **Muslim Contributions to the Development of Human Civilization**
  - **Laws and Customs**
    - » **Local Laws**
    - » **International Conventions**
    - » **Customs and Traditions**
- **Components and Issues of Islamic Discourse**
  - **Faith**

- 
- » Definition – Pillars – Impact on Life
  - » Knowledge of God
    - Scientific and Logical Evidence of God’s Existence
  - » Belief in the Divine Scriptures
  - » Belief in the Messengers
    - Moral Qualities of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH)
  - Values
    - Definition – Characteristics – Dimensions
    - Examples of Human Values
      - Self-purification (*tazkiyya*)
      - Knowledge (*ilm*)
      - Wisdom (*ḥikma*)
      - Mercy (*raḥma*)
      - Peace (*salām*)
      - Citizenship (*muwāṭana*)
  - Intellectual fortification
    - Foundations, Methods, and Results
  - Conclusion
  - Bibliography





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AN INTRODUCTION TO  
ISLAMIC CULTURE

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## DEFINING ISLAMIC CULTURE AND IDENTIFYING THE FEATURES OF ISLAMIC DISCOURSE

**Culture** (*thaqāfa* - الثقافة): In Arabic, culture carries several linguistic meanings:

1. Skill, understanding, intelligence, and acumen. The classical grammarian Ibn Manẓūr wrote: “To be skilled in something is to master it. A skilled and understanding person is described as *thaqf*, *thaqif*, or *thaqūf*. A ‘cultured’ boy possesses acumen and intelligence, meaning he has a firm grasp of what he needs.”
2. Quickness of learning. Another grammarian, al-Azharī, said, “It is said that to ‘*thaqif*’ a thing is to learn it quickly.”<sup>1</sup>
3. Controlling and managing affairs: It is said, “A man is *thaqf* if he is in control of what he possesses and manages it,” as Ibn al-Sikkit stated.<sup>2</sup>
4. To perceive and attain something: They say, “He ‘*thaqifa*’ a thing in such and such a place,” meaning he took it, attained it, or grasped it.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Azharī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad. *Tahdhīb al-Lughā* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 2001), 9:81.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Mālik, Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Jīānī. *Ikmāl al-A’lām bi-Tathlīth al-Kalām* (Mecca: Umm al-Qura University, 1984), 1:88-155.

All these meanings are interconnected. Understanding something and being proficient in it leads to learning it quickly, which in turn leads to mastering it, perceiving it, and attaining it.

In its technical sense, culture in Arabic refers to the body of sciences and knowledge that are sought to be understood, learned, and mastered. Among these definitions are:

1. "Everything that enlightens the mind, refines taste, and cultivates the faculty of criticism and judgment, whether in individuals or in society. This includes knowledge, beliefs, art, ethics, and all the means through which an individual contributes to their society."<sup>1</sup>
2. "The summation of spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional characteristics that distinguish a particular society or social group. This includes the arts, literature, and ways of life, as well as fundamental human rights, value systems, traditions, and beliefs."<sup>2</sup>

Based on these linguistic and technical definitions of culture, this book defines Islamic culture as: **"A set of beliefs, knowledge, arts, ideals, traditions, and skills that stem from Islamic discourse, encompass its issues, are compatible with common human values, and ensure intellectual fortification and integrity in Muslim societies."**

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<sup>1</sup> Majma' al-Lugha al-'Arabiyya. *al-Mu'jam al-Falsafi* (Cairo: al-Maṭabī'a al-Amīriyya, 1983), 85.

<sup>2</sup> UNESCO, "I'lān Miksīkū bi-Sha'n al-Thaqāfa," *Majalla al-Ma'rifa* (Syria) 247, year 21, Sep. 1982.

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## Features of Islamic Discourse (*al-Khiṭāb al-Sharī*)

As religious discourse and revelation rest at the core of Islamic culture, it is necessary to begin by discussing its overall features:

1. **Rationality:** The use of reason in analysing and judging matters. Islamic discourse is rational in its structure and purpose, as it addresses those with intellect and understanding, seeking to persuade them and to call them to engage with it and respond to its requirements. For this reason, we find that the Glorious Qurʾān and the *ḥadīths* of the Noble Prophet (PBUH) elevate the value of reason in many verses. The Holy Qurʾān uses the word “reason” in its various forms in (49) places, including: “We have made Our revelation clear to you so that you may use your reason.”<sup>1</sup> The Qurʾān also urges the development of human mental capabilities through observation, research, contemplation, reflection, and deduction in more than (696) places, including: “In the creation of the heavens and earth; in the alternation of night and day; in the ships that sail the seas with goods for people; in the water which God sends down from the sky to give life to the earth when it has been barren, scattering all kinds of creatures over it; in the changing of the winds and clouds that run their appointed courses between the sky and earth: there are signs in all these for those who use their minds.”<sup>2</sup>

The Holy Qurʾān condemns blind imitation, which disables the mind and inhibits the faculty of thinking, because it leads to intellectual decline and civilizational deterioration. The mind is the tool for understanding the divine revelation contained in the Holy Qurʾān and the Sunna, through which correct knowledge and sound perception are attained, thereby opening the path to progress in various aspects of life.

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 57:17.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 2:164.

- 2. Humanity:** Humanity is the purpose of creation, and the divine messages were revealed for humanity's sake. To emphasize this, one of the chapters of the Holy Qurʾān is named the Chapter of Humanity (*Sūra al-Insān*). The word “human” and its meaning are mentioned in ninety-seven (97) places in the Holy Book. The message of God has been delivered to many across the ages, and the message of Muḥammad (PBUH) is for all of humanity. God Almighty says: “We have sent you [Prophet] only to bring good news and warning to all people.”<sup>1</sup>

One manifestation of humanity in Islam is that the religion honours the value of every person, emphasizing respect and appreciation. God Almighty said: “We have honoured the children of Adam.”<sup>2</sup> Additionally, the Qurʾān states: “If any saves a life it is as if he saves the lives of all mankind.”<sup>3</sup> God’s honour is equal for all people regardless of race, ethnicity, or belief.

- 3. Practicality:** Islamic discourse aims to raise humanity’s quality of his life to the highest possible levels, with all available means, through understanding the nature of reality by taking into account its components and variables, and understanding the impact of its data, taking into account the dealings of time and the constraints of place in understanding the legal rulings related to it, and in knowing the methodology of applying them and working with them based on the relationship between the texts and objectives and reality.<sup>4</sup>

The gradual revelation of the Qurʾān over 23 years established and promoted this methodology. Qurʾānic verses were revealed

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 34:28.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 17:70.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 5:32.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Bayyah, ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Shaykh al-Mahfūz. *Tanbīh al-Marāji’ ‘ala Ta’ṣīl Fiqh al-Wāqi’* (Abu Dhabi: Markaz al-Muwaṭṭa’a, 2018), 123.

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in response to emerging events, unforeseen circumstances, and calamities, interacting with people's realities, safeguarding their interests, resolving their problems, and answering their questions. God Almighty says: "We have sent the Scripture down to you explaining everything, and as guidance and mercy and good news to those who devote themselves to God."<sup>1</sup> Our Prophet (PBUH) explained Qur'ānic verses with a profound understanding of the text and a keen grasp of reality, its manifestations, and its challenges.

Furthermore, the practical nature of Islamic discourse lies in its consideration of people's capabilities and potential, and in its alignment with their innate nature and inherent disposition. God Almighty said: "God does not burden any soul with more than it can bear."<sup>2</sup> In addition, the Qur'ān states: "God does not burden any soul with more than He has given it."<sup>3</sup>

One manifestation of this realism is the leniency shown to those with valid excuses, such as permitting travellers and the sick to break their fast. God Almighty says: "So any one of you who is present that month should fast, and anyone who is ill or on a journey should make up for the lost days by fasting on other days later. God wants ease for you, not hardship."<sup>4</sup> God also shortens prayers for travellers: "When you [believers] are travelling in the land, you will not be blamed for shortening your prayers."<sup>5</sup>

4. **Balance:** Islamic discourse is characterized by its commitment to achieving balance in all aspects of life, in all its dimensions. This is seen in several ways:

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 16:89.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 2:286.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān, 65:7.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 2:185.

<sup>5</sup> Qur'ān, 4:101.

- a. Balance between the demands of the soul and the body:** Islam combines acts of worship that nourish and develop the soul with legislation that considers the rights of the body. On the authority of Anas b. Malik, some of the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH), said: “I will not marry.” Others said: “I will not eat meat.” Still, others said: “I will not sleep on a bed.” Finally, others said: “I will fast continuously and not break it.” This reached the Messenger of God (PBUH). He praised God and glorified Him, then said: “What is the matter with people who say these things? I pray, and I sleep, I fast, and I break my fast, and I marry. Whoever turns away from my Sunnah is not one of my followers.”<sup>1</sup>

Islam is keen on ensuring a balance between acquiring worldly interests and working for the Hereafter. God Almighty said: “Seek the life to come by means of what God has granted you, but do not neglect your rightful share in this world.”<sup>2</sup> God praises those who call upon Him and say: “Our Lord, give us good in this world and in the Hereafter.”<sup>3</sup> Then God says about them: “They will have the share they have worked for: God is swift in reckoning.”<sup>4</sup>

- b. Balance between faith and reason:** As Islam calls believers to faith in all its pillars, it establishes rational and logical proofs for it. Reason leads to faith, and faith responds to the call of reason. We find this in many verses of the Holy Qur’an, such as: “People, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, so that you may be mindful [of Him], who spread out the earth for you and built the sky; who sent water down from it

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<sup>1</sup> al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh, *al-Jāmi’ al-Musnad al-Mukhtaṣar min Umūr Rasūl Allāh wa Sunanihi wa Ayāmihi* (Bulāq: al-Maṭba‘a al-Kubra al-Amīriyya, 1893), *ḥadīth* no. 5063; Muslim, Ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar min al-Sunan bi-Naql al-‘Adl ‘an al-‘Adl ‘an Rasūl Allāh* (Constantinople: Dār al-Ṭibā‘a al-‘Āmira, 1915), *ḥadīth* no. 1401.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’an, 28:77.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’an, 2:201.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’an, 2:202.

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and with that water produced things for your sustenance. Do not, knowing this, set up rivals to God.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Almighty commanded worship, followed by rational proof of the evidence of His existence and His deserving of sincere worship.

c. **Balance between self-reliance and reliance on God.** Balance between self-reliance and reliance on God. The correct understanding of reliance (tawakkul) on God is to apply the means of success that God Almighty has placed in our hands and commanded us to use, with faith and certainty that these means only achieve their effects by His command, as the Prophet Jacob (PBUH) did when he commanded his sons to take the necessary steps while relying on God Almighty’s power: “He said, ‘My sons, do not enter all by one gate– use different gates. But I cannot help you against the will of God: all power is in God’s hands. I trust in Him; let everyone put their trust in Him.’”<sup>2</sup>

5. **The centrality of values and ethics:** Values and morals occupy a large space in Islamic discourse, and some manifestations of this are:

a. **The call to adopt noble morals and spread the virtue:** Islamic law came with the pinnacle of virtues and morality, including mercy and wisdom, tolerance and peace, love and cooperation, and others. God Almighty said: “God commands justice, doing good, and generosity towards relatives, and He forbids what is shameful, blameworthy, and oppressive. He teaches you, so that you may take heed.”<sup>3</sup> The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “I was sent to perfect good morals.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 2:21-22.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 12:67.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 16:90.

<sup>4</sup> al-Aṣḥābī, Mālik b. Anas, *al-Muwaṭṭa’* (NA, 1991), *ḥadīth* no. 3357.

- b. Making values and ethics the goal of worship and interactions:** Acts of worship and interactions carry an ethical and value-based dimension; no act of worship or interaction is devoid of noble values or fails to produce virtuous character. God Almighty said about prayer: “prayer restrains outrageous and unacceptable behaviour.”<sup>1</sup> The Qur’ān says about zakat: “To cleanse and purify them [Prophet], accept a gift out of their property [to make amends] and pray for them.”<sup>2</sup> About fasting, the Qur’ān states: “You who believe, fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may be mindful of God.”<sup>3</sup> Finally, about Hajj: “The pilgrimage takes place during the prescribed months. There should be no indecent speech, misbehaviour, or quarrelling for anyone undertaking the pilgrimage- whatever good you do, God is well aware of it. Provide well for yourselves: the best provision is to be mindful of God- always be mindful of Me, you who have understanding.”<sup>4</sup>

All interactions in Islam are based on tolerance, honesty, trustworthiness, and fulfillment of obligations. The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) said: “May God have mercy on a person who is lenient when he sells, lenient when he buys, and lenient when he demands payment.”<sup>5</sup> Adopting these ethics in daily interactions preserves harmony among individuals and societal cohesion. Therefore, Islamic law prohibits all transactions that contradict these ethical principles, such as outbidding another, bidding against another’s offer, proposing marriage to a woman already engaged, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 29:45.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 9:103.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 2:183.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 2:197.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn Mājah, Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Qazwīnī, *Sunan Ibn Mājah* (Riyadh: Dār al-Ṣiddīq lil-Nashr, 2013), *ḥadīth* no. 2023, 473.

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6. **Openness and acceptance of the other:** Islam calls for openness to human civilizations, interacting with and mutually benefiting from them. Therefore, Muslims interacted with various human cultures and civilizations, spreading the knowledge and sciences they developed through translation, publication, and development. Among the most prominent of these was the translation of Greek books of knowledge into Arabic during the Abbasid era. al-Ma'mūn wrote to the King of the Romans about the translation of ancient sciences preserved in his country, including works on philosophy, engineering, music, medicine, and others. The king responded to this, and al-Ma'mūn chose a group of scholars under the supervision of the House of Wisdom, and they translated those books into Arabic.<sup>1</sup>

The following are some examples of Islam's call for openness and acceptance of others:

- a. The Holy Qur'ān calls for communication and getting to know others, to exchange knowledge and experiences, based on the fact that the difference between people is a praiseworthy diversity that enriches and advances human civilization. God Almighty said: "People, We created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into races and tribes so that you should recognize one another."<sup>2</sup>
- b. The Holy Qur'ān tells the stories of different cultures and civilizations, such as the Egyptian civilization, and the civilizations of 'Aad, Thamud and Sheba, while mentioning some aspects of these civilizations, such as Ad's distinction in the field of building and industry, their progress in methods of acquiring power, and the superiority of the Kingdom of Sheba in irrigation, engineering, and architecture.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm, Muḥammad b. Ishāq, *al-Fihrist* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifa, 1997), 301.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 49:13.

<sup>3</sup> Nawāf, Aḥmad 'Abd al-Raḥmān, *Tārīkh al-'Arab Qabl al-Islām* (Riyadh: al-Janādiriyya lil-Nashr wa'l-Tawzī', 2015), 52.

- c. The Qur'ān's use of words from other cultures, to the point that some scholars mentioned: "There is no language in the world that is not found in the Qur'ān."<sup>1</sup> Examples of this include: أباريق, meaning water path; ابلعي, meaning: drink; أخلد, meaning: to settle down; الأرائك, meaning: couches; أسفار, meaning: books; حصب, meaning: firewood; الرقيم, meaning: tablet; and سَرِيًّا, meaning: river. These are just a few examples of words documented in Qur'ānic sciences.<sup>2</sup>
- d. The Prophet's communication with the world: Through his letters to kings and princes, and his letters to some tribes. Some scholars cite up to 26 documents, and others have counted many more.<sup>3</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) was also keen to have his messengers learn the languages of the kings with whom he corresponded. On the authority of Zayd b. Thābit, may God be pleased with him: "The Messenger of God commanded me to learn the writing of the Jews for him," so he could write for the Prophet (PBUH) and read to him when letters were received.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, we find that the discourse upon which Islamic culture was founded is characterized by virtuous features, particularly the appreciation of reason and its elevation, the honouring of humanity and the safeguarding of its interests, the understanding of reality and its changing circumstances, and the achievement of balance and integration between the needs of the body and the soul. Each of these features works together to build a culture open to other civilizations, drawing from and being enriched by them in complete integration and harmony.

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<sup>1</sup> al-Tha'labī, Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm, *al-Kashf wa'l-Bayān 'an Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Jeddah: Dār al-Tafsīr, 2015), 1:211.

<sup>2</sup> al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr, *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Miṣriyya al-'Āmma lil-Kitāb, 1974), 2:129.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Ṭulūn, Muḥammad b. 'Alī, *I'lān al-Sā'ilīn 'an Kutub Sayyid al-Mursalīn* (Damascus: Maktaba al-Qudsī wa'l-Badīr, 1929), 52-3.

<sup>4</sup> Abū Dāwūd, Sulaymān b. al-Ash'ath al-Sijistānī, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-Aṣriyya, 2000), *ḥadīth* no. 3645, 3:318.







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SOURCES OF  
ISLAMIC DISCOURSE

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# The Holy Qur'ān

DEFINITION - OBJECTIVES - METHODOLOGY  
FOR UNDERSTANDING

The Qur'ān occupies the highest position in the system of Islamic knowledge, as it is the first source of the religion. The religion's structure is built upon it, and from it its principles are derived, and its subjects and components are extracted, whether in faith, worship, morality, or behaviour.

## Defining the Qur'ān (القرآن)

In Arabic, "Qur'ān" is a verbal noun on the pattern of *fulān*, like *ghufrān* (غفران), *shukrān* (شكران), and *rujḥān* (رجحان), meaning: gathering and combining.<sup>1</sup> From this, God says, "We shall make sure of its safe collection and recitation."<sup>2</sup> There is disagreement regarding its derivation; some scholars have stated that the word Qur'ān "Is a noun not derived

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<sup>1</sup> al-Naysābūrī, al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad, *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān wa Raghā'ib al-Furqān* (Beirut: Dār al-Qīma lil-Ṭabā'a w'al-Nashr, 1995), 1:29; Abū 'Ubayda, Mu'ammār b. al-Muthanna, *Majāz al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1992), 1:2; al-Ṭayyibī, al-Ḥusayn b. 'Abd Allāh, *Futūḥ al-Ghayb fir'l-Kashf 'an Qinā' al-Rayb* (Dubai: Jā'iza Dubai al-Dawliyya lil-Qur'ān al-Karīm, 2013), 16:164.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 75:17.

from anything.”<sup>1</sup> Others have said it is derived:

- a. From the root (قرأ), as in the Arabic expression: “I gathered the water in the basin.”<sup>2</sup> The word (قري) is a variant of this root.<sup>3</sup>
- b. Some say it is derived from the verb (قرنت), meaning to join or combine something. It was so named because of the combination of chapters, verses, and letters it contains.

The classic grammarian al-Farrā’ wrote: “As the Qur’ān’s verses confirm one another, they are ‘evidences (*qarā’in*).”<sup>4</sup> Whatever the case may be, it is the term by which the Holy Qur’ān is named, and no other book carries the same name.”<sup>5</sup>

In practical use, the Qur’ān is **“the miraculous word of God Almighty, even if it is just one chapter, revealed to our master Muhammad (PBUH), by the trustworthy messenger of revelation, Gabriel (PBUH), written in the Qur’ānic manuscripts, transmitted to us through continuous transmission, recited in worship, beginning with al-Fātiḥa, and ending with al-Nās.”**<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Zarkashī, Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad, *al-Burhān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān* (Cairo: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Kutub al-‘Arabiyya, 1957), 1:373.

<sup>2</sup> al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, *Mu’tarak al-Aqrān fī l’jāz al-Qur’ān* (Beirut: Dār al-Bāz lil-Nashr wa’l-Tawzī’, 1988), 2:329.

<sup>3</sup> al-Farāhīdī, al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad, *al-‘Ayn* (Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl, ND), 5:204.

<sup>4</sup> al-Suyūṭī, *Mu’tarak al-Aqrān*, 2:329.

<sup>5</sup> Abū ‘Ubayda, *Majāz al-Qur’ān*, 1:1.

<sup>6</sup> al-Samīn al-Ḥalabī, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad, *‘Umda al-Ḥuffaẓ fī Tafsīr Ashraf al-Alfāz* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1996), 3:286; al-Zarqānī, Muḥammad ‘Abd al-‘Azīm, *Manāhil al-‘Urfān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān* (Cairo: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1934), 8.

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## Explaining the Definition

**The word of God:** This excludes all speech other than that of God Almighty, whether it be the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet (PBUH), or other humans, jinn, and angels. All of that is not called Qurʾān.

**The miraculous, even in a single chapter:** The Qurʾān is miraculous in its entirety, just as it is miraculous in any single chapter. God Almighty said: “Say, ‘Even if all mankind and jinn came together to produce something like this Qurʾān, they could not produce anything like it, however much they helped each other.’”<sup>1</sup> The Qurʾān also says: “If you have doubts about the revelation We have sent down to Our servant, then produce a single sura like it- enlist whatever supporters you have other than God- if you truly [think you can].”<sup>2</sup>

**Revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH):** This excludes what was revealed to previous prophets, such as the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms, and others. None of these is called Qurʾān, even though they are all from God and are greatly honoured and respected.

**Written in the Qurʾānic manuscripts:** This is an advantage of the Qurʾān, that it was written down and preserved in writing since the time of the Prophet (PBUH), under his supervision and care, and then it was compiled after that during the time of Abū Bakr, may God be pleased with him, and then ʿUthmān, may God be pleased with him.

**Transmitted through continuous transmission:** The Qurʾān was transmitted by a large and numerous group of people who could not possibly have conspired to lie, nor could they have made a mistake by chance. This provides conclusive and definitive knowledge that this Qurʾān is the word of God Almighty.

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 17:88.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 2:23.

**One worships through reciting the Qurʾān:** The mere recitation of the Qurʾān is an act of worship for which the believer is rewarded, just as prayer is not valid unless something from it is recited. This condition excludes from the consideration of the Qurʾān: the non-mutawātīr readings, because we are not worshipping by them, and likewise the sacred *ḥadīths*.

The connection between the technical meaning and the linguistic meaning is clear: the Qurʾān was first compiled in the Preserved Tablet, then sent to the heart of the Prophet (PBUH), and then to copies of the Qurʾān and the hearts of the memorizers.<sup>1</sup> The Qurʾān compiles within its pages the principles of worship, transactions, morals, values, and other things, as it compiles the fruit of what preceded it from other divine revelations. Some scholars said, “This book is called Qurʾān from among the books of God because it is a collection of the fruit of His books.”<sup>2</sup>

The Holy Qurʾān has many names, the most famous of which are:

1. **The Book:** God Almighty said: “for We have sent the Scripture down to you explaining everything, and as guidance and mercy and good news to those who devote themselves to God.”<sup>3</sup>
2. **The Criterion:** God Almighty said: “Exalted is He who has sent the Criterion down to His servant so that it may be a warning to all people.”<sup>4</sup>
3. **The Reminder:** God Almighty said: “We have sent down the Reminder Ourselves, and We Ourselves will guard it.”<sup>5</sup>

The Holy Qurʾān was revealed to the heart of the Messenger of God (PBUH), in stages, through the angel of revelation, Gabriel (PBUH). God

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<sup>1</sup> Abū ʿUbayda, *Majāz al-Qurʾān*, 1:1.

<sup>2</sup> al-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī, al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad, *Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qurʾān* (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifa, 2005), 669.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 16:89.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 25:1.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 15:9.

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Almighty said: “Truly, this Qur’ān has been sent down by the Lord of the Worlds: to your heart [Prophet], so that you could bring warning in a clear Arabic tongue.”<sup>1</sup> The Qur’ān also states: “We Ourselves have sent down this Quran to you [Prophet] in gradual revelation.”<sup>2</sup>

Revelation was distributed over the course of the prophetic mission (approximately 23 years), including 13 years in Mecca and 10 years in Medina, taking into account people’s circumstances and the requirements of their environment, fulfilling their needs, resolving their problems, and achieving their happiness. Both Meccan and Medinan chapters (*sūras*) are distinguished by certain characteristics, as noted by scholars.

Characteristics of Meccan chapters are:

1. Brevity of verses
2. Demonstration of the unity of divine messages and their shared origin
3. Concise legislation and a focus on strengthening faith
4. Encouragement of noble character traits<sup>3</sup>

Characteristics of Medinan chapters are:

1. Longer verses
2. Detailed rulings
3. A call for coexistence and the achievement of peace and stability

In addition, there are many commonalities between the Meccan and Medinan verses of the Qur’ān, such as strengthening faith in God Almighty, connecting worshippers to Him, and emphasizing virtuous morals and ideal values.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 26:195.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 76:23.

<sup>3</sup> al-Khudrī, Muḥammad, *Tārīkh al-Tashrī‘ al-Islāmī* (Cairo: Dār al-Tawzī‘ wa’l-Nashr al-Islāmiyya, 2006), 12.

## Objectives of the Holy Qur'ān

The objectives of the Holy Qur'ān are the major goals that it came to achieve through its verses and chapters. Whoever contemplates the content of the Qur'ān will find that the general purpose for which it was revealed is to achieve benefit for humanity and to ward off harm, so that people may be happy in this life and the hereafter. al-'Izz b. 'Abd al-Salām wrote: "Most of the purposes of the Qur'ān are: commanding the acquisition of benefits and their means, and prohibiting the acquisition of harms and their means."<sup>1</sup> al-Ṭāhir Ibn 'Āshūr wrote: "God Almighty revealed the Qur'ān as a book for the betterment of all people, as a mercy to them. God Almighty said: 'We have sent the Scripture down to you explaining everything, and as guidance and mercy and good news to those who devote themselves to God.'"<sup>2</sup>

The most important objectives of the Holy Qur'ān can be summarized as five: establishing faith and worship of the Most Merciful, honouring humanity, purifying conscience, educating humanity, and building nations.<sup>3</sup>

**First: Establishing faith and worshipping the Most Merciful:** God Almighty says: "So [Prophet], bear in mind that there is no god but God."<sup>4</sup> The Qur'ān was revealed to acquaint people with their Creator, to show them the majesty of His essence, the perfection of His attributes, and the magnificence of His creation. God Almighty says: "He is God: there

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn 'Abd al-Salām, 'Izz al-Dīn, *Qawā'id al-Aḥkām fī Maṣāliḥ al-Anām* (Cairo: Maktaba al-Kuliyāt al-Azhariyya, 1991), 1:8.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 16:89; Ibn 'Āshūr, Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir, *Taḥrīr al-Ma'na al-Sadīd wa Tanwīr al-'Aql al-Jadīd min Tafsīr al-Kitāb al-Majīd* (Tunis: al-Dār al-Tunisiyya lil-Nashr, 1984), 1:38.

<sup>3</sup> al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad b. Jarīr, *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān* (Mecca: Dār al-Tarbiyya wa'l-Turāth, ND), 1:449; al-Sam'ānī, Abū al-Muẓaffar Maṣū' b. Muḥammad, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Riyadh: Dār al-Waṭan, 1997), 2:438; al-Shātibī, Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Mūsa, *al-Muwāfaqāt fī Uṣūl al-Sharī'a* (Cairo: Dār Ibn 'Affān, 1997), 4:209; al-Baqā'ī, Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm, *Maṣā'id al-Nazar lil-Ishrāf 'ala Maqāsid al-Suwar* (Riyadh: Maktaba al-Ma'ārif, 1987), 1:474; Ibn 'Āshūr, *al-Taḥrīr wa'l-Tanwīr*, 1:40-41, 81, 102, 182, and 15:166.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 47:19.

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is no god other than Him. It is He who knows what is hidden as well as what is in the open, He is the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy. He is God: there is no god other than Him, the Controller, the Holy One, Source of Peace, Granter of Security, Guardian over all, the Almighty, the Compeller, the Truly Great; God is far above anything they consider to be His partner. He is God: the Creator, the Originator, the Shaper. The best names belong to Him. Everything in the heavens and earth glorifies Him: He is the Almighty, the Wise.”<sup>1</sup> Among the things that strengthen faith in God is reflecting upon the magnificence and wonder of His creation. God Almighty says: “There truly are signs in the creation of the heavens and earth, and in the alternation of night and day, for those with understanding, who remember God standing, sitting, and lying down, who reflect on the creation of the heavens and earth: ‘Our Lord! You have not created all this without purpose- You are far above that!- so protect us from the torment of the Fire.’”<sup>2</sup> Indeed, reflecting upon the heavens and their height, the earth and its vastness, the mountains and their stability, and the seas and their waves nourishes the heart with faith, cultivates in the mind the faculty of creativity and mastery, and yields knowledge based upon evidence and proof. He, the Exalted, said: “It is He who sends down water from the sky. With it We produce the shoots of each plant, then bring greenery from it, and from that We bring out grains, one riding on the other in close-packed rows. From the date palm come clusters of low-hanging dates, and there are gardens of vines, olives, and pomegranates, alike yet different. Watch their fruits as they grow and ripen! In all this there are signs for those who would believe.”<sup>3</sup>

The Qur’ān also guides humanity to the ways of worshipping God Almighty, which bring them closer to Him and lead to His love. God said: “And worship Me. This is a straight path.”<sup>4</sup> God also said: “I created jinn and mankind only to worship Me.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 59:22-24.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 3:190-191.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 6:99.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 36:61.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 51:56.

**Second: Honouring man:** God Almighty said: “We have honoured the children of Adam and carried them by land and sea; We have provided good sustenance for them and favoured them specially above many of those We have created.”<sup>1</sup> Honouring and exalting man, explaining his great worth, his noble status, and his favour over other creations, are among the objectives brought by the Holy Qurʾān.

The Qurʾān has emphasized the favour of humanity in the strongest terms and many forms, including that God Almighty:

1. Created humanity, breathed His spirit into him, and made His angels prostrate to him. God Almighty said: “Your Lord said to the angels, ‘I will create a mortal out of dried clay, formed from dark mud. When I have fashioned him and breathed My spirit into him, bow down before him,’ and the angels all did so.”<sup>2</sup>
2. Honoured humanity with reason and endowed them with the faculties of learning: God Almighty said: “It is God who brought you out of your mothers’ wombs knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and minds, so that you might be thankful.”<sup>3</sup> God Almighty favoured humanity with reason, by which they manage their affairs and ward off harm through various kinds of knowledge and sciences.
3. Preserved a person’s wealth, life, and honour, and made creatures subservient to people. God Almighty said: “[People], do you not see how God has made what is in the heavens and on the earth useful to you, and has lavished His blessings on you both outwardly and inwardly?”<sup>4</sup>
4. Made the Qurʾān the focus of heavenly messages, and prescribed for it what would improve people’s life and make them happy.

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 17:70.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 15:28-30.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 16:78.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 31:20.

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God Almighty said: “Ta Ha, It was not to distress you [Prophet] that We sent down the Quran to you.”<sup>1</sup>

**Third: Purifying the self:** God Almighty said: “It is He who raised a messenger, among the people who had no Scripture, to recite His revelations to them, to make them grow spiritually and teach them the Scripture and wisdom.”<sup>2</sup> One of the main objectives of the Qurʾān is to elevate the human soul to the levels of perfection, by purifying it from reprehensible qualities such as envy, hatred, malice, pride, conceit, and anger, and adorning it with virtuous morals such as patience, forbearance, wisdom, mercy, and benevolence.

There are many verses in the Qurʾān that call for good morals and traits; among them:

1. Calling for trustworthiness: “but if you decide to trust one another, then let the one who is trusted fulfil his trust; let him be mindful of God, his Lord. Do not conceal evidence: anyone who does so has a sinful heart, and God is fully aware of everything you do.”<sup>3</sup>
2. Urging the cultivation of forbearance and kindness: “Who give, both in prosperity and adversity, who restrain their anger and pardon people – God loves those who do good.”<sup>4</sup>
3. Commanding forgiveness and tolerance: “Be tolerant and command what is right: pay no attention to foolish people.”<sup>5</sup>
4. Encouraging mutual support and cooperation: “Help one another to do what is right and good.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 20:1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 62:2.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 2:283.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 3:134.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 7:199.

<sup>6</sup> Qurʾān, 5:2.

There are many verses warning against the evils of certain traits and characteristics, including:

1. Prohibiting mockery and ridicule of others: “Believers, no one group of men should jeer at another, who may after all be better than them; no one group of women should jeer at another, who may after all be better than them; do not speak ill of one another; “<sup>1</sup>
2. Prohibiting the shaming and slander of others: “do not use offensive nicknames for one another. How bad it is to be called a mischief-maker after accepting faith! Those who do not repent of this behaviour are evildoers.”<sup>2</sup>
3. Prohibiting transgressing against privacy and not protecting the reputation of others: “Do not spy on one another or speak ill of people behind their backs.”<sup>3</sup>

To reinforce these values, the Holy Qurʾān presents examples of people with high morals and virtuous qualities, foremost among them His prophets and messengers. God Almighty said about Noah (PBUH): “He was truly a thankful servant.”<sup>4</sup> He also said about His close friend (*khalīl*), the father of the prophets, Abraham (PBUH): “For Abraham was forbearing, tender-hearted, and devout.”<sup>5</sup> He said about His prophet Ishmael (PBUH): “He was true to his promise, a messenger and a prophet.”<sup>6</sup> And He said about our Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH): “Truly you have a strong character.”<sup>7</sup> And when Aisha was asked regarding the

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 49:11.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 49:12.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 17:3.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 11:175.

<sup>6</sup> Qurʾān, 19:54.

<sup>7</sup> Qurʾān, 68:4.

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Prophet's character she said: "His character was the Qur'ān."<sup>1</sup>

**Fourth: Educating humanity:** God Almighty said: "God has been truly gracious to the believers in sending them a Messenger from among their own, to recite His revelations to them, to make them grow in purity, and to teach them the Scripture and wisdom- before that they were clearly astray."<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān and the Prophet's purpose was to teach people the words of their Lord, and to apply wisdom to their words, actions, and interactions in all aspects of their daily lives.

Further evidence of this great purpose is that the first verse revealed of the Holy Qur'ān was a call to acquire knowledge. God Almighty said: "Read! In the name of your Lord who created: He created man from a clinging form. Read! Your Lord is the Most Bountiful One who taught by [means of] the pen, who taught man what he did not know."<sup>3</sup> To further emphasize the importance of knowledge, the Holy Qur'ān mentions its most prominent tools, including:

1. **The Pen:** God Almighty says: "who taught by [means of] the pen."<sup>4</sup>
2. **Writing:** God Almighty says: "Nun By the pen! By all they write!"<sup>5</sup>
3. **Scriptures:** God Almighty says: "All this is in the earlier scriptures, the scriptures of Abraham and Moses."<sup>6</sup>
4. **Ink:** "Say [Prophet], 'If the whole ocean were ink for writing the words of my Lord, it would run dry before those words were exhausted'- even if We were to add another ocean to it."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, *Musnad Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal* (Jeddah: Dār al-Minhāj, 2011), *ḥadīth* no. 2524, 11:250.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 3:164.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān, 96:1-5.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 96:4.

<sup>5</sup> Qur'ān, 68:1.

<sup>6</sup> Qur'ān, 87:18-19.

<sup>7</sup> Qur'ān, 18:109.

The Qurʾān also mentions the faculties of receiving, learning, and recording: “It is God who brought you out of your mothers’ wombs knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and minds, so that you might be thankful.”<sup>1</sup>

**Fifth: Building homelands:** The Holy Qurʾān shows that one of the goals of human settlement on Earth is to develop it and build its civilization. God Almighty said: “[Prophet], when your Lord told the angels, ‘I am putting a successor on earth,’ they said, ‘How can You put someone there who will cause damage and bloodshed, when we celebrate Your praise and proclaim Your holiness?’ but He said, ‘I know things you do not,’”<sup>2</sup> meaning: a resident and a builder who will inhabit and develop it. The Qurʾān also states: “It was He who brought you into being from the earth and made you inhabit it,”<sup>3</sup> meaning: He commanded you to develop your land. To achieve this purpose, God Almighty prepared and subdued the earth, and placed within it the materials and components for its construction. God Almighty said: “Remember how He made you heirs after ‘Ad and settled you in the land to build yourselves castles on its plains and carve houses out of the mountains.”<sup>4</sup> God calls upon people to cooperate and work together in developing the earth and completing its construction. God Almighty said: “We are the ones who give them their share of livelihood in this world and We have raised some of them above others in rank, so that some may take others into service: your Lord’s grace is better than anything they accumulate.”<sup>5</sup>

This goal can only be achieved by being attached to and loving the homeland, striving to serve and develop it, defending its sanctity and inviolability, and working diligently for its advancement and to elevate its status.

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 16:78.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 2:30.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 11:61.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 7:74.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 43:32.

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These are the most important objectives of the Holy Qurʾān, which should be used to help contemplate it. Contemplation is only possible for those who pay attention to the objectives of the Qurʾān, to understand the wisdom behind its rulings, and to be able to properly interpret and act upon it.

## Methodology for Understanding the Qur'ān

Understanding the Holy Qur'ān can only be achieved by applying two elements:

1. Reflecting on its verses. God Almighty said: "This is a blessed Scripture which We sent down to you [Muhammad], for people to think about its messages, and for those with understanding to take heed."<sup>1</sup> The meaning of "thinking about" is: contemplating its words, understanding its meanings, and pondering its purposes and aims. al-Zamakhsharī said: "The meaning of reflecting upon the Qur'ān is: contemplating its meanings and seeing what is in it."<sup>2</sup>
2. A precise and comprehensive scholarly approach, starting from the linguistic meaning, guided by the body of other Islamic religious texts, taking into account the general principles and overall objectives of Islam, and considering the context of the text, its circumstances and the reason for its revelation, as detailed below:

**First: The holistic view:** To understand the verses of the Holy Qur'ān, we must look at it as a complete, integrated, and interconnected whole; all its verses are like one text in the system of reasoning and deduction, so whoever does not have knowledge of them and does not gather their parts will not be able to understand their meanings.<sup>3</sup>

A piecemeal view of Qur'ānic verses obscures the text's meaning and misses its purposes and aims. Therefore, it is necessary for those who want to understand the Qur'ān to keep in mind the fact that it is like a single image, to understand its verses within its overall meanings and purposes.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 38:29.

<sup>2</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, Maḥmūd b. 'Umar, *al-Kashāf 'an Haqā'iq Ghawāmiḍ al-Tanzīl wa 'Uyūn al-Aqāwīl fī Wujūh al-Ta'wīl* (Cairo: Dār al-Rayān lil-Turāth, 1987), 1:540.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Bayyah, 'Abd Allāh b. al-Shaykh al-Maḥfūz, *al-Kalīma al-Ta'īriyya lil-Multaqa al-Thānī li-Muntada Abū Dhabī lil-Silm*, 41; al-Shāṭibī, Ibrāhīm b. Mūsa, *al-I'tisām* (NA: 1992), 1:311.

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**Second: Focus on linguistics:** The Arabic language is the key to understanding the Holy Qurʾān and comprehending the meanings of its words and verses, since the origin of its revelation is in Arabic. God Almighty said: “a Scripture whose verses are made distinct as a Quran in Arabic for people who understand.”<sup>1</sup> The sciences of language are numerous and diverse, and the most prominent of them that help in understanding the Holy Qurʾān is knowing the rare words and distinguishing between literal statements and metaphors.

1. Understanding unfamiliar words: This refers to the linguistic meanings of Qurʾānic words within the established norms of the Arabic language. Indeed, “understanding the meanings of individual words in the Qurʾān is among the primary aids for anyone seeking to understand its meanings.”<sup>2</sup> A careful examination of the words of the Holy Quran, in terms of their clarity, reveals them to fall into several categories:
  - Some terms are clear to everyone, such as the Almighty’s saying: “[How] prosperous are the believers!”<sup>3</sup> and: “God is ever relenting, most merciful.”<sup>4</sup>
  - Other terms are understood by those who have knowledge of the Arabic language, such as: “when the sky is stripped away,”<sup>5</sup> meaning “removed and folded away as the cover is stripped away from something,”<sup>6</sup> and from the term stripped (*kushiṭat*): “stripping the camel, that is: removing the skin from it.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 41:3.

<sup>2</sup> al-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī, *Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qurʾān*, 54.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 23:1.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 49:12.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 81:11.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn Qutayba, ‘Abd Allāh b. Muslim, *Gharīb al-Qurʾān* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1987), 516.

<sup>7</sup> al-Rāghib al-Asfahānī, *Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qurʾān*, 712.

- Some terms require deep specialization and extensive knowledge of the Arabic language, such as: “fruits, and fodder.”<sup>1</sup> The “fodder (*abban*)” is: “The pasture prepared for grazing, from: ‘He prepared for such and such,’ meaning: He made it ready.”<sup>2</sup>

2. Literal and Figurative Meaning: One of the things that helps in understanding the Holy Qurʾān is considering literal and figurative meanings. “The literal meaning is when a word retains its original meaning in the language, while the figurative meaning is when it is used in a sense other than its original meaning due to a relationship between the two meanings, with a contextual clue preventing it from being taken in its original (literal) sense. For example, one might say ‘lion’ when the intended meaning is ‘brave’.”<sup>3</sup> The words of the Holy Quran, in terms of their meaning in this respect, fall into two categories:

- What indicates a literal meaning, such as: “Joseph’s brothers came,”<sup>4</sup> regarding their physical arrival.

- What indicates a figurative meaning, such as: “when your Lord comes with the angels, rank upon rank,”<sup>5</sup> meaning the coming of His command. This is evidenced by another verse: “Are the disbelievers waiting for the angels to come to them, or your Lord’s Judgement?”<sup>6</sup>

**Third: Prophetic explanation:** The Prophet (PBUH) clarified the Holy Qurʾān. Therefore, his verbal and practical explanations should be relied upon in understanding its verses. An example of this is the Almighty’s statement regarding the beginning of ab-

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 80:31.

<sup>2</sup> al-Rāghib al-Asfahānī, *Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qurʾān*, 59.

<sup>3</sup> al-Jurjānī, ‘Abd al-Qāhir b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, *Dalā’il al-l’jāz* (Cairo: Maṭba‘a al-Madanī, 1992), 366.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 12:58.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 89:22.

<sup>6</sup> Qurʾān, 16:33.

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staining from things that break the fast for the fasting person: “eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct from the black. Then fast until nightfall.”<sup>1</sup> ‘Adī b. Ḥātim (may God be pleased with him) misunderstood the verse. He said: “So I took a black rope and a white rope and placed them under my pillow. I kept looking at them during the night, but I could not distinguish them. So, I went to the Messenger of God (PBUH) and told him about it. He said: ‘That is only the blackness of the night and the whiteness of the day.’”<sup>2</sup> Thus, through this prophetic statement, we understand the intended meaning of the verse.

**Fourth: Focusing on the objectives:** This refers to understanding the verses of the Qurʾān by considering the goals, meanings, and wisdom that Islam came to achieve. Interpreting verses in isolation from these objectives leads to errors in understanding and application. al-Ṭāhir Ibn ‘Āshūr stated: “The literal evidence of Islamic law cannot dispense with knowledge of its objectives.”<sup>3</sup> The most important of these objectives is the preservation of the five necessities: religion, life, intellect, honour, and property, which aim to achieve security, stability, tranquillity, and everything that benefits humanity.

**Fifth: Context and reasons for revelation:** This refers to considering the events and issues that accompanied the revelation of Qurʾānic verses. al-Wāḥidī wrote, “It is impossible to understand the interpretation of a verse and its intended meaning without knowing its story and the circumstances of its revelation.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 2:187.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 1906, 2:18; Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 1081, 2:761.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn ‘Āshūr, Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir, *Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿa al-Islāmiyya* (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Miṣrī, 2011), 3:79.

<sup>4</sup> al-Wāḥidī, ‘Alī b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Naysābūrī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* (Dammām: Dār al-Islāh, 1992), 8.

Ibn Daqīq al-‘Īd wrote, “Explaining the reason for revelation is a powerful method for understanding the meanings of the Qur’ān.”<sup>1</sup> An example of this is the verse: “Safa and Marwa are among the rites of God, so for those who make major or minor pilgrimage to the House it is no offence to circulate between the two. Anyone who does good of his own accord will be rewarded, for God rewards good deeds, and knows everything,”<sup>2</sup> meaning: walking between them. Understanding the words: “it is no offence to circulate between the two,” without considering the reason for its revelation, suggests that the walking (*sa’ī*) between Safa and Marwa is not obligatory. However, it is one of the pillars of Hajj and Umrah, as evidenced by the *ḥadīth* of ‘Āṣim b. Sulaymān, who said: “I asked Anas b. Mālik about Safa and Marwa. He said: ‘We used to think that they were from the practices of the pre-Islamic era, but when Islam came, we refrained from them.’ Then God Almighty revealed: “Safa and Marwa are among the rites of God, so for those who make major or minor pilgrimage to the House it is no offence to circulate between the two.” The reason for the revelation of the verse indicates that the negation of blame is not intended to negate obligation, but rather to guide them to not feel constrained from the walking (*sa’ī*) between Safa and Marwa.

Understanding the Qur’ān according to these rules represents sound Islamic culture, which enables one to be guided by the upright guidance of the Qur’ān and to apply its requirements correctly in a way that achieves the interests of humanity, takes reality into account, meets people’s needs, and interacts with all aspects of daily life.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Daqīq al-‘Īd, Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad, *Iḥkām al-Aḥkām Sharḥ ‘Umda al-Aḥkām* (NA, 2005), 457.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 2:158.

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## The Impact of the Qur'ān on Organizing Life

The Qur'ān came with a clear message: guiding humans to the most upright paths and the clearest of ways. God Almighty said: “This Qur'ān does indeed show the straightest way. It gives the faithful who do right the good news that they will have a great reward.”<sup>1</sup> The Qur'ān organizes the human personality, strengthens a person's connection with their Lord, consolidates relationships with others, and guides a person's connection with the universe.

**First: A person's relationship with themselves:** The Holy Qur'ān called upon man to elevate and develop himself, and this was done through:

– Urging humanity to purify themselves by cleansing and purifying their souls from reprehensible qualities and adorning them with virtuous character. God Almighty said: “Prosperous are those who purify themselves,<sup>2</sup> and “by the soul and how He formed it and inspired it [to know] its own rebellion and piety! The one who purifies his soul succeeds and the one who corrupts it fails.”<sup>3</sup> God made the purification of the soul one of the most important objectives of the Prophet's mission. God said about the Prophet: “God has been truly gracious to the believers in sending them a Messenger from among their own, to recite His revelations to them, to make them grow in purity, and to teach them the Scripture and wisdom.”<sup>4</sup>

– Commanded people to use their minds: The command to use the mind, to look and to reflect has come in more than one hundred and thirty places in the Holy Qur'ān, including: “Do you not understand?” This is repeated in 13 places. Other examples include: “Has it not occurred to them”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 17:9.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 87:14.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān, 91:7-10.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 3:164.

<sup>5</sup> Qur'ān, 7:184.

and “Have they not thought about their own selves?”<sup>1</sup> and “Have they not contemplated,”<sup>2</sup> and “Do they not see the sky above them.”<sup>3</sup>

– Encouraging people to develop their intellect: by learning useful sciences and acquiring beneficial knowledge. The word “knowledge” and its derivatives are mentioned in the Holy Qur’an in 856 places, including: “Lord, increase me in knowledge!”<sup>4</sup> and: “those of you who believe and those who have been given knowledge.”<sup>5</sup>

– Directing people to acquire wisdom: This means putting things in their proper place and acting in accordance with what achieves benefit. Wisdom and its derivatives are mentioned in 119 places in the Holy Qur’an, including: “and He gives wisdom to whoever He will. Whoever is given wisdom has truly been given much good, but only those with insight bear this in mind.”<sup>6</sup> And the Almighty made teaching people wisdom one of the greatest missions of His Prophet (PBUH). God said about him: “God has been truly gracious to the believers in sending them a Messenger from among their own, to recite His revelations to them, to make them grow in purity, and to teach them the Scripture and wisdom.”<sup>7</sup>

**Second: A person’s relationship with their Lord:** The Holy Qur’an includes a set of principles that establish the relationship between humanity and its Creator and motivate people to love God, be mindful of God, and worship God properly. These principles are:

– Knowing God Almighty, His Most Beautiful Names, and His Sublime Attributes: “He is God: there is no god other than Him. It is He who knows what is hidden as well as what is in the open, He is the Lord of

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’an, 30:8.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’an, 7:185.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’an, 50:6.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’an, 20:114.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’an, 58:11.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’an, 2:269.

<sup>7</sup> Qur’an, 3:164.

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Mercy, the Giver of Mercy. He is God: there is no god other than Him, the Controller, the Holy One, Source of Peace, Granter of Security, Guardian over all, the Almighty, the Compeller, the Truly Great; God is far above anything they consider to be His partner. He is God: the Creator, the Originator, the Shaper. The best names belong to Him. Everything in the heavens and earth glorifies Him: He is the Almighty, the Wise.”<sup>1</sup>

- Having positive faith in God: This is having confidence in the vastness of God Almighty’s mercy, the greatness of His generosity, and the extent of His wisdom, and that He, Glory be to Him, does not decree for His creation anything except what is good for them in the present and the future. The Holy Qur’ān has told us about the Prophet’s (PBUH) situation with his companion Abū Bakr in the cave, praising his good faith in his Lord and the strength of his certainty in Him, “Even if you do not help the Prophet, God helped him when the disbelievers drove him out: when the two of them were in the cave, he [Muhammad] said to his companion, ‘Do not worry, God is with us,’ and God sent His calm down to him, aided him with forces invisible to you, and brought down the disbelievers’ plan. God’s plan is higher: God is almighty and wise.”<sup>2</sup>

- Awareness of God’s Presence: This is by being mindful of God’s knowledge of a person and God’s awareness of one’s actions and behaviours, both private and public, so that a person finds himself where God commanded him to be, and finds himself absent where He forbade him to be. God Almighty said: “God is aware of the most furtive of glances, and of all that hearts conceal,”<sup>3</sup> and: “Whether you keep your words secret or state them openly, He knows the contents of every heart.”<sup>4</sup>

- Trusting in God: This means that a person should consider the apparent means in achieving what he seeks, while relying on God Almighty and seeking His help: “God! There is no god but Him, so let the faithful

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 59:22-24.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 9:40.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 40:19.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 67:13.

put their trust in Him,”<sup>1</sup> and: “Consult with them about matters, then, when you have decided on a course of action, put your trust in God: God loves those who put their trust in Him.”<sup>2</sup>

- **Worshipping God:** This is done by performing what God has obligated and drawing near to Him through what He has encouraged and urged: “I created jinn and mankind only to worship Me,”<sup>3</sup> and: “People, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, so that you may be mindful [of Him].”<sup>4</sup> Among the acts of worship that God has obligated upon His servants and made pillars of Islam after the two testimonies of faith are: establishing prayer, giving zakat, fasting Ramadan, and performing Hajj for those who are able to do so. God has made voluntary acts of worship from the same categories as these obligatory acts, through which the believer draws near to his Lord, seeking an increase in His favour. In addition, God has urged other acts of worship without making them obligatory, such as remembering God (*dhikr*), and thanking God: “So remember Me; I will remember you. Be thankful to Me, and never ungrateful.”<sup>5</sup>

**Third: Relationships between people:** The Holy Qurʾān contains an integrated system of ethics that governs human behaviour and regulates interactions with others, the most important of which are:

- **Honesty:** God Almighty said: “You who believe, be mindful of God: stand with those who are true.”<sup>6</sup> Honesty is in words and actions, encouraging a person to perfect their work, staying away from deception and fraud.

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 64:13.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 3:159.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 51:56.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 2:21.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 2:152.

<sup>6</sup> Qurʾān, 9:119.

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- Humility: Gentleness, respect for people, and acceptance of what is right. God Almighty said: “Do not strut arrogantly about the earth: you cannot break it open, nor match the mountains in height,”<sup>1</sup> and: “Do not turn your nose up at people, nor walk about the place arrogantly, for God does not love arrogant or boastful people.”<sup>2</sup> God praised His servants who “walk upon the earth humbly,”<sup>3</sup> or those who walk on the earth with gentleness and humility, with tranquility and dignity, and with composure and good manners.<sup>4</sup>

- Acquaintance: Communication between people, regardless of their race, culture, or geographical distance. God Almighty says: “People, We created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into races and tribes so that you should recognize one another. In God’s eyes, the most honoured of you are the ones most mindful of Him: God is all knowing, all aware.”<sup>5</sup> Through communication, cooperation is achieved, which our Lord Almighty called for in His saying: “help one another to do what is right and good; do not help one another towards sin and hostility.”<sup>6</sup> Through positive interaction, efforts are combined, energies are integrated, and expertise is united to contribute to improving humanity and achieving peace.

- Kindness to people: Doing good and showing kindness to people in all forms and ways, in words and deeds. God Almighty said: “Spend in God’s cause: do not contribute to your destruction with your own hands, but do good, for God loves those who do good,”<sup>7</sup> and: “Worship God; join nothing with Him. Be good to your parents, to relatives, to orphans, to

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’an, 17:37.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’an, 31:18.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’an, 25:13.

<sup>4</sup> al-Qurṭubī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad, *al-Jāmi’ li-Aḥkām al-Qur’ān* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, 1964), 13:28.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’an, 49:13.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’an, 5:2.

