

Qur'ani Rhetoric in Digital Da'wah: An Analysis of *Targhīb wa Tarhīb* As A Response to Cancel Culture and Narrative Extremism

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Abstract

The declining effectiveness of Islamic preaching in the modern era indicates the need for a communicative approach that engages both the rational and emotional dimensions of human beings. In this context, the Qur'an offers a powerful rhetorical framework through the concepts of *targhīb* (motivation and promise) and *tarhīb* (warning and deterrence) as persuasive instruments of da'wah. This study aims to analyze the role of Qur'anic rhetoric in verses containing *targhīb* and *tarhīb* as a method of preaching capable of fostering moral and spiritual awareness within contemporary society. Employing a qualitative method based on thematic exegesis (*tafsir maudhu'i*), this research systematically identifies, classifies, and analyzes relevant verses to uncover their rhetorical patterns and ethical messages. The findings reveal that Qur'anic rhetoric integrates logical reasoning, aesthetic expression, and spiritual depth in conveying divine guidance effectively. Verses of *targhīb* cultivate hope, optimism, and moral transformation through promises of divine mercy and reward, while verses of *tarhīb* reinforce ethical responsibility through reminders of accountability and punishment. The synergy between these two elements produces a balanced model of preaching that harmonizes hope and caution, shaping reflective and morally grounded individuals. This study affirms the continued relevance of Qur'anic rhetoric as a foundation for developing contextual, humane, and communicative models of *da'wah* in response to contemporary social change.

Keywords: Contextual *da'wah*, Qur'anic ethics, *targhīb* and *tarhīb*, Islamic rhetoric

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Abstrak

Fenomena menurunnya efektivitas dakwah di era modern menunjukkan perlunya pendekatan komunikasi keagamaan yang tidak hanya bersifat normatif, tetapi juga mampu menyentuh dimensi rasional dan emosional manusia secara simultan. Dalam konteks ini, Al-Qur'an menghadirkan kekuatan retorik melalui konsep *targhīb* dan *tarhīb* sebagai instrumen dakwah persuasif yang menyeimbangkan motivasi dan peringatan. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis peran retorika Qurani dalam ayat-ayat *targhīb* dan *tarhīb* sebagai strategi dakwah yang mampu membangkitkan kesadaran moral dan spiritual umat di tengah dinamika sosial modern. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan *tafsir maudhu'i* untuk menelusuri, mengklasifikasi, dan menganalisis ayat-ayat yang memuat pola janji dan ancaman secara tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa retorika Qurani memadukan kekuatan logis, estetis, dan spiritual dalam menyampaikan pesan ilahiah secara efektif. Ayat-ayat *targhīb* menumbuhkan harapan, optimisme, dan dorongan transformasi diri melalui janji pahala dan rahmat Allah, sedangkan ayat-ayat *tarhīb* membangun kesadaran etis melalui peringatan konsekuensi moral dan ancaman azab. Sinergi keduanya melahirkan model dakwah yang proporsional antara harapan dan kewaspadaan, sehingga membentuk pribadi religius yang reflektif dan berakhlak. Kajian ini menegaskan bahwa retorika Qurani tetap relevan sebagai fondasi pengembangan dakwah kontekstual, humanis, dan komunikatif dalam menghadapi tantangan perubahan sosial kontemporer.

Kata kunci: Dakwah Kontekstual, Etika Qur'ani, *Targhīb wa Tarhīb*, Retorika Islam.

Introduction

The development of digital communication technology has drastically changed the pattern of social interaction such as the speed, range, and intensity of communication have increased, but along with it has emerged a new phenomenon that threatens the quality of human relations, one of which is the practice of *gaslighting* and other forms of manipulation of social reality that give rise to what can be called *digital dehumanization*. Recent studies confirm that the transformation of communication mediums also affects the stylistic, rhetorical, and ethical dimensions of messages circulating in public spaces.¹

Gaslighting is a practice of psychological manipulation that makes victims doubt their own perception, memory, or sanity; when the practice is internalized and used in social or political communication patterns, it produces collective impacts in the form of an erosion of public trust, fragmentation of shared reality, and a rift in relational justice. Therefore, the study of contemporary communication ethics needs to relate this psychosocial phenomenon with textual-religious studies that offer normative sources of improvement.²

In the Islamic tradition, the Qur'an is not only a ritual guide; it also contains

¹ Hishomudin Ahmad dan Norfarhana Ahmad Ghafar, "Stylistic Variation and Linguistic Strategies in Quranic Discourse: A Rhetorical, Phonetic, and Translational Analysis," *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science* IX, no. IV (2025): 5957–64, <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.90400426>.

² *Integrating emphatic and normative approaches in hadith interpretation a contextual study of prophetic ethical communication in da'wah*, t.t., <https://doi.org/10.15575/diroyah.v9i2.48182>.

a powerful set of social ethics and communicative rhetoric, including the methods of divine persuasion known in the study of *balaghah* and the science of Qur'anic rhetoric. Contemporary studies of Qur'anic linguistics and rhetoric show that there are stylistic patterns that are deliberately used to influence the affective and cognitive of the reader/listener, so that revelation is able to shape the moral and collective disposition of society. Recent studies of Qur'anic rhetoric and stylistic variations support this understanding.³

One of the significant rhetorical and ethical concepts in the Qur'an is the concept of *targhīb wa tarhīb* (encouragement with the promise of reward and warning/threat), which serves as a double persuasive strategy: arousing hope (king') as well as piety through awareness of divine sanctions. The literature on da'wah and Islamic education documents the effectiveness of the *targhīb-tarhīb* method in shaping moral motivation, and discusses its application in the context of contemporary pedagogy and *da'wah*.⁴

In addition to *targhīb* and *tahrīb*, the Qur'an also condemns the behavior of denying the truth of the classic term *takdzīb* which includes a rejection of revelation and, more broadly, social behavior that denies reality and justice. The reinterpretation of the concept of *takdzīb* within the framework of contemporary relational ethics is relevant to dealing with problems such as *gaslighting*, as both relate to the distortion of truth and the attempt to dominate the reality of others. The thematic study of verses that allude to lies and rejection is an important methodological step to ground Qur'anic ethics in the modern social realm.⁵

The *tafsir maudhu'i* (thematic tafsir) approach is used in this study to collect and synthesize verses related to the concept of *targhīb wa tarhīb* and *takdzīb* comprehensively, thus producing a complete and contextual understanding. The verses of *targhīb* studied include QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 25 and QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 133–136 which contains the promise of forgiveness and paradise as moral motivations, while the *tarhīb* verses include QS. Al-Ghāsyiyah [88]: 1–7, QS. At-Tahrīm [66]: 6–8, and QS. An-Nisā' [4]: 56 which describes the warning and ethical consequences of deviation. The concept of *takdzīb* is analyzed through QS. Al-Muṭaffifīn [83]: 10–17 as a representation of the rejection of truth and its social impact. Through this method, the verses are understood integratively to find a pattern of Qur'anic rhetoric that balances hope (*raja'*) and warning (*khauf*), so that

³ Muhammad Abdel Haleem, "Rhetorical Devices and Stylistic Features of Qur'anic Grammar," dalam *The Oxford Handbook of Qur'anic Studies*, oleh Muhammad Abdel Haleem, ed. oleh Muhammad Abdel Haleem dan Mustafa Shah (Oxford University Press, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199698646.013.22>.

⁴ *metode targhib dan Tahrīb (reward dan punishment dalam pendidikan islam)*, https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://jurnal.faiunwir.ac.id/index.php/Jurnal_Risalah/article/download/13/8/16&ved=2ahUKewidh_S2ieeQAxWY4zgGHeOhD3QQFnoECBsQAQ&usq=AOvVaw1GGm2pioJAAqBIKFWv9Bjb.

