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## Psychological Principles of Child Upbringing in the Prophetic Sunnah: An Islamic Perspective

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### Abstract

This paper examines the profound insights into child psychology embedded within the Sunnah of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, highlighting twelve key principles that underpin emotionally healthy and balanced upbringing. Drawing upon classical ḥadīth literature and contemporary psychological theory, it demonstrates how early Islamic guidance—such as warm reception, empathetic companionship, joy-eliciting behaviors, tactile affection, equitable treatment of sons and daughters, and participatory play—fosters cognitive, social, and spiritual well-being in children. Special emphasis is given to the exceptionally high reward promised for raising daughters, illustrating the Qur’anic and Prophetic ethos of justice and compassion. In the modern era, where pediatric mental health challenges are increasingly prevalent, revisiting these time-honored practices offers a holistic framework for nurturing resilient, morally upright, and psychologically robust future generations.

**Keywords:** Child Psychology, Islamic Parenting, Prophetic Sunnah, Emotional Development, Spiritual Nurturing

### Introduction

Psychology is a fascinating field that helps us understand the fundamental behaviors of

human beings. Experts continuously strive to uncover the hidden aspects of human psychology, using innovative methods and evolving approaches. It is a vast discipline that delves into human intellect, nature, and behaviors, offering deep insight into these areas.<sup>1</sup> In line with our topic, let us first explore the literal meaning of psychology.

#### **Literar Definition of Psychology**

The Arabic term *nafsiyāt* is the plural of *nafsiyyah*, meaning “mentality” or “mindset.” The root word *nafs* is feminine in form and has two primary pronunciations:

1. *Nafs* with a sukoon, meaning “soul,” “self,” or “personality.”
2. *Nafas* with a fathah, meaning “breath” or “pleasant air.”<sup>2</sup>

In English, the term “psychology” is derived from the Greek words *psyche* and *logos*. The word *psyche* in Greek refers to the “soul,” “mind,” or “spirit,” while *logos* denotes “study,” “explanation,” or “discourse.” Thus, the literal meaning of “psychology” becomes “the study of the soul,” i.e., a science concerned with matters of the spirit and mind.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Technical Definition of Psychology**

“The scientific study of the behavior of individuals and their mental processes is called psychology.”<sup>4</sup>

#### **The Importance of Childhood Training**

A human being passes through several phases in life, and the first phase is childhood. According to psychologists, this stage holds tremendous importance. Much psychological research focuses on the social factors influencing early childhood because it is during this time that the foundation of a person’s lifestyle is laid.

If we closely observe children, it becomes evident that even from a young age, they try to make sense of life and its purpose. Children attempt to identify their abilities, strengths, and talents by interacting with their environment and society. By the age of five, they begin to adopt a specific lifestyle and develop strategies to deal with challenges. At this stage, children also begin to understand what is expected of them and what they expect from others.

In essence, at this age, children start perceiving the world through a consistent and structured cognitive framework.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, by nature, childhood is the period during which the foundation for an individual’s entire life is established. This is the stage where the child’s mindset is formed, and the way this mindset is shaped will continue to influence the later stages of life—adolescence and old age.

If a child’s morals and character are nurtured in a positive environment, this will serve as a valuable asset in adulthood. However, if negative traits take root early on, rectification in the future becomes very difficult, though not impossible.<sup>6</sup>

From infancy, a child is influenced by the attitudes, relationships, and parenting methods of their parents. Likewise, family values, tendencies, and behavior patterns leave a lasting impression on the child’s personality. In addition, other psychological experiences during this time also hold great importance, which is why childhood is given special attention by psychologists.<sup>7</sup>

The sīrah nabawīyyah (Prophetic biography) provides valuable guidance in this regard. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated:

كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُوَلَّدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ، فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ كَمَا تَلِدُ الْبَيْمَةَ تُنْجُ الْبَيْمَةَ هَلْ تَرَى فِيهَا جَذْعَاءَ<sup>7</sup>

Translation:

“Every child is born on fīrah (pure nature), then his parents make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian, just as an animal gives birth to a complete offspring do you see any among them born mutilated?”<sup>8</sup>

This ḥadīth indicates that every child is born with a pure, natural disposition (fīrah), but external social factors especially parental influence shape their behavior and psychology. Over time, these factors alter the trajectory of the child’s lifestyle.

