

The Rights of Relationship

حقوق الرحم

Right n. 22: The Right of the Mother

حق الأم

فَحَقُّ أُمِّكَ، فَإِنْ تَعَلَّمَ أَنَّهَا حَمَلَتْكَ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْمِلُ أَحَدٌ أَحَدًا وَأَطْعَمَتْكَ مِنْ ثَمَرَةِ قَلْبِهَا مَا لَا يُطْعِمُ أَحَدٌ أَحَدًا، وَأَنَّهَا وَقَتَكَ بِسَمْعِهَا وَبَصَرِهَا وَيَدَيْهَا وَرِجْلَيْهَا وَشَعْرَهَا وَبَشَرَهَا وَجَمِيعَ جَوَارِحِهَا مُسْتَبْشِرَةً بِذَلِكَ، فَرِحَةً مُوَابِلَةً، مُحْتَمِلَةً لِمَا فِيهِ مَكْرُوهُهَا وَأَلَمُهَا وَثَقُلُهَا وَغَمُّهَا حَتَّى دَفَعَتْهَا عَنْكَ يَدُ الْقُدْرَةِ وَأَخْرَجَتْكَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ فَرَضِيَّتْ أَنْ تَشْبَعَ وَتَجُوعُ هِيَ، وَتَكْسُوكَ وَتَعْرَى، وَتُرْوِيكَ وَتَظْمَأُ، وَتُظِلُّكَ وَتَضْحَى، وَتُنْعِمَكَ بِبُؤْسِهَا، وَتُلْذِذَكَ بِالنَّوْمِ بِأَرْقَاهَا، وَكَانَ بَطْنُهَا لَكَ وِعَاءً، وَحِجْرُهَا لَكَ حِوَاءً، وَثَدْيُهَا لَكَ سِقَاءً، وَنَفْسُهَا لَكَ وِقَاءً، تُبَاشِرُ حَرَّ الدُّنْيَا وَبَرْدَهَا لَكَ وَدُونَكَ، فَتَشْكُرُهَا عَلَى قَدْرِ ذَلِكَ وَلَا تَقْدِرُ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا بِعَوْنِ اللَّهِ وَتَوْفِيقِهِ.

Then the right of your mother is that you should know that she carried you where no one carries anyone, and she fed you with the fruit of her heart – that which no one feeds anyone, and she protected you with her hearing and sight, and her hands and legs, and her hair and skin and all her other organs. She was highly delighted to do so. She was happy and eager, enduring the harm and the pains, and the heaviness and the grief until the Mighty Hand expelled you out of her and delivered you out to the Earth.

She did not care if she went hungry as long as you ate, and if she was naked as long as you were clothed, and if she was thirsty as long as you drank, and if she was in the sun as long as you were in the shade, and if she was miserable as long as you were happy, and if she was deprived

of sleeping as long as you were resting. And her abdomen was your abode, and her lap was your seat, and her breast was your supply of drink, and her soul was your fort. She protected you from the heat and the cold of this world. Then you should thank her for all that. You will not be able to show her gratitude unless through God's help and His granting you success.

The Meaning of 'Umm'

The Arabic word 'Umm' that is used for mother really means the root and the foundation. It is so widely used to mean mother that its other meanings are overshadowed.

The Use of 'Umm' in the Qur'an

One of the uses of 'Umm' in the Qur'an is to refer to a real mother as in the following verse:

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ فَإِذَا خِفَتْ عَلَيْهِ فَالْقَبِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكِ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

"So We sent this inspiration to the mother of Moses: "Suckle (thy child)..." [The Holy Qur'an, al-Qasas 28:7]

The second use of 'Umm' in the Qur'an is to refer to its basic meaning of root and foundation as in the following verse:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ

"He it is Who has sent down to thee the Book: In it are verses basic or fundamental (of established meaning); they are the foundation of the Book: others are allegorical." [The Holy Qur'an, Al-i-Imran 3:7]

The third use of the word 'Umm' in the Qur'an is to refer to the greatest of several things or the central one as in the following verse:

لِتُنذِرَ أُمَّ الْقُرَىٰ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا

"...that thou mayest warn the Mother of Cities¹ and all around her²..." [The Holy Qur'an, al-Shura 42:7]

Mecca was the central town in Arabia like the capital cities in the world today. Others say that Mecca is called the mother of cities because the Earth started to expand starting from there, and that Mecca is the

first spot created and the first piece of dry land on the Earth. The wives of the Prophet are also considered the mothers of the believers in the Qur'an as we read in the following verse:

النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ

“The Prophet is closer to the Believers than their own selves, and his wives are their mothers...”
[The Holy Qur'an, al-Ahzab 33:6]

Considering the various meanings mentioned above one can better understand the importance of the rights of the mother.

Mother Suffers Pain

Now that we have reviewed the meanings of the word ‘Umm’ in Arabic we will consider the various important points that Imam Sajjad expressed regarding the rights of the mother. Imam Sajjad starts his discussion with pregnancy and describes how a mother suffers the hardships of the period of pregnancy and the pains of labor.

This is the type of hardship that no one else is ready to suffer for our sake. This point is clearly stressed in the Holy Qur'an in the following verse:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا وَحَمْلُهُ وَفِصَالُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

“We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents: In pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth. The carrying of the (child) to his weaning is (a period of) thirty months. At length, when he reaches the age of full strength and attains forty years, he says, "O my Lord! Grant me that I may be grateful for Thy favor, which Thou has bestowed upon me, and upon both my parents, and that I may work righteousness such as Thou mayest approve; and be gracious to me in my issue. Truly have I turned to Thee and truly do I bow (to Thee) in Islam.”
[The Holy Qur'an, al-Ahqaf 46: 15]

Moreover, in another verse we read:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدِكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ

“And We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents: in travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning: (hear the command), "Show gratitude to Me and to

thy parents: to Me is (thy final) Goal. “[The Holy Qur’an, Luqman 31: 14]

The period of pregnancy is one of the most difficult times of a mother’s life. She has to put up with many hardships from the time that she gets pregnant. She has to give a lot of her own energy to the fetus that is growing inside her. That is why she gets weak and develops many problems during pregnancy.

The Period of Pregnancy

As the fetus grows it draws more and more of the materials from the mother’s body. It even affects her bones and her nerves. At times, it even does not let her rest, eat or sleep. Near the end of the period of pregnancy when the baby has grown, it even becomes difficult for the mother to sit up or stand up. However, the mother suffers all these difficulties due to the love she has for the baby that will soon be born: the baby that will smile at his mother once it is born.

Delivery is one of the hardest to bear periods of a mother’s life. There are even mothers who lose their precious life during delivery. A mother is like a carrier who is delivering the most important package with which she is entrusted. She must safely deliver the baby. That is why she must take all necessary precautions to safely deliver her baby. She must be very careful about what she eats, how she moves, where she rests, and her hygiene during the full period of pregnancy.

The duration of the trip for the package that a mother carries is nine months and no less. She must be careful that it is not harmed before reaching its destination. The baby might be harmed at any moment. The baby does not have a spirit until it reaches nearly the age of four months and ten days. Then the baby will push and the mother will be hurt, but she will thank God for her baby being alive. After a long period of hardship and suffering, the baby is born and a new period of life begins for the mother.

During the period of breast-feeding, the mother must spend all her days and nights to fulfill all the needs of the baby. The baby cannot talk during this period. He cannot tell where he is feeling pain. His only language is that of crying, and the mother must recognize all he needs through his crying. The cleansing of the baby is another very difficult task in this period. The mother must also take care of the baby during times of illness.

The Period of Breast-Feeding

The Qur’an states that the period of breast-feeding is two years as in the following verse:

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ

“The mothers shall give suck to their offspring for two whole years, if the father desires to complete the term...” [The Holy Qur’an, al-Baqarah 2:233]

In another verse, the full period of pregnancy and breast-feeding is said to be thirty months:

وَحَمْلُهُ وَفِصَالُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا

***The carrying of the (child) to his weaning is (a period of) thirty months."* [The Holy Qur'an, al-Ahqaf 46: 15]**

Once we subtract 24 from 30, we get 6. Could the period of pregnancy end after six months? The jurisprudents and interpreters of the Qur'an have stated that the minimum period of pregnancy is six months, and the maximum period of breast-feeding is twenty-four months. It has been recorded that some children have been born after six months of pregnancy. We can also conclude that the sooner the baby is born, the longer it must be breast-fed so that this thirty-month period of development is completed.

Ibn `Abbas has been narrated as saying that whenever a pregnancy lasts for 9 months, the mother should breast-feed the baby for 21 months. However, if the pregnancy lasts for 6 months, then the mother should breast-feed the baby for at least 24 months.³ This is also supported by natural laws since the shortcomings of the period of pregnancy must be compensated for during the period of breast-feeding. Therefore, we notice that a mother performs great sacrifices for her baby during the periods of pregnancy and breast-feeding.

