

FOUNDATIONS

DAWAH TRAINING COURSE NOTES [1 - 4]

INTRODUCTION

MAXIMISE YOUR ONLINE LEARNING

WHAT IS DAWAH?

WHY SHOULD WE GIVE DAWAH?



TOPIC 1: INTRODUCTION

DISCUSSION: *Why do you feel it is important to come on a dawah training course?*

Welcome to iERA's dawah training course. The purpose of this course is to give you the correct information, advice and guidance on how to do the best job in the world: the job of the Prophets and Messengers – Da'wah.

In this course, we are going to cover a number of important topics related to dawah, including what is dawah, why should we give dawah, the fiqh of dawah, as well as an effective and simple way to do it!

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you will:

- have the right tools and confidence to speak to almost anyone about Islam.
- understand why dawah is an obligation.
- understand the huge rewards of giving dawah and the consequence for abandoning it.

NOTE: This is a foundational course. We are not going into any deep philosophical discussion. We are going to give you the basic tools that you need to articulate the message of Islam in a compassionate and intelligent manner. You can then build upon this later.

SOME PREREQUISITES

This course is suitable for anyone who wishes to learn how to give dawah; however, it is important that you have a good grounding in the basics of Islam before you embark on this journey (i.e. a good understanding of tawheed and shirk, the five pillars of Islam, the six pillars of Imaan, etc)

IMPORTANT ADVICE

1. Purify your intentions: Sincerity is the key for dawah and for all of our acts of worship. The Prophet ﷺ said: **"Actions are judged by intentions and every man shall have only that which he intended."** (Bukhari).
2. Correct actions: Correct means according to the sunnah and the rules of Islam.

ACTIVITY:

- *Who has been involved in dawah before?*
- *Who has been to a dawah training course?*
- *Have you ever had to explain Islam to someone?*
- *Do you feel comfortable in explaining Islam to non-Muslims?*

TOPIC 2: MAXIMISE YOUR ONLINE LEARNING

In order to learn online effectively, you need:

- Good time management
- Self-discipline
- Willpower
- Strong motivation

This is because you are in charge of your own learning - you decide how much or how little you want to do and when. There is also a very strong connection between sincerity and your ability to focus and learn. If you are really sincere, you will give it the attention it deserves.

WAYS TO MAXIMISE YOUR LEARNING

1. Have a dedicated study space

Having a dedicated study space will tell you “it’s time to be serious and work!” Wherever you decide it to be – the living room, a home office, a space in your bedroom – make sure it is a place that is quiet, organised and distraction-free. Avoid places where it is too comfortable or distracting, like lying on your bed or near your PlayStation!

2. Have a dedicated time to study

There are certain hours in the day when you are most productive and others when you are least productive. Pick a time when your mental energy levels are at their highest. If you do that it will be much easier to focus, retain information and remain motivated to engage in the lessons. Find your peak time and structure your day and the course around it.

3. Identify & Remove Distractions

Research shows that the optimal study time is 45 minutes to an hour. It should be focused on the task at hand and should not be broken to look at your phone, check emails and make cups of tea and coffee. To do this you will need to identify and remove distractions.

Set some limits. Eliminate these distractions. Turn your phone off, tell your friends and family that you’re busy for the next hour and not to disturb you, close all other internet tabs so you’re not checking your emails or will be tempted by YouTube. You will know what your distractions are and what they are the best and you will know the best way to remove or minimise them.



TOPIC 3: WHAT IS DAWAH?

DISCUSSION: *What does “dawah” mean to you?*

DEFINITIONS

Dawah has a linguistic meaning and an Islamic meaning. The Arabic word for dawah comes from the root د ع و. The words ‘to call’ and ‘to invite’ come from this root. but from an Islamic perspective, it encompasses the whole of what could be termed: **“enjoining the good and forbidding the wrong”**. From our perspective at iERA, our dawah is focused on calling non-Muslims to Islam - that is our specific focus.

Allah says in the Quran, **“Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is [rightly] guided.”** (16:125). He also says, **“And that there might grow out of you a community who invite unto all that is good”** (3:104). In this verse, the words “all that is good (al-khayr)” means the whole of Islam. Ibn Taymiyyah said, *“Dawah is to call people to believe in Allah and in what His Messengers came with by accepting what they came with and obeying them in what they commanded... Dawah entails calling to all that He commanded and forbidding all that He forbade and that is precisely what is commanding the good and forbidding the evil.”*

THE NEED FOR DAWAH AND ITS IMPORTANCE

Misinformation and lies about Islam are spread every day, which means there is an even bigger need for us to explain the truth. For example, many people think Allah is just a God for the Arabs or that Islam is just for Asian people. The need for dawah is huge, and as long as there are people who are ignorant of Allah, there will always be a need to call them and invite them back to Allah.

