

# Interfaith Dialogue between Ethics and Necessity – A Study from the Qur’anic Guidelines

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## Abstract

Muslim theology admits on diversity of faiths followed by mankind. The existence of religious diversity is aimed at, among other things, seeking a common ground in disseminating goodness and eradicating evil practices in the community. The study attempts to reveal the guidelines on religious dialogue from the passages of the Qur’an. The Qur’an emphasizes on the importance of communication and dialogue especially with the People of the Book. The Prophetic tradition also indicates on presence of other religious adherents. They are expected to work together in promoting goodness and establishing justice on the basis of divine precepts. Moreover, it highlights the importance of dialogue with different religious groups, as well as the prospect to wipe off misunderstandings that can lead into communal tension and crisis. The study will also shed light on the obstacles faced by religious leaders in conducting the dialogue and to contributing to the promotion of peace and justice. The most important part is that it attempts to expose the ethical guidelines as stated in the Qur’an which could be adopted as principles of dialogue. It is not aimed at condemning other faiths; rather it is aimed at exposing awareness on the differences and similarities which, in the long run, can give chance to restoring misconceptions.

**Keywords:** interfaith, Qur’anic perspective, religious community, ethics, peace

## 1. Introduction

Islam admits the existence of plurality in all aspects of lives that includes multi races and religions. The message given to the Prophet (peace be upon him) does not merely govern ritual service rather it also concerns with human relation. To believe in religion is the right of individual and no one could force others as it contradicts the principles of freedom. Muslims are required to interact with others through *ta’aruf* and dialogue to come to common understanding. (Note 1)

Plural society is characterized by different cultures, traditions, and spiritual activities. Those elements should be taken into consideration to make dialogue across faithful boundaries and to ensure peaceful co-existence in the community. (Note 2)

The need for dialogue across cultural boundary is due to the fact that all human beings are originated from single family of Adam. However, the interaction and dialogue should not be at the expense of religious identity which needs to be preserved in all circumstances. The demonstration of divine values is to be done through the dialogue to manifest the relation between Islam and other religions.

## 2. Meaning and Concept

The Arabic terms which signify the meanings of dialogue are *al-hiwar*, and *al-mujadalah*. (Note 3) Both of them relate to dialogue with slightly different meanings. The dialogue might take place due to the existence of certain thing which could lead to confusion. It is conducted more likely to come out from the problem or to ensure certain thing to others. The example on dialogue in the Qur’an can be referred to this verse,

Allah has indeed heard (and accepted) the statement of the woman who pleads with thee concerning her husband and carries her complaint (in prayer) to Allah: and Allah (always) hears the arguments between both sides among you: for Allah hears and sees (all things). (Note 4)

This is another example indicating the assertion to others as mentioned in this verse,

(Abundant) was the produce this man had he said to his companion, in the course of a mutual argument: "more wealth have I than you, and more honour and power in (my following of) men." (Note 5)

Then, a person who commits to the truth and justice responded to him,

His companion said to him, in the course of the argument with him: "Dost thou deny Him Who created thee out of dust, then out of a sperm-drop, then fashioned thee into a man? (Note 6)

The dialogue occurs between two persons or groups in which each of them has their own perception on certain thing with the purpose of reaching into an agreement. It needs to be conducted with proper preparation in which each group must be ready to accept the reality when other people gave more reliable argument. (Note 7) Moreover, it needs to be worked out with scientific approach and high level of competency in term of presenting ideas. (Note 8) There is another term which is called as *al-jidal* (lit. dispute) which gives an understanding about the act of an argument. Sheikh Mutawalli Sha`rawi defines the word *al-jidal* which can be given the meaning as exchange the argument between two parties with the aim of convincing others on certain thing. (Note 9)

The argumentation normally takes place due to the existing misunderstanding and the enmity. So, *al-jidal* (argument) normally tends to an enmity in different level and form. The person who involves in argument is characterized with mental stubbornness. (Note 10) The example can be referred to this verse which says,

Allah has indeed heard (and accepted) the statement of the woman who pleads with thee concerning her husband and carries her complaint (in prayer) to Allah: and Allah (always) hears the arguments between both sides among you: for Allah hears and sees (all things). (Note 11)

