A large, vibrant, multi-colored decorative border with intricate, swirling patterns in shades of blue, yellow, green, and red. It frames the central text area.

Islamic
Teachings
on
Ideal
Family
Life

Note on Transliteration

In this work, the transliteration of the Arabic words and expressions has been conformed to the Royal Asiatic Society standards as follows.

The ا is represented by ' , a sort of catch in the voice, and by the a'rāb, if applicable, as indicated below.

The ا is represented by a or the a'rāb, as indicated below.

The ب is represented by b.

The ت is represented by t.

The ث is represented by *th*, pronounced like *th* in the English word *thing*.

The ج is represented by j.

The ح is represented by ḥ.

The خ is represented by *kh* pronounced like the Scottish *ch* in *loch*.

The د is represented by d.

The ذ is represented by *dh* pronounced like the *th* in the English words *that* and *with*.

The ر is represented by r.

The ز is represented by z.

The س is represented by s.

The ش is represented by sh.

The ص is represented by ṣ.

The ض is represented by ḍ pronounced like the *th* in the English word *this*.

The ط is represented by ṭ.

The ظ is represented by ṣ.

The ع is represented by ' , a strong glottoral specific to Arabic.

The غ is represented by *gh*, a sound approached very nearly in the *r grasseye* in French.

The ف is represented by f.

The ق is represented by q.

The ك is represented by k.

The ل is represented by l.

The م is represented by m.

The ن is represented by n.

The ه is represented by h.

The و is represented by v or w.

The ي is represented by y.

The *fatḥa* is represented by an *a* (pronounced like the *u* in the English word *bud*) when short, and by *ā* (pronounced like the *a* in the English word *father*) when long, by *ai* (pronounced like the *ay* in the English word *say*) when followed by a *ya*, and by *au* (pronounced resembling the *ou* in the English word *sound*) when followed by a *waw*.

The *kasrah* is represented by an *i* (pronounced like the *i* in the English word *bid*) when short, by *ī* (pronounced like the *ee* in the English word *deep*) when long.

The *ḍamma* is represented by a *u* (pronounced like the *oo* in the English word *wood*) when short, by *ū* (pronounced like the *oo* in the English word *shoot*) when long.

In the name of Allāh, the Gracious, the Merciful

**ISLĀMIC TEACHINGS
ON
IDEAL FAMILY LIFE**

Published By

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Foreword

Being a complete and final religion from God, Islām guides all aspects of our lives. This guidance is contained in the Holy Qurʾān; the life-time examples (that is, the Sunnah) and the sayings (Ḥadīth) of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him).

In the USA, our members grow up in a non-Islāmic culture, and there are also converts to Islām who need to learn the Islāmic guidelines on marriage (just as in other matters). In light of this, Jamāʿat Aḥmadiyya in USA has collected the relevant teachings on marriage.

These contain the Qurʾānic injunctions, extracts from the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, peace and blessings of Allāh be on him, his example and written material obtained from the writings of *Ḥaḍrat* Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him.

This task was performed by the Tarbiyat Committee including members of the auxiliary organizations. Although the brunt of this work was borne by *Maulānā* Mukhtār Aḥmad Cheema, *Maulānā* Dāūd Ḥanīf made final adjustments.

The compilation of the material is divided as follows:

- Part One is on Islāmic teachings when viewed as a premarital advice (counseling before Nikāḥ).
- Part Two is advice on conduct during married life.
- Part Three is on solutions to problems if and when they arise in the course of married life, so as to restore domestic peace and harmony. This will be printed separately.

This treatise is presented in the hope that many of the questions will be answered and that it will form the basis for mutual discussion among the parties. In particular it may help in defining expectations for married life as an Aḥmadi Muslim. In Shā' Allāh.

Wassalām,

Ahsānullāh Ḥafar

Amīr, Aḥmadiyya Movement in Islām, U S A

**Islāmic Teachings
on
Pre-Marital Counseling**

Islāmic Marriage System

Almighty Allāh has created everything in pairs. It is a scientific fact that these pairs exist in all things, in vegetable kingdom, even in inorganic matters. There is not any iota of doubt that these elements don't exist by themselves. They depend upon each other for their survival. The Holy Qur'ān has mentioned repeatedly this fact in different verses, like,

سُبْحٰنَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ الْاَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنْبِتُ الْاَرْضُ وَمِنْ اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا

يَعْلَمُوْنَ

“Holy is He Who created all things in pairs, of what the earth grows and of themselves, and of what they know not.”

(The Holy Qur'ān, 36:37)

So human beings are also created in pairs, and the main philosophy behind it is the survival of the human race, and also that they may live in peace and tranquility.

What is Marriage?

Marriage or wedding is a legal union of a man and woman, in other words, it is an agreement under which a man and a woman live as husband and wife by legal or religious commitments.

Marriage in Islām is a divine bond between husband and wife to enjoy social and intimate relationship with each other and to have children. It is one of the most sacred divine contracts between them. In Islām, marriage is a part of a social system, which lays down detailed guidelines about the relationship between the two genders.

Since the family is the nucleus of Islāmic society and marriage is the only way to bring families into existence,

Islām encourages marriage when someone reaches the age of puberty.

No Room for Celibacy in Islām

In Islām, there is no room for celibacy at all. Bachelor life is discouraged, even condemned, in Islām. Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) says in this regard:

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَا صَرُورَةَ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ -

(ابوداؤد كتاب العناك باب لا صرورة في الاسلام)

Ibni ‘Abbās (May Allāh be pleased with him) narrated that the Holy prophet Muḥammad (Peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said,

“There is no room for celibacy in Islām.”

(Abū Dāwūd, Kitābul-Manāsik)

On another occasion, the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) placed great stress on this aspect of Islāmīc teachings, and instructed his companions to strictly follow him in every walk of his life. He says in this context,

عَنْ أَنَسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ نَفَرًا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ: لَا أَتَزَوَّجُ وَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ: أَصَلِّي وَلَا أَنَامُ وَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ: أَصُومُ وَلَا أُفْطِرُ فَبَلَغَ ذَلِكَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: مَا بَالُ أَقْوَامٍ قَالُوا كَذَا وَكَذَا! لِلنَّبِيِّ أَصُومُ وَأُفْطِرُ وَأَصَلِّي وَأَنَامُ وَأَتَزَوَّجُ النِّسَاءُ فَمَنْ رَغِبَ عَنِّي سَتَيْتِي

فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي - (بخارى كتاب النكاح باب ترغيب في النكاح)

Anas, may Allāh be pleased with him, narrates that some of the companions of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) decided to be secluded from the worldly affairs. Someone said that he would not marry, and someone said that he would not sleep but keep on praying, and someone said that he would continuously keep on fasting. When this news reached the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), he said,

“What type of people are they? I observe fast and also break, I sleep and also marry. So, whoever turns away from my practice is not of me.”

(Bukhārī, Kitābun-Nikāḥ)

It is marriage that fulfills the basic needs of individuals and of society. It is the cornerstone upon which the whole Muslim life is built.

It is very important to have understanding about the marriage partner and to have a happy life. Otherwise life can become worse than hell.

Status of Men and Women

The first and foremost lesson given by Almighty Allāh to bear in mind is the equality of human race, especially men and women, and above all between husband and wife. As the Holy Qur’ān says,

يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمْ أَوْ رَبُّكُمْ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ
وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً
وَأْتَقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ

رَقِيبًا

“O ye people! fear your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and created therefrom its mate, and from them twain spread many men and women; and fear Allāh, in Whose name you appeal to one another, and fear Him particularly respecting ties of relationship. Verily Allāh watches over you.”

(The Holy Qur’ān, 4:2)

This is one of the verses which is always recited on the occasion of Nikāh (wedding) ceremony to remind the couple that so far as their status as human being is concerned, they are created from a single soul, so they are equal. No one is superior or inferior to the other. But, of course, responsibilities and obligations are different. Therefore respect and love must always be exhibited for the other partner. And, it is not possible unless there is fear of Almighty Allāh in the heart.

Haḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, says,

The relationship between husband and wife should be as between two true and sincere friends. The primary witness of a person’s high moral qualities and of his relationship with God is his wife. If his relationship with his wife is not good, it is not possible that he should be at peace with God. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, has said,

“The best of you are those who behave best towards their wives.”

(Malfūzāt, Vol. V, pp. 417-418)

Again Almighty Allāh says in the Holy Qur’ān:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنشَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً
 وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

“Whoso acts righteously, whether male or female, and is a believer, We will surely grant him a pure life; and We will surely bestow on such their reward according to the best of their works.”

(The Holy Qur’ān, 16:98)

The above verse of the Holy Qur’ān is very clear that men and women have equal rewards with their Lord in this life and in the life to come, on the Day of Judgment. This verse recognizes the equality of rights of men and women. It also promises that Allāh will confer on both equally. Women are not inferior to men. So, if God has not made women inferior to men, in status as human being they should not be treated inferior to men in any way.

Again Almighty Allāh says,

مَنْ عَمِلَ سَيِّئَةً فَلَا يُجْزَىٰ إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا وَمَنْ عَمِلَ
صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ
يُرَزَقُونَ فِيهَا بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٤١﴾

“Whoso does evil will be requited only with the like of it; but whoso does good, whether male or female, and is a believer—these will enter the Garden; they will be provided therein without measure.”

