Da'wah of Islam: A Study of its Ways and Means

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ABSTRACT

Da'wah is the name of the missionary activity in Islam. Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) performed da'wah as the fundamental purpose of his mission. The best way that Muḥammad (peace be upon him) adopted in da'wah was to invite people with wisdom and eloquent preaching, and if they argued, argument with them in the best and most gracious ways was asked to do (Al-Qur'ān, 16:125). Three basic principles of da'wah were given in this Qu'ānic guidance: ḥikmah, maw'izah ḥasanah, and jadl bi al-aḥsan. The approach of da'wah in Islam depends upon a clear understanding of these three terms. This paper studies these basic principles of the Islamic da'wah.

Keywords: Da'wah, Islam, Ḥikmah, Maw'izah, Mission, Ḥasanah.

Introduction

The term ″*da'wah*″ is a verbal noun with roots in Arabic, signifying the acts of inviting and enjoining. In the Islamic context, it specifically involves encouraging individuals to embrace *īmān* (Islamic faith) and actively engage in its practice. This understanding is derived from the Arabic root ″*da'a*,″ encompassing concepts such as invitation and enjoining, as elaborated by Aḥmad Ḥasan az-Ziyat et al. in Al-Mu'jum al-wāsit.

[1]*Da'wah* typically refers to the dissemination of Islamic teachings. An individual who engages in *da'wah*, either as a religious professional or as a volunteer within a community, is referred to as a *dā'ī* (plural *du'āt*). Essentially, a *dā'ī* is someone who encourages others to comprehend Islam through a dialogical approach and can, in certain instances, be catagorized as an Islamic counterpart to a missionary. This role involves inviting individuals to embrace the Islamic faith, participate in prayer, and adopt an Islamic way of life. In the Qur'an, the term *da'wah* carries various meanings. In *Surah* 30:25, it denotes calling the deceased to awaken on the Day of Judgment. Nevertheless, in a broader context, it typically represents Allāh's invitation for individuals to live in accordance with His Will. Thus, when used in the first centuries of Islam, It pertained to the substance of that message and was occasionally used interchangeably with *sharī'ah* and *dīn*.

In the realm of Islamic theology, the objective of *da'wah* is to extend an invitation to individuals, encompassing both Muslims and non-Muslims, to comprehend the principles of Islam, its beliefs, and its application. Therefore, it is also characterized as the responsibility to "proactively motivate fellow Muslims to strive for increased piety in every facet of their lives." This definition has emerged as a key concept in contemporary Islamic discourse, and nearly all contemporary *da'wah* organizations operate with the primary goal of mobilizing the Muslim Ummah in this direction.

Da'wah is the invitation addressed to people by Allāh through His Messengers to believe in the true religion, Islam, the religion of all the Messengers of Allah. Every Messenger was sent to a particular place and people to perform *da'wah* in his way. Prophet Nūḥ had been sent to the whole population of his time but not for all times to come. Finally, Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) has been sent for the whole of mankind. Therefore, every human being must believe in him to attain felicity here and in the life hereafter.

Every Messenger has been sent to extend an invitation and provide guidance to humanity, directing them toward their Creator, Allah, as the Qur'ān says:

كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَّاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللّٰهُ النَّبِيّنَ مُبَشِّرِيْنَ وَمُنْذِرِيْنَ وَاَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِيْمَا اخْتَلَفُوْا فِيْهِ ۗ وَمَا

اخْتَلَفَ فِيْهِ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوْهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ فَهَدَى اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوْا فِيْهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِاِذْنِهٖ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ

يَهْدِيْ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ اِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ

"Mankind was one single nation. And Allāh sent Messengers with glad tidings and warnings; and with them He sent the Book in truth, to judge between people in matters wherein they differed."[2]

