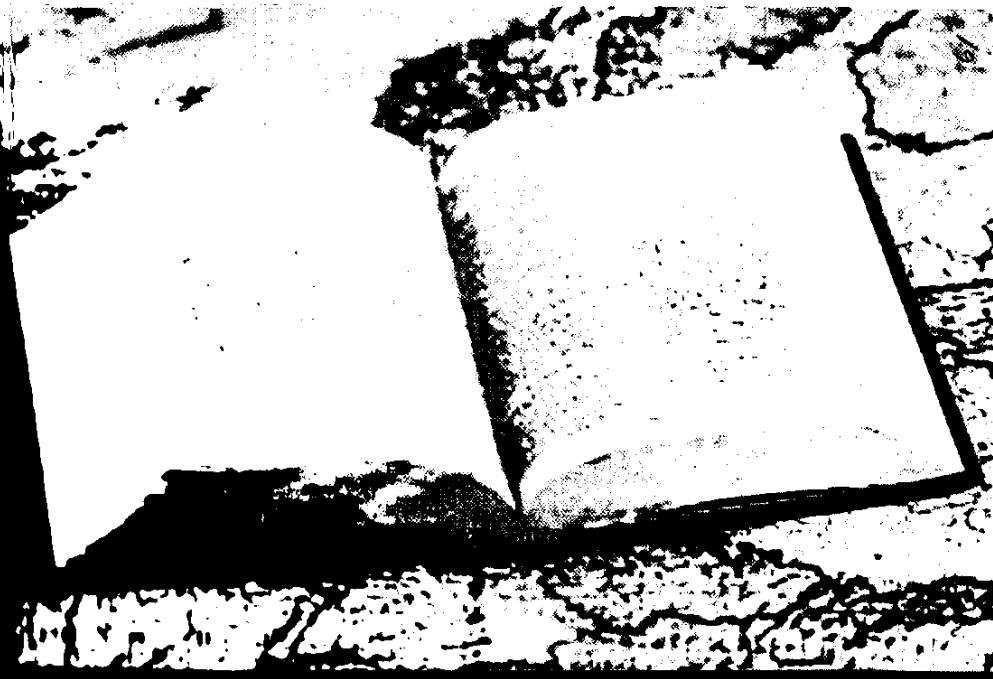


## ABOUT THE BOOK

**T**his book, *The Bible in Information Resources Management, Volume One*, is an exposition to the relationships between the Bible and the course, *Information Resources Management (IRM)*. There is nothing new in the face of the earth. Every human endeavour has its root from the Bible, the Word of God. So also is *Information Resources Management*, a conglomerate of *Library Science, Information Science, Records Management, and Archival Studies*. This book shows how the Bible is the foundation of *IRM*. It is a lesson for those who want to use the Bible as a source of wisdom to teach and practice in the school. Each chapter has a different application and relation to the Bible.

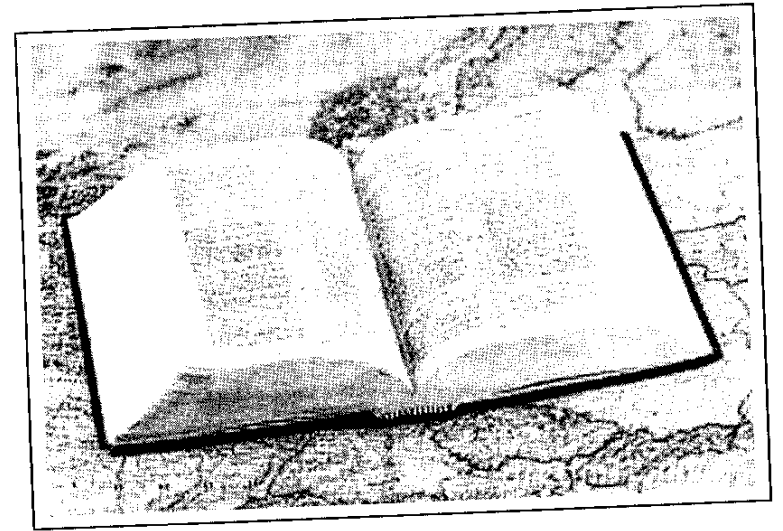
THE BIBLE IN INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT



THE  
**BIBLE**  
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 RESOURCES  
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VINCENT ENYERIBE UNEGBU, Ph.D.

