

# The Role of the Family and Women in Nurturing Human Being

## **The serious attention accorded all dimensions of family life by Islam**

. . . The laws of the *shari'a* embrace a diverse body of laws and regulations, which amounts to a complete social system. In this system of laws, all the needs of man have been met: his dealings with his neighbours, fellow citizens, and clan, as well as children and relatives; the concerns of private and marital life; regulations concerning war and peace and intercourse with other nations; penal and commercial law; and regulations pertaining to trade and agriculture.

Islamic law contains provisions relating to the preliminaries of marriage and the form in which it should be contracted, and others relating to the development of the embryo in the womb and even what food the parents should eat at the time of conception. It further stipulates the duties that are incumbent upon them while the infant is being suckled, and specifies how the child should be reared, and how the husband and the wife should relate to each other and to their children. Islam provides laws and instructions for all of these matters, aiming, as it does, to produce integrated and virtuous human beings.

*Islamic Government*, pp. 43–44.

One of the things that creates different human behavioural patterns is how the rules for marriage, sexual intercourse and the times it can take place, for the gestation period and when the woman is breastfeeding, for selecting a husband and a woman who will be the one to breastfeed the child, and other instructions are observed.

These rules influence fully the physical and spiritual health of the child in the same manner as his

learning environment, his teachers, friends, associates and kind of knowledge imparted to him do, along with other things that are too many to be mentioned here. All these things can have strange effects on a child's development, some of which are noticeable.

*At-Talab wal-Iradah*, p. 148

Islam has laid the foundations of man's life from before his birth. It has established the social foundations of the family and has laid down injunctions for man covering the period he lives with his family, the time that he enters into education, the time he enters society, and the time that he has relations with other countries, with other governments, with other nations. All of these have a programme; the holy laws contain provisions for all of these things. (165)

14 November 1965 (23 Aban 1344 AHS)

Islam has moral teachings and it has rules that govern man's social relations, his relationship with himself, his wife, his children, his neighbours, his friends, his fellow countrymen, his co-religionists, and people of a different religion. Islam has rules for men, which extend from before his birth until after his death. It contains provisions relating to the preliminaries of marriage and the form in which it should be contracted, and others relating to the development of the embryo in the womb until birth. It specifies how the child should be reared, it has rules for him at puberty, in his youth, in old age, when he dies and is laid in his grave and even after that . . . (166)

28 September 1977 (6 Mehr 1356 AHS)

. . . There are rules for other relationships concerning man. There are rules to ensure man's well-being even before he is born, to ensure that a sound, healthy, refined individual comes into the world. Islamic law contains provisions relating to the preliminaries of marriage, the choice of spouse, and the form in which a marriage should be contracted, there are laws for when intimate relations take place between a man and his wife, for when a child is conceived and when being suckled. There are rules for the child for the time he is being reared by his mother and when he is being trained by his first teachers. Islam has rules for all of these things, and laws to train man. (167)

9 November 1978 (18 Aban 1357 AHS)

One facet of Islam deals with government and governmental and political affairs, and another deals with man's spiritual development which concerns man himself alone: What should he be in terms of beliefs, ethics and social behaviour? What must a man be? In this regard, Islam encompasses every aspect of human life, whereas other governments and societies are impulsive towards the same. That is, no government will ever approach an individual and reprimand him for whatever (immoral) activities he may engage in at home.

Whatever misdeed takes place in an individual's home is of no concern to other governments. Islam,

however, is concerned with the individual even if he is alone at home; that is, it tells him what he is supposed to do, how to behave and what ethics and intellectual perceptions he should adopt. It tells him how a father should treat his children, how a child should behave towards his father, a mother to her child, a child to his mother, a brother to a brother, how families should behave among themselves or a family towards another. All of these have rules to follow in Islam, which takes everything into consideration. (168)

11 November 1978 (20 Aban 1357 AHS)

Islam is a religion that belongs to all. It was revealed to build up a human being in a way that it proposes; to mould him into an equitable man in such a way that one human being cannot commit one grain or pinhead of injustice against another; that a human being cannot be unjust to his own child or to his wife, or a wife to a husband, or two brothers to one another or these to their friends. Islam wants to mould man into a just being in the fullest sense of the word "human being," one whose intellect is humane, whose essence and appearance are human and one who respects human behaviour and conduct. Islam wants to materialise these goals. (169)

11 November 1978 (20 Aban 1357 AHS)

We want such an ideology, one that when it first starts to train the people directs them towards the development of the excellence of the human being. You look around yourselves in the world; can you find an ideology like Islam, which has laws aimed at making man a true human being even before he has been born, before his parents have married?

All of the world's ideologies deal with people who have reached puberty and who are active members of society. Islam, however, aims to perfect man even before he is born, before his parents marry, by stating what kind of spouse a man and a woman should choose. Why does it do this? Because the husband and wife are the origin of an individual or individuals and Islam wants these individuals, who are to be handed over to society, to be righteous individuals.

So before a couple marry, Islam stipulates what kind of a woman the man's prospective wife should be and what kind of a man the woman's prospective husband should be, what kind of personalities they should have, how they should behave and in what kind of family they should have been brought up.

After marriage too, Islam stipulates how the husband and wife should treat each other. Islam has laid down rules that pertain to the period when the woman is with child, and to the delivery of the child. It also specifies how a child should be reared. Islam provides laws and instructions for all of these matters so that this child that is produced from these two people will be a virtuous individual in the society and righteousness will reign throughout the world.

This is Islam. Islam seeks to create true human beings and it sets out to do this even before the child is born, before his parents have even married. It begins there and has laid down laws that cover this period

and the period after the child has come into the world: it stipulates the duties that are incumbent upon the parents while the child is being suckled; it specifies how the child should be reared by the parents, how he should be treated later in the elementary and high schools and what the teachers there should be like.

Then when the child reaches the age of independence, the age at which he must make his own decisions, Islam tells him what kind of a person he should be, what he should and shouldn't do. Islam does this because it wants the people in society to be righteous, sound individuals. (170)

31 December 1978 (10 Dey 1357 AHS)

If you examine Islam closely, you will see that it has laws and programmes for all the dimensions man possesses. It has regulations for man for even before he is born, before his parents marry. It has procedures to ensure the embryo develops well. Islam stipulates what kind of woman you should choose for a wife, what kind of man you should choose for a husband, what circumstances should prevail at the time of marriage, what rules exist and what the procedure should be.

It has rules governing the time the child is conceived and the period of gestation, like a farmer who sows a seed taking care to choose fecund soil in which to plant it, irrigating it with pure water, at the proper times, and tending to it so that it grows properly. In order to train true human beings, Islam begins even before the parents have married; it wants the basis to be strong and good, the spouse to be a healthy, sound person of human qualities.

Islam contains further provisions relating to the child's birth, to the period the infant is being suckled, it specifies how the parents should rear the child and the kind of instruction he should receive from them and others. No other system of laws covers such things; this is something peculiar only to those laws brought by the prophets. (171)

2 February 1979 (14 Bahman 1357 AHS)

Know that Islam covers everything; it contains laws relating to before marriage takes place between a man and woman to the time of interment. All its laws are progressive instructions necessary for man's happiness whether in this world or the next. (172)

19 February 1979 (30 Bahman 1357 AHS)

Islam is a system, a political system, however, whereas other systems disregard many things, Islam overlooks nothing. It trains man in all the dimensions he possesses, in both his material and spiritual aspects; it concerns itself with both. Islam has rules aimed at creating a true human being even before he is born, before the marriage between his parents takes place, by stipulating, among other things, what kind of spouse a man and woman should choose, what kind of disposition they should have and how pious they should be.

When a farmer wants to plant a seed he must consider the type of soil there is in the area in which he intends to plant it and the things needed for its growth, which are useful and which are not. He must take care of the seed from the time it sprouts to when it bears its fruit. Islam treats humans in the same manner that is in the manner of a farmer who wants to produce a good harvest.

From before the seed is planted Islam has rules stipulating what kind of mother and father the child should have, and prescribes the form in which the marriage should be contracted. This is because Islam is concerned with the child's future life, for if the father or mother is of corrupt moral nature, [and] their actions that of an inhuman being, their offspring will be affected by these traits, they will inherit them. Therefore, like a very conscientious and compassionate farmer, Islam takes care of mankind.

