

Prophetic Reflections on Nature: Foundations for an Islamic Approach to Ecotherapy

Dzulfaidhi Hakimie Dzulraidi^{1*}, Mohd Dahlan A. Malek^{2*}, Umar Muhammad Noor³, Mohd Solleh Ab Razak⁴

¹Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, 88400 Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia

²Faculty of Psychology and Social Work, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, 88400 Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia

³Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, 88400 Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia

⁴Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, 88400 Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia

*Corresponding Author

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ABSTRACT

The role of mindfulness towards nature as a tool for mental therapy has gained significant attention in modern psychology, particularly through the development of ecotherapy. While this concept has been largely shaped by Western frameworks, the Islamic tradition has long recognized the importance of reflecting on the natural world through the practice of tafakkur alam (contemplation of nature). Despite its deep roots in Islamic teachings, the therapeutic dimensions of tafakkur remain underexplored, especially through the lens of the hadiths of Prophet Muhammad SAW. Although numerous authentic hadiths encourage reflection on the signs of creation, much of the existing scholarship has focused predominantly on faith-related interpretations, with little attention given to the psychospiritual benefits and therapeutic potentials of such practices. Addressing this gap, the present study examines tafakkur alam as practiced by the Prophet SAW, proposing it as a form of Nabawi ecotherapy. Employing a qualitative content analysis methodology, the study compiles and interprets relevant hadiths using the framework of fiqh al-hadith. The findings demonstrate that the Prophet's engagement with nature through tafakkur not only reinforced spiritual faith but also provided a profound therapeutic effect, alleviating anxiety, promoting inner peace, and strengthening the spiritual bond with the Creator. This study advocates for the mainstreaming of a hadith-based approach to tafakkur alam as an Islamic alternative for promoting holistic mental health.

Keywords: ecotherapy; mindfulness; mental health; tafakkur; hadith.

INTRODUCTION

The recognition of mindfulness towards nature as an instrument for mental therapy has been progressively expanding within modern psychology, particularly through the development of ecotherapy and nature-based therapy approaches (Firat Ünsal & Zafer Korkmaz, 2023). These approaches emphasize that observing and reflecting upon the beauty, balance, and order of the natural world can foster inner tranquility, alleviate emotional stress, and enhance psychospiritual well-being (Charlton Hall, 2017). Although this concept has been largely pioneered by Western and secular psychological frameworks, the Islamic tradition has long emphasized the importance of reflecting upon the creation of Allah through the concept of tafakkur alam (contemplation of nature). In the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad SAW, contemplation of nature is not only regarded as an intellectual act of worship but also embodies values of serenity, self-reflection, and spiritual connection with the Creator (Hakimie Dzulraidi et al., 2024).

Problem Statement

Despite its profound presence in Islamic teachings, the dimension of *tafakkur alam* as a form of ecotherapy within the Islamic framework remains underexplored in contemporary scholarship. Most Islamic studies addressing *tafakkur* have predominantly framed it within theological discussions, spiritual cultivation, or the marvels of creation, without adequately connecting it to its psychospiritual potential and therapeutic effects on modern mental well-being (Dewi Ruhama'ul Laili, 2012; Kz et al., 2019; Raden Intan Lampung, 2019). Yet, numerous hadiths portray the Prophet's contemplative and profound interactions with nature, such as his seclusion (*uzlah*) in the Cave of Hira', reflection upon the skies and stars, observation of natural phenomena like rain and mountains, and his appreciation of trees and other elements of creation. These psychospiritual dimensions, however, have not been systematically analyzed from the perspective of an Islamic ecotherapy model based on revelation.

This study seeks to address three critical gaps:

1. The absence of integrated studies connecting the Prophet's practice of *tafakkur alam* with the modern framework of ecotherapy, where most exegeses and hadith commentaries have focused solely on theological or moral aspects without exploring its therapeutic functions.
2. The ambiguity surrounding the concept of Islamic ecotherapy rooted in hadith, as the term "ecotherapy" remains foreign in Islamic discourse and lacks systematic development based on prophetic principles.
3. The urgent need to develop a therapy model based on revelation that meets the growing demand among Muslim communities for mental health care approaches aligned with Islamic spirituality.

Accordingly, this study aims to:

1. Analyze hadiths that depict the Prophet Muhammad's SAW contemplative engagement with nature in the context of ecological awareness and emotional well-being;
2. Reconstruct the foundations of Islamic ecotherapy based on the Prophet's spiritual interaction with the natural world;
3. Contribute to the development of an Islamic therapeutic approach rooted in authentic textual sources to support mental health initiatives within Muslim societies.

