



The Methodology of the Prophets in Calling to Allaah, That is the Way of Intellect and Wisdom

By Shaykh Rabee' bin Haadee al-Madkhalee

Translated by Abu Talhah Dawud Burbank

Nooh

Nooh was the second father of all mankind, and the first of the Messengers (*Rusul*) to the people of the Earth. This great Prophet lived a very long life: he called his people for nine hundred and fifty years to the *tawheed* of Allaah and to making all worship purely for Him. He did not become weary of this, nor lose interest. He called them night and day, in private and in the open. Allaah, the Most High, says,

“Indeed We sent Nooh as a Messenger to his people ordering him to warn his people before a painful punishment should come to them. He said, ‘O my People, I am a plain and clear warner to you, that you should worship Allaah alone, avoid disobedience to Him and obey me. If you do so He will forgive you your sins and grant you respite until an appointed term. Indeed when the term decreed by Allaah comes it cannot be delayed, and if you knew you would submit to and obey your Lord.’ Nooh said, ‘O my Lord, I have called my people day and night to worship You alone and warned them of Your punishment but my calling them to the truth only results in them turning away from it.¹ Whenever I call them to worship You alone and to obey You, and to dissasociate themselves from the worship of everything but You, so that You may forgive them, they thrust their fingers in their ears and cover themselves up with their garments, so as not to hear. Then they persist in their disbelief and arrogantly and obstinately refuse to follow and submit to the truth. Then I called them loudly and openly, and I called them individually and privately. I said to them, ‘Ask your Lord to forgive your sins and repent to your Lord from your unbelief and association of others in worship with Him, and make your worship sincerely and purely for Him,

¹ At-Tabaree reports from Qataadah, “It has reached us that a man would take his son to Nooh and say to his son, ‘Beware of this man, don't let him lead you astray, for I remember when I was your age, my father brought me to him and warned me against him just as I am warning you.’”

then He will forgive you, indeed He greatly forgives those who turn to Him in repentance and seek His forgiveness. He will then send you rain in abundance, and grant you increase in wealth and children, and provide you with gardens and rivers. What is wrong with you that you do not have awe and fear of Allaah, when it is He that created you in successive stages? Do you not see how Allaah has created the seven heavens one above the other, and has placed the moon therein as a light and has made the sun a lamp? Allaah it is who created you and brought you from the earth, and He it is who will return you to it, and then resurrect you from it. Allaah - it is Who spread out the earth for you, so that you may travel about upon wide roads.” Nooh said, ‘O my Lord, they have rejected my call and opposed it, and have instead followed the call of those whose wealth and children only increase them in error and take them further away from their Lord. Furthermore the leaders have plotted a mighty plot, and they have said, “Do not abandon your gods. Do not abandon *Wadd*, nor *Suwaa*, nor *Yaghooth*, nor *Ya'ooq*, nor *Nasr*.” Indeed many have gone astray due to the idols. O Allaah, grant no increase to the transgressors except in error.² Due to their sins they were drowned in the Flood and entered into the Fire, and they could find no one to save them from Allaah’s punishment.”³

So what did the *da'wah* of this noble Messenger comprise of, and Allaah has told us the summary of his noble *da'wah* which continued for nine hundred and fifty years?! Indeed it was an earnest and painstaking call to the *tawheed* of Allaah and to make all worship purely for Him. It was a tireless effort and he used every possible means available to him to convince them of his call. He called them privately and individually, and he called them openly. He encouraged them and warned them, informing them of the promise of good for the obedient, and evil for the disobedient. He gave them practical and intellectual proofs, from themselves and their lives, and what they saw before them with regards to the heavens and the earth, and the clear signs and lessons contained in them. All of this failed to benefit them and did not cause them to accept. Rather they persisted in their disbelief and error, and they rejected all this obstinately and arrogantly. They persisted in their adherence to the idols and false and futile objects of worship. So the result of this persistence and obstinancy was destruction and annihilation in this world, and everlasting torment in the Hell-fire in the Hereafter.

² This supplication of Nooh against them came after he was informed by Allaah that they were not going to be Believers, as explained by al-Baghawee.

³ Soorah Nooh (71):1-24.

At this point we may ask: why did this great Prophet continue for such an extremely long period of time, expending huge efforts, untiringly and without languidness, calling to the starting point of *tawheed*? Why did Allaah praise him so highly, and cause him to be remembered, and make him one of those Messengers who were the firmest of all in their determination (*qolul-adhm*)? Does the call to *tawheed* deserve all this esteem? Is this methodology an establishment of this procedure for this noble Prophet in opposition to logic, wisdom and intellect? Or is it pure and certain wisdom, and what is demanded by correct logic and sound and perceptive intellect? Why did Allaah approve of following this methodology in *da'wah* for 950 years, and commend him, and cause his name and his story to endure, and impose it as a duty upon the greatest of the Messengers and the one having the greatest intellect of all the people, that he should take him as an example to follow in his *da'wah* and his perseverance?

The just answer, established upon intellect and wisdom, and upon understanding the status and position of Prophet hood, and having the greatest trust in it and giving it its due respect, is that the call to *tawheed* and striving to wipe out *shirk* and to purify the earth from it, does indeed deserve all of this. It is indeed wisdom itself and is demanded by natural inclination and intellect. It is furthermore, a binding obligation upon every caller to Allaah that they understand this methodology, this great and divinely inspired *da'wah* and great goal, and that they devote all their effort and energy to its attainment and its being propagated throughout all of Allaah's earth. Furthermore that they work together, cooperate and unite, and sincerely attest to each others' truthfulness. Just as the Messengers, the callers to *tawheed*, were: the earlier ones telling of the coming of the later ones and the later ones attesting to the truthfulness of the previous ones and promoting their call, and following the same way. It is also binding upon us to believe that if there was any other methodology better and more correct than this methodology, that Allaah would have chosen that for His Messengers and would have favoured them with it. So is it fitting for any Believer to turn away from it and choose a different methodology for himself, and to arrogantly seek to attack this divinely laid down methodology and its callers?!

