



Religious Moderation from the Hadith Perspective: A Thematic Study on the Values of Balance in Islamic Studies

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Abstract

Religious moderation (wasathiyah) is a key concept in Islamic teachings that emphasizes justice, balance, and the avoidance of extremism in practicing religious life. This study aims to examine the values of balance from the perspective of the Prophet Muhammad's hadiths using a thematic (maudhu'i) approach. The primary focus of the analysis includes the balance between worldly and spiritual life, ritual and social worship, as well as attitudes toward differences. Furthermore, the discussion highlights the role of hadiths in constructing a peaceful and inclusive Islamic narrative and their relevance in addressing challenges of extremism and intolerance. The findings indicate that the Prophet's hadiths not only serve as normative guidelines but also embody values that can strengthen the discourse on Islamic moderation in a pluralistic global society. Therefore, a thematic study of hadiths on religious moderation is crucial for reinforcing tolerance, peace, and harmony among religious communities.

Keywords

Religious moderation, Wasathiyah, Hadis, balances, Tolerance , Dakwah

Introduction

The phenomenon of religiosity among Muslim communities is currently situated in a highly dynamic, complex, and challenging context. This dynamism arises not only from within the Muslim community itself, through differences in views, interpretations, and diverse religious practices, but is also significantly influenced by various global external factors. Internal challenges may include conflicts in interpreting Islamic teachings, an increasing tendency toward extremism whether in the form of conservatism or liberalism and a weak, in-depth understanding of religious values. Meanwhile, external challenges encompass globalization, Western cultural hegemony, and the rapid development of information technology, all of which directly or indirectly shape how Muslims understand and practice their faith in daily life. These conditions render contemporary Muslim religiosity a complex issue requiring

serious attention from various parties, including religious scholars, academics, and community leaders. Internally, there is a concerning trend of growing adherence to extreme religious interpretations. (Yunus, 2017). On one hand, radicalism has emerged, emphasizing exclusivism and violence in the name of religion; on the other hand, liberalism has also developed, often neglecting the normative boundaries of Sharia. Both, however, deviate from the essence of Islamic teachings as a religion of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* which prioritizes balance, justice, and compassion in all aspects of life.

Meanwhile, the reality of contemporary global life is characterized by increasingly intense intergroup interactions within the context of multicultural and multireligious societies. (Afifuddin, 2020). Muslims are confronted with the demand to present a face of Islam that is moderate, inclusive, and dialogical. Values such as tolerance, respect for differences, and the ability to communicate peacefully have become indispensable in addressing the increasingly complex challenges of the modern era. In this context, the concept of religious moderation, or *wasathiyah al-Islam*, becomes highly relevant for serious and in-depth study, both theoretically and practically. Moderation in Islam is not a new discourse but rather an integral and authentic part of foundational Islamic teachings.

The Qur'an explicitly describes Muslims as *ummatan wasathan* (a moderate community) entrusted with the role of being witnesses over humanity. (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 143).

وكذلك جعلناكم أمة وسطا لتكونوا شهداء على الناس . ويكون الرسول عليكم سمداً وما جعلنا القبلة التي كنتم عليها إلا
لتعلموا من يتبع الرسول . ممن ينقلب على عقبيه وإن كانت لكم آفة إلا على الذم . هدى الله وما كان الله ليضيع إيمانكم . إن
الله بالناس لرؤوف رحيم

Translation :

“Thus We have made you (O Muslims) a middle nation (*ummatan wasathan*) so that you may be witnesses over the deeds of mankind, and so that the Messenger (Prophet Muhammad) may be a witness over your deeds. We did not set the Qibla (Baitulmaqdis) to which you formerly prayed except to know who would follow the Messenger and who would turn back. Indeed, changing the Qibla is difficult except for those whom Allah has guided. Allah will not let your faith go to waste. Truly, Allah is Most Compassionate and Most Merciful toward mankind.”

In this context, moderation encompasses spiritual, social, political, and cultural dimensions, all aimed at achieving balance (*tawazun*), justice (*adl*), and the avoidance of extremism (*ghuluw*). These concepts are further reinforced in various hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ which, directly or indirectly, provide guidance for living a moderate life in both religious practice

and social interactions.

