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Developing Lofty

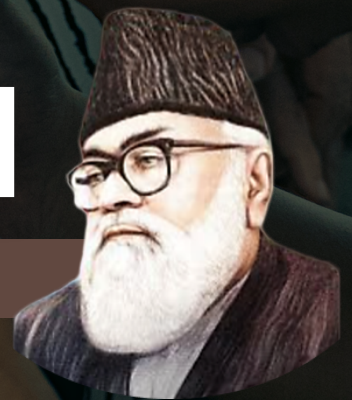
Akhlak

WHY AND HOW

SYED MAUDUDI

TRANSLATED BY: MUHAMMAD NABEEL MUSHARRAF

PROOF-READING: IRFAN IKHTIAR



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لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ

لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا

FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH ALONE! WE SEEK
FROM YOU NEITHER REWARD NOR THANKS

QURAN 76:9



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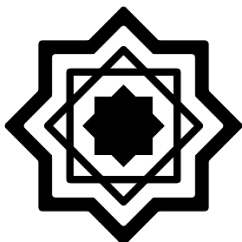
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST MERCIFUL, THE ALWAYS MERCIFUL

Table of Contents

Foreword by the translator	1
Akhlaq is the foundation of all success	5
Being a true Muslim and having high Akhlaq are inseparable realities	7
Reasons for the downfall of Akhlaq	10
The role of educational system	12
Importance of laws, governance, the people who run the systems	15
Three important conditions that determine success of any democratic system.....	18
Foundations of Akhlaq.....	22
The solution	26

Foreword by the translator



Akhlaq¹, morality, and manners are the real treasures of any society. If we look around in our societies, we find that tranquility and serenity is missing in the hearts of the people. If we analyze, we can find many reasons for this. However, one of the most prominent reasons is that we have lost the Akhlaq. If we develop high morals and Akhlaq, many of the things that cause negativity, stress, depression and heart-ache in the society would automatically disappear. Importance of Akhlaq in our religion is paramount. It is not enough to be just concerned about one's own acts of worship and beliefs; Islam commands us to develop superior Akhlaq and provides detailed guidance on how to deal with others.

This is the essence of our religion and this is what is most

¹ Akhlaq is an Arabic term referring to practice virtue, morality and good manners and character in Islam. In simple words, we can say that Akhlaq is basically the ethics, good conduct and moral character of a person.

beloved in the sight of Allah swt. Our leader, our Kareem, our Master Muhammad ﷺ informed us:

إِنَّ مِنْ خَيْرِكُمْ أَحْسَنَكُمْ أَخْلَاقًا

Verily, the best of you are those who have the best Akhlaq. (Saheeh Bukhari, 3366)

He also gave us the news that:

مَا شَيْءٌ أَثْقَلُ فِي مِيزَانِ الْمُؤْمِنِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ خُلُقٍ حَسَنٍ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيُبْغِضُ الْفَاحِشَ الْبَدِيءَ

Nothing is heavier upon the scale of the believer on the Day of Resurrection than good Akhlaq. Verily, Allah hates the vulgar, obscene person. (Sunan al-Tirmidhi, 2002, Saheeh)

Once he ﷺ said to his companions:

أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِأَحَبِّكُمْ إِلَيَّ وَأَقْرَبِكُمْ مِنِّي بِمَجْلِسَا يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ

Shall I tell you about the most beloved to me and the closest to my assembly on the Day of Resurrection?

They said, “Yes, O Messenger of Allah.” The Prophet ﷺ said:

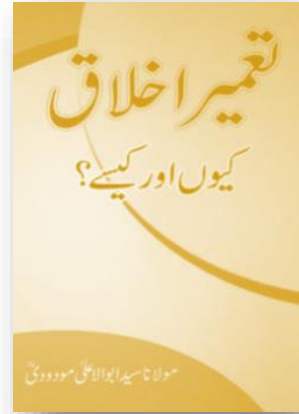
أَحْسَنُكُمْ خُلُقًا

Those with the best Akhlaq. (Musnad Ahmad, 6696, Saheeh)

From the above traditions, it can easily be seen how much

emphasis is there in Islam on having lofty Akhlaq. It is very unfortunate that we are losing this treasure of Akhlaq from our societies. A serious effort is required to regain this treasure and become the people that our beloved Master ﷺ wanted us to become. This book by SAMA-O-BASR Publications is a humble effort in this path.

