



ISLAMIC
SHAKHSIYAH
FOUNDATION

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Shakhsiyah Publications presents:

Finding Strength in the Quran:

A Family Halaqah

Guide on Palestine

A Resource for Muslim Parents & Educators

It may be difficult to turn away from the news and social media on our phones right now as atrocities and injustice unfold before our eyes. As adults, it feels impossible to process everything we are bearing witness to – the videos of suffering, the silence from people we consider friends, the helplessness. It feels even more impossible to discuss this with our children and young adults.

Let us support them through the lens of the Quran and Sunnah, and use these to guide our response to what we have been witnessing in the last few weeks. We turn to the Quran as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ did during times of hardship. We turn to du'ā with the yaqīn (conviction) that Allah (swt) will answer us. We turn to the words and example of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as our role model who went through similar situations.

We recommend utilizing this resource to set up halaqah in your homes, classrooms, and masājid (mosques).

If you would like to learn more about halaqah, the [Islamic Educator Learning Community](#) is currently offering courses on The Prophetic Pedagogy of Dialogic Halaqah and offer various resources around conducting dialogic halaqah in your classrooms and homes.

This resource offers:

- **Guidelines on when and how to talk to children at times of crisis**
- **Guidelines on how to set up a family halaqah so that we can listen to our children and support them**
- **Talking Points and Key Questions to use in your family halaqah**
- **Ayāt (verses) of the Quran and hadith (sayings of the Prophet ﷺ) that are relevant to the current crisis unfolding before us.**

Having Age-Appropriate Conversations



For children aged seven and under:

- All children are individuals. Carefully consider your child's maturity and temperament, and then explain the issues in an age appropriate manner.
- If they ask questions, give them accurate yet brief information. Avoid giving unnecessary details.
- Listen to their concerns and fears, but reassure them by explaining that they are safe and that you are there to make sure everything is okay.
- It is important not to belittle their fears, instead distract them with their toys and give them physical comfort.
- Some children may find it easier to express their feelings through art, colouring and age appropriate writing activities.
- It is important for all children to know that they can ask you any question, and that you will answer them honestly.

For children aged eight years and above:

- Older children may be interested in the reasons behind conflict. You can help them by going through some recent political events and the historical context, to explain what is happening.
- Make sure that all the interaction with your child is discussion based and you are doing a lot of listening, as this will help you understand your child's concerns and address them.
- Speak about and clear up any misconceptions the child has between fact and fiction – discuss the significance of truth and lies.
- With older children, there may be an opportunity to speak about deconstructing the news and how bias and prejudice can be created
- You may need to explain the key vocabulary being used in the media such as terrorist, 'Islamist' and extremism. A good starting point is to ask your children what they understand by these terms. Explain that these are vague terms and are used differently by different people. Children can understand how these terms are sometimes used to unfairly demonise Muslims. Children should understand that this is unjust, and they can be proud to be Muslim.
- Read through Prophet Muhammad's seerah, giving examples of how he dealt with difficult situations and negative propaganda.
- Discuss and explore the notion of accountability with your child and consequences in this life and in the akhira.

Taking care of our children's needs: Guidelines on when and how to talk to children in times of crisis

In order to take care of the emotional, spiritual and physical needs of our children in difficult times, it is important to apply some simple guidelines. These guidelines are designed to support parents when there is political violence or unrest, locally, or globally, which often results in an onslaught against Muslims in mainstream and social media. In this complex environment, it is important for Muslim parents to recognise their own needs and their children's needs. One of the ways to address this is to learn about the life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and learn how he dealt with similar experiences. His sabr and fortitude can be a source of reassurance and serves to build resilience.

Start with yourself. We are the anchors of our children and the way we act and react carries more weight than any content and resources that we could share with them.

Take care of yourself spiritually and emotionally and remember that we should refer all our thoughts and actions to pleasing Allah ta'ala.

Turn off the news in the living room and watch bulletins and engage with non-biased news sources to ascertain a balanced perspective in private.

Children should be able to view their homes and families as safe environments. Adults who are stressed and fearful can convey those emotions to children

Limit your own consumption of the news and social media if it is affecting you negatively.



