

# Islamic Traits

## Topics

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1. Cleanliness (From the 30th Flash)
2. Purification (From the 26th Word)
3. Confession of Faith (From the 26th Letter)
4. Islam and Iman (From the 9th Letter)
5. Sincerity (From the 20th and 21th Flashes)
6. Personal Life (From the 12th Word)
7. Social Life (From the 12th Word)

## Cleanliness:

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*In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.*

*“And the earth We have spread wide; and how well have We ordered it. (51:48)”*

The universe is a vast, **constantly working factory** and the globe of the earth a hostel and **guesthouse** which is continually filled and emptied. Generally, factories, hostels and guesthouses which are thus used become much dirtied and soiled with filth, debris and rubbish, and putrid matter accumulates in all parts of them. They cannot be occupied unless they are kept with care and cleaned and swept; human beings are overwhelmed by the dirt. The factory of the universe and guesthouse of the earth, however, are totally pure, clean and spotless, and completely unsoiled, untainted and fresh; there is nothing unnecessary, nothing without benefit, not a random piece of dirt to be found. Even if there is apparently, it is quickly thrown into a transformation machine and cleaned.

This means that the One who looks after this factory does so very well. **Its Owner** is such that He sweeps and cleans and orders the vast factory and extensive palace as though they were small rooms. Considering the size of the huge factory, there is no dirt or rubbish remaining from its filth and debris. Indeed, its cleanness and tidiness are remarkable.

If someone does not wash himself and clean his small room for a month, they will become extremely dirty and soiled. That is to say, the cleanliness, purity, and luminosity in this palace of the world arise from a **continuous, wise, and diligent cleaning**. If it were not for this cleaning, sweeping and careful tending, in one year all the hundred thousand animal species would have been choked on the face of the earth.

Also, the **debris of the globes in space and the heavens**, which manifest life and death, and of satellites and stars, would have smashed not only our heads and those of the other animals, but also the head of the earth itself and of our world. They would have rained down on our heads rocks the size of mountains and driven us away from our homeland in this world. However, for a long time past, if as a warning a few meteorites have fallen as a result of destruction and reconstruction in those lofty worlds, they have not broken any heads.

Furthermore, **the corpses of a hundred thousand animal species** and the debris of two hundred thousand plant species each year on the face of the earth resulting from the alternation and struggles of life and death would have so utterly filthied the land and the sea that conscious creatures, rather than loving and delighting in the face of the earth, would have felt disgust and aversion at such ugliness and fled to death and non-existence.

Just as a bird cleans its wings with ease and a scribe his pages, so too the wings of the aircraft of the earth and the birds of the heavenly bodies and the pages of the book of the universe are cleaned and **made beautiful**. So much so that people who do not consider the infinite beauty of the hereafter and think with belief become lovers of this cleanliness and beauty of the world, they worship it.

That is to say, this palace of the world and factory of the universe display a greatest manifestation of the **divine name Most Holy** whereby it is not only the carnivorous cleaners of the seas and the eagles of the land which obey the commands proceeding from that sacred cleansing, but also its cleansing officials which gather up corpses, like worms and ants. Like the red and white blood-

corpuscles flowing in the body obey those sacred commands and do the cleaning in the body's cells, so does breathing purify and clean the blood.

And as **eyelids obey the command to clean the eye and flies to brush their wings**, so the extensive atmosphere and the clouds obey it. The air blows upon the pieces of dust and soil settled on the surface of the earth and cleans it. The sponges of the clouds sprinkle water on the garden of the earth and dampen the dust and soil. Then, so as not to dirty the sky, the air quickly collects the earth's rubbish and withdraws and hides itself with perfect orderliness. It displays the beautiful face and eye of the skies as swept and polished, all sparkling and shining.

And as the stars, elements, minerals, and plants obey the command to clean, all particles and atoms obey it: they pay attention to cleanliness within the astonishing upheavals of change and transformation. They never congregate anywhere unnecessarily and get in the way. If they do become soiled, they are quickly cleaned. They are impelled by a hand of wisdom to acquire the **cleanest, neatest, and most shining states and the most beautiful, pure and subtle forms**.

