Chapter 1: Introduction

The right channel of people’s quest for the TRUTH as introduced by Islamic Sources – Qur’an and Prophetic Sunnah, does not create conflicts between them especially between Muslims and non-Muslims in the present-day. Rather, it is the blind channel, which speculates the TRUTH. Therefore, people’s misunderstanding of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.)’s true mission – al-Islam and its teachings, has come as a result of their ignorance by getting access to such information blindly based on what others do say about Islam and not on what Islam does say about it. It is this approach that has created currently many barriers and conflicts between Muslims and Muslims as well as Muslims and other fellow humans. In order to clarify the bad image of Islam and its Prophet (p.b.u.h.) as well as the position of Muslims, this study has found very crucial to undertake a research on:–

Methodology of Prophetic Da’wah and its Relevance to the Contemporary Global Society.

Methodology of Prophetic Da’wah has been a very important subject discussed from time to time by many Muslim scholars in direct or indirect form. Muhammad al-Ghazali maintains that the selection of the right methodology used in Islamic Da’wah, which is in line with Qur’an and Sunnah has a great impact on people’s awakening towards their way of thinking followed by their self-awakening. Certainly, Islamic Da’wah will achieve its objective if people’s mind-set or view about the Truth has been corrected. (al-Ghazali, 2005, pp. 15-16) Ismail Raji al-Faruqi has mentioned methodology in general where he asserts that calling people to Islam is “the effort by the Muslim to enable other men to share and benefit from the supreme vision, the religious truth, which he has appropriated.” Therefore, according to him, Islamic Da’wah requires a methodology, which does not impose force on people’s consciousness and intellect, rather it should remind them about their true nature – Fitrah – directed to both Muslims and non-Muslims through a friendly communication. (al-Faruqi, 1982, pp. 33-39) Abdullah Muhammad Zin asserts that Da’wah methodology denotes “method, means, plan, etc., anything connected with the systematic propagation of the da’wah.” (Zin, 1995, p. 48) He has mentioned that the three methodologies addressed by Qur’an – wisdom, goodly counsel, and argument in gracious manner, will help a Muslim Da’ to “formulate most of the general principles of methodology applying in any situation and condition.” (Zin, 1995, pp. 49-58) Muhammad Muntaz Ali maintains that “the methodological principles presented and practiced by Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) are derived from the Revelation of the Qur’an.” He has mentioned in his work the most distinctive principles of the methodology of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) in conveying the Message of Islam, such as, belief in God, excellent conduct, wisdom, and so on. (Ali, 2009, pp. 44-58) The literature of abovementioned scholars has not covered all aspects concerning the subject on Prophetic methodology. Therefore, this research will attempt to present Prophetic methodology in a way to fill the gap left by previous Muslim scholars.

The discourse or dialogue between God and human started with Adam (p.b.u.h.) and accomplished with Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). When a group of people or a nation used to go astray previously, God showed His mercy by sending another Prophet or Messenger to guide them, to remind them as well as to give them good tidings. Certainly, all God’s Prophets and Messengers were wise and skillful in inviting their own people to the TRUTH – To worship Only One True God – Allah (s.w.t.), and avoid false or any other form of worship. Da’wah to the Path of Allah (s.w.t.), according to the Qur’an, was a duty of every Prophet.
(p.b.u.h.) as well as their followers (Muslims). Contemporary situation of Muslims and others is not different from the situation of the old Arabs to whom God sent the last and final message – al-Qur’an, and the seal of all Messengers – Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). The last and final Testament or Guidance from Allah (s.w.t.), the Creator of Heavens and Earth, the Seen and the Unseen, Man and Jin, Water and Fire, Seas and Rivers, Mountains and Forests, has been sent to humanity and will end with the end of life on earth. Thus, it is the task and duty of every matured Muslim to convey the message of Islam to others as it was conveyed by Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and especially to communicate and implement the exemplary methods employed by the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) in his Da’wah. Since, the aim of Islamic Da’wah is to remind and correct those who know Islam and to inform others who do not know Islam, a proper Da’wah methodology is required to convey to people that their basic rights of Deen (religion), life, intellect, offspring, and wealth will be protected by the Law of Allah (s.w.t.). Certainly, this paper attempts to discuss in a very descriptive and analytical method the following issues: (1) Pre-Islamic Arabian Society and the Prophecy of Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), (2) Special Characteristics and Principles of Prophetic Methodology in Islamic Da’wah, (3) Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.)’s Ways of Da’wah, (4) Relevance of Prophetic Da’wah to Contemporary Global Society, and (5) Conclusion (revealing important findings and suggestions). This research will add to the existing literature on Islamic Da’wah significant outcomes and will serve as a key reference for young Muslim preachers and a source of clarification for non-Muslims.

