

## CHAPTER 5

### AKHLAQ (MORALITY)

#### Meaning of akhlaq

Akhlaq is the plural of the word **khuluq**, which means *behavior whether good or bad*. Technically, akhlaq refers to the standard behavior or code of conduct which an individual is expected to uphold or observe according to his or her society.

#### Dynamics of Khuluq

There are two dynamics of Khuluq as explained below:

*Husnul-khul* means good behavior that earn a person rewards if performed. For example, helping the needy, visiting the sick, reciting Quran among others.

*Suul-khuluq* means bad behavior that can earn a person a sin if committed. For example, telling lies, backbiting, calling others offensive nicknames etc.

#### Essentials, Principles and the basic component of Islamic Morality

Morality in Islam centers on certain basic beliefs and principles as follows:

- a) Allah (S.W.T) is the creator and source of all goodness, truth and beauty.
- b) Man is a responsible, dignified and honorable agent of Allah (S.W.T).
- c) Allah (S.W.T) has put everything in the heavens and the earth in the service of mankind.
- d) By His Mercy and Wisdom, Allah (S.W.T) does not expect the impossible from man or hold him accountable for anything beyond his power.
- e) Moderation, practicality and balance are guarantees of high integrity and sound morality.
- f) All things are permissible in principle except what is singled out as obligatory, which must be observed, and what is singled out as forbidden, which must be avoided.
- g) Man's ultimate responsibility is to worship Allah (S.W.T) and his highest goal is to earn the pleasure of his Creator.

- h) Islam abolishes all inequalities based on race, color of skin, ethnicity, language and place of birth.
- i) Islam encourages good relationship with neighbors as weapon of maintaining peace, justice and tranquility.
- j) Man must acquire the highest degree of patience, truthfulness, as well as forgiveness so as to be successful both on Earth and Hereafter.

### Dimensions of Islamic morality

Islamic morality is measured in two ways as discussed below:

#### a) Maaroofaat [the virtues]

These are good habits, deeds or practices which Islam acknowledges them as good and therefore, are permitted in Islam. They could be in the form of actions, gestures or statement which are decent.

### Examples of maaroofaat

The following are Examples of Maarufat:

- a) Visiting the sick: A Muslim should pay a visit to both Muslim and non-Muslim sick members of the society.
- b) Escorting the deceased to the grave.
- c) Assisting the needy, orphan and the poor, for example feeding them.
- d) Honoring the aged members of the society regardless of their religion.
- e) Trustworthiness (al-amaana): Muslims have to be people who keep their words in any promise, contracts among others.
- f) Al-Qanaa: Having contentment with whatever Allah (S.W.T) has decreed for him/her.
- g) Having self-control, self-esteem and self-discipline whether in public or privacy.
- h) Talking only when it is necessary, and it should be truth and words of decency.
- i) Having hayaa (modesty) in committing indecent acts.
- j) Having sabr (Patience): Muslims are expected to be the most patient people.
- k) Tranquility (having sakina): Muslims are expected to exhibit a sense of calmness during the period of panic.

- l) Al-hilmu: Muslims are to be kind, humble and polite to everything and everyone.
- m) Cleanliness (nadhafah): Muslims must observe cleanliness of body, clothes and place at all times.
- n) Birul-waalideyn: Muslims have to take care and be kind to their parents.
- o) Radu-salaam: Greeting and salutation among Muslims should be their daily routine.
- p) Al-adala: Doing justice between two people, group or even states.
- q) Helping a person loading and offloading goods.
- r) Removing of harmful things that may injure a passer-by from the road.

#### b) Munkaraat [the vices]

These are all kinds of bad habits, practices or deeds that are prohibited in Islam. These vices can be in the form of actions gestures or statements. Allah (S.W.T) has prohibited all forms of Munkaraat whether practiced in the open or in secrecy.

