

FIQH OF DAWAH

DAWAH TRAINING COURSE NOTES [5-8]

INTRODUCTION

THE CALL

THE CALLER

THE CALLED



TOPIC 5: INTRODUCTION TO THE FIQH OF DAWAH

In this section, we are going to look at the Fiqh of dawah. There are certain important rules and principles that we need to apply to make sure that our dawah follows the just and perfect guidance of Allah. Just like wudu and salah have certain essential elements and rules that need to be followed in order for it to be correct, the same is true for dawah.

We are going to look at three different elements – the call, the caller and the called.

- By the call, we mean the contents of the message - what is it that we are calling non-Muslims to exactly?
- By the caller, we mean ourselves as duaat - what is our role and how should we fulfil it.
- By the called, we mean those who we are calling Islam to - the non-Muslims.



TOPIC 6: FIQH OF DAWAH - THE CALL

DISCUSSION: *what is the key essential components of the message when giving dawah?*

Allah says, “Say, ‘O Prophet, ’ “This is my way. I invite to Allah with insight—I and those who follow me. Glory be to Allah, and I am not one of the polytheists.” [12:108]. As this verse makes clear, the call is to Allah, which means to call people to single out Allah for worship alone and to reject everything that opposes that. This is the focus and this is actually the reason why Allah created us. As Allah says “I did not create jinn and humans except to worship Me.” [51:56]. If this is our purpose in life, surely we should inform non-Muslims about it.

This was the call of all the Prophets and Messengers: “Surely We sent a messenger to every community, saying, “Worship Allah and shun false gods.” But some of them were guided by Allah, while others were destined to stray. So travel throughout the land and see the fates of those deniers!” [16:36]

When the Prophet ﷺ sent Muadh ibn Jabal to Yemen to give dawah there, he said to Muadh: “You are going to the people of the book, so let the first thing you call them to is: “There is nothing worthy of worship except Allah.”” [Bukhari]



THE CALL IS NOT...

It is so important to remember that dawah is not to your own culture, to your imam, to your race, to your community, your particular group, to your desires, or your political ideology. Nor is it to some "aspect" of Islam, like wearing the hijab or not eating pork! Aisha said: "What does it matter which part of it you read first? (Be informed) that the first thing that was revealed thereof was a Surah from Al-Mufassal, and in it was mentioned Paradise and the Fire. And When the people embraced Islam, the verses regarding legal and illegal things were revealed. If the first thing to be revealed was: 'Don't drink alcoholic drinks.' People would have said, 'We would never leave drinking alcohol,' and if there would have been, 'Don't commit illegal sexual intercourse, 'they would have said, 'We will never give up illegal sexual intercourse.' [Bukhari]

This shows that there is great wisdom in the process and stages of dawah. There are some things that are a priority and take precedence over others, and if these priorities are confused one might even end up pushing people away from the straight path instead of drawing them closer to it.

THE CALL IS WITH BASEERAH

"Say, 'O Prophet, ' "This is my way. I invite to Allah with insight—I and those who follow me. Glory be to Allah, and I am not one of the polytheists." [12:108]. The verse goes further and says that not only is the call to Allah, but it is done with *baseerah*, which means clear evidence and certain knowledge and insight.

This means that we need to understand what we are calling to. How can we call to Allah if we do not know Him? This is why you should have a good grounding in the fundamental knowledge of Islam and a good understanding of what tawheed and shirk is.



GUIDANCE IS FROM ALLAH

The other important part of the call is that our duty is to convey the message and invite non-Muslims to it. Guidance does not come from us. Allah says: **“Indeed, [O Muhammad], you do not guide whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He is most knowing of those who are [rightly] guided”**. [28:56]

Allah also says **“But if they turn away – then We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], over them as a guardian; upon you is only [the duty of] notification. And indeed, when We let man taste mercy from us, he rejoices in it; but if evil afflicts him for what his hands have put forth, then indeed, man is ungrateful.”** [42:48]

The important point to remember here is that although our duty is to call people back to Allah, we do not need to change or distort the religion to make it suitable and conform to others ideals and practices. It’s up to them to choose and for Allah to guide, our duty is to convey in the best way.

