



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

FACULTY OF ARTS

COURSE CODE: ISL113

COURSE TITLE: QUR'ANIC ETHICS

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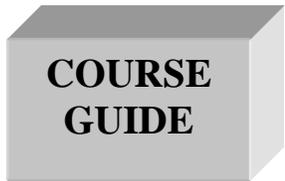
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Introduction

You are welcome to ISL113 class. The course is titled ‘Qur’anic Ethics’. It is a two-unit compulsory course for students of B.A. degree in Islamic Studies. Islam

is a religion that combines both devotion and moral. Therefore the Qur'an, which is the code of conduct for the Muslims, is concerned about the moral disposition of the Muslim faithful so that they would be able to live a life of happiness and righteousness. You are therefore advised to prepare well to benefit from this course by taking note of all necessary points and be ready to ask for clarification from your facilitator when necessary. Once again, you are welcome.

Aims and Objectives

This course is aimed at exposing students to some of the Qur'anic verses and passages that guide Muslims into living a moral life that is devoid of evil practices. The objective is to make students to be acquainted with relevant verses of the Qur'an that discuss moral conduct in order to apply them in their day-to-day activities.

Working through this Course

The Components of this Course which you are expected to work through without leaving one on touched are:

1. This Course Guide
2. Study Units
3. Textbooks
4. Assignments File
5. Presentation Schedule

Study Units

There are fifteen units (of three modules) in this course. These are listed thus:

MODULE 1

| | | |
|---------------|---|---------|
| Unit 1 | Definition of Morality and its place in the Holy <i>Qur'ān</i> | 10 - 16 |
| Unit 2 | The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Morality and Prophet Muhammad's Examples | 17 - 23 |
| Unit 3 | Moral Teachings of the <i>Qur'ān</i> Relating to the Family | 24 – 32 |
| Unit 4 | Moral Teachings of the <i>Qur'ān</i> Regarding Kinsmen, Neighbours and the Community at large | 33 - 37 |
| Unit 5 | Moral Obligations of the Rulers and their Subjects | 38 - 42 |

MODULE 2

| | |
|---|---------|
| Unit 1 The Teachings of the <i>Qur'ān</i> on Justice, Truthfulness and Righteousness | 43 - 52 |
| Unit 2 The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Injunctions on Dressing. | 53 - 59 |
| Unit 3 The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Teachings on Unity, Equality of Mankind and Peaceful Co-Existence | 60 - 67 |
| Unit 4 The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Injunctions Relating to Fulfillment of Promises, Trusts and Contracts | 68 – 74 |
| Unit 5 The Qur'ānic Condemnation of Vices like Pride, Envy, and Hypocrisy | 75 – 80 |

MODULE 3

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Unit 1 The <i>Qur'ān's</i> Stand on Slandering, Rumour Mongering and Falsehood | 81 - 87 |
| Unit 2 The Problem of Corruption and Suggested Solution. | 88 - 97 |
| Unit 3 Islam's Stand on the Vices of Intoxicants (<i>Khamr</i>), Hard Drugs And Gambling | 98 - 104 |
| Unit 4 Condemnation of Adultery (<i>Zinā</i>) and Sodomy (<i>Liwāt wa 's-Sihāq</i>) | 105 - 112 |
| Unit 5 Prohibition of Vices such as Abortion, Murder and Suicide | 113 – 119 |

Assignment File

Here, there are details of work you must do and submit to your tutor for making. Your scores from these assignments shall be used as part of your final marks in the course. Detail of this shall be found in ASSIGNMENT FILE and in Course Guide in the assignment section. Note that ASSIGNMENT will be marked based on tutor-marked assignment (TMAs) and a final written examination at the end of the course.

Assessment

Your assessment will be based on tutor-marked assignments (TMAs) 30% and a final examination which you will write at end of the course 70%.

Tutor Marked Assignment

Each unit has at least three or four assignments. You are expected to work through all the assignments and submit them for assessment. Your tutor will assess the assignments and select four, which will constitute the 30% of your final grade.

The tutor-marked assignments may be presented to you in a separate file. Note that there are tutor-marked assignments for you. It important you do them and submit for assessment.

Presentation Schedule

The Presentation Schedule included in your course materials gives you the important dates for the completion of tutor-marked assignments and attending tutorials. Remember, you are required to submit all your assignment by the due date. You should guard against falling behind in your work.

Course Overview and Presentation Schedule

| Unit | Title of Work | Weeks | Assessment Activity |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------|---------------------|
| Module 1: | | | |
| Unit 1 | Definition of Morality and its place in the Holy <i>Qur'ān</i> | Week 1 | Assignment 1 |
| Unit 2 | The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Morality and Prophet Muhammad's Examples | Week 2 | Assignment 2 |
| Unit 3 | Moral Teachings of the <i>Qur'ān</i> Relating to the Family | Week 3 | Assignment 3 |
| Unit 4 | Moral Teachings of the <i>Qur'ān</i> Regarding Kinsmen, Neighbours and the Community at large | Week 4 | Assignment 4 |
| Unit 5 | Moral Obligations of the Rulers and their Subjects | Week 5 | Assignment 5 |
| MODULE 2: SOURCES OF SHARĪ'AH | | | |
| Unit 1 | The Teachings of the <i>Qur'ān</i> on Justice, Truthfulness and Righteousness | Week 6 | Assignment 6 |
| Unit 2 | The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Injunctions on Dressing | Week 7 | Assignment 7 |
| Unit 3 | The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Teachings on Unity, Equality of Mankind and Peaceful Co-Existence | Week 8 | Assignment 8 |
| Unit 4 | The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Injunctions Relating to Fulfillment of Promises, Trusts and Contracts | Week 9 | Assignment 9 |
| Unit 5 | The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Condemnation of Vices like Pride, Envy, and Hypocrisy | Week 10 | Assignment 10 |
| Module 3: MISCELLANEOUS | | | |
| Unit 1 | The <i>Qur'ān</i> 's Stand on Slandering, Rumour Mongering and Falsehood | Week 11 | Assignment 11 |
| Unit 2 | The Problem of Corruption and Suggested Solution | Week 12 | Assignment 12 |
| Unit 3 | Islam's Stand on the Vices of Intoxicants (<i>Khamr</i>), Hard Drugs and Gambling | Week 13 | Assignment 13 |
| Unit 4 | Condemnation of Adultery (<i>Zinā</i>), and | Week 14 | Assignment 14 |

| | | | |
|-------------|---|---------|---------------|
| | Sodomy (<i>Liwāt wa 's-Sihāq</i>) | | |
| Unit 5 | Prohibition of Vices such as Abortion, Murder and Suicide | Week 15 | Assignment 15 |
| Revision | | | |
| Examination | | | |

Final Examination and Grading

At the end of this course, you will write a final examination, which shall constitute 70% of your grade. In the examination, you will be required to answer three (3) questions out of at least five (5) questions.

Course Marking Scheme

This table shows the actual marks allocations

| Assessment | Marks |
|-------------------|---|
| Four Assignments | Best three marks of the four assignments count as 30% |
| Final Examination | 70% of overall marks |
| Total | 100% of course marks |

How to Get the Most from this Course

In distance learning, the study units replace the university lecture. This is one of its great advantages. You can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at a time and place that suits you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to the lecturer. In the same way a lecturer might give you some reading to do, the study units tell you when to read, and which are your text materials or set books. You are provided exercises to do at appropriate points, just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise. Each of the study units follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit, and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. Next to this is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. These learning objectives are meant to guide your study. The moment a unit is finished, you must go back and check whether you have achieved the objectives. If this is made a habit, then you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course. The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your set books or from a Reading section. The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into any trouble, telephone your tutor. Remember that your tutor's job is to help you. When you need assistance, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it.

1. Read this Course Guide thoroughly, it is your first assignment.
2. Organize a Study Schedule. Design a 'Course Overview' to guide you through the Course. Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Important information, e.g. details of your tutorials, and the date of the first day of the Semester is available from the study centre. You need to gather all the information into one place, such as your diary or a wall calendar. Whatever method you

- choose to use, you should decide on and write in your own dates and schedule of work for each unit.
3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything to stay faithful to it. The major reason that students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please, let your tutor know before it is too late for help.
 4. Turn to Unit 1, and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
 5. Assemble the study materials. You will need your set books and the unit you are studying at any point in time.
 6. Work through the unit. As you work through the unit, you will know what sources to consult for further information.
 7. Keep in touch with your Study Centre. Up-to-date course information will be continuously available there.
 8. Well before the relevant due dates (about 4 weeks before the dates), keep in mind that you will learn a lot by doing the assignment carefully. They have been designed to help you meet the objectives of the course and, therefore, will help you pass the examination. Submit all assignments not later than the due date.
 9. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
 10. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.
 11. When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor for marking, do not wait for its return before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the Assignment is returned, pay particular attention to your tutor's comments, both on the Tutor-Marked Assignment form and also the written comments on the ordinary assignments.
 12. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in the Course Guide).

Tutors and Tutorials

The dates, times and locations of these tutorials will be made available to you, together with the name, telephone number and address of your tutor. Your tutor will mark each assignment. Pay close attention to the comments your tutor might make on your assignments as these will help in your progress. Make sure that assignments reach your tutor on or before the due date. Your tutorials are important, therefore try not to skip any. It is an opportunity to meet your tutor and your fellow students. It is also an opportunity to get the help of your tutor and discuss any difficulties encountered on your reading.

Summary

In this Course Guide, we have provided you a general overview of *ISL113: Qur'anic Ethics* in which students pursuing Degree in Arabic and Islamic Studies programme must earn two credit Units. The Course Aims and Objectives and what learners will gain working through the Course Material and its Study Units are stated clearly at the onset. We have also provided you a list of textbooks and references for your further reading. As an inference in the Guide, to develop an active interest in the Course is a prerequisite for its successful completion. Assess yourself through the Self Assessment Exercises (SAEs). You will equally be assessed for grading purposes through the Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs). Thus to do well- in the course, you must get yourself organized and try to conform to the presentation schedule.

Conclusion

Much as I cannot promise you a too-easy ride on this course, I equally do not envisage much difficulty as long as you play the roles assigned to you in the whole exercise.

We wish you best of luck and success in the course.

MODULE 1

| | | |
|---------------|---|---------|
| Unit 1 | Definition of Morality and its place in the Holy <i>Qur'ān</i> | 10 - 16 |
| Unit 2 | The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Morality and Prophet Muhammad's Examples | 17 - 23 |
| Unit 3 | Moral Teachings of the <i>Qur'ān</i> Relating to the Family | 24 – 32 |
| Unit 4 | Moral Teachings of the <i>Qur'ān</i> Regarding Kinsmen, Neighbours and the Community at large | 33 - 37 |
| Unit 5 | Moral Obligations of the Rulers and their Subjects | 38 - 42 |

MODULE 2

Unit 1 The Teachings of the *Qur'ān* on Justice, Truthfulness and

| | | |
|---------------|---|---------|
| | Righteousness | 43 - 52 |
| Unit 2 | The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Injunctions on Dressing. | 53 - 59 |
| Unit 3 | The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Teachings on Unity, Equality of Mankind and Peaceful Co-Existence | 60 - 67 |
| Unit 4 | The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Injunctions Relating to Fulfillment of Promises, Trusts and Contracts | 68 – 74 |
| Unit 5 | The <i>Qur'ānic</i> Condemnation of Vices like Pride, Envy, and Hypocrisy | 75 - 80 |

MODULE 3

| | | |
|---------------|---|-----------|
| Unit 1 | The <i>Qur'ān's</i> Stand on Slandering, Rumour Mongering and Falsehood | 81 - 87 |
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| Unit 4 | Condemnation of Adultery (<i>Zinā</i>), and Sodomy (<i>Liwāt wa 's-Sihāq</i>) | 105 - 112 |
| Unit 5 | Prohibition of Vices such as Abortion, Murder and Suicide | 113 - 119 |

MODULE 1: CONCEPT OF MORALITY IN ISLAM

UNIT 1: DEFINITION OF MORALITY AND ITS PLACE IN THE HOLY *QUR'ĀN*

Unit Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Morality and its place in the Holy *Qur'ān*
 - 1.3.1 Definitions of Morality
 - 1.3.2 Status of morality in human society
 - 1.3.3 The Holy *Qur'ān* as a book of guidance
 - 1.3.4 Place of Morality in the Holy *Qur'ān*
- 1.4 Conclusion
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 References/Further Readings
- 1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

You are welcome to the ISL113. This is the first time we shall be meeting on this course which is titled QUR'ĀNIC ETHICS. The course is designed to expose you to some of the moral instructions that will guide you towards attaining a fulfilled life as a Muslim, as contained in the holy *Qur'ān*.

Qur'ān plays an important role in the liberation of human kind as it expounds and explains all that is, or may be needed by mankind for the complete fulfillment of life.

Can you imagine how a community without a divine book of guidance would be? Really, that would be a community devoid of meaningful existence, a community of disorder, anarchy, hopelessness, etc.

Verily, *Qur'ān* seeks to create faith in God through rehearsal of His signs; it makes provision for mankind's welfare-materials, spiritual and moral developments.

You will also agree that by adhering to the *Qur'ān* as a book of morality, human kinds will be capable of socializing and carrying out good conducts according to the dictates of Allah.

Because of its importance, the study of the status of the *Qur'ān* as a book of morality becomes worthwhile.

In this Unit therefore, you will learn about definitions of morality.

You will also learn something concerning the importance of the *Qur'ān* as a book of guidance and morality.

For you to benefit greatly from our discussion, maximum attention is required from you.

You will also need to have a copy of the Qur'an as a working tool. One again I welcome you to the class and it is my hope that you are going to enjoy this lesson.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- i. Define morality.
- ii. Describe the status of morality in human society.
- iii. Discuss the importance of the *Qur'ān* as a book of morality.

1.3 Morality and its place in the Holy *Qur'ān*

1.3.1 Definitions of Morality

Various scholars have defined morality in different ways to adequately reflect its meanings and functions. Some of these definitions are cited below. From their point of views it can be said that:

“Morality is the norm, code of rules and principles of human conduct 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”. (D.F., Asaju, 1997).

It is shared rules of conduct directing what should and should not be done by certain individuals under specified circumstances”. (G. Aderibigbe, 1997)

As an educational subject, morality is the sciences of virtues and the way to acquire them, of vices and the way to guard against them”. (K.O. Paramole, 2000)

“Morality is the simplest etiquette of behaviour accepted as norm by society ... the lubrication which enables the various machineries of human community to operate and interact with ease”. (A.A. Mawdudi, 1978)

From the few definitions of morality cited above, it should be understood by you that morality is very important in human life. It is a means of attaining perfection in this life and greatness in the life after. Most of the definitions of morality hint on human actions and dispositions in relation to good or bad, right and wrong. In other words, any matter concerning habits, attitudes, customs, ways of life, especially when assessed as good or bad, right or wrong falls within the context of morality.

In-text question: Now tell me, from all the different definitions on morality as discussed above, what will you say is the central focus of morality?

As you progress in your studies, you will become very familiar with the numerous moral functions in the *Qur'ān*.

1.3.2 Status of Morality in human society

Morality is the set of standards put in place within the society. It is very important in human life as it guides on how people live together in cooperation, peace and harmony. It is placed under what is generally regarded as rules, regulations or code of conduct that guide the day-to-day activities of the people. There are good and bad morals. However, the good morals are those behaviours that are acceptable while the bad morals are those that are detestable (rejected) in the society.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

1. Having studied the different views of scholars on definition of Morality, give a concise meaning of morality in your own words.
2. Explain the essence of good morals in human society.

1.3.3 The Holy Qur'ān as a book of guidance

The Qur'ān is the primary source of guidance and information in Islam. It is composed of such manifest revelations as were made in the very words of Allah. It was revealed to Muhammad in Arabic language so that he might be able to accomplish the Divine task saddled him. Qur'ān aptly says: "We have revealed the Qur'ān in Arabic language so that you may understand". (Q43: 3)

The first revelation (Qur'ān 96 verses 1-5) came to the Prophet (SAW) in Cave *Hirāh* in 17th Ramadan in 610 C.E., while the piecemeal revelation of the whole Qur'ān covered two periods – Makkan and Madinan periods. The former period had 12 years 5 months while the latter had 9 years 9 months. In other words, fraction wise, the Makkan revelations was 19/30 while that of Madinah was 11/30. However, the Makkan Surahs differ in character from those revealed in Madina. While the Makkan Surahs which are comparatively small, generally deal with the basic tenets of Islam and provide guidance to the individual soul, while the Madinan Surahs are rich in laws relating to civil, criminal, social and political problems of life.

1.3.4 Importance of the *Qur'ān* as a book of Morality

Abdul suggests that, *The Qur'ān is the sacred Book of Muslims that consists exclusively of the revelations and commands which Muhammad, the Prophet (SAW), received from time to time, as a message from God, and which under divine guidance, the prophet delivered to those around him* (M.O.A. Abdul, 1983).

The Holy Book while reaffirming the truth of all previous revelations, itself comprises of all truth for the whole of mankind for all times, ages, colours, creeds and languages (A. Rahman Doi, 1981)

The importance of the *Qur'ān* as a book of guidance for humanity cannot be underestimated. Its inclusive and integrative discussions combine and span across faith in God, religious rites, spiritual observances, social conducts, decision making, intellectual pursuits, habits of consumption, manners of speech and all other moral teachings. (See, *Qur'ān* 4 verse 36)

Qur'ān gives basic moral norms and values with wide range of behaviour for the individual, and shows him the way to the highest possible moral excellence which can save the entire humanity from the chaos and anarchy that have overtaken it today (M.A. Rauf, 1973).

It abounds in excellent moral suggestions and precepts. We cannot turn to a single page of its fragmentary compositions without finding moral topics which all men must approve. This fragmentary construction yields texts and norms complete in themselves suitable for common men in any of the incidents of life (T.J. Draper, 1875).

In the view of James Michener,

“*Qur’ān* is remarkably down-to-earth in its discussion of good life. For it combines dedication to one God and practical moral instructions. In one memorable passage (Q2:282) it directs: “When you deal with each other in transactions involving future obligations, reduce them to writing ... and get two witnesses, so that if one of them errs the other can remind him. This is juster in the sight of Allah, more suitable as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among people”. (The Reader’s Digest, American edition, 1955).

