

Moral and Social Development: Role of the Family

Praise be to Allah we seek refuge in Him and we seek His guidance. Peace and prayers are due on the best of creation, prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Dear Muslims, we are all aware of the numerous ills sweeping across societies or the world at large. The pollution of cultures to fellow man manifested by such deviant behaviours as armed robbery, large scale fraud, drug abuse, the get-rich-quick syndrome which drive people to sell their conscience to make money and total violation to law and order. Also common to contemporary society is the devaluation of the sacred institution of marriage seen in the high incidence of divorce and consequent lack of care of children which in turn leads to juvenile delinquency on a large scale. These social ills are aggravated by lack of control of what our children watch on TV and by

free access to pornographic materials while gangsterism, vandalism and drug addiction (trade) among our youth are attaining alarming proportions. We have steered thus far in moral crises because we have deviated from the moral values of Islam as embodied in the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). The way out is to go back to Allah. Islamising our actions and knowledge. In the path of bringing back rectitude, the Muslim community carries the greatest burden, because Allah, *Subhanahu wa ta'aala*, describes us as-

... *the best community raised for mankind. Enforcing what is right, for bidding what is wrong. And believing in God* (Q3:110).

Islam has the answer to all our crisis because it is the fully-tested, complete way of life ordained by Allah, the creator, for all spheres of activities; moral, social political, etc. No man-made arrangement has ever succeeded in bringing all-round peace and happiness to the family, society and humanity at large.

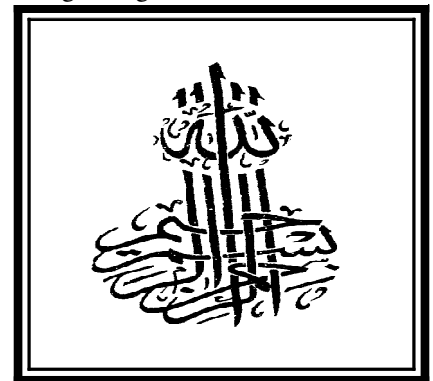
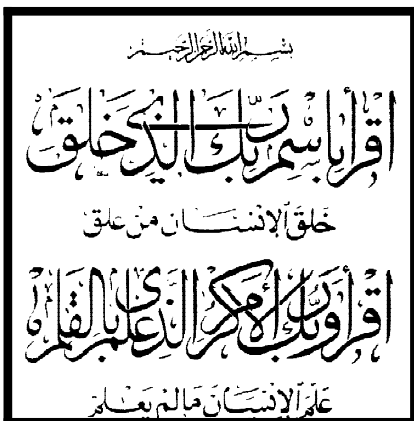
Islamic Ideals and Philosophy

To a Muslim, Allah is the creator of the entire Universe and all that it contains and He is their unrivalled Master, Sovereign and Sustainer. Allah is all-wise, all-powerful and all-knowing. He knows the manifest

and the hidden. He is free of all defects, weaknesses and faults. He is pure in every respect. He is fair and just. Man is His creature, subject and servant and has been brought into existence to serve and obey Him. With these facts, it follows that the correct course of life for a Muslim is to live in complete obedience to Allah, to follow the mode of worship, in the widest scope of the word, prescribed by Allah through His chosen prophets of which we are all accountable. The moral code of Islam covers a wide field including the details of domestic life as well as broad aspects of national and international behaviour. It guides us at every stage in life. Hence Islam has been described as a perfect way of life (Q 4:125).

Islamic Concept Society

An ideal society means a middle-coursed oriented one which creates the most desirable state of social relationship conducive to healthy living and growth of its members. A



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non-Muslim feels he is just an individual who is totally free to do what ever he wants whenever he wants. He analyses the society as a 2-dimensional affair, involving the individual and the rest of his society. However, since piety and fear of Allah and a sense accountability to Him are the fundamental features of an Islamic society and order of life, society becomes a 3-dimensional affair. The individual, Allah and the society is duly recognised and appropriately woven into social fabric. The three basic norms of social behaviour in Islam are: (1) Justice (*Adl*), (2) Generous and honest dealings (*Ihsan*) (3) Co-operation. There are numerous verses in the Qur'an stating clearly qualifying these norms (Q3:191, 16:90). There must be a strong evidence of a collective dynamism to up hold righteousness and piety, justice and Ihsan, order and discipline so that each individual, weak or strong, poor or rich, ruler or ruled participate in it. Under an Islamic ideal society, individuals are urged to put in their best in the promotion of good and elimination of evil.