It has rules for man, which extend from before his birth to the time he marries. It has many rules relating to the time of conception, the gestation period, the time the infant is being suckled; it specifies how the child should be cared for in the mother's lap and later under the protection of the father. It has rules for him when he enters school, then later when he joins society. From before he is born Islam cares for the child, so that he can achieve the high station man can attain. Islam has rules covering all these things.

Other systems in the world, other forms of government in the world, do not concern themselves with such matters, they are only bothered about making sure this society serves their interests and that the peace is kept so they can plunder the people. Even the best and most equitable of them cares only for rectifying its own society a little.

Otherwise, how a child should be reared, what rules exist covering the period the child is in the womb and is being suckled are of no consequence to other systems. Islam, to the contrary, does care about such things, and when the child grows into a man, it stipulates how he should behave towards his brother, towards his mother and father, how the mother and father should treat their son, how they should treat their neighbours, their fellow citizens, their co-religionists and foreigners. Islam concerns itself with all of these.

One facet of Islam deals with government and governmental and political affairs, and another deals with man's spiritual development. For man is a two-dimensional being, there are two sides to him: one the physical, for every aspect of which Islam has rules; and the other the spiritual, which no other system even broaches. No other system is concerned about giving man spiritual training or moral refinement so that he can reach the stage that none, save God, knows of. Islam even stretches to that stage, it takes man's hands and leads him to the highest heaven. No other system does this. (173)

19 February 1979 (30 Bahman 1357 AHS)

Religions concern themselves with all the dimensions man possesses. There are rules to ensure man's well-being even before he is born, instructions relating to how a marriage should be contracted, what conditions should be met, what kind of woman the man should choose for a wife and what kind of man the woman should choose so that the marriage is a good one. For marriage is like cultivated land used

for producing human beings. Before the marriage even takes place, precautions are taken to ensure that a sound, spiritually healthy individual comes into the world.

Thus attention is paid to the preliminaries of marriage, the conditions that should be met, and following the marriage there are rules governing the intimate relations between a man and his wife and for when a child is conceived. The mother is advised what food she should eat when she is carrying the child and what she should avoid, what her life should be like and how she should behave. Instructions are provided stating what kind of woman should suckle the child after he is born – that is if the parents wish to employ a wet nurse – how the child should be suckled, at what times, under what conditions, how the mother should treat the child when he is in her care, and later, when he has left the lap of his mother, how the father should treat him.

There are rules governing how the child should be reared in the family, what his teachers should be like, and when he enters society, how he should act. This is all to make sure that upright, morally correct individuals enter society. (174)

14 May 1979 (24 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS)

Islam is concerned with everything. It plans for the child you will bring into the world even before you marry. It stipulates what kind of woman the man's prospective wife should be, what kind of man the woman's prospective husband. For a human being is like a plant that must grow and blossom, and just as a farmer must take care when planting his seeds, selecting the right soil in which to plant them, good fertiliser and the right amount of water to nourish them, so too much the same applies in the case of a human being.

Islam stipulates what conditions must prevail from before man is conceived, in what kind of seedbed the seed must be planted, what kind of person the man should be who will plant the seed. Then later, after marriage, Islam has rules for when the child is conceived. Islam seeks to put right all aspects of man's life, aiming, as it does, to produce integrated and virtuous human beings. (175)

21 May 1979 (31 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS)

Islamic law contains provisions for the period before marriage takes place, because it is through marriage that human beings are created. When you want to get married, no other system of laws in the world is concerned with how you should go about this. As far as other laws are concerned, you need only register your marriage at the registry office, the rest is up to you. Islam, however, pays attention to the period before marriage, for it is from marriage that a child springs, and he must have sound beginnings.

Like an extremely caring and affectionate farmer who, to ensure that his crop turns out well, selects only seeds of the best kind, planting them in fertile soil and nourishing them with only pure water, Islam seeks to produce true human beings, and it sets out to do this even before the child's parents have married by

telling the woman what kind of man she should choose for a husband and the man what kind of woman he should choose for a wife, it gives them the rules for this. It has rules covering the marriage and afterwards when the woman is with child, then following that for the period of the child's upbringing.

For Islam seeks to create a true human being, and it begins at the very beginning when the foundations of a child's life are first laid. So it pays attention to such affairs, whereas all other laws in the world ignore them.

Other laws pay scant regard to how a man acts in the privacy of his own home, they adopt the attitude that as long as the person remains indoors and does not disturb the peace and order in society, he can do what he likes. Islam is not this way. Islam seeks to create upright human beings so that even at home they do nothing illegal or immoral. Islam wants man to behave at home as he would in the street, as he would in public. It seeks to make man a true human being in all circumstances. (176)

10 June 1979 (20 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

No teachings other than those of the prophets are concerned with who you choose as a wife or who the woman chooses as a husband. They consider it none of their concern. Not one of their laws covers this area or what duties are incumbent on the mother when she is with child, when she is breastfeeding and when raising the child, or what the father must do in rearing his child. Corporeal laws, and systems other than those of the prophets, are not concerned with such matters.

They are concerned only with preventing the individual from committing corrupt acts when he enters society, and even then they only make it their business when such acts are likely to cause disorder. Otherwise, they do not consider indulging in corrupt acts of the bacchanalian type as wrong; indeed they encourage such behaviour. They are not concerned with man's moral refinement or with creating a true human being. In their view, the only difference between humans and animals is that man has progressed more, he can make aeroplanes whereas animals cannot, he can become a physician, an animal cannot. The limits for such laws exist in the physical realm.

Islam, however, is concerned with everything. It concerns itself even with the period before a couple marry so that their offspring will become morally sound, upright human beings. So it has instructions stipulating what kind of person you should choose for your spouse. Why does it do this? Well, we can compare it with a farmer who wants to produce a good crop. First, he must consider the land, making sure it is fertile land, then the seeds he is to plant, they too must be of fine quality, and then what the seeds need to grow. All these things he must take into account to ensure as far as possible that his crop will be a good one and he will profit from it.

Islam does the same, only with regard to human beings. So it stipulates what kind of person you should choose for a spouse so that a virtuous human being is produced. It has instructions covering the marriage and what conditions should be fulfilled, there are also instructions pertaining to the time a child is conceived, to the period when the woman is with child and when the infant is being suckled.

This is because the monotheistic schools of thought, of which Islam is the most comprehensive, have come to produce true human beings. They haven't come to produce a creature with human intelligence but whose limits and aims are those of an animal. No, they have come to produce human beings in the true sense of the word. (177)

4 July 1979 (13 Tir 1358 AHS)

Let them come and see what Islam says, how it is with an individual from the time he/she wishes to marry to ensure that the child this union produces is a good child. How later it has rules for how the infant should be reared by his mother, how he should be treated at school and for all stages of his life until the end. Islam seeks to guide you along a straight path. (178)

6 July 1980 (15 Tir 1359 AHS)

## **The important role played by mothers in the proper upbringing of children**

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Be mindful of your actions making sure they are good. Make sure your uprising is for God, your actions for God. Those of you who have children, bring them up on divine teachings. (179)

8 February 1979 (19 Bahman 1357 AHS)

In our revolutionary movement, women have likewise earned more credit than men, for it was the women who not only displayed courage themselves, but also reared men of courage. Like the Noble Qur'an itself, women have the function of rearing and training true human beings. (180)

6 March 1979 (15 Isfand 1357 AHS)

Islam wants to train you to become an integrated and virtuous human being, so that in your care suchlike human beings may be raised. (181)

8 March 1979 (17 Isfand 1357 AHS)

Men are raised in your care, you are the educators of men, recognise your own worth, just as Islam does. (182)

8 March 1979 (17 Isfand 1357 AHS)

You have served Islam and, God willing, you will continue to do so. You rear lion-hearted men and women in Iran. It is in your laps that virtuousness, decency, and greatness are fostered. You have a duty to raise your children well, to bring them up with Islamic values, with human values, and raise them to be

fighters. It is through your struggles and those of all sections of society that we have been able to bring this movement this far and proclaim an Islamic republic. (183)

