

Explain Self purification and Ehsaan in the light of Quran and Sunnah. Explain Individual and Collective impacts of self purification.

Expounding Self-Purification: A Characteristic of Islamic Civilization

Self-purification is a systematic process of cleansing the inner self from moral vices and disciplining it through faith, repentance (Tawbah), self-accountability (Muhasabah) and spiritual vigilance (Muraqabah), Mujahadah (striving against the self), regular worship and remembrance of Allah (Dhikr and Ibadah), good manners and character (Akhlak). Self-purification is a fundamental characteristic of Islamic civilization as self-purification has profound moral, spiritual and social impacts.

1- Importance of Self-Purification in the light of Quran and Sunnah

Allah Almighty says in Glorious Quran

"Allah has succeeded the individual who purifies it (the soul) and He has failed the individual who corrupts it (the soul)." (Surah Ash-Shams)

2. Ehsaan: The Main Goal of Self-Purification

Ehsaan is the highest level of spiritual excellence where an individual purifies his heart and actions to such a great extent that he lives in constant consciousness of Allah's presence.

The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) says

“Worship Allah as if you see Him,
and if you cannot see Him; then
Indeed Allah sees you.”
(Sahih Muslim)

3. Stages of Self-Purification

i. Tawheed and Iman

By centralizing devotion, fear and hope toward a single Creator, man is freed from being enslaved by masters of material world such as ego, wealth, worldly power. This gives him inner peace. Tawheed and Iman are foundational pillars of self-purification and Musharatah is its practical application.

Allah Almighty says in Glorious Quran

“O you Allah is the protector of those who believe. He brings them out from darkness into light.”

(Surah Al-Baqarah)

ii. Tawbah (Repentance)

It refers to consciously turning away from sins and sincerely returning to Allah.

Allah Almighty says in Glorious Quran

“Indeed Allah loves those who constantly repent and purify themselves”

(Surah Al-Baqarah)

iii. ^(self-accountability) Muhasabah and ^(spiritual vigilance) Muqabalah

Muhasabah (self-accountability) refers to evaluating one's own actions.

Allah Almighty says in Holy Quran

“O you who have believed, fear Allah and let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow.”

(Surah Al-Hashr)

Muraqabah (spiritual vigilance) refers to constant consciousness that Allah is watching all his deeds as intentions.
Allah Almighty says in Holy Quran

“Indeed, Allah is ever Watchful over you.”

(Surah An-Nisa)

iv. Mujahadah (striving against the self)

Striving against the self (Mujahadah) refers to waging greater war (Jihad-e-Akbar) against Nafs-al-Amara (the soul that incites evil desires) to make ^{or moral vices} submissive to the will of Allah.

The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) says

“The Mujahid is the one who strives against his own self (Nafs) for the sake of Allah.”

(Sahih Bukhari)

v. Regular Worship and Remembrance of Allah (Dhikr and Ibadah)

They help in self-purification by providing spiritual elevation and protection from sins. For instance,

The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) says

“The nearest a servant comes to his Lord is when he is prostrating.”

Allah Almighty says in Holy Quran

“Salat restrains one from shameful and evil acts.”

Surah Al-Ankaboot Verse
45

Allah Almighty says in Holy Quran

“O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you so that you may become righteous.”

(Surah Al-Baqarah)
Verse 183

vi- Good Manners and Character (Akhlaq)

This stage involves replacing moral vices such as arrogance, greed etc with moral virtues i.e. sincerity, humility, patience etc.

Allah Almighty says in Holy Quran

ان الله مع الصبرين

Indeed, Allah is with the patient

(Surah Baqarah)

The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) says
Whoever humbles himself for Allah,
Allah elevates him.

Jami al Tirmidi

4. Impacts of Self-Purification on an Individual

i. Moral excellence

Allah Almighty says in Holy Quran

“Indeed, Allah commands justice, forgiveness and giving to relatives.”

(Al-Quran)

Self-purification helps an individual in attaining moral excellence by aligning his character according to Divine will.

ii. Intellectual and Spiritual Excellence

Allah Almighty says in Holy Quran

“O you who believe, if you fear Allah He will grant you a criterion (Furqan).” (Surah Al-Anfaal)

Furqan is the highest level of moral and intellectual excellence. Self-purification helps individual in attaining this excellence.

5- Collective Impacts of Self-Purification

i- Promoting religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence

Self-purification promotes noble morals in individuals such as forbearance, which emphasizes on restraint in the face of difference or provocation.

Allah Almighty says in Glorious Quran

“Do not revile those whom they call upon besides Allah. They out of ignorance revile Allah in return.”

This promotes peaceful coexistence.

ii- Strengthening social Trust

When individuals embark on a journey of self-purification, they try their best to uphold following principles of Islam:

The truthfulness, trustworthiness, integrity in business dealings as commanded

by Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.)

“Indeed, the truthful and trustworthy merchant will be with the prophets.”

Sahih Muslim

Self purification promotes social harmony by fostering honesty in society which strengthens social trust.

Concluding Thoughts

Self purification is a systematic process that involves cleansing the inner self from moral vices and disciplining it through faith, repentance, Mufhasabah, Muraqabah, Mujahadah, remembrance and worship of Allah; and good manners and character.

Self-purification has profound moral, intellectual, spiritual and collective impacts for a society.
