

VIRTUES OF CARING FOR ORPHANS

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INTRODUCTION

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ
أَجْمَعِينَ، أَمَّا بَعْدُ

Any child deprived of the affection and sympathy of parents will naturally suffer a complex. Islam is that unique religion which has sympathized with the orphan and has seen to their needs. Prior to Islaam, the orphan was an ignored member of society. Allaah ﷻ elevated the status of this helpless individual.

Our Rasul ﷺ himself was an orphan at birth. In light of this historical fact, Muslims are no strangers to the concept of adoption and foster care. In fact, they have before them lofty examples of these practices right from the life of Rasulullaah ﷺ.

Having been brought up as an orphan himself, placed Rasulullaah ﷺ in a position where he was able to naturally and instinctively identify with the plight of orphan children more than others. His teachings are therefore replete with teachings and directives towards the orphan, of treating them with utmost kindness and compassion. In the time of Rasulullaah ﷺ, there was hardly a home which had not taken in and adopted an orphan child. This was a normal practice in the society of his companions.

Muslims should, by virtue of the lofty example and teachings of Rasulullaah ﷺ, be in the very frontline in efforts to secure the adoption and fostering of 'abandoned' children. In fact they ought to be setting the trend for the rest of society in this matter. At the

least, it is expected of them to co-operate closely with groups and bodies that are promoting these efforts.

In this booklet, some of the virtues of caring for orphans has been mentioned, as well as the severe punishment for causing harm to them, whether physically, mentally or monetarily. May Allaah ﷻ accept this booklet, and make it a means for our salvation in the Hereafter, and a continuous charity (sadaqah-jaariyah) for myself, my parents, teachers, spiritual guide, family members and friends!

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EMPHASIS ON LOOKING AFTER AN ORPHAN

Allaah ﷻ has placed great emphasis in the Quraan regarding the rights of all people. In the following verse, one has been especially commanded to fulfil the rights of the following groups of people, including the orphan:

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنْبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ وَيَكْتُمُونَ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا وَالَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَن يَكُنِ الشَّيْطَانُ لَهُ قَرِينًا فَسَاءَ قَرِينًا وَمَاذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيمًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ وَإِن تَكَ حَسَنَةً يَّضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِن لَّدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

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Worship Allaah and do not associate any partner with Him. Do good to parents, relatives, orphans, the poor, the neighbour who is a relative, the neighbour who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the traveller and your slave-girls. Surely Allaah does not like the self-conceited and boastful, those who are miserly and instruct people towards miserliness, and conceal that which Allaah has given them out of His grace - And We have prepared for the disbelievers a disgraceful punishment - those who spend their wealth in order to show off to people and do not believe in Allaah, nor in the Final Day. And the one whose friend is Satan, he has a very evil friend indeed. What loss would it have been to them had they believed in Allaah and in the Final Day and spent of that which Allaah gave them! And Allaah has full knowledge of them. Surely Allaah does not hold back the right of anyone (even if it may be equal to an atom's weight). And if there be a good deed, He doubles it and gives from Himself (His treasures) a great reward. (Nisaa verse 36-40)

In these verses, Allaah ﷻ commands fulfilment of his rights as well as that of fellow human beings. Amongst those mentioned, one category is that of orphans.

A few points to be taken note of in these verses:

1.) Allaah ﷻ before mentioning the rights of people, has first mentioned His oneness and the command to worship Him. Only the person who has true fear of Allaah ﷻ, which comes about by understanding His oneness, will fulfil the rights of others properly, and will not do so due to social pressure or governmental laws. Another reason why Allaah ﷻ has mentioned His rights first is so that one keeps in mind that while fulfilling the rights of others, the laws of Allaah ﷻ must not be violated.

2.) The word ihsaan (do good) has been mentioned. In Arabic, there are three words:

a.) zulm (oppression) – This means that others do good to you and you do wrong to them.

b.) adl (fairness) – This means that you do good to others as they do good to you.

c.) ihsaan (do good) – This means that you do good to others even if they cause harm to you, or do not show any kindness to you.

In this verse, we are commanded to do good to other human beings, even if we get no benefit from them, and even if they cause harm to us.

3.) The qualities which prevent a person from fulfilling the rights of others are: a.) pride and self-conceit, which becomes apparent when one boasts b.) love of wealth which causes one to be stingy and encourages others likewise c.) love of name and fame which causes one to spend money not for Allaah's pleasure, but to show

off to people. d.) lack of belief in Allaah ﷻ and the life of the hereafter.

4.) A believer knows that Allaah ﷻ is watching him when he is fulfilling these duties and he knows that Allaah ﷻ will reward him manifold. That is why he strives to fulfil the rights of others, even if no-one is aware of the sacrifices he undergoes.

Note: An orphan in Islamic terminology refers to an immature child whose father has passed away, even if his/her mother is alive. Once the child becomes mature, he/she does not remain an orphan. However, if some-one continues seeing to his/her needs at this time, he will still be rewarded.

In another verse, Allaah ﷻ states,

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلَّوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ
السَّبِيلِ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

They ask you (O Muhammad ﷺ) what they should spend. Say,
“Whatever you spend of good must be for parents, family
members, orphans, the poor and the travellers. Whatever you do of
good deeds, truly, Allaah knows it well.” (Baqarah verse 215)

The fact that Allaah ﷻ speaks about kindness towards the orphans alongside mentioning kindness towards ones parents and family is not merely coincidental. He ﷻ does so to show us that the care we provide to an orphan must be at par with the care we provide to our loved ones. Just as we would ensure the physical, mental and emotional well-being of our children and our parents, we must ensure the same level of well-being for any orphan we take into our care. Such was the situation in the traditional Muslim world. For a long time there were no traditional orphanages and instead,

orphans were given to good-hearted individuals who would love and care for them as they would for their own children.

Our duty first is to look within our own family and loved ones and determine if there is any individual in an orphaned state and then put forth all our means and resources to genuinely take care of that person.

If there is no such individual within our kindred then we must look towards the many Islaamic charities and aid organizations that run orphan sponsorship programs and **sponsor an orphan**.

If you cannot afford to do it alone then create a group of four or five friends where everyone can collectively share the financial responsibility.

However, simply donating money and financial support is not enough to live up to the call of Allaah ﷻ. We must go above and beyond that and actually try to get to know the orphan we are sponsoring. We must ensure that they receive their due rights such as a warm bed to sleep at night, healthy food to eat, loving caretakers, clean clothes to wear, access to education and so on.

We must adopt a care and concern for that orphan similar to the care and concern we have for our own children and loved ones. If it is possible for us to travel then we should make an attempt to visit our sponsored orphans, to sit with them, eat with them and genuinely get acquainted with them. It is in this heartfelt effort where the true sweet reward from Allaah ﷻ lies.

The current state of our Muslim brothers and sisters across the globe is so dire and desperate, with thousands of migrants and refugees fleeing their war torn countries. Countless children have lost their parents and families, and **it is now more than ever a call for those of us with abundant resources at our disposal to stand up and lend a hand.**

Rasulullaah ﷺ had actually emphasised the looking after of orphans:

عَنْ أَبِي بَكْرٍ الصِّدِّيقِ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: " لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ سَيِّئُ الْمَلَكَةِ " فَقَالَ رَجُلٌ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أَلَيْسَ أَخْبَرْتَنَا أَنَّ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةَ أَكْثَرُ الْأُمَمِ مَمْلُوكِينَ وَأَيْتَامًا؟ قَالَ: " بَلَى، فَأَكْرَمُوهُمْ كِرَامَةَ أَوْلَادِكُمْ، وَأَطْعِمُوهُمْ مِمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ " قَالُوا: فَمَا يَنْفَعُنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: " فَرَسٌ صَالِحٌ تَرْتَبِطُهُ ثِقَاتِلُ عَلَيْهِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، وَمَمْلُوكٌ يَكْفِيكَ، فَإِذَا صَلَّى فَهُوَ أَخُوكَ، فَإِذَا صَلَّى فَهُوَ أَخُوكَ "

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It was narrated from Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “No person who mistreats his slave will enter Jannah.” The Sahaabah ﷺ said, “O Messenger of Allah, did you not tell us that this nation will have more slaves and orphans than any other nation?” He ﷺ replied, “Yes, so be as kind to them as you are to your own children, and feed them with the same food that you eat.” They asked, “What will benefit us in this world?” He ﷺ replied, “A horse that is kept ready for fighting in the cause of Allaah; and your slave to take care of you, and if he performs salaah, then he is your brother(in Islam).” (Ahmad no. 75, Ibn Majah no. 3691)

This injunction is not anything new. Even the past ambiyaa ﷺ and the wise people of the past encouraged the same.

عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ عَبْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنَ أَبِي قَالٍ قَالَ: قَالَ دَاوُدُ: كُنْ لِلْيَتِيمِ كَالْأَبِ الرَّحِيمِ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّكَ كَمَا تَزْرَعُ كَذَلِكَ تَحْصُدُ، مَا أَفْسَحَ الْفَقْرُ بَعْدَ الْغِنَى، وَأَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ، أَوْ أَفْسَحَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ، الصَّلَاةُ بَعْدَ الْهُدَى، وَإِذَا وَعَدْتَ صَاحِبَكَ فَأَنْجِزْ لَهُ مَا وَعَدْتَهُ، فَإِنْ لَا تَفْعَلْ يُوْثِرُ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةً، وَتَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ صَاحِبٍ إِنْ ذَكَرْتَ لَمْ يُعْنِكَ، وَإِنْ نَسِيتَ لَمْ يُذَكِّرْكَ.

Dawood عليه السلام said, “Be like a merciful father towards the orphan. Know that you will reap as you sow. How ugly is poverty which sets in after wealth! More than that, how ugly is misguidance which one suffers after guidance! When you make a promise to your friend, fulfil your promise.

