

THE ETHICAL AND SOCIAL DIMENSION IN THE OBJECTIVES OF THE QUR'AN AND ITS IMPACT ON ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract:

The research aims to examine the impact of the ethical and social dimension on achieving sustainable social development, by exploring the guidance and objectives derived from Qur'anic verses in this regard, which have a significant influence on social development, while highlighting the importance of this influence in people's lives to ensure the sustainability of social development among members of communities. The study relies on the inductive-deductive method, and within this framework, adopts the analytical approach. The results revealed, most importantly, that chastity and livelihood, truthfulness, and trustworthiness are the core of a pure, genuine life for any human civilization; through them, honor is preserved, lineages protected, and societies distinguished. The Qur'an has established a comprehensive ethical and social system that places values at the center of human and social development. **Key Recommendations:** Integration of Qur'anic values into development and educational curricula, and promotion of applied maqasid-based studies to cultivate value-consciousness that contributes to forming virtuous, active citizens in society.

Keywords: Ethics – Values – Sustainable Development – Objectives of the Qur'an

INTRODUCTION

All praise is due to Allah, and may peace and blessings be upon His Messenger. The Qur'an is the greatest book revealed by Allah Almighty to His most honored Messenger, serving as guidance and a cure for what lies within the hearts, a source of guidance and mercy for the believers. The guidance of the Qur'an is the most excellent, upright, and clear guidance. The nation is in urgent need of Qur'anic guidance to achieve a good and wholesome life, and to build societies correctly and soundly, free from corruption and disorder.

This research aims to shed light on an important aspect of building societies in light of the objectives of the Qur'an, by focusing on one of the most crucial factors: the **ethical and social dimension** and its impact on achieving **sustainable social development**.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To extract Qur'anic foundations for building a virtuous and balanced society based on principles of justice, benevolence, solidarity, and shared responsibility.
2. To establish the connection between Qur'anic guidance and the concept of sustainable development, considering it a human goal complementary to the higher objectives of Shariah.
3. To identify the Qur'anic objectives and guidance related to social ethics that assist in building sustainable communities.

Significance of the Study:

1. To enhance the integration between religious values and modern development systems, enriching academic discourse in Islamic studies and social development.
2. To open avenues for researchers to apply Qur'anic guidance in real-life contexts to achieve sustainable development.

Research Problem:

The research problem emerges from the following question:

How does the guidance of the Qur'an contribute to consolidating the ethical and social dimension, thereby achieving comprehensive sustainable development?

The applied scholarly approach:

The study adopts an **inductive-deductive approach**, tracing guidance and objectives relevant to the research topic and deriving them from Qur'anic verses.

Research Plan:

The paper comprises: Introduction, Two Main Sections (Mabahith), Conclusion, and References.

1. **Section One:** The Importance of Ethical and Social Reform
2. **Section Two:** The Impact of Strengthening Qur'anic Ethical and Social Values in Building a Balanced and Sustainable Society****

Section One: The Importance of Moral and Social Reform

Moral and social reform is one of the most important components of reform—after religious reform. This is derived from the Qur'anic verses, which show that the prophets, peace be upon them, first called their people,

after establishing the oneness of Allah, to reform themselves and their communities through noble character, virtuous qualities, sound dealings, and everything that guides them to the straight path in their religion and worldly affairs.

For example, the Prophet Shu'ayb, peace be upon him, first commanded his people to worship Allah: **Arabic:** وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَهِ غَيْرُهُ هَٰذَا جَاءَكُم بِبَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ **Transliteration:** Wa ila Madyna akhahum Shu'ayban; qala yaa qawmi u'budoo Allaha ma lakum min ilaahin ghayruhu qad ja'atkum bayyina min rabbikum [Al-A'raf: 85]

