Building Good Character In Muslim Youth: A Way Forward In The Light Of The Fundamentals Of Islamic Ethics

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Abstract

The existence of Islamic ethics holds substantial importance in the development of character building in Muslim youth. If a young mind leads a life according to the fundamentals of Islamic ethics, he is directly obeying Allah’s commands and is following the religion. He feeds his soul with honesty, justice, bravery, and the pursuit of knowledge. Another precedent of obeying these ethics is that an individual can easily avoid the seven deadly sins. This paper discusses the values of Islamic ethics alongside old and modern psychology, philosophy, and the development of young minds (which is not dealt so far in this manner as per the humble knowledge of the researcher). It explains how adapting these ethics can bring peace to oneself and how it helps one to become a more suitable member of society. By widely referencing the

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Qurān, the paper elaborates the punishments and consequences of the seven deadly sins; and how Islam protects against them. This research helps learn the role of Islamic ethics in the character building of young minds and mental health peace within the society.

**Keywords:** Islamic Ethics, Character Building, Psychology, Seven Deadly Sins, Young Mind.

**Introduction**

Islam is said to be a religion of all times where ancient and modern-day psychology prove this idea to be present in all walks of life. Prior to the development of modern day psychology that deals with human behavior, the human relationship with soul has been a subject of exploration and has evolved to be a phenomenon of learning. Islamic Ethics first had a relationship with psychology and now since the current psychology is studied in more depth, a connection between it and Islamic ethics can be seen. To understand the effects of Islamic Ethics in Character Development; both forms of psychology are to be studied in-depth, evaluating their effects with and without its presence. But before that, understanding the root meaning of words is necessary as it will help create a more accurate mind map.

Character Development is an important asset that helps recognize the important virtues within and keeps the society’s eudaimonia intact. Linguistically, the term character has been derived from the Greek language, where charassein means to carve; and in Latin it means psychiatric traits; summing up to denote human nature in general. Those people who have a good character can be referred to as; those people that can assemble their emotional, psychological, and ethical behaviour. Whereas ethics refers to the moral principles that control human behaviour; while philosophers have described it as the science of the human soul, defining the characteristics and means to control them. Moreover, it is argued that by adapting religious ethics; civilizations make best use of life that benefits society.

**Psychology and Islam**

The five fields of Intellectual inquiry in Islam are: teachings through the Quran, Hadith, jurisprudence (‘ilm al fiqah), dialectical theology (ilm al-kalam), philosophy (falsafah), and mysticism (tasawwuf). The mentioned areas talk about the moral problems in detail with varying degree of eminence. The changes in the nature of these fields has left an impact on the scope of ethical discussion in these disciplines and its connection with other topics like metaphysics, psychology, and logic. It connects the concerned topics with guidance, psychology, and ethics, providing principles in a manner that it is easy to be interpreted by anyone interested to learn from it.

The Quran ultimately guides its follower towards contentment, which is dependent upon the betterment of the souls and can be only achieved by ethico-religious practices. Other subjects for example economics, psychology, and politics, are linked to ethics as its background or in a supportive role. Although neither psychology nor any of the other subjects is managed in a conceptual and complex way, and the correlations are not made definite because it is not requisite for ethico-religious practices. This is similar to prophetic traditions, except that it is

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more elaborate since the prophetic traditions are the explanation of the teachings of Allah in the Quran.\(^3\)

The Jurisprudence of early Islamic times has four prime principles: firstly, the religious doings (‘ibadah), then the financial dealing within a society (muamalat), third marriage (nikah), and lastly crimes (jinayat). Islamic Jurisprudence is derived from the Quran and Sunnah; while composing, the jurists considered having the social environment where these laws would prove to be fruitful. The psychological aspect of human existence has also been considered, but it is compared to psychology, in intellect that has nurtured under Islamic values. This role in jurisprudence of psychology is because of these laws that endured for this world’s proper ordering of affairs.

