

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

News and Comment

Raising the next generation of Muslims in the UK is becoming a crime

As a Muslim community in the UK, we know we hold a great responsibility to raise our children in a manner that they hold onto their Deen. We want to raise adults who look after us in our old age, who hold the Qur'an in their hearts, who care for their neighbours, who tell the truth whatever the situation, who walk the ground with humility. So that when we are dead and gone, Islam is the light by which this community is led.

However we know the obstacles of carrying Islam on in this manner, is being challenged today. The damning draft Ofsted Report released on the Muslim school in Luton and the ominous Trojan horse case of the Birmingham schools, have left Muslim parents and educationalists feeling that our efforts with tomorrow's Ummah is a problem.

This witch-hunting of the Muslim community shows one thing. That despite a range of faith schools existing from a host of communities, Christian, Jewish to Hindu - It is the Muslim schools and efforts of Muslim parents, that are a threat. The Christian community, with the largest number of faith schools across the country, still significantly do believe homosexuality is a sin. The Archbishop recently released guidance to tackle homophobia bullying in schools, still acknowledging the significant religious view. Orthodox Jews believe in gender segregation, with single sex schools in the UK. Islam, however, seems to be the only punchbag for such views by Gove, licencing his sensationalist sweeping measures around Muslim schools. All because, anything can go in the name of tackling extremism in the Muslim community today.

This whipped up fury may appear like a big giant for us to overcome, as has been gender segregation in Universities, niqab in the community. But it is a giant we must push back on, with trust in Allah (swt) that He will support us and assist us. As a community we must come together to resist this pressure against the bringing up of our next generation. This is something we cannot compromise on an inch. And if we were to, it will do nothing but legitimise the vilification of it. We will rubber stamp the idea propagated, that we are trying to teach our children things which are harmful for society, breeding hatred and terrorists. This we know, could not be any further from the truth:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ﴾

“O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are [appointed] angels, harsh and severe; they do not disobey Allah in what He commands them but do what they are commanded.”
[Surah Tahreem: 4]

This ayah stands today as it did yesterday and will tomorrow. That we must do everything in our power to save our children from the Hellfire, despite the overwhelming pressure we feel against media giants and anti-Islamic politicians. Many of us still have needs to raise at the school PTA meeting about how our children will get through the school day in Ramadan in this climate, we may have children who will be going to a Muslim school where they will study the Deen. We have to be brave and carry on. It is the time, to increase our efforts not decrease them.

Muslim schools, we must confidently argue are actually one of the greatest achievements of the UK population. The minority Muslim community have garnered together much needed funds to establish a wealth of schools up and down the country. These schools have sought to instil values in the next generation, that can only benefit the society they will live in. The belief that the idea of God consciousness, sense of accountability, values of compassion, care and responsibility to be helpful members of society which Islamic education imbibes, is crucial for the adults of tomorrow. The truth is Muslim schools are producing children that this very society needs in a time where increasing materialism, individualism and a hedonistic culture is engulfing the youth. To claim Muslim schools are creating people harmful for society, is not only the grossest case of libel, but laughable - When scores of state schools find difficulty in getting the child to respect the teacher.

But yes, ultimately it is another attack on our Deen and Islamic lifestyle, we may feel we are not strong enough to stand up against. But it was Prophet Dawud (as) who came forward before the giant Jalut, knowing his battle didn't look promising from the outside. But he (as) knew how important it was to stand up for the sake of the Haqq.

He (as) was told to not even fight as his father felt he was too young and weak. But he went forward, persevering and as Allah says that it was He who ultimately gave him the firm decision:

﴿وَشَدَدْنَا مُلْكَهُ وَأَتَيْنَاهُ الْحِكْمَةَ وَفَصَّلَ الْخِطَابِ﴾

“And We strengthened his kingdom and gave him wisdom and discernment in speech.” [Surah Saad: 20]

Our feeling of being cornered, is true being a minority community with little access to the media. But the stories of the Prophets that we read to our children, give us a strong lesson about perseverance despite how hard it appears. Because we don't shape what happens, as a result of our efforts. Only Allah (swt) has the power to do that.

Finally, if we were to dip into our future fifty years from now, to see a community whose Islam was merely in a sir name and nothing else, we would be devastated. Because to just live means nothing, without living with the Deen of our Rabb.

The road to the preservation of Islam was not just the mission of the last Messenger of Allah (saw) - But has become the mission of this minority community in the UK, in the 21st century.

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