<sup>7</sup> Qur’an, 2:195.

the needy, to neighbours near and far, to travellers in need, and to your slaves. God does not like arrogant, boastful people.”<sup>1</sup>

**Fourth: Connection to the universe:** God Almighty has made the earth and all that is in it subservient to humanity: “We established you [people] on the earth and provided you with a means of livelihood there--small thanks you give!”<sup>2</sup> God has also made humans His vicegerents upon the earth: “And they replied, ‘We were being persecuted long before you came to us, and since then too.’ He said, ‘Your Lord may well destroy your enemy and make you successors to the land to see how you behave.’”<sup>3</sup> God has commanded humanity to sustain the earth’s bounty by:

– Preserving nature: “Give full measure and weight and do not undervalue people’s goods; do not cause corruption in the land after it has been set in order: this is better for you, if you are believers.”<sup>4</sup>

– Rationalizing the use of natural resources: “Children of Adam, dress well whenever you are at worship, and eat and drink [as We have permitted] but do not be extravagant: God does not like extravagant people,”<sup>5</sup> and: “Give relatives their due, and the needy, and travellers--do not squander your wealth wastefully: those who squander are the brothers of Satan, and Satan is most ungrateful to his Lord.”<sup>6</sup>

– Developing it and building civilization: “ It was He who brought you into being from the earth and made you inhabit it, so ask forgiveness from Him”<sup>7</sup>, or “He commanded you to develop your land,”<sup>8</sup> with everything that contributes to improving the quality of life and

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 4:36.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 7:10.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 7:129.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 7:85.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 7:31.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 17:26-27.

<sup>7</sup> Qur’ān, 11:61.

<sup>8</sup> al-Sam’ānī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, 2:438.

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facilitating the means of living in it; from paving roads and building homes to establishing institutions.

Using the above, a correct and disciplined understanding of the texts of the Holy Qurʾān builds a balanced personality, committed to a relationship with the Creator, improving one's relationship with others, and contributing to the sustainability of the components of the environment. These factors lead a person to build a pioneering and prosperous civilization, within a framework of integration and cooperation, which brings benefit, goodness, peace and happiness to all of humanity.

# Prophetic Guidance and the Prophet's Biography

## Introduction

Prophetic guidance and the Prophet's biography are among the most important sources of Islam, as they are the practical application of the rulings and wisdom revealed in the Holy Qur'an. This is indicated by the Almighty's words addressing His Prophet (PBUH): "We sent them with clear signs and scriptures. We have sent down the message to you too [Prophet], so that you can explain to people what was sent for them, so that they may reflect."<sup>1</sup> Meaning: "And We have sent down to you, O Muhammad, this Qur'an as a reminder to the people and an admonition to them, so that you may make clear to them what was sent down to them of that, and so that they may remember it and take heed from it."<sup>2</sup>

## Defining Prophetic Guidance

Guidance (*hadī* - هدي) in Arabic means "of a good form and way."<sup>3</sup> It is said: "He is of good guidance: meaning he is of a good way."<sup>4</sup> If a person follows the *hadī* of someone, he is said to have followed his "path."<sup>5</sup>

Technically, guidance refers to the Prophet's (PBUH) sayings, actions, and approvals, with the aim of following him. God Almighty said: "The Messenger of God is an excellent model for those of you who put your hope in God and the Last Day and remember Him often."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'an, 16:44.

<sup>2</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 17:211.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazrī, al-Mubārak b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Shaybānī, *al-Nihāya fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth wa'l-Athar* (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-ʿIlmiyya, 1979), 5:253.

<sup>4</sup> al-Qālī, Ismā'īl b. al-Qāsim, *al-Bārī fī'l-Lughā* (Beirut: Dār al-Ḥaḍāra al-ʿArabiyya, 1975).

<sup>5</sup> Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1993), 115:356.

<sup>6</sup> Qur'an, 33:21.

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## Defining the Prophet's Biography

In Arabic, *sīra* (سيرة) means “path,” “way,” or “method.”<sup>1</sup> For example, it is said: “He ‘led (*sāra*)’ them in a good way.”<sup>2</sup> In this sense, *sīra* and *hadī* are synonymous.

In usage, *sīra* has been defined in many ways,<sup>3</sup> from which we can benefit from the sum of them that it is: a science that studies everything related to the Prophet (PBUH). It documents the events of his life, lists his attributes and morals, and reveals the evidence of his prophethood, from his birth to his death.

## Importance of the Prophet's Biography

The importance of the Prophet's biography lies in its portrayal of the practical aspects of the noble Prophet's (PBUH) life across individual and social dimensions. The importance of studying it is highlighted by its achievement of the following objectives:

1. To become familiar with the character of the Noble Prophet (PBUH) in all its aspects and dimensions, in terms of his good character and appearance, the purity of his heart and soul, his dignity and prestige, his composure and tranquillity, his cheerfulness and optimism, his balance and moderation, his truthfulness and trustworthiness, his faithfulness to his covenant, his patience and forbearance, his compassion and mercy, his tolerance and wisdom, his humility and gentleness, and the nobility and perfection of his actions.
2. To know his guidance in his residence and travel, his joy and sorrow, his ease and hardship; in his connection with his Lord

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1997), 3:120-21.

<sup>2</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mukhtār al-Ṣiḥāḥ*, 159.

<sup>3</sup> al-Kalā'ī, Sulaymān b. Mūsa b. Sālim, *al-Iktifā' bimā Taḍmunhu min Maghāzī Rasūl Allāh wa'l-Thalātha al-Khulafā'* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1999), 1:3; al-Yūsī, *al-Qānūn fī Ahkām al-'Ilm wa'l-'Ālim wa'l-Muta'allim* (Rabat: Maṭba'a Shāla, 1998), 280-81.

and worship, his relationship with his homeland, his dealings with his family and relatives, his kin and friends, his neighbours, his approach to his upbringing and education, the manifestations of his care for women, the elderly, the young, the weak, the needy, and his behaviour in his gatherings, his mosque, and his market; and all the details of his life.

3. To realize the truth of the Prophet's understanding of Qur'anic revelation and legal discourse, in accordance with the words of God Almighty: "We sent them with clear signs and scriptures. We have sent down the message to you too [Prophet], so that you can explain to people what was sent for them, so that they may reflect."<sup>1</sup>
4. To learn about the great values indicated by the biography of the Prophet (PBUH), including purification, knowledge, and wisdom, which are mentioned in the Almighty's words: "God has been truly gracious to the believers in sending them a Messenger from among their own, to recite His revelations to them, to make them grow in purity, and to teach them the Scripture and wisdom- before that they were clearly astray."<sup>2</sup>
5. To strengthen one's faith in the Prophet (PBUH) and belief in him by learning about the signs of his prophethood, his noble qualities, and his pure morals.
6. To deepen one's love for the Prophet (PBUH). Learning about the details of the Prophet's life instils love, reverence, and respect for him. Everyone who lived with the Prophet (PBUH) during his life and interacted with him in all circumstances loved him sincerely.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'an, 16:44.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'an, 3:164.

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## Methodology for Understanding the Prophet's Guidance and Biography

To achieve a correct understanding of the Prophet's guidance and biography, we must rely on methodological controls and rules, which we will detail below:

**First: Relying on Arabic meanings:** Linguistic meaning is one of the most important aspects to be referred to in order to understand the Prophet's (PBUH) guidance and biography. In these texts are words whose meanings can only be understood by referring to dictionaries. For example, (*ghurran*) and (*muḥajjalīn*) in the saying of the Prophet (PBUH): "Indeed, my nation will come on the Day of Resurrection *ghurran* and *muḥajjalīn* from the traces of ablution."<sup>1</sup> Their meaning is: "White faces and limbs from the light of ablution, like the white-faced horse with white limbs, which is the one whose face and the pasterns of its legs are white"<sup>2</sup> al-Rakbī says: "*ghurra*: whiteness on the forehead of the horse... and *al-tahjīl*: whiteness on the legs of the horse."<sup>3</sup>

Among other examples of unique terms that the Prophet (PBUH), explained is the word: "*makhmūm al-qalb*" in his saying when asked: Which of the people is best?: "Everyone who *makhmūm al-qalb* and truthful of tongue." They said: "Truthful of tongue, we know it, but what is *makhmūm al-qalb*?" He said: "It is the pious and pure one, in whom there is no sin, no transgression, no malice, and no envy."<sup>4</sup>

**Second: Focus on overall objectives:** To understand the Prophetic guidance and biography in a way consistent with the spirit of Islam, it is necessary to study it in light of the general objectives and major goals of

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<sup>1</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 136, 1:39; Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 246, 1:149.

<sup>2</sup> al-Yaḥṣabī, al-Qādī 'Ayāḍ, *Mashāriq al-Anwār 'ala Ṣiḥāḥ al-Āthār* (Tunis: Dār al-Turāth, 1987), 1:182.

<sup>3</sup> al-Rakbī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Ibn Baṭṭāl, *al-Nuzum al-Mustaṭhab fi Tafsīr Gharīb Alfāz al-Muḥadḥab* (Mecca: al-Maktaba al-Tijāriyya, 1988), 1:29.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Mājah, *al-Sunan*, ḥadīth no. 4216, 5:299.

the religion, far from the literal reading that takes away the spirit of the texts, and the wisdom and meaning of the Sharīʿa.

## **Impact of the Prophet's Guidance and Biography on Morality**

Prophetic guidance and the noble Prophetic biography constitute two fundamental pillars in building a balanced human personality. They contribute to guiding a person's behaviour and correcting actions, so that one may walk in his life according to the upright approach and the straight path. God Almighty said: "You give guidance to the straight path."<sup>1</sup> This is achieved through the following:

**First: Individual and societal responsibility:** Prophetic guidance cultivates a sense of responsibility towards individuals and others, motivating people to perform their duties and bear the consequences of their actions. The Prophet (PBUH) clarified the circle of individual responsibilities and said: "Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you will be asked about his flock. The imam who oversees the people is a shepherd over them and he will be asked about them. The man is a shepherd over his family, and he will be asked about them. The woman of the man is a shepherdess over her husband's wealth and her children, and she will be asked about them..."<sup>2</sup> If everyone understands their responsibilities and fulfils them, success and peace will be achieved for all.

**Second: Work and productivity:** Prophetic guidance elevates the value of work, calls upon people to be diligent and hardworking, and urges them to be productive. The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: "The strong believer is better and more beloved to God than the weak believer, and in each there is good. Be eager for what benefits you, seek God's help and do not be helpless."<sup>3</sup> To achieve the highest levels of productivity,

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 42:52.

<sup>2</sup> al-Aṣḥabī, Mālik b. Anas, *al-Muwattaʿa*' (NA: 1991), *ḥadīth* no. 992, 343.

<sup>3</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *ḥadīth* no. 2664, 8:56.

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the Prophet urged us to seize opportunities and not miss them. He said: “Take advantage of five things before five others: your youth before your old age, your health before your sickness, your wealth before your poverty, your free time before you become busy, and your life before your death.”<sup>1</sup>

**Third: Positivity and optimism:** The Prophet’s guidance plays a significant role in promoting positivity and instilling optimism and hope in people’s lives. The Prophet (PBUH) “loved good omens.”<sup>2</sup> He called for optimism and the rejection of pessimism, saying: “If a man says, ‘The people are doomed,’ then he is the most doomed of them.”<sup>3</sup> Pessimism and a negative outlook lead to frustration and hopelessness, hindering productivity and work. Kind words are among the greatest sources of optimism, stimulating and motivating people to engage in more righteous and fruitful work and beneficial production.

**Fourth: Balance and moderation:** We learn from the Prophet’s guidance to make moderation our approach and balance a characteristic of our personality in all our religious and worldly affairs. When the Prophet (PBUH) came to a group of people who were excessive in their worship and neglected the affairs of their lives, he explained to them that good lies in moderation and balance, not in extremism and rigidity.

**Fifth: Observing good manners and ethics in interactions:** Among the most important lessons a person learns from the Prophet’s (PBUH) teachings, both in word and deed, is the cultivation of good manners and noble character. He said: “I was sent only to perfect good character.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, a person embodies these ethics within their family and community and interacts with both those who agree and disagree with them accordingly.

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<sup>1</sup> al-Bayhaqī, Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn, *Shū‘b al-Īmān*, ḥadīth no. 9769, 12:477.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, ḥadīth no. 8393, 14:122.

<sup>3</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 26223, 8:36.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, ḥadīth no. 9074, 4:258.

**1. Morality within the family:** The Prophet (PBUH) was concerned with building a family based on sound morals and good companionship. He commanded kindness towards wives, and he was the best example in this. On the authority of ‘Ā’isha (may God be pleased with her): The Messenger of God said: “The best of you are those who are best to their families, and I am the best of you to my family.”<sup>1</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) also urged mercy towards children, and he was the best example. On the authority of Anas b. Mālik (may God be pleased with him): “I have not seen anyone more merciful to children than the Messenger of God.”<sup>2</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) singled out daughters for special care and kindness and said: “Whoever has three daughters, or three sisters, or two daughters or two sisters, and treats them well, is patient with them, and fears God in his dealings with them, will enter Paradise.”<sup>3</sup>

**2. Morality in society:** We draw inspiration from the Prophet’s guidance to treat all people well, including being a good neighbour. The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “Whoever believes in God and the Last Day should not harm his neighbour.”<sup>4</sup> Likewise, honouring guests is important. The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “Whoever believes in God and the Last Day should honour his guest.”<sup>5</sup> Visiting and comforting the sick is also important. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “Whoever visits a sick person, a caller from heaven calls out: ‘You have done well, and your journey has been blessed, and you have earned a place in Paradise.’”<sup>6</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) had a non-Muslim neighbour who fell ill, so he visited him along with his Companions.<sup>7</sup> When he visited a sick person, he would

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<sup>1</sup> al-Tirmidhī, Muḥammad b. ‘Īsa, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1996), *ḥadīth* no. 3895, 6:188.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Ḥibbān, Muḥammad, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ* (Cairo: Dār al-Ta’ṣīl, 2014), *ḥadīth* no. 6992, 7:551.

<sup>3</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, *ḥadīth* no. 1916, 3:478.

<sup>4</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *ḥadīth* no. 6018, 8:11.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, *ḥadīth* no. 8536, 16:216.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn Humām, ‘Abd al-Rāziq, *al-Muṣannaf* (Cairo: Dār al-Ta’ṣīl, 2015), *ḥadīth* no. 10655, 5:140.

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console him by saying: “No worry, it is a purification, God willing.”<sup>1</sup>

**3. Moral conduct towards others:** The Prophet’s guidance instils in Muslims the values of treating non-Muslims with kindness, benevolence, and justice. The Prophet (PBUH) advised his Companions to treat the non-Muslims of Egypt well, saying: “Treat its people well, for they have a covenant and kinship with us.”<sup>2</sup> He (peace and blessings be upon him) also used to visit and inquire about the well-being of the People of the Book.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the upright prophetic guidance contributes to building a balanced personality that bears responsibility, possesses a positive spirit, embodies moral values, is serious at work, keen to strengthen social relations, and contributes to building civilization, in a way that brings good and benefit to humanity.

## Sources of the Prophet’s Biography

We can access the events of the Prophet’s biography from various sources, the most important of which are:

**First: The Holy Qur’ān:** The Holy Qur’ān is the most truthful, reliable and important source for the Prophet’s biography. We find that it mentions many events of the Prophet’s life, along with the lessons and morals drawn from them. You can hardly find in the Holy Qur’ān a chapter without some verses related to an event in the Prophet’s life, before and after his initial call to prophethood, and before and after the migration to Medina.

Among the events preceding the Prophet’s mission that the Holy Qur’ān addresses is God’s care for His Prophet (PBUH) in his childhood and youth, as mentioned: “Did He not find you an orphan and shelter you? Did He not find you lost and guide you? Did He not find you in need and

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<sup>1</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 3616, 4:202.

<sup>2</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 2543, 7:190.

<sup>3</sup> al-Bastī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Hibbān*, ḥadīth no. 5539, 6:420.

make you self-sufficient?”<sup>1</sup> This means: The Prophet was an orphan, so He took him into the care of your uncle Abū Ṭālib, who provided for him. God found him in an environment far removed from guidance, so He protected him from their ways and kept him free from their morals. He found him poor and without wealth, so He enriched him with Khadija’s wealth.<sup>2</sup> These are all events that occurred before the Prophet’s (PBUH) call to prophethood, summarized in the Qur’ān and detailed in other sources of the Prophet’s biography.

Among the events mentioned in the Qur’ān that accompanied the Prophet’s mission are the beginning of revelation and the start of his message. This is found in several chapters, including: “Read in the name of your Lord who created.”<sup>3</sup> “You [Prophet], enfolded in your cloak! Stay up throughout the night, all but a small part of it”<sup>4</sup> “You, wrapped in your cloak, arise and give warning!”<sup>5</sup> and: “By the Day of Resurrection and by the self-reproaching soul!”<sup>6</sup> “[Prophet], do not rush your tongue in an attempt to hasten [your memorization of] the Revelation: We shall make sure of its safe collection and recitation. When We have recited it, repeat the recitation and We shall make it clear.”<sup>7</sup>

Among the events that the Holy Qur’ān testifies to before the migration was the story of the Prophet (PBUH) with Ibn Umm Maktūm and ‘Utba b. Rabī: “He frowned and turned away when the blind man came to him--for all you know, he might have grown in spirit, or taken note of something useful to him. For the self-satisfied one you go out of your way--though you are not to be blamed for his lack of spiritual growth--but from the one who has come to you full of eagerness and

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 93:6-8.

<sup>2</sup> al-Samarqandī, Naṣr b. Muḥammad, *Baḥr al-‘Ulūm*, 3:592.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 96:1.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 73:1-2.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 74:1-2.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 75:1-2.

<sup>7</sup> Qur’ān, 75:16-19.

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awe you allow yourself to be distracted. No indeed! This [Quran] is a lesson.”<sup>1</sup>

**Second: The Noble Prophetic *Ḥadīth*:** The books of *ḥadīth* are among the most important sources of the Prophetic biography, as their authors recorded in them “the scenes of the Prophet, classified his signs and proofs, verified the virtues of his family, and the achievements of his fathers and clan, ... and expressed all the actions of the Prophet; in his travel and his presence, his journey and his residence, and all his circumstances; from sleep and wakefulness, indication and statement, silence and speech, rising and sitting, eating and drinking, clothing and riding.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 80:1-11.

<sup>2</sup> al-Rāmḥarmazī, al-Ḥasan b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khallād, *al-Muḥdīth al-Fāṣil bayn al-Rāwī wa’l-Wā’ī* (NA: Dār al-Dhakhā’ir, 2016), 132.

# Islamic Jurisprudence (*fiqh*)

## DEFINITION, SCHOOLS, AND MAIN FEATURES

Islamic jurisprudence is one of the most important sources of Islamic legal discourse, from which the believer derives detailed practical rulings related to acts of worship, such as prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, zakat, and others, as well as rulings related to interactions, such as buying, selling, renting, and others, and rulings on personal status, such as marriage, divorce, and others. Jurisprudential rulings govern individuals and societies in their relationships with their Lord, with each other, and with the world around them.

**Definition:** In Arabic, the word *fiqh* (فقه) has several meanings, including:

1. Perception: Ibn Fāris said, “The letters *fā*, *qāf*, and *hā* form a single, sound root indicating the perception and knowledge of something.”<sup>1</sup>
2. Astuteness: It is said, “I testify to your understanding of *fiqh*,” meaning your astuteness.<sup>2</sup>
3. Knowledge: Ibn Fāris said: “Every knowledge of something is *fiqh*, then the knowledge of Sharīʿa was specifically associated with it, so every scholar of what is permissible and forbidden was called a jurist.”<sup>3</sup> “To conduct *fiqh* is to debate with someone in knowledge.”<sup>4</sup>
4. Understanding: al-Azharī said: “So-and-so was given *fiqh* of the religion; that is, comprehension of it. And so-and-so un-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Sayyiduh, ‘Alī b. Ismāʿīl al-Mursī, *al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1996), 1:260-61.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, 13:523.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 4:442.

<sup>4</sup> al-Jawharī, *al-Ṣiḥāḥ Tāj al-Lughā wa Ṣiḥāḥ al-ʿArabiyya*, 6:2243.

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derstood from me what I explained to him, he *fiqh* something when he comprehends it.”<sup>1</sup> And from it is the supplication of the Prophet (PBUH) for Ibn ‘Abbās, may God be pleased with them both: “O God, grant him understanding (*fiqh*) of the religion.”<sup>2</sup>

Some scholars have defined *fiqh* as understanding, whether apparent or hidden, as well as a statement or action. This is based on the Almighty’s statement: “What is the matter with these people that they can barely understand what they are told?”<sup>3</sup> Others restricted it to understanding subtle things, but understanding self-evident truths is not called *fiqh*.<sup>4</sup>

The connection of these linguistic meanings to the technical meaning is that the competent jurist is knowledgeable about the principles and branches of the Sharī‘a, astute in the mechanisms of deduction from the source texts, aware of reality and its changes, and characterized by a precise understanding of the legal texts, their meanings, rulings, and reasons.

**Technical Meaning:** “Knowledge of practical Sharī‘a rulings acquired from detailed evidence.”<sup>5</sup> That is: knowledge of what God Almighty has prescribed in rulings on worship and interactions, related to the conduct of obligated Muslims, derived from the Holy Qur‘ān, the Prophetic Ḥadīth, and the major principles of the Sharī‘a.

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<sup>1</sup> al-Azharī, *Tahdhīb al-Lughā*, 5:263.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 143, 1:41.

<sup>3</sup> Qur‘ān, 4:78.

<sup>4</sup> al-Shīrāzī, Ibrāhīm b. ‘Alī b. Yūsuf al-Fayrūzābādī, *Sharḥ al-Lum‘* (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1983), 157.

<sup>5</sup> al-Aṣbahānī, Maḥmūd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, *Bayān al-Mukhtaṣar Sharḥ Mukhtaṣar Ibn al-Ḥājib* (Riyadh: Dār al-Madanī, 1986), 1:18.

## Schools of Islamic Jurisprudence and Their Most Important Features

Jurisprudence during the time of the Prophet (PBUH) was based on the Holy Qur'ān and the Prophetic guidance, as the Qur'ān was revealed in accordance with the needs and interests. The Prophet (PBUH) explained the rulings through his words and actions, including the pillars of prayer, the rituals of Hajj, the thresholds for zakat, and the rules for buying and selling.

After the Prophet's (PBUH) death, the Companions would refer to the Holy Qur'ān and the Prophetic *ḥadīth* to assess new issues against the rulings that preceded them, mindful of the objectives they understood from the Holy Qur'ān and the actions of the Prophet. On the authority of Maimūn b. Mahrān: "Abū Bakr, may God be pleased with him, would judge according to the Book of God, and if he did not find it, he would judge according to the Sunna of the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, and if he did not find it, he would ask the Muslims, and if they informed him of the ruling of the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, he would judge according to it, and if that was too difficult for him, he would call the leaders of the Muslims and their scholars and consult with them, and if their opinion was agreed upon on the matter, he would judge according to it."<sup>1</sup>

The Successors followed the path of the Companions, may God be pleased with them, in deriving legal rulings by choosing, from among their *fatwas*, what their own reasoning led them to. Most of the Successors adopted the *fatwa* of the Companion who spread jurisprudence in their localities. Thus, the people of Mecca adopted the *fatwas* of Ibn 'Abbās, the people of Medina adopted the *fatwas* of Zayd b. Thābit and Ibn 'Umar, and the people of Kufa adopted the *fatwas* of 'Alī and Ibn Masūd, may God be pleased with them all. The Iraqis tended to adopt analogy and

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<sup>1</sup> al-Bayhaqī, Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn, *al-Sunan al-Kubra* (Cairo: Markaz Hajar lil-Buḥūth wa'l-Dirāsāt, 2011), *ḥadīth* no. 20367, 20:336.

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opinion, hypothesizing events before they occurred, while the Hijazis tended to adopt the public interest and to narrate extensively from the Companions. These differing methodologies led to the emergence of two schools of jurisprudence in the era of the Successors:

- The School of Ḥadīth in the Hijaz, headed by Saīd b. al-Musayyab, a scholar from Medina
- The School of Opinion (*ra'y*) in Iraq, led by Ibrāhīm al-Nakhī, a scholar from Kufa

These two methodologies had a significant impact on the emergence of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence at the hands of the learned Imams, whose jurisprudence was compiled and disseminated throughout the ages. Among the most prominent of these Imams are the founders of the four schools of law, namely:

**First: Abū Ḥanīfa; al-Nūmān b. Thābit (80 - 150 AH):**<sup>1</sup> The Imam of the Hanafi school of thought, and the jurist of Iraq. He was considered one of the minor Successors because he saw some of the Companions. Abū Ḥanīfa explained the sources he relied on in deriving the legal rulings, saying: "I take what I found in the Book of God Almighty, and if I did not find it, I took the Sunna of the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, and the authentic traditions that spread in the hands of trustworthy people. If I did not find it, I took the saying of whomever I wanted from his Companions, may God bless him and grant him peace, and I left the saying of whomever I wanted. Then I did not go from their saying to the saying of others. If the matter reached those after them, then I had to exert myself as they exerted themselves."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Sa'd, Muḥammad b. Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubra* (Cairo: Maktaba al-Khānjī, 2001), 8:489; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Yūsuf b. 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Intiqā' fī Faḍā'il al-Thalātha al-A'imma al-Fuqahā'* (Cairo: Maktaba al-Qudsī, 1931), 122; al-Shīrāzī, Ibrāhīm b. 'Alī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā'* (Beirut: Dār al-Rā'id al-'Arabī, 1970), 86.

<sup>2</sup> Abū Yūsuf al-Qādī, Ya'qūb b. Ibrāhīm, *al-Āthār* (Hyderabad: Lajna Ihya' al-Ma'ārif al-Nu'māniyya, ND), 1:7.

Among the most famous students of Imam Abū Ḥanīfa were:

1. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī (d. 189 AH), to whom is attributed the compilation of Abu Hanifa's jurisprudence
2. Ya'qūb b. Ibrāhīm, the judge Abū Yūsuf (d. 113 AH)

**Second: Mālik b. Anas (93 AH – 179 AH):**<sup>1</sup> The Imam of the Maliki school of thought, he acquired knowledge from Nāfi', the freed slave of Ibn 'Umar, Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī, and Rabī'a b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān. al-Shāfi'ī said: "When scholars are mentioned, Malik is the brightest star."<sup>2</sup> Among the most important principles upon which Imam Mālik based his school of thought are: the Holy Qur'ān, the Prophetic traditions, consensus (*ijmā'*), analogical reasoning (*qiyās*), in addition to the practice of the people of Medina, the sayings of the Companions, juristic preference (*istiḥsān*), public interest (*istiṣlāḥ*), blocking the means to evil (*sadd al-dharā'i'*), and others.

Among his most famous students were:

1. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Qāsim al-Miṣrī (d. 191 AH)
2. 'Abd Allāh b. Wahb b. Muslim (d. 197 AH)
3. Ashhab b. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Qaysī (d. 204 AH)

**Third: Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī (150 – 204 AH):**<sup>3</sup> The Imam of the Shāfi'ī school of thought, he was born in the Levant and died in Cairo. He studied under Imam Mālik b. Anas and Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Intiqā'*, 23; al-Maqadasī, 'Abd al-Ghanī b. 'Abd al-Wāḥid, *al-Kamāl fī Asmā' al-Rijāl* (Kuwait: al-Ha'ya al-Āmma, 2016), 8:271; al-Suyūṭī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥuffāz* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1982), 96:189.

<sup>2</sup> al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *al-Ma'ūna 'ala Madhhab 'Ālim al-Madina* (Mecca: al-Maktaba al-Tijāriyya, ND), 1:75.

<sup>3</sup> al-Bayhaqī, Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn, *Manāqib al-Shāfi'ī* (Cairo: Maktaba Dār al-Turāth, 1970), 26; al-Dhahabī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'* (NA: 1985), 10:5.

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Shaybānī, a companion of Abū Ḥanīfa. He combined the schools of *ḥadīth* and opinion and laid down the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) in his book *al-Risāla*. He also compiled his own jurisprudence in his book *al-Umm*. In his school of thought, he relied on the Holy Qurʾān, Prophetic Ḥadīth, consensus, analogy, presumption of continuity, and other sources. Among his most famous students were:

1. Yūsuf b. Yaḥya al-Buwayṭī (d. 231 AH)
2. Ismāʿīl b. Yaḥya al-Muzanī (d. 264 AH)
3. al-Rabīʿ b. Sulaymān al-Murādī (d. 270 AH)

**Fourth: Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Ibn Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī (164 - 241 AH):** The Imam of the Ḥanbalī school of thought. He lived in Iraq and studied under Imam al-Shāfiʿī, and he was familiar with the books of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī, but his ambition was directed towards memorizing and classifying the *ḥadīth*, and one of his most important books is *al-Musnad*. His jurisprudential opinions were recorded by his students. al-Shāfiʿī said: “I left Baghdad, and I did not leave behind anyone more knowledgeable or learned than Ibn Ḥanbal.”<sup>2</sup>

Among his most famous students were:

1. Šāliḥ b. Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (d. 266 AH), his eldest son, who focused on transmitting his father’s jurisprudence and legal rulings
2. Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (d. 213 AH), who focused on narrating *ḥadīth* from his father
3. Abū Bakr al-Athram, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Hānī (d. 273 AH)
4. Abū Bakr al-Marwāzī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥajjāj (d. 274 AH)

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubra*, 9:358; Ibn Abī Ya’la, Muḥammad, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1997), 1:4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Khalikān, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, *Wafiyāt al-Ayān wa Anbā’ al-Zamān* (Beirut: Dār Šādir, 1994), 1:64.

## Features of Islamic Jurisprudence

Islamic jurisprudence is an interaction between texts and general principles, and between current events and surrounding circumstances. The learned jurist deals with this interaction in a way that achieves public interest and aligns with the intent of Islamic law. He draws from the texts and principles, which has made jurisprudence dynamic throughout the ages, and has endowed it with unique characteristics and features, the most important of which are:

**First: Combining the letter and spirit of the Law:** Islamic jurisprudence relies on reasoning from the apparent meanings of the legal texts, deriving conclusions from them, and analogizing to them, as it is guided by the light of their general objectives and principles. “If the sources of rulings were limited to the texts and the meanings derived from them, the door of *ijtihād* would not be wide enough, for the texts and their meanings attributed to them do not fall within the vastness of the Sharīʿa, like a drop from the ocean.”<sup>1</sup>

Among the rulings mentioned by the jurists based on the spirit of legislation and its overall objectives are those concerned with preserving land and resources. All of them fall under the objectives of Islamic law, included in its general goals and objectives, based on the words of God Almighty: “Remember when Moses prayed for water for his people and We said to him, ‘Strike the rock with your staff.’ Twelve springs gushed out, and each group knew its drinking place. ‘Eat and drink the sustenance God has provided and do not cause corruption in the land.’”<sup>2</sup> And: “Do not corrupt the earth after it has been set right- call on Him fearing and hoping. The mercy of God is close to those who do good.”<sup>3</sup>

**Second: Considering human interests:** God Almighty has established the principle of benefits and harms as a foundation for the Sharīʿa and

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<sup>1</sup> al-Juwaynī, ‘Abd al-Malik b. ‘Abd Allāh, *al-Burhān fī Uṣūl al-Fiqh* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1997), 2:162.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 2:60.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 7:56.

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as a sign of the purposes of God’s rulings and the wisdom of God’s legislation. God Almighty said: “God commands justice, doing good, and generosity towards relatives and He forbids what is shameful, blameworthy, and oppressive. He teaches you, so that you may take heed.”<sup>1</sup> God commanded what achieves benefit and forbade what brings harm. Thus, rulings include the interests of people, sufficient to make them happy. We find it stipulates the prohibition of everything that is purely harmful, and the permissibility of everything that is beneficial and good. God Almighty said: “who commands them to do right and forbids them to do wrong, who makes good things lawful to them and bad things unlawful, and relieves them of their burdens, and the iron collars that were on them.”<sup>2</sup>

**Third: The centrality of facilitation and the removal of hardship:** The rulings of Islamic law are based on facilitation, tolerance, and the removal of hardship. God Almighty said: “God wants ease for you, not hardship,”<sup>3</sup> and: “He has chosen you and placed no hardship in your religion, the faith of your forefather Abraham.”<sup>4</sup>

All obligatory rulings in Islamic jurisprudence fall within the capacity and ability of obligated persons. God Almighty said: “God does not burden any soul with more than it can bear,”<sup>5</sup> and: “God does not burden any soul with more than He has given it- after hardship, God will bring ease.”<sup>6</sup>

If a person experiences hardship in fulfilling an obligation, Islam removes that hardship. God Almighty said: “But there is no blame attached to the weak, the sick, and those who have no means to spend, provided they are true to God and His Messenger.”<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, if a person is unable to fulfil an obligation due to some excuse, the Wise Lawgiver will lighten this obligation:

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 16:90.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 7:157.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 2:185.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 22:78.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 2:286.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 65:7.

<sup>7</sup> Qur’ān, 9:91.

- By exempting the person obligated from it, such as exempting the person obligated to perform Hajj from the one who is unable to do so. God Almighty said: "Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to God by people who are able to undertake it."<sup>1</sup>

- Or by reducing it, such as the permission to shorten the four-unit prayer for the traveller. God Almighty said: "When you [believers] are travelling in the land, you will not be blamed for shortening your prayers."<sup>2</sup>

- Or by advancing it or delaying it, such as the permission to combine the Maghrib and 'Ishā' prayers while traveling. On the authority of Ibn 'Umar, may God be pleased with them both, he said: "When the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, was in a hurry to travel, he would combine the Maghrib and 'Ishā' prayers."<sup>3</sup>

- Or by replacing it with something lighter, such as replacing ablution with dry ablution when water is unavailable or its use is impossible; God Almighty said: "If any of you is sick or on a journey, or has just relieved himself, or had intimate contact with a woman, and can find no water, then take some clean sand and wipe your face and hands with it. God does not wish to place any burden on you: He only wishes to cleanse you and perfect His blessing on you, so that you may be thankful."<sup>4</sup>

- Or by changing its form, such as allowing prayer to be performed sitting down for those who are unable to stand or lying down for those who are unable to sit.

**Fourth: Understanding new developments and issues:** Islamic jurisprudence keeps pace with the spirit of the age, dealing with its needs with flexibility, engaging with its changes with openness, and understanding its new issues and emerging issues in various fields,

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 3:97.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 4:101.

<sup>3</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 703, 2:150.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 5:6.

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including medicine, economics, the environment, space, and technology, and their related problems. This is done in accordance with what is permitted by the legal texts, the main principles, general rules, higher objectives, and what is required in terms of understanding reality, considering the consequences, taking into account the objectives, the jurisprudence of balances and valid interests, openness to universal knowledge and civilizational values, and using modern sciences and specialized institutions in their field. All this is done to understand the most accurate perceptions of scientific developments, with the aim of reaching balanced legal rulings that are compatible with these developments and interact with them positively and respond to progress and human needs.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> UAE Council for Fatwa, *Wathīqa Abū Dhabī fī al-Istī'āb al-Shar'ī lil-Mustajidāt al-'Ilmiyya*, Conference on the Legal Understanding of Scientific Developments, 2023.

# Fatwa

## DEFINITION, IMPORTANCE, CONTROLS, AND NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

**Definition:** *Fatwa* (فتوى) in Arabic is a verbal noun of the verb “أفتى” (to give a *fatwa*). It is said, “أفتاه في الأمر” (he gave him a *fatwa* on the matter), meaning he explained it to him.<sup>1</sup> And “أفتيت فلانًا في مسألته” (I gave so-and-so a *fatwa* on his question), meaning to answer him.<sup>2</sup> From this comes the verse: “They ask you [Prophet] for a ruling about women. Say, ‘God Himself gives you a ruling about them.’”<sup>3</sup> The plural is: *fatāwa*.<sup>4</sup>

The one seeking a *fatwa* is a *musfaftī*, and the *muftī* is the one who answers.<sup>5</sup>

It is said that its origin is from “*fata*,” meaning a strong young man.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the *muftī* strengthens the one seeking a *fatwa* by increasing his knowledge and filling a gap he may have. Ibn ‘Aṣḥūr said, “A *fatwa* strengthens the soul of the one seeking it, and it is related to the meaning of ‘*fata*’.”<sup>7</sup>

In legal terminology, the meaning of *fatwa* does not differ significantly from its linguistic meaning, except that it is restricted to Islamic rulings

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<sup>1</sup> al-Azharī, *Tahdhīb al-Lughā*, 14:234; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, 15:147.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn ‘Aṣḥūr, *al-Muḥarrir al-Wajīz fī Tafsīr al-Kitāb al-‘Azīz* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2001), 2:118.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 4:127; al-Farāhīdī, al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad, *al-‘Ayn*, 8:137.

<sup>4</sup> al-Fayūmī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, *al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr fī Gharīb al-Sharḥ al-Kabīr* (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-‘Ilmiyya, ND), 2:462.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 4:474.

<sup>6</sup> al-Fayūmī, *al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr*, 2:462.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn ‘Aṣḥūr, ‘Alī b. Mu’min, *al-Mumtī‘ al-Kabīr fī’l-Taṣrīf* (Beirut: Maktaba Lubnān, ND), 346.

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and their supporting evidence. In the terminology of Islamic jurists, it is defined as: “Explaining the Islamic legal opinion on a specific matter, based on the relevant Islamic legal evidence.” The *muftī* explains to the questioner the ruling on the matter in question, indicating whether it is permissible or prohibited, without delving into the detailed evidence for the ruling, because a non-specialist may not understand the evidence.

## The Importance and Danger of Issuing *Fatwas*

The importance of issuing *fatwas* stems from the fact that it is one of the most important means of clarifying the Sharīʿa ruling. Through it, what is permissible and forbidden is known, rulings on new issues and developments are clarified, and people gain insight into the matters of their religion.

Because of the great importance of issuing *fatwas*, God Almighty attributed it to Himself, saying: “They ask you [Prophet] for a ruling about women. Say, ‘God Himself gives you a ruling about them,’”<sup>1</sup> and: “They ask you [Prophet] for a ruling. Say, ‘God gives you a ruling about inheritance from someone who dies childless with no surviving parents.’”<sup>2</sup>

God has made it clear that among the tasks and responsibilities of the Prophet (PBUH) is issuing *fatwas*. God Almighty said: “We have sent down the message to you too [Prophet], so that you can explain to people what was sent for them, so that they may reflect.”<sup>3</sup> There is no doubt that among the Prophet’s explanations is clarifying the legal ruling for those who seek a *fatwa* from him. He, may God bless him and grant him peace, carried out this task in the best way possible, so he would answer the Companions about what they asked him about.

After the Prophet (PBUH), the jurists of the noble Companions, may God be pleased with them, took over issuing *fatwas*, and then after them the great scholars, for they are “the heirs of the prophets,” as the Prophet said.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 4:127.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 4:176.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 16:44.

<sup>4</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, *ḥadīth* no. 3641.

Therefore, the Companions were hesitant to issue *fatwas*, issuing them only rarely. On the authority of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Laylā, he said: “I met one hundred and twenty of the Anṣār, the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). If one of them was asked about a matter, he would refer it to another, and that one to another, until it returned to the first one.”<sup>1</sup> And in another narration: “None of them would narrate a *ḥadīth* except that he wished his brother had sufficed him in narrating it, and he would not be asked for a *fatwa* on anything except that he wished his brother had sufficed him in issuing the *fatwa*.”<sup>2</sup>

This is because errors in issuing *fatwas* can lead to grave consequences, including the corruption of the religion and the destruction of nations. Therefore, it is wise to regulate the issuance of *fatwas* and designate specific bodies, appointed and approved by the ruler, to serve as a unified reference for people in matters of their faith. This is done to avoid errors, prevent division and fragmentation, and achieve unity and consensus. This is what we will discuss in the following section.

## The Methodology and Guidelines of Issuing *Fatwas*

In order for a *fatwa* to be in accordance with Islamic law and beneficial to the person seeking it, the *muftī* must adhere to a clear and disciplined methodology that stems from understanding and conceptualizing the question, taking into account the situation and circumstances of the person seeking the *fatwa*, and invoking the relevant legal evidence, principles, and established rules, while observing the following guidelines:

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<sup>1</sup> al-Bayhaqī, Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn, *al-Madkhal ila ‘Ilm al-Sunan* (Medina: Maktaba al-Dār, 1984), 2:860.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn al-Ṣalāh, ‘Uthmān b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, *Fatāwa Ibn al-Ṣalāh* (Beirut: Maktaba al-‘Ulūm wa’l-Ḥikam, 1987).

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### **First: Guidelines of knowledge:**

1. Proficiency in Islamic jurisprudence and the rules of the Arabic language
2. Consultation with specialists in the natural sciences, such as medicine, and the humanities, such as economics
3. Consideration of the three types of jurisprudence: reality, anticipation, and application
4. Consideration of customs and traditions

**Second: Intellectual controls:** These are summarized as the moderate approach, neither strict nor lenient. al-Shāṭibī wrote: “The *muftī* who has reached the highest degree is the one who leads people to the customary middle way in what is appropriate for the public. He does not take them to the path of strictness, nor does he incline them towards the extreme of permissiveness. The proof of the correctness of this is that it is the straight path of the Sharīʿa. It has been stated that the legislator’s intention is to lead Muslims toward moderation without excess or negligence. If he deviates from that with those who ask for a *fatwa*, he deviates from the intention of the legislator. Therefore, what deviates from the middle way is condemned by the firmly established scholars.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Third: National guidelines:**

1. Possession of a license and permit to issue fatwas from official authorities
2. Compliance with state law
3. Refraining from issuing fatwas on matters under judicial review
4. Adherence to the official state school of thought (Mālikī), while drawing upon and utilizing other schools of thought to facilitate matters for the people and to accommodate their circumstances

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<sup>1</sup> al-Shāṭibī, *al-Muwāfaqāt*, 5:276.

## National *Fatwa* Institutions in the United Arab Emirates<sup>1</sup>

From 2008 to 2017, with the direct support and attention of the wise leadership of the United Arab Emirates, *fatwas* had an officially accredited body that took charge of its affairs and was responsible for all its details. The official Fatwa Center was established within the General Authority for Islamic Affairs and Endowments at the beginning of February 2008 and was officially opened in August of the same year. It undertook the task of receiving questions from those seeking *fatwas* and responding to them using the best technologies and electronic systems, whose pioneering excellence was witnessed by all who visited the centre and learned about its mechanisms and methodologies. This reflects the national importance of the *fatwa* and its prominent role in shaping a proactive Shari'a discourse that considers the country's cultural heritage and enhances its competitiveness and position on the map of the future.

The Center's objectives, as stipulated in its founding charter, were as follows:

1. To regulate *fatwas* within the community and unify their authority
2. To prevent the issuance of personal and impromptu *fatwas*
3. To facilitate direct communication between all segments of society and scholars of Islamic law
4. To cultivate religious awareness and promote moderation, centrism, and tolerance
5. To identify the needs of the community, guide it towards correct Islamic practices, and assist in resolving its problems

In 2017, the UAE Cabinet issued a decision to establish the UAE Council for Fatwa. By 2018, a decision was issued to form the members of the Council. Since that date, the Council has carried out its duties, and reality has proven the necessity for the Council to have financial and administrative independence. In 2020, the Cabinet issued a decision

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<sup>1</sup> Website of the UAE Council for Fatwa, [fatwauae.gov.ae](http://fatwauae.gov.ae).

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to amend the establishment decision, and the UAE Council for Fatwa was considered an organizational unit that reports to His Highness the Head of the Presidential Court, while giving the Council its financial and administrative independence. Prior to that, benchmarking was carried out, by reviewing Gulf and Arab experiences, as well as international experiences, while being keen on creativity and innovation in accordance with the work methodologies in the country.

## The UAE Council for Fatwa

**Establishment:** The UAE Council for Fatwa was established to be the sole entity authorized to issue general Shari'a *fatwas* in the country. It enjoys financial and administrative independence and reports to the President of the Presidential Court, in accordance with Federal Law No. 3 of 2024.

**Vision:** A global view, proactiveness in issuing legal rulings, and consolidating human values.

**Message:** Moderate and well-founded legal rulings, an intelligent system, and national *fatwa* competencies with a civilized and humanistic identity.

**Values:** Humanity – Transparency – Competitiveness – Sustainability – Academic – Responsibility – Positivity – Citizenship – Moderation – Relevance.

**Tasks:** The Council undertakes the following responsibilities:

1. Issuing general, emerging, emergency, and proactive *fatwas* that are appropriate to the reality of Emirati society to achieve social stability.
2. Issuing general *fatwas* in the country on various matters and topics, either directly or in response to requests from official bodies, institutions, entities, or individuals.
3. Issuing policies and regulations governing *fatwa* affairs, in coordination with relevant authorities in the country.

4. Issuing opinions on matters related to insulting sacred symbols and sectarian intolerance.
5. Publishing studies and research related to various fields of *fatwa*, and reviewing *fatwa* content issued by official bodies, in a manner that reinforces national identity and strengthens societal values.
6. Observing the new moon in the country, including sighting and observing the crescent of the holy months of Ramadan, Shawwal, and Dhu al-Hijjah, in coordination with the relevant authorities.
7. Qualifying, training, and developing the skills of qualified *fatwa* issuers, upon request from relevant authorities, and attracting and nurturing distinguished *fatwa* talents.
8. Strengthening strategic partnerships within the Council's purview with moderate international *fatwa* centres and religious authorities, in accordance with applicable national legislation.
9. Providing *fatwa* services to answer legal inquiries and developing the digital services system.
10. Providing legal opinions on legislation and laws related to *fatwas* that are submitted to the Council by the issuing authorities.
11. Any other powers or duties assigned to the Council by a decision of the Head of the Court.

**Objectives:** The Council generally aims to regulate the issuance of religious edicts, unify their references, organize their affairs and mechanisms in the country, and confront abuse of revered figures, preventing *takfir* and sectarian fanaticism, by stating the religious opinion on such matters.

**Main Services:** The Council provides *fatwa* services through the following channels:

**First: Telephone *Fatwas*:** The Council receives public inquiries via the toll-free number (8002422) daily from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, during official working days, in three languages: Arabic, English, and Urdu. Callers can speak with specialists in Islamic jurisprudence to inquire about legal rulings and receive reliable answers that consider current realities and anticipate future needs.

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**Second: Fatwas via SMS:** The Council has allocated a free number (2535), through which the public can send their questions on all days of the week, including holidays. The questioner sends his question via SMS to the mentioned number and then receives the answer after it has been prepared by specialists in Sharīʿa *fatwas* via SMS.

**Third: Website *Fatwas*:** The Council allows the public around the world to send their questions 24 hours throughout the week, where the questioner sends his question through an electronic window on the website, and the answer is sent via email.

**Fourth: *Fatwa* Windows:** The Council provides in-person or virtual *fatwa* sessions for governmental or private entities and institutions, with legal specialists, based on a request submitted through the Council's website.

**The Council's Methodology for Issuing *Fatwas*:** The Council adopts a collective approach to issuing *fatwas*, avoiding fanaticism and extremism.

In matters of worship, the Council answers questions according to the well-known Mālikī school of thought, the official school of the UAE, considering the circumstances of the questioner and applying the principle of leniency in accordance with the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence.

In financial transactions, the *muftī* considers the circumstances of the questioner, applying the principle of leniency in accordance with the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence or with the rulings adopted by contemporary Islamic legal councils.

Regarding intellectual matters, the Council has assigned several *muftīs* to engage in dialogue with young people about the imported cultures circulating on social media that promote extremism and sow doubt about faith and loyalty to one's homeland.

The Council has adopted a methodology for dealing with questions related to other religions and their followers, based on establishing the concepts of tolerance, coexistence, and peace, and refraining from insulting or attacking others, whether verbally or physically.

Fatwas related to public affairs, such as political, economic, social, and military matters, or those regulated by applicable laws in the country, are referred to the members of the UAE Fatwa Council for a ruling.

The Council does not answer questions concerning the interpretation of dreams, the evaluation of groups, sects, and individuals, or riddles and competition questions. The Council directs those seeking *fatwas* to consult the Sharīʿa court regarding matters of blood money (*diyya*), punishments, discretionary punishments (*taʿzīr*), and other issues before the judiciary, as issuing a fatwa on these matters requires the presence of the disputing parties before the court.

Federal Law No. (3) of 2024, which established the Council, regulates fatwa issuance in the country. Its articles stipulate penalties, fines, and sanctions to regulate fatwas in the country, including:

1. A fine of no less than ten thousand (10,000) dirhams and no more than two hundred thousand (200,000) dirhams shall be imposed on anyone who commits any of the following:
  - a. Issuing a general religious edict (*fatwa*) in the state on any of the matters and subjects within the Council's jurisdiction.
  - b. Issuing a private religious edict (*fatwa*) to the public without being licensed or authorized to do so.
  - c. Publishing religious edicts (*fatwas*) in circumstances not permitted under this Law or the Council's resolutions.
  - d. Publishing to the public a religious edict (*fatwa*) that could incite sectarianism, bigotry, or discord in society.
  - e. Issuing a religious edict (*fatwa*) in cases pending before the state's judicial authorities, or issuing a *fatwa* on matters or subjects regulated by applicable laws in the state.
  - f. Publicly challenging or questioning the *fatwas* issued by the Council.

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- g. No media outlet, website, or social media user in the country may fail to obtain a license or permit from the Council before establishing a website to publish religious edicts (*fatwas*) or organizing a program for issuing them.
  2. The fine stipulated in paragraph (1) of this article shall be doubled in case of a repeat offense.

Thus, official institutions in the country have played a prominent role in regulating religious edicts and curbing any deviant *fatwas* or foreign ideologies that oppose moderation and contradict the approach of tolerance and coexistence adopted by the country.

# Islamic Civilization

## DEFINITION, COMPONENTS, AND ETHICS

### Definition of Civilization (حضارة)

In Arabic, the word civilization comes from the verb “*ḥaḍāra* (to be present),” and its plural is “*ḥaḍārāt*.” It has several meanings, including:

1. Residence and stability: It is said: “The Bedouin *ḥaḍāra*: he resided and settled, and no longer travelled.”<sup>1</sup> “And *ḥaḍāra* means: residence in the city.”<sup>2</sup>
2. Closeness: In *al-ʿAyn*, it states: “*ḥaḍāra*: the nearness of something. You say: ‘I was in the *ḥaḍāra* of the house.’”<sup>3</sup>
3. Presence: The opposite of absence. “The present: those who are present in their gathering.”<sup>4</sup>
4. Witnessing: “It is said that he spoke in the *ḥaḍāra* of so-and-so: that is, witnessed his presence.”<sup>5</sup>

All these definitions are clearly related to the following technical meaning, as the people of civilization have settled on them and established their foundations with them. They are present in all aspects of their lives, bearing witness to the progress, prosperity and development they have achieved.

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<sup>1</sup> ʿUmar, Aḥmad Mukhtār, *Muʿjam al-Lughā al-ʿArabiyya al-Muʿāṣira* (NA: 2008), 1:511.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, 4:197

<sup>3</sup> al-Farāhīdī, *al-ʿAyn*, 3:102; al-Azharī, *Tahdhīb al-Lughā*, 4:118; al-Šāḥib b. ʿIbād, Ismāʿīl b. ʿIbād, *al-Muḥīṭ fīʾl-Lughā* (NA: 1994), 2:439.

<sup>4</sup> al-Šāḥib, *al-Muḥīṭ fīʾl-Lughā*, 2:439.

<sup>5</sup> al-Jawharī, al-Šihāḥ Tāj al-Lughā, 2:632.

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In its technical sense, civilization has been defined in several ways, including:

Ibn Khaldun said: “Civilization is the pinnacle of luxury and the mastery of the crafts used in its various aspects and styles, including gastronomy, clothing, buildings, furnishings, structures, and all other aspects of domestic life and its conditions.”<sup>1</sup>

Will Durant defined civilization as “a social system that enables humans to increase their cultural production.”<sup>2</sup>

The *al-Wasīf* Dictionary states: “A high stage in human development, and manifestations of scientific, artistic, literary, and social progress in urban areas.”<sup>3</sup>

Based on the above, we can define Islamic civilization as: what Muslim societies have achieved throughout history in terms of spiritual elevation, scientific and intellectual superiority, social progress, urban development, and economic prosperity.

## Components of Islamic Civilization

Islamic civilization represents a rich legacy, encompassing spiritual, scientific, intellectual, and artistic components that interact with one another.

**First: The scientific and intellectual component:** A cornerstone of Islamic civilization, playing a pivotal role in its emergence and development. Science and cultivating the intellect stemmed from the Qurʾān’s repeated calls to seek and impart knowledge, as well as the Prophet Muḥammad’s (PBUH) encouragement. The very first verse revealed in the Qurʾān urged

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, *al-‘Ibar wa Dīwān al-Mubtada’ wa’l-Khabar* (Beirut: Mu’assassa Jamāl lil-Ṭibā’a wa’l-Nashr, ND).

<sup>2</sup> Durant, William, *Qiṣṣa al-Ḥaḍāra*, trans. Zakī Najīb Maḥmūd (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl lil-Ṭab’ wa’l-Nashr wa’l-Tawzī’, 1988), 1:3.