Dimensions of Da'wah

Thus, da'wah is the Quranic expression denoting the mission of the Messengers, a concept elaborated in diverse ways throughout the Qur'ān. Numerous Quranic verses indicate that *da'wah* is *shahādah* — testifying and giving witness; *indhār* — warning; *bayan* and *tabyīn* — manifesting and explaining the Truth; *naṣīḥah* — counsel or advice; *tablīgh* — propagation, proclamation, conveying and making a certain thing known; *tabshīr* — (giving) glad tidings; *tadhkīr* — reminding; *ḥujjah* — concluding the argument, communicating the message completely, eliminating any room for excuses or further debate; *iṣlāḥ* — reformation; *tajdīd* — revival and reformation *ṣadaqah* — charity and *jihād* — striving hard in the way of Islam. An account of the Quranic verses containing these terms.[3]

In addition to these terms, the Qur'ānic term *al-'amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahyu 'an al-munkar* denotes the sum and substance of *da'wah*. This fact is clearly explained by the Qur'ān in the following *verse*:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَّدْعُوْنَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۚ وَأُولٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ

"Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity."[4]

This verse implies that Muslims have a divine obligation to engage in da'wah, signifying that promoting righteousness and discouraging wrongdoing is the essence of this endeavor. The expression '*al-khayr*' (all that is good) signifies Islam.[5] That implies Islam is all good; wherever there is any good, it is essentially Islamic. This is the reason for Islam being universal and intrinsically good.

By now, we are in the position to make an overview of the various meanings of *da'wah* as under:

a) Extending invitations for individuals to embrace the Islamic faith and engage in its practices.

b) Affirming or attesting to the truth of Islam, providing testimony through both speech and actions.

c) Giving people glad tidings about the benefits of accepting and practicing the truth.

d) Cautioning individuals about the dire consequences of disregarding, neglecting, or being indifferent to the truth.

e) Clarifying the truth with clear and unequivocal language to humanity, aiming to eliminate any conceivable doubts from their minds regarding the divine message from the Lord of the people.

f) Offering counsel for non-Muslims to embrace Islam and for Muslims to adhere to its practice.

g) Transmitting the message of Islam to each individual within the human family.

h) Prompting individuals about the inherent truth that their true success in this life and happiness in the Hereafter is contingent upon embracing the path prescribed for them by their Creator— Allah.

i) Conveying the message in full and striving in this way to the extent that a negligent and indifferent person cannot say that he did not accept it because he did not know.

'Abdullah Y. 'Alī, while explaining the Verse 165th of *al-Nisa'*, quoted above, writes:

"Every Prophet proclaims Allah's goodness to the righteous and forgiveness to those who repent, (good news), and the wrath to come for those who reject faith and live in iniquity (warning). Their warning mission is a prelude and complement to their mission of good news. No one can then say that he or she did not know."[6]

Extending invitations for people to embrace goodness, encouraging righteous actions, and discouraging them from engaging in wrongdoing.

Discussion

Allāh calls people to Himself through the verse of the Qur'ān. There are fourteen such verses in the Qur'ān beginning with the phrase '*yā ayyuha al-nās'* (O mankind!), in which Allah invites people in general to Islam and its commandments. At the same time, He did not leave the methods of *da'wah* to be ambiguous but by giving examples of the ways and means of His Messengers. In the presence of these guidelines the Islamic workers have no need to borrow their methods and methodologies from any foreign missionary movements, which are contradictory to the Islamic principles. However, what ways and means the Islamic workers need to adopt while they

perform their duty, is not subject to any rigid sticking to certain given postulates. Since Muslims have to face situations and situations change; therefore, the methods and means of *da'wah* will surely change according to the nature of the circumstances, the people targeted, and the interests of the religion. So, it is up to the worker in the field to adopt any method according to the demands of time and space. However, fundamental principles have been given by Allah in His Book. The Qur'ān has laid down the boundary within which a *dā'ī*has to work, and that boundary is enshrined in the following verse:

اُدْعُ اِلٰى سَبِيْلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِيْ هِيَ اَحْسَنُ ۗ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيْلِهٖ وَهُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِيْنَ

> *"Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for thy Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from His path, and who receive guidance."[7]*

