



REVISITING THE HADITH “YASSIRŪ WA LĀ TU‘ASSIRŪ, BASHSHIRŪ WA LĀ TUNAFFIRŪ”: A PROPHETIC PARADIGM FOR RELIGIOUS DERADICALIZATION IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Religious radicalism frequently emerges from rigid and literalist interpretations of Islamic sources that neglect the core Prophetic values of mercy (*rahmah*), facilitation (*taysir*), and moderation. This article revisits the Prophetic hadith “*Yassirū wa lā tu‘assirū, bashshirū wa lā tunaffirū*” (“Make things easy and do not make them difficult; give glad tidings and do not drive people away”) as a normative and strategic framework for religious deradicalization. Employing qualitative library research, the study examines the hadith through *takhrij*, analysis of *sanad* and *matn*, *asbāb al-wurūd*, and classical as well as contemporary scholarly commentaries. The findings demonstrate that the Prophetic ethic of facilitation (*taysir*), encouragement (*tabshir*), and the rejection of deterrence (*tanfir*) constitutes a coherent paradigm for countering religious extremism by fostering inclusive, tolerant, and humanistic religious understanding. When operationalized within Islamic education, da‘wah, and public policy, this principle strengthens religious moderation and supports deradicalization efforts in Indonesia. The study argues that revisiting this hadith not only reaffirms its normative authority but also highlights its contemporary relevance as a Prophetic framework for preventing radicalization and promoting social harmony.

Keywords: Hadith, Taysir, Islamic Moderation, Religious Deradicalization, Radicalism

ABSTRAK

Radikalisme agama kerap berakar pada penafsiran keagamaan yang kaku dan literalistik sehingga mengabaikan nilai-nilai profetik Islam, seperti *rahmah* (kasih sayang), *taysir* (kemudahan), dan moderasi. Artikel ini meninjau kembali hadis Nabi “*Yassirū wa lā tu‘assirū, bashshirū wa lā tunaffirū*” (“Mudahkanlah dan jangan mempersulit; berilah kabar gembira dan jangan membuat orang lari”) sebagai kerangka normatif sekaligus strategis dalam upaya deradikalisasi agama. Dengan menggunakan penelitian kepustakaan kualitatif, kajian ini menganalisis hadis tersebut melalui *takhrij*, kajian *sanad* dan *matan*, *asbāb al-wurūd*, serta telaah terhadap komentar ulama klasik dan kontemporer. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa etika profetik berupa *taysir*, *tabshir*, dan penolakan terhadap *tanfir* membentuk paradigma yang koheren untuk menangkal ekstremisme keagamaan dengan mendorong pemahaman Islam yang inklusif, toleran, dan humanistik. Penerapan prinsip ini dalam pendidikan Islam, dakwah, dan kebijakan publik memperkuat moderasi beragama dan mendukung program deradikalisasi di Indonesia. Dengan demikian, peninjauan ulang terhadap hadis ini menegaskan kembali otoritas normatifnya sekaligus relevansinya sebagai kerangka profetik dalam mencegah radikalisasi dan membangun harmoni sosial.

Kata Kunci: Hadis, Taysir, Moderasi Islam, Deradikalisasi Agama, Radikalisme



INTRODUCTION

Religious radicalism and extremism remain persistent and multifaceted challenges for Muslim societies at both global and national levels. A substantial body of scholarship demonstrates that intolerance, violence, and terrorism committed in the name of religion often originate from rigid and literalist readings of sacred texts—readings that marginalize Islam’s core ethical foundations of mercy (*rahmah*), compassion, and facilitation (*taysir*) (Esposito, 2002; Abu-Nimer, 2003; Hasan, 2018). Such reductive hermeneutics transform religion from a moral force for human flourishing into an exclusionary ideology, legitimizing coercion and eroding social cohesion within plural societies (Armstrong, 2017).

In Indonesia, this challenge is particularly acute. As the world’s largest Muslim-majority country, Indonesia is defined by deep cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity sustained historically through tolerance and civic pluralism (Azra, 2017). Radical ideologies that promote violence, exclusivism, and doctrinal rigidity stand in direct contradiction to these foundations and to the nation’s commitment to unity and social justice (Madjid, 1992; Hasyim, 2016). In this context, Islam as *rahmatan lil-‘alamīn* must be articulated through interpretive frameworks that are moderate, inclusive, and responsive to social plurality rather than insulated from it.

A central Prophetic source articulating this ethical orientation is the well-known hadith: “*Yassirū wa lā tu’assirū, bashshirū wa lā tunaffirū*”—“Make things easy and do not make them difficult; give glad tidings and do not drive people away” (al-Bukhārī; Muslim). This instruction encapsulates a comprehensive moral vision that governs religious teaching, da’wah, and communal leadership, positioning facilitation and

encouragement as foundational principles of Islamic guidance.

Both normatively and practically, this hadith functions as a guiding framework across all spheres of religious life. The Prophet Muḥammad consistently embodied *taysir* by considering individual capacity, social context, and psychological condition, thereby modeling a pedagogy of wisdom, gentleness, and moral effectiveness (al-Nawawī, 2002). While firm in prohibiting injustice, he prioritized spiritual uplift and communal welfare, demonstrating that ethical rigor need not entail harshness or alienation.

Within Islamic jurisprudence, *taysir* is understood as an expression of divine mercy and is operationalized through the legal maxim *al-mashaqqah tajlib al-taysir* (“hardship necessitates facilitation”). This maxim affirms that Shar‘ah is intrinsically oriented toward human capacity and well-being, as reflected in legal concessions (*rukḥṣah*) such as *tayammum* when water is unavailable (al-Suyūṭī, 1998; Ibn Ḥajar, 2001). Such facilitation does not signify legal laxity but a principled balance between moral obligation and lived reality (Ibn Qudāmah, 2004).

