



# CHILDREN'S

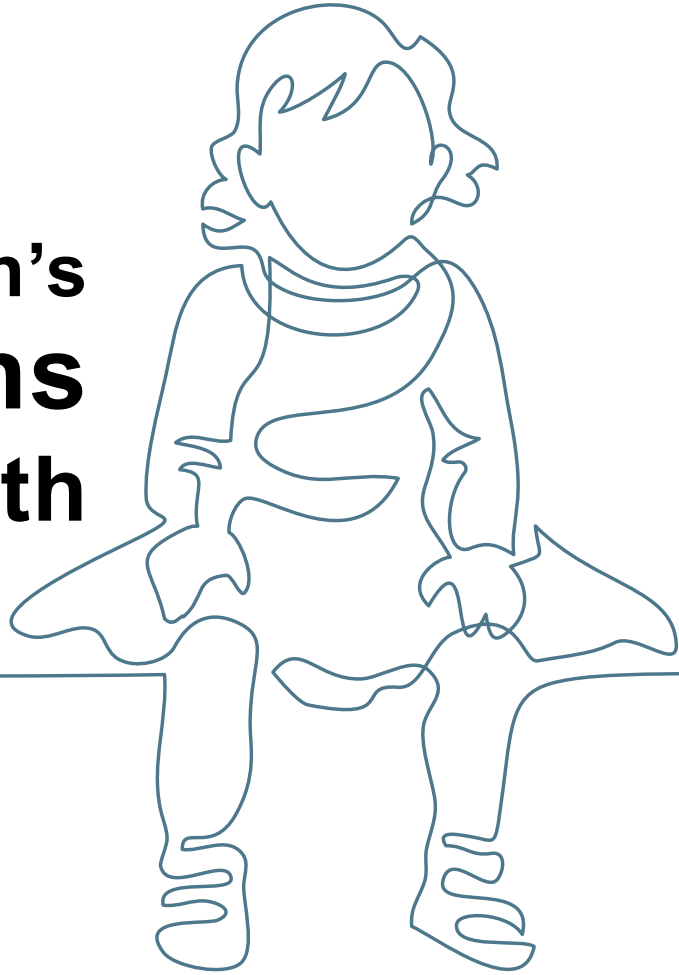
FAITH QUESTIONS

An illustration of a man and a child from behind, looking at a large, stylized question mark. The man is on the right, wearing a white t-shirt and blue shorts. The child is on the left, also in a white t-shirt. The background is a blue sky with clouds and a beach at the bottom. The question mark is a large, dark blue outline.

Abdullah Hamad Alrakf


# The Children's Questions about Faith


Abdulla Arrakf







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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah,  
the Most Merciful,  
the Most Gracious



# INTRODUCTION

In the name of Allah the Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate,

All praises are due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. And prayers and peace to Muhammad, the messenger of Allah and the noble prophet, and his companions and family.

This book is directed to Muslim parents devoted in teaching faith to their children in the times of globalization and unlimited access - through technology - to all that is confusing and/or contradictory to the Islamic faith. As we know, Allah and His prophet have ordered us, Muslims, to take good care of our children and tend to their spiritual and physical needs. Muslim parents ought to teach their children, raise them, protect them from corruption, and instruct them to follow Allah's orders. In fact, we are held accountable for this specific duty. In the Quran, Allah *Subhanahu Watala* says: "O' you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is people and stones." Allah also says, "Allah instructs you concerning your children." In the Hadith, the prophet says "**All of you are responsible, and all of you will be asked about what you're assigned with.**" If we raise our children to be good Muslims, Allah will reward us for our efforts. If we do not take care of our children, Allah will punish us. As one scholar explains, bearing parents the responsibility of caring for children proves Allah's mercy because it makes

caring a religious responsibility. In fact, raising children to become good Muslims is a blessing not only because it demonstrates our compliance to Allah's commands, but also because good grown up children bring peace and satisfaction in our old age and constant reward after death. In the Hadith, the prophet says: Once a person dies, he or she can no longer gain reward for the Hereafter except through one of three: A recurring charity, knowledge that benefits people, or a pious child who prays for his or her parents."

Raising children by parents, as educators agree, is crucial to their transition into successful life. Lack of parents in child's life leads to challenges children may not be able to overcome. After all, children look up to their parents and their integrity – later in life - is contingent upon their parents' upbringing. If parents raise their children well, the children will be better equipped to deal with the outside world. If parents fail to raise their children well, children will be ill-mannered and prone to failure.

In addition to teaching children the basic tools of life that include education and skills, parents should also pay attention to the spiritual needs of children. For Muslims, these needs do not only mean religious knowledge or practice, but also Islamic faith in specific. To us, Muslims, faith helps us understand the meaning of life, death, good time, and hard times. It gives us peace in mind and harmony with our surroundings. Teaching faith to children helps them overcome anxiety, uncertainty, and stress they might experience in this turbulent world. And the sooner children learn how to connect with Allah, the better; whatever children

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learn early in life stays with them and develops throughout their lives.

A lot of material by notable scholars and academics have discussed the importance and methods of raising Muslim children and teaching them Islam. This book, however, is focused on one particular aspect: developing faith in children and answering their questions about Islamic faith. Thus, it is limited in its scope and parents should also consult other books about raising children to practice Islamic rituals and morals.

This book is divided into two sections, the first section provides parents with the most important faith related information they need to teach their kids. The second part provides parents with ways to respond to questions children might ask about faith. Both sections complement one another. I hope that parents find the material here concise and useful. I would also appreciate any correspondence with my valued readers that help me improve the material presented and make it available to all Muslim parents looking for ways to improve the life and faith of their children.

**May Allah Guide us to all that is beneficial in this world and rewarding in the Hereafter**

**Abdullah Arrakf**



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# The Definition, Tools, and Essentials of Nurturing Faith

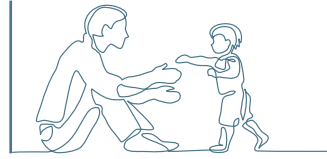




# Nurturing

Nurturing children is a human necessity in order to establish a functional society. It encompasses preparing children in all aspects of life including social conduct, knowledge about surrounding, psychological well-being, and caring for their health. Thus, prior to discussing nurturing faith, one has to understand the concept of nurture and its implications.

## Definition of Nurturing



When educators discuss the concept of nurture, they mean a purposeful and developed process maintained by rules that aim to establishing good habits in children through guidance, training, education, refinement, and practice. Nurturing also aims to preserve the innate nature and talents of children,

to protect them, and to guide them towards righteousness and perfection that prepares a good human being ready for the responsibly of life. Nurturing is a tool that creates healthy and functional leadership in society.

## Raising Children in Islam



Nurturing Children is crucial in Islam. Ibn Omar narrates that the messenger of Allah (may Allah's mercy and blessings be upon him) said: **“Every one of you is a guardian and is responsible for whatever he or she are in charge of; the ruler is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects; the woman is a guardian of her husband's house and is responsible for her charges.”** In this Hadith, the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) points out the massive responsibility on the shoulders of each one of us: we will be asked - undoubtedly - about whatever we are entrusted with. The prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) also said: **“Any man whom Allah has given the authority of ruling over people but does not look after them in an honest manner will never feel even the smell of Paradise.”** In this Hadith, we see reference to the importance of providing truthful, honest and beneficial advice. Furthermore, Ibn Omar said: “Educate your son, you

will be asked about him: how did you raise him?, What did you teach him? He will also be asked on his kindness and obedience to you.” Here, Ibn Omar asserts that caring for children is the parents’ responsibility; parents are the first source of information and moral lessons. In fact, the prophet has stressed that raising children is greater than charity: **“A person educating his child is better than him donating food.”** It is also alleged that the prophet said that teaching children good manners is better than donation: **“A parent has never granted to a son anything better than good behavior.”** These Hadiths indicate that raising and educating children are one of the most important and noblest gifts parents can provide to their children.









## Nurturing Faith is a Necessity:



Many Ayahs and Hadiths stress that it is the parent's duty to assist their child in this early and critical stages of life. For example, in the Quran, Allah says: **"Allah instructs you concerning your children."** The prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) also stressed the importance of this stage. He says: **"Every child is born with a true faith (i.e. to worship none but Allah Alone) but his parents convert him to Judaism, Christianity or Zoroastrianism"**. This Hadith infers crucial facts that include:

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- Ⓐ Faith is inborn in human nature. Whoever deviates from it ultimately deviates towards loss.
  - Ⓑ Faith nurturing is a child's right upon parents; it leads to happiness in life and it is a safeguard in the Hereafter - Allah willing – that would differentiate winners from losers.
  - Ⓒ Children's surroundings affect their state of mind.

It is a blessing from Allah to have an inborn pure faith since childhood without an effort to achieve it. Accordingly, parents must do their best to protect their children's inborn nature. They must raise their children to accept the true religion, built on the Quran and Sunnah, and never leave their children learn through social influence.

Faith is the ultimate truth of existence and the reason Allah created humanity. It defines a person's journey in this life and determines his or her destination in the Hereafter. Actions and manners are built upon faith; nurturing the faith of children is crucial because – as we shall explain - children's soul, creeds, principles, habits, and visions are ultimately built on faith. To ignore teaching faith to children is, thus, a form of abuse of ignoring to teach and equip children with crucial tools they need for their future life and the Hereafter.

As mentioned, children are vulnerable as they experience psychological and cultural leaps and other forms of influence that should not be overlooked. Sadly, distorting and anti-Islamic faith media programs are now abundant and available at the tip of the children's fingers. These programs shape the minds of children; once they grow, it becomes harder to change what has already been installed. It is the responsibility of parents to protect their children from negative influence.

## The Goals of Islamic Education



**The general aim of Islamic education is to establish true worship of Allah Alone. The below elaborates more on this:**

Children who grow up in families committed to true Islamic teachings and who focus on building Islamic faith are likely going to copy their parents and adopt their personal perceptions. These children are also less likely to deviate from Sunnah and fall into un-Islamic worship practices. Uncommitted Muslim parents, or parent who ignore teaching their children about faith under the pretense that they are still young, will find it later difficult to bring their children back to religion or have faith because these children did not see the benefits of religion early in their life.

Of course, without doubt, raising children is one of the toughest tasks parents encounter. This is why it is explained, in the Quran, as the acts of prophets (blessings and peace upon them all). In the Quran, Nuh (peace be upon him) calls his son to follow the path of Allah and warns him against following corrupt people: “O my son, come aboard with us and be not with the disbelievers.” . Similar wise, Ibrahim (peace be upon him) instructs his children on his deathbed “O’ my sons, indeed Allah has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims.” Luqman’s (peace be upon him) first command to his son was also a warning against worshipping anyone other than Allah: ““O’ my son, do not associate [anything in worshipping] with Allah. Indeed, association [with Him] is great injustice.” Furthermore, the prophet’s life is full of examples of teaching faith to children.

Prophet Muhammad (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) commands Ibn Abbas: “Young man! I will teach you a statement: Be mindful of Allah and He will protect you. Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him before you. When you ask, ask Allah Alone, and when you seek aid, seek Allah’s aid”. All these examples not only illustrate the importance of nurturing faith, but also illustrate that it was a practice of prophets and that it is a challenging practice. Muslims look up to the prophets who are an example of leading good and productive life.

Here is what children gain from a strong faith:

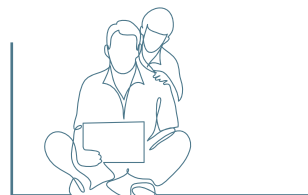
- Ⓐ They will engage in doing good deeds and seek activities that gets them closer to Allah and His mercy.
- Ⓑ They will be better at refraining from bad deeds.
- Ⓒ They will abstain from indulging in luxuries because life is not the center of their interest and their hearts are not attached to it.

- D** They will gain divine support; Allah takes care of those who believe in Him. They will achieve happiness in this life and in the Hereafter.
- E** They will gravitate towards Allah and increases spiritual strength. As faith flourishes, the servants' trust and affection towards Allah and detachment from His creatures increase.
- F** They will let go of negativity and hostility. As faith grows in the heart, the effect of personal inclinations becomes limited. Moreover, determination strengthens and drives them towards noble behavior.
- G** They will have positive outlook to the world; the strong believer seeks to improve himself and those around him. In other words, faith builds a psychologically and emotionally balanced individual who is an effective and productive member of society, and who performs his or her duties as a guardian of Allah's dominion of Earth by inhabiting it and utilizing its resources.
- H** They will achieve peace and tranquility. Trust based on faith is ingrained in the heart. Fears that haunt others diminish. In other words, faith nurturing provides spiritual stability and psychological security because it provides answers to the big questions of life; these answers are derived from The Quran and from the messenger's (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) the Sunnah. These answers are characterized by the clarity of their source, method, and goals. These answers also speak to the child's needs, reality, and upbringing.

Nurturing faith is beneficial to society in that it helps society fulfil the main purpose of creation, which is to worship Allah. Furthermore, nurturing faith is beneficial to society in three main ways:

- A** It provides the bedrock to establishing a Muslim community through preparing righteous people who will worship Allah with guidance and insight and fulfill Human being's mission on Earth.
- B** It sets the stage for establishing good moral standards after the standards that the prophet set fourteen hundred years ago. Though the prophet focused on the importance of monotheism, which is essentially the center of Islamic faith, Allah and His prophet have frequently reminded us that morals are based upon faith. Allah will reward as for good behavior and punishes us for bad behavior. Allah has also praised the prophet for having good morals that stem from faith: "And indeed, you are of a great moral character." The prophet also stressed this fact. He said: " I was sent to perfect good character."
- C** Building a community with individuals who share their faith develops brotherhood among individuals in that community. As a result loyalty and care will be anchored towards the Muslim community and its members. In the Quran, Allah says: "The believers are but brothers." The prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) says: "A believer to another believer is like a building whose different parts enforce each other" and "The believers are merciful, kind, and loving among themselves like a unified body; if any part of the body is not well, the whole body will help it through sleeplessness and fever."

## The Essential Dimensions of **Nurturing** faith



There are two essential dimensions for nurturing faith in children: epistemological and practical:

The epistemological dimension has two aspects: knowledge and creed

a- Knowledge presents the key to understanding and building ethics and motives. Allah says: “Say, “Are those who know equal to those who do not know?” Only they will remember [who are] people of understanding” (39:9). The prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) was keen on teaching his companions beneficial knowledge; he taught them to seek refuge in Allah from useless knowledge by asking Allah in prayers: “O Allah, I seek refuge in Thee from knowledge which does not benefit and from a heart that does not fear Allah.” What these two quotes prove is that good faith is based upon knowledge about that faith its requirements.



Creed is the belief that settles in heart based upon knowledge. For Muslims, this belief is the belief in the six pillars of faith which will be discussed further down

**The practical dimension has three aspects: servitude to Allah, practice, and morals**

**Aspect #1: Servitude to Allah:** servitude is based upon truthful inner self and unique personal traits that build the urge to constantly and truthfully evaluate life and connection to Allah. It also means the belief that servitude is a blessing rather than a burden. Manners, thoughts, hopes, and ambitions are purified through devotion. The prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) told Mu'ath Ibn Jabal: **“By Allah, I love you, Mu'ath, I'll teach you some words. Never leave to recite this supplication after every (prescribed) prayer: ‘O Allah, help me in remembering You, in giving You thanks, and in worshipping You well.’”** Here, the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) teaches Mu'ath that worshipping Allah is a gift from Him, the Almighty and that it is not a burden. Worshipping is not just individual effort, it is also divine guidance and blessing.

**Aspect #2: Application:** Knowledge about Allah and his blessings dictates practicing worshipping and thanking Him. Our action and practice of worshipping Allah and thanking him differentiates winners from losers in the Hereafter. This is why Allah says in the Quran: **“So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it ○ And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.”**

**Aspect #3: Morals:** Morals are based upon faith. The foundations of Islam create well-behaved people because it categorizes manners and ethics as acts of worship. The prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) states that his focus is on encouraging good behavior. He says: “I was sent to perfect good character.” He also states that: “Indeed the most beloved among you to me, and the nearest to sit with me on the Day of Judgment is the best of you in character.”



# Examples of Nurturing Faith



Providing practical examples helps ingrain principles and values. The following are some examples of how the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and his companions establish faith in children.

