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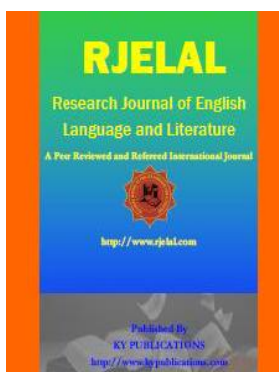
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## ZERO AFFIXED WORDS AS A FACTOR OF LEXICAL AMBIGUITY IN SOME SELECTED SERMONS

ABEERHADISALIH

Assistant Professor

Department of English Language, College of Education for Women  
Iraqi University



### ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with what are called zero affixed or zero morph words i.e. converted words. English language is full of many words that are derived from one class to another without any addition or deletion, (noun to verb, verb to noun, adjective to verb, adjective to noun). For example: *right, guard, rest, busy, safe, patient, blame*. These words cause problem between the speaker and the hearer as the latter would be sometimes confused with the speaker's referent which part of speech he or she is using.

In fact, delivering a speech about a specific aspect and listening to it within a limited period of time by a group of people, is the basic task in sermons. The addresser sometimes uses some converted words within the sermon when he prepares it every week. As a result, this arouses confusion among the addressees because of their ambiguous usage. In this way, the sermon would not be comprehensible to the hearers as expected.

This study is a trial to erase the ambiguity of zero affixed words usage within the sermons by analyzing them lexically.

The present study is valuable to students, researchers and teachers of English language. It is also valuable as an analytical study because it sheds light on the difficulties that are faced by English language users.

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### 1.1 PRELIMINARY

The morpheme is generally understood as a unit which has form as well as content. i.e. a physical substance (phonological and phonetic) and a meaning or function within a grammatical system. Linguists do not all use the term *morpheme* in this sense; some distinguish another unit, namely the *morph*, when wanting to refer specifically to the phonological form of a morpheme.

For example, Lockwood (1993:12-13) states: 'A morph ... is a sequence of phonemes which bears a meaning and cannot be divided into smaller meaning-bearing phoneme sequences.'

Within the actual word, morphemes may assume different phonological shapes, which are referred to as morphs, in this case */m-/*, */-mop-/*. Zero morphs are morphs which have a morphemic representation at the abstract level, but no phonological properties at the concrete level.

A morph is generally defined as the

phonological (or orthographical) representation of a morpheme (Lyons, 1968:196).

This means that a morph has an overt or concrete manifestation by which it can be recognized. Postulating a **zero morph** constitutes an anomaly, since **zero** implies no phonological substance, while **morph** implies a phonological representation.

Lockwood (1993:45) proposed the use of the term **zero allomorph** rather than **zero morph** to resolve this anomaly. He explained that 'a morph is defined as consisting of phonemic material, so it cannot be zero.

Nevertheless, *one of the allomorphs* of a morpheme may be zero, and we can view a zero allomorph as one which corresponds to no morph'. Most morphologists usually think that a zero form is justified only in those cases where there is also an overt (i.e. non-zero) form that expresses exactly the same meaning or function (cf. Aronof, 2005:160-161). This constraint has also been called the **overt analogue criterion**.

This means that for each type of conversion (noun to verb, verb to noun, adjective to verb, adjective to noun) we would have to find at least one affix that expresses exactly the same range of meanings as conversion. If so, we can safely assume the existence of a zero-affix, if not, we have to reject it. In both cases, both conversion and zero-affixation would fulfill the same function, i.e. do their job properly.

### 1.2. What is a zero morpheme?

Traditionally, linguists think of morphemes as constant sound-meanings. That is to say, when a standard noun is to be made the inflectional morpheme -s at the end of it changes the word to indicate pluralism as in **Cat/Cats, Beer/Beers**. (Spencer, 1991: 40-44)

Along the same token, when a standard verb is to exist in the past tense, the inflectional morpheme -ed changes the word to denote its tense e.g. **Bake/Baked, Raise/Raised**. (ibid)

Take the following sentences:

**(1) I love looking at the *sheep* in the meadow.**

**(2) I *hit* them with a giant baseball bat.**

These sentences illustrate the remarkable concept known as the **zero-form morpheme**--a

morpheme that doesn't change the word at all, typically in spelling or pronunciation.

