



Friday Sermon

HAZRAT MUHYI-UD-DIN AL-KHALIFATULLAH

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(Summary of Sermon)

After greeting all his disciples (and all Muslims) worldwide with the greeting of peace Hadhrat Khalifatullah (atba) read the Tashahhud, Ta'uz, Surah Al Fatiha, and then he delivered his sermon on the subject of ***“Womenfolk in Islam (Part 2)”***

WOMENFOLK IN ISLAM:

By the grace of Allah, I thus continue my Friday Sermon on the status of the Womenfolk in Islam.

(3) AS A MOTHER

As mothers, the status of women has been raised by Islam to such an extent that nothing higher is conceivable. As the last law-bearing religion, Islam has provided for the every right and need of the female human species, and perfected them so that these teachings represent the best of teachings for generations up till the Day of Judgement.

The Holy Quran says:

Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to (your) parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in your life, do not say to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour. And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: “My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood.” (17: 24-25)



It is reported by Hazrat Abu Huraira (ra) that when the Holy Prophet (pbuh) was questioned by a disciple as to who after God and His Messenger (pbuh) deserve his fine treatment, the Prophet said: "Your mother." He then asked, "Who next?" The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) replied: "Your mother." He asked again: "Who next?" He (pbuh) said again, "Your mother." The man put the question for the fourth time and it was only then that the Holy Prophet (pbuh) said: "Your father." (Bukhari)

This Hadith shows the paramount importance which the mother enjoys in the eyes of Allah and in the life of his children and family. She is deserving of much more respect and care, three times more than the father.

The sacrifices of the mother for her child not only include the long and painful pregnancy period, but also the moment of delivery (giving birth to the child), which is equally painful. In the Holy Quran, Allah says: **We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents: In pain did his mother bear him (during pregnancy), and in pain did she give him birth.** (46: 16)

One of the companions came in the presence of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and asked him: *"Whilst travelling there was a place where the ground was so hot that if you placed a piece of uncooked meat on the ground it would roast! I have carried my mother on my shoulders for six miles. Am I free from the rights of my mother?"* The Holy Prophet (pbuh) said: *"Perhaps, this could be the recompense for (only) one of the shocks she endured during labour while giving birth to you."* (Tabarani).

In Islam the Pilgrimage to Mecca, i.e., the Hajj is the best action of worship and the reward to a person who performs the Hajj properly is that all his past sins are forgiven and he receives a high rank in the eyes of Allah. But in expressing the dignity of the mother, the Holy Prophet said: *"One who looks at the face of his mother with sentiments of reverence and love once, is rewarded as if he had performed the Pilgrimage."* The people asked him, what if he looked twice, to which he replied: *"It is as if he had performed two Pilgrimages, and thrice, as if he had performed three Pilgrimages and so on."*

In this respect, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) himself set a model for the world. Once, Halima (ra) the lady who nursed him in his childhood came to see him. The Prophet was sitting with his disciples. As soon as he saw her, he stood up, called to her as a mother with reverence and spread his mantle on the floor and requested his foster mother to take her seat there. It is quite evident from this Sunnah that the respect which a mother receives from her children in Islam is the highest to which no other worldly relationship can aspire.

The doors of spiritual elevation are open to woman in the same way as they are open to men. They are commanded to educate themselves in the same way as the men, and if they attain a high position in learning, then even the men are expected to learn and benefit from their knowledge and wisdom. It is reported that after the Prophet's death, his disciples used to visit

Hazrat Ummul Mumineen Aisha (ra), the noble wife of the Holy Prophet (pbuh), and seek knowledge from her for the Holy Prophet (pbuh) before his demise told the congregation of believers that if they wanted to learn half of their whole religion, then they should consult Aisha (*Umayra*).

Islamic history is resplendent with a long list of the names of the ladies who received the highest honour in society, the highest degree in learning and the highest qualifications in different branches of human activity. It was through the influence of other societies - which were not Muslim – that the idea of the inferiority of the female sex already existing in those societies spread to the uneducated class among the Muslims, who knew very little about the teachings of Islam. Had they known the teachings of Islam, they would have known that in Islam the female sex deserves the same position, the same respect and the same dignity as the members of the male sex who, in turn, are not allowed to degrade and insult them and make them their tools. To touch them with a bad intent is considered a sin and even to glance at them with a bad motive is counted as one of the most heinous sin (e.g. adultery) in Islam. That is why in the Holy Quran men are commanded: **Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: And Allah is well acquainted with all that they do.** (24: 31)

The importance of a woman in society cannot be overestimated. She is the mother of humanity. She brings up the child in her womb for at least six months, feeds him at her breast for at least two years and is mainly responsible for his training at least up to the age of six or seven.

It is a well known fact of medical science that the mentality of the mother affects the mentality of her children just as, or even more than, her physical qualities influence their physical build. Islam, therefore, commands women to keep themselves away from places where there may be the slightest chance of their being influenced by an evil force or evil idea so that their chastity and purity may be preserved and the mentality of their offspring may be safe from corruption. This is why Allah says in the Holy Quran: **O consorts of the Prophet, you are not like any other women; if you fear Allah, do not be soft in speech lest he in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire; and speak a speech that is just. And stay quietly in your houses and do not make a dazzling display like that of the former times of ignorance; and establish regular prayer, and give regular charity and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah only desires to remove all abomination from you, O people of the household, and to purify you a (thorough) purifying.** (33: 33-34)

There is no blame on them (the women) (if they appear unveiled) before their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their own women, or of what their right hand's possess. And fear Allah; surely Allah is Witness of all things. (33: 56).

O Prophet tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women that they cast their outer garments over their persons (when they go out of their homes). This will be more convenient, that they should be known (as such) and not molested. And Allah is oft-Forgiving and most-Merciful. (33: 60)

Examples of the way in which those commandments were interpreted by the Holy Prophet (pbuh) can be seen in his beloved daughter Fatimah, and his beloved wives, Khadija and Aisha among others. Nowhere do we find any evidence after the revelation of the veil (*Pardah*) that the Holy Prophet's wives or his daughters were ever seen with an open face and an open head in front of strangers save at the time of performing acts of worship like prayer or pilgrimage. In the conditions of prayer it is laid down that the body of the woman must be entirely covered except her face and hands. There is also an express injunction in the Hadith that no woman should put on a veil during the pilgrimage. In the prayer and pilgrimage, men are strictly forbidden from gazing at the faces of the womenfolk and they have been warned to remember that the female servants of Allah are in the presence of their Creator.

Thus with respect to their position in life, their inherent rights as human beings and their relations with Allah men and women are on an equal level in Islam. This was the teaching of the Holy Prophet (pbuh). And this too is the verdict of the Holy Quran for Allah says: **Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female. You are (members) one of another. (3: 196).**

May Allah grant all mankind the capacity to realize the beauty of the teachings of Islam and give to the women the importance they deserve by not trampling upon their rights and by giving them the proper respect taught by Islam which shall see to their growth in both the temporal and spiritual realm for the benefit of all human species. *Ameen.*