

## UNIT 1

## ETHICS IN ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

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### 1.0. OBJECTIVES

Ethics is a code of conduct or a set of belief which distinguishes between 'good and bad' behaviour in a descriptive use, which is arbitrary and subjective created by philosophers, religion or individual conscience. Ethics examines the general character or habit of mankind which involves description or history of human in a particular society of different period. This can be noticed and studied as one goes along the ancient history of Indian philosophies – Vedas, Upanishads, Jainism and Buddhism. In this unit you are expected to understand:

- Ethical teachings of the Vedas
- 'Truth' and self-realization' in the Upanishads
- Non-violence and its significance in Jainism
- Attainment of enlightenment in Buddhism

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

In India, at the beginning, there was no distinction between religion and philosophy. The main aim of philosophy was a quest for values. That being the reason, Indian philosophy maintained a close relationship with religion. Added to it, the intellectual curiosity and wondrous ambition to realize the highest values of life was the reason for the philosophical search. The life had to be lived with moral principle. That was a must and could not 'stay put' in the moral realm of claims but must go beyond to the higher region of divisionless, inspiring experience from which morality derives its sanctions and values. So, Philosophers worked with both 'trans-logical' and 'super-moral'. Philosophy understood that wealth (artha) and pleasure (kama) were not opposite of righteousness (dharma).

### 1.2. VEDAS

The religion, philosophy, ritualistic practices, civic conduct and even social relationship are guided by certain codes which are known as Smritis, and they are based on the sacred sanction of the Vedic authority. The Vedas differentiate the fruit attained by Karma and Jnana, two factors in the spiritual progress of the man. Karma is connected to the world immediately above the one where men live. Jnana is connected to world farther away, an abode of Gods.

Jnana is considered as mysterious knowledge. It is said that Indra taught this knowledge to Dadhyac. In Vedas the rishis evolve a highly complicated system of philosophy and highlight the value of Jnana as a means to attain highest abode (heaven) after death. Through Jnana the soul gets into the state of bliss. But the bliss state is not permanent as the soul sooner or later changes its abode. "Indian doctrine of transmigration and Karma, the consequence of the way one led their life affected the next stage: had a humble beginning in the primitive way but even at this early period, contained an ethical content and had attained some degree of elaboration," wrote A. L. Basham in his book, "The Wonder that was India".

The Vedic rishis do not consider this world as an evil one. There is no indication that man must strive for a salvation. The rishis sang in elaboration the glory of the next world after death. But that does not mean they fought shy of this world. This world is a good world, with blessing of the Gods; it is a sort of sojourn. This world is a place for virtuous people, a stepping stone to aim to the higher one. There is no pessimism either on religion or in its philosophy.

There is no conflicting discussions regarding the past, present or future actions. There is no conflict between Dharma, Artha and Kama. Man's life is looked as harmonious. The entire life of a man has a single objective to be good.

Vedic people lived close to the nature. They looked at nature in awe and devotion and experienced the divinity of nature. They composed greatest Vedic mantras. And each chanting ended with a request for blessing.

In the Rv X.34 book, hymn on "Gambler" is highly illuminating. The gambler is unhappy about his gambling and regrets for losing the love of his family and being in debt. But he can not resist the sound of the dice and goes to the gambling house. Hymn advises how to live a virtuous life –  
"Play not with dice; ply thy tillage; rejoice in thy property,  
thinking much of it; there are thy cattle.  
O gambler, there thy wife,  
this Savitr here, the noble, reveals to me" (13)

The Veda hymns on sacrificial is a part of exchange: in the sense the worshippers gladden the deities to receive rewards for the offering. The attitude of the worshipper is not the one of the extreme modesty or deep emotion instead one of the relationship of a friend, but with full reverence towards the maker of the universe. The purpose is of analogous in character to the end in view.