This is a reform for what was corrupted in the belief of faith. He then followed it by calling them to reform themselves and their society from corrupt dealings, emphasizing fairness, honesty, and justice: **Arabic:** فَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ **Transliteration:** Fa awfoo al-kayl wal-meezan wa laa tabkhasoo an-naasa ashyaa'ahum wa laa tufsidoo fil-ardhi ba'da islaahiha; zaalikum khayrun lakum in kuntum mu'minin [Al-A'raf: 85]. He also warned them against harming others, robbing them, and spreading fear, as such acts destroy communities, threaten lives, and undermine social solidarity: **Arabic:** وَلَا تَقْعُدُوا بِكُلِّ صِرَاطٍ تُوعِدُونَ وَتَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مَن آمَنَ بِهِ وَتَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَادْكُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ **Transliteration:** Wa laa taq'udoo bikulli siraatin too'idoon wa tasuddoon 'an sabeelillahi man aamana bihi watabghoonaha 'iwajan wa uthkuroo kayfa kana 'aaqibatul mufsideen [Al-A'raf: 86] This gradual approach in guidance is undoubtedly the method of all prophets, peace be upon them.

Chapter Two: The Impact of Strengthening Qur'anic Moral and Social Values on Building a Balanced and Sustainable Society

The Noble Qur'an has a profound impact in achieving and reinforcing moral and social values. I will present one example from the Qur'an that demonstrates this aspect, namely the story of Yusuf (Joseph), peace be upon him. Upon examining Surah Yusuf, peace be upon him, we find that this matter is clearly manifested in the verses of the Surah. In what follows—through the story of Yusuf, peace be upon him—I will address two of the most significant moral aspects that have a profound effect on moral and social reform, namely:

1. Truthfulness (Al-Sidq)

One of the main objectives of Surah Yusuf is to guide people to all forms of guidance and clarify what leads to it. Imam al-Baq'a'i, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "Its purpose is to describe the Book as a clarification of everything that leads to guidance" [8].

Truthfulness and trustworthiness are among the most important qualities that lead to guidance. Clear examples appear in the story of Joseph: **Arabic:** قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا مَا لَكَ لَا تَأْمَنَّا عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ نَاصِحُونَ ... وَجَاءُوا أَبَاهُمْ عِشَاءً يَبْكُونَ قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا إِنَّا ذَهَبْنَا نَسْتَبِثُ وَتَرَكْنَاهُ يُوسُفَ عِنْدَ مَتَاعِنَا فَأَكَلَهُ الذِّئْبُ

... وَجَاءُوا عَلَىٰ قَمِيصِهِ بِدَمٍ كَذِبٍ قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ أَنْفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ وَاللَّهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَىٰ مَا تَصِفُونَ **Transliteration:** Qaloo yaa abanaa ma laka laa ta'manna 'ala Yusuf wa innaa lahu naasihoon ... wa jaaa'oo abahum 'ishaa'an yabkoon; qaloo yaa abanaa inna dhahabnaa nastabiqu wataraknaa Yusuf 'inda mata'inaa fa akalahu adh-dhi'b ... wa jaaa'oo 'alaa qameesihi bidam kadhbi; qal bal sawallat lakum anfusukum amran; fasabrun jameel wallahu al-musta'aanu 'alaa ma tasifoon [Yusuf: 11,16–18] "God, Exalted is He, informs us about the brothers of Yusuf that when they had finished committing their crime, they came in a deceitful manner, pretending to weep at a time when it is impossible to examine the features of the face to distinguish truth from falsehood — that is, at night. They justified their crime by claiming that they had gone to race one another and had left Yusuf with their belongings. Then they said: 'And we know that you will not believe us, even if we were worthy of being believed, due to your intense love for Yusuf, peace be upon him, and your suspicion of us.' [3]

Through reflecting and contemplating these verses, we can derive the most important lessons related to moral reform pertaining to truthfulness and trustworthiness, as follows:

1- The verses show that truthfulness leads to a praiseworthy outcome, whereas lying leads to an evil end, and that a society built upon falsehood and treachery is destined for ruin. This becomes clear through the sequence of verses in the story of Yusuf (peace be upon him). We see that the brothers of Yusuf fell into lying out of envy toward him, wanting thereby to gain their father's full attention. Yet God, Exalted is He, exposed them and granted the final outcome to Yusuf. In His saying: (وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ لَتُنَبِّئَنَّهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِمْ هَٰذَا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ) [Yusuf: 15] **Translation:** "And We inspired him: 'You will surely inform them of this affair of theirs, while they do not perceive.'" **Transliteration:** Wa awhayna ilayhi latunabbi'annahum bi-amrihim haadha wa hum laa yash'urun.