Pre-Islamic Arabian Society and the Prophecy of Muhammad (p.b.u.h.):

The Pre-Islamic Arabia was literally unknown to the world of antiquity, such as Egyptian, Greek and Roman civilizations. It has the shape of an irregular rectangle and it is located in a very strategic and isolated area, which has prevented it before from many outside invasion. It is boarded with Palestine and the Syrian Desert on the north and it is boarded by the kingdom of al-Hirah, the Euphrates and Tigris and the Persian Gulf on the east. On the south it is boarded by the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of ‘Adan board. Lastly, to the west it is boarded by the Red Sea. The Arabian Peninsula climate does suit only to the desert life, which requires its people – the Bedouins, to move from one place to another and to survive only on pasture. Camel was used for transportation as it could resist the hit of desert. (Haykal, 2009, p. 9)

The Arabs who lived in the Arabian Desert were isolated for a long time until the trade and commerce initiated by the Romans with other territories in the west to India. They found this road to less dangerous compared to the sea. Therefore, the Arab Bedouins stood between the two roads connecting East and West – by way of Egypt or the Persian Gulf. (Haykal, 2009, p. 10) The people who were travelling in these two roads for trade purposes found it very difficult to reach their destiny. They were facing the Arabs who were attacking their caravans and taking away their belongings. Arabia was a country without any political leader or a proper law to protect the life of merchants passing these two roads. Thus, it was not known to the world until the advent of Islam, which made the Arabs to migrate from and become the leaders of Islam. (Haykal, 2009, p. 11) Arab trades who were travelling great distances to the East and the West did not have any interest in education or knowledge. The few who were educated among the Arabs were not interested to establish any educational institute as they themselves were not able to understand things properly. Although they had genuine abilities as far as language is concerned, they did not establish any proper civilization. They lived in tribes and they were united when outsiders attacked them. Otherwise, they were quarreling and even fighting with other tribes that they were related with. They were superstitious and worshipped idols. They lived in a complete ignorance, where immorality and discrimination were prevailing. (Mawdudi, 1980, p. 43)

They were following their own desires and became very materialistic in all aspects of their life. Even though the Arabs were known for their honor and kindness, yet evil, immorality, injustice, and corruption dominated their community. For instance, when a man was blessed with a baby girl, he grieved and his face darkened. (Siddiqi, 1984, p. 14) Some of the Arabs used to bury their daughters alive because the birth of a baby girl was considered as shameful, while some others would bring up their girls in sufferance and contempt. (al-Hatimy, 1983, p. 14) Such situation of the women in the pre-Islamic Arabian society has been mentioned in the following Qur’anic verses: “When news is brought to one of them, of (the birth of) a female (child), his heart is filled with grief and contempt; (Al-Nahl: 58-59)?, and “When the female (infant), buried alive, is questioned - For what crime was she killed?; (Al-Takweer: 8-9)3. This verse reveals the fact that the rights of offspring and life were violated by the Arabs because of their ignorance about the Truth, which they had polluted and distorted.

Al-Zamkhshari has given a good comment and interpretation on the content of the two abovementioned Qur’anic verses in his al-Kashaf (Qur’anic exegesis). When an Arab was blessed with a daughter, he had in his mind two options: First, if he wanted to be ashamed of her (when she becomes matured), he would put on her a dress made of wool or fur and send her to desert to take care of his camels and sheep. Second, if he wanted to kill her, he would leave her until she had completed six years of her age and he would say to her mother: perfume her and beautify her. So, he would go out with her and when he reached the well he dug for her in the desert, he would say to her: look inside it. Then, he would push her from behind inside the well and instantly cover her with soil until the well would become equal with the ground. (al-Zamkhshari, 1998, Vol. 4, p. 708).  


2 ﴿وَزَكَّاهَا بِحَيْلٍ فَأَنْهَدْهَا لِلَّذِينَ أُولِي الْأَمْرٍ﴾ (الْإِسْرَءِيلُ: ٥٨)

3 ﴿وَزَكَّاهَا بِحَيْلٍ فَأَنْهَدْهَا لِلَّذِينَ أُولِي الْأَمْرٍ﴾ (الْإِسْرَاءِ: ٨-٩)
In another occasion, al-Zamkhshari has mentioned that when a pregnant woman approached her due of delivering the baby she dug a well and she would go near to it at its edge to deliver her new born. She had two alternatives: (1) If she gave birth to a baby girl she would throw her into the well; and (2) if the new born was a boy she would keep him. (al-Zamkhshari, 1998, Vol. 4, p. 708) Indeed, such kind of activities done by the Arabs in the pre-Islamic Era, show the level of their ignorance about the Truth. The girl was not aware of what was happening to her and why she was put to death. Therefore, Allah (s.w.t.) has addressed the issue concerning the situation of the infant child put to death by their fathers in the Day of Judgement, who will be asked a question – for what crime she was put to death by burying her alive.

The abovementioned state of affairs on which the pre-Islamic Arabian society was, formed two major classes: the nobles and the slaves. The nobles had the privilege to rule and manage all affairs of their community as well to enjoy all the rights. On the other hand, the slaves were deprived from all their rights and were treated as products with which their masters could do anything even kill them. Above all, ignorance about the TRUTH was one of the major elements paving the way for the construction of an unpleasant environment in the Arabian society. Arabs’ ignorance made them to become slaves of their own desires, where they worshipped idols made up of wood and stone instead of worshipping their Creator, Allah (s.w.t.).

In such situation of the pre-Islamic Arabian society, Allah (s.w.t.) showed for the last time His Mercy to humanity by sending the last, comprehensive and universal Guidance “al-Qur’an” through the last Messenger “Muhammad (p.b.u.h.),” Muhammad (p.b.u.h.,) al-‘Umari (an illiterate person who did not know how to read and write), challenged his own people even before his Prophethood with his humbleness and trustworthiness and above all with his noble character that attracted his own people who called him as al-Amin (the Trusty). Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), who was born after the death of his father Abdullah (he died when Muhammad was in the womb of his mother), came from the highest and the noblest lineage: ‘Muhammad ibn `Abdullunulah ibn Hashim (banu hashim—founder of tribe) ibn Abdu Manaf ibn Qusayy ibn Killah ibn Murra ibn Ka’ab ibn Lu’aie ibn Ghaalib ibn Fihar (he was Quraish so his descendants are known as Quraish, most respected tribe), Maalik ibn Nadjar ibn Kinana (famous person whom Prophet mentioned in a hadeeth) ibn Khuzaima ibn Mu’dridka ibn Ilyaas ibn Mudar ibn Nizar ibn Ma’ad ibn ‘Adnan (forefather of the vast majority of Arab tribes), ibn Udd ibn Muqawwim ibn Nahur ibn Tayrah ibn Yarub ibn Yashhub ibn Nabit ibn (Prophet) Ismail ibn (Prophet) Ibrahim…” (Seerah Ibn Hisham, 2000, p. 3)

The discourse on Islamic Da’wah commenced with the Prophetic call of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) addressed to his people – the Arabs, who as it has been mentioned above were living in a complete darkness and ignorance. The Prophethood of Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), which was conveyed by him in the last two decades before his death in AH10/AD632, has a very different nature compared to the previous prophecies witnessed by all the prophets before him. His Prophethood and his Message – the Qur’an, symbolize the highest and ultimate development of the phenomenon of Prophecy as a whole. (Al-Faraqi, 1986, p. 99) The Prophet (p.b.u.h.)’s call to his people was a friendly invitation to the submission of one’s self willingly to the Creator of the Worlds, Allah (s.w.t.) and to obey Him by worshipping Him alone.

The Prophethood granted by Allah (s.w.t.) to Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) placed the last Prophet (p.b.u.h.) in the highest position compared to his tribesman and countryman as well as other humans in general. The office of Prophethood made Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) to have a connection with the Creator in a special way. He had an equal status of his people to humanity in a special way. He had to address to his people and humanity at large, The Qur’an, Prophecy, and it terminates all possibilities for the coming of another Prophet with a Prophetic mission by God. If any person be he a Muslim or a non-Muslim claims his prophecy after the final Prophethood of Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) he is claiming a false prophecy and no one should follow his prophetic claims. What will make the Prophetic Da’wah so special? Without any doubt, it has special characteristics and principles because of the status of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and his mission, which have been addressed in the Qur’an by Allah (s.w.t.).

Firstly, the Prophet should be obeyed as ordered by al-Qur’an. This denotes that every human being regardless of his race,
color, culture, tradition, location, religion, should obey the Prophet (p.b.u.h.), as he is the bridge or the channel between him/her and the Creator. A person’s obedience to the Prophet is equivalent to his/her obedience to Allah (s.w.t.). This phenomenon has been addressed by Allah (s.w.t.) in the following Qur’anic verses: (1) “We sent not a Messenger, but to be obeyed, in accordance to with the will of God …” (al-Nisa: 64); (2) “But no, by the Lord, they can have no (real) Faith, until they made you judge in all disputes between them, and find in their souls no resistance against your decisions, but accept them with the fullest conviction.” (al-Nisa: 65). Al-Tabari mentions that these two verses were revealed to rebuke the attitude of the hypocrites of Madinah towards the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and his Message. He states that Allah (s.w.t.) rebukes those hypocrites by saying: I have not sent a Prophet save I have imposed his obedience on those to whom he was sent. Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) is among those Prophets. So, the one who left Prophet (p.b.u.h.)’s obedience and has shown dissatisfaction with his ruling as well has invoked injustice, he has gone against My command and has neglected My duty (imposed on him). (al-Tabari, 2003, Vol. 7, pp. 197-204) Allah (s.w.t.) says in ‘Qur’an: (3) “Say: ‘Obey God and His Messenger’. but if they turn back, God loves not those who reject faith.” (Al ‘Imran: 32); (4) “And obey God and the Messenger that you may (really) obtain prosperity.” (Al-‘Imran: 332).

Secondly, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) is the most authoritative expounder of al-Qur’an. It signifies that Allah (s.w.t.) has given full authority to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) to explain and to interpret the Message of Qur’an. The authority of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) is based on the Qur’anic instructions. Therefore, this fact makes the Prophetic Sunnah to be the expounder of the Qur’anic Text in order to explain the Qur’anic Laws and introduce Laws that the Qur’an is silent about them as well as to lessen the burden of Muslims in dealing with the Qur’anic Text. So, the Sunnah of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) is the message he conveys to mankind in accordance with Allah’s Revelation and it is the explanation given to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) by Allah (s.w.t.). In other words, Allah (s.w.t.) has granted to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) the authority to explain the Qur’anic Text through his Sunnah — his sayings, doings, and practices Allah (s.w.t.) in order to make it known to the people what has been revealed to them from Allah (s.w.t.). (Al-Tabari, 2001, Vol. 14, pp. 229-232) Allah (s.w.t.) says：“….and We have sent down unto thee the Message; that you may explain clearly to men what is sent for them, and that they may give thought.” (al-Nahl: 44).