Ḥikmah

So far as the Qur'ānic context is concerned, *ḥikmah* refers to high moral values and manners. In (Qur'ān, Al-Isrā' 17), after mentioning the basic principles of morality like worshipping none but Allah, showing mercy and kindness to parents, doing righteous deeds, squandering not wealth, spending in the way of Allah, killing not children for fear of want, coming not near to adultery, killing not any soul except for just cause, coming not near to orphan's property except to improve it, doing justice in weighing and measuring, pursuing not that of which one does not know, walking not on earth with insolence in the *verse* 23-38, Allah says thus:

ذَٰلِكَ مِمَّآ أَوْحَىٰٓ إِلَيْكَ رَبُّكَ مِنَ ٱلْحِكْمَة

> *"These are among the (precepts of wisdom, which thy Lord has revealed to thee."[8]*

This is the moral structure of Islam, beginning with the true worship of Allah ﷻ, drawing pointed attention to the weak and helpless emphasising the fact that the love of Allāh encompasses the love of man leading to a selfless helping to fellow-humans.[9] Similarly, Luqmān's moral teachings like: Setting up regular prayers, promoting justice, and prohibiting wrongdoing, showing patience, not meeting others with pride nor showing arrogance, being moderate in pace and lowering voice while talking (Al-Qur'ān, 31:33-19) in addition to many other qualities mentioned above (17:39), are

mentioned thus:

<div align="center">وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا لُقْمَٰنَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ</div>

<div align="center">*"We bestowed (in the past) wisdom on Luqmān."[10]*</div>

Imām Rāzī defines *ḥikmah* as:

> *The best and highly beneficial clear-cut proof in favour of admitted beliefs.* [11]

Ṭabarī says that *ḥikmah* refers to both the Qur'an and the teachings of the Messenger in the form of *ḥadīth.*[12]

Sulaymān Nadwī says that *ḥikmah* is the way in which evidences are given to prove the point based on admitted facts.[13]

Qārī Ṭayyib gives almost the exact definition. The essence of his discussion is that *hikmah* entails presenting compelling evidence in support of Islam to the extent that no trace of doubt remains in the heart of the invitee.[14]

Shaykh 'Abdul 'Azīz 'Abdullah b. Bāz suggests that *hikmah* involves presenting unequivocal and self-explanatory evidence in support of the Truth, making it clear and simultaneously opposing falsehood. This is why some commentators assert that *hikmah* refers to the *Qur'an*, which contains clear evidence supporting the Truth, while others also include the *sunnah*. In either case, *hikmah* entails inviting towards Allah with *'Ilm* (knowledge) and *baṣīrah* (clear insight), grounded in solid evidence and proofs.[15]

Imām Shawkānī asserts that everything contrary to foolishness is considered *hikmah*. This implies that anything that is clear, evident, and inherently correct qualifies as *hikmah*. This principle applies comprehensively to the Qur'an and subsequently to the *sunnah* as well.

Explaining further the word *ḥikmah* let us consider the following *āyāh* wherein in addition to many responsibilities of *rasūl* two are mentioned as:

<div align="center">وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ</div>

<div align="center">*"Instructs them in Book and Wisdom."[16]*</div>

Here *al-kitāb* (the Book) evidently means the Qur'ān, but what does *al-hikmah* mean? To 'Abdullah Yūsuf 'Alī, It could refer to either a comprehension of life and its principles along with an understanding of Allah's magnificent universe, or it could denote the *sunnah*.[17] As it is the first-hand interpretation of the Book."

Maw'iẓah Ḥasanah

To Imām Rāzī, *maw'iẓah Ḥasanah* meansderived facts and sound proofs,[18] while to Ibn Jarīr Tabarī, *maw'izah hasanah* means to warn people about the punishment of Allah

so that they take advice.[19] To Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī it means: *targhīb* (motivating and persuading), *tarhīb* (warning) and *tarqīqi qalb* (making hearts tender and soft). All this, in turn, means to him inviting people with lessons of knowledge.[20] Sulaymān Nadwī means by its heart rendering and sincere advice, whereas Qārī Ṭayyib says that it includes evidence not as sound as those provided in case of *ḥikmah* but they work by creating doubt in the opponent's heart and mind with respect to his own point of view thereby making his own position weaker.[21]