This book in your hand is a translation of a booklet by one of the most prolific writers of the present era, Maulana Syed Abul Aala Maududi whose services to Islam need no introduction. Described by Wilfred Cantwell Smith as "the most systematic thinker of modern Islam" his numerous works, which covered a range of disciplines such as Qur'anic exegesis, hadith, law, philosophy and history, have been translated in numerous languages and read around the globe. Even long after his departure from this world, he is still lighting up the souls and spirits of millions of people through his works.



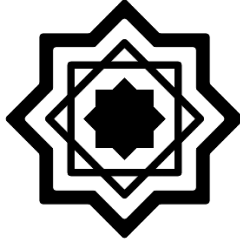
This book is the English translation of Syed Maududi's book *Tameer-e-Akhlaq: Kyon aur Kaisay* which looks at this aspect from an overall system perspective and invites

the readers to not only ponder on their own Akhlaq at an individual level, but also to become a part of the effort to enhance the Akhlaq and morality at the collective level encompassing the whole society. The book not only identifies the problems but also presents their thought-provoking solutions while elaborating and linking with the timeless principles of the rise and fall of nations. It would be very beneficial if the readers of this book also refer to another book by Maulana Maududi on this subject titled 'Ethical Viewpoint of Islam'. These two books read together would establish a solid foundation for understanding the system of ethics in Islam, In Sha Allah.

We make a dua to Allah swt to make this book a sadaqa jariyyah for us and make it means for enhancing our own Akhlaq as well Akhlaq of everyone who benefits from it.

19 September 2020
Muhammad Nabeel Musharraf
SAMA-O-BASR Publications
(A Project of iCAN)
Australia

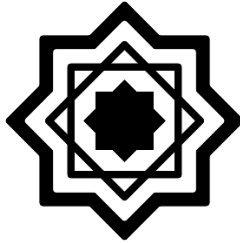
Akhlaq is the foundation of all success



Akhlaq is the real worth and the real distinguishing feature between the human beings and the animals. This is upon which one's success depends in this world and the next. Neither a person in his individual capacity, nor any group of people as a collective body can succeed without Akhlaq. There is no branch or aspect of human life which does not require some moral grounds and Akhlaq for achieving stability. Can we ever achieve peace if the sanctity of human life and fulfilment of rights of others is absent in the societies that we live in? Can our society ever escape a destruction if its members never miss crossing over the boundaries of reasonability, and never think twice before subjugating the life, wealth, and honors of other members of the society whenever they find an opportunity? Can you ever imagine a civilized society if there are no sensible laws available for

managing the interactions between individuals and groups; or, if they are present but not followed? Can you ever run a civilized and well-developed system of life if the social system, political system and economics in the society are void of trustworthiness, justice, sense of responsibility, and righteousness? Not only that, I ask you: Can you even protect your status as a free nation if such a selfishness is prevailing in the hearts of your people? When they don't have any room in their hearts for devotion to anything else apart from their own selves and their own personal gains?

Being a true Muslim and having high Akhlaq are inseparable realities



Now if you look at it from the perspective of being a Muslim, you would realize that we cannot even imagine an Islamic system of life with such prevalence of inferior Akhlaq and unethical behaviors.² A Muslim is made a

² The deen of Islam and the Akhlaq are inseparable. Every rule, concept, and practice in Islam is meant to ultimately affect our inward and outward behaviour.