The *Qur’ān* is undoubtedly the Book of morals. In it, we find a comprehensive moral guidance which can assure human progress to the highest pinnacle in every sphere of human life and activity (K.O. Paramole, 2000).

There is truly no single thing we do, say, use, choose or think about that does not follow one of the indices of ethics and morality. Considering good manners even in their superficial aspect, no one unless he is a hermit, can fail to gain from a proper courteous and pleasant approach, or fail to be handicapped by an improper, offensive or a resentful one. Certainly, the greatest asset that a man or woman or even a child can have is good moral qualities.

In-text question: Briefly explain how Qur'an is considered to be a book of moral.

1.4 Conclusion

The teachings of the *Qur’ān* are universal, addressed to all people regardless of their origins, to enlighten their spirits, to unify their societies, purify their morals and to replace the domination by the powerful with justice and fraternity. As a book of guidance, *Qur’ān* elucidates moral topics, broadens them as far as possible and establishes good in place of vice in every area of human life, on the individual as well as the social levels.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 (SAEs)

3. What is the *Qur’ān*?
4. How can you describe the importance of the *Qur’ān* to mankind?
5. Mention two (2) other revealed books of God and briefly compare their moral lessons with the *Qur’ān*.

1.5 Summary

In this unit, we have dealt with:

1. definitions of morality as written by various scholars. Precisely, four (4) definitions were presented.
2. the status of morality in human society. It was stated that good moral values are very important for societal development and peaceful coexistence.
3. how the *Qur'ān* served as a divine guidance and a book of morality to mankind, especially the Muslims.

1.6 References/Further Readings

- i. M.O.A. Abdul (1983), *The Holy Book of Islam: Its Content and Value*, Lagos-Nigeria, Islamic Publications Bureau.
- ii. A Rahman Doi (1981), *Introduction to the Qur'ān*, Lagos – Nigeria, Islamic Publications Bureau.
- iii. Paramole, K.O. (2000), *Ethics in Islam: An Analytical Study*, Lagos-Nigeria, Islamic Studies Circle.
- iv. Aderibigbe, G. (1997), *Religion and Human Ethics*, Ijebu-Ode, Alamsek Press.

1.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Morality is the set of standards put in place within the society.
2. Good morals are the acceptable virtues in the society as they guide people on how to live together in cooperation, peace and harmony.

Answers to SAEs 2

3. The *Qur'ān* is the sacred Book of Muslims that consists exclusively of the revelations and commands which Muhammad, the Prophet (SAW), received from time to time, as a message from God, and which under divine guidance, the prophet delivered to those around him.
4. The *Qur'ān* is undoubtedly the Book of morals. In it, we find a comprehensive moral guidance which can assure human progress to the highest pinnacle in every sphere of human life and activity.
- 5
 - i. Two other Books include *Tawrah* which was revealed to Prophet Musa, and *Injil* which was revealed to Prophet Isah.
 - ii. While the messages in the other two books mentioned above were directed to particular person and race (Firhawn and the Israelites

respectively), the teachings of the *Qur'ān* are universal, addressed to all people regardless of their origins, to enlighten their spirits, to unify their societies, purify their morals and to replace the domination by the powerful with justice and fraternity. As a book of guidance, *Qur'ān* elucidates moral topics, broaden them as far as possible and establishes good in place of vice in every area of human life, on the individual as well as the social levels.

UNIT 2

THE QUR'ĀNIC MORALITY AND PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S EXAMPLES

Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Moral teachings in the Qur'ān
 - 2.3.1 Some moral themes in the Qur'ān
 - 2.3.2 Qur'ānic description of Prophet Muhammad as a moral example
 - 2.3.3 Moral characters of some of Prophet Muhammad's Companions
 - 2.3.4 The effect Prophet Muhammad's good virtues on the spread of Islam
- 2.4 Conclusion
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Readings
- 2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

You will recall that in Unit 1, the concept of morality, its status and importance in human society, as well as the relevance of the holy *Qur'ān* as a divine guidance on morality were all discussed. In this Unit 2, you will learn some moral qualities as hinted in the *Qur'ān* with particular references to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) as a model to all men and women. There is no gainsaying that if Muslims should follow these moral qualities and emulate the path of the Prophet in-to-to, they will attain perfection in some qualities. Therefore, the study of moral qualities in the *Qur'ān* along with Prophet Muhammad exemplary characters becomes worthwhile.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this unit you will be able to:

1. identify some of the moral themes talked about in the *Qur'ān*.
2. explain Qur'ānic description of Muhammad as a model of morality

3. mention some exemplary characters of Prophet Muhammad's Companions.

2.3 Moral teachings in the Qur'ān

2.3.1 Some moral themes in the Qur'ān

You have learnt in the Unit one that *Qur'ān* is a book of moral. It is a divine scripture that discusses some moral values expected of a sincere believer in Allah who believes in life after death and in accountability before Allah. The Glorious *Qur'ān* is very explicit on moral issues relating to politics, law, economics, social relations and interactions, public administration, education, etc” (M.A. Rauf, 1979). Let us now mention and discuss some of such moral themes which are contained in the *Qur'ān*. These include: brotherhood, equality, fairness, justice, love, mercy, compassion, solidarity, freedom of choice etc. The essence of all these moral values is to ensure peaceful coexistence among men and to show man’s readiness to submit to the dictates of Allah with the hope of meeting His divine favour especially on the day of Judgement.

2.3.2 Qur'ānic description of Prophet Muhammad as a moral example

In the spirit of the Holy Book, it is an obligation of a Muslim to be a vivid example of honesty and perfection, of seeking knowledge and virtue; to correct his mistakes and repent his sins, develop a good sense of social consciousness and human feeling. In reference to Prophet Muhammad’s moral character, the *Qur'ān* says in *Suratul-Qalam* (Chapter 68:4): “And Verily, you (Muhammad) are on an exalted (standard of) character”. Also *Suratul-Ahzab* (Qur’an Chapter 33:21) reads:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

“Certainly in the Apostle of God (Muhammad) you have a moral standard”.

As you can see, the two verses quoted above allude to the character of the Holy Prophet. And indeed several books written on his biography contain many of his moral examples. These include qualities such as God-consciousness, guarding against evil; extreme trust in Allah, justice and fair play; perseverance and peaceful co-existence with non-Muslims, simplicity and generosity; beneficence and good treatment of women, etc. (L.M. Adetona, 2000).

Let us examine two out of the above-mentioned moral examples of the Prophet – these are: Trust in Allah and co-existence with non-Muslims.

(1) In the early days of Islam, the Prophet and those who believed reposed their trust solely in Allah and cared not about the evil plans of the unbelievers. Some of the companions were tortured up till the point of death yet they remained firm with their faith in Allah.

Also, the *Qur'ān* in Chapter 3, Verse 173 describes the trust in Allah of the Prophet and those with him in a manner that shows that no human threat could dissuade them from remaining steadfast in the way of Allah. It reads thus:

الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

“Those unto whom men said: The people have gathered against you, therefore fear them (the threat of danger) but this (threat) increased their faith and they cried: Allah is sufficient for us: Most Excellent is He in Whom we trust”.

From the above instances one can learn from the life of the Prophet and his early companions that *Tawakkul* (Trust in God) is the act whereby Allah is entrusted with all our affairs.

(2) Another area where the holy Prophet is worthy of emulation is on his attitude towards non-Muslims. In spite of the fact that he suffered a great persecution in the hands of non-Muslims he did not use the opportunity of his becoming the head of a community to persecute the non-Muslims in Madinah. Even the Makkan disbelievers who often visited Madinah were not maltreated. An example that easily comes to mind is that of Qutailah bint Abdu-ul-Uzza, the mother of Asmā' bint Abu-Bakr, who did not accept Islam but went to visit her daughter in Madinah. Asmā' initially refused to see her but the Prophet asked her not only to see her mother but to treat her well. On another occasion, the Prophet warned the Muslims not to tamper with the freedom of the *dhimmi* i.e. non-Muslims under the protection of Islam. He said:

Whoever hurts a dhimmi, I shall be his/her complainant and for whosoever I am a complainant, I shall ask for his/her right on the day of judgement.

Once in a trial between a Muslim and a Jew, the Prophet gave a decision in favour of the Jew not fearing that by this act he would alienate the sympathy of the clan to which the Muslim belonged. The Jew on hearing the Prophet's decision exclaimed that “By Allah, you have decided with truth”.

From the foregoing, it must have been understood that Islam has set rules of etiquettes because it is a complete civilization and a way of life. Through belief in Allah and the Day of Judgement, Islam furnishes a force which enables a person to adopt the moral conducts in the *Qur'ān* and Prophet's examples with earnestness and sincerity, with all the devotion of heart and soul.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

1. Quote the *Qur'ān* passage that described the Prophet as exemplar of character and explain it briefly.
 - Highlight four (4) out of the characters of Prophet that are worthy of emulation?

2.3.3 Moral characters of some of Prophet Muhammad's Companions

The companions of the Prophet Muhammad were those who lived with him and learnt Islam from him. They included those who migrated with him from Makkah to Madinah (Muhajirun) and those who received and hosted him while in Madinah (Ansar). These people loved the Prophet and tried all they could to emulate his lifestyle. Prominent among them were the four rightly-guided Khalifs who succeeded him one after the other. They are: Abubakri As-Siddiq, Umar Ibn Khattab, Uthman Ibn Affan, and Ali Ibn Abi Talib. The companions were taken after the Prophet in his simplicity of life, maintaining justice among men, promotion of peace, good neighbourliness, giving of charity, defending the less-privileged, modesty, truthfulness, and trustworthiness, among others.

2.3.4 The effect Prophet Muhammad's good virtues on the spread of Islam

The success recorded by Islam during its early stage in Arabia can mostly be attributed to the moral values in Prophet Muhammad. Having been known as *Al-Amin* (the Trustworthy) ever before his prophethood, many people believed in him and accepted his message without doubt. He was able to change the people's beliefs, customs, behaviours, and social norms. He did this by convincing people with his kind attitude and persuasion. He was so simple with the people that they approached him for solutions to their socio-religious problems. His readiness to listen to the people irrespective of their social and religious differences attracted many non-Muslims into embracing Islam.

In-text question: Why was Muhammad nicknamed *Al-Amin*?

2.4 Conclusion

As already established, if one follows the moral qualities in the *Qur'ān* and adopts the path of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to the letter, he will attain perfection in some qualities and assume some new attributes such as becoming *Muttaqi* (God fearing); *Rashshīd* (Rightly Guided) *Musālih* (an upright man); *Munsif* (an upholder of justice); *Siddīq* (A trustworthy); *Mukhlis* (one who is sincere); *Sabbūr* (One who perseveres); etc. Finally, in order to allow our moral standards to be in consonance with God's prescription, we must emulate Prophet Muhammad (SAW) moral examples.

2.5 Summary

In this unit we have briefly mentioned the moral injunctions in the Holy *Qur'ān* along with Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) examples which spans across personal, social, economic and other interactions that must be imbibed by the Muslim in all aspects of their endeavours. How the Holy Book described the Prophet Muhammad as exemplary in character was identified. Some of his attitudes to the non- Muslims were also examined. In the conclusion, the rank one attains by following such injunctions are enumerated.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 (SAEs)

3. Discuss the scope covered by topics on moral qualities in the *Qur'ān*.
4. Examine critically the significance of Muhammad (SAW) moral examples to Muslims.

2.6 Possible Answers to SAEs

Answers to SAEs 1

- (Chapter 68:4): “And Verily, you (Muhammad) are on an exalted (standard of) character”. Also *Suratul-Ahzab* (Qur'an Chapter 33:21) reads: “Certainly in the Apostle of God (Muhammad) you have a moral standard”. The two verses quoted above allude to the good character of Prophet Muhammad which is meant to be emulated by Muslims. Emulating such good characters will lead to successful life and attainment of Allah's pleasure in the hereafter.
- Four (4) out of the characters of Prophet Muhammad that are worthy of emulation are:
 - justice and fair play;
 - perseverance and peaceful co-existence with non-Muslims;
 - simplicity and generosity;
 - beneficence and good treatment of women.

Answers to SAEs 2

- Scope covered by topics on moral qualities in the *Qur'ān* include: brotherhood, equality, fairness, justice, love, mercy, compassion, solidarity, freedom of choice.
- The significance of Muhammad's (SAW) moral examples to Muslims:

Having been known as *Al-Amin* (the Trustworthy) ever before his prophethood, many people believed in him and accepted his message without doubt. He was able to change the people's beliefs, customs, behaviours, and social norms. He did this by convincing people with his kind attitude and persuasion. He was so simple with the people that they approached him for solutions to their socio-religious problems. His readiness to listen to the people irrespective of their social and religious differences attracted many non-Muslims into embracing Islam.

2.7 References/Further Readings

- i. M.A. Rauf (1979), *An Introduction to Qur'ān Al-Qur'an*, Lagos-Nigeria, Islamic Publications Bureau.
- ii. L.M. Adetona (2000), *The Holy Prophet Muhammad: His Life and Sayings*, Lagos-Nigeria, OACE and Al-Haqq.

UNIT 3:

MORAL TEACHINGS OF THE *QUR'ĀN* RELATING TO THE FAMILY

Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 Moral teachings in the Qur'ān on family
 - 3.3.1 The moral obligations of the father to his children
 - 3.3.2 Prophet Luqman's admonition to his son
 - 3.3.3 Mother's moral responsibilities
 - 3.3.4 Moral precepts for the children
- 3.4 Conclusion
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/Further Readings
- 3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

3.1 Introduction

Welcome to Unit 3. In this unit you will learn about some Qur'ānic moral teachings in relation to the family. You will also have an insight into Prophet Luqman's admonition to his son which is meant to serve as paradigm for fathers. Before we continue, I want you to give the summary of what we discussed in the last lesson.

Having reviewed what we discussed in the last lesson, let us now continue our discussion on our topic of today's lesson which we said is on moral teachings on the family in the light of the holy Qur'an. As you already understand, the foremost institution of human society is the family unit. It is an institution through which a generation prepares the succeeding generation for the preservation and promotion of human civilization and for the discharge of its social obligations with devotion, sincerity and enthusiasm. Thus, a study of the topics in this unit becomes very pertinent. So you need to pay a rapt attention to our discussion for you to benefit immensely.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

1. define what a family is.
2. mention the importance of marriage in Islam.
3. list and discuss the roles of parents to their children.
4. discuss the duties of children to their parents.

3.3 Moral Issues in the *Qur'ān* Relating to the Family

“*Qur'ān* upholds that, the correct form of relationship between a man and a woman is marriage, that is, the one in which full responsibilities are undertaken by them and which results in the emergence of family” (A.A. Mawdudi, 1967).

In addition, *Qur'ān* regards every family within a compound not as ordinary unit in social statistics, but as a small group on the bigger level. Each family is thus seen as a miniature representation of the larger society. Verily, for any given community to enjoy love, peace, tranquility and progress, every family unit must be ready to co-operate with others by observing the societal norms (See, K.O. Paramole, 2000).

It is worthy of note that, *Qur'ān* assigns to man within the family, a position of authority so that he may maintain order and discipline as the chief of the household. It expects the wife to obey and look after the comforts and wellbeing of her husband and children, and expects the children to behave accordingly to their parents.

3.3.1 The moral obligations of the father to his children:

(a) Upbringing:

It is the moral duty of the father to bring up their children to required standards. *Qur'ān* has directly called on the father to provide food, clothing, shelter and education. To take good care of children is one of the most commendable deeds in Islam by the father. The Holy Prophet (SAW) was so much in love of children and expressed his conviction that his Muslim *Ummah* would be respected among other communities for its kindness to children.

(b) Guidance:

Another major moral responsibility of the father is that of guiding the children. The Glorious *Qur'ān* gives the example of Luqman who sermonized his son on the need to worship Allah without associating other god with Him; to observe

regular prayers; to enjoin virtue and forbid vice; to avoid arrogance and pride, etc. *Qur'ān, Suratul- Luqman, 31: 13 – 19* reads in part:

يَا بُنَيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ وَاقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاغْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ

“O my son! Establish regular prayer, enjoin what is just, and forbid what is wrong; and bear with patience constancy whatever betide you; for this is firmness of purpose in the conduct of affairs. And swell not your cheek (for pride) at men. Nor work in insolence through the earth; for Allah loves not any arrogant boaster. And be moderate in your pace and lower your voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass.”

Prophet Muhammad said: No father can give to his son a gift better than good morals.

(c) Discipline:

Discipline can only be maintained through a central authority and in the view of the *Qur'ān* the position of father in the family is such that it makes him the fittest person to take over this responsibility. But this does not make him become a tyrant and oppressor in the household. In fact, both father and mother should be seen as disciplinarians over their children. They should always call back to order any erring child and mete out equal punishment to such child if the case requires.

In-text question: Based on your understanding of our discussions so far, mention some of the obligations of a father on his children.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

1. Give the Islamic Concept of family.
2. Discuss the Qur'ānic precepts of the husband moral obligation.

3.3.2 Prophet Luqman's admonition to his son as paradigm for parents

It will be pertinent to read the remaining admonition of Prophet Luqman to his son which goes as follows to gain more insight into the above.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالَهُ فِي غَامٍ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ

بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّهَا إِنْ تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ

“We bestowed (in the past) wisdom on Luqman: “show (your) gratitude to Allah, And whoever gives thanks, he gives thanks for his ownself. And whoever is unthankful, then verily, Allah is All-Rich, Worthy of all praise. Behold, Luqman said to his son by way of admonition: “Oh my son: join not in worship (others) with Allah, joining others in worship with Allah is a great wrong indeed. And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and for bearing and weaning you for two years give thanks to Allah and your parents...but if they strive to make you join in worshipping me things of which you have no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear them company in this life with justice and consideration, and follow the way of those who turn onto Me; (Q31: Verses 12 – 19).