### 1.3. UPANISHADS

Upanishads are both religion and philosophy. As a religion it discovers the truth of the inner world and understands the significance of the divinity of life. As a philosophy, it synthesizes the science of inner world with outer world bring about the unification of understanding of total reality and the effect on the human life and character, depth of faith and vision along with breath of outlook and sympathy.

Understanding of the Brahman is the center theme of the Upanishads. It is the "Truth of truth". "As the spider moves along the thread, as small sparks come forth from the fire, even so from this 'Self' come forth all breaths, all world, all divinities, all beings. Its secret meaning is the truth, of truth. Vital breaths are the truth and their truth is **It (Self)**." (Brhadaranyaka Upanishad II, 1.20) Both Brhadaranyaka and Maitri highlight that all knowledge and wisdom are the breath of the eternal Brahman. All the ethical knowledge from the Vedas, Upanishads, ancient lore, science verses, legendary stories, aphorism, explanations and commentary came out from the great reality "mahad – bhutam" from Brahman. They came out as easily and effortlessly as the breath. This alone is "Satasya satyam iti" (Maitri Upanishad VI. 32), the truth of the truth, empirical existence is the truth; the underlying truth of the Self.

Upanishads claim the salvation is by knowledge or realization rather than by faith and work. The ethics is basically pragmatic. All human emotions are the part of Brahman but in relative term only. The seeker realizes the 'truth' that the good which takes him to Brahman and bad is the reverse of it.

"There are three branches of duty, sacrifice, study and charity - Austerity, indeed, is the first. The second is the pursuit of sacred wisdom, dwelling in the house of the teacher. Absolutely controlling his body in the house of the teacher is the third. All these attain to the worlds of the virtuous. He who stands firm in Brahman attains life eternal." (Chandogya Upanishad II, 23. 1)

The difference between the good and the bad is discussed in Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, "He who knows (the mystery of Brahman) become calm, restrained, satisfied, patient and confident and he sees himself in the (great) self, sees all things as self ... evil does not overcome him but he overcomes the evil .... Free from the evil, free from decay, free from hatred, free from thirst, he becomes a (true) Brahman" (IV – 4- 23)

The realization of Brahman is possible for all set of people. Many kings realized the Self. A servant's son Satyakama could get a teacher as his intention was pure and honest.

"I don't know my family, sir" Satyakama answered when asked about his family," I asked my mother and she said that she had me in the youth, when she used to travel about a lot as a servant .... She said that as she was Jabala and I was Satyakama, I was to give my name as Satyakama Jabala."

"Nobody but a true Brahmana would be so honest, " the teacher said, " go and fetch me fuel, my friend and I will initiate you for you have not swerved from the truth." (Chandogya Upanishad IV, 4)

Upanishads do not take away the previous belief of rites and rituals but substitute them to meditation and introspection. In Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, the Ashvamedha sacrifice, horse is

meditated as a symbol of universe, “The head is the dawn, whose eyes is the Sun ... whose back is the heaven .... (1. 1. 1.)

The common sacrificial fire is visualized as extraordinary fires beginning from heaven which has, “The Sun as a fuel, solar rays as its smoke, the moon as its cinder ...” (Chanadogya Upanishad V. 4.1.) the purpose of such visualization is to gradually withdraw the seeker’s mind from the external things and direct it to inward, to be contemplative, so that he may get rid of his dependency on the objective world. The principle is to mould a man to perfection. Take him from ignorance to wisdom to comprehend the ‘Ultimate Truth’ of life.

“The fundamental object of spiritual life has always been same, although emphasis has been laid upon different approaches and disciplines. And it must be so, for the approach to ‘Truth’ must suit the psychic make – up of a being and unless there is the capacity and patience to continue the search up to the end ....” has written Mahadranatha Sircar in his essay on “Mystical Approach in the Upanishads”.