Imam Ibn al-Qayyim R.A. writes:

الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ خُلُقٌ فَمَنْ زَادَ عَلَيْكَ فِي الْخُلُقِ زَادَ عَلَيْكَ فِي الدِّينِ

The religion itself is entirely good character, so whoever surpasses you in character has surpassed you in religion. (Madarij al-Salikin, 2/294)

And Imam Al-Shatibi writes:

وَالشَّرِيعَةُ كُلُّهَا إِيمَانٌ هِيَ تَخْلُقُ بِمَكَارِمِ الْأَخْلَاقِ

Muslim for the very reason that with his presence, the goodness will prevail, and the evil will perish. If all of one's struggles are against goodness and for spreading the evil, and yet he claims to be a Muslim, it is a clear incongruity. If someone is a Muslim and yet others are not safe from his evil, if someone is a Muslim and yet he cannot be trusted in matters, if someone is a Muslim and yet he runs away from the good and all his efforts are in the pursuit of malevolent things, if he eats haram and fulfils his desires through haram means – then, is there really a benefit of him being a Muslim?³

There can be nothing more disgraceful for a society than;

The Sharia in its entirety only creates noble morals. (Al-Muwafaqat 2/124)

³ From the ahadith of the Prophet ﷺ, we learn that these characteristics indicate nifaq (hypocrisy) i.e. a disagreement between what the tongue says as compared to what is in the heart and what is evident from the actions.

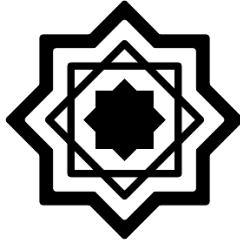
Abdullah ibn Amr reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

أَرْبَعٌ مِنْ كُنْ فِيهِ كَانَ مُنَافِقًا خَالِصًا وَمَنْ كَانَتْ فِيهِ خَلَّةٌ مِنْهُمْ كَانَتْ فِيهِ خَلَّةٌ مِنْ نِفَاقٍ حَتَّى يَدْعَهَا إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ وَإِذَا عَاهَدَ عَدَرَ وَإِذَا وَعَدَ أَخْلَفَ وَإِذَا خَاصَمَ فَجَرَ

There are four signs that make someone a pure hypocrite and whoever has them has a characteristic of hypocrisy until he abandons it: when he speaks he lies, when he makes a covenant he is treacherous, when he makes a promise he breaks it, and when he argues he is wicked. (Saheeh Bukhari, 34)

when it gets deprived of justice and gets abundance of oppression and corruption; when the goodness continues to decline in it; when the evil find all the means and resources in it to get nourished and nurtured; and when the opportunities for trustworthiness, dutifulness, and accountability continue to diminish with passing day. This is the state of affairs that invites God's wrath. If this is the situation of a Muslim society, it means that the soul of Islam has already left its body. It might have the name of Islam still living in it somewhere, but it is not really a Muslim society. On top of it, if that society is being called a Muslim society, this would only become a reason for people to be repelled away from Islam.

Reasons for the downfall of Akhlaq

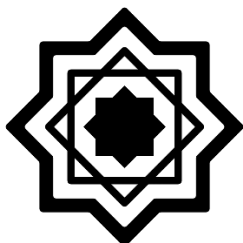


A Muslim only goes towards the downfall of Akhlaq when acquiring the pleasure of Allah swt and success in the hereafter do not remain an objective for him; rather the Dunya (or the worldly life) becomes a central focus of all his struggles. It is, however, a universal principle that no nation can achieve success while having lowly Akhlaq. With diminutive level in Akhlaq, neither can one achieve the Dunya nor the Aakhirah.

