



A QUR'ANIC VIEW ON THE BELIEF-ORIENTED STANDARD OF HUMAN ETHICS

Zamakhshyari bin Hasballah Thaib¹, Mukhamad Hadi Musolin², Vina Annisa³

*Correspondence:

Email:

dr.zamakhshyari@dharmawangsa.ac.id

Authors Affiliation:

¹Universitas Dharmawangsa, Indonesia

²Universiti Islam Antarbangsa Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah Kedah, Malaysia

³Universitas Dharmawangsa, Indonesia

Article History:

Submission: April 01, 2025

Revised: May 03, 2025

Accepted: June 20, 2025

Published: June 30, 2025

Keywords: Standard of ethics; Nature of ethics; Belief – based ethics.

Kata Kunci: Standar akhlak; Sifat akhlak; Akhlak dalam konteks keyakinan.

Abstract

This study explores the Qur'anic foundations of moral standards by examining the relationship between belief ('*aqidah*') and morality as reflected in selected Qur'anic verses. Employing a thematic interpretation (*tafsir maudhū'i*) through a descriptive – analytical method and inductive reasoning (*istiqrā'*), this research investigates how ethical conduct is shaped within the Qur'anic worldview. The key finding highlights that, according to the Qur'an, morality is inherently practical and action – oriented. It emphasizes the necessity of righteous deeds as a pathway to human nobility and true happiness. Moral obligations, in this context, are not abstract theories open to speculation, but imperatives that demand immediate implementation. The Qur'an positions revelation – not reason or custom – as the ultimate source of moral authority. Furthermore, the Qur'anic standard of ethical belief is deeply rooted in core theological principles such as *tawhīd* (divine oneness), trust in God, sincere intention, and love, which collectively guide the moral conscience of a believer.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji dasar-dasar moralitas dalam perspektif Al-Qur'an dengan menelusuri hubungan antara keimanan ('*aqidah*') dan moralitas sebagaimana tercermin dalam sejumlah ayat Al-Qur'an. Melalui pendekatan deskriptif-analitis dengan metode tafsir tematik (*tafsir maudhū'i*) dan penalaran induktif (*istiqrā'*), studi ini berupaya memahami bagaimana perilaku etis dibentuk dalam kerangka pandangan hidup Qur'ani. Temuan utama menunjukkan bahwa moralitas dalam Al-Qur'an bersifat praktis dan berorientasi pada tindakan. Al-Qur'an menekankan pentingnya amal saleh sebagai jalan menuju kemuliaan manusia dan kebahagiaan sejati. Kewajiban moral, dalam konteks ini, bukanlah sekadar teori yang dapat diperdebatkan, melainkan perintah nyata yang menuntut pelaksanaan segera. Al-Qur'an menetapkan wahyu – bukan akal atau kebiasaan – sebagai sumber utama otoritas moral. Standar keyakinan etis dalam Al-Qur'an berakar pada prinsip-prinsip teologis seperti tauhid, tawakal, niat yang tulus, dan cinta, yang secara keseluruhan membimbing nurani moral seorang mukmin.

INTRODUCTION

Since ancient times, philosophers have tried to establish standards in ethics, but they ended up like a group of blind men who encountered an elephant, each describing it based on what they understood from what they touched. None of them provided a comprehensive picture regarding moral issues, nor succeeded in establishing standards that encompass various aspects of humanity and help achieve a balance between the spiritual and the material. Nicolas Malebranche, one of the prominent modern philosophers known for his doctrines on divine surveillance, causality, and ontology, witnessed the continuous failures and confusions experienced by philosophers in their attempts to establish moral standards. He believed that common thought is always the



same among all people, and that the general order does not change; however, morals vary according to time and place (Moussa, 1943).

Moral issues in humans often arise due to the duality present in humans, where humans consist of body and soul, mind and will, as well as complex and interrelated relationships with diverse and often conflicting needs and desires. Often, various theories stemming from human thought are unable to establish complete laws or rules to balance or reconcile both sides of this duality, as well as the complex relationships between them (Badawi, 1967).

In addition, there are two types of goodness that one aims to achieve through moral rules, namely happiness and virtue. Happiness comes from feelings and emotions, while virtue comes from reason and conscience. Therefore, morality strives hard to unite these two types of goodness as the main goal of human behavior (El – Sharqawi, 1988)

It is unimaginable that someone can achieve virtue without eliminating the pressures of desires and passions within themselves, and sacrificing them for the sake of truth and duty. Meanwhile, happiness cannot be achieved without satisfying human desires and emotions, and distancing oneself from anything that causes pain. In other words, virtue is achieved through struggle and sacrifice, while happiness is achieved through comfort, tranquility, and confidence. Therefore, a moral dilemma arises: how can one achieve happiness and be virtuous at the same time?

Many positivist philosophers have overlooked that, despite the complexity, composition, and diversity of humans, they are beings endowed with will, making it difficult to predict human behavior and choices with certainty. Moreover, humans were not created by themselves or by other beings. It should be mentioned that many ethicists say that ethics is a normative science, which means it establishes general and fixed rules as a model of ideal behavior that must be adhered to in all circumstances. But at the same time, they also say that the subject of ethics is human behavior that is performed voluntarily in terms of what ought to be (Majid, 1991). From the above explanation, it is clear that moral experts are faced with a dilemma to resolve, considering that human life and needs are diverse and continuously evolving. How can one reconcile moral rules with the individual realities from which this behavior originates?

Considering this failure, humanity has no choice but to acknowledge that the rules of ethics have only one source, which is revelation. Only revelation reaches the entire soul and provides it with complete substance, nourishing the heart, mind, and body evenly. Acknowledging this truth, is in harmony with truth and justice. Because the Almighty God is the Creator of humanity, and He knows the past, present, and future of humanity, only He has the right to establish what should be the rules for humanity, and only God knows how to achieve happiness and virtue for humanity simultaneously.

