



أَفْهَمُوا أَكْبَارَنَا

Our Precious Sprouts

Islāmic Regulations for Newborns

تَرْغِيْبٌ فِي تَرْبِيَةِ الْوَلَدِ الْكَبِيْرِ

2nd Edition

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مُصْطَفَى الْجِبَالِيِّ

Muhammad Bin Muṣṭafā al-Jibāly

The Muslim Family – 4

أفلاذ أكبادنا

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Islāmic Regulations for Newborns

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ

وَجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا ﴾ ﴿٧٤﴾ الفرقان

«And those (Servants of the Most Merciful) who say, “Our Lord! Bestow on us from our spouses and offspring those who will be a comfort to our eyes, and make us a (collective) leader for the pious.”» [Al-Furqān 25:74]

الأسرة المسلمة - الكتاب الرابع
The Muslim Family - 4

أفلاذ أضيافنا

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MUḤAMMAD Bin MUṢṬAFĀ AL-JIBĀLY

منشورات الكتاب والسنة

AL-KITAAB & AS-SUNNAH PUBLISHING

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Our Precious Sprouts
Islāmic Regulations for Newborns
(The Muslim Family—4)

269 p. 22 × 15 cm
ISBN 1-891229-58-3

World-wide Distributor:

Dakwah Coner Bookstore (M) Sdn Bhd
No. 34-1, Jalan 14/22, Section 14, 46100 Petaling Jaya,
Selangor Darul Ehsan
Telephone: +603-7956-4664
Web: www.dakwahbookstore.com.my

Printed by:

Al-Maktab al-Islāmī
PO Box 11/3771, Beirut, Lebanon
Telephone: +961-5-456280, 5-450657
Web: www.almaktab-alislami.com
E-mail: islamic_of@almaktab-alislami.com

Published by:

Al-Kitaab & as-Sunnah Publishing
Telephone Numbers:
+1-817-719-2611 (USA)
+961-3-046338 (Lebanon)
+966-50-9600572 / 14-8466002 (Saudi Arabia)
Web: www.kspublications.com
E-mail: info@kspublications.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRELUDE	xiii
Opening Sermon.....	xiii
Our Mission: Purification and Cultivation.....	xiv
1. Purification	xv
a. Purifying Our Sources of Knowledge	xv
b. Purifying Our Beliefs	xvi
c. Purifying Our Practices	xvi
2. Cultivation	xvii
a. Becoming True Followers of the <i>Salaf</i>	xvii
b. Calling to the Pure Religion	xviii
c. Presenting the Islāmic Solution	xix
Conclusion.....	xx
PREFACE	xxi
The Muslim Family.....	xxi
This Book.....	xxii
Acknowledgment.....	xxiii
1. PLANTING THE SEED	1
Islām Encourages Having Children	1
Procreation Is a Major Goal of Marriage	1
A Child Is a Favor from Allāh	2
A Child Increases the Number of Muslims	2
Good Soil Is Required for a Good Seed	3
Reward for Having Children	4
A Guaranteed Reward for True Believers	4
Children Who Die Young	5
Children Outliving Their Parents	7
Invoking Allāh’s Blessings and Protection.....	8
Invoking Allāh’s Blessings at Marriage	8
Invoking Allāh’s Protection at Intercourse	9
2. EMERGENCE OF THE SPROUT	11
Pregnant Women’s Cravings.....	11

Exposure during Delivery	11
Doctors and Nurses	11
Video-Recording the Delivery	13
The First Cry	14
Condition for Inheritance.....	15
Applauding the Newborn.....	15
Announcing the Birth	15
Congratulation	17
Giving Presents	19
Islām Prohibits Gender-Based Bias.....	19
Submission to Allāh’s Decree	19
Disliking Girls Is a Quality of Extreme Ignorance	20
Merits in Having Daughters	21
Importance of Gratitude	24
Gratitude Is a Quality of the Messengers and Believers	24
Most People Are Ungrateful	25
Reward for Gratitude and Punishment for Ingratitude	25
Gratitude for Having Children	26
A Child Is a Great Favor from Allāh	26
Raising Children Gratefully	27
3. NAMING THE NEWBORN	29
When to Name a Newborn	29
Naming on the Seventh Day	29
Naming Before the Seventh Day	29
Conclusion	31
Who Names the Child?	32
Giving a Good Name	33
Recommended Names.....	35
Names of <i>‘Ubūdiyyah</i>	35
Names with Realistic Meanings	36
Names of the Prophet Muḥammad	37
Names of Other Prophets	38
Names of Righteous People	40
Ascribing the Child to the Father.....	41
Ascribing the Child to His Father Is Mandatory	41
Ascribing the Child to Other than His Father Is a Major Sin	42
Illegitimate Children	43

Surnames	45
Definition	45
Changing the Surname	46
Carrying the Husband's Surname	46
Bearing a <i>Kunyah</i>	47
Definition and Recommendation	47
Bearing a <i>Kunyah</i> Before Having Children	47
Giving <i>Kunyah</i> to a Childless Woman	48
Giving <i>Kunyah</i> to Children	48
The Prophet's <i>Kunyah</i>	49
Prohibited Names	51
Names Expressing Servitude to Other than Allāh	51
Names and Descriptions Specific to Allāh	52
Names of Nonbelievers and Tyrants	52
Disapproved Names.....	53
Names Specifically Disapproved by the Prophet	53
Ugly Names	55
Western and Non-Arabic Names	56
Names of Singers, Actors, and Other Sinners	57
Girls' Names Indicating Passion or Bodily Attraction	57
Combined Names	58
Names of Angels and Qur'ānic <i>Sūrah</i> s	59
Changing a Name to a Better One	59
The Prophet's Practice	59
Names That the Prophet Changed	60
Refusing the Prophet's Recommendation	63
Calling by a Nickname	63
Calling Adults by Shortened Names	63
Calling Children by Nicknames or Abbreviated Names	64
4. 'AQĪQAH	65
Meaning of ' <i>Aqīqah</i>	65
Linguistic and Religious Meanings	65
Is the Name " <i>Aqīqah</i> " Disliked?	65
Ruling of ' <i>Aqīqah</i>	66
Is It Disliked?	66
Evidence that It Is Obligatory	67
Evidence that It Is Voluntary	69

' <i>Aqīqah</i> vs. <i>Ṣadaqah</i>	71
Conclusion	72
Animals that May Be Slaughtered for ' <i>Aqīqah</i>	73
Animal Type	73
Number of Animals	74
Sex of the Animals	74
Other Qualities	75
Day of Slaughtering the ' <i>Aqīqah</i>	75
The Seventh Day	75
After the Seventh	76
Offering ' <i>Aqīqah</i> for Oneself	77
Method of Slaughtering	77
Sincerity to Allāh	77
Using a Sharp Knife	78
Mercy toward the Animal	79
Laying the Animal Down	80
Cutting the Throat	81
Pronouncing Allāh's Name	82
Summary	84
Dispensing of the ' <i>Aqīqah</i> 's Meat	84
Dividing the Meat	84
Feeding People	85
Wisdom Behind the ' <i>Aqīqah</i>	86
Child's Confinement	86
Insight into the ' <i>Aqīqah</i> 's Wisdom	90
Rubbing Saffron on a Newborn's Head	91
Questions Answered	92
Delaying the ' <i>Aqīqah</i> for Financial Reasons	92
Buying Meat Instead of Slaughtering	92
' <i>Aqīqah</i> for a Short-Lived Baby	92
' <i>Aqīqah</i> for a Miscarried Fetus	94
Storing the ' <i>Aqīqah</i> 's Meat	94
5. CIRCUMCISION	95
Overview	95
Origin of Circumcision	95
Description of the Process	95

Circumcision in the Islāmic Texts.....	96
One of the Characteristics of <i>Fiṭrah</i>	96
A Prophetic Command	97
A Practice of the Father of Prophets	97
A Practice of the <i>Ṣaḥābah</i>	98
Ruling	98
Ibn-ul-Qayyim's Reasoning	98
Conclusion	99
Date of Performing Circumcision	100
The Earlier the Better	100
Narrations Specifying the Seventh Day	100
Delaying Circumcision until the Age of Discernment	101
New Muslims	102
Benefits and Wisdom.....	102
Circumcision of Females	103
Description	103
Excessive Circumcision	103
Female Circumcision in Islāmic Texts	104
Ruling	105
Violations and Innovations.....	105
6. OTHER NEWBORN SUNNAHS	107
<i>Taḥnīk</i>	107
Definition	107
Authentic Reports	107
Discussion and Ruling	109
Shaving the Head and Giving Charity.....	110
Authentic Narrations	110
Both Boys and Girls Should Be Shaved	112
Date of Shaving	112
The Whole Head Should Be Shaved	112
Shaving the Head upon Embracing Islām	114
Giving Charity	114
Calling <i>Athān</i> and <i>Iqāmah</i> ?	115
7. PROTECTING THE BABY FROM EVIL	117
How to Protect the Baby.....	117
Do not Give Satan Food or Lodging	117

Cover All Food at Night	118
Keep Children Indoors after Sunset	119
Ultimate Protection Is from Allāh	120
Protection with <i>Ruqyahs</i> and Extolments.....	120
Definition and Ruling of <i>Ruqyah</i>	120
Best <i>Ruqyahs</i>	121
<i>Ruqyah</i> with <i>al-Fātiḥah</i>	122
<i>Ruqyah</i> with <i>Sūrat ul-Baqarah</i>	123
<i>Ruqyah</i> with <i>Āyat-ul-Kursī</i>	124
<i>Ruqyah</i> with <i>al-Mu'awwithāt</i>	125
<i>Ruqyahs</i> from the Sunnah	127
<i>Ruqyah</i> against the Evil Eye	128
<i>Ruqyahs</i> for Children	129
Wrong Forms of Protection.....	131
Avoiding Amulets and Talismans	131
Avoiding Blue Beads, Horseshoes, and Other Charms of <i>Shirk</i>	132
No Need to Make <i>Du'ā'</i> or <i>Thikr</i> on Behalf of the Baby	133
Eliminating the "Deterrents" of Good	134
8. DETERRENTS OF GOOD	135
Why It Does Not Work.....	135
Dolls and Other Images.....	135
Modern Children's "Toydom"	135
Prohibition of Images in Islām	136
Images Drive The Angels Away	136
Permission of Some Dolls and Toy Animals	137
Controversy Regarding Photography	138
Conclusion	139
<i>Fatwās</i> Concerning Images on Clothes	140
<i>Fatwās</i> Concerning Dolls	140
Music.....	142
Other Angel-Repellents.....	143
Dogs	143
Bells & Ringing	144
Television.....	145
Imitation of the Non-Muslims.....	146
Celebrating Birthdays	147
Baby Shower	149
Clothing Issues	149

9. OTHER BABY ISSUES	151
Cleanliness and Purity Issues.....	151
Babies' Urine	151
Carrying Babies During the Prayer	152
Bringing Babies into the <i>Masjid</i>	154
Touching a Baby's Private Parts	154
Piercing the Ears.....	156
Changing Allāh's Creation	156
Inflicting Harm and Pain	157
Conclusion	159
Kissing Children and Showing Mercy to Them.....	160
Breast-Feeding.....	161
Definition and Duration	161
Historical Background	162
Importance of Breast-Feeding in Islām	163
Legislative Texts	165
Regulations	167
Advantages of the Mother's Milk & Breast-Feeding	167
Milk Banks	168
Pregnancy of a Nursing Mother	170
Concluding Remarks from Ibn-ul-Qayyim	171
REFERENCES	173
General.....	173
"Newborn" and "Baby".....	173
' <i>Aqīqah</i> and Slaughtering.....	174
Islāmic Names.....	175
Allāh's Excellent Names.....	175
APPENDIX A: LIST OF NAMES	177
Introduction.....	177
General Guidelines	177
Names of Boys.....	178
Names of Girls.....	207
APPENDIX B: ALLĀH'S EXCELLENT NAMES	221
Introduction.....	221
Guidelines Concerning Allāh's Names.....	221
1. All of Allāh's Names Are Excellent	221

2. Allāh's Names Have Distinctive Meanings	221
3. Allāh's Names Require Evidence	222
4. Allāh's Names are Countless	222
5. Merit of Ninety-Nine of Allāh's Names	223
Lists of Allāh's Authentic Excellent Names	223
A) Single-word Excellent Names from the Qur'ān	223
B) Relative Excellent Names from the Qur'ān	228
C) Excellent Names from the Sunnah	229
D) Compound Excellent Names	230
Names without Evidence	231
APPENDIX C: ARABIC TERMINOLOGY	235
Introduction	235
Translating and Referencing Qur'ān and <i>Ḥadīth</i>	235
Relevant Charts	235
Arabic Terms	235
Glossary of Common Terms	236
Arabic Weekdays	241
Islāmic <i>Hijrī</i> Months	242
Important Places	242
Transliteration	242
Veneration Symbols	244
Index of Arabic Terms	245

PRELUDE

Opening Sermon

«إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا

وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.»

Al-hamdu lillāh. Indeed, all praise is due to Allāh. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allāh from the evil within ourselves and from our wrongdoings. He whom Allāh guides, no one can misguide; and he whom He misguides, no one can guide.

«وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.»

I bear witness that there is no (true) god except Allāh—alone without a partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is His 'abd (servant) and messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ ١٣٢ آل عمران

«O you who believe, revere Allāh the right reverence, and do not die except as Muslims.»¹

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَجِدَةٍ وَّخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا

كثيرًا ونساءً واتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا﴾ ١ النساء

«O people, revere your Lord who created you from a single soul, created from it its mate, and dispersed from them many men and women. Revere Allāh through whom you demand things from one another; and (respect the ties of) the wombs. Indeed, Allāh is ever-Watchful over you.»²

1. *Āl 'Imrān* 3:102.

2. *An-Nisā'* 4:1.

«This knowledge will be carried by the trustworthy individuals from every generation; they expel from it alterations of extremists, falsehoods of pretenders, and misinterpretations of the ignorant.»¹

B. PURIFYING OUR BELIEFS

Philosophical arguments, cultural dictates, and alien notions have tainted the beliefs of many Muslims. Therefore, it is imperative to purify the Islāmic faith, basing it solely on authentic texts from the Qur'ān and Sunnah, cleansing it from all forms of *shirk*, and aligning it with the belief of the *Ṣaḥābah* whom Allāh (ﷻ) praised, saying:

﴿فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنْتُ بِهِ فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا﴾ البقرة ١٣٧

«So if they believe as you (O Muḥammad and your companions) believe, they are truly guided.»²

C. PURIFYING OUR PRACTICES

Innovated acts of worship (*bid'ahs*), not authorized by Allāh (ﷻ) or His Messenger (ﷺ), have marred the religious practices of many Muslims. Therefore, it is imperative to purify the Islāmic practices, basing them on authentic texts from the Qur'ān and Sunnah, matching them with the understanding and practice of the *Ṣaḥābah*, and cleansing them from *bid'ahs*. This is the “path of the believers” that Allāh (ﷻ) describes as:

﴿وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

نُؤَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصَلِّهِ ۗ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا﴾ (١١٥) النساء

«He who opposes the Messenger—after guidance became clear to him—and follows other than the believers' path: We will give him the consequence

1. Recorded by al-Bayhaqī, Ibn 'Adiyy, and others from Abū Hurayrah, Ibn Mas'ūd, and other companions (رضي الله عنهم). Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Hidāyat-ur-Ruwāh* 239).

2. *Al-Baqarah* 2:137.

he chose and admit him into hell—the most awful destination.»¹

2. Cultivation

Cultivation (or *tarbiyah*) is the steady and persistent process of learning to live upon the correct path of Islām and abide by its dictates. It is to establish our beliefs and practices upon the purified knowledge, and then continue to grow with this knowledge. Cultivation goes hand-in-hand with purification.

A. BECOMING TRUE FOLLOWERS OF THE SALAF

Purification of our beliefs and practices must extend into cultivating ourselves and our communities upon the purified teachings, striving to be true followers of our great *salaf*, the *Ṣaḥābah* (ﷺ). Praising both the *Ṣaḥābah* and their true followers, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ أُولَئِكَ مِنِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٠٠﴾ التوبة﴾

«The first to embrace Islām among the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār, and also those who follow them in the best way: Allāh is pleased with them and they are with Him. He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, and in which they will abide eternally. This is the supreme success.»²

The *Ṣaḥābah* were the righteous group that Allāh (ﷻ) chose to accompany His Prophet (ﷺ) and receive His Message. They left the false religion of their forefathers, eagerly accompanied the Prophet (ﷺ), learnt directly from him, helped him establish the first and best Islāmic community, and accurately disseminated his teachings.

1. *An-Nisā'* 4:115.

2. *At-Tawbah* 9:100.

When the Muslims establish the *Ṣaḥābah* as their true role models, they will become inclined toward the objective pursuit of truth, and their minds will become free from stubborn and ignorant loyalty to *mathhabs* (sects), parties, or factions.

B. CALLING TO THE PURE RELIGION

A vital part of the cultivation process is to invite all people, Muslims and non-Muslims, to the pure and unadulterated religion of Islām. This should be done by:

- a) Adorning ourselves with good manners and righteous actions to become worthy representatives of our noble message. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ
وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾﴾ النحل

«Indeed, Allah enjoins justice and good conduct and giving to relatives, and He forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He exhorts you (with this) that you might remember.»¹

- b) Presenting our message with wisdom, benevolence, and kindness. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿ادْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجِدْ لَهُم مَّا هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ
رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾﴾ النحل

«Invite your Lord's path with wisdom and good exhortation, and argue with them in the best way. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of those who stray off His path and is most knowing of those who are rightly guided.»²

1. *An-Naḥl* 16:90.

2. *An-Naḥl* 16:125.

Undertaking the obligation of inviting to Allāh's path is the duty of all Muslims, individually and collectively, each according to his best ability. Allāh (ﷻ) commands:

﴿وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ﴾ البائدة ٢

«Help one another in righteousness and piety; and do not help one another in sinning and transgression.»¹

This is the only way to attain Allāh's acceptance and achieve happiness and success. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَالْعَصْرِ ۝١ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ۝٢ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا

الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصَّوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَّصَّوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ۝٣﴾ العصر

«By time, a human is surely in loss, except for those who believe, do righteous deeds, mutually enjoin the truth, and mutually enjoin perseverance.»²

This, further, is the way to establish among the believers a true and honest compassion that emanates from a strong unifying cause. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا﴾ آل عمران ١٠٣

«Hold fast, collectively, to Allāh's rope, and do not disunite.»³

C. PRESENTING THE ISLĀMIC SOLUTION

Inviting to the Truth includes providing realistic Islāmic solutions to contemporary problems. There is no doubt that Allāh's guidance is the only comprehensive way for resolving people's problems at the individual and communal levels. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

1. *Al-Mā'idah* 5:2.

2. *Al-'Asr* 103:1-3.

3. *Āl 'Imrān* 3:103.

﴿وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ﴾ المائدة ٤٩

«Arbitrate among them (O Muḥammad) according to what Allāh revealed, and do not follow their errant views.»¹

Conclusion

The above discussion demonstrates the urgency of providing the readers with works that refine the understanding of Islām and present it in a manner that incorporates correctness, simplicity, and practicality. Indeed, this is the mission that we adopt, and this book is a humble step in that direction.

We seek Allāh's guidance and help, and we implore Him (ﷻ) to enable us to purify and cultivate ourselves and our communities in the way that is most pleasing to Him—*āmin*.

1. *Al-Mā'idah* 5:49.

PREFACE

The Muslim Family

The Muslim Family is a series of books presenting detailed discussions relating to the family life, starting with courting and marriage and extending into raising children according to Islām. To-date, this series consists of the following titles:

① The Quest for Love & Mercy

Fiqh of Marriage & Wedding in Islām

Discusses the importance and advantages of marriage, selecting a spouse, the courting process, the marriage contract, marriage consummation, celebrating the wedding and the *walimah*, and forbidden marriages; provides a practical procedure for performing the marriage contract; and includes a sample marriage certificate.

﴿وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ
مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً﴾

② Closer than a Garment

Marital Intimacy according to the Pure Sunnah

Covers the proper etiquettes of marital intimacy, forbidden acts of intimacy, the perils of *zinā*, and birth control; answers many frequently-asked questions about various acts of intimacy.

﴿هُنَّ لِيَأْسَ لَكُمْ
وَأَنْتُمْ لِيَأْسَ لَهُنَّ﴾

③ The Fragile Vessels

Rights and Obligations
between the Spouses in Islām

Covers the obligations and rights of both spouses; contains biographies of the Mothers of the Believers; paints very realistic pictures from the life of the Prophet (ﷺ) with his wives; and presents a complete discussion of the *ḥadīth* of Umm Zar'.

﴿رَفَقًا بِالْقَوَارِيرِ﴾

④ Our Precious Sprouts

Islāmic Regulations for Newborns

أَفْلَادُ آبَائِنَا

We base our discussions on authentic texts from the Qur'ān and Sunnah, guided in their explanation by the understanding of eminent '*ulamā*'. We strive to eliminate elements of superstition and falsehood that have crept into these parts of human life by way of tradition or ignorance.

This series deals with marriage and other family issues in a practical approach, taking advantage of the author's years of experience in the field of marriage and counseling.

Each book serves as a complete and reliable handbook within its scope. The material is often supplemented with charts and diagrams for easy reference, discussion, and study.

This Book

As a logical continuation to the first three books, this sequel deals with the normal fruit of marriage: babies. It covers the Islāmic regulations relating to a newborn. This includes welcoming the baby, naming it, shaving its hair, circumcising it, and slaughtering the sacrificial *'aqīqah*.

The discussion of naming the newborn covers recommended and prohibited names, nicknames, and *kunyahs*. It is further enhanced with two appendices. The first appendix provides a list of suggested names for both boys and girls. The second appendix discusses Allāh's excellent names and includes a list of authentic names that have evidence from the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

The discussion of *'aqīqah* includes its meaning, ruling, and wisdom, animals that may be slaughtered to satisfy the *'aqīqah* requirement, method of slaughtering the *'aqīqah*, dispensing of its meat, its feast, and wrong practices relating to it.

The discussion of circumcision includes the circumcision process, its ruling for boys and for girls, its benefits, its regulations, and wrong practices relating to it.

The discussion of other *sunnahs* relating to newborns includes *tahnik*, shaving the baby's head, and a warning against calling *athān* or *iqāmah* in a newborn's ear.

The discussion of protecting newborns from evil includes *ruqyah* and other extolments, and a warning against wrong methods of protection.

The discussion of deterrents of good includes clothing, toys,

music, and birthdays

The discussion of other baby issues includes *tahārah*, piercing the ears, and breast-feeding.

Therefore, this book can serve as a complete guide for the correct Islāmic acts that parents need to perform for their newborns during their first weeks in life.

Acknowledgment

All praise and thanks are due to our Lord (ﷻ) who facilitated the completion of this work.

I ask Allāh (ﷻ) to reward all the Muslims who helped and supported this effort in various ways.

In particular, I ask Him (ﷻ) to reward my *shaykh* and teacher, Muḥammad Nāṣir-ud-Dīn al-Albānī (رحمته الله), whose works have been of tremendous benefit to me.

I ask Him (ﷻ) to reward my wife whose relentless support and advice have always provided a gentle push toward the completion of my projects.

I ask Him (ﷻ) to reward my children and all individuals who proofread the manuscript and provided beneficial feedback.

I ask Him (ﷻ) to reward my brother Sādiq al-Jibāly who has always been instrumental in supervising the editing and printing of my books, as well as stocking and shipping them.

I ask Him (ﷻ) to reward Bilāl Zuhayr ash-Shāwīsh who has kindly and intently provided brotherly advice and support, employing the abilities and expertise of “Al-Maktab-ul-Islāmī” in publishing most of my books.

I ask Him (ﷻ) to make this humble effort helpful and profitable to the Muslims, forgive my shortcomings, purify my work from hypocrisy and conceit, and accept it from me.

﴿رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ ﴿٤٠﴾﴾

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ ﴿٤١﴾﴾ إبراهيم

«My Lord, keep me constant in prayer, and the same for my progeny. Our Lord, answer my *du'ā*'. Our Lord, forgive me, my parents, and the believers on Judgment Day.»¹

My Lord, bestow Your peace and praise upon our Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).

أبو عبد الله محمد بن مصطفى الجبالي

Muḥammad Bin Muṣṭafā al-Jibāly

Al-Madīnah an-Nabawīyah

Thuḥ-Hijjah 1435

October 2014

1. *Ibrāhīm* 14:40-41.

1. PLANTING THE SEED

Muslims are urged to have children and raise them righteously, according to the Islāmic teachings. This involves selecting a righteous spouse to help in this most important “cultivation” process. It also involves understanding the great rewards that Allāh (ﷻ) has promised to those Muslims who handle their parenting responsibility seriously. These issues are the subject of discussion in this chapter.

Islām Encourages Having Children

PROCREATION IS A MAJOR GOAL OF MARRIAGE

Procreation is one of the main goals of marriage. Allāh (ﷻ) ordained it for Muslims as a means of increasing the number of His obedient servants. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَالْتَنَ بَشُرُهُمْ وَأَبْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ﴾ البقرة ١٨٧

«So now (during *Ramqādān*'s nights), have relations with them (your wives) and seek that which Allāh has decreed for you.»¹

“Seeking that which Allāh has decreed for you” means the “offspring” as asserted by Mujāhid, al-Ḥakam, ‘Ikrimah, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, as-Suddī, and aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk.²

Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رحمته) said:

“Allāh (ﷻ) permitted the Muslims to have intercourse during the nights of fasting—until dawn. But during intercourse, a person is so overcome by the need to fulfill his desire that nothing else occurs to his heart.

1. *Al-Baqarah* 2:233.

2. *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawdūd* p. 9.

Because of this, Allāh (ﷻ) instructed the Muslims that, while pursuing their desire, they should also seek what Allāh has decreed for them of rewards (for being chaste), as well as the offspring that would issue from this intercourse to become a worshiper of Allāh ...”¹

A CHILD IS A FAVOR FROM ALLĀH

In this life, children are among Allāh’s infinite favors upon people. Allāh (ﷻ) indicates that He favored His messengers with children:

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَذُرِّيَّةً﴾ الرعد ٣٨

«And We have surely sent messengers before you (O Muḥammad) and granted them wives and offspring.»²

And He (ﷻ) favored other people with this:

﴿وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْوَابِكُمْ بَنِينَ وَحَفَدَةً وَرَزَقَكُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ﴾ النحل ٧٢

«Allāh gave you spouses from yourselves, granted you, from your spouses, children and grandchildren, and provided you with good things for your sustenance.»³

A CHILD INCREASES THE NUMBER OF MUSLIMS

It is recommended for a Muslim to seek offspring through marriage, and thereafter raise them according to Islām.

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«النِّكَاحُ سُنِّيٌّ، فَمَنْ لَمْ يَعْمَلْ بِسُنَّتِي فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي،
وَتَزَوَّجُوا فَإِنِّي مُكَابِرٌ بِكُمْ الْيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.»

1. *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawdūd* p. 9.

2. *Ar-Ra’d* 13:38.

3. *An-Naḥl* 16:72.

«Marriage is (part of) my Sunnah. Whoever does not implement my Sunnah is not of my followers. Marry because, indeed, I will be delighted by your outnumbering of (other) nations on Resurrection Day.»¹

Ma‘qil Bin Yasār, Abū Hurayrah, and Abū Umāmah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«تَزَوَّجُوا الْوُدُودَ الْوُلُودَ، فَإِنِّي مُكَائِرٌ بِكُمْ الْأُمَمَ، وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَرَهْبَانِيَّةِ النَّصَارَى.»

«Marry a loving and fertile woman for, indeed, I will be pleased by that you will outnumber other nations (on Resurrection Day). Do not practice monasticism like the Christians.»²

GOOD SOIL IS REQUIRED FOR A GOOD SEED

Righteous Muslims are the only people who elect to live by Allāh’s (ﷻ) commands and follow His Messenger’s (ﷺ) guidance. Therefore, it is important to increase their number so as to establish Allāh’s religion in this life and enter His gardens in the next.

Thus, a Muslim should strive to raise his family upon the true religion. Only then would they be among the numbers of Muslims who will please Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) on Judgment Day.

Because of this, a Muslim is required to seek a righteous spouse who is capable of playing a positive and constructive role in nurturing and raising the children.

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«تَخَيَّرُوا لِنُطْفِكُمْ فَانكِحُوا الْأَكْفَاءَ وَأَنْكِحُوا إِلَيْهِمْ.»

-
1. Recorded by Ibn Mājah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 2383).
 2. This is combined from narrations recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā’ī, and al-Bayhaqī. It is verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 1784, *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 1782).

«**Make a (good) choice for your sperm (i.e. offspring): marry (women) from worthy families, and marry (your daughters) to such.**»¹

Reward for Having Children

A GUARANTEED REWARD FOR TRUE BELIEVERS

The believers are rewarded for the children they beget, even if those children die before puberty. Abū Tharr (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أَرَأَيْتَ لَوْ كَانَ لَكَ وَلَدٌ فَأَدْرَكَ، وَرَجَوْتَ خَيْرَهُ، ثُمَّ مَاتَ، أَكُنْتَ تَحْتَسِبُهُ؟»

«**If you had a child who reached puberty, and you expected good from him, but he died, would you seek Allāh's reward for that?**»

Abū Tharr replied, “Yes!” The Prophet (ﷺ) asked, «فَأَنْتَ خَلَقْتَهُ؟» «**Are you the one who created him?**» Abū Tharr replied, “No, it is Allāh who created him.” The Prophet (ﷺ) asked, «فَأَنْتَ هَدَيْتَهُ؟» «**Are you the one who guides him?**» Abū Tharr replied, “No, it is Allāh who guides him.” The Prophet (ﷺ) asked, «فَأَنْتَ كُنْتَ تَرْزُقُهُ؟» «**Are you the One Who sustains him?**» Abū Tharr replied, “No, it is Allāh who sustains him!” The Prophet (ﷺ) then said:

«كَذَلِكَ فَضَعَهُ فِي حَلَالِهِ، وَجَنَّبَهُ حَرَامَهُ، فَإِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ

أَحْيَاهُ، وَإِنْ شَاءَ أَمَاتَهُ، وَكَأَجْرٍ.»

«**Thus, put it (your seed) in the lawful (intercourse with your wife), and avert it from the prohibited (zinā). If Allāh wills, He would then give it life; and if He wills, He would make him die. And you will be rewarded (in both cases).**»²

1. Recorded by Ibn Mājah, al-Hākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi* 2928 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 1067).

2. Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbān, and an-Nasā'ī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 575).

CHILDREN WHO DIE YOUNG

As indicated above, when a believer loses a child and shows patience and submission to Allāh's will, he will be immensely rewarded.

One of the *Tābi'ūn* known as Abū Ḥassān reported that he lost two young sons. He met Abū Hurayrah and asked him, "Can you relate to us something that you heard from Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) to appease our souls in regard to the ones that we have lost?" Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) then reported that he heard the following from the Prophet (ﷺ):

«صِغَارُهُمْ دَعَامِيصُ الْجَنَّةِ، يَتَلَقَّى أَحَدُهُمْ أَبَاهُ (أَوْ أَبَوَيْهِ) فَيَأْخُذُ بِوَيْهِ أَوْ بِيَدِهِ، كَمَا آخُذُ أَنَا بِصِنْفَةِ نُوْبِكَ هَذَا، فَلَا يَتَّاهَى (أَوْ يَتَّهَى) حَتَّى يُدْخِلَهُ اللَّهُ وَأَبَاهُ الْجَنَّةَ.»

«Their (i.e., the Muslims') deceased young are the free roamers of *Jannah*. When one of them meets his parent, he will hold onto their hand or the edge of their garment like I hold your garment, and will not desist until Allāh admits him together with his parent into *Jannah*.»¹

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) also reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمَيْنِ يَمُوتُ هُمَا ثَلَاثَةٌ مِنَ الْوَلَدِ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا الْحِنْتَ إِلَّا أَدْخَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَأَبَوَيْهِمُ الْجَنَّةَ بِفَضْلِ رَحْمَتِهِ، وَيَكُونُونَ عَلَى بَابٍ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ فَيَقَالُ لَهُمْ: "ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ". فَيَقُولُونَ: "حَتَّى يَجِيءَ أَبَوَانَا." فَيَقَالُ لَهُمْ: "ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَبَوَاكُمْ بِفَضْلِ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ.»

«When three of a Muslim couple's children die before reaching puberty, Allāh will admit the parents into *Jannah* by virtue of His mercy. They (the children) will stand at one of the gates of *Jannah*, and will be told, "Enter *Jannah*." But they will say, "Not until our parents arrive." They will

1. Recorded by Muslim (2635), Aḥmad, and others.

then be told, “Enter *Jannah*, together with your parents, by virtue of Allāh’s mercy!”¹

Qurrah Bin Iyās al-Muzanī (رضي الله عنه) reported that among the *Ṣaḥābah* (رضي الله عنهم) who attended the Prophet’s (ﷺ) *ḥalqahs* was a man with a young son who would come and sit in front of him. The Prophet (ﷺ) asked him if he loved his son, and he responded, “O Allāh’s Messenger, may Allāh love you like I love him!” Later on, the boy passed away, and the father was so grieved that he stopped attending the *ḥalqahs*. The Prophet (ﷺ) inquired about him and was told that his son died. The Prophet (ﷺ) summoned him, consoled him, and asked him:

«يَا فُلَانُ، أَيُّمَا كَانَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكَ، أَنْ تُمَتِّعَ بِهِ عُمُرَكَ، أَوْ لَا تَأْتِيَ عَدَا بَابًا مِنْ
أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ إِلَّا وَجَدْتَهُ قَدْ سَبَقَكَ إِلَيْهِ فَفَتَحَهُ لَكَ؟»

«O so-and-so, what would you prefer: to enjoy your child during this life, or that tomorrow (in the hereafter) you would not reach a gate of *Jannah* but find that he has preceded you to open it for you?»

He replied, “I rather prefer that he precedes me to open the gates of *Jannah* for me.” He told him, «فَذَلِكَ لَكَ.» **«This will be yours.»** A man of the Anṣār asked, “O Allāh’s Messenger—may Allāh make me a ransom for you, is that specific to him, or is it for all of us (who lose their children)?” He replied, «بَلْ لِكُلِّكُمْ.» **«Rather, it is for all of you.»²**

Buraydah Bin al-Ḥaṣīb (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to look after the Anṣār, visit them, and inquire about them. One day he was told that a woman from the Anṣārī was very depressed because she had lost her only child. So the Prophet (ﷺ),

1. Recorded by an-Nasā’ī, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām-ul-Janā’* iz p. 34).

2. Recorded by an-Nasā’ī, Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām-ul-Janā’* iz p. 205).

accompanied by some of his companions, went to visit and console her, and he said to her:

«أَمَا إِنَّهُ بَلَغَنِي أَنَّكَ جَزَعْتِ عَلَى ابْنِكَ، فَاتَّقِي اللَّهَ وَاصْبِرِي.»

«I have been informed that you are sorrowful for your son. Have *taqwā* of Allāh, and be patient.»

She replied, “How can I not be sorrowful when I have become a childless woman?” He (ﷺ) said:

«الرَّقُوبُ الَّذِي يَبْقَى وَلَدُهَا. مَا مِنْ امْرِيٍّ أَوْ امْرَأَةٍ مُسَلِّمَةٍ يَمُوتُ هَبًا
ثَلَاثَةٌ أَوْ أَوْلَادٍ يَحْتَسِبَانِهِمْ إِلَّا أَدْخَلَهُمَا اللَّهُ بِهِمُ الْجَنَّةَ.»

«A truly childless women is she whose children remain alive (not offering them for Allāh’s cause). Whenever three children of a Muslim man or woman die and they seek Allāh’s reward for that, Allāh will admit them both into *Jannah* because of them.»

‘Umar (رضي الله عنه), sitting on the Messenger’s (ﷺ) right, asked, “May my parents be a ransom for you, what if only two children die?” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, «وَإِثْنَانِ.» **«Even two.»**¹

CHILDREN OUTLIVING THEIR PARENTS

A righteous child who outlives his parents can contribute to their record of good deeds after their death. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا مَاتَ الْإِنْسَانُ انْقَطَعَ عَمَلُهُ إِلَّا مِنْ ثَلَاثٍ: صَدَقَةٍ جَارِيَةٍ،
أَوْ عِلْمٍ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ، أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ.»

«When a human dies, his (good) deeds come to an end, except for three types: an ongoing charity, a beneficial knowledge, and a righteous child who

1. Recorded by al-Bazzār and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām-ul-Janā’ iz* p. 208).

supplicates for him.›¹

Invoking Allāh's Blessings and Protection

INVOKING ALLĀH'S BLESSINGS AT MARRIAGE

A couple should start their marriage by invoking Allāh's (ﷻ) blessings for themselves and their offspring.

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا أَفَادَ أَحَدُكُمْ امْرَأَةً فَلْيَأْخُذْ بِنَاصِيَتِهَا، وَلْيُسَمِّ اللَّهَ، وَلْيَدْعُ بِالْبَرَكَاتِ، وَلْيَقُلْ:

«Let any of you who marries a woman put his hand on her forehead, mention Allāh's name and invoke His blessing (i.e., say, “*Bismillāh, allāhumma bārik ī fihā*—With Allāh's name. O Allāh, bless her for me,” and then say:

"اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ خَيْرِهَا وَخَيْرِ مَا جَبَلْتَهَا عَلَيْهِ،

وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّهَا وَشَرِّ مَا جَبَلْتَهَا عَلَيْهِ."»

“*Allāhumma innī as’aluka min khayrihā wa-khayri mā jabaltahā ‘alayhi, wa-a’ūthu bika min sharrihā wa-sharri mā jabaltahā ‘alayh—*

O Allāh, I ask You to grant me of the good that ensues from her or that You placed into her nature, and to protect me from the evil that ensues from her or that You placed into her nature.”²

A man once came to ‘Abdullāh Bin Mas‘ūd (ﷺ) and told him that he had just married a young woman and was worried that she might dislike him. ‘Abdullāh told him:

«إِنَّ الْإِنْفَ مِنَ اللَّهِ، وَإِنَّ الْفَرْكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ لِيُكْرَهُ إِلَيْهِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَهُ.

فَإِذَا أُذْخِلْتَ عَلَيْكَ فَمُرْهَا فَلْتَصِلْ خَلْفَكَ رَكْعَتَيْنِ، وَقُلْ:

1. Recorded by Muslim (1631), Abū Dāwūd, and others.

2. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be good by al-Albānī (*Ādāb-uz-Zifāf* p. 93 and *al-Kalim-ut-Tayyib* 207).

“Indeed, love (between the two spouses) is from Allāh and dislike is from Satan. Satan wants you to loathe what Allāh made lawful for you. When your wife first comes to you, lead her in praying two *rak‘āt*, then say:

"اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِي أَهْلِي، وَبَارِكْ لَهُمْ فِي. اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي مِنْهُمْ، وَارْزُقْهُمْ مِنِّي.
اللَّهُمَّ اجْمَعْ بَيْنَنَا مَا جَمَعْتَ بِخَيْرٍ، وَفَرِّقْ بَيْنَنَا إِذَا فَرَّقْتَ إِلَى خَيْرٍ."

‘Allāhumma bārik lī fī ahlī, wa-bārik lahum fiyya. Allāhumma-rzuqnī minhum warzuqhum minnī. Allāhumma-jma‘ baynanā ma jama‘ta bikhayr, wa-farriq baynanā ithā farraqta ilā khayr—

O Allāh, bless my wife for me and me for her. O Allāh, provide (offspring) for me through her and for her through me. O Allāh, let our joining be upon what is good; and let our parting, when you separate between us, be to what is good.’”¹

INVOKING ALLĀH’S PROTECTION AT INTERCOURSE

One of the noble goals of intercourse is producing righteous offspring. This is indicated in Ibn Mas‘ūd’s above supplication. In addition, it is important for the spouses to beseech Allāh to keep Satan away from their offspring.

Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لَوْ أَنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ إِذَا أَرَادَ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ أَهْلَهُ قَالَ :
بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ ، اللَّهُمَّ جَنِّبْنَا الشَّيْطَانَ ، وَجَنِّبِ الشَّيْطَانَ مَا رَزَقْتَنَا ،
فَإِنَّهُ إِنْ قَضَى بَيْنَهُمَا وَلَدٌ مِنْ ذَلِكَ، لَمْ يَضُرَّهُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَبَدًا.»

◀When one of you is about to approach his wife (for intercourse), if he says:

1. Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (*al-Kabīr* 8993, 8994), ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq (10460, 10461), and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ādāb-uz-Ziḡāf* p. 96). Note that this *ḥadīth* counts as being said by the Prophet (ﷺ), because it legislates an act of worship that a *ṣaḥābī* would never devise of his own.

“Bismillāh. Allāhumma jannibn-ash-Shayṭān, wa-jannib-ish-Shayṭāna mā razaqtanā—

With Allāh’s name (I perform intercourse). O Allāh, keep Satan away from us and from what You provide for us.”

If it is then decreed that a child ensues (from that intercourse), Satan will never harm it.>¹

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (141, 3271, 3283, 5165, 6388, 7396), Muslim (1434), and others.

2. EMERGENCE OF THE SPROUT

Pregnant Women's Cravings

During pregnancy, especially in the early stages, some women develop strong cravings for specific food items or other things.

A common belief is that the woman must have what she craves. If she does not, a mark similar to the craved item will appear on the baby's body after birth. All of this has no basis in Islām.

Exposure during Delivery

DOCTORS AND NURSES

In our time, pregnancy often requires regular checkups by an obstetrician. Delivery is usually handled by the obstetrician and a number of nurses. Thus, a woman is expected to expose the most private part of her body to several individuals during the course of her pregnancy and delivery.

This exposure must be limited to the bare minimum. To fulfill this, a woman should apply the following guidelines:

1. She should make sure that her physicians and nurses are Muslim females. If this is not possible, they should at least be all females. Exposure in the presence of male doctors or nurses should be a highly exceptional case—a Muslim family should only allow it for an absolute necessity.
2. She should limit her doctor's checkups (even if the doctor is female) without endangering herself or her baby.
3. She should limit the number of nurses and hospital staff members present during her delivery.
4. She should not expose any part of her body beyond the minimum amount required for checkup or delivery.

In reponse to a question about hospital delivery, the 'allāmah, al-Albānī (رحمته الله), said:

“This is an issue with which Muslims are afflicted nowadays. A pregnant woman used to deliver in the depth of her home, with the help of some of her female relatives or a midwife. Things have changed now because Muslims are influenced by foreign and Western customs, in confirmation of the Prophet’s saying:

«لَتَتَّبِعَنَّ سَنَنَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ شِبْرًا شِبْرًا وَذِرَاعًا بِذِرَاعٍ
حَتَّىٰ لَوْ دَخَلُوا جُحْرَ صَبَّابٍ تَبِعْتُمُوهُمْ.»

⟨You will follow the ways of those who preceded you, a span for a span, and a cubit for a cubit. Even if they enter into a lizard’s hole, you would surely follow them!⟩¹

... Indeed, we find Muslims imitating the nonbelievers in their worst customs and practices. One such act of imitation is to force women to deliver in the hospital, whether or not this is a real necessity for them. This has become a consistent practice, even for poor households that would have to tighten their budget in order for the woman to deliver in the hospital ...

If the midwife or female doctor who supervises the pregnant woman decides that her delivery is abnormal and might require an additional surgery then she may be transferred to the hospital. But for a natural delivery, it is not permissible to make the woman leave her house and enter the hospital to have a natural birth ...

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (3456) and Muslim (2669) from Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī (رحمته الله).

Furthermore, if it is necessary for the woman to enter the hospital within the aforementioned narrow guidelines, her delivery should not be performed by a male doctor but, rather, by a female doctor—unless a female doctor is not available and the woman’s life is endangered, in which case a male doctor may perform the delivery ...

As for the evidence that a woman should deliver in her home unless there is a necessity for her to be admitted into the hospital, it is that Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿ وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَىٰ ﴾ الأحزاب ٣٣

«And abide in your homes and do not display yourselves as was the display of the former times of *Jāhiliyyah*.»¹

This means that a woman should stay in her home and not leave it except for a need ... As we said earlier, there is no need for a woman with normal pregnancy to go to the hospital.

Furthermore, when a woman is admitted into the hospital, she will be liable to exposure to many men and women. This cannot be permitted except within the tight guidelines that we set earlier.”²

VIDEO-RECORDING THE DELIVERY

A wrong practice that must be avoided by Muslims is for the husband or some other individual to photograph or video-record the delivery process, keeping a permanent record of the mother’s *‘awrah*.

1. *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:33.

2. From a question-answer session recorded in Emirates, archived at: audio.islamweb.net/audio/index.php?page=FullContent&audioid=109346-44k.

The First Cry

The first indication of a live birth is the baby's cry. This cry falls upon the ears of the fretting parents and relatives as the sweetest sound on earth.

In fact, the Prophet (ﷺ) tells us that one of the reasons a newborn begins its life with a cry is that Satan pinches it. Satan's extreme jealousy and hatred for humans has no limit. He does not hesitate to direct his attacks on every human from birth.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَا مِنْ مَوْلُودٍ إِلَّا نَخَسَهُ نَزَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ حِينَ يَقَعُ (يُوَلَدُ)،
فَيَسْتَهْلُ صَارِحًا مِنْ نَخْسَةِ الشَّيْطَانِ، إِلَّا ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ.»

«There is no baby but that Satan pokes it when it is born, so it starts off by crying from Satan's poke—except for the Son of Maryam (Mary) and his mother.»

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) then recited the *āyah*:

﴿وَإِنِّي أَعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ﴾ آل عمران

«(Maryam's mother supplicated to Allāh,) "Indeed, I seek Your protection for her and her progeny from Satan, the outcast."»^{1,2}

Thus, a child who has not yet encountered anything in this life is first received with a poke from man's worst enemy: Satan.

As the child grows into an adult who understands and appreciates various worldly pleasures, Satan will have more chances to influence him. A human will then be in serious need for a shield in the face of Satan's seduction and misguidance. This is where Allāh's (ﷻ) guidance is essential: it provides every human with the only possible protection against his archenemy—from his first to his last days on earth.

1. *Āl 'Imrān* 3:36.

2. Combined from narrations by al-Bukhārī (4548, 3286, 3431) and Muslim (2366).

Condition for Inheritance

The condition for a fetus to inherit is that it is born alive—even for a brief moment. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا اسْتَهَلَ الْمَوْلُودُ وَرَّثَ.»

«As soon as a baby cries (at birth), it inherits.»¹

An exception to the above is an illegitimate child of *zinā*. Such a child would not inherit from the biological father. ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أَيُّمَا رَجُلٍ عَاهَرَ بِحُرَّةٍ أَوْ أَمَةٍ، فَالْوَلَدُ وَوَلَدُ زَنَانَا، لَا يَرِثُ وَلَا يُورَثُ.»

«Whichever man commits *zinā* with a free or slave woman, the child (that she bears) is a child of *zinā*. It neither inherits (from him) nor gives (him) inheritance.»²

The reason for this is that a child from *zinā* may not be attributed to the biological father. ‘Ā’ishah, Abū Hurayrah, and other *ṣahābah* (رضي الله عنهم) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الْوَلَدُ لِلْفِرَاشِ، وَلِلْعَاهِرِ الْحَجَرِ.»

«A child belongs to the mattress (where it was born), and the one who committed adultery receives the stones (as punishment).»³

This *ḥadīth* will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Applauding the Newborn

ANNOUNCING THE BIRTH

Bishārah is to deliver pleasant information or glad tidings. An

1. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 1707).
2. Recorded by at-Tirmidhī, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Hidāyat-ur-Ruwāh* 2990).
3. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (2053, 2218, 2745, 4303, 6749, 6750, 6765, 6818, 7182), Muslim (1457, 1458), and others.

important type of *bishārah* is to announce a child's birth to the parents and those who would appreciate the news. This brings pleasure and happiness to the believers, which is a recommended act in Islām. Allāh (ﷻ) tells us that He sent angels to give the good tidings to Ibrāhīm (ﷺ) and Zakariyyā (ﷺ).