Taking care of our children's needs: Guidelines on when and how to talk to children in times of crisis

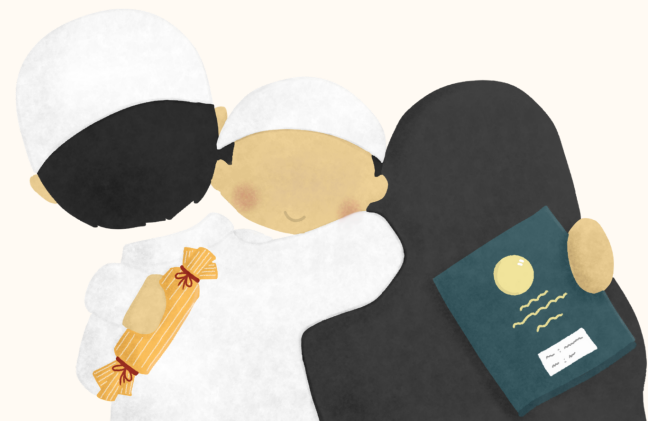
Continue to encourage positive ways of engaging in the larger society, e.g., through helping neighbours, supporting charities and protesting peacefully as our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Children need calm, reassuring, and honest adults when they are feeling afraid. Your relationship with them matters.

It is important to monitor and control all children's access to the television and internet, including smart phones, with a password. Internet safety is something every member of the family should be informed about.

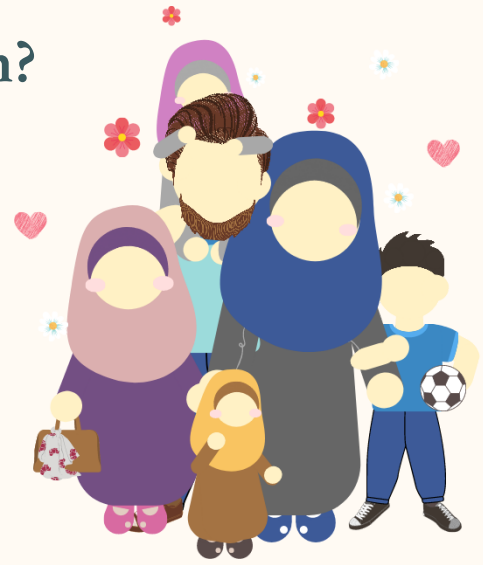
Help older children to understand bias in the media and social media and learn how to engage critically with what they see, hear and read. Help them to understand the importance to question the reliability and validity of sources.

Reassure children that most people in our community and the world are kind and helpful.



How can I set up a family Halaqah?

It can be really helpful to have these dialogues during a dedicated time where everyone can focus. You can use Family Halaqah to help you do this. The Prophet Mushammad ﷺ used to teach his companions through halaqah. Keep in mind that the remembrance of Allah (swt) is a form of action, a form of resistance, and a form of easing our hearts. We hope that this opens up dialogue that is healing – for both yourself and your learners.

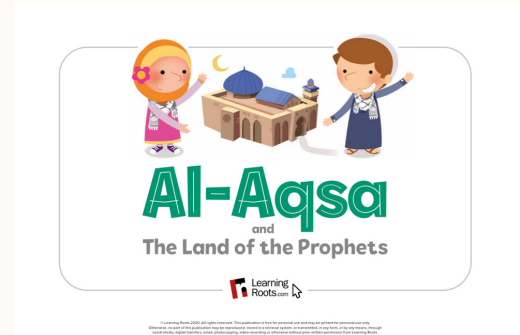


<p>What does a Halaqah look like?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit with your children in a circle on the ground and let them know that this is a time of learning from the Qur’an, the Sīrah (life of the Prophet ﷺ) and Sunnah (the Prophet’s example).
<p>Niyah (Intentions)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin with Bismillah and Qur’an recitation.
<p>Dialogue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the prepared halaqah talking points and key questions given below. • It is important to discuss all sides of an issue and encourage children to think about why others may disagree. • Let the family know that this is a dialogue and everyone can talk and ask questions.
<p>Know their levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember that everyone has a different level of understanding and you need to help each person in your family understand in a way that makes sense to them. Some children may be too young for this. • Trust yourself as a parent, you know your children and how they understand things.
<p>Closing with d’uā</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End your halaqah with a collective d’uā. You might find this resource helpful.