The verse discusses the enmity between a woman and her husband due to misunderstanding on certain thing. When a husband approached the Prophet (peace be upon him) regarding the matter, it was conducted with cool manner with the use of the word *tahaawarakuma* (your dialogue) as there was no enmity. So, the word *al-jidal* is used either in defense about the truth or negate about the fallacy. (Note 12) The word *al-jidal* is also used in the Qur'an related to dealing with people of the book. (Note 13) Apparently the use of the word *al-jidal* related to the people of the book is to confirm the message given to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and to prove that religious precept is true which enlightens human life. (Note 14) Followers of other religions who are subjected to dialogue can be referred to this evident,

Those who believe (in the Qur'an), those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Sabians, Christians, Magians, and Polytheists, Allah will judge between them on the Day of Judgment: for Allah is witness of all things. (Note 15)

Those who need to be approached through dialogue are Jews and Christians. Apart from that there are also Sabians who worship stars and Magians worship the fire. Polytheists basically believe in god as Creator of the universe but they associate with others. (Note 16) The status of people of the Book in some scholars' view is not confined to the Jews and Christians rather it includes those who believe in heavenly religion. (Note 17)

Now back to the issue of religious dialogue (*hiwar al-dini*), it contains certain things to seek an understanding between religious believers. The word *al-jidal* is to argue whenever the existence of the different school of thought. (Note 18) Scholars who are concerned with plurality are of the view that religion attempts to guide mankind to achieve happiness in this world and also in the hereafter which can only be attained through harmonious life. Hence, the dialogue is defined by Hans Kung in which he said, 'There will not be possible to establish peace among the nations when there is not peace among the religions and there will not be any peace among religions when there is no dialogue among them.' (Note 19) Then, one of the purposes of the dialogue is to achieve peaceful of life among all religious adherents.

### 3. Principles of Dialogue

The Islamic religion is concerned with the life of human beings to reach into the perfection and the Prophet (peace be upon him) was assigned to convey the message to all humanity who are originated from single family as the verse says,

He created you (all) from a single person: then created, of like nature, his mate; and he sent down for you eight head of cattle in pairs: He makes you, in the wombs of your mothers, in stages, one after another, in three veils of darkness. Such is Allah, your Lord and Cherisher: to Him belongs (all) dominion. There is no god but He: then how are ye turned away (from your true Centre)? (Note 20)

The principles of dialogue can be referred to these following aspects: First, we should admit on the diversity of

religion. (Note 21) The existence of religious plurality is to give the change to conduct the dialogue in the hope that they could take a lesson on the goodness of certain religious doctrine which would lead, toward the end, to confirm on the authenticity of revelation. This is in line with the spirit of what had been given to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in which the verse says,

Mankind was one single nation, and Allah sent Messengers with glad tidings and warnings; and with them He sent the Book in truth, to judge between people in matters wherein they differed; but the People of the Book, after the clear Signs came to them, did not differ among themselves, except through selfish contumacy. Allah by His Grace guided the believers to the Truth, concerning that wherein they differed. For Allah guided whom He will to a path that is straight. (Note 22)

The Second aspect, it should be conducted sincerely for introducing the uniqueness of the message. This is in fact, cannot be separated from the main character of Islam which needs to be introduced to all mankind. Thirdly, stick to the concept of truth and justice which, again, characterizes the message given to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Whenever the dialogue is conducted, we should believe that the truth must overwhelm and we should not comprise at the expense of belief.

Mankind was one single nation, and Allah sent Messengers with glad tidings and warnings; and with them He sent the Book in truth, to judge between people in matters wherein they differed. (Note 23)

The justice is the main thing that we have to deal with others regardless of religious background. The Prophet Muhammad was given clear guidance in dealing with all mankind to treat them fairly,

O ye who believe! stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do. (Note 24)

Fourth, dialogue must be conducted in good manner especially with People of the book. One of the ways is that the dialogue should not undermine the doctrine of particular religion. (Note 25) The general guideline can also be referred to this verse that says,

And dispute ye not with the people of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation), unless it be with those of them who inflict wrong (and injury): but say, "We believe in the Revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; our God and your God is One; and it is to Him we bow (in Islam). (Note 26)

Islam admits on positive characters among people of the book who commit to the truth and religious principles as mentioned in this verse,

And there are, certainly, among the People of the Book, those who believe in Allah, in the revelation to you, and in the revelation to them, bowing in humility to Allah: they will not sell the Signs of Allah for a miserable gain for them is a reward with their Lord, and Allah is swift in account. (Note 27)

Their level of commitment and prayer toward the religious command can be referred to this this verse,