In the examples provided, so long as the sentences, there is no real way to know what the morphology of the italicized word actually is.

In (1), ***sheep*** could be singular or plural. (Pesetsky, 1996: 63)

**If there's a field of *sheep* outside my house, I can enjoy looking at *them*.**

**If I have a painting of one *sheep* in a meadow, I love looking at *it*.**

**In (2), tomorrow, when the *sheep* annoy me, I will *hit* them with a bat.**

**Or, yesterday, when the *sheep* annoyed me, I *hit* them with a bat.**

Put another way, words that have zero-form morphemes in them require additional information in order to understand what the semantic meaning is. If the sentence is

**(3) The *sheep* that are in the meadow are pleasant to look at.**

The plural form of "***sheep***" is known from context, as the plural verb form *are* exists to imply *sheep* + plural. The second sentence could be rewritten

**(4) Yesterday I hit them with my baseball bat.**

And the time adverb ***yesterday*** implies that the verb is hit + past. (Ora, 2013: 150-159)

### 2.1. Ambiguity

Cruse (2006: 10) states that an ambiguous expression is that which has more than one distinct meaning. Yet, he argues that almost all expressions can mean different things in different contexts. Therefore, ambiguity should be reserved only for the expression which has more than one 'established meaning'. This notion is called 'distinctness of meaning' which must be considered, according to Cruse, when tackling ambiguity. Consider example (1):

1-a: My best friend has just had a vasectomy

b: My best friend is pregnant. (ibid).

Cruse (ibid) provides a number of characteristics or properties for the ambiguous expressions, among which are the following:

1. In any interlocution, an addresser who produces an ambiguous expression adopts only one of the

interpretations and expects the addressee to adopt that interpretation.

2. Choosing between the alternative interpretations is a must when considering ambiguity, in other words, there is no a neutral interpretation between the two, e.g., (2):

2- I will meet you at the bank, (ibid: 10).

The meaning of 'bank' in example (2) could either be 'a financial institution' or 'a margin of a river' depending on the context of situation. There is no neutral interpretation between the two.

3. Identity of constraint is an important characteristic of ambiguity. Linguistic expressions are not haphazardly combined. To clarify more, consider the adjective **light** which has two meanings, '**light in color**', and '**light in weight**'.

There is a restriction on the possible combinations of **light**. Hence, when one says **Liz was wearing a light coat, so was Sue**, one should take **Sue** as wearing a light coat too, for it is quite odd to interpret the sentence as one of them has a light-colored coat while the other to be light in weight or (vice versa), this is called the identity of constraint, (ibid: 82).

## 2.2 Ambiguity and Context

It is an agreed upon fact that words do not have meaning in themselves but rather acquire meaning on a certain occasion. In other words, words do not contain meaning in themselves, meaning is communicated by language. Woods (2006: 8) states that language does not exist in a social void. Thus, language elements, words, phrases and sentences, do not work in a social vacuum. Thus, language acquires meaning in context and language elements are meaningless or at least ambiguous if they do not occur in the suitable context of situation. Woods (ibid) maintains that meaning is constructed through the social practice of language on a certain occasion in a specific situation. In other words, meaning is constructed in context.

Scholars agree that the term context is used to describe the environment, situation, state, surroundings, etc. Thus, Context is defined as "*discourse that surrounds a language unit and helps to determine its interpretation and usually scholars use the synonyms linguistic context, context*

*of use, etc*". Context is also defined as "*a set of facts or circumstances that surround a situation or event, and that which surrounds, and gives meaning to something else. Circumstance, situation, phase, position, posture, attitude, place, point; terms; regime; footing, standing, status, occasion, surroundings, environment, location, dependence*". (Source: [www.thesaurus.com](http://www.thesaurus.com)).

