

MODULE 2

Class Title: Respecting Parents

Aim of the lesson: To learn importance of respecting parents through a role play

Category: Interpersonal skills

Lesson Format: Power point presentation with activity

(**Note to teacher:** some slides in the power point presentation –slides 58-60, are hidden, as they were not used for this session. They have not been deleted as you may want to use them for your class.)

Greeting to students) *Assalam alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

(*Taooz*) *Aoodhubillahi min AsShaytanir Rajeem*

(*Tasmiyah*) *Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem*

(*Du'a*) *Rabbish rahli sadri wa yassirli amri wahlul uqdatum millisani yafqahu qawli* (Surah Ta-Ha 20: Verse 25-28)

Slide 1:

Today we're going to talk about the importance of respecting parents, *inshaAllah*. In today's world, not respecting parents is a rampant problem in most families. In fact, it's much too common nowadays to have kids grumbling, talking back, rolling their eyes, and, even yelling and slamming doors, at their parents! Worst of all, they don't even feel any remorse at having done it; they think their behaviour is perfectly acceptable, even normal. There was a time when respecting one's parents was the absolute norm, but today, especially past a certain age, if children respect their parents it's considered really weird. Am I wrong in what I've said, so far?

What we need to find out is why and how the norm of respecting one's parents has faded, over the years. What's happened? So in today's class *inshaAllah*, we're going to try to figure this out. What's gone wrong? What's happened? Firstly, we're going to attempt to figure out what exactly respect means, and secondly, we're going to learn who our parents are. Are you all curious to know? I sure am.

Slide 2:

To begin with, what is 'respect'?

Respect is to show or feel esteem or admiration for someone or something. For example, when you feel respect towards someone, you'll show esteem or admiration for them by the way you look at them, approach them, and greet them and talk to them; whether you greet with a really big, genuine smile and say '*Assalamualaikum*' in a "Oh I'm so happy to see you" way, or just say "Salamalaikum" in a pathetic "I couldn't care less" way, with a twisted face and an attitude, without even looking at them. So our attitude, our tone of voice, and our expression clearly indicate how much we respect someone.

To respect someone also means to give regard to that person's likes and dislikes. For example, if we take a survey over here and find out that you guys do not like cottage cheese sandwiches and guava juice. Now, we can show respect to you guys by giving regard to your dislikes and not serving these. By looking out for your dislikes, it's a way of showing respect to you guys, isn't it?

Yet another way of respecting can be by appreciating and acknowledging someone's hard work and efforts. There are many other ways of showing respects through our facial and bodily expressions, our speech, our attitude, and what we do. The former are just a few examples. Do you guys get what respect means? Do you have any other meaning in mind?

Slide 3:

Now let's see who our Mum and Dad are. Who're your mum and dad?

Students: Our parents.

Teacher: Okay, but who's mum, really? Does your mum look like this?

Student: She's the one who gave birth to us and gives us her love, care and everything.

Teacher: Okay, let's first find out who mum really is, as defined by the society, media, and very importantly—our friends. She's our glorified maid, maybe? The one who does chores all day long, the one who's responsible for your clean clothes and tidy bedrooms, maybe? Yes? No?

Students: No.

Teacher: No? She's much more than that?

Student: No.

Teacher: She's not much more than that?!

Student: She doesn't clean.

Teacher: So she doesn't clean herself, but she makes sure it's all done? Okay. Is she responsible for your clean clothes?

Students: Yes, but she doesn't do them herself.

Teacher: So what does she do? What chores does she do in the house?

Student: She cooks food for me.

Teacher: Okay, so she's your chef. How about your dad? Just who is your dad?

Student: The ATM!

Teacher: An ATM machine? He's your bank?

Student: Sometimes our mums and dads are both ATM machines. Whenever Dad says I don't have money, we go to Mom.

Student: I think all dads are responsible for making things just magically appear!

Student: I think both of them make things magically appear.

Student: Yes.

Teacher: So they grant us all that we wish for? Yes, much—what's good for us. Anyhow, today we're going to try and define, as well as clear, our perspectives about our parents.