6 April 1979 (17 Farvardin 1358 AHS)

It is by you that great men and women are raised; it is in your laps they are raised. You are held dear by the nation; you are its support. Strive hard in your studies so that you equip yourselves with moral excellence and are virtuous in word and deed. Rear strong children for the future of our country. Your laps are like schools in which strong youth should be raised. Seek to acquire the highest virtues so that in your care your children will also acquire them. (184)

10 April 1979 (21 Farvardin 1358 AHS)

Islam wants you to care for your children yourselves and raise them to be good, upright individuals, to brighten up your home with the light of these Islamic children. For they are the children of Islam, and the destiny of Islam and your country lies in their hands. (185)

10 May 1979 (20 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS)

Since in the beginning these children are raised in your care, you are the ones responsible for their actions. If you raise a good child, that child alone may secure the well-being of a nation, just as, God forbid, if you raise a bad child, he may be the cause of corruption in society. Do not think of your child as merely a child, one day, when he enters society, he may become a leader of the society and, if not brought up well, he could lead it into corruption. (186)

13 May 1979 (23 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS)

Your children must be trained well; they must be given a sound, Islamic education while they are in your care. For it is to your apron strings they cling, it is you they follow around, your moves they watch and your words they hear. So let them not hear a lie from you lest in the future they become liars. For surely, if they hear lies from you and then from their fathers, they will become liars, but if they see that both are good, morally sound people, then they will become the same. (187)

13 May 1979 (23 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS)

Our nation's long-term programme is for those who educate our children, that is our teachers, the mothers and fathers of our children, their lecturers and those who write and those who speak for them, to acquaint them with spiritual matters and help them to understand spiritual matters. (188)

24 May 1979 (3 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

The ladies' help is several times more valuable than that of men. May God protect you. May He keep you so that you may carry on your job of training human beings, a job that the prophets were also

assigned. May God's peace be upon you all, and also His mercy. (189)

26 May 1979 (5 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

Respected ladies! You are all responsible; we are all responsible. You are responsible for the upbringing of the children; you have the duty of nurturing virtuous children in your care to hand over to society. We all have this duty, but it is in your care that they receive a better upbringing. A mother's lap is the best school for a child. (190)

26 May 1979 (5 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

As you yourselves now say, you ladies are teachers. You have two noble occupations, two very noble jobs. One is to raise your children well, which is much more important than all other jobs. If you hand over one good individual to society, this is better for you than owning the whole world. I cannot describe how honourable it is for you to bring up your children to be virtuous human beings.

So one of your jobs is to bring up good children. It is in the laps of mothers that true human beings must be produced, for the first stage of their education is in the laps of their mothers. The affection a child feels for his mother is greater than any other, none can compare with the love that exists between a child and his mother. Children learn better from their mothers; they are influenced more by their mothers than they are by their fathers, teachers or lecturers. (191)

11 June 1979 (21 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

May God grant you ladies, who are in effect centres for the training of small children, success to the end in teaching and training these children properly. Their training begins in your laps, and it is in your care that children are trained well. (192)

4 July 1979 (13 Tir 1358 AHS)

These teachings our young people, this generation, received during the time of the *taghut*, these *taghuti* teachings, must be transformed into human, Islamic teachings. It is hoped that this education will begin in the laps of the mothers and continue to the level of university and beyond. For the well-being of a nation depends on its heads, and those in whose hands its destiny lies, being righteous people, pure in heart. (193)

17 July 1979 (26 Tir 1358 AHS)

A mother's lap is the best school in which a child is trained. That which he learns from his mother is quite different from what he learns from his teachers. He picks up more from his mother than he does his teachers; he is trained better in the lap of his mother than he is by his father or teachers. It is a human responsibility and a divine duty, a noble deed, to raise a true human being. (194)

17 August 1979 (26 Murdad 1358 AHS)

You sisters who are responsible for children, take care to promote in them human values, and those of you who are responsible for a community, make sure you guide it to God's straight path. For it is this divine, straight path, which can take man from imperfection to perfection, from darkness to light. (195)

12 October 1979 (20 Mehr 1358 AHS)

God's infinite mercy upon those mothers and fathers in whose pure care you brave fighters in the theatre of battle and struggle against the appetitive soul were raised. (196)

22 March 1982 (2 Farvardin 1361 AHS)

God's mercy be upon these ladies in whose pure laps these lion-hearted youths were raised. (197)

9 February 1984 (20 Bahman 1362 AHS)

## **The importance and honour of motherhood**

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One cannot count the many rights mothers have and they cannot be rightly fulfilled. One night of a mother's life with her child is worth more than a lifetime of a dedicated father's. The affection and compassion that shine from a mother's radiant eyes hold a glimmer of the compassion and kindness of the Lord of the worlds. God, the Blessed and Exalted, has imbued the hearts and souls of mothers with the light of his own divine compassion, such that none can describe and no one, save the mothers, can understand.

And it is this everlasting compassion that has given mothers a heavenly-like tolerance in the face of suffering and hardship from the time of conception, throughout pregnancy, during childbirth and throughout the years of the child's life from infancy up to the end. She endures hardship and suffering in a way that the father cannot endure even for one night. The tradition which says "Heaven is under the mother's feet"<sup>1</sup> is absolutely true.

It has been explained in such a subtle fashion because of the significance of the matter and to show children to search for happiness and the gardens of heaven under the blessed feet of their mothers, to respect them as they would Almighty God and to seek the approval and satisfaction of God the Most Holy in their approval and satisfaction.

*Jilveha-yi Rahmani*, p. 47.

Islam came to fashion true human beings. The divine book of Islam, which is the Most Noble Qur'an, is designed to train man in all his dimensions, in spiritual and physical dimensions, political, social, cultural,

and military, in all human dimensions.

Islam came to show us the way to do this. We, in turn, must educate our youth along Islamic lines, our women must be trained Islamically, passing this training on to their children in their care so that when their children mature, they become servants for Islam and humanity. (198)

11 April 1979 (22 Farvardin 1358 AHS)

You who are educators, who wish to educate your children or society, must pay attention to this verse from the Holy Qur'an: "*Read, in the name of thy Lord,*" (Qur'an 96:1). When you want to teach or learn something remember to read, in the name of thy Lord, do so with God in mind, with divine teachings. If a person receives both a formal education and is instructed in divine teachings, he will be useful for his country.

A country is never harmed by one who has been given both a proper education and proper training. Harm is usually done to a country by thinkers who lack proper training, who have received a formal education but one that lacked spiritual training. They have acquired knowledge but have no piety; they have had no training of the inner self. It is for this reason that they become foreign agents that they themselves draw up the plans for the country's destruction. (199)

13 April 1979 (24 Farvardin 1358 AHS)

May God grant you ladies, who are in effect centres for the training of small children, success to the end in teaching and training these children properly. Yes, their training begins in your laps, and it is in your care that children are trained well. It is possible that a child whom you have trained well will save a nation. Take care to hand over good children to society, and let your teaching be accompanied by training. (200)

13 April 1979 (24 Farvardin 1358 AHS)

You ladies are valuable in the eyes of God, God willing. Raise your children to be good, upright individuals, give them an Islamic upbringing. (201)

10 May 1979 (20 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS)

You bear the great responsibility for the training of your children from when they are very young and easily influenced, when they quickly pick up things they are taught, good or bad. Since in the beginning these children are raised in your care, you are the ones responsible for their actions.

If you raise a good child, that child alone may secure the well-being of a nation, just as, God forbid, if you raise a bad child, he may be the cause of corruption in society. Do not think of your child as merely a child, one day, when he enters society, he may become a leader of the society and, if not brought up well, he could lead it into corruption. (202)

13 May 1979 (23 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS)

In your role as mothers you must morally purify your children, in your role as teachers you should train them well and hand over to society sound, upright individuals, and in so doing create a sound society. If, God forbid, the opposite is the case, you too will suffer as a result, just as in the same way you will benefit from any good deed they do, for you are the source of that good deed. There is a reckoning, either a penalty or a reward. If, God forbid, you hand over corrupt individuals to society and they perform corrupt deeds, you will suffer as a result. (203)

13 May 1979 (23 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS)

You ladies have the honour of being mothers, which puts you ahead of the men. You have the responsibility for training children in your laps. The mother's lap is the first school a child has. A good mother brings up a good child, but, God forbid, if the mother is misguided, the child brought up in her lap will also be misguided. For children have a particular affection for their mothers, which they have for no one else, and when in their laps, all they wish for they find in their mothers, she is their everything.