Thus, the moral precepts derivable from this divine passage are as follows;

1. Gratitude to Allah for His kindness
2. Absolute faith in Allah
3. Gratitude and goodness to parents
4. Disobedience to the parents if only when obedience will involve *shirk* (association of partners with God).
5. Keeping up of prayers regularly
6. Enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong
7. Bearing misfortune with fortitude
8. Modesty and avoidance of arrogance

From the foregoing, you must understand that the relevance of Luqman’s admonitions to the moral development of man cannot be underestimated. All are virtuous acts which every believer must live to achieve. While discouraging all forms of vices and promoting all virtues as stated in *Sūratu Luqmān* in order to build one’s character, Muslims are advised to adhere strictly to the virtues highlighted in this unit and rely solely on the grace of Allah in difficult times.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 (SAEs)

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. How many moral qualities are contained in Luqman’s admonition to his son? |
|--|

3. What are the lessons parents should learn from Luqman’s admonition to teach their children?

3.3.3 Mother’s moral responsibilities:

Breast-Feeding: The Glorious *Qur’ān* expressly stipulates a two-year weaning period for children, unless as otherwise mutually agreed by both spouses. Even then a foster-mother must be found to breast-feed the baby (as artificial feeding). This is so because Islam realizes the importance and usefulness of breast milk. It is more nutritious and hygienic than mechanized milk, and children fed with breast-milk are known to be healthier and stronger.

Tenderness: It is the duty of the two parents to show tenderness and love towards their children and treat them equally. Some parents (especially men) are fonder of their sons than daughters. They take great interest in the upbringing of their male issues while the welfare and training of female ones is generally neglected. Daughters are sometimes considered to be a 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 says:

“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” (*Mishkatu `l-Masabih*).

In-text question: Mention some of the responsibilities of a mother to her children.

3.3.4 Moral Precepts for the Children

The Qur’ānic precepts for the children with regards to their moral responsibilities towards their parents and as further expatiated upon in the *Hadīth* among others include:

- i. In return for the huge investment of the parents, children must respect and obey their parents at all times.
- ii. They should take care of them and be kind to them especially when they are old.
- iii. Children should do all they could to support and make their parents comfortable and happy while they live. These include adequate provisions for food, lodging, clothing and general comfort.
- iv. The *Qur’ān* realizes that when our parents are old they cannot but behave in some ways that we will sometimes find something amiss. It

therefore suggests that even when they offend, children should respectfully and with kindness bear with them. (Q. 17:23-24)

- v. Prophet Muhammad was reported to have said, “Paradise of the children lies at the feet of the mothers” and regards dereliction of duty to parents as a heinous sin. (*Mishkāt Masābīh*)

Self-Assessment Exercises 3 (SAEs)

- 4. Examine five moral duties of a mother in the Muslim family.
- 5. State what you know about the moral responsibilities of a child as taught in the *Qur’ān* and expatiated in the *Hadīth*

3.4 Conclusion

Truly, for the continued survival of humanity and for building an orderly, egalitarian and a just balanced society, both parents and children must play their roles well. A society devoid of these moral obligations may face the danger of extinction. Surely, the greatest asset a family (parents and children) can have is to be morally upright.

3.5 Summary

From the above, it should be clear to you that the parent-child moral precepts according to the *Qur’ān* are structurally complementary. That is, in Islam, they are bound together by mutual obligations and reciprocal arrangements. Adhering to these moral precepts by the parents and children is a means to building a morally ideal society.

3.6 References/Further Readings

- i. K.O. Paramole (2000), *Ethics in Islam: An Analytical Study*, Lagos-Nigeria, Islamic Studies Circle.
- ii. A.A. Mawdūdī (1967), *Islamic Way of Life*, Karachi, I.I.F.S.O.

3.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

Answers to SAEs 1

- 1. Family unit is the foremost institution of human society. It is an institution through which a generation prepares the succeeding generation for the preservation and promotion of human civilization and for the discharge of its social obligations with devotion, sincerity and enthusiasm. A family is seen as a miniature representation of the larger society. Verily, for any

given community to enjoy love, peace, tranquility and progress, every family unit must be ready to co-operate with others by observing the societal norms.

2. Moral obligation of fathers.

- **Upbringing:** It is the duty of the father to see to proper upbringing of members of the family. As husband, he has to provide his wife with food, clothing, shelter, and security.
- **Guidance:** A father must provide guidance to his family, both in spiritual and temporal life. It is his duty to see that his wife and children fear Allah, believe in and serve Him.
- **Discipline:** A father is the controller and general overseer over his family. He is to ensure that members of his family are well mannered. He is to correct the mistakes made by his wife and children through lawful and reasonable method.

Answers to SAEs 2

3. Moral lessons in Luqman's admonition are 8.
4. Luqman's admonition contains virtuous acts which every believer must live to achieve.

Answers to SAEs 3

5. Five moral duties of a mother in the Muslim family. A mother is expected to:

- obey and look after the comforts and well-being of her husband and children;
- breastfeed her child for at least two weaning periods;
- Oversee the proper upbringing of a child;
- Serve as good model for the child;
- Support her family with prayer and in all other means possible.

6. Moral responsibilities of a child as taught in the *Qur'ān* and *Hadīth*. Children must:

- respect and obey their parents at all times.
- take care of them and be kind to them.
- do all they could to support and make their parents comfortable and happy by providing adequate provisions for food, lodging, clothing and general comfort.
- respectfully and with kindness bear with them at their old age.

UNIT 4:

MORAL TEACHINGS OF THE *QUR'ĀN* REGARDING KINSMEN, NEIGHBOURS, AND THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE

Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 Moral teachings of the Qur'an
 - 4.3.1 Qur'ānic precepts on Kinship
 - 4.3.2 *Qur'ān* and Hadith on Neighbourhood
 - 4.3.3 Moral Obligation in the Community
- 4.4 Conclusion
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.6 References/Further Readings
- 4.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

4.1 Introduction

In our last lesson, we looked at some moral teachings of the Qur'an as it related to family. And specifically we discussed about the duties and responsibilities of the parents towards their children and those of the children too towards their parents. In today's lesson, we will continue by looking at the moral teachings of the Qur'an about kinship, neighbourhood and the community. The viewpoint of Islam is that Man is created by God to serve, obey Him and put in place a good moral order where he lives. Beyond the limited circle of man's immediate family the next social sphere which is sufficiently wide is that of kinship, one's immediate environment and the state or nation as a whole. *Qur'ān* regards human community as a pyramid. Its base is the nuclear family, followed by the extended family, the compound, then the town, the state, the nation, the continent and finally the world at its apex. As a complete way of life, Islam gives guidance for the survival of each layer. Surely, the morality of a nation is of paramount importance as it is the totality of behavioral etiquette. So, the study of moral teachings as regards one's immediate community and humanity at large is very significant.

4.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit you will be able to:

- (i) quote a relevant Qur'anic passage and a tradition of the holy Prophet Muhammad on moral obligations to kinsmen.
- (ii) discuss the Islamic morality in relation to one's immediate environment.

- (iii) explain Islamic moral teachings relating to the community at large.

4.3 Moral Teachings of the Qur'an

4.3.1 Qur'anic precepts on Kinship

The *Qur'an* admonishes Muslims to be kind to their kinsmen. In Suratul-Isra'I (Chapter 17:26), Allah says: "And give to kinsman his due..." Anyone one who disregards and pays no heed to the bonds of kinship has been condemned as a transgressor and sinner of the worst order. In the traditions of the Prophet (SAW), maintaining good relation with kinsmen (*ṣilatu-r-rahim*) is emphasized and counted among the highest virtues. He once said: "He who violates the rights of kinsmen and shows no respect for the bonds of kinship in his conduct shall not go to heaven."

Thus one may conclude that the Religion of Islam looks down upon a person who cold-shoulders his relations or treats them in an unbecoming manner.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

1. What do you understand by kinship and neighbourhood?
2. Identify the three forms of neighbours mentioned in this section and any other one you know.

4.3.2 Qur'an and Hadith on Neighbourhood

Aside the kinsmen, there obtains a permanent association also between a man and his neighbours. According to the *Qur'an*, neighbours are in three stages (1) a neighbour who is also a relation, (2) an alien neighbour, and (3) a casual or temporary neighbour. All of them deserve fellow-feelings, affection, kindness, courtesy and fair treatment. A tradition of the Prophet (SAW) says:

"Angel Jubril continued to enjoin me with good treatment towards the neighbour until I thought he would make him an heir of the property (of a deceased neighbour)".

In-text question: Now mention three types of neighbours as discussed above.

4.3.3 Moral Obligation to the Community

Qur'an also has its standard of morality in relation to the community as a whole. This comprises of one's servants, employees, as well as the needy, weaker and poorer sections of the society. They must all be treated with kindness and

generosity. It has been made the duty of all well-to-do individuals to look after their well-being and serve them in whatever way they can. The Prophet (SAW) also says:

“Help the distressed ... feed the hungry, visit the sick and free the captives”

We may submit at this juncture that, no distinction has been drawn in the above traditions between a Muslim and a non-Muslim. All members of the community have a claim on us no matter which religion they belong.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 (SAEs)

3. What are your moral duties to your kinsmen as admonished by the *Qur'ān*?
4. Expatiate on some of the *Qur'ānic* moral obligations between a wealthy individual and members of his community?

4.4 Conclusion

From the foregoing it has been established that *Qur'ān* pays serious attention to our moral obligations in relation to kinship, neighbours and those people who are close to us in the community, and evolves certain rights and duties in respect of them. Certainly, a further study of the Islamic Scripture will reveal more moral precepts which if imbibed into human culture will improve their social conditions.

4.5 Summary

In this unit we have dealt with Islamic moral precepts in relation to kinship, neighbours and community at large.

4.6 References/Further Readings

- K.O. Paramole (2000), *Ethics in Islam: An Analytical Study*, Lagos Nigeria, Islamic Studies Circle.
- M.M. Nomani (1979), *What Islam is*, Lucknow-India, Islamic Research Publication.

4.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Kinship is the extended members of a family. They are the kinsmen who are not part of the immediate family members.
2. The three kinds of neighbours are: (i) a neighbour who is also a relation, (ii) an alien neighbor who is not part of one's relation, and (iii) a casual or temporary neighbour, like office neighbour or market neighbour.

Answers to SAEs 2

3. A Muslim must maintain good relation with his kinsmen. He must give them what is due to them.
4. *Qur'ān* has its standard of morality in relation to the community as a whole. This comprises of one's servants, employees, as well as the needy, weaker and poorer sections of the society. They must all be treated with kindness and generosity. It has been made the duty of all well-to-do individuals to look after their well-being and serve them in whatever way they can.

UNIT 5:

MORAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE RULERS AND THEIR SUBJECTS

Unit Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcomes
- 5.3 Obligations of Rulers and their Subjects
 - 5.3.1 Moral Duties of the Rulers
 - 5.3.2 Moral Duties of the Subjects
- 5.4 Conclusion
- 5.5 Summary
- 5.6 References/Further Readings
- 5.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

5.1 Introduction

In the last four lessons we have been discussing morality in the light of the *Qur'ān*. We looked at some relevant Qur'ānic verses as well as some guiding traditions of the holy Prophet Muhammad to explain the importance of moral virtues in the life of Muslims in their various communities. In this unit you will learn some of the teachings of Islam on moral issues regarding relationship between the authority and the subjects which may otherwise be termed political morality. You will then agree that in Islamic political thought every individual has one moral obligation or the other to perform towards society, which means both rulers and citizens have to observe certain norms. Surely, if those in position of authority and their subjects exhibit good moral traits, the society will become peaceful, clean and progressive devoid of unrighteous acts. Therefore, the study of moral issues in relation between the authority and the subjects is inevitable. As always, I can assure you that today's lesson is going to be very interesting. You are welcome.

5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- (i) explain the position of Islam on political morality
- (ii) discuss on some of the moral obligations of rulers.
- (iii) describe the moral duties of the ruled in any given society.

5.3 Obligations of Rulers and their Subjects

5.3.1 Moral Duties of the Rulers

Islam persistently demands that the principles of morality must be observed at all cost and in all walks of life. Hence it requires nations to base their politics on justice, truthfulness and honesty. It is not prepared under any circumstances whatsoever, to tolerate fraud, falsehood and injustice for the sake of any political, administrative or national expediency.

Leaders must be of exemplary character. They must ensure that injustice, oppression and persecution find no place in their domain. More significantly, they must always remember that they will account for their leadership on the day of judgement. The Prophet says, “You are all shepherds and each of you shall render account for his herd” (*Mishkat Masābih*)

Thus, righteousness, fear of God, honesty, fairness, modesty, justice, sincerity, accessibility and above all, regard for other people’s rights is as necessary a qualification for the ruler as fitness to rule. He should certainly consider himself responsible to Allah for every act that he did in the exercise of his authority.

Aside all the above, you should know that, the people’s responsibility to the constituted authority is to respect its laws and obey its orders as long as such obedience does not involve disobedience to God and His Messenger. The Prophet says, “To hear and obey the authority is binding, so long one is not commanded to disobey God; when one is commanded to disobey God, he should not listen”.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

1. Explain the moral duties of political office holders from the perspectives of Islam.
2. What do you think will happen to a nation whose leaders and subjects perpetrate immoral acts?

5.3.2 Moral Duties of the Subjects

In addition, every subject must wish the country well. He must avoid those acts which are capable of bringing harm to the leaders and the nation. He must not collaborate with saboteurs, be ready to serve the country and above all he must be ready to pay the supreme sacrifice if necessary. More importantly, citizens owe leaders cooperation by paying taxes promptly and obeying rules always. The *Qur'an* says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

“O you who believe: Obey God, and obey the Apostle, and those charged with authority among you. If you differ in anything amongst yourselves refer it to Allah and His Messenger ...” (Q.4:59).

From the above assertions, it should be understood by you that, between the authority and their subjects, preference must always be given to truth, honesty, justice, selflessness and fear of God over material considerations. Both the rulers and citizens have to observe

certain rules. The rulers must see themselves as stewards and not as masters. They must be ready to serve and not to oppress. In another tradition Prophet Muhammad (SAW) says: “The People’s leader is their servant”.

In-text question: Briefly explain some of the moral responsibilities of both the rulers and the subjects to each other.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 (SAEs)

3. What are the moral duties of the subjects to their rulers and their nation?

5.4 Conclusion

We are very optimistic that, if all the aspects of political morality mentioned above are taken care of by both the leadership and follower-ship of any given society, especially our country Nigeria, then, an ideal , peaceful and prosperous state or nation can be brought into existence, where high moral standards and sublime characters will flourish.

5.5 Summary

In this unit, we have analyzed the moral status of both the rulers and the ruled in any political set up.

References/Further Readings

- K.O. Paramole (1998) “*Ta’dhib: Islamic Morality*” in M.A. Muhibbu-Din and I.A. Lawal *Arabic and Islamic Studies’ Students Hand Book*, Lagos-Nigeria, Arabic and Islamic Studies Units of LASU, pp. 114 – 129.
- M. Al-Ghazali (1980) *Muslim’s Character*, Beirut – Lebanon, The holy *Qur’ān* Publishing House.

5.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Political office holders must be of exemplary character. They must ensure that injustice, oppression and persecution find no place in their domain. More significantly, they must always remember that they will account for their leadership on the day of Judgement. They must see the position they occupy as a trust placed on their shoulders and for which they are accountable before God.
2. Any nation or society whose leaders and subjects perpetrate immoral acts, the society will never be peaceful and progressive until they change their bad attitudes.

Answers to SAEs 2

3. The moral duties of the subjects to their rulers and their nation. The subjects:
 - must wish the country well.
 - avoid those acts which are capable of bringing harm to the leaders and the nation.

- not collaborate with saboteurs against the leaders and the nation.
- be ready to serve the country and be ready to pay the supreme sacrifice if necessary.
- be paying taxes promptly and be law-abiding.

Module II

Unit 1: THE TEACHINGS OF THE *QUR'ĀN* ON JUSTICE, TRUTHFULNESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

Unit Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 More on Qur'anic moral teaching
 - 1.3.1 Qur'anic teaching on Justice
 - 1.3.2 Qur'anic teaching on Truthness
 - 1.3.3 Qur'anic teaching on Righteousness
- 1.4 Conclusion
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 References/Further Readings
- 1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

1.1 Introduction

Welcome to module 2 unit 1. Our attention in this unit will be focused on some Qur'anic moral teachings in relation to Nigerian situation. Nigerians have always experienced injustices emanating from people belonging to different strata of the nation; from the leaders to the followers, employers to employees, the wealthy individuals to the less privileged masses; etc. Verily, the Qur'anic moral teachings on justice are very important if social justice is to be enhanced in our society.

Also, in the unit you will learn about truthfulness as highlighted in the *Qur'ān* and supported by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in his actions and sayings. You will then see the value of this moral quality as a way of building good moral character in human lives especially among youths. Surely, imparting the teachings of the *Qur'ān* on justice, truthfulness and righteousness to students in order not to follow the bad steps of their predecessors is very commendable.

In this unit also you will understand the true meaning of righteousness and the distinctive features cum characteristics of the Righteous as analyzed by Allah in Q2:177. You will then agree that righteousness is a virtue by which the *Qur'ān* means to consolidate man's relation with Allah and his fellow beings. About this sense, the various derivatives of the term referring to righteousness are found in most of the Qur'anic verses that deal with moral and social matters. So, the study of distinctive features of the righteous as explained in Q2: 177 is very significant. Get set and let us continue.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit you will be able to:

- i. explain what you have learnt on Justice as described in the *Qur'ān*.
- ii. discuss on how to maintain justice and good human relations in the society.
- iii. distinguish between justice and injustice
- iv describe the rare features of the righteous.
- v. highlight the characteristics of those who are truthful.
- vi admonish members of your society on the benefits of truthfulness.

1.3 More on Qur'anic moral teachings

1.3.1 Justice

Norman Anderson, quoting “*Blacks Dictionary of Law*, defines justice as “proper administration of laws ... the constant and perpetual disposition of legal matters or disputes to render every man his due”. (N. Anderson, 1976).

Justice is an integral part of the moral topics of the *Qur'ān* which must be practiced in all spheres of our life. The Holy *Qur'ān* speaks of Allah commanding justice (Q7: 29) and adds:

“Allah commands justice, and the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin. He forbids all shameful deeds, injustice and rebellion. He instructed that you may receive admonition”. (Q 16: 90).

