

30 Hadīth on Raising Muslim Children

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Presented in these lectures are the guidelines and principles for parents and educators for raising Muslim children.

Hadīth #10

Bringing small children to the masjid and holding them in prayer:

Narrated Abū Qatada Al-Ansari:

Allāh's Apostle was praying and he was carrying Umama the daughter of Zainab, the daughter of Allāh's Apostle and she was the daughter of 'As bin Rabi'a bin 'AbduShams. When he prostrated, he put her down and when he stood, he carried her (on his neck).

[Taken from www.sahihalbukhari.com - The Book of Sutrah (496)]

Benefits from the hadīth:

- Permissibility of carrying a baby girl to the masjid and during the prayer.
- The Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) used to put the child down in rukū and prostration fearing they might fall.
- Male caregivers should not be shy to show affection to small children in different ways in front of the people; as the Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) did so.
- Carrying small children to the masjid and during prayer will help them to love the worship of Allāh, the people who do it and the places it is done in.
- Carrying small children in prayers is showing them mercy.
- The hadīth stresses the fact of having mercy on children to the extent that some Scholars gave it priority to complete devotion to the prayer.

Ibn Hajr said that here there is a clash between complete devotion between salāt and tending to the needs of the child. So which do you give preference to? Ibn Hajr says that the Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) chose to tend to the needs of the child. Showing that it is the Sunnah to give preference to the needs of the child over full total concentration in your salāt. Other Ulema did not agree to this point. True devotion to the salāh does not exclude taking into consideration the situations around you. True devotion in the salāh does not clash with being attentive to the needs of the people.

For example, if the Prophet (ﷺ) heard a child crying he would shorten his salāh. The way to truly concentrate in your prayer is to pick up a crying child and continue praying, otherwise a crying child left to cry would distract you from your prayer. There is no clash in the first place. There is nothing that conflicts with the devotion we should have in our prayer due to him carrying Umama. True devotion includes keeping in mind the conditions you are in.

- The hadīth illustrates the humbleness of the Prophet (ﷺ), his good manners and the mercy he showed to the young and old alike.

Hadīth #11

Being patient with the children in the masjid and handling their playfulness:

Abdullāh ibn Ma'sūd (raḍī Allāhu 'anhu) said that:

Hasan and Husayn jumped on the Prophet's (ﷺ) back while he was praying. The Prophet (ﷺ) gestured that it was okay.

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Benefits from the Hadīth:

- Young children who have not yet reached the age of seven are allowed to attend the masjid without praying with the congregation.
- They are not to be told to stand in the row and pray, rather Hasan and Husayn were playing freely in the masjid.
- Children can play in the masjid at the time of the congregational prayer if it does not cause harm to them or anyone else.
- The acclaimed hadīth saying, keep your children out of the masjid, has very weak chains, it is not authentic.
- Hasan and Husayn were around 3 and 4 at the time of this hadīth. We infer that by knowing that the Prophet (ﷺ) put them on either side of his lap. If they were any bigger it would have been difficult to do that. They jumped on his back without causing discomfort. They were not ordered to pray.
- Muslims should be patient with the playful nature of toddlers and realize they are an important part of the Muslim community. Treating them harshly at an age when they do not understand many things is something that may harbour ill feelings of the masjid, its people and perhaps Islām.
- The gesture that the Prophet (ﷺ) made was very significant. It approves of what Hasan and Husayn did. The gesture was to prevent them from preventing the children from playing. It was an indication that what they were doing should not be prevented. After the prayer he praised them and did not ask, where is the father and mother of this child.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) stayed in prostration when the child was on his back, until someone said that they thought he was receiving revelation. He replied, "My son had boarded me, so I disliked stopping him until he himself became tired."

Hadīth #12

Children in the masājid:

From the hadīth of Buradah (raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu):

Children were running free in the masjid.

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Benefits from the Hadīth:

- Children are a fitnah and a trial.
- Trials in Islām can be good or bad.
- Permissibility of children being in the masjid, even on Jum’ah.