Slide 4:

A mother is not just our maid, driver or ATM, agreed? Who is she really? To start with, she's the one who kept us warm, safe and secure in her tummy for nine months—almost one whole year! We made her puke, maybe even several times a day, and kept her from eating what she wanted. We kicked her, and maybe even punched her, from inside her own belly; gave her lots of sleepless nights with backache and all sorts of other aches, and to top it all, we nearly terrorized her with pain trying to make our way out of her!

Despite all that, she fell in love with you from the moment she held you in her arms and saw you. Justifiably, Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*) has acknowledged this hardship suffered by mothers in the Qur'an:

Slide 5:

“We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents; in pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth” (Surah Al-Ahqaf :15)

Slide 6:

Not very long ago, you girls were like these smelly, snotty-nosed, pooping, really loud and demanding brats. Who took care of this bundle of joy? It was your mother who took care of all of this mess.

Actually, I really wanted to put up a picture of a dirty diaper up and show it, so that you could begin to understand what she's done for you. She was the one who changed your nappies and cleaned all other messy stuff you did. Did she clean up and care for you with disgust and anger? No, on the contrary she took care of you with utmost pleasure and pride; she did everything out of love, out of care, out of deep affection. She did not do an *ehsaan* on you, did she?

Students: No.

Teacher: In fact, your mother was probably so proud of you that she showed pictures of you to anyone who was willing to see them. I'm saying this from my own experience. When my sister's first born was potty trained, she clicked pictures of her sitting on her potty chair and showing them to all us excitedly, "Look, she can sit on a potty chair now! She's potty trained!" Those are the kind of small accomplishments only mothers can feel proud of! They become gaga over the silliest words and actions that their babies do.

Slide 7:

As a result, how should we behave with our mothers? What's the status given to mothers in Islam? Anyone know?

Student: Paradise lies under her feet.

Teacher: Yes, this is what Islam tells us. Our mothers are the ones under whose feet lies *Jannah*. This is stated in Tirmidhi.

Slide 8:

In a *hadith* in Bukhari, it's related:

"A man came to the Prophet *Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*): O Messenger of Allah, who among the people is the most worthy of my good companionship? The Prophet *Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam* said: Your mother. The man said: Then who? The Prophet *Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam* replied: Then your mother. The man further asked: Then who? The Prophet *Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam* replied: Then your mother. The man then asked again: Then who? The Prophet *Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam* replied: Your father." [Bukhari]

What does this *hadith* show? This *hadith* tells the status our mothers should have of in our lives, as this is the status given to them in Islam.

Slide 9:

Now, let's come to our fathers. Your father's the one who's probably planned out your college education from when you were two days old. He's the one who works hard day and night, year after year ceaselessly, so that he can take you on exotic vacations, or give you those hi-fi gadgets, those big shiny cars you roam around in, and these lovely clothes you girls are wearing right now. All this is because of fathers usually, right?

My Dad used to play hide and seek with me even when I was ten! I'm sure you all have your own experience where your dads did so much for you, so much more for you, right? Aren't dads really precious?

Students: Yes, for sure.

Teacher: *Alhumdulillah*. So dads shower their love and affection over us.

Slide 10:

So basically, you didn't become this big just by yourself, on your very own. Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* was the one who created you and it's because of Him that you're growing up *Alhumdulillah*. Therefore, after Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*, we should give thanks to our parents for they brought us up the way we are.

Slide 11:

Furthermore, there are lots of people who have come and gone, and will come and go, in our lives. We have siblings, family, friends, and classmates who may at one time or another abandon us. Even husbands and wives get divorced; they part ways. We have parted ways with a lot of people, haven't we?

But parents are two people who are constant in our lives until the end, who remain loyal to us throughout our lives, who care for us endlessly, who love us immeasurably and blindly, and who continuously fret and fuss over us, worry about us. Sometimes, they may say or do things which we don't like, but it's usually for our own good, and out of sheer concern that they do it. Do you girls agree with me? Your parents are the ones who love you the most, don't they? We don't realize it at times, and maybe not at your age.

Student: In relationships, a brother can get jealous of a sister, or a sister can get jealous of a brother, but parents will never get jealous of their children. A brother and sister may fight and part ways over something small even, but parents never abandon us.