What she says, how she acts, her nature, all have an effect on a child. When the child is in his mother's lap, which is his first class, if he is taught virtuousness, morality, goodness, he will grow up with a good nature, with that purity of spirit and goodness of deed that has been nurtured in him. While in her lap, the child will begin to imitate his mother, so that if he sees she is good-natured, her words and actions kind and good, he too will behave likewise. For his mother is the one he patterns himself on, and what she instils into him will prove his most effective training. (204)

13 May 1979 (23 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS)

A long-term programme for you young people, you ladies, indeed for everyone, is self-reform and moral purification to advance the aims of Islam. If you ladies bring up your children to be morally upright, Islamic individuals, you have protected both your religion and your country. If, God forbid, immoral, un-Islamic children spring from your laps, if under the tutelage of you young people un-Islamic, unprincipled children emerge, and in the schools and universities our children attend they are not taught goodness of character and Islamic virtues, then both Islam and our country will be cast to the wind. (205)

24 May 1979 (3 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

The mother in whose lap a child is reared bears the gravest of responsibilities and has the noblest of professions: that of bringing up children. The noblest profession in the world is rearing a child and handing over to society a true human being. This is why, throughout history, God the Blessed and Exalted sent prophets. Throughout history, from Adam to the Seal of the Prophets, prophets came to train true human beings. (206)

24 May 1979 (3 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

When a mother wants to save her child from distress, her kindness is more effective than any medication. The child needs spiritual pacification, and this can be provided by the mother and father. (207)

26 May 1979 (5 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

You can train children to uphold the aims of the prophets. You yourselves must be both guardians and the trainers of guardians, for your children are the next custodians. Train them well. Your homes must be places where children are given both religious instruction and formal learning, where they are taught moral edification. The future of these children is the responsibility of the mothers and fathers. (208)

26 May 1979 (5 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

Respected ladies! Purify your characters and those of your children. Bring your children up to be Islamic, for Islam has everything. Put yourself in the shelter of Islam and endow yourselves with Islamic morals, for Islam has everything.

Respected gentlemen! Respected ladies! Obey the call of Islam. Islam did not come to provide fodder; it came to secure spirituality. One should not cry out only for material things, for this is not following the path of Islam. If spirituality is realised, then the material will become spiritual and will follow. Islam approves of material progress when it follows spiritual progress, not when it occurs alone. The basis is spiritual; a country with spiritual progress is a true country. (209)

29 May 1979 (8 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

While your children are in your laps give them an Islamic upbringing, teach them to be upright human beings so that when you send them to primary school you send sound, morally upright and well-behaved children. (210)

11 June 1979 (21 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

You must be mindful of giving these children in your care a religious upbringing, a moral upbringing. If you hand over one committed, virtuous child to society you may see that one day he is the one who reforms society, for it is possible for one individual to reform society.

Likewise if, God forbid, this child leaves your laps an unscrupulous individual, if he leaves the care of you who are teachers an immoral person, then it is possible that he will corrupt society, and you will be the ones responsible. If you train your children properly, it will bring with it honour such that likens to that the prophets enjoyed. If, on the other hand, you bring your children up to be immoral, God forbid, they could possibly corrupt a whole society. (211)

11 June 1979 (21 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

You ladies who took part in this movement, and may God keep you, must continue to participate from now on and advance this movement. The most important thing for you to do is train your children well. The former regime wanted to separate the children from their mothers. They lured the ladies into offices, not with the aim of improving these offices, rather with the intention, for one thing, of making them corrupt places and for another of taking the children out of their mothers' care.

Children, who from the beginning are not raised in their mothers' laps, develop complexes from which much corruption emanates. Look after your children well, train them well for it is these children who can save a country. While in your care give them an Islamic upbringing, raise them to have virtues, to have faith, so that they can be of service in this country. May God grant you all happiness and make you a useful person for your country. (212)

2 July 1979 (11 Tir 1358 AHS)

It is possible that a child whom you have trained well will save a nation. Take care to hand over good children to society, and let your teaching be accompanied by training. (213)

14 July 1979 (23 Tir 1358 AHS)

The prophets came to make true human beings. They were given the mission to transform those men who are no different from animals into true human beings, to purify them. This was their profession and it should be the profession of mothers with regard to the children in their care. They too, through their deeds, must purify their children; children are trained better in the laps of their mothers than they are by their teachers.

The love a child has for his mother he feels for no one else, what he hears from his mother becomes engraved on his heart and stays with him till the end. Mothers must be mindful of training their children properly, of bringing them up to be morally upright individuals. Their laps should be both a school of learning and of religious instruction, this is a very important matter and it is something, which only mothers can achieve. Children hear more from their mothers than they do their fathers. No one can influence a young child or endow the infant with his/her own character and morals the way the child's mother can. (214)

17 July 1979 (26 Tir 1358 AHS)

It is possible that a child whom a mother has trained well may one day save a nation. It is also possible that a child whom a mother has trained badly may destroy a nation. (215)

17 July 1979 (26 Tir 1358 AHS)

If good training begins in the mother's lap and continues through primary school, high school and university or other institutes of higher education, then there may come a time when you see that all the young people are good, upright individuals and they draw a country towards goodness. (216)

17 July 1979 (26 Tir 1358 AHS)

A good, upright individual may train a world, whereas someone unscrupulous and immoral may lead the world to corruption. Both immorality and godliness originate from your laps, from your teachings and from the schools in which you teach. (217)

17 August 1979 (26 Murdad 1358 AHS)

The correct training of these small children begins at this stage of their lives. If, God forbid, the mother is a wrongdoer, these little ones will receive an unsound training from the start. The responsibility for their upbringing lies in your hands. (218)

6 October 1979 (14 Mehr 1358 AHS)

The role of the women in society is more important than that of the men, for in addition to being active members of society themselves in all fields, the ladies also raise active members. A mother's service to the community is greater than that of a teacher, indeed of anyone else. And this is what the prophets wanted, they wanted women to be people who train society and bestow upon the community lion-hearted men and women. (219)

16 March 1981 (25 Isfand 1359 AHS)

Be good mothers for your children, good advisers to society and hard workers for the needy, as, praise God, you already are. (220)

16 March 1981 (25 Isfand 1359 AHS)

A mother's service to the community is much greater than that of a teacher, indeed of anyone else. And this is what the prophets wanted . . . (221)

16 March 1981 (25 Isfand 1359 AHS)

The ladies of Iran have played a greater role in this movement and this revolution than the men, and today as they pursue their activities behind the front lines, their role is greater still. Through their educational pursuits, whether in the form of educating their own children or teaching in classrooms and other places, they still play a great role in this revolution. (222)

23 May 1981 (2 Khurdad 1360 AHS)

The respected ladies of Iran have proved that they did not fall victim to these machinations and will not do so. They have proved that they are firmly entrenched in the bastion of virtuousness and modesty and will present this country with strong, integrated young men and virtuous, committed young women, and never will they go down those roads which the superpowers have laid at their feet with the intention of destroying this country. (223)

23 May 1981 (2 Khurdad 1360 AHS)

What can one say? What can be laid at the noble feet of the exalted mothers who raised such children in their pure laps? (224)

27 August 1984 (5 Shahrivar 1363 AHS)

The Iranian ladies have brought Islam to the stage it is now at by sacrificing their lives, their youth and their time, and I hope that from now on it will be advanced even further. You can be sure that as long as you remain active and committed to Islam, as long as you are ready to give your young ones for the cause and are willing to train them properly, then Islam will progress . . . (225)

12 March 1985 (21 Isfand 1363 AHS)

## **The negative effects of separating children from the care of their mothers**

### **The negative effects of separating children from the care of their mothers**

By putting them under pressure and exerting force, they tried to destroy this segment of the population too. They strove to stop them from performing that glorious deed which is theirs to perform, from executing those services that this segment wishes to render the nation, those valuable services which our ladies are entrusted to undertake, and prevent them from performing that most fundamental of services which it is their duty to render, that is training their children in whose hands the destiny of the country lies.

