

The Holy Quran and Morality

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Abstract

Quran has considered the morality from the personal, civil and political perspectives and has explained the moral issues in all dimensions of human's life so that the human benefits the bliss of guidance in all fields and he is led toward bliss which is the final stage of morality. If we look at the moral teachings from the Quranic perspective, the dignity and attraction of Quran is redoubled. The expanded invitations and focuses of the Holy Quran on the moral construction, self-purification and human's high values indicate the high place of morality in the aims of religion. In Quran, improving the human's moral issues is considered as one of the most important assignments of prophets. The domain of Quran relationship with morality is expanded and the moral teachings of Quran are not only one of the most significant parts, but also they are the current theme of Quran. The moral virtues are not the absolute tool to organize the human's behavior in this world to organize his life, but similar to the construction materials, they are used to base the construction of his eternal life. This article tries to study the morality in the Holy Quran and tries to analyze and scrutinize the morality from all the Quranic dimensions.

Keywords: The noble Quran, morality, bliss, moral teachings, purification

Introduction

Knowledge and insight are two of man's main characteristics that are the distinctive part of human with other life manifests in the universe. However, if these two elements do not enter the field of practice and do not affect the man's morality and behavior, the man's dignity will not be formed and human is like a container in which jewelries are placed without adding any value to the container. A human is a human when its existence dust is combined with the purity of insight and knowledge and a new industry is created as a form of high knowledge and behavior. Therefore, morality is the essence of all natural and acquisitive values and the essence of prophets' divine teachings. Despite the dignity that knowledge has in this field, it is only a tool, a necessity, an insight, a faith, a passage, morality, practice and the final destination.

Morality discussions are regarded as the most significant Quranic discussions which form the most important aim of prophets, because neither the religion has meaning for people without

morality nor their world would be organized (MakaremShirazi, 1998: 17).

Morality deals with the human's optional behavior and moods and it has a specific attraction for him and the human has looked at it respectfully. The moral establishment of human's life has a conceptual basis; the formation of society and the advent of the human's civilizations. Morality is so respectful that those who lack this specification have a respectful look at those who own the morality specification. Morality is the human's leader that adorns him with good traits and moral virtues. In fact, morality defines the human's behavior and thought. In other words, the morality is aimed at developing the self. A brave and generous human has a much greater spirit than the coward, arrogant one.

Molla Ahmad Naraqi writes on page 9 of the Meraj Al-Sa'deh: "the use of morality knowledge is to purify the self from bad traits and to adorn it to the morality refinement and the fruit of morality is to achieve the eternal welfare and prosperity and one should know that the absolute bliss is achieved when the self-tablet is purified from all the bad traits and is adorned with all the good traits. The correction of some traits is useful although, it does not bring the absolute bliss for the human." The aims and effects of morality can be categorized as follows:

1. Morality is the modifier of human's desire.
2. Morality is the booster of human's spiritual dimension.
3. Morality ensures the enforcement of laws and regulations.
4. Morality is the faith preserver.
5. Morality purifies human from any weakness and leads them to the highest level of morality traits.

The morality science restrains the rebel forces of soul and boosts them in the direction of wisdom, justice and chastity so that they achieve the moral traits and enable us to understand the good deeds easily.

Undoubtedly, Quran is a big moral book whose one of the main aim is to correct and complete human's morality. God has graced on the believers that He has sent a prophet for them to recite the God verses for them and tries to train and develop their moral traits. The theoretical and practical trainings of this divine book build a system and everybody can turn into a complete moral human. It is clear that no discipline, even the psychology can be replaced with morality, because there are subjects that are allotted to morality. Therefore, the study of morality creates the field of new studies through using Muslims' moral heritage and the capacities of different sciences; the studies that can be problem solver in different discussions including psychology in addition to developing the Islamic moral science.

1- Definition of Morality

Morality is the plural form of manner meaning sensual characteristics that have found a penetration mode (penetration means to go into the depth of heart); it means that it has penetrated within the self and has denoted a special color and smell to it. The formation of internal structure causes the human's behavior and speech finds the internal color and smell. Nothing comes out of the sack but what was in it. Therefore, morality has an internal root and external behaviors show the human's internal structure. Good deed shows the internal purity and bad deed shows the internal pollution. Quran names both deeds as the manner: Quran talks about Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) "And undoubtedly, you possess excellent manners" (Surah Al-Qalam, 4)

And about the people of Hood when he was said: "They said, 'it is equal to us whether you admonish us or be not of the admonishers" he says: "This is not but the same habits of the ancients" (Surah Ash-Shu'araa, 136 & 137).

Therefore, mood refers to the internal style that is effective in human's behavior. Therefore, the Islam prophet was selected to complete the good morality. "I was selected to complete the good mood in the society." Therefore, the morality science is called the scientific wisdom. Wisdom is the internal insight that balances the human's behavior and the insight is achieved from the internal purity.

