# The Natural and Intellectual Rights in Islam

**The Father:**

My child! My purpose of speaking about the religious issues was for you to become familiar with a sample of the beliefs of you father and mother, and to become certain that it is not without reasons that they are fond of religion. Even, if these discussions did not convince you, and if you still are of your old opinion about them, and should think your parents are old fashioned and superstitious, this rights, to be rude to them or to treat them disrespectfully. As the rights of your parents are natural and intellectual and in any case they are inviolable.

Have you not ever heard of a Christian youth by the name of Zakariya who became Muslim and who went to Medina to Imam al-Sadiq (as) and said to him: "I was a Christian, now I have become Muslim. My father, mother and entire family are Christians also my mother is blind. Do you see it advisable for me to stay with them?"

The Imam Said:

"Certainly, be good to your mother and pay attention to her." - Usual Kafi, New edition, 2nd Volume, p. 16

The youth, upon the return to his home town of Kufa, started to render his services to his mother. And more than ever before, he treated her with kindness. So much so the it surprised his mother. She inquired about the reason of his extreme kindness after becoming Muslim. He told her of the Imam's advice. She was impressed and consequently, she too accepted Islam.

**The Child:**

Of course the matter of religious beliefs has nothing to do with the rights of parents. They exist whether the child is in agreement with parent's principles and beliefs or not.

**The Rights of Fathers and Mothers**

**The Father:**

My child! Even if the Holy Qur'an and the religious leaders had not advised you on how to treat your father and mother, your intelligence would command you to honour them. And as far as human nature is concerned, treating them with due respect is a must. There are many verse in the Holy Qur'an, as well as many statements concerning the topic.

The Almighty, in the Holy Qur'an says:

"And your Lord has decreed that you shall not worship except Him and honour your parents.

For as long as they live, one of them or both of them, you shall not speak harshly to them or mistreat them; you shall speak to them amicably. And lower for them the wings of humility and kindness and say: My Lord, have mercy on them for they brought me up from infancy.

- The Holy Qur'an 17: 23-24

The Almighty Allah in another place in the Holy Qur'an says:

"We enjoined the human being to honour his parents; his mother bore him as he got heavier and heavier and cared for him for two years until weaning. You shall be appreciative to Me and to your parents. To me is (thy final) goal." - The Holy Qur'an 31:14

The Holy Prophet (p.b. u.h.) in answer to a person who had asked what right has father to his child, said: "The child should not call him by his name. Neither should he walk in front of him: nor be seated before he is seated and he should use no evil words, to anyone, except after one has used evil words against his father."

- Usul al-Kafi, New Edition, vol.II pp. 159-161

A foster sister of Prophet once went to his visit. The Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h) treated her with utmost love and respect. After she had left, her brother went to his visit. But he did not receive as much attention from him. People present at both meetings, asked the reason. The Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h) explained:

"The reason is that she had treated parents with more respect and kindness than he had." - Usul al-Kafi, New Edition, vol II.159-161

Our Fourth Imam, Imam Sajjad (as) says:

"You are indebted to your mother for she carried you in a manner that no one else did. She fed you the essence of her life whereas no other person did. she fed no other person such food. She used her entire being for the purpose of protecting you. Whereas, she would not care about herself being hungry or thirsty, she fed you and quenched your thirst. She dressed you well when she had no cover for herself. If she were in the sun, she would put you in the shade. She deprived herself of a peaceful sleep for you sake, She protected you from heat and cold. She did all these so you would stay alive for her. Oh human, without Allah's help. you shall never be able to thank her enough! And you are indebted to your father for that he is your roots. If he were not, you would be not give him credit for all good fortunes you may have, because he is the one, who is the basis for them. Be grateful and appreciative to him. And there is no power except by Allah."

- Wafi, 3rd part, 0.127

Imam al-Rida (as)1 quotes the Holy Qur'an where Allah say: "Oh human give thanks unto me and unto your father and mother."

- Oyoon Akhbar al-Rida, p. 143

Therefore, he who does not appreciate his parents, he does not appreciate Allah. Again Imam al-Rida (as) says:

"He who does not express his appreciation for a gift, given to him by someone, has not indeed thanked Allah." - Oyoon Akhbar al-Rida, p. 194

**The Child:**

Of course, the wisdom advises one to honour one's father and mother. And Holy Qur'an as well as our religious leaders confirm such as advise.

**The Chid's Rights**

**The Father:**

My child! In order not to judge in a one sided manner, I should tell you that as any child is obligated to his parents, they in return are obligated to him too. In reply to a man who had asked about his obligations to his child, the Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h) said:

"It is for you to give him a good name and to raise him in a good manner and to teach him an appropriate trade" - Wafi, 12th part, pp. 210-211

The Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h) has other points in this respect such as: "Teach your children swimming and archery." - Wafi, 12th part, pp. 210-211

"Parents are equally obliged to discharge their responsibilities towards their children and are accountable in case of failure. Similarly children are responsible to discharge their obligation towards parents" - Wafi, 12th part, pp. 210-211

"May Allah have mercy upon those parents who help their children so that the children could reciprocate the same towards them. They asked how can they help. He replied by accepting any easy task he may fulfill; and by not requiring him to do hard labour; and by not being rough and unfair to him."