These sacrifices are both physical and emotional. It is interesting to note that the Qur'anic verse Ahqaf 46: 15 stresses kindness to both parents, but goes on to mention the sufferings of the mother and the hardships she has to go through on one's behalf. This is to awaken us, and to make us realize her great rights incumbent upon us. Then it recommends that we thank God and both our parents who are the means by which God's blessings are delivered to us.

The Mother's Share in the Development of the Child

In the verses cited above, we were instructed to be kind to both of our parents. Which of the parents has a greater share in the development of the child? The Qur'an has given a greater share to the mother due to her efforts and role during the period of pregnancy and breast-feeding. Once the sperm unites with the egg to form the initial fetus, the parents have an equal share in the development of the child. However, the mother feeds the fetus in the uterus and carries the baby until she delivers it.

Thus, she has a greater share in the development of the baby. Alexis Carl said: "Both parents have an equal share in the initial development of the cells from which other cells are constructed through successive divisions. However, in addition to providing half of the cell, the mother provides for the protoplasm that encompasses the cell. Thus, she has a greater share in the development of the fetus compared to the father. The man's duty in the development of the fetus is for a short time. However, the

mother supports the fetus for nearly nine months during which it is fed by blood delivered to it from the mother's uterus.⁴

The Effects of the Mother on the Fetus

The fetus is like a part of the mother when it is in her uterus. All the physical and psychological states of the mother affect the child. The mother's physical state and what she eats all affect the child. Likewise, her thoughts and temper also affect the child. Should the mother get scared during pregnancy she will get pale. However, the fetus will be more seriously hurt. In Ea'jaze Khorakiha we read: "If a pregnant woman gets so scared that she gets pale and shivers, then there will be certain marks on the child's skin."⁵ A mother's sadness, anger, getting upset, getting suspicious, getting envious, her animosities and other bad or good traits will affect the child."⁶

The Period of Breast-Feeding as Viewed by the Qur'an

Consider the following verse of the Qur'an:

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَا تُضَارَّ وَالِدَةٌ بَوْلِدَهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَلَدِهِ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

"The mothers shall give suck to their offspring for two whole years, if the father desires to complete the term. But he shall bear the cost of their food and clothing on equitable terms. No soul shall have a burden laid on it greater than it can bear. No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child.

Nor father on account of his child, an heir shall be chargeable in the same way. If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no blame on them. If ye decide on a foster-mother for your offspring, there is no blame on you, provided ye pay (the mother) what ye offered, on equitable terms. But fear God and know that God sees well what ye do." [The Holy Qur'an, al-Baqarah 2:233]

In this verse the Qur'anic instructions about breast-feeding are outlined. We can summarize them as follows:

1 The right to breast-feed for two years belongs to the mother. It is the mother who takes care of the baby. Although the father has the right of authority over small children, the Qur'an has given the right of breast-feeding to the mother since breast-feeding establishes physical and emotional ties between the child and the mother. In short, "the mother shall give suck to their offspring for two whole years...."

2 The period of breast-feeding does not have to be two whole years unless the father desires to complete the term considering the child's health. If the mother wants to reduce that period, she can breast-feed for a shorter time.

3 During the breast-feeding period, all the living expenses of the mother including food and clothing are to be paid for by the father of the child even if they get divorced, so that the mother can breast-feed the baby without any worries.

4 Neither the father nor the mother has the right to sacrifice the children's life in order to resolve their own differences. This would impart an irreversible psychological blow to the child. Men should be careful not to violate the mother's right to breast-feed their child by taking the baby away during that period. Mothers who are granted this right should not abuse it either.

5 If the father dies during the period of breast-feeding, his inheritors should provide for the living expenses of the breast-feeding mother.

6 It is up to both parents to mutually agree to stop breast-feeding the child whenever they think it proper to do so based on the child's physical conditions.

7 We can never take away the mother's right to breast-feed her child unless she refuses to do so herself or there is a problem with her breast-feeding the baby. In such a case, we can hire another woman to breast-feed the child- partially or fully.⁷ Thus, we see that breast-feeding is the right of the mother. Now let us see how milk is produced in her body.

Milk Formation

Consider the following verse:

وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةً نُسْقِيكُمْ مِمَّا فِي بُطُونِهِ مِنْ بَيْنِ فَرْثٍ وَكَدِّمٍ لَبَنًا خَالِصًا سَائِغًا لِلشَّارِبِينَ

“And verily in cattle (too) will ye find an instructive sign. From what is within their bodies between excretions and blood, We produce, for your drink, milk, pure and agreeable to those who drink it.” [The Holy Qur'an, al-Naḥl 16:66]

As this verse states milk is produced from what is within the body between excretions and blood. It has been proven that when food is digested in the stomach and is ready to be absorbed it is spread across a very large surface in the stomach and the intestines where there are millions of tiny veins that extract the useful substances from it. This is absorbed by a sophisticated tree-like structure that starts at the nipples. When the mother eats food, her body extracts its nutrients and delivers it through this network to the fetus in the mother's uterus.

Once the baby is born and the umbilical cord is cut, food can no longer reach it this way. However, the same network directs it towards the nipples. New processing steps are carried out by the mammary glands and a new product called milk is produced for the baby. Milk is something in between excretions and blood. The glands in the breasts use the amino acids stored in the body to build the needed proteins. Some of the nutrients in milk do not exist in blood. They are produced in the glands⁸ in the breast.

Other nutrients like salt, phosphates, and vitamins enter the milk directly from the blood. Other nutrients like lactose are derived from the blood, but the breasts considerably process them. As you can see milk production is the result of absorption of food nutrients in the blood and its direct contact with the breasts. However, milk does not look like blood nor does it smell like the excretions. Scientists have stated that at least five hundred litres of blood must circulate through the breasts in order to produce one liter of milk.

To produce one litre of blood a lot of food has to go through the intestines.⁹ Milk nutrients include sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, zinc, copper, iron, phosphorous, chlorine, iodine, and sulphate as well as oxygen, nitrogen and carbonic acid. It also contains sugar in the form of lactose. Milk has B, P, A and D vitamins.¹⁰ That is why the Prophet said:

لَيْسَ يُجْزَى مَكَانَ الطَّعَامِ وَالشَّرَابِ إِلَّا اللَّبَنُ

“The only thing that can be substituted for food and water is milk.”¹¹

Milk: Light and Perfect Food

Milk is a pure and delicious form of food that is suitable for people of all ages. That is why people who get ill are instructed to drink milk. Milk is very effective in the growth of bones and is recommended in case of bone injuries. It may be that the Qur’anic reference to the purity of milk refers to its ability in speeding up bone growth. This is also understood from the jurists’ decrees on breast-feeding.

They say: “If a child is breast-fed by some lady and his bones get strong and he gets chubby then he becomes familiar to her.” They also say: “Fifteen times of consecutive breast-feeding or even a full day and night of consecutive breast-feeding will cause this familiar state.” It can be concluded that even a full day and night period of breast-feeding can result in the strengthening of bones and the growth of the body.¹²

It should also be said that breast-feeding the newly-born with the initial milk produced in the mother’s breast is extremely important. In books on Islamic jurisprudence we read: “The life of the child depends on this. For this reason it is considered to be an obligatory act to feed the baby with the initial milk produced in the breast right after it is born.”¹³ It is perhaps for this reason that it was revealed to the mother of Moses to breast-feed him before putting him in the river as we read in the following verse:

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ فَإِذَا خِفَتْ عَلَيْهِ فَلَقَّيْبَهُ فِي الْيَمِّ

So We sent this inspiration to the mother of Moses: "Suckle (thy child), but when thou hast fears about him, cast him into the river." [The Holy Qur'an, al-Qasas 28:7]

It is through the milk that many of the characteristics of the mother are transferred to the child. Imam Ali hit Muhammad Hanifeh and said: "You have inherited fear from your mother." The Prophet of God only drank his own mother's milk and did not accept to be breast-fed by any other woman. Thus, we realize how important breast-feeding is in the development and growth of the child.

Mother is at the Full Service of the Child

All of the mother's time is spent caring for the child from the moment it is born. Even a moment of neglect of the child by the mother might result in the death of the child. The day and night caring of the child by the mother deprives her of the necessary rest that she needs herself. However, the natural love for the child makes all this bearable. This has been expressed by Imam Sajjad as "she was highly delighted to do so."

Mother's Love

Being loved is one of the essential needs of man. Once born the need for being loved is also born with us. We can say that the need for love ranks third after our need for food and water. Psychologists consider it one of the strongest psychological excitements.

Being loved is not just needed during childhood. Rather it is a need that lasts throughout our life cycle, but is fulfilled in various forms. We can see the manifestations of the need to be loved in children. When not paid enough attention, they hang onto their parents. When other children are loved, they get jealous. In adults, we see that women get jealous of other women who talk to their fiancés or husbands. Young people compete with each other to attract someone to themselves.

