

## **PREGNANCY**

### **The period of pregnancy**

The time of pregnancy is a very difficult period with anxiety and various physical and spiritual stresses, although a mother is the center of love and affection, an example of God's Mercy and eager to have a baby and see her child's pretty, innocent face. The husband, the relatives of both and their friends should all take care of her at all times, since any yelling or screaming, vulgarity or bad-temper, or any form of bothering the pregnant women will not only hurt her, but it will also have a bad influence on the baby. If the couple lives in the house of either one of their parents, then their parents are morally bound and religiously obliged to not only avoid provoking the husband against his pregnant wife, but also to be considerate of the pregnant woman. The man's parents should seriously avoid interfering in the couple's peaceful life and the woman's parents should try not to be picky about the husband. Both sides are seriously responsible for the couple and the unborn baby.

If the fetus is harmed even slightly by the quarrels, bad tempers or excessive expectations of either relatives, they must undoubtedly answer to God in His just court. Then they shall be seriously punished for their oppression. The Holy Quran holds every one responsible for the slightest to the greatest sins they commit.

Therefore, by the Lord, we will, of a surety, call them to account, for all their deeds. [Holy Quran: Hijr: 15:92-93]

But stop them, for they must be asked: [Holy Quran: Saffat: 37:24]

For every act of hearing, or of seeing or of (feeling in) the heart will be inquired into (on the day of Reckoning). [Holy Quran: Bani Israil: 17:36]

I have received many letters from young couples during my religious lectures all over Iran. I have helped resolve many family conflicts, and have noticed that a major portion of these problems are related to the relatives of the couple, usually some unreasonable expectations of the husband's father or mother, or the pickiness of the woman's parents or of the groom's. Imam Sadiq has said the source of many of these immoral encounters is the result of jealousy. In some cases, of course, the newly-wed wife is at fault since she is young and inexperienced. In these cases, the elders should forgive her, but they do not, and the fights get worse. Sometimes religious or moral shortcomings worsened the situation to the point of divorce. As you know, any man or woman is seeking freedom and independence by nature. Restriction of this God-given freedom by anyone is a great vice and a sin. Stressing on the needs of a pregnant woman for security and attention does not mean that we should ignore her needs or treat her badly at other times. This is only because of the subject of the discussion in this chapter, and a pregnant woman's special conditions.

In fact, it is necessary for all to respect human rights of freedom and independence at all times and under all conditions. If the two families can provide for a separate housing

arrangement for the newly-wed couple without experiencing real difficulty, it would be great. They should treat them kindly and with love and affection. Both parents should associate with the young couple, and avoid gossiping or interfering in their life while doing so. If they cannot provide a separate house for them, then they should let them live in a part of their own house. However, they should try not to bother them, since in the beginning of the couple's life they are filled with love. The bride is God's trust in the family of the groom. She has left her own family with lots of hope and aspirations and has entered a new life. The groom, also, is God's blessing in the family of the bride. They should take care of these blessings just like their own children. Such caring is in line with the Holy Quran and traditions and is considered to be God's worship with the reward being God's pleasure and the eternal Heaven.

The parents of both the bride and the groom have either experienced the kindness and nobility of their near relatives, and started a good life or have been seriously hurt by them when they first got married themselves. In either case, they should now help safeguard the ties of marriage of the newly-wed couple by providing for their peace and security and avoiding undue interference. This way the young couple can enjoy their life and benefit from God-given blessings, instead of being hurt or separated due to improper interventions or unreasonable expectations. I remember seeing the following tradition in Usul-i-Kafi: The sixth Imam said the first piece of advice given to Adam by God when he first started his life on Earth was:

"Want for others what you want for yourself, and do not approve of for others what you do not approve for yourself."

Thus, the relatives and friends of both the bride and the groom should follow these words, since then there will be fewer problems, and these problems can easily be resolved, too. Now consider the following verses of the Glorious Quran regarding pregnancy:

In travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning: (hear the command) [Holy Quran: Luqman: 31:14]

We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents: In pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth. [Holy Quran: Ahqaf: 46:15]

Do you not think that we should respect the pregnant woman during this strenuous period of weakness, anxiety and suffering? Being considerate of her is at first her husband's moral and religious duty, and next it is the responsibility of all her relatives, so that the physical and mental health of both the mother and the baby are guaranteed.

### **Duties During Pregnancy**

The time of pregnancy is a boring and difficult period during which the various systems in the body undergo strange changes. If it was not for the love of the child, mothers who have once become pregnant would refuse a second pregnancy. In this period some of the internal glands start to increase secretions, and the body uses more and more nutrients. However, the pregnant woman cannot eat food properly due to nausea, and a lack of appetite. Some women go on a rigid diet to be slim and not let the fetus grow too

big and hurt their good looks. They avoid eating good foods so that the baby does not grow so much that their skin wrinkles, or they have to undergo a hard delivery. They do not realize that now they are two people, and their diet must be such that it provides the necessary nutrients for the growth of the baby, too. To keep at a reasonable weight and provide for the health of the mother and the proper growth of the child, a well-balanced diet must be established. During this period of over secretion of the glands, food is absorbed and burnt rapidly. Much of the food intake is absorbed by the fetus, else the women would get really fat.

Should the pregnant woman not consume sufficient food, reserves in the kidney, bone marrow, and other parts of the body would be depleted. The fetus needs lime and iron to build up its various body parts: The iron is needed for the blood. Without it hemoglobin which is the fundamental element of blood cells would not be formed. Then the fetus will extract it from the mother's iron. Thus the mother will slowly develop blood deficiency as will the baby. To be able to provide the iron necessary for her body and the baby, she must daily eat some grains, some liver, meat and some fruits like apples, grapes, dates, etc. Lime is the basic material for the baby's body. It is needed in the amount of 40-50 grams to build up the bones. The mother should eat this much calcium every day, otherwise the baby will extract calcium from the mother's body. Then the mother will slowly get weaker, her bones will deteriorate, her teeth rot and her hair will fall out. We can compensate for this need by feeding the mother dairy products, wheat or barley, pears or apples. Thus we can help the fetus grow. [Mother's Guide, p.6.]

There are many books which explain ways to help safeguard the health of the child and the mother. There are many details like the kind of clothes, their color, the shoes, the mother's associations, and so on which affect the baby. If the mother neglects God and does not pay enough attention to her religious duties and reading the Quran, then the baby's mental and spiritual growth will be affected. Pregnancy itself is considered a form of worship with a great reward. The Prophet (Pbuh) said:

When a woman becomes pregnant, she is similar to one who fasts, stays up at night to worship God, and fights for God with her wealth and life. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.101, p.106]

Of course, a couple could use birth control with mutual consent. However, this way they will lose out on a profitable deal. They should also not lose control and have too many children, since raising kids requires financial, physical and spiritual strength. Should parents not be able to properly raise their children because they have too many, the kids may turn out to be bad kids and then damn their parents.

## **Delivery**

Although childbirth is a very pleasant experience for the mother, the father and the relatives, it is very painful for the mother. The Imams have said that labor has a great reward and is considered to be worship. The Prophet (Pbuh) said:

When she delivers her baby she will have a reward which is so great that it is incomprehensible. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.101, p.106-107]

Imam Sadiq said:

A woman who dies during delivery will not be accountable for her deeds in this world

since she has died with the sorrow of childbirth.

The Prophet (Pbuh) said: Give your wife a few dates as soon as she delivers her child, since God ordered Mary to eat dates at the time of delivery. Give her seven dates from Medina or your own town. God has said:

I swear by my Majesty, Grandeur, Nobility and Highness that if a woman eats dates on the day of childbirth, then the child shall be patient whether it is a boy or a girl. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.101, p.116]

In Islam, all aspects of childbirth including the delivery room, the midwife, and the people present are closely considered so as to guarantee the physical and mental health of the mother and the baby.

### **New-Born Clothing**

The Prophet (Pbuh) ordered the people in charge of the affairs of the house to put white clothes on Imam Hassan Mujtaba when he was born. By mistake, they put yellow clothes on him and handed him over to the Noble Prophet. The Prophet (Pbuh) took him, kissed him, put his tongue in the mouth and sucked his lip. Then he said:

Did I not order you to put white clothes on him?

Then he asked for the white clothes and put them on the baby, and put the yellow clothes aside. Then he said the general call to prayer (Adhan) in his right ear and the specific call to prayer (Iqamah) in his left ear. He named him Hassan. He did the same things when Imam Husayn was born (Vasa'il, v.21, p.409).

### **The First Food for the Baby**

The Noble Kulayny, author of the book Usul al-Kafi has narrated the following tradition:

Feed your baby first with the water from the Euphrates River and then the dirt from Imam Husayn's grave: if not possible use rain water. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.407]

### **Adhan and Iqamah (The general call to prayer and the specific one)**

It is said the first part of the body of the baby which works is the ear. The Quran has placed especial emphasis on the ear. From the very first moments of birth the ear hears and the brain receives and records what the ears hear. Sounds affect the child's mind. The house should be void of forbidden and polluted sounds or else the child will become mentally and psychologically polluted. Saying the Adhan and Iqamah in the child's right and left ears at the first moments after birth was a tradition of the Prophet (Pbuh) and the Immaculate Imams. The child should hear the call to God's unity, Prophethood, leadership, and prayer so that he/she starts life with these concepts and ends it with the

same concepts. He/she will be born a Muslim and will die as a Muslim. Do not say that he/she is only one-day old, does not understand, does not see, cannot receive any information. The baby has all these fresh and powerful powers. I heard from Professor Tabatabaee (may God bless him):

A twenty-three year old American girl got a brain disease. They operated on her brain, and then after waking up she sang a religious song in French. The parents were really surprised. The doctor asked why they were surprised. They said our daughter does not know any French, does not have any French books, and nor does she have any French friends. Then the girl's mother solved the problem by saying that when the girl was only there months old, some French refugees of World War 2 came to the US. There was a Christian nurse who had rented a house next to their house: She used to come to our house, hug the baby and sing her a lullaby to pacify her. It was obvious that her lullaby was religious. Those words were recorded in her brain then, and were retrieved 23 years later when she became conscious after surgery. Therefore, saying the call to prayer in the early moments of life, and saying things to the ears of the dead person just after death are not useless. The ear is the first part that works and is the last one that stops to function.