- Wafi, 12th part, pp. 219-211 Imam Ali (as) says:

"Do not force your children in having the same characteristics as you do. Because they created in an era which is different from yours." - Al Imam Ali, vol. III, p 733 Further he said:

"A father has three obligations towards his child: 1. To give him a good name, 2: To raise him in a good manner, and 3: To teach him Holy Qur'an. - Nahjul Balagha, p. 546.

I think, by this, he does not merely mean the pronunciation of Qur'anic words, but rather the practice and implementation of its commandments, method, and its exalted moral guidelines in their day of day lives. You should familiarize yourself with the sublime realities in the Qur'anic

text, so that you can meet your spiritual needs. What better honour is there to lead a life according to the teaching of the Holy Qur'an. Our fourth Imam, Imam Sajjad (as) says:

"You should be aware of the fact that your child has come from you and that people associate his good or bad deeds with you. You are responsible to teach him good manners, and to guide him to the way of the Creator of the World and to help him on obeying Him. Most assuredly, you will be rewarded for the being good to your child, and will be punished for abusing him." - Wafi, Part III, p.127

Imam al-Sadiq (as) says:

"He who is beneficent to his child, is so to his parents" - Wafi, part II, p. 211

Our seventh Imam, Imam Musa al-Kazim,1 (as) says:

"It is appropriate to encourage a boy during his childhood to do difficult work in order to grow up a patient and meek adult." - Wafi, Part II,P. 211

**The Child:**

As you admit for the most part, rearing a child and preparing him for a material and spiritual life is up to his parents.

## The Responsibilities of Fathers & Mothers

**The Father:**

My child! based on the verse in the Holy Qur'an that advise benevolence to parents, next to worshipping of Almighty Allah, it is understood that next to our obligations to Him, there is no greater obligation than that to our parents.

**The Child:**

My honourable father! Your responsibilities to me as parents are as great as your authority over me. It is all up to you as to how you raise and rear me and how to educate me. Our times are different from each others. Our environment too is different from that in which you were growing up. A simple life, with no means of corruption and not too many social obligation or luxuries, raised you to the way you are. But I was born into this world in the age of Atom, machine and cinema and in a polluted environment.

As if I were to spend all day and night serving you would not be too, much, you should do likewise for me, and have a watching eye day and night one me in this rough sea (of life). If I am about to drown, grab my hand and rescue me. Parents should periodically go to their children's schools and inquire about their education and behaviour from their teachers. Ask

about their associates and close friends and particularly to ask about where they spend their time when they are out for the evening.

At night at home they should help their children with their homework by offering them guidance. If they are about to engage in an unwise activity, they should stop them by explaining to them the harms that may be involved. In this way, they will learn from their parent's past experiences. Of course, their involvement should not be detrimental to the children's independent personality or to their confidence building.

**Rearing of a Child**

**The Father:**

My child! Speaking of rearing of a child, I must agree that a child is capable of being trained. If it were not so, we the parents, would not have been obligated for your upbringing. He also is capable of improving. Many evil doers who received the right kind of advice became righteous people. And many ill-tempered accepted guidance and converted into good natured gentle individuals. So, in this manner, it is only wise for parents to offer their good advice to their children whenever they note the later are starting to misbehave or the weaken their religious beliefs. Not by beating them up or by putting them under material pressure, or by kicking them out of the house. Rather, by offering advice or by having a mutually trusted individual talk to them and give them guidance. Furthermore, in a sympathetic way, they should pray to Allah that the child be corrected. they should rest assured that he will then be guided.

A man named Dawood (David) went to Imam Musa al-Kazim (as) complaining about his own son that he had wasted a large amount of his money. The Imam said to him:

"Try to correct your child. And know that compared to the blessings of having a child, one hundred thousand Dirhams (dinars) are nothing." - Wafi, part XII, p. 211

**The Child:**

As you just mentioned, the best way to rehabilitate a child and bring him back to doing good deeds again, is by telling him the solutions in a soft voice and in a respectable manner. One should avoid harsh words so the child would feel that all that is being said is well intended and is only for his welfare and that the purpose is to change his course to the right path in life. 26. Importance of Mother's Rights

**The Father:**

My child ! please be aware that the rights of mothers are more important than that of the father. An individual once asked the Holy prophet (p.b.u.h) "To whom should I be kindest?" He

replied: "Your mother." Then he asked: "After her, to whom" He again said: Your Mother". The man asked the same question for the third time. The reply was the same, Your Mother". And he repeated his question for the fourth time, the Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) answered him "Your Mother."