<sup>3</sup> *al-Mu’jam al-Wasīf* (Cairo: Majma’ al-Lughā al-‘Arabiyya, 1972), 1:181.

the pursuit of knowledge and encouraged reading: “Read.”<sup>1</sup> The Qur’ān also distinguished between the learned and the unlearned: “Say, ‘How can those who know be equal to those who do not know?’ Only those who have understanding will take heed.”<sup>2</sup> Teaching was among the first missions entrusted to the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH): “God has been truly gracious to the believers in sending them a Messenger from among their own, to recite His revelations to them, to make them grow in purity, and to teach them the Scripture and wisdom.”<sup>3</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) made “seeking knowledge an obligation upon every Muslim.”<sup>4</sup> This laid the foundation for tremendous and remarkable scientific and educational progress. Schools, universities, libraries, and translation centres were established. Scholars in Islamic civilization were guided by the words of God Almighty: “Say, ‘Travel throughout the earth and see how He brings life into being: and He will bring the next life into being. God has power over all things.’”<sup>5</sup> Their interest encompassed all human and natural sciences, including philosophy, logic, sociology, medicine, astronomy, mathematics, chemistry, physics, and others. Islamic civilization was also open to mutual interaction with other civilizations, benefiting from them and enriching them.

Perhaps the most prominent evidence of this trend in Islamic civilization is the Arabization and translation movement, which was initiated by Khālīd b. Yazīd b. Muāāwiya and later systematized by Hārūn al-Rashīd, and for which the Caliph al-Ma`mūn established the House of Wisdom, attracting scholars from various civilizations. It was an academic complex, an astronomical observatory, and a public library, in which books of science and philosophy were translated from Greek, Syriac, and Indian languages into Arabic.<sup>6</sup> This included the works of Ptolemy

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 96:1.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 39:9.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 3:164.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Mājah, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, ḥadīth no. 224, 97.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 29:20.

<sup>6</sup> Durant, *Qiṣṣa al-Ḥaḍāra*, 13:177.

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in mathematics and astronomy, the books of Galen in medicine, the works of Aristotle and Plato in philosophy, and others. This scientific and intellectual exchange shaped the identity of Islamic civilization, its development, progress, and prosperity throughout the ages.

**Second: The artistic component:** Art forms a vital part of Islamic civilization and is represented by the state of mastery and creativity that it reached. Art had a prominent imprint and distinctive identity, shaped by Islam's interest in beauty and its encouragement of creativity. The Holy Qur'ān presented us with unique architectural and engineering models, extremely precise and beautiful. God Almighty said: "Pharaoh said, 'Haman, build me a tall tower so that I may reach the ropes that lead.'"<sup>1</sup> God Almighty said about Bilqīs, the Queen of Sheba: "Then it was said to her, 'Enter the hall,' but when she saw it, she thought it was a deep pool of water, and bared her legs. Solomon explained, 'It is just a hall paved with glass.'"<sup>2</sup> "The palace of our master Solomon was made of glass and precious stones."<sup>3</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) praised the value of beauty, saying: "Indeed, God is beautiful and loves beauty."<sup>4</sup>

Among the most important artistic fields that Islamic civilization focused on were:

1. **Architecture:** One of the most prominent artistic contributions made by Islamic civilization, represented by unique architectural landmarks and distinctive monuments. This was clear in the construction of places of worship and palaces, such as the Prophet's Mosque in Medina, the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, the Cordoba Palace in Andalusia, the Hassan Tower in Rabat, and other landmarks that bore witness to high craftsmanship and architectural creativity.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 40:36.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 27:34.

<sup>3</sup> al-Rakābī, Falayḥ Karīm Khudayr, *al-'Imāra wal-Bī'a fī'l-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, Majalla Kuliyya al-Ādāb, 94, 62.

<sup>4</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 91, 1:65.

2. Arabic Calligraphy: Arabic calligraphy is considered one of the most important arts of Islamic civilization and received special attention due to its connection with the Holy Qurʾān and the Arabic language. Mujāhid, in interpreting the verse, “and He gives wisdom to whoever He will”<sup>1</sup> said, “It means calligraphy.”<sup>2</sup> It has also been said that “Calligraphy is one of the two tongues, and its beauty is one of the two forms of eloquence.”<sup>3</sup> Throughout history, calligraphers have created new forms, characterized by precision and beauty. Among the most famous of these scripts are:
  - a. Thuluth: Used today for decorative calligraphy on mosques, especially the composite script.
  - b. Naskh: Used for writing Qurʾāns.
  - c. Kufic: Used for inscriptions on Islamic architecture, including mosques.

Among the most famous calligraphers who emerged during the Islamic civilization were:

- a. Ibn Muqla, considered the founder of Arabic calligraphy, whose handwriting became exemplary.
  - b. al-Yāqūt al-Mustaʿsimī, renowned for his Naskh.
  - c. Ibn al-Bawwāb, famous for his Thuluth.
3. Ornamentation (Arabesque):<sup>4</sup> These are the precise geometric shapes and patterns that characterized art in Islamic civilization, decorating the walls of mosques, domes, minarets and miḥrābs, as well as palaces and houses. Artisans used precious stones, precious metals, ceramics, pottery, glass, marble, plaster, and others.

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 2:269.

<sup>2</sup> al-Māwardī, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, *Adab al-Dunyā waʾl-Dīn* (NA: Dār Maktaba al-Ḥayā, 1986), 60.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ḥasan, Zakī Muḥammad, *Funūn al-Islām* (Cairo: Dār al-Rāʾid al-ʿArabī, ND), 250.

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They also used the art of ornamentation in weaving carpets, curtains and clothes. Durant wrote: “As for Islamic art, it has exhausted its strength in ornamentation... nothing has surpassed it yet.”<sup>1</sup>

**Third: Literature:** A fundamental pillar in Islamic civilization because Islam is a civilization of the written word, which expresses human values, ideas and feelings. Literature in Islamic civilization was characterized by richness and diversity, and included multiple genres, including poetry, prose, story, and oratory.

1. Poetry: Arabic poetry was born alongside the Arabic language and then flourished and developed under Islamic civilization. Its purposes diversified, its styles developed, and its themes rose. The Prophet (PBUH) encouraged poetry and poets. He said to his poet Ḥassān b. Thābit, may God be pleased with him: “The Holy Spirit will continue to support you as long as you defend God and His Messenger.”<sup>2</sup>

Among the prominent poets in Islamic civilization were:

- a. During the time of the Prophet (PBUH): Ḥassān b. Thābit, who was famous for defending the Messenger of God and explaining his virtues. One of his most famous poems begins: “A seal of prophethood was placed upon him.”<sup>3</sup> Kāb b. Zuhair, who was famous for his poem “Bānat Suād” in praise of the Messenger, and al-Khansā’, who was famous for her poetry in mourning her brother Sakhr.
- b. In the eras following the Prophetic era: al-Farazdaq, Jarīr, Abū Nuwās, Abū al-‘Atāhiyya, al-Mutanabbī, Abū Tammām, and others.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Durant, *Qiṣṣa al-Ḥaḍāra*, 13:382.

<sup>2</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 249, 7:165.

<sup>3</sup> Thābit, Ḥassān, *Dīwān Ḥassān b. Thābit* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1994), 54-55.

<sup>4</sup> Ḍayf, Shawqī, *Tārīkh al-Adab al-‘Arabī* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1995), 2:46, 2:336, and 3:290.

Poetry has had a significant impact on preserving Islamic history, documenting events and developments, in addition to preserving and improving the Arabic language.

2. **Storytelling:** Storytelling represents an important part of the heritage of Islamic civilization. It was an effective tool for narrating history, spreading values and morals, and expressing lessons, morals, and admonitions. Interest in storytelling arose in Islamic civilization stemmed from the Holy Qur'ān's mention of it, as it named an entire chapter The Stories (*Sūra al-Qaṣaṣ*), which included several stories of prophets, wise men, and others. The Prophet (PBUH) also used to narrate stories full of lessons and morals to his Companions. Storytelling has diversified throughout the ages and taken several forms, including folk tales, literary narratives, and historical accounts.
3. **Oratory:** Oratory occupied a prominent place in Islamic civilization, as it was a facet of intellectual activity and a means of preaching and reminding others. Its importance was derived from its being prescribed during Friday Prayer, as God Almighty commanded attendance: "Believers! When the call to prayer is made on the day of congregation, hurry towards the reminder of God and leave off your trading."<sup>1</sup> Oratory in Islamic civilization was distinguished by clarity, eloquence, rhyme, and an abundance of rhetorical images. Among the prominent orators in Islamic civilization was Saḥbān Wāil al-Bāhilī, who was an example of eloquence and clarity.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 62:9.

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## Ethics of Islamic Civilization

Islamic civilization is distinguished by its reliance on an integrated system of moral values and human principles. Alexis Carrel said, “The beauty of morality surpasses science and art, in that it is the foundation of civilization.”<sup>1</sup> Islamic civilization derived its values and principles from the Holy Qurʾān and the righteous guidance of the Prophet. The Qurʾān contains a vast array of moral values and human principles, which it called upon people to adopt and embody. Among these is: “Be tolerant and command what is right.”<sup>2</sup> One of the Prophet’s missions was to promote values and establish morality. He said: “I was sent only to perfect good character.”<sup>3</sup> Moral values and human principles permeated all dimensions of Islamic civilization. Scientific, intellectual, cultural, social, and economic...Morals encompassed all Islam’s vital aspects and it affected all its members, regardless of race, religion, or background.

Among the most important values and principles that characterized Islamic civilization are:

**First: Humanity:** In Islamic civilization, people are the basic element and the main component and therefore occupy a lofty position and a prestigious status. Individuals have protection, preservation, appreciation and honour, simply for being a human being, regardless of race, gender, colour, religion, or anything else. God Almighty said: “We have honoured the children of Adam and carried them by land and sea; We have provided good sustenance for them and favoured them specially above many of those We have created.”<sup>4</sup> In Islamic civilization, man is a brother to man, whoever he may be. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “You are the children of Adam, and Adam was created from dust.”<sup>5</sup> This paved

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<sup>1</sup> Carrel, Alexis, *al-Insān Dhālik al-Majhūl*, trans. Shafiq As'ad Farīd (Beirut: Maktaba al-Ma'ārif, 1980), 153.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 7:199.

<sup>3</sup> al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-Kubra*, ḥadīth no. 20819, 21:28.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 17:70.

<sup>5</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ḥadīth no. 5116, 4:331.

the way for the embodiment of the meanings of human brotherhood and contributed to opening up horizons of civilizational communication, acquaintance, and knowledge and cultural exchange, based on the words of God Almighty: “People, We created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into races and tribes so that you should recognize one another. In God’s eyes, the most honoured of you are the ones most mindful of Him: God is all knowing, all aware.”<sup>1</sup> All of this had a great and profound impact on the development of Islamic and human civilization.

**Second: Justice and righteousness:** These are two values that occupy a central place in Islamic civilization and reflect its ethical and moral essence. Islamic law calls for treating all people equally, whether they agree or disagree, regardless of their social class, background, beliefs, orientations, or gender. God Almighty says: “God commands justice, doing good, and generosity towards relatives and He forbids what is shameful, blameworthy, and oppressive.”<sup>2</sup> God also urges Muslims to uphold these values with others, saying: “He does not forbid you to deal kindly and justly with anyone who has not fought you for your faith or driven you out of your homes: God loves the just.”<sup>3</sup> The result of the good treatment that characterized Islamic civilization was social stability, cohesion, global communication, and cooperation.

**Third: Tolerance:** Islamic civilization was characterized by tolerance, both in theory and practice. This was manifested in “respecting others and their freedoms, acknowledging and accepting differences between individuals, appreciating cultural diversity, being open to other ideas and philosophies with the motivation of learning, and not rejecting what is unknown.”<sup>4</sup> The characteristic of tolerance in Islamic civilization

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 49:13.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 16:90.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 60:8.

<sup>4</sup> al-Jarārī, ‘Abbās b. ‘Abd Allāh, *Mafhūm al-Ta’ayush fī l-Islām* (Morocco: ICESCO, 1996), 52.

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originated from the texts of the Holy Qurʾān and the Prophetic Ḥadīth. The Holy Qurʾān acknowledged differences and explained that the wisdom behind them is mutual understanding, cooperation, and the exchange of benefits, regardless of ethnic or religious affiliations. God Almighty said: “People, We created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into races and tribes so that you should recognize one another.”<sup>1</sup> And the Prophet (PBUH) said: “I was sent with tolerant monotheism.”<sup>2</sup>

This principle was most fully manifested in the Constitution of Medina, which regulated the relationship between the inhabitants of the city, regardless of their sect, religion, and race, and was the origin of the principle of tolerance. Among what was stated in this document: “And the Jews of BanūʿAwf are a community with the believers; The Jews have their religion, and the Muslims have their religion, their allies and themselves, except for those who commit injustice and sin, for they will only bring destruction upon themselves and their households...and there is support between them against those who fight the people of this document, and there is mutual advice and counsel between them, and righteousness without sin.”<sup>3</sup>

The era of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, may God be pleased with him, witnessed the birth of another document that demonstrates the authenticity of tolerance in Islamic civilization. This document, called the Covenant of ʿUmar, was written for the people of Jerusalem. It stated: “This is what the servant of God, ʿUmar, Commander of the Faithful, gave to the people of Jerusalem as a guarantee of safety; he gave them safety for themselves, their property, their churches, and their crosses; that their churches shall not be inhabited, nor demolished, nor shall anything be taken from them, nor from their precincts, nor from their crosses, nor

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 49:13.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal*, ḥadīth no. 22722, 10:108.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Hishām, ʿAbd al-Malik, *al-Sīra al-Nabawiyya* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿa Muṣṭafa al-Bābī al-Ḥal-abī, 1955), 1:504.

from anything of their property, nor shall they be forced to change their religion, nor shall any of them be harmed.”<sup>1</sup>

The third of these documents is the “Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together,” signed in Abu Dhabi, the capital of tolerance in the United Arab Emirates, on February 4, 2019, by two prominent religious figures: Pope Francis, head of the Catholic Church, and Shaykh Aḥmad al-Ṭayīb, Grand Imam of al-Azhar, under the patronage of His Highness Shaykh Muhammad b. Zayed, President of the UAE. This document builds upon all previous international documents, serving as a global reference point for upholding morality, establishing justice, and respecting human dignity.

This document emphasized that:

- True religious teachings call for adherence to the values of peace, upholding the values of mutual understanding, human brotherhood, coexistence, and dedicating oneself to wisdom, justice, and benevolence.
- Freedom is a right for every human being; in belief, thought, expression, and practice. Pluralism and differences in religion, colour, gender, race, and language are a wisdom of divine will.
- Justice based on mercy is the path that must be followed to achieve a dignified life, which every human being has the right to live under.
- Dialogue, understanding, and spreading a culture of tolerance, acceptance of others, and coexistence among people would contribute to containing many social, political, economic, and environmental problems.
- Dialogue between believers means meeting in the vast space of shared spiritual, human, and social values, and investing in

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<sup>1</sup> al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad b. Jarīr, *Tārīkh al-Umam wa'l-Mulūk* (Cairo: Dār al-Turāth, 1967), 3:609.

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spreading the higher morals and virtues that religions call for, and avoiding pointless arguments.

- Protecting places of worship, including temples, churches, and mosques, is a duty guaranteed by all religions, human values, and international conventions and norms.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, we find that Islamic civilization presented a unique model, whose foundations were based on religious, intellectual, and scientific principles, moral values, and humanism, and were embodied in sophisticated literary and artistic creations that had a great and profound impact on the advancement of humanity and the development of human civilization.

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<sup>1</sup> Website of the Human Fraternity Document: [Abu Dhabi Document | Higher Committee of Human Fraternity](#).

## The Relationship of Islamic Civilization to the Humanities and Natural Sciences

Throughout its long history, Islamic civilization has been interested in the human and natural sciences in all their branches. It opened itself to them, interacted with them, benefited from them, enriched them, and developed them, based on the call of the Holy Qurʾān to seek knowledge, contemplate the human soul, and reflect on the cosmos to achieve the development of the earth and benefit humanity.

**First: The relationship of Islamic Civilization to the humanities:** Throughout history, Muslim scholars have shown a keen interest in the humanities, producing outstanding figures and pioneers who advanced Islamic civilization and enriched human knowledge. Among these sciences are:

1. **Philosophy:** The intellectual pursuit of the truths of existence and deep contemplation of its essential principles, in order to know the First Creator and achieve happiness for humankind. The word “philosophy” is originally Greek, composed of “phila,” meaning “to love,” and “sophia,” meaning “wisdom.” Thus, a philosopher is someone who loves wisdom or engages in the pursuit of wisdom. This is the same meaning conveyed by the word “wisdom” in the Holy Qurʾān, as in the verse: “And We had certainly given Luqman wisdom.”<sup>1</sup> In this context, philosophy signifies a precise understanding of humanity and existence, translating this understanding into profound principles and meanings that guide humanity towards achieving the purpose for which it was created.

Philosophy is one of the most important pillars of Islamic civilization, due to its role in the advancement and progress of civilization. It affirms that the world and life have intrinsic value, and consequently, it motivates humanity to ascend to the highest attainable

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 31:12.

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value.<sup>1</sup> As al-Kindi said, philosophy is “the highest in rank and the noblest in status among human endeavours,”<sup>2</sup> because it is a science that serves the others by establishing arguments, teaching the means of finding solutions, and employing persuasive techniques. The German philosopher Heidegger also said, “Sciences cannot exist unless philosophy precedes and guides them.”<sup>3</sup>

Muslim scholars engaged with philosophy from this standpoint, paying close attention to it through transmission, translation, explanation, interpretation, critique, correction, addition, and innovation; and they built upon it their understanding of existence, considering it an intellectual science needed by all civilizations, such as:

- a. Abū Yūsuf Ya‘qūb b. Ishāq al-Kindī (d. 256 AH), who was nicknamed the Philosopher of the Arabs.
  - b. Abū Naṣr Muḥammad al-Farābī (d. 339 AH), also known as the Second Teacher after Aristotle.
  - c. al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Sīnā (d. 428 AH), famously known as the Chief Scholar.
  - d. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Ibn Rushd al-Andalūsī (d. 595 AH), known as the Commentator, for his commentaries on Aristotle’s works.
2. **Sociology:** A science that studies the emergence, growth, nature, laws, and systems of human societies, and explains the behaviour of their members and studies their interactions, with the aim of the continuity and development of the social entity.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Schweitzer, Albert, *Falsafa al-Ḥaḍāra*, trans. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī (Cairo: al-Mu‘as-sassa al-Miṣriyya al-‘Āmma lil-Ta’līf wal-Tarjama wal-Nashr, 1963), 113.

<sup>2</sup> al-Kindī, Yūsuf b. Ya‘qūb, *Kitāb al-Kindī ila al-Mu‘taṣam bi-Allāh fi’l-Falsafa al-Ūla* (Cairo: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1948), 77.

<sup>3</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Mā al-Falsafa?* trans. Fu‘ād Kāmil ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (Cairo: Dār al-Naḥḍa al-‘Arabiyya, 1977), 36.

<sup>4</sup> ‘Umar, *Mu‘jam al-Lughā al-‘Arabiyya al-Mu‘āṣira*, 1:393; ‘Abd al-Jabbār, Nabīl ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, *Tārīkh al-Fikr al-Ijtīmā’ī* (Amman: Dār Dijla, 2009), 178.

Sociology is one of the most important things that helps societies build their civilization according to a disciplined approach; it studies the factors affecting human behaviour, guides the understanding of social issues and how they affect societies, helps to understand the causes of social problems and develop ways to solve them, and helps to understand different cultures in order to build a more tolerant, cohesive, just and effective Islamic civilization.<sup>1</sup>

Among the first Muslim scholars who took an interest in sociology were:

- a. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Yaʿqūb Miskawayh (d. 421 AH), author of *Tajārib al-Umam wa Taʿāqub al-Himam* (Experiences of Nations and Successive Eras), in which he documented social and economic life in the Abbasid Caliphate.
  - b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn Khaldūn al-Ḥadramī (d. 808 AH), one of the most famous Muslim sociologists, author of the renowned *Muqaddima* (Introduction to the History of Ibn Khaldūn).
3. **History:** The science that documents the news of the past, records the events of their time, and identifies their causes, contexts, and effects on civilization. Its aim is to learn from diverse human experiences, understand the universal laws governing the rise and flourishing of civilizations, and utilize this knowledge to build a progressive present and a prosperous future. Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī said, “Were it not for history, nations would perish with the death of their leaders, and the state of their ancestors would remain hidden from later generations.”<sup>2</sup> History is a continuous chain of interconnected stages, where later generations build upon the work of their predecessors. al-Māwardī said, “Were it not for the fact that the second generation benefits from what the first generation established, the people of each era would be in need of creating what they require.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Nabālī, ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿAbd, *ʿIlm al-Ijtimāʿ* (Amman: Dār al-Khalīj lil-Nashr wa'l-Tawzīʿ, 2019), 151.

<sup>2</sup> al-ʿUmarī, Aḥmad b. Yaḥya b. Faḍl Allāh, *Masālik al-Abṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār* (Abu Dhabi: al-Majmaʿ al-Thaqāfī, 2002), 12:293.

<sup>3</sup> al-Māwardī, *Adab al-Dunyā wa'l-Dīn*, 144.

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Because of the importance of history in building civilizations, all heavenly books have paid attention to it, including the Holy Qurʾān, which urged us to study the history of nations, peoples, and civilizations, and told us about their news and stories. God Almighty said: “We relate to you [Muhammad] such accounts of earlier towns: some of them are still standing; some have been mown down.”<sup>1</sup> God mentioned the stories of the prophets with their peoples and mentioned a number of nations and their civilizations, such as the civilization of Sheba and the civilization of Dhul-Qarnayn.

Scholars of Islamic civilization recognized this Qurʾānic call, and several brilliant historians emerged among the Muslims who authored massive historical encyclopaedias, documenting the facts of human history and the events of the human past. Among the most prominent of these were:

- a. Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310 AH), in his book *History of the Prophets and Kings*, which chronicles human history from the beginning of creation to his own time.
- b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630 AH) and his book *al-Kāmil fiʾl-Tārīkh*, which compiles accounts of kings, notables, scholars, and virtuous individuals in the East and West, from the beginning of time to his own era.
- c. Ismāʿīl b. ʿUmar Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH) and his book *al-Bidāya waʾl-Nihāya*, a monumental encyclopaedic work that chronicles events from the beginning of creation to his own time, in addition to foretold future events.
- d. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808 AH) and his book *al-Ibar*, one of the most prominent historical works, in which the author discusses the history of nations and the lessons it offers to human civilizations.

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 11:100.

4. **Archaeology:** The science that deals with the tangible material heritage left behind by humans, which acquired its archaeological value from the accumulation of time, such as buildings, statues, coins, and others; to learn about the path of development that human civilization took in its past eras, and to extract its scientific, cultural and aesthetic values.

Throughout Islamic civilization, Muslims have been concerned with antiquities, as evidenced by what history books have conveyed to us about the care that rulers took in preserving and restoring them. al-Baghdādī said: “Kings continued to take care of the survival of these antiquities and prevent tampering with them and tampering with them...and they did that for reasons of interest, including: to remain a history that is noted by the ages, that it is a witness to the revealed books, for the Holy Qurʾān mentioned it and its people, so in seeing it is the news of the news, and the confirmation of the effect, and that artifacts it indicate something of the conditions of those who came before, their conduct, the abundance of their knowledge, the purity of their thought, and other things.”<sup>1</sup>

History books have also conveyed scholars’ interest in antiquities, both in recording and documenting them, and among the most prominent of these scholars are:

- a. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Azraqī (d. 250 AH) and his famous book *News of Mecca and the Antiquities Found Therein*.
- b. Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī (d. 749 AH), who was interested in the antiquities of Egypt, its wonders, and its fine craftsmanship, with his book *The Paths of Sight in the Kingdoms of the Cities*.
- c. Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Maqrīzī (d. 845 AH), who authored two books, *Sermons and Lessons from the Mention of Plans and Events and The Events of the Lands and the News of the People*,

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<sup>1</sup> al-Baghdādī, ‘Abd al-Laṭīf b. Yūsuf, *al-Ifāda wa’l-‘tibār fi’l-Umūr al-Mushāhada wa’l-Hawādith al-Mu’ayyina bi Arḍ Miṣr* (Cairo: Maṭba‘a Wādī al-Nīl, 1869), 34.

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which are among the most important books on antiquities. In them, he mentioned many countries and described the antiquities of the ancients and the buried treasures they contained.

## **Second: The relationship of Islamic Civilization to the natural sciences:**

Throughout history, Muslim scholars have paid great attention to the physical sciences, studying and developing them, thereby advancing Islamic civilization. Among these sciences are:

1. **Astronomy:** The study of celestial bodies, including stars, planets, and galaxies, their formation, composition, evolution, properties, movement, dimensions, relationships with each other, and their influence on Earth.<sup>1</sup> The Arabs used to call astronomy by several names, the most famous of which are: 'Ilm al-Hay'a (the science of celestial bodies), 'Ilm al-Anwā' (the science of weather patterns), and 'Ilm Aḥkām al-Nujūm (the science of astrological judgments).<sup>2</sup>

Astronomy has a major role in Islamic civilization; it is one of the ways of its progress, prosperity, and connection with other civilizations, as it enables the understanding of the universe, its development and future, the knowledge of times and dates, and helps in determining locations and studying the climate.

Muslim scholars were interested in astronomy and researched it according to scientific rules, especially after the translation of Greek astronomy books into Arabic.<sup>3</sup> They arrived at several facts that were not common at the time, such as the spherical nature of the earth and its rotation.

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<sup>1</sup> Majma' al-Lughā al-'Arabiyya, *al-Mu'jam al-Wasīl*, 2:1002; Various Authors, *Mūjaz Dā'ira al-Ma'ārif al-Islāmiyya* (Sharjah: Markaz al-Shāriqa lil-Ibdā' al-Fikrī, 1998) 24:7397.

<sup>2</sup> *Ishāmāt al-Ḥaḍāra al-'Arabiyya wa'l-Islāmiyya fī 'Ulūm al-Falak* (Alexandria: Bibliotheca Alexandrina, 2006), 8-9.

<sup>3</sup> Durant, *Qiṣṣa al-Ḥaḍāra*, 13:183.

Their interest in this science stemmed from two things:

- a. The Qurʾān: The Holy Qurʾān mentions a number of celestial bodies. God Almighty says: “By His command He has made the night and day, the sun, moon, and stars all of benefit to you. There truly are signs in this for those who use their reason.”<sup>1</sup> It also refers to their movement, succession, and phases: “The sun, too, runs its determined course laid down for it by the Almighty, the All Knowing. We have determined phases for the moon until finally it becomes like an old date-stalk. The sun cannot overtake the moon, nor can the night outrun the day: each floats in [its own] orbit.”<sup>2</sup> The Qurʾān also pointed out its fruits and benefits: “It is He who made the stars, so that they can guide you when land and sea are dark: We have made the signs clear for those who have knowledge.”<sup>3</sup>
- b. The connection of Islamic rituals to the movement of the planets: Determining the direction of prayer, knowing its times, the beginning and end of the month of Ramadan, as well as the months of Hajj; all of that is related to the movement of the moon. God Almighty said: “They ask you [Prophet] about crescent moons. Say, ‘They show the times appointed for people, and for the pilgrimage.’”<sup>4</sup>

Among the most prominent astronomers in Islamic civilization:

- a. Muḥammad b. Jābir al-Battānī (d. 317 AH), author of the *Zij* (astronomical tables), in which he corrected Ptolemy’s astronomical tables, and *Maʿrifa Maṭālīʾ al-Burūj fīma bayn Arbāʾ al-Falak* (Knowledge of the Rising Places of the Zodiac Between the Quarters of the Celestial Sphere).

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 16:12.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 36:38-40.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 6:97.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 2:189.

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- b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Mūsa al-Khwārizmī (d. 232 AH), one of the founders of astronomy, and among his most important books is *Zij al-Khwārizmī*, which contains accurate astronomical tables.
  - c. Abū 'Alī al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan Ibn al-Haytham al-Baṣrī (d. 430 AH), nicknamed Ptolemy II, made contributions to optics that influenced astronomy.
  - d. 'Umar b. Ibrāhīm al-Khayyām (d. 515 AH), known for his reform of the Jalali calendar,<sup>1</sup> which was more accurate than the Julian (Roman) calendar.<sup>2</sup>
  - e. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī (d. 440 AH), author of *al-Ishtia'āb fi Ṣan'a al-Aṣṭarlāb*, in which he laid out a simple theory for measuring the circumference of the earth with an accuracy that does not differ much from the value known today.
2. **Medicine:** Deals with physical and psychological diseases, illnesses, and ailments, and seeks to prevent them, find medicines for them, and treatments that suit them.

This science occupies a special place in any civilization, as it is the touchstone by which its progress is measured. Therefore, it has occupied a large part of the interest of Islamic civilization, based on the Holy Qur'ān and Prophetic guidance. In the Holy Qur'ān there is an explicit call to take care of health; care, prevention and treatment: "Children of Adam, dress well whenever you are at worship, and eat and drink [as We have permitted] but do not be extravagant."<sup>3</sup> al-Samarqandī said: "God has gathered all of medicine in this verse."<sup>4</sup> Likewise, we find in the Prophetic guidance an encouragement to

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<sup>1</sup> A solar calendar that was developed during the 11th Century CE during the Seljuk Period, see *Mūjaz Dā'ira al-Ma'ārif al-Islāmiyya*, 7:2103.

<sup>2</sup> The calendar implemented by Julius Ceaser in 46 BCE, see *Mūjaz Dā'ira al-Ma'ārif al-Islāmiyya*, 30:9628.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān, 7:31.

<sup>4</sup> al-Samarqandī, *Baḥr al-'Ulūm*, 1:511.

maintain health, as in the saying of the Prophet (PBUH): “The strong believer is better and more beloved to God than the weak believer.”<sup>1</sup> We also find an encouragement to pursue means of treatment, as in the Prophet’s saying: “O servants of God, seek treatment, for God has not placed a disease except that He has placed a cure for it.”<sup>2</sup>

Throughout history, Muslims have transformed these divine teachings and Prophetic guidance into practical reality, and their rulers and scholars have paid great attention to the science of medicine.

a. Among the rulers’ interest in medicine:

- Building medical schools, the most famous of which is the Dhākhūrī School in Damascus, which is also known as (al-Bīmāristān al-Dhākūrī), which was founded in the year 565 AH.
- The construction of hospitals for physical and psychological treatment. These hospitals included health facilities, including shelters for the elderly and the blind, and ambulance stations.<sup>3</sup> Sigrid Hunke (d. 1999) wrote: “Every hospital in our time, with its arrangements and laboratory, is a monument to Arab genius.”<sup>4</sup>
- Building pharmacies, taking care of them, and monitoring their medicines. Sigrid Hunke wrote: “Every pharmacy and drug warehouse in our time, and every pill of medicine, is a small, visible reminder of two of the greatest Arab physicians and teachers of the West.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 2664, 8:56.

<sup>2</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ḥadīth no. 19599, 19:529; al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ḥadīth no. 2038, 3:561.

<sup>3</sup> al-Qifṭī, Jamāl al-Dīn ‘Alī, *Ikhbār al-‘Ulamā’ bi Akhbār al-Ḥukamā’* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2005), 150.

<sup>4</sup> Hunke, Sigrid, *Shams al-‘Arab Tasṭā’ ‘ala al-Gharb*, trans. Fārūq Bayḍūn (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1993), 334-35.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

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- Appointing staff to monitor health procedures in markets.
  - Enacting legislation to protect the environment from pathogenic pollution.
- b. Scholars were interested in medicine as they authored books on it, established theories, and translated books that dealt with medicine from other civilizations. Among the most prominent Muslim scholars of medicine and pharmacy are:
- a. Sulaymān b. Ḥasan, known as Ibn Juljūl (d. after 377 AH), physician of Cordoba, author of *Categories of Physicians and Sages and Interpretation of the Names of Simple Medicines from the Book of Dioscorides*.<sup>1</sup>
  - b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī (d. 440 AH), author of *The Book of Pharmacy in Medicine*, in which he thoroughly investigated the nature of medicines, their names, the differing opinions of earlier scholars, and the views of various physicians and others on these subjects. He arranged it alphabetically.<sup>2</sup>
  - c. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Muḥammad b. Marwān b. Zuhr al-Ishbīlī (d. 557 AH), author of *The Book of Moderation in the Reform of Souls and Bodies*.<sup>3</sup>
  - d. al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Sīnā, known as al-Shaykh al-Rā’īs (d. 428 AH), who excelled in medicine “to the point that the most eminent physicians began to study medicine with him.”<sup>4</sup> He has several classifications in medicine, the most important of which is *The Canon*, an important reference in historical

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<sup>1</sup> al-Qifṭī, *Ikhbār al-‘Ulamā’*, 190; al-Khazrajī, Aḥmad b. al-Qāsim, ‘*Uyūn al-Anbā’ fī Ṭabaqāt al-Aṭibbā’* (Beirut: Dār Maktaba al-Ḥayā, ND), 493.

<sup>2</sup> al-Khazrajī, ‘*Uyūn al-Anbā’*, 459.

<sup>3</sup> al-Khazrajī, ‘*Uyūn al-Anbā’*, 517; Dashdash, ‘Iṣma ‘Abd al-Laṭīf, *al-Andalus Nihāya al-Murābiṭīn wa Mustahal al-Muwaḥiddīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1988), 441.

<sup>4</sup> al-Khazrajī, ‘*Uyūn al-Anbā’*, 438.

medicine that remained relied upon in the science and practice of medicine for six centuries, was translated into many languages, and was studied in European schools for a time.<sup>1</sup>

- e. 'Alī b. Abī al-Ḥazm Ibn al-Nafīs (d. 687 AH), who was «the most knowledgeable person of his time in medicine.»<sup>2</sup> Among his books are: *al-Shāmil fī'l-Ṭibb*, *Bughya al-Ṭālibīn wa Ḥujja al-Mutaṭabbibīn*, and *al-Mūjaz*, which is an abridgment of Ibn Sīnā's Canon.
- f. Muḥammad b. Zakariya al-Rāzī (d. 313 AH), one of the leading figures in the field of medicine. His most important works are: *al-Ḥāwī fī'l-Ṭibb*, which was translated into Latin, and *al-Fuṣūl fī'l-Ṭibb*.<sup>3</sup>

3. **Mathematics:** This science deals with the study of numbers, quantities, shapes, structures, the changes that occur to them, and the logical relationships between them. It includes: algebra, geometry, and statistics.

All civilizations, including Islamic civilization, were interested in the mathematical sciences, as they are the backbone of human civilization, one of the most important indicators of its development, and the most prominent evidence of a civilization's distinction and progress, because these sciences are involved in most other fields, such as astronomy, physics, architecture, engineering, chemistry, and economics. Among the most important mathematicians produced by Islamic civilization were:

- a. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Mūsa al-Khwārizmī (d. 232 AH), the founder of algebra, and the author of *The Compendium on Calculation and Balancing*, which had a great impact on the

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<sup>1</sup> al-Zarkalī, Khayr al-Dīn, *al-A'lām* (Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm lil-Malāyīn, 2002), 2:242.

<sup>2</sup> al-Zarkalī, *al-A'lām*, 2:271.

<sup>3</sup> al-Zarkalī, *al-A'lām*, 6:129-30.

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development of mathematics.<sup>1</sup>

- b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan Ibn al-Haytham (d. 430 AH). al-Ṣafadī said: “No one of his time was his equal in mathematical knowledge.”<sup>2</sup> Among his most prominent books in mathematics is *The Area of a Parabolic Solid* and was translated into German.<sup>3</sup>
- c. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Ibn al-Bannā’ (d. 710 AH), among his books are: *The Articles on arithmetic*, and *Summary of the Operations of Arithmetic*.<sup>4</sup>

4. **Physics:** The science of nature that investigates the properties of materials, their nature, structure, components, and interactions. It studies the kinetic phenomena of bodies and the forces acting upon them. It also studies the behaviour of things under different influences, with the aim of understanding and interpreting the natural phenomena of the universe through experimentation, observation, measurement, and analysis, and then formulating comprehensive principles for them.<sup>5</sup>

Physics has and continues to play a fundamental role in the establishment of civilizations. Understanding nature fosters innovation and invention, leading to development and progress. Therefore, we find that Muslim scholars devoted their attention and efforts to physics, guided by numerous Qur’ānic verses that encourage observation, contemplation, and analysis, such as: “Say, ‘Look at what is in the heavens and on the earth.’” But what use are

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<sup>1</sup> Hill, Donald, *al-‘Ulūm wal-Handasa fi’l-Ḥaḍāra al-Islāmiyya*, trans. Aḥmad Ṣāliḥ al-Faqīh (Cairo: Dār al-Ma’ārif, 1993), 37.

<sup>2</sup> al-Ṣafadī, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl, *al-Wāfi bil-Wafayāt* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 2000), 11:321.

<sup>3</sup> al-Qifṭī, *Ikhbār al-‘Ulamā’*, 129.

<sup>4</sup> al-Zarkalī, *al-A’lām*, 1:221-22.

<sup>5</sup> ‘Umar, *Mu’jam al-Lughā al-‘Arabiyya al-Mu’āṣira*, 3:1759.

signs and warnings to people who will not believe?”<sup>1</sup> Among those who excelled in this science were:

- a. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Khazīnī (d. 550 AH), author of *Mīzān al-Ḥikma*, which is a scientific encyclopaedia in mechanics (the movement or rest of bodies under the influence of certain forces).
  - b. Hiba Allāh b. Malika al-Baghdādī (d. 560 AH), author of *al-Muṭabar fī’l-Ḥikma*, in which he discussed several physical laws, including: the third law of motion, which states that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.
  - c. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan Ibn al-Haytham (d. 430 AH), “who established the science of physics on its correct scientific foundations, the author of the *Optics*, which contains many discoveries in physics.”
5. **Chemistry:** Also known as the “elixir,” it is the science that studies matter, its properties, structure, composition, behaviour, the changes it undergoes, and the reactions it goes through to produce new substances. al-Khwārizmī stated that “the word ‘chemistry’ is of Arabic origin, derived from the root ‘k-m-y-m,’ meaning ‘to conceal or hide.’” This may explain why al-Rāzī titled his two books on chemistry *The Secrets and The Secret of Secrets*. Some researchers have suggested that it is derived from “quantity” or “amount,” as Muslim scholars used to say, “If we add a quantity of one substance to two or three quantities of another, such and such will result.” Chemistry has had a profound impact on Islamic and human civilization, as it has a role in many sciences, such as medicine, pharmacy, and agriculture. It is also a cornerstone in the development of several industries and professions. Muslim scholars were so interested in chemistry that some researchers have said it was Muslims who originated chemistry as a distinct science. That is because they introduced to it careful observation, scientific

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 10:101.

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experimentation, and attention to monitoring its results, after it had been based on vague hypotheses.<sup>1</sup>

Muslim interest in chemistry stemmed from the Qur'ān's call to know the origin of creation. God Almighty said: "Say, 'Travel throughout the earth and see how He brings life into being.'"<sup>2</sup> Another of their starting points was the Qur'ān's mention of many chemical elements, such as the atom: "Not even the weight of an atom in the earth or sky escapes your Lord, nor anything lesser or greater: it is all written in a clear record."<sup>3</sup> Among the most prominent chemists in Islamic civilization:

- a. Khālid b. Yazīd (d. 90 AH), who was the first to write about chemistry. His most important books are: *The Wonderful Secret in Unraveling the Impenetrable Symbol*, *The Paradise of Wisdom in the Science of Chemistry*, and *The Two Treatises of Marianus the Monk*.<sup>4</sup>
- b. Jābir b. Ḥayyān (d. 200 AH), nicknamed the father of chemistry, who laid the foundations of the experimental method in the science of chemistry, until chemistry became known in Europe as Jābir's Craft.<sup>5</sup>
- c. Muḥammad b. Zakariya al-Rāzī (d. 313 AH), one of his most important books is: *The Secret of Secrets*, which included knowledge of medicines, instruments, and experiments.

Thus, Muslim scholars made contributions to various sciences, and more details of these contributions will come in the following section.

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<sup>1</sup> Durant, *Qiṣṣa al-Ḥaḍāra*, 13:187.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 29:20.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān, 10:61.

<sup>4</sup> Hājī Khalīfa, Muṣṭafa 'Abd Allāh, *Kashf al-Zunūn 'an Asāmī al-Kutub wa'l-Funūn* (London: Markaz Dirāsāt al-Makhtūṭāt al-Islāmiyya, 2021), 2:1531; Ibn Khalikān, *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, 2:224.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *al-'Ibar*, 1:666.

## Muslim Contributions to the Development of Human Civilization

Muslims made great efforts and numerous contributions to the development of human civilization across various sciences and knowledge, most notably medicine, mathematics, physics, geography, astronomy, and others. Gustave Le Bon wrote: “Medicine, astronomy, mathematics, and chemistry are considered the most important sciences that the Arabs cared about, and the Arabs completed their greatest discoveries in these sciences. The Arabs’ medical writings were translated throughout Europe, and a large part of them was not destroyed as happened to their other books.”<sup>1</sup>

**First: Medicine:** Muslim scholars played a major role in advancing medicine, making numerous contributions across its specialties. This had a profound impact on human civilization. Among the most important of these contributions were:

1. Establishment of Hospitals: These were known as Bīmāristans. al-Walīd b.‘Abd al-Malik is considered the first to establish a public hospital in 88 AH to treat leprosy.<sup>2</sup> Hospitals also varied in Islamic civilization, including permanent hospitals and mobile ones, such as those during the reign of Sulṭān Maḥmūd the Seljuk (d. 525 AH), which were equipped with medical instruments and medicines and were attended by several doctors.<sup>3</sup> Hospitals were not just places for treatment; they were also medical colleges and contained large libraries. Among the most important hospitals in Islamic civilization were:

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<sup>1</sup> Le Bon, Gustaf, *Ḥaḍāra al-‘Arab*, trans. ‘Adil Zu‘aytar (Cairo: Mu‘assassa Hindāwī, 2012), 503.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Alī, Muḥammad Kurd, *Khiṭaṭ al-Shām* (Damascus: Maktaba al-Nūrī, 1983), 6:156.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn al-Qifti, *Tarikh al-Hukama’* (Leipzig: NA, 1902), 405.

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- al-‘Aḍudī Hospital in Baghdad: Established by ‘Aḍud al-Dawla b. Buwayh in 371 AH (981 CE). It had 24 physicians on duty around the clock and included a scientific library, a pharmacy, and kitchens.
  - al-Nūrī Hospital in Damascus: Established by Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Shahīd in 549 AH (1157 CE) and remained operational for approximately 800 years.
  - al-Manṣūrī Hospital in Cairo: Established by Sayf al-Dīn Qalāwūn in 683 AH (1284 CE). It could treat more than four thousand patients daily.
  - Marrakesh Hospital in Morocco: Established by Ya‘qūb al-Manṣūr (d. 595 AH/1195 CE). It was of a very high standard in terms of medical facilities, modern medicines, and skilled physicians.<sup>1</sup>

2. Performing surgical operations: Muslims excelled in it to a great extent and called it “work of the hands.”<sup>2</sup> They were able to use anaesthesia by inhalation, using an aesthetic sponge.<sup>3</sup> They also used resuscitation by pushing quantities of air through the lungs with alternating pressure.<sup>4</sup> They also used skin tendons to suture wounds, using “two needles and one thread attached to them.”<sup>5</sup> This enabled them to perform several surgical operations, the most important of which were:

- Tracheotomy, performed by Dr. al-Zahrāwī<sup>6</sup>
- Removal of glaucoma and cataracts from the eye

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<sup>1</sup> Various Authors, *Mūjaz Dā‘ira al-Ma‘ārif al-Islāmiyya*, 7:2071.

<sup>2</sup> Ḥussayn, Muḥammad Kāmil, *Tārīkh al-Ṭibb wa’l-Ṣaydala ‘ind al-‘Arab* (NA: al-Munazzama al-‘Arabiyya lil-Tarbiyya wa’l-Thaqāfa wa’l-‘Ulūm, ND), 97.

<sup>3</sup> Various Authors, *al-Mawsū‘ al-‘Arabiyya al-‘Ālamiyya* (Riyadh: Mu‘assassa A‘māl al-Mawsū‘a lil-Nashr wa’l-Tawzī‘, 1999), 415.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣayba‘a, Aḥmad b. al-Qāsim, *‘Uyūn al-Anbā’ fi Ṭabaqāt al-Aṭṭibā’*, 3:167-8.

<sup>5</sup> Hunke, *Shams al-‘Arab*, 278.

<sup>6</sup> al-Difā‘, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulaymān, *Ruwād ‘Ilm al-Ṭibb fi’l-Ḥaḍāra al-Islāmiyya* (NA: 2000), 105; Qāsim, Maḥmūd al-Ḥājī, *al-Ṭibb ‘ind al-‘Arab wa’l-Muslimīn Tārīkh wa Musāhamāt* (Jeddah: al-Dār al-Sa‘ūdiyya lil-Nashr wa’l-Tawzī‘, 1987), 152.

- Cosmetic surgeries, such as correction of lip, nose, and ear deformities<sup>1</sup>

Among the most famous Muslim surgeons was Ibn Sīnā. History books mention that he was a skilled surgeon and performed many surgical operations.<sup>2</sup>

3. Innovation of Medical Instruments: Muslim scholars invented numerous surgical instruments that they used in their operations. Among the most prominent of these scholars was Abū al-Qāsim al-Zahrāwī, as documented in his book, *The Arrangement of Medical Knowledge for Those Unable to Compile It*. Some of the most important of these instruments include:

- Scalpels: Sharp instruments used in surgical procedures, and they come in many types and shapes depending on their use
- Lever: Used to extract the remaining fragments of broken tooth roots
- Nasal drip: An instrument for dripping ointment into the nose, usually made of silver or copper<sup>3</sup>

4. Medical Discoveries: Muslim physicians adopted the experimental method in medicine, which led them to many discoveries. Ibn Sīnā said, “I examined patients, and an indescribable number of treatments derived from experience were opened to me.”<sup>4</sup> Among the most important medical discoveries of Muslim physicians are:

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<sup>1</sup> al-Rāzī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad, *al-Ḥāwī fī'l-Ṭibb* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 2002), 3:225.

<sup>2</sup> Qāsim, *al-Ṭibb*, 148.

<sup>3</sup> Qāsim, *al-Ṭibb*, 148-51.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Abī Usayba'ā, *Ṭabaqāt al-Aṭṭibā'*, 3:73.

- Smallpox, and a description of the symptoms that distinguish it from measles<sup>1</sup>
- Pulmonary circulation, as described by Ibn al-Nafīs in his book *Commentary on the Anatomy of the Canon*<sup>2</sup>

5. The development of medicine based on anatomy: al-Rāzī was the first to make the foundation of the science of medicine based on anatomy. Muslim physicians required the surgeon to be familiar with anatomy, the benefits of organs and their locations. Ibn Ṭufayl (d. 581 AH) excelled in dissecting dead and living bodies.<sup>3</sup>

6. Authoring medical books: Among the most important were

- *Firdaws al-Ḥikma* by 'Alī b. Sahl al-Ṭabarī (d. 247 AH), a massive book on physiology, health, medicine, and other related topics<sup>4</sup>
- *al-Qānūn fī'l-Ṭibb* by Ibn Sīnā (d. 427 AH), a complete medical encyclopaedia<sup>5</sup>
- *al-Taṣrīf li man Ajāza 'an al-Ta'līf* by Abū al-Qāsim al-Zahrāwī (d. after 400 AH), a complete encyclopaedia of medicine<sup>6</sup>
- *al-Tadhkira* by 'Alī b. 'Īsā al-Kaḥḥāl (d. after 500 AH), the greatest ophthalmologist of his time<sup>7</sup>
- *al-Mūjaz* by Ibn al-Nafīs (d. 687 AH), an abridgment of Ibn Sīnā's *al-Qānūn*

<sup>1</sup> Bāshā, Aḥmad Fu'ād, *al-Turāth al-'Ilmī lil-Ḥaḍāra al-Islāmiyya wa Makānatahu fī Tārīkh al-'Ilm wa'l-Ḥaḍāra* (NA: 1983), 181.

<sup>2</sup> Bāshā, *al-Turāth al-'Ilmī*, 179.

<sup>3</sup> Maḥzar, Jalāl, *Ḥaḍāra al-Islām wa Atharuha fī'l-Taraqqī al-Ālamī* (Cairo: Maktaba al-Khānjī, 1974), 344.

<sup>4</sup> Durant, *Qiṣṣa al-Ḥaḍāra*, 13:195.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn al-Nafīs, 'Alī b. Abī al-Ḥazm, *al-Shāmil fī'l-Ṣinā'a al-Ṭibbiyya* (Abu Dhabi: al-Majma' al-Thaqāfī, 2002), 1:6.

<sup>6</sup> Le Bon, *Ḥaḍāra al-'Arab*, 561.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣayba'a, *Ṭabaqāt al-Aṭṭibā'*, 333.

## Second: Physics

Scholars of Islamic civilization inherited physics from the Greeks, who had pioneered many of its theories. They drew on their knowledge, benefited from their books, then enriched and developed it, disseminating and publishing it in a display of fruitful integration and cultural interdependence.

Among the most important fields in which Muslim physicists worked were optics and mechanics, as mentioned earlier, and some of their most prominent physical contributions include:

1. Invention of the time interval scale: Ibn Yūnus al-Ṣadafī al-Miṣri (d. 399 AH) invented the pendulum which he used to measure time intervals while observing the stars in his physical experiments.<sup>1</sup>

2. Discovery of the Law of Gravity: There were scientific indications of the discovery of the law of gravity among Muslim scholars, including the statement of Muḥammad b. Aḥmad ‘Abd Allāh al-Idrīsī (d. 560 AH): “The earth attracts the weight in its bodies, like a magnet attracts iron.”<sup>2</sup>

3. Development of physical theories: ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Khāzinī (d. 550 AH) excelled in the field of physics, especially in the subjects of motion (dynamics), the science of static fluids (hydrostatics), and the science of specific gravity.

4. Writing books: Muslim physicists authored several books in various branches of physics, the most important of which were:

- *The Book of Optics* by Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan Ibn al-Haytham (d. 430 AH), a scientific encyclopaedia and key reference work in the history of optics. In it, he discusses the general process of vision, the details of what the eye perceives, how vision perceives objects through reflection from heavy bodies, the nature of images (the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣayba’a, *Ṭabaqāt al-Aṭṭibā’*, 112.

<sup>2</sup> al-Idrīsī, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh, *Nuzha al-Mushtāq fī Ikhtirāq al-Āfāq* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2020), 11.

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images seen in heavy bodies), errors in vision through reflection, and how vision perceives objects through refraction.<sup>1</sup>

- *The Balance of Wisdom* by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Khāzinī (d. 550 AH), a comprehensive work on balances, methods of weighing, and related topics. It includes his studies on the equilibrium forces of stationary fluids and addresses theories of friction and fluid forces. The book also contains descriptions of various instruments, such as those used for fluid equilibrium, specialized balances, standard balances, and others. Furthermore, it provides definitions of some physical terms, such as specific gravity and weight.
- *The Considered Text on Wisdom* by Hiba Allāh b. Malika (d. 560 AH), is one of his most famous books. In it, he talked about plants and animals, divine wisdom, and physics. He addressed the definition of physics (the science of nature), the movement of bodies, and other physical topics.

### **Third: Mathematics**

Muslim scholars excelled in mathematical sciences, making significant contributions. They introduced inventions, developed theories, and authored books. Among their most prominent contributions are:

1. The development of numbers: Arabs used to rely on letters in calculation, assigning a number to each letter, until Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Fazārī (d. 180 AH) opened the way for al-Khwārizmī to learn Indian numerals. He developed them, simplified them, and introduced many modifications to them, so they replaced calculation by letters. He based them on the theory of acute or right angles. The number (1) has one angle, and (2) has two angles. They are called “*al-ghubāriyya*” because they were written on a sand tablet when performing calculations.

2. The invention of zero: The Indians used an empty space as an indicator of the cell that had no number, and it was difficult to find the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn al-Haytham, al-Ḥasan, *Kitāb al-Manāẓir* (Kuwait: al-Majlis al-Waṭanī lil-Thaqāfa wa'l-Funūn wa'l-Ādāb, 1983), 749-80.

empty cells, which made them need to use squares to determine them. al-Khwārizmī invented drawing zero (0) in the empty cell, which had a great effect on facilitating arithmetic operations, and mathematicians consider zero to be the greatest invention that humanity has reached.<sup>1</sup>

3. The system of tens: Invented by al-Khwārizmī, in which a number has two values, a value, and a value in relation to the zero place in which it is located. So, the number (9) if it is in the second place is (90), and if it is in the third place it is (900), and so on, which greatly advanced the science of mathematics and arithmetic operations.

4. The development of numerical fractions: This was done by Aḥmad Ibn āl-Bannā' al-Marrākushī (d. 731 AH), who refined and developed them to what they are written today, by placing a separating line between them, as follows: the quarter ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ), the third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ), the half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ), three-quarters ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ). Then the mathematician Ghiyāth al-Dīn Jamshīd al-Kāshī (d. 832 AH) developed them greatly in his *Miftāḥ al-Ḥisāb*.<sup>2</sup>

5. Mental Calculation: It is called (Hand Calculation) or (Contract Calculation), which is known today as (Mental Calculation). It does not require paper and pen. It was used by merchants, travellers, and others. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Qarāfī (d. 815 AH) wrote a book about this subject: *al-Ma'ūna fī'l-Ḥisāb al-Hawā'ī*.<sup>3</sup>

6. Algebra: "A process by which the unknown number is extracted from the known number if there is a relationship between them that requires it."<sup>4</sup> It was invented and named by al-Khwārizmī, and he authored the book *Algebra and Equations on it*, and this science is still called by the name that al-Khwārizmī chose for it, and his motivation for that was calculating Islamic inheritance shares, as he created algebraic methods to facilitate this science.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Various Authors, *Mūjaz Dā'ira al-Ma'ārif al-Islāmiyya*, 21:6529.