In jurisprudence, psychological concepts are considered to a restricted extent. Namely these are intention (niyya), will (irada), and motive (gharad) and instincts. When specific laws of jurisprudence are formulated, these phenomena are taken into consideration. Islamic Theology aims to defend religious belief in contradiction to innovation and heretical aberrations. This credence is constructed on Quranic and Prophetic traditions as the basis of the well-being in secular and religious affairs. Here lay the source of evil and good, their relationship with God, reason of existence of pain and evil in the world, and whether terms like obligatory / good / may be termed in connection to God’s command / prohibition.\(^4\)

The study of issues in the theological system has condensed in exploring psychological issues. Mental health processes that lead to action- knowledge including power, motive, will etc., have been studied thoroughly. This study is conducted, following the analytical method where theological ethics are considered as analytical ethics in comparison to the philosophical ethics. The Philosophical ethics in Islam from the medieval Muslim philosophers has a relationship between the Greek attitude towards psychology and ethics. Muslim philosophers, complemented the Greek notions with psychological education, derived from Islam and the work of the Sufis.

Sufism is an Islamic discipline that uses psychology more than Islamic philosophy. Sufism’s main aim is to attain happiness in the hereafter and the happiness depends upon the progress of the soul towards the right direction. To attain this progress it is necessary to gain understanding about the nature of the soul, its purpose, its return and the reason why it will be reunited with the body. A substantial utilization of psychology is perceived in the writings of al Ghazali in which sacred passages on different psychological themes have been dedicated to psychological discussions (knowledge of ethics, deep psychology, and metaphysical foundations).\(^5\)

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\(^3\) Adibah Binti Abdul Rahim, “Understanding Islamic Ethics and Its Significance on the Character Building”, *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 2013, pp. 508-513


The use of psychological teachings in ethics of philosophers and Sufis is divided into two groups. Firstly, the understanding of an ethical system, where theories serve as a background for ethical teachings, or they are more directly involved. The second category enlists psychological teachings that are associated to specific fragments of an ethical system. Psychological teachings of the second type are different yet important; some are vital to morals while the rest only enhance the significance. Psychological theories that are involved in Sufi or Philosophical ethics are: theory of the soul as a substance, dualism, interactionism, theory of circular relationship between the soul-body, and theory of faculties of the soul.6

The western philosophers and psychologists have expounded these aspects; however, the Muslim moralists have not done it in the same way. Muslim philosophers and Sufis have deduced the moral goal and how it can be achieved. The idea of perpetual existence of the soul after death is taken very seriously by the Sufis. The ultimate goal taught is the development of the soul in a positive direction, so that the ethics of the soul can be recognized. Psychological dualism is the same feature of body and soul as a substance where the soul and the body are in opposition in terms of their states, qualities, and essence (body being an instrument while soul is the real person). This concept of Aristotle and Peripatetic comprehend the human body as a prison house of the soul.7

Muslim Thinkers believe that since the soul is a separate entity, thus, the highest goal should be to live an intellect-devoted life, which is the essence of the soul.8 The Sufis continue all practical, theoretical, and moral efforts for the improvement of the soul. Both Sufis and philosophers argue that the body must be treated well so that the soul develops. All that has been mentioned concerning psychology, a question arises regarding the two schools of behaviourism and psychoanalysis. An answer can be obtained by endeavored with the disagreement and agreement of Islamic Principles and Modern psychology.

Modern psychology has detrimental features towards Islamic ethics. It teaches that preceding events determine human actions and denies the existence of a soul which survives the death of the body. This is the reason that a soul cannot be experimented upon and modern psychoanalysis shows all religious beliefs are elaborated psychologically. However, there are modern Psychology theories that agree with Islamic ethics that are useful to educate the youth with the moral and religious guidance such as the theory of self-realization / self-development which suggests that impulses and instincts in humans are there to attend his desires.

All aspects of character development play a role to discover a harmonized manifestation in a person’s life. This process is different from repression of instincts to a point of its extinction. Thus, the idea of a flawlessly developed character there is not complete freedom nor extinction; but is to keep alignment with Islamic instructions. Psychoanalytic is another theory which deals with the treatment of mental abnormality. One of the very steps has similarity to the methods

of correcting evil characters, mentioned by Muslim Philosophers. According to Sufis and Moral philosophers, it is claimed that for curing moral disease within the soul, evil or vice character traits; initially the reasons have to be identified and later these causes have to be removed using appropriate means.\(^9\)

Apart from this, there are many other degrees of modern psychology that agree with Islam, for example, theories of individual’s natural development, learning and habit formation. Impact of environmental atmosphere upon development of character, and amendment of evil habits, are possible by the formation of positive conduct. If an individual has inclination towards negative habits, the solution is to amend those practices by replacing them with good ones. Henry Sidgwick, on psychology relating to the western ethics, argued about ethics belonging to a portion of psychology.\(^10\) A related conclusion can be deduced on the connection that exists amongst Islamic ethics, as well as psychology.