1. Ibn Abbas narrates that the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) used to seek refuge in Allah for Al-Hasan and Al-Husain: **"Your forefather (i.e. Abraham) used to seek refuge with Allah for Ishmael and Isaac by reciting the following: 'O Allah! I seek Refuge with Your Perfect Words from every devil and from poisonous pests and from every evil, harmful, envious eye'"**.
2. Abu Huraira narrates that the Messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: **"Every child is born with a true faith (to worship none but Allah Alone) but his parents convert him to either Judaism, Christianity or Magainism."**





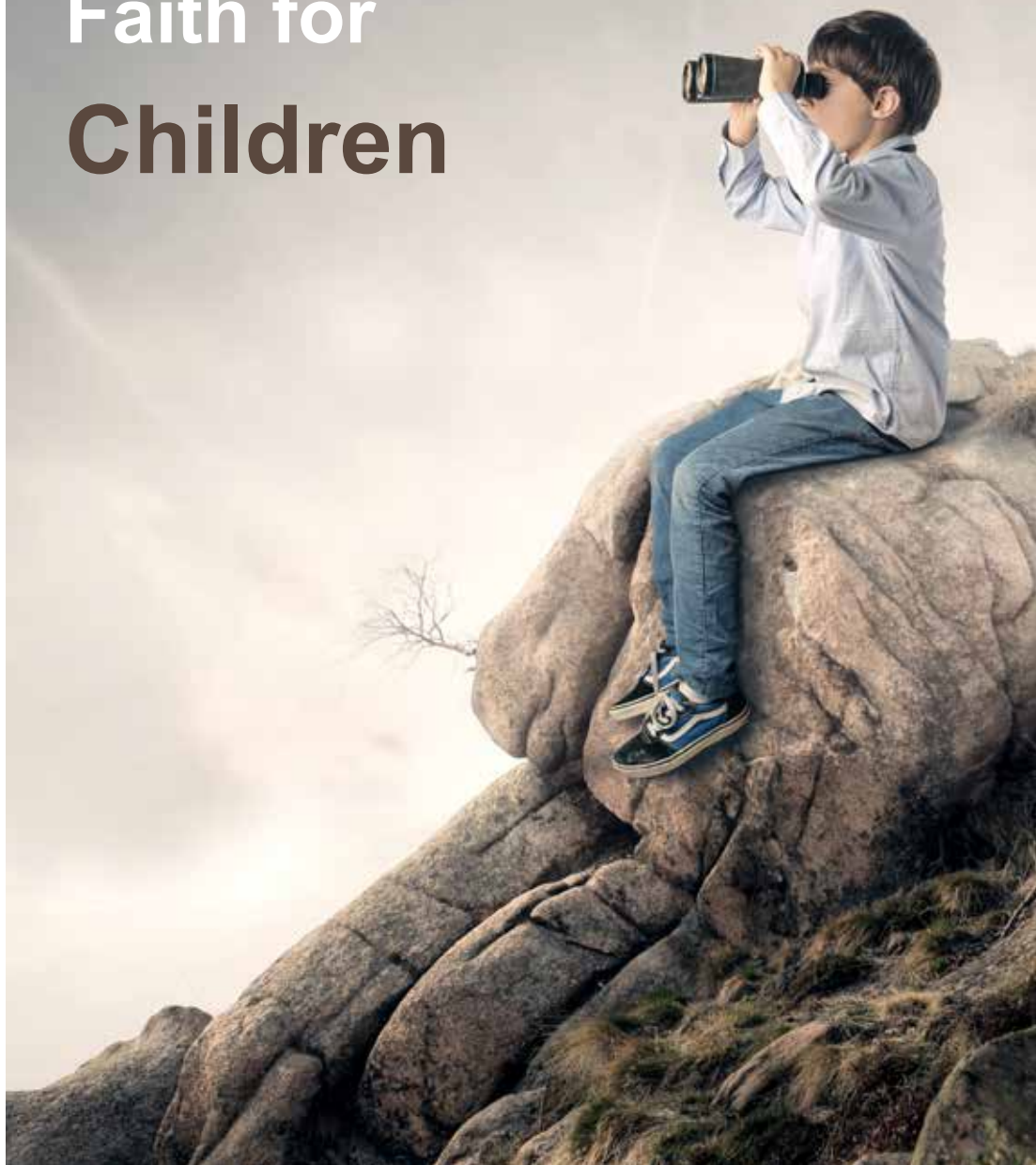
3. Umar ibn Abi Salama narrates: “I was a young boy under the care of Allah’s messenger (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) and my hand used to meander in the dish while I was eating. So, the messenger (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said to me: ‘O boy! Mention the Name of Allah and eat with your right hand and eat of the dish what is nearer to you.’”

4. Ibn Abbas narrates: “I was behind the prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) one day when he said: **‘Son ! I will teach you a statement: Be mindful of Allah and He will protect you. Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him before you. When you ask, ask Allah, and when you seek aid, seek Allah’s aid. Know that if the entire creation were to gather to do something to benefit you - you would never get any benefit except that Allah had written for you. And if they were to gather to do something to harm you - you would never be harmed except that Allah had written for you.’**”

5. Al-Hasan ibn Ali narrates: **“The messenger (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) taught me some words to say during the *witr* (night prayer): ‘O Allah, guide me among those You have guided, grant me security among those You have granted security, take me into Your charge among those You have taken into Your charge, bless me in what You have given, guard me from the evil of what You have decreed, for You are the one who decrees, and nothing is decreed over You. He whom You befriends is not degraded. You are blessed and exalted, our Lord.’”**
6. Anas ibn Malik narrates: **“The messenger (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said to me: “O my little son! When you enter upon your family say salam, it will be a blessing for you and upon the people of your house.”**
7. Jundub Al-Bajli narrates: **“We were with the prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) and we were strong youths, so we learned faith before we learned Quran. Then we learned the Quran and our faith increased thereby.”**
8. Umm Sulaim - Anas ibn Malik’s mother - entered Islam when Anas was still young, not weaned yet, and used to teach Anas to say that “There is no God but Allah,” “I testify that Muhammad (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) is Allah’s messenger” and so he did.
9. Ibrahim Al-Taimi said: “They used to prefer to teach the young child - when he first learned to talk - to say ‘There is no God but Allah’ seven times, so that it becomes the first thing he learns.”



# Nurturing Faith for Children





**A**s mentioned earlier, nurturing faith is vital to ingraining the correct creed in the mind and heart and to developing good habits and codes of ethics. People establish their vision and attitude towards the world during childhood. These visions and attitudes shape their happiness in this life and success in the hereafter. Therefore, it is the parent's duty to assist their child in this early and critical stage of life. In the Quran, Allah says: **{Allah instructs you concerning your children.}** (4:11).

- 1. Faith is inborn in human nature. Whoever deviates from it ultimately deviates towards loss.**
- 2. Parents' have a responsibility to raise children and maintain their natural state of mind.**
- 3. Children's surroundings affect their state of mind.**

It is a blessing from Allah to have an inborn pure faith since childhood without an effort to achieve it. Accordingly, parents must do their best to protect their children's inborn nature. They must raise their children to accept the true religion built on the Qur'an and Sunnah and never go with the flow. Moreover, in times when the world is at the fingertips of children, imitating other Muslims does not protect children from deviation or identity loss.

A child's pure heart is vulnerable. If a child grew up learning what is good, he or she will eventually apply it and achieve happiness in this life and success in the hereafter; parents and mentors will also be rewarded for their effort. Conversely, if a child was neglected or raised poorly, he or she will be miserable in life and doomed in the Hereafter; parents and mentors will also be held responsible for their negligence. Childhood is the best stage to shape a person. The older a person gets, the harder the change.

Children who grow up in families committed to true Islamic teachings will copy their parents and adopt their personal perceptions. Introducing religion harshly can lead to adverse effects on children. Uncommitted Muslim parents will find it difficult later to attract their children to religion because these children did not see the benefits of religion early in their life.



## The Development of Faith in Children



For children, religion begins with the principle of Allah's existence. Other principles (e.g. creation, the Hereafter, Angels, and Jinn) form later. Religion develops in children through four characteristics:

- A Tangibility:** at first, children attach tangible elements to religious concepts. As they approach teenage and comprehend reality, they separate the two
- B Imitation:** children imitate adults in worshipping and supplications without understanding their meaning or spiritual essence. Parents should take advantage of the children's fondness at this stage to familiarize them with the pillars and effects of Islam and Eman.



- C Reward:** children observe parent's satisfaction when performing acts of worship. Thus, they perform worshipping to gain parent's love and admiration, to gain some benefits, or to escape punishment.
- D Loyalty:** Children are spiritually attached to religion due to their need for connection

Parents should realize the stages of the development of faith and work through them accordingly. First, they should work on nurturing their children's inborn nature by focusing on the concept of monotheism. After that, parents should work on establishing faith by teaching their children the six pillars of faith that are built upon loving Allah and His messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and upon teaching Quran.

Therefore, the presence of the religious instinct and its growth in children helps parents raise them. This instinct points towards religious devotion that does not fade and can be guided and developed. Religious instinct can be manipulated in various ways; Islam, however, directs it towards the aim it has been created for.

Parents should utilize the growth of faith in children by teaching them the six pillars of faith, especially the belief in Allah. To believe in Allah and to love him leads to the rest of the five pillars. Loving Allah is one the main indications of believing in Him and submitting to Him. Loving Allah is a prerequisite for obeying Him and denouncing His enemies. This devotion must be higher than any love to anyone else. Allah the Almighty says: **“Say, [O Muhammad], ‘if your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allah and His messenger and jihad in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.”** Allah indicates that the first trait of the worshippers He is pleased with is that they love Him: **“O you who have believed, whoever of you should revert from his religion - Allah will bring forth [in place of them] a people He will love and who will love Him [who are] humble toward the believers, power-**

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**ful against the disbelievers; they strive in the cause of Allah and do not fear the blame of a critic. That is the favor of Allah; He bestows it upon whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and all-Knowing.”** Allah also indicates that pure monotheism can never exist without the ultimate love of Allah: **“And [yet], among the people are those who take other than Allah as equals [to Him]. They love them as they [should] love Allah. But those who believe are stronger in love for Allah.”** Devotion to Allah is the highest level of love. Furthermore, it is the manifestation of the core element of Islamic faith: Monotheism, that stresses on complete devotion and love to Allah. In fact, Monotheism is not accomplished until the servant’s devotion and love to Allah outweighs the love of anything else.

Faith based upon love is one of the greatest methods of straightening children’s behavior and aligning it with Islamic principles that submit to Allah and His messenger (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him). Furthermore, A heart filled with love for Allah and His messenger (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) is dedicated to Allah in faith, worship, and ethics. No matter how many minor sins or forgetfulness one commits, the love of Allah will always guide him or her back to the straight path - may Allah permit. After all, love is an internal affection, not a mere external display of emotion.

The vision of existence that the Islamic creed provides is in harmony with the inborn human instinct and mental well-being. This vision has characteristics that are not found in any other religion: it is comprehensive in its intellectual, credal, and legislative structure: it provides a thoughtful explanation for the beginning of the universe, its end, and the truths inside it and beyond it. It also clarifies an explanation for the beginning and end of human life. It points out the purpose of creating the universe and human-kind. Therefore, it answers existential questions that satisfies people’s cognitive abilities. People can never be satisfied in this life without finding satisfactory and healing answers; otherwise, they will live in continuous anxiety and confusion in their search for the meaning of life.



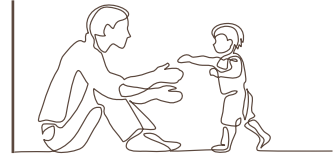
# The Benefits of Nurturing Faith



**Children gain many benefits when their faith is nurtured; including the following:**

- 1** | they will engage in doing good deeds and seek activities that gets them closer to Allah and His mercy.
- 2** | they will be better at refraining from bad deeds.
- 3** | They will abstain from indulging in luxuries because life is not the center of their interest and their hearts are not attached to it.
- 4** | They will gain divine support; Allah takes care of those who believe in Him. They will achieve happiness in this life and in the Hereafter.
- 5** | They will gravitate towards Allah. As faith flourishes, the servants' trust and affection for Allah and detachment from His creatures increase.
- 6** | They will let go of negativity and hostility. As faith grows in the heart, the effect of personal inclinations becomes limited. Moreover, determination strengthens and drives them towards noble behavior.
- 7** | They will have positive outlook to the world; the strong believer seeks to improve himself and those around him.
- 8** | They will achieve peace and tranquility. Trust based on faith is ingrained in the heart. Fears that haunt others diminish.

## The Cornerstones of Faith Nurturing



Teaching faith includes the following:

1. Teaching children the six pillars of faith that contain the belief in Islamic laws and their alignment with human nature. This should be accompanied by refraining from direct orders that lack the spirit of faith. Instead, parents should utilize practical ways that awaken the heart, inspires the mind, and nurture attitude towards life.
2. Raising children to love the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), his family, wives, and companions without exaggeration or negligence.
3. Raising children to revere religious practices and manifestations and to refrain from degrading them or showing apathy towards them.
4. Teaching children that faith is not complete without benevolence. Faith increases with good deeds and decreases with sins. Therefore, nurturing true faith benefits ethics, attitude towards life, and devotion.



5. Teaching children about the Day of Judgment and that our actions will determine our fate in that day. People who do good deeds will be rewarded and those who do bad deeds will be punished.
6. Teaching children that Allah oversees everything. He the Almighty sees them, hear them, and no one can hide from Him.
7. Teaching children to stick to truth and proudly and strongly hold on to it.



## Education Techniques for Teaching Faith

Techniques to strengthen faith can be divided into two categories: **Early childhood techniques** and **Middle and Late childhood techniques**.

**In early childhood, parents should focus on the following:**

1. Explaining names that indicate devotion (e.g. Abdullah, Abdulrahman, Abdulkarim) in brief. Also, ensuring that children listen to the call of prayers, teaching them daily supplications and reciting them in their presence, reminding them of Allah's gifts upon them - especially during meals - and teaching them to mention Allah's name prior to eating, and thanking Him afterwards.
2. Helping Children memorize and understand 1 chapters from the Quran, the word of Allah, starting with 'Al-Fatiha, Al-Ikhlâs, Alfalaq, and Al-Nass( i.e. surah 1,112,113, and 114). Parents should also teach children songs that teach faith. Nurturing respect for the sacredness and commands of the Noble Quran in an attractive way teaches a child that mastering recitation elevates a person to the level of the righteous angels. A child should be taught the ethics of reading and listening to the Quran (i.e. seeking Allah's protection, mentioning Allah's name and listening with respect). Listening to the Quran improves children's Arabic and drives them towards further reading the Quran. In addition, parents should repeatedly narrate the stories of the Noble Quran in a simple and comprehensive manner using various methods.
3. Mentioning Allah in happy and good times. Allah should not be linked to cruelty and torture in childhood. Parents should avoid focusing on Allah's anger, punishment, and Hellfire.
4. Bringing the beauty of creation and its coherence to children's attention so that they feel the greatness of the Creator and love Him for providing this creation to us.

5. Training children to have positive attitude, mercy, cooperation, manners of talking and listening and linking it to the love of Allah and His commands. This should be done through leading by example which allows children to live in an atmosphere full of benevolence and awareness of Allah's presence.





**In Middle and Late Childhood, parent should further expand on these techniques. For example:**

1. They should continue teaching their children the extent of the universe's greatness and intricate creation so that children can comprehend glorifying Allah. Allah says: "It is the work of Allah, who perfected all things."
2. They should remind children about the wisdom in Allah's actions and creations (e.g. the wisdom of creating night and day, sun and moon, and the senses) so that children love Allah and thank Him - Allah says: "Do they not contemplate within themselves? Allah has not created the heavens and the earth and what is between them except in truth."
3. They should also take advantage of available moments to wisely guide children through current issues and advise them on making right decisions and avoiding evil. For example, if a child gets sick, we should attach his or her heart to Allah by teaching him or her supplications, by encouraging him or her to trust in Allah, and by reading the Quran. If we give our child a treat, we should remind him or her to thank Allah. Parents should avoid discussing faith with children during hard times because a child does not have the cognitive ability to understand the concept at the time.
4. They should continue leading by example and practicing Islam so that children attach religion to everyday life. Leading by example allows children to observe sincerity which is an essential element in faith and avoid hypocrisy
5. Parent should also continue teaching children through stories and songs that highlight Islamic concepts and values. Parents should also introduce the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) to children by narrating his biography (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), particularly his childhood, his kind encounters with children, his appearance, and his noble character. Parents should also narrate the stories of his companions, wives (mothers of the believers), and family (may Allah be pleased with them all).