Some psychologists believe that children have certain needs that are fulfilled with the sensation of warmth they feel when they are hugged or caressed. Should this need not be fulfilled, there will be bad consequences for the child. One of the scientists who believed in this said: "When children are born they should sleep with their mother and not be sent to a nursery since their need for the warmth of being hugged and caressed will not be fulfilled."

Some psychologists even think that when for some reason a child's mother cannot sleep with the child, she should have another mother take care of and caress the baby. That is why nurseries have been established. [14](#)

Does the Baby Realize the Lack of the Mother

This question has been left unanswered since babies do not talk. However, a few experiments were conducted to discover the answer. In one study, several baby monkeys were given to a fake mother. The baby monkeys had the same reactions they had to their real mothers. The most acceptable fake mother for the baby monkeys was one constructed with a stick wrapped with sponge and rough material.

This one was preferred over another one that was not soft enough for the baby monkey to hug, but produced warm milk for the baby. In these experiments, it was noticed that whenever the baby monkeys faced a stressful situation, they ran to their fake mothers and hugged it. Can we conclude that children need the physical touch of their mother?

A Mother's Sacrifice

A mother prefers the life of the child over her own and even at times some mothers will sacrifice their own lives to save their babies. A mother can stand hardships but cannot stand to hear her baby cry. As Imam Sajjad said: "She did not care if she went hungry as long as you ate, and if she was naked as long as you were clothed..."

A mother loves her baby in two forms. One form is a sense of maternal love like not being able to stand the baby cry. However, she also has an intellectual love for the baby. She takes him to the doctor when he gets ill. The doctor might operate on the child. The mother knows that this operation will cause the child to bleed. She will cry but withstand the operation until the child is cured. If asked why, she would say that she prefers a little damage done to the child to receive the great benefit of becoming healthy.

Heaven is Under the Mothers' Feet

The position of the mother is so lofty that the Prophet has advised us that in order to go to Heaven we must serve our mothers. This is similar to other traditions in which Heaven has been presented as being under the shade of the swords of those who fight in the way of God. Now let us look at a few traditions in this regard. ¹⁵ The Prophet of God said:

الْجَنَّةُ تَحْتَ أَقْدَامِ الْأُمَّهَاتِ.

"Heaven lies under the feet of mothers."

Moses the son of Imran asked God for advice three times. God advised him to His own pure Self for all those three times. However, Moses asked for more advice. God advised him regarding his mother twice and advised him regarding his father for the third time.

جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، مَنْ أَبْر؟ قَالَ: أُمُّكَ. قَالَ: ثُمَّ مَنْ؟ قَالَ: أُمُّكَ. قَالَ: ثُمَّ مَنْ؟ قَالَ: أَبَاكَ.

A man went to see the Prophet of God and said: "O Prophet of God! Whom shall I treat well?" He said: "Your mother." The man asked: "Who else?" The Prophet said: "Your mother." The man asked: "Who else?" Again, the Prophet said: "Your mother." Again, the man asked: "Who else?" This time the Prophet said: "Your father."

Thus, we can see that our mothers have a greater right incumbent upon us. We can say that the mother's share is three times that of the father's based on the above tradition. Even though the father pays for the expenses of the child, the mother has a greater role in the period of pregnancy, breast-feeding and upbringing of the child. The father just pays for the needs, but it is the mother who is always with the child and never leaves him alone and whole-heartedly attends to him.

Serve the Mother or the Front

A young man went to see the Prophet along with his mother. He wanted to go to the front but his mother would not let him do so. The Prophet said:

عِنْدَ أُمِّكَ قَرٌّ وَإِنَّ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَجْرِ عِنْدَهَا مِثْلَ مَا لَكَ فِي الْجِهَادِ.

"Be at the service of your mother since it is not any less of a service than going to the war front."

1. Makkah
2. The world.
3. Tafsir-i-Namunah, v.21, p.327.
4. Koodak (Guftar-i-Falsafi), v. 1, p.96; quoted from Insan Mawjud Nashenakhteh, pp.85-86.
5. Ea'jaze Khorakiha, p. 172.
6. Koodak, v. 1, p. 118.
7. Tafsir-i-Namunah, v.2, pp. 131-135.
8. Milk is produced in small sac-like glands (alveoli) in the breast. These sacs develop after specific hormonal (estrogen, progesterone, pituitary prolactin and placental lactogen) stimulation that begins during four to six months (second trimester) of pregnancy.
9. Awwalin Daneshgah wa Akharin Payambar, v.6, pp.71-77.
10. Mercury can also appear in milk due to silver tooth fillings. Neonatal uptake of mercury (Hg) from milk was examined in a pregnant sheep model, where radioactive mercury (Hg203)/silver tooth fillings (amalgam) were newly placed. A crossover experimental design was used in which lactating ewes nursed foster lambs.

In a parallel study, the relationship between dental history and breast milk concentrations of Hg was also examined in 33 lactating women. Results from the animal studies showed that during pregnancy, a primary fetal site of amalgam Hg concentration is the liver, and after delivery the neonatal lamb kidney receives additional amalgam Hg from mother's milk. In lactating women with aged amalgam fillings, increased Hg excretion in breast milk and urine correlated with the number of fillings or Hg vapor concentration levels in mouth air.

It was concluded that Hg originating from maternal amalgam tooth fillings transfers across the placenta to the fetus, across the mammary gland into milk ingested by the newborn, and ultimately into neonatal body tissues. Comparisons are made to the US minimal risk level recently established for adult Hg exposure. These findings suggest that placement and removal of “silver” tooth fillings in pregnant and lactating humans will subject the fetus and neonate to unnecessary risk of Hg exposure.

[11.](#) Awwalin Daneshgah wa Akharin Payambar, v.6, p. 100.

[12.](#) Tafsir-i-Namunah, v. 1, p.292.

[13.](#) Sharh-i- Lum’ah, Kitab al-Nikah, v.5, p.452.

[14.](#) Usul-i-Ravanshenasi Ma’an, v. 1, p. 441.

[15.](#) Mizan al-Hikmah, v. 10, pp.712-713.

Right n. 23: The Right of the Father

حق الأب

وَأَمَّا حَقُّ أَبِيكَ فَتَعَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ أَصْلُكَ، وَأَنَّكَ فَرْعُهُ، وَأَنَّكَ لَوْلَاهُ لَمْ تَكُنْ. فَمَهْمَا رَأَيْتَ فِي نَفْسِكَ مِمَّا يُعْجِبُكَ فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ أَبَاكَ أَصْلُ النِّعْمَةِ عَلَيْكَ فِيهِ وَاحْمَدِ اللَّهَ وَاشْكُرْهُ عَلَى قَدْرِ ذَلِكَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ.

And the right of your father is that you should know that he is your root and you are his branch. And without him, you would not be. Whenever you see anything in yourself which pleases you, you should know that your father is the root of its blessing upon you. So praise God and thank Him in recognition of that. And there is no power but in God.

Father as the Root of the Child

Imam Sajjad points out the most fundamental cause-effect relationship between a father and his child. This scientific and philosophical principle states that the father is the root of the child, or the cause of the existence of the child. Were it not for the existence of the father, the child would not exist. The existence of the child is dependent on the existence of his father. This is manifested all over the world.

The Imam reminds the children of the importance of the existence of the father and explicitly declares that the father is the root and the children are like his branches. Thus, whatever is manifested in the child has its roots in the existence of his father. Another important issue is that once a child is born he starts to grow up and continues his development while his father may have already completed his growth or be near its completion.

Therefore, it is always the cause that as the child is flourishing and becoming stronger day by day, his

father is getting weaker every day. The child who realizes that he is getting stronger than his father might become too proud of himself. If he starts to feel superior to his father, he might forget to respect his father or even disrespect him. Imam Sajjad advises the children to remember that their father is the root of whatever excellent qualities they have whenever they feel this way.

This will help them overcome such sense of superiority over their father. Imam Sajjad also recommends the children to be grateful and recognize the blessings granted to them. Hence, they will be responsible children and fulfill all their duties regarding their father. This way they will also be saved from the harms they might experience in case their parents damn them.

At last, Imam Sajjad stresses that recognizing the blessings from our father, his rights and properly performing our duties regarding him is only possible through divine assistance, and we should ask God to help us in this respect. In the chapter on the rights of the mother, the Qur'anic verses stress that we should treat our parents with kindness. We will not reiterate those here again, and suffice to the presentation of traditions related to respect for the father.

Traditions on the Importance of the Father

Muhammad ibn Yahya quoted on the authority of Ahmad ibn Esa on the authority of Hasan ibn Mahboob on the authority of Abi Val'lad Han'nat who asked Imam Sadiq regarding the meaning of the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

“...And that ye be kind to parents.” [The Holy Qur'an, Bani Israil 17:23]

Imam Sadiq said:

الإِحْسَانُ أَنْ تُحْسِنَ صُحْبَتَهُمَا وَأَنْ لَا تُكَلِّفَهُمَا أَنْ يَسْأَلَكَ شَيْئًا مِمَّا يَحْتَاجَانِ إِلَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَا مُسْتَغْنَيْنِ

“Goodness (ihsan) is that you associate with them well and that you do not constrain them to ask you for what they need, even if they may be rich.”