The Prophetic preference for ease is further illustrated in the report of ‘Ā’ishah that whenever the Prophet was given two permissible options, he chose the easier of the two so long as it involved no sin. Likewise, his repeated instruction—“*Make things easy, do not make them difficult; give glad tidings, do not drive people away*”—reveals a pedagogical approach grounded in psychological insight and social empathy, aimed at nurturing faith rather than enforcing conformity through fear.

Taken together, the principles of *taysir* and the prohibition of *ghulūw* (religious excess) align fully with reason, human nature (*fiṭrah*), and spiritual well-being. Islam upholds moderation (*wasatiyyah*) as a

safeguard against practices that overburden believers or distort the moral objectives of religion. Excessive religiosity detached from compassion and contextual awareness ultimately undermines rational judgment, violates human disposition, and impedes healthy spiritual development (al-Qaradāwī, 2001; Shihab, 2007).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative library-research design. The primary sources consist of Prophetic reports relating to the principle “*yassirū wa lā tu’assirū, bashshirū wa lā tunaffirū*” as transmitted in major hadith collections, alongside authoritative classical and contemporary commentaries that explicate their juridical and ethical implications (e.g., al-Bukhārī, 1997; Muslim, 2000). Secondary sources comprise scholarly monographs, peer-reviewed journal articles, and prior studies on Islamic moderation (*wasatiyyah*) and deradicalization, particularly within the Indonesian context (e.g., Hosen, 2012; Syamsuddin, 2019).

Data were generated through systematic documentary review and organized using thematic coding. The analysis proceeded in three stages. First, the study conducted a text-focused mapping of relevant narrations and key lexical motifs (e.g., *taysir*, *ta’assir*, *tabshir*, *tanfir*), including attention to variant wordings where relevant. Second, the materials were classified into thematic clusters—normative-ethical principles, pedagogical orientations (education and *da’wah*), and socio-institutional implications (community guidance and policy). Third, the study employed descriptive and contextual analysis to interpret how the Prophetic ethic of facilitation and non-alienation can function as a contemporary framework for countering rigid and exclusionary religiosity.

By combining thematic analysis with contextual reading, this method enables the

study to demonstrate the continuing relevance of the hadith in shaping an Islamic paradigm of ease, balance, and moderation, and to articulate its potential contribution to the deradicalization of religious understanding.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Deradicalisation Paradigm

Deradicalization is widely understood as a multidimensional process that integrates psychological, socio-political, and theological interventions to counter violent extremism. Contemporary research consistently shows that sustainable deradicalization prioritizes cognitive reorientation, behavioral transformation, and social reintegration rather than relying predominantly on punitive or security-driven measures (Horgan, 2009; Rabasa et al., 2010). Programs with lasting impact typically address locally embedded grievances through education, dialogue, and community engagement, thereby weakening the moral legitimacy and emotional appeal of extremist narratives (El-Said, 2015).

In Islamic contexts, theological rehabilitation constitutes a central pillar of this process. Extremist ideologies frequently derive authority from selective, literalist, and decontextualized readings of scripture. Consequently, deradicalization requires the reorientation of religious interpretation toward Islam’s core ethical principles—most notably *rahmah* (mercy), *wasatiyyah* (moderation), and *taysir* (facilitation). When integrated with psychosocial support and structural reform, such theological engagement enables deeper and more enduring ideological disengagement by addressing the internal moral logic of extremism rather than its symptoms alone.

Within this normative-theological framework, the Prophetic injunction “*Yassirū wa lā tu’assirū, bashshirū wa lā tunaffirū*” (“Make things easy and do not make them difficult; give glad tidings and do not drive

people away”) assumes particular relevance. The applicability of this hadith to contemporary deradicalization discourse, however, rests upon its canonical authenticity and normative authority within the Islamic tradition. For this reason, the present study undertakes a focused classification and analysis of the hadith’s transmission to establish its epistemic legitimacy as a foundational resource for Islamic approaches to counter-radicalization.

Classification, Authenticity, and Context of the Hadith of Facilitation

Prophetic reports articulating the ethic of facilitation—expressed in the injunction “*yassirū wa lā tu’assirū, bashshirū wa lā tunaffirū*”—circulate widely across the ḥadīth corpus. Although these narrations are traced to approximately thirty-seven collections, this study restricts its analysis to the *kutub al-tis’ah* to ensure canonical reliability and methodological rigor. Within this core corpus, sixteen narrations are identified: two in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, two in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, one in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, seven in *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, and one each in *Musnad al-Shāfi’ī* and *Musnad al-Bazzār*, alongside two in *Musnad Abī Ya’lā*.

These reports are further corroborated by multiple *shawāhid* transmitted by major Companions, indicating a convergent and robust transmission network. Anas ibn Mālik relates five narrations across al-Bukhārī, Aḥmad, al-Bazzār, and Abī Ya’lā; Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī transmits four in Muslim, Abī Dāwūd, and Aḥmad; Ibn ‘Abbās reports three in *Musnad Aḥmad*; and Abū al-Ṭayyāḥ transmits one in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. The plurality of transmitters and isnād pathways strengthens the evidentiary force of the hadith and situates it among well-attested Prophetic teachings.

Table 1. Details These Narrations by Source, Report Number, Principal Transmitter, and Chain of Transmission.