Nevertheless, the implementation of moderation values in the religious life of Muslims does not always proceed smoothly. Various obstacles exist, ranging from narrow and textual interpretations of religious texts, insufficient in-depth religious literacy, to the influence of transnational ideologies carrying specific agendas. These factors result in distortions in understanding and practicing the values of balance that should constitute the core of Islamic life itself. Therefore, systematic and scholarly efforts are required to reaffirm the foundations of moderation in Islam, particularly through studies of the Prophet's hadiths, which are rich in messages of balance and collective welfare.

One approach that can be employed to explore the values of moderation in hadiths is the thematic (*maudhu'i*) approach, which involves collecting hadiths related to a specific theme in this case, the values of balance. This approach enables readers to understand the normative messages of Islam in a comprehensive and contextual manner. (Zainuddin, 2020). Through this study, various forms and dimensions of balance taught by the Prophet will be identified, encompassing aspects of spirituality, worship, social relations, as well as attitudes toward differences and diversity.

Religious Moderation on Hadist Perspectives

Religious moderation can be understood as a perspective and pattern of practicing religious teachings that emphasizes justice, civility, and openness to diversity whether in terms of beliefs, religious practices, or cultural differences. This attitude is also characterized by the rejection of all forms of violence in the name of religion. Such an understanding is not only supported by a strong theological foundation, as reflected in various narrations of the Prophet Muhammad's hadiths. According to (Yoga Irama, 2021) legitimacy from the social realities of Indonesian society. As a naturally diverse country in terms of ethnicity, religion, culture, and language, Indonesia possesses a strong and rich cultural heritage as well as significant social capital in upholding values of togetherness and harmony. Therefore, the diversity present within Indonesian society should serve as a solid foundation for implementing the values of religious moderation in daily life.

Religious Perspectives from the Thematic Hadith Approach

Religious moderation lies in understanding and practicing

religious teachings with justice, gentleness, respect for differences, and the rejection of all forms of violence. This moderation is not only firmly grounded in religious teachings through textual sources such as hadiths but also derives legitimacy from the social realities of Indonesian society. As a nation naturally shaped by the diversity of ethnicities, cultures, languages, and religions, Indonesia possesses a strong cultural foundation and substantial social capital. Therefore, this plurality should not merely be viewed as a social reality but also serve as a source of inspiration for upholding the values of moderation in everyday religious life.(Mursidin, 2023). In while according to Nur (2023), Religious moderation should be established as a new paradigm collectively embraced by all layers of the religious community. This paradigm is important because, through a moderate approach, every adherent of religion can learn the significance of ethics in social interactions, the ability to engage in constructive dialogue, and the skills to resolve conflicts wisely. By internalizing these values of moderation as part of their worldview and way of life, the potential for interreligious conflict can be mitigated at its root namely, through a perspective that upholds tolerance, mutual understanding, and a spirit of togetherness.

Islam and Religious Moderation In Hadis Perspective

Religious moderation is an important concept in contemporary Islamic discourse, emphasizing tolerance, justice, and the wise acceptance of differences. Etymologically, the term “moderation” is often associated with the Arabic word *wasathiyah*, which means intermediate, balanced, or non-extreme. In the religious context, *wasathiyah* reflects a conciliatory attitude that is neither excessive nor neglectful of fundamental religious principles. According to Faelasup, (2001) The conceptualization of moderation in the Prophet Muhammad’s hadith corpus, particularly through a search for the term *wasathiyah* in the *Kutub al-Tis’ah* (the nine major hadith collections), reveals that the term *wasathiyah* does not appear explicitly in these collections. However, several terms with similar or closely related meanings are found, such as *al-qasd* (moderation/being in the middle), mentioned six times, and *al-i’tidāl* (balance), which appears only once, specifically in Tirmidhi’s hadith number 255. Furthermore, the fundamental principles of *wasathiyah* as reflected in the hadiths encompass universal values that are highly relevant

