

## The Significance of Islamic Moral Education in Nigeria for National Advancement

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**Abstract:** The training of child's personality towards the best moral and social conduct and encouraging him through this training to grow up as a good, self-disciplined, responsible and law-abiding citizen who values his nation and is ready to safeguard the interest of his society, is one of the significances of Islamic Moral Education. To provide this moral training is therefore relevant to the present period when all kinds of corruption and vices like wine-drinking, adultery and fornication, theft and armed robbery, kidnapping and banditry, fraud, bribery, cheating in marketing and devouring of people's wealth without their consent pervade our society. No nation can have meaningful advancement without controlling such immoral and social vices. In view of this therefore, this paper is intended to discuss on the significance of Islamic Moral Education in Nigeria for National Advancement.

**Keywords:** self-disciplined, Islamic Moral Education,

### INTRODUCTION

The significance of Islamic moral education in Nigeria cannot be over stressed. This is because it addresses all of the commonly known moral virtues and with a sense of balance and proportion it assigns a suitable place and function to each one in the total scheme of life. It widens the scope of man's individual and collective life, his domestic associations in the political, economic, legal, intellectual and social realms. It covers his life from home to society, from dining table to battle field and peace conference - literally, from the cradle to the grave.<sup>1</sup> In short, no sphere of life is exempt from the Islamic moral education.

The principles of Islamic moral education are sometimes stated as positive commitments which must be fulfilled (like: righteousness; benevolence; patience; truthfulness; justice etc.) and sometimes as negative prescriptions (like: intoxicants; adultery; theft; highway robbery; fraud; bribery, gambling; etc.) which must be avoided. Whether they are stated positively or negatively, they are designed to build in the human being a sound mind, a peaceful soul, a strong personality, and a healthy body. There is no doubt that these are necessary requirements of the general welfare and prosperity of mankind.<sup>2</sup>

In fact, this (Islamic moral education) is the type of education that the Nigerian nation requires. The nation where all sorts of immoral acts have over the years been the cause of lack of peaceful coexistence among its citizenry. As

<sup>1</sup> Isma'il, H. M. *Ruh al-Bayan*, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, 5/ 274

<sup>2</sup> Hammudah, A. (n.d.), *Islam in Focus*, Islamic Publication Bureau, Lagos, p33

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a consequence of these immoral acts, Nigeria has slowed down to a crawl in terms of economic, political, social and technological advancement. It is the aim of this paper therefore, to examine the significance of Islamic moral education in Nigeria for national advancement. To achieve this aim, the paper is intended to discuss on:

- I. Positive principles of Islamic moral education contained in the Islamic Studies syllabus which if adequately studied, lead to the welfare of the individual or the society, and
- II. Negative principles that are injurious to the individual or the society.

### **Fulfillment of Positive Principles of Islamic Moral Education**

The dimensions of Islamic moral education are numerous, far reaching, and comprehensive. The Islamic morals deal with the relationship between man and his Creator, man and his fellow men, man and the other creatures of the Universe, man and his external behavior and his manifest deeds, his words and his thoughts, his feelings and intentions. In a general sense, his role is to champion what is right and fight what is wrong, seek what is true and abandon what is false, cherish what is beautiful and wholesome and avoid what is indecent and unwholesome. Truth and virtue are his goal. Humbleness and simplicity, courtesy and compassion, are his second nature. This high-level morality will undoubtedly, nourish and reinforce morality at the human level.<sup>3</sup> We shall at this juncture, give some examples of these positive principles of Islamic morals which must be fulfilled:

#### **Righteousness (Taqwa)**

Righteousness (*Taqwa*) is a positive principle of Islamic morals studied under Islamic Moral Education. *Taqwa* means to fear Allah through the performance of good deeds and adherence to His laws as outlined in the Qur'an and Sunnah in order to be saved from His anger and punishment.<sup>4</sup> In other words, it means avoiding anything that may displease Allah and doing everything possible that attracts Allah's pleasure and His reward.<sup>5</sup> A man in this life is like one who walks in a bushy and thorny area. If he is not very careful about where he places his feet, he is likely to step on thorns, which will automatically harm him. This life is full of temptation that makes one commit what can incur Allah's punishment on him. Anything sinful in this life is like a thorn in one's way. All must of necessity be crossed by all. Allah (SWT) says:

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَحَنَّةٍ غُرُوضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

*Be quick in the race for forgiveness from your Lord, and for a garden whose width is that (of the whole) of the heavens and of the earth, prepared for the righteous.*<sup>6</sup>

#### **ii. Kindness (Ihsan)**

Kindness is another positive principle of Islamic morals. Literally, it means to make good. But according to the Qur'an, it signifies doing kindness to others, forgiving and pardoning, and guiding others to the right.<sup>7</sup>

Allah (SWT) says:

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

*Your Lord has enjoined you to worship none but Him, and to show kindness (Ihsan) to your parents.*<sup>8</sup>

In another verse, He says:

الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَاطِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

*(Those) who spend alike in prosperity and in adversity, For those who curb their hunger and those who forgive their fellow men. And Allah love the charitable (Muhsinun).*<sup>9</sup>

In yet another verse, Allah says:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّن دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

*And who speaks better (Ahsan) than he who calls others to the service of Allah, does what is right, and says: I am one of the Muslims.*<sup>10</sup>

<sup>3</sup> ibid

<sup>4</sup> Al-Jaza'iri, A. *Aysar al-Tafasir*, Al-Maktabat al-Shamilah, vol.1, p142

<sup>5</sup> Al-Tabari, M. J. (1420/2000), *Jami' Al-Bayan An Ta'wil Ay al-Qur'an*. Edited by A. M. Shakir, Mu'assasat Al-Risalah, 12/ 367

<sup>6</sup> *Ali Imran*, 3:133

<sup>7</sup> Al-Qurtubi, M. A. (ND), *Al-Jami' Li Ahkam Al-Qur'an*, Mawqi' Ya'sub, 2/13

<sup>8</sup> *Al-Isra'*, 17:23

<sup>9</sup> *Ali Imran*, 3:134

<sup>10</sup> *Fussilat*, 41:33

When questioned about *Ihsan* (benevolence), the Prophet (SAW) described it saying:

أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ،

*To worship Allah as though you see Him, for He sees you although you do not see Him.*<sup>11</sup>

This indicates that the concept of *Ihsan* in Islam is so comprehensive that it includes everything.

### iii- Patience (*Sabr*)

Another significant principle of Islamic morals is patience (*sabr*). The literal meaning of patience is perseverance, tolerance, endurance, or steadfastness. In the jurisprudential terminology however, it means keeping one's impulses, passions, feelings and emotions under control in the performance of what is right and avoidance of what is wrong.<sup>12</sup> The Qur'an explains patience in three different forms. They are:

#### (a) Patience in performing religious acts. Allah (SWT) says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

*O believers, be patient and let your patience never be exhausted. Stand firm in your faith and fear Allah, so that you may triumph.*<sup>13</sup>

#### (b) Perseverance implying self-control. Allah (SWT) says:

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ. الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

*And hasten to earn the forgiveness of your Lord and a Paradise as wide as heaven and earth, prepared for those who curb their anger and those who forgive their fellow-men. Those who spend (in Allâh's Cause) in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger, and who pardon men; verily, Allâh loves Al-Muhsinûn (the good doers).*<sup>14</sup>

#### (c) Patience against calamities. The Qur'an testifies:

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالتَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِيرٍ الصَّابِرِينَ. الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ. أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

*We shall test you with some fear and hunger, with loss of life and property and crops. Give good news to the patient who in adversity says: we belong to Allah and to Him we shall return. On such people will be Allah's blessing and mercy. Such men are rightly guided.*<sup>15</sup>