### **Childbirth Etiquette**

The author of the book, Makarim-al-Akhlagh has narrated the Immaculate Imams saying there are these traditional acts for the time of childbirth. The first of these is naming the child, then shaving the head, giving charity equal in weight to the cut hair, sacrificing an animal, rubbing saffron on the head of the baby, circumcising the boys, and feeding sacrificial meat to the neighbors. [Vasa'il, v.21, pp.411-413]

Imam Sadiq has highly recommended to sacrifice an animal, so much so that he has nearly considered it obligatory [Ibid].

Imam Musa, the son of Jafar was asked about circumcision, he replied:

Circumcising boys on the seventh day after birth is a tradition [Vasa'il, v.21, p.439]

### **Mother's Milk**

Breast feeding for two years is prescribed in the Holy Quran:

The mothers shall give suck to their offspring for two whole years. [Holy Quran: Baqara: 2:233]

In travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning: (hear the command) [Holy Quran: Luqman: 31:14]

In fact, God has provided for the sustenance of the baby's milk in the mother's breast. A mother does not have the right to deprive the baby of his/her God-given milk and give powdered or animal milk for some personal, imaginary or physical reasons. The best way to start the breasts to produce milk is through sucking them. No drug can do a better job. Once the baby starts to suck the mother's breast, her milk secretions become regular, and she starts to feel healthier too. Breast milk contains 1.6 percent of albuminoids, 0.4

percent fat, 3.8 percent sugar and some salt and vitamins. This combination is only found in the mother's milk, and nowhere else. By God's will, only the mother's breast has the potential to produce such food for a newborn guest. The formula for animal milk is slightly different. Animals like cows which grow faster have more albuminoids. While the breast feeding progresses, the combination above changes slowly. The sugar and fat reduce, while the albuminoids increase. The sucking action of the baby not only helps him/her feed and get full, it also causes an increase in the secretions of the glands in the breasts. In the first fifteen days after birth, the child must be breastfed seven times per day. This starts from nearly 6 AM and continues to 12 PM once every three hours. Then we must reduce this frequency of breastfeeding six times per day, and let the child go to sleep at 9 PM. This way the mother can get a chance to rest, as does the baby's digestive system, which should be prepared for the next day. The mother should try to let the baby get full at each breast-feeding session. This requires some patience. The baby must be then put to sleep on his/her right side. Then the mother can go and get busy doing her own household chores. A child that sleeps well after each breast feeding session is perfectly healthy, and one must be glad to have such a baby. [Mother's Guide, p.30]

Even though the Prophet (Pbuh) was very busy, he paid special attention to the feeding of the children. He would come to Fatimah Zahra's house, put his finger on Husayn's mouth and by observing his sucking tested his appetite. If he was really hungry, he would be breastfed. If not, he would not be fed just for crying, since feeding the baby too often would cause illness and slow down the children digestive system. This would make him/her grow up to be weak. The Prophet (Pbuh) said:

There is no milk for babies better than mother's milk. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.103, p.323]

This was said centuries ago by the Noble Prophet of Islam. It is a fact that has been recently discovered by great scientists. In the West where families leave their children to be raised in day care centers and be fed powdered milk, the researches have stated that there is no better food or milk for the baby than the mother's milk. In rare instances where the mother lacks sufficient milk, it has been stressed in traditions to be very careful when choosing someone to breastfeed the baby instead. This is so because the milk is very effective on both the spirit and the body of the child. Based on traditions, one should avoid choosing a dumb, psychotic, evil-doing, weak-eyed person, Jew, Christian, Magi, or an alcoholic person to breastfeed your baby. This is because their condition will be transferred to the baby through the milk. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.103, Chapter on Breast-feeding; Vasa'il, v.15, Chapter on Breast -feeding].

The main point about breast feeding is the reward which is surprising. Um Salmeh asked the Prophet:

Men get all the good rewards but what about poor women?

He replied:

The reward of pregnancy is the same as fasting and night worship, and fighting in the way of God with one's wealth and life. Delivery has such an extensive divine reward which no one can realize. And for breast-feeding, each suck of the baby has the reward of freeing one of the slaves from the generation of Ismael. When the mother stops, a noble angel shall hit her on the side and tell her, start over since you are forgiven [Vasa'il, Al-i-Bayt, v.21, p.451]

It is important for mothers to note the following point that Imam Sadiq told a woman named Um Ishaq:

Breastfeed your baby with both breasts, since one is like a source of food while the other is like a source of drinking.

## **Naming**

Some people consider naming an unimportant issue, and put any name on their child. However, naming is very important, and it affects the child's mentality and future. For this reason, there is one detailed chapter dedicated to naming in the books on traditions. The seventh Imam said:

The first kind act of a man towards his child is choosing a good name. Each of you must choose a good name for your child.

The Prophet (Pbuh) said:

Choose good names for yourselves, since you will be called by the same names in the Hereafter. [Ibid]

A narrator said that he went to see Imam Sadiq when he was sitting by Imam Musa's cradle. I sat and waited for him to stop caring for the child. He called me and I greeted him. He answered and then yelled at me, saying that I should immediately go and change the name I had chosen for my baby the previous day. I had named my newborn daughter Homeyra, but God dislikes this name, so I went and changed it. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.389]

Imam Sadiq has narrated his ancestors as saying:

In fact, the Prophet (Pbuh) used to change the bad names of towns and people. [Vasa'il, v.21, pp.390-391]

Imam Baqir said:

The most loudable name is the one which conveys the meaning of being a servant of God. And the best names for your children are the names of the Prophets. [Ibid]

Imam Musa, the son of Jafar, said:

Poverty shall not enter a home in which a girl is named Fatimah, or a boy is named Muhammad, Ahmad, Ali, Hassan, Husayn, Jafar, Talib or Abdullah. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.396]

To please the Prophet (Pbuh) and the Imams, you should change the names of your children if they are different from the names of the Prophet, the Imams or their mothers; lest your children file a complaint against you in the Hereafter for the bad names, symbolizing the wicked heroes of sin and corruption, which you named them with.

## **RAISING CHILDREN IN ISLAM**

### **The position and worth of children**

Children, whether male or female, are the greatest and most beneficial blessing that God has favored his servants with. The Prophet Abraham (Pbuh) did not have any children and was sad about this. When he was very old, God gave his worthy servant two sons: Ismael and Issac. Issac is the source of the divine Prophets until the time of Jesus and

Ismael is the source of all the Prophets to the time of Muhammad, the last Prophet (Khatim-al-Anbiyaa), the Immaculate Imams and thousands of wise men, mystics and religious jurists. A child is a great blessing, a source of goodness, nobleness and benefit in this world and the Hereafter for an individual. Of course, the reference is to an individual believing in God and due to his belief trains his child to be a believer and a good and worthy person. Abraham wholeheartedly praised God for being granted offspring: Really, being granted offspring requires one to praise God.

Praise be to God, Who hath granted unto me in old age Ismael and Isaac: for truly my Lord is He, the Hearer of Prayer! [Holy Quran: Abraham: 14:39, p.631.]

We understand from this noble verse that the position of offspring is so important in life that Abraham requested children from God in his old age and his prayer was answered. When Zacharias was old he prayed to God in the prayer niche to give him a child.

So give me an heir as from Thyself, (One that) will (truly) represent me, and represent the posterity of Jacob [Holy Quran: Maryam: 19:5-6]

Ishaq ibn Umar quotes on the authority of the sixth Imam:

Mothers and fathers depart from this world and benefit completely from the worship, supplications and good deeds of their offspring in the case that their children were believers.

The Prophet (Pbuh) stated: Five people have left this world but their files have not been closed: Reward continually is bestowed upon them. 1) The one who plants a tree 2) The one who digs a water well for others to use 3) The one who builds a mosque 4) The one who has taken down the Quran and 5) The one who leaves behind a worthy child. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.104, p.97]

The sixth Imam said:

When Joseph saw his brother he asked him:

How are you going to make the preparations for marriage. His brother said that his father Jacob instructed them in the following way: If you can raise heavenly children, do so. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.356]

Imam Sajjad said:

A Muslim man is fortunate in these regards: 1) His place of business is in the small city he lives in, so he can see his family after a day's work. 2) His friends are worthy and pious 3) He has a child whose help he can benefit from. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.103, p.7]

How blessed is a worthy child that the Glorious Quran says:

And God has made for you mates (and Companions) of your own nature, and made for you, out of them, sons and daughters and grandchildren, and provided for you sustenance of the best. [Holy Quran: Nahl: 16:72]

Imam Sadiq stated:

In the Hereafter, Muslim offspring will intervene on their parents behalf and the intervention will be accepted.

The seventh Imam said:

The man who does not die until he sees his offspring is fortunate. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.351-8]

The benefit of having children is so much that the Commander of the Faithful (Amir al-Mumineen) said:

A child's illness is the penalty for the parent's sins.

The Prophet (Pbuh) said:

Worthy offspring are a bunch of sweet-smelling flowers which God has distributed amongst his servants.[Ibid]

And the Prophet (Pbuh) said:

Worthy children are a bunch of sweet-smelling flowers from the Heavenly flowers. [Ibid]

In a tradition it was stated:

The Prophet (Pbuh) was on the Medina mosque pulpit preaching to the people when Hassan and Husayn (peace be upon them) entered the mosque. They were both wearing red shirts and while walking fell down. The Prophet (Pbuh) quickly came down from the pulpit and picked up both children. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.42, p.284].