Overall, this study argues that *tafakkur alam* is not merely an intellectual or spiritual practice but also holds immense potential as a holistic therapeutic approach grounded in hadith and the prophetic tradition. Consequently, it paves the way for the development of a Nabawi ecotherapy framework as a viable Islamic alternative for contemporary mental health care.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach as it is most suitable for understanding the dimensions of meaning, spiritual values, and psychospiritual implications embedded within the hadiths related to *tafakkur alam* (Ahmad Sunawari Long, 2015; Idris, 2018; Jamil, 2019). This approach allows the researcher to deeply explore the Prophetic practices of engaging with the natural environment and to examine their potential as an Islamic-based ecotherapy instrument. It also aligns with the requirements of textual research and the spiritual interpretation of the actions of Prophet Muhammad SAW in the context of mental well-being.

Documentation method was utilized as the primary technique for data collection. The primary sources of the study comprise authentic hadiths that record the Prophet's contemplative engagement with nature, including his seclusion (*uzlah*) in the Cave of Hira', reflection upon the skies and stars, observation of weather phenomena, and appreciation of natural elements such as trees and mountains. These hadiths were sourced mainly from the collections of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. In addition, hadith commentaries such as

Fath al-Bārī by Ibn Hajar, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* by al-Nawawī, and *al-Minhāj* were also consulted to understand the context, objectives, and scholarly interpretations regarding the Prophet's actions.

Secondary sources included classical and contemporary works in the fields of *fiqh al-hadith*, Islamic psychology, Islamic spirituality, and modern ecotherapy. These sources encompass journal articles, academic theses, reference books, and research reports discussing human-nature relationships, *tafakkur*, emotional well-being, and nature-based therapeutic approaches. Materials were obtained from physical libraries, personal scholarly collections, and digital databases such as Scopus, JSTOR, and Google Scholar.

For analytical purposes, this study adopts a thematic content analysis method. The hadiths collected were analyzed and categorized according to major themes such as seclusion (*uzlah*) and natural solitude, reflection upon the creation of the heavens and the earth, sensitivity towards weather phenomena, and emotional interaction with elements of nature. Each theme was examined in depth to identify the underlying therapeutic values and their potential to be developed as foundations for an Islamic-based ecotherapy framework.

The analysis also takes into consideration the *fiqh al-hadith* approach, particularly in terms of context (*siyāq*), objectives (*maqṣad*), and effects (*athar*), to assess how the Prophetic practices can be reconstructed into a holistic Islamic psychospiritual therapy model grounded in revelation. Ultimately, the study aims to formulate the principles of *tafakkur alam* based on hadiths and propose an initial reconstruction of an Islamic ecotherapy framework applicable to contemporary Muslim societies.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Mental Health Issues in Malaysia

A harmonious and peaceful life is the aspiration of every individual across all age groups (Noraznida Husin et al., 2022). Essentially, harmony and well-being are states free from physical and mental stress or disturbances. According to a study by Arnida Anuar et al. (2021), well-being is a measure of quality of life assessed psychologically or internally, encompassing several dimensions such as joy, self-confidence, health, family life, work, education, finances, and others. Specifically regarding health, an individual's well-being is closely linked to physical, mental, and social health. The World Health Organization (WHO) states that these three aspects must be fulfilled for an individual to achieve optimal health.

From an Islamic perspective, however, this division is considered incomplete. According to Abū Zayd al-Balkhī (2019), Islam emphasizes the interconnection between physical and mental health with spiritual well-being. This view is widely agreed upon by Islamic philosophers. Al-Balkhī himself criticized medical practitioners who prioritized physical health over mental and psychological health (Musfichin, 2019). This issue was eventually addressed seriously by the WHO, leading to continuous research and, in 1984, the inclusion of spirituality as a component in defining human health. Consequently, the concept of health now encompasses four dimensions: physical, mental, social, and spiritual (biopsychosociospiritual) (Rifqi Rosyad, 2016).

Mental health problems are no longer unfamiliar in Malaysia (Nurul Atikah Abbas & Kamarul Azmi Jasmi, 2022). Continuous surveys and research have shown a rising number of individuals experiencing mental health issues (Rajab & Saa'ri, 2017). According to the National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS, 2020), three out of ten adults in Malaysia aged 16 years and above are at risk of experiencing mental health problems. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as "a state of well-being in which an individual realizes their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, works productively and effectively, and is able to contribute to their community" (Lackey, 2018).

