

## **The Importance and Methodology of Tarbiyah (Education & Upbringing)**

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Tarbiyah in Islam is very important, for indeed all of the Deen is based upon tarbiyah i.e. the education and upbringing of the people. This starts with the education and training of our own selves, of our families, and then of the community at large. But this tarbiyah is most important with respect to our children, so that they are brought up on the correct path of Islam.

**"Verily! Allah will not change the good condition of a people as long as they do not change their state of goodness themselves." (Sura Ra'd 13:11)**

So it is upon us to change our own condition, the condition of our families, our communities and the community of the Muslims at large. For if we were to neglect this responsibility then we would never achieve the correct tarbiyah – training, upbringing and education - of our societies.

What follows are some practical steps in bringing up the family correctly:

### **Setting A Good Example**

Parents should be the best example for their children. They should hasten to do all good and, likewise, hasten to leave all evil. This is because children follow the example of their parents as they love, respect and admire them. It is not possible, however one may try, to hide one's evil characteristics from one's children. A person may go into his home, and closes the door behind him, but it is the children who know the reality of his affairs. Children know their parents' characters; they watch, they observe, and they know their situation perfectly. So we should try and be good examples to our children; having the best characteristics, being good towards the people, and remaining upright in our Deen.

### **Placing Importance Upon The Deen**

Parents should raise their child to know that the most important aspect of his life is that he be upright in his Deen, correcting it and clinging to it firmly.

**"And he made it (i.e. Laa ilaha illAllah - none has the right to be worshipped but Allah Alone) a Word lasting among his offspring (True Monotheism), that they may turn back (i.e. repent to Allah or receive admonition)." (Sura Zukhruf 43:28)**

So this should be our greatest concern with regard to our children, that we make clear to them the importance of their Religion and their being upright. After this, the believer should make du'a to Allah and supplicate to Him that He guide his children and make them upright, for indeed there is no power nor strength except in Allah.



## **Showing Love & Kindness Towards One's Children**

The parent should control his affairs with love, kindness and softness, and should not always use harshness and beating to bring up his children. Rather, he should make his way to be primarily a loving and concerned way. However, if the situation requires that he should also use harshness and hardness, then he should do so as and when the situation requires it. But, he should not make this his only way i.e. that he is always hard and harsh towards his children. We should not be like those people who are always hard upon their children as this may lead them towards further corruption and going astray. Neither should we leave our children without any discipline so that they follow whatever way they like and do whatever they like. Rather, we should take the middle course (balanced), sometimes using harshness and sometimes softness, according to the situation. We should always try to exercise balance in raising our children, balancing their affairs correctly and making the uppermost characteristic that of kindness, softness and mercy.

## **Teaching Good Character**

The parent should raise his children upon good character from a young age. He should teach them the Qur'an, the Seerah of the Prophet s.a.w. and that of the Companions r.a.. One should not leave his children to continue making mistakes saying that he will correct them when they get older, because indeed it becomes increasingly more difficult to correct a person when he has grown up upon incorrect actions and bad characteristics. We should teach our children from a young age the correct Aqeedah and belief. We should also teach them aspects of good character, like being courageous, kind, generous and modest. Then, if one of our children makes a mistake, we should point out this mistake to them and explain that the action is wrong, not leaving them and saying 'they are just children' or that we will tell them when they grow older. This is because of the saying, "Whoever grows up upon something, he grows old upon that that same thing."

And from the guidance of the Prophet is that he used to train and bring up the children from a young age upon good manners and character. Likewise in the hadith of the son of Umm Salamah, who narrated that he used to stay in the house of the Prophet, and that he used to eat in an incorrect way i.e. from everywhere in the plate.

So the Prophet said to him, "O boy! Mention Allah's Name i.e. say 'Bismillah', eat with your right hand and eat that which is in front of you. So this Sahabah went on to narrate that he continued to practise this etiquette of eating until that day i.e. until he had become older. This shows that the Prophet would correct the children by pointing out their mistakes, and also he did so in such a way that they would continue upon the correct way which he had taught them until they became older.





### **Exercising Justice With Regard To One's Children**

The parent should not oppress or wrong any of his children. He should not show one of his children due favor more so than the other, by giving him more than his other children or praising him more than any of the others. Indeed this type of oppression and favoritism can be a reason for the children swaying from the correct path and developing personal problems later on in life. The Prophet s.a.w. said, "Fear Allah and be just with regard to your children." Indeed, being just can positively affect the children's tarbiyah, just as being unjust can have negative affects upon their tarbiyah.

Of these negative effects is that the child may feel that if he cannot find justice with his own parents, then who can he find justice with? And he may carry this problem and this feeling in his heart all of his life.

### **Spending Upon One's Children**

The parents, both the mother and the father, should spend upon their children.

Prophet s.a.w. said, "Two dinars which you spend in the way of Allah, or two dinars which you spend by way of sadaqah (charity), or two dinars which you give to the miskeen (poor), or the two dinars which you give to your family - with which of these is the greatest reward? Indeed the greatest of these as regards reward is that dinar which you spend upon your family." (Hadith Muslim)

So, in conclusion, everyone should take care of his family, for if it were the case that everyone in society were to take care of the upbringing of their families and their financial needs, then this would be good for the society as a whole.

But, if everyone were to leave the affairs of their families and their children to someone else, then this would lead to the corruption of the society and poverty would be widespread.

By spending upon our families and taking care of their tarbiyah, this is how we train them and help them to remain upright upon this Deen of Al-Islam.