Then he recited the Quranic verse: Your riches and your children may be but a trial: but in the Presence of God, is the highest Reward. [Holy Quran: Tagabun: 64:15]

In Tehran, a subterranean water canal had been dug whose excavator was a man named Hajj Alireza Zaba. For more than one-hundred years people from some parts of Tehran used that water. One of the great theologians said that someone saw him (the excavator) in his dreams. He was in a great orchard standing by a big river. The excavator told the man that his orchard was one of Heaven's orchards and that river was one of Heaven's, too. Those two blessings were the reward for excavating that canal in Tehran. But, alas! I wish I had a child who had said "There is no God but God" just once and then died. By stating his belief in monotheism, a great benefit would have been mine.

### **Love for children**

The Sixth Imam quoted upon the authority of the Prophet:

Love your children and have mercy on them. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.483]

Some people do not show much affection for their children or do not show their affection. They are harsh and strict when interacting with their children. These people must know that using this method, which is inhumane and unIslamic, will deprive them of God's Mercy. Imam Sadiq said:

In fact, God shows mercy upon his servants, just for the strong love they have for their offspring.[Ibid]

The Seventh Imam said:

God the Great does use things like His Anger against women and children. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.484]

God's Anger is shown for the faithlessness and bad-temperedness to the family. The Sixth Imam said:

Moses said the following to God when he was on the Tur Mountain: God, which action according to you is the best one? God said that loving children is the best one.

### **Kissing the Children**

In the valuable book Ruzat al-Vaizin Fatal Nayshaboori being one of the great Shiite scholars has narrated an Immaculate Imam as saying:

Kiss your children a lot. For each kiss you will get a divine heavenly rank which would otherwise take 500 years to achieve.

A man came to the Prophet (Pbuh) and said: I have never kissed my child. The Prophet (Pbuh) said that in fact this man was a resident of the fire of Hell. There is no difference between boys and girls in this regard. Those who look sad when God grants them a daughter, are similar to the Arabs of the Age of Ignorance: They are terribly stupid. God willing, I shall discuss later about raising daughters, so that it becomes clear how valuable it is in Islam to raise a daughter. Another important consideration regarding child rearing is stated by the Immaculate Imams , and is very important to follow:

Separate the sleeping place of boys from girls at the age of ten. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.361]

The Prophet (Pbuh) has issued a very important recommendation in this regard:

Separate the sleeping place of boys from boys, boys from girls, and girls from girls from the age of ten. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.460]

It is not appropriate for two kids to sleep in the same bed, whether they be both boys, a boy and a girl, or both girls. Islam does not approve of this. Imam Sadiq said:

Let your children be free to play until they reach the age of seven. For the next seven years, keep a really watchful eye on him/her. If he/she accepts to be religious, it is fine. Else there is no good in him/her. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.473]

The Prophet (Pbuh) said:

Teach your children to swim and shoot. [Kafi, v.6, p.473]

He also said:

Respect your children, and improve their behavior. Then you shall be forgiven. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.476]

Malik Denyar said:

I was ignorant, a loafer and I married three times. I divorced all of them for being infertile. I had a son from my next wife. I took him to school at the age of six. When I returned home in the evening, I saw that he was ill. Then I found out that the following verse is the first thing that he was taught:

A Day that will make children hoary-headed?[Holy Quran: Muzzammil:73:17]

We could not treat his ailment, so he died. I went to stay beside his grave. One night I dreamt that I was alone in a scary desert. A strange creature attacked me. I started to run away, and then reached a wall. I tried to climb over the wall to get over to the other side and escape. But suddenly I saw a few kids playing. I called out to my son and asked where he was. He said that after he died he was taken to a Quran class, so that by learning the Quran, he could become qualified to enter Heaven, and gain God's Mercy. I asked him about the nature of the creature that followed me. He said that was the manifestation of my own ugly and immoral acts. I fearfully woke up and stopped all my wicked acts and repented. Then I trotted down God's path.

## **THE WORTH OF RAISING A DAUGHTER IN ISLAM**

## **God's Will in Granting a Child**

The Holy God is the Creator of all He wills, the owner of the heavens and the Earth, the Wise, the Powerful, the Just, the Merciful and the Benevolent. His will and decision regarding his servants is pure kindness and favor. He is the manifestation of love, mercy and nobleness and proper choosing. Whatever He wants for His servants is appropriate for this world and the Hereafter. And the servant must submit to God's Wisdom, Mercy and Will. This type of submission is the highest form of spiritual worship and stems from morality of the Prophets and the Saints, and the sign of love and understanding of God's lovers and mystics. All of the following cases are God's pure Mercy, Kindness and His burning Love for His servants: the barren parents, the ones with a daughter; the ones with a son and the mother who bears twins, one being a girl and one being a boy.

To God belongs the dominion of the heavens and the Earth. He creates what He wills (and Plans). He bestows (children) male or female according to His Will (and Plan), or He bestows both males and females, and He leaves Barren whom He will: [Holy Quran: Shura: 42:49-50]

Based on this noble verse, female offspring are an aspect of the kingship of God and the manifestation of His will in Creation and the light of His knowledge and power in regards to man. His knowledge and power, action and will, rule and ownership deemed a couple to have a daughter. Getting upset about having a daughter is a great sin, since it implies being upset with divine Ownership, Creation, Choice, Knowledge and Ability. This is stupid, illogical and unwise. As Imam Sadiq has said a baby who dies will be given to Sarah and Abraham in the Purgatory to be raised, and then be saved for the parents until the Hereafter. In the book *Maskan al-Fowad*, Shahid has narrated the sixth Imam as saying that having patience when a baby dies and not crying a lot has a reward that is greater than if the baby had not died, but grew up and fought as a soldier of Imam Mahdi and became a martyr in God's way.

Imam Husayn took his six-month-old baby to the tent, and gave him to his sister Zaynab. Then he sat on the ground and asked God to accept his six-month-old martyred baby as a credit for the Hereafter. When a dead child is so important and valuable for us, then can you estimate the worth of a child which we raise, educate and train expending a lot of our efforts? There is no difference between a boy and a girl, just a child. It is said in verse twenty-eight of the Chapter *Anfal* that children are God's test for man. If man is pleased with his child, then he has succeeded in this test. If he tries to educate him and teach him religion; provides the means for his marriage as much as he can; respects him; honors him and respect his rights, then he shall attain a great reward. The Holy Quran has said:

Wealth and sons are allurements of the life of this world. But the things that endure, good deeds, are best in the sight of thy Lord, as rewards, and best as (the foundation for) hopes. [Holy Quran: Kahf: 18:46]

One who strives to raise his children and gets them acquainted with God, the Prophets, the leadership of the Imams and the Quran shall leave a highly valuable thing behind which cannot be matched. This is better for him in the presence of God and will be good for the Hereafter. Are not Mary, Khadijah, Asia and Fatimah the best patrimonies that their fathers left behind. Why should anyone get upset about having a daughter? Who knows what is in the womb? Does anyone's will but God's affect the gender of the baby

in the womb? This is God's will and we should surrender to it. It is His Mercy, favor and kindness to grant us a daughter. we should thank him all our life for this blessed daughter. Remember that the Prophet (Pbuh) was granted a few sons named Qasem, Tayib, Tahir and Abraham, however, neither one survived. God never congratulated him for having a son, and no special verse of the Quran was revealed on these occasions. But when Khadijah became pregnant with Fatimah, the Chapter Kauthar of the Quran was revealed and he was informed of receiving a great deal of blessings, and eternal goodness.

### **Highly Important Traditions Regarding Raising a Daughter**

It is recommended to pray to God to give you a daughter, if you do not have one. Prophet Abraham, who had Issac and Ismael prayed to God to have a daughter. His prayer has been quoted by Imam Sadiq as: He asked God to give him a daughter so there be at least someone to cry after his death and remember him. [Vasa'il al-Shiaa, v.21, p.361; Al-i-Bayt Press]. What is important in this tradition is not the goal, rather it is the fact that a Prophet prays to have a daughter. It is an honor to be the father of a girl, as the Noble Prophet of Islam was. It is a real honor to have a girl and become similar to the Prophet (Pbuh) in this respect. Imam Sadiq said: The Prophet (Pbuh) was the father of all girls. [Ibid]

If someone does not have a daughter, but has a sister, he still has some leeway to receive God's Mercy. The Sixth Imam said: Whoever has three daughters or three sisters should go to Heaven. [Ibid]

The Prophet (Pbuh) said: Daughters are a blessing: they are kind, helpful, good companions, blessed, and like cleanliness.[Vasa'il, v.21, p.362]

The Sixth Imam said: Whoever is the guardian of either two daughters, two aunts, or two maternal aunts shall be protected from the fire of Hell.[Ibid]

A man informed another man who was sitting by the Prophet (Pbuh) that he had become the father of a girl. The man turned pale. The Prophet (Pbuh) asked the reason. He said: I left the house when my wife had pains. Now this man informed me that I have a daughter. The Prophet (Pbuh) said: The earth shall support her, the sky will be a shadow over her head, and God will grant her sustenance. She is like a scented bunch of flowers you can smell. Then he turned to his companions and said: Whoever has just one daughter has problems of raising her, guarding her, preparing her dowry and providing for her marriage. Help whoever has two daughters. Whoever has three daughters seems to be engaged in holy war, and he is forgiven if he does any acts which he is admonished not to do. [Ibid]

And please help, lend money and have mercy upon whoever has four daughters. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.365]

How dear daughters are that the Prophet (Pbuh) has advised his companions to help those who have daughters and has established such help as a duty for the Muslim nation!

At the time of Imam Sadiq a man's wife delivered a girl. He came to Imam Sadiq and looked upset and angry. Imam Sadiq said: What would you say if God sent you a revelation and asked you if you will let Him choose the gender of your child? He said: Of

course, I would ask God to choose for me. Then Imam Sadiq said: Well, now God has chosen a daughter for you. Remember the story of Moses and Khizr. When Khizr killed that child by God's command he told Moses: "I willed that God give to his parents a better and more merciful child instead of him."