Humans who are indifferent to this truth and dislike this reality are caused by human arrogance towards destiny and their ego towards happiness. Allah has warned humanity in His noble Book about this arrogance, because it obscures the meaning of goodness and truth in the human soul, as well as the fate that awaits them for turning away from His path.

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوِّكَ فَعَدَلَكَ فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَاءَ رَّبُّكَ كَلَّا بَلْ تُكَذِّبُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ وَإِنَّ الْفُجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٍ

O humankind! What has fortified you in opposition to your Lord, the Most Generous, Who created, shaped, and perfected your form according to His will? However, no! You indeed reject the last Judgment, while you are undoubtedly monitored by watchful,

esteemed angels who document everything. They are aware of all your actions. Certainly, the righteous shall experience happiness, while the wicked shall endure torment in Hell. (QS. 84: 6 – 14)

Starting from the urgency of understanding the standards of belief in ethics from the perspective of the Qur'an and its role in shaping societal truth, which begins with individual truth, ethics are deemed very important in the function, maintenance, and development of society, as well as in strengthening the foundation of humanity within it. This research aims to explain the standards of belief in morality according to the Qur'an by understanding the nature and characteristics of morality in the Qur'an on one hand, and deriving moral standards, both those related to the heart and beliefs of a person as well as their behavior and appearance on the other hand, through the analysis of various Qur'anic verses that discuss the relationship between belief and moral issues.

The main question in this research is: What are the standards of belief in ethics according to the Qur'an? From this question, other questions arise and branch out, including: How does the Quran view the essence of morality? What is the nature of morality in the Quran? What are the standards of belief in ethics according to the perspective of the Qur'an?

Through the research, it becomes clear that many theoretical studies have addressed the topic of ethics in light of the Quran. However, in general, they approach this topic differently from this research; those studies mentioned behavioral ethics in general without detail and without mentioning the nature of ethics in the Quran. We mention some of those scientific studies, for example, but not limited to the following:

1. A doctoral dissertation written by Muhammad Abdullah Daraz and translated by Abd al-Sabour Shahin, from the University of Sorbonne in France in 1947, titled "*Dustûr al-Akhlak fo Al-Qur'an (The Constitution of Morality in the Quran: A Comparative Study of the Theoretical Foundations of Morality in the Quran)*." This research discusses many ethical concepts, ranging from the concepts of duty, responsibility, retribution, intention, and effort. Some of these concepts are closely related to the standards of belief in morality in the research to be conducted, although the two differ in nature and purpose.
2. A doctoral dissertation written by Rima Sharif, from Cairo University in Cairo in 2012, titled "*The Foundations of Ethics in the Old Testament Compared to the Qur'an*." This dissertation focuses on the origins of Old Testament beliefs that influence the foundations of ethics, and also examines the foundations of ethics in the Old Testament within the framework of Quranic ethical theory. Although the research findings are very important, their nature is different from the study that will be conducted, which focuses on the standards of ethical beliefs according to the Quran.
3. A scientific encyclopedia written by Ahmed Al-Sharbasi, published by Dar Al-Ra'id Al-Arabi in Beirut in 1971, under the title "*Encyclopedia of the Ethics of the Quran*." This encyclopedia consists of six volumes and covers a range of ethical values, but in general, it differs from the nature of this research.
4. A master's thesis written by Majed Al-Oseimi, under the supervision of Dr. Mohammed Khayyat, from Umm Al-Qura University in Mecca in the year 1428/1429 AH, titled "*Practical Ethics in the Qur'an*." This thesis discusses the concept of ethics and its categories in the Qur'an, as well as the ethics of Muslim teachers, but does not focus on examining the standards of belief in ethics according to the Qur'an.

5. A master's thesis written by Abdulaziz Al – Shibl, from King Abdulaziz University in Mecca in the year 1396 AH, titled "*Ethics in the Qur'an*." This thesis discusses two main topics in the issue of ethics, namely duties and moral values in the Qur'an. Unfortunately, this research does not delve deeply into the standards of belief in morality.
6. A master's thesis written by Hamid Salem Al – Harbi, from Umm Al – Qura University in Mecca in the year 1404 H/1984 AD, titled "*The Level of Application of School Educational Values Derived from Surah Al-Hujurat*." This thesis does not discuss the standards of belief in morality and is limited in focus to discussing the moral educational values derived from Surah Al – Hujurat.
7. A master's thesis written by Adnan Abdul Rahman Al – Maimani, from Umm Al – Qura University in Mecca, in the year 1411 AH, titled "*Moral Education in the Verses of Mecca and Medina*." This study does not examine the standards of belief in ethics, as the focus is limited to moral guidance in the *Makkiyah* and *Madaniyah* surahs.

THE CONCEPT OF ETHICS IN THE QURAN

The word "*akhlaq*" is the plural form of "*khuluq*" (Al – Qastalani, 2004). Literally, the word "*khuluq*" refers to character, honor, habit, and religion. The word *khuluq* is also mentioned in the Qur'an in the words of Allah: "*You are indeed a man of exceptional character*." (QS. 68: 4). Ibn Abbas interpreted the word "*khuluq*" here as meaning religion (Ibn al – Athir, 1963). Morality, in this sense, is a system of actions aimed at achieving a good life and a pattern of behavior with oneself and with others, in terms of what this behavior should be. We can say that morality is not just a part of religion, but its essence and spirit; religion, in its essence, consists of the duties that a person is obligated to fulfill towards their Lord, themselves, and other creatures. Therefore, Ibn al – Qayyim said: "Religion is all about morality, so whoever excels in morality excels in faith."

The word "*khuluq*" also mentioned in the words of Allah: "*This is merely the custom of our forebears*." (QS. 26: 137). Scholars have interpreted the word "*khuluq*" in this verse to mean habit and disposition (Faris, 1979). Ethics, in the sense of disposition, habit, and nobility, are the affirmation of the purpose of good deeds and their establishment in human behavior until they become habitual, and are performed by a person without effort or reconsideration. Furthermore, the internal character should be as continuous and firmly established as the external character.