In the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, Prajapati, the Guru taught his disciples – God, Man and Demon. After the completion of the education; while leaving the Guru, all the three asked for the last spiritual advice. The Guru said one sound “Da”. When inquired what they understood by the sound, God, Man and Demon gave three different interpretations, according to their psychic. God responded that it was Damyata (be self - controlled), Man understood it as Datta, (give), Demon analyzed it as Dayadhvam (be merciful)

The process of attaining wisdom is a difficult one. The one whose mind is filled with material care and desire, one who is given himself up to pleasure can not peruse in the path of knowledge. But, one who lives a virtuous life can understand the ‘Self’.

“.....

“Now, what do you see?”

“Nothing, Sir.”

“My son,” the father said, “what you do not perceive is the essence, and in the essence the mighty banyan tree exists. Believe me, my son, in that essence is the self of all that is. That is the ‘Truth’, that is the ‘Self’. And you are that Self, Svetaketu.” (Chandogya Upanishad VI. 12)

**Check Your Progress I**

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1) How did Vedic philosophy depict ‘Ethics’?

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2) What are ‘Truth’ and ‘Brahman’ in the Upanishads?

#### 1.4. JAINISM

“The Jain claims a great antiquity for their religion”, writes Hiralal Jain, “their earliest prophet was Rsbhadeva, who is mentioned even in the Vishnu and Bhagavata Puranas as belonging to the remote past.” Jainism even thought existed at the time of Vedas but followed non – violence as one of its strong principle as against animal sacrifice followed by Vedic people. Jainism teaches strict self discipline as a path of salvation. Mahavira the 24<sup>th</sup> Tirthankara, admitted all aspirants irrespective of caste and gender and started a system of peaceful proselytization. Because of him his followers are spread across the whole country.

The whole of Jainism ethics revolve around Ahimsa and Karma. Saman Suttam of Jinendra Varni preaches, “Nothing which breaths, which exists, which lives or which has essence or potential of life, should be destroyed or ruled over, or subjugated, or harmed, or denied of its essence or potential.

In support to the truth, I ask you a question – “Is sorrow or pain desirable to you?” if you say “Yes it is”, it would be a lie. If you say, “No, it is not,” you will be expressing the truth. Just as sorrow or pain is not desirable to you, so it is to all which breathe, exist, live or have any essence of life. To you and all, it is undesirable, and painful, and repugnant.”

Jainism is a quest on self – effort in progress the soul on the spiritual ladder to divine consciousness. When the soul shed downs its karmic bonds completely, it attains divine consciousness. Moksha marga (path of salvation) is the main objective of a Jain. To attain the salvation one must have Samyak darshan (right faith), Samyak Jnana (right knowledge) and samyak charitra (right conduct). These are Ratnatraya (the three jewels). The three jewels are the combination of Bhakti marga of Bhagavata, Jnana marga of Vedanta and Karma marga of Mimamsakas. Jainism preaches that Bhakti, Jnana and Karma co – exist in a person. They work like a medicine to cure a sick mind– faith in its efficacy, knowledge by its use and actual taking of the medicine, right conduct. One’s main objective in life is to release one self from the suffering soul in the web of universal samsaric misery.

Jains follow the “Jina” (conqueror). Jinas are spiritually advanced human beings who have rediscovered the Dharma.

There are Ethical principles for a householder and stricter rules for a sanyasin, monks. But both adherently had to follow Ahimsa. The path of righteousness or Dharma is the combination of Ratnatrya and Ahimsa. Dharma is incomplete if any one is wanting.

There are fundamental five vows for both householder and monks–

He shall not do violence to other living beings - Ahimsa

He shall speak the truth – Satya.

He shall not commit theft – Asteya.

He shall not commit adultery - Brahmacharya.

He shall not greed for the worldly possession - Aparigraha.

**1. Ahimsa** is non – violence. To understand Non – violence, one must know, what is violence? Injuring and hurting other living creatures is violence. Jainism emphasizes on equality to all life, whether the creatures are big or small. So, Killing a big or a small living being is violence, hurting others physically or in speech is violence. Intentionally insulting and make others suffer emotionally is violence. Opposite of violence is non – violence. A householder can not lead a life without violence. Therefore, one is recommended to discharge his worldly responsibilities with the minimum injuries to others. But killing animals for eating is strictly prohibited. No one should kill for gain.

