

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Khutbah on World Orphans (Yateem) Day - Ramadan 15th

By Sh. Abdur Rahman Khan

الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِ اللّٰهِ وَعَلٰی اٰلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ.
وَبَعْدُ:

Allah SWT says:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ
وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

They ask you, [O Muhammad], what they should spend. Say, "Whatever you spend of good is [to be] for parents and relatives and orphans and the needy and the traveler. And whatever you do of good - indeed, Allah is Knowing of it." (Ch.2: Verse 215)

World Orphans Day

- Ramadhan 15th has been declared as World Orphans Day by the OIC (57 Muslim countries) and this is the 3rd year. The idea is not to make a one day show of talking about taking care of orphans (Yateem) but to make this day; a day of that the international community should take action to raise awareness for the orphans and urge to start all kinds of social projects to alleviate their sufferings.
- The awareness must be made that these children are not forgotten nor are they lost in political gimmicks. After all it is a religious responsibility. It is a Muslim's responsibility.

The Reality of Yateem or Orphans

- Some major causes of children becoming orphans are as result of wars, invasions, natural disasters, diseases, civil unrest, social problems and crisis in various countries. Their numbers have reached tens of millions. Often most of these orphans are malnourished; never or hardly ever go to school. Food and medical treatment in cases of injuries are far from adequate. Living conditions are also very harsh as they shuffle from family to family

or from handmade shacks and tents, to being left on the roads vulnerable to other social illnesses.

- Children of such circumstances do not have the experience and life skills to make it on their own. Without help and intervention many can lose their childhood and only have a little hope for a better future and not to mention losing their lives.

Islam has given rights to the Yateem (orphans)

- Islam as a complete way of life takes care of every aspect of the human society. It provides solutions to every aspect of human problems especially in the field of social justice and social services. It affirms that the right of any child be protected, taken care of physically, psychologically and emotionally. And these rights don't change when they become orphans. In fact, it becomes a greater responsibility on society to ensure that this orphan child be given the comfort and protection he or she deserves. Thus Islam ranks taking care of Yateem among the noblest of good deeds.
- Rasoolullah SAS was himself an orphan. Thus, he spoke about the importance and responsibility of taking care of orphans (Yateem) from a firsthand experience and not just in theory or idea even though that would have sufficed.
- There is great importance set in the Quran and Sunnah (the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH)) in the treatment of the orphans.
- In fact, Allah SWT was the ultimate caretaker of Rasoolullah SAS being an orphan. He SWT says: **أَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَىٰ** - *Did He not find you orphaned, and give you shelter?* (93:. 6)
- There were also many incidents of how Rasoolullah SAS took care of orphans but suffice to mention his direct involvement with the orphans of Ja'far bin Abi Talib (RA) when he got martyrdom in the Battle of Mu'tah مؤتة. The Prophet (SAS) went to Jafar's house and gave Asma (RA) the following glad tiding that rejoiced her:

أَتَخْشِينَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْعَيْلَةَ ؟ أَنَا وَلِيُّهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ

"Do you afraid of poverty while I am their guardian in this world and in the Hereafter?"

Shar'ee importance of taking care of the Yateem

The high status of taking care of the Yateem is mentioned in a Hadith of Rasoolullah SAS in which he said:

" كَافِلُ الْيَتِيمِ لَهُ أَوْ لِغَيْرِهِ أَنَا وَهُوَ كَهَاتَيْنِ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَأَشَارَ مَالِكٌ
بِالسَّبَّابَةِ وَالْوَسْطَى "

"One who looks after the orphan whether he is his relative or not, I and he would be together in Paradise like this, and Malik (explained it) with the gesture by drawing his index finger and middle finger close together". (Sahih Muslim from Abu Hurairah)
The narration of Al-Bukhari is slightly different:

أَنَا وَكَافِلُ الْيَتِيمِ كَهَاتَيْنِ فِي الْجَنَّةِ ، وَأَشَارَ بِالسَّبَّابَةِ وَالْوَسْطَى ،
وَفَرَّقَ بَيْنَهُمَا قَلِيلًا .

