

The Call to Allaah

By the esteemed Shaykh Saalih al-Fowzan [1]

Da'wah to Allaah rests upon firm pillars and is established upon foundations which are absolutely essential. If any of these are missing, the *da'wah* will not be correct, nor will it produce the desired results - no matter how much effort is expended, nor how much time is wasted. And this is the reality which we witness with regards to many of the present-day calls, which are not supported by those pillars, nor built upon those firm foundations.

These pillars which support the correct *da'wah* are clearly shown in the Book and the *Sunnah*, and can be summarised as follows:-

[1] Knowledge of That Which One Calls To

Since the ignorant person is not suitable to be a *dâ'î* (caller). Allaah - *the Most High* - said to His Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*:

"Say, O Muhammad *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, this is my way: I call to Allaah (i.e. the testification that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah alone, having no partner) upon certain knowledge - I and those who follow me." [Sûrah Yûsuf 12:108]

And *Basîrah* is knowledge. So the *dâ'î* is certain to encounter those who are scholars of misguidance, those who will attack him with doubts and futile arguments, in order to rebut the truth. And Allaah - the Most High - says:

"And argue with them in a way that is better." [Sûrah an-Nahl 16:125]

Furthermore, the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said to Mu'adh: "*You are going to a people from the people of the Book.*" [2] So if the *dâ'î* is not armed with sufficient knowledge for him to face the doubts, and contend with the opponent, then he will be defeated in the first encounter and will be halted at the beginning of the way.

[2] Acting In Accordance With That Which He Calls To

So that he will be a good example - his actions attesting to his words, and leaving no excuse for the opponents of the truth. Allaah - *the Most High* - said about His Prophet Shu'ayb, that he said to his people:

"I do not wish to forbid you from something and then do it myself. Rather, I only wish to rectify you as far as I am able." [Sûrah Hûd 11:88]

And Allaah - *the Most High* - said to His Prophet Muhammad *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*:

"Say, O Muhammad *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam!* Indeed my Prayer, my sacrifice, my living and my dying are all purely and solely for Allaah, Lord of the Worlds. There is no share of any of that for other than Him. That is what my Lord has ordered me, and I am the first of this nation to submit to Allaah as a Muslim." [Sûrah al-An'âm 6:162-163]

"Who is better in speech than the one who calls the people to Allaah and does righteous actions?" [Sûrah Fussilat 41:33]

[3] Al-Ikhlâs (Purity of Intention)

Such that the *da'wah* is done purely and sincerely to seek the Face of Allaah and His reward. It is not done for show, nor repute, nor status, nor leadership, nor desiring worldly goals - since if any of these goals adulterate the *da'wah* then *da'wah* will not be purely for Allaah; rather it would then be a call for oneself, or for the attainment of a worldly goal, as Allaah informs that His Prophets said to their respective people:

"I do not ask you for any reward for conveying this Qur'aan." [Sûrah al-An'âm 6:90]

"I do not ask you for any monetary recompense for my admonition." [Sûrah Hûd 11:29]

[4] Beginning with what is of Primary Importance, Then With What Comes Next in Importance, and So On

So firstly he calls to the correction of *'aqîdah* (beliefs and creed), by ordering that all worship is made purely for Allaah, and that *shirk* is forbidden. Then ordering the establishment of the Prayer, and the paying of the *Zakâh*, and that the obligatory duties are carried out and that the forbidden matters are avoided. This was the procedure followed by all the Messengers, as Allaah - *the Most High* - says:

"We sent a Messenger to every nation, ordering them that they should worship Allaah alone, obey Him and make their worship purely for Him; and that they should avoid everything worshipped besides Allaah." [Sûrah an-Nahl 16:36]

"We did not send any Messenger before you, O Muhammad, except that We revealed to him that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, so make all your worship purely for Allaah." [Sûrah al-Anbiyâ 21:25]

Furthermore, when the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* sent Mu'adh to Yemen, he said to him: *"Indeed you are going to a people from the people of the Book, so let the first thing you call them to be the testification that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah. So if they accept this, then inform them that Allaah has obligated five Prayers upon them in each day and night ..."* [3]

Then there is in his *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam's* way and method of giving *da'wah*, the best example and the most perfect and complete methodology - in that he *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*

remained in Makkah for thirteen years, calling the people to *Tawheed* and forbidding them from *Shirk*, before he ordered them with Prayer, *Zakâh*, Fasting and *Hajj*, and before he forbade them from usury, fornication, theft and murder.

