



# VOYAGES *Journal* OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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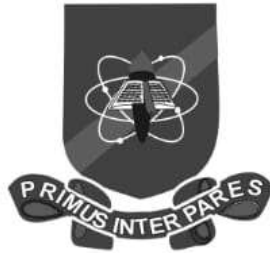
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## **EDITORIAL**

It is with great pleasure and gratitude to Allah (SAW) that on behalf of the Editorial Board, I am presenting the 7<sup>th</sup> volume, December 2021 edition of Voyages Journal of Religious Studies, a publication of the Department of Religious Studies, Gombe State University. This edition of the publication has in it a number of articles from reputable scholars within the world of academia across disciplines.

Some of the issues covered in this volume center on Qur'an, ethics and morals, Islamic education, Da'wah activities, cultural values, pandemic in the teachings of Islam, Ulumul Hadith, peaceful coexistence and an examination of some biblical verses on stewardship as it applies to the Nigerian context.

My sincere gratitude goes to the authors who contributed their wealth of knowledge. I wish to acknowledge the efforts of the editorial consultants and the editorial board who work tirelessly to see the success of this edition. Thank you.

Lastly, we give a tribute to our former Editor-in-Chief, Prof. Umaru Dahiru, may Allah have mercy on him and grant him Jannah. Amin.

**Dr. Fatima Abubakar,**

Head, Department of Religious Studies,  
Gombe State University, Gombe, Nigeria.

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# The Fundamental Principles of Islamic Ethics and Morals in Teaching and *Da'wah*

Auwal Abdullahi,<sup>1</sup> Fatima Abubakar<sup>2</sup> and Aliyu Alhaji Rabiu<sup>3</sup>

## Abstract

Islam as a complete code of life has explicit moral codes and ethical system that regulate the behavior and interactions of Muslims from individual level to the international level. From politics to economics, education to social relations and interaction; all endeavors of a Muslim's life are guided by the Shari'ah which prescribes what is right or proscribes what is wrong. Islamic ethical principles and moral codes are clearly rooted in the Glorious Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW) who was sent to teach and guide people to the right path. With all the formal school systems and many Islamic organizations which undertake *da'wah* activities, teaching and proselytization still find it difficult to achieve their aims. This paper, therefore, employs analytical methods of qualitative analysis drawing data from the Glorious Qur'ān and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as well as other sources of Islamic law to explore the underlining basic principles of Islamic ethics and morals guiding teaching and *da'wah*. The paper further recommended ways of achieving a more sustainable teaching and *da'wah* practices in Muslim communities and beyond.

**Keywords:** Islamic ethics, Morality, *Da'wah* and *Ta'lim*

## Introduction

The system of ethics is considered the protective fence of societies and their secure fortification against social spyware and problems that might hinder the progress of these communities. The talk about morality is a talk about the survival of a nation or its demise (Abdullahi 131). Islam is very explicit on moral issues relating to politics, law, economics, social relations and interactions, public administration, education, etc. (Ayub, Hamzah, & Razak, 23). From greetings to multilateral international relations, Muslims have a guiding set of conducts and moral codes that dictate how to talk, dress, walk, trade, use the restroom etc. The life of any Muslim either at individual or community level should ideally reflect the teachings contained in the Qur'ān and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The Prophet's high standard of manners made him a model for all Muslims.

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Though unlettered, but the Prophet (SAW) was able to become the greatest of teachers and the grand *Da'iy* (proselyte) of his *Ummah*. Teaching and *Da'wah* specifically are essential practices that facilitate the propagation and dissemination of the beautiful teachings of Islam (Faryadi, 2015). They are what the Prophet (SAW) was sent to do and the legacy he left for his *sahabah* (RA). Allah (SWT) says:

He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger (Muhammad SAW) from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them (from the filth of disbelief and polytheism), and teaching them the Book (this Qur'an, Islamic laws and Islamic jurisprudence) and Al-Hikmah (As-Sunnah: legal ways, orders, acts of worship of Prophet Muhammad). And verily, they had been before in manifest error (Qur'an, Jumu'ah, 62:2).

This task of the Prophet (SAW) was passed over to the companions and *ahl al-ilm* (people of knowledge who continue the same trend. As the Prophet (SAW) said: "*Scholars are the inheritors of the prophets (AS)*" (Sunan At-Tirmizi). As a model, the Prophet (SAW), though unlettered, but was the greatest teacher and greatest *da'iy* of all the generations because of his excellent virtues and moral behaviors. Allah SWT says: "*There is indeed a good model for you in the Messenger of Allah - for the one who has hope in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah profusely*" (Qur'an, Al-Ahzab, 33:21).

