

Question:

Is it true that one should not let one's children outside in the evenings due to the *Shayāṭīn* being around at that time?

Answer:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

There are many concepts which have become unusually prevalent within certain parts of the Muslim world. If such concepts cannot be justified by the Qur'an and Sunnah, they are not to be accepted; on the other hand, a textual evidence will prove a particular concept to be from Islām and not from a cultural tradition.

As for keeping one's children indoors in the evenings, there is an authentic *ḥadīth* in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* wherein the Prophet of Islām ﷺ explicated this. The *ḥadīth* reads:

«إذا استجنى الليل ، أو قال : جنح الليل ، فكفوا صبيانكم ، فإن الشياطين تنتشر حينئذ ، فإذا ذهب ساعة من العشاء فخلوهم ، وأغلق بابك واذكر اسم الله ، وأطفئ مصباحك واذكر اسم الله ، وأوك سقاءك واذكر اسم الله ، وخر إناءك واذكر اسم الله ، ولو تعرض عليه شيئاً»

“When night falls, keep your children [i.e. do not let them out] because the Shayāṭīn are scattered at that time. When a portion of the night goes by, you may let them free. Mention Allāh's name when closing your door; mention Allāh's name when extinguishing your lantern; mention Allāh's name when locking your water-skin; mention Allāh's name when covering your utensil - even by placing something across it.”⁽¹⁾

Another *ḥadīth* of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* reads:

«لا ترسلوا فواشيكم وصبيانكم إذا غابت الشمس حتى تذهب فحمة العشاء ، فإن الشياطين تُبعث إذا غابت الشمس حتى تذهب فحمة العشاء»

“When the sun sets, do not send out your cattle and your children until the time of 'Ishā' enters, because the Shayāṭīn are sent out after sunset until the time of 'Ishā' enters.”⁽²⁾

Although the chain of the second narration contains a *mudallis*, Abū 'l-Zubayr, he has explicitly mentioned having heard this narration from Sayyidunā Jābir ؓ, as

⁽¹⁾ Al-Bukhārī (3280) and Muslim [5250] (2012).

⁽²⁾ Muslim [5253] (2013) and Abū Dāwūd (2604). This has been translated according to one interpretation of the word *faḥmah*. For more details, see *Al-Minhāj* (commentary of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*): vol. 5 p. 209 [Dār al-Fayḥā' edition (1431 AH / 2010 CE)].

recorded by al-Ḥumaydī in his *Musnad* (1273); and the above-mentioned narration, as well as other narrations, support its meaning.⁽³⁾

Therefore, there is a sound basis to the well-known concept of keeping young children indoors after sunset. As for the *Fiqhī* status of keeping one's children indoors – i.e. *wājib*, *mandūb* etc – we advise one to resort to an expert of Fiqh who is well-versed in the principles of one of the four major schools of Sunnī Law.

We surely attest that Allāh ﷻ knows best.

Answered by Shahin-ur Rahman, Northampton.

Sunday 8th Dhū 'l-Qa'dah 1436 AH (23rd August 2015 CE)

Checked and approved by Shaykh Dr. Abul Hasan Hussain Ahmed, London.

⁽³⁾ For more details, see *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* vol. 4 pp. 246-247 and vol. 5 pp. 563-564 under (3733) [Mu'assat al-Risālah edition (1433 AH / 2012 CE)].