And nearest among them in love to the Believers wilt thou find those who say, we are Christians: because amongst these are men devoted to learning and men who have renounced the world, and they are not arrogant. And when they listen to the revelation received by the Messenger, thou wilt see their eyes overflowing with tears, for they recognize the truth: they pray: "Our Lord! We believe; write us down among the witnesses. (Note 28)

This is another evident with regard to the behavior of people of the books who firmly stick to the belief and concerned with establishment of justice in the community,

Not all of them are alike: of the People of the Book are a portion that stand (for the right); they rehearse the Signs of Allah all night long, and they prostrate themselves in adoration. They believe in Allah and the Last Day; they enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong; and they hasten (in emulation) in (all) good works: they are in the ranks of the righteous. (Note 29)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was required to deal with them to seek the common ground which can cooperate on certain matters as illustrated in this verse,

Say: O People of the Book come to common terms as between us and you: that we worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, lords and patrons other than Allah. If then they turn back, say ye: bear witness that we (at last) are Muslims (bowing to Allah's will). (Note 30)

Sheikh Sha`rawi holds that whenever someone involves in a dialogue he should avoid of using harsh words which could annoy the feelings of others. The purpose of a dialogue, he holds, is to admonish people on the things which are positive. It can be effective whenever a person resorts to the use of wisdom. The example could be seen in the story of a King when he had a dream that all his teeth were falling apart one after the other. He went to a clergyman (*kahin*) seeking his advice about the strange dream. The clergyman told him that all his family members including himself will die soon. The king became extremely upset after hearing such a prediction. Afterward, he visited another clergyman to get his views regarding the dream. The person told him that he would be the longest living person compared to others in the family. This made him highly pleased and appreciated the man and his prediction. This means that admonition must be conducted with utmost wisdom and kindness. (Note 31)

Sheikh Sha`rawi holds that Allah laid down ethics of dialogue with the sole aim of taking out a person from disbelieve into belief and from the opposition to conviction. This could only be achieved through kindness and mercy. Such manner can also be referred to textual evidence which can be adopted as ethics of dialogue. The verse says,

Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and Most Gracious: for thy Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from his path, and who receive guidance. (Note 32)

He clarified further that the dialogue can be made into different categories. It could be conducted based on the educational level and belief of a person. The dialogue can also be done even with atheists (*al-mulhidun*), those who believe in Allah but, yet, they associate with others (*shirk*). While the dialogue with the people of the book, he said, it must be handled with utmost care as they believe in God as the creator of the universe and also believe in the messages given to previous prophets. The only thing they deny is the message given to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). We may tell them, “you believe in Jesus who was preceded by other messengers. What is the reason you disbelieve in the message given to Prophet Muhammad? All of the Messengers were sent to teach monotheism (*Tawhid*) and morality. Because of this, Allah commands the believers to deal with them with utmost kindness and wisdom. They believe in God, previous messengers, and books sent to them. (Note 33)

The Qur`anic word *illa billati hiya ahsan* (except with means better than mere disputation), shows that the dialogue must be conducted with kindness. The example could be related to behavior of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him), as mentioned in this verse,

Or do they say, he has forged it? say: if I had forged it, on me were my sin and I am free of this of which ye are guilty. (Note 34)

Prophet Noah demonstrated leniency and kindness during the dispute by using the word *ijrami* (if I have forged it) referring to himself that indicates the high level of ethics of dialogue. Likewise, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) used kindness, as reflected within this textual evidence that says,

Say: Ye shall not be questioned as to our sins, nor we be questioned as to what ye do. (Note 35)

Prophet (peace be upon him) relates the word *ajramna* (committed crime) to himself instead of making the link against his enemy. This again, indicates the high standard of ethics in conducting the dialogue with others. (Note 36) Although theologically each religion has different concept, *yet*, we are advised to have a dialogue by observing the ethics. Those who go beyond the coverage of the people of the book by claiming that Jesus is the son of God or to believe in trinity, they fall in the folds of polytheism. Yet, we should not say to them, “follow our Messenger, Muhammad (peace be upon him), rather we should say just follow your Messenger and open your own book (scripture) to find the good news on the arrival of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as clearly mentioned in this verse,

Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own (Scriptures) in the Law and the Gospel for he commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil; he allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure); he releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them. So it is those who believe in him, honour him, help him, and follow the Light which is sent down with him it is they who will prosper. (Note 37)