**2. What is Truth, satya?** Truth is to say what one has seen or heard. Truth is justice. One should not hesitate to tell the truth even when his/her life is in danger. But at the same time; if the truth results in bring harm to others in such case the truth should be withheld in the interest of the others. There is a Sanskrit Subhasita – “Satyam bruyath, priyam bruyath, na bruyath satyam apriyam”, (say the truth, say what is pleasing to hear but do not say injurious truth).

**3.** The third one is; do not **steal, asteya**. Stealing has various dimensions such as – a. stealing others property,  
b. direct others to steal,  
c. receiving stolen property  
d. cheating in measure,  
e. retain things with a motto ‘finders keepers’.

**4.** The fourth one is not to commit **adultery, brahmacharya**. A married person must not look at women with an evil intention. Treat opposite sex with respect.

**5.** The fifth and last one is not to **amass wealth greedily, aparigraha**. Each householder needs money to have a decent life. But ambitious accumulation of wealth without satisfaction, leads to great karmic action, resulting in suffering and unhappiness. To lessen the karmic and samsaric bandage, one must have limited necessity and be content.

Jainism does not believe in an Omnipotent Supreme Being, Creator or Manager (karaka) but believes in Universe, governed by natural laws. Jainism warns the householders not to have superstitious ignorance, mudas – loka muda, deva muda and pasandi muda. It is advised not to perform rites and rituals to please Gods to attain their blessings. To achieve salvation through righteousness Jainism advocates to give up eight arrogances–

possession of intelligence,  
temple worship,  
noble family,  
caste,  
physical and mental strength,  
magical power,  
tapas and yoga,

beauty of one's person. Giving up arrogance lightens and purifies the mind and heart. Makes one humble and pure. Leads to the path of divine consciousness.

Among all the living beings, Jainism values human life as a gift and a rare opportunity to reach enlightenment.

There are two types of monks, monks in white dress – Swathambaras and monks without cloth – Digambaras. Ethical codes for the monks are stricter and harder. Monks can not stay in one place for a long period of time. The body and mind are trained to endure the nature – cold, heat, rain, storm, hunger, thirst, mosquito bites, and such. By their aesthetic and virtuous life, purifying mind and body they attain Jina hood.

## 1.5. BUDDHISM

Buddhism like other Indian Philosophies hold the view that 'Samsara' and Avidya' (ignorance) are the two that one need to escape from. The 'Kama' (desire) is the root cause of bandage. The moment "Mara" the evil leaves, one will be enlightened. Ethics of Buddhism is traditionally based on what Buddhist saw as the enlightened perspective of the Buddha or other enlightened souls. So, the scholars look at the Buddhist scriptures and make use of the anthropological evidences from the traditional Buddhist societies.

The ethical principles are at various degrees depending on the individual capability, there are no hard and fast rules. There are rules for a layman, and to those who wants to practice strictly and to a monk and nun.

For the layman it is simple 'Panca Silani' five precepts. The English translation to the Pali text is

"I undertake the training rule to abstain from taking the life.

I undertake the training rule to abstain from taking what is not given

I undertake the training to abstain from sexual misconduct

I undertake the training to abstain from false speech.

I undertake the training rule to abstain from fermented drink that causes heedlessness."

The main precept are non – violence and non – injury. To a certain extent Buddhism and Jainism propound similar view regarding non – violence. About killing and punishing others physically it is said in chapter 10 of Darmapada, "Everyone fears punishment; everyone fears death, just like you do. Therefore do not kill or cause to kill. Everyone fears punishment; everyone loves life, as you do. Therefore do not kill or cause to kill." In the same text in chapter

26, it states, “Him I call Brahmin who has put aside weapons and renounced violence towards all creatures. He neither kills nor helps others to kill.”