The hitherto situation of our Islamiyyah school system in most parts of northern Nigeria in recent times is too tragic; despite having well developed curricula fully structured school systems, the institution is failing. In the view of the students, the teachers (*ustaadhs*) are ordinary employees and not worthy of the profound respect that is associated with the disseminators of the knowledge. Noble Islamic character, willingness to work, and the unwavering pursuance of true *ilm* (knowledge) is being ignored and the results are tragically lamentable (Ahmed 64). Any endeavor cannot come to perfect fruition if the correct procedure is not followed. Therefore, going back to proper Islamic code of teaching as enshrined by the Qur'ān and Sunnah is very much imperative in the creation of an ideal society full of knowledge and vigor.

### **The Concepts of Ethics and Morality**

Ethics and morals are often used interchangeably. The word "**Ethics**" is derived from the Greek word "*Ethos*" which means character, decency or custom (Dedi 38; Ebrahimi Yusoff 326 and Abdullahi 131). Ethics is the body of moral principles or values regarding right and wrong that is done by every person in a group or society. "Morality" comes from the Latin word "*moralitas*" meaning manner, character, proper behavior (Younus 60). Morality is the code of conduct that an individual, group or society hold as authoritative in distinguishing rights from wrong at personal, interpersonal and societal levels. It determines right and wrong actions (dos and don'ts) and carries with it consequences of man's choice of actions" (Musa 181).

Islamic ethics, therefore, refers to a set of rules which are guiding Muslims so that they can live good and ideal life while being civilized (Hassan 12). Islamic morals are behaviors, characters and manners which are acceptable and recommended by the Shari'ah. From the few definitions of Islamic ethics and morals, it could be deduced that ethics and morality are very important in human life. It is a means of attaining perfection in this life and greatness in the life after.

### **Nature of Islamic Ethics and Morality**

Unlike other systems, Islamic ethics and moral values are derived from a divine source. This divine source is the revelation from Allah. Therefore, this system cannot be changed, or manipulated to fit our desires. It applies regardless of time or place. This system has not been changed for thousands of years, it cannot be changed today, and it will never change until the Day of Judgement. No one has the authority to change or alter this system, even if the whole world wants to do so. What was considered good morals in the past will remain as good morals throughout time. What was considered as bad morals in the past will also remain so forever.

The Islamic system of ethics is not affected by cultural norms, because Allah is the One who determines what is acceptable and what is not. The Noble Qur'an is very detailed and clearly mentions the significance of good manners, just like it mentions the importance of belief, worship, and all our daily affairs. Allah, the Almighty says in the Qur'an: "... *This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. But as for him who is forced by severe hunger, with no inclination to sin, then surely, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful*" (Ma'idah, 4:3).

Unlike other ethical systems, Islam's moral system is a very detailed and complete package (comprehensiveness). Islam goes as far as teaching us the way that we should walk, visit one another, enter houses, eat, drink, dress, sleep, travel, greet, take permission, sneeze, yawn and other seemingly trivial acts. Islam addresses every aspect of human life, no matter how minor. It does not lack anything that needs to be completed nor does it have any defects that need to be amended. The Islamic religion guides our Good Character that deal with the individual, the community, and Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

It also guides us on how to deal with rulers and how to honor and respect scholars. Islam even directs us on how to act during times of peace and war. It goes as far as guiding us on the treatment of animals. The Prophet (SAW) said in this regard: "*Let one of you sharpen his knife and give ease to the animal in order to reduce the pain*" (Sahih Muslim, Book 34, Hadith 84). No other ethical system can match Islam's one. Only Allah, with His great wisdom, could have made such a system that teaches humans how to deal with every aspect of their lives. This is because Islam is not a man-made system; it is the religion of Allah. He made it complete and integrated. No man has, can or ever will come up with a system that is so perfect. If you want a successful and happy life, then simply apply Islam to it, and you will have wonderful results.

Universality is another distinctive characteristic of Islamic Ethics and Morality (Al-Bar and Chamsi-Pasha 51). What is permissible in China is equally permissible in Chile, Muslims world over observe the same morals. Therefore, the Glorious Book “while reaffirming the truth of all previous revelations, itself comprises of all truth for the whole of mankind for all times, ages, colors, creeds and languages” (Rahman, 1981). Allah says: “*And We have not sent you (O Muhammad SAW) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind, but most of men know not*” (Saba’, 34:28). This verse indicates that Islamic principles are universal and applicable to all Muslims without discrimination based on caste, race, tribe etc.