Ibraaheem

The Father of the Prophets and the Leader of those who worship Allaah alone, upon the true religion, Ibraaheem, the Chosen and Beloved Friend of Allaah (*Khaleelullaah*), who was such that Allaah ordered the best of the Messengers and the final Prophet, and his *ummah*, to emulate him, to take his call as an example, and to follow his way and methodology.⁴ Allaah, the Most High, says:

“And remember when Ibraaheem said to his father Aazar, ‘Will you take idols for worship? Indeed I see that you and those who worship idols along with you are upon clear error.’ Likewise We showed Ibraaheem the heavens and the earth (and how they are a proof that the Creator alone should be worshipped), so that he should be one of those who have Faith with certainty. So when the night covered him with darkness he saw a star and said, (as an argument to show his people the error of worshipping anything besides Allaah), ‘This is (what you claim to be) my Lord?!’ Then when it set, he said, ‘I do not love that which passes away.’ Then when he saw the moon rising up he said, ‘This is (what you claim to be) my Lord?!’ Then when it set he said, ‘If my Lord did not keep me firm upon the guidance then I would surely be one of the misguided.’ Then when he saw the sun, he said, ‘This is (what you claim to be) my Lord?! This is greater than the others.’ Then when it set he said, ‘O my people, I am free from all that you associate as partners in worship with Allaah. Indeed I have turned my face in worship to Him who has created the heavens and the earth, making all worship purely for Him, and I am not from those who worship anything besides Allaah.’”⁵

So this was a fervent, vigorous and incessant call to the *tawheed* of Allaah, and to make all of religion purely for Him, and to the elimination and rejection of *shirk*. It begins with the family and extends to the nations, waging war upon *shirk* and the idols and shaking the very foundations of attribution of any worship to the stars. So the chosen and beloved Friend of Allaah proceeded

⁴ As indicated by the saying of Allaah, the Most High:

“Then We revealed to you, O Muhammad (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam), that you should follow the religion of Ibraaheem who was a Muslim upon the true religion and was not one of those who worshipped idols and associated partners with Allaah.” [Soorah an-Nahl (16):123].

And the saying of Allaah, the Most High:

“Say, O Muhammad (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam): Allaah has indeed spoken the Truth, so follow the religion of Ibraaheem who was upright, upon the religion of Islaam, and he did not make any share of his worship for any created being.” [Soorah Aal-’Imraan (3):95].

⁵ Soorah al-An’aam (6):74-79.

upon the soundest way in debating and arguing in order to establish Allaah's Proof and to refute *shirk* and to show its fallacy and reject the doubts used to support it. So his use of the word 'idols' shows contempt for their phoney and supposed gods, and an exposure of their foolishness. He observed the aforementioned celestial bodies one after the other, each one succeeded the previous one which set and became absent, in order to use their condition as a clear proof of the fallacy of their having any divinity or right to worship as his people claimed. Who was it who protected and guarded them and controlled their affairs and the affairs of the creation when they passed and set?! Therefore they must reject the false divinity and right to worship which they claimed for them and disbelieve in that. It was upon them to wash their hands of them and turn instead to their true God, He Who created and brought into existence the heavens and the earth. He Who does not pass away or depart. He Who knows all about their condition and is fully aware of all their movements and periods of rest. He Who protects and preserves them and controls their affairs. They were strong proofs extracted from the situation they experienced and the visible creation.

Allaah, the Most High, says:

“And recite to your people from the Book (the Qur’aan), O Muhammad (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam), about Ibraaheem. He was one who was fully truthful and one sent as a Prophet by Allaah. When he said to his father, ‘Why do you worship that which cannot hear, nor see, nor benefit you, nor remove any harm from you at all?! O my father, Allaah has given me knowledge which has not come to you, so accept the sincere advice I give you, and I will show you the Straight Way, upon which you will not go astray. O my father, do not worship Satan (by obeying him in his call for you to worship the idols) - indeed Satan is one disobedient to the Most Merciful (Allaah). O my father, I fear for you, knowing that if you die upon attribution of partners to Allaah in worship, and upon worship of Satan, that Allaah’s punishment and torment will be upon you, and that you will merely be a companion of Satan in the Hell-fire.’ He replied, ‘Do you reject my gods, O Ibraaheem? If you do not cease abusing and reviling them I will certainly revile you. Go away from me if you wish to remain safe from me.’ Ibraaheem said, ‘But you are safe from me harming you, I will rather ask my Lord to guide you and forgive your sins. He has always been most Gracious and Kind to me. I shall keep away from you and all that you worship besides Allaah, and I will worship and invoke my Lord, making all of worship purely for Him. I hope that I shall not be one unblest in my worship and supplications.’ So when he separated himself from them and all that they worshipped

besides Allaah, We gave him a family who were better than them, Ishaaq and Ya'qoob, and we made all of them Prophets, and we bestowed our mercy upon them all, and granted them renown and praise upon the tongues of the people.”⁶

So this was a fervent call to *tawheed*, established firmly upon knowledge, reason and intellect, and upon good and sound manners. Guiding the misguided to the Straight Path. It was opposed by blind bigotry and partisanship, based upon desires, ignorance, stubbornness and obinate pride: otherwise how could anyone worship and humble themselves to those who cannot hear, nor see, nor help them in any way?!

Indeed the knowledge of *tawheed*, O reader, is that knowledge which all the Prophets were honoured with, and with it they assaulted falsehood, ignorance and shirk. So ignorance of this knowledge, the knowledge carried by the Prophets, which guides to the truth and saves from misguidance and shirk, ignorance of this is fatal and is a deadly poison which kills the intellect and the ability to think.

“O my Father, Allaah has given me knowledge which has not come to you, accept the sincere advice which I give to you, and I will show you the Straight Way, upon which you will not go astray.”⁷

Then after these robust efforts in *da'wah* expended by Ibraaheem in calling to Allaah, calling the family and the nation, establishing the irrefutable proofs upon his father and his people, after this he took this great call and confronted that haughty and tyrannical ruler who claimed divinity, he faced him with the full strength and bravery. Allaah, the Most High, says:

“Do you not consider the one (Namrood) who, because Allaah had granted him an extended kingdom disputed with Ibraaheem about his Lord. Ibraaheem said to him, ‘It is my Lord (Allaah) Who gives life and death.’ He said, ‘I give life and cause death.’ Ibraaheem said, ‘Allaah causes the sun to rise from the east, so if you are truthful then cause it to rise from the west.’ So the unbeliever was confounded, and Allaah does not guide the unbelievers to find proof against the people of truth.”⁸

⁶ Soorah Maryam (19):41-50.