⁵ "Tafsir Maudhui di Indonesia: Sejarah, Tokoh, dan Pengaruhnya dalam Kajian Al-Qur'an" Authors," *DESEMBER 2024 3* (t.t.), <https://doi.org/10.30631/malay.v3i2.2858>.

it is relevant in responding to contemporary phenomena such as digital *da'wah*, cancel culture, and narrative extremism by presenting a reflective, proportional, and ethically oriented *da'wah* communication.⁶

This kind of ethical reinterpretation requires an interdisciplinary dialogue: between the study of interpretation, Islamic ethics, social psychology, and the study of *da'wah* communication. For example, theories of *epistemic injustice* and symbolic manipulation can be attributed to the Qur'anic concepts of honesty (*ṣidq*), *Amanah*, and justice ('*adl*). Thus, the analysis of verses related to *takdzīb* is not only a textual operation, but also contributes to praxis solutions such as ethical guidelines for public communication, ethical digital literacy, and *da'wah* strategies that prevent dehumanizing practices.⁷

Several recent studies have highlighted the relationship between Qur'an interpretation and digital communication practices. Studies of Qur'anic ethics on social media show that thematic interpretation approaches can identify relevant moral principles for building dignified communication in a fast-paced and sometimes destructive digital space, as found by Alfathah et al. (2025).⁸ In addition, the phenomenon of interpreting the Qur'an on social media poses significant challenges to *da'wah* competence and ethics, especially when literal interpretation without a strong methodological foundation has an impact on the publication of controversial content, as analyzed by Maksum and Isyanto (2026).⁹ However, although these studies link interpretation and digital communication, there is still a gap in the literature that specifically maps the rhetorical function of qur'ani *targhīb wa tarhīb* as a strategy for moral balance in dealing with phenomena such as cancel culture and narrative extremism; this study aims to fill this gap through a systematic approach to *maudhu'i* interpretation.

The framework of this research takes steps: identification of the corpus of verses related to *targhīb*, and *tarhīb*; a review of classical and modern interpretations (including thematic and contemporary interpretations); a conceptual analysis that links the findings of interpretation to the social psychology literature on *gaslighting*; and an implicit synthesis for *da'wah* ethics. This approach ensures a strong linkage between textual studies and contemporary social problematics.¹⁰

Finally, this study proposes that the integration between the understanding of Quranic rhetoric and the construction of relational ethics can make an original

⁶ "Tafsir Maudhu'i di Indonesia: Sejarah, Tokoh, dan Pengaruhnya dalam Kajian Al-Qur'an"

⁷ *Intergrating emphatic and normative approaches in hadith interpretation a contextual study of prophetic ethical communication in da'wah.*

⁸ Suryana Alfathah, Eni Zulaiha & Asep Ahmad Fathurrohman, "Qur'anic Ethics for Social Media: Insights from Indonesia's Thematic Tafsir", *Mashadiruna Journal of the Science of Al-Qur'an and Tafsir* 4, no. 1 (2025). DOI: 10.15575/mjiat.v4i1.38417.

⁹ Ghufron Maksum & Nur Isyanto, "Fenomena Penafsiran al-Qur'an di Media Sosial: Analisis Kompetensi Keilmuan dan Etika Dakwah", *Al Ashriyyah* 11, no. 2 (2025): 365–378. DOI: 10.53038/alashriyyah.v11i2.245.

¹⁰ "Tafsir Maudhu'i di Indonesia: Sejarah, Tokoh, dan Pengaruhnya dalam Kajian Al-Qur'an"

contribution to modern da'wah discourse: not only conveying normative messages, but also providing communication techniques that strengthen awareness of truth and justice, thus preventing manipulative practices such as gaslighting. Thus, this study is expected to be a bridge between the tradition of interpretation and the challenges of communication ethics in the 21st century.¹¹

The research method in this study uses a qualitative approach with the type of library research, as commonly used in contemporary interpretation studies.¹² This research utilizes the method of thematic interpretation (*tafsīr maudhu'ī*), which is a way of interpreting the Qur'an based on a certain theme or topic by collecting related verses, then analyzing them systematically.¹³ These steps include the selection of a theme, the collection of relevant verses, the examination of inter-verse relationships (*munāsabah*), and the formulation of contextual interpretations in accordance with contemporary challenges.¹⁴ Thus, this method allows researchers to not only read texts in alphabetical order, but to explore meaning thematically and applicatively to modern social issues.

In practice, this research follows the procedure described in the literature on the method of *tafsīr maudhu'ī*, which is the phase: (a) establishing the theme of the research in this case the concept of *takdzīb* and the rhetoric of da'wah (b) collecting and verifying verses of the Qur'an that discuss the rejection of truth, relational honesty and justice (c) examining classical and modern interpretations including aspects of *asbab al-nuzul*, *qira'at*, and socio-historical context (d) conducting conceptual analysis that relates The results of interpretation with the social psychology literature on gaslighting and the practice of relational manipulation and (e) compiling a synthesis of findings as implications of *da'wah* and social communication Thus, this methodology aligns the textual-theological approach with contemporary issues and produces an analysis that is relevant to the contemporary context.

The Concept of Targhīb wa Tarhīb in the Rhetorical Structure of the Qur'an

Qur'anic rhetoric is one of the important dimensions in the study of the Qur'an which focuses on the ways in which language, style, and persuasive strategies are used by revelation to shape the attitudes and behaviors of listeners or readers. This rhetorical study places the Qur'an not only as a normative text,

¹¹ Insyirah Abdul Rahim dan Muhamad Khairul Anuar Zulkepli, "A REVIEW OF QURANIC RHETORIC STUDIES: TECHNIQUES AND LINGUISTIC FEATURES," *International Journal of Modern Education* 7, no. 26 (2025): 657–74, <https://doi.org/10.35631/IJMoe.726044>.

¹² Imam Muslim Eni, *Tafsir Maudhu'ī: Examining History, Methods, and Significance in Contemporary Tafsir Thought* Authors, t.t., <https://doi.org/10.36418/syntaximperatif.v5i6.569>.

¹³ Novi Nur Sholihat dan Putri Mega Shintia, "Metode Tafsir Maudhu'ī Diperiksa Kembali," *Jurnal Iman dan Spiritualitas* 3, no. 4 (2024): 657–66, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jis.v3i4.31105>.

¹⁴ Triana Rokim, *Tafsir Maudhu'ī: Asas dan Langkah Penelitian Tafsir Tematik* Authors, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.30868/at.v6i02.2057>.

but also as a communicative text designed to influence the cognitive, affective, and volitional aspects of humans. Contemporary research on the elements of balāghah and the stylistics of the Qur'an shows that the rhetoric of the Qur'an is effective as an instrument of ethical and pedagogical discourse.¹⁵

In the realm of Islamic *da'wah*, the ability to convey messages persuasively is the main prerequisite so that religious messages can be understood and internalized by various levels of society. Qur'anic rhetoric provides a number of rhetorical techniques such as the use of metaphors, depictions of heaven and hell, repetition, and rhetorical questions that function to increase emotional resonance and listener engagement. Therefore, understanding the rhetoric of the Qur'an is important for the theory and practice of modern *da'wah*, including digital *da'wah*.¹⁶

One of the prominent rhetorical patterns in the Qur'an is the *category of Targhīb wa Tarhīb*, which is a combination of incentives (promises of rewards) and disincentives (warnings/threats). This dual approach balances hope (*raja'*) and fear (*khauf*), thus creating a comprehensive moral drive rather than relying on a single emotional strategy. The literature on *da'wah* methods and Islamic pedagogy documents that the balance between expectation and warning has a strong effect on religious motivation.¹⁷

