



# *Praise to God, Lord of the Worlds*

---

An Introduction to Qur'anic  
Ecology and Resonances  
with *Laudato Si'*

Brief introduction to my main sources, and to the present global crises.

*Laudato Si'* (LS) and leading Muslim faith-based scholars' views on the roots of the current crises.

Relevant Qur'anic principles which are pertinent to addressing ecological and environmental issues.

Resonances of these principles and numerous other Qur'anic verses with *Laudato Si'* themes.

# *Laudato Si'* *on the roots of the current crisis*

Pope Francis addresses the 'human roots of the ecological crisis' in LS Chapter 3.

LS 106-114 highlights the issue of 'a global technocratic paradigm'.

LS 115-136 points out the negative impacts of modern anthropocentrism which regards nature as having only utilitarian value.

LS 118: There is 'a constant schizophrenia, wherein a technocracy which sees no intrinsic value in lesser beings coexists with the other extreme, which sees no special value in human beings'.

*Leading  
Muslim faith-  
based  
scholars on  
ecology and  
the  
environment*

Seyyed H. Nasr

Osman Bakar

Fazlun Khalid

Ibrahim Özdemir

Like Pope Francis and some of his predecessors, Muslim scholars like Nasr, Khalid, Bakar and Özdemir have long raised the alarm on the negative impact of human pursuit of endless growth and profit.

# *Philosophical roots of the current crises*

The Muslim authors situate the philosophical roots of the Anthropocene in two main paradigm shifts that took place in modern history.

1. Scientific advances and philosophical reconfigurations -> increasing exclusion of religion, spirituality, and the divine from human life -> life was then regarded as accidental, and the significance of human life was, in effect, limited to understanding this world and making the best of it.
2. A desacralisation of nature -> regarding it as having no intrinsic value and serving only to furnish human needs.

(Qur'anic Ecology and Resonances, pp. 35 ff.)

'When nature is viewed solely as a source for profit and gain, this has serious consequences for society.

The vision of 'might is right' has engendered immense inequality, injustice, and acts of violence against the majority of humanity ... Completely at odds with this model are the ideals of harmony, justice, fraternity and peace as proposed by Jesus.' (Laudato Si' 82)

*Qur'an,  
Chapter 30,  
verse 41*

‘Corruption (*fasād*) has appeared on the land and in the sea because of what the hands of people have acquired [i.e., what people have done]; [this has been allowed by God] so that He makes them taste some of what they have done, that they might return [to doing what is good].’ (Q. 30:41)

*Laudato Si’,  
paragraphs 6  
and 82*

‘The deterioration of nature is closely connected to the culture that shapes human coexistence.’ (LS 6)

‘Completely at odds with this model [of might is right] are the ideals of harmony, justice, fraternity and peace as proposed by Jesus.’ (LS 82)

# *Foundational Qur'anic Ecological Perspectives*

Creation and humankind as repositories of 'the signs of God' (*āyāt Allāh*)

– > hence the view of creation as a revelatory 'book' like the Qur'an and consequently the sanctity of the natural world and of humanity.

The human being as deputy /steward on earth (*khalīfah fi'l-ard*)

– > hence the care-taking responsibilities of humankind towards the earth and all therein.

An intimate connection between God, cosmos and humankind, rooted in God Himself, through *tawḥīd*

– > hence, the understanding that our way of living impacts, and is impacted by, the rest of creation, and that this is an integral part of our relationship with God Himself.

# Tawḥīd

‘Traditional Islamic science made the necessary ecological inference from the idea of Divine Unity [and] termed the ecological principle ‘the “Unicity of Nature” ... which conveys the ideas of interrelatedness, interdependence and unity.’ This is ‘the most fundamental principle in Islamic ecology and environmental science.’ (Bakar, *Environmental Wisdom*, 23, 25.)

‘*Tawḥīd* is the testimony to the unity of all creation, and to the fabric of the natural order of which humankind is an intrinsic part ...[it is] the bedrock of Islam’s holistic approach.’ (Khalid, *Signs on the Earth*, 163–164).

‘As part of the universe, called into being by one Father, all of us are linked by unseen bonds and together form a kind of universal family, a sublime communion which fills us with a sacred, affectionate and humble respect.’ (Laudato Si’ 89)

*Tawḥīd*, then, is the fulcrum-principle for Islamic integral ecology and a major connecting point between the Pope’s teaching on integral ecology and Islamic ecological perspectives.