for fostering a harmonious religious life. These values include *al-khairiyyah* (being the best community), *al-'adalah* (justice), *al-tawāzun* (balance), *al-tasāmuh* (tolerance), *al-istiqāmah* (steadfastness in goodness), and *raf' al-haraj* (relieving the community from hardship). These values serve as moral and spiritual foundations for implementing religious moderation in a pluralistic society such as Indonesia. Thus, although the term *wasathiyah* is not explicitly mentioned in the wording of the *Kutub al-Tis'ah* hadiths, the essence of moderation is nonetheless embedded in various synonymous terms, reinforcing the importance of a balanced, just, and tolerant approach in religious practice.

Religious Moderation on Al-Quran and Hadis Perspectives

Religious moderation is a central concept in Islamic teachings that emphasizes the importance of practicing religion with a proportional, non-excessive attitude while upholding justice. This concept guides adherents to maintain a balanced stance, avoiding extremes such as radicalism or liberalism in religious practice. In the Qur'an, Muslims are described as *ummatan wasathan*, or a moderate community, signifying their role as exemplars in applying the principles of balance and justice in both religious and social life. Thematically, values such as *tawazun* (balance), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *i'tidal* (justice), and *shura* (consultation) serve as core pillars for fostering inclusive and harmonious religious practices. This concept of moderation is highly relevant to the pluralistic context of Indonesian society, where social cohesion and respect for differences are essential. Therefore, the implementation of moderation is not only normative but also operational, as reflected in educational policies and social-religious practices. This perspective is reinforced by various studies, including one conducted by (Chaerunnisa & Mahmudi, 2024) emphasizing that the teachings of moderation in the Qur'an and hadith play a central role in fostering a harmonious social life. Likewise, (Mursidin, 2023) It underscores the urgency of implementing the values of moderation in Islamic educational institutions to prevent the younger generation from developing intolerant and radical tendencies.

This study aims to explore and classify the values of balance in the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad. ﷺ as well as examine their relevance in fostering religious practices that are peaceful, tolerant, and proportional. Accordingly, this study is expected to make a significant contribution to strengthening the

discourse on religious moderation in contemporary Islamic studies and serve as a reference for nurturing a harmonious and civilized religious life within society.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a library research (literature-based) methodology. It uses a thematic (maudhu'i) approach to analyze hadiths related to the values of moderation and balance. Data collection is carried out through an extensive literature review of both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include hadith collections such as *Sahih Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim*, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, and relevant commentaries (*sharh*) on hadith, while secondary sources consist of books and scholarly journals relevant to the topic. Data analysis is conducted using a descriptive-analytical method, which involves describing the texts of the hadiths and examining their meanings in the context of the values of religious moderation.

Literature Review

This study builds upon the body of knowledge established by previous research. In this context, the author will present several earlier studies relevant to the topic under discussion in this research, namely: First, previous research that examined religious moderation from the perspective of hadith: (Mursidin & Mahmudin, 2023); (Aslamiah et al., 2023); (Shafwan, 2022); (Muhammad, 2022). Second, previous research that examined religious moderation in Islam: (Habibie et al., 2021); (Suryadi, 2022); (Muaz & Ruswandi, 2022); (Abror & Riau, 2020). Third, previous research that explored the values of balance (tawazun) in Islamic studies. (Bahri & Wahyudi, 2024); (Wafa et al., 2024); (Taufiq et al., 2023).

This study differs significantly from previous research that served as its foundation. Research on the judicial system in Saudi Arabia conducted by Mubarak (2017) and Zakiah salsabila (2017), for example, primarily emphasizes the historical aspects and institutional structure of the Islamic judiciary in Saudi Arabia, focusing on the Shariah judicial system developed under religious authority. Similarly, the research Pratama & Rasmawan (2025) examines the judicial system in Saudi Arabia from the perspective of public law and institutional reform but does not specifically address the relationship between these judicial institutions and the principles of administrative justice within the context of Islamic law. Meanwhile, research on the

Diwan Mazhalim institution conducted by Alfarisi (2020) is more focused on the function of the institution as an instrument for supervising the abuse of power, without examining its comparative aspects with other legal systems. For additional, Abouyounes (2025) examines the Diwan Mazhalim from historical and theoretical perspectives, but has not systematically compared it with modern administrative judicial institutions.