<sup>2</sup> Hājī Khalīfa, *Kashf al-Zunūn*, 6:636.

<sup>3</sup> al-Sakhāwī, Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān, *al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi' li Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi'* (Beirut: Maktaba al-Ḥayā, ND), 2:157.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn*, 1:636.

<sup>5</sup> al-Nadīm, Muḥammad b. Ishāq, *al-Fihrist*, 340.

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## Fourth: Astronomy

A group of Muslim scholars excelled in astronomy, benefiting from the efforts of the ancient Egyptians, who laid some of the foundations of this science by dividing the horizon circle into 36 sections, each 10 degrees. They also benefited from ancient Greek civilization, whose people were guided to know a group of constellations, and divided them into twelve equal distances. They had a role in determining the sizes and dimensions of stars, and other things that Greek civilization achieved.

Muslims built upon the achievements of previous civilizations, translating, explaining, innovating, and inventing, thus contributing to human civilization. Among the most prominent contributions of Muslims to astronomy are:

1. Translating books from Greek, Syrian, and Indian sources: This preserved important cultural heritage. Among the most important books translated by Muslim scholars were: *The Key to the Stars* by Hermes the Wise, from Greek into Arabic, and *The Almagest* by Ptolemy, also from Greek into Arabic.<sup>1</sup>

2. Construction of astronomical observatories: Among the most important of these are: the great observatory built by Caliph al-Ma'mūn in the al-Shamāsiyya neighbourhood of Baghdad,<sup>2</sup> and the observatory he built on the summit of Mount Qaysūn in Damascus.<sup>3</sup> Also, the observatory built by Ibn al-Shāṭir (d. 777 AH) in Damascus.<sup>4</sup>

3. Development of the Astrolabe: A device that determines the angles of elevation of celestial bodies above the horizon in any location. Its origin is a Greek word meaning "balance of the sun." It is said that the first to make it was Ptolemy, the author of the *Almagest*,<sup>5</sup> but the first to write a book describing its making and method of use was Muḥammad

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<sup>1</sup> al-'Aqīqī, Najīb, *al-Mustashriqūn* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1964), 1:78.

<sup>2</sup> al-Qifṭī, *Ikhbār al-'Ulamā'*, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Various Authors, *Mūjaz Dā'ira al-Ma'ārif al-Islāmiyya*, 30:9627.

<sup>4</sup> al-Qifṭī, *Ikhbār al-'Ulamā'*, 213.

<sup>5</sup> Various Authors, *Mūjaz Dā'ira al-Ma'ārif al-Islāmiyya*, 24:7404.

b. Ibrāhīm al-Fazārī (d. 180 AH). Arab and Muslim scholars initially used the astrolabe to determine prayer times, the direction of the Qibla, the beginning of Ramadan, and to know the eclipse prayers, and in measuring and observing different dimensions. Ibrāhīm Yaḥya al-Naqqāsh al-Andalusī, known as al-Zarqalī (d. 480 AH), made an astrolabe distinguished in terms of technological accuracy, and it continued to be used by Arab and Muslim scholars in their observations throughout the ages.<sup>1</sup>

4. Astronomical Tables (*Zīj*): For calculating celestial bodies, according to mathematical rules and numerical laws of extreme accuracy. They are among the most important requirements for astronomical observation, which determine the positions of the planets, the rules for knowing the months and past days, and understanding the positions of the planets in terms of altitude, depression, inclinations, and movements. Among the most famous are: (*Zīj Ibn Yūnus*), by ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Yūnus (d. 397 AH).<sup>2</sup>

Some of the most important works written on astronomy were:

- *The Comprehensive Book on Astronomy and Celestial Motions*, by Aḥmad b. Kathīr al-Farghānī (d. 247 AH), which remained a reference in astronomy, and was relied upon by Europe and West Asia for seven hundred years<sup>3</sup>
- *al-Zīj al-Maḥmūdī*, by al-Badī‘ al-Aṣṭurlābī (d. 534 AH), who was skilled in the manufacture of astronomical instruments<sup>4</sup>
- *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*, by Ibn al-Shāṭir (d. 777 AH), who was renowned for his astronomical instrument making
- *A Gift for the Intelligent in the Science of the Astrolabe*, by Shams al-Dīn al-Rudānī (d. 1094 AH), a later astronomer<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bāmakhrama, al-Ṭayyib b. ‘Abd Allāh, *Qalāda al-Naḥr fī Wafayāt A’yān al-Dahr* (Jeddah: Dār al-Minhāj, 2008), 4:112.

<sup>2</sup> al-Idrīsī, *Nuzaha al-Mushtāq*, 1:7; al-Qanūjī, Şiddīq b. Ḥasan, *Abjad al-‘Ulūm al-Waḥī al-Marqūm fī Bayān Aḥwāl al-‘Ulūm*, 2:93-4.

<sup>3</sup> al-Qanūjī, *Abjad al-‘Ulūm*, 2:51.

<sup>4</sup> Durant, *Qiṣṣa al-Ḥadāra*, 13:182.

<sup>5</sup> al-Abābānī, Ismā‘il Bāshā, *Hidaya al-‘Arīfīn Asmā’ al-Mu‘allifīn wa Āthār al-Muṣannifīn* (Istanbul: Wakāla al-Ma‘ārif al-Jaliyya, 1951), 714.

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## Fifth: Geography:

Muslim scholars played a pioneering role and made advanced contributions to the science of geography. They engaged with Greek scholars in the field of geography, especially Ptolemy, and quickly developed and excelled in this science. Among their most important contributions to geography are:<sup>1</sup>

1. The claim that the Earth is spherical and rotates on its axis: This was at a very early time. Ibn Khurdādhba (d. 272 AH) said in his book *The Routes and Kingdoms*: “The Earth is round like the roundness of a ball, and the water is attached to it and is naturally still on it and does not leave it, and the Earth and the water are stable in the interior of the celestial sphere like the yolk in the interior of an egg.”<sup>2</sup>

2. Geographical Mapping: al-Sharīf al-Idrīsī (d. 560 AH) created the first world map, which was said to have “proved that the Arabs’ knowledge of African geography was greater than had been thought for a long time, and it included places that Europeans only discovered in the modern era.”<sup>3</sup> Gustaf Le Bon said, “The most famous Arab geographer is al-Idrīsī, and it was from his books, which were translated into Latin, that Europe learned geography in the Middle Ages.”<sup>4</sup> These maps had a profound impact on the advancement of global navigation. Durant said, “These maps were the greatest achievement of cartography in the Middle Ages. No maps more complete, accurate, extensive, or detailed had been drawn before them. al-Idrīsī, like most Muslim scholars, was certain of the Earth’s sphericity, and he considered this an indisputable fact.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Le Bon, *Ḥaḍāra al-‘Arab*, 468.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Khurdādhba, ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Aḥmad, *al-Masālik wa’l-Mamālik* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1989), 4.

<sup>3</sup> Le Bon, *Ḥaḍāra al-‘Arab*, 567.

<sup>4</sup> Le Bon, *Ḥaḍāra al-‘Arab*, 470.

<sup>5</sup> Durant, *Qiṣṣa al-Ḥaḍāra*, 13:358.

3. Authoring books on geography: Among the most prominent were:

- a. *The Dictionary of Countries* by Yāqūt al-Ḥimawī (d. 626 AH), a huge geographical encyclopaedia that included all the geographical information known in the Middle Ages. Gustaf Le Bon said: “Yāqūt travelled a lot, he travelled first for trade, then he travelled to study the land and its people, because he was greatly impressed by its countries, its inhabitants of different races, their clothing, and their ways of life.”<sup>1</sup>
- b. *A Gift to Those Who Contemplate the Wonders of Cities and the Marvels of Travels* by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (d. 779 AH), in which he included details of his travels, and mentioned descriptions of the natural environment, geographical features, and other things, which benefited and enriched the science of geography.

Thus we find that scholars in Islamic civilization were open to all civilizations, and looked at what their scholars had written and left behind; they drew from their sciences, translated their books, developed their theories, enriched their knowledge, and presented innovations and inventions that had a great impact on the development, progress, and prosperity of civilization.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

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# Local Laws,

## INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS, AND CUSTOMS

Legislation and customs are of paramount importance in regulating and stabilizing social life. Through them, people know their rights, understand their duties towards their families, their community, and their homeland, and learn how to deal with others. Laws achieve interests, guarantee rights, and preserve security and stability, to build cohesive families, a united society, and a prosperous homeland. Therefore, it is necessary to adhere to the law and abide by it, and this is part of obeying the ruler, which God Almighty commanded: “You who believe, obey God and the Messenger, and those in authority among you.”<sup>1</sup> On the authority of Abu Umāma, may God be pleased with him, he said: The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “Obey those in authority among you, and you will enter the Paradise of your Lord.”<sup>2</sup> Scholars have stipulated that the ruler has the right to choose legislation and laws what in the best interests of the people, and one of their famous rules in this regard is: “The actions of the Imam over the subjects are dependent on the public interest,”<sup>3</sup> which means: that the actions of the ruler and the institutions under his rule, and the laws and legislation issued by them, are only to achieve the public interest of society.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 4:59.

<sup>2</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ḥadīth no. 616, 1:602.

<sup>3</sup> al-Zarkashī, Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad, *al-Manthūr fī’l-Qawā’id al-Fiqhiyya* (Kuwait: Wizāra al-Awqāf, 1985), 1:309.

## First: Local laws

The word “law (*qānūn* - قانون) in Arabic means “the measure of everything.”<sup>1</sup> Its origin is either a Syriac word meaning ruler<sup>2</sup> or the Greek (canon) meaning: the straight stick, then it moved to Persian to mean: the origin of everything and its measure. Its use became common to mean the origin of the thing that it follows, or the method that it follows, or the system on which the parts of the thing are organized.<sup>3</sup>

The meaning of laws being “local” is that they originate from within the state and its official institutions, and targets individuals belonging to it.

Therefore, local laws are: “a set of rules that govern the behaviour of individuals in society, to which every individual must submit willingly or unwillingly, and whenever a person refuses to submit to and obey them, the state compels them to do so.”<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly, the local laws of the United Arab Emirates can be defined as: a set of mandatory general rules issued by the state to regulate the behaviour of persons subject to it, including its citizens, residents, and visitors, and to govern their relationships with each other and their relationships with state agencies and institutions, with the aim of achieving their happiness and well-being.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Sayyiduh, ‘Alī b. Ismā‘īl, *al-Muḥkam wa’l-Muḥīṭ al-A‘zam* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2000), 6:136; al-Fayrūzābādī, *al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*, 1226; al-Zubaydī, Muḥammad Murtaḍa, *Tāj al-‘Urūs min Jawāhir al-Qāmūs* (Abu Dhabi: al-Majlis al-Waṭanī lil-Thaqāfa wa’l-Funūn wa’l-Ādāb, 1965-2001), 36:24.

<sup>2</sup> al-Kafawī, Ayyūb b. Mūsā, *al-Kulliyāt Mu‘jam fi’l-Muṣṭalahāt wa’l-Furūq al-Lughawiyya* (NA), 734.

<sup>3</sup> al-Sudayrī, Tawfiq b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, *al-Islām wa’l-Dustūr* (Riyadh: Wikāla al-Maṭbū‘āt wa’l-Baḥṭh, 2004), 1:15.

<sup>4</sup> Faraj, Tawfiq Ḥasan, *al-Madkhal lil-‘Ulūm al-Qānūniyya* (NA: Mu‘assassa al-Thaqāfa al-Jām’iyya, 1981), 10; Tanāghū, Samīr, *al-Nazariyya al-Āmma lil-Qānūn* (Alexandria: Mansha’a al-Ma‘ārif, 1974), 7.

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The local laws of the United Arab Emirates consist of 221 federal laws, 68 executive regulations, and 214 regulatory decisions.<sup>1</sup>

Divisions of Laws in the United Arab Emirates: The local laws of the United Arab Emirates are organized within an integrated system; consisting of the Constitution, federal laws, decrees issuing federal laws, federal decrees, decisions of the President, Prime Minister, Cabinet, and circulars issued by ministries and federal entities, as follows:

- **The Constitution:** A set of rules that regulates the entity and form of the state, and clarifies the legislative, executive and international powers between the Union and the member Emirates. It also clarifies the public authorities and the nature of the relationship between them, in addition to stating the rights, freedoms and public duties of the members of society, and aims to advance the country and its people to the status that qualifies them to occupy the appropriate place among the international community.
- **Federal Laws:** The main instrument for implementing the provisions of the constitution. They are concerned with regulating matters of strategic importance in the state, regulating the relationship of the state with its institutions, the relationship of the state and its institutions with individuals, and the relationship of individuals with each other.
- **Decrees:** These include:
  - **Decrees with the force of law:** Federal laws that cannot be delayed, and which are issued when the meetings of the Supreme Council of the Union are not held. These laws are issued by the President and the Council of Ministers.
  - **Federal Decrees:** Issued by the President in accordance with the powers vested in him by virtue of the Constitution or the law, after the approval of the Council of Ministers, and the ratification of the President or the Supreme Council of the Union, each according to its jurisdiction.

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<sup>1</sup> Official website of UAE Legislation: <https://uaelegislation.gov.ae>.

- Decisions: These include:
  - Decisions of the Head of State and the Prime Minister: Legislations in the form of decisions issued by the Head of State or the Prime Minister, in accordance with the powers vested in them by virtue of the Constitution or the law, each according to his jurisdiction.
  - Cabinet Decisions: Issued by the Cabinet in accordance with the powers vested in it by virtue of the Constitution or the law. The Cabinet issues them to ensure the implementation of federal laws, such as executive regulations and regulatory decisions implementing laws and their executive regulations. These decisions fall outside the scope of the jurisdiction of the concerned minister or the head of the federal government entity. They also include decisions to regulate the work of the government and ensure that ministries and federal government entities perform their duties within their jurisdictions, through the issuance of regulatory and executive regulations.
  - Decisions and circulars issued by ministries and federal authorities: Executive decisions for laws and regulations, issued by the minister, the undersecretary of the ministry, or the director general of the federal authority, each according to his jurisdiction, in accordance with what is stipulated in the applicable legislation, with the aim of implementing laws and regulations, and organizing the work of the ministry or the relevant federal authority.

## Areas of UAE Law

Law in the United Arab Emirates is diverse, encompassing all aspects of social life, and the details are as follows:

1. Education, comprising 10 pieces of legislation
2. Health, comprising 39 pieces of legislation
3. Residency and employment, comprising 29 pieces of legislation
4. The economy and business practices, comprising 59 pieces of legislation

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5. Industry and technical specifications, comprising 24 pieces of legislation
  6. The financial and banking sector, comprising 34 pieces of legislation
  7. Taxation, comprising 28 pieces of legislation
  8. Justice and the judiciary, comprising 38 pieces of legislation
  9. Security and safety, comprising 26 pieces of legislation
  10. Communication, technology, and space, comprising 9 pieces of legislation
  11. Energy, transportation, and the environment, comprising 16 pieces of legislation
  12. The family and society, comprising 33 pieces of legislation
  13. The environment and natural resources, comprising 39 pieces of legislation
  14. Culture and media, comprising 7 pieces of legislation
  15. Sports, comprising 8 pieces of legislation
  16. Religious affairs, comprising 7 pieces of legislation
  17. The regulation of government work, comprising 21 pieces of legislation

**Accessing UAE laws:** Those who wish to view the local laws of the United Arab Emirates can refer to the UAE Legislation platform ([www.uaelegislation.gov.ae](http://www.uaelegislation.gov.ae)), an official platform developed and supervised by the General Secretariat of the Cabinet, in coordination with all relevant authorities. It aims to be a unified, integrated, comprehensive, and up-to-date system that includes all legislation in force in the country, and makes accessing it easier for all segments of society from inside and outside the country.

The platform contains a database that includes the most important federal legislation issued in the country, its executive regulations, and other regulatory decisions; from the establishment of the Union in 1971 until now, according to the latest amendments, in addition to a list of amendments, regulations and tables attached to it.

The platform allows users to participate in the development of legislation through a dedicated online campaign announced upon entering the

platform. The platform also publishes the latest news related to federal legislation in the country.<sup>1</sup>

## **Federal Law Against Discrimination, Hatred and Extremism**

Among the most important laws enacted by the United Arab Emirates, which have established its pioneering vision and proven its distinction and precedence in consolidating the values of tolerance, dialogue, and coexistence among human beings, is Federal Decree-Law No. 34 of 2023 on combating discrimination, hatred and extremism, which was issued by His Highness Shaykh Muhammad b. Zayed Al Nahyan – may God protect him – and published in the Official Gazette of the United Arab Emirates on September 29, 2023, and implemented one month later.<sup>2</sup>

It includes twenty-six articles distributed across four chapters:

**Chapter One:** General Provisions, **Chapter Two:** Crimes and Punishments, **Chapter Three:** Special Provisions, and **Chapter Four:** Final Provisions.

**Chapter One**, concerning general provisions, contains three articles:

- Article 1: Definitions:
  - Contempt of religion: Any act that is offensive to God, religions, prophets, messengers, holy books, or places of worship, in accordance with the provisions of this law.
  - Discrimination: Any distinction, restriction, exclusion, or preference of individuals or groups based on religion, belief, sect, denomination, race, colour, or ethnic origin.
  - Hate speech: Any statement or action that incites sedition, discord, or discrimination between individuals and groups.

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<sup>1</sup> Official website of UAE Legislation: <https://uaelegislation.gov.ae>.

<sup>2</sup> Law Combatting Discrimination, Hate, and Extremism, Government of the United Arab Emirates, <https://uaelegislation.gov.ae/ar/legislations/2131>.

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- Article 2: The relationship between the provisions of this law and the provisions criminalizing and punishing offenses contained in other laws.
  - Article 3: Establishing the principle that freedom of opinion and expression cannot be invoked to justify any statement or action that incites contempt for or insults religion.

**Chapter Two**, concerning crimes and punishments, includes the following articles:

- Articles 4 and 5: The legal framework for crimes of discrimination and hatred, specifically the crime of contempt of religion, such as:
  - Insulting, defaming, or disrespecting the Divine Presence (God).
  - Insulting, mocking, or disrespecting any religion, its rituals, or sacred symbols, or disrupting, or obstructing, through violence or threats, the performance of its rituals or licensed religious celebrations.
  - Desecrating, destroying, or disrespecting any of the holy books in any way.
  - Insulting, mocking, disrespecting, or disrespecting any of the prophets or messengers, their wives, their families, or their companions.
  - Insulting, mocking, or disrespecting any of them.
  - Vandalism, destruction, abuse, or desecration of places of worship, cemeteries, graves, their annexes, or any of their contents.
- Article 6: The crime of any form of discrimination.
- Article 7: The crime of inciting hate speech.
- Article 8: The crime of inciting tribalism.
- Article 9: Increasing penalties if the crime is committed by a public official, a person of religious authority, or in a place of worship.

- Article 10: The crime of exploiting religion to accuse individuals or groups of apostasy.
- Article 11: The crime of producing, manufacturing, or selling publications or recordings that are likely to incite contempt for religion, discrimination, or hate speech.
- Article 12: The crime of possessing or acquiring documents or publications with the intent to incite contempt for religion, discrimination, or hate speech.
- Article 13: The crime of establishing, founding, or managing an association or body with the intent to incite contempt for religion, discrimination, or hate speech.
- Article 14: The crime of joining an association or body with the intent to incite contempt for religion, discrimination, or hate speech.
- Article 15: The crime of holding a meeting or conference with the intent to incite contempt for religion, discrimination, or hate speech.
- Article 16: The crime of financing, soliciting, or receiving funds with the intent to commit a crime of discrimination or hatred.

**Chapter Three**, concerning specific provisions, includes the following articles:

- Articles 18 and 19: The dangers of extremism and the penalties for extremists.
- Article 20: Lists of extremist groups.
- Article 21: Legal procedures against associations, centres, bodies, organizations, groups, and entities associated with extremist acts.
- Article 22: Exemption of those who cooperate with the competent authorities in uncovering extremist acts or arresting extremists.
- Article 23: Jurisdiction of the courts in trying extremists.

**Chapter Four**, concerning final provisions, comprises three articles:

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- Article 24: The principle of positive discrimination in favour of women, children, persons with disabilities, the elderly, or others, is not considered prohibited discrimination.
  - Article 25: Repealing previous decrees and any provision that contradicts or conflicts with the provisions of this decree.
  - Article 26: Provisions for publication and entry into force.

These national legislations and laws, with their binding force, represent the safety valve of society and its protective shield from various dangers that threaten its cohesion, security and stability. They also serve to promote aesthetic values that protect the various segments of society from all intellectual ills that fuel sedition and cause the destruction of homelands.<sup>1</sup>

## Second: International agreements

International agreements represent a fundamental pillar and legal framework for regulating relations between states to achieve global stability, promote international cooperation, protect human rights, ensure sustainable development, and spread human values. The Prophet (PBUH) emphasized the importance of international agreements and global norms in regulating relations between nations and peoples, achieving the interests of humanity, and warding off harm. This was demonstrated by his participation in *Ḥilf al-Muṭayyibīn*, a pact whose members made a covenant and pledged by God to stand united with the oppressed against the oppressor until their rights were restored. The Prophet said: “I witnessed the *Ḥilf al-Muṭayyibīn* as a young boy, and I do not wish to break it, even if I were to possess red camels.”<sup>2</sup> When the Quraysh sent

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<sup>1</sup> al-Zāhirī, Kahlīfa Mubārak ‘Alī, *Tafkīk Khitāb al-Taṭarruf al-Dīnī fī Tajruba Dawla al-Imārāt al-‘Arabiyya al-Muttaḥida* (Abu Dhabi: Muhamad Bin Zayed University for Humanities, 2023), 419-34.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-Kubra*, ḥadīth no. 13208, 13:343.

Abū Rafī‘ as a messenger to the Prophet, he said: “O Messenger of God, I swear by God that I will never return to them.” The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “I do not break covenants, nor do I detain messengers.”<sup>1</sup> The Prophet was keen to build strong and firm relationships with kings and tribal leaders by sending them messages and receiving theirs.<sup>2</sup>

The following is a definition of international law, and the most important agreements that the United Arab Emirates has ratified.

Definition of International Law: “The set of rules that govern relations between sovereign states.”<sup>3</sup>

International law is based on three main sources, as stipulated by the International Court of Justice in Article 38, which are:

1. **Treaties and Agreements:** These may be bilateral or multilateral. Multilateral treaties stipulate the right of any state to accede to them in the future.
2. **International Custom:** A set of unwritten rules of international conduct, formed through the customary practice of states, which have acquired the status of legally binding rules for those subject to them.<sup>4</sup>
3. **General Legal Principles Recognized by Civilized States:** Legal beliefs and practices common to all advanced legal systems.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ḥadīth no. 2758, 3:83.

<sup>2</sup> al-Ṣubḥī, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh, *Marwiyyāt al-Wathā’iq al-Nabawiyya al-Maktūba* (Medina: Islamic University of Medina, 2009), 983-87.

<sup>3</sup> al-Na‘īm, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Alī, *Uṣūl al-Aḥkām al-Shar‘iyya wa Mabādi’ ‘Ilm al-Anzīma* (Riyadh: Mu‘assassa Ba‘īnū, 1981), 179.

<sup>4</sup> al-Majdhūb, Muḥammad, *Muḥāḍarāt fī’l-Qānūn al-Dawlī al-‘Āmm* (Beirut: College of Law and Political Science, Lebanese University, 1967), 52.

<sup>5</sup> al-‘Āṣī, Ḥasan, *Mathūm al-Qānūn al-Dawlī al-‘Āmm* (Copenhagen, al-Hay’a al-Waṭaniyya al-Dinmārkiyya lil-Kutub, 2020), 5.

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## International law is divided into two parts<sup>1</sup>

1. Public International Law: The set of rules and regulations that govern relations between states in times of peace and war, and between states and international organizations, such as:
  - The Universal Declaration of Human Rights,<sup>2</sup> adopted in 1948, contains 30 articles that define fundamental human rights, which all states must respect and protect.
  - The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, adopted in 1965, contains 25 articles and was ratified by the United Arab Emirates on May 20, 1974.
  - The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted in 1979, contains 30 articles and was supplemented by the Optional Protocol in 1999, consisting of 21 articles. The United Arab Emirates ratified this Convention on October 6, 2004.
  - The Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989, contains 54 articles and was supplemented by the First Optional Protocol in 2000, consisting of 17 articles, concerning the protection of the dignity of the child. It was ratified by the United Arab Emirates on March 2, 2016.
    - The Second Optional Protocol of 2000, consisting of (13) articles, relating to the involvement of children in armed conflicts, was ratified by the United Arab Emirates on January 3, 1997.
  - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Adopted in 2006, it comprises 50 articles and was ratified by the United Arab Emirates on March 19, 2010.

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<sup>1</sup> UN Treaty Body Database, United Nations: [tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Home.aspx?lang=En](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Home.aspx?lang=En).

<sup>2</sup> For more information about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the details of the articles, the countries that have ratified it, and any amendments made.

- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: Adopted in 1984, it consists of 33 articles, with an Additional Protocol added in 2002, comprising 37 articles. The United Arab Emirates ratified this Convention on July 19, 2012.
2. Private International Law: Legal texts aimed at regulating interactions between local and foreign individuals, meaning defining how the law applies to citizens of a state and to individuals coming to it from other countries. This law emerged in 1834 and was adopted as a legal means of settling disputes between individuals based on their nationalities. Its topics include:
- Nationality: This refers to an individual's affiliation with a state.
  - Residence: This is an individual's relationship with a state resulting from their residence there.
  - Foreigner Status: This refers to the rights, obligations, and responsibilities that foreigners may enjoy in the state where they reside.<sup>1</sup>

## Third: Customs and traditions

Scholars of Islamic jurisprudence and legal maxims paid great attention to customs and traditions, considering changes in customs and differences in people's habits and traditions, based on the principle of mercy, ease, and wisdom called for by Islamic law. God Almighty said: "God wants ease for you, not hardship. He wants you to complete the prescribed period and to glorify Him for having guided you, so that you may be thankful."<sup>2</sup> Among the things that indicate the consideration of this great principle is God Almighty's saying: "Be tolerant and command what is right (*'urf*)."<sup>3</sup> Many scholars have interpreted (*'urf*) here as what

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<sup>1</sup> al-Şadda, 'Abd al-Mun'im Faraj, *Mabādi' al-Qānūn* (Cairo: Dār al-Nahḍa, 1977), 51.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 2:185.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān, 7:199.

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people have agreed upon in transactions and customs that achieve interests and make lives easier.<sup>1</sup> The scholars said: “There is no doubt that observing a custom that does not contain corruption is a type of benefit that must be taken into account.”<sup>2</sup>

The following explains the meaning of custom according to scholars, and outlines what is meant by customs and traditions in the United Arab Emirates (*al-sana*), their importance, components, and principles.

## Definition of Custom ( *urf* - عرف )

Ibn Faris wrote: “The letters *‘ayn*, *ra*’ and *fa*’ are two sound roots, one of which indicates the continuity of something connected to another, and the other indicates tranquillity and peace of mind...custom is what is known, and it is called that because souls find peace in it.”<sup>3</sup>

In technical usage, custom is “what people have come to know and what has become common among them, whether in all countries or some of them, whether it is a statement or an action.”<sup>4</sup>

Customs and traditions in the United Arab Emirates (*al-Sana*):<sup>5</sup> *al-Sana*, or *al-Madhab*, or *al-Samt* are synonyms in Emirati heritage, and they refer to: the set of values, traditions, and behavioural patterns that the people of society in the United Arab Emirates have agreed upon and adhered to in many details of their lives, until they became part of their cultural and social identity.

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<sup>1</sup> al-Sam’ānī, Manṣūr b. Muḥammad, *Qawā’i’ al-Adilla fi’l-Uṣūl* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1999), 1:29; al-Ba’ī, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh, *al-Dhakar al-Ḥarīr bi Sharḥ Mukhtaṣar al-Taḥrīr* (Cairo: Dār al-Dhakhā’ir wa’l-Maktaba al-‘Umariyya, 2020), 798.

<sup>2</sup> Abū Zahra, Muḥammad, *Mālik: Ḥayātuhu wa ‘Aṣruhu Ārā’uhu wa Fiqhuhu* (Cairo: Maktaba al-Anglo al-Miṣrī, ND), 388.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Luḡa*, 3:281.

<sup>4</sup> al-Bahūtī, Manṣūr b. Yūnus, *al-Minaḥ al-Shāfiyāt bi-Sharḥ Mufradāt al-Imām Aḥmad* (Riyadh: Dār Kunūz Ishbiliyā lil-Nashr wa’l-Tawzī’, 2006), 1:32.

<sup>5</sup> UAE Ministry of Education, *Manhaj al-San’ al-Imārātī* (Abu Dhabi: Mu’assassa Waṭanī al-Imārāt, 2022), 17.

Regarding the origin of (*al-sana* - السنع) in Arabic, Ibn Fāris says: “The letters *sīn*, *nūn*, and *‘ayn*, if they are sound, indicate beauty, goodness, and elevation.”<sup>1</sup> The word *sanā* means: gentleness, the best, finest, and most honourable of everything. If something becomes “*sanā*,” it becomes beautiful and good, and it is *sanī*, meaning beautiful.<sup>2</sup>

When contemplated, all these meanings are realized in the technical meaning of good manners. Good manners are the most beautiful, best, and highest of morals, and one of its most important components is kindness to people, and treating them with the best, finest, and most honourable morals and behaviours.

In technical terms, *sanā* means: “The sum of words, actions, and morals that must be adhered to in daily social situations and occasions.”<sup>3</sup>

## The Importance of Emirati Customs

The United Arab Emirates has authentic traditions and customs that it cherishes and is keen to preserve and instil in its people, so that they may be passed down from generation to generation, thus continuing the links between the past and present and extending into the future. The late Shaykh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan emphasized this, saying: “We must preserve our heritage, for it is our origin and roots, and we must hold fast to our deep-rooted principles.”<sup>4</sup> He also said: “Without morals, good conduct, and knowledge, nations cannot build their generations and fulfil their duties. Rather, the foundations of nations are built upon knowledge, good character, chivalry, understanding of the past, and

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 3:106.

<sup>2</sup> al-Farāhidī, *al-‘Ayn*, 1:338; al-Azharī, *Tahdhīb al-Lughā*, 2:62; al-Jawharī, Ismā‘īl b. Ḥammād, *al-Ṣiḥāḥ Tāj al-Lugh wa Ṣiḥāḥ al-‘Arabiyya*, Beirut: Dār al-‘Ilm lil-Malāyīn, 1987), 3:1233.

<sup>3</sup> UAE Ministry of Education, *Manhaj al-San’ al-Imārātī*, 17.

<sup>4</sup> “Aqwāl al-Mu’assis,” *al-Imārāt al-Yawm*, 28 March 2018, available at: <https://www.emaratallyoum.com/local-section/other/2018-03-28-1.1084419>.

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looking towards the present and future.”<sup>1</sup>

UAE society, while open to others, remains committed to its heritage and traditions, upholding its values and customs, which results in:

- Strengthening patriotism and a sense of belonging
- Sustaining positive moral values within the community
- Strengthening family and community bonds
- Enhancing individual communication, productivity, and creativity

## Foundations of Emirati Customs

Emirati customs were a conscious and necessary response to the circumstances society faced, grounded in the country’s geographical particularity and its extended historical experience.

## Principles and Values in Emirati Customs

Emirati customs draw from pure sources that have contributed to shaping its system in various fields of life. These customs have been passed down through successive generations in the land of the Emirates. Undoubtedly, these behaviours have acquired the characteristic of voluntary commitment and have consistently aligned with society’s vision, customs, values, and traditions. All of these have proven their usefulness in the experiences of previous generations and have been employed practically and creatively in the renaissance and development of the Emirates.

Although these values carry within their characteristics and content the factors of their sustainability, in addition to their continuous ability to be completed and developed, they have always enjoyed special support and diligent guidance from the wise leadership of the United Arab Emirates, within the framework of its constant awareness of the importance of

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<sup>1</sup> Farās b. Darwīsh, “al-Shaykh Zāyed Manāra al-Ḥaqq wa’l-Ḥikma,” *al-Bayān*, 18 April 2017, available at: <https://www.albayan.ae/books/author-book/2017-04-18-1.2919131>.

these values and their advanced position in the system of ethics, and the path of growth and development.

Among the most important of these values and principles of Emirati custom are:

**1. Family bonds and visiting relatives:** Family bonds are an authentic characteristic of UAE society. This is manifested in family gatherings and the exchange of family visits. This authentic custom comes from from Shaykh Zayed – may God have mercy on him – who was closely connected to his family, starting with his mother, who was always a guide to his behaviour and a supporter of the successes he achieved in his career. This connection came from his belief that his strong connection with his family was a necessary prelude to his connection with the people of his nation. He – may God have mercy on him – said: “It is the duty of the head of the family to look after the affairs of his family members and to work for their happiness and well-being.”<sup>1</sup>

**2. Generosity and hospitality:** Generosity and hospitality are hallmarks of Emirati etiquette, considered noble customs that Emirati society still cherishes and upholds. Emirati citizens are inherently generous and hospitable to all people, regardless of their race, colour, nationality, or beliefs.

Emirati hospitality encompasses the customs and etiquette of receiving and warmly welcoming guests. rituals are accompanied by expressions of welcome, joy, and happiness at the visit. Among the proverbs that reflect the generosity of the Emirati people are: “A house without a coffee pot is not worth visiting,” and “A morning cup of coffee is better than a well-trained camel.”

**3. Volunteering and helping those in distress (*al-fazá*):** *al-Fazá* is a manifestation of social life in the United Arab Emirates, and an authentic tradition based on cooperation, solidarity, and support during times of hardship and need for others to shoulder the burdens of life.

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<sup>1</sup> Maktab al-Wathā'iq wa'l-Dirāsāt, *Abū Zabi bayn al-Ams wa'l-Yawm*, 1969, 54.

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What distinguishes *fazá* is that it is voluntary and spontaneous, dictated by the values and traditions recognized in society, without the motive being a financial reward, kinship, or any other considerations.

The spirit of solidarity that has been rooted in Emirati values since ancient times has continued to this day, after it transcended the borders of the homeland and the geography of the Emirates to the world, and the spirit of solidarity of the Emirates and its leadership in comforting and rescuing peoples has become an example to be followed, for what a human can do for his fellow man.

Thus, legislation and customs form a basis to which people refer in organizing their affairs in a way that achieves their interests, preserves their stability and security, and contributes to building cohesive families, united societies, and prosperous homelands, which confirms the importance of returning to these legislations and customs as a reference in achieving balance and justice in society.





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COMPONENTS AND ISSUES  
OF ISLAMIC DISCOURSE

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# Faith (*al-īman*)

## DEFINITION AND IMPACT ON PROMOTING VALUES

Faith is the most important component of the Islamic religion; indeed, it is its foundation upon which the other components are built, as it forms the backbone upon which the life of a Muslim is based; in his connection with his Creator, his understanding of his existence, the guidance of his behaviour, and the regulation of his relationship with others. Faith is the purpose of all heavenly messages. God Almighty sent the prophets to achieve it, and revealed books with them to clarify it, so that people may be happy in this world and the hereafter.

**Definition:** Faith (*al-īmān* - الإيمان) is a verbal noun meaning “to believe.” According to linguists, faith and belief are synonymous.<sup>1</sup> God Almighty said on the tongue of the brothers of Joseph: “You will not believe us, though we are telling the truth!”<sup>2</sup>

In technical terms: Faith is the heart’s belief in “God Almighty, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and belief in fate, both good and evil.”<sup>3</sup> That is: “submission, acceptance, with contentment, submission, and peace of mind.”<sup>4</sup>

## Foundations of Faith

1. **Belief in God:** This is the first, foremost, and greatest pillar of faith. It means believing in the existence of God Almighty, His Oneness, His Most Beautiful Names, and His Sublime Attributes. God Almighty

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<sup>1</sup> al-Azharī, *Tahdhīb al-Lughā*, 15:368.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 12:17.

<sup>3</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 8, 1:28.

<sup>4</sup> al-Safārīnī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, *Lawāmi’ al-Anwār al-Baḥiyya wa Sawā’i’ al-Asrār* (Damascus: Mu’assassa al-Khāfiqīn, 1982), 1:420.

says: “I am God; there is no god but Me. So worship Me and keep up the prayer so that you remember Me.”<sup>1</sup> It also means believing that He, Glory be to Him, is the Creator of all that exists. God Almighty says: “This is God, your Lord, there is no God but Him, the Creator of all things, so worship Him; He is in charge of everything.”<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, it means believing that He, Glory be to Him, is the only One worthy of worship. God Almighty says: “We never sent any messenger before you [Muhammad] without revealing to him: ‘There is no god but Me, so serve Me.’”<sup>3</sup> Belief in God Almighty is one of the greatest obligations. God Almighty says: “You who believe, believe in God and His Messenger and in the Scripture He sent down to His Messenger, as well as what He sent down before. Anyone who does not believe in God, His angels, His Scriptures, His messengers, and the Last Day has gone far, far astray.”<sup>4</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) said: “Faith is to believe in God.”<sup>5</sup> More details about belief in God Almighty and the rational and scientific proofs of His existence will follow later.

- 2. Belief in the angels:** This is the second pillar of faith. God Almighty said: “The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, as do the faithful. They all believe in God, His angels, His scriptures, and His messengers.”<sup>6</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) said: “Faith is to believe in God and His angels.”<sup>7</sup>

Angels are “honoured servants.”<sup>8</sup> They believe in Him, the Exalted, and acknowledge His Oneness. God, the Exalted, said: “God bears

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 20:14.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 6:102.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 21:25.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 4:136.

<sup>5</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 4777, 6:115.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 2:285.

<sup>7</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 4777, 6:115.

<sup>8</sup> Qur’ān, 21:26.

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witness that there is no god but Him, as do the angels and those who have knowledge. He upholds justice. There is no god but Him, the Almighty, the All Wise.”<sup>1</sup> They are constant in their worship and obedience to Him, the Exalted, “they glorify Him tirelessly night and day.”<sup>2</sup> “Believers, guard yourselves and your families against a Fire fuelled by people and stones, over which stand angels, stern and strong; angels who never disobey God’s commands to them, but do as they are ordered.”<sup>3</sup>

Angels are from the unseen realms beyond human comprehension. God Almighty created them from light. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “The angels were created from light.”<sup>4</sup> One of the greatest reasons for God Almighty creating them is:

- To convey God’s message to His prophets and messengers: “God chooses messengers from among the angels and from among men. God is all hearing, all seeing.”<sup>5</sup>
- Counting the deeds of the children of Adam, writing them down, and preserving them. God Almighty said: “Do they think We cannot hear their secret talk and their private counsel? Yes we can: Our messengers are at their sides, recording everything.”<sup>6</sup> And the testimony of that against man on the Day of Resurrection. God Almighty said: “And the angels will bear witness.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 3:18.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 21:20.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 66:6.

<sup>4</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no 2996, 8:226.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 22:75.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 43:80.

<sup>7</sup> Qur’ān, 4:166.

3. **Belief in the revealed scriptures:** This is the third pillar of faith. God Almighty said: “So [you believers], say, ‘We believe in God and in what was sent down to us and what was sent down to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and what was given to Moses, Jesus, and all the prophets by their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we devote ourselves to Him.’”<sup>1</sup> The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “Faith is to believe in God, His angels, His books.”<sup>2</sup>

Among the books revealed to the prophets are:

- a. The Holy Qurʾān: God Almighty revealed it to our Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). God Almighty says: “We sent to you [Muhammad] the Scripture with the truth, confirming the Scriptures that came before it, and with final authority over them.”<sup>3</sup>
- b. The Torah: God Almighty revealed it to our Prophet Moses (PBUH). God Almighty says: “We revealed the Torah with guidance and light, and the prophets, who had submitted to God, judged according to it for the Jews.”<sup>4</sup>
- c. The Gospel: God Almighty revealed it to our master Jesus (PBUH). God Almighty said: “We sent Jesus, son of Mary, in their footsteps, to confirm the Torah that had been sent before him: We gave him the Gospel with guidance, light, and confirmation of the Torah already revealed- a guide and lesson for those who take heed of God.”<sup>5</sup>
- d. The Psalms: This is the book revealed to our master David (PBUH). God Almighty said: “And We gave David the Psalms.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 2:136.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 4777, 6:115.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 5:48.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 5:44.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 4:46.

<sup>6</sup> Qurʾān, 4:163.

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- e. The Scrolls of Abraham and Moses: “These are the books revealed to them.”<sup>1</sup> God Almighty says: “All this is in the earlier scriptures, the scriptures of Abraham and Moses.”<sup>2</sup>

The discussion of belief in the heavenly books will be presented in greater detail later.

4. **Belief in the Messengers:** This is the fourth pillar of faith. God Almighty says: “We sent Our messengers with clear signs, the Scripture and the Balance, so that people could uphold justice”<sup>3</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) said: “Faith is to believe in God, His angels, His books, and His messengers.”<sup>4</sup>

God Almighty has related to us in the Holy Qurʾān the stories of twenty-five messengers, and He has shown us that the best of them are the noble Messengers of firm resolve, whom God Almighty mentioned in His saying: “We took a solemn pledge from the prophets- from you [Muhammad], from Noah, from Abraham, from Moses, from Jesus, son of Mary- We took a solemn pledge from all of them.”<sup>5</sup> More details about belief in the messengers will come later.

5. **Belief in the Day of Judgment:** This is the fifth pillar of faith. God Almighty said in describing the believers: “And in the Hereafter they are certain.”<sup>6</sup> The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “Faith is to believe in God, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ li Ahkām al-Qurʾān*, 20:24.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 87:18-19.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 57:25.

<sup>4</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 4777, 6:115.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 33:7.

<sup>6</sup> Qurʾān, 2:4.

<sup>7</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 4777, 6:115.

The Day of Judgment refers to the day when people will be resurrected for reckoning and recompense. God Almighty will resurrect people after their death and hold them accountable for all their deeds and actions. He will reward the righteous for their good deeds and punish the wicked for their evil deeds. God Almighty says: “Beware of a Day when you will be returned to God: every soul will be paid in full for what it has earned, and no one will be wronged.”<sup>1</sup>

Among the names of the Day of Judgment mentioned in the Holy Qurʾān are:

- a. The Hour: God Almighty says: “They ask you [Prophet] about the Hour, ‘When will it happen?’ Say, ‘My Lord alone has knowledge of it.’”<sup>2</sup>
- b. The Day of Resurrection: God Almighty says: “By the Day of Resurrection.”<sup>3</sup>
- c. The Day of Religion: God Almighty says: “Master of the Day of Religion.”<sup>4</sup>
- d. The Day of Reckoning: God Almighty says: “This is what you are promised for the Day of Reckoning.”<sup>5</sup>
- e. The Day of Rebirth: God Almighty says: “This is the Day of Rebirth.”<sup>6</sup>
- f. The Day of Decision: God Almighty says: “This is the Day of Decision; We have gathered you and the former generations.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 2:281.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 7:187.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 75:2.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 1:4.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 38:53.

<sup>6</sup> Qurʾān, 30:56.

<sup>7</sup> Qurʾān, 77:38.

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6. **Belief in fate:** This is the sixth pillar of faith. God Almighty said: “the Prophet is not at fault for what God has ordained for him. This was God’s practice with those who went before- God’s command must be fulfilled.”<sup>1</sup> The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “Faith is to believe in God, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and fate, both good and evil.”<sup>2</sup>

Belief in fate means certainty that everything that happens in this universe is by the knowledge, will, and decree of God Almighty. “Belief in fate is not a restriction on the movement of the believer; rather, it is related to knowledge, for God Almighty knew in eternity what each individual among mankind would choose by their own free will, so there is no compulsion. Therefore, it was a natural and just matter that every person should be rewarded for what they did. God Almighty said: “Every soul is held in pledge for its deeds,”<sup>3</sup> and: “each gains whatever good it has done, and suffers its bad.”<sup>4</sup>

Belief in Fate:

- Does not prohibit sin: It is not permissible for a person to commit sins and then claim that God Almighty has no power over them, and it has been reported in the tradition: “The example of God’s knowledge of you is like the sky that overshadowed you and the earth that carried you. Just as you cannot leave the sky and the earth, so you cannot leave God’s knowledge. And just as the sky and the earth do not carry you to sins, so God’s knowledge does not carry you.”<sup>5</sup>

- Does not contradict striving, working, and taking the necessary steps, nor does it lead to shirking one’s responsibilities, or to complacency

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 33:38.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 4777, 6:115.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 74:38.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 2:286; Zaqqūq, Maḥmūd Ḥamdī, “al-‘Aqīda al-Dīniyya wa Ahamiyyatuha fī Ḥayā al-Insān,” *al-Azhar Magazine*, 1994, 45.

<sup>5</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 2:290.

and wishful thinking, nor does it constitute an obstacle to progress and prosperity. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: “Seek help from Allah and do not despair. If something befalls you, do not say, ‘If only I had done such and such,’ but rather say, ‘Allah has decreed, and what He wills, He does.’”<sup>1</sup> ‘Umar said: “Let none of you sit idle, neglecting to seek sustenance, saying, ‘O Allah, provide for me,’ for you know that the sky does not rain gold or silver.”<sup>2</sup>

- Does not preclude seeking medical treatment: A believer should not refrain from taking medicine under the pretext that illness is decreed by God Almighty. Just as illness is by God’s decree and knowledge, so too is medicine. The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “For every disease there is a cure, and when the cure is applied to the disease, it is healed by the permission of God, the Exalted and Glorified.”<sup>3</sup> When our master ‘Umar, may God be pleased with him, wanted to enter the Levant, and he was informed that the plague had broken out there, he considered turning back. Abū ‘Ubayda said to him: “Are you fleeing from God’s decree?” ‘Umar, may God be pleased with him, replied: “If anyone other than you had said that, O Abū ‘Ubayda, I would have said so. Yes, we are fleeing from God’s decree to God’s decree.”<sup>4</sup>

## The Impact of Faith on Life

Faith in God Almighty, certainty of His oneness, belief in His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and belief in fate, both good and bad, have beneficial effects on human life, some of which are psychological and emotional, some of which are behavioural and practical, and some of which are related to reward and recompense.

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<sup>1</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 2664, 8:56.

<sup>2</sup> al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad, *Ihyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma’rifā, ND), 2:62.

<sup>3</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 2204, 7:21.

<sup>4</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 5729, 7:130.

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## First: Psychological effects

1. Mental security and inner peace: The believer knows that God Almighty, who created him, is the One who protects, cares for, and has mercy on him. Thus, his heart finds peace, his soul is content, and his fear and anxiety dissipate. God Almighty says: “It is those who have faith, and do not mix their faith with idolatry, who will be secure, and it is they who are rightly guided.”<sup>1</sup> God Almighty has promised those who believe in Him a good, tranquil, and happy life, as He says: “To whoever, male or female, does good deeds and has faith, We shall give a good life and reward them according to the best of their actions.”<sup>2</sup> A good life is a life filled with tranquility and peace. The Most High said: “It was He who made His tranquillity descend into the hearts of the believers, to add faith to their faith.”<sup>3</sup>
2. Contentment: Whoever knows that God Almighty is the One who manages his affairs, and that nothing happens in this universe except what He has decreed and ordained with His wisdom, will be content with what is ordained for him. This is one of the meanings of the good life that God promised the believers, as in the previous verse. Ibn ‘Āshūr said in his interpretation of this verse: “This is a promise in which men and women are equal, and it is a promise of the good things of this world, the greatest of which is contentment with what has been allotted to them.”<sup>4</sup> The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “How amazing is the affair of the believer! Indeed, all his affairs are good for him. This is not for anyone except the believer. If something good befalls him, he is grateful, and that is good for him. If something bad befalls him, he is patient, and that is good for him.”<sup>5</sup> Thus, the believer is content in all circumstances

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 6:82.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 16:97.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 48:4.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn ‘Āshūr, *al-Taḥrīr wa’l-Tanwīr*, 14:273.

<sup>5</sup> Muslim, *al-Munad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 2999, 8:227.

and at peace of mind. Allah Almighty says: “but He will overlook the bad deeds of those who have faith, do good deeds, and believe in what has been sent down to Muhammad--the truth from their Lord--and He will put them into a good state.”<sup>1</sup> This is because they know that their affairs are in the hands of Allah, and their reward is with Allah. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “No fatigue, illness, worry, grief, harm, or distress befalls a Muslim, even the prick of a thorn, but that Allah expiates some of their sins thereby.”<sup>2</sup>

3. **Mindfulness:** A quality of the soul that compels its possessor to do what pleases the One who watches over him, and to avoid what displeases Him. It is one of the most prominent qualities of the believers, for the believer knows with certainty that God Almighty is aware of him, watching over him in his words, deeds, and all his circumstances, in accordance with the Almighty’s saying: “Do you not see [Prophet] that God knows everything in the heavens and earth? There is no secret conversation between three people where He is not the fourth, nor between five where He is not the sixth, nor between less or more than that without Him being with them, wherever they may be,”<sup>3</sup> and: “he does not utter a single word without an ever-present watcher,”<sup>4</sup> so that will motivate him to do good deeds and to abandon sins and evils.

## **Second: Behavioural effects**

1. **Performing good deeds:** Faith motivates its possessor to perform many good deeds and avoid reprehensible ones. Therefore, we find that the Holy Qur’an often links faith and good deeds, indicating that good deeds spring from faith: “Those who believe, do good deeds, keep up the prayer, and pay the prescribed alms will have their reward with their Lord: no fear for them, nor will they grieve.”<sup>5</sup> God

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 47:2.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 5641, 7:114.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 58:7.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 50:18.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 2:277.

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begins His command to perform good deeds with the call of faith: “Believers, obey God and His Messenger: do not turn away when you are listening to him,”<sup>1</sup> and: “You who believe, be mindful of God: stand with those who are true.”<sup>2</sup>

2. Possessing noble character: The stronger a person’s faith, the better their character and the more beautiful their qualities. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “The most complete of believers in faith are those who are best in character.”<sup>3</sup> Among the most important virtues that faith cultivates are:

– Trustworthiness: The Prophet (PBUH) said: “There is no faith for one who has no trustworthiness,”<sup>4</sup> and: “The believer is the one whom people trust with their wealth and their lives.”<sup>5</sup>

– Modesty: The Prophet (PBUH) said: “Modesty and faith are inseparable; if one is removed, the other is removed as well,”<sup>6</sup> and: “Modesty is a branch of faith.”<sup>7</sup>

– Kindness: The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “Whoever believes in God and the Last Day should honour his guest. Whoever believes in God and the Last Day should not harm his neighbour,”<sup>8</sup> and: “Any believer who feeds a hungry believer, God will feed him on the Day of Resurrection from the fruits of Paradise. Any believer who gives a thirsty believer to drink, God will give him to drink on the Day of Resurrection from the sealed nectar. Any believer who clothes a

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 8:20.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 9:119.

<sup>3</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ḥadīth no. 4682, 4:220.

<sup>4</sup> Aḥmad, *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, ḥadīth no. 12578, 5:341.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn Mājah, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, ḥadīth no. 3934, 826.

<sup>6</sup> al-Ḥākim, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh, *al-Mustadrak ‘ala al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1990), ḥadīth no. 58, 1:73.

<sup>7</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 9, 1:11; Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 35, 1:46.

<sup>8</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 6018, 8:11.

naked believer, God will clothe him from the greenery of Paradise.”<sup>1</sup>

– Good words: The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “Whoever believes in God and the Last Day should speak well or remain silent.”<sup>2</sup>

### **Third: Spiritual rewards**

1. Guidance: God Almighty says: “But as for those who believe and do good deeds, their Lord will guide them because of their faith. Streams will flow at their feet in the Gardens of Bliss.”<sup>3</sup>
2. Good status with God: God Almighty says: “But the Lord of Mercy will give love to those who believe and do righteous deeds.”<sup>4</sup>
3. Great bounty: God Almighty says: “Give the believers the good news that great bounty awaits them from God.”<sup>5</sup>
4. Entering Paradise: God Almighty said: “But those who believe and do good deeds will be given the Gardens of Paradise. There they will remain, never wishing to leave.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ḥadīth no. 1682, 2:130; al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ḥadīth no. 2449, 4:241.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 6018, 8:11; Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 47, 1:49.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 10:9.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 19:96.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 33:47.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 18:107-8.