The fifth, the dialogue must be conducted with use of wisdom (*al-hikmah*), best selection of the expression (*al-maw`izah al-hasanah*) and make the argument with the best manner (*wa jadilhum bi al-lati hiya ahsan*). This can be referred to this textual evident that says,

Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for thy Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance. (Note 38)

Sometimes the issue of religious doctrine may cause sensitivity. Hence, the Qur'an gives the direction to deal and argue with them with utmost care through the use of good words as referred to this verse,

And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation), unless it be with those of them who inflict wrong (and injury): but say, "We believe in the revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; Our Allah and your Allah is one; and it is to Him we bow (in Islam)." (Note 39)

Even with those who worship temples or statues, for the sake of maintaining harmonious life, Islam prohibits to humiliate them. This can be referred to the Qur'anic verse that says,

Revile not ye those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite revile Allah in their ignorance. Thus have we made alluring to each people its own doings. In the end will they return to their Lord, and we shall then tell them the truth of all that they did. (Note 40)

#### 4. Dialogue Requirement

There must be certain rules for those who participate in the dialogue in search of common grounds in which all religious adherents could collaborate. The thing should be kept in mind is that the dialogue should not be at the expense of faith. He must equip himself with religious knowledge sufficiently in order to convince others on the fact that the religion complies with human nature. This includes knowing religious affiliation and even ideological thought of other groups. (Note 41) The Qur'an condemns those who involve in the dialogue without preparation as the verse says,

Yet there is among men such a one as disputes about Allah, without Knowledge, without Guidance, and without a Book of Enlightenment. (Note 42)

They should expose themselves to introduce the religion with intellectualism. Thus, they must have clear idea and sufficient knowledge. (Note 43)

This is what the Qur'an says,

Say thou: "This is my way: I do invite unto Allah,- on evidence clear as the seeing with one's eyes,- I and whoever follows me. Glory to Allah! And never will I join gods with Allah!" (Note 44)

Moreover, they must know the detail of educational background, level of sympathy and even their views toward other people's religion. They should also have awareness that dialogue is attempted toward achieving the God's pleasure instead of material interest. So, the sincerity represents the most fundamental part in the dialogue with followers of other religions. They must have the courage to say about the truth without having any fear from others. (Note 45) Allah highly praises those who stick to the truth while introducing Islam to others as the verse says,

It is the practice of those) who preach the Messages of Allah, and fear Him, and fear none but Allah. And enough is Allah to call (men) to account. (Note 46)

To participate in the dialogue he should be ready to be governed with ethical conducts as it becomes the effective way of gaining the sympathy from others. The expression and the body language should reflect the truth and ready for listening other people's opinion. (Note 47) Above all, they should accept the fact that religious plurality is a part of the divine will to give the chance to interact with the spirit of learning from each other.

#### 5. Objective of Dialogue

Sheikh Sha'rawi regards that among the goal of dialogue is to reduce religious tension in the community. The dialogue can be used as an effective tool to bridge misconceptions, at the end, toward common understanding. Different religious leaders can be invited to share ideas and experiences to see the advantages and even disadvantages of particular doctrines. After thorough discussions people may change their perceptions and turn it the rational one.

The important aspect of dialogue is to maintain tolerance. Mohammad Natsir, former Prime Minister of Indonesia, regards that people have the right to defend their religious principles at any cost. (Note 48) He argues that the issue of religion sometimes becomes sensitive due to blind fanaticism. God gives guidance to maintain peace and avoiding the clash. The Prophet (peace be upon him) demonstrated tolerance in dealing with the people of the book in the government to maintain peace under this divine guidance:

“...and I am commanded to judge justly between you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord: for us (is the responsibility for) our deeds, and for you for your deeds, there is no contention between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is (our) final goal.” (Note 49)

Faith or belief requires responsibility to actualize the sanctity of fundamental value. Natsir again regards the state must use its authority to revive the spiritual consciousness that leads into peace in the country. The crux of the message is to ensure the equality of mankind in which the diverse ethnicity, races, and even the social status is to let them interact in positive way. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) ensures the equality of mankind and there should not be superiority among others as the dignity is simply based on level of piety and God consciousness as the Qur'an says,

O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you despise each other). Verily the most honored 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). (Note 50)

This divine guidance, according to Natsir, is to admit the greatness of God with the purpose of achieving goodness through cooperation among all faithful adherents. In the practical aspect, high educational institution can initiate dialogue on certain issues to be discussed from different angles of religious belief. While in the community level, religious leaders can also share on challenges they face such as injustice, corruption, dictatorship and even misusing the drug by youths of today. By doing so, they might change the perception and even it can wipe out the misconception due to certain prejudices resulted from the negative influences of media communication.