⁷ Soorah Maryam (19):43.

⁸ Soorah al-Baqarah (2):258.

So Ibraaheem called this tyrant and claimant to divinity to the *tawheed* of Allaah, and to *eemaan* in His Lordship. But he exceeded all bounds in his arrogance and haughtily refused to accept the *tawheed* of Allaah and to give up on his claims to Lordship. So Ibraaheem debated with him in this brilliant manner whose proof was clear. Ibraaheem said,

“It is my Lord (Allaah) Who gives life and death.”⁹

So the stupid tyrant replied that he too could give life and death - meaning that he killed whom he pleased and spared whom he pleased. This answer of his was merely a pretence and a means of fooling the ignorant, and was a way of avoiding the question, since what Ibraaheem referred to was the fact that his Lord created mankind, animals and plants and gave them life, and brought them into existence from nothing. Then He causes them to die with His Power, and that He gives the humans and animals death at the end of their appointed life-spans, due to visible causes which He shows and without visible causes. So when Ibraaheem saw that he tried to create a pretence to evade the issue, which might fool some of the ignorant and common folk, he then said, as a means of showing the futility of what his saying entailed, that if you are as you claim, then,

“Allaah causes the sun to rise from the east, so if you are truthful then cause it to rise from the west.’ So the unbeliever was confounded.”¹⁰

So the unbeliever was left confounded and at a loss for words. His argument was overthrown, he was silenced, struck dumb and falsehood was rendered futile as is always the case. So this contains a lesson for those who listen attentively and witness it, that the call to *tawheed* represents the peak of sincerity, wisdom and intelligence; it proceeds in the due and correct manner, and as Allaah has willed, not merely struggling for kingship, nor seeking to fight for leadership.

If the goal of Ibraaheem had been to attain rulership and authority he would have taken a different methodology to this, and he would have found people who gathered around him and supported him. But Allaah refuses, and His Prophets and the pious callers from the true followers of the Prophets in every time and place, they all refuse except to follow the way of guidance and truth,

⁹ Soorah al-Baqarah (2):258.

¹⁰ Soorah al-Baqarah (2):258.

and to clearly proclaim the truth and to establish the proof against the proud and obstinate.

So Ibraaheem established this great obligation in the best and most complete manner. He established the proof upon his father and his people, upon those who governed them and upon all of his nation. Then when he saw that they were persisting in their *shirk* and their unbelief and were established upon falsehood and misguidance, he resorted to censure and correction by means of the hand and use of strength. So where did his change and correction begin, and what was the correct and rightly guided means for correction of the dire situation which had beset his nation? Did he seek to overthrow the state because it was the root of all the evils and corruption and the source of *shirk* and misguidance?! How can that be denied when the ruler claimed lordship for himself and persisted in that claim? So why did Ibraaheem not consider a revolution against this unbelieving government, and at the head of it a tyrant who claimed divinity, and by so doing wipe out all the forms of corruption and *shirk*, and establish in its place the divinely-guided state headed by Ibraaheem, '*alayhis-salaatu was-salaam*?! The answer is the Prophets were far removed from following any such way or even considering it, since this is the way of the oppressors, the ignorant and the foolish, those who seek after this world and strive for authority in it.

Rather the Prophets were callers to *tawheed* and pioneers guiding to the truth, and seeking to save the people from falsehood and *shirk*. So when they applied themselves to correction and changing the state of affairs, and they were the most knowledgeable and intelligent of the people, then they necessarily began with striking at the true sources of *shirk* and misguidance. This is what Ibraaheem, the mild, wise and rightly guided, the heroic and brave, did. Allaah, the Most High, says:

“We guided Ibraaheem to the truth at a young age before the time of Moosaa and Haaron, and We knew that he was fitting for that and was a person of true and certain *eemaan* who would worship Allaah alone and not associate any partner with Him. When he said to his father and his people, ‘What are these idols which you worship and are devoted to?!’ They said, ‘We found our fathers worshipping them and have followed them in that.’ He said, ‘Both you and they in worshipping the idols are in clear error.’ They said, ‘Are you serious in your saying that you have come with the truth, or are you merely being frivolous?’ He said, ‘Rather, I bring you the truth. Your Lord, other than Whom none has the right to be worshipped, is the sole Lord and Creator of the heavens and the earth, He Who created you all, not any of the

idols to which you are devoted. I am a witness to the fact that none but Him is deserving of your worship.’ Ibraaheem said in secret (but was overheard by a single man from his people), ‘By Allaah, I intend to destroy their idols when they go off to their festival.’ So he broke them to pieces except for the largest of them (upon which he tied the axe with which he had broken the others), so that they might take heed and abandon worship of their idols after witnessing their weakness and futility. The people said, ‘Who has done this to our gods?! Whoever has done it is certainly a criminal.’ Those who had heard the saying of Ibraaheem said, ‘We heard a youth speaking, he is called Ibraaheem.’ They said, ‘Bring him before the eyes of the people, that they may testify against him.’ They said, ‘Is it you who did this to our gods, O Ibraaheem?’ He said, ‘Rather this one, the largest of them did it. Ask the idols who had it done to them, if it is that they can speak.’ So they turned to themselves and said, ‘You know that they are unable to speak.’ He said, ‘Then will you worship besides Allaah that which cannot benefit you at all, nor harm you. Woe to you and the idols which you worship besides Allaah. Have you no sense to see the futility of your worship of the idols?’ They said, ‘Burn him and aid your gods, if you do indeed wish to aid them and continue to worship them.’ We said, ‘O fire, be cool and safe for Ibraaheem.’ They wished to cause harm to him, but it was they whom We caused to be the losers.”¹¹

So Allaah guided Ibraaheem to the truth knowing that he was fitting for that. This wise and rightly-guided Prophet faced corruptions in beliefs (*'aqeedah*) and corruption in rule and authority. A nation whose thinking was degenerate, people whose minds were astray, so that they worshipped idols in the form of pieces of wood, rocks and stars. They were also ruled by a corrupt and evil government lead by a tyrant who claimed divinity, yet the people submitted to his leadership. So where was Ibraaheem to begin his correction? Should he have begun by attacking the ruler, since for certain he had ruled by other than the revealed Law of Allaah and ruled by the laws of ignorance. There is no doubt about that. He also openly claimed Lordship and the right to make and lay down the law. Or should he have begun with correction of beliefs (*'aqeedah*). Correcting the *'aqeedah* of the nation and the *'aqeedah* of the government of ignorance?!