In-text question: Do you know that the Qur'an is very concerned about doing justice in all circumstances? Now consider the following:

In the *Qur'ān* Allah asks man to judge fairly (Q4: 58); to use *Qur'ān* 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. (See Q4: 135).

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) advocates justice without fear or favour, affection or ill-will. Aishat reported God's messenger 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 (K.O. Paramole, 2000)

Let me cite two notable incidents as bases for the establishment of an ideal administration of justice in Islam:

- a. It is on record that Umar ibn al-Khattāb during his leadership rebuked Zayd ibn Thābit who was a judge in Madinah for standing up to honour him when he (Umar) appeared in court as a defendant in a case filed by Ubayy ibn Ka‘b. he also denounced the judge for not asking him (Umar) to take the oath as the plaintiff had done.
- b. Umar was also reputed in the administration of justice for increasing his son’s punishment for drunkenness from forty to eighty lashes. (K.O. Paramole, 2000)

It may be adduced from the actions of Umar bn al-Khattāb that, if a judge is well trained and decent, he can reform the defects of the law by his selfless decisions and just orders. But a cruel, unkind, unjust and oppressive judge can show indifference to the correct commands and authorities. Same is the condition of an individual, when he is expected to be just and fair in all his endeavours.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

1. Who is a just leader or judge?
2. What is your advice for the future leaders and followers on justice?

1.3.2 Truthfulness

Qur’ān extols truthfulness and encourages Muslims to always speak the truth. They are also exhorted to keep the company of only those who are truthful. (Q9: 119).

It is on record that the distinctive characteristics of the Muslim society of the first generation were truthfulness, discipline, tolerance and courtesy. The Prophet says:

“He who wishes to love God and His Apostle, or wishes God and His Apostle to love him, must take care to speak nothing but the truth whenever and wherever he speaks. (N.M. Nomani, 1976).

The value of truth was so impressed on the hearts of his followers that they not only loved it but underwent severest hardship for the sake of it. When about two centuries later, the Muslim critics laid down certain canons to judge the truthfulness of the transmitters of *ahadith* they all agreed on one point, that no companion of the Prophet had uttered a deliberate falsehood.

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.

Abu Hurayrah reported that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

“Anybody who called a child saying that he would give him a certain thing and did not give him, then it is a lie”.

The Holy *Qur’ān* says:

“Nay, we hurl the truth against falsehood and it knocks out its brain, and behold, falsehood perishes: Woe unto you for (false) things you ascribe to us” (Q21: 18).

It may be clearly seen from the above that truth is ever stronger than falsehood. Truth is daylight and falsehood is darkness. The Prophet also says:

“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.”

The Holy *Qur’ān* asks rhetorically:

“Oh you who believe, why do you say things you cannot do? It is grievously odious in the eyes of Allah to say what you cannot do”. (Q61: 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 retorted strongly:

“Death for the man who indulges in story-telling in order to make some people laugh and for that he relies on falsehood. There is death for him, there is destruction for him”. (M. Ghazali, 1980).

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 (SAEs)

3. Explain the significance of truthfulness in any human society?
4. Mention two (2) characteristics of either a truthful or an humble person

In-text question: Can you tell me the position of the Qur'an Righteousness? Now follow me as we discuss further on this.

1.3.3 Righteousness as depicted in Q. 2:177

You will first learn the verse by heart and this is cited below:

It is not righteous that you turn your faces towards East or West but righteous is he who believes in Allah and the last Day, and the Angels; and the Books; and the messengers; and spends out of his sustenance, out of love of Him, for his kinsfolk, for orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; and observes proper prayer; and practices regular charity; and fulfills the contracts which he had made; and stays firm and patient in pain and adversity and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the Righteous (God fearers). (Q2: 177).

Let us now highlight the features of the righteous as depicted in the above verse. These are that a righteous person is he who:

- believes in God
- believes in the Last Day
- believes in the existence of the Angels
- believes in the Holy Books
- believes in the Messengers
- spends out of his sustenance out of love of Allah for:
 - a. His Kinsfolk
 - b. The Orphans
 - c. The Needy
 - d. The Wayfarer
 - e. Those who ask (Beggars)

- f. For the ransom of slaves
- observes regular prayers
- practices regular charity
- fulfils the contracts (promises) which he had made
- stands firm and patient in pain, during adversity and throughout all periods of panic

From the above, you should understand that there are ten major and eight minor distinctive features of the righteous as mentioned in Q2 verse 17, all of which are very relevant towards attaining perfection in this life and greatness in the last day. All the mentioned features to the best of our understanding are very easy to come by as they all hint on simple actions and dispositions in relation to Allah and our fellow human beings. As you progress in your studies, you will become more familiar with other Qur'ānic characteristics of the righteous.

Self-Assessment Exercises 3 (SAEs)

- 5. Enumerate at least eight out of the features of the righteous.
- 6. Using Umar bn al-Khattab as your basis for leadership, how can a just and balanced society be put in place?.

1.4 Conclusion

No one can deny the fact that justice is a praiseworthy moral quality needed by man in all his activities. A Muslim should therefore imbibe the teachings of the *Qur'ān* on justice. If we can be just in deeds and words in our dealings with others, surely, our world will be a better place for us.

It must also be noted that truthfulness in the Qur'ānic context mean not only that we should avoid telling lies but also that we should do our duty honestly and live our life not only for ourselves but also for all those to whom we are obliged for our wealth, health, honour, knowledge and progress; that is, we should do our duties to our nation, community, friends, parents, employers, employees, colleagues, children, etc.

Allah demands of us to carry out, thoroughly and well, the duties prescribed by Him and fulfil zealously the rights of men who have a claim on us. That is why He calls on us to make righteousness our constant companion. Qur'an reveals that

there are lot of great benefits that could be derived in this world and the life to come by those who practice righteousness and fear Allah.

1.5 Summary

In this unit, we have treated justice according to the views of the *Qur'ān*, and as corroborated by the sayings of Allah's Prophet (SAW) and as practiced by some of his companions with special focus on Umar bn al-Khattab, the second caliph of Islam. We have also expatiated on the moral teachings of the *Qur'ān* on truthfulness. In addition, we briefly explained the distinctive moral features of the righteous as depicted in Q2 verse 177; we also mentioned how favoured are those people in the sight of God.

1.6 References/Further Readings

- Qāsim (1976), *The Ethics of Al-Ghazzāli – A Composite Ethics in Islam*, Selangor – Malaysia, Central Printing Sendirian.
- K.O. Paramole (2000), *Ethics in Islam: An Analytical Study*, Lagos-Nigeria, Islamic Studies Circle.
- Tabbārah (1988), *The Spirit of Islam (Doctrines and Teachings)*, 2nd Ed., Beirut – Lebanon, *Darul 'ilm Lilmalayn*.
- N .M. Nomani (1979) *What Islam Is*, Lucknow-India, Islamic Research and Publications.

1.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

Answers to SAEs 1

1. A just leader/Judge is he who avoids partiality in judgement and remains firm, fair and just even if the case involves himself, his parents, kin, friends, rich, poor, powerful or weak people. He is he who does not allow his lust to influence his sense of judgement.
2. Future leaders must adopt the teachings of the holy Qur'an on justice. They must judge lead and judge their subjects with the fear of Allah knowing fully well that Allah, the Best Judge will question them on the day of judgement on whatever they do on earth.

Answers to SAEs 2

3. Significance of truthfulness in any human society: In the hearts of the small children, 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. Truthfulness is needed for any society to develop. Any nation whose leaders are not truthful is bound to crumble. Leaders must be truthful in discharging their responsibilities and the subjects must also be truthful in doing what is expected of them as good citizens. A truthful society is bound to prosper.

4. Two characteristics of a truthful and humble person:

i. A truthful and humble person will have the love of God and His Apostle; he will also be loved by God and His Apostle.

ii. A truthful and humble person is a candidate of Paradise.

5. Eight features of the Righteous person:

- believes in God
- believes in the Last Day
- believes in the existence of the Angels
- believes in the Holy Books
- believes in the Messengers
- spends out of his sustenance out of love of Allah
- fulfils the contracts (promises) which he had made
- stands firm and patient in pain, during adversity and throughout all periods of panic.

6. It may be adduced from the actions of Umar bn al-Khattāb that, if a judge is well trained and decent, he can reform the defects of the law by his selfless decisions and just orders. But a cruel, unkind, unjust and oppressive judge can show indifference to the correct commands and authorities.

UNIT 2: THE *QUR'ĀNIC* INJUNCTIONS ON DRESSING

Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Dressing code in the light of the Qur'an
 - 2.3.1 Dressing Etiquette for Men
 - 2.3.2 Dressing Code for Women
 - 2.3.3 Anti-Hijab Campaign
- 2.4 Conclusion
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Readings
- 2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

2.1 Introduction

In this unit you will learn some basic moral issues on dressing. You will then understand that Qur'ānic instructions on dressing are very significant. Can you imagine how a society without good dressing etiquettes would be? Such a society would not be different from that of the beasts. But in the Qur'ānic guidelines on dressing and its etiquettes, human beings have perfect guidance. Thus, the study of this unit becomes significant.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- i. describe the ways of dressing *Qur'ān* allows for both male and female
- ii. identify the Qur'ānic chapters and verses that speak on Islamic modes of dressing

In-text question: In your opinion, do you think it is necessary that dressing code should be introduced in your community?

2.3 Dressing code in the light of the Qur'ān

2.3.1 Dressing Etiquettes for Men

For the stabilization of human society, *Qur'ān* requires every human being to dress decently. Allah says in part in Q7: 26 thus:

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُؤَارِي سَوَاتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَى ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ

“Oh you children of Adam: We have bestowed raiment upon you to cover your shame, as well as to be an adornment to you. But the raiment of righteousness, that is the best”.

He also says in *an-Nahl*, Q.16:81:

وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ سَرَائِيلَ تَقِيكُمْ الْحَرَّ وَسَرَائِيلَ تَقِيكُمْ بِأَسْكُمْ كَذَلِكَ يَتِمُّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَسْلُمُونَ

... “and He made you garment to protect you from heat and coats of mail to protect you from your (mutual) violence ‘

The Prophet (SAW) says:

“Eat, drink, wear decent clothes and give alms without extravagance and conceit”.

It is true that men do not have to cover their heads, but there is a dress code for them, as well, although it is not as widely publicized as the women’s dress code. Men must at least be covered from the navel to the knees with loose fitting clothing. The rules for men are different because women are less likely to ogle men than the other way around.

Islam permits the wearing of white clothes, the use of red, green, yellow and black colour clothes of cotton, woolen and other varieties but disallows the wearing of silk materials. Also, the wearing of shirts, trousers, socks, caps or turbans by men are being endorsed by Islam.

2.3.2 Dressing Code for Women

Muslim women wear *hijāb*—which is more than just a head cover — because God ordered them to do so in two places in the *Qur’ān*, and because Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) also ordered it. The *Qur’ān* says in *Surah* 24, verses 30 - 31

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ
وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ
بِخُمْرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ
بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَائِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوْ التَّابِعِينَ غَيْرِ
أُولِي الإِرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ أَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَى عَوْرَاتِ النِّسَاءِ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ
مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

“Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and be modest. That is purer for them. Lo! Allah is Aware of what they do. 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 so as 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...

Q.33: 59 which is also on the same point, reads:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ ذَلِكَ أَدْنَى أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

“O Prophet! Tell thy wives and thy daughters and the women of the Believers to draw their cloaks close round them [when they go abroad]. That will be better, that they may be recognized and not annoyed. Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful.”

This indicates that one of the reasons for *hijāb* is to distinguish the believing woman from the non-believing.

Let us ask ourselves, if a female judge walks into the courtroom wearing a tight miniskirt and low-cut blouse, would people take her seriously? Who would you respect more, a woman dressed like that or one dressed modestly? The *Qur'ān* was revealed for all times, and though circumstances change, human nature does not. The fact is that men do like to look at women's bodies. So, a woman who covers herself is more likely to be respected as a person than looked upon with disrespect. Up until the end of the nineteenth century, a Western woman who had any self-respect covered her head—though perhaps not all her hair—in public. Your audience may argue that a woman who does not cover her hair is no longer looked upon as a loose woman. That may be true, but women still know that men look at them. Otherwise, why would they spend millions of dollars every year to style, color, and treat their hair?

Some women cover their faces either because they think it is required of them - only a minority of scholars says so - or because they think it is better for them to protect their modesty. Others do not think it is required, but they prefer to act as the wives of Prophet Muhammad did, for they take them as a model in their everyday life. Those, believe that such act is desirable (*mandūb*), which would earn them more heavenly reward.

If a long head covering would get in the way in her work or pose a danger to her—if the woman were working around machinery or in a laboratory, for example—she can wear a different style that doesn't have dragging ends. Actually, *hijab*—perhaps loose trousers and a long shirt if her work requires her to bend, lift, or climb steps or ladders—gives a woman more freedom of movement while protecting her modesty than does a short dress.

In-text question: What do understand by *Hijab*?

2.3.3 Anti-*Hijāb* campaign

There have been campaigns against the use of *hijāb* by some enemies of Islam as well as some uninformed Muslims. Such people look at the use of *hijāb* as a plot to enslave and oppress the Muslim women. Now let us ask, is the use of *hijāb* oppression against women? Answer to this question in "NO". Dr. Fatima Naseef, author of *Women in Islam*, sees *hijāb* as a woman's right to maintain her modesty and to be respected as a person. We want to quickly add that women dressing etiquette recommended by Islam is a way of protecting them and protecting the feeble-minded men who may feel uncomfortable the moment they see women who are almost naked in their irresponsible dress which they sometimes call fashion. Let us turn the question around. If one woman has the right to go half-naked in public, why doesn't another woman have the right to cover herself in public? Why is it looked upon as oppression if she chooses to be modest?

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Describe the minimum dressing etiquette of an adult male Muslim.2. Give a full description of a properly dressed Muslim woman.3. Attempt the questions raised by the anti-<i>hijab</i>. |
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2.4 Conclusion

Qur'ānic moral instructions on dressing of both men and women are very significant and relevant to the Nigerian society considering the fact that the way most people dress lives much to desire. The Nigerian environment nowadays is being destabilized and corrupted through different immoral ways of dressing of both old and young women. Some men are also guilty of these shameless acts. By

returning to the dress code which the *Qur'ān* as a divine guidance recommends the nation will be saved from the menace of the shameful modes of dressings called “fashion” being witnessed here and there and on daily basis. We recognize however that the old costumes of men’s and women and even some of the new men and women fashion designs quite conform with stipulated dressing etiquettes of Islam.

2.5 Summary

For the stabilization of human society, *Qur'ān* requires every human being, male and female to dress decently and modestly. Although it is not so widely publicized like that of women, Islam has rules for men’s dressing. At least they must be covered from the navel to the knees with loose fitting clothing.

Qur'ān attaches moral and social dimensions to the dressing of Muslim women and recommends that:

- a. Women’s dress must cover the whole body except the areas specially exempted which is explained in the prophetic tradition “if a woman reaches the age of puberty, no part of her body should be seen but these – and he pointed to his face and hands.”
- b. The looseness of the dress must be reasonable enough so as not to reveal the shape of a woman’s body.
- c. The dress must be thick enough so as not to show the colour of the skin it covers, or the shame of the body which it is supposed to hide, and;
- d. The dress should not be such that attract men’s attention to the woman’s beauty.

In addition, *Qur'ān* tells women who have reached menopause to always appear in modest dresses, not fully covered in *hijāb*. (J.A. Badawi, n.d.)

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 (SAEs)

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| 4. Summarize the moral teachings in <i>Qur'ān</i> Chapter 24 verses 30-31 |
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3.6 References/Further Readings

- J.A. Badawi (n.d.), *The Muslim Woman's Dress*, Delancy – London, Ta-Ha Publishers Limited.
- K.O. Paramole (1998), "*Tahdhib (Islamic Morality)*", in M.A. Muhibbu-Din and I.A. Lawal,

2.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Men must at least be covered from the navel to the knees with loose fitting clothing.
2. The dressing code 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.
3. Is the use of *hijāb* oppression against women? Answer to this question in "NO". *Hijāb* is a woman's right to maintain her modesty and to be respected as a person.

Answers to SAEs 2

4. Moral teachings in Qur'ān Chapter 24 verses 30-31.
 - Both Muslim male and female are enjoined to dress modestly
 - Muslim men and women are to lower their gaze
 - They are to protect their private parts
 - They should be aware that Allah is well-acquainted with what they do.
 - Women are not to show off their adornment except that which is apparent
 - Women should walk gently while moving in the public in order not to attract attention of the opposite sex.

UNIT 3: THE QUR'ĀNIC TEACHINGS ON UNITY, EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE

Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 More on Qur'ānic moral teachings
 - 3.3.1 Unity and Equality of Mankind
 - 3.3.2 Peaceful Co-Existence
- 3.4 Conclusion
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/Further Readings
- 3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

3.1 Introduction

We have recorded in Nigeria a great number of religious riots which could have been averted if people are well furnished with the principles of peaceful co-existence among men as mentioned in the Qur'an. In this unit therefore, you will learn the teachings of Islam on Unity, Equality of Mankind and Peaceful Coexistence all which are ingredients of peace and development in the society. You will then agree that the *Qur'ān* is full of moral guidance in the areas of maintenance of peace and harmony. Listen attentively as we move on, remember to jot down cogent points and be prepared to ask questions when necessary.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit you will be able to:

- i. explain the position of the *Qur'ān* on Unity of the Origin of Mankind
- ii. explain the Qur'ānic position on the equality of Human Beings.
- 6. Know the Islamic stand on peaceful coexistence between members of a society.

3.3 Other moral teachings in the *Qur'ān*

3.3.1 Unity and Equality of Mankind

A basic tenet of Islam is faith in the oneness of God and its constant lesson is the principle of unity and equality of mankind in the sight of God. Islam affirms this in unequivocal terms. It repudiates the doctrine of polygenism that ascribes multiple ancestries unto mankind. It also does away with the idea of 'Castes' or 'Classes' or races which forms basis of discrimination and segregation in many human societies.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

“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”
(Q.4:1)

In the area of maintaining love and peace, however, *Qur'ān* takes a step further by instructing that, all men are equal, whatever their colour, 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 Hawā'u who were created by Allah.