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THE  
**BIBLE**  
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MANAGEMENT

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the students of RELT 953: Biblical Foundation of Information Resources Management.

## FOREWORD

*The title for this book is The Bible in Information Resources Management.* This title is chosen as a result of the course that led to its production - RELT 953: Biblical Foundation of Information Resources Management whose students produced the chapters in this first volume. The course is taught by the editor. The aim is to prepare a sample of what the students in this course are expected to do. In other words, it is a Reader and a Pathfinder for those who would do this course in the future. The successors will learn from the predecessors. The course is a new one and has no textbooks, so, the teacher and the students have to develop this pamphlet that may be a precursor to other textbooks.

In no way are the submissions perfect. They are written by "trembling hands" and to encourage the students, some of who are using the Bible for the first time in their lives, to learn a course that seems to have no relationship with the Bible. The students were guided and their eyes were opened to see how the Bible is the foundation of all studies.

As much as plagiarism is vehemently abhorred, and as long as it is never accepted in any academic endeavour, we apologize if, in any way, any student has un-mindfully lifted any work of an author without proper referencing. All the articles published here are class assignments without any initial intention of publishing them. As has been stated, this is a stepping stone for those coming to do this course. When we stand on the shoulders of others we see more. Where the teacher or any other individual made a substantial addition, the name is added as one of the authors.

All opinions expressed here are those of the authors and they are held responsible for any publication misconduct. The work is dedicated to the contributors. Twelve authors contributed to the ten articles in this book. Congratulations!

**Vincent E. Unegbu, PhD**  
Lecturer, RELT 953

# CHAPTER 1

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## **A Comparative Study of Librarians' Code of Ethics and Biblical Ethical Issues using the Ten Commandments**

By  
Omawumi O. Makinde

### **Abstract**

*This study was carried out to see the similarities and differences in the code of ethics of librarians and the biblical code of ethics. The study used information formats in print and non-print media for its literature review. Findings show that librarians' code of ethics has its roots in biblical code of ethics as there are more similarities than differences; but the biblical code of ethics is more encompassing as certain issues that are not found in librarians' code of ethics are taken care of in the Bible revealing the superiority of the code of ethics given by God to the code of ethics of librarians. It was concluded that God is the fountain of knowledge and all professions, including Information Resources Management, have their foundation in the Bible – God's Inspired Book.*

*Key words: Librarians, Code of ethics, Ten Commandments, Bible.*

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this paper is to compare the ethical values of librarians with the Ten Commandments in the Bible to see their relationship

The paper opens with the definition and the importance of ethics. The code of ethics of librarians and the Ten Commandments are also briefly stated. The two are then placed side by side by way of comparison to bring out their similarities and differences. The paper concludes by taking a stand point on the issue.

Ethics is the study of standards of behaviour, moral judgment and philosophy. It also has to do with the system or code of morals of individuals, groups, professions and religions (The Webster's New World Dictionary online). The Oxford Dictionary online defines it as a branch of knowledge that deals with moral principles, while Hornby (2006) sees it as beliefs and principles about what is right or wrong. Thus from the foregoing, it could be deduced that ethics has to do with a set of conducts that dictate the way of behaviour of an individual, a group of people or a society, stating what is acceptable and what is not. Ethical concern is found in religion, profession and in some other areas of human endeavour. In whichever area it is found, code of ethics has purposes to