Scholars have defined ethics with various terminological definitions. For example, Ibn Miskawayh (Miskawayh, 2015) defined ethics as a state of the soul that drives it to its actions without thought or deliberation. This state is divided into two categories: one that is natural and inherent in temperament, like a person who is easily provoked to anger, and one that is acquired through habit and training, which may begin with thought and deliberation and then continue gradually until it becomes a habit and character.

While Al – Ghazali (Al – Ghazali. *Ihya 'Ulumuddin*, n.d.), defined character in a way that includes both elements, with a clear criterion, he sees morals as "a firmly established disposition in the soul, from which actions emerge easily and effortlessly, without the need for thought and deliberation. If the disposition leads to commendable and praiseworthy actions both rationally and religiously, that disposition is called good character. If the actions are vile, the disposition from which they arise is called bad character."

Despite the differences in the definitions provided by Ibn Miskawayh and Al-Ghazali, both definitions observe the psychological basis of behavior. Additionally, other definitions highlight the theoretical aspect of ethics, such as "ethics as the foundation of behavior," "ethics as the science of good and evil," and other definitions.

In general, ethics is defined as the science that studies or should study the goals that human behavior seeks and distinguishes between the relative and the absolute among them, as well as the best and noblest means capable of achieving the goals that lead to human perfection and happiness (Mariam, 2010). In other words, ethics is the science of virtues and how to acquire them so that a person can embody them, and of vices and how to avoid them so that a person can abandon them (Salahaddin, 1983).

The essence of this definition is a serious attempt to provide a convincing answer to a simple and specific question, but one of great importance: What should we do to be good and virtuous and enjoy happiness? The value of ethical theories or the theoretical aspect of ethics derives its value and importance from the degree of truth and correctness it offers in answering this question (Attia, 1990).

It is worth noting that one should not overlook, even for a moment, that the answer to that fundamental question derives its life, vitality, and value solely from application. A person is not virtuous merely for knowing what they should do, but their virtue lies in doing what they should do. In other words, they must act on what they know and believe to be good; it is not enough to merely know and believe in goodness without applying what they know and believe (Badr-ei, 1999).

It is clear that the Quran often associates faith with good deeds in many verses, including His saying "Indeed, the believers are successful: those who exhibit humility in prayer; those who refrain from frivolous discourse; those who contribute to the almsgiving; those who maintain their chastity, except with their spouses or those bondwomen in their possession, for they incur no blame; however, those who seek beyond this are transgressors; the believers are also those who honor their trusts and commitments; and those who diligently observe their prayers. These individuals will be granted Paradise as their possession. They will remain there indefinitely" (QS. 23: 1–11). It is noted from those verses that action is a condition for the validity and acceptance of faith, because a believer should not contradict his words with his actions, lest he fall under the reproach of the Quran, which strongly denounces the separation of word from deed or knowledge from application, as in the Almighty's saying "Do you advocate for righteousness yet neglect to embody it oneself, despite your engagement with the Scripture? Do you not comprehend? (QS. 2: 44). And another word of God; "O faithful! Why do you articulate actions that you do not perform? It is reprehensible in the eyes of Allah to utter what one does not practice" (QS. 61: 2–3).

Moreover, the Quran warns those who do not apply justice to themselves and others equally, saying "Woe to the deceivers! Individuals who exact the entire measure while purchasing from others, then provide a lesser quantity when measuring or weighing for customers" (QS. 83: 1–3).

As-Sa'di (Lestari & Sa'adah, 2021) believes that these verses indicate the necessity of being fair and objective even in debates. It is known that each debater is keen on arguments that support their opinion, but the verse pointed out that everyone should look at their opponent's arguments, which they do not know, and examine their opponent's evidence as they would their own.

It becomes clear from all of this that the goal and fruit of ethics are realized through action and application, and the theoretical aspect is merely a means to achieve what

should be done in the best possible way, so that a person can attain what they aspire to in terms of goodness and happiness.

THE NATURE OF ETHICS IN THE QURAN

Akhlaq in the Quran is practical morality. When the Quran presents virtues and moral duties to us, it presents them as obligations that must be fulfilled and carried out immediately, not as debatable theories. They are the ideal solution to all the problems that hinder a person from their goodness and happiness (Draz, 1973). Moreover, any failure to apply them in the manner prescribed by revelation renders them ineffective in achieving their goal of bringing happiness to a person in this world and the hereafter.

The Quran has shown that the role of human will regarding ethics is complete sincerity in applying them as they were revealed, and not allowing any other source to rival revelation, as a sole authority to whom the will should owe obedience and loyalty. This is the foundation upon which ethics in the Quran are built, and this is evident through His saying "Judgment is solely His" (QS. 6: 62) and another saying "However, no! By your Lord, they will not be genuine believers until they acknowledge you, O Prophet, as the arbiter in their conflicts, harbor no dissent against your verdict, and surrender entirely" (QS. 4: 65).

For example, when God commanded us to pray in the Quran, which is the most specific act requested from the servant as gratitude for the Creator's blessings, He commands us to do it along with its justification, from its beneficial effects that return to the individual and the community, saying "Indeed, 'genuine' prayer should deter 'one' from indecency and wickedness" (QS. 29:45).

