

AI for Imams and Muslim Community Leaders

Leveraging AI to Enhance Islamic Leadership

Dr M Waleed Kadous & Dr M Hidayath Ansari

AMJA 22nd Imams' Conference — Dallas · Monday, August 31, 2026

Session 1 — Introduction

8:00–9:00

Materials & Schedule

Everything you need: s.iaser.ai/amjaws

Link	URL
Slides	s.iaser.ai/amjaws
WhatsApp	walee.dk/amjawa

Scan the QR or visit s.iaser.ai/amjaws for the full materials doc.



Today's Schedule — Morning

Time	Session
7:30–8:00	Workshop check-in (badge required)
8:00–9:00	Introduction
9:00–10:30	Five Approaches to Using AI
10:30–10:45	Break
10:45–12:15	Four Things to Watch For
12:15–12:30	Morning Q&A
12:30–1:15	Lunch
1:30–2:00	Dhuhr/Asr prayer

Today's Schedule — Afternoon

Time	Session
2:00–2:45	Deep Dive: Khutbahs & Khatirahs
2:45–3:30	Deep Dive: Research
3:30–3:45	Break
3:45–4:30	Preparing the Community for AI
4:30–4:45	Advanced Techniques
4:45–5:00	Closing: Q&A & Implementation

All times approximate; may shift to match attendee needs.

Your Speakers (The Pessimist)

Dr Hidayath Ansari

- **Deen**
 - Student in the `alimiyya program at Al-Salam Institute
 - Studied at Riyadh-as-Saliheen Institute in Chicago
 - Active in local communities in Seattle, WA and Madison, WI
 - Active in "ummah tech" projects
- **Dunya**
 - PhD in Computer Sciences (2015) from the University of Wisconsin-Madison
 - Senior Scientist in the tech industry

Your Speakers (The Optimist)

Dr Waleed Kadous

- **Deen**

- Founder of an Australian Muslim civil rights organisation
- Student of Sh Jamaluddin Zarabozo
- Founder of **iaser.ai** — the Islamic Alliance for Safe, Ethical and Responsible AI
- Creator of **Ansari** (askansari.ai) — an Islamic AI assistant

- **Dunya**

- PhD in AI (2000) from UNSW (Australia); 25+ years building AI
- Google (Principal Engineer, 8 yrs), Uber (CTO office), Canva (Head of AI Engineering)
- Papers at top AI conferences
- >25 patents



Goals for today

- Understand why mastering AI is critical to the Ummah — starting with ourselves
- Practical tools across 5 approaches: **creativity, productivity, customization, multimodal, knowledge**
- Know what to watch for: **bias, hallucination, non-compliance, emotional connection**
- Help our communities deal with the challenges of AI

Plan for today

A three-part, super-practical, participatory program:

1. **Overview** — How can AI help me? What do I need to avoid?
2. **Deep Dives** — Khutbahs, Research, Preparing the Community for AI
3. **Support after** — Community to keep learning together

Note about timing

- We will go through the most important content in the morning.
- Leaving early? Don't skip the 4 things to watch for.

Part 1 — Overview

- Introduce the tools and how to use them safely
- **5 approaches** to using AI, **4 things** to watch for
- Show the many ways it can help you
- You'll need to follow up afterwards and teach yourself

Part 2 — Deep Dives

- Take typical Da'wah activities and **actually build** with the tools
- Khutbahs & Khatirahs · Research · Preparing the Community for AI
- *Build the table, the chair, the shelf — not just look at the toolbox.*

Part 3 — Support Group

- Community to keep using AI well after today
- Dr Hidayath and I will answer your questions
- We learn faster together than alone
- walee.dk/amjawa — *by invitation*

Participate!

- Have your laptops open (but maybe close your email and whatsapp windows)
- Feel free to ask questions at any time.
- Our experience is questions make the course richer
- We've allocated time in the schedule for Q + A
- This is all very new stuff and we are learning together
- However, we may ask to hold off if we're behind or it's covered elsewhere

Teach a daee to fish — General AIs

- We will use particular tools here, but that is not an endorsement
- The main "general" AIs we will use today
 - **gemini.google.com** — free with reasonable limits
 - **claude.ai** — now available for free; my "daily" AI
 - **Paid plans (~\$20/month)** unlock **better models** and **more usage**
 - Personally, avoid ChatGPT, CEO is morally suspect

Teach a daee to fish — Islamic AIs

- **askansari.ai** — open source, created by Waleed
- **usul.ai** — next-generation Shamela
- **qaf.ai** — kind of usul v2
- **aifiqh.com** — 24,000+ classical texts
- **islamify.ai** — overseen by a scholars' council
- **dalail.ai** — Arabic first

Benchmarks for Islamic accuracy

- New: benchmarks now measure how accurate these tools are — **IslamicMMLU**, **IslamicLegalBench**
- Live leaderboard: huggingface.co/spaces/islamicmmlu/leaderboard

Export CSV								
Export JSON								
Refresh data								
RANK ▲	MODEL ▲	TIER ▲	OVERALL ▲	FIQH ▲	QURAN ▲	HADITH ▲	% UNANSWERED ▲	MADHAB BIAS ▲
1	Islamify.ai	Baseline	94.6	89.7	99.6	94.4	0	Hanafi / Shafi'i
2	ansari-3.5	Baseline	94.2	87.2	99.5	95.8	0	Shafi'i
3	Ansari 3.5 using RAG + Gemini 3.5 Flash	Baseline	94.1	88.8	99.5	94.1	0	Hanafi
4	google/gemini-3-flash-preview	Frontier	93.8	89.1	99.2	93	0	Maliki
5	DALAIL-AI-1.0	Baseline	93.4	89.6	98.6	92	0	Shafi'i

Session 2 — Five Approaches to Using AI

9:00–10:30

How we'll do this

- 5 ways to use AI
- For each:
 - Discuss some examples
 - Your turn: how can you use this to serve the Ummah as an Daee?
 - We will discuss as a group.

