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The Quranic Discourse on Animals and Its Relevance to Modern Zoology
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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the theological and ethical meaning of animals in the Quran, and evaluates how the animals mentioned in the scriptures correspond to the present-day zoological knowledge. There are more than 200 direct and indirect references to the animal world in the Quran, and bees, ants, camels, and whales serve not only as biological creatures: they are also represented as signs of God (ayat), exemplars, and actors in prophetic fables. Examining verses describing bees in Surah An-Nahl, ant colonies in Surah An-Naml, and an ant to consider the camel in Surah Al-Ghashiyah, the article creates scientific correlations of the subjects of the insect communication, adaptations to the desert, or marine life. The Quranic worldview involves the ethical aspect that is supported by the idea of mizan (balance), khalifah (stewardship) and divine accountability which, in their turn, promote environmental conservation, animal rights and sustainable relationship with nature. Moreover, the paper criticizes compulsory scientific harmonic and rather advocates a reflective, symbolic, and epistemologically pluralistic attitude to scriptural zoology. Although the Quran is not a scientific textbook, the moral code and theology that underlies it complements the modern-day issues of biodiversity, ecological justice, and treatment of animals as living beings. The exchange between the Quranic doctrine and the contemporary science proves the validity of Islamic thinking in the contemporary ecological and ethical discussion, a spiritually embedded but intellectually sound explanation of the interaction between people, animals, and environment.

Keywords: Quran, Animals, Islamic Environmental Ethics, Zoology, Quranic Ecology, Bee Communication, Animal Rights, Scientific Parallels.

Introduction

The Quran, being the foundational text of the Islamic religion has long been not only celebrated in its spiritual and moral teachings, but also in the way it reflects on the natural world. In its verses there are specific mentionings of natural things, such as earth, skies, water systems, flora and fauna, which are frequently described as being the evidence (ayat) of divine wit. This interrelatedness of divine revelation with natural elements has been observed by scholars, as providing an impetus to spiritual reflection and scientific wonder (Nasr, 1993). As opposed to the present-day secular writings that tend to divide science and spirituality, the Quran presents the two in a unitary way, where readers are encouraged to recollect the world of nature as the evidence of the Godly creativity and compassion (Foltz, 2006). Within Islamic epistemology,

knowledge (ilm) contains the metaphysical and the moral aspects of reality, not just the empirical and the rational ones. As a result, the mention of animals in Quran is not accidental and stylistic because it also functions as a means to knowledge in the human cognition of creation and the ethical duty of the human inhabiting it (Sardar, 2011). It is a framework that puts Quran on the one hand as a source of ethics and a call to scientific observation and prepares fertile soil where a dialogue between scriptural and modern zoological knowledge is to be established.

The role of animals in the Islamic worldview is special in nature. In the past, they have not only been considered as utilitarian assets but sentient beings with divine meaning and with rights. Earlier Islamic philosophers such as Al-Jahiz, whose *Kitab al-Hayawan* (Book of Animals) is regarded as a landmark in early zoology, stressed animal intelligence, animal society and interdependence in nature (Dhanani, 2014). Modern day academicians produce the same insistence in observing that in Islamic philosophy animals have been approached as a human being is a part of the larger weaving of the creation and are subject to divine law and that they should be considered morally (Izzi Dien, 2000). They are mentioned many times in the Quranic text, either as a symbol, a teacher, a sign, or an agent of God in intervening in the world, which is why they are so valuable in conveying theological truths and moral values. As an example, besides being described in their usefulness, bees, ants, birds, and camels are also eulogized because of their special behaviors and their social functions (Foltz, 2006). This symbolic wealth is one of the factors promoting a more profound ethical ecology within Islam which undermines anthropocentric paradigms and provides a more holistic account of what it means to be alive, one that echoes very well with contemporary ecology and animal welfare movements.

