



Showing *Birr* to Parents and the Rights of Children

A Khuṭba by **Sheikh ‘Abdul Ḥamīd Kishk**¹

Translated by Mahdi Lock²

Released by www.marifah.info 1432 H

Praise be to Allah, Lord of all Creation...Praise be to Allah for the guidance that He has granted, and for making the purified Sunnah an example for us to emulate, The One Who has created and given life.

I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the King, The Clear Truth, The One and Unique, The Peerless and Eternal...Glory be to You, My Lord...Glory be to You.

I bear witness that our master, our beloved, our intimate friend and our ‘aẓīm is Muḥammad, may Allah’s prayers be upon him and all His Companions and Household.

¹ (1933-1996) A renowned Shāfiī scholar and preacher from Egypt, Sheikh Kishk was a graduate of Al-Azhār University and a specialist in creed, ḥadīth and Sīrah. From the late 1960s to the early 1980s, his khuṭbas in Cairo regularly drew crowds of about 10,000 people. He delivered more than 2000 khuṭbas over a forty-year period and it is reported that never once did he make a mistake in the Arabic language. At the age of 13, Sheikh Kishk lost the use of one of his eyes and became completely blind at the age of 17. As a result, Sheikh Kishk was known to often quote a line of poetry from Ibn ‘Abbās:

إن يأخذ الله من عيني نورهما
ففي فؤادي وعقلي عنهما نورُ

*Allah has taken the light from each of my eyes
And thus, in their place, there is light in my heart and my mind*

Due to his harsh criticism of the Egyptian regime, Sheikh Kishk was imprisoned twice, once in 1965, for two and a half years, and again in 1981. He was released the following year on the condition that he refrain from preaching, so from that time onwards he concentrated on writing a tafsīr. Amongst the many things he criticized was the assertion that Islam and socialism were compatible, as well as the modern bureaucratic state.

On the 26th of Rajab, 1417 (December 6th, 1996), the Sheikh returned to Allah while praying two *nafl raka’āt* before the Friday prayer. In the second *raka’* he completed his first prostration, sat up, prostrated the second time, and never got up again. He was sixty-three. May Allah have mercy on him and all of us, amīn!

² Translated from *Ṣarkhāt fawq Al-Minbar: Khutab Al-Sheikh Kishk, fī Al-Jumu‘a wa Al-‘Īdayn wa Jamī‘ Al-Munāsabāt* (Cairo: Al-Rawḍa li Al-Nashr wa Al-Tawzī‘, 2010)

To proceed; indeed there is a copious number of authentic aḥādīth that illustrate the manners that The Prophet, may Allah's prayers and peace be upon him, was sent with, and here we are, the ones mentioning a portion of these aḥādīth in order to seek blessings by way of The Prophet's statements, may Allah's prayers and peace be upon him, just as we seek blessings by way of the clear āyāt from the Book of Allah, Glorified and Exalted.

What did our Prophet, may Allah's prayers and peace be upon him, say about *birr*?

On the authority of Al-Nawās ibn Sam'ān Al-Anṣārī, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: 'I asked The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's prayers and peace be upon him, about *birr* and *ithm*, and he responded: "***Birr* is good manners, while *ithm* is what troubles your heart and you would hate for people to know about it.**"³

Thus, *ithm* is what wavers in the heart and the heart is not at ease with it, and you would hate for people to see it. *Birr* is good manners, and the best thing that has been said regarding it is that: 'It is to fulfil one's obligations, refrain from what is forbidden and smile at people and be good towards them.'

Wābiṣa ibn Ma'bad said: 'I came to Allah's Messenger, may Allah's prayers and peace be upon him, and asked him about *birr*, so he said: "**You have come to ask about *birr*?"** I said: 'Yes.' He said: "***Birr* is what puts the soul at ease and puts the heart at ease, while *ithm* is what troubles the soul and makes the heart waver, even if the people have repeatedly given a fatwa in favour of it.**"⁴

What did our Prophet, may Allah's prayers and peace be upon him, say about *birr al-wālidayn*?

It is on the authority of Abū Hurayra, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: 'A man came to The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's prayers and peace be upon him, and said: 'O Messenger of

³ Related by Muslim and Al-Tirmidhī

⁴ (tn): This ḥadīth has been related by Imam Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Imam Aḥmad in his *Musnad* and Imam Al-Dārimī in his *Sunan*. It is also the 27th ḥadīth in *Al-Arba'īn Al-Nawawīyyah*.