### *Psychological Principles of Child Upbringing*

Warm Reception:

Welcoming a child warmly is one of the simplest yet most effective ways to win their heart. Children tend to feel more comfortable and happy with people who show them affection. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ used to express joy upon the arrival of children. It is narrated by Abū Hurayrah (RA) that:

"I was with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in one of the markets of Madinah. After returning, the Prophet ﷺ asked thrice: ‘Where is the child? Call Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī.’<sup>9</sup> He was arriving with a necklace around his neck. The Prophet ﷺ stretched out his hands, and so did Ḥasan (RA), and he embraced him. Then the Prophet ﷺ said,

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أُحِبُّهُ، فَأَجِبْهُ، وَأَحِبَّ مَنْ يُحِبُّهُ<sup>10</sup>

‘O Allah! I love him, so You also love him, and love those who love him.’”

Abū Hurayrah (RA) added, “After hearing this, there was no one more beloved to me than Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī.”

### *2. Companionship*

Companionship plays a vital role in the moral upbringing of children. A friend reflects another friend’s character, and they influence each other greatly. Therefore, when children begin to socialize with peers, it becomes the parents’ responsibility to encourage companionship with virtuous children and to closely monitor their habits and behaviors.

Parents should also try to include their children in various family settings, as this exposure helps children develop refined manners and social skills. This inclusion is part of the child’s rights. The Prophet ﷺ demonstrated this aspect beautifully by always keeping children with him on different occasions, without hesitation or discomfort.<sup>11</sup>

As narrated in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī:

أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ يُصَلِّي وَهُوَ حَامِلٌ أُمَامَةَ بِنْتُ زَيْنَبَ بِنْتُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَلَأَيُّ الْعَاصِ بْنِ رَبِيعَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ شَمْسٍ، فَإِذَا سَجَدَ وَضَعَهَا، وَإِذَا قَامَ حَمَلَهَا

used to lead prayer while carrying Umāmah bint Zaynab<sup>12</sup>, ﷺ "The Messenger of Allah and Abū al-‘Āṣ ibn Rabī‘ah. When he prostrated, he ﷺ daughter of the Messenger of Allah would put her down, and when he stood up, he would carry her again.”<sup>13</sup>

Similarly, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar (RA) narrated:

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Among the trees, there is a tree whose leaves do not fall, and it resembles the believer. Tell me which tree that is<sup>14</sup>?” People began searching among the trees of the forest. I thought in my heart it was the date palm but did not say it due to my young age. The Prophet ﷺ then said, “It is the date palm.” Later I told my father ‘Umar (RA) what I had thought, and he said, “Had you spoken it, it would have been more beloved to me than having this and that (worldly possessions).”<sup>15</sup>

This incident illustrates the importance of involving children in adult gatherings and educational moments, enabling them to learn manners and wisdom from an early age.

There are also ḥadīths that mention that the ṣaḥābah (companions) would bring their nursing infants to the Prophet ﷺ, and even when a child urinated on his clothing, the Prophet ﷺ never showed displeasure. As narrated from ‘Ā’ishah (RA):

أُتِيَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِصَبِيٍّ، فَبَالَ عَلَى ثَوْبِهِ، فَدَعَا بِمَاءٍ فَأَتْبَعَهُ إِيَّاهُ  
, and he urinated on the Prophet’s clothes. ﷺ “A child was brought to the Messenger of Allah then called for water and poured it over the soiled area.”<sup>16</sup> The Prophet

This narration emphasizes the patience and gentleness of the Prophet ﷺ in dealing with children and their natural behaviors, setting a model for how children should be raised with love, inclusion, and understanding.

## Psychological Principles of Child Upbringing (Part 2)

### 3. Bringing Joy to a Child's Heart:

A child's innocent mind is deeply affected by joy and smiles. Children are naturally drawn to happiness and cheerfulness. When they observe joyful expressions on the faces of their parents and relatives, their own temperament becomes more lively and fresh. This emotional upliftment enhances their ability to learn. The Prophet ﷺ would adopt various methods to bring joy to children’s hearts.<sup>17</sup> Some of those methods are mentioned below:

### 4. Giving Importance to Children:

Interacting with children in a pleasant and affectionate manner holds great psychological value. When children are treated with respect and given attention, it significantly impacts their emotional well-being. Psychologically, this attention makes them more focused and receptive. Furthermore, it helps them grow into empathetic, generous individuals who care about others and are not self-centered.

