



**SOCIAL
ETIQUETTES IN ISLAM - I**

UNIT: 18

SOCIAL ETIQUETTES IN ISLAM-I

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ISLAMIC CORRESPONDENCE COURSE
(English)

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FOREWORD

Muslim communities all over the world are faced with a variety of challenges in their Dawah activities. One major challenge relates with the area of education. It is not easy to develop, in every community, an educational institution which may provide professional assistance and back up to members of community in acquiring Islamic knowledge and information. In some Muslim communities full time educational institutions have been established. In others, educational needs of the community are met through weekend programmes, seminars, symposia and other such activities.

Some Muslim communities have given serious thought to programmes of distance teaching, however, such programmes have not been materialized with proper know-how and professional assistance.

The Dawah Academy, at a humble level, is in the process of developing a series of correspondence courses in English and other languages. In order to develop a suitable introductory course on Islam as the way of life, we are introducing, at this point, material selected from existing Islamic literature.

Our next step will be to produce our own material in view of the needs of Muslim communities in various parts of the world. This will have two levels: first general level and second a post-graduate course on Islam. The present selection from Islamic literature deals with first level. This covers a variety of topics dealing with Islam as a complete way of life. We hope this course will provide initial information on important aspects of Islam.

We will greatly appreciate critical comments and observations of participants on this course. This will help us in development of our own material for both levels of study. Please do not hesitate to write to us if you have some suggestions to improve the material or methodology. Address all your observations at the following:

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PURITY AND NEATNESS

Allah's favourites are those who make constant efforts to remain pure and neat. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed: 'Purity and neatness are half of faith'. In other words, Faith partly consists in cleansing one's soul and partly in keeping physically clean and pure. The purity and neatness of soul implies cleansing the soul of all impurities such as infidelity, polytheism, sin and vice, and embellishing it with righteous beliefs and pure morals. The purity and neatness of the body denotes keeping it clear of all external filth and adorning it with neatness and good manners.

1. On waking up, clean your hand before putting it in a pot of water. You never can tell where your hands lay during sleep.
2. Do not discharge urine on the floor of the toilet, especially when it is made of soil.
3. When passing stools or urine, do not sit facing the direction of Qiblah, nor with your back to Qiblah. Having relieved yourself, use a clod or water to clean the private parts or purify yourself with water only. Do not use the dung, bone or charcoal for cleaning purposes. When the private parts have been cleaned, scrub your hands with soap or earth and wash them.
4. Do not sit down to eat when your bowels are under pressure. Relieve yourself of urine or stool, before eating.
5. Use your right hand in eating as well as in performing ablution. For cleaning the private parts of the body or for clearing the nose, use your left hand only.

6. Discharge urine on soft ground, so that its drops do not splash around. Always pass the urine in a sitting posture. However, if the condition of the ground or some real hardship prevents from sitting down, you may urinate in a standing posture. Otherwise, in normal circumstances, it is a very dirty habit and should be strictly avoided.
7. Do not sit down to answer the call of nature on the riverside, the quay, on the thoroughfares or in shaded places. Such a practice causes inconvenience to others and is derogatory to rules of propriety and good manners.
8. Put on shoes and cover your head with a cap etc. before going to the lavatory and read the following prayer on your way:

اللهم انى اعوذ بك من الخبث والخبائث (بخارى، مسلم)

Allahumma innī 'audu bika minal khubthi wal khaba'ith.

(*Bukhari-Muslim*)

"God I seek thy Protection against the devils of the masculine as well as the feminine species."

(*Bukhari-Muslim*)

On emerging from the lavatory, read this prayer :

الحمد لله الذى اذهب عنى الاذى وعافانى (نسائى، ابن ماجه)

Alhamdu lillahi-l-ladhī adhaba 'annil adha wa 'āfānī.

(*Nasāi, Ibn-e-Majah*)

"I thank the Lord who relieved me of the burden and granted me ease."

(*Nasāsi, Ibn-e-Majah*)

9. Discharge your nose or phlegm with care in a spitoon, or do so in a place out of the sight of people.

10. Avoid putting your finger in the nostrils and clearing the wax of your nose too often. Clear the nose and clean it well out of the sight of people, whenever the need arises.
11. Strictly avoid the practice of spitting phlegm into the folds of a handkerchief and rubbing them together. This is a despicable habit and must be avoided except when it cannot be helped.
12. While chewing betel leaf, do not talk in such a manner as to splash saliva on the person you are talking to, thus causing discomfort to him. If you chew tobacco or betel leaf frequently, you should take great care in observing the rules of oral hygiene. Beware also, lest you should talk with your mouth too close to the person addressed.
13. Perform ablution with great care and try to keep in a state of ablution most of the time, if not at all hours. Where water is not available, you may perform *Tayammum*. Recite :

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Bismillāh hirrahmā nirrahim.

'In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

at the beginning of ablution and say the following prayer in the course of its performance :

اشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له واشهد ان محمدا عبده
ورسوله اللهم اجعلني من التوابين واجعلني من المتطهرين (ترمذی)

*Ashhadu an lā ilāla illallahu wahdahu lā sharika lahu wa ashhadu
anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa rasuluh. Allahumm aj'ālīnī
minat-tawwābīna waj'alnī min-al-mutatahhirīn. (Tirmizi)*

"I bear witness that there is no god save Allah and He has no partner. And I testify that Muhammad is the servant of God and His Messenger. God! Join me with those people who repent most and take great care in keeping themselves pure and clean."

When the ablution is over, say the following prayer:

سبحانك اللهم وبحمدك اشهد ان لا اله الا انت استغفرک واتوب اليك

*Subhanak-allahumma wa bihamdika ashhadu an lā ilaha illa anta
astaghfiruka wa atūbu ilaika.* (Nasai)

"God ! Thou art Pure and Supreme in Thy Praiseworthiness. I testify that there is no deity beside Thee. I seek Thy forgiveness and I appeal to Thee."

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed :

"The emblem of my Ummah on the Day of Judgement will be that their foreheads and other parts of the body on which ablution is performed will be radiant with light. Hence whosoever wishes to enhance his light is free to do so."

(Bukhari, Muslim)

14. Brush your teeth with miswak (twig) regularly. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed :

"I would have decreed the brushing of teeth with a miswak (twig) during all ablutions but for the inconvenience it would have caused to the Ummah".

On one occasion, some people arrived to see the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) . Their teeth were stained with yellow grease. On observing their teeth the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) urged them to form the habit of using miswak.

15. You must bathe at least once a week. Make it a point to bathe on Friday to join the Friday congregation in clean and neat dress. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed:

“Discharging of trust leads to Paradise”. The companions (God be pleased with them) submitted : “O Apostle of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ! What is meant by Trust?”

The Apostle of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed :

“Allah has appointed no greater trust than cleansing oneself of impurity by taking bath”. Hence a person must take bath when he needs one.

16. Do not go into or pass through the mosque in a state of impurity. If no alternative is available, perform the *Tayammum* before entering the mosque or passing through it.
17. Dress your hair with oil and comb. Trim the overgrown hair of your beard with scissors; apply collyrium to your eyes; and clip your nails and keep finger-nails clean. Adorn yourself with propriety, simplicity and moderation.

18. Cover your face with a handkerchief on sneezing, so that the excretion is not splashed on to anyone else. After sneezing say :

الحمد لله

Alhamdu lillah

“Praise be to Allah” !

The listener should say :

يرحمك الله

Yarhamukallah.

“May Allah show you Mercy” !

In response to this, you should recite :

يهديك الله

Yahdikallah.

“May Allah guide you”.

19. The Holy prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was very fond of perfume. After performing the toilet or on arising from sleep, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) invariably used perfume.

ETIQUETTES OF DRESS

1. You should wear a dress which covers and protects your body and meets the requirements of modesty, honour and virtue. Your dress should also be an expression of culture, elegance and beauty. In respect of this blessing, God says in the Holy Qur'ān :

يٰۤاٰدَمُ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ لِبَاسًا يُّوَارِي سَوْآتِكَ وَيُرِيهَا (۱۱۱ عراف-۲۶)

Yabanī Adama qad anzalnā alaikum libasan yuwārī sauāatikum wa rīsha.