No.	Collection	Hadith No.	Companion	Chain of Transmission
1	Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī	67, 6125	Anas ibn Mālik	Anas ibn Mālik → Prophet
2	Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī	3038	Abū Burdah	Abū Burdah → his father → Prophet
3	Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim	1732	Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī	Abū Mūsā → Prophet
4	Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim	1733	Abū al-Ṭayyāḥ → Anas ibn Mālik	Anas → Prophet
5	Musnad Aḥmad	3269	Anas ibn Mālik	Anas → Prophet
6	Musnad Aḥmad	2029	Anas ibn Mālik	Anas → Prophet
7	Musnad Aḥmad	11883	Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī	Abū Mūsā → Prophet
8	Musnad Aḥmad	18868	Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī	Abū Mūsā → Prophet
9	Musnad Aḥmad	2029	Ibn ‘Abbās	Ibn ‘Abbās → Prophet
10	Musnad Aḥmad	12698	Ibn ‘Abbās	Ibn ‘Abbās → Prophet
11	Musnad Aḥmad	18751	Ibn ‘Abbās	Ibn ‘Abbās → Prophet
12	Musnad al-Bazzār	6640	Anas ibn Mālik	Anas → Prophet
13	Musnad Abī Ya’lā	3394	Anas ibn Mālik	Anas → Prophet
14	Musnad Abī Ya’lā	3400	Anas ibn Mālik	Anas → Prophet
15	Sunan Abī Dāwūd	4835	Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī	Abū Mūsā → Prophet

From the perspective of ḥadīth criticism, the narrations examined here are *marfū’* (attributed directly to the Prophet) and *muttasil* (supported by uninterrupted isnāds), with demonstrable transmitter encounters (*liqā’*). Classical *jarḥ wa ta’dil* assessments consistently affirm the reliability of their narrators, warranting the classification of these reports as *ṣaḥīḥ*. Textually, the command to facilitate (*taysir*) in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* closely corresponds to parallel versions preserved in

Sunan Abī Dāwūd and *Musnad Aḥmad*, confirming strong cross-collection convergence.

Minor lexical variations—such as *yassirū*, *bashshirū*, or *‘allimū*—reflect transmission *bi al-ma’nā* (by meaning), while ancillary clauses (e.g., *wa taṭāwa‘ā wa lā takhtalifā; sakkīnū*) appear in certain routes without altering the hadith’s core directive. Likewise, differences in concluding phrases (*lā tu’assirū | lā tunaffirū*) fall within acceptable bounds of verbal variation. Some versions in *Musnad Aḥmad* further add the injunction to remain silent when angered, underscoring emotional restraint as integral to Prophetic pedagogy.

Collectively, these narrations are free from *shudhūdh* (irregularity) and *‘illah* (hidden defects). Their *matn* neither contradicts Qur’anic principles nor conflicts with sound reason or established Prophetic teachings; rather, it coheres with broader narrations portraying Islam as *al-ḥanīfiyyah al-samḥah*—a pure and tolerant faith—as indicated in the report:

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ قِيلَ لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ أَيُّ الْأَدْيَانِ أَحَبُّ إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَنِيفِيَّةُ السَّمْحَةُ

Accordingly, the hadith commanding facilitation and prohibiting unnecessary hardship in religious instruction is conclusively established as *ṣaḥīḥ* and functions as authoritative legal-moral evidence (*ḥujjah*) within Islamic scholarship.

With respect to *asbāb al-wurūd*, the clearest context is the Prophet’s dispatch of Mu’ādh ibn Jabal and Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī to Yemen. In *al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, the Prophet instructed them: “*Yassirā wa lā tu’assirā, bashshirā wa lā tunaffirā, wa taṭāwa‘ā wa lā takhtalifā*”—to facilitate, encourage, cooperate, and avoid dispute. This guidance reflects a deliberate Prophetic strategy of

gentle, non-coercive, and context-sensitive *da‘wah* in a socially diverse environment. Additional reports indicate that the same principle also addressed internal excessiveness among Companions who imposed extreme devotional burdens upon themselves, prompting the Prophet to reaffirm moderation as a criterion of authentic religiosity. As Ibn Ḥajar notes, the command to facilitate encompasses the full range of religious life—ritual practice, social relations, and communal governance—thereby reinforcing Islam’s categorical rejection of *ghulūw*.

Taken together, the hadith’s classification, authentication, and contextual grounding confirm *taysir* as a foundational Prophetic guideline for communicating Islam across diverse cultural settings. This provides a robust textual basis for employing the hadith as a normative framework for Islamic moderation and contemporary deradicalization discourse.

Internal Extremism and the Prophetic Correction of Excessive Piety

A particularly instructive context for the Prophetic injunction “*yassirū wa lā tu’assirū, bashshirū wa lā tunaffirū*” concerns forms of internal extremism manifested through excessive piety. In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, a group of Companions resolved to undertake austere devotional regimens—continuous night prayer, perpetual fasting, or permanent abstention from marriage. Although driven by sincere zeal, the Prophet ﷺ treated these commitments as expressions of *ghulūw dākhilī* (internal excess) that risked disfiguring Islam’s normative balance.

In response, he reaffirmed an integrated model of religiosity that harmonizes worship with rest, social responsibility, and family life. By rejecting practices that impose undue hardship on the self, the Prophet established that authentic devotion must remain consonant with human capacity and *fiṭrah*. Within this corrective framework, he

reiterated the principle: “*Yassirū wa lā tu’assirū, bashshirū wa lā tunaffirū*”—to facilitate rather than burden, and to nurture receptivity rather than aversion.

