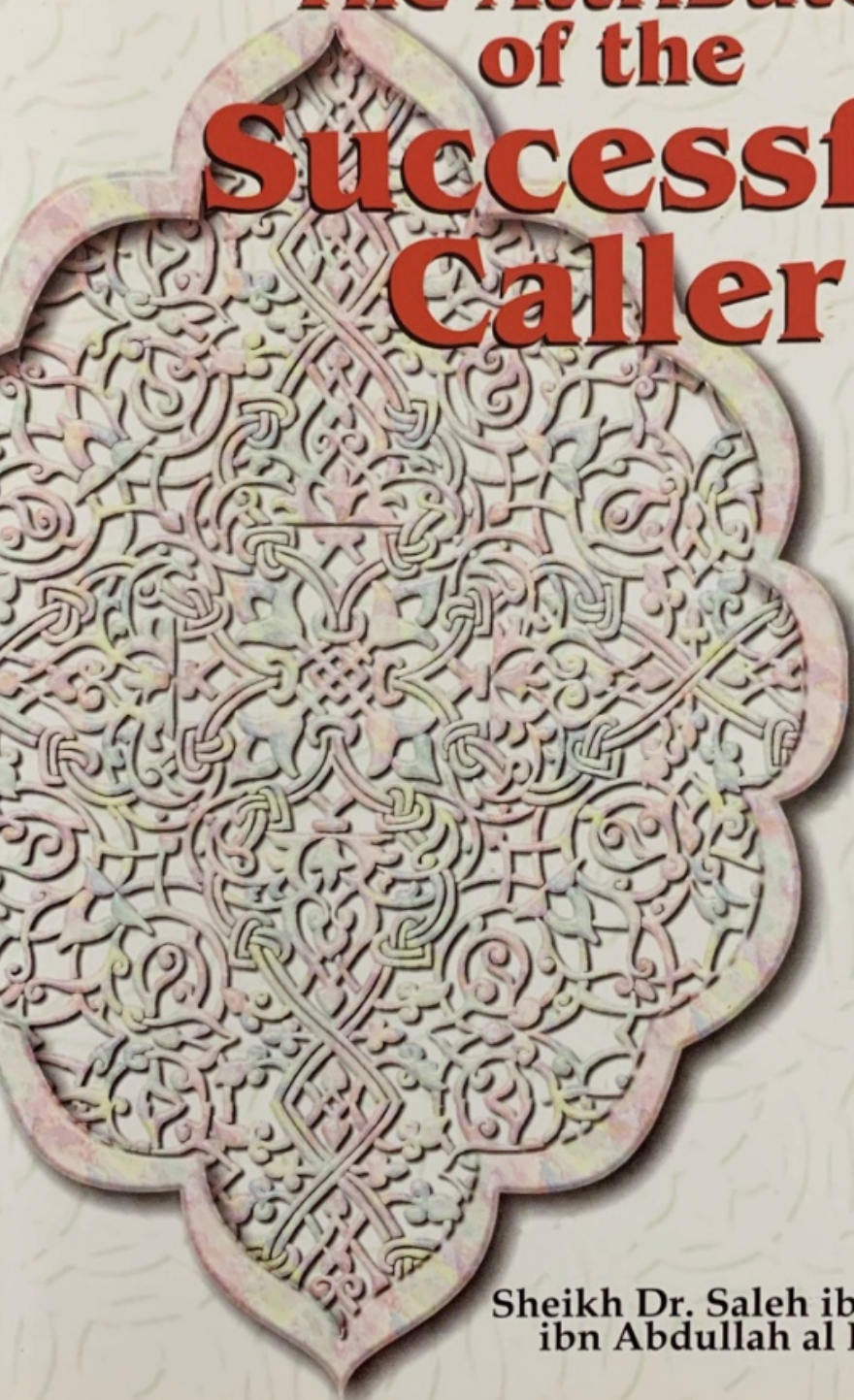


The Attributes of the Successful Caller



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The Attributes of the Successful Caller

by

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P R E F A C E

All praise is due to Allaah and peace be upon Muhammad (ﷺ), his family, his companions and all those who follow his footsteps until the Last Day.

This is a translation of the book '*Sifaat ad-Daa'iyah an-Naaajib*' by Sheikh Saleh ibn Fawzan ibn Abdullah al Fawzan. It is very much needed in this present time when many people are calling to Islam and yet they are not qualified and equipped with knowledge and understanding.

