



ETHICS : INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL

FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS OF ETHICS

MORAL PRINCIPLES ?

RIGHT?

SOCIAL VALUES?

INDIVIDUAL VALUES ?

VALUES ?

WRONG?

BAD ?

GOOD?

HUMAN CHARACTER ?

ETHICS IS CONCERNED WITH THE MORAL ISSUES OF THE WORLD

- The moral code of the people is an indicator of their social and spiritual ways of life.
- The true essence of human life is to live amidst worldly joy and sorrows.
- True religion lays stress on moral virtues.
- People are required to discharge their duties according to the moral code of ethics.
- A true knowledge of ethics would be attained if one practices and imbibes these moral values.

THE COSMIC ORDER

- India has a very ancient history of thinking about ethics. Its central concepts are represented in *Rigveda*, one of oldest knowledge texts not only of India but of the entire world.
- In *Rigveda*, we come across the idea of an all-pervading cosmic order (*ṛta*) which stands for harmony and balance in nature and in human society.
- Here *ṛta* is described as a power or force which is the controller of the forces of nature and of moral values in human society.
- In human society, when this harmony and balance are disturbed, there is disorder and suffering.
- This is the power or force that lies behind nature and keeps everything in balance.

COSMIC ORDER - RTAM

- Example of Rta – Forms of Rtam - Food chain, food web, N₂, H₂O, O₂ cycle etc., Ozone layer.
- Disturbing the Rta - Genetic modification, single shot seeds.
Not following individual ethics and hoarding more than required, eating more than required, killing for the sake of taste, plastics, pollution etc., disturbs the COSMIC ORDER (Rta).
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ETHICS IS OF TWO KINDS. INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL.

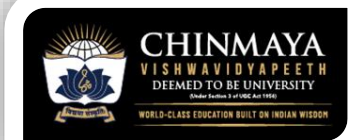
❑ Social ethics represents the values that are needed for social order and harmony.

In the light of both ethics, the following examples can be discussed .

1. Karna (gray areas of both.)
2. Most of us, don't we follow social ethics and not very keen for individual ethics? Example: Sunday morning rise late.
3. Duryodhana
4. Shakuni
5. Ravan.
6. Sugreeva.
7. Sri Rama
8. Bharat

- Individual ethics is **indicative of the good** qualities that are essential for individual well-being and happiness.

Ethics is the core of all the religious and philosophical systems in India.



- ❑ In the knowledge tradition of India, ethics has its origin in its religious and philosophical thinking. From time immemorial, various religious faiths have flourished here.
- ❑ Every religious and every philosophical system of India has a prominent ethical component.
- ❑ Ethics is the core of all these systems. In every religious tradition, good moral conduct is considered essential for a happy and contented life.
- ❑ Without following the path of righteousness no one can attain supreme goal (*mokṣa*) of life.
- ❑ For this one has to perform good deeds and avoid wrong-doing.

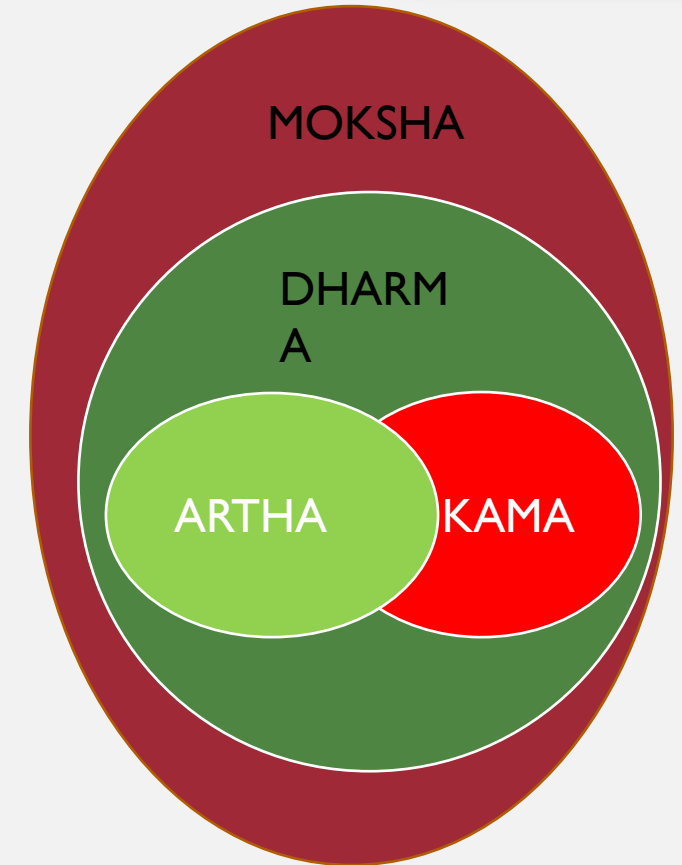
THE HINDU WAY OF LIFE

- Every individual is expected to perform his or her duty appropriate to his or her,
- 1. Caste (varṇa) and 2. Stage of life (āśrama),
- This division of one's life into the four āśramas and their respective dharmas, was designed,
- A. To provide fulfilment to the person in his social, moral and spiritual aspects, and
- B. To lead to harmony and balance in the society,
- The four āśramas are:
 - (1) brahmacarya, stage of studentship,
 - (2) grhastha, stage of the householder,
 - (3) vanaprastha, life in the forest, and
 - samnyāsa, renunciation.