It is against this rich scriptural and intellectual background that it is felt that this will be a good opportunity to explore convergence of Quranic sources on animals and current knowledge in zoology which is the subject of the present article. Although the Quran is not a book of science, the verses covering the behavior of animals, biological events and functions of the ecosystem are in most instances consistent with advances made in the contemporary sciences of life—such as the advanced social structure of the bees, migratory basis of the birds and adaptation of the camel in the physiological events. It is through such examination of these parallels with a thematic and scientific eye that this article aims to prove that the Quranic worldview does not contradict with empirical inquiry but supplements it in a meaningful way (Sardar, 2011). The aim is neither to construe religious text scientifically, nor to introduce scientific text into religious discourse but to institute a dialogue between theology and zoology in a respectful and mutually beneficial way in which each can enhance the appreciation of the other. By so doing, not only does the study add to the general discourse of science and religion, especially those in the Islamic tradition, but it also testifies to the timelessness of the Quran in the era that is more and more concerned with biodiversity, animal rights, and environmental ethics (Guessoum, 2010; Haque, 2021).

Animals in the Quran: A Thematic Overview

Animals have a prominent role in the Quran both in the narrative structure, theology and morality. The Quran, being the main source of Islamic faith and walk of life, does not introduce animals as

the side elements or symbolic ornaments, but as the signs (Ayah) of power and wisdom of God. In over 200 verses, animals are discussed directly and indirectly through all of its 114 chapters. The Quran scholars like Nasr (1996) noted that the Quran is in touch with the natural world (and animals) in ways that bring reflection, humility, and reverence. It is not only an informative work about animals but something that makes people think deep spiritually and ethically about them. As such, whole chapters get the names of animals, Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow), Surah Al-Nahl (The Bee), Surah Al-Ankabut (The Spider), Surah Al-Fil (The Elephant), which emphasize both the ecological importance of animals and their spiritual and symbolic burden. As it was suggested by Izutsu (2002), his naming convention references to the way the Quran places ethical and metaphysical truths in the language of nature. The allusions to animals are spread throughout Meccan and Medinan Surahs and are used both in stories, ethics, and legislation and theological statements. The animal mentioning is therefore broad and also packed in terms of themes, which fortifies the holistic reading of the Quran in which human beings are not the masters but servants (khalifah) of the world.

The references to animals in the Quran are methodologically various and mark the relationship between human being and animals in the versatile aspects of utilitarian, spiritual, symbolic, and ethical. Subsistence, mode of transport, sacrifice ritual and signs are some of the aspects or point where domesticated animals such as the camel, cow, horse, donkey and sheep are mentioned.. The camel, for example, is famously invoked in Surah Al-Ghashiyah:

أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ

“Do they not look at the camels—how they are created?” (Qur’an, 88:17). This verse encourages contemplation of the camel’s anatomical and ecological adaptation, presenting it as a marvel of divine engineering. Scholars like Foltz (2006) interpret such verses as invitations to develop a sacred ecological consciousness rooted in gratitude and stewardship. Wild animals, though mentioned less frequently, are also embedded with symbolic depth. Birds are described as glorifying God in unison (Qur’an, 24:41), while the ant in Surah An-Naml displays foresight and communal order, indicating the Qur’an’s awareness of animal behavior:

قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّمْلُ ادْخُلُوا مَسَاكِنَكُمْ

“An ant said, ‘O ants! Enter your dwellings, lest Solomon and his armies crush you while they do not perceive.’” (Qur’an, 27:18). Modern entomologists have often remarked on this verse’s surprising alignment with scientific understanding of ant colonies, which operate through collective intelligence (Archer, 2015). Additionally, aquatic animals like fish and whales are tied to theological lessons most notably in the story of Prophet Yunus (Jonah), who was swallowed by a “great fish” (Qur’an, 37:142). These references, drawn from across the Qur’an, affirm the divine intentionality in all forms of life and place humans in a reflective rather than exploitative relationship with them.

