



NURTURING OF CHILDREN

PART 1 -FROM MARRIAGE TO CHILD-BIRTH



*DEALING WITH -SEARCHING FOR A SPOUSE; ONE'S FEELINGS
REGARDING HAVING CHILDREN; WHAT TO DO AFTER THE BIRTH OF A
CHILD*

*SPIRITUAL LIGHT
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A PROPER MARRIAGE AND ITS EFFECT ON NURTURING

This discussion revolves around three points:

- (1) Marriage is a demand of human nature
- (2) Marriage is a social necessity
- (3) Selecting the most suitable partner

1. MARRIAGE - DEMAND OF HUMAN NATURE

Islam vehemently opposes monastism (despising marriage) since it runs contrary to man's nature.

Sa'd bin Abi Waqqaas (radiyallaahu anhu) has quoted Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

ان الله ابدلنا بالرهبانية الحنيفية السمحة (بيهقي)

Allaah has favoured us with a natural, pure way of life, in the place of monastism

Nabi (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) also said:

من كان موسرا لان ينكح ثم لم ينكح فليس مني (طبرانی)

Whoever is able to get married, yet does not do so, is not of me

From the above ahaadith we learn that remaining single, merely to free oneself for Allaah Ta'ala's worship, despite the need and availability of means is not permitted.

Anas (radiyallaahu anhu) has narrated that three men questioned the wives of Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) regarding his (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) worship. After being informed, it appeared as though they felt their worship to be little. They thus said, "Where can we ever reach the position of Allaah's messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam). He has after all, already been blessed with divine forgiveness. (What they meant was that Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) did not have to do much 'ibaadah, since he (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) had already been informed of his forgiveness.)

One of them said, "I shall remain awake every night in the worship of Allaah." The second said, "I shall fast continuously, not missing a single day." The third said, "I shall have no contact with women whatsoever. I shall never marry!"

When Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) was informed of their statements, he remarked "By Allaah, I fear Allaah the most, I worship Him the most and I am the most devout, yet I rotate between fasting and not fasting. I observe the ibaadah of the night and also take rest. Marriage is

also my *sunnah*. Whoever ignores my *sunnah* (way of life) has no true relationship with me.”

2. MARRIAGE - A SOCIAL NECESSITY

The institution of marriage, advocated by Islam is a combination of numerous advantages, national and social gains, the most important of which are:

(a) Continuation of the Human Species

The only way to ensure the continuance of the human race is through the blessed agency of nikaah. In the Noble Qur’aan, Allaah Ta’ala refers to this particular point in the following words:

وَاللّٰهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَنِينَ وَحَفَدَةً وَرَزَقَكُمْ
مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ أَفَبِالْبَاطِلِ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَبِنِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ هُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ (نحل)

Allaah has given you wives from among yourselves, and given you children and grandchildren from your wives, and provided good things for you. So why do they believe in falsehood and reject the blessings of Allaah

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا
رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا (نساء)

O mankind! Have taqwaa of your Rabb who created you from a single self and created its mate from it and then disseminated many men and women from the two of them. Have taqwaa of Allaah in whose name you make demands on one another and also in respect of your families. Allaah watches over you continually

(b) Protection of One’s Lineage

Through *nikaah*, children are able to take pride in attributing themselves to their parents. This naturally causes pleasure and a feeling of self-honor. Had this divine system of marriage not been there, there would be an unimaginable amount of children without any lineage, regarded as

a low, degradable nation. This would leave a black spot on society, and moral degeneration and corruption would then spread.

(c) Society is protected from Moral Degradation

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) would encourage youngsters to marry, saying:

يا معشر الشباب من استطاع منكم الباءة فليتزوج فإنه أغض للبصر وأحصن للفرج و
من لم يستطع فعليه بالصوم فإنه له وجاء (بخارى، مسلم)

O assembly of youth! Whoever has the ability to get married, he should do so. It will aid in protecting the gaze and private parts. If you cannot get married, then fast regularly, for verily, it is a shield!

d) Society is freed from Major Illnesses

Diseases caused by illicit relationships such as aids, etc. are prevented by marriage. Such sicknesses severely affect nations, weaken the bodies, and practically destroy the younger generation.

(e) Spiritual and Mental Contentment

Marriage creates love and affection between spouses. The husband, upon returning home from a hard day's work, finds relief from all his worries in the company of his family. Similar is the case with the wife. The spouses obtain contentment and peace of mind from each other, and through the love and affection that exists between them; they combat all difficulties and worries.

Allaah Ta'ala in a most beautiful manner describes the scene of marriage:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْتَكَرُونَ (الروم)

Among His Signs is that He created spouses for you of your own kind so that you might find tranquility in them. And He has placed affection and compassion between you. There are certainly Signs in that for people who reflect

The effect that this spiritual and mental solace has on one's children is quite evident.

(f) Marriage creates a bond of Love and Co-operation between Spouses- Essential for Family Building

Only through marriage will the responsibilities and duties of building a family be equally shared. In accordance to her temperament, the wife sees to the affairs of the house and to rearing the children. The husband on the other hand, goes out to earn for his family, fulfilling all their financial needs. Through this mutual co-operation, pious offspring are reared and every family lives in happiness, harmony, and contentment.

g) Marriage arouses a Parenting Passion

After marriage, the passion to be a parent is kindled. Each partner begins to behave more maturely and this has a tremendous impact on one's children later on.