The Qur'aan informs us that this rightly-guided Prophet, the *Imaam* of the Prophets, began with correction of *'aqeedah*, that is the call to the *tawheed* of Allaah, and to make all worship purely and sincerely for Him alone, and

¹¹ Soorah al-Ambiyaa (21):51-70.

fighting and wiping out *shirk*, and demolishing its causes, and tearing it out from the roots. So that is what he did: he called them to the *tawheed* of Allaah, and to renounce the worship of everything besides Him. He argued with them about this matter and they argued with him. But he refuted them with powerful arguments and clear proofs, and he stripped them of everything they sought to use as a proof until they admitted their wrongdoing, misguidance, and their blind-following and stubborn and fatal acceptance of the ways of their forefathers.

“They said, ‘We found our fathers worshipping them and have followed them in that.’”¹²

So when Ibraaheem saw obstinate following of desires and intellects as hard as rock, he made a wise and brave plan to destroy their idols. He carried out this plan with full vigour, bravery and courage. Then this heroic act¹³ incited the government and the nation against him, and they called him for judgement in public and laid down the charge before him,

“Is it you who did this to our gods, O Ibraaheem?”¹⁴

So he responded to them in a mocking and sarcastic manner,

“Rather this one, the largest of them did it. Ask the idols who had it done to them, if it is that they can speak.”¹⁵

So this mocking reply was like a thunder-bolt striking their imbecilic minds.

“Then they relapsed and said, ‘You know that they are unable to speak.’”¹⁶

So when he had divested them of the weapon of argument, they resorted to using force, the weapon used by everyone lacking proof in every time and place,

¹² Soorah al-Ambiyaa (21):53.

¹³ The great heroic action and the wise call to *tawheed* and to the elimination of *shirk*, is counted by many of the callers to correction these days as being an example of preoccupying oneself with minor and insignificant matters. And there is no action nor power except by the will of Allaah. Indeed it is not the eyes that are blind, but rather the hearts. They think that *da'wah* must begin with a call to the correction and rectification of rulership and government, not correction of *'aqeedah*. In this view Ibraaheem and all the other Prophets were in error with regard to the correct methodology of *da'wah*. (al-Fawzaan).

¹⁴ Soorah al-Ambiyaa (21):62.

¹⁵ Soorah al-Ambiyaa (21):63.

¹⁶ Soorah al-Ambiyaa (21):65.

“They said, ‘Burn him and aid your gods, if you do indeed wish to aid them and continue to worship them.’”¹⁷

But Allaah saved His chosen and beloved friend, Ibraaheem, and He threw back the plot of the unbelievers upon them.

“We said, ‘O fire, be cool and safe for Ibraaheem.’ They wished to cause harm to him, but it was they whom we caused to be the losers.”¹⁸

So the fact that Ibraaheem was saved from harm in that huge fire, which Allaah caused to become cool and safe for Ibraaheem, was a very great sign, indeed one of the greatest of Allaah’s signs proving his Prophet hood, his truthfulness, and the correctness of what he came with, i.e., *tawheed* and the declaration of the futility of the *shirk* and misguidance which his people were upon.

Then Allaah rewarded Ibraaheem, *’alayhissalaam*, for this wise *da’wah*, and this outstanding *jihaad* and sacrifice,

“We saved Ibraaheem and Loot from their enemies and took them to the land which We have blessed for all the worlds. And We bestowed upon him Ishaq (his son) and Ya’qoob (his grandson) as an extra favour upon him. And We made all of them those who acted in obedience to Allaah and avoided what He forbade. And We made them leaders to be followed, guiding the people according to Our orders and calling them to worship and obey Allaah. And We inspired in them the doing of those deeds which are good, and establishment of the Prayer, and payment of the *Zakaat*. And they were worshippers of Us alone.”¹⁹

¹⁷ Soorah al-Ambiyaa (21):68.

¹⁸ Soorah al-Ambiyaa (21):70.

¹⁹ Soorah al-Ambiyaa (21):71-73.

Yoosuf

The noble one, son of the noble one, son of the noble one.²⁰ About whom Allaah sent down a long *Soorah* relating his noble life to us, and its stages, from his childhood to his death, and how his circumstances changed, and the difficulties that he faced, and how he faced everything with the Strength of Prophethood and his patient perseverance, wisdom and mildness.

Yoosuf, *'alayhissalaam*, saw the corrupt outlook of the Pharaohs in Egypt and their oppression, and he knew the beliefs of the nation amongst whom he lived. He knew the corruption of their beliefs and their idolatry, which led them to take idols and cattle as gods to worship besides Allaah. The story of this noble Prophet, *'alayhissalaam*, is long, and from it, we will examine the story of his imprisonment and his *da'wah* at that time. Allaah, the Most High, says,

“And two young men entered the prison along with him. One of them said, ‘I saw in a dream that I was pressing grapes,’ and the other one said, ‘I saw in a dream that I was carrying bread upon my head and birds were eating from it.’ ‘Inform us of the interpretation of this for indeed we see that you are one of the doers of good.’ He said, ‘No food will come to you to eat except that I will inform you about it fully before it comes to you. This is from the knowledge which my Lord has taught me as I have remained free of the religion of a people who do not believe in the oneness of Allaah and who are disbelievers in the Hereafter. Rather I follow the religion of my fathers, Ibraaheem, Ishaaq and Ya'qoob. It is not fitting that we should worship anything else along with Allaah. This is from Allaah's favour upon us and upon the people, yet most of the people do not give thanks for Allaah's favours. O my two companions in the prison, is it better that you worship