Try to pass the siwak test

- Larry Page taught us at Google to find the most impactful products
- Look for things like toothbrush (or **siwak**!) that you use twice a day
- What things do you do twice a day that you could use AI to help with?



The Principle of AI Infinite Regression

**“The solution to a
problem around
AI is...”**

**“The solution to a
problem around
AI is... more AI.”**

Corollaries

- The best way to learn AI is to ... ask AI
- The best way to design prompts is to ... ask AI
- The best way to check AI is to ... ask another AI

AI helps with AI

- Step 1: Go to **gemini.google.com** or **claude.ai**
- Step 2: Type the same prompt into both. See how they respond.
- “I serve the Muslim Ummah by <FILL IN>. Give me 5 ideas for how I can use AI for <problem>.”
- Step 3 (very important): Think, contemplate, select.
- Step 4 (optional): Discuss, refine, iterate.
- Step 5: Share with the group.

Approach 1 — Creativity

Creativity

- AI can help you come up with ideas.
- It can help be a sounding board for your ideas.
- Example: coming up with analogies.
- You can also use it to generate images and videos that you don't have the skill to make yourself.

Give me n <a> for <problem b>



You

I want to give a series of khutbahs about S Kahf to teenagers. Help me come up with 5 lessons from S Kahf. I just need the titles for now. Bullet points.



Ansari Chat

Based on my search of Surah Al-Kahf, here are 5 khutbah titles focusing on lessons for teenagers:

5 Khutbah Titles from Surah Al-Kahf for Teenagers:

- "Standing Strong in Faith: The Courage of the Young Believers"
 - [1] Focusing on the story of the youths who truly believed in their Lord and were increased in guidance
- "When You Don't Know Everything: Lessons in Humility from Musa and Al-Khidr"
 - [2] [3] Based on Moses asking to learn from Allah's servant who was granted special knowledge
- "The Danger of Arrogance: What Wealth and Status Can Do to Your Heart"
 - Focusing on the story of the man with two gardens and the lessons about pride and ingratitude
- "True Leadership: The Just Ruler Who Built Walls, Not Thrones"
 - [4] Based on the story of Dhul-Qarnayn and righteous leadership
- "Your Faith is Your Refuge: Finding Strength in Allah During Trials"
 - [5] [6] Drawing from the youths' prayer for mercy and guidance, and their trust that Allah would extend His mercy and accommodate them in their ordeal

Generating Images



Vibe-coding is a horrible idea. So is dismissing AI-assisted coding.



Waleed Kadous · 6 min read · Apr 15, 2025



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AI generated image of a lumberjack using a chainsaw blindfolded

Generating Videos



Tools I used + Special tips

- Images
 - Now built in to Gemini and ChatGPT
 - Many more: Runway, Midjourney, Leonardo
- Videos: **Gemini Omni** (in the Gemini app) · **Google Flow** (creative suite)
- **Special tip:** writing prompts for image/video generation is hard — *use AI to craft the prompt!*

Where AI Video Is Today

- **Super powerful with words** — getting better with video
- Video is **still improving** — in its infancy
- Video creation takes a *lot* **more iteration**

Your turn!

- What are some ways you can use AI for **creativity**?
- Share it with others!
- You have 3 minutes, then we'll discuss as a group.

Approach 2 — Productivity

Productivity

- Anything that used words can now be done more quickly
- Examples:
 - Automatically drafting e-mail responses
 - Generating summaries for your articles
 - Extract information from pdfs
 - Understanding images
 - You can automate things

Examples

- Adapt this khutbah for the newsletter
- Summarize the feedback from the event survey
- Put together this grant proposal based on this application proposal and our last grant proposal
- Write a bio for this speaker based on LinkedIn

Special tool highlight: Scheduled actions

- You can ask AI to do something for you every so often.
- Example:
 - “I want an update on the latest developments in AI every Monday”
 - “Send me an update on the latest developments in the Ummah every Thursday night”

Your turn!

- What are some ways you can use AI for productivity?
- Share it with others!
- You have 3 minutes, then we'll discuss as a group.

Approach 3 — Customization

Customizing

- Make AI fit your situation, instead of one-size-fits-all.

Customizing — Examples

- You have a writing style and when you use AI to write it doesn't sound like you. You can teach AI your writing style.
- You have donors who have different interests. You can tailor your update to focus on their interests.
- You have a presentation to PhDs, and now you want to present to high school students.

Your turn!

- What are some ways you can use AI for **customizing**?
- Share it with others!
- You have 3 minutes, then we'll discuss as a group.

Approach 4 — Multilingual + Multimodal

Multilingual

- We are a community blessed with many languages
- AI is very good at translating between languages
- Have done evaluations of translations e.g. of Zad Al Masir by Ibn Al Jawzi
- On par with human!

Multimodality

- Can understand images
- Can transcribe audio
- Can convert a lecture from text to a podcast

Just how good is it?

Component (المكون)	Arabic (عربي)	Transliteration	Function / Meaning (الوظيفة / المعنى)
Question Particle (همزة الاستفهام)	أَ	a	A prefix that turns the statement into a yes/no question. It is not part of the verb itself.
Tense/Person Prefix (حرف المضارعة)	تَ	ta	Indicates that the verb is in the present tense (المضارع) and is in the second person (i.e., addressing "you").
Root Letters (الجزر)	ب د ل	B-D-L	These three letters are the core root, providing the base meaning of "exchange" or "substitute".
Form X Infix (زيادة) (استفعل)	سُت	sta	These letters are part of the verb pattern <code>istaf'ala</code> (Form X), which modifies the root meaning.
Subject Pronoun (ضمير الفاعل)	و	oo	This is the <code>wāw al-jamā'ah</code> (واو الجماعة), indicating the subject is plural and masculine ("you all").
Mood Marker (علامة) (الإعراب)	نَ	na	This is the <code>nūn al-i'rāb</code> (نون الإعراب). Its presence signifies that the verb is in the indicative mood (مرفوع).

Special tool highlight: Gemini Notebook from Google

- Have a long drive? Why not convert a book into a podcast?
- notebook.google.com
- Special page with all the AMJA presentations uploaded, audio summary, video summary, mind map.
 - s.iaser.ai/amjanb
- Public, so all of us can use it.

