

# PHILANTHROPY IN RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE: A STUDY ON THE CONCEPT OF 'GIVING' IN ISLAM, CHRISTIANITY, AND BUDDHISM

*Titin Yuniartin, Koko Komaruddin, and Ahmad Labib Majidi*

**Abstract:** This article is motivated by contradictory views that depict religion as a source of truth and salvation on the one hand and as a source of misfortune on the other. Against this backdrop, this article reaffirms the position of religion as a source of truth and salvation through an exploration of philanthropic activities within the religions of Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism. The philanthropic activities referred to in this paper are the concept of "giving", as recommended by these religions, and practised by their followers. This article constitutes library research that utilizes interviews with religious leaders. These sources are analyzed using deductive-inductive and logical-scientific qualitative analysis. The concept of "giving" as a philanthropic activity in these three religions encompasses diverse terminology but shares a common essence and substance in the form of belief and obedience to God, self-purification from vices, and solidarity among fellow human beings. Rhetorically, religious communities must sanctify humanistic values and goodness rather than sanctify dehumanization and malevolence.

**Keywords:** philanthropy; giving; Islam; Christianity; Buddhism

**Abstrak:** Artikel ini dilatarbelakangi oleh pandangan kontradiktif yang menyatakan agama sebagai sumber kebenaran dan keselamatan di satu sisi, serta agama sebagai sumber kemalangan di sisi lain. Dengan latar belakang ini, artikel ini lebih menegaskan posisi agama sebagai sumber kebenaran dan keselamatan melalui penelusuran aktivitas filantropis dalam agama-agama, yakni Islam, Kristen, dan Buddha. Aktivitas filantropis yang dimaksud dalam tulisan ini adalah konsep ‘member’ sebagaimana yang dianjurkan agama dan dilakukan oleh para penganut agama tersebut. Artikel ini merupakan penelitian kepustakaan, yang juga memanfaatkan wawancara kepada para tokoh agama. Sumber-sumber ini dianalisis dengan menggunakan analisis kualitatif secara deduktif-induktif dan logis-ilmiah. Konsep ‘memberi’ sebagai aktivitas filantropis dari tiga agama ini memiliki istilah-istilah yang beraneka ragam, tetapi mengandung kesamaan esensi dan substansi berupa keyakinan dan ketaatan kepada Tuhan, penyucian dan pembersihan diri dari sifat tercela serta solidaritas antar sesama manusia. Secara retorik, dapat dinyatakan bahwa tugas umat beragama itu menyakralkan nilai-nilai humanis dan kebaikan, bukan menyakralkan dehumanisasi dan keburukan.

**Kata kunci:** filantropi; memberi; Islam; Kristen, Buddha

## Introduction

In general, it is undeniable that every world religion can be seen from two contrasting perspectives. On one hand, religion is understood as a path to truth and salvation that advocates for humanitarian values and peace. However, on the other hand, religion seems to become a source of misfortune through calls for violence and warfare (Hilmy 2018). All religious adherents regard their religion as a doctrine of loving kindness and peace. However, historically, religion has been and may still be actualized and practised by its followers in various expressions of violence, both epistemic and physical.

In connection with this, it is not an exaggeration to suggest that all religions have, at some point in their history, encountered violence, although violence in the name of religion is often driven by secular issues related to statehood, governance, or politics (Armstrong, 2017; Fueller 2015; Kimball, 2008). In this regard, religion as a doctrine and guide devoid of violence represents a utopia. Hence, the persisting negative portrayals of religion, such as brutality, extremism, fanaticism, chaos, and hatred, which continually adorn the media headlines and have become a prevalent viewpoint for some segments of global society, are undeniable facts.

Simultaneously, the study of religion is evolving profoundly. According to Komaruddin Hidayat (2016), there are at least four points of reference when examining a religious doctrine. First, each religion recognises and reveres the sacred scriptures containing divine revelations. Second, the religious traditions are preserved and passed down from generation to generation. Third, the written works of intellectuals, scholars, or religious figures. Fourth are the beliefs and personal life experiences of those who adhere to the faith. In the context of this paper, the author is particularly interested in highlighting the second point mentioned above, specifically examining the tradition of philanthropy in world religions, namely Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, and Waqf (Ziswaf) in Islam, tithing in Christianity, and almsgiving in Buddhism.

