

Significance of Islamic ethics in the Western Perspective

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Abstract

Allah S.W.T. said: "And thou (standest) on an exalted standard of character" (68:4), and Prophet Muhammad said: "I have sent to achieve the culmination of high moral standards" (Bukhari, 2011). This statement's significance can only be established by comparing the Islamic code of ethics with other moral philosophies. On the other hand, the West has established its superiority over other nations, assuming that it has a dominant civilization, which is based on reason and scientific knowledge. Along with the Renaissance, the affairs whether they belong to an individual or society were gradually liberated from religion's grip and handed over to human intellect and consciousness. Religion was considered merely a matter of an individual, which can only fulfil a person's psychological needs. In contrast, intellect and wisdom were considered the only measures to resolve social problems and eliminate all types of conflicts and contradictions. In this scenario, the question is obvious, what are the basic parameters of "Right and Wrong" in ethics? Moreover, if they are compared with Islam's moral system, what would be the possible differences? This article provides a scholarly overview of the Western ethical philosophy and its social values and its comparison with Islamic moral values.

Keywords: Ethics, Morality, Good, Evil, Islam, West, Ethical theories

Introduction

"Anyone who cannot form a community with others, or who does not need to because he is self-sufficient, is no part of a city-state-he is either a beast or a god" (Aristotle, 1998).

As a social animal, a human being needs society for survival. The better formation of any society depends on a right understanding of the concept of good and evil. Recognition of right and wrong is one of the few basic questions on which man has been pondering since he was transformed into a conscious being. A better society cannot be formed unless it is possible to understand and identify the good and the bad properly. No country or nation can ever achieve its goals or retain its place in history if it does not take the right path.

The development in technology has transformed the world into a global village. The rapid transportation made it easy for us to move into different continents, and live with the people those differ us with their cultural values and civilization. As a result, the conflicts are growing day by day because everyone competes for commanding maximum resources, and has become more conscious of holding on his civilization and cultural values, and doesn't want to give it up at any cost as *Samuel Huntington* pointed it out in his famous book *The Clash of Civilizations* (1996). To minimize the people's conflicts, it is necessary to know; *"what is the right thing to do?"*

With the expansion of many business, companies and large cosmopolitan cities, the ethical issues are growing up and becoming more complex. To resolve modern man's conflicts and make a coherence in his objectives, the study of ethics has got extreme attention in contemporary academia. To identify *"what is the right thing to do?"* the West has produced a rich tradition of ethical theories that have gone through many stages of evolution from the Greek period to this day. No doubt, all these concepts have their significance, but we find its many aspects contrast with the Islamic concept of morality.

The paper will explain the significance of the Islamic concept of morality in the perspective of the Western theoretical framework of morality to elucidate the ethical phenomenon. Although vast literature has

been produced in the West on ethics, the purpose is not to comprehensively examine the western moral tradition. So, the research will describe the main significance of traditions and prominent theories to make it easy to apprehend with its nature and those contradictions hidden inside the system of western morality.

Literature Review

Many contemporary Muslim scholars, like; Mawdudi (1977), Qaradhwani (1996), Ghamidi (2017), Khursheed (2017), have been published their work on morality in the perspective of western ethics in general. Mr. Ghufuran Ahmad and Jawad Syed (2020), discussed the Meta aspects of Islamic morality and its significances in Islamic banking. Michele Mangini (2018) described the Islamic tradition of reasoning in the context of western ethical philosophy. Al-Aidaros (2013), described the ethical theories from an Islamic perspective. His article rejects the western concept of ethics. However, the similarities in both Western and Islamic concept of ethics are not raised in the said article. Here is some space for this article that elaborates the historical development of western ethics briefly, and explains the significances of Islamic Ethics without biasness, then highlights the similarities and conflicts both in Western and Islamic concepts of ethics.

Western Ethics in Historical Perspective

Historically, European ethics are usually divided into three main periods with different characteristics.

Greek period: 7 BC to 5 AD.

Medieval period: 500 A.D. to 1500 A.D.

Modern period: 1500 to onwards. (Lilly, 1953)

In the 20th century, significant work was done on ethics, as Feminism and postmodernism have added different dimensions. Therefore, the twentieth century should be analyzed separately.

The Greek Period: There were many philosophical schools, such as depicting their ethical reasoning and decision-making history is

impossible. Therefore, the research's focus would be on the identification of the prominent ethical schools and their epistemological approaches to judge good and evil.