Allāh (ﷻ) gave Ibrāhīm (ﷺ) the *bishārah* of the forthcoming birth of his first son Ismā'īl (ﷺ):

﴿ فَبَشِّرْنَاهُ بِعَلْقٍ حَلِيمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾ الصافات ﴾

«So We gave him the good tidings of a tolerant Boy.»¹

Allāh (ﷻ) also gave Ibrāhīm and his wife (ﷻ) the *bishārah* of the forthcoming birth of their son Ishāq and, subsequently, Ishāq's son, Ya'qūb (ﷻ):

﴿ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بِالْبُشْرَى قَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ فَمَا لَبِثَ أَنْ جَاءَهُ بِعِجْلٍ حَنِيذٍ ﴿٦٦﴾ فَلَمَّا رَأَى أَيْدِيَهُمْ لَا تَصِلُ إِلَيْهِ نَكِرَهُمْ وَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ إِنَّا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَى قَوْمِ لُوطٍ ﴿٧٠﴾ وَأَمْرَاتُهُ قَائِمَةٌ فَضَحِكَتْ فَبَشَّرْنَاهَا بِإِسْحَاقَ وَمِنْ وَرَاءَهُ إِسْحَاقَ يَعْقُوبَ ﴿٧١﴾ هود ﴾

«Our messengers (the angels) have surely come to Ibrāhīm with good tidings. They said, "Peace." He replied, "Peace." And he hastened to bring them a roasted calf. But when he saw their hands not reaching for it, he deemed their conduct strange and became apprehensive of them. They said, "Fear not. We have been sent to the people of Lūṭ." His wife was standing, and she smiled. Then We gave her good tidings of (the birth of) Ishāq and, after Ishāq, of (his son) Ya'qūb.»²

1. *Aṣ-Ṣāffāt* 37:101.

2. *Hūd* 11:69-71.

Allāh (ﷻ) also says in regard to this:

﴿ فَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ وَبَشَّرُوهُ بِغُلَامٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴾ (الذاريات)

«He conceived fear of them. They said, “Fear not!”
And they gave him good news of a knowledgeable
boy.»¹

Allāh (ﷻ) also tells us that the angels delivered to Maryam (ﷺ) the *bishārah* of the birth of ‘Īsā (ﷺ):

﴿ إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ اسْمُهُ

الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ﴾ آل عمران ٤٥

«And when the angels said, “O Maryam (Mary),
indeed Allāh gives you tidings of a word from Him
whose name will be the Masīḥ (Messiah), ‘Īsā, Son
of Maryam.”»²

And Allāh (ﷻ) gave Zakariyyā (ﷺ) the *bishārah* of Yaḥyā’s (ﷺ) birth:

﴿ يَنْزَكِرْنَا إِنَّا نَبَشِّرُكِ بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَى لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا ﴾ (مريم)

«(He was told,) “O Zakariyyā, indeed We bring
you good tidings of a son whose name will be
Yaḥyā (John), and whose name We never gave to
anyone before him.”»³

CONGRATULATION

Tahni’ah literally means: requesting bliss. It is a form of congratulation presented to a person who has received a blessing or favor, and it usually includes a supplication of *barakah* (blessing).

As stated above, when a pleasant event occurs to a Muslim, it is

1. *Ath-Thāriyāt* 51:28.

2. *Āl ‘Imrān* 3:45.

3. *Maryam* 19:7.

recommended that some of his relatives or friends give him the *bishārah*. Other Muslims can then share in the occasion and bring him pleasure through *tahni'ah*.

When Allāh (ﷻ) revealed that He accepted the repentance of Ka'b Bin Mālik and his other two companions¹, a man rushed to Ka'b and gave him the *bishārah*. Later on, when Ka'b entered into the *Masjid*, other people gave him *tahni'ah*.²

Tahni'ah may only be made with Islāmically acceptable terms, such as asking Allāh to bless the child and give it a righteous life.

A famous, albeit weak, report from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (ﷺ) is to say to a person who who is granted a child:

﴿بُورِكَ فِي الْمَوْهُوبِ، وَشَكَرْتَ الْوَاهِبَ، وَبَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ، وَرَزَقْتَ بَرَّهُ.﴾

“May what you have been granted be blessed (for you), may you be grateful to the Giver, may it (the newborn) live to adulthood, and may it be good to you.”³

A more valid report from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (ﷺ) is to say:

﴿جَعَلَهُ اللهُ مُبَارَكًا عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى أُمَّةٍ مُحَمَّدٍ.﴾

“*Ja'alah-Ullāhu mubārakan 'alayka wa-'alā ummati Muḥammad*—May Allāh (ﷻ) make it (the child) blessed for you and for Muḥammad's (ﷺ) *Ummah*.”⁴

Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَنَقَبَلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولِ حَسَنِ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا﴾ ﴿آل عمران ٣٧﴾

1. *At-Tawbah* 9:118.
2. The full story of Ka'b's repentance is recorded by al-Bukhārī (4677), Muslim (2769), and others.
3. Recorded by Ibn 'Adiyy, Ibn 'Asākir, and others. Verified to be extremely weak by Ibn 'Adiyy (in *aḍ-Ḍu'afā'*) and Ibn Ḥajar (in *Lisān-ul-Mīzān*). Some '*ulamā'*' indicate that, as additional proof of its weakness, it mentions *al-Wāhib* instead of *al-Wahhāb* (the Giver) as a name for Allāh.
4. Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī and Abū Nu'aym with an acceptable (*ḥasan*) *isnād*.

«So her Lord accepted her (Maryam) with good acceptance and caused her to grow righteously.»¹

Based on this *ayah*, some ‘*ulamā*’ derive the *tahni’ ah*:

تَقَبَّلَهُ اللَّهُ بِقَبُولِ حَسَنٍ، وَأَثَبَتْهُ نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا.

“*Taqabbalah-Ullāhu bi-qabūlin ḥasanin wa-anbatahū nabātan ḥasanan*—May Allāh (ﷻ) accept it favorably and raise it righteously.”²

GIVING PRESENTS

Giving presents to Muslims is a good practice on all occasions. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«تَهَادُوا، تَحَابُّوا.»

«Exchange presents to enhance love among you.»³

Thus, it is permissible to give a present to a newborn’s family as a token of help and support for the added responsibility. However, the present should be given without extravagance or show-off. Furthermore, it should not be given with the understanding that it is a required and consistent obligation upon all relatives and acquaintances.

Islām Prohibits Gender-Based Bias

SUBMISSION TO ALLĀH’S DECREE

We should be pleased with the children that Allāh grants us, regardless of whether they are boys or girls. We must understand that what Allāh (ﷻ) decrees for us derives from His great knowledge and wisdom. Nothing happens haphazardly in Allāh’s dominion. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۗ يَهْتَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ

1. *Āl ‘Imrān* 3:37.

2. Reported from Ibn Bāz (رحمته الله عليه), as on www.ahlalhdeth.com.

3. Recorded by Abū Ya’lā, al-Bayhaqī and al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab-ul-Mufrad*. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 1601).

إِنشَاءً وَيَهَبُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ الذَّكَورَ ﴿٤٩﴾ أَوْ يُزَوِّجُهُمْ ذُكْرَانًا وَإِنثَاءً
وَيَجْعَلُ مَن يَشَاءُ عَقِيمًا إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٥٠﴾ الشورى

«To Allāh belongs the dominion of the heavens and earth. He creates what He wills. He gives to whom He wills females, and He gives to whom He wills males. Or He couples them as males and females, and He renders whom He wills childless. Indeed, He is Knowing and Capable.»¹

DISLIKING GIRLS IS A QUALITY OF EXTREME IGNORANCE

It is prohibited to favor boys over girls or dislike the birth of girls. Allāh (ﷻ) condemns this as being one of the traits of *Jāhiliyyah*. He says:

﴿وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِالْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ﴿٥٨﴾
يَتَوَارَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِن سُوءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهِ ۚ أَيَسْكَبُ عَلَىٰ هُونٍ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُ
فِي التُّرَابِ ۗ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾﴾ النحل

«And when one of them is informed of a female (born to him), his face darkens with suppressed anger. He hides himself from the people because of the ill of which he has been informed. Should he keep it in humiliation or bury it in the ground? Unquestionably, evil is what they decide.»²

The pagans of *Jāhiliyyah* hated to have girls and considered them a source of shame and scorn. They often killed them or buried them alive to get rid of the disgrace associated with them. At the same time, they believed that the angels were female and that they were Allāh's daughters! Allāh (ﷻ) mocks this contradiction in the following:

1. *Ash-Shūrā* 42:49-50.

2. *An-Nahl* 16:58-59.

﴿ وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُمْ بِمَا صَرَبَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ مَثَلًا ظَلَّ وَجْهَهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ﴾

﴿ الزخرف ﴾

«And when one of them is given tidings of (the birth of) that which he so readily attributes to the Most Merciful (i.e. a daughter), his face darkens with suppressed anger.»¹

MERITS IN HAVING DAUGHTERS

A believer is pleased with whatever Allāh grants him. He realizes that one girl is sometimes better than many boys.

When Maryam's mother gave birth to her, she thought that Maryam would not be as capable as a boy. However, Maryam grew up to be better than most people—one of the best four women who ever lived. Anas and Jābir (رضي الله عنهما) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«حَسْبُكَ مِنْ نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ: مَرْيَمُ بِنْتُ عِمْرَانَ، وَخَدِيجَةُ بِنْتُ خُوَيْلِدٍ،
وَفَاطِمَةُ بِنْتُ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَأَسِيَّةُ امْرَأَةِ فِرْعَوْنَ.»

«Of the women of mankind, it is sufficient for you (to honor): Maryam Bint 'Imrān, Khadijah Bint Khuwaylid, Fā'timah Bint Muḥammad, and Āsiyah, Pharaoh's wife.»²

A daughter brings cheer and happiness to the hearts of her parents. 'Uqbah Bin 'Āmir and 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنهما) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَا تَكْرَهُوا الْبَنَاتِ، فَإِنَّهُنَّ الْمُؤَسَّاتُ الْعَالِيَاتُ.»

«Do not dislike daughters, because they are the cheering and dear ones.»³

1. Az-Zukhruf 43:17.

2. Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Hidāyat-ur-Ruwāh* 6141 & *Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 3328, 3143).

3. Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn 'Adiyy, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-

Raising girls uprightly is a great act of righteousness in Islām. It makes one worthy of close company with the Messenger (ﷺ) in *Jannah*. Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) once brought together his index and middle finger, saying:

«مَنْ عَالَ ابْنَتَيْنِ أَوْ ثَلَاثَ بَنَاتٍ، أَوْ أُخْتَيْنِ أَوْ ثَلَاثَ أَخَوَاتٍ،
فَاتَّقَى اللَّهَ، وَأَقَامَ عَلَيْهِنَّ حَتَّى يَبْلُغْنَ (أَوْ يُدْرِكْنَ) أَوْ يَبِينَ، أَوْ
يَمُتْنَ، أَوْ يَمُوتَ عَنْهُنَّ، كُنْتُ أَنَا وَهُوَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ كَهَاتَيْنِ.»

«Whoever supports two or three daughters, or two or three sisters, revering Allāh in their regard, and taking care of them—until they reach puberty, or depart (by marriage), or die, or he dies (before that), I will then be with him in *Jannah* like these two fingers.»¹

‘Uqbah Bin ‘Āmir (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ كَانَ لَهُ ثَلَاثُ بَنَاتٍ، فَصَبَرَ عَلَيْهِنَّ وَأَطْعَمَهُنَّ وَسَقَاهُنَّ
وَكَسَاهُنَّ مِنْ جِدَّتِهِ، كُنَّ لَهُ حِجَابًا مِنَ النَّارِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.»

«Whoever has three daughters and he raises them patiently, giving them food, drink, and clothes as he can afford, they will then shield him from the Fire on Resurrection Day.»²

Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ عَالَ ثَلَاثًا مِنْ بَنَاتٍ، يَكْفِيهِنَّ وَيَرْحُمُهُنَّ وَيَرْفُقُ بِهِنَّ، فَهُوَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ.»

Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 3206).

1. This is combined from narrations recorded by Muslim (2631), Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī, and others. Some of those narrations were verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 295-297, 1120). A similar narration was recorded by at-Tirmithī from Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه), and verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ut-Targhīb* 1973).
2. Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 294 and *al-Adab-ul-Mufrad* 76).

«Whoever supports three daughters, sufficing them and showing them mercy and kindness, will enter *Jannah*.»¹

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that a poor woman came to her carrying two little daughters, and begging for food. ‘Ā’ishah gave her all the food she had, which was just three dates. The woman gave one date to each of her daughters and was about to eat the third, but her daughters asked her for more food. So she split the remaining date in half and gave each of her daughters one half. Her action amazed ‘Ā’ishah and she mentioned it later to the Prophet (ﷺ) who said:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَوْجَبَ لَهَا مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ أَوْ أَعْتَقَهَا بِهَا مِنَ النَّارِ. مَنْ ابْتُلِيَ مِنَ الْبَنَاتِ بِبَنِيٍّ فَأَحْسَنَ إِلَيْهِنَّ كُنَّ لَهُ سِتْرًا مِنَ النَّارِ.»

«Indeed, because of her action, Allāh has ordained for her *Jannah* and secured her from the Fire. He who is tried by having daughters and treats them kindly, they will shelter him from the Fire.»²

We know that a number of the prophets mostly fathered females. This applies, for instance, to Lūṭ (عليه السلام) and Muḥammad (ﷺ).

Sāliḥ, Imām Aḥmad Bin Ḥanbal’s son, reported that when his father or others whom he knew had female babies, Aḥmad (رضي الله عنه) would say:

«الأنبياء كانوا آباء بنات. وقد جاء في البنات ما قد علمت.»

“The prophets were fathers of girls. And what you know (of good things) has been reported in regard to females.”³

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1. Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Ya’lā, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 2492 and *al-Adab-ul-Mufrad* 78).
 2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (1418, 5995) and Muslim (2629-2630).
 3. *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawdūd* p. 19.

Importance of Gratitude

Those who receive a favor should show gratitude for it. And who deserves our gratitude more than our greatest benefactor: Allāh (ﷻ)?

Gratitude to Allāh (ﷻ) is a main objective of worship. A true believer acknowledges Allāh's favors with gratitude, contentment and love.

One should strive to be grateful to Allāh (ﷻ) in all situations and circumstances. Gratitude is rendered to Him with the tongue through words of praise, dedication, and glorification. It is also rendered with the body and limbs through actions of submission and obedience.

GRATITUDE IS A QUALITY OF THE MESSENGERS AND BELIEVERS

Gratitude is a quality that Allāh (ﷻ) praises, and to which He calls His messengers and their followers. Allāh praises His *Khalīl* (close confidant) Ibrāhīm (ﷺ) for being grateful to Him:

﴿إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ حَنِيفًا وَلَوْ يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾ شَاكِرًا
لِأَنْعَمِهِ أَجْتَبَنَاهُ وَهَدَيْنَاهُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٣٢﴾﴾ النحل

«Verily, Ibrāhīm was an *ummah* (a comprehensive leader), devoutly obedient to Allāh, inclining toward the truth, and was not of those who join partners with Allāh. He was grateful for His (Allāh's) favors. He (Allāh) chose him and guided him to a Straight Path.»¹

Similarly, Allāh (ﷻ) praises His prophet Nūh's (ﷺ) gratefulness:

﴿ذُرِّيَّةَ مَنْ حَمَلْنَا مَعَ نُوحٍ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَبْدًا شَكُورًا ﴿٢٦﴾﴾ الإسراء

«The offspring of those whom we carried with Nūh—Indeed, he was a grateful servant (to Us).»²

1. *An-Nahl* 16:120-121.

2. *Al-Isrā'* 17:31.

Allāh (ﷻ) commands all of the believers to adorn themselves with the virtue of gratitude. He says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ﴾ (البقرة ١٧٢)

«Oh you who believe, eat of the good things which We have provided for you, and be grateful to Allāh—if it is indeed Him that you worship.»¹

And He (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكَرْتُكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُون﴾ (البقرة ١٧٢)

«So, remember Me—I will then remember you; and be grateful to Me, and do not deny Me.»²

MOST PEOPLE ARE UNGRATEFUL

Despite Allāh's boundless favors upon us, most people are ungrateful to Him. He (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَجَعَلْ لَكُمْ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَرَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ﴾ (السجدة ٩)

«And it is He Who gave you hearing, eyesight, and hearts. But little are you grateful (to Him).»³

Allāh (ﷻ) also says:

﴿وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّاكِرُونَ﴾ (سبأ ١٣)

«Only few of My servants are the grateful.»⁴

REWARD FOR GRATITUDE AND PUNISHMENT FOR INGRATITUDE

While Allāh (ﷻ) promises prosperity and abundance for His grateful servants, He (ﷻ) condemns those who are ungrateful and promises severe punishment for them. He (ﷻ) says:

1. *Al-Baqarah* 2:172.

2. *Al-Baqarah* 2:152.

3. *As-Sajdah* 32:9.

4. *Saba'* 34:13.

﴿ وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ ﴾ ﴿٧﴾ إبراهيم

«And (remember) when your Lord proclaimed, “If you are grateful (to Me), I will surely give you more (of My favors). But if you are ungrateful, indeed, My punishment is surely severe.”¹»

As an example, Allāh (ﷻ) tells us that He punished the tribe of Saba' for their ingratitude:

﴿ ذَلِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَهَلْ يُجْزَىٰ إِلَّا الْكَافِرُونَ ﴾ ﴿١٧﴾ سبأ

«That was their punishment because of their ingratitude—and do We thus punish except the ungrateful?»²

Gratitude for Having Children

A CHILD IS A GREAT FAVOR FROM ALLĀH

One of Allāh's great favors on us is His granting us offspring. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿ وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي أَمَدَّكُمْ بِمَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ ﴿١٣٢﴾ أَمَدَّكُمْ بِأَنْعَامٍ وَبَنِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

وَحَنَنٍ وَعَيْوُنٍ ﴿١٣٤﴾ الشعراء

«So revere and fear the One who provided you with that which you know: He provided you with cattle and children, and gardens and springs.»³

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿ وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْزَالِكُمْ بَنِينَ وَحَفَدَةً وَرَزَقَكُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ ﴾ ﴿٧٢﴾ النحل

«Allāh has given you spouses from yourselves, has

1. *Ibrāhīm* 14:7.

2. *Saba'* 34:17.

3. *Ash-Shu'arā'* 26:132-134.

granted you, from your spouses, children and grandchildren, and has provided you with good things for your sustenance.»¹

RAISING CHILDREN GRATEFULLY

The best way of utilizing a favor that Allāh (ﷻ) grants us is by making that favor a source of obedience and a show of gratitude. This applies to our children.

The believers must strive to raise their offspring to be pious, submissive to Allāh, consistent in their prayers, and responsible bearers of the *da'wah* to Allāh. If they do so, they contribute to their children's life-long well-being and eternal salvation. If, on the other hand, they neglect this important duty, they contribute to their children's possible eternal ruin.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُوَلَّدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ حَتَّى يُعْرَبَ عَنْ لِسَانِهِ. فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ أَوْ يُشْرِكَانِهِ، كَالشَّاةِ تُولَدُ جَمْعَاءَ، هَلْ تَرَى فِيهَا مِنْ جَدْعَاءَ؟»

«Every child is born with a pure *fiṭrah* (nature)—until he becomes able to express himself. It is his parents who then turn him into a Jew, a Christian, a Magian, or a pagan. This is like baby goats: they are born intact—can you find any of them (at birth) with a cut ear?»²

From the moment a child is born, we should exhibit deep gratitude to Allāh for this great favor. We should demonstrate our gratitude by slaughtering *'aqīqah*, implementing various *sunnahs* pertaining to a newborn, avoiding violations and *bid'ahs* committed by the ignorant, and striving to raise our child to be a

1. *An-Nahl* 16:72.

2. This is a combined narration recorded by al-Bukhārī (1358, 1359, 1385, 4775, 6599), Muslim (2658-2659), and others. A similar narration was recorded by Aḥmad, ad-Dārimī, and others from al-Aswad Bin Sa'ī' (رضي الله عنه), and verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 402).

righteous individual who will also show gratitude to his Lord (34).

3.

NAMING THE NEWBORN

When to Name a Newborn

NAMING ON THE SEVENTH DAY

A newborn should be named during its first few days of life. According to some reports, this should be done on the seventh day. Samurah Bin Jundab (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«كُلُّ غُلَامٍ رَهِينَةٌ بِعَقِيْقَتِهِ، تُذْبَحُ عَنْهُ يَوْمَ سَابِعِهِ وَيُسَمَّى فِيهِ وَيُحْلَقُ رَأْسُهُ.»

«Every child is confined by its ‘*aqīqah*, which is to be slaughtered for it on its seventh day. On that day, it should also be named, and its head should be shaved.»¹

And ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported:

«أَمَرَ النَّبِيُّ بِتَسْمِيَةِ الْمَوْلُودِ يَوْمَ سَابِعِهِ وَوَضْعِ الْأَدَى عَنْهُ وَالْعَقِّ.»

“The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded us to name a newborn on its seventh day, and to remove filth off it and perform its ‘*aqīqah*.”²

NAMING BEFORE THE SEVENTH DAY

There are authentic reports indicating that the Prophet (ﷺ) named some newborns before the seventh day.

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that on the morning following the birth of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) son Ibrāhīm, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«وُلِدَ لِي اللَّيْلَةَ غُلَامٌ فَسَمَّيْتُهُ بِاسْمِ أَبِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ.»

-
1. Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi‘* 4541 and *Irwā‘-ul-Ghalīl* 1165).
 2. Recorded by at-Tirmithī and Ibn Abī Shaybah. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ut-Tirmithī* 2269).

«A baby-boy was born for me this past night. I named him after my father¹, Ibrāhīm.»²

Anas (رضي الله عنه) also reported that as soon as his mother, Umm Sulaym, gave birth to his younger brother, ‘Abdullāh, she told him, “O Anas, take these dates, and do not let the baby eat anything until you first hand him to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) in the morning.”

In the morning, Anas took the baby to the Prophet (ﷺ). He found him wearing a striped cloak and marking some cattle. When he saw the baby he asked Anas, «أَوَلَدْتُ بِنْتُ مِلْحَانَ.» «**Did Milhān’s daughter deliver?**» He replied, “Yes!” He said, «رُؤْيُكَ أَفْرَغُ لَكَ.» «**Wait until I finish what I am doing.**» He then put away what he had in his hand, held the baby, and asked, «أَمَعَهُ شَيْءٌ.» «**Did you bring anything with him?**» He replied, “Yes, some dates.”

The Prophet (ﷺ) took the dates, chewed on them, mixing them with his saliva, opened the baby’s mouth, and rubbed the chewed dates inside his mouth. The baby began to hungrily suck the sweetness of the dates together with the Prophet’s (ﷺ) saliva. This was the first thing to enter the baby’s stomach; and the Prophet’s (ﷺ) said:

«انظُرُوا إِلَى حُبِّ الْأَنْصَارِ التَّمْرِ.»

«**See how the Anṣār love dates!**»

Anas then said, “O Allāh’s Messenger, give him a name.” The Prophet (ﷺ) rubbed the baby’s face and named him ‘Abdullāh.³

Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (رضي الله عنه) reported:

«وُلِدَ لِي غُلَامٌ، فَأَتَيْتُ بِهِ النَّبِيَّ، فَسَمَّاهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ،

-
1. Meaning, “forefather”.
 2. Recorded by Muslim (2315), Abū Dāwūd, and others.
 3. This is a combined report from al-Bukhārī (1301, 1502, 5470, 5542, 5842), Muslim (2144), Aḥmad, and others.

فَحَنَّنَهُ بِتَمْرَةٍ، وَدَعَا لَهُ بِالْبَرَكَةِ، وَدَفَعَهُ إِلَيَّ).

“A baby-boy was born for me. I took him to the Prophet (ﷺ) who named him Ibrāhīm, chewed on a date and made him suck it, invoked blessings for him, and then gave him back to me.”¹

Sahl (رضي الله عنه) reported that when al-Munthir Bin Abī Usayd was born, he was brought to the Prophet (ﷺ) who asked, «مَا اسْمُهُ.» **What is his name?** His father, Abū Usayd, replied, “So-and-so.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said, «لَا، لَكِنَّ اسْمَهُ الْمُنْذِرُ.» **Rather, his name is al-Munthir.**²

CONCLUSION

From the above, we see that the Prophet (ﷺ) instructed to name a newborn on the seventh day. However, his practice shows that he named some newborns upon birth.

A few among the ‘ulamā’, such as al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (رضي الله عنه) and Imām Mālik (رضي الله عنه), hold the opinion that it is not permissible to name a child before the seventh.

Most of the ‘ulamā’, however, are of the opinion that naming a newborn is permissible upon birth, but should not be delayed past the seventh day.

We find the latter opinion more appropriate for the following reasons:

1. It is not clear from the Prophet’s (ﷺ) above commands that he prohibited naming a newborn before the seventh day. In other words, we do not have a text saying, for example, “Do not name a baby before the seventh day.”
2. The best way to reconcile between the Prophet’s (ﷺ) statements and actions is by allowing both of them to hold

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5467, 6198), Muslim (2145), and others.

2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (6191), Muslim (2149), and others.

simultaneously—if possible. This reconciliation is possible in this case, and there is no need to assume that either of the two indications abrogates the other.

Thus we conclude—Allāh knows best—that a newborn should be named no later than the seventh day from birth.

Who Names the Child?

The ‘*ulamā*’ agree that the father has the first right to name the newborn. This is because Allāh gave him the responsibility of leading the family. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ

عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ﴾ النساء ٣٤

«Men are in charge of women by (right of) what (qualities) Allāh has given one over the other and what they spend (in support) from their wealth.»¹

Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ، وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ. فَالْإِمَامُ رَاعٍ، وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ فِي أَهْلِهِ، وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَالْمَرْأَةُ رَاعِيَةٌ فِي بَيْتِ زَوْجِهَا، وَهِيَ مَسْئُولَةٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهَا، وَالْحَادِمُ رَاعٍ فِي مَالِ سَيِّدِهِ، وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ فِي مَالِ أَبِيهِ، وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ. فَكُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ، وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ.»

«Each one of you is entrusted with a responsibility and is accountable for his responsibility. A ruler is responsible (for his people), and is accountable for his responsibility. A man is responsible for his family and is accountable for his responsibility. A woman is responsible for her husband’s house and is accountable for her responsibility. A servant is responsible for his master’s property and is accountable for his responsibility. And a (young)

1. *An-Nisā’* 4:34.

man is responsible for his father's wealth, and is accountable for his responsibility. Thus, each one of you has a responsibility and is accountable for his responsibility.»¹

However, it is recommended for the father to show kindness to his wife by consulting with her and seriously considering her suggested names, especially if they are within the guidelines of good names that we discuss below.

It is also permissible for the mother to name her child independently, provided that the father approves or agrees to this. Allāh (ﷻ) tells us that upon delivering Maryam (Mary), her mother was the one who named her:

﴿ فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ
وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ ۖ وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ ﴾ آل عمران ٣٦

«When she (Maryam's mother) delivered her, she said, “My Lord, I have delivered a female—And Allāh was most Knowing of what she delivered—and the male is not like the female. And I have named her Maryam.”»²

It is also recommended for the parents to consult with individuals of knowledge and wisdom who can help them find the most suitable names for their offspring.

Giving a Good Name

The parents are required to choose a good name for their newborn. A good name is a name that is known to be pleasing to Allāh (ﷻ), approved by His Messenger, or acceptable to the righteous ‘*ulamā*’ of Islām.

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1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (893, 2409, 2554, 2558, 2751, 5188, 5200, 7138), Muslim (1829), and others.
 2. *Al ‘Imrān* 3:36.

Bakr Abū Zayd (ﷺ) said:

“The ‘*ulamā*’ agree that it is obligatory to name both males and females ...

If the parent violates this *shar‘ī* fact, and selects (for the newborn) a name disapproved by the *shar‘* or not possible to accommodate by the Arabic language, this choice would produce a conflict and contradiction between the child’s dignity as a human being and a Muslim and the improperly chosen title ...

A name is the first thing that faces a newborn when it exits from the darkness of the womb. It is the first description that distinguishes it from other human beings. It is the first long-lasting act that a parent does for the newborn. It is the first process through which a newborn enters into the nation’s record. ...

Thus we see, as stated by Ibn-ul-Qayyim (ﷺ), that most of the lowly people have names suiting their status, and most of the honorable and decent people have names suiting their status ...

Indeed, the names affect the named ones: in terms of beauty or ugliness, cheerfulness or repulsion, and kindness or harshness.

Thus, O Muslim—may Allāh bless what He grants you—be good toward your newborn, yourself, and your nation by selecting a name that is pleasant in utterance and in meaning.”¹

Therefore, the parents should carefully appraise the name that they want to give to their child, making sure that it has a good meaning, sounds pleasant, and is suitable in other regards.

1. *Tasmiyat-ul-Mawlūd* pp. 20-24.

Recommended Names

There are guidelines to be considered when looking for a name for one's child. These guidelines are discussed in the following subsections. Appendix I presents lists of names for boys and girls that mostly fulfill these guidelines.

NAMES OF 'UBŪDIYYAH

The best two names are: 'Abdullāh and 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān. Ibn 'Umar and other companions (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ أَحَبَّ الْأَسْمَاءِ إِلَى اللَّهِ: عَبْدُ اللَّهِ وَعَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ.»

«Indeed, the most beloved names to Allāh are:
'Abdullāh and 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān.»¹

These two names describe their bearers as being 'ibād (servants and worshipers) of Allāh. They reflect the true purpose of a person's existence: 'ubūdiyyah or servitude to Allāh, as Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿ وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴾ ﴿٥٦﴾ الذاريات

«I only created *jinn*s and humans to worship Me.»²

Furthermore, these two names declare servitude to Allāh through His two foremost excellent names: Allāh and ar-Raḥmān, which are mentioned in the following:

﴿ قُلِ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى ﴾ ﴿١١٠﴾ الإسراء

«Say, "Call upon Allāh or call upon ar-Raḥmān. Whichever (name) you call (is acceptable, because) to Him belong the best names.»³

The first name, 'Abdullāh, was the most common among the *ṣaḥābah* (رضي الله عنه). Approximately three-hundred companions carried

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1. Recorded by Muslim (2132), Ibn Mājah, and others.
 2. *Ath-Thāriyāt* 51:56.
 3. *Al-Isrā'* 17:110.

it. The very first child that was born for the Muhājirīn in al-Madīnah was named ‘Abdullāh Bin az-Zubayr (ﷺ).

We can see from the above *āyah* that it is also recommended to give names expressing servitude to any of Allāh’s other authentic excellent names. A full list of Allāh’s excellent names is included in Appendix B.

Note that one may not rely on fabricated and baseless narrations in order to demonstrate the recommendation of names of servitude. The following narration, for example, is fabricated:

"أَحَبُّ الْأَسْمَاءِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَا تُعْبَدُ بِهِ."

“The most beloved names to Allāh are those expressing servitude.”¹

And the following is another often-mentioned narration that has absolutely no basis in any of the books of *ḥadīth*:

"أَحَبُّ الْأَسْمَاءِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَا عُبِدَ وَحَمِدَ."

“The most beloved names to Allāh are those expressing servitude or praise.”²

NAMES WITH REALISTIC MEANINGS

It is recommended to give or carry names whose meanings are realistic, avoiding excessiveness or exaggeration. Abū Wahb al-Jushamī (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«خَيْرُ الْأَسْمَاءِ: عَبْدُ اللَّهِ وَعَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ، وَأَصْدَقُ الْأَسْمَاءِ:

هَمَّامٌ وَحَارِثٌ، وَشَرُّ الْأَسْمَاءِ: حَرْبٌ وَمَرَّةٌ.»

◀The best of names are: ‘Abdullāh and ‘Abd-ur-Rahmān. The most truthful names are: Hammām (planner) and Ḥārith (cultivator). And the worst

1. Verified to be fabricated by al-Albānī (*aḍ-Ḍa‘īfah* 408).

2. Verified to be baseless by al-Albānī (*aḍ-Ḍa‘īfah* 411).

names are: Ḥarb (war) and Murrah (bitter).¹

Two good names mentioned in this *ḥadīth* are Hammām and Hārith. They both reflect true qualities that are within human nature. Every human is a planner and maker of decisions—whether good or bad. And every human’s actions in this life cultivate crops—whether good or bad.

Since bearing these two names would not constitute exaggeration or lying, the Prophet (ﷺ) considered them truthful.

Other names that fulfill the same criteria of being truthful and modest should also be good to bear.

NAMES OF THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD

It is indeed recommended to bear the name of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), because he is our example and the finest of humanity. Furthermore, he invited the Muslims to carry his name.

Jābir, Abū Hurayrah, and Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«سَمُّوا (تَسَمَّوْا) بِاسْمِي، وَلَا تَكْتُبُوا بِكُنْيَتِي.»

«Give (or carry) my name, but not my *kunyah* (nickname).»²

This permission applies to the Prophet’s (ﷺ) original name, “Muḥammad”, or its synonyms, such as “Aḥmad” or “Maḥmūd”. It does not apply to other names or qualifiers describing specific acts of the Prophet (ﷺ), as in the following *ḥadīth*. The second part of this *ḥadīth* is discussed below in the section of “*kunyah*”.

Jubayr Bin Muṭ‘im (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ لِي أَسْمَاءَ: أَنَا مُحَمَّدٌ، وَأَنَا أَحْمَدُ، وَأَنَا الْهَاجِي الَّذِي يَمْحُو اللَّهُ بِِ الْكُفْرِ، وَأَنَا

1. Recorded by Ibn Wahb (in *al-Jāmi*). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 904, 1040).
2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (110, 2120-2121, 3114-3115, 3537-3539, 6187-6188, 6196-6197), Muslim (2131, 2133-2134), and others.

«الْحَاشِرُ الَّذِي يُجْمَعُ النَّاسُ عَلَى قَدَمَيَّ، وَأَنَا الْعَاقِبُ الَّذِي لَيْسَ بَعْدَهُ نَبِيٌّ.»

⟨I have various names:

1. I am Muḥammad (the often-praised);
2. I am Aḥmad (the highly praised);
3. I am al-Māhī (wiper) because Allāh wipes away disbelief through me;
4. I am al-Ḥāshir (the gatherer) because all people will be gathered behind me (on Judgment Day);
5. And I am al-‘Āqib (the succeder) because there is no prophet after me.⟩¹

It should be noted that naming a child Muḥammad is recommended but not obligatory. One should beware of excessive fabricated *ḥadīth*s in this regard, such as the following:

“Anyone who has three sons and failed to name one of them “Muḥammad” has indeed acted ignorantly.”²

Another related baseless *ḥadīth* is the one mentioned earlier:

“The most beloved names to Allāh are those expressing servitude or praise.”³

And still another one is:

“Whoever is granted a baby-boy and names him “Muḥammad” for the blessing in this name, he and his newborn will be admitted into *Jannah*.”⁴

NAMES OF OTHER PROPHETS

It is recommended to bear names of prophets because they are the most righteous of humanity, and Allāh (ﷻ) chose them as His

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (3532, 4896), Muslim (2354), and others.

2. Verified to be fabricated by al-Albānī (*aḍ-Ḍa‘īfah* 437).

3. Verified to be baseless by al-Albānī (*aḍ-Ḍa‘īfah* 411).

4. Verified to be fabricated by al-Albānī (*aḍ-Ḍa‘īfah* 171).

envoys to humanity.

In addition, Allāh directly named some of His prophets, such as Yaḥyā (John) and ‘Īsā (Jesus). Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿يُنزِكْرِنَا إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ أَسْمُهُ يَحْيَى لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا ﴿٧﴾﴾ مريم

«(He was told,) “O Zakariyyā, indeed We bring you good tidings of a son whose name will be Yaḥyā, and whose name We never gave to anyone before him.”»¹

And He (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ

أَسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ﴿٤٥﴾ آل عمران

«And when the angels said, “O Maryam (Mary), indeed Allāh gives you tidings of a word from Him whose name will be the Masīḥ (Messiah), ‘Īsā, Son of Maryam.”»²

Sometimes, the Prophet (ﷺ) named newborns after prophets.

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that on the morning following the birth of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) son Ibrāhīm, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«وُلِدَ لِي اللَّيْلَةَ غُلَامٌ فَسَمَيْتُهُ بِاسْمِ أَبِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ.»

«A baby-boy was born for me this past night. I named him after my forefather, Ibrāhīm.»³

Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (رضي الله عنه) reported:

«وُلِدَ لِي غُلَامٌ، فَأَتَيْتُ بِهِ النَّبِيَّ، فَسَمَّاهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ،

فَحَنَكْتُهُ بِتَمْرَةٍ، وَدَعَا لَهُ بِالْبَرَكَةِ، وَدَفَعَهُ إِلَيَّ.»

1. Maryam 19:7.

2. Āl ‘Imrān 3:45.

3. Recorded by Muslim (2315), Abū Dāwūd, and others.

“A baby-boy was born for me. I took him to the Prophet (ﷺ) who named him Ibrāhīm, chewed on a date and made him suck it, invoked blessings for him, and then gave him back to me.”¹

Yūsuf Bin ‘ Abdillāh Bin Salām reported:

(سَمَّانِي النَّبِيُّ يُوسُفَ، وَأَقْعَدَنِي عَلَى حِجْرِهِ، وَمَسَحَ عَلَى رَأْسِي.)

“The Prophet (ﷺ) named me Yūsuf, sat me on his lap, and rubbed his hand over my head.”²

Naming children after prophets and righteous individuals was an old practice among the earlier nations. Al-Mughīrah Bin Shu‘bah (رضي الله عنه) reported that he once traveled to Nijrān (in Yemen) and was asked by some Christians there:

“You recite in your book regarding Maryam (Mary):

﴿يَتَّخَذَ هَنُرُونَ﴾ «O Sister of Hārūn (Aaron) ...»³

However, Hārūn and Mūsā (Moses) preceded ‘Isā (Jesus) by numerous years.”

So when he came back to al-Madīnah, he asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about this, and the Prophet (ﷺ) explained to him:

﴿إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسَمُّونَ بِأَنْبِيَائِهِمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ قَبْلَهُمْ﴾

◀Indeed, they used to bear names of their prophets and righteous people who preceded them.▶⁴

NAMES OF RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE

Next to the prophets, the most esteemed individuals to us are other righteous scholars of Islām, headed by the Prophet’s companions (رضي الله عنهم). They are the inheritors of the knowledge of

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1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5467, 6198), Muslim (2145), and others.
 2. Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī (in *ash-Shamā’ il*), and al-Bukhārī (in *al-Adab-ul-Mufrad*). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Mukhtaṣar-ush-Shamā’ il* 292 and *Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Adab-il-Mufrad* 834).
 3. *Maryam* 19:28.
 4. Recorded by Muslim (2135).

prophethood, and the teachers of goodness. Their favors and benefits are tremendous to all people. Thus, they are the best examples to take, and it would honor a person to carry one of their names.

Therefore, it is recommended to name one's children after the *ṣaḥābah* (صحابه), headed by the Four Rightly Guided Successors (Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, and 'Alī), the Mothers of the Believers, and the family of the Prophet (آل). It is also recommended to name after other individuals among the *salaf* (سلف) who were known for knowledge and virtue.

Ascribing the Child to the Father

ASCRIBING THE CHILD TO HIS FATHER IS MANDATORY

A child should be ascribed to his (or her) true father, and not to the mother or some other person. Thus, if the child's name is Zayd and the father's is 'Amr, the child is called Zayd Bin 'Amr (Zayd son of 'Amr). Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿ادْعُوهُمْ لِآبَائِهِمْ هُوَ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا
آبَاءَهُمْ فَاخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَمَوَالِيكُمْ﴾ الأحزاب ٥

«Ascribe them to their fathers; it is more just to Allāh. But if you do not know their fathers—then they are still your brothers in religion and your allies.»¹

Even on Judgment Day, people will be ascribed to their fathers. Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ الْعَادِرَ يُرْفَعُ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، يُقَالُ: "هَذِهِ عَدْرَةُ فُلَانٍ بْنِ فُلَانٍ."»

«On the Day of Resurrection, a banner will be raised over a traitor saying, "This is for the treachery of so-and-so son of so-and-so (man).»²

1. *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:5.

2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (6177-6178), Muslim (1735), and others.

Note that this *ḥadīth* refutes the claim made in a fabricated *ḥadīth*:

“On Judgment Day, the people will be called by their mothers.”¹

ASCRIBING THE CHILD TO OTHER THAN HIS FATHER IS A MAJOR SIN

In Islām, ascribing a child to other than the true father is a major sin. Its punishment is denial of Jannah in the hereafter.

Sa‘d Bin Abī Waqqāṣ and Abū Bakrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ ادَّعَى إِلَىٰ غَيْرِ أَبِيهِ، وَهُوَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ غَيْرُ أَبِيهِ، فَالْجَنَّةُ عَلَيْهِ حَرَامٌ.»

Anyone who relates himself to other than his (true) father, knowing that he is not his father, Jannah will then be prohibited for him.²

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَا تَرْغَبُوا عَنْ آبَائِكُمْ، فَمَنْ رَغِبَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ فَهُوَ كُفْرٌ.»

Do not disown your fathers. Disowning one’s father is (an act of) *kufr*.³

Abū Tharr (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَيْسَ مِنْ رَجُلٍ ادَّعَى لِغَيْرِ أَبِيهِ، وَهُوَ يَعْلَمُ، إِلَّا كَفَرَ. وَمَنْ ادَّعَى

مَا (أَوْ نَسَبًا) لَيْسَ لَهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا، وَلَيَتَبَوَّأُ مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ.»

Any man who knowingly assigns himself to other than his father is a *kāfir* (in this act). And anyone who claims ownership (or lineage) that is not his is not one of us, and he will have a seat in the Fire.⁴

1. Recorded by Ibn ‘Adiyy from Anas and by at-Ṭabarānī from Ibn ‘Abbās. Verified to be fabricated by al-Albānī (*aḍ-Ḍa‘īfah* 433,434).

2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (4326-4327, 6766-6767), Muslim (63), and others.

3. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (6768), Muslim (62), and others.

4. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (3508), Muslim (61), and others.

‘Alī and Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ ادَّعَى إِلَى غَيْرِ أَبِيهِ، أَوْ انْتَمَى إِلَى غَيْرِ مَوَالِيهِ،
فَعَلَيْهِ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ.»

«Anyone who relates himself to other than his (true) father, or associates himself with other than his (true) masters, upon him will be the curse of Allāh, the Angels, and all people.»¹

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«كُفْرٌ تَبْرُؤٌ مِنْ نَسَبٍ، وَإِنْ دَقَّ، أَوْ ادَّعَاءٌ نَسَبٍ لَا يُعْرَفُ.»

«It is an act of disbelief to deny a (true) lineage—slight though it might be, as well as to claim an untrue lineage.»²

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) also reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ ادَّعَى إِلَى غَيْرِ أَبِيهِ لَمْ يَرِحْ رَائِحَةَ الْجَنَّةِ،
وَإِنْ رِيحَهَا لَيُوجَدُ مِنْ مَسِيرَةِ سَبْعِينَ عَامًا.»

«Anyone who relates himself to other than his (true) father will not smell the fragrance of *Jannah*, even though its fragrance can be found from a travel distance of seventy years.»³

ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN

The above rule has an exception in the case of an illegitimate child who is conceived as a result of a *zinā* relationship. An illegitimate child may not be ascribed to the biological father—even if the father is known beyond doubt.

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1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (111, 1870), Muslim (1370), Abū Dāwūd, and others.
 2. Recorded by Aḥmad and at-Ṭabarānī (in aṣ-Ṣaḡhīr). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḡhīḥ-ut-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb* 1987).
 3. Recorded by Aḥmad. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḡhīḥ-ut-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb* 1988).

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) (and more than twenty¹ other companions) narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«الْوَلَدُ لِصَاحِبِ الْفِرَاشِ، وَلِلْعَاهِرِ الْحَجَرِ.»

‹The child belongs to the owner of the mattress;
and the adulterer deserves a stone.›²

More specifically, 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that, after the conquest of Makkah, Sa'd Bin Abī Waqqāṣ and 'Abd Bin Zam'ah³ (رضي الله عنه) went to the Prophet (ﷺ) to resolve a dispute between them.

Sa'd (رضي الله عنه) said, "This child is my nephew. My brother 'Utbah Bin Abī Waqqāṣ testified to me that he is his son, and you can see his resemblance to him."

'Abd Bin Zam'ah (رضي الله عنه) said, "He is my brother, from my father's slave woman. He was born on my father's mattress."

Inspecting the child, the Prophet (ﷺ) observed an obvious resemblance between him and 'Utbah⁴. Yet, he (ﷺ) said:

«هُوَ لَكَ يَا عَبْدُ بَنِ زَمْعَةَ. الْوَلَدُ لِلْفِرَاشِ، وَلِلْعَاهِرِ الْحَجَرِ.»

‹He is yours, O 'Abd Bin Zam'ah. The child
belongs to (the owner of) the mattress; and the
adulterer deserves a stone.›

Turning to his wife, Sawdah, the Prophet (ﷺ) added, «وَاحْتَجِي مِنْهُ يَا سَوْدَةَ.» «Keep your *hijāb* in his presence, O Sawdah.» So the disputed child never saw Sawdah after that."⁵

1. Reported by Ibn Ḥajar from Ibn 'Abd-il-Barr in *Faṭḥ-ul-Bārī* 12:47 (under 6750).
2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (6750, 6818), Muslim (1458), and others.
3. He was the brother of Sawdah Bint Zam'ah (رضي الله عنها), one of the Prophet's wives.
4. This child, whose name was 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān Bin Zam'ah, was born as a result of a *zinā* relationship that was accepted during *Jāhiliyyah* as a form of marriage. A woman would have intercourse with different men. Should she deliver a child, they would attribute him to the man that it resembled the most.
5. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (2053, 2218, 2421, 2533, 2745, 4303, 6749-6750, 6765, 6817-6818, 7182), Muslim (1457-1458), and others.

This *ḥadīth* indicates that an illegitimate child belongs to the owner of the mattress on which it was conceived, or to the legitimate husband (or master) of the mother at the time of conception, regardless of other claims or chances. This holds whether the concerned individuals were Muslim or not when the child was conceived.

This is the most correct opinion in regard to this issue.¹ Laws of inheritance and family relations should follow this understanding.

As for the Prophet's (ﷺ) command to Sawdah to cover herself from 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān, despite the fact that he is considered her brother, it is out of precaution and protection for the Mothers of the Believers, because of the great similarity that the Prophet (ﷺ) found between him and 'Utbah.

Note that this does not condone the great sin that the two partners committed in their illegitimate contact, for which they deserve a severe punishment under the *Islāmic* law and incur a great burden of sin on Judgment Day.²

From the above *ḥadīth* we also conclude that a child conceived by a free (non-slave) single woman should carry her name. For example, if her name was Lubnā Bint Charles Johnson and his name was Sāmī, his full name would then be Sāmī Bin Lubnā Bint Charles Johnson.

Surnames

DEFINITION

A surname, also called last name or family name, is a name carried by all members of the same family.

Historically, surnames derived from tribe names or nicknames. A nickname is a descriptive name usually given to a person instead of, or in addition to, the actual name; it derives from the person's occupation, appearance, locality, or other matters.

1. Review *Fath-ul-Bārī* 12:39-48 (under 6749-6750).

2. The Author provides a detailed discussion of *zinā* in, "Closer than a Garment".

In recent times, most countries have adopted surnames as a means of distinguishing between families and keeping track of family lineage. This is important for marriage, custody, inheritance, and other purposes.

In many Muslim countries, the use of surnames has led to dropping the Islāmic way of nomenclature whereby a man is ascribed to his father with the term *ibn* or *bin* (son), and a woman with *bint* (daughter).

Despite government and legal requirements, a Muslim should continue to present himself using the Islāmic naming method in correspondence, introductions, and so on. Thus, if his name is Sālīm, his father's is Rafīq, and his surname is Carpenter, he should introduce himself as Sālīm Bin Rafīq Carpenter.

CHANGING THE SURNAME

We showed that it is prohibited to ascribe oneself to other than one's true father. This does not necessarily apply to changing one's surname. As is discussed above, the surname is different from the father's name. Changing the surname, therefore, is permissible if it does not cause confusion in regard to one's lineage—whether legally or in the minds of some people.

Assume, for example, that a woman's name before she accepted Islām was Christina, and her father's was Charles Johnson. Thus, her full name was Christina Bint Charles Johnson. After embracing Islām, she wanted to change her first name to Lubnā and her surname to 'Abdullāh. Her new name would then be Lubnā 'Abdullāh Bint Charles Johnson, which is often shortened to Lubnā 'Abdullāh. This is permissible if it does not result in losing her lineage to her father or cause confusion in her relationships.

CARRYING THE HUSBAND'S SURNAME

A common practice in many countries nowadays, including some Muslim countries, is to legally change a woman's surname to her husband's surname upon marriage.

As discussed in the previous subsection, this is permissible and does not fall under the prohibition of attributing oneself to other than one's father. However, if the woman has the option of keeping her maiden surname, she should do so rather than follow this non-Islāmic practice.

Bearing a *Kunyah*

DEFINITION AND RECOMMENDATION

In general, "*kunyah*" is a nickname given to a person instead of, or in addition to, the actual name. In this book, however, we apply "*kunyah*" to a specific type of nicknames: It is a combination of two terms consisting of a name preceded by the word *Abū* (father) or *Umm* (mother). Depending on its position in a sentence, *Abū* may appear as *Abā* or *Abī*. Most often, the name used in the *kunyah* is the bearer's eldest child. But, as we will show below, this is not a necessary condition.