They feared lest in their laps children were brought up to be pious, Islamic and with a love for their homeland, and that even when these children entered the school system, they still would not be able to change them, not even with all the propaganda they disseminated at the schools through the teachers and propagators they had installed there. Thus, their plan was to turn these ladies away from that great, fundamental role they have and pretend that in so doing they had freed half the population of Iran. (226)

16 May 1979 (26 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS)

Of course, there is no objection to women taking up employment, sound employment, but we do not want a repeat of the way it was during the Pahlavi era. Then they did not have employment in mind for women, rather their aim was to degrade both men and women, pulling them down from that position they occupy. They did not want a natural growth for either sex. They did not want our children to receive a sound upbringing so they took steps to prevent this from the very beginning by depriving many of the chance to be raised in their mothers' laps, which are centres for a child's training.

Then later at the primary schools, there too they misguided the children and led them astray with their

malicious propaganda and misleading books. Even later still, at the universities, their agents there did not let them develop properly, they did not allow training to be given that would produce genuine scholars or individuals committed to the welfare of the country and to Islam. (227)

16 May 1979 (26 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS)

Unfortunately, the foreigners made us view the profession of being a mother as very demeaning and of little value, consequently some mothers, although by no means all were encouraged to distance themselves from their children. This great profession was made to appear unimportant so that mothers would not rear good children in their laps. Fathers too were made to feel they needed not to pay much attention to their children or to their proper upbringing.

The school system also, up to and including university, suffered the same lack of training. This was because the foreigners did not want true human beings to exist in this country; they knew that if this were to happen, such people would sever their hands from this land. They don't want genuine, believing Muslims, people with faith in God, people who consider martyrdom a triumph, to exist in this country. (228)

24 May 1979 (3 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

Unfortunately, during the rule of the *taghut*, they tried to take this profession away from these mothers, so they propagated views that questioned the woman's role as a mother, they disparaged this noble occupation and made it seem unimportant in the eyes of the mothers. For they wanted to distance the mothers from their children, they wanted the children to be brought up in nurseries and the mothers to go doing the things they wanted them to do.

A child brought up in a nursery is not the same as one raised in his mother's lap. When a child is brought up in a nursery by strangers without his mother's care and affection, he will develop a complex. Much of the corruption from which society suffers, stems from these children who have grown up with a complex. Major complexes are created when a child is separated from his mother. A child needs his mother's affection, therefore this profession, which was also the profession of the prophets, for they too came to make true human beings, is your primary one: to give your child his primary training. (229)

11 June 1979 (21 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

Throughout the rule of this monarchy, they strove to distance mothers from their children. They instilled in the mothers the idea that looking after their children was of no value; that they should work outside in the offices instead. In this way they took the innocent children out of their mothers' laps and put them into nurseries and other places where unsympathetic strangers gave them an unsound training.

When a child is separated from his mother, it doesn't matter who looks after him instead, he will develop complexes that in turn become the source of much corruption. Many of the murders that occur stem from

these complexes, and many of these have developed because of a child being separated from his mother. (230)

17 July 1979 (26 Tir 1358 AHS)

When infants are taken from their mothers' care and put into nurseries, they develop complexes because they are placed in the care of strangers and are deprived of their mothers' love and affection. These complexes become the root of most of mankind's corruption. These wars that occur are a result of complexes, which exist in the hearts of bloodthirsty individuals. This thieving and treachery we witness stems mostly from the complexes within man.

If your children are separated from you, they will develop complexes and be drawn into corruption because of the lack of your motherly love. The former regime was actually assigned the task of leading our children into corruption, of not allowing them to be brought up, to be trained, in the loving care of their mothers, so that they would develop complexes. In the school system the story was the same, our children were placed in the hands of teachers appointed by them, attended universities they had set up; corruption from the bottom right up to the top "*From light they will lead them forth into the depths of darkness*" (Qur'an 2:257). The regime did not allow a sound education to be imparted, one that would create true human beings. (231)

17 August 1979 (26 Murdad 1358 AHS)

They did not want true human beings to develop so they made the training of children by their mothers appear to be a very trivial matter. Some of the mothers, those who were easily influenced by them, came to believe their propaganda and stopped caring for their dear children themselves, sending them instead to nurseries where they received devilish training. (232)

17 August 1979 (26 Murdad 1358 AHS)

You are responsible and the responsibility is great. A good, upright individual may train a world, whereas someone unscrupulous and immoral may lead the world to corruption. Both immorality and godlessness originate from your laps, from your teachings and from the schools in which you teach. They wanted to remove the children from their mothers' care and send them to nurseries. (233)

17 August 1979 (26 Murdad 1358 AHS)

For the ladies there is one matter, which is more important than anything else that is the proper upbringing of their children. Do not think that those who always decry (the profession of) being a mother and bringing up children, who make it appear a very trivial matter and very demeaning, are right. They want to distance children from their mothers' laps, where they will be given a proper upbringing, and send them from the start to nurseries for strangers to train. They don't want true human beings to be produced, and it is in your laps that this can happen. They wish to prevent your children from being with

you and thus prevent true human beings from being trained. (234)

17 August 1979 (26 Murdad 1358 AHS)

## **The importance of the family and the duty of the parents to prevent children from straying**

### **The importance of the family and the duty of the parents to prevent children from straying**

The noble soul of the Most Noble Messenger (peace be upon him and his descendants) is restless and afraid lest the tree of prophethood and Imamate shed its leaves and autumn sets in. The Prophet said: Marry and procreate and indeed I will be proud of you above all other nations.[2](#)

*Forty Traditions*, p. 147.

Your home must be a school, a place where your young ones are taught the principles of Islam, where they are refined morally. You must deliver well-bred, upright youngsters to the schoolteachers and they in turn must edify them further. (235)

10 May 1979 (20 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS)

This call to marry and the high commendation marriage has been given are to encourage marriage and discourage deviation and corruption. Through their teachings, the prophets aim to prevent the development of an unbridled carnal appetite and the establishment of centres of corruption and fornication, they do not seek to quash passions and carnal desires per se, for these are a natural part of man's nature and must be allowed to perform their purpose.

However, they are subject to restraints. If the teachings of the prophets were realised, then man would become complete in this world, and this gluttony, these injustices, these aggressions and class differences would not arise; in the next world too, which is the most important one, in that life which is eternal, his welfare would be assured. (236)

7 July 1979 (16 Tir 1358 AHS)

When goodness prevails in a society, the people brought up in it will be good, healthy individuals. A family whose members are all sound individuals will bring up sound children, unless, that is, these children enter a corrupt society, which in turn corrupts them.

This is only natural, for the nature of small children makes them very impressionable, and they can be easily influenced by good or bad. If they are brought up in a sound society, they will grow up to be sound individuals, on the other hand if society is corrupt, they will grow up to be corrupt too. (237)

1 July 1980 (10 Tir 1359 AHS)

It was you families who raised these brave youths in your laps, youths who made sacrifices for Islam.  
(238)

18 December 1980 (27 Azar 1359 AHS)

Our nation must give the situation of these individuals some consideration, the mothers and fathers of these young, misguided boys and girls must give a thought for their children and guide them. We only want what is best for you. (239)

22 June 1981 (1 Tir 1360 AHS)

Time and again I have advised these misguided young people and exhorted their mothers and fathers to counsel their children and prevent them from becoming tools in the hands of criminals. (240)

29 June 1981 (8 Tir 1360 AHS)

Mothers and fathers must give their children careful attention and mind what they do and what goes on with them. They should not allow these helpless girls to fall into their<sup>3</sup> trap, these helpless boys to fall into their trap. They should counsel them, but if they pay no heed, then they should report them. (241)

10 August 1981 (19 Murdad 1360 AHS)

The role the family plays in the upbringing of children, in particular that of the mother for infants and the father for teenagers is a very sensitive one. If children are brought up well with salutary teachings in the laps of their mothers and in the care of dedicated fathers, then when they are sent to school, the work of the teachers is made much easier. Fundamentally, a child's training begins in the pure laps of mothers and in the care of fathers, and when a salutary, Islamic upbringing is imparted, this lays the foundations for commitment to the interests of the country and the country's independence and freedom. (242)

22 September 1981 (31 Shahrivar 1360 AHS)

The mothers and fathers of these innocent children, these inexperienced youth,<sup>4</sup> must strive to save their beloved offspring from this peril, which threatens to destroy their lives in this world and the next. The crusading and committed nation must be vigilant and persevering and save the youth, who are the country's assets and valuable resources, from the evil of these American agents<sup>5</sup> who wish to lead them astray. (243)

22 September 1981 (31 Shahrivar 1360 AHS)

Dedicated mothers and fathers should keep a close eye on their children and their comings and goings, so that, God forbid, they don't fall prey to the American-backed hypocrites and the Russian-backed deviators. They should involve themselves in their studies, for the role of the mothers and fathers in protecting their children during their school years is very important and valuable.