“O children of Adam ! We have sent unto you raiments to conceal your shame and to serve as protection and decoration”.
(7:26)

As a matter of fact the word ‘Rīsh’ in the verse, literally means the wings of the bird. The wings of a bird lend beauty and grace to it and also serve as a means of protection for its body. The word, however, is commonly used when referring to beauty, elegance and fine dress. Of course the purpose of dress is to lend beauty and grace and to serve, as protection against climatic effects. But the foremost use of dress is to cover private parts of the body. Allah has inculcated modesty and diffidence in the nature of man. It was for this reason that when Hadrat Adam and Hadrat Hawwā (Eve) (peace be on both of them) were deprived of the elegant robes of Paradise, they began to use leaves of trees to cover their bodies. Hence consider this as the principal use of dress and choose a dress which conforms to the requirements of modesty. You should also make sure that your dress, besides affording adequate protection against climatic conditions, should also be of such a style that it should lend an aura of grace, elegance and culture to your personality. Do not wear dress of a style which should make you an object of ridicule or provoke satirical comments among the people.

2. You should keep in mind while putting on clothes that dress is a blessing which Allah has conferred on man only. It has been denied to all other living creatures. Offer thanks to Allah for this special favour and blessing. Endowed as you are with this distinctive bounty, you should never act contrary to the decrees of Allah or show ingratitude. Dress is a remarkable favour from the Lord. While putting on dress, re-ignite this feeling in your heart and express your sense of gratitude in the words which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had taught to the believers.
3. Piety is the best apparel. Piety signifies purity of soul as well as righteous physical appearance. In other words you should wear dress of the kind which the Shari'ah has prescribed for the believers, which does not display arrogance or pride, which does not lend a feminine air to men nor a masculine appearance to women. The dress should be an emblem of your righteousness and devotion to God. The women should strictly conform to the rules set by Shari'ah in respect of female dress and men must observe the laws of Shari'ah with regard to male dress.
4. Put on a new dress with feelings of joy. Name the cloth and acknowledge the munificence and blessing of Allah. Inspired by a sense of gratitude to the Lord, recite the prayer which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to offer while putting on a new dress.

Hadrat Abū Sa'īd Khudrī (God be pleased with him) reports: "Whenever the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) put on a new dress, head dress shirt or a sheet covering, he used to recite the following prayer and insert the name of the garment in the recitation :

اللهم لك الحمد انت كسوتيه استلك خيره و خير ما صنع واعوذ بك
من شره و شر ما صنع له (ابوداؤد)

Allahumma lakal hamdu anta kasautanihi as'aluka khairahu wa khaira ma suni'a lahu wa a'udhu bika min sharrihi wa sharri ma suni'a lahu.
(Abu-Dawud)

O God ! Unto Thee belongeth all praise. Even as Thou hast clothed me in this (garment), I ask of Thee the good thereof, and the good of that wherefor it hath been made, and I seek refuge in Thee from the evil thereof, and the evil of that wherefor it hath been made.

The prayer bears the following meaning : God ! Grant me the favour to use the dress which you have bestowed on me for the same purposes which you deem righteous. Grant me the favour to cover my modesty with this dress and to protect my soul and body against immodesty and shamelessness. Grant me the favour to make it a means of adornment and grace for my body. God ! Grant me the favour to eschew displaying ostentation, pride or arrogance in dress and let me not transgress the bounds set by you in the use of dress by your slaves, both men and women.

Hadrat 'Umar (God be pleased with him) stated : "The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "Whosoever puts on a new dress and has means, should give away his old dress to the poor. On wearing a new dress, a person should recite the following prayer :

الحمد لله الذى كسانى ما اوارى به عورتى واتجمل به فى حياتى

Alhamdu lillah-il-ladhī kasānī mā uwarī bihī 'auratī wa atajammalu bihī fī hayātī,

Praise be to God Who clad me with that wherewith I cover my shame, and wherewith I adorn myself in my life.

Whosoever reads the above prayer at the time of putting on a new dress, Allah will keep him under His care and protection in this life and in the life Hereinafter". *(Tirmidhī)*

5. Take care to put on the dress with right side first. While putting on the shirt, kurta, shervani or coat, wear the right sleeve first. Similarly while putting on a pyjama enter the right foot first. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) while putting on the shirt used to wear the right sleeve first and then put the left arm into the left sleeve. Similarly, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to put the shoe on his right foot first and then wore the left shoe. On taking off his shoe, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) first took off his left foot and then the right one.

6. You must shake the garments before putting them on, lest there be deadly insect hidden in them which might cause you harm. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was once wearing socks in a jungle. He put on a sock and was intending to put on the second one when a crow dived and carried off the sock. the crow soared to a great height and dropped the sock on the ground. The shock of landing threw out of the sock a snake which fell at same distance. On seeing this, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) offered thanks to Allah and observed : "It is the duty of every Muslim that on intending to wear sock, he should shake them first". *(Tabarani)*

7. Wear white dress. White dress is ideal for men, especially the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "Wear white dress. it is the best. You ought to wear white cloth in life and bury your dead in a shroud made of white cloth". *(Tirmidhī)*

On another occasion, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : “You should wear white clothes, for the white cloth stays cleaner and put your dead in white shrouds”.

The phrase ‘white cloth stays cleaner’ implies that white cloth shows off the slightest stain instantly, which a person may clean immediately. If the cloth is dyed, the stains will not be seen instantly. Hence a person will not pay immediate attention to wash a dyed garment.

It is recorded in *Sahih Bukhari* that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to wear white clothes. In other words, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) not only liked to put on white dress himself, but also enjoined upon the male members of his Ummah to wear white clothes.

8. The length of your pyjama, lungi should fall above the ankles. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) holds such people as hopeless, the deprived ones and deserving of severe torment who out of pride and haughtiness let their pyjamas or lungis fall below their ankles. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed : “There are three types of people with whom God shall not speak on the Doomsday, nor look at them, nor will He admit them to Paradise after purifying them; rather God shall ordain a painful torment for them”. Hadrat Abu Dhar Ghifari (God be pleased with him) submitted: “O Apostle of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who are these deprived and unfortunate people?” The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed:

“First, he who out of pride and haughtiness lets his ‘lower garments fall below his ankles.

Secondly, the man who reminds others of the favours, he has done to them.

And thirdly, the one who wishes to promote his business by misrepresentation on oath“ *(Muslim)*

Relating a personal anecdote, Hadrat ‘Ubaid ibn Khalid (God be pleased with him) says : “I was once walking in the holy city of Medina when a voice said from behind: ‘Lift up your lower garment — by so doing a man not only guards himself from physical filth but also from the impurity of soul”. Looking over my shoulder, I saw the Apostle of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ! It is a simple sheet of cloth that I am wearing. How can it show haughtiness and pride?“ The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : ”Is it not obligatory for you to follow my example?“ On hearing these words of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), my eyes at once fell towards his lower garment and I saw that the length of his garment fell to the middle of his calf“

The Holy Prophet’s (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observation that ‘by keeping the length of his pyjama or lower garment above the ankles the man is guarded against not only physical dirt but also impurity of soul, is highly significant. It implies that when the length of a garment falls below the ankles, it gathers filth from the ground and becomes dirty. Soiled clothes are always offensive to a person of neat and clean taste. Moreover, the habit of wearing garments whose length falls below the ankles betrays arrogance and pride and these two evils are symptoms of the impurity of soul. These considerations apart, the Qur’ānic

injunction 'The life of the Prophet is the best example for you to follow' should suffice for a pious believer.