### **Significance of Islamic Ethics and Morals**

When Allah create man, He designed within him wishes, desires and tendencies that attract and push him to do good or evil. So, there was to be a controller to direct these desires and tendencies in a positive direction so that humans do not fall to the lowest level and elevate them psychologically, mentally and spiritually. Ethics provides the means for deciding purposeful courses of action that otherwise would become random, arbitrary and even aimless (Adibah 511).

Ethics are individual, social and an urgent humanitarian necessity. Good morals instill a sense of duty and enable the virtue of self, and this makes the good behavior a self-emission towards truth, goodness and justice. Thus, if the situation of the individual is right, the community is also right. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) gave a great position to morals: he made them the aim of his message to the people by saying, “*I was sent to uphold and complement ethical values.*” (Adab al-Mufrad 273).

*Adab Al-Islam* (Islamic manners) and discipline train and educate the individual to control his passions and to respond to the voice of reason. They also educate him to exhibit qualities of patience, of being content and of self-dependence, that is, not seeking the help of others unless unavoidable. Islamic ethics are intended to concentrate attention on the essentials, to rescue man from the distraction. They distinguish means from ends and help individuals and community to administer personal and collective resources effectively.

The rules of conduct for a Muslim life contain sound wisdom, whether viewed in religious, cultural, social, economic, psychological or even medical terms. It follows that, for a healthy, balanced life, individual and community should apply these rules comprehensively and conscientiously (Abdullahi 132). After the creation of man, Almighty Allah gave him an authority to live his life according to his own choice whether it’s good or bad choice. Allah has given this freedom to the man because it is basically his test how he will live his life that is according to the way that Allah described or the other that is evil. Allah says: “*Verily, We showed him the way, whether he be grateful or ungrateful*” (Qur’an, Al-Insan, 76:3).

Islam has set some universal fundamental rights for humanity, which are to be noticed and respected under all situations. These include protection of life, religion, lineage, intellect,

honor and property (Al-Bar and Chamsi-Pasha 54). To achieve this, Islam provides not only legal safeguards but also a very effective moral system. So whatever point to the interest of the individual or the society is morally good in Islam and whatever is injurious is morally bad.

### Sources of Ethics and Morals in Islam

Sources of ethics in Islam are the same sources of Islamic legislation or Shari'ah. The Glorious Qur'an is the first source of morality, which contains an ethical system that calls for supremacy and eminence. Allah says:

... We have sent down on you the Book as an exposition of everything (that pertains to guidance and error, and to the knowledge of good and evil, and to happiness and misery in both worlds), and guidance and mercy and glad tidings for the Muslims (those who have submitted themselves wholly to God)" (Qur'an, An-Nahl, 16:89).

The second source of ethics is the Prophetic Sunnah. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is the real and behavioral translation of what is stated in the Qur'an about morals. The life of the Prophet (SAW) is an invitation to good morals because, *"nor does he, in regard to what he brings you, speak out of [his own] desire, [out of] the whims of his soul"* (Najm 53 verse 3).

### Ethical Rankings in Islam

According to Abdullahi, ethics from Islamic perspective, can be divided into four levels:

1. **Personal Ethics** that lead to the individual benefit and goodness such as patience to scourge and thanks to the grace. It is linked to the relationship of the individual with the creator (Al-Asmer, 1997).
2. **The Social Ethics** which benefit the community such as cooperation, honoring parents, good neighborliness (Al-Sibai, 1979).
3. **Human morality which benefits the humanity:** It is based on respecting others' opinions and behaviors (Sabri, 2002).
4. **The universal ethics which benefit all that Allah created** from non-humans like animals and others by investing in them for the benefit of all mankind (Al- Hili and Al-Suyuti, 1987).

### The Concept of Teaching in Islam

Islam has, from its inception, placed a high premium on education and has enjoyed a long and rich intellectual tradition (Faryadi 49). Knowledge (*'ilm*) occupies a significant position within Islam as evidenced by the more than 800 references to it in Islam's most revered book, the Qur'an. Allah says: *"Allah will exalt those of you who believe and those who have knowledge to high degrees"* (Qur'an, 58:11). Teaching is the process that facilitates learning of either or both of *Naqli* (divine knowledge) and *Aqli* (logical and intellectual knowledge). It also refers

to the presentation of knowledge, and demonstration of ability or skills that enable students make connections of the old and the new knowledge to form new ideas (Faryadi 55).

By the virtue of Shari'ah, seeking knowledge (of Shari'ah), is compulsory upon every Muslim as stated in the hadith (Sunan Ibn Majah, The Book of the Sunnah, Hadith 224). Disseminating the knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim. The prophet (SAW) said: *“Convey from me be it even one verse”* (Bukhari, 3461). Allah's Apostle (SAW) also said: *“Let the one who is present convey to the one who is absent”* (Bukhari, 234).