Etymologically, *targhīb* (ترغيب) comes from the root ر-غ-ب (*raghiba*) which in Ibn Manzur's *Lisān al-'Arab* is explained as the inclination of the heart towards something accompanied by a strong sense of pleasure and desire (*al-mayl ma'a al-mahabbah*), while the form of *targhīb* means to encourage or motivate by mentioning the virtues and benefits of a thing (*al-ḥathth wa al-tahrīd bi dhikri al-mahāsini*); This notion is reinforced in *Al-Mu'jam al-Wasīṭ* which defines *targhīb* as an invitation through promise and attraction (*al-da'wah bi al-wa'd wa al-tashwīq*), so that lexically it refers to the process of arousing hope and emotional attraction to the good. *Tarhīb* (ترهيب) comes from the root ر-ه-ب (*rahaba*) which means fear or fear (*khāfa*), and in the form of masdar means to cause fear and warn (*al-takhwīf wa al-taḥdhīr*), which is to warn of danger or punishment to keep one away from despicable deeds. Thus, in the original Arabic language, *targhīb wa tarhīb* represents the two basic affective movements of man—love and fear—which in Qur'anic rhetoric combine to move the moral will: to encourage good through the attraction of reward and to restrain from evil through the awareness of

¹⁵ Abdul Azis dkk., "Keindahan Retorika dalam Al-Qur'an: Analisis Balaghah dalam Ayat-ayat Persuasif," *Uktub: Journal of Arabic Studies* 5, no. 1 (2025): 39–57, <https://doi.org/10.32678/uktub.v5i1.8>.

¹⁶ Syaifullah Hamdani et al., "A Rhetorical Analysis of Ustadz Felix Siaw's Da'wa on Youtube," *International Journal of Islamic Studies Higher Education* 1, no. 2 (2022): 93–104, <https://doi.org/10.24036/insight.v1i2.122>.

¹⁷ Fina Surya Anggraini, "Targhib wa Tarhib Perspektif Al-Quran," *INOVATIF: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan, Agama, dan Kebudayaan* 4, no. 1 (2018): 141–65, <https://doi.org/10.55148/inovatif.v4i1.69>.

consequences.ah.¹⁸

On a practical level, the rhetoric of *targhīb wa tarhīb* is not just a matter of theory: many Islamic educational institutions, Islamic boarding schools, and da'wah programs have applied this method to form discipline, morality, and spiritual motivation. The results of the case study show that the use of the expectation-warning approach in the context of religious learning increases the ritual adherence and moral commitment of students. Thus, the transfer of Qur'anic rhetorical techniques to the practice of da'wah has real implications for the effectiveness of religious communication.¹⁹

The development of digital media requires the adaptation of traditional rhetorical strategies so that da'wah messages remain relevant and able to penetrate the noise of information. In a social media environment, the emotional elements of Qur'anic rhetoric (promises of rewards, warnings of consequences, stories of awareness) can be mediated through audiovisual narratives designed to spark empathy and moral reflection. The digital *da'wah* communication literature emphasizes the need to translate classical rhetorical principles into contemporary formats without neglecting ethics.²⁰

The *targhīb-tarhīb* approach also offers strategic advantages in the context of pluralism and democracy: it allows for the delivery of normative messages primarily without coercion, since the combination of expectation and warning makes room for freedom of decision-making while affirming moral consequences. Therefore, Qur'anic rhetoric has the potential to be a persuasive da'wah tool while respecting the autonomy of *mad'u* (da'wah targets) in a pluralistic society. Various contemporary studies consider this kind of persuasive approach to be suitable for the context of pluralistic nations.²¹

However, the application of *targhīb wa tarhīb* is not without ethical challenges. When abused, for example, by highlighting the element of fear dominantly or using spiritual promises for political motives, this method can be a manipulative instrument. Therefore, the study of Qur'anic rhetoric needs to emphasize the principles of communication ethics such as *honesty of 'sidq*, *justice of 'adl*, and the responsibility of *trust* so that the persuasion process remains dignified. The literature on da'wah ethics highlights the importance of these normative limitations.

The thematic analysis of the verses of *targhīb wa tarhīb* must also consider the

¹⁸ Fina Surya Anggraini, "Targhib wa Tarhib Perspektif Al-Quran," 141–65

¹⁹ Febry Irwansyah Pasaribu dkk., "Analisis Targhib wa Tarhib dalam Hadis melalui Perspektif Psikologi Behaviorisme dan Relevansinya terhadap Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Keilmuan dan Keislaman*, 1 Desember 2025, 672–89, <https://doi.org/10.23917/jkk.v4i4.777>.

²⁰ Abdul Chalim dkk., "Digital Da'wah: Effective Strategies in Spreading Islam through Social Media," *Journal of Noesantara Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2025): 33–42, <https://doi.org/10.70177/jnis.v2i1.1844>.

²¹ Zulfa Ilma Nuriana dan Nisrina Salwa, "Digital Da'wah in the Age of Algorithm: A Narrative Review of Communication, Moderation, and Inclusion," *Sinergi International Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 4 (2024): 242–56, <https://doi.org/10.61194/ijis.v2i4.706>.

linguistic context and cultural objectives: an effective rhetorical structure in one culture may require recontextualization in order to resonate in another. Therefore, thematic interpretations must be complemented by sociocultural studies and cross-media communication to ensure that rhetorical strategies remain relevant and sensitive to local contexts. Several cross-cultural communication studies confirm the need for this kind of recontextualization.

Hermeneutically, parsing *targhīb wa tarhīb* through *tafsīr maudhu'ī* presents epistemic benefits: instead of reading verses fragmentarily in the order of mushaf, the thematic approach gathers relevant verses so as to allow for the synthesis of meaning directed at specific issues such as da'wah ethics. Many modern interpretive researchers recommend this method for connecting textual messages to contemporary social problems. This methodology has proven to be effective for formulating applicable ethical guidelines.²²

From the perspective of persuasive psychology, rhetorical strategies that combine *targhīb* and *tarhīb* make use of the principles of behavioral motivation: the promise of reward serves as positive reinforcement, while the warning serves as a deterrent that reinforces social norms. This kind of interdisciplinary approach that combines Qur'anic rhetoric with the theory of motivational psychology opens up new avenues of empirical research on the effectiveness of da'wah. Several new interdisciplinary studies have tested the combination of such motivational instruments in the context of religious education.²³

In an era of disinformation and polarization, Qur'anic rhetoric can also serve as a restorative mechanism: *targhīb* narratives that emphasize the values of goodness and *tarhīb* narratives that remind of moral consequences can help restore norms of public truth and communication responsibility. Therefore, integrating *targhīb-tarhīb* into a value-based digital literacy strategy can be one of the solutions to mitigate disinformation. Media literacy studies show the effectiveness of the value approach in strengthening users' critical and ethical attitudes.²⁴

In the framework of the title "*Qur'anic Rhetoric in Digital Da'wah: An Analysis of Targhīb wa Tarhīb as a Response to Cancel Culture and Narrative Extremism*", the corpus of verses analyzed through the *tafsīr maudhu'ī* approach can be mapped to three main domains, namely ritual, social-communicative, and eschatological domain: in the ritual domain there are *targhīb* verses such as Al-Baqarah 2:25 and 2:110 and Al-Mu'minin 23:1–11 affirms the promise of good luck and reward for the faithful as the foundation of moral integrity; in the relevant social-

²² Abdul Jalil, "Studi Historis Komparatif Tentang Metode Tahfiz al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Hadis* 18, no. 1 (2018): 1, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.2017.1801-01>.

