

MIFTAAH SEMINAR

SUNNAH PARENTING



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SESSION 1

Parenting is a Sunnah for Everyone

- Everyone is a parent even if they do not have children.
- Aisha RA is referred to as the mother of the believers although she had no children.
- Whether or not a person is a parent, they will parent someone.
- When a child's parent is not present, any other person who disciplines or congratulates that child is parenting them.
- One should not take offense when someone else corrects their child because that person does not gain anything from correcting them and they are only trying to help.
 - If the parents were present at that time, they may have also corrected their child, so when a parent is not present, it is essential that another person takes on that role.

There Are No Specialists in Parenting

- Parents are constantly learning and improving based on the changing times in this world.

- It is completely ok that one is not a specialist in parenting.
- For a person to become a specialist three things are necessary:
 - Education
 - As a parent, one must constantly be educated because the society which the children live in will be different from the society which the parents grew up in.
 - Experience
 - People at different stages of their life will parent differently because their experience has guided them in specific ways.
 - Ex: A grandparent may parent differently than the parent themselves.
 - Mentorship
 - One must constantly utilize those from whom they can take advice.
 - This can be local scholars, teachers, elders, etc.

The Responsibility of Parenthood

- It is important to recognize that parenting has a very clear responsibility.
 - This responsibility can never be mastered but it can be worked towards.
- The Prophet SAW gave a general description of humanity. He said: Verily, all of you have a flock and all of you will be asked about your flock.

- We are responsible to take care of this flock but we are also responsible to recognize who this flock is.
- This hadith continues and gives parents various responsibilities. These include:
 - Responsibility to the spouse
 - Responsibility to the children
 - Wealth within the family
 - Honor that exists within the family
 - The house in which the family grows in
- These responsibilities are what one should recognize as part of their flock.
- There are six objectives of Islamic law and each of them are a responsibility which we must uphold in relation to our deen. These include:
 - Protection of the religion
 - Protection of health/bodies
 - Protection of wealth
 - Preservation of the mind
 - Certain things are made impermissible because they compromise intelligence (ex: alcohol)
 - Protection of lineage
 - Protection of honor
- Parents must ensure that these six principles are always upheld when it comes to their children.
 - Many times parents will sacrifice their children's religion or honor for their own motives without even realizing it.

Before Becoming Parents

- One must prepare to become a parent before they are a parent.
- This begins with looking for a spouse.
 - One hadith of the Prophet SAW mentions that a woman should look for a spouse with good character.
 - Children are going to want to emulate their parents, so it is essential that both parents have good character.
 - Each person should be most conscious of their own character and whether it is good or not.
 - One can not just assume that they are good and pure, but they must make themselves good and pure.
 - If we want to marry someone of good character but we are not of good character it will cause an imbalance in the relationship and that imbalance will be shown throughout the family and life.
 - The Prophet SAW stated: Oh gathering of youth, if you are capable, then marry. If not then you should fast.
 - He SAW encouraged marriage.
 - The Prophet SAW also stated: A person can marry a woman for her wealth, beauty, lineage, and/or religion. Choose religion or your hands will become dusty.
 - One can look at all four of these elements but should specifically look at religion.

- Look at the qualities that you want in someone else and assess if you have those qualities.
 - This way when that person comes, both people can complement each other with these qualities rather than harm one another with the imbalance.
- If one wants to become a great parent, they must be great children.
 - One can be a great child even if their parents have passed away.
 - There are many ways that a child can benefit their parents after they have passed away (ex: making dua for them or giving charity on their behalf).
- The Prophet SAW mentioned a story which showed the power of what it means to be a good child.
 - Three men of Bani Israel were on a journey and it began to rain, so they hid in a cave. During the storm a large boulder fell and blocked the entrance of the cave. The men could not move it so they decided that they would make dua to Allah SWT. They asked Allah to look upon a deed that they had done for Him which gave Him pleasure and they said that perhaps He will move this boulder because of their dua and His pleasure with their good deeds. The first man made dua and said that when he used to work, he would come home with milk for his family. Before he gave milk to his wife and children, he would give milk to his parents.