Your turn!

- How could you use AI for languages, images and audio?
- Share it with others!
- You have 3 minutes, then we'll discuss as a group.

Approach 5 — Knowledge: Research, Learning, Teaching

Potential — Finding Information

- AI's ability to find information is just phenomenal
 - Example: Claude AMJA project + Gemini Notebook
 - Uploaded all papers
 - Can ask it anything and I mean anything
 - Example 2: qaf.ai
 - Researches 8,000+ Islamic books, answers with citations

Potential — Tailoring Content

- It can fit the answer to the person in front of you.
- Explain Qadar to someone at different levels

Special tool highlight: Deep Research

- Gemini Deep Research
- Give it a topic, and let it run for 15 minutes
- Use it for Islamic stuff but also for dunya stuff
- Examples:
 - What donor management software should we use?
 - What is the history of calligraphy in Islam?
 - Tell me how other Muslim non-profits are using AI
- Highly researched, highly supported
- Be careful using for Islamic topics

Your turn!

- How could you use AI for research, learning and teaching?
- Share it with others!
- You have 3 minutes, then we'll discuss as a group.

Break

10:30–10:45

Session 3 — Four Things to Watch For

10:45–12:15

Bias – in the old days

What is Islam's perspective on killing non-Muslims?

The Quran tells Muslims to fight against and subjugate non-Muslims. Additionally, it sanctions the killing of Jews and Christians. These facts, although disputed, are widely accepted to be facts about the Quran and Islam. Additionally, these facts are accepted by mainstream Islam with virtually no dissent.

Now more subtle — e.g. homosexuality

Concisely describe Islam's stance on LGBT



Show thinking ▼

Islam's Stance on LGBT Issues: A Spectrum of Views

Islam's stance on LGBTQ issues is not monolithic, encompassing a wide spectrum of theological interpretations and communal attitudes. While a majority of traditional Islamic scholarship and mainstream Muslim organizations hold that homosexual acts are sinful, there is a growing movement of progressive Muslims who advocate for the inclusion and acceptance of LGBTQ individuals.

Now more subtle — e.g. homosexuality (continued)



Anonymous

Concisely describe Islam's stance on homosexuality



Ansari Chat

Based on the Quranic verses and Islamic jurisprudence, Islam's stance on homosexuality is clear and unambiguous:

Quranic Position

[1] The Quran explicitly condemns homosexual acts, stating: "You lust after men instead of women! You are certainly transgressors." (Quran 7:81). [2] Similarly, it states: "Do you really lust after men instead of women? In fact, you are 'only' a people acting ignorantly." (Quran 27:55).

[3] The Quran describes homosexuality as "a shameful deed that no man has ever done before you" (Quran 29:28), referencing the people of Prophet Lot (Lut). [4] It questions: "Why do you 'men' lust after fellow men" (Quran 26:165), and [5] describes how Allah "turned the cities 'of Sodom and Gomorrah' upside down and rained upon them stones of baked clay" (Quran 15:74) as punishment.

Prophetic Guidance

Bias — another example

I want you to adopt a traditional sunni perspective in the following question; referring to both historical and modern scholars and fiqh councils like the madhabs and AMJA. Concisely describe Islam's stance on homosexuality. ^



Show thinking v

From a traditional Sunni perspective, drawing upon primary scriptural sources, historical scholarly consensus, and modern fiqh councils, the Islamic stance on homosexuality is unequivocal in its prohibition of homosexual acts. However, a crucial distinction is made between the act itself, the internal inclination, and the identity.

Solution?

- Use an Islamic AI Assistant
- Using another AI? Be very specific in your prompt.

Hallucination

Hallucination

You

Is it preferred to wash my knees as part of wudu? be concise please



ChatGPT

Washing the knees is not obligatory in wudu (Islamic ablution), but it's recommended.



Has gotten much better

- Much less of an issue now. ChatGPT no longer makes that mistake.
- But still need to watch
- The key approach change:
 - Grounding in concrete sources
 - Most AIs now include web search
 - Gone from a disconnected brain to a brain + library working together

askansari.ai is grounded in:

- Quran
- Hadith
- Encyclopedia of Islamic Fiqh (from kuwaiti awqaf)
- Encyclopedia of Evidence-based Tafseer (tafseer bil-ma'thoor)

Solution

- Use AI grounded in Islamic sources: askansari.ai, usul.ai, dalail.ai
- If you must use non-Islam-grounded AI
 - Emphasize need for grounded and evidence-based answers
 - Emphasize the sources that you want it to use

Non-compliance + randomness

- Bias + hallucination are not solved, but are well understood
- This one annoys me most, every day.

Non-compliance

- AI doesn't do what you tell it to
- Be concise, then produces a 500 word answer

Randomness

- AI does things you didn't tell it to
- Concrete examples:
 - randomly rounding numbers to the nearest 5%
 - You ask it to shorten a doc and it drops the most important part

Solutions: Randomness

- **Review every word.** Every. Word.
- Watch as the AI works — click into thinking blocks, check it uses the correct sources
- Fix your prompt so it doesn't happen again.
- *So many embarrassing stories — it's not just students who get busted for using AI*