So we desired that their Lord would give them in exchange (a son) better in purity (of conduct) and closer in affection. [Holy Quran: Kahf: 18:81]

Instead of that child that was killed by Khizr ( and Moses objected to this act). God granted his parents a daughter from whose generation came seventy Prophets. [Kafi, v.6, p.6; Vasa'il, v.21]

Imam Sadiq said: Daughters are good deeds and boys are God's blessings. Good deeds will be given a reward, but one will be questioned about blessings.

[Vasa'il, v.21, pp.365-366]

God told his Prophet on the night of Ascension to Heaven:

Tell the father of girls, do not be impatient with your daughters, since I shall provide for their sustenance just as I created them. [Ibid]

Imam Sadiq said: One who wished for the death of his daughter will be admitted to God's presence in the Hereafter as a rebellious person [Ibid].

The Prophet (Pbuh) said: God the Glorious, and the Almighty is kinder to girls than He is to boys. On the Day of Judgment God will please one who pleases his daughters. [Vasa'il, v.20, p.364]

The Prophet (Pbuh) has said the following regarding the value of having a daughter: Your best children are your daughters. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.104, p.91]

The Prophet (Pbuh) said: One who is the guardian of three daughters or sisters shall certainly go to Heaven. They asked him what if one takes care of just two?

He replied yes. They asked him what if he takes care of just one daughter or one sister? Again he replied yes.[Vasa'il, v.21, p.368]

The Prophet (Pbuh) said: One who goes to the market and buys something and brings it home for his wife and children is similar to one who supports the needy.

It is better to give a priority to daughters in gifts. In fact, whoever pleases his daughter gets the reward of having freed one of the slaves from the line of Islamel.[Bihar al-Anwar, v.104, p.69]

What an amazing tradition? No other culture has supported having daughters this much in human history.

In many tribes and nations, girls and women were in a terrible state. It was due to the efforts of the Prophet (Pbuh) that a great spiritual revolution happened in regards to the life of girls and women, and how they are treated. It is even more amazing that the Prophet (Pbuh) has said: Do not hit your babies since their crying has a meaning. The first four months of crying is professing the unity of God, the second four months of crying is sending salutations to the Prophet (Pbuh) and his household, and the third four months of crying is praying for the parents. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.60, p.381] Therefore you should not beat one who is professing God's unity, or is sending salutations to the Prophet (Pbuh) and his household, or is praying for his/her parents. You should be considerate of such a person, and be kind to him/her.

Also consider the following important tradition: Sakuni, who is one of the companions of Imam Sadiq, said: I went to see Imam Sadiq when I was really sad. He asked me the reason why and I replied that my wife had delivered a girl. He said: The earth will

support her, God will give her sustenance, she lives in a different time period than you and she will eat her own share of daily bread. Then by God I was relieved of the burden. Then the Imam asked me what name I had chosen for her. When I said Fatimah, he put his hand over his forehead giving a sigh of relief said: Now that you have named her Fatimah, do not beat her, swear at her nor damn her. [Kafi, v.6, p.48; Makarim al-Akhlagh, p.220; Vasa'il, v.21, p.482]

The Prophet (Pbuh) said: One who has a daughter should not prefer his sons over her, or despise or scorn her. Then God will take him to heaven. [Marriage in Islam, p.136]

He also said: The reward of one who has one daughter is greater than the reward of one who goes on pilgrimage a thousand times, engages in holy war a thousand times, makes sacrifices a thousand times or gives a thousand dinner parties. [Ibid]

## **THE ROLE OF THE MOTHER IN CHILD REARING**

### **The child as the result of a mother's effort**

The Arabic word "Um" which means mother and is extensively used in the Quran and the traditions essentially means root and source. This is because a child is in the womb for six to nine months and extracts his/her physical and spiritual needs from the body of the mother. Also, the baby constantly extracts his/her needs from the mother's physical and nervous system. In fact a mother is the root or source of the existence of a child, and a child is the product of his/her mother and a reflection of the mother's physical and spiritual existence. The duration of stay of the child in the father's loins is very short, but the duration of his/her stay in the mother's womb is nearly 270 days. For this reason, the child is mostly affected by the mother, and Islam has paid especial consideration to the mother and no one else. The mother's physical and spiritual states appear in the child, and the child's substance will knowingly or unknowingly be based on his mother.

Before a girl marries she should either realize herself, or be told that she will become a mother later. She must then be careful about the feeding, training, educating, and socializing of her children, so that we can have a good future generation. I read this sentence quoted from the French Emperor Napoleon in a book about women. When asked which was the most valuable nation in his opinion he said: The one with the most mothers. The dignity of motherhood should always remain constant in the mind of women, else we will not have a good future generation. A mother should honor her motherhood to raise her children. She should mother her children so that they do not develop any spiritual or emotional deficiencies.

A woman who abandons the attributes of a mother, lets herself on the loose as a Western woman does, flirts and associates with strange men, ignores herself, her husband and her children to derive material and physical pleasure, is no longer then a real mother. She is similar to a wild beast attacking her own family, or a dangerous wolf that will harm the nobility and honor of her family. To raise wise, strong, polite and good children, a mother must be pure with a healthy mind, and humane ethics.

The following is a part of Vareth's pilgrimage prayers addressing Imam Husayn, the

Master of the Martyrs: I witness that, in fact, you were a light in lofty loins and pure wombs. A light which illuminated the world with knowledge, justice, wisdom and leadership during his life, and lit up the Hereafter after his martyrdom. In the same pilgrimage prayer, he is called as related to Fatimah and Khadijah: "Greetings and peace be upon you the son of Fatimah Zahra, Greetings to you the son of the great Khadijah".

The reason the Prophet of Islam (Pbuh) has recommended that young men who want to marry, should marry a girl from a noble, strong and religious family is to prevent corruption in the future generation. A girl who is flirtish, impolite, light-headed, untidy, lustful and a show-off with several boy friends is not suitable for marriage. She has lost her nobility, her qualifications to be a mother and her abilities to raise good children. Regarding such women, the Prophet (Pbuh) has said in a tradition: If they deliver snakes and scorpions it is better than babies, since they have corrupted their mind and soul seeking pleasure, and as such are unable to produce healthy children. Notice the following words of Noah:

And Noah said: "O my Lord! Leave not of the unbelievers, a single one on Earth! For, if Thou dost leave (any of) them, they will but mislead Thy devotees, and they will breed none but wicked ungrateful ones". [Holy Quran: Nuh: 71:26-27]

If there were many mothers among the people of Noah , women who were faithful, grateful, polite and chaste, then God would not have said that none but unbelievers can be produced from them. As the Prophet (Pbuh) has said: If a woman is similar to vegetation grown on garbage, then you cannot expect her to produce humane, divine, and sweet products. A mother should not attend any parties, even if it be at the house of their relatives. Some of these parties are given for sinning. This will affect her spirit and she may even lose her identity as a mother. A mother should not eat whatever she pleases. She should only eat food that is obtained lawfully; which is harmless to herself and her children. She should be concerned about issues related to cleanliness, insist on the performance of religious duties and moral issues. Then she will be overcome with light and can become illuminating. We have been informed through the Immaculate Imams that they have used Hazrat Faimah Zahra as their model and followed her in all matters whether it be related to intellectual, spiritual, moral or belief ones. Fatimah is an exemplary model in all Creation. She is an example of a perfect mother. Our daughters and wives should use her as a model to follow, since a mother is the source of the creation of a child. Children will be influenced by their mother while they are in the womb. When they are born they will be solely looking at and listening to their mother. Thus, mothers who follow Islamic ethics are polite, are centers of love and affection , and will positively affect their children. When Imam Husayn (Pbuh) put the head of Hur the son of Yazeed on his lap, he declared Hur's freedom from the rule of the Ummayyad clan, and lust. This was a credit to his mother. He said: You are free, and you have earned this freedom from your mother. Also when Omr-i-Saed insisted that Imam Husayn (Pbuh) should swear allegiance to Yazeed, the Imam declared his and his followers unwillingness to swear such an allegiance to him because of their having pure and holy mothers.

***The Fruit of the Garden of Purity***

Abdullah Mubarak, who was a wise, mystic, scholarly man, was hired by a garden owner as a gardener. During the time when pomegranates ripen, the owner of the garden invited a few guests to the garden, and asked Mubarak to bring them some pomegranates. Mubarak brought a basket of pomegranates, but they were all sour. The garden owner asked again for sweet pomegranates. Mubarak brought some more, but they were all sour, too. Again he asked Mubarak: Didn't I ask you to bring sweet pomegranates? You have been working here for six months, but you do not know which tree has sweet pomegranates? Mubarak answered no. The owner asked why and Mubarak said we had signed a contract stating I would be a gardener, not someone to eat the fruits in the garden. Indeed a pure sperm, a pure womb and good training will raise a person who will protect people's property, not one who will devour the people's wealth.

### **My Mother Ruined My Life**

It has been recorded that a young man was sentenced to death. They asked him to write out his will. He said he did not have a will, but he wished to see his mother before he died. They brought his mother to him. When saying good-bye he bit his mother's lips and tongue so hard that she fainted from the pain. They attacked him asking why he did that evil oppressive act. He said my mother was an oppressor. My mother ruined my life and caused me to be sentenced to death. I stole an egg from our neighbor when I was a child. She encouraged me so much so that I became a thief, so then I committed homicide. Indeed, Heaven is under the mother's feet, but she can also be the main cause of eternal torture in the Hereafter.

After Fatimah Zahra (Pbuh) passed away Imam Ali (Pbuh) told his brother Agheel who was familiar with Arab kinship: Choose me a wife who is born of one of the brave Arab mothers. After a while, Agheel told Imam Ali to marry Fatimah Kalabieh since there were no fathers among the Arabs who were braver than he was. Imam Ali (Pbuh) married her, and had four brave strong sons including Abulfazl al-Abbas.