According to a tradition reported by Abū Dāwud, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has given warning of terrible punishment for this offence. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "The pious believer should wear the length of his 'lower garment' up to the middle of his calf; there is no harm if the length falls to the ankles; but any part of the length which falls below the ankles shall burn in the fire. And on Doomsday, God shall not even look at the man who out of pride and arrogance wears an apparel whose length falls below his ankles"

9. Do not wear silk. Garments of silk are befitting for females only. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has strictly forbidden men to wear female dress or to put on effeminate airs.

Hadrat 'Umar (God be pleased with him) reports that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "Do not wear silk garments, for he who wears them in this world shall not wear them in the next" (*Bukhari, Muslim*). The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) once observed to Hadrat 'Ali (God be pleased with him) :

"Cut this silk cloth¹ into scarves and distribute them among these Fatimas²."

¹This cloth had been sent as a gift from the ruler of Okaidar and Dooma.

²'Fatimahs' refers to following three illustrious ladies :

(i) Fatimah Zehra (God be pleased with her), favourite daughter of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon

This also shows that silk dress is desirable for women. It was for this reason that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) urged Hadrat 'Ali (God be pleased with him) to cut the silk cloth into scarves for the ladies, otherwise the cloth could have been used for some other purpose.

10. Women should not wear thin dress which should make their forms visible, nor should they put on a tightly fitting dress which might make their figures prominent and alluring. In this way, they would be exposing their bodies, despite having worn garments. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has warned such immodest women of dire punishment.

“Women who are nude in spite of having garments on them who allure others and are allured by others shall be consigned to Hell. Their heads are awry like the humps of *Bakht* camels because of their coquettish posture. These women shall not enter Paradise, nor shall enjoy the sweet odour of Paradise, although the sweet odour of Paradise can be savoured from a long distance off“

(*Riyad-us-Salihin*)

On one occasion, Hadrat Asma' (God be pleased with her) arrived in the presence of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) wearing thin clothes. On seeing her, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) turned his face at once and observed:

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- (ii) him) and the wife of Hadrat 'Ali (God be pleased with him). Fatimah bint Asad (God be pleased with her) august mother of Hadrat Ali (God be pleased with him).
 - (iii) Fatimah (God be pleased with her) the daughter of Hadrat Hamza, the uncle of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

“Asma’ when a woman comes of age it is not lawful for her to expose any part of her body except face and hands”.

11. When wearing a Tehbund or pyjama do not lie down or sit in such a posture as to make prominent or lay bare any part of your body. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed: “Do not walk with one shoe on. Do not squat with one knee raised while you are wearing a Tehbund. Do not eat with your left hand. Do not wrap up your whole body in a sheet in such a manner as to make it impossible for you to move your hands freely for performing your work or for offering prayers. Do not lie flat and put one leg over the other lest it should uncover your body.

12. Men and women should not adopt the same fashions in dress. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: “Allah sends curses on those men who adopt feminine fashions and Allah curses such women who adopt a masculine style”. (Bukhari)

Hadrat Abū Huraira (God be pleased with him) states: “The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has pronounced a curse upon a male who puts on female dress and has cursed a female who dresses herself in masculine fashions”.

(Abū Dāwūd)

Someone once mentioned to Hadrat ‘A’isha (God be pleased with her) that there was a certain woman who wore masculine shoes, whereupon Hadrat ‘A’isha (God be pleased with her) observed: “The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has pronounced a curse upon such women who adopt masculine habits”.

13. The women must cover themselves with a scarf and keep their head and bosom veiled. They should not wear scarf of such transparent stuff as to reveal their hair. The scarf is meant to veil the beauty of the person. God ordains in the Holy Qur'an:

وليضربن بخمرهن على جيوبهن (النور-٣١)

Walyādribna bikhumurihinna 'alā juyūbihinna. (24:31)

“And draw their veils over their bosoms”.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) once received fine Egyptian veil. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cut out a piece and handing it to Wahya Kalbi (God be pleased with him) observed: “Cut a piece and make a shirt for yourself and give the other piece to your wife to use as a scarf, but tell her to stitch another layer of cloth under it so that her form may not be exposed to view.” *(Abū Dāwūd)*

Bearing this clear injunction of the Holy Book and Sunnah in mind, you should scrupulously follow the purport of Divine Command. Do not make a mockery of the Ordinance of Allah and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) by wearing only a small strip of cloth around your neck.

Hadrat 'Ā'isha (God be pleased with her) states: “When this injunction was revealed, the women discarded thin garments. They cut their scarves out of coarse cloth”. *(Abū Dāwūd)*

14. Dress yourself in keeping with your means and status. Do not dress up to show off vanity and to display an attitude of haughtiness towards others or to make an indecent show of your affluence. On the other hand, your dress should not cost more than your means permit, for thus you will be guilty of the sin of

extravagance. Do not look shabby and crest-fallen so as to make an impression of penury and helplessness upon others. Do not make a show of destitution, despite having everything. Put on proper, suitable and neat garments in keeping with your means and position. Some people appear destitute by wearing rags or patched garments and consider it piety or virtue. Moreover, they view those who put on clean and neat dress as worldly-minded and irreligious. This conception of religion is wholly fallacious. Hadrat Abū al-Hasan ‘Ali Shazlī (God be pleased with him) was once clad in very fine clothes. A destitute Sūfi took exception to this elegant turn out of Hadrat Shazlī (God be merciful to him) and remarked: “What need have the servants of God to put on such elegant dress?” Hadrat Shazlī (God be merciful to him) answered: “Brother, I have put on this elegant dress to express my gratitude and homage to the Grand and Magnificent Allah. Your shabby appearance is a show of misery. You appear as if you were begging alms from the people”. In reality, virtue does not consist in wearing rags, patched garments or clothes of inferior quality, nor does it require wearing luxurious apparel. The ingredients of virtue are the pious intentions and right thinking of the man. The truth is that every man should adopt a moderate and balanced attitude in all matters in consonance with his means and position. He should not let his soul grow dull by putting on destitute airs, nor should he display vanity and pride by wearing resplendent garments.

Hadrat Abūl Ahwas (God be merciful to him) reports a tradition from his father, “Once I went to the presence of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). I was then clad in a very ordinary and mean dress. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked me: “Do you possess wealth and means?” I submitted: “Yes, I do”. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) then enquired: “What

kind of goods do you possess?" I submitted: "Allah has blessed me with all kinds of goods, camels, cows, goats, horses besides slaves". The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "When Allah has blessed you with wealth and means, your person should manifest His Bounty and Favour".

(Mishkat)

The implication is that when God has conferred ample means to you, why do you put on the garb of a beggar and destitute person? This is an act of ingratitude of God.

Hadrat Jābir reports: "Once the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) visited our house to see us. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) chanced to see a man who was covered all over with dust; his hair was dishevelled. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "Does this man possess no comb with which to set his hair?" The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) then happened to see a man who was clad in a dirty dress. Whereupon the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "Does this man not possess even that (soap etc) with which to wash his clothes clean".

(Mishkat)

A man submitted to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) "O Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon you)! I like to have fine clothes and I like to dress my hair with oil, and wear nice shoes....' In this manner, he named several niceties he was fond of and even mentioned that he wished that his lash should also be of the best quality. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) listened to his conversation and then observed: " All these things are desirable, and God views this fine taste with favour".

(Mustadrak Hakim)

Hadrat ‘Abdullah b. ‘Umar (God be pleased with him) states: “I submitted to the Holy Apostle of Allah: ‘O Apostle of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ! Would I be guilty of vanity and haughtiness if I wore fine and nice clothes?’” The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “No, it is elegant to wear nice dress and elegance of dress pleases Allah”. *(Ibn Mājah)*

The following tradition has also been reported by Hadrat ‘Abdullah b. ‘Umar (God be pleased with him): “The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: Put on both garments when saying prayers (in other words, dress yourself in full suit). Man owes it to God more than to any one else that he should go into His presence in his best apparel and the neatest state”. *(Mishkat)*

Hadrat ‘Abdullah b. Mas‘ūd (God be pleased with him) states: “The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: He who has a little bit of pride in his heart shall not enter Paradise”. A man submitted: “Every man wishes that he should put on fine clothes and wear nice shoes”. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “God Himself is Graceful and elegance pleases Him. In other words, elegant dress does not connote haughtiness. Haughtiness consists in ignoring the rights of others and looking down upon others as mean and base”. *(Muslim)*

15. Observe good taste and propriety in dress and make-up. It is improper and offensive to good taste to go about with shirt unbuttoned at the chest, to wear buttons without proper arrangement, to roll up one leg of the trousers and keep the other down, to walk with one shoe on or to keep the hair dishevelled.