The Holy *Qur'ān* wishes to unite the entire human race under one banner as one of its verses reiterates the common origin of man and explains the division of humanity into nations, or races and tribes. It tells us that the object and purpose of this division was to recognize each other. It goes a step further and points out to us that 'piety' is the only criterion and standard by which man is judged by Allah and by which we should judge our fellowmen. It reads thus:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

Oh mankind: We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other not that you may despise one another. Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted with all things (Q49: 13).

An author of an English translation of the *Qur'ān* observes that, 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, colours, tribes, families and nations should not lead to estrangement from, but to a better knowledge of each other. Superiority of one another in this vast unification depends on righteousness, on the careful observance of duties toward Allah and fellowmen, and, on moral greatness. (A.M. Hobohm, n.d.)

One can contrast this Islamic teaching with the Hindus conception that the Brahaman is a cast derived from the gods and the Sudras a cast derived from the Asuras or demons.

Islam also opposes the idea of chosen race as taught by Judaism and is deadly opposed to the practice of apartheid policy in any form. Prophet Muhammad (S) chose Bilal, an Abyssinian, as the first *Muadhdhin* (one who makes the call for prayers) in Islam and said about another companion Salmam, who was a Persian, that he belonged to his family. These are excellent examples of the teaching and practice of brotherhood in Islam. A Muslim is therefore asked not to make any discrimination on the basis of colour, race, or nationality.

Q. 49:13 quoted above is even clearer on the issue of unity, equality and brotherhood of humanity. It emphasizes that the colour of the skin is of no consequence but the quality of the heart is of every consequence. The racial or national label matters nothing; the character matters everything:

Besides the Holy *Qur'ān*, there are a number of Traditions of the Prophet asking the true believers to refrain from making distinctions on the basis of caste or class or showing any kind of racial prejudice.

- (1) "He is not one of us who incites class prejudices or fights for class interest or dies in its pursuits." (Bukhārī and Muslim)
- (2) "Seek refuge from the curses of the oppressed to whatever community he or they may belong, for the portals of God are always open for the oppressed." (Abu Dāwud and Tirmidhī)
- (3) "The worst type of prejudice is to support one's community even in tyranny."
(Al-Bayhāqī)
- (4) "He who knowingly lend support to tyranny is outside the fold of Islam."
(Al-Tabarānī)

All members of the Islamic society, therefore, whatever their race, or tribe, or dynasty, or colour, or language, are equal members and possess equal fundamental rights. The Islamic society is thus a Non-Racial, Non-Tribal, and Casteless Society. It may also be termed as an *Egalitarian Society*. (Ansari, Muhammad Fazlu Rahman; *The Quranic Foundation and Structure of Muslim Society*; Karachi, vol 1. p. 188)

3.3.2 Peaceful Co-Existence

Maintaining peace in one's community is one of the basic tenets of the *Qur'an*, mostly because enmity between two opponents might develop into enmity among their friends, which often splits communities, states, countries and even nations into cliques whose main purpose would be to vex and harm one another. That is why *Qur'an* urges people to make peace among those believers who are joined together by religious fraternity. It says:

وَأِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَعَثَ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْآخَرَىٰ فَاقْتُلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّىٰ تَفِيءَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ فَاءَ بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسَطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel, make you peace between them: but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then turn your back (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of God, but if it complies, then make peace between them with justice and be fair: for God loves those who are fair (and just) (Q 49:9)

If fighting is forced on believers by aggressors, *Qur'an* asks the former to stop the moment the latter signals his intention to stop. Human being should not be over-killed during wars. Muslims should be prepared to incline towards peace whenever their opponents express their willingness to abide by their terms of peace (Q 2:190; 8:61).

It is believed that, ultimate good does not mean the Muslims should only lead an upright life or simply avoid harming others. Rather, it also means that they should always seek to maintain peace with their fellow human beings. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) teaches that man should always seek to spread love and peace. He must make others happy and safe. He also teaches that men should leave alone what does not concern him. Because prying into another people's affairs may lead to friction, confusion and misunderstanding, which may thereafter cause chaos and rivalry in societies where peace reigns.

Qur'an calls for a peaceful co-existence of mankind in any given society because it is a means towards the achievement of happiness, harmony and tranquility, success and stability of all and sundry, so that when people turn to it they may attain the prosperity and peace they yearn for.

In-text question: Why is *Qur'an* calling for peaceful co-existence among mankind?

Qur'an further instructs individuals, communities and nations that are empowered by God to always stand to rescue the oppressed people in safeguarding their lives and properties but warns that such assistance must be on the fear of God and not on material gains. He says:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

“... help you one another in righteousness and piety, but help you not one another in sin and rancor: fear Allah: for Allah is strict in punishment” (Q 5:3)

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

1. Highlight the significance of Qur’ānic moral topic on peaceful co-existence among men.
2. Critically examine the roots and causes of civil and international wars among human kind, and suggest Islamic solutions to them.

3.4 Conclusion

Qur’ān as a divine Book of Allah preaches the gospel of peace among mankind. It calls for peace in the greeting of the righteous and their ways of life, and forbids aggression in all its ramifications. On the other hand, all people are seen to be equal in the eyes of God, and He wants them to treat one another as equal. Distinction between them on the basis of race, colour, social standing, skill and degree of intelligence, etc are artificial and should not be tolerated. Human beings should strive to serve Allah and contribute meaningfully to the well-being of their community and fellow men.

3.5 Summary

Islam affirms unity of the origin and equality of mankind in unequivocal terms. Both the *Qur’ān* and the Hadith repudiate ‘cast’ ‘class’ or racial systems which form bases of discrimination in many societies. Man should always seek to maintain peace with fellow human beings.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 (SAEs)

3. Outline the essential teachings of Islam concerning the Unity of mankind.
4. Discuss equality of human beings as an importance moral teaching of Islam.

3.6 References/Further Readings

- M. Ghazali (1980), *Muslim's Character*, Beirut-Lebanon.
- K.O. Paramole (2000), *Ethics in Islam*.

3.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

Answers to SAEs 1

1. The significance of Qur'ānic moral topic on peaceful co-existence among men:
 - Justice promotes love, affection, trust, and development in the society.
 - Obedience to parent brings good wishes, love, supports, and happiness for the children.
 - Good neighbourliness promotes security, affection, team spirit, togetherness and peace in the society.
 - Truthfulness brings about trust, confidence, safety, love, and dependability.
 - *Qur'ān* calls for a peaceful co-existence of mankind as a means towards the achievement of happiness, harmony and tranquility, success and stability of all and sundry, so that when people turn to it they may attain the prosperity and peace they yearn for.
2. The roots and causes of civil and international wars among human kind.
 - Rivalry
 - Unnecessary interference in other nations' affairs.
 - Power tussle.Islamic solutions: Muslims should realize that:
 - all humans are creatures of Allah from the same source (Adam).
 - all powers belong to Allah.
 - whatever position we occupy on earth is temporary.
 - man will give account of all he does while on earth.

Answers to SAEs 2

3. Essential teachings of Islam concerning the Unity of mankind:
 - all humans are creatures of Allah from the same source (Adam).
 - all powers belong to Allah.
 - whatever position we occupy on earth is temporary.
 - man will give account of all he does while on earth.

4. Equality of human beings as an importance moral teaching of Islam:
 - all humans are creatures of Allah from the same source (Adam).
 - whatever position we occupy on earth is temporary.
 - all we acquire in life will not follow us to the grave.
 - everyone, irrespective of tribe, race, or social status, will die and return to Allah.
 - man will give account of all he does while on earth.

UNIT 4: THE *QUR'ĀNIC* INJUNCTIONS RELATING TO FULFILLMENT OF PROMISES, TRUSTS AND CONTRACTS

Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 More on socio-moral teachings of the Qur'an
 - 4.3.1 Fulfillment of Promises and Trusts
 - 4.3.2 Fulfillment of Contracts
- 4.4 Conclusion
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.6 References/Further Readings
- 4.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

4.1 Introduction

In this unit you will learn the teachings of the Glorious *Qur'ān* on fulfillment of promises, trusts and contracts. You will then agree that the guidance provided by the *Qur'ān* in these areas of values should be studied, digested and translated into action. More so, leaders in our society particularly those entrusted with authority or governance and management of the affairs of the people are no more seeing promises, trusts and contracts as heavy loads on their heads which must be fulfilled and rendered accordingly. Since all promises made by men and women must come to pass and trusts and contracts must be well guarded the study, digestion and translation of this unit become imperative.

4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- i. state the position of the *Qur'ān* on fulfillment of promises.
- ii. discuss the significance of Trusts in the Muslim society.
- iii. expatiate on the teachings of the *Qur'ān* on contracts.

4.3 More on socio-moral teachings of the Qur'ān

4.3.1 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. It is a basic reason of success in life and is today considered a distinguished quality of truly civilized people who fulfill promises they make and do not betray when entrusted.

A Muslim must fulfill his promises and keep to his pledges. When he enters into any contract, he should honour 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. Similarly, when an oath is taken, it should be redeemed.

However, this fulfillment of promises or the redeeming of the oaths and pledges are necessary only when the dealing is legitimate and concerns truth, otherwise honouring the promises that involve something sinful and disobedience to Allah has no value, and undertaking an oath on falsehood or sinful acts are of no effect should be null and void. No importance should be attached to them. Prophet Muhammad says: "If someone has taken an oath, but saw an aspect of goodness in another thing, he may break his oath and pay compensation (atonement), and should perform the act which is better".

According to the *Qur'ān*, trust (*Amānah*) is something given to a person or group of people to take care of. The trustee is therefore, expected to take good care, and dispose of the trust honestly and accurately as at when due.

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.

In-text question: Do you believe that position of leadership is a trust entrusted to any leader in the society? If yes, how?

Furthermore, trust demands that if a man is appointed to a certain high office (be it public or private) he should not use it for self-aggrandizement or for the benefit of his relatives, for the use of public funds for personal purposes is a crime. Exploitation of one's office or taking undue advantages of it is forbidden in Islam. The prophet says: "... *Whosoever is been given a post and concealed a middle or a thing smaller than that, then it will be a misappropriation with which he will appear on the day of judgement*". Of those people who always respect and fulfill their promises and trusts: Q.23: 1, 8, 10-11

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْوَرْدُونَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

“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”

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

1. Does Islam attach any importance to fulfillment of promises? Explain.
2. What should be the attitude of a Muslim towards trusts?

4.3.2 Fulfillment of Contracts

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ

‘O you who believe! Fulfill all Contracts’

This is the opening part of (Q.5:1) which has been and is still being justly admired by

both ancient and modern exegetes of the Holy Book for its terseness and comprehensiveness.

The Arabic word ‘*Uqūd*’ in the portion implies so many things that a whole chapter of commentary can be written on it. It means contracts and other obligations which we must fulfill.

In our own human and material life we undertake mutual obligations expressed or implied, documented or unwritten. This may be contract involving debts which must be settled, contract of work that must be carried out, contract of marriage, business and other social interactions and promises made; we must faithfully fulfill all these obligations in all these relationships.

It also implies divine and *Sharī‘ah* obligations that arise from our spiritual nature and our relation to Allah. He created us and implanted in us the faculty of knowledge and foresight besides the intuition and reason which He gave us. He made nature responsive to our needs, and His signs in Nature are so many lessons to us in our own inner life. He further sent Messengers and Teachers, for the guidance of our conduct in individual, social and public life. All these gifts create corresponding obligations which we must fulfill.

It also connotes religious devotional duties, obligations such as *hajj*, *sawm*, *itikaf*, *tahajjud* and *tarāwih*, oaths and atonements for errors. This is the view of Ibn

Abbas, a celebrated Qur'anic exegete, whose opinion is highly respected. In a nutshell, it implies all obligations imposed by Allah upon his servants and what he made lawful for them and what He forbids them from.

Our group or our state enters into a treaty; every individual in that group or state is bound to see that as far as lies in his power, such obligations are faithfully discharged.

There are tacit obligations; living in civil society, we must respect its tacit conventions unless they are morally wrong, and in that case, we must get out of such society. There are tacit obligations in the characters of host and guest, wayfarer or companion, employer or employed, etc, etc, which every man of Faith must discharge conscientiously.

The man who deserts those who need him and goes on retreat in a desert or hiding place is a coward who disregards his obligations. All these obligations are interconnected. Truth and fidelity are parts of religion in all relations of life.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 SAEs)

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Comment fully on the portion of Q.5:1 the meaning of which reads 'O you who believe! Fulfill all obligations.4. Explain the Qur'ānic tenet on contracts. |
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4.4 Conclusion

It observes also that, keeping of promises and trusts is one of the important qualities of a Muslim and condemns those who refuse to do so. The Prophet (SAW)

concludes this when he says: "The hypocrite has three characteristics. If he speaks, he

tells lies. If he promises something, he fails to fulfill his promise. And when he is entrusted with something, he betrays his trust".

4.5 Summary

The guidance provided by the *Qur'ān* in the area of values such as fulfillment of promises, trusts and contracts should be studied, digested and translated into action.

When a Muslim makes promises he must respect them, when he makes pledges, he must keep them and when he enters into any contract, he should honour the agreement. Similarly, when an oath is taken, it should be redeemed.

However, this fulfillment of promises or the redeeming of the oaths and pledges are necessary only when the dealing is legitimate and concerns truth. Otherwise honouring the promises that involve something sinful and disobedience to Allah has are of no effect should be null and void.

4.6 References/Further Readings

- Yusuf (1975), *The Holy Qur'ān: Text, Translation and Commentary*, 3rd ed. London, The Islamic Foundation.
- M. Al-Ghazzālī, (1980); *The Muslim's Character*; Beirut, Lebanon.
- K.O Paramole (2002), "The Moral Teachings of Suratu Luqman as Paradigms for Character Building" in National Association of Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies Journal, vol. 6. no 2, pp. 12 – 22

4.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. A Muslim must fulfill his promises and keep to his pledges. When he enters into any contract, he should honour 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. Similarly, when an oath is taken, it should be redeemed.
2. A Muslim should keep whatever he is entrusted with jealously as he will be held accountable for it before Allah on the day of Judgement.

Answers to SAEs 2

3. A Muslim must fulfill his promises and keep to his pledges. When he enters into any contract, he should honour 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. Similarly, when an oath is taken, it should be redeemed.
4. The Arabic word '*Uqūd*' in the portion implies so many things that a whole chapter of commentary can be written on it. It means contracts and other obligations which we must fulfill.

In our own human and material life we undertake mutual obligations expressed or implied, documented or unwritten. This may be contract involving debts which must be settled, contract of work that must be carried out, contract of marriage, business and other social interactions and promises made; we must faithfully fulfill all these obligations in all these relationships.

UNIT 5: THE *QUR'ĀNIC* CONDEMNATION OF VICES SUCH AS PRIDE, ENVY, AND HYPOCRISY

Unit Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcomes
- 5.3 More on socio-moral teachings of the Qur'an
 - 5.3.1 Moral Teachings on Pride
 - 5.3.2 Moral Teachings on Envy
 - 5.3.3 Moral Teachings on Hypocrisy
- 5.4 Conclusion
- 5.5 Summary
- 5.6 References/Further Readings
- 5.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

5.1 Introduction

In this Unit you will learn some Qur'ānic moral instructions on vices like pride, envy and hypocrisy. You will then agree that morality is about dos and don'ts, rights and wrongs, virtues and vices. Morality is one of the major issues that differentiate human beings from acting like beasts. With good moral qualities, human being becomes capable of behaving well, engaging in good characters devoid of vices such as pride, envy, hypocrisy and the like. Therefore, the study of Qur'ānic teachings on vices and how to guide against them becomes inevitable due to their bad consequences.

5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this Unit you will be able to:

- i. define Envy
- ii. mention what constitutes pride in human beings
- iii. explain meaningfully the position of the hypocrites in the sight of Allah

5.3 More on socio-moral teachings of the Qur'ān

5.3.1 Moral Teachings on Pride

Qur'ān views pride as a social vice that sows the seeds of separation and discord among individuals who have always been together with amity and cooperation. Not only does pride turns one away from showing love to others, but also makes his moral promotion difficult or rather impossible, mostly because a haughty person blinds himself to his personal faults, gives himself more esteem than he deserves and believes he is superior to others.

Those who take pride in themselves always refuse to listen to others' advice and cannot benefit from knowledge of more experienced and virtuous people and thus fall into delusion. Allah excludes arrogant people from the revelations and bliss of guidance which he sent to His Messengers because of their haughtiness and thus brings to them His anger and wrath. He says:

سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ آيَاتِيَ الَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَإِنْ يَرَوْا كُلَّ آيَةٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا وَإِنْ يَرَوْا
سَبِيلَ الرُّشْدِ لَا يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا وَإِنْ يَرَوْا سَبِيلَ الغَيِّ يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا
بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا عَنْهَا غَافِلِينَ

“Those who behave arrogantly on the earth in defiance of right-them will I turn away from my signs: even if they see all the signs, they will not believe in them: and if they see the way of right conduct they will not adopt it: but if they see the way of error, that is the way they will follow. For they have rejected Our signs, and failed to take warning from them” (Q 7:146)

The prophet of Allah says: “That person will not enter Paradise who has one atom of pride in his heart”.

In-text question: How is pride a social vice according to the Qur'anic view?

5.3.2 Moral Teachings on Envy

Qur'ān describes envy as a great moral vice that embitters people's lives. Malicious envy is a state of mind in which a man is pained when another person obtains any good, and the envious wants that good taken away from him, even though he himself will not obtain advantage from such a cessation. This leads to the vice of pleasure in another's misfortune.

Islam regards envy as one such instinct which diverts men from the straight path and imprisons the conscience to prevent men from reaching realistic hopes. And, by wishing misfortune to others, the envious practically brings misery upon himself, for instead of enjoying the bliss he has, he derives pains from the wealth of others.

Moreover, envy causes the destruction of good traits and praiseworthy manners, and prevents the hearts of people from allowing valuable spaces for their companions, or to discover the star of love shining in the skies of their lives. It deprives the envious from enjoying the feelings of cooperation and help. Thus, the prophet (SAW) says, “*keep yourselves far away from envy; because it eats up and takes away good actions, like fire eats up and burns wood*”.