The Quran logic says that men are from the same gem in the creation. The talents and constructive forces are the same and the aim of morality is human's training and developing. The tools with which one can achieve this aim are the same as well. Therefore, the topic of morality is not a secondary issue but it is in connection with the creation aim of human and is broadened in the width of Sharia and all the dos and don'ts have been stated in the range of morality discipline (Marefat, 2000: 6).

2- The Aim of Morality

The aim of morality is to achieve the spiritual perfections and the highest position of human's perfection that is determined for him in the beginning of creation. The human's bliss in both worlds depends on his perfections. "To achieve the goal" and "redemption from dependencies" that was stated in Quran show the aim of morality. Quran has shown the way to achieve this goal and has paved the way to achieve this goal. The term of salvation was used in Quran for a couple of times and it has known the term as the perfection of intention and the aim of human's training and adorning him with good traits: Undoubtedly, he attained to his goal who purified (Surah Al-A'la, 14)

He has succeeded who purifies it (Shams Surah, Verse 9)
 Undoubtedly, the believers reached to their goal (Surah Al-Muminun, 1)
 'O believers! Devour not interest, doubled and redoubled; and fear Allah, in the hope that you
 may get prosperity (Surah Al-i'Imran, 130)
 And remember Allah much; haply you may prosper (Surah Al-Jumu'a, 10)
 When God is intended to invite human to piety and avoiding sins, He says "O' you who believe"
 and He says that the final aim of human is to achieve the salvation and he should do good
 deeds and quit bad deeds to achieve it (MesbahYazdi, 2012: 35).
 And do good deeds haply you may be relieved (Surah Al-Hajj, 77)
 And whoso is guarded against the avarice of his own soul, those they are the successful (Surah
 Al-Hashr, 9)
 Therefore, the aim of self-purification is salvation. In fact self-purification is not only effective,
 but also it is unique.

3- The Relationship of Quran and Morality

Although the domain of Quran and morality is broadened, one of the most beautiful manifests of this relationship is the mutual influence in the direction of human's soul, because as Imam Ali (PBUH) says: "human's soul is enriched with the divine and Quranic trainings in both theoretical and practical dimensions." Therefore, the enriched soul can achieve the divine and Quranic morality and it can be said that the human's soul manifests the most beautiful effect and the mutual relationship between morality and Quran.

It should be reminded that the morality basis is summarized into four elements because whatever the human does is either to dispel the loss or is related to the thought and insight each of which has a moderate extreme where the moderate extreme of attracted interest is called chastity and that of the loss dispel is called courage and the moderate extreme of thought is called wisdom and combining these three, the fourth one is created which is called justice through which the right of each three mentioned forces is given. Therefore, it is said that "the basics of best morality are four things: chastity, courageous, wisdom and justice" (Tabatabaie, 1993: 377).

One sample among the four mentioned elements is named here to explain the mutual relationship between Quran and morality.

3-1- The Relationship between Quran and Kindness

Kindness is one of the most elegant moral characteristics and is categorized as the queen of

justice (Tabatabaie, 1403 AH, 372). The Holy Quran has talked about kindness a lot: “and those who believe are stronger in love for Allah” (al-Baqara, 165). In this Quranic verse, first loving God was introduced, second, it is mentioned that following the one who holds God’s message (Quran) causes God’s love to be attracted. Third, it is mentioned that the one who does not love God, is not received His revelation from His messenger and does not act upon it. Therefore, it is clear that the Prophet who is the mediator of the God’s word grace is the criterion of kindness and the only benefit of Quran is kindness because the axis of understanding Quran is God’s kindness. Therefore, it is clear that the human understands Quran as much as he loves God (JavadAmoli, 1971:85). Therefore, one of the most beautiful manifests of the mutual relationship between Quran and morality is the relationship between Quran and kindness.

3-2- The Relationship between Quran and Wisdom in terms of Morality

Wisdom is one of the most important manifests of the relationship between Quran and morality. Wisdom is one of the basics of morality and has different branches (Tabatabaie, 1403 AH, 372). It is noticeable that Quran is the wisdom “I swear by the Quran full of wisdom” (Yaseen, 2) and it is sent from God. There are 300 discussions about wisdom in the Holy Quran including the discussions of thought and insight that are two branches of wisdom meaning morality that all have invited people to think or have taught the prophet how to justify to verify the facts. However, it is important that there is no command in Quran for people to believe without any thinking or to do something. Moreover, most of the issues that cannot be understood by mind and thought are explained in Quran by argument. On the other hand, in terms of mutual relationship between Quran and morality, it should be stated that scientific and practical benefit from Quran is more achieved through wisdom in the moral sense, because although Quran invitation is a public invitation, people who are more intelligent, can benefit the Quranic concepts much more and this issue demonstrates the mutual relationship between Quran and morality.