One day, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was seated in the mosque when a man with dishevelled hair and unkempt beard came into his presence. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) made a gesture with his hand towards the man signifying that he should go and set the hair of his head and beard. The man went away and returned having settled his hair in better shape. Whereupon the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) remarked: "Isn't it better to look elegant and exquisite than to wear unkempt hair? A man with dishevelled hair wears the look of the devil". *(Mishkat)*

Hadrat Abū Huraira (God be pleased with him) states: "The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: No one should walk with one shoe on; either wear both shoes or take off both". *(Tirmidhī)*

It is in the light of this tradition that the 'Ulama have forbidden the wearing of only one sleeve or only one sock.

16. Avoid wearing, red, gaudy or resplendent dress or showy black or yellow apparel. Red, gaudy and resplendent dress is suited only to women and even women should observe proper rules about wearing such dress. As regards assuming superior airs by donning flowing robes and yellow garments, for the sake of displaying one's distinction, it is a sure sign of pride and haughtiness. Similarly, do not put on strange and funny clothes which may lend you an outlandish appearance and you may become an object of public ridicule.
17. Always put on simple, dignified, civilized dress and spend moderately on your clothes. Avoid luxury and extravagant finesse

in matters of dress. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed:

“Keep away from luxury, for the favourites of God are no lovers of ease and luxury”. (Mishkat)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also affirmed: “Allah will adorn that man with the dress of honour and nobility who, in spite of possessing means and power, observes simplicity in dress out of humility and obedience of God”. (Abū Dāwūd)

The illustrious companions (God be pleased with them) were one day sitting in company discussing worldly matters. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) remarked: “Simplicity of dress is one of the signs of faith”.

(Abū Dāwūd)

Once the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “There are many a servant of God in the world whose outward appearance is humble; their hair is dishevelled and dusty and their dress is ordinary and simple, yet in the sight of God their stature is very high. Should they take oath on something, Allah fulfils their oath. *Brā’ b Malik* (God be pleased with him) is one among this type of people.”

(Tirmidhi)

18. Give clothes to the destitute by way of expressing thanks to the Lord for having conferred the bounty of dress on you. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed: “Whosoever gives clothes to a Muslim to cover his body, Allah

shall clothe that man on the Day of Judgement in the green dress of Paradise". (*Abū Dāwūd*)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also affirmed: "A Muslim who gives clothes to another Muslim shall be afforded protection and safety by Allah as long as those clothes serve as a covering for the body of the beneficiary". (*Tirmidhi*)

19. Give fine clothes according to your means to your servants and slaves who serve you day and night.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "The slaves, male and female, are your brothers and sisters. God has given them under your charge. hence to whomsoever Allah has given power and control over some one, he should give him the same to eat as he eats himself and the same kind of dress to wear as he wears himself and he should not give him work to do which is beyond his capacity, and should the slave be unable to cope with the load of work, the master should share his burden". (*Bukhari, Muslim*)

Etiquettes of Dealing with Parents

1. Behave well towards your father and mother and consider this good conduct as a propitious act which will earn God's grace in this world as well as in the next. Next to God, man owes the greatest obligation to his parents. The greatness and value of this obligation towards one's parents may be realised from the fact that the Holy Qur'ān at several points mentions the rights of parents and the rights of God simultaneously at one place. Furthermore, the Holy Qur'ān has ordained the duty of offering thanks to the parents along with thanksgiving to the Lord.

وقضى ربك ان لا تعبدوا الا اياه وبالوالدين احسانا (نبي اسرائيل - ٢٣)

*Wa qadā rabbuka an-llā ta'budū illa iyyāhu wa bil wālidaini
ihsānā. (17:23)*

“The Lord hath decreed that ye worship none save Him and (that ye show) kindness to parents”.

Hadrat 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (God be pleased with him) relates “I submitted to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) which deed will win the highest favour of God?” The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) answered: “The prayer which is offered at the appointed hour”. I submitted again: “Next to this which other deed will win the greatest favour of God?” The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: “Good conduct towards father and mother”. I again submitted: “And next to this?” The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “Jihad (Fighting) in the way of Allah”.

(Bukhari, Muslim)

Hadrat ‘Abdullah (God be pleased with him) reports: “One day a person went to the presence of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and submitted: “I give my hand into your hand and swear allegiance for performing Hijrat and Jihad and I beseech a reward from God in return for this”. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) enquired: “Is one of your parents alive?” He submitted: “Yes, praise be to God, both my father and mother are alive”. Thereupon the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “Well then do you really want to receive a reward from God for performing Hijrat and Jihad?” The man replied “Yes, indeed, I beseech reward from God in return for these acts”. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “Go then. Attend to your parents and serve them well”. *(Muslim)*

Hadrat Abu Umama (God be pleased with him) relates: “A man enquired from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) : “O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ! What are the rights of parents over their offspring?” The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: “Your entry into Paradise or Hell depends on your good or bad conduct towards your parents”. *(Ibn Majah)*

In other words, if you treat them well, you will be sent to paradise and if you violate the rights that your parents have over you, you will be consigned to serve as fuel for Hell-Fire”.

2. Be grateful to your parents. Thanksgiving and an acknowledgement of debt and gratitude are the first duties which a beneficiary owes to the Benefactor. It is a fact that the parents are the palpable cause for our existence. Again it is under their protection and upbringing that we grow up to an age of maturity. The extraordinary self-sacrifice, unparalleled devotion and deep affection with which they patronise us demand that our hearts should be filled with sentiments of reverence, indebtedness, love

and an acknowledgement of their magnanimity and every fibre of our heart should pulsate with feelings of gratitude to them. It is for this reason that God has ordained offering of gratitude to parents along with thanksgiving to Him.

ان اشكر لى ولو الديك

Anishkurli wali walidaika.

“(We willed) that you should offer thanks to Me and remain grateful to your father and mother”.

3. Always try to make your parents happy. Do not say anything in opposition to their will or temperament which may displease them, especially when they are advanced in age they acquire a peevish and irritable temperament. In old age the parents start making unexpected demands and begin proffering impossible claims. In this case also tolerate their behaviour in good cheer and do not say anything in anger in response to their demands which may cause them pain and may injure their feelings.

اما يبلغن عندك الكبر احدهما او كلاهما فلا تقل لهما اف ولا تنهرهما

Imma yablughanna 'indakal kibara ahadu-huma au kilahuma fala taqullahuma uffin wa la tanharhuma.

“If one or both of thy parents reach an advanced age with thee, say not ‘fire’ unto them nor repulse them”.

As a matter of fact, the strength to tolerate unpleasant things is sapped during old age and weakness increases the sense of self-importance in old people. Hence they react sensitively to even the minor offensive matters. Keeping in view their delicate and sensitive nature, do not let your parents feel angry by any of your words or deeds.

Hadrat 'Abdullah b. Amr (God be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: "The pleasure of God is contained in the pleasure of the father even as His displeasure is contained in the displeasure of the father."
(Tirmidhi, Ibn Hibban, Hakim)

In other words, any one who wants to please God should seek the pleasure of his father, for if the father is angry, the favour of God cannot be earned. The one who makes his father angry provokes the wrath of God.

Another statement of Hadrat 'Abdullah (God be pleased with him) runs as follows: "A man left his parents weeping and came to the presence of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) for the purpose of offering allegiance to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) for Hijrah. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed to him : "Go back to your parents and return after making them happy as you came after leaving them crying".