6. Having mentioned these techniques, one should stress that parents should be careful not to overwhelm children. After all, children need fun and entertainment in their life. Therefore, we should not exhaust them and hinder their natural and psychological development by overlooking their main needs.
7. Children should be allowed to behave normally without adults' interference and parents should provide activities that allow children to explore their abilities and surroundings. This develops and strengthens their love for exploration.
8. In addition, parents should be positive with their children by supporting them and encouraging them to do their best. Improving children's attitudes with love and reward is a better way to achieve a balanced attitude towards life.



- 9.** Nurturing respect for the sacredness and commands of the Noble Qur'an in an attractive way teaches a child that mastering recitation elevates a person to the level of the righteous angels. A child should be taught the ethics of reading and listening to the Qur'an (i.e. seeking Allah's protection, mentioning Allah's name and listening with respect). Listening to the Quran improves children's Arabic and drives them towards further reading the Quran. Children should be taught the meaning of some of the Qur'anic verses they memorized that contain faith concepts... like 'The Opening', 'The Purity', 'The Day-break' and 'Mankind'. In addition, parents should repeatedly narrate the stories of the Noble Qur'an in a simple and comprehensive manner using various methods of demonstration.
- 10.** We can apply a Q and A method when teaching faith, and ensure that questions contain the information needed to be delivered and that answers are brief and suitable the age and level of awareness. This method provides children with values, noble morals, and positive attitude.
- 11.** Fun activities: Children can also learn by coloring pictures that contain various faith concepts. Children can also learn through contests. The more dynamic and interactive a contest, the better.
- 12.** Storytelling: Children can learn about faith through simple and attractive stories that suit their mental and cognitive capabilities. Children can also learn through repeating phrases that ingrain faith such as: "Allah has decreed and whatever He wills, He does," "rely upon Allah" and "Allah has the power over everything." With the help of parents, children can decorate their bedroom with faith phrases and expressions like: "I am a Muslim," "I love Allah" and "The pillars of faith". The repetition of these educational methods ingrains faith in children's minds.

13. At later childhood stages, parents should begin teaching children that everyone experiences hardship. Allah tests everyone in this life with hardship. We should teach children that there is wisdom behind Allah's decisions and ingrain in their mind that Allah is the One who brings goodness and prevents evil and that His mercy surpasses His anger. We should explain to children that relief always comes after distress and strengthen their trust in Allah because this is part of devotion. So, we believe that Allah's decisions are better than our choices and that people can do nothing but be patient and perform their duties in difficult times. They should also be content as they wait for Allah's reward. Finally, we must teach children supplications (Duaa) that benefit them.



# Important Educational Tools to Ingrain Faith in Children



Among the most important education tools to ingrain faith in children are the following:

- 1. Role Models:** role models are one of the most important tools that influence children. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) highlighted the importance of role models for children: Abdullah ibn Amer narrates: **"My mother called me one day when the Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) was sitting in our house. She said: Come here and I shall give you something. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) asked her: What did you intend to give him? She replied: I intended to give him some dates. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: If you were not to give him anything, a lie would be recorded against you".** In another narration, the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) says: **"Whoever calls his child (come here, take this) then doesn't give him, then it's a lie."** Therefore, being a role model is an effective method in raising children; the two narrations highlight the importance of honesty in raising children.



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2. **Sincere Advice:** preaching is either direct or indirect (e.g. allegories, dialogues). We should choose the right time and words so that the child does not get bored.
  3. **Reward and Punishment:** This way is one of the most powerful and emotional ways of educating children because it relates to human nature. It must be done without exaggerating the reward or punishment. Sensitive Children should be encouraged rather than intimidated; Children at young age need encouragement rather than intimidation.
  4. **Training, practice and building habits:** children should be trained to please, fear, and depend on Allah. They should also understand that everything is in His Hands. All that brings strength and firmness, that help them withstand every distress, and satisfaction that relieve their hearts.
  5. **Repetition:** modern science and experience confirm the effectiveness of repetition in teaching and ingraining knowledge.
  6. **Conversation:** conversations with widens their perceptions; however, a parent must respect the child's opinions, listens carefully, and calmly steer discussions so that conversation becomes fruitful. In discussion, we can apply a question and answer method while teaching faith; we should ensure that questions contain the information needed to be delivered and that answers are brief and suitable to the age and level of awareness of the child. This method provides children with values, morals, and positive attitude; it will be adequately discussed further down.
  7. **Books:** it is important to have a suitable library that contains scientific, cultural, and religious material in all forms including audiovisual and digital material. It is important that these books contain stories because, as mentioned, stories are an important educational tool. There are a lot of eloquent stories about the biography of the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and his companions.

8. **Modern educational tools and technology:** These tools should be utilized in an appealing and colorful way that attracts the child and makes him or her psychologically healthy.
9. **Natural Instincts:** Children have natural motives that parents can utilize when raising them. These include playing, cooperation, imitation, etc. Through playing, children discover their surroundings and express their ideas and extent of awareness. We can take advantage of these instincts to clarify the true meanings of life and universe and establish values. This can be done through observation and taking advantage of situations. Noting and guiding children leave everlasting marks.
10. **Supplication:** last but not least, supplications prove that people need Allah and have hope in Him. Allah encourages people to ask Him and He promised to answer their call: "And your Lord says, "Call upon Me; I will respond to you." A parent can utilize supplications to raise children. It is the way used by the greatest mentors ever - Allah's prophets (peace be upon them) - to affirm monotheism: "And [mention, O Muhammad], when Abraham said, "My Lord, make this city [Makkah] secure and keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols." Therefore, praying for children illustrates benevolence.

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- 11. Acting:** Children love imitation. They should have a chance to perform the role of Imams by praying, reciting Quran, and giving sermons or lectures. This helps them appreciate the worthiness of these job positions.





# Important traits

## parents should embrace as they teach their children about faith



**1. Kindness:** raising children is not fruitful unless done with kindness. Al-Aqraa ibn Habis watched the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) kissing Al-Hasan and Al-Husain and said: **"I have ten children and I have never kissed anyone of them," Allah's messenger (peace be upon him) looked at him and said, "Whoever is not merciful to others will not be treated mercifully."** The prophet also said: **"The Compassionate has mercy on those who are merciful. If you show mercy to those who are on the earth, He who is in the heaven will show mercy to you."**

**2. Tolerance and Forgiveness:** our prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) is the most tolerant and forgiving man. Anas ibn Malik says: "I was walking with Allah's messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and he was wearing a garment from Najran with a thick cape. A Bedouin followed him and violently pulled his garment; I noticed the side of the shoulder of Allah's messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) hurt because of that violent pull. The Bedouin said, 'O Muhammad! Give me some of Allah's wealth which is with you.' Allah's messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) turned and looked at him, smiled and ordered that he be given something."

Forgiveness is also related to tolerance. Allah says: "Take what is given freely, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the ignorant." To become tolerant, the messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) warned against anger. In a narration, a man said to the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and asked for advice. The prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Do not become angry" The man asked (the same) again and again, and the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said in each case, "Do not become angry."

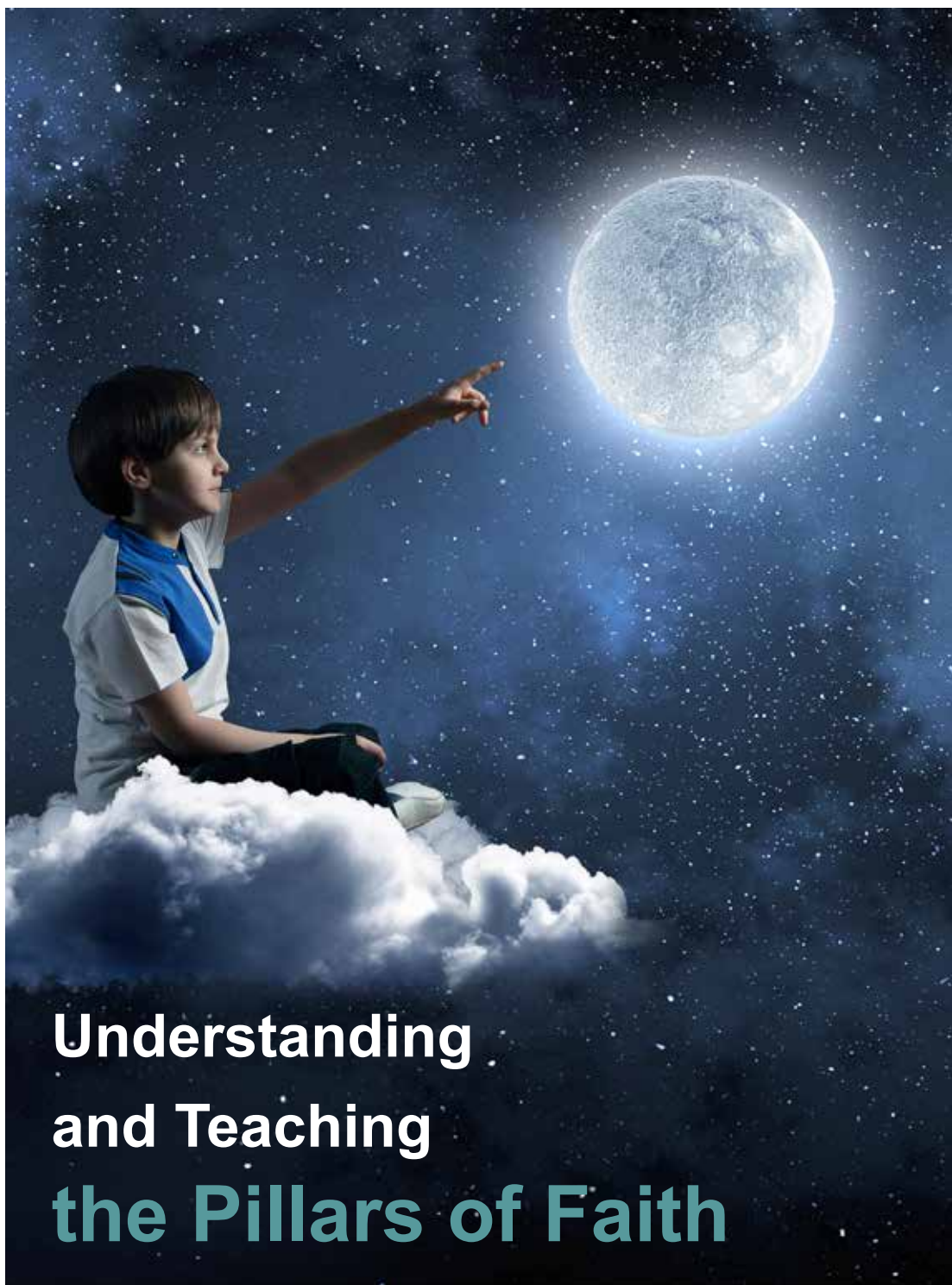


3. **Patience:** parents must be patient when raising or educating children. They should not rush the results to avoid disappointment. A parent without patience is like a traveler not equipped for travel.
4. **Justice:** parent must treat their children on equal basis. Treating children differently without valid reason hurts positive communication and harmony between children. Injustice is always a disgrace.
5. **Honesty:** parents must be truthful and honest when dealing with children. Honesty is a trait of Allah's messengers and it is a basic requirement for mastering any task and achieving goals.
6. **Piety:** Allah supports those who obey him in unexpected ways. Piety is the companion of success in life and in the Hereafter.
7. **Sincerity:** actions that are not for Allah's sake are not accepted and not rewarded. Insincere people gain nothing but lost effort.

- 8. Knowledge:** Unlike the ignorant, a knowledgeable person is more aware of the importance of present and the future. He or she is also more prone to making the right decisions.
- 9. Wisdom:** A parent who makes good judgments reaps the benefits of his judgment. Therefore, a parent endeavors to understand personalities and utilize his or her knowledge in guiding and raising children
- 10. Confidence:** Raising children is a psychological and spiritual effort. Only those who trust their capabilities will succeed.
- 11. Constant improvement:** parents take care of improving their abilities to be competent.







# Understanding and Teaching the Pillars of Faith



The

The First Pillar:

**Belief in Allah**

The Second Pillar:

**Belief in Angels**

The Third Pillar:

**Belief in Scripture**

The Fourth Pillar:

**Belief in the Messengers**

The Fifth Pillar:

**The Belief in the Hereafter**

The Sixth Pillar:

**Belief in Destiny**

## The First Pillar:

# Belief in Allah



Human instinct, cognitive abilities, and religions confirm Allah's existence. Every creature has an innate tendency to believe in his or her Creator. The thought process infers the presence of a Creator. All revealed religions confirm Allah's existence. Belief in Allah consists of four basics: the belief in His existence, the belief in His Lordship (i.e. that He is Allah, the Bestower, the Creator, and the Sustainer of everything), the belief in His oneness and worthiness of worship with no associates, and the belief in His perfect and beautiful Names and Traits. We must teach children these four basics so that they grow knowing Allah, glorifying Him, and loving Him. This pillar is the base for the rest of the pillars.

### Why Do We Teach Children to Love Allah the Almighty?

1. Because Allah created us in a perfect form, favored us over other creatures, and granted us Islam, the greatest blessing ever. Allah then provided us with favors without us deserving them and promised us Paradise: the reward that manifests His generosity.
2. Because love openly and privately leads to respect and reverence. Our children need to respect Allah instead of solely fearing His punishment or Hellfire. Love leads to devotion and delight in obeying Allah and avoiding sins.
3. Because Allah Almighty is the Ever-Living, the Self-Existent, the Eternal and the Ever-Lasting who never dies, sleeps, or doses off. Allah is with children (through His knowledge) everywhere we go, and He protects and takes care of them more than their parents. Thus, loving Him is essential. Children must know that Allah is their strongest supporter.

4. Because loving Allah leads to loving the Quran and prayers. Once children realize that Allah is Beautiful and loves beauty, they will do everything that is beautiful. Once they realize that Allah loves the patient, the purified, the benevolent, the generous, the confident, and the pious, they will do their best to please Him and win His support and protection. Once they realize that He does not like traitors, non-believers, offenders, arrogant, unjust and corrupt people, they will do their best to stay away from all these traits for His sake and satisfaction
5. Because loving Allah means feeling His presence which brings content, calm, and confident feelings and prevents anxiety and sadness. In addition, feeling the presence of Allah protects the soul and body from psychological and spiritual diseases, and – most of all - sins





## How to Teach Our Children to Love Allah the Almighty?

1. We should encourage children to observe nature because it is the only way to ingrain faith concepts in children. We must rely on children's senses to bring out their faith in their Creator and draw their attention to natural objects and phenomena (e.g. the sun, the rain, and the wind). Through observing nature, we should teach children that there is a Creator who controls this universe; we should urge children to ask and we should do our best in explaining belief to them by pointing out evidence of Allah's existence through analyzing nature and science. This includes the divine guidance to human creation. Allah says: "So let man observe from what he was created." and "And in yourselves. Then will you not see?". Also, we should encourage children to observe how Allah made food available and how He allowed plants grow. Allah says: "Then let mankind look at his food." In addition, we should highlight Allah's aptitude by observing his magnificent creatures. Allah says: "Then do they not look at the camels - how they are created?  And at the sky - how it is raised?  And at the mountains - how they are erected?  And at the earth - how it is spread out?" We can teach children these big concepts and their wonderful meanings that indicate the Creator's greatness - in different ages - using a variety of modern demonstrative and technological tools.
2. We should teach children Allah's beautiful names and traits that indicate His perfection and beauty. Allah Almighty is the Merciful; His mercy engulfs everything. He is the Pardoner who forgives sins. He is the Forgiver who conceals sins. He is the Generous who gives without asking. He is the Guider who guides His creatures to all that is beneficial. He is the Loving who loves and is beloved. Without doubt, knowing these traits help children love Allah.
3. We must refrain from warning children that Allah punishes children who disobey their parents. Disobeying parents is different from disobeying Allah. Linking the two prevents children from deeply thinking about Allah's ability and greatness. We should not depend on threats in raising children. Instead, we must teach children more about loving Allah and glorifying Him.