- One day this man came home and his parents had fallen asleep, but his children and wife were awake and hungry. The man was uncomfortable with the fact that his children and wife were hungry, but he felt that he could not put anyone above his parents, so he waited by the door of his parents until they woke up and gave them milk and then he gave it to his family. He then made dua to Allah to help alleviate their situation. The stone then moved a small amount.
 - This is only a portion of the story, but it shows how a person's good relationship with their parents can help them when they are in desperate need.
- A person will see a lot of reflection of how they were with their parents through how their children are with them.

Leading By Example

- The Prophet SAW always led by example and through this, people followed.
- Abdullah ibn Abbas RA narrated that he stayed in the home of the Prophet SAW for one night and he watched him SAW stand for tahajud, so he got up and joined him.
 - At this point, he was not even 10 years old, but his love for the Prophet SAW made him sacrifice his sleep and join him SAW in tahajud.
- Many times parents want their children to do things but they do not do them themselves.

- If a parent wants their child to pray, they should pray in front of them and with them.
- If a parent wants their child to memorize the Quran, they should set a time for their child to memorize and they should also sit and memorize with them at that time.
- Children should see their parents doing good acts.
 - A child will be much more likely to do the act if they see their parent doing it than if their parent only tells them to do it.
- A very important component of leading by example is that the parent falls in love with the child and the child falls in love with the parent.
 - People follow those who they love.
 - If parents are always seen as the ones who punish, eventually the sense of love will diminish.
 - This does not mean that a parent should not discipline, but there are preferable ways to do it.
 - In order to know how to make a child fall in love with them, parents must take a step back and reflect over what made them fall in love with their parents or mentors.
 - Parents should tell their children that they love them and display their affection to them.
 - The Prophet SAW would publicly display his affection for all of his children and grandchildren publicly and privately.

- Parents should congratulate their children on their successes rather than constantly pointing out their flaws.

Having Trust in All Times

- Trust means that we do our part.
- One should have trust in all six objectives of the deen.
 - Having trust in Allah when it comes to the child's religion means that we do that which is necessary for them to learn and be good Muslims.
 - The household should revolve around deen.
 - Take children to the masjid and to the gatherings of those who are pious.
 - Parents must rely on Allah to guide their child, but they must also do their part in keeping their child on the straight path.

Priorities: Putting Allah and His Messenger SAW First

- At times it will be difficult to put aside worldly things and put Allah and His Messenger SAW first.
 - One must understand that it does not mean that we put education or other important things second.
 - The intention of any action can make that act tied to Allah.
 - All other things can still be done while Allah is being put first.

- If while doing something a person misses a prayer, speaks foul language, or does something haram, they are not putting Allah first in that action.
 - Putting Allah first means that the action will be purely done for His sake even if it seems like it is a worldly act.

Children Are Not the Enemy

- Part of being a successful parent is being able to balance time between the children and the spouse.
- If one parent spends all of their time on their children and ignores the rights of their spouse, it can cause the spouse to subconsciously start to think of the children as the enemy.
- If one person can not give their spouse their rights, then the rights of their friends will also be ignored, and eventually the rights of Allah will be ignored.
- Both spouses should put in effort to show that they care for each other just as much as they are for their children.
- Parents should be cautious of blaming the other parent for when the child misbehaves.
 - Rather they should complement the other parent when the child succeeds.
- When a child passes away it can cause a large rift between the parents.
 - The other children and the spouse should not have to suffer for something which was not in the control of anyone but Allah.

- Spouses should be careful about how they treat each other and how they treat their other children if they are faced with this tragedy.

The Greatest Family Reunion

- As life goes on, the most important thing that we are preparing for is our reunion in Jannah.
- It is unknown if the parents or the children will be the first to leave this world.
- The entire family should revolve around Islam and should always have the goal of Jannah in mind.
- In the story of Ibrahim AS we can see how Islam is an integral part of every family member's life.
 - Ibrahim AS was an integral part of the spread of Islam.
 - Ismail AS helped build the ka'ba.
 - Hajar discovered the well of zam zam.
 - Ibrahim's other wife gave birth to Ishaq.
 - Ishaq and Ibrahim AS built masjid Al-Aqsa.
- The Prophet SAW would wake up his family members for tahajud.
- A family effort is not just when one person in the family succeeds or one of the children succeeds. It is when Islam and the love of Allah is reinforced within the entire household.