

We continue with our series of Khutab on raising children who are confident representatives of Islam and who will be a credit to us in this world and Sadaqa Jaariya for us in the next. Raising children is a contact sport. It is not an armchair exercise. iPhone, iPads, PlayStation, Netflix, and YouTube will not do it for you. Or rather, what they do, you won't like. As parents you must make choices. Some of them, if not all, will seem to be difficult. But if you consider the choices in the right perspective, you will see how those are the only choices that you can make. The question to ask yourself is, "How valuable are your children to you?" To help you visualize, may Allahﷻ keep your children safe; imagine that your child is kidnapped, and the kidnappers call you to demand a ransom. What will you pay? That is the price of your child and if you don't pay attention, you will lose the child to a kidnapper who will not call you for a ransom.

Let me assure you, my dear brothers, and sisters, I am not exaggerating. You can see the evidence of this in almost every family. If you don't want to become another statistic, then you must spend – not money, but time. That is the killer for most of us. Money, we have and money we spend, and we imagine that if we throw enough money at it, every problem, every challenge can be beaten. Not this one. Money can't beat this problem; it will only make it stronger. Big secret of raising righteous children is to give them half the money and double the time that you currently give them. Children are not 'kids', as we like to call them. Kids are the young of goats. Not the young of humans. The young of goats

need food and shelter. Human young need a lot more than that. Ask if yours are getting that. Ask if yours are getting more than food and shelter.

To continue from the last Khutba the values to inculcate are:

7. **Love Rasoolullah ﷺ**: Love the one we owe our Deen to. Love the one who used to weep for our forgiveness. Love the one who spent his entire life, trying to get people into Jannah. Love the one whose life was the living Tafsir of the Qur'an. Love the one who Allah ﷻ loves. Love the one whose last thoughts were not for his family, but for us. Love the one who we hope to meet on the Day of Judgement. Love the one behind whom we hope to cross the Siraat into Jannah. Teach children the value of the Sunnah by following it yourself.

For this it is necessary for us to know who Rasoolullah ﷺ is and what the significance of our relationship with him as the one whose way we emulate and follow, is. This must be the very first thing we teach our children by word and deed. Allah ﷻ and Rasoolullah ﷺ must be the most mentioned names in our homes. They must be the reference points for all our actions, culture, celebrations, events, and decisions. 'Does this please Allah ﷻ?' 'Is this in keeping with the Sunnah of Rasoolullah ﷺ?' These must be the operative questions for all our decisions. Our children must become used to them from birth. Their absence of concern for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ and for the Sunnah of Rasoolullah ﷺ, in any situation must be the point of dissonance for them and give them pause to think.

8. Allah ﷻ told us about the importance of the Sunnah of Rasoolullah ﷺ and recommended it as the best example to follow for the one who

loves Allah ﷻ and looks forward to meeting Him and who remembers Allah ﷻ a great deal.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ
وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

Ahzab 33: 21. Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad ﷺ) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much.

9. Allah ﷻ told us that the reward of following the Sunnah of Rasoolullah ﷺ is that Allah ﷻ will love the one who does that. Make that an aspirational goal for yourself and your children; that you try to earn the love of Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ said:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

A'al Imraan 3: 31. Say (O Muhammad ﷺ to mankind): "If you (really) love Allah then follow me (emulate me), Allah will love you and forgive your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

Teach them (and remind yourself) that the reward of following and emulating Muhammad ﷺ is that you will be loved by Allah ﷻ. No less. Reflect on what that means for you. What does it mean for your dua? What does it mean for when you need Allah ﷻ the most, at the time of our death and when we meet Him on the Day of Judgment?

To love anyone, it is essential to know them and so make the study; not merely reading; of the Seerah (biography) of Rasoolullah ﷺ essential

reading for you and them. When we read about his life, his challenges, his dealings, his courage, and his treatment of his followers, to love him is the natural outcome. If we study the Seerah, it helps us to put our own lives in perspective and get encouraged and energized.