Unlike those studies, this research not only discusses the judicial system in Saudi Arabia or the Diwan al-Mazhalim institution descriptively, but also provides an analytical comparison with the administrative judiciary system in Indonesia (PTUN), as examined by Maulidina (2023) The approach employed in this study is comparative normative, focusing on the similarities and differences in principles, structure, and objectives between the Diwan al-Mazhalim as an administrative justice institution within the Islamic legal system and PTUN as an administrative justice body in Indonesia's positive law system. Consequently, this research offers a more integrative and contextual perspective, as it not only explains the judicial systems from an institutional standpoint but also explores the substantive justice values underlying both systems. This approach distinguishes the study and highlights its novelty compared to previous research, which has generally been limited to a single legal system without in-depth comparative analysis.

Result and Discussion

1. Introduce concept of Religious Moderation (*wasathiyah*)

Etymologically, the term *wasathiyah* is derived from the Arabic word *wasath* (وسط), which means "middle," "moderate," "just," or "balanced." Linguistic analyses indicate that *wasath* reflects a position of fairness and equilibrium, not merely occupying a physical midpoint, but also in moral and spiritual contexts. Studies by Muhamadul Bakir Yaakub and Khatijah Othman emphasize that *wasathiyah* in the Qur'an and Hadith embodies values of balance and justice across various aspects of life. (Yaakub & Othman, 2016).

Terminologically, *wasathiyah* refers to the principle of moderation in religion, characterized by an attitude that avoids extremism and seeks to achieve balance in both belief and religious practice. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a prominent Islamic scholar, explains that *wasathiyah* is a fundamental characteristic of Islam, encompassing balance between: spirituality and materialism, rationalism and spiritualism, individual and society, as well as

tradition and innovation. (Othman & Sulaiman, 2014) Al-Qaradawi further emphasizes that the *wasathiyah* approach is fundamental for understanding and implementing Islamic teachings in a balanced and just manner.

Religious moderation holds critical importance in addressing global challenges, particularly in an era of globalization that increasingly blurs the boundaries of religious identity. Within the context of global Islam, moderation serves as a key approach to prevent extremism and radicalization, which could otherwise damage the image of Islam as a peaceful religion. (Rita, 2023). This moderate attitude is also essential for fostering tolerance among different religious communities and strengthening peaceful coexistence, both within Muslim society and with followers of other religions. Religious moderation teaches Muslims to respect differences and to respond to social and political issues wisely. Therefore, moderation is not only a principle within religious teachings but also a highly relevant strategy for promoting global peace, creating an inclusive environment, and maintaining social harmony. With the evolving times and global challenges, the principle of *wasathiyah* remains both relevant and crucial to be practiced in daily life.

2. The Concept of Religious Moderation from the Perspective of the Prophet Muhammad's Hadiths

The concept of religious moderation from the perspective of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ's hadiths focuses on the principles of balance, ease, and avoidance of extremism. Islam, as a *rahmatan lil-'alamin* (mercy to all worlds), emphasizes the importance of avoiding two extremes: *ghuluw* (excessiveness/extremism) and *taqsir* (negligence/deficiency). Through numerous hadiths, the Prophet ﷺ taught his followers to practice religion in a just and balanced manner, without falling into positions that are either overly strict or too lax. Some key hadiths illustrating the concept of religious moderation include:

a. Indeed, religion is easy, and no one burdens themselves in religion except that they will be overcome. Therefore, adopt a moderate approach, draw near to it, and rejoice..." (Hadith reported by al-Bukhari, No. 39)

This hadith demonstrates that Islam is a religion of ease, not one that prescribes excessive hardship or undue burden. The Prophet ﷺ reminded his followers not to be extreme in religious practice, as this could create difficulties in worship and daily life. This principle encourages believers to consistently choose the middle path in both worship and social interactions.

