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Youth, youth and youth

Once, Imam Jaffar Sadiq (as) asked his follower, Aba Jafar al-Ahwal, from Basra how much are the people responsive to the Wilaya of Ahlulbait (as), to which he answered that their response was very little. The Imam then said:

عَلَيْكَ بِالْأَحْدَاثِ فَإِنَّهُمْ أَسْرَعُ إِلَى كُلِّ خَيْرٍ
"You must approach the youth because they are more receptive to every good."

And this is the reason I believe that from now on we must invest more time, energy→

and resources in activities and projects that involve children and youth. Most of the Bosnian Shia converts are age between 20 and 45. Those of them who are married have children who are in the most cases below 18 years of age. I have counted 45 children from Bosnian Shia families that are in our vicinity. Talking to their parents, who expressed their approval and readiness to cooperate, has strengthened our resolve even further.

The ideal of a person that we would like to nurture and help develop is the one who, according to the advice given by Imam Musa Kazim (as), divides his time in four parts; the

first, to worship Allah and to live according to His guidelines; the second, to earn an honest living in order to support his family; the third, to have a social life with the members of his community and the fourth part to enjoy the things which are lawful to him.

Having that in mind we would like to set our priorities. We need to produce the syllabus, text books, and exam papers for the Religious education of the Shia children and youth. The next edition of our magazine will have more articles about the issues concerning Muslim children and young

people living in Bosnia. Also, we will encourage them to express in writing their opinions, experiences and perspective. The book "Biography of the 12 Imams" is being edited and illustrated in order to be easily readable by young people. At the same time, at our Center or in its proximity we will organize English classes, sports and practical activities in the form of different traditional crafts like pottery, sewing, weaving, knitting, leather and woodwork, modeling, bookbinding etc.

Interview with Shaikh Murtaza Alidina

During my stay in London in January I had privilege to have met Shaikh Murtaza Alidina and asked him few questions. Before we met for the talk, I shared with him a text that briefly familiarized him with the history, the current activities and the future plans regarding tableegh in Bosnia.

Q: What is your opinion on the priority of working with children and young people in the domain of tableegh?

Shaikh Murtaza: The Hadith that you have quoted, "You must approach the youth because they are more receptive to every good" can be taken as the foundational policy guideline. In support of this focus there is another hadith which is more powerful than the one cited. Ayatullah Jawad Amuli, in one of his Friday khudba, or in another lecture, quotes from the Holy



Prophet (sawa) the following: "Whosoever cultivates a piece of land which is derelict and is not owned by anyone, the produce and fruit that it gives belongs to him." And then he extends the principle to say that the hearth of the youth is that of an empty land, unclaimed as yet. This hadith you have quoted says 'it is very receptive, and if you work on that youth's mind and heart, it is

"If they seek your aid in religion, it is your duty to help them..."

Qur'an, al-Anfaal, 72
Translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Tableegh in Bosnia

easier for it to respond and accept the truth, because it is new and unaffected, doesn't yet have all the habits, the fixed mindsets and the entrenched attitudes, as the elder generation. The younger one is more flexible, more open, and more responsive.' But this hadith of the Holy Prophet is one step ahead. You own it! They become loyal to you. And if you want their loyalty to the Centre, the sense of belonging to the Centre, [you will have it] once they feel that their fundamental, basic needs and aspiration are fulfilled. If by the self-sustaining economic projects,

their aspirations, intellectual and social needs are being fulfilled in the Centre, with the sense of respect, dignity and self-confidence, with the teachings that bring them increasingly closer to God, they will become loyal and



committed to the Centre. Definitely, working with the youths should be a priority ...

Q: Majority Muslims in Bosnia are Hanafi Sunni borthers. Most of our donors are contributing with the niyah of helping Bosnian Shias. However, when we organize our activities for children, like educational courses, trips, etc., many, if not the majority, of the participants are the children of non-Shia parents. In order not to discriminate or hurt their feelings we include them in those activities. Is this OK?