Jadl

Jadl, in theview of Rāzī it means to silence the opponent with a sound argument. He also says that *ḥikmah* and *maw'iẓah ḥasanah* are the only two ways of *da'wah* while *jadl* (argumentation) is only meant for a secondary purpose i.e. to silence the opponent.[22]Ṭabarī says that if a *dā'ī* needs to make *jadl* he should be soft and should use kind words.[23] Thānwī says that *jadl* is opposite to *ḥikmah* although it is also done with *'ilm*; it is used to answer the opposite argument. He too is of the opinion that *da'wah* is basically performed with *ḥikmah* but if *jadl* is needed, it can also be resorted to accordingly.[24] Sulaymān Nadwī's interpretation to *jadl aḥsan* is that it is the method in which the faults and loopholes of the opponent's argument are made clear to him by countering with sounder arguments. And to Ṭayyib it means almost the same thing when he says that *mujādalah* (*jadl*) means making such a decisive argument that silences the opponent who finds no answer but to accept it.[25] Ibn Bāz says that when the opponent expresses doubts and argues, an argument may be made in return, but the approach should be soft and sound, not harsh.[26] The whole discussion is better summarised by A. Y. 'Alī in these words:

"In this beautiful passage, timeless principles of religious preaching are elucidated. It emphasizes the importance of approaching this task with wisdom and discretion, engaging individuals on familiar ground and persuading them through examples drawn from their own knowledge and experiences, whether limited or extensive. The preaching advocated is characterized by a lack of dogmatism, self-centeredness, or offensiveness. Instead, it should be gentle, considerate, and designed to capture attention. The recommended manner and arguments should avoid acrimony, taking inspiration from the most courteous and gracious examples. The goal is for the audience to recognize the sincerity in the exposition of faith, driven by love for humanity and devotion to Allah."[27]

The holy Qur'ān has given so many examples explaining the meaning of *mujādalah*

aḥsan (best argumentation). The spirit of it being that the *dā'ī* should invite people on the basis of common points so that they willingly come to listen to his call. On the other hand, this way doesn't hurt people's sentiments. Also the *mad'ū* (called) does not find any excuse to reject what he already believes in as his own property. The instructions given to Rasūlullāh on how to interact with the people of the Book. Testifies the holy Qur'ān thus:

ولا تجادلوا اهل الكتاب الا بالتى هى احسن الا الذين ظلموا منهم و قولوا امنا بالذى

وَلَا تُجَـٰدِلُوٓا۟ أَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ وقولُوا امِنَا بالذى أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَإِلَـٰهُكُمْ وَاحِدٌ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ ۥ مُسْلِمُون

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"And dispute ye not with the people of the Book, except in the best way, unless it be with those of them who do wrong but say, "we believe in revelation which has come down to us and in that which has come down to you; our God and your God is one; and it is to Him we submit (in Islam)."[28]

Inviting the 'People of the Book' to common terms between them and the Muslims so that *da'wah* could achieve its end in a peaceful and friendly atmosphere is more clearly highlighted in this *āyah*:

قُلْ يَـٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فان تولَّوْا فقوْلُوٓا اشهدُوا بانَّا مسلمؤن

"Say: 'O people of the Book! Come to common terms as between you and us: That we worship none but Allāh; that we associate no partners with Him, that we erect not from ourselves, lords and patrons other than Allāh. If then they turn back, say ye: "Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to Allāh's Will)."[29]

The aforementioned *āyāt* suggest that engaging in mere arguments is pointless. To attain our objectives, it is crucial to identify genuine areas of agreement. Additionally, demonstrating kindness, sincerity, and a sincere concern for the well-being of others is essential. This will unmistakably convey that our intentions are not self-serving. But, at the same time, we should treat firmly those who deliberately resort to wrong. There is no need to seek areas of agreement or practice patience with such individuals unless the harm is prevented or halted.[30]

Example of one such person, who probably shared not commonalities with Allāh's *dā'ī* and deliberately wanted to injure him, not willing to accept the Truth, is of Namrūd, the tyrant kind. When Ibrāhīm told him that his (Ibrāhīm's) Lord gives life and death, he replied that he too would give life and death. Ibrāhīm asked that his