Referring to the views of Hilman Latief (2013a; 2013b) in his two writings, philanthropy, which is understood in Indonesian as generosity and compassion towards others, appears not to be widely known conceptually,

even though, in practice, philanthropic activities have become an integral part of the religious community's life in Indonesia. Conceptually, philanthropy is a philosophical concept formulated to understand the relationships between individuals and one's love or a group's love for others. This love is expressed through traditions of giving and generosity. Thus, philanthropy is closely related to compassion, solidarity, and social relationships between the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, the fortunate and the less fortunate, and the powerful and the powerless. Furthermore, in subsequent developments, philanthropy is interpreted more broadly, not only associated with giving itself but also with the effectiveness and efficiency of giving, both material and non-material, which can lead to collective changes in society.

Upon careful examination, the concept of giving or generosity in these three religions, in particular, is a religious tradition that has been consistently upheld and practised by their adherents. Furthermore, this concept supports the argument that religions advocate and promote humanistic values, which entail humanizing humanity, and that religions teach goodness and how their followers act virtuously. There are at least a few emotional and intellectual reasons behind the selection of the concept of giving from the perspective of these three religions. First, the discussion of Islam is motivated by the fact that Islam is the author's religion. Second, the discussion of Christianity is due to the author's interactions with matters of transactions with the Christian community. Third, the discussion of Buddhism is because the author is intrigued by a religion filled with teachings rich in philosophical meaning, particularly concerning teachings about goodness, specifically the concept of giving.

## **Method**

In principle, this paper is library research, primarily utilising literary sources as the subject of study. However, this paper also incorporates direct or indirect interviews with specific informants, particularly religious figures within the religions under investigation. In terms of analytical perspective, this research employs a qualitative analysis perspective that emphasises deductive-inductive and logical-scientific analysis processes and does not involve numerical calculations. (Kaelan 2010; Kasiram 2010; Moleong 1996; Sugiyono 2011).

Data sources for this research were obtained from personal collections, including academic articles downloaded and books and interviews with religious figures. These data sources were then analyzed in a descriptive-explanatory manner and through a philosophical approach to generate analysis and synthesis (Azwar 2014; Mustaqim 2014) on the exploration and examination of the perspectives of Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism regarding the concept and practice of philanthropy or giving within their respective religions. Consequently, procedurally, this paper yields descriptive data in the context of this research, which consists of written words within sub-subtopics.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Various Concepts of Giving in Islam**

The concepts, terms, and forms of philanthropy related to "giving" in Islam are highly diverse. Several terms, such as Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, Waqf, Hadiah, and Hibah, all carry meanings related to giving or generosity. Terminologically, Zakat is a specific portion of wealth that Muslims are obligated to give and is directed towards those eligible to receive it (the poor and others). Etymologically, Zakat means pure, clean, fertile, blessed, and flourishing. According to Islamic law, Zakat is the third pillar of the Five Pillars of Islam. (Rifani et al. 2023)

According to the Maliki school, as cited by Wahbah Al-Zuhaili, *Zakat* is defined as giving a specific portion of wealth that has reached the nisab (the minimum threshold that makes Zakat obligatory) to those who are eligible to receive it (mustahiq). It should be noted that the ownership of the wealth is full and has been held for a full hawl (a year), not mining or agricultural produce. Additionally, the Hanafi school defines Zakat as making a specific portion of specific wealth the property of specific individuals as determined by the Shariah due to Allah's will. According to the Shafi'i school, Zakat is an expression for the outflow of specific wealth to a specific group, namely, the group alluded to by Allah in the Quran in Surah At-Tawbah, verse 60. (Al-Zuhailiy 2000)

In practical terms, especially in Indonesia, theological and political debates heavily influence the conception and implementation of Zakat.

Traditional scholars in the 1960s and 1970s and Indonesian Muslim intellectuals such as A. Hasan and Tengku Hasby Ash-Shidiqi tended to approach the concept of Zakat from a fiqh perspective rather than as a social issue. Meanwhile, others argue that Zakat is a concept in Islam functioning as a fiscal instrument for the state to promote societal well-being. Another group, led by contemporary Muslim activists, tends to view Zakat from an economic standpoint, emphasizing its role in achieving social justice (Latief, 2013).

Furthermore, another term representing the concept of giving in Islam is "infaq." Terminologically, infaq involves giving wealth, which can encompass both obligatory giving, such as Zakat, and voluntary giving (recommended but not obligatory). Infaq includes obligatory giving, such as Zakat, kafarat, nazar, and others, as well as voluntary giving (infaq sunah), which can encompass giving to people experiencing poverty, disaster relief, humanitarian aid, and more (Mahfudhotin & Madani, 2022).