(The Holy Qur’ān, 40:41)

The above verse of the Holy Qur’ān shows that whereas the requital of the evil deeds of any body will be proportionate to their deeds, the reward for their good deeds will be without limit or measure. This is the Islāmic concept of Heaven and Hell. What a beautiful concept it is. So, there is no discrimination between men and women so far as the reward of their deeds and actions are concerned. God has made them alike and they must be taken alike by their

partners, and must be respected, loved and honored by each other. In this regard, *Ḥaḍrat* Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, says:

“There are two types of men. There are those who leave their women entirely free. Their women pay no heed to religion and conduct themselves in a manner contrary to Islām, and there is no one to check up on them. There are others who treat them with such severity and strictness that their women cannot be distinguished from animals. They are treated worse than slaves and wild beasts. They beat them mercilessly as if they are lifeless objects. In short they are greatly ill-treated. There is a proverb in the Punjab that a wife is like a pair of shoes, which may be cast away at will and replaced by another. Such an attitude is most objectionable and is contrary to Islām.

The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, is a perfect exemplar for us in every respect. Study his life and see how he behaved towards women. I esteem a person who stands up against a woman is a coward and unmanly. If you study the life of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, you will find that he was so courteous, that despite his high dignity, if an old woman stopped to talk to him, he continued to listen to her till she let him go.”

(Malfūzāt, Vol. IV, p. 44)

Again, Almighty Allāh says in the Holy Qur’ān:

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْقَانِتَاتِ
 وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَشِيعِينَ
 وَالْخَشِيعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّاتِمِينَ وَالصَّاتِمَاتِ
 وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ
 أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٦﴾

“Surely, men who submit themselves to God and women who submit themselves to Him, and believing men and believing women, and obedient men and obedient women, and truthful men and truthful women, and men steadfast in their faith and steadfast women, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their chastity and women who guard their chastity and men who remember Allāh much and women who remember Him—Allāh has prepared for all of them forgiveness and a great reward.”

(The Holy Qur’ān, 33:36)

The Holy Qur’ān has repeatedly mentioned that Muslim women stand on the same level with Muslim men, and that they can attain to all those spiritual heights to which men can attain. Besides, Islām also confers on women all the political and social rights, which men enjoy. Only their spheres of activities being different, their duties are different. It is this difference in duties of both the sexes that has been mistakenly, or perhaps deliberately, misunderstood by people.

The ten outstanding attributes of Muslim men and women mentioned in this verse have been appropriately described in the above verse of the Holy Qur’ān. So, it is

sufficient proof that women are not lacking behind in any field of life.

Again, it is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān about men and women:

فَأَسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَمَلٍ مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ
 أَنثَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْضٍ فَأَلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ
 وَأُودُوا فِي سَبِيلِي وَقَاتَلُوا وَقُتِلُوا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ
 وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ
 اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ ﴿١٩٦﴾

So their Lord answered their prayers, saying, ‘I will suffer not the work of any worker from among you, whether male or female, to be lost. You are from one another. Those, therefore, who have emigrated, and have been driven out of their homes, and have been persecuted in My cause, and have fought and been killed, I will surely remove from them their evils and will cause them to enter Gardens through which streams flow—a reward from Allāh, and with Allāh is the best of rewards.’

(The Holy Qur'ān, 3:196)

The status of women is described very ideal in the above verse of the Holy Qur'ān, and they are not less than men in any field of their day-to-day life and in the field of piety and righteousness. In several other places in the Holy Qur'ān, believing men and believing women are made equally subject to the same commandments and entitled to the same rights and privileges. Briefly, Islām recognizes the equality of the social and religious rights of man and woman. So, in the same manner, women and men must be treated by their partners, and likewise respected by each other, and that is an

excellent guideline to establish peace and harmony in the family and the society they live in.

Purpose of Marriage

The main purpose of marriage is procreation and protection of human race, to guard against evils and immoralities and to establish a loving and peaceful society. This is why the Holy Qur’ān addresses the married people as Muḥṣan and Muḥṣanah, those who are guarded and protected as if they are in a well-secured and protected castle. It means that when someone is married, he or she becomes protected from satanic inclinations. This is why, for piety and righteousness, marriage is a must. It gives maximum protection from the evil and satanic passions. Marriage ensures that physical needs be satiated under divine rules. If someone is unable to find a suitable life partner, he should observe fast. The Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) says,

“O young people, whoever among you is able to marry should marry, and whoever is not able to marry is recommended to fast as fasting diminishes sexual urges.”

(Bukhārī, Book of Nikāḥ, Ḥadīth 3)

The Holy Qur’ān very beautifully states:

نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَانْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ وَقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ مُلْقَوَةٌ وَنَبِّئِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“Your wives are a tilth for you; so approach your tilth when and how you like and send ahead some good for yourselves; and fear Allāh and know that you shall meet Him; and give good tidings to those who obey.”

(The Holy Qur’ān, 2:224)

For the protection of human race marriage is a must. To fulfill this purpose a healthy partner must be selected for healthy generations, because a healthy fruit depends upon a healthy tree, and a healthy tree depends upon a healthy soil. Almighty Allāh has mentioned the wives as tilth, which shows that healthy generations will depend upon healthy wives.

Propagation of Species through Marriage

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, says that the above mentioned verse of the Holy Qur'ān states that,

Your wives are your tilth for the purpose of procreation, so approach your tilth as you may desire, but keep in mind the requirements of tilth, that is, do not have union in any manner that may obstruct the birth of children...

Of course, if the wife is ill, and it is certain that pregnancy will put her life in danger, or there is a sincere belief that some other valid reason exists, then such circumstances are exceptions. Otherwise, it is not permissible in the laws of Islām to obstruct the birth of children.

Thus, as a wife has been designated as tilth ... **one of the purposes** of marriage is that righteous servants of God may be born who may remember Him. The **second purpose** ... is that husband and wife may safeguard themselves through each other against improper looks and misconduct. **The third purpose** is that mutual love develops between them safeguarding them against the distress of loneliness. All this is set out in the Holy Qur'ān...

(Chashma-i-Ma'rifat, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp.
292-293)

Marriage is a very sacred bond of love between husband and wife. It must be a source of peace and comfort for both the partners. In this regard, the Holy Qur'an teaches:

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا
 فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّيْهَا حَمَلَتْ حَمَلًا خَفِيًّا فَمَرَّتْ بِهِ ۖ فَلَمَّا أَثْقَلَتْ دَعَوَا اللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا
 لَئِنْ آتَيْتَنَا صَالِحًا لَنُكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾

“He it is Who has created you from a single soul and made therefrom its mate, that he might find comfort in her. And when he knows her, she bears a light burden and goes about with it. And when she grows heavy, they both pray to Allāh, their Lord, saying, if Thou give us a good child, we will surely be of the thankful.”

(The Holy Qur'an, 7:190)

In this verse of the Holy Qur'an, the purpose of marriage and union of husband and wife is nicely mentioned, and that is to seek peace and comfort in the other partner. If one of them is not able to provide comfort to the other, then he or she is not fulfilling the purpose of their marriage.

Again, at another place, Almighty Allāh says in the Holy Qur'an,

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ
 بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

“And one of His Signs is this, that He has created wives for you from among yourselves that you may find peace of mind in them, and He has put love and tenderness between you. In that, surely, are Signs for a people who reflect.”

(The Holy Qur'an, 30: 22)

The above verse of the Holy Qur'ān sheds flood of light on the responsibilities of a married couple. And that is to provide peace of mind to the spouse, and have love and tenderness for the marriage partner. If the married couple really have this understanding and recognize their responsibility as husband and wife, then the whole world will be turned into a paradise. But unfortunately due to lack of knowledge, and having no comprehension about the true purpose of marriage, a peaceful home turns into an abode of misery and suffering.

Selection of a Partner

In selecting a life partner, it is necessary to pray to God to seek guidance from Him and follow the footsteps and guidance of the Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). The Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) has given guidance about every stage of life.

Compatibility (Kufw)

In selecting a life partner compatibility is one of the most important factors. It is called Kufw in Ḥadīth.

Wankiḥul-akfā', that is, and marry your equal.

(Ibn Mājah, Abwābun-Nikāḥ, Bābul-Akfā')

In connection with compatibility, there are many things to be considered but religion and spiritual status should be preferred. Consideration is given to social and economic position and worldly means of livelihood. In the same way, family background, education, age and health status are also considered.

Piety Must be a Priority

In the selection of a partner for life, piety and righteousness must be given priority over all other qualities. As it is mentioned in the following Ḥadīth,

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: تُنْكَحُ الْمَرْأَةُ لِأَرْبَعٍ لِمَالِهَا وَ
لِحَسَبِهَا وَلِجَمَالِهَا وَلِدِينِهَا، فَاظْفُرْ بِذَاتِ الدِّينِ تَرَيْتِ
يَذَاكَ - (بخارى كتاب النكاح باب الاكفاء في الدين)

“A woman is married for four things: her wealth, her family status, her beauty and her religion. So, you should marry a religious woman, otherwise you will be a loser.”