An example of this is narrated by <sup>18</sup>‘Abdullāh ibn Ja‘far (RA), who said:

“Whenever the Prophet ﷺ returned from a journey, he would meet the children of his household. Once, when he returned, I was brought to him, and he made me ride in front of him on his mount. Then one of his grandsons was brought, and he seated him behind him.”<sup>19</sup>

This incident demonstrates how the Prophet ﷺ treated ‘Abdullāh ibn Ja‘far (RA) with the same affection and status as he did his own grandsons. The memory of this beautiful gesture stayed with him for life, and he used to recall it with great delight.

### 5. Placing a Loving Hand on the Child's Head:

It is part of a child's nature to feel deeply joyful and loved when someone strokes their head with affection. Anas (RA) narrated:

“Whenever the Prophet ﷺ would visit the Anṣār, he would greet the children and gently place his blessed hand on their heads.”<sup>20</sup>

At times, the Prophet ﷺ would even touch their cheeks with his hand, which made the children feel even more loved and secure. Jābir ibn Samurah (RA) narrated:

“I once offered zuhr prayer with the Prophet ﷺ. As he came out of the mosque, I followed him. Outside, some children came to greet him. He patted each of their cheeks. He placed his hand on my cheek too, and I felt such fragrance and coolness in it as if it were a container of perfume from a perfumer.”<sup>21</sup>

This narration highlights that making children feel loved—through touch and attention—is a Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. Whether one's own children or others', all should be treated with equal affection and gentleness so that no child feels left out or emotionally neglected.

### 6. Kissing Children:

Kissing children is a significant way of expressing love and warmth. It builds an emotional bridge between the adult and the child. When a child receives this affection, they feel secure and valued. As a result, they develop emotionally and learn to treat others with kindness.<sup>22</sup>

‘Ā’ishah (RA) narrated:

“Some Bedouins came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, ‘Do you kiss your children?’ The Prophet ﷺ replied, ‘Yes’<sup>22</sup>.’ They said, ‘But we never do that.’ The Prophet ﷺ responded,

وَمَا أَمْلِكُ إِنْ كَانَ اللَّهُ نَزَعَ مِنْكُمْ الرَّحْمَةَ

‘What can I do if Allah has removed mercy from your hearts?’”<sup>23</sup>

On another occasion, the Prophet ﷺ kissed al-Ḥasan (RA), and Aqrā’ ibn Ḥābis (RA) remarked:

“I have ten children, and I have never kissed any of them.”

The Prophet ﷺ said,

مَنْ لَا يَرْحَمُ لَا يُرْحَمُ

“Whoever does not show mercy will not be shown mercy.”<sup>24</sup>

These narrations emphasize that showing affection to children, including kissing them, is not only a natural gesture of love but also a part of the prophetic character (Sunnah). It fosters emotional strength and social warmth within children and builds compassionate future generations.

## 7. Joking and Playing with Children

Children are naturally cheerful and often become a source of joy for adults through their innocent actions and laughter. Just as they playfully interact with elders, they also expect the same affection and attention in return. The Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) was

attentive to this psychological need of children and would engage in playful interaction with them.

For example, it is reported that the Prophet ﷺ used to joke with Abū ‘Umayr (RA). One day, when the Prophet ﷺ arrived and noticed Abū ‘Umayr looking sad, he inquired about the reason. The family informed him that the boy's pet bird (a nughayr, or a small nightingale) had died. The Prophet ﷺ lovingly asked him:

"يَا أَبَا عُمَيْرٍ، مَا فَعَلَ النُّغَيْرُ؟"

*"O Abū ‘Umayr, what happened to the little bird?"<sup>25</sup>*

This narration demonstrates the gentle manner in which the Prophet ﷺ acknowledged the child's feelings and consoled him through lighthearted speech.

