

How to Discuss the Ongoing Palestine Conflict with your Children (and everyone else)

1. Parents should start the whole discussion by using the following metaphor to make their children understand the conflict: You are peacefully living in your house and suddenly one day, 75 years ago, some people enter it by force, occupy half your house, evict half of your family, put the remaining half under house arrest in the remaining half of the house. Then, they keep on occupying rooms from that half too, pushing your remaining family further and further back, and finally, you find yourself locked up in the bathroom of your house. As if that wasn't bad enough, the occupiers at times cut off your electricity, water, and gas supplies and don't let anything enter the bathroom from the outside world. Now they are negotiating with you that you keep the bathroom, maybe also the kitchen, and accept that the house now belongs to the occupiers. Would you accept such a deal? To add insult to injury, whenever you throw a stone in protest and shatter a window of your own house in which currently the occupier is living, you are labelled as a terrorist.

2. So it is not simply about discussing the situation in Palestine but also about reclaiming the narrative of what is going on. International coverage is dominated by a clear and orchestrated Zionist media bias. Meanwhile, the emotions of Muslims globally are aligned with the hardship of the people of Palestine, and the desire to see the liberation of the Blessed Land, Al-Aqsa and the entire Palestine from the illegal Zionist occupation.

3. These events were not initiated two days ago or by the people of Palestine. Rather this was initiated in 1917 by Britain, followed by the creation of the illegal Zionist entity in 1947 by imposition upon the people of Palestine. This was the biggest theft in the 20th century that was legalized by international law and the United Nations and is still ongoing. 5 million Palestinians were forced out, while their homes, lands, and businesses were taken and are still being further taken by the Zionist settlers through forced evictions with the support of the Zionist regime and its military.

4. Any and every part of Palestine occupied is an illegal occupation, even if International law says it is not. Islam deems it as such and that is the ruling decided by Allah (swt). Any and every part of Palestine needs to be liberated, even if International Law says otherwise, as Islam demands this and that is sufficient reason for the Muslims.

5. Because Palestine is an occupied territory, the occupiers, sometimes euphemistically called settlers, are not civilians and therefore don't qualify for the rights civilians have in an armed conflict. Palestine is not a park where you can party anytime, rather it's occupied territory, so to remain safe, don't show up at the wrong place, at the wrong time.

6. Since the illegal creation of the Zionist entity and the occupation of Palestinian land, the people of Palestine in particular places like Gaza – live in the world's largest open-air prison, where they are deprived of basic needs – whether clean water, access to medical facilities and constant supply of electricity. Regular incursions and regular air raids by the Zionist military are the norm for the people of Palestine. Basic infrastructure including people's homes are destroyed and unable to be repaired. The mental impact is huge for the current and next generation of Palestinians.

7. The people of Palestine also include Christians who too suffer at the hands of the Zionist entity and also seek the liberation of Palestinian land. But this is an Islamic issue and a duty upon Muslims to liberate Palestine and secure all the people of Palestine their rights.

8. The past few days have shown that behind all the military might and financial and political support of the West, the illegal Zionist entity can be removed and Palestine liberated. We should also know that its liberation will not come through any of the Arab regimes in the region, for these regimes/governments are treacherous and are the first line to defend the Zionist entity.

9. Liberation will not come through a two-state solution and this idea must be rejected. The two-state solution attempts to fool the world that this is in the interest of Palestinians. However, its reality and purpose is to protect the existence of the illegal Zionist entity while maintaining restricted rights for the Palestinians and preventing them from returning to their lands. This is not a solution but a capitulation and telling Palestinians they cannot get back what rightly belongs to them. Islam does not accept the two-state solution or in fact any other solution except the complete and entire liberation of Palestine. Moreover, just as we don't recognize 'Israel', we are also not permitted to recognize Palestine, another nation-state coming out of the Peace of Westphalia, the Balfour Declaration, and the Sykes-Picot Agreement. We only accept a One-State solution, which is the Khilafah (Caliphate) State.

10. Muslims have been fed a diet of deception that we are weak and incapable. Whatever the political game being played, the past few days are a reminder that Muslims are not weak. We have the capability and more importantly we have Allah (swt) and there is no greater support than when Allah provides His support. We need to be uncompromising, and uninfluenced by the propaganda of Western might. Palestine or any occupied Muslim land for that matter like Kashmir, is a red line, as is the oppression of Muslims anywhere in the world.

11. This reality of the hypocrisy should be clear. While Ukraine is supported and praised for its physical resistance against the occupation of its lands by Russia, the Palestinians have been denied this right for 75 years and counting. Muslims must not be naive or fooled therefore into believing that calling on the US, the UN, International Law, or the West to intervene will solve the issue. These are the wolves and thieves that stole Palestine and protected the illegal Zionist entity. These are the same wolves that turn a blind eye to the tragedy of Kashmir at the hands of Hindu-dominated India. They are shameless and blatant in their double standards.

12. Our stance should be clear. We don't have double standards. We understand that this is a clash of civilizations, creeds, and ideologies. Our truthful claim is that we are followers of al-Haq, that we submit our will to Allah and have no say in any matter that Allah and His Messenger (saw) have decided. And Allah has demanded that Palestine and all Muslim land be liberated back under the fold and authority of Islam.

13. Instead of telling the Palestinians to be brave in braving this *zulm* (oppression) and not to do anything that will make the occupiers angry, we laud them in their struggle. We ask them to remain steadfast and we apologize to them for our neglect and the treachery, incompetence, and inaction of our rulers towards their plight. We look towards the Muslim armies, whom we call and remind of their duty, which is to liberate all Muslim lands.

14. It should also be highlighted that although the Palestinians are dying, they are not the ones who are complaining. Rather, they are willing to die for this cause. They believe that through their lives and blood, they can shake the conscience of the Muslim Ummah and its armies. They believe their sacrifice is worthwhile and capable of stopping the betrayal of the Muslim rulers in their attempt to normalize relations with the Zionist state. And while they are dying, their homes are being destroyed, their children are being killed, and they are paying the full price of this war, they are not complaining. However, many amongst us, whose sole duty it is to raise our voice for our armies to move are instead complaining! What does this tell us about our responsibility? That Palestinians have to give their lives to get our attention?

Their terrible life and misery are not enough for our rulers and our armies. Instead of being ashamed, we are complaining about why they escalated things. Is this an issue of military strategy or Imaan? This is the problem of *Wahn*, when you love this Dunya so much that you start fearing death. So fear Allah, and focus on your responsibility. Call upon the Muslim armies to help Palestine and Al-Aqsa.

15. We should remind ourselves and tell our children that it was only under the liberation of Islam that Palestine and all its people including the Christians and the Jews lived in security, peace, and stability. This is the only lasting solution for Palestine and indeed the entire world.

16. And yes, as one final point, do tell your children that the 'homemade' rockets that Hamas fired at the Zionist state were made primarily from unexploded Zionist munitions originally fired at them and the rockets are propelled by a solid mixture of sugar and potassium nitrate, a common fertilizer. Yes, Palestinians are fighting one of the world's most technologically advanced armies with their bare hands, while living in the worst possible conditions, under embargos and restrictions.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Dr. Abdul Baseer Qazi