### Purpose of Code of Ethics

1. Code of ethics serves as guide in the area of personal, professional, organizational and societal behaviour, that is, through an established code of ethics everyone is aware of what is expected of him or her to do. Such awareness therefore makes it mandatory for individuals, groups, organizations and societies to take responsibility for the outcome of their chosen behaviour.
2. Ethics as written and unwritten codes of principles and values that govern decisions and actions within an organization makes it possible for rational reflection and judgment to be made on what is right/wrong, just, unjust, good and bad when dealing with people, time and situations (Boundless Marketing Textbook Online).
3. Harker (2002) speaks extensively on the importance of code of ethics. He summarizes as follows: Code of ethics helps to reduce ambiguity involved in interpreting standards that have to do with relationships involving organizations and patrons, clientele or customers. It helps by avoiding a lot of troubles from all the sides.
4. Through code of ethics employees can understand their limits and

obligations within an organization and conduct themselves accordingly in area of work output, punctuality, dress code, relationships and in some other areas.

5. A policy statement on code of ethics can serve as protection for the reputation of an organization and also as legal defense document in the instance of an employee or a customer dragging a company to the law court.
6. It is therefore not difficult to see that code of ethics will make an individual to have peace of mind and satisfaction with oneself understanding that one is living in accordance with what one believes and stands for.
7. In addition to what has already been said, code of ethics foster harmony, peace and process within an organization and community. It also helps individuals, groups or organizations to have a common understanding of issues and be focused in their individual and collective behaviour.
8. Operating on the basis of ethics makes it possible for all concerned to see, understand and pronounce a judgment on what is fair, unfair, just, unjust, right, wrong, good and bad without ambiguities whether as a group of professionals relating with patrons, clientele or customers, or as members of a society relating with each other.

Various organizations, religions, professionals and societies have well spelt out code of ethics, among such are the librarians and the children of Israel whose code of ethics are stated in The Ten Commandments given to them by God. The code of ethics of librarians and The Ten Commandments are stated as follows:

### Librarians' Code of Ethics

Librarians are the professionals in charge of selection, acquisition, organization, preservation and dissemination of information contained in different formats in a library. Librarians work for various organizations and interact with different categories of library users depending on the ownership, location or users of such library. However, irrespective of the type of library, librarians have common code of ethics binding them in the course of carrying out their duties.

The code of ethics of librarians stipulates access to information

responsibilities towards individual and society; privacy, secrecy and transparency; open access and intellectual property; neutrality, personal integrity and professional skills; colleague and employer/employee relationship (IFLA, 2012). Having mentioned the code of ethics of librarians in order to have a good understanding of them, The Ten Commandments will also be stated in order to see what they entail.

### The Ten Commandments

The Almighty God is a perfect being and author of orderliness, harmony and peace. In order to ensure that honour is given to who honour is due and for the purpose of peaceful co-existence among His people, God gave them The Ten Commandments to serve as their code of ethics so that each and every one will understand their obligations to their Creator, parents, and neighbours to ensure that their society is a meaningful and peaceful one. In the events of conflict, these Ten Commandments serve as guidelines in pronouncing judgments. They still serve as code of ethics to all Christians today. They are as stated in Exodus Chapter 20 verse 3 to verse 17 thus:

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:
3. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me.
4. And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.
5. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.
6. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
7. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work:
8. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy GOD: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.

11. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.
12. Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD Thy God giveth thee.
13. Thou shalt not kill.
14. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
15. Thou shalt not steel
16. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.
17. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

For the purpose of comparison, the Librarian's code of ethics will be interwoven with The Ten Commandments and discussed as follows:

### Similarities and Differences of the Librarian's Code of Ethics and The Ten Commandments

The first commandment says,

#### **Thou shalt have no other gods before me...**

This commandment tells the children of Israel and Christians to be loyal and faithful to their creator as He, the Almighty, who is their benefactor in all areas of good things, deserve that honour. God is the creator, provider, protector and the all in all to the children of Israel therefore they owe Him an obligation to be faithful.

This is similar to the dictates of librarians' code of ethics that discusses employer/employee relationship in which it is stated that employees must be loyal to their employer. Similarly, an organization pays the wages and takes care of the welfare of the librarians in its employ therefore librarians owe their employers a great amount of loyalty by keeping the secret of the organization secret and working maximally for their pay. Librarians are also not to work for two organizations on full-time basis at the same time.