In less common cases, the name is preceded by *Ibn* (son) or *Bint* (daughter) instead of *Abū* or *Umm*.

Bearing a *kunyah* and addressing people by their *kunyahs* is an old Arab etiquette that was condoned by Islām. It was practiced by the Prophet (ﷺ), his companions, and the righteous Muslims through the ages. Addressing a person with his *kunyah* is a show of respect and esteem. Thus, it is recommended for a Muslim to bear a *kunyah* and to address others by their *kunyahs*.

BEARING A KUNYAH BEFORE HAVING CHILDREN

Contrary to common understanding, it is recommended for a Muslim to bear a *kunyah* even without having offspring.

Hamzah Bin Şuhayb reported that 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said to Şuhayb, "Why do you use Abū Yaḥyā as your *kunyah* even though you do not have a son (called Yaḥyā)?" Şuhayb (رضي الله عنه) replied:

«كُنَّانِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ بِأَبِي يَحْيَى.»

"Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) gave me the *kunyah* of Abū

Yaḥyā.”¹

Furthermore, a person’s *kunyah* does not necessarily need to contain the name of one of his (or her) children. Many of the companions (رضي الله عنه) were known with a *kunyah* that did not derive from a child’s name. Examples: Abū Bakr, Abū Ḥafṣ (‘Umar), Abū Hurayrah, Abū Tharr, Abū Sulaymān (Khalid Bin al-Walīd), Abū Salamah, etc.

GIVING *KUNYAH* TO A CHILDLESS WOMAN

It is also recommended for a woman to carry a *kunyah*, even if she does not have an offspring.

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that she once said to the Prophet (ﷺ), “O Allāh’s Messenger, why do you not give me a *kunyah*?” He replied:

«تَكْنِي بِابْنِ أُخْتِكَ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ. فَأَنْتِ أُمُّ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ.»

‘Carry a *kunyah* after your sister’s son, ‘Abdullāh (Bin az-Zubayr). So you are Umm ‘Abdillāh.’²

Commenting on this *ḥadīth*, al-Albānī (رضي الله عنه) said:

“This indicates that it is recommended to carry a *kunyah*, even for those who do not have children. This is an Islāmic etiquette that, as far as I know, is unparalleled by other nations. Thus, all Muslims, men and women, should adhere to it and drop what has invaded them of foreign customs ...”³

GIVING *KUNYAH* TO CHILDREN

It is also permissible to give *kunyahs* to children and address them by their *kunyahs*. This is part of the Arab and Islāmic tradition that the Prophet (ﷺ) approved and practiced.

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1. Recorded by Ibn Mājah, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 44).
 2. Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 132 and *Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Adab-il-Mufrad* 850,851).
 3. *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* vol..1.1 p. 257.

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) often visited Anas's family. On one of his visits, he saw a young brother of Anas looking sad. The Messenger (ﷺ) asked, «مَا سَأَانُهُ؟» **What is the matter with him?** He was told that he had a small bird that died. So he said to him:

«يَا أَبَا عُمَيْرٍ مَا فَعَلَ النُّعَيْرُ؟»

«O Abū 'Umayr, what happened to the birdie?»¹

Umm Khālid Bint Khālid (رضي الله عنها) reported that once the Prophet (ﷺ) was brought some garments among which was a small black *khamīṣah*² with green or yellow impressions. He asked his companions, «مَنْ تَرَوْنَ نَكْسُوهَا هَذِهِ الْحَمِيصَةَ؟» **To which girl do you think we should give this shirt?** They all remained silent. So he said, «اتُّونِي بِأُمَّ خَالِدٍ.» **Bring me Umm Khālid.** She was carried before the Prophet (ﷺ) wearing a yellow dress, and he put the garment on her with his own hands while saying:

«أَبْلِي وَأَخْلِقِي، ثُمَّ أَبْنِي وَأَخْلِقِي، ثُمَّ أَبْنِي وَأَخْلِقِي.»

هَذَا سَنَا يَا أُمَّ خَالِدٍ، هَذَا سَنَا يَا أُمَّ خَالِدٍ.»

«May you wear out and replace (your clothes), then wear out and replace, and then wear out and replace. This is pretty, O Umm Khālid! This is pretty, O Umm Khālid!»³

THE PROPHET'S KUNYAH

It is not permissible to bear the Prophet's (ﷺ) *kunyah*: Abul-Qāsim. It is further preferable to avoid naming one's eldest son Qāsim because, by common tradition, the father would be called Abul-Qāsim.

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1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (6129, 6203), Muslim (659, 2150), and others.
 2. *Khamīṣah*: A light black or red garment or shirt made of silk or wool with little colored impressions.
 3. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (3071, 5823, 5845, 5993), Abū Dāwūd, and others.

Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (ﷺ) reported that a boy was born for a man from among the *Anṣār*, so he named him al-Qāsim. The other *Anṣār* said to him, “We will not address you as Abul-Qāsim, and will not please your eye with this.” When the Prophet (ﷺ) heard about this he said:

«أَحْسَنَتِ الْأَنْصَارُ! تَسَمَّوْا بِاسْمِي وَلَا تَكْنُؤْا بِكُنْيَتِي، فَإِنَّمَا
جُعِلْتُ قَاسِمًا أَقْسِمُ بَيْنَكُمْ. تَسَمَّوْا بِي وَلَا تَكْنُؤْا بِكُنْيَتِي.»

«The *Anṣār* have done well! Carry my name but not my *kunyah*. I have only been made a *qāsim* (distributor) because I distribute and judge among you. So, carry my name but not my *kunyah*.»

The Prophet (ﷺ) then said to the man, «سَمِّ ابْنَكَ عَبْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ.» «Name your son ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān.»¹

Abū Hurayrah and Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«سَمُّوْا (تَسَمَّوْا) بِاسْمِي، وَلَا تَكْتَنُؤْا بِكُنْيَتِي.»

«Give (or carry) my name, but not my *kunyah*.»²

Some reports of this *ḥadīth* from Anas indicate that the Prophet (ﷺ) said this when a man was calling another man saying, “O Abul-Qāsim!” The Prophet (ﷺ) thought that he meant him and turned to look at him. The man then explained, “I did not mean you, O Allāh’s Messenger.”³

‘Alī (رضي الله عنه) reported that he said to the Prophet (ﷺ), “O Allāh’s Messenger, if I am granted a son after you, may I give him your name and your *kunyah*?” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, «نَعَمْ.» «Yes.»⁴

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1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (3114-3115, 3538, 6186-6187, 6189, 6196), Muslim (2133), and others.
 2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (110, 2120-2121, 3537, 3539, 6188, 6197), Muslim (2131, 2134), and others.
 3. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (2120-2121, 3537), Muslim (2131), and others.
 4. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-

Commenting on the various views regarding this issue, Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رحمته) said:

“The disapproval (of using the Prophet’s (ﷺ) *kunyah*) has three reasons:

1. Giving this description (*Qāsim*) to those who do not deserve it ... because his (ﷺ) division (of wealth) among people was according to Allāh’s command, unlike the division of kings who might give or deny according to desire.
2. Concern about confusion (between the Prophet (ﷺ) and someone else) when addressing or calling ... as was the case when a caller said to the Prophet (ﷺ), ‘I did not mean you.’ ...
3. Using both the Prophet’s (ﷺ) name and *kunyah* removes the benefit of having a distinction (in name) for him ...

The first reason makes it prohibited to carry the Prophet’s (ﷺ) *kunyah* during his life and after his death. The second reason limits the prohibition to his lifetime. The third reason only prohibits carrying his name and his *kunyah* simultaneously ...”¹

Prohibited Names

NAMES EXPRESSING SERVITUDE TO OTHER THAN ALLĀH

There is a consensus among the Muslim ‘*ulamā*’² that it is prohibited to use a name expressing servitude to other than Allāh by means of terms such as ‘*abd* (slave) and *ghulām* (servant). Examples: ‘Abd-ur-Rasūl (Messenger’s slave), ‘Abd ‘Alī, ‘Abd-ul-Ḥusayn, ‘Abd-ul-Ka‘bah, ‘Abd-ul-‘Uzzā, ‘Abd Shams (Slave of the Sun), Ghulām Rasūl, Ghulām Muḥammad, and so on.

Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah*. 6:1081-1082).

1. *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawdūd* p. 90.
2. Review Ibn Taymiyyah’s *al-Fatāwā* 1:378.

It is also prohibited to use a name expressing servitude to an unauthentic name of Allāh, such as ‘Abd-ul-Maḡṣūd or ‘Abd-us-Sattār. A list of the most common names without evidence is presented at the end of Appendix B.

NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS SPECIFIC TO ALLĀH

Among Allāh’s (ﷻ) excellent names, there are some that may be applied to people. For example, Allāh is *al-Baṣīr* (the Seeing) and a human is *baṣīr* (seeing). Obviously, the human’s sight is limited whereas Allāh’s is not.

On the other hand, there are some excellent names that are unique and specific to Allāh (ﷻ) and may not be applied to any of His creation. They include: Allāh, ar-Raḡmān, al-Aḡad, al-Khallāq, al-Bārī’, aṣ-Ṣamad, al-Qayyūm, ar-Razzāq, al-Jabbār, and al-Mutakabbir.

The reader is referred to Appendix II for a complete list of Allāh’s names together with their meanings.

It is also prohibited to apply to a human being a description that is Allāh’s sole right, such as King of Kings or Judge of Judges, Supreme Owner of the Dominion, Knower of the *Ghayb*, and so on. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أَخْنَعُ اسْمٍ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ رَجُلٌ تَسْمَى مَلِكَ الْأَمْلَاقِ. لَا مَالِكَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ.»

«On Resurrection Day, the most corrupt name to Allāh will be that of a man who was called King of Kings. There is no (true) king except Allāh.»¹

NAMES OF NONBELIEVERS AND TYRANTS

It is prohibited to carry names of known nonbelievers, tyrants, and other deviant individuals. Examples: Shayṭān (Satan), Khinzib (a devil), Fir‘awn (Pharaoh), Hāmān (Pharaoh’s general), Qārūn, Cleopatra, Qayṣar (Caesar), Kisrā, and so on.

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (2605-2606), Muslim (2143), and others.

Disapproved Names

NAMES SPECIFICALLY DISAPPROVED BY THE PROPHET

There are names that the Prophet (ﷺ) specifically disapproved.

‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَئِنْ عِشْتُ لَأَنْهِيََنَّ أَنْ يُسَمَّى: رَبَّاحٌ، وَنَجِيجٌ، وَأَفْلَحٌ، وَبَرَكَهٌ، وَنَافِعٌ، وَيَسَارٌ.»

‘If I live long enough, I will surely prohibit naming Rabāḥ, Najīḥ, Aflaḥ, Barakah, Nāfi‘, and Yasār.’¹

And Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported:

أَرَادَ النَّبِيُّ أَنْ يَنْهَى عَنْ أَنْ يُسَمَّى بِيَعْلَى وَبِبَرَكَهٍ وَبِأَفْلَحٍ وَبِيسَارٍ وَبِنَافِعٍ وَبِنَحْوِ ذَلِكَ، ثُمَّ رَأَيْتُهُ سَكَتَ بَعْدَ عَنِهَا فَلَمْ يَفْعَلْ شَيْئًا، ثُمَّ قِضَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَلَمْ يَنْهَ عَنْ ذَلِكَ، ثُمَّ أَرَادَ عُمَرُ أَنْ يَنْهَى عَنْ ذَلِكَ ثُمَّ تَرَكَهُ.

“The Prophet (ﷺ) intended to prohibit naming Ya‘lā (high), Barakah, Aflaḥ, Yasār, Nāfi‘, and so on. But he did not say or do anything in this regard until he passed away. ‘Umar then intended to prohibit this, but he later stopped.”²

On the other hand, Samurah Bin Jundab (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“نَهَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُسَمَّى رَقِيقَنَا بِأَرْبَعَةِ أَسْمَاءٍ:

أَفْلَحٌ وَنَافِعٌ وَرَبَّاحٌ وَيَسَارٌ.”

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited us from naming our slaves as Aflaḥ (successful), Nāfi‘ (useful), Rabāḥ (winner), or Yasār (facilitation).”³

Samurah (رضي الله عنه) also reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

1. Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*as-Sahīḥah* 2143).
2. Recorded by Muslim (2138) and others.
3. Recorded by Muslim (2136), Ibn Mājah (3730), and others.

«لَا تُسَمِّ غُلَامَكَ رَبَّاحًا وَلَا أَفْلَحَ وَلَا يَسَارًا وَلَا نَجِيحًا (نَافِعًا)،

يُقَالُ: "أَنْتُمْ هُوَ؟" فَيَقَالُ: "لَا".»

◁ Do not name your servant Rabāḥ or Aflaḥ or Yasār or Najīḥ (successful), because it would be said, “Is he there?” And the answer could be, “No!”¹

Commenting on the above narrations, al-Albānī (رحمته الله) said:

“According to Jābir’s (رحمته الله) knowledge, the Prophet (ﷺ) passed away without prohibiting these names. However, Samurah Bin Jundab (رحمته الله) reported that he prohibited them.”²

Yet, it is important to note that the Prophet (ﷺ) had a servant named Rabāḥ, and he did not alter his name. ‘Umar (رحمته الله) reported:

الْمَا اعْتَرَلَ النَّبِيَّ نِسَاءَهُ، فَإِذَا أَنَا بِرَبَّاحٍ، غُلَامٍ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ،

فَنَادَيْتُ: "يَا رَبَّاحُ! اسْتَأْذِنْ لِي عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ."

“When Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) abstained from his wives³, I saw his servant Rabāḥ and told him, ‘O Rabāḥ, take permission for me to see Allāh’s Messenger.’”⁴

Based on the above reports, we note the following:

1. Some of the disapproved names constitute self-praise or glorification, such as Rabāḥ and Nāfi‘.
2. Some of the disapproved names describe good qualities that would reflect unpleasant meanings when put in a negation context. This is because the negation may appear as though it

1. Recorded by Muslim (2136-2137), Abū Dāwūd, and others.

2. *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* (5:177).

3. This incident is discussed in detail in the Author’s, “The Fragile Vessels”.

4. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (2468, 4913, 5191, 5843), Muslim (1479), and others. Note that the servant’s name is only mentioned in Muslim’s reports.

refers to the good quality rather than the name. For example, if a person called Barakah (blessing) departs from a place, one would say, “Blessing has departed,” and if he is not present, one would say, “Blessing is not here.” Such statements might bring pessimism to ignorant individuals.

3. The Prophet (ﷺ) had a servant named “Rabāḥ”—one of the disapproved names. Also, many knowledgeable individuals during and after the Prophet’s (ﷺ) time carried such names.
4. According to most ‘*ulamā*’, the names mentioned in the above *ḥadīths* are not strongly prohibited but are merely *makrūh* (disliked). An-Nawawī (رحمته) said:

“It is disapproved to give these names or others of similar meanings. This disapproval is of the level of dislike and not of prohibition. As clarified by the Prophet (ﷺ), the reason for this dislike is that one may ask, “Is he there?” And the answer could be, “No!” This answer is unpleasant and might lead some people to pessimism.”¹

5. The same ruling of disapproval might apply to other names of similar meanings. Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رحمته) said:

“... Similar to this are: Mubarak (blessed), Muflih (successful), Khayr (goodness), Surūr (happiness), Ni‘mah (bounty), and the like. The reason for which the Prophet (ﷺ) disliked the four (earlier) names applies to these as well ...”²

UGLY NAMES

Names of repulsive meaning or pronunciation could cause mockery and bring awkwardness to their bearers. Islām disapproves such names that conflict with the Prophet’s (ﷺ) recommendation of carrying good names.

1. *Al-Minhāj* (2137).

2. *Tahfat-ul-Mawdūd* p. 74.

In a *ḥadīth* that we cited earlier from Abū Wahb al-Jushamī (ﷺ), the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مُرُّ الْأَسْمَاءِ حَرْبٌ وَمُرَّةٌ.»

⟨The worst of names are: Ḥarb (war) and Murrah (bitter).⟩¹

Obviously, these two names have ugly meanings. We will see below that the Prophet (ﷺ) often changed ugly names to good ones. For example, he changed Shihāb (a burning comet) because it represents fire and destruction, and he changed Ḥazn because it represents harshness.

Aṭ-Ṭabarī (ﷺ) said:

“One should not carry names of ugly meanings, self-praise, or that reflect a curse—even if those names were proper nouns for individuals and were not intended for the literal meaning they represent. Such names are disapproved because, on hearing them, one would think that they are descriptions of their bearers. Thus, the Prophet (ﷺ) altered some people’s names to names that truly described their bearers.”²

WESTERN AND NON-ARABIC NAMES

A Muslim should not give his child a name originating from outside the Islāmic culture, because this expresses glorification of those cultures. Examples include: Jacklyn, Julie, Diana, Susan, Victoria, Emily, Gloria, Lara, Linda, Maya, Heidi, Yara, Mervat, Shīrīn, and Nīvīn. In addition, when some of those names are traced to their roots, they are found to have un-Islāmic original meanings, such as pagan gods.

Also, some Muslims, including Arabs, use names of Arabic origins that were converted to other languages, such as Turkish and Persian. Examples: Jawdat, Midḥat, Najdat, Ṣafwat, ‘Iṣmat,

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1. Recorded by Ibn Wahb (in *al-Jāmi*). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 904, 1040).
 2. Reported by Ibn Ḥajar in *Fath-ul-Bārī* 10:707 (under 6193).

Ra'fat, Ḥaqqī, Fawzī, Majdī, Ramzī, Rajā'ī, Rushdī, etc. Such names should be replaced by their original Arabic equivalents. Examples: Ra'fat → Ra'ūf; Fawzī → Fā'iz; Ṣafwat → Ṣāfi.

Also, a genre of ugly names that have crept into some Muslim communities are names that have no meaning in any language and are more like names of dogs and cats. Examples: Zūzū, Fifi, Mīmī, etc.

NAMES OF SINGERS, ACTORS, AND OTHER SINNERS

It is disliked to bear names of movie stars, singers, musicians, sports champions, and other celebrities. Such individuals are not good role models in Islām. Therefore, they do not deserve to be given a position of importance in our lives or the lives of our offsprings.

GIRLS' NAMES INDICATING PASSION OR BODILY ATTRACTION

Parents should avoid giving their daughters names that reflect intimacy, lust, attraction, or seduction. In addition to being far from the way of the *salaf*, such names carry an implicit invitation to sin and corruption.

Al-Albānī (رحمته) said:

“Among the ugly names that have become prevalent in our time, and should be changed ... are names such as: Wiṣāl (lovers' union), Sihām (arrows of love), Nāhid (full-breasted woman), Ghādah (sensual woman), Fitnah (temptation), and so on.”¹

Bakr Abū Zayd (رحمته) says:

“... And those infatuated, mushy, and silly names: Aḥlām (dreams), Arīj (fragrance), Taghrīd (chirping), Ghādah, Fātin (temptress), Nāhid, Huyām² (... and so on, in a list that would be too long to mention.”³

1. *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* vol. 1.1, p. 427.

2. *Huyām*: Passionate love; insanity caused by extreme infatuation.

3. *Tasmiyat-ul-Mawlūd* p. 8.

COMBINED NAMES

It is also disliked to use names that are made up by combining two or more words. The only exceptions to this are the names of servitude to Allāh that we discussed earlier.

Many of the combined names consist of a descriptive word combined with the words “*dīn* (religion)”, “*Islām*”, Allāh, or “*ḥaqq* (truth)”. They usually constitute excessive praise for their bearers. Examples:

Name	Meaning	Name	Meaning
‘Alā’-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Highness	Bahā’-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Beauty
Ḍiyā’-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Light	Fakhr-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Glory
Khayr-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Goodness	Muḥy-id-Dīn	Religion’s Revivor
Nāṣir-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Protector	Naṣr-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Victory
Nūr-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Light	Qamar-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Moon
Sa’d-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Happiness	Ṣalāh-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Virtue
Sayf-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Sword	Shams-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Sun
Sharaf-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Honor	Shihāb-ud-Dīn	Religion’s Comet
Taqiyy-ud-Dīn	Pious in Religion	Nūr-ul-Ḥaqq	Light of Truth
Nūr-ul-Islām	Light of Islām	Raḥmat-ul-Lāh	Allāh’s Mercy

Such names were never used by the *ṣaḥābah* or the early righteous Muslims, and mostly came to Islām from non-Arab cultures. And even some of the great ‘Ulamā’ who were given such names by their parents later declared their disapproval of them, as in the case of Muḥy-id-Dīn an-Nawawī, Taqiyy-ud-Dīn Ibn Taymiyyah, and Nāsir-ud-Dīn al-Albānī. Al-Albānī (رحمته) said:

“Thus, it is not permissible to carry names such as ‘Izz-ud-Dīn, Muḥy-id-Dīn, Nāṣir-ud-Dīn, and so on.’”¹

There are many other forms of disliked combined names. One of these forms consists of the name Muḥammad preceding other boys’ names. Thus, instead of ‘Alī or Māhir, for example, some

1. *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 1:427.

people would make up the combined names Muḥammad ‘Alī or Muḥammad Māhir. Except for official records, the bearer of such a name would usually be addressed by his second name. The first name (Muḥammad) is only included for blessing. This is an unacceptable innovation that was introduced among the later generations of Muslims, and should therefore be avoided.

NAMES OF ANGELS AND QUR’ĀNIC SŪRAHS

Many of the ‘*ulamā*’ dislike carrying an angel’s names, such as Jibrīl, Mīkā’īl, and Isrāfīl, because this was not a practice of the *Salaf*. For the same reason, it is disliked to name a girl Malak or Malāk (both mean angel).

Similarly, it is disliked to name a child Ṭāhā, Yāsīn, Ḥā-mīm, or other names of Qur’ānic *sūrahs*. Many people think that the first two of these are names of the Prophet (ﷺ). However, there is no ground for this claim.

Changing a Name to a Better One

THE PROPHET’S PRACTICE

If one finds that one’s name is improper or disapproved in Islām, one should try to change it to a better name.

It was the Prophet’s (ﷺ) practice to change bad names to good ones. ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) also reported:

(كَانَ النَّبِيُّ يُعَيِّرُ الْأَسْمَاءَ الْقَبِيحَ إِلَى الْأَسْمَاءِ الْحَسَنِ).

“The Prophet (ﷺ) used to change an ugly name to a good one.”¹

This is a general statement that may apply to people, animals, towns, or locations. As an example, ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported:

(كَانَ النَّبِيُّ إِذَا سَمِعَ اسْمًا قَبِيحًا غَيَّرَهُ. فَمَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ يُقَالُ لَهَا عَفْرَةٌ، فَسَمَّاها حَضْرَةً).

“When the Prophet (ﷺ) heard an ugly name, he would alter it. Thus, he once passed by a village called

1. Recorded by at-Tirmithī and Ibn ‘Adiyy. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 207).

‘Ufrah (infertile) and named it Khaḍīrah (green).’”

Also, both Abū Ḥumayd and Jābir Bin Samurah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) changed al-Madinah’s old name of Yathrib (corruption and condemnation) to Ṭābah (goodness).²

As for altering people’s names, ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported:

«كَانَ النَّبِيُّ إِذَا آتَاهُ الرَّجُلُ وَلَهُ اسْمٌ لَا يُحِبُّهُ حَوَّلَهُ.»

“When a man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) with a name that he disliked, he would alter it.”³

NAMES THAT THE PROPHET CHANGED

There are many examples of names that the Prophet (ﷺ) changed for children and adults, males and females.

Zaynab Bint Abī Salamah (رضي الله عنها) reported that her name was Barraḥ, but the Prophet (ﷺ) told Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها):

«لَا تُزَكُّوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْبِرَّةِ مِنْكُمْ وَالْفَاجِرَةَ. سَمَّيْهَا: زَيْنَب.»

«Do not assert your own goodness. Indeed, only Allāh knows the righteous and the corrupt among you. Name her Zaynab.»⁴

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported the same:

«كَانَ اسْمُ زَيْنَبَ بَرَّةً، فَقِيلَ: "تُزَكِّي نَفْسَهَا." فَسَمَّاها رَسُولُ اللَّهِ: زَيْنَب.»

“The name of Zaynab (Bint Jaḥsh) was Barraḥ (righteous), and it was said that this constituted self-praise. So the Prophet (ﷺ) changed it to Zaynab (nice smelling and good looking tree).”⁵

1. Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī, Abū Ya’lā, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 208).
2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (1481, 1872, 4422), Muslim (1385, 1392), and others.
3. Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī and al-Khallāl. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 209).
4. Recorded by Muslim (2142), al-Bukhārī (in *al-Adab-ul-Mufrad* 821), and others.
5. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (6192), Muslim (2141), and others.

Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported:

كَانَتْ جُوَيْرِيَّةُ اسْمَهَا: بَرَّةً، فَحَوَّلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ اسْمَهَا:
جُوَيْرِيَّةً. وَكَانَ يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يُقَالَ: "خَرَجَ مِنْ عِنْدِ بَرَّةٍ." 1

“Juwayriyah’s name was Barraḥ (righteous), but Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) changed it to Juwayriyah (little friend or wife). The reason was that he disliked for people to say about him (when leaving her house), ‘He departed from the righteous.’”¹

Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that he had a sister called ‘Āṣiyah (disobedient)² but the Prophet (ﷺ) changed it and told her, «أَنْتِ جَمِيلَةٌ.» **«You are Jamīlah (pretty or good).»**³

Hishām Bin ‘Āmir (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) asked him about his name. He replied, “Shihāb (comet).” The Prophet (ﷺ) said, «بَلْ أَنْتِ هِشَامٌ.» **«Rather, you are Hishām^{4,5}»**

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that while the Prophet (ﷺ) was in her house, an old woman visited, and he asked her, «مَنْ أَنْتِ.» **«Who are you?»** She replied, “Juthāmah (nightmare) from the tribe of Muzan.” He said, «بَلْ أَنْتِ حَسَانَةُ الْمُزَيْنَةِ.» **«Rather, you are Ḥassānah (benevolent) from the Muzan.»** The Prophet (ﷺ) then asked her:

«كَيْفَ أَنْتُمْ؟ كَيْفَ حَالُكُمْ؟ كَيْفَ كُنْتُمْ بَعْدَنَا؟»

«How are you? How are your affairs? And how have you been after we last met?»

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1. Recorded by Muslim (2140), Aḥmad, and others.
 2. Note that this is different from Āsiyah, which is a good name that we have included in the list of recommended names in Appendix I.
 3. Recorded by Muslim (2139), Aḥmad, and others.
 4. “Hishām” means: expert camel milker; destroyer (of enemy).
 5. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah 215).

The woman replied, “We are all well—may my father and mother be a ransom for you, O Allāh’s Messenger!”

After the old woman left, ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) said, “O Allāh’s Messenger, why did you give this old woman so much attention?” He replied:

«إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ تَأْتِينَا زَمَنَ خَدِيجَةَ، وَإِنَّ حُسْنَ الْعَهْدِ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ.»

⟨She used to visit us during the time of Khadijah. Indeed, keeping the old trusts is a part of *īmān*.⟩¹

Sahl Bin Sa’d (رضي الله عنه) reported that when al-Munthir Bin Abī Usayd was born, he was brought to the Prophet. The Prophet (ﷺ) asked, «مَا اسْمُهُ؟» ⟨What is his name?⟩ His father, Abū Usayd, replied, “So-and-so.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said, «لَا، لَكِنَّ اسْمَهُ الْمُنْدِرُ.» ⟨Rather, his name is al-Munthir.⟩²

Hānī’ Bin Yazīd (رضي الله عنه) reported that when he visited the Prophet (ﷺ) with some of his people, the Prophet (ﷺ) heard them call him Abul-Ḥakam. The Prophet (ﷺ) summoned him and said:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَكْمُ، وَإِلَيْهِ الْحُكْمُ. فَلِمَ تَكْنَيْتَ بِأَبِي الْحَكْمِ؟»

⟨Indeed, Allāh is the Ḥakam (Judge) and to Him belongs the judgment. Why then did you use this *kunyah* of Abul-Ḥakam?⟩

He replied, “It is only that when my people had a dispute, they would come to me for arbitration, and my judgment would appease both sides.” The Prophet (ﷺ) commented, «مَا أَحْسَنَ هَذَا!» ⟨How good is this!⟩ Then he asked him, «مَا لَكَ مِنَ الْوَلَدِ؟» ⟨What children do you have?⟩ He replied, “Shurayḥ, ‘Abdullāh, and Muslim.” He asked him, «فَمَنْ أَكْبَرُهُمْ؟» ⟨Who is the eldest among them?⟩ He replied, “Shurayḥ.” The Prophet (ﷺ) then said, «فَأَنْتَ»

1. Recorded by al-Hākim, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 216).

2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (6191), Muslim (2149), and others.

«أَبُو شُرَيْحٍ.» **«You are Abū Shurayḥ then.»** And he made supplications for him and his children.

Hāni' added that the Prophet (ﷺ) also heard some people calling one of them, “‘Abd-ul-Ḥajar (stone-worshiper),” so he told him, «لَا، أَنْتَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ.» **«No! You are ‘Abdullāh.»**

When it was time for Hāni' to return to his land, he asked the Prophet (ﷺ), “Tell me what thing would admit me to *Jannah*.” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied:

«عَلَيْكَ بِحُسْنِ الْكَلَامِ، وَبِذَلِ الطَّعَامِ.»

«Say good things, and generously offer food (to the needy).»¹

REFUSING THE PROPHET'S RECOMMENDATION

It is wrong to oppose a command or a recommendation by the Prophet (ﷺ), even when it only deals with changing a name.

Sa'īd Bin al-Musayyib (رضي الله عنه) reported that his grandfather (رضي الله عنه) went to the Prophet (ﷺ) who asked him about his name. He replied, “Ḥazn (harsh).” The Prophet (ﷺ) said, «أَنْتَ سَهْلٌ.» **«You are Sahl (easy).»** He responded, “I do not like changing a name that my father gave me.” Sa'īd concluded, “Thus, harshness remained in our family since that time.”²

Calling by a Nickname

CALLING ADULTS BY SHORTENED NAMES

It is permissible to call adults by reduced versions of their names. This is called *tarkhīm* (softening), and it often reflects love, kindness, friendliness, or intimacy.

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Prophet (ﷺ) once told her:

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1. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 1939).
 2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (6190, 6193), Abū Dāwūd, and others.

«يَا عَائِشُ! هَذَا جِبْرِيلُ يَقْرَأُ عَلَيْكَ السَّلَامَ.»

«O ‘Ā’ish, this is Jibrīl giving you *salām*.»

She replied, “And upon him be *salām* and Allāh’s mercy and blessings. O Allāh’s Messenger, you see that which we cannot.”¹

Similarly, ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that, when she followed the Prophet (ﷺ) to al-Baqī’ and then ran back to her bed, he entered and exclaimed, «مَا لَكَ يَا عَائِشُ حَشِيَا رَابِيَةً؟» «What is wrong with you, O ‘Ā’ish, panting and your abdomen rising and falling?»²

CALLING CHILDREN BY NICKNAMES OR ABBREVIATED NAMES

It is conventional to call children by nicknames or reduced versions of their names. This often pleases and delights them, and there is nothing against it in Islām. Rather, the Prophet (ﷺ) practiced this on some occasions.

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to play with Zaynab, Umm Salamah’s (رضي الله عنها) daughter, calling her as:

«يَا زُوَيْنِبُ، يَا زُوَيْنِبُ.»

«O Zuwaynib, O Zuwaynib.»³

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1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (3768, 6201), Muslim (2447), and others.
 2. Recorded by Muslim (974), Aḥmad, and others.
 3. Recorded by aḍ-Ḍiyā’-ul-Maqdisī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*ay-Ṣaḥīḥah* 2141).

4. 'AQĪQAH

Meaning of 'Aqīqah

LINGUISTIC AND RELIGIOUS MEANINGS

“‘Aqīqah” derives from the Arabic verb ‘*aqqa*, which means split or cut. According to Aḥmad, Ibn ‘Abd-il-Barr, al-Khaṭṭābī, and others, “‘*aqīqah*” refers to cutting the throat of the animal that is sacrificed for a child’s birth.¹

According to al-Aṣma‘ī, az-Zamakhsharī, and others, “‘*aqīqah*” originally referred to the baby’s hair at birth and was subsequently applied to the sacrificed animal because it was offered at the same time as when the hair was shaved.

According to Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رحمته الله تعالى), both meanings are acceptable and correct. Therefore, in Islāmic terminology, ‘*aqīqah* refers to the animal slaughtered as a sacrifice for a newborn child. It is so named because the animal’s throat is cut during the sacrifice.

IS THE NAME “‘AQĪQAH” DISLIKED?

Some scholars dislike calling this sacrifice “‘*aqīqah*” because the Prophet (ﷺ) showed dislike of this name in the following *ḥadīth*. They believe that it is preferable to call it *nasīkah* (sacrifice).

‘Amr Bin al-‘Āṣ (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) was asked about ‘*aqīqah*. As if he (ﷺ) disliked the name, he replied:

«لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ (لَا أَحِبُّ) الْعُقُوقَ.»

«Allāh does not approve (or I do not approve) of
'*uqūq* (ungratefulness).»

He was told, “This is not what we meant. We are referring to that associated with having a baby.” He said:

1. *Faṭḥ-ul-Bārī* 9:726 (above 5467).

«مَنْ أَحَبَّ أَنْ يَنْسُكَ عَنْ وَلَدِهِ فَلْيَنْسُكَ عَنْهُ، عَنْ
الْغُلَامِ شَاتَانِ مُكَافَأَتَانِ، وَعَنِ الْجَارِيَةِ شَاةٌ.»

◁Whoever wishes to perform a sacrifice for (the birth of) his child, let him do so—two comparable goats for a boy, and one goat for a girl.▷¹

In this *ḥadīth*, it appears that the Prophet (ﷺ) disliked using the term “‘*aqīqah*” because of its connection with “‘*uqūq*”² which means “ungratefulness to parents and relatives”. Instead of ‘*aqīqah*, the Prophet (ﷺ) used the verb *nasaka* for sacrificing.

However, we will see below many other *ḥadīths* in which the Prophet (ﷺ) called this sacrifice “‘*aqīqah*” without showing any dislike of the name. Thus, it appears that when ‘*uqūq* was mentioned in the above *ḥadīth*, the Prophet (ﷺ) took the opportunity to warn against ungratefulness, without truly disapproving of the term “‘*aqīqah*” itself—and Allāh knows best.

Ruling of ‘Aqīqah

Most of the ‘*ulamā*’ consider ‘*aqīqah*’ voluntary. Some ‘*ulamā*’ consider it compulsory (*wājib*). And some go to the extreme of considering it disliked! In this section, we discuss each one of these views and show that the correct view is that it is obligatory upon those who can afford it.

Is It Disliked?

A few scholars believe that ‘*aqīqah*’ is one of the practices of *Jāhiliyyah* that Islām censored. They base their opinion on what the Prophet (ﷺ) said in the above *ḥadīth* of Ibn ‘Amr, « لَا أُحِبُّ » ◁I do not approve of ‘*uqūq*.▷ However, we have shown that this word “‘*uqūq*” could mean “slaughtering a ‘*aqīqah*” or “ungratefulness”, We have shown that the Prophet (ﷺ) referred to

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1. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā’ī, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 1166).
 2. Both words derive from the same root past-tense verb ‘*aqqa* that means cut.

the second meaning, as is clear from the rest of this *ḥadīth*.

Ibn-ul-Munthir (ﷺ)¹ said:

“Among those who approved of ‘*aqīqah* are: ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Abbās, ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Umar, ‘Ā’ishah—Mother of the Believers, Fāṭimah—daughter of Allāh’s Messenger, Buraydah al-Aslamī, al-Qāsim Bin Muḥammad, ‘Urwah Bin az-Zubayr, ‘Aṭā’ Bin Abī Rabāḥ, az-Zuhrī, Abū az-Zanād, Mālik, the people of Madīnah, ash-Shāfi’ī and his followers, Aḥmad, Ishāq, Abū Thawr, and many other learned people. By this, they follow Allāh’s Messenger’s (ﷺ) Sunnah. When a *sunnah* proves to be authentic, one must adopt it, regardless of those who reject it. The followers of opinion (the *Ḥanafīs*) denied that ‘*aqīqah* is a *sunnah*, thereby violating authentic narrations from Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), his companions (رضي الله عنهم), and whoever reported them from the *Tābi’īn*.”²

EVIDENCE THAT IT IS OBLIGATORY

Those who hold the position that ‘*aqīqah* is compulsory base their opinion on the following *ḥadīths*:

1. Salmān Bin ‘Āmir aḍ-Ḍabbī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَعَ (فِي) الْغُلَامِ عَقِيقَةٌ، فَأَهْرِيقُوا عَنْهُ دَمًا، وَأَمِيطُوا عَنْهُ الْأَذَى.»

«A ‘*aqīqah* is prescribed for every child. Thus shed blood on its behalf, and remove the harm off it.»³

2. ‘Ā’ishah, Umm Kurz, and Salmān Bin ‘Āmir (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

1. Muḥammad Bin Ibrāhīm Bin al-Munthir from Naysābūr (242-318 H). He wrote large books in *tafsīr* and *fiqh*, such as *al-Ijmā’* and *al-Awsat*.
 2. Reported by Ibn-ul-Qayyim in *tahfat-ul-Mawdūd* (p. 27).
 3. Recorded by at-Tirmithī, an-Nasā’ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi’* 4253 & 5877, and *Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 1171).

«عَنِ الْغُلَامِ شَاتَانِ مُكَافَأَتَانِ، وَعَنِ الْجَارِيَةِ شَاةٌ،

لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ ذُكْرَانَا كُنَّ أَوْ إِنَاثًا.»

<(Slaughter) for a boy two compatible sheep, and for a girl just one. Do not worry whether they (the sheep) are male or female.>¹

3. Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«عَنِ الْغُلَامِ عَقِيقَتَانِ، وَعَنِ الْجَارِيَةِ عَقِيقَةٌ.»

<Two 'aqīqahs (should be slaughtered) for a boy and one for a girl.>²

4. Asmā' Bint Yazīd (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الْعَقِيقَةُ حَقٌّ. عَنِ الْغُلَامِ شَاتَانِ مُتَكَافَأَتَانِ، وَعَنِ الْجَارِيَةِ شَاةٌ.»

<'Aqīqah is a right (upon you). (Slaughter) for a boy two compatible sheep, and for a girl just one.>³

5. Samurah Bin Jundab (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«كُلُّ غُلَامٍ رَهِينَةٌ بِعَقِيقَتِهِ، تُذْبَحُ عَنْهُ يَوْمَ سَابِعِهِ، وَيُسَمَّى فِيهِ وَيُخَلَّقُ رَأْسُهُ.»

<Every child is confined⁴ by its 'aqīqah. On its seventh day, its 'aqīqah should be slaughtered, it should be named, and its hair should be shaved.>⁵

6. Ibn 'Abbās, 'Ā'ishah, 'Alī, and other Ṣaḥābah (رضي الله عنهم) reported:

«عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ عَنِ الْحَسَنِ وَالْحُسَيْنِ بِكَبْشَيْنِ كَبْشَيْنِ (كَبْشًا كَبْشًا).»

1. This combined report from Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others, is verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 4105 & 4106, and *Irwā'-'ul-Ghalīl* 1166).

2. Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 4107 and *Irwā'-'ul-Ghalīl* 1166).

3. Recorded by Aḥmad and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 4133, and *Irwā'-'ul-Ghalīl* 1166).

4. The meaning of this "confinement" is discussed below (p. 84).

5. Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 4541, and *Irwā'-'ul-Ghalīl* 1165).

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) offered ‘*aqīqah* for al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn: two rams, two rams.”¹

It should be noted that some narrations of this *ḥadīth* express that the Prophet (ﷺ) slaughtered one ram for each grandson while others mention two rams. Commenting on this, al-Albānī (رحمته الله) indicated:

“‘Two rams’ is the correct number for two reasons:

- a. (Narrations of two) include an addition over the other narrations, and additions from trustworthy reporters are acceptable ...
- b. This agrees with other *ḥadīths* in this regard that the Prophet (ﷺ) required slaughtering two sheep for a boy ...”²

From the above reports, it is clear that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) commanded the people to slaughter a ‘*aqīqah*, indicated that it is compulsory for the newborn, and performed it himself for his grandsons: al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn.

It is well established in the Islāmic *fiqh* that a command from Allāh (ﷻ) or His Messenger (ﷺ) indicates an obligation—unless there is an additional evidence to make it voluntary.

In the case of ‘*aqīqah*, the above reports clearly classify it as an obligation. In what follows, we discuss the counter evidence.

EVIDENCE THAT IT IS VOLUNTARY

Many scholars believe that the following reports reduce ‘*aqīqah* from the level of *wujūb* (obligation) to the level of *istiḥbāb* (recommendation):

1. In the previously cited *ḥadīth* of ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه), Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

1. Recorded by an-Nasā’ī, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 1164).

2. *Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 1:384.

«مَنْ أَحَبَّ أَنْ يَنْسُكَ عَنْ وَلَدِهِ فَلْيَنْسُكْ عَنْهُ، عَنْ
الْغُلَامِ شَاتَانِ مُكَافَأَتَانِ، وَعَنْ الْجَارِيَةِ شَاةٌ.»

«Whoever wishes to perform a sacrifice for (the birth of) his child, let him do so—two comparable goats for a boy, and one goat for a girl.»¹

Those who believe that 'aqīqah is voluntary argue that this *ḥadīth* makes it dependant on the person's wish or inclination.

Our response, in light of the evidence cited in the previous subsection, is that the choice given in this *ḥadīth* should be understood as, "Whoever wishes to sacrifice because he can afford it ..."

Another possible explanation is that, similar to any other Islāmic obligation, 'aqīqah is not enforced on a person. Rather, it is subject to his choice, and he has the option of complying or refusing (for which he would be subject to either reward or punishment). Ibn Ḥazm (رحمته) ² said:

"If this *ḥadīth* were authentic, it would be an evidence for us against them, because it requires 'aqīqah for the boy and girl. It further indicates that this obligation does not bind the father against his will ... This *ḥadīth* makes 'aqīqah similar to *zakāh* and *zakaṭ-ul-fiṭr* in this regard, without any difference."³

2. Abū Rāfi' (رحمته) reported that when Fāṭimah (رحمته) gave birth to al-Ḥasan (رحمته), she asked Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), "Shouldn't I sacrifice blood (as 'aqīqah) for my son?" He replied:

1. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Irwā' -ul-Ghalīl* 1166).
2. Abū Muḥammad 'Alī Bin Ḥazm from Andalusia (384-456 H) was a great scholar and an extensive writer. His most cherished book is *al-Muḥallā* in which he laid strong foundations for the *Zāhirī* (apparent) school of *fiqh*.
3. *Al-Muḥallā* 6:241.

«لَا تَعُقِّي عَنْهُ، وَلَكِنْ احْلِقِي شَعْرَ رَأْسِهِ، وَتَصَدَّقِي بِزَنَةِ شَعْرِهِ فَضَّةً.»

⟨No, do not slaughter a 'aqīqah for him. Just shave the hair of his head, and give ṣadaqah (charity) equal to its weight in silver.⟩

She did this; and when al-Ḥusayn was born, she did the same.¹

The argument here is: had 'aqīqah been compulsory, the Prophet (ﷺ) would not have prevented Fāṭimah from offering it.

However, the earlier report by Ibn 'Abbās and other ṣahābah, including Fāṭimah's husband 'Alī (رضي الله عنه), is clear in that the Prophet (ﷺ) himself had slaughtered two rams for each of his two grandsons. Therefore, there was no reason for Fāṭimah or 'Alī to slaughter. Al-Bayhaqī (رحمته الله) said:

“It is as if he (the Prophet (ﷺ)) wanted to perform the 'aqīqah himself, as we have narrated, so he commanded her (Fāṭimah) to do another thing instead, which was to give charity ...”²

'AQĪQAH VS. ṢADAQAH

It is not permissible to give charity in place of slaughtering 'aqīqah, even if the amount of charity exceeded the 'aqīqah's cost. Each act of worship in Islām has its own time, place, or conditions that would not normally allow other acts to replace it.

Imām Aḥmad (رحمته الله) was asked, “Would you prefer for a person to slaughter 'aqīqah or give its value to the needy?” He replied, “'Aqīqah (is better).”³

Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رحمته الله) said:

“Slaughtering for a specific requirement is better than giving what equals or exceeds its value as charity—

1. Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be ḥasan (good) by al-Albānī (*Irwā' -ul-Ghalīl* 1175).

2. Reported by al-Albānī in *Irwā' -ul-Ghalīl* vol. 1, p. 404.

3. Reported by al-Khallāl in *al-Jāmi'*.

such as the *hady* (*hajj* sacrifice) and *uḍḥiyah*. This is because the slaughter and spilling of blood are specifically required in these cases ...”¹

CONCLUSION

We conclude from the above that ‘*aqīqah* is obligatory upon the father or those who are in immediate custody of the newborn—Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

Ibn Ḥazm (رحمته) said:

“The Prophet’s (ﷺ) command concerning ‘*aqīqah* makes it an obligation. No one is allowed to understand that any of his (ﷺ) commands are elective unless there is an additional text in that regard. Otherwise, saying such a thing would be lying ...”²

A well-founded rule in Islām is that accountability is based on capability. Thus, the obligation of ‘*aqīqah* is dropped for those who cannot afford it. This does not mean that they would then be prohibited from performing it, but merely that it becomes optional for them. They may find relatives or friends willing to help with its cost, or may borrow money for this purpose.

Imām Aḥmad’s (رحمته) son Ṣāliḥ asked him concerning a man to whom a child is born. The man has no money to offer a ‘*aqīqah*; should he borrow and offer it or wait until he has the money? The Imām’s response was:

“The greatest warning that we heard in regard to ‘*aqīqah* is Samurah’s *ḥadīth* that every child is confined by its ‘*aqīqah*. Indeed, I hope that if this man borrows money, Allāh (ﷻ) will quickly enrich him because he revives a *sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) and follows his guidance.”³

1. *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawḍūd* p. 44.

2. *Al-Muḥallā* 6:237.

3. Reported by al-Khallāl in *al-Jāmi’*.

Animals that May Be Slaughtered for 'Aqīqah

ANIMAL TYPE

In the *ḥadīths* concerning 'aqīqah, the Prophet (ﷺ) referred to the animal to be slaughtered as *shāt*. In the above, we translated "shāt" as "sheep" or "goat". According to Ibn Manzūr:

"While *Shāt* normally means a male or female sheep, ... it can also mean a goat, a deer, a cow, a farm animal, or a zebra."¹

As for the Prophet's (ﷺ) practical Sunnah, we have seen in an earlier report by Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) slaughtered two rams for each of his grandsons.

The normally accepted practice among the *salaf* is to only slaughter sheep or goats for 'aqīqah—although, as we have shown, the texts of the *ḥadīths* do not exclude slaughtering larger animals.

As for slaughtering camels, some of the *Ṣaḥābah* considered it permissible. As an example, al-Ḥasan (رضي الله عنه) reported:

(كان أنس بن مالك يعق عن ولده بالجزور.)

"Anas Bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) used to slaughter camels as 'aqīqah for his children."²

However, 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) strongly disapproved of this. Abū Mulaykah reported that 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān Bin Abī Bakr (رضي الله عنه) had a male baby and his sister 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) was told, "O Mother of the believers, slaughter a camel for his 'aqīqah." She replied:

(مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ، وَلَكِنْ مَا قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ: «شَاتَانِ مُكَافَأَتَانِ.»)

"I seek refuge with Allāh! Rather, what Allāh's Messenger said was, <Two comparable *shāts*.>"³

1. *Lisān-ul-'Arab* under "shawaha".

2. Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah and aṭ-Ṭabarānī with an authentic *isnād*.

3. Recorded by aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī

Thus, the more correct view is that it is not permissible to slaughter camels for 'aqīqah.

NUMBER OF ANIMALS

We have cited earlier narrations indicating that a 'aqīqah consists of two animals for a boy and one for a girl. For example, Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«عَنِ الْغُلَامِ عَقِيقَتَانِ، وَعَنِ الْجَارِيَةِ عَقِيقَةٌ.»

«(Slaughter) two 'aqīqahs (or animals) for a boy and one for a girl.»¹

According to some scholars, the difference between male and female newborns in terms of the number of 'aqīqah animals is comparable to the difference between males and females in matters of testimony, inheritance, blood ransom, etc. It arises from the difference in social rights and liabilities, and gives no guarantee of additional merit or better rewards for either side, the latter being only based on piety.

SEX OF THE ANIMALS

The sex of the animals slaughtered for 'aqīqah is immaterial. We again cite the *ḥadīth* reported by Umm Kurz (رضي الله عنها) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«عَنِ الْغُلَامِ شَاتَانِ، وَعَنِ الْجَارِيَةِ شَاةٌ. لَا يَصْرُكُمُ ذَكَرُ إِنَاكُنَّ أَوْ إِنَاثَا.»