Qur’ān makes it clear that the consequences of envy have always been a manifest regret. The first sin ever committed against God was envy of Adam by *Shaytān*. The second was envy of Hābil by Qābil, and also, the envy of Yusuf by his brothers was a conspicuous one when he was thrown into the well. Allah has however placed those who purify their minds of envy above others.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

1. Aside the three mentioned moral vices in this section, mention any other three relevant to this course?
2. Examine the significance of showing love to others as against demonstration of pride?

5.3.3 Moral Teachings on Hypocrisy

Hypocrisy has been condemned in the Glorious *Qur’ān* in the severest of terms. For example, Allah says in *Qur’ān* 4 verses 145-146 thus:

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِاللَّهِ وَأَخْلَصُوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِي اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

“*The hypocrites will be in the lowest depths of the fire: no helper will you find for them. Except for those who repent, mend (their life), hold fast to God, and purify their religion as in God’s sight...*”

Qur’ān, chapter 9 verses 66-67 also contain more exposition of the hypocrites.

Precisely, hypocrisy is one of the most detestable qualities in man’s nature. Whenever man becomes corrupted by telling lies, breaking promises and agreements, he advances in hypocrisy until it eventually becomes an acute disease.

In-text question: Mention some of the effects of hypocrisy in our contemporary society.

It has been established that hypocrisy from time immemorial has always prevented individuals from reaching the truth or attempting to discover it. It is also an indestructible dam placed on the path of acquiring noble virtues. Any society

that allows hypocrisy to thrive among its members will lack honesty and sincerity among various classes of the society. While commenting on the adverse effect of hypocrisy, Yusuf Ali suggests that, in order to save man from this social cancer, the hypocrites can obtain forgiveness on four conditions:

1. Sincere repentance, which purifies their hearts;
2. Amendment of their conduct which purifies their outer life;
3. Steadfastness and devotion to God, which strengthens their faith and protects them from the assaults of evil, and;
4. Sincerity in their religion, or their whole inner being which brings them as full members into the goodly followership of faith.

From the above submission, it should be known that the three vices discussed are social cancers which every morally upright person must be wary of. Surely, there cannot be progress or good neighbourhood in any society whose members parade any of these social maladies. All the points raised therein are issues worthy of note to inquiring minds.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 (SAEs)

3. In your view, how can one guard against envy?
4. Describe the characteristics of the hypocrites as discussed in this course.

5.4 Conclusion

There is truly no single thing we do, say, use, choose or think that does not fall within the purview of virtues and vices. If one considers virtuous acts even in their superficial aspects, no one unless he is a hermit, can fail to gain from a proper courteous and pleasant approach, or fail to be handicapped by improper or resentful one such as pride, envy and hypocrisy. So, individuals must be broad-minded and look at all things from the viewpoint of public good and should not keep his own selfish gain in view.

5.5 Summary

In this unit, we have explained three major social vices, these are: pride, envy and hypocrisy which every right-thinking person must eschew.

5.6 Reference/Further Readings

- K.O. Paramole (2000), *Ethics in Islam*.
- K.O. Paramole (1999), *Ethical Themes in the Forty Traditions*.

5.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Slander, Rumor mongering, and Backbiting.
2. Love promotes unity, understanding, progress and development while pride leads to animosity and enmity.

Answers to SAEs 2

3. By admitting that it is only Allah that determines the fate of man; By recognizing all worldly riches and achievement as temporary; By remembering the consequences of envious people as contained in the holy book.
4. Whenever man becomes corrupted by telling lies, breaking promises and agreements, he advances in hypocrisy until it eventually becomes an acute disease.

Module III

UNIT 1: THE QUR'ĀN'S STAND ON SLANDERING, SCANDAL-MONGERING AND FALSEHOOD

Unit Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 More on Qur'anic moral teaching
 - 1.3.1 Qur'anic teaching on Slandering and Scandal Mongering
 - 1.3.2 Qur'anic teaching on Falsehood
- 1.4 Conclusion
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 References/Further Readings
- 1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

1.1 Introduction

In this Unit you will learn the position of the *Qur'ān* on detestable actions like slandering, scandal mongering, falsehood and defamation of character. You will then know that these socio-moral vices are unethical and anti-progress. Any society where there are individuals possessing any of these acts will seldom be free of chaos, instability and suspicion. So, in order to build a virile society where love, peace, harmony and good moral qualities would reign supreme, there will be need to understand these evils and ways of getting rid of them.

1.2 Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this Unit you will be able to:

- i. discuss the Qur'anic attitude towards Slandering, Scandal Mongering and Falsehood.
- ii. mention some of the consequences of Slandering, Scandal Mongering and Falsehood in a society.
- iii. suggest solutions to the problem of Slandering, Scandal Mongering and Falsehood.

1.3 More on Qur'anic moral teaching

1.3.1 Qur'anic teaching on Slandering and Scandal Mongering

A lot of evil and bad blood is generated through obnoxious habits of backbiting (*ghībah*), slandering, scandal mongering, false accusation of innocent women and

similar vices which will be discussed together here because they are all major sins and evils of the tongue.

Qur'ān warns against *ghībah* and *namīmah* and compares them to eating the flesh of one's brother (Q 49:12).

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِنْ نِسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ بِئْسَ الْإِسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ

بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَتُبْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ

تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ

“O you who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others, it may be that the (latter) are better than the (former). Nor let some women laugh at others: it may be that the latter are better than the former, nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by (offensive) nick-names; ill seeming is a name connoting wickedness, (to be used of one) after he has believed: and those who do not desist are indeed doing wrong.”

“ O you who believe! Avoid suspicion as much as possible, for suspicion in some cases is a sin: and spy not on each other, nor speak ill of each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother! Nay you would abhor it; but fear Allah: for Allah is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful.”

No one would like even to think of such an abomination as eating the flesh of his brother. But when the brother is dead, and the flesh is carrion, abomination is added to abomination. In the same way we are asked to refrain from hurting people's feelings when they are present; how much worse is it when we say things, true or false, when they are absent!

Also, in Chapter 104 scandal mongering and backbiting are among three vices condemned in the strongest terms. The third vice condemned being piling up of wealth not for use and service to those who need it but in miserly hoards as if such hoards can prolong the miser's life or give him immortality.

The chapter says that people who indulge in such an act and in fact in all acts that suggest evil of men by word or mimicry, sarcasm or miserliness will be condemned into a fire which smashes or breaks the body and heart to pieces

In fact, *Qur'ān* does not stop at categorizing defamation of character as a grave sin, but has further to make it the duty of all Muslims to defend the honour of their brothers because Allah will on the Day of Judgment safeguard such people from Hell-fire.

In-text question: How will you define scandal mongering as a social evil in the society?

It is clear that if any Muslim allows his tongue to backbite or slander his brother, then he has certainly violated the rules of good moral quality and become a sinner in the eyes of Allah and mankind generally. So, in order to bring our souls out of darkness into light, we must strengthen all noble thoughts in our minds to counter any destructive and unhealthy ideas or insinuations. By guarding our tongues against defamation, we take the step towards happiness. Also, in order for us to counter the spread of corruption, it is incumbent on us to be speaking against calumny and defending the integrity of others when they are being slandered. As we protect and observe the rights of others, we are taking steps towards the advocacy of noble traits on which the survival of every society depends.

Those who love (to see) scandals circulate among the Believers, will have a grievous Chastisement in this life and in the Hereafter: Allah knows and you know not.

(Q.24:19). If it were not for Allah's grace and mercy on you, and that Allah is oft-Returning, Full of Wisdom - you would be ruined indeed. (Q. 24:10)

This was in connection with the accusation of infidelity by the man against his wife, they were both reminded of Allah's mercy and warned against suspicion and untruth. In 24:14, the believers were told to be wary of false rumors lest they should cause pain and division among themselves: it is Allah's grace that kept them united. There may be conspiracies laid by evil against simple people; it is Allah's grace that will protect them

The general lesson is directed to the observance of purity in act and in thought, concerning one's self and concerning others: it is only Allah's grace that can keep that purity spotless for He hears prayers and knows all the conspiracies spread in the path of the good. Spotless purity in thought, word, and deed, includes the disposition to put the best construction on the motives of others, so that we ascribe no evil motive to the seeming indiscretions of virtuous people.

Those who slander chaste, indiscreet and believing women are cursed in this life and in the life Hereafter: for them is a grievous Chastisement; (24:24) On the Day when their tongues, their hands and their feet will bear witness against them as to their actions. (25) On that Day Allah will pay them back (all) their just dues, and they will realize that Allah is the (very) Truth, that makes all things manifest. Good women are sometimes indiscreet because they think of no evil. But even such innocent in-discretion lands them and those who hold them dear, in difficulties.

وَلَا تُطِعْ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ هَمَّازٍ مَشَّاءٍ بِنَمِيمٍ مَنَّاعٍ لِلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ عُتُلٌّ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ زُنِيمٍ

“Obey not very mean, swearer; A slanderer, going about with calumnies; Habitually hindering (all) good, transgressing beyond bounds, deep in sin; Violent and cruel, with all that, of doubtful birth. (Q.68:10-13)

The *Qur'ān* warns us that all reports, especially if emanating from unknown source, are to be tested, and the truth ascertained. If they were believed and pass on, much harm may be done., of which you may have cause afterwards to repent heartily. Scandal or slander of all kinds is here condemned.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا
عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ

“O you who believe! If a sinner comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest you harm people unwittingly and afterwards become full of repentance for what you have done.”

Q49:6

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

1. Examine critically Qur'ānic attitude towards slandering and rumour mongering.
2. Discuss the evils of defamation of character in our immediate environment?
3. Why should a Muslim guard against backbiting and slandering?

1.3.2 Qur'anic teaching on Falsehood

Falsehood (or telling lies) is the origin of all vices, with which the social frame cracks, the current of affairs is confused, and through which the liar loses credibility among people, who no longer believe him or trust his conduct.

People need the confidence of others. Dishonesty and lying uproot this confidence, and that is why, concerning false people:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ كَذَّابٌ

“God guides not one who transgresses and lies” Q40:28).

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ كَاذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ

“God guides not such as are false and ungrateful” (Q.39:3)

God threatens false people with grievous penalty on the Day of Account:

Say not, concerning any false thing that your tongues may put forth, ‘This is lawful, and this is forbidden,’ so as to ascribe false things to God. For those who ascribe false things to God will never prosper. (In such falsehood) is but a paltry profit, and theirs will be a grievous Penalty” (Q.16:16-17).

In-text question: Do you agree that telling lies is the origin of all vices? If yes, then explain.

Falsehood is not always bad, to be sure; there are times when telling a lie is more profitable and better for the general welfare, and for the settlement of conciliation among people, than telling the truth. To this effect the Prophet says: “He is not a false person who settles conciliation among people, supports good or says what is good.”

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 (SAEs)

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Discuss the attitude of the <i>Qur'ān</i> towards falsehood.5. Why should we avoid falsehood? |
|---|

1.4 Conclusion

From the above analysis, it should be understood by you that slandering, scandal peddling, rumour-mongering, defamation of character and falsehood are all major vices that portend evil consequences both socially and spiritually. The Holy *Qur'ān* condemns them in unequivocal terms. They should be diagnosed as social maladies that must be remedied. Most of the points raised are very vital and germane towards the rehabilitation of those who may have such bad traits in them. By now you must have been fully acquainted with the moral issues of the *Qur'ān* treated in this course.

1.5 Summary

The *Qur'ān* portrays vices like calumny, character assassination; scandal peddling, falsehood and wrong accusation of innocent people as evils which have grievous social and spiritual consequences, here on earth and in the hereafter. Every individual must therefore guard against them.

1.6 References / Further Reading

- Yusuf (1975), *The Holy Qur'ān: Text, Translation and Commentary*,
3rd ed. London, The Islamic Foundation.
- A. A. Tabbarāh (1978) *The Spirit of Islam*; Beirut, Lebanon

1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. The *Qur'ān* condemns slandering and rumor mongering and compares them to eating of one's brother's flesh.
2. Defamation of character is a very bad practice that sows the seed of hatred and acrimony in the society. It is also an offence which is punishable before Allah on the day of Judgement.

Answers to SAEs 2

3. Telling lies is generally not acceptable in Islam except when it is to settle rift and for reconciliation as a means to make peace and harmonious co-existence.
4. The holy *Qur'ān* condemns falsehood and lying in the following verses: "God guides not one who transgresses and lies" (Q40:28); "God guides not such as are false and ungrateful" (Q.39:3); "...For those who ascribe false things to God will never prosper. (In such falsehood) is but a paltry profit, and theirs will be a grievous Penalty" (Q.16:17).
5. Falsehood is a major sin that portend evil consequences both socially and spiritually. Allah condemns lying and vow that His anger will always be upon liars.

UNIT 2: THE PROBLEM OF CORRUPTION AND SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Corruption in the light of the *Qur'ān*
 - 2.3.1 Corruption from the Islamic Perspective
 - 2.3.2 A Bird's Eye View X-Ray of Corruption in Nigeria
 - 2.3.3 Evil Effects of Corruption
 - 2.3.4 Islam's Framework for Solving the Problem
- 2.4 Conclusion
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Readings
- 2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

2.1 Introduction

Man today, in his globalized village is groaning under the agony of the evil effects of corruption. In Nigeria, corruption has become endemic. Bribery, looting of public treasury, embezzlement of public funds and other multifaceted abuse of power for personal and narrow group benefits are the most common denominators in all sectors. These have hindered economic balance and stability as well as constituted a cog in the wheel of the progress and development of the nation.

Many so-called crusades have been waged to no avail. Laws and sanctions have been invoked with little effect. It is in this light that an Islamic framework in arresting this quagmire of corruption has become indispensable. As a divine system devoid of human manipulation, it will no doubt reduce the problem to the barest minimum and solve it to a large extent.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this Unit you will be able to:

- i. mention what constitutes corruption from the Islamic point of view
- ii. discuss the evil consequences of Corruption, Stealing and Robbery
- iii. suggest some Islamic measures to be employed in order to solve the problem of corruption or reduce it to the barest minimum in the society.

2.3 Corruption in the light of the *Qur'ān*

2.3.1 Corruption from the Islamic Perspective

The word "Corruption" means dishonest or illegal acts done by a person in position of authority in anticipation of money or personal gain or acts done not in line with accepted standards of behaviour. It is also seen as "all forms of bribery,

abuse of office and nepotism, any favour done in expectation of material or non-material gain or even in reward of an earlier deed”. (Patrick Edobor Ighinonovia 2003)

Thus, there is moral corruption, religious corruption, such as Islam and Christianity not been practiced in their pristine purity, ideological corruption, such as bastardization of democracy and capitalism, political corruption, like electing people through falsification of election result, and legal corruption, to mention but a few, and not just financial corruption.

Many crimes are regarded as acts of corruption in Islam, the greatest crime that people can commit against themselves is *shirk*, or associating partners with Allah in worship in whatever form. By doing this, they equate Allah, who is the Creator, the Omnipotent and the All-Provider, with a weak and limited creature. (Q. 31:13).

In-text question: What do understand by moral corruption?

Also, from the Islamic perspective, committing different types of sin is causing corruption on the earth. The most grievous of these sins are the destructive ones which Allah and His Messenger threaten the perpetrators of with a severe punishment.

Some of them are: practicing magic, committing murder, making interest-based

transactions, usurping the property of orphans, mistreating one’s parents, bearing false

witness, adultery and fornication, drinking alcohol and taking narcotics, stealing, severing

bonds of kinship etc. These sins destroy man and turn him into an obedient servant of

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

“*And when it is said to them, ‘Do not cause corruption on the earth, who will then lead him to all evils and blind him from seeing the truth and receiving guidance.*

earth,’ they say, ‘We are but reformers’. Unquestionably, it is they who are the corrupters, but they perceive (it) not.” (Q. 2:11-12).

Thus, the word ‘*fasād*’, in the Islamic Scripture, which connotes ‘corruption’ among other meanings, applies to all forms of crimes - individual and social,

material and moral, economic and political, legal and cultural, national and international⁵.

Sayyid Qutub highlights Islam's condemnation of corruption when he says, "Islam disdains to consider life in terms of a mouthful of bread, carnal desires, or a handful of money. Yet at the same time it prescribes living comfortably for every individual but it prefers to provide this comfort by individual earnings through lawful means and legitimate enterprises.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

1. Give some various points of view on the concept of corruption.
2. What is the Islamic view on the social malady and its attitude towards it?

2.3.2 A Bird's Eye View X-Ray of Corruption in Nigeria

It is the belief of most Nigerians today that corruption is the nation's number one problem, militating against the country's development. There is hardly any level in the national life of Nigeria that does not reek with corruption. Figures released for census conducted, voters' registration, political parties' membership list, primary and secondary school enrolments have always been inflated either for gratification received or in order to attract funds which are based on returns from such exercises.

Public enterprises and private companies conceal accurate figure in order to evade tax. At the Airports, Seaports and Nigerian Borders with neighbouring countries, it has been business as usual for quite a long time. The rate of corruption been perpetrated is quite alarming in deed.

The current administration of General Olusegun Obasanjo has included the fight against corruption as one of its cardinal objectives. To this end, it set up the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). This war on corruption has had several highpoints, numerous casualties and varied views and reviews regarding implementation and the purpose it is serving. On June 27, 2001, Transparency International (TI) ranked Nigeria as the second most corrupt nation in the world and published statistics of corrupt practices and trends of corruption in Nigeria to back up its position.

A reflection of these trends will make one agree with Sidi H. Ali (1984) that "for most Nigerians, politics provided not an avenue for national service and devotion to the welfare of the masses, but an opportunity to exploit the genuine nationalist aspirations of the people for their selfish ends.

2.3.3 Evil Effects of Corruption

One of the evil effects of corruption is that it hinders economic development. "It opens the door for inefficient allocation of resources as well as raises the cost of investment and decreases investors' confidence. Research has revealed that countries with notoriously high levels of corruption risk marginalization in a world of rapid economic integrity.