4. When children watch their parents perform prayer and other obligations or refrain from prohibitions, they usually ask for explanations. Parents should answer by highlighting the love of Allah and by obeying Him. That is how we raise children to love Allah by example. A child follows his parents. Mentioning heaven and Allah's reward of eternal bliss for His pious servants' ingrain love in the hearts of children.
5. When children begin to understand the meaning of obligations, they must be taught that love is an obligation because Allah the Almighty is the One who created, sustained, and favored us over His creations. He gifted us with Islam. We must teach children that all the blessings around us are from Allah. In addition, we should teach children to thank Allah for His blessings and ask Him for more.
6. Thus, as we can see, teaching children ways that help them love Allah and His messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) is inclusive of all forms of worship.



## The Second Pillar: Belief in Angels



Belief in angels consists of belief in the following: their existence, their names, narrations about them, and loving them.

1. That they are created from light. Aisha says: “The messenger (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said: (The Angels were born out of light and the Jinns were born out of the spark of fire and Adam was born as he has been defined (in the Quran) for you.)” It is sufficient to generally describe angels without details.
2. They have names and duties. For example, Jibreel is the chief of angels and the one who descended with the Quran. Mikael is responsible for directing rain. Israfeel is responsible for blowing the Horn. There are also the carriers of the Throne, the writers, the protectors, etc.
3. Their population is huge and that no one knows how many they are except Allah the Almighty and that they are creatures that obey Allah’s commands.
4. They are impeccable and that they constantly worship Allah and neither get tired, bored, nor arrogant. They love the believers, support them, pray for them, and protect them. They also look for and attend gatherings that invoking Allah.

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5. We should teach children to love the angels because they are noble creatures that care for the believers. Loving angels strengthens loyalty and affection towards noble creatures that glorify Allah, ask for His forgiveness, and pray for the believers. Angels also bring good news to the believers who take the path of faith and good deeds before entering Paradise. Angels pray for the believers and support them. Allah sends them to protect the believers. Allah says: “For each one are successive [angels] before and behind him who protect him by the decree of Allah.”
  6. We should also teach children that faith requires respecting the angels because they are honorable creatures. They never disobey Allah and they do everything Allah asks.
  7. We should also teach children about the things that bring the angels close to us (e.g. reading Quran, learning about Islam, etc.) and by refraining from things that distance them from us (e.g. lack of personal hygiene). Jaber ibn Abdillah narrates that the prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said: “He who eats of this (offensive) plant, garlic, (and one time he said: He who eats onion and garlic and leek) should not approach our masjid for the angels are harmed by what harms humans“.
  8. Teaching children to believe in the existence of angels has many benefits: it helps them realize the extent of Allah’s knowledge, greatness, capability and wisdom. It also helps them feel safe because they know that the angels protect and support them as Allah ordered them to do.
  9. Teaching children that our relationship with angels (weather through our understanding of them, or their watching over us) illustrates the importance of human beings. We are not irrelevant or worthless. This means that we should be up to the ultimate task we are created for.

## The Third Pillar:

# Belief in Scripture

### What does Teaching Children about Scriptures include?

1. We should teach them that they are revealed by Allah, that they are mercy for people, and that they provide legislations and rules that suit various nations. Parents should clarify to children that the scriptures are a blessing that teach us about Allah, the Hereafter, and good and evil.
2. We should teach them to believe in their names as mentioned in the Quran such as the Scriptures of Ibrahim (peace be upon him), the Torah of Moses (peace be upon him), the Psalms of David (peace be upon him), the Gospels of Jesus (peace be upon him), and the Quran of Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him).
3. We should teach them to believe that they support and not contradict one another. Allah says: "Confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture."



4. We should tell them about stories in them and explain that the previous ones have been altered by people, that they were temporary and specifically sent for certain nations, and that Allah did not guard them like the Quran.
5. Belief that the Qur'an supersedes all previous scriptures and that people are obliged to follow its commands until Judgment Day. People must obey its clear laws and not trespass the boundaries it sets.

We encourage children to memorize the Quran because memorizing the Quran improves children brainpower and enlightens the child's soul through its verses. The noble Quran invites us to think about the creation of the skies, Earth, humans, and our surroundings. It increases our faith and knowledge that accompany actions.

Memorizing and understanding the Quran improve intelligence. It also improves Arabic pronunciation and language skills. Furthermore, it nurtures religious emotions (e.g. fear, affection, submission) and gets children to practice its teachings on daily basis.

It teaches children the correct way of life and noble morals.

### How to Encourage Children to Memorize the Quran?

1. One of the most effective methods in encouraging chil-

dren to memorize the Quran, is to mention the virtues of memorizing it, reciting it, teaching it, and applying its teachings in daily life. The prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) says: "Read the Quran, as it will come as an intercessor for its companions on the Day of Resurrection." He also says: "It shall be said - to the one who memorized the Quran - 'Recite, and rise, recite as you would recite back



in life. For indeed your rank shall be at the last verse you recite.”, and says: “The example of a Believer who recites the Quran, is that of a citron which smells good and tastes good, and the example of a Believer who does not recite the Quran, is that of a date which has no smell but tastes sweet. The example of a hypocrite who recites the Quran, is that of an aromatic plant which smells good but tastes bitter, and the example of a hypocrite who does not recite the Quran, is that of a colocynth plant which has no smell and is bitter in taste.” In addition, he says: “The best among you (Muslims) are those who learn the Quran and teach it.”

2. We should also reward children for reading and memorizing Quran and attending classes that teach it .
3. We must simplify the process of memorizing the Quran and make it likable by starting off with short surahs. Children should start with the last part (Juz' Amma). This has short and rhymed chapters, which makes it easier to memorize. These chapters also mention the pillars of faith and reinforce creed and discipline. The Quran provides health and security because the noble Quran is a reminder and a medica-





tion. In addition, it strengthens children's language skills

4. We must briefly explain the meanings of the Surah's children recite and memorize. These meanings open children's minds and hearts. We should not underestimate the importance of explaining the meanings of the Quran to children; children have amazing skills in memorizing and understanding the Quran.
5. We should teach children that the Quran is an antidote, a mercy, and a blessing from Allah. Allah says: "And We send down of the Quran that which is healing and mercy for the believers." Whoever memorizes it, or part of it, can treat himself and anyone sick.



## The Fourth Pillar: Belief in the Messengers



This pillar includes that Allah has chosen them for specific nations and that they are morally and mentally fit to deliver His message. Allah says: “And We did not send any messenger except [speaking] in the language of his people to state clearly for them.” The following are some of the points concerning belief in the messengers that need to be taught to children:

1. That Allah the Almighty sent a messenger to every nation calling them to worship Allah alone and to disbelieve in anything else .

They are all trustworthy, righteous, wise, pious, and honest.

2. The message - from the first messenger to the last one - highlights monotheism, meaning that all worships are directed to Allah Almighty alone (including creeds, words, and actions). No one is to be worshiped other than Him.

3. That there is divine wisdom in sending messengers to His creatures: to worship Allah Alone (monotheism), to guide mankind to the right path, to teach people the aspects of religion and life, to take them out of the darkness into light, to lead the nations and apply Allah's law, and to lead by example.



4. That Allah sent the messengers to guide mankind to His path because He is merciful and He cares for us. This means we should thank Him for this great blessing and love the messengers and prophets because they delivered His message and advised us. No matter how aware and intelligent we are, we cannot successfully reform a whole nation to achieve cohesion, equality, and justice. The messengers taught people what benefits them and warned against what harms them.

5. That we must love and obey Allah's last messenger, Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), and not love any other one more than him. We must also love those who loved and supported the messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and to distance ourselves from those who opposed him. We must also honor him and say "peace and blessings upon him" whenever mentioned and appreciate his qualities and virtues because he was very merciful and compassionate. In addition, those who have been honored by visiting his mosque and standing at his grave must respect him by lowering their voices at his grave (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and his mosque.

## How to Teach Children to Love the prophets (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon them). especially the last prophet:

1. We must assure children that Allah the Almighty loves His prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and has chosen him over everyone else. He Almighty ordered us to love him (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). We must teach children that loving the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) is a sign of loving Allah the Almighty; whoever loves the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) truly loves Allah.
2. Remind children that the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) is a mercy to the worlds. He guided us by delivering this religion. He will be a mercy to the believers and will intercede on behalf of them -with Allah's permission on the Day of Resurrection
3. Encourage children to read chapters of the prophet's noble biography. This biography teaches children that the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) is the example and role model to everyone. We must mention his Allah-given miracles (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), his great morals, his support for the oppressed, his sympathy for the poor, his care of the orphans, and his compassion for the weak. In doing all of this, we should use a language that fit their age and suit their mental stage. We must diversify our tools to meet children's needs and requirements for growth and to take into consideration the nature of individual differences and environmental conditions.
4. Children must observe their parents and surrounding environment honoring the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), his Sunnah, and his words by following him (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and praying for him (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) whenever mentioned. Parents behavior is one of the most effective ways of influence (i.e. a father performs certain acts of worship and informs his children that this is what the messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) used to

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do. Raising children by example has the greatest effect on positive development and faith education; the messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) is the example and role model that educators must follow and apply in everyday life with their children.

5. Children should memorize some of the authentic narrations that indicate the perfection of Islam that the prophet brought, the great qualities of the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), and the virtue of his companions. The narrations (Hadith) have a great impact on faith, behavior, and self-improvement. We can arrange competitions in short narrations with clear meanings that include some of the important morals and motivate children with rewards

6. Parents should mention the narrations of the companions dealing with the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and how they used to honor him, especially the companions of young age, such as the story of Anas' endeavor to follow him (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). When a tailor invited Allah's messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) to a meal which he had prepared. Anas says: "I went with Allah's messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) to that meal, and the tailor served the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) barley bread and soup of squash and meat. I saw Allah's messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) picking the pieces of squash from around the dish, and since then I have kept on liking squash." The parent should take care of demonstrating how his companions (may Allah be pleased with them) loved him and sacrificed for him and keep telling related stories.

7. There are fruits to loving the prophet. Anas's narration that a man asked the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) about the Hour (the Day of Resurrection) saying: "When will the Hour be?" The prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "What have you prepared for it?", the man said: "Nothing, except that I love Allah and His messenger." The prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "You will be with those whom you

love.” Anas says: “We had never been so glad as we were hearing that saying of the prophet (“You will be with those whom you love.”) Therefore, I love the prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him), Abu Bakr and `Umar, and I hope that I will be with them because of my love for them though my deeds are not like theirs«.

8. We should help children love the prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) through creative methods such as poetry, stories, speeches, and articles. We should encourage contests in the topic of ‘loving the prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him).



## The Fifth Pillar:

# The Belief in the Hereafter

Belief in the Hereafter includes belief in death, resurrection, judgment, reward and punishment, walking the straight path, weighing deeds, Paradise, and Hellfire. During Middle childhood, children begin to clearly recognize concepts about the Hereafter; prior to this, it is better to keep that talk brief and concise. We should only explain that there is another life and that Allah has created Paradise for the believers and Hellfire for disbelievers.

### Children should be taught the following about the Hereafter:

1. Allah will revive everyone from death on the Day of Resurrection so that they will be judged for their actions in life. People will be either rewarded or punished for their doings.
2. Allah created Paradise (i.e. the house of blessing, happiness, and eternity) to reward his faithful believers. He also created Hellfire for non-believers. We should strive to achieve Paradise's and what Allah prepared in it for the believers
3. We should delicately talk to children about death and the Hereafter and highlight Allah's mercy and forgiveness so that disturbing thoughts don't haunt them
4. Allah is not unjust to anyone. He will punish the wrong doers and will compensate the oppressed and reward the good doers. Tyrants will be held accountable for their actions in the Hereafter. Each person will get what he or she deserves

## The Sixth Pillar:

# Belief in Destiny



Belief in destiny includes belief in Allah's perfect knowledge, decree, capabilities, creation, and will. Prior to nine, children cannot understand destiny and discussion on it should be delayed until later stage

However, certain aspects can be taught during that time:

1. First and foremost, we should teach children to trust in Allah: This aspect is easy to grasp and the prophet has exemplified it when he gave advice to Abdullah ibn Abbas, who was a child at the time. Ibn Abbas said: "One day I was behind the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and he said: (O young man, I shall teach you some words: Be mindful of Allah and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, then ask Allah; and if you seek help, then seek help from Allah. And know that if the nation were to gather together to benefit you with anything, they would not benefit you except with what Allah had already decreed for you. And if they were to gather together to harm you with anything, they would not harm you except with what Allah had already decreed against you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried." In another narration: "Be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him in front of you. Recognize and acknowledge Allah in times of ease and prosperity, and He will remember you in times of adversity. And know that what has missed you [and you have failed to attain] was not going to befall you, and what has befallen you was not going to miss you. And know that victory comes with patience, relief comes with affliction, and hardship comes with ease".

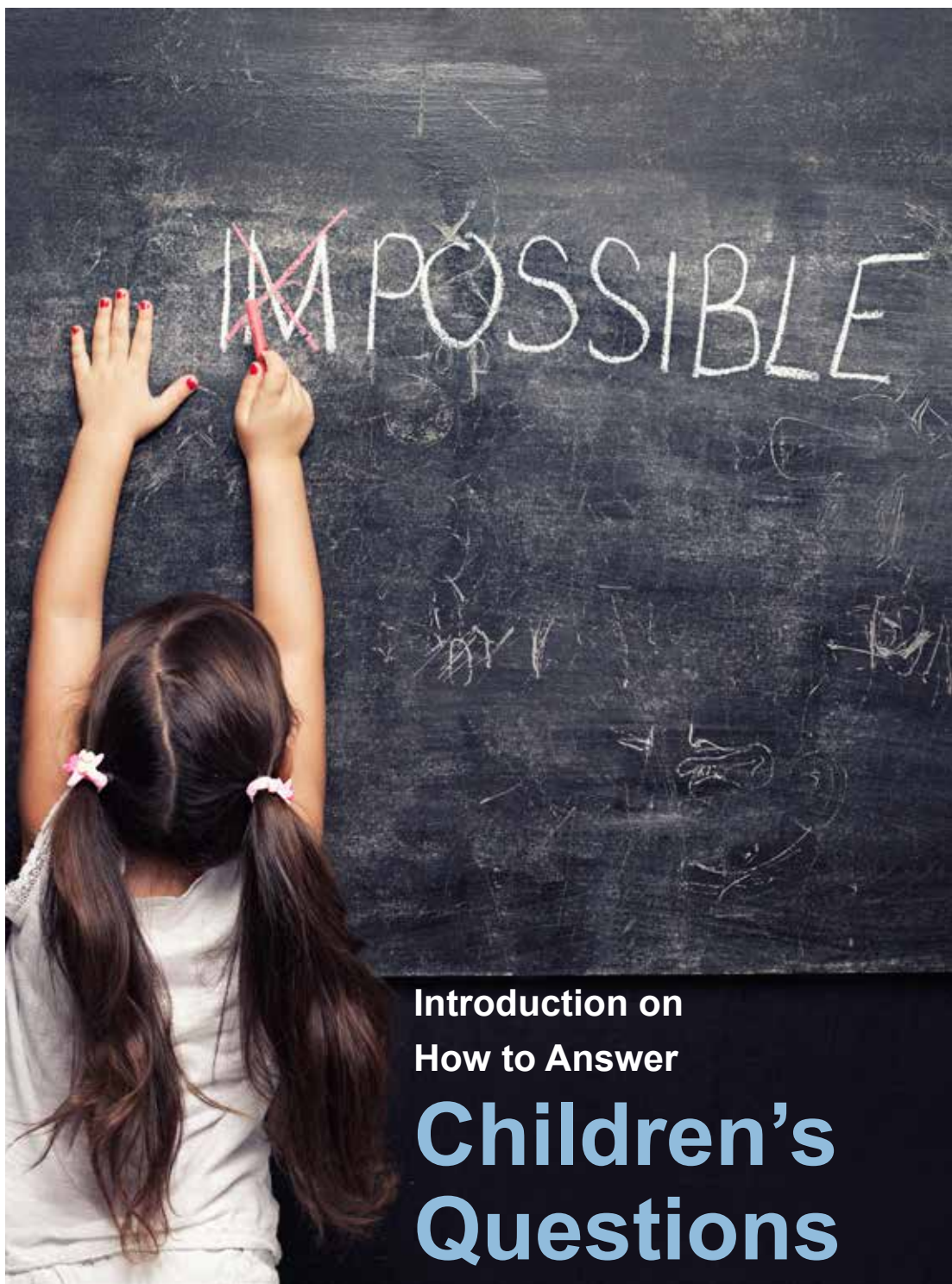
2. Parents should avoid discussing destiny with their children at this stage. However, they can explain the extent of Allah's knowledge of pre-destiny, His capabilities, and His omnipresence that does not negate people's freedom of choice and the consequences of that choice. Yet, if the issue of destiny preoccupies a child's mind, the mentor should clarify it in a simple and conceivable manner.
3. Teach children to seek help only from Allah. Prayers must be directed to Allah only. We must trust and depend on Him. We must also be patient with whatever he decrees.
4. That Allah decrees whatever is good. Therefore, one must not be depressed or weak when bad things happen. Instead, one must be content with Allah's decree, even if it is difficult. One must be sure that: "We will never be struck with calamity except by what Allah has decreed for us".
5. That everything is in Allah's hands; He does whatever He wants because He has absolute control over His dominion. This leads to strengthening the children's connection to Allah and directing their prayers and hopes towards Him.