Mental health encompasses three primary components: stress, anxiety, and depression (NHMS, 2020). Stress refers to an emotional reaction involving feelings of sadness and exhaustion caused by life events such as disappointment (Syed Lamsah et al., 2018). Depression, or Major Depressive Disorder (MDD), is a common and serious illness that typically affects a person's mood and behavior, including sleeping, eating, or working habits. Although it is a serious condition, it is treatable (Your Health in Mind, 2018). Meanwhile, anxiety

refers to feelings of worry, unease, fear, and apprehension. Anxiety disorders are characterized by excessive worry, often accompanied by physical symptoms such as elevated blood pressure and nausea. It occurs when an individual's reactions are disproportionate to normal responses in a given situation (American Psychological Association Therapy, 2018).

Various approaches have been adopted to address mental health issues in Malaysia. One proven complementary treatment is ecotherapy, which has the potential to significantly improve individuals' mental health (Maria Rueff & Gerhard Reese, 2023).

Concept of Islamic Ecotherapy

Ecotherapy represents a new branch within the field of ecopsychology that leverages the natural environment as a therapeutic tool for addressing mental health challenges, grounded in the principle that a healthy ecosystem is essential for overall human well-being (David Orr, 2009). Linguistically, the term “ecotherapy” is a combination of two elements: “eco,” derived from the Greek word *oikos* meaning "home," and “therapy,” which denotes the healing or treatment of the soul (Fisher, 2013).

From a terminological standpoint, Geoff Berry (2023) describes ecotherapy as an umbrella term encompassing a new form of psychotherapy that acknowledges the significant role of the environment and emphasizes the interconnectedness between humans and nature (Linda Buzzell & Craig Chalquist, 2009). Additionally, ecotherapy has been defined as a therapeutic intervention aimed at improving mental health and well-being through engagement with the natural environment, helping to reduce stress, alleviate symptoms of depression, and promote psychological resilience (Marissa Bryers, 2022).

Expanding upon its scope, Thomas J. Doherty (2015) characterizes ecotherapy as encompassing a variety of psychotherapeutic practices, including counseling, psychotherapy, social work, self-help, preventive care, and public health efforts, all conducted with an ecological consciousness or intention. These interventions often involve natural settings and integrate nature-based activities into the therapeutic process. This approach emphasizes the ecological dimensions of self, identity, and human behavior, and its applications range from the individual level to broader planetary concerns (Thomas J. Doherty, 2015).

In summary, ecotherapy can be understood as a psychotherapeutic approach that utilizes the environment as a central medium for healing and treatment. It is also commonly referred to by alternative terms such as green therapy, earth-centered therapy, and nature-based therapy (Linda Buzzell & Craig Chalquist, 2009).

Andy McGeeney (2016) outlined several specific characteristics of ecotherapy practices as follows:

Table 1: Characteristics of Ecotherapy

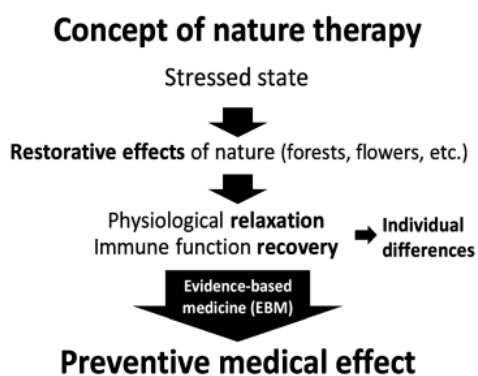
Nu	Characteristics of Ecotherapy	Explanation
1	Conducted Outdoors	Ecotherapy activities are conducted outdoors, not limited to buildings or specific facilities.
2	Inclusive for Everyone	Ecotherapy is open to all groups, including those who feel marginalized.
3	Participant Involvement	The relationship between therapist and client is crucial in planning and decision-making for healing.
4	Collaboration with Partners	It is recommended to have partnerships with other institutions to enhance funding opportunities and treatment quality.
5	Cooperation with Authorities	Collaboration with local authorities is established to promote community health and well-being.

6	Boosts Self-Confidence	Ecotherapy helps restore and improve clients' self-confidence.
7	Monitoring and Evaluation	All processes are continuously monitored and evaluated, with results shared with others.
8	Sustainable and Long-Term	Ecotherapy is designed to provide lasting change and focus on the future.
9	Holistic Perspective	Uses a holistic approach that involves more than just medical intervention.
10	Sharing Outcomes with Others	The outcomes of treatment are shared with others to provide broader benefits.