Lord makes the sun rise in the east, let him (the tyrant king) make it rise from the west. This argument wonderstruck him. Finding no answer, he remained silent:

<div dir="rtl">قَالَ إِبْرَاهِمُ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْتِى بِٱلشَّمْسِ مِنَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ ٱلْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ ٱلَّذِى كَفَرَ والله لا يهدئ القوْم الظالمِيْن</div>

Explaining this way of Ibrāhīm as to how much he resorted to a non-confrontational approach and tried to break the king's arrogance by the peaceful way of *hikmah*, Mawlānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāhī says that he could have silenced the king at the very first chance when he said that he could also give life and death, but he (Ibrāhīm) did not resort to the way of *munāẓirah* (disputation) which is opposite to *ḥikmah*. (Since he was sincere and genuinely concerned about the tyrant king's fate, he avoided *munāẓirah* and wanted to take another chance to lead him to the Truth). But the moment it became clear to him that he was deliberately beating about the bush and was not ready to listen, he gave him the final blow and left him in a good way.[31]

During *da'wah*, a *dā'ī* may have to face hate from people not believing in his religion. In such cases a *dā'ī* should never touch the sensibilities of his *mad'ū*, nor should he belittle him by calling him *kāfir* or *mushrik* lest he (*mad'ū*) should get annoyed. In the early Makkan *suwar* (plural of *sūrah*: a chapter of the holy Qur'ān) people were generally addressed as: (O! Mankind) (O! Man) (O! My people) not as O! Unbelievers or O! polytheists. The holy Qur'ān prohibits the Muslims to abuse and revile false deities, lest their guardians, out of spite, revile Allah ﷻ in their ignorance. This attitude also gives rise to religious friction in society thereby disturbing peace and hence killing the very essence of Islam. Thus, says Allah ﷻ:

<div dir="rtl">وَلَا تَسُبُّواْ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّواْ ٱللَّهَ عَدْوًۢا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ</div>

"Revile not ye those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite revile Allah in their ignorance."[32]

The wrong is necessarily to be criticized and discouraged but not by hurting the sentiments for that is against *ḥikmah*, which demands that, for keeping the atmosphere of mutual harmony intact, hurting the sentiments of people during *da'wah* should be avoided in a very delicate manner. Even if the *mad'ū* reacts in a very harsh and bad manner, the *dā'ī* should still not repel evil with evil. That is the real peaceful and peach-loving approach, which turns the opponent into an intimate friend. Testifies the holy Qur'ān thus:

<div dir="rtl">ٱدْفَعْ بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا ٱلَّذِى بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِىٌّ حَمِيمٌ</div>

"Repel evil with what is better: Then will he between whom and thee was hatred

become as it were thy friend and intimate."[33]

Had Allāh's Messenger ﷺ adopted a confrontational approach against the polytheists of Madīnah, this city would have become a place of bloodshed and hundreds of *munāfiqūn* (hypocrites), who were always busy in plotting against the Muslims and Islam, would have been slain by the Muslims. But despite all their misdeeds the Messenger of Allāhﷺwas guided to treat these people thus:

فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُل لَّهُمْ فِى أَنفُسِهِمْ قَوْلاً بَلِيغًا

"So keep clear of them, but admonish them, and speak to them a word to reach their very souls."[34]

Three things have been said in this *āyah* viz; *ī'rāḍ, maw'iẓah* and *qawl blīgh*. *Ī'rāḍ* means neither taking them into confidence, for that would be foolish; Nor engaging in a relentless conflict with them, as doing so would extinguish the prospect of reforming and cleansing them from their hypocrisy. But the Messenger of Allāh was advised to steer clear of their deceitful tactics, while simultaneously being encouraged to earnestly point out their mistakes, offering timely words to penetrate their hearts and bring them back to Allah. ﷺ[35]

Fir'awn (Pharaoh) was the most wretched and tyrant king. Musā (Moses) and his brother Hārūn (Aron) were commanded by Allāh to persuade and motivate him with a language that is mild:

فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلاً لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهُ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَى

"But speak to him mildly, perchance he may take warning or fear Allāh."[36]

