
Editorial Observations

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This issue of the journal features three articles and one book review. In order in which they appear, Jack Kem, Enamul Choudhury, and Patrick S. Smith wrote the articles [in this issue](#). Jack Kem's article illustrates and shows the implications of the various approaches to ethics using the famous King David of the Hebrew Bible. Enamul Choudhury argues in favor of the wisdom tradition in ethics by citing how that can be done using the Quran. In particular, he argues the Quranic meaning of inclusion - both in terms of consciousness and conduct - responds to the diversity that the emerging global consciousness and global context entails. Patrick S. Smith argues for spiritual wisdom ethics and notes that it is consistent with the American regime values of separation of church and state.

Jack Kem wrote the first article titled "Killing Goliath Was The Easy Part: David's Moral Development From Servant To Leader To Servant-Leader." He used the life of King David as an illustration of the various approaches to ethics and one person's moral development. Although in the Jewish and Christian traditions, King David is one of the greatest kings, if not the greatest king, of Israel, King David was not without his faults – the most notable being an adulterer and a murderer. The story of David portrays the moral development of a great leader and how in different stages of his life, he learned and morally grew.

These three vignettes in King David's life provide insight into how David transitioned among the different bases for moral decision-making in his life. For example, the first story of David and Goliath highlights the deontological approach to ethics. The second story about David and Bathsheba illustrates the teleological approach to ethics with its devastating consequences due to David's actions. Finally, in his naming of Solomon to the throne, David displays an integrative approach of a virtuous man – tempered by his earlier lessons in life.

Kem notes that starting as a young shepherd boy, he fought the giant Goliath and won – standing on his principles. However, as King, David applied teleological ethics and he wrongly calculated the consequences of his actions when he committed adultery with Bathsheba. The unanticipated result was a series of second and third order effects of his actions that not only hurt him but his nation. In contrast and applying yet a different approach to ethics, King David in his last days paved the way for his son Solomon to effectively lead the nation of Israel as a virtuous leader. David learned, in his final days, how to successfully apply virtue ethics to the major decisions of his life.

Enamul Choudhury wrote the second article titled “Virtue Ethics And The Wisdom Tradition: Exploring The Inclusive Guidance Of The Quran.” He elaborates on the meaning and measure of virtue ethics as a distinct form of moral discourse centered on cultivating an ethic of identity or character, which is different from the prevalent discourses on ethics. While virtue ethics remains grounded in the Aristotelian tradition of moral inquiry, Choudury considers this to be a restrictive in advancing the meaning of the ethic of identity. He argues we must enlarge the scope of inquiry by considering the wisdom traditions as sources from which we can draw our understanding of virtues. He notes that scriptures are a neglected source of wisdom and shows how one can use the Quran as an exemplary source for the understanding and cultivation of an inclusive ethic of identity. He does this by exploring the Quranic meaning of inclusion - both in terms of consciousness and conduct. Such a meaning is crucial for responding to the diversity that the emerging global consciousness and global context entails.

Patrick S. Smith wrote the last article titled “Spiritual Wisdom Ethics: A Linkage Between Religion And Government.” He used a new approach to ethics called Spiritual Wisdom Ethics, which relies and builds upon the vast historical and collective values found in the five major religious faiths in our world – Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. It does this without the imposition of any particular religious tradition. Thus, his approach to ethics is global while employing the concept of virtue ethics developed by Aristotle.

Smith’s article confronts the apparent dilemma of accepting both a fundamental value of American society called the separation of

church and state and employing a faith-based approach to ethics. He notes that at first consideration that a faith based rather than a secular approach to ethics is apparently not compatible with the American regime value of strict separation of church and state that is upheld by the U.S. courts. He argues such a contradiction does not exist by first presenting a brief review of American history on this debate and then secondly summarizing the basic elements of spiritual wisdom ethics. He concludes that spiritual wisdom ethics is consistent with this doctrine and that such an approach to ethics offers a return to the fundamental perspective on ethics that is consistent with the First Amendment notion of freedom of religion.

This issue of our journal ends with a short book review by Carolee Stephens of the University of Akron. She reviews Stephen G. Post's *Ethical Issues from Diagnosis to Dying: The Moral Challenge of Alzheimer Disease*, 2nd Ed., 2000 published in the Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore. The book is a second edition of a comprehensive presentation of the problems and moral challenges associated with caring for person with Alzheimer Disease, a terminal dementia. She believes the book provides a basis for much discussion within the context of any course on ethics, particularly those concerned with long-term care and medical issues.