

# The Upbringing of Children in Islam

English translation of the Arabic Book, *Tarbiyat al-aw'lad fi al-Islam*  
The original book is in Arabic by Sheikh Abd 'Allāh Nāseḥ Alwān

*May Allah be merciful to him.*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Preface

(To the Urdu edition)

Praise is for Allah, the Exalted, the Great. May blessings and peace be on His Messenger, Muhammad, the noble chosen one, on his family, his companions and those who follow his guidance — on all of them.

**The** idea of an abridged form of the Urdu translation of *Tarbiyat-e-Aul<sup>ad</sup> aur Islam* obsessed my mind for long. The original book is in Arabic by Sheikh Abd 'Al<sup>ah</sup> N<sup>aseh</sup> Alw<sup>an</sup> *May Allah be merciful to him*. My aim is that this invaluable gem may find a place in every home. Further, its brevity may prompt those who have little time to read and understand it. Sometimes, the bulk of a book is in itself a deterrent to its merit. Today, everyone is already busy and time is not easily at hand to devote oneself to religious effort. Some friends and elders advocated the cause of this book so forcefully that I committed myself to this task placing reliance in Allah. I pray to Allah, Full of Grace, that He may make my work easy and may grace my time. May He guide me to such brevity that while the object is fulfilled, the advantage is universal.

My dear Brother Maul<sup>an</sup>a Muhammad Umair exerted himself in smoothing out the manuscript and Brother Maul<sup>an</sup>a Fah<sup>im</sup>udd<sup>in</sup> corrected it. May Allah grant a good reward to them and to respected Sh<sup>ahid</sup> Husain who managed the printing of the book diligently! May He also reward all those who have co-operated with us in achieving this task in any manner! May He make this work an asset for me in the Hereafter and a cause for gaining His forgiveness! May He guide the Muslims to read it, to act upon it, and to conduct their lives according to its directions. The blessings of Allah be on the best of His creation, Muhammad, his family and his companions—all of them.

This Book is divided into three parts

There are four Chapters in Part One, seven in Part Two (which deals with the responsibilities of the guardians), and three Chapters and a Conclusion in Part Three.

This book pursues an easy approach to explain the fundamental principles of upbringing and the manner and rules of training. It discusses the subject of upbringing and training from every angle. The book contains guidelines to impart religious discipline, character building, spiritual education, intellectual growth and physical drill. It suggests ways to model the child's personality in the right direction morally, psychologically and socially.

This book will serve as a guideline to every guardian and head of family to raise his children in a correct Islamic way. In it one can find excellent suggestions for building strong foundations of the nation and valuable principles for preparing the individual. There is no alternative but to adopt the complete and exhaustive Islamic system of rearing and reforming. May Allah inspire the Muslims that in their thinking and creed they make Islam their guideline, in the field of education and deeds they appoint it their true goal and asylum, in gaining honour and glory, nobility and eminence, and Islamic unity, they choose it as their ideal. And Allah is The Reconciler and The Helper. Our final call is that all praise is for Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

Muhammad Habibu<sup>ah</sup> Mukht<sup>ar</sup>

Bin Hakim Muhammad Mukht<sup>ar</sup> Hasan, *May Allah be merciful to him.*

14-8-1411 Hijri. 2-3-1991 AC

## A Word About The English Translation

It was on the suggestion of Maulāna Doctor Habib Allah Mukhtar that I took up translation of his book the Mukhtasar *Tarbiyat-e-Aulāad aur Islam*. The Urdu book is a wealth of information on the subject and is very exhaustive. I have gained invaluable knowledge through it. I hope that I have done justice to the translation and my readers too will find it informative and interesting.

I found difficulty in transliteration of some names particularly those that were rendered Arabic in the *Tarbiyat ul Aulāad fil Islam* and then into Urdu for the *Tarbiyat e Aulāad aur Islam*. If my readers will guide me in this respect, and point out any other lapses, I will be obliged to them.

The scholars of the Jāmi'at ul Uloom il Islamiyah offered very valuable assistance and suggestions. I am grateful to them and many others who guided me. To Maulāna Dr Habib Allah Mukhtar, the honourable Chancellor of the Jāmi'at ul Uloom il Islamiyah, I owe a heavy debt of gratitude for reposing full confidence in me and entrusting to me the very high responsibility of translation of their books.

I pray to Allah to reward them all and to cause this book useful in the propagation of Islam.

Rafiq bin 'Abd Al-Rahmān. 26<sup>th</sup>. December 1996.

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# بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

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### GLOSSARY

Reference:  
extracted from book

### The upbringing of Children in Islam

Tarbiyat-e-Aulad aur Islam

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## **PART ONE**

### **Chapter1**

**The Exemplary Marriage: Its link and relationship with upbringing.**

**Psychological awareness and feelings for the children.**

**General Instructions Concerning Children.**

**The disobedient behaviour in the child—its causes and remedy.**

# Chapter 1

## The Exemplary Marriage: Its link and relationship with upbringing.

Marriage is innate to human propensity.

**The** religion of Islam rejects celibacy. Monastic life is against human nature and runs counter to his desires and sentiments. The Holy Prophet May blessings of Allah and peace be on him has said: *Allah, The Exalted, has granted us an easy, straight religion in place of monasticism.*<sup>1[1]</sup> Also, he, May blessings of Allah and peace be on him has said: *One who can marry and does not marry is not of my people.*<sup>2[2]</sup>

Islam forbids leading an unmarried life and the adoption of celibacy as a form of worship. The Messenger of Allah May blessings of Allah and peace be on him recognised the limitations of human beings in the administration and supervision of society and the treatment of human soul. He has directed us not to be overzealous or do something that is not within our powers. Three of his companions may Allah be pleased with them visited the house of the Holy Prophet may blessings of Allah and peace be on him. They asked his noble wives may Allah be pleased with them about the nature of his worship of Allah and his endeavours for Islam. When they got their reply, the companions did not consider these efforts ample for themselves. They lamented that they could not attain the status of the Messenger of Allah May blessings of Allah and peace be on him who was assured a place in Paradise. One of them said, “I will keep awake the whole night and offer optional prayers”. The second asserted that he would fast his entire life and never break the fast. The third vowed that he would abstain from women and not marry ever. Our beloved Prophet May blessings of Allah and peace be on him said to them: *By Allah, I fear Allah more than you do, worship Him more than you do and am more devout than you are. In spite of this, I fast at times and do not fast at other times. I offer prayers but I sleep too and also marry women. Remember, whoever ignores my way of life (Sunnah) has no relationship with me.*<sup>3[3]</sup>

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1<sup>[1]</sup> Bayhaq<sup>2</sup>i

2<sup>[2]</sup> ¶Tabar<sup>2</sup>an<sup>2</sup>i and Bayhaq<sup>2</sup>i

3<sup>[3]</sup> Bukh<sup>2</sup>ar<sup>2</sup>i and Muslim.

## Marriage is a social necessity.

The institution of marriage advocated by Islam is a combination of numerous advantages and national and social gains. Some of these are given below.

### 1. Continuance of human species.

It is obvious that marriage assures the continuation of the human species. Also, the reformers in this field have framed rules for the upbringing of children so that the human race survives morally and physically. The Noble Qur`ān has also referred to this aspect.<sup>4<sup>[4]</sup></sup>

### 2. Protection of lineage.

Were it not for the institution of marriage as enunciated by Islam, there would have been a plethora of children of unknown descent. This would have resulted in moral degeneration and corruption. In contrast to this, children born out of natural wedlock are a source of solace to their parents and they are themselves self-reliant, honourable and noble.

### 3. Society is guarded against moral degradation.

It is an exemplary and a successful society (considered as a nation or on an individual basis) where an individual achieves his natural urges through lawful means of marriage. This society fulfils its responsibilities and is an active ingredient of the country and the nation. Keeping in view the moral wisdom and social advantage of marriage, those who can afford to do so must marry. Married persons may easily lower their gaze and prevent themselves from doing evil. One who cannot afford to marry, should fast often so that he may repress his sensuous desires.<sup>5<sup>[5]</sup></sup>

### 4. Society is protected from illnesses.

Illicit sexual intercourse may cause many fatal diseases and promotes obscenity and unlawful acts. Marriage is an antidote to these ailments. It secures society from those maladies, which would otherwise destroy the human race.

### 5. Spiritual and moral peace.

Marriage arouses love and affection between the spouses. The husband, weary from his day's toil, forgets his worries on meeting his wife and children.

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<sup>4<sup>[4]</sup></sup> an-Naḥḥl 16:72; a similar topic is discussed in an-Nis`ā` 4:1.

<sup>5<sup>[5]</sup></sup> Bukh`ar`i and Muslim.

Similarly, the wife, tired and worn out from her day's work, is refreshed on welcoming home her husband. They obtain, one from the other, mental solace and love and passion<sup>6[6]</sup>—and this spiritual and mental tranquillity serves as an impetus to educate and see over their children.

6. Co-operation between husband and wife.

The husband and wife co-operate with each other in building up their family and realising their responsibilities. The wife goes around the household chores and instructs her children; the husband fulfils his obligations outside the house and earns his livelihood. This way the spirit of co-operation is stimulated in them and the children born to them are noble and pious.

7. Arousal of parental sentiments.

Pious sentiments are stirred up in the father and the mother. These prompt them to look after their children, to provide for their needs, seek a peaceful life, and strive for a bright future.

These are the important social benefits derived out of marriage and they are very effective in moulding the children, reforming the family and fostering the growth of society. These are the reasons why *Shari'ah* commands us to marry<sup>7[7]</sup>; and it has described a pious woman the best of the worldly luxuries one may get.<sup>8[8]</sup>

Marriage is the selection of the best (partner)

A marriage is most successful if the rules and regulations laid down in the religion of Islam are obeyed faithfully. It is then an excellent generator of love and devotion, and harmony and unity. Children born out of such a marriage may turn out to be true believers, sound in health, possessing a good disposition and a high level of intelligence. We reproduce below relevant edicts.

1. Criterion of selection should be religion.

A correct and true understanding of Islam is to mould one's actions and conduct to the prototype shown by it and set an example of high morals, superior etiquette and virtue. It is also to embrace the *Shari'ah* as a whole.

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<sup>6[6]</sup> ar-R<sup>a</sup>um, 30:21.

<sup>7[7]</sup> ibn M<sup>a</sup>ajah.

<sup>8[8]</sup> Muslim.

When the bride and the bridegroom match this standard and live their lives in conformity with this gauge, they will be designated religious. If not, they will be termed wayward and far removed from Islam howsoever-high claims they may lay to piety and righteousness.

A person came to Hazrat 'Umar *May Allah be pleased with him* to testify to the credentials of another. On this occasion Hazrat 'Umar presented an excellent guideline to verify the standing of a person and to confirm his authenticity. Thus, he asked the man, "Do you know him?" On receiving an affirmative answer, he queried, "Are you his neighbour? Do you always see him coming and going?" "No" was the reply. "Have you ever travelled with him?" "No." "Have you ever had a monetary dealing with him?" The reply was, "No." "Then it appears you might have seen him offer prayers in the mosque?" "Yes, indeed." "You may go. You do not know him!" Then to the other he turned, "Bring me a person who knows you."