(Bukhārī, Kitābun-Nikāḥ)

The Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) has further elucidated on this issue in the following Ḥadīth,

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: إِنَّمَا الدُّنْيَا مَتَاعٌ وَلَيْسَ مِنْ مَتَاعِ
الدُّنْيَا شَيْءٌ أَفْضَلُ مِنَ الْمَرْأَةِ الصَّالِحَةِ -
(ابن ماجه البواب النكاح باب افضل النساء)

“Surely, the whole world is a provision, and there is no greater provision of the world than a pious woman.”

(Ibn Mājah, Abwābun-Nikāḥ)

So, according to the Islāmic traditions and saying of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), piety and righteousness top the list of priorities in selecting a partner.

Truthfulness in Exchanging Information

As marriage is the most important and sacred agreement in human life, there is a great need to be fair, sincere, true and trustworthy. It is better to put trust in God, and to seek guidance from Him, than to trust in someone's own senses and abilities. In this regard the Holy Qur'an says,

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَقُولُوْا قَوْلًا سَدِيْدًا ﴿٧١﴾
يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ اَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوْبَكُمْۗ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهُۥ
فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿٧٢﴾

“O ye who believe! fear Allāh and say the straightforward word. He will set right your actions for you and forgive you your sins. And whoso obeys Allāh and His Messenger shall, surely, attain a supreme triumph.”

(The Holy Qur'an, 33:71-72)

These verses of the Holy Qur'an are recited on the occasion of the announcement of the marriage (Nikāḥ ceremony). In these verses, for success, believers are taught righteousness, truthfulness, obedience to God and his Messenger, the Holy Prophet of Islām (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). It is difficult to be successful with our own personal limited wisdom and knowledge unless there is grace and favor of Almighty Allāh. But, according to the above verse of the Holy Qur'an, if someone fully submits himself to the will of Allāh and fulfills the conditions mentioned above, he is guaranteed to achieve the utmost success.

Role of Parents in the Marriage

Parents are always of great help to their children right from their birth. They act in a beneficent manner towards their children throughout their lives. At the crucial time of

finding a life partner for the child, their help and guidance is direly needed. They have to play a vital role in arranging the marriage of their children on time and in a most appropriate manner.

According to the Islāmic Law, there is no room for dating or having premarital relations. It is the parents who take most of the responsibilities to look for a suitable match for their children.

Living in the western society, sometimes children are not aware of how critical is the participation and role of the parents in arranging a suitable partner for them. Children sometimes think that they are mature enough to search for suitable spouse for themselves, but they do not realize that their parents are their best well-wishers, and that they have a great personal experience of married life accompanied with their experience of married lives within their families and acquaintances. They would never think of ruining the lives of their children. So, the children must have trust in their parents in this regard. Critical examination shows that arranged marriages are the most successful marriages in the society.

The concept of arranged marriages is misunderstood in the western society. People think that whatever match is suggested by the parents for the children, especially for the daughters, the children must accept that match blindly. Unfortunately sometimes it happens so. But it is entirely wrong. Arranged marriages mean that the parents assist their children in finding a suitable match, but it is up to the children to accept the suggested match or not.

Seeing of Each Other For Marriage

Before the marriage, boys and girls are not allowed to have private meetings. They can meet only in the presence of their parents or elders. Such meetings are allowed only after other formalities have been accomplished.

The permission to see each other is granted by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) in the following Ḥadīth:

عَنِ الْمُعَيَّرَةِ بْنِ شُعْبَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّهُ
خَطَبَ امْرَأَةً، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: انْظُرْ
إِلَيْهَا فَإِنَّهُ أَحْرَى أَنْ يُؤَدِمَ بَيْنَكُمَا.

(ترمذی کتاب النکاح باب فی النظر الی المحظوبۃ)

It is narrated by Mughīrah Bin Shu‘bah (peace be upon him) that he sent a message for marriage to a lady, and Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said,

“See her, as seeing will increase the chance of affection and attachment between the two of you.”

(Tirmidhī, Kitābun-Nikāḥ)

So, the role of the parents is to help the children and to put before them convincing reasons to accept that match, not to force them to marry the proposed match. The children must know that the chance of success in arranged marriages is much higher than for the other marriages.

Essentials of Marriage (Nikāḥ)

Dowry (Mahr)

Dowry is a payable gift to the bride by the bridegroom, which is fixed before the performance of Nikāḥ ceremony. It is the property of the bride. She can use it as she wishes. It is to recognize the right of wife to own property.

It is preferable that the dowry is paid at the time of wedding, but it can also be paid at any suitable time after the wedding.

The dowry is always due upon the husband unless it is exempted by the wife. The Holy Qur'an says,

وَعَاتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدَقَتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً فَإِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ
هَيِّئًا مَّرِيَّةً ﴿٥﴾

“And give the women their dowries willingly. But if they, of their own pleasure, remit to you a part thereof, then enjoy it as something pleasant and wholesome.”

(The Holy Qur'an, 4:5)

Again, the Holy Qur'an lays great stress upon the importance of Mahr, and its obligation in the following verses,

وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَاجِلَ لَكُمْ مَّا وَرَاءَ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ
مُسْفِحِينَ فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً وَلَا
جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا تَرَضَيْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْفَرِيضَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا
حَكِيمًا ﴿٦﴾

“And forbidden to you are married women, except such as your right hands possess. This has Allāh enjoined on you. And allowed to you are those beyond that, that you seek them by means of your property, marrying them properly and not committing fornication. And for the benefit you receive from them, give them their dowries, as fixed, and there shall be no sin for you in anything you mutually agree upon, after the fixing of the dowry. Surely Allāh is All-Knowing, Wise.”

(The Holy Qur'ān 4:25)

So, whatever Mahr is fixed, it must be paid to the bride but if the bride does not take it or she returns it to the husband, he can enjoy that with pleasure. However, it must be understood that the man has no right or authority to force the wife to forfeit the dowry. He should not ask her to do so. Dowry is always at the disposal of the bride. She has every right to benefit from it.

Limit of Dowry (Mahr)

According to the Islāmic law, there is no limit for dowry. It should remain within reasonable limits. It should not be so insignificant that the people should take it as a joke, nor it should be so high that it becomes burdensome upon the man. In Aḥmadiyya Muslim community, it is usually fixed between six months to one year's worth of the income of the husband.

Guardian (Walī)

A guardian represents the bride throughout her wedding arrangements and proceedings. In Islāmic terminology that guardian is called "Walī."

For guardian of the bride first priority is always the father, and in his absence the authority goes to the brother, and so on.

Authority of the guardian means that he would be helping the girl throughout her marriage and after marriage, if help is needed. He should help the girl in getting a suitable person to marry, he should supervise the marriage arrangements and represent her in the marriage (Nikāḥ) ceremony.

Consent of Bride for Marriage

According to the Islāmic law, the guardian must have the consent of the bride, and with the approval of the bride

Nikāḥ should be performed. Walī has no authority to force the girl to marry anyone. According to the Islāmic law, there is no marriage without the approval of the bride,

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ جَارِيَةً بَكَرًا
 أَتَتْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَذَكَرَتْ أَنَّ أَبَاهَا
 زَوَّجَهَا وَهِيَ كَارِهَةٌ، فَخَيَّرَهَا النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
 (البداءة باب في البكر تزوجها ابوها ولا يشارها)

“It is narrated by Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be pleased with him) that a virgin girl came to the Holy prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and said that her father had married her with someone but she did not like him. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) gave her the option to maintain that marriage or reject it.”

(Abū Dāwūd, Bāb Fil-Bikr Yuzawwjuhā Abūhā)

Guardian of a Muslim Girl of a Non-Muslim Family

If the bride is the only Muslim in the family, her non-Muslim relative can perform this duty, such as, father, a brother or an uncle. But if her legitimate guardian does not agree with the bride, and she wants to marry a Muslim man, she is not bound to obey that guardian. She has every right to appoint any guardian from among the Muslims. But according to the Islāmic law, a bride must have a guardian.

The Need for a Guardian for a Woman

According to the Islāmic Law, there is no need for a guardian for the bridegroom, because the responsibilities, such as, taking care of wife, children, and the whole family, are directly related to the man, and these responsibilities cannot be given to someone else. This is why the man

himself must undertake all these obligations. This is why there is no need of any guardian for the man. But women are dependent upon the men. They need someone else to take this responsibility to help them in the circumstances when she needs any help, such as, when husband does not discharge his responsibilities effectively. This is why there must be a guardian for the bride for marriage.

If the bridegroom is not mature, that is, has not reached adulthood, then there must be someone to be his representative or guardian to give consent for taking the responsibilities related to the bridegroom.

Announcement of Marriage (Nikāḥ Ceremony)

Nikāḥ is the official announcement of the marriage, which is attended by the bridegroom or his representative and the guardian of the bride, along with the relatives and friends of both the parties.

The announcement of Nikāḥ in public is essential. A short sermon is delivered by the Imām (officiating clergy) or an officiating person related to the marriage, and at the end of the sermon, Imām gets the authorization from the bride's guardian and bridegroom to announce the marriage. After the announcement the couple becomes legitimately husband and wife.