### Examples of Munkaraat

The following are Examples of Munkaraat:

- (i) Al-kibrwatafaakhur: Arrogance and pride.
- (ii) An-nameema: Backbiting, Slander and gossips.
- (iii) Al-kidhbu: Telling lies.
- (iv) Suul-laqab: Calling one another by offensive nicknames.
- (v) Khiyaana: Not appreciating and having a sense of Dissatisfaction and lack of contentment.
- (vi) Sukhriyat: Looking down upon others because of tribe, class or wealth, race etc.
- (vii) Being tarthar: Being talkative.
- (viii) Al-tajassus: Spying on others' affairs.
- (ix) Adh-dhani: Wishful thinking.
- (x) Ghamz wal-ramz: Using signs in talking about people.
- (xi) Qat-ul rahimi: Disintegration with one's family members.
- (xii) Al-khamru: Consumption of alcohol as well as Drug and substance abuse
- (xiii) Al-maisir: Gambling and games of chances.
- (xiv) Any talks or deeds attached to all forms of sexual perversions.

## Major crimes

Crimes that which are taken to be major and most serious include the following:

1. Muder: Killing
2. Zinaa: Fornication and adultery.
3. Al-khamru: Consumption of alcohol.
4. Damage someone's body.
5. Stealing and highway robbery.
6. Losing morals and chastity.

## Significance of Islamic morality

The following are some of the importance of Islamic morality:

- Islamic morality is meant to build in the human being a sound mind and body and a peaceful soul.
- To enforce the implementation of Islamic laws in the society, therefore virtues keep on prevail.
- It makes a Muslim have a distinctive Islamic personality when interacting with others and thus maintains conditions in which peace and justice may flourish.
- Islamic moral values are meant to cultivate in a Muslim the best character in the most whole some manner.
- It strengthens the bonds between human beings and Allah thus developing a strong *taqwa* (piety) that makes a Muslim to strive in earning Allah's pleasures.
- Islamic morality guards the Muslims external behaviors and his manifest deeds to be in line with Allah (S.W.T) and the teachings of Islam and thus eradicate evils and disorder in all their forms.
- It promotes positive thinking by guiding individual Muslims to be occupied with constructive ideas and serious pursuits of how to lead a positive life on this earth and the hereafter.
- It discourages a Muslim from practicing prohibitions such as use of intoxicants.
- The Munkaraat have been prohibited by Allah (S.W.T) for the spiritual and mental wellbeing of man as well as for the moral and material benefit of humanity.

- It promotes peace and harmony in the society in that the prohibitions discourage vices.
- It generates affection and respect between the members of the family and the society in general hence promoting brotherhood.
- Allah has promised rewards for those who abide by the Islamic morals and avoid evils deeds.

### **Amr bilMa'rufWaNahyi Anil Munkar (Enjoining good and forbidding evil)**

Allah says, *"Let there arise in you a group of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity."* [Q: 3:104]

The prophet (P.B.U.H) also emphasize on the importance of morals in a hadith reported by Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri who says that the messenger of Allah says, *"He of you who sees an abomination should change it with his hand; if he could not, then with his tongue; if he could not, then in his heart; and this is the faintest in faith."* (Muslim).

### **Teachings of the above Qur'anic verse and the Hadith of the Prophet**

1. To educate the public against evils is a duty of each and every person.
2. It is very important to keep off evil so that we can preserve the purity of the soul and have it more concentrated on performing ibadah.
3. Muslims should keep reminding each other of the good things expected from them for it is the only way of attaining success.
4. Those who commit crimes should be reported to the relevant authority for them to be rehabilitated.
5. Man is the khalif (vice-gerent) of Allah on Earth and thus is responsible of ensuring that Allah's commandments are implemented.
6. Performing of a good deed makes one to earn thawab, while a bad deed is a sin and deserves punishment.

## Morality based on iman and swalihah

The Islamic morality has the following essential concepts as much as imaan (faith) and swalihah (righteous deeds) of Muslims are concerned.

- The good morals of anybody are shaped by the faith that he or she possesses and the dutifulness towards his creator.
- Good deeds that are not accompanied with Iman are known to have no reward before Allah.
- One's obedience to Allah's commandments always leads him or her to righteous deeds.
- Morality must be understood as part and parcel of the actual behavior in the practice of daily Islamic worship.
- Iman and Swalihah cannot be separated because they are interdependent in their functioning.