Heed this! Hazrat 'Umar was not carried away by the man's appearance and attire. The Holy Prophet *May blessings of Allah and peace be on him* has said:

*Allah does not look at your countenance or your built but he looks at your hearts and your deeds.*<sup>9[9]</sup>

This is why the Holy Prophet *May blessings of Allah and peace be on him* has commanded those who intend to marry to select a partner who is religious. Then they may grant the rights each of the other, impart Islamic education to their children, and manage the home properly. Instead of setting a yardstick of beauty and glamour or wealth and assets, piety must be the criterion.<sup>10[10]</sup> Allah lowers the worth of the person who marries to raise his prestige. He inflicts poverty on one who intends to amass wealth by marrying a rich spouse. He dishonours and disgraces him who sets his eyes on a life partner of high ancestry. He who marries aiming to preserve his gaze from the unlawful, or to guard his private organs, or to reconcile the separated, earns the pleasure of Allah Who blesses the woman for the man and the man for the woman.<sup>11[11]</sup> The parents and guardians of the girl must also seek a pious, well-mannered boy for the girl who may concede his wife her rights as ordained by Islam. He may look after the family, impart knowledge of Islam to the children and guard honour and reputation, and see that mischief and corruption is checked.<sup>12[12]</sup>

No mischief is more sinister than to ensnare a pious girl in the web of a freethinking, irreligious husband who does not bother about relations, modesty or honour. He compels her to cast off the veil, to mix freely with men, to sing and dance, and to banish religion and

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**9<sup>[9]</sup> Muslim.**

**10<sup>[10]</sup> Bukh<sup>a</sup>ar<sup>a</sup>i and Muslim.**

**11<sup>[11]</sup> ¶Tabar<sup>a</sup>an<sup>a</sup>i.**

**12<sup>[12]</sup> Tirmiz<sup>a</sup>i.**

nobility. How many bashful, noble girls who were examples of modesty, chastity and shyness became shameless and immoral after their marriage into freethinking families. Children of such parents revolt against religion and are shameless and evil because they are raised in indecent surroundings. Therefore, let religion and ethics form the basis of selection of a match.

## 2. The choice be based on nobility and pedigree.

The life partner must be chosen from a devout, pious family of good ancestral background because this too influences progeny. Intrinsically people are either good or bad; they may be compared to a mine or a quarry, which remain unchanged. Those who were good in the Age of Ignorance are good in the time of Islam too provided they develop an understanding of religion.<sup>13</sup><sup>[13]</sup> A beautiful and glamorous woman who is born in an indecent and corrupt family is like green herbage of filth, which must be avoided.<sup>14</sup><sup>[14]</sup> We are commanded to seek good women for our sons and to marry them in families of comparable status<sup>15</sup><sup>[15]</sup> because the stamp of the family passes down the progeny.<sup>16</sup><sup>[16]</sup> Therefore, we must select wives who have been brought up in pious and righteous surroundings, are from noble and religious families, well mannered, virtuous and graceful. Nobility and excellent traits are inherited by their offspring. Hazrat Usman bin al-Aas *may Allah be pleased with him* compared one who marries with the one who sows a seed. Therefore, a person must see where one sows the seed. The woman of a lowly bearing and a mean family background seldom bears a noble child. Hence, choose a woman of noble parentage though it may take some time to find her. It is necessary to be vigilant and select a well-mannered wife. A boy asked Hazrat ‘Umar “What is the right of a child over his father?” He replied, “Must choose his mother after due deliberation, give the child a good name and teach him the Holy Qur`ān.”

The study of the science of heredity affirms that the child is the prototype of both of its parents — in disposition, in physical built, and in intellect. Thus, keep in mind these priorities and pick up an ideal life partner if you wish your children to be pious, righteous, self-controlled, fearful of Allah and obedient.

## 3. Selection of the spouse outside one’s own family.

Among the principles advocated by Islam is the preference for an unrelated girl of good ancestry so that the children born in wedlock may be excellent and free from various diseases and hereditary illnesses.

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13<sup>[13]</sup> Ṭayālis<sup>ai</sup>, ibn M<sup>ani</sup>‘ and Askar<sup>ai</sup>.

14<sup>[14]</sup> D<sup>ar</sup> Quṭn<sup>ai</sup>, Askar<sup>ai</sup> and ibn Ad<sup>ai</sup>.

15<sup>[15]</sup> ibn M<sup>ajah</sup>, D<sup>ar</sup> Quṭn<sup>ai</sup> and al Ḥ<sup>akim</sup>.

16<sup>[16]</sup> ibn M<sup>ajah</sup>, Daylam<sup>ai</sup> and ibn Ad<sup>ai</sup>.

Further, the circle of society is widened. By marrying within the family, the offspring tend to be lean and weak.<sup>17</sup><sup>[17]</sup> The study of heredity confirms today what the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* had said fourteen hundred years ago in very clear and explicit words. Children born from marriage within the family are feeble and witless.

4. Previously unmarried women be preferred.

There is much wisdom in selecting an unmarried girl. The family is safe from bickering and quarrelling, hatred and enmity and an unhappy life. Often, love between the two strengthens and, mostly, the unmarried girl is attached to the husband and loves him because he is the first man to enter her life. Against this, when a man marries a once-married woman, it often happens that the woman does not find in her second husband the love and affection she had for her first husband. This arouses hatred. Hazrat 'Aishah *may Allah be pleased with her* spoke to the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him*. She said, *tell me, if you camp in a valley where there is a tree that has been grazed upon and another that none has touched yet, then where will you feed your camel?* *May blessings of Allah and peace be on him* he said: *The one that is untouched yet.* Hazrat 'Aishah said, *I am that very tree.*

The wisdom in wedding a spinster is discussed in a saying of the Holy Prophet *May blessings of Allah and peace be on him*. He said: *Marry women who are not divorced or widowed because they are of sweet disposition, pure and clean, full of mercy, undeceiving, content on receiving a little.*<sup>18</sup><sup>[18]</sup> On his return from the *Ghazwah, Z<sup>a</sup>at Al-Raqa'*, the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* asked Hazrat J<sup>a</sup>abir *may Allah be pleased with him*, "Have you married?" "Yes, I have." "A virgin or a previously married woman?" He replied, "An already married woman." "Why not a girl, she would have played with you and you with her?" He replied, "My father was martyred in the Battle of Uhud and left me seven sisters to care for so I married an elderly woman who would keep them together and look after them." He said, "You did a wise thing."<sup>19</sup><sup>[19]</sup> Thus, under certain circumstances it is better to marry a divorced woman or a widow.

5. To opt for the most fertile woman.

The purpose of marriage is not to satisfy sensual desires but the aim is to propagate the *Ummah* of Prophet Muhammad *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him*. So, at the time of choosing a woman for marriage a generative woman should be selected. This may be surmised in two ways:

- ② The woman is free from ailments that hinder pregnancy. The views of doctors may be sought in this regard.

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<sup>17</sup><sup>[17]</sup> I could not trace this ¶had<sup>a</sup>ith. If any one finds it, please let me know.

<sup>18</sup><sup>[18]</sup> ibn M<sup>a</sup>ajah and Bayhaq<sup>a</sup>i .

<sup>19</sup><sup>[19]</sup> Bukh<sup>a</sup>ar<sup>a</sup>i and Muslim.

☐ The physical state of the woman's mother and married sisters may be verified. Fertile women are normally healthy and sound and are active in household chores and bringing up children and are quick in serving the rights of the husband.

However, the husband must not overlook the education and feeding of his children or he will be sinning.<sup>20</sup><sup>[20]</sup>

A man was in love with an affluent but barren woman of high genealogy, of honour and rank. He wished to marry her. The Holy Prophet May blessings of Allah and peace be on him did not permit him to marry her. When he sought permission the third time, he replied: *Marry a woman who may give birth to many children and may love much so that I will be proud of your higher numbers over other Ummah.*<sup>21</sup><sup>[21]</sup>

These are fundamental and important views on marriage. They have a deep bearing on the question of education. Therefore, on the subject of training individuals, Islam took up the first link in the family; it begins with marriage because this is a desire and necessity of the human beings. It links the offspring to their ancestry. Because of it society is secure from many contagious diseases and licentious behaviour. Husband and wife combine to train their children. The beginning of the Islamic education of children must be an exemplary marriage that considers the important points that are effective in training, and that play a pivotal role in preparing and correcting the society.

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<sup>20</sup><sup>[20]</sup> ibn ʿHibb<sup>a</sup>an.

<sup>21</sup><sup>[21]</sup> ab<sup>a</sup>u D<sup>a</sup>awood. Nas<sup>a</sup>a<sup>i</sup> and ʿH<sup>a</sup>akim.

**Reference:**  
**extracted from book**

**The upbringing of Children in Islam**

**Tarbiyat-e-Aulad aur Islam**

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Chapter 2

### Psychological awareness & feelings for the children

**By** psychological awareness we refer to the love and compassion and tenderness which Allah, the Exalted, has aroused in parents for their children. Thereby, a feeling of abhorrence emerges for the customs and habits of the Days of Ignorance concerning daughters. One may also know what the parents must do when a conflict arises between the interests of the child and the considerations of Islam.

Love of children is natural to parents.

It is natural for parents to love their children, to look after them and to be kind and compassionate to them. Without this motivation human beings could have been wiped out off the face of the earth. The Noble Qur`ān has categorised children as the adornment of the world.<sup>22</sup><sup>[1]</sup> Children are a great blessing of Allah for which we must thank Him.<sup>23</sup><sup>[2]</sup> Further, if the children are pious and God-fearing then they are the delight of the eyes.<sup>24</sup><sup>[3]</sup> Poets have composed very high calibre poetry on the subject of love for children; these are very moving and heart-warming and brimming with sentiment and feeling. The poetry of Umayya bin abū as-Sult, Abu Bakr Tarsoosee, and Ustad Umar Bahāa-ul-Amāiree are very touching and highlight the love and compassion innate in the parents.<sup>25</sup><sup>[4]</sup> The result of the love and compassion that Allah, the Exalted, has put into the hearts of parents ensures that children are properly trained and that their needs are met.

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<sup>22</sup><sup>[1]</sup> al-Kahf, 18:46.

<sup>23</sup><sup>[2]</sup> al-Isrā`a, 17:6.

<sup>24</sup><sup>[3]</sup> al-Furqān, 25:76.

<sup>25</sup><sup>[4]</sup> see *Islam aur Tarbiyat-e-Aulād* vol. 1 pp. 60-65.

**Love of children and being affectionate to them is a divine gift.**

Love of children, affection and tender and kind feelings for them are unique sentiments. They have a great say in their guidance and training, care and nourishment. One who is bereft of mercy has the characteristics of a surly, stonehearted, cruel person.