[5] Patient Perseverance in Facing Difficulties Encountered in Calling to Allaah, and in Facing Harm From the People

For the path of *da'wah* is not strewn with roses, rather it is covered with hardships and hazards. The best example of this is the case of the Messengers - may Allaah's praises and blessings of peace be upon them all - with regards to the harm and the mockery which they suffered from their people. As Allaah - *the Most High* - said to His Messenger *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*:

"Indeed Messengers were also mocked before you, but those who mocked them were overtaken by the punishment that they made light of." [Sûrah al-An'âm 6:10]

And He said:

"Indeed Messengers were also denied before you, but they bore these denials with patient perseverance, and they suffered harm until Our help came to them." [Sûrah al-An'âm 6:34]

Likewise, the followers of the Prophets met with the same harm and hardship, in proportion to their efforts in calling to Allaah, following the example of those noble Messengers - may Allaah's praise and purest blessings of peace be upon them all.

[6] The Caller Must Be a Person of Good Manners Using Wisdom in His Call

Since this will be an important reason for the acceptance of his call. Just as Allaah ordered his two noble Prophets: Mûsâ and Hârûn - *'alayhimus-salâtu was-salâm* - that this was the manner in which they were to face the worst Unbeliever upon the face of this earth: *Fir'awn* (Pharaoh), who claimed Lordship for himself. Allaah - *the One free from all imperfections* - said:

"And speak mildly to him, that he might accept admonition or fear and obey Allaah." [Sûrah Tâ Hâ 20:44]

And Allaah - *the Most High* - said to Mûsâ *'alayhis-salâtu was-salâm*:

"Go to *Fir'awn* who has transgressed all bounds in his haughtiness, pride and disbelief, and say: Will you not purify yourself from the sin of disbelief and be obedient to your Lord? And that I guide you to the worship of your Lord, so that you may submit fearfully to Him and be obedient to Him." [Sûrah an-Nâzi'ât 79:17-19]

And Allaah - *the Most High* - said, concerning His Prophet Muhammad *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*:

"By the mercy of Allaah you behaved with gentleness towards them, and had you been severe and harsh hearted they would have left you and departed." [Sûrah Âli-Imrân 3:159]

"Indeed you, O Muhammad *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, are on an exalted religion standard of character." [Sûrah al-Qalam 68:4]

"O Muhammad *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*! Call mankind to the way prescribed by yoke Lord with the Revelation that has been sent down to you, and admonish them with the examples and warnings that Allaah has provided in His Book, and argue with them in a way that is better." [Sûrah an-Nahl 16:125]

[7] The Caller Must Remain Firm in His Expectation and Hope for Good

He should not despair of the effect of his call, nor about the guidance of his people. Nor should he despair of the aid and the help of Allaah - even if a long time passes. Again, he has the best example in this matter in the Messengers of Allaah. So the Prophet of Allaah, Nûh - *'alayhis-salâtu was-salâm* - remained amongst his people for nine-hundred and fifty years, calling them to Allaah.

Also, when the harm and the hurt caused by the Unbelievers became severe, and the Angel of the mountain came to our Prophet Muhammad *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, asking if he wanted him to crush them with the two mountains, he replied: *"No! I wish to have patience with them. Hopefully Allaah will produce from them offspring; who will worship Allaah alone, not giving any partner to Him."* [4] So if the *dâ'î* lacks this attribute, he will halt at the start of the path and feel discouraged and frustrated.

So whichever call is not built upon these foundations, and whose *manhaj* (methodology) is not the methodology of the Messengers - then it will be frustrated and will fail, and it will be toil without benefit. The clearest proof of this are those present day *Jamâ'ahs* (groups) which set out a methodology and programme for themselves and their *da'wah*, which is different to the methodology of the Messengers. These groups have neglected the importance of *'aqîdah* (correct beliefs and creed) - except for a very few of them - and instead call for the correction of side issues. So one group calls for the correction of rule and politics and demands establishment of the *hudûd* (prescribed punishments), and that *Sharî'ah* (Islaamic Law) be applied in judging amongst the people - and this indeed is something very important, but it is not what is most important: Since how can one seek to establish and apply Allaah's judgement upon the thief and the fornicator, before seeking to establish and apply Allaah's judgement upon the *mushrik* - the one who attributes worship to others besides Allaah. How can we demand that Allaah's judgement be applied to two men disputing about a sheep or a camel, before demanding that Allaah's judgement be applied upon those who worship idols and graves, and those who deny or hold heretical beliefs with regards to Allaah's Names and Attributes - divesting them of their true meaning, or distorting them. Are these people not greater criminals than those who fornicate, drink wine and steal?!! Since those are crimes against mankind, whereas shirk and denial of Allaah's Names and Attributes are crimes against the Creator - *the One free from all imperfections* - and the right of the Creator has precedence over the rights of creation.

Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) says in his book: *al-Istiqâmah* (1/466): "So these sins along with correct *Tawheed* are better than corrupted *Tawheed* in the absence of these sins." [5]

Then another *Jamâ'ah* (group) affiliate themselves with *da'wah*, except that their methodology is also at variance with the methodology of the Messengers. They give no importance to correct *'aqîdah*, rather they give importance to some acts of worship and practicing *dhikr* (remembrance of Allaah) in the way of the *Sûfîs*. They concentrate upon *khurûj* (going out) and touring the

lands, and what is important to them is that they manage to attract the people to join them without caring about their *'aqidah*. And all of these are innovated ways, taking as their starting point, matters which were left until last in the call of the Messengers. This is just like the case of someone who seeks to cure a body whose head has been decapitated - since the place of *'aqidah* in the religion, is like the head with regard to the body. Thus it is necessary for these groups to correct their concepts and understanding, by referring back to the Book and the *Sunnah*, in order to know the methodology of the Messengers in calling to Allaah. For indeed Allaah - *the One free from all imperfections* - informed that correct rule and sovereignty, which is the central part of the call of the former *Jamâ'ah* whom we mentioned, cannot be achieved except after correcting *'aqidah*, such that all worship is for Allaah alone and worship of everything else is abandoned. Allaah - *the Most High* - says:

"Allaah has promised to those amongst you who truly have îman (true faith and belief) and act in obedience to Allaah and His Messenger, that He will grant them rulership upon the earth, just as He granted it to those before them, and that He will establish their Religion for them and grant them the authority to practice their Religion which He chose and ordered them with. And He will certainly change their situation to one of security, after their fear. Providing that they worship and obey Me, not associating anything else in worship with Me. Then, whoever rejects this favour by disobedience to their Lord - then they are the rebellious transgressors." [Sûrah an-Nûr 24:55]

So these people wish to establish the Islaamic State before purifying the lands of idolatrous beliefs which take the form of worship of the dead, and devotion to the tombs - such as is no different to the worship of *al-Lât*, *al-'Uzzâ* and the third of them *Manât*, rather it is worse. So they are attempting that which is impossible:

*"And whosoever seeks greatness without effort and exertion
Will only be wasting his life in seeking something impossible."*

Indeed, establishment and application of the *Sharî'ah* and the prescribed punishments, and the establishment of the Islaamic State, and avoidance of whatever is prohibited, and achievement of whatever is obligatory - all of these things are from the rights of *Tawheed* and matters which perfect it and follow on from it. So how can we give attention to that which is subsidiary whilst neglecting that which is of primary importance?

References

1. From the Shaykh's introduction to the book: *Manhajul-Anbiyâ fid-Da'wah ilallâh fîhil-Hikmah wal-'Aql* (pp.10-16) of Shaykh Rabî' ibn Hâdî. The translations of the meanings given for all Qur'aanic Âyât are summarised from the *tafsîrs* of at-Tabarî, al-Baghawî, al-Qurtubî, Ibn Kathîr and ash-Shawkânî.
2. Related by al-Bukhârî (no.7372) and Muslim (no.29) from 'Abdullâh Ibn 'Abbâs *radiallâhu 'anhumâ*.
3. Related by al-Bukhârî (no.7372) and Muslim (no.29), from Ibn 'Abbâs *radiallâhu 'anhu*.
4. Related by al-Bukhârî (no.454) and Muslim (no.4425), from 'Âishah *radiallâhu 'anhâ*.

5. The proof for this is the Saying of Allaah - the Most High: **"Allaah does not forgive that partners should be set up with Him in worship, but He forgives whatever is lesser than that to whomsoever He pleases."** [Sûrah an-Nisâ 4:48].

Masjid al Ghurabaa, Luton

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