Al-Saadi believes that whoever performs prayer with humility, completes its pillars and conditions, their heart becomes enlightened and purified, their certainty increases, their willpower for good strengthens, and their inclination towards evil decreases. Therefore, whoever maintains their prayer in this manner will be deterred from immorality and wrongdoing. And when He commands us to give zakat, He justifies His command with its good effects on our souls and our family and social structure. Even in naming this duty, He gives it all the meanings He intends to achieve. Giving money, in addition to the compassion, cooperation, and strengthening of social bonds it entails, purifies the soul from the vice of stinginess and miserliness and purifies its good nature (Fadlo, 2001). Hence, He follows it with prayer in His saying "Perform prayer and remit the almsgiving tax (*zakah*)" (QS. 2: 110). Then he explains its impact by saying "Those who are liberated from the egotism of their own souls are the ones who achieve true achievement" (QS. 64: 16). But the Quran emphasizes the warning for those who neglect its performance, saying "Convey favorable tidings of distressing punishment to people who accumulate riches and silver and fail to expend it in the service of Allah." (QS. 9: 34).

As for fasting, it is obligatory, and its acceptance is justified by the sharpening of willpower, its practice in submitting to the truth, enduring hardships for the sake of the highest ideals, and freeing oneself from the dominion of desire, selfishness, and self-love. It also embodies the meaning of compassion and emotional connection between the classes of the nation and the realization of human brotherhood. And hence, fasting was a school where all strong nations were nurtured (Fadlo, 2001). And this is what the Quran alludes to in presenting this duty when He, the Exalted, said: "O faithful! Fasting is mandated for you, as it was for those preceding you, so that you may attain mindfulness of Allah." (QS. 2: 183)

Therefore, it is not a coincidence that the time prescribed for performing this duty is the most suitable time for a person to receive the legislation of goodness, truth, and to act upon it, as it is said. "Ramaḍān is the month during which the Quran was revealed as a guide for humanity, containing unequivocal evidence of guidance and authoritative directives" (QS. 2: 185).

While *Hajj* is the gathering of various Islamic duties and their fruits, it is also the model in which human purity, cleanliness, and religious unity are realized. *Hajj*, compared to other Islamic acts of worship, is considered the lifeline that carries a person to the safe shore, and it is the culmination of the matter that completes Islam (Fadlo, 2001), as Allah Almighty said "Today, the skeptics have relinquished all hope of eroding your faith. Therefore, do not be afraid of them; revere Me! Today, I have finalized your faith, completed My favor upon you, and selected Islam as your path. However, anybody driven by severe hunger—without the intention to sin—will undoubtedly find Allah to be All – Forgiving and Most Merciful" (QS. 5: 3).

When the Quran presents the obligation of *Hajj*, it does so in conjunction with the benefit and absolute righteousness of humanity, encompassing all horizons of human goodness, as a reminder of the importance of fulfilling this duty and the limitless goodness it contains, as Allah Almighty said "Thus, they may get the advantages designated for them and invoke the Name of Allah on specified days over the sacrifice animals He has bestowed upon them. Consume their meat and provide sustenance to the impoverished" (QS. 21: 28).

Al – Tantawi (Tantawi, 1997) clarified that among the manifestations of the religious benefits of *Hajj* are the forgiveness of the pilgrims' sins, the acceptance of their prayers, and attaining God's pleasure. Meanwhile, among the manifestations of the worldly benefits of *Hajj* are their gathering and acquaintance in that holy place, and then their cooperation in righteousness and piety, the exchange of benefits through trade among themselves, and so on.

Whoever contemplates the legislation of *Hajj* will find that it encompasses an infinite extension of blessings and benefits that the Quran has unleashed without limitation or specification of time or place. Moreover, *Hajj* is the mirror that reflects the complete image of religious assembly in form and substance. The Quran has depicted this matter in His saying "*Summon all individuals to the pilgrimage. They will approach you on foot and on every emaciated camel from every far route, in order to acquire the rewards prepared for them, and to invoke the Name of Allah on designated days over the sacrifice animals He has supplied for them. Consume their flesh and provide sustenance to the destitute. Subsequently, allow them to groom themselves, fulfill their vows, and encircle the Ancient House. Indeed, it is correct. Those who revere the rituals of Allah are favored in the eyes of their Lord. The flesh of cow is permissible for you, save for what has been previously stated to you. Avoid the contamination of idolatry and eschew deceitful speech*" (QS. 22: 27 – 30).

This approach, followed by the Holy Quran in explaining the nature of ethics, did not limit itself to stating the religious commands only. We find that this approach is also clear and evident during the Quranic exposition of the religious prohibitions, such as the prohibition of murder, the prohibition of adultery, the prohibition of drinking alcohol, and other religious prohibitions (Al – Jabri, 2001).

When the Quran forbade us from killing, it showed us the destructive impact of that crime on human existence itself. Allah Almighty said "Therefore, We decreed for the Children of Israel that whoever takes a life—except as retribution for murder or corruption

in the land—will be regarded as having killed all of humanity; and whoever preserves a life will be considered as having saved all of humanity. Despite the fact that Our messengers had already presented them with unequivocal evidence, many of them subsequently transgressed throughout the land" (QS. 5: 32).

And therefore, the perpetrator of this crime is sentenced to death in this world in order to preserve the life and security of all people, as Allah Almighty said "There exists a safeguard for your lives in the law of retaliation, O individuals of reason, that you may attain mindfulness of Allah" (QS. 2: 179).

As for the Hereafter, the murderer who committed this heinous crime intentionally awaits a miserable fate, as Allah Almighty said "Whoever knowingly kills a believer will be rewarded with Hell, where they will remain eternally. Allah will express displeasure towards them, condemn them, and arrange for them a severe punishment" (QS. 4: 93).

When the Quran forbids us from adultery and approaching it, it clarifies to us its bad consequences and its destructive effects on the fabric of the family and society, as Allah says "*Do not go near adultery. It is truly a shameful deed and an evil way*" (QS. 17: 32).

And when the Quran warns us against alcohol, gambling, and other vices, it provides us with a justification for this prohibition, as Allah Almighty said "O faithful! Intoxicants, gambling, idolatry, and casting lots for decision – making are all manifestations of Satan's influence. Therefore, avoid them to achieve achievement. Satan's scheme is to incite animosity and animus among you through intoxicants and gambling, thereby obstructing your remembrance of Allah and your prayers. Will you not refrain?" (QS. 5: 90 – 91).