Teacher: Exactly, very good. That's a lovely thing that you just said. Siblings can get jealous of each other; some of the closest of relationships can have jealousy in them to sour them, but parents can never get jealous of their children. Parents never think badly of their kids.

Slide 12:

So are you girls beginning to understand who parents really are? Their value and worth? Now let's talk about the respect that they deserve from us—not only for all that they do for us, but also what's expected of us by Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*. *Insha Allah*, we'll try see how we show respect to our parents. Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* tells us in *Surah Isra*:

Slide 13:

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honour. And lower unto them the wing of submission and humility through mercy, and say: ‘My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy as they did bring me up when I was young’.” (*Surah Al Isra*, 17: 23-24)

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا
أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

If you look at these *ayat*, there's just one instruction with regards to Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*, and that is to worship none but Him. In contrast, there are so many commands with regards to our parents. The command to do good to our parents comes **right** after the command to worship only Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*. By mentioning all these commands with regards to parents right after what we owe Him, Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* is indicating that our parents come second only to Him. So now we're going to concentrate on the part on parents.

Slide 14:

“*Wa bil waalidaini ihsaana*”. This command actually comes at various places in the Qur'an and it's usually translated as: “And that you be dutiful to your parents”. The word that we're going to focus on today is *ehsaan*. What does *ehsaan* mean?

Student: Favor. It's to do a favor for somebody.

Teacher: You're doing a favor on someone. Anyone else? What do you understand by the word *ihsaan*? Come on! You guys don't speak Urdu? Is there any other meaning of *ihsaan*? Or do you girls all agree with 'favor'?

Student: To show mercy, maybe, in this context at least?

Slide 15:

Teacher: It could mean to be merciful, okay, in this context. In Urdu it means favor. But we are going to delete that meaning completely right now, because in Arabic it does not mean favor.

In Arabic it means excellence - to behave exceptionally well, extremely well, okay? In Arabic it means being exceptionally good—and 'exceptionally' has a lot of stress on it. And do you know *ihsaan* in Arabic, grammar wise, it's an exhortation. Does anyone know what exhortation means? It means to urge strongly: we **have** to do it! So we are being commanded to be exceptionally good, to be extremely good. Now do you all understand '*ihsaan*'? So in Arabic it does not mean favor.

Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* is not telling us to do a favor upon our parents; is goodness to them even a favor? No, absolutely not; it's rather our duty. Thus, Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* is commanding us to behave exceptionally well towards our parents.

Slides 16-18:

Let's just examine a few examples from our day to day lives and figure out how we can attain that exceptional behavior with them. Let's say you're on the phone with your best friend and you're in the middle of a really intense conversation—at the climax of her story; you're really gripped on whatever she's saying. Suddenly, your mom comes in and asks, "Sweetie, please help me set the table". What will you do?

Students: Oh, not now mom!

Teacher: Yes, your first reaction may be to just refuse what your mom is asking you to do, or tell her you'll come in a bit. Anyone else?

Student: Get up reluctantly, slowly, as a favor.

Teacher: Yes you may obey her but only half heartedly and in the Urdu context, you'd do an *ehsaan* on her, you'll do a favor on her. Right?

Student: Obey her fully, right away.

Teacher: Really? You'd obey her fully, immediately?

Student: Yes.

Teacher: *MashaAllah*, you obey all the time?

Student: Well...not all the time...

Student: I'd call my friend back later and go and set the table.

Teacher: I wish that were the case. Okay, *Alhumdulillah* if you guys actually do that, *Alhumdulillah*. But the first thing that we usually do is roll our eyes, then groan, and then complain to our friend, "She just had to ask me now, didn't she? She knew I was on the phone!" But remember, Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* is asking for exceptional behavior. No matter how good the story is, no matter what your friend is saying, you just hang up. You politely say, "Yes Mum, I'm coming", hang up and you help her out—and not half-heartedly! Let's say if she's telling you something really important or urgent, then you should ask her to hold on, tell your Mom it's really urgent and ask if you could help her in a bit. Basically, it's the attitude that we're talking about, isn't it? It's how we should react—with a very good attitude. Moms are pretty understanding; we just have to handle things properly, kindly, and politely.