This episode demonstrates that *taysir* and the prohibition of unnecessary hardship are not limited to external da’wah or interreligious engagement. They also operate as internal regulatory norms, protecting the Muslim community from self-imposed extremism that undermines spiritual well-being, disrupts social harmony, and compromises sustainable religious commitment.

Prophetic Guidance to Mu’adh ibn Jabal and Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī

A closely related articulation of this Prophetic ethic is preserved in the narration transmitted by Aḥmad through Abū Burdah from his father. When the Prophet ﷺ dispatched Mu’adh ibn Jabal and Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī to Yemen, he instructed them:

عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ أَبِي بُرْدَةَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ بَعَثَ مُعَاذًا وَأَبَا مُوسَى إِلَى الْيَمَنِ فَقَالَ بَشِّرُوا وَلَا
تُنْفِرُوا وَيَسِّرُوا وَلَا تَعْسِرُوا وَتَطَاوَعَا وَلَا تَخْتَلِفَا قَالَ
فَكَانَ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا فُسْطَاطًا يَكُونُ فِيهِ يَرْوَرُ
أَحَدُهُمَا صَاحِبَهُ قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ أَظْنُهُ عَنْ أَبِي
مُوسَى

This directive consolidates a coherent Prophetic methodology for da’wah: encouragement rather than intimidation (*bashshirū wa lā tunaffirū*), facilitation rather than severity (*yassirū wa lā tu’assirū*), and cooperation rather than contention (*taṭāwa’ā wa lā takhtalifā*). As Ibn Ḥamzah (2009) notes, the instruction was delivered within a socio-religiously diverse setting, where rigid or

coercive approaches would have compromised both the credibility of da’wah and communal stability.

Notably, the emphasis on mutual cooperation and the avoidance of dispute extends the principle of *taysir* beyond doctrinal content into relational ethics. It suggests that countering extremism is not merely a matter of correcting beliefs but also of regulating social dynamics: polarization, polemical rivalry, and intra-community fragmentation often provide fertile ground for extremist reasoning, whereas the Prophetic model privileges harmony, empathy, and shared responsibility as conditions for sustainable religious guidance.

Interpretive and Linguistic Dimensions of the Hadith

Imām al-Nawawī frames this hadith within a distinctly pedagogical horizon, emphasizing that it was addressed to emissaries responsible for instructing socially diverse communities, including laypersons and new converts. The Prophetic call to facilitate and encourage thus reflects sensitivity to varying levels of religious literacy, spiritual readiness, and contextual constraint. Religious guidance, in this view, must be adaptive and persuasive rather than uniform and coercive (al-Nawawī, 2002).

Al-Nawawī further notes that the hadith is structured around two conceptually opposed terms: *yusr* (يسر, ease) and *usr* (عسر, difficulty). Lexically, *usr* derives from *‘asara-ya’suru-‘usran*, denoting constriction, hardship, and burden (Ibn Manẓūr, 1990), whereas *yusr* conveys accessibility, simplicity, and facilitation (al-Munawwir, 1997). The Prophetic imperative therefore establishes *ease* not as a peripheral virtue but as a normative orientation governing both religious communication and practice.

The semantic range of the root *y-s-r* reinforces this ethic. Certain derivatives (such as *yusrā*) carry connotations of gentleness and gradualness, suggesting that facilitation includes pedagogical pacing and emotional sensitivity. Even the etymological association of *maysir* with “easy gain” reflects the deep embedding of *ease* within Arabic moral imagination, further highlighting why the Prophetic preference for *taysir* resonates powerfully at the linguistic level.

Taken together, these interpretive and linguistic dimensions indicate that the Prophetic rejection of extremism operates across multiple registers—pedagogical, ethical, social, and behavioral. Excessive religiosity, whether expressed as self-imposed austerity or harsh methods of *da’wah*, represents a deviation from Prophetic guidance no less than overt coercion. By insisting on facilitation, encouragement, and communal harmony, the Prophet ﷺ articulated a normative framework that anticipates key principles of contemporary deradicalization: reducing alienation, strengthening social cohesion, and cultivating sustainable religiosity.

From a contemporary standpoint, these teachings offer a strong textual basis for countering both internal and external radicalization. They affirm that moderation is an inherently Prophetic virtue rooted in language, context, and lived Sunnah. Thus, *taysir* functions not only as a legal maxim but as a comprehensive ethic shaping education, community leadership, and rehabilitation toward humane and balanced religiosity.

The Dialectical Relationship between *Yassirū* and *Lā Tu’assirū*

Classical commentators emphasize that the Prophetic formula “*yassirū wa lā tu’assirū*” is a deliberate pairing rather than mere rhetorical repetition. Imām al-Nawawī—cited by Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī—notes that *yassirū* (“make things easy”) could, if taken alone, be

misconstrued as permitting facilitation only in exceptional circumstances. The subsequent prohibition *lā tu’assirū* (“do not make things difficult”) therefore functions as a normative safeguard, establishing facilitation not as episodic leniency but as a consistent ethical orientation in religious instruction and practice (al-‘Asqalānī, 2001). Together, the two imperatives form a comprehensive directive: ease is to be actively pursued, and unnecessary hardship must be deliberately prevented.

This Prophetic ethic is firmly corroborated by Qur’anic discourse, which repeatedly frames divine obligation in proportion to human capacity. Verses such as al-Inshirāḥ [94:5–6], al-Baqarah [2:185; 2:286], al-Mu’minūn [23:62], and al-Ṭalāq [65:7] collectively affirm that hardship is neither an aim nor a virtue of the Sharī‘ah, but a contingent condition that warrants facilitation. In this sense, *‘usr* is treated as a circumstance to be mitigated, not moralized.