After Malik Ashtar's martyrdom, the Commander of the Faithful went to the top of the minaret of Kufa's mosque" . mosque and said: I see no other mother who can deliver a child like Malik. What a man he was! He was like a lofty mountain and strong rock. He is in the same position in regards to me that I am in regards to the Prophet (Pbuh).

### **Sometimes Worshipping Diminishes**

A young fellow went to his mother and said sometimes the strength of his worshipping diminishes although he does not eat unlawfully earned food, does not associate with bad people, and avoids anything that might make him lazy about worshipping. He said at times he felt a strand of darkness shadowing his spiritual light. Then he said after having studied about this problem, he came to the conclusion that this must be a problem transferred from his mother to him. He asked for the truth to try to solve this problem. The mother told him that his father was on a trip when she was

pregnant with the boy and she said: There were lots of plums on the market, but I could not leave the house and could not buy any. Once when I went to the roof to spread the clothes on the line to dry, I saw the plums that the neighbors had spread out to dry. I ate just one plum to taste it, but then I became sorry and I was too shy to tell the neighbor to ask for their consent. The young man told his mother that he had found the problem. He asked for her permission to go to the neighbor's house and solve the issue, so that he could continue God's worship without any attacks from Satan.

### ***A Bright Marriage***

When I was young, I heard the following from one of the religious authorities in the main city mosque called Jameh. When the father of that great religious authority, Moqadas Ardebili, went to ask one of his fellow citizens if he could marry his daughter, he said: My daughter is blind, deaf, dumb and crippled. Marry her if you wish. The man said: How can I live with such woman? Then her father replied: When I say she is blind, I mean she cannot see whoever is not intimate; when I say she is deaf I mean she cannot hear the sound of whoever is not intimate; when I say she is crippled, I mean her hands have not touched anyone who is not intimate or gone to a forbidden party. Then the man married that lady, and the product of that marriage was a noble scholar.

### ***Sheik Shoostary's Mother***

Sheik Jafar Shoostary reached a high position in knowledge and practice. He had a great influence in guiding the people. They once asked his mother if she is pleased with having such a child. She replied no. They asked her why? She said: during the two years of breast feeding, once I did not do my ablution before breast feeding, and did not hug him. I wished him to grow up and become Imam Sadiq but he turned out to be Jafar Shoostary.

### ***The Effect of Physical and Spiritual Purity in Upbringing***

Once I traveled to Borojerd to preach for ten nights. I wished to get more informed about the great Muslim scholar Ayatullah Borojerdy. A ninety-year old man explained to me that his mother really tried to always perform her ablutions before breast-feeding him. On a cold night when she wanted to cleanse her body but could not leave the house (to go to a public bath-house) she washed herself with cold water, then fed the baby. The mother's spiritual attention, and the father's sincere efforts yielded a man which brought about vast changes in the Shiite religious schools in scientific, practical and moral issues.

Young girls should prepare themselves to become mothers. Equip yourselves with the divine, human and moral necessities of motherhood. And noble mothers should maintain their motherhood identity. Only God knows how rewarding it is to bring up such good children. Among the people who can intercede on one's behalf in the Hereafter are

believers, religious scholars and martyrs. There is no set limit on how many people they can intercede for. They can intercede on behalf of whoever deserves it. Of course, the first and foremost person who shall benefit from this intercession is their mother. The Prophet (Pbuh) said:

Three groups of people can intercede on one's behalf in God's presence, and their intercession shall be accepted by God. They are the Prophets, then the scholars, then the martyrs. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.8, p.34]

Imam Baqir said:

Indeed believers intercede like the two tribes of Rabiah and Mozaer. Believers intercede even on behalf of their servants.

Why should daughters and mothers be such as to benefit from your scholar, martyr or believing children's intercession in the Hereafter? Is it not bad to lose your motherhood identity for the few days of this temporal life? Is not too terrible for you to ruin the spiritual foundation of your children, who are entrusted to you by God. Is it not awful for you to raise them up like Eastern devils?

## **THE ROLE OF THE FATHER IN CHILD REARING**

### **Consider the following four facts**

It is understood from verses 33-37 of the Chapter Al-i-Imran and verse 28 of Chapter Maryam that man's development and perfection depend upon the following four factors.

- 1- A believing father
- 2- A believing mother
- 3- A good and sympathetic teacher
- 4- Lawfully obtained food

When the Jews saw Jesus in the hands of Mary who was a girl without a husband, they told her out of their surprise:

O sister of Aaron! Thy father was not a man of evil, nor thy mother a woman unchaste! [Holy Quran: Maryam: 19:28]

They were not aware of the truth that Jesus was God's word induced into the womb of the noble, chaste Mary. They thought she had done wrong. Knowing that her father was a noble, believing man who followed divine etiquette and her mother was a chaste, believing woman, they could not believe that such a child of such parents would commit such an act. The people knew that a child was a reflection of the spiritual, behavioral and physical realities of his or her parents. It was only when baby Jesus spoke in the cradle that it became clear that such a child as Mary, with such a high position as to become the mother of a Prophet, will result from such parents. You note that the people expected her chastity primarily due to her father's pure character. For this reason they told her: Your father was not bad.

O sister of Aaron! Thy father was not a man of evil, nor thy mother a woman unchaste! " [Holy Quran: Maryam: 19:28]

They also considered her mother's character, That is why they told her: We know your mother she is chaste. O sister of Aaron! Thy father was not a man of evil, nor thy mother a woman unchaste! [Holy Quran: Maryam: 19:28]

In the previous chapter, the role of the mother in child-rearing and a mother's duties were discussed, and there is no need to discuss it here any more. The importance of eating legally obtained food was already discussed, too. Also, no one is unaware of the importance of the role of teachers and their character and behavior of their students. In this chapter, the role of the father, and his character concerning the up-bringing, morality and actions of the child is discussed. A father must at first pay close attention to the religious moral and scientific training of the child. Secondly, he should treat his wife in such a way that the children's life is not bitter. Thirdly, he should be careful not to feed his wife and children with any unlawfully obtained food. It is recorded in traditions from the Household of the Prophet (Pbuh) that several groups of people will be tortured in the Hereafter without any reckoning. One of these groups are fathers who do not attend to the religious and moral training of their children. God the Almighty has created all the people to say prayers so as to reach the position of God's Caliph on Earth, to attain guidance, knowledge, wisdom, and to finally enter Heaven. The people themselves prepare the grounds for their torture.

### **The Commander of the Faithful Cried**

When the Command of the Faithful won the war of Jamal, and things cooled down, he went amongst the dead and cried. This was an unprecedented event in the history of man for a military man who has won the war. They asked him the reason. He said: These people had accepted Islam. They prayed, fasted and worshipped God. They should have gone to Heaven. I feel sad that they came to wrongfully fight with an Immaculate Imam. They followed their selfish desires and have to suffer eternal torture.

### **People of Torture**

The people of torture shall ask God to be saved five times, but they are turned down five times. Then they shut their mouths up forever. The following verse is regarding one of these times.

Therein will they cry aloud (for assistance): "Our Lord! Bring us out: We shall work righteousness, not the (deeds) we used to do! "- Did We not give you long enough life so that he that would should receive admonition? And (moreover) the warner came to you. So taste ye (the fruits of your deeds): for the wrong-doers there is no helper." [Holy Quran: Fatir: 35:37]

Fathers should note to paying close attention to the growth, development and perfection of their children. Do not be indifferent to your children. Keep the house clean for them. Give them lawfully obtained food to eat. Be considerate with your wives. This way your good deeds and behavior will influence your children, and they too will learn to be good parents for their children in the future. Remember that all your actions and plans are being observed by God, the Prophet (Pbuh) and the noble Imams.

Work (righteousness): Soon will God observe your work, and His Apostle, and the Believers: [Holy Quran: Tauba: 9:105]

So be careful about how you live, what you say, and how you behave, since all your actions affect your family members. The Prophet (Pbuh) has informed fathers of their important role. The noble Imams have made many recommendations for fathers. At home the father is like the ruler of a country. He is responsible for his wife and children and will be questioned about his deeds in the Hereafter. Adorn your children with pure intentions. Encourage them to do good deeds. Develop the love for knowledge and sciences in their hearts. Take them along to religious gatherings. Teach them their obligatory religious duties before they reach puberty. Be friends with them and treat them kindly. The Prophet (Pbuh) and the Commander of the Faithful are the best models for fathers to follow. Study their life, and adopt their ways and manners in your own life. Let your children adopt the Prophet and the Master of the Mystics (Ali) as their life model instead of adopting corrupt foreign or local people. Try to provide the means for your house to be filled with the scent of Prophethood and leadership of the Imams, then you shall prosper in this world and the Hereafter.

