

## Shaping Islamic Education to Build Muslim Youth for the Challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Life

### 6. Understanding Islam as a Comprehensive Deen able to Solve All Human Problems

Many Muslim youth view Islam as just a religion, comprised of a few good morals, rituals and rules. Furthermore, they witness Islam constantly being depicted as backward, barbaric, oppressive to women and other faiths, and an historical artefact. Additionally, they live within societies which in the main are governed by the capitalist secular democratic system, which regardless of its countless faults and problems, they see as having some functionality in practically organizing the affairs of a state and trying to solve the issues faced by the people. All this has led to many of our youngsters viewing Islam as a belief which is restricted to their personal affairs or a handful of issues, and hence irrelevant to modern life and the host of day to day problems we face as individuals, communities, societies and states. They therefore turn to the secular democratic system and solutions as the means to address their political, economic, social and other societal matters, despite witnessing its numerous failures and dangers, due to not seeing Islam as a credible and superior alternative to solving human problems and organizing the affairs of a state. They may also be influenced by the deceptive arguments of those reformists who say that the values and laws of Islam are for a different age and hence call for the Deen to be changed along Western secular liberal lines which they claim will make it more relevant to 'modern life'.

One of the key concepts that must therefore be built within Muslim children is the understanding that Islam is not just a religion with a few rules and regulations. Rather it is a comprehensive Deen that was revealed by Allah (swt) to solve all human needs and problems and organize the affairs of humanity for all times and places in a way that ensures harmony, prosperity, security, and justice for all. And they must understand that the way prescribed by Islam to bring these solutions to life in this world, is through the establishment of the Khilafah state based upon the method of the Prophethood which will implement all the beliefs, values, principles, laws and systems of Islam upon our Muslim lands. Through understanding these points, young Muslims will have confidence in their Deen and see it as relevant to their lives and this 21<sup>st</sup> century world. Allah (swt) says,

﴿وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

**“And we revealed it (the Qur’an) to you as a clarification for every issue, and a guidance and mercy and good news for those who submit.”** [An-Nahl: 89]

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا﴾

**“This day I have perfected your Deen for you, completed my favour upon you and chosen for you Islam as your way of life.”** [Al Maidah: 3]

Moreover, with the widespread level of oppression, injustice and corruption as well as the mountain of spiritual, political, economic, social, family, moral, judicial, and educational crises afflicting states across the world – from the East to the West – our children should view Islam and the implementation of its values, laws and system as an absolute urgent necessity to resolve this quagmire that mankind faces today. Allah (swt) says,

﴿الرَّ كِتَابَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ﴾

**“Alif Lam Ra. (This is) a Book which We have sent down to you so that, by their Lord’s permission, you lead out the people from the darkness (of ignorance) into the light (of faith), to the way of the Mighty, the Owner of Praise.”** [Ibrahim: 1]

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

**“And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds.”** [Al-Anbiya: 107]

The manner of building this concept is not just to convey these evidences above, but rather to deliver Islam in a way that they can understand clearly how Islam’s principles, laws and system can solve the many problems that societies face today in every field of life.

So for instance, with the concept of racism which is plaguing many states today, we should explain that Islam rejects the idea of one colour or race as being superior to another for Allah (swt) created all. Rather Islam states that superiority is only based upon the level of taqwa or God-consciousness and righteousness of the individual. Allah (swt) says,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْتَأَكُمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ﴾

**“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other. Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).”** [Al-Hujurat: 13]

And the Prophet (saw) said,

«يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، أَلَا إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، وَإِنَّ أَبَاكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، أَلَا لَا فَضْلَ لِعَرَبِيٍّ عَلَىٰ عَجَمِيٍّ، وَلَا لِعَجَمِيٍّ عَلَىٰ عَرَبِيٍّ، وَلَا لِأَحْمَرَ عَلَىٰ أَسْوَدَ، وَلَا لِأَسْوَدَ عَلَىٰ أَحْمَرَ إِلَّا بِالتَّقْوَىٰ»

**“All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety and good action.”**

He (saw) also said,

«لَيْسَ مِنْنا مَنْ دَعَا إِلَىٰ عَصَبِيَّةٍ وَلَيْسَ مِنْنا مَنْ قَاتَلَ عَلَىٰ عَصَبِيَّةٍ وَلَيْسَ مِنْنا مَنْ مَاتَ عَلَىٰ عَصَبِيَّةٍ»