Thirdly, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) is the law legislator in Islam. It denotes that Allah (s.w.t.) has granted to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) full authority to be the second law legislator after Him. Any legislation brought forward by the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) should be obeyed by his followers and all mankind without any hesitation or objection as Prophet’s words are based on Revelation. Allah (s.w.t.) says: “He will make lawful for them all good things and prohibit for them all evil things…” (al-A’raf: 157), and “So take what the Messenger assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you. And fear Allah; for Allah is strict in Punishment.” (al-Hashr:7). Ibn Kathir asserts that whatever the Messenger commands you to do it, then you have to do it without any objection or hesitation and whatever he forbids you, then you have to avoid it completely. Certainly, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) only commands righteousness and forbids evil. (Ibn Kathir, 2000, Vol. 9, p. 558)

Fourthly, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) is the role model. It indicates that Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) is the best role model to be followed by every Muslim as well as humanity at large. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) has demonstrated in his entire Prophetic life a par excellent example to be followed by Muslims as well as humanity at large as his message is universal in nature. He (p.b.u.h.) is the best role model in every aspect of a person’s day-to-day life concerning both affairs of his earthly and hereafter aspects of life. Allah has addressed in the Qur’an: “Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the Praise of Allah.” (Al-Qur’an: 33). It signifies the highest moral and wholesome personality as a model for mankind. Allah (s.w.t.) says: “The one who besides spreading the knowledge about Islam he will set a true and living Islamic example, individually and collectively. Da’wah by mere words will never achieve its mission if those words are not reflected in a Muslim’s day-to-day activities. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) set the best example concerning Islamic Da’wah as lived according to the Divine Word of Allah (s.w.t.) – al-Qur’an. Thus, he demonstrated the highest moral and wholesome personality as a model for mankind. Allah (s.w.t.) says: “You have indeed in the Messenger of God, a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for any one whose hope is in God and
Sixthly, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) did not compromise as far as Islam is concerned. When the non-Muslim asked him for compromise, offering to worship only Allah if Muhammad would worship their idols, then the Surah al-Kafiran was revealed: "Say: O ye that reject Faith! worship not that which ye worship. Nor will ye worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which ye have been wont to worship, Nor will ye worship that which I worship. To you be your Way, and to me mine." (Al-Kafirun: 1-6). Al-Zamakhshari mentions in his Kashaf that Allah (s.w.t.) revealed this verse during the Meccan period responding to the group of Qurayshi people who wanted to compromise with the Prophet concerning his mission – the worship of One Single-Revealed God. They said to the Prophet: O Muhammad! You follow our religion and we follow your religion; you worship our gods one year and we worship your God one year. The Prophet replied: May God forbid to associate other gods with Him (in worship). (al-Zakhamshari, 1998, Vol. 4, pp. 813-814) The attitude of this Qurayshi band that wanted dearly to convince the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) to compromise in religion shows that they were not following the Truth, rather, they were following the falsehood.

Lastly, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.)'s approach was gentle and full of love. Once a Bedouin urinated in the Mosque and the companions of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) were very angry and intended to chase him away. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.), however, asked them to let him finish first and then just wash it away. He said to the Bedouin with gentleness that Masjids are not the places to urinate but to remember Allah (s.w.t.). He (p.b.u.h.) was informed by the Revelation about the incident where Prophet Musa (a.s.) and Prophet Harun (a.s.) had to go and speak to Pharaoh softly and gently: "Go, both of you, to Pharaoh, for he has in his heart some hardness of heart. Therefore show him, both of you, with gentle speech so that the message may have greater impact on the souls with more beneficial outcome.

Once a Bedouin urinated in the Mosque and the Messenger (p.b.u.h.) called him and said to him: ‘These mosques are not the places meant for urine and filthy excretion. But speaks to him mildly; perchance he may taking warning or fear (God).” (Taha: 43-44). Ibn Kathir says that Allah (s.w.t.) commanded Musa and Harun to go to Pharaoh and to speak to him with mildness and softness as he has become rebellious and insolent against Allah (s.w.t.) as well he has disobeyed him. The invitation of Musa and Harun to Pharaoh was done with gentle and easy speech so that the message may have greater impact on the souls with more beneficial outcome. (Ibn Kathir, 2000, Vol. 6, p. 344)

Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.)'s Way of Da'wah

The essence of Prophetic Da'wah is Tawhid, and, therefore, the call to Tawhid is an invitation to all human beings to a conscious acceptance of the Almighty God, Allah (s.w.t.) as the Ultimate Authority in all of their personal, social, and public affairs, which then, leads to a qualitative change of their individual and communal daily life. Such invitation should be done in a humble way and not by force. To avoid compulsion in the process of Islamic Da'wah, a methodology or way is required to be followed. Certainly, Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) inspired by Revelation – the Qur'an has provided the best methodology or way to be used in Islamic Da'wah by every single matured and learned Muslim. The way used by Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) in converting the Word of Allah to his people was of a direct communication or personal communication in secrecy and public. (Yusuf, 1993, pp. 35-37) Prophet (p.b.u.h.)'s successful presentation of the Divine Message to his people and others has labelled Islamic Da'wah as a direct communication, which is an oral communication consisting of face to face dialogue, persuasion, and presentation of thoughts, ideas, interests and ambitions.