Similarly, it is narrated by Jābir (RA)<sup>26</sup> that one day, while they were with the Prophet ﷺ and had been invited to a meal, they saw the Prophet's grandson, Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī (RA), playing with other children on the way. The Prophet ﷺ went ahead of the group, stretched out his hands to catch Ḥusayn, who started running around in delight. The Prophet ﷺ continued laughing and playing with him until he caught him and lovingly embraced him, saying:

"حُسَيْنٌ مِنِّي وَأَنَا مِنْ حُسَيْنٍ، أَحَبَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ أَحَبَّ حُسَيْنًا، الْحَسَنُ وَالْحُسَيْنُ سَيِّدَانِ مِنَ الْأَسْبَاطِ"

*"Ḥusayn is from me and I am from Ḥusayn. May Allāh love the one who loves Ḥusayn. Hasan and Ḥusayn are two leaders among the youths of Paradise."<sup>27</sup>*

In another narration, the Prophet ﷺ humorously addressed Anas ibn Mālik (RA) by calling him:

"يَا ذَا الْأُذُنَيْنِ"

*"O you with two ears"<sup>28</sup>*

He also affectionately called him Abū Baqlah (father of herbs), as he used to bring vegetables.<sup>29</sup>

These narrations demonstrate that taking care of children's emotional well-being through light-hearted jokes and playful gestures was part of the Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah.

## 8. Giving Gifts to Children

Gifts have a powerful emotional impact on human psychology. In every society, offering gifts is a recognized way of expressing affection and strengthening social bonds. A well-known ḥadīth of the Prophet ﷺ encourages this practice:

"تَهَادُّوا تَحَابُّوا"

*"Exchange gifts and you will develop mutual love."<sup>30</sup>*

The Prophet ﷺ applied this principle not only among adults but also with children. According to Abū Hurayrah (RA), when the Prophet ﷺ would receive the first fruit of the season, he would first supplicate for barakah (blessing), and then give it as a gift to the youngest child present in the gathering:



”كَانَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ إِذَا أُتِيَ بِالشَّمْرَةِ أُتِيَ بِهَا لِيُبَارِكَ فِيهَا، ثُمَّ يُعْطِيهَا أَصْغَرَ مَنْ يَحْضُرُ مِنَ الصِّبْيَانِ”<sup>31</sup>

This practice shows how the Prophet ﷺ used thoughtful gestures to engage with children and nurture their self-worth and emotional development.

### (9) Play and Recreation with Children

Play such as jumping, running, and engaging in recreation—is an essential aspect of a child's life. Although these activities may seem trivial at first glance, in reality, they are crucial for the development of physical and psychological capabilities. Through play, children strengthen their physical faculties, and the mental engagement required in games stimulates reflection and creativity. Gradually, this allows a child's innate potential to unfold, contributing to the development of a well-rounded personality.

Engaging in play with children is not only beneficial for their emotional well-being but also essential for their proper upbringing. Psychologically, when parents play with their children, the children feel joy and a sense of importance in their actions. This strengthens the parent-child bond. Furthermore, children, being naturally weak, tend to admire the strength and authority of adults. Imitating adults becomes their way of internalizing discipline and direction.

Modern educational psychologists stress the importance of parental participation in recreational activities with children and view it as a parental duty. Yet, this very principle was practiced and exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ over fourteen centuries ago. Let us explore some examples of this prophetic behavior:

It is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ would line up ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās and ‘Ubaydullāh ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), and say:

”مَنْ سَبَقَ إِلَيَّ فَلَهُ كَذَا وَكَذَا”<sup>32</sup>

"Whoever reaches me first will receive such and such a reward."

The children would run to him, jump on his chest and back, and he ﷺ would embrace them and kiss them with affection.

Similarly, it is narrated from ‘Alī ibn Abī Tālib (رضي الله عنه) that once, when al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn (رضي الله عنهما) were playfully wrestling, the Prophet ﷺ said:

”سَجِّعْ حُسَيْنًا”

"Cheer for Ḥusayn!"