What is pulling us most towards the love of the Dunya is the thirst for wealth. In order to achieve this crooked objective of accumulating the wealth by all means, we have resorted to selfishness and corruption while not realizing that this approach itself is a road-block to economic progress. I have had the opportunity to visit several Muslim countries, especially in the middle east. When I meet the businessmen over there who import

goods from non-Muslim countries, I ask them about why do they not choose their brother country, Pakistan, from where they can easily get the exact same things. The answer they give to this question really makes me feel sad. They tell that they have stopped placing orders to Pakistani businesses because at the time of acquiring the order, they show superior but when the time for sending the actual product comes, they dispatch inferior quality goods. Now tell me, can we make any progress in the field of trade with this sort of approach? Because of the way many of our industrialists and major traders are running after undue profits and gains, it is strengthening and fattening the faction of the society that they belong to; however, as far as the overall society is concerned, it is getting weaker and weaker because of such behaviors. With all this happening, for how long can we escape the fire of class struggle and societal predicament which has already burnt many other nations of the world who took such senseless route. It is because of this approach that our working class is inclined toward procrastination and lack of a sense of responsibility; they are interested in standing up for their rights only while not worry about anyone else. Is this really the way that would take us towards economic stability?

The role of educational system



For a long time, we are advocating that education and educational reforms will pave the road for material success. However, all our struggles have focused only on making people that know the books that they study; we have never focused on making them good human beings or good Muslims. On contrary, our institutions are generating armies of people that neither possess the human ethics nor the Islamic Akhlaq. We find no traces of this objective in the approach and philosophy of institutions that it is also our responsibility to create a personality in students that is best for our nation.⁴ This is

⁴ This is in stark contradiction to Islamic philosophy of seeking knowledge. Our predecessors have taught us that acquiring manners come before study books and seeking knowledge. This is the objective and philosophy of the Islamic system of education.

Imam Ibn al-Mubarak, may Allah have mercy on him, said to the Ashab ul Hadith:

the reason that majority of the workers that our

أنتم إلى قليل من الأدب أحوج منكم إلى كثير من العلم

You are in greater need of a little manners than a great deal of knowledge. (Tarikh Dimashq, 32918)

And he said:

طلبت الأدب ثلاثين سنة وطلبت العلم عشرين سنة وكانوا يطلبون الأدب ثم العلم

I sought manners for thirty years and I sought knowledge for twenty years. The righteous predecessors would seek manners and then seek knowledge. (Ghayat al-Nihayah, 1/446)

Imam Al-Layth ibn Sa'd, may Allah have mercy on him, said to the people of Hadith:

تَعَلَّمُوا الْحِلْمَ قَبْلَ الْعِلْمِ

Learn forbearance before seeking knowledge. (Jami' Bayan al-'Ilm, 581)

Imam Al-Zuhri, may Allah have mercy on him, said:

كُنَّا نَأْتِي الْعَالِمَ فَمَا نَتَعَلَّمُ مِنْ أَدْبِهِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْنَا مِنْ عِلْمِهِ

We would come to a scholar and what we learned from his manners was more beloved to us than his knowledge. (Hilyat al-Awliya, 4575)

Imam Ibn Wahb, may Allah have mercy on him, said:

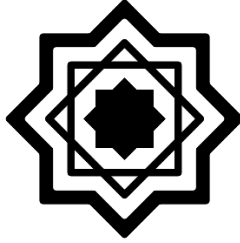
مَا تَعَلَّمْتُ مِنْ أَدَبِ مَالِكٍ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ

What I learned from the manners of Malik was better than his knowledge. (Jami' Bayan al-'Ilm 581)

government and our institutions are finding are deprived of any trustworthy character. This is in exception to a very small minority which is becoming smaller and smaller as the time is progressing. From the very initial levels to the top tier in leadership, our departments and institutions are run by those people who seriously lack uprightness, trustworthiness, and a sense of accountability. These are the people who even a little temptation and a little fear can deviate from the right path; the people who do not mind causing even biggest of the harms and setbacks to others, even their own nation and country, when they see an opportunity for a personal gain. These are the people in whose eyes there is no value for consciousness; the ones who do not find any problem in breaking the laws and codes of conduct for their personal interests. Spiritual success is far-cry; the type of educational system we are running is not even preparing us for a material success. How far can we go in any walk of life with such a character which is unable to bear the burden of trust, and which does not have the courage to stand in front of temptations and fears.⁵

⁵ This inability to stand strong facing desires and temptations is what not only becomes a source of failure in this world, but also in the here-after, as we learn from the hadith below.