²³ Benny Kurniawan, "KONSEP TARGHIB DAN TARHIB DALAM PERSPEKTIF TEORI BELAJAR BEHAVIORISTIK," *An-Nidzam : Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan dan Studi Islam* 3, no. 1 (2016): 101–16, <https://doi.org/10.33507/an-nidzam.v3i1.11>.

²⁴ Alif Nurjannah Adila Humairoh, *MODERASI KONTEN DAN LITERASI DIGITAL: TANTANGAN KOMUNIKASI PUBLIK DI ERA DISINFORMASI DI INDONESIA* Authors, t.2024., <https://doi.org/10.60145/jcp.v2i12.566>.

communicative domain verses such as Al-Hujurat 49:6 and 49:11–12 on the verification of information, the prohibition of ridicule and prejudice, An-Nur 24:15–16 on the dangers of spreading accusations without knowledge, Al-Ma'idah 5:8 on justice even against the hated, and Fussilat 41:34 about repaying evil with good, which is directly related to the problem of polarization and cancel culture in the digital space; while in the eschatological domain there are Az-Zalzalah 99:7–8 and Qaf 50:18 which affirm accountability for every word and deed, so that the whole verse shows that the rhetoric of *targhīb wa tarhīb* is comprehensive in shaping spiritual awareness, communication ethics, and public moral responsibility.

In contemporary *da'wah* practice, the application of *targhīb wa tarhīb* must include ethical communication strategies: the use of polite language, relevant context, and an emphasis on the wisdom of *mau'izhah hasanah* so that the message fosters a change in attitude and not just fear. Field research on digital *da'wah* supports the idea that humanist approaches are more resistant to resistance and result in long-term behavioral change. Therefore, Qur'anic rhetoric must be internalized as an ethics of communication, not just a technique of persuasion.²⁵

Critical studies also show the need to develop the competence of *da'i* (preacher) in applying *targhīb tarhīb*: the hermeneutic ability to interpret the messages of the Qur'an contextually and communicatively, so that the values of eschatological and moral teachings can be translated into *da'wah* messages that are relevant to the social, psychological, and cultural realities of modern society without losing their theological substance.

Thematic Analysis of the Verses of Targhīb wa Tarhīb

Definition and Basic Concept of Targhīb wa Tarhīb

The concept of *targhīb wa tarhīb* is one of the important approaches in the study of the rhetoric of the Qur'an that has direct implications for the practice of Islamic *da'wah*. Etymologically, the word *targhīb* comes from the root of the word *raghība-yarghabu-targhībān*, which means "to encourage" or "arouse the desire for something good", while *tarhīb* comes from the root of the word *rahhaba-yurahhibu-tarhībān*, which means "to frighten" or "to warn against something bad". In the context of *da'wah*, these two terms are used to strike a balance between motivation (*king'*) and warnings (*khauḥ*) in calling people to goodness.²⁶

Terminologically, *targhīb wa tarhīb* is understood as a Qur'anic persuasive method that displays promises and threats simultaneously to move the human heart. The Qur'an uses these two approaches not just to provide normative

²⁵ Sarawut Kedthawon, "A Systematic Literature Review Using Artificial Intelligence and Fake News Detection," *Interdisciplinary Academic and Research Journal* 4, no. 1 (2024): 603–16, <https://doi.org/10.60027/iarj.2024.273480>.

²⁶ 'Abd-al-'Azīz al-Maqālīh, *Kitāb al-aṣḍiqā'*: ṣī'r, Ṭab'a 1 (Riyāḍ ar-Raiyis, 2002).

information, but as a psychological means that shape the ethical and spiritual behavior of the ummah. Yusuf al-Qaradawi explained that the *targhīb wa tarhīb* method is a form of "*da'wah bil hikmah approach*" that combines emotional and rational dimensions to touch human moral awareness.²⁷

This approach is deeply rooted in Islamic theology. In many verses, the Qur'an displays a balance between the promise of heaven and the threat of hell as a manifestation of Allah's compassion and justice. For example, in QS. Al-Hijr [15]: 49–50 affirms: "*Nabbi' 'ibādī annī anā al-Ghafūr al-Raḥīm wa anna 'adhābī huwa al-'adhāb al-alīm.*" This verse shows the rhetorical structure of *targhīb–tarhīb* that is directly side by side. In his commentary, Ahmad Mustafa al-Maraghi²⁸ explained that the juxtaposition of *al-Ghafūr al-Raḥīm* with the threat of punishment is a method of divine education so that people do not fall into excessive attitudes — either despair or feeling safe from punishment. In line with that, Ibn Kathir in *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm* emphasizes that this verse shows the principle of *jam' bayna al-raja' wa al-khawf* (gathering hope and fear) as the manhaj of the *da'wah* of the prophets, because the human soul will not be upright except with a balance of the two. Meanwhile, Al-Qurtubi in *Al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'ān* sees this verse as a theological proof that Allah's mercy precedes His wrath, but His justice is upheld; therefore a believer should not rely solely on mercy without charity, nor should he sink into fear to the point of losing hope. Meanwhile, M. Quraish Shihab in *Tafsīr al-Mishbah* interprets this arrangement of verses as a communication strategy that touches modern human psychology: the message of affection opens up a space of spiritual closeness, while the warning of punishment maintains moral awareness so that freedom does not turn into negligence. Thus, the dialogue between mufassir shows agreement that *targhīb wa tarhīb* is not just a stylistic pattern, but a pedagogical-theological principle that sustains human moral stability through a balance of love and fear.²⁹

The *targhīb wa tarhīb* approach has strong relevance in the context of modern *da'wah*. In a contemporary era marked by moral crisis, materialism, and spiritual disorientation, this method is able to bring back the spiritual awakening of the Qur'an which is guiding and motivating without judgment. The rhetoric of *Targhīb wa Tarhīb* has high persuasiveness because it contains elements of repetition, semantic contrast, and moral symbolism that are able to touch the inner layers of the human mind.³⁰

²⁷ Novaadila Eriza and Abdul Ghafar Don, "The Exploration of the Psychological Approach of Targhib and Tarhib in Da'wah to Non-Muslims," *Journal of Islam and Contemporary Society* 26, no. 1 (2025): 31–41, <https://doi.org/10.37231/jimk.2025.26.1.894>.

²⁸ Saeed Abbasinia, "The Motivational Linguistic Crystallization of the Qur'an in Promise and Promise from the Perspective of Language Pragmatology," *Journal of Linguistic Research (IR)*, no. Online First (September 2023), <https://doi.org/10.22108/jrl.2023.138555.1784>.

²⁹ Amir Moussa. Dan Bou Khamsin, Amir Moussa, *Human Rights: An Introduction to Human Rights Awareness*, al-Ṭab'ah 2 (Center for Arab Unity Studies, 2002).

³⁰ Mursam, Luqman Abdul Jabbar, dan Saifuddin Herlambang, "Persuasive Communication in the Qur'an: Implications for Contemporary Preaching," *JOISCO: Journal of Islamic*

In addition, this concept is also a counterweight in modern da'wah ethics. If the rational approach tends to emphasize logic and argumentation, then *targhīb wa tarhīb* activates the affective dimension in the human soul, which makes the message of da'wah more alive and imprinted. Thus, this method is not only theological, but also communicative, bridging revelation with the psychological reality of mad'u (the object of da'wah).