**“The one who calls for ‘asabiyyah (nationalism) or who fights for ‘asabiyyah or who dies for ‘asabiyyah is not one of us.”**

Furthermore, Islam rejects bonding people on the basis of colour, race, ethnicity, tribe or nationality which all have the potential to incite racism or hatred towards others from another country. Rather it establishes the Islamic Aqeeda as the only basis that Muslims should be bonded upon, while also stating that all people – regardless of which religion, gender, or country they are from – should enjoy the same rights of citizenship under Islamic rule no matter how long they have resided within the state.

Our children should also be able to see that it is Islam’s rejection of nationalism or implementing national borders between its lands or acting only on the basis of materialistic selfish national interests as all governments – Muslim and non-Muslim do today - which will enable the state built purely upon Islam: the Khilafah to practically solve the huge refugee crisis today. This is because it is a state that unifies its lands, resources, and man-power and hence could provide adequate food, housing, education, healthcare and other needs to any oppressed people who seek asylum under its rule, ensuring them a dignified life. Furthermore, since it genuinely serves the needs of humanity rather than a specific nation, it will mobilise its army and other resources to protect any persecuted people – Muslim or non-Muslim – regardless of where they live, and grant them full rights of citizenship within its lands if they seek this.

If we take another example, such as the mass poverty that plagues the world today, we should explain to our children how Islam obliges the state to fulfil the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, education and healthcare of every citizen under its rule and hence will place the fulfillment of this duty as a central policy of governing. This is in accordance to the Hadith of the Prophet (saw),

«لَيْسَ لِابْنِ آدَمَ حَقٌّ فِي سِوَىٰ هَذِهِ الْخِصَالِ بَيْتٌ يَسْكُنُهُ وَثَوْبٌ يُوَارِي عَوْرَتَهُ وَجِلْفٌ الْخُبْزِ وَالْمَاءِ»

**“The son of man has no better right than that he would have a house wherein he may live, a piece of cloth by which he can hide his nakedness, a piece of bread and some water.”** [Reported by Tirmidhi]

However, we also need to illustrate to our children how the Islamic economic laws and system would practically achieve this objective of eradicating poverty and ensuring prosperous lives for all, tackling the massive inequality of wealth that exists within societies today. For example, we could highlight that Islam rejects interest or the hoarding of wealth which concentrates wealth in the hands of a few while making the masses poor. Rather the Islamic laws ensure the effective distribution of wealth amongst the people. For instance, it prohibits the privatization of valuable resources such as gas, coal, electricity, and water so that all are able to enjoy their benefits, including through investing their revenue in education, healthcare, agriculture and infrastructure development. The Islamic Khilafah system will also have a Department of Sadaqa which will provide the poor or unemployed with funds to set up a business, buy land or property in order to get out of debt or poverty. Furthermore, a state ruling purely by Islam will calculate, collect and distribute the zakat correctly from the Muslims and distribute it according to Allah's command, including for the poor. Alongside this, the unification of lands and resources under the Islamic Khilafah state would enable it to use wealth from a richer part of the state to provide for those in poorer areas to lift them out of poverty Insha Allah.

With the widespread political oppression that young Muslims witness today globally that is taking place under dictatorships and democracies alike, we can also demonstrate how the Islamic system can solve this problem. For instance, we can explain how the Islamic ruling system of the Khilafah has many checks and balances defined by the Shariah laws which minimize the emergence of political oppression. For example, under Islamic rule, the laws and rights of the people are fixed in accordance to those defined by the Qur'an and Sunnah and cannot be changed by the ruler or anyone in governance, for Allah (swt) says,

﴿فَأَحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ﴾

***“And judge between them by what Allah has revealed. And do not follow their vain desires, diverging from the Truth that has come to you.”*** [Al-Maida: 48]