On the other hand, "Shadaqah" refers to the voluntary and sincere giving of a Muslim to others without limitations regarding time or specific amounts. Shadaqah is broader than Zakat and infak, as it encompasses all acts of goodness, not just financial contributions. As stated in a hadith, "Smiling at your brother is charity" (Febriyanti et al., 2023).

Waqf also represents the concept of giving in Islam. The term "waqf" can be defined as the act of waqif (the person making the waqf) to separate and transfer a portion of their property for perpetual or temporary use by their intentions, for worship and the common welfare by Shariah (Jubaidah & Batubara, 2023). According to Ismail A. Said, waqf is agreed upon as the release of property to individuals or groups for utilization with purposes that do not conflict with Islamic Shariah or law. Scholars' consensus (*ijma'*) accepts waqf as an ongoing charity prescribed in Islam. No one can deny or reject the practice of waqf in Islam. Waqf has been a practice consistently carried out and adhered to by the Prophet's companions and the Muslim community from the early days of Islam to the present (Said, 2013).

"Hibah" refers to a gift given by someone to another party while the giver is still alive, and the gift distribution is also done while the giver is still alive (Priyadi, 2023). In other terms, "hibah" can be equated with a "gift" or

"present," with the understanding that it involves giving money, goods, services, and other items without expecting any form of compensation, as typically occurs in trade. Nevertheless, the gift giver may expect some form of reciprocation, whether in the form of reputation (prestige) or influence. In interpersonal relationships, through the theory of social exchange (Mighfar, 2015), exchanging gifts plays a role in strengthening social bonds, although in other contexts, it can be associated with negative stigma. Furthermore, the term "gift" can be expanded to explain anything that makes others feel happier or less sorrowful, particularly acts of kindness, including forgiveness (even if the recipient is not deserving).

Several terms, concepts, and forms of philanthropy related to "giving" in Islam can be identified based on the explanation provided. From this discussion, it is evident that Islam strongly encourages its followers to "give," which involves donating a portion of their wealth to individuals or groups through various means, both individually and communally or collectively. The wisdom and benefits of this practice are twofold: On the one hand, the giver can diminish selfish qualities like greed, avarice, and greediness, and on the other hand, the recipients benefit materially and non-materially.

### **Tithing in Christianity: Historicity and Normativity**

Tithing has a long history when viewed historically. According to Ndaru Sarjono (2020), the origin of tithing was an expression of gratitude in the context of a covenant with God, with precedents such as when Abraham gave one-tenth of the spoils of war to Melchizedek and when Jacob vowed to God. This precedent later became a cultural tradition in the ancient Near East. Tithing only gained legal-formal footing during the era of Mosaic Law and other books in the Old Testament. Tithing was emphasized and regulated as part of the obligatory law through the Mosaic Law and the Old Testament. In the New Testament, the emphasis on tithing is not solely on giving but on the spirit of justice, social solidarity, compassion, and love.

Terminologically, tithing is the act of believers giving to the Levites and priests of the New Testament era in response to the blessings bestowed by God, motivated by sincerity and voluntary dedication to God. Tithing can also be understood as giving 10% of a child of God's income to the Church. Tithing is typically voluntary and paid through money, checks, or stocks. In

the early days, tithing was given in the form of agricultural produce or similar items, although Orthodox Jews and Modern Israel still follow the practice of *ma'aser kesafim* (giving 10% of income to charity) and continue to adhere to the agricultural tithing laws.

Based on the author's interview with a pastor named Pastor Maria Wayar from West Papua, it can be understood that, for today's Christians, tithing represents a portion of God that should be given through providing for the Levites, as the Levites did not possess land or possessions. The conceptual definition of the Levites in the present era is those who are servants of God or individuals who have wholly devoted themselves to God's work. In this context, priests are entitled to receive the tithe because they have no other occupation besides spreading God's word. As for the reasons or foundations of tithing, according to Pastor Daniel Pribadi, there are at least four.

First, to the treasury house so there may be food in My house. This is based on the book of Malachi, chapter 3, verse 10, which states:

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house. Test Me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." (Malachi 3:10)

According to the chapter and verse mentioned, the tithe should be brought to the House of the Lord, not another place. This is because, in the House of the Lord, priests provide full-time service to the people of the Lord from Monday to Sunday whenever needed.