b. Hadiths on Moderation in Worship:

"Perform deeds according to your capacity, for Allah will never grow tired of rewarding you until you grow tired. Indeed, the deeds most beloved to Allah are those done consistently, even if they are small." (Hadith reported by al-Bukhari)

This hadith emphasizes the importance of consistency and moderation in acts of worship. The Prophet ﷺ did not encourage his followers to engage in excessive worship that could lead to fatigue or an inability to sustain their practices. Islam teaches that worship should be performed in a measured and continuous manner, even if in small amounts, but consistently over time.

c. Hadis on Moderation in Social and Interpersonal Relations (Muamalah):

"Whoever makes things easy for others, Allah will make things easy for him in this world and the Hereafter." (HR.Muslim)

This hadith illustrates that a moderate attitude applies not only in worship but also in social life. The Prophet ﷺ taught his followers to be gentle, tolerant, and avoid extremism in their interactions with others. This includes refraining from harshness and treating others with kindness, compassion, and understanding.

In daily life, the concept of religious moderation taught by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ can be applied in various aspects, such as Belief and Aqidah: Avoiding extreme interpretations of religious doctrine, whether overly strict or overly lenient. Moderation in aqidah means accepting diversity in understanding as long as it remains within the fundamental framework of Islamic teachings.

Worship: The principle of moderation in worship means not overburdening oneself with practices that could be harmful, while maintaining the quality and consistency of worship. For example, balancing obligatory and voluntary acts of worship and not forcing oneself to perform beyond one's capacity. Social and Political Life: Religious moderation in social and political contexts entails maintaining peace, avoiding violence, and promoting cooperation among groups. The Prophet ﷺ taught his followers to always adhere to the principles of justice, goodness, and mutual respect in their interactions.

3. The Values of Balance (*Tawazun*) Contained in the Hadiths of the Prophet

Tawazun or balance is one of the key concepts in Islam, reflecting justice and harmony in human life. From the perspective of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ's hadiths, the values of balance are strongly emphasized in various aspects, including worldly life and the hereafter, ritual and social worship, attitudes toward differences, as well as in issuing legal opinions (*fatwa*) and conducting da'wah.

Islam teaches its followers not to focus excessively on either this world or the hereafter, but to maintain a balance between the two. This is reflected in a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ narrated by al-Bukhari:

"If you ask, then ask from Allah; and if you seek help, then seek it from Allah. Know that if all of humanity were to gather to benefit you with something, they would not be able to benefit you except with what Allah has already decreed for you. Likewise, if they were to gather to harm you with something, they would not be able to harm you except with what Allah has already decreed for you..." (HR. al-Bukhari, No. 7410)

This hadith teaches that the balance between worldly life and the hereafter lies in our belief that everything occurs by Allah's will. Therefore, we must strive wholeheartedly to achieve goodness in this world while keeping our ultimate goal the life of the hereafter in mind.

Islam teaches that balance in religious life encompasses both ritual worship (such as prayer, fasting, and almsgiving) and

social interaction with others. The Prophet ﷺ reminded his followers not to focus solely on personal worship but also to do good for others. In one hadith, he said: *"Indeed, the best of you are those who are most beneficial to others."* (HR. al-Quda'i)

This hadith illustrates that social acts of worship, such as benefiting others, doing good deeds, and fostering harmonious relationships within the community, are highly valued in Islam. It reflects a balance between personal religious practice and social engagement with others. People are like metals; they are not the same, yet each has its own distinct value.

" Humans are like metals; they are not the same, yet each has its own distinct value." (HR. Ahmad)

This hadith teaches Muslims to accept diversity and strive to live together peacefully, even in the presence of differences in belief or worldview. A moderate attitude in respecting differences is part of the value of balance that should be applied in daily life. In da'wah and issuing religious guidance, Islam emphasizes the importance of balancing the delivery of truth with wisdom, without overburdening others. The Prophet ﷺ said::

"Convey from me even if it is only one verse." (HR. al-Bukhari)

ادْعِ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَجْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

Terjemahnya:

" Invite (people) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in the best manner."...