If you do not, it will bring about enmity between you and him. Seek refuge in Allaah from a companion who, when you mention some needs to him, does not help you and who does not remind you when you forget any important work of yours.” (Adabul-Mufrad no. 138)

قَالَ أَبُو حَبِيبٍ السَّلْمِيُّ: " قَرَأْتُ فِي الْحِكْمَةِ: أَنْصِتْ لِلْسَّائِلِ حَتَّى يَنْقَضِيَ كَلَامُهُ، ثُمَّ ارْجُدْ بِرَحْمَةٍ وَلِينٍ، وَكُنْ لِلْيَتِيمِ كَالْأَبِ الرَّحِيمِ، وَكُنْ لِلْمَظْلُومِ نَاصِرًا لَعَلَّكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ خَلِيفَةَ اللَّهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ

Abu Hameed Sulami says, “I read in the books of wisdom, “Listen to a beggar until he completes his speech, then answer him with mercy and softness. Be to an orphan like a merciful father. Be a helper to the oppressed. Perhaps you will be a vicegerent of Allaah on the earth.”

(Al-Kuna wal Asmaa of Doolaabi no. 793)

Emphasis has been given to even spend one's money on them.

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ "وَأَنَّ هَذَا الْمَالَ خَضِرَةٌ خُلُوةٌ، فَنِعْمَ صَاحِبُ الْمُسْلِمِ مَا أُعْطِيَ مِنْهُ الْمُسْكِينُ وَالْيَتِيمُ وَابْنُ السَّبِيلِ. أَوْ كَمَا قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. وَإِنَّهُ مَنْ يَأْخُذْهُ بَعْضُ حَقِّهِ كَالَّذِي يَأْكُلُ وَلَا يَشْبَعُ، وَيَكُونُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ".

Abu Saeed Khudri رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “No doubt this wealth is sweet and green. Blessed is the wealth of a Muslim from which he spends on the poor, the orphans and to needy travellers. (Or

Rasulullaah ﷺ said something similar to it.) No doubt, whoever takes it in the wrong manner will be like the one who eats but is never satisfied, and his wealth will be a witness against him on the Day of Judgement."

(Bukhari no. 1465)

In the past eras, Muslims would encourage one another to look after orphans.

عَنْ نَجِيجِ أَبِي عُمَارَةَ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ الْحَسَنَ يَقُولُ: لَقَدْ عَاهَدْتُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ مِنْهُمْ لِيُصْبِحَ فَيَقُولُ: يَا أَهْلِيهِ، يَا أَهْلِيهِ، يَتِيمَكُمْ يَتِيمَكُمْ، يَا أَهْلِيهِ، يَا أَهْلِيهِ، مِسْكِينَكُمْ مِسْكِينَكُمْ، يَا أَهْلِيهِ، يَا أَهْلِيهِ، جَارَكُمْ جَارَكُمْ، وَأُسْرَعُ بِخَيْرِكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ تَرُدُّلُونُ

Hasan said, "I remember a time among the Muslims when their men would say in the mornings (to remind their families), 'O family! O family! (Look after) your orphan! Your orphan! O family! O family! (Look after) your poor members! Your poor members! O family! O family! (Look after) your neighbour! Your neighbour!' Time has been swift in taking the best of you while every day you become worse. (Al-Adabul-Mufrad no. 139)

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عَنْ أَسْمَاءَ بِنِ عُبَيْدٍ قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِابْنِ سِيرِينَ: عِنْدِي يَتِيمٌ، قَالَ: اصْنَعْ بِهِ مَا تَصْنَعُ بِوَلَدِكَ، اضْرِبْهُ مَا تَضْرِبُ وَلَدَكَ.

Asma ibn Ubayd said, "I said to Ibn Sirin, 'I have an orphan in my care.' He said, 'Treat him as you would treat your own child. Beat him as you would beat your own child.'" (Al-Adabul-Mufrad no.140)

Since it is no easy task to look after orphans, great virtues have been mentioned in the Quraan and Ahaadeeth for those who undertake this noble task. Hereunder, a few will be mentioned:

VIRTUES FOR LOOKING AFTER AN ORPHAN

Allaah ﷻ has mentioned that those who fulfil the rights of orphans, together with certain other qualities, will gain great status in the hereafter. For example, Allaah ﷻ states,

فَلَا افْتَحَمَ الْعَقَبَةَ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْعَقَبَةُ فَكُّ رَقَبَةٍ أَوْ إِطْعَامٌ فِي يَوْمٍ ذِي مَسْجَةٍ يَتِيمًا ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ أَوْ مِسْكِينًا ذَا مَتْرَبَةٍ ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْمَرْحَمَةِ أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْمِمْنَةِ

But he has made no effort to pass on the difficult path that is steep.

And do you have any idea of the difficult path that is steep? (It is) freeing a slave, giving food on a day of hunger (famine) to an orphan near of kin or to a poor person afflicted with misery. Then he is one of those who believed, and recommended one another to perseverance and patience, and (also) recommended one another to pity and compassion. They are those who are on the Right (the dwellers of Jannah). (Balad verse 11-18)

إِنَّ الْأَبْتَرَّ إِشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَاسٍ كَانَ مَزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ اللَّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا يُوفُونَ بِالْأَنْدَرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا وَيُطْعَمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا إِنَّا نَخَافُ مِنْ رَبِّنَا يَوْمًا غُيُوسًا قَمَطِيرًا فَوَقَاهُمُ اللَّهُ شَرَّ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَلَقَّاهُمْ نَضْرَةً وَسُرُورًا وَجَزَاهُمْ بِمَا صَبَرُوا جَنَّةً وَحَرِيرًا مُتَكَبِّينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ لَا يَرَوْنَ فِيهَا شَمْسًا وَلَا زَمْهَرِيرًا وَدَانِيَةً عَلَيْهِمْ ظِلَالُهَا وَذُلَّتْ أَفْطُوفُهَا تَذَلِيلًا وَيُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِآنِيَةٍ مِّنْ فِضَّةٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ كَانَتْ قَوَارِيرًا قَوَارِيرَ مِّنْ فِضَّةٍ قَدَرُوهَا تَقْدِيرًا وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنْجَبِيلًا عَيْنًا فِيهَا تُسَمَّى سَلْسَبِيلًا وَيَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ إِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ حَسِبْتَهُمْ لُؤْلُؤًا مَّنثورًا وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ ثُمَّ رَأَيْتَ نَعِيمًا وَمُلْكًا كَبِيرًا عَلَيْهِمْ ثِيَابٌ سُدُوسٌ خُضَرٌ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ وَخُلُوعًا أَسَاوِرَ مِّنْ فِضَّةٍ وَسَقَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا إِنَّ هَذَا كَانَ لَكُمْ جَزَاءً وَكَانَ سَعْيُكُمْ مَشْكُورًا

Verily, the Abraar (pious, who fear Allaah and avoid evil), shall drink a cup (of wine) mixed with a drink from a spring in Jannah called Kaafoor, a spring wherefrom the slaves of Allaah will drink, causing it to gush forth abundantly. They (are those who) fulfil (their) vows, and they fear a Day whose evil will be wide-spread. And they feed (others) food, despite their love for it (or for His love), to the poor, the orphan, and the captive, (Saying), “We feed you seeking Allah's pleasure only. We wish for no reward, nor thanks from you. Verily, We fear from our Lord a hard and distressful Day, that will make the faces look horrible.” So Allaah saved them from the evil of that Day, and gave them beautiful shining faces and joy. And He has rewarded them with Jannah and silken garments, because they were patient. Reclining therein on raised thrones, they will not see there the excessive heat of the sun, nor the excessive bitter cold, (as there will be no sun and no moon in Jannah). And the shade of the trees therein will be close above them, and the bunches of fruit thereof will hang low within their reach. And round vessels of silver and cups of crystal, crystal-clear, made of silver will be passed around between them. They will decide the measure thereof according to their wishes. And they will be given to drink in Jannah a cup (of wine) mixed with Zanjabil (ginger, etc.), a spring there, called Salsabil. And boys of everlasting youth will walk amongst them (to serve them). If you see them, you would think them to be scattered pearls. And when you look there (in Jannah), you will see delight (that cannot be imagined), and a great dominion. Their garments will be of fine green silk and gold embroidery. They will be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord will give them a pure drink. (And it will be said to them), “Verily, this is a reward for you, and your effort has been appreciated.” (Dahr verse 5-22)

There are many ahaadeeth which mention the virtue of caring for an orphan. Hereunder, some of them will be quoted.

(١) عن سهل بن سعد رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "أنا وكافلُ اليتيم في الجنة هكذا، وأشار بالسبابة والوسطى، وفرَّجَ بينهما" رواه البخاري وأبو داود والترمذي. وقد وقع في رواية لأُم سعيد عند الطبراني: كَافِلُ الْيَتِيمِ لَهُ أَوْ لغيرِهِ إِذَا اتَّقَى مَعِيَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ كَهَاتَيْنِ «يَعْنِي الْمُسَبِّحَةَ وَالْوُسْطَى

1.) Sahl bin Sa'd Saaidi ؓ narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "The one who takes responsibility to care for an orphan - whether he is a close relative or not - and I will be in Jannah like this." Then Nabi ﷺ indicated by joining his index and middle finger. In the narration of Umme-Saeed, the wording is as follows, "will be with me in Jannah like this, on condition that he has the quality of taqwa (piety)." (Bukhari no. 5304/6005, Abu Dawood no.5150, Tirmidhi no. 1918, Mu'jami-Kabeer of Tabrani no. 759)

Rasulullaah ﷺ indicated with his fingers in order to clarify his words and so that his message would settle in the hearts of his audience. The hadeeth may have several meanings: one is that it refers to closeness that one who takes care of an orphan will enjoy with Rasulullaah ﷺ when entering Jannah; another is that such a person will enter Jannah immediately and will attain a high rank therein.

Ibn Battaal has stated, "It is a right upon the one who hears this hadeeth to practise on it, so that he can be the companion of Rasulullaah ﷺ in Jannah, and there is no rank in Jannah better than this.