For the sake of national unity, the government can also sponsor the dialogue by inviting religious leaders to share ideas how to preserve traditions in the midst of globalization and also to seek common ground which they can cooperate to perpetuate peace in the community. One of the conditions for holding the inter-religious dialogue, each group must choose the candidates who are competent to link the message with the contemporary issues. Otherwise, the dialogue becomes fruitless rather the approach becomes doctrinal.

It might be good to hold religious dialogue on validity of certain faith in the midst of social changes from religion and scientific angles. If religion cannot address social issue and contradicts scientific proof, it might be no longer relevant to be adopted in the community. It is quite interesting to note the views of contemporary Muslim scholars on significance of dialogue. Most of them are in favor of the dialogue to maintain peaceful co-existence and get rid of all hatred and religious fanaticism. The dialogue should gear toward achieving the shared values and virtues as contained in the message of each religion such as love (*mahabbah*), peace (*al-salam*), hygienic (*al-taharah*), justice (*al-Adl*) and tolerance (*al-tasamuh*). The early stages of dialogue is crucial to galvanize on the goodness on the basis of cooperation among all nations as the world today faces multidimensional problems. The purpose of the discussion or dialogue is to strengthen the atmosphere of peaceful co-existence between all religious believers, especially between the West and the East in which the latter can be categorized as the Muslim world. The West on the other hand, represents the Christian world. In terms of the dialogue, Muslims do not really take the issue seriously. Religious dialogue should be taken as the utmost priority today as there are certain groups who make efforts to incite hatred and jealousy among all religious adherents. Again, the idea that he launched on the agenda of the dialogue, must be conducted with the sole purpose of seeking a common ground which Muslims could collaborate in combating all dangers and crisis that encounter human life. While dialogue is to seek certain points in which Muslims could collaborate, at the same time, the emergence of religious plurality is part of the will of God and that each group must realize this until there is no fanaticism against each other. Above all, dialogue must be conducted with a level-headed mind. Justice must be maintained among all of humanity regardless of religious affiliation. The verse says,

Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just. (Note 51)

Based on the above evidence, Muslims should be able to actualize the concept in their interactions in the midst of a pluralistic society. The purpose is, he said, to reach a common understanding and perpetuate cordial relation with all nations in all aspects. While Shaykh Mahmud 'Ashur, Vice Chancellor of al-Azhar University regards that dialogue is necessary to solve problems of 'modern life' regarding religious issues. It is worth noting that dialogue can be conducted to seek common ground for collaboration. There are common values between all heavenly religions to promote virtues and respect each other through communication and dialogue in the community. (Note 52)

It is interesting to note that among the objectives of dialogue is to encounter the common threat of the enemy of

all religions which are mostly related thoughts such as secularism, atheism and other ideological beliefs which negates the role of religion. These ideological thought to some extent are successful in influencing the minds of people who ignores religious precepts on ethics. They try to alienate religion from the community. It is inevitably true that such trends become a major problem which each religion faces. In view of this, the religious dialogue would be meaningful to combat such views and opinions. (Note 53)

## 6. Conclusion

Religious dialogue is necessary as human beings subscribe to different ways of lives based on their respective beliefs. The diversity of faith is a part of the divine will and the presence of believers is to interact in positive way to demonstrate the sincerity of peace in the community. The role of religion attempts to guide mankind to achieve happiness in this world and also in the hereafter which can only be attained through leading a harmonious life.

The Qur'an lays principles of dialogue especially with regards to the Peoples of the Book. The ethical guideline, among other things, is that dialogue must be conducted sincerely for introducing the uniqueness of the message and to remain steadfast to the concept of truth and justice. It must be carried out with the use of wisdom, good exhortation and to argue in a civil manner. Those involved in dialogue should equip themselves with knowledge on the educational background, level of sympathy and even people's perception toward other religions. They should be aware that dialogue is attempted to achieving God's pleasure and thus must have the courage to speak the truth. Above all, they should accept the fact that religious plurality is part of divine will to give the opportunity to interact with the spirit of learning from each other.