Also, the diversion of public funds enriches some and impoverishes others. It kills initiatives of potential experts in the private sectors and sacrifices efficiency on the altar of greedy hands mismanaging abundant wealth. Moreover, it desecrates the rule of law and undermines the legitimacy and stability of democratic regimes. Corruption demolishes the elements of prudent management of wealth and resources. Irrational and short-sighted decisions are taken. These are motivated by greed but not need. Approvals of projects are met premised not on the basis of suitability but on the dividends for the decision-makers.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 (SAEs)

3. Give a bird's eye view of corruption in Nigeria.
4. What are the evil effects of the corruption on the economy of Nigeria?

2.3.4 Islam's Frameworks for Solving the Problem

Islam's Holistic World View

Islam's balanced and holistic world view is a case in point as an efficacious panacea to the problem of corruption. An average Nigerian today is obsessed in the constant pursuit of wealth with the dictum that the end justifies the means. People are only interested in your fleet of cars and high mansions and not the sources. Whereas, "Man shall surely answer the query of how he acquired the wealth he enjoyed on earth"

(Q.102:8), and "no servant will be able to move an inch (on Judgment Day) until he has been asked about his life, how he spent it; about his wealth, how he acquired it and on what he spent it; about his knowledge, how he utilized it; and about his body, on what it was expired". This *Qur'an* and Hadith references provide a framework for individual reckoning as each will account for his life, wealth, knowledge and body.

Power of the State.

Allah (SWT) states categorically that the objects of an Islamic state are not just for the sake of it. It is a missionary state. He declares thus;

الَّذِينَ إِن مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَاللَّهُ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ

"those whom if we give power in the land, will establish Salat, pay the Zakat dues, enjoin what is right and forbid what is evil and the final decision of all affairs is in the hand of Allah"

(Q22:41)

Stability will reign supreme in a nation which sincerely directs the affairs of its citizen to God through worship provide for the welfare of the people and eradicate evil, of which corruption is a cardinal one.

'The object of the state is not merely to prevent people from exploiting each other but also to eradicate all forms of evil and to encourage all types of virtues mentioned by God in the Holy *Qur'an*.

Leadership as a Trust.

Islam in strong terms abhors scrambling for leadership. It considers it a trust. The Prophet (SAW) declares that;

“Every one of you is a keeper or a shepherd and will be questioned about the well-being of his fold. So, the head of state will be questioned about the well-being of the people of the state”²⁴

It is a fact that if leadership were vested in God-conscious men, the society will flourish with good but if otherwise, it will drift towards corruption and exploitation.

History of Islam is replete with how leaders acted as servants of the led. Those who ascended thrones especially during the glorious days of the companions did so not for personal aggrandizement. They denied themselves and satisfied their subjects. Transparency was at its peak during their time. They appeared in persons at the court with ordinary subjects when occasion demanded. They humbly attended to the query of their subjects even in the public. It may be incisive to mention here that Umar Ibn Khattāb (RA) once saw a very lean and thin young girl moving along shakily. He said, “In what a sad plight the child is?” He got to know after further enquiry that she was his grand-daughter. Then, Abdullah ibn Umar (RA) told his father that, “whatever is in your charge, you give us nothing from it”. This has brought her this sorry state. In reply to his complaint, Umar said, “By God I have nothing for you more than I can give out to the Believers in general, whether it meets your needs or not. The book of God stands to decide just between us”.

Power of the Pulpit (Mimbar)

The regular congregation of the Muslims for the five daily prayers, once in a week for Jumu‘ah prayer, twice in a year for both *Eid-ul-Fitr* and *E id-ul-Adhā* and once in a year for Hajj, provide the avenue for societal reconstruction. Today, religious charlatans aid and abet corruption.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ الْأَحْبَارِ وَالرُّهْبَانِ لَيَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا ينفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

“There are many, indeed, amongst the Rabbis and the Monks who falsely devour the wealth of men and debar them from the path of Allah. Those that hoard gold and silver and do not spend it in the cause of Allah, announce unto them a most painful chastisement”, so is divine warning in (Q. 9:34)

The verse thus warns the Ummah from the corrupt ‘Ulamā and misleading worshippers. According to Maududī, he said these Rabbis and Monks “devour the wealth of the common people by selling false judgements and by taking bribes, gifts and presents on different pretexts” They also peddle power to perform miracle, heal the sick and solve problems.

Hence, the Mimbar, can go a long way to enlighten the populace on the havoc of corruption and its consequence in the hereafter. People need constant reminder and this should be done by those who are themselves models of virtue and piety.

In-text question: How can *Mimbar* serve as a channel for solving social evils in the society?

Creating Sense of Value and Discipline.

Thus, Mawdudi posed the question, “can a person having no fear of God and with no realization of retribution on the Day of Judgment, be restrained from indulging in dishonest acts and irresponsible behavior? Can a person thus bereft of all vestiges of loyalties except the one for his individual self, be persuaded to sacrifice his personal gains? ... Without any doubt, the relativity of the values is responsible for the unprecedented epidemic of corruption. The contemporary civilization is based on self-indulgence while that of Islam requires sacrifice, altruism, discipline, self-control, self-endurance which are difficult to sustain. (Ali Nadwi 1983).

2.4 Conclusion

Islam condemns corruption in all its forms. The cancerous effect of corruption is manifest in all life endeavours of Nigeria and Nigerians. The panacea does not lie in human theories as all have defied all logics. The present war against corruption is futile or at least almost lost as the law enforcement agencies are themselves culprits. A true and effective solution may be found in the above itemized Islamic framework. For those Islamic antidotes, being divine and universal in nature will really help to solve the problem of corruption in Nigeria and restore her lost treasures.

2.5 Summary

Various definitions of Corruption have been presented in this Unit. Fasaad, the Quranic word that applies to all forms of corruption is also expatiated upon. A bird’s eye view of Corruption in Nigeria and series of partially successful crusades of the Federal Government against the social malady are also examined. The Unit also enumerate some evil effect of the vice in brief. The last section of the Unit highlights the Quranic Framework for solving the problem. This includes the Religion’s holistic world view, Responsibility of the State, perceiving leadership as a trust, power of Spiritual leaders and Creating sense of value and discipline.

2.6 References / Further Readings

- Mustafā Sibā’i (1948), *Some Glittering Aspects of the Islamic Civilization*; The Holy *Qur’ān* Publishing House, Lebanon
S.A.A. Maududi, (n. d.), *The Meaning of the Qur’an*, London.
Islam and the World (198) Salimiah; IifSO.

2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Different points on corruption:

- It is also seen as “all forms of bribery, abuse of office and nepotism, any favour done in expectation of material or non-material gain or even in reward of an earlier deed”. (Patrick Edobor Ighinonovia 2003)
 - Types of corruption include: moral corruption; religious corruption; ideological corruption; political corruption; and legal corruption.
 - Corruption is under the term *fasād*’ in Islamic law.
2. Islam views corruption as the bane of societal development. Also, from the Islamic perspective, committing different types of sin is causing corruption on the earth. The most grievous of these sins are the destructive ones which Allah and His Messenger threaten the perpetrators of with a severe punishment.

Answers to SAEs 2

3. In Nigeria, corruption desecrates the rule of law and undermines the legitimacy and stability of democratic regimes.
4. Effects of corruption on Nigeria Economy:
 - It hinders economic development.
 - It opens the door for inefficient allocation of resources as well as raises the cost of investment and decreases investors’ confidence.
 - It risks marginalization in a world of rapid economic integrity.
 - It enriches some and impoverishes others.
 - It kills initiatives of potential experts in the private sectors and sacrifices efficiency on the altar of greedy hands mismanaging abundant wealth.
 - It desecrates the rule of law and undermines the legitimacy and stability of democratic regimes.
 - Corruption demolishes the elements of prudent management of wealth and resources. Irrational and short-sighted decisions are taken. These are motivated by greed but not need. Approvals of projects are met premised not on the basis of suitability but on the dividends for the decision-makers.

UNIT 3: ISLAM'S STAND ON VICES OF INTOXICANTS (*KHAMR*), HARD DRUGS AND GAMBLING

Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 More on Qur'anic moral teachings
 - 3.3.1 Meaning and prohibition of *khamr* and *maysir* in the *Qur'ān*
 - 3.3.2 Prohibition of *khamr* and *maysir* in the *Qur'ān*
 - 3.3.3 The harms of *Khamr*
 - 3.3.4 The harms of Gambling
- 3.4 Conclusion
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/Further Readings
- 3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

3.1 Introduction

Welcome to Unit 3 where we will continue with our discussions on moral teachings of the Qur'an. In this Unit, we are going to be discussing *khamr*, its meaning and what it entails. Also to be looked into is the effect of *khamr* in the society. This topic is so important as it determines the success or otherwise of any society. You are therefore, advised to pay rapt attention as we proceed and I hope you will enjoy the lesson.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this Unit you will be able to:

- (i) define *Khamr* and its various meanings
- (ii) mention the physical, mental, social, economic and spiritual harms of *Khamr*.
- (iii) state some of the Islamic injunctions on the vices of wine, narcotics and hard drugs.
- (iv) discuss Islam's stand on gambling

3.3 More on Qur'anic moral teachings

3.3.1 The meaning of *Khamr* and *Maysir*

At the present stage of Muslim's intellectualism, one can confidently define the word "*Khamr*" used in Q.5:90-91 as meaning any intoxicant, alcoholic, narcotic substance or tranquilizer, solid or liquid. Thus, the word becomes applicable to wine and hard drugs which usually have the same effects on those taking them. These include Indian hemp, marijuana, cocaine, opium and other narcotics which when taken has influence on the judgement of the brain. The user becomes engulfed in the ocean of dreams and imaginations. He becomes physically weak and nervous; mentally sick and morally deficient. He suffers from dereliction as a result of which he is regarded a social misfit. *Maysir* means gambling. It includes betting and all other forms of game of chance which some people embark on to get cheap gains.

In-text question: What do you understand by the terms *khamr* and *Maysir*?

3.3.2 Prohibition of *khamr* and *maysir* in the *Qur'an*

Considering the negative effects which Alcoholic drink (*Khamr*) and Gambling (*Maysir*) have on the lives of people in the society, and what harm they can cause, the Qur'an, a divine book of guidance, contains some divine injunctions (rules) to guide mankind especially the Muslims on how best to avoid the societal calamity which consumption of alcohol and the practice of gambling may cause. Some of such rules include the following:

"...He makes lawful for them all good things and forbids for them all indecent things..." (Q.7:157)

"And do not plunge yourselves into destruction" (Q.2:195.)

"And do not kill yourselves" (Q.4:29).

On the harm of intoxicants, the Holy Book says:

"They ask you (O Muhammad) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: "In them is a great and (some) benefits for men, but the sin of them is greater than their benefits". (Q.2:219)

Thus, Allah prohibits them by saying:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ
فاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ * إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ
وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ

O ye who believe! Intoxicants (*khamr*) and gambling, (dedication of) stones, and (divination by) arrows, are only an abomination of Satan's handiwork: eschew such (abomination), that ye may

prosper. Satan’s plan is but to excite enmity and hatred among you with intoxicants and gambling and turn you away from the Remembrance of God and from prayer. Will ye not abstain? (Q.5: 90 - 91).

These two verses include graceful advice. First, God calls wine and gambling “an abomination of Satan’s handiwork” and by abomination, it means utmost disgrace and wickedness because evil and corruption issue forth from them. Second, He considers one’s turning away from them a means of success in the present life, and thus indicates by analogy, that committing such acts leads to loss in the present life and in the Hereafter. Third, God considers them as excitants of enmity and hatred. And finally, He says that they prevent the person from performing the Remembrance of God and prayer to Him – two of the basic pillars of religion.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Enumerate the laid down general rules in the Holy <i>Qur’ān</i> forbidding everything that is harmful to human being.2. Give the meaning of <i>khamr</i> and <i>maysir</i>.3. Give the Verses of the <i>Qur’ān</i> that forbid intoxicants or alcohol and their content analysis. |
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3.3.3 The harms of *Khamr*

Wine and similar alcoholic beverages lead to countless harms. They weaken the person’s conscience and ruin his sense of modesty. They stimulate the drinker to abandon the established morality and commit ugly and wicked deeds. Most of the acts of adultery and marital disloyalty are committed under the effects of wine, which often leads to the ruin of marriages and thus to a painful sense of remorse. Many acts of discord and disturbance of peace as well as the crimes that these lead to, take place in wine shops and other similar places.

Some may choose to defend the drinking of wine, by saying that people’s mental pains have become so severe and their hardships so many, that they find no cure other than wine. The answer to this wrong assumption is that the mental hardships can never be rooted out by drinking wine, but by strengthening the moral conscience and training ourselves on self-control, graceful forbearance, and spiritual encouragement. The drinking of wine to escape pain is to no avail. This is because the effects of wine will soon disappear and leave the person in deeper pain. This leads him to either a nervous breakdown or to alcoholism, and thus he lives like one who commits gradual suicide. By doing this, he would be killing his physical activity and mental efficiency, besides the health trouble that issue from his conduct.

Regarding the social harms of drinking wine, one might say that drinking results in enmity and even among friends. When the person gets drunk, he loses his faculty

of reason which used to prevent him from committing shameful talk or wicked deeds; thus, he offends others, quickly becomes angry for the slightest reason and creates needless quarrels and troubles.

Furthermore, drinking wine averts one from the remembrance of God and from performing prayer to him; the drunken man has no faculty of reason or consciousness with which he can praise his lord for His blessings and thus worship him. Worship can be performed only in the presence of reason and a sound mind. That is why, by prohibiting wine and setting laws against drunken people, Islam takes a higher stand than the rest of religions that do not prohibit wines or set laws against those who drink it. The first duty of religion is to urge people on the worship of God, and no act of worship can be performed if the person is drunk.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

4. Discuss the evil effect of *khamr* on the addicts.
5. React to the attempt by some to defend the drinking of wine.

3.3.4 The Harms of Gambling.

The harms of gambling begin essentially from the financial trouble the gambler suffers. If at all a gambler makes profit, the profits he makes rest on the losses of others; he usurps other gamblers' money before their own eyes. The greater his losses the stronger the fury at the winner, who, in brief instants, robs him of his money. Gamblers often exceed the normal limits of loss till they lose all their money. Losing control over themselves, they commit suicide, set curses at the winner, or bear evil for him, which may end up in a quarrel as is familiar with the scenes of the gamblers.

In-text question: Mention some negative effects of gambling in the society. Similarly, gambling averts the person from the Remembrance of God and performing prayer to Him. A gambler turns all his powers to gambling in which he has high hopes of profit and fears of loss; hence the Qur'ān's *condemnation* of it as cited above.

3.4 Conclusion

You can conclude from the foregoing submissions that the general rules in the *Qur'ān* forbidding things that are injurious to the physical, socio-economic and spiritual well-being of human beings are applicable to intoxicants and hard drugs, solid or liquid.

Wine and drug addict and gambling have evil consequences on the body, brain, social and spiritual well-being of the culprits. They are in the category of grave sins, (*kabāir*), so therefore people should keep away from them. Islam forbids them, specifies corporal punishment for the offenders and threatens them with chastisement in the hereafter.

3.5 Summary

Intoxicants, alcohol, wine, narcotics such as hemp, marijuana, cocaine, heroin and any other substance, solid or liquid, the consumption of which adversely affects the body and brain of the consumer fall under the term *khamr* used in *Qur'ān*. These substances along with gambling are abominations and handiwork of Satan. Their disadvantages are greater than their advantages. They are in addition injurious to the socio-economic and spiritual well-being of the consumer and as such prohibited. We must not go near them or have anything to do with them.

3.6 References / Further Reading

- Yusuf Ali, Holy *Qur'ān*, *Meanings and Commentary*; Manār International Cooperation, Kansas City, USA
- Afif A. Tabbārah (1978), *The Spirit of Islam*, Beirut, Lebanon.
- Yusuf al-Qardawi (1998), *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam*; Islamic Culture and Relations.

3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1.
 - "...He makes lawful for them all good things and forbids for them all indecent things..." (Q.7:157);
 - "And do not plunge yourselves into destruction" (Q.2:195.);
 - "And do not kill yourselves" (Q.4:29).
5. *Khamr* means Alcoholic drink and *Maysir* means Gambling.
3. O ye who believe! Intoxicants (*khamr*) and gambling, (dedication of) stones, and (divination by) arrows, are only an abomination of Satan's handiwork: eschew such (abomination), that ye may prosper. Satan's plan is but to excite enmity and hatred among you with intoxicants and gambling and turn you away from the Remembrance of God and from prayer. Will ye not abstain? (Q.5: 90 - 91).

Answers to SAEs 2

4. Evil effects of *khamr* on the addicts:
 - drinking of alcohol results in enmity
 - drinking wine averts one from the remembrance of God and from performing prayer

- addicts quickly becomes angry for the slightest reason and creates needless quarrels and troubles
5. Some may choose to defend the drinking of wine, by saying that people’s mental pains have become so severe and their hardships so many, that they find no cure other than wine. The answer to this wrong assumption is that the mental hardships can never be rooted out by drinking wine, but by strengthening the moral conscience and training ourselves on self-control, graceful forbearance, and spiritual encouragement. The drinking of wine to escape pain is to no avail. This is because the effects of wine will soon disappear and leave the person in deeper pain.

UNIT 4: ADULTERY (ZINĀ) AND SODOMY (LIWĀT WA ‘L-SIHĀQ)

Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 More on Qur'anic moral teachings
 - 4.3.1 Moral teachings on Adultery (*Al-Zinā*)
 - 4.3.2 Moral teachings on the practice of Sodomy and Homosexuality (*Al-Liwāt* and *A’s-Sihāq*)
- 4.4 Conclusion
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.7 References/Further Readings
- 4.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

4.1 Introduction

Against good moral qualities and values, *Qur’ān* denounces shameful deeds, indecencies, immoralities and vices. It is Satan who commands people to do what is evil and shameful. In the Holy *Qur’ān*, as the word *fasaad* implies several forms of corruption, so also the word “*fahshā*” implies comprehensive forms of evil. People are forbidden to come near adultery, for it is a shameful deed and evil.

“Nor come near adultery for it is indecent deed (*fahshā*) and an evil way” (opening the road to other evils Q.17:32).