Hafiz ibn Hajar has written in Fathul-Baari, Our Sheikh (Allamah Iraqi) has mentioned in the commentary of Tirmidhi, "Perhaps the wisdom behind the above i.e. the person who takes responsibility to care for the orphan is near to Rasulullaah ﷺ in status in Jannah, is that Rasulullaah ﷺ was sent to a nation who did not know the

matters of their deen. He took responsibility for them, taught them and guided them. Similarly, one who takes responsibility to care for an orphan takes responsibility to care for one who does not understand the matters of his deen, and in fact, even worldly matters. He guides, teaches and instils character into the child. Thus, he resembles Rasulullaah ﷺ in this matter. (Fathul-Baari)

Note: The virtue mentioned here will be acquired when the guardian looks after an orphan with his own wealth or uses the wealth of the orphan for this purpose, following the correct Islamic protocols.

٢) عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «كَافِلُ الْيَتِيمِ لَهُ أَوْ لغيرِهِ أَنَا وَهُوَ كَهَاتَيْنِ فِي الْجَنَّةِ» وَأَشَارَ مَالِكٌ بِالسَّبَّابَةِ وَالْوُسْطَى رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ، وَرَوَاهُ مَالِكٌ عَنْ صفوان بن سليم مرسلاً ورواه البزار متصلاً،

2.) Abu Hurayrah ؓ narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “I and the one who takes care of an orphan, whether he is a close relative or not, shall be in Jannah like this.” The narrator, Maalik ibn Anas, indicated with his index and middle finger. (According to the narration of Bazaar, Rasulullaah ﷺ himself joined these two fingers.) (Muslim no. 2983, Bazaar no.9689)

Note: In this hadeeth, we are taught that caring for an orphan from one’s own family as well as orphans from other families will be rewarded by Allaah ﷻ. Thus the reward applies to grandparents, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters, etc., as well as those who are not family members.

One point to note however, is that once these children reach the age of puberty, the laws of hijab will apply.

In a similar narration narrated by Ibn Abbaas ؓ, Rasulullaah ﷺ is reported to have said, “Whoever gives refuge to one or two

orphans, then he remains patient and hopes for reward, he and I will be in Jannah like this.” Rasulullaah ﷺ then joined his middle and index finger together.” (Tabraani in Awsat no. 8477)

In this narration, two conditions are mentioned for gaining the great reward of being close to Rasulullaah ﷺ:

- a.) One will have to patiently bear the hardships and difficulties in bringing up orphans.
- b.) One’s intention should be sincere: to gain the pleasure of Allaah ﷻ and to gain rewards in the Hereafter. A believer understands that the true rewards will not be gained in this world, but in the Hereafter.

٣) عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ -: "مَنْ عَالَ ثَلَاثَةً مِنَ الْأَيْتَامِ، كَانَ كَمَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَهُ وَصَامَ نَهَارَهُ، وَعَدَا وَرَاحَ شَاهِرًا سَيْفُهُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، وَكُنْتُ أَنَا وَهُوَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ أَخَوَيْنِ، كَهَاتَيْنِ أُخْتَانِ، وَالصَّقَ إصْبَعَيْهِ السَّبَابَةَ وَالْوُسْطَى رواه ابن ماجه.

3.) Ibn Abbaas ؓ narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “Whoever cares and spiritually nurtures three orphans is like the person who stays awake at night, fasts during the day, and goes and comes in the path of Allaah ﷻ, with his sword exposed (i.e. ready to meet the enemies of Allaah ﷻ). He and I will be brothers in Jannah, just as these two are brothers.

Rasulullaah ﷺ then joined two fingers, the index and middle finger.

(Ibn Majah no. 3680)

٤) عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «مَنْ قَبَضَ يَتِيمًا مِنْ بَنِي الْمُسْلِمِينَ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ وَشَرَابِهِ أَدْخَلَهُ اللَّهُ الْجَنَّةَ ابْتَةً إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْمَلَ ذَنْبًا لَا يُغْفَرُ لَهُ» " رواه الترمذي، وقال حديث

حسن صحيح.

- 4.) Ibn Abbaas ؓ narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “Whoever brings a Muslim orphan to join in his food and drink, Allaah ﷻ will definitely enter him into Jannah unless he does a sin which cannot be forgiven (i.e. shirk (associating partners with Allaah ﷻ)). (Tirmidhi no. 1917)

٥) عَنْ مَالِكِ بْنِ عَمْرِو الْقَشِيرِيِّ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: « وَمَنْ ضَمَّ يَتِيمًا مِنْ بَيْنِ أَبَوَيْنِ مُسْلِمَيْنِ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ وَشَرَابِهِ حَتَّى يُغْنِيَهُ اللَّهُ وَجَبَتْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةُ » رواه أحمد والطبراني، وأبو يعلى ورواه أحمد محتج بهم إلا علي بن زيد.

5.) Amr ibn Maalik Qushairi رضي الله عنه narrates that he heard Rasulullaah ﷺ saying, “Whoever brings a Muslim orphan to join in his food and drink until the orphan becomes independent, Jannah is definite for him.” (Ahmad no 19030, Abu Ya’la no. 2457, Al-Mu’jamul-Kabeer no. 668)

٦) عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى الْأَشْعَرِيِّ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «مَا قَعَدَ يَتِيمٌ مَعَ قَوْمٍ عَلَى قَصْعَتِهِمْ، فَيَقْرُبُ قَصْعَتَهُمْ شَيْطَانٌ» " حديث غريب رواه الطبراني في الأوسط والأصبهاني كلاهما من رواية الحسن بن واصل، وكان شيخنا الحافظ أبو الحسن رحمه الله يقول: هو حديث حسن، ورواه الأصبهاني أيضاً من حديث أبي موسى.

6.) Abu Moosa رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “Whenever an orphan sits with people, sharing with them in their plate, Shaytaan does not come close to their plate.” (Al-Mu’jamul-Awsat no. 7165, Musnadul-Haarith no. 907)

٧) عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: " أَحَبُّ بُيُوتِكُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بَيْتٌ فِيهِ يَتِيمٌ مُكْرَمٌ " رواه البيهقي في شعب الإيمان. و عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: « خَيْرُ بَيْتٍ فِي الْمُسْلِمِينَ بَيْتٌ فِيهِ يَتِيمٌ يُحْسَنُ إِلَيْهِ، وَشَرُّ بَيْتٍ فِي الْمُسْلِمِينَ بَيْتٌ فِيهِ يَتِيمٌ يُسَاءُ إِلَيْهِ رواه ابن ماجه.

7.) Umar رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “The most beloved house in the sight of Allaah, is a house in which an orphan is honoured.” The narration of Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه reads, “The best house amongst the Muslims is the house in which an orphan is treated well, and the worst house amongst the Muslims is the house in which an orphan is ill-treated.” (Al-Mu’jamul-Kabeer no.13434; Ibn Majah no. 3679, Al-Mu’jamul-Awsat no. 4785, Al-Adabul-Mufrad no. 137)

The meaning of being treated well is that one should show love, affection and honour to the orphan, spend on him, give him good

food correct him when he is wrong, and educate him. This is because the orphan, due to being a minor as well as being deprived of having a father (or both parents in some cases) is most worthy of being honoured.

If one has to scold or even hit the child (within Shari limits) for purposes of nurturing, then this will be included in treating him well, even though outwardly it seems that one is ill-treating him. (Mirqaat)

٨) عَنْ عَوْفِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "أَنَا وَامْرَأَةٌ سَفْعَاءُ الْحَدَّيْنِ كَهَاتَيْنِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ" وَجَمَعَ بَيْنَ أَصْبَعَيْهِ السَّبَابَةِ وَالْوُسْطَى "امْرَأَةٌ ذَاتُ مَنْصِبٍ وَجَمَالٍ آمَتٌ مِنْ زَوْجِهَا، حَبَسَتْ نَفْسَهَا عَلَى أَيْتَامِهَا حَتَّى يَأْتُوا أَوْ مَاتُوا" رواه احمد و أبو داود.

8.) Auf ibn Maalik Ashjaee ؓ narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "I and a woman whose beauty has faded (due to tirelessly looking after her orphan children to the extent that she had no time to worry about herself) will be like this on the Day of Judgement. Rasulullaah ﷺ indicated with his middle and index finger. This refers to a woman of status and beauty who had lost her husband (due to divorce or death) and she abstains from remarrying (due to her) fatherless children, until they become independent or pass away. (Abu Dawood no. 5149, Musnad Ahmad no. 24006)

٩) عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "أَنَا أَوَّلُ مَنْ يَفْتَحُ لَهُ بَابُ الْجَنَّةِ، إِلَّا أَنَّهُ تَأْتِي امْرَأَةٌ تُبَادِرُنِي فَأَقُولُ لَهَا: مَا لِكَ؟ وَمَا أَنْتِ؟ فَتَقُولُ: أَنَا امْرَأَةٌ قَعَدْتُ عَلَى أَيْتَامٍ لِي" رواه أبو يعلى، وإسناده حسن إن شاء الله.

9.) Abu Hurayrah ؓ narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "I will be the first to open the door of Jannah. I will see a woman trying to enter with me or just after me. I will ask her, "Who are you?" She will answer, "I am a woman who cared for my orphan children." (Musnad Abu Ya'la no.6651)

١٠) عَنْ أَبِي أُمَامَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: "مَنْ مَسَحَ رَأْسَ يَتِيمٍ لَمْ يَمْسَحْهُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ كَانَ لَهُ بِكُلِّ شَعْرَةٍ مَرَّتْ عَلَيْهَا يَدُهُ حَسَنَاتٌ، وَمَنْ أَحْسَنَ إِلَى يَتِيمَةٍ أَوْ يَتِيمٍ عِنْدَهُ كُنْتُ أَنَا وَهُوَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ كَهَاتَيْنِ، وَقَرَنَ بَيْنَ أَصْبُعَيْهِ السَّبَّابَةِ وَالْوُسْطَى" رواه أحمد وغيره من طريق عبيد الله بن زحر عن علي ابن يزيد عن القاسم عنه.