Islam sees the role of teachers not only to teach, but they also act as change agents in the society. They serve the society as educators, counsellors, trainers, guides and consultants. They are obliged to ensure the academic excellence as well as outstanding personal traits of students (Ahmed 55). Teaching facilitates learning of *ilm* (knowledge), *tarbiyyah* (spiritual and ethical nurturing) and *adab* (development of sound social behavior). This job requires a teacher to apply the best ethical and moral values in teaching and there is no doubt, that the Prophet (SAW) is the model in that respect.

### The Concept of *Da'wah*

*Da'wah* (دعوة) is an Arabic word which is derived from the root *da'a* (whose triconsonantal root is د ع و) which signifies “to summon”, “to call” or “to invite” (Bilal) someone to something great especially a religious belief. It literally means issuing a sermon or making an invitation. The term is often used to describe how Muslims teach others about the beliefs and practices of their Islamic Faith (Huda 1). *Da'wah* is an instruction from our Lord where he said: *“Invite all to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious. For your Lord knows best who have stayed from His path, and those who receive guidance”* (Qur'an, Al-Nahl, 16:125).

Both Muslims and non-Muslims could be targets of *da'wah*, hence, it entails inviting and sharing information about Islam, spreading the good teachings of Islam for people to understand how to worship Allah as described in the Qur'an and Sunnah (Huda 3). Allah the almighty says: *“And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful”* (Qur'an, Al-Imran, 3:104). He (SWT) also says: *“Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to Allah, works righteousness, and says, I am of those who bow in Islam?”* (Al-Qur'an 41:33). The act of calling people to the path of Allah is not meant only for scholars; rather, it is a general command to everyone to spread the message on a basic level. Four things are required for one to enter paradise which include having faith, performing righteous deeds, advising others to the truth and righteousness, and being consistent and patient while doing so (Suratul Al-Asr, 103:1-3).

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## Nexus between Teaching and *Da'wah*

Teaching and *Da'wah* are both commands from Allah (SWT) to His Messenger, Muhammad (SAW), hence, are considered acts of *ibadah* (worship) that attract reward. They are, historically, the major instruments used in spreading Islam. Both *da'wah* and teaching have similar ethical requirements and are guided by identical moral values. Teaching can be considered as a form of *da'wah*, and *da'wah* also involves elements of teaching; therefore, they are complementary to each other. One cannot invite people to the right way without teaching them the doctrines of Islam. While teaching, one is persuaded to willingly accept certain Islamic ideals, which is a form of *da'wah*. *Da'wah* is both for Muslims and non-Muslims, while teaching is mostly done for Muslims. While a *Da'i* uses his knowledge, actions and good manners to invite people to the *Deen*, these traits are passed on from teacher to students during teaching and they form the main targets of teaching in Islam.

## Islamic Ethical Principles while Teaching and *Da'wah*

For teaching and *da'wah* to be effective, there is need for character adjustment and modelling according to the Islamic ethical system. The greatest teacher and *Da'i* of our time is the Prophet (SAW) who was sent to teach the good ethical systems and Islamic doctrines. As un-lettered, he was able to teach thousands of people and send the message of Islam across great nations and provinces. Therefore, any affair of Muslims' life is referred to Allah and His Messenger SAW. Allah says: “...If you differ on anything among yourselves refer it to Allah and his messenger, if you do believe in Allah and the Last Day that is best, and suitable for final determination” (Qur'an, Nisa'i, 4:59). The excellent virtues, manners, attitudes and general behaviors of *Rasulullah* (SAW) are the general reference to all Muslims, teachers, *du'at* and others.

The following are some general ethical principles that regulate, direct and guide the practice of teaching and *da'wah* from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Ebrahimi and Yusoff (328) and Dedi (38) noted similar traits:

### 1. Sincerity of Intention (*Ikhlas*)

According to prophetic saying, all deeds are adjudged (to be accepted or rejected) based on the intention of the doer. Teachers and *Du'at* should be sincere in their intention. Whilst teaching or undertaking any *da'wah* activity, they should never be desirous of obtaining the *dunya*. One should only teach for the pleasure of Allah (SWT) and for earning the *akhirah* (hereafter). One should not teach or call to religion of Islam merely for some worldly gain or to earn some luxuries and a handsome salary. If a person does so, he has made his *Ilm* (knowledge) a means of attaining this world. The Prophet (SAW) has strongly prohibited this. It is mentioned in a Hadith that: “The one who acquires knowledge of *Din* through which he could earn the pleasure of Allah (SWT), but instead he does so only so that he can gain the pleasures of the

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world, then such a person will not even smell the fragrance of Jannah” (Riyad as-Salihin, Book of Knowledge, 1376).

