

YAQEEN INSTITUTE FOR ISLAMIC RESEARCH

40 HADITHS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

LECTURE NOTES

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Chapter 25: Justice Between Parents and Children

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: A son does not repay what he owes his father unless he buys him (the father) in case he is a slave and then emancipates him.

[Sahih Muslim]

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " لَا يَجْزِي وَلَدٌ وَالِدًا إِلَّا أَنْ يَجِدَهُ مَمْلُوكًا فَيَشْتَرِيَهُ " فَيُعْتِقَهُ "

[صحيح مسلم]

Introduction

- Previously we discussed justice in financial transactions. We will now enter the family realm of social justice.
 - Will begin with the rights of parents on their children.
- Islamic principle: The prophet (ﷺ) would always assign clear authority. Rights and responsibilities are clearly laid out in Islamic texts.
- The trickiest aspect in the family realm is the balancing rights (ex. rights of parents vs. rights of spouse)
- We should always try to do Ihsan by doing more than what is required of us.
- The Hadith mentions the father. However, a majority of scholars say it applies to your mother as well.
- The Hadith is not to be taken literally and is meant to express the idea that you can never repay your parents.

Rights of Parents in the Quran

- When looking at the Qur'an there are two ways in which Allah speaks about the treatment of parents.
 - Surah Isra Ayah 23: وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۗ

- "And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment..."
- The Ayah uses the word **قضى** which refers to justice/judgment.
- Allah (swt) joins the respect for the parents with the obligation to worship him alone to emphasize its importance and show its obligation
- Surah Ahqaf Ayah 15: **وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا**
 - "And We have enjoined upon man, to his parents, good treatment..."
 - This Ayah uses the word **وصية** which is when you entrust someone with something. It is very personal and denotes a sense of excellence. When someone gives you a wasiyyah you honor it for the love of that person.

Showing Ihsan to Parents

- There was a man who cared for his mother while she was extremely old and weak. She was at the point where she was essentially like an infant; he had to carry her, clean up after her, take her to the restroom, etc. The man believed that he had repaid her for what she did for him. However, Umar (ra) told him that you do all that while praying to Allah that she passes soon but she would do all that while asking Allah to give you a long life.
 - Even if it looks like you are repaying them on the outside, that isn't the case on the inside. There is a special ihsaan, a special mercy that Allah has put in the heart of parents.
- A man carried his mother on his back during Hajj and asked Ibn Umar "Have I repaid her yet" and he replied, not even for one of her shouts during labor.
- Zayn Al-Abideen would wait for his mother to eat before he did. He didn't want to eat something that she had desired for herself.
- Imam Ahmed (ra) did not get married until his mother passed away. She was a single mother who struggled and he felt that if he got married he would not be fulfilling her right upon him.
- These stories don't show rulings in Islam but rather instances of Ihsan.

Parents Reaching Old Age

- If your parents reach old age in your lifetime, it is a نعمة and not a curse. They are your ticket to Jannah and you have endless opportunities to serve them.
- Surah Isra Ayah 23-24: وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۖ إِنَّمَا يُبَلِّغُنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَيْهِمَا فَلا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٌ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا – وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا

 - “And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as], "uff," and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word.” “And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say, "My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small.””
 - فَلا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٌ: Don't ever show any displeasure when they get old. This is the time where they might require more time from you and express any displeasure that you have to serve them.
 - وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا: Don't make them feel repealed. Islam recognizes emotional rights!
 - وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا: Replace these behaviors with dignified and honorable words. The first effect of speaking good words is to make that person feel dignified.
 - وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ: Show complete powerlessness in front of them. Lower yourself in humility and sub-ordination.

- The greatest example of this when the Prophet (ﷺ) would see the women who raised him and humble himself as a child

The Mother Above the Father

- Surah Ahqaf Ayah 15: وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا ۖ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا ۖ وَحَمَلُهُ وَفِصَالُهُ ۖ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي دَرْبِي ۗ إِنَّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

 - “And We have enjoined upon man, to his parents, good treatment. His mother carried him with hardship and gave birth to him with hardship, and his gestation

and weaning [period] is thirty months. [He grows] until, when he reaches maturity and reaches [the age of] forty years, he says, "My Lord, enable me to be grateful for Your favor which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents and to work righteousness of which You will approve and make righteous for me my offspring. Indeed, I have repented to You, and indeed, I am of the Muslims." "

- By signaling out the mother, the Ayah shows that there is a priority in terms of parents.
 - Similarly, a Hadith of the prophet (ﷺ) mentions the mother 3 times before the father. Of course, this does not mean that you dishonor your father.
 - This is a 180 from the ignorance of the Arab culture where in the Pre-Islamic era a mother had a very low position and could even be inherited. Islam took her position and honored her even above the father.
- There is a story where a man confessed a murder to Ibn Abbas (ra) and asked if he had a chance of being forgiven. Ibn Abbas asked him if his mother was alive. He said no. So Ibn Abbas told him to repent and draw near to Allah as much as possible. Ibn Abbas later said that he asked him if his mother was alive because he did not know of any action that brings one closer to Allah than being good to one's parents.
- Also note that Allah (swt) keeps the verse general. He does not specify to which parents you should good treatment and excellence.

Reasonability in Obedience

- It is understood that the parents should not abuse their rights.
 - Allah (swt) is not unreasonable with his servants
- Hadith: لا طاعة لمخلوق في معصية الخالق
- "There is no obedience to a creation while disobeying the creator"
- Hadith: إنما الطاعة في المعروف
- "Obedience is always contingent on it being reasonable."
- The most unreasonable request a parent could make of a child is to do Shirk.

- This is what the father of Ibrahim (as) demanded of him. His father also tried to murder him. However, that didn't excuse Ibrahim (as) from treating his father with respect.
- Surah Luqman Ayah 15: وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۗ وَصَاحِبِهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا
 - "But if they endeavor to make you associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them but accompany them in [this] world with appropriate kindness"
- Hadith: أنت ومالك لأبيك
 - "You and your money belong to your father."
 - This does not mean that your father can take his son's money but is rather an expression that you are responsible for taking care of your parents if you have money.
- A man came to Umar (ra) to complain to him about his son. The son said, "doesn't the child have rights over the father as well?" Umar (ra) said that those rights are that the father marries a good wife (the child's mother), gives him a good name, and teaches him Quran. The father didn't fulfill those rights so Umar (ra) reprimanded him.

Conclusion

- There is no greater gift or investment than children and there is no greater obligation or way to earn the pleasure of Allah than the opportunity to serve your parents in old age.