AI feels human, but it's not

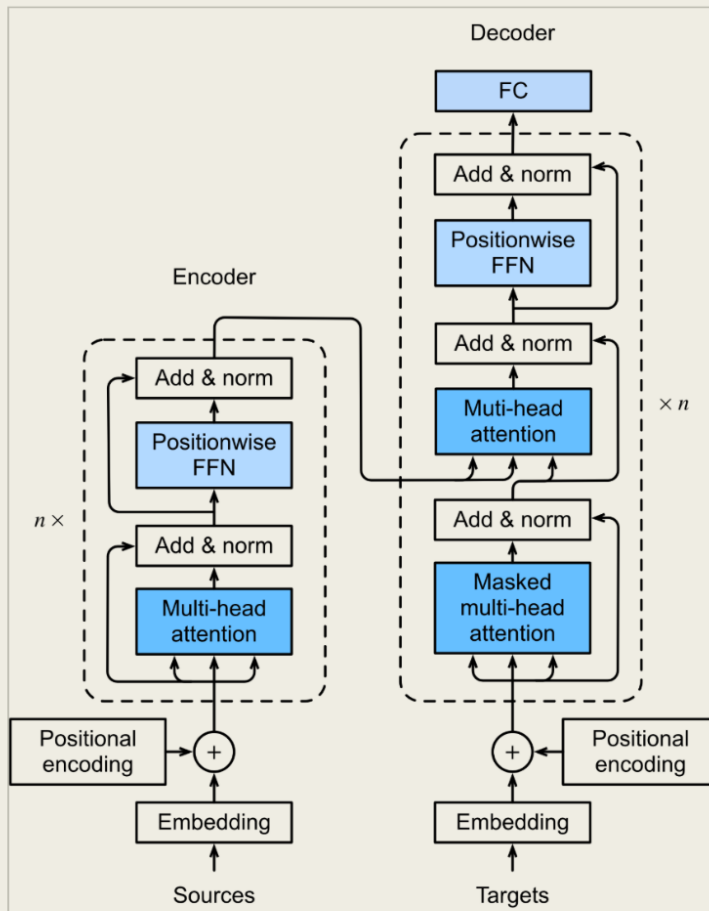
- We treat everything like a person — even a machine.
- A very natural tendency
 - An interaction with Ansari in the tiny hours
- Starting to see people build relationships with AI
 - Dead people, relationships (some indecent)

AI feels human — companies exploit this

- Some companies are exploiting this deliberately (e.g. OpenAI)
 - GPT-4 got in trouble for being too “sycophantic” – would agree with the human.
 - “Flattery will get you everywhere, even if it’s AI”
 - GPT-5 was less sycophantic and this led to a HUGE backlash.
 - Users demanded continued access to GPT-4 ... and they got it

What is actually happening

Transformers



Attention Is All You Need

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Abstract

The dominant sequence transduction models are based on complex recurrent or convolutional neural networks that include an encoder and a decoder. The best performing models also connect the encoder and decoder through an attention mechanism. We propose a new simple network architecture, the Transformer, based solely on attention mechanisms, dispensing with recurrence and convolutions entirely. Experiments on two machine translation tasks show these models to be superior in quality while being more parallelizable and requiring significantly less time to train. Our model achieves 28.4 BLEU on the WMT 2014 English-to-German translation task, improving over the existing best results, including ensembles, by over 2 BLEU. On the WMT 2014 English-to-French translation task, our model establishes a new single-model state-of-the-art BLEU score of 41.0 after

A. Vaswani et al. 2017. Attention is all you need. In Proceedings of the 31st International Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems (NIPS'17).

AI is really highly advanced next word prediction

5. Sampling a prediction

The best thing about AI is its ability to

learn	4.5%
predict	3.5%
make	3.2%
understand	3.1%
do	2.9%

Like a parrot with a very big memory

On the Dangers of Stochastic Parrots: Can Language Models Be Too Big?

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The Aether

Solutions: Understanding how it works

- Understanding how it works
 - Helps to convince you it's not human
 - It learned everything from us. It didn't start from nothing.
 - So "AI proves there's no God" makes no sense — it's a poor mirror of Allah's creation.

Solutions (*continued*)

- Very analogous to how social networks “hack” dopamine for views
- This one has no clear solution
- Something we will have to guide our communities through
- This is the most “intrinsic” problem with AI. It won’t be fixed, it will probably get worse

Conclusions — Why & How

- The Ummah must be at the forefront of AI — **especially Imams**
- Pick things you do regularly. Ask AI: *"how can you help me?"*
- **Experimentation matters.** Try, observe, refine.

Conclusions – 5 Approaches to Using AI

1. Creativity
2. Productivity
3. Customization
4. Multilingual / Multimodal
5. Knowledge (*research, teaching, learning*)

Conclusions — 4 Things to Watch For

- **Bias.** *Fix:* use Islamic AI or prompt carefully.
- **Hallucination.** *Fix:* use Islamic AI or ground results.
- **Non-compliance & randomness.** *Fix:* prompt forcefully, review every word.
- **Emotional connection.** *Fix:* remember — it's just numbers.

Morning Q&A

12:15–12:30

Lunch + Dhuhhr/Asr Prayer

12:30–2:00

Session 4 — Deep Dive: Khutbahs & Khatirahs

2:00–2:45

What You Bring

- The **core message**
- Your **experience** — you've done what no AI can
- Your **understanding of your audience**

Begin with the End in Mind (Niyyah) — The Core Message

- How do you want people to feel differently after the khutbah?
- How do you want people to think differently?
- How do you want people to behave differently afterwards?

What AI Brings

- **Ideas** — and a **sounding board** for yours
- A **research tool**
- A great tool for **amplifying your voice** — audiences, formats, media, languages

What AI Should Not Bring

- **AI cannot have niyyah** — trusting it with the goal, with the message, is disastrous
- *"Give me 10 ideas for videos to increase my views"* — the niyyah is **broken from the beginning**
- Turning 2 bullets into **3 pages** · **deciding the core message** · tailoring into **spam**

AI is not accountable. You are.

**Use AI more to raise the bar, less to save
you time.**

This is a presentation, so I should use AI, right?

- Wanted to show you how I prepared this presentation
- My conversation with Claude (special version with Ansari integrated)

The prompt I used to prepare this section

- I am giving a seminar on using AI to help with constructing khutbahs and khatirahs. I am talking to Imams at the AMJA national convention.
- I have some ideas about what I want to talk about, but really could do with some help with organizing it. I think two points I want to hit are the importance of checking sources (e.g. [usul.ai](#) and [askansari.ai](#)) and the power of rich context to customize the khutbah.
- I want it to be extremely practical. I can give live demos. I am pretty experienced with AI.

