



# The Concept of Morality in Social Ethics According to the Perspective of Imam Al-Shafi'i: Its Relevance in the Contemporary Context

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## Abstract

Etiquette in social interactions plays a crucial role in shaping a morally upright generation and fostering a harmonious environment. However, issues persist regarding the understanding and practice of these etiquettes within society. Despite the teachings of Islamic social etiquette principles, studies indicate that comprehension remains weak, and their application is not comprehensive. Technological advancements and the use of social media contribute to this problem, leading to an increase in harsh communication, cyberbullying, and interactions that are not grounded in Islamic values. This paper discusses ethical principles such as trustworthiness, honesty, dignity, and manners in social interactions, especially between men and women, as outlined by Imam al-Shafi'i. The study employs a qualitative approach, referencing the primary works of Imam al-Shafi'i and related previous studies. Findings suggest that Islamic social etiquette is deeply rooted in high moral standards, and Imam al-Shafi'i's thoughts offer practical guidance that remains relevant in contemporary contexts. This presentation aims to contribute towards strengthening Islamic moral values in the daily lives of the younger generation.

## Keywords:

Imam al-Shafi'i,  
Ethics,  
Social Etiquette,  
Contemporary Context.

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## INTRODUCTION

Ethics in social interactions play a vital role in shaping a harmonious and prosperous society. In Islam, morality encompasses all aspects of behavior in social interactions, involving not only the relationship between individuals but also the relationship between human beings and Allah SWT. Imam Al-Shafi'i, as one of the great scholars in Islamic history, presented a clear and profound perspective on social ethics through his writings, particularly in the Diwan of Imam Al-Shafi'i.

The ethical values in social interaction built upon the foundation of Islamic morality remain highly relevant in modern society, where technological advancement and the influence of social media have significantly transformed the way people interact—often contributing to a decline in moral values. Therefore, this study aims to examine Imam Al-Shafi'i's views on morality within the context of social ethics and assess their relevance in addressing contemporary social challenges, especially concerning the younger generation that is increasingly exposed to the digital world.

In Islam, morality is generally categorized into two major types: akhlaq mahmudah (commendable morals) and akhlaq mazmumah (blameworthy morals). This study focuses on the discussion of akhlaq mahmudah as found in the Diwan of Imam Al-Shafi'i. The poems compiled in this book convey educational and moral messages through a cultural and literary approach. This method plays a significant role as an educational tool capable of shaping the character of the youth and society at large by instilling a deep appreciation for knowledge and wisdom.

The Diwan of Imam Al-Shafi'i delivers moral guidance to students, encouraging them to be willing to make sacrifices in the pursuit of knowledge and service to the community. Worldly life is portrayed as a field for planting seeds of good deeds, the fruits of which will be reaped in the form of happiness in the hereafter. Furthermore, the Diwan instills the value of zuhd (asceticism), teaching individuals to accept the divine decree of Allah SWT with sincere contentment.

The moral teachings presented in the Diwan of Imam Al-Shafi'i can be summarized into three core values:

1. Morality towards Allah SWT
2. Morality towards the Self
3. Morality towards Others

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **The Concept of Morality (Akhlaq) in Islam**

1. Definition of Akhlaq: In Islam, akhlaq refers to an individual's behavior and manners in interactions with Allah SWT, oneself, and fellow human beings. Good character reflects one's faith (iman) and piety (taqwa).
2. Classification of Akhlaq: Morality in Islam is divided into two main categories:
  - a. Commendable Morality (Akhlaq Mahmudah): Traits that are encouraged in Islam, such as honesty, patience, humility, and forgiveness.
  - b. Blameworthy Morality (Akhlaq Mazmumah): Traits that are prohibited in Islam, such as arrogance, envy, and anger.