These attributes have an adverse effect on children; they tend to be rebellious and aberrant and are lost in the deep maze of ignorance, villainy and wretchedness. Therefore, Islam urges us to develop the sentiments of love and mercy. It has warned us against being devoid of these qualities.<sup>26<sup>[5]</sup></sup>

A person was embracing his child. The Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* asked him, “Do you feel compassion for the child?” “Yes, I do”, was the polite reply. He said, “Allah is Merciful to you more than you are to the child, He is the most Merciful (of those who show mercy)”.<sup>27<sup>[6]</sup></sup> Our beloved Prophet severely admonished those who were not merciful to their children.<sup>28<sup>[7]</sup></sup> Once, when he kissed Hasan bin Al<sup>ai</sup> *may Allah be pleased with them* a person said, “I have ten children and I have never shown love to any of them”. He looked towards the person in astonishment and said, “He who is not merciful will not be shown any mercy.”<sup>29<sup>[8]</sup></sup>

When a woman visited her, Hazrat ‘Aishah *may Allah be pleased with her* gave her three dates. She gave to her two sons one each and kept one with herself. Both the boys ate their share and then looked towards their mother with expectant eyes for more. She halved the date that she had kept with herself and gave them a piece each. When Hazrat ‘Aishah related this to the Holy Prophet, he said, “How does this amaze you? Her tenderness to her children has earned her the mercy of Allah.”<sup>30<sup>[9]</sup></sup>

The Holy Prophet *May blessings of Allah and peace be on him* was very softhearted. His grandson was in a moribund state; he took him in his laps and tears rolled down his eyes. Hazrat Sa’d *May Allah be pleased with him* asked, “O Messenger of Allah! What’s the matter?” He said, “This is the mercy of Allah that he has put into the hearts of men”. In another version it is put thus, “Of His bondsmen, Allah, the Exalted, puts mercy into the heart of whom He wills. Allah, the Exalted, is merciful to those of His slaves who are merciful to others”.<sup>31<sup>[10]</sup></sup>

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**26<sup>[5]</sup> ab<sup>u</sup> D<sup>a</sup>awood and Tirmiz<sup>ai</sup>.**

**27<sup>[6]</sup> Bukh<sup>a</sup>ar<sup>ai</sup>.**

**28<sup>[7]</sup> Bukh<sup>a</sup>ar<sup>ai</sup>.**

**29<sup>[8]</sup> Bukh<sup>a</sup>ar<sup>ai</sup>.**

**30<sup>[9]</sup> Bukh<sup>a</sup>ar<sup>ai</sup>.**

**31<sup>[10]</sup> Bukh<sup>a</sup>ar<sup>ai</sup> and Muslim.**

**To dislike daughters is the repulsive custom of the Days of Ignorance.**

Islam upholds equality and fair play. In showing kindness and compassion to children, it does not discriminate male and female.<sup>32<sup>[11]</sup></sup> Even in this age, as they did before, some people dislike daughters. To discriminate against them is a sign of being ignorant of religion and weak in faith.<sup>33<sup>[12]</sup></sup> A Muslim must submit himself happily to the will of Allah, whether the new-born is a boy or a girl is determined by Allah alone.<sup>34<sup>[13]</sup></sup>

The Holy Prophet has stressed upon the care of daughters. This, so that the habits of the Days of Ignorance may be obliterated from the minds of those inconsistent in belief. He has instructed us to pay proper attention to the care and training of daughters. He has assured us that whoever looks after two daughters (in another version, three daughters)<sup>35<sup>[14]</sup></sup>, till they have matured, will be together with him on the Day of Resurrection.<sup>36<sup>[15]</sup></sup> It is reported in a Tradition that a father who brings up three daughters, nourishes and clothes them will find that they will protect him from Hell.<sup>37<sup>[16]</sup></sup> Therefore, we must seek guidance from these *Ah<sup>a</sup>ad<sup>a</sup>ith* and practice impartiality and parity in dealing with our sons and daughters so that we are worthy of Paradise.

**Reward on being patient on the death of a child.**

The complete faith of a believer that Allah ordains everything encourages him to be patient so that he is steadfast in facing accidents, and trials. When one is patient in enduring a crisis one feels relaxed. He, who is patient on the death of his child and praises Allah, has a house prepared for him in Heaven by the name of *Bait-ul-Hamd*.<sup>38<sup>[17]</sup></sup>

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32<sup>[11]</sup> al-M<sup>a</sup>a`idah, 5:8, A<sup>h</sup>s<sup>h</sup>ab-us-Sunan, A<sup>h</sup>mad, ibn <sup>h</sup>Hibb<sup>a</sup>an.

33<sup>[12]</sup> an-Na<sup>h</sup>l, 16:58-59.

34<sup>[13]</sup> ash-Sh<sup>a</sup>ur<sup>a</sup>a, 42:49-50.

35<sup>[14]</sup> <sup>h</sup>Humaid<sup>a</sup>i.

36<sup>[15]</sup> Muslim.

37<sup>[16]</sup> A<sup>h</sup>mad and <sup>h</sup>Humaid<sup>a</sup>i.

38<sup>[17]</sup> Tirmiz<sup>a</sup>i and ibn <sup>h</sup>Hibb<sup>a</sup>an.

## The benefits of patience:

1. A person who is patient in facing adversity is entitled to entry into Paradise and gains immunity from Hell.<sup>39</sup><sup>[18]</sup> He whose two or three children die and he bears the loss patiently is protected from Hell.<sup>40</sup><sup>[19]</sup>

2. The child, whose parents bear his death with patience, will intercede for them. He will not enter Paradise until his parents are admitted too.<sup>41</sup><sup>[20]</sup> Young children are abiders of Heaven and they will not let go the garment or hand of their father or parents until Allah allows them to go into Paradise.<sup>42</sup><sup>[21]</sup>

Observe the strong faith and conviction of the female Companions *may Allah be pleased with them* how they were steadfast on the death of their children. Although his son was ill, Hazrat Abu Talhah *may Allah be pleased with him* went on a journey; the son died. When he returned from the journey, he asked his wife, umme Sal<sup>ā</sup>im *may Allah be pleased with her*, “How is the child?” She replied, “More comfortable than before.” (She meant to say that the child was relieved of the pangs of this life and was gone to the next world.) Then she gave him to eat. The husband slept with her at night. Then she said, “Tell me, if one who has kept a trust with another demands it back, has he the right to refuse to return it?” He said, “No!” She said, “Be patient on the death of your son. He has died. Hope for reward from Allah, the Exalted.” Abu Talhah was dejected and protested, “You astonish me. Why did you not tell me before?” He presented himself before the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him and* narrated all that had transpired. He said, “May Allah bless you, your last night”.<sup>43</sup><sup>[22]</sup> Thus, they had a child. The Prophet named him Abdull<sup>ā</sup>ah. One Ans<sup>ā</sup>ari has said, “I have seen the nine sons of this Abdull<sup>ā</sup>ah *may Allah be pleased with him*; all of them were religious scholars and *Qurr<sup>ā</sup>a*”.

Hence, parents must strengthen their faith and be steadfast. All are His trust and will return to Him. Everyone has an appointed time.

Interests of Islam deserve priority over love of the child.

The love of children must have second place to the concerns of Islam. The aim and objective of every Believer is to establish an Islamic society.

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<sup>39</sup><sup>[18]</sup> Bukh<sup>ā</sup>ar<sup>ā</sup>i and Muslim.

<sup>40</sup><sup>[19]</sup> A<sup>ḥ</sup>mad and ibn <sup>ḥ</sup>Hibb<sup>ā</sup>an.

<sup>41</sup><sup>[20]</sup> <sup>ḥ</sup>Ṭabar<sup>ā</sup>an<sup>ā</sup>i.

<sup>42</sup><sup>[21]</sup> Muslim.

<sup>43</sup><sup>[22]</sup> Bukh<sup>ā</sup>ar<sup>ā</sup>i and Muslim.

The noble Companions *may Allah be pleased with them* and those who followed them clearly understood this. They had no other goal before them but *jihad*, the preaching of Islam and spreading it. It is for this reason that their household, their wives and children, and even their lives, meant nothing to them when the interests of Islam were before them. They were ever eager to attain martyrdom and prayed to Allah to bestow on them martyrdom. When the welfare of religion demanded of them, they did not care for wealth or life, household or family. The strong belief which Hazrat *Ibādah may Allah be pleased with him* exhibited before the king of Egypt, Maquoqus, reflects the firm faith of the Companions. It shows also the inferiority in their eyes of the majesty and splendour of this life. He highlighted the inadequacy of armour and forces against the help of Allah and emphasised his earnest desire to attain martyrdom. Indeed, these honourable people had understood the Qur`ān.<sup>44</sup><sup>[23]</sup>

The mind of a Muslim and his heart and limbs must be occupied in the love of Islam, its doctrines and *jihad* and love for fellow Muslims and invitation to (the religion of) Allah. The love of the family, wives and children and lineage must be subordinated to the love of Islam.<sup>45</sup><sup>[24]</sup>

ﷺ Hazrat Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb *may Allah be pleased with him* said to the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* “O Messenger of Allah! You are dearer to me than all else except myself”. He said: *None of you can become a full Believer unless I am dearer to him than his life.* ﷺ Hazrat Umar said, “By Him Who has revealed to you the Book, you are dearer to me than my life too!” He said, “It’s correct now!”<sup>46</sup><sup>[25]</sup> Unless one’s desires are not made subservient to religious exigencies, one cannot be a firm Believer.<sup>47</sup><sup>[26]</sup>

### Punishing a child and severing ties with him.

When the child attains the proper age, his parents or guardians must adopt all tactics to train and educate him. This, so that he is equipped with the habits and manners prescribed by Islam and the dignified social civilities. Initially, the guardian must discipline the child with compassion and love. If this is ineffective, he may suspend the bond with the child. If this, too, is unproductive, then, keeping oneself within limits, one may use the cane to the necessary extent. Attention may be paid to the upbringing method of the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him*. While eating, a young boy moved his hand all around the dish before him.

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<sup>44</sup><sup>[23]</sup> at-Tawbah, 9:24

<sup>45</sup><sup>[24]</sup> Bukhārī.

<sup>46</sup><sup>[25]</sup> Bukhārī.

<sup>47</sup><sup>[26]</sup> Bukhārī and Muslim.

The Holy Prophet said, “Son, call the name of Allah and with your right hand eat from the portion before you.”<sup>48</sup><sup>[27]</sup>

Once, the Holy Prophet was offered a drink. After he drank of it, he asked a young boy seated to his right, “Do you permit me to offer this drink to the aged people to my left?” This was a very polite style of teaching. The youngster said, “By Allah, I cannot prefer anything at all to the blessed portion offered by you.” The Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* gave him the drinking bowl. This young companion was ﷺ Hazrat Abdullāh bin Abbās *may Allah be pleased with them*.<sup>49</sup><sup>[28]</sup>

A young relative of ﷺ Hazrat Abdullāh bin Mughaffal *may Allah be pleased with him* cast some pebbles. He forbade him from doing so and cited the Prophet’s ban in this regard. One cannot hope to hunt an animal by it nor cause injury to an enemy; rather, one may hurt an innocent eye or dislodge someone’s tooth. However, the youngster persisted and again threw the pebbles. ﷺ Hazrat Abdullāh said “The Holy Prophet has forbidden us to throw pebbles and you persist in your defiance. I will not speak to you”.<sup>50</sup><sup>[29]</sup> This shows that one may suspend relations as part of training.

