

The Prophet's Earliest Teaching of Da'wah: Qur'anic View on Surah al-Muddaththir and Surah al-Muzzammil

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ABSTRAK

Al-Qur'an dianggap sumber rujukan paling autentik bagi orang Islam. Ia menggariskan petunjuk yang terbaik dalam semua aspek kehidupan manusia. Ini tidak terkecuali dalam kerja-kerja da'wah. Terdapat banyak ayat al-Qur'an yang berkaitan dengan da'wah. Bagaimanapun, artikel ini hanya memberi tumpuan terhadap dua surah terawal yang diturunkan kepada Nabi Muhammad iaitu surah al-Muddaththir dan surah al-Muzzammil. Kajian dan pemerhatian terhadap kedua-dua surah ini menjelaskan beberapa ciri pendidikan da'wah yang nyata seperti pengisytiharan atau penyampaian mesej Islam, pengisytiharan mesej kebesaran Tuhan, etika kebersihan, etika dalam da'wah seperti sabar dan ikhlas serta mendirikan solat di waktu malam (qiyamullail) dan membaca al-Qur'an. Nilai-nilai pendidikan tersebut telah dipraktikkan oleh Rasulullah di dalam kehidupan Baginda sebagai da'i dan masih sesuai di zaman moden ini.

ABSTRACT

The Qur'an is regarded as the most authentic sources for the Muslims. It lays down the best of guidances in all aspects of human life. For the missionary works (da'wah) it is not exceptional. One can found clearly that there are many verses which are related to da'wah. This article, will however concentrated on two of the earliest Surahs of the Qur'an i.e surah al-Muddaththir and surah al-Muzzammil. A careful study of these Surahs would revealed salient features of da'wah's teaching like proclamation of the message, proclamation of the greatness of God, rules for hygiene, ethical teachings and the establishment of prayer at night and the recitation of the Qur'an. These teachings were practised by the Prophet in his life as a da'i and remain applicable to the modern time.

INTRODUCTION

The teaching of da'wah in this article is defined as the method of da'wah. The Qur'an provide some useful method of da'wah for the Prophet in the very beginning of his career as a da'i. God's teachings (the method of da'wah) to the

Prophet at the earliest stage were marked by the revelations of *surah al-Muddaththir* and *al-Muzzammil* in which clear guidance was provided to the Prophet for the proclamation of the Islamic message. These Surahs are extremely important for this purpose. These Surahs give us clear picture how da'wah education is important for da'i. A meticulous study of these Surahs concerning da'wah education of the Prophet reveals the following:

PROCLAMATION OF THE MESSAGE

God sent the prophets to convey his message that is the message of Tauhid. The Prophet Muhammad as one of the prophets also has the same responsibility as the previous prophets were. He has to carry the Islamic message to all mankind. This burden task need to be performed systematically and wisely. In order to fulfill this responsibility, Allah did not let the Prophet alone, He (Allah) rather provided the prophet some useful methods which are considered importance in da'wah. The Prophet's assignment as a da'i (preacher) is clearly indicated as follows:

O thou (in thy solitude) enfolded! Arise and warn! (al-Muddaththir 74:1-2)

The commentators of the Qur'anic exegesis refer to the appellation of *al-Muddaththir* in the beginning of *surah al-Muddaththir* to the Prophet Muhammad. This appellation then followed by the command to 'rise and warn, (*qum fa anzir*). Therefore, the combination of these two verses signify a direct command to the Prophet to perform his assignment as a da'i to human beings for the first time. According to al-Baghawī (1987, 4:412), the instruction to rise and warn means that the Prophet was commanded to warn the unbelievers of Makkah. Al-Qurtubī (t.th, 30:68) went further, explaining that the message meant that the unbelievers should be reminded that they would be punished if they remained unbelievers. These views of the commentators revealed that it is an obligation for the Muslims to propagate the message of Islam even though these verses specially revealed to the Prophet.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GREATNESS OF GOD

The assignment as a da'i needs a special relationship with God. The Prophet as a role model for all da'is' was thought by Allah to magnify his name. The Qur'an in this case mentions:

And thy sustainer's greatness glorify! (al-Muddaththir 74:3)

Commenting on this verse, al-Qurtubī (t.th, 30:68) quoted Ibn Arabī who stated that the words '*wa rabbaka fakkabbir*', magnify your Lord stand for '*takbir taqdis*', sacred magnifying, which imparts the sense of destruction of

idols and worship of One True Transcendental God. Al-Tabari (1954, 29:144) suggests that the Prophet was commanded to praise God, worship Him and seek help from Him all the time.

The above views of al-Qurtubi and al-Tabari indicate clearly that da'i should rely and seek Allah's help in undertaking his work to convey the Islamic message to all mankind in any circumstances.

Remembrance of God has been an important exercise in the life of those who are occupied in the propagation of faith. The Qur'anic mentions that previous Prophets also remained closely associated with the exercise in their campaigns for the propagation of faith. The Prophet Muhammad was not an exception for this rule. Those who have Allah's greatness and majesty deeply embedded in their hearts never feel any hesitation and are not afraid at all to face challenges in their dakwah. Sayyid Qutb (1982, 6:3754) feels that all challenges and difficulties in da'wah can be overcome when the faith of greatness of God deeply penetrates da'i's heart. This basic teaching to proclaim the greatness of God was the greatest encouragement and the highest inspiration to the Prophet in his career as a da'i. Da'i in modern time also need this kind of inspiration.

RULES FOR HYGIENE

Islam put a great emphasis on cleanliness. It is a part of Islamic teaching. Therefore, based on this fact, hygieness or cleanliness is also considered as important for those who are undertake da'wah works. Regarding the rules of hygiene and it's importance, the Qur'an reveals the following:

And thy garments keep free from stain. And all abomination shun (al-Muddaththir 74:4-5).