### **Imam Al-Shafi'i's Perspective in Diwan Al-Shafi'i**

1. The Diwan Collection: The Diwan of Imam Al-Shafi'i is a compilation of poems that express his views on life, knowledge, and morality.
2. Content: The poems emphasize the importance of moral character in daily life, including themes such as guarding one's speech, practicing humility, and avoiding arrogance.
3. Cultural Approach: Imam Al-Shafi'i employs a cultural-literary approach in imparting moral values, using poetry as a medium of moral education and ethical reflection.

### **The Relevance of Imam Al-Shafi'i's Moral Teachings in the Contemporary Context**

1. Modern Social Challenges: In the digital era and the age of social media, human interactions are increasingly vulnerable to slander, hatred, and a decline in etiquette.
2. Application of Moral Values: Practicing the moral teachings of Imam Al-Shafi'i can contribute to the development of a harmonious and prosperous society.
3. The Younger Generation: Moral education through the poetry of Imam Al-Shafi'i offers an alternative approach in guiding young people to be more civil and ethical in their interactions.

### Theoretical Model: Moral Education Based on the Poetry of Imam Al-Shafi'i

1. Input: A collection of Imam Al-Shafi'i's poems containing moral values.
2. Process: Reading, understanding, and internalizing the poems by individuals.
3. Output: Behavioral change in individuals towards better moral conduct in social interactions.
4. Outcome: The formation of a harmonious and prosperous society through the practical application of moral values in daily life.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Morality Towards Allah (Akhlaq Towards Allah)

#### 1. Sincerity in Accepting Life's Decree (Takdir)

Human beings have no power over the course of their lives other than to accept it with sincerity, submission, and obedience to the divine decree ordained by Allah SWT. Each day passes, leaving people with their worldly affairs, and often difficulties follow moments of ease as one grows older. Life is a mixture of joy and hardship; however, the best among people are those who accept their fate with sincere contentment.

Imam Al-Shafi'i expressed this in his poetry:

وَلِكِنِّي رَاضٍ بِمَا حَكَمَ الدَّهْرُ      وَمَا كُنْتُ رَاضٍ مِنْ زَمَانِي بِمَا تَرَى  
فَاتِي بِهَا رَاضٍ وَلَكِنَّهَا قَهْرٌ      فَإِنْ كَانَتْ الْأَيَّامُ خَانَتْ عَهْدَنَا

*"I am not content with the passage of time as it unfolds, yet I am content with the decree that time brings."*

*"If the days betray the hopes we built, I am still content with them, though they overpower."*

From these verses, we learn that the attitude of rida (contentment) and acceptance of Allah's decree must be firmly rooted in life. This can be realized through constant gratitude for the blessings given. Allah, the All-Knowing, is aware of all that has happened and all that will come, and thus, humans should not complain when facing calamities, nor be excessive in their joy during times of happiness. What matters most is sincerity in accepting life's destiny.

#### 2. Acceptance of Divine Decree (Qadha')

At times, we find ourselves struggling and overwhelmed by the burdens of life, feeling incapable of bearing its weight. Yet, the events of the past are all part of Allah's divine plan. Complaining to anyone other than Allah is a form of disgrace, and those who understand the nature of time will be patient through trials.

Imam Al-Shafi'i illustrates this in his poetry:

أَرَى حُمُرًا تَرعى وَتَعْلَفُ مَا تَهْوَى      وَأَسَدًا جِيعًا تَظْمَأُ الدَّهْرَ لَا تُرْوَى  
وَأَشْرَافَ قَوْمٍ لَا يَتَالَوْنَ قَوْتَهُمْ      وَقَوْمًا لِنَامًا تَأْكُلُ المَنَ وَالمَسْلُوى  
قَضَاءَ لِدَيَانِ الخَالِقِ سَابِقُ      وَلَيْسَ عَلَى مَرِّ القَضَا أَحَدٌ يَقْوَى

*"I see donkeys grazing and being fed to their satisfaction, while lions go hungry and thirst without relief."*

*"The noble struggle to find sustenance, while the lowly feast upon manna and quail."*

*"This is the decree of the Creator of all beings—none can resist the bitterness of fate."*

From this poem, we learn the importance of accepting Allah's qadha'. Being content in the face of trials requires strong faith in Allah, believing that every decree holds hidden wisdom. Calamities that occur in life may serve as means for Allah to erase sins and elevate our spiritual rank. Therefore, we must believe that every decision Allah makes is ultimately for our benefit.

