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الدعوة إلى الله مكانتها وكيفيتها وثمراتها

SHAYKH SĀLIH FAWZĀN AL-FAWZĀN

THE CALL TO ALLAH

ITS STATUS, ITS METHODS AND ITS REWARDS¹²

بسمراللمالرحمن الرحيمر

All praise is for the Lord of the worlds, who commanded the Muslims that there rise from amongst them a group who call to the good by commanding the good and forbidding the evil. May peace and blessings be upon His slave and Messenger, our Prophet Muhammad - who was the best to convey the glad tidings and warning - and upon his household, his Companions who, solely for His sake, performed the duty of spreading this religion by striving and correctly calling to Allah so that the promise of Allah in the following verse could be realised:

It is He Who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth (Islam), to make it superior over all religions even though the polytheists hate (it).

[At Tawbah 33]

By the permission of Allah, my words today will attempt to clarify the matter of calling to Allah with regard to

¹ Translated by Abu Ameenah AbdurRahmān Bennett.

² From the book *Muhādarāt fil Aqeedah wad Da'wah*.

- its significance and status in Islam
- its methods and its various areas
- the characteristics that the caller is required to be adorned with
- the fruits of da'wah and its results

I ask Allah to make me and all the Muslims successful in speaking the truth and acting accordingly, and that He makes these words a factor in carrying out the obligation [of da'wah] and a step in the path of good.

DEFINING DA'WAH TO ALLAH

The words الذُعَاء and الدُعَاء linguistically convey the meaning of pursuing/inviting or issuing a summons. The phrase 'Da'wah to Allah' means an invitation to have faith in Allah and to worship Him, alone, without any form of partners, by obeying Him and by abandoning any acts of disobedience. For indeed, Allah created creatures for His worship, just as He stated Himself:

And I (Allah) created not the jinns and humans except they should worship Me (Alone). I seek not any provision from them (i.e. provision for themselves or for My creatures) nor do I ask that they should feed Me. Verily, Allah is the All-Provider, Owner of Power, the Most Strong.

[Adh Dhāriyāt, 56-58]

[Worship of Allah] is predicated upon a logical and dispositional imperative. For nothing deserves to be worshipped except for the One who is capable of creating and providing, as stated by Allah:

And those whom they call on besides Allah have not created anything while they are themselves created.

[An Nahl20]

And He states,

Verily, those whom you worship besides Allah have no power to give you provision, so seek your provision from Allah.

[Al 'Ankabut 17]

However, due to the *fitrah* (the natural human constitution) undergoing some type of alteration, this leads to the aberration of man worshiping things besides Allah due to evil and corrupted environmental factors or because of satanic propagandists from amongst men and jinn. The Prophet (*) said,

Every child is born with a natural disposition [to worship none but Allah Alone], but his parents convert him to Judaism or Christianity or Magianism.³

The Prophet (*) also said in a Hadith Qudsi,

I have created My servants with a natural inclination to the worship of Allah but it is the devils who turns them away from the right religion.⁴

Allah commanded the Muslims to migrate from the lands of the disbelievers to the lands of the Muslims so as to separate themselves from such corrupted environments.

Due to these environmental factors being a cause for human deviation, along with the soul's relentless inclination towards evil, Allah commanded da'wah to Allah so as to (1) refute those who had deserted the truth, (2) to teach the ignorant and (3) to remind the neglectful. So He revealed

³ Saheeh al-Bukhāri (1385).

⁴ Saheeh Muslim (2865).

scripture and sent His Messengers as a means that leads to Him and to redirect His slaves back to Him, as stated by Allah Himself:

And Allah invites to the garden and to forgiveness by His will, and makes clear His verses to men, that they may be mindful.

[Al Baqarah 221]

And Allah invites to the abode of peace and guides whom He pleases into the right path.

[Yoonus 25]

He invites you to forgive you your faults and to respite you till an appointed term [Ibrāheem 10]

You find Allah continually calling the people to Him. So He states, "O Mankind!" "O You who believe!" "O My slaves!". He calls them to everything that is good and forbids them from everything that is evil.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DA'WAH AND ITS STATUS IN ISLAM

Ever since the time mankind deviated from the belief of Tawheed – during the time of the people of Nuh – Allah has sent Messengers to call mankind back to Tawheed and the correct creed, as Allah has stated:

And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tāghoot (all false deities besides Allah).