Corpus of Verses Studied

Analysis of this thematic verse, *the verses of targhīb wa tarhīb* are studied through *a maudhu'i* (thematic) tafsir approach, which explores the themes of promises and threats in various letters to find a consistent rhetorical pattern and moral message. The four main verses are the focus of the discussion, namely QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 218, QS. Ali Imran [3]: 133–135, QS. Al-Ghasiyah [88]: 1–7, and QS. Al-Tahrim [66]: 6–8.

First, QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 218 affirms: *Indeed, the believers and those who believe in Allah and strive hard for the sake of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Merciful.* QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 218 affirms that faith, *hijrah*, and *jihad* are prerequisites for the birth of a *raja'* (hope) of Allah's mercy. In addition to Ibn Kathir's explanation that hope should not be passive without real deeds, several other *mufassir* enrich the dialogue of the meaning of this verse. Al-Tabari in *Jāmi' al-Bayān* explains that the phrase "*ulā'ika yarjūna rahmatallāh*" indicates moral certainty—that is, that their hopes are not speculative, but based on a combination of faith and sacrifice; thus, the *targhīb* in this verse is rational and based on ethical cause and effect. Meanwhile, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi in *Mafātīh al-Ghayb* highlights the psychological dimension of the word *yarjūna* (they hope) which indicates the continuity between human effort and the breadth of Divine grace, so that the rhetoric of this verse establishes a balance between optimism and awareness of self-limitations. Al-Qurtubi emphasized the legal and moral aspects that the mention of the three great charities (*faith, hijrah, jihad*) is a form of gradation of values that shows the hierarchy of sacrifice in Islam, so that the promise of mercy becomes a collective motivation for the social stability of the *ummah*. In a contemporary perspective, M. Quraish Shihab sees this verse as a spiritual impulse that is relevant throughout the ages: Allah's grace is described as a horizon of hope that is open to those who are actively transformed, not stagnant in verbal convictions. Thus, the dialogue between *mufassir* shows that QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 218 contains a comprehensive pattern of *targhīb*—combining spiritual motivation, moral responsibility, and theological optimism—so that it is effective as a model of *da'wah* rhetoric that builds hope without neglecting the demands of real charity.³¹

Second, QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 133–135 presents a pattern of *targhīb* that emphasizes the acceleration of repentance and moral reform. The cry "*wa sāri'ū*

Communication 3, no. 1 (2025): 28–38, <https://doi.org/10.24260/joisco.v3i1.4695>

³¹ Sayid Muhammad Husain Thabathaba'i dkk., *Tafsir al-Mizan* (Lentera Hati, 2010).

ilā maghfiratin min rabbikum" indicates the spiritual urgency to return to God immediately. Ibn Kathir emphasized that the characteristic of pious people is not the absence of sin, but their urgency in repentance and correcting mistakes. In line with that, Al-Tabari sees the structure of this verse as a gradual education: starting from the encouragement towards forgiveness, then the social character of the pious person (*infaq*, restraining anger, forgiving), to awareness and *istighfar* after falling into sin. Meanwhile, M. Quraish Shihab interpreted the phrase "heaven as wide as heaven and earth" as rhetorical hyperbole that builds infinite optimism. Thus, the *targhīb* in this verse is both psychological and ethical—encouraging the acceleration of repentance, social self-control, and belief in the vastness of Divine grace.³²

Third, QS. Al-Ghāsyiyah [88]: 1–7 shows a strong pattern of *tarhīb* through visual and rhythmic descriptions of the punishment of the hereafter. The phrase "*wujūhun yawmā'idz khāshī'ah, 'āmilatun nāshibah*" describes the existential exhaustion of human beings who live without an orientation of faith. Ahmad Mustafa al-Maraghi considers that the strength of this verse lies in the visual image that evokes the reader's psychological awareness. Al-Razi deepens this meaning by explaining that hard work without faith will end in futile suffering in the hereafter, so this threat is not only physical but also existential. Meanwhile, Sayyid Qutb saw the short rhythm and phonetic pressure of this surah as an emotional strategy to shake the negligent heart. Thus, the *tarhīb* in this verse works on the theological, symbolic, and aesthetic dimensions at the same time, building moral awareness through profound psychological effects.³³

Fourth, QS. Al-Taḥrīm [66]: 6–8 combines the elements of *targhīb* and *tarhīb* in a balanced rhetorical sequence. The commandment "*qu anfusakum wa ahlakum nārā*" indicates preventive and educational responsibilities within the family. Al-Tabari interprets this verse as an obligation to foster and educate the family to avoid punishment, emphasizing the pedagogical dimension of *tarhīb*. Ibn Kathir reinforces that guarding the family means commanding obedience and preventing disobedience, so the threat here is normative and social. However, after such a harsh threat, verse 8 immediately opens the door of repentance and the promise of light for believers. Al-Alusi sees this arrangement as a Qur'anic method that balances fear and hope, while M. Quraish Shihab emphasizes that the exclamation "*yā ayyuhalladzīna āmanū*" is a loving call that indicates the identity of faith before the delivery of threats. This pattern shows the emotional balance typical of Qur'anic *da'wah* between moral discipline and the opportunity for mercy.³⁴

³² Rizal Hermawan dan Eko Surbiantoro, "Implikasi Pendidikan dari QS Ali-Imran 133- 135 tentang Ciri-Ciri Orang Yang Bertaqwa," *Jurnal Riset Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 26 Juli 2024, 43–48, <https://doi.org/10.29313/jrpai.v4i1.3873>.

³³ Abdul Azis dkk., "Keindahan Retorika dalam Al-Qur'an: Analisis Balaghah dalam Ayat-ayat Persuasif," *Uktub: Journal of Arabic Studies* 5, no. 1 (2025): 39–57, <https://doi.org/10.32678/uktub.v5i1.8>.

³⁴ سعيد عباسي نيا، "تبلور زبان انگیزشی قرآن در وعده و وعید از منظر کاربردشناسی زبان،" *نشریه پژوهش های زبان شناسی*

Structural and Semantic Analysis

An analysis of the above verses shows that *targhīb wa tarhīb* is not just a form of theological message, but also a structured rhetorical device. In many verses, *the pattern of targhīb* uses gentle diction, a metaphor of pleasure, and a symbol of harmony (e.g., "*the paradise that flows the rivers underneath*"), while *the tarhīb* uses a sentence structure that is short, rhythmic, and full of emotional stress. This pattern shows that the Qur'an regulates the message of *da'wah* by considering the psychological aspects of the audience.³⁵

In terms of semantics, *targhīb* represents the value of *rahmah* (affection) and *raja'* (hope), while *tarhīb* emphasizes the value of *'adl* (justice) and *taqwa* (moral awareness). These two concepts cannot be separated because they complement each other in the formation of faith consciousness. In modern *da'wah*, this approach can be translated into a balanced communication strategy between positive persuasion (reward-based message) and moral correction (warning-based message).³⁶

Thus, the approach of *targhīb wa tarhīb* shows the breadth of Qur'anic rhetoric in responding to human dynamics. Islamic *da'wah* is not a one-way indoctrination process, but an ethical dialogue that combines love, hope, and moral responsibility. It is this balance that makes the Qur'an not only a normative text, but also a relevant medium of spiritual communication throughout time.³⁷

Qur'anic Rhetoric as a Da'wah Strategy

Rhetorical Aspects in Targhīb Verses

Qur'anic rhetoric is a linguistic expression that contains persuasive and spiritual powers, which are able to move the heart and influence human behavior. In the context of *targhīb*, the Qur'an uses beautiful language, full of metaphors, and oriented towards hope (*king'*). The promise of heaven, forgiveness, and eternal happiness is a rhetorical symbol that fosters optimism and steadfastness of faith.³⁸

The Qur'an uses a lot of symbolic and imaginative language styles to build persuasion. For example, in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 218 and QS. Ali 'Imran [3]: 133–135, used diction describing heaven as a place with "*rivers flowing underneath*".