### ***An Amazing Point Regarding the Mother of HajiSheik Fazlollah Noory***

That noble man who was a fighter in God's way, a religious authority and sympathetic for the nation was born from a noble father and a pure mother who tried hard to educate him. His father devoted all his effects to his growth, development and education and when he noticed that he loved knowledge and religious practices, he sent him to Najaf. He had many great teachers there. He gained much benefit from the teachings of Haj-Mirza Husayn Noory, Mirza Shirazi, Sheik Ansari and the enlightenment of the Immaculate Imam. He returned to Tehran with a strong background in knowledge, wisdom, religious practices, ethics and piety and became the leader of the great scholars. He initiated the struggle against oppression through the Mashrootheh, a revolution which had succeeded. However, some selfish polluted folks got into the government and changed the direction of this revolution in such a way as to receive orders from London. Amongst the religious scholars, he was the one who objected to this the most, yelled, immigrated, made public announcements, etc. However, he couldn't succeed. Then he was arrested and condemned. He was condemned to death because he wanted the Mashrootheh Government and an Islamic Parliament, one which relies on the Quran the traditions, Nahj ul-Balaghah and Shiite jurisprudence. He had good and divine intentions. He was wise and sympathetic. He had learned all this from his father and his teachers and had acquired his perseverance from his mother and had mingled it all together with the lawfully obtained daily bread he had eaten. He was executed on the thirteenth of Rajab, the birthday of the Commander of the Faithful. He was killed for his rightful desires by the freemasons who thought his intentions were also executed, but they were unaware of the following Holy verse: Their intention is to extinguish God's Light (by blowing) with their mouths:

But God will complete (the revelation of) His Light, even though the Unbelievers may detest (it). [Holy Quran: Saff: 61:8]

Nearly eighty years later on the thirteenth of Rajab at 10 AM near the same place that he was killed the Islamic parliament was opened up as a result of the revolution of the Iranian nation under the leadership of Imam Khomeini. Thus, Sheik Fazlollah's intentions were realized. On that day I was one of the invitees to the parliament. I wasn't surprised at all since I knew God is the helper to the believers and has realized his care intentions although he was martyred. Prosperous be his father who will be honored in the Hereafter and win the presents of God, the Prophets and the Imams for having such a child.

### **Youth Beware**

O' dear youth, Muslim children, and followers of the Prophet (Pbuh): I have an important recommendation for you. Attain the qualities of a good father before you get married. It is too late to do so when you get married. Try to cleanse yourselves of evil traits, try to improve your behavior and your associations and food, since genes transfer your traits to your next generation. This is not just one of the research findings of Western scientists which some might ignore or even consider to be invalidated in the future. It is a natural phenomenon which has been outlined by Islam from the very beginning. Note the following important tradition in this regard: A young man rushed in to see the Prophet (Pbuh) and told him worriedly that both his wife and he himself had white skin but their baby was dark-colored. The Prophet (Pbuh) said: Indeed genes transfer traits. Thus, he relieved the young man from his burden. The fact that father's traits transfer to their children as stated by the Prophet (Pbuh) is also proven by scientists today.

Therefore, try to attain the qualities that Islam requires of a father before you get married. Do not get married just for lust and material life. Then your children will not be useful for you and the society. The Prophet (Pbuh) and the noble Imams were pleased of being from the line of Abraham, the idol breaker, whose traits were transferred to his future generations. In the authentic Vareth supplication, we read that Husayn is the inheritor of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad and the Commander of the Faithful. This inheritance is not material wealth; rather it is the spiritual states, religious knowledge, good behavior, honor and nobility. Why should we not benefit from all these spiritual assets, so that children too can inherit them?

### **Deviated Fathers and the Children's Duties**

In some families, it may be the case that the father does not abide by the religion and does not perform his religious duties. He may not be interested in or accept divine facts. The children who have matured should politely invite him to accept God's way, and tell him about the losses he shall suffer in this world and the Hereafter. If he does not accept this, they should try to guard themselves from corruption while living with him. Take Musab ibn Amir as a model. He was a believing, faithful warrior in God's way who

fought along with the Prophet (Pbuh) in the Battle of Uhad and was martyred. His parents were atheists, and they really loved him. He accepted the Prophethood due to his pure nature, and went to Medina to preach the people before the Prophet's immigration to Medina. He prepared the means for many of the people of Medina to accept Islam and thus Medina became prepared for the immigration of the Prophet. When the Prophet (Pbuh) saw him once in Medina wearing a shirt made of unprepared sheep skin, he showed him to his companions and said: Look at a man whose heart has been enlightened by God, I saw him in Mecca with his parents. They provided the best food and clothes for him, but the love for God and His Prophet has driven him to live as you see. [Mizan al-Hikmat, v10, p232]

O young fellows whose fathers live a life void of spirituality, and do not want you to be adorned with ethics, religion and spirituality: Their main effort is for you to either reach a position in material sciences, or attain wealth. Be kind with them. Do not quarrel with them, since this is against the orders of God and his Prophet. Do not follow them, and do not give up God, the Imams and the Hereafter for the sake of accepting their vain invitations. Follow Muhammad, the son of Abu Bakr, who was a pious, religious, noble and worshipping man in this regard. Live like him who lived with love of Ali, following the Quran, and the Prophets way of life, and was finally martyred in God's way and in order to help establish God's religion. Also coordinate your activities with morality and your behavior with divine order.

### *A Noble Father*

I heard the following from the nephew of the late Ayatullah Hajj Sheik Abdulkarim Haeri, who was the founder of the great seminary in Qum, when I went to preach in Mehrgerd for a few nights. The Sheik's father could not have a child for fifteen years. He was sad. He was a butcher, which is a boring job. His wife thought that she may have a problem getting pregnant, so she told him that she would find him a good second wife so he may have a child. After a while she found a widow a few miles away and proposed his husband to marry her. They were married as usual, and on the wedding night the three-year-old daughter of the widow. would not leave her mother. The child's aunt picked her up, but she cried. The noble man was moved and told her that he could not bear to hear an orphan cry. Additionally he said their marriage and having a child might harm the orphan even more.

So he gave the nuptial gift to her and returned to Mehrgerd to be with his first wife. For this reason, on the same night his wife got pregnant with Hajj Sheik Abdulkarim, who later founded the seminary in Qum and taught nearly a thousand scholars and future religious authorities. One of the men he trained was Imam Khomeini, the reader of the Islamic revolution, who influenced both the East and the West and also saved Islam. So Khomeini was the product of Hajj Sheik Abdulkarim Haeri who himself was the son of a noble, divine and sincere butcher. Only God knows the reward of this butcher in the Hereafter next to his son, and his son's students and the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

### **Bad Fathers and Good Children**

Hajaj, the son of Yusef Saqafi, was an evil, wicked, oppressor and criminal man with bad children. However, a noble, wise, poetic, knowledgeable, mystic, lover of the Household of the Prophet, and a singer of songs for the Immaculate Imams, specifically the Commander of the Faithful and the Master of Martyrs (Imam Husayn) was born in Hajaj's line during the time that Seyed Morteza was the religious authority. His name was Abu Abdullah Katib. He was totally different from his forefathers. He did not have their traits, and accepted God using the power of the intellect and his nature. He became divinely oriented and was especially paid attention to by the Household of the Prophet.

It has been said that Mirza Abdullah Afandi stated the following in Riaz al-Ulama: For some reason, Seyed Morteza spoke harsh words with Abu Abdullah Katib. Then he dreamt the same night and saw the Prophet (Pbuh) and the noble Imams. The Prophet (Pbuh) gave him a cold shoulder. He asked the Prophet (Pbuh) what he had done wrong? The Prophet (Pbuh) told him that he must apologize to the Shiite poet since he had not treated him well. When the sun rose, the noble Seyed walked all the way to Abu Abdullah Katib's house, apologized and asked for forgiveness. Then our noble young folks should realize that God has given them power to maintain their independence and not follow the impious ones, even if they be their own fathers. Therefore you should not be influenced by such fathers, but remain on the straight path, steadfastly.

### **A Distinguished Father**

Sadr Al-Muteahalin Shirazi was an unprecedented philosopher, a wise scholar and a pious mystic. He brought about a major change in philosophy and wrote many scientific books in this field. He was the son of a rich and famous man in Shiraz. His father had a high government position, and was also a pearl and antiques dealers. His father was really interested in his son following the same job and working with him. So he stayed with his father for some time, and he stayed in Bushehr and Basra with the same job. He returned to Shiraz after a couple of years. He politely asked his father for permission to quit this job and go to study in the religious schools in Shiraz. The lofty father replied positively. Then he quit the business, and deprived himself of the comfort of the house, happiness and material pleasures. Shortly after he became a renown scientist when he was still young. This he owed to the sacrifice and love of his father. Then he found no one who could teach him anything else. Thus he asked for permission to go to Isfahan. This request too was instantly accepted. He then went to Isfahan and continued his studies under the guidance of Sheik Bahayee, Mirdamad and Mirfindereski, and he reached the position of Sadr al-Muteahelin after a while. Indeed a father's good character turned a shopkeeper into a professor of philosophy. Therefore it is true that a noble, wise, knowledgeable and sympathetic father can raise good offspring for humanity and science.

## **Ali Akbar Will Not be Raised With Forbidden Food**

When I was a child, there used to live a noble old man who was pious and disciplined in our neighborhood. He was a dealer in the Bazaar in Tehran. Since he was polite, religious and trustworthy, he was respected by the business men. He used to attend the congregational prayers three times a day. He was very attractive to young kids. I was one who attended even the morning prayers at the mosque. He used to tell us various amazing stories. Once he said: A young religious fellow lived with his parents in the Naser Khosrow region. His father did not follow religious decrees. Since he was familiar with religious issues through his associations, he would advise his father, but it was of no use. Then he left his father and went to sell things on the streets in the city of Ray next to the shrine of Hazrat Abdul Azim Hassany, and instructed the people on religious issues.

On the dawn of Ashura, he came to Tehran to visit his parents. They had gone to attend the religious ceremonies. He too went there. By chance, the man who was supposed to enact the role of Shimr had become sick. They did not know him, so they asked him to perform the ceremonies. He accepted the role, and entered the theater and successfully played the role. His father recognized him, and became upset. When they all returned home after the ceremonies, his father asked him if he had had anything to eat. He answered no. His father told him there was jam and yogurt in the house, he could go and have some. When he went to the jam jar, there he saw a dead rat in the jar. He brought some yogurt to eat. His father asked him why he did not bring the jam. He responded that there was a dead rat in the jar and it was forbidden to eat the jam. His father yelled at him and asked why he had not quit being religious after one year. Then he asked why he enacted the role of the Shimr and not the role of Ali Akbar? The son replied that a father who eats some jam in a jar with a dead rat in it, which is forbidden to eat, should not expect to have a child who will become Ali Akbar; since the result of eating forbidden food is Shimr. O' young fellows. Try to become good fathers and have good children. O' fathers. If you have any problems which may harm your children's spirit, then try to remove that flaw. Indeed the Hereafter is a strange day for all.