If necessary, parents may beat the child too. When they are seven years old, parents must command them to offer the obligatory prayers. At the age of ten, if they do not offer the prayers they may be beaten, and at this age, their beds may be separated.<sup>51</sup><sup>[30]</sup> These methods are for those nearing maturity. When he is mature, a somewhat different approach is taken. If he does not respond to advice, then the guardian or teacher must snap ties with him until he abstains from defiance and disobedience. A *ḥadīth* says *the strongest of the links of faith is to sustain friendship for the sake of Allah and to brook enmity for His sake. Show love for Him alone and bear hatred for Him alone*.<sup>52</sup><sup>[31]</sup>

When ﷺ Hazrat Ka’b *may Allah be pleased with him* delayed himself in the *Ghazwah Tabook*, the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* forbade people to speak to him. He endured this for fifty days. He felt the world close in on him. No one would talk him. Nobody visited him. However, when the Qur`ān disclosed Allah’s forgiveness, the Holy Prophet lifted the boycott over him.<sup>53</sup><sup>[32]</sup>

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<sup>48</sup><sup>[27]</sup> Bukhārāi and Muslim.

<sup>49</sup><sup>[28]</sup> Bukhārāi and Muslim.

<sup>50</sup><sup>[29]</sup> Bukhārāi.

<sup>51</sup><sup>[30]</sup> abū Dāwood and Ḥākim.

<sup>52</sup><sup>[31]</sup> Ṭabarānāi.

<sup>53</sup><sup>[32]</sup> Bukhārāi.

As a piece of warning, the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* shunned contact with his pure wives for a month.

¶Hazrat Abdullāh bin Umar *may Allah be pleased with him* severed relations with his son on a religious point and when he died the boycott was yet effective. He had narrated a ¶hadīth according to which women should not be barred from mosques; the son said, “We will stop the women”. This displeased ¶Hazrat Abdullāh and he stopped speaking to his son.<sup>54</sup><sup>[33]</sup>

This may be our attitude and we may snap ties with disobedient children who are Believers. If, God forbid, anyone is an atheist or an unbeliever, then it is the right of Islam that we reject him completely. We must stop all manner of dealing with him and severe relations with him. This boycott should be made public, too. Muslims never befriend those people who are antagonists of Allah and His Messenger *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* be they their fathers, sons, brothers or relatives.<sup>55</sup><sup>[34]</sup>

¶Hazrat Nāu¶h *may peace be on him* had said to his Lord, “My son is of my family”, Allah said, “O Nāu¶h, he is not of your folk; his actions are evil”.<sup>56</sup><sup>[35]</sup> ¶Hazrat Ibrāhīm *may peace be on him* interceded for his father, because he had promised him that he would do so, but when it became clear that he was an enemy of Allah, he disowned him.<sup>57</sup><sup>[36]</sup> Therefore, if a child (or any relative) is adamant on disbelief, faith stipulates that all relations with him be snapped. This, because in the eyes of Islam the religious link is stronger and more preferable than a link based on blood, territory, country, language, brotherhood or economy. Islam has taught us that religion has preference over all else, a father or a son, a wife or a tribe, wealth or property.<sup>58</sup><sup>[37]</sup>

Muslims are brothers, one to another.<sup>59</sup><sup>[38]</sup> He who is the most righteous is the most honourable with Allah.<sup>60</sup><sup>[39]</sup> The guardians must pursue a correct course of instruction so that people will be well trained. Also, the society will not be corrupt any more; and people will not wander. The environment will not be ugly or poisonous. It will be an honourable and well-mannered system.

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54<sup>[33]</sup> A¶s¶hāb-us-Sunan.

55<sup>[34]</sup> al-Mujādilah, 58:22.

56<sup>[35]</sup> Hād, 11:45-46.

57<sup>[36]</sup> at-Tawbah, 9:114.

58<sup>[37]</sup> at-Tawbah, 9:24.

59<sup>[38]</sup> al-¶Hujurāt, 49:10.

60<sup>[39]</sup> al-¶Hujurāt, 49:13.

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Chapter 3

### General Instructions Concerning Children

In this chapter, we will discuss four subjects:

- ❑ The guardian's duty on a child's birth?
- ❑ Instructions on naming the child.
- ❑ Rules of *aqeeqah*.
- ❑ Rules of circumcision.

#### What must a guardian do on the birth of the child?

Islam has laid down the fundamental principles in unambiguous terms for rearing the child.

Congratulations may be conveyed on the birth.

It is commendable that we congratulate our Muslim brother on the birth of his child and thus add to his happiness. This creates an atmosphere of love and compassion among Muslim families. If congratulations cannot be conveyed, prayers for the well being of his child must be offered. The Noble Qur`an refers to the glad tidings to ﷺ Hazrat Ibrah<sup>im</sup> *may peace be on him* and his wife.<sup>61[1]</sup> Similarly, ﷺ Hazrat Zakariyy<sup>a</sup> *may peace be on him* too was given the glad tidings of the birth of ﷺ Hazrat Ya<sup>hy</sup><sup>a</sup> *may peace be on him*<sup>62[2]</sup>. On the birth of the Holy Prophet the slave-girl of Abu Lahb, ﷺ Hazrat Thuwaibah, congratulated the uncle, Abu Lahb, who freed her on the occasion.

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61<sup>[1]</sup> H<sup>a</sup>ud, 11:69-71.

62<sup>[2]</sup> <sup>a</sup>Al Imr<sup>a</sup>an, 3:39, Maryam, 19:7.

In our congratulatory message to the parent, we may add a prayer to Allah: *That He bless the child, That He guide the parents to be thankful, That the child turn out to be righteous, That he have a long life.*<sup>63</sup>

Irrespective of whether the new born is a boy or a girl, we must offer congratulations. Some people offer gifts, sweetmeat or cash. This practice is within the ambit of the Sayings of the Holy Prophet that Muslims must present gifts to one another to foster friendship and love. However, we must neither turn it into a mere custom nor consider it obligatory. We must avoid the ways of non-Muslims and must not indulge in wasteful expenditure.

*Azān* and *iqāmah* may be said in the child's ears.

In the right ear of the new-born baby, the *azān* may be recited, and in the left ear, the *iqāmah*. This is done immediately after the baby is bathed. On the birth of ﷺ Hazrat Hasan to ﷺ Hazrat Fatimah *may Allah be pleased with them* the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* had said the *azān* in his ear.<sup>64</sup> This practice ensures safety to the child from epilepsy.

ﷺ Hafiz ibn Qiyim *may Allah be pleased with him* says the significance of saying the *azān* and the *iqāmah* in the ears of the child is that the first words he hears declare the greatness and majesty of Allah. The words of testimony are those which a man recites on embracing Islam. In other words, this is a pronouncement of the creed of Islam. Besides, at the sound of *azān* and *iqāmah*, Satan distances himself. At this early age, the child is thus invited to Allah the Majestic, to Islam and to the worship of Allah. This call forestalls temptation by Satan and ensures an unblemished faith. Moreover, it is a forearming against Satan and temptation.

*Taḥneek*.

*Taḥneek* is the practice of chewing date and applying a part of the chewed portion to the palate of the child so that it goes down the child's mouth easily. If date is unavailable, one may apply any thing sweet, like sugar-candy, honey or juice, to the child's palate. Thereby, the *sunnah* is fulfilled. The veins and the muscles are strengthened. The dental palate, the jaws and the mouth are made active. As a result, it is easy for the child to suck milk from the breast of its mother. A pious and God-fearing scholar or a venerable saint may be invited to do *Taḥneek*. *Taḥneek* is *mustaḥbib*.

ﷺ Hazrat Abu Mūsā said, "When my son was born, I brought him to the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* who named him Ibrāhīm, performed his *Taḥneek* with date, blessed him and returned him to me".<sup>65</sup> ﷺ Hazrat Anas carried the new born son of ﷺ Hazrat

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<sup>63</sup> abū Bakr bin al Munzir.

<sup>64</sup> abū Dāwūd and Tirmizī.

<sup>65</sup> Bukhārī and Muslim.

Abu Talḥah to the Holy Prophet. He chewed a date and gave some of it in the mouth of the child, carried out *Taḥneek* and named the child Abdullāh.<sup>66</sup><sup>[6]</sup>

### *Aqeeqah.*

The hair on the head of the new-born must be shaved on the seventh day. It is *mustaḥhib* (commendable) to give silver in *sadaqah* to the poor and needy equal to the weight of his hair. Shaving the hair of the head provides the child with strength and opens up the pores of the skin. It is also beneficial to the eye-sight, the hearing and the sense of smell. Thereby the poor is helped, too. Ḥazrat Fātimah *may Allah be pleased with her* distributed silver as *sadaqah* equal in weight to the hair on the heads of Ḥazrat Ḥasan, Ḥusain, Zainab and umme Kulthūm.<sup>67</sup><sup>[7]</sup> On the birth of Ḥazrat Ḥasan, the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* asked Ḥazrat Fātimah to have his head shaved off and offer silver equal in weight to the hair as *sadaqah*. The hair weighed a dirham or a little lesser than a dirham.<sup>68</sup><sup>[8]</sup>

The entire head must be shaved. To shave some hair and to leave some on the head is called *qaz'* and is disallowed.<sup>69</sup><sup>[9]</sup> This is not fair with the head because some of it is bared and the rest hidden. It is exactly as though a part of the body receives sunlight and rest of it is in shade. Also, it may be compared with a shoe on one foot and none on the other. Both these things are forbidden. The intention is to prevent the defacing of one's appearance. It also aims at discouraging the adoption of unreasonable airs or resemblance to non-Muslims. You must act on these *mustaḥhib* deeds so that it is then easy to act on the *farḍ* (compulsory deeds).

### Instructions on naming the child

People name their children to distinguish them from others and to call them by their names. Islam is a complete faith. It recognises this habit and its importance. Therefore, it gave a set of instructions on naming the child.

When must a child be named?

According to a *ḥadīth*, a child is pledged with its *aqeeqah*; it is sacrificed on behalf of the child on the seventh day when it is given a name and the hair is shaved off its head.<sup>70</sup><sup>[10]</sup> Thus,

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<sup>66</sup><sup>[6]</sup> Bukḥārī and Muslim.

<sup>67</sup><sup>[7]</sup> Mālik in Muwaḥḥidī and Yaḥyā bin Bukair.

<sup>68</sup><sup>[8]</sup> ibn Ishāq.

<sup>69</sup><sup>[9]</sup> Bukḥārī and Muslim.

<sup>70</sup><sup>[10]</sup> Aḥḥab-us-Sunan.

the child must be named on the seventh day. According to some *Aḥḥadīth*, the child must be named promptly on birth. When Munzir bin abū Usaid was born his father took him to the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* who took the child in his laps and asked the father its name. On being told his name, he said, “No, call him Munzir”.71<sup>[11]</sup> It is reported in a tradition that the Holy Prophet said, “Last night a son was born to me, and I have named him Ibrāhīm after my grandfather, Ibrāhīm *may peace be on him.*”72<sup>[12]</sup>

Names that are preferred, and that are undesirable.