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## Knowledge of God

### Scientific and Logical Evidence of God's Existence

#### Knowledge of God

Knowing God Almighty—His greatness, majesty, and all His names and attributes—with certainty is the foundation of Islam, the noblest of all knowledge, the origin of faith, and the ultimate purpose of creation. al-Ghazālī said: “In short, the noblest and ultimate of all sciences is the knowledge of God Almighty.”<sup>1</sup> From this knowledge stems the obligation of every religious duty, for it is the path to:

– Love of God: Ibn Rajab said, “The stronger a servant’s knowledge of God, the stronger his love for Him and his love for obeying Him, and the greater the pleasure he experiences in worship, whether through remembrance or other means, according to that knowledge.”<sup>2</sup>

– Refining the soul, enlightening the mind, and elevating the spirit: Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Balnasī said, “Reason indicates that the happiness of souls lies in knowing God Almighty and in loving Him.”<sup>3</sup>

– Happiness in this world and the Hereafter: al-Rāzī said: “The greatest level of reward is being immersed in the knowledge of God and in His love, and attaining this knowledge is great happiness and complete joy.”<sup>4</sup>

Thus, the first obligation upon those accountable is that God Almighty says: “So [Prophet], bear in mind that there is no god but God, and ask

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<sup>1</sup> al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, 1:52.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Rajab, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad, *Istinshāq Nasīm al-Uns min Nafaḥāt Riyāq al-Quds* (NA: Dār al-Fārūq al-Ḥadītha, 2004), 3:316.

<sup>3</sup> al-Balnasī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī, *Tafsīr Mubḥamāt al-Qur’ān* (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1991), 2:398.

<sup>4</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 21:468.

forgiveness for your sins and for the sins of believing men and women,”<sup>1</sup> and: “We never sent any messenger before you [Muhammad] without revealing to him: ‘There is no god but Me, so serve Me,’”<sup>2</sup> and: “This is a message to all people, so that they may be warned by it, and know that He is the only God, and so that those who have minds may take heed.”<sup>3</sup> Regarding this, the jurist Ibn Ashir, may God have mercy on him, says “The first duty of those who are accountable and capable of understanding is to know God.” To reach this knowledge, one must look, ponder, reflect, and contemplate the signs and proofs that God Almighty has established regarding His existence, greatness, and oneness.<sup>4</sup>

## Scientific and Logical Evidence of God’s Existence

In addition to textual evidence, there are also compelling rational and scientific proofs that demonstrate the existence of the Almighty Creator and His unique oneness, including:

**First: The evidence of innate nature (*fiṭra*):** Innate nature is “the system that God created in man, body and mind. So, a person walking with their feet is a physical disposition, and a person’s attempt to reach for things with their feet is contrary to physical nature. Deducing results from their causes is a mental disposition and attempting to deduce something from something other than its cause is contrary to mental nature.”<sup>5</sup>

The reliance on innate nature in reasoning about the existence of God is evident in that it:

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 47:19.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 21:25.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 14:52.

<sup>4</sup> Mayāra, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, *al-Durr al-Thamīn wa’l-Mawrad al-Mu’īn* (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2008), 29-30; al-Āmidī, ‘Alī b. Abī ‘Alī, *Abkār al-Afkār fī Uṣūl al-Dīn* (NA: al-Maktaba al-Qawmiyya, 2004), 1:63.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn ‘Āshūr, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘a al-Islāmiyya*, 93.

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1. Instinctively pushes man towards questioning the meaning of existence and searching for his Creator. This is ingrained in the depths of the human soul. Professor Barrett said: “Children grow up with a tendency to search for the meaning of their surroundings and to understand them. When given the space to develop and grow their minds naturally, this search leads them to believe that everything is designed with a purpose, and that a wise maker designed it. They assume that this intended maker is all-powerful, all-knowing, all-perceived, and eternal. This maker does not need to be visible or embodied like humans.”<sup>1</sup>

2. Leads man to believe in the existence of a supreme and greater power, a power he is in need of and to which he turns, especially in times of hardship. God Almighty says: “When you get into distress at sea, those you pray to besides Him desert you, but when He brings you back safe to land you turn away: man is ever ungrateful,”<sup>2</sup> and: “It is He who enables you to travel on land and sea until, when you are sailing on ships and rejoicing in the favouring wind, a storm arrives: waves come at those on board from all sides and they feel there is no escape. Then they pray to God, professing sincere devotion to Him, ‘If You save us from this we shall be truly thankful.’”<sup>3</sup> al-Rāzī said: “When a person falls into a severe ordeal and calamity, he no longer has hope of help from anyone. It is as if, by the very nature of his creation and the requirements of his nature, he supplicates to the One who will deliver him from it and bring him out of its entanglements and snares. This is nothing but the testimony of the innate nature of need for the Creator and Manager.”<sup>4</sup>

3. There is nothing without a purpose, otherwise the existence of this universe would be an absurdity. Every human being’s nature calls them to an important and urgent question about the reason for their existence,

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<sup>1</sup> Justin Barrett, *Fiṭriyya al-Īmān*, trans. Markaz Dalā’il (NA: Dār Waqf Dalā’il lil-Nashr, 2016), 14.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 17:67.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 10:22.

<sup>4</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 19:71.

purpose, destiny, and fate. This is what gives the world meaning, by its connection to the afterlife.

**Second: The Argument from Contingency:**<sup>1</sup> Every event must have a cause, and every existing thing undoubtedly has a creator. There is no cause without an effect, and this is self-evident. Ibn Ḥazm, may God have mercy on him, said: “No action can occur without an agent. If a person sees something, he asks: Who made this? He is never satisfied that the action occurred without an agent. If he sees something in someone else’s hand, he asks: Who gave you this?”<sup>2</sup> Since our world is created, it must have a creator, who is God Almighty. The proof that our world is created is the change that occurs within it, such as night and day, movement and stillness, heat and cold, life and death. The agreed-upon principle is that everything that changes is created.<sup>3</sup> al-Zamakhsharī said in his interpretation of the verses of Abraham’s dialogue with his people: “He wanted to alert them to the error in their religion, and to guide them to the path of observation and reasoning, and to make them aware that correct observation leads to the conclusion that none of them can be a god, due to the evidence of their created nature, and that behind them there is a Creator who created them, a Maker who made them, and a Manager who managed their rising and setting, their movement, their journey, and all their other conditions.”<sup>4</sup>

The basis of the argument for creation is the statement of God Almighty: “Were they created without any agent? Were they the creators? Did they create the heavens and the earth? No! They do not have faith.”<sup>5</sup> Meaning: Did they come into existence without a creator? “That is something

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<sup>1</sup> al-Ghazālī, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad, *al-Iqtisād fī'l-'itiqād* (Damascus: Dār Qutayba lil-Ṭibā'a wa'l-Nashr wa'l-Tawzī', 2003), 41.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Ḥazm, 'Alī b. Aḥmad, *al-Faṣl fī'l-Milal wa'l-Ahwā' wa'l-Niḥal* (Cairo: Maktaba al-Khānjī, ND), 1:12.

<sup>3</sup> al-Kūrānī, Aḥmad b. Ismā'īl, *al-Durar al-Lawāmi' fī Sharḥ Jam' al-Jawāmi'* (Medina: al-Jāmi'a al-Islāmiyya, 2008), 1:293.

<sup>4</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, Maḥmūd b. 'Umar, *al-Kashshāf*, 2:40.

<sup>5</sup> Qur'ān, 52:35-36.

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that cannot be, because the connection of creation to the creator is a necessity of the name, so it must have a creator. Since they have denied the Creator God, and it is not permissible for them to come into existence without a creator who created them, are they the creators of themselves? That is more corrupt and invalid, because how can something that does not exist create, and how can action come from it? If both aspects are invalidated together, the argument is established against them that they have a creator, so let them believe in Him.”<sup>1</sup> In his argument for creation, Ibn ‘Āshir said: “Its existence is conclusive proof of His need for a Creator, every created thing.”

This means that the existence of God Almighty is conclusive proof of every doubt, which is the need of every created thing for a Creator.<sup>2</sup> al-Rāzī wrote: “Some wise people said: If someone slaps a child’s face, that slap indicates the existence of the Creator, because if a wise child is slapped on his face, he cries out and says: Who hit me? This is only because the testimony of his innate nature indicates that since the slap came into being after not existing, its coming into must be due to an agent who performed it, and due to an agent who brought it into existence. If this event, despite its insignificance, needs an agent, then the need of all events in the world for an agent is more appropriate.”<sup>3</sup>

**Third: The evidence of precision and perfection (intelligent design):** The state of the universe after its creation; the precision of creation and manufacture, the precision of the system, and the brilliance of the design, which indicates that behind this is an all-knowing Lord, an all-powerful God, and a wise manager, who made all these beings and creatures move according to a precise system without deviation. If we found a house with a complete structure, designed precisely, furnished carefully, serving specific purposes that contribute to the comfort of its

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<sup>1</sup> al-Khaṭṭābī, Ḥamad b. Muḥammad, *A’lām al-Ḥadīth* (Mecca: Jāmi’a Umm al-Qura, 1988), 3:1913.

<sup>2</sup> Mayāra, *al-Durr al-Thamīn*, 49.

<sup>3</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 19:71.

inhabitants, it would become clear to us that this house did not come into existence in this form by chance; rather, there is an engineer who intended for its construction to achieve this goal: The ultimate comfort for its inhabitants. If we contemplate the universe well, we will see that it is designed with precision and utmost care, making the earth suitable for life and achieving happiness. al-Khaṭṭābī: “If you contemplate the form of this world with your sight, and consider it with your mind, you will find it like a well-built and prepared house, containing everything its inhabitant needs in terms of tools and equipment. The sky is raised like a roof, the earth is spread out like a carpet, the stars are arranged like lamps, the jewels are stored like treasures, the various kinds of plants are prepared for food, clothing, and needs, the kinds of animals are harnessed for transportation and used in facilities, and man is like the owner of the house who is entrusted with what is in it. In this is a clear indication that the world was created with planning, measure, and order, and that it has a wise and perfect Creator, with perfect wisdom.”<sup>1</sup> al-Rāzī says: “The occurrence of a house engraved with wondrous engravings is impossible except with the existence of a knowledgeable engraver and a wise builder...Since instinct testifies to the engraving’s need for an engraver and the building’s need for a builder, then it is more appropriate to testify to the need of all this world for a wise and choosing agent.”<sup>2</sup>

The Holy Qurʾān referred to this system in verses such as: “The sun, too, runs its determined course laid down for it by the Almighty, the All Knowing. We have determined phases for the moon until it finally becomes like an old date-stalk. The sun cannot overtake the moon, nor can the night outrun the day: each floats in [its own] orbit,”<sup>3</sup> and: “We created man from an essence of clay, then We placed him as a drop of fluid in a safe place, then We made that drop into a clinging form, and

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<sup>1</sup> al-Bayhaqī, Aḥmad b. al-Ḥussayn, *al-l’-tiqād wa’l-Hidāya ila Sabīl al-Rashād* (Beirut: Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadīda, 1980), 39.

<sup>2</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 19:71.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 36:38-40.

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We made that form into a lump of flesh, and We made that lump into bones, and We clothed those bones with flesh, and later We made him into other forms--glory be to God, the best of creators!"<sup>1</sup> and: "who created the seven heavens, one above the other. You will not see any flaw in what the Lord of Mercy creates. Look again! Can you see any flaw? Look again! And again! Your sight will turn back to you, weak and defeated. We have adorned the lowest heaven with lamps and made them [missiles] for stoning devils for whom We have also prepared the torment of a blazing fire."<sup>2</sup> The precise and perfect design of this universe is evidence of the existence of a wise and innovative Creator. al-Bayhaqī wrote: "The perfection in the creation of things refers to the perfection of their design and the excellent planning for them, which indicates and proves the existence of the Maker. God Almighty said: 'He Who has perfected everything He created.' Meaning: the excellent planning in creating every one of His creations according to what He willed to create it."<sup>3</sup> God created the universe and brought it forth in the form that He wanted to prepare it for, as the Almighty said: "It is He who has control over the heavens and earth and has no offspring--no one shares control with Him--and who created all things and made them to an exact measure."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 23:12-14.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 67:3-5.

<sup>3</sup> al-Bayhaqī, Aḥmad b. al-Ḥussayn, *al-Asmā' wa'l-Ṣifāt* (Jeddah: Maktaba al-Sawādī, 1993), 1:67.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 25:2; al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, 2:333.

## Belief in the Divine Scriptures

Belief in all the heavenly scriptures revealed to the prophets and messengers is the third pillar of faith. It is the duty of the responsible person to believe in all the heavenly books. God Almighty said: “You who believe, believe in God and His Messenger and in the Scripture He sent down to His Messenger, as well as what He sent down before,”<sup>1</sup> and: “So [you believers], say, ‘We believe in God and in what was sent down to us and what was sent down to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and what was given to Moses, Jesus, and all the prophets by their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we devote ourselves to Him.’”<sup>2</sup> The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: “Faith is to believe in Allah, His angels, and His books...”<sup>3</sup>

God Almighty described His believing servants by saying: “those who believe in the revelation sent down to you [Muhammad], and in what was sent before you, those who have firm faith in the Hereafter. Such people are following their Lord’s guidance and it is they who will prosper.”<sup>4</sup>

God Almighty commanded His Prophet (PBUH) to inform his followers that they believe in all the books revealed to His messengers: “Say [Muhammad], ‘We [Muslims] believe in God and in what has been sent down to us and to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes. We believe in what has been given to Moses, Jesus, and the prophets from their Lord. We do not make a distinction between any of the [prophets]. It is to Him that we devote ourselves.’”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 4:136.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 2:136.

<sup>3</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 4777, 6:115.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 2:4-5.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 3:84.

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God Almighty took a covenant from all the prophets that they should believe in one another and in the books they brought: “God took a pledge from the prophets, saying, ‘If, after I have bestowed Scripture and wisdom upon you, a messenger comes confirming what you have been given, you must believe in him and support him. Do you affirm this and accept My pledge as binding on you?’ They said, ‘We do.’ He said, ‘Then bear witness and I too will bear witness.’”<sup>1</sup> Ibn Kathīr wrote “God Almighty informs us that He took a covenant from every prophet He sent from Adam, peace be upon him, to Jesus, peace be upon him, that whatever God gave one of them of scripture and wisdom, and whatever level he reached, then a messenger came to him after him, he would believe in him and support him, and that what he had of knowledge and prophethood would not prevent him from following and supporting whoever was sent after him.”<sup>2</sup>

### Defining Belief in the Divine Scriptures (*al-Kutub al-Samāwiyya* – الكتب السماوية)

Ibn Fāris wrote: “The letters *kāf*, *ta*, and *ba* form a single, sound root, indicating the joining of one thing to another. From this comes the word ‘book’ and ‘writing.’”<sup>3</sup> *Kitāb* was then applied to a specific written text, namely the Holy Qurʾān: “That is the Book about which there is no doubt.”<sup>4</sup> It may also refer to all heavenly books: “The truly good are those who believe in God and the Last Day, in the angels, the Scripture, and the prophets.”<sup>5</sup> Ibn Kathīr wrote: “*Kitāb* is a generic noun that includes the books revealed from heaven to the prophets.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 3:81.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Kathīr, Ismāʿīl b. ʿUmar, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿAzīm* (NA: Dār Ṭība lil-Nashr waʾl-Tawzīʿ, 1990), 2:67.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 5:158; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth waʾl-Athar*, 4:147.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 2:2.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 2:177.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿAzīm*, 1:486.

**Belief in the scriptures is:** firm conviction that they are the word of God Almighty, revealed to His messengers, some of them confirming others, through which they convey God's message to His creation. God Almighty said: "Mankind was a single community, then God sent prophets to bring good news and warning, and with them He sent the Scripture with the Truth, to judge between people in their disagreements."<sup>1</sup>

## The Wisdom in Revealing the Divine Scriptures

From the perfection of the Creator's mercy towards His creation, and His desire for good for humanity in this world and happiness in the Hereafter, God sent His messengers to humanity and revealed books with great wisdom and noble purposes.

The reasons behind the revelation of the divine scriptures are:

- Guidance for humanity: God Almighty revealed the books to His messengers to guide people to the best paths and the most upright ways. They are a source of guidance for them, providing them with spiritual and moral values. Divine scriptures connect people to their Creator, elevate their morals, help them to treat one another well, and strengthen the bonds of love and harmony among them, so that they may be happy in this life and the Hereafter. God Almighty said about the Holy Qur'ān: "This is the Scripture in which there is no doubt, containing guidance for those who are mindful of God,"<sup>2</sup> and: "This Qur'ān does indeed show the straightest way. It gives the faithful who do right the good news that they will have a great reward."<sup>3</sup> Regarding the Torah, God says in the Qur'ān: "We gave Moses the Scripture, so that they might be rightly guided."<sup>4</sup> It is mentioned about the Torah and the Gospel: "Step by step, He has

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 2:213.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 2:2.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān, 17:9.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 23:49.

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sent the Scripture down to you [Prophet] with the Truth, confirming what went before: He sent down the Torah and the Gospel earlier as a guide for people and He has sent down the distinction [between right and wrong].”<sup>1</sup> Qatāda said: “They are two books that God revealed. In them is a statement from God, and protection for whoever takes it, believes in it, and acts according to what is in it.”<sup>2</sup>

- Light for humanity: The purpose of the heavenly scriptures is to move people from the darkness of ignorance and heedlessness to the light of knowledge and wisdom. God Almighty said about His prophets and the heavenly scriptures: “If they reject you, so have other messengers been rejected before you, even though they came with clear evidence, books of wisdom and enlightening scripture,”<sup>3</sup> and about the Holy Qur’ān: “People of the Book, Our Messenger has come to make clear to you much of what you have kept hidden of the Scripture, and to overlook much [you have done]. A light has now come to you from God, and a Scripture making things clear, with which God guides to the ways of peace those who follow what pleases Him, bringing them from darkness out into light, by His will, and guiding them to a straight path.”<sup>4</sup>
- Mercy and happiness: Mercy is one of the greatest purposes of the revelation of the heavenly scriptures. God Almighty said through Noah: “Do you find it so strange that a message should come from your Lord- through a man in your midst- to warn you and make you aware of God so that you may be given mercy?”<sup>5</sup> About the Torah: “Can they be compared to those who have clear proof from their Lord, recited by a witness from Him, and before it the Book of Moses, as a

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 3:3-4.

<sup>2</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-Bayān ‘an Ta’wīl al-Qur’ān*, 6:162.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 3:184.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 5:15-16.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 7:63.

guide and mercy?”<sup>1</sup> About the Holy Qurʾān: “We have brought people a Scripture- We have explained it on the basis of true knowledge- as guidance and mercy for those who believe.”<sup>2</sup> It is from the mercy of God Almighty to mankind that He made the heavenly scriptures a source of happiness for humanity. God Almighty said to our Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH): “It was not to distress you [Prophet] that We sent down the Quran to you.”<sup>3</sup> Meaning: “We did not send down the Qurʾān to you to cause you hardship and distress, but rather to make you the happiest of the children of Adam.”<sup>4</sup>

## The Divine Scriptures Revealed to the Prophets

God Almighty revealed scriptures to some of His messengers. Some of these scriptures are named by God in the Holy Qurʾān, while others are not. All the divine scriptures agree on establishing faith in God Almighty: “We never sent any messenger before you [Muhammad] without revealing to him: ‘There is no god but Me, so serve Me.’”<sup>5</sup> However, each prophet had a law that suited his time and people: “We have assigned a law and a path to each of you.”<sup>6</sup> Among these scriptures are:

**a. The Torah:** This is the book revealed to our Prophet Moses (PBUH). The Holy Qurʾān mentions the Torah 18 times, describing it as:

1. A reminder and a light: “We gave Moses and Aaron [the Scripture] that distinguishes right from wrong, a light and a reminder for those who are mindful of God.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 11:17.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 7:52.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 20:2.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-Wajīz fī Tafsīr al-Kitāb al-ʿAzīz*, 4:37.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 21:25.

<sup>6</sup> Qurʾān, 5:48.

<sup>7</sup> Qurʾān, 21:48.

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2. Guidance and mercy: “Once again, We gave Moses the Scripture, perfecting [Our favour] for those who do good, explaining everything clearly, as guidance and mercy, so that they might believe in the meeting with their Lord,”<sup>1</sup> and: “When Moses’ anger abated, he picked up the Tablets, on which were inscribed guidance and mercy for those who stood in awe of their Lord.”<sup>2</sup>
  3. Containing guidance and light: “We revealed the Torah with guidance and light, and the prophets, who had submitted to God, judged according to it for the Jews.”<sup>3</sup>
  4. Containing admonition: “We inscribed everything for him in the Tablets which taught and explained everything, saying, ‘Hold on to them firmly and urge your people to hold fast to their excellent teachings. I will show you the end of those who rebel.”<sup>4</sup>

**b. The Gospel:** Revealed to our master Jesus (PBUH) confirming the Torah: “We sent Jesus, son of Mary, in their footsteps, to confirm the Torah that had been sent before him: We gave him the Gospel with guidance, light, and confirmation of the Torah already revealed– a guide and lesson for those who take heed of God.”<sup>5</sup>

The Holy Qurʾān mentions the Gospel twelve times, describing it in the same way it described the Torah, saying it is, “guidance, light, and confirmation of the Torah already revealed– a guide and lesson for those who take heed of God.”<sup>6</sup> The Qurʾān also clarifies that the Gospel offers further leniency compared to the Torah, as God Almighty says, through the words of Jesus (PBUH): “I have come to confirm the truth of the

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 6:154.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 7:154.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 5:44.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 7:145; al-Wāḥidī, ‘Alī b. Aḥmad, *al-Wasīṭ fi Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-Majīd* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1994), 2:408.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 5:46.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

Torah which preceded me, and to make some things lawful to you which used to be forbidden. I have come to you with a sign from your Lord.”<sup>1</sup>

Among the things included in the Torah and the Gospel and referred to in the Holy Qur’ān:

1. The coming of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and his mission: “who follow the Messenger- the unlettered prophet they find described in the Torah that is with them, and in the Gospel- who commands them to do right and forbids them to do wrong, who makes good things lawful to them and bad things unlawful, and relieves them of their burdens, and the iron collars that were on them,”<sup>2</sup> and: “Jesus, son of Mary, said, ‘Children of Israel, I am sent to you by God, confirming the Torah that came before me and bringing good news of a messenger to follow me whose name will be Ahmad.’”<sup>3</sup>
2. The description of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH): “Muḥammad is the Messenger of God. Those who follow him are harsh towards the disbelievers and compassionate towards each other. You see them kneeling and prostrating, seeking God’s bounty and His good pleasure: on their faces they bear the marks of their prostrations. This is how they are pictured in the Torah and the Gospel: like a seed that puts forth its shoot, becomes strong, grows thick, and rises on its stem to the delight of its sowers.”<sup>4</sup>

**c. The Psalms:** This is the book that God Almighty revealed to our master David (PBUH). God Almighty said: “And We gave David the Psalms.”<sup>5</sup> The Holy Qur’ān referred to some of what was mentioned in

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 3:50.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 7:157.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 61:6.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 48:29.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 17:55.

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the Psalms: “We wrote in the Psalms, as We did in [earlier] Scripture: ‘My righteous servants will inherit the earth.’”<sup>1</sup> al-Ṭabarī wrote: “God Almighty informed us in the Torah and the Psalms, and in His prior knowledge before the heavens and the earth existed, that the land of Paradise will be inherited by His servants who act in obedience to Him, adhering to His commands and prohibitions.”<sup>2</sup>

**d. The Scrolls of Abraham and Moses:** God Almighty said: “All this is in the earlier scriptures, the scriptures of Abraham and Moses.”<sup>3</sup> That is, the books revealed to them. al-Ṭabarī wrote: “As for the scrolls, it is the plural of scroll, and what is meant by it is the books of Abraham and Moses.”<sup>4</sup>

Among the matters included in the scriptures of Abraham and Moses and mentioned in the Holy Qurʾān:

1. God Almighty says: “Prosperous are those who purify themselves, remember the name of their Lord, and pray. Yet you [people] prefer the life of this world, even though the Hereafter is better and more lasting. All this is in the earlier scriptures, the scriptures of Abraham and Moses.”<sup>5</sup> al-Ṭabarī wrote: “That is, the content of this statement is in the former scriptures, the scriptures of Abraham and Moses.”<sup>6</sup> On the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās, may God be pleased with him: “When the verse was revealed: ‘Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High,’ the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, said: ‘All of it is in the scriptures of Abraham and Moses.’”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 21:105.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Abī Shayba, Muḥammad, *al-Kitāb al-Muṣannaf fīʾl-Aḥādīth waʾl-Āthār* (Beirut: Dār al-Tāj, 1989), 6:152; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʾ al-Bayān*, 18:549.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 87:18-19.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn ʿĀdil, ʿUmar b. ʿAlī, *al-Lubāb fī ʿUlūm al-Kitāb* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1998), 2:287; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʾ al-Bayān*, 24:377.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 87:15-19.

<sup>6</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʾ al-Bayān*, 30:101.

<sup>7</sup> al-Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrak*, ḥadīth no. 2930, 2:258.

2. God Almighty says: “Has he not been told what was written in the Scriptures of Moses and of Abraham, who fulfilled his duty: that no soul shall bear the burden of another; that man will only have what he has worked towards; that his labour will be seen and that in the end he will be repaid in full for it” until: “This is a warning just like the warnings sent in former times.”<sup>1</sup>

**e. The Holy Qur’ān:** The book revealed to our Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), the last of the heavenly scriptures to be revealed, which confirmed all the heavenly scriptures before it. God Almighty said: “We sent to you [Muhammad] the Scripture with the truth, confirming the Scriptures that came before it, and with final authority over them: so judge between them according to what God has sent down.”<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur’ān also included the contents, purposes, and aims of the previous heavenly books. The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “I was given the seven long chapters in place of the Torah, the chapters containing one hundred verses in place of the Psalms, the chapters containing repeated verses in place of the Gospel, and I was given preference with the detailed chapters.”<sup>3</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) explained that some of the meanings of the chapters in the Qur’ān were mentioned in the Gospel, the Torah, and the Psalms. He said to ‘Uqbah b. ‘Āmir: “Shall I not teach you the best three chapters that were revealed in the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms, and the Great Criterion (the Qur’ān)?” He said: “Yes, may God make me your ransom.” So the Prophet recited: “Say, He is God, the One,” and “Say, I seek refuge in the Lord of daybreak” and “Say, I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind.”<sup>4</sup> The Holy Qur’ān also referred to some of the legal rulings that were mentioned in the Torah, including the Almighty’s statement: “In the Torah We prescribed for them a life for a life, an eye

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 53:36-41; 53:56.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 5:48.

<sup>3</sup> Mujāhid b. Jabr, *Tafsīr Mujāhid* (Beirut: al-Manshūrāt al-‘Ilmiyya, ND), 2:752; al-Bayhaqī, *Shu‘b al-Īmān, ḥadīth* no. 2415, 2:465.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, ḥadīth* no. 17607, 7:372.

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for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, an equal wound for a wound: if anyone forgoes this out of charity, it will serve as atonement for his bad deeds. Those who do not judge according to what God has revealed are doing grave wrong.”<sup>1</sup>

The heavenly scriptures are a covenant connected to one another, all agreeing on the essence which is belief in God Almighty and differing in some laws in consideration of the changes of time and place. God Almighty revealed them to show people the Creator, may His glory be exalted, and to guide them to what is in their lives to be upright and their happiness in the Hereafter.

In explaining the integration and interconnectedness between the heavenly scriptures and the noble messengers to whom they were revealed, the Prophet (PBUH) said: “My example and the example of the prophets before me is like that of a man who built a building and perfected and beautified it, except for the place of one brick in one of its corners. So, the people began to walk around it and marvel at it and say: Why was this brick not put in place? He said: I am that brick, and I am the Seal of the Prophets.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 5:45.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 3535, 4:186.

## Belief in the Messengers

Belief in all the messengers is the fourth pillar of faith. It is obligatory for a Muslim to believe in all the messengers without distinction between them. God Almighty says: “The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, as do the faithful. They all believe in God, His angels, His scriptures, and His messengers. ‘We make no distinction between any of His messengers,’ they say, ‘We hear and obey. Grant us Your forgiveness, our Lord. To You we all return!’”<sup>1</sup> and: “So [you believers], say, ‘We believe in God and in what was sent down to us and what was sent down to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and what was given to Moses, Jesus, and all the prophets by their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we devote ourselves to Him.’”<sup>2</sup> God Almighty promised good to those who believed in all the messengers, saying: “But God will give [due] rewards to those who believe in Him and His messengers and make no distinction between any of them. God is most forgiving and merciful.”<sup>3</sup>

Belief in the messengers is achieved in one of two ways: those we know of, we believe in their specific names and their reported attributes, and those we do not know, we believe in them in general terms, for there are messengers of God Almighty who have not been mentioned to us, nor has their story been related to us. God Almighty said: “to other messengers We have already mentioned to you, and also to some We have not.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 2:285.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 2:136.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 4:152.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 4:164.

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## Definition of Belief in the Messengers

The word “messengers (رسل)” in Arabic is the plural of “messenger (رسول),” which means “the one sent.”<sup>1</sup> It is said: “I sent a messenger: I dispatched him with a message to deliver.” It is a passive participle, and it is permissible to use it in one form for the masculine, feminine, dual, and plural. It is also permissible to use it in the dual and plural forms.<sup>2</sup>

Ibn Fāris wrote: “The letters *ra*, *sīn*, and *lām* form a single, consistent, and measured root, indicating emanation and extension. You say, ‘The people came in groups,’ meaning they followed one another. And the messenger is well-known.”<sup>3</sup>

These two linguistic meanings—sending and succession—are realized in the following technical meaning of the messengers, for the messengers are sent by God Almighty, and then revelation is sent to them in succession, one after the other, and the message of their last extends until the Hour is established.

In terminology: Messengers are people whom God Almighty has chosen and selected to carry His heavenly message to the people; they call them to Him, remind them of Him, explain to them what they need regarding their religion and their worldly affairs, and make them aware of the positive and negative consequences of their actions.

The difference between messengers and prophets is that messengers are those who were sent by God Almighty with a new law, like Moses who brought the law contained in the Torah. As for the prophet, he does not bring a new law, but rather he comes to confirm the law of those who came before him, like Joshua b. Nūn, for he only came to confirm the law of Moses and to command action on what is in the Torah.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Zubaydī, *Tāj al-Urūs min Jawāhir al-Qāmūs*, 29:73.

<sup>2</sup> al-Fayūmī, *al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr*, 1:226.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 2:392.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Sikandarī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, *Laṭā’if al-Munan* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma’ārif, 2006), 34.

Belief in the Messengers is: firm conviction that they were selected by God Almighty: “with Us they will be among the elect, the truly good,”<sup>1</sup> and: “and also some of their forefathers, their offspring, and their brothers: We chose them and guided them on a straight path.”<sup>2</sup> Messengers came to guide mankind to the path of truth, so they conveyed all that God sent them with. They did not conceal a letter or change a word from it, following their conviction and the noble morals they brought and were called to.

### **Messengers in the Holy Qurʾān and the Successive Nature of Their Messages**

God Almighty mentioned 25 messengers in the Holy Qurʾān, and He gathered eighteen of them in one section, which is: “Such was the argument We gave to Abraham against his people- We raise in rank whoever We will- your Lord is all wise, all knowing. We gave him Isaac and Jacob, each of whom We guided, as We had guided Noah before, and among his descendants were David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron- in this way We reward those who do good-Zachariah, John, Jesus, and Elijah- every one of them was righteous-Ishmael, Elisha, Jonah, and Lot. We favoured each one of them over other people.”<sup>3</sup>

The rest of the messengers are mentioned separately in other verses, such as: “God chose Adam, Noah, Abraham’s family, and the family of Imran, over all other people,”<sup>4</sup> and: “To the people of ‘Ad We sent their brother, Hud,”<sup>5</sup> and: “To the people of Thamud We sent their brother, Salih,”<sup>6</sup> and: “To the people of Midian We sent their brother, Shuayb,”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 38:47.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 6:87.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 6:83-86.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 3:33.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 7:65.

<sup>6</sup> Qurʾān, 7:73.

<sup>7</sup> Qurʾān, 7:85.

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and: “And remember Ishmael, Idris, and Dhu’l-Kifl: they were all steadfast,”<sup>1</sup> and: “Muhammad is the Messenger of God.”<sup>2</sup>

God gathered the resolute ones among them, those whom God Almighty commanded His Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to emulate in their great patience and steadfastness, in the statement: “We took a solemn pledge from the prophets- from you [Muhammad], from Noah, from Abraham, from Moses, from Jesus, son of Mary- We took a solemn pledge from all of them.”<sup>3</sup>

The roles of the messengers are characterized by integration, mutual support, and cooperation for the good of humanity and mercy for mankind. Each one confirmed his predecessor’s message and completed what he had built. The efforts of the prophets, beginning with Adam (PBUH) and culminating in the Seal of the Prophets Muḥammad (PBUH), united in constructing a civilizational edifice of noble human values. Each prophet contributed to it in a different way, until the structure was complete in all its aspects, representing the refined human character.

**Adam (PBUH)** established the value of repentance to show how a person’s relationship with his Lord should be when he disobeys and forgets God: “Then Adam received some words from his Lord and He accepted his repentance: He is the Ever Relenting, the Most Merciful.”<sup>4</sup>

**Noah (PBUH)** emphasized the value of long-term patience in reaching goals and objectives, as he stayed among his people for “a thousand years less fifty years.”<sup>5</sup>

**Hūd (PBUH)** emphasized the value of thanking God Almighty for the means of developing civilization: “Do you find it so strange that

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 21:85.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 48:29.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 33:7.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 2:37.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 29:14.

a message should come from your Lord, through a man in your midst, to warn you? Remember how He made you heirs after Noah's people, and increased your stature: remember God's bounties, so that you may prosper."<sup>1</sup>

**Ṣāliḥ (PBUH)** called for preserving blessings, good management, and rational consumption of water, the most important source of energy and life: "Tell them the water is to be shared between them: each one should drink in turn."<sup>2</sup>

**Shu'ayb (PBUH)** urged the preservation of honesty in financial transactions, as he said to his people: "Give full measure: do not sell others short. Weigh with correct scales: do not deprive people of what is theirs. Do not spread corruption on earth."<sup>3</sup>

**Abraham (PBUH)** raised the value of complete obedience and absolute submission in all that God Almighty commanded: "and of Abraham, who fulfilled his duty."<sup>4</sup>

**Lot (PBUH)** emphasized the value of relations between the sexes according to sound nature: "We sent Lot and he said to his people, 'How can you practise this outrage? No one in the world has outdone you in this.'<sup>5</sup>

**Joseph (PBUH)** emphasized the importance of good management in achieving food security when he said: "Joseph said, 'You will sow for seven consecutive years as usual. Store all that you reap, left in the ear, apart from the little you eat. After that will come seven years of hardship which will consume all but a little of what you stored up for them; after that will come a year when the people will have abundant rain and will press grapes.'<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 7:69.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 54:28.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān, 26:181-83.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 53:37.

<sup>5</sup> Qur'ān, 7:80.

<sup>6</sup> Qur'ān, 12:47-49.

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**David (PBUH)** gave great importance to innovation in industry: “We taught him how to make coats of mail for the benefit of you [people], to protect you in your wars, but are you grateful for this?”<sup>1</sup>

**Moses (PBUH)** raised the value of seeking knowledge and being keen to acquire it, no matter how far the distance: “Moses said to his servant, ‘I will not rest until I reach the place where the two seas meet, even if it takes me years!’”<sup>2</sup>

**Jesus (PBUH)** established the edifice of the value of tolerance and benevolence: “After those We sent Jesus, son of Mary: We gave him the Gospel and put compassion and mercy into the hearts of his followers.”<sup>3</sup>

**The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH)** came to fulfil these values, as he emphasized giving space to reason, in accordance with the guidance of the Qur’ān, through the repeated calls to use reason such as: “Perhaps you will understand,”<sup>4</sup> and: “There truly is a sign in this for people who use their reason.”<sup>5</sup>

Thus, the edifice of human values was built, through the integration of the efforts of God Almighty’s prophets and messengers, indicating that what they brought was one message, from one God, and one source, with the goal of achieving happiness and mercy for humanity.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 21:80.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 18:60.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 57:27.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 2:73.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 16:67.

<sup>6</sup> al-Zayn, Muḥammad Bassām Rushdī, *al-Qiyam al-Insāniyya al-Mushtaraka bayn al-Adyān al-Samāwiyya al-Thalāth*, PhD Dissertation, Da’wa and Islamic Studies College, 2023.

## Duties of the Messengers

God Almighty sent messengers to people with specific tasks and duties. Paying attention to these and acting accordingly is part of having complete faith in them. These duties include:

**First: Introducing people to their Creator and commanding them to worship Him:** The Almighty said: “We never sent any messenger before you [Muhammad] without revealing to him: ‘There is no god but Me, so serve Me.’”<sup>1</sup> All the prophets shared the same goal: connecting people to their Creator and calling them to worship Him, the Most High. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “The prophets are brothers from different mothers, but their religion is one.”<sup>2</sup> Noah (PBUH) said to his people: “We sent Noah to his people. He said, ‘My people, serve God: you have no god other than Him. I fear for you the punishment of a fearsome Day!’”<sup>3</sup> Hūd and Šālīḥ said the same, and Abraham (PBUH) said to his people: “Serve God and be mindful of Him: that is better for you, if only you knew.”<sup>4</sup>

**Second: Purification of the soul:** Purification was one of the most important missionary functions that God Almighty sent with those He chose from His creation. Caring for the soul was the way of the prophets before our Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), such as God’s friend Abraham, and His interlocutor Moses: “Prosperous are those who purify themselves, remember the name of their Lord, and pray. Yet you [people] prefer the life of this world, even though the Hereafter is better and more lasting. All this is in the earlier scriptures, the scriptures of Abraham and Moses.”<sup>5</sup> Purification of the soul was also one of the three major objectives with which our master and prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) was sent: “God has been truly gracious to the believers in sending them a Messenger from among their own, to recite His revelations to them,

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 21:25.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Šaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 3443, 4:167.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 7:59.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 29:16.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 87:15-19.

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to make them grow in purity, and to teach them the Scripture and wisdom.”<sup>1</sup>

**Third: Developing the earth and not corrupting it:** Every messenger called his people to develop and cultivate the earth, and to refrain from corrupting it or tampering with its resources. God Almighty said, through Moses: “Eat and drink the sustenance God has provided and do not cause corruption in the land.”<sup>2</sup> God Almighty also said through Ṣāliḥ: “My people, worship God. You have no god other than Him. It was He who brought you into being from the earth and made you inhabit it, so ask forgiveness from Him, and turn back to Him: my Lord is near, and ready to answer.”<sup>3</sup> And God said through Shu‘ayb: “My people, serve God: you have no god other than Him. A clear sign has come to you from your Lord. Give full measure and weight and do not undervalue people’s goods; do not cause corruption in the land after it has been set in order: this is better for you, if you are believers.”<sup>4</sup>

## Characteristics of the Messengers

God Almighty sent messengers to the people from among themselves, human beings like them, who see them and live among them, so that they would be more likely to follow them and emulate their guidance. If the messengers had been sent from among other human beings, it would have been the greatest hardship and the most severe difficulty for them: “And even before your time [Prophet], all the messengers We sent were only men We inspired--if you [disbelievers] do not know, ask people who know the Scripture--We did not give them bodies that ate no food, nor were they immortal,”<sup>5</sup> and: “Say, ‘I am only a man like you.’”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 3:164.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 2:60.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 11:61.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 7:85.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 21:7.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 18:110.

The humanity of the messengers does not mean that they are not preferred over others. Rather, they are at the height of human perfection, human excellence, and moral refinement. God Almighty said: “But God knows best where to place His messages,”<sup>1</sup> and: “We favoured each one of them over other people,”<sup>2</sup> and: “Their messengers answered, ‘True, we are only men like you, but God favours whichever of His servants He chooses. We cannot bring you any proof unless God permits it, so let the believers put all their trust in Him.’”<sup>3</sup> Hence, God Almighty distinguished His messengers with attributes; Because of this they were given preference over others, and distinguished from others, and some of them were given special characteristics, by which some of them were given preference over others.

### **First: Characteristics of the Messengers**

1. Honesty: “This is what the Lord of Mercy promised, and the messengers told the truth.”<sup>4</sup> God described many of His messengers with this attribute in several verses. About Idrīs (PBUH): “Indeed, he was a truthful prophet.”<sup>5</sup> About Abraham (PBUH): “And mention in the Book, Abraham. Indeed, he was a truthful prophet.”<sup>6</sup> About Ishmael (PBUH): “Indeed, he was true to his promise.”<sup>7</sup> On the tongue of Joseph’s companions: “O Joseph, O truthful one.”<sup>8</sup> About our Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH): “And God and His Messenger have spoken the truth.”<sup>9</sup> The Prophet was known among his people as the truthful one.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 6:124.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 6:86.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 14:11.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 36:52.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 19:56.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 19:41.

<sup>7</sup> Qur’ān, 19:54.

<sup>8</sup> Qur’ān, 12:46.

<sup>9</sup> Qur’ān, 33:22.

<sup>10</sup> Baḥraq, Muḥammad b. ‘Umar, *Ḥadā’iq al-Anwār wa Maṭāli’ al-Asrār fī Sīra al-Nabī al-Mukhtār* (Jeddah: Dār al-Minhāj, 1998), 119.

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2. Trustworthiness: God Almighty said, on the authority of Noah (PBUH): “I am a faithful messenger sent to you.”<sup>1</sup> On the authority of Hūd (PBUH): “I am delivering my Lord’s messages to you. I am your sincere and honest adviser.”<sup>2</sup> On the authority of Ṣāliḥ (PBUH): “Indeed, I am a trustworthy messenger to you.”<sup>3</sup> On the authority of Lot (PBUH): “Indeed, I am a trustworthy messenger to you.”<sup>4</sup> When recounting the words of the king to Joseph (PBUH): “From now on you will have our trust and favour.”<sup>5</sup> On the tongue of Moses (PBUH): “Hand the servants of God over to me! I am a faithful messenger who has been sent to you.”<sup>6</sup> The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) was known among his people as the trustworthy one.<sup>7</sup>
3. Sincerity: God Almighty said: “Mention too, in the Quran, the story of Moses. He was specially chosen, a messenger and a prophet.”<sup>8</sup> About Joseph (PBUH) “Indeed, he was one of Our chosen servants.”<sup>9</sup> “Meaning those whom We have chosen for Ourselves and selected for Our prophethood and message. In this verse, indeed Joseph was one of Our servants who were sincere in their worship of Us.”<sup>10</sup> God said to His Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH): “Say, ‘I have been commanded to serve God, dedicating my worship entirely to Him. I have been commanded to be the first to submit.’ Say, ‘I fear the torment of a terrible Day if I disobey my Lord.’ Say, ‘It is God I serve, dedicating my worship entirely to Him.’”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 26:107.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 7:68.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 26:143.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 26:162.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 12:54.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 44:18.

<sup>7</sup> al-Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrak*, ḥadīth no. 1697, 2:543; Baḥraq, *Ḥadā’iq al-Anwār*, 119.

<sup>8</sup> Qur’ān, 19:51.

<sup>9</sup> Qur’ān, 12:24.

<sup>10</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-Bayān*, 16:49.

<sup>11</sup> Qur’ān, 39:11-14.

4. Performing Good Works: God Almighty said: “Peace be upon Abraham!’ This is how We reward those who do good.”<sup>1</sup> About Abraham (PBUH): “We gave him Isaac and Jacob, each of whom We guided, as We had guided Noah before, and among his descendants were David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron- in this way We reward those who do good.”<sup>2</sup> About Joseph (PBUH): “When he reached maturity, We gave him judgement and knowledge: this is how We reward those who do good.”<sup>3</sup> About Moses (PBUH): “When Moses reached full maturity and manhood, We gave him wisdom and knowledge: this is how We reward those who do good.”<sup>4</sup>
5. Mercy and Compassion: God Almighty said: “We sent Noah to his people. He said, ‘My people, serve God: you have no god other than Him. I fear for you the punishment of a fearsome Day!’”<sup>5</sup> About Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH): “A Messenger has come to you from among yourselves. Your suffering distresses him: he is deeply concerned for you and full of kindness and mercy towards the believers,”<sup>6</sup> and: “[Prophet], are you going to worry yourself to death because they will not believe?”<sup>7</sup> Meaning: regretful and sorry that they will not be guided, out of mercy and compassion for them.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 37:109-10.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 6:84.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 12:22.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 28:14.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 7:59.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 9:128.

<sup>7</sup> Qur’ān, 26:3.

<sup>8</sup> al-Māwardī, ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, *al-Nukat wa’l-Uyūn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, ND), 3:284.

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## Second: Attributes of the Messengers

God Almighty said: “We favoured some of these messengers above others. God spoke to some; others He raised in rank; We gave Jesus, son of Mary, Our clear signs and strengthened him with the holy spirit.”<sup>1</sup> In this verse, God Almighty explains that He preferred some of His messengers over others by giving some of them attributes that others do not have, or by raising the rank of some of them above the rank of others, for reasons known only to Him.

God singled out Adam (PBUH) by creating him with His own hands, breathing into him of His spirit, and commanding the angels to prostrate before him: “Your Lord said to the angels, ‘I will create a man from clay. When I have shaped him and breathed from My Spirit into him, bow down before him.’ The angels all bowed down together, but not Iblis, who was too proud. He became a rebel. God said, ‘Iblis, what prevents you from bowing down to the man I have made with My own hands? Are you too high and mighty?’”<sup>2</sup>

God favoured Abraham (PBUH) by choosing him as His intimate friend: “And God took Abraham as His intimate friend.”<sup>3</sup>

God favoured Moses (PBUH) by speaking to him and conversing with him: “He said, ‘Moses, I have raised you above other people by [giving you] My messages and speaking to you: hold on to what I have given you; be one of those who give thanks,’”<sup>4</sup> and: “We called to him from the right-hand side of the mountain and brought him close to Us in secret communion.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 2:253.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 38:71-75.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 4:125.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 7:144.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 19:52.

Jesus (PBUH) was favoured by being God's word, which He conveyed to Mary, and a spirit from Him: "Jesus, son of Mary, was nothing more than a messenger of God, His word, directed to Mary, a spirit from Him."<sup>1</sup>

Our master and Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) was favoured and distinguished with several qualities, the most prominent of which is that he was described as having the best morals: "truly you have a strong character."<sup>2</sup> The Prophet was the most perfect of people in character. Our Lord said about him: "He is kind and merciful to the believers,"<sup>3</sup> and: "So by mercy from God, you were gentle to them."<sup>4</sup> On the authority of 'Abd Allāh b. 'Amr b. al-'Aās, may God be pleased with them both, he said: "This verse in the Qur'ān: 'O Prophet, indeed We have sent you as a witness and a bringer of good tidings} And a warner,' is found in the Torah as: 'O Prophet, indeed We have sent you as a witness and a bringer of good tidings, and a protector for the unlettered. You are My servant and My messenger. I have named you al-Mutawakkil. He is not harsh or rough, nor does he raise his voice in the markets, nor does he repel evil with evil, but he pardons and forgives.'"<sup>5</sup> Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib said to Negus, describing the morals of the Messenger of God: "God sent to us a Messenger from among us, whose lineage, truthfulness, trustworthiness, and chastity we know...he commanded us to speak the truth, to fulfil our trusts, to maintain kinship ties, to be good neighbours, to refrain from forbidden things and bloodshed, and he forbade us from immoral acts, false speech, consuming the wealth of orphans, and falsely accusing chaste women."<sup>6</sup>

Several of the moral qualities of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) will be mentioned in the following section.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 4:171.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 68:4.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān, 9:128.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 3:159.

<sup>5</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 4838, 6:135.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, ḥadīth no. 1764, 1:440.

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# The Moral Qualities of the Prophet

## Muhammad (PBUH)

Noble character is among the greatest things the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) was sent with. He said, “I was sent only to perfect good character.”<sup>1</sup> He was the most perfect of people in character, the most generous in companionship, the kindest in dealings, and the most bountiful in giving, to the point that his Lord described him: “truly you have a strong character.”<sup>2</sup> When ‘Ā’isha, may God be pleased with her, was asked about the Prophet’s character, she said, “His character was the Qur’ān.”<sup>3</sup> The Prophet embodied the values and morals of the Holy Qur’ān in his words, deeds, and all aspects of his life.

The Prophet (PBUH) was a role model for others in his morals, an ideal in his conduct and actions, and a source of nobility in all his movements and stillness. He respected the elderly, showed mercy to the young, honoured women, appreciated the youth, was kind to the weak, gave to the needy, taught the ignorant, and treated all people with kindness and gentleness. God Almighty said in describing him: “Your suffering distresses him: he is deeply concerned for you and full of kindness and mercy towards the believers.”<sup>4</sup>

Among the greatest virtues that the Prophet (PBUH) possessed and which his noble soul embodied were:

**First: Mercy:** The essence of the noble Prophet’s character. It was embodied in all his meanings and dimensions. The Prophet was a mercy walking on the earth; in his words, his actions, his movements, and his stillness. God Almighty said in describing him: “he is deeply concerned

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal*, ḥadīth no. 9074, 4:258.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 68:4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal*, ḥadīth no. 2524, 11:250.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 9:128.

for you and full of kindness and mercy towards the believers,”<sup>1</sup> and: “It was only as a mercy that We sent you [Prophet] to all people.”<sup>2</sup> The Prophet said about himself: “I am but a mercy bestowed.”<sup>3</sup> The Prophet instilled the value of mercy in all of humanity, saying: “By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, you will not enter Paradise until you show mercy to one another.” They said: “O Messenger of God, we are all merciful.” He said: “It is not the mercy that one of you shows to his own family, but rather the mercy shown to all people.”<sup>4</sup> Among the manifestations of his mercy are:

1. Towards children: The Prophet (PBUH) was merciful to children, kind to them, gentle with them, attentive to their needs, and considerate of their feelings. Anas b. Mālik, may God be pleased with him, said: “I have never seen anyone more merciful to children than the Messenger of God.”<sup>5</sup> On the authority of al-Zubayr b. al-‘Awwām, may God be pleased with him, the Messenger of God kissed Ḥasan and embraced him, and began to smell him, and a man was with him, and he said: “I have a son who has reached puberty, and I have never kissed him.” The Messenger of God said: “If God has removed mercy from your heart, what is my sin?”<sup>6</sup>
2. Towards workers: The Prophet (PBUH) was merciful towards workers; he cared for their affairs, commanded good treatment of them, and forbade burdening them beyond their capacity. Abu Dharr, may God be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of God said: “God has placed your workers under your care, so

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 9:128.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 21:107.

<sup>3</sup> al-Dāramī, ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, *Musnad al-Dāramī* (Riyadh: Dār al-Mughnī lil-Nashr wa’l-Tawzī’, 2000), *ḥadīth* no. 15, 1:166.

<sup>4</sup> al-Nasā’ī, *al-Sunan al-Kubra* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1991), *ḥadīth* no. 5928, 5:414.

<sup>5</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *ḥadīth* no. 2316, 7:76.

<sup>6</sup> al-Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrak*, *ḥadīth* no. 4793, 3:186.

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feed them what you eat and clothe them with what you wear, and do not burden them with what they cannot bear. If you do burden them, then help them.”<sup>1</sup> He treated them with noble character, taught them, and never rebuked or was harsh with them.

3. Towards orphans: The Prophet (PBUH) was a merciful father and a generous sponsor to orphans. When he married Umm Salama, may God be pleased with her, he sponsored her orphans, took them in, and treated them like his own children, and said to her: “Your family is my family.”<sup>2</sup>
4. Towards women: The Prophet (PBUH) was the best example and role model in this regard. He treated women with mercy and compassion. He said, “The best of you are those who are best to their families, and I am the best of you to my family.”<sup>3</sup> When his daughter Fatima, may God be pleased with her, entered his home, he would stand up to greet her, spread his cloak for her, and seat her in his place. He would also carry Umama, the daughter of his daughter Zaynab, while praying. When he prostrated, he would put her down, and when he stood, he would pick her up again. This is the ultimate example of his mercy and kindness.

**Second: Tolerance and coexistence:** The Prophet (PBUH) was the greatest example of refined tolerance and civilized coexistence. He forgave those who wronged him, maintained ties with those who severed them, pardoned those who transgressed against him, respected his opponents, treated them kindly and justly, and protected their rights. This is because tolerance and coexistence have a profound impact on purifying souls, uniting hearts, resolving disputes, stabilizing societies, and renewing affection. He acted in accordance with the words of God Almighty: “Overlook this and pardon them: God loves those who do

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<sup>1</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *al-Sunan*, ḥadīth no. 5158, 724.

<sup>2</sup> Aḥmad, *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, ḥadīth no. 16603, 7:68.

<sup>3</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ḥadīth no. 3895, 5:709.

good.”<sup>1</sup> Among the manifestations of this are:

1. His respect for the rituals of the People of the Book: When the delegation of the Christians of Najran came to the Prophet, they entered his mosque after afternoon prayer and wanted to pray in his mosque. Some people were about to prevent them, but the Messenger of God said: “Leave them.” So they faced the east and performed their prayer.<sup>2</sup>
2. His signing of the Charter of Medina, which brought together all those living in Medina, Muslims and non-Muslims, on a covenant of coexistence and tolerance.<sup>3</sup> Thus, it is one of the strongest historical testimonies and evidences of tolerance, which was bestowed by the morals of the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, and which was documented in books of biography and history.

After the Prophet (PBUH) completed his mission of faith and fulfilled his humanitarian task, with which God Almighty had sent him, and established its foundations and principles in people’s hearts, he joined his Lord on Monday, the twelfth of Rabī al-Awwal, in the year 11 AH, leaving humanity a great legacy of faith and morality to be a beacon for them and a reason for their happiness and well-being.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 5:13.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā’il al-Nubuwwa* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2002), 5:382.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-Nabawiyya*, 2:107.