## **THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILDREN**

### **The path to prosperity**

At first we will mention the following words from the Commander of the Faithful about prosperity. These divine and wise words have risen out of his heavenly heart to guide man towards prosperity. In response to one who asked what prosperity is he said: Prosperity does not depend on having more wealth, children, but it depends on having more knowledge, patience and perseverance; and on being proud of your worshipping of God. Thank God if you have good behavior. Ask God for forgiveness, if you do bad

deeds. There is no property in this world for anyone except those who have committed sins and repented; and those who have striven to do good deeds. Deeds which are done with piety are not trivial. How can such deeds be so small if they are accepted? [Nahj ul-Balaghah, Commented on by Ibn Abel Hadid, v.18, p.250]

In these divine sayings three facts have been pointed out: being knowledge; perseverance; and the application of both which is God's worship. It is also mentioned that knowledge, perseverance and their application should be void of sin to be accepted by God. Knowledge of an impious one, perseverance mixed with sin, and worship without piety are all sources of harm or a waste of time. Those who achieved something in this world achieved it through knowledge and wisdom, worship and repentance, and piety and abstinence. The uninformed and the unwise; the weak and the impatient; the slaves of lust and carnal desires; the ones who delve in sin; and the refugees from good deeds are all useless folks who are a source of harm.

We can conclude from these divine words that parents must first realize their Islamic duties towards their children, and then patiently perform their duties. They should be happy and proud of doing these duties, and thank God for enabling them to attend to the needs of their children, and respect their rights. If they have had some shortcomings in performing their duties, they should ask God to forgive them. They should be pious in all aspects so that their efforts are not wasted. There is no doubt that attending to the needs of the children, and striving to provide for them is a great form of worship and a good deed which will be rewarded both here and in the Hereafter.

### **Children's Rights**

The Prophet (Pbuh) said:

The rights of the child over the father consist of teaching him/her writing, swimming and shooting, and should only feed him/her clean and lawfully-earned food.

Of course, one need not directly perform these duties. If the father just sends his child to school, and swimming and shooting classes, he has done his job. The duty of feeding them only lawfully earned food is really important, and one must be very careful about this so that no problems arise here or in the Hereafter. How good it would be if there were sports clubs and mosques next to all our schools so that our children could go to learn how to swim or shoot after their studies, or could go to the mosque to learn religious matters. Thus, in addition to physical and mental development, they would receive spiritual training too. Literacy, swimming, shooting and eating lawfully earned food are four sources of power for the children. Once they are equipped with these, they will be safe from many dangers. Pursuit of such activities shall fill the free time of the youth, and is very effective in balancing out their instincts and sexual energy. In the book entitled "Mukhlal", Sheik Bahayee has narrated that a man called Hassan said:

Should I find a bit of lawfully earned bread, I will dry it; grind it firmly until it turns into powder, and keep it. Then whenever someone comes to me with an illness being difficult to cure, I will feed him with a bit of it so that he gets cured.

## **The Effects of Lawfully or Unlawfully Obtained Food**

I heard the following from one of the great religious scholars: When I studied in Qum as a student of Imam Khomeini, I used to go to the villages for preaching during the first ten days of the month of Muharram. I went to Imam Khomeini and asked him for permission to go to a new village to preach for which I had been invited to do so. The Imam prayed for me and advised me on how to treat the people and preach. I went to that village.

When I entered that village which had no more than two to three thousand residents, I saw a religious-looking farmer who asked if I had come there to preach. When I replied positively, he told me to only preach about the lawful and the unlawful as ordained by God. This, he said, is what they need to know the most about since they do not care about it. Then he asked me not to go to anyone's house except his since he is the only one who strictly watches out for the divinely ordained lawful and unlawful. He added that I would be more enlightened and preach better if I dined at his house. So I went to stay at his house, and everything was fine just as he had predicted. I could deliver a good speech whenever I wanted to preach in the mosque. He used to leave the house early each morning to go to the field, and I left the house with him. He would come to the mosque for evening prayers, and we returned to his house together after the preaching.

One day I accepted someone else's invitation to go to his house. I did not inform my host. When I wanted to preach that night I was not at ease. The audience did not notice anything but I had a hard time getting words out of my mouth! My host who was among the audience noticed my unusual state, and gave me a few bad looks which implied his objection to what I had done. When we went back to his house that night, he asked me why I went to someone else's house to eat that day. He stated that he realized this from the way I preached. He ordered me not to go to anyone else's house to eat for the rest of the duration of my stay there. He also advised me never again to eat unlawfully obtained food and be careful about whom I associate with. Once again I shall remind you about what to feed your children by stating the divine words of the Prophet:

Do not take home anything but what is lawfully earned for your family's daily bread.

## **Sheik Zahed**

Sheik Muhammad Husayn Zahed was a noble scholar in Tehran. He was a real mystic who attracted many young fellows to the mosque or religious ceremonies and gave them religious training. He once told me that he was invited to a place where he should not have gone. He had only one ice cream there. When he got up at night to perform his ablutions in preparation for prayers, and then he fell down the stairs. He got injured and his wife treated the wound on his forehead. He could not pray due to the pain, and fell asleep. Then he heard a voice asking him why he had eaten that ice cream. He woke up and realized that his injured head was a penalty for committing that sin. The Prophet (Pbuh) said:

The child's right over his/her father is that a good name be chosen for him/her, the provision of the means for his/her marriage when the time comes, and teaching him/her

how to read and write. [Mizan al-Hikmat, v.10, p.720].

A man asked the Prophet (Pbuh) what rights do his children have over him? He replied:

Choose good names for them, teach them proper behavior and place them in good position. [Ibid]

He also said:

If a child grows up and gets ready for marriage, and the father can provide for his/her marriage but does not do so, then the father is responsible for any sin committed by the child. [Ibid].

The Commander of the Faithful said: The rights of a child over his/her father include the choice of a good name, good upbringing and teaching him/her the Quran. One of the men from the Ansar asked Imam Sadiq whom should he treat kindly? He replied: Your parents. He said they have perished. The Imam said: Treat your children kindly. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.104, p.98]

The Prophet (Pbuh) said: Adorn your children with the following three characteristics: Love for your Prophet, love for the Household of the Prophet, and reading the Quran. It is the duty of the father to acquaint the children with the Prophet (Pbuh) and the pure Household of the Prophet. This should start from childhood so that the child grows up with their love and recognition. The child can also coordinate all his/her life affairs with them, and adopt no other model to follow. This is because love of the Prophet, of the Imams, and following them are the best sources of prosperity for man.

### **A Good Memory**

The first time I was invited to preach in Tabriz, I asked those who invited me to get me a moderate-priced place to stay in the poor areas of town. They accepted my condition. When I reached Tabriz, I was housed in a two-story building. The house owner lived in one story and the other story was used for religious meetings. He was a common man with a moderate income. He was religious. He asked me if I knew the reason why I was housed there? I told him that I had set up such a condition. He then told me that was not so. He said that he had attended one of the religious meetings I had held in Mashhad on the day of Arafah. At the end of that day, he had gone to the shrine of Imam Reza and prayed to house me if I should ever come to preach in Tabriz. He believed that Imam Reza had planned this.

He said that he and his family are all dedicated to serve the Household of the Prophet, and those who serve them. He then told me the following which was related to his father. He said his father used to say prayers at night throughout his whole life. He would kindly wake up his son since the age of thirteen and tell him that at night when everybody is sleeping, it is the best time to cry for the oppressions done to Imam Husayn. He told me that they are loyal to Imam Husayn and will not quit serving him until they die and join him in the Hereafter to serve him again. Imam Sadiq said:

A child should play for seven years, then study the book for another seven years, and then learn about lawfully and unlawfully obtained goods during the next seven years. [Mizan al-Hikmat, v.10, p.222]

The Commander of the Faithful said:

Ask your children to seek knowledge. [Ibid]

He also said:

Teach your children the prayer, and be serious about their prayers when they mature.

We read in three important Prophetic traditions that the parents may be cursed by the children if they do not honor their rights, and the same holds for the children. Both sides are required to honor each other's rights. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.74, p.70; Mizan al-Hikmat, v.10, p.723]

### **A Note to Parents**

The Prophet (Pbuh) said:

A good deed is recorded for whoever kisses his/her child. God will be pleased in the Hereafter with whoever pleases his/her child. The parents who teach their children the Quran shall be called in the Hereafter and given two dresses which are so shiny that will illuminate the residents of Heaven. [Furu al-Kafi, v.6, p.49]

The Prophet (Pbuh) said:

Whoever has a small child, should play childish games with him. [Vasa'il, v.15, p.203]

The Prophet (Pbuh) said:

Whoever kindly raises his daughter, kindly trains her, and feeds her from whatever God has bestowed upon him, shall have prepared himself a shelter from the Fire of Hell. [Mizan al-Hikmat, v.10, pp.705-707].