Importance of laws, governance, the people who run the systems



Our real strength is not those material resources that our Creator has put at our disposal to use, but it is those people who are made in-charge of making use of these resources. If these people get corrupted, what benefit can the material resource bring to us? Their corruption and its impact cannot be stopped or controlled merely

Abu Huraira R.A. reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, was asked, “What enters most people into Paradise?” He said:

تَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَحُسْنُ الْخُلُقِ

Fear of Allah and good character.

It was asked, “What enters most people into the Hellfire?” He said:

الْفَمُّ وَالْفَرْجُ

The mouth and the genitals. (Sunan al-Tirmidhi, 2004, Sahih)

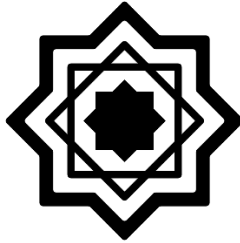
through the government interventions as the success of the use of such power is also dependent upon the character of those who are using it. Even the best of the laws and constitutions in the world cannot bring any benefit if those who implement them feel no shame in breaking them and making them a tool for their own personal agenda. Whatever restrictions you put in place to stop the evil will themselves become tools for such people who wish to take undue advantages. This would open another door for the people of poor character to further their accumulations. It will lead to more devastation than good. Irrespective of how just your law is, it cannot demonstrate the miracle of establishing social justice in the society if the people who sit on the chair in the 'houses of justice' are ones who themselves slaughter justice. If the law-enforcing bodies themselves get determined to break the law and oppress, justice can never flourish in such a society.

If you observe, you would notice that the way systems are designed in the present times, a lot of means and resources are directly under the disposal of governments. People cannot directly take benefit from them; it is the governments who decide the mechanisms through which such resources would be utilized. We can say, in other words, that on behalf of governments, it is the people

who run the government who decide about this in reality. The extent of benefits that can be taken from these means and resources in case of honest, righteous, and responsible people running the government cannot be compared to the utilization of these resources when the people running the government machinery are suffering from the diseases of corruption, irresponsible behavior, bribery, nepotism, self-centered thinking, and lack of concern for the law. It is because of these corrupt workers that the governments are neither able to properly collect their taxes nor able to utilize them in a worthy manner.

Above is the case when the law and constitution themselves are right, the high-ups are responsible, but the workers underneath them are corrupt. However, if the law itself is full of injustices and evidently inappropriate aspects, and when the high-ups and the leaders themselves are an equal part in the corruption, then the destruction and demise of such a society hits the very maximum. In such a situation, the government itself becomes a source of destruction rather than being a means of construction and betterment.

Three important conditions that determine success of any democratic system



The method that we have chosen for selecting our rulers and our law-makers is democracy. It should not be forgotten the democracy doesn't have some magic in its name which would ensure selection of the most suitable people. Democracy itself is dependent on certain Akhlaqi (moral aspects) and ethical principles in order to be successful. If those Akhlaqi aspects are absent, it cannot flourish. Some of these essential aspects include the following.

1. The people of the nation in which democracy is being implemented should have a proper awareness about their rights and should be determined to preserve them. At the collective level, it should have the strength to not let any oppressor or tyrant over-come

them. Its people should not be willing to sell their opinions. They should not give in to temptations. They should not give opinions against their consciences. Their choices should not be based on some fear. They should not favor the incapable only because they are affiliated with them in some way or form.