Sayyidina Umar (RA) stated that, if you see an (*Aalim*) scholar who has love for this world, then, treat him suspiciously in matters regarding *Din*. The reason for this is that whatever a person is inclined to, his attention will be directed towards that. An *Aalim* should never allow greed to enter his heart.

## 2. *Taqwa* (Consciousness of Allah)

This term means, fear of Allah, being conscious of Allah, piousness, piety, devotion and religiosity etc. Ibn al-Qayyim considers *taqwa* as doing what Allah commands and avoiding all what He prohibits, protecting oneself from hellfire and earning paradise. In a classroom or outside, during *da'wah* or after, teachers and those calling to Islam should be conscious of Allah. Having *taqwa* will guide *du'at* to do what pleases Allah and avoid that which He prohibits. The noble Prophet (SAW) was reported to have said: “*Fear Allah wherever you are*” (Sunan al-Tirmidhī 1987).

## 3. Honesty and Truthfulness

In Islam, honesty is expected when dealing with other people and serves to unite notions of candor and truthfulness in actions, relationships and verbal exchanges. Thus, Islam compels truthfulness and forbids deceit. Al-Qur’ān commands honesty where Allah says: “*O you who believe! Keep from disobedience to Allah in reverence for Him and piety and keep the company of the truthful (those who are also faithful to their covenant with Allah)*” (Qur’ān At-Tawbah, 9:119). Prophet Muhammad (SAW), as a firm believer in Allah, is the perfect example of a character that embodied honesty and received the titles, *al-Amin*, the trustworthy, and *al-Sadiq*, the truthful, even prior to his elevation to Prophethood. Allah says in this regard:

Those who have believed in God and His Messengers (those whose actions prove their profession of faith) - they are, in the sight of their Lord, the loyal and truthful (to God in whatever they do and say), and the witnesses (who have borne testimony to the truth with their lives). They have their (particular) reward and their (particular) light. But those who disbelieve and deny Our manifest signs and Revelations – they will be the companions of the Blazing Flame (Al-Hadid, 57:19).

Allah (SWT) strictly forbids deceit and says that hellfire awaits those who conduct their life dishonestly. Allah also commands Muslims to be honest when consuming wealth:

O you who believe! Do not consume one another’s wealth in wrongful ways (such as theft, extortion, bribery, usury, and gambling), except it be dealing by mutual agreement; and do not destroy yourselves (individually or collectively, by following wrongful ways like extreme asceticism and idleness. Be ever mindful that) God has

surely been All-Compassionate towards you (particularly as believers) (An-Nisa', 4:29).

Here, Allah (SWT) forbids the consumption of other people's wealth with dishonest intent and reprimands Muslims on the matter to prevent murder consequently. He says: *"Do not confound the truth by mixing it with falsehood, and do not conceal the truth while you know (the meaning and outcome of what you do, and that what you strive to hide is true, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, whose coming you have been anticipating)"* (Al-Baqarah, 2:42).

It is antithetical to Islamic ethics to mix truth with falsehood. An instance of this is telling partial truth when witnessing a crime committed by someone related to you. Allah forbids the concealing of truth when you know it, for example, lying for a family member who committed theft to prevent the pursuit of justice. Time and again, Allah reprimands Muslims to follow His instructions contained in the Qur'an to prohibit lying. The Qur'an extols truthfulness and encourages Muslims to always speak the truth. They are also exhorted to keep the company of only those who are truthful (Qur'an, 9: 119). In the hearts of the small children however, the seeds of the greatness and importance of truth should be sown, so that they may grow up and develop on truth and may give it its due place in their actions and utterances. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: *"Truth guides to virtue and virtue guides to paradise. A person persists in saying the truth until in the sight of Allah he is named Truthful. Lying leads to vice and vice leads to the fire: and a person goes on lying till in the sight of Allah named a liar"* (Muslim 2607).

The Glorious Qur'an asks rhetorically: *"Oh you who believe, why do you say things you do not do? It is grievously odious in the eyes of Allah to say what you cannot do"* (Qur'an 61: 2-3). It may thus be said that, even during jokes, Muslims are expected to be truthful. It is observed that people use to give full rein to their tongues in the matter of humorous talks to make others laugh, and do not hesitate to spread the tales and stories invented by friends and foes only for the purpose of eliciting some pleasure or to cause amusement. The Prophet (SAW) retorted strongly: *"Destruction is for the man who tells lies for the amusement of other people"* (Tirmidhi hadith 1939). And he (SAW) also said:

Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. And a man keeps on telling the truth until he becomes a truthful person. Falsehood leads to Al-Fujur (i.e., wickedness, evil-doing), and Al-Fujur (wickedness) leads to the (Hell) Fire, and a man may keep on telling lies till he is written before Allah, a liar (Bukhari, 6094).