[An Nahl 36]

He clarified their mission and duty when He said,

(We sent) messengers as the givers of good news and as warners, so that people should not have a plea against Allah after the (coming of) messengers; and Allah is Mighty, Wise.

[An Nisā' 165]

He sends down the angels with inspiration of His Command to whom of His slaves He pleases (saying): "Warn mankind that none has the right to be worshipped but I, so fear Me (by abstaining from sins and evil deeds).

Given that this Ummah of Muhammad (*) has received its legacy of messengership and heavenly scripture and that Allah selected its Prophet (*), who was sent to the whole of mankind, to be the seal of the Messengers and He made its scripture a *Muhaymin* (trustee, witness and a judge) over all other previous scripture, making this Ummah the inheritors of this Great Book, as stated by Allah

Then We gave the Book (the Quran) for inheritance to such of Our slaves whom We chose (the followers of Muhammad),

[Fātir 32]

Thus, this Ummah's duty towards mankind is greater than the duty imposed upon all previous nations due to the potential Allah has bestowed upon this Ummah, which He never bestowed upon any previous Ummah. Rather, this Ummah is solely responsible for propagating the message

of Allah to mankind and to perform Jihād⁵ against those who refuse to accept the guidance from Allah or those who obstruct mankind from following the path of Allah, as stated by Allah Himself:

You are the best of nations ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin Al-Ma'ruf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam has ordained) and forbid Al-Munkar (polytheism, disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden), and you believe in Allah.

[Al 'Imrān 110]

And the Most High's statement,

Thus We have made you [true Muslims], a just (and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad) be a witness over you.

[Al Baqarah 143]

Allah commissioned and entrusted the Messenger (*) of this Ummah with the call of mankind [to Islam]. The Most High states,

Blessed be He Who sent down the criterion (of right and wrong, i.e. this Quran) to His slave (Muhammad) that he may be a warner to the 'Alamin (mankind and jinns).

[Al Furqān 1]

The Most High's statement,

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⁵ **[TN]:** And here the Shaykh is referencing the Jihād that has been mandated by the Book and the Sunnah based upon the rules of engagement that have been mandated by Allah and His Messenger and implemented faithfully by the Companions. He is not referencing the 'Jihād' of the renegade bandits who are notoriously known as al-Qaeda and their illegitimate offshoot ISIS. What they perform is not Jihad; it's murder, mayhem and madness under the pretence of Jihād.

يَّ اللَّهِ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَكَ شَلِهِدَا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ٥، وَدَاعِيًا إِلَى ٱللَّهِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَسِرَاجَا مُّنِيرًا ١٠

O Prophet! Verily, We have sent you as witness, a bearer of glad tidings and a warner.

And as one who invites to Allah by His Leave, and as a lamp spreading light.

[Al Ahzāb, 45-46]

The Most High's statement,

And We have not sent you to the whole of mankind expect as a bearer of glad tidings and as a warner, but most men do not know. [Saba 28]

Just as Allah has commissioned and entrusted the Messenger (*) with the call, He has also entrusted this Ummah with the task of calling mankind to Allah. The Most High states,

Say (O Muhammad), "This is my way; I invite unto Allah with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me.

[Yusuf 108]

Al-Hāfidth Ibn Katheer said,

Allah instructed His Messenger (*) to say to mankind and jinn that this is my path – that is, his way, his course of action and his Sunnah. And [essentially] it is the attestation to 'none has the right to be worshipped except for Allah, alone, free of any partner', calling to Allah with insight and certainty based upon evidence. Everyone who calls to what Allah's Messenger (*) called to does so with insight and certainty based upon evidence that is rational and legal.

So, the call to Allah is an obligation upon this Ummah and a duty for mankind to accept. This type of obligation is a communal-based obligation—that is, if a sufficient number of the population undertake this duty then the rest are relieved of this obligation and incur no sin. However, if no one undertakes this duty, or the required number for undertaking this duty is not sufficiently met, then every capable person falls into sin. The Most High states,

Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining Al-Ma'ruf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do) and forbidding Al-Munkar (polytheism and disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden). And it is they who are the successful.