One cannot help but admire and respect the approach outlined by the Quran in interpersonal worship, starting with the relationship between a person and their parents. The Quran does not merely command the child to maintain ties of kinship with their parents, but it emphasizes their right to appreciation and respect by mentioning their previous favors to the child and what they have sacrificed for the child, as Allah Almighty said: "Your Lord has ordained that you shall worship no one but Him. Honor your parents. If one or both of them attain old age under your supervision, refrain from expressing disdain or raising your voice at them. Instead, treat them with respect and humility out of compassion, and pray, "My Lord!" Extend mercy towards them, for they nurtured me during my youth." (QS. 17: 23 – 24).

When the Quran called us to hold fast to the truth and adhere to it, it justified this command by the sound social order it achieves and the harms that result from not responding to this call. Allah Almighty said "And steadfastly adhere to the rope of Allah and do not become split. Recall Allah's benevolence towards you when you were adversaries; He reconciled your hearts, and by His grace, you became brethren. You were on the verge of a blazing abyss, and He rescued you from it. This is how Allah elucidates His revelations to you, enabling you to be properly led" (QS. 3: 103).

Al-Saadi believes that God commanded them in that verse to do what helps them achieve piety, which is to unite and hold fast to the religion of God. This is because the righteousness of both religion and the world is based on the unity of the hearts of the believers. Just as the ability to succeed in any matter is contingent upon their unity, the benefits they gain, which are countless, from cooperating in righteousness and piety are dependent on their unity. On the other hand, the disruption of order, the severing of ties, and the occurrence of general harm all arise from the division and enmity among the believers.

And when the Quran commanded us to forgive and do good, it clarified to us the commendable effects that return to us, as He says "*Good and evil cannot be equivalent.*"

Counter malevolence with benevolence, and the adversary will become akin to a confidant" (QS. 41: 34).

And when the Quran commanded us with the duty of calling to Islam, this Quranic command was characterized by a high moral tone that spread the spirit of love and brotherhood, as Allah Almighty said: "Invite everybody to the path of your Lord with wisdom and benevolent counsel, and engage in discourse with them in the most commendable manner. Undoubtedly, your Lord alone possesses the utmost knowledge of those who have deviated from His Path and those who are rightly guided." (QS. 16: 125)

Al-Qurtubi (Al-Qurtubi, 2006) believes that this verse is Mecca, revealed at the time of the command to reconcile with the Quraysh, where God commanded His Messenger to invite to God with gentleness and kindness, without harshness or violence. This verse is definitive and not abrogated for the sinners among Muslims, and it is abrogated by the verse of fighting concerning the disbelievers.

The Quran has made it clear that adherence to Islamic legislation in ethics is not just the foundation of happiness in the Hereafter, but it is also the key to security, brotherhood, and happiness in this world, as Allah Almighty said "Allah has assured those who believe and perform righteous deeds that He will undoubtedly appoint them as successors on earth, as He did with previous generations; He will firmly establish for them the faith He has selected; and He will transform their fear into security—on the condition that they worship Me, associating nothing with Me. However, those who disbelieve after this pledge are the ones who will be insubordinate" (QS. 24: 55).

Thus, the Quran presents its obligations in a consistent manner, almost uniformly in every command and prohibition. Although the Quran provides justifications for accepting its commands and prohibitions, it does not offer us debatable and discussable ethical theories, as is the case with positivist theories. Instead, the Quran provides a definitive and conclusive solution and answer to every question or problem. This solution imposes itself on both individual and collective conscience, being equally valid for the lower and the higher. It is also an authoritative answer that guides the mind without being guided by it, and directs the heart without being misled by it. Hence, it is obligatory to implement it without debate or discussion (Moussa, 1943).

THE DOCTRINAL STANDARD OF ETHICS

In the view of the Quran, the correct standard for ethics is revelation, not reason or habit. The person with true morals is always submissive and compliant with everything that has been commanded or prohibited. And this standard is what drives and advances the movement of human history from the beginning of human existence until the Day of Judgment. This standard is what the movement of human history and its progress have been based on since the beginning of human existence until the Day of Judgment (Danielle & Rebecca, 1990).

The Quran depicts that ethics in Islam is a general and comprehensive system, encompassing multiple ethical standards, some of which pertain to the heart of the Muslim and their beliefs, and the foundations upon which ethics are built. Others relate to behavior and its manifestations (W., 2014). In this research, we will address the belief-based standard of human ethics without delving into the behavioral aspect of ethics in detail.

There are several correct standards for ethics concerning human belief, which are:

First: Monotheism

The Quran sees the position of monotheism in the structure of ethics as the position of the heart in the body, and the position of the center in the circle. One of the fruits of monotheism is that a person is liberated from submission to subjective standards, no matter how powerful they are. Through monotheism as well, the human heart is freed from whims and inclinations towards the worldly, and the heart is filled with the light of truth.

The Quran has emphasized in many verses that monotheism is the standard, urging people to adhere to it and act upon it. The Quran has also provided many justifications for accepting it intellectually and emotionally. At times, the Quran called for monotheism by stating that there is only one God, as He said: "If there had been other deities besides Allah in the sky or the earth, both worlds would undoubtedly have been polluted. Exalted is Allah, Lord of the Throne, beyond their assertions." (QS. 21: 22)

And sometimes in the Quran, it is mentioned that God's knowledge encompasses everything, as He said "He possesses the keys to the unseen, known solely to Him. He is aware of what exists in both terrestrial and aquatic realms. No leaf falls without His awareness, nor does a grain in the earth's blackness or any entity—whether verdant or desiccated—escape the meticulous documentation in a flawless Record" (QS. 6: 59).