These are just some of the fruits which marriage bears. The role of marriage in *tarbiyah* (nurturing) should never be under- estimated. It is thus no surprise, when we find Islam repeatedly emphasizing its importance.

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

الدنيا متاع وخير متاعها المرأة الصالحة (مسلم)

The world is a place of means, and the best of these means is a pious wife

3. SELECTING THE MOST SUITABLE PARTNER

Islam has provided golden principles to ensure a perfect marriage, one of love, compassion and unity.

From amongst these principles are:

(a) Din should be given priority when looking for a wife

Din (piety) is to adopt the complete way of life taught by the *shari'ah*. Whoever does so is regarded as 'pious' and that person would be the best choice for marriage.

Abu Hurayrah (radiyallaahu anhu) has narrated that Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

ان الله لا ينظر الى صوركم واجسادكم وانما ينظر الى قلوبكم واعمالكم (مسلم)

Allaah does not look at ones form or body, rather He looks at the heart and at one's actions

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) encouraged man to seek a pious wife, so that the rights of the husband and children could be fulfilled:

تنكح المرأة لأربع لمالها ولحسبها ولجمالها ولدينها فاظفر بذات الدين تربت يداك

(بخارى، مسلم)

'A woman is married for one of four reasons, her wealth, her lineage, her beauty or her piety. Attain success by choosing piety as your criteria!'

[Sahih al-Bukhaari, Sahih Muslim]

The guardian of the woman has also been given similar guidelines:

إذا جاءكم من ترضون دينه و خلقه فزوجه ان لم تفعلوا تكن فتنة في الارض وفساد عريض

(ترمذی)

'If anyone approaches you with a proposal, whose character and piety pleases you, accept his proposal. If you do not do so, there shall be great mischief and evil on the earth!' [Jaami' at-Tirmidhi]

What could be worse than handing a believing woman over to a man with a care-free attitude; a man who totally ignores the *shari'ah*; is not concerned in the least bit with family ties and who has no self-honor, nobility and respect.

How many good, pious girls have we not seen, whose family were metaphors of piety, yet when they were given over to free-thinking husbands, they became so immodest and filthy-minded that the word "modesty" no longer finds any place in their vocabulary.

If a child grows up in such a household, what kind of nurturing could one ever expect!? Thus, building one's household and choosing one's spouse, with *din* and noble character as the criteria is of utmost importance.

Only then will a woman find true bliss, only then will proper nurturing take place, and only then will the nobility and honor of one's family remain intact.

(b) Selection should be based on noble lineage

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

الناس معادن في الخير والشر - خيارهم في الجاهلية خيارهم في الاسلام اذا فقهوا
(ابوداؤد طيالسي)

Concerning being good or bad, people are similar to a mine (i.e. whatever it has within it will one day emerge). Thus, those who were the noblest during the Era of Jaahiliyah (Ignorance) shall occupy that very mantle in Islam, provided they acquire the understanding of religion.

For this reason, Nabi (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) encouraged every person to base his selection on family nobility, piety, and modesty when searching for a spouse.

Abu Sa'id Khudri (radiyallaahu anhu) relates that Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) once said:

اياكم و خضراء الدمن قالوا و ما خضراء الدمن يا رسول الله – قال المرأة الحسناء في المنبت
السوء (الدارقطني)

‘Beware of filthy vegetation!’ The Sahaabah (radiyallaahu anhum) asked, ‘What is meant by “filthy vegetation”’. Nabi (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) replied, ‘A beautiful woman, brought up in an evil household.’

Aa’ishah (radiyallaahu anha) narrates:

تخيروا لنطفكم و انكحوا الاكفاء (الدارقطني)

‘Choose good, noble women for your semen and marry in families of comparable status.

In *Sunan Ibn-Maajah* the words of Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) are recorded thus:

تخيروا لنطفكم فان العرق دساس (ابن ماجه)

‘Select wisely for your sperm, since the qualities of a family pass down to one’s progeny.’

(c) Choosing women from other families

Marrying out of one’s immediate family is preferable. Such marriages usually result in the offspring being healthier, since inherited illnesses do not find strength and thus slowly die off.

(This is not a general principle, which cannot be opposed. When the need arises, there will be absolutely no problem with marrying in close circles. Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) himself, got his most beloved daughter, Faatima (radiyallaahu anha) married to her immediate cousin, ‘Ali (radiyallaahu anhu).)

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

لا تنكحوا القرابة فان الولد يخلق ضاويا (تذكرة الموضوعات)

‘Avoid marrying close family, since this leads to weak off-spring.’

اغتربوا ولا تضووا (نهاية)

‘Marry abroad and do not weaken your off-spring.’

NOTE: Maulana Habibullaah Mukhtaar Saahib (rahimahullaah) has written regarding these two ahadith, that he was unable to trace their source. I (Maulana Qamruzzamaan Saahib) mentioned this to Maulana Rashid Ahmad Saahib (rahimahullaah), whilst his honorable father, Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi Saahib (rahimahullaah) was still alive. He later informed me that ‘Allaamah ibn Athir (rahimahullaah) and ‘Allaamah Muhammad Taahir Patni (rahimahullaah) had made mention of it in their books, *Nihaayah* and *Tadhkiratul-Maudu‘aat*, respectively.