### iv. Forgiveness (*Al - Afw*)

The next significant principle of Islamic morals is forgiveness. Forgiveness means to overlook a wrong done to one, to stop demanding due rights voluntarily, to pardon.<sup>16</sup> Even though Islam allows one to freely retaliate when Injustice and harm is done to him, yet, what is better and more rewarding in the sight of Allah is to forgive voluntarily. Allah (SWT) says:

وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِثْلُهَا فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ

*The recompense for an evil is an evil like thereof; but whoever forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is with Allâh. Verily, He likes not the Zâlimûn (oppressors, polytheists, and wrong doers).*<sup>17</sup>

### In Another Verse, He Says:

وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ وَلَئِنْ صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِلصَّابِرِينَ

*And if you punish (your enemy, O you believers in the Oneness of Allâh), then punish them with the like of that with which you were afflicted. But if you endure patiently, verily, it is better for As-Sâbirûn (the patient).*<sup>18</sup>

Forgiveness is very important in building up a sound moral personality and also in solving social conflicts and

<sup>11</sup> (Al-Qazwini, M.A. *Sunan Ibn Majah*, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, Vol. 1, p24

<sup>12</sup> As'ad Humad, *Aysar al-Tafasir*, al-Shamilah, p311

<sup>13</sup> *Ali Imran*, 3:200

<sup>14</sup> *Ali Imran*, 3:133—134

<sup>15</sup> *Al-Baqarah*, 2: 155- 157

<sup>16</sup> Al-Qurtubi, M. A. (1964/1384), *Al-Jami' Li Ahkam Al-Qur'an*. Dar, al-Kutub al-Misriyyah, al-Qahirah, 2/ 173

<sup>17</sup> *Al-Shura*, 42:40

<sup>18</sup> *Al-Nahl*, 16:126

disorder. Forgiveness helps to create atmosphere of love, respect and cordiality among people. While revenge, even when just, creates the opposite. Forgiveness helps bring people together, while harshness tends to make people hate each other. It turns one's enemies to be his hearty friends. Allah says:

وَلَا تَسْتَوِي الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ

*The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e. Allâh orders the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly) then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend.<sup>19</sup>*

## V. Trust (Amanah)

Trust (*Amanah*) is also another important principle of Islamic morals. Trust is a strong belief in the honesty, goodness, strength, confidence, reliability of someone or something. It is considered as one of the highest moral quality and is expected from every follower of Islam. It covers the responsibilities of the leaders towards their subjects in distribution of wealth, returning back their rights and administration of justice.<sup>20</sup> It is a very important concept in Islam, and emphasizes the aspect of man's free moral choice and responsibility for his actions, Allah the Almighty enjoins all Muslims to observe their trusts. He says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِأَمْرِكُمْ لَآتِي وَأَمَانَاتٍ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا  
*Allah Commands you to hand back your trusts to their rightful owners, and to pass judgment upon men with fairness. Noble is that to which Allah exhorts you. Allah is Hearing, Seeing.<sup>21</sup>*

This shows that whenever a person is given a trust, he must render it back to the owner(s). Be they his parents, brothers, neighbors, friends or orphans or teachers. He must not betray his trust, Also, one who is appointed as Treasurer of an organization or society or a government official should not betray his trust. Allah (SWT) says:

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ وَمَنْ يَغُلَّ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ  
*No Prophet could (ever) be false to his trust, if any person is so false, he shall on the Day of judgment, restore what he misappropriates; then shall every soul receive its due: whatever it earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly.<sup>22</sup>*

### In the Hadith, Anas (RA) reported that Allah's Messenger (SAW) said:

لَا إِيمَانَ لِمَنْ لَا أَمَانَةَ لَهُ وَلَا دِينَ لِمَنْ لَا عَهْدَ لَهُ  
*He has really no faith who does not fulfil his trust, and he has (really) no religion who does not fulfil his promise. (Al-Sunan al-Kubra)<sup>23</sup>*