«(Slaughter) for a boy two sheep, and for a girl just one. It does not matter whether they (the sheep) are male or female.»²

(*Irwā' -ul-Ghalīl* 1166).

1. Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 4107, and *Irwā' -ul-Ghalīl* 1166).
2. Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā' -ul-Ghalīl* 1166).

OTHER QUALITIES

There is no authentic text requiring other qualities for a 'aqīqah, such as size, age, color, etc. Some scholars hold the opinion that it should have similar qualities to the *udhhiyah*¹. This has no proof, since acts of worship cannot be subjected to *qiyās* (analogy).

Yet it is to be noted that, similar to *udhhiyah*, 'aqīqah is a sacrifice offered to Allāh (ﷻ) as an expression of servitude and gratitude. Therefore, in both cases, one should try to sacrifice animals of good quality and appearance.

Day of Slaughtering the 'Aqīqah**THE SEVENTH DAY**

'Aqīqah should be slaughtered on the seventh day from birth (counting the birthday). We cite again two *ḥadīths* in this regard.

Samurah Bin Jundab (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«كُلُّ غُلَامٍ رَهِينَةٌ بِعَقِيقَتِهِ، تُدْبِحُ عَنْهُ يَوْمَ سَابِعِهِ وَيُسَمَّى فِيهِ وَيُحْلَقُ رَأْسُهُ.»

«Every child is confined by its 'aqīqah, which is to be slaughtered for it on its seventh day. Also, its hair should be shaved, and it should be named.»²

'Abdullāh Bin 'Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported:

(أَمَرَ النَّبِيُّ بِتَسْمِيَةِ الْمَوْلُودِ يَوْمَ سَابِعِهِ، وَوَضَعَ الْأَذَى عَنْهُ، وَالْعَقَّ.)

“The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded that a newborn be named on the seventh day and that the harm be removed off it and its 'aqīqah be slaughtered.”³

Since the Prophet (ﷺ) set the time for this act of worship, it is not permissible to slaughter the 'aqīqah prior to the seventh day—just like prohibiting slaughtering the 'īd sacrifice before the 'īd

1. The sacrifice offered on the 'īd of *al-Aḍḥā*.
2. Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 4541, and *Irwā'-'ul-Ghalīl* 1165).
3. Recorded by at-Tirmithī and Ibn Abī Shaybah. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Tirmithī* 2269).

prayer.

Ibn Ḥazm (رحمته) said:

“Slaughtering should be performed on the seventh day of birth, and is not acceptable before then. If the slaughter is not done on the seventh, it is mandatory to do it whenever it becomes possible after that.”¹

Waliyy Ullāh id-Dahlawī (رحمته) said:

“*Aqīqah* is slaughtered on the seventh day so as to give the family enough time to recover from the pains and hardship of childbirth, and to enable them to find the animals needed for ‘*aqīqah*.”²

AFTER THE SEVENTH

If the ‘*aqīqah* is not slaughtered on the seventh, it may still be slaughtered on the fourteenth or twenty-first day from birth.

Buraydah (رحمته) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الْعَقِيقَةُ تُذْبَحُ لِسَبْعٍ، أَوْ لِأَرْبَعِ عَشْرَةَ، أَوْ لِإِحْدَى وَعِشْرِينَ.»

«A ‘*aqīqah* should be slaughtered on the seventh, fourteenth, or twenty-first day (after birth).»³

If the ‘*aqīqah* is not slaughtered on one of these three dates for a legitimate reason, it should be slaughtered as soon as possible after that. Legitimate reasons for delay include: inability to find an animal, forgetting, ignorance, poverty, and so on.

Deliberately neglecting to slaughter the ‘*aqīqah* on the specified days is a sin that requires repentance. In addition, as indicated above by Ibn Ḥazm, the ‘*aqīqah* would still need to be slaughtered after repentance.

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1. *Al-Muḥallā* 6:234.
2. *Hujjat-Ullāh-il-Bālighah*.
3. Recorded by at-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Awsaṭ*) and aḍ-Ḍiyā’. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi’* 4132 and *Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 1170).

It is important to note that these dates are set for the actual slaughtering of 'aqīqah. As for cooking and eating it, it may be done at any later date.

OFFERING 'AQĪQAH FOR ONESELF

Offering 'aqīqah is an obligation upon the parents or those who are in custody of the newborn. It is not the newborn's obligation or responsibility.

However, if no one performed this obligation for an individual, it is permissible for him to perform it when he reaches adulthood. The Prophet (ﷺ) did this for himself.

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported:

(عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ عَنِ نَفْسِهِ بَعْدَمَا بُعِثَ نَبِيًّا.)

“Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) performed 'aqīqah for himself after he was appointed as prophet.”¹

Muḥammad Ibn Sīrīn (رضي الله عنه) said:

“If I knew that 'aqīqah was not performed for me, I would perform it myself.”²

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (رضي الله عنه) said:

“If no one performed 'aqīqah for you, perform it for yourself—even if you are a full grown man.”³

Method of Slaughtering

SINCERITY TO ALLĀH

'Aqīqah must be offered purely and sincerely to Allāh (ﷻ). Offering a sacrifice to other than Allāh is a major sin and act of *shirk*. Those who commit it would be liable to Allāh's wrath and

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1. Recorded by 'Abd-ur-Razzāq, aṭ-Ṭahāwī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 2726).
 2. Recorded by Ibn Ibn Abī Shaybah in *al-Muṣannaḥ*. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 6:506).
 3. Recorded by Ibn Ḥazm in *al-Muḥallā*. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 6:506).

curse. 'Alī (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَعَنَ اللَّهُ مَنْ لَعَنَ وَالِدَيْهِ، وَلَعَنَ اللَّهُ مَنْ ذَبَحَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ، وَلَعَنَ
اللَّهُ مَنْ أَوَى مُحْدِثًا، وَلَعَنَ اللَّهُ مَنْ غَيَّرَ مَنَارَ الْأَرْضِ.»

«Allāh curses anyone who curses his parents; Allāh curses anyone who offers a slaughter to other than Allāh; Allāh curses anyone who gives abode to an innovator (in the *Dīn*); and Allāh curses anyone who changes land boundaries (thereby transgressing without right).»¹

USING A SHARP KNIFE

An animal should be slaughtered quickly and skillfully, using a sharp knife. Shaddād Bin Aws (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَتَبَ الْإِحْسَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ؛ فَإِذَا قَتَلْتُمْ فَأَحْسِنُوا الْقِتْلَةَ، وَإِذَا
ذَبَحْتُمْ فَأَحْسِنُوا الذَّبْحَةَ، وَلْيُجِدْ أَحَدُكُمْ شَفْرَتَهُ، وَلْيُرِخْ ذَبِيحَتَهُ.»

«Allāh requires that all deeds be well-performed. So when you kill, kill in a good manner, and when you slaughter, slaughter in a good manner. And let the person (who performs the slaughter) sharpen his blade and make it easy for his kill.»²

'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) reported that once Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) sacrificed (for 'īd) a large-horned ram with black legs, chest, belly, and eyes. When he was ready to slaughter it he said to her, «O 'Ā'ishah, bring the knife.» Then he said, «Sharpen it on a stone.» Then he took the knife, laid down the ram, and slaughtered it while saying:

«بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُمَّ تَقَبَّلْ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَمِنْ أُمَّةِ مُحَمَّدٍ.»

1. Recorded by Muslim (1978), Aḥmad, and others.

2. Recorded by Muslim (1955), Abū Dāwūd, and others.

⟨ *Bism-illāhi wallāhu akbar*—With Allāh’s Name (I slaughter); Allāh is the Greatest. O Allāh, accept from Muḥammad and Muḥammad’s family, and from Muḥammad’s *Ummah*.⟩¹

Furthermore, the knife may not be made from teeth (or tusks) or nails (or claws). Rāfi‘ Bin Khadij (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَا أَنْهَرَ الدَّمَ، وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ، فَكُلُوهُ، لَيْسَ السِّنُّ وَالظُّفْرُ.
أَمَّا السِّنُّ فَعَظْمٌ، وَأَمَّا الظُّفْرُ فَمَدَى الْحَبَشَةِ.»

⟨Whatever (cutting tool) causes the (animal’s) blood to gush out, and if Allāh’s Name is pronounced on it, then you may eat from it. But do not use teeth or nails (to kill it). As for teeth, they are bones; and as for nails, they are the Abyssinians’ knives.⟩²

The reason for the prohibition of using teeth, bones, and nails is that knives made from them cause pain and torture to the animal, which contradicts the requirement of showing mercy to it, as is further explained below.

MERCY TOWARD THE ANIMAL

Out of Allāh’s (ﷻ) great and boundless favors on us, He subjugated some animals for our sustenance. This does not give us permission to torture these animals to any degree beyond the minimum needed for killing them. Thus, the animals should be slaughtered with a sense of mercy and compassion. This includes hiding the knife from the animal’s sight until the last minute, and avoiding killing the animals within each others’ sight.

Qurrah Bin Iyās al-Muzanī (رضي الله عنه) reported that a man told Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), “O Allāh’s Messenger! Indeed, even when I

1. Recorded by Muslim (1966), Abū Dāwūd, and others.

2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (2488, 2507, 3075, 5498, 5503, 5543-5544), Muslim (1968), and others.

slaughter a goat, I show mercy to it.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«وَالشَّاةُ إِنْ رَحِمْتَهَا رَحِمَكَ اللَّهُ.»

«Even for a sheep (or goat), if you show it mercy Allāh will show mercy to you.»¹

Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) saw a man preparing to slaughter a goat. He laid it down and stood over it, holding it with his foot on its side, sharpening his blade even while it helplessly watched him. The Prophet (ﷺ) said to him:

«أَفَلَا قَبْلَ هَذَا؟ أَتُرِيدُ أَنْ تُمَيِّتَهَا مَوْتَتَيْنِ؟»

«Should you not have done it (the sharpening) before this (the slaughter)? Do you wish to give it death twice?»²

In another report, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أَتُرِيدُ أَنْ تُمَيِّتَهَا مَوْتَاتٍ؟ هَلَا حَدَدْتَ شَفْرَتَكَ قَبْلَ أَنْ تُضَجِّعَهَا؟»

«Do you want to give it death many times? Should you not have sharpened your blade before laying it down?»³

LAYING THE ANIMAL DOWN

It is recommended to lay the animal down before slaughtering it (except for camels). This is what the Prophet (ﷺ) did when he slaughtered the black-legged ram as in ‘Ā’ishah’s (رضي الله عنها) earlier *ḥadīth*. Commenting on that *ḥadīth*, an-Nawawī (رحمته الله) said:

“This shows that it is recommended to lay the sheep down during slaughtering. They should not be slaughtered while standing or sitting, but while lying down. This is more merciful, and is supported by a

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1. Recorded by Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭabarānī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 26).
 2. Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 24).
 3. Recorded by al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 24).

number of *ḥadīths*. Furthermore, there is a consensus among the Muslims, which complies with the 'ulamā's opinion and the Muslims' practice that the animals should be laid on their left side, because it is easier for the slaughterer to hold the knife with his right hand and the animal's head with his left."¹

Anas (رضي الله عنه) also reported:

صَحَّى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ بِكَبْشَيْنِ أَمْلَحَيْنِ أَفْرَتَيْنِ، دَبَحَهُمَا بِيَدِهِ. رَأَيْتُهُ
وَاضِعًا قَدَمَهُ عَلَى صِفَاحِهِمَا وَيَقُولُ: «بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ.»

“Allāh's Messenger sacrificed (for 'īd) two wide-eyed and large-horned rams. He slaughtered them with his hand. I saw him place his foot on their flanks while saying, *«Bism-illāhi wallāhu akbar—with Allāh's name; Allāh is the Greatest.»*²

From this *ḥadīth*, we also see that it is recommended for the person conducting the slaughtering to place his foot on the animal's side near the neck. This would facilitate the slaughtering process.

In addition, we have seen from an-Nawawī's above statement that it has been the practice of the *salaf* to lay the animal down on its left side, so that the person slaughtering it would be able to cut its throat with his right hand while holding its head with the left.

It has also been the practice of the *salaf* to turn the animal so as to face the direction of *Qiblah* while being slaughtered. Nāfi' (رضي الله عنه) reported that Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) used to dislike eating from an animal that was slaughtered facing away from the *Qiblah*.³

CUTTING THE THROAT

We have seen from Rāfi's earlier *ḥadīth* (p. 79) that one of the

1. *Sharḥu Muslim* 13:130.

2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5558, 5564-5565), Muslim (1966), and others.

3. Recorded by 'Abd-ur-Razzāq with an authentic *isnād* (as in *Aḥkām-ul-Mawlūd*).

requirements of correct slaughtering is that the blood should be poured out. This is done by cutting the throat. Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) said:

"الذَّكَاءُ فِي الْحُلُقِ وَاللَّبَّةِ."

“(Correct) slaughtering is applied to the throat and windpipe.”¹

The acceptable practice among the Muslims is to cut the food-passage (larynx), the windpipe, and the two jugular veins. An-Nawawī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Ibn-ul-Munthir (رضي الله عنه) said:

“There is a consensus among the ‘ulamā’ that when the windpipe, the larynx, and the two jugular veins are cut and the blood is shed, correct slaughtering is accomplished. However, the ‘ulamā’ differ in regard to cases where the four passages are not all cut ...”²

PRONOUNCING ALLĀH’S NAME

It is required to pronounce Allāh’s name over an animal while slaughtering it. We have seen above that the Prophet (ﷺ) did this when he slaughtered the rams. He also commanded Rāfi‘ Bin Khadīj (p. 79) to pronounce Allāh’s name over the slaughtered animals.

Pronouncing Allāh’s name demonstrates that the animal is dedicated to Allāh and not to any false god. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَكُلُوا مِمَّا ذَكَرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ بِآيَاتِهِ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ (١١٨) ﴿الأنعام﴾

«So eat of that (meat) upon which Allāh's Name has been pronounced (at the time of slaughter), if you have faith in His Signs.»³

1. Recorded by Ibn Hibbān and others from Ibn 'Abbās and other companions (رضي الله عنه). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā'-'ul-Ghalīl* no. 2542). A *ḥadīth* similar to this and attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) is verified by al-Albānī to be extremely weak (*Irwā'-'ul-Ghalīl* no. 2541).
2. *Sharḥu Muslim* 13:133.
3. *Al-An'ām* 6:118.

And He (ﷺ) says:

﴿وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذَكَّرْ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَإِنَّهُ لَفِسْقٌ﴾ الأنعام ١٢١

«And do not eat of that (meat) upon which Allāh's Name has not been pronounced; that would indeed be a grave disobedience.»¹

These *āyāt*, as well as Rāfi's *ḥadīth*, clearly require pronouncing Allāh's Name upon the meat at the time of slaughter.

In the first of the above two *āyāt* (6:118), Allāh (ﷻ) permits the believers to eat from animals that were purely dedicated to Him during slaughtering. In the second *āyah* (6:121), Allāh (ﷻ) prohibits eating from animals that were not purely dedicated to Him (but to other false gods), and considers eating their meat a grave disobedience. This is further clarified in the following two *āyāt*:

﴿قُلْ لَا آجِدُ فِي مَا أُوْحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّمًا عَلَى طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا مَسْفُوحًا أَوْ لَحْمَ خِنْزِيرٍ فَإِنَّهُ رِجْسٌ أَوْ فِسْقًا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ (١١٥) الأنعام

«Say (O Muḥammad), “I do not find among what was revealed to me anything forbidden to one who would eat it, unless it be a dead animal, or blood spilled out, or the flesh of swine—for indeed, these are impure. Also (forbidden) is a (slaughter of) disobedience dedicated to other than Allāh.”»²

And:

﴿حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصَبِ وَإِنْ تَسَقَّسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلَمِ ذَلِكُمْ فَسُقٌ﴾ الهائدة ٣

1. *Al-An'ām* 6:121.

2. *Al-An'ām* 6:145.

«Prohibited to you are dead animals, blood, swine flesh, what has been dedicated to other than Allāh, and what has been killed by strangling, by a violent blow, by a head-long fall, by gorging, or that from which a wild animal ate—except what you are able to slaughter (before its death), and those which are sacrificed on stone alters, and (also prohibited is) that you seek decision through divining arrows. (All of) this is grave disobedience.»¹

Thus, failing to pronounce Allāh's name during slaughtering, because of ignorance or forgetting, does not make the animal prohibited—unless it is dedicated to other than Allāh.

SUMMARY

From the above, we conclude that correct slaughtering should be performed as follows:

1. The animal should be laid down on its left side facing the *Qiblah*.
2. A sharp tool should be used in order to spill the blood and minimize the animal's pain.
3. Nails, teeth, or bones (of humans or animals) may not be used for slaughtering.
4. The throat and windpipe should be cut, and the blood should be poured out.
5. Only Allāh's name may be pronounced over a slaughtered animal. Pronouncing other names is a grave act of disobedience that makes the slaughtered animal prohibited.

Dispensing of the 'Aqīqah's Meat

DIVIDING THE MEAT

Comparing 'aqīqah to *udḥiyah* ('īd sacrifice), some scholars recommend dividing it into three parts, eating one part, feeding

1. *Al-Mā'idah* 5:3.

the second, and giving the rest as charity. This has no authentic proof in the Sunnah.

Thus, it is left open for those offering 'aqīqah to dispense of it in a way suitable to their condition and finances. They may keep it all, give it away, cook it and feed the people, and so on.

FEEDING PEOPLE

Many scholars recommend cooking the 'aqīqah's meat and inviting others to feast on it. This has been practiced by the Muslims since early times. Mu'āwiyah (رضي الله عنه) Bin Qurrah (رضي الله عنه)¹ reported:

“When my son Iyās was born, I invited a number of the Prophet's (ﷺ) companions and fed them. They supplicated (for the boy) and I said, ‘May Allāh bless your supplication; I will now supplicate, so say *āmīn* to what I say.’ Then I made a long supplication for him.”²

There is no specific text in the Sunnah prescribing a feast for the 'aqīqah. However, there are general texts encouraging the Muslims to feed others. Since 'aqīqah is slaughtered as a display of gratitude to Allāh, and since at least some of the meat will normally be given away, it is best to give it away in cooked form. Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رضي الله عنه) said:

“It is recommended to cook it rather than give it away as raw meat ... thereby relieving the poor people and the neighbors from the need to cook; this is an act of added benevolence and an expression of gratitude (to Allāh) for this favor.”³

However, some people are under the wrong impression that the

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1. Qurrah al-Muzanī was a *ṣaḥābī*, and his son Mu'āwiyah was a *tābi'ī*. Mu'āwiyah's son, Iyās, grew up to become a brilliant judge.
 2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab-ul-Mufrad* (1255). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Adab-il-Mufrad*).
 3. *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawdūd* pp. 49-50.

purpose of 'aqīqah is to invite people to the feast. They direct more concern to this than to the sacrifice itself, sometimes buying the meat instead of slaughtering. This is wrong, as it misses the basic idea behind 'aqīqah, which is the sacrifice.

As for those who are invited to a 'aqīqah feast, it is recommended for them to attend, unless there are violations to Islām practiced by the attendees¹. Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا دَعَا أَحَدُكُمْ أَخَاهُ فَلْيُجِبْ، عُرْسًا كَانَ أَوْ نَحْوَهُ.»

<When one of you invites his brother, he should respond to his invitation—whether it is for a wedding feast or something similar.>²

Wisdom Behind the 'Aqīqah

CHILD'S CONFINEMENT

Central to understanding the wisdom behind 'aqīqah is the interpretation of “confinement” in Samurah's (رضي الله عنه) earlier ḥadīth:

«كُلُّ غُلَامٍ رَهِينَةٌ بِعَقِيْقَتِهِ، تُذْبَحُ عَنْهُ يَوْمَ سَابِعِهِ وَيُسَمَّى فِيهِ وَيُحْلَقُ رَأْسُهُ.»

<Every child is confined by its 'aqīqah. On its seventh day, its 'aqīqah should be slaughtered, it should be named, and its hair should be shaved.>³

The 'ulamā' differ in interpreting “confinement” in this ḥadīth. Imām Aḥmad (رضي الله عنه) said:

“The meaning of ‘confinement’ in the ḥadīth is that the child will be confined from interceding for its parents (on Judgment Day).”⁴

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1. For a detailed discussion of the etiquettes required from the host and guests in regard to a *walimah* or other feasts, the reader is referred to the Author's, “The Quest for Love and Mercy”.
 2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5173, 5179), Muslim (1429), and others.
 3. Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 4541, and *Irwā'-ul-Ghalīl* 1165).
 4. Reported by al-Khallāl in *al-Jāmi'*.

Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رحمته) strongly challenged this view. Proposing a better and more reasonable understanding, he said:

“There is a difference (among the scholars) in regard to the meaning of this ‘confinement’.

To some of them, it means that (if the parents did not offer ‘*aqīqah*’) the child will be prevented from interceding for the parents (on Judgment Day). This was said by ‘Aṭā’ and followed by Imām Aḥmad.

This opinion is clearly debatable, because a child’s intercession for its parent has no priority over the opposite (i.e., a parent’s intercession for a child). Intercession is not the purpose of being a parent. The same is true about all other relationships and lineages. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿يَنْتَهِمُ النَّاسُ أَنْفُقُوا رَبِّكُمْ وَأَخْشَوْا يَوْمًا لَا يَجْزِي وَالِدٌ عَنْ وَلَدِهِ

وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ هُوَ جَازٍ عَنِ وَالِدِهِ شَيْئًا﴾ لقمان ٣٣

«O people, revere your Lord, and fear a Day when no parent will avail his child, nor will a child avail his parent at all.»¹

... Thus, no one will intercede for anyone on Judgment Day except after Allāh’s permission and consent. And His (ﷻ) permission depends on (a) the deeds of the person who is interceded for—in terms of belief (in Allāh) and purity (from *shirk*), and (b) the intercessor’s position and closeness to Allāh. This closeness is not earned by lineage or parenthood or ancestry. Even the Master of Intercessors (Muḥammad ﷺ), who has the highest status before Allāh (ﷻ), told his uncle, aunt, and daughter:

«لَا أُغْنِي عَنْكُمْ (لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ) مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا.»

1. Luqmān 31:33.

«I cannot suffice (or protect) you in any way from Allāh.»¹

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said in regard to his major intercession (on Judgment Day), when he will prostrate before his Lord (ﷻ):

«فَيَحْدُلِي حَدًّا، فَأُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنَ النَّارِ وَأَدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ.»

«He will set a limit (of people) for me that I will take out from the Fire and admit into *Jannah*.»²

Thus, his intercession will be for a certain number of people that Allāh will specify for him, and his intercession will not exceed them.

How then can one say that a child will intercede for its parent, and that if the parent did not offer 'aqīqah for it, the child will be prevented from interceding?

Furthermore, you do not say for a person who does not intercede for others that he is confined. There is nothing in this term (confinement) supporting this usage. Allāh (ﷻ) only indicates that a person will be confined by what he earned. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ ﴿٢٨﴾﴾ المدثر

«Every soul will be detained (or confined) for what it had earned (in its first life).»³

And He (ﷻ) says:

﴿أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ أُبْسِلُوا بِمَا كَسَبُوا﴾ الأنعام ٧٠

«Those are the ones who are put into captivity (in

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (2753, 3527, 4771), Muslim (204-206), and others from Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).
2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (6565), Muslim (193), and others from Anas and Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).
3. *Al-Muddaththir* 74:38.

the Fire) because of what they had earned.»¹

A confined person is imprisoned because of an act that he or someone else did ...

Allāh has made the child's sacrifice a means of releasing it from confinement with the devil that attaches himself to it from the moment that it enters into this world, stinging it in its side.

The 'aqīqah then provides for a person ransom and redemption from Satan's confinement and imprisonment, and from hindering his pursuance of deeds that would benefit him in his final abode.

Thus, it is as if a person is confined because Satan had slain him with the knife that he uses on his allies and followers. Having made an oath to his Lord that he would destroy all but a few of Ādam's progeny, he closely watches for the emergence of a child into this life. As soon as it emerges, he rushes to embrace it, and strives to keep it in his fist and confinement and among his allies and followers. He is most keen to accomplish this, and thus, most of newborns are of his followers and belong to his party ...

Allāh has thus legislated for the parents a means of releasing their child from Satan's confinement in the form of a redeeming slaughter. If this slaughter is not performed for the child, the child remains confined by it. This is the meaning of the Prophet's (ﷺ) *ḥadīth* in which he commanded that blood be shed on its behalf to save it from being confined.

Had the confinement been applicable to the parents, the Prophet (ﷺ) would have said, 'Shed blood for YOURSELVES so that you would deserve your child's intercession.'

1. *Al-An'ām* 6:70.

The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded that the apparent harm be removed from the child, and that blood be shed to remove the hidden harm because of its confinement. This indicates then that the intention is to cleanse the newborn from both forms of harm: the apparent and the hidden—and Allāh knows best.”¹

INSIGHT INTO THE 'AQĪQAH'S WISDOM

Great 'ulamā', such as Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رحمته) ² and Waliyy-Ullāh ad-Dahlawī (رحمته) ³, presented important insights into the wisdom behind the legislation of 'aqīqah. These include the following:

1. 'Aqīqah is a considerate way of declaring the birth and lineage of the newborn. It is far better than announcing the birth in marketplaces, newspapers, or other media.
2. 'Aqīqah provides a way of feeding the needy. This makes it an important Islāmic means of promoting generosity, suppressing stinginess, and incurring multiple rewards.
3. 'Aqīqah is a declaration of happiness for the birth of a new Muslim, adding to the number of Muslims that will be displayed by the Prophet (ﷺ) on the Day of Resurrection.
4. 'Aqīqah strengthens the ties among the Muslims because they gather to feast and celebrate the birth of the newborn.
5. 'Aqīqah is an act that distinguishes the Muslims from the *Jāhili* pagans who used to rub the child's head with animal blood, or the Christians who baptize their children with water.
6. 'Aqīqah is a sacrificial act that reminds us of Ibrāhīm's (رحمته) sacrifice and the ram that Allāh (رحمته) sent down as a ransom for Ibrāhīm's son Ismā'il (رحمته). It strengthens the Muslims' attachment to their righteous ancestors and encourages them to be consistent in doing good like those ancestors did.

1. *Tuhfat-ul-Mawdūd* pp. 48-49.

2. In *Tuhfat-ul-Mawdūd*.

3. In *Hujjat-Ullāh-il-Bālighah*.

7. 'Aqīqah is an act of obedience and benevolence that, with Allāh's permission, benefits the child and helps protect it from harm and evil.
8. 'Aqīqah ransoms the child and ends its confinement. We should ask Allāh (ﷻ) and expect from Him that He makes the 'aqīqah a cause for good health, security, and development of the child, protecting it from Satan throughout its life, making each part of the animal of 'aqīqah a ransom for the corresponding part of the child.

Rubbing Saffron on a Newborn's Head

On the seventh day from birth, it is also recommended to rub saffron or other perfume on the baby's head.

An old *Jāhili* practice, subsequently abolished by Islām, was to smear a newborn's head with the 'aqīqah's blood. Buraydah (رضي الله عنه) reported:

كُنَّا فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ إِذَا وُلِدَ لِأَحَدِنَا غُلَامٌ دَبَّحَ شَاةً وَأَلَطَحَ رَأْسَهُ بِدَمِهَا.
فَلَمَّا جَاءَ اللَّهُ بِالْإِسْلَامِ كُنَّا نَذْبِجُ شَاةً وَنَحْلِقُ رَأْسَهُ وَنَلَطُحُهُ بِرِزْعِ عَفْرَانٍ.

“When a child was born to one of us during *Jāhiliyyah*, he would slaughter a goat and smear its blood over the child's head. After Allāh brought Islām, we (were commanded to) slaughter the goat, shave the baby's head, and cover it with saffron.”¹

'Abd al-Muzanī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«يُعَى عَنِ الْغُلَامِ، وَلَا يَمَسُّ رَأْسَهُ بِدَمٍ.»

‘**Aqīqah is to be slaughtered for a newborn. But its head should not be touched with blood.**’²

1. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*as-Ṣaḥīḥah* 2452 and *Irwā' -ul-Ghalīl* 1172).
2. Recorded by Ibn Mājah, at-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Awsaṭ*), and at-Ṭahāwī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*as-Ṣaḥīḥah* 1996, 2452, *Irwā' -ul-Ghalīl* 4:389, and *Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 8108).

'Ā' ishah (ﷺ) reported:

كَانُوا فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَجْعَلُونَ قُطْنَةً فِي دَمِ الْعَقِيقَةِ وَيُحِيلُونَهُ عَلَى رَأْسِ
الصَّبِيِّ. فَأَمَرَهُمُ النَّبِيُّ أَنْ يَجْعَلُوا مَكَانَ الدَّمِ خَلْوُقًا.

“During *Jāhiliyyah*, people would soak a cotton piece in the 'aqīqah's blood and pass it over the newborn's head. (After Islām,) the Propher (ﷺ) commanded that the blood be substituted with *khalūq*^{1,2}.

Questions Answered

In this section, we cite questions (Q) and their answers (A) as provided by prominent contemporary 'ulamā'.

DELAYING THE 'AQĪQAH FOR FINANCIAL REASONS

Q. At the birth of his child, a man could not afford a 'aqīqah. If he has the money for it after a year or more, should he slaughter 'aqīqah, or does the obligation cease for him?

A. It is recommended for him to offer 'aqīqah whenever it becomes possible for him—even after one or more years ...³

BUYING MEAT INSTEAD OF SLAUGHTERING

Q. Is it permissible to buy some meat instead of slaughtering a 'aqīqah?

A. No, it is not permissible. A goat should be slaughtered for a female baby and two goats for a male baby ...⁴

'AQĪQAH FOR A SHORT-LIVED BABY

Q1. A baby was born alive after a six-month term, but died the

1. *Khalūq* is an orange-colored perfume that women in the past used. It is mainly composed of saffron.
2. Recorded by Ibn Hibbān, Abū Ya'lā, and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 2452 and *Irwā' -ul-Ghalīl* 4:389).
3. Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research & Fatwā (including: 'Abd-ul-'Azīz Bin Bāz, 'Abd-ur-Razzāq 'Afifī, 'Abdullāh Bin Ghadayān, and 'Abdullāh Bin Qa'ūd).
4. Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research & Fatwā (including: 'Abd-ul-'Azīz Bin Bāz, 'Abd-ur-Razzāq 'Afifī, and 'Abdullāh Bin Qa'ūd).

same day. Is it required to offer 'aqīqah for it?

A1. It is recommended to slaughter 'aqīqah for this baby (two goats for a boy and one goat for a girl) even though it died right after birth. 'Aqīqah should be slaughtered on the seventh day of birth, and the (dead) baby should be named. This is based on what Salmān Bin 'Āmir reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَعَ الْغُلَامِ عَقِيقَةٌ، فَأَهْرِيقُوا عَنْهُ دَمًا، وَأَمِيطُوا عَنْهُ الْأَذَى.»

«A 'aqīqah is prescribed for every child. Thus shed blood on its behalf, and remove the harm off it.»¹

Also, Samurah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«كُلُّ غُلَامٍ رَهِينَةٌ بِعَقِيقَتِهِ، تُذْبَحُ عَنْهُ يَوْمَ سَابِعِهِ وَيُحْلَقُ وَيُسَمَّى.»

«Every child is confined by its 'aqīqah. It should be slaughtered for it on the seventh day, its hair should be shaved, and it should be named.»^{2, 3}

Q2. Is it required to offer 'aqīqah for a baby who dies before the seventh day?

A2. If a baby dies before the seventh day, its 'aqīqah should still be slaughtered on the seventh. The baby's death before the seventh does not prevent slaughtering for it on the seventh. As for the *shar'ī* evidences specifying the time for slaughtering the 'aqīqah, we do not find any of them indicating that it ceases for a baby who dies before the seventh ...⁴

1. Recorded by at-Tirmithī, an-Nasā'ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 4253, 5877, and *Irwā'-ul-Ghalīl* 1171).
2. Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 4541, and *Irwā'-ul-Ghalīl* 1165).
3. Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research & Fatwā (including: 'Abd-ul-'Azīz Bin Bāz, 'Abd-ur-Razzāq 'Afifī, 'Abdullāh Bin Ghadayān, and 'Abdullāh Bin Qa'ūd.)
4. Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research & Fatwā (including: 'Abd-ur-Razzāq 'Afifī, 'Abdullāh Bin Ghadayān, and 'Abdullāh Bin Mānī'.)

'AQĪQAH FOR A MISCARRIED FETUS

Q1. Is 'aqīqah required for a miscarried fetus whose gender is clear?

A1. 'Aqīqah is not required for a miscarried fetus, even if its gender is clear—if it is dropped before life is blown into it. The reason for this is that in this case it cannot be called a baby or a newborn ...¹

Q2. Is 'aqīqah required for three miscarried male fetuses, the first dropped after four months minus three days, and the second after three months and seventeen days, and the third dropped after two months?

A2. 'Aqīqah is recommended for a miscarried fetus if it is dropped after life has been blown into it, which occurs after four months of pregnancy. In your case, 'aqīqah should not be offered for any of the three fetuses.²

STORING THE 'AQĪQAH'S MEAT

Q. Is it permissible to store the 'aqīqah's meat in the freezer?

A. (Yes because) it is recommended to eat some of the 'aqīqah's meat, give away some, and feed some to the relatives and neighbors ... The time for distributing the meat is open and unrestricted ..."³

1. Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research & Fatwā (including: 'Abd-ul-'Azīz Bin Bāz, 'Abd-ur-Razzāq 'Afifi, and 'Abdullāh Bin Ghadayān,)

2. Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research & Fatwā.

3. 'Abd-ul-'Azīz Bin Bāz, *Nūrun-'al-ad-Darb* recordings.

5. CIRCUMCISION

Overview

ORIGIN OF CIRCUMCISION

Circumcision is an act of cleanliness that was first ordained by Allāh (ﷻ) for His prophet Ibrāhīm (ﷺ). Subsequently, it became a consistent practice among Ibrāhīm's descendants and followers, including the Jews and Muslims.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«كَانَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ صَبَّغَ الضَّيْفَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ، وَهُوَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ اخْتَنَّ عَلَى
رَأْسِ ثَمَانِينَ سَنَةً، وَاخْتَنَّ بِالْقَدُّومِ.»

«Ibrāhīm was the first person to host guests. He was also the first person to be circumcised—at the age of eighty—and he circumcised himself with an axe.»¹

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS

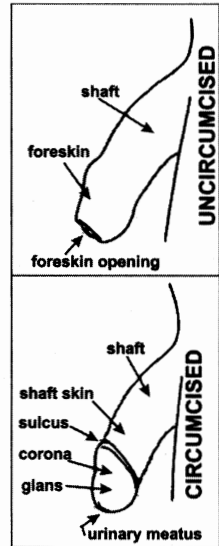
The male sexual organ, the penis, consists of a head called “glans”, and a shaft. The shaft is covered with skin that ends at the base of the glans in a junction called the “frenar band”. At birth, the glans is encased in a skin covering called the “foreskin”, or “prepuce”, which is a continuation of the shaft's skin. The “frenulum”, or “frenum”, is a connecting mucous membrane on the underside of the penis, similar to that beneath the tongue.

Circumcision is a minor surgery that removes the foreskin, resulting in complete exposure of the glans. This surgery includes:

1. Recorded by Ibn 'Asākir. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 725).

1. Cutting around the frenar band and removing the foreskin.
2. Splitting the frenum and pushing it back until the crown of flesh is fully uncovered.
3. Drawing the blood out of the wound and surrounding areas.
4. Putting ointment, bandages, and gauze pads to help stop the bleeding and heal the wound properly.

The adjacent diagram¹ shows a comparison between an uncircumcised and a circumcised penis.



Circumcision in the Islāmic Texts

ONE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF *FIṬRAH*

There are a number of practices that are labeled as “characteristics of *fiṭrah*” because they conform to the true, pure, and unadulterated human nature. The Prophet (ﷺ) included circumcision as one of these characteristics.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الْفِطْرَةُ خَمْسٌ: الْحِتَانُ، وَالْإِسْتِحْدَادُ، وَقَصُّ الشَّارِبِ، وَتَقْلِيمُ الْأَظْفَارِ، وَتَنْفُ الْإِبْطِ.»

<There are five qualities of *fiṭrah*: circumcision, shaving the pubic hair, trimming the mustache, clipping the nails, and plucking the armpit hair.>²

Commenting on this *ḥadīth*, Abū Bakr Bin al-‘Arabī (رضي الله عنه) said:

“I consider all five qualities mentioned in this *ḥadīth* mandatory, because anyone who neglects them would not appear like a human being—much less a

1. Courtesy of www.cirp.org.

2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5889, 5891, 6297), Muslim (257), and others.

Muslim.”¹

In another narration, the Prophet (ﷺ) named ten or eleven qualities of *fiṭrah*. ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«عَشْرٌ مِنَ الْفِطْرَةِ: قَصُّ الشَّارِبِ، وَإِعْفَاءُ اللَّحْيَةِ، وَالسَّوَاكُ، وَالْمُضْمَضَةُ،
وَاسْتِنْشَاقُ الْمَاءِ، وَقَصُّ الْأَظْفَارِ، وَغَسْلُ الْبَرَاجِمِ، وَتَنْفُؤُ الْإِبْطِ، وَحَلْقُ
الْعَانَةِ، وَانْتِقَاصُ الْمَاءِ، وَالِاخْتِتَانُ.»

⟨There are ten qualities of *fiṭrah*: trimming the mustache, sparing the beard, *siwāk* (brushing the teeth), inhaling water (to clean the nose) and rinsing the mouth, clipping the nails, washing the finger knuckles, plucking the armpit hair, shaving the pubic hair, washing the private parts with water, and circumcision.⟩²

A PROPHETIC COMMAND

The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded new Muslims to get circumcised.

Kulayb al-Juhanī (رضي الله عنه) reported that he came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and told him that he embraced Islām. The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded him:

«أَلْقِ عَنْكَ شَعْرَ الْكُفْرِ وَاخْتِنِ.»

⟨Shave off the hair of *kufr*, and get circumcised.⟩³

A PRACTICE OF THE FATHER OF PROPHETS

We saw earlier that circumcision was first performed by Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) in fulfillment of a command from Allāh (ﷻ).

1. Reported by Ibn Ḥajar in *Fath-ul-Bārī* 10:418 (under 5889).
2. A combined report from Muslim (261), Abū Dāwūd, Aḥmad, and others. A similar *ḥadīth* is recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, and Abū Dāwūd from ‘Ammār (رضي الله عنه), and is verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥu Abī Dāwūd* 54).
3. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi’* 1251 and *Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 79).

Similar to the earlier narration, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«اِحْتَسَنَ اِبْرَاهِيْمُ، وَهُوَ ابْنُ ثَمَانِيْنَ سَنَةً، بِالْقَدُوْمِ.»

«Ibrāhīm was circumcised with an axe when he was eighty years old.»¹

Al-Marwazī reported that Imām Aḥmad (رضي الله عنه) was asked about this and he explained:

“He used the (sharp) edge of an axe.”²

A PRACTICE OF THE ṢAḤĀBAH

Circumcision was practiced by the ṣaḥābah—though they often delayed it until the child was older. Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) was asked, “How old were you when Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) passed away?” He replied:

«أَنَا يَوْمَئِذٍ مَحْتُونٌ، وَكَانُوا لَا يَخْتِنُونَ الرَّجُلَ حَتَّى يُدْرِكَ.»

“I was circumcised then. And they used to not circumcise a male until he reached the age of discernment.”³

Ruling

IBN-UL-QAYYIM’S REASONING

In what follows, we summarize the most important reasons provided by Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رضي الله عنه)⁴ as proof that circumcision is obligatory:

1. Allāh commanded the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) to follow the pure creed of Ibrāhīm⁵, and circumcision is a part of it.
2. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) commanded Kulayb al-Juhanī to get

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (3356, 6298), Muslim (2370), and others.

2. *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawdūd* p. 95.

3. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (6299, 6300), Aḥmad, and others.

4. In *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawdūd* pp. 100-110.

5. As in *an-Naḥl* 16:123.

circumcised when he embraced Islām.

3. Circumcision is one of the clear and apparent practices that distinguish between Muslims and *kāfirs*.
4. Circumcision causes pain and may result in complications and serious repercussions. This would not be allowed for the sake of a noncompulsory act.
5. Islām prohibits exposing one's '*awrah*', or looking at someone else's '*awrah*' or touching it without a necessity. Circumcision involves committing these three prohibitions (exposing the '*awrah*', looking at it, and touching it). This would not be possible unless circumcision is obligatory.
6. Islām prohibits cutting any part of a human body unless Allāh commands and ordains it. Circumcision must then be obligatory to make it possible for the person performing it to cut the foreskin.
7. An uncircumcised person is liable to impurity and uncleanness because of the remains of urine underneath his foreskin. This could nullify his prayer and other acts of worship.

CONCLUSION

We saw in earlier texts that: (a) Ibrāhīm (ﷺ) started the *sunnah* of circumcision; (b) the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) commanded a new Muslim to get circumcised; and (c) circumcision has been a consistent practice of the Muslims from the time of the *ṣaḥābah*.

Based on this, in addition to Ibn-ul-Qayyim's above argument, we conclude that circumcision is obligatory. Al-Albānī (رحمته) said:

“As for the ruling of circumcision, the correct opinion according to us is that it is obligatory. This is the opinion of the majority of '*ulamā*', such as Mālik, Ash-Shāfi'ī, and Aḥmad. Ibn-ul-Qayyim took this position as well and presented fifteen different reasons to support it. Though those reasons cannot individually prove this position, there is no doubt that

they can collectively do so.”¹

Date of Performing Circumcision

THE EARLIER THE BETTER

Being obligatory, circumcision should be performed at the earliest possible date. Thus, it is permissible to circumcise a male baby during his first few days, especially since circumcision at this early age has a number of benefits:

1. The child heals faster.
2. The child does not remember the pain.
3. Circumcision requires exposing the private parts, which makes it more disliked to do so for an older child than a newborn.

NARRATIONS SPECIFYING THE SEVENTH DAY

Some people believe that circumcision should be performed on the seventh day. However, this is only based on weak narrations that cannot be held as acceptable evidence.

The first narration, from Jābir (رضي الله عنه), says:

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) offered ‘*aqīqah* for al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn and circumcised them on the seventh day (from birth).”²

Note that the first part of this narration is authentic as we showed in the discussion of ‘*aqīqah*.

The second narration, from Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه), says:

“There are seven practices that are part of the Sunnah for a male baby on the seventh day: he should be named ... and circumcised ... ”³

1. *Tamām-ul-Minnah* p. 69.

2. Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *aṣ-Ṣaghīr*), Ibn ‘Adiyy, and others. Verified to be weak by al-Albānī (*Tamām-ul-Minnah* p. 68).

3. Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Awsaṭ*) and verified to be weak by al-Albānī (*Tamām-ul-Minnah* p. 68).

Some 'ulamā', such as Imām Mālik (ﷺ), dislike performing the circumcision on the seventh day because this resembles the Jews' practice.¹

Imām Aḥmad (ﷺ) said:

“Performing circumcision on the seventh day is permissible. Al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣrī) disliked it only for fear of resembling the Jews. But this is not apparent ... Wahab Bin Munabbih was asked about this, and he said, ‘It is recommended to do it on the seventh day because it is easier for the baby. A baby is born with numbness in all of its body, and cannot feel pain for seven days. If it is not circumcised by then (the seventh), let him grow stronger before you do it.’”²

We conclude from the above that the seventh day has no special significance in this case. Circumcision may be performed on, before, or after the seventh, depending on the parents' convenience and the child's health.

DELAYING CIRCUMCISION UNTIL THE AGE OF DISCERNMENT

We saw in Ibn 'Abbās's (ﷺ) earlier report that some of the *ṣaḥābah* did not circumcise their children until they reached the age of discernment, which is normally past seven years.

This practice did not necessarily rely on a command from the Prophet (ﷺ). It is very likely that they delayed the circumcision until the child was stronger and healthier, rather than make him liable to dangerous or fatal infections in his first days, especially with the limited hygienic and medical conditions in those days.

Al-Māwardī (ﷺ) said:

“Circumcision has two dates: a date of obligation and a date of recommendation. The date of obligation is the attainment of puberty. And the date of

1. Ibn Taymiyyah's *Majmū' -ul-Fatāwī* 21:113.

2. *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawdūd* p. 112.

recommendation is on the seventh day after birth ...
 One is urged not to postpone it beyond the
 recommended date without an excuse.”¹

NEW MUSLIMS

When an uncircumcised man embraces Islām, he should get circumcised as early as possible. This was the case with Kulayb al-Juhanī in the *ḥadīth* cited earlier.

Benefits and Wisdom

Circumcision is a means of completing and perfecting the *fiṭrah* upon which Allāh (ﷻ) created humans. It is performed based on a command from Allāh and guidance from His messengers. It establishes a way of conforming to Allāh’s legislation, even in the private genital area—which is the most personal part of a human’s body. It shows submission to Allāh’s command and willingness to live by His laws, publicly and privately.

Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رحمته) said:

“Circumcision is one of the beauties of the legislations that Allāh ordained for His servants. It completes the *fiṭrah* upon which He created them ... Circumcision was initially ordained to complete the Pure Religion. Allāh made a covenant with Ibrāhīm, promising to make him a leader for the people and a father of many nations. He promised to raise the prophets and kings from his seed and to multiply his progeny. He told him that the sign of this covenant is that they will circumcise every newborn among them ... Circumcision is then a sign of entering into the religion of Ibrāhīm ...

Allāh’s “dye”² is the Pure Religion because it dyes the hearts with knowing Him, loving Him, sincerity to Him, and worshipping Him alone without partners. It

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1. Reported by Ibn Ḥajar in *Fath-ul-Bārī* 10:421 (under 5889).
 2. He is referring here to *al-Baqarah* 2:138.

also dyes the bodies with the qualities of *fiṭrah*, such as circumcision, shaving the pubic hair, trimming the mustache, clipping the nails, plucking the armpit hair, rinsing the mouth, inhaling water (to clean the nose), *siwāk* (brushing the teeth), and washing the private parts. Allāh’s *fiṭrah* then appears in the hearts and bodies of the followers of the Pure Religion.”¹

Circumcision is an important hygienic method of maintaining the cleanliness of male genitals by eliminating a prime location for filth and germs to collect. Ibn-ul-Qayyim (☉) said:

“What adornment is better than removing excessive foreskin, pubic hair, armpit hair, mustache hair, and nails? Indeed, Satan likes to hide, habituate, and dwell in these things ... The uncircumcised foreskin is uglier than excessively long nails, mustaches, or pubic hair ...”²

Circumcision of Females

DESCRIPTION

Female circumcision is somewhat similar to male circumcision. It is applied to the clitoris instead of the penis. Just like the foreskin surrounding the glans, the clitoris is surrounded by a small hood connected to two flaps of skin called the “labia minora”.

Female circumcision involves removing part or all of the clitoral hood and the labia minora.

EXCESSIVE CIRCUMCISION

Pharaonic circumcision in the Nile Valley is as old as recorded history, and continues to be practiced in Sudan, Egypt, and other African countries. Because of its brutal and destructive nature, it is often called “female genital mutilation”.

Pharaonic circumcision involves excision of the clitoris, the labia

1. *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawdūd* pp. 113-114.

2. *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawdūd* p. 115.

minora and the inner, fleshy layers of the labia majora. The remaining outer edges of the labia majora are then brought together so that when the wound has healed they are fused so as to leave only a pinhole-sized opening. Urination and menstruation must thereafter be accomplished through this remaining pinhole-sized aperture.

FEMALE CIRCUMCISION IN ISLĀMIC TEXTS

There is a popular assumption that female circumcision has no place in Islām. This is not true, because female circumcision was practiced during the Prophet's (ﷺ) time and he approved it. It continued to be practiced by the *ṣaḥābah* and *Salaf* after him.

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said to a woman in al-Madīnah who used to circumcise women:

«إِذَا حَفَضْتِ فَأَشْمِي وَلَا تُنْهَكِي، فَإِنَّهُ أَنْضَرُ
(أَسْرَى) لِلْوَجْهِ وَأَحْطَى (أَحَبُّ) لِلزَّوْجِ.»

«When you trim (the clitoral foreskin), do it lightly and not excessively. This would then bring beauty to the woman's face and please her husband.»¹

‘Ā’ishah and Ibn ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا التَّقَى الْخِتَانَانِ وَجَبَ الْغُسْلُ.»

«When the two *khitāns* (of man and woman) meet, *ghusl*² becomes compulsory.»³

Similarly, ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا جَلَسَ بَيْنَ شُعْبَيْهَا الْأَرْبَعِ، وَمَسَّ الْخِتَانُ الْخِتَانَ، فَقَدْ وَجَبَ الْغُسْلُ.»