2. The people who govern and run the system of that country and the soldiers who defend its borders should have this much love and reverence for the nation, law and the rights of people that they should not become a part of any effort to bring about the rule of tyranny and oppression in the land and let not any autocrat overtake the essence of democracy. They should not become a tool to enable the by-passing of law by the powerful ones. They should be sincere to this philosophy of democracy that “the governance is actually the role of the representatives of people who people elect out of their uninfluenced own will; the role of the workers of the government is that they should honestly work under the elected representatives and should have such a strength of character that no one should be able to manipulate them to overtake the rights of the people to select their own representations.”
3. The society should comprise of most of those people

who would never become such self-centered that they develop a determination to nurture venality, gutlessness, and foully among the people of the nation and the government workers merely to get the rulership or the positions of power⁶. Even if they have an urge for rulership, it should be controlled and confined within certain acceptable boundaries and limits. Rather than buying the positions of power or exploiting the people and situations, they should gain confidence of the people through service and the way they conduct themselves. They should only then accept the position if the people elect them for the rulership and representation.

Wherever these three conditions are not met, the

⁶ If they exhibit these behaviours and embody the Akhlaq that the Islam wants to foster in them, they will not only attain the success in Dunya but are also guaranteed the success in the hereafter.

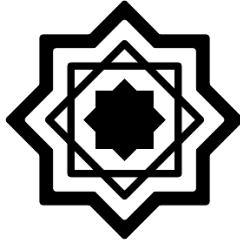
'Ubadah ibn al-Samit reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

اَضْمِنُوا لِي سِتًّا مِنْ اَنْفُسِكُمْ اَضْمِنْتُ لَكُمْ الْجَنَّةَ اِذَا حَدَّثْتُمْ وَاَوْفُوا اِذَا وَعَدْتُمْ وَاَدُّوا اِذَا اُوْتِيتُمْ وَاَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَكُمْ وَعُصُوا اَبْصَارَكُمْ وَكَفُّوا اَيْدِيَكُمْ

Guarantee for me six deeds and I will guarantee for you Paradise: Be truthful when you speak, keep your promises when you make them, fulfill the trust when you are trusted, guard your chastity, lower your gaze, and restrain your hands from harming others. (Musnad Ahmad, 22251, Saheeh)

democracy would suffocate. It is only the strong and reliable pillars that can bear the load of independence and democracy. If this heavy load is put on any weak pillars and decayed beams, the whole structure will collapse. The system at a place with such gloomy characteristics might be termed as democracy, but in reality, it would be a tyranny. The people who come to rule through illegitimate means can never be sincere to people. In whatever they do, they will always give priority to their own objectives over what is right and just - whether it is law-making or running the affairs of the government. In such a situation, neither the respect for law remains alive nor such a government can bring about any constructive change in the society.

Foundations of Akhlaq



The biggest dilemma is that the foundations on which the building of our Akhlaq was established are collapsing. [Let us review a basic overview of three important foundations of our system of morality].

1. God, His Messenger, His book and the day of judgement

God, The Messenger, Quran and belief in the hereafter – these are those primary and fundamental foundations upon which the character of individuals and nations are to be built. However, our system, our way of education and the environmental of our educational institutions, rather than strengthening these foundations, is determined at weakening them day by day. On contrary, serious efforts are being made to carve on the hearts of people the imported conceptualizations, philosophies and values of ‘God-less’ and ‘religion-free’ societies. Not many people are realizing that this approach is uprooting and killing our identity and self as a nation.

2. Differentiation between halal and haram

The second thing whose survival is linked to the survival of our moral and Akhlaqi system is the differentiation between the halal and the haram. Rather than preserving it and taking care of it, we are busy in cutting it from its roots. Our entire financial system is running on *riba*⁷. Every Muslim knows that Islam has forbidden this, yet they are indulged in it. Drinking and alcoholism is increasing day by day in our societies, even though at one time it was the pride of the Muslim societies that they controlled drinking, and hence its harmful effects on the society, in such a way that no other nations of the world could compete with it⁸. Running after unlawful sexual

⁷ 'Riba' can be roughly translated as "usury", or unjust, exploitative gains made in trade or business under Islamic law. Involvement in Riba is considered to be a war with Allah swt and His messenger in the Quran.