As Muslims, it is our obligation to believe that everything has been decreed and recorded by Allah since the beginning of time. Only He knows what is truly best for His servants. A true believer should always be content, patient, and resilient in facing every divine decree. However, belief in fate does not mean that one should cease making efforts. For example, when one feels hunger, that is fate—but one must still strive to find food. After eating and being satisfied, that too is part of Allah's decree.

## **Morality Towards the Self (Akhlak Towards Oneself)**

### **1. Healing Ignorance with Patience**

In social life, every individual must observe ethics in their interactions. However, one may sometimes become entangled in aimless arguments or conversations that only lead to regret. When someone utters thoughtless or harmful words, the consequences can be detrimental. In such cases, Imam Al-Shafi'i offers invaluable advice: patience.

Imam Al-Shafi'i wrote in his poetry:

كَعُودٍ زَادَهُ الْإِحْرَاقُ طِيْبًا      يَرْيَدُ سَفَاهَةً فَأَزِيدُ جَلْمًا

*"The more his foolishness increases, the more I increase my patience—like incense that releases fragrance when burned."*

This verse teaches us that the essence of faith and virtue lies in patience. While it is easy to speak of faith, few can maintain it through trials. Many begin with good intentions, but only a few can persevere because they lack patience in facing life's challenges. Patience is a hallmark of piety; some scholars even describe it as half of faith. The bond between patience and faith is like that between the head and the body—without patience, one cannot uphold faith, just as a body cannot survive without a head.

Allah SWT has granted patience as a weapon for believers to endure life's trials. A patient person is like a sword that never dulls, or like someone who possesses inner wealth despite lacking material means. Therefore, patience is a key solution in overcoming the difficulties of life.

In facing hardship, it is crucial to remain calm, as anger does not solve problems. Instead, we must think clearly to find the best solutions. When dealing with friends who have difficult personalities, we should not isolate ourselves but rather show mutual respect and avoid unproductive arguments.

### **2. Ethics of Seeking Knowledge**

Imam Al-Shafi'i was a devoted student of Imam Malik, whom he deeply respected until Imam Malik's passing. Before leaving Mecca, Imam Al-Shafi'i stayed with the tribe of Huzail, a Bedouin tribe

renowned for their eloquence in Arabic. He lived among them for seventeen years to learn their language and culture.

On one occasion, a man from the Zubayri clan (descendants of his uncle) said to him: "O Abu Abdillah, honor me for my eloquence and legal acumen, even though you are more knowledgeable than anyone of your time." Imam Al-Shafi'i asked, "Who else is there?" The man replied, "Malik ibn Anas, the Imam of the Muslims in this era." Imam Al-Shafi'i then sought out Imam Malik and studied under him. From this experience, Imam Al-Shafi'i teaches us the importance of humility and self-discipline in seeking knowledge, especially when faced with difficult teachers.

In his poetry, he advises:

فَإِنَّ رُسُوبَ الْعِلْمِ فِي نَفَرَاتِهِ      اصْبِرْ عَلَى مَرِّ الْجَفَا مِنْ مُعَلِّمِ  
تَجَرَّعَ ذَلَّ الْجَهْلِ طُولَ حَيَاتِهِ      وَمَنْ لَمْ يَذُقْ مَرَّ التَّعَلُّمِ سَاعَةً  
فَكَبَّرَ عَلَيْهِ أَرْبَعًا لَوْفَاتِهِ      وَمَنْ فَاتَهُ التَّعْلِيمُ وَقَتَ شَبَابِهِ  
إِذَا لَمْ يَكُونَا لَا اِعْتِبَارَ لِدَاتِهِ      وَذَاتُ الْفَتَى وَاللَّهُ بِالْعِلْمِ وَالتَّقَى