From the Panca sila sutra it is ‘Eight precepts’. This has the first five precepts of the previous one, – restrain from – killing, stealing, un – chastity, lying and taking intoxicants. And there are three more Sutras for a stricter discipline. The translation from the Pali -

I undertake the training rule to abstain from eating at the wrong time.

I undertake the training rule to abstain from singing, dancing, playing music and garlands.

I undertake the training rule to abstain from luxurious places for sitting or sleeping and over indulging in sleep.

The precept for the monks and the nuns varies from ten to sixteen. The main feature is not to accept money and to indulge in physical comfort.

To be focused in total self – realization, there are three golden rules to be followed

Taking refuge in Buddha.

Taking refuge in Dharma.

Taking refuge in Sanga.

To be free from samsara, avidya and dukkha, it is not enough if one knows the principals of Buddhism but understand the essentials of life. **Wisdom, (Prajna) Ethical conduct (Sila) and the Concentration (Samadi)** are the three essentials. Wisdom ‘prajna’ comes from Right view it leads to the right intention. The right view and intentions guides to Ethical conduct, sila, - the right speech, right action, right livelihood and right effort. The next stage is Concentration, samadi, one pointed focus in ‘self – activity’ to have right mindfulness and right concentration. When wisdom, ethics and concentration becomes the way of life; one gains right knowledge and release from Dukkha and Mara; there by attain enlightenment. This is called as “Noble Eight Fold Path’.

The Crusade of ‘noble eight fold path’ starts with Right View. Right view can also mean – right perspective, right understanding. The right way is to look at life and society as they really are. Comprehend the meaning and the purpose of existence. To know the various forms of Dukkha - sickness, aging, death other emotions like greed, unhappiness, hatred and delusion. Comprehend the cause of physical and mental suffering. The ‘right view’ is explained in detail in the “Sammaditthi Sutta”. The aim and objective are to check one’s confusion and clear the mind by overcoming the delusion of suffering. Right view gives scope to move away from clinging to dogmatic belief and to be more flexible, open minded.

Right view is achieved in two levels one is to understand the cause of sorrow and judge things rationally so that one leads a peaceful life in samsara that is ‘**view with taints**’ followed by laymen. Another one is to understand the cause and effect of human existence of birth, aging, disease, suffering and strong disturbing emotions like greed, hatred. And make an attempt to release one self completely from these and face the present with total present awareness with right mindfulness and be open, quiet and alert. All the judgment and interpretations are suspended or if occur then just registered and dropped, be calm and collective, such view

ultimately take the seeker to the enlightenment to be free from bondage and to be filled with love, that is '**view without taints**' a path way of the monastic.

One can never overlook the three truths of life:

**Karma:** each action (by way of body, speech and mind) leads to karmic result that is reaction. Karmic result depends on good actions and negative actions. Once the action is over the result of the action is permanent and can't be reversed. So, one has to have complete consciousness of one's action to reduce negative karma.

**The three characteristics:** everything that arises changes (impermanence). Mental, body phenomena and suffering are impermanent.

**Suffering:** 'The four noble truths' says, "Birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, distress and despair are suffering. Not being able to obtain what one wants is also suffering. The arising of craving is the proximate cause of the arising of suffering and the cessation of craving is the proximate cause of the cessation of the suffering. The quality of ignorance is the root cause of the arising of suffering, and the elimination of the quality is the root cause of the cessation of suffering. The way leading to the cessation of suffering is the noble eightfold path."

Gay Watson in his essay, "Buddha Meets Western Science" writes: "Buddhism has always been concerned about feelings, emotions, sensations and cognition. The Buddha points both to cognitive and emotional causes of suffering. The emotional cause is desire and its negative opposite, aversion. The cognitive cause is ignorance of the way things truly occur, or of three marks of existence: that all things are unsatisfactory, impermanent and without essential self."