#### **Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image....**

This is the second commandment. Here God is telling His people that He

is a jealous God. This shows the depth of His love for His people and He is encouraging them to reciprocate this love; not only that, He is also saving them from going astray by giving honour to a creature or creation which cannot help itself or himself but to depend on the powerful Creator of the universe who can solve all their problems. All those who go against this injunction will be punished while those that obey it will receive mercy as it applies to all other dos and don'ts of God.

This is still similar to the expectation of employers of librarians in their relationship with the employees. Librarians are also not expected to honour individuals above the organization that pay their salaries neither are they expected to give their loyalty to other organizations that are not paying them nor giving them any benefit, doing such could attract some disciplinary measures.

#### **Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy GOD in vain....**

In this third commandment God wants His children to be sincere by not being hypocrites in their worship of Him. Their yes should be yes and no should be no, not saying yes when they mean no; they should not swear and should not allow God's name to be mocked through them. The name of God should not be carelessly used nor used in profanity. The children of Israel and every other Christian are not to take the name of the LORD their God in vain according to the third commandment. That is, they are to be sincere to their God, not being hypocrites, but standing for what they profess.

The same principle applies in librarians' code of ethics that demands personal integrity and professionalism of every librarian in the course of serving their organizations and library users. They are to be true to their calling in the best practices and not paying mere lip service to their work and library users.

The fourth commandment is

#### **Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy**

God expects his children to rest from all their labours as he did after creation. Not only that, he wants them to set aside the seventh day to honour God and to do only those things that are in service to God. God has blessed, honoured and sanctified this day (Gen 2: 2.3), so will

everyone who obeys this injunction be blessed and honoured by God. God commands His children to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. This means they must observe a rest every week and also worship God throughout the day.

In the same way librarians observe brake periods while at work and also observe rest in accordance to the organizations they work for and worship God according to the dictate of personal religion but many work on the Sabbath day. Out of the seven days that make a week, God wants us to rest in one. There is no library that works seven consecutive days without taking off in one. It should be done because God said it. The day to observe is the Sabbath day.

The fifth commandment says

#### **Honour thy father and thy mother...**

This is a commandment that comes with the condition for longevity. The children of Israel as well as all who believe in the Almighty God are to love and respect their parents. This they can do by being obedient to them in all areas that will glorify God and by taking care of them till they depart this terrestrial plane. This commandment talks about the duties owed to relations, that is, honouring father and mother.

Librarians too have responsibilities towards individuals and society including their employers, patrons, and colleagues. They are to honour all, show respect to everybody and obey their organizational rules and regulations in carrying out their duties and ensuring they live up to expectation in serving their communities. Librarians should respect their elders/seniors in the profession.

#### **Thou shalt not kill**

The sixth commandment borders on not killing, meaning that Israel and every child of God should not physically take lives of other people neither should they do anything that could cause injury to the personality of others. This means God's people must not do any harm to themselves: be it their own health, comfort and life or that of other people. They must not hate, persecute, nor defame other people's character; and must not be accomplice in any evil to hurt anybody.

In the same vein, librarians are to respect personal privacy, protect

personal data entrusted to them by their clientele, and ensure confidentiality in relating with the library users so that the personal data in care of librarians are not used to destroy the personality of others be it individuals or organizations. Librarians should not cut the hand that is feeding them. Do not destroy your institution or kill your leaders by any means.

#### **Thou shalt not commit adultery**

The seventh commandment has to do with the chastity of God's people. God's children are holy and anyone who calls upon the name of God must be clean in and out. They must not be lustful with their eyes, body or soul. Obeying this law means not offending another party's spouse in a way that one will not want to be offended. They are also not to defile themselves. Committing adultery is sleeping or having sexual intercourse with anyone who is not your wife. This commandment prohibits that.