Allaamah Muhammad Taahir Patni (rahimahullaah) has also written that the first narration is not marfu‘ (i.e. it is most probably the words of a Sahaabi, and not that of Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam).) Imaam Ghazaali (rahimahullaah) has also quoted this narration in *Ihya*, and in the footnotes, Hafiz Iraaqi (rahimahullaah) has written that it is believed to be the words of Umar (radiyallaahu anhu) – (MI Qamruz Zamaam Sahib)

Science has now proven that marriage within one’s close family could lead to offspring being born weak, both mentally and physically; and such marriages at times have a negative influence on the character of the child. Just imagine, over fourteen hundred years ago, when there was not even a trace of modern scientific equipment, at that time already, Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) had made man aware of this genetic fact. (Remember, such types of marriages are not prohibited. It has merely been discouraged as a health precaution.)

(d) Preference should be given to a virgin

Islam has encouraged that a virgin be sought for marriage. The benefits behind this guideline are innumerable. By adopting this principle, one saves himself from numerous arguments and fights, which other households experience daily. Greater love and affection exist in such marriages between spouses. A woman finds the greatest attraction and inclination for the first man in her life. A woman previously married may at times not find within the second husband that which she found in the first.

‘Aaishah (radiyallaahu anha) once asked Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam), “If you are given a choice between grazing your animals in a pasture already eaten from and grazing them in an un-used pasture, which would you prefer. Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) replied, “The un-used pasture.” ‘Aaishah (radiyallaahu anha) thereafter commented, “I am that un-used pasture.” [Sahih al-Bukhaari]

What she meant was that, sufficient for her virtue over the wives was that she was the only one who was not previously married.

Imaam Bayhaqi (rahimahullaah) and Ibn Maajah (rahimahullaah) have recorded the following tradition in which the wisdom of preferring a virgin has been explained.

عليكم بالابكار فانهن اعذب افواها وانتق ارحاما و اقل خباً و ارضى باليسير

‘Give preference to virgins over married women, since their speech is sweeter, they are more fertile, they are more sincere, and they remain content, even with little.’

If circumstances demand, then marrying previously married women would be best. Jaabir (radiyallaahu anhu) himself married such a woman. When Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) enquired as to why he did not choose a virgin, with who he could find more enjoyment, he replied that his father had been martyred at Uhud, leaving behind seven young daughters, thus he chose to marry such a woman who could care for them. Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) thereupon praised his selection.

Note: Other reasons for preferring previously married women could include amongst others;

- Concern for the security and welfare of a widow
- Desiring to practice upon this *sunnah* of Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) – (MI Qamruz Zamaan)

(e) Marrying women who are fertile

This may be ascertained by looking at the number of children borne by the other females of that family, e.g. her sisters, aunts etc. Enquiries could also be made, regarding whether the members of that family suffer from any illness, which may hamper them from bearing children. Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) has been quoted to have said:

تزوجوا الولود الودود فاني مكاثربكم الامم (ابو داؤد و النسائي و الحاكم)

'Marry women who are child-bearing and full of affection, so that I may boast of the size of my ummah.' [Abu Dawud, Nasaa'i, Mustadrak Haakim]

Summary: A stable marriage plays a tremendous role in good nurturing. It is for this reason that Islam has encouraged that the basis of one's selection be piety, family nobility and that preference be given to a virgin.

OUR FEELINGS REGARDING HAVING CHILDREN

(a) Love for One's Children is a Demand of Human Nature

Due to this love, parents are able to bear the difficulties of nurturing, see to the needs of their offspring, and shower them with love and affection. Had this love not been there, the world would be deprived of the beauty of children.

In the Noble Qur'aan, Allaah Ta'ala has described children as being an adornment of the world.

الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا

'Wealth and sons are an embellishment of the life of this world. But, in your Rabb's sight, right actions which are lasting bring a better reward and are a better basis for hope.' [Surah al-Kahf]

The gift of children has been described as one of the many great favors of Allaah Ta'ala for which one has to be thankful, Allaah Ta'ala says:

وَأَمْدَدْنَاكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ أَكْثَرَ نَفِيرًا

'And supplied you with more wealth and children and made you the most numerous group' [Surah al-Israa]

If these children then remain Allaah-fearing and righteous, they will become the coolness of their parent's eyes.

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

'Those who say, 'Our Rabb, give us joy in our wives and children and make us a good example for the Allaah fearing.' [Surah al-Furqaan]

(b) Love and Compassion for One's Children is a Divine Gift

From amongst the outstanding qualities that Allaah Ta'ala has equipped parents with, are the qualities of mercy, compassion and love for one's children. These qualities play a major role in their nurturing.

These qualities have been embedded within the hearts of the creation and the *shari'ah* has encouraged all elders; be they parents, *mashaayikh* or leaders of organizations, to strengthen those qualities within themselves.

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) thus mentioned:

ليس منا من لم يرحم صغيرنا ويعرف حق كبيرنا (ابو داؤد, ترمذی)

'He who does not show mercy to the young and does not recognize the rights of elders is not from amongst us. [Sunan Abu Dawud, Jaami' at-Tirmidhi]

On another occasion, he (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) stated:

من لا يرحم لا يرحم (الادب المفرد للبخاری)

'He who does not show mercy will not be dealt with mercifully.' [Al-Adab Al-Mufrad]

Imaam Bukhaari (rahimahullaah) has quoted the following narration in his book *Al-Adab Al-Mufrad*, "A woman came to 'Aa'ishah (radiyallaahu anha) with her two children. She gave the woman three dates, which she distributed between her two siblings and herself. After eating their share, the children looked to their mother for more. The mother thus broke her date in half and gave each sibling one piece. When Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) arrived, 'Aa'ishah (radiyallaahu anha) mentioned what she had seen. Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) commented:

وما يعجبك من ذلك , لقد رحمها الله برحمتها صبيها

'Were you amazed at her actions? Verily Allaah has showered His mercy upon that woman, due to the compassion she had shown to her children.'