Linguistically, the Qur’anic use of *‘usr* further clarifies the scope of the Prophetic prohibition. The root appears twelve times in varied grammatical forms (al-Farmawī, 1994; Shihab, 2002), alternating between definite usage (*al-‘usr*) that signals identifiable instances of hardship and indefinite forms that suggest generalized or potential difficulty. This distribution indicates that hardship is contextual and variable, never absolutized as an ideal.

Conversely, *yusr* (ease) and its derivatives appear with greater frequency—approximately forty-four occurrences—across multiple grammatical forms (al-Farmawī, 1994; Shihab, 2002), reinforcing ease as a constitutive moral orientation rather than an incidental concession. Key passages such as al-Baqarah [2:185; 2:280], al-Inshirāḥ [94:5–6], and al-Ṭalāq [65:7] consistently articulate accessibility, proportionality, and accommodation. Notably, *maysarah* in al-Baqarah [2:280] explicitly denotes facilitation

in socio-legal relations, underscoring that Shari‘ah accounts for human limitation and material vulnerability.

Taken together, this Qur’anic and linguistic mapping demonstrates that the dual Prophetic injunction—*yassirū* and *lā tu’assirū*—is anchored in Islam’s moral and legal architecture. Ease is not merely pragmatic; it is normative, while hardship is exceptional and demands mitigation. The hadith thus condenses, in imperatival form, a Qur’anic vision of moderation (*wasatiyyah*), balance (*tawāzun*), and humane religiosity.

Accordingly, “*Make things easy and do not make them difficult*” functions as a theologically coherent and linguistically grounded framework governing worship, social conduct, and legal application. Its enduring relevance lies in its capacity to prevent rigidity, restrain excessiveness, and sustain religious life that is both normatively faithful and existentially sustainable.

Scholarly Commentaries on the Hadith *Yassirū wa Lā Tu’assirū*

Classical and contemporary Muslim scholars have consistently treated the hadith “*yassirū wa lā tu’assirū*” as a distilled expression of the Prophetic ethos—an ethical framework derived from Qur’anic guidance and applicable across the full spectrum of religious life. As al-Khaṭīb (1981) notes, its scope extends beyond ritual practice to encompass creed, transactions, ethics, and social relations, rendering it immediately operative in everyday religiosity. Its normative thrust is neither permissive laxity nor unyielding rigor, but calibrated balance: easing religious commitment without dissolving moral seriousness (al-Suyūṭī, 2003).

A key interpretive insight, emphasized by al-Sa’dī (2000), lies in the Prophet’s lexical choice of *‘usr* (difficulty) rather than *mashaqqah* (hardship). Whereas *mashaqqah*

often suggests concrete physical strain, *‘usr* carries a broader semantic field encompassing psychological pressure, social burden, and spiritual distress. This choice signals that the Prophetic prohibition of difficulty targets not only bodily hardship but any undue constraint that undermines human dignity, emotional stability, or the sustainability of religious commitment.

This expansive ethic is reinforced by Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah in *I‘lām al-Muwaqqi‘īn*, where he argues that the Prophet’s method of guidance is fundamentally rooted in compassion rather than coercion, persuasion rather than intimidation. Approaches defined by harshness and severity, Ibn al-Qayyim maintains, are not markers of superior piety but deviations from the Prophetic mission of *rahmah* (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, 1991). In this reading, facilitation is not a concession to weakness but fidelity to the Sunnah’s moral architecture.

In jurisprudential terms, this Prophetic ethic is systematized in the legal maxim *al-mashaqqah tajlib al-taysir* (“hardship necessitates facilitation”), which operationalizes mercy within legal reasoning. Al-Sa’dī (2000) underscores that hardship may be physical, psychological, social, or spiritual, and that *lā tu’assirū* forbids imposing unwarranted difficulty in both ritual obligations and social dealings. The maxim thus serves the Shari‘ah’s higher objectives (*maqāsid*), particularly the realization of benefit (*maṣlahah*) and the prevention of harm.

At the same time, jurists stress that facilitation is principled rather than absolute. Concessions (*rukhaṣ*) apply only to qualifying hardship and do not nullify core obligations under ordinary conditions. As al-Suyūṭī (1996) cautions, routine difficulties—such as long days, adverse weather, or ordinary travel

discomfort—do not in themselves suspend essential duties. Facilitation therefore functions within a calibrated legal logic, not as an unrestricted relaxation of norms.

This proportionality is sharpened by al-Suyūṭī’s tripartite classification of hardship: severe hardship (*‘aẓimah fāḍiḥah*) that threatens life or bodily integrity and warrants full concessions; mild hardship (*khafifah*) that does not excuse obligations; and moderate hardship (*mutawassit*) that requires contextual evaluation—where proximity to severity legitimizes facilitation, and proximity to mildness requires adherence to the original ruling. This graduated model preserves both the integrity of worship (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*) and the protection of life and well-being (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*).

The same logic is institutionalized through the doctrine of *al-rukḥṣah*, which temporarily relaxes a strict ruling (*‘aẓimah*) to a lighter alternative (*takhfīf*) due to valid excuses (*‘udhr*), without abrogating the original norm. Building on ‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Salām and later al-‘Alā’ī, jurists classify facilitation mechanisms into structured forms: (1) exemption (*isqāṭ*), (2) reduction (*tanqīṣ*), (3) substitution (*ibdāl*), (4) advancement (*taqdīm*), (5) postponement (*ta’khīr*), (6) leniency (*tarkhīṣ*), and (7) modification of procedures (*taghyīr*) (al-Suyūṭī, 2003; Hakim, 1954). These categories demonstrate that facilitation is not ad hoc, but an integral and theorized dimension of Islamic legal methodology.