Then Imam Sadiq mentioned the verse of Holy Qur'an that states that you cannot get any food unless you give in charity out of what you like. Then Imam Sadiq said:

وَأَمَّا قَوْلُ اللَّهِ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى: "إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أَفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرَهُمَا" قَالَ: إِنْ أَضْجَرَكَ فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أَفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرَهُمَا إِنْ ضَرَبَكَ وَقَالَ "وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا" قَالَ: فَإِنْ ضَرَبَكَ فَقُلْ لَهُمَا غَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمَا فَذَلِكَ مِنْكَ قَوْلٌ كَرِيمٌ، قَالَ "وَإِخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذِّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ" قَالَ: لَا تَمَلَأْ عَيْنَيْكَ مِنَ النَّظَرِ إِلَيْهِمَا إِلَّا

برحمة ورقّة، ولا ترفع صوتك فوق أصواتهما ولا يدك فوق أيديهما، ولا تُقدم قدامهما.

As for the statement of God, the Blessed, the High: **‘Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them’ (17:23)**, the Imam said: “If they vex you, then do not say a word of contempt to them and do not repel them if they strike you.” He said: **“But address them in terms of honour’ (17:23)**, means: Even if they strike you, say to them: ‘May God forgive you’, and that will be your addressing them in terms of honour”. He said: **“And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility’ (17:24)**, means: Do not look at them directly except with mercy and compassion. Do not raise your voice above their voices, or your hands above theirs, and do not walk ahead of them.”¹

All this means that you should not hurt them.

Ibn Mahboob quoted on the authority of Khalid ibn Nafih Bujali on the authority of Muhammad ibn Marwan on the authority of Imam Sadiq :

إنّ رجلاً أتى النبيّ (ص) فقال: يا رسول الله أوصني، فقال

“A man went to see the Prophet and asked him for advice. The Prophet said:

لا تُشرك بالله شيئاً وإن حُرقت بالنار وعُذبت إلا وقلبك مطمئن بالإيمان، والديك فأطعهما وبرّهما حيّين كانا أو ميّتين، وإن أمراك أن تخرج من أهلك ومالك فافعل فإنّ ذلك من الإيمان.

“Do not set any partners for God even if you are tortured or burnt in fire, but that your heart should be secure in faith. Obey your parents, and be kind to them whether they are living or deceased. If they order you to leave your family and your possessions, do so, since that is part of faith.”²

Ali ibn Ibrahim quoted on the authority of Muhammad ibn Esa ibn Ubayd on the authority of Yunus ibn Abdul Rahman on the authority of Durust ibn Abi Mansoor on the authority of Imam Kazim : “A man asked the Noble Prophet about the right of a father incumbent upon his child. The Prophet replied:

لا يُسمّيه باسمه، ولا يمشي بين يديه، ولا يجلس قبله، ولا يستسب له.

“He should not call his father by his name, and he should not walk ahead of him. He should not sit down before he does, and should not do things to cause his father to be blamed or sworn at.”³

Muhammad ibn Yahya quoted on the authority of so and so on the authority of Ibrahim ibn Shoaib that he told Imam Sadiq : “My father has gotten old, and is so weak that I have to accompany him to the toilet. Should I do so?” The Prophet said:

إِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ تَلِيَ ذَلِكَ مِنْهُ فافْعَلْ، وَلَقَمَهُ بِيَدِكَ، فَإِنَّهُ جَنَّةٌ لَكَ غَدًا.

“Do so if you can. Put food in his mouth with your own hands, and you will see that your reward will be the Garden of Heaven in the Hereafter.”⁴

Therefore, Imam Sadiq recommends that children take care of their parents when they get old and weak just as they did when the children were young and weak.

The establishment of homes for the elderly can be justified today if they are to house ill, poor, homeless and lonely old people, or those elders who want to live in such homes themselves. However, it is very bad and painful that some children or grandchildren use these homes to reach their selfish desires; and force their old parents or grandparents to leave home and go live in such places.

They hurt their feelings in this way, and even expedite their death. The rights of the parents are so important that Islam has stressed their respect being incumbent upon children even if they are not Muslims. Ali ibn Ibrahim quoted on the authority of so and so, on the authority of Ansabat ibn Mus'ab, on the authority of Imam Baqir :

ثَلَاثٌ لَمْ يَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى فِيهِنَّ رُحْصَةً: أَدَاءُ الْأَمَانَةِ إِلَى الْبَرِّ وَالْفَاجِرِ، وَالْوَفَاءُ بِالْعَهْدِ لِلْبَرِّ وَالْفَاجِرِ، وَبِرُّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ بَرِّينَ كَانَا أَوْ فَاجِرَيْنِ.

“There are three things that God has not permitted anyone to abandon:

- 1 – Returning what we are entrusted with to its owner whether he is a good-doer or wicked.
- 2 – Honoring our covenants whether it be with good-doers or wicked people.
- 3 – Being kind to our parents whether they are good-doers or wicked people.”⁵

Duties of the Youth

The duties of the youth who believe in Islam was clarified in the Qur'anic verse and traditions presented so far. They should realize that their parents have a great right over them. They must be thankful to their parents and should never neglect or hurt them even if the parents do not perform their duties well. Imam Sadiq said:

مَنْ نَظَرَ إِلَى وَالِدَيْهِ نَظَرَ مَاقَتٍ وَهُمَا ظَالِمَانِ لَهُ لَمْ تُقْبَلْ لَهُ صَلَاةٌ.

“God will not accept the prayers of one who looks at his parents with hatred, even if they have not performed their duties towards him.”⁶

Thus, we realize that even if parents hurt their children, the children must overlook their mistakes.

The Effects of Killing One's Father

Muhammad ibn Suhayl narrated that once during the rule of Montasar he saw a Persian rug decorated with faces of kings and some Persian script. He looked at the images more carefully and saw the face of a crowned king. Below it he read: "This is the face of King Shiroyeh who killed his father King Khosrow Parviz, but his rule did not last more than six months.

Then on the left side of the rug he saw the image of Yazeed ibn Valid ibn Abdulmalik who killed his cousin to take over his rule, but he did not last more than six months too. Then he thought that Montasar's rule would not last more than six months because he had also killed his father to get into power.⁷

The details are as follows. Mutawakkil who was one of the Caliphs of the Abbasid clan despised Imam Ali and insulted him in his court. His son Montasar was not pleased with this behavior, and used to object to his father's action. Once when Mutawakkil was in a meeting with several important people, he insulted Imam Ali. Montasar got upset and objected to his father. Mutawakkil verbally humiliated him in front of others present. Montasar who was twenty-five years old could not stand being insulted in front of the people. He then decided to kill his father.

Al-Mutawakkil's Murder

Montasar employed several Turkish slaves in the court to kill his father. One night when Mutawakkil was having a party and was drunk having fun with ladies, he was left in the court with Fath ibn Khaqan who had a very high rank. Then the slaves attacked them with their swords and killed them both. Then they pledged allegiance to Montasar the same night. Although Mutawakkil's own behavior led to his being murdered; Montasar did not last more than six months either. It was the constant blaming of Montasar by his father that ended this way. Consider what Imam Ali said in this regard:

الإفراطُ في المَلَامَةِ تشبُّ نيرانَ اللّجَاجِ.

*"Excessive blaming will fuel the flames of stubbornness."*⁸

The Father's Right Over the Child

Muhaqqiq Ardebili said: "It is reasonable to say that one should avoid being damned by his parents. Traditions and Qur'anic verses also support this. Children must obey their parents. The jurists have stated that if the leader has not declared holy war or the infidels have not attacked Muslim lands, parents can prevent their children from going to war."⁹

Whatever is forbidden or incumbent upon one regarding strangers also holds for parents:

- 1) One cannot travel without the permission of his parents.
- 2) One must obey his parents.
- 3) Parents can prevent one from participation in war.
- 4) If one is to obey his parents or say his prayers, he should put off the prayers and do what his parents ask him to do.
- 5) There are times when parents can prevent one from attending the congregational prayer. [10](#)

[1.](#) Usul al-Kafi, v.2, p. 157.

[2.](#) Ibid. p. 158.

[3.](#) Usul al-Kafi, v.2, p. 158.

[4.](#) Ibid. v.2, p. 162.

[5.](#) Ibid.

[6.](#) Usul al-Kafi, v.2, p.349.

[7.](#) Tatamat al-Muntaha, p.243.

[8.](#) Jawan (Guftar-i-Falsafi), quoted from Tuhaf al-'Uqul, p.84.