[Al 'Imrān 104]

Al-Hāfidth Ibn Katheer said,

The intended meaning of this verse is that there should be a group from amongst this Ummah that undertakes the task [of calling to Allah], even though [such a task] is an individual duty in accordance with each person's ability. It is established in Saheeh Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah that Allah's Messenger (*) said

مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ Whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand. If he is not able to do so, then [let him change it] with his tongue. If he is not able to do so, then with his heart — and that is the weakest of faith.

In a narration, the Prophet (*) said,

وَلَيْسَ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ مِنَ الإِيمَانِ حَبَّةُ خَرْدَلٍ

⁶ Saheeh Muslim (39).

And beyond that there is no faith even to the extent of a mustard seed.

Allah, glorified be He and exalted, informs us that the best in speech are those who invite to Allah:

And who is better in speech than one who invites to Allah and does righteousness and says, "Indeed, I am of the Muslims."

[Fussilat33]

Al-Hāfidth ibn Jarir said,

Allah states, 'O people, who better than him who states, "Our Lord is Allah" and then he remains upright in true faith in Allah by performing His obligations and refraining from His prohibitions. He calls the slaves of Allah to whatever He has said and to act accordingly."

Imam ash-Shawkāni said,

This verse is more entitled to be understood in broad and general terms as implied by its wording. Thus, everyone who combines between calling the slaves to whatever Allah has prescribed and doing righteous deeds by carrying out Allah's obligations and avoiding His prohibitions then there is no one better than him, more exemplarily than him or greater in receiving reward than him.

Indeed, calling to Allah has a special status in Islam. For it is from the greatest of tasks for which the Messenger (**) was sent—a task that he (**) and his followers were entrusted with. Allah states,

⁷ [TN]: This is a part of a narration in Saheeh Muslim that states, "Never had a Prophet been sent before me by Allah towards his nation who had not among his people (his) disciples and companions who followed his ways and obeyed his command. Then there came after them their successors who said whatever they did not practise, and practised whatever they were not commanded to do. He who strove against them with his hand was a believer: he who strove against them with his tongue was a believer, and he who strove against them with his heart was a believer and beyond that there is no faith even to the extent of a mustard seed."

قُلُ هَاذِهِ عَ سَبِيلِيَ أَدْعُواْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَاْ وَمَن ٱتَّبَعَنِيُّ ٨٠٨

Say (O Muhammad): "This is my way; I invite unto Allah with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me."

[Yusuf 108]

The call to Allah precedes fighting for the sake of Allah. The Prophet (*) used to invite the disbelievers to Islam before fighting them. He used to instruct his commanders and his armies to call their enemies to Islam before fighting them in battle. And so if they accepted the call to Islam, they would not be fought, but if they rejected it, they would be fought.

The need for the call to Allah has increased dramatically during these times due to an increase in deviation and heresy and due those who are actively advocating evil, immorality and permissiveness due to the various means at their disposal to spread this evil. So we have the Christian missionaries and evangelists spreading their call around the globe, venturing into the remote bush to exploit the ignorance and the poverty of the indigenous people. And here we have the rulings of the Qur'an which has been pushed aside and replaced with man-made laws in the majority of Muslim countries. And the media outlets in most countries around the world are pumping out these man-made toxic laws via these broadcasting stations and outlets.

Even more dangerous than all of this are the exertions of deviant sects that thrive under the label of Islam. These sects conspire against Islam from within by undermining its foundations and by showing enmity towards the Sunnah and its people—propagating their innovations and religious superstitions; harbouring hatred against the Companions and distancing themselves from the creed of the Righteous Predecessors. The Muslims are under threat both home and abroad, which requires the loyal callers to Islam and its scholars to redouble their efforts in fighting back the armies that are advancing on Islam so as to put a decisive end to their plots whilst showing the

^{* [}TN]: The Prophet (*) said, "Tomorrow I will give the flag to somebody who will be given victory (by Allah) and who loves Allah and His Apostle and is loved by Allah and His Apostle." So, the people wondered all that night as to who would receive the flag and in the morning everyone hoped that he would be that person. Allah's Messenger (*) asked, "Where is 'Ali?" He was told that 'Ali was suffering from eye-trouble, so he applied saliva to his eyes and invoked Allah to cure him. He at once got cured as if he had no ailment. The Prophet (*) gave him the flag. 'Ali said, "Should I fight them till they become like us (i.e. Muslim)?" The Prophet (*) said, "Go to them patiently and calmly till you enter the land. Then, invite them to Islam, and inform them what is enjoined upon them, for, by Allah, if Allah gives guidance to somebody through you, it is better for you than possessing red camels." (Saheeh al-Bukhāri 3009)

Muslims the true worth of their religion and exposing the plots and plans of their enemy. On the day when the callers of Islam awake to repel these attacks, victory, by the permission of Allah, will embrace them. Allah, the Most High states,

Rather, We dash the truth upon falsehood, and it destroys it, and thereupon it departs.