The thematic spread of animal mentions also reflects a layered narrative strategy that moves from the literal to the metaphorical and the spiritual. For instance, animals are invoked in parables, metaphors, legal prescriptions, and eschatological visions. The bee in Surah An-Nahl is praised not only for its ecological role but also its divine inspiration:

وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنْ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا

“And your Lord inspired the bee: ‘Take for yourself among the mountains, houses...’” (Qur’an, 16:68). Here, divine inspiration is not limited to humans or prophets but extended to animals, indicating a broader Qur’anic cosmology in which life is interconnected and purpose-driven. Animals are also mentioned as beings with communities like humans:

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَّمٌ أُمَّتَالِكُمْ

“There is no creature on the Earth or bird flying with its wings except that they are communities like you.” (Qur’an, 6:38). This verse radically equalizes the moral and existential status of animals, emphasizing their inclusion in divine accounting and ecological ethics. Philosophers such as Haque (2005) and Nasr (1996) argue that the Qur’anic worldview resists anthropocentrism and instead endorses a bio-centric perspective, urging humility in the face of creation’s complexity. Thus, the frequency and thematic range of animal mentions in the Qur’an are not random or decorative they serve as a divine pedagogy that encourages reflection, balance, and spiritual awareness in human-animal interaction.

Quranic Animal Behavior and Scientific Parallels

1. The Bee (Surah An-Nahl 16:68–69)

The Quranic verse in Surah An-Nahl (16:68–69) offers one of the most remarkable descriptions of insect behavior:

وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنْ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ

“And your Lord inspired to the bee: Take for yourself among the mountains, houses, and among the trees and in that which they construct.” The subsequent verse mentions honey with healing properties, indicating divine purpose and utility in bee behavior. Modern science has confirmed that bees exhibit structured decision-making and complex communication. Through the waggle dance, bees relay information about food sources (von Frisch, 1967), and their hives are highly organized into castes workers, drones, and a queen exemplifying social order (Seeley, 2010). This mirrors the Quranic emphasis on “inspiration” and ordered behavior.

2. Honey Production and Medical Significance

The Quran further states:

يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ ۗ

“From their bellies comes a drink of varying colors, wherein is healing for mankind” (An-Nahl 16:69). Today, this “drink” is known to contain enzymes, antioxidants, and antimicrobial compounds (Mandal & Mandal, 2011). Scientific research confirms honey’s efficacy in wound healing and antibacterial treatment, validating this Quranic insight (Al-Waili et al., 2011). Moreover, bees' ecological role as pollinators aligns with the Quranic framing of them as divine agents in ecological systems, offering another parallel between scripture and science.

3. The Ant (Surah An-Naml 27:18)

Another compelling example lies in the story of Prophet Solomon and the ants:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَتَوْا عَلَىٰ وَادِ النَّمْلِ قَالَتْ مَمْلَةٌ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّمْلُ ادْخُلُوا مَسَاكِنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَانُ وَجُنُودُهُۥ

“Until, when they came upon the valley of the ants, an ant said, ‘O ants, enter your dwellings lest Solomon and his soldiers crush you’” (An-Naml 27:18). This verse anthropomorphizes the ant, attributing it the ability to communicate danger to its colony. Modern myrmecology affirms that ants use pheromones and tactile signals to relay information about threats (Wilson, 1971). Studies by Hölldobler & Wilson (1990) reveal complex warning systems in ant colonies, including evacuation protocols when threats are detected validating the Quran’s portrayal of sentient-like awareness and social coordination among ants. The Quran’s representation aligns with scientific findings that ants possess social hierarchies, from queens to foragers, each performing designated roles. Ant colonies are considered “superorganisms” due to their cooperative behavior (Gordon, 2010). These dynamics underscore the Quranic recognition of organizational intelligence in tiny creatures, demonstrating a clear harmony between sacred narrative and modern zoological observation.

4. The Camel (Surah Al-Ghashiyah 88:17): Adaptation and Design

Surah Al-Ghashiyah poses a rhetorical question:

أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَىٰ الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ

“Do they not look at the camel how it is created?” (88:17). The verse calls attention to the camel’s remarkable anatomy. Camels exhibit numerous adaptations for desert survival, including the ability to lose up to 25% of body weight through sweating, a unique water-conserving physiology, and double-layered eyelashes to protect against sand (Yagil, 1985). Their red blood cells are oval and can flow even under dehydration a rare mammalian feature (Schmidt-Nielsen, 1964). This Qur’anic verse encourages reflection on the precision of biological design, an idea later mirrored in biological studies.

5. The Camel in Nomadic and Ecological Contexts

Beyond biology, camels have economic and cultural importance in arid regions. Their milk is a key source of nutrition and their dung a source of fuel. The Quran’s highlighting of camels reflects not

just ecological adaptation but also the vital role they play in human subsistence, fitting the Quran's broader themes of utility and divine balance in creation.