The name given to the child must be meaningful, lovely and good. On the Day of Resurrection, a person will be called by his name and the names of his parents. Therefore, a good name must be selected.73<sup>[13]</sup> Allah, the Exalted, likes best the names Abdullāh and Abdur Raḥmān.74<sup>[14]</sup>

Those names must not be given to the child, that affect his personality or become a cause of ridicule. The Messenger of Allah *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* always changed names that were derogatory.75<sup>[15]</sup> The name of one of the daughters of Ḥazrat Umar was ʿAsiyah (meaning, disobedient), the Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* changed it to Jamilah.76<sup>[16]</sup> Besides, the Holy Prophet changed such names as *Azʿiz, Utlah (hardness, thickness), Satan, Ḥukm, Ghurab (crow), Habʿab (snake, Satan).*77<sup>[17]</sup> He also changed the names, *Ḥarb (war) into Silm (peace), Muztajaʿ (one who lies down) into Mumbais (one who is prepared, ready), Banu az-Zʿania (the product of adultery) into Banu ar-Rushdah (good people), Banu al-Maghwiyah (one who misleads) into Banu ar-Rushdah.*

We must not give names that allude to ill omen or bad character. The grandfather of Ḥazrat Saʿid bin al Musayyab presented himself before the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him*. He asked him his name. “*Hizn*” was the reply (meaning, hard ground, surliness). He said, “Your name is *Sahl* (easy)”. He replied, “How can I change the name given to me by my father?” Ḥazrat Saʿid says that from then on hardness of character is found among us.78<sup>[18]</sup>

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71<sup>[11]</sup> Bukhārāi and Muslim.

72<sup>[12]</sup> Muslim.

73<sup>[13]</sup> abū Dāwūd.

74<sup>[14]</sup> Muslim.

75<sup>[15]</sup> Tirmizāi.

76<sup>[16]</sup> Tirmizāi and ibn Mājah.

77<sup>[17]</sup> abū Dāwūd.

78<sup>[18]</sup> Bukhārāi.

¶Hazrat Ya¶hyªa bin Saªaid says that ¶Hazrat Umar asked a person his name. He replied, “*Jamrah*” (live coal). “And the name of your father?” “*Shihªab*” (meteor). “With whom are you connected?” He replied, “*Harqah*” (burning). ¶Hazrat Umar asked him, “Where do you live?” “*Harrat un-Nªar*” (heat of fire). “Where is it?” “*Zat Lazza*” (flames of fire). ¶Hazrat Umar *may Allah be pleased with him* said to him, “Go home, quickly! The people of your house have perished from burning”. It turned out so truly!<sup>79</sup><sup>[19]</sup>

The name selected for the child must be other than a name of Allah; thus, it should not be A¶had, Khªaliq or Razzªaq. It is permissible, however, to name the child Abdul A¶had, Abdus ¶Samad or any other name of Allah compounded with Abdul.

When ¶Hazrat Hªani came to Madinah with his people, they called him Abu ¶Hakm. The Messenger of Allah *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* said, “Only Allah, the Exalted, is ¶Hakm. He alone is the One Who decides. Why do they call you Abu ¶Hakm?” He replied, “If a dispute arises among my community, they ask me to decide between them. Both the parties are happy with my decision”. He said, “This is commendable. We must settle the disputes of our folk. Say, do you have a son?” “I have three sons, Sharih, Muslim and Abdullªah.” “Who is the eldest?” “Sharih is the eldest.” The Prophet said, “Your *kunyah*<sup>80</sup><sup>[20]</sup> is Abu Sharih”.<sup>81</sup><sup>[21]</sup>

According to a ¶hadªith, on the Day of Resurrection, the worst of all persons in the eyes of Allah — and liable to punishment — will be he whom people will call *Shahinshah*. Only Allah, the Exalted, is Shahinshah (meaning, King of the monarchs) and kingdom belongs to Him alone.<sup>82</sup><sup>[22]</sup>

We must not give names to our children that indicate good fortune. Suppose the names to be *Aflah* (successful), *Nafeª* (profitable), *Ribªah* (beneficial), *Yasr* (easy).

If in a gathering, someone calls out a person by such a name and he is not there, the answer “not here” might imply that this characteristic is lacking in that assembly. A ¶hadªith says:

*Allah, the Exalted, likes most four phrases sub¶hªan Allah, wal ¶hamd u lillªah, wa la ilªaha ill Allah and Allah u akbar. Do not give your sons the names of Yasªar, Najeeh or Aflah. You will ask for them. If they are not there, the person replying would say ‘not here’. These are four names; do not refer to me after adding to these names.*<sup>83</sup><sup>[23]</sup>

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<sup>79</sup><sup>[19]</sup> Mªalik in Muwa¶t¶ta.

<sup>80</sup><sup>[20]</sup> *kunyah* is an honorific name. It is used with abªu or umm.

<sup>81</sup><sup>[21]</sup> abªu Dªawood.

<sup>82</sup><sup>[22]</sup> Muslim.

<sup>83</sup><sup>[23]</sup> abªu Dªawood, Tirmizªi.

While naming their children, parents must ensure that the names they select signify servitude to Allah alone and to no false deity. They may not append bondage even to the name *Nabi*. Certain forbidden names include *Abdul Uzza*, *Abdul Ka'bah*, and *Abdun Nabi*. Similarly, parents must not give names to their children that emphasise love and romance. Some of these names are: *Hiy'ah*, *Beef'a*, *Nihau*, *Sosan*, *Miyadah*, *Gadah*, *Ahlam*. These mean 'violent love', 'slim waist', 'large bosomed', 'fragrant flower', 'walks swinging to and fro', 'soft and delicate woman', 'dream'. Islam envisages Muslims as a people of remarkable attributes. When parents select vulgar and romantic names, they risk tainting the character of the child.

The Messenger of Allah *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* has encouraged his *Ummah* to call their children with meaningful names. He has suggested names of the Holy Prophets *may peace be on them* or *Abdullah* or *Abdur Ra'hm'an*. This, because they may stay the best of *Ummah* and fulfil their duty diligently in guiding humanity to Islam and truth. The words of a *ḥadīth* are: *Keep the names of the Holy Prophets may peace be on them. Allah, the Exalted, loves most the names Abdullah and Abdur Ra'hm'an. The most truthful names are Ḥarith and Hum'ah. The most disliked names, and vulgar too, are Ḥarb and Murrah (respectively, war and bitter).*

It is *sunnah* to use *kunyah* for the child.

The use of a *kunyah* for the child creates in him a feeling of self-reliance and nobility. Call him Abu so and so. He cultivates a sense of confidence in the society. When the epithet is lovely and fitting and used in a light-hearted vein, he feels happy about it. This also teaches him how he may address his elders and those younger than him. It was the habit of the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* to give *kunyah* to children. He called the brother of *Ḥazrat Anas may Allah be pleased with him* Abu Umair. When he lost his bird, the Holy Prophet asked him, "What happened to Abu Umair Nugair?"<sup>84</sup> The *kunyah* may not necessarily refer to one's own children; it may refer to anyone. For instance, *Ḥazrat Abu Bakr may Allah be pleased with him* had no son by the name Bakr but his epithet was Abu Bakr.

The *kunyah* of *Ḥazrat Umar may Allah be pleased with him* was Abu *Ḥafṣ*. The *kunyah* given to *Ḥazrat Aishah may Allah be pleased with her* was umme *Abdullah*. *Ḥazrat Anas may Allah be pleased with him* had as *kunyah* Abu *Ḥamzah* and *Ḥazrat Khalid bin Waleed* had Abu *Sulaim'an*. *Kunyah* may be given to all, young or old.

Some considerations upon naming the child.

If father and mother do not agree on a name, then it is the prerogative of the father to name the child. The child is known by his father.

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84<sup>[24]</sup> Bukh'ari and Muslim .

This is the command given in the Noble Qur`ān.<sup>85</sup> The Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* had named his son, Ibrāhīm.<sup>86</sup>

It is not permitted to give the child a contemptuous or a disliked name. It is not proper to select such names as *Thagnay, Bhingay, Gungay, Kabray, Kuloo*, and the like. The Noble Qur`ān has disallowed the use of names with the intention to tease<sup>87</sup> lest children develop bad habits.

What about the epithet *Abul Q<sup>a</sup>asim*? The *Ulamā* are agreed that the name of the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* may be chosen for the child. An individual named his son Muḥammad. People objected to it. He went to the Prophet and narrated his predicament. The Holy Prophet asserted, “Give your children my name. However, do not use my *kunyah* because I am the one to divide. I divide among you”.<sup>88</sup>

How is it to use the *kunyah* of the Holy Prophet *Abul-Q<sup>a</sup>asim*? There are different opinions on this. Some *Ulamā* have disallowed its use altogether.<sup>89</sup> Others have concluded that it is correct to use it as reflected in some Traditions. Yet others have opined that it is inadmissible to use both the name and the epithet for the same child.<sup>90</sup> Some others have contended that the inadmissibility was during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet but now that he is dead it is permissible to use both the name and the *kunyah*.<sup>91</sup> This last conclusion is superior.

### ***Aqeeqah* and its instructions.**

What is *aqeeqah*.

The Arabic word *ʿaq* means ‘to cut’. Thus *uqooq w<sup>a</sup>aldain* is ‘disobedience to parents and suspension of relations’. In the terminology of *Shari’ah* it is the sacrifice of a goat for the child on the seventh day after he is born.

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<sup>85</sup> al-Aḥzāb, 33:5.

<sup>86</sup> Muslim .

<sup>87</sup> al-Ḥujurat, 49:11

<sup>88</sup> Muslim.

<sup>89</sup> Bukhārī and Muslim .

<sup>90</sup> abū Dāwūd .

<sup>91</sup> abū Dāwūd.

*Aqeeqah* is permissible.

According to a *ḥadīth*, we must perform *aqeeqah* on the birth of a child. Pay a ransom on his behalf and remove filth from him.<sup>92</sup><sup>[32]</sup> According to a *ḥadīth*, every child is pledged to his *aqeeqah* that may be sacrificed for him on the seventh day; the same day he must be named and his head shaved.<sup>93</sup><sup>[33]</sup> The sacrifice on behalf of a boy is two equal goats and for the girl one goat.<sup>94</sup><sup>[34]</sup>

The opinion of the jurists regarding the legality of *aqeeqah*.

*Aqeeqah* is *sunnah* or *muṣṭaḥib* in the view of Imām Mālik, Imām Shāfiʿī, Imām Aḥmad, Ishāq, Abu Thaur and others. They base their opinion on the *Aḥadīth* mentioned earlier. They do not consider it obligatory as they find no evidence in the *Aḥadīth*. Also, it is left to intention.

Ḥanafī think this is *istehbāb* (praiseworthy). Ḥasan Baṣrī and Laith bin Saʿd and others think it is obligatory. They base their opinion on the *ḥadīth* that says that every child is pledged to its *aqeeqah*.<sup>95</sup><sup>[35]</sup>

They also rely on the Tradition that, on the Day of Resurrection, people will be questioned about *aqeeqah* just as they will be asked about obligatory prayers.<sup>96</sup><sup>[36]</sup>

The approved time of *aqeeqah*.

According to *Aḥadīth*, it is commendable to perform *aqeeqah* on the seventh day.

The Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* did the *aqeeqah* of Ḥasan and Ḥusain on the seventh day after their birth. It may be done on the fourteenth or twenty-first day;<sup>97</sup><sup>[37]</sup> it is valid, too, on the fourth, eighth or tenth day or later.