Hadīth #13

Considering the situation of the people is from concentration in salah:

Narrated ‘Abdullāh bin Abi Qatada Al-Ansari (raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu):

My father said, “Allāh’s Apostle said, “Whenever I stand for prayer, I want to prolong it but on hearing the cries of a child, I would shorten it as I dislike to put its mother in trouble.”

[Taken from www.sahihalbukhari.com - The Book of the Characteristics of Prayer (#828)]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- Concentration in the salāt is made keeping mind the situation of the people in congregation. True devotion and concentration does not exclude that.
- The person leading the salāt should keep in mind the situation of the children and also anyone with weaknesses; during and after the salāt.
- Small children were present in the masjid at the time of the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam), he allowed this.

Hadīth #14

Permissibility of young children to play with dolls:

A'isha (radī Allāhu 'anhā) reported that she used to play with dolls in the presence of Allaah's Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) and when her playmates came to her they left (the house) because they felt shy of Allāh's Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam), whereas Allāh's Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) sent them to her.

[Taken from www.sahihmuslim.com - The Book of 'The Virtues of the Companions' (#5981)]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- Permissibility of keeping dolls in the house for children, as the Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) did not order to remove the dolls.
- Majority of Scholars permitted images for children.
- Shaykh Muqbil ibn Hādhi was of the opinion that if you want a doll, then you take a piece of wood and tie cotton around it, without making an image.
- Shaykh Muhammad Nāsir -ud-dīn al-Albāni (rahimahullāh) said that in the hadīth is the permissibility of image making and keeping the image, if there is benefit in that relating to education or refining character. Anything other than that is impermissible. (Taken from his book 'The Manners of the Wedding' page 196 in the Arabic.)
- There are guidelines for these images that are permissible:
 - There can be no harm related, it must have a benefit for the children.
 - The image should not be related to any type of prohibition and corrupt morals.
 - The image should not have music with it.
- The hadīth shows the Prophet's (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) good character and manners. He would play and spend time with young children, while he was the Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) who was ordered to convey the revelation to all of mankind.
- It is important for an educator or parent to play along with a small child.
- The Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) dealt with the children with what they understood.

Hadīth #16

Fair treatment between all one's children:

Nu'man ibn Bashir (raḍī Allāhu 'anhu) reported: My father donated to me some of his property. My mother Amra bint Rawaha said: I shall not be pleased (with this act) until you make Allāh's Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) a witness to it. My father went to Allāh's Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) in order to make him the witness of the donation given to me. Allāh's Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) said to him: Have you done the same with every son of your? he said: No. Thereupon he (the Prophet) said: Fear Allāh, and observe equity in case of your children. My father returned and got back the gift.

[Taken from www.sahihmuslim.com - The Book of Gifts (#3965)]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- When the Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) addressed Bashir the father of Nu'mān, he addressed him as if he was a group of people. "Be fair with all of your children." This indicates that it is not specific to one Sahābah, but applies to the whole Ummah. The hadīth would generally be applied to the Ummah, unless there is a evidence in that hadīth that it is specific for that one case.
- It is binding on a parent or educator, that they be just and fair in dealing with the children. Not to give others favours and gifts and not others, as this will lead to cutting off ties.
- Some of the Scholars (including Imām Ahmad and others) said that fairness between children means fairness in the way they will inherit from you. Therefore, the male can get two gifts and the female one, which is in accordance to the inheritance laws.
- Other Scholars said, "No." What is correct is to be equal, girls and boys get the same amount of gifts. You expect the same kind of dutifulness from a girl than a boy, so you should give and be fair to the boys just as you are with the girls.
- It is not permissible to take back gifts.
- To correct the mistake Bashir took back the gift, maybe because he couldn't afford the same gift for all his children.
- An-Nawawī mentions that the best way to correct the mistake is to buy all the other children the same gift, so that injustice is not done. If that cannot be done, of less virtue is to take back the gift.
- The father should go to the Scholars to get a verdict in matters that are not clear to him in how he deals with his children.
- The quickness of a believer in submitting to the truth and obedience to the Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam).