ACTIVITY: *Read the following passage about Nuh (peace be upon him) and his dawah to his people. Identify the different methods and approaches Nuh used to give dawah.*

He cried, **“My Lord! I have surely called my people day and night, but my calls only made them run farther away. And whenever I invite them to be forgiven by You, they press their fingers into their ears, cover themselves with their clothes, persist ‘in denial’, and act very arrogantly. Then I certainly called them openly, then I surely preached to them publicly and privately, saying, “Seek your Lord’s forgiveness, ‘for’ He is truly Most Forgiving. (71, 5-10)**

Now reflect over this verse about Nuh’s dawah: **“none had believed with him, except a few.” (11:40)**. All those years of giving dawah and only a few people accepted. However, would anyone say that Nuh did not fulfil his duty? Of course, he did. His job was to convey the message, and that is what he did. Allah is the one who guides whom He wills. This is the same for us - our job is to convey the message; whatever Allah does after that is up to Him.

PRESENT ISLAM IN THE BEST WAY

Not only should we continue to give dawah, no matter how many people accept it, but we must also make every effort to present Islam in the best way. Imagine someone cooked you the most delicious dish of food and then served it to you on a dustbin lid. Even if you were hungry you would be reluctant to eat it. Islam is certainly the best for any human to live but we must show that in the way we present Islam.

TOPIC 7: FIQH OF DAWAH - THE CALLER

DISCUSSION: *What are the key characteristics needed for a daee?*

Before we engage in dawah, it is very important for us to understand that much of our dawah is about how we treat one another. If we are harsh, egocentric and insincere, we will not be able to plant the right seeds in people's hearts and minds. There are some essential qualities and characteristics the da'ee must have.

SINCERITY

The Prophet (peace be upon him) emphasised on sincerity in the following hadith, **"The first of people against whom judgment will be pronounced on the Day of Resurrection will be a man who died a martyr. He will be brought and Allah will make known to him His favours and he will recognize them. [The Almighty] will say: And what did you do about them? He will say: I fought for you until I died a martyr. He will say: You have lied - you did but fight that it might be said [of you]: He is courageous. And so it was said. Then he will be ordered to be dragged along on his face until he is cast into Hell-fire.**

[Another] will be a man who has studied [religious] knowledge and has taught it and who used to recite the Qur'an. He will be brought and Allah will make known to His favours and he will recognize them. [The Almighty] will say: And what did you do about them? He will say: I studied [religious] knowledge and I taught it and I recited the Qur'an for Your sake. He will say: You have lied - you did but study [religious] knowledge that it might be said [of you]: He is learned. And you recited the Qur'an that it might be said [of you]: He is a reciter. And so it was said. Then he will be ordered to be dragged along on his face until he is cast into Hell-fire.

[Another] will be a man whom Allah had made rich and to whom He had given all kinds of wealth. He will be brought and Allah will make known to His favours and he will recognize them. [The Almighty] will say: And what did you do about them? He will say: I left no path [untrodden] in which You like money to be spent without spending in it for Your sake. He will say: You have lied - you did but do so that it might be said [of you]: He is open-handed. And so it was said. Then he will be ordered to be dragged along on his face until he is cast into Hell-fire." (Muslim)



Sincerity can be looked at in different ways:

1. **Be sincere to yourself.** When it comes to sincerity, we must firstly be sincere to ourselves. The Prophet ﷺ asked his companions: **“Shall I not inform you of what I fear most for you, more than the maseeh ad-dajjal?”** They said, **“Yes O Messenger of Allah!”** And he said, **“Hidden shirk (riyaa). A man stands to pray, so he beautifies his prayer when he notices someone looking at him.”** [Ibn Majah]
2. **Be sincere to the dawah itself.** Dawah is not a game. It’s not about who can get the most shahadaahs, nor is it a way for you to boost your own ego through winning arguments. Don’t use the dawah as an excuse to do haram.

