

Is it More Important to Teach in a Madrasah or to Engage in Tabligh

Q: Imaan-100 : There is a Madrasah in England with three Asaatiza (plural of Ustaadh -teachers) and 150 students. The Asaatizah have three weeks holiday and also attend the Tablighi gatherings in turn, for which time is taken off. Therefore, from the 313 days of the year during which the Madrasah runs, they spend 156 days in Tablighi programmes. This leaves only 157 days for actual teaching. In this Christian country and environment of Kufr, the children have only until they are 15 to attain the knowledge of Deen. In view of this, will it be permissible to waste the time of these children to participate in the activities of the Tablighi Jamaa'ah? Is it more important to impart the knowledge of Deen or to participate in the activities of the Tablighi Jamaa'ah? What is the ruling of the Shari'ah?

Answer: If the teachers are acting according to their agreement with the Madrasah committee, it will not be impermissible nor will there be any harm in what they are doing. The work of Tabligh is just as important as teaching the children. It is by the work of Tabligh that the environment of Deen is created for men and women, the young and the old. People then have the opportunity to inculcate the fear of Allaah, to have concern for the Akhirah, to develop the fervour for Ibaadah and to increase the religious consciousness.

The environment in England is particularly dangerous especially for the Muslim youth. If parents develop religious consciousness, they will naturally be concerned about their children and will then have them study the knowledge of Deen (something that people detest nowadays). It is in this way that people will be encouraged to regularly attend the Masaajid and Madaaris. The system that your Madrasah follows is worthy of emulation because just as the teachers are fulfilling their responsibility of teaching children, they are simultaneously fulfilling the responsibility of Tabligh.

Imaam Ghazaali RAH. laments about the period of time when people had become sinful on account of them failing in the task of encouraging each other to engage in Deeni education, Tabligh and in doing good. He adds, "What will be situation with the salaah and Deen of the rural people when most of those living in the cities are unaware of the conditions and injunctions of salaah?"

It is therefore necessary for an Aalim to be present in the Masjid of every town, suburb and small village. After fulfilling his immediate (Fardh Ain) duty towards his locality, the Aalim then needs to fulfill secondary (Fardh Kifaayah) duty if he has the opportunity and teach the Deen to the people in nearby areas. He should take his own food along with him and not be hosted by others so that they do not doubt his intentions.

In fact, people who know the conditions of salaah need to teach it to those who are ignorant of the same, failing which, they will be sinful. However, it is the Ulema who have the opportunity and time to educate the ignorant masses and it is also them who have the ability to fulfill this task in the best manner. If the task is left solely to the masses to fulfill, they will need to abandon their businesses, agriculture and other professions, thereby creating an imbalance in

the economy, whereas the economy needs to be maintained. It is the duty of the Ulema to pass on to people what Rasulullaah SAW. has taught and it is for this reason that they are referred to as the heirs of the Ambiyaa ALY.

When there are many learners and few teachers, it is necessary to employ more. When the objective of the Madrasah is to impart knowledge, it is regrettable to see more money being spent on the Madrasah building rather than on increasing the number of teachers and on their salaries.

The gist of it all is that the effort of Tabligh should be carried out simultaneously with the duty of teaching and it is necessary for the Madrasah committees to allow the teachers paid leave to engage in Tabligh.

Sheikhul Islaam Hadhrat Madani RAH. writes, "It has come to my attention that some committee members object to these teachers receiving the salaries. Islaamic institutions have not been founded solely for the purpose of imparting knowledge, but they are responsible for the religious and other requirements of the Muslims. It is for this reason that Hadhrat Nanotwi RAH. went on a collection drive during the wars that Europe and Russia waged and collected a huge amount of money to give to the Turks. Daarul Uloom Deoband was closed during this period. but salaries were still being paid."

He also states that during the periods when evils like the Shuddis, Shangtans and Rajpots were rearing their ugly heads, delegations of Ulema were dispatched to various areas and were still being their salaries. Had their families been left without this financial assistance, the Deen and Muslims would have been dealt a tremendous setback. He also makes it clear that it had been the practice of the Ulema from previous times as well to stop their teaching to attend gatherings, debates and other such programmes. By doing all of this, the Ulema are still fulfilling the objectives of the Islaamic institution.

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