Hadīth #17

Manners of teaching the child:

Narrated 'Umar bin Abi Salama:

I was a boy under the care of Allāh's Apostle and my hand used to go around the dish while I was eating. So Allāh's Apostle said to me, 'O boy! Mention the Name of Allāh and eat with your right hand, and eat of the dish what is nearer to you.' Since then I have applied those instructions when eating.

[Taken from www.sahihalbukhari.com - The Book of the Food, Meals (#5018)]

- The educator takes care to teach the child.
- The parent/educator eat with the children to make sure they are practicing proper Islāmic manners.
- Correction was made during the meal.

Hadīth #18

Considering the Rights of all People:

The Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) drank from a cup. On right side was a young boy and on the left were some elders. The Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) asked the young man if he could give the drink to the people on the left. The boy said that he would never give up the chance to be on the right side of the Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam). The boy then drank before the elders.

[Source not found]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- Children used to attend the gatherings with their elders.
- Even though the elders have a great right over the people, he still asked permission from the boy to take his right.
- Shows the importance of passing to the right in a gathering.
- Considering the rights of the child in front of the elders, cannot be considered insulting the elders. Rather, the rights of the children should be honoured and observed, even in the presence of the elders in the community.
- Shows the humbleness of the Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) by him seeking permission from a young boy.

Hadīth #19

Stages of Childhood Development:

‘Amr ibn Shuayb (raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu) relates from his father and the latter from his father, that the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) said:

When your children attain the age of seven years, ask them to perform the Salat and chastise them in respect of any fault in this behalf when they are ten years old, and let them sleep in separate beds.

[Taken from ‘Riyadh-us-Salehīn’ translated by S.M. Madni Abbasi (Chapter 38, #300) Reported by Abu Dāwūd]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- A clarification of the stages of childhood development until puberty.
- There are three basic stages.

First stage is the age of play, from birth to the end of the sixth year; they are not to be ordered to perform Islāmic duties.

Second stage from ages seven to the end of the ninth year; they are to be taught to pray, and taught the preconditions of praying. We make qiyās that the obligations in Islām are also to be taught. Harshness and punishment are not to be used.

Third stage from ages ten to puberty; they are to be held accountable for not following the obligations. Harshness and discipline should be applied if they do not follow the obligations.

- It is important for caregivers to categorize children into these three categories and to give each age group the treatment that the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) gave for each level.

Hadīth #20

How to deal with the mistakes of the children:

Narrated Anas (raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu):

I served the Prophet (ṣallallaahu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) for ten years, and he never said to me, “Uff” (a minor harsh word denoting impatience) and never blamed me by saying, “Why did you do so or why didn’t you do so?”

[Taken from ‘Summarized Sahih Al-Bukhārī’ translated by Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan - The Book of Good Manners (#2029)]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- Shows the great manners of the Prophet (ṣallalāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) and how he dealt with children.
- Children can be addressed in a way to make them happy and show we care about them.
- Being patient when dealing with children.

Hadīth #21

Being mindful of what we utter:

Imran b. Husain (raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu) reported:

We were with Allaah’s Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) in some of his journeys and there was a woman from the Ansar riding a she-camel that it shied and she invoked curse upon that. Allāh’s Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) heard it and said: Unload that and set it free for it is accursed.

[Taken from www.sahihmuslim.com - The Book of Righteousness, Manners and Joining the Ties of Kinship (#6276)]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- Prohibition of cursing oneself, his children, his wealth or his animal.
- Indication of saying HadākaAllāh (may Allāh guide you) if the person was angry, if it is a time that Allāh answers the du’ā, he can get some benefit from it.
- Prohibition of saying any bad du’ā, even when a person is angry.
- Shows the importance of du’ā, it is not just light speech; as du’ā is ibādah.