They must bear in mind that their children are at an age when they can be deceived by one misleading slogan, which can, God forbid, set them off down a path from which no one can turn them away. The mothers and fathers must remember that they exert more influence than anyone else over their children, and can save them from being sucked into a maelstrom of ignorance and corruption. For this reason, parents should keep in contact with their children's teachers, helping them in this important affair and getting their help.

I hope these young people will secure our cultural, political, economic and military independence of tomorrow, will save us from the malice of the superpowers and be the founders of a real third world.  
(244)

23 September 1982 (1 Mehr 1361 AHS)

## **Good conduct towards family members is recommended**

### **Good conduct towards family members is recommended**

Even though all mothers are exemplary, some exhibit special qualities (which put them above the rest). Throughout the course of my life with your respected mother, in my recollections of the nights she spent up with her children and the days she spent looking after them, I found her to have these qualities. So now I exhort you, my son,<sup>6</sup> along with my other children, to strive in your service to her after my death and in obtaining her approval. Just as I see she is pleased with you now, strive harder in your service to her when I have gone.

*Jilveha-yi Rahmani*, p. 47

My son, let me say a few words about personal and family matters then bring this verbose disquisition to an end. My foremost exhortation to you is to respect the rights of your very faithful mother. One cannot count the many rights mothers have and they cannot be rightly fulfilled. One night of a mother's life with her child is worth more than a lifetime of a dedicated father's.

The affection and compassion that shine from a mother's radiant eyes hold a glimmer of the compassion and kindness of the Lord of the worlds. God the Blessed and Exalted has imbued the hearts and souls of mothers with the light of his own divine compassion such that none can describe and no one save the mothers can understand. And it is this everlasting compassion that has given mothers a heavenly-like tolerance in the face of suffering and hardship from the time of conception, throughout pregnancy, during childbirth and throughout the years of the child's life from infancy up to the end.

She endures hardship and suffering in a way that the father cannot endure even for one night. The tradition which says "Heaven is under the mother's feet"<sup>7</sup> is absolutely true. It has been explained in such a subtle fashion because of the significance of the matter and to show children to search for happiness and the gardens of heaven under the blessed feet of their mothers, to respect them as they

would Almighty God and to seek the approval and satisfaction of God the Most Holy in their approval and satisfaction.

*Jilveha-yi Rahmani*, p. 47

And my last words of advice to Ahmad are to bring his children up well, to acquaint them with Islam from an early age, to take good care of his respected mother and to help all of his family and dependants. May God's peace be upon all the virtuous.

I ask all my kinsmen, especially my children, to forgive me for any failings, neglect or unfairness I may have shown them, and to pray that God will show me mercy and forgiveness, and He is the most merciful. I humbly ask God the Beneficent to grant my kinsfolk success in persevering in His way and following the path to happiness, and to bathe them in his extensive mercy.

*Jilveha-yi Rahmani*, p. 48

And I exhort Ahmad, my son, to treat his kin, especially his sisters and his nephews and nieces, with love and affection, and to be good, generous, pleasant and respectful towards them. I exhort all my children to treat one another with kindness and generosity, to be of one mind and tread one path, the path of God and His deprived servants, for well-being and happiness in this world and the next can be found through this.

And to Husayn,<sup>8</sup> who is the apple of my eye, I advise him not to neglect religious studies nor waste the talent God has given him, to treat his mother and sister with kindness and generosity, to disencumber himself from attachment to this world and to set out on the straight path of worship and servitude while still young.

*Jilveha-yi Rahmani*, p. 48

In addition to greeting all the family members and relatives and asking them to show courtesy and tolerance towards one another, to harbour no fear and resort to no other policy, for that which Almighty God has preordained will come to pass, it is necessary to draw your<sup>9</sup> attention to this point: if you seek Almighty God's approval and mine, then treat your mother, sisters, brother and relatives with unlimited kindness, for all are in need of your courtesies. I ask you to treat everyone well.

When I was being taken away I was told that the family could come with me if I so desired, again, here, this was repeated, but even though I would dearly love to see you all, I will not agree to your coming for I know how difficult it would be for you all and your respected mother here in a strange place.<sup>10</sup> God willing, I will be taken care of here. (245)

4 November 1964 (13 Aban 1343 AHS)

Concerning your mother, sisters, Ahmad,<sup>11</sup> and other relatives, it is necessary for me to stress that

God's approval and mine will be found in your good conduct towards them. Your mother is truly in need of your help; you must keep her happy in every respect, both materially and psychologically. Do not let her worry and provide for her comfort. (246)

10 November 1964 (19 Aban 1343 AHS)

I am sure there is no need to remind you to treat your mother and your dependants with the utmost kindness and affection, in particular oblige your mother, for that will please Almighty God. (247)

14 November 1964 (23 Aban 1343 AHS)

## **Complete texts of some of Imam's speeches about the role of the family and women in the training of the next generation**

**Complete texts of some of Imam's speeches about the role of the family and women in the training of the next generation**

### **13 May 1979**

**Imam's speech on the sensitive role played by mothers in the upbringing of their children and consequently in the rectification or degeneration of society**

**In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful**

You ladies have the honour of being mothers, which puts you ahead of the men. You have the responsibility for training children in your laps. The mother's lap is the first school a child has. A good mother brings up a good child, but, God forbid, if the mother is misguided, the child brought up in her lap will also be misguided. For children have a particular affection for their mothers, which they have for no one else, and when in their laps, all they wish for they find in their mothers, she is their everything. What she says, how she acts, her nature, all have an effect on a child.

When the child is in his mother's lap, which is his first class, if he is taught virtuousness, morality, goodness, he will grow up with a good nature, with that purity of spirit and goodness of deed that has been nurtured in him. While in her lap, the child will begin to imitate his mother, so that if he sees she is good-natured, her words and actions kind and good, he too will behave likewise. For his mother is the one he patterns himself on, and what she instils into him will prove the most effective training.

You bear the great responsibility for the training of your children from when they are very young and easily influenced, when they quickly pick up things they are taught, good or bad. Since in the beginning these children are raised in your care, you are the ones responsible for their actions. If you raise a good child, that child alone may secure the well-being of a nation, just as, God forbid, if you raise a bad child, he may be the cause of corruption in society. Do not think of your child as merely a child, one day, when

he enters society, he may become a leader of the society and, if not brought up well, he could lead it into corruption.

Take the example of Iran's experience under the Pahlavis. Their corruption was not merely evident in the fact that they stole our resources, or handed the country over to others with both hands, giving them whatever we had. No, for worse than this, they made others in this country corrupt like themselves, thieves like themselves, so that now when we want to find a healthy, upright individual we have to search for one, we have to grab a torch and search for someone who is sound, who is not a thief, who is trustworthy and honest, someone who would not betray his country.

Such individuals are today very scarce, the reason being that for fifty odd years these people led this country and wreaked havoc on it, and because they themselves were corrupt, those in their circle also became corrupt as did others close to them. The blight started at the top and spread down to the lower levels until corruption permeated everywhere, such that today there is a scarcity of sound, morally upright individuals in our country.

