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Imam Khomeini's Views on Ethics and Spiritualities

The secret of your victory has been first, your firm faith and then, unity of expression.

Preserve these two issues. Consolidate your faith because you are not a materialistic creature. Those who consider the human being as a materialistic creature, evaluate a person as other animals. You are a creature who has a materialistic dimension, but more important than that is your spiritual side; you possess a divine self. You have an abstract self. If you are at the service of God, the Most Exalted, the Most High, then your 'self' will become purged and purified and you will achieve happiness. You will embrace this happiness under any circumstances; with your purged 'self' you are victorious in your defeats, even in dying. (June 12, 1979)

Islam only values virtue and piety. Whoever is more pious and virtuous, has more value before God. (June 12, 1979)

If mankind is self-constructed and perfected, everything will come out as spiritual. Even the materialistic will become spiritual. (June 6, 1979)

Do not think too highly of the West. There is no basis for humanity there. It is the West which is eradicating the bases of human ethics. It is the West which is trampling upon human dignity. But we imagine that the West possesses everything. Now that the West enjoys the automobile, so it ought to have everything. But in laws, our laws are richer than those of the whole world. (June 9, 1979)

Do not think that the westerners have progressed. They have advanced materially, but they have no spirituality. Islam and other divine schools of thought seek to perfect and construct true human beings, but the West has nothing to do with this matter. The West has discovered natural resources and natural power while using them against human beings. The West uses these powers to destroy cities, countries and even humanity. (June 11, 1979)

You ought to become illuminating, to purge and purify your 'selves'. Leave worldly desires out of your 'selves'. All mistakes and wrongdoings stem from attachment to the world. Come to true and eternal life through divine life. (February 26, 1981)

All the messengers of God, the Most Exalted, the Most High, have been appointed to construct and perfect human beings. All the books of the Prophets, particularly, the Holy Quran, are trying to educate and train mankind. (February 26, 1981)

The world is based on education and training of human beings. The human being is the essence of all of the creatures and the outcome of the whole world. All the Prophets are assigned to bring this essence into materialization, to turn the human being into a divine being. This divine being then will have all the reflections and characteristics of God, the Most Exalted. He will become the center of illumination of the holy light of Almighty God. (February 26, 1981)

Departing from the 'self' is a prelude to the perfection of mankind. (February 26, 1981)

If a person is full of knowledge, even if one has a good command of Islamic teachings and even if one understands monotheism, but one is not purged and purified, still one will cause harm to oneself, one's country, one's nation and to Islam. No benefit will be achieved. (February 29, 1981)

One who seeks to purify a society will not be able to achieve one's goal if one's self is not purged and purified. A group of people who strive to purge and Islamicize a center will not be able to do so if they have not prepared themselves for it. They cannot correct others if they themselves are not corrected. (September 20, 1979)

The country and the nation are in need of construction, and spiritual construction has priority over all others. The jihad (spiritual and physical struggle for the cause of God) should begin from the 'self'; to fight against the internal Satan. This jihad will be the basis of other jihads and struggles.

Man cannot construct others unless he himself is constructed and the country cannot be constructed if others themselves are not constructed. The greatest jihad is the jihad against selfish desires and egoism, because all jihads will become victorious if in jihad against the 'self' we come out victorious.

The human being's passions are not limited to one, two, three, ten or even one hundred. The human being's greed is also unlimited by taking one country, two countries or ten. The Prophets were assigned to limit them, to bring them under control, to control this unleashed animal who believes in no limits. If this creature is left alone and free to itself and if one is not trained, one becomes so unleashed that one wants everything for one's own sake and seeks to sacrifice everybody for one's self. The Prophets were assigned to bring them under control and to give them some criteria. After one is leashed, then one will be shown the path in order to achieve those perfections which will cause one happiness and prosperity. The world and this nature are not the only things taken into account, rather, the world for the Prophets is a path and a means to achieve an exalted goal which we do not know, but they know. The Prophets

knew where one will end up if one is unleashed. They also knew where one will end up if one is leashed and if one uses one of the ways to achieve the exalted grades of humanity.