Buddhism gives importance to a '**Skilled Mind**'. The 'Mind' plays an important role in building up of one's self awareness. An experienced and competent mind avoids actions that are likely to cause suffering. The consequence of an action, Karma depends on the intention more than action itself. Buddhism emphasizes; anguish such as anxiety, remorse, guilt etc, should be avoided in order to cultivate calm and peaceful mind.

One needs regular practice of 'Pnaca sila' - no killing, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct and intoxicants, in day to day life. If one is to break any one of them, one should be aware of the mistake and examine how such a breach may be avoided in the future.

The 'Golden Rule' of Buddhism is empathy. Kindness, compassion, understanding and respecting people for what they are. These qualities must be the way of life under all circumstances, at all time, at all places.

## 1.6. LET US SUM UP

Ethics is such that there are no sharply defined boundary lines drawn between it and other branches of inquiry. No one can inquire the nature of virtue or values without examining the nature of the system of social relationship. From the time immemorial, the scholars, philosopher of the ancient civilization to the present time have tried to understand the Ethics with their intuitiveness and wisdom.

The Vedic Aryans saw the answer in sacrifice, rites and rituals. They worshipped the Nature with sacrifice. They strongly believed that if the nature is furious then it has the power to destroy living mortals. To please the unknown forceful energy they offered oblation. They composed most beautiful mantras in praise of the Universe. As Max – Muller says, “Nay, They (the Vedas) contain, by the side of simple, natural, childish thoughts, many ideas which to us sound decidedly modern.”

The Vedas cover human behaviour, virtue and negative qualities– faith, devotion, beauty, love, passion, greed, jealous, wars, tilling of the land, magic, a complete scenario of human life, inner conflict and commotion. But the bottom line is to attain heaven after death and to be reborn with fortune; one has to lead virtuous present life.

From Vedic period to the Upanishads the shift change from prolong rituals to seeking knowledge through self-realization by understanding the outer universe with inner self. A seeker finds a harmonic relationship between the outside worlds with that of inner self. It is the seeker who has to seek out the inner Brahman. Understand the truth is the ultimate goal of the life.

Jainism and Buddhism do not talk of Creator or Divine power. The emphasis is on conduct. The virtue of one’s behavior will redeem a person from life. That is enlightenment. Both teach simple to complex discipline – the basic principles being – no killing, no lying, no stealing, no adultery and no greediness.

“The doctrine of Karma, elaborated in Upanishads time and adopted by Buddhism and Jainism, was also part and parcel of Hinduism.” wrote A.L. Basham, “The belief of Karma does not necessarily involve fatalism. ....our present condition is inevitable, but only because of the Karma accruing from our past deeds. We can not escape the law of Karma any more than we can escape the law of gravity or the passage of time, but by judgment and forethought we can utilize the law of Karma to our advantage.”

In the early dialogue of Plato’s “The Protagoras”, Socrates ask Protagoras, why it is not easy to find teachers of Virtue as it is to find in swordsmanship, riding or any other arts. Protagoras answers that there are no special teachers of virtue, because virtue is taught by the whole community, (Republic 492 b). Socrates believed that by encouraging scholars and the lay man to tune attention from the outer world to inner self, the ‘self – knowledge’ can be achieved. Socrates correlates knowledge with ‘Virtue’ and equates virtue with ‘happiness’.

An old seer has said that human body is the combination of four persons – the first one is the physical body, ‘**Sharirra Purusha**’, the second is the meter person, **Chandas Purusha**, meter is the synonym for speech, a meter is a must for a poetry and the speech is a must for a living person, the third one is person of Veda, **Veda Purusha**, the person with true knowledge attaining a divine knowledge, the last one is great person, **Maha Purusha** a great personage with a great soul. Balanced combination of all the four persons in a living human makes a person a perfect man, man of virtue.