The Prophet (Pbuh) has made the following recommendations regarding children:

Fear God and treat your children equally.[Ibid]

Do not treat your children differently in terms of gifts, just as you like to be treated fairly. [Ibid]

God likes you to treat your children equally even when kissing them.[Ibid]

The Prophet (Pbuh) saw a man with two kids. He was kissing one and ignoring the other. He told him he should treat them equally, and kiss both of them if he wants to kiss them. [Ibid]

## **The Rights of the Parents**

### **A Heavy Burden**

Honoring the rights of the parents is a really heavy burden which only those who truly believe in God and the Hereafter can bear. The Holy Quran has stated the characters of a believer in:

The answer of the Believers, when summoned to God and His Apostle, in order that He may judge between them, is no other than this: They say, "We hear and we obey": It is such as these that will attain felicity. [Holy Quran: Nur: 24:51-52]

Note the following verse regarding the rights of the parents: Thy Lord hath decreed

that ye worship none but Him, And that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, But address them in terms of honor. And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say:

My Lord! bestow on them thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood. [Holy Quran: BaniIsrail: 17:23-24]

The fact that the rights of the parents are placed right after the rights of God shows the importance of these rights. This has been discussed in detail in the highly valuable book "Kafi, v.2, p.157. A tradition from Imam Sadiq has been written there. Usul al-Kafi is an authentic book due to the author being the noble, late Kolayni who lived during the period of the short absence of the twelfth Imam, its contents, and their narrators being close to the times of the Immaculate Imams. Its order and the attention it has received make it one of the most important sources of religious principles. Then no one's excuse shall be accepted after the interpretation of this important verse narrated from Imam Sadiq regarding the rights of parents. When Imam Sadiq was asked about the meaning of this verse, he said: When it is said treat your parents kindly it is meant that you should associate with them patiently and treat them kindly; do not encounter them with a bad attitude; provide for them whatever they may need without their having to ask for it, even if they are rich; and take them something whenever you go to visit them. Has not God said: By no means shall ye attain righteousness unless ye give (freely) of that which ye love; [Holy Quran: Al-i-Imran: 3:92]

Imam Sadiq said:

If one of your parents or both of them were old, impatient and weak so much so that it bothers you, do not say the least thing to them. Do not raise your voice even if they hit you. Speak with them kindly, using only noble words. If they try to hit you again, just tell them may God forgive both of you.

These are noble words. Then Imam Sadiq instructs us to be most humble with them; to look at them with passion; to always honor them and to never walk in advance. He says you must pray for them to receive God's Mercy since they raised you from childhood till now. In another verse God said:

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. But if they strive to make thee join in worship with Me things of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear their company in this life with justice (and consideration), and follow the way of those who turn to Me (in love): in the End the return of you all is to Me, and I will tell you the truth (and meaning) of all that ye did." [Holy Quran: Luqman: 31:14-15]

### **An Amazing Point**

Once he was appointed to the Prophethood, Moses was ordered to use gentle speech when dealing with the Pharaoh. He asked the reason why and was told that Pharaoh had spent fifteen years of his life to raise him, and had suffered much hardship to raise him from when he was a baby until he matured. Then he had the rights of parents and Moses

should not talk in harsh words with him.

### **A Delicate Issue**

In the Quranic interpretation called Menhaj, we read the following regarding the verse.

Did He not find thee an orphan and give thee shelter (and care)? [Holy Quran: Dhuha: 93:6]

God the Almighty told the Prophet (Pbuh) that He took away his father before his birth, and took away his mother when he was still a child. This was done because the Prophet (Pbuh) would have had a great difficulty in honoring the rights of his parents, given his especial circumstances as a Prophet of God.

### **Traditions Regarding Parent's Rights**

A narrator asked Imam Sadiq: Which of our deeds are the best? He replied: Being punctual about praying, being kind to parents, and fighting in the way of God. [Kafi, v.2, p.158]

Imam Sadiq said:

What prevents you from treating your parents kindly whether they are living or have passed away. One asked the Imam what he should do for his parents who have passed away. He replied: Pray, give charity, go on the Hajj pilgrimage and fast on their behalf.[Kafi; v.2, p.159]

### **Zacharias Serves His Parents**

Zacharias, the son of Abraham, said he was a strict Christian, and then became a Muslim. He said he was happy and went to Mecca to see Imam Sadiq. Imam Sadiq told him to ask any questions he wished to ask. Then he told Imam Sadiq that his family members were all Christian. His mother was blind, and he had to live with them since his father had no one else to rely on. He said his parents liked him to eat and drink from the same set of dishes. Imam Sadiq asked him if his parents ate any pork. He replied no. Then he asked if they touched any pigs? He answered no. Then Imam Sadiq ordered him not to leave their house; not to separate from his mother; to take care of her; to bathe her; to change her clothes; and to feed her.

He said he followed all these instructions upon his return to Kufa. Then his mother told him to tell her the truth about having become a Muslim. Then he told her yes, and said he had been ordered by his living leader, Imam Sadiq who was a descendant of the Prophet (Pbuh), to perform all these services. His mother asked him if he was the Prophet. He replied no. He is the sixth Imam and is the descendant of the Prophet. The

mother replied no: The things you do for me are the decrees of the Prophets of God. I am blind, but I realize that your religion is better than mine. I want you to guide me towards your religion. Then he guided his mother to become a Muslim, and she performed her noon prayers with him. At eve, she asked to say his evening prayers and let her say her prayers with him. She did so, and passed away after she had finished her prayers.

Then he remembered that Imam Sadiq had instructed him to bury his mother by himself if she passed away. He invited the Shiites early the next morning. Then they told him to call in her priest. He told them that she was a Muslim, and they helped him to bury her. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.491]. Jaber Jafi said the following: I was in the presence of Imam Sadiq. A man came and said: My parents are Sunni and very strict in their ways so how should I treat them? Imam asked him how he treats real Shiites. He replied with love, and assist them in solving their problems. Imam said: Treat your parents likewise. [Ibid, p.490]

Imam Baqir said: A young fellow served his parents well during their lifetime. However, his parents willed that he should repay a loan they could not. He refused to do so, and did not even ask God to forgive them. For this reason, God ordered that he be registered as one who is damned by his parents. Another child who was damned by his parents during his lifetime, paid back their debts after they passed away, and sought God's forgiveness for them, and was registered amongst those who treat their parents well. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.74, p.59].

Imam Sadiq has been narrated as saying the following in the book called "Amali:

Moses saw a beautiful face in the shade of heaven. He asked whose shadow was over him? He was told he was one who has really treated his parents well and had never gossiped or caused disunion.

The sixth Imam said:

If you desire death to be easy for you, visit your relatives and be kind to your parents. Then the angel of death will be told to take it easy on you, and you will not become poor during your lifetime.

Next to the Ka'aba a man asked Abuzar why he looked at Ali's face a lot. He replied that when he was next to the Prophet (Pbuh) and there was not any distance between him and the Imam, the Prophet, told him: Looking at Ali's face and kindly looking at one's parents is considered to be worship. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.38, p.196]

Imam Ali said:

Accept all your parents orders, except for sinning.

The seventh Imam said:

A man asked the Prophet (Pbuh) to explain the rights of the father. He said: Do not call him by his name. Do not walk ahead of him. Do not sit down before he does, and do not swear at him. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.74, p.45]

Imam Sadiq said:

Three things are obligatory for children regarding their parents. They should always be grateful to them; they should accept their advice on all matters except sinning, and they should always wish them well. [Tuhaf ul-Uqool, v.47, p.238].

The Prophet (Pbuh) said that the following statement implies parents' damnation:

Do whatever you wish, I will not forgive you. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.74, pp.61-74]

He also said:

Two things are quickly penalized in this world. They are being damned by one's

parents and committing fornication. [Ibid]

He also said: Anyone who makes his/her parents really sad, is damned by them. [Ibid]

The sixth Imam said:

Looking meanly at parents causes damnation.

A man told the Prophet: There is no evil deed which I have not done. Is there any way for me to repent? The Prophet (Pbuh) asked him if his parents were alive. He replied that his mother had passed away, but his father was alive. He told him to go and treat his father kindly so that his sins be forgiven. When the man left the mosque, the Prophet (Pbuh) said: He would have been closer to forgiveness by God, if his mother was still alive. Moses asked God for some recommendations three times. Then he was twice recommended to treat his mother well, and once to treat his father well. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.13, p.330]

Imam Baqir said:

One is not free in the following three cases: He is not free to do as he pleases in regards to what he is entrusted with, his promise, and being kind to his parents. [Vasa'il, v.21, p.490].

### **Sheik Ansari and His Mother**

The great jurist, and noble scholar called Sheik Ansari used to carry his mother on his back to the public bath house, and would then take her back home after her bath was finished. He used to come to kiss her hands at night, and would not leave the house without her permission. After she died, he cried a lot saying that he cries because he is now deprived of the great blessing of serving her. He compensated for all of her missed prayers by praying even though he was really busy teaching and had many who came to visit him. Although his mother was one of the most religious women at that time, he performed all those duties.

### **Mother's Damnation**

A young man was about to die. The Prophet (Pbuh) came to visit him, and told him to profess to God's unity and his Prophethood. He turned away his face and refused to profess. The Prophet (Pbuh) asked if he had a mother. He replied positively. He called her in and asked if she was not pleased with him. She replied positively. The Prophet (Pbuh) asked her to forgive him since he could not profess to God's unity. She said he had hurt her and she was upset with him. The Prophet (Pbuh) asked her to forgive him for the sake of the Prophet. She agreed and forgave her son. Then the Prophet (Pbuh) asked the young man to profess to God's unity and his Prophethood. The man uttered the words. Then the Prophet (Pbuh) asked him why he had not uttered it the first time. The man said a scary dragon would attack him and he could not talk. He added that now it had left and he could talk. [Manazel al-Akherat, Mohades Qumi].

Imam Sajjad said: Note the following regarding your mother. She carried you for nearly nine months in her womb, no one else could do so. She dedicated her love to you, no one else would do so; she protected you with all her existence, fed you and was hungry herself; gave you things to drink; and she remained thirsty herself; she clothed you, and did not care for her own clothing; she felt hot, but protected you from heat; she stayed up to care for you at night; and protected you in all circumstances so that she may have a child like you. You cannot be grateful enough for all she did unless God helps you. [Bihar al-Anwar, v.14, p.6]

Hakam Nami said that he told the sixth Imam: My father had donated a house to me, and he now plans to move back into it. The Imam said: Your father's deed is not good, but do not fight back if he fights with you; and talk calmly with him, if he yells at you. [Vasa'il, v.18, p.224]