How Islamic Ethics Bring Inner and Outer Peace

INNER PEACE

Muslims who are in dire need of inner peace or who are in discomfort will usually look for guidance in Islamic teachings as they need their questions to be addressed and answered promptly. Islam does play a vital role in bringing satisfaction in the lives of Muslims; however, it is only possible if they are sincerely indulging in the beliefs, worship, abstaining from what is forbidden, and following the fard (obligatory) practices. This does not mean that Muslims are not allowed to have an opinion of their own, in fact, it means that they should carry out all their activities by keeping in mind that they are doing it only for the sake of worshipping and being grateful to Allah alone. As the Holy Quran states: “O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient.” [2:153]\(^11\) Constantly remembering and being in the state of gratitude towards Allah will make it easier for those Muslims who find themselves divided between worldly affairs and faith, since they have found a purpose in this life. Moreover, living life with a purpose will also make the hereafter worth living and all the sacrifices of this world will also be paid-off fairly. Moreover, living a life with that sole purpose and reward in mind will bring inner peace and Muslims will be able to understand the concept of life. The Quran states: “And you will remember what I say to you, and I entrust my affair to Allah. Indeed, Allah (is) All-Seer of (His) slaves.”(40:44)\(^12\) Nowadays, Muslims find Islam confusing due to the lack of implementation of Islam ethics in their daily lives and because of cultural differences of various nations in the world. One can always consult Quran and Sunnah (Hadiths), and even authentic Muslim scholars who can answer their questions and guide them towards the straight path.\(^13\)

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\(^10\) Vahidvazhakkad Vahidmanu, “Psychology in Islamic Ethics”, Academia, 1981, pp. 213-227

\(^11\) Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 153

\(^12\) Surah Ghafir, Verse 44

\(^13\) Dr. Rabia Malik, “Islamic Ethics and Psychology”, Research Center for Islamic Legislation and Ethics, 2020
OUTER PEACE
This part deals with how a person tackles the worldly affairs by keeping in mind all the religious beliefs and dealing with all the tough and easy phases of life, either by being grateful or only praying and asking Allah about all our situations. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) is a perfect example and role model for us to follow. In a sahih hadith by Muwatta Malik, it was reported that the Holy Prophet said: “I have been sent to perfect good character.” Furthermore, if a person is just and he does not do anything wrong in this world with anyone, he will surely attain peace in this life and Allah will also send blessings in his life. Similarly, even if things are not according to the wishes of a person, if he has faith, he will look at things with a positive mindset and he will mostly believe that whatever is happening, it is due to the will of Allah and there might be something beneficial for him in it. Any Muslim with such belief will most likely be calm and he will think and ask Allah before doing anything. The Holy Quran proclaims: “Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest.” (13:28)

Becoming Functioning Members of Society by Implementing Islamic Ethics
Islam is a complete code of life and all the Islamic principles, provided to mankind, are a diverse and concrete set of guidelines that instruct them to become an active member of the society by following said principles. These principles are for mankind so that they know how to better differentiate between good and evil. Not only that but these principles advocate the idea that mankind should be better in sync with themselves, their souls and most importantly the people that are surrounding them, their community. The holy book of Quran, which, in itself, is a complete book of guidelines, encourages and advises mankind to maintain high standards of social ethics for the betterment of every living being put on this planet earth.

In a paper by Fazlur Rahman on “The Status of the Individual in Islam”, Rahman claims that Muslims and non-Muslims, both groups agree on the fact that Islam is a religion that highlights the importance of society and how it is crucial for an individual to actively interact in a community rather than living life individualistically. He states that Islam, in its essence, is a “social religion” and it primarily encourages mankind to exist collectively.

