

Value System in Muslim Families

The concept of family has by and large undergone changes. The days of the joint family in which its numerous members shared collective moments of learning and growing up are forever gone. In contrast, nuclear families with limited living space and relationships are preferred by people in general.

Islam has placed high value on the family system in recognition of the fact that a healthy family is the backbone of any society. Islam has envisaged certain family values that characterize a typical Muslim family. It is a reality that many of the so-called modern family methods go against those of Islam.

Marriage is at the core of the very concept of a Muslim family. When it comes to marriage, every individual needs to abide by the rules laid down by Islam. Though procreation is one of the very basic biological needs of human beings, a legitimate marriage has to happen for the couples to unite. We cannot deny that Modernism has brought in its wake very dangerous practices which have adverse effects on the framework of a family. There are unfortunate people nowadays who engage in short term live-in relationships without committing themselves to spouses. This is totally against all religious concepts of marriage.

We cannot begin to think of Muslim family values without referring to Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH). The religion has framed rules regarding marriage, inheritance, divorce and treatment of family members.

A father is normally regarded as the breadwinner and provider of a family. This does not mean that the father has to rule like a tyrant and be inconsiderate to the wife or children. In an ideal family, the father takes decisions in consultation with others, especially his spouse. The very life of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) is replete with examples of how kind and compassionate a father could be to his children.

Mother is biologically framed in such a way that demands her presence with the newborn baby for breastfeeding. This is why the image of a mother is always associated with that of a caregiver and nurturer. Islam has given utmost importance to mothers and the rest of the family members have been ordered by Allah to respect her more than anyone else. It has been figuratively reported in a Hadeeth that the paradise is under the feet of mothers.

The relationship between a husband and wife seems to be the most intimate in a family. They together steers the wheel of a family. They have to be loving and caring to each other. In spite

of differences, they need to serve each other and try to understand each others' stands. The intimacy and love maintained by Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) and Ayisha (RA) in their marital life should serve as models for contemporary Muslims. The way the couple conduct themselves in the presence of their children is important since children normally tend to copy from their parents' examples. Bringing up children according to the Islamic principles and teaching them the basic tenets of Islam by practice are among the principal duties of any parents.