(IR), no. Online First (September 2023), <https://doi.org/10.22108/jrl.2023.138555.1784>.

³⁵ Abdul Azis et al., "The Beauty of Rhetoric in the Qur'an: An Analysis of Balaghah in Persuasive Verses," *Uktub: Journal of Arabic Studies* 5, no. 1 (2025): 39–57, <https://doi.org/10.32678/uktub.v5i1.8>.

³⁶ Mira Fauziah, "Janji dan Ancaman Sebagai Metode Dakwah Alquran," *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah* 15, no. 1 (2018): 12, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jim.v15i1.5454>.

³⁷ Fauziah, "Janji dan Ancaman Sebagai Metode Dakwah Alquran."

³⁸ Agnes Nuraeni Muslim dkk., *TAFSIR AL-MIŞBĀH: LENTERA HATI QURAIŞ SHIHAB*, 09 (2024).

The phrase is not just a visual description, but contains rhetorical power that arouses emotions and motivation to do righteous deeds.³⁹

Targhīb-oriented Qur'anic rhetoric has three main characters: *al-uslūb al-balāghī* (beauty of language style), *al-ma'nā al-'āmiq* (depth of meaning), and *al-maqṣad al-akhlāqī* (moral purpose). The three form a synergy between beauty and ethics in *da'wah* communication.⁴⁰

Contemporary studies confirm that *targhīb* emphasizes not only *ukhrawī* rewards, but also social and psychological motivation. For example, that the promise of reward in the Qur'an is often associated with social solidarity such as helping the poor or upholding justice. Thus, *the dimension of targhīb* serves as a *motivational rhetoric* that encourages positive social action. In the perspective of communication psychology, *targhīb* rhetoric fosters *positive reinforcement* to moral behavior. Verses that contain promises of goodness have a strong psychological effect because they create a sense of *reward anticipation*, which is the expectation of positive replies that internalize moral values.⁴¹

Furthermore, *targhīb* also plays a role in building *spiritual resilience* and inner resilience in facing life's challenges. The picture of Allah's mercy and eternal life gives mental energy to Muslims to continue striving on the path of truth. Therefore, in the context of *da'wah*, the Qur'anic rhetorical style in *targhīb* can be actualized in messages that arouse the spirit of goodness, such as in sermons, *da'wah* social media, and educational digital content.⁴²

On the contrary, *tarhīb* serves as a corrective and preventive dimension in Qur'anic rhetoric. It contains a stern warning so that man does not slip into sin and negligence. *Tarhīb* verses such as QS. Al-Ghasyiyah [88]: 1–7 and QS. At-Tahrim [66]: 6–8 shows the power of visualization of hell, punishment, and moral consequences that arouse inner consciousness. This warning is not intended to instill excessive fear, but as a means of enforcing spiritual discipline.

The threat style in the Qur'an is part of *the uslūb al-tahzīr*, a warning language pattern that serves to educate and warn people to return to the straight path. This style features harsh diction but contains the meaning of Divine affection, because every threat is always accompanied by an opportunity for repentance. *Tarhīb* rhetoric has a significant moral effect. The image of hellish torment in the Qur'an is not a form of intimidation, but a *moral imagery* that serves as a therapy of awareness of sin and evil. Visualizations such as "*drink from boiling water*" or "*skin changed after burning*" contain ethical messages that encourage humans to stay away from evil.⁴³

³⁹ Maqālīh, *Kitāb al-aṣḍiqā'*.

⁴⁰ M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, *Understanding the Qur'an: Themes and Style* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001), ISBN 978-1860643958.

⁴¹ Abbasinia, "The Crystallization of the Qur'an's Motivational Language in Promise and Promise from the Perspective of Language Pragmatology," September 2023.

⁴² Kenneth I. Pargament, *Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy: Understanding and Addressing the Sacred* (New York: Guilford Press, 2007), ISBN 978-1593855406.

⁴³ Prof Dr. Mortada Abbas Faleh dan Ass. Lecture Abrar Abdul Hamid Rashid, "Images of

In addition to ethical functions, *tarhīb* also has a social dimension. In a modern society that tends to be permissive towards moral values, threatening rhetoric is a reminder of collective responsibility. *Tarhīb* is a form of "moral warning" to maintain social order and justice, not just a metaphysical threat.

In the context of digital da'wah, *the tarhīb* approach needs to be processed with wise and empathetic language. *Da'wah* that emphasizes threats without compassion tends to generate resistance. Therefore, a rhetorical strategy is needed that unites *targhīb* and *tarhīb* in harmony. It is called the *balanced preaching model*, which is da'wah communication that balances motivation and warning in the frame of empathy.⁴⁴

The concrete form of moderate *tarhīb* rhetoric can be seen in *da'wah* messages that invite introspection, not fear. For example, *da'wah* campaigns on social media that remind of the impact of social sins such as corruption, digital slander, and tyranny, are delivered with empathetic narratives and spiritual solutions. This is the form of translation of *tarhīb* that is in accordance with the principle of *rahmatan lil-'ālamīn*. From the perspective of Islamic rhetoric, *tarhīb* can be categorized as a form of *logos* and *pathos* in the Aristotelian framework, because it combines the power of logic (rational argumentation) with emotion (fear of the consequences of sin).⁴⁵ This combination produces a powerful persuasive effect on human behavior.

Therefore, neither *targhīb* nor *tarhīb* are inseparable in the Qur'anic rhetorical system. Both work in a single unity of divine communication that leads man to spiritual balance: love and fear, grace and justice, hope and vigilance.

Implementation of Targhīb wa Tarhīb Values in Contemporary Da'wah

Educational and Humanistic Da'wah

The values of *targhīb wa tarhīb* in the Qur'an contain a strong pedagogical function, not only as a spiritual means, but also as an instrument of moral education (*ta'dib*). Through a rhetoric that balances hope and warning, the Qur'an educates people to have a balanced ethical and spiritual awareness between *raja'* (hope) and *khauf* (fear). This approach is in line with the principle of *da'wah bil hikmah*, as Allah says in QS. An-Nahl [16]: 125, which emphasizes the importance of wisdom and gentleness in inviting people to goodness.⁴⁶

intimidation in the Noble Qur'an - a graphic study," *Thi Qar Arts Journal* 1, no. 37 (2022): 1–36, <https://doi.org/10.32792/tqartj.v1i37.283>.

⁴⁴ Kusnadi et al., "Principles of Islamic Communication in the Al-Qur'an," *RHETORIC: Journal of Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Studies* 3, no. 1 (2021): 73–85, <https://doi.org/10.47435/retorika.v2i2.592>.

⁴⁵ Naufal Muhazzib and Twediana Budi Hapsari, "Digital Preaching Rhetoric on Tiktok Media: Case Study of Habib Husein Ja'far Account," *MUHARRIK: Journal of Da'wah and Social* 8, no. 1 (2025): 199–212, <https://doi.org/10.37680/muharrik.v8i1.7553>.