The announcement of Nikāḥ in public is a must, and at least in the presence of two witnesses. Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said on the occasion of one Nikāḥ,

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: أَعْلِنُوا هَذَا الْبَيْتَ وَاصْرِبُوا عَلَيْهِ بِالْعُرْبِ أَلِ-

(ابن ماجه كتاب النكاح باب اعلان النكاح)

It is narrated by Ā'ishah, may Allāh be pleased with her, that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said,

“Make announcement of the Nikāḥ and publicize it by beating a drum.”

(Ibn Mājah, Kitābun-Nikāḥ)

No Nikāḥ Without a Guardian for the Bride

There is no Nikāḥ without the consent of the guardian of the bride. Following Ḥadīth categorically states,

أَيَّمَا امْرَأَةٍ نَكَحْتُ بِغَيْرِ إِذْنٍ وَرَبِّهَا فَنِكَاحُهَا بَاطِلٌ
فَنِكَاحُهَا بَاطِلٌ فَنِكَاحُهَا بَاطِلٌ

(ترمذی کتاب النکاح باب لا نکاح الا بولی)

“If any woman marries without the consent of her guardian, her marriage is void, her marriage is void, her marriage is void.”

(Tirmidhī, Kitābun-Nikāḥ)

Two Witnesses are a Must for Nikāḥ

Nikāḥ is the public announcement of a marriage in the presence of the witnesses. The secret marriages have no room in Islām. According to the Islāmic law, the Nikāḥ without the consent of guardian of the bride and without two honest witnesses is invalid,

لَا نِكَاحَ إِلَّا بِوَلِيِّ وَشَاهِدَيْنِ عَدْلٍ

(دارقطنی کتاب النکاح)

“There is no marriage without the consent of the guardian of the bride and two honest witnesses”

Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community USA Guidelines for Wedding Ceremonies

Wedding is a very personal, happy, emotional, memorable and once in a lifetime experience for families and friends. It consists of mostly private family functions as well as public functions. Various wedding ceremonies are a reflection of a community's morals, traditions and cultures.

A typical Aḥmadi Muslim wedding should be a reflection of our community's sincere adherence to true Islāmic principles and practice of modesty (moderation, simplicity and *parda*). As such, it is expected that the following guidelines will help in the planning and setup of proper Aḥmadiyya Muslim wedding ceremonies.

1. There should be a conspicuous separation of men and women when non-family participants are in attendance.
2. If women of a guest family prefer to stay with their male family members or companions during these ceremonies, they may do so in the men's section/side.
3. There should be no still/video photography in the women's section/side until the non-family guests have departed.
4. The bridegroom and his party should not go to the women's side until the non-family Ahmadi guests have departed.
5. During various wedding ceremonies, men should not go to women's side. The women, however, may entertain themselves through dignified, clean and wholesome activities, like singing poems, etc. Dancing

is not allowed. All such activities should be conducted with minimal formality.

6. Gifts at weddings are voluntary and optional. This practice should be kept as is. The practice of gift-registry is not allowed as it creates a sense of obligation to subscribe.

In the sad and unfortunate event that the above guidelines are not adhered to, the responsible Aḥmadi Muslims should respectfully excuse themselves from such ceremonies without unnecessarily embarrassing themselves or their hosts, and without making a scene.

**Islāmic Teachings
on
Post-Marital
Counseling
for
Ideal Family Life**

Responsibilities of Husband and Wife as Life Partners

Husband and wife as life partners have great responsibilities and obligations. Both of them must have a great concern and feelings of love and compassion for each other. Their sentiments and emotions must reflect love and sympathy for each other. The Holy Qur'ān has given an excellent example of husband and wife in the following verse,

هُنَّ لِيَاكُم مِّثْلُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لِيَهُنَّ

“They (wives) are a garment for you, and you (husbands) are a garment for them.”

(The Holy Qur'ān, 2:188)

Everyone knows that garments are used for three main purposes.

1. To cover and protect oneself from extreme climatic conditions, etc.
2. To look civilized, nice and elegant.
3. To cover weaknesses, faults and blemishes.

As every person likes to have a pretty garment, to beautify himself or herself, the marriage partners playing the role of good garments should bring out and enhance each other's beauty and should make every effort to make the spouse cheerful and happy.

As garments cover any fault or blemish of the body, in the same way, the marriage partner must cover the faults or weaknesses of the spouse. This is only possible if there is open-mindedness, forbearance and patience. These qualities must be exhibited by both sides. It is not possible that one partner shows patience and the other criticism, one overlooks and the other nags.

Playing the role of perfect garment covering the weaknesses or faults of the other, none of the two should disclose or advertise the shortcomings of the other.

Each partner should compensate for the weaknesses for the other and fill the voids of the other to make a beautiful whole.

To take care of the simile of garment's role in safeguarding one from the effects of bad weather, both should help each other in sailing through occasions of grief, pain and loss to either or both parties, and in consoling and supporting each other during physical and emotional adversities.

There are always problems in married life when there is criticism, and lack of trust and confidence in each other.

Supplications to God for a Happy Life

The Holy Qur'an teaches us to make every effort in creating a happy environment at home and offer prayers to Allāh to achieve this goal, because nothing good can be attained without the grace and help of God. Almighty Allāh has mentioned such fortunate people in the following verse of the Holy Qur'an.

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا

لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا ﴿٧٥﴾

“And those who say, ‘Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of our eyes and make us a model for the righteous.’”

(The Holy Qur'an, 25: 75)

Those who are sincere in their prayers, and support their prayers with exemplary Islāmic behavior and attitude, and struggle hard in this cause, Almighty Allāh answers the prayers of the supplicants and grants them happiness and

delight from their spouses and children. The key to success is to pray to God and seek His help to have a happy atmosphere at home.

Men as Guardians of Women

According to the Islāmic law, husband has the responsibility to provide every necessity of life for the wife and children adequately according to his means. It is upon man to undertake and do whatever is in his reach to manage the affairs of the whole family and give every possible protection to the family members. Because man sets the things right, or makes things straight and manages the affairs well, this is why man is called in the Holy Qur'an as "Qawwām," the guardian. This is what the Holy Qur'an teaches,

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ
وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ ۚ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَنَاطِتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا
حَفِظَ اللَّهُ ۗ وَاللَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَأَهْجُرُوهُنَّ ۚ فِي
الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاصِرِينَ ۚ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ۗ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٣٥﴾

“Men are guardians over women because Allāh has made some of them excel others, and because they (men) spend on them of their wealth. So virtuous women are those who are obedient, and guard the secrets of their husbands with Allāh’s protection. And as for those, on whose part you fear disobedience, admonish them and leave them alone in their beds and chastise them. Then if they obey you, seek not a way against them. Surely, Allāh is High, Great.”

(The Holy Qur'an, 4: 35)

Men, being guardian over the women, must try their best to treat them nicely, and fulfill their need in the light of the Holy Qur'an and practice of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). The Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) says,

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ
اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَعْمَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِيمَانًا أَحْسَنَهُمْ
خُلُقًا وَخَيْرًاكُمْ خَيْرًاكُمْ لِنِسَائِكُمْ-

(ترمذى كتاب النكاح باب حق المرأة على زوجها)

It is narrated by Abū Hurairah (may Allāh be pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said,

“Among the believers, most perfect in faith are those who have the best disposition, and the best among you are those who are kindest to their wives.”

(Tirmidhī, Kitābun-Nikāḥ)

The Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) always took great care of his wives. He always advised his followers to take great care of their wives. He was an exemplary person in this respect. An incident is narrated in Hadīth which throws a flood of light on this aspect of the life of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

عَنْ أَنَسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ
صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي بَعْضِ أَسْفَارِهِ، وَعَلَامُهُ أَسْوَدُ يُقَالُ
لَهُ أَنْجَشْتُهُ يَحْدُو، فَقَالَ لَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ
سَلَّمَ يَا أَنْجَشْتُهُ! رُوِيَ ذَلِكَ سَوَقًا بِالْقَوَارِيرِ-

(مسلم كتاب الفضائل باب في رحمة النبي للنساء)

“It is narrated by Anas (may Allāh be pleased with him) that the messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was on a journey and a young black boy whose name was Anjashah was singing to the camels melodiously and consequently driving them fast. When the Holy Prophet noticed this, he said to Anjashah, Slow down, there is fragile load (women) on the camels.”

(Muslim, Kitābul-Faḍā'il)

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah, (peace be on him), speaking about the guardianship of men, states,

The husband is the guardian and benefactor of the wife and is responsible for her comfort. He is her master and benefactor. He has been bestowed a stronger faculty than the wife. Since the beginning of the world, man has ruled over woman, and the standard of faculties granted to women is not as high as that granted to men. The Holy Qur'ān prescribes that if a husband, out of his beneficence, bestows upon the wife a mountain of gold, he cannot take it back from her in case of divorce. This shows how much a woman is honored in Islām.

(Chashma-i-Ma'rifat, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 276-291)

Women are advised to be obedient to the husbands. Since man struggles hard day and night to provide every essential need of the family, the wife must be thankful to the husband for his dutifulness. The Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) says,

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: لَوْ كُنْتُ امْرَأًا أَحَدًا أَنْ يَسْجُدَ لِأَحَدٍ
لَأَمَرْتُ الْمَرْأَةَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِزَوْجِهَا -

(ترمذى كتاب النكاح باب حق الزوج على المرأة)

It is narrated by Abū Hurairah (may Allāh be pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said,

“If I were to order someone to prostrate before any other human being, I would have ordered women to prostrate before their husbands.”