This "entails his rescue and his eventual authority over his brothers — for such informing cannot occur except when he has the upper hand and is secure from their harm."

Furthermore, among the insights indicated by the verses is the necessity of being alert and not being deceived by people of falsehood and baseless claims, regardless of their methods or persuasive styles. This is reflected in their statement: (قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا مَا لَكَ لَا تَأْمَنَّا عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ نَاصِحُونَ) [Yusuf: 11] **Translation:** "They said: 'O our father, why do you not trust us with Yusuf, when indeed we are surely his well-wishers?'" **Transliteration:** Qalū yā abānā mā laka lā ta'mannā 'alā Yūsuf wa innā lahu lanaṣiḥūn.

Abū al-Su'ūd (may God have mercy on him) said: "They addressed him in this manner to stir the

bond of kinship between him and them, and to remind him of the brotherly relationship between them and Yusuf (peace be upon him), so that they might thereby persuade him to abandon his opinion of protecting Yusuf from them — after he had sensed signs of envy and wrongdoing on their part.”[1]

Thus, it is necessary to restrain people of falsehood and avoid being deceived by the tactics they may use to justify their lies. For example, **weeping** is not a sign of truthfulness. Al-Qurtubī (may God have mercy on him) said: “This verse proves that a person’s weeping does not indicate the truth of his claim, for it may be contrived; some people are able to do so, and some are not.”[5]

He (may God have mercy on him) also said: “They unanimously agreed that Ya‘qūb (peace be upon him) deduced their lying from the soundness of the shirt. Thus, the one investigating a matter must observe signs and indicators when the evidence conflicts.”[5].”

Hence, **a suspicious person is often on the verge of exposing himself**, and true is the saying: “**The guilty one is about to say: ‘Arrest me.’**”[7].”

A careful listener detects inconsistency and lack of coherence in the words of a liar. The brothers of Yusuf took him so that he might play with them, yet upon returning, they informed their father that a wolf had eaten him while he was left near their belongings. Thus is the condition of liars in every age: they cannot perfect a lie from all angles, and inevitably leave behind a thread that leads to its unraveling. Hence the saying: “**The sign of lying is forgetfulness.**”

Al-Biqā‘ī (may God have mercy on him) said: “Falsehood inherently carries within itself evidence of its invalidity, just as the doubtful person is on the verge of revealing himself.”[8].

2- The verses also point to another category of lying that combines falsehood with slander — such as the lie uttered by the wife of al-‘Azīz when she accused Yusuf (peace be upon him) of wrongdoing: ﴿قَالَتْ مَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ أَرَادَ بِأَهْلِكَ سُوءًا﴾ [Yusuf: 25] **Translation:** “She said: ‘What is the recompense of one who intended evil toward your household?’” **Transliteration:** Qālat mā jazā‘u man arāda bi-ahlika sū‘ā.

This is an extremely dangerous form of lying, especially since it pertains to people’s honor, and she showed no concern for the consequences that might befall Yusuf (peace be upon him).

Al-Tāhir ibn ‘Āshūr (may God have mercy on him) said: “She rushed into speech in order to intensify the slander, without hesitating — making him imagine that she was upon the truth. She cast her words in a general, absolute form so that they would take the shape of a legal principle, serving as a rule whose intended

application was unknown, leaving the listener no option but to assent.”[2].

Nevertheless, it must be noted that **God will ultimately manifest the truthfulness of the truthful and will make clear the proof of his innocence.**

Second: Trustworthiness (Al-Amānah)

What must be observed for building upright societies is **trustworthiness**, for it is well-known that trustworthiness is one of the most important pillars of societies. By it the lives of people are set aright, and by neglecting it societies become corrupt, and wealth and blessings diminish. This meaning is manifest in various verses of Sūrat Yūsuf (peace be upon him).