The above verses cover both aspects of cleanliness, spiritual as well as physical. As a da'i, it is very important for the Prophet and all da'is' to remain physically clean in order to attract others to the Islamic message. The second verse clearly suggests inner purification. The earliest commentators have provided different interpretations of the word '*rujz*' in reference to this verse. The word '*al-rujz*', according to Mujahid, Ikrimah, Zuhr and Ibn Zayd (al-Tabari 1954, 29:147) means idols, whereas Ibn Abbas (al-Qurtubi t.th, 19:63) regards it as sins. Abu Āliyah and al-Rabi' thinks that *al-rujz* means '*najasah*' (an abomination) and *ma'siyah* (disobedience and Dahhak (al-Baghawi 1987, 4:413) thinks that it means polytheism. According to Qatadah, Mujahid and Ikrimah (al-Baghawi 1987, 4:413), the Prophet was taught to avoid any kind of sin and disobedience. He should not exercise oppression (zulm). Al-Hasan and al-Qardhi consider this as an indication for the promotion of good morals (al-Baghawi 1987, 4:413). These interpretations of the Qur'anic verses clearly suggested that cleanliness is important in da'wah. It is very important not only for the Prophet but also to all the da'i to keep clean both physical and spiritual in their daily life. They have to

practice good morals in their daily life considering that they are a role model to be followed.

ETHICAL TEACHING

Ethics is among a very important element in da^ʿwah. There are two aspects related to ethical teaching which are clearly mentioned by this Surah (*al-Muddaththir*) that is sincerity and patience. Further details concerning the ethical teaching related to da^ʿwah are as follows:

SINCERITY

In da^ʿwah sincerity plays a decisive role. This important value for the da^ʿi can be deduced from the following verse:

Nor expect, in giving, any increase (for thyself) (*al-Muddaththir* 74:6).

Mawdudi (1992, 6:143) while commenting this verse suggested that in his assignment as a da^ʿi, the Prophet should neither seek worldly gains nor personal benefits. This noble aim cannot be achieved without sincerity. As far as the da^ʿwah's method is concerned, sincerity is a need for da^ʿi, otherwise his works in da^ʿwah will be exposed to disappoint. The Prophet Muhammad in this case is a role model who was cultivated sincerity in his life. Therefore, a person who undertake the da^ʿwah works should understand that his dakwah is for the sake of Allah not for others.

PATIENCE

The propagation of faith is not an easy task. A da^ʿi needs the noble value in order to stand firm against all difficulties. The endeavours of the previous Prophets indicate that they were faced with many challenges in performing their assignment. Their own people opposed them, and some of them even fought with them. All of them faced patiently atrocities according to the Qur'an. The Qur'an confirms this fact:

Rejected were the Messengers before thee: With patience and constancy they bore their rejection and their wrongs, until our aid did reach them. There is none that can alter the words (and decrees) of Allah. Already hast you received some account of those Messengers (*al-An'am* 6:34).

The Prophet also witnessed the same experience. It is the nature of da^ʿwah (*sunnah fi al-da^ʿwah*) that he would be tested (see the Qur'an, *al-Baqarah*: 156, 214 and *Al-Imran*, 3:142). This kind of experience was useful for the Prophet in teaching him what would be response to such opposition and atrocities. Another Qur'anic injunction related to the patience:

And for the sake of thy Lord, be patient (al-Muddaththir: 7).

The da'i should always keep in mind that the dissemination of Islamic message will be more effective by practising patient. The Prophet's life as a da'i proved that this method of patient is very important and has a deep impact to attract people to the da'wah. The Islamic missionary must, therefore, exercise patience, self-restraint and show courage in pain and adversity. He should not grieve if the listeners reject the da'wah. The Prophet's da'wah proved that patience was an effective weapon in facing obstacles in da'wah and should be a great example to be followed by every da'i in present time.

SPIRITUALS TRAINING

For the spiritual upliftment, the establishment of prayer and the recitation of the Qur'an are essential for the da'i. These exercises would bring a person close to God. It is not difficult to understand the wisdom of similar spiritual training prescribed to the Prophet:

O thou folded in garments! Stand (to prayer) by night, but not all night. Half of it, or little less, or little more, and recite the Qur'an in slow, measured rhythmic tones (al-Muzzammil 73:1-4).

These verses shows us two important things which should be implemented by all da'is' in their life. First is the establishment of prayer at night and second is the recitation of the Qur'an.

One of the aims of this spiritual training is to enable the Prophet to promulgate the weight Qur'anic message. The Qur'an makes the statement concerning this facts in the following Divine words:

Soon shall we send down to thee a weighty Message (al-Muzzammil 73:5).

This kind of spiritual training will provide the da'i with some confidence to take the dakwah task. One cannot rely on his ability to do da'wah, rather he should seek guidances and help from Allah. It is important to note, that the establishment of prayer at night and the recitation of the Qur'an (*qira'at al-Qur'an*) are needed by all da'i as their good spiritual training.

CONCLUSION

The revelation of *surah al-Muddaththir* and *al-Muzzammil* provided the Prophet with the opportunity to establish and systematically develop the institution of da'wah. These Divine commandments enabled him to witness spiritual training and closeness to God. The significance of certain important values for da'wah such as purification, cleanliness, sincerity, patience and remembrance of God

became clear to him. These two Surahs are also important for the propagation of Islamic message in modern time. The understanding of these Surahs properly will help the da'ī to convey the Islamic message effectively. It can be concluded here, that it is the Qur'an as the most authentic sources for the Muslims provided some clear example for da'ī in relation to the da'wah method. These Qur'anic educations of da'wah which were practised by the Prophet during his time remain useful and can be applied in modern time.

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