How is the *aqeeqah* of a girl performed?

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92<sup>[32]</sup> Bukhārī.

93<sup>[33]</sup> Aḥṣan-us-Sunan.

94<sup>[34]</sup> Aḥmad and Tirmizī.

95<sup>[35]</sup> Tirmizī and Nasāʾī.

96<sup>[36]</sup> Ishāq from Bardah.

97<sup>[37]</sup> Maimooni.

*Aqeeqah* is *sunnah mustahibah* for both, boy and girl. Two goats are sacrificed on the birth of a son and one on the birth of a daughter.<sup>98<sup>[38]</sup></sup> However, if anybody sacrifices one goat on the birth of a boy, he has performed a valid *aqeeqah*.<sup>99<sup>[39]</sup></sup> This does not imply preference of a boy over a girl but this is because the Holy Prophet had done it. It may be, too, because man is given excellence over woman by reason of his superior physical power, heavier burden of responsibilities and supervision.

The bones of the animal must not be broken.

We must not break the bones of the sacrificial animal.<sup>100<sup>[40]</sup></sup> This is a sign of good omen of health and strength of the child. The poor and the neighbours get large pieces, too. However, there is no harm if someone does break the bones of the animal.

Other general instructions regarding *aqeeqah*.

The animal that is valid for sacrifice is valid too in the offering of *aqeeqah*. These include goat, sheep and ram. The animal must be one year old, fully. However, a six-month old ram may be offered in sacrifice and *aqeeqah* if it is sufficiently fat and healthy and looks like a year old. The goat must be a year old. The animal must be free from defect. It must not be blind, squint eyed or so much thin that there is no marrow in its bones. It must not be so lame that it cannot walk by itself to the place of sacrifice. That animal, also, is invalid for sacrifice whose tail or ear is cut off more than two-thirds, or most of its teeth have fallen off, or it has no ears since birth or is so much mad that it does not eat or drink.

The sacrifice of an animal is valid if its ear is torn or a horn is split. Also, if an animal is lame but it can walk on its three legs its sacrifice is allowed. If some of its teeth are broken but most are intact, the animal is not very mad or the ear, tail or hip is only one-thirds cut off, then, in all such cases, the sacrifice of this animal is valid.

The sacrifice of a cow or a buffalo is not valid before it is two years old. The camel must have completed five years of age.

It is legitimate to share in *aqeeqah* and sacrifice.

We may offer a cow or a camel instead of a goat in *aqeeqah*.

The division of meat during *aqeeqah* is subject to the same injunctions as apply to division of meat of a sacrificial animal. We may eat the meat ourselves, distribute as *sadaqah*, or gift it.

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<sup>98<sup>[38]</sup></sup> Aḥmad and Tirmizī and ibn Shaibah.

<sup>99<sup>[39]</sup></sup> abū Dāwūd

<sup>100<sup>[40]</sup></sup> abū Dāwūd .

However, in the case of *aqeeqah*, it is legitimate to give some to the nurse also.<sup>101</sup><sup>[41]</sup> In celebration of *aqeeqah*, we may invite others and cook the meat for the feast.

It is commendable to perform *aqeeqah* on behalf of the child. According to a *ḥadīth*, while offering the animal of *aqeeqah*, one may say: *I sacrifice in the name of Allah. O Allah, it is for You alone and it will return to You. O Allah, this aqeeqah is on behalf of so-and-so.*<sup>102</sup><sup>[42]</sup> However, if at the time of sacrifice, the parent does not take the name of the child, even then *aqeeqah* is valid because of the intention behind it.

The wisdom behind the legitimacy of *aqeeqah*.

On the birth of the child, the animal is offered in *aqeeqah* to obtain nearness to Allah and to offer ransom for the child. The child intercedes for its parents. Parents find in the fulfilment of the obligation under *Shari'ah* a source of happiness. Also, it promotes love and compassion among the individuals of society and all participate in the happiness. It opens a new fount of income.

It diminishes poverty and need. In Islam, there are different occasions of feast. These may be when guests or visitors arrive, on the birth of a child, on the marriage of a son, on circumcision of a new-born boy, when the traveller returns home, when *aqeeqah* is performed and when a house is built.

Circumcision and its injunctions.

The meaning of circumcision.

The literal meaning of circumcision is 'to cut the skin that is at the tip of the reproductive organ'. In *Shari'ah* it is 'the round part on the edge above the conical vascular body of the penis'.

The lawfulness of circumcision.

To rinse the mouth, to take in water in the nose, to bare the moustaches, to brush the teeth, to cut the nails, to remove the hair in the armpits, to strip the hair below the navel, and to circumcise<sup>103</sup><sup>[43]</sup> — these are innate to human nature.<sup>104</sup><sup>[44]</sup>

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<sup>101</sup><sup>[41]</sup> Bayhaq<sup>ai</sup>.

<sup>102</sup><sup>[42]</sup> ibn Munzir.

<sup>103</sup><sup>[43]</sup> Aḥmad and abū D<sup>awood</sup>.

<sup>104</sup><sup>[44]</sup> Aḥmad, Bukh<sup>ar</sup><sup>ai</sup> and Muslim .

## Is circumcision obligatory or *sunnah*?

Im<sup>am</sup> Abu Ḥan<sup>afah</sup>, Ḥ<sup>asan</sup> Ba<sup>ṣ</sup>ra<sup>ī</sup> and some followers of Im<sup>am</sup> Ḥ<sup>anbal</sup>, consider circumcision a *sunnah*. According to a Ḥ<sup>ad</sup>ī<sup>th</sup>, circumcision is *sunnah* for men and virtue for women.<sup>105</sup><sup>[45]</sup> In the Ḥ<sup>ad</sup>ī<sup>th</sup> quoted earlier, it is one of the *sunnah*. Thus, this supports their view that circumcision is *sunnah*. Besides, the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* did not enquire of those who turned Muslim if they were circumcised. If it was obligatory, he would not have omitted to ask.

Im<sup>am</sup> M<sup>alik</sup>, Im<sup>am</sup> Sh<sup>afa</sup>ʿ<sup>ā</sup>ī, Im<sup>am</sup> Aḥ<sup>mad</sup>, Shaʿ<sup>bi</sup>, and others hold that circumcision is obligatory. They did not allow an uncircumcised man to lead the prayers or to give evidence. Once, the Holy Prophet ordered a person who had embraced Islam, to shave off the hair grown during unbelief and to circumcise. He said: *Whoever joins Islam must circumcise howsoever old he is.*<sup>106</sup><sup>[46]</sup> Ibn Abb<sup>ās</sup> and Ḥ<sup>azrat</sup> Al<sup>ī</sup> *may Allah be pleased with them* ruled in the light of this Ḥ<sup>ad</sup>ī<sup>th</sup>.<sup>107</sup><sup>[47]</sup> Circumcision is a sign of religion. It distinguishes a Muslim from an unbeliever. Then, cleanliness—and, therefore, ritual prayers—of the uncircumcised person are questionable. The skin may retain drops of urine. If left unwashed, ablution and prayer are incomplete. An uncircumcised man is not permitted to lead the prayers. Circumcision is the *sunnah* of Ḥ<sup>azrat</sup> Ibr<sup>ā</sup>h<sup>īm</sup> and the Prophet was asked to adhere to the practice.<sup>108</sup><sup>[48]</sup> Ḥ<sup>azrat</sup> Ibr<sup>ā</sup>h<sup>īm</sup> was circumcised at the age of eighty years.<sup>109</sup><sup>[49]</sup>

He was the first person to perform circumcision. Circumcision is the *sunnah* of the Messengers;<sup>110</sup><sup>[50]</sup> it is a sound natural disposition and a sign of Islam and obligatory on men. He who does not circumcise commits a sin.

## Is it necessary for women to be circumcised?

According to the leading qualified jurists, circumcision is not obligatory on women; it is *mustaḥ<sup>ib</sup>*. According to one ruling of Im<sup>am</sup> Aḥ<sup>mad</sup> *may Allah have mercy on him* it is obligatory. However, according to the traditions, it is merely praiseworthy (*istehb<sup>ā</sup>ab*).

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<sup>105</sup><sup>[45]</sup> Aḥ<sup>mad</sup>

<sup>106</sup><sup>[46]</sup> Ḥ<sup>arb</sup>.

<sup>107</sup><sup>[47]</sup> Bayhaq<sup>ā</sup>ī

<sup>108</sup><sup>[48]</sup> an-Naḥ<sup>l</sup>, 16: 123.

<sup>109</sup><sup>[49]</sup> Bukh<sup>ār</sup>ā<sup>ī</sup> and Muslim .

<sup>110</sup><sup>[50]</sup> Tirmiz<sup>ā</sup>ī and Aḥ<sup>mad</sup>.

## When is circumcision obligatory?

Circumcision of the boy is recommended before he attains maturity. It is advisable to do it with *aqeeqah*. At this age he does not suffer much pain. The question of his being shy does not arise, too. The Noble Messenger had the *aqeeqah* and circumcision of ﷺHasan and ﷺHusain performed on the seventh day after their birth.<sup>111</sup><sup>[51]</sup>

The wisdom behind circumcision.

It is the basis of inbred nature, a symbol of Islam, an indication of the law of the Lord, and the attainment of the true society.<sup>112</sup><sup>[52]</sup>

It distinguishes Muslims from the followers of other religions. It also indicates the submission to the injunctions of Allah and discharge of his commands.

It ensures perfect cleanliness and tones down sensual desires.

It prevents many illnesses. Dr ﷺSabri al Qab<sup>a</sup>an<sup>a</sup>i in his book, 'Our Sexual Life', lists the advantages of circumcision:

- Man is relieved of the collection of harmful greasy matter and unpleasant dampness.
- The tip of penis is not imprisoned.
- He is immune from cancer of the penis.
- If performed at an early age, the tendency to urinate in bed is checked.
- The habit of masturbation is curbed.

The foregoing instructions emphasise upon the guardians that attention must be paid to rearing the child right from its birth. They must go over every matter concerning the child. Observance of these injunctions guarantees the health of the child. When it opens its eyes, the child may find itself in a practising Muslim family, whose guideline is Islam and who comply with the rules of *Shari'ah*. Thus, Islam establishes itself in the heart of the child. It strengthens the faith of the child. It encourages the child to be gentle, well mannered and pious.

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<sup>111</sup><sup>[51]</sup> Bayhaq<sup>a</sup>i

<sup>112</sup><sup>[52]</sup> an-Naﷻhl, 16:123.

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Chapter 4

### Disobedient behaviour in the child—its causes and remedy.

Poverty, need and hunger.

**When** a child finds around him poverty and hunger, want and despair, and he feels frustrated on not getting the necessities of life including his share of food and clothing, then he will go out to earn a livelihood. This is the time when he comes under the influence of criminals and immoral people. The equitable *Shari'ah* of Islam ensures that all people receive food, clothing and housing, and that poverty and hunger are eradicated. It sees to it that people get opportunity to work and earn a livelihood. The handicapped obtain stipends from the Treasury. It aids the bread-earner. It looks after the orphans, the widows and the old people in such a way that they live honourably. The observance of its injunctions will free the society from recanting and criminal behaviour.