In terms of objective, the dialogue is attempted to bridge misconceptions, to come toward a common understanding. It is also aimed at avoiding sensitivity due to blind fanaticism. The advantages are to maintain peaceful co-existence and eliminate hatred and fanaticism. It is also viewed that the dialogue is done to promote goodness and cooperation in handling multidimensional problems. While in global context, the dialogue is done to create a conducive atmosphere of peace between the Muslim world and the West. It is interesting to note that among the objectives of the dialogue is to encounter common challenges and threats of secularism, atheism and other ideological beliefs which endeavors to alienate the role of the religion in the community.

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## Notes

Note 1. The Qur'an, 49: 13.

Note 2. There were tens of thousands of Christians during the Abbasids period in the midst of Muslim population. The presence of Christians in Syria and Copts of Egypt are examples of tolerance of Islam toward other religious adherents. Muslim rulers offered fair treatment within the concept of *ahl al-dhimmah*. See Shawqi Dayf, *The Universality of Islam* translated by Abdel Wahab al-Affendi, (Morocco: Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, ISESCO, 1418H/1998), p.25.

Note 3. Abd al-Rahim bin Sumayil al-Sulami, *al-Hiwar bayn al-Adyan*, Maktabah al-Shamilah. See also Imad Sayfuddin Turkistani, *al-Hiwar ma'a Ahl al-Adyan: Mashru'iyatuhu wa Shurutuhu wa Adabuhu*, <http://www.al-islam.com>.

Note 4. The Qur'an, 58: 1.

Note 5. The Qur'an, 18: 34.

Note 6. The Qur'an, 18: 37.

Note 7. Basam Dawud Ajk, *al-Hiwar al-Islami al-Masihi: al-Mabadi, al-Tarikh, al-Mawlu'at wa al-Ahdaf*, (Damascus: Dar al-Qutaybah li al-Tiba'ah, 2008), p.20.

Note 8. Abd al-Rahman Hasan Jankah al-Midani, *Dawabit al-Ma'rifah wa Usul al-Istidlal wa al-Munazarah*, (Damascus: Dar al-Qalam, 1414H/1993M), p.371.

Note 9. Muhammad Mutawalli Sha'rawi, *Tafsir Sheikh Mutawalli Sha'rawi*, (Cairo: Matabi Akhbar al-Yawm, n.d.), Vol.1, p.7022.

Note 10. Ali Jirishah, *Adab al-Hiwar wa al-Munazarah*, (Mansurah: Dar al-Wafa li al-Tiba'ah wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi, 1412H/1992M), p.19.

Note 11. The Qur'an, 58: 1.

Note 12. Muhammad Mutawalli Sha'rawi, *Tafsir Sheikh Mutawalli Sha'rawi*, vol.4, p.150.

Note 13. The Qur'an, 29: 46.

Note 14. Muhammad Kamal al-Mawil, *al-Hiwar fi al-Qur'an al-Karim*, (Beirut: Dar al-Farabi li al-Ma'arif, 1420H/2000M), p.31.

Note 15. The Qur'an, 22: 17.

Note 16. Abu al-Fath Muhammad b. Abd al-Karim Imad al-Shahrestani, *al-Milal wa al-Nihal*, (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah li al-Tiba'ah wa al-Nashr, 1410H/1998M), vol.1, p.247.

Note 17. Imam Abu Muhammad Ali b. Ahmad al-Ma'ruf bi Ibn Azm al-Zahiri, *al-Fasl fi al-Milal wa al-Ahwa wa al-Nihal*, (Beirut: Dar al-Jil, 1405H/1985M), pp.109-177.

Note 18. See also Muhammad Khalifah Hasan, *al-Hiwar al-Dini wa Dawruhu fi Muwajihat al-Tatarruf wa al-Irhab*, <http://www.al-islam.com>

Note 19. Anis Malik Toha, *Hiwar al-Adyan bayn Jusur al-Tafahum wa Hifz al-Huwiyyah*, (Kuala Lumpur: *Journal of Tajdid*, Vol.14, No.27, 1431H/2010M), pp.133

Note 20. The Qur'an, 39: 6.

Note 21. Ruqayyah Taha Jabir al-'Alwani, *Fiqh al-Hiwar Ma` al-Mukhalif fi Daw' al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyah*, (Riyadh: Jaizah Naif bin Abd al-Aziz 'Al Su'ud al-'Alamiyyah li al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyah wa al-Dirasah al-Mu'asirah, 1426H/2005M), vol.1, pp.52-53.