Schilitetal (1994:6, cited in Dey, n.d. : 2) observes that the main aspects of a context are: where you are, who you are with, and what resources are nearby. Pascoe (1998: 3, cited in ibid) defines context as "*the subset of physical and conceptual states of interest to a particular entity*". Context is, in fact, the situation that surrounds the language and the interactants. The important aspect is that a situation differs from one to another, and so, one cannot identify all of them.

## 2.3 Lexical ambiguity

Ullman (ibid: 159) argues that when the same word belongs to different parts of speech, it means different things, rendering it polysemous as well as homonymous. Good examples of such case are the word **double** which can be an adjective, an adverb, a verb and a noun; **grave** (adjective), **grave** (noun), **bear** (noun), **bear** (verb), etc.

Such uses differ not only in meaning, but in grammatical function. In brief, Ullmann proposes that homonymy and polysemy are the basis of lexical ambiguity. Lexical ambiguity occurs when words have more than one established meaning as they are communicated.

For example:

1- **bank**, (Axelsen, 2000:6).

Example (1) may variously mean the **bank of a river** or a '**financial institution** (noun), to **bank money** (verb). Context can help in mitigating or even solving the lexical ambiguity. Besides, the context is invested in bending the texts to give various meanings beyond their dictionary or lexical limits. In other words, lexical ambiguity is not confined at all to linguistic expressions which are inherently ambiguous, that is, before being contextualized which is, actually, the case of homonymy and polysemy.

So, any word or phrase may look lexically ambiguous, within the boundaries of pragmatic ambiguity, as a result of the context in question

It is the situation which makes linguistic expressions lexically ambiguous not only the dictionary, as a result of being an elusive context of situation and beside the addressees' lack of the world knowledge, knowledge language or that of language change.

### 3.Lexical Analysis:

1. **Back:** this lexeme comes as a verb means **support** and comes as a noun **sustenance**, or comes as an adverb means **behind, backwards** and as an adjective means **late**. In the text it came as an adverb means **backwards**. "**but the prophet (pbuh) sent her back home and gave her a time limit to give birth to the child**"
2. **Beat:** this lexeme comes as a verb means **to hit, to defeat**, and as a noun means **a pulsation**. In the text it came as a verb means **to hit**. "**and beat them for it (prayer) when they become ten years old, and arrange their beds (to sleep) separately**"
3. **Benefit:** this lexeme occurs as a verb means **to improve, to profit**, and as a noun means **interest, support, advantage**. In the text it came as a verb means **to profit something**. "**they won't benefit you but that which Allah has written for you**"
4. **Care:** this lexeme appears as a noun means **protection** or a verb means **to look after**. In the sermon it came as a verb means **to look after**, i.e. to protect the children from harm. "**the divine Law came to clarify the best ways and methods to protect children and care for them**."
5. **Comfort:** this lexeme can be a noun means **relief, rest**, or it can be a verb means **to comfort**. In the sermon it appears as a noun means **relief** i.e. to cause relief to others "**made them a comfort and joy for the soul and heart, and Allah's blessing and peace be upon our master, Mohammed, the best of worshippers**".
6. **Command:** this lexeme has two meanings, one if it occurs as a verb means **to order, to instruct**, the other if it occurs as a noun means **order, leadership**. In the text it came as a verb means **to order**. "**command your children to pray when they become seven years old**"
7. **Curse:** this lexeme comes with two meanings. If it occurs as a noun it will mean **damn, hardship**. If it comes as a verb, it will mean **to agonize, to torture**. In the text it came as a noun means **damn**. "**the one who harms people on the road deserves their curse**"
8. **Dear:** this lexeme may occur as a noun means **darling, lovely** or it may be an adjective means **exclusive, precious**. It can be an adverb means **with love**. The sermon has the adjective means **precious**. "**therefore dear brothers we must set an example to our children**". The addresser is addressing his audience starting with this word as a type of courtesy.
9. **Delight:** the lexeme would be a noun means **pleasure, gladness**, or it would be a verb **to rejoice, to brighten**. In the sermon it came as a noun means **pleasure**. "**they are precious to the hearts and they bring delight to the eyes**", i.e. children are a gift from Allah that brings pleasure to our life.
10. **Demand:** this lexeme has two meanings when it comes as a noun means **request or appeal**. When it comes as a verb means **call, ask, require**. In this sermon it came as a verb means **require**, i.e. laws impose their rights. "**Modern laws demand these rights, according to their views for the noticeable negligence of children's rights**."
11. **Direct:** this lexeme comes with the meaning **to guide, to point, to lead** as a verb and **immediate, honest** as an adjective. In the text it came as a verb means **to lead**. "**then he directed people to relate the children with their creator when they are very young**".
12. **Drink:** this lexeme occurs as a verb means **to drink, to absorb**. The other is when it occurs as a noun means **syrup, beverage**. In the text it occurs as a verb means **to drink**. "**and if**"