10.) Abu Umaamah رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "Whoever passes his hand over the head of an orphan, solely for Allaah's pleasure, rewards will be written for him for every strand of hair his hand touched. Whoever shows kindness to an orphan girl or boy in his care, I and him will be in Jannah like this. Nabi ﷺ then joined his index and middle finger." (Ahmad no. 22153, 22284)

There is a lengthier narration in Shuabul-Imaan and Bazzaar which is as follows:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي أَوْفَى، قَالَ: بَيْنَمَا نَحْنُ قُعُودٌ عِنْدَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذْ أَتَاهُ غُلَامٌ، فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، غُلَامٌ يَتِيمٌ وَأُمِّي لِي أَرْمَلَةٌ أَطْعَمْنَا أَطْعَمَكَ اللَّهُ مِمَّا عِنْدَهُ حَتَّى تَرْضَى. قَالَ: فَقَالَ: "مَا أَحْسَنَ مَا قُلْتَ يَا غُلَامُ، يَا بِلَالُ انْطَلِقْ إِلَى أَهْلِنَا فَأْتِنَا بِمَا وَجَدْتَ عَنْدهُمْ مِنْ طَعَامٍ" فَأَتَاهُ بِلَالٌ بِوَاحِدٍ وَعِشْرِينَ تَمْرَةً فَوَضَعَهَا فِي كَفِّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَأَشَارَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِكَفِّهِ إِلَى فِيهِ، وَنَحْنُ نَرَى تِلْكَ السَّاعَةَ أَنَّهُ يَدْعُو بِالْبَرَكَةِ لِلْيَتِيمِ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِلْغُلَامِ: "سَبْعَةٌ لَكَ وَسَبْعَةٌ لَأُمِّكَ وَسَبْعَةٌ لَأَخِيكَ، وَتَعَشَّ بِتَمْرَةٍ وَتَغَدَّ بِأُخْرَى" فَانْصَرَفَ الْغُلَامُ وَكَانَ مِنْ أَبْنَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ، فَقَامَ إِلَيْهِ مُعَاذُ بْنُ جَبَلٍ فَوَضَعَ يَدَهُ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ، فَقَالَ: يَا غُلَامُ جَبَرِ اللَّهُ يَتَمَكَ وَجَعَلَكَ خَلْفًا مِنْ أَيْبِكَ. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ: "وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ، لَا يَلِي أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ يَتِيمًا فَيُحْسِنُ وَلَا يَتَهُ ثُمَّ يَضَعُ يَدَهُ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ إِلَّا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ بِكُلِّ شَعْرَةٍ حَسَنَةً، وَكَفَّ عَنْهُ بِكُلِّ شَعْرَةٍ سَيِّئَةً"

Abdullaah ibn Awfaa رضي الله عنه narrates that once they were sitting with Rasulullaah ﷺ when a young boy came and said, "May my parents be sacrificed for you, O Rasulullaah! I am an orphan, (I have an orphan sister,) and a widowed mother. Give us some food to eat, Allaah ﷻ will grant you that which is by Him, until you become pleased." Rasulullaah

ﷺ said, “How wonderful you have spoken, my son! O Bilaal! Go home and bring to us whatever food you find by them.” Bilaal ﷺ brought twenty one dates and placed them in the hands of Rasulullaah ﷺ, who then made a sign with his hands, towards his mouth. We realised that he was making dua of blessings for the dates at that moment. Then Rasulullaah ﷺ said to the boy “There are seven dates for you, seven for your sister and seven for your mother. Have one date in the morning and one in the evening.” When the boy moved away from Rasulullaah ﷺ, (and he was from the children of the muhaajireen) Muaadh ibn Jabal ﷺ stood up, placed his hands on his head, and supplicated, “May Allaah ﷻ remove from you the effects of being an orphan, and make you a good replacement for your father!” Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “I saw what you did to the boy, O Muaadh!” Muaadh ﷺ remarked, “This was due to compassion for the boy.” Rasulullaah ﷺ then said, “By the Being in whose control is the life of Muhammad! If a person takes responsibility to care for an orphan, and then treats him well, then whenever he places his hand on the orphan’s head, he will gain a reward in place of every hair touched, and a sin will be wiped out.” (Bayhaqi in Shuabul-Imaan no. 10530, Bazaar no. 3375)

١١) عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ وَاسِعٍ، أَنَّ أَبَا الدَّرْدَاءِ، رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كَتَبَ إِلَى سَلْمَانَ: أَنَّ رَجُلًا شَكَاَ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَسْوَةَ قَلْبِهِ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: " إِنْ أَرَدْتَ أَنْ يُلَيِّنَ قَلْبُكَ فَأَمْسَحْ رَأْسَ الْيَتِيمِ وَأَطْعِمْهُ " رواه البيهقي في سننه

11.) Abu Darda ﷺ wrote to Salmaan ﷺ that a man complained to Rasulullaah ﷺ of his hard-heartedness. Rasulullaah ﷺ asked, “If you wish to soften your heart, then pass your hand over the head of an orphan and feed him.” (Sunanun-Kubra of Bayhaqi no.7095)

A lengthier narration states:

Ma'mar reports from a companion that Abu Dardaa ﷺ once wrote to Salmaan ﷺ the following advices, "Dear brother! Make the most of your health and free time before that calamity strikes which all

of mankind cannot repel (death). Also make the most of the du'aa of the afflicted person. Dear brother! Let the Masjid be your home because I have heard Rasulullaah ﷺ say, 'The Masjid is home to every person with Taqwa.' For those who have made their homes the Masaajid, Allaah has also guaranteed happiness, contentment and a safe passage across the bridge of Siraat en route to the pleasure of his Rabb ﷻ.

Dear brother! Have mercy on the orphan, keep him close to you and fed him from the food that you eat. When a person once came to Rasulullaah ﷺ complaining of a hard heart, I heard Rasulullaah ﷺ ask him, 'Do you want your heart to soften?' When the man replied in the affirmative, Rasulullaah ﷺ advised him saying, 'Keep an orphan close to you, pass your hand over his head and feed him from your own food. This will soften your heart and fulfil your needs.'

Dear brother! Never collect that for which you will be unable to express gratitude because I have heard Rasulullaah ﷺ say, 'On the Day of Qiyaamah, that wealthy person who obeyed Allaah with regards to his wealth will be brought forward. He will be in front of his wealth and it will be placed behind him. Every time, he stumbles on the bridge of Siraat, his wealth will say to him, 'Go on! You have fulfilled the rights due from you.' Thereafter, the wealthy person who did not obey Allaah with regards to his wealth will be brought forward with his wealth on his shoulders. His wealth will cause him to slip, saying, 'May you be destroyed! Why did you not obey Allaah when concerning me?' This will continue until the person will himself call for his destruction.'

Dear brother! I have been informed that you have purchased a slave. I have heard Rasulullaah ﷺ say, 'A person remains connected to Allaah and Allaah remains connected to him as long as another is not in his service because as soon as another person is in his

service, reckoning becomes incumbent for him.' In fact (my wife) Ummu Dardaa requested me for a servant at a time when I was well off, but I disapproved of the idea because of this reckoning that I heard about. Dear brother! Who is there to assure us that we will meet on the Day of Qiyaamah without fear of reckoning? Dear brother! Never fall into deception about being a companion of Rasulullaah ﷺ because we have lived long after him and Allaah Alone knows what we have done in this time." (Abu Nu'aym in his Hilya (Vol.1 Pg.224, Shuabul-Imaan no. 10174).

(١٢) عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَجُلًا شَكَاَ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَسَوَّاهُ قَلْبُهُ، فَقَالَ: «امْسَحْ رَأْسَ الْيَتِيمِ، وَأَطْعِمِ الْمَسْكِينَ» رَوَاهُ أَحْمَدُ، وَرِجَالُهُ الصَّحِيحُ.

12.) Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that that a man complained to Rasulullaah ﷺ of his hard-heartedness. Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "Pass your hand over the head of an orphan and feed the poor." (Ahmad no. 9018)

The benefit of passing the hand over the orphans head is that it will remind him of his impending death, which will cause one to appreciate life, since the cause of hard-heartedness is heedlessness and obliviousness. When a person feeds the poor, he is reminded of Allaah ﷻ's favours upon himself. He realises that Allaah ﷻ has granted him so much wealth that others are coming to him in need for that wealth. His heart will then melt and the hardness will disappear.

Another reason is that if one showers mercy on others, then this draws the mercy of Allaah ﷻ towards himself. When Allaah ﷻ's mercy falls onto him, the hardness of the heart will disappear. (Condensed from Mirqaat)

(١٣) عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «وَالَّذِي بَعَثَنِي بِالْحَقِّ لَا يُعَذِّبُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَنْ رَحِمَ الْيَتِيمَ، وَلَآنَ لَهُ فِي الْكَلَامِ، وَرَحِمَ يَتَّمُهُ وَضَعْفَهُ، وَلَمْ يَتَطَاوُلْ عَلَى جَارِهِ

بَفَضْلٍ مَا آتَاهُ اللَّهُ» رواه الطبراني، ورواته ثقات إلا عبد الله بن عامر، وقال أبو حاتم: ليس بالمتروك.

