

Islam as a complete code of life teaches its followers to spend a balanced life full of contentment and satisfaction. In the form of the Quran and Hadiths, we, the believers of Islam have the greatest sources of learning and guidance for each and every sphere/aspect of life. By following the golden principles of Islam one can lead a peaceful life easily. Islam not only guides us on how to offer worship but provides a mechanism to spend a full day i.e. dealings with other people. The moral or ethical system is an integral part of the Islamic system as discussed in the topic of Introduction to Islam. Allah the Almighty has discussed this topic in great detail in the Quran. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has also put great emphasis on adopting good morals. Tazkiyya (purification of lower self/soul) and morals are synonymous. Tazkiyya of the people was the Prophetic duty of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It has been mentioned in the Quran.

Likewise, We have sent to you (Our) Messenger from among yourselves who recites to you Our Revelations and purifies and sanctifies (your hearts and ill-commanding selves) and teaches you the Book and inculcates in you logic and wisdom and enlightens you (on the mysteries of spiritual gnosis and divine truth) which you did not know.¹

Allah the Almighty has praised the good morals of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in the following verse.

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ۝

And assuredly you are placed high on the Most Glorious and Exalted (seat of) Character (i.e. adorned with the Qur'anic morality and endowed with the character traits of Allah).²

He himself was the embodiment and manifestation of the Quranic morals. When a Companion asked about the morals of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ from Hazrat Ayesha ؓ, she replied:

¹ Sura al-Baqara:151

² Sura al-Qalam:2

Don't you read the Quran? The character of the Apostle of Allah was the manifestation of the Quran.³

Some of the extraordinary morals of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has been discussed in the last topic. Here they are mentioned briefly as follows:

Honesty and Truthfulness: Prophet Muhammad, even before receiving the revelation, was known as "Al-Amin" (the trustworthy) and "As-Sadiq" (the truthful). His honesty and truthfulness earned him the trust of the community.

Compassion and Mercy: Prophet Muhammad is described in the Quran as a mercy to the world. His compassion extended not only to humans but also to animals. He demonstrated kindness, mercy, and empathy in various aspects of his life.

Justice and Fairness: The Prophet was a just leader who ensured fair treatment for all, regardless of their background. His sense of justice was evident in his judgments and dealings with people.

Humility: Despite his elevated status as a prophet, Muhammad remained humble. He participated in daily chores, listened to the concerns of the community, and did not seek personal gain or recognition.

Respect for Others: Prophet Muhammad treated everyone with respect, regardless of their social status. He emphasized the importance of respecting elders and caring for the well-being of others. He has taught to respect servants as well in that era when they were not considered as.

Forgiveness: The Prophet forgave even those who had harmed him or his followers. His capacity for forgiveness was evident in various situations, promoting reconciliation and harmony within the community.

Generosity and Charity: Muhammad was known for his generosity and willingness to help those in need. He encouraged acts of

³ Sahih Muslim:1739

charity and established the principles of Zakat (obligatory charity) and Sadaqah (voluntary charity).

Patience in Adversity: Throughout the challenges faced during his mission, Prophet Muhammad displayed immense patience. His ability to endure adversity without losing hope or composure is an inspiration for Muslims facing difficulties.

Significance of Good morals in the light of Hadith

‘The perfect of Believers faith wise are the best of them in conduct. And the best of you are the best of you with their women, [Abu Dawud 4682]

“There is nothing heavier in the scale of the Believer on the Day of Resurrection than good manners. Indeed, Allah, the Exalted hates the indecent and the obscene.” [Musnad Ahmed 27587]

“Nothing of what is put in the scale is heavier than good manners. And, the good-mannered person will attain the rank of the person who keeps fast and offers salah.” [Musnad Ahmed 28587]

“The dearest of you to me and the nearest of you to me in the station on the Day of Resurrection is the best of you in manners. And the most hated of you to me and the farthest from me on the Day of Resurrection are chatter-boxes, bigmouthed (who speak much without deliberation and caution), and the mutafayhiqun.” They asked, “O Messenger of Allah, we know those who speak much, but who the mutafayhiqun?” He said, “Those who speak with arrogance.” [Musnad Ahmed 17758]

A person with bad morals will not enter Jannah [Musnad Ahmed 31]

Morals mentioned in Sura al-Hujurat

Brotherhood and Equality: It stresses the concept of brotherhood among believers and the equality of all Muslims, regardless of their tribal or racial background.