(c) It is an Act of Ignorance to Despise One's Daughter

Islam demands that children be treated equally. Preferential treatment to sons over daughters is from the remnants of the era of ignorance, regarding which Allaah Ta'ala says:

يَتَوَارَى مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِنْ سُوءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهِ وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُمْ بِالْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ
أُيْمَسِّكُهُ عَلَىٰ هُونٍ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُ فِي التُّرَابِ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ

‘When one of them is given the good news of a baby girl, his face darkens and he is furious. He hides away from people because of the evil of the good news he has been given. Should he keep her ignominiously or bury her in the earth? What an evil judgement they make!’ [Surah an-Nahl]

The underlining factor behind this is weak faith on the promise of Allaah Ta’ala. Such attitude shows that one does not appreciate the favors of Allaah Ta’ala, which have come in the form of a daughter.

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) would time and again, mention the virtues of looking after one’s daughters, caring for them and showering one’s love and kindness upon them in order to rectify this horrible attitude. For example, Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

(1) Whosoever cares for two girls until they attain maturity will be with me on the Day of Qiyaamah like this. (Nabi (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) showed how close he would be, by indicating with his two fingers, one next to the other.) *[Sahih Muslim]*

(2) Whosoever, after being blessed with three daughters, cares for them with love, and feeds and clothes them with his own wealth, will find in these girls his salvation on the Day of Qiyaamah. *[Musnad Ahmad]*

(3) Whoever has three daughters or three sisters, or even only two, and he sees to their needs happily, fearing the anger of Allaah in neglecting them, will surely enter paradise. *[Humaydi]*

Parents and guardians should keep these virtues in mind and endeavor to be just in their treatment between their children, thus earning *jannah* for themselves. That is greater than all the possessions of this world, as well as the pleasure of Allaah Ta’ala, which is of course, the greatest treasure one could ever receive.

(d) The Reward for Patience on the Death of a Child

As ones’ faith in *taqdir* (predestination) strengthens, enduring difficulties becomes relatively easier. Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) once said, ‘When one loses a child, Allaah Ta’ala enquires from the angels,

‘Have you snatched away the soul of the child of my slave, have you snatched away his most beloved child, have you taken away from him a piece of his heart?’ The angels reply in the affirmative. Allaah Ta’ala then asks, ‘At that time what did my servant say?’ They reply, ‘O Allaah, he praised you and recited:

انا لله وانا اليه راجعون

‘We belong to Allaah and to Him we will return.’

Allaah Ta’ala, in expression of His happiness, commands, ‘Build for my slave a house in *jannah* and name it *Baitul-Hamd*’ (The house of one who has praised his Creator).

Exercising patience at such a time has numerous benefits. Patience during such moments many a time become the cause of one’s eternal salvation, it opens up the doors to Paradise and closes the gates of Hell.

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) once addressed the women saying, ‘Whosoever loses three children shall find them to be for her a barrier from *jahannam*. A woman asked, ‘What if only two children have passed away?’ Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) replied, ‘Then too’. [*Sahih al-Bukhaari and Sahih Muslim*]

If one wishes to witness how *Imaan* should be instilled within the hearts of one’s children, the lives of the Sahaabiyaat will have to be studied, how they nurtured their children, created within them the fervor of *jihaad* and exhibited the greatest feats of bravery and patience on being informed of the death of their family members.

(Books like *Hikaayat-e-Sahaabah* will be useful for this purpose.) – Ml Qmaruz Zaman Sahib

Parents must first strengthen their own *imaan*. If afflicted with any misfortune, the weapons of *imaan* and *yaqin* (conviction) should be drawn. If one’s child passes away, one should not become overcome with grief, rather patience should be exercised, remembering that reward has been written for every difficulty.

O Allaah, make the difficulties of life easy for us all and let us be pleased with your decisions!

(e) Preference to Islamic Principles over the Love of One's Children

Love for one's children has indeed been ingrained in the hearts of parents. This love should however, never become a barrier between one and his religious obligations. *Jihaad* and *tabligh* should not be abandoned merely due to one's concern regarding them. Islam must remain the focus of one's life and around Islam should everything else revolve.

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam), the sahaabah (radiyallahu anhum) and the taabi'in truly understood this point. The sole purpose of their life was *jihaad* and *tabligh* (propagating Islam). They never became oblivious of the announcement of Allaah Ta'ala:

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِينُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ (التوبة)

Say: 'If your fathers or your sons or your brothers or your wives or your tribe, or any wealth you have acquired, or any business you fear may slump, or any house which pleases you, are dearer to you than Allaah and His Messenger and doing jihaad in His Way, then wait until Allaah brings about His command. Allaah does not guide people who are deviators.]

Nor did they ever forget the following words of Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam):

لا يؤمن احدكم حتى اكون احب اليه من ماله وولده و الناس اجمعين
(بخارى , مسلم)

"None of you can be a true believer, unless I am more beloved to him than his wealth, his children and all of mankind."