The teachings of Quran and Sunnah have always put immense importance on the fact that in order to live a complete and gratified life, an individual must know or learn how to engage with their community while maintaining high standards of ethics. Only then can one become a functioning part of the society.

In an article by Yueqin Liu on “The Coordination Function of Islamic Ethics in Transforming Islamic Societies”, Liu states, “Islam believes that creating a harmonious relationship between human beings is an implication of creating harmony between man and Allah”.

This claim by Liu aligns with the Islamic concept of Haqooq-ul-Ibad (rights and duties of the creations of God, Allah Almighty). This Islamic concept highlights that one soul has some rights

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14 Source: al-Muwatta 1614
15 Surah Ar-Ra’d, Verse 28
17 Yueqin Liu, “The Coordination Function of Islamic Ethics in Transforming Islamic Societies”, Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia), 2011, pp. 17-36
and duties over the other and they are expected to fulfill these duties by interacting in the most positive and reasonable way possible so as to achieve the highest level of piety, and only then can they have a strong connection with God, Allah Almighty.

Adding on, it is repeatedly mentioned in Quran and Sunnah that one must maintain all levels of respect and tolerance for other living beings, and that every individual deserves respect despite their caste, color, and creed. “A Muslim is a brother to another” narrated by Abdullah Ibn Umar, a companion of the holy prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

A theoretical concept that also advocates this stance is Ummat ul-Islam, meaning “The collective community of Islamic people all over the world” and all Muslim are to stay united despite their divisions, i.e., nation, race, and class. Though this concept is restricted to only Muslim communities, but all Muslims are also encouraged to engage with individuals from different religions without any bias, as Islam is a religion of equality, peace, and prosperity. The Quran says, “There is no compulsion in religion” (2: 256)

To summarize, Islamic ethics provide us with all the tools to become a better part of the community so as to have a positive impact on the society and the world at large. Having interpersonal relationships is a major part of being a Muslim and so it is highly encouraged in Islam.

**Islamic Ethics vs The Seven Deadly Sins**

A major sin in Islam refers to something that is forbidden by Allah and His Messenger in the Quran and Sunnah. As narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim in a sahih hadith, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) describes the seven deadly sins that inevitably dooms a person to Hell:

The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Avoid the seven great destructive sins." They (the people!) asked, "O Allah’s Apostle! What are they?" He said, "To join partners in worship with Allah; to practice sorcery; to kill the life which Allah has forbidden except for a just cause (according to Islamic law); to eat up usury (Riba), to eat up the property of an orphan; to give one’s back to the enemy and fleeing from the battle-field at the time of fighting and to accuse chaste women who never even think of anything touching chastity and are good believers."

**Shirk**

Shirk means associating partners with Allah, and indeed it is the greatest of all sins. It goes against the fundamental core of a Muslim’s faith, i.e., “Tawhid” or Oneness of Allah. Shirk can be divided into two categories:

1. Ash-Shirk al-Akbar (The major shirk)
2. Ash-Shirk al-Asghar (The minor shirk)

Ash-Shirk al-Akbar refers to worshipping something or someone other than Allah and is a common practice in Idolatry and Polytheism. Those who commit this Major Shirk will never be forgiven as the Holy Quran states:

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18 Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 256
19 Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 6857, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 89
“Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And he who associates others with Allah has certainly fabricated a tremendous sin.” (Verse 4:48)  

These people will have all their good deeds wiped away and abode in Hell. Ash-Shirk al-Asghar, however, is linked with the heart, i.e., worshipping Allah and doing good deeds just to find praise and fame from people. Examples include showing off your good deeds on purpose for the sake of validation from people and not for the sake of Allah. Another example would be to swear by other than Allah, such as ‘I swear by my mother’ or ‘I swear by my child’ etc. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) has said: “Whoever swears (makes oath) by other than Allah has committed shirk.” (Sahih hadith, narrated by Ahmad, Abu Dawood, al-Tirmidhi)  

