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Proper preaching and choosing of words

Fatwa no. 21184

Q: I heard a sermon delivered by a Khatib (preacher). He spoke about Muraqabah (knowing that Allah is observing man's deeds). He said, "Verily, Allah, the Lord of the Worlds has surveillance cameras that He uses to observe His servants." Discussing the issue of guidance, he said, "When Allah guides someone through you, you will receive a photo of so and so and gratitude from Allah, the Lord of the Worlds because He has guided someone through you."

What is the ruling on that? Is it included in the prohibited personification of Allah (Exalted be He) stated in His saying: ﴿There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.﴾ Is there any proof from the Qur'an or Sunnah saying that Allah (Exalted be He) has surveillance cameras or that He sends a photo to so and so because Allah guided someone through him? Please advise. May Allah reward and protect you. As-salamu `Alaykum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

A: It is necessary when delivering a sermon or giving admonition to follow the permissible Shar`y (Islamic legal) ways. The best of these ways is to admonish and exhort through the Qur'an. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿O mankind! There has come to you a good advice from your Lord (i.e. the Qur'ân, enjoining all that is good and forbidding all that is evil), and a healing for that (disease of ignorance, doubt, hypocrisy and differences) which is in your breasts, - a guidance and a mercy (explaining lawful and unlawful things) for the believers.﴾ (Say: "In the Bounty of Allâh, and in His Mercy (i.e. Islâm and the Qur'ân); - therein let them rejoice." That is better than what (the wealth) they amass.﴾ He (Exalted be He) also says: ﴿This (the Qur'ân) is a plain statement for mankind, a guidance and instruction to those who are Al-Muttaqûn (the pious - See V.2:2).﴾ Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) further says:

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﴿But warn by the Qur'an; him who fears My Threat.﴾ in addition to many other Ayahs. The permissible ways of admonition also include the teachings of the Sunnah that were authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). The style the questioner mentioned is not permissible to use, because it shows disrespect to Allah (Exalted be He) and ascribes to Allah (Exalted be He) some actions that do not befit His Glory and imply that He is in need of equipments. The general rule of Tawhid (monotheism) is that Allah (Exalted be He) must not be described, named, or characterized with anything without Shar`y (Islamic legal) proofs.

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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