Slides 19-20:

Another example: You're playing this really exciting game on the computer or mobile and...

Student: ... And you're on the really last level...

Teacher: Exactly! You're on the last level and your Dad asks, "Munchkin, please fix me a cup of coffee." What do you do?

Student: You go like, "Ughhh!"

Teacher: Exactly. You ask Dad, "Not right now, I hope?!"

Student: You can save the game and fix the coffee as fast as you can.

Teacher: Save the game and fix the coffee as fast as you can; very good. *Alhumdulillah* if you do that; most of the times though, we don't do that. So yes the best thing to do is just pause the game there, you go and fix him a cup of coffee really nicely, you give it to him really nicely...

Student: Then ask, "May I go now?"

Teacher: That's the perfect way to handle it. This way you'll *InshaAllah* get the reward for promptly obeying your father—which is immense, and your game won't go anywhere, either.

Slides 21-22:

Another example: It's family dinner time and everyone's sharing their day's experiences and what are you doing? You're texting under the dining table, even though you know very well that you're not allowed to do that. Your Mum reminds you, "Please no texting!" but you just tune her out, think "whatever" and continue whatever you were doing—messaging or playing games. Remember, Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* is asking for exceptional behavior, so you should just put your phone away join the conversation with full zeal, full passion and full gusto.

Slide 24:

So we've just dealt with the first part of the *ayah*: "*Wa bil waalidaini ihsaana*". Is it clear how we can do *ihsaan* our parents? These were just a few day to day examples; I'm sure there are many more which happen in our daily lives in which we have to consciously choose to do *ihsaan* or lose our *thawaab* (reward).

Let's come to the second part of the *ayah* which is "...say not to them a word of disrespect..." Actually, the word of disrespect that Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* uses in this *ayah* is 'Uff!'. He says do not even say 'Uff!' to either of them. So, what is 'Uff!'?

Student: It's our reaction when we're annoyed.

Slide 25:

Teacher: 'Uff' is a reactionary word that just rolls off our tongues so easily! I think that's the first thing we say, and then we roll our eyes.

Students: Yes!

Teacher: And then we sigh. So Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* is telling us to not even say such an insignificant word, let alone blurt out something worse. For those who've learnt *tajweed*, 'fa' is the easiest letter to pronounce. So Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* is prohibiting from saying even the easiest letter.

So 'uff' may be the smallest utterance, but it's just one extreme; what's the other extreme? It's talking back, shouting, and screaming; these are totally not allowed!

Slides 26-28:

There are a few concepts with regards to respecting our parents that are ingrained in us right from the beginning—from when we were toddlers, *Alhumdulillah*. For example, when we address them we always say 'aap'; we never say 'tum' to our parents, do we? (*aap* is a polite way of addressing in Urdu, whereas, *tum* is a frank way)

Also, when they call us we don't answer "Kiyaa?" Do we? Rather, we answer with "Jee?" *Alhumdulillah*, these are etiquettes that are already engrained in us. So then why is it that at the slightest excuse we are ready to explode at them? Aren't we?

Slides 29-32:

Sometimes, your mother may be talking to you and you just walk away. Or you become critical of her: "Why is she so irrational? Why is she so oversensitive? Why can't she understand what I'm saying? Why doesn't she just let me be?"

How about with your dads? "He'll never understand what I'm saying; he never does! He's never faced the stuff which I'm facing now, so he can't possibly understand!" It may be that you're right about your mom and dad, but no matter what they say or do, no matter what you're feeling inside, you still have to respect them at all times.

As for answering back and screaming at them, these are so totally not allowed; they're out of the question, so just chuck them out the window! Even rolling the eyes—something we're all very good at, is totally disrespectful. It's just like saying 'Uff!'. It just may be that we're perceiving things wrongly. We haven't reached their level of wisdom and maturity yet, so we can't see things from their perspective, can we? They may seem totally unreasonable and irrational to us, but Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* has commanded us not even to say 'uff', so we just have to respect them, listen and obey. Remember, we can't even say the slightest word or make a gesture that may hurt them.