²⁰ As indicated in the *hadeeth* of Ibn 'Umar, *radiyallaahu 'anhumaa*, from the Prophet (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam) that he said, “The noble one, son of the noble one, son of the noble one: Yoosuf the son of Ya'qoob, the son of Ishaaq, the son of Ibraaheem, *'alayhissalaam*.” Reported by al-Bukhaaree (Eng. trans. 4/390/596), and Ahmad in *al-Musnad* (2/96), and also the *hadeeth* of Aboo Hurairah, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, that Allaah's Messenger (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam) was asked about the noblest of the people, so he said, “*Those most pious and obedient to Allaah.*” They said, “*It is not this that we are asking about.*” He said, “*Then the noblest of the people is Yoosuf, the Prophet of Allaah, son of the Prophet of Allaah, son of the Prophet of Allaah, son of the chosen and beloved Friend of Allaah.*” They said, “*It is not this that we are asking about.*” He said, “*Then is it about the origins of the Arabs that you ask? Then the people are of various origins. The best of them in the times of ignorance are the best of them in Islaam when they attain knowledge and understanding in the religion.*” Reported by al-Bukhaaree (Eng. trans. 4/390/597).

many different lords, or that you worship only Allaah, the One, Who subdues and has full power over everything? You do not worship besides Allaah except idols which you call gods, which you and your forefathers give names to, for which Allaah has sent down no authority. Authority is for Allaah alone. He ordered that you worship none but Him, that is the Straight and true religion, yet most of the people do not know (and are people of *shirk*).”²¹

This noble Prophet, *'alayhis-salaam*, lived in their palaces and was therefore well aware of the corruption of their administration and their rulers. He experienced at first hand their plots, their oppression, their unjust persecution and imprisonment by them. Furthermore he lived amongst an idolatrous nation who worshipped idols, cattle and stars. So where was correction to begin? What was the starting point?

Did he begin calling to Allaah, whilst he was wrongfully imprisoned along with others who were oppressed like him, by inciting them and rousing them against the despotic and tyrant rulers? This would be without a doubt a political response, and was an opportunity open to him. Or did he begin his call from the starting point adopted by his noble forefathers, and at the head of them Ibraaheem, the chosen and beloved Friend of Allaah and the *Imaam* of the call to *tawheed*, which was the starting point for all the Messengers of Allaah? There is no doubt that the single way of correction and rectification in every time and place is the way of calling to correct *'aqeedah* and *tawheed* and that all worship should be made purely and sincerely for Allaah alone.

Therefore Yoosuf began from this starting point, following his noble fathers, proud of their *'aqeedah*, and deriding and exposing the foolishness of the idolaters and their practice of taking idols, cattle and stars as lords to be worshipped besides Allaah.

So after clearly explaining this, and openly calling to *tawheed* and to rejection of *shirk*, he emphasised his call and his argument by his saying,

“Authority and command is for Allaah alone.”^{22, 23}

²¹ Soorah Yoosuf (12):36-40.

²² Soorah Yoosuf (12):40.

²³ This *Aayah* is one of the basic principles from the principles of *tawheed*, as Allaah has explained upon the tongue of Yoosuf, *'alayhis-salaam*. What is most unfortunate is that you see that many of the political reformers have explained it in a way that is far removed from its primary meaning, that all worship is to be made purely and sincerely for Allaah alone,

Then he explained this authority and command to mean the *tawheed* of Allaah, and that He alone is to be worshipped:

“...That is the Straight and true religion, yet most of the people do not know (and are people of *shirk*).”²⁴

Also Yoosuf, *'alayhis-salaam*, attained the highest position in this state²⁵ whilst calling to the *tawheed* of Allaah and establishing the clear proofs for his call and his Prophethood. Allaah, the Most High, says, in explanation of this,

“The king of Egypt said, ‘Bring him to me, I will make him my personal servant.’ So when he spoke to Yoosuf, he said, ‘Verily, this day you have with us a position of rank and full trust.’ He said, ‘Place me in charge of the storehouses and wealth of the land, indeed I will guard them faithfully and with full knowledge.’”²⁶

And he said, giving thanks to his Lord and Protector,

“O my Lord, You have bestowed upon me something of dominion and have taught me the interpretation of dreams. O Originator and Creator of the heavens and the earth, You are my Lord and Protector in this world and the Hereafter. Cause me to die as a Muslim and join me with the righteous.”²⁷

Furthermore Allaah says in explanation of his *da'wah*, upon the tongue of the Believer from the family of the Pharaoh:

“And Yoosuf came to you previously (before Moosaa) with clear signs yet you have not ceased doubting about what he came to you with. Until when he

and have instead explained it to have a political meaning, which is establishment of the state which they claim will establish Allaah's *Sharee'ah* upon the earth as His deputies/vicegerents. Then they go beyond bounds in this direction till they cause the people to forget the principal meaning of the *Aayah*, and they understand nothing from it except this new meaning, and there is no action and no ability except by the will of Allaah. They do the same with all or most of the *Aayaat* of *tawheed*.

²⁴ Soorah Yoosuf (12):40.

²⁵ Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, *rahimahullaah*, said in *al-Hisbah* (p.7), “Likewise Yoosuf the truthful and honest, was a minister for the Pharaoh of Egypt, and he and his people were *mushriks*. So Yoosuf performed whatever justice and good he was able to and called them as far as possible to correct *eemaan*.”

²⁶ Soorah Yoosuf (12):54-55.

²⁷ Soorah Yoosuf (12):101.

died you said, ‘Allaah will not send any Messenger after him.’ This is the state of those whom Allaah leads astray, those who are disbelievers in Him and doubt the truthfulness of the Messengers.”²⁸

So from the knowledge to be learned from the life-story of Yoosuf, *'alayhis-salaam*, which is presented to us in those noble *Aayaat* is that the call to *tawheed* is something very essential. Furthermore there is to be no leniency or relaxation in fighting against *shirk*, it is not permissible to keep silent about it, whatever the circumstances of the caller to Allaah; rather it is not permissible for any Muslim to ever accept it or be relaxed about it. So this shows the high station of *'aqeedah*, and its importance with Allaah, and with His Prophets and His Messenger. It also shows the very great difference and the distance between it and the details of Islaam.