Second, tithing serves as a hedge for all wealth in the eyes of the Lord. This is based on His Word:

"I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe," says the Lord Almighty. "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the Lord Almighty.

Third, tithing is a part of the work of building the House of the Lord. This is based on His Word, which states:

"So go up to the mountains, bring down timber, and build my house. Then I will take pleasure in it and be honoured," says the Lord.

"You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. I blew away what you brought home. Why?" declares the Lord Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house."

Fourth, tithing is the Lord's ownership that must be returned. In this context, 100% of the money is 10% that belongs to the Lord and must be returned to the treasury of the House of the Lord. The remaining 90% belongs to the Lord to be managed and cultivated, bearing fruit in goodness in life. The purpose of this is as a form of God's glory practised through acts like helping others, spreading the Gospel (Missions), and more.

In addition to tithing, philanthropy in Christianity also includes the concept of offerings. The differentiation between tithing and offerings is that tithing has a clear measurement of 10% of income, and the keywords are obedience and honesty, while offerings have no fixed amount; they can be limitless. Therefore, the more you give, the more abundance you will reap. The key to offerings is a willing and joyful heart. The basis for offerings is 2 Corinthians 9:6-7:

"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

In connection with the description provided by Muh. Luqman Arifin et al. (2023), philanthropy in Christianity can be categorized into three forms: collection, charity, and church offerings. First, "collection" refers to contributions for communal meals, gatherings, meetings, or the gathering of donations during worship ceremonies that are not bound by the tithing percentage (Latief 2013a). Second, "charity" can be understood as a tradition of charitable acts that has evolved into an ethical norm based on mutual assistance and helping one another. Third, "church offerings" are donations from the congregation used for the construction and maintenance of the church. These contributions can take various forms, including material or monetary donations and voluntary labour in building the church itself.

Based on the explanations above, collection, charity, or offerings are forms of giving in Christianity. This is because collection, charity, and offerings do not demand or regulate the exact amount or quantity to be given by the congregation, so it is not an issue if the congregation gives less or more than 10%. On the other hand, tithing can be considered a form of philanthropy or giving with a specific regulated percentage, which is 10% of the congregation's possessions.

### **Dāna in Buddhism**

According to Bhikkhu Sikkhananda, the term "*dāna*" in Buddhism comes from the Pāli language and can be roughly translated into Indonesian as *dāna*, charity, donation, or gift. The activities related to giving *dāna* are referred to as "berdana." In Indonesian, the word "dāna" is sometimes interpreted as money (capital), for example: "Do you have the 'dana' to establish a company?" This interpretation does not fall within the word "*dāna*" scope in this discussion. *Dāna* plays a significant role in Buddhist teachings, as it holds the first position among the ten qualities of perfection (*pārami*) and the three bases of meritorious deeds (punna-kiriya-vatthu): *dāna* (charity), *sīla* (morality), and mental development/meditation (*bhāvanā*), or when broken down in more detail, into ten meritorious deeds.

The characteristics of giving *dāna* include relinquishment or surrender, which serves to erode, overcome, or conquer greed. Giving manifests as non-attachment to the material or the object being donated and attaining prosperity and a good or pleasant life. Giving is considered successful when the giver can release their attachment to the material possessions they are donating. At that point, the manifestation of giving in non-attachment is achieved. On the other hand, manifestations such as achieving prosperity or a pleasant life may not be immediately realized. This depends on the strength of the results of the act of giving. However, it will certainly occur, and if it does not yield results in this life, it will bear fruit in the future (the life to come) (Sikkhananda, 2010).

### **Benefits and Purposes of Dāna**

Just like philanthropic activities in Islam and Christianity have wisdom, benefits, and specific purposes, *dāna* in Buddhism also serves various

purposes and brings specific benefits, some of which include (Sikkhananda, 2010):

1. Longevity, beauty, happiness, strength, and wisdom.
2. Being liked and admired by many people, being admired, and approached by the wise, having a widely spread reputation, being able to associate confidently with all social groups, and being born in the divine realms after death.
3. Conquering the trait of greed.
4. Strengthening friendships.
5. Being born in the divine realms, but if born in the human realm, being born into a wealthy family.
6. Donors will receive children, life partners, assistants, and obedient and understanding servants, provided the *dāna* is respected.
7. Eroding greed (*lobha*) and hatred/anger (*dosa*).
8. Serving as a provision for the journey through the cycle of birth and death (*samsāra*).
9. Serving as a foundation for attaining the *Magga*, *Phala*, and *Nibbāna*.