Allah, who amongst people is most worthy of my good company?’ He said: **“Your mother.”** The man said: ‘Then who?’ He said: **“Your mother.”** The man said: ‘Then who?’ He said: **“Your mother.”** The man said: ‘Then who?’ He said: **“Your father.”**⁵

Again on his authority a man said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, who amongst people is most worthy of good company?’ He said: **“Your mother, then your mother, then your mother, then your father, and then those who are closest to you and so on.”**⁶

He, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, mentioned the mother three times and then mentioned the father because of the magnitude of her right, which is due to her suffering through thirty months of pregnancy and suckling⁷, her sleepless nights looking after the child and the burning of her heart for the sake of raising it.

And again on his authority, The Prophet, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him said: **“Let him be humbled into dust, then let him be humbled into dust and then let him be humbled into dust.”** It was said to him: ‘Who, O Messenger of Allah?’ He said: **“Whoever sees one or both of his parents in old age and then doesn’t enter Paradise.”**⁸

Asmā’, may Allah be pleased with her, said: ‘When the Quraysh made the treaty with The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, my mother, who was an idol-worshipper, came to see me, so I asked The Prophet, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him: ‘My mother has come and she wants to see me. Should I keep relations with her?’ He said: **“Yes, keep relations with her.”**⁹

It is on the authority of Bahz Ibn Ḥakīm, from his father, from his grandfather, may Allah be pleased with him, that he said: ‘I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, who is most worthy of being shown *birr*?’ He said: **“Your mother, then your mother, then your mother, then your father,**

⁵ Related by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim

⁶ Related by Muslim

⁷ (tn): See Sūrat Luqmān 31:14: **“We have instructed man concerning his parents. Bearing him caused his mother great debility and the period of his weaning was two years: ‘Give thanks to Me and to your parents. I am your final destination.”**

⁸ Related by Muslim and Al-Tirmidhī

⁹ Related by al-Bukhārī and Muslim

and then your closest relatives and so on.¹⁰ No man asks his master for a favour that he has and his master denies him except that this favour that he withheld is asked of him on the Day of Resurrection in the form of a snake.”¹¹

It was said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, who is most worthy of being shown *birr*?’ He said: **“Your mother, your father, your sister, your brother, and then your remaining relatives. It is an obligatory right and it is maintaining the ties of kinship.”**¹²

It is on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with both of them, that a man from the Bedouins met him on the way to Makka. [Ibn ‘Umar] gave him the greetings of peace, let him travel on the donkey that he was riding on and gave him the *‘amāma* that was on his head. Ibn Dīnār said: ‘May Allah rectify you. Indeed they are Bedouins and they are pleased with ease and simplicity.’ ‘Abdullah [Ibn ‘Umar] responded: ‘Indeed the father of this man was beloved to ‘Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb, and indeed I heard The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, saying: **“The best form of *birr* for the son is to maintain ties with those whom his father loved.”**¹³

A man came from the Banī Salama and said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, is there any way to show *birr* towards my parents after they have died? He said: **“Yes, pray over them, seek forgiveness for them, fulfill their pledges after they have gone, maintain the ties of kinship that one has through them and be generous towards their friends.”**¹⁴

It is on the authority of Abū Al-Ṭufayl, may Allah be pleased with him, that he said: ‘I saw The Prophet, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, dividing up some meat in Al-Ja‘rāna and at that time I was a boy carrying the bone of a slaughtered camel. Then a woman approached and came near to The Prophet, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, and he stood up

¹⁰ (tn): Imam Al-Nawawī said that this ḥadīth is urging one to show *birr* to one’s relatives, and one’s mother is the most deserving of them. (*Tuḥfa Al-Aḥwadhī Sharḥ Jāmi‘ Al-Tirmidhī* (v.11, p.17) by Abū Al-Qāsim Al-Āmidī)

¹¹ Related by Abū Dāwūd and Al-Tirmidhī

¹² Related by Abū Dāwūd

¹³ Related by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd and Al-Tirmidhī

¹⁴ Related by Abū Dāwūd and Al-Bayhaqī

for her, laid out his cloak for her and she sat on it. I said: ‘Who is she?’ They said: ‘That’s his mother who suckled him.’¹⁵

What is meant by ‘his mother who suckled him’ is Ḥalīma Al-Sa‘diyya.