Taken collectively, these scholarly commentaries show that “*yassirū wa lā tu’assirū*” articulates a foundational ethical-juridical paradigm: it anchors Islamic normativity in Qur’anic mercy, places compassion at the center of Prophetic method, and provides jurists with tools to balance obligation and capacity. The hadith therefore functions not merely as moral exhortation, but as a cornerstone of legal reasoning and a critical resource for articulating moderation

and countering excessiveness in both classical and contemporary contexts.

Prohibition of Excessiveness (*Ghulūw*) in Religious Practice

The Prophetic ethic of facilitation (*taysīr*) is inseparable from Islam’s categorical prohibition of excessiveness (*ghulūw*). Both principles accord with reason, human disposition (*fiṭrah*), and spiritual-psychological well-being, affirming that religiosity is not measured by severity but by proportionality and sustainability. Practices that impose undue hardship or cultivate harshness therefore represent a deformation of religion rather than its fulfillment.

This orientation is explicitly articulated in the well-known ḥadīth of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās, in which the Prophet ﷺ warned against exaggeration in religion during the ritual at al-‘Aqabah:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي كُنتُمُ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَوْلَادَ فِي الدِّينِ. فَاِنَّمَا أَهْلَكُ مَنْ
كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ الْغُلُوفُ فِي الدِّينِ

The report frames *ghulūw* as a historically destructive pattern. Linguistically, it denotes excess and transgression beyond proper limits; in Islamic theological and legal discourse, it refers to beliefs or practices that exceed the bounds of revelation and destabilize Islam’s normative equilibrium and ethical moderation (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1993; al-Suyūṭī, 2003).

Closely related is *al-taṭarruf*—literally “standing at the edge”—which denotes deviation from the balanced center. Classical lexicography associates it with cognate notions such as *tanattu’* (rigidity), *ifrāt* (excess), *tasyaddud* (harshness), and *takalluf* (overexertion), all of which signal departures from *wasatiyyah* (al-Fayrūzabādī, 2005; Ibn Manẓūr, 1999; al-Asfahānī, 1997).

Historically, *ghulūw* manifests across doctrinal and devotional registers: exaggerated theological claims, sacralization of religious figures, indiscriminate *takfīr*, and devotional regimes that contradict Prophetic balance—such as perpetual fasting, continuous night worship, or treating recommended acts as obligatory while prohibiting what God has permitted (al-Syahrastānī, 1992; Ibn Taymiyyah, 2005; al-Nawawī, 2003). These excesses often coincide with wider social-intellectual pathologies: exclusivism, contempt for legitimate disagreement, and moral arrogance that fractures communal life (al-Ghazālī, 2005).

Yūsuf al-Qarāḍāwī (1990) distills extremist religiosity into two hallmark traits: fanatical rigidity that absolutizes one’s own interpretation while rejecting valid juristic plurality, and the imposition of unnecessary hardship on self and others—both of which contradict the Prophetic model of contextualized guidance, exemplified by shortening congregational recitations out of concern for the vulnerable. He further links these tendencies to *‘ujb* (self-admiration), a moral vice that sustains intolerance under the guise of piety.

Accordingly, the Prophetic prohibition of *ghulūw* functions as a foundational safeguard against the internal logic of radicalization. By rejecting excess and affirming *taysīr*, Islam advances a form of religiosity that is intellectually coherent, spiritually sustainable, and socially cohesive. This principle therefore operates not merely as ethical admonition, but as a normative pillar of Islamic moderation with direct relevance for contemporary deradicalization efforts.

Excessive Declaration of Others as Disbelievers (*Takfīr*)

One of the most destructive manifestations of religious excess (*ghulūw*) is the unwarranted excommunication of others

(*takfīr*). Historically, the Khawārij represent the earliest and most paradigmatic expression of this tendency. By absolutizing their interpretation of divine judgment, they legitimized violence against fellow Muslims deemed insufficiently compliant with God’s law, resulting in communal bloodshed and political assassinations—including the killings associated with the upheavals surrounding the caliphal period. Classical scholarship unequivocally condemned such reasoning, warning that reckless *takfīr* dismantles legal protection, normalizes violence, and corrodes social order (al-Bukhārī, 2002; al-Nawawī, 2005).

Contemporary extremist movements reproduce this Khārijite logic by branding rulers, scholars, or entire communities as unbelievers on the basis of selective textual readings or politicized grievances. Islamic jurisprudence treats *takfīr* as a matter of utmost gravity, tightly constrained by rigorous epistemic and procedural conditions precisely to prevent its abuse as an instrument of ideological exclusion and violence. In this sense, exaggerated *takfīr* is not merely a doctrinal error but a morally destabilizing practice with far-reaching social consequences.

Against such excess, Islamic scholarship consistently re-centers *da‘wah* on *taysīr* (facilitation), gradual moral cultivation, and exemplary conduct. Al-Qarāḍāwī (1990) formulates this Prophetic pedagogy through principles such as engaging hearts before imposing rules, prioritizing essentials over peripheral disputes, adopting gradualism in religious instruction, and educating without humiliation—an approach oriented toward transformation rather than coercion.