And His statement,

And say, "Truth has come, and falsehood has departed. Indeed is falsehood, [by nature], ever bound to depart."

[Al Isrā 81]

As our exemplar, what the Prophet (*) did when Allah sent him to fight the legions of polytheism, disbelief and tyranny is sufficient for us. During the time when he (*) was sent, polytheism and disbelief were rife to the point that the Ka'ba was replete with idols and above it were three hundred and sixty idols with images of idols hanging all along its interior walls. The Prophet (*) continued his call to Allah and his struggle against the polytheists until the conquest of Mecca. He entered Mecca, went straight to the Ka'ba and removed all the idols from inside and around it. He stabbed at the idols with a stick until they fell on their faces whilst reciting,

Truth has come, and falsehood has departed. Indeed is falsehood, [by nature], ever bound to depart.

[Al Isrā 81]

Therein is a lesson for today's callers of Islam, who are confronted with the challenges of all types of disbelief and deviancy, to redouble their efforts in their call to Allah and to remain steadfast and

to remind each other to remain steadfast because victory, by the permission of Allah, is close at hand. Allah states,

O you who believe! if you help (the cause of) Allah, He will help you and make firm your feet.

[Muhammad 7]

And the Most High states,

You shall certainly be tried and tested in your wealth and properties and in your personal selves, and you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the Scripture before you (Jews and Christians) and from those who ascribe partners to Allah, but if you persevere patiently, and become pious then verily, that will be a determining factor in all affairs, and that is from the great matters, [which you must hold onto with all your efforts]

[Al 'Imrān 186]

THE METHOD OF THE CALLING TO ALLAH AND ITS FIELDS

It is incumbent upon the one who calls to Allah that he firstly correct himself and his kith and kin around him and then he should direct his attention towards the people. Allah, the Most High, said about His Prophet, Shu'ayb,

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⁹ **[TN]:** This basic procedure of da'wah is a procedure that is abandoned by many new-age da'ees, including the Salafis. We find a substantial amount of prominent brothers in our communities enjoining the good and forbidding the evil on a communal or a societal level, but if you were to enter their homes, the good they enjoin publicly is nowhere to be seen and the evil they forbid publicly is manifest in each member of his family. We forget that each home is one unit that negatively or positively contributes to the circumstance of the community. How can we expect to rectify our communities when we can't even rectify our families? The reasons for this double-standard in da'wah are many; so many that an independent paper could be written on the subject.

And I do not intend to differ from you in that which I have forbidden you; I only intend reform as much as I am able. And my success is not but through Allah. Upon Him I have relied, and to Him I return.

[Hood 88]

And the Most High states,

O you who believe, save yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is men and stones.

[At Tahreem 6]

Imam ibn al-Qayyim said,

The first thing that Allah revealed to His Prophet (*) were the words "Read in the name of your Lord who creates". This is the moment when he (*) became a prophet because Allah commanded him to read these words within himself without commanding him to convey them publicly. Subsequently, the verses "O you who covers himself [with a garment], arise and warn." So he received prophethood with the word "read" and messengership with the words "O you who covers himself". Then He commanded him (*) to warn his kith and kin, then the people, then the Arab tribes around him, then the Arabs in in general and then finally the whole of mankind.

So from this we glean that those who give the call to Allah by leaving their lands and the people of their locality or even their household along with their relatives who are upon polytheism, disbelief or other acts of disobedience to give the call to Allah that they have opposed the prophetic method of calling to Allah.

It is also incumbent upon the caller to start with the most important matters. So his first point of call is the correction of creed because it is the very foundation upon which deeds are based. No matter how many deeds a person does, if his deeds are not predicated upon sound Islamic values, which are free from polytheism, then such deeds are of no value and worthless. Allah states,

And it was already revealed to you and to those before you that if you should associate [anything] with Allah, your work would surely become worthless, and you would surely be among the losers.