Hence, Islam promotes monotheism and Oneness of Allah in Muslims so that it gives individual’s a purpose and a sense of understanding of God’s creations. Moreover, Tawhid brings serenity and peace to the mind, as well as purifies the heart. Individuals get a sense of clarity since they know the meaning of their creation is to worship Allah and live in accordance with His rules (Aqeedah Tawhid). The Holy Quran supports this by saying: “And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.” Furthermore, it unites the entire Ummah together under one message and establishes peace and prosperity in society, preventing the internal chaos of existential crisis and engaging the mind to see Allah’s creation for themselves. “Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding.” (3:190)  

**Practicing Witchcraft**  
Also known as ‘sihr’, sorcery is also a kind of shirk since it involves worshipping jinns and misguiding people. It should be noted that magic is different from miracles, and black magic only causes harm and creates illusions. As the Holy Quran mentions:  

“And they followed [instead] what the devils had recited during the reign of Solomon. It was not Solomon who disbelieved, but the devils disbelieved, teaching people magic and that which was revealed to the two angels at Babylon, Harut and Marut. But the two angels do not teach anyone unless they say, “We are a trial, so do not disbelieve [by practicing magic].” And [yet] they learn from them that by which they cause separation between a man and his wife. But they do not harm anyone through it except by permission of Allah. And the people learn what harms them and does not benefit them. But the Children of Israel certainly knew that whoever purchased the magic would not have in the Hereafter any share. And wretched is that for which they sold themselves, if they only knew.” (2:102)  

Islam condemns any kind of magic, including horoscopes and fortune-telling, because no one has the knowledge of the future except for Allah, and those who claim that they do are
deceiving people. The Holy Prophet said: "If I had the knowledge of the unseen, I should have secured abundance for myself, and no evil would have touched me" (Holy Quran 7:188)²⁶

This verse highlights that even prophets did not know what the future would hold. And although many messengers were blessed with miracles, such as how Prophet Abraham was saved miraculously from the fire by Allah who made the flames cool and peaceful; Moses could separate the sea with his staff, and Jesus could heal the blind, lepers and bring the dead back to life. These miracles were all used to denote the existence of God and help humanity, whereas magic is deceptive and can only cause harm to others. Such disbelievers who have strayed the righteous path will not be able to enter Paradise, no matter how much they repent. The Holy Prophet also advises Muslims to recite the Verse of the Throne (Ayat-ul-Kursi) each time after every obligatory prayer to protect themselves from magic. The translation is as follows:

"Allah! There is no God save Him, the Alive, and the Eternal. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. Unto Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Who is he that intercedes with Him save by His leave? He knows that which is in front of them and that which is behind them, while they encompass nothing of His knowledge save what He will. His chair encompasses the heavens and the earth, and He is never weary of preserving them. He is the sublime, the Tremendous" (2:255)²⁷.

**Killing A Life Unjustly**

Allah the Almighty has honored man by breathing life into him and placing him superior to all the other creations in the heavens and earth. Therefore, as Muslims, we should appreciate God’s creation and admire His magnificence. Yet, at what point does taking life becomes permissible? The Holy Quran says: “And do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden, except by right.” (Verse 17:33)²⁸ It is narrated that the Holy Prophet (pbuh) permitted the right to take souls on certain conditions, as reported:

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “It is not permissible to spill the blood of a Muslim except in three [instances]: the married person who commits adultery, a life for a life, and the one who forsakes his religion and separates from the community.” [Al-Bukhari] [Muslim]²⁹

However, Islam condemns mindless bloodshed and reiterates the importance of the preservation and protection of life. Allah has set out a great punishment to those who take away life unlawfully³⁰, as stated in the Holy Quran: “But whoever kills a believer intentionally - his recompense is Hell, wherein he will abide eternally, and Allah has become angry with him and has cursed him and has prepared for him a great punishment.” (Verse 4:93)³¹

In addition, the Holy Prophet has declared killing a believer as one of the gravest of sins:

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²⁶ Surah Al-‘araf, Verse 188  
²⁷ Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 255  
²⁸ Chapter (17) sūrat l-isrā (The Night Journey), verse 33  
²⁹ Al-Bukhari, Muslim, “40 Hadith an-Nawawi”, Hadith no. 14  
³¹ Chapter (4) sūrat l-nisāa (The Women), verse 43
"If this world were to be destroyed, that would be less significant before Allah than the unlawful killing of a believer." [Ibn Majah] 32