(f) Reprimanding and Punishing Children for *Tarbiyah* (Nurturing) Purposes

Islam discourages breaking off relations from one's children as long as love and affection benefits them. Hitting has been permitted only as a final resort, and that too, provided it is meted out in accordance to the

laws laid out by the *shari'ah*. It should not be done mercilessly or abusively.

The following incident throws some light on how *tarbiyah* should be made, with love, compassion and kindness: 'Amr bin Abi Salama (radiyallaahu anhu) remained under the supervision of Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) during his youth. He says, 'My hands would move all around the eating dish.' Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) corrected me, saying:

يا غلام سم الله وكل بيمينك وكل مما يليك (بخارى , مسلم)

"O my young friend, recite 'Bismillaah' before you eat. Eat with your right hand and eat from that which is close to you."

Sahl bin Sa'd (radiyallaahu anhu) has narrated that on one occasion Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) was presented with something to drink. On his right was a young lad, and on his left were many senior Sahaabah. Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) asked the lad, 'Do you give me permission to pass the drink to those on my left?' The youngster replied, 'By Allaah! I shall never allow anyone to take away my right in drinking from the leftover water of Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam). (The young lad was none other than 'Abdullaah bin 'Abbaas (radiyallaahu anhu)) [*Sahih al-Bukhaari, Sahih Muslim*]

At times of extreme necessity, relationships may also be broken, as long as the sole purpose behind it is to acquire better nurturing results.

Abu Sa'id Khudri (radiyallaahu anhu) has narrated that Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) forbade animal-pelting, saying:

انه لا يقتل الصيد ولا ينكأ العدو وانه يفقأ العين ويكسر السن (بخارى)

'Pelting does not kill the hunted animal nor does it severely harm the enemy, rather it only injures the eye or breaks a tooth.'

Abdullaah bin Mughaffal (radiyallaahu anhu) once saw some young immature relatives of his pelting animals. He forbade them from doing so, mentioning the above words of Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam). A while later he found them doing the same. He became extremely upset and vowed never to speak to them again, due to their not respecting the command of Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam).

With regards to hitting one's children, Abdullaah bin 'Amr (radiyallaahu anhu) has narrated from Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam):

مروا اولادكم بالصلاة وهم ابناء سبع سنين و اضربوهم عليها وهم ابناء عشر و فرقوا
بينهم في المضاجع (ابوداؤد، حاكم)

“Command your seven-year old to perform salaah. If, at the age of ten he is still not punctual, one may resort to hiding. Similarly, after they reach the age of ten separate their bedding.”

This method could be employed only if the child is young. Once the child attains maturity the mentor should turn a cold shoulder towards the one in his care if advice does not benefit.

‘Abdullaah bin ‘Abbaas (radiyallaahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

اوثق عرى الايمان الموالاة في الله و المعادة في الله و الحب في الله و البغض في الله

“The tightest knot in the rope of Islam is to befriend and disassociate solely for the pleasure of Allaah, to love for the sake of Allaah and to dislike for the sake of Allaah.” [Tabaraani]

Ka‘b (radiyallaahu anhu), describes the time when Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) issued the order that all ties with him must be broken, punishing him for not participating in the battle of Tabuk without any valid excuse. He says, ‘Fifty days had passed and it seemed as though the earth had become straitened, despite its vastness.’ No one was prepared to meet him, nor even merely reply to his salaam. Finally, Allaah Ta’ala accepted his tawbah and the punishment was lifted. [Sahih al-Bukhaari]

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) himself left his wives for one month, due to their disobedience.

‘Allaamah Suyuti (rahimahullaah) has narrated that due to some improper action committed by one of his sons; ‘Abdullaah bin ‘Umar (radiyallaahu anhu) became extremely upset and did not speak to him until his death.

NOTE: The methods of tarbiyah outlined above are for children who have *imaan*, but are lazy in fulfilling its requirements. If one’s children renegade (become murtad) then the demand of Islam is that one immediately disassociates from them.

BEING BLESSED WITH A CHILD

Congratulations on the Birth of a Child

It is *mustahab* to participate in the joy of the Muslim parents, and to congratulate them. The minimum one should do is make *du'aa'* for the wellbeing of the new-born. In the Noble Qur'aan, different methods of offering congratulations have been mentioned.

Regarding Zakariyya (alayhis salaam):

فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بَيَحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا
وَخَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

'The angels called out to him while he was standing in prayer in the Upper Room: 'Allaah gives you the good news of Yahya, who will come to confirm a Word from Allaah, and will be a leader and a celibate, a Messenger and one of the righteous.'[Surah aal-'Imraan]

It has been narrated from Husayn (radiyallaahu anhu) that on the occasion of the birth the following *du'aa'* should be made:

بورك لك في الموهوب وشكرت الواهب ورزقت به وبلغ أشده

'May Allaah Ta'ala bless your child, make you thankful to Allaah Ta'ala for his gift, make your child pious, and let him reach the prime of his youth.'

Congratulations should be given, irrespective of whether the new-born is a girl or a boy. In fact, greater happiness should be shown on the occasion of the birth of a female.

Adhaan and Iqaamah on the Birth of a Child

Immediately after birth, the *adhaan* should be called out in the right ear and the *iqaamah* in the left ear. Abu Raafi' (radiyallaahu anhu) has said that he saw Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) giving *adhaan* in the ear of Hasan (radiyallaahu anhu) after his birth. In the narration of 'Abdullaah bin 'Abbaas (radiyallaahu anhu) further detail has been given. He says, "Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) gave *adhaan* in the right ear of Hasan (radiyallaahu anhu) and *iqaamah* in the left ear".

