

Upbringing of Children

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يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا

"O you who believe! Save yourself and your families from the fire of Jahannam". (at-Tahreem: 6)

Zaid Ibne Aslam (rahmatullahi alayh) said that when Rasulallah ﷺ read this Aayat, the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ asked how they could save their children and families from the fire of Jahannam. Rasulallah ﷺ said, "Keep on encouraging them to do those things which Allah Ta'ala likes and to keep away from those deeds which Allah Ta'ala dislikes."

Hadhrot Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ explained this Aayat by saying, "To teach and encourage oneself and one's own family about all things which are good."

Rasulallah ﷺ also said, "May Allah Ta'ala have mercy on the father who helps his children to remain polite and good towards their father (and not to treat him badly)."

A Hadith says that the Aqeeqah of a baby should be done on the 7th day after birth and the baby should be given a name. After six years of age the child must be taught good manners; after nine years of age the child must have a separate bed and should not share a bed with any other person; after thirteen years of age a child must perform Salaah regularly and may be punished for not reading Salaah, and when sixteen years of age he or she should be married. After that, the father should hold his or her hand and say, "I have taught you good manners and given you an education and have got you married, I now seek Allah Ta'ala's protection in this life from any mischief by you and any punishment in the Akhirah due to you." The meaning of 'any punishment due to you' is that, when a person does a wrong, that will count as his own sin and if the others copy him in that sin, he will be questioned about their sins too; and they will also receive the full punishment for the sins done by them. Hence, when children follow the bad examples of their elders and act in a wrong way, their sins will count against the elders too. Therefore, the elders must refrain from doing anything wrong (especially) in front of them (children).

In this Hadith it has been said that when they reach thirteen years of age, children should be punished for not reading Salaah, but it comes in many Ahaadith that they should be commanded to read Salaah when they are seven years of age and they should be punished for not reading Salaah when they are ten years of age. What we learn is that a father is allowed to beat his child if he does not read Salaah and if the father does not do so, he will be guilty of a sin. But if the child is regular in reading his Salaah, in fasting and other ibaadaat of Islaam, the blessings of these good deeds will reach the parents as well. Then, when he grows up to be a pious person and makes dua for his parents; that will be extra blessings for them.

Ibne Maalik (rahmatullahi alayh) has said that in this Hadith, the condition is of the children being pious, because the dua of sinful children will not reach the parents. The mention of dua in the Hadith is meant to encourage the children to make dua for their parents. The father of pious children automatically receives the blessings of all the good deeds done by them, whether they make dua for him or not. It is like planting a fruit tree for all the people. The planter will keep on receiving blessings as people eat fruit from the tree, whether they make dua for him or not.