Similarly, killing a non-Muslim living under the protection of a Muslim ruler is also condemned. `Abdullah bin `Amr narrated that the Holy Prophet (pbuh) said: “Whoever killed a Mu'ahid (a person who is granted the pledge of protection by the Muslims) shall not smell the fragrance of Paradise though its fragrance can be smelt at a distance of forty years (of traveling).” [Al-Bukhari] 33

Moreover, this applies to committing suicide as well, as Allah warns us against this by stating: “And do not kill yourselves [or one another]. Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful.” (4:29)34 So, we should be thankful for our lives and express gratitude to God for everything he has given us. When we open the Quran, the first chapter starts with ‘Alhamdullilah’ which means “praise be to God”, but in reality, it is another way of expressing gratitude in our daily lives. When someone asks us how our day went, Muslims usually reply with “Alhamdullilah.” In this way, Islam teaches us to be thankful throughout the day, from waking up to eating to drinking water etc., hence, our lives revolve around portraying gratitude towards Allah. The evidence is supported by chapter 55 of the Holy Quran titled Surah Ar-Rahman, as Allah repeats the same question thirty-one times, “So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?” (55:61)35

Consuming Riba (Interest)
Riba (Usuary or Interest) refers to unreasonably high interest rates. Islam has banned practicing Riba as it is used to make exploitive gains from business and trade. Moreover, there are two types of Riba:

1. Riba An Nasiyah
2. Riba Al Fadl

Riba An Nasiyah is the excess amount given above the principle amount on a loan or cash, while Riba Al Fadl is the overcompensation, without any consideration, from a sale of goods. This means that we should exchange goods according to the equal market value of the commodity. The Holy Prophet has clarified this by saying:

“Sell gold in exchange of equivalent gold, sell silver in exchange of equivalent silver, sell dates in exchange of equivalent dates, sell wheat in exchange of equivalent wheat, sell salt in exchange of equivalent salt, sell barley in exchange of equivalent barley, but if a person transacts in excess, it will be Riba. However, sell gold for silver anyway, you please on the condition, it is hand-to-hand and sell barley for date anyway, you please on the condition, it is hand-to-hand.” [Muslim]36

32 Sunan Ibn Majah, Hadith no. 2617
33 Sahih al-Bukhari 6914
34 Surah An-Nisa, verse 29
35 Surah Ar-Rahman, verse 61
36 Sunan an-Nasa’i 4560
Allah has strongly condemned this act since it spews greed and unlawful desires at the expense of others. The Holy Quran accentuates this fact several times, such as in Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 275:

“Those who consume interest cannot stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except as one stands who is being beaten by Satan into insanity. That is because they say, “Trade is [just] like interest.” But Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest. So whoever has received an admonition from his Lord and desists may have what is past, and his affair rests with Allah. But whoever returns to [dealing in interest or usury] – those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein.” (2:275)37

Therefore, Islam teaches believers to resist the temptation of Greed and remain humble in accordance with the rules of Allah. The practice will eventually develop steadfastness and remove materialistic desires, as the believers know this world is only a trial period to test our faith and the temptations are the obstacles we must persevere through. Indeed, Allah is ever Merciful, and he rewards the believer who spends his wealth in the way of Allah (by giving Zakat). Not only does giving Zakat help create a sense of brotherhood and humility between individuals, but it also creates economic equality and abolishes classes in society. And for this act, Allah writes the reward in Surah Ar-Rum: “And whatever you give for interest to increase within the wealth of people will not increase with Allah. But what you give in Zakat, desiring the countenance of Allah - those are the multipliers.” (30:39)38

Devouring An Orphan’s Wealth

There is great emphasis on protecting and taking care of orphans in Islam, since they are weak and vulnerable. Moreover, protecting their property and wealth is of even greater importance as children cannot look after it themselves. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) was himself an orphan and instructs us to take care of children who do not have their parents or fathers. Yet, those who possess an orphan’s wealth for themselves will be severely punished by Allah with fire in their stomachs, as written in Surah Al-Nisa:

“Indeed, those who devour the property of orphans unjustly are only consuming into their bellies fire. And they will be burned in a Blaze (i.e., Hellfire)” (4:10)39

Similarly, exchanging one’s defective possessions with an orphan’s good possessions is a major sin and will not be forgiven on the Day of Judgement.