# *Qur'anic Ethical Principles / Virtues*

*Raḥmah*  
Mercy

*Wasatīyah, I'tidal, Mīzān*  
Moderation, Balance

*'Adl, Ta'ādul, Qisṭ*  
Justice, Equitability

*Istiqāmah*  
Integrity, Uprightness

*Asmā' Allāhi al-ḥusnā*  
The most beautiful names of God

## *Contentment with little*

‘Christian spirituality proposes a growth marked by moderation and the capacity *to be happy with little*’. (LS 222)

The Islamic spiritual ideal of ‘*contentment with little*’ (*al-riḍā’ bi’l-qalīl*) and the Qur’anic virtue of moderation are contrasted with excessiveness and the desire to accumulate more and more (*takāthur*), which is condemned in Q. 102.

## *Renewal*

‘There can be no renewal of our relationship with nature without a renewal of humanity itself. There can be no ecology without an adequate anthropology.’ (LS 118)

## *The Divine Names are a portrait*

The Islamic Divine Names are *a theological portrait of God* and also *an anthropological portrait* of humankind.

# Some Islamic Divine Names

*Al-Raḥmān*  
the All-Gracious

*al-Ḥayy*  
the Living

*al-Aḥad, al-Wāḥid*  
the One, the Only

*al-Khāliq*  
the Creator

*al-Raḥīm*  
the Merciful

*al-Rabb*  
the Lord-  
Nurturer

*al-Ḥaqq*  
the Truth,  
Reality

*al-Wadūd*  
the Deeply-  
Loving

*al-Ra'ūf*  
the  
Compassionate

*al-Laṭīf*  
the Kind

*al-Muqīt*  
the Nourisher

*al-Salām*  
Peace

*al-Hādī*  
the Guide

*al-Dayyān*  
the Judge

*al-Barr*  
the Good, Dutiful

*al-Karīm*  
the Generous

*al-'Adl,*  
the Just, Justice

*al-Ḥāfiẓ*  
the Protector

*al-Muḥaymin*  
the Guardian

*al-Qayyūm*  
the Preserving Sustainer

*al-Muqsiṭ*  
the Equitable

*al-Wāsi'*  
the Comprehensive

*al-Muḥīṭ*  
the All-Encompassing

*al-Rashīd*  
the Rightly-Discerning,  
Right-Guiding

*al-Shāfi*  
the Healer

*al-Muḥyī*  
the Enlivener, the Revivifier

*al-Mu'īd*  
the Restorer

# Divine Names As:

**God's endowment to humanity:** *The silent keyboard of His characteristics and qualities.*

'The nature/character of God according to which He has made humanity' (*fiṭrat Allāh allatī faṭara'l-nāsa 'alayhā*; Q. 30:30)

Cf. LS 115: '... Man too is God's gift to man. He must therefore respect the natural and moral structure with which he has been endowed.'

**A hermeneutical framework** within the Qur'an relating the contextual material to God.

**An exegetical ethical framework** within the wider revelation of creation, playing a dynamic role that joins the earthly context back to God.

Humankind is directly instrumental in manifesting existential exegesis through our actions. Simultaneous **infusion** of divine energy on earth and **re-fusion** of earthly contexts to God – through human actions harmonious with divine qualities.

Divine names as the **ethical scales** for weighing up human action

Divine names -> ethical scales for human action

*Raḥmah* -> the divine default quality

*Raḥmah*: mercy, compassion, beneficence, doing good even to one who does not deserve it.

It includes strength and gentleness, forgiveness and justice, majesty and magnanimity.

‘God’s infinite power does not lead us to flee his fatherly tenderness, because in him affection and strength are joined.’ (LS 73)

# *Divine raḥmah, divine love*

*Qur'an, chapter 6, verses  
12 & 54*

'He (God) has inscribed mercy upon Himself / upon His soul' (Q. 6:12,54)

*Laudato Si', paragraph  
77*

'God's love is the fundamental moving force in all created things.' (LS 77)

*The balance of  
Raḥmah & Love*

*Raḥmah* as the *pivot* of the scales and the *goal* of the balancing act.

Love, like *raḥmah*, is both the pivot and the balance to be achieved.

# *Some Resonances & Commonground*

An emphasis on universal divine love/mercy, and tender care.

Humankind as made of spirit, will/character, and physical matter.

Humanity endowed with a moral nature.  
The accountability of humankind to God.

The natural world as a 'book' of God, worthy of love and respect and through which we come to know God.

View of creation as interconnected and interdependent.

Similar concerns about the economic paradigms that dominate today.

Call for ecological conversion or *tawbah*.

Call to live a life of ecological awareness and virtue; to live temperate and altruistic lives.