## VI -Peace

Peace is yet another concept of the Islamic principles of morality. To appreciate how Islam approaches the question of peace, one has only to consider a few elementary facts about Islam. Peace and Islam are derived from the same root and may be considered synonymous.<sup>24</sup> One of Allah's Names is Peace as indicated in the following verse:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيَّمُنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ  
*Allah is He, than Whom there is no other god; the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace (and Perfection), the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver of Safety, the Exalted in Might, the Irresistible, the Supreme: Glory to Allah. (High is He) above the partners they attribute to Him.<sup>25</sup>*

**The concluding words of the daily prayers of every Muslim- السلام عليكم ورحمة الله are words of peace. The greeting of the Muslims when they return to Allah is peace. The Qur'an says:**

دَعْوَاهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ وَأَجْرٌ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
*(This will be) their cry therein: "Glory to Thee, O Allah." And "Peace" will be their greeting therein! and the close of their prayer will be: "Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds!"<sup>26</sup>*

<sup>19</sup> Fussilat, 41:34

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 5/ 256

<sup>21</sup> Al-Nisa', 4:58

<sup>22</sup> Ali Imran, 3:161

<sup>23</sup> Al-Baihaqi, A.A. Al-Sunan al-Kubra, Majlis Da'irat al-Ma'arif al-Nizamiyyah, al-Hind, Vol. 9, p231

<sup>24</sup> Al-Tabari, op. cit. 4/257

<sup>25</sup> Al-Hashr, 59:23

<sup>26</sup> Yunus, 10:10

**In another verse, the Noble Book says:**

وَأُدْخِلَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ

*But those who believe and work righteousness will be admitted to gardens beneath which rivers flow, - to dwell therein forever with the leave of their Lord. Their greeting therein will be: "Peace!"<sup>27</sup>*

**The daily salutations among the Muslims are expressions of peace. The adjective 'Muslim' means in a sense, peaceful. Heaven in Islam is the abode of peace. Allah says:**

لَهُمْ دَارُ السَّلَامِ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

*For them will be the home of Peace (Paradise) with their Lord. And He will be their Wali (Helper and Protector) because of what they used to do.<sup>28</sup>*

**In another verse, He says:**

وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى دَارِ السَّلَامِ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

*Allâh calls to the Home of Peace (i.e. Paradise, by accepting Allâh's religion of Islâmic Monotheism and by doing righteous good deeds and abstaining from polytheism and evil deeds) and guides whom He wills to a Straight Path.<sup>29</sup>*

This is how fundamental and dominant the theme of peace is in Islam. The individual who approaches Allah through Islam cannot fail to be at peace with Allah, with himself, and with his fellow men. Taking all these values together, putting man in his proper place in the cosmos, and viewing life in the Islamic perspective, men of good faith and principles cannot fail to make our world a better world, to regain human dignity, to achieve equality, enjoy universal brotherhood, and to build a lasting peace.<sup>30</sup>

The above-mentioned positive principles of Islamic morals are only a few out of numerous dimensions of the Islamic moral education that are studied within the Islamic Studies syllabus. It is obvious that if these concepts are learnt and adhered to by the Nigerian citizens, Nigeria will not only stand on its feet in terms of all-round development, but it will also compete with the already developed nations.

### **Avoidance of the Negative Principles of The Islamic Morals**

To protect man from insanity and degeneration, from weakness and indulgence, from indecency and temptation, Islam has prescribed certain things pertaining to food, drinking, recreation, and misconduct, which must be avoided. Avoidance of these negative principles contained in the Islamic Moral Education if adequately studied shall definitely transform the individual and the society to a greater level of advancement. Among these are the following three examples:

#### **1. INTOXICATION**

Intoxication according to Prophetic tradition covers all kinds of drinks and drugs which change a person's mental state and behavior.<sup>31</sup> This includes any fermented juice of grape, barley, dates, honey or any other substance which may make one intoxicated (modern alcoholic drinks like beer, whisky, brandy and all narcotics that have intoxicating effects like Indian hemp, heroin, cocaine and Marijuana are therefore included among the intoxicants).<sup>32</sup> All intoxication substance like alcohol and hard drugs have many dangers for human beings. Too much loss of human life and corruption, in society are mostly caused by intoxicants. Many motor accidents on roads are caused by drunken drivers or drug addicts. Wine drinking and drug addiction destroy a person making him a liability to his family. Islam prohibits all intoxicants. Allah the Almighty says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلامُ رِجْسٌ مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

*O you who believe! Intoxicants and gambling (dedication of) stones, and divination by) arrows, are an abomination, of Satan's handwork: Eschew such (abomination), that you may prosper.<sup>33</sup>*

**Abdullah bin Umar (RA) reported that Allah's Messenger (SAW) said:**

كُلُّ مُسْكِرٍ حَرَامٌ، وَكُلُّ مُسْكِرٍ حَرَامٌ

<sup>27</sup> Ibrahim, 14:23

<sup>28</sup> Al-An'am, 6:127

<sup>29</sup> Yunus, 10:25

<sup>30</sup> Hamudah Abdalati, op. cit., p31

<sup>31</sup> Al-Jaza'iri, A. Aysar al-Tafasir, op. cit. vol.1, p104

<sup>32</sup> AbdurRahman, I.D. (1984/1404) Shari'ah: The Islamic Law, Ta Ha publishers, London, United Kingdom, pp261-262

<sup>33</sup> Al-Ma'idah, 5: 93

*All intoxicants are alcohol and all alcoholic drinks are forbidden.*<sup>34</sup>

## 2. Theft and Highway Robbery

Islamic moral education puts a great premium on the sanctity of human life and property. Therefore, a moral code of the Qur'an is to be strictly adhered to in order to make human life on this planet worth living and peaceful. Man has to uphold the truth of Allah and should be free from any fear or slavery to human weakness of temptation, avarice, taking other's property or life by force of arms. As creative members of the society, the Muslims are enjoined to bring about a society based on economic and social justice. The Glorious Qur'an speaks of the economic rights enjoined upon the Muslims:

وَفِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ

*And in their wealth, there is acknowledged right for the needy and destitute.*<sup>35</sup>

However, this right is not to be misunderstood that the poor, needy, greedy or ambitious people should rob or steal their property.<sup>36</sup>

Earning livelihood and acquisition of wealth through theft and robbery has been declared unlawful and illegal by Islam. The term 'theft' has neither been defined by the Qur'an nor by the Sunnah. Literally however, it may be defined as the act of depriving a person of his property dishonestly, stealthily and illegally. It is, thus, an act of taking other's property which is safely kept under lock and key and to which the thief could have no access except by forcing his way in, without any lawful claim to it.<sup>37</sup> Protection of property is one of the fundamental rights of a citizen and the state is duty-bound to safeguard it from the encroachments of others. A thief is a person who not only infringes the right of a citizen with regard to his property but also deprives him permanently of his hard-earned belonging. The thief is a menace to peaceful society and is looked upon with terror. This justifies the reason why the Qur'an has declared theft as a major offence punishable with amputation of hands. Allah (SWT) says:

وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا جَزَاءً بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

*As for the thief, both male and female, cut off their hands. It is the reward of their own deeds, an exemplary punishment from Allah. And Allah is Mighty, Wise.*<sup>38</sup>

### Abu Hurayrah (RA) narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said:

"لَعَنَ اللَّهُ السَّارِقَ ، يَسْرِقُ الْبَيْضَةَ فَتُقَطَّعُ يَدُهُ ، وَيَسْرِقُ الْحَبْلَ فَتُقَطَّعُ يَدُهُ"

*Allah curses a man who steals an egg and gets his hand cut off, or steals a rope and get his hand cut off. (Sharh Sahih Muslim)*<sup>39</sup>