3-3- The Relationship between Quran and Virtue

One of the beautiful manifests of the mutual relationship between Quran and Morality is the procedure of Quran and virtue, because Quran states: “None shall touch it save the purified ones” (al-Waaqia, 79). The summery of this message is that Quranic scientific and practical knowledge is achieved when both soul and body are purified. On the other hand, Holy Quran talks about virtue “and whoever respects the signs of Allah, this surely is (the outcome) of the

piety of hearts" (al-Hajj, 32). The summery of the message is that the regulation of divine rituals is Quran obeisance that is realized through recitation, understanding the content, interpretation, promoting the theology and regulations.

3-4- The Relationship between Quran and Courageous

One of the most beautiful manifests of Quran relationship and virtuous morality is the flourishing procedure of courageous queen in the light of Quran. Quran says the followers "tell, except what Allah has decreed for us, nothing is taken by us" (Koleini, 1985: 415) and then Quran says "do you expect something rather than these two for us?" in this verse, being murdered for the sake of God (martyrdom) is similar to victory and is regarded as one of the wishes for believers and talks about the spirit of courage among Islam fighters in the shadow of Quranic teachings and culture.

4- Morality in Quran

Morality that is concerned with the optional behavior of a man has always had specific attraction and respect for him. Seen from the Quranic point of view, moral virtues are not the tool to organize the human's behavior in this world, but it is regarded as the construction materials to base his eternal life. In Quran, human is defined as a creature that is able to get perfection and can adorn himself with moral jewelry. Human owns option as well and is well aware of this option and the origin of aim existence is achieved for his optional deeds through the human's option (Keiqa, 2003: 35).

In addition to the final goal in human's behavior, three points must be considered:

1. Human will see the profit and loss of his effort. "Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight an atom's weight of good, see it! And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it" (Al Zalzalah, 7 & 8).
2. Salvation and perfection will not be achieved without human's effort: "That man can have nothing but what he strives for" (Al Najm, 39).
3. The human's leading and misleading refers to him. "Who receiveth guidance, receiveth it for his own benefit, who goeth astray doth so to his own loss: no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another: One man cannot bear the burden of another: nor would We visit with Our Wrath until We had sent a Messenger (to give warning)" (Al-Isra', 15)

The Holy Quran has considered morality from the individual, civil and political perspectives. In other words, Quran explains the moral issues in all dimensions of human's life to let the human benefit the prosperity in all these fields and lead him to the bliss that is the final goal of

morality.

Morality in Islam is based on the axis of self-analysis and perfection in the real self – against self-concept and the first step toward bliss and perfection is “self-analysis” through recognizing the spiritual and high tendencies can boost them in him and through recognizing the material tendencies (sensuality) he can get free from their dominations and can dominate them. Quran knows the human as a free creature. “Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls)” (Al Ra’d, 11). “Wherewith

Allah guideth all who seek His good pleasure to ways of peace and safety” (Ma’idah, 16).

Therefore, the final perfection of human is closeness to God; however, due to ignorance and sensuality, men are different on determining the perfection and those who love this world, determine the perfection in wealth, those who follow science and industry, determine it in science and industries and those who are into remembering God and the Doom’s Day, determine perfection in another thing and those who love monarchy and power, determine the perfection in spreading the power and authority. However, the final goal and absolute perfection is “Allah” and everything must be done to satisfy God.

There are two groups of verses in Quran about human: the verses that know the human as a supreme creature and the verses that criticize the human. It is because human is a multi-dimensional creature in Quran.

And when your Lord said to the angels, I am going to place in the earth a khalif, they said: What! wilt Thou place in it such as shall make mischief in it and shed blood, and we celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy holiness? He said: Surely I know what you do not know” (Al-Baqara, 30).

The verses that have criticized human, have regarded him as an inferior creature and have considered even the most inferior traits of him such as: “And when We show favor to man, he turns aside and withdraws himself; and when evil touches him, he makes lengthy supplications” (Fussilat, 51).

Therefore, human needs to be trained to move toward the goodness and if the human guides the natural life toward “correction” he will help to develop the divine nature and prophets are sent to do this as well.

In the field of civil morality and in order to achieve the bliss, Quran is focused on collecting the virtues and leaving the vices, because practicing laws and regulations in social life is not possible without moral support; such as the civil morality that is mentioned in the Holy Quran: “And not alike are the good and the evil. Repel (evil) with what is best, when lo! he between whom and you was enmity would be as if he were a warm friend. And none are made to receive

it but those who are patient, and none are made to receive it but those who have a mighty good fortune" (Fussilat, 34 & 35).