Therefore, arbitrary arrests, torture, mass spying on citizens, removing the rights of religious minorities, and silencing individuals from accounting those governing the state, that are all prohibited in Islam will always be prohibited under Islamic rule. Islamic principles such as ensuring the rule of law, an independent judiciary, and having an elected ruler with limitations on his power, cannot be changed. No-one is above the law – including the Khalifah. Furthermore, only Islam can nurture leaders with taqwa (God-consciousness) who are servants of the people sincerely caring for their every need, for they are constantly aware of their great accountability before their Lord (swt) for how they execute their duties. Alongside this, there are numerous avenues under Islamic governance that facilitate and support the people in holding their rulers to account, for the Khilafah system seeks to preserve the correct application of Islam, including upholding justice and ensuring the people's needs are met. This is rather than protecting the political ambitions and fulfilling the desire for power of those who rule. So for example, the education system of the Khilafah will nurture an understanding amongst the Ummah of their vital Islamic obligation of commanding the Marouf and forbidding the Munkar and hence accounting their rulers over their responsibilities. It will also generate an abundance of independent scholars who have the important role of scrutinising and correcting the Khalifah on his understanding and adoption of the Shariah rules. Alongside this, within the Khilafah, the role of political parties, the Court of Unjust Acts (Mahkamat al-Mathalim), the Council of the Ummah (Majlis al-Ummah), and an independent media is to stand against oppression and hold the rulers to account to ensure they fulfil their duties and govern by justice, including meeting the needs and rights of the people.

And finally, we can also describe to our children how Islam can solve many of the social problems facing societies today such as broken families, the neglect of children and the elderly, and violence and exploitation of girls and women. Depending on the age of the child, we can explain how Islam rejects personal and sexual freedoms which cause relationships outside marriage, broken families, and crimes against the honour of women. It also prohibits

the objectification, sexualization and exploitation of women for any purpose which cheapens their status. Rather it demands that men and society view and treat women with the upmost respect always, even outlawing and enforcing a severe punishment upon those who utter a single word of slander or commit a single act of violence that violates their dignity. Allah (swt) says,

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَانِينَ جَلْدَةً وَلَا تَقْبَلُوا لَهُمْ شَهَادَةً أَبَدًا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾

***“Those who accuse chaste women of adultery and fail to bring four witnesses (to approve it) flog them eighty stripes and never (afterward) accept their testimony - they indeed are evil-doers.”*** [An-Nur: 4]

Furthermore, Islam contains a comprehensive framework of social laws such as the prescription of a specific dress-code, forbidding the beautification of women in public life, outlawing extramarital relationships, and prohibiting a non-mahrem man and woman (those to whom marriage is legal) being alone together or socialising together. These laws regulate the relationship between men and women to ensure their cooperation in society and an interaction that is pure, dignified and productive, while also minimising any social or moral problems, including violence against women. This will enable them to study, work, travel and engage in other activities in society in a safe environment. These Islamic social laws also direct the fulfilment of the sexual instincts of men and women to marriage alone and hence to that which is beneficial for society and men, women and children alike, rather than to those relationships which are harmful to the wellbeing of the community, family and individuals. This body of social laws will be implemented comprehensively by the Khilafah that places the protection of women’s dignity and safety as well as the harmony of family life as a key pillar of state policy.

Empowering Muslim children with the understanding of Islam as a comprehensive belief system that is able to solve all human problems in the best way, will help them to see the implementation of their Deen in all areas of life as vital and of utmost relevance for today’s world. It will also enable them to present Islam effectively as the correct way of life to those around them, and equip them with strong arguments to counter some of the attacks on their beliefs. And it will Insha Allah build them to stand against those who seek to change Islam for they will understand that their Deen does not need reforming, it needs implementing completely and correctly. All of this will instill within our Muslim youth a great sense of responsibility towards their Ummah and humanity and a great urgency to work to carry Islam to mankind and establish the System of Allah (swt), the Khilafah in our Muslim lands, having recognized the great power that lies in their hands to bring real change to this world through their Deen. It will give them a worthy cause to struggle for that can truly build a better future for their Ummah and mankind.

﴿فَإِنَّمَا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقَى \* وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَى﴾

***“So there will surely come to you guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, he shall not go astray nor fall into distress and misery. But whosoever turns away from My Reminder (i.e. neither believes in this Qur'an nor acts on its orders, etc.) verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection.”*** [Ta-Ha: 123-124]

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by  
Dr. Nazreen Nawaz

Director of the Women’s Section in the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir