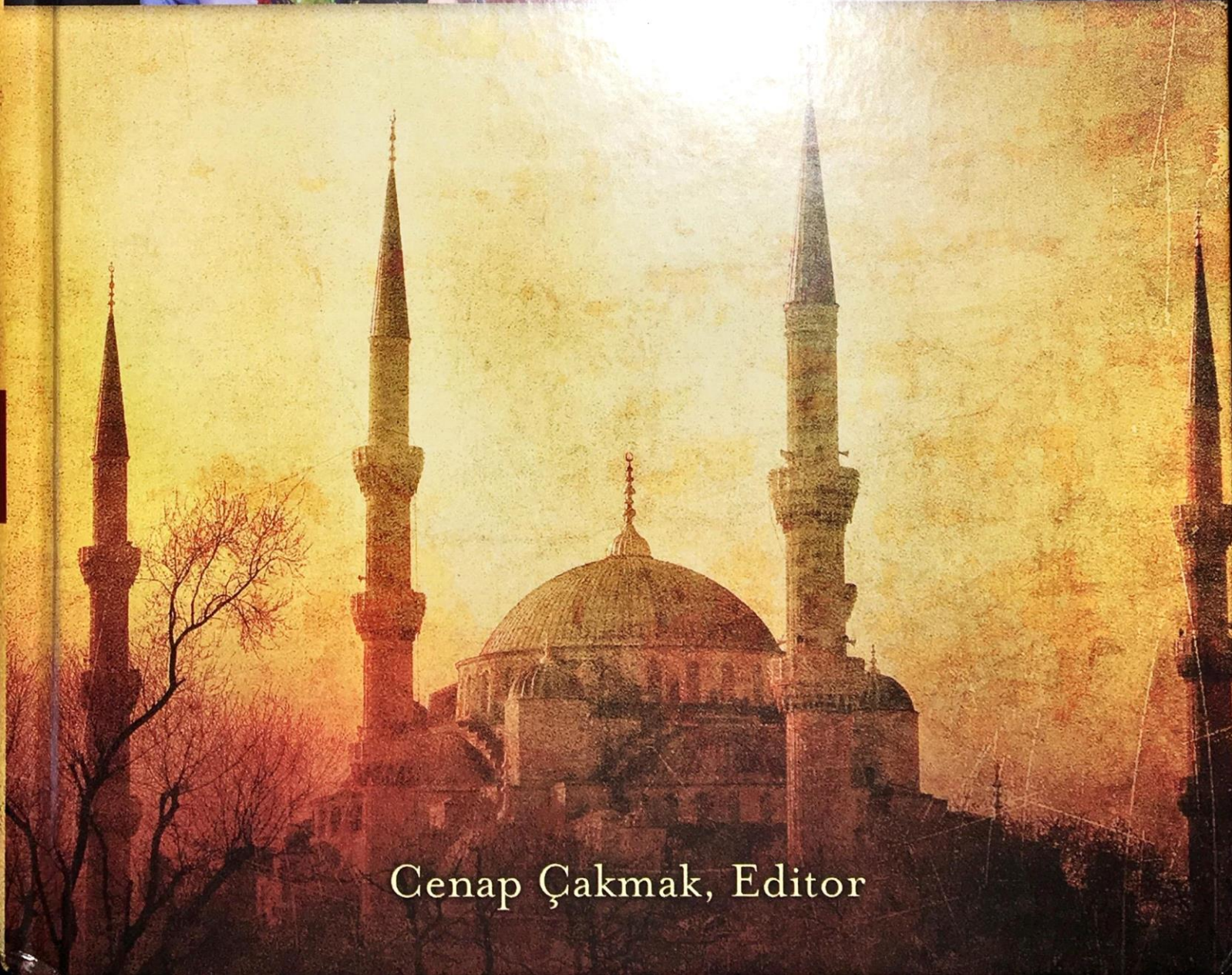


ISLAM

A WORLDWIDE ENCYCLOPEDIA



VOLUME 4



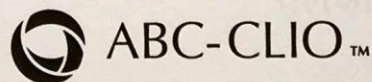
Cenap Çakmak, Editor

Islam

A Worldwide Encyclopedia

Volume 4: Q–Z

Cenap akmak, Editor



An Imprint of ABC-CLIO, LLC
Santa Barbara, California • Denver, Colorado

Further Reading

- Hallaq, Wael B. *The Impossible State: Islam, Politics and Modernity's Moral Predicament*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013.
- Hourani, Albert. *Islam in European Thought*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Hourani, Albert, Philip S. Khoury, and Mary C. Wilson. *The Modern Middle East*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2004.
- Huntington, Samuel. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. London: Simon and Schuster, 1997.
- Lewis, Bernard. *Islam and the West*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Von Laue, Theodore H. *The World Revolution of Westernization: The Twentieth Century in Global Perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Willpower

An important term in Islamic theology and scholarship, willpower serves as the source of some other relevant Islamic concepts and of a true faith. The Quran mentions the term 139 times, attributing it to Allah and to human beings. Willpower means decisiveness and deliberateness in action and fulfillment of the acts in conformity to the considerations in mind. Thus, from this standpoint willpower points to a deliberate action rather than a preference or tendency. From an Islamic perspective, willpower basically means the ability and power to take action.