As for highway robbery, it is an exercise of a group of armed people or a single person who may attack travelers or way farers on the highway or any other place depriving them of their property through the use of force in the circumstance when the victims are away from receiving any immediate help.<sup>40</sup> Highway robbery is described by the Qur'an as: "a war against Allah and His Messenger" and an attempt to spread mischief in the world. The offender therefore, is to be punished, like a rebel, with death or with amputation of hands and feet or with banishment. The Qur'an states:

إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِنْ خِلَافٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ جزئ في الدنيا ولهم في الآخرة عذاب عظيم

*The recompense of those who wage war against Allâh and His Messenger [sal-Allâhu 'alayhi wa sallam] and do mischief in the land is only that they shall be killed or crucified or their hands and their feet be cut off from opposite sides, or be exiled from the land. That is their disgrace in this world, and a great torment is theirs in the Hereafter.*<sup>41</sup>

## 3. Bribery and Corruption

<sup>34</sup> Al-Humaidi, M.F. (2002/1423), *Al-Jam'u baina al-Sahihaini al-Bukhari wa Muslim*, Dar al-Nashr/ Dar ibn Hazm, Lebanon, Beirut, 2/180

<sup>35</sup> *Al-Dhariyat*, 51: 19

<sup>36</sup> AbdurRahman, I.D. (1984/1404) *Shari'ah: The Islamic Law*, op. cit., p250

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> *Al-Ma'idah*, 5:38

<sup>39</sup> Al-Qadhi, I. *Ikmalu al-Mu'allim Sharh Sahih Muslim*, 5/259

<sup>40</sup> AbdurRahman, I.D. (1984/1404) *Shari'ah: The Islamic Law*, op. cit., p250

<sup>41</sup> *Al-Ma'idah*, 5:33

In strong terms, the Qur'an condemns bribery and corruption in all forms and commands honest living. The following verse testifies:

وَتَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّخْتِ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ

*And you see many of them (Jews) hurrying towards sin and transgression, and eating illegal things [as bribes and Ribâ (usury)]. Evil indeed is that which they have been doing.<sup>42</sup>*

Bribery is the act of giving something of value to someone in authority or someone authorized to do a job, to persuade him to show unjustified favour to the giver of such a thing.<sup>43</sup> Bribery eats justice and gives birth to many socio-economic evils. Corruption is a broader term covering not only bribery but all forms of official misconduct in return for gifts or services or agreement of any kind, not necessarily material. A person may force other(s) to give him bribes either by refusing or neglecting to carry out his normal assignment. A voucher clerk may refuse to process the bill of a supplier unless he receives some bribe from him. A policeman may neglect to protect the life and property of a citizen unless he is given something by way of bribe. A judge may not fix a case hearing unless the plaintiff gives him illegal gratification. Thus, bribery is given to deny someone of his right or to bring unnecessary hardship on him or to terrorize someone or to free a criminal or to get his punishment reduced or to prevent justice in any other procedure. In short, it is a form of fraudulent practice in order to usurp the rights of people.<sup>44</sup> Islam has not only prohibited bribery but has also condemned both the parties to its transaction to Hell in the next world. Allah says:

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدُلُّوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

*And eat up not one another's property unjustly (in any illegal way, e.g. stealing, robbing, deceiving), nor give bribery to the rulers (judges before presenting your cases) that you may knowingly eat up a part of the property of others sinfully.<sup>45</sup>*

**Abullahi Bin Umar (RA) narrates that:**

لَعَنَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الرَّاشِيَّ وَالْمُرْتَشِيَّ

*The Messenger of Allah (SAW) uttered curse on those who give bribes and those who take bribes.<sup>46</sup>*