A little Background Knowledge

What is Palestine?

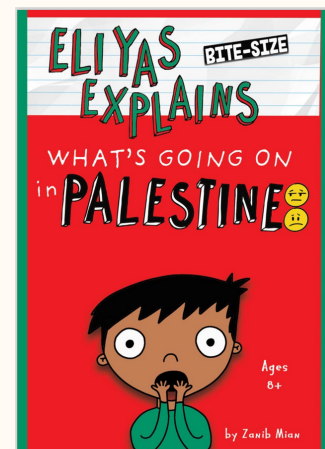
In Islam, Palestine is considered a “blessed land” for Muslims as it is home to our first qiblah, It is the third most important Masjid for Muslims after Masjid Al Haram and Masjid an Nabwi and is mentioned in the Quran six times.



Prophet Ibrahim (as) began building Al -Aqsa and it was expanded by Sulayman (as). The whole compound including the court yard, The Dome of the Rock and *Masjid Qibli* make up *Masjid Al Aqsa*. It is located in the city of Jerusalem or *Al Quds* in Arabic, which is also a holy place for Christians and Jews. Do you know the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ went to *Al Quds* on *Isra wal Miraj* on an animal similar to a horse Buraq, where he led all the previous prophets in prayer and then ascended to *Jannah*, where Allah (swt) gave Muslims the gift of *Salah*. Here is a [resource](#) on Masjid Al Aqsa.

What is happening in Palestine?

[Eliyas Explains What's Going On in Palestine](#) is a resource that you could use for additional information about the history of Palestine and present-day events. Remember that this is just one resource and you will need to adapt it for your context and purposes.



Resources are suggestions. ISF and IELC do not accept responsibility for the content of links and resources. Please use your own discretion as to how useful they are to your context and how to discuss the issues raised within them.

Family Halaqah 1: What should we do in a time of crisis? Qur'anic Ayāt, Talking Points & Key Questions:

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

“Do not falter or grieve, for you will have the upper hand, if you are ‘true’ believers”. (Al Imran 139)

- What does it mean to falter? Why does Allah (swt) tell us not to falter? What happens when we do?
- Allah tells us not to “grieve,” do you think this means that we cannot be sad? [We should feel sad as the Prophet ﷺ said that as believers, we are all one body. If one part of the body hurts, the whole body hurts. Sadness and love for our brothers and sisters in Islam is a sign of our belief. This ayah is not telling us not to be sad].
- So, what do you think Allah (swt) is saying to us in this ayah? [In this ayah, Allah (swt) is talking to the believers who suffered so much loss during the Battle of Uhud. It is therefore relevant to us today.]
- How can this ayah help us with what is happening in Gaza right now?
- Why might it be bad to grieve too much? What can it stop us from doing?
- What can we do instead of simply being sad?



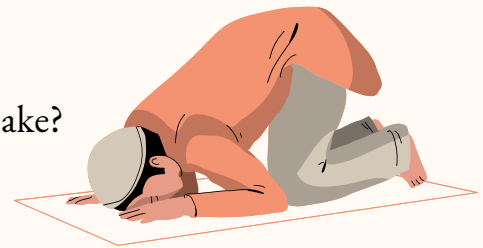
Family Halaqah 2: What is sabr? Why is it important right now? Qur'anic Ayāt, Talking Points & Key Questions:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ
الصَّابِرِينَ

١٥٣

“O believers! Seek comfort in patience and prayer. Allah is truly with those who are patient.” (Al Baqarah 153)

- What is sabr? [patience, steadfastness, not complaining]
- Right now, we are all feeling helpless. Why are we feeling helpless? [We want to help the people of Gaza but there is no way in. The supplies we are donating are not getting in. World leaders are not supporting Gaza and preventing their suffering.]
- What can we do when we feel helpless? [In this ayah, Allah tells us what we must do. We must seek help through patience, steadfastness and prayer.]
- What is patience? Can you give me an example of when you have been patient? What actions might we do now that would be impatient?
- What does it mean to be patient in this situation? Does it mean to do nothing?
- What does steadfastness mean? Can you give an example of someone who has been steadfast?
- What does it mean to seek Allah's help through prayer?
- In what ways does prayer help us?
- What is the difference between prayer and d'ua?
- What are some da'awat (supplications) you like to make?
- Is there anything else we can do to help Gaza?