Inshaallaah this will be an aid to those who are in the midst of the call to Allaah and an admonition to those who are giving *da'wah* without knowledge upon an incorrect methodology.

May Allaah reward all those who checked the translation and layout of the book and all those who helped in its publication.

I seek refuge from associating partners with Allaah knowingly and I seek His forgiveness from associating partners with Allaah unknowingly.

Abdulilah Ibn Rabah Lahmami
24th Rabi' II 1422h/ 17th July 2001



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah the Most Merciful the Most Kind

All praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the worlds. Peace and blessings be upon His servant and Messenger, our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his family, his Companions and those that follow him until the Judgement Day.

After which follows:

The subject of calling to Allaah, the Most High, is an important one. The call to Allaah means inviting (others) to enter into the religion of Allaah for Allaah created the creation for His worship.

Allaah says:

«وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ»

“And I (Allaah) created not the Jinn and Mankind except that they should worship Me (alone).”¹

«مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُونِ»

“I seek not any provision from them nor do I ask that they should feed Me.”²

¹ Soorah ad-Daariyat: 56, 57.

² Ibid.

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ﴾

“Verily, Allaah is the All-Provider, the Owner of power, the Most Strong.”³

The benefit of those worshipping Allaah returns to them for they are the ones in need of worshipping Him. As for Allaah, the Most High, He is in no need of them nor their worship.

Allaah says:

﴿إِنْ تَكْفُرُوا أَنتُمْ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ﴾

“If you disbelieve, you and all those in the earth together, then verily, Allaah is Rich (free of all needs) the Owner of all praise.”⁴

In a *hadeeth Qudsi*⁵ Allaah says:

“Oh My servants, if the first of you and the last of you, the men of you and the jinn of you were to have the most pious (heart of) one man, that would not increase My kingdom in anything. Oh My servants, if the first of you and the last of you, the men of you and the jinn of you were to have the worst (heart of) a man amongst you, that would not decrease anything from My kingdom. Oh My servants, it is your actions that I account you for, then I will show this to you, so whoever finds good then let him praise Allaah and whoever finds other than that then let him blame no one but himself.”⁶

³ Ibid.

⁴ Soorah al-Ibrahim: 8.

⁵ A *hadeeth ‘Qudsi’* is a *hadeeth* which the Prophet (ﷺ) narrated as a statement from Allaah.

⁶ Saheeh Muslim [4/1994], related by Abu Dhar al-Ghifaree *radhiallaahu ‘anhu*.

So the worshippers are the ones in need of worshipping Allaah in order that they acquire His pleasure, forgiveness and mercy. This is so that He may enter them into His Paradise and save them from His Punishment. This is why Allaah created them. However, it was decreed from His wisdom that He would test and try them so that there would be a distinction between the people of obedience and the people of sin.

Satan and his party call the people away from worshipping Allaah to the disobedience of Allaah and to the following of desires and lusts. This is why Allaah sent Messengers calling people to that which is good. The devils call them to evil.

Allaah says:

﴿وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيُبَيِّنُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَذَكَّرُونَ﴾

“And Allaah calls to Paradise and forgiveness by His will and He makes His signs clear to mankind that they may remember.”⁷

And Allaah calls to Paradise and He guides whomsoever He wills to the Straight Path. He calls you so He may forgive you your sins and He delays it (reward or punishment) until an appointed time.

Allaah calls His servants so that they may worship Him, repent to Him and seek forgiveness from Him. He sent the Messengers calling the people to this and He gave the scholars, the inheritors of the Prophets, the responsibility of calling to Him for the good and benefit of His servants.

⁷ Soorah al-Baqarah: 221.

The call to Allaah has been established ever since the incident between Adam (ﷺ) and Satan. Satan took it upon himself to lure and misguide whoever he was able to from the children of Adam (ﷺ).

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا إِنَّمَا يَدْعُو حِزْبَهُ لِيَكُونُوا
مِنْ أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ

“Indeed Satan is an enemy to you so take him as an enemy, and he calls his party to be of the companions of the Fire.”⁸

No doubt there are callers to that which is good and there are callers to falsehood amongst the devils from the jinn and the men. This is out of wisdom from Allaah, the Most High, and as a trial and test for His servants from the time creation began until the end of the world. Conflict continues between the truth and falsehood and between the callers to good and the callers to evil. Allaah has praised those who call to Him.