The sophist was a prominent group of the philosophers, and many of them answered the above question that morality is a matter of human expediency. We call things good simply because they satisfy the majority of humanity. A famous phrase associated with the "great sophist" *Protagoras* is that "*Man is the measure of all things*" (Kattsof, 1953) and it means that he is the only standard to distinguish the right from the wrong.

Socrates, the founder of western philosophy, was less confident to answer this question. He expressed his view in the maxim "*Virtue is Knowledge*" (Houlgate, 1970). He realized that knowledge of human nature is essential for a better life. His two great followers, Plato and Aristotle, pursued him systematically. For Plato, this knowledge was metaphysical, mostly, which cannot be perceived by our senses. It is a world of ideas. Aristotle accepted in general, but he was more interested in distinguishing these principals. But the common thing among them was to understand goodness, which means to understand the nature of the universe as a whole (Lillie, 1957).

Their two contemporary schools of thought also answered this question. The Epicureans opinion of good things was linked with the satisfaction of human desires, and the viewpoint is called *hedonism* because it fills our pleasures. According to Stoics; right action is always done following some principles known to the reason (Lillie, 1957).

Medieval Ethics: The Church was dominant, so the final standard to identify right and wrong was God's law described in the Bible, and Church was the final authority to interpret it and set the disputes. The standard historiography often skips medieval ethics' significance and fails to do justice to the ethical concerns of medieval thoughts. Thomas William edited a book *The Companion to Medieval Ethics*. Many articles of this book signified the characteristics of this era from '*Augustine to Eriugena*, and most prominent was *Scholastic* thoughts, and *Anselm of Canterbury* and *Thomas Aquinas* were his key figures. Thinkers in the middle period developed complex accounts to structure the moral acts, and reflected on

the relationship between Christian law and natural law (Rachel, Rachel, 2015).

Modern Ethics: The Renaissance was a fervent period of European history marking the transition from the middle Ages to Modernity. This period is approximately considered between 1400 and 1600, and was associated with great social change in all dimensions of life. As a result, the Church started to lose the authority which it had held for nearly a thousand years over the larger part of Europe. It shook the ancient political, social, and religious values and gave much attention to individual liberty and set him free from many old cultural boundaries (Jessie Szalay, 2016). Many advancements were seen in different dimensions of life, particularly in moral values. Many ethical theories were developed in this era, like; subjectivism, Utilitarianism, Deontological theories, Egoism, feminist ethics, virtue ethics, altruism, etc. Afterwards, the paper will discuss the significances of some of the most important ones. It will compare them with Islamic teachings of morality.

Ethical Theories

It is possible to display moral theories in many ways, but the main concern is not to encompass all moral theories in a systematic way, as usually, philosophers of ethics do in between; Metaethics, Normative ethics and applied ethics or absolutism and relativism or objectivism and subjectivism or Deontological and teleological or naturalistic and non-naturalistic theories or attitude and consequences theories or some other. So the primary concern would be to highlight the essential concepts of western morality to understand the western moralist mind and his conflicts compared to Islam.

Moral Absolutism & Relativism: Both terms are opposite and closely akin to objectivism (values those guide man's choices and actions) and subjectivism (individuals decide morality). W.T. Stace wrote: "*According to the absolutist there is but one eternally true and valid moral code. This moral code applies with rigid impartiality to all men*" (Stace, 1937). It means the moral standards to judge the right or wrong are universal regardless of their context and individual beliefs and goals. And action would be moral or immoral inherently or possibly from supernatural authority. Moral absolutism is contrary to moral relativism, and it means

that rules may be made in different ways at different times by different peoples, and different communities have different truths (Blackburn, 2001). In Greek era; Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Stoics, in medieval Christians and modern era Kant and all Deontological theorist have confidence in moral *absolutism*. The rest of all are inclined to moral *relativism*.

The Devine Command theories: This theory asserts that the identification of good and evil is based upon religious beliefs. Something good means commanded by God, and what is prohibited by Him must be considered evil. In ancient Greek, it was usually held that moral truths were associated directly to theology, and religious piousness was almost equivalent to morality. So, many controversies are found on God's concept and his nature of judgments between right and wrong, as one of the dialogue was held between *Socrates* and *Euthyphro*, and the subject was "*who is a religious professional*" (Hare, John, 2019). This theory mostly refers to Judaism, Christianity, Bahai Faith and Islam as they claimed to be divine. And all the religions have presented the theory in many ways, but the core point is almost the same; God is the final and absolute authority to set the parameters of right or wrong.