Also, if we really want to see the importance of dawah, go to the Quran. Around 1/3 of the Qur’an is about the stories of the Prophets and Messengers.

REFLECTION: *If you were to ask each other, “what was the salah like of Prophet Ayub?”, could you answer it? What about the salah of Prophet Hud or Saleh? Could you tell each other about the zakah of Prophet Shuayb? The hajj of Musa? The fasting of Ilyas? For the majority of the Prophets, Allah chose not to divulge this information to us. But, what about their dawah? Has Allah told us about their dawah? Does this show a significance?*

If we read through the Quran, we can find this in many places. For example:

- **Nuh (peace be upon him):** “We had certainly sent Noah to his people, and he said, “O my people, worship Allah ; you have no deity other than Him.” (7:59)
- **Hud (peace be upon him):** “And to ‘Aad We sent Hud, saying, ‘O my people worship Allah, making all of your worship purely for Him, since there is none besides Him having the right to be worshipped by you.’” (7:65)
- **Saleh (peace be upon him):** “And to Thamud (people, We sent) their brother Saleh. He said: “O my people! Worship Allah! You have no other Ilah (God) but Him.” (7:73)
- **Shuayb (peace be upon him):** “And to [the people of] Madyan [We sent] their brother Shu‘ayb. He said, “O my people, worship Allah ; you have no deity other than Him.” (7:85)
- **Ilyas (peace be upon him):** “And verily, Ilyas was one of the Messengers. When he said to his people: ‘Will you not fear Allah? Will you call upon Ba‘l (an idol) and forsake the Best of creators, Allah, your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers?’” (37:123)
- **Musa (peace be upon him):** “Then We sent after them Moses with Our signs to Pharaoh and his establishment, but they were unjust toward them. So see how was the end of the corrupters. And Moses said, ‘O Pharaoh, I am a messenger from the Lord of the worlds’” (7:103-104)
- **Isa (peace be upon him):** [Jesus said], “And indeed, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. That is a straight path.” (19:36)
- **Muhammad (peace be upon him):** “Say, (Muhammad), this is my way, I call to Allah upon certain knowledge - I, and those who follow me.” (12:108)

These verses clearly show the importance of da’wah and that the task of the Messengers was conveying the message of Islam.

Allah also says in the Quran:: “And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad) but We revealed to him (saying): ‘none has the right to be worshipped but I, so worship Me.’” (21:25) and “[We sent] messengers as bringers of good tidings and warners so that mankind will have no argument against Allah after the messengers. And ever is Allah Exalted in Might and Wise.” (4:165)

THE MISSION OF DAWAH IS ONGOING AND CONSTANT.

Dawah also needs to be maintained and continued at all times. This is because humanity is always relapsing and forgetting the true path.

REFLECTION: *When you clean your kitchen and it's spotless, it is inevitable that it will get messy again. There's no point complaining saying: “I just cleaned it yesterday, it was spotless!” You have to clean it again and again, maintaining cleanliness at all times. Dawah also needs to be consistent and it needs to be continuous. Don't just think because you did it one or two times, the dawah is done - No, it needs to be maintained!*



DISCUSSION: *Who is responsible for giving dawah?*

WHO SHOULD GIVE DAWAH?

Most scholars have agreed that dawah is *Fard al-Kifayah* (a collective obligation). This means that, as long as some Muslims are effectively fulfilling the obligation, the responsibility for the whole ummah is fulfilled.

Allah tells us: “**Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islam), enjoining Al-Ma’roof (which means everything that is good) and forbidding Al-Munkar (which is evil). And it is they who are the successful ones.**” (3:104). This indicates that there needs to be a specific group of people who are dedicated to the task of dawah!

There may be times and circumstances where any individual will have a responsibility for dawah and this will depend according to one’s circumstances and level of ability and knowledge. For example, if your child was smoking or doing something wrong, you wouldn’t just say: “oh the imam will fix it” or “the community will sort him out, it’s their job”. No, it’s your job too! Similarly, if you know of the importance of dawah in your area, and you can see that there’s a need for it, then you too should get involved.

EVERYONE HAS A ROLE TO PLAY

At iERA, we believe that everyone can have a role to play in the dawah. Play to your strengths and benefit the dawah in whatever way you can: If you have good public speaking skills you can do talks or presentations. If you’re good at writing, you can write articles. If you have Graphic design skills, produce leaflets and posters. If you have admin skills, help out in a dawah organisation in their administrative roles. Whatever you can do, big or small your role, nothing is lost in Allah’s sight.

TOPIC 4: WHY SHOULD WE GIVE DAWAH?

DISCUSSION: *Why should we give dawah?*

The reason why we should give dawah is the same reason we do anything in Islam – and that’s to seek the pleasure of Allah! Dawah is something Allah has ordered us with, and if we do it, we are promised great rewards; however, if we don’t do it, then there is a threat of punishment.