"and do not quarrel for then you will be weak in hearts and your power will depart, and be patient; surely Allah is with the patient" (Al-Anfaal, 46).

In the field of political morality, Quran has mentioned some points. By political morality we mean those sensual traits the politicians must have in the field of thinking of social affairs to lead the society toward bliss and promote the virtues and dispel the vices off the society. Naraqı talks on this subject: "Everyone who corrects his traits and does not follow the sensuality and follows the moderate road, he is able to correct the others and is deserved to lead people and is God's messenger and shadow on the ground" (Naraqı, 1991: 490).

The Sabzevari researcher also refers to the politicians' political morality in his work and believes that: "...if there was not a just king in the world, the world would be spoiled. Therefore, people need a king who lives in justice and follow the prophets' way, tries hard to repel the tyrants' cruelty, keeps everybody at his deserved stage, keeps the believers safe from the cruel people, is a man of knowledge, religion and virtue, does not misuse the people's wealth, enjoining good and forbidding the evil and keeps the roads safe" (LaakZaie, 2001: 159).

Therefore, the significant issue in political morality is the governmental officials' manner of conduct. God has considered it in some verses: "Those who, should We establish them in the land, will keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and enjoin good and forbid evil; and Allah's is the end of affairs" (Al-Haaj, 41).

"Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts to their owners and that when you judge between people you judge with justice; surely Allah admonishes you with what is excellent; surely Allah is Seeing, Hearing" (An-Nisaa', 58)

"Surely Allah enjoins the doing of justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion; He admonishes you that you may be mindful" (An-Nahl, 90)

One of the characteristics that governmental officials should own is tolerance and the prophets and state officials should be the most tolerant people in the society. "O my Lord! Expand my breast for me, and make my affair easy to me" (Taa-haa, 25 & 26).

The officials should be humble as well. "And be kind to him who follows you of the believers" (ash-Shu'araa, 215).

5- Conclusion

The Holy Quran is the greatest gift of God and God has graced on human by revealing it to the

Prophet of Islam. Quran is the light that has illuminated the hearts and is the best treatment. This book is the preaching that awakens human and is a guide that shows the best way toward bliss to the human. Quran is a complete selection of human's knowledge and human sciences that talks about the fields of morality, training, politics, beliefs and sociology, to name a few and presents its own viewpoint in all fields of study.

Morality is very important in the Holy Quran and in various verses the 'self-purification'- the main axis of Quran- has been stated as one of the main aims of revelation of the Quran and Islam Prophet's message. The morality, self-purification, individual behavior, and individual's social relationship with others play a deep and expanded role. Morality regulates and organizes the relationship between human and God, completes the human and society and it plays an important role in the man's personal and social life and destiny.

Seen from the Quranic perspective, the human is a passenger who is traveling to meet God and seeks luggage to reach the destination. The best luggage is to get accustomed to the divine morality and the most significant axis is self-purification that is considered as the most important aim of revelation of Quran and sending the prophet of Islam in various verses. The domain of morality is the personal and social and international behavior and deeds and it facilitates and regulates the relationships between human and God and human with himself, with others and with nature and the conclusion is the perfection of individual and society. The effort of Quran in moral issues and self-purification is a basic and fundamental issue and other programs are derived from it. In other words, it shadows all the Islamic laws and regulations. In fact, the moral perfection in the individual and society is the most important aim on which other religions focus and it is regarded as the root of all the social corrections and the tool of fighting with corruptions and abnormal phenomena.

According to the Quran categorization, morality is in three types: 1) divine morality, 2) individual morality, 3) social morality. Morality and moral issues are the origin of the goodness and beauty and there are three opposite concepts of sensuality, world and Satan against these three characteristics and we are always dealing with them and we are being led with the traditions of Prophets and Imams as well as with Holy Quran and its divine verses.

Morality is one of the most significant issues in Holy Quran. Following the religious issues, morality issues are mainly concerned with the Holy Quran. God says in Quran "Our Lord! and raise up in them a Messenger from among them who shall recite to them Thy communications and teach them the Book and the wisdom, and purify them; surely Thou art the Mighty, the Wise" (al- Baqara, 129) Furthermore, in Surah Shams, the purification issue has been stated followed by the 11 important swears to the creator, creature, earth, sky, sun, moon and selves...

I swear by the sun and its brilliance,
 And the moon when it follows the sun,
 And the day when it shows it,
 And the night when it draws a veil over it,
 And the heaven and Him Who made it,
 And the earth and Him Who extended it,
 And the soul and Him Who made it perfect,
 Then He inspired it to understand what is right and wrong for it;
 He will indeed be successful who purifies it,
 And he will indeed fail who corrupts it (ash-Shams, 1-10).

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