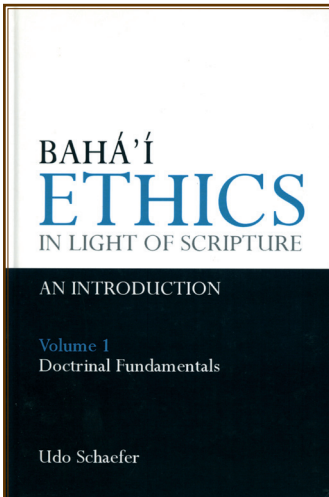


BAHÁ'Í ETHICS IN LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE

Volume 1: Doctrinal Fundamentals

Udo Schaefer



There is a fundamental discrepancy between man as he is and man as he could be, if only he recognized his true being and purpose. Ethics is the discipline by which man can understand how he can pass from the first condition to the second.

Ethics deals with the image of man: his freedom, moral responsibility and dignity, asking, What is human nature? What is the purpose of life? What is the highest good of human conduct and what are its sanctions?

Ethics also seeks the origin, derivation and vindication of moral values, asking, What is the ultimate standard of right or wrong? Are there universally

recognized moral principles of good and evil, right and wrong? Where do they come from, how are they recognized and why should they be binding on me?

Ethics also tries to find answers to the questions, What shall I do? How should human beings live in order to become happy? What is virtue? What prompts right conduct?

Revelatory ethics – ethics as an expression of the divine will – asks about the relationships between reason and revelation, freedom and law, liberty and obedience, the virtues and divine commandments, virtues and vices and sin.

Udo Schaefer's *Bahá'í Ethics in Light of Scripture* is an attempt to analyse the underlying structures and detect the interior architecture of the Bahá'í moral system and is a step towards developing a Bahá'í moral theology. *Doctrinal Fundamentals*, the first of two volumes, provides a historical overview of the Bahá'í Faith, a systematic survey of its doctrines and an overview of the origin and derivation of moral values. It considers the metaphysical nature of man and man's responsibilities, looks at reason and conscience, and explores liberty and its limits. Schaefer's second volume (forthcoming) deals with concrete values – the virtues, divine commandments and principles of social ethics from a Bahá'í perspective.

You are one of the few Bahá'í authors whose work is scientifically outstanding and capable of imparting historically solid and religiously systematic insights... I truly hope that the (religious) scientific community grants this exhaustive and weighty volume the attention which it rightfully deserves.

Professor Dr. Udo Tworuschka, University of Jena

SPECIFICATIONS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Bahá'í Faith: A Historical Overview

Doctrines: A Systematic Survey

1. God
2. Creation
3. Revelation
4. The Messengers, the 'Manifestations of God'
5. The Bahá'í Faith and Its Relationship to Other Religions
6. Man
7. The Covenant of God
8. The Word of God
9. The Recognition of Truth
10. Evil, Suffering and Theodicy
11. Death, Immortality, Resurrection and the World to Come
12. Rites, Prayer, Fasting, Meditation
13. Bahá'u'lláh
14. The Political Dimension
15. The Oneness of Mankind
16. A Global Order
17. The 'Most Great Peace'

Prolegomena to Bahá'í Ethics: The Resurgence and Reconstruction of Morality

1. The Spirit of Modernism and the Crisis of Morals
2. Whence a New Ethics?
3. The Ethos of Interfaith Dialogue
4. A New Option

Exordium

1. The Centrality of Moral Orientation in Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation
2. Categories of Norms

On the Origin, Derivation and Theological Vindication of Moral Values

1. The Origin of Moral Values in Christian and Islamic Thought
2. Ethical Voluntarism in the Bahá'í Faith
3. On Natural Law
4. A New Dimension in Ethical Thought
5. The Law of God: A Manifestation of His Mercy and Grace
6. The Infallibility of the Manifestations
7. The Authenticity of the Revealed Word
8. The Law of God – A Provocation?
9. The Source of Ethical Knowledge

The Metaphysical Nature of Man

1. Human Nature in Philosophy and the Humanities
2. Bahá'u'lláh's Anthropology and the Process of Spiritualization
3. The 'Self' and the 'Flesh'
4. Renunciation and Detachment
5. Human Weakness and Divine Assistance
6. Bahá'u'lláh's Verdict on Asceticism
7. Digression: Bahá'u'lláh's Verdict on Hedonism

Man's Responsibility

1. The Metaphysical Relevance of Human Actions
2. Good Will and Right Motives
3. Free Will versus Determinism
4. Sin, Repentance and Forgiveness

Bahá'í Epistemology: Reason and Conscience

1. Reason
2. Conscience

Liberty and its Limits

1. The Western Concept of Liberty
2. Liberty within the Bounds of Moderation
3. Political Liberty
4. Divine Law and 'True Liberty'

General Outline

1. Basic Structures
2. The Moral Action
3. An 'Ethic of Ultimate Ends' or 'An Ethic of Responsibility'
4. Features of Bahá'í Ethics in Comparative Perspective

Appendixes, Bibliography,
Index of Names, General Index