‘Alī (رضي الله عنه) remarked, "O Messenger of Allah! You are favoring Ḥusayn even though al-Ḥasan is older." The Prophet ﷺ replied:

”إِنَّ جِبْرِيلَ يُسَجِّعُ الْحَسَنَ فَأُسَجِّعُ الْحُسَيْنَ”

"Indeed, Jibrīl is cheering for al-Ḥasan, so I cheer for Ḥusayn."<sup>33</sup>

### The Prophet's ﷺ Personal Engagement in Play

The Prophet ﷺ personally engaged in play with children. He would let his grandsons ride on his back. It is narrated by Jābir (رضي الله عنه):

"رَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ وَالْحَسَنَ وَالْحُسَيْنَ عَلَى ظَهْرِهِ، وَهُوَ يَمْشِي عَلَى يَدَيْهِ وَرُكْبَتَيْهِ، وَهُوَ يَقُولُ: نِعْمَ الْجَمَلُ جَمَلُكُمَا، وَنِعْمَ الْعِدْلَانِ أَنْتُمَا"

"I saw the Prophet ﷺ with al-Hasan and al-Husayn riding on his back while he crawled on all fours. He said, 'What an excellent mount is your camel, and what excellent riders you both are'<sup>34</sup>

## (10) Encouraging Competition and Rewarding Children

One of the most effective ways to inspire motivation in a person is to create a sense of competition. This method proves even more fruitful with children,<sup>35</sup> as they possess hidden strengths and emotions that surface in competitive environments. The Prophet ﷺ nurtured this sense of competition among children in both intellectual and physical forms, such as in races.

Such competition not only awakens personal potential but also cultivates social consciousness. It teaches children how to face life's challenges and find solutions. Modern child development programs emphasize this very method to instill resilience and confidence.<sup>36</sup>

## Equal Attention to Girls in Islam: A Qur'anic and Prophetic Perspective

### *Social Context: Preferential Treatment of Boys*

Even in today's modern era, girls are often considered inferior and are not given the same importance as boys. This disparity in attention and value has deep historical roots. During the Age of Ignorance (*ʿAṣr al-Jāhiliyyah*), the oppression of girls was rampant among some Arab tribes, female infanticide (burying girls alive) was a common practice. Unfortunately, the sorrow at the birth of a girl persists in many parts of society even today. The Qur'ān describes the reaction of such men in vivid terms:

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُمْ بِالْأُنْثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ - يَتَوَارَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِنْ سُوءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهِ أَيُمْسِكُهُ عَلَىٰ هُونٍ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُ فِي التُّرَابِ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ

"And when one of them is informed of [the birth of] a female, his face becomes dark, and he suppresses grief. 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."<sup>37</sup>

### Prophetic Reform: Dignity and Equality of Daughters

In contrast to these dark practices, the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) educated parents on the proper status of daughters. He encouraged affection (*maḥabbah*) and companionship (*muwānasah*) toward them. He also declared that expressing displeasure at the birth of daughters reflects a polytheistic mindset (*mushrikānah ṭarz-i-ʿamal*). Hence, showing discontent at the birth of a daughter is impermissible, for doing so amounts to ingratitude (*kufṛ al-ni'mah*) towards Allah. Indeed, whether it is a boy or a girl, it is Allah alone who bestows children.<sup>38</sup>

### Greater Reward for Raising Daughters



In pre-Islamic Arab society, daughters were buried alive. The Prophet (ﷺ) not only condemned such actions but also gave immense glad tidings (bashārah) to those who raised daughters with love and care. He said:

مَنْ عَالَ جَارِيتَيْنِ حَتَّى تَبْلُغَا، جَاءَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَنَا وَهُوَ وَضَمَّ أَصَابِعَهُ

*"Whoever raises two daughters until they reach maturity, he and I will be like these two (fingers) on the Day of Resurrection."* He then brought his fingers close together to illustrate.<sup>39</sup>

In another ḥadīth, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever is tested by daughters and treats them well, it will be a shield for him from the Hellfire."*<sup>40</sup>

### *What Is Good Treatment?*

The Prophet (ﷺ) himself explained what proper treatment (ḥusn al-‘ishrah) toward daughters entails:

مَنْ كَانَتْ لَهُ ابْنَتَانِ فَلَمْ يَبْغِهَا، وَلَمْ يُؤْثِرْ وَلَدَهُ عَلَيْهَا، قَالَ: يَغْنِي الدُّكُورَ أَدْخَلَهُ اللَّهُ الْجَنَّةَ

*"Whoever has a daughter, and he does not bury her alive, nor humiliate her, nor give preference to his son over her such a person will be admitted to Paradise by Allah."*<sup>41</sup>

This means that a parent should not discriminate in providing for their children's needs food, clothing, shelter, education, or upbringing. Both sons and daughters must be treated equally in all these respects.