Similarly librarians' code of ethics stipulates integrity in carrying out professional duties. They are not to take bribe, they are to be fair to all, and they are not to defile the garment of their career in any area of the work, be it in their dealings with book suppliers/agents or in relating with library users. They are not to be partial and they are not to use the intellectual properties of others without permission, neither should they allow the library users to use such properties more than what is allowed by way of "fair use" as these will amount to breaching copyright law.

It also has to do with respect of the opposite sex working with you. Do not take undue privilege of your less privileged workers and mess up with them. Do not commit adultery. Do not take what is not yours.

#### **Thou shalt not steal**

This commandment has to do with the security of the property of God's people and that of their neighbours. Stealing is an offence punishable by imprisonment. To moslems it may result in losing some of your limbs or some of your parts. To God it means that Israelites as well as Christians are not to rob God of His tithes and offerings and to other people not to rob them of their properties. They are not to cheat others in the area of landed properties, merchandise, wages, rents, debts and taxes.

Librarians have a duty to protect the intellectual property of their users. Librarians must, as much as possible to ensure that such property

is not stolen by way of unfair use of books and through excess photocopying and plagiarism of theses and dissertations in their care, they are not to commit this same offence by taking undue advantage of having free access to the intellectual properties of others.

#### **Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour**

This is the ninth commandment and it shows that God forbids lying, deceit and falsehood in any shade. Israelites and Christians must not seek to put others in trouble unjustly in any way through their word, gesture or deeds. Slandering, backbiting and exaggeration to bring problem to others must be avoided and not destroying the reputation of others for any reason whatsoever.

By the same token, librarians are to be true in giving free access to the information in their care. Censorship should not be done when not necessary and they must not, because of religious, racial, social and any other leanings, mislead the library users in the course of seeking access to information. Let users know when materials are available or not. Do not lie to avoid punishment or to get your fellow worker in trouble for selfish momentary gain.

#### **Thou shalt not covet... anything that is thy neighbour's**

By giving the tenth commandment, God wants His people to be satisfied with whatever they have by way of family members, vocation, property, education, profession or any other thing. Satisfaction with only whatever God has given them will not make it possible for them to be envious of other people's belongings which could lead to other corrupt practices. Seeking for more is not bad but envying other people's own is the problem. Contentment is the answer.

This is similar to the code of ethics of librarians enjoining librarians to play on level ground when seeking for higher ground. Librarians are not to destroy others because they need promotion; it still boils down to their code of ethics that says they must be people of integrity. Love your profession. Be proud of your calling.

#### **Conclusion**

It has been observed that code of ethics is important in the lives of

individuals, organizations and societies as it dictates and guides the conduct of these entities. Literature and discussion also show that there are similarities in The Ten Commandments and librarians' code of ethics as all the code of ethics of librarians are also found in The Ten Commandments. However, there is a difference in the area of the fourth commandment which says 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy....' It is not stated anywhere in the code of ethics of librarians that a day of rest and worship of the creator must be set aside. But observations show that librarians working for various organizations observe daily break periods, week end offs and go on leave annually in order to have some rest and worship God according to the dictate of their individual religion. What is not sure of is "keeping the day holy" and how to keep it holy.

Thus it could be concluded that The Ten Commandments are more perfect as they encompass all aspects of human life including the areas of worshipping the creator and observing rest, both of which are important for all round development of every human being. This shows that God is the fountain of all wisdom, knowledge and understanding and the Bible is the foundation for all professions. These are also the submissions of Unegbu and Onuoha (2013). Human beings do not have any new knowledge but that which is already stated in God's Holy Book after which man's knowledge and inventions are patterned. God's Word and Law have been from the beginning of time and are still relevant. Therefore His law cannot be annulled. Human laws derive from God's law but they are not as perfect and stable as the law of God and this shows the imperfection of human nature.

It is therefore concluded that God is perfect as His Word and law are perfect showing perfect provision for man in his relationship with his Creator and with his fellow human beings. Therefore biblical code of ethics is superior to the code of ethics of librarians; and all reverence, glory, honour and adoration must be ascribed to Him who knows it all and from whom all others copy.

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