Mild and soft language and gentle nature of the *dā'ī* does not give arrogance, inside the *mad'ū*, any chance to wake up, disturb the peaceful atmosphere and harmonious relationship between the *dā'ī* and the *mad'ū* that had been established at the outset when the *dā'ī* approached the *mad'ū* in the form of the latter's well-wisher. Rasūlullāh's ﷺ gentle nature which attracted people towards him was so highlighted in the Holy Qur'ān that it was shown as the part of Allāh's Mercy He had showered upon him:

فبما رحمة من الله لنت لهم ولوكنت فظًا غليظ القلب لانفضوْا من حوْلک فاعف عنهم وأستغْفر لهمْ

"It is part of the Mercy of Allah that thou dost deal gently with them. Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee so pass over (therein faults), and ask for Allāh's forgiveness for them."[37]

There can be people, as they are in every society, who create hurdles in way of

peace and justice. They will never tolerate a *da'ī's* peace-keeping and peace-making efforts. They played their mischievous role in the form of *kuffār* (unbelievers) and *munāfiqūn* (hypocrites) to sabotage the *da'wah* of Allāh's Messenger which they failed to do because of his peaceful and peace-loving approach. The Holy Qur'ān testifies thus:

ٱدۡفَعۡ بِٱلَّتِی هِیَ أَحۡسَنُ فَإِذَا ٱلَّذِی بَیۡنَكَ وَبَیۡنَهُ ۛ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ ۥ وَلِیٌّ حَمِیمٌ

"Repel (evil) with what is better then will he, between whom and thee was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate."[38]

In a situation when the unbelievers outrightly rejected the Faith, they were unhesitatingly called as *kāfirūn*. But at the same time, they were not persecuted or abused nor was any compromise made with them for peace and harmony cannot be achieved by making a cocktail of truth and falsehood. Allāh says:

قلْ يا ايّها الكافرۇن لا اعۡبد ما تعبدۇن ولا انتم عابدۇن ما اعبد ولا انا عابد مّا عبدتّم ولا انْتم عابدۇن ما اعۡبد لكم ديۡنكم و لى ديۡن

"Say: O ye who reject Faith! I worship not that which ye worship. Nor will ye worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which ye have been want to worship no will ye worship to which I worship. To you be your way and to me mine."[39]

Da'wah and coercion are incompatible with each other. Since Faith is the matter of free will it is meaningless if force is behind it; faith by compulsion is no faith at all. That is the reason why *da'wah* aims at making Truth and falsehood so clear that there remains least doubt in one's mind to search out the Reality. Allāh says:

لَآ إِكۡرَاهَ فِی ٱلدِّینِ ۚ قَد تَّبَیَّنَ ٱلرُّشۡدُ مِنَ ٱلۡغَیِّ ۚ فَمَن یَكۡفُرۡ بِٱلطَّاغُوتِ وَیُؤۡمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدِ ٱسۡتَمۡسَكَ بِٱلۡعُرۡوَةِ ٱلۡوُثۡقَىٰ

لَا ٱنفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِیعٌ عَلِیمٌ

"Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error: whoever rejects Tagūt and believes in Allāh hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And Allāh heareth and knoweth all things."[40]

From this it follows that coercion in *da'wah* "is a grave violation of the human person, second only to homicide, if not equal to it." [41] Secondly man as God's *khalīfah* (vicegerent) on earth,[42] has to fulfil the divine will, that comprises two parts[43] viz; *shari'ah* and natural law. While the later part is already fulfilled in the form of the perfect physical phenomena, the former part has to be fulfilled by man as moral law. Hence *da'wah* reminds man of this responsibility and the necessity of fulfilling the law of *shari'ah*. "This constitutes man's distinction from all other creatures. Only he acts freely and thus enables himself to actualize the moral part of the divine will. His

essence is his capacity for responsible moral action. Coercion is a violation of this freedom and responsibility, and is utterly inconsistent with man's relation to the divine will."[44]

