

Introduction

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Peace and blessings be upon Muhammad and his pure immaculate family

Ethics is the discipline concerned with what is morally good and bad, right and wrong. It occupies a remarkable position among the other disciplines because of its significant subject and high principle. The noble traits are the only means that achieves the high senses of humanity and perfection. The bad manners, on the other hand, deform man and line him up with beasts.

Not only do moralities have influence on individuals, but also they creep into nations to reflect their modes of life and levels of development or retraction. Many historical events have proved that moral corruption has been the destructive axe that ruined civilizations.

As a proof of the significance of morality is that Prophet Muhammad (S)¹ considered morality as the aim of his Divine mission: He (S) said:

“I was appointed for Prophethood so that I may accomplish moral perfection.”

This is the very purpose at which ethics aims through its regulations and standards that discipline the individuals' consciences, rectify their moralities, and guide to the reputable conduct and ideal behavior.

The courses of ethical researches vary among the past and present scholars. Some go beyond the limits to make the matter dull and inapplicable. Others subjugate it to their personal traditions, surroundings, and habits to divest it of the traits of perfection. This in fact makes such courses different and unfit to be the immortal ethical constitution for humankind.

Thorough comparative studies, it is clearly noticeable that the best course in this regard is the Islamic that is taken from the holy Quran and the moralities of the Ahlul-Bayt² (a)³. This course is characterized by moderation, genuineness of principal, and suitableness to the different ages and ideas. Because of its distinctive features, it is the one and only course that takes people, on both levels of individuals and communities, towards ethical perfection and high moral standards in such an exciting style

prepossessing minds and hearts and achieving perfection in shorter time and easier way. Furthermore, it represents the excellence of the divine revelation as well as the wisdom of the Ahlul-Bayt (a) who progressed in the light of that revelation and understood its concepts to present it in the form of expressive wisdom, high trait, and nonesuch moral lessons whose illumination and purity focus on souls to clean and light them through virtuous concepts.

On that account, I loved and inclined to that course and was encouraged to plan this message with all of its researches on its guidance.

If some people will be guided and others will not, this will definitely not cause any defect to the instructions of the Islamic course. This will be ascribed to the variation of people's natures and readiness to accept the concepts of guidance.

It is quite unfortunate to see Muslims, after having been the leaders of nations and pioneers to virtues, lose their positions because of their deviation from the moralities of Islam. Thus, they have been plunging in humble manners of moral corruption. They are required, if they intend to regain their dignity and good reputation, to restudy their huge moral heritage. If they do so, they will reacquire people's trust and admiration and will be "the best of the nations raised up for (the benefit of) men."

Such a precious hope cannot be attained without the cooperation of the sincere personalities in the fields of enlightening and enjoining Muslims to adhere to the Islamic moralities as well as publicizing its constructive concepts to present them in an attractive way so as to incite people to study and follow. This hope insisted on me to write down this book and plan it on the focus of the following features:

- This work does not comprise the entire scope of ethics. It only includes its most important topics that affect people's lives most. I did my best to avoid scientific terms and mysterious expressions, and presented the matter in a strong clear-cut style.
- I chose [hadiths](#) and narratives that are recorded in the most reliable reference books.
- I paid, as much as possible, attention to the advantages of the noble traits and disadvantages of the bad manners in addition to the reference to their spiritual and material effects on both the individuals and communities.

It is worth mentioning that moderation is the ethical criterion in evaluating the moral virtues. This moderation should be away from excess and negligence. The acceptable morality is that which lies in the middle between exaggeration and negligence. If such an accepted morality leaves the center to the extreme of exaggeration or that of negligence, it will turn into a bad morality. Chastity, for instance, is a virtue lying between the two vices of evil and solidity. Any exaggeration in chastity will lead to indolence, and any negligence will lead to greed. Courage, as another example, is a virtue lying between the two vices of rashness and cowardice. In consequence, the persistence on virtues has become one of the noble aims acting as matters of competition for the self-determined and ambitious people.

I hope God would accept and reward me for this humble effort, out of His outspread kind and great generosity. I also hope He would lead me, as well as my faithful brethren, to success. God is surely the worthiest of guiding and success.

Mahdi Sayyid Ali as-Sadr

- [1.](#) (S) Stands for (peace be upon him and his family).
- [2.](#) The Ahlul-Bayt (the people of the house), is a term that is dedicated to the family of the Prophet Muhammad (S). Moreover, it is dedicated to definite individuals; namely, Ali ibn Abi Talib, Fatima az-Zahraa (the Prophet Muhammad's daughter and Ali ibn Abi Talib's wife), al-Hassan ibn Ali, and al-Hussein ibn Ali. The nine sinless Imams (namely, Ali ibn al-Hussein as-Sajjad, Muhammad ibn Ali al-Baqir, Ja'far ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq, Musa ibn Ja'far al-Kadhim, Ali ibn Musa ar-Redha, Muhammad ibn Ali al-Jawad, Ali ibn Muhammad al-Hadi, al-Hasan ibn Ali al-Askari, and Al-Mahdi the Awaited) are also within the Ahlul-Bayt.
- [3.](#) (a) stands for (peace be upon him/her/ them)
- [4.](#) Hadith is the body of traditions concerning the sayings and doings of the Prophet Muhammad (S).

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