



Islam and Ethics



Islamic system of Ethics

Ethics:

Ethics is English synonym of Akhlaaq which is an Arabic word in plural form of Khulq which means good habit.

Concept of good & evil:

According to Islamic education, concept of good (Khair) is concerned with Qur'an and Sunnah. The fountainhead of good is Allah (Subhanahu wa ta'aala) as Allah is ever good and likes good deeds while evil (Sharr) although is created by Allah but it is followed first by Satan and then by those who are the followers of Satan. As Allah said, *"And do not follow the footsteps of Satan, surely, he is an open enemy of yours. He commands you to do evil and immodest acts and that you ascribe to Allah what you do not know"*. (Al-Baqarah: 168, 169) So, the fountainhead of evil is Satan.

Concept of Ma'roof & Munkar:

Ma'roof is an Arabic word which means fair, approved and lawful, while Munkar means unfair, disliked and unlawful.

Everything that is ordered or is permissible by Allah and His Messenger is Fair (Ma'roof) and everything forbidden and impermissible by Allah and His Messenger is Unfair (Munkar).

Source of ethical values:

Al-Qur'an and Sunnah.

The holy Prophet has stated the foremost purpose of his being sent down in this world and the method of his call to the people in these words:

"I have been sent only for the purpose of perfecting good morals."

(Al-Muata)

That great message which has left an indelible impression on the history of life, and for propagating which and for bringing people under whose influence Prophet Muhammed (p.b.u.h.) worked ceaselessly. Its purpose was nothing else but to strengthen the moral character of the people so that the world of beauty and perfection may be illuminated before their eyes and they may try to achieve it consciously and with knowledge. All the Islamic compulsory forms of worship are designed as exercises and training to enable people to acquire correct morals and habits and to live righteously, and to adhere to these virtues till the end, whatever be the changes in their circumstances.

Principles of morality:

According to Qur'an and Sunnah, the concept of morality in Islam is just to follow the directions of Qur'an and Sunnah. If Islam bids to do something, just doing it is called as ethics. If Islam forbids from something, to refrain from it is called as ethics.

References:

وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ (الفتح: 29)

And those who are with him (Mohammad, the messenger of Allah) are hard on the disbelievers, compassionate among themselves.

مَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ يُوَضَّعُ فِي الْمِيزَانِ أَثْقَلَ مِنْ حُسْنِ الْأَخْلَاقِ (ترمذی)

There will be nothing heavier put in The Balance more than good ethics.

إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَدْرِكُ بِحُسْنِ خُلُقِهِ دَرَجَةَ قَائِمِ اللَّيْلِ وَ صَائِمِ النَّهَارِ (ابوداود)

Surely, a man can achieve by his good ethics the status of one who performs Salah whole night long and keeps fasts whole day long.

The prophet (PBUH) said:

"By God, he cannot be a Momin; by God, he cannot be a Momin; by God, he cannot be a Momin. He was asked: 'who' He answered: 'He from whose misdeeds his neighbour is not safe.' (Bukhari)

The prophet (PBUH) said:

"A person who believes in Allah and the Here after should speak about good things or else should keep quiet." (Bukhari)

The prophet (PBUH) said:

"One person asked the Prophet: 'O Messenger of Allah a certain woman is very famous for her prayers, fasting and many charities, but she talks rudely with her neighbours. Tell me, what will be her fate?' He replied that she would go to Hell. Then that person asked: 'O Messenger of Allah! Another woman does not do much by way of prayers and fasting; gives pieces of cheese in charity and does not harm her neighbours.' He replied: 'She is of the Paradise.'" (Musnad Ahmad)

Usama bin Shareek says:

"We were sitting in the presence of the Messenger of Allah so quietly as if birds were perched on our heads. Nobody had the courage to open his mouth. In the meanwhile some people came and asked: "Amongst the slaves of God who is the dearest to Him." The Prophet replied: "One who has the best moral character." (Ibn Hibban)