### *Greater Reward for Raising Daughters*

Islam grants a greater reward for raising daughters than for sons. The reason, as scholars have explained, is that sons are often raised with the hope that they will support their parents in old age, whereas daughters are raised as amānah (trusts) meant for other households. Thus, the nurturing of daughters is often done purely for the sake of Allāh (li-wajhi Llāh) without any worldly expectation in return. This sincerity earns greater reward in the sight of Allāh Ta‘ālā.<sup>42</sup>

### *Equality Among All Children*

The Prophet (ﷺ) regarded unequal treatment among children as a form of ḡulm (injustice). In one narration, a Companion's wife requested that her husband gift a slave to her son and make the Prophet (ﷺ) a witness to this gift. Bashīr رضي الله عنه approached the Prophet (ﷺ) and said:

“My wife has asked me to give a slave to her son and make you a witness to it.”

The Prophet (ﷺ) asked:

أَلَهُ إِخْوَةٌ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ، قَالَ: فَأَعْطَيْتَ كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمْ مِثْلَ هَذَا؟ قَالَ: لَا، قَالَ: فَلَا تُشْهِدْنِي إِذَا، فَإِنِّي لَا أَشْهَدُ عَلَى جَوْرِ

“Does he have other brothers?”

He replied, “Yes.”

The Prophet ﷺ asked, “Have you given each of them the same gift?”

He said, “No.”

The Prophet ﷺ responded, “Then do not make me a witness, for I do not testify to injustice.”<sup>43</sup>

This narration clearly emphasizes the principle of equity among children. Favoring one child over the others in matters of gifts, treatment, or affection can lead to serious psychological and emotional damage within the family.<sup>44</sup> Such imbalanced behavior may cause:

1. Rivalry and resentment among siblings.
2. The favored child to develop arrogance and a sense of superiority.
3. The deprived child to suffer from inferiority complexes.
4. Deep-rooted bitterness toward the parents in the long term.

The Prophet ﷺ, by his noble conduct, prohibited discrimination among children and upheld the value of fairness in both material and emotional matters.<sup>45</sup>

### **Conclusion**

In summary, Allāh Ta‘ālā granted the Prophet ﷺ profound knowledge of child psychology. No one has shown as much regard for a child's inner world as the Prophet ﷺ. In today's mechanical and fast-paced world, where mental and emotional disorders are on the rise, children are increasingly prone to psychological challenges. If we adopt the Sunnah (prophetic model) in dealing with children, many of these disorders can be prevented. As a result, we can raise a future generation that is not only physically strong but also mentally sound and spiritually healthy.

### **Suggestions and Recommendations:**

#### **1. Revive the Prophetic Model in Parenting:**

Parents, educators, and caregivers should consciously adopt the Sunnah-based methods of interacting with children such as expressing affection, showing equal attention to all children, and acknowledging their emotions—to foster emotional security and trust.

#### **2. Promote Equality Among Children:**

In line with the Prophetic guidance, parents must ensure justice and fairness among their children in all aspects material, emotional, and spiritual—to prevent jealousy, resentment, and sibling rivalry.

#### **3. Prioritize Emotional Intelligence in Upbringing:**

Like the Prophet ﷺ, who was deeply aware of children's emotional needs, parents should pay attention to their child's psychological development by practicing empathy, encouragement, and emotional validation.

#### **4. Incorporate Play and Joy in Daily Interaction:**

The Prophet's ﷺ playful interaction with children underscores the importance of joy in

learning. Schools and homes should include recreational, imaginative, and moral play to nurture creativity and closeness.

#### 5. Educate Parents on Gender Justice:

Islamic scholars, teachers, and community leaders should emphasize the greater spiritual reward of raising daughters to eliminate deep-rooted cultural biases and promote gender equity in parenting.