Consequences Theories: Many philosophers of ethics look consequences of finding an act, whether it is right or wrong. And an act would be right if it brings the greatest happiness and goods for the greatest numbers. According to James Feiser: "*An action is morally right if the consequences of that action are more favourable than unfavourable.*" These consequences-based theories are also called teleological theories, meaning the result of an act would be the only determining factor. These theories became very popular in the eighteenth century by moral philosophers who preferred to draw the conclusion and assess an action morally based on experience, rather than by appealing to instincts or an extensive lists of doubtful duties. There are three main subdivisions of consequences based theories:

a) Ethical Egoism: James Rachels: "*Ethical Egoism is the radical view that one's only duty is to promote one's interests*" (Landau, 2013). And this is the only one ultimate principle of conduct that encapsulates all of one's obligations and natural duties. A British moral philosopher Henry Sidgwick introduced *Egoism* in his famous book *Essays on Ethics and*

Methods (1874). This theory has its roots in Greek philosophy, as *Epocoriens* was believed that a good thing is which always satisfy human desires. A famous political philosopher Thomas Hobbes was also in favour of Egoism (Alexander Moseley).

b) Ethical Altruism: James Fieser describes the altruist dictum as: "*An action is morally right if the consequences of that action are more favorable than unfavorable to everyone except the agent.*" In the 19th century *Auguste Comte*, the founder of *Positivism*, coined this term, and later it is adopted generally as a convenient antithesis of Egoism (Duignan, 2013). It is often understood as a form of consequentialism.

The most contemporary atheist Richerd Dawkins is also a believer of ethical altruism and explicates his theory of "selfish genes" based on genes' altruistic behaviour. Genes ensure their own survival by influencing organisms to behave altruistically (Dawkins, 2006).

c) Utilitarianism: This is the most famous theory based upon consequences attributed to an English philosopher *Jermy Bentham*. According to Bentham (2000) "*by the principle of utility is meant the principle that approves or disapproves of every action according to the tendency it appears to have to increase or lessen—i.e. to promote or oppose—the happiness of the person or group whose interest is in question*". According to James Feiser: "*an action is morally right if the consequences of that action are more favourable than unfavourable to everyone*".

All three of these theories consider the consequences of an action are the backbone to identify the "*what is the right thing to do?*"

Deontology Theory: The word "*deontological*" comes from the Greek word *deon*, which means "duty". In modern moral philosophy, *deontology* is a duty-based theory regarding which choices are morally required, forbidden, or permitted (Alexander, Larry and Moore, Michael, 2016). It stands in opposition to consequentialism, and its main focus is that an action is more important than consequences. There are four central duty theories.

First: A German philosopher Samuel Pufendorf in 17th century classified dozens of duties under their headings; duties to God, duties to oneself, and duties to others.

Right theory is the second duty-based approach to ethics. Both rights and duties are related in such a way that one person's rights imply the duties of another person. John Lock considers these rights are natural, given by God. Thomas Jefferson recognizes that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are our natural rights (James Fieser).

A third *duty* based theory, by the most influential German philosopher Immanuel Kant, is also considered a deontological theory. He argued that the supreme principle of morality is a standard of rationality that he dubbed the "*Categorical Imperative*" and this "*The categorical imperative would be that one which represented an action as objectively necessary for itself, without any reference to another end*" (James Feiser). This categorical imperative works with three universal principals: 1) "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law". 2) "Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your person or the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means". 3) "A rational being must always regard himself as giving laws either as a member or as sovereign in a kingdom of ends which is rendered possible by the freedom of will" (Kant, 2002).

British philosopher W.D presents the fourth contemporary duty-based theory. Ross, which emphasizes *prima facie* duties (James Fieser)

Virtue Ethics: This is a character-based theory that emphasis to the moral character in contrast to the moral approaches that accentuate consequences of actions (consequentialism), or emphasis to the duties or rules (deontology), (Hursthouse, Rosalind, Pettigrove, Glen, 2018).

This theory concentrates on the question of what people should be rather than what they should do. In other words, this theory's main emphases are what makes an individual decent person rather than what makes a right action. The pioneer philosopher of virtue ethics is Aristotle, and different accounts of virtue ethics get inspiration from him. He enlists many traits in his prominent book *Nichomachean Ethics*, like; courage,

temperance, generosity, magnificence, justice, truthfulness, etc. (Aristotle, 2004).

Islamic Point of view

Before analyzing western ethical philosophy, it is necessary to explain the principals and distinctions of the Islamic concept of morality. So it would have paved the way to understand the flaws of the moral concepts that grew up in the West.