The nature of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.)'s mission, is comprehensive, universal, and final distinguishes him from all previous Prophets. Therefore, the burden of his responsibility was extremely heavy compared with other prophets as his message came to guide all people until the Day of Judgment. Besides, Allah (s.w.t.) has revealed to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.), the teachings and methodologies of all other prophets, which served as an example for him (p.b.u.h.), his followers and humanity at large. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) has been addressed in the Qur'an among of those Messengers of determination known as 'ula al-`azm: "Therefore patiently persevere, as did (all) messengers of inflexible purpose; and be in no haste about the (Unbelievers)." (Al-Ahzab: 35). Ibn Kathir has mentioned that Allah (s.w.t.) has commanded the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) to observe patience with those who rejected his mission among his people. Allah has mentioned in the Qur'an the names of messengers who preserved patience in their Da'wah with their people- Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, Isa and the seal of all the messengers, Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). (Ibn Kathir, 2000, Vol. 9, p. 82)

Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) demonstrated a perfect method of Da'wah through which a Muslim is responsible to present, introduce or inform others about Allah (s.w.t.), the Prophet (p.b.u.h.), and his teachings, and not to force them to accept Islam as their religion, as everyone is free to choose his or her own religion. This is the aim of Islamic Da'wah and the beauty of Deen al-Islama. To have a better understanding of Prophet (p.b.u.h.)'s methodology, it is very important to discuss in this section the ways used by the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) in Islamic Da'wah. The foundation of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.)'s way in Da'wah has

12 “إِفْلَيْتُمْ نِيَّتًا لِلْوَٰلِدِينَ سَّالِبّيْنَاهُمَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تُقِنِّهِما وَإِنْ لَمْ تُقِنِّهِما وَإِنَّكُمْ لَكُمُ الْكَيْرِيَّةَ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَكُمُ الْكَيْرِيَّةَ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَكُمُ الْكَيْرِيَّةَ (الْأَحَدَّ: ۲۱) "أَنْ لَوْ نُقِنْيَ زُرُوحَ مَا أَنْتُمْ تُقُنُونِ " إِفْلَيْتُمْ نِيَّتًا لِلْوَٰلِدِينَ سَّالِبّيْنَاهُمَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تُقِنِّهِمَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تُقِنِّهِمَا وَإِنَّكُمْ لَكُمُ الْكَيْرِيَّةَ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَكُمُ الْكَيْرِيَّةَ (الْأَحَدَّ: ۲۱) "أَنْ لَوْ نُقِنْيَ زُرُوحَ مَا أَنْتُمْ تُقُنُونِ " إِفْلَيْتُمْ نِيَّتًا لِلْوَٰلِدِينَ سَّالِبّيْنَاهُمَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تُقِنِّهِمَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تُقِنِّهِمَا وَإِنَّكُمْ لَكُمُ الْكَيْرِيَّةَ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَكُمُ الْكَيْرِيَّةَ (الْأَحَدَّ: ۲۱) "أَنْ لَوْ نُقِنْيَ زُرُوحَ مَا أَنْتُمْ تُقُنُونِ " إِفْلَيْتُمْ نِيَّتًا لِلْوَٰلِدِينَ سَّالِبّيْنَاهُمَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تُقِنِّهِمَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تُقِنِّهِمَا وَإِنَّكُمْ لَكُمُ الْكَيْرِيَّةَ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَكُمُ الْكَيْرِيَّةَ (الْأَحَدَّ: ۲۱) "أَنْ لَوْ نُقِنْيَ زُرُوحَ مَا أَنْتُمْ تُقُنُونِ " إِفْلَيْتُمْ نِيَّتًا لِلْوَٰلِدِينَ سَّالِبّيْنَاهُمَا وَإِنْ L
been addressed by Allah (s.w.t.) in the following verse: “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: ...” (al-Nahl: 125) From this verse can be extracted the most important aim of Qur’anic Da’wah, which is the invitation unto the Path of Allah (s.w.t.), or the way that leads to the establishment of the Divine System on earth. This Qur’anic verse promotes three important ways used by the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) in Islamic Da’wah: (1) al-Hikmah; (2) al-Mawżūnah al-Hasanah; and (3) al-Jidal bil-latī Hiya Ahsan.

Al-Da’wah bi Al-Hikmah:

The first method of Qur’anic Da’wah is al-Da’wah bi al-Hikmah (the invitation of others to the Way of Allah with wisdom), which signifies in Arabic language meanings related to: (1) al-Ta’āqul (thinking); (2) al-Ni‘yad (justice / equilibrium / balance of things), and (3) Iḥkām al-Ummar (perfection or mastery of the things, and their transformation to rules that will be bound to). (Taalib, 1998, p. 82) Al-Hikmah is also attained from the mastery learning of the faith from the Islamic Sources; al-Qur‘an and al-Sunnah. Certainly, Muslim scholars unanimously agree that the Qur‘an and the Sunnah (sayings, actions and tacit approval) of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) are the most important sources of wisdom. One of the names of Allah is al-Hakim. In the whole life of Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), whatsoever he said, did and approved all were done based on wisdom. Thus, we could say that Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.)’s way of Da’wah is based on the wisdom and guidance of Allah (s.w.t.).