“And give to the orphans their properties and do not substitute the defective [of your own] for the good [of theirs]. And do not consume their properties into your own. Indeed, that is ever a great sin” (4:2)40

Furthermore, betraying an orphan’s trust and suppressing them will result in their children having the same fate as the orphan’s. The Quran states:

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37 Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 275
38 Surah Ar-Rum, verse 39
39 Surah An-Nisa, verse 10
40 Surah An-Nisa, verse 2
“And let those [executors and guardians] fear [injustice] as if they [themselves] had left weak offspring behind and feared for them. So let them fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice” (4:9)

Thus, it is crucial to take full responsibility of an orphan and his wealth if one is their guardian. We should treat the orphans like our own children and hand them back their property once they become adults. Allah blesses the person who raises an orphan properly and the individual elevates his status in the eyes of Allah. In addition, taking care of an orphan softens a person’s heart and makes them kinder and gentler. A story by Abu Huraira supports this claim when he reported that a man came to the Messenger of Allah to complain about the hardness of his heart. The Holy Prophet advised him by saying: “If you want to soften your heart, feed the poor and pat the head of the orphan.” Moreover, taking care of an orphan is a continuous form of charity, even after death. The Holy Prophet said: “When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: sadaqah jariyah (a continuous charity), or knowledge from which benefit is gained, or a righteous child who prays for him.” [Muslim]

Fleeing From the Battlefield

Islam allows believers to go at war when their peace and religion is threatened by a growing oppressor. However, if someone flees from the battlefield and runs away in times of need, it could affect the troops’ morale and cause them to lose battle. And indeed, such cowardice and treachery is a major sin in Islam. The Quran states: “O you who have believed, when you meet those who disbelieve advancing [for battle], do not turn to them your backs [in flight].” (8:15)

When we think of fighting in the name of Allah, we think of the word “Jihad.” The literal meaning of Jihad is to “exert oneself” and the religious meaning is to exert our power at the utmost capacity in the cause of Allah. To protect and preserve an ummah’s life, religion, progeny, intellect, and property, one must go at war if no negotiations could be made with the enemy. The Quran highlights that there are two types of wars: one for the sake of Allah and the other for the sake of evil. As indicated below:

“Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the cause of Taghut. So fight against the allies of Satan. Indeed, the plot of Satan has ever been weak.” (4:76)

Hence, when a believer goes to battle, he must remain steadfast and have full faith in Allah to help him in battle. In addition, his attitude should not be boastful or proud, and he must be fully aware of the cause he is fighting for. These Islamic principles help bring unity among Muslims on the battlefield and a sense of purpose. Not to mention, fighting alongside each other will inculcate courage, bravery, dignity, and honor; and Allah will reward these individuals for their fearlessness. The Holy Quran affirms this by saying:

41 Surah An-Nisa, verse 9
42 Source: Musnad Ahmad 7576
43 Reference: Riyad as-Salihin 1383
44 Surah Al-Anfal, verse 15
45 Muslim, “THE BOOK OF JIHAD AND EXPEDITION (Translated by Abdul Hamid Siddiqui)”, Routledge, 2019, Book 19
46 Surah An-Nisa, verse 76
“Indeed, those who have believed and those who have emigrated and fought in the cause of Allah - those expect the mercy of Allah. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” (2:218)

“And never think of those who have been killed in the cause of Allah as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision,” (3:169)

**Accusing Chaste Women of Adultery**

The Islamic Law (Shariah) sets down a heavy penalty for adultery and fornication, a punishment of hundred lashes each. This process is only done by going through proper legislation in accordance with the law. Therefore, it should be noted that Islam does encourage severe punishments, rather it is a code of life that establishes these rules to protect people from grave sins and promote a clean and morally pure way of life. However, slandering chaste and virtuous women is a grave sin because a person is wrongfully accusing them of a crime they never did. Such accusers are also known as liars, unbelievers, hypocrites, oppressors, polytheists, mischief-makers, perjurers etc. Allah says: “Verily, those who accuse chaste women, who never even think of anything touching their chastity and are good believers – are cursed in this life and in the Hereafter, and for them will be a great torment” (24:23).