6. The Whale and Prophet Yunus (As-Saffat 37:139–142): Deep Ocean Life and Redemption

The story of Prophet Yunus (Jonah) offers one of the Quran's most dramatic encounters with marine life.

فَالْتَقَمَهُ الْحُوتُ وَهُوَ مُلِيمٌ

"Then the fish swallowed him while he was blameworthy" (As-Saffat 37:142). Although "whale" is a common interpretation, the Arabic word الحوت (al-ḥūt) generally refers to a large sea creature. Marine biology has shown that large whales, such as the sperm whale, can dive for over an hour and ingest large prey whole, using peristalsis rather than chewing (Watwood et al., 2006). The Quranic account, though miraculous in scope, resonates with the known capacities of aquatic megafauna and their oceanic behaviors, situating a spiritual lesson within plausible zoological parameters. The story of Yunus also metaphorically touches on isolation and transformation conditions echoed in deep-sea ecological systems. Whales play essential roles in marine ecosystems, particularly in nutrient cycling. The Quranic narrative, while spiritually focused, underscores marine creatures as part of a divine plan of mercy, power, and purpose. The convergence of this narrative with the known biological importance of large marine animals (Roman et al., 2014) suggests that the Quran's references, while often allegorical, are also compatible with scientific realities.

Ethical and Ecological Teachings in the Quran

1. The Principle of Mīzān (Balance) and Ecological Equilibrium

One of the core ethical themes in the Quran is the concept of mīzān (مِيزَان), which refers to balance, justice, and proportion in creation. This concept is beautifully articulated in Surah Ar-Rahman (55:7–9):

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ ﴿٧﴾ أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ ﴿٨﴾ وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ

"And the heaven He raised and imposed the balance. That you not transgress within the balance. And establish weight in justice and do not make deficient the balance." This passage suggests not just a physical but a moral order—a call to humans to maintain the ecological and social harmony established by God (Nasr, 1996). In a modern context, mīzān aligns closely with ecological sustainability, environmental ethics, and biodiversity conservation. Breaching this balance—through pollution, overconsumption, or cruelty to animals—is thus a moral failing, not merely an environmental one. It underscores the Quran's foundational view of nature not as an inert backdrop but as a realm of divine signs (āyāt) that demands responsible interaction (Foltz, 2006).

2. Khalifah (Vicegerency) and Moral Accountability

In Surah Al-Baqarah (2:30), the Quran announces humanity's appointment as khalifah (خَلِيفَةً) or vicegerent on Earth. This designation is not a grant of dominion but a delegation of trust (amānah) and responsibility. The verse reads:

إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً

"Indeed, I will make upon the earth a vicegerent." Islamic scholars such as Al-Ghazali and contemporary ethicists like Sardar (2014) interpret this concept to mean humans must safeguard creation and act justly toward all living beings. This stewardship includes animals, who, according to Surah Al-An'am (6:38), form communities like humans:

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَّمٌ أُمَّتًا لَكُمْ

"There is no creature on the earth or bird that flies with its wings except [that they are] communities like you." This egalitarian view counters anthropocentrism, insisting that humans are not superior rulers over animals but entrusted caretakers. It directly challenges modern practices like industrial farming, deforestation, and wildlife exploitation, and positions Islam as an ally in ecological justice (Izzi Dien, 2000).

3. Condemnation of Cruelty and Islamic Animal Rights Ethics

The Quran and Hadith literature emphasize compassion and justice toward animals. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was known for his exceptional kindness, and numerous authentic hadith condemn Muhammad abuse. For example, a woman is reported to have been sent to Hell for starving a cat (Bukhari, Hadith No. 2365), while another narration states that a man was forgiven for giving water to a thirsty dog (Muslim, Hadith No. 2244). The Quran also states:

إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

"Indeed, Allah does not love the transgressors" (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:190). This verse, though general, is often cited in Islamic environmental ethics to caution against excess and cruelty in any form including against animals. Modern Islamic scholars argue that these teachings call for humane treatment, freedom from unnecessary suffering, and dignified living conditions for animals (Abou El Fadl, 2006). Even slaughter, a necessary act for sustenance in many traditions, must be done with minimal pain, sharp instruments, and in a single motion, while invoking God's name (Surah Al-An'am 6:121). These guidelines anticipate modern animal welfare laws and reflect a broader ethical framework rooted in dignity and compassion.