There are a few, but only a few, and this is because for over fifty years the Pahlavis impaired our human resources, damaged them in a way that they did not damage our national resources, those they simply stole. It was the human resources that were the important ones. If a person, a shah, or a state leader is a morally refined, sound individual, then those around him will also be good people and their good deeds will, in turn, encourage others to act likewise. At one time you may see that if for twenty years a righteous ruler holds sway, then in that time a whole country can be made righteous and just.

The reason why we insist on having an 'Islamic' republic is that Islam seeks to create morally refined individuals. The Qur'an is a book designed to create true human beings, the prophets came to ameliorate mankind, [and] they had no other task but this. Throughout their lives, the great prophets and the Immaculate Imams (upon whom be peace) strove to educate the people. God the Blessed and Exalted sent the prophets to purify and reform mankind.

If a person who leads a community, a mullah who leads a community, is a reformed, righteous individual, the community too will become a righteous one, for the people take their example from him. If a government is a sound, righteous one, the people too will become righteous, for they take their cue from them. This process must begin in the laps of your mothers, with your children.

Your children must be trained well; they must be given a sound, Islamic education while they are in your care. For it is to your apron strings they cling, it is you they follow around, your moves they watch and your words they hear. So let them not hear a lie from you lest in the future they become liars. For surely, if they hear lies from you and then from their fathers, they will become liars, but if they see that both are good, morally sound people, then they will become the same.

When you deliver such children to the school system, if there they are taught by sound teachers, then when they leave the system and enter society they will make society a sound, morally upright one. God

willing you ladies will at some time become teachers, and those of you who are not mothers already will be so in the future, God willing.

In your role as mothers you should bring your children up well, in your role as teachers you should train them well and hand over to society sound, upright individuals and in so doing create a sound society. If, God forbid, the opposite is the case, you too will suffer as a result, just as in the same way you will benefit from any good deed they do, for you are the source of that good deed. There is a reckoning, either a penalty or a reward. If, God forbid, you hand over corrupt individuals to society and they perform corrupt deeds, you will suffer as a result.

I ask God, the Blessed and Exalted, to grant all you ladies and gentlemen success, health and happiness.

Peace be upon you and also the mercy and blessings of God. (248)

13 May 1979 (23 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS)

## **26 May 1979**

**Imam's address to a gathering of ladies from the families of scholars at the theological school in Qum**

**In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful**

*"O Apostle! Sufficient unto thee is God and those who follow thee among the believers,"* (Qur'an 8:64).

Such pride this verse evokes in the believers, such a responsibility it brings for them. It evokes pride because although God the Blessed and Exalted alone is sufficient and one in His omnipotence, everyone else being insignificant compared to Him, He gave the believers, and this includes the women, the honour of mentioning their name alongside His own blessed name and telling the Prophet that He and the believers, those who follow him, both male and female, are enough for him: "*Sufficient unto thee is God and those who follow thee among the believers.*"

What an honour this is for us, for the believers, for you devout ladies, to be mentioned in the same line as God, and what a responsibility this brings for us all. In this verse, God the Blessed and Exalted is telling us that we must protect Islam, the Noble Prophet of Islam and all those associated with him, and we must uphold the laws and aims of Islam. We have been commissioned to protect God's religion, to uphold divine aims.

You believing women, who are from the families of religious scholars, who are from the household of prophecy, you more than anyone else have a fundamental role to play in upholding the aims of Islam. God has favoured us by saying that along with Him, we should protect the religion of Islam. "*Sufficient unto thee is God and those who follow thee among the believers.*"

Respected ladies! You are all responsible; we are all responsible. You are responsible for the upbringing of the children; you have the duty of nurturing virtuous children in your care to hand over to society. We all have this duty, but it is in your care that they receive a better upbringing. A mother's lap is the best school for a child. You have a responsibility towards your children, towards your country; you can train your children so that one day they make the country flourish. You can train children to uphold the aims of the prophets.

You yourselves must be both guardians and the trainers of guardians, for your children are the next custodians. Train them well. Your homes must be places where children are given both religious instruction and formal learning, where they are taught moral edification. The future of these children is the responsibility of the mothers and fathers, but that of the mothers is greater. They are honoured more than the fathers, the mother's influence on the child's psychology is greater than the father's.

You are responsible; we are all responsible; God, the Blessed and Exalted, has made us all responsible and has said in this noble verse: "*Sufficient unto thee is God and those who follow thee among the believers.*" Those among the believers who follow Islam, who follow the Messenger of Islam, these are the people who are sufficient for the Messenger.

This is a great responsibility which all the people, all the followers, all those who follow the Messenger must undertake. This mark "*Sufficient unto thee is God and those who follow thee among the believers,*" must be on their foreheads. They must protect God's religion, Islam and the Most Noble Qur'an.

They must not tremble in the face of these impotent insurrections that these inhuman elements create in Iran, nor fear these feeble insurrectionists who assassinate people thinking they can terrorise the nation. Our nation will never be intimidated by such tactics and our movement will never be assassinated.

By assassinating individuals they will not be able to assassinate the movement. Our movement is rooted even without such personalities as the late Mutahhari,<sup>12</sup> Mr. Hashemi<sup>13</sup> and others. God the Blessed and Exalted and those who follow the Prophet from among the believers are sufficient, the nation is sufficient. Our nation has found its way, there is no fear, we will never allow these assassinations to intimidate us, nor will we return to the past or permit the East or West to ever again interfere in the affairs of our country.

May God keep you believing women who participated greatly in the Islamic movement and who are now helping the needy. Your help is very valuable. The ladies' help is several times more valuable than that of men.

May God protect you, may He keep you so that you may carry on your job of training human beings, a job that the prophets were also assigned.

May God's peace be upon you all, and also His mercy. (249)

## **11 June 1979**

### **Imam's address to a group of ladies from Dezful In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful**

As you yourselves now say, you ladies are teachers. You have two noble occupations, two very noble jobs. One is to raise your children well, which is much more important than all other jobs. If you hand over one good individual to society, this is better for you than owning the whole world. I cannot describe how honourable it is for you to bring up your children to be virtuous human beings.

So one of your jobs is to bring up good children. It is in the laps of mothers that true human beings must be produced, for the first stage of their education is in the laps of their mothers. The affection a child feels for his mother is greater than any other, none can compare with the love that exists between a child and his mother.

Children learn better from their mothers; they are influenced more by their mothers than they are by their fathers, teachers or lecturers. While your children are in your laps give them an Islamic upbringing, teach them to be upright human beings so that when you send them to primary school you send sound, morally upright and well-behaved children.

So one of your jobs is to educate your children. Unfortunately, during the rule of the *taghut*, they tried to take this profession away from these mothers, so they propagated views that questioned the woman's role as a mother, they disparaged this noble occupation and made it seem unimportant in the eyes of the mothers. For they wanted to distance the mothers from their children, they wanted the children to be brought up in nurseries and the mothers to go doing the things they wanted them to do.

A child brought up in a nursery is not the same as one raised in his mother's lap. When a child is brought up in a nursery by strangers without his mother's care and affection, he will develop a complex. Much of the corruption from which society suffers stems from these children who have grown up with a complex. Major complexes are created when a child is separated from his mother. A child needs his mother's affection, therefore this profession, which was also the profession of the prophets, for they too came to make true human beings, is your primary one: to give your child his primary training.

Another honourable profession has also been assigned to you, for you are also teachers and the responsibility this job brings with it is as great as the honour. As teachers, your job is to develop man, the same task that the prophets were assigned. The prophets, from the first to the last, came to train and develop mankind; indeed this is the whole point of their coming.

The Most Noble Messenger was a teacher of man, as was *Hazrat Amir* (Imam `Ali, upon whom be peace) after him. Their teachings are meant for the whole of mankind whereas you teach only a portion, your profession is the same as theirs, only on a smaller scale, their teachings are far more extensive.

So this profession of yours is also a very honourable one, and the responsibility it carries with it is very great, in the same way as the responsibility of the prophets was very great in their task to develop man, a task which they accomplished. Your profession is the profession of the prophets, it is a very honourable one and your responsibilities the same.