This ethic is vividly illustrated in the report narrated by ‘Ā’ishah, where the Prophet ﷺ demonstrated composure and courtesy even

toward a socially harmful individual, concluding with the striking moral criterion:

إِنَّ شَرَّ النَّاسِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَنْزِلَةٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَنْ تَرَكَهُ
النَّاسُ اتِّقَاءَ شَرِّهِ

The episode clarifies a critical Prophetic principle: moral discernment does not justify verbal aggression or social humiliation. Instead, the Prophet’s conduct establishes restraint and dignified engagement as ethical imperatives, even when confronting problematic behavior.

From this narration, scholars derive an essential da’wah strategy: encouragement (*tabshir*) should precede warning (*tandhir*). Empathic reassurance cultivates receptivity, whereas premature intimidation often entrenches resistance. Hence, the preacher must exercise contextual sensitivity, calibrating discourse to the audience’s psychological and social condition. This Prophetic pattern is likewise reflected in his engagement with figures such as ‘Adī ibn Ḥātim, where persuasion and moral vision—rather than denunciation—opened a path to voluntary acceptance (al-Bukhārī, 2002).

In deradicalization terms, this Prophetic methodology constitutes a decisive counter-narrative to *takfirī* ideology. Where extremist movements operate through exclusion, denunciation, and absolutism, the Prophetic model prioritizes patience, ethical discipline, and the preservation of human dignity. Excessive *takfir*, therefore, is not a sign of doctrinal purity but a profound departure from Prophetic ethics—one that converts religious commitment into a mechanism of violence. Re-centering da’wah on facilitation, gradualism, and compassionate engagement provides a robust normative framework for resisting radicalization and restoring the moral balance of religious life.

Facilitation and Mercy as Foundational Values in *Maqāṣid al-Sharī’ah*

Taysir (facilitation) functions not merely as an ethic of da’wah but as a hermeneutical principle that links Sharī’ah norms to their higher objectives (*maqāṣid al-sharī’ah*). As El-Wereny (2017) argues, facilitation serves as an interpretive lens through which legal rulings remain oriented toward the purposes of divine law rather than collapsing into rigid formalism. The Prophetic injunction “*Yassirū wa lā tu’assirū, bashshirū wa lā tunaffirū, wa taṭāwa’ū wa lā takhtalifū*” therefore articulates a comprehensive normative agenda: ease religious practice, privilege encouragement over intimidation, foster cooperation, and prevent divisive religiosity—an ethic exemplified in the Prophet’s dispatch of emissaries to Yemen, where contextual sensitivity and plural realities were decisive for da’wah (Jaffar, 2022).

Conceptually, *taysir* operationalizes the *maqāṣid* by translating core objectives—such as the preservation of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), and intellect (*ḥifẓ al-‘aql*)—into legal reasoning that minimizes harm (*maḍārrah*) and maximizes benefit (*maṣlaḥah*). In this sense, facilitation is not a concession to convenience but a form of purposive normativity: it prioritizes the intent of the law over literal rigidity and functions as a safeguard against *ghulūw* (excess), ensuring that devotion does not devolve into fanaticism and discipline does not harden into coercion (Ibn Ḥajar, *Fath al-Bārī*; Musadad et al., 2025).

As a marker of *wasatiyyah* (moderation), *taysir* generates identifiable indicators: proportionality in ritual observance, tolerance and inclusivity in social relations, flexibility under necessity (*ḍarūrah*), categorical rejection of violence and exclusion, and accountable legal practice grounded in ethical responsibility. This resonates with al-Qarāḍāwī’s “middle way,” which mediates between *taṭarruf* (extremism) and *tasāhul*

(unprincipled laxity), thereby safeguarding both the authority and purposes of Shari‘ah (al-Qarāḍāwī, 2010; Halilović, 2014).

At the level of public policy, this Prophetic ethic strengthens deradicalization in both practical and normative terms. Practically, it supports rehabilitation strategies centered on social reintegration, contextualized religious education, and economic empowerment rather than ideological coercion. Normatively, a *maqāsid*-based approach legitimizes restorative over purely punitive measures, prioritizing the protection of life and faith as overarching legal imperatives (Sumiadi et al., 2025; Bunyamin et al., 2025). Evidence from Indonesia likewise suggests that pesantren-based initiatives and correctional programs are most effective when they cultivate *rahmah* (compassion), *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance), and *i’tidāl* (equilibrium) as core pedagogical values (Ihsan & Fatah, 2021).

Accordingly, *taysīr* emerges as a transformative paradigm that integrates empathy, purposive legal reasoning, and social healing. Contemporary deradicalization studies further corroborate that durable disengagement from extremist ideologies is better achieved through psychosocial support, community-building, and credible moderate narratives than through coercive or securitized interventions alone (Popp et al., 2020). Through *taysīr*, Islam is thus articulated as a reconciliatory moral force—one that sustains balanced religiosity, preserves human dignity, and contributes to enduring social peace.

The Prophetic Principle of Ease in Deradicalisation and Islamic Teaching

The Prophetic injunction “*Yassirū wa lā tu’assirū*” (“make things easy and do not make them difficult”) constitutes a foundational ethical and methodological principle for Islamic teaching and contemporary deradicalisation. Embodying the ethic of *taysīr*

(facilitation), it redirects da‘wah and pedagogy away from rigidity and coercion toward mercy, accessibility, and moral formation—affirming that Islam cultivates obedience and spiritual flourishing without imposing gratuitous burdens (Esposito, 2002).