4. Conservation and Biodiversity in Islamic Teachings

While conservation is often thought of as a modern science, Islamic teachings have long promoted the preservation of species and habitats. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ prohibited killing animals for sport and encouraged planting trees and protecting water sources (Kamali, 2010). His teachings also inspired the establishment of ḥimā (protected zones) and ḥarim (sacred preserves), early Islamic conservation practices that predated Western environmentalism by centuries (Denny,

1998). In the current era of climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and species extinction, Islamic ethics offer a religiously motivated model for ecological preservation. From banning overhunting to opposing genetic manipulation for profit, Islamic environmentalism is increasingly invoked in legal and policy frameworks across Muslim-majority countries. It provides a powerful lens for addressing animal rights debates, deforestation, and marine protection (Khalid, 2002). The Quran thus emerges not only as a book of guidance for spiritual life but as a charter for a balanced, compassionate, and sustainable world.

Quranic Guidance: Signs over Science

The Quran identifies itself first and foremost as a book of guidance and signs, rather than scientific textbook. They refer to the natural world to animals, celestial bodies, and human anatomy, not to empirical verification, but to moral, spiritual, and epistemic contemplation. This difference plays a critical role in comprehending the character of Quranic knowledge and its applicability to the contemporary science. The Islamic cosmology, as stressed by Nasr (1996), does not divide the sacred and natural world, but it sees the universe as theophany, or a manifestation of the attributes of divinity. This point of view encourages reflection and amazement not reductionism. The Quranic texts like, I tell you the truth, in the heavens and the earth and in change of night and days you shall find evidence (Surah Al-Imran 3:190) reveal the fact that the nature is filled with spiritual allegory and divine guidance.

Modern scholars and popular authors have however been leaning to scientific concordism: an effort to retrospectively reconcile Quranic descriptions with modern science, sometimes in overreach. An example would be when one tries to establish accurate correlations between embryological descriptions in the Quran and contemporary developmental biology that can lead to epistemological confusion, wherein metaphorical and moral conclusions are confused as technical descriptions (Guessoum, 2011). Any such methods have a danger of trivializing the Quran, of reducing it to the status of a scientific textbook, whereas it functions on a totally different ontological and epistemic level. According to Zarkovitch (2013), this imposition of harmony may end up harming the religious and scientific integrity. Although appreciating science, the intellectual tradition of Islam always cautions against the instrumentalization of the divine message to pursue ends to which it was never directed.

The promotion of the Quran on reflection (tafakkur), pondering (tadabbur) and observation (nazr) is being presented as the epistemological connection between revelation and science. Many verses call human to learn the nature, to see God wisdom, not to achieve its ruling through materialistic skills. e.g. Do they not see how the camel is created? (Surah Al-Ghashiyah 88:17) and And in your own selves do you not see? (Surah Adh-Dhariyat 51:21). These questions are not directed at finding answers to them in the laboratory, but are what is called a holistic view of creation, in which spiritual wisdom, as well as scientific interest, goes hand in hand (Sardar, 2011).

Classical and modern scholars of Islam such as Al-Ghazali and Seyyed Hossein Nasr claim that the Islamic worldview never separates science and ethics and metaphysics. Instead of putting the

Quranic references to the test of modern science, what is important is the cultivation of a humility and awe before the nature. The universe is not an inert text, and scientific knowledge is not a way to control things but rather the way to read them as a text of servanthood (*ubuudiyah*) and responsible stewardship (*khalifah*). Thus, scientific reflection of the Quran is not imperative but inquisitive as it promotes inquiry without boundaries and ethical reflection in accordance with the divine order (*mizan*) (Izzi Dien, 2000).