It is on the authority of ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with both of them, that he, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, said: **“The pleasure of the Lord is found in the pleasure of the father, and the displeasure of the Lord is found in the displeasure of the father.”**¹⁶

It is on the authority of Al-Barā’, may Allah be pleased with him, from The Prophet, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him: **“The maternal aunt has the rank of the mother.”**¹⁷

A man came to The Prophet, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, and said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, I have committed a grave sin. What can I do to repent?’ He said: **“Do you have a mother?”** He said: ‘No.’ He said: **“Do you have a maternal aunt?”** He said: ‘Yes.’ He said: **“Show her *birr*.”**¹⁸

What did The Prophet, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, say about children?

If The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, has clarified for us the rights of parents over their children, then indeed he has constantly accustomed us to establish a balance with justice so that the scales are not imbalanced. Thus, he clarified for us the rights of children over their parents, and Allah, Blessed and Exalted is He, addresses the believers by

¹⁵ Related by Abū Dāwūd

¹⁶ Related by Al-Tirmidhī. (tn): This ḥadīth is also in Imam Al-Bukhārī’s *Adab Al-Mufrad*, and other collections. In his commentary on the *Sunan* of Imam Al-Tirmidhī (*Tuḥfa Al-Aḥwadhī Sharḥ Jāmi‘ Al-Tirmidhī* (v.11, p.21)), Imam Al-Āmidī says: ‘Regarding his statement (the pleasure of the Lord is found in the pleasure of the father), the same applies to the mother, and indeed she takes priority. Al-Ṭabarānī relates [this ḥadīth] with the wording: **“The pleasure of the Lord is found in the pleasure of the parents, and His displeasure is found in their displeasure.”** (The displeasure of the Lord) i.e. *sakhat*, is the opposite of pleasure (is found in the displeasure of the father) because He the Exalted has commanded that the father be obeyed and honoured, and whoever obeys him has obeyed Allah and whoever angers him has angered Allah, and this is a severe threat indicating that *al-‘uqūq* [i.e. harming, disobeying and rebelling] is an enormity.’

¹⁷ Related by Al-Tirmidhī

¹⁸ Related by Al-Tirmidhī

saying: **“O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is men and stones.” [Al-Taḥrīm 66:6]**

Therefore, the responsibility of every human being towards his family is equal to his responsibility towards himself, and the proof is that Allah the Exalted connected the family to the self in this āya when He said: **“Save yourselves and your families...” [Al-Taḥrīm 66:6]** So, what did The Prophet of Mercy say in this regard?

It is on the authority of Abū Hurayra, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: ‘The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, kissed Al-Ḥasan Ibn ‘Alī and he had Al-Aqrā‘ Ibn Ḥābis Al-Taymī sitting with him, and he said: ‘I have ten children and I’ve never kissed any of them.’ The Messenger, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, looked at him and then said: **“Whoever doesn’t show mercy will not be shown mercy.”**¹⁹

Usāma Ibn Zayd, may Allah be pleased with both of them, said: ‘The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, used to take me and sit me on his thigh, and he would sit Al-Ḥasan on his other thigh and then put them together and say: **“O Allah, show them mercy, for indeed I show them mercy.”**’²⁰

The Messenger increases the rank of mercy towards children one mercy after another. It is on the authority of ‘Ā’isha, may Allah be pleased with her, who said: ‘A Bedouin came to The Prophet, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, and said: ‘Do you kiss children? We don’t kiss them.’ The Prophet, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, said: **“What can I do for you if Allah has removed mercy from your heart?”**’²¹

The Messenger, may Allah’s prayers and blessings be upon him, would make people desire pleasure with what God had decreed if He had provided them with daughters, and indeed the believer must be in a state of gratitude and patience and never despair or lose hope of God’s mercy.

¹⁹ Related by Al-Bukhārī, Abū Dāwūd and Al-Tirmidhī

²⁰ Related by Al-Bukhārī

²¹ Related by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim

It is on the authority of ‘Ā’isha, who said: ‘A woman came to me and begged me, and she had two girls with her. She found nothing with me except for one date, so I gave it to her and she split it between the two girls. Then she stood up and left. The Prophet, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, came and I told him what had happened, and he said: **“Whoever is tried with these girls and is good to them, they will be a barrier for that person from the Fire.”**²²

In Muslim and Al-Tirmidhī there is: **“Whoever takes care of two girls until they have grown up will enter Paradise with me like these [two fingers].”** The meaning is that whoever provides for them and takes care of them until they have grown up, i.e. become independent of him by way of earning or marriage, will enter Paradise with The Prophet, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him.