Among them is His saying, the Exalted: ﴿قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا مَا لَكَ لَا تَأْمَنَّا عَلَى يُوسُفَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ نَاصِحُونَ﴾ [Yusuf: 11] **Translation:** They said: “O our father, what is the matter with you that you do not trust us with Joseph, although we are truly his well-wishers?” **Transliteration:** Qālū yā abānā mā laka lā ta‘mannā ‘alā Yūsufa wa-innā lahu nāsihūn. And His saying, the Exalted: ﴿وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ إِنِّي أَرَى فِيكَ الْيَوْمَ لَدِينًا مَكِينًا﴾ [Yusuf: 54] **Translation:** And the king said: “Bring him to me.” Then, when he spoke to him, he said: “Today you are established in position with us, and trustworthy.” **Transliteration:** Wa-qāla al-maliku i‘tūnī bihi fa-lamma kallamahū qāla innaka al-yawma ladaynā makīnun amīn. From these two verses, we can derive guidance that clarifies this aspect and strengthens the value of trustworthiness within societies, as follows:

1. The verses indicate that **neglecting trust and failing to guard it leads to numerous hardships and calamities**. When the brothers of Yūsuf (peace be upon him) failed to keep the trust of protecting him—shown in their statement: “What is the matter with you that you do not trust us?”—this resulted in grave consequences: the son was separated from his father for **forty years**, he was unjustly imprisoned, grief entered the heart of his father until **he lost his sight because of sorrow**. And this is the case in every matter: whenever trust is lost, it leads to injustice among people and to the ruin and collapse of societies. For this reason the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “**When trust is lost, then await the Hour.**” (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī) [6]
2. The verses point to the fact that **possessing virtuous and noble character traits, and abandoning evil morals, is among the greatest foundations of empowerment**, and among the strongest factors for success and prosperity—both in this world and the next. This is evident in the trustworthiness and honesty of Prophet Yūsuf (peace be upon him). The Exalted says: ﴿وَكَذَلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَتَّبِعُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ ۚ نَصِيبُ بِرَحْمَتِنَا﴾ [Yusuf: 56] **Translation:** Thus We established Joseph in the land so that he might settle wherever he wished. We bestow Our mercy upon

whom We will, and We do not allow the reward of the doers of good to be lost. **Transliteration:** Wa-kadhālika makkannā li-Yūsufā fī al-arḍi yatabawwa'u minhā ḥaythu yashā'; nuṣību bi-rahmatinā man nashā', wa-lā nuḍī'u ajra al-muḥsinīn. Thus, **honesty and trustworthiness are a path to empowerment upon the earth.**

3. The verse also indicates that **authority and responsibilities should be entrusted to those who are deserving—those known for honesty and trustworthiness.** Whoever is known for trustworthiness is most deserving of leadership, for in this lies the protection of societies and the safeguarding of people's wealth. This is derived from the king's words to Joseph: **إِنَّكَ الْيَوْمَ لَدِينَا مَكِينٌ** (Yūsuf: 54) ("Today you are established in position with us, and trustworthy.") After the king and the people were fully assured of Joseph's innocence, the king summoned him. When he spoke to him, he admired his words, and his status increased in the king's eyes, so he drew him near and honored him.[4]

Thus it must be: whoever combines these qualities is worthy of all trust, fit for every position, and successful in every task. Trustworthiness is one of the most essential conditions for positions of authority, for corruption arises when matters are entrusted to those unqualified to handle them.

From all of the above, it becomes clear that **moral and social reform in its various forms is one of the most important foundations for building a sound human civilization and ideal societies.** People, by their innate nature, love noble character and degrees of perfection; such qualities give them hope to attain virtues. For this reason, it is out of Allah's mercy that throughout the ages—even in times of the ummah's weakness—there remain steadfast models who uphold the highest ideals in their words, deeds, and beliefs. This, without doubt, contributes to building a strong and enduring human civilization.

RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS:

1. Chastity, modesty, honesty, and trustworthiness constitute the true pure essence of any human civilization, for through them honor is preserved, lineage is safeguarded, and society distinguishes itself.
2. The research indicates that the Noble Qur'an established a comprehensive moral and social system that makes values the central axis of human and social development in all fields.
3. The research further indicates that the moral dimension plays a critical role in achieving sustainability, both in development in general and in social development in particular.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Integrating Qur'anic values into development and educational curricula, and strengthening applied Maqāsid-based studies in order to cultivate value-based awareness that contributes to building a righteous and active citizen within society.

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