Allaah says:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَلَا تَسْتَوِي الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

“And who is better in speech than the one who calls to Allaah (says: My Lord is Allaah – believes in His Oneness) and does good deeds and says I am indeed from amongst the Muslims. Good and bad are not equal, repel (the evil) with one which is better.”⁹

⁸ Soorah al-Faatir: 6.

⁹ Soorah al-Fusilat: 33,34.

Allaah said that the callers to Allaah are the best people in speech. He also described the callers as those who practice what they call the people to by saying:

﴿وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا﴾

*“and does good deeds”*¹⁰

So the caller must be the first to practice what he is calling to by way of obedience and worship such that his speech is in accordance with his actions. This is why the Prophet of Allaah Shu'ayb (عليه السلام) said (as Allaah says in the *Quran*):

﴿وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُخَالِفَكُمْ إِلَىٰ مَا أَنهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ إِنِ أُرِيدُ إِلَّا الْإِصْلَاحَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ﴾

*“I do not wish, in contradiction to you, to do that which I forbid you. I only desire reform to the best of my ability. And my success cannot come except from Allaah, in Him I put my trust and to Him I turn (in repentance).”*¹¹

Allaah’s saying (in the previous Verse):

﴿إِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

*“I am indeed from amongst the Muslims,”*¹²

¹⁰ Soorah al-Fusilat: 33.

¹¹ Soorah al-Hud: 88.

¹² Soorah al-Fusilat: 33.

means that he belongs to Islam, to the Muslims and to the Group of Muslims. He does not affiliate himself to anyone except the Muslims.

Then Allaah, the Most High, shows that the caller to Allaah will meet some harm from the people but He advised (the caller) to repel (the evil) with one that is better.

If anyone wrongs him then he should meet this wrong with righteousness. This will result in the acceptance of his call.

﴿وَلَا تَسْتَوِي الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ﴾

“And good and bad are not equal, repel (the evil) with one which is better.”¹³

So when the caller is harmed, he does not consider what is said or done against him. He meets the wrong with that which is good. So he is good to whoever harms him in order to bring people to good. He does not seek victory for himself but rather he wants good for the people. This is why the Prophet (ﷺ) never sought victory for himself. Rather he only ever became angry and took revenge if the sanctuaries of Allaah were violated. He himself was harmed and he was spoken against and things were said about him but he never sought victory for himself, rather he sought the reward from Allaah.

¹³ Soorah al-Fusilat: 34.

This is from the essential fundamentals of the call: showing goodness to the ones being called, even if they err. This will bring them to goodness and attract them to good. As for meeting them with bad then this will push them away.

«ادْفَعْ بِالتِّي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ»

*“Repel (the evil) with one which is better.”*¹⁴

Then Allaah showed the effects of this and said:

«فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ»

*“Then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend.”*¹⁵

Then He showed that this attribute is dear, meaning that the person should be patient and should endure (harms) and should return ill-treatment with good. This is a noble attribute.

Allaah says:

«وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا»

*“And none shall reach it except those who are patient.”*¹⁶

This requires patience. That is, to imprison the soul from wanting revenge and victory, thereby calming his soul. This is what protects the caller from his human enemy, with goodness towards him, such that his love is earned and he inclines towards good.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Soorah al-Fusilat: 35.

As for the satanic enemies then Allaah has shown how to protect oneself from them.

﴿وَأِمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ﴾

“And if an evil whisper from Satan tries to turn you away (from doing good) then seek refuge in Allaah, He is the All Hearer, the All Knower.”¹⁷

The caller to Allaah will face the human devils and the jinn devils. He should face the human devil with goodness towards their ill doing, overlooking their errors and ignoring what they say. As for the devils from amongst the jinn then one is protected by seeking refuge from them.

This is the way of the successful caller. He continues to call to the way of Allaah. He should not become weak, such that his effort decreases due to a person harming him or speaking against him. This is because he is not calling to himself and he is not looking to gain victory for himself, rather, he is calling to Allaah, the Most High.

Calling to Allaah means inviting others to enter the Religion of Allaah, the One Who created this creation for the purpose (of worshipping Him). In it lies their happiness, betterment and success.