O you who have believed, fear Allah and give up what remains [due to you] of interest, if you should be believers. And if you do not, then be informed of a war [against you] from Allah and His Messenger. (Quran 2:278-9)

⁸ Alcohol consumption results in a lot of deaths and other ill outcomes in the society; there is no dispute on this matter and the statistics are abundantly available. Whenever any country has tried to ban it, the people have shown so much resistance that the ban had to be lifted. The only society where it vanished as soon as the command was heard was the state of Madinah. When the messenger of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made the announcement that Alcohol has been made haram, people threw whatever quantity of alcohol they had stored in their houses. If some had it in his mouth and hadn't drunk it, he spitted

gratification and sensual pleasures is another cancer in our society. Blindly following the western culture, we are tirelessly working to promote immodesty, nudity, inappropriate and uncultured interaction between the genders, obscene literature, songs and movies. Are we following the model of the society that was exemplified in front of us - the society that enjoyed a great repute among all the nations of the world that it honored the women and celebrated its modesty and values. After spilling out of all these important boundaries of the sacred law, what possibility remains that we will have any concern for what is halal and what is not? Why would people even worry if they see someone engaged in bribery, dishonesty, plundering, usurping, theft, and other ugly things like these. Engaging in unlawful would become a very normal thing in such societies.

3. Our values

Third important thing is those values that we inherited from our religion, our nation and our elders which are meant to keep us upright on high level of morality and

it out. People even vomited to clean their stomachs of something that their leader declared as haram. It could only happen in the community of Muhammad ﷺ. History has not witnessed such devotion and morality anywhere else in the world.

Akhlaq. As a Muslim, what should have been of most value to us would be the ability to identify and support what is right and just, justice and equity, trustworthiness and honesty, truthfulness, contentment with our means, modesty, honor, brotherhood, and most-importantly God-consciousness and pursuit of excellence. It is very painful to see that we have replaced these important values with the love for the abundance of worldly goods and wealth, pompous lifestyle, authoritarianism, overpowering others, rulership, luxuries and worldly comforts – irrespective of whatever means are deployed to acquire them.⁹

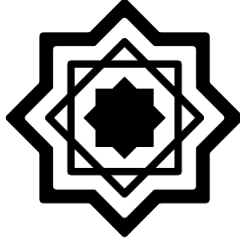
⁹ This is in clear contradiction to the life-style that the best of the creation displayed and guides us to adopt.

Ibn Umar reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a traveler along a path.”

Ibn Umar would say, “If you make it to the evening, do not wait for the morning. If you make it to the morning, do not wait for the evening. Take from your health for your sickness, and from your life for your death.” (Saheeh Bukhari, 6053)

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كُنْ فِي الدُّنْيَا كَأَنَّكَ غَرِيبٌ أَوْ عَابِرُ سَبِيلٍ - وَكَانَ ابْنُ عُمَرَ يَقُولُ إِذَا أَمْسَيْتَ فَلَا تَنْتَظِرِ الصُّبْحَ وَإِذَا أَصْبَحْتَ فَلَا تَنْتَظِرِ الْمَسَاءَ وَخُذْ مِنْ صِحَّتِكَ لِمَرَضِكَ وَمِنْ حَيَاتِكَ لِمَوْتِكَ

The solution



You will now ask about how can we come out of this pit of lowly Akhlaq and how can we avoid its harmful implications. I would highlight this to you that you are not asking this question in space; you are inquiring from the perspective of a particular country or a particular nation; the people who have acquired certain attributes and characteristics over the centuries. You are asking about those people for whom materialistic prosperity and advancement in 'life-style' has remained the main priority for an extended period. Akhlaq and its development was not even a consideration and hence no collective efforts were considered needed for this. [Let us now review a 4-pronged solution to this gloomy situation].