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# Values

## DEFINITIONS, CHARACTERISTICS, DIMENSIONS

### Definition of Values

In Arabic, values (*qiyam* - قيم) are the plural of (*qīma* - قيمة) and can mean:<sup>1</sup>

Goodness<sup>2</sup> or uprightness: Straightening a stick so that it becomes upright and straight (*mustaqīm*).<sup>3</sup> It can also mean an upright matter,<sup>4</sup> as in the Qur'ān: “upright scriptures.”<sup>5</sup>

Permanence and stability: Value is used for something that is constant and continuous, as in the Qur'an: “God: there is no god but Him, the Ever Living, the Ever Watchful.”<sup>6</sup>

Foundation: The essence of something, its core, the support by which it stands, and from this comes: This is the foundation of religion and truth.<sup>7</sup>

In technical terms, values are a set of higher principles and abstract ideals, which include several behaviours and morals, that elevate individuals, societies and homelands, and ensure living in peace and tranquillity.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 5:43.

<sup>2</sup> al-Zubaydī, *Tāj al-'Arūs*, 33:319.

<sup>3</sup> al-Azharī, *Tahdhīb al-Lughā*, 2:125.

<sup>4</sup> al-Zubaydī, *Tāj al-'Arūs*, 33:319.

<sup>5</sup> Qur'ān, 98:3; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth*, 4:125.

<sup>6</sup> Qur'ān, 2:255; 'Umar, *Mu'jam al-Lughā al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'āṣira*, 1:600.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 5:43.

<sup>8</sup> Khalīfa, 'Abd al-Laṭīf Muḥammad, “Irtiqā' al-Qiyam,” *Ālim al-Ma'ārif*, 160, 1992; Ḥussayn, Muḥī al-Dīn Aḥmad, *al-Qiyam al-Khāṣṣa lada al-Mubdi'īn* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1981), 29-30; Zāhir, Diyā', *al-Qiyam fī'l-'Amaliyya al-Tarbawiyya* (Cairo: Mu'assassa al-Khalij al-'Arabī,

## Characteristics of Values

- a. **Comprehensiveness and Integration:** Values are an integrated system that include the spiritual, cognitive, and practical aspects of humanity, and encompasses a person's entire life from all its aspects, in integration between all fields: social, economic, and national.
- b. **Stability and Continuity:** Values are constants that do not undergo any change or alteration due to changing circumstances, times, or people, because they represent the moral and spiritual foundations of societies.
- c. **Innateness:** Values stem from human nature and arise with a person from childhood. What indicates their innateness is the person's intrinsic desire to embody high morals and strive towards good behaviours, such as empathy, cooperation, and justice.
- d. **Realism and Flexibility:** Values are consistent with human capabilities and harmonize with human abilities. They are also—despite their stability—highly flexible and adaptable to different environments, allowing them to be implemented in every environment in realistic and effective ways. This contributes to understanding the differences in value systems between societies and cultures, and helps in accepting others, integrating with them, and benefiting from their values and giving them benefit.

## Social and Human Dimensions of Values

Values are of paramount importance on both the social and human levels, as they shape the identity of the individual and society, and directly influence their formation and development.

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1984), 32; 'Uthmān, Aḥmad Fathī, *al-Qiyam al-Ḥaḍāriyya fī Risāla al-Islām* (Riyadh: al-Dār al-Sa'ūdiyya, 1981), 42.

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Values help the individual to develop, improve, achieve goals, and guide people towards positive behaviours. They give people an optimistic outlook on life, provide them with the motivation to strive for advancement and development, give life meaning and purpose, and help us understand our role in society, which contributes to our happiness and self-satisfaction.

Values also contribute to building strong social relationships among members of society, based on cooperation, respect, tolerance, and honour. They regulate the behaviour of individuals within their community, protect the rights of each, ensure fair and just treatment, make people strive to achieve common goals, build high and fruitful objectives, motivate people to accept others regardless of cultural differences and religious differences, and make it easier for people to resolve conflicts and disputes, which results in a strong, cohesive, stable, united, progressive, and prosperous society.

## EXAMPLES OF HUMAN VALUES

### The Value of Purification (*Tazkiya*)

#### Definition

In Arabic, the term *tazkiya* (تَزْكِيَة) has several meanings, including goodness and righteousness,<sup>1</sup> as in the Qur'an: "purer and more compassionate,"<sup>2</sup> meaning in righteousness. It can also mean purity, from: "None of you is pure,"<sup>3</sup> and: "He has certainly succeeded who purifies it,"<sup>4</sup> meaning: he who purifies himself from vices.<sup>5</sup>

In technical usage, *tazkiya* is "The perfection of the human soul; by purifying it from base morals and vices, and developing it with good character traits, noble morals and virtues."<sup>6</sup>

Purification is a process of emptying and adorning; Emptying the heart of hatred, envy, pride, conceit, and other reprehensible qualities. Adorning it with love, purity, sincerity, and other praiseworthy qualities. This is reflected in one's actions through good words and beautiful deeds.

#### Importance

- Purification is one of the most important missions with which the prophets were sent. God Almighty said: "God has been truly gracious to the believers in sending them a Messenger from among their own, to

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, 14:358.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 18:81; *Ibid*.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān, 24:21; al-Baqā'ī, Ibrāhīm b. 'Umar, *Nuzum al-Durar fī Tanāsib al-Āyāt wa'l-Suwar* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1995), 22:78; al-Rāghib al-Aṣṣḥānī, *al-Mufradāt fī Ghārib al-Qur'ān*, 380-81.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 91:9; Ibn Qutayba, *Gharīb al-Qur'ān*, 259.

<sup>5</sup> al-Ḥumayrī, Nashwān b. Sa'īd, *Shams al-'Ulūm wa Dawā' Kalām al-'Arab min al-Kulūm* (Yemen: Wizāra al-Thaqāfa, 1999), 5:2819.

<sup>6</sup> al-Khafājī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, *Nasīm al-Riyāḍ fī Sharḥ al-Shifā lil-Qāḍī 'Ayāḍ* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, ND), 1:69.

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recite His revelations to them, to make them grow in purity, and to teach them the Scripture and wisdom- before that they were clearly astray.”<sup>1</sup> When God Almighty sent our master Moses to Pharaoh, He said: “Go to Pharaoh, for he has exceeded all bounds, and ask him, Do you want to purify yourself [of sin]?”<sup>2</sup>

- God Almighty mentioned purification in the Holy Qur’ān in 56 instances, 23 of which are in the sense of purification mentioned here, such as: “Prosperous are those who purify themselves,”<sup>3</sup> and: “whoever purifies himself does so for his own benefit-everything returns to God.”<sup>4</sup> God Almighty swore in His Book to the success of whoever purifies himself with eleven oaths. God Almighty said: “By the sun in its morning brightness and by the moon as it follows it, by the day as it displays the sun’s glory and by the night as it conceals it, by the sky and how He built it and by the earth and how He spread it, by the soul and how He formed it and inspired it [to know] its own rebellion and piety! The one who purifies his soul succeeds and the one who corrupts it fails.”<sup>5</sup>

- The Prophet (PBUH) used to ask God Almighty to purify his soul, saying: “O God, grant my soul its piety, and purify it, for You are the best of those who purify it, You are its guardian and master.”<sup>6</sup>

## Methods of Purification

There are many ways to purify the soul and elevate it to the levels of perfection, the most important of which can be summarized as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 3:164.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 79:17-18.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 87:114.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 35:18.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 91:1-10.

<sup>6</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 2722, 8:81.

1. **Belief in God Almighty:** One of the greatest means of purifying the soul is belief in God and understanding His greatness and power, which leads to reverence for Him in the heart, fear of Him in secret, and consequently, acting in accordance with what pleases Him and avoiding what displeases Him. God Almighty called belief purification: “for all you know, he might have grown in spirit, or taken note of something useful to him.”<sup>1</sup> Ibn Zamanin said: “Meaning: he will believe.”<sup>2</sup> God Almighty said to Moses (PBUH) when He sent him to Pharaoh to call him to faith: “and ask him, Do you want to purify yourself [of sin]?”<sup>3</sup> meaning: “Believe in what I have brought and worship the Lord of the worlds.” Faith in God Almighty gives a person the strength and determination to resist desires and fills the soul with peace and tranquillity.
2. **Mindfulness:** Mindfulness of God Almighty, awareness of His knowledge, and awareness of His gaze purify the human soul. The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “There are three things, whoever does them has tasted the sweetness of faith: – [and he mentioned among them] – and purifies his soul.” A man asked: “What is the purification of the soul?” He replied: “That he knows that God Almighty is with him wherever he is.”<sup>4</sup> Mindfulness prevents the human soul from committing sins. God Almighty says: “for anyone who feared the meeting with his Lord and restrained himself from base desires, Paradise will be home.”<sup>5</sup> Mindfulness controls and refines the soul. To overcome his desires and triumph over his whispers, the Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “The strong one is not the one who overcomes hardship, but the strong one is the one who overcomes his own soul.”<sup>6</sup> The human soul becomes

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 80:3-4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Abī Zamanayn, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān, al-ʿAzīz* (Cairo: al-Fārūq al-Ḥadīth, 2022), 5:94.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 79:18.

<sup>4</sup> al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-Kubra, ḥadīth* no. 7275, 4:161.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 79:40-41.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān, ḥadīth* no. 4602, 5:386.

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accustomed to what its owner accustoms it to, whether good or evil. al-Būṣīrī said: “The soul is like a child; if you neglect it, it will grow up loving to suckle, but if you wean it, it will be weaned.” The Holy Qur’ān has given us an example to follow in vigilance: Joseph (PBUH): “The woman in whose house he was living tried to seduce him: she bolted the doors and said, ‘Come to me,’ and he replied, ‘God forbid! My master has been good to me; wrongdoers never prosper.’”<sup>1</sup>

3. Self-Accountability: Constantly holding oneself accountable and questioning oneself preserves one’s purity and clarity and contributes to one’s elevation and refinement. The wise and intelligent believer commits to holding himself accountable for vices: why did he commit them? And for virtues: why did he not increase them? So that his heart remains in constant vigilance and fear. The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “The wise person is the one who takes account of himself and works for what comes after death, and the incapable person is the one who follows his desires and hopes for God’s mercy.”<sup>2</sup> Among what was written: “In the wisdom of the family of David: It is incumbent upon the wise man not to be preoccupied with anything other than four hours: an hour in which he communes with his Lord, an hour in which he takes account of himself, an hour in which he is alone with his brothers who inform him of his faults and are truthful to him about himself, and an hour in which he is alone with himself and his pleasures, in what is permissible and beautiful, for in this hour there is help for these hours and a refreshment for the hearts.”<sup>3</sup>
4. Worship and Obedience: Among the things that purify and nurture the human soul, elevating and ennobling it, is the worship and obedience to God Almighty. If we examine the major acts

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 12:23.

<sup>2</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ḥadīth no. 2627, 4:450.

<sup>3</sup> al-Bayhaqī, *Shu’ab al-Īmān*, ḥadīth no. 4677, 4:164.

of worship in Islam, we find that one of their greatest aims is the purification of the soul. al-Ghazālī wrote, “The more acts of worship one performs, the purer and more refined the soul becomes. The purpose of worship is its effect on the heart, and this is achieved through consistent and frequent performance of it.”<sup>1</sup> A careful study of the Holy Qurʾān reveals that acts of worship are often mentioned alongside their fruit of purifying the soul by cleansing it of its impurities and elevating its character. The impact of worship on the purification of the soul was previously discussed in the section on acts of worship.

5. Reciting the Qurʾān: The Holy Qurʾān purifies the soul and cleanses it of impurities: “People, a teaching from your Lord has come to you, a healing for what is in [your] hearts, and guidance and mercy for the believers.”<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qurʾān heals the mind and purifies the heart. When the heart is purified, the soul is purified. The Holy Qurʾān has explained that reading and listening to this book, reflecting upon its verses, heeding its admonitions, and learning from its wisdom; Faith increases and purifies the human soul. God Almighty said: “true believers are those whose hearts tremble with awe when God is mentioned, whose faith increases when His revelations are recited to them, who put their trust in their Lord.”<sup>3</sup>
6. Remembrance: The remembrance of God Almighty is one of the purest, best, and most sublime deeds. Through it, hearts are revived and souls are purified. God Almighty said: “Prosperous are those who purify themselves, remember the name of their Lord, and pray.”<sup>4</sup> God Almighty called purification in this verse remembrance. ‘Ikrima said: “who purify themselves” means to say “There is no god but God.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, 3:58.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 10:57.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 8:2.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 87:14-15.

<sup>5</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-Bayān*, 24:319.

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7. Attending Gatherings of Elders: To draw from their knowledge and wisdom, to benefit from their values and principles, to take advantage of the breadth of their minds and the maturity of their opinions, and to emulate them in their worship and good deeds: “You who believe, be mindful of God: stand with those who are true.”<sup>1</sup> Sitting with elders helps connect with God Almighty and worship Him, elevates and purifies the soul, and helps acquire virtuous morals and embody noble values and authentic customs. Whoever sits with elders takes from the righteousness of their condition and the purity of their soul that by which his soul is purified and his morals are elevated.
  8. Humanitarian Work: Engaging in community services, volunteering in charitable work, and contributing to humanitarian initiatives, such as aiding the poor, sponsoring orphans, striving for the needy, and other such things, are among the most important means that help to purify the soul and cleanse and purify the heart, because they train their owner to give and bestow without expecting anything in return, and cultivate in him the values of mercy, compassion, cooperation, mutual support, and altruism. On the authority of Abū Hurayra, may God be pleased with him, that a man asked the Prophet (PBUH) to guide him to what would soften his heart, so he said to him: “If you want your heart to soften, then feed the poor and stroke the head of the orphan.”<sup>2</sup>
  9. Supplication: After a believer has exhausted his efforts and exerted energy and hard work in taking the means to purify himself and elevate himself he or she may seek help by turning to God and praying to Him to help him with that and to make his paths easy for him, following the example of the Prophet (PBUH), whose supplication was: “O God, grant my soul its piety and purify it, for You are the best of those who purify it. You are its Guardian and

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 9:119.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, ḥadīth no. 914, 4:272.

Master.”<sup>1</sup> And among what he, may God bless him and grant him peace, used to supplicate with was: “O God, guide me to the best of morals, for none guides to the best of them except You, and turn away from me its evil, for none turns away its evil except You.”<sup>2</sup>

Thus, self-purification elevates the individual to the highest levels of human perfection and raises them to the heights of moral virtues. It also strengthens social bonds, fosters positive coexistence, and instils values of love, harmony, and dialogue among all of humanity.

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<sup>1</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 2722, 8:81.

<sup>2</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 771, 2:185.

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## The Value of Knowledge (*Ilm*)

Knowledge is one of the greatest human values and the noblest thing a seeker desires. God Almighty said: “What about someone who worships devoutly during the night, bowing down, standing in prayer, ever mindful of the life to come, hoping for his Lord’s mercy? Say, ‘How can those who know be equal to those who do not know?’ Only those who have understanding will take heed.”<sup>1</sup> God forbade equating between the knowledgeable and the ignorant because of the virtue that the knowledgeable person possesses in understanding the realities of things and considering similar matters: “Such are the comparisons We draw for people, though only the wise can grasp them.”<sup>2</sup>

### Defining Knowledge (*Ilm* – علم)

In Arabic, the letters ‘*ayn*, *lām*, and *mīm* form a single, sound root indicating a characteristic that distinguishes something from others. Examples include:

1. The opposite of ignorance:<sup>3</sup> It is said, “I knew the thing: I recognized it and experienced it,”<sup>4</sup> and “He taught him ‘*ilm*, and made it known to him; so he learned it.”<sup>5</sup> A person has ‘*ilm* about something when its true nature is revealed to him or her.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 39:9.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 29:43.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 4:109.

<sup>4</sup> al-Azharī, *Tahdhīb al-Lughā*, 2:254.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, 12:417.

<sup>6</sup> ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, ‘Ā’isha, *al-Tafsīr al-Bayānī lil-Qur’ān al-Karīm* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma’ārif, ND), 1:203.

2. A sign:<sup>1</sup> It is said, “He marked (*‘ilm*) it.”<sup>2</sup>
3. A flag.<sup>3</sup>
4. The top of a mountain, or the highest point the eye can see: and from this comes the saying of al-Khansā: “And indeed, Sakhr is a guide for those who seek guidance, as if he were a beacon with a fire on its head.”<sup>4</sup>

In technical terms, defining knowledge is almost deceptively simple. al-Ghazālī says: “It may be difficult to define it truly in a precise and comprehensive expression that encompasses both the genus and the essential differentia, for this is difficult with most things; indeed, most sensory perceptions are difficult to define.”<sup>5</sup> The truth is that the essence of knowledge is readily and clearly conceived,<sup>6</sup> so there is no need for a definer to understand it. al-Ghazālī says: “Knowledge is almost imprinted in the mind with its meaning and reality without any need for a definition.”<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, it has been defined in many ways, which we will not elaborate on here.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps the most famous definition is: “Knowledge of the known as it truly is.”<sup>9</sup>

The intention here is to conceive of knowledge as a major human value that the Islamic religion has taken great care to emphasise. Based on this, it can be said that *‘ilm* is: acquiring useful knowledge and beneficial

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 4:109-10.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, 12:419.

<sup>3</sup> al-Azharī, *Tahdhīb al-Lughā*, 2:254; Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 4:109-10.

<sup>4</sup> al-Jāhīz, ‘Amr b. Baḥr, *al-Maḥāsīn wa’l-Aḍḍād* (Beirut: Dār wa Maktaba al-Hilāl, 2002), 171.

<sup>5</sup> al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥāmid, *al-Mustaṣfa* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1993), 21.

<sup>6</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 2:420.

<sup>7</sup> al-Ghazālī, *al-Mustaṣfa*, 21.

<sup>8</sup> Khalīfa, *Kashf al-Ẓunūn*, 1:4.

<sup>9</sup> al-Bāqilānī, Muḥammad b. al-Ṭayyib, *Tamhīd al-Awā’il wa Talkhīṣ al-Dalā’il* (Beirut: Mu’assassa al-Kutub al-Thiqāfiyya, 1987), 25.

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information - whatever its field - with the aim of self-development, societal advancement, national progress, and human civilizational progress.

The relationship between the linguistic meanings and this technical meaning is that the possessor of knowledge has a mark that distinguishes him from others, so he is like a lofty flag at the top of the mountain; high in status and position, clear in status and measure.

## The Importance of Knowledge

Knowledge is of great importance in Islam, for God Almighty has made it a path to honour and dignity: “Read, and your Lord is the Most Generous.”<sup>1</sup> Whoever takes the path of knowledge will ascend until attaining the most honourable ranks and highest positions: “God will raise up, by many degrees, those of you who believe and those who have been given knowledge.”<sup>2</sup>

The importance of knowledge is evident in the following:

1. One of the Most Beautiful Names of God is derived from it, for He is the Knower of all things, both known and unknown: “My Lord knows everything that is said in the heavens and the earth: He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing.”<sup>3</sup>
2. God Almighty is the first teacher: “It is the Lord of Mercy who taught the Qurʾān. He created man and taught him to communicate,”<sup>4</sup> and: “He taught by the pen, taught man that which he did not know.”<sup>5</sup>
3. Imparting knowledge is one of the missions with which the prophets and messengers were sent: “It is He who raised a

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 96:3.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 58:11.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 21:4.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 55:1-4.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 96:4-5.

messenger, among the people who had no Scripture, to recite His revelations to them, to make them grow spiritually and teach them the Scripture and wisdom.”<sup>1</sup> In the ḥadīth: “God did not send me to be harsh, but He sent me as a teacher, making things easy.”<sup>2</sup>

4. God Almighty mentions the tools of knowledge in the Holy Qurʾān, including: “He taught by the pen,”<sup>3</sup> and: “Nun. By the pen and what they write.”<sup>4</sup> The two verses draw attention to the importance of the pen as the writing tool by which knowledge is recorded, preserved, and transmitted over time and space and succession of generations.<sup>5</sup>
5. God Almighty began the final heavenly message by commanding knowledge: “Read in the name of your Lord who created.”<sup>6</sup>
6. God Almighty commanded His Prophet (PBUH) to seek knowledge:<sup>7</sup> “And say, ‘My Lord, increase me in knowledge.’”<sup>8</sup> This is the clearest evidence of the preciousness of knowledge, its high status, and God Almighty’s great love for it. The Prophet (PBUH) constantly asked God for knowledge, as in the ḥadīth: “O God, benefit me with what You have taught me, teach me what will benefit me, and increase me in knowledge.”<sup>9</sup> This is evidence of the virtue of knowledge and an encouragement to acquire it whenever possible.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 62:2.

<sup>2</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 1478, 4:187.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 96:4.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 68:1.

<sup>5</sup> ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, *al-Tafsīr al-Bayānī*, 2:23.

<sup>6</sup> Qurʾān, 96:1.

<sup>7</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 2:407.

<sup>8</sup> Qurʾān, 20:114.

<sup>9</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ḥadīth no. 3599, 5:578; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, ḥadīth no. 251, 1:92.

<sup>10</sup> Majma‘ al-Buḥūth al-Islāmiyya bil-Azhar, *al-Tafsīr al-Wasīṭ lil-Qurʾān al-Karīm* (Cairo: al-Maṭābī‘ al-Amīriyya, 1993), 6:1072.

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## Methods of Gaining Knowledge

Knowledge is the most precious thing a person can strive to acquire and the noblest pursuit in which to spend their life. Scholars have mentioned beneficial ways to acquire knowledge and effective methods to attain it, including:

**First: Enrolling in official educational institutions:** The basis of seeking knowledge is to take it from specialists. The teacher takes the student by the hand and shows him where to start and how to learn. Teachers explain the obscure and clarify problems. Students also learn good morals and useful manners, through their teacher's words and demeanour. When the mother of Imām Mālik, may God have mercy on him, wanted to teach him, she told him: "Go to Rabī'a and learn of his manners before you learn his knowledge."<sup>1</sup>

Educational institutions, including schools and universities, represent an ideal learning environment, guaranteeing students a comprehensive and integrated education that helps them build themselves, increase their knowledge and information, acquire useful life skills, and explore new fields of knowledge, thanks to the resources they provide, including:

- Rich and intellectually sound curricula, prepared with high professionalism, that suit students' levels and capabilities, thus developing their level, enriching their knowledge acquisition, and equipping them with constructive critical thinking skills.
- Innovative and advanced technological means and tools that enrich the learning experience, make education easier, and provide faster access to information.
- Various teaching methods, including instruction, discussion, school activities, and others, which reinforce information among students of different levels of understanding, enhance their effective communication, and instil a spirit of teamwork.

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<sup>1</sup> al-Yahşabī, 'Ayāḍ b. Mūsa, *Tartīb al-Madārik wa Taqrīb al-Masālik* (Morocco: Maṭba'a Faḍāla, 1983), 1:130.

- Rich resources; such as libraries, laboratories, and technological tools that enhance the learning experience.

This is in addition to the many benefits found at educational institutions, including:

- Gaining academic recognition
- Building a successful career
- Developing a spirit of creativity and innovation
- Contributing to academic research
- Acquiring essential life skills

**Second: Reading:** One of the most important gateways to knowledge. The first command to seek knowledge was a command to read: “Read in the name of your Lord who created.”<sup>1</sup> Reading brings richness, cognitive expansion, intellectual maturity, and continuous renewal of information. It is a journey through the minds and understandings of men, and “there is nothing better than looking into the minds of men.”<sup>2</sup>

Traditional scholars were keen readers and interested in reading. One of them said: “I spent forty years, and I never spoke, slept, or reclined except with a book on my chest.”<sup>3</sup> Another said: “I never get enough of reading books, and if I see a book that I have not seen before, it is as if I have stumbled upon a treasure. If I said that I have read twenty thousand volumes, it would be more, and I am still seeking more.”<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, whoever desires to attain knowledge should be constantly engaged with books, reading extensively in their field of specialization and exploring other disciplines, leaving nothing out, so that their knowledge may broaden and their understanding deepen. Among the greatest means of expanding one’s understanding and opening horizons

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 96:1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn al-Jawzī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Alī, *al-Adhkiyā’* (NA: Maktaba al-Ghazālī, ND), 6.

<sup>3</sup> al-‘Umarī, *Masālik al-Abṣār*, 7:363.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn al-Jawzī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Alī, *Ṣayd al-Khājir* (Riyadh: Madār al-Waṭan lil-Nashr, 2016), 789.

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are books on philosophy and logic, history and biographies, language and literature, as well as books on the natural sciences, for this increases knowledge and strengthens faith.

Whoever examines the state of scholarship in Islamic civilization will find them reading across every discipline and science, including the sciences of the Qurʾān, *ḥadīth*, jurisprudence, language, sociology, philosophy, algebra, chemistry, pharmacy, biology, and literature. Prominent scholars excelled in all these fields, and distinguished scholars emerged, as previously mentioned. Indeed, God Almighty did not bestow knowledge upon one people to the exclusion of others, nor did He confine it to one era to the exclusion of another. Rather, He made knowledge shared and distributed among His servants, opening to the later what He withheld from the earlier, alerting the less knowledgeable to what the more knowledgeable overlooked, and reviving it through later scholars who follow the words of earlier ones, and through successors who challenge the past.<sup>1</sup> The student of knowledge should read critically and thoroughly to contribute to the academic and civilizational progress.

**Third: Reflection and contemplation:** God Almighty opened the door to understanding the universe. Through contemplation of the Qurʾān, God also opened the doors to reflecting upon His signs: “Travel throughout the earth and see how He brings life into being; and He will bring the next life into being. God has power over all things,”<sup>2</sup> and: “There truly are signs in the creation of the heavens and earth, and in the alternation of night and day, for those with understanding, who remember God standing, sitting, and lying down, who reflect on the creation of the heavens and earth: ‘Our Lord! You have not created all this without purpose– You are far above that! so protect us from the torment of the Fire,’”<sup>3</sup> and many other verses that open the doors to the sciences of the universe and life.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Qutayba, ‘Abd Allāh b. Muslim, *Iṣlāḥ Ghalaṭ Abī ‘Ubayda fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth* (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1983), 45.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 29:20.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 3:190-91.

Contemplation is a gateway to knowledge and understanding: “It is He who made the stars, so that they can guide you when land and sea are dark: We have made the signs clear for those who have knowledge.”<sup>1</sup> God Almighty urged contemplation in more than one verse, such as: “Do they not look into the dominion of the heavens and the earth and all that God has created?”<sup>2</sup> This is a clear text urging contemplation of all that exists, for existence points to the Creator. The more complete one’s understanding of creation, the more complete one’s understanding of the Creator. It is as if the Sharī’a has encouraged the contemplation of existence through reason and demanded its understanding through reason.<sup>3</sup> This is evident in several verses, including: “Do they not see the sky above them—how We have built and adorned it, with no rifts in it,”<sup>4</sup> and: “Do the disbelievers not see how rain clouds are formed how the heavens are lifted, how the mountains are raised high, how the earth is spread out?”<sup>5</sup>

**Fourth: Asking experts:** Asking questions is one of the most important keys to knowledge. God Almighty said: “Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know.”<sup>6</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) said: “The cure for ignorance is asking questions.”<sup>7</sup> Through questioning, the locks of knowledge are opened, its mysteries are clarified, and its difficulties are resolved. It was narrated on the authority of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may God be pleased with him, the Prophet said: “Knowledge is a lock, and its key is asking questions.”<sup>8</sup> And on the authority of Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī, the Prophet said: “Knowledge is a treasure, and it is opened by asking questions.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 6:97.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 7:185.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Rushd, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, *Faṣl al-Maqāl*, 22.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 50:6.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 88:14-20.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 16:43.

<sup>7</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ḥadīth no. 336, 1:251.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn al-Mu’taz, ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad, *al-Badī’ fī’l-Badī’* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1990), 78.

<sup>9</sup> al-Dāramī, *Musnad al-Dāramī*, 1:485.

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Therefore, seeking knowledge necessarily involves asking specialists. It was said to Ibn ‘Abbās, may God be pleased with them both: “How did you acquire this knowledge?” He said: “With a questioning tongue and an understanding heart.”<sup>1</sup>

A specialist is one who is qualified to be asked and to provide useful information. As for the non-specialist, he either does not answer because he does not know, or he answers without knowledge and makes mistakes and causes others to make mistakes. It has been said: “If a person speaks about something other than his art, he will come up with wonders!”<sup>2</sup>

**Fifth: Utilizing modern technology:** Modern technology offers tremendous potential, helping students expand their knowledge and assisting them in their research journey, provided they use it wisely and rationally, without overusing it or becoming completely dependent on it. Among the most important available technological resources for achieving this are:

- Online educational platforms: A fertile educational environment that can be referred to and utilized to expand knowledge and open to new sciences. The Ministry of Education in the UAE has introduced 13 global educational platforms on its smart learning portal, which rely on artificial intelligence and are characterized by advanced educational features, and are able to recognize the different levels of Emirati school students and adapt to their educational and pedagogical needs.
- Educational applications: The importance of electronic educational applications in enriching student scientific knowledge is undeniable; these include:
  - o Educational games, which appeal to students and capture their attention, provide enjoyment during the learning process

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<sup>1</sup> al-Māwardī, *Adab al-Dunyā wa’l-Dīn*, 70.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, ‘Alī b. Ḥajar, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma’rifā, 1959), 3:584.

- E-books, which compete to attract students with their engaging and captivating teaching methods
- Educational videos: Several educational channels are available on YouTube, providing easy and readily available knowledge in modern and interesting ways, through lectures and courses in various fields of knowledge, enabling students to fully develop their knowledge and skills.
- Online libraries: The best alternative to paper libraries, due to their ease of access and the ease of searching for information in them, through smart devices.
- Search engines and artificial intelligence: Knowledge can be acquired by searching on search engines or artificial intelligence sites and applications such as ChatGPT and others. These are useful methods for those who use them well, know how to invest in them, can distinguish correct outputs, and are armed with a sound intellectual identity that protects them from being swayed by what they may contain of false and extremist ideas.

**Sixth: Education and authorship:** Spending on everything diminishes and reduces it, except for knowledge, which always increases and develops. Spending on knowledge is done by teaching it through instruction or authorship. God Almighty has obligated everyone who knows something good to reveal and spread it, and He has made that zakat of knowledge, just as He has made charity the zakat of money.<sup>1</sup> God Almighty says: “Yet it is not right for all the believers to go out [to battle] together: out of each community, a group should go out to gain understanding of the religion, so that they can teach their people when they return and so that they can guard themselves against evil.”<sup>2</sup> On the authority of ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Amr, may God be pleased with him, the Prophet (PBUH) said: “Convey from me, even if it is a single verse.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Iṣlāḥ Ghalaṭ*, 45.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 9:122.

<sup>3</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 3274, 3:1275.

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The same notion applies to every beneficial and useful knowledge: if you spread it through teaching or writing, it grows and increases, its benefit becomes widespread, and its goodness increases. Ibn Jamā'a, may God have mercy on him, said: "Engaging in classification, collection, and authorship – with complete virtue and full competence – reveals the realities of arts and the subtleties of sciences, due to the need for much investigation, reading, research, and review. It is as al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī said: It strengthens memory, sharpens the heart, hones the mind, improves expression, earns a good reputation and a great reward, and immortalizes it until the end of time."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Jamā'a, Ibrāhīm b. Abī al-Faḍl, *Tadhkira al-Sāmi' wa'l-Mutakallim fī Adab al-ʿĀlim wa'l-Muta'allim* (Beirut: Dā'ira al-Ma'ārif, 1935), 29-30.

## Things a Student of Knowledge Must Be Aware of:

### First: Adherence to ethics, including:

- Academic integrity: The student of knowledge strives for accuracy and honesty in transmission, attributing statements and opinions to their originators. He does not quote a scholar or source and then deliberately omit mentioning it. Rather, he is careful to attribute every statement to its author and to credit every quotation to its source.
- Patience and perseverance: Knowledge requires patience and perseverance, “because the level of knowledge is the level of inheritance from the prophets, and lofty goals are only attained through great effort. In Muslim, it is narrated on the authority of Yahya b. Abī Kathīr: ‘Knowledge cannot be attained with bodily ease...’<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, he should not burden himself beyond his capacity, lest he become weary and bored, for he might develop an aversion that cannot be remedied. Rather, his approach should be moderate. And every person knows himself best.”<sup>2</sup>

**Second: A gradual approach to seeking knowledge:** This is done by moving from an easier stage in knowledge to a more difficult one. One should not try to receive all knowledge of a topic at once, because that is difficult for the student, so he becomes bored and stops learning. The Holy Qurʾān has indicated this noble character in seeking knowledge in the words of God Almighty: “No person to whom God had given the Scripture, wisdom, and prophethood would ever say to people, ‘Be my servants, not God’s.’ [He would say], ‘You should be devoted to God because you have taught the Scripture and studied it closely.’”<sup>3</sup> It has been said in the interpretation of the devoted servant of the Lord: He is

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<sup>1</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 612, 2:104.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Jamā’a, *Tadhkira al-Sāmi’*, 27-28.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 3:79.

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the one who is raised with the small sciences until he reaches its major ones.”<sup>1</sup> al-Zuhri said: “Whoever seeks knowledge all at once, misses it all.”<sup>2</sup> Others said: “The student should not take on more than he can bear, but rather limit himself to the little that he can master, memorize, and perfect.”<sup>3</sup> In the context of explaining the ethics of the student, al-Ghazali wrote: “He should not delve into any branch of knowledge all at once, but rather observe the order and begin with the most important... and he should not delve into a branch until he has mastered the branch before it, for the sciences are arranged in a necessary order, and some of them are a path to others, and the successful one is he who observes that order and progression...and let his intention in every science that he seeks be to progress to what is above it.”<sup>4</sup>

**Third: Continuity and uninterrupted learning:** The value of knowledge should accompany a person throughout their life, only ceasing with death. God Almighty commanded His Prophet Moses (PBUH) to seek knowledge from a righteous servant despite his exalted status. Scholars have said that this teaches us that a scholar must desire and strive to increase their knowledge, and not be content with what they possess, just as Moses did.<sup>5</sup> No matter how high one’s knowledge, one should never think that they have reached a stage where they are no longer required to seek further knowledge. Ibn al-Jawzi wrote: “The best thing is to increase one’s knowledge, for whoever limits themselves to what they know and thinks it sufficient will become stubborn in their opinion, and their self-importance will prevent them from benefiting further, and discussion will reveal their error.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Sam’ani, Mansur b. Muhammad, *Tafsir al-Qur’an*, 1:336.

<sup>2</sup> al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, Ahmad b. ‘Ali, *al-Jami’ li-Akhlaq al-Rawi wa Adab al-Sami’* (Riyadh: Maktaba al-Ma’arif, 2022), 1:232.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> al-Ghazali, *Ihya’ Ulum al-Din*, 1:52.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn Battal, ‘Ali b. Khalaf, *Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari* (Riyadh: Maktaba al-Rushd, 2003), 1:160.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn al-Jawzi, *Sayd al-Khatir*, 127.

**Fourth: Acting upon what one has learned:** Action consolidates knowledge, blesses it, and makes it beneficial. Knowledge is a tree, and action is its fruit, and knowledge is the parent, and action is the offspring. ‘Alīb. Abī Ṭālib, may God be pleased with him, said: “Knowledge calls out to action, and if it responds, it will remain, otherwise it will depart.”<sup>1</sup> Everyone who earns knowledge must apply it to his reality and achieve self- and societal development and improvement, as the previous scholars did throughout Islamic history. Among them were the physicians who served their religion and country with medicine, the chemists, the physicists, and the well-versed in the sciences of philosophy and logic. All of them acted upon what they learned and benefited their country, their society, and the world with what they acquired. Examples of them have been mentioned in previous sections.

## Science and Religion

Speaking about Muslim scholars and referring to their scientific achievements that contributed to building human civilization leads us to the nature of the relationship between science and religion, within the framework of distinguishing between the two concepts and what is special about each. If science seeks to build an organized, objective knowledge about the phenomena of the world, based on a clear and evident method, with the aim of reaching the laws that control these phenomena, in order to harness them for the benefit of man, then religion shares this goal with science and goes beyond it to clarify the ways of salvation and answer the question of destiny.

Science, in its modern sense, has been dominated by the materialistic characteristic that has limited its goal to controlling nature, and then man, and manipulating both. Hence, all institutions have worked to develop science and technology, as the modernists believed that science alone can eliminate disparities between nations, promoting equality

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn al-‘Adīm, ‘Umar b. Aḥmad, *Bughīya al-Ṭalab fī Tārīkh Ḥalab* (London: Markaz Dirāsāt al-Makhṭūṭat al-Islāmiyya, 2016), 8:142.

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among peoples, and truly elevate man and achieve good. However, this perception led to the moral deterioration and put the problem of scientific ethics in question.

It is true that science has provided conditions of comfort and made life easier for individuals in the material world, but on the other hand, it has shown humanity immoral ways. The development of technological sciences in the twentieth century has led to inhumane and destructive results. Science has become an arbitrary part of humanity, and the development of technological science has led to the deterioration of the human condition.

Science has established its values based on the principle of “everything that is possible must be done,” thus turning possibility into obligation. However, obligation, “what must be,” is fundamentally an ethical principle. The development of science—in its modern technical sense—has led to ethical deterioration, as it has reached its limit through objectification and alienation, that is, the violation of ethical values. This will lead us to question the role of religion within scientific practice.

Here religion appears as a saviour and deliverer of humanity from the encroachment of science and technology. Auguste Comte tried to make a religion from the results of science, which he called the “religion of humanity,” one suitable for all that offers people comfort and reassurance in this world. But this religion failed because it was based on science alone and because it rejected divine religions. This causes us to contemplate the rich and complementary relationship that religion and science have in Islam, a relationship that encourages science: “And say, ‘My Lord, increase me in knowledge.’”<sup>1</sup> Islam elevates the status of scholars: “Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees.”<sup>2</sup> Islam encourages intellectual and experimental inquiry and calls upon Muslims to explore new horizons through knowledge: “Jinn and mankind, if you can pass beyond the

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 20:114.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 58:11.

regions of heaven and earth, then do so: you will not pass without Our authority.”<sup>1</sup> These and other noble verses achieve integration between science and religion, preserving the status of knowledge, for it is the path to development, a responsibility entrusted to humankind: “He is the One Who created you.”<sup>2</sup> “And He created you from the earth and settled you therein.”<sup>3</sup> Islam protects science with its values so that it does not deviate from its mission of developing the earth and seek to destroy it, “And do not cause corruption on the earth after its reformation.”<sup>4</sup> God preserves the essence of humanity as a rational, thinking, willing, free, and dignified being, in opposition to the enslavement of technology and its usurpation of their will and freedom: “We have honoured the children of Adam and carried them by land and sea; We have provided good sustenance for them and favoured them specially above many of those We have created.”<sup>5</sup>

The call for an integrated relationship between religion and science is the only way to save humanity from the overwhelming danger of technology, to preserve science’s utilitarian aspect that serves humanity, and to deepen humanity by making science the path to knowing God and worshipping Him, as well as deepening the human virtues represented in wisdom, courage, chastity, altruism, perfection, generosity and creative ambition. Science without religion and ethics is a ruin for souls, an annihilation of spirits, and destruction for all of humanity.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 55:33.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 58:11.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 11:61.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 7:56.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 17:70.

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## The United Arab Emirates and Science

The United Arab Emirates, guided by the insightful vision of its wise leadership, is making significant efforts to promote scientific research and technological development. This stems from its vision for the future, as clearly indicated in the second pillar of the UAE Centennial Plan 2071, which emphasizes the importance of this applied aspect in future education. This pillar aims to “enhance the teaching of advanced science and technology, particularly in the fields of space, engineering, innovation, and medical and health sciences; instil ethical values and positive attitudes that elevate the level of professionalism in educational institutions; cultivate minds open to the experiences of developed nations; establish mechanisms for discovering students’ individual talents from the earliest stages of their education; empower schools to be nurturing environments for entrepreneurship and innovation; and transform educational institutions in the country into global research centres.”<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the UAE hosts and sponsors numerous international conferences and exhibitions in science and technology, thereby fostering scientific exchange and knowledge development both within the UAE and internationally.<sup>2</sup>

The efforts of the United Arab Emirates have begun to yield notable results, as it ranked first in the Arab world and twenty-fifth globally in the 2019 Global Competitiveness Report, issued by the World Economic Forum.<sup>3</sup> The UAE also recently ranked first regionally in the 2023/2024 Human Development Index report issued by the United Nations Development Programme, advancing in the global ranking by nine places compared to its ranking in the previous report, and ranking seventeenth globally out of 193 countries included in the report, ahead of countries such as Canada, the United States of America, and Japan.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://uaecabinet.ae/ar/uae-centennial-plan-2071>.

<sup>2</sup> Various Authors, “Science and Technology in the UAE: Building Science Capacity and Supporting Innovation,” *Arabian Humanities*, 2014.

<sup>3</sup> al-Khalili, Jamal, “Science in the UAE: Current Status and Future Prospects,” *Nature Middle East*, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> UAE Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Centre: <https://fcsc.gov.ae/>.

The most prominent Emirati institutions in the scientific and technological fields are:

1. Emirates Institution for Advanced Science and Technology (EIAST):<sup>1</sup> This is one of the most prominent scientific institutions in the UAE and supports scientific research and technological development across a range of fields, including physics, chemistry, and mathematics. This institution is committed to promoting a culture of scientific research and technological innovation, in line with the goals and vision of the wise government, which centres on building a sustainable knowledge-based economy. EIAST has opened the fields of knowledge and science to every outstanding Emirati through launching the “Go Forth” scholarship, dedicated to high school and university students who excel in various engineering disciplines, such as mechanical, electrical, electronic, chemical, computer and software engineering, communications, in addition to space sciences and physics. The result was that 95% of the engineers developing projects launched by EIAST are graduates of national universities.
2. Khalifa Centre for Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering:<sup>2</sup> Since its opening in 2014, the Khalifa Centre for Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering has come a long way in achieving leadership in the field of genetic engineering and plant biotechnology, through scientific discovery and innovation to produce and modify plants with agricultural and economic characteristics. The centre’s mission is based on studying the genome, with the aim of developing crop production and achieving food security.
3. Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC):<sup>3</sup> The Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre began its journey in 2006 as the entity

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://www.argaam.com/ar/article/articledetail/id/987668>.

<sup>2</sup> See: <https://www.uaeu.ac.ae/ar/research/centers/kcgeb>.

<sup>3</sup> See: <https://www.mbrsc.ae/ar/homepage-ar>.

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responsible for hosting the UAE National Space Program. The Centre has undertaken the tasks of building, developing, and operating several Earth observation satellites, providing imagery, analysis, and study services, and delivering relevant data to scientific communities and research centres worldwide. Among the satellites owned by the Centre are DubaiSat-1 and DubaiSat-2. In 2018, the Centre launched KhalifaSat, the first fully Emirati-made satellite, and unveiled its plan to develop the new MBZ-SAT satellite, which will be the most advanced in the region for high-resolution imaging.

4. The Future Observatory:<sup>1</sup> This observatory was launched in 2016. It is a scientific platform specializing in monitoring and publishing the latest global developments daily in the fields of space science, artificial intelligence, health, virtual reality, and many others, through studies, research articles, graphs, and interactive visual materials, in simplified Arabic and English.
5. The UAE Scientific Laboratories Platform:<sup>2</sup> The UAE government launched the UAE Scientific Laboratories Platform in 2018 to connect laboratories in the country with scientists and experts, and to provide scientists with direct and quick access to more than 150 precision research devices distributed throughout the country, in addition to world-class research equipment and devices, with the aim of enhancing local scientific research efforts, supporting researchers and academics, and developing scientific and technological capabilities in the UAE.
6. Mohammed Bin Rashid Centre for Future Research:<sup>3</sup> This centre forms a global platform designed by the Dubai Future Foundation

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://futurism.com/>.

<sup>2</sup> See: <https://u.ae/ar-ae/about-theuae/science-and-technology/inspiration-behind-the-advancement>.

<sup>3</sup> See: <https://www.dubaifuture.ae/ar/insights/h-h-mohammed-bin-rashid-launches-centre-h-future-to-dedicated/>.

to create communication between young scientists in the UAE and others around the world, in order to exchange knowledge and create new opportunities through advanced scientific research available via the Internet, and to invest the results of research in improving the quality of human life and building prosperous knowledge societies. The Mohammed bin Rashid Center for Future Research introduces a new concept of scientific collaboration by adopting participatory research among scientists and aims to:

- Achieve research ten times faster than traditional research
- Reduce research costs by 70%
- Accelerate the scientific research process by 50%

The launch of this centre supports the development of the space industries and advanced sciences sector in the UAE, in line with the UAE Centennial Plan 2071, which aims to have the UAE hold a distinguished position in various sectors by the centenary of its establishment. Supporting the development of this sector are the Mars Science City, launched after the UAE's annual meetings, and the Mars 2117 Project, which seeks to advance human presence on the Red Planet.

To maximize benefits and invest in emerging scientific minds, the centre offers grants to the best researchers worldwide, accelerating and facilitating the scientific funding process and enabling researchers to focus on the most important challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The centre also works to openly publish all its research and results to academic and research communities worldwide.

The efforts of the United Arab Emirates in enabling experimental sciences stem from its vision aimed at empowering generations to build a strong scientific state able to keep pace with the challenges of the future, ensure the continuity of development, and sustain happiness for decades to come, based on knowledge as the most important economic component.

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## The Value of Wisdom (*Ḥikma*)

Wisdom is a human value that Islam has long concerned itself with and a key characteristic of the rational human being. Wisdom is the fruit of diverse knowledge, experience, accumulated expertise, and the effect of deep understanding, mature thinking, and conscious perception, which leads to balanced statements, upright actions, and correct decisions.

### Definition of Wisdom

In Arabic, wisdom (*ḥikma* - حكمة) can be defined in several ways:

Linguistically: The word has several meanings in Arabic:

1. Prevention and control: Ibn Fāris said, “The letters *ḥā*, *kāf*, and *mīm* form a single root meaning prevention. The first meaning of this is judgment, which is preventing injustice. The bit of an animal is called a *ḥakama* because it restrains it.<sup>1</sup> It is said, ‘I bridled the animal and made it strong...’ Wisdom is analogous to this because it prevents ignorance.”<sup>2</sup>
2. Judgment and management:<sup>3</sup> Ibn al-Athīr said, “Among the names of God Almighty are *al-Ḥakam* and *al-Ḥakīm*, which mean the ruler, the judge.”<sup>4</sup> al-Azharī said, “*Ḥikma* is judging with justice.”<sup>5</sup>
3. Perfection and mastery: Someone who masters and perfects things is called a *ḥakīm*, and someone who is skilled in the intricacies of

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth*, 1:420.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 2:91.

<sup>3</sup> Various Authors, *al-Mu'jam al-Wasīl*, 1:190.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth*, 1:418.

<sup>5</sup> al-Azharī, *Tahdhīb al-Lughā*, 4:69.

crafts and perfects them is also called a *ḥakīm*.<sup>1</sup>

4. Knowledge and science: Ibn al-Athīr said, “Wisdom is the knowledge of the best things through the best sciences.”<sup>2</sup>
5. Status: From this it was said: “God raised his *ḥikma*; that is, his status and position, as it is said: He has *ḥikma* with us, that is, his status.”<sup>3</sup>

In technical usage, *ḥikma* has been defined in several ways, the most important of which are:

- “Knowledge of the true nature of things as they are and acting accordingly.”<sup>4</sup>
- “Abandoning what is undesirable and doing what is appropriate.”<sup>5</sup>
- “Performing actions that have a praiseworthy outcome.”<sup>6</sup>
- “Accuracy in speech and action.”<sup>7</sup>

From the above, it appears that wisdom is of two types:

- Theoretical wisdom: which is the understanding of the true nature, meanings, and objectives of things.
- Practical wisdom: which is situating things in their proper place.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth*, 1:419.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth*, 31:512.

<sup>4</sup> al-Zubaydī, *Tāj al-Urūs*, 31:512.

<sup>5</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 2:422.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-Bayān*, 5:576; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad, *Tafsīr al-Qur‘ān al-Aẓīm* (Riyadh: Maktaba Nizār Muṣṭafa al-Bāz, 1998), 2:531.

<sup>8</sup> al-Bahūtī, ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad, *Manāzil al-Sā‘irīn ila Maqāmāt Iyāka Na‘bud wa Iyāka Nasta‘īn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, ND), 78.

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The relationship between the linguistic and technical meanings is that the wise person proceeds from knowledge and insight, which prevent him from doing anything inappropriate, and drive him to excellence and perfection, so he does not act except in accordance with what is right. He does not judge except in accordance with what is just, and thus his status is raised among people and his worth and importance are magnified among them.

## The Importance of Wisdom

Wisdom is of great importance in human life; it serves as a guiding light, directing behaviour towards sound actions, correct decision-making, and facing life's challenges with awareness and insight. It also helps individuals build a mature, resilient, moderate, and balanced personality, enhancing their ability to think deeply and consider consequences. Furthermore, it is a sound path to building healthy and balanced relationships with others, contributing to mutual understanding, empathy, and respect. Wisdom is a key factor in success across all aspects of life. As some have said, "Wisdom is among the paths to success and the means to prosperity."<sup>1</sup> It is an effective way to prevent risks and problems, and its importance is evident in the following:

1. The Holy Qur'an's interest in it: The Holy Qur'an has shown remarkable interest in wisdom, mentioning it in 208 places. The exact word is mentioned in 20 places.
2. It is one of the attributes of God Almighty: "He is the Supreme Master over His creatures, the All Wise, the All Aware."<sup>2</sup> al-Azharī said: "Among the attributes of God are: the Judge, the Wise, and the Ruler. The meanings of these names are close, and God knows

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn al-Nahhās, Yahya b. Abī al-Khayr, *Ḥusn al-Tanbīh limā Warad fi'l-Tashbīh* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2001), 1:184.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'an, 6:18.

best what He intended by them, and we must believe that they are among His names.”<sup>1</sup>

3. It is one of the attributes of the Qurʾān: “Yā Sīn. By the wise Qurʾan.”<sup>2</sup> This is because the Qurʾān is the word of the All-Wise which speaks with truth and wisdom.<sup>3</sup> It is also because the Qurʾān is decisive, with no disagreement or disturbance in it, and it is not subject to invalidity or contradiction.<sup>4</sup>
4. God Almighty bestowed it upon His prophets, the righteous, and the wise among His servants: for wisdom is the essence of their message and the method of their dealings. About Abraham: “We have indeed given the family of Abraham the Scripture and wisdom.”<sup>5</sup> On the tongue of Jesus: “I have come to you with wisdom.”<sup>6</sup> About the Prophet David: “And We gave him wisdom.”<sup>7</sup> About Luqman the Wise: “And We had certainly given Luqman wisdom.”<sup>8</sup>
5. It is one of the great missions of the Prophets, peace be upon them.<sup>9</sup> God Almighty said about our master and Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH): “And He teaches them the Book and wisdom.”<sup>10</sup> Abū Ḥayyān said that this verse refers to: “the Qurʾān and the Sharīʿa and the explanation of the rulings.”<sup>11</sup> He commanded His Prophet

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, 12:140.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 36:1-2.

<sup>3</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 17:184.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth*, 1:419; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ li Aḥkām al-Qurʾān*, 15:5.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 4:54.

<sup>6</sup> Qurʾān, 43:63.

<sup>7</sup> Qurʾān, 38:20.

<sup>8</sup> Qurʾān, 31:12.

<sup>9</sup> al-Shāfiʿī, Muḥammad b. Idrīs, *al-Risāla* (Cairo: Dār al-Turāth, 1940), 32, 78.

<sup>10</sup> Qurʾān, 62:2.

<sup>11</sup> Abū Ḥayyān, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf, *al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ fīʾl-Tafsīr* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1993), 1:626.

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(PBUH) to follow the path of wisdom in his words and deeds: “[Prophet], call [people] to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good teaching.”<sup>1</sup>

6. It is the source of all virtues: God Almighty made wisdom the source of all good and the goal of all virtue, saying: “He gives wisdom to whoever He will. Whoever is given wisdom has truly been given much good, but only those with insight bear this in mind.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, the most perfect of people after the prophets are those who possess the greatest share of wisdom and the most complete inheritance of it. Wisdom is the balance upon which God Almighty has built existence, and through it, people’s lives are ordered, and their security, stability, cohesion, and unity are achieved.

## Methods of Gaining Wisdom

Wisdom is attained by adopting its means, the most important of which are:

1. **Striving to Seek Knowledge:** God Almighty has linked wisdom and knowledge in many places in the Holy Qur’ān. About Joseph: “When he reached maturity, We gave him judgement and knowledge: this is how We reward those who do good.”<sup>3</sup> About Lot: “We gave Lot sound judgement and knowledge and saved him from the community who practised obscenities– they were shameless people who broke God’s law!”<sup>4</sup> About Solomon and David: “And made Solomon understand the case [better], though We gave sound judgement and knowledge to both of them.”<sup>5</sup> About Moses: “When Moses reached full maturity and manhood, We gave him wisdom and knowledge: this is how

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 16:125.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 2:269.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 12:22.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 21:74.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 21:79.