Slides 33-34:

How can we control ourselves from even saying "Uff! "? How can we stop ourselves from not even saying the slightest word of annoyance?

Student: By controlling ourselves?

Teacher: Exactly. We have to keep a **firm** grip on our anger. We have to begin training ourselves to control our anger. It'll be difficult in the beginning, but the strength to do so will come with time and with training.

Actually, what we are required to do is *sabr*—we have to be patient, strong and tolerant in order to control ourselves. It'll help us if we realize our status with regards to our parents: we're their kid, and are thus at a much lower level. In contrast, as the ones who brought us into this world and take care of us, they're at a much higher level than we are. We certainly don't have a tit for tat relationship with them. It's not that "If they can scream at me, if they can be nasty to me, why can't I be the same with them?" We have to get this concept of equality with parents out of our minds completely; as it just **doesn't** exist!

Slide 35:

So let's just do a little experiment today and see if we are at equilibrium with our parents. Is our status higher, or is it the same, or is it at a much lower?

(**Note to teacher:** Have measuring scales and different weights (you can use objects as weights). Ask kids to list some things they think they do for their mum, add a weight for each thing they do. Then ask what their mum does for them and add weights on other scale, then simply add a real heavy weight on mums scale that would tip it no matter how much weight is added on other side – that would be the weight of the fact that she gave birth to them!)

Teacher: Okay, I have this scale here that we're going to use. Can you all see this scale? It's really heavy so I can't hold it up. I'm sorry, just move up, stand up or kneel. We're going to "weigh" what you do against what they do or have done. Give me an example please.

Student: Give them water.

Student: Be nice to them

Student: You smile at them.

Student: Greet them lovingly and respectfully.

Teacher: Okay, good. So all of these things, *Alhumdulillah*, are the good things that you do for them. Now let's look at what your parents have done for you, or are still doing. Firstly, your mother gave birth to you. This fact really tips the scale because no matter what we do, no matter how good we are to our moms, just this one crucial act puts her at a **much** higher level. We cannot beat that. She deserves our sincerest and best *ihsan* treatment, no matter what. Besides this, there's lots more things that she does for us, doesn't she?

Student: I can't really count the number of things my mother does for me.

Teacher: absolutely.

Slide 36:

So now is your perspective becoming clearer with regards to where we stand compared to our parents?

Students: Yes.

Slides 37-39:

Thus, no matter how bad a situation gets, we cannot talk back. No matter how bad a scolding you're getting, no matter how stern and difficult your mom or dad become, you cannot lash out at them. You are going to listen to them patiently, and always with a kind and respectful attitude. Then, when they're done speaking, you're going to reply softly to them—softly explain your point of view.

You're going to talk things out with them, not fight it out with them! You have to sincerely try to come to mutual agreement or a compromise with them. Don't just explode; act civilized! You know a lot of misunderstandings and conflicts can be sorted out just by talking things out and maintaining good communication with our parents.

Slides 40-41:

Moving on, let's look at the third command of these *ayat*. The third command is "...and lower to them the wings of submission through humility and mercy". What is meant by "wings of submission through humility and mercy"? What do you understand by this?

Student: How we should behave?

Slide 42:

Teacher: Yes, Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* is talking about how our attitude should be, for instance, our bodily gestures and our body language. We may not say "*uff*" to them, but our attitude can say a **lot** more!

Student: Like rolling our eyes?

Teacher: Yes. So we have to keep a grip not just on our words, but as importantly, our attitude as well.

Slide 43:

Let's say your mom is talking to you but your head is buried in a magazine, or you're busy on your iPhone, or iPad, or whatever it is that you have. You're not looking at her. She's talking to you but you're not looking at her. What does this show?

Student: Ignoring.

Teacher: Ignoring. What else does it show? Somebody is talking to you and you just focus them out, you're looking elsewhere or involved in other things.

Students: You're telling them they're not important.

Teacher: They're not important to you. You're being rude, aren't you? So even though we're not saying anything, our attitude is showing rudeness. Now, what if it was your school Principal addressing you? Your Principal comes up to you and starts talking to you. Would you tune her out?

Student: No! No way!