'Allaamah ibn Qayyim (rahimahullaah), in explaining the wisdom behind this, writes:

'The first words that should fall on the ears of the new-born should be words referring to the greatness of Allaah Ta'ala, just as how at the time of death, one is encouraged to recite the *kalimah*, words which expound the majesty and oneness of Allaah Ta'ala.'

Also, upon hearing the *adhaan*, *shaytaan* flees, thus protecting the child from *shaytaan's* advances and affording the child the opportunity to receive the *da'wah* (invitation) towards Rahmaan (Allaah) before *shaytaan* invites the child towards himself.

Every child is born on *fitrah* (i.e. believing in only one creator). By encouraging the giving of *adhaan* and *iqaamah* at the earliest stage of the child's life, Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) has shown that steps for the protection of the belief in one Allaah Ta'ala and for protection against *shaytaan* must be taken right from the beginning of the infant's life.

Tahnik

The meaning of *tahnik* is to chew on a date and place a part of it on the palate of the child. After chewing on the date for a short while, a piece of it should be placed on one's finger and the finger should be slowly rotated in the mouth of the infant, ensuring that the entire mouth receives some portion of the date. In the event of dates not being available, any other sweet substance may be used.

It would be best if *tahnik* be done by a pious, Allaah-fearing '*aalim* or saint, so that the child benefits from his blessings as well.

Abu Musa Ash'ari (radiyallaahu anhu) narrates that when his son was born, he brought him to Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam). Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) made his *tahnik* with a date, choose for him the name 'Ibraahim' and thereafter handed him back over to the father. [*Sahih al-Bukhaari, Sahih Muslim*]

Shaving the Hair

On the seventh day, the head of the infant should be shaved and silver equal to its weight (or its equivalent in cash), should be distributed amongst the poor. This is a *mustahab* (preferable) practice.

Amongst the wisdoms behind this are:

- 1) By shaving the head, the pores of the head open up and the senses of hearing, seeing and smelling are strengthened.
- 2) By distributing silver (or its equivalent) to the poor, an environment of mutual love and sharing is created.

NOTE: Although some of the laws mentioned above are *mustahab*, a sincere effort should be made to fulfil every one of the etiquettes and laws mentioned above. If today we become lax with practices which are *mustahab*, it is very possible that tomorrow our attitude with *waajibaat* and *faraaid* (compulsory acts) become the same. Soon nothing but the name "Islam" will remain and there is even a possibility that one eventually leaves the fold of Islam. May Allaah Ta'ala protect us all!
Aameen

CHOOSING A NAME FOR ONES CHILD

When Should the Name be Chosen?

Certain ahaadith indicate that the name should be chosen on the seventh day, others indicate that as soon as the child is born and from other ahaadith it can be gauged that it is not compulsory to choose it on the first day.

After thorough research, it becomes clear that there is no fixed law regarding this matter. It does not matter whether the name is given immediately after birth, or on the third day or on the seventh day (the day of the child's 'aqiqah).

Choosing Appropriate Names

The father or guardian should choose a name that has a beautiful and good meaning. Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

انكم تدعون يوم القيامة باسمائكم وباسماء آبائكم فاحسنوا اسمائكم (ابو داؤد)

'On the Day of Qiyaamah you shall be called by your name and by the names of your parents. Therefore, choose suitable names.'

Abdullaah bin 'Umar (radiyallaahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

ان احب اسمائكم الى الله عز وجل عبد الله وعبد الرحمن (مسلم)

'The most beloved of names to Allah are 'Abdullaah and 'Abdur Rahmaan.'

There are certain names that are exclusive to Allah Ta'ala, e.g. Ahad, Samad, Khaaliq, Razzaaq and Rahmaan. The word 'Abd' or 'Abdullaah' should be placed before such names, e.g. 'Abdul-Ahad, 'Abdur-Razzaaq etc.

The name 'Shaahin-Shaah' (the king of kings) should not be kept. Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) has mentioned that on the day of Qiyaamah, Allaah will be most angry with one who would be called 'Shaahin-Shaah' (the king of kings) in this world. The reason being is that this title is only suitable for Allaah Ta'ala.

Names from which good omens could be taken should also be avoided, e.g. Aflah (successful), Naafi' (beneficial), Rabaah (profit), Yaasir (ease) etc.

The reason for this is that perhaps someone comes looking for them and they are not present. At that moment the person of the house would say for e.g. 'Rabaah is not here.' The meaning of this literally would be that in this house there is no 'rabah' (success). Although this meaning would not be intended, still too, such statements should be avoided. Keeping these names have been discouraged in the ahaadith. (Refer to *Sahih Muslim* and *Jaami' Tirmidhi*)

Names in which the word 'Abd' (slave) is placed before the name of anyone besides Allaah Ta'ala are not permissible, e.g. 'Abdul-Uzza, 'Abdul-Ka'bah, 'Abdun-Nabi, etc.

Name with obscene and filthy meanings, as well as those which show lust and passion should be avoided totally. Islam desires that one be called, referred to and remembered with good, noble titles. Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) thus ordered:

'Keep the names of the Ambiyaa'. The most beloved names to Allaah are 'Abdullaah and 'Abdur-Rahmaan. The most truthful of names is Haarith (one who earns for himself) and Hammaan (one who is bold in his intentions). The worst of names is Harb (war) and Murrah (sour)."