Its contemporary urgency is most visible in efforts to counter *ghulūw* (excessive religiosity), a recurrent catalyst of radicalisation. *Ghulūw* commonly emerges from shallow religious literacy, rigid textualism, and the neglect of purposive reasoning (*maqāsid al-shari‘ah*), producing exclusivist attitudes and hostility to contextual judgment. As Ibn Taymiyyah cautioned, interpretive rigidity tends to breed intolerance and moral absolutism—dynamics echoed in modern movements that delegitimise pluralism, reject civic order, or denounce fellow Muslims over minor juristic differences.

Radicalisation, however, is rarely reducible to theology alone. It is shaped by intersecting psychological, educational, and socio-political drivers that intensify vulnerability to extremist narratives. Historically, the Khawārij exemplify how harsh social conditions and absolutist moral reasoning can normalize violence in the name of purity (Lewis, 2002). In contemporary Indonesia, vulnerable youth—particularly those with limited access to nuanced religious education—are more susceptible to emotionally charged recruitment frames, amplified by structural grievances such as poverty, marginalisation, and perceived injustice. Global political tensions and distorted encounters with modernity further aggravate polarisation (Esposito, 1999; Kepel, 2004).

Within this complex landscape, *yassirū wa lā tu’assirū* provides both ideological orientation and practical discipline. It anchors religious life in *wasatiyyah* (moderation), *rahmah* (compassion), and context-sensitive

instruction, restraining interpretive hardness while prioritising human welfare and social cohesion. Qur’anic cautions against exaggeration in religion (e.g., al-Mā’idah [5:77]) reinforce that extremism does not deepen piety but corrodes moral and communal integrity. By contrast, *taysir* reaffirms Islam as *rahmatan lil-‘ālamīn*—a tradition of mercy, balance, and the protection of dignity.

Psychological dynamics also matter. Guilt, shame, or a desire for moral “compensation” can propel individuals into *ifrāt* (exaggeration), expressed as harsh self-discipline and punitive judgments of others, often at the expense of Sharī’ah’s compassionate spirit (Ibn Taymiyyah, 2001). In Indonesia, such excess can surface in *takfir* against fellow Muslims over madhhab differences or local practices such as grave visitation and *tahlilan*, patterns reinforced by socio-political dissatisfaction and entrenched literalism (Taher, 1998). Here, *taysir* offers a corrective ethic: guidance grounded in empathy, gradualism, and contextual awareness rather than denunciation.

The centrality of moderation is further expressed in the Prophetic maxim “*khayr al-umūr awsaṭuhā*” (“the best of matters is the middle path”), which captures Islam’s moral equilibrium between ideals and lived realities, devotion and social responsibility, firmness and compassion (al-Qaraḍāwī, 1992). Extremism, by contrast, disrupts the very principles of *rahmah* and *tawāzun* (balance) that structure Islamic ethical reasoning.

Operationally, the Prophetic ethic of facilitation informs three strategic domains. First, Islamic education: moderation-oriented curricula cultivate civic commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and cultural respect. Pedagogically, *taysir* supports dialogical and inclusive learning rather than dogmatic or punitive instruction. Second, da’wah and public engagement: the hadith mandates that

religious guidance address both ritual life and social realities—poverty, injustice, education—through persuasion, moral credibility, and cross-cultural sensitivity rather than confrontation. Third, correctional and rehabilitation settings: *taysir* strengthens disengagement programs by emphasizing reintegration, mentorship, and vocational empowerment, aligning with *maqāṣid* priorities such as safeguarding life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*) and faith (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*) while avoiding punitive excess.

Taken together, the Prophetic principle of ease functions as a unifying paradigm integrating theology, pedagogy, and policy. By operationalising *taysir* across educational, social, and institutional contexts, Islam is articulated not as a rigid or exclusionary system, but as a dynamic moral tradition capable of sustaining inclusive religiosity, peaceful coexistence, and context-sensitive responses to radicalisation.

CONCLUSION

This study has established that the Prophetic ḥadīth “*Make things easy and do not make them difficult; give glad tidings and do not drive people away*” is *marfū‘* and *ṣaḥīḥ*, supported by uninterrupted (*muttasil*) chains of transmission and narrators whose reliability is affirmed through *jarḥ wa ta’dil*. Its *matn* is free from irregularities and defects and coheres with Qur’anic principles of facilitation, proportionality, and mercy, granting it enduring normative authority across worship, social relations, ethical conduct, and economic life. Substantively, the ḥadīth articulates a Prophetic paradigm in which *taysir* (facilitation) and *tawāzun* (balance) function as foundational ethical and hermeneutical principles: *taysir* enables faithful practice without undue hardship, while *tawāzun* restrains *ghulūw* (excess), ensuring that religiosity remains humane, sustainable, and aligned with the higher objectives of Sharī’ah

(*maqāsid*), particularly the preservation of faith, life, intellect, and social cohesion.

The findings further indicate that radical and exclusionary interpretations do not emerge from Prophetic teaching but from interpretive deviations that privilege rigidity over purpose and severity over mercy. By contrast, *yassirū wa lā tu‘assirū* offers a coherent and operational framework for Islamic moderation, combining contextual sensitivity, moral responsibility, and attentiveness to human capacity—principles directly applicable to religious education, *da‘wah*, and contemporary deradicalisation efforts. Read through a *maqāsid*-oriented lens, this Prophetic ethic reaffirms Islam as *rahmatan lil-‘ālamīn*, a tradition that nurtures spiritual well-being, strengthens social harmony, and sustains balanced religiosity. Re-centering Islamic thought and practice on this paradigm is therefore crucial not only for countering extremism, but also for advancing an authentic, compassionate, and context-responsive expression of Islam within modern plural societies.

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