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Abdul Ghafar Don

Book Review: Presenting Islam in the West

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Presenting Islam covering both aspects; the message of Islam a methodology of way of delivering the message. This article reviewing the book title “Presenting Islam in the West” by Daud R. Matthews, the Anglican convert to Islam. His experienced of being grown in United Kingdom and serving in Saudi Arabia provided him sufficient knowledge on culture of both tradition, Islam and the West. This book of “Presenting Islam in the West” has revealed the knowledge of the author the reality of da’wah, its nature and methodology. The book which provides da’wah methodology in Western context has seven sections. The details are as the following:

Section 1: Introduction

This section has mentioned concerning the obligation and duty of the ummah (the Muslim) to convey the message of Islam to all mankind. By Quoting the Qur’anic verse, Sural Ali ‘Imran, 3:110, the author said that to achieve the best nation, the Muslim ummah should believe in Allah, perform the duty to enjoin virtue and forbid evil.

Section 2: How the Prophets Conveyed the Message

The message of Islam that conveyed by several messengers of Allah is mentioned in this section. They are, the Prophet Nuh, Ibrahim, Ismail, Musa, Elias, Isa and the Prophet Muhammad. All of them according to the author brought the same message; Tauhid (The Oneness of Allah). Three methods of da’wah as did by prophets are also mentioned in this section. They are: 1) Knowledge of that which one calls to, 2) Acting in

accordance with that which he calls to , and; 3) purity of intention (al-ikhlas)

Section 3: How to Present Islam

This section contains some practical aspects of doing da'wah particularly in western context. The author regarded the relationship of the da'i (preacher) and mad'u (those of called) is similar to that of a doctor and a patient. Several aspects related to da'wah is mentioned in this section such as principles of making da'wah, methods of da'wah, methodology of da'i, and characteristics of a da'i.

Section 4: Reference Summaries

Section provides summary or checklist for talking issues in Islam and suggests some practical aspects of da'wah in the UK. Islam need to be explained and introduced through various mediums as proposed by the author such as electronic and printed media (Radio, TV and newspapers). Muslims according to the author should make their voices heard on issues affecting them.

Section 5: The Preservation of the Qur'an

This section emphasises on the history of Qur'anic preservation through the method of memorization and the writing of the mashaf called rasm othmani. In relation to this, the author has called the Muslim ummah to refer to the Qur'an as a source of da'wah guidances.

Section 6: Missionaries and New Testament Manuscripts

Section six reveales Christian missionaries strategy of deviating the Muslims from their teachings and made an effort to do their evangelist mission. He takes for example how Christian relief groups have made inroads in places like Somalia by taking advantage of humanitarian crises. They have been also established front export businesses as a long term method to a targeted country in achieving the said mission.

Section 7: How You Can Help

This book ended with the appeal for the Muslims to spend or give their money and time for the sake of da'wah. The author added that da'wah would gain a victory if the Muslims willing to sacrifice their lives, times and wealths.

On the basis of the above facts related to the book, it might be helpful if da'wah organizations or da'I (the caller) could consider it as a practical guide in doing da'wah to the society. The book "Presenting Islam in the West" has revealed the experience of the author in propagating Islam particularly in the Western context of da'wah.

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