(Abu Dawud)

Do service to your parents with heart and soul. If God has afforded you the opportunity to serve your parents, it is in fact a favourable opportunity for you to earn entitlement to Paradise and to win the Pleasure of God. Good service to parents secures blessings and grace in both worlds and man obtains salvation from the calamities of this world and the next. Hadrat Anas (God be pleased with him) relates :

"Any man who desires that his life should be prolonged and his subsistence may be increased ought to do good service to his parents and show kindness to them."
(al-Tarhib-o-Tarhib)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed:

“Let that man be disgraced, and disgraced again and let him be disgraced even more”. The people enquired: “O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who is that man?” The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: “I refer to the man who found his parents old in age — both of them or one of them — and yet did not earn entitlement to Paradise by rendering good service to them”.

(Muslim)

On one occasion, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) gave precedence to the obligation of looking after one’s parents over one of the supreme forms of worship like Jihad. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade a companion (God be pleased with him) to proceed on Jihad and urged him to look after his parents.

Hadrat ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr (God be pleased with him) relates that a person came to the presence of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) with the intention of participating in the Jihad. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) enquired from him: “Are your father and mother alive?” He submitted: “Yes, they are alive”. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) thereupon observed: “Go and render good service to them. This is the Jihad”.

(Bukhari, Muslim)

5. Respect and adore your parents and do not show disrespect to them by a single word or action. The Holy Qur’ān affirms :

وقل لهما قولا كريما (بنی اسرائیل - ۲۳)

Wa qullahumā qaulan karīmā (17:23)
 “But speak to them a gracious word”.

On one occasion Hadrat ‘Abdullah b. ‘Umar (God be pleased with him) enquired from Hadrat Ibn ‘Abbas (God be pleased with him): “Do you wish to ward off Hell and gain entry into Paradise?” Ibn ‘Abbas (God be pleased with him) answered: “Yes, why not, I swear in the name of God I cherish this desire”. Hadrat Ibn ‘Umar (God be pleased with him) then asked : “Are your parents alive?” Ibn ‘Abbas (God be pleased with him) replied: “Yes, my mother is alive”. Ibn ‘Umar (God be pleased with him) remarked: “If you talk to them in a polite manner and look after their needs and feed them well, you will certainly be admitted to Paradise provided you abstain from capital evils”.

(Al-Adab-ul Mufrad)

Hadrat Abu Huraira (God be pleased with him) once saw two men. He asked one of them: “What is your relationship with the other man”? The person replied: “He is my father”. Hadrat Abu Huraira (God be pleased with him) thereupon advised him, “Look, never call him by his proper name, walk ahead of him nor sit before he takes his seat”.

(Al-Adab-ul Mufrad)

6. Be faithful and humble towards your parents.

واخفض لهما جناح الذل من الرحمة

Wakhfid lahumā janāhadh dhulli minar rahmah.

“And lower unto them the wing of submission through mercy”.

(17 :23)

To offer humble obedience to parents implies to pay constant regard to their dignity. Do not assume a haughty attitude towards them, nor treat them with insolence.

7. Love your parents and consider this act as a privilege and a source of reward in the eternal world. Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (God be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed:

“The pious offspring who casts a single look of affection at his parents receives a reward from God equal to the reward of an accepted Hajj.” The people submitted: “O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) : If someone casts a hundred such glances of love and affection at his parents, what then?” The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “Yes, indeed, even if one does so a hundred time a day, he will get a hundred fold reward. God is far greater than you imagine and is completely free from petty narrow-mindedness.” *(Muslim)*

8. Obey your parents with full devotion. Even if they show some intransigence, obey their will cheerfully. Keeping in view the great favours which they have done to you, try to fulfil all their demands willingly which may be offensive to your own taste or temperament, provided, of course, they are not derogatory to the tenets of religion.

Hadrat Abu Sa'id (God be pleased with him) narrates that a person came to the presence of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) from Yemen. The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) enquired from him: “Do you have any relations in Yemen?” He submitted : “Yes, my father and mother are there”. The Holy Prophet (peace and

blessings of Allah be upon him) then asked : “Did they give you permission to leave?” The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) thereupon observed: “Go back then and ask the permission of your father and mother. If they agree, come back and join the Jihad, otherwise, attend on them and render good service to them”.

(Abu Dawud)

Realise the value of rendering obedience to parents from the fact that a man came from miles intending to join the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in Holy war for the glory of religion, yet the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) turned him back saying: “You can join the Holy War only if both your father and mother allow you to do so”.

Hadrat Ibn ‘Abbas (God be pleased with him) reports that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : “The man who wakes up in the morning having previously discharged all the duties and obligations laid upon him by God concerning his parents, he will find the two gates of Paradise open for him on waking up in the morning; and in case there is only one parent, the person will find one door of Paradise open for him. And in contrast if a man wakes up in the morning having previously disregarded any obligations or duties laid upon him by God concerning his parents, then he will find two gates of Hell open for him on waking up in the morning; and in case one of the parents is alive, then the man will find one gate of Hell open for him”. The man submitted: “O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), if the parents are treating him wrongly, what then?” The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: “Yes, even if they are treating him wrongly; yes, indeed, even if they are treating him wrongly”.

(Mishkat)

9. Consider your own goods as the property of your parents and spend your capital on them with an open hand. The Holy Qur'an affirms:

يسئلونك ماذا ينفقون قل ما انفقتم من خير فللوالدين (البقرة-215)

Yus'alunaka mādhā yunfiqūna qul ma anfaqtum min khairin falil walidaini. (2: 215)

They ask thee, what they shall spend. Say what spend for good must be to parents”.

On one occasion a man came to the presence of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and complained that his father took whatever goods he wanted from him. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sent for that man's father. An old, infirm man came walking with the help of a stick. When the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) interrogated him on the point, the old man submitted: “O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ! There was a time when I was strong and he was weak and helpless. I had money and he was empty handed. I never forbade him then to lay his hands on anything that I possessed. Today, he is strong and healthy and I am old and infirm. He has money and I am empty-handed. He now denies me access to his goods”. Upon hearing this talk of the old man, the Benefactor of the humanity (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) burst into tears and addressing the son of the old man observed: “You and your goods are the property of your father”.

10. Even if your father and mother are non-Muslims, treat them well. Continue to pay them respect and devotion and serve them faithfully. However, in case they command you to become a

polytheist or indulge in a sinful act, refuse to obey them and sternly repulse their demand.

وان جاهداك على ان تشرك بي ما ليس لك به علم فلا تطعهما
وصاحبهما في الدنيا معروفا

Wa in jahadaka ala antushrika bimā laisa laka bihi ‘ilmun fala tuti ‘huma wa sahibhuma fiddunya ma ‘rūfa.

“And if your (parents) pressurise you to associate some one with Me of which you have no knowledge, obey them not, yet continue to treat them well in the world”.

Hadrat Asma’ (God be pleased with her) states: “In the sacred lifetime of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), my mother visited me on one occasion. She was a polytheist at that time. I submitted to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) : “My mother has come to pay me a visit and she is an unbeliever in Islam. How should I treat her?” The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “Yes, you should continue to show kindness to your mother”.
(*Bukhāri*)

11. Offer prayers begging grace for your parents, Bring to mind their fervent appeals to the Lord and beg His mercy for them with a zealous and sincere heart. God ordains:

وقل رب ارحمهما كما ربيني صغيرا

Waqul rabbirhamhumā kamā rabbayāni saghīra.

“And say: My Lord! Have mercy on them both as they did care for me when I was little”.

In other words, say: "O Creator, with mercy, devotion, affection and love my Lord they reared me in childhood and sacrificed their own pleasure and ease for my sake but, they, in their infirmity and helplessness of old age, are more deserving of kindness and love than I ever was. God! I can pay them no recompense. Do patronise them and show them mercy in their miserable state".