Hadīth #22

From the ways to protect the child - make duā for them:

Narrated Ibn ‘Abbās (raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu):

The Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) used to seek Refuge with Allāh for Al-Hasan and Al-Husain and say: “Your forefather (Ibrahīm) used to seek Refuge with Allāh for Ishmael and Isaac by reciting the following: ‘O Allāh! I seek Refuge with Your Perfect Words from every devil and from poisonous pets and from every evil, harmful envious eye.’ ”

[Taken from www.sahihalbukhari.com - The Book of the Prophets (#3148)]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- The legislation of seeking refuge with Allāh on behalf of small children to keep them from the harms of the shayātīn, harmful insects and jealousy.
- All of the nations have practiced this, and was started by Ibrahim (alayhi salaam).
- There is a proof that Ahl-us-Sunnah used to say that the Qur’ān is not a created thing. Proof is that the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) said, “I seek refuge in the perfect Words of Allāh.”
- To seek refuge is of two types. Firstly, to seek refuge in something created is called shirk. Secondly, seeking refuge in the Creator. Therefore, seeking refuge in the Words of Allāh is seeking refuge with Allāh by way of His Attributes - His Speech.

Hadīth #23

From the ways to protect the child - bring them in at the time of maghrib:

Jabir b. 'Abdullāh reported Allaah's Messenger (ṣallāllāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) having said:

When the wings of the night (spread) or it is night, restrain your children (from going out), for the shaytān is abroad at that time, and when a part of the night is passed, free them and shut the doors, making mention of Allāh's Name, for the shaytān does not open a closed door, and tighten the mouths of waterskins and mention the Name of Allāh, cover your utensils and mention the Name of Allāh even though you should just put something on them, and extinguish your lamps.

[Taken from www.sahihmuslim.com - The Book of Drinks (#4995)]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- Allāh has taught the Prophet (ṣallāllāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) about the ghayb.
- We have been given many ways to protect our children from the harms of the shaytān.
- To give significance at the time of maghrib, and to bring the children in at that time.

Hadīth #24

From the ways to protect the child - make du'ā for themselves:

Hasan ibn Ali

Taught me some words to say in the witr. Abu Dāwūd, at-Tirmidhī

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- It is an indication to teach children to make du'ā for their ownelves.
- It is an indication to teach children that which is required for the obligatory and optional prayers, when they have reached the age of seven.
- It is an indication to teach the children to seek the help of Allāh ta'alā only, to seek His guidance, His blessings and to seek refuge in Him from all types of evils.
- The parent/educator having concern for the optional prayers of the child.
- Shows the importance of salatul- witr. The Prophet (ṣallāllāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) never used to leave off the witr prayer. (He only left it off once, in Muzdalifah, nothing was prayed after Ishā until the fajr prayer. This is an indication that witr is not obligatory.)

Hadīth #25

Outwardly showing love to the children by teaching them a du'ā after the prayer:

Narrated Mu'adh bin Jabal (raḍī Allāhu 'anhu): Allaah's Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) told me,

"O Mu'adh, I will give you some advice - 'Never leave the recitation of this supplication after every (obligatory) prayer: O Allāh, help me to remember You, thank You, and worship You perfectly.' "

[Taken from 'Bulugh Al-Maram' compiled by Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalanī (Dar-us-Salam Publications) - The Book of Prayer (#257)]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- From the Sunnah of the Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) is to openly express your love for a child.
- Offering advice and teaching that which is beneficial is from the result of love. True love is preparing a child to get into a position to earn Allāh's pleasure.
- To openly declare your love to a child will gain their attention, therefore making it a good technique to teach them.
- Teaching children the importance of seeking Allāh's Help alone.
- Shows the concern that the educator should have concerning the salah of the child and for the supplications the child will make after the prayer.