At the beginning, Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) used al-Hikmah in his personal and secret communication of Islamic Message to his people. Later on, he (p.b.u.h.) was commanded in another revelation to preach to his close relatives: “And admonish your closed relative” (al-Shu‘ara': 214) After a pause, he also received the following revelation: “O thou wrapped up (in the mantle)! Arise and deliver thy warning! And thy Lord do thou magnify! And thy garments keep free from stain! And all abomination shun! Nor expect, in giving, any increase (for thyself)! But, for thy Lord’s (Cause), be patient and constant!” (al-Muddaththir:1:7)

In the first early three years in Mecca, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) conveyed Islam personally and individually to his friends and family. To his wife Khadijah (r.a.) and friends, he used the personal touch to speak and to convey the message. To his relatives, he conveyed the message by having invited them for food and after they had taken their food. Among the first new Muslims are: Khadijah Binti Khuwailid, Ali ibn Abi Talib, Zaid ibn Harithah, Abu Bakr al-Muttalib, 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Auf, Sa’ad ibn Abi al-Waqqas and others. (Haykal, 2009, pp. 88-91) After the number of Muslims reached thirty, Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) chose the house of al-Arqam ibn Abi Arqam, who was his companion to teach Islam to the new Muslims. Wisdom in the personal and private preaching is that the conditions of the Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic Era) did not allow him to preach openly. The Prophet (a.s.w.)’ Da’wah is more effective through the individual and secret ways. His preaching was done face to face – the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) as a Da’i and his wife or friends as mad’u. The personality and sincerity of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) could move the hearts of the mad’u. The mad’u also could ask any question from the Da’i. All Muslim scholars assert that when the number of the Muslims is too small and weak and there is the risk of being destroyed, open preaching should be abandoned as the Ummah has to look after the safety of Muslim.

Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) invited the family of ‘Abd al-Muttalib to a feast in his house including Abu Lahab. After the meal, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) was about to speak; suddenly Abu Lahab, one of his uncles, stood up and made a long speech, where he warned and threaten the Prophet about his new religion, which differs from the traditional religion of their ancestors. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) did not give any prompt respond to Abu Lahab, rather he kept silent and was listening, studying the situation and gathering information about the approach of others towards his new mission – al-Islam. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) invited his relatives for the second time for a treatment where he stood up and gave a speech about his Prophetic mission. He made it very clear to them that he will never stop his mission regardless of the consequences he might face and informed all of them that he was commanded by Allah (s.w.t.) to invite first his relatives before inviting the public. (Haykal, 2009, pp. 93-94). Prophet (p.b.u.h.)’s speech attracted many of his relative, who later on embraced Islam. The way used by the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) with wisdom expanded the circle of Islamic Da’wah from his family members to his close relatives, who became a supporting force for him.

After the third year, Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) turned to preach openly when Allah (s.w.t.) revealed to him: “Therefore proclaim openly that which you have commanded, and turn away from al-mushrikin.” (al-Hijr: 94) In obedience to this command, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) gathered the Quraysh before the hill of al-Safa. Standing on the hill, he asked the people: “O people! If I inform you that there is a troop of soldiers coming to attack you from the yonder hills, would you believe me?” The people said, “We have never heard you telling a lie.” Then, raising his voice he said: “I have come to you as a Warner, and if you do not respond to warning, punishment will fall upon you”. However, Abu Lahab, his uncle interrupted and said: “May you perish! Did you gather us only for this reason?” Then he went away. (Haykal, 2009, pp. 93-94) As the last Prophet, Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) has obligations to communicate the message openly after the followers of Islam had reached to a certain number. His first call in the open was full of wisdom as he did not directly deliver the message, but firstly confirmed the people’s trust in him before conveying the message.

Open preaching that lasted for ten years was followed by persecutions and sufferings of Muslims, which indeed had trained the Companions of Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) to become the best people. They were willing to sacrifice their life, family, property and
everything for the sake of Islam. In the midst of these unending sufferings, the foundation of the **khayr al-Ummah** had been lain down in Makkah. Allah (s.w.t.) sent Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) to warn the entire humanity about the Last Day – the Day of Judgment. People must accept God’s sovereignty over them and mend their ways. They have to worship God sincerely to follow acts of **Ibaadah** and moral instructions in both their individual and social lives.

**Al-Da’wah bi Al-Maw’izah al-Hasanah:**

The methodology or the way selected by the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) as addressed by the Qur’an is **al-Maw’izah al-Hasanah** (beautiful preaching or delivering of the Message), through which the heart and emotions are moved. This dimension is related to such manifestations that develop close relationships between the Da’i (caller) and his/her audience while promoting the teachings of Islam in a polite and moderate manner, and awakening of the feelings with the intention of good advice and counselling. (al-Baarruudee, 1987, p. 24)

Da’wah bi al-Maw’izah al-Hasanah creates an environment of discussion or communication ruled by better understanding between the Da’i and his/her audience as the aim of what Da’i says benefits his/her Mad’u. (al-Zamaakhshari, 1997, p. 601) Such way also releases the Da’i from nasty words and restricts him to more acceptable words or expressions, and makes him repel the evil with what is better. Beautiful preaching or advice will cause the others while entering with them into a religious conversation.