The second most essential requirement of religion, after faith, is the purification of morals, means to clean his/her attitude both towards his Creator and his fellow human beings. This is termed as a righteous deed. All the Sharia is its sequel that has to be changed with evolutionary process undergone in societies and civilization, however both foundation of religion; faith and righteous deeds, which always persis000000t absolute (Gamidi, 2017). And Qur'ān clearly stated that who will bring forth these two things will be blessed with paradise.

"وَمَنْ يَأْتِهِ مُؤْمِنًا قَدْ عَمِلَ الصَّالِحَاتِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الدَّرَجَاتُ الْعُلَىٰ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ مَنْ تَزَكَّىٰ"

"And he who comes before Him as a believer having done righteous deeds, exalted ranks are for such people, evergreen gardens beneath which streams flow and they shall abide therein forever. This shall be the reward of those who purify themselves." (20: 75-76).

And its value also can be seen in the narration of Prophet Muhammad PBUH. Once he said: *"I have sent to achieve the culmination of high moral standards"* (Bukhari, 2011). And he is also reported to have said: *"The best among you are those who are morally sound from others"*.

In moral philosophy, the most fundamental question is about *the main source who classify right and wrong*. In Qur'ān Allah says:

"وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا"

"And the soul bears witness and the perfection given to it, then [God] inspired it with its evil and it is good that he succeeded who purified it and he failed who corrupted it. (91:7-10)"

According to Mawdudi:

"Inspiring the human self with its wickedness and its piety and virtue has two meanings: (1) That the Creator has placed in it tendencies to do both good and evil, and this is the thing that every man feels in himself. (2) That Allah has endowed every man's unconscious mind with the concept that there is a moral good and there is a moral evil, that good morals and acts and evil morals and acts are not equal and alike."

These concepts are not alien to man; he is conscious of these by nature, and the Creator has enriched him with the ability to differentiate between good and bad naturally. This same thing has been said in *Surah al-Balad*: "وَهَدَيْنَاهُ" *"And We showed him both the highways of good and evil"* (90:10). ; and in *Surah ad-Dahr*, thus: "إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا" *"We showed him the way, whether to be grateful or disbelieving"* (76: 3); and in *Surah al-Qiyamah*, the same has been expressed: "بَلِ الْإِنْسَانُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ بَصِيرَةٌ وَلَوْ أَلْقَىٰ" *"in fact, he himself is a witness upon his own self. However much he may put up excuses"* (75: 14-15)

However, in interpreting this innate ability to distinguish between good and evil, there could have been many differences in terms of persons, times and circumstances. This is the bounty of God Almighty, and He did not leave any room for such differences and wherever there was a fear of discrepancy between good and evil, He demarcated it through His Messengers. This guidance has been preserved in the Qur'ān by these messengers until the Day of Judgment. This guidance confirms whatever a man finds within himself. Moreover, man's intuitive knowledge and empirical knowledge, knowledge derived from the laws of life and circumstances, and rational knowledge, all testify to this. Therefore, the virtues and vices of morality are determined with full certainty as a result (Ghamidi 2017). While revealing his will to humankind in the Qur'ān, God also urges them to exercise reason in understanding revelation. (Nanji, 2000)

The second foremost question is: What is the real stimulus that compels a person to purify and sanitize his moral values? The above-quoted verses of the Qur'ān have answered that the real motivation is the inspiration of good and evil to man, which makes him realize that the results of both cannot be the same. In these verses, the Qur'an has drawn attention to this success and failure, respectively. Consequently, the feeling of fear and hope arises in a person and motivates him to purify his morals despite his inclination towards physical tendencies (Ghamidi 2017).

The third question is about the objectives of this effort. Philosophers have different opinions on this question as per their interests. One group thinks that it is a pleasure. Another group regards it to be an obligation for the sake of it. A third group thinks that it is perfection.

The above-quoted verses of Suran al-Shams clearly say that attaining God's eternal kingdom is impossible without self-purification. A little deliberation shows how much comprehensive this statement of the Qur'ān is and how it covers all the objectives stated by moral philosophers. This is because a person gets perfection, true happiness if he purifies his faith a good deeds, and even if a man would be able to discharge his obligations without any greed, it is through this (Ghamidi, 2017). According to Khurshid (2017), the real purpose of man's endeavour should be to please God. This is the standard by which a decision is made by observing Islam's moral system.