*"Be patient with the harshness of your teacher, for knowledge is embedded in his discipline."*

*"Whoever does not taste the bitterness of learning for an hour, will endure the humiliation of ignorance for life."*

*"If one neglects education in youth, recite the funeral prayer over him—for his soul has died."*

*"The worth of a young man, by Allah, lies in his knowledge and piety. Without them, he holds no value."*

This poetry teaches that the pursuit of knowledge requires patience. Etiquette in learning is vital—adab is even more important than knowledge itself. Enduring hardship in learning, including dealing with a teacher who may not always convey knowledge effectively, is part of the process of acquiring beneficial knowledge. Such knowledge not only benefits a person in this world but continues to reward them in the Hereafter.

### 3. Relief from Calamity

Every human being will inevitably face trials and hardships. These moments of crisis can shake one's heart, yet it is in these very moments that one should return to Allah, the ultimate source of all solutions.

Imam Al-Shafi'i stated:

دُرْعًا وَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْهَا الْمَخْرَجُ      وَلَرُبَّ نَارِلَةٍ يَضِيقُ لَهَا الْفَتَى  
فُرَجَّتْ وَكُنْتُ أَظُنُّهَا لَا تَفْرَجُ      ضَاقَتْ فَلَمَّا اسْتَحْكَمَتْ خَلْقَاتُهَا

*"A calamity may overwhelm a youth, but with Allah lies the way out."*

*"It tightens until it seems unbearable, then relief comes—when I thought it never would."*

These lines convey a powerful message: never despair. Severe trials can become a means by which one returns to their Lord. Patience, prayer, and trust in Allah are the believer's true weapons. Therefore, one must be confident that with every hardship comes ease.

### 4. The Virtue of Silence Over Argumentation

At times, silence is more virtuous than speech. Imam Al-Shafi'i expressed this in his poetry:

إِنَّ الْجَوَابَ لِبَابِ الشَّرِّ مِفْتَاحُ      قَالُوا سَكَتٌ وَقَدْ خُوصِمْتَ قُلْتَ لَهُمْ  
وَفِيهِ أَيْضاً لَصَوْنِ الْعَرَضِ إِصْلَاحُ      وَالصَّمْتُ عَنْ جَاهِلٍ أَوْ أَحْمَقٍ شَرَفٌ  
وَالكَلْبُ يَخْسَى لِعَمْرِي وَهُوَ نَبَاحُ      أَمَا تَرَى الْأَسَدَ تُخْشَى وَهِيَ صَامِتَةٌ

*"They said: You remained silent though you were challenged—I replied: Replying is the key to evil."*

*"Remaining silent before a fool or an ignorant man is an honor, and protects one's dignity."*

*"Don't you see that lions are feared though they are silent, while dogs are scorned though they bark?"*

These verses contain deep wisdom: responding to the ignorant brings no benefit and may worsen the situation. Silence preserves one's honor and nurtures the soul, preventing it from being entangled in slander or enmity. As the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him speak good or remain silent."

## 5. The Virtue of Silence

It is well known among the wise that, "If speech is silver, then silence is gold." Silence, therefore, is not a sign of weakness, but rather a symbol of wisdom and inner peace. Rarely does one regret keeping silent; more often, those who speak excessively are the ones who regret their words.

Imam Al-Shafi'i likened silence to a trade that never incurs loss. He said:

إِذَا لَمْ أَجِدْ رِبْحاً فَلَسْتُ بِخَاسِرٍ      وَجَدْتُ سَكُوتِي مَتَجَرّاً فَلَزِمْتُهُ  
وَتَاجِرُهُ يَعْلُو عَلَى كُلِّ تَاجِرٍ      وَمَا الصَّمْتُ إِلَّا فِي الرِّجَالِ مُتَاجِرٌ

*"I found silence to be a profitable trade, so I clung to it."*

*Even if I gain no profit, I surely incur no loss.*

*Among men, silence is an esteemed commerce—*

*And the silent merchant rises above all others."*

This refined metaphor reflects how silence elevates dignity. Whoever restrains their tongue from idle or harmful speech will be loved and respected. In fact, many scholars regard silence as one of the highest forms of worship. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

*"Silence is the highest form of worship."* (Narrated by Ad-Dailami)

Silence is also a mark of maturity and sound intellect. If a word brings no benefit, it is better left unsaid.

## 6. Guarding the Tongue

Wise people have long said that a person is judged by two small organs: the heart and the tongue. The tongue can be a source of honor—or a cause of destruction. Thus, guarding one's speech is essential for personal safety and moral integrity.

Imam Al-Shafi'i wrote:

لا يلدغك إنّه نعبانٌ      إحفظ لسانك أيها الإنسان  
كانت تهاب لقاءه الأقران      كم في المقابر من قتيل لسانه

*"Guard your tongue, O human being,*

*Lest it bite you—it is a snake!*

*How many lie buried because of their tongues,*

*Fear'd by companions who once held them in regard."*

The tongue is like a sharp weapon; a wound from a sword may heal, but a wound from words can leave lasting pain. As the Arabic proverb says:

جراحات السنان ، لها التيام      ولا يلتام ما جرح اللسان

*"The wounds from spears may heal,*

*But the wounds inflicted by the tongue do not."*

Allah ﷻ affirms in the Qur'an:

عَتِيدٌ رَقِيبٌ لَدَيْهِ إِلَّا قَوْلٌ مِنْ يُلْفِظُ مَا

*"Not a word does one utter except that with him is an observer ready [to record]." (Surah Qaf: 18)*

مَسْئُولًا عَنْهُ كَانَ أَوْلَيْكَ كُلُّ وَالْفُؤَادِ وَالْبَصَرِ أَلْسَمِعَ إِنَّ َّ عِلْمَ بِهِ لَكَ نَيْسَ مَا تَقْفُ وَلَا

*"And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight, and the heart—all will be questioned about it." (Surah Al-Isra: 36)*

It is evident, then, that every word will be counted and held accountable. Hence, one should only speak that which is good and beneficial.

## 7. Etiquette of Speech

The tongue, a divine gift, is not merely a tool for communication but a trust that must be used with decorum and wisdom. A true believer is not complete unless they guard their speech with care.

Imam Al-Shafi'i stated:

لا خير في حشو الكلام      إذا هتديت إلى عيوبه  
من منطوق في غير حينه      والصمت أجمل بالفتى  
سمة تلوح على جبينه      وعلى الفتى لطباعه

*“There is no goodness in excessive speech  
If you have already reached the essence of the point.  
Silence is more graceful for a youth  
Than words spoken at the wrong time.  
A youth’s character is reflected  
In the mark that glows upon his brow.”*

From this, we may extract several lessons:

- a. Avoid idle talk.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

*“Part of the excellence of a person’s Islam is leaving what does not concern him.”* (HR. Tirmidhi)

- b. Speak only at the right time and place.

Words spoken without consideration often lead to regret.

- c. Be cautious not to hurt others with your words.

Every statement leaves an imprint—whether healing or harming.

- d. One’s character is revealed through speech.

A learned person speaks with discipline, while the ignorant speak heedlessly.

Therefore, speak the truth when it brings benefit, and remain silent when speech causes harm. Indeed, silence, when placed in the right moment, is a priceless jewel.

## 8. Patience in Facing Trials

Patience is a noble virtue and serves as a shield for the believers in facing destiny and life’s challenges. Every human being will inevitably experience sorrow, loss, or hardship. In such times, one must return to Allah with a heart filled with contentment and patience.

Imam Al-Shafi’i said:

وَأَلَّا فَهُوَ آتٍ بَعْدَ حِينٍ      سَأَصْبِرُ لِلْجَمَامِ وَقَدْ أَتَانِي  
وَمَوْتُ أَحِبَّتِي قَبْلِي يَسُونِي      وَإِنْ أَسْلَمَ يَمُتَ قَبْلِي حَبِيبٌ

*“I will be patient with death as it comes to me,*

*If not now, then surely soon.*

*How can I escape when those I loved have died before me?*

*The passing of my loved ones grieves me deeply.”*

Key Reflections:

- a. Death is certain for every soul.

As Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ ٥٧

*"Every soul will taste death. Then to Us you will be returned."* (Surah Al-'Ankabūt: 57)

- b. Patience erases sins and elevates one's status.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

*"No Muslim is afflicted with a calamity but that Allah will forgive his sins because of it."*  
(Narrated by Bukhari & Muslim)

- c. Patience brings inner peace.

Allah ﷻ states:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ١٥٣

*"Indeed, Allah is with those who are patient."* (Surah Al-Baqarah: 153)

- d. Great rewards await those who are patient.

As Allah ﷻ says:

إِنَّمَا يُؤَفِّي الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ١٠

*"Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account."* (Surah Az-Zumar: 10)

Therefore, remain patient—for patience is a light in darkness, a remedy in pain, and a triumph in the midst of defeat.

## **Morality Towards Others**

### **1. Noble Conduct in the Face of the Ignoble**

Among the refined manners emphasized by classical scholars is the noble approach in dealing with people of poor character. Such ignobility—known as *nazi*—often stems from jealousy and resentment toward others' success. The envious are uneasy at the happiness of others and resort to slander and defamation.

Imam Al-Shafi'i, renowned for his refined character, endured such challenges without retaliation. He affirmed:

*“The higher a person’s status, the less they are tainted by insults from those with poor character.”*

Thus, social status should never be viewed as a source of shame. In fact, true disgrace lies in those who seek to expose the faults of others. Imam Al-Shafi'i expressed this wisdom in his famous poem:

وَمَا الْعَيْبُ إِلَّا أَنْ أَكُونَ مُسَابِئُهُ      إِذَا سَبَّيْتِي نَذَلَ تَرَايِدْتُ رَفْعَهُ  
لَمْ كُنْتُهَا مِنْ كُلِّ نَذَلٍ تُحَارِبُهُ      وَلَوْ لَمْ تَكُنْ نَفْسِي عَلَيَّ عَزِيزَةً  
كَثِيرَ التَّوَانِي لِلَّذِي أَنَا طَالِبُهُ      وَلَوْ أَنَّنِي أَسْعَى لِنَفْعِي وَجِدْتَنِي  
وَعَارَ عَلَى الشَّبْعَانِ إِنْ جَاعَ صَاحِبُهُ      وَلَكِنِّي أَسْعَى لِأَنْفَعِ صَاحِبِي

*“If I am insulted by the lowly, my honor only rises,*

*For the fault is not mine but in the one who insults,*

*If I had no self-respect, I'd stoop to their level,*

*But I strive to benefit my companions, not just myself,*

*And it's shameful for one to be full while his friend is hungry.”*

## 2. Key Moral Lessons:

### a. Avoiding Jealousy and Resentment

Envy corrupts the heart and breeds hostility. Islam calls for gratitude and contentment, deterring such feelings that destroy brotherhood.

### b. Preserving Dignity and Avoiding Retaliation

A person of noble character refrains from responding to evil with evil and instead responds with patience and wisdom.

### c. Prioritizing Mutual Well-being

A true Muslim is mindful of others' needs. As the Prophet ﷺ said:

*“None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.”* (HR. Bukhari & Muslim)

## 3. The Attitude of Forgiveness

Humans cannot see into one another's hearts—only Allah knows what is hidden. Imam Al-Shafi'i advised that one should forgive, whether a mistake was intentional or accidental.

True friendship accepts flaws, whereas hypocrisy flatters to one's face but slanders behind their back. Apologizing is more virtuous than silence, and concealing a brother's fault is nobler than exposing it.