Shaikh Murtaza: In principle, money which is given as sadaqa, can be used for Muslims, non Shia Muslims, even non-Muslims, in fact, any other human being who is in need. Not only needy, even if he is a rich person you can use sadaqa for them. The only person who disqualifies is the person who is anti-Islam or he will use the resources that you make available for him against Islam or against the madhab of Haq, Ahlulbait as. Sadaqa as a general principle can be applied to and can be used for all these other groups. However, zakat is the only wajib fund which

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Shaikh Murtaza

is restricted to the followers of Ahlul Bait (as), well as some of the kaffaras. According to some of the mujtahids, it should be only given

to a mu'min, not to any other group. Other than that, sadaqa is a general term. In fact, non sayed sadaqa can be given to a sayed, the mustahab sadaqa, not the wajib. The wajib zakat can only be receive by a sayed if it is given by a seyed. Thus, for them are khums. So if it is given with the niyya of sadaqa, it can apply to all. Not only to the Sunni Muslims, but even non Muslims, so long as they are not identified as anty-Shia. The problem, I guess would be if the donor had in mind that he just wanted to promote the Shia faith alone. But even in that case there could be made an argument. For example,

sometimes you need to build friendly relations with other sects. Even zakat, for example, one of its uses is for the mu'allafa qulubihim, those whom you wish to win their hearts, like those whom you want to attract to Islam or wilayat of Ahlul Bait (as), or those non Muslims whom you do not want to attract, but to reduce their damage to Islam. The only problem with that, if the zakat is to be used for this purpose, then the hakim al-Shar'a, i.e. mujtahid, needs to grant permission for that.

Q: Some donors ask us questions like “How many have you converted so far?” “Or what is the

rate of conversion?” and then they compare that with the amounts of the donations we receive. Some of them look somehow disappointed, as if the investment failed to produce desired results. Do people have right to ask such questions? If yes, what is the best answer to give?

Shaikh Murtaza: Number one, if that is his personal funds that he is giving out, he should be involved in the discussion to decide where and how is to be used for the purpose. Number two, if it is not his fund, it is a fund, let say, of Imam (as) and he has been authorized to identify areas of tableegh and the needs, and

accordingly to give it for that purpose. So, if it is for tableegh, then tableegh has got different styles and different methods. Conversion is one of them, not necessarily the only one. Alternatively, in the third case, it is not his personal fund and it is not the Imam's public fund, but he is just an agent who is collecting on behalf of other private donors. He becomes a person who identifies areas where the needs are and he says, all right, I have funds available to provide you with assistance. So, in that instance you need to make your case to him, to convince him that, given the circumstances that we have in Bosnia, these are our goals of work. One is definitely that we

need to maintain the few Shias that we already have. We do not want to lose them and say, all right, just because the only funds you are giving us are to look for new converts, we are sorry; we do not have time, energy or funds for maintaining the ones that we already have, and we are losing them out. So, you have to make case of your priority. The priority number one, of course, would be to maintain what you already have. Then priority number two would be

'Can we expand and bring more? Are we able to do that? Do we have infrastructure and resources for that?

Good example to keep in mind is the Holy Prophet (sawa). He did his tableegh in different stages, depending on the circumstance in which he was living. So, in the early stage it was one to one contact. He started with his family, then with his friends, then he approached strangers. But it was still one to one stage. Even that stage of tableegh was private and secret. He could not

go public because he would be rejected and persecuted. So he had to build up a sufficient base and numbers that could sustain pressure when the bigger outer society start to pounce upon them. I do not know the stage of development and stability of the Bosnian Shia Muslims. At which stage are they? [Are they] within the family or the friends circle, or they can begin to reach out to the strangers, and that also, secretly or publicly. Then accordingly you

will have to determine your goals of tableegh. And then again, the method that you use, is it personal contact, or is the books, or the internet or mixture of everything, I do not know. You have to study the environment to be able to decide how best to do tableegh.

However, getting new converts definitely should not be the only goal. For sure, it is a high and noble goal, but as priority, it depends. What about maintaining the ones that you already have?