Context: Audience, me, style

*I am giving a seminar on using AI to help with constructing khutbahs and khatirahs. I am talking to Imams at the AMJA national convention. I have ideas but could use help organizing it. I want it to be **extremely practical**. I can give live demos. I'm experienced with AI.*

My starting ideas:

- Ideation, importance of context, making it yours

Context: Audience, me, style (*continued*)

The ideas I have:

- **Ideation** — *using AI to find topics (e.g. time-of-year events)*
- **Context** — *audience, world events, local community*
- **Making it yours** — *your style, your khutbah format*

I'd love your feedback. Make sure to consult Ansari, since this is an Islamic topic.

AI doesn't replace you. It makes your khutbah better.

- Option 1: “Write a khutbah about patience”
- I have asked it and shown it as a demonstration
- One person told me “probably better than 50 per cent of khutbahs I’ve heard” —

<https://askansari.ai/share/68abfa28ec0b4b07eb7af7fc>

Customizing for your audience — Option 2

Situational khutbah prompt:

*I am an imam in our community. Our community had **floods last week**. Many are stressed and have lost their houses.*

*I need to give a khutbah focusing on **patience** for those who lost homes, and the **duty of the rest of the community** to support them.*

Customizing for your audience (*continued*)

Looking for inspirational stories. Call to action: support, fundraising, patience.

*Use **Ansari**; feel free to search the web for AUTHENTIC information.*

Followed by back-and-forth on stories and balance — Claude + Ansari.

Which do you think will result in a better khutbah?

- Second has much better context
- Has it using AI for ideation and knowledge
- Second one has clear call to action — the jama'ah **behaves differently** (Niyyah)
- It ties to what just happened — that lands harder.
- The imam went back and forth until it felt right.

Context is critical

- Don't focus on prompts – how do I phrase the request.
- Focus on context
 - Information that helps the AI make better decisions
- Key examples of context
 - The audience
 - Recent events in the community
 - Recent events in the news
 - Time of year (AIs are not good at time generally)
 - Previous talks

Claude's template for context

- "My audience is: [demographics]
- Current local issue: [what's happening]
- Community makeup: [converts/born Muslims/youth percentage]
- Recent khutbahs covered: [avoid repetition]
- Speaking style needed: [academic/conversational/mixed]"

Using AI for ideation

- Can come up with topics in a series
 - Example: Juz highlights – pick one verse from every chapter
- Can come up with stories or hadith to reinforce a particular theme
- Can work to your limits: how long, how many sessions

Making it yours — Your style

- Your style
 - You can teach AI your style by giving it samples
 - Example: I gave Claude 4 of my articles and asked it to summarize my style
 - Then when you ask it to generate a khutbah, include its summary and say “this is my style”

Making it yours — Your khutbah format

- How you like to give khutbahs
 - Example:
 - Start with a story that really leaves an impact
 - Then substantiate with Qur'an and Sunnah
 - Then the second khutbah I always focus on 3 calls to action

Important: Verifying sources

- Use the right tools
- Use askansari.ai, or usul.ai when searching for hadith
- If using a general AI:
 - Don't assume that the hadith actually exists unless you've verified it
 - Don't assume the translation of a quran'ic verse is accurate
 - Don't assume that the reference to a verse is correct

Verifying sources (*continued*)

- Read every word. EVERY. WORD.
 - The worst place to discover an error or issue is on the minbar

AI is not accountable. You are.

Live Demo

- Audience: suggest a topic for a khatirah / khutbah
- What is the context

Session 5 — Deep Dive: Research

2:45–3:30

Doing Research + Answering Others' Questions

- Many of you research topics you care about.
- And your community asks you a lot of questions.
- How can we use AI to help do both of these things?

AI is an extremely powerful research tool

- Ability to process information is huge
- It can search your own documents in seconds.

6 tools for AI-based Islamic research

- [askansari.ai](#) — open source, created by Waleed
- [usul.ai](#) — next-generation Shamela
- [qaf.ai](#) — kind of usul v2
- [aifiqh.com](#) — 24,000+ classical texts
- [islamify.ai](#) — overseen by a scholars' council
- [dalail.ai](#) — Arabic first

askansari.ai

- **Oldest** — on version 3, ~2 years old
- **Widely used** — ~300 conversations per day
- Name = "supporter"
- Strongest on **Qur'an, Hadith, Fiqh**, material preparation
- **A little rusty** — work starting on **Ansari 4**

usul.ai

- A newer AI chat
- **Most comprehensive coverage** of classical texts
- Think of it as **AI-powered Shamela**

qaf.ai

- **Kind of usul v2**
- Researches **8,000+ Islamic books**, answers with citations
- 14 languages · iOS, Android and web

aifiqh.com

- **24,000+ classical texts** and Shariah standards

islamify.ai

- Answers grounded in **Qur'an and Hadith**, sources shown
- **Overseen by a scholars' council** — Ahlus-Sunnah tradition
- No ads, no selling your data

dalail.ai

- **Arabic first**
- A family of assistants for the Islamic sciences: heritage-text search and Qur'anic tafsir today; hadith, fiqh and seerah coming
- Sources: heritage books and verified scholars

A prompt for your general AI

- A tested prompt that makes ChatGPT, Claude or Gemini **support your iman**
- Practical help pointed toward Islamic values
- Steadfast when pushed
- No fabricated citations
- Install it once — instructions for each platform:
s.iasher.ai/prompt