It is not permissible for the Muslim, particularly the caller, to take up any position which violates his *'aqeedah* or is contrary to it, or that he is a fortune-teller, those who are *Mushriks*, or that he is a custodian of their idols. If he does any of this then he is one of the misguided *Mushriks*. With regard to the legislative aspect, if the Islamic state is established, it must apply the *Sharee'ah* of Allaah, otherwise:

“And whoever does not judge by what Allaah has revealed then they are the ones guilty of unbelief.”²⁹

The unbelief (*kufir*) here is explained in detail by the scholars of Islaam, from the Companions and others, that it may be major *Kufir*, when the person disdains the *Sharee'ah* of Allaah and declares it lawful to judge by something else, and it may be lesser *Kufir* (i.e., that which does not take a person out of Islaam) when he does not declare it lawful to judge by other than it, but gives in to his desires and because of that judges by other than what Allaah sent down.

However when the Islamic state has not been established, then Allaah does not a burden a soul with more than it is capable of. So the Muslim may take up a position in a non-Muslim state with the condition that he establishes justice, and that he does not obey them in a matter which involves disobedience to Allaah, and does not judge by other than what Allaah sent down. This was what the Prophet of Allaah, Yoosuf, did. He took up a position as a deputy for an unbelieving king, and he did not judge according to his laws:

²⁸ Soorah Ghaafir:(40):34.

²⁹ Soorah al-Maa'idah (5):44.

“He could not have taken and kept his brother according to the king’s law.”³⁰

Furthermore, he established justice between the subjects and called them to the *tawheed* of Allaah. So this contains a decisive reply to those who give little importance to the ‘*aqeedah* of *Tahweed*. Those who gloss over and accommodate when it comes to the *shirk* which has filled the world, and they regard the callers to *tawheed* and the enemies of *shirk* with contempt and scorn. They turn up their noses and are too proud to ‘lower’ themselves to the level of the callers to *tawheed*, and they are very wily and astute concerning political affairs, but nothing is more burdensome and disagreeable to their hearing and their hearts than listening to or saying a word regarding *tawheed* or *shirk*. These types of callers have caused themselves to fall into a deep abyss, whilst they think that they have reached the highest peaks. Can a people ever prosper whose stance with regard to the call of the Prophets is like this, unless they sincerely repent to Allaah from what they are upon?

³⁰ Soorah Yoosuf (12):76.

Moosaa

Moosaa, the one to whom Allaah spoke directly, the strong and trustworthy.

We see that his call was directed to *tawheed* and carried the lights of guidance and wisdom. Moosaa was brought up and was raised in the palaces of the greatest tyrant who claimed divinity. He knew the various types of corruption, unbelief, tyranny, injustice and despotism from what he witnessed in the palaces. He saw things which it is difficult to imagine or think possible. He also saw the enslavement of his people, the Children of *Israa'eel*, and their humiliation, and their women taken as slaves, and the killing of their children, to such an extent that it surpassed any oppression known to mankind. Allaah, the Most High, says,

“Pharaoh exalted himself haughtily in the land, and divided its people into castes. He enslaved a group of them (i.e., the Children of *Israa'eel*), killing their sons and letting their women live. He was indeed one of the corrupt evil-doers.”³¹

The people of Pharaoh were also people of *shirk* and idol-worship without a doubt.

So how did Moosaa begin? Was his call directed to correction of the '*aqeedah* of this idolatrous nation? Or did it begin with a demand for the restoration of the rights of the Children of *Israa'eel*, and a struggle to gain rulership and authority from the hands of the tyrant, and at the head of them Pharaoh, who claimed divinity for himself?

The call of Moosaa was just like the call of his forefathers and brothers from the earlier Prophets. His Lord instructed him and inspired him with the principle of *tawheed*, and chose him to carry his revelation, and to establish worship of Him. Allaah, the Most High, says,

“Has not the story of Moosaa come to you? When he saw a fire and said to his family, ‘Remain where you are for I have seen a fire. Perhaps I can bring a fire-brand from it or find someone who can show us the way.’ So when Moosaa came to the fire his Lord called him, ‘O Moosaa, I am your Lord. Remove your shoes, indeed you are in the purified valley of *Tuwaa*. I have chosen you as My Messenger, so listen to and heed what I reveal to you.

³¹ Soorah al-Qasas (28):4.

Indeed I am Allaah. None has the right to be worshipped but Me. So worship Me and do not worship anything else besides Me, and establish Prayer for My remembrance. Indeed the Final Hour is certainly coming, which I keep hidden from all except Myself, in order to reward each soul according to its good or bad deeds.”³²

So this was the beginning of his Messengership; he was inspired and ordered with the *'aqedah* of *tawheed*. He was ordered to establish it in himself and to represent it in his life. Then he was entrusted with the duty of calling to this sublime principle and was sent by Allaah to the Pharaoh. Allaah furthermore explained to him the correct manner of giving *da'wah* and the wise way in which he was to face the Pharaoh. Allaah, the Most High, said:

“Go to Pharaoh who has transgressed all bounds in his haughtiness, pride, unbelief, and say, ‘Will you not purify yourself from the sin of unbelief and be obedient to your Lord? And that I guide you to the worship of your Lord, so that you may submit fearfully to Him and obey Him.”³³

He also supported him with his brother Haaron in order for the proof to be established to the utmost, and He taught them to use gentleness and mildness in *da'wah* since that is the best way to attain the guidance of those whom Allaah wishes to guide:

“Go both of you to Pharaoh, indeed he has transgressed beyond all bounds, and speak mildly with him that he might accept admonition and fear and be obedient to his Lord.”³⁴

So they carried out the order of their Lord and called him to Allaah, hoping for him to be guided and purified, so that he should be one of those who fear Allaah and fear and beware of the evil consequences of *shirk* and oppression. But he did not respond to this wise and composed call. So Moosaa manifested the great signs and clear proofs of his Prophethood and the truthfulness of his Messengership. But the despotic tyrant Pharaoh merely increased in his transgression and rejection of the truth:

“But Pharaoh denied the signs which Moosaa came with and disobeyed his order for him to fear and obey his Lord. Then he turned away from what he

³² Soorah Taa Haa (20):9-15.

³³ Soorah an-Naazi'at (79):17-19.