You must be mindful of giving these children in your care a religious upbringing, a moral upbringing. If you hand over one committed, virtuous child to society you may see that one day he is the one who reforms society, for it is possible for one individual to reform society.

Likewise if, God forbid, this child leaves your laps an unscrupulous individual, if he leaves the care of you who are teachers an immoral person, then it is possible that he will corrupt society, and you will be the ones responsible. If you train your children properly, it will bring with it honour such that likens to that the prophets enjoyed. If, on the other hand, you bring your children up to be immoral, God forbid, they could possibly corrupt a whole society.

May God protect you and grant you happiness. May you be good teachers for your children and for the girls who come to you for training, God willing.

Peace be upon you and also the mercy and blessings of God. (250)

11 June 1979 (21 Khurdad 1358 AHS)

## **16 March 1981**

### **Imam's address to a group of ladies**

#### **In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful**

Greetings to you great women who through your counsel wish to lead us to the right path. Greetings to the ladies throughout the country who acted as teachers to the men during this noble movement, and who remain so today. Foreign hands tried to turn these esteemed members of society, in whose capable hands the sound structure of countries rest, to turn you ladies, who have the job of building Iran and building the men, into dolls and playthings in the hands of corrupt individuals.

However, praise be to God, they did not succeed. The plan was this: to induce these influential members of society, from whose laps spring influential men and women, to stop caring for their children themselves and to place them instead in nurseries and other such places, thus depriving these mothers of their right to exercise their motherly duties and love to the full, and keeping these children from their mothers' supervision. In this way they could prevent children from being trained in their mothers' laps and from becoming individuals who would act for their country and for beloved Islam.

Through the ignominious scheme for the unveiling of women devised during the reign of that dim-witted thug Riza Khan, they conspired to change this beloved segment of the population whose role it is to develop society, into one that would corrupt society. And their plan was not aimed only at you ladies. It

also sought to corrupt the young men too by luring them into centres of corruption, and by training them in such a way that were their country to fall into the hands of others they would remain indifferent or even assist in its capitulation.

If this movement, this Islamic revolution, had achieved nothing other than the transformation that has taken place in our women and our youth, this alone would have been enough for our country. There are individuals around who like to tell people that this revolution has achieved nothing. They are people who sneer at this transformation, which has taken place in you because it is detrimental to them and to the plundering powers.

Through their malicious propaganda they try to make you believe that nothing has changed. But what better demonstrates that change than a gathering such as this where you ladies are present, than the moral agenda you have set yourselves or the unqualified trouble you go to for the needy and homeless? If this were the time of the former regime, then such gatherings would not take place, nor would the all-encompassing activities of the ladies who form one half of Iran's population and who educate the other half.

The role of the women in society is much more important than that of the men, for in addition to being active members of society in all fields, the ladies also raise active members. A mother's service to the community is much greater than that of a teacher, indeed of anyone else. And this is what the prophets wanted, they wanted women to be people who train society and bestow upon the community lion-hearted men and women.

Those who sought to deprive this country of all its gifts, of Islam, morals and good deeds, and drag the people into centres of corruption, now see as you enter society and serve society that their plans for you and the men have come to naught. For this reason, they are raising their voices, insisting that nothing has happened, that the situation is just as it was under the former regime and nothing has changed from the time of Riza Khan and his son.

This is mere propaganda, which contradicts what is evident to all the men and women throughout the country, that a change has occurred in the people and in the value systems prevalent in Islamic countries, particularly Iran. For whereas under the former regime one's consequence and standing were measured by obnoxious make-up, by what one wore and in what kind of house one lived, the values found today in Islamic countries, particularly in Iran, are human, moral values.

These values have come about because of the change that has taken place in the ladies. Those who once liked to show off amongst the female community with their costly clothes and pernicious make-up are now condemned and stand shamefaced. In those days, our Muslim ladies were embarrassed wearing Islamic dress, and the deprived classes who observed the Islamic dress code felt ashamed of the way they dressed before the affluent, but corrupt, classes. Today the opposite is true, and now one of those people who once put on such corrupt displays of make-up and dress would be ashamed in your

midst.

This transformation is the greatest to take place in our society. Those of our women who were typical of the Muhammad Riza and Riza Khan era have now returned to being Zaynab-like women and followers of Fatima. In those days, they were followers of European fashion waiting for the latest designs to arrive; today they are followers of a school of thought and accept that which Islam approves of.

This is the greatest transformation to take place in our society, make sure it lasts. Be alert so that corrupt hands, corrupt pens and corrupt words cannot deceive you and return you to your former state. Pursue this path, all of you, you millions of men and women, pursue this path as you are doing and do not pay any attention to what they say or write.

Think for yourselves; don't simply bow to the ideas of others. Try to be useful for your country, guide the men and counsel the statesmen. Be good mothers for your children, good advisers to society and hard workers for the needy, as, praise God, you already are. You are already active throughout the country doing things that need doing. You are taking care of children who have no refuge, helping the needy and homeless, comforting them and showing them kindness. This is a great service, which carries much merit before God, the Blessed and Exalted.

May God guide all the ladies and men to this straight path, which you ladies are now following. May the other segments of Iran's population also follow that same right path which you are now treading sincerely and without a thought to self-indulgence. The nation must realise that this kind of talk and the mistakes government officials sometimes make are not significant enough to harm our Islamic Republic.

I ask God, the Blessed and Exalted, to quickly bring an end to these disagreements which exist among people in the different echelons of society, from the country's officials down to the ordinary people, so that everyone together can work towards leading this country to the straight path, to making it flourish and to promoting Islamic and human morals in all segments of the population.

My advice to all sections of society, whether the ladies, the youth or the men, is that they must not think they have to differ with one another over the issues which arise in Iran. The differences that arise among those in the upper echelons will be solved, God willing, but if you start fanning the flames of this dissension, you may actually be preventing a solution from being found.

You, the masses, must remain united and not pay any attention to these problems, which arise among the officials. Always be mindful of the fact that it is your ideological unity which can bring happiness and well-being to this society, and that disunity can perhaps, God forbid, lead to the special favour God has bestowed upon you being taken away and your country becoming once again that which it was and which for so many long years you had to suffer.

If disagreements arise among the people which lead, God forbid, to us being defeated in the war or to it being prolonged, the blame will lie with those who fan the flames of these disagreements and who create

unrest in the streets and the bazaar. Muslims, believers and those committed to God the Blessed and Exalted should pay no heed to these elements in society who are the remnants of the former regime, or to corrupt individuals among the people, for they simply want to push you into the arms of the West or East. Be vigilant and take pains to solve the differences yourselves. Urge the quarrelling parties to settle their disputes.

I ask God, the Blessed and Exalted, for the happiness and well being of the Islamic nations, for you ladies, for all the Muslim women and all segments of the population. I beseech God the Blessed and Exalted to grant victory to the armies of Islam over the forces of unbelief. May God grant you all happiness and success in helping your fellow man.

Peace be upon you and also the mercy and blessings of God. (251)

16 March 1981 (25 Isfand 1359 AHS)

1. – A saying of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his descendants).
2. – See Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, Book on Marriage, Chapter 1, the Preliminaries of Marriage, Narrative 17.
3. – Referring to deviatory groups who tried to lead young people astray with their untruthful claims.
4. – Referring to those youth deceived by the false claims of deviatory groups.
5. – Referring to the deviatory and anti-revolutionary groups.
6. – Imam here is addressing his son, the now deceased Hajj Sayyid Ahmad Khomeini.
7. – A saying of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his descendants).
8. – Referring to Sayyid Husayn Khomeini, the son of Imam's late son, Hajj Sayyid Mustafa Khomeini.
9. – Imam is addressing his son, Hajj Sayyid Mustafa Khomeini, who was martyred in 1977.
10. – The city of Bursa in Turkey, where Imam spent the first months of his period in exile.
11. – Referring to the late Hajj Sayyid Ahmad Khomeini.
12. – Referring to the martyr Murtaza Mutahhari who was martyred on 2 May 1979 (11 Urdibihisht 1358 AHS) by the terrorist group Furqan.
13. – Hujjat al-Islam wal Muslimin `Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani on whose life an attempt was made in 1979 (1358 AHS) by the terrorist group Furqan.

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