- Usul Kafi, New Edition Tehran, Vol. II p. 159 Again a man asks the Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) about being kind to parents. In reply for three times, he said: "Your mother": and only then he said " Your father."

- Usul Kafi, New Edition Tehran, Vol. II P. 162 Perhaps there are two reasons for this importance: (A) Motherly affection, and (B) Mother's influence on the child's character.

**A. Motherly Affection:**

It is the mother who suffers more pain in taking care and in protection of the child. She nourishes and brings up the child in her love filled lap until she delivers him to the society. One would be quite astounded to realize what a mother does for her child. Only then, one would agree that none would match a mother. Not even an affectionate maid or babysitter. Suppose a maid or a babysitter is able to offer the services, they do so in return of a wage, not merely for the affection to the child.

**B. Mother's Influence on the Child's Character:**

The mother lays the basic foundation of the child's bahaviour and character. As through her mild she provides nourishment for the body, through her teachings, she strengthens his spirit. Consequently, the child inherits his mother's mannerism, habits and other characters since early infancy and will keep them throughout his life. Finally, the child's happiness depends on the way he is reared by his mother. The Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h) says:

"Do not select stupid women or women with visual important for nursing your children because milk affects character." - Wafi, part XII, p. 27

Imam Ali (a.s.) says:

"Be careful as to who nurse your children since they will grow up with same milk." - Wafi, Part XII,PP. 27-27

He also says:

"No milk is more blessed for a child than that of his own mother." - Wafi, Part XII, pp. 27-28

Imam Baqir1 (a.s.) says:

"Choose good natured women for nursing your children and avoid the evil one because milk transfers character." - Wafi, Part XII,pp.27-28

Samuel Smiles says:

"Those who swing children's cradles are more influential than those who run the government." - The Book of Ethics, Part 1, pp. 38-48

"Rearing of a child begins at the time of his first smile." - The Book of Ethics, Part 1, pp. 38-48

"Infancy is like a mirror. It reflects whatever is placed in front of it." - The Book of Ethics, Part 1, pp. 38-48

"The model constantly present in front of the child is his mother" - The Book of Ethics, Part 1, pp. 38-48

"Mother has far more influence on the child than does his father." - The Book of Ethics, Part, pp. 40-54

An Ancient Greek once said:

"If you put your slave in charge of rearing your child, soon you will have two slaves." - The Book of Ethics, Part, pp. 40-54

George Herbert says:

"One good natured mother is worth one hundred teachers." - The Book of Ethics, Part, pp. 40-54

John Randolph, the will known American politician says:

"Only one thing saved me from becoming atheistic. That was the thoughts of the moments when my mother in her death bd took my hands and placed me on her lap and made me repeat after herm her belief in the Lord."

- The Book of Ethics, Part, pp. 40-54 It has been said that:

"A good mother is nature's masterpieces." - The Book of Ethics, Part, pp. 40-54 Napoleon Bonaparte used to say:

"A child's good and bad behaviour always depends upon that of his mother." - The Book of Ethics, Part, pp. 40-54 Adams, the American President, says:

"During infancy, I had the great blessing anyone could have. That, having a mother who was capable of raising a family in an excellent instructions from her. If there are any shortcomings and deviations in my life, it is of my own fault and it has nothing to do with her" - The Book of Ethics, Part, pp. 40-54

Joseph Demister, after discussing the inventions and art works produced by some famous men, continues that:

"It is true that women have produced no such things, but what they have done is far more important than all these works because it is women who have raised such pious and industrious men." - The Book of Ethics, Part, pp. 40-54

He throughout his works, refers to his mother with love and respect. In one instance, he says: "Good natured mother was a heavenly angel who was bestowed a human body temporarily by God." - The Book of Ethics, Part, pp. 40-54

Goethe had a great affection and love for his mother. About her he says: "My mother had excellent qualities for living." - The Book of Ethics, Part, pp. 40-54

And when he was in Frankfurt, he would meet with all people who had in any way been kind to his mother and would thank them for that. Samuel Johnson talks with extreme respect about his mother. "She was a wise and well educated woman who enforced religious sentiments in him since early childhood. And in appreciation, he, with his small income, would provide all kinds of conveniences for her." - The Book of Ethics, and Editions, Part 1, pp. 50-54

**The Child:**

I admit that the rights of mothers are extremely important. That is why to mother, I say " I shall never forget about your contribution as my mother, I have read that Heaven is under the footsteps of mothers like you and happiness comes through being obedient to you. I consider that a big mistake on my part if I am not a decent and worthy child, for you. And a life in which I do not fulfill my obligations to you would be a miserable life."

I am certain that you will be happy with me even if I am not good to you. And no matter how nasty I am. you will forgive me. Your being happy with me, and your forgiveness is enough to make me happy in life on this earth and to save me forever from Allah's wrath on the Day of .Judgment