- he/she drinks, then let him/her drink with his/her right"
13. **Finger:** this lexeme appears as a verb means **to point, to touch**. Also it appears as a noun means **key, indicator**. In the text it appeared as a noun means **fingers of the hand**. "until he/she licks his/her fingers, for one does know where in his/her food the blessing lies"
  14. **Hand:** this lexeme has two meanings. The first is when it occurs as a verb means **to give, afford, award**. The second meaning when it occurs as a noun means **portion, palm, part of the body**. In the text it occurred as a noun means **a part of the body**. "Muslim is the one who does not use his tongue or hand to harm people"
  15. **harm** is either a verb which means **to hurt** and a noun which means **damage**. In the sermon it occurs as a noun. "a Muslim is called for avoiding all that may harm others", i.e. Muslim should not cause hardship to others.
  16. **Interest:** it occurs as a noun means a **benefit or welfare, concern**. It can occur as a verb means **to care, to give**. In the sermon it occurred as a noun means **concern**. "to arouse the interest of this religion in their hearts".
  17. **Issue:** this lexeme occurs with two meanings. The first when it comes as a verb means **to publish, to release**. The second when it comes as a noun means **case, affair, section**. In the text it came as a noun means **affair**. "our true religion of Islam is comprehensive, covering all life issues"
  18. **Kind:** this lexeme appears as a noun means **type**, or as an adjective means **friendly**. In this sermon it appeared as an adjective. "there is an important and a kind act of the Islamic jurisprudence"
  19. **Left:** this lexeme appears as a noun means **the left side the opposite of right**. Also it comes as an adjective means **left-handed**. In the text it came as an adjective means **the opposite of right**. "for the devil eats with his left and drinks with his left"
  20. **Lick:** this lexeme has two meanings the first when it came as a verb means **to suckle, to taste food by tongue**. The second when it comes as a noun means **tasting the food by tongue**. In the text it occurred as a verb means **to taste the food by tongue**. "until he/she licks his/her fingers, for one does know where in his/her food the blessing lies"
  21. **Love:** This word comes as a noun means **passion** or a verb means **to like**. It came here as a noun means **passion**. "to gain the love of Allah be he exalted", i.e. to be accepted from Allah.
  22. **mark:** this word can be a noun means **indication** or a verb means **to make a mark**. In this sermon it occurs as a verb which means **to make a mark**, i.e. let them to be distinguished among others. "and guided people to mark themselves with them".
  23. **Master:** this lexeme has three meanings. The first if it comes as a verb means **to cope, to overcome, to conquer**. The second when it comes as a noun means **captain, gentleman, lord**. The third if it comes as an adjective means **major, prime**. In the text it came as a noun means **lord**. "our master Muhammad".
  24. **model** it is either a verb carries the meaning **to design** or a noun which means **example**. It can be an adjective with the meaning **typical**. In this sermon it occurred as a noun which means **example**, as a verb which means **to shape**. "and the best model to model after" i.e. Muhammad (PBUH) is Muslims' ideal to be followed and in the same time they can make from themselves a model by following him.
  25. **Name:** the lexeme appears with two meanings. The first as a noun means **denotation, reference**. The second appearance is as a verb means **to term, to define, to call**. In the text it appeared as a verb **to call** and as a noun **the reference**. "o lad! Name in the name of Allah"
  26. **Next:** this lexeme may come as an adjective means **nearer or close** or it may come as an adverb means **after, nearby**. In the text it came as an adverb means **nearby**. "should eat from what is next to him/her and not from the middle of the plate"