4. The Relevance of Balance Values in Hadiths to Contemporary Religious Practices

Extremism and intolerance pose significant challenges for humanity in the modern era. Religious extremism refers to actions or ideologies that lead to the use of violence or the

coercion of religious teachings in ways that contradict the core principles of the religion itself. Meanwhile, religious intolerance is the unwillingness to accept differences in beliefs or opinions of other faiths, which often results in discrimination or conflicts among religious communities.

In the context of Islam, extremism and intolerance are fundamentally opposed to the principles of moderation taught by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Islam is a religion that advocates peace, tolerance, and respect for differences. Allah Almighty states in the Qur'an:

إِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنْكُمْ وَلَا يَرْضَىٰ لِعِبَادِهِ الْكُفْرَ وَإِنْ تَشْكُرُوا يَرْضَهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا يَزِرُ
وَاظِرَةً وَزِرَ إِخْرِيٍّ إِلَىٰ رَيْكُمْ مَرْجِعَكُمْ فَبِئْسَ لَكُمْ بَدَاتٍ أَعْمَلُونَ إِنَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
الْصِّدْقُ

Translation:

" If you disbelieve, then indeed Allah does not need you, and He is not pleased with disbelief from His servants; but if you are grateful, He is pleased with your (goodness)...."

This verse demonstrates that Allah grants humanity the freedom to choose their faith without imposing one religion over another. Therefore, extremism and intolerance contradict the fundamental principles of Islam, which emphasize respect for religious freedom and diversity. One form of extremism that often emerges is terrorism carried out in the name of religion. Such actions clearly do not reflect the peaceful teachings of Islam. In the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, he said:

" Whoever kills a person who is not at war with us, then he is not among us."(HR. al-Bukhari)

This hadith emphasizes that violence against those not involved in warfare or conflict is prohibited in Islam. Therefore, the value of balance (*tawazun*) is essential for fostering harmony among religious communities. This balance teaches us to avoid extremism in beliefs and actions and to accept differences as part of human diversity. In the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, he said: *" Indeed, religion is easy, and no one burdens themselves in religion*

except that they will be overcome. Therefore, adopt a moderate approach, draw near to it, and rejoice..." (HR. al-Bukhari, No. 39)

This hadith reminds Muslims to adopt a moderate stance in all aspects of life, including interactions with followers of other religions. Balance in religious practice, emphasizing mutual respect and understanding, is essential for fostering peace and harmony among different religious communities. Furthermore, in Qur'an, Surah Al-Hujurat [49]:13, Allah states:

إِنَّ ٱلۡأَنۡفُسَ ٱلۡفَاسِقَ ٱتَّخَذَتۡ لِكُلِّ قَبِيلَةٍ مَّوۡجِبِينَ
خَبِيرٌ عَلِيمٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱتَّقِىَ ٱللَّهَ عِنۡدَ ٱكۡرَمِكُم

Translation:

" O mankind, indeed We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another...."

This verse emphasizes the importance of differences as part of God's will, with the purpose that humanity may know one another and interact in a good and constructive manner. Maintaining balance in perceiving these differences is essential for fostering harmonious and mutually respectful relationships among religious communities.

It should also be noted that religious moderation is not only a fundamental principle in Islamic teachings but also an important strategy in da'wah and Islamic education. Moderate da'wah focuses not only on conveying Islamic teachings but also on creating space for dialogue and mutual understanding among different religious communities. Islam teaches that da'wah must be delivered wisely, with full wisdom, and without imposing the teachings on others. In this regard, Allah Almighty states in Qur'an, Surah An-Nahl [16]:125:

إِنۡ أَجۡسَنۡ هُنَّ ٱلۡبَ ٱلۡقَىٰ وَجَادِلُهُمُ ٱلۡحِ ٱلۡسَنَةَ وَٱلۡمُوعِظَةَ ٱلۡحَكِيمَةَ رِ ٱلۡيَكۡ سَبِيلَ ٱلۡإِ ٱلۡدَعِ

بِالْمُهْتَدَىٰ إِعْلَامٍ وَهُوَ سَبِيلُهُ عَنِ ضَلِّ بِمَنْ إِعْلَامٍ هُوَ رِيكَ

Translation:

" Invite (people) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in the best manner."...

