

163493 - Dealing With Child's Birth Defect

the question

A son was born to me who has only four fingers on his right hand, and I was not bothered by that, but last night I was looking at a picture of a right hand and how Allah creates the fingers and palm so beautifully, and I burst into tears. It is true that I cannot do much about it, but I do not know why my son is like this, when there is no one else in the family who has this condition; even his older brother is physically complete.

I think these feelings are natural and would be felt by any mother in a situation such as mine. I am very upset by it but I do not show my pain. But sometimes I think how I am going to answer his questions when children make fun of him in school when he is older, and he comes to me and asks me about that. What should I tell him then?

Detailed answer

We understand your feelings towards your child as a mother and how you feel when you see that Allah has tested your son with what you mentioned. We will highlight a few points that we hope will be beneficial to you in dealing with this test and handling it well.

-1-

You have to ponder the great wisdom of Allah, may He be exalted, in what He decrees; the fact that your son was created with only four fingers is included in what you should ponder. Allah, may He be exalted, has not created anything in vain; rather He has created it for sublime reasons and great wisdom. For example, He has decreed that some of His creation should be affected by physical defects in which they vary. One of the greatest wisdoms behind this is that this is a test for his parents, and for the son when he grows up and becomes an adult who is accountable. We have discussed this in detail in the answer to question no. [13610](#).

-2-

We hope that you will not be distracted by painful memories, because focusing too much on feelings of sorrow and pain will lead to neglecting your duties and not striving in the child's best interests. It may also lead you — Allah forbid — to get angry and object to what Allah, may He be exalted, has done.

-3-

We do not think that the fact that Allah created your son with four fingers is a serious test. Allah has made his mind sound and has made him able to move, and he can eat, sleep, see and hear. These are great blessings for which you need to be grateful.

-4-

We advise you to take care of your son and teach him skills in which he may be able to surpass his peers, to make up for the defect in his body. For example, you could teach him to memorize the Quran or seek knowledge, which will make him a distinctive child who is praised, so he will not feel that he is less than his peers.

-5-

Avoid dealing with him on the basis of pure emotions; do not let him see that you are upset or sad, so that he will not feel that he is less than his siblings or peers.

-6-

Tell his brothers and sisters that they have to be careful in the way they speak to him and not make fun of him, and there should be strict punishment for anyone who goes against that.

-7-

Work with the school administration and social services so that he will be taken care of and looked after, anyone making fun of him will be punished and he will be helped to overcome the effects of that if it happens.

-8-

Try to make your son one of those who frequent the mosques, so that he will have good friends who are seekers of knowledge and those who have memorized the Quran. These are the people who — in sha Allah — will not make fun of him.

When he grows up, teach him that Allah, may He be exalted, has tested other people with things that are more severe than what he has been tested with. There are some who cannot move, and some who are insane, or blind, or deaf, or who have leukaemia, or who have to have kidney dialysis every two days, and so on. There are many severe calamities that Allah has spared him from. He should understand that what Allah has tested him with is nothing in comparison to other severe calamities. Over and above all that, he should understand that he has been given the greatest blessing, namely Islam; Allah has made him one of those who proclaim the Oneness of Allah, which is an immense blessing for which he should give thanks with his heart, his tongue and all his physical faculties. And he should understand that this world is the place of tests, trials, sorrow, pain and imperfection, and that happiness, joy and perfection will come in the Paradise of eternity, so let him strive to be one of its people.

We ask Allah, may He be exalted, to help you and make things easy for you, and we ask Him, may He be exalted, to guide him to that which leads to His pleasure.

And Allah knows best.