The caller to Allaah does not want the people to reward him for his efforts. Rather he seeks the reward from Allaah. The caller to Allaah does not seek promotion and prestige in the land. He looks to the benefit of the people and to take the people out of darkness into light. This is what the successful caller seeks.

¹⁷ Soorah al-Fusilat: 36.

As for the one opposite to this, he wants to be seen or praised by the people. Without a doubt this person returns to the beginning of the path, as he meets the first obstacle. As for the one who calls to Allaah then he is not put off, but he continues his *da'wah*.

﴿قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا﴾

“Say: I do not seek from you reward.”¹⁸

All of the Prophets said to their nations:

﴿لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا﴾

“I do not ask from you any reward.”¹⁹

This means: What we want is to bring good and benefit to you. If you accept, then that is what is sought. If you do not accept then we have freed ourselves of responsibility and have established the proof upon you.

The call to Allaah precedes *Jibaad* (striving for the cause of Allaah) because the Messenger (ﷺ) before sending his army, used to advise them to call the people to Islam before fighting them.

They start with the call to Allaah. If they (the disbelievers) accept, then all praise is due to Allaah. If they do not respond to the call, they are fought and *Jibaad* is proclaimed against them in order to raise the word of Allaah.

¹⁸ Soorah 'al-An'am: 90.

¹⁹ Ibid.

1. So the disbelievers are called to enter Islam.
2. Those Muslims who have misguidance in (matters of) *Aqeedah* (belief) are called to correct their *Aqeedah*.
3. Those Muslims who have correct *Aqeedah*, but they have some sins and contradictions, are called to repent and to leave these sins and acts of disobedience.

So the call to Allaah is a necessity and it varies according to need. It is a must to have this call to Allaah until the Hour comes and it is not allowed to leave it. It is the work of the Prophets, the Messengers and their followers from amongst the rectifying scholars.

Allaah says praising this nation:

﴿كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ﴾

*“You are the best nation ever raised up for mankind, you enjoin good and forbid the evil and you believe in Allaah.”*²⁰

Allaah says:

﴿وَلَتَكُنَّ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

*“Let there arise from amongst you a nation who call to that which is good and they enjoin that which is right and forbid that which is evil (according to Islam). They are the successful ones.”*²¹

²⁰ Soorah al-Imran: 110.

²¹ Soorah al-Imran: 104.

The duty of this nation is the call to Allaah so that the people are taken out of darkness into light. Allaah ordered His Prophet (ﷺ) with the call to Allaah:

﴿ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ﴾

“Call to the way of Allaah with wisdom and beautiful preaching and argue with them in ways that are best.” ²²

This is an order from Allaah to His Prophet (ﷺ).

Then He showed him the methodology that he (ﷺ) should follow in his call.

﴿قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾

“Say: this is my way, I call to Allaah, upon knowledge, I and whoever follows me, and Glory be to Allaah and I am not from the polytheist.” ²³

In these two Verses the ruling regarding calling to Allaah is clarified for us. It is obligatory since Allaah ordered the Messenger (ﷺ) to do it. He also said that the followers of this Messenger (ﷺ) must call to Allaah just as he (ﷺ) did:

﴿هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي﴾

²² Soorah an-Nahl: 125.

²³ Soorah al-Yusuf: 108.

“This is my way, I call to Allaah, upon knowledge, I and whoever follows me,”²⁴

The methodology of this call must be in accordance to that which Allaah has legislated and not a methodology that is left for the people (to make up), such that they make a methodology for themselves. Rather the methodology is that which Allaah placed and that which the Messenger (ﷺ) has depicted and applied in his pure life.

The followers of the Messenger (ﷺ) were upon the methodology of the Prophet (ﷺ) in his call. So anyone who brings a new methodology contradicting the methodology of the Messenger (ﷺ), the way of the *Quran* and the *Sunnah*, will be considered wrong and incorrect in their methodology. The consequences are that his call will not be successful. Rather his call will be considered incorrect.

He would only be successful in his call once he follows the footsteps of the Messenger (ﷺ) and takes his methodology from the *Quran* and the *Sunnah*. The above two Verses clearly show this.