This verse emphasizes the importance of da'wah carried out with gentleness, wisdom, and an avoidance of harshness or coercion. Such moderate da'wah is crucial for reducing potential divisions and enhancing a correct understanding of Islamic teachings. Education also plays a vital role in religious moderation. Education grounded in the values of moderation can cultivate a generation that is tolerant, respectful of differences, and not susceptible to extreme viewpoints. In this context, religious moderation serves as a means to teach students or the wider community to understand and respect both their own faith and the beliefs of others with full tolerance.

5. The Contribution of Hadiths in Strengthening the Discourse on Islamic Moderation

The hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad explicitly demonstrate that tolerance, justice, and balance are inseparable components of Islamic teachings. In various narrations, the Prophet consistently emphasized the importance of being just toward all people, regardless of their religion, ethnicity, or social status. One particularly strong hadith underscores the principle of justice:

" Indeed, the peoples before you were destroyed: when a notable person stole, they would leave him alone, but when a weak person stole, they would punish him. By Allah, if Fatimah bint Muhammad were to steal, I would be the one to have her hand cut off." (HR. al-Bukhari, No. 6788)

This hadith demonstrates the Prophet's firmness in upholding impartial justice, even toward his own family. In the context of moderation, this attitude serves as an important foundation for the values of social justice and equality, which are highly relevant in both national and

religious life. Additionally, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also demonstrated interfaith tolerance in various instances, such as when he accepted peace agreements with non-Muslims or allowed the Christian delegation from Najran to pray in the Prophet's Mosque.

"Let them pray in my mosque...." (Historical narration in *Sirah Ibn Hisham*, not a literal hadith, but corroborated by Islamic historians).

This attitude reinforces the legitimacy that tolerance toward other religious communities is a practice directly exemplified by the Prophet, not merely a theoretical teaching. In line with this, hadiths hold the potential to shape a peaceful and inclusive religious narrative. The Prophet's hadiths contain moral messages that form a religious discourse that is not only normative but also practical and contextual. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was known as a gentle, wise, and inclusive figure in dealing with a pluralistic society. He did not impose Islamic teachings but conveyed them with wisdom and good counsel.

"Make things easy and do not make them difficult; give glad tidings and do not drive people away." (HR. al-Bukhari, No. 69)

This hadith serves as an important foundation for shaping a peaceful Islamic da'wah narrative, encouraging Muslim preachers and scholars to convey Islamic teachings in an inclusive, friendly, and compassionate manner. In the context of religious pluralism, this attitude is crucial to preventing polarization, intolerance, and even violence in the name of religion. The Prophet Muhammad was also known never to curse or demean those who had not embraced Islam. Even toward the Quraysh polytheists who caused him harm, he continued to pray for them:

"O Allah, guide my people, for they do not know." (HR. al-Bukhari, No. 3477)

This serves as the foundation of a religious narrative that humanizes individuals, respects freedom of religion, and rejects violence and unilateral judgment.

Conclusion

Religious moderation (*wasathiyah*) is a fundamental principle in Islamic teachings, deeply rooted in the Qur'an and the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad. This concept emphasizes balance (*tawazun*), justice, and ease in practicing religion, while rejecting all forms of extremism and intolerance. The Prophet's hadiths consistently demonstrate that Islam instructs its followers to adopt a moderate stance in worship, social transactions, and in responding to differences. In the context of modern life, which is often fraught with religious and social conflicts, the values of *wasathiyah* are highly relevant for fostering tolerance, peace, and interfaith harmony. Moderation is not only a prudent strategy for da'wah but also a crucial pillar in Islamic education, aimed at shaping a just, harmonious, and morally upright society. Therefore, strengthening the understanding and practice of religious moderation based on the Prophet's hadiths is a vital step toward creating an inclusive and peaceful religious life.

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