(Tirmidhī, Kitābun-Nikāḥ)

Again, in another Ḥadīth, it is mentioned by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him),

عَنْ أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: أَيُّمَا امْرَأَةٍ مَاتَتْ وَرَزَوُجُهَا رَاضٍ
عَنْهَا دَخَلَتْ الْجَنَّةَ -

(ابن ماجه كتاب النكاح باب حق الزوج على المرأة)

It is narrated by Ummi Salamah (May Allāh be please with her) that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said,

“Any woman who dies while her husband is pleased with her, will enter Paradise.”

(Ibn Mājah, Kitābun-Nikāḥ)

Men are overall guardians of the family affairs, and women are guardians of the house management and training of the children. The wives are supposed to give every possible protection and support to the men. In this regard, women should follow the practice of the wives of the Holy Prophet

Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). *Ḥaḍrat* Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, says,

Noble example of the Wives of the Holy Prophet

No one can claim a higher status than the wives of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, yet they performed all domestic chores and swept their chambers. With all that, they were diligent in worship. One of them had suspended a rope from the ceiling to hold on to stay awake during Prayer. Part of the worship for a woman is to discharge her duty to her husband and part of it is to express her gratitude to God.

(Malfūzāt, Vol. VI, p. 53)

Ladies First

Once Ḥaḍrat Ṣafīyyah, wife of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him), was traveling with the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). She used to enwrap herself in a sheet and sit behind him on the camel's back. Whenever she had to mount a camel, the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) offered his knee for her to step on. Now, the camel on which the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) and Ḥaḍrat Ṣafīyyah were riding, slipped and they both fell down. A companion, Abū Ṭalḥah, ran towards the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) for assistance. But the Prophet of God directed him to go to the aid of the lady first. (Bukhārī)

Exemplary Family

Ḥaḍrat Sayyidah Nusrat Jahañ Begum (Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān), wife of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) gave the following advice to her daughter, Ḥaḍrat Sayyidah Nawāb Mubārakah Begum, at the time of her wedding.

- Never do a thing keeping it secret from your husband. Never do anything that you feel the need to hide from your husband! Even if the husband may not be observing, but God does see, and the wife loses her respect when the matter is disclosed at the end.
- If a thing is done against his wishes, never try to hide it. Inform him clearly, as that is the way to retain respect. To hide it leads to disgrace and disrespect.
- Do not argue with him when he is angry! If he is angry with you or a child or a servant, and you know that he is at fault, even then do not respond to him. When he calms down, then gently let him know the truth and make him realize his error. The woman who argues with her husband when he is angry loses her respect. It will be a great disgrace if he uses harsh words to her in his anger.
- Consider his dear ones and their children as your own dear ones. Never think of harming anyone even if he is doing wrong to you. You should have good will in your heart for all, and do not take any action in revenge against anyone. Then you will always behold God doing good to you.

(Sīrat Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān, Part II, pp. 167-168,
compiled by Maḥmūd ‘Alī ‘Irfānī)

The husband should also observe these instructions for promotion of peace and harmony at home.

**Simple Farewell Ceremony
for the Daughter of
Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad,
the Promised Messiah,
peace be on him**

The Nikāḥ of *Ḥaḍrat* Mubārakah Begum, daughter of *Ḥaḍrat* Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah, was performed with *Ḥaḍrat Nawāb* Muḥammad ‘Alī Khān on February 17, 1908 by *Ḥaḍrat Maulawī* Nūrud-Dīn. She was taken to her husband’s home, that was to be her home from then on, on Sunday, March 14, 1909 by her mother, *Ḥaḍrat* Sayyidah Nusrat Jahān Begum (*Ḥaḍrat* Ammāñ Jān), wife of *Ḥaḍrat* Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah (peace be on him). The following description of the sending away ceremony (Rukḥṣatī) from the diary of *Ḥaḍrat Nawāb* Muḥammad ‘Alī Khān shows simplicity of the ceremony.

"Today, Mubārakah Begum, the eldest daughter of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him), whose Nikāḥ was performed with me on February 17, 1908, formally came to my home after her farewell (Rukḥṣatī, that is, sending from parents home to the husband’s home)... The Rukḥṣatī took place at 3 pm. I found in her both the beauty of countenance and that of character. She is also extremely knowledgeable. Thanks to Allāh for this bounty. It is a grace in abundance upon an insignificant person like me that He has graced me with the family of the Prophet. It is a great bounty of God that He bestows on whomsoever He pleases, and Allāh is the Master of Great Bounty. Rukḥṣatī was performed in great simplicity. *Ḥaḍrat* Ammāñ Jān sent me a list of articles, before Mubārakah Begum’s arrival (in my home), which she was bring along with her. At 2 pm, *Ḥaḍrat* Ammāñ Jān herself brought Mubārakah Begum to my home, and she came through the stairway passage that connects my home to the home

of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him. I was in the mosque. She had to wait for a very long time. When I came home after offering my prayers, she called me, and pointing to Mubārah Begum, addressed me in a very emotional tone, “I am giving my orphan daughter in your custody.” With a heavy heart, she departed quickly saying Assalāmu ‘Alaikum!

(Aḥmad, Volume 2, pp. 252-253)

Obligations of a Married Couple to Parents and Children

In the Holy Qur’ān, all human beings are mentioned as members of a single large family unit. Members of this large family have some obligations and rights towards each other as well as to the unit itself. The smallest family unit starts with husband and wife, and with the birth of a child they become father and mother. In due course, this small unit expands to many other relations and keeps enlarging and energizing through their mutual cooperation and support. With the expansion of the family, the husband and wife assume different roles. Their biggest and most important role is their parenthood as they have to prepare future generations. Peace and happiness reigns supreme in the family unit as long as parents remain their guide and pivotal center. Therefore, it is of paramount importance for the husband and wife to know and comprehend the role, responsibilities and rights of parents. In connection with Islāmic family unit, parents and children, *Ḥadrat* Mirza Tahir Aḥmad, Khalīfatul-Masīḥ IV (Allāh’s mercy be on him), has stated in his writings, briefly but beautifully, with which qualities the youth of our community should harness themselves. He states,

“To build a family life around the pivotal figure of a mother requires the strengthening of other blood relationships and the restoration of a genuine affinity

with kith and kin. Even though each unit may live separately, this larger family concept is supported and promoted by Islām for many reasons. Some of which are as follows:

1. It prevents imbalances from occurring in society.

2. If strong love and affection were promoted in the family between brothers and sisters, father and daughters, mother and sons, etc., it would naturally lead to the consolidation and protection of a healthy family unit. This natural bonding is further strengthened by a system of relationships surrounding it in the form of genuine affinity and closeness between aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, grandchildren and grandparents. New avenues of seeking warmth and healthy pleasure would open up for this larger family system.

3. The institution of family in such cases is less likely to be fragmented. To share a common roof in the name of a family would no longer be as meaningless as we generally find today. The members of the family would continue to gravitate towards the central beacon of family elders. Most family activities would rotate around this axis. There would be no lone individuals forgotten, dejected and relegated to the attic or basement of social order, or, knocked out of families as useless articles...

This is exactly the Islāmic concept of homes and families which is regarded as the most important central unit in society. It is mainly because of this difference in attitudes that today we find in the modern societies of the world a much greater incidence of abandoned, old, or disabled parents considered as burdens on families.”

(Islām’s Response to Contemporary Issues pages
109-110)

Allāh, The Wise Says:

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِنَّمَا بَيَّلَعْنَّ عِنْدَكَ
الْكَبِيرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا
قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا
وَآخِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا
رَبَّيْتَانِي صَغِيرًا

Thy Lord has commanded, “Worship none but Him, and show kindness to parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age with thee, never say to them any word expressive of disgust nor reproach them, but address them with kindly speech.

And lower to them the wing of humility out of tenderness. And say, ‘My Lord, have mercy on them even as they nourished me in my childhood.’ ”

(The Holy Qur’ān, 17:24-25)

The most important precept laid down in the above verse of the Holy Qur’ān is the moral conduct and obligations of children towards their parents. It is our parents who are the first ones to direct our attention to God. It is in the parental mirror that the divine attributes of Mercy, Compassion, Love and Providence are reflected and on a micro human scale are given practical expression. They point to the Being from whom all things take their origin. The long chain of man’s parentage shows that his existence is not the result of mere accident or chance. It turns our thoughts to the Great Originator and Creator. It also shows that a great and noble purpose underlies the creation of man. Man is told in the case of parents that he is in a position to return their love and kindness so he is commanded to be generous to them.

When the parents of a person are dependent on him and live with him, he is enjoined by the Holy Qur’ān to refrain from using any harsh words towards them. The words have been added because when a man’s parents are living with

him, there is always the likelihood of differences to arising and consequently for the embitterment of mutual relations. Moreover, when a person spends his money for another, he is inclined to think that he has a right to exercise his authority over him. The Holy Qur'ān therefore has emphasized that extra care should be taken in our relations towards our parents. In Arabic the word “*Uff*” is used to express one’s disgust by word of mouth. So, in this verse, the Holy Qur'ān means to say that we should never speak harshly to our parents.