NOTE: The gist of this whole discussion is that such names should be kept, wherein the word 'Abd (slave) comes before any of the beautiful names of Allaah Ta'ala, or the names of the Ambiyaa (alayhimus salaam) should be chosen. There is great blessing in this. Such names show the grandeur of Islam. May Allaah grant all taufiq (ability to practice) – Ml Qamruz Zaman Sahib

Choosing a *Kunniyya* (Appellation) for the Child

The meaning of *kunniyya* is to call one 'the father or mother of so and so', e.g. Abu 'Abdullaah, Abu Ismaa'il, Umme 'Abdullaah, Umme Ismaa'il, etc.

From amongst the benefits of selecting a *kunniyya* for a child are the following:

- It creates within the child a sense of self-honour and a feeling of importance.

- It is a source of inspiration and creates a sense of responsibility. By receiving a *kunniya*, a child feels that he/she has now matured and is being treated as an adult.
- A *kunniya* showing love and affection to the child brings delight and happiness to their hearts.
- By being addressed with such titles, they learn how to address their elders.

It is not necessary that one's *kunniyah* be made, using the names of one's own children. Rather, due to any small relationship or connection, one's *kunniyah* could be made. For example, Aai'shah رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَنْهَا would be called 'Umme-'Abdullaah' (the mother of 'Abdullaah), whereas 'Abdullaah (radiyallaahu anhu) was her nephew. Similarly, Abu Bakr (radiyallaahu anhu) had no son with the name of Bakr, but his *kunniyah* remained 'Abu Bakr' (the father of Bakr). Bakr refers to a kid (the young of a goat).

Important Points on Selecting a Childs Name and *Kunniyya*

(1) If mother and father differ regarding the name, the final decision lies with the father. Allaah Ta'ala orders in the Qur'aan:

ادْعُوهُمْ لَابَائِهِمْ هُوَ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ

'Call them after their fathers. That is closer to justice in Allaah's sight.'

[Surah al-Ahzaab]

(2) Choosing bad names or titles is not allowed.

(3) The name Muhammad can be kept. There exists difference of opinion with regards to keeping the *kunniyah* of Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) Abul-Qaasim. Amongst the different views are:

(a) *Makruh* - This is the view of Imaam Shafi'i (rahimahullaah).

(b) Permissible

(c) Naming one's child "Muhammad" and thereafter choosing for him the *kunniyah* 'Abul-Qasim' is not permissible.

(d) The prohibition of keeping this *kunniyah* was confined to the era of Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam).

The author of this book has preferred the fourth opinion. This is also the view of Imaam Maalik (rahimahullaah). Many ahaadith also indicate towards this view. Thus, to select the name 'Muhammad' as well as the *kunniyah* 'Abul-Qasim' will be permissible.

AQIQAH

The meaning of ‘*aqiqah*’ is “to cut”. In the *shari‘ah*, it refers to the slaughtering of a male or female goat, seven days after the birth of a child.

1. Aqiqah is Sunnah

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

مع الغلام عقيقة فاهرقوا عنه دما و اميطوا عنه الاذى (بخارى)

‘For every child ‘aqiqah should be made. Slaughter on his/her behalf and remove the dirt that has settled upon them.’

In a hadith of Tirmidhi, further detail can be found:

عن الغلام شاتان مكافئتان و عن الجارية شاة (ترمذى)

‘For a boy, slaughter two goats, and for a girl, one.’

Explaining the wisdom and virtue of ‘*aqiqah*’, Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

كل غلام مرتين بعقيقته تذبح عنه عند يوم سابعة و يحلق رأسه ويسمى (ترمذى)

‘Every child remains locked to his ‘aqiqah. On the seventh day, an animal should be slaughtered on his/her behalf, their hair should be shaven off and a name should be chosen.’

The meaning of being ‘locked to his ‘*aqiqah*’ is that good fortune and well-being is kept away from a child as long as his/her ‘*aqiqah*’ is not made. These ahaadith support the view that ‘*aqiqah*’ is *sunnah*. This is the view of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahimahullaah), as well as the majority of the *fuqaaahaa’*.

Best Time for ‘Aqiqah

If ‘*aqiqah* cannot be made on the seventh day, it should be made on the fourteenth, and if this is also not possible, then on the twenty-first and so on. This is *mustahab*, otherwise ‘*aqiqah* can be made on any day.

Difference between the ‘Aqiqah of a Boy and of a Girl

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) was questioned regarding ‘*aqiqah*. He replied, ‘Two goats for a boy and one for a girl.

This is the view adopted by ‘Abdullaah bin ‘Abbas (radiyallaahu anhu) and ‘Aa’ishah (radiyallaahu anha). Imaam Maalik (rahimahullaah) prefers the view that one goat also suffices for a boy. Thus, when one has the means, two goats should be sacrificed for a boy, and when one feels this difficult, at least one should be cut.

The Bones of the ‘Aqiqah Animal Should not be Broken

Instead of breaking the bones of the animal when distributing its meat, separate it at its joints. Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) instructed:

لا تكسروا منها عظاما

‘Do not break its bones.’

Ataa’(rahimahullaah) has said, ‘We regard it best not to break the bones of the ‘*aqiqah* animal.’ (*I’laa-us-Sunan*) This command is *mustahab*.