27. **Nurse:** this lexeme has two meanings, the first when it appears as a noun means **nursemaid**. The second when it came as a verb means **to keep, to bring up, to raise**. This sermon has the verb which means **to raise**. " **then sent her back once again, till she nurses the baby until it can depend on itself**".
28. **Order:** this lexeme comes as a verb means **to command, to sort**. It can come as a noun means **arrangement, instruction**. In the text it came as a verb means **to command**. "**order your children to pray at the age of seven and hit them for doing it at the age of ten**"
29. **Praise:** this lexeme has two meanings, the first when it occurs as a verb means **to dissuade, acclaim**. The second when it occurs as a noun means **commendation, glorification**. In the text it occurred as a noun means **glorification**. "**praise be to Allah**"
30. **Present:** this lexeme can be a verb means **to attend, to offer, and as a noun means a gift, present tense**, or as an adjective means **current, actual**. In the text it occurred as an adjective means **current** "**Allah created children and made them a blessing and ornament for the present life**"
31. **Record:** this lexeme has two meanings when it is a verb means **to register, to score**, and as a noun it means **registration, report**. In the text it came as a noun means **registration**. "**the pens have been lifted and the records have dried**".
32. **Respect:** this lexeme comes as a noun means **regard, esteem** and as a verb means **to regard, to honor**. In this sermon it came as a verb means **to honor**. "**to follow Allah's orders, not to be arrogant and to respect other people's rights**", i.e. to take into consideration others rights and do not exceed the limits.
33. **Reward:** this lexeme comes either as a verb means **to pay, to give a prize**, or as a noun means **pay, recompense**. In the text it occurred as a noun means **recompense**. "**encouraged to grow his money as a voluntary work on the part of the rich and as a reward for the poor**".
34. **Right:** this lexeme comes as a noun means **truth, sense, share**. Also it comes as an adjective means **correct** and comes as an adverb means **straight**. In the sermon it came as a noun means **share**, i.e. Islam does not differentiate between man and women in rights. "**once he/she comes out to life, the Islamic jurisprudence affirms his/her inheritance and bequest right**".
35. **Safe:** this lexeme occurs as a noun and an adjective. When it occurs as a noun means **iron box**, but when it occurs as an adjective means **secure, peaceful**. In the text it came as an adjective means **secure** "**a believer is the one whom people feel safe with**"
36. **Separate:** this lexeme comes as a verb means **to disconnect, to divide, to part** and as an adjective means **independent, private**. In the text it came as a verb means **to part**. "**and hit them for doing it at the age of ten, and separate them in beds**"
37. **Show:** this word comes as a noun means **offer** and may come as a verb means **to display**. Here it came as a verb means **to display**. "**and rules show that heeding to these rules and laws is a judicial duty**", i.e. to clear up the rules to people.
38. **Sure:** this lexeme occurs as an adjective means **confirmed, certain**, and as an adverb means **definitely**. In the text it occurred as an adjective means **certain**. "**and be sure that if you seek help, seek the help of Allah**"
39. **Trouble:** this lexeme comes as either a noun means **problem** or as a verb means **to worry, to disturb**. In the sermon it came as a noun means **problem**. "**there are a lot of includes in the history of Islam which talk about Muslims competing to help their brothers overcome hardships and trouble**".
40. **Turn:** this lexeme has two meanings, when it occurs as a verb means **to reverse, to upset, to change**. When it occurs as a noun means **change, alteration, return**. In the text it occurred as a verb means **to change**. "**or else they will turn a kind of wrath**".
41. **Type:** this lexeme appears with two meanings as a verb means **to print**, but as a noun it



means a kind, a sort. In the text it came as a noun means a kind. "whoever eats a type of food then says: praise be to Allah"

42. **Wipe:** this lexeme comes with two meanings. When it occurs as a verb means **to clean, to mop**. When it occurs as a noun means **mopping**. In the text it occurred as a verb

means **to clean**. "one should not also wipe his hand with cloth"

### 3.1 The Frequency of Lexical Ambiguity:

There are 18 ambiguous words in five selected sermons. Below are the number of each type of word found in the sermons.

