

Introduction

The family is the first main pillar for the raising of a good child. The foundation of the personality of a child is formed in the family environment, and for this reason the child's rights upon the family are divided into two parts: the rights before the birth of the child and the rights after birth.

Based on this principle, the responsibility of parents towards the child from the viewpoint of Islam begins prior to birth. So, even before the birth, the child has rights upon the parents, and if not observed, the effects of a child's upbringing and education will decrease.

The recommendations given by the leaders of Islam in this regard are explained in the first section of this book through four chapters.

1– Organising a Meritorious Family

In the first chapter while explaining the value of wanting to have children and the importance of forming a family, emphasis has been put on the fact that the sex of a child is not important, whether being a male or a female. The important thing is the health and merit of a child, and since newborn girls had mostly been treated unkindly, the predecessors of Islam strongly recommended treating them with extra affection and grace.

The Holy Qur'an has clearly said that in the Hereafter the believing children will join their family in Paradise, and thereby families who raise meritorious children are admired and encouraged.

On the contrary, the Islamic traditions have seriously warned against the danger of unworthy children, introducing them as the worst afflictions of a family.

Population Control from the Viewpoint of Islam

Pondering on the above-mentioned, it becomes clear that the purpose of the traditions that encourage Muslims to have more children is to arrange a program for producing as many healthy and righteous

children as possible in order to create an exemplary society. In this case, not only does Islam oppose the control of the growth of population, but it supports the increase of the population of a Godly society. However, in the conditions brought about by economical difficulties and cultural corruption where families do not have the ability to raise qualified children, the increase of children is not desirable and there is a need for family planning to control the population.

Therefore, according to the instructions of the leaders of Islam, the Islamic government and the Muslim families are obliged to organise their programs aimed to increase the population based on their economic and cultural abilities. If it is not possible to upbringing righteous people and have an increase in population at the same time, it is preferred to prevent population growth and give priority to the upbringing of righteous children.

2- The Role of Heredity

The second chapter explains the positive and negative roles of heredity in the development of the personality of the child as mentioned by the leaders of Islam. Accordingly, not only does the child inherit the outside features of its parents, but it also inherits their psychological and innate characteristics (such as bravery, generosity, and good temper).

A noteworthy point is that according to Islamic traditions, the mothers play a greater role than the fathers in this regard. Therefore, those who seek to raise healthy, strong, handsome and righteous children must be more mindful in choosing their wives.

3- The Role of the Parents' Food

Chapter three explains the role the parents' food intake has in the future of the child. The most important advice the leaders of Islam have in this regard is warning against the destructive role of consuming unlawful food. The foetus that originates from the consumption of unlawful food will lead to the deviation and aberration of the child. The families who desire happiness for their children must avoid eating prohibited food. Such precautions regarding food must be specifically observed by mothers during their pregnancy, and mothers should not even participate in any feast whose food is doubtful.

Moreover, the consumption of certain kinds of food and fruits is recommended for fathers and mothers prior to the formation of the foetus, throughout the period of pregnancy and after giving birth.

4- The role of the Method of Copulation

According to Islam, lawful and unlawful sexual relations have a fundamental role in the positive and negative characteristics of a child. From the viewpoint of the Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.), the first Divine bounty given to a person is the legitimacy and purity of birth. Many of the social vices are the results of the transgression of unlawful birth. This does not mean that illegitimately born children can never choose

the correct path of life, even though without doubt choosing the correct path is difficult for them.

The fourth chapter of this section mentions the positive effects of legitimacy of birth in the formation of the personality of the child and the warnings against illegitimate births. In addition to this, for the felicity of the future of the children, it is recommended that parents be mindful of this at the time of sexual intercourse. At the end of the chapter, some traditions will be mentioned about the role of the states and particular times of sexual intercourse and its effects in the future of the child.^{[1](#)}

^{[1](#)} . It must be noted that the authenticity of such narrations is weak; however the weakness of the chain of narrators does not indicate that they have not been issued by the Infallibles (a.s.). Therefore, since these traditions have been quoted in authentic sources, they have been mentioned at the end of this chapter for the awareness of families.

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