First and foremost, we learn from them, that the caller to Allaah must have sincere intention. The aim of the caller must be to seek reward from Allaah, to establish His religion and to improve the condition of those being called to the correct way. He does not want any of the gains of this world nor to be highly honoured in the land. He does not want to show off and to be heard of, neither does he want a worldly gain. Rather he seeks the Face of Allaah. He seeks to take out the people from darkness into light, from misguidance to guidance, from disbelief to (correct) belief and from disobedience to obedience. This is what is sought.

²⁴ Ibid.

In the saying of Allaah:

﴿إِلَى اللَّهِ﴾

“to Allaah,” ²⁵

is a reference to sincerity. Sheikh Muhamad Abdulwahhab said regarding this Verse:

﴿أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ﴾

“I call to Allaah.” ²⁶

“In it is a reference to sincerity, because most people call only to themselves.” ²⁷

One does not call to a group or party or person other than Muhammad (ﷺ). Nor to a way of life other than the Islamic religion, nor does he call to a group other than to the Group of Muslims *Ablu Sunnah wal Jama'ah* (the people who gather together upon the Sunnah):

﴿وَقَالَ إِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

“And he says: I am from amongst the Muslims.” ²⁸

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ *Fath al Majeed Sharh Kitaab Tawbeed* [1/185].

²⁸ Soorah al-Fusilat: 33.

It is upon the caller to invite to Allaah and not to call to himself because most people call to themselves. This is why if some harm, deficiency or any obstacle befalls him, it affects him because this, in his eyes, mauls his personality.

As for the one who calls to Allaah, he is not concerned whether the people praise him or not. This is because he seeks the Face of Allaah, the Most High. If any harm befalls him then it is in the path of Allaah.

The second attribute of this methodology is that as a pre-condition, the one who calls to Allaah must be upon knowledge. He must have knowledge of what he is calling to. Upon him is to learn, first and foremost, the knowledge which will allow him to call the people to Allaah, the Most High.

The ignorant one is not good for calling (people) even if his intention is good and even if he calls to Allaah with firm resolve. If he does not have the knowledge then he is unfit for *da'wah* (calling people) because he is not Islamically qualified. The one calling to Allaah needs to clarify to the people the wrong from the right in *Aqeedah* (belief), worship, interactions, manners, etiquette, personal life, and in many things which are in the legislation. He needs to explain these things to the people.

If he does not have the knowledge, how will he clarify to them? Will he speak with ignorance and make things permissible or impermissible? This is a great catastrophe. He will misguide the people even if his intention is good. Without realising it, he will misguide the people. He may make permissible things impermissible and impermissible things permissible and give incorrect verdicts.

So only one equipped with Islamic knowledge taken from the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) upon insight is fit to give *da'wah*. Insight (*baseera*) refers to knowledge.

The one who calls to Allaah will be faced by argumentative ones as well as those who bring doubts and the hypocrites. If the caller is not qualified in Islamic knowledge, which he uses to refute their doubts and arguments then he will be defeated at the first obstacle he meets. They will be victorious over him and this will be at the expense of the *da'wah* (the call).

How will a person who does not have Islamic knowledge be able to answer problems, doubts and misguidance? So knowledge (*baseera*) in the *da'wah* is a necessary part. As for having only good intention and having only love to do good without knowledge then this is not enough. You now see those who speak amongst gatherings of people, embark upon answering questions after every gathering and after every speech. If the speaker or lecturer is not upon knowledge, how will he be able to answer these people gathered in front of him?

Allaah says:

«وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ»

“Glory be to Allaah and I am not from the polytheists.”²⁹

This negates from Allaah everything not befitting Him and is a disavowal from the polytheists. Also, the followers of the Messenger (ﷺ) free themselves from polytheism (*Shirk*) and polytheists.

²⁹ Soorah al-Yusuf: 108.

Shirk is calling upon other than Allaah and the worship of other than Allaah. So the one who calls to Allaah must disassociate himself from the enemies of Allaah and ally himself with the allies of Allaah due to the saying of Allaah:

﴿وَقَالَ إِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

“And he says: I am from amongst the Muslims.”³⁰

So he affiliates himself to the Party of Allaah and to the Muslims and does not affiliate himself to ambiguous ideologies or to doubtful parties. Rather he affiliates himself to the Party of Allaah, and the Group of Muslims, the sincere ones to Allaah. These are the attributes of the caller who is upright upon this exalted work.

