

Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Hādī al-Madkhalī on the Common-Folk Entering into the Affairs of *Da'wah*¹

Translation by Abū al-Ḥasan Mālik ibn Ādam al-Akhḍar

Question: Perhaps it has reached you that from the problems we face in our land (America) are that those who are in charge of many of the affairs of the *da'wah* are from the common-folk. And in many instances, we see them contradicting the students of knowledge in our country in statement and action. So what is your advice to both parties: the students of knowledge and the common-folk who are upon these administrations concerning the charge and direction of the *Da'wah al-Salafiyyah* in America?

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn Hādī: “Our advice is that we say that these unlearned individuals have no right to lead the *da'wah*, because Allāh has said to His Messenger ﷺ:

“Say: This is my way; I invite unto Allāh with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows with sure knowledge. And Glorified and Exalted be Allāh (above all that they associate as partners with Him). And I am not of the *Mushrikīn*.” [*Yusuf* 12:108]

And “*baṣīrah*” here [in this verse] is knowledge, in the most correct of the Scholars’ sayings [regarding this *āyah*]. So no one can be a caller except a Scholar or a well-grounded student of knowledge. These are the people who implement the call to Allāh. As for the unlearned, then they should not involve themselves in this because Allāh has said to His Prophet ﷺ:

“So stand (ask Allāh to make) you (Muḥammad ﷺ) firm and straight (on the religion of Islāmic Monotheism) as you are commanded and those (your companions) who turn in repentance (unto Allāh) with you, and transgress not (Allāh's legal limits). Verily, He is All-Seer of what you do.” [*Hūd* 11:112]

Here Allāh commanded him to stand firm and straight. So those who don't know the Islāmic legislation, the command, in this aspect, [will not know] whether it is a command to implement something or a command to desist. Thus, if it is a command to do something, by way of obligation, a definitive command, then it is obligatory. If it is less definitive in the command, then it is *mustahabb* (desired). And if the command is a prohibition, if the

¹ The following question and answer is taken from a series of questions I posed to the Shaykh during an trip to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the early summer of 2010C.E. See: <http://www.salafitalk.net/st/viewmessages.cfm?Forum=6&Topic=10980>

prohibition is a definitive injunction, then it is impermissible. If it is not definitive, then it is disliked. So this is not known except by those who have studied. Therefore, it is incumbent to seek knowledge; and so the unlearned have no right to direct the *da'wah*. Yes, he may be utilized in other areas where he has some expertise, like financial or administrative matters, if there is an office to organize the affairs of the *da'wah*. As for leading the *da'wah* and what is connected to teaching, guidance, the rearing of the people and their education of their Lord's Legislations, then this is not for these individuals from the unlearned. It is obligatory upon them to understand this and avoid entering into these matters.

And what is upon our brothers from the students of knowledge is to give them understanding of these affairs with gentleness, leniency and kindness, so as to win them over and not lose them. So if they are successful in this, then praise is for Allāh, and if not, and they are determined to dictate to the students of knowledge their opinions and desires in these affairs, then it is a must that they be abandoned, and that [the students of knowledge] establish the correct call to Allāh independent of them. This is what I advise my brothers. Also, I say, it is incumbent upon the one who does not possess knowledge to take benefit from those who do, and that they understand that affair of *da'wah* is not established except with knowledge.

Allāh says:

So know (O Muḥammad) that *La ilāha ill-Allāh* (none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh), and ask forgiveness for your sin, and also for (the sin of) believing men and believing women. And Allāh knows well your moving about, and your place of rest (in your homes). [Muḥammad 47:19]

So He began with knowledge before statement and action. Therefore, one must have knowledge first and foremost. Allāh says:

And it is not (proper) for the believers to go out to fight all together. Of every troop of them, a party only should go forth, that they (who are left behind) may get instructions in (Islāmic) religion, and that they may warn their people when they return to them, so that they may beware (of evil). [Tawbah 9:122]

So the *da'wah* cannot be established amongst the people until a group of individuals go and learn for themselves. Therefore, it is upon those from the unlearned to accept the speech of their brothers from the Salafi students of knowledge who are known for truthfulness, advice, sincerity in the call to Allāh and steadfastness upon the command of Allāh and following the

Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. And it is upon them not to be prideful or arrogant, but rather to accept from them (i.e. the students of knowledge).

And if they differ in any matter, then they raise it to the Scholars, and they, praise be to Allāh, are present and can be contacted with ease. So they should get in touch with any of the Salafī scholars, and by Allāh's permission, they will clarify the matter for them. Therefore, we say that what is incumbent upon our brothers from the students of knowledge is to instruct the people with gentleness as much as they are able, but if the affair reaches the level of obstinateness, then there is nothing you can do with the obstinate.

Also, it is incumbent upon the other brothers to fear Allāh within themselves and to submit to the command of Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ and to comply with their brothers from the students of knowledge because they have learning. And if they doubt in anything or differ and are not convinced, then let them contact one of the Scholars, so by Allāh's permission, they can clarify that which is unclear to them from these issues, and the matter is easy. And whoever is obstinate after the affair has been clarified, then there is nothing that can be done. And the likes of this individual, you can only hope for his guidance.”