12. Observe special care in looking after your mother. By nature, the mother is weak and more sensitive and needs your better treatment and devotion. Moreover, her favours and sacrifices are comparatively far greater than the father. Hence religion has conceded preferential rights to the mother and has enjoined upon the believers to treat their mothers with special consideration. The Holy Qur'ān affirms:

ووصينا الإنسان بوالديه إحسانا حملته امه كرها ووضته كرها وحمله وفصاله
ثلاثون شهرا (الاحقاف-١٥)

Wa wassainal insāna biwālidaihi ihsānā. Hamalat-hu ummuhu kurhan wa wada' athu kurhan wa hamluhu wa fisaluhū thalāthūna shahrā. (46 : 15)

"And We have commanded unto man kindness towards parents. His mother beareth him with suffering, bringeth him forth with suffering, bearing of him and weaning of him is thirty months".

While enjoining upon the believers to show good behaviour towards both father and mother, the Holy Qur'ān has drawn a poignant picture of constant suffering of pain and hardships by the mother and has excellently pointed out in a psychological manner the fact that the devoted mother deserves comparatively more of your service and kind behaviour than your father. The same fact

has been elucidated in greater detail by the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Hadrat Abu Huraira (God be pleased with him) reports: "A man came to the presence of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and submitted : "O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ! Who deserves the noblest treatment from me?" The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed" "Your mother". He again submitted: "And next?" The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "Your mother". When the man submitted for the forth time: "And who next"? The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "Your father".
(*Al-Adabul Mufrad*)

Hadrat Jāhma (God be pleased with him) paid a call on the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and submitted : "O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ! I wish to join you in the Jihad and have come to solicit your guidance in this matter. I seek your command". The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) enquired from him: "Is your mother alive?" Jahma (God be pleased with him) submitted: "Yes, she is alive". Thereupon the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), said "Return to her then and devote yourself to her service, for Paradise lies under her feet".
(*Ibn Majah, Nasa'i*)

Hadrat Awais (may God show him mercy) was a contemporary of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), but he could never attain the privilege of calling on the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He had an old mother to whose service he devoted himself day and night. He cherished a great desire to see the Holy Prophet (peace

and blessings of Allah be upon him) and it was but natural for every Muslim to have a burning desire to catch a glimpse of the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Hadrat Awais (God be merciful to him) indeed wanted to pay a call, yet the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade him to come. Similarly, Hadrat Awais (mercy of God be on him) cherished an ambition to discharge the obligation of Hajj, yet as long as his mother remained alive, Hadrat Awais (God be merciful to him) never set out for the Hajj alone. He fulfilled the desire to perform Hajj only after his mother's demise.

13. Treat your foster mother well. Do service to her and show her respect and adoration. Hadrat Abu Tufail (God be pleased with him) states: "I once witnessed the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) distributing meat at a place called Ja'rana'. Presently, a lady arrived and approached near the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) spread out his sheet for her and the lady sat on it. I enquired from the people, "Who is this lady?" The people told me "This lady is the foster mother of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). *(Abu Dawūd)*

14. Remember your parents after they have passed away. Observe the following etiquettes to render good service to your deceased parents.

1. Offer prayers continuously invoking mercy of God upon your dead father and mother.

The Holy Qur'ān enjoins upon the pious to say this prayer:

ربنا اغفر لى ولوالدى وللمؤمنين يوم يقوم الحساب

*Rabbanaghfirli waliwālidayya wa lil mo'minīna
yauma yaqumūl hisāb.*

O our Lord! Grant forgiveness to me and my parents and pardon all the faithful on the day of Reckoning.

Hadrat Abu Huraira (God be pleased with him) states “When the deceased is elevated to high degrees of favour, he enquires in astonishment: “How so?” He is informed by God, “Your offsprings have been offering prayers begging mercy for you (and God has accepted those petitions of mercy)”.

Hadrat Abu Huraira (God be pleased with him) also states:

“The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: The opportunity to do something ends with one’s death, yet there are three-things which continue to afford benefit to him after death —a recurring charitable act; knowledge which he has imparted to others from which people derive benefit and thirdly, pious offsprings who continue to offer prayers invoking mercy of God upon him.

2. Fulfil all the contracts and promises made by your parents and carryout their will. Your parents must have made many agreements with some people, they might have made a covenant with God; they might have taken a vow; they might have promised to deliver goods to someone; they might have owed a debt to somebody but were unable to discharge it before death overtook them; they might have made a will at the time of their death. Fulfil all these obligations to the extent of your means.

Hadrat ‘Abdullah b. ‘Abbas (God be pleased with him) narrates : “Hadrat Sa’d b. ‘Ubada (God be pleased with him)

submitted to Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), "O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ! My mother had taken a vow, but she expired before discharging it. Can I carry out the vow on her behalf?" The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: "Why not ! You must carry out the vow taken by her".

3. Show good conduct to the friends of your father and the female companions of your mother. Treat them with respect. Seek their advice just as you seek the advice of your elders and pay due regard to their opinions and advice. On one occasion, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "There is no superior deed of piety than that man should do good service to the companions and friends of his father".

Once Hadrat Abu Darda (God be pleased with him) fell ill and his condition continued to aggravate till they lost all hopes of his life. Hadrat Yusuf b. 'Abdullah (God be pleased with him) made a long journey and came to enquire after his health. On seeing him, Hadrat Abu Darda asked in astonishment: "How are you here!" Yusuf b. 'Abdullah (God be pleased with him) replied: "I have come here only to enquire after your health, for you were on terms of deep friendship with my late father".

Hadrat Abu Barda (God be pleased with him) relates: "When I arrived in Medinah, 'Abdullah b. 'Umar (God be pleased with him) paid me a visit and said: "Abu Barda (God be pleased with you), do you know why I have come to see you?" I replied: "No, I have no idea why you have come here." Thereupon Hadrat 'Abdullah b. 'Umar (God be pleased with him) said : "I have heard the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as affirming : "The man who wishes to render good service to his father, who is in the grave, ought to show good treatment to

his father's companions and friends". Having related this saying of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) 'Abdullah b. 'Umar (God be pleased with him) remarked : "Brother, my father 'Umar and your father (God be pleased with him) were on terms of deep friendship. I wish to commemorate this friendship and fulfil its duties. *(Ibn Hibban)*

4. Show constant good treatment to the relations of your parents and entertain full respect and pay due regard to the sanctity of these connexions. An indifferent and irresponsible conduct towards these relations is tantamount to treating your own parents with indifference and negligence. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "Do not observe indifference towards your forefathers. To show carelessness in your conduct towards your parents is to display ingratitude to God."

15. If, God forbid, you have been guilty of negligence in treating your parents well or discharging your full obligations towards them during their lifetime, do not despair of God's mercy. Offer prayers constantly invoking blessings of God upon your deceased parents. It is possible God may forgive your sin of negligence and admit you among the ranks of the pious people.

Hadrat Anas (God be pleased with him) relates: The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed:

"If a person does not observe filial devotion to his parents during their lifetime, and both parents or one of them passes away, the person ought to offer prayers for his deceased parents and beg His Mercy and beseech Him to grant salvation to them till God in His Mercy ordains their admission to the rolls of the pious people."

Etiquettes of Married Life

The sublime culture and civilization which Islam envisages can only come into existence when we succeed in building up the structure of a righteous society. And a stable and well-organized family system is a prerequisite for the birth of a righteous society. Family life begins with the sacred matrimonial connexion between husband and wife and the development of this connexion into a permanently happy and pleasant matrimonial life chiefly depends on the full awareness of the etiquettes and duties of marital life in both husband and wife and their zeal, sincerity and devotion to observe those etiquettes and discharge obligations of married life. Let us in the first place deal with those etiquettes and obligations which concern the husband and then we shall proceed to discuss the etiquettes and duties to be observed by the wife.

1. Treat your wife well in life. Discharge your obligations towards her with a liberal heart and adopt a favourable and self-sacrificing attitude in every matter concerning your wife. God ordains :

وعاشروهن بالمعروف

Wa āshirūhunna bilma'rufi.

“And live with them in a good manner”.