«Once he (the man) sits between her (the woman's)

1. Recorded by al-Hākim, at-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Awsaṭ*) and others from Anas and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 722).
2. *Ghusl* is a ritual bath that is required after intercourse.
3. Recorded by Aḥmad at-Ṭahāwī, and Ibn Mājah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 1261, 2063).

four limbs and (his) *khitān* touches (her) *khitān*, *ghusl* becomes compulsory.»¹

Also, ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا جَاوَزَ الْحِثَّانُ الْحِثَّانَ، وَجَبَ الْغُسْلُ.»

◁When the (man’s) *khitān* enters past the (woman’s) *khitān*, *ghusl* becomes compulsory.▷²

In the above narrations, the Prophet (ﷺ) described both the male and female sex organs as “*khitān*”, which means, “circumcision area or location”. This again indicates that female circumcision was a known and acceptable practice. Commenting on this, Imām Aḥmad (رضي الله عنه) said:

“This provides evidence that women used to be circumcised.”³

RULING

From the above, we see that female circumcision is voluntary. It is recommended for women with extensive labia growth, but the prophet clearly warned against excessive removal.

Violations and Innovations

There are many violations and innovations relating to circumcision. In what follows we list a few of them:

1. For males: Removing, in addition to the foreskin, some of the shaft’s skin, leading to great pain and serious harm to the child.
2. For females: Excessive removal of the labia or other genital parts, as in the case of Pharaonic circumcision.
3. Celebrating circumcision by slaughtering animals, serving

1. Recorded by Muslim (349), Ibn Khuzaymah, and others.

2. Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāh* 442 & *Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 80).

3. *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawdūd* p. 117.

food, offering congratulations, giving money and gifts, and so on.

6. OTHER NEWBORN *SUNNAHS*

There are some other *sunnahs* pertinent to a newborn during its first few days of life. In this chapter, we discuss the most common of them.

Tahnik

DEFINITION

Tahnik is to chew some food and then insert it into a baby's mouth.¹ Usually, the food is dates, and is rubbed against the baby's *hanak* (upper jaw or palate) so that the baby would suck on it or eat it.

AUTHENTIC REPORTS

There are several authentic reports of the Prophet (ﷺ) performing *tahnik* for newborns. 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported:

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ يُؤْتَىٰ بِالصَّبِيَّانِ فَيَبْرِكُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيُحَنِّكُهُمْ.

“Newborns were occasionally brought to the Prophet (ﷺ). He would invoke Allāh's blessings on them and perform *tahnik* for them.”²

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that as soon as his mother, Umm Sulaym (رضي الله عنها), gave birth to his younger brother, 'Abdullāh, she told him to take him to the Prophet (ﷺ) with some dates. The Prophet (ﷺ) took some of the dates, chewed on them, mixing them with his saliva, opened the baby's mouth, and rubbed the chewed dates inside his mouth. The baby began to hungrily suck the sweetness of the dates together with the Prophet's (ﷺ) saliva. This was the first thing to enter the baby's stomach; and the Prophet's (ﷺ) said:

1. *Lisān-ul-'Arab*.

2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (222, 5468, 6002, 6355), Muslim (286, 2147), and others.

«انظروا إلى حبِّ الأنصارِ التَّمْرِ.» أو «أبتِ الأنصارُ إلَّا حُبَّ التَّمْرِ.»

⟨See how the Anṣār love dates!⟩ or ⟨The Anṣār refuse but to love dates.⟩¹

Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (رضي الله عنه) reported:

وُلِدَ لِي غُلامٌ، فَأَتَيْتُ بِهِ النَّبِيَّ، فَسَمَّاهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ،
فَحَنَكْتُهُ بِتَمْرَةٍ، وَدَعَا لَهُ بِالْبَرَكَةِ، وَدَفَعَهُ إِلَيَّ.

“I had a baby-boy. I took him to the Prophet (ﷺ) who named him Ibrāhīm, chewed on a date and gave it to him suck, invoked blessings for him, and then gave him back to me.”²

And Asmā’ Bint Abī Bakr (رضي الله عنها) reported:

احْمَلْتُ بِعَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الزُّبَيْرِ بِمَكَّةَ، فَخَرَجْتُ وَأَنَا مُتِمٌّ، فَأَتَيْتُ الْمَدِينَةَ، فَوَلَدْتُ
بِقُبَاءٍ، ثُمَّ أَتَيْتُ بِهِ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (ﷺ) فَوَضَعَهُ فِي حَجْرِهِ، ثُمَّ دَعَا بِتَمْرَةٍ فَمَضَعَهَا
ثُمَّ تَفَّلَ فِي فِيهِ، فَكَانَ أَوَّلَ شَيْءٍ دَخَلَ جَوْفَهُ رِيْقُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (ﷺ)، ثُمَّ حَنَكَهُ
بِالتَّمْرَةِ، ثُمَّ دَعَا لَهُ فَبَرَكَ عَلَيْهِ، وَكَانَ أَوَّلَ مَوْلُودٍ وُلِدَ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ.

“I conceived ‘Abdullāh Bin az-Zubayr (رضي الله عنه) in Makkah. I migrated to Madīnah near the end of my term and gave birth in Qubā’³. Then, I took ‘Abdullāh to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) who placed him on his lap, requested a date, chewed it, and transferred it to his mouth. Thus, the first thing to enter his stomach was the saliva of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ). The Prophet then rubbed the date inside ‘Abdullāh’s mouth and supplicated and invoked blessings for him. ‘Abdullāh was the first child born (for the Muhājirūn) in Islām

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (1301, 1502, 5470, 5542, 5842), Muslim (2144), and others.
2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5467, 6198), Muslim (2145), and others.
3. A suburb of Madīnah.

(in Madīnah).”¹

DISCUSSION AND RULING

Based on the above reports, an-Nawawī (رحمته) concluded:

“Among the benefits in these narrations are the following:

1. There is a consensus (among the ‘*ulamā*’) that it is recommended to perform *tahnik* for a newborn.
2. A righteous man or woman should perform the *tahnik* for the baby.
3. It is preferable to perform *tahnik* with dates.”²

And al-‘Aynī (رحمته) said:

“The wisdom behind *tahnik* is the expectation that the baby would then attain *īmān* and its sweetness, because dates are the fruits of the tree that the Prophet (ﷺ) likened to a believer—especially if the person who performs *tahnik* is one of the virtuous people or righteous ‘*ulamā*’, so that his saliva will enter the child’s stomach. Don’t you see that when Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) performed *tahnik* for ‘Abdullāh Bin az-Zubayr, he (‘Abdullāh) attained virtues and qualities of perfection beyond description? He grew to be a reciter of the Qur’ān and a man of devoutness and sublime goodness—all because of the Prophet’s blessed saliva.”³

However, many ‘*ulamā*’, such as ash-Shāṭibī (رحمته)⁴, disapprove of performing *tahnik* with any person’s saliva after the Prophet (ﷺ). The Prophet’s (ﷺ) saliva was absolutely blessed. Because of this, his companions used to compete over his spit, catching it with

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (3909, 5469), Muslim (2146), and others.

2. *Al-Minhāj* 14:372.

3. ‘*Umdat-ul-Qārī* 21:84.

4. In *al-I’tisām* (2:10).

their hands, and rubbing it over their bodies. This merit does not apply to the saliva of any human after him. We never heard that the people brought their children for *tahnik* to Abū Bakr or ‘Umar, the best two men after the Prophet (ﷺ). How then can we recommend performing *tahnik* with the saliva of lesser Muslims, regardless of how righteous they might be?¹

Based on the above, we conclude the following:

1. It is recommended for a parent, relative, or friend to perform *tahnik* for a newborn soon after birth.
2. *Tahnik* should be performed with a date. The date may be softened with water or saliva so that the baby would be able to suck on it.
3. Introducing saliva into a baby’s mouth with the belief that such an act imparts blessings to the baby has no evidence (except what was in the case of the Prophet (ﷺ)) and should therefore be avoided.

Shaving the Head and Giving Charity

It is required to shave a newborn’s head on the seventh day and give *ṣadaqah* equal to its hair’s weight in silver. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) commanded his daughter Fāṭimah (رضي الله عنها) to do this for her children al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn (رضي الله عنهما).

AUTHENTIC NARRATIONS

Abū Rāfi‘ and ‘Alī (رضي الله عنه) reported that when Fāṭimah (رضي الله عنها) gave birth to al-Ḥasan, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) told her:

«يَا فَاطِمَةُ، احْلِقِي رَأْسَهُ وَتَصَدَّقِي بِزَنَةِ شَعْرِهِ فِضَّةً.»

«O Fāṭimah, shave his head, and give charity equal to his hair’s weight in silver.»

‘Alī (رضي الله عنه) added:

1. Paraphrased from Shaykh ‘Abd-ul-Muḥsin al-‘Abbād (may Allāh bless him) in his explanation of *Sunanu Abī Dāwūd* (4:47).

(فَوَزَنَّاهُ فَكَانَ وَزْنُهُ دِرْهَمًا أَوْ بَعْضُ دِرْهَمٍ.)

“We weighed it and found its weight to be a *dirham* or less.”¹

Salmān Bin ‘Āmir aḏ-Ḍabbī reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«مَعَ الْغُلَامِ عَقِيقَةٌ، فَأَهْرِيقُوا عَنْهُ دَمًا، وَأَمِيطُوا عَنْهُ الْأَذَى.»

«A ‘*aqīqah* is prescribed for every child. So, shed blood on its behalf and remove harm off it.»²

Commenting on this *ḥadīth*, al-Albānī (رحمته) said:

“Ibn Sīrīn said that ‘removing harm’ refers to shaving the head. He indicated that this was his own understanding, not having an authentic report in this regard. Also, Abū Dāwūd narrated (no. 2840) with an authentic *isnād* that al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣṭī) used to say that ‘removing harm’ means ‘shaving the head’. It possibly has another meaning, as mentioned by Abū Ja‘far aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, which is to refrain from smearing the newborn’s head with blood, as was done during *Jāhiliyyah* times.”³

Similarly, ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رحمته) reported:

(أَمَرَ النَّبِيُّ بِتَسْمِيَةِ الْمَوْلُودِ يَوْمَ سَابِعِهِ، وَوَضَعَ الْأَذَى عَنْهُ وَالْعَقَّ.)

“The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded us to name a newborn on its seventh day, as well as to remove harm off it and slaughter its ‘*aqīqah*.”⁴

1. Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Bayhaqī (in *al-Kubrā*), and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 1175).
2. Recorded by at-Tirmithī, an-Nasā’ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi’* 4253, 5877, and *Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 1171).
3. *Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 4:400.
4. Recorded by at-Tirmithī and Ibn Abī Shaybah. Verified to be *ḥāsan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ut-Tirmithī* 2269).

BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS SHOULD BE SHAVED

The obligation of shaving a newborn's head applies to both boys and girls. There is no evidence for those who restrict the shaving to the boys. Rather, the reasoning given in Salmān's *ḥadīth* (removing the filthy hair) holds for both genders. In addition, the Prophet (ﷺ) gave a general rule, as is reported by 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها):

«إِنَّمَا النِّسَاءُ شَقَائِقُ الرِّجَالِ.»

«Indeed, women are but full sisters of men.»¹

DATE OF SHAVING

The above *ḥadīths* indicate that, similar to 'aqīqah, shaving the head should be done on the seventh day of birth.

THE WHOLE HEAD SHOULD BE SHAVED

When shaving a newborn's head, one should avoid *qaz'*, which is to shave part of the head and leave the rest unshaved.

Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) saw a boy with part of his head shaved and the other part unshaved. He (ﷺ) disapproved this, saying:

«أَخْلِقُوهُ كُلَّهُ أَوْ ائْرُكُوهُ كُلَّهُ.»

«Shave it all or spare it all.»²

Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) similarly reported:

(نَبِيٌّ عَنِ الْقَزَعِ: أَنْ يُخْلَقَ بَعْضُ رَأْسِ الصَّبِيِّ وَيُتْرَكَ بَعْضٌ.)

“(The Prophet (ﷺ)) prohibited *qaz'*, which is shaving a part of a boy's head and sparing the rest.”³

Ibn Ḥajar (رحمته الله) commented on this issue saying:

“Some scholars hold the opinion that *qaz'* is

1. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, ad-Dārimī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 1:347 and *Ṣaḥīḥu Sunani Abī Dāwūd* 235).
2. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 212 and *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 1123).
3. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5920, 5921), Muslim (2120), and others.

prohibited because it disfigures one's appearance, others say that it is the look of Shaytān, and others that it is the look of the Jews... *Qaz'* is limited to the hair on the head, not that of the sideburns or the back of the neck."¹

Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رحمته) reported that Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته) said:

“This indicates Allāh’s and His Messenger’s absolute love of fairness. Allāh requires fairness in all matters—even between a human being and himself. (For example,) it is prohibited to partially shave the head because this would be unfair to the head, keeping some of it covered and baring the rest. Similarly, the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited sitting partially in the shade² because it constitutes unfairness to part of the body. He also prohibited walking with just one shoe, instructing to wear shoes on both feet or walk barefoot.³

As for *qaz'*, it is four types:

1. Shaving separate streaks here-and-there from the head, making it appear like broken clouds.
2. Shaving the center and leaving the sides, as the Christian monks do.
3. Shaving the sides and leaving the center, as is done by many of the vile and lowly people.
4. Shaving the front and leaving the back.”⁴

This clearly indicates the prohibition of some hair styles whereby

1. *Fatḥ-ul-Bārī* 10:448 (under 5921).
2. Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others from Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 837, 838).
3. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5855), Muslim (2097), and others from Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).
4. *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawdūd* p. 64.

parts of the head's hair are completely shaved, as is done with the Mohawk, or as is more common now where parts or creases of the head are shaved.

SHAVING THE HEAD UPON EMBRACING ISLĀM

As soon as a newborn begins its new life, its prior hair should be shaved. Similarly, as soon as a man impinges on his new life as a Muslim, he should shave his prior hair.

The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded new Muslims to do so. Kulayb al-Juhanī (رضي الله عنه) reported that he came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and told him that he had embraced Islām. The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded him:

«أَلْتَقِيَ عَنَّا شَعْرَ الْكُفْرِ وَآخِثْتِنِ.»

«Shave off the hair of *kufur*, and get circumcised.»¹

Note that circumcision is also required in both cases. Note also that shaving the head of new Muslims applies only to men. We have no authentic reports that the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded any woman who embraced Islām to shave her head.

GIVING CHARITY

We saw above that when the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded his daughter Fāṭimah to weigh her baby's shaved hair and give a charity equal to its weight in silver, 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) said, "We weighed it and found its weight to be a *dirham* or less."

Thus, the value of this charity is quite small, and is more symbolic than real. Still, those who cannot afford paying that little are exempt from giving it.

It should be noted that it is incorrect to demand paying this charity in what equals the hair's weight of gold, because the Prophet (ﷺ) specified silver. Ibn Ḥajar (رحمته الله) said:

"All reports agree that the charity is given in

1. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 1251 and *Irwā' -ul-Ghalīl* 79).

silver, and none of them mentions gold.”¹

As for the date of this charity, it also starts on the seventh day of birth, because it is linked to shaving the hair.

Calling *Athān* and *Iqāmah*?

Many scholars recommend calling *athān* in a newborn’s right ear and *iqāmah* in its left ear. This is based on three reports recorded in the books of *Ḥadīth*. However, the first of them is weak, and the second and third are fabricated, as is indicated in the footnotes.

1. Abū Rāfi‘ reported:

“I saw Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) call the *athān* in the ear of al-Ḥasan Bin ‘Alī when his mother Fātimah gave birth to him.”²

2. Al-Ḥasan Bin ‘Alī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Whoever gets a new baby and calls *athān* in its right ear and *iqāmah* in its left ear, it will never be harmed by *Umm-uṣ-Ṣibyān* ³.”⁴

3. Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“The Prophet (ﷺ) called *athān* in the ear of al-Ḥasan Bin ‘Alī on the day that he was born, and he called *iqāmah* in his left ear.”⁵

1. *At-Talkhīṣ-ul-Ḥabīr* 4:148 (as reported by al-Albānī under *al-Irwā’* 1175).

2. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be weak by al-Albānī (*aḍ-Ḍa’īfah* 1:493-494 and 13:272). Note that al-Albānī (رحمته الله) previously considered it *ḥasan* (*Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 1174) but later found it weak due to further evidence.

3. *Umm uṣ-Ṣibyān* literally means, “the Mother of Kids”. It refers to a harmful wind that afflicts the babies and causes them to fall sick (al-‘Aynī in *al-‘Alam-ul-Hayyib*).

4. Recorded by Abū Ya‘lā, Ibn-us-Sunnī, and others. Verified to be fabricated by al-Albānī (*aḍ-Ḍa’īfah* 321 and *Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 1174).

5. Recorded by al-Bayhaqī (in *Shu‘ab-ul-Īmān*). Verified to be fabricated by al-Albānī (*aḍ-Ḍa’īfah* 6121).

Since there is no reliable evidence for calling *athān* or *iqāmah* for a newborn, both acts are considered *bid'ah* and should be avoided.

7. PROTECTING THE BABY FROM EVIL

How to Protect the Baby

We protect our children physically by safeguarding them from harmful objects and situations, and by supplying them with the necessary nourishment and means for their growth and development.

More importantly, we must supply our children with spiritual care and protection. This includes regular application of *ruqyahs* (discussed below), in addition to maintaining our daily *athkār* (extolments), hoping that Allāh (ﷻ) will then protect us, our children, and other beloved ones.

DO NOT GIVE SATAN FOOD OR LODGING

Pronouncing Allāh's name is to say, "بِسْمِ اللَّهِ—*bism Illāh*—with Allāh's Name". This is an affirmation that what we do is by Allāh's will, help, and protection.

Pronouncing Allāh's name upon entering the home, and over food, prevents the devils from entering that home or sharing in that food. Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا دَخَلَ الرَّجُلُ بَيْتَهُ، فَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ عِنْدَ دُخُولِهِ وَعِنْدَ طَعَامِهِ، قَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ: "لَا مَبِيَّتَ لَكُمْ، وَلَا عَشَاءَ." وَإِذَا دَخَلَ، فَلَمْ يَذْكُرِ اللَّهَ عِنْدَ دُخُولِهِ، قَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ: "أَدْرَكْتُمُ الْمَبِيَّتَ." وَإِذَا لَمْ يَذْكُرِ اللَّهَ عِنْدَ طَعَامِهِ، قَالَ: "أَدْرَكْتُمُ الْمَبِيَّتَ وَالْعَشَاءَ."»

«When a man pronounces Allāh's name upon entering his home and over his food, Satan tells his allies, "There is no lodging or food for you (in this house tonight)." But if that person enters his home

without pronouncing Allāh’s name, Satan says to his allies, “You have secured lodging.” And if he does not pronounce Allāh’s name over his food, Satan says, “You have secured both lodging and food.”¹

Particularly at night, we are urged to pronounce Allāh’s name as we close the outside doors. Jābir (رضي الله عنه) also reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا كَانَ جُنْحُ اللَّيْلِ، أَجِيفُوا الْأَبْوَابَ، وَادْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ،
فَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَا يَفْتَحُ بَابًا أَجِيفَ وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ.»

«When the night sets in, close the doors and pronounce Allāh’s name over them. Indeed, Satan does not open a closed door upon which Allāh’s Name was uttered.»²

Therefore, pronouncing Allāh’s name upon entering our home and over our meals provides protection for the entire household, including our babies, from Satan and his allies.

COVER ALL FOOD AT NIGHT

At night, we should cover our food and drinks, pronouncing Allāh’s name over them. Jābir (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا كَانَ جُنْحُ اللَّيْلِ، غَطُّوا الْجِرَارَ، وَأَوْكُوا الْقِرْبَ وَادْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ،
وَحَمَّرُوا الْأَيَّةَ وَلَوْ أَنْ تَعْرُضُوا عَلَيْهَا عُودًا، وَادْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّ
الشَّيْطَانَ لَا يَفْتَحُ عَلَقًا، وَلَا يَحِلُّ وَكَاءً، وَلَا يَكْشِفُ إِنَاءً.»

«When the night sets in, close large jars and tie the water skins, and pronounce Allāh’s name; and cover food vessels—even if only by placing a stick across their opening, and pronounce Allāh’s name.

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1. Recorded by Muslim (2018) and Abū Dāwūd.
 2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (3280, 3304, 3316, 5623-5624, 6295-6296), Muslim (2012-2013), and others.

Indeed, Satan does not open or uncover closed vessels.»¹

Jābir (رضي الله عنه) also reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«عَطُوا الْإِنَاءَ، وَأَوْكُوا السَّقَاءَ، فَإِنَّ فِي السَّنَةِ لَيْلَةً يَنْزِلُ فِيهَا وَبَاءٌ، لَا يَمُرُّ بِإِنَاءٍ
لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ غِطَاءٌ، أَوْ سِقَاءٍ لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ وَكَاءٌ، إِلَّا نَزَلَ فِيهِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ الْوَبَاءِ.»

«Cover your vessels and tie your water skins. Indeed, one night every year, a disease comes down (by Allāh's decree). Whenever this disease passes by an uncovered vessel or water skin, it descends into it.»²

Thus, we should never leave food uncovered during the night. Even if we have no cover other than a twig, we should use it rather than keep the food completely uncovered. Covering the food protects against insects, lizards, and other creatures that may bring harm into it. While we take these physical measures, we pronounce Allāh's (ﷻ) name, because everything is created by Him and is under His control. He (ﷻ) will then surely protect us and our offspring from diseases and other harms.

KEEP CHILDREN INDOORS AFTER SUNSET

When the sun sets, the children should be kept indoors to protect them from the night's evils. Jābir (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا كَانَ جُنْحُ اللَّيْلِ (أَوْ أَمْسَيْتُمْ) فَكُفُّوا صِبْيَانَكُمْ، فَإِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ
تَنْشُرُ حَبِئْتَهُنَّ، فَإِذَا ذَهَبَتْ سَاعَةٌ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَخَلَوْهُنَّ.»

«When the night sets in, restrain your children (from playing) until the crest of dusk recedes, because devils spread out during that time. When an hour of the night has passed, you may release

1. This is a part of the previous *hadith* recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

2. Recorded by Muslim (2014).

them.>¹

This *ḥadīth* indicates that there is a “peak time” in the evening for the spread of evil and harm, brought about by devils and *jinn*s. This peak-time extends for one hour, starting from sunset. Since children are especially vulnerable, they should then be restrained from playing outdoors. After this hour has passed, the children may be released and allowed a brief time of playing before sleep.

It should be noted that the “restraining” is required for children who play on the street or away from their parents’ observation. It is not required for children playing indoors or in their home’s backyard or garden that does not contain harmful objects.²

ULTIMATE PROTECTION IS FROM ALLĀH

We should always remember that, regardless of how good our schemes to protect our children from all harm are, they can sometimes fail miserably and inexplicably. This is because the ultimate protection is only from Allāh (ﷻ). We should show Him true reliance and trust in order to deserve His protection.

This is why we pronounce Allāh’s (ﷻ) name in the various situations that we discussed above. In addition, we should consistently maintain our daily extolments, and should apply *ruqyahs* to seek His absolute protection. This is discussed in the next section.

Protection with *Ruqyahs* and Extolments

DEFINITION AND RULING OF RUQYAH

Ruqyah consists of words said or written in the form of *du‘ā’* or *ṭhikr* for the purpose of protection or cure. It is sometimes accompanied with other actions, such as blowing or wiping over the thing to which it is applied.

People from most cultures and religions use various forms of

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1. This also is a part of the previous *ḥadīth* recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
 2. This is expressed by Shaykh Muḥammad al-‘Uthaymīn (رحمته) in *Fatāwā Tata‘allaqu bil-Atfāl* (Verdicts Relating to Children)—available on the Internet.

ruqyahs. Most of those *ruqyahs* contain magic, *shirk*, senseless words, lies, etc. In English, a *ruqyah* is called a spell, charm, incantation, and so on.

The Prophet (ﷺ) warned against using *ruqyahs* that contain *shirk*. ‘Awf Bin Mālik al-Ashja’ī (رضي الله عنه) reported that he asked the Prophet (ﷺ), “O Allāh’s Messenger, we used to apply *ruqyahs* during *Jāhiliyyah*. What do you think of this?” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied:

«اعْرِضُوا عَلَيَّ رُقَاكُمْ، لَا بَأْسَ بِالرُّقَى مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ فِيهِ شِرْكٌ.»

⟨Present your *ruqyahs* to me. There is nothing wrong with *ruqyahs* as long as they do not involve *shirk*.⟩¹

There are some important conditions that must be satisfied in a *ruqyah* to be permissible. They were summarized by Ibn Hajar (رحمته الله) as follows:

“The ‘*ulamā*’ unanimously agree that an acceptable *ruqyah* must satisfy three conditions:

1. It should be with Allāh’s words (Qur’ān) or using His names and attributes.
2. It should be in Arabic or of an intelligible meaning.
3. One must believe that it does not have an independent power by itself, but by Allāh (ﷻ).”²

BEST RUQYAHS

It is best to apply *ruqyahs* that are reported in the *Sunnah*. This includes specific portions of the *Qur’ān*, such as *al-Fātiḥah* (1:1-7), *āyat-ul-Kursī* (2:255), and the last three *sūrahs* (112, 113, 114). It also includes other authentic supplications seeking Allāh’s help and protection.

1. Recorded by Muslim (2200), Ibn Hībbān, and others.
 2. *Faṭḥ-ul-Bārī* 10:240 (under 5735).

RUQYAH WITH AL-FĀTIHAH

Al-Fātiḥah is the opening and most important *sūrah* of the Qur'ān. It contains great praises of the Lord of lords (ﷻ), and expresses utmost submission to Him:

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝۱ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝۲ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝۳ مَلِكِ ۝۴ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ۝۵ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝۶ اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝۷ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝۸﴾ الفاتحة

«With the Name of Allāh, the Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy. All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of the worlds, the Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy, and Master of the Day of Judgment. It is You (O Allāh) that we worship, and it is You that we ask for help. Guide us to the Straight Path—the path of those whom You have blessed, and not of those who have been condemned (by You), nor of the misguided.»¹

Al-Fātiḥah is a most powerful *ruqyah*. The *Ṣaḥābah* understood this and applied it effectively, and the Prophet (ﷺ) approved their practice.

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported that he was traveling with a number of other *Ṣaḥābah*. They stopped one night by the dwellings of a bedouin tribe who refused to host them or give them food. The chief of that tribe was then stung (by a snake or scorpion) and his people were unable to treat him. They sought help from the nearby wayfarers, and Abū Sa'īd said, “By Allāh, I can perform *ruqyah*. But since you refused to host us, I will not apply it until you pledge to give us a gift.” The bedouins agreed to give them a flock of thirty sheep, and he then started blowing (with light spit) on the chief's sting and reading *al-Fātiḥah*. The chief was immediately cured, and stood and walked as though nothing had happened to him. The *Ṣaḥābah* then received the

1. *Al-Fātiḥah* 1:1-7.

pledged sheep and said to each other, “Let us not divide them until we reach the Prophet (ﷺ) and tell him what happened.” Upon reaching Madīnah, they went to the Prophet (ﷺ) and told him their story. The Prophet (ﷺ) then said:

«وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ أَنَّهَا رُقِيَّةٌ؟ قَدْ أَصَبْتُمْ! افْسِمُوا وَاضْرِبُوا لِي مَعَكُمْ سَهْمًا.»

«How did you know that it (*al-Fātiḥah*) is a *ruqyah*? You have done well! So, divide the sheep among you, and allot a share to me.»¹

Ibn ul-Qayyim (رحمته) said:

“The superiority of the Lord of the worlds’ speech over other speeches is like Allāh’s superiority over His creation. His speech contains complete cure, benevolent protection, guiding light, and prevalent mercy. If this speech were to be sent down over a mountain, the mountain would collapse from its greatness and glory ... So how about the *Fātiḥah* of the Book? Nothing comparable to it was revealed in the Qur’ān, Tawrah (Torah), (Injīl) Gospel, or Zabūr (Psalms). It includes the meanings present in all of Allāh’s books ... A *sūrah* with these qualities is worthy of being used as a cure to all diseases and as antidote for poisonous bites.”²

RUQYAH WITH SŪRAT UL-BAQARAH

Sūrat ul-Baqarah at large is an important *ruqyah* for protection against Satan and his evil. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَا تَجْعَلُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ مَقَابِرَ، إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنْفِرُ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ الَّذِي تُقْرَأُ فِيهِ سُورَةُ الْبَقَرَةِ.»

«Do not turn your homes into graveyards (by not reciting Qur’ān). Indeed, Satan is dispelled from a

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (2276, 5007, 5736, 5749), Muslim (2201), and others.
2. *Zād ul-Ma’ād* 4:137-138.

room in which *sūrat-ul-Baqarah* is recited.)¹

RUQYAH WITH ĀYAT-UL-KURSĪ

Āyat-ul-Kursī is the best *āyah* of the entire Qur’ān. It contains a great description and praise of Allāh’s power, knowledge, and other sublime qualities:

﴿اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ﴾ البقرة

«Allāh—there is no (true) god except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of all (the creation). Neither drowsiness nor sleep can overtake Him. He owns all that is in the heavens and on earth. Who can ever intercede with Him without His permission? He knows what is ahead of them (the creation’s future) and what is behind them (their past), while they do not encompass any of His knowledge except what He wills. His Seat² extends over the heavens and earth, and their upkeep does not tire Him. He is the most High, the Great.»³

Ubayy Bin Ka’b (رضي الله عنه) narrated that he had a harvest of dates that was unexplainably shrinking every day. Keeping a close watch over it, he found the thief to be a *jinni* that resembled an adolescent boy, but with hands similar to a dog’s paws. Ubayy had a brief discourse with this *jinni*, and then asked him, “What would protect us from your kind?” The *jinni* replied:

1. Recorded by Muslim (780), at-Tirmithī, and others.
2. The seat is a great thing that Allāh created to demonstrate His power and glory—though He has no need for it, just as He has no need for anything else He created. The Seat is much smaller than the Throne (see the Author’s: “Knowing Allāh”).
3. *Al-Baqarah* 2:255.

“This *āyah* from *Sūrat-ul-Baqarah*, ‘*Allāhu lā ilāha illā huw-al-ḥayy-ul-qayyūm*,’¹—he who reads it in the evening will be protected from us until the morning; and he who reads it in the morning will be protected from us until the evening.”

In the morning, Ubayy came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and told him about this. The Prophet (ﷺ) told him, «أَمَّا إِنَّهُ قَدْ صَدَقَكَ وَهُوَ كَذُوبٌ.»² «Surely, he told you the truth although he is a liar.»²

RUQYAH WITH AL-MU‘AWWITHĀT

The *mu‘awwithāt* (the protecting ones), presented below, are the last three *sūrahs* of the *Qur’ān*. The last two of them, called the two *mu‘awwithāt*, carry a clear meaning of *ruqyah*. *Sūrat-ul-Ikhlāṣ* (112) does not explicitly carry such meaning, but contains concise and strong words of praise for Allāh (ﷻ), making it an important introduction to the succeeding two *sūrahs*.

﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ﴿٢﴾ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿٣﴾ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ﴿٤﴾﴾ الإخلاص

«Say, “He is Allāh, the One and Unique. Allāh, the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor was He born. There is no equal to Him.”»³

﴿قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ﴿١﴾ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ﴿٢﴾ وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ ﴿٣﴾ وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ ﴿٤﴾ وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ﴿٥﴾﴾ الْفَلَقِ

«Say, “I seek refuge with the Lord of daybreak, from the evil of what He created, and from the evil of darkness when it settles, and from the evil of the blowers in knots, and from the evil of an envier

1. *Al-Baqarah* 2:255.

2. Recorded by an-Nasā’ī and at-Ṭabarānī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ut-Targhīb* 662).

3. *Al-Ikhlāṣ* 112:1-4.

when he envies.”»¹

﴿قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ﴿١﴾ مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ﴿٢﴾ إِلَهِ النَّاسِ ﴿٣﴾ مِنْ شَرِّ
الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ﴿٤﴾ الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ ﴿٥﴾ مِنَ
الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ ﴿٦﴾﴾ النَّاسِ

«Say, “I seek refuge with the Lord of the people, the King of the people, the God of the people, from the evil of a retreating whisperer, who whispers (evil) in the breasts of the people, (whether he is) from among *jinn*s or the people.”»²

Khubayb (رضي الله عنه) reported that he went with other men on a dark night seeking the Prophet (ﷺ) to lead them in prayer. When they found him, the Prophet (ﷺ) said to Khubayb, «قُلْ.» «Say.» Not knowing what to say, Khubayb remained silent. The Prophet (ﷺ) repeated his command, «قُلْ.» «Say.» Again, Khubayb remained silent. On the third time, Khubayb said, “O Allāh’s Messenger, what should I say?” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied:

﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾ وَالْمَعُودَتَيْنِ، حِينَ تَمْسِي وَحِينَ تَصْبِحُ،
ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ، تَكْفِيكَ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ.﴾

«Say “*Qul huwa 'Llāhu aḥad*” and the two *mu'awwithāt* three times in the evening and in the morning. This would protect you from all (harmful) things.»³

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported about the Prophet (ﷺ):

كَانَ إِذَا أَوَى إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ جَمَعَ كَفَيْهِ ثُمَّ نَفَثَ فِيهِمَا فَقَرَأَ فِيهِمَا ﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ

1. *Al-Falaq* 113:1-5.

2. *An-Nās* 114:1-6.

3. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ut-Targhīb* 649).

أَحَدٌ ﴿﴾ وَ﴿قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ﴾ ﴿﴾ وَ﴿قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ﴾ ﴿﴾ ثُمَّ يَمَسُّحُ بِهَا مَا اسْتَطَاعَ مِنْ جَسَدِهِ يَبْدَأُ بِهَا عَلَى رَأْسِهِ وَوَجْهِهِ وَمَا أَقْبَلَ مِنْ جَسَدِهِ يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ. فَلَمَّا اشْتَكَى (تُقَلُّ) كَانَ يَأْمُرُنِي أَنْ أَفْعَلَ ذَلِكَ بِهِ.

“When he went to bed, he would bring the palms of both hands together and blow into them while reciting “*Qul huwa 'Llāhu aḥad*”, “*Qul a'ūthu bi rabb-il-falāq*”, and “*Qul a'ūthu bi rabb in-Nās*”¹. He would then rub with them whatever he could reach of his body, starting with his head, face, and the front part of his body. He would do this three times. When he was in his (final) illness, he asked me to do this for him.”²

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَتَعَوَّذُ مِنْ عَيْنِ الْجَانِّ وَعَيْنِ الْإِنْسِ فَلَمَّا نَزَلَتِ الْمُعَوَّذَاتَانِ أَحَدَهُمَا وَتَرَكَ مَا سِوَى ذَلِكَ.

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to seek (Allāh’s) protection from *jinn*s and the human eye (with various *ruqyahs*)—until the two *mu'awwithāt*³ were revealed. After that, he adhered to them and left all else.”⁴

RUQYAHS FROM THE SUNNAH

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Jibrīl (عليه السلام) visited the Prophet (ﷺ) while sick⁵ and said to him, «يَا مُحَمَّدُ، اشْتَكَيْتَ؟» **O Muḥammad, are you ailing?** He replied, «نَعَمْ.» **Yes.** Jibrīl then said:

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1. *Sūrah*s 112, 113, and 114 (cited above).
2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (4439, 5016, 5735, 5748, 5751), Muslim (2192), and others.
3. *Sūrah*s 113 and 114 (cited above).
4. Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāh* 4563).
5. Since the *Ṣaḥābah* could not normally see Jibrīl (عليه السلام), Abū Sa'īd (رضي الله عنه) must be reporting here something that the Prophet (ﷺ) had told him.

«بِسْمِ اللَّهِ أَرْقِيكَ، مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ يُؤْذِيكَ، مِنْ شَرِّ كُلِّ نَفْسٍ،
أَوْ عَيْنٍ حَاسِدٍ، اللَّهُ يَشْفِيكَ، بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ أَرْقِيكَ.»

«*Bism-illāhi arqīk, min kulli shay'in yu'thīk, min sharri kulli nafsin aw 'ayni ḥāsīd. Allāh yashfīk. Bism-illāhi arqīk—*

With Allāh's Name I shelter you, from all that ails you, from the evil of any soul, and that of the envious eye. May Allāh cure you; with Allāh's Name I shelter you.¹

'Uthmān Bin 'Affān (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ يَقُولُ فِي صَبَاحِ كُلِّ يَوْمٍ وَمَسَاءِ كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ: "بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ" ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ لَمْ يَضُرَّهُ شَيْءٌ.»

«Nothing would harm a 'abd who says three times every morning and evening:

“*Bism-illāh-il-lathī lā yaḍurru ma'-asmihī shay'un fil-arḍi walā fis-samā'i wahuw-as-samī-ul-'alīm—*

(I shelter myself) with the name of Allāh, the One with whose name nothing can cause harm on earth or in the heaven. He is the Hearer, the Knower.”²

RUQYAH AGAINST THE EVIL EYE

Envy is one of the greatest evils among Allāh's creation. It is what caused Satan to rebel against Allāh's (ﷺ) command. And it is what causes people to make plots and inflict wars against each other.

One of envy's ugly manifestations is the evil eye. This can happen when an envious person observes something with envy or

1. Recorded by Muslim (2186), at-Tirmithī, and others. A similar *ḥadīth*, reported by 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها), is recorded by Muslim (2185).
2. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ut-Targhib* 655).

awe; that look can cause an immediate harm or damage to that thing (with Allāh's permission).

Asmā' Bint 'Umays (رضي الله عنها) narrated that she said to the Prophet (ﷺ), "O Allāh's Messenger, the children of Ja'far are easily afflicted with the evil eye. Should I seek *ruqyah* for them?" He replied:

«نَعَمْ، فَإِنَّهُ لَوْ كَانَ شَيْءٌ سَابَقَ الْقَدَرَ لَسَبَقَتْهُ الْعَيْنُ.»

«Yes, if anything were to race *Qadar* (Allāh's decree), it would be the evil eye.»¹

'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported:

«كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ يَأْمُرُنِي (يَأْمُرُ) أَنْ أُسْتَرِّقِيَ مِنَ الْعَيْنِ.»

"The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded us to seek *ruqyah* from the (evil) eye."²

Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) saw in her house a young girl with a yellowish face, so he said:

«اسْتَرْقُوا لَهَا، فَإِنَّهَا تَنْظَرَةٌ.»

«Seek *ruqyah* for her, because she is struck with an (evil) eye.»³

RUQYAHS FOR CHILDREN

Children are especially vulnerable to evil eyes, harmful insects, and devils. Because of this, the Prophet (ﷺ) applied *ruqyah* to children and urged others to do the same, as we saw above in the case of Ja'far's children and in Umm Salamah's *ḥadīth*, and as in the following reports.

'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) heard a little child crying, so he said:

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1. Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāh* 4560).
 2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5738), Muslim (2195), and others.
 3. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5739), al-Ḥākim, and others.

«مَا لَصَبِيَّكُمْ هَذَا يَبْكِي؟ فَهَلَّا اسْتَرْقَيْتُمْ لَهُ مِنْ الْعَيْنِ؟»

«Why is this child crying? Wouldn't you seek to treat him with *ruqyah* from the evil eye?»¹

Allāh's complete words are His commands and decree that never err; they are most truthful, just, wise, and powerful. There is a number of *ḥadīths* relating that the Prophet (ﷺ) performed *ruqyah* with Allāh's complete words.

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) sought Allāh's protection for his grandchildren, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, with the following supplication:

«أُعِيذُكُمْ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّةِ، مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ وَهَامَّةٍ، وَمِنْ كُلِّ عَيْنٍ لَامَّةٍ.»

«*U'ithukumā bikalimāt-illāh-it-tāmmah, min kulli shayṭānin wa-hāmmah, wa-min kulli 'aynin lāmmah—*

I shelter both of you with Allāh's complete words from every devil and harmful creature, and from every envious eye.»

The Prophet (ﷺ) further informed:

«هَكَذَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ يُعَوِّذُ إِسْحَقَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ.»

«This is how Ibrāhīm used to seek protection for Ismā'il and Ishāq (رضي الله عنهما).»²

And Allāh (ﷻ) tells us that upon delivering Maryam, her mother sought Allāh's protection for her and her offspring from Satan:

﴿فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذَرَيْتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ﴿٣١﴾﴾ آل عمران

«When she (Maryam's mother) delivered her, she

1. Recorded by Aḥmad. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 1048).
2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (3371), Ibn Ḥibbān, and others..

said, “My Lord, I have delivered a female—And Allāh was most Knowing of what she delivered—and the male is not like the female. And I have named her Maryam. And I seek Your protection for her and her progeny from Satan, the outcast.”»¹

Wrong Forms of Protection

In our ongoing pursuit of protecting our offspring from harm, we should strictly avoid practices that will not benefit them and will even, potentially, harm them. In this section, we highlight some of those practices that are often performed by the ignorant.

AVOIDING AMULETS AND TALISMANS

The supplications mentioned above should be seriously and sincerely uttered by the appropriate individuals.

Some people write their *ruqyahs* on paper or engrave them on gold and silver, thereby forming amulets that they hang on babies’ chests or around their necks. This brings a number of harms, such as the following:

1. This would not produce the desired protection, because it is not done as instructed in the Sunnah.
2. This is a *bid’ah* because it was not taught or practiced by the Prophet (ﷺ) or his companions (رضي الله عنهم).
3. This may constitute *shirk* because the people who use these amulets tend to believe that they have an independent protective power.
4. This ultimately leads ignorant people to use amulets containing magical terms and senseless words made up by devils and soothsayers. This, indeed, is an awful level of deviation and *shirk*.

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān (بارك الله فيه) said:

1. *Al ‘Imrān* 3:36.

“It is not permissible to hang protective charms or (Qur’ānic) writings on adults or children. All of this is classified under the *tamīmahs* (amulets) that the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited. If those amulets contain nonsense, obscurities, words of unknown meaning, names of *jinn*s or devils, and so on, then they are unanimously prohibited because they contradict true faith and surely lead to *shirk*.

If those amulets contain Qur’ān and authentic supplications (only), they are still prohibited according to the most correct opinion of the ‘*ulamā*’. The reason for this prohibition is that hanging them would open the door for hanging the other prohibited (*shirkī*) amulets. Additionally, hanging some of the Qur’ān on a baby shows disrespect of the Qur’ān ...”¹

AVOIDING BLUE BEADS, HORSESHOES, AND OTHER CHARMS OF SHIRK

It is prohibited to use for protection blue beads, horseshoes, eye images, or other symbols and charms that some ignorant people use, thinking that they have protective powers. Using them is a serious act of *shirk* that the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited as we saw earlier.

Ibn Mas‘ūd (رضي الله عنه) reported that he saw a string tied around his wife’s neck for *ruqyah*. He cut it off her neck and said:

«إِنَّ آلَ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ لَا غِنَاءَ عَنِ الشَّرِكِ.»

“Indeed, the family of ‘Abdullāh (Bin Mas‘ūd) have no need for *shirk*.”

Then he added that he heard Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«إِنَّ الرُّقَى وَالْتَمَائِمَ وَالتَّوَلَةَ شِرْكٌ.»

«Indeed, (incorrect) *ruqyahs*, amulets, and *tiwalahs*²

1. *Al-Muntaqā Min Fatāwā Şāliḥ al-Fawzān* 1:166-168.

2. Charm that a woman uses to maintain her husband’s love.

are forms of *shirk*.)”¹

‘Īsā Bin ‘Abd-ir-Raḥmān Bin Abī Laylā reported that he went to visit Abū Ma‘bid ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Ukaym al-Juhanī (ﷺ) who was afflicted with redness². ‘Īsā suggested to him, “Why do you not hang an amulet (for cure)?” Abū Ma‘bid responded, “Death would be easier than this. I heard Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«مَنْ تَعَلَّقَ شَيْئًا وَكَلَّ إِلَيْهِ.»

‘Anyone who hangs something (for protection) will be yielded to that thing.’³

This means that such a person will not get the desired protection because Allāh (ﷻ) will yield him to that thing from which he sought help without right.

NO NEED TO MAKE *DU‘Ā* OR *THIKR* ON BEHALF OF THE BABY

Some parents reason that, since their baby is still incapable of saying *du‘ā* and *thikr* on its own, it would be good that they say them for it. Thus when they finish feeding it, they say, “*Al-ḥamdu lillāh.*” They say the same when the baby sneezes. They say the supplications of going to sleep and rising from sleep on behalf of the baby, and so on.

This practice shows excessive concern and may classify as *bid‘ah* for two reasons. First, we have no knowledge that the *ṣaḥābah* or their true followers did this. Second, the supplications and *ruqyahs* that we cited earlier were recommended by the Prophet (ﷺ) himself, and they should provide the necessary protection for the baby.

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1. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 2972 and *Ṣaḥīḥ-ut-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb* 3457).
 2. This is a disease that produces swelling and redness in the face and other parts of the body.
 3. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmithī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ut-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb* 3456).

ELIMINATING THE “DETERRENTS” OF GOOD

There are many “deterrents” that divert or reduce the effect of *ruqyahs* and supplications. Such deterrents should be removed from the presence of children at all times, especially during their sleep. “Deterrents of good” include music, images, and all other acts of disobedience that may be committed in a child’s presence. Some of those deterrents will be discussed in the next chapter.

8. DETERRENTS OF GOOD

Why It Does Not Work

Many concerned parents indicate that they did all what they could to protect their child from harm and evil, such as reading authentic *du'ā's* and applying authentic *ruqyahs*, but illnesses and accidents continue to afflict the child. Thus they wonder if the child is under a black-magic spell or is possessed by *jinn*s.

When we inquire from those parents about the environment they have established for their child, we often find that it contains a number of wrongs that constitute strong deterrents for the acceptance of *ruqyahs*, thereby aiding harm and evil in attacking their child.

Among those deterrents are images, music, bells, television, and other acts of disobedience that are committed or maintained in the child's proximity. In this chapter, we discuss a few common deterrents.

Dolls and Other Images

MODERN CHILDREN'S "TOYDOM"

It has become universally acceptable, or even recommended, to have images of all forms, colors, and sizes on children's clothes, beds, walls, and so on.

A large part of the children's toys are personified after animals and fictional characters. We see Micky Mouse, Goofy, Donald Duck, Bugs Bunny, Little Mermaid, Lion King, and other cartoon characters decorating and populating our children's world.

Our children's rooms, walls, shelves, and beds are filled with dolls and stuffed animals. Teddy bears are accepted as legitimate longtime companions for our children, with their companionship often extending into adolescence and beyond.

PROHIBITION OF IMAGES IN ISLĀM

In this section, “image” or “picture” means a two-dimensional painting or photograph, or a three-dimensional statue or figure, made to resemble humans, animals, or fictional creatures.

Making images is a major sin in Islām. A Muslim should not make an image or help in making it unless it fulfills a legitimate need that cannot be fulfilled otherwise.

‘Ā’ishah and Ibn ‘Umar (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَصْنَعُونَ هَذِهِ الصُّورَ يُعَذَّبُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، يُقَالُ لَهُمْ: «أَحْيُوا مَا خَلَقْتُمْ.»»

◀Indeed, those who make these images will be punished on Resurrection Day and will be told, “Give life to what you created.”▶¹

Ibn Mas‘ūd and ‘Ā’ishah (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الْمُصَوِّرُونَ (الَّذِينَ يُضَاهَوْنَ بِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ).»

◀Indeed, the people with the most punishment on Resurrection Day are the images makers—those who emulate what Allāh created.▶²

The relevant part of an image that leads to its prohibition is the head, because it reflects the actual resemblance. Ibn ‘Abbās (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الصُّورَةُ الرَّأْسُ، فَإِذَا قُطِعَ الرَّأْسُ فَلَيْسَ بِصُورَةٍ.»

◀The (prohibited) image is the head. When the head is removed, it is not an image anymore.▶³

IMAGES DRIVE THE ANGELS AWAY

In addition to the great punishment promised for those who make

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (2105, 3224, 5181, 5951, 5957, 5961, 7557-7558), Muslim (2107-2108), and others.
2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5950, 5954, 6109), Muslim (2107, 2109), and others.
3. Recorded by al-Bayhaqī (in *al-Kubrā*), al-Isma‘īlī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*as-Sahīhah* 1921 and *Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi’* 3864).

images, there is an immediate punishment for those who display images: They lose the company of the angels of mercy who would otherwise engulf the believers with help and protection. These angels do not like the proximity of the images that represent disobedience to Allāh (ﷺ).

‘Ā’ishah, Maymūnah, Abū Ṭalḥah, Abū Hurayrah, and other companions (رضي الله عنهم) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ لَا تَدْخُلُ بَيْتًا فِيهِ صُورَةٌ.»

«Indeed, the angels do not enter a house in which there is an image.»¹

Images that are on display in a certain room drive the angels of mercy out of that room. This gives Satan and his devils easier access to the houses, bodies, and lives of people living there.