The Quran clarifies that true freedom, in its fullest form, can only be achieved by pure monotheism and sincere servitude to God. The more an individual is sincere in their monotheism and servitude to God, the more their freedom increases from the dominion of subjective standards, regardless of their source or value. This true freedom cannot be attained through wealth, status, children, or society. Through monotheism, an individual's behavior and judgment on matters are governed by an objective standard aimed at truth and goodness.

Secondly: Trust in God

By "*tawakkul*" here, we mean that an individual strives as much as possible within the limits of God's commands and prohibitions, and then leaves the results of their efforts to God Almighty. *Tawakkul*, which is the fruit of monotheism, is a measure of a Muslim's faith in God's decree and destiny. It is also a sign of a person's correct understanding and perception of their destiny and the limits of their ability.

The one who relies on God has a heart and spirit filled with peace, security, and contentment, so their state becomes one of noble determination and persistence in success. They do not know failure or despair when the results they hoped for through their efforts are not achieved, but rather they become more determined and resolute in refining their means and reassessing their position anew. And when what they hoped for is achieved, they do not become arrogant or conceited, but are grateful for God's grace and blessings. Moreover, their success calls for more humility, which increases their zeal in attaining perfection and progress (W., 2014).

Reliance on God is a precise criterion by which a Muslim measures the purity of their heart, the strength of their faith, their trust in God, and the sincerity of their heart towards Him without any other reasons. Additionally, adherence to reliance on God achieves the following results in our moral behavior and within ourselves:

1. The disconnection between work and its results. The separation between work as a cause and the result as an effect is necessary for the worker's faith in God to be greater than his faith in himself. The result is not merely the fruit of his ability and the outcome of his will alone, but it is derived solely from God's will.
2. Indeed, reliance on God reflects a positive and good effect on our hearts, then on the way we perform our work, and then on our attitude and outlook towards the

future. Those who rely on themselves to achieve their goals, without relying on God, find anxiety settling in their hearts with the first step they take towards any goal. They often wonder before undertaking a task: Will my effort succeed or fail? And if it succeeds, to what extent will it be successful? Similarly, after the task, anxiety does not leave them. If the result matches their effort, they say: Couldn't I have gained more? And if the result is less than they hoped, they do not blame themselves, but rather direct their anger towards luck and fate.

There are many Quranic verses that call people to rely on God and encourage it as a standard for a Muslim's faith and morals, including His saying "Place your trust in Allah if you are indeed believers" (QS. 5: 23), and another verse "Those who are conscious of Allah will be granted an escape and provided for from unforeseen sources. Whoever places their reliance in Allah, He alone is adequate for them" (QS. 65: 2–3).

Third: Intention

Intention in language means purpose and will. Its technical meaning is that the heart directs itself to choose one matter over another with a firm resolve that is only hindered by an external obstacle beyond one's control. Intention is a criterion for determining the value of an action and judging it as good or bad, because if the worker's intention in their action is for the sake of God, the action is good, and its doer deserves praise and reward. However, if it is for anything than God, the action is judged according to the intention behind it. If it is bad, the intention is bad, and the doer is considered wicked and deserving of blame and punishment. If it is in a permissible matter, it is an ordinary action that does not deserve to be evaluated by the standard of good and bad (John, 2004).

Voluntary behavior can be divided into three categories based on its intention:

1. The acts of obedience, which are intrinsically linked to intention in their validity, because intention is a condition for the validity of performing religious duties that are not complete unless the Muslim intends the face of God, and it is purely for God alone. For example, giving money to the poor is good for the poor and in the eyes of the law that is what it commands. This is the outward aspect of the act. As for the spirit of the act, it is the intention behind it; if it is purely for God, the act becomes good for the poor and good for the doer, leading to the purity and clarity of his soul. The more good intentions there are, the greater the goodness in the Islamic duty, such as intending to meet the needs of the poor, preserving their human dignity, protecting them from deviation, removing hatred and resentment from their hearts, and other good purposes (Al-Ghazali. *Ihya 'Ulumuddin*, n.d.), as Allah Almighty said: "The illustration of those who allocate their resources for the sake of Allah resembles a grain that germinates into seven ears, with each ear producing one hundred grains. Allah amplifies the prize for anyone He desires. For Allah is Omnibenevolent and Omniscient." (QS. 2: 261)
2. Sins, which have no effect of good intention in changing their ruling, such as someone who built a school, mosque, or hospital from forbidden money or on usurped land. In this category, the good intention does not change their ruling from being a sin; rather, their ugliness increases because they used evil as a means to achieve good contrary to what the Sharia has commanded. This is because the doer here falls into one of two categories: either they know the purpose and method of Sharia, and then they place their intention, no matter how good it seems to them, in the place of the Sharia's intention, so they are defiant because they have placed their subjective standard in place of the divine standard as the

basis for their moral behavior. Or they are ignorant of the purpose, commands, and prohibitions of Sharia, so they are sinful due to this ignorance. Therefore, whoever intends good through a sin out of ignorance is not excused as long as returning to Sharia is accessible and within their ability (Al-Ghazali. *Ihya' Ulumuddin*, n.d.).

3. Permissible actions, which mean all matters that have not been addressed by a command or prohibition from *Syaria*, if intention is present, it takes the ruling of that intention. So, whoever performs them with the intention of goodness for the sake of Allah, they become ethical actions and acts of worship for which the doer is rewarded (Al-Ghazali, Hamid, & Al-Islam, 1963). For example, when someone eats food, if a Muslim exceeds the natural permissible purpose of eating, such as satisfying hunger and maintaining health, and intends to strengthen the body to fulfill religious duties in the best manner, then the food, which is a permissible act and a normal behavior, becomes an ethical act. This same food, if intended to gain strength to attack and humiliating people, turns from a permissible act into a sin. Many Quranic verses clarify the impact of intention as a criterion for determining the type and nature of the action, including His saying "Despite being instructed alone to worship Allah alone with genuine devotion, uphold prayer, and remit alms – tax (*zakah*)". That is the correct path. (QS. 98: 5). And in another verse "Proclaim, 'O Prophet 'I am merely a human like you; however, it has been disclosed to me that your deity is solely One God.'" Those who aspire to encounter their Lord should perform virtuous actions and not associate anyone in the worship of their Lord" (QS. 18: 110).