On the other hand, don’t make the excuse of being tempted into haram as a reason not to give dawah as those people mentioned in the Quran: **“And among them is he who says, ‘Permit me [to remain at home] and do not put me to trial.’ Unquestionably, into trial they have fallen. And indeed, Hell will encompass the disbelievers.”** [9:49]. According to one tafseer, this verse was about the hypocrites who used the excuse that the beautiful women of Sham were a temptation for them so they should not go to jihad. They made “fitnah” an excuse not to go. The real “fitna” was their refusal to struggle in Allah’s path.

3. **Be sincere to the one you’re giving dawah to.** Do this by having a real genuine concern for the person you are giving dawah to. Be prepared to listen to what they are really saying and try not to pre-judge them.

Big corporations spend a great deal of time and money, not only into developing a product, but in motivating their staff into believing that they are selling the best product there is! They make sure their staff really believe it. So, when the sales team sells the product, they do so with full confidence and zeal.

If you truly have a passion and love for Allah and His religion, then this can often be the most effective dawah tool of all. **What comes from the heart, goes to the heart.** This is why a caller needs to constantly be developing their connection with Allah, their love for Him, faith and trust and taqwa, as well as their intellectual capabilities to effectively communicate the message.



KNOWLEDGE & CLARITY

With knowledge also comes clarity. Part of the miraculous nature of the Quran is how it communicated complex ideas and subjects in a very easy to understand manner. When we are giving dawah to non-Muslims, they need to understand what we are talking about, not only in terms of the words but also the concepts.

Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) said: *“Speak to the people in a language they understand. (i.e. make the call easy for them to understand. Give them concepts and examples that they can relate to). Do you wish that Allah and His Messenger be rejected?!”*

Da’wah is not based on ignorance, emotion or unknowns. We mentioned this earlier with regards to the call – it should be done with baseerah – certain knowledge. Do not talk about the things you do not know, and do not lie about Allah and the Messenger; do not make it up as you go along.

In light of this, we should stick to what we do know, and not delve into what you don’t know. Allah tells us in the Qur’an: **“When you received it with your tongues and said with your mouths that of which you had no knowledge and thought it was insignificant while it was, in the sight of God, tremendous.” (24:15)**. Allah also says: **“And do not say, concerning that which your tongues falsely put forward, ‘This is lawful and this is forbidden,’ so as to invent lies against Allah. Indeed, those who invent lies against Allah will never prosper.” (16:116)**. In terms of the knowledge they should know, the focus should be on knowing Allah and why He deserves worship. Both the Quran and the Messenger point towards this.

You do not need to be a scholar. The Prophet ﷺ said: **“Convey from me, even if it is one ayat”** (Bukhari). This means, although we do not need vast amount of knowledge to give da’wah, the knowledge we do need is on whatever we convey. Also, if there is just one thing you know and understand, convey it. If you don’t know, say you don’t know and leave discussing it.

Also, many Muslims unfortunately “change” Islam to try and make it more palatable to the person they’re talking to, especially in the West. This totally goes against the dawah and in fact, it is a major sin! This is NOT dawah.



PATIENCE

Not everyone is going to accept your message straightaway or even at all! You may find hostility from non-Muslims or even mockery. You must stay patient. Part of that patience is restraining your anger. Remember the person you are dealing with doesn't know what you know and does not see things the way you do.

Developing this understanding and attitude is an essential part of being an effective da'ee and patience in general must be an everyday part of a Muslim's life. Allah tells us: **“By time! Indeed, mankind is in loss. Except for those who have believed, and done righteous deeds, and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience.”** [103, 1-3]. This shows that calling and aiding others upon truth needs sabr or patience.

KINDNESS & GENTLENESS

Along with patience, the hallmark of your character in dealing with people should be kindness and gentleness.

Allah also told Musa and Harun (peace be upon them both) to speak mildly to Pharaoh while giving dawah to him **“And speak to him mildly, perhaps he may accept admonition”** (20:44). Imam al-Qurtubi said about this verse, *“If Musa was commanded to speak mildly to Pharaoh then it is even more appropriate for others to follow this command when speaking to others and when commanding the good and forbidding the evil.”* (Al-Jami'li Ahkam al-Qur'an). Firawn was one of the worst disbelievers and tyrants to ever walk this earth, yet Allah told them to speak to him mildly. What does that tell us about how we should speak to people?