Allaah says:

﴿ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ﴾

“Call to the way of your Lord with Hikmah³¹.”³²

Hikmah means putting something in its appropriate place. It is used to refer to the knowledge of understanding.

﴿وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ﴾

“And He has sent down upon you the Book and the Hikmah.”³³

³⁰ Soorah al-Fusilat: 33.

³¹ *Hikmah* means putting something in its appropriate place. When used unrestrictedly, it refers to knowledge and understanding.

³² Soorah an-Nahl: 125.

³³ Soorah an-Nisaa: 113.

It has also been said that *Hikmah* (wisdom) is the Prophetic way and the Prophetic narrations (authentic *ahadeeth*). Allaah says:

«وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا»

“Whoever is given Hikmah then they have been given much good.”³⁴

Allaah says:

«وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ»

“And We have given Luqman the Hikmah.”³⁵

This means *fiqh* (understanding) and *Baseera* (insight/ knowledge). *Hikmah* is a word that could mean *fiqh* or to put something in its proper place such as the statement of Allaah:

«ادْعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ»

“I call to Allaah upon baseera.”³⁶

Meaning: Upon knowledge of what I call to.

In the Verse:

«ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ
بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ»

³⁴ Soorah al-Baqarah: 269.

³⁵ Soorah al-Luqman: 12.

³⁶ Soorah al-Yusuf: 108.

“Call to the way of your Lord with Hikmah and beautiful preaching and argue with them in a way that is better.”³⁷

And the Verse that follows:

﴿وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ وَلَئِنْ صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ
لِّلصَّابِرِينَ﴾

“And if you punish (your enemy, O you believers in the Oneness of Allaah), then punish them with the like of that with which you were afflicted. But if you endure patiently, verily, it is better for the patient.”³⁸

Allaah mentions the ones being called and that the caller should treat every group with whatever is suitable for them.

The first kind of people are the ignorant who do not possess stubbornness and they do not insist upon the wrong but they have fallen into error due to ignorance. For these it is enough that he (the caller) shows them the truth. Once he shows them the truth they turn to (accept) it and they leave whatever error they were upon. These people only need clarification because they have fallen into error without intending to and they seek the truth. So when the truth is shown to them they turn to (accept) it and leave what they were upon.

This is one kind of people. It is enough to show them the truth and encourage them towards it. They only want the truth and this is what they look for, as it is their goal. If it is shown to them they accept it.

³⁷ Soorah an-Nahl: 125.

³⁸ Soorah an-Nahl: 126.

The second kind are those (who), if you show them the truth and show them what they are upon in terms of error, they become lazy to leave their errors for that which is correct. This kind has weakness so needs exhortation after the clarification. You explain to them the punishment of those who are shown the truth and refuse to follow it or hurry towards it as Allaah says:

﴿وَنَقَلْنَا أَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ أَوْلَٰى مَرَّةٍ وَنَذَرْنَاهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ﴾

*“And we shall turn their hearts and their eyes away (from guidance), as they refused to believe therein for the first time, and we shall leave them in their trespass to wander blindly.”*³⁹

So, the one to whom the truth becomes clear and does not follow it and hurry to accept it, a deviation and a changing of the heart is feared.

The third group are those who have argumentation. After the truth becomes clear they present their doubts and confusions intending by this to refute the truth. This one requires argumentation by a way that reaches the truth and does not cause repulsion or bitterness. Rather arguing in a way that is best as Allaah says:

﴿وَلَا تُجَادِلُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ﴾

³⁹ Soorah al-An'aam: 110.

“And do not argue with the People of the Book except in a way that is better (with good words and in a good manner, inviting them to Islamic monotheism with His Verses) except those amongst them who do wrong.”⁴⁰

So this one requires argumentation that refutes the doubtful proofs that he brings.

Therefore we have said that the caller to Allaah needs knowledge or else how will he be able to argue in a way that is better, except if he has knowledge and insight which he has acquired and armed himself initially with before he enters the arena.

Those being called, therefore, may either be ignorant people who accept the truth once it becomes clear to them or they may be those who have laziness in them after the truth is shown to them such that they need admonition. They may be those who have doubts that they hang on to and justify, by these doubts, what they are upon. These require argumentation until their doubts are removed and their excuses are cut off.