³⁴ Soorah Taa Haa (20):43-44.

ordered him (i.e., obedience to his Lord) and instead worked evil and corruption, and he gathered his people and his followers and said, 'I am your lord, the most high.' So Allaah seized him with punishment for his latter and his earlier saying."³⁵

The Escalation of the Tyranny of the Pharaoh and how Moosaa and his People Faced it with Patient Perseverance and Forbearance

"The chiefs of Pharaoh's people said, 'Will you leave Moosaa and his people to cause mischief in the land when they have abandoned worship of you and worship of your gods?' He said, 'We will kill their sons and let their women live, and will have full power over them.'"³⁶

So what was the sin of Moosaa and his people in the view of these criminals? No crime except that they called to the *tawheed* of Allaah and to remain firm upon it, and to disbelieve in Pharaoh and his idols. Then what was the response of Moosaa with respect to these disgraceful and outrageous transgressions which exceeded all bounds in its barbarity and ferocity?!

His response was to remain firm upon correct belief, and to have patience and forbearance, and to seek the aid of Allaah in facing these calamities. Then he awaited the good outcome, and victory as a consequence and a good fruit of this remaining firm and this patient perseverance.

"Moosaa said to his people, 'Seeks Allaah's help and be patient, the earth is Allaah's, He gives it as a heritage to whom He pleases from His servants. The final outcome is in favour of those who fear Allaah by avoiding disobedience of Him and doing what He orders.'"³⁷

Then when no hope that the Pharaoh and his people would believe remained, and the suffering which the Children of *Israa'eel* were subjected to increased in severity, the sole request which Moosaa made to the Pharaoh was that he should allow the Children of *Israa'eel* the freedom to leave the land of Egypt and emigrate to wherever Allaah willed that they should go, in order to save them from the torment inflicted upon them.

³⁵ Soorah an-Naazi'at (79):21-25.

³⁶ Soorah al-A'raaf (7):127.

³⁷ Soorah al-A'raaf (7):128.

“So go to the Pharaoh, saying, ‘We are the Messengers sent by your Lord, to order you to free the Children of *Israa’eel*. So release them and cease tormenting them. Indeed we bring you a clear sign from your Lord, and peace and safety from Allaah’s punishment are for those who follow the guidance.’”³⁸

It was a sublime call to the *tawheed* of Allaah containing light and wisdom. It was also accompanied by an eager desire for the guidance of those who were being called, and that they should be purified. It also contained a clear example of the utmost patience and forbearance in enduring great harm, and in facing tyranny and haughty oppression. It also shows the way to face the most difficult situations with wisdom and forbearance, whilst having the strongest hope in Allaah, that He will assist and grant victory to the Believers and destroy the unbelieving oppressors. Including clear lessons for those who make their call purely seeking the Face of Allaah and desire to rectify mankind and to turn to their Lord, and for them to be guided to His Straight Path.

³⁸ Soorah Taa Haa (20):47.

Muhammad (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam)

The noblest of all the Prophets and the last of them, Muhammad ibn 'Abdullaah (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam). The one sent with the greatest, most complete and most comprehensive message. The one whom Allaah sent as a mercy for the worlds, and as a bringer of good tidings and a warner, and as a Caller to Allaah with His permission, and a shining light. He did not leave anything good except that he guided his *ummah* to it and pointed it out to them, nor anything evil except that he warned them against it. So which of the fundamentals of Islaam did this exalted Prophet begin with? What was the starting point for his *da'wah*? He (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam) began with what all the Prophets began with, and started where they started in their *da'wah* calling to the 'aqeedah of *tawheed*, and calling for all worship to be made purely and sincerely for Allaah alone. He began with the testification, "None has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah," (*Laa ilaaha illallaah Muhammadur Rasoolullaah*). Can it be imagined that he or any of the other Prophets would begin with anything but this great principle, the foundation of all the divine Messages?! Allaah's Messenger (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam) began with this fundamental principle, so the first thing which the people heard was, 'Witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah.' So the proud and haughty said.

"The unbelievers said, 'Has he made all that is to be worshipped a single God, who alone is to be called upon and hears all invocations. This is a very curious thing which we have not heard of.' So the leaders amongst them went off saying to one another, 'Continue in what you are upon and persist in worshipping your idols. He only says this to gain ascendancy over us.'"³⁹

He continued calling to this lofty principle and highest goal throughout the Meccan period of his Messengership, for thirteen years. He did not become weary or languid. He patiently bore all types of harm to propagate this principle, since no religious duties or pillars of Islaam were obligated upon him, except for the Prayer which was obligated in the tenth year of Prophethood, and apart from the excellent manners of keeping ties of relationship, truthfulness and chastity which he commanded his people with. However the core of his *da'wah* and the cause of dispute and opposition to him was that great fundamental principle. So Allaah charged this noble Prophet (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam) with the particular duty of establishing this great principle. Allaah, the Most High, says:

³⁹ Soorah Saad (38):5-6.

“Indeed We have sent down the Book to you, O Muhammad, with the truth, so worship Allaah alone making all religion purely and sincerely for Him. Indeed the religion that is free of all taint of *shirk* is alone what is acceptable to Allaah. As for those who take and invoke helpers and protectors besides Allaah, then they say, ‘We only worship them so that they should intercede for us and bring us nearer to Allaah.’ Indeed Allaah will establish judgement between them regarding the matters of religion about which they dispute.”⁴⁰

Allaah, the Most High, says:

“Say, O Muhammad (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam), ‘Allaah has commanded that I should worship Him alone, purely and sincerely, not associating anything with Him, and I am commanded to be the first of this nation who submits to Him as a Muslim, making all worship purely for Him.’ Say, O Muhammad, ‘I fear should I disobey my Lord in this, the torment of a great Day.’ Say, ‘It is Allaah alone that I worship, making all of my worship purely and sincerely for Him, and not worshipping anything else besides Him.”⁴¹

“Say, O Muhammad (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam), ‘Indeed my Prayer, my sacrifice, my living and my dying are all purely and solely for Allaah, Lord of all the Worlds. There is no share of any of that for other than Him. That is what My Lord ordered me, and I am the first of this nation to submit to Allaah as a Muslim.’”⁴²

He also commanded him to call all of the people to fulfil and implement this principle, and to proceed upon it. Allaah, the Most High, says:

“O Mankind, single out your Lord with worship; He who created you and all those who came before you so that you may be of those who seek to avoid Allaah’s punishment and anger; those whom Allaah is pleased with. He Who has made the earth a resting place for you and has made the sky a canopy, and sent down rain from the sky, and brought out with it crops and fruits from the earth as provision for you. So do not set up rivals with Allaah in your worship whilst you know that you have no Lord besides Him.”⁴³

⁴⁰ Soorah az-Zumar (39):2-3.