6. Belief in destiny brings stability and peace. Once a believer realizes that everything that happens to him or her - whether good or bad - is good and that absolute evil does not exist, he or she will be relieved and content. Believers in destiny face their problems, concerns, and worries with a welcoming heart and adjust accordingly. Whoever believes in destiny does not panic during calamities; Believers in destiny surrender to Allah's Will, hoping to be rewarded by Allah; they remind themselves at the first shock of Allah's promise of reward: "And give good tidings to the patient  Who, when disaster strikes them, say, "Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return".  Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is those who are the [rightly] guided".
7. We should utilize stories of people who returned to Allah when hit by distress and later realized the goodness in what Allah had decreed as their lives changed for the better.
8. That Allah has unlimited knowledge about the past, present and future: Allah is omnipresent but he does not prevent people from their freedom of choice and the consequences of that choice. Belief in destiny is summarized in believing that Allah knows everything in detail and that He has written in the Slate all that is predestined for everyone until the Day of Resurrection.





Introduction on  
How to Answer

# Children's Questions



## After

After all, Allah created Children to learn through asking questions. Conversations during childhood are mostly questions. Children feel that they know nothing about their surroundings. Because ignorance generates fear, children rush to learn about things as much as they could. Three year old children ask their parents and siblings tens of questions. The answers, without doubt, affect them and shift them from a state to another, which is seen through their continuous shift from one topic to another during conversation. Children can always be heard asking: “What?” “Where is that?” “How did that happen?” “Where did that come from?” “What is it?” “Do you know?” etc. Children want to know everything that interest them. They want to understand the things that they see and hear about even though they might not listen to or comprehend answers

Children are curious. Their curiosity increases according to their environment and present opportunities. That's why we are overwhelmed by their questions that are more intense than ours when we were children. Times have changed and our surroundings and science have progressed. Undoubtedly, the parent's educational methodology affects the extent of children's questions. A parent who gives the opportunity and happily accepts children's questions delves deeper in their souls. Conversely, parents who do not accept questions, will not have intrigued children. It is true that children should not know everything; yet, it is important that children do not shy from asking questions that affect their lives. Children should not feel insignificant or untrusted. More importantly, children must feel comfortable talking to their parents.

## Reasons Why Children Ask so Many Questions

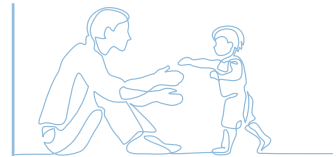


**The reason why children ask so many questions can be listed in the following points:**

1. Their desire to explore and discover in order to satisfy the needs of their mental growth.
2. Their need to understand their surroundings.
3. Their concerns or fears due to their lack of previous experience. For example: children are scared of animals even if they are harmless. Children ask questions to feel safe
4. The development of their language. When children ask questions, they practice language and demonstrate language capabilities and social participation rather than search for answers

5. The opportunity for communication and emotional connection with parents
6. Developing confidence in parents and his self-esteem

## Nature of Children's Questions



In order to understand children's questions, we must distinguish between intellectual, linguistic, and psychological questions. In the first type of questions, the motif is to learn or talk about interests. In the second type, the motif is psychological relief, not answers. After all, questions are determined by context. We cannot determine the importance of the question, understand it, or define its meaning without understanding the specific situation that inspired the child to ask. Questions have no value in themselves; their value is derived from the situation itself and the surrounding circumstances.

Children's questions serve three structural functions; which are:

1. Psychological stability: Many children's questions are based upon a psychological inspiration.
2. Deductive thinking: Children obtain knowledge through available information built through connections
3. Knowledge about surrounding environment and essential life matters that include: moral and behavioral values within the cultural and social environment.

## Types of Questions in Children



It is important to classify children's questions because answers vary according to their types. Questions are classified as follows.

1. **Language questions:** for example: "Why are things named?", "Why don't names change?," and "Why don't we invent a new language?"
2. **Existential questions:** For example: "Where did we come from?," "Where will we go?," "How do children come?," "What does death mean?," and "What about the universe?" etc.
3. **Rebellious questions:** these questions are centered around "Why aren't children allowed to do what grown-ups do?" They are attempts to imitate adults rather than mere questions.
4. **Test questions:** these questions test the parents' limits and criticize perceived weaknesses. They usually come in the form of comparison with other parents and focus on the financial and physical capabilities
5. **Concern questions:** these questions reflect anxiety. The most com-

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mon anxiety questions are about the absence or desertion of a parent.

- 6. Questions about the body:** these questions are about the body gender difference.

This classification can help parents understand the background of questions posed by children. Children do not ask for the sake of asking; they ask to understand

### Why Do Parents Ignore Children's Questions?

Ignoring questions or showing irritability is not only a result of lacking answers or understanding the psychological and educational function of questions, but also a result of other reasons such as:

- 1.** Adults feel that the questions are awkward or unimportant which results in dismissing them. Adults fall in the trap of ignoring children's rights of individual simple and clear thinking as a result of a false feeling of authority that dismisses the child's right to throw simple questions that reflect sincere desire for knowledge , discovery, and psychological stability
- 2.** Adults feel that some questions are difficult because they are related to social, cultural, or moral taboos that can only be discussed at a specific age. The difficulty and awkwardness of questions are discomfoting to adults. Thus, adults should be prepared to answer these questions in a suitable manner
- 3.** Sometimes, the amount and progression of questions forces adults to neglect these questions. This would not have happened have adults realized the psychological importance children's questions. Instead, adults would have supported the child and encouraged him or her to think out loud and ask more.
- 4.** Sometimes, parents ignore questions because they are vague or indirect



5. Parents may avoid answering questions because they do not know the underlying motif of the question. However, adults should provide honest and sincere answers
6. Parents ignore children's questions because they feel that they require objective answers because of the child's limited mental abilities. At this point, parents wonder how the child thought of the question rather than answer it



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## How Should Parents Deal with Children's Questions about Faith?

Parents should provide the right answers for their children's questions. They should also find ways to discuss their concerns about faith. They must encourage them talk about their ideas about religion so that they would be content and confident and so that they can comprehend religious balance away from prejudice. Parents do not need to know all the right answers for their children's questions; however, they must teach them the six pillars of faith so that they grow with a strong belief in Allah. It is beautiful idea to assign older siblings to write down the questions of their younger siblings; older siblings would welcome that task if they found care and support. They will also have fun because we are teaching older children appreciating questioning, which will encourage them to ask themselves. This will also teach children how to respect the question of their future children when they become parents. In addition, parents will collect questions and have answers for their future brothers and sisters as well. Answering questions makes children happy and improves relationships - Allah permitting. Instead of suspicious sources, parents become the first trusted source of information during the coming years, especially during teenage.

Parents should differentiate between two kinds of faith questions: urgent repeated questions presented to multiple members in the family that may produce other questions and casual questions that can be avoided by directing attention to other topics. It is not wise to ignore the first type of questions. We must try our best to answer the first type of questions or look for someone who can because these questions have an important educational dimension. Casual questions, however, do not need answers especially if the answers are beyond the child's comprehension. Furthermore, When Answering Questions, parents should uphold the basics

## When Answering Questions, parents should uphold the basics



There are principles parents should commit to while answering questions. These include:

1. **Respect:** parents taking question should make their child feel that they share him or her concerns. Respecting these concerns establishes psychological balance, calmness, self-confidence, focus, and logical cohesion. Parents should also ensure that older siblings do not mock their younger sibling. In case this happens, parents must take a stand, praise the child's courage and emphasize the importance in asking by reminding everyone of what Allah said: "And mankind have not been given of knowledge except a little"
2. **Trust and Honesty:** parents should be precise in their answers. They should use simple language that is easy to understand and simplify scientific information. Honest answers result in stability, confidence, and psychological security
3. **Addressing the Motives of Asking a Question:** motifs rise from surroundings. For example, children get worried and disturbed after the birth of a new baby in the family. A child may ask: "Where do children come from?" We should not answer this question scientifically; we rather need to address the question's real motifs.

The best thing parents can give children is helping them enlighten their minds not through stories, tales, and true knowledge only, but also through meditation, suggestions, questioning, and thinking outside the box. Interaction, positive discussion, purposeful conversation, and opinions exchange are crucial. Parents must also ask questions that inspire thinking in children.

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We can use the answers of children's question in a more open way. If the question is normal and not deep or sensitive, parents may ask their child or encourage him or her to bring up the question in a family meeting. Then, they should encourage everyone to join the discussion because:



## Education Through Conversation



**Conversation between children and their parents benefits the family in many ways:** it gets children closer to the rest of the family, it increases harmony and love between members of the family, and it nurtures a friendly atmosphere that goes beyond discussing topics.

From this, we can summarize that education by conversation bring the following:

1. It gives children the freedom to independently think and reach facts. This inspires their creativity and develops their personality
2. It is simple and without formalities. It is engaging, relaxing, and not embarrassing
3. It brings happiness and self-confidence to children. It also teaches them to listen to others
4. It provides an opportunity for searching and logical and independent thinking. It also allows children to think from different points of view
5. It raises children's level of attention and interaction. Conversely, it prevents lack of attention and weariness.

# Phrases for Conversation Questions



During conversation, children can be asked using many phrases:

**What happens?,"** this phrase encourages children to look at their surroundings. It helps them directly describe their observations

**What do you want?,"** this phrase helps children state their needs

**How do you do that?,"** this phrase helps children think freely and inspires their imagination to search for answers

**Why does this happen?,"** this phrase helps children search for causes for certain issues and analyze connections between them

**(What would we do if such-and- happened?),** this phrase helps children re-examine things from different perspectives.



## Ways to Answer Children's Questions



We mentioned earlier the kinds and forms of questions. Here, we will talk about ways of answering questions that vary according to time, place, and condition. The most common ways are:

1. **Direct Verbal Answers** are the most common way of answering questions: A child asks a question and parents provide a verbal, quick, and brief answer
2. **Short Story Answers** are indirect answers. Stories should suit the nature of the question. Usually, children enjoy story answers and listen to them attentively
3. **Visual Answers** are answers with colorful and attractive illustrations (e.g. scientific illustrations) in which images are main source of information
4. **Observation answers** are answers in which children are required to observe and reach conclusions (e.g. questions about animals, their livelihood, and reproduction).





## General Instructions to Consider When Answering Children



When answering questions, there are a set of dos and don'ts that we should pay attention to

1. Discuss answers with children. When done, ensure that the child is convinced by the answer.

Remember: fruitful answers are short, clear and specific, suitable for children's age, time, location, and conditions they live in, and they do not focus on right and wrong; they rather inspire children and widen their horizons and imagination

2. Be honest. Take care not to provide wrong information at any cost. The accuracy of your answers is the cornerstone to earn your child's trust.

3. Simplify your answer so that it is understandable and suitable. Whatever information you provide will stick in the child's mind 1-

Avoid ambiguity and confusion.

Avoid incomplete information under the pretense that the child is young and does not understand..

4. Do not underestimate your child's cognitive abilities; Children can understand when the right method is used.

5. Do not blame, mock, or scold your child for asking questions. Make your child notices that you are ready to answer all his or her questions. Mockery makes the child feel small, unconfident. It also discourages exploration.

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6. Do not worry if questions about Allah reflect inability to imagine His existence. Do not escape answering these questions because the child will look for answers elsewhere.
  7. Do not hesitate to ask for help finding the right answer. To come off as a seeker of knowledge is better than coming off as an arrogant who claims to know what to expect. It is not shameful to ask your child to wait until you find the right answer
  8. Answer questions directly without distortion.
  9. When busy, calmly explain to your child that the time is not suitable for you to answer questions. Respond to the question when free.
  10. Avoid unnecessary detailed explanations. Answering questions of a six year old should be shorter than answering those of a ten year old, and so on. This includes questions that need abundant details and evidence (e.g. metaphysical or embarrassing questions). Other answers are limited and given to all age levels.
  11. Link answers, as much as possible, to elements children conceive. Avoid abstract concepts that confuse children.
  12. Both parents should align their answers. Opinions should be the same when guiding providing information for children
  13. Do not answer a question with a question. When a parent responds asking: "What do you mean?," the child feels frustrated for failing to deliver the question. Children believe that parents should understand without further explanation. If parents want to confirm they understood the point, they should use an affirming statement like: "You mean."....
  14. Avoid dictation; instead, Parents must not be radical in expressing their opinions. If a child gets an answer from a different source, they should respond with the correct answer in a simple, convincing, and easy way that regains the trust in them rather than others.

15. Do not lecture; Instead: discuss. Provide examples, tell stories, and utilize audio-visual and scientific material, dynamic games, imitation, drawing, meditation, songs, brainstorming, mind games, wall craft, etc. to deliver answers. Variety improves children's intelligence and broadens their knowledge.
16. Some questions should be answered gradually. The more a child demands, the more answers you provide depending on age, type of question, and extent of awareness.
17. When children mature, ask for their opinion on what they are inquiring and observe their reaction before answering them. Then answer according to their response. Children do not and should not think the way we think because they have a different mindset.



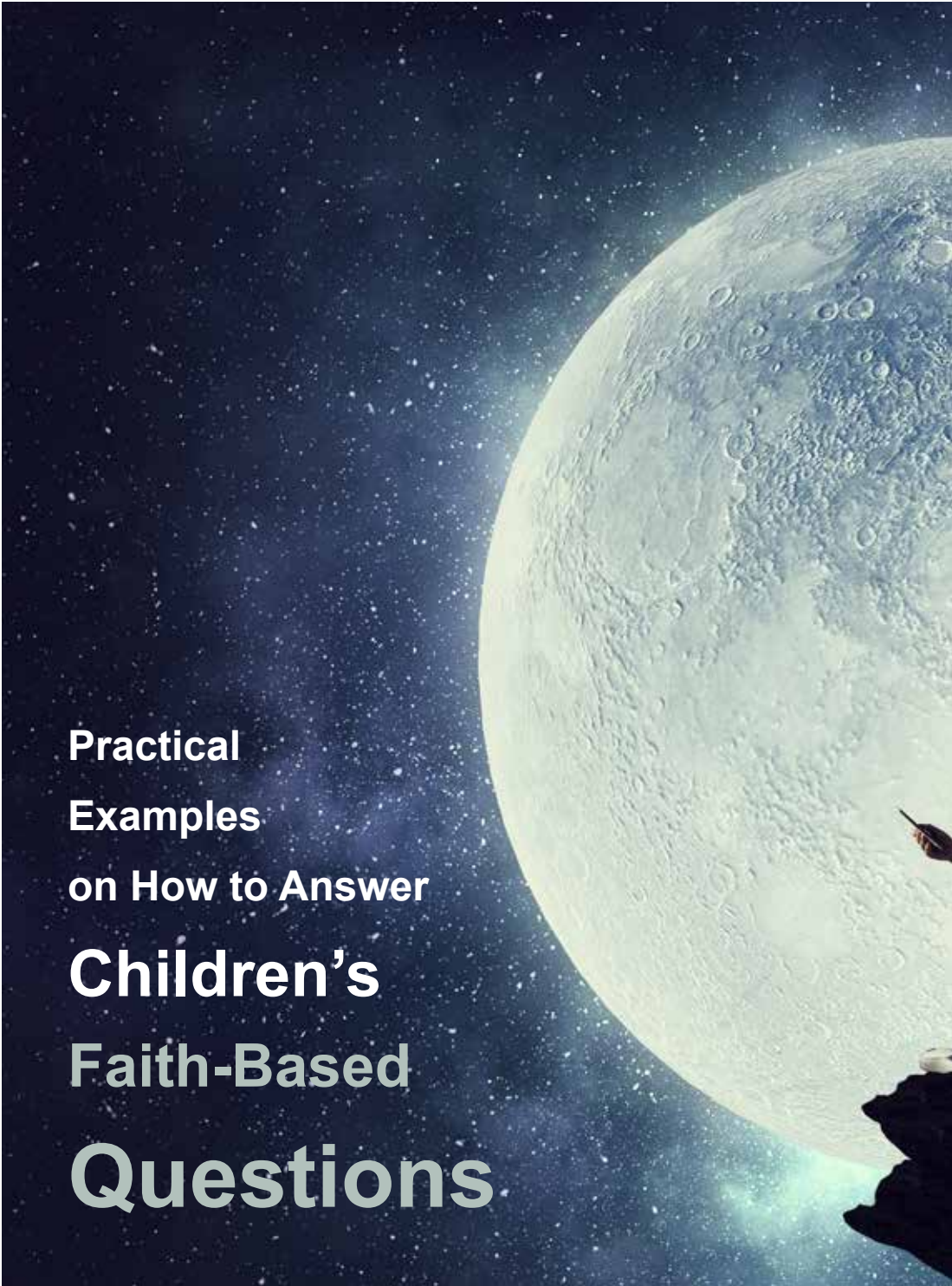
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# Mistakes Committed While Answering Children's Questions



**Some of the most serious mistakes that are committed when answering our children include:**

Not taking into consideration the different behavioral aspects.