⁴⁶ Faridah Faridah dkk., "METODE DAKWAH DALAM AL-QUR'AN," *Jurnal Al-Mubarak*:

In the context of educational *da'wah*, *targhīb* functions to build a spiritual *growth mindset* that fosters the spirit to improve oneself, while *tarhīb* fosters moral awareness to avoid sinful and disobedient acts. The *da'wah* method based on *targhīb wa tarhīb* is a prophetic *educational model* because it is oriented towards the transformation of human behavior, not just the delivery of doctrine. The application of *targhīb wa tarhīb* values in the world of Islamic education also shows its relevance to the formation of students' religious character. *Targhīb* (motivation) based teaching is able to foster an intrinsic awareness of the value of goodness, while *tarhīb* (warning) serves as a moral control mechanism that guides ethical behavior. Thus, the two form a pedagogical balance in Islamic education.⁴⁷

Humanistic *da'wah* places humans as active subjects in the process of change. The principle of *targhīb wa tarhīb* is applied not to scare, but to build moral awareness based on empathy and social responsibility. *Da'wah* that overemphasizes the element of threat without empathy can lead to "pathological fear" that actually distances *mad'u* from the values of *rahmah*. Therefore, the rhetoric of the Qur'ani must be packaged in a dialogical and persuasive manner so that the message of *da'wah* is more inclusive and relevant.⁴⁸

In practice, humanistic *da'wah* that integrates *targhīb wa tarhīb* can be applied through sermons, spiritual guidance, or digital content that displays motivational messages accompanied by ethical reflections. This approach allows *da'wah* to become a space of enlightenment (*tanwir*) that guides the people towards a balance between compassion and moral firmness. Furthermore, this approach is also relevant to the spirit of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* (the goals of the *Shari'ah*), especially in preserving the intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*), religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), and the soul (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*). *Da'wah* that instills motivation and commemoration in proportion is a form of realization of *maqāṣid* values that emphasize the benefit of the *ummah* and social justice.⁴⁹

Digital Da'wah and Moral Challenges

The transformation of digital technology has brought a major change in the communication pattern of Islamic *da'wah*. Social media, podcasts, YouTube, and other online platforms are becoming new arenas for the dissemination of

Jurnal Kajian Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir 6, no. 2 (2021): 159–71, <https://doi.org/10.47435/al-mubarak.v6i2.740>.

⁴⁷ Syamsiah Nur dan Hasnawati Hasnawati, "Metode Targhib dan Tarhib dalam Pendidikan Islam," *AL-LIQQO: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 01 (2020): 64–77, <https://doi.org/10.46963/alliqo.v5i01.145>.

⁴⁸ Suud Sarim Karimullah, "The Influence of Humanist Da'wah in Social Transformation and Social Change in Muslim Societies," *Syiar: Journal of Islamic Communication and Broadcasting* 3, no. 2 (2023): 51–70, <https://doi.org/10.54150/syiar.v3i2.240>.

⁴⁹ Rois Wicaksono, "Strategi Dakwah Framing Berbasis Maqashid Syariah: Transformasi Nilai Rukun Islam sebagai Kebutuhan Spiritual bagi Gen Z dan Milenial," *Iqtida: Journal of Da'wah and Communication* 5, no. 02 (2025): 151–72, <https://doi.org/10.28918/iqtida.v5i02.12300>.

religious messages. However, this era also presents serious challenges in the form of information floods, empathy crises, and the phenomenon of *digital dehumanization*, where humans tend to lose moral sensitivity due to superficial virtual interactions.⁵⁰

In this context, the application of *targhīb wa tarhīb* values is important to form *Islamic digital ethics*. Through *targhīb*, digital da'wah can motivate audiences to use technology productively, such as spreading goodness and strengthening social solidarity. Meanwhile, *tarhīb* can be used to warn of the dangers of media abuse, such as *hate speech*, slander, and hoaxes.⁵¹

Da'wah communication in the digital era must be adaptive to the characteristics of new media, but still maintain its ethical substance. This means that *da'wah* content on social media must contain a balance between *hope and fear narrative* so that the message conveyed does not lose its moral power.⁵²

The principle of *targhīb wa tarhīb* can be applied through creative visual and narrative approaches, such as reflective videos, storytelling, and spiritual testimonials. This strategy has proven to be more effective in reaching younger generations who are used to visual and fast communication. In the context of Islamic communication ethics, the digital application of *targhīb wa tarhīb* must follow the principle of *qaulan layyina* (soft words) as taught to the Prophet Moses in QS. Tāhā [20]: 44. This principle is relevant in the face of polarizing religious discourse on social media, which is often harsh and exclusive. Polite but firm digital da'wah reflects the *wisdom of the Qur'aniyah* in guiding the ummah towards moral balance. Furthermore, the values of *targhīb wa tarhīb* can also be the basis for the development of Islamic digital literacy. Qur'anic ethics-based digital literacy not only teaches media skills, but also forms spiritual awareness in using technology. This is important to create a digital space that is healthy, productive, and oriented towards the benefit of the people.⁵³

The *targhīb wa tarhīb*-based *da'wah approach* can also respond to the phenomenon of *religious disinformation*, namely the spread of misleading religious content. Through the narrative of hope, preacher can invite the public to clarify information and foster the spirit of *tabayyun* (verification), while through warning, preacher can warn of the danger of social sin due to the spread of

⁵⁰ Tata Sukayat, "Da'wah communication in the Contemporary Era: Implementing da'wah ethics on social media," *Journal of Da'wah Science* 43, no. 2 (2023): 375–90, <https://doi.org/10.21580/jid.v43.2.18465>.

⁵¹ Nase Nase dkk., "Phenomenon of digital da'wah: Analysis of religious moderation and the ethics of da'wah communication on social media," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 45, no. 2 (2025): 313–40, <https://doi.org/10.21580/jid.v45.2.27992>.

⁵² Sukayat, "Da'wah communication in the Contemporary Era."

⁵³ Marlenda Marlenda dan Bashori Bashori, "Peran Literasi Digital dalam Dakwah Berbasis Al-Qur'an: Implementasi dan Tantangan di Media Sosial," *AL-UKHWAH - JURNAL PENGEMBANGAN MASYARAKAT ISLAM*, 10 Juni 2025, 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.47498/jau.v4i1.5131>.

religious hoaxes. In global *da'wah*,⁵⁴ the application of Qur'anic rhetoric based on *targhīb wa tarhīb* also shows the potential to build *Islamic soft power*. The Islamic message that is balanced between compassion and warning is a moral force that can improve the image of Islam in the international world. And the rhetoric of the Qur'an has universal relevance to reinforce the image of Islam as a religion of *rahmatan lil-'ālamīn*.

Thus, the application of *targhīb wa tarhīb values* in digital *da'wah* not only functions as a method of conveying messages, but also as an ethical paradigm in building fair, empathetic, and dignified communication. Through this approach, *da'wah* in the digital era is not only informative, but also transformative, forming a balanced spiritual and social consciousness between hope and moral vigilance.

Synthesis and Relevance of Da'wah

The Integration of Targhīb wa Tarhīb Values in the Holistic Da'wah Paradigm

Overall, it can be concluded that the value of *targhīb wa tarhīb* is the two main axes in the rhetoric of Qur'anic *da'wah* which emphasizes the balance between *love and justice, mercy and hisab, and hope and moral vigilance*. In the context of Islamic *da'wah*, this balance is not just a communication style, but part of the Qur'anic epistemological system that functions to shape the spiritual and social consciousness of the people.⁵⁵

The *da'wah* approach that integrates *targhīb wa tarhīb* serves to build "affective and reflective" communication, where the dai not only transfers religious messages, but also builds an emotional connection with the audience.⁵⁶ This is in line with the concept of *tablīgh bi al-ḥikmah*, which is to convey the truth in proportion to gentleness and firmness, as shown by the prophets in the Qur'an.