Therefore, whether in a class or outside, during preaching or not, teachers and *du'at* are expected to be truthful and honest in their dealings.

#### **4. Justice and Fairness**

As a high moral principle and from Islam's ethical perspective, justice is defined as treating others fairly by providing them with what they rightfully deserve in the Islamic context, and by rightfully positioning things. Allah says in the Qur'an:

God commands you to deliver trusts (including public and professional duties of services) to those entitled to them, and when you judge between people, to judge with justice. How excellent is what God exhorts you to do. Surely God is All-Hearing, All-Seeing (An-Nisa', 4:58).

For justice to be fully applied to the highest degree, Muslims must purify themselves by keeping their acts and beliefs virtuous. They should also stand tall and proudly protect the sanctity of Islam by becoming those who deliverer justice. Allah instructs:

O you who believe! Be upholders and standard-bearers of right for Allah's sake, being witnesses for (the establishment of) absolute justice. And by no means let your detestation for a people (or their detestation for you) move you to (commit the sin of) deviating from justice. Be just: this is nearer and more suited to righteousness and piety. Seek righteousness and piety, and always act with reverence for God. Surely God is fully aware of all that you do (Al-Ma'idah, 5:8).

This verse shows that Allah disallows injustice and hatred (e.g., through discrimination) and that He also disregards color and ethnic differences because people are equal in His sight. Hence, God commands humankind to hold justice with the highest esteem. Allah has repeatedly reprimanded mankind regarding injustice in al-Qur'an, wishing to protect us from the mistakes of our ancestors. In the Qur'an Allah asks man to judge fairly (Q4: 58); to use Qur'an in judging cases (Q4: 105); to avoid partiality in judgement and remain firm, fair and just even if the case involves oneself, parents, kin, friends, rich, poor, powerful or weak people and one should not allow his lust to influence his sense of judgement (Q4: 135). On his authority, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) advocates justice without fear or favor, affection or ill-will. Aisha (RA) reported Allah's messenger (SAW) to have said:

Part of what destroyed your predecessors was that when a person of rank amongst them committed a theft, they left him alone; but when a weak one of their number committed a theft, they inflicted the prescribed punishment on him. I swear by Allah that if Fatimah, daughter of Muhammad should steal, I would have her hand cut off (Muslim, 4187).

#### **5. Gentleness and Simplicity**

Gentleness is a key quality of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). When he wanted to teach his companions, he used a very wise method which entailed respect for the recipients of such knowledge without embarrassing them (Ibrahim 23). One day a Bedouin urinated in the

mosque, and the people ran to beat him, the Prophet (SAW) said: "Do not interrupt his urination (i.e., let him finish). Then the Prophet (SAW) asked for a tumbler of water and poured the water over the place of urine" (Al-Bukhari). In another version, the Prophet (SAW) called the man and explained to him that the mosques are not places for urine, but they are for offering prayer and worshipping God. When teaching a lesson, the teacher should refrain from explaining the lesson in a way that is beyond the understanding of the students. In this regard, we should follow the way of Rasulullah (SAW).

Imam Malik said: It is not appropriate for an *Aalim* to speak to anyone about anything that is beyond his understanding. Knowledge, which is meant for the advanced students, should not be explained to the beginners. Instead, before teaching the more profound or deeper aspects of *Ilm*, the basic aspects should be taught to the beginners and their *tarbiyah* should be made.

## 6. Equality

Daughters are sometimes considered to be burden. For this reason, Islam has devoted particular attention to the proper and equal treatment of both boys and girls and extolled it as an act of great virtue. The Prophet (SAW) said:

Anyone who has a female child and does not bury her alive or treat her unjustly, nor does he prefer his male child to her but looks after her welfare and training and marries her at the right place, Allah will admit him into paradise" (Sunan An-Nabi Dawud 5146).

In the area of maintaining love and peace, however, Qur'ān takes a step further by instructing that, all men are equal, whatever their color, language, race, ethnicity, nationality and background. It addresses itself to the conscience of humanity and banishes all false barriers in form of race, status and wealth. Qur'ān removes all these impediments and proclaims the idea that the whole of mankind originated from Adam and Hawa' who were created by Allah. This verse explains:

O mankind be conscious of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul; and from it created the spouse thereof and from the two-spread multitude of men and women. And be conscious of your duty toward Allah in Whom you claim (your rights) of one another and towards the womb that bore you. Lo Allah has been a Watcher over you (Al-Nisa', 4:1).