The sphere of treating women goes beyond daughters and indeed includes sisters, so it’s the same whether there are two daughters or two sisters. On the authority of Abū Sa’īd Al-Khudrī, may Allah be pleased with him, The Prophet, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, said: **“Whoever has three daughters, or two daughters, or two sisters, keeps good company with them and fears Allah regarding them, will have Paradise.”**²³

Indeed, Allah’s mercy and generous reward comprises those who are good to their daughters, even if they have only one. It is on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās, may Allah be pleased with both of them, that The Prophet, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him, said: **“If someone has a daughter and does not oppress her, does not demean her and does not prefer his sons over her, Allah will enter him into Paradise.”**²⁴

The meaning of ‘not oppress here’ (*lam ya’idha*) means that he does not bury her alive, as was the disgusting custom of the Jāhiliī Arabs. As for not preferring his sons over her, this means that he should be equally good to all the children in his life.

²² Related by Al-Bukhārī, Muslim and Al-Tirmidhī

²³ Related by Al-Tirmidhī and Abū Dāwūd

²⁴ Related by Abū Dāwūd

If this is the side of mercy towards children, then the side of disciplining has its own rank in Islam, just as it has its own positive effects. There isn't the slightest doubt that there is no contradiction between mercy and discipline. Rather, discipline is a part of mercy, and you cannot separate one from the other. Just as The Messenger, may Allah's prayers and peace be upon him, urged mercy towards children, at the same time he also urged that they be disciplined.

It is on the authority of Jābir Ibn Samra, may Allah be pleased with him, that The Prophet, may Allah's prayers and peace be upon him, said: **“For a man to discipline his child is better than him giving a ṣā²⁵ in charity.”**²⁶

It is on the authority of Ayūb Ibn Mūsā, from his father, from his grandfather, may Allah be pleased with him, that The Prophet, may Allah's prayers and peace be upon him, said: **“There is no gift that a father can give to his child that is greater than the gift of good manners.”**²⁷

The meaning of good manners is that he teaches him how to eat and how to drink, how to treat people, how to strive in order to make a living amongst them and improve their relations, his obligations towards his Lord and His creation, and then he also teaches him what is suited to the time and place with regards to the bounds that Allah has set, and *tawfīq* is in the Hand of Allah the Exalted; He grants it to whom He wills.

Second Khuṭba

Praise be to Allah, Lord of all creation...may the most generous gifts be for His Friends...may He bless them with His blessings...thus they shall have no fear, nor will they grieve.

²⁵ (tn): The meaning of ṣā', according to Hans Wehr, is a cubic measure of varying magnitude, but in the fiqh of zakāt, it is 2.03 litres of food, which is the amount of food that should be given as one's Zakāt al-Fiṭr (*Reliance of the Traveller*, h7.1, p.261)

²⁶ (tn): Related by Imams Abū Ya'ālā and Al-Tirmidhī.

²⁷ Related by Al-Tirmidhī

O Allah, we ask You to keep us away from the places of the oppressors...and to make us from amongst those who are safe from the agony of death, the darkness of the grave and standing in order to be reckoned.

Dear brothers, how great is our need to raise our children according to the creed. How great is our need in a time in which values are lost, principles are not adhered to and there is very little sincerity.

Indeed I am saying this with great sorrow, regarding the loss of morals that has happened amongst us in these days, and we are the cause of it. If we fear that our children will deviate, then we must return to the morals of our Dīn and we must expel Shayṭān from amongst us.

O Lord, indeed I am asking you in this hour, which may be the hour of response, indeed I ask You to grant might to Islam and victory to the Muslims. O Allah, by Your grace, exalt the words of the Truth and the Dīn.

O Allah, give abundantly to your sincere slaves...cure those amongst us who are sick, have mercy on those of us who have deceased, destroy our enemies, unite our ranks, gather together those of us who are separated, take charge of our affair, beautify our deliverance and allow us to fulfill those hopes of ours that please You.

“Indeed Allah commands to justice and doing good, and giving to relatives. And He forbids indecency and doing wrong, and tyranny. He warns you so that hopefully you will pay heed.”
[Al-Naḥl 16:90]