**Practical  
Examples  
on How to Answer  
Children's  
Faith-Based  
Questions**



## The

The following answers are primarily directed to parents - as well as teachers, mentors and others - who are requested to provide answers fit to their child's age level and cognitive ability. There is no answer that fits all age levels and cognitive abilities. Therefore, **what concerns us is the content and practicality of the answer rather than the exact words used to deliver it.**

## Faith-Based Questions on Allah



### Faith-Based Questions on Allah

The most frequent questions children wonder about at a young age revolve around Allah. Here are some of the children's most asked questions:

#### ? Who Is Allah?

First, we should not wait until the child asks about Allah; we should rather initiate discussion about Allah whenever possible. The correct answer to children's question about Allah and His Traits establish Monotheism in children's minds and hearts early. The best way to teach children about Allah is to direct their minds from thinking about the nature of Allah to thinking about His signs and wonders of creation that illustrate His greatness (e.g. the sky, the clouds, the stars, the sun, the moon, the sea, the trees, etc.). Therefore, when a child asks: "who's Allah?!", we should simply respond that and provide examples for this. Children will then know Allah through evidence. In order to draw children's attention to the sky and the vast land with mysterious and intricate system, we should ask them: "You see this system? The creator and organizer of its laws is Allah the Almighty." Teaching children the short chapters at the end of the Quran is useful because they contain the best information about Allah's and His Traits. He is Allah who "Neither begets nor is born, nor is there to Him any equivalent".



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Answer (to children 4-10)

Allah is our Creator and Sustainer. He is the One who created everything and everyone around us. He created us including our organs (e.g. eyes, ears, mouth, tongue, hands, feet, and our whole body). He created the sky, land and all the trees. Allah is the One who created everything, and nothing is like Him. He is the Most Merciful, the Sustainer, and the Generous. He has Names and Traits that are all beautiful. That is why He - Alone - without any companions - deserves devotion. He commands adults to take care of children, help them and provide for them and for everyone. He notices, rewards, and punishes us for good and bad deeds, respectively. He is the One who rewards the generous for their generosity and punishes the offenders for their offence. As a result, we thank Allah for His blessing by worshipping Him and doing good things. He created the trees, the rivers, the seas, and everything in this life; He is the source of power. Whenever He wants something, He just says "be" and it becomes.

Possible conversation model:

" -Who bought you those beautiful clothes"?

" -Dad"

" -Who takes you to school"?

" -Dad"

" -When you get sick, who takes you to the doctor"?

" -Dad"

" -Who takes you out for a picnic"?

" -Dad"

" -So, your father takes care of all your stuff"?

" -Yes"



"Likewise, Allah bestows mercy upon us; He is the One who takes care of all of us. Allah is the Creator of everything. Everything you see is Allah's creation: the sun, the moon, the clouds, the seas, the mountains, humans, animals, birds, angels, and jinn. Allah is the Creator of the whole universe; He is Generous and Merciful. He takes care of us and always provides us with abundance



How does Allah look like? How Come Nothing is Like Him?

In order to answer this question, we must draw the child's attention to our limited abilities to conceptualize things and fully understand everything. The rationale here is that we cannot conceptualize all of Allah's creation. If we cannot conceptualize all of Allah's creation, then ultimately we cannot conceptualize Him. This answer might disappoint the child. However, we can ensure him or her that we will eventually see Allah when we meet Him in the Hereafter. Furthermore, we should explain to the child that Allah did say something about Himself in the Quran. Therefore, we do know a little bit about Him but we should not Fantasize about His appearance. Only religion and the Quran can tell us about Allah. The Quran says: "There is nothing like Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing." Accordingly, Allah is not like us or anything else. This indicates the greatness of Allah who we should love, hope for, and fear. We know that Allah is great through his creation (e.g. Heaven) and we will see him in Heaven.

Answer

We do not know. There is nothing like Allah. He is the One who created me, you, and everyone. Allah is different from man. Man cannot create man, while Allah can; He can do anything He wants. And since nobody can see Allah in this life, then nobody can describe how he looks like. We cannot see Him in His full beauty and grace because our abilities are limited. No matter how far our minds grow and understand, they are still limited to know only what Allah allows them to know and nothing else. It

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is impossible to know everything because we are humans. If Allah was a human like us, He would get sick like us, eat and drink like us, and die like us. However, Allah does not get sick, he does not eat, drink, or die. He always exists. He is the Creator of the skies

Our hearing is limited; we can only hear from a certain distance. If we hear everything, we would become exhausted. Our vision is limited, too. We can only see to a certain distance. We cannot see what is behind a wall, for example. Our mind is limited just like our hearing and sight; it cannot conceive everything. The human mind is limited and cannot understand everything. From the day Allah created humanity until now, what we do not know is more than what we know. The human soul - for example - is so close to us, yet we cannot conceive it. If we cannot conceive what is inside us, how can we know what is outside us? Accordingly, if our mind is limited, it cannot understand Allah's form.

Possible Model Conversation (age 8-10):

We can (theoretically) ask a child to stare at the sun without blinking and ask: "Can you keep staring at the sun"?

" -No"

" -Same thing for Allah, We cannot stand the light that radiates from Allah's veil. But when we go to heaven, we will see Him - may Allah permit



### Who Created Allah?

Here we should note the prophetic advice: Seeking refuge in Allah and subtly directing the child's thoughts towards another issue so the he or she does not carry on with these questions is the key here. We redirect the child's thought away not because we lack an answer. We rather do it to eliminate suspicion.

Answer:

No one. Allah is the creator of everything. That is why we worship Him alone. We do not worship anything that is created. Allah is not created; the process of creation applies only for the creature. No one can ever bring Allah from nonexistence. Otherwise, He would be a creature, too. Allah has neither a beginning nor an end. If we assumed that there is a creator of Allah the Almighty, the same question remains unanswered: “Who created the creator of the creator?” Then, “Who created the creator of the creator of the creator?” and so on. Abu Huraira narrates that the prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said: “Satan comes to one of you and says, ‘Who created so-and-so?’ ‘till he says, ‘Who has created your Lord?’ So, when he inspires such a question, one should seek refuge with Allah and give up such thoughts“.

Possible scenario (for 10 years old)

If someone asked you about the length of the fourth side of a triangle... you will not have an answer because the triangle only has three sides.

Another scenario:

Let us take the ‘soldier and bullet’ example. A soldier wants to fire a gun,



but in order to do so, he must take permission from the soldier behind him. That soldier - in order to give permission - must take permission from the soldier behind him... and like that to a no-end. The question is: "Will the first soldier ever fire the gun.?"

"No, because no one can reach the soldier who can give the order to fire.

Exactly ! The soldier can only fire the gun if there is a last soldier who can give orders without consulting with the one behind. Without that soldier, no matter how many soldiers there are, the gun will never fire. All other soldiers are like zeros; they are beside each other but no matter how many they are - even if they are infinite - they will always be nothing except if we put before them a number: 1 or more.



### Where Did Allah Come From? How Old Is He? Who was there before Allah?

The answer to these types of questions requires explaining the idea that time and space are creations of Allah. Allah created everything and by everything we mean everything, whether physical, mental, or conceptual. If we get children to understand that, then answering these questions can become easy. Here we should note the prophetic advice: Seeking refuge in Allah and subtly directing the child's thoughts towards another issue so the he or she does not carry on with these questions is the key here. We redirect the child's thought away not because we lack an answer. We rather do it to eliminate suspicion. Furthermore, like the question about creation, we should note the prophetic advice: Seeking refuge in Allah and subtly directing the child's thoughts towards another issue so the he or she does not carry on with these questions is the key here. We redirect the child's thought away not because we lack an answer. We rather do it to eliminate suspicion.

*Answer:*

Since Allah was not created and that He neither begets nor was born, then He has no beginning or an end. He does not have an age like hu-

mans, because He is the Creator. Allah Almighty is the First ever. Nothing is before him and He is the Last. Nothing is after Him. He said: "He is the First and the Last, the Ascendant and the Intimate, and He is, of all things, Knowing." Time is like space; it does not limit Allah. Time is one of Allah's creations; creatures cannot limit or contain their creator. Allah owns all the traits of perfection and beauty."

### Is Allah Male or Female?

Similar to the question about how Allah looks like, we should briefly answer this question and shift the child's thoughts away from thinking too much about Allah's appearance. Here, we better clarify to the child that gender is a necessity to differentiate between types of creatures and that Allah has actually the creator of creatures.

*Answer:*

Allah is not male or female. He is the creator of these two concepts. He said: "And that He created the two mates - the male and female." Allah the Almighty is above classification. In fact, there are other creatures that are not under such classification (e.g. the angels). Even the sky, clouds, air, and water are not male or female. Therefore, if some creatures do not fall within gender classification, then Allah primarily does not, too: "There is nothing like Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing."

### How do we know that Allah Exists?

Belief in Allah is an undeniable human instinct and evidence of Allah's existence is plenty. Every day, people in every field discover evidence of Allah's existence. The nature in human soul proves Allah's existence; Allah says: "The innate nature (fitrah) of Allah upon which He has created all people" - (Quran 30:30). Every single one of us has an inner voice that tells him about Allah's greatness, power, and care. Key to the answer to this question is to illustrate the complexity of this world and its system.

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## *Answer*

There are two types of evidence that proof Allah's existence: Logical and tangible. As we can see. This world is very intricate. Either it happened by chance, created itself, or it is created by a Creator. The first two options are impossible; therefore, only the third one possible and the Creator is Allah. In the Quran, Allah says: "Were they created by nothing, or were they the creators [of themselves]? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Rather, they are not certain". He has control over the sky and Earth; Allah says: "Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding." In addition, Allah perfected human creation; He says: "And in yourselves. Don't you see?" He also created the stars, mountains, animals, etc. All these point to the Creator's mastery. Signs of Allah's existence are spread across the World. Moreover, Creatures have a purpose: they all worship Allah who has no associate, whatsoever.

### *Possible Scenario for a logical evidence (age 9-12)*

Abu Haneefa was once asked to prove Allah's existence.

- He replied: "First, tell me about a ship from Degla that sails - to carry food and goods - by itself, returns by itself, docks by itself, empties itself by itself, and does the same thing all over again by itself."

- "That is impossible!", people said.

- Abu Haneefa replied, "If it is impossible for a ship to do this, then how can the world function on its own?!"

It is impossible that a perfect world happens without an All-Capable, All-Knowing Creator.

### *Another Scenario for tangible evidence (age 9-12)*

A parent can also ask the child: when you get hungry, you automatically look for food to satisfy your hunger. When you get thirsty, you look for something to quench your thirst; when you smell something beautiful, you

feel happy and the opposite happens when you smell something foul. When you look at the flowers, the roses, the sky, and the nature around you feel ecstatic. Similarly, we feel the need for Allah for refuge to feel safe and calm. When we feel sad and depressed, we return immediately to Allah and call Him and when we feel happy, we praise Him and thank Him.

### **?** Does Allah Hear, See, and Talk Like Us?

The answer to this question provides an opportunity to teach children self-control: "If Allah is All-Hearing and All-Seeing, is it appropriate that He hears or sees us doing something unacceptable to Him?"

*Answer:*

Yes. Allah talks, hears, and sees. He says: "Certainly Allah has heard the speech of the one who argues with you, [O Muhammad], concerning her husband", "[Allah] said, "Do not be scared. Indeed, I am with you both; I hear and see", and "Indeed, He is aware of what you do." However, He does not do it like us. Allah is different from His creation. He hears sounds no matter how low they are; He sees things no matter how far they are. He hears and sees everything; yet, His hearing and vision do not resemble those of the deficient and weak creatures. Allah is unmatched. He says: "There is nothing like Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing."

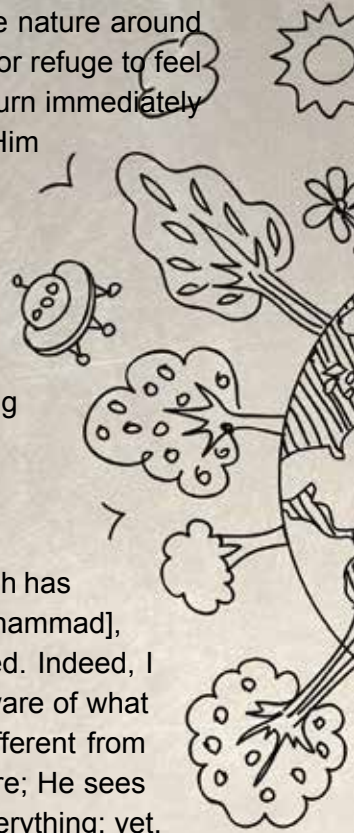
### **?** Does Allah Get Hungry and Thirsty Like Us?

*Note to Parent:*

Key to answering this question is the explanation that hunger and thirst are aspects of weakness and Allah Almighty is perfect and flawless.

*Answer:*

No, Allah does not get hungry or thirsty. He does not need food or drink







because He is the Creator of everything and does not need anything. If He ever needs anything, He would not be Allah. Creatures are the ones that need food and drink and Allah provides it for them. There is no comparison between the creature and the Creator. Not everything we make needs what we need. The same thing goes with Allah.

*Possible Scenario (age 10-12)*

- "Let me ask you a question... Who made the bike?"
- "The bike manufacturer."
- "Let us imagine that the bike talks and asks its maker: 'What do you eat? What do you drink?' How will you respond?"
- "I will say: 'It is none of your business. What will you gain from knowing such a thing; your main purpose is to travel fast without any defects?'"
- "Excellent. Same thing when it comes to Allah. Allah created us to worship Him: 'And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.'" These questions are not going to benefit or help us achieve this task. On the contrary, it will distract us from completing our tasks. When can bikes ask questions? When they are broken; they go to their manufacturer to get fixed. That is why we seek refuge in Allah through prayers and supplications when we find ourselves weak in worshipping Him or when something bad happens to us".

 **How Powerful Is Allah?**

Key to answering this question is that if we were talking about limited power or ability, then we are talking about a trait of weakness; the end of power means the beginning of weakness, and weakness is not a trait of Allah the Almighty. This question is also beneficial to explaining the importance of worshipping Allah alone. He is the only one capable of providing our needs and sustenance.

*Answer:*

Allah's power is infinite. Nothing stands in His way; He said: "Allah is competent over all things." Whenever He wants something, He says: "be", and it becomes. Allah is capable of everything because He is the Creator of everything. Nothing in land or sky defeats Him. Only creatures have limited powers because they are created with limited abilities. The Creator's ability, however, has no boundary or weaknesses. He is the One who crushes the mountains, moves the oceans, orders the water to sink into earth. Nothing in the universe occurs without His order and will. The Creator does not need any creature. The sky is one of His creations, and His existence is not dependent upon any creature. He does not need them; He does not need anything.

