

Bringing up children

Translated by Saad ibn Abou Talhah Daawood Burbank

[Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fAmm4ikYNik>]

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan (حفظه الله)¹:

Yes, the affairs that take place are linked to their reasons. Righteousness and rectification has its reasons, and corruption has its reasons. And obedience to the parents has its reasons, [just as] disobedience to the parents also has its reasons. It is obligatory upon the Muslim to carry out the beneficial means for the righteousness and rectification of his children. And Allaah the Most High has said:

وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا

[And say, "My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up when I was small."]²

When the parents grow old and need serving, then the child is dutiful to them, serves them, and provides for them that which they require – due to His saying:

إِذَا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أَفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذَّلِيلِ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا

[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 to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say, "My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up when I was small."]³

[His saying]: ‘As they brought me up’ indicates that the parents must bring up their children upon good and upon righteousness and uprightness in order that he is obedient and dutiful to them when their need [for him] arises.

And the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)⁴ enjoined the parents with their children while they are young. So he (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

¹ (حفظه الله) May Allaah preserve him

² سورة الإسراء - Sooratul-Israa (17):23-24

³ سورة الإسراء - Sooratul-Israa (17):23-24

⁴ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) (sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him

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“Order your children with the prayer when they are seven [lunar] years, and hit them for it at ten [if they do not comply], and separate between them in their beds.”

And it is well known that cultivating them upon the prayer is from the reasons for [their] righteousness, because the prayer prevents from immorality and evil – just as Allaah the Exalted and Most High has stated in His saying:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ ۖ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ

[And establish the prayer. Indeed, the prayer prevents immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do.]⁵

And from that which prayer necessitates is that he teaches them the ablution and purification, and covering the `Awrah (those parts that should not be exposed), and the conditions of the prayer that it requires. This is cultivation from a young age. So the child is ordered with the prayer at the age of distinction with just a command. And when he reaches ten years of age, then along with the command [to pray]; if he was to be lazy and lax [regarding it] then he should be hit – [due to his (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) saying]:

‘And hit them for it at ten [i.e. if they do not comply]’.

Also he oversees the children in their beds; so he separates between them in their beds, just as the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) ordered. Because that distances them from their manners becoming corrupted. So this is a proof of caring for one’s children. Therefore it is [also] a proof for cultivating the children upon there not being free-mixing between men and women, because it is from the matters that cause trial and temptation. So this is a tremendous cultivation that the children are to be brought up upon. And these are from the reasons for the righteousness of the child.

As for if the children were to be neglected and left alone until they grow up – something which many of the people have fallen into today –the father does not know his children. Except when he grows old and he wants them to be of benefit to him and to obey him; at this point he regrets that which has passed him by regarding their upbringing. At this point his negligence will be of no benefit. If he wanted to discipline and cultivate them after they had grown up – he would not be able to do so.

Verily the young shoots if you were to straighten them, they would straighten out and correct themselves but they are not supple and flexible once they become [dense] wood.

The time has passed, so the father must be early in giving his children a good cultivation, [teaching them] the acts of worship and mannerisms, and teaching them the belief of Tawheed (monotheism), and singling out Allaah with all acts of worship. There is no doubt this will tire him out and be difficult for him – however he must be patient upon this.

⁵ سورة العنكبوت - Sooratul-`Ankaboot [29:45]

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Due to this the father deserves [such a high] level of obedience and good treatment that the child is not able to repay him for. However he carries out some of it, from that which he has the ability to do. This is because the father has exerted that which he exerted while his child was young.

Many parents do not care about their children, except that they provide food and drink for them, and clothing, and the things of this world, and bodily things. However they do not pay attention to cultivation of the hearts, and cultivation [upon] action – and this is the origin, and what is important. As for nurturing their bodies, then this could cause harm. However nurturing the hearts is that which contains in it benefit. So it is upon the parents to be aware of this. And due to this, disobedience to the parents is plentiful in these times of ours. And in these times of ours children assaulting their father is plentiful; to the extent that it may reach killing – to the extent that the son kills his father. This is because he did not raise him upon obedience, goodness, and kindness. So it is as if he is someone foreign and unrelated to him. He does not know him at all; regarding his religion, or regarding his manners, or regarding nurturing him upon goodness. He has neglected him, and lost him. While he is busy with his worldly affairs, nurturing his wealth, and chasing after profits. He does not know his house except as a shelter and as somewhere to stay the night. He does not know that which occurs within it – even though they [i.e. his household] are his subjects, and he will be questioned regarding them. So the owner of the house is a shepherd, and he will be questioned regarding his flock. Therefore what is obligatory upon the parents is that they pay attention to this matter. And what is obligatory upon the children is that they know the status of the parents, and the status of the obligation of being obedient to them. Upon both the parents and the children is to know what his obligation is, and that he frees himself from being blamed by the other [i.e. by giving each other his rights]. May Allaah guide us all to that which He loves and is pleased with.