The truth is that (all) believers are brothers (to one another). So make peace between your two brothers and always fear Allah, so that you may be shown Mercy.⁴

Avoidance of Suspicion and Backbiting: Believers are advised to avoid suspicion, backbiting, and spying on one another, promoting trust and unity within the community. Backbiting has been strictly prohibited in Islam.

O Believers! Avoid most conjectures. Indeed some conjectures are sins (liable to punishment in the Hereafter). And spy not (on someone's unknown matters or secrets), nor backbite one another. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it. And fear Allah (in all such matters). Indeed Allah is Ever-Returning, Ever-Merciful.⁵

Conflict Resolution: The surah provides guidance on resolving conflicts peacefully and encourages reconciliation between disputing parties.

And if two parties of the Muslims fight, make them reconcile. Then if either of these (parties) commits injustice and aggression against the other, fight against that (party) who are committing aggression till they turn to Allah's command. When they revert and submit, make peace between them with equity. And put justice to work. Surely Allah loves those who do justice.⁶

Avoidance of Mockery: Believers are urged not to mock or ridicule others, as it can lead to negative consequences and damage relationships within the community.

O Believers! Let no community ridicule another community. It is likely that they may be better than those (who ridicule). Nor should women make fun of other women. It is likely that they may be better than those (who make fun). And do not offend or find fault with one another, nor call each other names. Calling someone wicked or indecent after (he embraces) faith is an extremely evil name. And those

⁴ 1 Sura al-Hujurat:10

⁵ Sura al-Hujurat:12

⁶ Sura al-Hujurat:10

who do not turn to Allah in repentance it is they who are the wrongdoers.⁷

Guarding Speech: The importance of guarding one's speech and using it wisely is emphasized to prevent the spread of false information or harmful rumors. In the age of social media, we should be very careful regarding sharing of news without authenticity.

Humility: Believers are encouraged to be humble and not to boast or be arrogant, recognizing that true honor comes from piety and good deeds.

These values promote a harmonious and ethical community life, fostering mutual respect, trust, and cooperation among believers. We should strive hard to adopt all the aforementioned morals.

Factors lead to decline of the Morals

Several factors contribute to the decline of moral values in society. While it's important to note that these reasons can vary across different cultures and regions, some common factors include:

Technology and Media Influence: The rapid expansion of technology and media exposure can contribute to a decline in moral values, as individuals may be influenced by negative portrayals, unrealistic standards, or desensitization to ethical concerns.

Breakdown of Family Structure: Changes in family dynamics, including an increase in single-parent households or weakened family bonds, can impact the transmission of moral values from one generation to the next.

Educational System Challenges: Educational systems sometimes focus more on academic achievements than on moral and character development. Lack of emphasis on ethics in schools can contribute to the erosion of moral values.

Individualism and Consumerism: Societal emphasis on individual success and materialism can lead to a decline in collective

⁷ Sura al-Hujurat:11

moral responsibility. A focus on personal gain may overshadow the importance of ethical considerations.

Religious Decline: In societies where religious influence diminishes, there may be a corresponding decline in adherence to moral values traditionally associated with religious teachings.

Globalization: While globalization brings cultural exchange and economic growth, it can also introduce conflicting values and cultural relativism, potentially diluting or challenging established moral norms.

Social and Economic Inequality: Widespread disparities in wealth and opportunities can lead to a sense of injustice and diminish the belief in the fairness of societal structures, impacting adherence to moral values.

Social Media and Online Culture: The anonymous nature of online interactions and the rapid spread of information through social media can contribute to cyberbullying, misinformation, and a general coarsening of discourse, impacting moral values.

Addressing the decline in moral values often requires a multifaceted approach involving education, community engagement, and efforts to strengthen familial and institutional foundations that promote ethical behavior.