Allah has warned all believers to be aware of their thoughts and actions, as evil thoughts, and deeds seep in gradually and unknowingly. The Holy Quran states:

“O you who have believed, do not follow the footsteps of Satan. And whoever follows the footsteps of Satan - indeed, he enjoins immorality and wrongdoing. And if not for the favor of Allah upon you and His mercy, not one of you would have been pure, ever, but Allah purifies whom He wills, and Allah is Hearing and Knowing.” (24:21)

As a result of Satan’s temptations, the Liar speaks false accusations with no repercussions. Consequently, lack of trust, suspicions, and doubts spread throughout the Muslim community and every individual starts suspecting each other; the wife doubts the husband, the husband doubts the wife, and people doubt their legitimacy. Hence, it stains the reputation of the community. To protect people’s honor and prevent the spread of false accusations, Allah has set a huge punishment for the deceivers as stated in the Holy Quran: “And those who accuse chaste women and then do not produce four witnesses - lash them with eighty lashes and do not accept from them testimony ever after. And those are the defiantly disobedient,” (24:4).

Moreover, on the Day of Judgement, it is stated in the Holy Quran that the accuser will have every limb of their body speak against him and testify the truth:

“On the day when their tongues and their hands and their feet testify against them as to what they used to do.” (24:24)

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47 Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 218
48 Surah Al-Imran, verse 169
49 Surah An-Nur, verse 23
50 Surah An-Nur, verse 21
52 Surah An-Nur, verse 4
53 Surah An-Nur, verse 24
Thus, as Muslims, we should refrain from lying and wrongfully accusing someone of any type of crime. Such hypocrisy only corrupts the heart and soul and fills the mind with negativity. As such, we should make it a trait to be honest and uphold justice in society. Islam emphasizes to not only speak the truth, but to stay in the company of truthful people and make it a social obligation to support truthful people and social justice advocates. Allah blesses the truthful and righteous as stated in the Holy Quran:

“And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger - those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favor of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions.” (4:69)

Although staying virtuous and abstaining from these sins may sound impossible as humans are gullible creatures and prone to making mistakes, we should still strengthen our faith and pray to Allah to protect us from all evils, whether big or small. Indeed, by fearing the punishment of such sins and following the Islamic ethics in our daily lives, we would be nobler and more virtuous Muslims in the eyes of Allah. And may Allah guide us to the right path (Ameen).

Conclusion

The religion of Islam that has been around for centuries and brought light into the world during dark ages. The Islamic ethics impacted the world in the most positive way possible and acted as “pearls of wisdom” in every era. These are not for only Muslims but for all humanity. Islamic ethics enlightened us about good and evil, permitted and forbidden, and so protected mankind from all kinds of evil and will continue to do so till the end of time. Only condition is to follow these principles not only for your own sake but for the sake of humanity and for the sake of Allah SWT, the Creator and Lord of all creations. Islamic ethics have the power to shape the character of a person as they align with many variations of ancient and modern-day psychological concepts that mankind is now aware of. Islam is a religion of peace and teaches us about inner and outer peace, integrity, equality, justice, bravery, and all that is needed for mankind in order for them to function as a positive part of the society and make the world a better place. Though Islam does encourage harsh punishments, the teachings of Quran and Sunnah make it thoroughly clear that those who do evil and/or committed sins will be justly punished and those who do good things and are obedient will be rewarded, either in this world or the Day of Judgment.

The seven deadly sins (shirk, witchcraft, Riba, Usurping an Orphan's Property, fleeing from the Battlefield and accusing someone of adultery) are an obstacle in our path towards become what Islamic ethics expect or require from us and they hinder our ability to be better humans and so are forbidden. To accomplish, Islamic ethics provide with logical explanation to everything and so play a significant role in shaping of human character. Not only by following these ethics a person is working for the cause of Allah SWT (Fi sabillillah) but they are also working for the betterment of the society which will in-turn rejuvenate their minds and their souls.

54 Surah An-Nisa, verse 69
Bibliography