PERMISSION OF SOME DOLLS AND TOY ANIMALS

Excluded from the prohibition of images are simple dolls that are intended to teach children certain skills. ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) had such dolls during the early period of her marriage, and the Prophet (ﷺ) did not disapprove them. She reported:

كُنْتُ أَلْعَبُ بِالْبَنَاتِ عِنْدَ النَّبِيِّ (ﷺ)، وَكَانَ لِي صَوَاحِبٌ يَلْعَبْنَ مَعِي، فَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ﷺ) إِذَا دَخَلَ يَتَقَمَّعَنَّ مِنْهُ، فَيُسِرُّهُنَّ إِلَيَّ فَيَلْعَبْنَ مَعِي.

“I used to play with dolls, and some of my friends used to play with me. When Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) came home, they would shy away from him, but he would tell them to go back and play with me.”²

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) also narrated that when Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) returned from the battle of Tabūk or Khaybar, she had some dolls in her room in an alcove covered with a curtain. He asked, «مَا هَذَا يَا

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1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (2105, 3224-3227, 5181, 5949, 5957-5958, 5960-5961), Muslim (2104-2107, 2112), and others.
 2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (6130), Muslim (2440), and others.

«عَائِشَةُ؟» **What is this, O 'Ā'ishah?** She replied, "These are my dolls." He saw in their midst a horse with leather wings and asked, «مَا هَذَا الَّذِي أَرَى وَسَطَهُنَّ؟» **What is this that I see in their midst?** She said, "A horse." He asked, «وَمَا هَذَا الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ؟» **And what is that thing on it?** She replied, "Two wings." He exclaimed, «فَرَسٌ لَهُ جَنَاحَانِ؟» **A horse with two wings?** She said, "Did you not know that Sulaymān's horses had wings?" So he smiled until she could see his molar teeth.¹

CONTROVERSY REGARDING PHOTOGRAPHY

Since photography was only invented in recent times, there are no texts in the Sunnah directly applicable to it. Contemporary 'ulamā', therefore, differ in regard to the ruling of photographing humans and animals.

Those who prohibit it² base their opinion on that a photographic image is still an image according to both commonsense and *shar'* and, hence, the ruling of images applies to it.

Those who allow it,³ on the other hand, base their opinion on that a photographic image does not involve "emulation of Allāh's creation", because it is a mere projection of light and shadows of beings that Allāh (ﷻ) has created. Its ruling, therefore, depends on the nature of the particular image: it is prohibited if it represents *shirk* or sinning, otherwise it is permitted.

Both of the above two groups of 'ulamā', however, agree on the prohibition of displaying images and hanging them.⁴

1. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥu Abī Dāwūd* 4123, *al-Mishkāh* 3256).

2. Such as: al-Albānī, Ibn Bāz, and al-Fawzān.

3. Such as: al-Quraḏāwī, 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān 'Abd-ul-Khāliq, and Ibn 'Uthaymīn in one of his two opinions in this regard.

4. Good reviews of this are available at the following links: islamqa.info/ar/170967, www.startimes.com/f.aspx?t=32835573, and islamqa.info/ar/101257.

CONCLUSION

From the above, we conclude the following:

1. **It is prohibited to make images of living beings.** This prohibition applies whether the images are of two or three dimensions. Photographs and videos are controversial and may be classified as doubtful. But since Muslims should beware of indulgence in doubtful matters, they should avoid excessiveness in taking or sharing photographs of babies or other family members without a demonstrated benefit.
2. **It is prohibited to display images.** Many Muslims ignorantly hang family pictures on their walls or display them on desks and dressers. In addition to driving the angels away, this often results in over-admiring the images, which can easily lead to *shirk*. We should be careful to hide away all pictures, even those of newspapers, when they are not in use.
3. **The prohibition is emphasized in the case of images that make anti-Islāmic propaganda or call to corruption.** We see that modern toys and dolls, mostly made by non-Muslims, project and emphasize cultures and ideologies alien to Islām. A common example is: Barbie dolls—female dolls shaped after the West’s distorted understanding of how a woman should look.
4. As an exception to (1) and (2) above, **it is permissible to make children’s toys and dolls** that resemble living beings. However, those toys should be **hand-crafted** in such a way as to serve the purpose of teaching sewing, decoration, and other house-keeping activities. This exception should not be widened to encompass today’s images and toys that are made to closely match Allāh’s creation. By Islāmic standards, many of today’s toys are statues that should be removed from a Muslim’s house.
5. In analogy to Point 4, **it is permissible to make images that**



are needed for legitimate purposes that cannot be otherwise fulfilled. This includes passport and identity pictures, images needed for instructional purposes, and so on.

We would never want to deprive our children of the company and care of the angels of mercy. Yet, this is exactly what happens when we fill their rooms and our houses with images and statues.

FATWĀS CONCERNING IMAGES ON CLOTHES

Shaykh Muḥammad Bin Ṣāliḥ Bin ‘Uthaymīn (ﷺ) said:

“The ‘*ulamā*’ say that it is prohibited to dress a baby with anything that is prohibited for adults to wear. Since garments with images are prohibited for adults, they are likewise prohibited for babies. The Muslims should boycott those clothes and shoes (with images) so that the people of evil and corruption would not attack us (Muslims) from this direction.”¹

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān (بارك الله فيه) said:

“It is not permissible to buy clothes that have images of beings with souls, such as humans, animals, and birds. Making and using images are prohibited because of the numerous *ḥadīths* prohibiting this and strongly warning against it. The Prophet (ﷺ) cursed those who make images and indicated that they will be severely punished on Resurrection Day. Thus it is not allowed to wear a garment with images or make a baby wear it. One should buy clothes that do not have images, which are available in plenty—all praise is due to Allāh.”²

FATWĀS CONCERNING DOLLS

Shaykh Muḥammad Bin Ṣāliḥ Bin ‘Uthaymīn (ﷺ) said:

“It is surely permissible for little girls to play with

1. *Majmū‘ Fatāwā wa-Rasā’ il Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn* 2:275.

2. *Al-Muntaqā Min Fatāwā Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān* 3:339-340.

dolls that have no clear features. This would be similar to the dolls with which ‘Ā’ishah (ﷺ) played. However, if a doll has clearly distinctive features making it resemble a human being—especially if it also has motion or voice—I would have a reservation in my heart against it, because it would then be clearly competing with Allāh’s creation ...

It is prohibited to make dolls in a way resembling Allāh’s creation. This would be considered of the *taṣwīr* (image-making) that is, without a doubt, prohibited ...

As for purchasing such dolls, I urge that we instead buy toys that have no images, such as bicycles, toy cars, cranes, and so on.”¹

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al- Fawzān (بارك الله فيه) said:

“It is not permissible to hold possession of images of beings with souls, except for the necessary ones such as photographs of identity cards, driving licenses, and so on. All other images are not permissible to possess—not even children’s toys or images used for teaching them. The reason for this is the general texts prohibiting making images or using them.

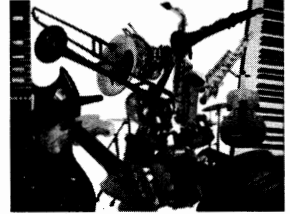
There are many children’s toys with no images. The opinion of those who permit using images for children’s toys is weak. They rely on the *ḥadīth* of ‘Ā’ishah’s (ﷺ) toys when she was young. However, some scholars say that this *ḥadīth* is abrogated by the later prohibition of making images. Others say that the images described in this *ḥadīth* are not like the images known today. They were made of rags and sticks and did not resemble an animal the way today’s images do. This is the more correct opinion, and Allāh knows

1. *Majmū’ Fatāwā wa-Rasā’il Ṣāliḥ al-’Uthaymīn* 2:277-278.

best. As for today's images, they precisely resemble animals—some of them even move like animals.”¹

Music

Some people believe that “classical” and soft music has a soothing effect on babies. Based on this non-Islāmic concept, music competes with images in filling the child's world. Music is played constantly in children's amusement parks, movies, and restaurants. Many of the babies' toys play music when touched, pressed, or hugged. Even infant toys such as rattles and swings play musical segments.



It is disappointing to see many Muslims adopt music as an innocent practice, making it an essential part of their children's life. This is an error that conflicts with authentic texts. Furthermore, there is a consensus among the early scholars of *Islām*, including the Four *Imāms*, that music is prohibited.

Anas, ‘Imrān, Abū Umāmah, ‘Alī, and Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَيَكُونَنَّ فِي هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ حَسْفٌ وَقَذْفٌ وَمَسْحٌ، وَذَلِكَ إِذَا شَرِبُوا الخُمُورَ، وَاتَّخَذُوا الْقَيْنَاتِ، وَضَرَبُوا بِالْمَعَازِفِ.»

«It will come to pass that there will be among the people of this *Ummah* earth-collapsing, stoning, and metamorphosis. That will be when they will (widely) drink intoxicants, keep female singers, and play on musical instruments.»²

Anas (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«صَوْتَانِ مَلْعُونَانِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ: مَزْمَارٌ عِنْدَ نِعْمَةٍ، وَرَنَّةٌ عِنْدَ مُصِيبَةٍ.»

1. *Al-Muntaqā Min Fatāwā Šālih al-Fawzān* 3:338-339.

2. Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Šaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 5467 & *aṣ-Šaḥīḥah* 2203).

⟨Two sounds are cursed (by Allāh) in this life and the hereafter: flute (music) played when a good fortune occurs, and wailing when a misfortune occurs.⟩¹

Shaykh Muḥammad Bin Ṣāliḥ Bin ‘Uthaymīn (رحمته) was asked about children’s games and educational programs that include some music. He replied:

“The prohibition of music is confirmed by what al-Bukhārī recorded from Abū Mālik al-Ash‘arī (رحمته) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَيَكُونَنَّ مِنْ أُمَّتِي أَقْوَامٌ يَسْتَحِلُّونَ الْحِرَّ وَالْحَرِيرَ وَالْحَمْرَ وَالْمَعَازِفَ.»

⟨There will be among (the people of) my *Ummah* those who will violate the prohibition of adultery, silk clothing (for men), intoxicants, and musical instruments.⟩²

... Therefore, it is prohibited to use such programs without removing the music.”³

Other Angel-Repellents

We saw above that images repel the angels of mercy from our homes. This is also true about dogs and bells—as we explain in this section.

Dogs

Some Muslims, in imitation of the non-Muslims, keep dogs as pets in their homes and around their children. The presence of dogs inside a house, however, drives the angels away from that house.



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1. Recorded by al-Bazzār, aḍ-Ḍiyā’-ul-Maqdisī, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ut-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb* 3527 and *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 427).
 2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5590) and others.
 3. *Fatāwā Tata’allaqu bil-Atfāl* (Verdicts Relating to Children)—widely available on the Internet.

‘Ā’ishah, Maymūnah, Abū Ṭalḥah, Ibn ‘Umar, and other companions (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ لَا تَدْخُلُ بَيْتًا فِيهِ كَلْبٌ أَوْ صُورَةٌ.»

⟨Indeed, the angels do not enter a house in which there is a dog or an image.⟩¹

BELLS & RINGING

Bells and ringing also repel the angels of mercy from our presence.



As for bells, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَا تَصْحَبُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ رُفْقَةً فِيهَا كَلْبٌ أَوْ جَرَسٌ.»

⟨The angels do not accompany travelers who have with them a dog or a bell.⟩²

And as for the ringing of bells, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) also reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الْجَرَسُ مَرَامِيرُ الشَّيْطَانِ.»

⟨The bell is (one of) Satan’s flutes.⟩³

Bunānah reported that she was with ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) when a young girl was brought in wearing an anklet with ringing bells. ‘Ā’ishah requested to either remove that girl from her presence or remove her bells. She then explained that she heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say:

«لَا تَدْخُلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ بَيْتًا فِيهِ جَرَسٌ.»

⟨The angels do not enter a house containing a bell.⟩⁴

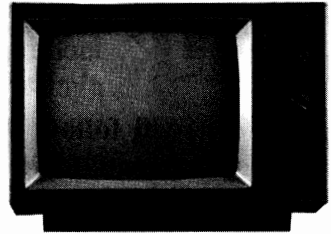
1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (3225, 3227, 5949, 5960), Muslim (2104-2107), and others.
2. Recorded by Muslim (2113), Abū Dāwūd, and others. There are similar reports from other *Ṣaḥābah*: ‘Ā’ishah, Umm Ḥabībah, Anas, and Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه).
3. Recorded by Muslim (2114), Abū Dāwūd, and others.
4. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ut-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb* 3120).

Similar to music, many babies' toys have bells or produce a ringing sound. This includes some infants' toys, such as rattles. Such toys must be eliminated to keep the angels of mercy around our babies.



Television

Television encompasses all of the evils that we covered earlier in this chapter, plus many others. From the moment that a baby can discern what it sees, the TV starts playing a major role, mostly destructive, in forming the child's personality and establishing the child's principles. It is not surprising then that we include it among the repellents of good and even consider it one of their worst.



Shaykh 'Abd-ul-'Azīz Bin Bāz (رحمته الله) said:

“With regard to television, it is a dangerous device. Its harmful effects are great—like those of the cinema, or even worse. From the research that has been written about it, and from the words of experts in Arab countries and elsewhere, we know enough to conclude that it is dangerous and very harmful to Islāmic beliefs, morals and the society's condition. The reason for this is that it includes presentations of bad morals, tempting scenes, immoral pictures, semi-nakedness, destructive speech, and disbelief. It encourages imitation of the disbelievers in conduct, way of dressing, and revering their (non-Muslim) leaders. (At the same time, it encourages) neglect of Islamic conduct and way of dressing, and belittling the Islāmic scholars and heroes. It damages their image by portraying them in a disdainful manner that makes the people despise and disregard them. It teaches cheating, stealing, plotting, and committing acts of

violence. Without doubt, anything that produces so much evil should be stopped and shunned ...”¹

Imitation of the Non-Muslims

Muslims nowadays perform many acts that are not from the guidance of Islām but are, rather, done in imitation of the non-Muslims. This was foretold by the Prophet (ﷺ), as Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported from him:

«لَتَتَّبِعَنَّ سَنَنَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ شِبْرًا شِبْرًا وَذِرَاعًا بِذِرَاعٍ،
حَتَّىٰ لَوْ دَخَلُوا جُحْرَ ضَبٍّ نَبِعْتُمُوهُمْ.»

«You will follow the ways of those who preceded you, a span for a span, and a cubit for a cubit. Even if they enter into a lizard’s hole, you would surely follow them!»

The Prophet (ﷺ) was asked, “Do you mean the Jews and Christians?” He replied, «فَمَنْ؟» «Who else?»²

Obviously, the Prophet (ﷺ) was not referring to matters of technology and science. The Muslims are required to benefit from any nation that can help them improve in such areas. However, they should be extremely careful, not allowing their imitation to extend to areas of culture and customs that may end up affecting their religion itself.

Thus, the worst form of imitation of the non-Muslims is in practices that involve *shirk* or are based on their deviant religious beliefs.

A Muslim who is bent on imitating the non-Muslims in many of their practices will end up imitating them even in religious matters. This may lead him to become, effectively, one of them. Ibn ‘Umar and Ḥuthayfah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

1. *Al-Fatāwā* 3:227.

2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (3456, 7320), Muslim (2669), and others.

«مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ.»

«Whoever imitates a people is one of them.»¹

Earlier in this chapter, we discussed a number of issues that reflected imitation of the non-Muslims. In what follows, we mention a few additional acts in which the Muslims specifically imitate the non-Muslims in areas relating to children.

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS

Celebrating birthdays is an act in which Muslims bluntly imitate non-Muslims without reason.² Birthdays have reached such a high degree of importance in some Muslims' lives that, to them, neglecting them is as bad as neglecting one of Islām's two annual 'īds!



By introducing innovations and wrong practices like birthdays into our children's lives, from their early childhood, we would be imparting to them life-long misconceptions and deviation.

Shaykh Muḥammad Bin Ṣāliḥ Bin 'Uthaymīn (رحمته الله) said:

“Celebrating a child's birthday is either an act of worship or a normal habitual practice.

1. If it is an act of worship then it is an innovation (*bid'ah*) in Allāh's religion. It is confirmed from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he warned against *bid'ahs* and indicated that they are acts of misguidance. He said:

«وَأَيُّكُمْ وَمُحَدَّثَاتِ الْأُمُورِ، فَإِنَّ كُلَّ بَدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلَّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ.»

«Beware of the (religious) matters that are innovated (by the people), for every innovated matter is an act of misguidance that (whoever

1. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Awsaṭ*). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi'* 6149 and *Irwa'-ul-Ghalīl* 1269).
2. For a detailed discussion of this subject, the reader is referred to the Author's, "Festivals & Celebrations in Islām".

initiated it) will reside in the Fire.》¹

2. If it is a habitual practice then it carries two violations:

a) It constitutes making a particular day *‘īd* when it is not. This exhibits disrespect of Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) by instituting a day of celebration without Allāh’s permission. When Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) arrived at al-Madīnah, he found that the Anṣār had two (annual) days of celebration. So he said:

«قَدِمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَكُمْ يَوْمَانِ تَلْعَبُونَ فِيهِمَا فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ. وَقَدْ
أَبَدَلَكُمْ اللَّهُ بِهِمَا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمَا: يَوْمَ النَّحْرِ وَيَوْمَ الْفِطْرِ.»

«When I came to Madīnah, you had two days that you celebrated from *Jāhiliyyah*. Indeed, Allāh has substituted them for you with two better days: the Day of *Fiṭr* (Breaking the Fast) and the Day of *Naḥr* (Sacrifice).»²

b) It constitutes imitating Allāh’s enemies, because this practice is not one of the Muslims’ practices but came to them from other nations. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ تَشَبَهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ.»

«Whoever imitates a people is one of them.»^{3,4}

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1. Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others from al-‘Irbāḍ Bin Sāriyah (رضي الله عنه). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 2455).
 2. Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others, from Anas (رضي الله عنه). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ-ul-Jāmi’* 4381).
 3. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and aṭ-Ṭabarānī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 1269).
 4. *Fatāwā Manār--ul-Islām* 1:43-45.

BABY SHOWER

A baby shower is a non-Muslim practice whereby a party is held for the expecting mother, usually before the baby's birth. It is typically a women-only party, arranged and hosted by a close friend of the family. Guests are expected to bring gifts of baby furniture, clothes, accessories, supplies, and toys. The expectant mother usually makes her wish-list of items and conveys it to the guests either directly or discreetly.



The simple fact that the baby shower is a non-Muslim practice makes it unacceptable for Muslims to hold or join. It is a celebration of a fetus that may or may not make it into this world alive. Also, this places undue burden on the guests who would feel pressured to buy whatever the mother requests.

In Islām, a baby is not celebrated until it is born healthy and alive. We discussed early in this book (p. 19) that it is permissible to give presents to families for their newborn baby. But those who wish to do so should do it outside the setting of this practice.

CLOTHING ISSUES

Nowadays, most clothing and bedding items are produced by non-Muslims with un-Islāmic concepts. They often contain images of sports or movie stars, musical instruments, cartoon characters, and so on. They might also carry writing and symbols that reflect un-Islāmic ideologies.

This makes it difficult to purchase baby clothes, blankets, and other items that are Islāmically acceptable.

Nevertheless, Muslim parents should be keen to oppose the trend of purchasing popular and the more readily available baby items. They should be prepared to conduct a more careful search for items that are Islāmically appropriate. If they receive as gifts items that are in violation of Islām, they should return or exchange them, or try their best to alter them in appropriate ways to make them Islāmically acceptable. This will also serve the

purpose of clearly emphasizing to their family and community that they indeed revere the teachings of Islām and abhor blind or ignorant imitation of the non-Muslims. Allāh will certainly grant blessing and happiness to the families of those who truly strive for His cause.

Shaykh Muḥammad Bin Ṣāliḥ Bin ‘Uthaymīn (رحمته الله) said:

“It is prohibited for a Muslim—whether male or female, young or old—to imitate the nonbelievers in clothing or other matters ... Muslims should have a strong personality that prevents them from being subsidiary to others. They should be the uppermost because their religion is the most sublime.”¹

Shaykh Bin ‘Uthaymīn (رحمته الله) was asked whether it is permissible to dress young children in clothing that exposes their thighs and other parts of their body. His reponse was:

“It is well known that *‘awrah* does not apply to children who are under seven years of age. Yet, getting children used to short and indecent clothing will make it easier for them to expose their *‘awrah* in the future ... Therefore, my opinion is that children should be prevented from wearing such clothes, and should only wear decent clothes to avoid such concerns.”²

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1. *Fatāwā Tata‘allaqu bil-Atfāl* (Verdicts Relating to Children)—widely available on the Internet.
 2. *Fatāwā Tata‘allaqu bil-Atfāl* (Verdicts Relating to Children)—widely available on the Internet.

9. OTHER BABY ISSUES

Cleanliness and Purity Issues

BABIES' URINE

Human urine is *najis* (impure/filthy). Its traces should be completely washed off if it falls on a garment, sheet, carpet, etc. There is one exception to this: the urine of a MALE baby whose main source of nourishment is breast-feeding. In this case, the location of urine may be merely sprayed with water without thorough washing.

‘Ā’ishah (ﷺ) reported:

(أُتِيَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ بِصَبِيِّ، فَبَالَ عَلَى ثَوْبِهِ، فَدَعَا بِمَاءٍ فَاتَّبَعَهُ إِيَّاهُ.)

“A male baby was brought to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), and the baby urinated on his garment. The Prophet (ﷺ) requested water and sprayed it over his garment.”¹

Umm Qays Bint Miḥṣan (ﷺ) reported:

(أَتَيْتُ بَابِنَ لِي صَغِيرٍ، لَمْ يَأْكُلِ الطَّعَامَ، إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ، فَأَجْلَسَهُ فِي حَجْرِهِ، فَبَالَ عَلَى ثَوْبِهِ، فَدَعَا بِمَاءٍ، فَنَضَّحَهُ وَلَمْ يَغْسِلْهُ.)

“I brought to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) a son of mine who had not eaten food (i.e., was only breast-feeding). He placed him on his lap, and the baby urinated on his garment. The Prophet (ﷺ) requested water and sprayed it over his garment without washing it.”²

‘Alī Bin Abī Ṭālib (ﷺ) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (222, 5468, 6002, 6355), Muslim (286), and others.
 2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (223, 5693), Muslim (287), and others.

«بَوْلُ الْغُلَامِ الرَّضِيعِ يُنْضَحُ، وَبَوْلُ الْجَارِيَةِ يُغَسَّلُ.»

⟨The urine of a breast-fed male baby is sprayed, and the urine of a breast-fed female baby is washed.⟩¹

There are several other authentic reports to the same meaning by other *Ṣaḥābah* (ﷺ).

Since spraying a baby's urine with water does not remove the urine, the above narrations indicate that the urine of a breast-fed male baby is *ṭāhir*. This is true as long as the baby's main nourishment comes from breast-feeding—although he might be fed other supportive foods. However, when breast-feeding becomes a minor portion of his diet his urine becomes *najis*.

The above discussion does not apply to a female baby—her urine is *najis* from birth.

The '*ulamā*' have various speculations regarding this distinction between male and female babies. But we did not find any of their opinions strong enough to present here.

On the other hand, some recent studies seem to indicate that there is indeed a chemical difference between the two urines, with the urine of a female baby containing 90% more bacteria than a male baby's when both are in their first few months of life.

Whether this is the actual explanation of this distinction or not, we still submit to Allāh's and His Messenger's (ﷺ) judgment—whether or not we fully understand its underlying wisdom.²

CARRYING BABIES DURING THE PRAYER

Abū Qatādah (ﷺ) reported:

رَأَيْتَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ النَّاسِ وَهُوَ حَامِلٌ عَلَى عُنُقِهِ أَمَامَةَ بِنْتُ رَبِيبٍ

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1. Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā'-'ul-Ghalīl* 166).
 2. This research was presented during the Eighth International Conference for the Scientific Miracles of the Qur'an and Sunnah, Kuwait 1427 (2006).

لَأَبِي الْعَاصِرِ بْنِ الرَّبِيعِ ، فَإِذَا قَامَ حَمَلَهَا وَإِذَا سَجَدَ وَضَعَهَا .

“I once saw Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) leading the people in prayer while carrying upon his shoulder (his granddaughter) Umāmah, Zaynab’s daughter from Abū al-‘Aṣ Bin ar-Rabi’. When he stood, he held her. And when he prostrated, he set her down.”¹

Commenting on this, Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رحمته) said:

“(This indicates) the permission of carrying children even when the condition of their clothes is not known (whether *tāhir* or *najis*) ...

This was clearly during an obligatory prayer. It provides a refutation of those who have paranoia (in regard to moving during the prayer). It indicates that infrequent movement during the prayer does not invalidate it—if there is need for it. It also reflects mercy toward the children, teaches humbleness and good manners, and indicates that touching little children does not invalidate *wuḍū’*.”²

And an-Nawawī (رحمته) said:

“Some of the Mālikīs claim that this *ḥadīth* is abrogated, others claim that it is an exclusive act of the Prophet’s (ﷺ), and others claim that there was a necessity (for carrying Umāmah). However, all of these are invalid and rejected claims, because they have no evidence. The *ḥadīth* does not indicate anything that violates the rules of *Shar’*. A human being is (initially) *tāhir*, and what is within the belly is immaterial. As for the children’s clothes and bodies, they are considered *tāhir* until there is proof to the contrary. Also, movement during the prayer does not invalidate it—if it is slight and discontinuous. The

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (516, 5996), Muslim (543), and others.

2. *Tuhfat-ul-Mawdūd* p. 134.

proofs for this are overwhelming.”¹

Based on these important statements by Ibn-ul-Qayyim and an-Nawawī, we conclude that it is also permissible to hold diapered babies during the prayer regardless of the content of their diapers (as long as they are not leaking).

BRINGING BABIES INTO THE *MASJID*

The above *ḥadīth* of Abū Qatādah clearly indicates that, contrary to some claims, it is permissible to bring young children into the *masjid*. This is further supported by the following *ḥadīth*.

Anas and Abū Qatādah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنِّي لَأَدْخُلُ فِي الصَّلَاةِ فَأُرِيدُ إِطَالَتَهَا، فَأَسْمَعُ بُكَاءَ الصَّبِيِّ،
فَأَتَجَوَّزُ فِي صَلَاتِي، مِمَّا أَعْلَمُ مِنْ وَجِدِ أُمِّهِ مِنْ بُكَائِهِ.»

«Indeed, I start the prayer intending to extend it. Then I hear a baby’s cry, and I shorten my prayer because I know its mother’s concern for its crying.»²

TOUCHING A BABY’S PRIVATE PARTS

The mother or other adults often need to touch a baby’s private area for cleaning, changing, checking temperature, and so on. An often-raised concern is whether this touching invalidates *wuḍū’*. The simple answer is that it does not, because there is no evidence that it does.

Many scholars reason that since touching one’s private area invalidates *wuḍū’*, touching a baby’s private area invalidates *wuḍū’* as well. However, this analogy is not correct because of the difference between the two cases. In addition, the *ḥadīths* of the Prophet (ﷺ) clearly indicate that touching one’s private area does not necessarily invalidate *wuḍū’* —unless it is done with lust.

1. Reported by Ibn Ḥajar in *Fath-ul-Bārī* 1:765 (under 516).

2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (707-710, 868) and Muslim (469-470).

Busrah Bint Şafwān (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا مَسَّ أَحَدُكُمْ ذَكَرَهُ فَلْيَتَوَضَّأْ.»

‘When one of you touches his penis, he should perform *wuḍū’*.’¹

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا أَفْضَى أَحَدُكُمْ بِيَدِهِ إِلَى فَرْجِهِ، وَلَيْسَ بَيْنَهُمَا سِتْرٌ وَلَا حِجَابٌ، فَلْيَتَوَضَّأْ.»

‘When one of you reaches with his hand to his genitalia, without a separation, he should perform *wuḍū’*.’²

Talq Bin ‘Alī (رضي الله عنه) reported that he went with other men to Allāh’s Prophet (ﷺ). While they were there, a man who appeared to be a bedouin came and asked, “O Prophet of Allāh, what do you say in regard to a man who touches his penis (during the prayer) after having performed *wuḍū’*?” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied:

«وَهَلْ هُوَ إِلَّا بَضْعَةٌ (أَوْ مُضْعَةٌ) مِنْهُ.»

‘Is it anything but a piece of flesh from his body?’³

Commenting on this *ḥadīth*, al-Albānī (رحمته الله) said:

“This contains a subtle indication that the touching not requiring *wuḍū’* is only that which is not associated with lust, because in this case it is possible to liken touching that part to touching any other part of the body. Contrary to this is the touching with lust, which is not then similar to touching other parts of the body where the touching is not associated with desire. This should be quite obvious. Thus, this *ḥadīth* does not

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1. Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā’-ul-Ghalīl* 116 and *Şaḥīḥu Abī Dāwūd* 181).
 2. Recorded by Ibn Ḥibbān, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Şaḥīḥah* 1235).
 3. Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Şaḥīḥu Abī Dāwūd* 182, 183).

serve as evidence for the Ḥanafis who say that touching never invalidates *wuḍūʿ*. It can only serve as evidence for those who say that touching without lust does not invalidate *wuḍūʿ*, whereas touching with lust does, because of Busrah's *ḥadīth*. This reconciles between the two *ḥadīth*, and is the opinion that *Shaykh-ul-Islām* Ibn Taymiyyah chose in some of his books, as I remember."¹

Piercing the Ears

Piercing involves two acts that are normally prohibited in Islām: changing Allāh's (ﷻ) original creation, and causing unnecessary harm and pain.

CHANGING ALLĀH'S CREATION

Cutting animals' ears and changing the way Allāh created them constitute a sinful act of disobedience. Changing Allāh's creation without permission demonstrates obedience to the Devil, as Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنْ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا إِنْتَنَا وَإِنْ يَدْعُونَ إِلَّا سَيِّطَنَا مَرِيدًا ﴿١١٧﴾ لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ
وَقَالَ لَا تَخْذَنْ مِنْ عِبَادِكِ نَصِيبًا مَفْرُوضًا ﴿١١٨﴾ وَلَا ضَلَّئِهِمْ وَلَا مَبِيئِهِمْ وَلَا مَرْتَبَهُمْ
فَلْيَبْتَئِكُنَّ مَا ذَاتُ الْأَنْعَامِ وَلَا مَرْتَبَهُمْ فَلْيَعْبِرُوا بِحَلْقِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطَانَ
وَلِيًّا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُبِينًا ﴿١١٩﴾﴾ النساء

«They call (instead of Allāh) upon none but rebellious Satan, whom Allāh has cursed. And he had said (to Allāh), “I will surely take from among Your servants a specific portion. I will mislead them, give them false promises, command them so they will slit the ears of cattle, and command them so they will change the creation of Allāh.” Certainly, whoever takes Satan as an ally instead

1. *Tamām-ul-Minnah* p. 103.

of Allāh is in tremendous loss.»¹

This prohibition of slitting the ears applies more so to humans whom Allāh (ﷻ) honored and fashioned in the best form:

﴿لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ﴾ (التين 4)

«Verily, We have created the human being in the best of stature.»²

Changing this stature without permission is indeed an act of atrocity and deviation that deserves punishment.

For the same reason, the Prophet (ﷺ) indicated that Allāh (ﷻ) curses those who change what He (ﷻ) created. This includes (but is not limited to) removing their facial hair, wearing wigs, filing their teeth, or tattooing their bodies) seeking by that to improve their appearance. Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْوَائِمَاتِ وَالْمُسْتَوْشِمَاتِ، وَالنَّامِصَاتِ وَالْمُتَمَصِّمَاتِ،
وَالْوَاصِلَاتِ، وَالْمُتَفَلِّجَاتِ لِلْحُسْنِ، الْمُغَيِّرَاتِ حُلُقِ اللَّهِ.»

«Allāh curses those women who tattoo (for others) and who get tattoos, those who pluck the facial hair (for others) and who have their facial hair plucked, those who connect their hair with other (fake) hair, and those who file their teeth for beauty—they all change Allāh's creation.»³

INFLECTING HARM AND PAIN

Harming a human without reason is strongly prohibited as well. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بَغْيٍ مَا كُنْتُمْ بَأْسُهُمْ﴾

1. *An-Nisā'* 4:117-119.

2. *At-Tīn* 95:4.

3. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (4886, 4887, 5931, 5939, 5943, 5944, 5948), Muslim (2125), and others.

فَقَدْ أَحْتَمَلُوا بُهْتَنَا وَإِنَّمَا مَيْتًا ﴿٥٨﴾ الأَحْزَاب

«And those who harm believing men and women for what they do not deserve have certainly born upon themselves a slander and manifest sin.»¹

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Abbās and ‘Ubādah Bin aṣ-Ṣāmit (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَا ضَرَرَ وَلَا ضِرَارَ.»

«No harm may be inflicted on oneself or others.»²

EARRINGS DURING THE PROPHET’S TIME

There are a few reports in the Sunnah indicating that the Muslim women during the Prophet’s (ﷺ) time wore earrings, and the Prophet (ﷺ) did not condemn or prohibit this.

Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that, after the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed the two *rak‘āt* on the day of ‘Īd and gave the *khuṭbah*, he approached the women:

أَتَى النِّسَاءَ فَوَعظَهُنَّ وَأَمَرَهُنَّ بِالصَّدَقَةِ، فَجَعَلَتِ الْمَرْأَةُ تُلْفِي الْقُرْطَ (الْخُرْصَ)
وَالْقَلْبَ وَالْحَاتِمَ (الْفَتْخَ) وَالسَّخَابَ، وَيَلَالٌ يَأْخُذُ فِي طَرْفِ نَوْبِهِ.

“He (ﷺ) then walked (with Bilāl (رضي الله عنه)) to where the women sat. He (ﷺ) admonished them and urged them to give *ṣadaqah*. They responded by giving their earrings, bracelets, rings, and necklaces to Bilāl.”³

If it was prohibited to wear earrings, the Prophet (ﷺ) would have declared it when he saw the jewelry that the women gave.

In a long *ḥadīth* known as the *ḥadīth* of Umm Zar⁴,

1. *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:58.

2. Recorded by Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī and others (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 250).

3. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (98, 863, 964, 977, 979, 1431, 1449, 4895, 5249, 5880, 5881, 5883, 7325), Muslim (884), and others.

4. The full *ḥadīth* is cited in the Author’s, “The Fragile Vessels”.

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) told her that Umm Zar’ said the following about her husband:

«رُؤِجِي أَبُو زَرَّعٍ. وَمَا أَبُو زَرَّعٍ؟ أَنَا سَمٌ مِنْ حُلِيِّ أَدْنِي...»

«My husband was Abū Zar’. And what would you know about Abū Zar’! He made my ears heavy with jewelry ...»

In the conclusion of this *ḥadīth*, the Prophet (ﷺ) said to ‘Ā’ishah:

«يَا عَائِشَةُ، كُنْتُ لِكَأَبِي زَرَّعٍ لِأَمْ زَرَّعٍ.»

«O ‘Ā’ishah! I am to you like Abū Zar’ was to Umm Zar’.»¹

This indicates the Prophet’s (ﷺ) approval, among other things, of Abū Zar’’s giving earrings to Umm Zar’ to wear.

CONCLUSION

We have seen that it is prohibited to pierce any part of the body, because it involves changing Allāh’s creation and inflicting harm and pain. This general rule holds all the time, with only one exception that derives from the *ḥadīths* presented in the previous subsection.

Most of the ‘*ulamā*’ conclude that it is permissible for women to have their earlobes pierced in order to wear earrings on them. They argue that had it been prohibited, the Prophet (ﷺ) would have taken the occasion to explain this to the people and warn them against it. Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رحمته الله) said:

“As for piercing a girl’s ear, it is permissible for the purpose of wearing jewelry. This was stated by Imām Aḥmad. He also stated that it is disapproved to do it for a boy. The difference between the two is that a female needs to wear jewelry, making piercing her ears of benefit—contrary to a boy.”²

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5189), Muslim (2448), and others.

2. *Tuḥfat-ul-Mawdūd* p. 126.

However, because of the earlier discussed prohibition of inflicting pain and piercing, as well as other numerous warnings in the *Sunnah* against imitating the *kuffār* or the other gender, the conclusion should be as follows:

1. It is permissible to pierce a female's earlobes only in order to place earrings in them.
2. No additional holes are permitted than what is necessary to place the earrings.
3. No other parts of the body (nose, navel, tongue, etc.) may be pierced, because this involves imitation of the *kuffār*.
4. Males may not pierce their ears or wear earrings, because this is a strictly feminine adornment in Islām. In addition, this is done nowadays by singers and other corrupt individuals that a Muslim should avoid imitating.

Kissing Children and Showing Mercy to Them

Showing mercy to children is a noble trait in Islām. This was done by the Prophet (ﷺ) in various ways, as we have shown throughout this book. For instance, he rubbed children's heads, gave them gifts, called them with nicknames and *kunyahs*, performed *tahnik* and supplicated for them, taught them simple lessons, joked with them, carried them during and outside the prayer, and kissed them.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) kissed al-Ḥasan Bin 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) in the presence of al-Aqra' Bin Ḥābis at-Tamīmī. Al-Aqra' commented, "Indeed, I have ten children and have never kissed any of them." Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) looked at him and said:

«مَنْ لَا يَرْحَمُ لَا يُرْحَمُ.»

«He who does not show mercy, no mercy will be shown to him (by Allāh).»¹

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5997), Muslim (2318), and others.

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that some bedouins who visited Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) asked his companions, “Do you kiss your children?” The companions replied, “Yes!” The bedouins said, “By Allāh, we never kiss them.” So the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أَوْأَمَلِكُمْ لَكُمْ إِنْ نَزَعَ اللَّهُ مِنْ قُلُوبِكُمُ الرَّحْمَةَ؟»

«What can I do for you if Allāh has removed mercy from your hearts?»¹

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported:

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ (ﷺ) وَسَلَّمَ كَيْدَلْعُ لِسَانَهُ لِلْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ،

فَيَرَى الصَّبِيَّ حُمْرَةَ لِسَانِهِ، فَيَبْهَشُ إِلَيْهِ.

“Indeed, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to stick his tongue out for al-Ḥasan Bin ‘Alī. When the baby would see the redness of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) tongue, he would rush to him.”²

Breast-Feeding

DEFINITION AND DURATION

Allāh (ﷻ) ordained breast-feeding for humans and animals. It is a period during which the babies grow and build strength while enjoying the closeness and attention of the mother. At the end of the breast-feeding term, the child is “weaned” from the mother in preparation for becoming an independent being.

The normal duration of breast-feeding for humans is approximately two years. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَوَضَعْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بُولَدِيهِ حَمَلَتَهُ أُمَّهُ، وَهَنَا

عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفَضَلَهُ، فِي عَامَيْنِ﴾ لقمان ١٤

«We have enjoined upon the human being to treat

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5998), Muslim (2317), and others.
2. Recorded by Abū ash-Shaykh (in *Akhḷāq-un-Nabī*) and al-Baghawī (in *Sharḥ-us-Sunnah*). Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 70).

his parents kindly. His mother bore him with weakness upon weakness; and his weaning is in two years.»¹

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كَرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كَرْهًا
وَحَمَلُهُ وَفِصْلُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا﴾ الأحقاف ١٥

«We have enjoined upon the human being to treat his parents kindly. His mother bore him with hardship and delivered him with hardship. And his gestation and weaning (period) is thirty months.»²

According to Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) and many other ‘ulamā’, the difference between the two *āyāt* (30 – 24 = 6 months) is the duration of a short-term pregnancy.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Breast-feeding has been the practice of humans from earliest times; never was formula feeding widely practiced prior to this modern time.

Allāh’s messengers were no exception—they too were breast-fed. When Mūsā (عليه السلام) was a baby, Allāh (ﷻ) revealed to his mother to throw him into the river. Down the river, Mūsā was discovered by Pharaoh’s family who decided to adopt the unidentified baby. However, there was a serious problem: the baby would not suckle from any woman’s breast. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاضِعَ مِنْ قَبْلُ﴾ القصص ١٢

«And We had previously made all wet-nurses prohibited for him (i.e., only his mother could nurse him).»³

1. *Luqmān* 31:14.

2. *Al-Ahqāf* 46:15.

3. *Al-Qaṣas* 28:12.

In his childhood, the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) suckled from his mother Āminah, Thuwaybah—a slave girl of his uncle Abū Lahab,¹ Umm Ayman (Usāmah Bin Zayd’s mother), and Ḥalimah as-Sa’diyyah.²

In recent times, many women have unnecessarily left their homes to work in careers inferior and less fulfilling than that for which they were created. This has forced them to drop many of their natural practices. Pregnancy is now often avoided or limited, and breast-feeding is being propagated as a useless and unnecessary duty in the face of formula and processed baby-food. This is denying many infants born today emotional and health benefits that are critical to their well-being.

IMPORTANCE OF BREAST-FEEDING IN ISLĀM

Islām emphasizes the importance of breast-feeding in various ways. In what follows, we highlight a few of them.

1. Breast-feeding is clearly an obligation upon both parents. The mother provides the milk, and the father provides the material support. This is discussed further in the next subsections.
2. Islām gives to the relationships resulting from breast-feeding a status similar to that of blood relationships. ‘Ā’ishah, Umm Salamah, Ibn ‘Abbās, and ‘Alī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَ مِنَ الرَّضَاعِ مَا حَرَّمَ مِنَ الْوِلَادَةِ (النَّسَبِ؛ الرَّحِمِ).»

◀Indeed, Allāh has prohibited (marriage) among suckling relatives, as He has prohibited it among birth (or blood) relatives.▶³

3. Although Allāh (ﷻ) ordained that people who commit

1. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5101, 5106-5107, 5123, 5372), Muslim (1449), and others from Umm Ḥabībah (رضي الله عنها).

2. Recorded by Ibn Ḥibbān, Abū Dāwūd, and others from ‘Abdullāh Bin Ja‘far (رضي الله عنه). Verified to be *ḥasan* by ath-Thahabī and others.

3. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (2645-2646, 3105, 4796, 5099-5100, 5103, 5111, 5239, 6156), Muslim (1444-1448), and others.

adultery must be stoned to death,¹ the punishment of an adulteress pregnant from *zinā* is postponed until she either finishes breast-feeding her baby or finds someone to breast-feed it after her sentence has been carried out.

A woman came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and confessed that she was pregnant from *zinā*. The Prophet (ﷺ) asked a man from the Anṣār to take her into his custody until she delivered her baby. After delivery, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَا تَرْجُمُهَا وَنَدِّعْ وَلَدَهَا صَغِيرًا لَيْسَ لَهُ مَنْ يُرْضِعُهُ.»

«We cannot stone her and leave her young baby with no one to breast-feed it.»

A man from the Anṣār pledged to provide a wet-nurse for the baby. The Prophet (ﷺ) then had her stoned and said:

«لَقَدْ تَابَتْ تَوْبَةً لَوْ قَسِمَتْ بَيْنَ سَبْعِينَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ لَوَسِعَتْهُمْ.

وَهَلْ وَجَدْتَ تَوْبَةً أَفْضَلَ مِنْ أَنْ جَادَتْ بِنَفْسِهَا لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى؟»

«Indeed, she has repented such a repentance that, were it to be divided among seventy of al-Madīnah's residents it would encompass them. Have you seen a better repentance than giving herself for Allāh (ﷻ)?»²

4. The Prophet (ﷺ) informed that mothers who voluntarily refuse to feed their milk to their babies (leading to their starvation) will be severely punished in the hereafter. In a long *ḥadīth* reported by Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī (رضي الله عنه), the Prophet (ﷺ) related to his companions a (true) dream that he saw regarding many incidents taking place in *barzakh*³.

1. A detailed discussion of this is presented in the Author's, "Closer than a Garment".

2. A combined report recorded by Muslim (1696), Abū Dāwūd, and others (see *Irwā'ul-Ghalīl* 2322, 2333).

3. This is the intermediate life after death and before resurrection. It is fully discussed in the Authors, "Life in al-Barzakh".

Among what he (ﷺ) said was the following:

«بَيْنَمَا أَنَا نَائِمٌ إِذْ أَتَانِي رَجُلَانِ، فَأَخَذَا بِصَبْعِي... ثُمَّ انْطَلَقَا بِي، فَإِذَا نَحْنُ بِنِسَاءٍ مُعَلَّقَاتٍ بِعَرَاقِيهِنَّ مَصُوبَةٌ رُءُوسُهُنَّ، تَنْهَشُ نَدَاهُنَّ الْحَيَّاتُ. قُلْتُ: "مَا بَأَلُ هَؤُلَاءِ؟" قَالَ: "هَؤُلَاءِ يَمْنَعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ الْبَنَانُ."»

«While I was sleeping, two men (angels) came to me, held me by my upper arms, and took me ... We moved on, until we came upon women suspended upside-down from their ankles, snakes biting at their breasts. I asked, "Who are these?" They replied, "These are women who deny their children their milk."»¹

LEGISLATIVE TEXTS

The following texts from the Qur'an cover most of the regulations pertaining to breast-feeding.

Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿ وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَا تُضَارَّ وَالِدَةٌ بِوَالِدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَالِدَيْهِ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْرِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالْقَوْلُ اللَّهُ وَاعْمَلُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴾ البقرة

«Mothers may breast-feed their children two complete years for whoever wants to complete the nursing term. Upon the father is their (the

1. The full *hadīth* is combined from narrations recorded by Ibn Khuzaymah (1986), Ibn Hibbān, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 3951, *Ṣaḥīḥ-ut-Targhīb* 1005, and *at-Ta'līqāt-ul-Ḥisān* 7448).

mothers') provision and clothing according to what is reasonable. No person is charged with more than his capacity. No mother should be harmed through her child, nor should a father be. And upon the heir (of the father) is a similar obligation (if the father dies). And if they both (parents) desire weaning through mutual consent and consultation, there is no blame upon either of them. And if you wish to have your children breast-fed by a substitute, there is no blame upon you as long as you give payment according to what is reasonable. And revere Allāh and know that Allāh is Seeing of what you do.»¹

And Allāh (ﷻ) says in regard to the divorced wives' 'iddah (waiting period):

﴿أَسْكِنُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ سَكَنتُمْ مِنْ وُجْدِكُمْ وَلَا تُضَارُوهُنَّ لِضَعْفِهِنَّ عَلَيْهِنَّ وَإِنْ كُنَّ
 أَوْلَاتٍ حَمَلٍ فَانْفِقُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ حَتَّى يَضَعْنَ حَمَلَهُنَّ إِنْ أَنْضَعْنَ لَكُمْ فَتَأْتُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ
 وَأَتَمَرُوا يَتَنَكَّرَ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَإِنْ تَعَاَسَرْتُمْ فَسَدِّضْ لَهَا أُخْرَى ۖ لِيُنْفِقَ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِّنْ
 سَعَتِهِ ۚ وَمَنْ قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ فَلْيُنْفِقْ مِمَّا ءَاتَاهُ اللَّهُ لَا يَكْفُلُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَّا
 ءَاتَاهَا سَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا ۖ﴾ (الطلاق)

«(During their 'iddah,) lodge them (your divorced wives) of where you dwell out of your means, and do not harm them in order to oppress them. And if they should be pregnant then spend on them until they give birth. And if they breast-feed for you, give them their payment and negotiate among yourselves in the acceptable way. But if you are in dispute, then another woman may breast-feed for him (the father).

1. Al-Baqarah 2:233.

Let a man of wealth spend from his wealth. And he whose provision is restricted, let him spend from what Allāh has given him. Allāh does not require from a soul except according to what He has given it. Allāh will bring about after hardship ease.»¹

REGULATIONS

From the above, we derive the following regulations concerning breast-feeding:

1. Unless she has a legitimate excuse, a mother is required to breast-feed her baby for two full years.
2. During the breast-feeding term, the baby's father is required to support the mother, even if she was divorced from him.
3. The father should support the mother appropriately in accordance with his means.
4. In case of the father's death, his heirs are responsible for the father's obligation.
5. It is impermissible for the father to prevent the mother from breast-feeding her baby in order to cause her harm and aggravation. Similarly, it is impermissible for the mother to refuse to breast-feed her baby in order to harm or aggravate the father.
6. If one of the baby's parents thinks that there is need to wean the baby prior to the end of the two-year term, he (or she) should consult with the other parent. Weaning would then be allowed after the consultation and a joint agreement.
7. With the parent's joint agreement, it is permissible to hire another woman to breast-feed the baby.

ADVANTAGES OF THE MOTHER'S MILK & BREAST-FEEDING

Breast-feeding has many advantages over artificial feeding. In what follows we present a selected list of them as proposed by

1. *Aṭ-Ṭalāq* 65:6-7.

many physicians¹:

A. Advantages of the Mother's Milk:

1. It contains all the necessary nutrients for the baby.
2. It provides the baby with immunity against various infections.
3. It is assured to be clean and sterilized.
4. It is always at the right temperature for the baby.
5. It is available whenever the baby needs it.
6. It remains fresh and does not go bad in storage.
7. It is suitable for the baby's digestive system.