The Muslim Family

The Muslim family can be described as the most fundamental unit in the total scheme of social order. In Islam, the role of the family in building an ideal community, enjoys the highest status and the greatest prestige. It is the fount of the human race, its culture, society and civilisation, procreation is made possible because of sexualisation and it is institutionalised in the family. In essence the family is the nucleus of the society and the training ground for socialisation for the young members of the community. The family is a divinely inspired institution in the sense that it came into existence with the creation of a human being. Furthermore, Allah has already stated clearly in the Qur'an the various categories of people who can marry who can not (Q 5:5, 2:221). We are duty-bound to obey if

we hope to succeed (Q 33:36).

Some Evil Forces in Society

Evil forces in the society a Muslim family has to contend with include: (I) The evil influence of the mass media (ii) The free access to pornographic materials (iii) The emergence of a permissive society where so many activities previously regarded as illicit and abominable are now part of our habits, customs and tradition. To combat these negative forces, the Muslim pervert must educate the child from its formative years as the purpose of life, that is, consciousness, love and fear of Allah. The family should create and maintain an "Islamic atmosphere" in the home through. (i) Observance of the five pillars of Islam together particularly Salat and Fasting. (ii) Observance of Islamic culture in dress, food, ethics etc. (Q 2:233, 2:235-6). (iii) Monitoring and regulating the activities of the child towards Islamic values. (iv) bringing the child in contact with other Muslim children, and (v) participation in Islamic activities. (vi) hospitality, generosity, love, tenderness and mercy.

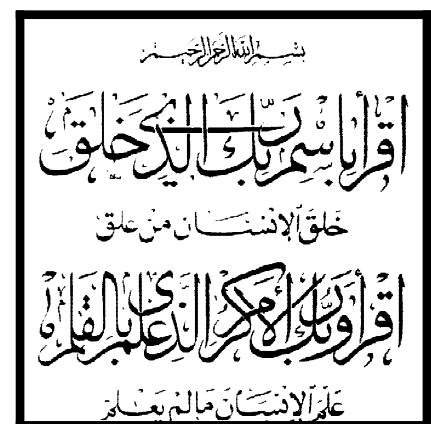
In addition, the Ummah should make conscious effort to "Insulate" Muslim families from the decadent society. Effort must be made particularly in the west to pull resources together to set up private schools with Islamic bias where all learning will be related to Allah by introducing the Islamic approach to learning. For example, sex education taught by appropriate people at the appropriate time. This is a sure panacea to the moral decadence facing the Muslim youth. Needless to say, children learn by example. A child can be disciplined and hard working if the parents are discipline and hard working. Finally, it is an established fact that a strong, stable and healthy family units provides the foundation for strong, stable and healthy communities and societies.

Ahadith corner

From Mu'adth bin Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "O Mu'adth! Do you know what Allah's Right upon His slaves is?" I said "Allah and His Messenger know best." The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "To worship Him Alone and to join none in worship with Him (Allah). Do you know what their right upon Him is?" I replied "Allah and His Messenger know best." The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Not to punish them (if they do so)".

From Samura bin Jundub (may Allah be pleased with him): Allah's messenger (peace be upon him) said: "Tonight two (visitors) came to me (in my dream) and took me to a town built with gold bricks and silver bricks. There we met men who, half of their bodies look like the most handsome human beings you have ever seen, and the other half, the ugliest human beings you have ever seen. Those two visitors said to those men: 'Go and dip yourselves in that river.' So they dipped themselves therein and then came to us, their ugliness disappeared and they were in the most handsome shape. The visitors said, 'The first is the Garden of 'Adn (i.e., 'Adn paradise), and that is your dwelling place.' then they added, 'As for the people who were half ugly and half handsome, they were those who have mixed deeds that were good with deeds that were evil, but Allah forgave them'"

Question:



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Some people delay the 'Asr and Dhuhr prayer until after sunset or delay Fajr prayer until after sunrise, and say that they are busy with their work such as farming or hunting and similar other jobs or they say that they have a major impurity and will wait until they make *Ghusl*. Is it allowed for them to do that or not?

