

Like Father.....

Tips by Khalifah 'Umar ibn 'Abdil 'Azeez

Khalifah 'Umar ibn 'Abdil 'Azeez's (rahimahullah) advice below is very apt and pertinent.

وكتب عمر بن عبد العزيز إلى مؤدب ولده:

خذهم بالجفاء فهو أمتع لأقدامهم ، وترك الصبحة فان عاداتها تكسب الغفلة، وقلة الضحك فان كثرت تميت القلب ، وليكن أول ما يعتقدون من أدبك بغض الملاهي التي بدؤها من الشيطان ، وعاقبتها سخط الرحمن ، فانه بلغني عن الثقات من حملة العلم أن حضور المعازف واستماع الأغاني واللهج بهما يثبت النفاق في القلب كما يثبت العشب بالماء . وليفتتح كل غلام منهم بجزء من القرآن يثبت في قراءته ، فاذا فرغ منه تناول نبله وقوسه وخرج إلى الغرض حافيا ، فرمى سبعة أرشاق ، ثم انصرف إلى القائلة ، فان ابن مسعود كان يقول : ” يا بني قيلوا ، فان الشياطين لا تقبل

(ذكره ابن أبي الدنيا في : ” ذم الملاهي ” ص: 9)

Khalifah 'Umar ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz (rahimahullah) wrote the following instructions to his children's mentor (teacher)

“ Be strict on them for this is more effective in restraining them. Stop them from sleeping after Fajr Salaah, for this causes stupidity / negligence. They should laugh less for a lot of laughing kills the heart / soul. Let the first thing you inculcate in them be the hatred for Music, for I have heard from various People of Knowledge ('Ulamaa) that Music develops hypocrisy in the heart just as water grows grass.

Each of them should commence the day with the recitation of the Holy Quran in the proper manner. When they complete that, they should take their bows and arrows and proceed barefooted to the range. Each of them should shoot 7 times. Thereafter they should take mid-day sleep (siesta). For Sayyiduna 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood (radiyallahu'anhu) use to say: Oh my children! Take siesta, for verily the devils do not do so.”

(Kitaabu Zhammil Malahi of Hafiz Ibn abi Dunya pg. 9)

These words of Khalifah 'Umar ibn 'Abdil 'Azeez (rahimahullah) give us the following lessons on upbringing of children:

1. To commence the day with the recitation of the Quran
2. Not to sleep after Fajr (until after sunrise at least)
3. To abstain from music
4. To laugh less

5. Engagement in physical activity, like archery

6. The importance of siesta (qailoolah)

Each of the above are valuable lessons of life, which we as adults can implement and also inculcate in our children.

Quran Recital every morning

Many of us commence our day by reading the news, -which is more depressing than informative- or by catching up on our timeline, or sifting through emails etc.

The recitation of Quran, first thing in the morning will bring barakah (blessing) in our affairs throughout the day. Our children should see us reciting the Quran after Fajr. This will subconsciously lead them on to the same.

Music; they are never too young to abstain

We often justify our leniency towards our kids' indulgence in haram or makrooh (repulsive) deeds by saying: *"They are too young"*

The fact that 'Umar ibn 'Abdil 'Azeez detested music even for his under aged children, demonstrates to us how we should view the training of our own.

Don't allow the seeds of hypocrisy to grow even at that tender age. The computer games that they play should be free of foul language, evil habits and the music should be turned off. Never underestimate the effect that these supposed "games" could have on an innocent mind. It's sad, how lightly we take the issue of Music that even as adults, we repeatedly need to be cautioned of our ringtones.

Who is there that can say he has never heard a musical ringtone go off while in Salah in the Masjid?!

Who would have believed it if we were told a decade ago, that a time will come when a muslim will play music -or at least allow it to be played- while in sajdah, the closest posture we could get to Allah Ta'ala?!

Entertainment

Today we all look for how to be best entertained rather than spend our time usefully.

Laughter and jokes have become so common, that at times one will notice people joking even at a janazah!

The rare opportunity we get to ponder about death doesn't pass with an unnecessary joke or fable being shared.

Even in religious lectures, the crowds are inflated if the speaker can entertain better...

As mentioned earlier, these were 'Umar ibn 'Abdil 'Azeez's (rahimahullah) guidelines for the upbringing of children. Alas many of us adults need this lesson too.

Natural physical activity

'Khalifah 'Umar ibn 'Abdil 'Azeez (rahimahullah) specifically ordered the mentor to take them outdoors for archery daily. The Arabs also preferred to send their kids to the villages where they could spend their time outdoors, herding goats and learning basic life skills. In fact, until a few decades ago, we too would spend our days outdoors in various activities.

Today's child may be engaging in very similar activities too, but instead of it being outdoors they do it on a screen! It's no more physical, it's actually electronic! It's no longer real, it has become *virtual*.

Physical activity has its own benefit in early childhood development that can never be replaced with any electronic device. Parents need to carefully think of ways to keep their children occupied in a manner that won't just keep them from bothering their parents, but ways that will enhance the child's mind, body and Iman as well.