



The Importance of Family Life

Family means a group of people who are related to each other, especially parents and their children. A person, from birth to death, lives his life with his family. The members of a family are attached to each other due to different relationships. The human civilization also started with the family system which is essential for its very survival. Thus in a way the family is an essential part of society. A society has also its influence on the families. If a society is moving on the path of prosperity and Islamic ways of life, the families will also prosper and lead a virtuous life. Islam has greatly emphasized the importance of a strong family system in human society. According to Islam 'Zaujain' (husband and wife) are the two important pillars of a family.

Mutual Relationship Between Zuajain

Almighty Allay says:

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا-

① Translation

“It is He (Allah) Who created you from one soul, and from this (soul) He created its pair so that it may get solace.”

Thus we see that marriage provides a lawful base of family life between the two members of a pair. As a result pure relationship between husband and wife comes into existence. The Holy Quran has described the marital relationship as 'Ehsan' (احسان) which means fortification or to be safe by building strong walls all around. In other words, after marriage Zaujain (husband and wife) become safe from immoral attacks. They become life partners and share each other's comfort and suffering. They sympathize each other without any selfish ends and help each other to solve their difficulties and problems. Marriage increases the mental capabilities of

the partners and enables them to think over their family problems wisely. With the birth of children the mutual relationship between the parents is further strengthened, and home becomes a paradise.

According to the Islamic point of view the chief objective of the family life is to ensure the continuance and reproduction of human race. The bond of marriage is the only way to keep the family life pure and chaste. The family system, therefore, serves as the foundation of a society. When this very foundation is destroyed, it will not be possible to organize a society and save it from turmoil and disorder

Allah Almighty has given very clear instructions for the stability and continuance of the family life.

In the Holy Quran the relationship between husband and wife has been described as love and compassion. In the Holy Quran Allah says:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ
مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً۔ (الروم: 21)

2 Translation

“And among His signs is this: He created for you helpmates from yourselves so that you might find comfort in them, and He has put between you (your hearts) love and mercy.”

The relationship between husband and wife brings satisfaction to the human instinct on one hand, and creates mutual love, trust and compassion on the other. The two partners are follow-travellers on the path of life due to spiritual relationship.

Rights and Duties of Zaujain

Islam has given equal rights to the husband and the wife. The Holy Quran says:

وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ:

“And the women have rights similar to those of men over them in kindness.”

Of Zaujain (husband and wife), the rights of one partner are the duties of the other partner, and the duties of one partner are the rights of the other partner.

Rights of Wife/Duties of Husband

According to the Islamic teachings it is the duty of the husband to provide food and shelter to the family. He should make arrangements for housing, clothing and feeding his wife and children. He should bear expenses of the necessities of life according to his economic status. He should allow her wife to keep the amount, given to her as Mehr, in her possession or invest it in some business. He should treat his wife kindly. He should fear God and do justice and favour to his wife. He should also acknowledge her right to inheritance according to the Islamic Shariah and should not do injustice to her.

Rights of Husband/Duties of Wife

It is the foremost duty of a wife to love her husband and give him comfort. In the Holy Quran Allah says:

فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَنَاطٌ حَفِظَتْ لِّلْغَيْبِ (النساء: 34)

“So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret.”

A wife should also be faithful to her husband. It is her duty to guard all the things entrusted to her by her husband. She should not disclose his secrets and should not leak out the household affairs. She should also guard her husband's honour and nobility.

The life of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is the lighthouse which guides us to the right path. He says:

خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي

“Amongst you the best one is he who is the best for his family, and amongst you I am the best for my family.”

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) also said: “The best among the women is the one who is obedient and a source of delight for her husband when he is present and guardian of his wealth and of her own self when he is absent.”

Rights and Duties of Children and Parents

The rights of children are the duties of parents and the rights of parents are the duties of children.

Rights of Children/Duties of Parents

Islam enjoins on parents to fulfil the rights of their children. In the Holy Quran Allah Almighty says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا

“O believers! Save yourselves and your families from the fire (of hell).”

It is the duty of the parents to make arrangements for upbringing, educating and training their children in the best possible manner. They should also make arrangements for their marriage. They should maintain equity and justice among their children. Even after the death of their parents, the righteous offspring cause addition to their virtues.

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said, “One who is not affectionate to Allah’s creatures and to his own children, Allah will not be affectionate to him.”

Rights of Parents/Duties of Children

It is the duty of children to obey every order of their parents except that which requires them to show disobedience to God. Children should treat their parents kindly and respectfully and should give importance to their opinion. Especially when parents attain old age, the children should respect their feelings and treat them with love and kindness. They should find time everyday to attend their old parents. When the parents pass away the children should pray for their salvation.

The Holy Quran says:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا (احقاف:15)

“We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents.”

وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۖ إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا آفٌ وَلَا تُنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ۝ وَخُفِّضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْنِي صَغِيرًا ۝ (بنی اسرائیل: 23,24)

3 Translation

“Show kindness to parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not a word of contempt to them, nor repel them, and speak to them a gracious word. And lower to them the wings of submission out of kindness and say: My Lord! Have mercy on them as they brought me up when I was a little child.”

The status of mother is higher than father because she undergoes more suffering for the sake of her children. The Holy Quran says: “His mother bears him in weakness upon weakness and his weaning is in two years.

There is a saying of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), “Heaven is beneath the feet of mother.”

Relatives

Islam requires us to do good and to be kind to our relatives. According to the Holy Quran, after parents our other blood relations deserve most to be helped and treated kindly by us.

لَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ ۖ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ. (البقره: 83)

4 Translation

“Worship none but Allah, and show kindness to parents and relatives.”

The importance of doing good to relatives is evident from the following sayings of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

“A person who does not respect the rights of his relatives will not enter Paradise.”

“One who breaks off his relations with his relatives shall not enter Paradise.”

“Giving of alms to relatives carries two rewards: one is the reward of alms and the other is the reward of helping relatives.

EXERCISE

A. Answer the following questions.

1. What is the family life and what is its importance?
2. What is the base of the family life and what is its chief objective?
3. How is the family system related to society?
4. What are the rights and duties of Zaujain (husband and wife)?
5. What are the rights and duties of children and parents?
6. What importance does Islam give to relatives?

B. Fill in the blanks.

1. A family consists of _____ and their _____.
2. According to Islam, _____ and _____ are the two important pillars of a family.
3. “It is Allah Who created you from one _____.”
4. The Holy Quran has described the marital relation as _____.
5. The chief objective of the family life is to ensure the continuance and reproduction of _____.
6. The family life serves as the _____ of a society.
7. It is the duty of the husband to provide _____ to the family.
8. “Amongst you the best one is he who is the best for his _____.”
9. Children should treat their parents _____ and _____ and should give importance to their _____.
10. The status of mother is _____ than father.
11. _____ lies beneath the feet of mother.
12. “Worship none but Allah, and show kindness to _____ and _____.”