These benefits and purposes highlight the significance of *dāna* as a practice in Buddhism and its potential impact on one's life and spiritual development.

If classified, the categories of almsgiving in the Buddhist religion are quite diverse. They can be categorized based on the Dhamma groups (Vinaya, Sutta, and Abhidhamma), based on the objects given, based on the manner of giving, the timing, and the recipients of the donation, and so forth. Below are some classifications of almsgiving (Sikkhananda, 2010).

If based on the Vinaya, it can be categorized into four types, namely almsgiving of robes (*Cīvara Dāna*), almsgiving of food (*Piṇḍapāta Dāna*), almsgiving for dwellings and their requisites such as *vihāras* (monasteries), beds, chairs, and other items (*Senāsana Dāna*), and almsgiving of medicines (*Bhesajja Dāna*). Meanwhile, according to the Sutta (the Buddha's teachings), it can be almsgiving of food (*Anna Dāna*), almsgiving of drinks (*Pāna Dāna*), almsgiving of robes or clothing (*Vattha Dāna*), almsgiving of sandals or means of transport (*Yāna Dāna*), almsgiving of flowers (*Māla Dāna*), almsgiving of fragrances like incense, and others (*Gandha Dāna*), almsgiving

of ointments or balms (*Vilepana Dāna*), almsgiving of beds, sofas, and their accessories (*Seyyā Dāna*), almsgiving for dwellings like *vihāras*, *cetiya*s, and *kutis* (*Āvāsa Dāna*), and almsgiving of light sources such as lamps, candles, and others (*Padīpeyya Dāna*).

The donations based on *Abhidhamma* are as follows:

1. Donation of Visible Objects (*Rūpa Dāna*); This is understood as giving with an emphasis on the colour or form of the object being donated, such as giving flowers, clothes, books, and other items with colours or forms liked by the recipient.
2. Donation of Auditory Objects (*Sadda Dāna*); This involves giving sounds or items that produce sounds favoured by the recipient, like expressions of gratitude or musical instruments.
3. Donation of Olfactory Objects (*Gandha Dāna*); It refers to giving with an emphasis on the scent or fragrance of the object being donated, such as perfumes and incense.
4. Donation of Taste Objects (*Rasa Dāna*); This kind of donation emphasizes the taste or flavour of the object being given, including sour, sweet, salty, and other tastes.
5. Donation of Tactile Objects (*Phoṭṭhabba Dāna*); It involves giving with an emphasis on the tactile qualities of the object, like soft fabrics or comfortable sofas.
6. Donation of Mental Objects (*Dhamma Dāna*); This type of donation is related to mental objects or things beyond the previous five senses and does not refer to the *Dhamma* teachings of the Buddha. It can be interpreted as providing nourishing elements like food, drinks, and sustenance. For example, donating bread, cakes, fruits, or beverages to meet the nutritional needs of the recipient. It can also refer to sustaining life or freedom, such as caring for the sick, releasing animals from harm, or even liberating prisoners from jail.

According to the information received by the author of the *Segenggam Daun* website, October to November is *Kathina* Month, which is closely associated with *Dāna* (donations). During this one month, Buddhists celebrate Holy *Kathina* Day, which will conclude on November 27, 2023. *Dāna* (donations) during this *Kathina* Month should be directed towards the

Sangha, the community of Bhikkhus, both from the past and the present, whether they have attained perfection or are still striving for it. They are united by the goal of achieving the same enlightenment as the Buddha. (Dhammika 2015)

The Kathina *Dāna* is, in fact, a robe offering. The robe is the primary offering of either cloth material or ready-made robes. It is not just the robe; it also includes other necessities for the Bhikkhus, such as food, medicines, and shelter. However, if the Buddhist community finds it challenging to provide these necessities directly, they can be represented by monetary donations. If the Buddhist community can provide all four requirements directly – the robe, food, shelter, and medicines – they can be given directly to the Bhikkhus. However, if represented by money, that money is given to the Kavia Karaka (the *Dāna* collector and fulfiller of the Bhikkhus' needs). The Buddhist community only makes a statement to the Bhante (the title for Bhikkhus) with the following declaration:

"Bhante, with all our hearts, we provide for Bhante's needs in the four requisites. The amount is such-and-such. If Bhante requires it, please request it from Kavia, responsible for these four requisites."