13.) Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "By the one who has sent me with the truth, Allaah ﷻ will not punish on the Day of Judgement the person who had mercy on an orphan, spoke gently to him, had compassion on his condition of being an orphan and weak; and did not show arrogance over his neighbour due to the wealth which Allaah ﷻ bestowed him with." (Al-Mu'jamul-Awsat no. 8828)

١٤) عَنِ عُرْوَةَ بْنِ الزُّبَيْرِ، أَنَّ عَائِشَةَ، زَوْجَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَدَّثَتْهُ قَالَتْ: جَاءَتْنِي امْرَأَةٌ مَعَهَا ابْنَتَانِ تَسْأَلْنِي، فَلَمْ تَجِدْ عِنْدِي غَيْرَ تَمْرَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، فَأَعْطَيْتُهَا فَقَسَمَتْهَا بَيْنَ ابْنَتَيْهَا، ثُمَّ قَامَتْ فَخَرَجَتْ، فَدَخَلَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَحَدَّثَنِي، فَقَالَ: مَنْ يَلِي مِنْ هَذِهِ الْبَنَاتِ شَيْئًا، فَأَحْسَنَ إِلَيْهِنَّ، كُنَّ لَهُ سِتْرًا مِنَ النَّارِ رواه البخاري و مسلم

14.) A'ishah said, "A woman came to me who had her two daughters with her. She asked me for something, but I could not find anything to give her except for a single date which I gave her. She divided it between her daughters and then got up and left. When Rasulullaah ﷺ came, I told him what had transpired. He ﷺ said, "Whoever looks after any of these girls (orphan girls), they will become a veil from the Fire for that person." (Bukhari no. 5995, Muslim no. 2629)

١٥) عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «مَنْ حَفَرَ قَبْرًا بَنَى اللَّهُ لَهُ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَمَنْ غَسَلَ مَيِّتًا خَرَجَ مِنَ الْخَطَايَا كَيَوْمٍ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ، وَمَنْ كَفَّنَ مَيِّتًا كَسَاهُ اللَّهُ أَثْوَابًا مِنْ خُلَلِ الْجَنَّةِ، وَمَنْ عَزَى حَزِينًا أَلْبَسَهُ اللَّهُ التَّقْوَى وَصَلَّى عَلَى رُوحِهِ فِي الْأَرْوَاحِ، وَمَنْ عَزَى مُصَابًا كَسَاهُ اللَّهُ خَلَّتَيْنِ مِنْ خُلَلِ الْجَنَّةِ لَا يَقُومُ لَهُمَا الدُّنْيَا، وَمَنْ اتَّبَعَ جَنَازَةً حَتَّى يَقْضَى دَفْنَهَا كُتِبَ لَهُ ثَلَاثَةٌ قَرَارِيطَ، الْقِرَاطُ مِنْهَا أَعْظَمُ مِنْ جَبَلِ أُحُدٍ، وَمَنْ كَفَلَ يَتِيمًا أَوْ أَرْمَلَةً أَظَلَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي ظِلِّهِ وَأَدْخَلَهُ جَنَّتَهُ» لَمْ يَرَوْ هَذَا الْحَدِيثَ عَنِ الْخَلِيلِ بْنِ مَرْثَةَ إِلَّا مُوسَى بْنُ أُعَيْنَ، وَلَا يَرَوِي عَنْ جَابِرٍ إِلَّا يَهْدَا الْإِسْنَادِ. وَلَمْ يُنْسَبْ لَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِي رَوَى هَذَا الْحَدِيثَ

15.) Jaabir ibn Abdullaah رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “Whoever digs a grave, Allaah ﷻ will build for him a palace in Jannah. Whoever baths a deceased person, comes out of his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him. Whoever shrouds a deceased person, Allaah ﷻ will clothe him with garments of Jannah. Whoever consoles a grief-stricken person, Allaah ﷻ will grant him taqwa and send special mercy on his soul. Whoever consoles an afflicted person, Allaah ﷻ will clothe him with two garments of Jannah, the value far superior than the whole world. Whoever follows a janaazah (bier) until the burial is complete, then three qiraat will be written for him, each qiraat is greater than the Mount Uhud. Whoever takes responsibility to look after an orphan or widow, Allaah ﷻ will grant him shade in His shade and enter him into Jannah.” (Mu’jamul-Awsat no. 9292)

WARNINGS WITH REGARD TO NEGLECT OF ORPHANS

24

Allaah ﷻ states,

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالدِّينِ فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدْعُ الْيَتِيمَ وَلَا يَحْضُ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمُسْكِينِ

Have you observed the person who rejects the religion (particularly the Day of Judgement?) He is the one who repels an orphan, and does not urge (others) to feed the needy. (Maaoon verse 1-3)

Ibn Abbaas رضي الله عنه has said that repelling an orphan means denying him his legitimate rights. Qataadah says that it means being unjust to him, which happens because of having no faith in the Hereafter.

This surah contains several warnings. It includes a special warning about orphans: ill-treating an orphan is among the causes for punishment and damnation in the hereafter. Many people take over as guardians of orphans simply for the sake of misappropriating their property, but when the orphans, or some others on their behalf, raise a demand they rebuke them. For such people, there

can be no doubt about future punishment and damnation. This is apparently the reason for the revelation of the Surah.

There are about 20 verses in the Quraan containing warnings of ill-treatments to orphans. The gist of these verses is to impress on people the utmost importance of giving good treatment to orphans, which includes working for the improvement of their lot and being their sincere well-wisher. One is required to take care of their property, to be kind to them and to do everything possible for their well-being and happiness. If an orphan girl is taken in marriage, her dowry must not be reduced because there is no one to plead for her: this is one of the admonishments given in the ahaadeeth.

Shah Abdul Azeez has mentioned that there are two ways of being kind to orphans. The one, which is obligatory on guardians, is to take care of their property by investing it in business or agriculture, so that it earns profits to suffice for their living expenses and other common needs like education and proper upbringing. The second type is obligatory for the common people, which includes avoiding all types of causing harm or inconvenience to orphans, treating them kindly, seating them closer to oneself in gatherings, showing affection by patting their heads, and taking the small ones in the lap, like one's own children to show them paternal love. Allaah ﷻ has ordered all men to treat orphans like their own children so that the pre-ordained handicap suffered by them, through the loss of their father, may be compensated by the loving care of thousands of men in place of the paternal love. (Condensed from Fadhaail-Sadaqaat)

Rasulullaah ﷺ has given stern warnings for those who neglect orphans. Hereunder are a few ahaadeeth.

(١) وعن أَبِي شُرَيْحٍ خُوَيْلِدِ بْنِ عَمْرِو الْخَزَاعِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أُحَرِّجُ حَقَّ الضَّعِيفِينَ: الْيَتِيمَ وَالْمَرْأَةَ». حديث حسن رواه النسائي بإسناد جيد.

1.) Abu Shurayh Khuwaylid ibn Umar Khuzaai رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “O Allaah! I warn against oppressing/ failing to fulfil the rights of two groups of weak people: orphans and women (i.e. widows).” (Sunanul-Kubra of Nasai no. 9104, Ibn Majah no. 3678)

Note: The lack of support for orphans frequently results in their rights being overlooked and trampled. Islaam teaches that orphans should be treated kindly and gently. Since they are weaker in nature compared to others, they rely upon Allaah ﷻ for His help to a greater extent compared to others, hence one who oppresses them shows contempt towards Allaah ﷻ and is then deserving of punishment.

(٢) وروى عن أبي سعيد الخدري رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "إياكم وبكاء اليتيم، فإنه يسري في الليل، والناس نيام" رواه الأصبهاني

2.) Abu Saeed Khudri رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “Beware of the crying of the orphan, for it travels at night, whilst people are asleep.” (At-Targheeb no. 3847)

Abu Dardaa رضي الله عنه said, “Beware of the curse of the oppressed and the curse of the orphan because both travel (to Allaah) at night when people are fast asleep.” He also said, “The person whom I hate most to oppress is the one who has none other than Allaah ﷻ to ask help of.” (Abu Nu'aym in Hilya vol.1 page 221)

This refers to those people who oppress orphans. When the orphan cries, his duaas immediately go to the heavens.

Rasulullaah ﷺ is reported to have also said, “Beware of the curse of the oppressed, since there is no barrier between his curse and Allaah ﷻ.” (Bukhari no. 2448, Muslim no.29)

٣) عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، قَالَ: اجْتَنِبُوا السَّبْعَ الْمُوبِقَاتِ قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، وَمَا هُنَّ؟ قَالَ: الشِّرْكُ بِاللَّهِ، وَالسَّحَرُ، وَقَتْلُ النَّفْسِ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ، وَأَكْلُ الرِّبَا، وَأَكْلُ مَالِ الْيَتِيمِ، وَالتَّوَلَّى يَوْمَ الرَّحْفِ، وَقَذْفُ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ الْغَافِلَاتِ

Abu Hurayrah ؓ narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “Avoid the seven great destructive sins.” The Sahaabah ؓ asked, “O Allaah's Messenger! What are they?” He replied, “To associate partners in worship with Allaah; to practice sorcery; to kill any life which Allaah has forbidden, except for a just cause (according to Islaamic law); to consume interest, to usurp the property of an orphan; to flee from the battle-field at the time of fighting and to accuse chaste and simple-minded believing women.” (Bukhaari no. 6857, Muslim no. 145)

٤) عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: " أَرْبَعٌ حَقَّ عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ لَا يُدْخِلَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ، وَلَا يُدِيقَهُمْ نَعِيمًا: مُدْمِنُ خَمْرٍ، وَآكِلُ رِبَا، وَآكِلُ مَالِ الْيَتِيمِ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ، وَالْعَاقُ لَوَالِدَيْهِ "

Abu Hurayrah ؓ narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “Allaah ﷻ has taken it upon Himself that He will not enter four types of people into Jannah, and will not allow them to experience taste any enjoyment therein: 1.) a habitual drinker of alcohol 2.) a consumer of interest 3.) a consumer of an orphans wealth unjustly 4.) one who is disobedient to ones parents.” (Shuabul-Imaan no. 5142)

٥) وعن أنسٍ رضي الله عنه رفعه إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: " أن رجلاً قال ليعقوب عليه السلام: ما الذي أذهب بصرك، وَحَتَّى ظَهَرَكَ؟ قال: أما الذي أذهب بصري فالكاء على يوسف، وأما الذي حَتَّى ظَهَرَني فالحزن على أخيه بنيامين، فَأَتَاهُ جَبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، فَقَالَ: أَتَشْكُو اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ؟ قال: إنما أَشْكُو بَنِيَّ وَحَزَنِي إِلَى اللَّهِ. قال جبريلُ عليه السلام: اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ

بما قلت منك. قال: ثم انطلق جبريل عليه السلام، ودخل يعقوب عليه السلام بيته، فقال: أي ربّ أما ترحمُ الشيخَ الكبير. أذهبتَ بصري، وَحَنَيْتَ ظَهري، فَأَرَدْتُ عَلَيَّ رِيحَانَتِي، فَأَشْمَهُمَا شَمَّةً واحدةً، ثم اصنع بي بعد ما شئت، فأنا جبريل، فقال: يا يعقوب إن الله عز وجل يُقرئك السلام، ويقول: أبشر فإنهما لو كانا ميتين لَنَشَرْتُهُمَا لَكَ لِأَقْرَبَ بهما عينك، ويقول لك يا يعقوب: أَتَدْرِي لِمَ أَذْهَبْتُ بِصْرِكَ، وَحَنَيْتَ ظَهْرَكَ، وَلِمَ فَعَلَ إِخْوَةُ يَوْسُفَ بِيُوسُفَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ؟ قال: لا. قال: إنه أتاك يَتِيمٌ مُسْكِينٌ وهو صائِمٌ جائِعٌ وذبحت أنت وأهلك شاةً فَأَكَلْتُمُوهَا ولم تُطْعِمُوهُ، ويقول: إني لم أَجِبْ شَيْئاً من خَلْقِي حُبِّي الْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينَ، فاصنع طعاماً، وأدْعُ الْمَسَاكِينَ. قال أنس: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: فكان يعقوب كلما أمسى نادى مُنَادِيَهُ: من كان صائماً فليحضِرْ طعام يعقوب، وإذا أصبح نادى مُنَادِيَهُ: من كان مُفْطِراً فليفطر على طعام يعقوب" رواه الحاكم والبيهقي والأصبهاني واللفظ له، وقال الحاكم: كذا في سماع حفص بن عمر بن الزبير، وأظن الزبير وَهَمَ، وأنه حفص بن عمر بن عبد الله بن أبي طلحة، فإن كان كذلك فالحديث صحيح، وقد أخرجه إسحاق بن راهوية في تفسيره قال: أنبأنا عمرو بن محمد حدثنا زافر بن سليمان عن يحيى بن عبد الملك عن أنس عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم نحوه.

5.) Anas رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "A person asked Yaqoob عليه السلام, "What caused your eyesight to be taken away and your back to be bent?" He replied, "As for my eyesight, this was due to crying over Yusuf عليه السلام. My back becoming bent was due to grief over his brother, Binyaaameen." Jibraa'eel عليه السلام came to him and asked, "Are you complaining about Allaah ﷻ?" He replied, "Verily I complain of my grief and sadness to Allaah." Jibraa'eel عليه السلام said, "Allaah ﷻ knows better than you the reality of your speech." Jibraa'eel عليه السلام then departed. Yaqoob عليه السلام entered his house, and supplicated, "O my Sustainer! Will You not shower mercy on an old man? You allowed my eyesight to be taken away and my back to become bent. Return to me my two beloved fragrant flowers, so that I could smell them one more time, then You may do as You please with me." Jibraa'eel عليه السلام came back and said, "O Yaqoob! Allaah ﷻ has conveyed salaams to you and He says, "Good news! Had they been dead, I would have resurrected them for you so

that I could bring joy to you through them. O Yaqoob! Do you know why I took away your eyesight and caused your back to be bent? Do you know why the brothers of Yusuf did whatever they did?" When Yaqoob ﷺ replied in the negative, Allaah ﷻ said, "A poor orphan came to you. He was hungry and had been fasting. You and your family had slaughtered a sheep. You ate from it and did not feed him. I do not love anyone from My creation as I love the orphans and poor. Therefore prepare food and invite the poor." Rasulullaah ﷺ continued, "Every evening thereafter, an announcer on behalf of Yaqoob ﷺ used to announce, "Whoever is fasting, then come to eat the food of Yaqoob." Every morning, his announcer would announce, "Whoever is not fasting should come to eat the food of Yaqoob." (Mustadrak of Haakim no. 3328, Shuabul-Imaan no. 3131, Al-Mu'jamul-Awsat no. 6105 and Al-Mu'jamus-Sagheer no. 857)

SOME EXAMPLES OF THOSE WHO CARED FOR ORPHANS

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1.) Basheer bin Aqrabah Juhani ﷺ relates, "On the day the Battle of Uhud was fought, I asked Rasulullaah ﷺ, 'What has happened to my father?' Rasulullaah ﷺ replied, 'He has been martyred. May Allaah shower His mercy on him.' When I started to weep, Rasulullaah ﷺ picked me up, passed his hand over my head and made me ride with him on his animal. He said, 'Will you not like me to be your father and Aa'isha to be your mother?'" (Shuabul-Imaan no. 10533, At-Tareekhul-Kabeer no. 1751/1752)

2.) Abu Imraan Jawni states, "Suleiman ﷺ was once travelling with his entourage. Birds were shading him, and there were humans and jinns on his right and left. He passed by a worshipper of the Bani Israaeel, who said, "By Allaah! O son of Dawood! Allaah ﷻ has granted you a great kingdom." Suleiman ﷺ heard his speech and

remarked, “One tasbeeh in a person’s pan of Scales is better than whatever the son of Dawood has been granted, since whatever he has been granted will eventually terminate, whilst the tasbeeh will remain forever.” The Nabi of Allaah ﷺ, Suleiman عليه السلام, used to feed the lepers and orphans sifted bread, and used to eat barley himself. He did not leave behind one dinar or dirham the day he passed away. (Hilyatul Awliya vol. 2 page 313)

3.) Mu’aawiya ؓ asked Abdullaah ibn Abbaas ؓ, “What do you have to say about Umar bin Khattaab ؓ?” Abdullaah ibn Abbaas ؓ replied, “May Allaah shower his mercy on Abu Hafs (Umar ؓ). By Allaah! He was a great supporter of Islaam, a protector of the orphans, a treasure chest of Imaan and a shelter for the weak. By Allaah! He was truly a sanctuary for the pious, a fortress for Allaah’s creation and an ally to every person. With fortitude and confidence in Allaah, he established Allaah’s True Deen until the time came when Allaah made the Deen of Islaam dominant and subjugated many lands. Allaah’s name was then mentioned in every direction, every hill and every spring in many parts of the world. He displayed exceptional tolerance when people spoke offensively, he was always grateful to Allaah during times of hardship and times of ease and he engaged in the Dhikr of Allaah at every moment. May Allaah’s curse until the Day of Qiyaamah follow the person who harbours enmity for him!” (Al-Mu’jamul-Kabeer no. 10589)

4.) For the burial of Abu Ubaiday, the people gathered together. The bier of Abu Ubaydah ؓ was taken to a plain where Mu’aadh ؓ led the funeral prayer. When the corpse was brought to the grave, Mu’aadh ؓ, Amr ibn Al Aas ؓ and Dhaak ibn Qais ؓ entered the grave to lay the body to rest. When they emerged from the grave, they closed the grave with sand and (standing at the head-side of the grave) Mu’aadh ؓ addressed the deceased, saying,

“O Abu Ubaydah! I shall certainly heap praises on you, but will say nothing untrue, because I fear that it may incur Allaah’s wrath. By Allaah! As far as I know, you were certainly from among those people who abundantly engaged in the Dhikr of Allaah, who walked humbly on earth and who would greet (and part company from) foolish people when they addressed you (to avoid disputes). You were among those who would neither be miserly nor wasteful when spending in charity, but who displayed excellent moderation between the two extremes. By Allaah! You were among those whose hearts submitted to Allaah, who displayed humility, who were compassionate towards orphans and the poor and who detested the behaviour of treacherous and arrogant people.” (Mustadrak Haakim vol. 3 page 264, no. 5148)

5.) Abu Bakr ibn Hafs has reported that Abdullaah ibn Umar ؓ would eat only when an orphan was present at his tablecloth. (Abu Nuaym in Hilyah vol. 1 page 298, Al-Adabul-Mufrad no. 136)

6.) Hasan reports that whenever Abdullaah ibn Umar ؓ ate a meal, he would invite an orphan from the vicinity. When he was about to eat lunch one day, he searched for the orphan, but could not find him. The orphan then arrived after Ibn Umar had eaten. He asked for some more food to be brought, but was informed that it was finished. Some porridge mixed with honey (a dessert) was brought for Ibn Umar ؓ. He then gave the cup to the orphan saying, "Take this. By Allaah, you have not lost out." Hasan (the narrator) commented, “By Allaah, Ibn Umar was the one who had not lost out.” (Al-Adabul-Mufrad no. 134)

7.) Barra bint Raafi narrates, "When some surplus wealth was being distributed, Umar ؓ sent to Zaynab bint Jahash ؓ her share. When it was brought to her, she said, 'May Allaah forgive Umar ؓ. My other sisters are better at distributing this than I am (take it to

them rather).' When she was told that it was all hers, she exclaimed, 'Subhaanallaah!' She then veiled herself and told the people bringing it to put it down and cover it with a cloth. Thereafter, she instructed me to put my hand beneath the cloth, to take a handful of coins and give it to the people of certain tribes, all of whom were her relatives and orphans. Eventually when there was only a little left beneath the cloth, I said to her, 'May Allaah forgive you, O Ummul Mu'mineen! By Allaah! We also have a right to this.' 'You may have whatever is left beneath the cloth,' she said. We found eighty five Dirhams there. She then raised her hands towards the sky and prayed, 'O Allaah! Let not the surplus of Umar reach me after this year.' She then passed away (not long afterwards)." (Hilyatul-Awliyaa vol. 2 page 54)

8.) Muadh ibn Jabal ؓ narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ advised him (when sending him to Yemen), "O Muaadh, I advise you to fear Allaah, speak the truth, fulfil promises, give back trusts, abstain from deceit, have mercy on the orphan, protect your neighbour, control your anger, adopt humility, spread the salaam, speak gently, hold firm onto imaan and gaining an understanding of the Quraan, have love for the hereafter, fear for reckoning, short-lived hopes and do righteous actions. I prohibit you from speaking in a vulgar way to any Muslim, from falsifying a truthful person, from verifying a liar, or from disobeying a just ruler." (Abu Nuaym in Hilyah, Bayhaqi in Zuhd, and Kharaaiti in Makaarimul-Akhlaaq)