The above verse is not addressed to believers alone, but to men and women in general, who are told that they are all members of one family and their divisions into race, colors, tribes, families and nations should not lead to estrangement from, but to a better knowledge of each other. A Muslim is therefore asked not to make any discrimination based on color, race, or nationality. Jabir Ibn Abdullah (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah, (SAW) said in the

farewell sermon: “O people, your Lord is one and your father Adam is one. There is no virtue of an Arab over a foreigner, nor a foreigner over an Arab, and neither white over black nor black over white, except by righteousness” (Shu’ab Al-Imān 4706).

All students or members of the society, whatever their race, or tribe, or dynasty, or color, or language, are equal and should be treated equally in the teaching environment or field of *da’wah*.

### **7. Fulfillment of Promises and Trusts**

Great stress has been laid in Islam on faithfulness to agreements and trusts. This is in fact another type of honest and a quality which people should embrace. A Muslim teacher or *Da’i* must fulfil his promises and keep to his pledges. When he enters any contract, he should honor the agreement. He should be known among the people as a man of reliable promises, and there should be no fear of any breach of promises or of any dubious dealings from him. However, this fulfillment of promises and pledges are necessary only when the dealing is legitimate and concerns truth, otherwise, it should not be honored. Abu Hurairah (RA) reported that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: “He who took an oath and then found another thing better than that, he should do that which is better, and expiate for the vow (broken by him)” (Muslim, 4053).

In the eyes of Islamic scholars, trust has a wide dimension. But underneath it all, is the sense of responsibility. It may be in form of legacy, wealth, property, moral obligation or leadership. Even our own lives are supposed to be held in trust by us. And verily, Allah our creator expects us to make the best use of it because all our actions are to be accounted for in the day of reckoning before Allah. Of those people who always respect and fulfil their promises and trusts: Q.23: 1, 8, 10-11. Allah says: “The successful indeed are the believers... those who faithfully observe their trusts and promises ... these will be the heirs. Who will inherit paradise and they will dwell in there forever.” In Surah al-Ma’idah, Allah says: “O you who believe! Fulfil all contracts” (Qur’ān 5:1). In a nutshell, it implies all obligations imposed by Allah upon his servants and what he made lawful for them and what He forbids. There are tacit obligations in the characters of host and guest, wayfarer or companion, employer or employee, etc. which every man of faith must discharge conscientiously.

### **8. Love, Compassion and Kindness**

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) loved his companions and cared for them a lot as his students. A teacher must have compassion for his students in the same way a father would have for his own children. Rasulullah (SAW) said: “I am to you like a father (is to his child, I teach you) (Sunan Abi Dawud, Hadith 8).

Abu Hurairah (RA) reported that the Prophet (SAW) said: *“Whoever is kind, affable, easy-going, Allah will forbid him from entering Hellfire”* (Al-Sunanul Kubra Lil-Bayhaqi 20806). Do not punish children whilst you are angry. An angry doctor cannot cure a patient. Similarly, an angry teacher who has no self-control will not be able to discipline his students, thus, causing more harm than good. The counsellor, who advises with scorn, serves only to add venom to venom. A pious person once mentioned that a teacher must be an embodiment of love and kindness. Nobody is prepared to listen to harsh words. Allah mentions in the Qur’an: *“Had you been harsh and hard hearted, they would have dispersed from around you”* (Qur’an 3:159). Love, compassion, kindness, sympathy and mercy are all values that should be inherent behaviors to both teachers and *du’at* alike. Students will better learn from kind and compassionate teacher than from a harsh teacher.

### 9. Patience and Tolerance

Islam is the religion of mercy and kindness, the religion of tolerance and ease. Once when the Prophet (SAW) was asked, “What is Iman (belief/faith)?” He (SAW) replied: *“Iman (faith) is patience and tolerance”* (Al-Silsilah al-Sahihah, no. 554, 2/87). This saying of the prophet SAW means that patience and tolerance are an integral part of a Muslim’s belief and are from the best aspects of Iman. Any teacher or caller to the path of Allah must be extremely patient and tolerant. He should be ready to face difficult times and unpalatable things. A teacher must be patient and tolerant with his students, their deliberate bad behaviors and their deviance. The Prophet (SAW) was faced with so many difficulties to the level that his life was threatened in Mecca before he was commanded to migrate to Madinah. The rule remains, embrace all people and be patient with them.

### 10. Modesty

In the teaching/*da’wah* processes, modesty plays an important role for the teacher and the *Da’i*. The duo have to develop the sense that own they are dealing with their own children and people so that he may behave modestly with them. Modesty is said to be the half *īmān* (belief) in Islam. This ethical principle is mentioned at different places in the Qur’an, one of which Allah says: *“Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: And Allah is well acquainted with all that they do”* (Qur’an, Nur, 24:30). The Prophet (SAW) also said: *“Eat, drink, wear decent clothes and give alms without extravagance and conceit”* (Bukhari 5969).