Lexemes	Class of words			
	Noun	Verb	adjective	adv
Back				back
Beat		beat		
benefit		benefit		
Care		care		
Comfort	comfort			
command		command		
Curse	Curse			
Dear			Dear	
Delight	Delight			
Demand		demand		
Direct		direct		
Drink		drink		
Finger	Finger			
Hand	Hand			
Harm	Harm			
interest	interest			
Issue	Issue			
kind			kind	
Left			Left	
lick		lick		
Love		love		
Mark		mark		
Master	master			
Model	model	model		
Name	name	name		
next				next
Nurse		Nurse		
Order		Order		
Praise	praise		present	
Present				

Record	record			
Respect		respect		
Reward	reward			
Right	right			
Safe			Safe	
Separate		separate		
Show		show		
Sure			Sure	
Trouble	trouble			
Turn		turn		
Type	type			
Wipe		wipe		

4. **Conclusion:**

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that:

1. There are 42 zero affixed words in the three sermons that were selected for the current study. These lexemes can cause lexical ambiguity to the hearer.
2. There are 17 of them came as nouns and 19 of them occurred as verbs and 6 of them occurred as adjectives, 2 of them were adverbs.
3. Zero affixed words are being used in sermons as verbs more than other classes.
4. Most of these verbs are regular.
5. The majority of the verbs occurred in the sermons were in the imperative mood and active voice.
6. Few of the verbs were in the past tense and in the indicative mood.
7. Most of the adjectives are gradable and dynamic.
8. 70% of the verbs are stative and 30% of them are dynamic.
9. The two adverbs that were in the sermons were adverbs of place.
10. Most of the nouns are abstract and less of them are common.

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## Appendix

### Raising Children in Islam

Praise be to Allah who bestowed upon us the blessing of children, and commanded us to guide them to the straight path that leads to happiness. Peace and blessing be upon our master Prophet Muhammad, the best of Allah's servants. And upon his family and companions till the day of Resurrection.

Allah, be He exalted, said: **{O you who believe! Ward off yourselves and your families against a Fire ( Hell ) whose fuel is men and stone, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) sever, who disobey not, (from executing) the commanded }** { At-Tahreem: V.6}

Allah, be He exalted, said: **{And (remember) when Luqman said to his son when he was advising him: " O my son! Join not in worship others with Allah. Verily. Joining others in worship with Allah is a great ( wrong) indeed. (13) And we have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. (14) His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship. And his weaning is in two years – give thanks to Me and to your parents. To Me is the final destination.(15) [ But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of wish you have no knowledge, then obey them not but behave with them in the world kindly. And follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do (16) O my son! If it be (anything) equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed, and though it be in a rock, or in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Verily is subtle (in bringing out that grain). Well-Acquainted (with its place). (17) O my son! Perform prayers, enjoin (on people) all that is good, and forbid (people) from all that is evil and bad, and bear with patience whatever befalls you. Verily, these are some of the important commandments (ordered by Allah with no exemption).**

And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily. Allah likes not any arrogant boaster.(18) And be moderate (or show no insolence) in your walking, and lower your voice. Verily, the harshest of all voices is the braying of the asses}. [ Luqman.v.13-19].

Abd-Allah Bin Amro (ABPWT) narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said: " Command your children to pray when they become seven years old, and beat them for it (prayer) when they become ten years old; and arrange their beds (to sleep) separately"<sup>(1)</sup>

Narrated Ibn Abbas (ABPWT) said: Once I was behind the Prophet who said to me: "Young boy! I'm going to teach you words. Obey Allah and he will protect you Obey Allah and He will be there for you. If you ask, ask Allah. If you seek help, seek the help of Allah. And be sure that if the whole nation gathers to benefit you, they won't benefit you but that which Allah has written for you. And if they gather to harm you, they won't do you any harm but that which Allah has written for you. The pens have been lifted and the records have dried"<sup>(2)</sup>.