He wrote:

اقبل معاذير من يأتيك مُعتذراً  
لقد أطاعك من يرضيك ظاهراً  
إن برَّ عندك فيما قال أو فجراً  
وقد أجلك من يعصيك مُستتراً

*"Accept the excuses of those who come to you with apologies,  
Whether they speak truthfully or otherwise,  
One who tries to please you outwardly obeys you,  
And one who sins in secret honors you more than one who sins openly."*

Forgiveness reflects a pure soul and brings inner peace as well as divine approval.

#### 4. Ethics in Debate

Debate, when done with adab and wisdom, becomes a path to truth; without it, it becomes hostility. Imam Al-Shafi'i modeled high standards in discussion—always calm, humble, and open-minded.

He said:

مناظرت أحداً قط فأحببت أن يخطيء، وما في قلب من علم،  
إلا وددت أنه عند كل أحد، ولا ينسب إلي ما نظرت أحداً إلا على النصيحة

*"I never debated anyone except that I hoped they would correct me.  
Any knowledge I possess, I wish it was known by all.  
I never debated anyone except with sincere advice."*

He reminded us that debate is not about winning arguments but about seeking knowledge. When criticized, he responded with grace, not hostility.

In his poetry, he advised:

فناظر من تناظر في سكون  
خليماً لا تلح ولا تكابر

*"Debate calmly and gently,  
Without harshness or arrogance."*

Guiding Principles of Debate According to Al-Shafi'i:

- Calmness – Avoid raised voices or emotional outbursts.
- Courtesy – Use kind and respectful language.
- Sincerity – Debate for truth, not ego.
- Respect for Differences – Accept truth even if it comes from an opponent.
- Avoid Arrogance – Pride corrupts knowledge and intention.

He said:

*"If you win an argument but lose a brotherhood, you've truly lost—despite appearing victorious."*

True scholarly debate ends in mutual respect, not humiliation—this is the hallmark of true intellectuals: knowledgeable, respectful, and magnanimous.

#### 5. The Practice of Condolences (Ta'ziyah) According to Imam Al-Shafi'i

Offering condolences (ta'ziyah) is a noble Sunnah in Islam. It is a gesture of comfort to a grieving believer, aimed at easing sorrow and strengthening bonds of compassion. It is not merely a formality but a profound expression of empathy.

Imam Al-Shafi'i once consoled Abdurrahman ibn Mahdi after the death of his son through a poetic verse:

إِنِّي أُعْزِيكَ لَا أَنِّي عَلَى طَمَعٍ      مِنْ الْخُلُودِ وَلَكِنْ سُنَّةَ الدِّينِ  
فَمَا الْمُعْزَى بِبَاقٍ بَعْدَ صَاحِبِهِ      وَلَا الْمُعْزَى وَإِنْ عَاشَا إِلَى حِينِ

*"I console you, not hoping for eternal life,*

*But because it is the way of faith,*

*For neither the consoler nor the consoled will live forever,*

*Even if they both survive a little longer."*

This practice encourages believers to remain patient and content with divine decree, while praying for the deceased. It also serves to remind us of the importance of patience, compassion, and brotherhood in times of hardship.

## CONCLUSION

This discussion highlights the profound importance of morality (akhlak) in the life of a Muslim, as viewed by Imam Al-Shafi'i, beautifully illustrated through his poetic verses. Morality towards Allah entails sincere acceptance of destiny (qadar) and divine decree (qadha'), as well as patience in facing life's trials. Personal ethics involve self-restraint in the face of ignorance, proper manners in seeking knowledge, guarding one's tongue, and practicing silence as a sign of wisdom.

In human interactions, Imam Al-Shafi'i advocates for noble behavior even when confronted with individuals of poor character. He encourages forgiveness and discourages engaging in fruitless debates. For him, debating should be rooted in the pursuit of truth rather than the desire to win arguments.

Finally, he emphasizes the Sunnah of offering condolences (ta'ziyah) as a form of emotional and spiritual support for those afflicted by loss, while also strengthening the bonds of brotherhood among Muslims. Altogether, these values demonstrate that morality is the cornerstone of balanced relationships—between humans and their Creator, within themselves, and with the surrounding society.

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