In a sermon to a mammoth congregation on the eve of Hajja-tul-Wida (Last Hajj) of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) enjoined upon the Muslims :

“O people! Listen! Behave well towards women, for they are like captives with you. You have no right to give them harsh treatment save in the case when they show open disobedience. If

they are guilty of disobedience, keep away from them in the bed room. In case you punish them, take care not to cause them severe injury. When they come round and obey your will, do not find pretexts to harass them. Listen carefully! you have some rights over your wives and your wives have some rights over you. They owe an obligation to you not to let your beds be trampled by anyone whom you dislike and not let anyone trespass into your house whose visit you do not like. And listen, you owe a duty to them to feed them well and provide good clothing to them”.

(*Riyad-us-Salihin*)

In other words, make such provisions for their feeding and clothing as are befitting to a marital relationship of unique intimacy, union of hearts and a spirit of companionship.

2. Entertain a good opinion about your wife as far as possible and adopt an attitude of politeness, toleration and magnanimity for the sake of amicable living with her. If she lacks beauty of face or person or is deficient in good manners, morality, good sense or skill in household affairs, bear these faults with patience. Look to her virtues and maintain a harmonious relationship by means of generosity, liberality of mind and self-sacrifice. God ordains :

والصلح خير

Was-sulhu khair.

“And amity contains goodness”.

And the believers are enjoined upon as follows:

فان كرهتموهن فعسى ان تكرهوا شيئا و يجعل الله فيه خيرا كثيرا
(النساء-١٩)

Fa-in-karihtumuhunna fa-'asā antakrahu shai'an wa ya'j alallāhu fihī khairan kathīra. (4: 19)

“For if ye hate them it may happen that ye hate a thing wherein Allah hath placed much good”.

The same subject has been elucidated by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the following Tradition :

“No believer should hate his pious wife. If he dislikes one habit of his wife, it is possible he may like her for some other aspects of her character”.

As a matter of fact each woman has some weakness of one sort or another and if the husband turns against her on account of her bearing a certain deficiency and conceives a hatred for her, a pleasant home life becomes impossible for the couple. Common sense dictates that man should adopt a liberal attitude and reposing his trust in God should endeavour to live amicably with his wife. It is possible that God may vouchsafe to that man, merely for the sake of this woman, such bounties which his limited mind cannot comprehend. For instance, this woman may possess excellent virtues of religion, faith, character and morality in reward for which God may shower blessings upon her own family or may be a pious soul is born of this woman who may prove beneficial for the whole mankind and may serve as a *Sadaqa Jariah* (Continuing Charity) in favour of the father till the end of his life, or perhaps the woman may serve as a means of reforming the character of her man and thus may help him to gain proximity to Paradise or it may be that God may bless this man with large subsistence and prosperity because such a blessing of prosperity was destined for his wife. At any rate, do not ruin your married life impetuously on the grounds of an apparent defect in the woman. On the other hand, be wise and try to promote gradually an atmosphere of happiness and concord in the home.

3. Adopt an attitude of forgiveness and kindness. Forget all the faults of omission, stupid actions and disobedient attitude of your wife.

The woman is deficient and weak in wisdom and commonsense and bears an extreme passionate temperament. Hence try to bring her round with patience, calmness, kindness, affection and devotion. Try to get along with her with patience and restraint. God ordains :

ياايهاالذين امنوا ان من ازواجكم واولادكم عدوا لكم فاحذروهم
وان تعفوا و تصفحوا و تغفروا فان الله غفور رحيم (التغابن- ١٣)

Yā-ayyuhalladhīna āamanu inna min azwājikum wa aulādikum aduwwan lakum fahdharūkum wa-in ta'fū wataṣfahū wa taghfirū fa-innallaha ghafūrrahīm. (Attāghabun : 14)

“O ye who believe! verily, among your wives and your children, there are enemies for you, therefore beware of them. And if ye efface and overlook and forgive, then Allah is Forgiving, Merciful”.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed :

“Be good to women. The woman has been created out of the rib and the uppermost part of the rib ends in a curve; so if you try to straighten out the curve, it will break, yet if you leave it alone, the curve will remain. Hence, be good to women”.

(*Bukhāri, Muslim*)

4. Treat your wife politely and show love and affection to her. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed:

“The believers who possess perfect faith are those who display the best manners, and the best among you are those who treat their wives in the best possible manner”. *(Tirmidhi)*

Politeness and tenderness of behaviour can best be judged in the home. People are constantly living amidst their family members and the real temper and moral conduct of man is completely revealed in the free and uninhibited atmosphere of the home. It is a fact that only such believers possess perfect faith who display civility, kindness and affectionate behaviour towards their family members and who support, sympathise, love and adore inmates of their household.

Hadrat ‘Ā’isha (God be pleased with her) reports : “I used to play with dolls along with my playmates in the house of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). On the arrival of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) all of them used to hide themselves in the nooks and corners of the house. The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to search out each one of them and send them to join me in the play”. *(Bukhāri, Muslim)*

Once on the occasion of Hajj, the camel of Hadrat Safiyya (God be pleased with her) sat down on the ground and she was therefore left behind while the entire caravan passed on. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came to her and found her weeping without restraint. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stood there wiping off her tears with the edge of a sheet with his own holy hands. While the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) wiped off tears from her eyes, she (God be pleased with her) continued to weep unrestrainedly for a long time”.

5. Make liberal provisions for all the needs of your wife and do not stint in expenses. Feel a sense of pleasure and comfort in spending your lawful earnings on members of your family. You owe an obligation to your wife to provide her with food and clothing and to struggle energetically, in order to earn enough money to discharge this obligation, is the most pleasant duty of a husband. The performance of this duty with an open and cheerful heart earns for the believer the reward of a happy marital life in this world and a favourable recompense and bounty in the world to come. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed :

“You spend a dinar in the way of God; you spend another dinar to ransom a slave; you give away one dinar as alms to a beggar; and there is one dinar which you spend on your family. Among all these, the dinar that will earn the best reward and blessings of God is the one which you have spent on your family”.

(Muslim)

6. Teach your wife the rules and manners enjoined by religion. Let her observe Islamic morality and make her life graceful. Make every possible effort to train and mould her according to the Islamic pattern of life so that she may prove to be a good wife, good mother and a pious devotee of God and may discharge her duties as a wife efficiently and faithfully. God affirms :

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا

Yā-āyyuhāllādhīn amanu qū anfusakum wa āhlikum nārā.

“O ye who believe! Save yourselves and your family from the Fire of Hell”.

As the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) devoted himself to preaching and teaching the laws of religion

outside the home, likewise he continued to perform the same function inside his home. Making an illusion to this fact, the Holy Qur'ān addresses the wives of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in these words :

“And remember the verses of God and the matters of wisdom that are conveyed to you in your house”.

The Qur'ān has advised the believers through the ministry of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) :

وامر اهلك بالصلوة واصطبر عليها

Wa'mur ahlaka bissalāti wastabir 'alaihā.

“And urge upon the inmates of your house to observe prayers and fully abide by this obligation yourself too”.

The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirms :

“When a man wakes up his wife during the night and they offer two Rak'ahs of Prayers together, God ordains that the man's name should be included in the rolls of the male rememberers of God and the woman's name in the register of those females who offer praises to God and remember Him.” *(Abu Dawud)*

The second Caliph Hadrat 'Umar (God be pleased with him) used to stand all night offering devotions to God. Near the hour of dawn he used to wake his wife saying : “Rise, get up and say prayers”, and later he (God be pleased with him) used to recite this verse also:

وامر اهلك بالصلوة واصطبر عليها

Wa'mur ahlaka bis-salati wastabir a'laiha.

“And urge upon the inmates of your house to observe prayers and fully abide by this obligation yourself”.

7. If you possess several wives, show equal treatment to all of them. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to observe great care in dispensing equal treatment to his wives. On the eve of setting out for a journey the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to draw lots and took with him the wife whose name was decided by the toss. Hadrat Abu Huraira (God be pleased with him) states that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed:

“If a man has two wives, but does not treat them with equality and even-handed justice, he shall be resurrected on the Day of Judgement in such a condition that half of his body is paralysed”.