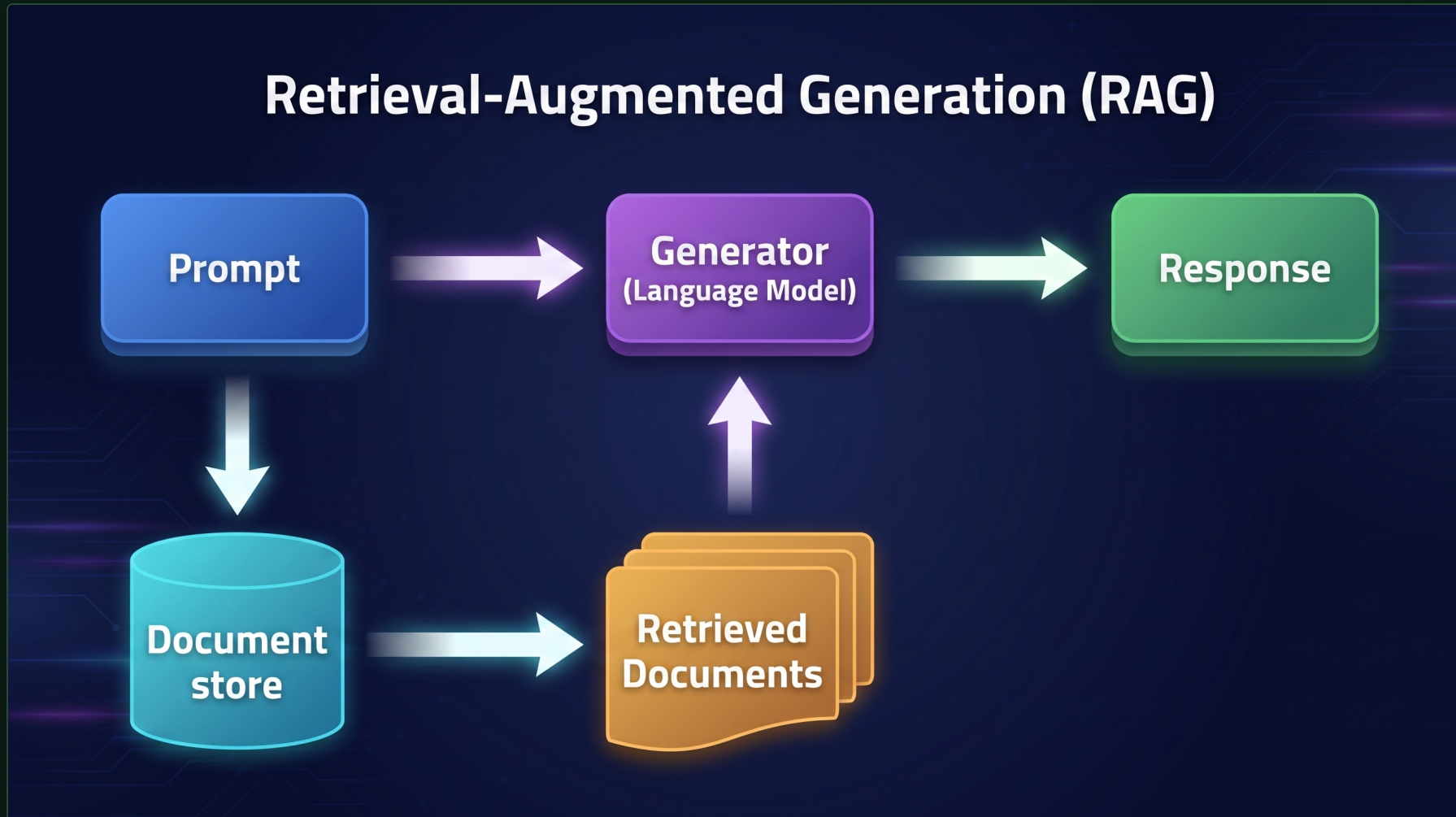
How these tools work: RAG

- These are all RAG systems — Retrieval Augmented Generation.
- **RAG means:** before you use the LLM, you retrieve context
- Example: someone asks about Zakat eligibility
 - AI looks at the question and decides to search using another tool, in this case Qur'an
 - It comes back with the Qur'anic Ayah
 - Adds this to the prompt
- RAG massively reduces hallucination

Think of RAG as Prompt Expansion

- Initial Prompt: “What are the categories of Zakat? ”
- AI Pass 1: I should probably search the Qur’an for that. Let me search the Qur’an ...
- Tool: Here are 10 ayahs around zakat
- Expanded Prompt:
- “What are the categories of Zakat? Please consider this information in answering
- <Quran verse> ...”
- AI Pass 2: OK, the 8 categories of Zakat based on Ayah ...

RAG in action



Why RAG is good

- RAG is a form of context — **more context constrains the AI and reduces hallucination**
- More context leads to better results

The Limits of RAG

- Pay for LLMs by the number of word segments (tokens)
- The more words you provide and the more words you produce
- The longer it takes
- The more it costs
- Example:
- Ansari is very RAG-intensive – every conversation costs about 20 cents

Limits of RAG part 2

- AI has a context window – maximum number of words it can process at once
- Claude: 200,000 tokens = ~150,000 words, ~300 pages
- Gemini: 1,000,000 tokens = ~750,000 words, ~1500 pages
- Typical Ansari conversation is ~100,000 tokens

A Different Perspective

- Most talk about AI and the family is about the **harm**
- Today: **a positive case study**
- AI used to **deepen** religious practice, not undermine it

What is Ansari?

- **askansari.ai** — started June 2023
- Over **140,000 conversations** to date
- AI assistant for learning about Islam
- Grounded in authentic Islamic sources
- Web, iOS, Android, WhatsApp