Unless they say, no we are giving you extra funds, so go out and get some more. Then you have to make realistic plans, and say, ok this is what is possible in the given circumstances and this is how we are advancing. Nuh (as) in 950 years had so many converts. The Holy Prophet (sawa) in 13 years in Mecca only managed to get so many converts. At one stage it reached a point when there were no more converts. It is only when those pilgrims from Madina came for hajj

and met him at Aqaba and Mina, the whole thing shifted. And in Madina, in the first few years the Prophet (sawa) fought in defensive mode. They had to survive against attacks from Quraish in Badr, then in Uhud and then finally in Ahzab. After that there was a sort of freedom to propagate, there was no conflict, no major confrontation any more. So, it all depends at which stage you are.

The World Federation of KSMC visits our centre



We were honored by the visit of the World Federation team consisting of Sayed Aliraza Naqvi, Munawer Rattansey and Dr Muslim Khoja in October 2011. They attended our Thursday programme and the programme that was organized to commemorate 40th day from the passing away of Hasan Shabar. Sayed Aliraza recited Dua Kumail and spoke to the congregation on Thursday evening. Brother Munawer in his address to the gathering on Friday expressed The World Federation's dedication to support the Shia community in Bosnia. It has been agreed that the magazine Muslimanski Zivot should be revived, the book about the history of the 12 Holy Imamas, Sireye Pishvayan by Mahdi Pishvayi that has been translated from Farsi be published, and the two flats that are under construction to be finished. The funds for the magazine and the book were generously pledged by Dr Muslim. Also we agreed that we should look into projects for the long term that will eventually help the Bosnian Shia community become self-sufficient and independent.

Mahe Muharram 1433

We had programmes for 11 nights. The speakers this year were two Bosnian zakirs, Narmeen Hudzic and Abdulah Shabar. The topic chosen was 'Death from the viewpoint of the Holy Qur'an'. As in previous years, the invitations were sent via text messages to about 70 persons. Visitors came from Sarajevo, Zanica, Vesoko and, as far as, Sanske Most, which is more than 300 km distance. On the Day of Ashura we traveled to Sarajevo to attend the programme at the Sarajevo Husainiya. In the evening of Ashura the film



“Caravan of pride”, which had been dubbed into Bosnian, was screened. Among the visitors were members of an association of senior citizens. One of them commented “If Yazid ibn Muawiya was such then I ask myself how is it possible that a



street in Madina has been named after him today ?” After the programmes two of our youngsters recited a poem named “Karbala, the land sorrow and pain”

Muslimanski zivot is back

Thanks to Dr Khoja, we are back to publishing business. I want to write few words about the issue no 60 of the magazine, which marks the new beginning. Its general purpose is to inform and educate us, Bosnian Shias, as well as to explain and present our beliefs and practices to others. In this issue the event of Gadir e Khum was narrated, moral malady of israf (immoderation) was explained and a short introduction of the main parts of namaz was given. In addition, it carries a story of a non-Muslim mother whose daughter decided to wear hijab. The magazine also promotes understanding, dialog and tolerance among the Muslims. For that reason we brought a speech of Ahmad Hussain Deedat, a renowned South African preacher, he delivered after his visit of Iran in 1984. In it he says: “What is all this Shia-Sunni tensions? It is all politics. These antagonisms are all politics now. If a Sunni brother somewhere does



something wrong you say oh the individual is not being very Islamic, he is a kaffir, But if a Shia does something wrong you want to condemn the whole Shia community, the whole nation of millions, and say they are all rubbish just because one Shias

actions are not very Islamic....” Then, we have an article in which three big Maraja, Sayed Sistani, Sayed Khamenei and Shaikh Makarim Shirazi condemn hurting the feeling of the Sunni Muslims brothers. The next article deals with the religious and political unity among Bosnian Muslims. Their current vulnerability to the attacks of their enemies comes mainly from the fact that they are politically and ideologically divided. At the end, there is an article that deals with ever-increasing problem of the Wahhabism, explaining the roots of this ideology and differences among the present Wahhabi groups.

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