[Az Zumar 65]

And this is why the call of the Prophets, or what they primarily gave attention to, was the correction of creed through calling to Tawheed and discarding polytheism. The Most High states,

And We certainly sent unto every nation a messenger, [saying], "Worship Allah and avoid all types of false gods."

[An Nahl 36]

And,

Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him.

[An Nisā' 36]

And just as these verses instruct, the Prophet (*) spent thirteen years in Mecca calling to Tawheed before he migrated to Madeenah. He used to forbid the people from polytheism before he commanding them to pray, give zakāt, fast or perform Hajj. What clearly proves that the Prophets were uniform when it came to the methodology of conveying the message is the fact that they all

initiated with the call to Tawheed and that they all prohibited polytheism and only then did they call to their respective legal rulings.

Even Muslim societies are not free from the various strains of polytheistic beliefs and practices due to a combination of ignorance and the skulduggery and shenanigans of those who endeavour to corrupt the beliefs of the people. In our Muslim societies today, as you well know, we are inundated with copious amounts of major polytheistic practices and beliefs in the form of shrine worship, and only a few callers have taken up the challenge to castigate it, and this is a colossal shortcoming. Furthermore, the callers to Allah must concern themselves with the eradication of innovated practices and beliefs by teaching the correct prophetic practices to the people. And this is because, after polytheism, innovations are the most detrimental things to the religion of Islam, since the innovator legalises things in Islam that Allah has not sanctioned. All types of innovations offered by an innovator will be rejected no matter how much effort he exerts or how much money he spends or how much time he wastes in performing these innovations. The Prophet (**) said,

Whoever does any act that is not in accordance with our affair (i.e., Islam) then it will be rejected.¹⁰

And he (*) said,

Beware of newly-invented matters, for every newly-invented matter is an innovation and every innovation is a going-astray.¹¹

Therefore, the callers to Allah are required to direct their efforts to reviving the sunnahs which have been left by the people and to put to death all innovated practices and beliefs. These are from the most important things that the callers must focus on.

¹⁰ Saheeh Muslim (1718).

¹¹ Sunan Abi Dāwood (4607).

After these things, a caller to Allah must direct his efforts to calling the people to perform their religious duties (e.g., prayer) and to give up all acts of disobedience and unlawful acts and to correct the way the Muslims do their dealings with one another. And this is because disobedience is one of the reasons that leads to the destruction of the people and their lands. Allah states,

Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned so He may let them taste part of [the consequence of] what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness].

[Ar Room 41]

However, the presence of righteous callers and reformers serves as a safeguard against punishment and destruction. Allah states,

And your Lord would not have destroyed the cities unjustly while their people were reformers.

[Hood 117]

Conversely, a lack of presence of righteous callers and reformers serves as a cause for destruction.

The callers to Allah should always take into consideration the state of the people who are being called to. So the ignorant person should be treated accordingly; the person who has knowledge should be treated accordingly and the stubborn person should be treated accordingly. Each group should receive treatment that is suited to their respective states. Allah states,

Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. [An Nahl 125]

So because circumstances differ from person to person then each person being called should be treated accordingly:

The first scenario is that the person is ignorant of the truth but when it is made clear to him, he readily accepts it. So this person should be invited to the truth with wisdom, gentleness, care and compassion.

The second scenario is that he does not accept the truth or act according to it immediately due to some laziness or being a bit slack in his duties. So this person requires that things be made urgently clear to him so as to instil the fear of Allah in him and remind him of the reward of those who act accordingly and the punishment for those who persist in their disobedience.