The verse quoted above teaches the Faithful to be always kind to their parents. It purports to say that ordinarily a person can never fully repay the love and affection his parents gave him when he was yet a child. He should make up the deficiency by praying for them. The words of the prayer imply that in old age parents need to be attended as carefully and affectionately as little children are looked after in their childhood. Similarly, the husband and wife should respect and care for the parents of each other, as they are supposed to respect their own parents. None of them should neglect, intentionally or unintentionally, the parents of the other. It is a very important moral obligation for both, and the negligence of which results in misery for the whole family.

Commenting on Chapter 17, Verses 24:25, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ IV (may Allāh’s mercy be on him) says:

“These verses are the most significant on this subject. After the Unity of God, human beings should, through their attitude of love, affection and kindness, give priority over all other things to their parents who have reached an old and difficult age.

Further, the verses speak of situations when the behavior of one or both of the parents becomes extremely trying and sometimes offensive. In response to that, not even a mild expression of disgust

or disapproval should pass one's lips. On the contrary, they should be treated with profound respect.

The emphasis on the most excellent relationship between one generation and another guarantees that no generation gaps appear. Such gaps always interrupt the transmission of traditional moral values.

Islāmic social philosophy, therefore, teaches that no generation should permit a gap to appear between it and the outgoing generation and between it and the future generation. Generation gaps are totally alien to Islām.

As stated earlier, the family concept in Islām is not limited to members of a single home. The following verse instructs Muslims to spend not only on their parents but also on their kith and kin who are mentioned next to parents in order of preference so that their sense of dignity is not injured and mutual love is promoted.

Worship Allāh and associate naught with Him, and show kindness to parents, and to kindred, orphans, the needy and to the neighbor who is a kinsman and the neighbor who is a stranger, and the companion by your side and the wayfarer and those who are under your authority. Surely, Allāh loves not the arrogant and the boastful.

(Ch. 4: Al-Nisā : 37)

The Holy Qur'ān declares that you must be mindful of kindness to your parents.

If contemporary society learns the lesson from these injunctions, many problems which it faces today and which represent a blemish on an advanced society, would cease to exist. No homes for the aged would be needed, except for some aged people who, unfortunately, have no close relative to look after them. But in an Islāmic society, the love between

parents and children is so repeatedly emphasized that it is impossible for a child to abandon his parents when they grow old for the sake of his or her own pleasure.

The Future Generation

As for the future generation, the Holy Qur'ān educates society in a unique way. It teaches that to achieve the best of relationships between you and your children, it is highly essential that the relationships between you and your wife should also be excellent.

In this regard, the verse cited earlier (Ch. 4: Al-Nisa: 35), which refers to guardians (QAWWĀMŪN), lays a very heavy responsibility on the shoulders of a husband. If his conduct is not conducive to the creation of an ideal atmosphere for a healthy family life, he would have failed in his responsibility to act as a guardian (QAWWĀM). It should be remembered that the best example of QAWWĀM was the Holy Founder of Islām (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) himself. He was neither harsh nor dictatorial nor in any way offensive or over-assertive in relation to his family. To keep them on the right path was a grave responsibility, but the way that he discharged this responsibility serves as an excellent living example for all times to come for all those who want to investigate and comprehend the real meaning of the epithet QAWWĀM.

In a famous Tradition, Abū Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) said:

The most perfect of believers in the matter of faith is he whose behavior is best; and the best of you are those who behave best towards their wives.

(Tirmidhī)

If the parents really want their children to grow up into members of a righteous society, they should remember that mutual relationships between husbands and wives are going to play an important role in the making or breaking of the character of their children.

The Holy Qur'ān teaches

Those who hear not false witness, and when they pass by anything vain, they pass by with dignity; and those who, when they are reminded of the Signs of their Lord, fall not down thereat deaf and blind; and those who say, 'Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of our eyes, and make us a model for the righteous.

(Ch. 25: Al-Furqān :73-75)

This prayer possesses a unique charm and is filled with profound wisdom. Both partners in marriage are taught to pray for each other and their children that God may always provide them deep satisfaction and happiness from one another as well as from the children and to make their children the forerunners and leaders of a God-fearing, righteous generation.

It only takes one to apply this teaching to oneself to fully realize the significance of this verse. When you desire something vaguely, it may not influence your conduct significantly, but when you pray for it earnestly then your conduct is bound to be influenced by that prayer. To illustrate this further, there are many amongst us who desire to be truthful but seldom is this desire translated into practice. Those who earnestly pray to God that He should make them become truthful, are influenced far more in their conduct by their prayer than those merely wishing for something vague. A genuine effort is made in molding

one's behavior for the better. A person would be acting very oddly indeed after such a prayer if he treats his wife and children in a manner inconsistent with the prayer.

Turning exclusively to the younger generation and their rights and obligations, the Holy Qur'an admonishes:

O ye who believe! Fear Allāh and let every soul look to what it sends forth for the morrow. And fear Allāh; verily Allāh is Well-Aware of what you do.

(Ch. 59: Al-Ḥashr : 19)

The Qur'an warns the parents that if they fail to discharge the responsibility due to their offspring and leave behind a generation, which is not beyond censure in its conduct then the parents will be held answerable before God.

Again, the parents are warned not to murder their own children in the sense that the parents become instrumental and responsible in some way in destroying their character.

(Ch. 6: Al-An'ām: 152)

Not only one's own children but the younger generation as a whole must be treated with love, kindness and respect is the strong word of advice given by the Holy Prophet of Islām, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him:

‘Always be kind to your children’.

(Ibn Majah: Bk: Adab; Ch: Birrul-Wālid)”

(Islām's Response to Contemporary Issues,
London, 1992, pp. 91-95)

Islām attaches great importance to the upbringing of children and advises the newlywed couple to pray to God for the protection of the would-be born child from Satan and its

influence. When a child is born in due course, adhān is called in its right ear and Iqāmat in the left ear immediately after the birth or soon after, so that the name of God is introduced to the new brain and education starts under the guidance of God, the Creator. A suitable name is given to the baby, and on the seventh day of the birth, ‘Aqīqah is performed. On the day of the ‘Aqīqah, the head of the baby is shaved, silver or gold equal to the weight of the hair is given to the poor as charity. An animal for a girl and two animals in case of a boy are slaughtered as sacrifice for the baby and supplications (Du‘ā) are offered for the long life and protection of the child. At the age of six, children are encouraged to offer formal prayers, and thus by the age of ten most of them become punctual and well versed in it. If some unfortunate ones do not adapt to offering prayers regularly then remedial measures may be taken to make them realize the importance and obligation of offering prayers diligently. It is one of the obligations of the parents to educate and train children in the right manner. The Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) has said,

“A child is born with pure nature. Its parents make it a Jew, a Christian, or an atheist through imparting a particular teaching and providing a particular model through their own conduct.”

(Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Janā’iz, Kitāb al-Tafsīr, Kitāb al-Qadr. Muslim, Kitāb al-Qadr)

The Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) again says,

“A person who has been blessed with one or two daughters, and he educates and brings them up in the right manner, will enter Paradise.”

(Bukhārī. Muslim)

Children should be provided religious and secular education to the best standard according to one’s means. However, moral training should be given priority so that they

have an insight for developing a relationship with God, and seek guidance from Him throughout the rest of their lives. It will ensure their success in all fields of life in due course.

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, says,

“People have great desire to have children and children are bestowed on them. But it is never observed that they strive for making them good, pious, and obedient servants of God. Neither do they ever pray for them, nor keep in view different grades of upbringing [that is, they do not act according to the requirements of time].

My personal condition [in this regard] is that there is no Ṣalāt of mine in which I do not implore for my friends/followers, children, and wife. There are several parents who put their children in bad habits. When they start acquiring evil in the beginning, they do not warn them. The result is that, day by day, they become daring and bold in the evil ways. A story is told that a boy was being hanged for his criminal deeds. At this last moment, he expressed his desire to see his mother. When his mother came, he went close to her and said, “I want to suck your tongue.” When she stretched her tongue out, he bit it. When questioned, he replied, “My this very mother is the cause of my plight today. If she had checked me on time I would have not come to this end.”

Suffice it to say that people do desire to have children but not that they be servants of faith rather that they be their heir in the world. When children are born, no attention is paid to their upbringing, neither their perceptions are straightened out nor their morals are corrected.”

(Malfūzāt, Vol. 2, Pages 372-373)

It is very clear from the above writings of *Ḥadrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad*, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, that parents should pay full attention to the training of children from the very early life.

The education and training of children should continue till they are fully mature and are capable of running a new home independently. At that time too, their parents should help them to have a suitable companion for life as wife or husband. The children trained by parents according to the Islāmic teachings become in turn an embodiment of Islāmic teachings ensuring proper training of future generations. The Holy Qur'ān has stated the whole scenario of ideal parent children relationship in the following verse, which should be emulated:

And We have enjoined on man to be good to his parents. His mother bears him with pain and brings him forth with pain. And the bearing of him and his weaning takes thirty months, till, when he attains his full maturity and reaches the age of forty years, he says, 'My Lord, grant me the power that I may be grateful for Thy favor which Thou hast bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and that I may please Thee. And make my seed righteous for me. I do turn to Thee; and, truly, I am of those who submit to Thee.'