[9.](#) Footnotes of Usul al-Kafi, v.2, p.349.

[10.](#) Ibid.

Right n. 24: The Right of the Child

حق الولد

وَأَمَّا حَقُّ وَلَدِكَ فَتَعَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ مِنْكَ وَمُضَافٌ إِلَيْكَ فِي عَاجِلِ الدُّنْيَا بِخَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ، وَأَنَّكَ مَسْئُولٌ عَمَّا وَلَّيْتَهُ مِنْ حُسْنِ الْأَدَبِ وَالِدَلَالَةِ عَلَى رَبِّهِ وَالْمَعُونَةِ لَهُ عَلَى طَاعَتِهِ فِيكَ وَفِي نَفْسِهِ، فَمُتَابٌ عَلَى ذَلِكَ وَمُعَاقِبٌ، فاعْمَلْ فِي أَمْرِهِ عَمَلَ الْمُتَزَيِّنِ بِحُسْنِ أَثَرِهِ عَلَيْهِ فِي عَاجِلِ الدُّنْيَا، الْمُعْذِرِ إِلَى رَبِّهِ فِيمَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ بِحُسْنِ الْقِيَامِ عَلَيْهِ وَالْأَخْذُ لَهُ مِنْهُ. وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

And the right of your child is that you should know that he is from you and he will be ascribed to you in this world due to both his good deeds and his evil deeds. And you are responsible for what has been entrusted to you in teaching him good conduct, and guiding him toward his Lord and helping him to obey Him on your behalf and for himself. Then you will be rewarded for so doing, and you will be punished. [1](#)

Then regarding his affairs, act like one who will be proud of bringing him up in this world, and one who is excused by his Lord for what is between you and him for taking good care of him, and the good results you achieved. And there is no power but in God.

Imam Sajjad mentions the following points regarding the rights of children:

1 A father should not forget that the child is his and that the child's good or bad deeds will be ascribed to him.

2 A father is responsible for guiding the child to obey God, and to teach and educate him.

3 A father should not be indifferent to the result of the deeds of his child. There will be rewards for the child's good deeds, and punishment for the child's bad deeds for the father, too.

4 A father should do his best to raise the child so that his excuse is acceptable both to his child and God.

The rights of parents were presented in previous chapters. In this chapter, Imam Sajjad presents the rights of children incumbent upon parents. There is no doubt that the very foundation of each child starts when a couple gets married and realizes that the fruit of their love and mutual life will be the children that they have and raise. Some of the traits of the children are genetically inherited from their parents. Children are thus a reflection of their parents' characteristics.

The issue of genetic inheritance of traits also holds true in plants and animals, and is not to be discussed here further. Once by God's will the child is born into this material world, Islam considers the parents highly responsible towards him. They should first realize the importance of this issue, and seek God's help in fulfilling their heavy duties. We will briefly discuss these duties here.

To successfully raise children, parents should consider the following two important points. First, they should revive the child's potential talents, and secondly they should work to eliminate the child's wrong or harmful inclinations. A good teacher is one who studies and discovers the child's talents and uses practical and scientific methods to develop them to the point of their perfection and application. He also destroys the potentially bad hereditary inclinations left over in the child from his parents or grandparents. Imam Sadiq said:

وَيَجِبُ لِلوَلَدِ عَلَى وَالِدِهِ ثَلَاثُ خِصَالٍ: اخْتِيَارُهُ لَوَالِدَتِهِ وَتَحْسِينُ اسْمِهِ وَالْمُبَالَغَةُ فِي تَأْدِيبِهِ.

*"Three rights for the child are incumbent upon his father: selecting a (good) mother for him, giving him a good name, and exerting the utmost effort in raising him well."*²

Thus Imam Sadiq has considered that parents must exert all efforts to raise their children.

Imam Sajjad said:

وَأَعْنِي عَلَى تَرْبِيَتِهِمْ وَتَأْدِيبِهِمْ وَبَرِّهِمْ.

“O God! Please help me in raising and educating my children and making them good people.”³

Thus, we realize that raising children is a hard task and everyone should seek God’s help in this important affair.

The Rights of Children

Children have certain rights over their parents from the time that they are born. The first right relates to naming them. This right has been mentioned in many traditions. The Prophet said:

مِنْ حَقِّ الْوَلَدِ عَلَى الْوَالِدِ أَنْ يُحْسِنَ اسْمَهُ وَيُحَسِّنَ أَدَبَهُ.

“Among the rights of child over the father are that he chooses a good name for him, and raises him well.”⁴

The Prophet said:

سَمُّوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ أَسمَاءَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَأَحْسِنُ الْأَسْمَاءَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ وَعَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ

“Give your children the names of the Prophets. The best names are Abdullah and Abd al-Rahman.”⁵

The Prophet said:

مِنْ حَقِّ الْوَلَدِ عَلَى وَالِدِهِ ثَلَاثَةٌ: يُحْسِنُ اسْمَهُ وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَةَ وَيُزَوِّجُهُ إِذَا بَلَغَ

“Children have three rights over their father: that he give them a good name, teach them how to read and write, and marry them off when they mature.”⁶

Imam Ali said:

حَقُّ الْوَلَدِ عَلَى الْوَالِدِ أَنْ يُحْسِنَ اسْمَهُ وَيُحَسِّنَ أَدَبَهُ وَيُعَلِّمَهُ الْقُرْآنَ

“The right of a child incumbent upon his father is that the father should choose a good name for him and teach him good etiquette and the Qur’an.”⁷

Changing bad Names by the Prophet

The Prophet Muhammad changed bad names of people and places to good ones and freed the people

from bad feelings and humiliation due to having a bad name. Imam Sadiq quoted on the authority of his father that the Prophet changed the ugly names of people and towns.[8](#)

Umar had a daughter whom he had named Asiyah meaning sinner. The Prophet changed her name to Jamileh meaning beautiful.[9](#) In another tradition we read: “Abi Rafe’ narrated that the daughter of Umm-Salma’ was named Barrah meaning good-doer. The Prophet of God changed her name to Zaynab.”[10](#)

The Prophet did this since that name connotated selfishness and some people said that she wants to claim to be pure. The Prophet changed her name to Zaynab to end the people’s humiliating her. Ahmad ibn Haytham asked Imam Ridha : “Why did the Arabs put the names of animals such as dogs, wild cats, tigers, etc. on their children?” Imam Ridha replied: “The Arabs were fighters. They named their children this way so as to frighten their enemies when they called their children during fighting.”[11](#)

Bad Names: A Cause of Humiliation

The head of an Arab tribe was named Jareyah that means a kind of boa. He was frank and strong. His relatives and him were displeased with Mu`awiyah’s oppressive rule and Mu`awiyah had sensed this. Mu`awiyah decided to humiliate him. Once when Mu`awiyah faced him,

Mu`awiyah said: “How lowly were you in your tribe that they named you a boa.” Jareyah immediately replied: “And how lowly you were in your tribe that they named you Mu`awiyah meaning a female dog.” Mu`awiyah got angry and said: “Shut up. You have no mother!” Jareyah replied: “I do have a mother. By God we have hearts which beat in your hatred.” Then Mu`awiyah who was defeated said: “May God not increase the people like you.”[12](#)

Another example is related to a man who lived at the time of Mu`awiyah. He was the head of his tribe and his name was Sharik ibn Aoor. The word “Sharik” means partner in Arabic, and it is not a good name. His father’s name was Aoor that means “one with a defective eye” in Arabic.

Once when he went to see Mu`awiyah, Mu`awiyah said: “Your name means “partner” but there are no partners for God. You are the son of the man with a defective eye. However, a healthy man is better than one with a defective eye. You are ugly, and beauty is better than ugliness. What is the reason that the people of your tribe have chosen you as their chief?”

Sharik replied: “By God your name is Mu`awiyah which means a dog! You barked and they called you Mu`awiyah[13](#). You are the grandson of Harb that means fighting, but peace is better than fighting. You are the son of Sakhr that means rocks, but dirt is always better than rocks. How can you be the Commander of the Faithful?” This really hurt Mu`awiyah and he ordered him to depart.[14](#)

Ugliness or physical defects cause a sense of humiliation. Ugly names do the same. It is for this reason that we are instructed in Islam to choose proper names for our children. Choosing proper names will be very influential on their personality, and will make them immune to psychological complexes.

So far, we have discussed the duties of parents to choose good names for their children. Next, we will discuss the next duty of parents in educating their children and acquainting them with God. Let us see what is said in this regard in the traditions.