The Kathina *Dāna* given each year is not only intended for robes, food, shelter, and medicines but also to support the education of Bhikkhus abroad, help in the renovation of temples in remote areas, publish books, fund the travel of Bhikkhus, provide medical care for sick Bhikkhus, and more. According to one Bhante in Buddhism, giving *Dāna* is like learning the alphabet – it is the foundation. You can read, write, and craft papers and expand your knowledge through the alphabet. *Dāna* takes on deeper meaning after a long study. With *Dāna*, one will not face scarcity or poverty. In Buddhism, one should give, assist, and share if one wishes to be happy.

One will attain prosperity, success, beauty, and happiness through *Dāna*. After a while of giving, one will find more profound significance beyond prosperity, success, beauty, and attractiveness. This is because prosperity, success, beauty, and attractiveness are impermanent. True *Dāna* is about reducing self-attachment, hatred, and greed. Self-attachment, hatred, and greed are sources of suffering. At a higher level, the lessons on *Dāna* elevate into Paramitha Perfection, meaning one's entire life revolves around

*Dāna*. One thinks about bringing happiness and what can be done for others, so there is no room for self-attachment, hatred, and greed.

### **Comparative Analysis of the Concept of "Giving" in Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism**

No	Theme of the Issue	Islam	Christianity	Buddhism
1	The terms and definitions	The terms in Islam, including Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, Waqf, Hibah, and Hadiah, all refer to acts of "giving." These terms represent activities ordained by God for the betterment of oneself and others. They are performed to purify wealth, cleanse the soul, and assist those in need, especially the less fortunate.	In Christianity, there are two terms for "giving," namely tithing and offering. Tithing (or tite) does not specify the amount, as it is a fixed 10% of one's income, with the key emphasis on obedience and honesty. Meanwhile, offering is not restricted by a specific amount; the larger, the better, with the key focus on faith, willingness of the heart, and joy.	In Buddhism, the act of "giving" is called <i>dāna</i> . Giving is of great significance in Buddhism and can even be considered the foundation of all Buddhist teachings.

2	Characteristics	Giving should be done sincerely for the sake of God, to purify one's wealth, cleanse the soul, and demonstrate a lack of materialistic greed or selfishness. It should also show care and concern for others. This act of giving involves vertical devotion to God (hablummunallah) and horizontal compassion for fellow human beings (hablumminannas).	From the two terms, tithing and offering, it is evident that both are commands from the LORD to "give," but they differ in the calculation of the amount. The keys to tithing are obedience and honesty, while the keys to offering are faith, willingness, and joy. Both are primarily used for the benefit of God (religion).	Giving is a highly beneficial act to the giver in this world. It helps diminish attachment to the material world, greed, and avarice. Additionally, it has advantages for one's life after death. In Buddhism, giving is fundamentally intended to save the giver and enable them to attain perfection in their subsequent existence or life.
3	The Urgency of Giving	In Islam, fulfilling zakat and beyond has several benefits, including: 1. Purifying the wealth and soul of	In Christianity, giving tithes and offerings has various benefits, such as: 1. Meeting the	In Buddhism, making offerings (dāna) has several benefits, including: 1. Longevity, beauty,

		<p>the giver (muzakki).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Enriching the wealth of the giver.</li> <li>3. Supporting the cause of Allah.</li> <li>4. Assisting fellow believers in their economic well-being.</li> </ol>	<p>operationa l needs of the Church.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Serving as a fence for all possessions in the name of the Lord.</li> <li>3. Contributing to the construction of the house of the Lord.</li> <li>4. Returning what belongs to the Lord.</li> </ol>	<p>happiness, strength, and wisdom.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Being liked and admired by many people, respected and approached by the wise, with a reputation for kindness spreading widely, allowing harmonious associations with all social strata with confidence . There is the possibility of being reborn in the realm of the gods upon death.</li> <li>3. Overcoming greed.</li> </ol>
--	--	---	--	---

				<p>4. Strengthening friendships.</p> <p>5. Rebirth in the realm of gods, or if reborn as a human, in a wealthy family.</p> <p>6. Donors receive children, life partners, assistants, and obedient and understanding servants when offering with respect.</p> <p>7. Reducing greed (lobha) and hatred/anger (dosa).</p> <p>8. Serving as a provision for the journey</p>
--	--	--	--	---