The Prophet ﷺ said: **“Show gentleness, for (if) gentleness is found in anything, it beautifies it and when it is taken out from anything it damages it.”** [Abu Dawud]. In another narration, he said: **“Nothing will be heavier on the Day of Resurrection in the Scale of the believer than good manners. Allah hates one who utters foul or coarse language.”** [Tirmidhi]

This is one of the reasons why many people flocked towards the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ because he dealt with them gently, as Allah says in the Quran: **“And by the Mercy of God you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh hearted, they would have broken away from you.”** [3:159] It actually implies the opposite is also true – that if you are gentle and soft-hearted when talking to people, they will come closer to you.

One of the reasons for this was because the Prophet ﷺ deeply cared for people! He cared about what would happen to them. He had extremely high emotional intelligence and empathy. He did not want to see people going to Hellfire! In fact, this level of concern and worry that the Prophet ﷺ has for people's guidance almost made him sick. Allah said about him: **“It may be that you are going to kill yourself with grief, that they do not become believers.”** [26:3]

Allah reminded the Prophet ﷺ that He is one who guides whom He wants and that He knows best (those) who deserve guidance. An incident during the life of the Prophet ﷺ, highlights his great concern for the guidance of humanity when the Prophet ﷺ heard that a young Jewish boy was on his deathbed and the Prophet ﷺ visited him and told him to embrace Islam. The boy looked at his



father who was sitting beside him, and his father said: ‘Obey Abul-Qasim (obey the Prophet).’ Obey the Prophet ﷺ. The (dying) boy therefore embraced Islam and the Prophet ﷺ stepped out of the home, saying: **“Praise be to Allah who has saved him from the Hellfire.”** [Bukhari].

The Prophet ﷺ said: **“The likeness of me and you is that of a man who lit a fire and grasshoppers and moths started falling into it, and he tried to push them away. I’m seizing your waistbands and trying to pull you away from the Fire but you are trying to get away from me.”** [Muslim]

NOT HAVING USEFUL ARGUMENTS

It almost inevitably will happen that in the course of inviting others to Islam one ends up having a heated discussion and this will turn into an argument. Argumentation is not a characteristic of the believer. Allah tells us in the Quran: **“And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace,”** [25:63] Also the Prophet ﷺ said: **“I guarantee a house on the outskirts of Paradise for one who leaves (off) arguments even if he is right”** [Abu Dawud]

Dawah is NOT about winning arguments or embarrassing another person. Dawah is about winning hearts and minds. Think about these questions:

- What is the objective of the dawah conversation?
- How should the non-Muslim feel after the conversation?
- What is Allah going to ask you about the conversation?

So, do not have useless arguments. Do not have useless arguments. Do not have useless arguments. Focus on conveying the compassionate and peaceful message of Islam to humanity.

DO NOT GO TO EXTREMES

Refrain from extreme and hateful speech, and this is generally true about our approach to the Deen. The Prophet ﷺ warned us: **“Beware of extremism in religion, because the only thing that destroyed those before you was extremism in religion.”**



TOPIC 8: FIQH OF DAWAH - THE CALLED

THREE TYPES OF PEOPLE

Allah says in the Quran the meaning of which is: “Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching and discuss with them in a way that is better.” [16:125]. This verse reinforces the commandment of Allah to give dawah and call to His way, but it also gives us important guidance on how we do that:

- With wisdom
- Beautiful preaching
- To discuss with them in a way that is best.

If we break this verse down, it gives us clues about the different types of people and their psychological state:

1. The first is “with *hikmah*” – (*bil-hikmati* / with wisdom). *Hikmah* refers to the Quran and the Sunnah. For some people, once they know something is from God, that’s enough for them. They understand that God is to be obeyed and that reason demands that we should submit to His commands. What they need is to actually be shown that something is actually from God and Once they know they act on it.
2. The next is *mauithatul hassana*, which means a beautiful reminder or admonition. This could be a reminder of death or about the temporal nature of this world and its pleasures, or a reminder of the everlasting life in paradise or hellfire. This is after all what the Prophet ﷺ was – a bearer of good tidings and a warner.
3. The last aspect is to “*jaadil bi lati ahsan*”, which means to discuss with them in ways that are best. These are the type of people that need some sort of logical or rational explanation for things. So, we may need to further explain to them the truth via discussion, convincing arguments and good explanations.