Aristotle says that there are **three natural states of man** – vegetable (physical), animal (emotional) and rational (mental). Physical nature is maintained by exercise and care, emotional by instinct and urges and mental through human reason and developed potential. Rational development is the most important as it is self – awareness and uniquely human. Modesty needs to be encouraged and very important. Courage is moderation between cowardliness and recklessness. Aim and objective of man is to lead simple life governed by virtue. Aristotle further says to practice Virtue is difficult; the right action, right thinking, right motive to do at the right time, to the proper extent to the correct fashion for the right reason.

All the four Disciplines discussed above have ‘Ethics’ as the soul of their preaching. All the four disciplines believed in Karma, rebirth, truth, virtue, kindness, charity, mercy. The essence is the same but the presentation is different.

“If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered over the greatest problem of life, and found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant, I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we who have nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greek and Romans, and the Semitic race, the Jewish may draw the corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more Universal, in fact more truly human a life ... again I should point to India.”  
Max – Muller

### Check Your Progress II

- Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.  
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1) What are the vows for a householder in Jainism?

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2) What is the difference between ‘View with taints’ and ‘View without taints’ in Buddhism?

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## 1.7. KEY WORDS

**Meta-ethics:** Meta-ethics deals with theoretical meaning and refers to the moral propositions and explains how truth values are determined.

**Normative Ethics:** Normative ethics determines practical means of determining a moral course of action.

**Applied Ethics:** Applied ethics points out how the moral outcome can be achieved in a specific situation.

**Descriptive Ethics:** Descriptive ethics describes the way in which the moral values are believed by people. It contrasts with prescriptive or normative *ethics*.

## 1.8. FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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## 1.9. ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

### Answers to Check Your Progress I

1. The Veda differentiates the fruit attained by Karma and Jnana. Karma and Jnana are recognized as two different factors in the spiritual progress of the man. Karma is connected to the world immediately above the one where man lives. Jnana is still higher and farther away. It is the abode of Gods.

In Vedas the rishis evolve a highly complicated system of philosophy and highlights value for Jnana as a means to attain highest abode (heaven) after death. It is preached that through Jnana the soul can get into the state of bliss. The Vedas do talk about bad man and bad deeds, but the emphasis is the rewards that a virtuous man receives after death, greater glory and higher world.

2. Understanding of the Brahman is the center theme of the Upanishads. It is the “Truth of truth”. “As the spider moves along the thread, as small sparks come forth from the fire, even so from this Self come forth all breaths, all world, all divinities, all beings. Its sacred meaning is the truth, of truth. Vital breath is the truth and their truth is **It** (Self).” (Brhadaranyaka Upanishad II.2.20) Both Brhadaranyaka and Maitri highlight that all knowledge and wisdom are the breath of the eternal Brahman. All the ethical knowledge from the Vedas, Upanishads, ancient lore, science verses, legendary stories, aphorism, explanations and commentary came out from the great reality “mahad – bhutam” from Brahman. They came out as easily and effortlessly as the breath.

This alone is “Satasya satyam iti” (Maitri Upanishad VI. 32), the truth of the truth, empirical existence is the truth; the underlying truth of the Self.

### Answers to Check Your Progress II

1. There are fundamental five very important vows for a householder –

He shall not do violence to other living beings - **Ahimsa**

He shall speak the truth – **Satya.**

He shall not commit theft – **Asteya.**

He shall not commit adultery - **Brahmacarya.**

He shall not greed for the worldly possession – **Aparigraha**

2. Right view is achieved in two levels one is to understand the cause of sorrow and judge things rationally so that one leads a peaceful life in samsara that is ‘**view with taints**’ followed by laymen.

Another one is to understand the cause and effect of human existence of birth, aging, disease, suffering and strong disturbing emotions like greed, hatred. And make an attempt to release one self completely with these, face the present with total present awareness with right mindfulness, and be open, quiet and alert. All the judgment and interpretations are suspended or if occur then just registered and dropped. be calm and collective, such view ultimately take the seeker to the enlightenment to be free from bondage and filled with love, that is ‘**view without taints**’ is a path way of the monastic.