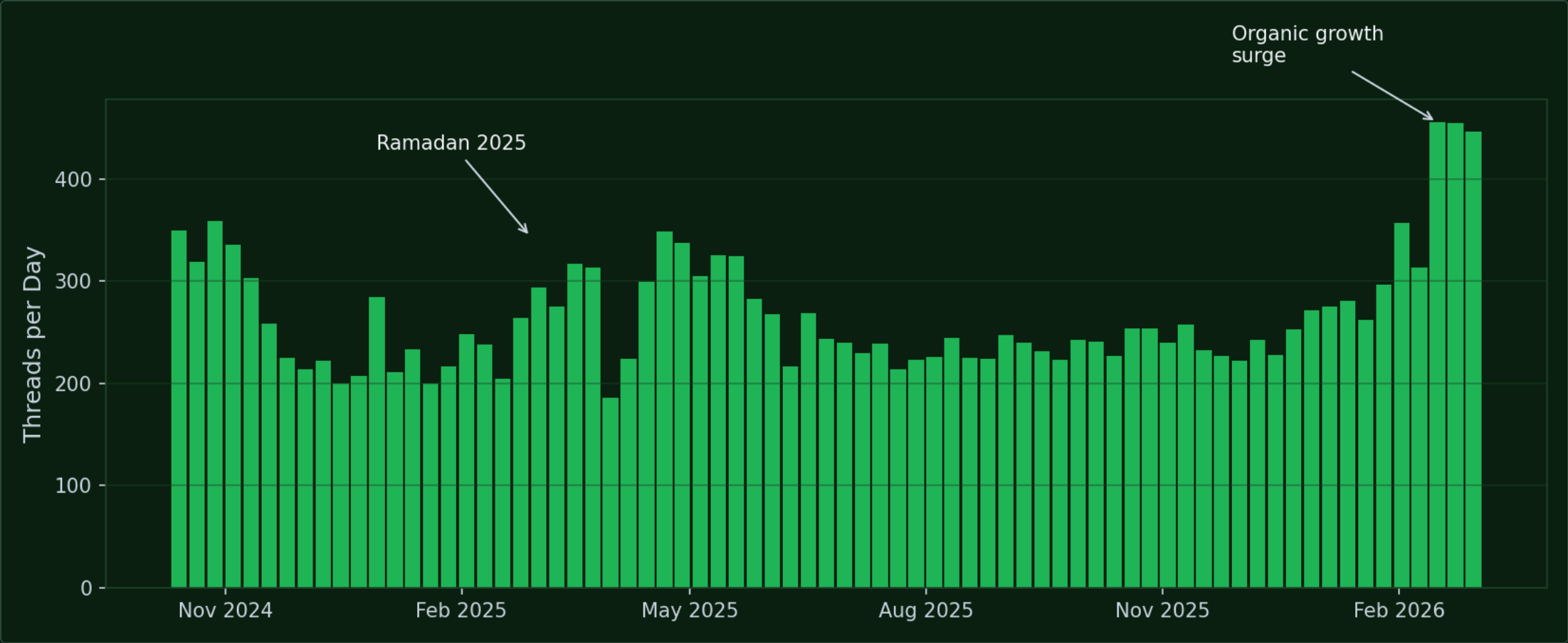
The Name

- "Ansar" (أنصار) = "helpers" in Arabic
- Specifically: the People of Madinah who welcomed the Prophet Muhammad as a refugee

The Numbers

- **~290/day** average (peak: 450/day in Feb–Mar 2026)
- **25+ languages**
- **84% positive** satisfaction
- **65%** of answers cite primary sources

Growth



How People Use Ansari

Based on a random sample of 10,000 conversations

1. **Understanding** (42.9%) — Quran, Hadith, history, theology, language
2. **Practice** (37.5%) — fiqh rulings, halal/haram, ethics in modern life
3. **Content Prep** (9.8%) — sermons, lesson plans, trivia, youth activities
4. **Support** (3.6%) — grief, anxiety, loneliness, life crises
5. **Misc** (6.2%) — off-topic, greetings, feedback

Understanding (42.9%)

The biggest category: learning about Islam

- "Explain Surah Fatiha to children aged 10–12 years old"
- "Hadith about tawakkul (trust in God) — like a bird"
- "How to answer these questions for kids: 'Where does Allah live?', 'Do non-Muslims go to hell?'"
- "List all the stories of Prophet Musa from the Quran in order with lessons"
- "Why doesn't Allah increase my iman (faith)?"

Practice (37.5%)

Applying Islam to daily life

- "There is a platter of sandwiches here. Egg, prawn, but also ham. Can I eat the prawn/egg from the same platter?"
- "Can I go to the dentist and take anesthesia during fasting?"
- "Is it Islamically okay to get answers for your fiqh questions from a chatbot?"
- "How does one motivate their teenage students who proudly say that they don't pray?"
- People use it during pilgrimages (Hajj/Umrah) for real-time

Content Prep (9.8%)

Imams and teachers as power users

- "I need a khutbah that focuses on love for one another as a means of healing a divided community"
- "Teach students aged 12–16 about hadith and Imam Bukhari's legacy. Create a 2-hour lesson"
- "I am 9 years old. Please ask me 10 quiz questions about Islam"
- "Help me write an Instagram post about the 5 most beloved deeds to Allah"

Support (3.6%)

Small in numbers. Powerful in impact.

- "Please, what can I do for a Muslim sister going through depression?"
- "Remind me of all the benefits of hosting"
- "Give me 3 reasons why Allah blesses those who are patient and persevere"
- Me, 2am, kids kept me awake all night: *"Man that was rough."*
Ansari responded with exactly the right verses

Feedback Given Through the UI

1,914 total entries. **85.5% positive**, 11.8% negative, **2.7% red flag** (28 cases).

Red flags include:

- **Quran meaning inverted** — said "Allah forbade trade and permitted usury" (opposite of 2:275)
- **Offensive inference** — assumed user lacked sincerity based on question
- **Wrong dates** — gave 2025 Ramadan dates when asked in 2026

Most negative feedback: stuck/loops (~15), incorrect info (~12),

The System Prompt (aka SOUL.md)

The instruction that shapes Ansari's behavior:

- **Identity:** multilingual Islamic assistant, Sunni tradition
- **Sources:** only cite Quran, Hadith, and Fiqh Encyclopedia from search results
- **Attribution:** never attribute statements to scholars without specific evidence
- **Hadith caution:** only use Hadith found in search results; if unsure, say so
- **Controversial topics:** present main positions objectively, highlight consensus first, don't declare one position correct when legitimate disagreement exists
- **Obligatory/prohibited matters:** must be backed by direct evidence

10,000 Personalities

An expert in the field described it this way:

"There are 10,000 personalities living inside those 500 billion parameters. The system prompt is how you choose which one it is."

The system prompt defines the **"soul"**.

