



Did you know that an adult can drown in just 60 seconds, and a child can drown in just 20 seconds? Did you know that it takes just half a cup of water entering your lungs to cause you to drown? Did you know that in most cases, drownings are silent, without any desperate splashing or shouting for help? Did you know that the majority of drownings occur within 10 meters of safety?

The above statistics probably come as a surprise to most people, but they highlight a crucial point – drowning occurs very quickly, and it is generally due to a brief lapse in the attention of those supervising the children. Thus, experts advise that when children are in water, adults should scan the water every 10 seconds, looking for signs of distress, and should be able to reach a child in trouble within 20 seconds.

Now, just as a child can drown in water and lose his life, there is another form of drowning which can take place which is even worse than drowning in water. This is the drowning of our children's imaan in the floods of fitnah (Deeni and imaani trials). This drowning is far worse and far more tragic, as the child losing his imaan, and later on passing away in a state of disbelief, will result in him being condemned to Jahannam for eternity.

When we examine the two forms of drowning, we find that they are similar in most respects. A child's imaan can be affected in mere seconds, and it takes just a small influence, such as a movie, book, or corrupt friend, to drown his imaan. Likewise, the drowning of the imaan is generally silent, due to which parents only recognize the damage when it is already too late. Similarly, the drowning of the imaan can take place close to home – or even under the parents' roof – if the parents are lax and do not exercise vigilance in monitoring and supervising their children.

Hence, just as parents need to constantly keep an eye on their children when they are in the

water, and need to look out for signs of distress, parents must keep an eye on their children in these times of fitnah and look out for signs of the imaan being eroded and destroyed. Subtle changes in the child's attitude and behaviour, such as a change in language (use of vulgar language, etc.), changes in dressing and secretive and furtive behaviour are all signs that should sound the warning bells.

Nevertheless, among the main fitnahs which cause a child's imaan to drown are the following:

Friends: The blessed hadeeth of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) teaches us that a person's behaviour, attitude, mindset and ways will be moulded by his friends and the company that he keeps.

(Sunan Abi Dawood #4833)

Hence, most smokers and drug users will admit that the habit commenced through the influence of friends. Likewise, in many cases, watching pornography and other similar evils were also learnt through corrupt friends.

Media: Books (novels), movies, songs and TV series are all major contributors to the loss of imaan. In regard to these influences, it should be borne in mind that the danger to the imaan is over and above the sin of listening to music and watching movies and TV (as photography and movies of animate objects are haraam). Such is the subtle yet fatal influence of such media that a child once professed that he finds more inspiration in watching The Lord of the Rings (a certain movie based on a fictitious novel) than he finds in reading incidents from the lives of the illustrious Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum)! Similarly, such media has even managed to romanticize lesbianism, satanism and other evils which a believer, by his very nature, should abhor and detest.

Cell phone and Internet: Though it's been said [before](#), the danger can never be overstated and hence it will be said again – at the mere swipe of a finger, the cell phone and internet gives one access to the darkest of evils and most twisted of sins.

Furthermore, social media has promoted illicit relationships to such an extent that let alone the effect it has on the youth - it has even caused countless marriages to shatter and fall apart. Through a cell phone and the internet, one can access every other fitnah such as corrupt friends, illicit relationships, movies, etc.

Other Influences: Other influences include the school curriculum which now preaches

tolerance and support for LGBTQ+ relationships, advocates for equality between men and women, teaches Darwin's theory of human evolution, etc. whereas these teachings diametrically oppose the pristine teachings and beliefs of Islam.

If any parent is negligent in supervising his child and the child thereafter drowns, the parents will forever be blameworthy as their negligence led to the disaster that befell their child. In the very same way, if we are negligent in monitoring the imaan of our children, we will be taken to task by Allah Ta'ala, as it is the fardh obligation of every parent to make an effort to save his household from Jahannam.

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has advised that in times of fitnah, people will find safety through remaining at home. (*Sunan Tirmizi #2406*) Likewise, another hadeeth mentions that when Dajjaal emerges, people will try to keep their family members at home so that they remain safe. (*Musnad Ahmad #5353*) Thus, we should exercise extreme caution in sending our children out of the home (e.g. sleepovers, etc.), as their imaan can drown in mere moments.

If a child is able to swim, he will be safer in the water, though he will still be at risk. In fact, the stronger he is at swimming, the better his chances of survival will be. Thus, together with monitoring and supervising our children, we must make an effort to strengthen their imaan so that they will be able to remain afloat and swim against the tides and floods of fitnahs. This effort will be made through ensuring that the child attends the maktab madrasah, engaging in daily home ta'leem, and also illuminating the home and hearts with zikr, du'aa, recitation of the Quraan Majeed, etc.

These are the 'life vests' that will keep the child's imaan afloat and help him to survive the temptations and fitnahs that try to drag him beneath the flood water and drown his imaan.

May Allah Ta'ala safeguard our imaan and the imaan of our progenies until the Day of Qiyaamah, aameen.

Drowning!

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The drowning of our children's imaan in the floods of fitnah (Deeni and imaani trials) is even worse and more tragic than them drowning in water.

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