

132214 - Fearing Corruption of Kids in School

the question

I am always arguing with my husband and the reason for that is that he does not want to let the children go to school and he says that the schools will corrupt the children's upbringing. What is your opinion from a religious point of view?

Detailed answer

Firstly:

Children are one of the great blessings of Allah that He bestows upon His slaves, and they are a trust given to the person about which he will be asked on the Day of Resurrection, as it says in the hadeeth (prophetic narration) narrated from Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), who heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say: "Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock. The ruler of the people is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock. A man is the shepherd of his household and is responsible for his flock. A woman is the shepherd of her husband's house and children and is responsible for her flock. The slave is the shepherd of his master's wealth and is responsible for it. Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock."

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (853) and Muslim (1829).

It is the duty of the father to protect his children from all kinds of evil, whether it is tangible or intangible. The most important thing which he must protect is their religious commitment and proper conduct.

Secondly:

The basic principle is that the Muslim should weigh up the pros and cons of anything, and compare its positive and negative aspects, and see what is most likely to be the case.

There is no doubt that schools have their negative and positive points. Schools can have a positive or negative effect on the children's upbringing. Many mothers and fathers complain about the negative impact of schools and this is a real issue that is faced by most religiously committed families. But the Muslim can overcome these negative effects by a number of means:

(a)

Seeking the help of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, to protect them by calling upon Him and beseeching Him, for du'aa' is a great weapon in protecting children. Allah mentioned the du'aa' of the righteous (interpretation of the meaning):

"And those who say: Our Lord! Bestow on us from our wives and our offspring the comfort of our eyes, and make us leaders of the Muttaqûn (the pious)"

[al-Furqaan 25:74].

The righteousness of the parents also has a major role in the guidance of the children, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the town; and there was under it a treasure belonging to them; and their father was a righteous man, and your Lord intended that they should attain their age of full strength and take out their treasure as a mercy from your Lord"

[al-Kahf 18:82].

Ibn Rajab (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Allah may take care of a person's offspring after his death because of his righteousness, as it says in the verse, "and their father was a righteous man" [al-Kahf 18:82]: they were protected because of the righteousness of their father. End quote.

Jaami' al-'Uloom wa'l-Hukam, p.
186

(b)

The parents have a role to play in the upbringing of their children; it is not limited to the school's role. The father has to bring his children to the mosque and send them to classes to memorise the Qur'aan and study (religious) knowledge. He should instil love of Islam in their hearts. This also applies to the mother at home with her daughters.

(c)

He should watch the children closely and always follow up on what they are studying, with teachers and other students; he should also offer advice and direction to his children in a kind and gentle manner, combining encouragement and deterrence.

(d)

He should replace government schools with Islamic schools which focus on the religious aspect of the students, and he should choose the best school for that. There are many such schools, praise be to Allah, in most countries. If the father is not financially able to pay the fees of those schools, he can look for the best public (state-funded) schools by asking and consulting other parents

(e)

The parents should play a role in choosing good friends in the school and in the neighbourhood. For example, they should be people he knows from the mosque or the Qur'aan class, or relatives who can be trusted.

(f)

The parents should not let there be any gap between them and their children, so that if there is a problem for example, the children will hasten to discuss it with their parents. This is something that is well known from experience.

The point is that one of the greatest of responsibilities is the responsibility of looking after children. Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Whoever neglects to teach his child what will benefit him, and pays no attention to him, has mistreated him in the worst way. In most cases, the corruption of children results from their parents and parental neglect of them, and their failing to teach them the obligatory duties of Islam and the Sunnahs. So they neglected them when they were young. End quote.

Tuhfat al-Mawdood, p. 229

After that, we should explain that if a person has no choice but to take his children out of school, the basic principle is that he should provide a suitable alternative to those schools, so that they will not end up with nothing, especially since we have seen cases of people who took their children out of school altogether, so the children were lost between the television and the street, and they sank into ignorance and

played too much, and thus (the parents) did not achieve anything; rather they sinned by allowing harm to befall their children.

Hence our advice to the father is not to keep his children from going to school, but what he has to do is strive to remedy their negative effects as much as he can.

Our advice to the sister is to seek the help of Allah and turn to Him by offering supplication (du'aa'); she should also discuss with her husband, in a gentle manner with evidence and proof. She may seek the help of wise and righteous people among her family or his. Allah is the One Who we hope will protect us and you, and our children, from all evils.

And Allah knows best.