**In another Hadith, Abu Humaid-as-Sa'idiy reported that:**

اسْتَعْمَلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رَجُلًا مِنَ الْأَزْدِ يُقَالُ لَهُ ابْنُ اللَّتْبِيَةِ فَلَمَّا قَدِمَ قَالَ هَذَا لَكُمْ وَهَذَا أُهْدِيَ إِلَيَّ فَقَامَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - ﷺ - عَلَى الْمِنْبَرِ فَحَمِدَ اللَّهَ وَأَثْنَى عَلَيْهِ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: «أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي اسْتَعْمِلُ الرَّجُلَ مِنْكُمْ عَلَى الْعَمَلِ مِمَّا وَلَا يَلِي اللَّهُ، فَيَأْتِيَنِي فَيَقُولُ: هَذَا لَكُمْ وَهَذَا هَدِيَّةٌ أُهْدِيَتْ إِلَيَّ، أَفَلَا قَعَدَ فِي بَيْتِ أَبِيهِ أَوْ بَيْتِ أُمِّهِ حَتَّى يَنْظُرَ أَيُّهُدَى إِلَيْهِ أَمْ لَا وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ لَا يَنْتَالُ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا جَاءَ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَحْمِلُهُ عَلَى عُنُقِهِ

*The Prophet (SAW) appointed a man of Azd tribe called Ibn al-Lutbiyyah as Zakat-collector. When he returned (to Madinah), he said: This is for you and these are presents offered to me. Then the Noble Prophet stood on the pulpit (and delivered a sermon), praised Allah and glorified Him and said: The next thing is that I have appointed some men among you to manage some affairs of which Allah gave me authority. One of them comes and says: This is for you and this is a present given to me. Why then does he not sit down in the house of his father or in the house of his mother and then see whether he is given presents or not? By Him in whose hand there stands my life, nobody will take anything out of it except that he will be brought on the Resurrection Day carrying it on his shoulder.<sup>47</sup>*

**Amr-bin-Al-A's reported: He heard the Messenger of Allah (SAW) say:**

"مَا مِنْ قَوْمٍ يَظْهَرُ فِيهِمُ الرِّئَا إِلَّا أُخْذُوا بِالرُّعْبِ، وَمَا مِنْ قَوْمٍ يَظْهَرُ فِيهِمُ الرِّشَا إِلَّا أُخْذُوا بِالرُّعْبِ"

*There are no people among whom adultery becomes widespread but are overtaken with famine and there are no people among whom bribery becomes widespread but are overtaken with fear.<sup>48</sup>*

Therefore, earning wealth through bribery in whatever form is absolutely illegal (*Haram*).

## CONCLUSION

As we have seen from the beginning to the end of this paper, attempt was made to show the significance of

<sup>42</sup> Al-Ma'idah, 5:62

<sup>43</sup> Atiyyah, M.S. Al-Rishwatu, p3

<sup>44</sup> AbdurRahman, I.D. (1984/1404) *Shari'ah: The Islamic Law*, op. cit., p395

<sup>45</sup> Al-Baqarah, 2:188

<sup>46</sup> Al-San'ani, M. I. *Subulus-Salam Sharh Bulugh al-Maram*, Dar al-Hadith, Vol. 2, p59

<sup>47</sup> Ibn Batal, A. KH. (203/1423) *Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*, Maktabat al-Rushd, al-Su'udiyah, al-Riyadh, (7/ 11

<sup>48</sup> Al-Qariy, A.M. (2002/1422) *Mirqat al-Mafatih Sharh Mishkat al-Masabih*, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut Lebanon, (6/ 2351)

Islamic moral education in Nigeria today. No one doubts the fact that this nation is surrounded by different forms of social and moral bankruptcy; poor and bad public services; shattered economy; increase in crime rate; price levels rise; etc. Certainly, if Islamic moral education comprising righteousness, kindness, patience, truthfulness, justice, forgiveness, trust, peace, etc. are sincerely studied, taught and practiced, law and order will improve, public service will become better, efficiency will increase, and above all, national advancement will be achieved.

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