The quarrelsome parents.

When his parents are at loggerheads with each other, the child seeks to escape from this offensive surrounding. He then spends his time with his favourite friends. If these friends are evil, he too turns into a menace for the society. Islam has set guidelines for the selection of marriage partners. The pair may live in love and harmony. They may co-operate with each other and be safe from bickering.

Divorce and the resultant poverty and hunger.

Those children also deviate whose parents are divorced. When they do not find a loving mother and a caring father, the children tend to develop bad habits. When the divorced woman remarries, the children turn to misconduct. Generally, if she is poor, a divorced woman seeks employment leaving the young children unattended and free to roam about. The obnoxious atmosphere has a disagreeable effect on them turning them into delinquents. Islam enjoins upon both the spouses to give each other their rights and fulfil their obligations so that a detestable and blameworthy situation does not arise. These rights are:

1. A woman must obey her husband. Once, women sent a message to the Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* "Men participate in *jihad*, if they die, they gain the status of a *shaheed*, otherwise that of a *ghazi*. They earn reward and virtue and collect the booty too. We serve them; but, what do we attain?" He said, "Submission to the husband and fulfilment

of his rights are equal in reward and virtue to *jihad* in the way of Allah. But very few women do it.”<sup>113</sup><sup>[1]</sup>

2. She must look after the property of her husband and guard her chastity. There is a *ḥadīth* to the effect: *Shall I not reveal to you the best of the things a person can collect? It is a pious and righteous woman. When the husband looks towards her, she pleases him. When he asks her to do something, she obeys him. When he is not there, she protects his property and her own honour.*<sup>114</sup><sup>[2]</sup>

3. She should not refuse to comply when her husband calls her to his bed. According to a *ḥadīth*: *when a wife denies her husband this right and he passes the night displeased with her, the angels curse the woman until dawn.*<sup>115</sup><sup>[3]</sup>

4. A husband is responsible for the maintenance of his wife and children. Exactly this is the command of the Lord.<sup>116</sup><sup>[4]</sup> *Fear Allah concerning your wives because you have obtained them through the guarantee of Allah and it is through His words that they are lawful to you. It is your obligation to feed and clothe them according to custom.*<sup>117</sup><sup>[5]</sup>

5. A husband must consult his wife in matters relating to the home. The Holy Prophet *may blessings of Allah and peace be on him* has said, *Consult them about (the marriage of) your children.*<sup>118</sup><sup>[6]</sup>

6. They must overlook each other’s weaknesses and defects. The Holy Prophet has said: *No believer must bear malice toward a believing woman. If she has a trait that he dislikes, she may have some other quality that appeals to him.*<sup>119</sup><sup>[7]</sup>

7. A husband must treat his wife with kindness, humour her and live happily with her. Allah, the Exalted, has said: *And live with them honourably; if you dislike them, perhaps you detest a thing and yet Allah has placed abundant good therein.*<sup>120</sup><sup>[8]</sup> The Holy Prophet has said: *The best among you is he who treats his family kindly. I am better with my family than you*

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<sup>113</sup><sup>[1]</sup> Bazz<sup>ar</sup> and Ṭabar<sup>an</sup>.

<sup>114</sup><sup>[2]</sup> ibn M<sup>a</sup>ajah.

<sup>115</sup><sup>[3]</sup> Bukh<sup>ar</sup> and Muslim.

<sup>116</sup><sup>[4]</sup> al-Baqarah, 2:233.

<sup>117</sup><sup>[5]</sup> Muslim.

<sup>118</sup><sup>[6]</sup> Aḥmad and ab<sup>u</sup> D<sup>a</sup>awood.

<sup>119</sup><sup>[7]</sup> Muslim.

<sup>120</sup><sup>[8]</sup> an-Nis<sup>a</sup>, 4:19.

are.121<sup>[9]</sup> Once the Holy Prophet took ¶Hazrat Aishah to see the play of the Africans. He waited there with her for a long time.122<sup>[10]</sup> He would run with her, too. ¶Hazrat Umar often said, “In being kind and soft to his wife, a husband must be like a child; however, with others he must behave like a bold man.”

8. The husband must lend a hand in the household tasks. The Holy Prophet would engage himself in household chores. At times, he would cook the meat. Sometimes, he would sweep or clean the house.123<sup>[11]</sup>

If the spouses guarantee these rights, they will never face disagreement and they will never quarrel. On the contrary, the entire family will be cited as an example of a group of a happy, loving people. However, if, because one of them is short-tempered and ill-mannered, they lack harmony and unity and it is difficult to live together, then the husband must not divorce his wife before he endeavours to reconcile and adopt the policies discussed in the next few lines.

? To give advice and counsel.

? To sleep on separate beds; this is an impulsive remedy that may soften his wife towards him.

? To give a simple beating provided it is beneficial to do so. The husband must see to it that the beating is so innocent that it is superficial only, leaving no marks on the body. He must not hit on areas where damage is possible. The face, the chest, the stomach and such parts must be avoided. However, do remember that the Holy Prophet never beat a woman.124<sup>[12]</sup>

Once, a woman complained to him that her husband beat her. He said: *A man among you beats his wife as though she were a slave-girl and then embraces her; he is not ashamed of himself.*125<sup>[13]</sup>

? To appoint someone who may arbitrate between the two after listening to each of them. If they reconcile and unite, then it is commendable. The Noble Qur`ān has ordered us accordingly.126<sup>[14]</sup> However, if the dispute persists, then he may give the woman the first

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121<sup>[9]</sup> ibn M<sup>a</sup>ajah and ¶H<sup>a</sup>akim.

122<sup>[10]</sup> Bukh<sup>a</sup>ar<sup>a</sup>i and Muslim.

123<sup>[11]</sup> ¶T<sup>a</sup>bar<sup>a</sup>an<sup>a</sup>i.

124<sup>[12]</sup> ibn Sa`d.

125<sup>[13]</sup> ibn Sa`d.

126<sup>[14]</sup> an-Nis<sup>a</sup>`, 4:34-35.

divorce during the time she is free from menstruation and he has not had sexual intercourse with her. This will allow them to rejoin if they have second thoughts about separation.<sup>127<sup>[15]</sup></sup> Islam expects us to adopt a sound approach to avert divorce whose consequences are very alarming. Divorce is in the one lawful act that invites the displeasure of Allah.<sup>128<sup>[16]</sup></sup> A husband is under obligation to provide for his wife and children during her period of waiting after divorce so that she is not compelled to run from pillar to post for help.<sup>129<sup>[17]</sup></sup> If he is poor, the government must bear their expenses and the rich must look after them and be kind to them.<sup>130<sup>[18]</sup></sup> The affluent face a stern punishment and a strict accounting if they do not spend on the poor.<sup>131<sup>[19]</sup></sup>

### The idle time of children and adolescents.

Deviation and libertine behaviour may follow if ample idle time is available to the child and he has nothing to do. Guardians must be very careful about this. They must engage their wards in beneficial and gainful activities and urge them to offer ritual prayers. Apart from being an important form of worship, it is a physical exercise and a means to obtaining cleanliness and purity. Hence, when a child is seven years old, order him to offer his prayers and, when he is ten, punish him if he does not offer the prayers.<sup>132<sup>[20]</sup></sup> Children may take part in exercises for *jihad* and learn horse-riding, archery, swimming, jumping, boating, and similar sports. Encourage them to read useful books, write and deliver speeches, and keep physically fit.

We are directed in the Qur`aan to collect trained horses and ammunition to fight our foe.<sup>133<sup>[21]</sup></sup> We find in a *ḥadīth*: *Consider health before ailment a boon.*<sup>134<sup>[22]</sup></sup> Our beloved Prophet has said: *Learn archery and horsemanship. That you master archery is more dear to me than you learn horse-riding.*<sup>135<sup>[23]</sup></sup> *Play is absurd but not marksmanship, taming horses,*

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127<sup>[15]</sup> al-Baqarah, 2:230.

128<sup>[16]</sup> ab<sup>u</sup> D<sup>a</sup>awood and ibn M<sup>a</sup>ajah.

129<sup>[17]</sup> al-Baqarah, 2:236.

130<sup>[18]</sup> Muslim.

131<sup>[19]</sup> Ḥ<sup>a</sup>ḥim and Bazz<sup>a</sup>ar.

132<sup>[20]</sup> Ḥ<sup>a</sup>ḥim and ab<sup>u</sup> D<sup>a</sup>awood.

133<sup>[21]</sup> al-Anfaal, 8:60.

134<sup>[22]</sup> Ḥ<sup>a</sup>ḥim and Bayhaq<sup>i</sup>.

135<sup>[23]</sup> Nas<sup>a</sup>ai and Tirmiz<sup>i</sup>.

*amusing one's wife, and to learn swimming.*<sup>136[24]</sup> *The display of one's courage before the enemy invites the mercy of Allah.*<sup>137[25]</sup> *A strong believer is better than a feeble one and is dearer to Allah.*<sup>138[26]</sup> Keep these Islamic rules in mind and train your children to be healthy and strong scholars of religion. Let them not be divergent, ill-mannered or defiant.

## Evil society and vulgar companions.

The main cause of straying and defiance among children is evil and indecent companions. The influence of evil companions sets in faster and if the child is stupid, careless and unprincipled this is more marked because he idealises them in his actions. It becomes difficult to bring him back to senses. This is why we are directed to supervise the children. Particularly, we must keep an eye on adolescents— their manners, their company and their friends. We must find for them noble friends from whom they may learn good manners and may imitate them. The Noble Qur`ān has directed us to keep away from evil company.<sup>139[27]</sup>

We learn from a *ḥadīth* that a person is on the religion of his friends. Therefore, we must observe him with whom we build a friendship.<sup>140[28]</sup> A good friend is like the owner of musk and a bad companion is as a blower of a kiln. The possessor of musk will gift you the musk or you will buy it from him, or you will benefit from its fragrant smell anyway. On the other hand, a kiln operator may burn your clothes; even if he does not, the unpleasant odour is your lot anyway.<sup>141[29]</sup>

*A person will be with him whom he has befriended and he will receive whatever he has earned.*<sup>142[30]</sup> We are ordered to keep away from vile companions because they will get us into disrepute.<sup>143[31]</sup> Guardians must observe these principles so that their children turn out to be respectable members of the society and valuable assets for the *Ummah*, giving it proper guidance.

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<sup>136[24]</sup> ḤTabarānāi and ḤHākim.

<sup>137[25]</sup> ibn Ishāq and ibn Hishām.

<sup>138[26]</sup> Muslim.

<sup>139[27]</sup> al-Furqān, 25:27-29, Qāf, 50:27, az-Zukhruf, 43:17.

<sup>140[28]</sup> Tirmizāi.

<sup>141[29]</sup> Bukhārāi and Muslim.

<sup>142[30]</sup> Tirmizāi.

<sup>143[31]</sup> ibn Asākir.