Anas (ABPWH) narrated that Prophet (PBUH) said: "Everyone will be held responsible in front of Allah for that with which he was entrusted whether he kept it or not"<sup>(3)</sup>

Children are a gift from Allah to us. They are the adornment of the life of this world. They are precious to the hearts and they bring delight to the eyes. But this gift remains incomplete if they don't get a proper upbringing that protects them from Allah's displeasure and punishment.

Allah the Great and Almighty praised his prophet and pious servants for raising their children righteously. For example, Ismail (PBUH) used to enjoin on his family and his people the prayers and the obligatory charity, and his Lord was pleased with him.

Ibraheem (PBUH) used to advise his sons to follow straight path of Allah. Wise Luqman warned his son against joining to his parents his parents, to be a God-fearing man both covertly and overtly to observed the prayer, to follow Allah's orders, not to be arrogant and to respect other people's rights.

These are the basic principles to which children should be raised. Abiding by these principles protects one from Allah's punishment and enables him to enjoy Allah's favours. Not abiding by them exposes one to be held responsible for his negligence before Allah. Carelessness about looking after children and not giving them

proper upbringing deprives their parents from their devotion and goodness when they grow up, and the children become unable to be helpful neither to themselves nor to their parents.

Therefore, dear brothers, we must set to our children and do our best to give them righteous upbringing so they might be the comfort of our eyes both in life and after death.

#### **Caring for Children in Islam**

Praise be to Allah, who bestowed upon us the gift of having children, and made them a comfort and joy for the soul and heat and Allah's blessing and peace be upon our master, Mohammed the best of worshippers, and upon his family and Companions till the Day coming.

Allah, be He exalted, said, **{Wealth and children are the armament of this present life}** [Al-Kahf: v.46].

Allah, be He exalted, said, **{Order your family to pray and be patient in it. We do not ask you for provisions, rather, it is We who provide for you. And the final outcome is for the cautious}** [Ta-Ha: v.132].

Allah, be He exalted, said, **{Mothers shall suckle their children for two years completely, for whoever desires to fulfill the sucking}** [Al-Baqarah:v.233].

Allah, be He exalted, said, **{Allah has given you wives from among yourselves, and has given you and your wives, sons and grandsons and he has provided you with good things. What, do they believe in vanity; do they disbelieve in the favor of Allah?}** [An-Nahl:v.72].

Narrated Abdu Allah Bin Amr (ABPWT): Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, **"It is sinful enough for a person to withhold from those he/she owns their sustenance"**<sup>(1)</sup>. And in another narration

**"It is sinful enough for a person to neglect those he/she sustains"**<sup>(2)</sup>.

Narrated Abdu Allah Bin Amr(ABPWT): Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, **"Order your Children to pray At the age of seven, and hit them for doing it at the age of ten, and separate them in beds"**<sup>(3)</sup>

Allah created children and made them an ornament for the present life, and made their parents love them, sympathize with them, and wish to offer goodness to them, especially in childhood.

Modern laws demand these rights, according to their views, for the noticeable negligence of children's rights. But as human nature varies in knowledge and appreciation of this goodness, the Divine Law came to clarify the best ways and methods to protect children and care for them. Hence, a child's rights are permanent since he/she is shaped as an embryo in a mother's womb. When the soul is breathed into him/her, transgression against him/her is forbidden in consensus (of Moslem legal scholars). Islamic jurisprudence forced a penalty upon his/her killer called Al Gharrah; it is: a slave whose price is worth half of the blood-money's tenth value. Once he/she comes out to life, the Islamic jurisprudence affirms his/her inheritance and bequest rights. It also affirms his/her nursing and expending and expending. The first thing of all that is to affirm the right of natural nursing and suckling for an adequate.

Period of times in order to let him/her grow up psychologically and physically. The Islamic jurisprudence also affirms expenditure until puberty, so that he/she does not have to work and earn a living and get exploited or abused psychologically or physically. It also considers negligence of those whom a person sustains as one of the worst sins.

On the other hand; the Islamic Law obligated that a child's money is to be preserved from spoiling, and encouraged to grow his money as a voluntary work on the part of the rich, and as a reward for the poor.

