

Islam says no to extremism, yes to moderation

By [Thameem Ushama](#) - December 4, 2021 @ 9:36am



Islamic moderation features are so well integrated that the end characteristic of a moderate Muslim community is its command of righteousness and forbidding viciousness as tangible features. - NSTP file pic

Many discourses on Islam's nature and characteristics have been held since 9/11 incident in the United States. Some lead to positive images, but many give rise to negative perceptions.

Muslims claim Islam is peaceful, just, and moderate, but some people tend to believe Islam is unjust, unkind, unfair, immoderate, extreme, militant and even hostile.

Some spread their versions and interpretations of Islam, and present Muslims as uncooperative. Intellectual dissensions arise among people who are unaware of Islam's worldview, culture and civilization.

Islamic religious teachings are believed to foster terrorist motivations. Provocateurs portray Muslims as a violence-prone tribe. Thus, Islam is misunderstood in contemporary realms.

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Hence, these negative observations warrant a rational response from authentic Islamic sources to correct misconceptions.

The Arabic term Wasatiyyah refers to the "method" of Islamic moderation. God revealed the Quran — the Muslim scripture — as the guidance to liberate humankind from the darkness of ignorance.

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The Quran requires humans to apply the method of moderation as the means and essence of guidance. Moderation is not confined to any partial implementation or enforcement of religious teachings, rulings or systems, but, instead, attends a comprehensive method applied to every aspect of life by all individuals, groups and nations.

Islam is entirely based on moderate methodology, and this is clear in the Quran and prophetic example. Whosoever among Muslims neglects moderation is regarded as one who neglects the realities of the Quran's holistic nature.

The message of Islam is moderation, and the exegetical literature on moderation underscores fundamental and extraordinary features. The Quran declares that the Muslim community is uniquely distinguished from other nations and communities. God exalted this community to dignity, for it applies moderation as the method.

The Quran describes many prominent features of moderation and allows us to comprehend that Islam's method of moderation is applied to all walks of life. The main features of Islamic moderation are:

(i) Excellence or Goodness

(ii) Justice

(iii) Easing or removal of hardship

(iv) Wisdom

(v) Straightness

(vi) Between two Limits

Each feature manifests a pragmatic objective. According to Muslims, God is the only guide to their achievement, which limits excess and apathy via moderation, and thus, avoid extremism.

The Muslim community is moderate, and is neither rigid nor dogmatic. It is an open secret, welcomes new ideas and learns from other societies, cultures and civilizations. It seeks the truth, wherever that may come from and adopt it.

Moderation is evident in the way Muslim society is run and organised. It is neither permissive, undisciplined, nor regimented, run by rigid rules, and instead, raised on learning, education, and rich cultural and social traditions.

There are six features of moderation. **The first** is "excellence or goodness". It is substantiated by a Quranic verse in which God calls Muslims the "Middle Nation" or "Moderate nation" or ummatan wasatan, in Arabic.



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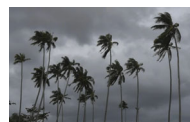
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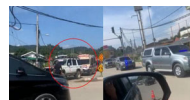
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For this reason, Muslims are described as the "best community" (khayra ummah), and the Quran explicitly proposes that moderation is excellence or goodness.

The second is "justice", which infers straightness, impartiality, fairness, equitableness, probity, honesty, uprightness, and just composition.

The third is the "ease and removal of hardship", which is the principal purpose of any consequent discourse on moderation's true meaning because moderation aims to ease and remove hardship.

The fourth is "wisdom", which refers to justice, knowledge, reasoning, gentleness, prophethood and Scripture. The term expresses the call for man's awareness of the excellence of creation with the best available knowledge.

Thus, wisdom refers to the process of obtaining the truth through knowledge and reason and infers a prohibition of ignorance.

At the same time, it forbids any migration towards harshness and evil.

The fifth is "straightness", as endorsed by scholars, who determined that when a person is not living within a network of "straightness", he/she will deviate from the truth according to the common Islamic understanding. Deviation manifests as either excessiveness or negligence and is contrary to the spirit of moderation.

The sixth concerns equilibrium "between two limits". Maintaining a balance between two limits is another characteristic of moderation.

Islamic moderation features are so well integrated that the end characteristic of a moderate Muslim community is its command of righteousness and forbidding viciousness as tangible features.

The most comprehensive attribute of such an ideal community is its collective easing of social burdens and facilitations that remove hardship. These activities are essential components of Islam, yet lip-service sophists falsely render without genuine activation.

Nevertheless, these features are crucial to our understanding of the significance of easing burdens and removing hardships, especially in religious matters.

It transmits that Islam does not endorse extremism in any aspect of life, but moderation is the key to felicity and the well-being (Sejahtera) of man, society, and nation.

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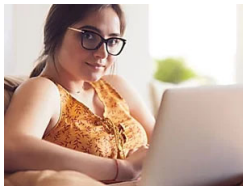
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