

Duty towards Children

In as much as obligation towards parents has been strictly enjoined upon children, Islam has also instituted duties towards children. The Holy Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) laid down some guiding factors with regard to the upbringing and maintenance of children, especially female children.

The Holy Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) had raised the status and position of females in Society, and promised the Muslims success and high reward for upbringing their daughters with the necessary education and training to face marriage and lead a decent family life.

The father has been instructed to provide for the maintenance of his infant children, whilst both parents have been instructed to provide education for their young children beginning first with the study of the Holy Quran. Of all the properties and which children inherit from their parents, the best is good manners. Parents have been instructed to spend for the well-being of their children. The Hadith states there is no better cause than to spend for the well-being of their children.

If in the case of the father's death, the mother spends her time bringing up the minor children till they attain maturity, instead of taking a second husband, that mother has been assured a place in Paradise next to the Holy Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam).

There are Ahadith that state that parents should salute (make Salaams to) their children when entering the house; and parents should often express kindness and affection to their children by hugging and kissing them.

The following are Ahadith from the various Kitaabs of Hadith that refer to duties of parents towards children:

Muslim Shareef: Hazrat Anas (radi Allahu anhu) reported that the Messenger of Allah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) said: "Whoever maintains two girls till they attain maturity, he and I will come on the Day of Resurrection like this, 'and he joined his fingers.'"

Tirmizi Shareef: Hazrat Jaber bin Samorah (radi Allahu anhu) reported that the Messenger of Allah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) said: "The teaching of good manners by a man to his son is better for him than to give a sa'a in charity."

Sunnan Abu Dawud: Hazrat A'f bin Malik (radi Allahu anhu) reported that the Messenger of Allah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) said: "I and the woman black of two cheeks shall be like these two fingers on the Day of Resurrection (Yazid bin Zurayy pointed out the middle and fore-fingers), the woman who has been bereft of her husband (but) possessing beauty and respectability, and who confines herself to (upbringing) her orphan children till they grow major and die."

Ibn-e-Majah Shareef: Suraqah bin Malik (radi Allahu anhu) reported that the Holy Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) said: "Shall I not teach you the best form of charity? - (maintaining) your daughter who has been returned to you, who has got no earning member except you."

Bukhari Shareef and Muslim Shareef: Hazrat Ayesha (radi Allahu anha) reported that a desert Arab came to the Holy Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) and said: "What! Do you kiss children? But, we don't kiss them?" Then the Messenger of Allah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) said: "I can't help you since Allah has taken kindness out of your heart."

Bukhari Shareef and Muslim Shareef: Hazrat Abu Hurairah (radi Allahu anhu) reported that the Messenger of Allah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) kissed his grandson Hasan bin Ali (radi Allahu anhu) in the presence of Aqra bin Habis (radi Allahu anhu), whereupon Aqra said: "I have ten children and I have never kissed any of them." The Messenger of Allah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) looked towards him and said, "He who is not kind will not be shown kindness."

Abu Dawud Shareef: Bara'a (radi Allahu anhu) narrated: "I came with Abu Bakr (radi Allahu anhu) who was the first to reach Madina. Hazrat Ayesha (radi Allahu anha), his daughter, was lying in bed on account of fever. Abu Bakr (radi Allahu anhu) came to her and said, 'How are you my beloved daughter?' and he kissed her."