On the other hand, the Islamic Law warned against sexual discrimination among children, pointing to fact that both sexes are gifts of Allah, the Great and Almighty, without any distinction between a male and a female.

Then, the Prophet's (PBUH) directed people to the ways through which one praises to Allah, thanks Him for this gift, and affirms the child's. He (PBUH) set the Sunnah of Aqiqah (slaughtering a sheep or two for the occasion of a baby's birth, and giving away parts of them as almsgiving), and ordered that a child's name should be good. Then he (PBUH) directed people to relate the children with Their Creator when they are very young, and directed that they be ordered to perform prayers at the age of seven.

There is an important and a kind act of the Islamic jurisprudence, which states that a child's right of life is preserved by the Islamic Law, even if he/she was not a result of a legal marriage. An adultery-pregnant woman came to ask the Prophet (PBUH) to enact the penalty of adultery upon her to purify her from

Her sin, but the Prophet(PBUH) sent her back home and gave her a time limit to give birth to the child, then sent her back once again, till she nurses the baby until it can depend on itself.

Through these Islamic teachings, we find that Islam gained precedence in showing the child's right and his/her care. We pray to Allah, be He exalted, that He sets our children right, and perverse them against every misfortune.

#### **Eating Etiquettes**

Praise be to Allah, Who provided subsistence and sufficed us, and Who facilitated goodness for us and blessed us with it, and Allah's blessing and be upon our master, Mohammed, the noblest Prophet and upon all his family and Companions.

Allah, be He exalted, said, **{Children of Adam, take your adornment at every place of prayer. Eat and drink, and do not waste. He does not love the wasteful}** [Al-A'raf:v.31].

Narrated Omar Bin Abi Salman (ABPWH), I was a boy in the lap (guardianship) of Allah's Messenger (PBUH), and my hand was messing (playing) with the plate, then Allah's Messenger (PBUH) told me, **"O lad! Name in the Name of Allah's eat with your right, and eat from what is near you"**.. And that was my way of eating food (Ti'mati) since then.<sup>(1)</sup>

Narrated Aishah (ABPWH): Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, **"When any of you starts eating, then he/she should mention the name of Allah, and if he/ she forgets to mention the name of Allah at the beginning and end"**<sup>(2)</sup>

Narrated Jaber (ABOWH): Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, **"When a morsel falls from anyone of you, then he/she should pick it up, remove the dirt that is on it, eat it and should not leave it for the Devil. One should not also wipe his hand with a cloth, until he/she licks his/her fingers, for one does not know where in his/her food the blessing lies"**

Narrated Abdu Allah (ABPWT): Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, **"When any of you eats, then let him/her eat with his/her right, and if he/she drinks, then let him/her drink with his/her right, for the Devil eats with his left and drinks with his left"**

Narrated AbiHurayra (ABPWH), the prophet (PBUH) never criticized any food; if he felt appetite for it, he ate it, or else he left it.

Narrated Mu'az Bin Ananas (ABPWH): Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, **"Whoever eats a type of food then says: Praise be to Allah, Who has fed me of this food , and has provided it for me without any ability or power by me, then his preceding and recent sins are forgiven"**

The previous texts presented a number of nice and useful eating etiquettes, such as: not to be extravagant in eating and drinking, that a person should eat with his/her right hand not the left, so that he/she would not be likened to the Devil and that a person should never criticize any food.

Some other eatingetiquettes are: one should not eat while leaning on something, should eat from what is next to him/her and not from the middle of the plate, except if that in the middle is different from what is in front of him/her. It is unpleasant also, to near one's mouth to the food, and to spit and blow one's nose when eating with other people. It is unpleasant to breathe and blow in a vessel, and it is pleasant drink while sitting.

It is unpleasant to drink from the mouth of the bottle.And it is preferable to wipe the vessel (with fingers) and lick fingers. It is preferable, also, to eat the food that fell on the ground after removing dirt off it, and that food is not to be blown at. It is better for one to clean in between his/her teeth (with a stick), but not to swallow what is clean in that way. It is preferable for one to eat food not when it is hot, but when its heat drops, and not to belch during his eating or drinking. And it is preferable to drink in three breaths.