⁴¹ Soorah az-Zumar (39):11-14.

⁴² Soorah al-An’aam (6):162-163.

⁴³ Soorah al-Baqarah (2):21-22.

Allaah, the Most High, says:

“The God Who alone has the right to be worshipped is a Single God. So do not worship anything besides Him, nor associate anything in worship with Him, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy.”⁴⁴

Allaah, the Most High, says:

“Say, O Muhammad (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam), to all of the people, ‘I am the Messenger of Allaah to you all. Allaah, to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and everything therein. None has the right to be worshipped but Him. He Who alone gives life and death. So affirm true faith in Allaah and in His sole right to worship, and believe in His Messenger, the Unlettered Prophet (Muhammad (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam)) who believes in Allaah and His Words, and follow him, so that you may be rightly guided.’”⁴⁵

The *Aayaat* in this regard are very many, and what we have quoted is an example showing the methodology of Allaah’s Messenger (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam) in calling to *tawheed*

Then with regard to the *Sunnah*, there are many things clearly showing that Allaah’s Messenger (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam) began his *da’wah* with *tawheed* and completed it with it, and continued calling to it from the beginning to the end, throughout his (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam) life.

(1) ‘Amr ibn ‘Abasah as-Sulamee, *radiyallaahu ‘anhu*, who said, “During the times of Ignorance I used hold that the people were upon error and futility, and they used to worship the idols, then I heard of a man in Makkah who received revelation. So I set out upon my riding beast and came to him. At that time he was in hiding due to oppression of his people. So I behaved in a way that enabled me to gain access to him in Makkah, which I did. So I said to him, ‘What are you?’ He replied, ‘I am a Prophet.’ So I said, ‘And what is a Prophet?’ He said, ‘Allaah has sent me as a Messenger.’ So I said, ‘And what is it that He has sent you with?’ He said, ‘I have been sent to order the joining of ties of relationship, to break the idols, so that Allaah is worshipped alone and nothing at all is associated in worship along with Him.’ So I said, ‘And who is with you upon this?’

⁴⁴ Soorah al-Baqarah (2):163.

⁴⁵ Soorah al-A’raaf (7):158.

He said, 'A free man and a slave.' He said, 'And at that time Aboo Bakr and Bilaal were with him from those who believed in him...' ⁴⁶

(2) When 'Amr ibn al'Aas and 'Abdullaah ibn Rabee'ah al-Makhzomee went to an-Najaashee, the ruler of Abyssinia, to speak to him in order to incite him against the Muslims who had emigrated to Abyssinia, they said, 'O king, some of our foolish youths have abandoned their religion and come to your land. They have split away from their own people and have not entered your religion. Rather they have come up with an innovated religion which is not known either to us or to you...' So the Najaashee asked the Muslims, 'What is this religion which you have split from your people and not entered my religion or the religion of any of these nations?!' So Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib was the one who replied, and he said to him, 'O king, we were a people from the people of ignorance who worshipped idols, and we ate unslaughtered meat and committed foul acts, and we cut off ties of relationship, treated our neighbours in an evil manner and the strong amongst us used to devour the weak. So we were upon that until Allaah sent a Messenger to us from amongst us. We knew his lineage, his truthfulness, his trustworthiness and his chastity. So he called us to Allaah, that we should single Him out and worship Him alone and renounce everything which we and our fathers used to worship besides Him, all stones and idols; he commanded us to speak the truth and to fulfil trusts; to join ties of relationship; to live in a good manner with our neighbours; to avoid forbidden acts and shedding blood; and he forbade us from foul acts and from falsehood; and he forbade us from unlawfully devouring the wealth of orphans and falsely accusing chaste women. He ordered us to worship Allaah alone and not to worship anything along with Him...' He said, 'So he told him the affairs of Islaam,' 'So we attested to his truthfulness and believed him and followed him in that which he came with. So we worshipped Allaah alone, and did not worship anything else besides Him, and we made forbidden that which He forbade us, and declared lawful that which He allowed for us. So our people became enemies to us and tortured us and tormented us to turn back from our religion to the worship of idols, and so that we should allow the filthy actions which we used to allow. So when they oppressed us, treated us cruelly and made it unbearable for us, and came between us and our religion, then we left and came to your land, and we preferred you to others and wished to live in your company, and we hoped that we would not be oppressed while with you...' ⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Reported by Muslim (Eng. trans. 2/395 no.1812) and Ahmad in *al-Musand* (4/112).

⁴⁷ Reported by Imaam Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/202) and (5/290). Ahmad said, "Ya'qoob (meaning Ibraaheem ibn Sa'd az-Zuhree) narrated to us (reliable): My father narrated to us, from Muhammad ibn Ishaq; Muhammad ibn Muslim ibn 'Ubaydillaah ibn Shihaab

(3) Also amongst the questions which Hirqal (Heraclius) asked Aboo Sufyaan, at the time of the peace of Hdaybiyyah, about Allaah's Messenger (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam) was that he asked Aboo Sufyaan, "What does he command you?" So Aboo Sufyaan replied, "He says, 'Worship Allaah alone and do not worship anything else along with Him, and abandon what your fathers say. And he orders Prayer, charity, chastity and the joining of ties of relationship.'"⁴⁸

So these *ahaadeeth* clearly show us what the *da'wah* of Allaah's Messenger (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam) was in both the Makkan and Madinan periods.

narrated to me: from Aboo Bakr ibn 'Abdir-Rahmaan ibn al-Haarith ibn Hishaam al-Makhzoomee:from Umm Salamah bint Abee Umayyah (meaning the Mother of the Believers, *radiyallaahu 'anha*.)" It is a chain of narration that is fully *saheeh*, except for Muhammad ibn Ishaq, but he clearly states that he heard it directly and so his narration is *hasan* (good and acceptable).

⁴⁸ Reported by al-Bukhaaree (Eng. trans. 1/7/no. 6) and it is a long *hadeeth*.