Ibn Katheer *rahimabullaah* has mentioned the meaning of these categories (of people) when explaining these two Verses in his ‘*Tafseer*,’ as did Ibn Al-Qayyim in ‘*Zaad al Ma’aad*’. Sheikh Islam ibn Taymiyyah *rahimabullaah* has also mentioned it in his ‘*Majmoo’ Fataawa*’ taking the (meanings) from these Verses.

In these Verses is the methodology of *da’wah* that is clear in which there is no doubt. That is, firstly upon sincerity to Allaah, secondly upon knowledge and thirdly upon the correct method which causes the call to Allaah to reach the people’s hearts. If the call is upon

⁴⁰ Soorah al-Ankaboot: 46.

the correct way then it will reach the hearts. Allaah, the Most High, will grant benefit by it even if few are guided by it. More so, as time passes, its marks will remain such that future generations are guided by it.

Take (the example of) the effects of the rectifying scholars of this *Ummah*, their marks having remained amongst the people. The likes of Sheikh al-Islam ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Al-Qayyim and others from amongst the rectifiers. Allaah caused benefit (through) their call during and after their time and the people continue to benefit from it, due to it being upon the correct methodology, upon legislated knowledge and upon insight. Its effects remain, continuously, and all Praise is due to Allaah.

Also from the methodology of calling to Allaah is prioritising. That is, a person starts with the most important things first, as is the call of the Messengers may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon them.

The Messengers first started with the correcting of beliefs because that is the foundation. Once the beliefs were corrected they turned to correcting other matters. They turned to correcting social interactions, manners and morals.

As for correcting these matters before correcting the belief, then it is not possible for the call to be successful for it is not built upon a correct foundation. Everything built without a foundation will collapse. For this reason the starting point of the call of all the Messengers was towards correcting the belief.

The first thing every Messenger said to his people was:

«وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا»

“And worship Allaah and do not associate partners with Him.”⁴¹

Just as Nuh, Hud, Saalih, Shou’aib, and Ibrahim also said *alayhim asalaam*. Also as our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said while he stayed in Makkah for thirteen years commanding the people to correct their belief, by worshipping Allaah in His Oneness without any associates and leaving off the worship of idols, trees and stones.

Then after the belief was established, the rest of the Islamic legislation was revealed. The Prayer, *Zakat* (obligatory charity), Fasting and Hajj, all became obligatory. The Islamic commandments became obligatory after the belief was established and was firmly upright.

When the Prophet (ﷺ) sent people for *da’wah*, he would order them to start by correcting the people’s beliefs. Such that when he sent Muadh ibn Jabal *radbiallaabu ‘anbu* to Yemen he (ﷺ) said to him:

*“You are going to a nation from the People of the Book. So let the first thing that you call them to be the testification (there is no deity worthy to be worshipped except Allaah), if they accept that from you, then inform them that Allaah has made obligatory upon them five daily prayers in a day and night. If they accept that from you, then inform them that Allaah has obligated on them a charity (Zakat) that is taken from the rich and given to the poor (the obligatory charity).”*⁴²

⁴¹ Soorah an-Nisaa: 36.

⁴² Saheeh Bukhaaree [5/109], related by Abdullah ibn Abbas *radbiallaabu ‘anbu*.

Look at how he (ﷺ) ordered Muadh to begin with the belief and that if they accepted it and singled out Allaah in worship, to order them with prayer. The reason being is that prayer is not correct unless the belief is corrected first. If they were to accept the call to Allaah and establish the prayer then he would order them to pay the charity, for charity (*Zakat*) is not correct until the belief is corrected and the prayer is established. In this manner the Religion is built upon the foundation of *Tawheed* (Oneness of Allaah) and the worship of Allaah.

Therefore, the callers must concern themselves with this matter. That is to correct the people's beliefs by calling the disbelievers to enter into Islam with the testification (there is no deity worthy to be worshipped except Allaah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah). Also by calling those who ascribe themselves to Islam but have mistakes in their belief to correct their belief. It is not enough for a person to ascribe himself to Islam and yet have a defective belief.

Islam will never be achieved unless the belief is corrected. The call to Islam, with deviated belief, will not suffice nor will it aid its adherent in anyway. Also when 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib was given the flag on the day of *Khaibar*, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "*Be patient and invite them to Islam. Let them know what is obligatory upon them of Allaah's rights for I swear by Allaah if one man was to be guided through you it would be better for you than the red camel.*"⁴³

⁴³ Saheeh Bukhaaree [5/77], related by Sahl ibn Sa'd *radbiallaabu 'anbu*.