The third scenario is that even when the truth is made clear to him, he refuses to accept it and even attempts to bring specious arguments to undermine the truth. This person should be contended with in a way that is best so as to remove his doubts and make clear his erroneous understanding. Shaykh al-Islam ibn Taymiyyah said,

People are of three types: (1) Those who acknowledge the truth and follow it, and this is the wise person. (2) Those who acknowledge the truth but do not act accordingly. This person should be admonished until he acts according to what he knows. (3) Someone who refuses to acknowledge the truth. This person should be contended in a way that is best because disagreeing with him could prompt him to become angry. However, if he is confronted in a way that is best then he has done his utmost to ward off the assailant.¹²

Imam ibn al-Qayyim said in respect to Allah determining the degrees of calling to the truth based on the levels of the people:

So the one who has intellectual integrity and is agreeable and shows no opposition or stubbornness towards the truth then he should be invited with wisdom. As for the one who is agreeable but he is somewhat heedless and a bit slow to react then he should be admonished in a good way. And this includes commanding the good and

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 $^{^{12}}$ Majmoo' al-Fatāwā (2/45).

forbidding the evil by encouraging him (through the incentive of rewards) and making him apprehensive (by reminding him of Allah's punishments). As for the one who is stubborn and rejects the truth then his stubbornness should be contended in a way that is best.

And this is because the caller is similar to a doctor in the sense that he is mindful of his patient when treating him.

As for the fields of da'wah then they number many and all of these fields should be put to good use when calling to Allah. From these fields:

- 1. The field of education irrespective of whether it is organising study circles in the masjid or studies that take place in an academic environment. The teacher or the lecturer should be someone who calls to Allah by being an exemplary model in both speech and action. He should not limit his actions to just delivering a [academic] lecture because students are influenced by their teacher and readily accept things from him and are likely to emulate him more than anyone else. Thus, teachers should take advantage of the impressionable nature of their students and guide them towards good and safeguard them from evil.
- 2. Imamate in the masjid and preaching in the masjid and this is an extensive field for da'wah that takes place on a daily and weekly basis. The Imam and the Khateeb (Friday preacher) can clarify matters and steer people in the right direction and use their insight for calling to Allah. On most occasions, the Messenger (*) used to teach the people after the congregational prayer or during the Friday sermon. If this field of da'wah was taken advantage of accordingly, it would result in producing much good because the people have faithfully come together in one of the houses of Allah seeking to be guided and educated. And so the Imam and the Khateeb should have a good level of knowledge and an appetite for da'wah so that Allah can benefit the people through them. Thus, it is incumbent that the one chosen for the imamate of the masjid should be on this aforementioned level.
- 3. The Hajj season and this is a grandiose season during which Muslims gather in one place from all around the globe, which saves many callers of Allah the trouble of travelling to other lands to give da'wah whilst granting them the opportunity to interact with the

large numbers of people and then call them to the truth. Undoubtedly, these pilgrims will generally be more approachable because they have come with hearts that are eager for good and correct guidance. The Prophet (**) used to come to the pilgrims to teach the truth and he used to deliver sermons on the Day of 'Arafat and during the days of at-Tashreeq.¹³

4. In government and employment sectors – the heads of department and government agents should be actively participating in da'wah by providing religious guidance to anyone who is under their purview. They should also check that the people under their authority are performing their prayers, and if they are not then they should raise the matter with them. He is just not responsible for his employees from a work related perspective; he is also, to some decree, responsible for them from a religious perspective. The Prophet (*) said,

Every one of you is a shepherd and everyone is answerable with regard to his flock.¹⁴

Likewise, the employee should carry out da'wah and give a word of sincere advice to his colleagues or even his boss. The Prophet (*) said,

'Religion is sincere advice, religion is sincere advice, religion is sincere advice.' They said; 'To whom, O Messenger of Allah?' He said, 'To Allah, to His Book, to His Messenger, to the Imams of the Muslims and to their common folk.' ¹⁵

And in this way, the believer takes every opportunity that presents itself in all of these different fields to give the call to Allah.

¹³ The days of *Tashreeq* are the 11th, 12th and 13th of Dhu'l-Hijjah.

¹⁴ Saheeh Muslim (1829).

¹⁵ Saheeh Muslim (8).

- 5. In places of public gatherings so the caller to Allah must got to public gathering places, such as the masjids, schools, universities and colleges, clubs and market places, to give the call to Allah.
- **6.** Through media outlets so the caller to Allah should participate in broadcasting religious programmes via the radio and in writing articles for religious magazines. And this is because these means of communication reach every home and accompany the traveller on his journey and the pedestrian on his way. And if these means of communication are abandoned and left to an evil people then they will become a means for destruction and sedition.

Individuals who go on academic or diplomatic missions to foreign countries must make sure that they represent Islam correctly in their speech, actions and mannerisms, and that they be true callers to their religion or their Muslim nation so that anyone who has contact with them learns about the true message of Islam. People that look at them will consider their conduct as a practical application of Islam.