The above-mentioned *āyāh* also guides us towards the fact that "Allāh's protection is continuous, and His plan is always to lead us from the depths of darkness into the clearest light."[45] It also follows from this "that the societal order desired by Islam is one where men are free to present and argue their religious causes with one another…. Islamic *da'wah* is therefore, an invitation to think, to debate and argue."[46] And for the realisation of this divine plan Allāh ﷻ always sent His Messenger's to invite people to believe in Him and reject *ṭāgūt* (all false gods) in order to attain real salvation in both the worlds. The responsibility of all the Messengers was to proclaim the Message without compelling people to accept it:

<div align="center">مَّا عَلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ إِلَّا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ</div>

<div align="center">*"The Messenger's duty is to proclaim (the Message)."*[47]</div>

Islam accepts that each and every human being can't possibly embrace Allāh's Religion. So, the Muslims should not behave as if they are ignorant of this reality and impatient. Allah addresses His Messenger in these words:

> *"If it were Allāh's Will He could gather them together unto true guidance. So*
> *be not thou amongst those who are swayed by ignorance (and impatience)."*[48]

Hence, if Allāh Himself had Willed to make all humans on earth believers, He would have not left it upto His Messengers and after the final Messenger, Muḥammad (peace be upon him) commanded his *ummah* (the Muslims) to present the Truth in its pure and pristine form before the humanity leaving to their choice whether they accept or reject it, a *dā'ī* is therefore, not allowed to compel them against their will to believe:

<div align="center">وَلَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّكَ لَأَمَنَ مَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ كُلُّهُمْ جَمِيعًا افانت تكره النّاس حتّٰى يكونوٰا مومنينْ</div>

<div align="center">*"If it had been thy Lord's Will, they would all have believed, —all who are on*
<div align="center">*earth! Wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will to believe."*[49]</div>

A. Y. ʿAlī explains this fact thus:

"If Allāh had chosen not to grant the limited free will bestowed upon humanity, His omnipotence could have made all individuals uniform. In such a scenario, everyone would have had faith, but this faith would lack any merit. In the existing world, humans possess diverse faculties and capacities, urging them to strive, explore, and align themselves with Allāh's will. Consequently, faith becomes a moral accomplishment, and resisting faith transforms into a sin. Simultaneously, individuals

of faith should exercise patience and refrain from anger when confronting unfaithfulness. Importantly, they must avoid the temptation of enforcing faith through physical coercion, as coerced faith holds no true essence. Instead, they should strive sincerely."[50]

Ibn Kathīr says that since the Message of Islam is clear, there is no need to use compulsion for one having sound mind and pious heart will accept it out of his own volition. But if he is compelled to accept it, it is useless[51] for *īmān* (Faith) is the outcome of free choice.

Similarly, views are expressed by Zamakhsharī in *Tafsīr Kashshāf*, Rāzī in his *Tafsīr Kabīr*, Abū Muslim Isfahānī and other prominent Muslim thinkers.[52]

Conclusion

Concluding the whole discussion, Islam, being the Religion of peace, leads man to eternal peace and the establishment of a Just world order through submission and surrender of his limited will before the Supreme Will of Allāh. *Da'wah* therefore, aims at inviting the whole mankind towards this Reality so that they could succeed in establishing the real 'Kingdom of God' on this earth. Islam asserts that the entire human race constitutes the family of Allāh, and as members of this family, all individuals are connected by a shared bond of brotherhood. *Da'wah* enthusiasm among the Muslims is therefore, based upon sincerity and love for every human being.

References & Endnotes:

[1] Miṣbāḥ al-Raḥmān Yūsufī, "'Ilm al-Da'wah al-Islāmiyya wa nasha'tuthu", *Al-Ba'th al-Islāmī*, Vol. 40, No.4, Mar. 1999 Lukhnow, Nadwah al-'Ulama', Mar., P.24.

[2] Al-Qur'ān, 2:213.

[3] For detail: Al-Qur'ān, 2:143; 2:6; 16: 2; 2:160; 7:68; 11:34; 5:67; 48:8; 88:21; 87:9; 4:165; 11:88; 25:52.

[4] Al-Qur'ān, 3:104.