B. Advantages of Breast-feeding:

1. It suppresses obesity in mothers and babies.
2. It strengthens affection and emotional ties between the mother and her baby.
3. It may be performed as an act of worship seeking through it Allāh's pleasure and acceptance.

In conclusion, we cite the following statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):

“AAP reaffirms its recommendation of exclusive breastfeeding for about the first six months of a baby's life, followed by breastfeeding in combination with the introduction of complementary foods until at least 12 months of age, and continuation of breastfeeding for as long as mutually desired by mother and baby.”²

MILK BANKS

The importance of the mother's milk that we emphasized above applies as well to premature infants and other babies who do not

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1. Adapted from an article by Dr. Fārūq Musāhil published in *al-Ummah Journal* (50:1405), Qatar. See also: <http://americanpregnancy.org/first-year-of-life/breastfeeding-and-bottle-feeding/>
 2. From: www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/Pages/AAP-Reaffirms-Breastfeeding-Guidelines.aspx

have mothers to breast-feed them. This gave rise to the modern concept of mothers donating excess milk to milk banks. Nowadays, there are milk banks in the United States, Britain, and other Western countries. These “banks” collect and preserve breast milk, which is then fed to various babies as needed.

Contemporary Islāmic scholars have differed in regard to the permissibility of establishing and using milk banks. Some of them approved of this¹ based on the understanding that:

- a. In their view, breast-feeding that leads to the prohibition of marriage must involve direct suckling from the mother.
- b. The milk of milk banks does not come from identifiable mothers. Rather, it is a mixture coming from an undetermined number of women. This makes it very unlikely that a baby would drink its fill of milk from just one woman.

However, the position of many ‘*ulamā*’² and Islāmic *fiqh* councils is that milk banks are prohibited because they bring doubts regarding milk relationships.

For example, the Islāmic *Fiqh* Council issued the verdict:

“Indeed, collecting milk from various mothers, mixing it, and then feeding it to the children—this leads to losing the identity of the nursing mother, and might result in a man marrying his milk sister, mother, or aunt ... Thus, the Council of Islāmic *Fiqh*, a subdivision of the Islāmic Convention Organization, has met in its Second Symposium in Jeddah on 10-16 *Rabī‘ ath-Thānī* 1406 (22-28 December 1985), carefully reviewed and discussed detailed *fiqh* and medical studies concerning milk banks, ... and decided:

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1. Such as Yūsuf al-Qaradhāwī, ‘Abd-ul-Laṭīf Ḥamzah, and Muṣṭafā az-Zarqā. See: <http://fiqh.islammessages.com/NewsDetails.aspx?id=4375>
 2. Such as Bakr Abū Zayd, ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān Abd-ul-Khāliq, and many others. See: <http://fiqh.islammessages.com/NewsDetails.aspx?id=4375>

- i) The prohibition of establishing milk banks in the Muslim world.
- ii) The prohibition of feeding babies from them.”¹

Based on the above, we conclude that it is best to avoid milk banks due to the difference of opinion among contemporary scholars.

PREGNANCY OF A NURSING MOTHER

When a nursing woman gets pregnant, the condition of her milk declines due to her body diverting resources to support the new fetus. For this reason, some scholars recommend that nursing mothers avoid intercourse with their husbands or take measures to avoid conception.

However, the Prophet (ﷺ) did permit having intercourse with the nursing wife, and he did not consider it necessary or useful to practice early withdrawal (as a measure of birth-control) with her. Judāmah Bint Wahb (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

لَقَدْ هَمَمْتُ أَنْ أَنْهَى عَنِ الْغَيْلَةِ، حَتَّى ذَكَرْتُ أَنَّ الرُّومَ
وَفَارِسَ يَصْنَعُونَ ذَلِكَ فَلَا يَضُرُّ أَوْلَادَهُمْ.»

«I was about to prohibit having intercourse with a nursing women, but then realized that the Romans and Persians do it and it does not harm their children.»

He (ﷺ) was then asked about early withdrawal and he replied, «ذَلِكَ الْوَأْدُ الْخَفِيُّ.» **«That is the secret killing of children.»**²

Sa'd Bin Abī Waqqāṣ (رضي الله عنه) reported that a man came to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) and said, “I perform early withdrawal with my wife.” The Prophet (ﷺ) asked him, «لِمَ تَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ؟» **«Why do you do**

1. See: <http://fatwa.islamweb.net/fatwa/index.php?page=showfatwa&Option=Fatwald&Id=17699>

2. Recorded by Muslim (1442) and others.

that?») He replied, “I pity her child (that she nurses).” Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لَوْ كَانَ ذَلِكَ (الْعَيْلُ) ضَارًّا صَرَّ فَارِسَ وَالرُّومَ.»

«If it is harmful for a woman to continue breast-feeding after conception, it would have harmed the Persians and Romans.»¹

We conclude from this the following:

1. It is permissible for a man and his breast-feeding wife to have intercourse.
2. If the two parents wish to wait for their baby to grow older before the breast-feeding mother becomes pregnant again, it is permissible (but not recommended) for them to practice early withdrawal.
3. If the nursing mother gets pregnant, she does not have to stop breast-feeding her baby. However, if her physical condition is such that her pregnancy clearly degrades her milk or threatens the wellbeing of her fetus, she may need to terminate her breast-feeding and find an alternative wet-nurse (which is not easy in our times) or milk substitute for her baby.

CONCLUDING REMARKS FROM IBN-UL-QAYYIM

We conclude with an important advice from Ibn-ul-Qayyim (رحمته الله) concerning breast-feeding:

“Babies should only be fed the (mother’s) milk until their teeth appear. Their stomach and digestive system (in the early months) are incapable of handling (solid) food. When the baby’s teeth come out, its stomach becomes strong and ready for food. Indeed, Allāh (ﷻ) delays the growth of teeth until the baby needs the food. This is from His wisdom and kindness, and out of mercy toward the mother and her nipples, so that the baby would not bite them with its teeth.

1. Recorded by Muslim (1443) and others.

Babies should be given solid food in a gradual manner, starting with soft foods, such as wet bread, (animal) milk, yogurt, meat broth, ...

The parents should not be too disturbed by the baby's crying and screaming, especially when it is hungry for milk. That crying benefits the baby tremendously, training its limbs, widening its intestines, broadening its chest, ...

The complete breast-feeding term is two years. This is a right for the baby ... Allāh confirmed this with the word "complete", saying ﴿حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ﴾ البقرة ٢٣٣ «**Two complete years,**» so that no one would assume it to be less than this ...

When the nursing mother wants to wean the baby, she should do so gradually ... she should train it because of the harm involved in a sudden change of habits ...

And care should be taken not to force the baby to walk before it is ready, because that would cause its legs to become bent and twisted ...

When a nursing woman is approached (with intercourse) by a man, she may get pregnant, which is bad for the baby who is being nourished by her milk. The good blood would then be redirected to nourish the fetus in her womb ... This would cause the milk in her breasts to become scarce and deficient ... Thus, when a nursing women gets pregnant, it is best for her to stop (or decrease) breast-feeding her baby and seek another wet-nurse for it ...¹

1. *Tuhfat-ul-Mawdūd* pp. 140-145.

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APPENDIX A: LIST OF NAMES

Introduction

In what follows, we present a selection of names for boys and girls. Many of these are names of prophets, *Ṣaḥābah*, and other male and female individuals from among the righteous *salaf*.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following guidelines were taken into consideration in preparing the following lists:

- 1. Sorting:** The names are sorted according to the English alphabetical order, overlooking special transliteration symbols: ' (for *hamzah*), ' (for *'ayn*), under-dots, and over-dashes.
- 2. Meanings:** The provided meanings of names are often not all-inclusive or precise due to the expanse of the Arabic language. Further details should be sought using a lexicon.
- 3. Pronunciation:** In addition to carrying a good meaning, we recommend selecting a name that is easy to pronounce.
- 4. Names of Servitude:** Boys' and girls' names that are constructed by prefixing one of Allāh's excellent names with the terms *'abd*, *'ubayd*, or *amah*, are discussed in Appendix B. Therefore, they are not included in the following two lists.
- 5. Disliked Names:** In the following, some names are followed by an asterisk (*). Although those names were disapproved by the Prophet (ﷺ), the *'ulamā'* do not have a unanimous view about the level of their disapproval (see Chapter 3).
- 6. Abbreviations:** In the following, we use the abbreviations: superlative (Sp); diminutive (Dm); plural (Pl). It should be noted, however, that a quality modified in one of these manners usually becomes of exaggerated meaning.

Names of Boys

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Abān	Follower	أَبَان
'Abbād	Sp. of 'Ābid	عَبَاد
'Abbās	Sp. of 'Ābis (frowner; austere)	عَبَّاس
'Ābid	Worshiper	عَابِد
Ādam	Of tan complexion; agreeable	آدَم
'Ādil	Just; upright; honest	عَادِل
'Adiyy	Group of fighters	عَدِيّ
'Adnān	Settler	عَدْنَان
'Afif	Chaste	عَفِيف
Aflah*	Successful	أَفْلَح
Agharr	Horse; white-faced	أَغْرَر
Āhil	Friendly	أَهْل
Aḥmad	Sp. of Ḥāmid or Maḥmūd	أَحْمَد
Aḥnaf	Sp. of Ḥanīf	أَحْنَف
'Ā'id	Returner	عَائِد
'Ā'ish	Living; of well-being	عَائِش
'Ā'ith	Seeking shelter	عَائِث
'Ajlān	Hurried; rushed	عَجَلَان
'Alā'	Highness, supremacy	عَلَاء

Name	Meaning	الإسم
'Aliyy ('Alī)	Lofty, sublime	عَلِيّ
'Alqamah	Piece of bitterness	عَلْقَمَة
Amīn	Trustworthy	أَمِين
Amīr	Leader; prince	أَمِير
'Āmir	Established; long-living	عَامِر
'Ammār	Of excessive worship	عَمَّار
'Amr	Alive	عَمْر
Anas	Sociable; cheerful	أَنْس
Anīs	Sociable; pleasant	أَنْيس
'Aqīl	Tied; intellectual	عَقِيل
'Arīb	Person	عَرِيب
Arqam	Of writings or marks	أَرْقَم
Asad	Lion	أَسَد
As'ad	Sp. of Sa'īd	أَسْعَد
Asbāṭ	Pl. of Sabṭ (generous; kind)	أَسْبَاط
Ash'ath	Horse; unkempt	أَشْعَث
Asīd	Sp. of Sayyid	أَسِيد
Aṣīl	Of noble descent	أَصِيل
'Āṣim	Shelter; protector	عَاصِم
Aslam	Sp. of Sālim	أَسْلَم

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Asqa'	Protected from enemies	أَسَقَع
'Assāf	Custodian; oppressor	عَسَاف
Aswad	Sp. of Sayyid (prevailer)	أَسْوَد
'Aṭā'	Giving	عَطَاء
'Āṭif	Affectionate	عَاطِف
'Aṭiyyah	Gift	عَطِيَّة
'Awf	Affair; matter	عَوْف
Awfā	Sp. of Wafī (loyal)	أَوْفَى
'Awn	Helper	عَوْن
Aws	Wolf; tribe of the Anṣār	أَوْس
Ayman	Blessed (Sp.)	أَيْمَن
'Ayyāsh	Sp. of 'Ā'ish	عِيَّاش
Ayyūb	A prophet's name; returner (to Allāh)	أَيُّوب
Azhar	Sp. of Zāhir	أَزْهَر
Badr	Full moon	بَدْر
Bahīj	Cheerful	بَهِيَج
Bakkār	Early worker	بَكَّار
Bakr	Young camel; an Arab tribe	بَكْر
Barā'	Innocent; blameless	بَرَاء
Bashīr	Bringer of glad news	بَشِير

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Bashshār	Sp. of Bashīr	بَشَّار
Bāsil	Brave	بَاسِل
Başīr	Seer	بَصِير
Bassām	Sp. of Bāsim	بَسَّام
Bayān	Clarification; eloquence	بَيَان
Bilāl	Dew; water	بِلَال
Bishr	Joy; happiness	بِشْر
Bukayr	Dm. of Bakr	بُكَيْر
Burayd	Dm. of Barad (dew or hail)	بُرَيْد
Buraydah	Sp. of Burayd	بُرَيْدَة
Burd	Pl. of Burdiyy (good dates)	بُرْد
Bushayr	Dm. of Bashīr	بُشَيْر
Busr	Soft; tender	بُسر
Ḍaḥḥāk	Sp. of Ḍāḥik (smiler)	ضَحَّاک
Ḍamrah	Sp. of Ḍāmīr (lean)	ضَمْرَة
Dāwūd	A prophet's name	دَاوُد
Daylam	Black and smooth; genius	دَيْلَم
Diḥyah	Open; smooth	دِحْيَة
Ḍimām	Gatherer; lion	ضِمَام
Dīnār	Gold currency; bright & shiny	دِينَار

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Ḍurayb	Striker; fighter	ضُرَيْب
Fādī	Savior; sacrificer	فَادِي
Fāḍil	Virtuous; generous	فَاضِل
Faḍl	Virtue; favor	فَضْل
Fahd	Leopard	فَهْد
Fā'id	Beneficial	فَائِد
Fā'iz	Successful	فَائِز
Fākih	Good spirited; humorous	فَاكِه
Falāḥ	Success	فَلَاح
Faqīh	Of understanding	فَقِيه
Farīd	Unique	فَرِيد
Fāris	Knight	فَارِس
Farqad	Name of a star; flat & level land	فَرْقَد
Fārūq	Distinguisher between right & wrong	فَارُوق
Fātiḥ	Conqueror; leader	فَاتِيح
Fawwāz	Sp. of Fā'iz	فَوَّاز
Fayṣal	Decisive; sword	فَيْصَل
Fayyāḍ	Sp. of Fā'id (overflowing; generous)	فَيَّاص
Fihir	Smooth stone	فِيهِر
Firās	Of insight; lion	فِرَاس

Name	Meaning	الاسم
Fu'ād	Heart	فُوَاد
Fuḍayl	Dm. of Fāḍil	فُضَيْل
Furāt	Sweet water; name of a river	فُرَات
Ghālib	Conqueror	غَالِب
Ghānim	Collector of gains	غَانِم
Ghassān	Depth of heart; peak of youth	عَسَّان
Ghayth	Rain; aid	عَيْث
Ghāzī	Fighter; attacker	غَازِي
Ghazwān	Sp. of Ghāzī	عَزْوَان
Ghiyāth	Relief, aid	غِيَاث
Ḥabīb	Beloved	حَبِيب
Ḥābis	Barrier; preventer	حَابِس
Hādī	Guide	هَادِي
Hadiyyah	Gift	هَدِيَّة
Ḥāfiz	Protector	حَافِظ
Ḥafiz	Sp. of Ḥāfiz	حَفِيز
Ḥafṣ	Lion; small house	حَفْص
Ḥājib	Preventer	حَاجِب
Ḥakīm	Wise	حَكِيم
Ḥamad	Praised (his Lord)	حَمْد

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Ḥamdān	Sp. of Ḥāmid	حَمْدَان
Ḥamīd	Praiseworthy	حَمِيد
Ḥāmid	One who praises his Lord	حَامِد
Ḥammād	Sp. of Ḥāmid	حَمَّاد
Hammām	Of determination; dynamic	هَمَّام
Ḥamzah	Tough & sharp; lion	حَمَزَة
Hāni'	Content; happy	هَانِي'
Ḥanīf	True; upright	حَنِيف
Hannād	Gentle; kind	هَنَاد
Ḥanūn	Compassionate; caring	حَنُون
Ḥārith	Cultivator; lion	حَارِث
Ḥārithah	Sp. of Ḥārith	حَارِثَة
Ḥarīz	Well protected	حَرِيز
Hārūn	A prophet's name	هَارُون
Ḥasan	Good; handsome	حَسَن
Hāshim	Generous; one who crushes food for guests	هَاشِم
Ḥasīb	Careful; accountant	حَسِيب
Ḥassān	Sp. of Ḥasan	حَسَّان
Ḥātim	Determined; decisive	حَاتِم
Ḥawshab	Gatherer	حَوْشَب

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Ḥaydar	Good mannered; descender; lion	حَيْدَر
Ḥayyy	Modest	حَيَّيَّ
Haytham	Hawk; climbable mountain	هَيْثَم
Ḥayyān	Sp. of Ḥayy (alive)	حَيَّان
Ḥāzim	Of strong determination	حَازِم
Ḥazm	Strong determination	حَزْم
Ḥibbān	Pl. of Ḥibb (beloved)	حَبَّان
Ḥijr	Custody	حِجْر
Hilāl	Crescent	هِلَال
Hishām	Generous (similar to Hāshim)	هِشَام
Ḥizām	Sp. of Ḥāzim	حِزَام
Ḥubaysh	Earners of food for his family	حُبَيْش
Hūd	A prophet's name; returner to Allāh	هُود
Ḥuḍayn	Dm. of Ḥāḍin (care-taker)	حُضَيْن
Hudbah	Eyelashes, edge of garment	هُدْبَة
Ḥukaym	Dm. of Ḥakīm	حُكَيْم
Humām	Magnanimous; brave	هُمَام
Ḥumayd	Dm. of Ḥāmīd	حُمَيْد
Ḥunayf	Dm. of Ḥanīf	حُنَيْف
Ḥunayn	Dm. of Ḥanūn	حُنَيْن

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Hunayy	Dm.of Hāni'	هَنْي
Ḥurayth	Dm.of Ḥārith	حُرَيْث
Ḥusām	Decisive; sword	حُسام
Ḥusayn	Dm.of Ḥasan	حُسَيْن
Ḥuṣayn	Dm.of Ḥuṣn	حُصَيْن
Hushaym	Dm.of Hāshim	هَشِيم
Ḥuṣn	Chastity; protection	حُصْن
Ḥuṭhayfah	Clear of defects	حُدَيْفَة
Ḥuyayy	Dm.of Ḥayy (living)	حَيِّي
Ibrāhīm	A prophet's name; Honorable father	إِبْرَاهِيم
'Īd	Festival	عِيد
Idrīs	A prophet's name; learned & studious	إِدْرِيس
'Ikrimah	Black; female pigeon	عِكْرِمَة
Ilyās	A prophet's name	إِلْيَاس
Ilyasa'	A prophet's name; wide and plentiful	إِلْيَسَع
'Imād	Foundation	عِمَاد
'Imrān	Building; construction	عِمْرَان
'Īsā	A prophet's name; noble camel	عِيسَى
'Iṣām	Shelter; protection	عِصَام
Ishāq	A prophet's name	إِسْحَاق

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Ismā'īl	A prophet's name; obedient to Allāh	إِسْمَاعِيل
Iyād	Support	إِيَاد
'Iyāḍ	Compensation	عِيَاض
Iyās	Despair (of the worldly life)	إِيَاس
Jabal	Mountain	جَبَل
Jabalah	Sp. of Jabal	جَبَلَة
Jābir	Comforter	جَابِر
Jabr	Consolation	جَبْر
Ja'far	Stream; plentiful	جَعْفَر
Jamīl	Beautiful; handsome	جَمِيل
Jarīr	Reins; controller	جَرِير
Jarrāḥ	Surgeon; doctor	جَرَّاح
Jāsir	Brave; of large frame	جَاسِر
Jasr	Of large frame	جَسْر
Jubārah	Sp. of Jubayr	جُبَارَة
Jubayr	Dm. of Jābir	جُبَيْر
Jumay'	Dm. of Jam' (gathering)	جُمُع
Junādah	Sp. of Junayd	جُنَادَة
Junayd	Dm. of Jundī (soldier)	جُنَيْد
Jundab	Grasshopper	جُنْدَب

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Jurayy	Fast runner	جُرَيّ
Ka' b	Rising land, honorable	كَعْب
Kāmil	Perfect	كامل
Kathīr	Plentiful	كثير
Kaysān	Considerate; tactful	كَيْسَان
Khabbāb	Trotter; fast walker	حَبَّاب
Khadīj	Born before full term	حَدِيح
Khaḍir	A prophet's name; greenery	حَضِر
Khalaf	Successor	حَلَف
Khālid	Eternal; long-living; mountain	خالد
Khalīfah	Sp. of Khalaf	حَلِيفَة
Khalīl	Close friend; beloved	حَلِيل
Khallād	Sp. of Khālid	حَلَاد
Khārijah	Sp. of Khārij (apparent; superior)	خَارِجَة
Khaṣīf	Grey; two-colored	حَصِيف
Khaṭīb	Speaker	حَطِيب
Khaṭṭāb	Sp. of Khaṭīb	حَطَّاب
Khayr	Goodness	خَيْر
Khubayb	Dm. of Khabbāb	حُيَيْب
Khufāf	Light; fast	حُفَاف

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Khulayd	Dm. of Khālid	خُلَيْدٌ
Khuṣayf	Dm. of Khaṣīf	خُصَيْفٌ
Khuwaylid	Dm. of Khālid	خُوَيْلِدٌ
Khuzaym	Dm. of Khāzim (similar; alike)	خُزَيْمٌ
Khuzaymah	Sp. of Khuzaym	خُزَيْمَةٌ
Kinānah	Quiver of arrows	كِنَانَةٌ
Kumayl	Dm. of Kāmil	كُمَيْلٌ
Kurayb	Near; close	كُرَيْبٌ
Kuthayr	Dm. of Kathīr	كُثَيْرٌ
Labīb	Intelligent; clever	لَبِيبٌ
Labīd	Resident	لَبِيدٌ
Laṭīf	Gentle	لَطِيفٌ
Layth	Lion	لَيْثٌ
Lu'ayy	Dm. of La'iyy (slow mover; settler)	لُؤَيٌّ
Luqmān	One who eats many bites	لُقْمَانٌ
Ma'bad	Submission (to Allāh)	مَعْبَدٌ
Maḥbūb	Beloved	مَحْبُوبٌ
Mahdī	Guided	مَهْدِيٌّ
Maḥfūz	Protected	مَحْفُوظٌ
Māhir	Clever; skilled	مَاهِرٌ

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Maḥmūd	Praiseworthy	مَحْمُود
Ma'īn	Water spring	مَعِين
Mājid	Glorious	مَاجِد
Makhlad	Of long youth	مَخْلَد
Mālik	Owner; master	مَالِك
Ma'mar	Establisher	مَعْمَر
Mamdūḥ	Praised	مَمْدُوح
Ma'mūn	Trusted	مَأْمُون
Ma'n	Beneficial	مَعْن
Ma'qil	Shelter	مَعْقِل
Ma'rūf	Known; benefactor	مَعْرُوف
Maṣṣūr	Victor	مَنْصُور
Marthad	Generous	مَرْتَد
Marwān	White fire-stone; a fragrant plant	مَرْوَان
Marzūq	Sustained	مَرْزُوق
Maslamah	Security	مَسْلَمَة
Mas'ūd	Happy	مَسْعُود
Maṣar	Rain	مَطَر
Maymūn	Blessed	مَيْمُون
Maysarah	Ease & facility	مَيْسَرَة

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Mihjan	Bird's beak; good manager	مِخْجَنٌ
Miqdād	Good manager	مِقْدَادٌ
Miqdām	Brave	مِقْدَامٌ
Miswar	Riser above things	مِسْوَرٌ
Mu'āfā	Given well-being	مُعَافَى
Mu'allā	Elevated	مُعَلَّى
Mu'ammal	Hoped in him	مُؤَمَّلٌ
Mu'an	Supported; aided	مُعَانٌ
Mu'āth	Protected (by Allāh)	مُعَاذٌ
Mu'āwiyah	One who barks; one who bends things	مُعَاوِيَةٌ
Mu'awwath	Protected (by Allāh)	مُعَوِّذٌ
Mubārak	Blessed	مُبَارَكٌ
Mubashshir	Giver of good news	مُبَشِّرٌ
Muḍar	Lover of Yogurt	مُضَرٌّ
Mudrik	Comprehender	مُدْرِكٌ
Mufliḥ	Successful	مُفْلِحٌ
Mughīrah	Sp. of Mughīr (attacker)	مُغِيرَةٌ
Mughīth	Helper; giver of aid	مُغِيثٌ
Muhājir	Migrator	مُهَاجِرٌ
Muḥammad	Name of our Prophet; Sp. of Maḥmūd	مُحَمَّدٌ

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Muḥannā	Given happiness	مُهَنَّأ
Muḥannad	Indian sword	مُهَنَّاد
Muḥarrar	Liberated	مُحَرَّر
Muḥriz	Accomplishing	مُحْرِز
Muḥsin	Benefactor	مُحْسِن
Muḥşin	Helping to be chaste	مُحْصِن
Mu‘īn	Helper	مُعِين
Mujāhid	Striver	مُجَاهِد
Mujammi‘	Gatherer	مُجَمِّع
Mukhtār	Chosen	مُخْتَار
Munīb	Returner (to Allāh)	مُنِيب
Munīf	High and superior	مُنِيف
Munīr	Shiny; brilliant	مُنِير
Munjid	Helper; giver of aid	مُنْجِد
Munqith	Rescuer	مُنْقِذ
Muṣṣif	Fair; just	مُصِّف
Munthir	Warner	مُنْذِر
Muqaddam	Placed ahead	مُقَدِّم
Muqarrin	Capable	مُقَرَّر
Muqātil	Fighter	مُقَاتِل

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Murād	Wish; goal	مُرَاد
Murajjā	Sp. of Marjū (expecting his help)	مُرَجَّجٍ
Murrah *	Sp. of Murr (bitter)	مُرَّة
Mūsā	A prophet's name	مُوسَى
Muṣ'ab	Master; stud	مُضْعَب
Musaddad	Guided	مُسَدَّد
Musā'id	Helper	مُسَاعِد
Musayyib	Giver	مُسَيَّب
Mushrif	Overlooking; supervisor	مُشْرِف
Muslim	Submitter; Muslim	مُسْلِم
Muṣṭafā	Chosen	مُصْطَفَى
Muṭahhar	Purified	مُطَهَّر
Muṭarrif	Attacker of the enemy's borders	مُطَرِّف
Mu'taṣim	Taking refuge (with Allāh)	مُعْتَصِم
Muṭayr	Dm. of Maṭar	مُطَيَّر
Muthannā	One who doubles the reward	مُتَنَّى
Muṭī'	Obedient	مُطِيع
Muṭ'im	Feeder; generous	مُطْعِم
Muṭṭalib	Seeker; requester	مُطَلِّب
Muwaffaq	Facilitated; aided	مُؤَفَّق

Name	Meaning	الاسم
Muẓaffar	Given victory	مُظَفَّر
Nabhān	Sp. of Nabīh	نَبَّهَان
Nabīh	Attentive; alert	نَبِيه
Nabīl	Noble	نَبِيل
Nadīm	Comforting companion	نَدِيم
Naḍr	Blooming; flourishing	نَضْر
Nāfi' *	Beneficial	نَافِع
Nahār	Daylight	نَهَار
Nā'il	Attainer (of wishes)	نَائِل
Na'im	Happiness; happy	نَعِيم
Nājī	Secure	نَاجِي
Najīb	Decent; honorable	نَجِيب
Najīh *	Successful	نَجِيح
Namir	Tiger	نَمِر
Nasīb	Relative; of good descent	نَسِيب
Nāṣiḥ	Advisor	نَاصِح
Naṣīr	Defender; supporter	نَاصِر
Nāṣir	Defender; supporter	نَاصِر
Naṣr	Victory	نَصْر
Naṣṣār	Sp. of Nāṣir	نَصَّار

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Nawf	Highness; loftiness	نَوْفٌ
Nawfal	Gift	نَوْفَالٌ
Nawwāf	Lofty; superior	نَوَّافٌ
Nawwās	Disordered; relaxed	نَوَّاسٌ
Nāyif	High and superior	نَايِفٌ
Nazīh	Honest; incorrupt	نَزِيهٌ
Nizār	Deserves plenty	نِزَارٌ
Naẓīr	Of insight; equal	نَظِيرٌ
Nu‘aym	Dm. of Na‘īm	نُعَيْمٌ
Nubayh	Dm. of Nabīh	نُبَيْهٌ
Nufayl	Relates to a fragrant plant	نُفَيْلٌ
Nufay‘	Dm. of Nāfi‘	نُفَيْعٌ
Nūḥ	A prophet's name; weeper (fearing Allāh)	نُوحٌ
Nujayd	Brave	نُجَيْدٌ
Nujayy	Holder of secret	نُجَيِّ
Nu‘mān	Sp. of Na‘īm	نُعْمَانٌ
Numayr	Dm. of Namir	نُمَيْرٌ
Nusayr	Dm. of Nasr (eagle)	نُسَيْرٌ
Nuṣayr	Dm. of Nāṣir	نُصَيْرٌ
Qaḥṭān	Affected by Drought	قَحْطَانٌ

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Qa 'qā'	Makes clicking sound while walking	قَعْقَاع
Qāsim	Distributor (of good)	قَاسِم
Qatādah	A thorny tree	قَتَادَة
Qays	Toughness	قَيْس
Qudāmah	Brave	قُدَامَة
Qurrah	Coolness; satisfaction	قُرَّة
Quşayy	Tracer; Distant	قُصَيّ
Qutaybah	Camel's saddle	قُتَيْبَة
Rabāḥ *	Winner	رَبَاح
Rabī'	Spring time	رَبِيع
Rabī' ah	Sp. of Rabī'	رَبِيعَة
Rafīq	Gentle; companion	رَفِيق
Rāfi' *	Raiser; elevator	رَفِيع
Rāghib	Wisher; hoper	رَاغِب
Rā'id	Pioneer; guide	رَائِد
Rajā'	Hope	رَجَاء
Rājih	Intelligent; wise	رَجِيح
Rashād	Guidance	رَشَاد
Rashīd	Guided	رَشِيد
Rāshid	Guided	رَاشِد

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Rāsīm	Running water	رَاسِم
Rawḥ	Mercy	رَوْح
Rawwād	Sp. of Rā'id	رَوَّاد
Rayḥān	Perfume	رَيْحَان
Razīn	Serious; solemn	رَزِين
Rib'iyy	Of spring-time	رَبِيعِي
Rifā'ah	Supreme; lofty	رِفَاعَة
Riyāḥ	Winds	رِيَّاح
Rubayḥ	Dm. of Rābiḥ (winner)	رُبَيْح
Rufay'	Dm. of Rāfi'	رُفَيْع
Ruḥayl	Dm. of Raḥl (camel's saddle)	رُحَيْل
Rukānah	Balance; solemn	رُكَّانَة
Ruwayfi'	Dm. of Rāfi'	رُؤَيْفِع
Ruzayq	Dm. of Marzūq	رُزَيْق
Şabīḥ	Beautiful like the morning	صَبِيح
Sābiq	Competitor	سَابِق
Şābir	Patient	صَابِر
Saburah	Experienced	سَبْرَة
Sa'd	Happiness	سَعْد
Şadaqah	Charity; truthfulness	صَدَقَة

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Şādiq	Truthful	صَادِق
Şafī	Pure	صَافِي
Şafiyy	Chosen	صَفِيّ
Şafwān	Clear; pure	صَفْوَان
Sahl	Easy	سَهْل
Sahm	Share; arrow	سَهْم
Sā'ī	Messenger; hard worker	سَاعِي
Sā'ib	Fast walker or runner	سَائِب
Sa'īd	Happy; lucky	سَعِيد
Sakan	Dwelling; tranquility	سَكَن
Şākhr	Rock	صَخْر
Şalāḥ	Goodness	صَلَاح
Salām	Peace	سَلَام
Salamah	Sp. of Salam (security)	سَلَمَة
Salāmah	Safety	سَلَامَة
Salimah	Stones	سَلِيمَة
Sallām	Giver of security; protector	سَلَام
Salm	Bucket; secure	سَلْم
Şāliḥ	Righteous; good	صَالِح
Salīm	Good; clear of defects	سَلِيم

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Sālim	Secure	سَالِم
Salmān	Sp. of Sālim	سَلْمَان
Şalt	Sharp	صَلْت
Sāmī	Lofty; dignified	سَامِي
Samīh	Tolerant; good hearted	سَمِيح
Samīr	Companion in evening talk	سَمِير
Samurah	A thorny tree	سَمْرَة
Sam'ān	Listener; attentive	سَمْعَان
Sariyy	Valuable	سَرِيّ
Sayf	Sword	سَيْف
Sayyār	Mover	سَيَّار
Sayyid	Master	سَيِّد
Shabīb	Young	شَبِيب
Shaddād	Hardy; Strong	شَدَّاد
Shāfi'	Mediator, intercessor	شَافِع
Shafīq	Compassionate	شَفِيق
Shāhīn	Falcon; hawk	شَاهِين
Shahr	Month	شَهْر
Shakal	Agreeable	شَكَل
Shākīr	Grateful; thankful	شَاكِر

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Shaḳīq	Full brother; equal	شَقِيق
Sharīf	Noble; honorable	شَرِيف
Sharīk	Partner	شَرِيك
Shaybah	White-haired	شَيْبَة
Shaybān	Sp. of Shaybah	شَيْبَان
Shibl	Lion's cub	شِبْل
Shu'ayb	A prophet's name; Dm. of Sha'b (nation)	شُعَيْب
Shu'bah	Group; branch	شُعْبَة
Shubayl	Dm. of Shibl	شُيَيْل
Shujā'	Brave	شُجَاع
Shurayḥ	Of understanding	شُرَيْح
Ṣiddīq	Most truthful & acceptor of truth	صِدِّيق
Ṣilah	Prize; connection	صِلَة
Simāk	High; lofty	سِمَاك
Sinān	Spear	سِنَان
Sirāj	Lantern	سِرَاج
Subay'	Dm. of Sab' (lion or wild animal)	سُبَيْع
Ṣubayḥ	Dm. of Ṣabīḥ	صُبَيْح
Ṣudayy	Very thirsty; of brains	صُدَيّ
Sufyān	Quick and hasty	سُفْيَان

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Şuhayb	Blondish; reddish	صُهَيْبٌ
Suhayl	Dm. of Sahl	سُهَيْلٌ
Sukayn	Dm. of Sākin (quiet)	سُكَيْنٌ
Sulaym	Dm. of Salīm	سُلَيْمٌ
Sulaymān	A prophet's name; Sp. of Sulaym	سُلَيْمَانَ
Sulṭān	Authority	سُلْطَانَ
Sumayr	Dm. of Samīr	سُمَيْرٌ
Sumayy	High; superior	سُمَيٌّ
Sunayn	Dm. of Sanīn (comparable)	سُنَيْنٌ
Surayj	Dm. of Sirāj	سُرَيْجٌ
Su'ūd	Sp. of Sa'd	سُعود
Suwayd	Dm. of Sā'id (prevailer)	سُوَيْدٌ
Ṭāhir	Pure	طَاهِرٌ
Ṭalāl	Pleasant; admirable	طَلَالٌ
Ṭalḥah	A thorny tree	طَلْحَةٌ
Ṭālib	Seeker	طَالِبٌ
Talīd	Inherited; ancient	تَلِيدٌ
Ṭalīq	Free	طَلِيقٌ
Ṭalq	Free	طَلَقٌ
Tamīm	Complete	تَمِيمٌ

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Tammām	Accomplisher	تَمَّام
Ṭarafah	Type of tree; overlooking and high	طَرَفَة
Ṭarīf	Humorous	طَرِيف
Ṭāriq	Star	طَارِق
Ṭawd	Mountain	طَوْد
Ṭayyib	Good	طَيِّب
Thābit	Firm	ثَابِت
Ṭhakwān	Type of tree; lighting up	ذَكْوَان
Ṭharr	Small ants	ذَر
Thawbān	Returner (to the right)	ثَوْبَان
Ṭhuhayl	One who loses attention or forgets grief	ذُهَيْل
Thumāmah	Sp. of Thumām (repairer; fixer)	ثُمَّامَة
Ṭhuwayd	Dm. of Ṭhā'id (protector)	ذُوَيْد
Tubay'	Dm. of Taba' (follower)	تُبَيْع
Ṭufayl	Easy or slow walker	طُفَيْل
Ṭuhayr	Dm. of Ṭāhir	طُهَيْر
Ṭu'mah	Providence; sustenance	طُعْمَة
'Ubādah	Sp. of 'Ābid	عُبَادَة
'Ubayd	Dm. of 'Abd (slave)	عُبَيْد
'Ubaydah	Sp. of 'Abd	عُبَيْدَة

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Ubayy	Dm. of Abiyy (proud)	أَبِي
'Ufayr	Covered with dust; beige-colored	عَفَيْر
Uhbān	Giver of gift; generous	أُهْبَان
'Umar	Builder; alive	عُمَر
'Umārah	Sp. of 'Umar	عُمَارَة
'Umayr	Dm. of 'Umar	عُمَيْر
Umayy	Having a goal	أُمِّي
Umayyah	Sp. of Umayy	أُمِيَّة
Unays	Dm. of Anīs or Anas	أُنَيْس
'Uqayl	Dm. of 'Aqīl	عُقَيْل
'Uqbah	Follower; successor	عُقْبَة
'Urwah	Tie; knot	عُرْوَة
Usāmah	Lion	أُسَامَة
Usayd	Dm. of Asad	أُسَيْد
'Utbah	Returner to the right; repentor	عُتْبَة
'Uthmān	Goose's chick; baby snake	عُثْمَان
'Uwaymir	Dm. of 'Umar	عُؤَيْر
Uways	Wolf; Dm. of Aws	أُوَيْس
'Uyaynah	Sp. of 'Uyayn (choice or best)	عُيْنَة
Wābil	Rain	وَابِل

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Wābiṣah	Bright; sparkling	وَإِبْصَة
Waḍḍāḥ	Shiny	وَضَّاح
Wadī'	Gentle	وَدِيع
Wafā'	Honesty; fulfilment of promises	وَفَاء
Wafīq	In harmony; constant	وَفِيق
Wahb	Gift	وَهْب
Wā'il	Sheltered	وَأَيْل
Wajīḥ	Distinguished	وَجِيه
Wakī'	Stung	وَكِيْع
Walīd	Child	وَلِيْد
Wāqid	Lighter of fire	وَاقِد
Wāsi'	Wide; Compassionate	وَاسِع
Wāṣil	Kind to others; generous	وَاصِل
Wasīm	Handsome	وَاسِم
Wāsim	Marker; handsome	وَاسِم
Wāthiq	Sure; steady	وَائِق
Wuhayb	Dm. of Wahb	وُهَيْب
Yaḥyā	A prophet's name; alive	يَحْيَى
Ya'lā *	Lofty; supreme	يَعْلَى
Yamān	Ease and facility	يَمَان

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Ya 'qūb	A prophet's name; successor	يَعْقُوبُ
Ya 'rub	Well expressed	يَعْرَبُ
Yasār *	Ease; facility	يَسَارُ
Yāsir	Facilitated; aided	يَاسِرُ
Yazīd	Increase	يَزِيدُ
Yūnus	A prophet's name; sociable	يُونُسُ
Yusayr	Dm. of Yāsir or Yasār	يُسَيْرُ
Yūsuf	A prophet's name; cause of grief	يُوسُفُ
Zāfir	Victor	ظَافِرُ
Zāhid	Renouncer of undue worldly pleasures	زَاهِدُ
Zāhir	Shiny	زَاهِرُ
Zahīr	Supporter	ظَهِيرُ
Zā'id	Increased	زَائِدُ
Zā'idah	Sp. of Zā'id	زَائِدَةٌ
Zakariyyā	A prophet's name	زَكَرِيَّا
Zakī	Pure	زَكِيٌّ
Zayd	Increase	زَيْدُ
Zāyid	Same as Zā'id	زَائِدُ
Zirr	Sword-edge	زِرٌّ
Ziyād	Sp. of Zayd	زِيَادُ

Name	Meaning	الاسم
Zubayd	Dm. of Zabad (foam or fat)	زُبَيْدٌ
Zubayr	Dm. of Zabīr (wise)	زُبَيْرٌ
Zufar	Master	زُفَرَ
Zuhayr	Dm. of Zahr (flowers)	زُهَيْرٌ
Zur'ah	Land for planting; planting seeds	زُرْعَةٌ

Names of Girls

Name	Meaning	الإسم
'Ābidah	Worshiper	عَابِدَةٌ
'Ablah	Of perfect proportions	عَبْلَةٌ
'Adīlah	Leveled; fair	عَدِيلَةٌ
'Afāf	Chastity	عَفَافٌ
'Afīfah	Chaste	عَفِيفَةٌ
'Ā'idah	Returner (to truth)	عَائِدَةٌ
'Ā'ishah	Living; of well-being	عَائِشَةٌ
Ālā'	Favors; bounties	آلَاءٌ
'Āliyah	High; lofty	عَالِيَةٌ
'Aliyyah	High; lofty	عَلِيَّةٌ
'Alyā'	Loftiness	عَلِيَاءٌ
Amah	Female slave	أَمَةٌ
Amān	Security	أَمَانٌ
'Āmilah	Worker	عَامِلَةٌ
Amīnah	Trustworthy	أَمِينَةٌ
Āminah	Secure	أَمِنَةٌ
'Āmirah	Sp. of 'Amrah	عَامِرَةٌ
'Amrah	Alive; vivid	عَمْرَةٌ
Anīсах	Friendly; good companion	أَنْيَسَةٌ
'Aqīlah	Intellectual	عَقِيلَةٌ

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Arwā	Mountain goat; thirst quencher	أَرْوَى
Asīl	Smooth; soft	أَسِيل
Aṣīlah	Of noble descent	أَصِيلَة
‘Āṣimah	Protector	عَاصِمَة
Āsiyah	Good & comforting	أَسِيَّة
Asmā’	Excellent; supreme	أَسْمَاء
‘Aṣmā’	Protected; sheltered	عَصْمَاء
Athīlah	Of old and established origin	أَثِيلَة
‘Ātikah	Covered with reddish perfume (saffron)	عَاتِكَة
Āyah	Miracle; sign	آيَة
‘Azīzah	Dear; honorable	عَزِيْزَة
‘Azzah	Dear; honorable	عَزَّة
Bādiyah	Starter (of good)	بَادِيَة
Bahiyyah	Good looking	بِهِيَّة
Banān	Finger	بَنَان
Barīrah	Kind (to her relatives)	بَرِيْرَة
Batūl	Matchless	بَتُوْل
Buraydah	Dew or hail	بُرَيْدَة
Bushrā	Good news	بُشْرَى
Busrah	Soft; tender	بُسْرَة
Buthaynah	Easy and soft land	بُثَيْنَة

Name	Meaning	الاسم
Dīmah	Rainy cloud	دِيمَة
Durrah	Jewel	دُرَّة
Faḍīlah	Virtue	فَضِيلَة
Fāḍilah	Virtuous	فَاضِلَة
Fā'izah	Winner	فَائِزَة
Fākhitah	Moonlight; a bird	فَاحِثَة
Fāṭimah	Weaner or weaned	فَاطِمَة
Fukayhah	Good spirited; humorous	فُكَيْهَة
Ghaniyyah	Self-sufficient; rich	عَنِيَّة
Ghufayrah	Forgiver	عُفَيْرَة
Ghunayyah	Dm. of Ghaniyyah	عُنِيَّة
Ghuzaylah	Weaver; young deer	عُزَيْلَة
Ḥabāb	Desire; inclination	حَبَاب
Ḥabbābah	Sp. of Ḥabībah	حَبَابَة
Ḥabībah	Beloved	حَبِيبَة
Ḥafīzah	Protector; one who takes good care	حَفِيزَة
Ḥafṣah	Caring; merciful	حَفْصَة
Hājar	Migrator	هَاجِر
Ḥakīmah	Wise	حَكِيمَة
Hālah	Halo around the moon	هَالَة
Ḥalīmah	Tolerant	حَلِيمَة

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Ḥamīdah	Praiseworthy	حَمِيدَة
Ḥamnah	Small monkey; small grape	حَمْنَة
Hanā'	Contentment; happiness	هَنَاء
Hanādī	Related to Hind	هَنَادِي
Ḥanān	Compassion; care	حَنَان
Ḥanīfah	Inclined to the truth; upright	حَنِيفَة
Ḥaṣān	Chaste	حَصَان
Ḥasanah	Good; goodness	حَسَنَة
Ḥaṣībah	Careful; accountant	حَسِيبَة
Ḥasnā'	Good; fair	حَسَنَاء
Ḥassānah	Sp. of Ḥasnā'	حَسَانَة
Ḥawwā'	Eve	حَوَاء
Ḥayāh	Life	حَيَاة
Hayā'	Modesty	حَيَاء
Ḥibāb	Love	حِبَاب
Hibat-Ullāh	Gift from Allāh	هِبَةُ اللَّهِ
Hind	Herd of camels	هِنْد
Ḥiṣṣah	Share	حِصَّة
Hudā	Guidance	هُدَى
Hujaynah	White camel	هُجَيْنَة
Ḥumaydah	Dm. of Ḥamīdah	حُمَيْدَة

Name	Meaning	الاسم
Hunaydah	Dm. of Hind	هُنَيْدَة
Ḥusnā	Best prize	حُسْنَى
Jamīlah	Pretty; beautiful	جَمِيلَة
Jumānah	Jewel	جُمَانَة
Juwayriyah	Young neighbor	جُوَيْرِيَة
Kaḥīlah	Of antimony-lined eyes; wide-eyed	كَحِيلَة
Karīmah	Noble	كَرِيمَة
Kathīrah	Plentiful	كَثِيرَة
Khadījah	Born before full term	كَحْدِيجَة
Khālidah	Eternal; long-living	خَالِدَة
Khāliṣah	Pure	خَالِصَة
Khawlah	Female deer	خَوَالَة
Khayyirah	Full of goodness	خَيْرَة
Khulaydah	Dm. of Khālidah	خُلَيْدَة
Khulūd	Eternity; long-life	خُلُود
Khuzaymah	Similar; alike	خُزَيْمَة
Kuḥaylah	Dm. of Kaḥīlah	كُحَيْلَة
Labībah	Intelligent; clever	لَبِيبَة
Lamā	Example; thin lips	لَمَى
Lamīs	Soft to touch	لَمِيس
Lamyā'	Of thin lips; follower	لَمِيَاء

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Laṭīfah	Gentle	لَطِيفَةٌ
Laylā	Of long black hair	لَيْلَى
Lubābah	Of intellect	لُبَابَةٌ
Lubnā	Tree with sweet juice	لُبْنَى
Luhayyah	Playful; entertaining	لُهِيبَةٌ
Mājidah	Glorious	مَاجِدَةٌ
Malikah	Queen	مَلِكَةٌ
Ma'mūnah	Trusted	مَأْمُونَةٌ
Manāl	Sought prize	مَنَالٌ
Marām	Wish	مَرَامٌ
Maryam	Wished for	مَرِيَمٌ
Masarrah	Source of joy	مَسْرَّةٌ
Maṣūn	Protected	مَصُونٌ
Maymūnah	Blessed	مَيْمُونَةٌ
Mays	A walk of vanity	مَيْسٌ
Maysā'	Walks with vanity	مَيْسَاءٌ
Maysūn	Of nice figure and face	مَيْسُونٌ
Mayyah	A tree that produces leaves	مِيَّةٌ
Mayyāsah	Sp. of Maysā'	مِيَّاسَةٌ
Mu'āthah	Protected (by Allāh)	مُعَادَةٌ
Mubārasah	Blessed	مُبَارَكَةٌ

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Mufidah	Valuable	مُفِيدَة
Mulaykah	Dm. of Malikah	مُلَيْكَة
Munā	Wish	مُنَى
Munayyah	Dm. of Munā	مُنْيَة
Munībah	Returner (to Allāh)	مُنِيبَة
Munīfah	High and superior	مُنِيفَة
Munīrah	Shiny; brilliant	مُنِيرَة
Musaykah	Perfumed with musk	مُسَيْكَة
Muznah	Rainy cloud	مُزْنَة
Nabīhah	Attentive; alert	نَبِيهَة
Nabīlah	Noble	نَبِيْلَة
Nadā	Dew; generosity	نَدَى
Nādiyah	Generous	نَادِيَة
Nafisah	Valuable	نَفِيْسَة
Nā'ilah	Attainer of goals and goodness	نَائِلَة
Na'īmah	Happy; of easy-living	نَعِيْمَة
Najāh	Security	نَجَاة
Najāḥ	Success	نَجَاح
Nājiyah	Secure	نَاجِيَة
Najiyah	Intimate companion	نَجِيَّة
Najlā'	Beautiful-eyed	نَجْلَاء'

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Najwā	Intimate discourse; secret conversation	نَجْوَى
Nasīkah	Piece of gold or silver	نَسِيكَةٌ
Nawār	Clear of doubts	نَوَار
Nawf	Highness; loftiness	نَوْف
Nazīhah	Honest; incorrupt	نَزِيهَةٌ
Ni'am	Favors; bounties	نِعَم
Ni'mah	Favor; bounty	نِعْمَةٌ
Nufaysah	Dm. of Nafisah	نُفَيْسَةٌ
Nuhā	Intelligent	نُهَى
Nuhayyah	Dm. of Nuhā	نُهْيَةٌ
Nu'mā	Happiness; happy	نُعْمَى
Nūr	Light	نُور
Nūrah	Lighted; shiny	نُورَةٌ
Nusaybah	Relative; of good descent	نُسَيْبَةٌ
Nuwaylah	Dm. of Nā'ilah	نُؤَيْلَةٌ
Qarībah	Near; relative	قَرِيْبَةٌ
Qurrah	Coolness; satisfaction	قُرَّةٌ
Rabāb	White clouds	رَبَاب
Rābiyah	Overlooking; highness	رَابِيَةٌ
Rabī'ah	Spring time; of balanced body	رَبِيْعَةٌ
Rābi'ah	Settler; resident	رَابِعَةٌ

