

Silat Al-Rahm (Family Ties) in Islam

Allah SWT says in the first verse of Surah Al-Nisa: “And fear Allah from whom you seek help and [the rights of] your relatives”

In Surah (Al-Isra’a/Bani Israel) Allah says: “Give the relative his due rights, and the destitute and the stranded foreigner “.

Indeed, Allah SWT established rights to the extended family of everyone that severing these ties results in a punishment to be feared. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in a Hadith narrated by Muslim:

“When Allah created the creations and was done with them, the Rahm (womb/family ties) stood up and said: this is the place for the one who seeks refuge in you from being severed.

Allah SWT said: would it not please you that I will connect with those who connect with you and sever my ties with those that sever their ties with you”. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) told the Sahabah then:

“Recite if you will (from Surah Muhammad): will you if your turn your backs [on Allah] cause destruction on earth and sever your family ties. These are the ones that Allah has cursed and made them deaf and blinded their eyes”.

You see from this hadith the following:

- 1- Connecting with family ties and being generous and kind to them is a prerequisite to connecting with Allah. If we do not have Khusho’ in our Salah then this may be an area to which one must look.
- 2- Disconnecting and not being good will surely result in being disconnected from Allah SWT no matter what other good one does. We will expand on this point later in this chapter Insha Allah.
- 3- The Ayah in Surah Muhammad quoted above had severing family ties follow mayhem and destruction on earth the punishment for would be being cursed by Allah and being made deaf and blind

Al-Rahm’s name is derived from Al-Rahman

In a Hadith narrated by Al-Turmith, prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: “Allah SWT said: it is the Rahm and I am the Rahman; I derived its name from my name. Whoever connects with it is connecting with me and whoever disconnects from it is disconnecting with me”.

Silat Al-Rahm is a condition of Iyman (believe in Allah)

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: “Whoever believes in Allah and the Day of Judgment then let him connect with his Rahm (extended family)” (narrated by Bukhari and Muslim).

Severing Al-Rahm causes one not to enter heaven

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: “the Jannah (heaven) will not be entered by the one who severs [Al-Rahm]”

Silat Al-Rahm is a cause for better life

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: “Whoever wants to have more income (Rizq) and leave a better legacy (or better life) then he must connect with his Rahm”.

Silat Al-Rahm results in twice the rewards

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: “charity to the poor is a single charity but to a relative is two: charity and Silat Rahm” narrated by Al-Turmith.

Charity/Sadqa is better to the relatives first

Not only has the above Hadith given us that meaning but many. However, I must point out that the saying that “Relatives are more worthy of good” is not an Ayah or Hadith but a saying that is rooted in many Ayah and Hadith. Here are a few:

“When Allah SWT revealed the Ayah: (You will not reach high status till you donate from what you love). Abo-Talha said to prophet Muhammad (PBUH): I love my far and I want to donate. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: I see that you should give it to your relatives”.

A Hadith narrated by Muslim, prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

“Best Dinar one spends is on his dependent (family); then on his ride for the sake of Allah; and Dinar on his friends for the sake of Allah”.

Maimoonah, the wife of prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and (may Allah be pleased with her), freed a young slave girl. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: had you given it (either refer to the money or may be her being the salve) to your uncles (from mother side), you would have had greater rewards” narrated by Muslim.

Silat Al-Rahm is a must even when the relatives are bad to you

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

“The one who connects with his Rahm is not the one who is good (or even more generous) when his relatives are good to him/her. The one (Wasil of Rahm) is the one who connects with his family ties even when they disconnects with him/her”.

A man came to prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and said:

“Oh, messenger of Allah, I have relatives I connect with them and they abandon me; I do good to them and they do me bad; I forgive them and they transgress upon me.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: if you are like you say then it is like you throw sand in their faces. You will have support from Allah with you as long as you remain on this condition" narrated by Muslim as well.

The Rights of Parents

Allah SWT mandated that parents be thanked after thanking Allah SWT:

"Thank me and your parents; to me all things shall return".

