

“Parenting, According to Our Scriptures”

1. Parenting should not be viewed and practised as a standalone event in the cycle of life. The term parent(s) indicate a bond that there are children under their care and responsibility, whether the children are direct offspring or fostered. The relationship between parents and their children varies with different communities throughout the world. Some communities practice the common family unit cycles of “new nest, full nest and then empty nest.” Islam is different and regardless to the racial and geographical ethnicity differences, all Muslims in Islam are compelled to heed to the decreed instructions in the Holy Qur’an, insofar as matters on the responsibility of parents to their children and the reverse of that: responsibilities of children to their parents. The Holy Qur’an provides equations of perfect balance of those rights and responsibilities.
2. On matters of faith, children have same religious values as adults and they should not be shutout of faith activities. Children must be aligned to religious scriptures and they must not be denied religious knowledge when they ask for facts. These are fundamental obligations of parents toward Children.
3. Parental practice does not stop at having children only, but the practice continues into the future with very specific obligations of parents to children. In Islam, the Holy Qur’an compels the mother to provide suckling and feed for infants till age of 30 months. The Holy Qur’an also compels the father to foot all costs associated in feeding and clothing of the children and running of the household at his cost; and this includes the hire of wet-nurse and servants (if necessary) at his cost, even though the couple may be estranged. This parental Order is stated in the Holy Qur’an at **46:15** *“And We have enjoined on man the doing of good to his parents. His mother bears him with trouble and she brings him forth in pain. And the bearing of him and the weaning of him is thirty months. Till, when he attains his maturity and reaches forty years, he says: My Lord, grant me that I may give thanks for Thy favour, which Thou hast bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do good which pleases Thee; and be good to me in respect of my offspring. Truly I turn to Thee, and truly I am of those who submit.”*
4. The education of children is a fundamental parental obligation. In the event of deep poverty, if the parents have a son and daughter and there is just barely sufficient funding for education of only one person, the first right to education always goes to the daughter. This is very important as the daughter will at some time in future become a mother; and the mother is the first teacher to a child. This is stated in the Holy Qur’an at **4:5** *“And make not over your property, which Allah has made a (means of) support for you, to the weak of understanding, and maintain them out of it, and clothe them and give them a good education.”*
5. The Holy Qur’an also recognises the role of both natural parents and foster parents and the guardianships they as parents are required to practice in managing properties. The Holy Qur’an ensures that the offspring must not be left unsecured and insists that parents make a will for their survival and future involving a testator. This is decreed at **2:180-182**: *“It is prescribed for you, when death approaches one of you, if he leaves behind wealth for parents and near relatives, to make a bequest in a kindly manner; it is incumbent upon the dutiful. Then whoever changes it after he has heard it, the sin of it is only upon those who change it. Surely Allah is Hearing, Knowing. But if one fears a wrong or a sinful course on the part of the testator, and effects an agreement between the parties, there is no blame on him. Surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”*
6. Property handing over to children also compels use of witnesses. These features are stated in the Holy Qur’an at **4:6** *“And test the orphans until they reach the age of marriage. Then if you find in them maturity of intellect, make over to them their property, and consume it not extravagantly and hastily against their growing up. And whoever is rich, let him abstain, and whoever is poor let him consume reasonably. And when you make over to them their property, call witnesses in their presence. And Allah is enough as a Reckoner.”*
7. The handing over also requires beneficial advisory and this is stated at **4:8** *“And when relatives and the orphans and the needy are present at the division, give them out of it and speak to them kind words.”*

Parents must not ignore their obligations and ensure that they leave their children well-cared for by making of a will for their children. The Holy Qur'an compels with prescribed ratios on making of wills at **4:11** *"Allah enjoins you concerning your children: for the male is the equal of the portion of two females; but if there be more than two females, two-thirds of what the deceased leaves is theirs; and if there be one, for her is the half. And as for his parents, for each of them is the sixth of what he leaves, if he has a child; but if he has no child and (only) his two parents inherit him, for his mother is the third; but if he has brothers, for his mother is the sixth, after (payment of) a bequest he may have bequeathed or a debt. Your parents and your children, you know not which of them is the nearer to you in benefit. This is an ordinance from Allah. Allah is surely ever Knowing, Wise."*

8. There are situations when parents may no longer have children and in such cases there is very specific formula how the properties are to be divided in the will. This has been stated at **4:12** *"And yours is half of what your wives leave if they have no child; but if they have a child, your share is a fourth of what they leave after (payment of) any bequest they may have bequeathed or a debt; and theirs is the fourth of what you leave if you have no child, but if you have a child, their share is the eighth of what you leave after (payment of) a bequest you may have bequeathed or a debt. And if a man or a woman, having no children, leaves property to be inherited and he (or she) has a brother or a sister, then for each of them is the sixth; but if they are more than that, they shall be sharers in the third after (payment of) a bequest that may have been bequeathed or a debt not injuring (others). This is an ordinance from Allah: and Allah is Knowing, Forbearing."*
9. There are situations when orphans are left in charge of relatives or certain persons as trustees. In such situations, the Holy Qur'an warns that persons left in charge of orphans must not cheat or trick the orphans and states at **4:10** *"Those who swallow the property of the orphans unjustly, they swallow only fire into their bellies. And they will burn in blazing fire."*
10. Whilst all children are required to be listening and heeding upstream to instructions of their parents, the Holy Qur'an requires that to be so; but at the same time makes certain that if the parents are imposing on their children to the worshipping of anything other than Allah, then insofar as that aspect matters, the children are ordered not to listen to their parents. This is given at **29:8** *"And We have enjoined on man goodness to his parents. But if they contend with thee to associate (others) with Me, of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not. To Me is your return, so I will inform you of what you did."* The Holy Qur'an records the same principles which were imposed on the Israelites and this is stated at **2:83** *"And when We made a covenant with the Children of Israel: You shall serve none but Allah. And do good to (your) parents, and to the near of kin and to orphans and the needy, and speak good (words) to (all) men, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate. Then you turned back except a few of you, and you are averse."*
11. The Holy Qur'an imposes a Decree that love from God to people must be same in parents' love to children and the reversible linkages of love, at **4:36** *"And serve Allah, and associate naught with Him, and be good to the parents and to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the neighbour of (your) kin and the alien neighbour, and the companion in a journey and the wayfarer and those whom your right hands possess. Surely Allah loves not such as are proud, boastful."*
12. The Holy Qur'an further decrees that children must always treat their parents very well, at **17:23** *"And thy Lord has decreed that you serve none but Him, and do good to parents. If either or both of them reach old age with thee, say not "Fie" to them, nor chide them, and speak to them a generous word."* Further, Muslims are compelled to pray for their parents and to plead for their forgiveness and this is decreed at **71:28** as *"My Lord, forgive me and my parents and him who enters my house believing, and the believing men and the believing women. And increase not the wrongdoers in aught but destruction!"* It is for all correct thinking Muslims to guide and assist others; the Holy Qur'an has sanctioned that correct advice shall be given to those who need to be guided. This is given in the Holy Qur'an at **3:103**, as *"And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful."*

-End of Document-