How Loving Affects Child Development

There is no doubt that children need both food and love to grow. They receive their food from the milk they get when they are breast-fed by their mother. This is the perfect food that God has prepared for their physical growth. The food for their spirit consists of the training and care they receive from their parents. Children need both food and love. The Prophet said:

أَحِبُّوا الصِّبْيَانَ وَارْحَمُوهُمْ فَإِذَا وَعَدْتُمُوهُمْ فَقُوا لَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يَرَوْنَ إِلَّا أَنْتُمْ رَازِقُوهُمْ

*“Love your children, and be kind and merciful to them. Fulfill your promises made to them since children consider their father to be the one who provides for their sustenance.”*¹⁵

Loving the children and fulfilling promises made to them are stressed here so that they do not learn to break their promises. There are many ways to express your love. One way is to kiss and hug them when they are small. The Prophet said:

قَبِّلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ بِكُلِّ قُبْلَةٍ دَرَجَةٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ مَا بَيْنَ كُلِّ دَرَجَتَيْنِ خَمْسُمِائَةٍ عَامٍ

*“Kiss your children. There is an elevation in your rank in Paradise as a reward for each kiss. Each raise in rank is as much as five hundred years.”*¹⁶

Imam Ali said:

قُبْلَةُ الْوَلَدِ رَحْمَةٌ وَقُبْلَةُ الْمَرْأَةِ شَهْوَةٌ وَقُبْلَةُ الْوَالِدَيْنِ عِبَادَةٌ وَقُبْلَةُ الرَّجُلِ أَخَاهُ دِينٌ

*“Kissing the child is mercy. Kissing the woman is desire. Kissing parents is worship, and kissing one’s believing brethren is religion.”*¹⁷

Kissing is restricted for others. Imam Sadiq said:

إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْجَارِيَةُ سِتَّ سِنِينَ فَلَا تُقَبِّلُهَا، وَالْغُلَامُ لَا يُقَبِّلُ الْمَرْأَةَ إِذَا جَاوَزَ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ

*“Men should not kiss girls who are older than six and women should not kiss boys who are older than seven.”*¹⁸

The Prophet loved his grandsons and kissed them often. Once a man named Aqra ibn Habes was present there when the Prophet kissed them. The man said: "I have ten sons, but I have never kissed any of them." The Prophet said: "So why has God taken love out of your heart?" Therefore we realize that the Prophet considered that man's act of not kissing his children to be a form of lack of love."¹⁹

Excessive Love

Although Islam advises us to love our children, it admonishes us against excessive love, and its possible side effects. Imam Baqir said:

شَرُّ الْآبَاءِ مَنْ دَعَاهُ بِرُّهُ إِلَى الْإِفْرَاطِ وَشَرُّ الْأَبْنَاءِ مَنْ دَعَاهُ التَّقْصِيرُ إِلَى الْعُقُوقِ.

"The worst of fathers is one whose kindness (to his children) drives him to excess. The worst of children is one whose negligence leads him to undutifulness (towards parents)." ²⁰

Excessive love for the children might spoil them and make them haughty and selfish. Imam Ali said:

شَرُّ الْأُمُورِ الرِّضَا عَنِ النَّفْسِ.

*"The worst of affairs is to be pleased with oneself."*²¹

Daughters are the Best Children

Parents should thank God for the children that God grants them. They should realize that children are God's trust in them. They should realize their heavy responsibility and exert all efforts to educate and raise them. The Immaculate Imams expressed that girls should be treated more kindly than boys are. This is really stressed in the sayings of the Prophet and the Immaculate Imams . Consider the following tradition in this regard.

Hazieh Yamani quoted on the authority of God's Prophet :

خَيْرُ أَوْلَادِكُمُ الْبَنَاتُ.

*"Your daughters are your best children."*²²

Imam Sadiq said:

الْبَنَاتُ حَسَنَاتٌ وَالْبَنُونَ نِعْمَةٌ؛ فَالْحَسَنَاتُ يُثَابُ عَلَيْهَا وَالنِّعْمَةُ يُسْأَلُ عَنْهَا.

“Daughters are good deeds, and sons are blessings. Good deeds will be rewarded and blessings will be questioned about.” [23](#)

The Prophet was given the glad tidings that God had granted him a daughter. His companions were so upset about the news that one could notice it from their faces. The Prophet said:

مَا لَكُمْ؟ رِيحَانَةٌ أَشْمُهَا وَرَزَقُهَا عَلَى اللَّهِ.

“Why are you so upset? A daughter is like a flower that I will smell. God will give her daily bread.” [24](#)

God’s Prophet said:

نِعَمَ الْوَلَدُ الْبَنَاتُ الْمُخَدَّرَاتُ. مَنْ كَانَتْ عِنْدَهُ وَاحِدَةٌ جَعَلَهَا اللَّهُ سِتْرًا لَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ عِنْدَهُ اثْنَتَانِ أَدْخَلَهُ اللَّهُ بِهِمَا الْجَنَّةَ، وَإِنْ كُنَّ ثَلَاثَةً أَوْ مِثْلُهُنَّ مِنَ الْأَخَوَاتِ وَضِعَ عَنْهُ الْجِهَادُ وَالصَّدَقَةُ.

“The best children are daughters behind veils. Whoever has one daughter, God will make her a protection for him against the Fire of Hell. Whoever has two daughters, God will make him enter Heaven with them. If one has three daughters or sisters, the duty of participation in a holy war and payment of charity are removed from him.” [25](#)

Ibn Abbas quoted on the authority of God’s Prophet :

مَنْ دَخَلَ السُّوقَ فَاشْتَرَى تُحْفَةً فَحَمَلَهَا إِلَى عِيَالِهِ كَانَ كَحَامِلٍ صَدَقَةٍ إِلَى قَوْمٍ مَحَاوِجٍ، وَلْيَبْدُوا بِالْإِنَاثِ قَبْلَ الذَّكُورِ. فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ فَرَّحَ ابْنَةً فَكَأَنَّمَا أَعْتَقَ رَقَبَةً مِنْ وَلَدِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ.

“One who goes to the bazaar to buy a present for his family is like one who has given some charity to needy people. One must put a higher priority on giving gifts to his daughters over his sons, since making one’s daughter happy is like freeing a slave from the children of Ishmael.” [26](#)

Raise Children to Raise Your Honor

Imam Sajjad asked us to attend to our children’s affairs in such a way as to cause their social growth and increased honor. We should raise them in such a way that they can live with honor and be a source of honor for us. It was mentioned that excessive love for the child might spoil him and make him selfish. He will also be raised in such a way that he cannot rely on himself and become independent. Fathers should foster a sense of self-confidence in their children from their early childhood so that they can be strong in the face of hardships. Imam Sadiq said:

قَالَ لُقْمَانُ: يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّ تَأَدَّبْتَ صَغِيرًا انْتَفَعْتَ بِهِ كَبِيرًا، وَمَنْ عَنِ الْأَدَبِ اهْتَمَّ بِهِ وَمَنْ اهْتَمَّ بِهِ تَكَلَّفَ عِلْمُهُ وَمَنْ تَكَلَّفَ عِلْمَهُ اشْتَدَّ طَلَبُهُ وَمَنْ اشْتَدَّ طَلَبُهُ أَدْرَكَ بِهِ مَنْفَعَتَهُ.

“Luqman said: O my son! You can benefit from politeness later if you learn to be polite when you are young. One who wants to learn to be polite makes an effort to learn. He will make all efforts to acquire educational sciences. Once he learns it, he can benefit from it. O my son! Always oblige yourself to perform your personal duties, and force yourself to withstand the hardships imposed on you by others. Do not be greedy with others if you hope to attain nobility in this world. Do not place any hopes in other people. The Prophets and the Saints have all been able to attain their higher ranks by cutting hopes off the people.”²⁷

We see that Luqman advises his son not to place any hopes in what others have; thus, he helps him develop to be independent. Parents should use these recommendations in raising their children.

- ¹. If you fail.
- ². Tuhaf al-‘Uqul, p.238.
- ³. Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah.
- ⁴. Mustadrak al-Wasa’il, v.2, p.618.
- ⁵. Makarim al-Akhlaq, p.220.
- ⁶. Ibid.
- ⁷. Nahjul Balaghah, Hikmah no.399.
- ⁸. Koodak (Guftar-i-Falsafi), v.2, p.228, quoted from Gharb al-Asnad, p.45.
- ⁹. Ibid.
- ¹⁰. Ibid. quoted from Sahih Muslim, v.6, p. 173.
- ¹¹. Koodak (Guftar-i-Falsafi), quoted from Wasa’il al-Shi’ah, v.5, p. 115.
- ¹². Koodak (Guftar-i-Falsafi), v.2, p.228, quoted from Gharb al-Asnad, p.45.
- ¹³. The son of Abu Sufyan Sakhr b. Harb b. Umayyah.
- ¹⁴. Koodak (Guftar-i-Falsafi), quoted from Samarat al-Uraq, p.59.
- ¹⁵. Makarim al-Akhlaq, p.219.
- ¹⁶. Ibid. p.220.
- ¹⁷. Ibid. p.220.
- ¹⁸. Ibid. p.223.
- ¹⁹. Ibid.
- ²⁰. Tarikh Ya’qubi, v.2, p.320.
- ²¹. Sharh-i-Ghurur wa Durar, v.4, p. 173.
- ²². Makarim al-Akhlaq, pp.219–220.
- ²³. Ibid.
- ²⁴. Ibid.
- ²⁵. Makarim al-Akhlaq, pp.219–220.
- ²⁶. Mustadrak al-Wasa’il, v.2, p.615.
- ²⁷. Koodak (Guftar-i-Falsafi), v.2, pp.293–294.

