

Directing fathers to give importance to raising children Islaamically

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Question: I have noticed, O eminent Shaykh, that there are many of the fathers who have been negligent in raising their children leaving them to engage in things which are of the highest level of detriment to them. Due to this, I seek from your eminence that you favour us by directing the fathers to give much importance to their children; especially in this time, may Allaah reward you with good.

Shaykh ibn Baaz (May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him): In the name of Allaah the Most Merciful the Bestower of mercy; may prayers and peace from Allaah be upon Allaah's Messenger, his family, his companions, and those who are guided with his guidance. As to what follows:

This which the questioner mentioned deserves attention, because watching over the children, males and female, and giving them attention and their Islaamic cultivation is an affair which is from the most important matters. The noble Prophet (May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him) said:

Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock. The man is a shepherd over his family and he is responsible for his flock. The Ameer who has been placed in charge of the people is a Shepherd, and he is responsible for his flock. The woman is a shepherd within the house of her husband and she is responsible for her flock. The servant is a shepherd over his master's wealth and is responsible for his flock. Then he said: Indeed each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock.¹

So this great Hadeeth indicates the obligation of giving importance to one's flock. The greatest of responsibility in that is that of the Imaam who is over the people; and he is the Ameer of the Muslims and their Sultaan. It is obligatory upon him to watch over them regarding all that which contains their rectification and the safeguarding of their religion and giving attention to that which will benefit them in the Duniya as well as the hereafter in accordance to his ability and as much as he can. The greatest of that is to give attention to the religion so that they are upright upon it and that they cling to it; and that is by way of performing the obligatory duties and leaving the prohibited, as is obligatory upon everyone who is in charge of the affairs of the people to rules between them with the Sharee'ah of Allaah and to make them hold fast to the legislation of Allaah. And he is not to rule between

¹ Imaam al-Bukhaaree reported it in his Saheeh as well as others.

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them with other than the legislation of Allaah. He is responsible for that as He, (The Exalted, The Most High) has stated:

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَسْأَلَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ٩٢ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

["So, by your Lord (O Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him)), We shall certainly call all of them to account, For all that they used to do."]²

Likewise, as in this authentic Hadeeth:

"Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock."

So he who is placed in charge over the people is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock. We ask Allaah to give the leaders of the Muslims Tawfeeq in all that which contains their rectification and the rectification of all the Muslims.

Likewise, every person is responsible for his household. So the father is responsible for his children and the mother is responsible for her children from the perspective of cultivating them Islaamically and commanding them with the good and forbidding them from evil and making them cling to the truth and abandon that which opposes the legislation of Allaah. From that is the affair of the prayer; for it is the supporting pillar of Al-Islaam. So it is obligatory upon the father to give attention to his children, and likewise the mother, so that they are upright upon the prayer and so that they safeguard it in the houses of Allaah along with the Muslims. Allaah (The Exalted, The Most High) says:

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى

["Guard strictly (five obligatory) as-Salawaat (the prayers) especially the middle Salaat (i.e. the best prayer - 'Asr)."]³

And He, (The Exalted), said:

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ

["And perform as-Salaat (Iqaamat-as-Salaat), and give Zakaat, and Irka' (i.e. bow down or submit yourselves with obedience to Allaah) along with ar-Raki'oon."]⁴

He, (The Exalted, The Most High), said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ

["O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones."]⁵

The parents are included in this.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ

["O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones."]⁶

² سورة الحجر - Soorah al-Hijr [15:92-93]

³ سورة البقرة - Soorah al-Baqarah [2:238]

⁴ سورة البقرة - Soorah al-Baqarah [2:43]

⁵ سورة التحريم - Soorah at-Tahreem [66:6]

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Paying attention to the affair of the prayer is from the reasons for protection from the Fire, for both the parent and the child. Allaah said, addressing his Prophet (May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him)

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا

[“And enjoin as-Salaat (the prayer) on your family, and be patient in offering them.”]⁷

The Prophet (May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him) said:

Command your children to pray at seven and beat them concerning it at ten; and separate them in the bed.⁸

So the child, whether male or female, is to be commanded to pray when he reaches seven and beaten concerning it when he reaches ten. This is because at this point he has reached and drawn near to maturity. When he attains puberty, the prayer becomes individually obligatory and binding upon him; and he deserves, if he abandons it, to be commanded to repent; so if he repents then this is good otherwise he is killed by the leader of the Muslims. So the affair (of the prayer) is major. Hence, it is obligatory upon the fathers and the mothers, the elder brothers of the children, and their uncles to cooperate in this matter and strive hard in rectifying the children and cultivating them Islaamically; and from that is making them hold fast to the prayer and commanding them with it when they reach seven and beating them concerning it when they reach ten and fall short in that.

Likewise, they are to be commanded with that which Allaah commands them with from righteousness toward their parents and safeguarding the tongue from abuse, cursing, and lying, and other than that from sins, from that which Allaah (The Exalted, The Most High) has prohibited. Likewise, that they are prohibited from consuming intoxicants and smoking so that they will not grow up upon this falsehood. So it is obligatory upon the fathers and mothers to give attention to the children regarding that which benefits them in the Duniya and the hereafter, and it is upon them to prohibit them from that which Allaah (The Exalted, The Most High) has prohibited them from, so that they grow up with a righteous upbringing and so that they will be upright upon the religion of Allaah. So when they reach puberty they will know that which is obligatory upon them and what they are prohibited from and they cultivated upon doing good and upon leaving off evil; then their father, their brother, their mother, and whoever played a role in this good will have the likes of their reward, as the noble Prophet (May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him) said:

He who directs to good will have the likes of the reward of the one who does it.

This is from the bounty of Allaah (The Exalted, The Most High). We ask Allaah, on behalf of all, for Tawfeeq and guidance.

⁷ سورة طه - Soorah TaaHaa [20:132]

⁸ Classed as Saheeh by Shaykh al-Albaanee in al-Irwa' (247).