This approach shows that Qur'anic rhetoric is not monological, but rather dialogical opens up space for reflection, self-awareness, and active participation of *mad'u*. Therefore, *targhīb wa tarhīb* can be considered as a *rhetorical equilibrium* that balances between human psychological needs and spiritual demands. In line with that, *da'wah* based on the balance of *targhīb wa tarhīb* plays a role in building *the moral reasoning* of Muslims, namely the ability to weigh good and bad with the guidance of Qur'anic values. This kind of *da'wah* is not only oriented to ritual obedience, but also to social and moral transformation.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Intiha'ul Khayarah, "Communication Media in the Perspective of the Qur'an: The Relevance of Oral Traditions and Digital Technology in Islamic Da'wah," *Al Furqan: Journal of Quran Science and Tafsir* 7, no. 2 (2024): 317–32, <https://doi.org/10.58518/alfurqon.v7i2.3039>.

⁵⁵ Rokibullah Rokibullah, "The Integration of Classical Rhetoric and Qur'anic Principles in Contemporary Islamic Da'wah Strategies," *Journal of Indonesian Impressions* 4, no. 7 (2025): 2769–84, <https://doi.org/10.58344/jii.v4i7.7053>.

⁵⁶ *Persuasive Communication in the Qur'an: Implications for Contemporary Preaching*, t.t.

⁵⁷ Jimi Irawan dan Bashori Bashori, "Etika Penyebaran Ayat Al-Qur'an dalam Media Digital:

Ethical and Communicative Relevance in Contemporary Da'wah

A modern reality characterized by technological advances, secularization of values, and spiritual crises, the principle of *targhīb wa tarhīb* has a new urgency as a da'wah strategy that touches human existential consciousness. This approach is able to answer the moral anxiety of society by offering two main narratives: hope for God's mercy and awareness of the consequences of sin. Digital societies tend to be more responsive to religious messages that touch on emotional aspects and are relevant to daily life. Thus, *the targhīb* approach can be used to build an inspirational positive narrative, while *tarhīb* serves as a moral control against the degradation of values in the public sphere.⁵⁸

The rhetoric of the Qur'ani that combines the two reflects the function of *da'wah* which is not only *amar ma'rūf nahi munkar*, but also *islāh al-nafs wa al-mujtama'* (self-improvement and society). An effective method of *da'wah* is one that is able to strike a balance between *targhīb bi al-jannah* (the drive to heaven) and *tarhīb bi al-nar* (warning against hell), because both strengthen faith and move righteous deeds.

In the context of modern Islamic communication, *targhīb wa tarhīb* can also play a role as a strategic approach in building *narrative empathy*, which is the ability to adapt da'wah messages to the emotional and social conditions of the audience⁶. This is in line with *the theory of Relational Communication* in contemporary communication studies, where the success of a message relies heavily on the emotional connection between the communicator and the communicator.⁵⁹

For example, digital da'wah on social media can use *targhīb narratives* through inspirational stories, stories of repentance, or spiritual reflections that foster religious optimism. Instead, *tarhīb* can be implemented in the form of moral campaigns or educational videos that remind of the negative impact of deviant behavior. Through this strategy, da'wah becomes more empathetic, communicative, and has a social impact⁶⁰

The Implications of Targhīb wa Tarhīb Rhetoric on the Transformation of Digital Da'wah

Theoretically, this study confirms that *targhīb wa tarhīb* is not only a linguistic

Kajian Literatur atas Tantangan dan Prinsip Qur'ani," *Fathir: Jurnal Studi Islam* 2, no. 3 (2025): 357–69, <https://doi.org/10.71153/fathir.v2i3.330>.

⁵⁸ Ilham Ansori dan Candra Krisna Jaya, "Komunikasi Dakwah di Era Digital," *Jurnal Manajemen Dakwah* 3, no. 1 (2025): 01–16, <https://doi.org/10.22515/jmd.v3i1.10860>.

⁵⁹ Humaidi Sakdiah, M. Noor Rahmah, Rabi'atul Adawiah, and Rusdiah Aslamiah, "Prophetic Communication in Digital Preaching: Building a Critical and Wise Society in Using Social Media," *Al-Hiwar: Journal of Da'wah Science and Techniques*, 13, no. 1 (2025): 13–24, <https://doi.org/10.18592/alhiwar.v13i1.16161>

⁶⁰ Rois Wicaksono, "Da'wah Framing Strategy Based on Sharia Maqashid."

or psychological device, but also an epistemological framework for Qur'anic da'wah. It brings together theological, moral, and rhetorical aspects in a dynamic system of meaning. This approach is relevant to enrich contemporary Islamic da'wah theories that are often trapped in the dichotomy between rationality and spirituality.⁶¹

The holistic da'wah paradigm based on *targhīb wa tarhīb* emphasizes the importance of a balance between the logic of revelation and social reality. *Da'wah* is not only rational, but it must also touch the emotional and spiritual side of humans. This approach is in line with the spirit of *tawāzun* (balance) in Islam which is the foundation of religious moderation.⁶²

Practically, the implementation of the value of *targhīb wa tarhīb* can be applied through several strategies⁶³:

First, Da'wah is based on spiritual education – emphasizing moral transformation and increasing faith awareness through balanced motivation and warning.

Second, Creative digital da'wah – utilizing social media to disseminate inspirational and reflective content with a visual communication style.

Third, Counseling and spiritual guidance – using the principle of *targhīb wa tarhīb* in the moral development of individuals and groups.

Fourth, Thematic sermons and lectures – construct a da'wah narrative with a balanced proportion of promises and threats so as not to provoke religious extremism.

Thus, Islamic da'wah that integrates the value of *targhīb wa tarhīb* is not only able to maintain the originality of the Qur'anic message, but also answers moral and social challenges in the modern era.

Conclusion

Initially, this study emphasized that Quranic rhetoric, especially the pattern of *targhīb* and *tarhīb*, is not just a language device, but a moral communication strategy that is relevant to the context of digital da'wah. Through the *tafsir maudhu'i* approach, this study traces the verses that contain promises and threats in various surahs to find a consistent rhetorical pattern, namely a balance between hope and moral vigilance. The results of the discussion show that *targhīb* functions to build spiritual optimism through the promise of grace, forgiveness, and heaven that encourages active self-transformation, while *tarhīb* instills an awareness of responsibility through warnings of the consequences of sin and

⁶¹ *Prophetic Communication in Digital Preaching: Building a Critical and Wise Society in Using Social Media.*, t.t., <https://doi.org/10.18592/alhiwar.v13i1.16161>.

⁶² Moh Edy Marzuki dkk., "Da'wah Ethics in the Digital Era in Media Transformation and Moral Governance," *Al-Tsiqoh: Jurnal Ekonomi dan Dakwah Islam* 10, no. 2 (2025): 67–78, <https://doi.org/10.31538/altsiq.v10i2.6923>.

⁶³ Ilham Ansori dan Candra Krisna Jaya, "Komunikasi Dakwah di Era Digital," *Jurnal Manajemen Dakwah* 3, no. 1 (2025): 01–16, <https://doi.org/10.22515/jmd.v3i1.10860>.

deviation. Both form an educational and proportionate model of persuasion, not excessively intimidating and not infinitely permissive, but guiding humans towards mature ethical awareness.

In the context of the phenomenon of cancel culture and narrative extremism in the digital space, this rhetorical pattern offers a humanistic and restorative *da'wah* paradigm. *Targhīb* can be translated as an inspirational narrative that opens up space for self-improvement without social stigma, while *tarhīb* serves as a moral control against the abuse of freedom of expression, hate speech, and disinformation. Thus, the purpose of the research to formulate the Quranic response to the digital communication crisis was achieved through the formulation of a *da'wah* model that balances compassion and moral firmness. The rhetoric of *targhīb* and *tarhīb* has proven to not only have a strong theological foundation, but also have practical implications in building digital communication that is dignified, inclusive, and oriented towards civilized social transformation.

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