Going by 2002 World Health Organization’s statistics, five people worldwide die from AIDS related diseases every minute of every day. Also, statistic update released by UNAIDS showed that two million died of AIDS related cause in 2002. Also, in 2003 more than three million people was reported dead with an estimated five million acquiring new HIV infections – bringing to 40 million living with the virus around the world.

AIDS weakens the body’s immune system. Continuous existence of AIDS in the body leads to death. AIDS first appeared in Nigeria in 1986. According to a Press Report, it has since killed millions of Nigerians between the ages of 14 – 49. Majority of victims are women. As at year 2005 more than three million Nigerians were living with AIDS.

The transferring of the virus from an infected person to another person is said to come usually through a number of ways. The most common cause of the pandemic include sexual intercourse, sodomy, blood transfusion, mother to child transfusion etc etc. In this Unit, Adultery (*Zinā*), Sodomy and Homosexuality (*Liwāt* and *Sihāq*) and the evils that accompany them shall be exposed.

4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this Unit, you will be able to:

1. briefly explain the meanings of Adultery or Fornication (*Zinā*), Sodomy and Homosexuality (*Liwāt* and *Sihāq*) as social vices.
2. enumerate some of the evil effects of these vices on the society
3. appreciate the Islamic injunctions concerning the vices.
4. denounce them and admonish people who move near them.

4.3 More on Qur'anic moral teachings

4.3.1 Adultery / Fornication (*Zinā*)

Sexually transmitted diseases like HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, Gonorrhoea etc. etc. may result from adultery or sodomy. Adultery may also result in unwanted pregnancy consequent upon which there may follow attempted abortion. It is gradual destruction of marriage institution and the associated responsibilities. A statistic has shown that life has degenerated in some communities to the extent that they can be compared with animals by the way they procreate to the extent that there are three bastards out of every ten children.

Adultery drowns one’s moral traits the products of which may be foundlings who live as a burden on society carrying with them ineffaceable feeling of pain

and resentful view of a life that deprives them of the bliss of living under the care of two parents who treat them tenderly and prepare a prosperous future for them. The *Qur'ān* prohibits adultery, considering it an abomination and a way of evil which people had better shun. The Holy Structure says in Chapter 17: Verse 32 “Come not near unto adultery, for it is shameful (deed) and an evil way.”

It also says anyone who is involved in *zinā* is a sinful criminal. The culprit if caught with sufficient evidence should be humiliated publicly by being given a hundred whips for the unmarried man or woman who commits fornication, and stoning to death for the adulterer or adulteress. The Prophet and his Companions applied this rule which had its roots in the Old Testament in line with the Islamic legal principle that stipulates: a law of the People of the Book before us is law for us until it is abrogated.

That is even not the end of the matter.

وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا يُضَاعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِ مُهَانًا
إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا وَمَنْ تَابَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَإِنَّهُ يَتُوبُ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَتَابًا

...The punishment of the culprit will be doubled on the Day of Resurrection and he will dwell therein perpetually humiliated except those who repent and become righteous. Those, Allah will change their evil deeds into good. And Allah is ever forgiving, ever-merciful. (Q.25:68-70).

In-text question: As you can observe in your environment, what would you suggest as the possible consequences of adultery and fornication that are now freely practiced in the society?

To prevent the occurrence of the evil of illicit sexual relations the Scripture stipulates in Chapter 17 Verse 32 *سَبِيلًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا* وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزَّانَا إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً meaning: Do not go near adultery. This indirectly connotes that sexual harassment in form of promiscuous dressing should be discouraged. Unlimited mixing up of both men and women should be checked. Furthermore, women should know that they will answer queries for the promiscuous role they play in the film industry and entertainments in club houses, hotels that involves nudity etc etc.

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

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|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss the social and spiritual consequences of <i>zinā</i> 2. Give a brief account of Islam’s stand on <i>zinā</i>. |
|---|

4.3.2 Sodomy and Homosexuality ((*Liwāt* and *Sihāq*))

Homosexuality ((*Liwāt* and *Sihāq*)) is on the increase in the civilized world and homosexual clubs and societies are founded in various countries of Europe and America which had up till recently considered the practice a major crime. Also, in the year 2006, a bill seeking legalization of marriage of the same sex was sent to the National Assembly in Nigeria. Thanks to the sense of reasoning, the bill was thrown out on the basis that

homosexuality has never been and will never be part of the Nigerians culture. A look at the anti-social vice from the Islamic perspective becomes pertinent.

Sodomy or homosexuality is an unnatural act of sex to satisfy ones' desire;
the

Islamic term for the act of sexual intercourse between two males being “*Liwāt*”
while

the term for it between two females is “*Sihāq*”.

The people of Lot, who had their habitats at Sodom and Gomorrah were materially very advance. In spite of the warning from Prophet Lot, they committed sodomy.

The *Qur’ān* speaks of them in the following words:

وَلَوْطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ
إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ

We also sent Lūt: he said to his people: Do you commit adultery as no people in creation (ever) committed before you? For you practice your lusts on men in preference to women; you are indeed a people transgressing beyond limits. (Q.7:80-81).

When they did not heed the warning of their Prophet, they were ruined completely through a shower of brick brimstone though a few remain of their towering buildings

have survived until today. Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said:

Four types of people get up in the morning while they are under the wrath of Allah and they sleep in the night under the wrath of Allah.” He was asked: “Who are they, O Messenger of Allah?” The Prophet replied: “Those men who try to resemble women and those women who try to resemble men (through dress and behaviour) and those who commit sex with animals and those men who commit sex with with men.”

Homosexuality is therefore a great sin from the Islamic perspective. More reports from the Prophet are as follows:

“One who kisses a boy with passion, Allah most High will punish him for a thousand years in the fire of hell.”

“One who touched a boy with passion, he will be cursed by Allah, the Angels and all the people.”

It is related by Ibn Abbas that the Prophet (S. A.W) said:

‘Allah Most High will not look at a man who committed sex with a man or a woman through her anus.’”

The Prophet (S.A.W) further said this about unnatural relationships between two men or two women:

“If a man commits an act of sex with a man, they both are adulterers, and if a woman commits such acts with a woman, then both of them are adulterers”

Sodomy is not only a social vice but also a sexual crime for which stipulated punishment

for adultery may be applied according to some school of thought or against which deterrent measures may be taken according to others.

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 (SAEs)

3. Discuss Sodomy as a vice and crime that must be shun.
4. Cite portions of the Holy *Qur'ān* that discuss Sodomy and its evil consequences.

4.4 Conclusion

From the foregoing, you can conclude that *Zina*, adultery or fornication opens door to evils such as sexually transmitted diseases, abortion, destruction of marriage institution and bearing of bastards. According to the *Qur'ān* which condemns it in unmistakable terms its punishment is humiliation in public to serve as deterrent if the crime is established beyond reasonable doubts. Stoning to death which had its root in the Holy Book revealed before the Prophet Muhammad could even be applied.

Sodomy or Homosexuality – *Liwāt* or *Sihāq* – is unnatural way of sexual satisfaction. It shares many evils in common with adultery. For example, they are both called shameful deeds *fāhishah* according to the *Qur'ān* and Hadith. It is an

evil way leading to sexually transmitted diseases. Capital punishment awaits the culprit if crime is established beyond reasonable doubt. Punishment in the hereafter for both is even greater if they die unrepentant.

4.5 Summary

Sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancy and gradual destruction of marriage institution that may be consequent upon adultery render it a vice whose temptation must be resisted.

Sodomy or Homosexuality on the hand is also an unnatural way of sex satisfaction and a shameful act that opens the door to many sexually transmitted diseases and a tendency towards destruction of marriage institution.

The two vices are from the point of view of *Qur'ān* and Hadith grievous sins for which public humiliation and capital punishment have been stipulated, while if established beyond reasonable doubt, hell fire will be the abode of the culprits in the hereafter.

You will now agree with the *Qur'ān* that one must resist temptation of committing the two, not come near them, and that even all roads leading to them must be blocked.

4.6 References / Further Reading.

- Yusuf Ali, (1998), *Holy Quran, Meanings and Commentary*; Manar International Cooperation, Kansas City, USA
- Abdu 'r-Rahmān I. Doi (1990); *Shari'ah: The Islamic Law* Taha Publishers, London, U.K.
- Afif A. Tabbārah (1978), *The Spirit of Islam*, Beirut, Lebanon.

4.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Transmission of sexually transmitted diseases; proliferation of unwanted pregnancies; procreation of bastards and untrained babies; prevalence of moral decadence.

2. The *Qur'ān* prohibits adultery, considering it an abomination and a way of evil which people had better shun. The Holy Structure says in Chapter 17: Verse 32 “Come not near unto adultery, for it is shameful (deed) and an evil way.” It also says anyone who is involved in *zinā* is a sinful criminal.

Answers to SAEs 2

3. Sodomy or homosexuality is an unnatural act of sex to satisfy ones' desire;
the
Islamic term for the act of sexual intercourse between two males being
“*Liwāt*”
while the term for it between two females is “*Sihāq*”.
4. We also sent Lūt: he said to his people: Do you commit adultery as no
people in creation (ever) committed before you? For you practice
your
lusts on men in preference to women; you are indeed a people
transgressing beyond limits. (Q.7:80-81).

UNIT 5: PROHIBITION OF VICES LIKE ABORTION, MURDER AND SUICIDE

Unit Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcomes
- 5.3 More on Qur'anic moral teachings
 - 5.3.1 Moral teachings on Abortion
 - 5.3.2 Moral teachings on Murder
 - 5.3.3 Moral teachings on Suicide
- 5.4 Conclusion
- 5.5 Summary
- 5.6 References/Further Readings
- 5.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

5.1 Introduction

This is the very last Unit of this course. In the previous units we have been discussing the moral teachings of the holy Qur'an as they concern the socio-religious life of man. Although we may not be able to cover all the moral topics, this unit will focus on the position of the *Qur'ān* on actions such as abortion, murder and suicide that involve termination of life. You will therefore be exposed to the fact that these three socio-moral vices and crimes are unethical, barbaric and anti-development. Any society harboring individuals with any of these vices or committing any of these crimes will be doomed in frequent chaos, fears, grieve, and hopelessness. So, in order to build a society where people with good moral qualities, peace and tranquility reign supreme, an understanding of the evils of

these three vices becomes essential. It is my belief that all we will be discussing here, as usual, will equip you towards living a life full of joy, peace and unity.

5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this Unit you will be able to:

- (i) establish the fact that abortion, murder or acts of suicide involve termination of lives.
- (ii) justify that the consequences of the three vices are both socially and spiritually grievous.
- (iii) advice Muslims against the practice of abortion.

5.3 More on Qur'anic moral teachings

5.3.1 Moral teachings on Abortion

Islam has made human life sacred and an aggression against human life is the second major sin in the sight of Allah, second only to denial of existence of God.

ولا تقتلوا النفس التي حرم الله إلا بالحق

"Do not kill the sole that Allah has made sacred except for just cause" (e.g. in judicial punishment for murder, or in self-preservation which may include not only self-defense in the legal sense but also pest control and provision of meat for food) Q. 17:33.

While Islam permits preventing pregnancy for valid reasons, it does not allow doing violence to the pregnancy once it occurs. Muslim jurists agree unanimously that after the foetus is completely formed and has been given a soul, aborting it is *harām*. It is also a crime, the commission of which is prohibited to the Muslim because it constitutes an offence against a complete life of human being. Jurists insist that the payment of blood money (*diyyah*) becomes incumbent if the baby was aborted alive and then died, while a fine of lesser amount is to be paid if it was aborted dead.

However, there is one exceptional situation. If, say the jurists, after the baby is completely formed, it is reliably established that the continuation of the pregnancy would necessarily result in the death of the mother, then in accordance with the general principle of the *Sharī'ah*, that of choosing the lesser of two evils, abortion must be performed.

For the mother is the origin of the foetus; moreover, she is established in life, with duties and responsibilities, and she is also a pillar of the family. It would not be possible to sacrifice her life for a foetus which has not yet acquired a personality and which has no responsibilities or obligations to fulfil.¹⁷

Imām al-Ghazālī makes a clear distinction between contraception and abortion, saying:

Contraception is not like abortion. Abortion is a crime against an existing being. Now, existence has stages. The first stages of existence are the settling of the semen in the womb and its mixing with the secretions of the woman. It is then ready to receive life. Disturbing it is a crime. When it develops further and becomes a lump, aborting it is a greater crime. When it acquires a soul and its creation is completed, the crime becomes more grievous. The crime reaches a maximum seriousness when it is committed after it (the foetus) is separated (from the mother) alive.¹⁸

Self-Assessment Exercises 1 (SAEs)

1. What is the Islamic attitude towards abortion?
2. Does Islam approve abortion? State why.

5.3.2 Moral teachings on Murder

As stated in the above passage, *Qur'ān* makes human life sacred; and teaches that, aggression against human life is the second greatest sin in the sight of Allah, second only to denial of Him. *Qur'ān* declares that ...if anyone kills a person for any reason other than to (the killing of) a person or for strong corruption in the land, it will be as if he had killed the whole of mankind... (Q 5:35). Because the human race constitutes a single family, an offence against one of its members is in fact an offence against the whole humanity. Allah also says in another verse that:

“And he who kills a believer intentionally will have his recompense in Hell fire, to abide therein forever; and the wrath of Allah is upon him and His curse, and a tremendous punishment has been prepared for him”. (Q 4:93).

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) says:

“A believer remains within the scope of his religion as long as he does not kill anyone unlawfully”

It should be understood that in order to preserve lives from unwarranted termination and to enhance social stability unjust killing which is the order of the day among both developed and developing countries like Nigeria must be stopped.

It must also be noted that, the *Qur'ān* forbids infanticide as well as abortion, because innocent lives are often wasted through these obnoxious acts (Q 17:31-33).

In-text question: At what point can abortion be equated with murder?

Self-Assessment Exercises 2 (SAEs)

3. Discuss the crime of murder from an Islamic perspective.
4. Give reasons why murder should be stopped at all cost.

5.3.3 Moral teachings on Suicide

Whoever takes his life in form of suicide by any means whatsoever has unjustly aken a life which Allah has made sacred? For since he did not create himself, nor even so much as a single cell of his body, the life of an individual does not belong to him; it is a trust given to him by Allah (S.W.T.). He is not allowed to diminish it, let alone to harm or destroy it. Allah (S.W.T.) says: **ولا تقتلوا أنفسكم إن الله كان بكم رحيما**

Do not kill yourselves; indeed, Allah is merciful to you. (Q. 4:29)

The Islamic teachings require the Muslim to be resolute in facing hardship; he is not permitted to give up and to run away from the vicissitudes of life when a tragedy befalls or some of his hopes are dashed. Indeed, the believer is created for striving, not for sitting idle, for combat, not for escape. His faith and character do not permit him to run away from the battlefield of life, and he possesses a weapon which never fails and ammunition which is never exhausted: the weapon of his unshakeable faith and the ammunition of his moral steadfastness.

The Prophet (ﷺ) warned that anyone who commits the crime of suicide will be deprived of the mercy of Allah and will not enter the Garden; he will deserve Allah's wrath and will be cast into the fire. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

'In the time before you, a man was wounded. His wounds troubled him so much that he took a knife and cut his wrist and bled himself to death. Therefore, Allah said, "My slave hurried in the matter of his life". Therefore, he is deprived of the Garden.'³

If a person is deprived of the Garden because he cannot bear the pain of his wounds and so kills himself, what about the one who takes his life because he has suffered a loss, whether great or small, in his business, has failed an examination, or has been rejected by a woman. Let those who are weak of will pay careful attention to the following hadith.

He who throws himself down from a rock and commits suicide will be throwing himself into the fire of Hell; he who drinks poison and kills himself will have the poison in his hand, drinking it forever in the fire of Hell; and he who kills himself with a weapon will have that weapon in his hand, stabbing himself forever in the fire of Hell.

5.4 Conclusion

There is no denying the fact that, vices like murder, abortion and suicide are anti-values and social maladies which every individual must guard against. Violence to pregnancy once it occurs and after the foetus is completely formed and has been given a soul, aborting it is *harām* unless it is reliably established that the continuation of the pregnancy would necessarily result in the death of the mother. In order to preserve lives from unwarranted termination and to enhance social stability murder which is the order of the day among both developed and developing countries like Nigeria must be stopped. The Muslim must be resolute in facing hardship; he is not permitted to commit suicide or give up when a tragedy befalls or some of his hopes are dashed. The progress and survival of any given nation depend on virtuous acts and keeping off anti-values.

5.5 Summary

Human life is sacred and aggression against it either in form of abortion, murder or suicide is a major sin in the sight of Allah second only to denial of His existence.

Life can only be terminated for just cause; Q. 17:33. such as in punishment for murder,

self-defense in the legal sense, pest control and provision of meat for food. Also, abortion

may be resorted to after the baby is completely formed, if it is reliably established that the

continuation of the pregnancy would necessarily result in the death of the mother in

accordance with the general principle of the *Sharī'ah*, that of choosing the lesser of two

evils. Anyone who commits the crime of suicide will be deprived of the mercy of Allah

and will not enter the Garden; he will deserve Allah's wrath and will be cast into the fire.

5.6 References/Further Readings

- Yusuf Ali, (1998), *Holy Quran, Meanings and Commentary*; Manar International Cooperation, Kansas City, USA

- A.bdur Rahmon I. Doi (1990); *Shari'ah: The Islamic Law* Taha Publishers, London, U.K.
- Y. Qardawi (1998), *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam*, Islamic Culture and Relations.

5.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answers to SAEs 1

1. Islam frowns against abortion and considers it as a crime against an existing being.
2. Islam permits preventing pregnancy for valid reasons, but it does not allow doing violence to the pregnancy once it occurs. This is justified in Q17:33 which reads:
"Do not kill the sole that Allah has made sacred except for just cause"

Answers to SAEs 2

3. *Qur'ān* makes human life sacred; and teaches that, aggression against human life is the second greatest sin in the sight of Allah. Therefore committing murder is not lawful in Islam except if it is has legal backing.
4. It should be understood that in order to preserve lives from unwarranted termination and to enhance social stability unjust killing which is the order of the day among both developed and developing countries like Nigeria must be stopped.