(Reference: Andy McGeeney, 2016)

The ecotherapy approach is grounded in the theory that reconnecting with the natural environment can produce positive effects for individuals experiencing mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression, and stress. Various forms of ecotherapy include Horticultural Therapy, Green Exercise (physical activities conducted in natural surroundings) (Russel, 2001), Animal-Assisted Therapy (involving human-animal interaction) (Berget et al., 2011), Wilderness Therapy (group activities and outdoor sports), Natural Lifestyle Therapy, Eco-Dream Work, and Community Ecotherapy (Jordan & Hinds, 2016). Among these methods, one of the most fundamental principles in ecotherapy practices is the act of contemplating nature and engaging in self-reflection, often referred to as deep thinking.

Ecotherapy is built upon several theoretical frameworks that propose a positive influence of natural environments on human mental health. Notably, the Attention-Restoration Theory (ART) and the Stress-Reduction Theory (SRT) serve as key foundations. The ART posits that exposure to natural settings often evokes feelings of awe, which in turn fosters a sense of tranquility and allows individuals to recover from mental fatigue and anxiety (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989). Meanwhile, the SRT suggests that immersion in nature can alleviate stress and enhance both physical and mental well-being by stimulating the parasympathetic nervous system, which governs relaxation and restorative functions (Ulrich, 1981). Refer to the diagram below:



(Adapted from Song et al., 2016)

The foundations of Islamic law emphasize spiritual values that contribute significantly to addressing individual psychological problems (D.R. Sanjaya, 2020). The elements of *'aqidah* (creed), *shari'ah* (law), and *akhlaq* (ethics) offer a systematic methodology for aiding individuals in overcoming mental health challenges (Seprianto et al., 2022). Consequently, the Islamic approach to mental health care is deeply rooted in spiritual principles and encompasses preventive, curative, constructive, and rehabilitative strategies (Khairunnas Rajab, 2006). Based on these foundations, it is evident that Islamic concepts of treatment serve as powerful tools in assisting patients to achieve deeper self-understanding (Seprianto et al., 2022).

Empirical studies have further substantiated this perspective. According to Akbarsyah Izzulhaq Muhammad (2023), the connection between ecotherapy and Islam is clearly observable, with Islamic teachings providing a strong spiritual framework for ecotherapeutic practices. This integration enriches the development of ecotherapy as a healing discipline and strengthens the view that Islam, as a monotheistic religion, promotes constructive and transformative healing rather than destructive tendencies.

The Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad SAW represents an exemplary model for the development of human potential, both psychologically and spiritually. Sa'īd Hawwā' (1999) asserted that the Sunnah offers a complete system capable of addressing all aspects of human life and contemporary challenges. Similarly, Ibn Qayyim (1993) emphasized that true healing of the soul must be anchored in the teachings of the Prophets, affirming that there is no alternative path to genuine psychological healing. Furthermore, Ibn Qayyim (2000) elaborated that Prophetic therapy focuses on healing through heartfelt connection, reliance and trust (*tawakkul*) in Allah SWT, obedience, humility, supplication, repentance, and seeking divine forgiveness. Zainal Abidin (2016) noted that although Nabawi psychology closely resembles Islamic psychological models grounded in classical Islamic heritage (*turath*), a significant distinction lies in Nabawi psychology's greater emphasis on the Prophet's personal example as a model for optimizing the potential of the soul in every dimension of life.

The Concept of Nature Contemplation as Self-Reflection

This study compiles selected hadiths from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that are related to nature contemplation (*tafakkur alam*) within a therapeutic context. The references for both compilations are based on several major printed editions. For *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, the primary references include the Dār Ibn Kathīr edition, verified by Dibb al-Bughā, and the Maktabah al-Sultāniyyah edition. For *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, references are made to the Matba'ah al-Halabī edition, verified by Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, as well as the Dār al-Tabā'ah al-'Āmirah edition.