The whole world is not the ultimate goal before the Prophets. Rather, it is a path to be followed to reach the destinations which is the high grade of humanity. If a creature reached that high human grade, one will achieve a happiness which is not limited just to this world. The ultimate goal is the world behind this one.

The 'selves' of mankind in this world varies according to creation but they undergo a lot of differences due to the various training of different environments. In one place, the training is antihuman and immoral while in another, the training is human.

If our spiritualities and our tendencies towards the Quran are preserved, we will be victorious in the end, whether we embrace martyrdom which is a great success or we become victorious.

If you seek to implement the Islamic Revolution and the Cultural Revolution in Iran, first of all, this revolution should begin from your inner self. Your soul should undergo changes.

If decadent ethics and mentality takes place, this will be a return to the past and this will be 'reactionaryism'.

A person who is knowledgeable of the monotheistic sciences, religious sciences and ethics and knows all these sciences well but he is not purged and purified yet, such a person will become a dangerous creature for society.

The assignment of the Prophet of Islam was basically for education and training. To recite verses, signs, and the signs of the sciences whereby every science is considered to be a sign, to recite the signs for the people and purify and purge them and to cleanse their 'selves'.

If the 'selves' are not purged and purified and if they are not purified from corrupt qualities, science will have adverse effects.

When knowledge comes before purification and when this knowledge-bearer who is the outcome of this knowledge, is not purged, he will become a dangerous person for society. In this case, there is no difference between religious *ulama'* or university *ulama'*, and so on.

That knowledge-bearer who is not as yet purged and purified, will pose more danger than the ignorant person. If an ignorant person is corrupt, he will only harm himself but a corrupt knowledge-bearer will corrupt and contaminate the whole world. Purification is prior to teaching and learning. The Prophet (of Islam) is assigned to purge, to educate and to prepare the 'selves' and then teach them the Book and Wisdom. If the Book and Wisdom are not accompanied by education and purification, a creature will come out such as those in the Senate and National Assembly during the pre-Revolution era, i.e. the deputies of the houses of the Parliament during the time of the deceased Shah.

Education will be useful when it is accompanied with purification and the training of the mind and ethics in universities and other centers of learning, in places where the religious *ulama*' are present, or in places where non-religious teachers are present.

In Islam, ethical teachings are also political ones. This same commandment in the Quran saying that the believers are brothers to one another is an ethical, social and political order. If the believers — various ethnic groups who are in Islam and believe in God and the Prophet of Islam — act in a fraternal manner with one another, this will create affection among all classes and groups in the same way that a brother feels affection towards his own brother. This in addition to being a great Islamic ethical rule with great ethical consequences; it is also a great social commandment with important consequences. (August 18, 1980)

If all divine orders and commandments are implemented by a people, falsehood and evil will leave them. If the ethical divine rules, human ethics and religious beliefs are implemented among Muslim peoples, falsehood will be annihilated of and by itself. (August 28, 1980)

What makes similar actions different from one another is the ultimate goal attached to them that forces human beings to take such actions. Then, God, the Most High will elevate people to the lofty position of humanity. (June 24, 1979)

Almighty God has bestowed a favor upon mankind by sending His messengers to train their spiritual side which is the most important one. The Prophets were assigned to purge, purify and then teach human beings the Book and Wisdom as well as to teach the control of the material aspects of them. Those who are materialistic, regard materiality in unleashing terms. The Prophets were assigned to train human beings in such a way that all material gains come under the control of the spirit. The basic principle is spiritualities, which no school of thought or ruling clique in the world pay heed to them. (June 24, 1979)

None of the regimes of the world but those of a monotheistic origin have focused on the spirituality of mankind and have sought to elevate them. All the world regimes are seeking to utilize the material gains and establish a material system. The Prophets, on the other hand, were basically assigned to purge and purify the human 'self'; to teach them the Book (the Holy Quran) and Wisdom and to control them. (July 4, 1979)

A Muslim clergy should be pious and attracted to God, the Most Exalted, the Most High, wholeheartedly so that he will be able to educate society. He should, first be trained in order to be able to train society. (June 26, 1979)

A person who is well-educated but his knowledge is not accompanied with a purgation of his ethics and spiritual training, will do more harm to his country and to his people than those who have no knowledge. (June 27, 1981)