We reward those who do good.”<sup>1</sup> al-Zajjāj wrote: “That is, We made him wise and knowledgeable.”<sup>2</sup> al-Rāzī interpreted wisdom as knowledge, writing: “Wisdom is the knowledge that is connected to action. For one who knows something but does not act in accordance with his knowledge is not called wise. Rather, the one who acts in accordance with knowledge is the wise one.”<sup>3</sup> This is because knowledge is light, by which its possessor perceives truths, helps expand cognitive horizons, assists in understanding various aspects of life, develops skills in constructive critical thinking, enhances the ability to solve problems, and establishes the values of deliberation, composure, reflection, and avoiding haste. Thus, a person understands matters deeply, encompasses all their dimensions, and analyses them comprehensively, which leads to sound actions and correct decisions. This is the essence of wisdom, and for this reason, God Almighty distinguished between scholars and others: “Say, ‘How can those who know be equal to those who do not know?’”<sup>4</sup>

2. Gain Experience: Accumulated experience, repeated trials, and encountering diverse situations are among the greatest aids in acquiring wisdom, because those with experience and expertise:
  - Know what is beneficial and pursue it, and what is harmful and avoid it. Ibn Ḥajar said: “Whoever has experienced things knows their benefit and harm, so he does nothing except with wisdom.”<sup>5</sup> Thus, wisdom is a safeguard for a person against intellectual extremism and behavioural deviation in all their forms and dimensions.
  - Learn from the mistakes and challenges they face, mastering ways

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 28:14.

<sup>2</sup> al-Zajjāj, Ibrāhīm b. al-Sirrī, *Ma’ānī al-Qur’ān wa l’rābihi* (NA, 1988), 3:99; al-Māwardī, *al-Nukat wa l’-Uyūn*, 3:21.

<sup>3</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 24:543.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 39:9.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *Fath al-Bārī*, 10:530.

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to overcome and transcend them. Hence, it is said: “A person cannot be described as wise, nor can they attain that level, until they experience and try things, discerning the sources of error and avoiding them.”<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the Prophet (PBUH) said: “A believer is not stung twice from the same hole.”<sup>2</sup>

- Develop insight into the consequences of things, think about outcomes and results, and build up a large stock of methods and ways that enable them to avoid problems.
  - Are distinguished by a deep understanding of souls and personalities, a precise knowledge of the surrounding environment, and a comprehensive grasp of various aspects of life, which helps them to deal wisely and prudently with different temperaments and diverse situations in various environments. al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī wrote: “Wisdom is a light that reveals the hidden aspects of things, and wisdom is not complete until one examines matters directly with one’s own soul. The wise person sees the consequences of things, their beauty and their ugliness. When one sees this with one’s senses, it becomes a clear vision that cannot be erased or forgotten. Wisdom is completed after experience, because before experience was the perception of the heart, and then became the perception of the eye. Wisdom was the knowledge of certainty, and now it is the eye of certainty. This is why it is said: ‘The mind is acquired through experience.’”<sup>3</sup>
3. Continuously reading books of wisdom: Through them, the reader learns about the values, wisdom, experiences, and stances of others. Among the most important things to read and study to acquire and accumulate wisdom are:

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<sup>1</sup> al-Khaṭṭābī, Ḥamad b. Muḥammad, *Gharīb al-Ḥadīth* (Riyadh: Maktaba ‘Ubaykān, 2002), 1:618.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 6133, 8:31.

<sup>3</sup> al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī, *Nawādir al-Uṣūl fī Aḥādīth al-Rusūl* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, ND), 2:297.

- The Holy Qurʾān: The Holy Qurʾān is the source of divine wisdom. It is the word of God, the Wis and All-Knowing: “By the Wise Qurʾān.”<sup>1</sup> God included profound wisdom in the Qurʾān and the biographies of the wise prophets and righteous people, and the wise guidance, useful lessons, and successful life experiences that their stories contain. For the reader to benefit from the wisdom of the Qurʾān, he must continue to recite it and ponder its meanings and verses.
- The Prophet’s biography: God Almighty sent our Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) to teach people wisdom at all levels: “And He teaches them the Book and wisdom.”<sup>2</sup> The Prophet was the wisest and most intelligent person. He spoke with wisdom and acted with wisdom, with those near and far, those who agreed and those who disagreed with him. His biography is full of wise situations and actions, from which the believer draws what makes him wise in all his affairs and circumstances.
- Biographies of the Wise: The Holy Qurʾān tells us the biography of Luqman the Wise and informs us of some of his profound wisdom and wise advice to his son as he admonishes him: “And We had certainly given Luqman wisdom.”<sup>3</sup> This is a sign to study the biographies of the wise, those who have a firm footing in knowledge, long experience in life, and positions that reflect reason and foresight, to be guided by their wisdom, emulate their values, principles, and morals, and to draw from their sermons, lessons, and examples of benefits for a person in his religious and worldly life.
- Books of wisdom and proverbs: A cultural treasure trove brimming with values and wisdom; they include the finest words of the wise, and offer a glimpse into their social standards, moral principles, and the essence of their experiences, all in concise and expressive

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 36:2.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 2:129.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 31:12.

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phrases, precise in formulation, rich in meaning, reflecting their understanding of life and their methods of dealing with it, which enables the reader to delve into the depths of different cultures, drawing inspiration from them for higher values, noble principles, and superior experiences; which enriches his thinking, broadens his horizons, and deepens his awareness.

4. Sitting with the Wise: Sitting with the wise, learning about their circumstances, listening to their words, and benefiting from their actions and stances, whether in gatherings, scholarly meetings, or similar settings, is among the greatest aids to acquiring wisdom. It was said to some scholars: “What is the most enjoyable thing?” They replied: “Sitting with the wise and discussing matters with scholars.”<sup>1</sup> It is narrated that Luqman the Wise advised his son, saying: “My son, sit with scholars and listen to the words of the wise, for God, Blessed and Exalted is He, revives hearts with the light of wisdom, just as He revives the dead earth with rain from the sky.”<sup>2</sup> Abū Juḥayfa said: “Sit with the elders, associate with the wise, and ask the scholars.”<sup>3</sup> That is, associate with them at all times, for they are correct in their words and deeds, and in their company lies the refinement of character.<sup>4</sup> By associating with them, one acquires from them the essence of their knowledge, the sum of their experiences, and the essence of their expertise, thus making it easier for him to know his goals and objectives, avoid pitfalls, and overcome obstacles. Abū al-‘Abbās b. ‘Aṭā’ said: “Whoever wants to be enlightened by the light of wisdom should sit with the wise and associate with people of understanding and intellect.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, *Nawādir al-Uṣūl*, 2:297.

<sup>2</sup> al-Aṣbahānī, *al-Muwaṭṭaʿ*, ḥadīth no. 2117, 2:181.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, ḥadīth no. 27243, 14:208.

<sup>4</sup> al-Mannāwī, *al-Taysīr bi Sharḥ al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaghīr*, 1:485.

<sup>5</sup> al-Aṣbahānī, Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh, *Ḥiliya al-Awliyā’ wa Ṭabaqāt al-Aṣfiyyā’* (Cairo: Maṭba’a al-Sa’āda, 1974), 10:303.

5. Consulting wise people: Those with sound minds, past experiences, good ideas, and complete integrity. Seeking their advice and seeking their opinion, especially in complex situations, important issues, and emerging developments, has clear importance and desired benefit. The one who seeks advice “adds to his opinion the opinions of the wise, and combines to his mind the minds of the wise.”<sup>1</sup> Also, consulting them broadens a person’s horizons, enables them to have a comprehensive understanding of what concerns them, to look at problems from different angles, open up multiple horizons of solutions, and make people aware of the strengths of a wise person’s advice so that a person can focus on them, and the weaknesses so that they can be avoided. ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz said: “Consultation is a door of mercy and a key to blessing, with which no opinion goes astray.”<sup>2</sup> Some wise men said: “If matters become difficult for you, then refer to the opinion of the wise, and seek the advice of the scholars. For it is better for you to ask and be safe than to act unilaterally and regret it. You should frequently consult those with sound minds, especially in important matters, for they rarely err in their opinion or lose their sense of what is right.”<sup>3</sup>
6. Participating in seminars and academic conferences: These discuss issues of thought, culture, and values. Seminars are like clubs brimming with knowledge, and platforms full of wisdom, enabling a person to exchange ideas with others, and to learn about multiple viewpoints, which nourishes the mind, enriches culture, corrects behaviour, broadens horizons and builds one’s personality, so that they become a wise person with all the pillars of wisdom in their thinking, words, actions and everything that emanates from them. One of the wise men said: “He who is disciplined by wisdom and made wise by experience has gained.”

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<sup>1</sup> al-Māwardī, *Adab al-Dīn wa’l-Duniyā*, 300.

<sup>2</sup> al-Mannāwī, ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf b. Tāj al-‘Ārifīn, *Fayḍ al-Qadīr Sharḥ al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaghīr* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, ND), 4:2.

<sup>3</sup> al-Māwardī, *Adab al-Dīn wa’l-Duniyā*, 303.

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7. Participating in social and voluntary activities: This is an opportunity to gain practical experience, life skills, enhance communication abilities, develop a sense of responsibility, deepen understanding of life, and learn how to deal with various circumstances and situations wisely, knowledgeably, and with patience and prudence.

It is well known that acquiring wisdom is a long journey and an extended path that requires patience, perseverance, practice and training, bearing the burdens of seeking knowledge, associating with people of intellect and wisdom, benefiting from their guidance, being keen to reflect and ponder on life experiences, and constantly feeling the need for continuous and sustainable learning.

## The Value of Mercy (*Raḥma*)

Mercy is one of the noble values and human principles of Islam. The Creator, Glory be to Him, is characterized by mercy, and He sent His messengers and prophets with it, and He deposited its meanings and contents in His books and messages, and He, Glory be to Him, established mercy in the souls of His creation and made them naturally inclined towards it. Mercy is an inner strength and psychological spaciousness that is integrated with the values of justice and firmness. It does not mean - in any way - leniency or weakness. The person with a merciful heart combines firmness and gentleness, seriousness and compassion in his dealings, according to what the private and public interest requires.

Mercy is a value that indicates the soundness of its possessor's heart, the purity of his intentions, and the clarity of his heart. Its manifestations are evident in showing compassion for people, being kind to them, treating them well, taking the initiative to fulfil their needs, and hastening to develop all goodness and righteousness for them. Mercy's effects appear in cohesive social relations, united human societies, and a world dominated by love, cooperation, and peace.

### Definition of Mercy (*Raḥma*)

In Arabic, *raḥma* (رحمة) has several meanings, the most important of which are:

1. Compassion, kindness, and tenderness: Ibn Fāris wrote: "The letters *ra*, *ḥa*, and *mīm* form a single root indicating tenderness, kindness, and compassion. From this, the female womb is called a *raḥim* because it is from it that which is shown mercy and tenderness, namely the child, originates."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Faris, *Maqayis al-Lughah*, 2:498.

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2. Kinship: Siblings come from the same womb (*raḥim*).<sup>1</sup>
  3. Kindness: From this comes the expression, “May God have mercy on so-and-so,” meaning: May He be kind to him and bestow His favour upon him. Based on this, it is narrated that mercy from God is a blessing and a favour.<sup>2</sup>

In technical usage, mercy has been defined in several ways, including:

al-Jāhīz wrote: “Mercy is a character trait composed of affection and grief. It is love for the one shown mercy, coupled with grief over the circumstances that led to the mercy shown to him.”<sup>3</sup> al-Rāghib defined it as: “A tenderness that necessitates showing kindness to the one shown mercy.”<sup>4</sup> al-Kafawī wrote: “It is an emotional state that often occurs in those with tender hearts, and it is the basis of the psychological inclination that is the basis of kindness.”<sup>5</sup>

Based on this, we can define mercy as a human quality composed of love and compassion, manifested in a desire for others’ good and in kindness shown to them.

## Importance of Mercy

Mercy is a fundamental and central virtue, possessed by the Lord of the Worlds, and conveyed through the prophets and messengers. It is enshrined in the teachings of the holy scriptures. In His infinite wisdom, God has made it a cornerstone that nourishes human bonds and strengthens social harmony. The importance of mercy manifests itself in several ways, most notably:

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Faris, *Maqayis al-Lugha*, 2:498.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> al-Jāhīz, ‘Amr b. Baḥr, *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq* (Ṭanṭā: Dār al-Ṣaḥāba lil-Nashr, 1989), 24.

<sup>4</sup> al-Rāghib al-Aṣḥānī, *al-Mufradāt fī Gharrīb al-Qur’ān*, 347.

<sup>5</sup> al-Kafawī, *al-Kuliyāt*, 471.

- The derivation of the two names of God (the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful) from the root of mercy, and His Majesty is described by it: Ibn al-Athīr wrote: “The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful are two names derived from mercy, and they are from the forms of exaggeration, and Raḥmān is more emphatic than Raḥīm.”<sup>1</sup> God’s mercy, glory be to Him, is above all mercy: “And He is the Most Merciful of the merciful.”<sup>2</sup> His mercy encompasses all things: “And My mercy encompasses all things.”<sup>3</sup> al-Fayrūzābādī wrote: “Mercy is a connecting cause between God and His servants. Through it He sent His messengers to them, revealed His books to them, guided them, settled them in His abode of reward, and provided for them and healed them.”<sup>4</sup> God’s mercy is manifested in His creation through kindness and favour, protection and forbearance, forgiveness and pardon. God Almighty said: “When those who believe in Our revelations come to you [Prophet], say, ‘Peace be upon you. Your Lord has taken it on Himself to be merciful: if any of you has foolishly done a bad deed, and afterwards repented and mended his ways, God is most forgiving and most merciful.’”<sup>5</sup>
- Mercy is one of the attributes of the prophets, peace be upon them. The Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful, sent His messengers with mercy to His creation, so their hearts were merciful towards them. They desired good for them and were compassionate towards them. Noah said to his people: “He said, ‘My people, think: if I did have a clear sign from my Lord, and He had given me grace of His own, though it was hidden from you, could we force you to accept it against your will?’”<sup>6</sup> And from the mercy of Abraham, the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya*, 2:210.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 12:92.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 7:156.

<sup>4</sup> al-Fayrūzābādī, Muḥammad b. Ya’qūb, *Baṣā’ir Dhawī al-Tamyīz fī Laṭā’if al-Kitāb al-‘Azīz* (Cairo: Lajna lḥyā’ al-Turāth al-Islāmī, 1973), 3:55.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 6:54.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 11:28.

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Friend of God towards his people: “So whoever follows me – he is of me; and whoever disobeys me – indeed, You are Forgiving and Merciful.”<sup>1</sup> And from the mercy of Jesus towards his people: “And if You forgive them, indeed, You are the Exalted in Might, the Wise.”<sup>2</sup> Just as He, Glory be to Him, sent the Prophet of Mercy, Muḥammad (PBUH): “And We have not sent you, [O Muḥammad], except as a mercy to the worlds.”<sup>3</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) said: “He only sent me as a mercy to the worlds.”<sup>4</sup>

- The divine scriptures are constitutions of mercy for humanity: God Almighty sent messengers and revealed with them books filled with the essence of mercy. Regarding the Torah, God says: “Once again, We gave Moses the Scripture, perfecting [Our favour] for those who do good, explaining everything clearly, as guidance and mercy, so that they might believe in the meeting with their Lord,”<sup>5</sup> and: “When Moses’ anger abated, he picked up the Tablets, on which were inscribed guidance and mercy for those who stood in awe of their Lord.”<sup>6</sup> Regarding the Holy Quran, God says: “Now clear evidence, guidance, and mercy have come to you from your Lord.”<sup>7</sup> The word “mercy” and its derivatives appear in the Holy Qur’ān in about 326 places, and a surah in the Holy Qur’ān is named after it (al-Raḥmān). al-Fayrūzābādī collected the meanings of mercy that were mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān, and he found twenty aspects of it.<sup>8</sup> The teachings of the Holy Qur’ān also included the most eloquent meanings of mercy, and the highest

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 14:36.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 5:118.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 21:107.

<sup>4</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ḥadīth no. 4659, 7:53; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, ḥadīth no. 24203, 10:517.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 6:154.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 7:154.

<sup>7</sup> Qur’ān, 6:157.

<sup>8</sup> al-Fayrūzābādī, *Baṣā’ir Dhawī al-Tamyīz*, 3:56-58.

features of compassion among all people. God Almighty said: “Is it not sufficient for them that We have sent down to you the Book which is recited to them? Indeed in that is a mercy and a reminder for a people who believe.”<sup>1</sup>

## Fields of Mercy

The fields of mercy are diverse, starting with the individual, passing through the family, then the community, then the homeland, ending with all creatures on the face of the earth. The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “Those who show mercy will be shown mercy by the Most Merciful. Show mercy to those on earth, and He who is in heaven will show mercy to you.”<sup>2</sup>

The following is a statement of the most important areas of mercy:

**First: Mercy towards oneself:** The greatest and most fundamental area of mercy is the self. Some wise people have said, “Have mercy on yourself before you ask others for mercy; for if you have mercy on yourself, you will be honoured by yourself.”<sup>3</sup> Self-mercy is manifested in:

- Gentleness towards oneself, attending to one’s health, taking care of one’s nutrition, developing one’s skills, giving oneself adequate rest, protecting oneself from psychological stress, and balancing one’s needs with the demands of responsibilities and work.
- Being diligent in treating, protecting, and safeguarding oneself: “And do not kill yourselves. Indeed, God is ever Merciful to you.”<sup>4</sup>
- Purifying the self with piety, good deeds, and beneficial knowledge, strengthening confidence in it, and being keen to benefit it. The

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 29:51.

<sup>2</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ḥadīth no. 1924, 4:323; Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ḥadīth no. 4941, 7:298.

<sup>3</sup> al-Tawḥīdī, ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, *al-Muqābasāt* (NA: Dār Su’ād al-Ṣabāḥ, 1992), 255.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 4:29.

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Prophet (PBUH) said: “Be keen on what benefits you.”<sup>1</sup>

**Second: Mercy for the family:** This is the mercy that exists between members of the same family, including husbands and wives, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, and all other relatives. Some forms of mercy include:

- Towards one’s children: This is manifested in showing them compassion, kindness, and consideration for their circumstances. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “He is not one of us who does not show mercy to our young ones.”<sup>2</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) praised the mercy of a mother towards her children. In the *ḥadīth*, a woman came to Aisha (may God be pleased with her) asking for something, and she had two children with her. Aisha gave her three dates. She gave each child one date and kept one for herself. The two children ate the two dates, so she took the remaining date and cut it in half. She gave each of her children half a date. The Prophet (PBUH) came and she told him what had happened. He said, “What is so remarkable about her? God has shown her mercy because of her mercy towards her children.”<sup>3</sup>
- Mercy for parents: by being dutiful to them, treating them kindly, and fulfilling their needs. God Almighty said: “Your Lord has commanded that you should worship none but Him, and that you be kind to your parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, say no word that shows impatience with them, and do not be harsh with them, but speak to them respectfully and lower your wing in humility towards them in kindness and say, ‘Lord, have mercy on them, just as they cared for me when I was little.’”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *ḥadīth* no. 2664, 8:56.

<sup>2</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, *ḥadīth* no. 2031, 4:48.

<sup>3</sup> al-Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrak*, *ḥadīth* no. 2485, 4:196.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 17:23-24.

- Between spouses: God Almighty said: “Another of His signs is that He created spouses from among yourselves for you to live with in tranquillity: He ordained love and kindness between you. There truly are signs in this for those who reflect.”<sup>1</sup> Marital life is based on compassion between spouses; care and consideration, giving and attention, appreciation and assistance.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 30:21.

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## The Value of Peace (*Salām*)

Peace is a central human value in Islam, a shared value that unites all of humanity, regardless of colour, race, religion, or creed, to achieve human coexistence and civilizational integration. Islam established the value of peace and its associated noble human values, such as tolerance, coexistence, respect, and acceptance of others, and called for its consolidation among people, rejecting all forms of hatred, violence, division, conflict, hostility, and exclusion that contradict it.

### Definition of Peace (*Salām* - سلام)

In Arabic, peace may mean:

1. Safety and well-being: Ibn Fāris wrote, “For the letters *sīn*, *lām*, and *mīm*; most of its meanings relate to health and well-being.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, “*salām*” originally means safety and freedom from defects, both apparent and hidden.<sup>2</sup>
2. Peace and reconciliation:<sup>3</sup> This is exemplified in the verse: “And if they incline towards peace, then incline towards it also.”<sup>4</sup>
3. Acceptance and submission: The meaning of “*taslīm*” is to accept a judgment.<sup>5</sup>

In its technical sense, *salām* can be defined as a state of tranquillity in human societies, resulting from its members adopting the values

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 3:90.

<sup>2</sup> al-Jawharī, *al-Ṣiḥāḥ*, 5:1951-52; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, 12:291.

<sup>3</sup> al-Rāghib al-Aṣḥāhānī, *al-Mufradāt*, 421.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 8:61.

<sup>5</sup> al-Rāghib al-Aṣḥāhānī, *al-Mufradāt*, 423; Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 3:90-91; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-Bayān*, 14:41; al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 15:500.

of coexistence and tolerance, rejecting violence and extremism, and avoiding conflicts and disputes, leading to stability and prosperity.

Peace is a state in which psychological and spiritual tranquillity prevail among members of society, reflected in relationships between individuals, making social peace a state of harmony. This manifests itself in solidarity and cooperation to benefit all and ward off harm to all, and it is evident in language, behaviour, and interactions, so there is no violence in language, no aggression in behaviour, and no injustice in treatment.<sup>1</sup>

## Importance of Peace

Islam places great importance on peace and gives it meticulous attention. Its manifestations can be summarized as follows:

1. Peace is one of the beautiful names of God: “He is the King, the Holy, the Peace.”<sup>2</sup>
2. The Holy Qur’ān is the Book of Peace: “There has come to you from God a light and a clear Book. By which God guides those who follow His pleasure to the ways of peace,”<sup>3</sup> meaning: the paths of safety.
3. God Almighty mentioned the root word for peace and its derivatives in 130 places in the Holy Qur’ān, indicating the centrality of peace in human relations in Islam. The root word for peace appears with several meanings in the Holy Qur’ān. Abū Hilāl al-‘Askarī said: “Peace appears in the Qur’ān in six ways:
  - The name of God Almighty: “He is God, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the Peace.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Jawharī, *al-Ṣiḥāḥ*, 5:1951-52.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 59:53.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 5:15-16.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 59:23.

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- Goodness: “So turn away from them and say, ‘Peace,’”<sup>1</sup> meaning: say: goodness. And He, the Exalted, said: “And when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say, ‘Peace,’”<sup>2</sup> meaning: they respond with goodness.
  - Good praise: “Peace be upon Abraham.”<sup>3</sup>
  - The well-known greeting (Peace be upon you and the mercy of God): “So greet one another with a greeting from God, blessed and good.”<sup>4</sup>
  - Safety from all evil: “‘Peace be on you,’ from his companions on the Right.”<sup>5</sup>
  - Delivering something to its owner: “Enter it in peace,”<sup>6</sup> meaning: it has been delivered to you, so take it with pleasure.
4. Peace is the greeting of Islam: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, “Spread peace among yourselves.”<sup>7</sup> When the Messenger of Allah was asked, “Which aspect of Islam is best?” he replied, “To greet with peace those you know and those you do not know.”<sup>8</sup> ‘Ammār said, “Three things, whoever possesses them has perfected faith:... and extending peace to the world,” meaning, “to all people.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 43:89.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 29:63.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 37:109.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 24:61.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 56:91.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 15:46.

<sup>7</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 6236, 8:52; Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 39, 1:47.

<sup>8</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1:15.

<sup>9</sup> al-Fayrūzābādī, Muḥammad b. Ya’qūb, *al-Sīra al-Nabawīyya* (Cairo: Markaz al-Kitāb lil-Nashr, 1997), 193.

5. Paradise is the abode of peace: “And Allah invites to the abode of peace.”<sup>1</sup> al-Zajjāj said, “It is called the abode of peace because” it is the abode of perpetual peace, which neither ends nor perishes.<sup>2</sup>
6. Peace is among the highest objectives of Islam; it encompasses all legitimate objectives and unites all protected interests. Therefore, it is obligatory to acknowledge its exalted status and lofty position, and to strive for its realization and respond to every call to preserve and sustain it.<sup>3</sup>

## Ways of Achieving Peace

Islam called upon all of humanity to unite under the banner of peace. God Almighty said: “And if they incline towards peace, then incline to it also and rely upon God,”<sup>4</sup> and: “O you who have believed, enter into peace completely.”<sup>5</sup> Peace is important because of its impact on individual safety, societal stability, and the prosperity of homelands and civilizations. To achieve this value, there are methods that should be followed, including:

1. **Official projects, initiatives, and programs:** Among the most important factors in achieving peace and stability are the official efforts undertaken by states, the initiatives they seek to implement, and the programs they work to establish. These represent a significant soft power with a substantial impact, yielding remarkable results and a broad international reputation. The United Arab Emirates has made significant efforts in promoting peace through a range of programs, initiatives, and projects, the most important of which are:

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’an, 10:25.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, 12:291.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Bayyah, ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Shaykh al-Mahfūz, *al-Kalima al-Ta’iriyya lil-Multaqa al-Awal li Muntada Abū Zabī lil-Silm*, 89.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’an, 8:61.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’an, 2:208.

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- The Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together: A religious document for world peace and living together, born from talks between al-Azhar al-Sharīf and the Vatican, signed in the UAE capital, Abu Dhabi, under the generous patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE – may God protect him – in the presence of the Grand Imam, Shaykh of al-Azhar, Aḥmad al-Ṭayyib, and Pope Francis, in February 2019. This event is considered a historic event in dialogue between East and West and a unique leap in the history of humanity. The document includes the human values, concerns, and global issues that Islam and Christianity share, and it calls for:<sup>1</sup>
    - Upholding the values of peace, promoting mutual understanding, human fraternity, and coexistence.
    - Fostering dialogue and understanding between religions and spreading a culture of tolerance, which contributes to addressing many social, political, and economic problems.
    - Protecting places of worship–temples, churches, and mosques–as a duty guaranteed by religions, human values, and international conventions.
    - Developing the relationship between East and West as an absolute necessity for both, irreplaceable and indispensable. It is essential to establish shared universal human rights.
    - Guaranteeing children’s rights to family upbringing, nutrition, education, and care. These rights are a duty guaranteed by the family and society, and any practice that infringes upon their dignity or violates their rights must be condemned.
    - Freedom of belief as a right for every human being. Differences in religion, colour, gender, and race are a manifestation of divine wisdom.

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<sup>1</sup> “Wathīqa al-Ukhuwwa al-Insāniyya min Ajl al-Salām al-Ālamī,” *al-Ta’āyush*, 5, April 2019, 24-25.

- Promoting ethics and dialogue among believers, fostering convergence within the vast realm of shared spiritual, human, and social values, and leveraging this to disseminate morality and avoid unproductive arguments.
- The call for citizenship based on both duties and rights makes it incumbent upon religious scholars to instil the values of active and positive citizenship.
- Recognizing women’s rights to education and work, to exercise their political rights, and to liberate them from historical and social pressures.
- Protecting the rights of the elderly, the vulnerable, and people with disabilities is a religious and societal duty that must be ensured and protected through decisive legislation.
- Ceasing the support of terrorist movements with money, weapons, planning, justification, or media coverage. Such support should be considered an international crime that threatens global peace and security, and all forms of extremism must be condemned.

The declaration of this document came to sow the seeds of peace, spread a culture of tolerance and harmony, resume efforts to extinguish the fires raging in the body of humanity, extend bridges of amity and friendship between East and West, and establish a new era based on human fraternity. All its provisions stem from the heart of the two religions and their guiding principles. Islam considers all people brothers, as Imam ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (may God be pleased with him) said, “A brother to you in faith, or a peer to you in creation.”<sup>1</sup> Christianity also sees the other as a brother in humanity. In 1981, Pope John Paul II addressed a large gathering of Christians and Muslims in Manila, the capital of the Philippines, saying, “I address you as brothers, and I mean what I say, because that is what we are. We are all children of one human family, but also brothers in God.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Wathīqa al-Ukhuwwa al-Insāniyya min Ajl al-Salām al-‘Ālamī,” *al-Ta’āyush*, 5, April 2019, 24-25..

<sup>2</sup> al-Sammāk, Muḥammad, *al-Fatikhān wa’l-‘Alāqāt al-Islāmiyya* (NA: 2000), 10.

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The signing of the Abu Dhabi Declaration—the Document on Human Fraternity—by Imam Aḥmad al-Ṭayyib and Pope Francis was a profound event with insightful vision. It opens new horizons and contemporary perspectives for researchers, scholars, thinkers, and intellectuals in reading religious and theological discourse within the context of human life, reality, and current needs. This declaration came in accordance with modern requirements, which necessitated its issuance by two poles of the Islam and Christianity. The declaration came to encompass many religious and human issues that contribute to building the universal human being and preserving the planet and its resources. It came to meet its context, carrying the torch of goodness, to extinguish the fires that have been ignited in the world and the violations of human rights.

This declaration provided a unique model for humanizing religious discourse. Humanization here means considering the humanity of the individual, a person's nature, and the need for explanation, interpretation, scientific thinking, and practical application of economic, social, and religious issues. It is a renewal of the reading of Sharī'a texts and rulings with a methodology that suits the time, place, and changes of life. Man is the civilizational agent, the centre of the universe, the ultimate reference to which matters return from beginning to end, and the producer of truth.

Continuing the path of humanization requires teaching future generations to understand their reality and needs, them the culture of dialogue and acceptance of others, and raising them to believe in pluralism and the innateness of difference. Diversity is a source of richness and wealth, not a cause of unhappiness, or a justification for treating others with rejection and exclusion.

The Declaration and the resonance it found provide a wonderful example of how the modern mind is distinguished from all its previous manifestations and practices by the scientific capabilities and intellectual skills it has acquired, which helped it to break free from the dogmatic isolation into which it had long been lured by erroneous ideas and inherited beliefs that stood as an obstacle to any dialogue or

communication between those of different beliefs. This declaration broke those barriers, obstacles, and restrictions, and the presence of religious authorities and their witnesses at the moment of signing the immortal document was a great message that clearly indicates the movement of the religious intellectual framework towards the right path and the rejection of dogmatic isolationist beliefs.

The Document on Human Fraternity has transcended that exclusionary and marginalizing view of the other, and established a unique epistemological model that accommodates different religious references and frames their initiatives for the sake of establishing world peace.

As the justifications for igniting wars and strife have multiplied in an era in which human capabilities for destruction have developed, it is in the interest of religions to rediscover their shared value stock and invest it in presenting visions and perspectives that help to reject the culture of violence and extremism, find ways to resolve armed conflicts and disputes, and establish peace and harmony among peoples and nations. Religion possesses the means and tools that enable all of humanity to coexist in tranquillity, peace, and comfort.<sup>1</sup>

For this reason, the eighth Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace issued the “Abu Dhabi Declaration for Comprehensive Citizenship,” which stated in its eighth clause that “the shared value system among religions constitutes a strong starting point and a unique energy for contributing to the achievement of the common good; religions call for mercy, love, forgiveness, pardon, and reconciliation among people...so the followers of religions, institutions, and religious leaders must together play a leading role in these areas based on their shared religious values.”<sup>2</sup>

- The Abrahamic Family House: A cultural edifice that includes a mosque, a church, a Jewish synagogue, and an educational centre.

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<sup>1</sup> AlDhaheer, Kahlifa, *Deconstructing the Discourse of Religious Extremism: The UAE Experience* (Abu Dhabi: Mohamed Bin Zayed University for Humanities, 2025); See also <https://forhumanfraternity.org/document-on-human-fraternity/>.

<sup>2</sup> Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace, “Abu Dhabi Declaration for Comprehensive Citizenship,” 2021, 11.

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It embodies the common values between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and represents a unique symbol of mutual understanding and harmonious coexistence, to achieve peace among the various followers of different religions.<sup>1</sup>

- The National Tolerance Program: A strategic national program, adopted by the Cabinet in 2016, with the aim of showing the true image of moderation, respect for others, spreading the values of peace and coexistence, and ensuring the religious, intellectual and cultural pluralism that characterizes the United Arab Emirates, and rejecting methods of hatred, violence, sectarianism, discrimination and intolerance; in thought, education and behaviour.<sup>2</sup>
- Humanitarian and Charitable Initiatives: The UAE has regulated and governed charitable and humanitarian work within official governmental and community institutions licensed of about 40 institutions, covering all regions of the country, the most prominent of which are: the Emirates Red Crescent, the Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan Charitable and Humanitarian Foundation, and the Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation for Humanitarian Work. The UAE's humanitarian initiatives stem from a comprehensive vision that takes into account the achievement of global human security, without discrimination between peoples based on religion, gender, colour or geographical region, and aims to establish the principle of peace and promote its values.<sup>3</sup>

**2. Intellectual awareness and education:** Ideas are the starting point of behaviour, and a mind imbued with the values of peace, tolerance, coexistence, and respect for diversity and difference gives rise to actions and behaviours that support and consolidate peace. Hence,

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.abrahamicfamilyhouse.ae/?language=en&lang=en>.

<sup>2</sup> "Mumathilū al-Adyān fī 'Qima al-Tasāmuḥ:' al-Imārāt Rā'ida al-Tasāmuḥ 'Ālimiyyan wa al-Akthar Īmānan bi'l-'Aysh al-Mushtarak," *al-Ittiḥād*, 16 November 2018.

<sup>3</sup> "al-Imārāt Tatabawwa' Makāna Mutaqaddima ḍimn Manzūma al-Quwa al-Khayra 'Ālimiyyan wa Tuqaddim Namūdhajan lil-'Aṭā' al-Insānī," *al-Ittiḥād*, 20 December 2012.

the importance of intellectual awareness and scientific education about peace and its values, which is undertaken by:

- **The Family:** The family plays a pivotal and fundamental role in instilling the values of peace, tolerance, and moderation in children, and in protecting them against extremist ideologies and socially deviant behaviours. This is achieved through:
  - **Education and Guidance:** Through parental guidance, children acquire skills to listen and understand, learn the principles of mutual respect and acceptance of others, and gain methods for resolving conflicts peacefully.
  - **Providing Good Role Models:** Parents are the primary role models for children, who observe their actions and behaviours. Parents should embody the values of peace in their daily conduct, demonstrating patience and gentleness in words and deeds, and avoiding violence and conflict.
  - **Family Dialogue:** When parents open dialogue and discussion with their children about topics related to the value of peace, such as tolerance, justice, respect, and acceptance of others, it contributes to deepening their understanding of these values and how to apply them in daily life.
- **Educational institutions, including schools, universities, and research centres:** These places play a pivotal role in cultivating a sound and moderate intellectual mindset among their students and staff, and in establishing the correct methodology for understanding and interpreting religious texts, thus avoiding the trap of extremist or deviant interpretations that contradict the noble objectives of Islam. This can be achieved through:
  - **Educational Curricula:** These include methods for instilling a culture of peace, promoting tolerance and moderation, and rejecting extremism that leads to violence, hatred, and contempt for religions.

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- Academic Activities: Such as seminars, conferences, and student activities that contribute to raising awareness of the importance of peace and fostering its spirit among students and researchers.
  - Safe Libraries: These serve as reliable scientific resources and references that students can rely on for their studies and research.
- 3. Strengthening the meaning of human brotherhood:** God Almighty created all people from the same soul as Adam (PBUH): “O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul.”<sup>1</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) said: “People are the children of Adam, and Adam was created from dust.”<sup>2</sup> God made people brothers in humanity. The Messenger of God said: “O people, your Lord is One, and your father is one.”<sup>3</sup> All of humanity is one family, from one womb. The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “I bear witness that all people are brothers.”<sup>4</sup> They communicate, get to know one another, and bond and cooperate. God Almighty says: “O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another.”<sup>5</sup> The prophets addressed their people based on the principle of human brotherhood. God Almighty says about Noah (PBUH): “When their brother Noah said to them, ‘Will you not fear God?’”<sup>6</sup> God Almighty says about the people of Hud (PBUH): “And to ‘Ād We sent their brother Hud.”<sup>7</sup> God Almighty says about Thamud:

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 4:1.

<sup>2</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ḥadīth no. 5116, 7:438; al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ḥadīth no. 3956, 6:225.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, ḥadīth no. 33489, 38:474.

<sup>4</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ḥadīth no. 1508, 2:621; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, ḥadīth no. 19293, 32:48.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 49:13.

<sup>6</sup> Qur’ān, 26:106.

<sup>7</sup> Qur’ān, 7:65.

“And to Thamud We sent their brother Salih.”<sup>1</sup> He said about Madyan: “And to Madyan We sent their brother Shu‘ayb.”<sup>2</sup> Based on the principle of human brotherhood, the Holy Qur‘ān made the life of the individual equal to the life of all humanity: “And do not kill yourselves,”<sup>3</sup> meaning: Do not kill one another, for “whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land – it is as if he had killed all of mankind. And whoever saves one – it is as if he had saved all of mankind.”<sup>4</sup>

4. **Forgiveness and tolerance:** The Holy Qur‘ān urges forgiveness and tolerance in many verses, including: “So pardon and overlook until Allah brings about His command,”<sup>5</sup> and His saying: “But whoever pardons and makes reconciliation – his reward is with Allah.”<sup>6</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) emphasized this divine command, saying: “Allah does not increase a servant in anything except honour by forgiveness.”<sup>7</sup> Tolerance was a characteristic of the prophets. They pardoned those who wronged them and forgave those who mistreated them. An example of their tolerance is that of Joseph with his brothers. After their transgression, he said to them, “No blame will there be upon you today.”<sup>8</sup> One of the greatest examples of tolerance is that of our master and Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) with his people when they harmed him. He prayed for them, saying, “O God, forgive my people, for they do not know.”<sup>9</sup> And when he returned to Mecca and met those who had caused his expulsion,

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<sup>1</sup> Qur‘ān, 7:73.

<sup>2</sup> Qur‘ān, 7:85.

<sup>3</sup> Qur‘ān, 4:29.

<sup>4</sup> Qur‘ān, 5:32.

<sup>5</sup> Qur‘ān, 2:109.

<sup>6</sup> Qur‘ān, 42:40.

<sup>7</sup> Musilm, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 2588, 8:21.

<sup>8</sup> Qur‘ān, 12:92.

<sup>9</sup> Ibn Ḥibbān, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 973, 3:254.

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he said to them, “O people of Quraysh, what do you think I will do to you?” They said: “Good, a generous brother and a generous nephew.” He said to them, forgiving, tolerant, and gentle: “I say as my brother Joseph said: ‘There is no blame upon you today. May God forgive you; and He is the Most Merciful of the merciful.’”<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet (PBUH) treated those who wronged him kindly, acting in accordance with the words of God Almighty: “Good and evil cannot be equal. [Prophet], repel evil with what is better and your enemy will become as close as an old and valued friend.”<sup>2</sup>

5. **Coexistence and acceptance of others:** The difference between people is a divine sign and human nature. God Almighty said: “And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colours. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge.”<sup>3</sup> God Almighty did not intend for all people to follow the same path: “If your Lord had pleased, He would have made all people a single community, but they continue to have their differences—except those on whom your Lord has mercy— for He created them to be this way, and the word of your Lord is final: ‘I shall definitely fill Hell with both jinn and men.’”<sup>4</sup> Difference among people necessitates coexistence and cooperation, regardless of color, race, orientation, idea, and belief. Among the things that establish the principle of coexistence in our religion are:

- No compulsion in religion: “There is no compulsion in religion.”<sup>5</sup> Ibn ‘Āshūr wrote: “The negation of compulsion is a statement in the sense of a prohibition, meaning: Do not force anyone to follow Islam against their will. The negation of the entire category is

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<sup>1</sup> al-Azraqī, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh, *Akhbār Makka wamā jā’ fiha min al-Athār* (Beirut: Dār al-Andalus lil-Nashr, ND), 2:121.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 41:34.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 30:22.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 11:118-19.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 2:256.

used to indicate generality. This is clear evidence for the invalidity of all forms of compulsion in religion.”<sup>1</sup> This principle is further confirmed by:

- The Charter of Medina: Established by the Prophet (PBUH) after his migration to Medina. It is a document that embodies the principles of coexistence and fraternal human interaction that guarantees rights and freedoms. It states: “The Jews have their religion, and the Muslims have their religion, their allies and themselves, except for those who commit injustice and sin...and there is between them advice and counsel, and righteousness without sin...and the neighbor is like the self, neither harming nor sinning.”<sup>2</sup>
- The Covenant of Najran: Between Abū Bakr, may God be pleased with him, and the people of Najran, renewing the covenant of the Messenger of God that was between them. It read: “In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. This is the document of the servant of God, Abū Bakr, the successor of Muhammad, the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, to the people of Najran. He grants them protection by the protection of God Almighty and the covenant of the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, for themselves, their lands, their religion, their money, their entourage, their buildings, their absent ones, their present ones, their bishops, their monks, their churches, and everything under their control, whether little or much. They shall not be gathered or made to pay tithes, and no bishop shall be changed from his bishopric, nor any monk from his monastic order; in fulfilment of all that Muhammad the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, wrote for them, and on what is in this document is the protection of God Almighty and the covenant of

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn ‘Āshūr, *al-Taḥrīr wa’l-Tanwīr*, 3:62.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-Nabawīyya*, 1:503.

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Muḥammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, forever.”<sup>1</sup>

- The Covenant of ‘Umar: Between ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, may God be pleased with him, and the people of Jerusalem: “This is what the servant of God, ‘Umar, Commander of the Faithful, gave to the people of Jerusalem as a guarantee of safety. He gave them a guarantee of safety for themselves, their property, their churches, their crosses, their sick and their healthy, and all their religious community, that their churches shall not be inhabited or demolished, nor shall anything be taken from them or their precincts, nor from their crosses, nor from anything of their property, nor shall they be forced to change their religion, nor shall any of them be harmed.”<sup>2</sup>
- The command to treat others with kindness and justice: This preserves rights, defines duties and responsibilities, and establishes peaceful and respectful coexistence. God Almighty says: “God does not forbid you from showing kindness and dealing justly with those who have not fought you because of your religion or driven you out of your homes. Indeed, God loves those who act justly.”<sup>3</sup> al-Qarāfī wrote: “Whoever transgresses against them, even with a bad word, or backbiting about one of their reputations, or any kind of harm, or assists in that, has violated the covenant of God Almighty, the covenant of His Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him), and the covenant of the religion of Islam.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Shaybānī, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan, *al-Siyar al-Ṣaghīr* (Beirut: al-Dār al-Muttaḥida lil-Nashr, 1975), 267.

<sup>2</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Umam wa’l-Mulūk*, 3:609.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 60:8.

<sup>4</sup> al-Qarāfī, Aḥmad b. Idrīs, *Anwār al-Burūq fī Anwā’ al-Furūq* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1998), 3:14.

6. **Reconciliation:** Reconciliation only brings good. God Almighty says: “And reconciliation is best.”<sup>1</sup> Reconciliation brings hearts together, strengthens bonds, solidifies relationships, prevents disputes, and averts disagreements. Therefore, God Almighty called for it and urged it: “There is no good in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity, or kindness, or reconciliation between people. And whoever does that seeking the pleasure of God – then We will give him a great reward,”<sup>2</sup> and: “And do not make Allah an excuse in your oaths to prevent you from being righteous and fearing Allah and making peace between people. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing,”<sup>3</sup> meaning: if you swear not to make peace between people, do not fulfil your oath, but rather make peace, for that is better for you than fulfilling the oath. Allah Almighty said: “So fear Allah and amend that which is between you.”<sup>4</sup> Because of the great benefit of making peace between people and its profound impact, the Prophet (PBUH) made reconciliation higher than some acts of worship. On the authority of Abū Dardā’: The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “Shall I not tell you of something better than the rank of fasting, prayer, and charity?” They said: Yes. He said: “Reconciling between people.”<sup>5</sup>
7. **Purifying the heart:** This means freeing the heart from malice, envy, resentment, and hatred towards others, which contributes to strengthening human relations, reinforcing bonds of affection and cooperation among people, and spreading positivity and optimism in their surroundings and communities.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 4:128.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 4:114.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 2:224.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 8:1.

<sup>5</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ḥadīth no. 4919, 7:280; al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ḥadīth no. 2509, 4:663.

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## The Value of Citizenship (*Muwāṭana*)

The value of citizenship is among the most important principles in Islam, starting from the time of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), both in its establishment and implementation, and continuing through the various stages of the history to our era. The Constitution of Medina established the principles of citizenship, which Muslims have followed, coexisting with people of different faiths in the same homeland. Minarets stood alongside churches, synagogues, monasteries, and other places of worship without objection.<sup>1</sup> In this era, Muslim scholars and thinkers worked to establish the principle of citizenship in a way that encompasses different affiliations through a correct understanding and sound evaluation of the jurisprudential heritage and historical practices, while also considering the changes that have occurred in the world. These changes have elevated citizenship to a timeless level, where it is now embodied in two covenants that govern reality: an internal covenant, which is the country's constitution, representing a contract between all citizens, and a global covenant, which is the Charter of the United Nations and its appendices, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international treaties.<sup>2</sup>

### Definition of Citizenship

In Arabic, the root of the word citizenship (*muwāṭana* - مواطنة) is derived from the root “*waṭan*,” signifying a shared homeland between two or more people. The word *waṭan* has several meanings, including:

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<sup>1</sup> al-Ḥaddād, Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, “al-Muwāṭana al-Shāmila fī Naẓar al-Islām,” *al-Imārāt al-Yawm*, 10 December 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Bin Bayyah, ‘Abd Allāh, “al-Muwāṭana al-Shāmila: Mawḍū‘ lil-Baḥṭh,” published 22 April 2024.

1. Place of birth, residence, or dwelling: *Waṭan* refers to a person's place of origin and residence.<sup>1</sup> *Awṭantu al-arḍ* means "I made the land my homeland."<sup>2</sup> *Waṭana bi'l-makān* and *awṭana* both mean "he resided in the place." *Waṭan* also means "the house where one resides."<sup>3</sup>
2. Places and locations: This is exemplified in the verse: "Allah has already given you victory in many places."<sup>4</sup> Here, "*mawāṭin*" refers to places.<sup>5</sup> *Mawaṭin Makka* refers to the places of Mecca. Any place where a person resides for a specific purpose is considered their *waṭan*.<sup>6</sup>
3. The resolve to do something, or to accept it. Ibn Sīda said: "He resolved himself to do something, he committed himself to it, and it accepted it."<sup>7</sup>

In technical usage, the Emirati Citizen Values and Behaviours Document defines citizenship as: "A shared heritage of principles, values, customs, and behaviours among individuals in a single state, which contributes to shaping the citizen's personality and gives it characteristics that distinguish it from other citizens in other countries."<sup>8</sup>

In other words: Citizenship is the individual's full and responsible membership in the state, and the duties and responsibilities that result from that membership.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Muṭarrizī, Nāṣir b. 'Abd al-Sayyid, *al-Mugharrab fī Tartīb al-Mu'arrab* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, ND), 489.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 6:120.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, 13:154.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 9:25.

<sup>5</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 14:178.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, 13:154.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn Sayyiduh, *al-Muḥkam wa'l-Muḥīṭ al-A'zam*, 9:240.

<sup>8</sup> UAE Government, *Emirati Citizen Values and Behaviours Document*, 27 November 2012.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

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This technical meaning is not far from the previous linguistic meanings, as there is a positive interaction between a person and his country and homeland, in terms of feelings on the one hand, and work and production on the other hand, and this relationship is characterized by seriousness, determination and responsibility.

## The Importance of Citizenship

The importance of citizenship is evident in the following:

1. **The Prophets' concern for their homelands:** The prophets' concern for their homelands was profound, and their devotion to them was evident. This is why their people threatened them, saying: "We will surely expel you from our land, or you will return to our religion."<sup>1</sup> This concern and devotion manifested itself in many ways, including:
  - Showing love for it: God placed love for Medina in the heart of the Prophet (PBUH), so "when he returned from a journey, and looked at the walls of Medina, he would hasten his mount, and if he was on an animal, he would urge it on, out of love for it."<sup>2</sup> Ibn Baṭṭāl wrote: "And his hastening his journey when he looked at it was because the proximity of the house renews the longing for loved ones and family, and confirms the yearning for home, and in the Messenger of God (PBUH) is the good example."<sup>3</sup>
  - Longing for it: As our Lord told us about the longing of His interlocutor Moses for his country: "Once Moses had fulfilled the term and was travelling with his family, he caught sight of a fire on the side of the mountain and said to his family, 'Wait! I have seen a fire. I will bring you news from there, or a burning stick for you to warm yourselves.'"<sup>4</sup> Ibn al-Arabi said: "When Moses' term was fulfilled, he asked to return to his family and longed for his

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 14:13.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 1886, 3:23.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Baṭṭāl, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 4:555.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 28:29.

hometown. In returning to one's hometown, one braves dangers, faces risks, and finds solace." Similarly, whenever our Prophet (PBUH) heard a story about his hometown, Mecca, he longed for it.<sup>1</sup> Aisha, may God be pleased with her, once asked Aṣīl al-Hudhalī, who had come from Mecca: "How did you leave Mecca?" He said: "Its sides turned green, its plains turned white, its fragrant grass grew abundantly, and its acacia trees spread. The Messenger of God (PBUH) said to him: 'Enough, O Aṣīl, do not grieve me.'<sup>2</sup> And in another narration: 'Woe to you, O Aṣīl, let hearts find peace.'<sup>3</sup> When our Lord, the Exalted, saw the longing of our master and Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) for Mecca, his birthplace, He revealed to him His words: "Indeed, He who has imposed upon you the Qur'ān will surely bring you back to a place of return."<sup>4</sup> The intended meaning was that He would return the Prophet to Mecca, and He, the Exalted, did so.<sup>5</sup> The scholars said: "A man's place of return is his hometown, because he departs and then returns to his hometown." When the Prophet (PBUH) migrated to Medina, he travelled by a route other than the traditional one for fear of being pursued. When he felt safe and returned to the road, he stopped at al-Juḥfa between Mecca and Medina. He knew the way to Mecca and longed for it. So Gabriel, peace be upon him, came to him and said: Do you long for your country and birthplace? He said: Yes. He said: Then God Almighty says: "Indeed, He who has imposed upon you the Qur'an will bring you back to a place of return."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Abū Bakr Ibn al-'Arabī, Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2003), 3:511.

<sup>2</sup> al-Suhaylī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Abd Allāh, *al-Rawḍ al-Anf fī Sharḥ al-Sīra al-Nabawiyya* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 2000), 5:31.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 28:85.

<sup>5</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 25:19.

<sup>6</sup> al-Tha'labī, *al-Kashf wa'l-Bayān 'an Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 20:518.

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- Praising it and mentioning its virtues: Our Prophet (PBUH) mentioned the virtues of Medina and praise the city. On the authority of Fāṭima bt. Qays, may God be pleased with her, the Prophet said: “This is Ṭayba, this is Ṭayba, this is Ṭayba,”<sup>1</sup> meaning Medina. In another *ḥadīth*, he only mentioned the word once.<sup>2</sup> al-Qāḍī ‘Ayāḍ wrote: “Ṭayba is the name of the city of the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace. He named it that from its goodness, which is purity and cleanliness, which is the opposite of filth and impurity...and it was said: because of its goodness for its inhabitants, and their security in it, and the tranquillity of the state of those who migrated to it...or from the goodness and good life in it, from the thing being good to me.”<sup>3</sup>
  - The difficulty of leaving and departing from it: The prophets, peace be upon them, were deeply attached to their homelands. It was difficult for them to leave and endure leaving them. For example, when Shu‘ayb (PBUH) was threatened by his people with expulsion from his homeland, he said: “Even if we were unwilling?”<sup>4</sup> Meaning, “Will you force us to leave our homelands against our will?”<sup>5</sup> Abu Ḥayyān wrote: “This indicates the difficulty of leaving one’s homeland.”<sup>6</sup> After the revelation descended upon the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) Waraqa b. Nawfal said to him, “O my nephew, what did you see?” The Messenger of God told him what he had seen. Waraqa said to him, “This is the same angel who came to Moses. I wish I were a young man then! I wish I were alive when your people expel you!” The Messenger of God said, “Will they expel me?” He replied, “Yes.” al-Suhaylī said, “He said to the Messenger of God, ‘You will surely disbelieve him.’ The

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<sup>1</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *ḥadīth* no. 2942, 8:203.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *ḥadīth* no. 1872, 3:21.

<sup>3</sup> al-Yaḥṣabī, al-Qāḍī ‘Ayāḍ, *Mashāriq al-Anwār*, 1:326.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 7:88.

<sup>5</sup> al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi‘ li-Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*, 7:250.

<sup>6</sup> Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ*, 5:112.

Prophet said nothing. Then he said, 'You will surely harm him.' The Prophet said nothing. Then he said, 'You will surely expel him.' The Prophet said, 'Will they expel me?' This is evidence of the love of one's homeland and the severity of leaving it...Therefore, the Prophet's soul was moved at the mention of leaving it in a way it had never been before, so he said, 'Will they expel me?' The conjunction 'and' connects the statement and makes the listener feel that the question is one of denial, grief at his words, or pain from them."<sup>1</sup> When the Messenger of God (PBUH) left, he said to Mecca, "How sweet a land you are, and how dear you are to me! If my people had not driven me out of you, I would not have settled anywhere else."<sup>2</sup>

- Praying for it: as did God's friend Abraham when he prayed for Mecca—the home of his wife and son—for security and sustenance: "Abraham said, 'My Lord, make this land secure and provide with produce those of its people who believe in God and the Last Day.'"<sup>3</sup> As did our master and Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), when he prayed for his homeland, Medina, saying: "O God, make Medina as beloved to us as Mecca, or even more so.<sup>4</sup> O Allah, bless us in our city, O Allah, bless us in our Ṣāā (a measure of weight), O Allah, bless us in our Mudd (a measure of weight) O Allah, bless us in our city, O Allah, make the blessing doubled."<sup>5</sup>

**2. The Holy Qurān mentions and celebrates the homeland in many verses, mentioning homes, countries, and other meanings of homelands.** God Almighty even named an entire chapter al-Balad, which means city and homeland, and He Almighty swore by it when

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<sup>1</sup> al-Suhaylī, *al-Rawḍ al-Anf*, 2:273.