Significances of Islamic Ethics

Transcendental Nature: The utmost significance that Islamic morality is transcendental by nature which is based upon revelation. The criterion to judge "good and evil" depends upon His divine guidance that, He has sent through His messengers. All those guidance are enough to test the good and evil in all the times and ages. This is the first fundamental difference that negates the principles of most western ethical theories.

Comprehensive & Universal: The message of Islam is unmistakable, and provides comprehensive guidance that extends across the time and place, related to this world and hereafter. Islamic Ethics gets its initial inspiration in two foundational sources; Qur'ān and Prophet Muhammad's narrations.

The Qur'ān provides guidance comprehensively in all dimensions of life, as Allah S.W.T stated in Qur'ān:

"We have revealed to you the Book, an exposition of everything, and guidance, and mercy, and glad tidings for the Muslims" (16: 89).

In Islam, the Qur'ān is the primary source of guidance that speaks about general concepts, and the *Sunnah* of Prophet spelt it out with specific details. In the case of ethics, we find the detailed practicality in the Prophet's behaviour and action. Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad PBUH described the purpose of his prophetic mission: *"I was sent only to perfect the moral excellence of human beings"*. Hence, to know the pragmatic view of ethics, Muslims need to look no further than to the Prophet PBUH himself.

Rational: Islam is the most rational religion in contrast to others. It doesn't represent faith matters merely, but also reason, knowledge, justice, humanism, and freedom are given their proper place with full of coherence. From the ethical perspective, Islam does not ignore the capacity people have because Allah S.W.T knows human beings' strengths and weaknesses (Al-Qaradawi 1996). In Qur'ān, He said: *"Allah does not obligate anyone beyond his capacity."* (2:286). Besides, Islam also takes into account the unique circumstances that allow Muslims to do that are initially prohibited under normal circumstance such as Islam categorically prohibited to eat *"carrion or blood that pours forth, or flesh of swine - because it is impure - or there be an animal slaughtered sinfully by invoking on it the name of someone other than Allah"* (6:145), but in some exceptional circumstances where it becomes necessary to save a life, Allah S.W.T allows to eat these things with two conditions; *"neither seeking pleasure nor crossing the limit"* (6:145). Islam urges his followers to use all resource with care and condemns those waste the resources, as evident in the narration of Prophet Muhammad PBUH: *"Eat, drink, wear clothes and give sadaqah but with neither extravagance nor pride"* (Abu Dawud, 2008).

Moderation: Islam takes a moderate approach to make a balance in between the ultra-idealist and the ultra-realist. According to Islam, human beings must have to maintain a balance between body and spiritual needs. A person is asked to put balance in his individual life, and he is also bound

to care for other social agents. So why Islam makes it mandatory that what you earn more than your needs, there should be a specific portion for the poor people, and you will be asked and punished, if fail to fulfil his duties. It was the matter of humankind, even Islam doesn't forget to mention merely the rights of animals, as Prophet said:

"Verily Allah has enjoined goodness to everything; so when you kill, kill in a good way and when you slaughter, slaughter in a good way. So every one of you should sharpen his knife, and let the slaughtered animal die comfortably" (Muslim.).

Stability: Another reason that gives Islam preference over other moral philosophies is its consistency and strength of stability, because it is based on the unalterable absolute message of Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. On the contrary, secular practice is always altering not just in details of the behavioural pattern but also in the principles behind that behaviour. What was intolerable yesterday, may turn out to be exhaustively acceptable today. Such unstable attitudes do not inspire those who would like to carry out their activities free from doubts (Zaheer, 1999).

A Comparative Study

The worldview is the main element that distinguishes the Islamic code of ethics and western ethical philosophy because it would be the necessary information about any philosophy. When we look at the Western system of analyzing in a historical perspective, no one has any kind of divine literature except what is associated with Christianity and Judaism. Although they had to be inclined to believe in some supernatural powers, they had to worship many gods.

Therefore, the western tradition is more used to take a rational approach to analyze different conflicts. So the philosophy that has been formed in the West has more based upon reasons and logic as compare to others. It must be kept in mind that all matter of reason and logic is based upon five senses, and it will never let humankind get any universal truth without any hindrances.