For sure, this exalted, universal cleansing which keeps the palace of the universe clean is the manifestation and requirement of the divine name Most Holy. Yes, just as the glorification of all creatures looks to the name Most Holy, so does the name of Most Holy require their cleanliness.<sup>1</sup>

It is because of this sacred connection of cleanliness that the Hadith,

*"Cleanliness is a part of belief"*

deems it to be a light of belief. And the verse,

*"Indeed, God loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean (2:222)"*

shows that cleanliness is a means of attracting God's love.

- TAKE AWAY POINT:
  - *Manifestation of the divine name Most Holy → Cleanliness (in space, skies, Earth, body, ...)*
- DRILL:
  - *How to keep them clean! How to cleanse?*



*Congratulations you've completed this unit!*

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<sup>1</sup> We must not forget that bad qualities, false beliefs, sins and innovation are all instances of moral and spiritual dirt.

## Purification:

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*In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.*

The verse, “*Therefore, do not justify yourselves (53:32)*” suggests, it is to not purify the soul. For on account of his nature and innate disposition, man loves himself. Indeed, he loves himself before anything else, and only himself. He sacrifices everything other than himself to his own soul. He praises himself in a manner befitting some object of worship. He absolves and exonerates himself from faults in the same way. As far as he possibly can, he does not see faults as being appropriate for him, and does not accept them. He defends himself passionately as though worshipping himself. Even, using on himself the members and faculties given him as part of his nature in order to praise and glorify the True Object of Worship, he displays the meaning of the verse, “*Who takes as his god his own desires. (25:43; 45:23)*” He considers himself, he relies on himself, he fancies himself. Thus, his purification and cleansing at this stage, in this step, is to not purify himself; it is not to absolve himself.

The verse, “*And be not like those who forget God, and He therefore makes them forget their own selves (59:19)*” teaches, man is oblivious of himself, and is not aware of himself. If he thinks of death, it is in relation to others. If he sees transience and decline, he does not attribute them to himself. His evil-commanding soul demands that when it comes to inconvenience and service of others, he forgets himself, but when it comes to receiving his recompense, and to benefits and enjoyment, he thinks of himself, and takes his own part fervently. His purification, cleansing, and training at this stage is the reverse of this state. That is to say, when oblivious of himself, it is not to be oblivious. That is, to forget himself when it comes to pleasure, and ambition and greed, and to think of himself when it comes to death and service of others.

The verse, “*Whatever good happens to you is from God, but whatever evil befalls you is from yourself (4:79)*” teaches, the nature of the evil-commanding soul demands that it always considers goodness to be from itself and becomes vain and conceited. Thus, in this Step, a person sees only faults, defects, impotence, and poverty in himself, and understands that all his good qualities and perfections are bounties bestowed on him by the All-Glorious Creator. He gives thanks instead of being conceited, and offers praise instead of boasting. According to the meaning of the verse, *Truly he succeeds who purifies it (91:9)*, his purification at this stage is to know his perfection to lie in imperfection, his power in impotence, and his wealth in poverty.

- TAKE AWAY POINTS:

- “*Therefore, do not justify yourselves*” → his purification and cleansing at this stage is to not purify himself; it is not to absolve himself.
- “*And be not like those who forget God, and He therefore makes them forget their own selves*” → to forget himself when it comes to pleasure, and ambition and greed, and to think of himself when it comes to death and service of others.
- “*Whatever good happens to you is from God, but whatever evil befalls you is from yourself*” → to know his perfection to lie in imperfection, his power in impotence, and his wealth in poverty.



Congratulations you've completed this unit!

## Confession of Faith:

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*In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.*

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ  
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

The two parts of the confession of faith cannot be separated; they prove each other, comprise each other; one cannot be without the other. Since the Messenger (Upon whom be blessings and peace) was the Seal of the Prophets and the heir of all the prophets, he is at the start of all the ways leading to God. There can be no way to reality and salvation outside his mighty highway. All the leading gnostics and verifiers of reality have said like “*It is impossible to be victorious on the way of salvation, except by following Mustafa.*” They also said: “*All ways are closed except the highway of Muhammad.*”

However, it sometimes happens that people are on the highway of Muhammad (UWBP) and within it, but are not aware of it.