QUALITIES THAT MUST BE DISPLAYED WHEN CALLING TO ISLAM

Given that calling to Allah has a very lofty position in Islam, it should only be undertaken by those who fulfil the following conditions:

First condition: that the person is sure in his knowledge of what he is calling to. Allah states,

Say (O Muhammad), "This is my way; I invite unto Allah with sure knowledge."

[Yusuf 108]

Thus, the Prophet (**) used to call to Allah with sure knowledge and his followers used to call to Allah with sure knowledge. The word النَصِيْنَة means knowledge, and therefore the caller to Allah must have knowledge of the lawful and the unlawful in the sense that he can differentiate between what the Sunnah and innovation; good and evil; the lawful and the unlawful; Tawheed and polytheism and disbelief and sinfulness and disobedience. And this is so he can competently deal with the shortcomings of the people whom he is calling to the truth. And so he needs to possess

enough knowledge to be able to convince the protester, silence the disputant and refute the doubts because Allah states,

And argue with them in a way that is best.

[An Nahl 125]

The Prophet (*) said to Mu'ādh before sending him to Yemen,

إِنَّكَ سَتَأْتِي قَوْمًا أَهْلَ كِتَابٍ

You will go to the people of Scripture. 16

And so the Prophet (**) made Mu'ādh aware of this so as to anticipate debating with them and so that he could provide the right answers to their testing questions. And this is because they are a people of knowledge from a time bygone, unlike the polytheists and the idolaters who possess no knowledge. Addressing a knowledgeable person is different to addressing everyone else! And thus an ignoramus is not fit to be someone who calls to Allah because he will do more damage than good. He will exacerbate matters rather than correct them and he will be stopped in his tracks when confronting the feeblest of doubts. He may even speak ignorantly or pass religious verdicts based upon ignorance. Allah has forbidden speaking about Him in the absence of knowledge, and He made it tantamount to shirk.

Nowadays, we find some people who are associated with the call to Allah having no knowledge whatsoever, and we fear that these people will have a real negative impact on the da'wah. It is a must that these people know the limits of their knowledge and that they do not speak on matters

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¹⁶ First call them to testify that 'there is no true god except Allah, that I am the Messenger of Allah.' If they obey you, tell them that Allah has enjoined upon them prayers during the day and night; and if they obey you, inform them that Allah has made Zakat obligatory upon them; that it should be collected from their rich and distributed among their poor; and if they obey you refrain from picking up (as a share of Zakat) the best of their wealth. Beware of the supplication of the oppressed, for there is no barrier between it and Allah. Saheeh al-Bukhāri (208)

they are not qualified to speak about— [falsely] assuming the position of the scholar and the erudite.

The caller to Allah should also practice what he preaches to the people because the people will observe his actions before accepting his speech. Allah mentions that His Prophet Shu'ayb said to his people,

And I do not intend to differ from you in that which I have forbidden you; I only intend reform as much as I am able.

[Hood 88]

Our Shaykh, Muhammad al-Ameen ash-Shinqeeti said,

We understand from this noble verse that a person must abstain from the things that he forbids the people from doing and he must also carry out the things he commands the people to do. Allah has made this matter clear in another place. His statement,

What! do you enjoin men to be good and neglect your own souls while you read the Book; have you then no sense?

[Al Baqarah 44]

And

It is most hateful to Allah that you should say that which you do not do.

[As Saff 3]

And in al-Bukhāri and Muslim is the hadith of Usāmah ibn Zayd who said that the Prophet(**) said

يُجَاءُ بِالرَّجُلِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَيُلْقَى فِي النَّارِ فَتَنْدَلِقُ أَقْتَابُهُ فِي النَّارِ فَيَدُورُ كَمَا يَدُورُ الْحِمَارُ بِرَحَاهُ فَيَجْتَمِعُ أَهْلُ النَّارِ عَلَيْهِ فَيَقُولُونَ أَىْ فُلَانُ مَا شَأْنُكَ أَلَيْسَ كُنْتَ تَأْمُرُنَا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ قَالَ كُنْتُ آمُرُكُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ قَالَ كُنْتُ آمُرُكُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلَا آتِيهِ وَأَنْهَاكُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَآتِيهِ

A man will be brought on the Day of Resurrection and thrown in the Fire, so that his intestines will come out in the Fire, and he will go around like a donkey goes around a millstone. The people of the Fire will gather around him and say ,"O so-and-so! What is wrong with you? Didn't you use to order us to do good deeds and forbid us to do bad deeds?" He will reply: "Yes, I used to order you to do good deeds, but I did not do them myself, and I used to forbid you to do bad deeds, yet I used to do them myself."