10. Draw attention to the fact that following the Sunnah is good for us in this life as well, because all that Rasoolullah ﷺ taught and did are the secrets of popularity and influence. And when a Muslim follows this with the intention of pleasing Allah ﷻ and as a sign of his love for Muhammad ﷺ, he earns the love of Allah ﷻ. This once again is the relevance of Islam in modern times. The same rules apply today.

11. Teach them about accountability to Allah ﷻ to Whom is our return. Every speech and action of ours must be done with this consciousness. This is the essence of Dhikrullah (Remembering Allah ﷻ). Whatever act of worship we do, repeating Allah ﷻ's names and attributes, Salah, Tilawatil Qur'an, fasting, charity and so on are all means to achieve this end i.e., a consciousness of the meeting with Allah ﷻ. None of them is an end in itself, but a means to achieve the end which is to gain closeness to Allah ﷻ by obeying Him. So, every time there is temptation to disobey, they must learn to ask, 'Who am I disobeying?' And not, 'How big is this act of disobedience?' They must understand that selective obedience is disobedience and that the essence of Uboodiyat (Submission to Allah ﷻ = Islam), is to obey every command joyfully out of love of the One to whom we owe everything and to Whom we will return. Connect them to Allah ﷻ by being connected yourself.

12. Teach them service as the means whereby a Muslim defines himself/herself as being a person who is most useful to society. Teach them the value of service in Islam as the means to earn the pleasure of Allahﷻ and His Forgiveness. Teach them service as being the signature of Islam. Service as the value that differentiates a Muslim from everyone else. Through this we will be able to answer the most common charge that Islam is no longer relevant to modern times. When Muslims are seen as beneficial for everyone in society and that because of Islam, then the relevance of Islam to all times will be proven beyond anything that anyone can say against it. Allahﷻ said about Muslims being beneficial (service) to others:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ
الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

A'al Imran 3: 110. You [Muslims] are the best of peoples ever raised up for [the benefit of] mankind; you enjoin Al-Ma'ruf (all that is good and permissible in Islam) and forbid Al-Munkar (all that is harmful and prohibited in Islam), and you believe in Allah.

Rasoolullahﷺ said, **“The best of people are those that bring most benefit to the rest of mankind.”** (Daraqutni, Hasan)

13. Teach them to be thankful to all those through whom we receive Allahﷻ’s blessings, and that it is the best way to win Allahﷻ’s pleasure and the goodwill of the people. Imagine a society where Muslims are known for their attitude of gratitude, seeking to help others, solve their

problems, stand up for their rights and help those in need. *Abu Huraira (RA) reported that Rasoolullah ﷺ said, "He has not thanked Allahﷻ who has not thanked the people."* Sunan Abī Dāwūd 4811 (Sahih)

14. Teach them to display our differentiators proudly and confidently (not arrogantly) in appearance, worship, dealings, speech, and action. We must not blend in as some more numbers in an undifferentiated mass but stand out as notable and valuable individuals. That is the secret of brand. Differentiation. Brand inspires loyalty. Loyalty inspires influence. Without brand you are one grain in a sack of rice.
15. Teach them the four noble values of Integrity (Truthfulness), Courage, Compassion and Excellence. These are the four core values of Islam. Anyone who lives by them can only be loved, respected and as a result, become influential. Teach them to always speak the truth and be fair and just in all dealings. Teach them to have the courage to stand up for those in need, those being oppressed, and to stand by their principles, no matter who is displeased. Teach them to have compassion and to show compassion and to behave with compassion by helping all those who can't help themselves. Teach them to put their money and action where their mouth is and act, instead of simply talking about values. Teach them to do everything they do and treat everyone they meet in the best possible way, no matter how small or trivial the action may be or whoever the person they meet, may be. Excellence is to speak and act as if you see Allahﷻ and though you don't see Him, know that He sees you. This is the definition of Al Ihsaan (Excellence) that

Rasoolullah ﷺ gave to Jibreel (AS) in the famous Hadith and it applies to everything we do in life.

Finally, we must remember that children listen with their eyes. They don't care what you say, until they see what you do. So, raising children has less to do with children and more to do with parents. As you are, so will they be. That is why they are your Sadaqatul Jaariya and not vice versa.