<sup>2</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ḥadīth no. 3926, 5:723.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān, 2:126.

<sup>4</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 1889, 3:23.

<sup>5</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 1374, 4:117.

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He said: “I swear by this city, and you are a resident of this city,”<sup>1</sup> and: “By the fig and the olive, and Mount Sinai, and this secure city.”<sup>2</sup>

3. **The Prophet’s (PBUH) concern for establishing the foundations of citizenship:** One of the first things the Prophet did upon arriving in Medina was to establish the foundations of citizenship. He drafted the Constitution of Medina, which regulated the relationships between its inhabitants and clarified the rights and duties of its citizens. This document was the first of its kind in terms of documented citizenship, as it was neither known nor practiced before. It served as a sound basis for contractual citizenship in society and a smooth agreement to which its parties voluntarily agreed, rallying around the principles it contained within the framework of positive interaction with reality and the components of Medinan society. It achieved social peace based on mutual recognition of rights and duties, and on the acceptance of diversity manifested in differences in beliefs, interests, and lifestyles, with a governing authority to which everyone could refer in the event of a dispute or disagreement. Thus, this document became a constitution for a society of diverse ethnicities and beliefs, and an embodiment of the Qur’ānic principles and Islamic values. Its articles included many of the principles of contractual citizenship, including freedom of religion, freedom of movement and ownership, the principle of general solidarity, the principle of joint defence, and the principle of justice and equality before the law. It provides the fundamental reference basis for citizenship as a social contract and a just constitution, for a society that is pluralistic in race, religion, and language, whose members enjoy the same rights, bear the same duties, and belong—despite their differences—to one society.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 90:1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 95:1-3.

<sup>3</sup> *The Marrakesh Declaration On the Rights of Religious Minorities in Muslim-Majority Lands*, Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, 27 January 2016.

## Pillars of Positive Citizenship

Positive and effective citizenship has two main pillars: wherever they are present, a land is transformed into a homeland, and the person living on it becomes a citizen who contributes to building and stabilizing it, then strives for its advancement and prosperity. These two pillars are:

1. **Patriotism:** In addition to geographical affiliation, this refers to an individual's emotional and psychological connection to their homeland, making them loyal and devoted, concerned for its well-being, and committed to fulfilling their obligations towards it.
2. **Active Participation:** This refers to the effective role an individual plays in their homeland—socially, economically, politically, and culturally.

## Foundations of Positive Citizenship

Positive citizenship means the active and responsible participation of every individual in their community. It is based on a set of principles aimed at strengthening social cohesion, sustainable development, and the nation's advancement and prosperity.

The United Arab Emirates has focused on the values of positive citizenship in its various aspects, including both geographical and digital citizenship.

**First: Geographical citizenship:** This can be achieved through several foundations and principles encompassing three aspects:

### 1. Ethics and public conduct, which includes the following:

- a. Adhering to good morals and virtuous conduct: A citizen should:
  - Uphold honesty and integrity in all daily dealings and adhere to professional ethics in their work life.
  - Behave with the manners that embody the values of civility and refinement and be mindful of public taste.

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- Be truthful in word and deed and promote transparency in their daily life and various transactions.
  - Be patient and forbearing in times of hardship and demonstrate gentleness and tolerance in dealing with people.
  - Be generous in their morals and dealings, and practice altruism with their peers and colleagues.
- b. Adhere to Islamic Values and Religious Tolerance: Citizens must:
- Adhere to and act in accordance with Islamic values and principles.
  - Respect all other religions.
  - Practice moderation and tolerance in religion and in all aspects of life, and avoid extremism and fanaticism.
- c. Have Pride in Authentic Customs and Traditions: Citizens must:
- Be familiar with the authentic customs and traditions of the nation that were enjoyed by the society of their forefathers.
  - Apply authentic values and traditions in their daily lives and reflect them in their behavior and interactions with others.
  - Present the best image of Emirati national identity in their daily lives and interactions with others.
  - Be keen to introduce Emirati customs and highlight their authentic traditions to non-citizens, both in form and substance.
- d. Exhibit Diligence and Perseverance: Citizens must:
- Always strive for excellence and attain the highest ranks in various fields.
  - Be a role model in all forums and at all levels.
  - Match words with actions and believe that success depends on perseverance and hard work.
- e. Adopt Innovation and Leadership: Citizens must:
- Adopt a free and creative mindset and always strive for innovation and creativity in all aspects of his daily life.

- Strive for innovation, leadership, and excellence in work and avoid routine.
- Develop the knowledge and skills that will support the ability to be creative and excel.
- Stay informed about all that is new and innovative in various fields.

f. Strive for Self-Realization: Citizens must:

- Set a clear vision for themselves with well-defined goals and features, and work diligently to achieve this vision.
- Enjoy balanced mental and physical health, as a healthy and psychologically sound individual is more beneficial to society.
- Continuously seek to educate themselves, broaden their understanding, and raise their level of academic achievement.
- Continuously build their practical experience and expand their knowledge in their field of specialization.
- Develop individual skills and continuously strive to acquire new skills.
- Balances work and personal life, giving work and family the appropriate amount of attention.

g. Representation Abroad: Citizens must:

- Reflect a positive image of the country while abroad through good conduct and behaviour.
- Respect the laws, environment, customs, and traditions of the countries they visit.

**2. Family and Society, which includes the following:**

a. Building a cohesive and beneficial family for society: Citizens must:

- Establish a clear vision and goals for their family, defining its role as an active component of society.

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- Respect and value the institution of marriage, the importance of forming a family, and the responsibilities that come with it as a responsible member of that family.
  - Foster an environment of dialogue among family members and support mutual respect among them.
  - Support mutual trust among family members and promote transparency among them.
  - Instil in their children an awareness of Islamic values, good morals, and the necessity of embodying them.
  - Raise their children to uphold customs and traditions and the importance of preserving national identity.
  - Instil in their children love for their country and patriotic sentiments.
  - Instil in their children the importance of giving and contributing to the advancement of the nation and strengthen their role as active members of society.
- b. Guaranteeing freedom for the rest of society: Citizens must:
- Respect others in society, regardless of their background.
  - Respect other cultures within the community.
  - Believe in the principle of equal opportunity and avoid favouritism and nepotism.
- c. Social Solidarity and Cohesion: Citizens must:
- Strengthen their sense of social responsibility and strive to contribute to the service of the community.
  - Engage in volunteer and charitable work that benefits the community and its members.
  - Work towards achieving social harmony and strengthening bonds among its members.

- Extend a helping hand to the less fortunate in society, such as people with disabilities, orphans, the elderly, and the poor.

**3. The homeland, which includes the following:**

**a. Loyalty to the Homeland: Citizens must:**

- Be loyal to the United Arab Emirates and its leadership.
- Preserve the security and safety of the state.
- Obey the constitution of the state and act in accordance with its principles.
- Perform all duties with honesty and integrity.

**b. Knowledge and work: Citizens must:**

- – Work diligently for the advancement of the homeland and to continue its progress and development.
- – Arm themselves with knowledge and acquire useful sciences to achieve prosperity and growth in the country.
- – Be keen to perform their assigned work to the best of their ability and make excellence in work a part of their daily practice.

**c. Unity and Cohesion: Citizens must:**

- – Support social cohesion in the country and work to strengthen national unity.
- – Support the concept of belonging to one state, not to a specific emirate.
- – Support the bonds of national unity and preserve the achievements of the Union.

**d. Respect for the Law: Citizens must:**

- Stay informed and aware of all laws and regulations in the country.
- Abide by the country's general legislation and refrain from any violations that disrupt public order.

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- Support the application of law and order in the country and the maintenance of security.
  - Make adherence to the law a fundamental principle of their lives in all aspects.

e. Environmental Protection: Citizens must:

- Comply with all laws and instructions related to environmental protection, public safety, and the health of the country's citizens.
- Work towards achieving sustainable development and preserving natural resources.
- Use energy efficiently and effectively, avoiding waste and extravagance.

f. Preservation of Public Property: Citizens must:

- Take social responsibility towards public facilities and refrain from tampering with or damaging them.
- Follow the guidelines and instructions for using public facilities.

g. Awareness of Rights and Duties: Citizens must:

- - Be familiar with the rights guaranteed to them by the constitution within the established frameworks and laws.
- - Works to fulfil their duties as citizens.
- - Guarantee the freedom of other members of society to exercise their rights and duties.

**Second: Digital citizenship:** This can be achieved through several foundations and rules outlined in the Charter of Values and Behaviours of Positive Digital Citizenship, launched by the Emirates Council for Digital Quality of Life, with the aim of enhancing the quality of digital life in the Emirates and establishing a safe and positive digital society. The Charter stipulated a set of values and behaviours for positive digital citizenship in the UAE, which all members of society, citizens and residents alike,

must adhere to, and its details are outlined in the following clauses:

1. Emirati Heritage: To remain loyal to the UAE and to be a role model for Emirati and human values, customs, and traditions in the digital world.
2. Digital Reputation: To represent the country in the best possible way and to defend its achievements and reputation in the digital world.
3. Respect for Others: To respect others, their privacy, and their intellectual property, and to refrain from bullying them or harming their work or digital identity.
4. Positive Investment: To use the digital world to develop skills, keep up with advancements, and anticipate the future, in line with the vision of the UAE.
5. Good Interaction: To promote the values of solidarity, social empathy, and positive interaction, and to use social media platforms wisely.
6. Digital Privacy: To protect personal information and refrain from sharing it, and to respect the privacy of others.
7. Credibility in Publishing: To verify the credibility of the content published or received from others, and to refer to reliable sources.
8. Responsibility and Regulations: To be responsible for interactions with the digital world and to respect the laws and regulations governing it.
9. Digital Ethics: To be proactive in limiting content that contradicts ethical and human values.
10. Balanced Use: To maintain physical and mental health by balancing and managing time between the virtual and real worlds.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Markaz al-Ittiḥād lil-Akḥbār, "Qiyam lil-Muwāṭana al-Ījābiyya Raqamiyyan," 29 January 2021.

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Thus, citizenship is a societal and religious responsibility, carrying within it a set of higher values and principles that regulate the relationship between individuals in the state on a solid basis.

In the age of globalization, thinkers have begun to speak of a new level of citizenship, characterized by breadth and inclusiveness, so that it relates to all of humanity, in terms of its relationship to its common homeland, which is the Earth. This is because the interconnectedness of peoples in their real circumstances and their future destinies has necessitated thinking about a “comprehensive global citizenship” that is based on a deep awareness of responsibility for the common existence of humanity on this Earth, which would guide it towards adopting the values of solidarity, cooperation, and hospitality, in order to revive the spirit of the passengers of the ship, which the whole world today is closer than ever to realizing the severity of the need for it, and being convinced that it is the only way that can guarantee the uprightness of its course and the safety of its destiny.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bin Bayyah, ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Shaykh al-Maḥfūz, *al-Kalima al-Taʿīriyya lil-Multaqa al-Khāmis*, 2018, 51-55; Bin Bayyah, ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Shaykh al-Maḥfūz, *al-Kalima al-Taʿīriyya lil-Multaqa al-Thāmin*, 2021, 23-24.





INTELLECTUAL FORTIFICATION







# Intellectual Fortification

## FOUNDATIONS, METHODS, AND RESULTS

One of the main goals of Islamic culture is the formation of a sound intellectual identity, grounded in a correct understanding of religion. Sound thinking forms immunity against destructive ideas, moves human behaviour towards correct actions, and makes one's outlook on life more optimistic and positive, leading to balance in the soul, stability in society, and prosperity in the homeland.

### Definition of Intellectual Fortification

In Arabic, Ibn Fāris defines fortification (*taḥṣīn* - تحصين) as: “The letters *ḥa*, *ṣad*, and *nūn* form a single root meaning preservation, protection, and safeguarding.”<sup>1</sup> Ibn Saydah said: “A *ḥiṣn* is any fortified place that cannot be reached. The plural is fortresses, and from this comes the word for a lock: a fortified one,”<sup>2</sup> because it is used to protect what is locked and preserve what is inside. “A person takes precautions against illness and the like: he takes precautions to protect himself from it, and he fortifies something: he prevents it and protects it.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-Lughā*, 2:69.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Sayyiduh, *al-Muḥkam wa'l-Muḥīṭ al-A'zam*, 3:153-54.

<sup>3</sup> Various Authors, *al-Mu'jam al-Wasīl*, 1:180.

Similarly, thought (*fikr* - فكر) means: “the mind’s engagement with something,”<sup>1</sup> and the heart’s reflection upon it. It is said: “He performed *fikr*,” meaning he reflected with his heart, considering. A thoughtful man is one who thinks a lot.<sup>2</sup> In *al-Miṣbāḥ*, it says: “Thought is the heart’s reflection through looking and pondering to seek meanings. I have thought about the matter, meaning: consideration and deliberation.”<sup>3</sup>

In technical usage, intellectual fortification means “Protecting a person’s thoughts, mind, and understanding from deviation and straying from the path of moderation in his understanding of religious matters and his perception of the universe and life.”<sup>4</sup>

Intellectual fortification is of paramount importance in human life, especially in light of the open electronic spaces of today and the great and successive challenges, in which the avenues of ideas have diversified, attempts at infiltration and disruption have multiplied, and factors leading to breaches of security have increased; this importance is highlighted by:

- Intellectual fortification is one of the pillars of preventive security, which forms immunity for a person against extremist ideas, and gives him the ability to resist them before they turn into violent behaviours that pose a threat to the security and stability of societies and the integrity of their identity. This is because the intellectual aspect is a major aspect and closely related to the rest of the behavioural aspects. Every moderate behaviour, cohesive society, stable homeland, and prosperous civilization throughout history has been based only on sound thought.
- Since the lack of intellectual immunity entails serious cultural, moral, and social dangers, studies have proven that students’

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Sayyiduh, *al-Muḥkam*, 7:7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Faris, *Maqāyīs al-Luġha*, 4:446.

<sup>3</sup> al-Fayūmī, *al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr*, 2:479.

<sup>4</sup> Sa’īd, Maḥmūd Shākīr and Khālīd al-Ḥarfash, *Mafāhīm Amniyya* (Riyadh: Jāmi’a Nāyif lil-‘Ulūm al-Amniyya, 2010), 14.

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exposure to some extremist ideas may weaken their educational level, distract them from studying, waste their time without benefit, spread laziness and lack of seriousness among them, and weaken their Arabic language, in addition to teaching them concepts and a culture that are alien to our Islamic concepts and culture and our social principles; it may arouse their instincts and spread vice and deviant behaviour among them, which leads to the absence of values and ideals in society, which negatively affects all areas of life.

## Foundations of Intellectual Fortification

Among the most important ways to achieve intellectual fortification and form a sound intellectual identity are the following:

**First: Faith:** Faith in God Almighty has a positive effect on intellectual fortification, as it forms a firm foundation that enhances a person's self-confidence, gives them the ability to face intellectual challenges, protects them from shaking intellectual convictions and the evil of incoming intellectual dangers. In addition, it provides them with the necessary foundations to distinguish between right and wrong, helps them to reject ideas that contradict sound beliefs, and provides them with a moral and ethical framework that contributes to the formation of their sound intellectual identity and enables them to have a deeper understanding of existence, which helps them to direct his thinking towards specific goals. A strong believer is always engaging in self-monitoring, which drives them to refine their thoughts, establish a love of virtue, and aspire to higher ideals, which establishes a balanced personality, capable of serving religion and his society with high confidence and full awareness.

**Second: Knowledge:** Sound knowledge is a fundamental pillar of intellectual fortification and a strong support in forming a sound intellectual identity. This is achieved through:

- Providing individuals with sound ideas and upright intellectual principles: Knowledge broadens a person's horizons, equips them with the necessary tools to correctly understand the teachings of the true religion, helps them grasp its tolerant values and virtuous ethics accurately, clarifies the principles of the scientific method based on research and experimentation, and enables them to examine the credibility of sources to resist claims unsupported by scientific evidence and adopt ideas based on logic and proof.
- Protecting individuals from extremist ideas and deviant perceptions: Sound knowledge forms a protective barrier against deviant and extremist ideas. It exposes individuals to their errors and makes them aware of their dangers before they arrive in a polished and embellished form. Destructive ideas spread more quickly, and their impact is more severe if they take root in the mind.
- Correcting alien ideas and distorted concepts: Extremist ideas affect the sound intellectual nature of a person, and with science they can be studied carefully at the beginning of their formation and influence, and their causes can be identified, and they can be corrected with argument, and treated with persuasion, before they become widespread, and become a normal behaviour, and an acceptable practice.

**Third: Role models:** Emulating our national figures and taking pride in them plays a major role in shaping intellectual awareness and building moral maturity. Among the most prominent of these figures is the founding father, Shaykh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, may God have mercy on him. His life story represents a unique civilizational legacy and an integrated school of thought that enlightens the mind, refines the soul, and teaches moderate and upright behaviour.

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Islam calls for building a sound intellectual identity by:

**First: Spreading the culture of peace:** Religion is a message of peace. God Almighty said: “O you who have believed, enter into peace completely.”<sup>1</sup> God Almighty also encouraged responding to calls for peace and de-escalation in situations of conflict and dispute: “And if they incline towards peace, then incline to it also.”<sup>2</sup> The United Arab Emirates has affirmed this principle through legislation and initiatives, including the Document on Human Fraternity in 2019.

A person’s belief in the principle of faith creates a mindset that makes peace a fundamental principle in dealing with others, whether they are of the same religion or others, away from violence and conflict, and believes in dialogue to resolve disputes, and in understanding to deal with others. Those who transgress or commit injustice will be repelled. God Almighty says: “So whoever transgresses against you, then transgress against him in the same way he transgressed against you,”<sup>3</sup> without oppression or exceeding the bounds: “And do not transgress. Indeed, God does not like transgressors.”<sup>4</sup> Those who are peaceful will be treated according to the principle of peace, and based on justice and righteousness. God Almighty says: “and He does not forbid you to deal kindly and justly with anyone who has not fought you for your faith or driven you out of your homes: God loves the just.”<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, those who do not believe in the culture of peace as a method and path adopt ideas characterized by extremism towards others, especially if they are those who differ from them in religion. They believe that human relations are based on conflict and hostility towards every opponent, and that the basis in dealing with non-Muslims, whether they are peaceful or not, is fighting until they believe, citing in

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 2:208.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 8:61.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 2:194.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 2:190.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 60:8.

a wrong and fragmented way the words of God Almighty: “Fight those who do not believe in God or in the Last Day,”<sup>1</sup> without considering its context, or taking into account its purposes, or taking into account the guidance of the Prophet (PBUH) in dealing with non-Muslims.

**Second: Establishing the principle of respecting others:** Islam emphasizes respecting others regardless of their colour, gender, race, or beliefs. Difference is inherent in human nature, as God Almighty says: “Another of His signs is the creation of the heavens and earth, and the diversity of your languages and colours. There truly are signs in this for those who know,”<sup>2</sup> and: “If your Lord had pleased, He would have made all people a single community, but they continue to have their differences—except those on whom your Lord has mercy— for He created them to be this way, and the word of your Lord is final.”<sup>3</sup> The Almighty guaranteed freedom of belief, so no one has the right to force anyone to change their belief or leave their religion: “There is no compulsion in religion.”<sup>4</sup> This is what the United Arab Emirates has emphasized in the Anti-Discrimination, Hatred and Extremism Law, Decree-Law No. 34 of 2023, which criminalizes discrimination and hatred based on religion, race, gender or any other basis.<sup>5</sup>

Belief in the principle of respecting diversity and difference contributes to creating an open and tolerant mindset that values difference, sees it as a source of richness and wealth, and accepts it. It also rejects bigotry, discrimination, and hatred, and refuses to exclude or erase the existence of others.

Conversely, those who do not believe in the principle of respecting those who disagree develop a closed, exclusionary mindset that monopolizes truth, rejects diversity, and refuses to acknowledge differences. They

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 9:29.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 30:22.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 11:118-19.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 2:256.

<sup>5</sup> UAE Anti-Discrimination Anti-Hatred Law, Federal Decree Law No. 34 of 2023.

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believe that everyone must conform to a single ideology, adopt a unified approach, and express only one opinion. They are also convinced that coexistence with non-Muslims is impossible, citing, in a flawed and misguided manner, the verse: “You who believe, do not take the Jews and Christians as allies: they are allies only to each other. Anyone who takes them as an ally becomes one of them– God does not guide such wrongdoers,”<sup>1</sup> while ignoring what is stated elsewhere. The Prophet’s biography includes examples of ethical conduct and humane coexistence with non-Muslims, in covenants and agreements, community participation, and all other transactions.

**Third: Emphasizing the principle of leniency:** Leniency is a prominent feature in the legal discourse, as it does not impose obligations beyond one’s capacity. God Almighty said: “God does not burden a soul beyond its capacity,”<sup>2</sup> and: “God does not burden a soul except with what He has given it.”<sup>3</sup> Islam came to make things easy for people and to remove hardship and difficulty from them: “God does not intend to place upon you any hardship.”<sup>4</sup> The United Arab Emirates has sought to establish and strengthen this principle in society through the system of mosque care. To regulate religious discourse, Cabinet Resolution No. 39 of 2012 was issued.

The one who understands that facilitation is a principle of religion, his mind expands to accommodate differing opinions and different doctrines, and his compassion towards others is strengthened.

On the other hand, whoever does not realize the ease of religion and believes that its texts are rigid and inflexible, thinks that it is based on strictness and difficulty, and that the more a person makes himself strict and burdens himself with worship, the closer he is to God Almighty, abandoning the guidance of the Prophet (PBUH) who adopted ease in

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 5:51.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 2:286.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān 65:7.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 5:6.

worship and commanded it, and avoided difficulty and forbade it, and explained that this religion has never been built up by anyone except that it has overcome him, as those who lived with him and knew his approach have conveyed to us.

**Fourth: Consolidating the approach of rationality:** Islam elevates the status of reason in comprehending and analysing facts objectively: “Such are the comparisons We draw for people, though only the wise can grasp them.”<sup>1</sup> God linked understanding and benefiting from reason in many verses. He said: “Indeed, in that are signs for a people who understand,”<sup>2</sup> “Indeed, in that is a sign for a people who understand.”<sup>3</sup> Recognizing the importance of a correct rational perspective, the UAE has focused on developing a generation that possesses it by strengthening the educational system through curricula, methods, and approaches. To adopt a logical, open, and balanced mindset that embraces dialogue and rejects subservience and submission, the UAE also worked to combat rigid ideas and rehabilitate their owners through several programs, including those offered by the National Counselling Centre, established by Federal Law No. 28 of 2019.

A person who adopts rationality develops a constructive critical faculty, and their perceptions are consistent with reason and logic. This person evaluates matters and objectively distinguishes what is correct from what is incorrect, relying on clear evidence and conclusive proof.

Conversely, those who do not adopt rationality are characterized by intellectual rigidity that paralyzes their ability to innovate and renew, leading them to interpret matters emotionally and understand them superficially, without analyzing them or paying attention to their depth and purpose. They are more prone to believing in superstitions and myths rather than seeking scientific and logical explanations, and they become fanatical about their opinions, clinging to their ideas without objective

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 29:43.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 13:4.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 16:67.

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arguments or proof. This leads to incorrect interpretations of religious texts and teachings, far removed from reason and logic. Among these is the belief that people used to hold, linking things to causes other than their logical ones, such as pessimism. When they went out on a journey or resolved to do something, they would drive away a bird. If it flew to the right, they would take it as a good omen, and if it flew to the left, they would take it as a bad omen. The Prophet (PBUH) invalidated this. When the sun was eclipsed on the day Ibrahim, the Prophet's son, died, the people said: The sun eclipsed because of Ibrahim's death. The Messenger of God said: "The sun and the moon are two signs from among the signs of God. They are not eclipsed because of anyone's death or life. When you see them, supplicate to God and pray until they are clear."<sup>1</sup>

**Fifth: Representing true citizenship:** Islam emphasized the value of citizenship by elevating the status of the homeland. Islam made loving and praying for the homeland one of the characteristics of the prophets and the nature of the upright people. Abraham (PBUH) singled out his homeland, Mecca, in prayer, saying: "My Lord, make this a secure city and provide its people with fruits—whichever of them believes in Allah and the Last Day."<sup>2</sup> Likewise, the Prophet (PBUH) singled out his homeland, Mecca, by expressing the intensity of his love for it, saying: "How good a land you are, and how beloved you are to me."<sup>3</sup> Anyone who contemplates the relationship of the prophets to their homeland and their connection to their countries realizes that the homeland in which they live, defined by geographical borders, governed by a ruler, and unique laws, customs, and traditions, has a high status in Islam. The United Arab Emirates confirmed this through its constitution and laws, and it is explained in detail in the Document of Conduct and Ethics of the Emirati Citizen.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 1060, 2:39.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 2:126.

<sup>3</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ḥadīth no. 3926, 5:723.

<sup>4</sup> UAE Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization, "Document of Conduct and Ethics of the Emirati Citizen."

This correct perception of the homeland motivates its owner to belong to it, be attached to it, be loyal to its leadership, and respect its laws, customs, and traditions.

Conversely, whoever does not adopt the correct conception of the homeland claims that the homeland has no borders, or that it is all of God's land, or that it is merely a handful of dust, believes that one should not belong to it, be loyal to its leadership, or abide by its laws. This person does not care about its concerns, does not recognize its sovereignty, does not acknowledge its rights and duties, and does not believe in the national bond among its members. Rather, this person claims that belonging is based on shared beliefs, which are erroneous and contradict what has been established in the biography of the Prophet (PBUH) regarding his love for his homeland, his attachment to it, his dealings with it, and his considering it a homeland with specific borders, as he drew its geographical boundaries, as in the hadith of Ka'b b. Mālik, may God be pleased with him, who said: "The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, sent me to teach the protected area of Medina."<sup>1</sup> He established a constitution that defined the foundations of citizenship within the boundaries of Medina, clarifying the principles governing the relationships of Muslims with each other and of others with them, as mentioned previously when discussing the Medina Charter.

One of the requirements of true citizenship is obedience to the ruler, which God Almighty has made obligatory by saying: "O you who have believed, obey God and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you."<sup>2</sup> The commentators have stated that the ruler is the one in authority.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Ḥārith, al-Ḥārith b. Abī Usāma, *Bughiya al-Bāḥiṭh 'an Zawā'id Musnad al-Ḥārith* (Medina: Markaz Khidma al-Sunna wa'l-Sīra al-Nabawiyya, 1992), *ḥadīth* no. 393, 1:466.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 4:59.

<sup>3</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 4:39.

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Prophetic texts hold that obeying the ruler is a religious duty, and that one must listen to and obey him in times of hardship and ease, and in times of activity and reluctance. Obedience to the ruler is a religion that a person adheres to, and a law that a person must follow to preserve security and stability, and to fulfil the religious requirement. He is a safety valve for homelands and for preserving lives, religions, money, and honour.

Obedience to the ruler is achieved through the following:

- Announcing allegiance to the ruler of the homeland, and allegiance is not permissible to anyone other than the ruler. Terrorist organizations make their allegiance to the leader of their group, so they betray the covenant and withdraw their hand of obedience. The Prophet (PBUH) has promised these people the most severe punishment and torment.
- Respecting the laws of the nation and the decisions issued by the ruler, as these are decisions to preserve the security and stability of the country, and to move it towards the path of development, construction and growth, and to work sincerely to achieve prosperity in the nation, and to preserve its wealth and gains.
- Not rebelling against the ruler in word or deed. Public denunciation that fuels sedition and unrest in homelands must be avoided. False demonstrations must also be avoided, as they are a disastrous beginning that only leads to the destabilization of security and stability, the destruction of homelands and homes, and only results in the sedition of war and bloodshed.
- Praying for the ruler to be well and successful, which is the practice of our righteous scholars. al-Fuḍayl b. 'Iyāḍ said: "If I had a supplication that would be answered, I would make it for the ruler."<sup>1</sup> The ruler is preoccupied with his mind and time to

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Jāmi' Bayān al-'Ilm wa Faḍlihi* (Cairo: Idāra al-Ṭabā'a al-Munīriyya, ND), 1:40.

provide security and safety for the homelands, and to provide a decent life. He is preoccupied and in great concern, and in need of sincere supplication.

- Beware of the instigators of sedition and discord who incite rebellion against the rulers and incite demonstrations, sit-ins, and chaos. These people bring nothing but evil and sedition to the homelands. Obedience and adherence to the ruler are the keys that close all sedition and shut the door to all evil and chaos.<sup>1</sup>

**Sixth: Having a positive outlook on life:** Life is an important stage of human existence, in which God has placed manifestations of beauty and splendour. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “The world is green and sweet.”<sup>2</sup> He encouraged the enjoyment of its good things, as God Almighty said: “And do not forget your share of this world,”<sup>3</sup> and: “Say, ‘Who has forbidden the adornment of God which He has produced for His servants and the good [lawful] things of provision?’”<sup>4</sup> God urged its investment and striving to reach the highest levels of prosperity in it: “He is the One Who produced you from the earth and settled you in it.”<sup>5</sup> This perspective has been reinforced by the United Arab Emirates through the National Strategy for Quality of Life, which aims to make the UAE a global leader in quality of life and enhance its position as the happiest nation. Globally. The strategy includes 14 pillars and 9 strategic objectives, including promoting healthy lifestyles, fostering good mental health, adopting positive thinking as a core value, and building life skills.<sup>6</sup>

The one who looks at life in this normal way is led by it to optimism and positivity, rather than to despair and hopelessness. God Almighty said:

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<sup>1</sup> AlDhaheri, *Deconstructing the Discourse of Religious Extremism*, 402-5.

<sup>2</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ḥadīth no. 2336, 4:260.

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān, 28:77.

<sup>4</sup> Qur’ān, 7:32.

<sup>5</sup> Qur’ān, 11:61.

<sup>6</sup> UAE Cabinet, National Strategy for Wellbeing 2031.

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“Do not despair of the mercy of God,”<sup>1</sup> and: “And do not despair of the mercy of God.”<sup>2</sup> which develops the spirit of creativity and innovation, revives the incentive to renewal and development, promotes constructive thinking, and enhances feelings of happiness and satisfaction.

However, the person who sees life through a negative, limited lens sees it as having no value, so he expects the worst and believes that isolation, alienation, and avoiding people are the ideal solutions. This causes him to be depressed and constantly sad, weakens his motivation towards work and production, makes him lose interest in life activities, and makes him abandon the enjoyment of the pleasures of this worldly life, and exaggerate in worship at the expense of his worldly duties, leaving the guidance of the Prophet (PBUH) in the balanced view of life, which requires balance between the requirements of this world and the requirements of the Hereafter.

Thus, Islam forms a sound intellectual identity that adopts the principles of peace, is based on the foundations of respect, embodies the values of justice, follows the path of facilitation, adopts rationality as a firm approach, establishes true citizenship, and enshrines a positive view of life, which achieves security and stability for the individual and society, and leads the nation to development and prosperity.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 39:53.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān, 12:87.

## Methods of Intellectual Fortification

Islam is keen on building a sound intellectual identity and intellectual fortification, relying on means including:

**First: The command to be balanced in religion:** Balance in religion is the approach that God Almighty has approved for His servants, and commanded them to follow it in His Book, and through the words of His Prophet (PBUH). Just as one should not be lax and negligent to the point of neglecting duties and persisting in sins, one should also not be strict or pedantic, nor should one exhaust oneself to the point of boredom. God Almighty said: “And He has not placed upon you in the religion any difficulty.”<sup>1</sup>

The moderate, balanced believer who knows that the Sharīʿa came to make him happy, not to make things difficult for him, does not burden himself with more than he can bear, nor does he burden himself with more than he can handle, acting upon the words of God Almighty: “God does not burden a soul beyond its capacity,”<sup>2</sup> so he does what he can without exhausting himself.

In contrast, the extremist tends to be strict in his adherence to religious rulings, burdening himself with more than he can bear, and making things difficult and exhausting for himself. He does not take the legal concessions and facilitations that the religion has prescribed to make worship and transactions easier, except in the most difficult circumstances. In advising and guiding others, he imposes his opinions on them, orders them to perform the most difficult and burdensome tasks, and frequently criticizes and condemns their actions, without considering their circumstances or what suits their situation. This leads to burdening them beyond their capacity and obligating them to do what is not obligatory for them, such as someone who makes it difficult for people to pay Zakāt al-Fiṭr in cash, adhering to the apparent meaning of

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 22:78.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 2:286.

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the noble Prophetic *ḥadīth*, even though the matter has flexibility and ease, taking into account reality and the changes of the times.

**Second: The importance of balance in practice:** Balance is an important principle of Islam and is called for to foster moderate behaviour, based on a reconciliation between the requirements of religion and the demands of the world. God Almighty said: “And seek, through that which God has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and do not forget your share of the world.”<sup>1</sup>

The moderate person is the one who maintains a balance between the rights of his Lord, the rights of himself, and the rights of his family, and takes care of his physical health and well-being through sufficient sleep, proper nutrition, and exercise. He also takes care of his spiritual health through worship and remembrance and balances his closeness to his Lord and his connection with Him, and his concern for the affairs of his community and the issues of his country.

On the other hand, the person who behaves in an extreme manner devotes himself to the worship of his Lord, isolates himself, and turns away from his worldly life, neglecting his appearance, health, and bodily needs, such as sleep, food, and medicine. In doing so, he goes against the guidance of the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace. The extremist ignores the rights of his family, does not care about the concerns of his community, and pays no attention to the affairs of his country.

**Third: The call to adopt values and morals:** Values and morals, expressed in words and actions, with all people—regardless of their race, religion, and colour—represent a characteristic of a moderate personality in its religiosity. The moderate person behaves in a refined manner in dealing with all people without exception; with his family, his community, his country, and indeed all of humanity, he respects their privacy and beliefs, preserves their dignity and rights, thinks well of them, treats them with kindness and compassion, love and affection, smiles and cheerfulness,

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 28:77.

addresses them with good words and kind speech, embodies truthfulness in his words, honesty in his dealings, faithfulness in his promises and covenants, humility and tolerance in his relationships, justice and fairness in his actions, makes mercy and benevolence the focus of his movements, dialogue and understanding the solution to his disputes and conflicts, and providing benefit to people the main essence of his culture and identity, embodying the saying of the Prophet (PBUH): “The most beloved of people to God Almighty are those who are most beneficial to people,”<sup>1</sup> and: “Whoever is able to benefit his brother, let him do so.”<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, the immoderate person makes suspicion the basis of his relationships and dealings, and harshness, rudeness, and impatience the method of teaching and correcting his family members. He thinks that he is getting closer to God Almighty by being hostile to those who disagree with him in his religion and belief, turning away from God Almighty’s call to be kind to them and just with them: “Be kind to them and act justly towards them. Indeed, God loves those who act justly,”<sup>3</sup> and: “And do good. Indeed, God loves the doers of good.”<sup>4</sup>

**Fourth: Establishment of positive citizenship that encompasses all individuals within the same homeland.** Citizens have no superior relationship with any affiliation, whether religious, sectarian, ethnic, or otherwise. Rather, citizenship is associated with rights guaranteed to all and duties that must be performed by all to achieve the targeted goals and to confront existing and future challenges. Its foundation is the achievement of common interests, and the prevention of various evils, by doing everything that contributes to the security and stability of the homeland, its progress and elevation, its development and prosperity, and warding off everything that harms its reputation, or leads to its

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<sup>1</sup> al-Ṭabarānī, Sulaymān b. Aḥmad, *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr* (Beirut: Maktaba lḥyāʾ al-Turāth, 1983), *ḥadīth* no. 13646, 12:453.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, *ḥadīth* no. 14451, 6:170; al-Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrak*, *ḥadīth* no. 8277, 4:460.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 60:8.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 2:195.

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ruin; and it is a central characteristic of moderate behaviour. Rather, citizenship is an innate instinct in the soul of the moderate person, which is translated by his intentions, words, and actions. God Almighty gave precedence in the Holy Qur'ān of the right of the homeland over the right of the individual as He, the Majestic, said in the context of defending the homeland: "How could we not fight in God's cause when our children and we have been driven out of our homeland?"<sup>1</sup> God gave precedence to the homeland over the children, and seeking the homeland's good was a concern that preoccupied the prophets. They even included it in their supplications, including the supplication of Abraham (PBUH) for all that is good for his country, when he said: "My Lord, make this city secure."<sup>2</sup> Ibn 'Āshūr said: "In this sentence, Abraham, peace be upon him, included all that is requested for the good of the city."<sup>3</sup>

The moderate citizen strives to protect his homeland and preserve its reputation, and responds honourably to defend its dignity, protect its borders, and raise its flag, in times of peace and war, with his own self, money, and words. A citizen repels rumours that destabilize the homeland, confronts those who seek to sow discord and division among its people, pledges allegiance to leaders and rulers, appreciates and respects them, preserves the purity of their reputation, prays for them privately and publicly, obeys their commands, and follows their opinions, especially in serious matters and dangerous events. The citizen respects their country's constitution, abides by its laws, interacts with its social system, and builds positive relationships between the nation's institutions and its individuals based on mutual rights and duties assigned to each party. Out of loyalty, devotion, respect, appreciation, and commitment, the citizen strives to bring benefits and ward off harm. They endeavour to develop their homeland, build its civilization, and work diligently for its prosperity, safeguarding its gains and wealth, protecting its resources and achievements, preserving its capabilities, and maintaining its glory.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 2:246.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, 14:35.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn 'Āshūr, *al-Taḥrīr wa'l-Tanwīr*, 13:55.

The citizen is keen on societal cohesion, strengthening its foundations, fostering coexistence among all its members, supporting one another, engaging in volunteer work, and promoting community cooperation. The citizen's guide in all of this is: "And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and transgression. And fear God."<sup>1</sup> The citizen frequently prays for his homeland, asking God Almighty to perpetuate His favour and blessings upon it, its goodness and happiness, its progress and elevation, its prosperity and flourishing, and to increase His bounty upon it. The citizen honours the homeland, preserves its security and stability, and spreads happiness and harmony among people.

However, the person with the immoderate behaviour, who is disconnected from his homeland, cut off from his roots, whose loyalty is to others, and whose allegiance is to other than his rulers, does not care about what happens in it, whether it is beneficial or harmful. He rejects its laws, opposes its official institutions, and belittles its rulers. He does not appreciate any development or prosperity that occurs in it, and he does not pay attention to its customs, traditions, and norms. He shows hostility towards society, its components, and its spectrum, especially those who differ from him in religion and belief. He may even collaborate with its enemies and suspicious external entities to undermine its structure, spread chaos in its society, and sow discord among its people, ignoring the saying of the Messenger of God (PBUH): "God will ask every shepherd about what he was entrusted with, whether he preserved it or neglected it."<sup>2</sup>

**Fifth: Encouraging civilized communication:** Civilized communication between the peoples of the world, regardless of their religions, races, languages, colours, and nationalities, based on pillars of respected boundaries, valid covenants, common interests, human coexistence, religious tolerance, and global understanding; all of these are pillars of

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 39:17-18.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Hibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Hibbān*, ḥadīth no. 5103, 6:191.

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moderate behaviour. God Almighty said: “O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you. Indeed, God is Knowing and Acquainted.”<sup>1</sup>

A moderate person adheres to international treaties, fulfils international agreements, abides by the international laws adopted by the country, respects national sovereignty and the territorial integrity of other countries, strives to achieve stability and peace in them, criminalizes the use of violence and force against them, refrains from interfering in their affairs and privacy, appreciates other religions, cultures, civilizations and ethnicities, respects their symbols, refrains from harming or diminishing them, seeks good neighbourliness with all countries, and strives to achieve friendship and mutual respect among peoples, based on equality, and the values of truthfulness and honesty in word and deed. A moderate person also benefits from other cultures and civilizations, exchanges knowledge, sciences, benefits and trade with them, shares the latest innovations and creations, helps them in times of disasters and crises, cooperates with them constructively, and engages in fruitful dialogue with them, contributing to the benefit of their country and the rest of the world.

On the other hand, the extremist takes the path of hostility and estrangement, spreading hatred and resentment with all the countries and peoples of the world, and refuses to engage with them in constructive dialogue unless it is based on submission to his opinion and belief. He criminalizes all kinds of dealings with countries, and considers all kinds of covenants, agreements and alliances with them to be null and void. He also forbids resorting to any of their laws, and prevents trade and economic exchange with them, ignoring the biography of the Prophet (PBUH) which was full of examples of civilized communication with all peoples, through the conclusion of covenants and agreements, the

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 39:13.

exchange of messages, the exchange of visits and gifts, and benefiting from their sciences, cultures and innovations.

Thus, moderation is a comprehensive approach that should be applied in all areas of life: in worship, interactions, morals, customs, and in personal, family, social, and professional life. Through moderation, a Muslim becomes balanced in religious practice, upright in behaviour and dealings, contributes to everything that benefits the country, and is open to global civilizations.

## Results of Intellectual Fortification

Intellectual fortification yields results manifested in moderate behaviour, with effects reflected across various relationships. Behaviour is the practical translation of thoughts and their actual impact. Whatever the ideas a person holds, their effects are only seen in their behaviour. Therefore, one is only held accountable for their actions and punished only for their deeds. God Almighty says: “God does not burden any soul with more than it can bear: each gains whatever good it has done, and suffers its bad.”<sup>1</sup> Hence, moderate behaviour acquires great importance, which is manifested in:

- Psychological comfort and peace of mind enhance quality of life and increase the sense of belonging to the community and country. Intellectual fortification also increases people’s love and respect for one another and helps citizens be more creative at work because it spreads the spirit of goodness, peace, and love in society and reduces conflicts and tensions between individuals.<sup>2</sup>
- The absence of moderate behaviour causes ruin for the individual, their community, and their nation, and its destructive effects may extend even further. Those whose behaviour is extreme

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 2:286.

<sup>2</sup> al-Jindī, Muḥammad ‘Ādil, *Qāmūs ‘Ilm al-Nafs* (NA: Dar Ghaydā’ lil-Nashr wa’l-Tawzī’, 2017), 45-46.

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find themselves in conflict with their own nature and instincts, burdening themselves with excessive zeal in religious practices and taking exaggerated precautions. They also harm their community by negatively influencing those around them, condemning it, harbouring animosity, and antagonizing anyone who disagrees with them. Furthermore, they disobey their ruler and leader, fail to contribute to building their nation, and do not hesitate to harm it with their negative words and destructive actions. Thus, their harm to their country is immense, and their negative impact is widespread.

When practiced properly, intellectual fortification produces results on three critical levels: the family, the community, and the nation.

## First: The Family

The family is the nucleus of society; its stability and cohesion determine the stability and cohesion of society. This is the meaning that Shaykh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan—may God have mercy on him—had in mind when he said: “The family is the foundation of the progress of the whole society.”<sup>1</sup> Islam paid attention to the family and was keen to preserve it. This is manifested in its call to build a relationship between spouses on the basis of love, mercy, kindness, and gentleness. God Almighty said: “Another of His signs is that He created spouses from among yourselves for you to live with in tranquillity: He ordained love and kindness between you. There truly are signs in this for those who reflect.”<sup>2</sup> The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: “Indeed, among the most perfect of believers in faith are those who are best in character and kindest to their families,”<sup>3</sup> and in another narration: “The most complete of believers in

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<sup>1</sup> Sharaf, Muḥammad Yāsir, *al-Ḥayā al-Ijtimā'iyya fī'l-Imārāt* (Abu Dhabi: Dār al-Mutanabī, 1995), 85.

<sup>2</sup> Qurʾān, 30:21.

<sup>3</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ḥadīth no. 5612, 5:9; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, ḥadīth no. 24841, 11:153.

faith are those who are best in character, and the best of you are those who are best to their wives.”<sup>1</sup> Whenever a Muslim man improves his treatment of his family by being kind to them, attending to their needs, and taking care of their affairs, he improves his standing with his Lord. The same applies to women, for “women are the counterparts of men.”<sup>2</sup> At that point, the family will follow the path of happiness and stability.

The care of Islam for the family is also manifested in its command to establish the relationship between parents and their children on the basis of innate mercy and the feeling of educational responsibility. This was manifested in the case of the Prophet (PBUH) with his family. In the *ḥadīth* of Anas b. Mālik, he said: “I have not seen anyone who was more merciful to his family than the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace.”<sup>3</sup>

Combining the requirements of nature and responsibility is not limited to the relationship between parents and children, but also extends to the relationship between children and parents. God Almighty said: “Your Lord has commanded that you should worship none but Him, and that you be kind to your parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, say no word that shows impatience with them, and do not be harsh with them, but speak to them respectfully and lower your wing in humility towards them in kindness and say, ‘Lord, have mercy on them, just as they cared for me when I was little.’”<sup>4</sup>

A man came to the Messenger of God (PBUH) with another old man. The Prophet said, “O so-and-so, who is this with you?” He said, “My father.” The Prophet said, “Do not walk in front of him, do not sit before

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<sup>1</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, *ḥadīth* no. 1162, 3:458, Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, *ḥadīth* no. 10248, 4:483.

<sup>2</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, *ḥadīth* no. 113, 1:189; Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, *ḥadīth* no. 236, 1:171; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, *ḥadīth* no. 26836, 12:125.

<sup>3</sup> Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *ḥadīth* no. 2316, 7:76.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 17:23-24.

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him, do not call him by his name, and do not insult him.”<sup>1</sup> If parents fulfil their duties towards their children and vice versa, the family will live in stability, happiness, and contentment.

Emirati law has paid great attention to family cohesion, enacting laws to strengthen families and establishing institutions to protect them, grounded in a firm foundation of customs, traditions, and societal norms.

Protecting the family, strengthening its cohesion, and developing its gains tops the list of priorities in the government plans, policies, and programs in the United Arab Emirates, based on a firm conviction that the family is the basic incubator and the first nucleus in a cohesive and united society and a safe and prosperous homeland in which its children enjoy well-being and stability.

Much energy is harnessed to establish, manage and develop an integrated system of bodies, institutions, laws, procedures and initiatives related to protecting, caring for and supporting the family; reaching the point where the United Arab Emirates occupied the first place in the Arab world in the list of Best Countries for Family Care for the year 2019, and sits 22<sup>nd</sup> globally in the total standards of quality of family life and raising children, 23<sup>rd</sup> in international leadership standards in these fields, 25<sup>th</sup> in quality of life measures, and 26<sup>th</sup> in the treatment of women.<sup>2</sup>

Emirati government institutions work through the National Family Policy, which includes 6 main pillars: marriage, family relations, balance of roles, childcare, family protection, and the framework for action.<sup>3</sup>

Among the most prominent institutions active in the family field in the UAE are: the Ministry of Community Development, the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, the Family Development Foundation,

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<sup>1</sup> al-Ṭabarānī, Sulaymān b. Aḥmad, *al-Muʿjam al-Wasīf* (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥaramayn, 1995), *ḥadīth* no. 4159, 4:267.

<sup>2</sup> “Ḥimāya al-Usra fī’l-Imārāt Awaliyya Yukaffilha al-Qānūn wa Tu’azzizuha al-Taṭbīqāt al-Dhakiyya,” WAM News Service 12 August 2023.

<sup>3</sup> UAE Government, National Policy for the Family.

the Marriage Fund (Marriage Grant), the Department of Community Development in Abu Dhabi, the Community Development Authority in Dubai, and the Supreme Council for Family Affairs in Sharjah.

## Second: Community

Intellectual fortification has a clear impact on society's cohesion and solidarity. This is evident in the fact that adherence to the social etiquette mentioned in the religious discourse is a means of achieving social cohesion. Among these etiquettes are:

- Being a good neighbour: God Almighty enjoined kindness to neighbours, saying: "Be good to your parents, to relatives, to orphans, to the needy, to neighbours near and far."<sup>1</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) said: "Gabriel kept urging me to be kind to my neighbour until I thought he would make him an heir."<sup>2</sup>
- Maintaining kinship ties: God Almighty says: "Beware of severing the ties of kinship: God is always watching over you."<sup>3</sup>
- Good relations between friends: God Almighty has enjoined kindness to friends in His saying: "Be good to your parents, to relatives, to orphans, to the needy, to neighbours near and far and travellers."<sup>4</sup>
- Kindness to the vulnerable: God Almighty said: "Therefore, do not oppress the orphan, nor repulse the beggar."<sup>5</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) said: "Stroke the head of the orphan and feed the poor."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 4:36.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, ḥadīth no. 914, 4:272.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān, 4:1.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān, 4:36.

<sup>5</sup> Qur'ān, 93:9-10.

<sup>6</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 23:321.

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- Kindness to others: God Almighty says: “and He does not forbid you to deal kindly and justly with anyone who has not fought you for your faith or driven you out of your homes: God loves the just.”<sup>1</sup> In an authentic narration, the Prophet (PBUH) stood up for the funeral of a Jew and said: “Is it not a soul?!”<sup>2</sup>

### Third: The Nation

The impact of intellectual fortification on the stability and prosperity of the nation is manifested in several ways, including:

- Attachment to one’s homeland: This is achieved through loving it, taking pride in belonging to it, caring about its issues, knowing its history, symbols, and role models, becoming familiar with its culture, customs, and traditions, and striving to benefit its people. The Holy Qurʾān mentions Abraham’s supplication for his homeland, Mecca, saying: “Abraham said, ‘My Lord, make this land secure and provide with produce those of its people who believe in God and the Last Day.’”<sup>3</sup> The Qurʾān also mentions Moses’ longing for his land and people and his determination to visit them: “Once Moses had fulfilled the term and was travelling with his family.”<sup>4</sup> The Qurʾān also tells us about the Prophet’s longing for his homeland, Mecca, and what was revealed to him at that time: “He who has made the Qurʾān binding on you [Prophet] will bring you back home,” to Mecca.<sup>5</sup>
- Loyalty to the ruler and adherence to his commands: God Almighty says: “O you who have believed, obey God and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Qurʾān, 60:8.

<sup>2</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 1250, 1:441; Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ḥadīth no. 960, 3:57.

<sup>3</sup> Qurʾān, 2:126.

<sup>4</sup> Qurʾān, 28:29.

<sup>5</sup> Qurʾān, 28:85.

<sup>6</sup> Qurʾān, 4:59.

- Respect for official laws: This is achieved by complying with them, fulfilling duties, carrying out responsibilities, preserving gains, contributing to the strengthening of security and safety, and not disrupting public order. This is part of obeying the ruler and fulfilling the trust that God Almighty has commanded in many verses, including His saying: “who are faithful to their trusts and pledges.”<sup>1</sup>
- Respecting customs and traditions: Everything that people have agreed upon must be respected, appreciated, and not violated. Scholars and jurists have always considered custom binding and have based many rulings on it; none of them has denied this.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān, 23:8.



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CONCLUSION

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## Conclusion

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, and peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, the Seal of the Prophets, and upon his family and companions. This reference book for the Islamic Culture course defined Islamic culture as “a set of beliefs, knowledge, arts, ideals, traditions, and skills that stem from Islam, encompass its issues, align with shared human values, and ensure intellectual integrity and ethical conduct in Muslim societies.” The book highlighted the most important features of Islam, namely rationality, balance, realism, the centrality of ethical values, and openness and acceptance of others.

The book also addressed the sources of Islamic law, namely the Holy Qur’ān, the Prophetic guidance and the noble biography of the Prophet, Islamic jurisprudence and legal opinions (*fatwas*), Islamic civilization, and laws, customs, and traditions, clarifying the concept of each and how to utilize and benefit from them.

The book then delved into the components and issues of the Islamic religion, summarizing them in the concept of faith in God Almighty, clarifying its meaning and its impact on strengthening values. It then moved on to discuss human values: their concepts and characteristics, such as comprehensiveness, stability, integration, continuity, innateness, realism, and flexibility, as well as their social and human dimensions. The book focused on the major values: purification of the soul, knowledge, wisdom, mercy, peace, tolerance, and citizenship, explaining their meaning, importance, means of acquiring them, ways to strengthen them, and methods of achieving them, including purposeful learning, diligence, perseverance, and setting a good example.

The book concluded with a discussion of intellectual fortification, its foundations, methods, and benefits. Thus, the reader can grasp the most important features of Islamic culture, its spiritual and faith-based dimensions, its ethical and moral character, and its civilizational and humanistic impact, which contribute to the realization of happiness for humanity.

Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds.





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## Book Summary

This book teaches readers about the concept of Islamic culture, the most important features of Islamic legal discourse, and its sources, components, and key issues in the realms of faith and fundamental values. The book also clarifies the importance of intellectual fortification as the purpose behind discussing the correct direction of Islamic discourse.

As readers delve into this book, they will develop a sound understanding of Islamic culture, including its foundational faith, ethical character, and civilizational impact, which contribute to the well-being of humanity.

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