It is therefore our job to identify which of these categories a person may fit into.



DISCUSSION *Look at the following scenarios. What problems can you identify? (NOTE: these scenarios are taken from real life examples.)*

SCENARIO 1

You on a break at work and your colleague, John, asks you a question - “Why do Muslims pray?”. You answer the question as best you can, but it leads to follow-up questions “Why do you need to wash your feet in the sink?” “Can you not just pray them all at once at the end of the day?” “Why do you need to take an extended lunch on Fridays?”. This goes on and on until the break is over, and all you have done is answer his question upon question.

SCENARIO 2

You are at your weekly Islamic Awareness stall in the city centre handing out leaflets on Islam. A lady walks on by and politely tells you she is Christian, that she believes in Jesus and that he is enough for her because he is the son of god who died for her sins. You quickly reel off Bible verses on how Jesus was not God and that he was “ignorant” of the hour, so how is it possible he was God! You say to her with a smile on your face, “how weak is your god that he died on a cross?!”



SCENARIO 1 - WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Often in a typical dawah conversation like this, the questions might be around much more controversial topics, such as the position of women in Islam, harsh punishments, jihad and obviously that can often lead to heated discussions and even full on arguments.

But the problem here is, all you are really doing is just trying to answer their questions, which really can become a never-ending circle of answering endless questions. Often the answers don't even really satisfy the questioner because his or her whole world view is completely different anyway.

You also never really talk about the most important matter – which is Islam and that knowing we have to worship Allah alone. So, this method of trying to answer every question actually has another potentially problematic long-term consequence. You are allowing the person to think that we do things in Islam because we can figure it all out rationally; but that's not the case. We do things in Islam because the All Knowing and All Wise Creator Allah has told us to. That's what being a Muslim means, one who submits and surrenders to Allah. This is our worldview and perspective on these things.

So, a more effective way would be to try and get the non-Muslim to understand why our world view and perspective makes more sense. If we can get this bit right, then by the will of Allah, you'll see the dawah becoming very fruitful!

SCENARIO 3 - WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Look at your character. Is this how we talk to people when we are trying to bring them closer to Allah or to convey the message with “wisdom and beautiful preaching”? In fact, this may go against the verse of the Quran, where Allah says **“O believers! Do not insult what they invoke besides Allah or they will insult Allah spitefully out of ignorance.” (6:108)**. So, by insulting the one that they worship, you may in turn cause them to curse or insult Allah.

This approach may even push people further away from accepting the message of Islam because they will associate Islam with bad manners, rudeness and attacking. Even if a person does not accept Islam, if we discuss with them in an appropriate manner (especially in relation to this particular scenario), they may become an advocate of Muslims and see the good in Islam. If anything, the bridge to further conversation and discussion is still open and available. However, by being rude and condescending, it may close the door completely to any further discussion, or even worse, you may even be the catalyst for them to hate Islam and actively preach against it.



EVERYONE HAS A FITRAH

Dawah is not difficult. Every person has a natural inclination inside them to want to worship Allah. This is what Allah and His messenger refer to as the Fitrah. And Allah tells us, the meaning of which is in the Quran: **“And remember when your Lord brought forth from the (back) loins (of the children) of Adam their descendants and had them testify regarding themselves. ‘Allah asked,’ ‘Am I not your Lord?’ They replied, ‘Yes, You are! We testify.’ ‘He cautioned,’ ‘Now you have no right to say on the Day of Judgment, ‘We were not aware of this.’” [7:172]**

And the Prophet ﷺ said: **“Every child is born in a state of fiṭrah. Then his parents make him a Jew, a Christian or a Magian...” [Muslim]**

So, the fitrah is the natural inclination to worship Allah but this is changed due to parents, social upbringing, and other influences.

The reason why dawah is easy is because we are actually inviting them back to their natural state, something they deep inside they already know, that Allah is their Rabb – Allah is their Lord.