



# ISLAMIC EDUCATION

*Journal of the All-Pakistan Islamic Education Congress*

---

Sept. - Oct. 1973

---

## IN THIS ISSUE

Distinction Between True Morality and False Morality

... Late Dr. Muhammad Rafi-ud-Din

The Making of a Scientist

... H. A. Krebs

Contemporary Motivation Theories in Agricultural-  
Extension

... Muzaffar Hussain

Iqbal's Theory of Knowledge

... Abbadullah Farooqi

Science and Religion

... Mian Khuda Bukhsh

The Need for Islamic Education in the South Pacific

... Qadir Bukhsh

### Books

Kalki or the Future of Civilisation

... H. A. F. Nadeem

ALL-PAKISTAN ISLAMIC EDUCATION CONGRESS

## DISTINCTION BETWEEN TRUE MORALITY AND FALSE MORALITY

DR. MUHAMMAD RAFI-UD-DIN

It is sometimes said that the core or essence of Islam is the universal principles of morality like justice, truth, honesty, generosity, purity, kindness, fraternity, tolerance, equality, etc., that a Christian, a Jew or a Hindu or even an atheist who follows these principles in his practical life, is as good as a Muslim who follows them and better than a Muslim who does not follow them and that, since these principles are now accepted everywhere in the world as true and worthy of being followed, Islam has already spread to the world.

Such views ignore the important distinction (pointed out and stressed by Islam) that exists between true morality and false morality. They are based on a gross misunderstanding not only about the teachings of Islam but also about the nature of universal moral principles and the extent to which they are being actually practised in the world.

The core or essence of Islam is something deeper than morality and it is the love of God in all the purity and perfection of His concept, which has been taught by the last of the Prophets, Muhammad (peace be upon him) and which is being protected and preserved safely by his followers while centuries roll on. Islam is not morality first of all but the love of God first of all. What makes an individual a Muslim is *iman* or faith and the reality of *iman* is no other but the love of God.

A Muslim is a person who testifies on the basis of a personal conviction that God alone is worthy of all admiration, adoration and worship (*Ashhadu an la ilaha illallah*) and these three activities are undoubtedly an expression—the highest expression possible—of love. The Holy Quran describes the believers as persons who love God intensely.

*And those who believe are very strong in their love of God. 2 : 165.*

According to Islam, a supposed moral action will be a true moral action only if it proceeds from the love of God and if it is performed, directly and immediately and consciously and deliberately, with the object of winning the pleasure and approval of God and for no other end

or purpose. As Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), has said, it is not the action itself but the intention behind it that makes it what it is.

And the only motive behind a true moral action can be the desire to seek the love and pleasure of God and the moral action of a Muslim cannot overcome its internal difficulties and cannot emerge in its full excellence as long as his love of God has not defeated and subordinated all the contending loves in his heart and acquired a complete control of his consciousness. True morality, according to Islam, emanates from a sincere, pure and whole-hearted love of God alone, otherwise it is a false morality which means not morality at all.

For example, a man has built a hospital by spending lacs of rupees out of his own pocket. If on searching of heart carefully he discovers that at the back of his noble deed there was no intention other than that to please God of true and pure concept and to win His approval then, according to Islam, his action will be truly moral and God Almighty will reward him for it, although incidentally his noble deed will have this result also that he will be respected by his fellowmen for his generosity. If on the other hand, his intention was no other than to be known as a good philanthropic man and to be respected by society for his generosity, then his action will not be moral. To take another example, supposing a trader is very honest in his dealings with his buyers and sellers. If by being honest, his intention is to win the pleasure of and save himself from the displeasure of God, his honesty will be a true honesty. If on the other hand he is honest as a matter of business policy and his intention is to win a good reputation for his firm as a means of extending his business and enlarging his profits, his honesty will be a false honesty. Some of us are often deceived by the false honesty of non-Muslims and begin to think that they are better than Muslims. This is however not the case. The man who is honest for the sake of a monetary gain is no better than a man who is dishonest for the sake of a monetary gain. Neither of the two is a seeker of the love and pleasure of God by his actions and each of them follows the easiest way open to him to get money.

According to Islam actions of false morality have no merit and no lasting worth or value however good or beautiful they may appear to be. They go waste and end in nothing.

*Say, should we let you know of those who are the greatest losers in respect of their moral deeds. They are those whose effort goes astray in this world's life and they think that they are doing good deeds. 18 : 23*

Actions of false morality will not even be weighed on the balance on the day of judgment.

*Their deeds are vain. Nor shall we set up a balance on the day of judgment.* 18 : 105

Such actions are like a mirage which looks like water to a thirsty man but is not water in fact.

*And those who do not believe in God their moral deeds are as a mirage in a desert which the thirsty man deems to be a water.* 24 : 39

Or they are like ashes blown away by a wind blowing hard on a stormy day.

*The parable of those who do not believe in God : their moral deeds are as ashes on the wind that blows hard on a stormy day. They have no power over aught they have earned.* 14 : 18

Universal moral principles are based on values derived from the qualities and attributes of God. Hence their love is a part of the love of God and cannot exist and cannot realise itself in practice apart from the love of God. Love of God is like the seed of a tree and universal moral principles are like the beautiful leaves and flowers of the tree that grows out of the seed. If a person desires to have beautiful leaves and flowers of a particular quality, he has to take the trouble of first sowing the seed of the tree that bears them and then working hard to see that the sapling that shoots out of this seed is properly watered and manured and looked after, till it has grown into a full tree. Otherwise, the only alternative left to him will be to be content with dead, dry or paper-made imitation leaves of that quality. As fresh leaves and flowers die when they are separated from the tree that bears them, so universal principles of morality become lifeless and meaningless when they are separated from the ideal from which they are really derived and to which they really belong, namely the ideal of God. If we desire an individual to act according to these principles we have to make sure not only that he loves God and no other idea, as the ideal of his life but also, that he develops his love of God to the maximum limit of his capacity. As the love of universal moral principles is a part of the love of God, these principles can find their full practical realisation only in the actions of an individual who loves God to the fullest extent.