And often it is very difficult to categorize behavior into obedience, disobedience, or permissibility, because the motives may overlap with each other. It is hard to determine whether the motive for the action is personal, humanitarian, religious, or all of them together. This distinction depends on revealing the moral goodness, hypocrisy, or pretense within our souls.

Imam Al-Ghazali (Al-Ghazali et al., 1963) addressed this profound issue. He believes that an individual whose will is conflicted between the motive of ethics and the motive of interest, and who finds it difficult to determine which is the primary driver pushing him to act, should test the effect of each motive separately, as if it were the sole motive for the action, and then analyze its relationship with the other motive. The relationship will fall into three categories: concurrence, participation, or assistance. Concurrence means that two motives come together, each of which is sufficient to complete the task. Participation means that two motives come together, each of which is not sufficient alone to complete the task, but the action is completed by their combination. Assistance means that one motive is sufficient alone to complete the task, while the other merely facilitates the performance.

What has been stated above are the three forms of the motivation's participation, and the individual must measure the intensity of their moral motivation about the other motivations. If the two sides are equal, meaning the moral motivation is equal to the personal motivation in acting, the act is neutral and cannot be described as moral or immoral. However, if the moral motivation outweighs the other motivations, the act has moral value proportional to the intensity and strength of the moral motivation compared to the other motivations. Conversely, if the personal motivation outweighs the moral motivation, the act loses its moral value.

And by example, the article becomes clear. Let's take an example: if someone asks you for help, and let's assume he deserves it for two reasons, which are poverty and kinship, and you provided him with the help he requested. To know the moral value of your action, you must ask yourself: was your motivation to help him his poverty or his kinship? You should consider if a foreign poor person or a wealthy relative approached you, and if you found the same determination and pleasure in helping both, this would indicate that each motivation, whether kinship or poverty, has an equal influence on your conscience. This is the essence of the balance in motivations.

But if neither the wealthy relative nor the poor stranger benefits from your kindness, it is a sign that neither of the two motives alone is sufficient to spur your determination to act. This is the image of participation. However, if you find that the primary motive is poverty and need, and the other motive is merely a facilitating factor without which you cannot independently motivate yourself or stir your ambition, this indicates that the primary motive is superior and dominant, while the other is secondary and its absence does not affect the completion of the action. This is the image of assistance.

And then, if the two motives, namely duty and benefit, or religious and personal, are equal, the moral charge in the action is nullified due to the balance of positive and negative in it. However, if the moral motive prevails, it has moral merit proportional to its strength over the other motive. Conversely, the action is deemed immoral to the extent of the difference in strength between the two motives, but it does not reach the immorality of an action devoid of any moral motive because even the slightest inclination in our will towards good results in an equal amount of good in our souls. This, in itself, is evidence of the superiority of Islamic ethics over other situational ethics.

And Al-Ghazali (Al-Ghazali *et al.*, 1963) mentioned in this regard that if the doer does not purify their intention for the sake of God but mixes their actions with the intention of showing off or personal gain, does it merit reward, punishment, or nothing at all? If their action is solely for show, it certainly merits punishment. However, if their action is purely for the sake of God, it merits reward.

People have differed on whether the doer mixed sincerity with hypocrisy, and the apparent reports indicate that he has no reward, although the reports are not free from contradiction in this matter. However, Al-Ghazali views the issue as one that should consider the strength of the motive. If the religious motive is equal to the psychological motive, then the two motives oppose and cancel each other out, making the action neither rewarded nor punished.

But if the motive of showing off is stronger, the action is not beneficial; rather, it is harmful and leads to punishment. If the punishment is lighter and less than the punishment for an action done purely for showing off, and there is no intention of seeking closeness to God. And if the motive of seeking closeness to God is stronger, he will be rewarded according to the degree of strength of the religious motive. This is by the saying of Allah, the Exalted "Therefore, everybody who performs an atom's weight of good will witness it. And whomever does an act of malevolence, even as minute as an atom, shall witness its consequences" (QS. 99: 7–8). In another verse "Indeed, Allah does not wrong anyone, not even by the weight of an atom. If it is a virtuous act, He will significantly amplify it and provide a substantial recompense from His grace" (QS. 4: 40).

The intention for good should not be wasted; rather, if it prevails, the amount equivalent to it will be nullified, and the excess will remain. If it is defeated, something of the punishment for the corrupt intention will be lifted because of it.

Moreover, the Quran explicitly permitted the involvement of personal motives on the condition that the religious motive is the foundation of the action, and that this

involvement does not diminish the value of the work at all, when God allowed the pilgrim to seek other benefits in His saying: "You bear no culpability for pursuing the rewards of your Lord on this voyage." (QS. 2: 198)

It became clear to us after this lengthy statement that intention is an important criterion for determining the type of behavior, its moral degree, and its rank in the scale of divine satisfaction and reward.

Fourth: Love

Love is an important pillar of Islamic ethics, and it is the vessel in which Islam ensures its commands, prohibitions, and ethical legislations find stability and continuity. Without love, commands are executed as duties or heavy obligations, from which the soul quickly grows weary and seeks to evade.

It is well known that when a person loves something, they surrender themselves and their mind to it. This is the secret behind Islam's emphasis on nurturing Muslim's emotions with love, due to the significant impact this sentiment has on guiding human behavior, building families and communities, and fostering cooperation and brotherhood among individuals and nations.

It is worth noting here that love is a blind emotion; it can be for good or for evil. Hence, the Quran has focused on enlightening and clarifying love, just as it focuses on its subject.