CONCEPT OF FOUR ENDS OF LIFE (puruṣārthas -EFFORTS)

- The concept of four ends of life (puruṣārthas) is also very important. These four ends of life are the goals which are desirable in them and needed for fulfilment of human aspirations. These are,
 - (1) righteousness (dharma);
 - (2) worldly gain (artha);
 - (3) fulfilment of desire; (kāma) and
 - (4) liberation (mokṣa). The fulfilment of all of these four ends of life is important for man.
- **These four are also called the pursuits of Human life which are valid only for Human birth. They are the four aspects of FREE WILL.**
- In this classification, dharma and mokṣa are most important from the ethical point of view. They give right direction and purpose to human life.
- Example, acquiring wealth (artha) is a desirable objective, provided however it also serves dharma, that is, the welfare of the society.



NISHKAMA KARMA - WHY

- 1. Story of PhD student turning mad as someone stole his thesis - Kama not getting fulfilled.
- 2. Story of ISRO scientist committing suicide – Kama getting fulfilled, no goal ahead.
- 3. Adharmic karma accumulates impurity of mind, world gives the consequences and can be rectified.
- 4. Dharmic karma also accumulates impurity – subtle EGO is kindled – how to remove the impurities?
- 5. Nishkama karma helps to remove them.

- **It is an action which is required to be performed without consideration of personal consequences.**
- **It is an altruistic action aimed at the well-being of others rather than for oneself.**
- **In Hinduism this doctrine is known as karma yoga.**
- **In the Bhagavad-Gītā, selfless action (nişkāma karma) is advocated.**

Core of the Mahabharata

- The concept of right and wrong is the core of the Mahābhārata.
- Non-violence, truthfulness, absence of anger, charity, forgiveness and self-realization.
- It is only by performing one's righteous duties or dharma that one can hope to attain the supreme path to the highest good.
- It is dharma alone that gives both prosperity (abhyudaya) and the supreme spiritual good (nīśryas).



Buddhist Ethics

- Buddhism also gives primary importance to ethics. Sometimes it is called an ethical religion as it does not discuss or depend on the existence of God (the Supreme Being with form and attributes)
 - Believes in alleviating the suffering of humanity
 - The ethical values in this faith are based on the life and teachings of the Buddha
 - These moral instructions are included in Buddhist scriptures or handed down through tradition
 - According to Buddhism, the foundation of ethics is the pañcaśīla (five rules), which advocates refraining from killing, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct and intoxicants
 - In becoming a Buddhist, a lay person is encouraged to take a vow to abstain from these negative actions.
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- **Buddhism, the two most important ethical virtues are A. compassion (karuṇa) B. Friendliness (maitrī).**
 - **One should have deep sympathy and goodwill for the suffering people and should have the qualities of a good friend.**
 - **The most important ethical value is non-violence or non-injury to all living beings. Buddhist ethics is based on Four Noble Truths.**
 - **(1) life is suffering, (2) there is a cause for suffering, (3) there is a way to remove it, and (4) it can be removed (through the eight-fold path).**
 - **It advocates the path of righteousness (dhamma). In a way this is the crux of Buddhist morality**



Jain Ethics

- Jainism is another important religion of this land. It places great emphasis on three most important things in life, called three gems (TRIRATNA). These are:
 - Right vision (samyaka dṛṣṭī),
 - Right knowledge (samyaka jñāna) and
 - Right conduct (samyaka cāritra).
- Apart from these, Jain thinkers emphasize the need for reverence (śraddhā).
- There are other moral principles governing the life of Jains.
- Most important of these are ideas of puṇya (merit) and pāpa (demerit).
- Such deeds are very important from the ethical point of view. Pāpa is the result of evil deeds generated by vice and puṇya is the result of good deeds generated by virtuous conduct.



most recent faith in Indian tradition, also lays great stress
In the words of its founder, Guru Nanak, “Truth is higher than
still is truthful conduct.” The cardinal virtues according to
Sikh Scripture, are: compassion (*dayā*), charity (*dāna*),
non-enmity (*nirvair*) and selfless service (*sevā*). In addition to
obliged to practise the general and eternal virtues.

The Bhakti Movement



- The Bhakti Movement During the middle ages, the Bhakti movement arose in India.
- It was an all-India movement of social reform and spiritual awakening.
- It played a very important part in reawakening moral consciousness in India.
- Jayadeva, Nāmdēv, Tulsīdās, Kabīr, Ravidās and Mīra are some of the prominent saints of this movement.
- Most of these saints came from the downtrodden sections of society.
- Rejecting the distinctions of caste, colour and creed, they spread the message of human equality.
- They were saint poets. In their vāṇī (poetic compositions) they propagated the ideals of love, compassion, justice and selfless service.
- These are the ethical values which we need even today.



THANK YOU