The Prophet (ﷺ) ordered him to call the people to Islam. Islam is built upon pillars: the Testification (there is no deity worthy to be worshipped except Allaah and that Muhammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allaah), establishing the Prayer, giving the obligatory Charity, fasting Ramadan and the Hajj (pilgrimage) to the Sacred House of Allaah. Also the rest of the commandments and legislations in the religion are all a completion of these pillars, but the foundations are these five pillars.

When the Prophet (ﷺ) said to 'Alee, *"Call them to Islam,"* he (ﷺ) did not stop at that, rather he (ﷺ) said to him, *"let them know what is obligatory upon them from the rights of Allaah."*⁴⁴ He explains to them what Islam is. He explains that Islam consists of obligations, pillars, regulations, worship, and social interactions. The Islamic legislations are all included under the term Islam. Otherwise if the purpose (of the call) was merely an order to attribute oneself to Islam, he (ﷺ) would have had no need to say to him, *"let them know what is obligatory upon them from the rights of Allaah."*

So it is obligatory upon the one who calls to Islam, to explain the reality of true Islam as well as the things that nullify it and those things that compromise ones Islam, such that people are upon insight.

As for calling to Islam, in a general way, this is not sufficient, for many people claim Islam. Whereas the correct Islam is the Islam which the Prophet (ﷺ) came with. This is based upon the commandments of Allaah and not upon that which nullifies Islam. This is the correct Islam.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

The word 'Islam' today is widespread upon the tongues of the people but the *correct* Islam is what is being referred to. This is what is sought. It is that which the Messenger (ﷺ) ordered 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib to clarify to the people. This aids what has proceeded in that the caller must be knowledgeable with regards to the rules and regulations of Islam, so as to explain to the people what is obligatory upon them of Allaah's rights.

As for the one who is ignorant of the rules and regulations of Islam then he will not be able to explain Islam to them if they ask him what it is. He will not be able to show them Islam. The obligation here is great. The call to Allaah is a must and this call must be upon correct foundations such that the call is fruitful, fulfilling its objectives.

The call to Allaah, has a great status as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Whoever calls to guidance will have the reward of those that follow him without their reward decreasing in anything, and whoever calls to misguidance will have the sins of all those that follow him without their sins decreasing in anything." ⁴⁵

The Prophet (ﷺ) said to 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib in the previously mentioned *hadeeth*:

"I swear by Allaah if Allaah guides one man through you, it would be better for you than the red camel." ⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Saheeh Muslim [4/2060], related by Abu Hurayrah *radbiallaabu 'anbu*.

⁴⁶ Saheeh Bukhaaree [5/77], related by Sahl ibn Sa'd *radbiallaabu 'anbu*.

This means a precious camel. Meaning that this is better for you than the world and the most valuable wealth in it. So how will it be if a group of Muslims and succeeding generations are guided through one person, due to the call of this rectifier towards righteousness and towards Allaah, the Most High? For him will be a reward which is similar to the rewards of those who follow him, whether they may be few or many, without their reward being decreased in any way.

The call to Allaah is an honourable station and a dignified action. It is something that is necessary. However, there is a need for having good understanding in the call such that you call to Allaah upon insight.

It is a must to know what the conditions for the caller are, so that the call continues upon a correct methodology, and so that differences do not occur between the callers to Allaah. Differing will happen due to ignorance, but if the callers gain good understanding in the call to Allaah and they know the correct methodology, they will never differ.

Differences only ever occur when people who are unqualified enter into the *da'wah*, and so whoever is not equipped for it with beneficial knowledge and sincerity to Allaah, the Most High, then differences will occur.

However, if the callers gain a good understanding in the call and their intentions are purely for Allaah, the Most High, and their objective becomes (seeking) the Face of Allaah, they will never differ. Rather they will help each other and they will be one hand. They will cooperate with righteousness and piety.

We ask Allaah to enlighten us and you, to those things that help our rectification. That He makes us and you callers, being guided (to the truth) and not misguiding others. That Allaah grants us and you, insight in His Religion (Islam) and acts that are upon His commandments and to have sincerity in His obedience.

و صلى الله و سلم على نبينا محمد و على آله و أصحابه أجمعين

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