				<p>through the cycle of life and death (saṃsāra).</p> <p>9. Providing a foundation for attaining the Path (Magga), Fruition (Phala), and <i>Nibbāna</i>.</p>
4	Giving for God	<p>In Islam, there is no specific term for "giving to God", even though everything is done for Allah (lillah). The donations given have their specific recipients (the eight recipients, especially the poor and needy). However, there is also the term "fī sabilillah," similar to offering for God in</p>	<p>In Christianity, there is a term for giving to God (the tithe, which is 10%). Additionally, "offering" is more horizontally oriented, aimed at helping others.</p>	<p>In Buddhism, Dāna Kathina is the offering presented to the Sangha during the month of Kathina. The four things that should be offered to the Sangha are robes, food, shelter, and medicines.</p>

		Christianity and Buddhism.		
--	--	----------------------------	--	--

From the chart above, one can see that in the three religions of Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism, there is the concept of "giving" (alms), with similar goals expressed in different terms. The terms zakat, infaq, shadaqah, waqaf, and hadiah in Islam, the tithe and offering in Christianity, and dāna in Buddhism all represent God's command, and obeying these commands means obeying God's will (God's right). In the context of the study of religion, this indicates that one of the main characteristics of each religion is the acknowledgement of the existence of God and the obligation of the religion's followers to obey God's commands.

Apart from the obedience to God, the act of "giving" in each religion also serves as a means of purification, cleansing, adornment, and salvation for the giver, both in this world and the hereafter. From this, two key points can be derived. First, each religion teaches to purify oneself from negative traits, such as greed, gluttony, and avarice. Each religion teaches the importance of detaching from materialism, overcoming greed, and not being excessively attached to worldly possessions. Second, in each religion, there is a fundamental teaching about the existence of an afterlife (in Islam, it is referred to as the Day of Judgment). This is a fundamental teaching in every religion, and it is reflected in the concepts of "giving" in each religion mentioned above, where "giving" is done with the hope of salvation and a better life in the hereafter.

In addition to the form of obedience to God and the hope for goodness in this world and the hereafter, the concept of "giving" also indicates that in each religion, there is a teaching to care for fellow human beings, especially those of the same faith. Each religion teaches its followers to share and help others. This is among the characteristics of religion. However, upon closer examination, "giving" is often primarily directed towards the interests of the religion and its respective community. In other words, the concept of "giving" is more aimed at serving the institutional/organizational interests (when religion is viewed as an institution/organization) and the group interests (social cohesion among its members/followers) of each religion.

## Conclusion

It can be concluded that the concept of "giving" exists in the three religions discussed above. In these three religions, the concept of "giving," or what can be referred to as philanthropy, shares a common essence and purpose, even though it is expressed in diverse terminologies. These terms depict the existence of theological and social elements that form the basis for the practice of "giving" or philanthropy. Theologically, it serves as evidence of the acknowledgement of the existence of God and obedience to Him, and socially, it stands as evidence of compassion towards fellow human beings.

The discussion of the concept of "giving" in the context of religious studies can be summarized as follows: the terms related to "giving" or philanthropic activities found within the Islamic, Christian, and Buddhist traditions are a manifestation of the teachings regarding faith and obedience to God, the purification and cleansing of oneself from vices like worldly attachment, greed, and stinginess, as well as the compassion towards fellow human beings in the form of financial (material) assistance. Furthermore, these "giving" activities or philanthropy demonstrate that these three religions embody humanistic teaching, emphasizing the goodness of humanity amidst the negative stigmas related to religious brutality, extremism, and fanaticism.

## References

- Al-Zuhailiy, W. (2000). *Zakat Kajian Berbagai Mazhab*. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Arifin, M. L., Rofiq Nurhadi, & Ida Zahara Adibah. (2023). Filantropi Islam dan Kristen: Studi Komparatif. *SALIHA: Jurnal Pendidikan & Agama Islam*, 6(1), 79–95. <https://doi.org/10.54396/saliha.v6i1.535>
- Armstrong, K. (2017). *Fields of Blood: Mengurai Sejarah Hubungan Agama dan Kekerasan*. Mizan.
- Azwar, S. (2014). *Metodologi Penelitian*. Pustaka Pelajar.
- Dhammika, V. S. (2015). *Tuturan Bijak Buddha: Wacana Renungan 365 Hari*. Yayasan Karaniya.