If Muslims want to communicate the Islamic Message to others, they have to understand the wisdom behind it, and then to implement the religious tenets and principles extracted from it. The most important issue found in this Holy Text is the way how Muslims should communicate with non-Muslims. Muslims, thus, should train themselves to enhance their religious reputation towards the non-Muslims by finding better ways leading to closer relationship with them in order to show the inclusivistic attitude of **Deen al-Islam** towards others. The Islamic Da’wah should be based on amicable conversation making it easy for others to get the right insight about the Divine Truth acknowledged by **al-Islam**. Hence, the Muslims must present Islam to others by ways that will make them to achieve love and respect and not hatred and disgrace among the other human fellows.

Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), the seal of all Prophets, was the best adviser and counselor for the whole of mankind. He was just, kind and compassionate. He has been described by the Qur’an as **ra’uf** (kind), **rahim** (merciful) and **rahmatan lil-‘alamin** (a mercy for all creatures). Throughout his life, he was deeply involved with calling people to the goodness of both worlds, **Dunya** (Earthly life which is temporary) and **Akhirah** (Hereafter life which is everlasting). Allah (s.w.t.) says: “Now has come unto you an Apostle from among yourselves; it grieves him that you should perish, ardently anxious over you: to the believers, he is most kind (**ra’uf**) and merciful (**rahim**).”22 (al-Tawbah: 128) Ibn Kathir says that Allah (s.w.t.) sent to the Arabs a Messenger chosen from among them, speaking the same language. He showed his mercy upon his companions and others and indeed every difficulties faced by the Muslim community would make him grieve. (Ibn Kathir, 2000, Vol. 4, pp. 553-554). Allah (s.w.t.) says in another verse: “And say to My servants (worshippers) that they should say those things that are best.”23 (al-Isra’: 53). The content of this verse shows that Allah (s.w.t.) has commanded Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) to inform his companions and Muslim brothers to speak only best words, while conveying the message of Islam to other fellows. The believers should address each other in their conversations and dialogues or arguments with the best and politest of expressions. This kind of conversations is considered as the most successful way in **Da’wah**. (Ibn Kathir, 2000, Vol. 6, p. 33)

**Al-Jidal bil-lati Hiya Ahsan:**

The Qur’anic Text – **Al-Jidal bil-lati Hiya Ahsan** – introduces the best way to be followed by every matured Muslim Da’i in his/her **Da’wah**. Al-Jidal is presented in a way that leads to the construction of an amicable conversation between Muslims and others. So, an argumentation can take place between two groups of people through ways that are best and amicable. **Al-Jidal** can be used in conveying the **TRUTH** in a form of mutual respect and better understanding, where the Da’i has “to be intimately engaged with someone in discussion or debate. This intimate and purposeful dialogue is called in the Holy Qur’an ‘the best, or fairest debate’ (al-jidal al-ahsan).” (Ayoub, 1997, vol. 8.2, p. 156.)

The notion **al-Jidal** was introduced by Islam to enable man of wisdom and sound intellect to oppose the philosophical and conservative challenges faced by him in his inner-consciousness and thoughts, which are linked with the evolving movement regarding his way of thinking transferring him from the darkness of scepticism, infidelity, and aberration, to the light of faith, monotheism and guidance. (Fadlullah, 1996, pp. 50-51) Muslims have to bear in mind that **al-Jidal** is not praised by the **Qur’an** in an absolute sense, it is only restricted to what is better (al-Husna).

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21 | ﴿ولا ت سوى** الْخَيْرَةُ لَوْ سَبِيعِينَ مِنَ الْحَكَايَةِ مَعْنَى هَيْ أَحْسَنَ إِفْلَأَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ الْحَكَايَةِ وَعَدَّاً كَافِهَ إِنِّي أَخْيَاهُ﴾ (النَّبِيَّةِ: 34).

22 | ﴿وَفَلَّأَذِي أَجَادِي أَطْفَأُوْلَىٰ هُمْ هَايًا غَيْرَ عَلَّمَ مَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ عِلْمًا رَفُّيًّا رُفَعُّوْلَىٰ (النَّبِيَّةِ: 128).

23 | ﴿وَفَلَّأَذِي أَجَادِي أَطْفَأُوْلَىٰ هُمْ هَايًا غَيْرَ عَلَّمَ مَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ عِلْمًا رَفُّيًّا رُفَعُّوْلَىٰ (النَّبِيَّةِ: 33).}
The Holy Qur’an has chosen what is better (al-Husna) for Muslim Da’i as a non-violent method and a tolerant way to be used in Da’wah. The practical results obtained by delivering the Message of Islam through this method will transform Muslims’ enemies to friends, who then start thinking and working the way Muslims do. (Fadlullah, 1996, p. 83) In other words, Muslims are advised and encouraged by the Qur’an to argue, dispute (dialogue), or deal with others and especially the People of the Book, in ways that are best and most gracious. Hence, amicable conversation in the process of Da’wah requires wisdom and fair exhortation. If the Da’i needs to use debate in his Da’wah, then, he has to do that with what is better. (Ibn Hameed, 1997, pp. 12-13) Islamic Da’wah in the context of Qur’an requires gentleness and kindness in order to gain supporters. (Zin, 1995, p. 54) The form of debate/conversation dialogue that takes place in Da’wah between the Muslim Da’i and his audience should not lead to hostility and hatred. Rather, it should be led to mutual respect and better understanding.