#### 6. Integrate Prophetic Parenting in Curricula:

Islamic institutions and madāris should develop dedicated modules on the Prophetic psychology of tarbiyah (nurturing) to prepare parents and teachers for emotionally intelligent and spiritually aligned parenting.

#### 7. Address Modern Psychological Challenges with Sunnah-Based Solutions:

Islamic psychologists and therapists should use Prophetic methods as a foundation for healing modern psychological issues in children, ensuring a faith-integrated therapeutic model.

#### 8. Public Awareness Campaigns:

Utilize Friday sermons, parenting seminars, and media platforms to educate the Muslim community on the timeless relevance of the Prophet's ﷺ method of child upbringing.

## References

<sup>1</sup> Zāmin Naqvī, *Tarbiyat-e-Aulād kā Nabavī Andāz aur Is ke Zarīn Uṣūl* [The Prophetic Method of Child Upbringing and Its Golden Principles], 423.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb fī Ma‘rifat al-Aṣḥāb*, vol. 4, 108. She was born in Makkah al-Mukarramah in 613 CE, 9 years before Hijrah. She was a jurist, scholar, and one of the most respected female Companions (ṣaḥābiyyāt). Senior Companions used to consult her on matters of inheritance. She married the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ in the 2nd year of Hijrah and narrated 2,210 aḥādīth. She passed away in 57 AH.

<sup>3</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 8, 7.

<sup>4</sup> Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad*, vol. 19, 185 (Beirut: Mu‘assasat al-Risālah, 2001/1421 AH).

<sup>5</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣābah*, vol. 1, 547. He was an Anṣārī Companion who pledged allegiance at ‘Aqabah Thāniyah and narrated over 1,500 aḥādīth. He passed away in 68 or 78 AH.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Usud al-Ghābah*, vol. 2, 24. His kunyah was Abū ‘Abd Allāh, and he was the grandson of the Prophet ﷺ, born in Sha‘bān, 4 AH. When he was born, the Prophet ﷺ gave the adhān in his ear. He was martyred in the tragedy of Karbala on 10 Muḥarram, 61 AH.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Usud al-Ghābah*, vol. 1, 294. He was a Khazrajī Anṣārī Companion and servant of the Prophet ﷺ. He accepted Islam in childhood and remained in service to the Prophet ﷺ until his death. He narrated 2,286 aḥādīth and died in Baṣrah in 93 AH.

<sup>8</sup> al-Tirmidhī, *al-Sunan*, vol. 3, 426.

<sup>9</sup> . al-Bukhārī, *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, vol. 1, 208 (Beirut: Dār al-Bashā’ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1989).

<sup>10</sup> . Muslim, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 2, 1000

<sup>11</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Usud al-Ghābah*, vol. 3, 291. He was born in 3 AH, a cousin of the Prophet ﷺ and a notable Companion. He was honored with titles such as “Ḥibr al-Ummah” and “Tarjumān al-Qur’ān.” He resided in Ṭā’if and passed away there in 68 AH.