- Febriyanti, I., Sari, P. P., & Yuniarti P, T. R. (2023). Rezeki dalam Al-Qur'an (Analisis Perbandingan Tafsir Al-Qurtubī dan Tafsir Al-Azhar). *Revelatia: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir*, 4(1), 27–40. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.19105/revelatia.v4i1.8713>
- Fueller, G. E. (2015). *Apa Jadinya Dunia tanpa Islam*. Mizan.
- Hidayat, K. (2016). Kata Pengantar. In C. W. Troll (Ed.), *Muslim Bertanya Kristen Menjawab* (hal. xii–xiv). Kompas Gramedia.
- Hilmy, M. (2018). Kata Pengantar. In A. Wijaya (Ed.), *Dari Membela Tuhan ke Membela Manusia; Kritik atas Nalar Agamaisasi Kekerasan* (hal. ix). Mizan.
- Jubaidah, S., & Batubara, C. (2023). Implementasi Manajemen Pengawasan Hadapi Problematika Pengelolaan Wakaf. *Jurnal Akuntan*, 1(3), 78–89. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.59581/jap-widyakarya.v1i3.916>
- Kaelan. (2010). *Metode Penelitian Agama Kualitatif Interdisipliner*. Paradigma.
- Kasiram, M. (2010). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif-Kuantitatif*. UIN Maliki Press.
- Kimball, C. (2008). *Kala Agama Jadi Bencana*. Mizan.
- Latief, H. (2013a). Agama dan Pelayanan Sosial: Interpretasi dan Aksi Filantropi dalam Tradisi Muslim dan Kristen di Indonesia. *Religi*, IX(2), 174–189.
- Latief, H. (2013b). Filantropi Dan Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia. *Pendidikan Islam*, 28(1), 123–139. <https://journal.uinsgd.ac.id/index.php/jpi/article/view/540/537>
- Latief, H. (2013c). *Politik Filantropi Islam di Indonesia*. Ombak.
- Mahfudhotin, & Madani, R. L. (2022). Strategi Pengelolaan Dana Infaq dan Shadaqah Melalui Program Koin Peduli pada Musim Pandemi Covid-19 (Studi pada LAZISNU MWC Ngronggot Nganjuk). *Al-Muraqabah: Journal of Manajemen and Sharia Business*, 2(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.30762/almuraqabah.v2i1.195>
- Mighfar, S. (2015). Social Exchange Theory: Telaah Konsep George C. Homans tentang Teori Pertukaran Sosial. *Jurnal Lisan Al-Hal*, 9(2), 261–286.
- Moleong, L. J. (1996). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Mustaqim, A. (2014). Model Penelitian Tokoh (Dalam Teori dan Aplikasi). *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-ilmu al-Quran dan Hadis*, 15(2), 201–218.

- Priyadi, A. (2023). Tinjauan Hukum tentang Hibah dan Batasan Pemberian Hibah. *Wijayakusuma Law Review*, 5(1), 23–30. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.51921/wlr.v5i1.232>
- Rifani, Taufiq, M., & Solihin, A. (2023). Analisis Akuntabilitas dan Transparansi Pengelolaan Zakat, Infak dan Sedekah (ZIS) (Studi Kasus Baznas Kota Payakumbuh). *Jurnal Ekonomi Islam*, 9(2), 2732–2743. <https://doi.org/>: <http://dx.doi.org/10.29040/jiei.v9i2.9004>
- Said, I. A. (2013). *The Power of Wakaf*. Dompot Dhuafa.
- Sarjono, N. (2020). Kajian Teologis Tentang Persepuluhan. *Jurnal Luxnos*, 6(2), 64–71. <https://doi.org/10.47304/ndaru>
- Sikkhananda, B. (2010). *Dana: Penjelasan Disertai dengan Cerita*.
- Sugiyono. (2011). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif-Kualitatif dan R&D*. Alfabeta.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHdQL6mLHWQ>
- <https://www.segengamdaun.com>
- Interview with Maria Wayar (Pendeta GKI Jemaat Syaloom Wasior Papua Barat).

---

**Titin Yuniartin<sup>1</sup>, Koko Komaruddin<sup>2</sup>, and Ahmad Labib Majdi<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1,3</sup>Institut Agama Islam Darussalam Ciamis, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia

Correspondence: <sup>1</sup>[titin\\_yuniar80@iaid.ac.id](mailto:titin_yuniar80@iaid.ac.id)