"I and the one who looks after an orphan will be like this in Paradise," showing his middle and index fingers and separating them. (Bukhari, Narrated by Sahl)

Explaining the virtue and importance of Yateem from the above mentioned Hadith Imam Ibn Hajar mentions that Ibn Battaal said:

"It is worthy of him who has heard this Hadith to act according to it in order to accompany the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, in Paradise. And there is no rank better than this rank in the Hereafter".

Imaam Ibn Hajar explained the scope of taking care of the Yateem saying:

One who looks after the orphan is one who takes care of his needs from maintenance, clothing, discipline, training and so on and this virtue is given to the one who spends of his own wealth or from the orphan's wealth with a permissible guardianship.

Looking after Yateem is an act of Piety and Righteousness

Islam is not just about talks and lectures but doing what Allah SWT commands us to. Here Allah SWT informs that it is not the outward things that bring about piety but He SWT says:

لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُولُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ
بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ
ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي
الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا

عَاهَدُوا^ط وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ^ط أُولَئِكَ
الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا^ط وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and gives zakah; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous. (Ch. 2: Verse 177)

It is not just commendable (Mandoob) but an obligation (Fard) and

Many times the Muslim community presents taking care of orphans is among the Mandoob actions and so it is commendable to participate in sponsoring an orphan. But Allah SWT has placed this act in line with Tawheed of Allah SWT and obedience to parents. The fact that Allah SWT speaks about kindness towards the orphans alongside mentioning kindness towards ones parents and family is not merely coincidental. He SWT does so to show us that the care we provide to an orphan must be at par with the care we provide to our loved ones.

He SWT commands:

وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي
الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ
وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا
يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا

Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the neighbor farther away, the companion at your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful. (Ch.4 Verse

36)

Taking care of orphans is the best act of charity in Islam

The Quran emphasizes the importance of spending on orphans as Allah SWT says:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ
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They ask you, [O Muhammad], what they should spend. Say, "Whatever you spend of good is [to be] for parents and relatives and orphans and the needy and the traveler. And whatever you do of good - indeed, Allah is Knowing of it." (Ch.2: Verse 215)

The Prophet (SAS) said:

إِنَّ هَذَا الْمَالَ خَضِرَةٌ حُلْوَةٌ فَنِعْمَ صَاحِبُ الْمُسْلِمِ ، مَا أُعْطِيَ مِنْهُ
الْمَسْكِينِ وَالْيَتِيمِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ

"This money is fresh and sweet. Blessed is the wealth of the Muslim, from which he gives to the poor, the orphan and the wayfarer". (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Rejection of Yateem is rejection of Deen itself

While the reward of taking care of orphans is tremendous, the rejection of orphans is considered a sign of rejection of all moral law, as expressed by Surah Al-Maa'un (107:1-3)

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالدِّينِ ﴿١﴾ فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدْعُ الْيَتِيمَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَا
يَحْضُ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ الْمَسْكِينِ

Have you seen him who denies the Recompense? (1) That is he who repulses the orphan (harshly), (2) And urges not the feeding of AlMiskin (the poor) (Ch. 107 Verses 1-3)

Allah SWT threatens those who unjustly usurp the property of orphans.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا
وَسَيَصْلُونَ سَعِيرًا

Verily, those who unjustly eat up the property of orphans, they eat up only fire into their bellies, and they will be burnt in the blazing Fire! (Ch. 4 Verse 10)

Conclusion:

Today Muslims all over the world donate to help taking care of orphans. There are many charitable organizations that provide food, clothes and shelter to orphans. But just by donating money and financial support is not enough for attaining the true meaning of Yateem and to live up to the call of Rasoolullah SAS. We must go above and beyond that.

We must adopt a care and concern for that orphan similar to the care and concern we have for our own children and loved ones. Today the Muslim World is filled with orphans, migrants and refugees fleeing their war torn countries. Countless children have lost their parents and families, and it is now more than ever a call for those with abundant resources at their disposal to stand up and lend a hand.

We must spread the awareness in our Masaajid, homes, circle of friends etc. Not only helping orphans financially would we have fulfilled their needs but we need address the root causes from all levels and in every possible way.

As we fast this The Blessed Month of Ramadhan we must keep in mind there are many in the streets and the shelters who would need anything from us even if it is just a Du'a at the time of breaking our fast.

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