Hadīth #26

The character of the parent or educator:

Narrated 'Abdullāh (raḍī Allāhu 'anhu): The Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) said,

"Truthfulness leads to Al-Birr (righteousness), and Al-Birr leads to Paradise. And a man keeps on telling the truth until he becomes a Siddiq (truthful person). Falsehood leads to Al-Fujur (i.e. wickedness, evil-doing), and Al-Fujur leads to the (Hell) Fire, and a man may keep on telling lies till he is written before Allāh, a liar."

[Taken from 'Summarized Sahih Al-Bukhārī' translated by Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan - The Book of Good Manners (#2039)]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- A parent and educator must be truthful, and teach this truthfulness to the children.
- The Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam) showed us that being truthful with your tongue leads you to birr (righteousness). Being truthful will lead you to the birr of being a good parent or educator.

Hadīth #27

Fulfilling the promises:

Narrated Abdullāh ibn Amir (raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu):

His mother called her son while the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) was in her house. The mother said that if her son came to her, she would give him something. The Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) asked her as to what she was going to give him. She told him, she was going to give a date. The Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) told her that if you had intended not to give him something, that would be written against you as a lie.

[Source not found]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- Be truthful with your children.
- Do not be lax with your children about lies.

Hadīth #28

Showing concern for the situations of the child and bringing happiness to the child:

Narrated Anas bin Maalik (raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu):

The Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) used to mix with us to the extent that he would say to a younger brother of mine, ‘O father of ‘Umar! What did the nughair (a kind of bird) do?’

[Taken from www.sahihbukhari.com - The Book of Good Manners (#5734)]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- Shows the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) has time to cheer up a small boy.
- The legislated nature of addressing a child with a kunya.
- The permissibility of children keeping pets and naming them.
- Some of the Scholars of Fiqh addresses the Scholars of Hadīth, by saying there is no fiqh benefits from this hadīth. In response, the Scholars of Hadīth came up with 60 benefits from this hadīth.
- An indication of the principle of addressing people according to their different levels.

Hadīth #29

The difference between the accountability of the child in the dunya and the accountability of the child in the Hereafter.

The Messenger of Allaah (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) said:

“The Pen is lifted from three. A child until he reaches puberty, an insane man until he comes to his senses and one who is asleep until he wakes up.”

[Recorded in Abu Dāwūd (#4403)]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- The accountability from ten years of age until puberty is the accountability in the dunya between the parent and the child.
- The accountability for the akhira is for after they reach puberty.

Hadīth #30

Responsibility:

Benefits from the Hadīth:

On the authority of Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī (raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu) that he said:

I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam) saying: “Whoever amongst you sees an evil then let him change it with his hand. If he is not able, then let him change it with his tongue. If he is not able, then let him hate it in his heart and that is the weakest of Īmān.”

[Taken from ‘Explanatory Notes on Imām an-Nawawī’s Forty Ahadīth’ by Muhammad ibn Sālih al-‘Uthaymīn (page 180).
Reported by Muslim (#49)]

- The hadīth is specific to those in authority.
- The man is responsible for his household.
- The parent or educator is responsible for what goes on inside the house or classroom. They must remove all evils with their hands.
- If the child forbids their parents or teacher from an evil, then the dīn is nasīhah, and they have to listen to the forbiddance of the evil coming from someone who is younger than them. This is from the fruits of good labour, that children correct the parents.

Hadīth #31

Facilitation upon the Deen:

Narrated Abu Mūsā (radī Allāhu ‘anhu):

That when Allāh’s Apostle sent him and Mu’adh bin Jabal to Yemen, he said to them, “Facilitate things for the people (treat the people in the most agreeable way), and do not make things difficult for them, and give them glad tidings, and let them not have aversion (i.e. to make the people hate good deeds).

[Taken from www.sahihbukhari.com - The Book of Good Manners (#5729)]

Benefits from the Hadīth:

- The obligation for anyone involved in education to be cheerful and give glad tidings to his children or students. He must call them to what is correct in a nice way and not do anything that will cause them to be inclined against Islām or its morals and the worship of Allāh Azzawajal.