Relevance of Prophetic Da’wah to the Contemporary Global Society

Currently, in the globalized world, means of communication have been centralized, controlled and used by a system that serves the interest of certain group of people. Therefore, the information is not broadcasted fairly as well as it is distorted, changed or fabricated. Such kind of attitude has affected many communities and especially Muslim community and their religion – al-Islam. Similarly, the ongoing socio-economic-political-intellectual crises and conflicts witnessed by mankind and especially the Muslim world have created a gap between Muslims and others as well have misrepresented Islam and Muslims. Certainly, the fall of communism and 11th September 2001 incident worsened the relationship among Muslim countries because of the weak leadership as well as Muslims and others (especially the West – USA and European countries). The USA military invasion on the Muslim world took a new direction with the motto - fighting terrorism and installing democracy and peace. This new mechanism of USA and its allies did not help to fight terrorism instead it destroyed and continue to destroy the Muslim countries one after another. Who has to be blamed for the creation of such situation? Indeed, no Muslim or non-Muslim would like to take the blame. Rather, they are blaming each other. Therefore, many innocent people have been killed or assassinated all over the world until the current year 2017. Many talks, conferences, seminars, summits, are held by scholars, intellectuals, and world political leaders. But, the problem is not solved.

Furthermore, do we have to blame the advancement of technology and especially information technology or the existing corrupted leadership or the ignorant masses, who just follow the order of their bosses blindly without any objection? Certainly, those to be blamed are the people and not the machines created or invented by them. For instance, technology does not act if people do not adjust and activate it. As a matter of fact, today’s advancement of technology and especially information technology has many advantages as well as disadvantages. It has introduced a lot of good things to humanity. It has created better communication channels by shortening the distance between people, while sending and receiving information and all it is done in a proper way. Beside, with the help of one button people can get a lot of information about each other. For some this is the highest stage of human civilization, and for some others this is the end of human civilization. On the other hand, both, the leaders and their subjects should not abuse their responsibilities entrusted to them. They have to be just and fair in the course of dealing with each other regardless of their position and status enjoyed by them in their community.

It is interesting for many who would like to know how to live a better life in the coming future. Will the existing technology provide and satisfy the endless demands and needs of people, which are aiming at their material satisfaction only? Technology alone as it is will not enable man to get his/her real happiness. Therefore, it is suggested by this study that to this technological development should be added what is more higher in its virtues through which man can achieve his/her expectations and ultimate destiny, and that is ISLAMIC WAY OF LIFE as promoted and lived by the last Prophet of Allah (s.w.t.), Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and his righteous companions. Certainly, contemporary people require the best example to be followed, and that example has been provided by Islam and its civilization before 14th centuries and that is Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). Although the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) of Islam has left this world before 14th centuries, still he (p.b.u.h.) is the only organic and unique example produced by human history. Therefore, humanity regardless of time and space should follow his footsteps and respect his legacy in order to be saved from both, earthly and hereafter destructions.

Muslims are urged to revive their knowledge about their Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and his mission, the Qur’an, by reading and understanding his Seerah (Prophet’s biography) and Sunnah (Prophet’s sayings, deeds, and acts), and to implement them in their day-to-day communications with other fellow Muslims and non-Muslims. They have to promote the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) to humanity at large by using wisdom and good manners as well as make them relevant to the contemporary global society. On the other hand, non-Muslims are asked in a humble way to get their information about Islam and its Prophet (p.b.u.h.) from authentic sources, Qur’an and Sunnah trustworthy representatives of Islam. They are not forced to embrace Islam, instead they are welcomed if they want to join it and they are summoned humbly to respect Muslims and their way of life – Islam as well as their beloved Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). Islamic Da’wah promoted in line with Prophetic methodology will create a real revolution in the hearts and minds of contemporary people who are indeed ignorant about the Truth. If this is done by both contemporary Muslims and non-Muslims, then peace, security and happiness will be restored to humanity.

Conclusion:

This study has reached at the conclusion that the ongoing conflicts between Muslims and Muslims as well as Muslims and non-Muslims that have created a hostile environment can be brought to an end if the Muslims will revive their understanding towar
Oneness of Allah (s.w.t.); (2) Al-Nubuwah – the Prophethood of Muhammad (p.b.u.h.); and (3) al-Akhiran – The End – The Day of Judgement. If these are understood by every single human being, then, the protection of his/her Deen, Life, Offspring, Intellect, and Wealth will be granted without any objection. These rights will be protected and preserved, when peace and harmony will be restored in contemporary global society(s). Prophetic ways foster amicable conversation(s) and interaction(s) between Muslims and Muslims as well as Muslims and other human fellows, which aim at the construction of a friendly environment, prevail by mutual respect, better understanding and peaceful coexistence. It is hoped that the findings of this study will serve as a source of inspiration for the young Muslim intellectuals and especially Muslim leaders and governors. They have to follow the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and his methodology in handling their responsibilities and trust as well as in their dealing with their subject – the people, regardless of their religious-cultural-political differences.

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