ALLAH HAS ORDERED US TO GIVE DAWAH

Allah says “**Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching and argue with them in a way that is better. Truly, your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His path, and He is the Best Aware of those who are guided**” (16:125). Allah also says, “**Invite to your Lord, and don’t be of those who associate partners with Allah**” (28:87). The Prophet ﷺ also ordered it, “**Convey from me, even if it is only one verse.**” (Bukhari)

Look at it practically: when you love something, you can’t help but want to share it with others. Your favourite football team, Apple or Android phone – you will want others to join you. This is because you are connected to it and you are invested in it. Similarly, if you love Islam, you love the guidance for yourself and you love that Allah has blessed you with Islam, so surely you should also want it for others and want to share it.

As the Prophet ﷺ said: “**You do not truly believe until you love for your brother what you love for yourself**”. An-Nawawi said “*This is interpreted as brotherhood in general, such that it includes the disbeliever and the Muslim. So, he should love for his brother, the disbeliever, what he loves for himself which is his entering Islam, just as he should love for his brother Muslim that he remains in Islam. For this reason, it is recommended to supplicate for the disbeliever to be guided. The meaning of love here is an intention for good and benefit, and this meaning is religious love, not human love.*” (Sharh al-Arba’yn 13). If you love Islam for yourself, don’t you also love it for your brothers and sisters in humanity? It’s actually THEIR right as well to know about Islam!

REFLECTION: *Put yourself in their shoes – what if you were a non-Muslim. Wouldn’t you want to know about Islam? Wouldn’t you want someone to give dawah to you? What if you lived next door to a Muslim and they never told you about Islam?*



THE REWARDS FOR GIVING DAWAH

Allah says, **“And who is better in speech than one who invites to Allah and does righteousness and says, “Indeed, I am of the Muslims.” (41:33).** Hasan al-Basri commented on this verse: *“This person is the beloved to Allah, the wali of Allah and is the most beloved to Him from amongst the people of the earth. He answered the call of Allah and invited the people to the very same call he responded to. He works righteous deeds within his response and declares: “Indeed I am from the Muslims.””*

The best of people and most beloved to Allah are the Prophets and the Messengers. The best of those is our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his number one mission was to give dawah – that was his constant sunnah. We are walking in his footsteps! There are no more Prophets or messengers to come after him, nor are there any of his companions left to continue the call. The responsibility for this Dawah falls on our shoulders.

Also, the Prophet ﷺ said: **“By Allah, if a single person is guided by Allah through you, it will be better for you than all of the red camels.” (Bukhari and Muslim)** The Arabs used to consider that the red camels were the best of wealth, so the Prophet ﷺ is telling us that if Allah guides one person to Islam through you it is better than the best of the wealth of this world. [Muslim]

In another important hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said **“Whoever guides [another] to a good deed will get a reward similar to the one who performs it.” (Muslim)**. That means that if you bring a person to the guidance by Allah’s will and whatever good you teach them and whatever good they do, they will be rewarded for it and so will you.



CONSEQUENCES FOR NOT GIVING DAWAH

As mentioned earlier, there is a link between dawah and enjoining good and forbidding evil. What better good is there than to call people to the Tawheed of Allah – to the worship of Allah alone – and what worse evil is there after shirk?

The Prophet ﷺ said, “I swear by the One in Whose Hand is my soul! Either you command good and forbid evil, or Allah will soon send upon you a punishment from Him, (and you will make dua) then you will call upon Him but He will not respond to you.” [At-Tirmidhi].

The disastrous consequences of failing to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil can be found in the story of the Sabbath breakers in the Quran. “Ask them concerning the town standing close by the sea. Behold! they transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath. For on the day of their Sabbath their fish did come to them openly holding up their heads but on the day, they had no Sabbath they came not: thus did We make a trial of them for they were given to transgression.” When some of them said: “why do ye preach to a people whom Allah will destroy or visit with a terrible punishment?” Said the preachers: “to discharge our duty to our Lord and maybe they may fear him.” When they disregarded the warnings that had been given to them We rescued those who forbade evil; but We visited the wrong-doers with a grievous punishment because they were given to transgression. When in their insolence they transgressed (all) prohibition We said to them: “Be ye apes despised and rejected.” (Quran 7:163-165)

DISCUSSION: *What lessons can we learn from this story?*

By not enjoining good and forbidding evil, all we do is bring about our own destruction that encompasses not only the evil doers but everybody else as well.

Al-Nu'man ibn Bashir reported: that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: “The parable of those who respect the limits of Allah and those who violate them is that of people who board a ship after casting lots, some of them residing in its upper deck and others in its lower deck. When those in the lower deck want water, they pass by the upper deck and they say: ‘If we tear a hole in the bottom of the ship, we will not harm and bother those above us.’ If those on the upper deck let them do what they want, they will all be destroyed together. And if they restrain them, they will all be saved together.” [Bukhari]