It should be noted that willpower holds different connotations for Allah and for human beings. The will of Allah, according to Islam, is the absolute truth that serves as the basis of the Islamic faith. Allah is able to do whatever he wants to and has absolute and limitless power; for this reason, his will immediately results in proper, flawless, and immaculate action. The willpower of human beings, although comparable to Allah's willpower in certain aspects, is fairly limited.

In theological terms, the will of a human being cannot go against the will of Allah; his willpower entails the comprehension of perfect knowledge in the universe and the compliance of things with his acts and knowledge. Diversity and complexity in the universe are also referred to as evidence of his limitless willpower. Islam recalls that nothing can happen if it goes against the will of Allah; his will is absolute, inevitable, unstoppable, wise, and fair. The will of a human being, on the other hand, is subject to certain restrictions that Allah prescribes. He never wishes injustice and ruthlessness for his servants; the Quran states that the ultimate goal of the willpower of a human being is to seek Allah and his blessing in all acts.

According to Islam, human beings are held accountable for their acts because they have willpower. From a theological perspective, it is possible to argue that there is a kind of divine covenant between Allah and humankind on the responsibility associated with acts and choices:

And [mention] when your Lord took from the children of Adam—from their loins—their descendants and made them testify of themselves, [saying to them], “Am I not your Lord?” They said, “Yes, we have testified.” [This]—lest you should say on the day of Resurrection, “Indeed, we were of this unaware.” (7:172)

This dialogue cited in the Quran is important to better understand the willpower of a human being under Islamic thinking because it emphasizes, based on the promise made to Allah, that human beings are responsible for their actions in the world and will be held accountable in the afterlife for what they did in the world. Allah grants reason and free will to human beings when he creates them. Free will enables human beings to make their own choices regarding their beliefs. The Quran narrates the story of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) who, relying on his free will, sought and finally identified the creator of the universe as a lesson and example of how reason should be used to recognize Allah.

Reason is what distinguishes a deliberate act from a nondeliberate one. Those who submit to the material pleasures and commit sinful acts will be punished in the afterlife, whereas those who comply with the wishes and commands of Allah because they are able to use their reason and willpower will be rewarded and granted entry into Paradise. This is where free will takes initiative in the Islamic faith; one of the main elements of free will is the ability to make a choice between good and evil. Choice is a deliberate act, and without deliberate acts, we cannot speak of willpower.

Another element that influences human behaviors and contributes to humans' ability to make choices is the self (*nafs*). The self, able to direct or manipulate willpower, is acknowledged as *jawhar* (essence) that affects the will and reason. According to Islam, a human being is under the influence of willpower as well as the self, but Islam underlines and strongly recalls that the self does not always preach the good; thus, Islam urges Muslims to remain alert vis-à-vis the deception by the self and to rely on willpower to comply with the commands of Allah.

To conclude, Islam recognizes two types of willpower. The willpower of Allah is of absolute nature and recognizes no boundaries; his willpower is the primary one that gives life to the willpower of human beings. In other words, the willpower of humans depend on Allah's will alone. This is why people's will cannot contradict with the wishes and acts of Allah. As a result, Allah has absolute might and ability; the willpower of human beings, on the other hand, is limited if compared to his absolute might. However, even this limited power is considered a great asset

that Islam considers as the main source of individual and collective responsibility of Allah's servants. Islamic theology recalls that all human beings will be held accountable for what they did in their lives in the world because they are granted reason and willpower. Accordingly, Islam urges men and women to resist the temptation of banned acts and to make the effort to become entitled to eternal happiness. A review of the Quran suggests that men and women were granted willpower to pursue good deeds, but they are absolutely free to make their own choices. For this reason, Islam considers that any good should be attributed to Allah (because it was Allah who granted the willpower for good deeds) and that human beings are responsible for the repercussions of their actions (because they were free to make their own choices).

Murat Ustaoglu and Cenap Cakmak

See also: Fate/Destiny (*Taqdeer*); Human Nature; Humans; *Nafs* (Self); *Shar* (Evil)

Further Reading

Al-Qadri, Tahir. *Islam and Freedom of Human Will*. Lancashire, UK: Minhaj Welfare Foundation, 2005.

Yucel, Salih. *Prayer and Healing in Islam*. Clifton, NJ: Tughra Books, 2010.

Wisdom

Wisdom is rendered in classical Arabic as *hikma*. Medieval Arabic lexicographers define *hikma* as the economy of knowledge; it implies a perception of things in their best possible order. Every person who masters the subtleties of an art is a wise person, or *hakim*. Beside knowledge, *hikma* conveys the sense of self-control. This is a highly regarded virtue in both pre-Islamic Arabia and Islam. In relation to the community's affairs, *hikma* indicates the delivering of a just judgment, as the wise is the person who treats others equitably. Thus, wisdom is instead practical knowledge that allows its holder to opportunely and justly put things in application.

In the Quran, the word *hikma* occurs several times. For instance, "And teach them the Book and the Wisdom, and purify them" (2:129). In their interpretations of the word "wisdom," early exegetes tended to diverge. Some of them understood it as the sunna of Muhammad. Others interpret it as the knowledge and deep understanding of religion, *fiqh*. It was also understood as knowledge of the heart (anticipating Sufism). The three interpretations privilege successively the traditionists (*muhaddithun*), the jurists (*fuqaha*'), and the Sufis. The Sunni exegete Ibn