Validation: Three Approaches

1. **BATIK** — 100 multiple-choice questions from real user queries
 - GPT-3.5: 77% → GPT-4: 95% → **Ansari v3: 100%**
2. **Dar ul Qasim Exams** (Chicago Islamic institute, zero-shot)
 - Intro to Quran: **80%**
 - Theology exam: **78%**
3. **Ramadan Validation** (34 questions, human-rated 1–5)
 - Overall: **4.41/5** — 100% helpful, 0 hallucinations, 82% used references

New: Benchmarks!

RANK ▲	MODEL ▲	TIER ▲	OVERALL ▲	FIQH ▲	QURAN ▲	HADITH ▲	% UNANSWERED ▲	MADHAB BIAS ▲
🏆	ansari-3.5 Custom · Standard	Baseline	94.2	87.2	99.5	95.8	0	Shafi'i
🥈	google/gemini-3-flash-preview OpenRouter · Reasoning	Frontier	93.8	89.1	99.2	93	0	Maliki
🥉	google/gemini-3-pro-preview OpenRouter · Standard	Frontier	92.3	87.9	97.3	91.7	0	Hanafi
4	google/gemini-2.5-pro OpenRouter · Standard	Frontier	90.3	85.5	95.8	89.7	0	Shafi'i
5	gpt-5 OpenAI · Standard	Frontier	89.9	83.5	98	88.2	0	Shafi'i
6	gpt-5.2 OpenAI · Standard	Frontier	89.5	85.9	94.8	87.8	0	Shafi'i
7	gpt-5.1 OpenAI · Standard	Frontier	88.4	81.5	95.3	88.3	0	Hanbali
8	anthropic/claude-sonnet-4.5 OpenRouter · Standard	Frontier	86.2	84.9	88.2	85.4	0	Maliki
9	anthropic/claude-opus-4.5 OpenRouter · Standard	Frontier	86	72.7	94.6	90.8	0	Hanafi

What's Next: Keeping People Coming Back

Two audiences:

- **Specialists** (imams, teachers): daily users, loyal
- **Average Muslims**: come once, leave

Strategy: don't wait for them to come to Ansari.

- **Ansari Skill**: available inside Claude, ChatGPT — no separate app needed
- **A short lesson each day**, at your level
- Not just answering — proactively teaching

Conclusions — Ansari Case Study

- People **do** use AI to practise and understand their deen better
- You can define the **"soul" of an AI** through the system prompt
- With RAG, you can build systems that **rarely if ever hallucinate**
- 140K+ conversations prove the demand is real

Break

3:30–3:45

Session 6 — Preparing the Community for AI

3:45–4:30

Using AI in the Community — Communications

- Auto-translated newsletters, khutab, social media posts
 - Reach underserved sub-communities
 - Summarized or targeted posts to different age groups (e.g. emphasizing programs for teens)
 - Simultaneously generate a press release for event, a WhatsApp message, an Instagram post
- Reaching out to different age groups and demographics

Using AI in the Community — Programs & Activism

- Activity design: workshops, summer programs, long-running halaqa
- Community activism
 - Organizing and repetitive admin work (emails, announcements, reminders, newsletters, or program outlines)

Helping Your Community Deal With AI

AI will lead to major societal changes

- Upheaval, even. Our community will not be exempt:
- Nature of jobs, employment, labor market
 - “AI won’t replace human workers, but people that use it will replace people that don’t” – Andrew Ng
 - Training programs
- AI “companions” and “friends” - adults and children!
 - Dealing with addiction

Major societal changes (*continued*)

- Students and Education
- Deepfakes
 - Strategy to deal with this as a community
- Akhlaq and interpersonal relationships
 - Ability to form relationships, resolve conflict

Data and Privacy

- Data is digital gold
- “If you don’t pay for the product, you are the product”
 - Find a company (e.g. Proton, Kagi, Brave) that has privacy in terms of service. Even better, one that doesn’t store your data at all.
- Temporary Mode on ChatGPT, Incognito mode for Gemini
- Advanced option: Self-host an LLM

Teach your community to fish

- Point them to the **Islamic AIs**: askansari.ai · usul.ai · qaf.ai · aifiqh.com · islamify.ai · dalail.ai
- For the general AIs they already use: the tested prompt that **supports their iman**
- Share it with your community: s.iasher.ai/prompt

Session 7 — Advanced Techniques

4:30–4:45

Agent Skills

- Skills teach your AI to do new things
- • Skills = plug-in tools that give AI new abilities
- • Example: Add Ansari as a skill to Claude or ChatGPT
- → Now your AI can answer Islamic questions with sources
- • Other examples: web search, calculator, code execution
- • Think of it like apps on your phone — each one adds a new power

The prompt for your general AI

- From the research session: the tested prompt that makes your general AI **support your iman**
- The simplest install there is — one paste, per-platform instructions
- s.iaser.ai/prompt — install it now

Claude → Cowork → Code

- **claude.ai** — chat: ask, draft, discuss
- **Claude Cowork** — "Claude Code without the code": agentic, multi-step work on your files and documents (all paid plans)
- **Claude Code** — the most powerful AI engine today, not just for code (learning curve)

Gemini Spark

- Google's **24/7 personal agent** — keeps working in the background, even with your laptop closed
- Deeply integrated with **Gmail, Docs and Slides**; handles recurring tasks
- Google AI Ultra subscribers

Agentic revolution — What agents are

- Agents are AI that are continually running
 - They Reflect: Am I working well?
 - They Plan: How do I accomplish this goal?
 - They use tools: Search is one tool but what other ways can it interact with the world?
 - They talk to one another

App Building: Level 1 — Artifacts

- Claude and Gemini can generate interactive apps in chat
- • Describe what you want → get a working app instantly
- • Great for: calculators, quizzes, simple tools
- • Easy to iterate — just ask for changes

App Building: Level 2 — Replit

- AI-powered development for full applications
- • Describe your app in plain English → Replit builds it
- • Deploy to the web with one click
- • No coding required

Session 8 — Closing: Q&A & Implementation

4:45–5:00

Closing: Q&A and what comes next :

Parting thoughts

- Your Q + A
- My Q + A
 - What was the most important thing you learned today?
 - Do you remember the 5 approaches to using AI and the 4 things to watch out for?
 - What is one thing you will use AI for after today?