(The Holy Qur'ān, 46:16)

Islāmic Veil

Promiscuity resulting from mixing of sexes is one of the greatest problems of today, especially in the western world, which is leading the society to evils and immoralities. It is the greatest issue of this age. Therefore, Muslims must try their best to be safe from the dangers of these ills. Chastity must be guarded. For this purpose, it is necessary for the Muslim women to observe the Islāmic system of veil. As the Holy Qur'ān says;

وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ
وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ
أَبْتَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي
أَخَوَاتِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَائِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوْ التَّبَاعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولَى
الْإِرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ أَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَىٰ عَوْرَاتِ النِّسَاءِ

“And say to the believing women that they restrain their eyes and guard their private parts and that they disclose not their natural and artificial beauty except that which is apparent thereof, and that they draw their head-coverings over their bosoms, and that they display not their beauty save to their husbands, or to their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers or the sons of their brothers, or the sons of their sisters, or their women or what their right hands possess, or such of male attendants as have no sexual appetite, or young children who have no knowledge of the hidden parts of women.”

(The Holy Qur’ān, 24: 32)

Hadrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, says in connection with Islāmic system of veil,

Wisdom Behind the Injunctions of Veil

A just-minded person will appreciate that free mixing of men and women and their going about together would expose them to the risk of succumbing to the upsurge of their emotions. It has been observed that some people see no harm in a man and woman

being alone together behind closed doors. This is considered civilized behavior. To avoid such situations from arising, the Law-Giver of Islām has forbidden all such behavior that might prove to be a temptation for anyone.

It has been said that where a man and a woman, who are not related to each other within the prohibited degrees, meet privately, Satan is the third with them. Observe the harm that is being done in Europe in consequence of this kind of freedom. In certain parts of Europe, such freedom has led to a life of unrestricted indulgence. If security is desired against indulgence, there must be a system of safeguarding chastity; it is not enough to trust the natural modesty of men and women. How blessed is the Islāmic teaching, which, by keeping men and women apart, safeguards social life against unlawful indulgences and disruption of family life which has resulted in many civil wars and suicides in Europe. Some women of good families adopt the ways of prostitutes in consequence of the prevalent freedom.

(Malfūzāt, Vol. V, p. 33)

At another place he says,

Requirements of the Islāmic System of Veil

The Islāmic system of the veil does not require that women should be shut up as in a prison. The Holy Qur'ān directs that women should not display their beauty and should not gaze at strange men. Those women who may be under the necessity of going out of their homes may do so, but they must restrain their looks.

(Malfūzāt, Vol. 1, p. 430)

Every intelligent person will appreciate that a large portion of humanity is governed by its natural desires and pays no heed to Divine chastisement. Many men look at young and beautiful women with desire and the same is the case with many women. In such circumstances unrestricted freedom would bring about the same kind of situation that prevails in some parts of Europe. When hearts are truly purified and all desires get rid altogether of the satanic spirit, when eyes are governed by the fear of God and the hearts are controlled by the Majesty of God, and undergo a holy change and put on the garment of the fear of God, freedom may do no harm inasmuch as at such a time men would become eunuchs for the sake of God and their eyes would lose the faculty of looking lustfully at strange women, and their hearts would not be capable of entertaining any evil thought. But, dear ones, may God direct your hearts, such is not the case today. If you usher in freedom today, you would sow a poisonous seed in your culture. This is an age that demands a system of restraint. Vice, debauchery and drunkenness prevail over the earth. Hearts are filled with atheism and are empty of respect for divine commandments. The tongues give utterance to high thoughts and the public addresses are full of logic and philosophy but the hearts are empty of spirituality. At such a time it would be a folly to expose your helpless sheep to the mercies of the wolf.

(Lecture Lahore, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, pp. 27-28)

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, further says,

Extreme Attitudes about Veil

People have adopted extreme attitudes in respect of the veil. Europe has gone to one extreme in

abolishing it altogether, and some of those among us, who profess to follow nature, wish to do the same here, while it is patent that the unrestricted freedom current in Europe has flung open the gates of vice. On the other hand, some Muslims go to the other extreme and do not let their women step out of their home at all, whereas it often becomes necessary for them to travel or to go about on account of some other need. We consider that both these types are in error.

(Malfūzāt, Vol. VI, p. 322).

We hope and pray that Almighty Allāh, may enable every one to follow His guidance and live a happy and prosperous ideal family life.

Glossary

Adhān اَذَان : Verbal call, made loudly, to announce the formal Islamic worship five times a day.

Aḥmadī اَحْمَدِي : A follower of *Ḥaḍrat* Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him.

Aḥmadiyya اَحْمَدِيَّة : see Aḥmadiyyat

Aḥmadiyyah اَحْمَدِيَّة : see Aḥmadiyyat

Aḥmadiyyat اَحْمَدِيَّة : Muslim sect believing *Ḥaḍrat* Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad to be the Promised Messiah and the Mahdī awaited by Muslims, peace be on him.

Allāh الله : The one and only God.

Amīr, Ameer اَمِير : commander, head. National head of the Aḥmadiyyah Community.

‘Aqīqah عَقِيْقَه : Custom of shaving the head of a newborn on the seventh day. Silver or gold equal to the weight of the hair is given to the poor as charity. An animal for a girl and two animals in case of a boy are slaughtered as sacrifice. Prayer (Du‘ā) is offered for the long life and protection of the child.

du‘ā دُعَا : prayer, supplication

Ḥadīth حَدِيْث : Saying of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, peace and blessings of Allāh be on him.

Ḥaḍrat حَضْرَت [Hadhrat, Hazrat]: His Holiness

imām اِمَام : leader, chief, guide

In Shā’ Allāh, in shā’allāh اِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ : God willing.

Iqāmah اِقَامَه : Call to line up for congregational formal prayers.

Iqāmat: see Iqāmah

Islām اِسْلَام : submission. Name of the religion introduced through the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, peace and blessings of Allāh be on him.

Jamā‘at Aḥmadiyyah: The Aḥmadiyyah Community.

Khalīfatul-Masīḥ, Khalīfat-ul-Masīḥ, Khalīfah al-Masīḥ

خَلِيفَةُ الْمَسِيحِ : Successor to *Ḥaḍrat* Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him.

Kufw كُفُو parity, compatibility

Mahr مَهْر dowry

Maulānā مَوْلَانَا : our master, our lord, our chief. Title of respect for Muslim religious scholars. Revered person.

Muḥammad مُحَمَّد : Praiseworthy, commendable, laudable.

Name of the Holy Prophet of Islām (571-632), peace and blessings of Allāh be on him.

Muḥṣan (masculine) مُحْصَن : Married. Guarded and protected as if in a well-secured and protected castle.

Muḥṣanah (feminine) مُحْصَنَةٌ : Married. Chaste. Virtuous.

Modest. Decent. Guarded and protected as if they in a well-secured and protected castle.

Nikāḥ نِكَاح : marriage, marriage announcement

parda پَرْدَه : Hījāb, niqāb, modesty, purdah, veil, curtain, screen or concealing garment used by some Hindus and Muslims to hide women from the gaze of men or strangers.

Qur'ān, Quran, Koran قُرْآن : recitation, a book most read. The Holy Book revealed to Muḥammad, peace and blessings of Allāh be on him, in Arabic over 23 years.

Rukḥṣatī رُكْحَصْتِي : Sending bride to husband's house.

Ṣalāt صَلَاة : Formal Prayer offered according to a prescribed procedure.

Sunnah سُنَّة : practice of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, peace and blessings of Allāh be on him.

tarbiyat, tarbiyah تَرْبِيَّة : training

tilth: land that is under cultivation

walī وَلِي : guardian, caretaker, custodian, friend, companion, saint, master, chief, owner, ruler, leader, superior

was-salām (pronounced as was-sa-lām) وَالسَّلَام : and, (greeting of) peace.

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The Holy Prophet

Muḥammad

Peace and blessings of Allāh be on him

The greatest prophet ever to live, Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him), was born in 571 at Mecca in Arabia. The city of Mecca had grown around an ancient holy site rebuilt by Abraham and Ishmael (peace be on them), which came to be known as the Ka'bah (literally meaning, 'a cube'). His father had died a few months before his birth. His mother died when he was six years old. He was cared for by his grandfather 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib until he died two years later, his uncle, Abū Ṭālib, then became his guardian.

In his teens he joined an organization whose members pledged to help the needy and the oppressed. Due to his honesty and consistent support of the oppressed, he came to be known as the Truthful and the Trustworthy.

At age 25, he accepted a marriage proposal from a pious trader Khadijah (may God be pleased with her), 15 years senior to him.

He preferred to spend his time in worship and meditation, retreating often to the cave of Ḥirā for days at a time to pray in solitude. He received his first revelation in the cave of Ḥirā when he was 40. His wife Khadijah, his close friend Abū Bakr, his cousin Alī (may God be pleased with them), were some of the first people to accept his call to the religion of Islam that he was commanded to spread.

His fervor to spread the anti-idolatry message of equity and goodwill met with extreme opposition and severe persecution of the faithful, his followers. To escape the persecution in Mecca, a group of Muslims immigrated to the Christian state of Abyssinia in 615. Meccans declared a boycott of the Muslims and segregated them outside Mecca for three years. The year 619 was one of great sorrow for Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). His uncle and protector, Abū Ṭālib, and his wife, Khadijah (may God be pleased with her), who stood by him during the early years of his call, both died.