Answer

Praise be to Allah the Lord of the worlds. No one is allowed to delay daytime prayers until nightfall or the night prayers until day because of some work such as farming or industrial work or major impurity or hunting or playing or anything else. In fact, all Muslims agree that one must pray Dhuhr and 'Asr during the day and Fajr before sunrise and that one should not miss them because of his job or pleasure or any other matter. The master can not forbid his slave, and the employer his employee or the husband his wife from offering their prayers on time. Whoever wilfully delays a *Salat* after its prescribed time such as delaying the 'Asr prayer after sunset should be asked to repent. If he does and commits himself to pray on time according to his ability, he should do that. If does not repent and says that he will always pray 'Asr after sunset because he is busy with his job or with hunting, the majority of the scholars are of the opinion that he should be punished. . . During the battle of al-Khandaq, the Prophet, (peace be upon him); delayed 'Asr prayer because he was fighting the non-believers and he prayed it after sunset. Afterwards, Allah revealed the following *Ayah* :

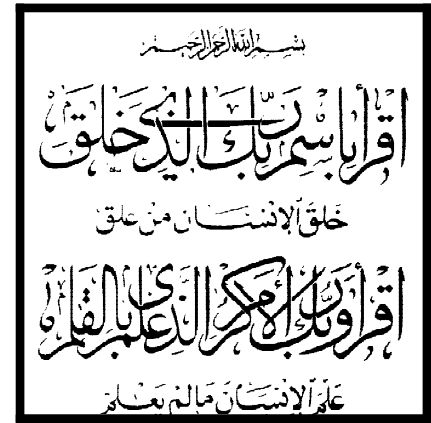
Guard strictly the five obligatory prayers and especially the middle prayer [Asr]. And stand before Allah with obedience.(Q2:238)

This is why the scholars say it is obligatory complete the *Salat* during its time even while fighting the enemies in Jihad, with the exception

of Abu Hanifa, who said that one may delay the prayer because of Jihad. As for delaying the prayer for reasons other than Jihad such as farming, manufacturing, hunting or such other work, no one among the scholars allows it. Indeed, Allah said:

So woe to the worshippers, who are neglectful of their prayers(Q107:4-5)

Among the *Salaf*, some said that this *Ayah* refers to the people who delay the prayers after their allowed time, and others said that it refers to those who offer their *Salat* on time but do not perform it the way they have been ordered to. The consensus of the scholars is that it is *Haram* (unlawful) to delay the *Salat* beyond its prescribed time and compare such an action with delaying the fasting or *Ramadhan* till the month of *Shawwal*. Valid excuses for delaying the prayer include a person who was asleep or who forgot to pray but does not include people who have major impurity or minor impurity or other such things. The latter must pray on time no matter what their condition is. In case of major impurity and there is no water, or if they are afraid that water may harm them, they should make *Tayammum*. If they have an impurity that they can not remove, they should still pray on time as they are. If they do not have clothes to cover themselves, they should pray as they are and should not delay the prayer after its time until they get their clothes. The same is valid for sick people, they should not delay the prayer for any such reasons. Umar ibn al-Khattab said that combining two prayers and performing them at the same time with no reason is a major sin. This is why it is the consensus of the scholars that if a person who can not find clothes prays as he is on time, he does not have to repeat his prayer: This is by the agreement of the four Imams. The same is true for the traveller who could not find water and makes *Tayammum* and prays on



time.

Question

A man is addicted to the performance of some sins. But he does not miss the five daily prayers and he says *Salat* on the Messenger 100 times a day and *Subhan Allah wal-Hamdulillah wal-Lahu Akbar* 100 times a day. Do his prayers and remembrance of Allah atone for his sins?