Note 22. The Qur'an, 2: 213.

Note 23. The Qur'an, 2: 213.

Note 24. The Qur'an, 5: 8.

Note 25. See Ahmad bin Sayf al-Din Turkistani, *al-Hiwar ma`a Ahl al-Adyan: Mashru`iyatuhu wa Shurutuhu wa Adabuhu*, <http://www.al-islam.com>.

Note 26. The Qur'an, 29: 46.

Note 27. The Qur'an, 3: 199.

Note 28. The Qur'an, 5: 82-83.

Note 29. The Qur'an, 3: 113-114.

Note 30. The Qur'an, 3: 64.

Note 31. Ibid., p.7022.

Note 32. The Qur'an, 16: 125.

Note 33. Ibid., pp.7023-7024.

Note 34. The Qur'an, 11: 35.

Note 35. The Qur'an, 34: 25.

Note 36. *Muhammad Mutawalli Sha`rawi, Tafsir Sheikh Mutawalli Sha`rawi*, (Cairo: Matabi Akhbar al-Yawm, n.d.), Vol.1, pp.7024-25.

Note 37. The Qur'an, 7: 157.

Note 38. The Qur'an, 16: 125.

Note 39. The Qur'an, 29: 46.

Note 40. The Qur'an, 6: 108.

Note 41. Khalid b. Abdullah al-Qasim, *al-Hiwar ma`a Ahl al-Kitab: Ususuhu wa Manahijuhu fi al-Kitab wa al-Sunnah*, (Riyadh: Dar al-Muslim, 1414H), pp.148-153.

Note 42. The Qur'an, 22: 8. Similar verse can also be referred to 3: 66.

Note 43. The Prophet (peace be upon him) gave the statement in his tradition in which he asked the followers to convey the message according to the level of intellectualism of people. This prophetic statement can also be considered as source of ethical guidance during the conduct of the dialogue with others. For details see Ala al-Din bin Husam al-Din al-Mutaqi al-Hindi al-Burhan Fawri, *Kanz al-'Ummal fi Sunan al-Aqwal wa al-Af'al*, (Kuwait: Muasasah al-Risalah, 1401/1981M), vol.10, p.242.

Note 44. The Qur'an, 12: 108.

Note 45. There are ample evidences in the traditions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) on the value of committing to the truth. Even the Prophet (peace be upon him) asked the companions to say the truth in all circumstances. In one *hadith* the Prophet said, 'Say the truth even it is bitter to yourself (*qul al-haq wa law kana murran*). See Muhammad Idris Ashur bin Yusuf (ann.), al-Jami al-Sahih Musnad al-Imam al-Rabi bin Habib al-Rabi' bin Habib bin 'Umar al-Azdi al-Basri, (Beirut: Dar al-Hikmah, 1415H), vol.1, p.300.

Note 46. The Qur'an, 33: 39.

Note 47. Sa'id Isma'il 'Ali, *al-Hiwar Manhajan wa Thaqafatan*, (Cairo: Dar al-Salam li al-Tiba'ah wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi wa al-Tarjamah, 2007), p.36. See also Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *Khitabuna al-Islami fi 'asr al-'Awlamah*, (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1424H/2004), p.29. See also Muhammad Khalifah Hasan, *al-Hiwar al-Dini wa Dawruhu fi Muwajihat al-Tataruf wa al-Irhab*, <http://www.al-islam.com>. See also Ahmad Saefuddin Turkistani, *al-Hiwar ma`a Ashab al-Adyan: Mashru'iyatuhu wa Shurutuhu wa Adabuhu*, <http://www.al-islam.com>

Note 48. Natsir support his argument with the verse of the Qur'an which says, 'Did not Allah check one set of people by means of another there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues, and

mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure. Allah will certainly aid those who aid His (cause); for verily Allah is Full of Strength, Exalted in Might, (able to enforce His Will (Qur'an, 22:40).

Note 49. The Qur'an, 42:15.

Note 50. The Qur'an, 49:13.

Note 51. The Qur'an, 60: 8.

Note 52. [http://digid.org/news\\_website\\_details.php?id=139](http://digid.org/news_website_details.php?id=139)

Note 53. Muhammad Khalifah Hasan, *al-Hiwar al-Dini wa Dawrihi fi Muwajahah al-Tataruf al-Dini wa al-Irhab*, <http://www.al-islam.com>