### Where Is Allah? How Big Is He?

Once children understand that Allah is the One who created us and blessed us, we then explain that Allah is in heaven. He said: "Do you feel secure that He [who holds authority] who's in the heaven...". It is false to say that Allah is everywhere, though, because this means that He is present inside everything, which is not true. We are committed to what is mentioned in the Sunnah. The prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) asked a maid servant: "Where is Allah?", she said: "He is in the heaven". He said: "who am I?" She said: "You are the messenger of Allah". He said: "Grant her freedom; she is a believing woman". Even though Allah is in the heaven, He can see and hear us everywhere. Constantly stressing that Allah sees and hears us increases the child's self-control. Allah the Almighty is in heaven, but His knowledge encompasses everything; He said: "He is with you wherever you are."

*Answer:*

Allah Almighty is in Heaven. He is not compared to anyone of His creatures. He is greater than everything; Allah is bigger than all of His creatures. If His creatures are great, their Creator is greater.

### How Come Allah Sees Us but We Do Not See Him?

*Tip to parent:*

We can utilize the answer to this question to explain to them that we cannot see Him, yet we believe in Him. We believe that He is Merciful, that He loves believers, that He is powerful, and that he is capable of everything and knows everything. He knows we are talking about Him right now.

*Answer:*

Our vision is limited; we cannot see most things. That is why we use microscopes and magnifying tools. If we cannot see created objects, then - logically – we cannot see Allah the Almighty. Human's capabilities in life prevent them from seeing Allah. Allah is high above us; therefore, He sees us all at the same time like someone who climbs a roof and sees those walking in the street while they do not see him. Allah sees us while we do not see Him. There are many things that exist that we cannot see.

*Possible scenario (6-10)*

We tell the child: "Our eyes cannot detect everything. We cannot see voices, yet we hear them. We cannot see air, yet we feel it. Our eyes cannot see Allah Almighty in this life; however - may Allah permit – we will be given better eyes in the Hereafter that will allows us to see Allah. That is why, "Vision doesn't perceive Him, but He perceives [all] vision; and He is the Subtle, the Acquainted."



**How Can Allah See too Many People?**

This question is related to the previous question. The answer is similar and it can also be used to raise the child's ability to self-control .

*Answer:*

Because Allah Almighty is above us all. Allah is the Competent over everything.

*Possible Scenario (age 5-10):*

To practically answer this question, we can take the child to the street

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and ask him or her to count the people he or she sees. Then, we go to a second floor and count again. Then we go to the roof and ask the child to count the people he or she sees for a third time. Then we give the child a binocular and ask for a more accurate count. From this example, we explain to the child that we should not measure things with our limited human capabilities. Allah's ability is greater than that of His creatures altogether. And we must stress that: "Allah is competent over all things."

*Another possible scenario:*

We can ask the child: "Do you think an ant can see us with full details, or does it just see a ghost or a shadow?" The child will respond that the ant can see only a very small part of the toe, and it might consider the toe a huge mountain.

- "Alright. Do you think the ant can ask: "How do you see us all at the same time?" Your answer will be: "It is natural". It suits your abilities that Allah gave you. The ant's abilities are limited. While it is easy for you to see many ant-shelters in the room all at the same time, an ant - with its limited abilities – can only see one. Since we agree that nothing is like Allah the Almighty, and that He is capable of everything, therefore, our limited abilities cannot comprehend what is "natural" for Allah. Allah's ability is greater than the ability of all the creatures because "Allah is competent over all things."



**Does Allah See People in the Dark? How Does Allah Sees Us When at Home with the Doors and Windows Shut? How Does Allah Know About All Our Actions? How Can He Watch All People?**

Key to answering these questions is that Children must learn that Allah has all the traits of beauty and perfection. They must know that Allah's abilities are limitless; He is the Omnipotent and the Almighty. He says: "Allah is competent over all things." Because His ability is limitless, nothing on earth or sky can defeat Him. We cannot compare Allah's ability with that of creatures, no matter how great the creatures are. Allah is greater. Like previous answers, the answer to this question is suitable to link to the

importance of self-control and religious devotion.

*Answer:*

Yes, Allah can see All people in the Dark and behind doors and walls.

*Possible Scenario*

First, we should show the child a movie scene with military soldiers using night-goggles, animals and birds that see in the dark, first-person video games with tools players use, such as x-rays gadgets, to detect objects behind walls or in the dark. After that, we ask: "If a weak human sees in the dark, can't Allah who created humans see in the dark, too? If Allah is the One who gave us the ability to create gadgets, can't He - the All-Capable and Overseer - do that? Allah is greater and more capable, and His ability has no boundary".

*Possible Scenario 2:*

We should show the child a picture of a medical scan and tell him that a technician - who is created by Allah - can see the bones inside us with an X-ray. Allah who created people, sees us while at home with all the doors shut. Nothing is like Allah; He is not like humans whose vision are blocked by buildings. Allah is unlike any creature because He is capable of doing anything

*Scenario 3*

The example of surveillance camera recording clarifies this. A camera records and detects every minor and major detail in front of it. Allah's

ability is greater than the camera; He can watch everyone at the same time because His ability is boundless. Allah's knowledge is absolute and inclusive of everything. Surveillance cameras help children grasp the omnipresence of Allah. A company can survey its employees with a camera that records and displays everything in monitoring screens, spontaneously. If people can invent this surveillance method, then Allah, the Creator Himself, can survey his creatures all the time.

### Why Doesn't Allah Die Like us?

Key to answering this question is that children understand that Allah created death and the circle of life. He is beyond His creation and the rules of His creation do not apply to him. Also, it is important to understand that Death is a sign of weakness. Allah is never weak. He was not created and will not die. Furthermore, key to this is explaining that death is part of Allah's plans for people. Death is the first stage of After Life.

#### *Answer*

Because Allah created everything and he created the circle of life. Everything he created dies. He says: "Every soul will taste death. Then to Us will you be returned." A person's death is the beginning of his or her Hereafter, the most important part after life. People, however, are creatures that die. Allah's life is not like ours; our lives end with death. Every creature vanishes, and nothing remains except Allah the Almighty. Allah is perfect, infinite life is a trait of perfection. This is why one of the names of Allah is the All-Living who never dies.

### Does Allah Love Me?

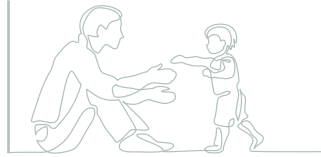
*Answer:*

Allah Almighty is forgiving and merciful; He loves the benevolent, the pious, and the truthful. He says: "He loves them, and they love Him." The signs of Allah's love for His worshippers include honoring them, nurturing them, handling their issues, sustaining them, and forgiving them. Everyone feels Allah's kindness and generosity. Allah loves the person who obeys Him, endeavors to get closer to Him and seeks His love by praying, honoring parents, giving charity, generosity, honesty, reciting the Quran, supplications and other good deeds. Allah loves whoever believes in him and commits to these actions.





## Questions related to Angels



### ? Who Are the Angels? What Do They Look Like?

*Answer:*

Angels are one of Allah's beautiful creatures. They are made of light. Allah created them before us; they got a will, a mind, and wings. They can take the shape of humans after permission from Allah. They neither eat nor drink. They are servants of Allah who follow His commands. They are honored on different levels.;

### ? What Are the Names of Angels?

*Answer:*

There are many angels and only Allah knows the exact number. Jibreel, Mikael, Israfeel, Rudwan, Malik (peace be upon them) are the ones we know of. There are also the carriers of Allah's mighty throne, the writers of people's actions, and others. Jibreel (peace be upon him) is the most noble. He is responsible for delivering the revelation to messengers (peace be upon them). There are Mikaeel, Israfeel, and others. Some Angels are responsible for continuously protecting humans. There are a huge number of angels; each has a specific task.

### ? Why Did Allah Create Angels?

*Answer:*

Allah Almighty created angels to do good; they are pure hearted. They never do evil or think of doing it. Angels are in Heaven; however, they descent to Earth to for certain tasks Allah commanded them to do, such as protecting, caring for, and watching us. They also descend to deliver scriptures, attend religious gathering, etc. Children should know that angels have two main tasks: worshipping Allah and taking care of the issues of the universe.

## Why Can't We See the Angels?

*Answer*

Humans do not have the ability to see angels in their original form; therefore, angels transform into the shape of humans so that prophets see and deal with them. Jibreel (peace be upon him), for example transformed into a Bedouin to teach the pillars of Islam.

## Who Are the Jinn?

*Answer:*

Jinn are one of Allah's creations. They are made of fire. Allah gave them different abilities we do not have such as flying and transporting objects fast. However, Jinn are commanded to obey orders and avoid whatever is prohibited like us. They die like us. We do not have the ability to see Jinn. Their nature differs from us; we are made of clay while jinn are made of fire.

## Who Is Stronger: Angels or Jinn?

*Answer:*

Angels are more powerful. Angels do not die until the Day of the blowing of the Horn (for whom Allah wills to die); jinn, however, die earlier. The angel of death takes the souls of jinn upon Allah's command: "Allah takes the souls at the time of their death." Furthermore, jinn fear the angels. In the battle of Badr, for example, Satan saw the angels sent by Allah to support the believers, and said to the non-believers: "I am disassociated from you. I see what you do not see; indeed, I fear Allah. And Allah is severe in punishment."

### **Do Angels Die?**

*Answer:*

Yes, angels are one of Allah's creations; everything dies except Allah the Almighty. He is the Ever-Living and the Sustainer of all existence. He says: "Everything will be destroyed except His Face." Everything on Earth and Heaven will die except things Allah permits to stay alive.

## Three: Questions Related to Scriptures

### ? What Are the Scriptures?

They are scriptures Allah sent to His messengers (peace be upon them) to deliver Allah's message and laws. Scriptures are guidance, mercy, and source of happiness in this life and in the Hereafter. We know that Allah sent the Scriptures of Ibrahim (Abraham) (peace be upon him), the Psalms of David (peace be upon him), the Torah of Mousa (Moses) (peace be upon him), the Gospel of Isa (Jesus) (peace be upon him) and the Quran of Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him).



### ? Why Do We Need the Quran? Why Is it a Miracle?

*Answer:*

Quran is a book of guidance that shows us the way to success, now and in the Hereafter, the same way a manual shows us how to operate a machine. Allah the Almighty said: "Doesn't He know what He created, and He is the Subtle, the Acquainted?" Since the prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) is the final prophet with no successors, his miracle, the Quran, is eternal; its message and orders are obligatory to the Last Day. The most important proofs of the inimitability of the Quran are lingual and rhetorical. Allah challenged the Arabs

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– known for their linguistics and rhetoric mastery – to produce the liking of the Quran. Humans and jinn failed to do so. That is why the Quran is a miracle.

### Why Didn't Allah Protect the Previous Books from alteration?

*Answer:*

Allah Almighty does what He desires. He has reasons for that - some of them we know and others we do not. Previous books were not miracles in themselves; therefore, it was not essential that they remain unchanged. Moreover, they were temporary regulations for certain people.

### What is the Evidence That Proves That the Quran is not Altered?

This question is usually asked by middle or High school students; therefore, we should quietly and carefully explain the proof of the Quran's authenticity. Whenever things are repeated, they settle; whenever they spread, they are affirmed.

*Answer:*

The Quran was delivered to us by succession. Muslims inherited the Quran generation after generation. They study and recite the Quran in their prayers; they also teach it to their children. If a Sheikh makes a mistake in a letter, we immediately correct him. The Quran is delivered to us, protected from any addition, omission, or alteration. Refuting this evidence leads to disproving historical facts, like the existence of the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), his companions, and famous figures in history; this is rejected by every rational person. Also, Allah challenged humans and jinn to come up with something similar to the Quran and both failed. The narrative and legislation of the Quran has no contradictions or distortions; this indicates that it is not a work of humans whose can be contradictory and distortive. The Quran is from Allah. He has taken care of protecting it.

## Four: Question related to the Messengers

### ? Who Are the prophets and the Messengers?

Prophets and messengers are chosen human beings. Allah made them prophets and ordered them to deliver the message to their people; this message is to worship Allah Alone. The first prophet is Adam (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him); the final prophet is Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). There are many prophets. Allah sent them to every nation on earth.

### ? Why Did Allah Send the Messengers?

Allah sent messengers to deliver His message. Every prophet in every historical period called his nation to worship Allah and follow the straight path. They are mercy and guidance for people. The messenger is a well-respected man among his people prior and after revelation. Allah chose messengers as role models for people. They teach us manners, positive attitudes, and they guide us to whatever benefits us and forbid whatever harms us. Sending the messengers is a testimony that there is one religion that calls for worshiping Allah alone. People need guides in their own language to show them the right way; Allah sent the books with His messengers in their tribes' mother tongue so that the message reaches clearly and accurately.

### ? Can prophets make mistakes?

Prophets are humans and humans make mistakes. Allah protected the prophets from making mistakes only in what relates to their message and whatever might taint their status as role models for people. Therefore, it is important not to allow anyone to point an accusation towards the Message prophets carry. However, prophets are liable to everyday mistakes (e.g. the prophet's misjudgment about agriculture or war).

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## Who Is Muhammad (May Allah's Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him)?

Muhammad is the final prophet sent by Allah. His full name is Muhammad ibn Abdillah ibn Abdilmuttalib Al-Hashimy Al-Qurashy. He was born in Mecca on Monday in Rabee Al-Awal of "The Year of the Elephant". His father died while his mother was still pregnant with him. His mother died when he was six. After that, his grandfather, Abdilmuttalib, took care of him. His grandfather died when the messenger was eight years old.

## What is the Proof of Muhammad's (May Allah's Peace and Blessings Be upon Him) Honesty?

*Answer:*

There are many proofs of Muhammad's (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) honesty. The most important one is the noble Quran. This miraculous book still amazes people with its dazzling treasure. Also, his behavior and morals attest to his honesty ; even his enemies praised him. Muhammad used to be called the truthful and the honest. Furthermore, his miracles are seen by his contemporaries and narrated for generations. The perfect and beautiful legislation he delivered is also a proof as it continues everywhere throughout history.

## How Did the Messenger (May Allah's Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him) ascend to Heaven in One Night?

*Answer:*

The prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) was taken on the "Buraq" to Jerusalem. He then rose to heaven with Jibreel (peace be upon him). Allah Almighty is capable of everything; nothing in land or in sky defeats Him. Nowadays, people finally built super-sonic planes. They have also invented 3D technology that allows them to be present in more than one place. Therefore, Allah is bigger and his abilities are greater than His creatures.

### **? Why Is Muhammad (May Allah's Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him) the Final Prophet?**

*Answer:*

Divine wisdom dictates sending prophets; when people forgot or distorted past scriptures, Allah send a messenger with a scripture that is not altered. Moreover, Allah took responsibility of protecting the Quran until the Day of Resurrection. Therefore, it is logical that the messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) became the final prophet and messenger.

### **? Why are we Required to Love the Prophet (May Allah's Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him)?**

*Answer:*

Loving the prophet is one of the pillars of faith. Loving Allah the Almighty is not complete without loving His messenger. Loving the prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) is linked to loving Allah because Allah has chosen him from all people to deliver this great message. Allah chooses the best of people because He knows more than anyone who is capable of handling His message. Since Allah chose him from all people for this great task, it is our duty to specifically love him. After all, he is the one who taught us about Allah. He was the best messenger and the most merciful to his nation. We are not grateful to anyone after Allah more than him (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). He went through pain as he called people to religion and benevolence. He used to get very sad when people disbelieved him because he feared that they will enter Hell-fire. Allah says: "Then perhaps you would kill yourself through grief over them, [O Muhammad], if they do not believe in this message, [and] out of sorrow." That is why he (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) is the one who deserves our utmost love after Allah.





## Questions Related to the Hereafter



### ? What Is the Judgment Day?

*Answer:*

The judgment day is the day when Allah resurrects all creatures and holds them accountable for their actions. It is also called the Last Day because there is no day after it. After the Judgment day, Allah will grant Paradise for whoever did good and obeyed we are not grateful to anyone not grateful to anyone him in this life; conversely, Allah will punish whoever's did evil or disobeyed Him. This day is also called the Day of Resurrection because it is the day in which people rise from their graves towards heaven for judgment.