While the resistance to Islām in and around Mecca was relentless, he found acceptance to his message 250 miles to the north in Yathrib with a deputation from the town accepting Islam in 620. He migrated to Yathrib in 622 escaping Meccan persecution. Yathrib, today's Medina in Arabia, came to be known as Madīnatun-Nabī, city of the prophet. Meccans followed the Muslims with swords to their new haven, were defeated in the Battle of Badr, but inflicted damage to the Muslims in the Battle of Uḥud. Muslims continued spreading the message of peace in spite of persecution and attacks culminating in the bloodless fall of Mecca to them in 630. Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) entered the city at the head of "10,000 saints" fulfilling the Biblical prophecy about the advent of a prophet among the Ishmaelite (Deuteronomy 33:2, 18:15).

After Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) passed away in 632, his long time companion, Abū Bakr, was elected to lead the Muslims until 634, followed by 'Umar until 644, Uthmān until 656, and his cousin Alī until 661 (may Allāh be pleased with them). Barely half a century had elapsed since the first revelation to Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) and Islam had already made in-roads to the banks of the Indus River to the east and gained strength across North Africa to the west. (Reference: Words of Wisdom, Zīrvī, Mīān and Aḥmad, 2000)

The Promised Messiah and Mahdi
Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad

Peace be on him

Born in 1835 in Qadian, India, Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad (peace be on him) remained devoted to the study of the Holy Qurʾān, and to a life of prayer and solitude. Finding Islam the target of foul attacks from all directions, the fortunes of Muslims at a low ebb, faith yielding to doubt and religion only superficially followed, he undertook a vindication and exposition of Islam, first in his epochmaking *Barāhīn-i-Aḥmadiyya*, issued in four volumes. The book gave Muslims pride in their religion, confidence in the integrity of their faith and cemented the robustness of its tenets. The book came to be known as the best written in defense of Islām in centuries, with high praise in recognition for its author as the defender of Islām.

Islām, he said, was a living faith through which man could establish contact with his Maker and enter into communion with Him. The teachings contained in the Holy Qurʾān and the Law promulgated by Islām were designed to raise man to moral, intellectual and spiritual perfection. He advocated undertaking defensive wars with the power of the written word through Jihād of the pen, rather than through use of the sword, and clarified that Islām forbids murder of innocent people in the name of Jihād.

Most of the friends of Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad (peace be on him) turned into his enemies when he announced that Jesus (peace be on him) of old had actually died, though not on the cross, and God had appointed him the Messiah mentioned in the prophecies of the Bible and the Holy Qurʾān. In 1889, he began to enroll for his Movement now established in centers and mosques for the preaching of Islām all over the world. Though he and his community faced extreme persecution from the very first day, he announced that God had told him that He would cause his message to reach the corners of the earth.

He wrote more than eighty books, mostly in Urdu and some in Arabic and Persian. He showed his truthfulness not only through the prolific words but also through prophecies revealed to him by God. Timely fulfillment of the prophecies and exposition of his claims led to miraculous growth of his community during his lifetime. Not only some of the great scholars of the time but a large number of seekers after truth from among the masses saw his truth and joined his community.

After the death of Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad (peace be on him) in 1908, his first Khalīfah (successor) was *Maulawī Nūruddīn* (may God be pleased with him) until 1914, followed by Mirzā Bashīruddīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad (may Allāh be pleased with him), the promised son of Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad (peace be on him) as the second Khalīfah until 1965. Mirzā Naṣīr Aḥmad (Allāh's mercy be on him), a grandson of Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad (peace be on him) was the third Khalīfah until 1982. Mirzā Ṭāhir Aḥmad (Allāh's mercy be on him), a grandson of Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad (peace be on him) was the fourth Khalīfah until 2003. Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad (may Allāh be his support), a great-grandson of Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad (peace be on him) is the fifth Khalīfah since 2003. Thus the Khalīfat of the promised Messiah (peace be on him) remains intact and ongoing.

Today, while celebrating the hundred years of Khilāfat, with missions in almost every country of the world, the Aḥmadiyya community is privileged to broadcast 24-hour satellite programs, televised on Muslim Television Aḥmadiyya (MTA), in defense of Islām and to promote Islāmic values the world over. (Reference: Introductory note in *Three Questions by a Christian Answered*, 1972)

Conditions of Initiation

by *Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān*

The Promised Messiah and Mahdi (peace be upon him)

The initiate shall solemnly promise:

I. That he/she shall abstain from *Shirk* (association of any partner with God) right up to the day of his/her death.

II. That he/she shall keep away from falsehood, fornication, adultery, trespasses of the eye, debauchery, dissipation, cruelty, dishonesty, mischief and rebellion; and will not permit himself/herself to be carried away by passions, however strong they may be.

III. That he/she shall regularly offer the five daily prayers in accordance with the commandments of God and the Holy Prophet (*peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him*); and shall try his/her best to be regular in offering the Tahajjud (pre-dawn supererogatory Prayers) and invoking *Darūd* (blessings) on the Holy Prophet (*peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him*); that he/she shall make it his/her daily routine to ask forgiveness for his/her sins, to remember the bounties of God and to praise and glorify Him.

IV. That under the impulse of any passions, he/she shall cause no harm whatsoever to the creatures of Allāh in general, and Muslims in particular, neither by his/her tongue nor by his/her hands nor by any other means.

V. That he/she shall remain faithful to God in all circumstances of life, in sorrow and happiness, adversity and prosperity, in felicity and trials; and shall in all conditions remain resigned to the decree of Allāh and keep himself/herself ready to face all kinds of indignities and sufferings in His way and shall never turn away from it at the onslaught of any misfortune; on the contrary, he/she shall march forward.

VI. That he/she shall refrain from following un-Islamic customs and lustful inclinations, and shall completely submit himself/herself to the authority of the Holy Qur'ān; and shall make the Word of God and the Sayings of the Holy Prophet (*peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him*) the guiding principles in every walk of his/her life.

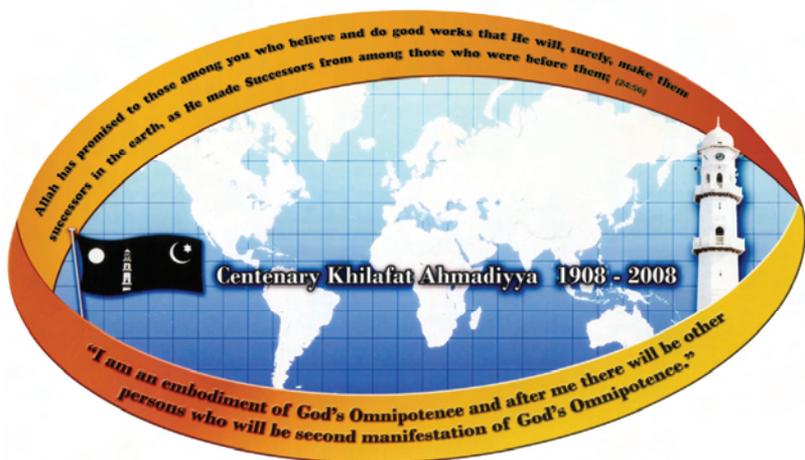
VII. That he/she shall entirely give up pride and vanity and shall pass all his/her life in humbleness, cheerfulness, forbearance and meekness.

VIII. That he/she shall hold faith, the honor of faith, and the cause of Islam dearer to him/her than his/her life, wealth, honor, children and all other dear ones.

IX. That he/she shall keep himself/herself occupied in the service of God's creatures for His sake only; and shall endeavor to benefit mankind to the best of his/her God-given abilities and powers.

X. That he/she shall enter into a bond of brotherhood with this humble servant of God, pledging obedience to me in everything good, for the sake of Allāh, and remain faithful to it till the day of his/her death; that he/she shall exert such a high devotion in the observance of this bond as is not to be found in any other worldly relationship and connection demanding devoted dutifulness.

(Translated from *Ishtihār Takmil-i-Tabligh*, January 12, 1889)



It is incumbent upon the members of my Jama'at that they should inculcate piety in their women in order to ensure their own piety, otherwise they will be guilty of a sin. If a wife is in a position to point out the shortcomings of her husband to his face, how can she have fear of God? If the parents are not righteous, their children would not be pure. Piety of children requires a long line of virtues; without it, the children would be bad. Therefore, the men should repent and should set a good example for the women. A woman keeps a watchful eye on her husband, and a man cannot hide his faults from her. Moreover, women are wise without showing it. Do not ever think that they are fools. In a subtle way, they are influenced by everything you do. If the husband is righteous, she will not only be respectful to him but also to God... The wives of the Prophets and the righteous were pious, because they were the recipients of their husbands' benign influence. The wives of the wicked and vicious are also like their husbands. How can the wife of a thief ever think of getting up to pray *Tahajjud* in the latter part of the night, when she knows that her husband has gone to steal. This is why it is said,

الزَّجَّالُ كَمَا مَوَى عَلَى النِّسَاءِ

Women are influenced by their husbands to the extent that if a husband excels in piety and righteousness, his wife will also partake of it. Similarly, if the husband is wicked, the wife too will share his evil. [Malfuzat, Vol. 5, pp. 217-218]