The caller must be sincere in his call to Allah. He does not seek fame, reputation or the praise of the people. All he seeks is to make the religion of Allah manifest and to make Allah's word supreme and to benefit the people by guiding them to good. And this is all deduced from Allah's words:

Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'AbdulWahhāb said,

This verse calls our attention to [the importance of] sincerity because many a people do not call to the truth but rather they call to themselves—that is to say that he seeks prominence and the praise of the people and this negates the presence of sincerity.

The caller to Allah must be patient and forbearing because he will face all types of hardships and difficulties when traversing the path of Da'wah. And so if he is not endowed with patience and forbearance then he will fall at the first hurdle. When Allah ordered His Prophet (*) to give the call, he also ordered him to be patient:

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¹⁷ Saheeh al-Bukhāri (91).

And be patient and your patience is not but by (the assistance of) Allah, and grieve not for them, and do not distress yourself at what they plan.

[An Nahl 127]

And Luqman said to His child,

O my son! keep up prayer and enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and bear patiently that which befalls you; surely these acts require determination.

[Luqmān 17]

The caller to Allah must not waiver in his belief and believe that the truth will eventually prevail, and so he should neither despair nor lose hope in his call having a praiseworthy effect even if it just results in establishing the proofs against an individual and to exonerate himself from any blame, just as Allah says about those people who admonished the Sabbath breakers:

And when a community among them said, "Why do you admonish a people whom Allah is about to destroy or to punish with a severe torment?" (The preachers) said: "In order to be free from guilt before your Lord (Allah), and perhaps they may fear Allah."

[Al A'rāf 164]

THE FRUITS OF CALLING TO ALLAH AND THE GOOD IT YIELDS

There is no doubt that for every good deed done [correctly], it must result in something commendable, and calling to Allah is from the most majestic of good deeds that can be done.

Calling to Allah was the task of the Messengers and their followers. Calling to Allah has many commendable results. From them is that it results in obeying the command of Allah:

Invite to the way of your Lord.

[An Nahl 125]

And,

And,

To this then go on inviting, and go on steadfastly on the right way as you are commanded.

[Ash-Shurā 15]

A command from Allah to His Messenger (*) also serves as a general command for his (*) nation as long as there is no evidence to show that a particular command was exclusive for the Prophet (*). Thus, just as the Prophet (*) was commanded to call to Allah, his followers were also commanded. Actually, Allah has commanded his (*) nation specifically:

Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good.

[Al 'Imrān 104]

From these commendable results is emulating Allah's Messenger (*), as stated by Allah Himself:

Say (O Muhammad): "This is my way; I invite unto Allah with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me."

[Yusuf 108]

The followers of the Messenger (*) call to Allah with sure knowledge, just as the Messenger (*) himself called to Allah with sure knowledge. And so those who do not call to Allah, have fallen short in following him (*).

From these results is the propagation of Allah's religion to mankind. The Prophet (*) himself has commanded this when he said,

Convey from me even if it were a single verse. 18

And so the one who does not convey what he knows of Allah's religion then he has concealed knowledge and Allah has threatened to curse those whom conceal the clear proofs, evidences and the guidance.

From these commendable results is guidance for whomever Allah wishes to guide and great rewards he will receive for guiding to good, as stated by the Prophet (*):

He who called (people) to righteousness, there would be reward (assured) for him like the rewards of those who adhered to it, without their rewards being diminished in any respect.¹⁹

As for the one who does not accept the call then the proofs are established against him and he deserves to be fought.

¹⁸ Saheeh al-Bukhāri (3461).

¹⁹ Saheeh Muslim (2674).

In conclusion, I ask Allah to make His religion victorious and that He makes His word supreme, and that He aids His supporters and He debases His adversaries. And that He guides the misguided amongst the Muslims—and all praise belongs to the Lord of the worlds. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his household and companions.