Answer

Allah says:

So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom shall see it.(Q99:7-8)

So any believer who does a good deed for the sake of Allah, Allah is just and will reward him for it. As for the small sins they might have been performing, they deserve to be punished for them but it is hoped that Allah would forgive them if they repent as Allah said:

... And there are others who have acknowledge their sins, they have mixed the deed that was righteous with another that was evil. Perhaps Allah will turn onto them in forgiveness. Surely, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.(Q9:102)

But if they die without repentance, then only Allah knows how their bad deeds compare with their good deeds, and one should not testify that they would enter either Paradise or Hellfire. Some sects like Mu'tazila

and Khawarij say those who perform a major sin will have all of their good deeds wiped out. But this is not the position of Ahlus-Sunnah; the latter say that those who perform major sins have good deeds as well as bad deeds and their fate is with Allah. As for the *Ayah*: "... Verily, Allah accepts only from those who are pious" (Q5:27), it means that whoever feared Allah in that deed, so that it was a good deed done only for the sake of Allah and in conformity with the Sunnah, then Allah will accept that deed from him. This is similar to the following *Ayah*

So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associates none as a partner in the worship of his Lord(Q18:110)

Umar ibn al-Khattab used to say in his supplication: 'O Allah! Make all of my deeds purely for your sake and do not make any part of them for anyone else's sake.' The position of those who claim that Allah does not accept the good deeds of a person unless that person has avoided all major sins, this position goes in contradiction with Qur'an and Sunnah. For example, the man who used to drink alcohol but the prophet, (peace be upon him) said that man loves Allah and His messenger. Also in other *Ahadith*, it is mentioned that Allah will take out of the Hellfire the people who have a grain of Iman in their hearts. Allah said:

... then of them are some who wrong their own selves, and of them are some who follow a middle course, and of them those who are, by Allah's will, foremost in good deeds. That is indeed a great grace.(Q35:32)

Question

A man travelled to another country with the intention of staying there one month or more. Should he shorten the prayer or complete it?

Answer

If it is his intention to stay in that

place for four days or less, he should shorten the prayer, since when the Prophet, (peace be upon him) entered Makkah, he remained four days during which he was shortening the prayer. If he intends to stay more than four days, scholars differed about the ruling. If he does not intend to stay and intends to leave and is prevented by some cause, he should keep shortening the prayer even if he stays more than four days. This is so since the Prophet (peace be upon him) remained in Makkah more than ten days and in Tabuk twenty nights during which he was shortening the prayer because he intended to leave on the next day during that period.

From Fatawa Ibn Taymiyyah.

(Culled from The Friday Report)

New Arrivals

Br. Kehinde Bashir Adetona for an MSc in Petroleum/Geochemistry in Newcastle-upon-Tyne University. Br. Kehinde is from Department of Chemistry University of Ibadan.

Graduation/Departures

Babangida Sani has returned to Department of Mathematics Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria after successfully completing his PhD in Operations Research from Lancaster University.

Ja'faru Ahmed has returned to Sokoto State Ministry of Works after successfully completing an MSc in Water Resources from Strathclyde University, Glasgow.

Saleh Abdullahi El-Yakub has returned to Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi, Nigeria, after successfully completing his PhD in Computer Science from Queen Mary and Westfield College, London.

Births

Br. and Mrs. Jibril Ahmed were blessed with a baby girl named A'isha on 3rd October, 1995.

Br. and Mrs. Bello Abubakar were

blessed with a baby boy named Jibril in February.

Br. and Mrs. Sani Bako were blessed with a baby boy named Ammar.

Br. and Mrs. AbdulKarim were blessed with a baby boy named Mujahid on 22 March 1996.

Br. and Mrs. Kabir U. Kabo were blessed with a baby boy named Usman on March 22, 1996.

Br. Mrs. Baba Gana were blessed with a baby girl named Fatima on 24 March 1996.

Br. and Mrs. AbdurRahman Ishaq were blessed with a baby boy named Yahya on 11th April 1996.

Call for articles

You are being reminded that contributions of articles are much needed for the prompt production of the Newsletter. In particular, this issue was long overdue for lack of articles. Therefore you are solicited to send items for publication.

Views expressed in this Newsletter, unless otherwise indicated, are not necessarily those of the Nigeria Muslim Forum.