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Rāḍiyah	Satisfied	رَاضِيَةٌ
Raḍiyyah	Satisfying	رَضِيَّةٌ
Raḍwā	Satisfied	رَضْوَى
Raḥmah	Mercy	رَحْمَةٌ
Rā'idah	Pioneer	رَائِدَةٌ
Ramlah	Weaver; fast walker	رَمَلَةٌ
Randah	Nice-smelling tree	رَنْدَةٌ
Rashīdah	Guided	رَشِيدَةٌ
Rāshidah	Guided	رَاشِدَةٌ
Rāsimah	Running water	رَاسِمَةٌ
Rawā'	Thirst quenching	رَوَاءٌ
Rawḍah	Garden	رَوْضَةٌ
Rāwiyah	Quencher of thirst	رَاوِيَةٌ
Rayḥānah	Fragrant plant; basil	رَيْحَانَةٌ
Rayyā	Quencher of thirst	رَيًّا
Razān	Seriousness; balance	رَزَانٌ
Razīnah	Serious; well-balanced	رَزِينَةٌ
Ru'ā	Visions	رُؤَى
Rubā	Hills; highness	رُبَى
Rubay'	Dm. of Rubā	رُبَيِّ
Rufaydah	Prize; gift; generous	رُفَيْدَةٌ

Name	Meaning	الإِسْمُ
Rumaysā'	Mended; comforted	رُمَيْصَاءُ
Rumaythā'	One who corrects and repairs	رُمَيْثَاءُ
Rumaythah	One who corrects and repairs	رُمَيْثَةٌ
Ruqayyah	Riser; lofty	رُقَيْيَّةٌ
Şabāḥ	Morning; of shiny face	صَبَاحٌ
Sabī'ah	Of perfect body; born on the seventh month	سَبِيْعَةٌ
Şabīḥah	Bright-faced; good looking	صَبِيْحَةٌ
Sābiqah	Competitor	سَابِقَةٌ
Şābirah	Patient	صَابِرَةٌ
Sadīdah	Balanced; correct	سَدِيدَةٌ
Şafiyyah	Chosen	صَفِيَّةٌ
Şaḥar	Dusk	سَحْرٌ
Şahbā'	Blonde	صَهْبَاءُ
Sahlah	Easy	سَهْلَةٌ
Sa'īdah	Happy	سَعِيدَةٌ
Sā'idah	Prevalent	سَائِدَةٌ
Sakīnah	Tranquility	سَكِينَةٌ
Salāmah	Safety	سَلَامَةٌ
Şālihah	Righteous; good	صَالِحَةٌ
Sālimah	Secure	سَالِمَةٌ
Sallāmah	Sp. of Sālimah	سَلَامَةٌ

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Salmā	Secure	سَلْمَى
Samar	Night chatting	سَمَر
Samḥah	Tolerant; good hearted	سَمْحَة
Sāmiyah	Lofty; dignified	سَامِيَة
Sanā'	Light; gleam	سَنَاء
Saniyyah	Of light	سَنِيَّة
Sārah	Pleasant	سَارَة
Sarrā'	Ease	سَرَاء
Sārrah	Pleasing	سَارَة
Sawdah	Woman of authority	سَوْدَة
Sawsan	A flower	سَوْسَن
Shafīqah	Compassionate	شَفِيقَة
Shākirah	Grateful; thankful	شَاكِرَة
Shaqīqah	Full sister; equal	شَقِيقَة
Sharaf	Honor	شَرَف
Sharīfah	Noble; honorable	شَرِيفَة
Shaymā'	Good mannered	شَيْمَاء
Shifā'	Cure	شِفَاء
Su'ād	Happiness	سُعَاد
Subay'ah	Dm. of Sab'ah (lioness)	سُبَيْعَة
Şubayḥah	Dm. of Şabīḥah	صُبَيْحَة

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Su'dā	Happy; cause of happiness	سُعْدَى
Suhaylah	Dm. of Sahlah	سُهَيْلَةَ
Sukaynah	Dm. of Sakīnah	سُكَيْنَةَ
Sukhaylah	Beloved by her parents	سُخَيْلَةَ
Sulāfah	Most pure	سُلَافَةَ
Şulayḥah	Dm. of Şālihah	صُلَيْحَةَ
Sultānah	Of authority	سُلْطَانَةَ
Sumayyah	Dm. of Sāmiyah	سُمَيَّةَ
Ṭāhirah	Pure	طَاهِرَةَ
Tamīmah	Complete	تَمِيمَةَ
Ṭarfah	Overlooking and high	طَرْفَةَ
Ṭaybah	Goodness	طَيِّبَةَ
Ṭayyibah	Good; righteous	طَيِّبَةَ
Taymā'	One who enslaves others with her love	تَيْمَاءَ
Thāmirah	Fruitful	ثَامِرَةَ
Thanā'	Praise	ثَنَاءَ
Thurayyā	A star	ثُرَيَّا
Ṭulayḥah	Dm. of Ṭalḥah	طُلَيْحَةَ
Tumāḍir	Green and soft branch; good praise	تُمَاضِرَ
'Uhūd	Covenants	عُهُودَ
'Ulā	Highness	عُلَا

Name	Meaning	الإسم
'Ulayyah	Dm. of 'Aliyyah	عَلِيَّة
Ulf	Friendliness	أُف
Umāmah	Guide and role-model	أُمَامَة
'Umārah	Establishment	عُمَارَة
Umaymah	Dm. of Umāmah	أُمَيْمَة
'Umayrah	Alive; vivid	عُمَيْرَة
Umayyah	Having a goal	أُمِيَّة
Unaysah	Dm. of Anīсах	أُنَيْسَة
Uns	Good company	أُنْس
'Uqaylah	Dm. of 'Aqīlah	عُقَيْلَة
Waḍḥā'	Good-faced; shiny-faced	وَضْحَاء
Wafā'	Honesty; fulfilment of promises	وَفَاء
Wahībah	Gift	وَهْبِيَّة
Wā'ilah	Sheltered	وَائِلَة
Wājidah	Loving	وَأَجِدَة
Wājīhah	Distinguished	وَجِيهَة
Wāsilah	Kind to others; generous	وَأَصِلَة
Wi'ām	Good relationships	وِئَام
Widā'	Gentleness	وِدَاع
Widād	Love and kindness	وِدَاد
Wuhaybah	Dm. of Wahībah	وُهَيْبَة

Name	Meaning	الإسم
Yumn	Facility and ease	يُمن
Yumnā	Facilitated and blessed	يُمنَى
Yusrā	Facilitated and blessed	يُسرَى
Zāhidah	Renouncer of undue worldly pleasures	زَاهِدَة
Zahrā'	A planet; flower	زَهْرَاء
Zakiyyah	Pure	زَكِيَّة
Zaynab	Good smelling and looking tree	زَيْنَب
Zubaydah	Cream of milk	زُبَيْدَة

APPENDIX B: ALLĀH'S EXCELLENT NAMES

Introduction

In this appendix, we present an authentic list of Allāh's (ﷻ) excellent names (*al-Asmā' -ul-Ḥusnā*). These excellent names are needed for forming compound Islāmic names.

Prefixing Allāh's excellent names with 'Abd, 'Ubayd, or Amah, results in compound boys' and girls' names, as is demonstrated in the following table:

Prefix	Example	Meaning	Gender
'Abd	'Abd-ul-Aḥad	Servant of al-Aḥad	Boy
'Ubayd	'Ubayd-ul-Aḥad	Small Servant of al-Aḥad	Boy
Amah	Amat-ul-Aḥad	Female Servant of al-Aḥad	Girl

Guidelines Concerning Allāh's Names

The following are some important guidelines that should be considered when dealing with Allāh's names:

1. ALL OF ALLĀH'S NAMES ARE EXCELLENT

Allāh's names are the most excellent and supreme of names. They reflect qualities of perfection that have no weakness or flaw in them. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا﴾ الأعراف ١٨٠

«To Allāh belong the excellent names, so invoke Him by them.»¹

2. ALLĀH'S NAMES HAVE DISTINCTIVE MEANINGS

Allāh's various names are synonymous in that they all refer to

1. *Al-A'rāf* 7:180.

Him alone. On the other hand, each name has a distinctive REAL meaning and describes a distinctive attribute or act of perfection.

3. ALLĀH'S NAMES REQUIRE EVIDENCE

Allāh's names are restricted to those authentically mentioned by Him. There is no room for the human intellect to construct and ascribe names to Him without evidence. We may not attribute to Allāh any name that He did not explicitly attribute to Himself in His Book or His Messenger's Sunnah.

4. ALLĀH'S NAMES ARE COUNTLESS

There is no limit to the number of Allāh's names. While He (ﷻ) mentioned many of them in His revelation, He kept many to Himself.

'Abdullāh Bin Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) instructed anyone who is touched by anxiety or grief to say:

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي عَبْدُكَ، وَابْنُ عَبْدِكَ، وَابْنُ أَمَتِكَ، نَاصِيَتِي بِيَدِكَ، مَاضِيَ فِي حُكْمِكَ، عَدْلٌ فِي قَضَاؤِكَ، أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اسْمٍ هُوَ لَكَ، سَمَّيْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ، أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ، أَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ أَحَدًا مِنْ خَلْقِكَ، أَوْ اسْتَأْذَنْتَ بِهِ فِي عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ: أَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ رِبِيعَ قَلْبِي، وَنُورَ صَدْرِي، وَجَلَاءَ حُزْنِي، وَذَهَابَ هَمِّي.»

‘Allāhumma innī ‘abduka, wa-bnu ‘abdika, wa-bnu amatik. Nāṣiyatī biyadik. Māḍin fiyya ḥukmuk. ‘Adlun fiyya qaḍā’uk. As’aluka bi-kull-ismin huwa lak, sammayta bihī nafsak, aw anzaltahū fī kitābik, aw ‘allamtahū aḥadan min khalqik, aw-ista’tartahū min ‘ilm-il-ghaybi ‘indak: an taj’al-al-Qur’ān rabī’a qalbī, wa-nūra ṣadrī, wa-jalā’a ḥuznī, wa-thahāba hammī—

O Allāh! I am Your servant and the child of Your male and female servants. My forehead is in Your hand. Your command is in force on me. Your Decree for me is just. I beg of You with every name of Yours with which You named Yourself, revealed

in Your Books, taught to any of Your creation, or kept within Your private knowledge: to make the Qur'ān the rain for my heart, the light of my chest, and the means of clearing my grief and dispelling my anxiety.›

The Prophet (ﷺ) further indicated that whoever says this, Allāh (ﷻ) alleviates his anxiety and distress, and replaces his grief with cheerfulness.¹

5. MERIT OF NINETY-NINE OF ALLĀH'S NAMES

Ninety-nine of Allāh's names have a special benefit for anyone who encompasses them. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ لِلَّهِ تِسْعَةً وَتِسْعِينَ اسْمًا، مِثَّةً إِلَّا وَاحِدًا، مَنْ أَحْصَاهَا
(أَوْ حَفِظَهَا) دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ. وَهُوَ وَثْرٌ يُحِبُّ الْوَثْرَ.»

«Indeed, Allāh has ninety-nine names—one hundred minus one, whoever encompasses (or memorizes) them will enter *Jannah*. And He (Allāh) is *Witr* (Unique) and loves uniqueness (i.e., *tawḥīd*).»²

Encompassing or memorizing these names means: knowing them, believing in them correctly, and acting in a way that conforms to this belief. We will show below that more than ninety-nine of Allāh's excellent names appear in the Qur'ān or Sunnah.

Lists of Allāh's Authentic Excellent Names

A) SINGLE-WORD EXCELLENT NAMES FROM THE QUR'ĀN

The following list includes all of Allāh's single-word names that are mentioned in the Qur'ān.

-
1. Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Ṭabarānī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* 198, 199 and *al-Kalim-uf-Tayyib* 124).
 2. Recorded by al-Bukhārī (2736, 6410, 7392), Muslim (2677), and others.

#	Allāh's Name	Short Meaning	الإِسْمُ
1	Al-'Afuww	Pardoner	العَفْوُ
2	Al-Aḥad	One & Unique	الأَحَدُ
3	Al-Ākhir	Last	الْآخِرُ
4	Al-Akram	Most Noble & Generous	الْأَكْرَمُ
5	Al-A'lā	Most High	الْأَعْلَى
6	Al-'Alīm	Knowledgeable	العَلِيمُ
7	Al-'Aliyy	Sublime	العَلِيِّ
8	Al-Awwal	First	الْأَوَّلُ
9	Al-'Aẓīm	Great	العَظِيمُ
10	Al-Bāri'	Originator	الْبَارِئُ
11	Al-Barr	Benevolent	الْبَرُّ
12	Al-Baṣīr	All-Seeing	الْبَصِيرُ
13	Al-Bāṭin	Intimate & Close	الْبَاطِنُ
14	Al-Fattāḥ	Establisher of Mercy & Justice	الْفَتَّاحُ
15	Al-Ghaffār	Perpetual Forgiver	الْغَفَّارُ
16	Al-Ghafūr	Forgiver in Plenty	الْغَفُورُ
17	Al-Ghaniyy	Self-Sufficient	الْغَنِيِّ
18	Al-Hādī	Guide	الْهَادِي
19	Al-Ḥafīẓ	Guardian	الْحَفِیْظُ

#	Allāh's Name	Short Meaning	الإِسْمُ
20	Al-Ḥāfiz	Preserver	الْحَافِظُ
21	Al-Ḥakam	Judge	الْحَكَمُ
22	Al-Ḥakīm	Wise	الْحَكِيمُ
23	Al-Ḥākim	Commander & Judge	الْحَاكِمُ
24	Al-Ḥalīm	Forbearing & Tolerant	الْحَلِيمُ
25	Al-Ḥamīd	Praiseworthy	الْحَمِيدُ
26	Al-Ḥaqq	Truth	الْحَقُّ
27	Al-Ḥasīb	Reckoner & Sufficer	الْحَسِيبُ
28	Al-Ḥāsib	Reckoner	الْحَاسِبُ
29	Al-Ḥayy	Ever-Living	الْحَيُّ
30	Al-Ilāh	God	الْإِلَٰهُ
31	Al-Jabbār	Formidable & Restorer	الْجَبَّارُ
32	Al-Kabīr	Magnificent & Grand	الْكَبِيرُ
33	Al-Kafīl	Guarantor	الْكَفِيلُ
34	Al-Karīm	Generous & Noble	الْكَرِيمُ
35	Al-Khabīr	Well-Acquainted & All-Aware	الْخَبِيرُ
36	Al-Khāliq	Creator	الْخَالِقُ
37	Al-Khallāq	Perpetual Creator	الْخَلَّاقُ
38	Al-Lāh	Greatest Name	اللَّهُ

#	Allāh's Name	Short Meaning	الإِسْمُ
39	Al-Laṭīf	Subtle & Kind	اللطيفُ
40	Al-Majīd	Glorious	المجيدُ
41	Al-Malik	Sovereign	الملكُ
42	Al-Malīk	Sovereign	المليكُ
43	Al-Matīn	Powerful	المتينُ
44	Al-Mawlā	Protector	المولى
45	Al-Mubīn	Manifest & Manifesting	المبينُ
46	Al-Muḥaymin	Guard & Witness	المهيمنُ
47	Al-Muḥīṭ	Acquainted & Embracing	المحيطُ
48	Al-Mujīb	Responsive	المجيبُ
49	Al-Muqṭadir	All-Capable	المقتدرُ
50	Al-Muqīt	Custodian	المقيتُ
51	Al-Muṣawwir	Fashioner	المصورُ
52	Al-Musta'ān	He Whose Help Is Sought	المستعانُ
53	Al-Mutakabbir	Majestic	المتكبرُ
54	Al-Muta'ālī	Most Exalted	المتعالى
55	Al-Mu'min	Grantor of Security	المؤمنُ
56	Al-Qadīr	Capable	القديرُ
57	Al-Qādir	Capable & Competent	القادرُ

#	Allāh's Name	Short Meaning	الإِسْمُ
58	Al-Qahhār	Prevailing	الْقَهَّارُ
59	Al-Qāhir	Subjugator	الْقَاهِرُ
60	Al-Qarīb	Near	الْقَرِيبُ
61	Al-Qawiyy	Strong	الْقَوِيُّ
62	Al-Qayyūm	Sustainer of All	الْقَيُّومُ
63	Al-Quddūs	Pure & Holy	الْقُدُّوسُ
64	Al-Wadūd	Loving	الْوَدُودُ
65	Al-Wahhāb	Grantor	الْوَهَّابُ
66	Al-Wāhid	One	الْوَاحِدُ
67	Al-Wakīl	Trustee	الْوَكِيلُ
68	Al-Waliyy	Ally	الْوَلِيُّ
69	Al-Wārith	Inheritor	الْوَارِثُ
70	Al-Wāsi'	Encompassing	الْوَاسِعُ
71	Al-'Azīz	Honorable & Mighty	الْعَزِيزُ
72	An-Naṣīr	Helper	النَّصِيرُ
73	An-Nāṣir	Helper to Victory	النَّاصِرُ
74	Ar-Raḥīm	Dispenser of Mercy	الرَّحِيمُ
75	Ar-Rāḥim	Merciful	الرَّاحِمُ
76	Ar-Raḥmān	Most Merciful	الرَّحْمَنُ

#	Allāh's Name	Short Meaning	الإِسْمُ
77	Ar-Raqīb	Watchful	الرَّقِيبُ
78	Ar-Rāziq	Sustainer	الرَّازِقُ
79	Ar-Razzāq	Ever-Sustaining	الرَّزَّاقُ
80	Ar-Ra'ūf	Compassionate	الرَّؤُوفُ
81	Aṣ-Ṣādiq	Truthful	الصَّادِقُ
82	As-Salām	He Who Is Free of Ills	السَّلَامُ
83	Aṣ-Ṣamad	Eternal Refuge	الصَّمَدُ
84	As-Samī'	All-Hearing	السَّمِيعُ
85	Ash-Shahīd	Witness	الشَّهِيدُ
86	Ash-Shākīr	Appreciative	الشَّاكِرُ
87	Ash-Shakūr	Ever-Appreciative	الشَّكُورُ
88	At-Tawwāb	Repentance Facilitator & Acceptor	التَّوَّابُ
89	Az-Zāhir	Apparent & Sublime	الظَّاهِرُ

B) RELATIVE EXCELLENT NAMES FROM THE QUR'ĀN

The following list includes all of Allāh's names that are derived from their mention in the Qur'ān related to something else.

#	Allāh's Name	Short Meaning	الإِضَافَةُ	الإِسْمُ
1	Al-Ālim	All-Knowing	عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ	العَالِمُ
2	Al-'Allām	Most Knowledgeable	عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ	العَلَّامُ
3	Al-Badī'	Incomparable & Originator	بَدِيعُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ	البَدِيعُ

#	Allāh's Name	Short Meaning	الإِصْنَاتُ	الإِسْمُ
4	Al-Fāṭir	Creator & Originator	فَاطِرُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ	الْفَاطِرُ
5	Al-Ghāfir	Forgiving	غَافِرُ الذَّنْبِ	الْغَافِرُ
6	Al-Ghālib	Predominant	غَالِبٌ عَلَى أَمْرِهِ	الْغَالِبُ
7	Al-Jāmi'	Gatherer	جَامِعُ النَّاسِ	الْجَامِعُ
8	Al-Kāfi	Sufficient	كَافٍ عَبْدُهُ	الْكَافِي
9	Al-Mālik	Owner	مَالِكُ الْمُلْكِ	الْمَالِكُ
10	Al-Muḥyī	Giver of Life	مُحْيِي الْمَوْتِ	الْمُحْيِي
11	An-Nūr	Giver of Light & Guidance	نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ	النُّورُ
12	Ar-Rabb	Lord	رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ	الرَّبُّ
13	Ar-Rafī'	Lofty	رَفِيعُ الدَّرَجَاتِ	الرَّفِيعُ

C) EXCELLENT NAMES FROM THE SUNNAH

The following list includes Allāh's single-word names that are only mentioned in authentic *ḥadīths* of the Prophet (ﷺ).

#	Allāh's Name	Short Meaning	الإِسْمُ
1	Ad-Dayyān	Supreme Judge & Ruler	الدَّيَّانُ
2	Al-Bāsiṭ	Giver to the Worthy	الْبَاسِطُ
3	Al-Ḥayīyy	Modest Who Loves Modesty	الْحَيِّئُ
4	Al-Jamīl	Of Excellent Qualities	الْجَمِيلُ
5	Al-Jawād	Bountiful	الْجَوَادُ
6	Al-Mannān	Giver in Plenty	الْمَنَّانُ

#	Allāh's Name	Short Meaning	الإِسْمُ
7	Al-Muḥsin	Benevolent and Kind	المُحْسِنُ
8	Al-Muqaddim	Promoter of the Worthy	المُقَدِّمُ
9	Al-Musa'ir	He Who Fixes the Prices	المُسَعِّرُ
10	Al-Mu'akh-khir	Repressor (of the Unworthy)	المُؤَخِّرُ
11	Al-Mu'tī	Grantor	المُعْطِي
12	Al-Qābiḍ	Withholder (from the unworthy)	القَابِضُ
13	Al-Witr	One & Unique	الْوَيْتْرُ
14	Ar-Rafīq	Gentle	الرَّفِيقُ
15	As-Sayyid	Master	السَّيِّدُ
16	As-Sittīr	He Who Covers Sins & Ills	السَّيِّرُ
17	As-Subbūḥ	Exalted	السُّبُّوحُ
18	Ash-Shāfi	Curer	الشَّافِي
19	Aṭ-Ṭabīb	Healer	الطَّيِّبُ
20	Aṭ-Ṭayyib	Good & Pure	الطَّيِّبُ

D) COMPOUND EXCELLENT NAMES

In the above lists, we excluded Allāh's authentic names that are compounded from two words. The reason for this is that such names cannot be normally used for forming human names. However, we list below, for completeness, Allāh's most commonly accepted compounded names.

#	Allāh's Name	Short Meaning	الإِسْمُ
1	Fāliq-ul-Ḥabbi wan-Nawā	Splitter of Seeds and Pits	فَالِقُ الْحَبِّ وَالنَّوَى
2	Muqallib-ul- Qulūb*	Turner of Hearts	مُقَلِّبُ الْقُلُوبِ
3	Muṣarrif-ul- Qulūb*	Turner of Hearts	مُصَرِّفُ الْقُلُوبِ
4	<u>Thul-</u> 'Arsh	The One of the Throne	ذُو الْعَرْشِ
5	<u>Thul-</u> Faḍl	The One of Favors	ذُو الْفَضْلِ
6	<u>Thul-</u> Jalāli wal- Ikrām	The One of Greatness and Honor	ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ
7	<u>Thul-</u> Ma'ārij	The One of Highness	ذُو الْمَعَارِجِ
8	<u>Thuṭ-</u> Ṭawl	The One of Bounties	ذُو الطَّوْلِ

Names without Evidence

Many of the names commonly thought to be excellent names of Allāh have no evidence in Allāh's Book or His Messenger's Sunnah.

Most of those unauthentic names derive from a weak *ḥadīth* attributed to Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه). The beginning of this *ḥadīth* is identical to the earlier authentic *ḥadīth* of Abū Hurayrah, but goes on to list 99 names, thirty of which are unauthentic.¹

The often distributed poster of Allāh's 99 names contains more than 20 unauthentic names as well.

The following list contains the most common unauthentic names.

1. Recorded by at-Tirmithī, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be unauthentic by al-Albānī (*aḍ-Ḍa'īfah* 2563 and *al-Mishkāh* 2288).

#	Wrong Name	Short Meaning	الإِسْمُ
1	Ad-Dahr	Time	الدَّهْرُ
2	Ad-Dā'im	Permanent	الدَّائِمُ
3	Aḍ-Ḍārr	Harmer	الضَّارُّ
4	Al-Abad	Eternity	الأَبَدُ
5	Al-'Adl	Justice	العَدْلُ
6	Al-Bāqī	Lasting	الباقِي
7	Al-Bārr	Dutiful	الْبَارُّ
8	Al-Bā'ith	Resurrector	الْبَاعِثُ
9	Al-Burhān	Proof	الْبُرْهَانُ
10	Al-Ḥannān	Caring & Compassionate	الْحَنَّانُ
11	Al-Huwah	He	هُوَ
12	Al-Jalīl	Majestic	الْجَلِيلُ
13	Al-Khāfiḍ	Lowerer	الْخَافِضُ
14	Al-Mājid	Glorious	الْمَاجِدُ
15	Al-Māni'	Deterrent	الْمَانِعُ
16	Al-Maqṣūd	Goal	الْمَقْصُودُ
17	Al-Ma'būd	Worshiped	الْمَعْبُودُ
18	Al-Mubdi'	Originator	الْمُبْدِيُّ
19	Al-Mughīth	Succorer	الْمُغِيثُ

#	Wrong Name	Short Meaning	الإسم
20	Al-Mughnī	Enricher	المُغْنِي
21	Al-Muḥṣī	Enumerator	المُحْصِي
22	Al-Mu'īn	Helper	المُعِين
23	Al-Mumīt	Causer of Death	المُمِيتُ
24	Al-Munīr	Giver of Light	المُنِيرُ
25	Al-Muntaqim	Avenger	المُنْتَقِمُ
26	Al-Mun'im	Giver of Favors	المُنْعِمُ
27	Al-Muqṣiṭ	Just	المُقْسِطُ
28	Al-Mursil	Sender	المُرْسِلُ
29	Al-Muthill	Giver of Humility	المُذِلُّ
30	Al-Mu'īd	Repeater	المُعِيدُ
31	Al-Mu'izz	Giver of Dignity	المُعِزُّ
32	Al-Qadīm	Ancient	القَدِيمُ
33	Al-Qā'im	Standing	القَائِمُ
34	Al-Waḥīd	Unique	الْوَحِيدُ
35	Al-Wājid	Passionate	الْوَاجِدُ
36	Al-Wālī	Ruler	الْوَالِي
37	Al-Wāqī	Protector	الْوَاقِي
38	An-Nāfi'	Beneficent	النَّافِعُ

#	Wrong Name	Short Meaning	الإِسْمُ
39	Ar-Rāfi‘	Raiser	الرَّافِعُ
40	Ar-Rashīd	Guided	الرَّشِيدُ
41	Ar-Rāshid	Guided	الرَّاشِدُ
42	Aṣ-Ṣabūr	Patient	الصَّبُورُ
43	As-Sāmi‘	Hearer	السَّمْعُ
44	As-Sātir	Coverer	السَّاتِرُ
45	As-Sattār	Ever-Coverer	السَّتَّارُ
46	Ash-Shadīd	Stern	الشَّدِيدُ
47	Aṭ-Ṭālib	Seeker	الطَّالِبُ
48	At-Tāmm	Complete	التَّامُّ

APPENDIX C: ARABIC TERMINOLOGY

Introduction

TRANSLATING AND REFERENCING QUR'ĀN AND ḤADĪTH

The Qur'ān contains Allāh's exact words. These words cannot be precisely translated into other languages because of possible misinterpretation and limited human understanding. We may only translate the meanings as understood by trustworthy Islāmic scholars. With this in mind, our Qur'ānic quotes include the Arabic text, the English meaning in «**boldface**», and a footnote specifying the location of the cited *āyah*(s).

Likewise, our *ḥadīth* quotes (as well as some quotes from the *Salaf*) include the Arabic text, the English meaning in «**boldface**», and a footnote briefly specifying its location in *ḥadīth* compilations and its level of authenticity. If the quote contains a supplication or exaltation, we normally include a transliteration of its text.

RELEVANT CHARTS

Near the end of this appendix, we present two important charts. The first defines the transliteration symbols used in this book. The second defines veneration terms that should be uttered at the mention of Allāh or one of His righteous worshipers.

ARABIC TERMS

The following glossary contains definitions of Arabic terms that are commonly used in Islāmic discussions. These terms constitute a basic vocabulary for readers of Islāmic material. The glossary is followed with charts of Arabic week-days, Islāmic lunar months, and important Islamic places.

Other terms specifically pertinent to the current book are included in the "Index" section at the end of this appendix, together with a page-reference indicating where they are first defined in this book.

Glossary of Common Terms

Term	Definition
' <i>Abd</i>	Slave, servant, or worshiper. Pl.: ' <i>ibād</i> or ' <i>abīd</i> .
<i>Abū</i>	Father of. Also, <i>abā</i> and <i>abī</i> (depending on position in sentence).
<i>Adab</i>	Good characters or manners; etiquette. Pl.: <i>ādāb</i> .
<i>Ākhirah</i>	The last life (or hereafter).
<i>Al-Fātiḥah</i>	The first chapter of the Qur'ān.
' <i>Ālim</i>	Scholar; learned man.
' <i>Allāmah</i>	Exaggerated form of "' <i>ālim</i> ".
<i>Āmīn</i>	"O Allāh, grant my request," said in concluding a <i>du'ā</i> '.
<i>Anṣār</i>	Residents of Madīnah who supported the Prophet (ﷺ).
' <i>Aṣr</i>	Afternoon; the third daily obligatory prayer.
<i>Athān</i>	Announcement; call to the prayer.
' <i>Awrah</i>	Weakness that requires protection; body-parts that should be concealed from others.
<i>Āyah</i>	Miracle; sign; a portion of the Qur'ānic text that is usually one sentence in length. Pl.: <i>āyāt</i> .
<i>Barakah</i>	Blessing.
<i>Bid'ah</i>	Innovation; unjustified change in the Islāmic teachings.
<i>Bin</i>	Son (a shorter form of <i>ibn</i>).
<i>Bint</i>	Girl; daughter.
<i>Da'wah</i>	Call; mission.
<i>Dīn</i>	Religion – often used in reference to Islām.
<i>Dīnār</i>	Old currency ≈ 4.25 g of 22k gold in today's standards.
<i>Dirham</i>	Old currency ≈ 3.0 g of pure silver in today's standards.
<i>Du'ā</i>	Invocation; supplication; prayer.
<i>Dunyā</i>	The lower (i.e., worldly) life.
<i>Fajr</i>	Dawn; the first daily obligatory prayer.
<i>Farḍ</i>	Obligation. <i>Farḍ Kifāyah</i> : A communal obligation that must be performed by at least a few Muslims. <i>Farḍ 'Ayn</i> : An obligation upon every Muslim.

Term	Definition
<i>Fatwā</i>	Religious verdict. Pl.: <i>fatāwā</i> or <i>fatāwī</i> .
<i>Fiqh</i>	Understanding; Islāmic jurisprudence—a subject dealing with practical regulations in Islām.
<i>Fitnah</i>	Trial; test; temptation; affliction.
<i>Fiṭrah</i>	The pure nature upon which Allāh (ﷻ) created people.
<i>Ghayb</i>	All knowledge beyond the reach of human perception.
<i>Ghusl</i>	Bath; ritual bath required after intercourse, ejaculation, and after a woman completes her menses.
<i>Ḥadīth</i>	Talk; speech; reports of the Prophet's (ﷺ) sayings, actions, and tacit approvals.
<i>Ḥajj</i>	Major pilgrimage to Makkah.
<i>Ḥalāl</i>	Permissible.
<i>Ḥalqah</i>	Circle or ring; study circle.
<i>Ḥarām</i>	Prohibited.
<i>Ḥasan</i>	Good; acceptable.
<i>Hilāl</i>	Crescent.
<i>Hijāb</i>	Cover; curtain; the Muslim woman's proper attire.
<i>Hijrah</i>	Migration; the early Muslims' migration to al-Madīnah.
<i>Ibn</i>	Son.
<i>ʿĪd</i>	Festival. Pl.: <i>a'yād</i> .
<i>Ihrām</i>	Prohibition; a state assumed by pilgrims, prohibiting for them specific acts, such as hunting, perfume, marriage.
<i>Ijmā'</i>	Consensus.
<i>Ijtihād</i>	Ability to reach correct conclusions from the available evidence.
<i>Imām</i>	Leader (of a nation, prayer, etc.); distinguished Islāmic scholar.
<i>Īmān</i>	Faith; belief.
<i>Iqāmah</i>	Establishment; call for starting the prayer.
<i>'Ishā'</i>	Night time; the fifth daily obligatory prayer.
<i>Isnād</i>	Chain of narrators of a <i>ḥadīth</i> .
<i>Jahannam</i>	Hell.
<i>Jāhiliyyah</i>	The era of ignorance (<i>jahl</i>) and disbelief prior to Islām.

Term	Definition
<i>Jamā'ah</i>	Muslim community; congregation of prayer.
<i>Janābah</i>	State of “uncleanliness” arising from ejaculation or intercourse. <i>Janābah</i> is terminated with <i>ghusl</i> .
<i>Janāzah</i>	Funeral.
<i>Jannah</i>	Garden; the gardens of paradise.
<i>Jihād</i>	Striving (or fighting) for Allāh’s cause.
<i>Jinn</i>	Creation that Allāh (ﷻ) made from fire, sometimes translated as “demon”. Satan is one of the <i>jinn</i> s.
<i>Jumu'ah</i>	Friday; the Friday mid-day prayer.
<i>Junub</i>	Person in a state of <i>janābah</i> .
<i>Kāfir</i>	Person who practices <i>kufr</i> . Pl.: <i>kuffār</i> .
<i>Khalīfah</i>	Successor. A Muslim ruler who succeeded the Prophet (ﷺ). Pl.: <i>khulafā'</i> .
<i>Khamr</i>	Alcoholic beverage.
<i>Khilāfah</i>	Succession; caliphate – a <i>khalīfah</i> 's rule.
<i>Kufr</i>	Ingratitude; disbelief; rejection of the faith of Islām.
<i>Khuṭbah</i>	Speech; sermon.
<i>Maghrib</i>	Sunset; the fourth daily obligatory prayer.
<i>Maḥram</i>	A man closely related to a woman and permanently prohibited from marrying her; examples: father, son, brother, uncle, nephew, father-in-law, son-in-law, son through nursing. Non- <i>maḥrams</i> include: cousin, stepbrother, brother-in-law.
<i>Makrūh</i>	Disliked; act that is disapproved but not prohibited in Islām.
<i>Malak</i>	Angel; also: <i>malāk</i> .
<i>Masjid</i>	Place designated for <i>sujūd</i> ; mosque.
<i>Mathhab</i>	Way or approach. It often refers to one of the four schools of <i>fiqh</i> : the Ḥanafī, Mālikī, Shāfi'ī, or Ḥanbalī.
<i>Minbar</i>	Raised platform in a <i>masjid</i> for delivering a <i>khuṭbah</i> .
<i>Mufī</i>	A 'ālim who gives <i>fatwā</i> .
<i>Muhājir</i>	Migrant; immigrant; person who undertakes <i>hijrah</i> . Pl.: <i>muhājirū(ī)n</i> .
<i>Mujāhid</i>	Person who performs <i>jihād</i> . Pl.: <i>mujāhidū(ī)n</i> .

Term	Definition
<i>Munkar</i>	Disapproved or rejected act. Pl.: <i>munkarāt</i> .
<i>Muṣallā</i>	Place designated for <i>ṣalāh</i> (or prayer).
<i>Muṣḥaf</i>	Collection of “ <i>ṣuḥuf</i> ” or sheets; book of the Qur’ānic text.
<i>Mushrik</i>	Person who practices <i>shirk</i> . Pl.: <i>mushrikū(ī)n</i> .
<i>Nafl</i>	Extra; voluntary; supererogatory deeds.
<i>Najāсах</i>	Impurity; filth. Adj.: <i>najis</i> .
<i>Qaḍā’</i>	Allāh’s decree and measure.
<i>Qadar</i>	Allāh’s predestination; often used as synonym of <i>qaḍā’</i> .
<i>Qiblah</i>	Direction of al-Ka’bah in Makkah.
<i>Qiyām</i>	Standing; the night prayer.
<i>Qudsī</i>	Holy. A <i>qudsī ḥadīth</i> is a statement that the Prophet (ﷺ) attributes to Allāh (ﷻ), though it is not from the Qur’ān.
<i>Rak’ah</i>	Full prayer unit, containing one <i>rukū’</i> . Pl.: <i>rak’āt</i> .
<i>Ribā</i>	Usury; interest.
<i>Rukū’</i>	Bowing; bowing in the prayer.
<i>Ṣadaqah</i>	Charity.
<i>Ṣaḥābah</i>	Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ). Singular: <i>ṣaḥābī</i> .
<i>Ṣaḥīḥ</i>	True; authentic.
<i>Salaf</i>	The early righteous pioneers and scholars of Islām.
<i>Ṣalāh</i>	Prayer; supplicating for the Prophet (ﷺ).
<i>Salām</i>	Peace; greeting with peace: <i>as-salāmu ‘alaykum</i> .
<i>Sanad</i>	Same as <i>isnād</i> .
<i>Shahādah</i>	Testimony; the Testimony of Islām: “There is no true god but Allāh, and Muḥammad is Allāh’s Messenger”; martyrdom for Allāh’s (ﷻ) cause.
<i>Shahīd</i>	Witness; person martyred for Allāh’s cause. Fem.: <i>shahīdah</i> , Pl.: <i>shuhadā’</i> .
<i>Shām</i>	Middle-East area of Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon.
<i>Shar’ (or Sharī’ah)</i>	The Islāmic Law. <i>Shar’</i> : legislated or permissible matter. <i>Ash-Shāri’</i> : the Legislator (Allāh ﷻ).

Term	Definition
<i>Shaykh</i>	Elderly man; title of respect for a man with an above-average level in Islāmic knowledge.
<i>Shayṭān</i>	Satan; devil.
<i>Shirk</i>	Polytheism; paganism; joining partners with Allāh (ﷻ).
<i>Sīrah</i>	Biography; the Prophet's (ﷺ) biography.
<i>Siwāk</i>	Stick from a desert tree, used for brushing the teeth.
<i>Ṣiyām</i>	Fasting.
<i>Sujūd</i>	Prostration; prostration in the prayer.
<i>Sunnah</i>	Way; guidance; teachings; the Prophet's (ﷺ) way and guidance.
<i>Sūrah</i>	Qur'ānic chapter.
<i>Tābi'ī</i>	Follower; student of the <i>Ṣaḥābah</i> . Pl.: <i>Tābi'ū'īn</i> .
<i>Tafsīr</i>	Explanation; Qur'ānic interpretations and commentaries.
<i>Takbīr</i>	Saying, "Allāhu Akbar – Allāh is the greatest."
<i>Ṭahārah</i>	Purity; cleanliness. Adj.: <i>ṭāhir</i> .
<i>Tahlīl</i>	Saying, "Lā ilāha illallāh – There is no (true) god except Allāh."
<i>Tahmīd</i>	(Also, <i>ḥamd</i>): praise; saying, "Al-ḥamdu lillāh – Praise be to Allāh."
<i>Taqlīd</i>	Imitation, especially without knowledge.
<i>Taqwā</i>	Fearing and revering Allāh.
<i>Tarbiyah</i>	Cultivation or education.
<i>Tasbīḥ</i>	Saying, "Subḥān-Allāh – Exalted be Allāh."
<i>Taṣfiyah</i>	Filtration or cleansing.
<i>Tashahhud</i>	Pronouncing the <i>Shahādah</i> ; the last part of prayer that includes pronouncing the <i>Shahādah</i> .
<i>Taslīm</i>	Saying <i>salām</i> ; concluding the prayer with <i>salām</i> .
<i>Ṭawāf</i>	Circumambulation around the Ka'bah.
<i>Tawḥīd</i>	Belief that Allāh is the only Lord and God to be worshiped, and that He possesses the most sublime attributes.
<i>Tayammum</i>	Symbolic ablution, in the absence of water, performed by wiping clean dust over the face and hands (to the wrists).
<i>Ṭhīkr</i>	Remembrance and extolment of Allāh (ﷻ). Pl.: <i>athkār</i> .

Term	Definition
' <i>Ulamā</i> '	Plural of "' <i>ālim</i> ".
<i>Umm</i>	Mother.
<i>Ummah</i>	Community; nation; followers.
' <i>Umrah</i>	Minor form of pilgrimage to Makkah that may be performed at any time of the year.
<i>Wahy</i>	Revelation; inspiration.
<i>Wājib</i>	Obligatory or required; obligation.
<i>Walī</i>	Friend; ally; guardian.
<i>Witr</i>	Odd number; last part of the night prayer (consisting of an odd number of <i>rak'āt</i>).
' <i>Wuḍū</i> '	Ritual ablution for the prayer; it includes washing the face and forearms, wiping over the head, and washing the feet.
<i>Zakāh</i>	Obligatory charity. <i>Zakāt-ul-fīṭr</i> : charity in the form of food given to the needy at the end of <i>Ramaḍān</i> .
<i>Zinā</i>	Adultery or fornication.
<i>Zuhr</i>	Noon; the second daily obligatory prayer.

Arabic Weekdays

Weekday	Arabic Name	اليوم
① Friday	<i>Al-Jumu'ah</i>	الجمعة
② Saturday	<i>As-Sabt</i>	السبت
③ Sunday	<i>Al-Aḥad</i>	الأحد
④ Monday	<i>Al-Ithnayn</i>	الاثنين
⑤ Tuesday	<i>Ath-Thulāthā'</i>	الثلاثاء
⑥ Wednesday	<i>Al-Arbu'ā'</i>	الأربعاء
⑦ Thursday	<i>Al-Khamīs</i>	الخميس

Islāmic *Hijrī* Months

Lunar Month	الشَّهْرُ
① <i>Al-Muḥarram</i>	المُحَرَّم
② <i>Ṣafar</i>	صَفَر
③ <i>Rabīʿ-ul-Awwal</i>	رَبِيعُ الْأَوَّلِ
④ <i>Rabīʿ-uth-Thānī</i> (or <i>Rabīʿ-ul-Ākhir</i>)	رَبِيعُ الثَّانِي
⑤ <i>Jumāda al-Ūlā</i>	جُمَادَى الْأَوَّلَى
⑥ <i>Jumād-al-Ākhirah</i> (or <i>Jumād-ath-Thānīyah</i>)	جُمَادَى الْآخِرَةِ

Lunar Month	الشَّهْرُ
⑦ <i>Rajab</i>	رَجَب
⑧ <i>Shaʿbān</i>	شَعْبَانَ
⑨ <i>Ramaḍān</i>	رَمَضَانَ
⑩ <i>Shawwāl</i>	شَوَّال
⑪ <i>Thul-Qaʿdah</i>	ذُو الْقَعْدَةِ
⑫ <i>Thul-Hijjah</i>	ذُو الْحِجَّةِ

Important Places

The following is a brief list of important places and locations for Muslims.

Place	Location
Makkah	The Prophet's (ﷺ) birthplace and the holiest town in Islām. It is located in western central Arabia.
Al-Madīnah	The town in Arabia to which the Prophet (ﷺ) migrated, built his <i>Masjid</i> , and lived the last ten years of his life. Its old name was Yathrib, but he changed it to Ṭaybah.
Al-Quds	The holy town of Jerusalem. It contains the third most sacred <i>masjid</i> in Islām.
Al-Kaʿbah	The house of worship in Makkah that all Muslims face in their prayers.
Al-Masjid-ul-Ḥarām	The Sanctified Mosque; the grand <i>masjid</i> in Makkah that contains al-Kaʿbah at its center.

Transliteration



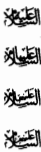

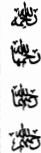
Except for proper nouns, transliterated Arabic terms are *italicized*. In general, the rules of English pronunciation are applicable. The following table includes additional symbols employed in this book to help pronounce the Arabic terms.

Arabic Letter	Symbol Used	English Equivalent Sound; Examples
ا	<i>Alif</i>	ā, Ā Long vowel “a”. Mostly: <u>M</u> an, <u>s</u> ad. Occasionally: <u>F</u> ather, <u>h</u> ard, <u>g</u> od.
و	<i>Wāw</i>	ū, Ū Long vowel “u”. <u>R</u> oot, <u>s</u> oup, <u>f</u> lute.
ي	<i>Yā’</i>	ī, Ī Long vowel “i”. <u>S</u> eed, <u>l</u> ean, <u>p</u> iece, <u>r</u> ec <u>i</u> ve.
ء	<i>Hamzah</i>	’ The first consonant vocal sound uttered when saying: <u>a</u> t, <u>i</u> t, <u>o</u> h.
ث	<i>Thā’</i>	th, Th <u>T</u> hree, <u>m</u> oth.
ح	<i>Hā’</i>	ḥ, Ḥ No equivalent. Produced in the lower throat, below “h”. It somewhat resembles the “h” in “ahem”.
خ	<i>Khā’</i>	kh, Kh No equivalent. Produced in the back of the mouth and top of the throat.
ذ	<i>Thāl</i>	th, Th <u>T</u> here, <u>m</u> oth <u>er</u> .
ص	<i>Ṣād</i>	ṣ, Ṣ A deeper “s” sound. Somewhat close to the “sc” in “mus <u>cl</u> e”.
ض	<i>Ḍād</i>	ḍ, Ḍ Sounds deeper than a “d”. Produced by touching the tongue to the mouth's roof, with the sides of the tongue pressed against the top molars.
ط	<i>Ṭah</i>	ṭ, Ṭ Similar but deeper than a “t”.
ظ	<i>Ẓah</i>	ẓ, Ẓ A deeper <u>thāl</u> , produced by touching the backside of the tongue to the tip of the upper front teeth.
ع	<i>‘Ayn</i>	’ Produced in the bottom of the throat, underneath the <u>ḥā’</u> .
غ	<i>Ghayn</i>	gh, Gh A gurgling sound produced in the back of the mouth, just above the <u>khā’</u> . Similar to the “R” in some French accents.

Arabic Letter	Symbol Used	English Equivalent Sound; Examples
ق	Qāf	q, Q
		Somewhat similar to the “c” in “coffee”.

Veneration Symbols

Out of love, appreciation, and gratitude, a Muslim is urged to utter the following phrases at the mention of Allāh, His messengers, or other righteous individuals.

Phrase & Transliteration		Meaning	Uttered with
<i>Subhānahū wa ta ‘ālā;</i> <i>Jalla jalāluh;</i> <i>‘Azza wajal</i>		He is exalted above weakness and indignity; exalted is His glory; He is exalted and glorified.	Allāh
<i>Ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam</i>		May Allāh’s peace and praise be on him.	Muḥammad or other prophets
<i>‘Alayhi-ssalām;</i> <i>‘Alayha-ssalām;</i> <i>‘Alayhima-ssalām;</i> <i>‘Alayhimu-ssalām</i>		Peace be on him, her, both of them, or all of them.	Remarkably righteous individuals (prophets, angels, etc.)
<i>Raḍiy-allāhu ‘anhu;</i> <i>Raḍiy-allāhu ‘anhā;</i> <i>Raḍiy-allāhu ‘anhumā;</i> <i>Raḍiy-allāhu ‘anhum</i>		May Allāh be pleased with him, her, both of them, or all of them.	Ṣaḥābah
<i>Raḥimahullā;</i> <i>Raḥimahallāh;</i> <i>Raḥimahumallāh;</i> <i>Raḥimahumullāh</i>		May Allāh have mercy on him, her, both of them, or all of them.	Past ‘ulamā’ or righteous Muslims

Index of Arabic Terms

<i>Al-Asmā' -ul-Husnā</i>	221
' <i>Aqqa</i>	65
' <i>Aqīqah</i>	65
' <i>Uqūq</i>	65
<i>Barzakh</i>	164
<i>Bishārah</i>	15
<i>Fiṭr</i>	148
<i>Hady</i>	72
<i>Hanak</i>	107
<i>Tahnik</i>	107
' <i>Iddah</i>	166
<i>Istihbāb</i>	69
<i>Khalīl</i>	24
<i>Khalūq</i>	92
<i>Khinzib</i>	52
<i>Khitān</i>	105
<i>Kunyah</i>	47
<i>Mu'awwithāt</i>	125
<i>Nahr</i>	148
<i>Nasaka</i>	66
<i>Nasīkah</i>	65
<i>Qaz'</i>	112
<i>Qiyās</i>	75
<i>Raqā</i>	120
<i>Ruqā</i>	120
<i>Ruqyah</i>	120
<i>Shāt</i>	73
<i>Tahni'ah</i>	17
<i>Tamīmah</i>	132
<i>Tarkhīm</i>	63
<i>Taṣwīr</i>	141
<i>Tiwalah</i>	132
' <i>Ubūdiyyah</i>	35
<i>Uḏhiyah</i>	75
<i>Walīmah</i>	85

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