### ? When Is the Day of Resurrection? Why Did Allah Hide that Day from Us?

*Answer:*

No one knows the date of the Day of Resurrection. Allah says: "They ask you, [O Muhammad], about the Hour: when is its arrival?  In what [position] are you that you should mention it?  To your Lord is its finality

○ You are only a warner for those who fear it.” Allah has hidden the date of that day so that we constantly do our best to prepare for it by doing good and avoiding evil. If we knew when that day is, we will only repent right after it and, consequently, life then would be full of evil more than what is present right now.

### What Is the Day of Accountability?

*Answer:*

The day of accountability is the day when Allah gathers all the people He ever created. Allah says: “Say, [O Muhammad], “Indeed, the former and the later peoples ○ Are to be gathered together for the appointment of a known Day.” Allah then shows people their actions and holds them accountable; He pays them according to their actions; whoever did good will be rewarded, and whoever did evil will be punished. Allah says: “So whoever does an atom’s weight of good will see it ○ And whoever does an atom’s weight of evil will see it.”

### What Is Death?

*Note to parents:*

Children six years or younger usually cannot conceive the full meaning of death and resurrection and that death is inevitable. Children between six and eight usually understand the meaning of death and its inevitability. Children between eight and ten usually understand death and resurrection; A child that age can experience a case of death in the family for the first time. We do not know how children feel when they hear about death and grave. Horror might fill their hearts. Therefore, we must explain the meaning of death without lying or sugarcoating (e.g. that someone is travelling ) as soon as we can. Sooner or later, a child will know the truth from others. Prior to the death of a family member, parents should show their child a dead bird, tree, or bug to clarify the concept of death.

*Answer:*

Death is a stage in life where a person moves from this world to another world. All of us will die when we grow up and catch up with those who died before us and live with them in Paradise - may Allah permit. Death is not the end of everything; it is a stage where a believer transfers to a better life and the wrong doer transfers to be punished. Allah loves us even though he takes away our lives. Allah takes our lives so that we may live beside Him in Paradise, a place that we cannot imagine its beauty. When a person dies, his soul remains alive; it ascends to the Creator and people will remember the good actions of a person. That is why one must prepare to meet Allah by doing good deeds and by committing to the teachings of Islam.

### What Happen to Children after they Die ?

*Answer:*

Children do not do evil, and they do not mean it; therefore, all children go to Paradise.

### What happens in the Grave after we die?

*Answer:*

When our time comes, we go to the grave, the place where dead people go. For those who believe in Allah, obey him and do good deeds, the grave will be a garden from Paradise. A believer will be blessed in the grave until the day of resurrection.

### Can a Dead Person Hear and See us? How Does a Dead Person Breathe Under Soil? Does He or She Eat, Drink, and Sleep?

*Answer:*

Yes, the dead can hear the greetings (Salam) of people and can hear supplications; however, dead people cannot breathe like us because they do not need to breath. Dead people have a different life with different laws

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and nature. There is no breathing, eating, drinking, sleeping or working in the grave. A grave is either eternal bliss or eternal punishment.

### What Is Paradise and What is in It?

*Answer:*

Paradise is the home of peace. It is a beautiful place full of everything you love and wish for. Paradise is the destination of generous people with good deeds. It has eight doors and it is made of levels; believers enter Paradise according to their good deeds and mercy of Allah. Those who have more deeds go to a higher and more beautiful level than those with less deeds. Yet, everyone lives in happiness, pleasure, and bliss. In Paradise, we will live happily ever after. We will never get sick or tired, and we will meet Allah Almighty, the messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), the prophets (peace be upon them) and everyone we love - may Allah permit. Paradise has everything we love and want - food, drinks, entertainment, and bliss.

### What Is Hellfire and Why Did Allah Create It?

*Answer:*

Hellfire is the place of punishment. It is a place that Allah made to punish those who do evil, hurt people, disobey Allah, and not follow His orders.

### What Happens to Animals after they Die? Will They Go to Paradise or Hellfire?

Animals are not accountable for their deeds since they were not given the choice to live the way they do. On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will gather them and avenge the harmed ones from the wrong doers. For example, a hornless sheep will knock the sheep that knocked it previously. After that, Allah will order them to become dust, so they turn into dust.

## Questions Related to Destiny



### ? What Does Fate and Destiny mean?

*Answer:*

Belief in Destiny is one of the pillars of faith in Islam. Allah says: **“He has created each thing and determined it with [precise] determination.”** -). To believe in Fate and Destiny requires us to believe that Allah knows about events before they happen, that he wrote them, that he willed them, and that he created them.

### ? How Does Allah Know What Will Happen Before It Happens?

*Answer:*

Because Allah is the creator and because His knowledge contains details of us before, during, and after our creation. In addition, Allah is the One who created man, time, and space; therefore, He knows “what was”, “what will be”, and “what shall be before it becomes”.



*Possible Scenario:*

We can explain this with a simple example; a toymaker knows what a toy can do before the toy does anything because he made it and put the fine details. Similar wise, Allah - who is capable of all things - created us; so, Allah is more capable of knowing what will happen.

 **Are We Destined to do things or do We have a Choice?**

This question might be asked by older children. The main answer should lead to what we call guidance and aberrance. We do not know what Allah wrote for us and we are not required to do so. Yet, we are required to believe that Allah's knowledge is infinite (including fate and destiny). We should be concerned only with our will and how to obey Allah's orders within our limits.

*Answer:*

We are destined to do certain things and we have the choice in other things. We do not have a choice when or where to be born or die. We do not have a choice to choose our parents or our relatives. However, we are free to pray and believe in Allah. The will in this freedom is within Allah's will - meaning that if Allah wants to force us to accept or reject something, He will; yet, He chose to give us the freedom; we will be held accountable for our choices; this is what Allah means when He says: "And you do not will except that Allah wills - Lord of the worlds."

*Possible Scenario:*

instructor brings a glass-cup and asks a child if he or she can throw it on the ground and break it.

- "Of course, I can."
- "What is preventing you, then?"
- "It is wrong."

- The instructor then comments: "Allah knows that you will not break this cup because you are a good child. He also knows that a naughty child will break it. So, did anyone prevent you from smashing the cup? Did anyone force the other child to break it? In a similar manner, We have the choice of what to do , but Allah knows what our choice will be.

### Why Did Allah Guide Some People and Did not Guide Others?

Allah provided guidance to all people. He says: "And have shown him the two ways. This means that He showed everyone the right path and allowed us to clearly differentiate between truth and falsehood. Then, He gave us the freedom of choice; therefore, some of us choose the right path while others do not.

### Why Does Allah Punish Those who Sin When He has Already Written in Eternity That They Will Sin?

*Answer:*

This knowledge is divine and we do not know why. All our assumption about the answers are illusions and ignorance. Therefore, humans are only responsible for what they do, and it is not possible for us to know our destiny before we act. Destiny is known only after events happen. So, why do we do good deeds and abandon bad ones? The answer is that we should do good deeds and avoid bad deeds because it is the safe path to Paradise. It is like choosing a road to a town. We avoid dangerous roads and travel on safe ones. We cannot use destiny as an excuse for being bad. Otherwise, criminals will argue that they are destined to do bad deeds. That is why humans must admit and surrender to Allah the Almighty who says "He is not questioned about what He does; yet, they will be questioned." He is the Creator and He Has authority over Everything.

## Why Did Allah Create Us? What is the Origin of the Universe? Why Did Allah Create Animals?

*Answer:*

Allah said: “And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me Alone.” Allah created us for a purpose that benefits us which is worshipping Him. The outcome for fulfilling or neglecting this purpose is Paradise or Hellfire, respectively. Allah masterfully created the universe with its skies, land, planets, and stars that are signs of His greatness. He made the sun provide us with warmth to help nurture plants and to kill germs. He made animals available to humans so we can eat them or carry our belongings on them. He said: “And [He created] the horses, mules and donkeys for you to ride and an adornment. And He creates what you do not know.

## Is Allah Going to Punish People who Did not Get Any Messengers?

*Answer:*

They will be under trial because Allah gave them intelligence. Allah will test these people and gives them orders on the Day of Resurrection; if they obey Him, they will enter Paradise. If they disobey Him, they will go to Hellfire.



## Why Does Evil Exist?

Life is a test; it is like the first chapter of a two-chapter novel. The Hereafter is the second chapter. It is the home of reward, punishment, and vengeance of the oppressed. That is why evil people are not always punished in life. Everyone will rise on the Day of Resurrection and be held accountable for his or her actions. Allah says: “So whoever does an at-



om's weight of good will see it ○ And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.”.

### Why Did Allah Create Evil People?

Allah created people and gave them the freedom to choose whether to do good or evil. One decides whether to be decent or not and will be responsible for the consequences. This is a blessing from Allah and His infinite wisdom because evil people can be good; it is our duty to help them. Yet, if they refuse and stick to what they do, then it is our duty to prevent them from harming people so that Allah loves and rewards us. Allah the Almighty is the Creator of everything in this life that is a home of test and distress. Allah says: “[He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in actions - and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving.. This test includes the presence of evil performed by the devils and human offenders.

### Why Did Allah Create Some People With Disabilities or Mutations?

Allah tests people with disorders and diseases. He will generously reward them for their patience and puts them in higher levels in Paradise. Noticing Disabled people reminds us of the blessings of Allah who gave us health. We must thank Allah for this. Noticing disabled people also reminds us of our weakness so that we are humbled and helpful. After Judgement Day, the benevolent will live a healthy eternal life in Paradise - may Allah permit.

### Why Are There Rich and Poor People? Why Do Some Evil People Live in Palaces While Some Good People Live in Sheds?

Allah the Almighty provides sustenance. He is the one who tests humans. Sometimes He gives the good person sustenance, to test his generosity. Other times He may prevent sustenance to test patience and endurance against envy. As long as a good person is patient in life, his or her rewards grow bigger. Conversely, a person with many blessings who offends others and does not give charity will be punished on the Day of Resurrection because he or she did not appreciate Allah's blessing.



Allah created people different so that the rich gives the poor and the strong helps the weak and poor. People have different languages, colors , races, character, and behavior. Everyone is tested in accordance with whatever Allah gave him or her. The rich are tested with money: will they pay their 'Zakaa' and give charity? Will they be generous? The poor are tested with their poverty. Are they going to be patient? Are they going to work hard? Are they going to accept bribes. Are they going to steal? Everything is a test; yet, Allah sustenance is for everyone and our financial status will not dictate whether we go to Paradise or Hellfire. Everyone is tested by what is bestowed upon them. If all people were rich, they would not serve each other and would not need each other. Allah says: "That they may make use of one another for service." This means that we (people) are subjected to each other. That is how the circle of life moves; otherwise, life stops if everyone is the same.

### Why Do We Get Sick? Why Do Calamities Happen to People?

Allah tests everyone to see if they endure illness or lose patience? Allah the Almighty will immensely reward the patient believer on the Day of Resurrection. Through illness, calamities, and distress Allah exalts the believers, purify their hearts from arrogance and pride, and loves them more. Also, worshippers get closer to Allah through prayers, patience, faith, and good deeds. They will also learn the blessing of health. We can ask chil-

dren: "Why are cars made? For transportation, right? Why do they have brakes? Don't brakes stop cars from moving? Brakes are necessary for safety. Cars are made to travel and the brakes stop them at the right time to protect drivers from harm. Allah created us to be happy by worshipping Him and appreciating blessings. He also created calamities to remind us of the great task we are made for so that we mess around, ask Him for forgiveness, and be patient as we wait for the reward.

### **?** Is Allah the One who Created Animals and Harmful Insects?

Allah is the Creator and the Lord of everything. He created those creatures with His ability and wisdom; He is the All-Knowing and the Wise who knows about them what we do not know. Our knowledge is scanty compared to Allah's knowledge and wisdom. That is why Allah says: "And you have not been given of knowledge except a little." We do not know all the reasons for Allah creating these animals. One of these reasons, however, is to illustrate Allah's intricate creation and masterfulness. Although they are a lot, Allah provides for all. He also tests us through them and rewards those these animals hurt; killing them illustrates courage and empathy



towards them illustrate weakness. Moreover, we sometimes get medicine from harmful animals (e.g. snake venom). Some harmful animals also take care of pests that are harmful to us (e.g. snakes eat farm rats that wreck the crops). Many of these harmful animals are food for other useful animals; this forms balance in the circle of life that Allah perfected.

### Why Do have to Pray Five Times a Day?

Worshipping Allah purifies and uplifts a believer's soul. The effort made to perform them is minimal compared to their benefit. Prayers include recitation, remembrance and supplication. In fact, prayers contain all forms of worship; therefore, it is better than separate reciting, remembrance, or supplication.

Believers rejoice at prayers because it brings them closer to Allah Almighty and allows them to ask for everything they wish for; Allah answers our prayers. We pray because Allah ordered us to pray and we love obeying Allah's orders. We are His worshippers; He is our Creator and Sustainer, and He deserves to be worshipped for His endless blessings. Allah says: "And if you should count the favors of Allah, you could not enumerate them."



Praying is an expression of our love and gratitude to Allah Almighty and a declaration of our need for Him to guard our health, guide us to what benefits us, and protect us from evil. Allah does not need us to worship Him; He does not need anything from us, and He does not benefit from us. Prayers are commands from Allah who wants us to worship Him in the way that His prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) demonstrated. That is the meaning of the Muslim declaration of faith: we worship Allah Alone according to His messenger's instruc-

tions. Worshipping Allah brings great rewards and it is a reason to enter Paradise. After all, Heaven is Allah's precious reward that requires hard work (i.e. worshipping Allah and obeying Him).

**?** I Asked Allah in My Prayer to Grow Quickly but He Didn't Answer Me?

There are ethics for supplication that we should consider. These include respecting the laws Allah put in this world. We pray to Allah and He chooses what is good for us. Your father would not give you permission to ride your bike in the middle of a street because he loves you and knows it might harm you. Allah is generous and he answers our prayers in three ways: He accepts our requests, protects us from a disaster that might happen to us, or rewards us for our prayers on the Day of Resurrection – which in turn gets us closer to paradise.

**?** Why Am I Not Pretty as My Friend?

This is because Allah created everyone unique. All of Allah's creation is beautiful. Allah says: "**We have certainly created man in the best of stature.**" - (95:4). Every person is unique in his or her own way; those who were created beautiful must thank Allah more, and those who are not as beautiful must accept the way Allah created them. Those who are thankful and patient shall reach high levels and gain huge rewards.

**?** If Allah Loves Us, Then Why Do Bad Things Happen to Us?

Allah tests us to differentiate between the good and the bad. Allah might test us so that we seek refuge in Him and stay close to Him. Allah tests His beloved with hardship to purify them and raise their ranks so that



they become role models for others and learn how to endure distress. This is why the prophet said: “The most severely tested people are the prophets, then those nearest to them, then those nearest to them”; the firmer we are in religion, the more severe is our trial. That is why the prophets were severely tested; they were murdered, hurt, and sometimes tested with severe illness (e.g. Ayoub (Job) (peace be upon him). Our prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) was severely hurt in Mecca and Medina; yet he was patient (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him). The point is that the truly faithful and pious go through hardship in accordance to their piety and faith. So, we must teach children that Allah does what He decrees. We must not ask Him to justify His actions. We know he is the most Just of all in what He does, because He is the Most Just of all.



These are the most commonly asked questions. You are welcome to contact us through email for answers to other questions or suggestions for better answers ([jrakaf@gmail.com](mailto:jrakaf@gmail.com)).

# Conclusion

**In conclusion, here are some important recommendations to keep in mind when raising children:**

- We must put effort in teaching parents how to nurture faith in children because they are the cornerstone of a promising generation with healthy education and awareness.
- We must produce Islamic media programs and cartoons that meet international standards to help parents in their mission. Furthermore, we must support and initiate symposiums and research that help in producing our own products with our own identity. We need alternative entertainment.
- We must provide more educational material in Arabic since material in Arabic is minimal. Most available products are simply translations of material that address cultures fit for different environments. We must increase our efforts to enrich Arabic library with material.
- We must design Faith Nurturing training for children, train qualified trainers, counselors, mentors, and teachers at different educational levels, keeping in mind the specific educational and scientific needs of each age group.
- We must develop official curricula that contain educational and scientific material which deals with modern-day faith related questions in a wide range contemporary setting.







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