Right n. 25: The Right of the Brother

حق الأخ

وَأَمَّا حَقُّ أَخِيكَ فَتَعَلَّمْ أَنَّهُ يَدُكَ الَّتِي تَبْسُطُهَا، وَظَهْرُكَ الَّذِي تَلْتَجِيْ إِلَيْهِ، وَعِزُّكَ الَّذِي تَعْتَمِدُ عَلَيْهِ، وَفُؤُوتُكَ الَّتِي تَصُولُ بِهَا، فَلَا تَتَّخِذْهُ سِلَاحًا عَلَى مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ وَلَا عُدَّةً لِلظُّلْمِ بِحَقِّ اللَّهِ، وَلَا تَدْعُ نُصْرَتَهُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ وَمَعُونَتِهِ عَلَى عَدُوِّهِ وَالْحَوْلَ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ شَيَاطِينِهِ وَتَأْذِيَةِ النَّصِيحَةِ إِلَيْهِ وَالْإِقْبَالَ عَلَيْهِ فِي اللَّهِ فَإِنْ انْقَادَ لِرَبِّهِ وَأَحْسَنَ الْإِجَابَةَ لَهُ وَإِلَّا فَلْيَكُنْ اللَّهُ آثَرَ عِنْدَكَ وَأَكْرَمَ عَلَيْكَ مِنْهُ.

And the right of your brother is that you should know that he is your hand that you extend, and your back to whom you seek refuge, and your power upon whom you rely, and your might with which you compete. Take him not as a weapon with which to disobey God, nor as a means with which to violate God's rights.

And do not neglect to help him against his own self and support him against his enemy, and intervene between him and his devils, and give him good counsel, and associate with him for God's sake. Then if he obeys his Lord and is responsible towards Him properly it is fine. Else God should be more preferable and more honorable to you than he is. [1](#)

Imam Sajjad has pointed out the following three points regarding one's brother:

- 1) A brother is one's helping hand. He is our supporter and he makes us stronger. We should not use this power in order to commit sins.
- 2) We should be his assistant and support him against his enemies.
- 3) We should release him from the captivity of Satan and direct his attention towards God. If he does not accept, we should follow God's decrees and not obey our brother.

Forms of Brotherhood in Islam

Brotherhood is one of the most important issues in Islam. There are two forms of brotherhood. One is a blood relationship – that is being born of the same parents. This is the closest kind of relationship that results in either one inheriting from the other. This is considered the second level of those who inherit from us according to Islamic jurisprudence. There are certain decrees in this regard.

The second form of brotherhood is through common belief. It is the form of brotherhood that has related all the Muslims together. It has become the source of unity of all the Muslims in the world. The Arabic word for brother is “Akh”. Its real meaning is brother, friend or companion. It really refers to two people

who have the same mother, father or both. It is also used for someone who has been breast-fed by one's mother. In a more general sense, it is also used for one's partner in industry or trade, one who is from the same tribe or one having the same beliefs. There are several instances in the Holy Qur'an when this word is used to refer to real brothers or believing brothers like in Chapters Yusuf and Nisaa.²

The Importance of Islamic Brotherhood

The Holy Qur'an says:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

“The Believers are but a single Brotherhood: So make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers; and fear God, that ye may receive Mercy.” [The Holy Qur'an, al-Hujurat 49: 10]

This verse expresses one of the most important slogans of Islam. Islam has put such a strong bond between the Muslims and has made them so close that it has called them brothers. Thus, Islam considers all Muslims to belong to one family. This is completely felt during the religious and political ceremonies of the pilgrimage of the Ka'ba. All the people who attend these ceremonies feel to be brothers to each other even though some have come from the West, and others have come from the East. Let us consider what the Prophet has said in this regard:

المُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ لَا يَظْلِمُهُ وَلَا يَخْذُلُهُ وَلَا يُسَلِّمُهُ.

“A Muslim is the brother of other Muslims. He never oppresses them. He never abandons them. He never leaves them alone in the face of calamities.”³

In another tradition, the Prophet said:

مَثَلُ الْأَخَوَيْنِ مَثَلُ الْيَدَيْنِ تَغْسِلُ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَى.

“Two believing brothers are like two hands each washing the other.”⁴

The Prophet's representation of two Muslims as the hands of the same body is a beautiful similitude showing that all Muslims belong to the same nation, and each Muslim is one of the hands of that nation.

A Believer: Brother of Other Believers

Imam Sadiq said:

المُؤْمِنُ أَخُو الْمُؤْمِنِ؛ عَيْنُهُ وَدَلِيلُهُ لَا يَخُونُهُ وَلَا يَظْلِمُهُ وَلَا يَغْشُهُ وَلَا يَعِدُهُ عِدَّةً فَيُخْلِفُهَا.

*“A believer is the brother of other believers. He acts as their eyes and as their guide. He will never cheat or oppress them. He will never deceive them or act against his promises to them.”*⁵

In another tradition we read: Abi Basir narrated that he heard Imam Sadiq say:

المُؤْمِنُ أَخُو الْمُؤْمِنِ كَالْجَسَدِ الْوَاحِدِ إِنْ اشْتَكَى شَيْئاً مِنْهُ وَجِدَ أَلَمَ ذَلِكَ فِي سَائِرِ جَسَدِهِ، وَأَرْوَاحُهُمَا مِنْ رُوحٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَإِنَّ رُوحَ الْمُؤْمِنِ لِأَشَدُّ اتِّصَالاً بِرُوحِ اللَّهِ مِنْ اتِّصَالِ شُعَاعِ الشَّمْسِ بِهَا.

*“A believer is the brother of other believers. They are all parts of the same body. If one part hurts, other parts will feel the pain. Their souls are also derived from One Spirit. A believer’s soul is so strongly attached to God’s Spirit that it is like the attachment of the sun’s rays to the sun.”*⁶

Brotherhood: the Greatest Blessing

The importance of the blessing of brotherhood is stressed in the Holy Qur’an as we read in the following verse:

وَاَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

“And hold fast, all together, by the rope which God (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude God’s favor on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, ye became brethren; and ye were on the brink of the pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus doth God make His Signs clear to you: That ye may be guided.” [The Holy Qur’an, Al-i-Imran 3: 103]

This verse was revealed about the two large tribes of Oas and Khazraj that had deeply-rooted animosities with each other. Once the Prophet entered Medina, he settled their affairs and made them brothers one to another. However, at times they forgot this brotherhood and fighting broke out between them. However, the Prophet would immediately resolve their differences.

The Prophet instructed the Muslims to express their love and friendship to each other since it has a very important influence on the continuation of brotherhood. He said: “When one of you likes another one he

should let him know about it.” [7](#)

The Reward of Visiting Believing Brothers

There is a chapter on visiting believing brothers in *Usul al-Kafi* in which there are many traditions pointing out the reward of visiting our believing brothers. We shall only cite a few of them here. Imam Sadiq said:

مَنْ زَارَ أَخَاهُ فِي اللَّهِ، قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: إِيَّايَ زُرْتَ وَتَوَابُكَ عَلَيَّ وَلَسْتُ أَرْضَى لَكَ ثَوَابًا دُونَ الْجَنَّةِ.

“God the Exalted the High will say to whoever visits his brother for the sake of God: O My servant! It was Me that You visited, and your reward is incumbent on Me. I will not be pleased with a reward of anything less than Heaven for you.” [8](#)

In another tradition we read that Abi Hamzeh quoted on the authority of Imam Baqir :

إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ الْمُسْلِمَ إِذَا خَرَجَ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ زَائِرًا أَخَاهُ لِلَّهِ لَا لِغَيْرِهِ التَّمَاسَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ وَرَغْبَةً فِي مَا عِنْدَهُ وَكَلَّ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بِهِ سَبْعِينَ أَلْفَ مَلَكٍ يُنَادُونَهُ مِنْ خَلْفِهِ إِلَى أَنْ يَرْجِعَ إِلَى مَنْزِلِهِ: أَلَا طِبْتَ وَطَابَتْ لَكَ الْجَنَّةُ.

“When the Muslim leaves his house to visit his brother for the sake of God alone, seeking God’s pleasure and hoping for his reward, God the Exalted the High will appoint seventy thousand angels who will keep calling out behind him until he returns home: Blessed you are, and may Heaven be pleasant for you.” [9](#)

Thus, we see that with such beautiful instructions, Islam has guaranteed the unity of Muslims and has prepared a lovely life for the believers.