- <sup>12</sup> Aḥmad Khalīl Jum‘ah, *Aulād kī Tarbiyat Qur‘ān o Ḥadīth kī Roshnī Mein* [Child Upbringing in the Light of the Qur‘ān and Ḥadīth], 351 (Lahore: Bayt al-‘Ulūm, 2003).
- <sup>13</sup> Zāmin Naqvī, *Tarbiyat-e-Aulād kā Nabavī Andāz*, 210.
- <sup>14</sup> Abid (204)
- <sup>15</sup> Aḥmad Khalīl Jum‘ah, *Aulād kī Tarbiyat*, 352.
- <sup>16</sup> al-Qur‘ān al-Karīm, al-Naḥl 16:58–59.
- <sup>17</sup> al-Qur‘ān al-Karīm, al-Shūrā 42:49–50
- <sup>18</sup> Muslim, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, 2027.
- <sup>19</sup> al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 2, 110.
- <sup>20</sup> Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān ibn al-Ash‘ath, *al-Sunan*, vol. 4, 337 (Karachi: Mīr Muḥammad Kutub Khānah, 1949).
- <sup>21</sup> . Shabbīr Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, *Tahdhīb al-Aṭfāl*, 30 (Lahore: Nūr Islām Academy, 2005).
- <sup>22</sup> . Ibn al-Athīr, *Usud al-Ghābah*, vol. 1, 231. He was Bashīr ibn Sa‘d ibn Tha‘labah, whose kunyah was Abū al-Nu‘mān. He participated in the second pledge at ‘Aqabah and all major battles. He was the first of the Anṣār to pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq<sup>ؓ</sup>. He was martyred in 12 AH while returning from the Battle of Yamāmah.
- <sup>23</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *al-Sunan*, vol. 3, 293.
- <sup>24</sup> Manzūr Aḥmad Nu‘mānī, *Ma‘ārif al-Ḥadīth*, vol. 6, 278 (Karachi: Dār al-Ishā‘at, 2007).
- <sup>25</sup> Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. *Musnad Aḥmad*. Vol. 19, p. 185. Beirut: Mu‘assasat al-Risālah, 1421 AH / 2001 CE
- <sup>26</sup> Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalānī. *al-Iṣābah fī Tamayiz al-Ṣaḥābah*. Vol. 1, p. 547. On the Companion who pledged allegiance in the second ‘Aqabah and narrated more than 1500 aḥādīth; died in 68 or 78 AH.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibn al-Athīr. *Usud al-Ghābah fī Ma‘rifat al-Ṣaḥābah*. Vol. 2, p. 24. Entry on Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī (raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā), grandson of the Prophet ﷺ, born Sha‘bān 4 AH and martyred in Karbalā’ on 10 Muḥarram 61 AH.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 294. On Anas ibn Mālik (raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu), Khazrajī Anṣārī Companion and servant of the Prophet ﷺ, narrated 2286 aḥādīth, passed away in Basra in 93 AH.
- <sup>29</sup> al-Tirmidhī, Abū ‘Īsā. *al-Sunan*. Vol. 3, p. 426.
- <sup>30</sup> al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl. *al-Adab al-Mufrad*. Vol. 1, p. 208. Beirut: Dār al-Bashā‘ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1989
- <sup>31</sup> Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj. *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*. Vol. 2, p. 1000.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibn al-Athīr. *Usud al-Ghābah*. Vol. 3, p. 291. On ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās (raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā), cousin of the Prophet ﷺ, known as Ḥabr al-Ummah and Tarjumān al-Qur‘ān, died in Ṭā‘if in 68 AH.
- <sup>33</sup> Jum‘ah, Aḥmad Khalīl. *Aulād kī Tarbiyyat Qur‘ān wa Ḥadīth kī Roshnī Mein*. p. 351. Bayt al-‘Ulūm, 2003.
- <sup>34</sup> *Tarbiyyat-i Aulād ka Nabawī Andaz aur Us ke Zareen Uṣūl*. p. 210
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 204.
- <sup>36</sup> Jum‘ah, *Aulād kī Tarbiyyat*, p. 352.
- <sup>37</sup> al-Qur‘ān al-Karīm, Sūrat al-Naḥl 16:58–59.
- <sup>38</sup> al-Qur‘ān al-Karīm, Sūrat al-Shūrā 42:49–50.
- <sup>39</sup> Muslim. *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 4, p. 2027.
- <sup>40</sup> al-Bukhārī. *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 2, p. 110.
- <sup>41</sup> Abū Dāwūd, Sulaymān ibn al-Ash‘ath. *al-Sunan*. Vol. 4, p. 337. Karachi: Mīr Muḥammad Kutub Khāna, 1949.
- <sup>42</sup> Shabbīr Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. *Tahdhīb al-Aṭfāl*. p. 30. Nūr Islām Academy, Lahore, 2005.
- <sup>43</sup> Ibn al-Athīr. *Usud al-Ghābah*, Vol. 1, p. 231. On Bashīr ibn Sa‘d ibn Tha‘labah, Companion of the Prophet ﷺ who pledged allegiance at ‘Aqabah Thāniyyah and was martyred after the Battle of Yamāmah in 12 AH.
- <sup>44</sup> Abū Dāwūd. *al-Sunan*, Vol. 3, p. 293.
- <sup>45</sup> Nu‘mānī, Manzūr Aḥmad. *Ma‘ārif al-Ḥadīth*. Vol. 6, p. 278. Karachi: Dār al-Ishā‘at, 2007.