Teacher: Would you start focusing on something in the distance?

Student: No way!

Teacher: Of course not! Yet with our parents, we take them for granted.

Slides 44-47:

Now, let's say your mom tells you to clean up the mess your younger sibling has made.

Student: Never!

Teacher: You answer "never" but you're not supposed to say never, ever!

Student: I would say "never".

Student: I think that just because I refuse to clean my younger sister's room doesn't mean I don't respect her.

Teacher: Okay, you may think you respect her. However, because you disagree with what she's asking you to do, you're actually showing disrespect by refusing to obey, or worse still maybe with your gestures, let's say by rolling your eyes. As a result, Mom commands you sternly once more and leaves. So then what do you do? You slam your bedroom door at her; you get aggressive. Her order has displeased you a lot and you're getting aggressive with your body language. So she comes back and says something, such as, "Who do you think you are, young lady? Now how do you react? You arch your eyebrow, push back your shoulders, put your hands on your hips, and pout your lips. You don't say anything, but these gestures that you make with your body and your facial expressions are contrary to Allah's command to lowering your wings of submission by being humble and merciful.

Slide 48:

Now, compare these two pictures. This girl has her shoulders lowered. When mom is talking to us, or scolding us or whatever, and we just throw back our shoulders, stick out our chest and

raise our chins, the message being conveyed by our body language is one of sheer defiance, isn't it?

Just look at the picture of this boy: isn't he showing that? So not only have we been commanded by Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* to refrain from saying the most insignificant of words, but we've also been commanded to watch our behaviour and attitude and body language.

Slides 49-50:

Worse still after disobeying mom, and thereby Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*, you might just go and complain to your best friend about her, "Do you know what mom did?! She's always being cruel and bossy with me! I think I'm adopted!" Do you guys realize you're backbiting at this point about your own mom? Furthermore, you're falsely accusing her of what she really isn't. So really we have to fix our attitude for our own welfare. This sort of attitude just has to change!

Slide 51:

Finally, the last part of the *ayat* that we're going to focus on is the *du'a*. So even though there are other messages in these *ayat*, we're only focusing on four today. The last part is a really beautiful *du'a*. It's a *du'a* that Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* has taught us to make for our parents. Do you girls know this *du'a*?

Students: Yes.

Slide 52:

It is "*Rabbir humhumaa kama rabbayaani sagheera*" or "My Raab! Bestow on them Your Mercy, as they did bring me up when I was small".

Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* has focused on the merciful aspect of parents in this *du'a*. Why mercy? You see, when we were small we were completely vulnerable, and dependent on them. Anything bad could have happened to us, or we may have been neglected. However, because of our mother's mercy, she was extremely caring and affectionate with us; she took great care of us and fussed over us, often times at the expense of her own needs. She fed us, clothed us, kept us warm and comfortable, cleaned us up, and cleaned up after us. She stayed up many nights as tending to our every need when we were sick.

Student: She wouldn't ever leave us or without someone dependable to look after us.

Student: Somebody once told me this story of a father and a daughter who went on a bridge that was really high. The daughter was holding the father's hand, and the daughter, scared, asked her father not to let go of her hand. She told him that she may let go of him, but he'd never let go of her.

Teacher: That's a really sweet story. This story shows complete trust and dependence on the mercy of parents. That's the aspect which Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* is highlighting. They

will do anything, they will do absolutely everything to take the best care of us, to save us from danger and being hurt in any way—physically or emotionally.

Surely, Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* has taken their selfless attitude into account before commanding us in these *ayat*; all those merciful things that they've done for us, including when they've shrugged aside our mistakes. What do they do when we make a mistake? They say, "*Bachay hain, seekh laingay*", (they're just kids, they'll learn from their mistakes).

Furthermore, if someone complains about us or says something against us, they take our side. Keeping in mind their compassionate approach, we should sincerely make *du'a* to Allah for them as much as we can.

We all have our own small and big experiences when parents have been so merciful upon us.

Slide 53:

So far what we've learnt in today's class from these *ayat* are four important lessons for us to implement in our lives.