Be humble to your parents

And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as], "uff," and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word.

And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say, "My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small."

Their mercy would be enough

The above verse: "My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small" shows that if Allah blesses them with the same mercy they bestowed upon as a child then that mercy would be enough for them to be in Allah's paradise.

Kindness to parents is a way to enter Jannah

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said :

"He is surely a loser (his nose is muddled) three times. The Sahabah said: who, O' messenger of Allah. He said: he whose parents, one or both, reach old age with him and they do not make him enter Jannah".

In a Hadith narrated by Al-Turmithi, prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

"The parent is the middle door to heaven; it is your choice to preserve it or lose it".

Meanness to parents prevents the word of Shahadah

A Sahabi (companion of the prophet PUBH) was on his death bed and the Sahabah kept reminding him to pronounce the Shahadah (no God but Allah) but he could not utter these words. He could say anything and everything else.

Alarmed they went to prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who immediately diagnosed the problem and asked: "does he have a mother?" they said yes and he asked to talk with her. He (PBUH) asked her what was upsetting her about her son. She said:

“He was a kind son except he preferred his wife and children over me whenever he brought food home. I am upset with him because of that.” The prophet (PBUH) asked her to forgive him but she refused. Seeing her anger, the prophet (PBUH) asked the Sahabah to fetch some wood. She asked why and he (PBUH) said” to burn him with it as this is what you are doing to him (making him enter hell) if you do not forgive him.” She forgave him and he was able to say the words of truth before he died.

Kindness to parents regardless of their religion

Islam gave rights to the parents regardless of their religion or their attitude and behavior. So the parents do not have to be Muslims to deserve our kindness. This is a point that some newly Muslims or even some who grew up Muslims sometimes miss. The recite the Ayah in the first Surah Ayah of Surah Al-Mumtahinah;

“Oh, believers do not take my enemies and yours as allies; extending to them affection while they have disbelieved in what came to you of the truth, having driven out the Prophet and yourselves [only] because you believe in Allah, your Lord”.

They actually forget that the eighth and ninth Ayahs of the same Surah states:

“Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.

Allah only forbids you from those who fight you because of religion and expel you from your homes and aid in your expulsion - [forbids] that you make allies of them. And whoever makes allies of them, and then it is those who are the wrongdoers”

Asma’a Bint Abi Baker had a visit from her who was not a Muslim during the peace time between Muslims and Quraish. Asma’a sent a message to prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on how to deal with her mother and the prophet (PBUH) instructions were to be kind and generous.

Allah SWT states in Surah Al-Isra/Bani Isreal:

“If they [the parents] fought with you take partners with me then do not obey them, and be a companion to them in good”.

Being good to your parents after their death

A man asked prophet Muhammad (PBUH):

“Is there any good deeds left that I can do for my parents now they are dead? Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: yes, praying on them; and begging Allah SWT to forgive them; honoring their wishes after their death; and connecting with the Rahm as they are the bond of connection” (Abo Dawood)

It is narrated by Muslim that Abdullah the son of Omar Bin al-Khattab was walking the stree once when he saw an out of town young man. He greeted him with passion and gave him his own donkey and head

cover (Imamah). A man asked him the reason given the fact the stranger would have been happy with much less.

Abdullah answered that the father of that man was a friend of his father and that prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said that “the best kindness is to connect with the friends of one’s own father”

Being good to your in-laws

Young husbands and wives will soon have children (God willing) and their children will grow to have their own families. One must remember that one does for/against his/her own in-laws will be witnessed by their children who will repeat the same behavior.

This is a true story from my personal life as a child back home in Syria:

“I had a neighbor who was one year older than me. His father was a doctor living in a very large house (like mansion) with a swimming pool, a fence and a gate, a three story house and a nice garden. There was a small unfinished room by the garden where the grandmother (the doctor’s mother) was sleeping, a very unpleasant room indeed.

The grandmother finally passed away and mother wanted to tear the room down saying they did not need it anymore. Upon hearing that my friend said:

Mom, do not tear this room down. This will be your room when I get married”.