Both men and women are required to dress decently. Though, Islam permits men to cover at least from the navel to the knees with loose fitting clothing, wearing of decent shirts, trousers, socks, caps or turbans are endorsed. Islam permits the wearing of white clothes, the use of red, green, yellow and black color clothes of cotton, woolen and other varieties but disallows the wearing of silk materials. Therefore, teacher or *Da’i* is not expected to wear anything contrary to this defined clothing. Hopefully the students will also learn from him.

Muslim women who are teachers and *Da'iyah* should wear *hijāb*, which is more than just a head cover. Allah orders in the Qur'ān, 24: 30-31:

And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw their veils over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their own husbands or fathers or husbands fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons, or their brothers or their brothers' sons or sisters sons, or their women, or their slaves, or male attendants who lack vigor, or children who know naught of women's nakedness. And let them not stamp their feet to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And turn unto Allah together, O believers, in order that ye may succeed.

These verses tell us the dressing of Muslim women is not just a matter of covering the head alone, but also of covering the bosom, which is attractive to men, and of lowering the gaze and walking in a way that does not attract attention. Note that the order to lower the gaze was addressed first to men.

### Consequences for Evading Islamic Ethics and Morals

Islamic ethics are not mere social constructs; they are commands and prohibitions from Allah and His Messenger. Obeying them attracts reward while evading them attracts punishment. Allah, the Almighty says:

Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of Dawud (David) and 'Iesa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary). That was because they disobeyed (Allah and the Messengers) and were ever transgressing beyond bounds. They used not to forbid one another from the Munkar (wrong, evil-doing, sins, polytheism, disbelief, etc.) which they committed. Vile indeed was what they used to do (Ma'idah, 5:78-78).

Being insincere in intention on any act of *ibadah* in Islam is a grievous offence. Seeker of knowledge will be brought on the Day of Resurrection and will be asked, “*What have you done in the world?*” He replied, “*I seek knowledge, act upon it, and I read the Qur'ān because of Allah*”, Allah will say, “*you lie. You seek knowledge and read Qur'ān so that others call you religious person*”. Finally, Allah put him in hell fire (Muslim, Book 4, hadith 1905). Equally, injustice, dishonesty, etc. are frowned at by the Shari'ah. Allah says in the Qur'an: “*The cause is only against the ones who wrong the people and tyrannize upon the earth without right. Those will have painful punishment*” (Al-Shura, 42:42). In another verse, He says: “*If any person is so false, He shall, on the Day of Judgment, restore what he misappropriated; then shall every soul receive its due, - whatever it earned, - and none shall be dealt with unjustly*” (Al-Imran, 3:161).

To devoted Muslims, Islamic ethical principles are not optional. They are a collection of divine commands that guide how we live and worship Allah (SWT) to earn His reward and move away from His punishment.

## **Conclusion**

The ethics and moral values contained in the Qur'ān and Sunnah are for all times, races, nations, tribes etc. and though circumstances change, human nature does not. Allah the creator of all things is in a better position to prescribe what is right for man or what is wrong for him. From Nursery/kindergarten teachers to university lecturers, Islam has provided universal moral system that is very comprehensive and complete. While etiquettes of teaching are revised from time to time to fit the current challenges, Islamic System remained unchanged and very effective and compatible to both formal and non-formal settings.

For those who embark on *da'wah* mission individually or collectively, and for every Muslim who is using his character, action or speech out there to invite people to Islam, Islam provides a clear framework, a blueprint and a roadmap to follow. Islamic ethical system is a complete package that will provide any *da'i* with spiritual and moral guidance as well as techniques and procedures for achieving his target. Both teaching and *da'wah* are elevated to the level of worship that attracts reward from almighty Allah. Teachers and *du'at*, are therefore encouraged to perform actively in order to earn the pleasure of Allah. What they may get in this world is just a small portion of the bigger reward that waits them in the hereafter. This Prophetic Hadith is very inspirational to conclude with: "*The most complete of the believers in faith, is the one with the best character among them*" (Al-Albani, Sahih Sunan Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith no.1162, 1/593).

## **Recommendations**

Based on the intellectual discourse of this paper, the following recommendations are imperative:

1. Islamic ethical and moral values should be incorporated into conventional etiquette for teachers at all levels of education.
2. Teachers and *du'at* should be trained periodically on the fundamental principles of Islamic ethics and morals for effective service delivery.

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