9.) A very sinful person in a certain area of Basrah passed away. His wife could not find anyone to assist with his janaazah, since none of his neighbours wanted to have anything to do with him, due to his excessive wrongdoings. His wife hired two labourers and they helped her to take him to the graveyard. They could not find

anyone to perform his janaazah salaah, so she then took him to a jungle to bury him. A very great saint lived in a nearby mountain. The woman saw him and it seemed as if he was waiting for the janaazah. He came down from the mountain to perform the janaazah salaah. The news spread in the village that the saint has emerged to perform the salaah of some-one. The people all rushed there. The saint lead the salaah with the people behind. The people were surprised as to why the saint had performed the janaazah salaah over this man. He said to them, "I was told in a dream to go to that certain place, where I would see a woman standing alone by a janaazah, and that I should perform his salaah, as he has been forgiven." The people became more astonished. The pious saint then asked the wife regarding her husband's condition and actions. She replied, "He was as you know him. He would spend the entire night at the tavern, drinking." The saint remarked, "Think carefully, are you aware of any good actions of his which he did?" She replied, "Yes, he had three qualities. Firstly, daily, he would become sober in the morning. He would change his clothes, make wudhu and perform Fajr salaah in congregation. Then he would return to the tavern and continue his evil. Secondly, his house would never be empty of an orphan or two. He would shower more kindness upon them than his upon own children. He would keep a fine watch over them. Thirdly, in the darkness of the night, at times, he would become sober. He would cry and say, "O my Sustainer! Which corner of Hell have you reserved for this wretched one?" The doubt which the saint had was removed and he went away. (Ihya-Ulumiddeen)

10.) Ubaidah ibn Hayaat said, "I saw Suwaid ibn Hayaat in a dream and asked him, "What action did you find most virtuous?" He

replied, “Feeding an orphan who is not a family member.” (Ibn Abid-Dunya in Kitabul-Iyaal no. 623)

11.) One of the pious predecessors said, “In the initial stages of my life, I was a heavy drinker, and always engaged in sinning. Once I saw an orphan. I honoured him as one’s son is honoured, in fact even more. When I went to sleep, I saw the angels of Jahannum, who caught hold of me and dragged me to Jahannum. Suddenly, I saw the orphan appearing in front of me. He said to the angels, “Leave him, until I plead to my Sustainer on his behalf.” They refused to do so. All of a sudden, a voice sounded out, “Leave him. We have forgiven him, despite all his sins, due to the kindness he showered on the orphan.” I then woke up. From that day onwards, I have honoured orphans very greatly.” (Az-Zawaaajir an Iqtiraafil-Kabaair)

12.) Umairah ibn Abi Naahiyah said, “I took an orphan from the Quraysh to my house. I fed him, cleaned him and gave him some money.” I then made an intention, “O Allaah! Grant my mother a share of the reward of my action towards this orphan.” When I went to sleep, I saw my mother coming towards me wearing the most beautiful clothing. This orphan was with her. She stood before me and said, “O my beloved son! If only you saw what this young lad did for me today.” The narrator Laith says, “She meant, “I attained so much of goodness because of my son Umairah’s kindness to the orphan.” (Ibn Abid-Dunya in Kitabul-Iyaal no. 622))

AN ORPHAN'S LIFE

1.) A lady who had become orphaned at a young age writes her story:

When my mother gave birth to her sixth child, a new-born girl, signs of her illness began to show. She was not able to complete her usual household chores of cleaning up after us, cooking, raising and caring for us. Soon my mother was so weakened by her stomach cancer, she could no longer stay in our home as there was no one to care for her growing needs. She and my new-born sister went to my maternal grandparent's house in another town. SubhanaAllah, we did not feel that we had lost her at that point, because we used to visit her every weekend. I could still sit next to her, and she would ask me about my school and most importantly about how I was doing. I still felt the love of a mother, even if she couldn't go back home with us.

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My mother's condition worsened until she parted this life. That is when sadness came into our lives. I, the oldest, was only 12 years and now held many responsibilities. My little sister, now six months, was left to be raised in the home of my maternal grandparents.

Our struggles began. We were four girls and three boys (1 half-brother) orphaned by our beloved mother and forgotten by most. Even though we stayed with our father and paternal grandparents, we were emotionally alone. Our poor grandmother had a very hard time managing both cooking and cleaning. She decided to focus on the cooking, feed us well, and let us be dirty.

We do not blame her for she was old in age. I tried to help with cleaning our home, sweeping, laundry etc. but during the school year it was nearly impossible to keep up with such a large family. We had been the cleanest children in our neighbourhood, but after my mother passed away we got so dirty we reached the point that we all had lice. The neighbours' children would run away from us in fear that they would get it too. The only time we would feel happy was when my aunt's children would come and visit us from outside the city and play with us. The lice got so bad, that our grandmother had to treat us. Although she didn't know exactly what to do she tried. She bought a can of household insect spray. Each of us were sprayed thoroughly by the choking fumes, and became dizzy for about 15 minutes. Next, she gave us much needed baths to wash chemicals and dead insects out from our hair.

We used to go to school but we did not have anyone to ask us what we had studied, how we had studied, or what we needed. There was no one to buy us our basic supplies such as pens and notebooks. If my pen was lost or broken, I would have to beg for days before someone would buy me another. I used to write my Arabic lessons and Mathematic lessons in one small notebook.

If one of us was sick, we wouldn't receive much care because we were a lot of children and our grandmother was busy with more important things. My poor youngest brother, Majid, was forgotten to be circumcised until the age of six. He still remembers the exact details of what happened. Most of the many tears I shed were not as much for myself as for my brothers and sisters' hardships.

My grandmother wanted my father to remarry so that she would

have somebody helping her with the housework and with the children. My father did marry, but it was not as she had expected. The new wife stayed with my father in another apartment alone. My poor grandmother had wanted my father to marry so that her workload would lessen, but nothing improved at all. They divorced shortly after because of their lack of compatibility.

Our grandmother grew even older and was not able to care for 6 children. This time my father wanted to marry, and he chose a girl 19 years old. This resulted in two more girls in the house, but it did not improve our situation. She bared the responsibility of herself and her husband (my father) only.

My grandmother wanted to give my father's new wife a chance to know us so that she could stay with us, and for my father to bear the responsibility of his children (us), so she travelled overseas to visit her other son (my uncle). Those were the worst days, for we felt orphaned in our hearts. We missed her so and wanted someone who would ask about us, love and care for us. Our grandmother returned after about 3 months because she missed us so much.

Anyways, we grew up through everything, but a mother is always a friend to her daughters, advising them, informing them, and teaching them how to cook, clean, etc.

The time for our marriage came, the time of happiness for girls, the time of misery for orphans. We did not find anyone who would take us shopping for beautiful clothes even though money was available. The mother is the one who ensures her daughter has a proper marriage. She's the one who tells the father what her daughter needs for a wedding. As for us we did not find

somebody to guide us. We were never shown how to maintain a home, prepare meals or even bake cookies as most girls do at a young age. This resulted in facing ridicules and insults from our in-laws. We did not have beautiful clothes as a new bride may, and this also made us unaccepted among our husbands' families. The suffering of an orphan is not only at a young age, the effects last a lifetime.

Even now we need someone to tell our problems to, and listen to us. We are not able to express all of our issues to our dear grandmother because she is old in age and sick. What we needed in our lives was love, mercy and someone to care about us. My siblings and I used to hate holidays and celebrations, we did not feel any happiness in them. We were jealous of the neighbours' children because they had mothers who protected them and were always there to look out for their needs. Even now that we are married we still need a mother to visit us and help us when we are about to have a baby. Only Allaah ﷻ knows how much difficulties my siblings and I face during our lives.

A mother is a treasure whose value is known only to those who have lost her. To all those whose mothers are still living, I advise them to appreciate their mother. Respect her and remember always that paradise lies under her feet. Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "Jannat lies under the mothers' feet."

A mother is the most caring creature on Earth. She cared for you when you were young so care for her when she is old. Your mother deserves to be kissed on her foot not hand. I salute all moms, and especially my precious and beloved grandmother!

2.) My name is Ummah. This is my story. I am an orphan who grew up in poverty. I am eight years old. Yesterday, I looked around me and saw people celebrating and I was uninvited. I got looked down every time I walked through the streets. I always felt this emptiness in my heart. I knew I was missing something. I wished someone would care for me. I have no mother or father. I wished for that very one glance a mother would give to her child full of love and mercy. I wished that I had a father who would ask me what I really wanted and would give it to me just to see me smile. I wish for a brother who would always be around to protect. I wish for a sister who would hold my hand and walk with me to school.

Today when I smiled, I was hushed away by the people. I felt as if no one liked to see me happy, that I was not important. Was my happiness not important to others? Why? Because I am an orphan. I started wearing hijab when I was six years old.

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One day I was very hungry. I had no food and a man with a beard came to me. He gave me some money so that I could buy some bread. I was shocked at his generosity and looked at him in amazement. After giving me some money, he looked at the sky and said "Alhamdulillah." With that money, I went to go buy some food for myself. The bakery in my town was next to a masjid. The store keeper closed the store until he prayed the Dhuhr Salah. I waited outside the masjid in order to buy the food. It was the day of Jummah and the Imam's khutbah was heard till the outside. I listened and it was about Hijab. It was so powerful that I cried so much and decided I would wear one.

I took the money and bought a small piece of bread. I spent the rest of the money on buying myself a nice hijab. This was the day, I learned how to say "Alhamdulillah".

I wiped my tears away from my eyes thinking of how lovely it would be to have a home. A few seconds later I looked up at the sky and saw the rain pouring down as if the sky cried with me. My heart felt at peace. I felt joy and recited the only verse I knew that the Imam repeated three times at the Masjid,

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease. (Inshiraah verse 5)

I now looked again at the sky and saw a beautiful rainbow appearing which made me full of joy. I said, "Alhamdulillah" again and walked towards my orphanage. On my way, a few boys came near me and started to make fun of my Hijab. I didn't know what to do and suddenly I heard a voice. A very tall boy came with his cricket bat and as soon as those five boys saw him, they ran away which made me laugh. When they left, I realized my foot my bleeding since I stepped on the rocks when those boys were bothering me. To my astonishment, the tall boy called me with a word I have never heard from anyone. He called me "sister." I was shocked and looked in all directions if he was addressing his sister. I told him I did not have any brothers, I am an orphan. He looked at me with an angry face saying, "You are my sister in Islam. I am here to protect you and no one can harm you while I am here. Let me go call my sister and take care of you."