[5] Ibn Jarir Tabari, *Jami'al-Bayan,* V. 4, P.24, Cited in Syed Jalal-ud-din 'Ansar, *Ma'ruf aur Munkar* (Ur.), tr. By Syed Amīn Ashraf, Delhi, 1983, P. 9.

[6] 'A.Y. 'Ali, Eng. Tr. of the meanings and Commentary of the Holy Qur'an, revised and ed. by The Presidency of Islamic Researches (IFTA), Call and Guidance, Al-Madinah AI-Munawwwarah, 1413R, Ex. n. 671.

[7] Al-Qur'ān, 16:125.

[8] Al-Qur'ān, 17:39.

[9] A. Y. 'Alī, op. cot., Ex. n. 2224.

[10] Al-Qur'ān,31:12

[11] Fakhruddīn Muhammad al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Kabīr*, (Beirut, Maktabah Tahqīq dār Ihyā' al-turāth al-'Arabī, 1997), p. 287.

[12] See Ibn Kathīr, op. coit., vol. 3, part, p. 67.

[13] Sulayman Nadwī, *Sirah al-Nabī*, vol. 4, p. 353.

[14] Qārī Muhammad Tayyib, *Dīnī Da'wat Ke Qur'ānī Usūl,* Deoband, 1994, p. 58-59.

[15] Ibn Bāz, *Al-da'wah ilā Allāh wa akhlāq al-du'āh*, Sa'ūdī Arabia, Idārah al-Bahūth al-'Ilmiyyah wa al-Iftā wa al-Da'wah wa al-Irshād, 1982, p. 23-25.

[16] Al-Qur'ān, 62:2.

[17] A. Y. 'Alī, op. cit., Ex. n. 5453.

[18] Rāzī, loc. cit.

[19] Ibn Kathīr, loc. cit.

[20] *Mahasini Islām*, p. 71.

[21] Tayyib, loc. cit.

[22] Rāzī, loc. cit.

[23] Ibn Kathīr, loc. cit.

[24] Thānwī, loc. cit.

[25] Qārī Tayyib, loc. cit.

[26] Ibn Bāz, op. cit., p. 25.

[27] A. Y. 'Alī, Ex. n. 2161.

[28] Al-Qur'ān, 29:46.

[29] Al-Qur'ān, 3:64.

[30] A. Y. 'Alī, op. cit., Ex. n. 3472-73. In modern times 'inter-religious dialogue' is held with the primary aim of removing mistrust and misunderstandings existing among different communities and, at the same time, developing cordial relationships, reconciliation and cooperation between them. This is done on the basis of common points between different religions. But so far as the Qur'ān and the *sunnah* are concerned, such approach has been adopted only towards the 'People of the Book' on the basis of the fundamental beliefs (like the belief in the Day of Judgment, revelation, true worship of God etc. Example of calling people of other faiths, who differ with the Muslims with respect to the very fundamentals cannot easily be found in the *Sunnah*. They were instead invited to Islām very plainly.

[31] Amīn Ahsan Islāhī, *Da'wati Dīn awr iskā tarīqah kār*, Delhi, MMI, 1987, p. 87.

[32] Al-Qur'ān, 6:108

[33] Al-Qur'ān, 41:34

[34] Al-Qur'ān, 4:63

[35] A. Y. 'Alī, Ex. n., 582.

36 Al-Qur'ān, 20:44

37 Al-Qur'ān, 3:159

38 Al-Qur'ān, 41:34

39 Al-Qur'ān, 109:1-6

40 Al-Qur'ān, 2:256

41 Ismail Raji Al-Farūqī, *Islam and other Faiths*, USA, IIIT, p. 306.

42 Al-Qur'ān 2:30.

43 See for detail chap.-1 of this thesis.

44 R. Al-Farūqī, op. cit., p. 307.

45 Ibid, Ex. n. 6291.

46 Ibid, P. 306.

47 Al-Qur'ān, 5:99

48 Al-Qur'ān, 6:35

49 Al-Qur'ān, 10:99

50 Ibid, Ex. n. 1480.

51 Ibn Kathīr, op. cit., vol. 1, part 3, p. 8-9.

52 Mawdūdī, *Al-Jihād fī al-Islām*, p. 159-61.