Family Halaqah 3: How does Allah guarantee justice, in this world and the akhirah (hereafter)?

Qur'anic Ayāt, Talking Points & Key Questions:

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَافِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ تَشْخَصُ فِيهِ الْأَبْصَارُ ﴿٤٢﴾

“Do not think ‘O Prophet’ that Allah is unaware of what the wrongdoers do. He only delays them until a Day when ‘their’ eyes will stare in horror.” (Surah Ibrahim 42)

- What do you think this ayah means?
- Does believing in Allah help us in the face of hardship? How does it do that?
- What would you say to someone who says that the hardship is too much? [We must have complete trust in Allah and trust that He will always take care of us as He is The Most Beneficent (Ar Rahman) and The Most Merciful (Ar Raheem)].
- Have you ever wondered why Allah (swt) is allowing all these bad things to happen? [Thoughts like this may enter your mind. However, we must be confident that Allah (swt) is the All-Hearing (Al-Samee’) and the All-Seeing (Al-Basseer). He is in control of everything. He is also The Most Just (Al- ‘Adl)].
- What are the qualities of Allah (swt) that you know? How does knowing this about Allah (swt) make you feel?
- What is justice?
- What does believing in the akhirah have to do with justice?
- Who is more just? Can our justice be equal to the Justice of Allah (swt)?
- How can we make sure we are wrongdoers? [If someone is hurting innocent Muslims or other innocent people, we can’t hurt them, we have to seek justice properly.]
- What actions would be unjust on our part?
- If someone is being unjust to a non-Muslim, what should we do?
- Do two wrongs make a right?

Family Halaqah 4: How does Allah test those He loves most? Qur'anic Ayāt, Talking Points & Key Questions:

“Verily, with hardship comes ease” (Surah Ash-Sharh, 5)

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ٥

- What is hardship?
- What is ease?
- What is a time that you have experienced hardship?
- What is a time that you have experienced ease?
- Allah (swt) promises us that with every hardship, comes ease. What do you think that means?



وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ

وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالْثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ١٥٥

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ١٥٦

We will certainly test you with a touch of fear and famine and loss of property, life, and crops. Give good news to those who patiently endure – who say, when struck by a disaster, “Surely to Allah we belong and to Him we will ‘all’ return.” (Al Baqarah 155 & 156)

- What does it mean to be tested?
- Why does Allah (swt) test us? [Allah (swt) loves every Muslim 70 times more than our own mothers love us. So we should remember Allah (swt) is Al Hakim (All Wise) and He knows what we do not know, and that is why He tests us.]
- How can we pass the test? [Refer back to the ayah if needed.]
- What do we mean when we say “Inna li Allah wa inna ilayhi rajee’oon?”
- Why do you think Allah (swt) mentions patience so many times in the Quran?
- How can we become the patient people that Allah (swt) speaks about in these ayahs?
- Allah (swt) tells us that we will certainly be tested in this life. What are tests that you’ve experienced in your life?

Family Halaqah 5: What does Allah say about the shuhada' (martyrs)? Qur'anic Ayāt, Talking Points & Key Questions:

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَن يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ وَلَكِن لَّا نَشْعُرُوكَ

“Never say that those martyred in the cause of Allah are dead—in fact, they are alive but you do not perceive it” (Al Baqarah 154)

- What is a shaheed? [The English word martyr is not a good translation, discuss the concept of shaheed and shahadah.]
- What does it mean to bear witness?
- In Surah Al Baqarah, Allah (swt) comforts those left behind, the people who have lost loved ones. He tells us that our loved ones who die as shuhada' are not dead. They are alive with Him, the most Merciful (swt), living in the Gardens of Jannah.
- The Prophet ﷺ also said “The martyr (shaheed) does not feel the pain of being killed except as one of you feels a bite/pinch (Sunan Tirmidhi, Hadith: 1668).
- How does this help us cope with what is happening in Gaza?
- What is the reward of a shaheed?
- How does this make you feel when you think of all the children of Gaza who are now shuhada'?
- How does Islam teach us to give comfort to those who have lost their loved ones?