And it sometimes happens that they do not know the Prophet (UWBP), but the road they have taken is part of his highway.

It happens too that because they are in a state of ecstasy or entirely immersed in contemplation or have withdrawn from the world, they do not think of the highway of Muhammad, and “*There is no god but God*” is sufficient for them.

Nevertheless, the most important side of the matter is this: non-acceptance is one thing, while the acceptance of non-being is another.

Ecstatics and recluses or those who have not heard or are uninformed about it, do not know the Prophet (UWBP) or they do not think of him that they might accept him. They are ignorant in that respect. They know “*There is no god but God*” only in respect of esoteric knowledge of Him. They may well be saved. But if those people who have heard of the Prophet (UWBP) and know his message do not affirm him, they do not recognize Almighty God. For them, the phrase “*There is no god but God*” on its own does not express divine unity, the affirmation of which is a means of salvation. For this is not ignorant non-acceptance, which may be excusable to a degree, it is rather the acceptance of non-being, which is denial.

The person who denies Muhammad (Upon whom be blessings and peace), who with his miracles and works was the pride of the universe and glory of mankind, certainly cannot receive any light and will not recognize God.

- **TAKE AWAY POINT:** *The two principles of confession of faith cannot be separated just like the way principles of Islam are all connected with each other and cannot be separated from one another. What happens if you try to separate an atom's protons, neutrons, and electrons from each other?*



*Congratulations you've completed this unit!*

## Islam and Iman:

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Islam is a preference, while belief is a conviction. To put it another way, Islam is to take the part of the truth and is submission and obedience to it, and belief is acceptance of and assent to the truth. Long ago I saw certain irreligious people who fervently supported the injunctions of the Qur'an.

That is to say, by taking the part of the truth, such people were in one respect Muslim and were called "*irreligious Muslims*." Then later I saw certain believers who did not evince support for the injunctions of the Qur'an nor take the part of them, and they reflected the epithet "*non-Muslim believers*."

Can belief without Islam be the means of salvation?

*The Answer:* Neither can Islam without belief be a means of salvation, nor can belief without Islam be a means. Even if someone without religion does not understand them, he cannot be unsympathetic towards them. And they have demonstrated proofs of belief and Islam in such powerful fashion that if even a non-Muslim understands them, he is sure to assent to them. While being a non-Muslim, he would believe.

Yes, the fruits of belief and Islam are as delectable as the fruits of the Tuba-tree of Paradise, and that their results are as agreeable as the pleasures of happiness in this world and the next. They therefore induce in those who see them and know them a feeling of infinite partiality, support, and surrender. Demonstrating proofs as powerful as the chains of beings and numerous as minute particles, they give rise to infinite submission and strength of belief. On certain occasions even when saying: "*In accordance with that we live, in accordance with it we shall die, and in accordance with it shall we be raised up on the morrow,*" I have experienced an infinite feeling of partiality. If the whole world were given me, I would not sacrifice a single truth of belief. It causes me extreme distress to imagine the reverse of a single truth for a minute even. Were the whole world to be given me, my soul would renounce it unhesitatingly for the existence of a single truth of belief. I feel an infinite strength of belief when I say, "*We believe in what You have sent through the Prophet, and we believe in what You have revealed through the Book, and we assent to it.*" I consider the opposite of any of the truths of belief to be rationally impossible, and I look on the people of misguidance as infinitely foolish and crazy.

- TAKE AWAY POINTS:

- *Neither can Islam without belief be a means of salvation, nor can belief without Islam be a means.*
- *Praise be to God for the religion of Islam and complete and perfect belief!*



*Congratulations you've completed this unit!*

## Sincerity:

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*In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.*

*Verily We sent the Book down to you in truth, so worship God in sincerity, for God's is sincerely practiced religion, (39:2)*

*And stand before God in a devout [frame of mind]. (2:238)*

*Truly he succeeds that purifies it, \* And he fails that corrupts it. (91:9-10)*

*Nor sell my signs for a small price. (2:41. etc.)*

*The noble saying of the Prophet (UWBP): "All men will perish, except the scholars, and all scholars will perish except those who act in accordance with their knowledge, and all of them will perish except the sincere, and even the sincere are in great danger."*

demonstrate together how important a principle of Islam is sincerity.

An ounce of deeds performed in sincerity is preferable to a ton performed without sincerity.

All your strength lies in sincerity and truth. Yes, strength lies in truth and sincerity. Even those who do wrong gain strength from their sincerity in their wrongdoing.

In this world sincerity is the most important principle in works pertaining to the hereafter; it is the greatest strength, the most acceptable intercessor, the firmest point of support, the shortest way to reality, the most acceptable prayer, the most wondrous means of achieving one's goal, the highest quality, and the purest worship.

There are many obstacles before significant good works. Satans put up a powerful struggle against those who assist in them. In the face of those obstacles and satans you have to rely on the strength of sincerity. You should avoid things that harm sincerity as you avoid snakes and scorpions. In accordance with the words of Joseph (Upon whom be peace), "*Nor do I absolve my own self [of blame]; the [human] soul is certainly prone to evil, unless my Sustainer do bestow His mercy, (12:53)*" the evil-commanding soul cannot be relied upon. Do not let egotism and the soul deceive you!

To gain sincerity and preserve it you should take as your guide the following rules: You should seek divine pleasure in your actions. If Almighty God is pleased, it is of no importance if the whole world even is displeased. If He accepts an action and everyone else rejects it, their rejection has no effect. Once His pleasure has been gained and He has accepted an action, even if you do not ask it of Him, should He wish it and His wisdom requires it, He will make others accept it. He will make them consent to it too. For this reason, to seek divine pleasure should be the sole aim in this service.

- TAKE AWAY POINTS:

- Sincerity → One and only one intention!
- An ounce of deeds performed in sincerity is preferable to a ton performed without sincerity.



Congratulations you've completed this unit!

## Personal Life:

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*In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.*

The moral training the wisdom of the All-Wise Qur'an gives to personal life:

1. The sincere student of Qur'anic wisdom is '**a servant**', but he does not stoop to worship even the greatest of creatures; he is an esteemed slave who does not take a supreme benefit like Paradise as the aim of his worship.
  2. And its student is '**humble**'; he is '**righteous**' and mild, yet outside the limits of his Maker's leave, he would not voluntarily lower and abase himself before anything other than his Maker.
  3. And he is weak and in want, and he knows his weakness and poverty, but he is '**self-sufficient**' due to the wealth which his All-Generous Lord has stored up for him in the hereafter, and he is '**strong**' since he relies on his Master's infinite power.
  4. And he acts and strives only '**for God's sake**', for God's pleasure, and '**for virtue**'.
- TAKE AWAY POINT:
    - *Self-sufficient and strong seeker of God's virtue vs self-centered seeker of benefit.*
  - DRILL:
    - *What is the meaning of 'virtue'? Name some virtuous acts!*



*Congratulations you've completed this unit!*

## Social Life:

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*In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.*

The training Qur'anic wisdom give to human social life:

1. Its point of support is '**truth**' instead of force.
  2. It takes '**virtue and God's pleasure**' as its aims in place of benefits.
  3. It takes the principle of '**mutual assistance**' as the principle of life in place of the principle of conflict.
  4. And it takes '**the ties of religion, class, and country**' to be the ties bonding communities.
  5. Its aim is to form a barrier against the lusts of the soul, urge the spirit to sublime matters, satisfy the high emotions, and urging man to the human perfections, make him a true human being.
  6. And the mark of the truth is '**accord**'.
  7. The mark of virtue is '**solidarity**'.
  8. The mark of mutual assistance is '**hastening to assist one another**'.
  9. The mark of religion is '**brotherhood**' and '**attraction**'.
  10. And the mark of reining in and tethering the soul and leaving the spirit free and urging it towards perfections is '**happiness in this world and the next**'.
- TAKE AWAY POINT:
    - Truth/virtue/assistance vs. force/benefits/conflict.
  - DRILL:
    - How do all the Islamic traits listed above result in "happiness here on Earth and thereafter"?



*Congratulations you've completed this unit!*