The Quran has made the law a standard for love in terms of its enlightenment and illumination, and it has not made the self, its desires, and whims a standard for it. The Quran has provided many proofs in this regard, including "Proclaim, 'O Prophet "Virtue and vice are not equivalent, despite the overwhelming prevalence of vice that may captivate you." Therefore, be conscious of Allah, O those of intellect, that you may attain prosperity" (QS. 5: 100). Another verse "Therefore, do not unjustly elevate yourselves. He is most knowledgeable about who is genuinely righteous" (QS. 53: 32). Another verse "You may have an aversion to what is beneficial and a preference for what is detrimental. Allah possesses knowledge that you lack" (QS. 2: 216). Else "However, no! By your Lord, they will never be genuine believers until they acknowledge you, O Prophet, as the arbiter in their conflicts, and experience no internal dissent against your verdict, submitting entirely" (QS. 4: 65). The sole reaction of the 'true' believers, when summoned before Allah and His Messenger for adjudication, is to declare, "We hear and obey." They are the ones who will genuinely succeed. (QS. 24: 51)

And the Messenger of Allah said: "Listening and obeying is a duty for a Muslim in what he likes and dislikes, as long as he is not commanded to disobey. If he is commanded to disobey, then there is no listening or obeying." (Narrated by Al – Bukhari)

In a Muslim's relationship, even with the closest people to him, his inclination and love should be towards the truth, not towards the self. For instance, we see Napoleon's law prohibiting a son from testifying against his father and mother out of respect for the kinship bond between them (Moussa, 1942). In contrast, the Quran calls on the individual to have his loyalty and love solely for God and the truth in all circumstances, as Allah says: "O faithful! Uphold justice as witnesses for Allah, even if it is detrimental to oneself, your parents, or close relatives. Regardless of their wealth, Allah is most capable of safeguarding their interests. Therefore, do not let your wants to lead you astray from justice. If you alter the testimony or decline to provide it, then be aware that Allah is undoubtedly cognizant of your actions." (QS. 4: 135).

It is worth noting that although the Quran encourages obedience to parents, that obedience is nullified when it conflicts with loyalty to the truth, as Allah Almighty said "However, if they coerce you to engage with matters of which you possess little understanding, do not comply. Maintain their companionship in this world with courtesy, and adhere to the path of those who turn to Me in devotion. Subsequently, you shall all return to Me, and I will apprise you of your past actions" (QS. 31: 15).

The Messenger of Allah summarized this guiding criterion for the emotion of love and its insight in his saying: "There is no obedience to a created being in disobedience to the Creator" (Narrated by Ahmad).

On another note, the Quran has linked love, in terms of its subject, to a higher ideal, where all the attributes of perfection are manifested. Thus, the meaning of love expands in the heart of the Muslim and rises to encompass the entire universe. In this way, the soul is purified from selfishness, desire, and self – love, which are vices that bring a person down to the level of beasts and generate hatred, animosity, and selfishness.

So when an individual looks at things through their subjective measure and limited personal interests, they love what agrees with them even if it doesn't agree with others or the truth, and hate what disagrees with them even if it agrees with others or the truth. Thus, they become selfish, rude, hard – hearted, and spiteful, destroying themselves and everything around them.

And therefore, the Quran has placed a strong emphasis on the subject of love, which should be nothing other than the love of God and His Messenger. This meaning is clearly evident in His saying "*Proclaim, 'O Prophet, 'If your parents, children, siblings, spouses, extended family, acquired wealth, apprehensions regarding trade decline, and cherished homes are more dear to you than Allah, His Messenger, and striving in His Cause, then await the fulfillment of Allah's decree.*" Allah does not provide guidance to the defiant individuals" (QS. 9: 24).

The Messenger of God resolved this matter when he made the love of God and the love of His Messenger a criterion for faith, as he said: "None of you truly believes until he loves me more than his father, his children, and all mankind" (Narrated by Bukhari).

When hearts take ideals as the object of their love, it is natural for love, brotherhood, and cooperation to prevail, for the voice of truth and duty to rise among people, and for the path to goodness and happiness to open up for individuals and communities. Conversely, when hearts take whims and personal interests as the object of their love, hatred prevails, enmity and conflict become entrenched among people, the paths to goodness and happiness are blocked, and man becomes miserable, wretched, and unhappy (Gibb, 1961).

This is God's decree and His signs among His creation, when He says "With the passage of time! Indeed, humanity is in significant loss, except for those who possess faith, engage in righteous deeds, and encourage one another towards truth and endurance" (QS. 103: 1 – 3). These are the most important standards that regulate the Muslim's feelings, which should guide his will towards achieving his goal of goodness and happiness.

CONCLUSION

After conducting an in – depth study of the doctrinal standards of human ethics from the perspective of the Qur'an, it can be concluded that the Qur'an views the core of ethical discourse as an effort to answer the fundamental question: what must humans do to become good, virtuous individuals and achieve true happiness? Ethics, in this view, does not stop at the theoretical level alone, but demands practical application in daily

life. The theoretical dimension is merely a means to achieve the practical goal, which is the true goodness and happiness of humanity.

Furthermore, the Qur'an emphasizes that ethics are practical and must be implemented directly. The moral values offered by the Qur'an are not intended merely as topics for discussion, but as ideal solutions to various issues that hinder humanity from achieving its full potential. Therefore, the implementation of these values is an obligation that cannot be postponed, as only by practicing them can humanity cultivate a noble character and civilization.

Finally, the primary standard of ethics according to the Qur'an is revelation, not reason or custom. The measure of morality in Islam is rooted in the principles of tawhid, tawakal, sincere intention, and love for Allah. This is the doctrinal foundation that guides the conscience of a Muslim in their behavior. By making revelation the standard, the Qur'an establishes a transcendent and consistent ethical system that guides humanity toward a meaningful, upright, and Allah – pleasing life.

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