Ethico Religious Concepts in the Qur'an

Izutsu, Toshihiko (2002). *Ethico Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*, McGill-Queen's University Press.

In this book, world known religious studies scholar Toshihiko Izutsu is explaining ethical terms that are referenced in the Qur'an, holly book of Muslims. May be it is not directly related to business ethics, but it still helps ones who are trying to understand ethical concepts of Islam.

Here is an excerpt from the books Preface:

"This book is a revised edition of my earlier work published in 1959 by Keio University in Tokyo, under the title, The Structure of the Ethical Terms in the Koran. Judged by the yardstick of my current thinking, the book stood much in need of improvement as a whole and of drastic revision in not a few places. In undertaking the revision, I have tried to make it a more satisfactory expression of my present views. Thus important additions have been made, many points which I now consider unnecessary have been dropped, and a number of passages have been completely rewritten. So much has it been altered that the book may very well be regarded as a new one, although the material used remains largely the same.

The title itself has been changed, lest the reader be misled into thinking that the book deals with all the ethical terms that appear in the Qur'an. Such is not the case. The Qur'anic terms of ethical and moral implication may be roughly divided into two major groups. One consists of those terms that concern the ethical life of the Muslims in the Islamic community (ummah), the other of those that are of an ethico-religious nature. The concepts in the second category go deep into the essential nature of man as homo religiosus. They reflect the spiritual characteristics which, according to the Qur'anic understanding of human nature, man as a religious being should disclose. And, in an essentially 'ethical' religion like Islam, these human characteristics must necessarily be religious and ethical at the same time, there being no real distinction between the two in this particular context.

The book deals systematically only with this second group of ethical terms. Those of the first class stand outside its interest, apart from a few exceptional cases.

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It remains to say a word about the theoretical part of this book. In the original edition, considerable space was given to abstract speculations regarding current theories of ethical language; methodological observations were scattered throughout the book. In the new edition, an abstract theory of ethical language has been replaced by a more fundamental theory of the linguistic or semantic world-view which underlies the entire analytic work, and the methodological principles which regulate the analysis have been gathered together in an introduction.

The present study consists of three parts: an exposition of the methodological principles of semantic analysis; the relation, positive and negative, that exists between the pre-Islamic tribal moral code and the Islamic—in our particular case, Qur'anic—ethics; and an analysis, by a consistent application of the methodological rules explained in the first section, of the major ethico-religious concepts in the Qur'an. […]" (pp. xi-ii-xiv)