First step: Realization of the sense of responsibility

In this situation, the first thing the we should become conscious and concerned about, and what our leaders and prominent people in the society should be even more

concerned with than the general people, is that they should realize that without Akhlaq, there is no possibility for us to prosper or even maintain our independence. Until and unless this realization is there, no serious effort can be made for nurturing the Akhlaq.

Though individual efforts have always been done by the grace of Allah swt, and our society has never been deprived of such people who have made efforts according to whatever capacity they have; their only impact has been that they reduced the rate of our downfall to some extent. They could not stop or reverse the downfall. Building lofty Akhlaq in a nation requires effort at national level. It cannot be successful unless the people responsible for running the affairs of the nation realize its importance and appreciate the devastating impacts of poor Akhlaq.

Second step: Identify the foundational philosophy

After the realization of this responsibility, it should also be realized that the building and nurturing of Akhlaq cannot be accomplished without a defined philosophy, map and milestones. By just repeating 'Akhlaq, Akhlaq..' and by just advertising some generally known good characteristics, you cannot create the Akhlaq in a nation. You inevitably need a foundational philosophy according

to which it should be determined that what is just and what is not. That moral foundation should govern what are the moral grounds which we should encompass and what is the criteria of right and wrong. In order to establish the Akhlaq, you need such a philosophy to back the process that would go deep into the hearts of the people and strengthen the system of Akhlaq from its very roots. Before we begin to develop human beings, we need to know what type of human beings we wish to develop them into. With that, we should also know how that type of human being can be made.

Step 3: Akhlaq cannot be established on foreign foundations

The third thing that needs to be understood is that we cannot import a philosophy and ideology from abroad and inculcate that in people in order to enhance their Akhlaq. If any constructive outcomes are required, they can only be achieved through a philosophy that is already deeply engrained in the nature and traditions of the people.

This is even more true in case of Muslims. We are not an uncivilized or uncultured nation that has recently found some wealth and is getting out of control because of its glitter. We are not a nation that is void of any rich history and glorious past. We are not the people who do not have

their own ideology, and philosophy of morality. We are not a nation that is in its infancy. If a nation is like that, then certainly a philosophy can be imported from outside to enhance its morality. But as far as the Muslims are concerned, we have our own set of beliefs and a supreme criteria for the right and wrong that we have exemplified for centuries. Though we are now in the state of decline, yet our values and our traditions are a feather in our cap and something that makes us really proud as a nation. Our nation has produced an abundance of people and exemplars whose character, uprightness and morality is unmatched in history to this day. These are the people that we look up to.

If you try to import a foreign philosophy and criteria for morality, all your struggles, for a foreseeable future, would be spent on breaking the already existing foundations so that you can then replace them with the new ones and then build the structure of morality on those new foundations. Such an effort will only further deteriorate the already-deteriorated condition of that nation. If that nation is able to survive this destructive approach, feel free to lay a new foundation stone for it! This is never going happen.

However, if you wish to start nurturing Akhlaq on the

basis of Islam, its values and traditions, then you can start this task from this very moment. Every coming day will show the benefits, fruits, and outcomes of this approach provided that this constructive approach is not polluted by the filth of destructive attitudes and efforts.

Step 4: Implement the change from a system perspective

Do not consider the work of nurturing the Akhlaq on the foundations of Islam to be of limited scope. In order to accomplish this, you will need to change your entire system of education, your curriculum, your approach, your environment and everything involved. You will need to make the best use of the means that shape the thinking and attitudes of nation including radio, TV, cinema, journalism, literature and so on. You will need to stop their misuse. You will need to change the way of tarbiyyah and development in the institutions and organizations that develop and prepare the people who run the government machinery and defense. You will need to bring about reforms in the law. You will also need to refine your leadership, governance and organizational policies. Most importantly, your leaders will need to alter their intentions, actions and approaches. System of elections and rulership will also need to be rubbed clean. This is not an easy task. It is a daunting mission and people

would only get up and take it on when they would realize that if their nation drowns, they would sink with it too and no one would be left to float. Everyone will get doomed together.