### Ill-treatment of children by the parents.

Experts in child training are unanimous that ill-treatment has an adverse influence on children. Parents must not be too strict and harsh with them. They must not beat and scold them or belittle them time and again. If a child is humiliated and teased habitually, then this will reflect in his habits and manners. His activities will be clouded with awe and fear. Sometimes, it may result in suicide, quarrelling with parents and murderous tendencies. To escape cruel treatment and beating, he may even run away from home. Such a child may turn out to be a criminal. Rebellion and immorality are prominent in such children. Islam advises parents and guardians that if they are civilised, tender and sympathetic to children, they will grow up as ideal youths. When children are given proper treatment, they grow up brave and confident and sense the respect and esteem given to them.

Allah, the Exalted, has commanded that we be fair to relatives and be prepared to help them.<sup>144</sup><sup>[32]</sup> He prefers that we control our temper, pardon others and condone their failures.<sup>145</sup><sup>[33]</sup> Allah, the Exalted, likes that we be tender-hearted<sup>146</sup><sup>[34]</sup> and declares hardness as a detestable characteristic.<sup>147</sup><sup>[35]</sup> If kindness were personified, nothing would have been more beautiful than it. Conversely, if hardness and rigidity were in human form nothing could have been uglier.<sup>148</sup><sup>[36]</sup> When you are compassionate to the children, they are obedient to you and you earn the mercy of Allah.<sup>149</sup><sup>[37]</sup> If you are benevolent, you will be shown mercy.<sup>150</sup><sup>[38]</sup>

Therefore, be humane to them so that your children tread the right path. If you take up a wrong attitude with your children and are very strict and tyrannical with them and punish them severely, they will be disobedient and rebellious. You will have sown the seed of obstinacy in them.

A man complained to ¶Hazrat Umar about his son’s disobedience. ¶Hazrat Umar summoned the boy and reprimanded him. “O Leader of the Faithful”, the boy said, “has the son no right over his father?” “Why not,” was the reply. The boy asked, “What are those?” The Leader of the Faithful replied, “Select for him a good mother, give him a good name, teach him the

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<sup>144</sup><sup>[32]</sup> an-Na¶hi, 16:90.

<sup>145</sup><sup>[33]</sup> aAl Imr²an, 3:134.

<sup>146</sup><sup>[34]</sup> al-Baqarah, 2:83 and Bukh²ar²i.

<sup>147</sup><sup>[35]</sup> aAl Imr²an, 3:159.

<sup>148</sup><sup>[36]</sup> A¶hmad and Bayhaq²i.

<sup>149</sup><sup>[37]</sup> ab²u Shaikh.

<sup>150</sup><sup>[38]</sup> ab²u D²awood and Tirmiz²i.

Noble Qur`ān...”. The boy interrupted, “My father has not given me any of these things. My mother is a Negro bond woman of a fire-worshipper. My name is Ja`l and it means *ugly black*. He has not taught me the Qur`ān”. ¶Hazrat Umar turned towards the father and said, “You complained to me that your son was disobedient. Before he could be realise it, you pushed him to rebellion yourself. You were the first to treat him negligently”.

Children are highly valued, loved ones and supporters of the parents. Parents are their sustainers and protectors — a comparison is drawn to the soft earth and the shade providing sky. If they request you for something, give it to them. If they are displeased, delight them. They will love you. Do not be very strict to them or they will be tired of you and may pray for deliverance from you.<sup>151</sup><sup>[39]</sup>

When children view sexual and criminal films.

Criminal and vulgar films have inflamed moral bankruptcy and lewdness in the society. Men and women mix together carelessly. Boys and girls have deflected off course. The same evil influence is cast by trash magazines that amplify sensual narration. Both young and old are swayed by these periodicals. These thoughts are implanted in raw, young minds and they unwittingly act on them. The result is that neither can the admonition of parents rectify them nor can the education of teachers obliterate the evil from their minds.

Islam has prescribed an excellent system and method for the training and correction of the children. These are:

1. Parents must keep children away from all that draws the anger of Allah against them. This is in conformity with the commands of Allah.<sup>152</sup><sup>[40]</sup>
2. Parents and guardians must realise their duties and obligations in this respect. They will be questioned about it.
3. They must shelter the children from everything that is damaging to them and weakens their faith. Where Islam teaches us to protect ourselves from loss, it also instructs us not to cause damage to others.<sup>153</sup><sup>[41]</sup>
4. They must screen the children from films and plays particularly those that lay emphasis on sex, violence and intrigue. They must protect them from trash reading material that ruins their character.

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<sup>151</sup><sup>[39]</sup> al-A¶hnaf advised Mu`awiyah in similar words when the latter sought his advice after being displeased with his son Yazaid.

<sup>152</sup><sup>[40]</sup> at-Ta¶hrim, 64:6.

<sup>153</sup><sup>[41]</sup> M¶alik and ibn M¶ajah.

Later on, in this book, duties in the fields of faith and character building will be discussed in detail.

### Unemployment in the society.

The man, who has a wife and children but is unemployed without any source of income or wealth and property, is the head of a family that is in ruins. His children will turn towards illegal activities. Sometimes, the head of the family and its other members conceive means of unlawful income. They incline towards stealing, robbery and bribery. In turn, this leads the nation towards destruction. Islam has the remedy for unemployment whether it is outside the control of the unemployed or self-imposed from laziness and lethargy. The unemployment that is outside the control of the unemployed is corrected in two ways:

1. It is incumbent upon the government to provide its people with a decent means of livelihood.
2. It is binding upon the society and the nation to assist an unemployed person.

The government is obliged to provide opportunities of employment to the people. When an Ansār requested the Holy Prophet for aid, he asked him to desist from begging. He auctioned the sackcloth and the bowl that the Ansār had on him for two dirhams. Then, he said to the man, “Buy the necessities of your house with one dirham and with the other buy an axe”. The Holy Prophet himself attached a wooden handgrip to the axe; then to the man he said, “Sell the wood you chop with the axe and do not come to me for the next fifteen days”. The Ansār returned after fifteen days having amassed ten dirham. He bought clothes and eatables with the money. The Holy Prophet said, “Hard work and labour is better for you than begging. On the Day of Judgement a black blot appears on the face of the person who begs”.<sup>154</sup><sup>[42]</sup>

When fellow men are without means of livelihood, people must help them out. He who has a spare conveyance or provision must give it to him who does not have any conveyance or provision.<sup>155</sup><sup>[43]</sup> *It is not the conduct of a believer that he fills his own belly while his neighbour is hungry.*<sup>156</sup><sup>[44]</sup> *If anyone dies of hunger or lack of attention, while he is among wealthy people, then Allah the Exalted is exonerated of all liability towards these wealthy people.*<sup>157</sup><sup>[45]</sup>

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<sup>154</sup><sup>[42]</sup> Bukhārāi.

<sup>155</sup><sup>[43]</sup> Muslim.

<sup>156</sup><sup>[44]</sup> Bazzār and Ṭabarānāi.

<sup>157</sup><sup>[45]</sup> al Jawzāi.

Islam prescribes strict observation of individuals whose unemployment is self-imposed. When it is confirmed that an individual is unemployed because of his own indolence then he must be reprimanded. If he does not mend himself then he may be put to work forcibly. ¶Hazrat Umar asked a group of people, “Who are you?” They replied, “We are resigned to the will of Allah and have placed our trust in Him”. ¶Hazrat Umar *may Allah be pleased with him* said, “You lie! He is resigned to the will of Allah who sows the seed and then places his trust in Him. It is not *tawakkal* to sit with hands tied. Gold and silver do not descend from the sky”. ¶Hazrat Umar prevented the poor and the destitute from being a burden on people. He encouraged hard work and fruitful employment. *Zak<sup>at</sup>* and charity are distributed for momentary relief, not to cease work and remain idle. However, the care of the old and handicapped is the duty of the State. On seeing an old Jew beg, ¶Hazrat Umar gave him alms from his own resources and then had him, and others like him, supervised through the State Treasury.<sup>158<sup>[46]</sup></sup>

### When parents ignore the training of their children.

The main cause of children being spoiled is the lack of interest of parents in their education. A great responsibility rests on the shoulders of the mother. She is like a *madrasah*. Like the father, she is also accountable. The child is constantly with her until he attains manhood. A woman is the keeper of the house of her husband. She will be questioned about her subjects. The father must give a helping hand to her in upbringing their children. That child is surely an orphan whose father and mother are occupied in other affairs and overlook their liabilities in the training of their child. Such children turn out to be criminals and vagabonds, more so if the parents are astray too and engaged in vagrancy. When children are nourished with the milk of unchaste women, they will become lewd like their mothers.

In case the parents are derelict in their responsibilities to their children, they will deserve a painful torment.<sup>159<sup>[47]</sup></sup>

The Holy Prophet has described man as the supervisor of his house who will be questioned about his subjects. He designated the mother as the keeper of the house of her husband and held her answerable for those in her charge.<sup>160<sup>[48]</sup></sup>

The Holy Prophet has ordered that the children and the family be taught manners, brought up well<sup>161<sup>[49]</sup></sup>, made to act on the injunctions of *Shari’ah* and kept away from unlawful things. He described this as a scheme to protect oneself from the Fire of Hell.<sup>162<sup>[50]</sup></sup> He said: *Imbibe in*

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<sup>158<sup>[46]</sup></sup> ab<sup>a</sup>u Ya<sup>a</sup>usuf.

<sup>159<sup>[47]</sup></sup> at-Ta<sup>h</sup>ra<sup>im</sup>, 66:6.

<sup>160<sup>[48]</sup></sup> Bukh<sup>a</sup>ar<sup>a</sup>i and Muslim.

<sup>161<sup>[49]</sup></sup> ibn M<sup>a</sup>ajah Abdur Razz<sup>a</sup>aq Sa<sup>i</sup>id bin Mans<sup>a</sup>ur.

<sup>162<sup>[50]</sup></sup> ibn Jar<sup>a</sup>ir.

*children love for me and my family and teach them the recital of the Noble Qur`an because they who carry the Qur`an will be under the shadow of the Throne.*<sup>[51]</sup>

**The child becomes an orphan.**

A child is also liable to degradation when it has no parent to love and look after him. Islam advises us to look after orphans. We must not be cruel to them. We must treat them kindly.<sup>[52]</sup> This will ensure that the children are worthy citizens, who do not sway from the right way. *When a loving hand strokes the head of an orphan, its owner gains a virtue against every hair on the head.*<sup>[53]</sup> *The guardian merits entry into Paradise.*<sup>[54]</sup> *He will enjoy the company of the Holy Prophet.*<sup>[55]</sup>

These then are the basic and main factors that breed disobedience and rebellion in children. You must rectify them. Follow the solution suggested by Islam so that your child turns out to be pure of soul and heart and develops virtuous qualities.

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<sup>[51]</sup> ﷻTabar<sup>a</sup>an<sup>a</sup>i.

<sup>[52]</sup> al-Baqarah 2:220, ad-ﷻDuﷻh<sup>a</sup>a 93:9, al-M<sup>a</sup>a<sup>a</sup>un 107:1-2, an-Nis<sup>a</sup>a` 4:10.

<sup>[53]</sup> Aﷻhmad and ibn ﷻHibb<sup>a</sup>an.

<sup>[54]</sup> Tirmiz<sup>a</sup>i.

<sup>[55]</sup> Tirmiz<sup>a</sup>i.