Wisdom of this Command

(a) The poor who are to receive some of its meat, will in this way, be allotted a bigger piece. Big pieces in the share of the rich will encourage them to also open up their hearts.

(b) It is a good omen that, Inshaa-Allaah, the child’s limbs will remain strong, since the animal is in reality a substitute offered on behalf of the child.

Laws Regarding the 'Aqiqah

Only those animals are permissible for 'aqiqah that are permissible for *qurbaani*. Such animals are:

(a) Goats and sheep that are one year old. A six-month old sheep that resembles a one-year old in size will also be allowed. This law does not apply to goats.

(b) Animals free from defects. Blind or squint animals, lame animals, or animals that do not have marrow in their bones, are not permitted. Animals unable to walk by themselves to the place of slaughter are also included in this category.

(c) The sacrifice of cows, bulls, and buffalo will be permissible after they reach the age of two. Camels must reach the age of five for it to be fit for 'aqiqah.

One 'aqiqah will suffice for only one child. It cannot be divided to suffice for more than one. Nor can one animal suffice for both 'aqiqah and *qurbaani*. (Yes, an intention can be made that the reward of the 'aqiqah be distributed.) However, in animals like cows, oxen, camels, etc., the 'aqiqah of up to seven girls may be made. Similarly, one share could be for 'aqiqah, while another for *qurbaani* can be stipulated.

The laws regarding the meat of the *qurbaani* also apply to the meat of 'aqiqah. The barber should be given meat so that he may also share in the celebration. People may also be invited to come and partake of the meat of the 'aqiqah.

It is preferable that when slaughtering, the name of the child be taken. 'Aa'ishah (radiyallaahu anha) heard Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

اذبحوا على اسمه فقولوا بسم الله اللهم لك واليك هذه عقيقة فلان

(مصنف عبد الرزاق)

'Slaughter on Allaah's name. Say, 'O Allaah, this sacrifice is solely for You and this animal's return is towards You. This is the 'aqiqah of so and so.'

Wisdom of 'Aqiqah

Through 'aqiqah, the child gains proximity to Allaah Ta'ala as soon as he enters the world. It also wards off misfortune and becomes an intercessor for the parents.

CIRCUMCISION

“Circumcision” literally means the cutting of the skin which is located around the head of the penis.

Is Circumcision *Wajib* or *Sunnah*?

Hasan Basri (rahimahullaah), Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahimahullaah) and some of the followers of the Hanbali *madhhab* are of the view that circumcision is *sunnah*. Their opinion is based on the fact that many Sahaabah (radiyallahu anhum) accepted Islam, but were not questioned regarding their circumcision having been done or not. Had it been *wajib* they would have most certainly been asked regarding it.

Also, Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) made mention of circumcision whilst discussing other acts which are *sunnah*, e.g. clipping the nails, removing the hair of the armpits, etc. This indicates that circumcision is also *sunnah*.

Imaam Shibli (rahimahullaah), Rabi’ah (rahimahullaah), Auzaa’i (rahimahullaah), Yahyaa bin Sa’id Ansaari (rahimahullaah), Imaam Maalik (rahimahullaah) and Imaam Shaafi’i (rahimahullaah) hold the opinion that circumcision is *wajib*. Their opinion is based on the hadith wherein Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) ordered a Sahaabi who had just accepted Islam:

الْق عَنْكَ شَعْرَ الْكُفْرِ وَاخْتَنْ

‘Shave off the hair which had grown in the days of disbelief and circumcise.’

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) also ordered:

مَنْ اسْلَمَ فَلْيَخْتَنْ وَإِنْ كَانَ كَبِيرًا

‘Whoever accepts Islam should circumcise, even if he is old.’

Allaamah Khattaabi (rahimahullaah) has written that although circumcision has been mentioned in the ahadith to be from the *sunnah* practices, many ‘ulemaa’ still prefer the view of its *wujub* (compulsion), due to it being a *shiaa’r* (trait) of Islam, which shows the difference of a Muslim from others.

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

اربع من سنن المرسلين الختان والتعطر والسواك والنكاح (ترمذی)

Four acts are from the traits of the Ambiyaa', i.e. Circumcision, using 'Itr (fragrance), Miswaak and Nikah.

Time for Circumcision

Majority of the '*ulemaa*' feel that it must be done before maturity, the earlier the better. Jaabir (radiyallaahu anhu) reports that Rasulullaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) did the circumcision and the *aqiqah* of Hasan (radiyallaahu anhu) and Husayn (radiyallaahu anhu) on the seventh day. (*Bayhaqi*)

Wisdom behind Circumcision

Circumcision is the basis of a pure temperament, it is a *shiaa'r* (trait) of Islam and a label of our *shari'ah*. It is the completion of that pure way of life taught by Allaah Ta'ala, through the tongue of Ibraahim (alayhis salaam).

Allaah Ta'ala says:

ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ أَنْ اتَّبِعْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا

'Then We revealed to you: 'Follow the religion of Ibraahim, a man of pure natural faith.' [Surah an-Nahl]

Circumcision distinguishes a Muslim from people of other religions and has many medical benefits as well.

As a conclusion and summary, the author (rahimahullaah) has written:

'The laws that have passed, regarding giving congratulations on the birth of a child, giving the *adhaan* in the ear, '*aqiqah*, shaving the head of the child, selecting a suitable name, circumcision, etc; all prove that the responsibility of good nurturing starts right from birth.'