All the Prophets' trainings, teachings, knowledge and purposes were centered on 'human being'. They

have all been assigned to train true human beings and to elevate mankind from this natural status to the lofty and high position of the supernatural and the heavens. Mankind, itself, is the main purpose of the assignment of the Prophets. (June 28, 1979)

The most dangerous and the staunchest enemy of human being is the 'self'. No other enemy is more detrimental than this enemy. (June 28, 1979)

This natural, superficial appearance is the least valuable side of human beings, either man or woman. But moving towards perfection starts from this point. Human beings are transformable and movable creatures who can elevate themselves from mere nature to a divine position. (July 2, 1979)

One becomes a true human being with one's spirit and one's insight. We share in common things such as possessing ears, eyes and legs, and therefore these are not the things which differentiate the human being from animal. What really separates mankind from other natural creatures is mankind's heart and insight. If you possess insight, you are considered to be a human being. (July 5, 1979)

One of the blessings of this Revolution has been the spiritual transformation observed in our society. I have repeatedly said that this spiritual transformation witnessed in Iran brought about by this Revolution with the will of God, the Most Exalted, the Most High, has been more valuable and more important than the victory we have achieved or the fact that we have curtailed the hands of the foreigners and criminals from this country. (July 5, 1979)

If the human being does not undergo training and education at the same time, the human being will remain in the rank of the beasts. The human being is worse than any other animal if the 'self' is not accompanied with training, education and purification. (July 8, 1979)

With every step taken for acquiring knowledge, and for your explicit and implicit actions, you should seek to create a sense of piety, resistance (against satanic desires) and honesty. You will learn and acquire knowledge and at the same time purify and purge your 'self' and bring it under your full control. (July 8, 1979)

The rebel and unleashing of the 'self' annihilates one. Any step taken for education and learning should be accompanied with measures to leash and control you 'self'! Control your 'self' which seeks to have no limits. (July 8, 1979)

There are two sides and dimensions to mankind. The spiritual side and the material side. The material aspect is what we observe, that which exists in this world. They are these materials that we witness. The spiritual side is another aspect beyond this world. (June 24, 1979)

All monotheistic schools of thought, in action with Islam, as the superior one, are seeking to train people in such a way that material gains do not act as obstacles for spirituality, although they (the divine religions) are involved with materiality as well. They seek to bring material gains under the service of

spirituality. While the religions pay heed to the material and the world, they attract people towards spirituality and liberate them from the darkness of the material at the same time. (July 27, 1979)

Islam's attention to material life is because it can serve the spirituality. Spiritualities are the criteria.

All the differences among human beings are rooted in the rebellion of the 'self'. (June 2, 1981)

Those who seek to train others in this world should first purge and purify themselves. (June 2, 1979)

If you are not purified, you will face rebellion of the 'self'. So long as you are not purged, knowledge will be dangerous for you and the most dangerous thing for you will be a high position. This may lead you to annihilation in this world as well as in the next world. (June 4, 1981)

The teaching of the Book and Wisdom will be impossible unless purgation comes first. You should purge your 'selves' from all contaminations. The worst one is the contamination of the 'self' with selfish and animal desires. (June 2, 1981)

Those who are trying to train others in this world should first purge themselves. Those who seek to rule over human beings should be purged and purified if they do not want to rebel (against God) and to not commit satanic deeds; The Ordainment is for this purpose. Purification for rulers, government officials, kings and for the presidents, is more necessary than for ordinary people. (June 2, 1981)

Our Revolution depends upon spirituality and God and those who are in agreement with us are those who agree with the line of monotheism. We should not forget the spiritual side for which we made such a Revolution. We should not neglect that spiritual side, for in spite of all our incompetence in propaganda and publicity, still the people of the world understand our Revolution. And it is the line of spirituality which oppressors and powerwielders are against. (October 15, 1981)

A nation will come out victorious if it relies on spirituality.

Liberty is not happiness and prosperity in and of itself. Independence is not happiness alone. Material gains alone will not create happiness for a nation. Happiness will consist of all of the above mentioned factors, if they are encompassed by spirituality.

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