(Tirmidhi)

‘Justice’ and ‘equality’ imply to treat them equally in all matters and show the same kind of behaviour to each wife. As regards the fact that a man may be specially attracted towards one wife or may be drawn to her or cherish deeper feelings of love for her, God will award no punishment to the man for it.

8. Obey your husband with a willing heart and feel pleasure and satisfaction in being faithful to him. This is what God commands a wife to do and the believing woman who acts according to the will of God wins His Favour. The Holy Qur’ān affirms :

فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ

Fas sālihātu qānitātun.

“The pious wives are those who show obedience to their husbands”.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed:

“No woman should keep fast without the permission of her husband”.
(*Abu Dāwud*)

Stressing the importance of rendering obedience and devotion to her husband, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has warned the woman:

“There are two types of persons whose prayers do not rise above their heads—the prayer of a slave who deserts his master until he returns to his service and the prayer of a woman who shows disobedience to her husband until she recants from this behaviour”.
(*Al-Tarhib-o-Al-Tarhib*)

9. Protect your honour and chastity. Keep away from all matters or activities which contain a possible threat to violate your honour or chastity. This is what God commands and it is also an essential prerequisite for making your marital life happy and pleasant. No amount of devotion and obedience of the wife can win the heart of her husband if the seeds of suspicion about her infidelity are once sown in his mind. Even an ordinary act of carelessness on the wife's part may prompt the devil to fill the heart of her husband with indelible doubts and suspicions. Hence keeping in view this human weakness, exercise utmost vigilance in such matters.

The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed:

“If the woman offers prayers five times a day, protects her honour and chastity, remains faithful to her husband, she may enter Paradise by whichever gate she likes”.

(Al-Tarhib-o-Al-Tarhib)

10. Do not go out of the house without leave or permission of your husband. Do not call at homes of which your husband disapproves, nor admit anyone into your house whom your husband dislikes.

Hadrat Mu'ādh ibn Jabal (God be pleased with him) narrates that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed:

“It is not lawful for a woman who believes God to admit a man into her house whose visit is disapproved by her husband or that she should go out of the house against her husband's will or she should obey the will of someone else in opposition to her husband's wishes”.
(al-Tarhib-o-Al-Tarhib)

In other words, obey the wishes of your husband, even watch and be mindful of the slightest indications of his approval or disapproval. Do not follow the counsels of others which are in opposition to the will of your husband.

11. It should be your permanent concern to make your husband happy by your words, actions, behaviour and manners. This is not only the real secret of a successful marriage, but a means to win the favour of God and admittance into Paradise. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed:

“The woman who dies in such a state that her husband was entirely satisfied and in concord with her, will certainly enter Paradise”.
(Tirmidhi)

Furthermore, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed:

“When a man calls his wife to fulfil the sexual urge and she declines and for this reason the husband remains angry with her all night, the angels send curses upon such a wife till dawn.”

(Bukhari, Muslim)

12. Love your husband and value his companionship. He is the adornment of your life, your life's support and a great companion and helper in the course of your life. Give thanks to God for this great Bounty and value this Bounty too with all your heart and soul. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed on one occasion:

“For the two who love one another there is no better thing than the ‘Nikah’ (matrimonial tie)”.

Hadrat Safiyya (God be please with her) cherished deep love for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). When illness overcame the Holy Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Hadrat Safiyya (God be pleased with her) spoke with genuine concern: “Would God that I had fallen ill instead of you, O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) !” At the expression of deep love by Hadrat Safiyya (God be pleased with her), the other wives of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) looked towards her in astonishment. Thereupon the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed:

“She is not merely making a show of her affection; she is expressing her genuine love”.

13. Acknowledge the debt of gratitude you owe to your husband and remain grateful to him. Your greatest benefactor is your husband who is always concerned with making you happy, providing for

your needs and feels satisfied when he has made all provisions for your comfort.

Hadrat Asma' (God be pleased with her) narrates the Tradition: I was once with my neighbour friends when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) passed near me. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said 'Salam' (peace be on you) to us and observed : "Avoid being ungrateful to those whom you owe a debt of gratitude. One of you, for instance, lives with her parents in an unmarried state for a long period. Then God confers upon her a husband. Subsequently, God grants her offspring. Yet in spite of all these favours when she feels enraged with her husband on some matter, she utters, 'Never have I received anything good from you". *(Al-Adab ul Mufrad)*

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in a warning statement to an ungrateful and unthanking wife observed :

"On the Day of Judgement, God will not even look at a woman who is ungrateful to her husband, despite the fact that a wife can never get along without her husband". *(Nasa'i)*

14. Feel happy in doing service to your husband and afford maximum comfort to him at the expense of your own inconvenience. Devote yourself to his welfare in all matters and by means of this sincere service capture the deep affections of his heart. Hadrat 'Ā'isha (God be pleased with her) used to wash the clothes of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) with her own hands, annointed his sacred head with oil, combed his hair, and rubbed perfume on his holy person (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The other contemporary pious ladies (God be pleased with them) served their husbands in the same manner.

On one occasion, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed:

“It is unlawful for a human being to prostrate before another human. If it had been permissible, the wife would have been ordained by God to offer prostration to her husband. The husband has the supreme right over his wife, and such is the optimum degree of this right that in case a husband’s whole body is covered with wounds and the wife licks them all with her tongue, the obligation she owes to her husband is even then not discharged in full measure”
(Musnad Ahmad)

15. Safeguard the home, property and goods of your husband. After marriage consider the husband’s home as your own and spend the wealth of your husband wisely and economically on the adornment of your home, on the enhancement of the prestige of your husband and on securing a better future for your children. Consider the advancement and prosperity of your husband as your own personal achievements. Praising the virtues of the women of the tribe of Quraish, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed:

“How excellent are the women of the tribe of Quraish. They are most affectionate towards children and most efficient guardians of their husband’s homes”.
(Bukhari)

Describing the virtues of a pious wife, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed:

“Next to the fear of God the most useful and the bountiful reward for a believer is a pious wife. When he asks her to do something, she does it cheerfully. When he looks at her, she pleases him to the core of his hearts. When he swears upon her

trust, she fulfils his oath. When he goes away, she protects her honour and chastity in his absence and finally in super-intendence of her husband's goods and property she remains truly faithful and devoted to his interest." *(Ibn majah)*

16. Observe cleanliness, manage your household affairs wisely and look after the decoration and furnishing of your homes. Keep your house clean. Arrange everything tidily and use things with proper care and skill. A clean and tidy home, neatly furnished rooms, good management of household affairs and home economy and a beautifully dressed and adorned wife wearing a pleasant smile on her lips..... all this charges the home atmosphere with currents of deep love and affection and the marital life is enriched with happiness and blessings. This is the only way for a wife to gain her personal salvation and to win the favour of God.

On one occasion during a meeting Hadrat 'Ā'isha saw that the wife of 'Uthman b. Maz'ūn (God be pleased with both of them) was dress in plain clothes and wore no adornments. Hadrat 'Ā'isha (God be pleased with her) was taken aback and enquired:

"My good lady! Has your husband 'Uthman gone out on a journey?"

You can judge from the exclamation of Hadrat 'Ā'isha (God be pleased with her) what a propitious act it is for a married woman to adorn and beautify herself for her husband.

Once a Muslim lady of Medina (God be pleased with her) presented herself before the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). She was at that time wearing gold bangles. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)

expressed his disapproval of her wearing the gold bangles. The lady submitted:

“O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon you)! If a woman does not adorn herself and make her person attractive for her husband, she would soon lose her value for him.”

(*Nasa'i*)

Note: The above unit has been taken from Muhammad Yusuf Islahi's *Etiquettes of life in Islam*, Lahore, Islamic Publications Ltd., 1985.

