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ONLINE MADRASAHS¹

The twenty first century is a place wherein there lies no rest, one is constantly busy and no time is spared to sit and reflect. The rat race of this world and the monotonous nine to five lifestyle has kept one preoccupied from the real purpose of one's life. There is a common concern among the masses in this mechanical and technological lifestyle, the concern of ease and promoting **convenience**.

The bombardment of new gadgets and appliances all share a common message; the message of convenience. Why walk when you can drive? Why manually grind when there are appliances which can do everything for you? Why vacuum when robots can do it all? And the list goes on and on.

Undoubtedly, many appliances and gadgets have become a need and without them life would be extremely difficult. However, on the other hand, many others are solely for our convenience, and due to this apparent disguise we become oblivious of the harm which we are causing to ourselves.

For example, many such appliances have reduced our physical activity and thus we are facing many physical ailments. Furthermore, an effort is made to remove these physical ailments with other gadgets. Hence, we are confounded in this vicious cycle.

As a Muslim, we ought to look at everything of this transitory abode with much more depth and astuteness. We should look beyond the apparent benefit and focus on the future harms and harmful effects. Shaikhul Hadeeth of Darul Uloom Deoband, Mufti Muhammad Saeed Palanpoori *rahimahullah* mentions that our gaze should always be focused towards the possible harmful outcomes, he mentions that the invention of the fridge has undoubtedly assisted us in storing food, however have we ever given any thought over the fact that it has also deprived us from giving to the poor by hoarding our food items?

This "convenience" is not only restricted to worldly aspects, but rather it has affected our Deeni issues as well. One of these issues is with regards to online Madrasahs.

Online Madrasahs are convenient for parents, as parents are relieved of the responsibility of dropping and picking up their children from Madrasah. Others may prefer online classes to on-site Maktab due to some other reasons, however as mentioned above, we should always consider the negative aspects and what our children will be deprived of if they do not attend a Madrasah. There are many benefits attached to physically attending a Maktab, *inshallah* due to brevity we will suffice on three points.

¹ Please note that this article is referring to normal circumstances wherein normal onsite classes can take place.

Firstly, *Ilm-e-Deen* (the knowledge of Deen i.e. the Noble Qur'an and other Islamic sciences) is a completely different realm and domain to that of secular knowledge. The knowledge of the Noble Qur'an and Ahadeeth is *Noor* (light), and this light is transferred from the *Ustaad/ah* to the student. This *Noor* will be acquired by sitting physically in the company of the *Ahlul Ilm* (people of Islamic knowledge).²

Secondly, it is very unfortunate that many have fallen prey to the misconception that the object of sending ones child to Madrasah is that the child quickly and casually completes the recitation of the Noble Qur'an and vanishes, but rather to the contrary, the object of my child attending a Madrasah is that together with reciting the Noble Qur'an in a correct manner and learning other Islamic subject's is that good qualities are inculcated and blameworthy traits are corrected.

Hadrat Abu Ubaid Al-Qasim ibn Sallaam *rahimahullah* narrates that all the companions of Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood *radiyallahu anhu* would travel to Hadrat Umar *radiyallahu anhu* in order to observe his attributes, mannerism and conduct. This was done in order for them to imitate and copy him.³

On one occasion, whilst Hadrat Abdullah bin Mubarak *rahimahullah* was on a journey he was asked the following question "Where are you intending (to go)?" He replied "Basra". The questionnaire further asked "Who do you intend (to meet) in Basra?". Hadrat Abdullah bin Mubarak *rahimahullah* said:

ابن عون, آخذ من اخلاقه, آخذ من آدابه

(I intend meeting) Ibn Awn *rahimahullah*, (so that) I can take from his character and his etiquettes/mannerisms.⁴

From the above two incidents we learn that the object of learning *Ilm-e-Deen* is not only confined to learning and excelling academically, but rather it is the companionship with the people of knowledge, so that good qualities are inculcated and that *Tarbiyah* (spiritual nurturing and rearing) takes place.

Finally, it is imperative that children are not deprived of an Islamic *Mahool* (environment). There is a profound effect on a child who witnesses an environment wherein the Sunnah of Nabi *Sallallahu alai wa sallam* is practiced, a place wherein other children are in Islamic Libaas (clothes) and Salaah is prayed in congregation. Such a child gains confidence in practising the Sunnah and further motivates others as well.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us understanding and practice. Ameen

² فان العلم الشرعى يختلف عن العلوم الاخرى، من حيث انه علم، وتربية وسلوك... (بعد أسطر) اما طالب العلم فانه يتعلم العلم ويتعلم معه السلوك والعمل من الشيوخ الخ (معالم الارشادية لصناعة طالب العلم -ص ١٨٥)

و من اين يكتسب هذا الرقى في التربية و السلوك من لم يتلق العلم عن الشيوخ؟! و من اين يكتسبها من يأخذها الشهادات بالانتساب الى الجامعات دون مواظبة و ملازمة و مباحثة؟! بل من اين يشم رائحتها من نال الشهادات العالية-بإسمائها و القابها لا بحقائقها - من اخذها من وراء شاشات الاجهزة الالكترونية في الجامعات المفتوحة و التعليم عن بعد؟! (صفحة ٤١٣)

روى ابو عبيد القاسم بن سلام: ان اصحاب ابن مسعود كانوا يرحلون الى عمر رضى الله عنهم جميعا، فينظرون الى سمته وهديه ودله، فيتشبهون به (صفحة: ٢١٠)³
وجاء في ((ربيع الابرار)) للزمخشري (١:٨١٥) ((قيل لعبد الله بن المبارك -و قد سافر- اين تريد؟ قال: البصرة، قيل: من تقصد بالبصرة؟ قال: ابن عون آخذ من اخلاقه، آخذ من آدابه (صفحة: ٢١١)⁴