The selection of these editions is based on their availability within the *al-Maktabah al-Shāmilah* application, which facilitates easy access and cross-referencing to ensure the accuracy of information. For a more systematic discussion, each hadith has been assigned a specific code to simplify the referencing and analysis throughout this study. Additionally, only the initial part of the hadith text (*atrāf al-hadith*) is included to streamline the analysis and maintain concise writing without compromising the original meaning of the hadith. Duplicate hadiths appearing in both compilations are counted only once. The results of the hadith compilation are as follows:

Kod	Teks Hadith	Terjemahan
H1	ثُمَّ حُبِّبَ إِلَيْهِ الْخَلَاءُ، وَكَانَ يَخْلُو بِغَارِ حِرَاءٍ، فَيَتَحَنَّنُ فِيهِ وَهُوَ التَّعَبُّدُ اللَّيَالِي ذَوَاتِ الْعَدَدِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَنْزِعَ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ	Then he was blessed with a love for solitude, and he would retreat to the Cave of Hira', engaging in tahannuth (worship) during the night for several periods before returning to his family to replenish his provisions for continued worship.
H2	فَلَمَّا سَلَّمَ قَامَ فَقَالَ: أَرَأَيْتُمْ كَيْفَ لَيْلَتُكُمْ هَذِهِ؟	After concluding the prayer with salutations, he stood and said: "Do you not notice what has occurred during your night?"
H3	وَجُعِلَتْ لِيَ الْأَرْضُ مَسْجِدًا وَطَهُورًا	The earth has been made for me a place of prostration and a source of purification.
H4	أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ «كَانَ إِذَا رَأَى الْمَطَرَ قَالَ: صَيِّبًا نَافِعًا	When the Messenger of Allah (SAW) saw rain, he would supplicate: "Allahumma sayyiban naafi'aa" (O Allah, let it be a beneficial rainfall).
H5	فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمْ شَيْئًا مِنْ ذَلِكَ، فَافْرَعُوا إِلَى ذِكْرِهِ وَدُعَائِهِ وَاسْتِغْفَارِهِ	If you witness anything (such as an eclipse), then immediately engage in the remembrance of Allah, supplicate, and seek forgiveness.

H6	إِنَّ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ آيَاتٍ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ	Indeed, the sun and the moon are two signs among the signs of the greatness of Allah.
H7	فَنَزَلَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى أَخَذَهَا فَضَمَّهَا إِلَيْهِ، فَجَعَلَتْ تَنِينَ أُنِينِ الصَّبِيِّ الَّذِي يُسْكُتُ، حَتَّى اسْتَقَرَّتْ، قَالَ: بَكَتْ عَلَى مَا كَانَتْ تَسْمَعُ مِنَ الذِّكْرِ	The Prophet (SAW) then approached the tree trunk, placed his hand on it and embraced it until it quieted down, whimpering like the sobbing of a child. He then said: "It was crying because of the remembrance (dhikr) it used to hear."
H8	مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ يَغْرِسُ غَرْسًا أَوْ يَزْرَعُ زَرْعًا، فَيَأْكُلُ مِنْهُ طَيْرٌ، أَوْ إِنْسَانٌ، أَوْ بَهِيمَةٌ، إِلَّا كَانَ لَهُ بِهِ صَدَقَةٌ	No Muslim plants a tree or sows a seed, and then a bird, a person, or an animal eats from it, except that it will be counted as charity for him.
H9	مَنْ أَعْمَرَ أَرْضًا لَيْسَتْ لِأَحَدٍ فَهُوَ أَحَقُّ	Whoever revitalizes dead land (ownerless land), it becomes his rightful property.
H10	إِنْ كُنَّا لَنَنْظُرُ إِلَى الْهَلَالِ، ثُمَّ الْهَلَالِ، ثَلَاثَةَ أَهْلَةٍ فِي شَهْرَيْنِ	Indeed, we used to observe the crescent moon month after month until we saw it a third time in the same month.
H11	فَلَمْ أَسْتَفِيقْ إِلَّا وَأَنَا بِقَرْنِ الثَّعَالِبِ فَرَفَعْتُ رَأْسِي فَإِذَا أَنَا بِسَكَابَةِ	And I found no peace except when I was at Qarn al-Tha‘ālib (Qarn al-Manāzil). I lifted my head and realized I was shaded by a cloud.
H12	يَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ تَكُونُ الْغَنَمُ فِيهِ خَيْرَ مَالِ الْمُسْلِمِ يَتَّبِعُ بِهَا شَعَفَ الْجِبَالِ أَوْ سَعَفَ الْجِبَالِ فِي مَوَاقِعِ الْفُطْرِ يَفِرُّ بِدِينِهِ مِنَ الْفِتَنِ	There will come a time when the best wealth of a Muslim will be sheep which he tends to in the mountains or the valleys blessed with rain, fleeing with his religion from trials (fitnah).
H13	اقْرَأْ فَلَانُ فَإِنَّهَا السَّكِينَةُ نَزَلَتْ لِلْقُرْآنِ أَوْ تَنَزَّلَتْ لِلْقُرْآنِ	Continue reciting, O so-and-so, for what you experienced just now was sakinah — tranquility from Allah — that came down like a gentle breeze, descending because of the Qur’an or accompanying its recitation.
H14	قَالَ اثْبُتْ أَحْدُ فَمَا عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا نَبِيٌّ أَوْ صِدِّيقٌ أَوْ شَهِيدَانِ	Calm down, O Uhud, for upon you now are only a Prophet, a Siddiq (Abu Bakr), and two martyrs (Umar and Uthman).
H15	كَانَ ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ الْآخِرُ قَعْدًا، فَنَظَرَ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَقَالَ: {إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ}	When the last third of the night arrives, the Prophet would sit and gaze towards the sky, then recite: "Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day are signs for those of understanding."
H16	قَالَ: هَذَا جَبَلٌ يُحِبُّنَا وَنُحِبُّهُ،	Upon reaching Mount Uhud, the Prophet said: "This is a mountain that loves us, and we love it."
H17	أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ دَخَلَ حَائِطًا وَأَمَرَنِي بِحِفْظِ الْبَابِ، فَجَاءَ رَجُلٌ يَسْتَأْذِنُ	The Prophet once entered a garden and instructed me to guard its entrance.
H18	فَإِنَّهَا تَذْهَبُ تَسْتَأْذِنُ فِي السُّجُودِ فَيُؤْذَنُ لَهَا	Indeed, the sun proceeds until it seeks permission to prostrate, and permission is granted to it.
H19	إِنَّكُمْ سَتَرَوْنَ رَبَّكُمْ كَمَا تَرَوْنَ هَذَا الْقَمَرَ	Verily, you will see your Lord just as you see the full moon.
H20	مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِ كَمَثَلِ خَامَةِ الزَّرْعِ	The parable of the believer is like a tender plant: when the wind blows, it bends, and when the wind calms, it straightens back up.
H21	ثُمَّ اسْجُدْ حَتَّى تَطْمَئِنَّ سَاجِدًا	Then prostrate and remain tranquil (ṭuma’nīnah) in your prostration.
H22	أَقْرَبُ مَا يَكُونُ الْعَبْدُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَهُوَ سَاجِدٌ.	The closest a servant is to his Lord is during prostration, so increase

	فَأَكْثَرُوا الدَّعَاءَ	your supplications therein.
H23	أَسْأَلُكَ مُرَافَقَتَكَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ. قَالَ "أَوْ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ؟" قُلْتُ: "هُوَ ذَاكَ." قَالَ "فَأَعِنِّي عَلَى نَفْسِكَ بِكَثْرَةِ السُّجُودِ"	"I ask you to grant me your companionship in Paradise." He (the Prophet) asked: "Is there anything else you desire?" I said: "That is all I desire." He replied: "Then assist me in fulfilling this for you by increasing your prostrations."
H24	مُطَرَّنَا بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَرَحْمَتِهِ	We have been blessed with rain by the bounty and mercy of Allah.
H25	فَإِذَا مَطَرْتُ، سُرَّ بِهِ،	And when rain fell, the Prophet felt happiness and his worries were lifted.

This study further discusses the *fiqh al-hadith* analysis of the selected hadiths mentioned earlier. In Islamic tradition, scholars have differed in their definitions of the concept of *tafakkur* (contemplation). According to Ibn Manẓūr (d. 711H), a renowned Egyptian scholar and the author of *Lisān al-‘Arab*, *tafakkur* is defined as a form of observation (Ibn Manẓūr, 1993). Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911H), the co-author of *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, described *tafakkur* as the capacity to engage in intellectual thought (Al-Suyūṭī, 2004). Meanwhile, al-Sa’dī (1988) explained that *tafakkur* refers to the action of the heart contemplating evidence and considering its consequences. Al-Zubaydī (1790) defined *tafakkur* as the process of combining two types of knowledge to produce a third understanding.

All these definitions highlight that *tafakkur* is a significant intellectual and spiritual process in Islam. It is not random thinking but involves deep observation, rational deliberation, and heartfelt awareness of the implications of what is observed. Al-Amin (2019) concluded that *tafakkur* is among the finest practices, capable of producing firm faith and clear knowledge. Similarly, *tadabbur* of nature also refers to a process of reflection, contemplation, and deriving meaning from life through observations of the natural world (Yusuff et al., 2021). However, according to Hilmi Hanbali (2017), *tadabbur* carries an additional value, leading a person to recognize that everything belongs to Allah SWT and that all creation will ultimately return to Him.

In summary, *tafakkur* and *tadabbur* involve reflecting, contemplating, and learning from the signs in the heavens and the earth, aiming, from a worldly perspective, to better understand and benefit from nature and ensure its preservation. From a spiritual perspective, the ultimate goal is to draw closer to Allah SWT (Afitazul Mukolidah, 2023).

Regarding hadith H1, it describes the Prophet Muhammad’s SAW practice of retreating in the Cave of Hira’. In Islam, *uzlah* (seclusion) is an act of withdrawing from worldly distractions and isolating oneself for the purpose of spiritual reflection (Totok Jumantoro & Samsul Munir Amin, 2005). This practice is closely associated with Sufi traditions, serving as a means to detach from heedlessness, worldly attachments, and forgetfulness of obedience and love for Allah SWT (Zakaria Stapa, 2013). The Prophet’s seclusion at Hira’ was a form of solitude aimed at calming the heart, introspection, and contemplation of nature. Sayyid Ramadhan al-Būtī (2019) explained that a Muslim’s faith cannot be deemed complete, even with abundant worship and good deeds, until he isolates himself for introspection, sensing Allah’s watchfulness, contemplating the wonders of creation, and drawing lessons from them about divine greatness.

Al-Khaṭṭābī (1988) noted that the Prophet SAW cherished solitude because it expanded the heart, aided contemplation, severed distractions from people, and softened the heart. Al-‘Ainī (2010) added that solitude is a natural state for the spiritual traveler (*sālik*): once one finds comfort in Allah, he finds discomfort in worldly company. The Prophet’s choice of the Cave of Hira’ was deliberate, as its small size suited solitude and its alignment with the Kaaba allowed direct view of it (al-Qaṣṭallānī, 1982).

Hadith H12 also touches on the theme of seclusion and spiritual reflection. Al-Qanāzī’ī (2008) emphasized that this hadith teaches the virtue of secluding oneself, especially amidst widespread corruption and trials among people. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (2017) noted that the Prophet’s reference to sheep and mountains in this hadith indicates that such quiet, remote locations are ideal for isolation from societal distractions — whether at the

mosque for *i'tikāf*, by the seashore, on the frontlines (*ribat*) for spiritual vigilance, or retreating at home to avoid societal harm.

The Prophet SAW frequently encouraged his companions to observe nature and reflect on their lives, as illustrated by hadiths H2, H5, and H10. In H2, the background involves the Prophet delaying the 'Ishā' prayer until half the night had passed. After leading the prayer, he directed his companions' attention to the night sky, saying, "Do you not observe your night?" (Ibn Sayyid al-Nas, 2007). Ibn Baṭṭāl explained that the Prophet intended to remind them of the brevity of life compared to earlier nations, thus urging earnestness in worship (al-Kirmani, 1937). A similar message is conveyed in H5, where during a solar eclipse, the Prophet urged remembrance of Allah SWT and performing the eclipse prayer. Al-Damāmīnī (2009) stated that the darkening of the sun symbolized the darkness of the grave, emphasizing the need for reflection at such times. Hadith H10 demonstrates how contemplation of the phases of the moon led to reflections on contentment (*qanā'ah*) and reliance (*tawakkul*) on Allah SWT. According to al-Damāmīnī (2009), the Prophet's simple lifestyle mirrored adaptability and reflection on environmental changes as a means of spiritual growth.

The Prophet Muhammad SAW utilized nature not merely for personal reflection but also as a means to glorify Allah SWT. This principle is evident in hadiths H6, H15, H18, and H19. As Iliyīn (2019) emphasizes, *tafakkur* involves contemplating the majesty and power of Allah through His creation. In hadith H6, the Prophet clarified that solar and lunar eclipses are among the signs of Allah's greatness, countering the pre-Islamic belief that celestial bodies possessed divine powers (al-Khaṭṭābī, 1988).

Hadith H15 depicts the Prophet gazing at the sky and reciting verses from Surah Āl-ʿImrān, which al-Nawawī (1972) cited as evidence that it is sunnah to reflect upon creation upon awakening. Al-Nawawī further suggested repeating this act each time one wakes during the night to emulate the Prophet's practice. Ibn Kathīr (1998) quoted al-Awzā'ī's interpretation that *tafakkur* here involves deeply pondering Allah's dominion over the universe. Mūsā (2002) added that the term "heavens" encompasses phenomena such as the alternation of night and day, celestial movements, and the cosmic order, all of which testify to Allah's supreme authority.

The Prophet's responses to natural phenomena were not limited to physical reactions but reflected profound spiritual sensitivity, underscoring the practice of *tafakkur*. This dimension is evident in hadiths H4, H24, and H25, all of which pertain to rain. In hadith H4, the Prophet would supplicate upon seeing rainfall: "O Allah, make it a beneficial rain," thereby expressing spiritual mindfulness and gratitude for Allah's blessings (Ibn Baṭṭāl, 2003).

In hadith H24, the Prophet affirmed, "We are given rain by the bounty and mercy of Allah," reinforcing the principle of *tawhīd* by rejecting superstitious beliefs that attributed rainfall to stars or seasonal changes (Ibn al-Athīr, 2005). Furthermore, hadith H25 narrates that rainfall brought joy and lifted the Prophet's worries. Prior to rain, the Prophet would experience concern, fearing that ominous weather could be a sign of divine punishment; however, actual rainfall reassured him that it was a manifestation of Allah's mercy (al-Harari, 2009).

Beyond responding to natural events, the Prophet SAW perceived elements of the natural world as living entities spiritually connected to him. This perspective is substantiated through hadiths H7, H14, and H16. In hadith H7, the Prophet comforted a crying palm trunk, showcasing a profound emotional and spiritual connection with nature (al-Zaydānī, 2012). This aligns with contemporary practices such as "forest bathing," which emphasizes emotional healing through interaction with nature (Whaley, 2018).

Similarly, in hadith H16, the Prophet declared that Mount Uhud loved him and his companions, and they loved it in return. Ibn Baṭṭāl (2003) interpreted this mutual affection as a real and divinely created bond. Hadith H14 further illustrates this relationship when the Prophet, standing upon Mount Uhud alongside Abu Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmān, reassured the trembling mountain: "Calm down, O Uhud! Upon you are a Prophet, a Siddiq, and two martyrs." Ibn Hubairah (1997) explained that the mountain's trembling either reflected its inability to bear the Prophet's and his companions' immense barakah or its joy in their presence.

These traditions collectively demonstrate that nature itself responded to the Prophet's presence, providing profound support for modern ecotherapy theories, which advocate emotional and spiritual healing through meaningful engagement with the natural world.

The analysis of these hadiths illustrates that *tafakkur* and *tadabbur* of the natural world were central practices in the Prophetic tradition. They served as instruments for self-reflection, fortification of faith, and the deepening of spiritual connection with Allah SWT. The selected hadiths consistently portray the Prophet SAW as reflecting deeply upon creation whether through solitary retreats, communal observation of celestial events, or heartfelt emotional responses to natural phenomena, all conducted with profound awareness and humility.

Moreover, the Prophet's interactions with elements such as the weeping palm trunk and Mount Uhud reveal a deeply spiritual worldview that perceives nature as living and responsive to divine presence. This understanding resonates with the foundational principles of modern ecotherapy, which advocate for emotional equilibrium through a conscious and reflective relationship with nature.

Thus, in Islam, *tafakkur* is not merely a path to spiritual enlightenment but also a foundational principle for ecological awareness and holistic well-being. It reaffirms the contemporary relevance of Nabawi practices in cultivating both spiritual and emotional health.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that nature contemplation (*tafakkur alam*) as practiced by Prophet Muhammad SAW represents a unique form of Nabawi ecotherapy, characterized by a balanced integration of spiritual reflection, faith reinforcement, and emotional well-being. Through the analysis of authentic hadiths, it is evident that the Prophet's practices—such as retreating to the Cave of Hira', reflecting upon natural phenomena, and spiritually interacting with elements like trees and mountains—not only strengthened the spiritual bond with Allah SWT but also provided inner tranquility and reduced anxiety.

The Nabawi approach to ecotherapy differs from Western ecotherapy, which is predominantly grounded in secular psychology. The Prophetic model integrates the elements of *tawhid* (the affirmation of divine unity), *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah), and the purification of the soul. Consequently, this study opens pathways for the development of an Islamic ecotherapy framework rooted in divine revelation, offering a holistic alternative for the mental and spiritual health care of contemporary Muslim societies.

For future research, it is recommended that specific elements—such as reflective practices involving water, earth, sky, and various weather phenomena—be explored in greater depth to further enrich the model of Nabawi ecotherapy based on Islamic sources.

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