The first one is to do *ihsaan* with our parents, which is extremely good treatment. More importantly, the message in these *ayat* are an exhortation or commandment from Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*, which means He's strongly urging us, commanding us that we have to do it; it's not an option for us, so we just have to do it.

Secondly, we're not even supposed to say the smallest word of displeasure—"Uff!".

Thirdly, our body language should always show respect for them.

Then finally, we're going to make *du'a* for them, at all times.

Now, going back to what someone over here was saying, that to disobey parents is the next biggest sin after doing *shirk*. Yes, that's true.

Student: What if your parents tell you to do something wrong?

Student: Your parents will never tell you do something wrong.

Teacher: No, wait; I'll come to her question. It's a really valid question. She asked what if your parents are asking you to do something wrong. Do we then have to obey them? By that, I think, she meant in the Islamic context. Well, if they're asking you to do something which is against Islam, something which is against Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*'s commandments, then what?

If you are doing something according to Islam, something which Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* has asked you to, for example a girl wants to start *hijaab*, but her parents maybe dissuading her, telling her it's too early or that she's gone crazy or no boy will marry her, etc. Sometimes,

parents may not even be saying anything but they show their disapproval with their silence. Their silence shows they aren't happy with that step you're taking. Then what do you do?

For the answer to that let's look at what the first part of the *ayat* is telling us? "And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him." So we have to obey Him first. Our duty in this world is to obey Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* first, before anyone else. Then, only after that, comes obedience to parents.

So if your parents tell you to do something against Islam, you politely...remember we have to be polite with our words and our attitude...tell them you have to obey Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* first. But we have to handle the issue politely, and if you can, give them evidence—a *dalil*. Just look up the evidence and show it to them. Thus, whatever the issue may be, if it's hijab or whatever it is that you're doing and your parents are stopping you from it, you have to respectfully tell them that Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* is asking you to do it and your obedience to Him comes first.

Well, let's look at this hadith: " 'Shall I not inform you about the three major sins?' Those who were present replied, 'Yes, O Messenger of Allah.' He said, 'Associating partners with Allah, disobedience to parents...' And sitting up from a reclining position, he continued, 'And telling lies and false testimony; beware of it.'" (Agreed upon)

The prohibition of worshipping more than one God is immediately followed by prohibition of disobeying parents.

Student: What about changing his position to sitting?

Teacher: Actually, *Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wasallam* was reclining and he repositioned himself before he said what came next. You guys are sitting like relaxed right now, and if I say something serious like, "hey you, go to the office right now" she will sit up attentively. When we hear or say something really serious, we're a lot more alert. So telling lies and false testimony is so bad, that he not only warned us against it, but before doing so his body language also showed its importance. We're focusing on obeying our parents right now, though.

Slides 55-56:

From now on, we're going to sincerely try hard not to go in the 'disrespect zone'. Furthermore, we're going to do all the little things that we can for our parents, besides what they ask us to do. And we should tell our parents now and again how much we really love and appreciate them. A simple kiss or a warm hug will do wonders, too.

Give them gifts every now and then. They don't have to be fancy or expensive stuff.

Student: Parents usually don't like expensive things.

Teacher: Yes parents appreciate the simplest of gifts, actually.

Student: Isn't that another merciful aspect of parents?

Teacher: Good, yes that would be another merciful aspect of parents. They don't expect expensive things from us. In fact, when you give them materialistic and expensive things, they may not hold as much value or importance in their lives as our getting good grades or showing good behaviour and manners.

Slide57:

We're going to conclude this class by sincerely and wholeheartedly making the *du'a* for our parents. So I want you guys to just close your eyes and imagine all the good things that your parents have done for you and make this *du'a* for your parents. Also, make it a habit to say this *du'a* in your *salah*, after the *tashahud*, *durud* and the ending musnoon *du'a*. Even throughout the day, just make this *du'a*.

(Du'a for end of a gathering) *Subhana Rabbika Rabbul Izzati 'amma yasifun wa salamun 'alal mursaleen, walhamdulillahi Rabbil 'alameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *Assalam alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

Reference for Teacher

Rights & Responsibilities of Parents and Children – audio by Huma Hajmul Hassan – English Translation by Farah Sohail – www.al-ilm.com