Brotherhood as Viewed by Imam Ali

Imam Ali said:

الإِخْوَانُ صِنْفَانِ: أَخْوَانُ النِّقَّةِ وَأَخْوَانُ الْمُكَاشَرَةِ. فَأَمَّا أَخْوَانُ النِّقَّةِ فَهُمْ الْكَفُّ وَالْجَنَاحُ وَالْأَهْلُ وَالْمَالُ، فَإِذَا كُنْتَ مِنْ أَخِيكَ عَلَى حَدِّ النِّقَّةِ فَأَبْذِلْ لَهُ مَالَكَ وَبَدَنَكَ وَصَافٍ مَنْ صَافَاهُ وَعَادٍ مَنْ عَادَاهُ وَكَتْمَ سِرِّهِ وَعَيْبَهُ وَأَظْهَرَ مِنْهُ الْحَسَنَ، وَاعْلَمْ أَيُّهَا السَّائِلُ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَلُّ مِنَ الْكَبِيرِيتِ الْأَحْمَرِ. وَأَمَّا أَخْوَانُ الْمُكَاشَرَةِ فَإِنَّكَ تُصِيبُ لَذَّتَكَ مِنْهُمْ فَلَا تَقْطَعَنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَا تَطْلُبَنَّ مَا وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ ضَمِيرِهِمْ وَأَبْذِلْ لَهُمْ مَا يَذَلُّوا لَكَ مِنْ طَلَاقَةِ الْوَجْهِ وَحَلَاوَةِ اللِّسَانِ.

“There are two groups of brothers: real brothers and superficial brothers. Real brothers are like your hands, wings, relatives or property. Once you find such brothers, you can help them; give them from

what you own; be friendly with their friends and be the enemy of their enemies; hide their secrets; cover up their faults, and reveal their good points. Beware that they are very rare. However, use your superficial brothers. Do not stop your friendship and your associations with them. However do not expect any more than this from them. When they treat you kindly and talk nicely with you, respond with gentle treatment and nice words.”[10](#)

Here Imam Ali clearly outlines our duties to our real friends as well as our superficial friends. He has set the limits of our encounters with them, and the degree to which we must help them, and benefit from their assistance.

Being Fair with Brothers

Imam Ali said:

مَعَ الْإِنصَافِ تَدُومُ الْأُخُوَّةُ.

“Brotherhood lasts by being fair.”[11](#)

When Muhammad reached the age of seven he asked his wet-nurse Halimah: “O Mother! Where are my brothers?” She said: “They have taken the sheep that God has blessed us with to the fields.” He said: “O’ Mother! You have not been fair with us.” His mother asked: “Why?” He said: “Is it fair for me to sit in the shade of the tent and drink milk, while my brothers are out there in the heat of the desert?”[12](#) God’s Prophet said:

سَيِّدُ الْأَعْمَالِ ثَلَاثَةٌ: إِنْصَافُ النَّفْسِ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ وَمُوَاسَاةُ الْإِخِ فِي اللَّهِ وَذِكْرُكَ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى فِي كُلِّ حَالٍ.

“Three acts are the master of all deeds: being fair, helping our brothers for the sake of God, and remembering God the High in all circumstances.”[13](#)

Brotherhood as Viewed by Imam Sadiq

Imam Sadiq said:

الْإِخْوَانُ ثَلَاثَةٌ: فَوَاحِدٌ كَالْغِذَاءِ الَّذِي يُحْتَاجُ إِلَيْهِ فِي كُلِّ وَقْتٍ، وَالثَّانِي فِي مَعْنَى الدَّاءِ وَهُوَ الْأَحْمَقُ وَالثَّالِثُ فِي مَعْنَى الدَّوَاءِ وَهُوَ اللَّبِيبُ.

“Brothers are of three kinds. The first kind is like nourishment that we always need; the second is like a disease, and they are the foolish ones. The third kind is like the remedy, and they are the intelligent

At last, we shall present the thirty rights of brotherhood as expressed by the Noble Prophet . This is perhaps one of the most complete traditions on the rights of brotherhood.

The Prophet's Views on Rights of Brotherhood

God's Prophet said:

لِلْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى أَخِيهِ ثَلَاثُونَ حَقًّا لَا بَرَاءَةَ لَهُ مِنْهَا إِلَّا بِالْأَدَاءِ أَوْ الْعَفْوِ: يَغْفِرُ زَلَّتَهُ وَيَرْحَمَ عِبْرَتَهُ وَيَسْتُرُ عَوْرَتَهُ وَيُقِيلُ عَثْرَتَهُ وَيَقْبَلُ مَعْذَرَتَهُ وَيَرُدُّ غِيْبَتَهُ وَيُدِيمُ نَصِيحَتَهُ وَيَحْفَظُ خِلَّتَهُ وَيَرعى ذِمَّتَهُ وَيَعُودُ مَرَضَهُ وَيَشْهَدُ مَيِّتَهُ وَيَجِيبُ دَعْوَتَهُ وَيَقْبَلُ هَدِيَّتَهُ وَيُكَافِي صِلَتَهُ وَيَشْكُرُ نِعْمَتَهُ وَيَحْسِنُ نُصْرَتَهُ وَيَحْفَظُ خَلِيلَتَهُ وَيَقْضِي حَاجَتَهُ وَيَشْفَعُ مَسْأَلَتَهُ وَيُسَمِّتُ عَطْسَتَهُ وَيُرْشِدُ ضَالَّتَهُ وَيَرُدُّ سَلَامَهُ وَيُطِيبُ كَلَامَهُ وَيَبْرِّ إِنْعَامَهُ وَيُصَدِّقُ أَقْسَامَهُ وَيُوَالِي وَلِيَّهُ وَلَا يَعَادِيهِ وَيَنْصُرُهُ ظَالِمًا وَمَظْلُومًا: فَأَمَّا نُصْرَتُهُ ظَالِمًا فَيَرُدُّهُ عَنْ ظُلْمِهِ وَأَمَّا نُصْرَتُهُ مَظْلُومًا فَيُعِينُهُ عَلَى اخْذِ حَقِّهِ وَلَا يُسَلِّمُهُ وَلَا يَخْذُلُهُ وَيُجِبُّ لَهُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ مَا يَحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ وَيَكْرَهُ لَهُ مِنَ الشَّرِّ مَا يَكْرَهُ لِنَفْسِهِ.

“There are thirty rights for each Muslim incumbent upon his believing brother. He cannot be relieved from them unless he honors them or is forgiven by his brother. They are as follows:

- 1 *He must forgive his brother's faults.*
- 2 *He must be kind to his brother during hard times.*
- 3 *He must hide his brother's secrets.*
- 4 *He must compensate for his brother's faults.*
- 5 *He must accept his brother's apologies.*
- 6 *He must defend his brother against those who gossip behind his back.*
- 7 *He must always advise his brother.*
- 8 *He must safeguard his brother's friendship.*
- 9 *He must honor his brother's covenant.*
- 10 *He must visit him when his brother gets ill.*
- 11 *He must attend his brother's funeral procession.*
- 12 *He must accept his brother's invitations.*
- 13 *He must accept his brother's gifts.*

14 *He must return his brother's favors.*

15 *He must be grateful for his brother's blessings.*

16 *He must try to help his brother.*

17 *He must guard his brother's honor.*

18 *He must fulfill his brother's needs.*

19 *He must intercede on behalf of his brother.*

20 *He must say "God bless you" when his brother sneezes.*

21 *He must guide his brother's lost ones.*

22 *He must respond to his brother's greetings.*

23 *He must welcome his brother's words.*

24 *He must welcome his brother's kindness.*

25 *He must accept his brother's swearing.*

26 *He must like his brother's friends.*

27 *He must not treat his brother with animosity.*

28 *He must help his brother whether he is an oppressor or an oppressed one.* [15](#)

29 *He should not leave his brother alone in the face of calamities.*

30 *He must like for his brother whatever he likes for himself, and dislike for him whatever he dislikes for himself.*

[1.](#) In the other version it continues with: 'And there is no power but in God'.

[2.](#) Qamus Qur'an, v. 1, pp.37-38.

[3.](#) Al-Mahajjah al-Bayda, v.3, p.332.

[4.](#) Ibid.

[5.](#) Usul al-Kafi, v.3, p. 166.

[6.](#) Usul al-Kafi, v.3, p. 166.

[7.](#) Al-Mahajjah al-Bayda, v.3, p.331.

[8.](#) Usul al-Kafi, Chapter on Visiting believing brothers.

[9.](#) Ibid. p. 177.

[10.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v.2, p.61.

[11.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v.2, p.308.

[12.](#) Al-Hadith, v. 1, p.285.

[13.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v.2, p.308.

[14.](#) Tuhaf al-‘Uqul, p.239.

[15.](#) Helping an oppressor means to prevent him from acts of oppression, but helping an oppressed one means helping him to get back what is rightfully his.

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