Meanwhile, the contemporary Islamic thought does not deny the success of modern science but acknowledges that science exists within the boundaries of methodological naturalism that is restrictive. It cannot make declarations about ultimate meanings and moral values, these are the subject of revelation. Thus the Quran does not rival with science, but complements it by providing purpose and moral guidance to science on the data it gathers (Hoodbhoy, 1991). It is not concordism but this complementarity which synthesizes the greatest honor to the integrity of the revelation on the one hand and of the reason on the other. Deriving the contemporary scientific ideas literally out of Quranic scriptures means committing a category error. Such a language of sacred texts is polyvalent, and it abounds in symbolism, moralizing, and existential meaning. In contrast with precise language of science, Quranic speech tends to act on several levels at the same time literal, allegorical, ethical, and metaphysical. An example can be given in the form of a story related to the bee in Surah An-Nahl (16:68-69), which may have zoological resonances, yet its principal purpose is theological to indicate the providence of God, the inspiration given to him, and the healing power of his creative act. According to Rahman (1980), the Quran does not talk to the human brain as informative but rather the language of the Quran is about the transformation of the human heart.

Besides, the temporality of the scientific paradigms does not restrict theological writings. What science will confirm to-day, will it change tomorrow? Imposing Quranic interpretation to adhere to the present theories (e.g., Big Bang cosmology, evolution, and quantum physics) is thus intellectually dangerous and spiritually restrictive. It runs the danger of making the revelation of his eternity dependent on temporal structures and subjection of the divinity of his speech to the vagaries of the empirical knowledge. Muslims must be willing to take science seriously without bending the exegesis of Quran into the pattern of scientific verification like it is wisely advised by Guessoum (2011). Finally, Quranic allusions to the natural world can be best explained through a holistic spiritual epistemology in which the natural world offers the signs of God that produce reflection, awe, and ethical sensitivity. The Quran is not a lab manual but a guide that is divine. Its usefulness is not in the fact that it proves science but the fact that it sets human consciousness in a direction that tends towards purpose, responsibility and harmony with creation. The Islamic theology made of humility in the face of the divine knowledge, thereby justifies the honour of the science and the scripture in their respective spheres.

Conclusion

Taking into account the thorough analysis of animal references in the Quran, one can see that the religious text can be used as a spiritual and ecological guide simultaneously. There is no simple

fiction in the use of the animals as a narrative tool or a metaphor; animals are instead used as part and parcel of a religiously structured universe that requires reflection, humility, and accountability by human beings. The Quran invites the believers to view the natural world with awe and majesty that compel them to view the actions and functions and systems of animals as an indicator (ayat) of the wisdom of God. The queenly colonies of the bee, the desert whiteness of the camel, the social wisdom of the ant--these things, and more, are set forth in the Quran, not as at variance with modern zoological knowledge, but as something to supplement it. This convergence creates a new worldview in which revelation and reason do not go against each other but coexist in order to enrich human perception to the meaning of nature and the human moral duty in it.

Furthermore, the Quranic-based ethical and ecological principles focus on the core of the concepts of balance (mizan), stewardship (khalifah) and compassion. Such values are in line with the current discourses on animal welfare, conservation and sustainability of the environment. The Quran establishes a comprehensive ethic of the environment by denouncing anthropocentric exploitation in favor of a biocentric ethical system. This article, instead of resorting to the Quran as to the source of empirical science, confirms its worth as the source of moral orientation and existential reflection in the context of ecological crisis. Humility and intellectual honesty, when directed to the Quran, the discourse about animal can contribute not only to scientific knowledge but also to spiritual awareness, inspiring mankind to lead into the future of care, coexistence, and sacred responsibility. The Quran, in that respect, is not a book of science but a guide to being virtuous in a world of varying and interlocking life.

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Quranic Verses

- Surah Al-Baqarah (2:30, 2:190, 6:121)
- Surah Al-An'am (6:38)
- Surah Al-Imran (3:190)
- Surah Al-Ghashiyah (88:17)
- Surah Adh-Dhariyat (51:21)
- Surah An-Nahl (16:68–69)
- Surah An-Naml (27:18)
- Surah Al-Fil (105:1–5)
- Surah Al-Ankabut (29)
- Surah Al-Fil (105:3)
- Surah As-Saffat (37:139–142)
- Surah Ar-Rahman (55:7–9)
- Surah Al-Nur (24:41)