He ran and came back with a beautiful girl. She said her name is "Khalida." Then she held my hand in hers and invited me inside her home. Her mother rushed and cleaned my wound. She put a bandage on me and looked at me with eyes of love and mercy. Then his father came as well and asked me if I needed anything. I didn't know what to say. I just started crying and could not believe everything I was seeing. In one moment, I found a brother, a sister,

a mother and a father like people who started to care for me because I am a Muslim girl.

I felt very happy and thanked Allaah. This family adopted me and never made me feel lonely. They taught me how to read Qur'aan and my sister also decided to wear Hijab with me. I always thanked Allaah for everything. Although I wished someone would care for me. I always felt Allaah's mercy around me. I knew that Allaah The All-Knowing knew every pain I felt and helped me through it.

A few months later, she fell very ill and returned to her Lord. Ummah was cared by the righteous Muslim family for only a few months. She was their guest who they loved so much. Ummah was an orphan. Orphans have been mentioned in the Qur'an by Allaah ﷻ. The people who were around Ummah looked down upon her as if she was not valuable however she was valuable in front of Allaah ﷻ. The rainbow appeared in the sky the second she recited the only verse she knew. She was then blessed with a beautiful family.

Allaah ﷻ says in the Qur'aan,

Nay, but you do not honour the orphans! (Fajr verse 17)

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards east or west; but it is righteousness- to believe in Allaah and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your wealth, out of love for Him, for your family members, for orphans, for the needy, for the traveller, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in salaah, and practice regular charity; to fulfil the contracts which you have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the pious." (Baqarah verse 177)

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ reported that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "The best house among the Muslims is the house in which orphans are well treated. The worst house among the Muslims is the house in which orphans are ill-treated. I and the guardian of the orphan will be in Jannah like that," indicating his two fingers. (Al Adabul Mufrad)
Story submitted by Ishrat Ali

THE RIGHTS OF ORPHANS

If Allaah ﷻ has chosen anyone as a guardian of an orphan, he must fulfil and grants the rights of this child:

A.) THE RIGHT TO BEING RAISED

Every child holds the right to being raised by either a mother (if alive) or by any responsible person who will serve as an example. This entails caring for the child both emotionally and physically. Children must be nurtured, loved and care for. They must be taught good Islamic morals, disciplined and taught to differentiate right from wrong. This is to ensure that the child grows up to become a good member of society who will benefit the people around him positively. In short, these are some of the duties of one bringing up an orphan:

A- Teaching the orphan child the values of Islaam and the performance of his religious Islaamic duties, by setting a good example.

B- Avoiding excessive spoiling, roughness, or weakness, as well as not preferring a child over the other.

C- The fulfilment of their emotional needs, by offering the proper care, love, and guidance suitable for every stage of childhood.

B.) THE RIGHT TO INHERITANCE

If the parents of the orphan left behind property, it is absolutely important that the guardian of that child keeps it until the child is of age, and then gives it to him. One should never use what belongs to the orphan except if he intends to invest it into something that will benefit the child when he comes of age. Whatever happens, the orphan must be given every cent of what is his. Wrongfully consuming the property of orphans incurs the wrath of Allaah ﷻ. Allaah ﷻ states,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَى ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيرًا

Indeed, those who devour the property of orphans unjustly are only consuming fire into their bellies and they will soon enter a blazing fire. (Nisaa verse 10)

In a hadeeth, Nabi ﷺ warned that the one who consumes the orphan's wealth unjustly will be in such a condition on the Day of Qiyaamah that the flames in his stomach will leap out of his mouth, eyes, ears and nose. All who will see him will immediately know that he had consumed the wealth of the orphan. (Durrul-Manthoor)

Abu Barzah ؓ narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "A group of people will be resurrected on the Day of Judgement with their mouths full of fire." When he ؓ was asked as to who they were, he ؓ replied, "Do you not see that Allaah ﷻ states, "Indeed, those who devour the property of orphans unjustly are only consuming

into their bellies fire and they will soon enter a blazing fire.” (Ibn Hibbaan no. 5566)

Abu Saeed Khudri رضي الله عنه narrates that Nabi ﷺ had narrated the happenings of the night he travelled to the heavens, “I saw a group of people who had lips like that of camels. Certain angels were appointed who caught hold of their lips, and then shoved stones of fire into their mouths, until it emerged from their backs. They were bellowing and screaming like animals. I asked Jibraaeel, “Who are they?” He عليه السلام replied, “They are those referred to in the verse, “those who devour the property of orphans unjustly are only consuming fire into their bellies and they will soon enter a blazing fire.” (Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)

Certain people, during the lifetime of Rasulullaah ﷺ, did not exercise caution with the wealth of orphans. The following injunctions were therefore revealed: “Do not approach the wealth of orphans except in the manner that is best...” (An’aam verse 152), as well as the above verse. Upon learning of these injunctions, those who had orphans under their care became fearful and completely separated the food and expenses of the orphans from their own food and expenses. They did this because if they were to mix the wealth of orphans with theirs, they would inevitably have to eat their wealth. The complication that this separation caused was that if a particular meal was prepared for the orphan alone, some of the food would be left over, get spoilt and eventually thrown away. These precautions began causing losses to the orphans. When this situation was explained to Rasulullaah ﷺ, the following verse was revealed:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَىٰ قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ وَإِنْ تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ
الْمُصْلِحِ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَعْنَتَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

And they ask you concerning orphans. Say, “To set right their affairs is best. And if you mix their expenses (with yours), then they are your brothers. And Allah knows him who means mischief (e.g. to swallow their property) from him who means good (e.g. to save their property). And if Allah had wished, He could have imposed hardship upon you. Truly, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.” (Baqarah verse 220)

The main object is that there must be justness and correct management in the wealth of orphans. If there is a benefit to the orphan by separating his wealth, this should be opted for. But if it is felt that it is to his advantage to mix his wealth with yours, this should be done. There will be no harm if you eat something of his and the next time he eats something of yours. This is because that orphan is either your brother in Islam or your blood brother. And it is not wrong for brothers to share, to feed, or to be fed by each other. What is very necessary is that full consideration should be given to improving the lot of the orphans. Allaah ﷻ has full knowledge of him who desires the embezzlement and destruction of the wealth of orphans and him who desires the reformation and improvement of their lot. (Tafseer Uthmaani)

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In another verse, Allaah ﷻ states,

وَأَتُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَبَدَّلُوا الْخَيْرَ بِالْأَسْفَلِ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ
خُوبًا كَبِيرًا

And give to the orphans their property, and do not substitute worthless (things) for (their) good (ones) and do not devour their property (as an addition) to your own property; this is surely a great sin.” (Nisaa verse

From this verse, we learn the following three injunctions:

1.) The guardian and overseer of the orphan whose father has passed away is ordered to hand over the latter's wealth once he reaches the age of puberty. While the orphans are under the guardianship of the guardian, he should not take the good of their wealth and exchange it for something that is bad or lesser in value. The guardian should not mix his personal wealth with that of the orphan's and then devour it. It is permissible for the guardian to keep his personal food together with that of the orphan provided no harm comes to the food of the orphan. It should not happen that through this mixing he devours the wealth of the orphan and fills his own pockets in the process. Devouring the wealth of orphans is a very serious sin.

2.) It is prohibited to use more than what is necessary from the wealth of the orphan, e.g. using R2 when only R1 is required. It is also prohibited to hasten in using the wealth of the orphan out of fear that when he grows up he will take all his wealth away. In short, the amount to be spent and the time when it is to be spent should both be appropriate - do not spend excessively nor hastily.

3.) The guardian should not use the orphan's wealth for his personal expenses. However, if the guardian is a needy person, he may take from the orphan's wealth in accordance with the services that he renders to the orphan. He may take this on a monthly basis. As for the person who is affluent, it is absolutely forbidden for him to take anything.

4.) Keep a close check on orphans until they reach a marriageable age. Then, if you perceive that they have sound judgement, hand

over their property to them. Do not consume it extravagantly and precipitately before they come of age. Those who are wealthy should abstain from it altogether. Those who are poor should use it sensibly and correctly. When you hand over their property to them, ensure that there are witnesses on their behalf.

C.) THE RIGHT TO CHILD SUPPORT

This includes the right to education, clothing, feeding, shelter, and healthcare.

A parent can never be replaced, but as Muslims, we can still give these children the best we can. Allaah ﷻ knows why he chose to make someone an orphan, and why he chooses you to be the guardian of that child. Have faith and remember that Allaah ﷻ is ever seeing, all hearing of what we do. Indeed, there is great reward for taking care of an orphan.

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CONCLUSION

Looking after orphans is a divine command. Those who are fortunate to be given this opportunity will be blessed with the following rewards, as were mentioned earlier:

- A.) Safety from difficulties on the Day of Judgement (Balad)
- B.) Attaining high levels in Jannah (Dahr)
- C.) Being in Jannah in close proximity to Rasulullaah ﷺ - hadeeth 1,2,3,8,10
- D.) Definite entry into Jannah – hadeeth 4,5
- E.) Safety from Shaytaan – hadeeth 6

- F.) Possessing the best house in the sight of Allaah ﷻ - hadeeth 7
 G.) Close proximity to Rasulullaah ﷺ on the Day of Judgement – hadeeth 8
 H.) Rewards written for every hair touched – hadeeth 10
 I.) Soft heartedness and one's needs will be fulfilled– hadeeth 11,12
 J.) Safety from punishment on the Day of Judgement - hadeeth 13
 H.) Barrier from the Fire – hadeeth 14
 I.) Under the shade of the Throne – hadeeth 15
 May Allaah ﷻ accept this booklet and make it a means for goodness to spread in the entire world!

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي بِنِعْمَتِهِ تَتِمُّ الصَّالِحَاتُ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ
 رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ
 جَزَى اللَّهُ عَنَّا مُحَمَّدًا ﷺ مَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ، سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ، أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ أَسْتَغْفِرُكَ
 وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْكَ

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