When we compare Islam with relativism or absolutism, then we find both have some problems. We cannot merely deny that the Islamic code of

ethics has no similarities with relativism or absolutism. On the contrary, the Islamic concept of morality is slightly similar to both. Because Islam looks both; the form and the spirit of something in two different ways. Spirit always remains absolute as compare to form that changes his shape with time and place. So, Islam doesn't insist on one single method that could be relative in a particular situation. We find in Qur'ān many precedents, like; a situation in which the prayer can be shortened or can be offered while riding:

"When you travel on the earth, there is no sin on you in shortening your Salah, if you fear that the disbelievers would put you in trouble" (4:101). "But if you are in fear, then (pray) on foot or riding" (2:239).

These verses clearly explain that shape of action can be changed compared to its spirit that remains absolute.

One of the best interpretations of moral values is *Divine Command Theories*. There are two different traditions those believe that it is God's mere responsibility to define what the right thing to do is: One of them is a Greek tradition that believes in the existence of one Creator or more than one, but has no authoritative means to determine their purpose, as Plato portrayed Socrates view in his dialogue *Euthyphro*, in which he asked: *"How, for example, are we supposed to know what the gods command?"* and criticized religious peoples; *"But people who claim to speak for God are not the most trustworthy folks"* (Rachels, Rachels).

To discover, *what is the right thing to do*, we see how Aristotle has developed his argument based upon nature, as he said:

"If then we are right in believing that nature makes nothing without some end in view, nothing to no purpose, it must be that nature has made all things specifically for the sake of man" (Rachels Rachels).

The second one is an Israeli tradition that was preserved in the form of the Bible. The Interpreter of the Bible is convinced that this natural argument of Aristotle and God has created that nature and commanded it. While Islam is superior to them in that, it has the guidance of revelation. At the same time, the role of the one who brought it is so immaculate that

even his most serious opponent *Abu Sufyan* did not say a single word against his character, when *Heraclius* asked him about Prophet Muhammad, like; "*Have you ever accused him of telling lies before his claim (to be a Prophet) or Does he break his promises?*" The answer was: "*No. We are at truce with him, but we do not know what he will do in it.*" *I could not find the opportunity to say anything against him except that*" (Bukhari). Secondly, the text of Qur'ān is completely preserved in its original language compared to the Bible that has been changed. Even its text is less reliable than *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, it cannot be claimed with certainty that this is the same guidance that God has revealed on *Musa* or *Jesus*. So, now Islam is the only universal religion with a complete code of conduct, and its guidance is perfect and practicable.

As mentioned above, Islam is a religion of moderation and makes a coherence in all aspects of life. It doesn't merely focus on consequences but makes a balance between goodwill, good action, and good consequences. For example, *haraam* food is forbidden, but to save lives, it gives permission as much as necessary (as mentioned above). Here we find that how Islam makes a sense in between results and the moral principles.

Egoism theory cannot be accepted, because it prioritizes a person's self-interest more than others, and there is no place for altruism in it. As Prophet PBUH criticized this behaviour by saying: "*None of you [truly] believes until he loves for his brother that which he loves for himself*" (Al-Bukhari). Muslims are strongly encouraged to help others without looking for any material rewards from society. Generally speaking, Islam does not accept the consequences of any wrongdoing, regardless of how much goods it brings for the society if it is against God's injunctions. Muslims believe that they have to do good to seek the Pleasure of Allah with good intentions.

The *Deontology* theory also has many weak spots. The most glaring is that it is a duty-based theory, that is less flexible and emphasizes absolute rules. In contrast, Islam keeps a balance in between absolutism and relativism.

The virtue ethic theory also has many contradictions, because it is a character-based theory and doesn't have proper guidance to identify the

best character in different situations. While in Islam, Qur'ān and *Sunnah* clearly describe, which character would be possibly appreciated. However, the Qur'ān places great emphasis on character building and highlights all these traits. As Allah SWT said in the Qur'ān: "*Lo! Allah enjoineth justice and kindness, and giving to kinsfolk, and forbiddeth lewdness and abomination and wickedness. He exhorteth you so that ye may take heed*" (16:90). Many Muslim scholars, like; Ghazali and Shah Waliullah, also gave much emphasis to all these traits. But the difference is that all these traits are practised in the light of Islamic worldview.

Conclusion

The above discussion leads us to conclude that reason and revelation, are two essential tools to determine "*what is the right thing to do?*" In western morality, the reason is considered the main instrument to formulate good and evil. So, we find that the moral system; developed in the West is incoherent. In contrast, Islam has provided the basis on which good and evil can be categorized in light of reason and revelation. These bases are consistent, reliable and cover all aspects of life. Moreover, the Islamic Moral System also awaken the individual's consciousness based on accountability in the life hereafter. So, he can recognize the voice of his conscience and choose the right path.

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