



# DAWAH TRAINING COURSE NOTES

FOUNDATIONS  
FIQH OF DAWAH  
G.O.R.A.P.  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

# 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]

# 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 shahadahs, 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 is the 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 and 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.



# G.O.R.A.P.

DAWAH TRAINING COURSE NOTES [9-21]

THE GO-RAP APPROACH

BEFORE WE GO-RAP

G — GOD'S EXISTENCE

O — GOD'S ONENESS

THE LINK BETWEEN GO & RAP

R — REVELATION

P — PROPHETHOOD

SUMMARY & CONTENTIONS



## TOPIC 9: The GORAP Approach

The GO-RAP approach to dawah is a very useful tool on which to build and structure your conversations with people about Islam. GO-RAP is an acronym which stands for:

- God's Existence
- God's Oneness
- Revelation
- And Prophethood

### HISTORY BEHIND THE GORAP

After many years of giving dawah, it was always the same questions that came up over and over again. Although there were very powerful explanations to the questions (and even in some instances, people accepted Islam), a shaykh pointed out that, the answers will not always satisfy the questioner because the foundations have not been established, and this would also just lead them to ask more and more questions.

The Sheikh said, if I could show them that Islam was the truth and that the Quran was from Allah, then logically they would have to accept and believe what God said. Ultimately, the answer to any questions about Islam is really "Because God tells us to".

The real challenge then is to get them to understand that there is a God and the Quran is His word and Muhammad ﷺ is His Messenger. This led to what was called the 'Systematic Approach to Dawah' - a simple system that could be an answer to most questions and cut straight to the root of the matter: go back and establish the foundations of calling to Allah first.

This method is a result of over 20 years of dawah experience and has been put together with the help of other dawaat, scholars and people of knowledge. The reason why this approach works so effectively is because it explains the foundational concepts of Islam in a reasoned and logical way. It avoids difficult issues and reduces the potential for arguments.



## SUMMARY OF GORAP

- God’s Existence – this is a simple discussion about how we can know that there is a Creator of this universe.
- God’s Oneness – again we give some simple reasoned points that we can show how we can understand that there is only One Creator, One God, as opposed to for example many gods. And importantly we can understand that the Creator is unique and different from the Creation.
- Revelation And Prophethood – again we show and try to give good reasons and examples for believing that the Quran is from God – from Allah – and Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger.

If we can establish these things and get agreement on them, then the person we’re talking to is going to be moving very, very close to accepting Islam – inshaAllah!

## IMPORTANT ADVICE

One of the important practical aspects of actually using the GO-RAP approach, it is that you use it as a map, rather than a rigid structure. Remember, this is the foundation for your dawah – so the GORAP is like your skeleton that you will develop with the flesh, muscles etc. later on, but you need to get your foundations correct first.

Understand how it all works, understand the concepts and steps rather than memorising the words merely like a script.

Make it your own and apply your own personality and knowledge to it. Don’t worry if you don’t get it all in one session; take your time! Learn it properly. Practice! Practice! Practice! Start by talking to yourself In the mirror, and then you know practice with your family and your friends.



## TOPIC 10: BEFORE WE GO-RAP

Before we GO-RAP, there are two key aspects that we need to discuss that will help us have fruitful dawah conversations inshallah.

### 1. INITIATION

Initiation is what you do to move a normal conversation into a dawah conversation (i.e. a GO-RAP conversation). This is important because the key to an effective dawah conversation is to take control of it so that you can present Islam.

Any conversation has the potential to be a dawah conversation. A dawah conversation can come from either one of two paths: 1) either you initiate the conversation or 2) you redirect a conversation.

Examples:

- **Initiate a dawah conversation** by simply asking a non-Muslim a question: “excuse me David, a quick question – do you believe in God?” or “Sarah – what do you think is the purpose of life?”
- **Direct the conversation to a GORAP one:** David asks: “Why do you Muslims pray?” Instead of answering this question and every question that may follow it, bring the question back to its foundations.

### Three Steps to Initiation

1. **Character:** Remember back to “The Caller” - our character and manners, being kind, considerate, smile, shake hands, thank them for the question, use their name and so on.
2. **Concept:** Bring them back to the foundations. To do this, we may have to say something like: *“In order for you to really understand the answer, I need to go over some of the basic principles of Islam.”*
3. **Agreement:** agree to have this conversation: *“Do you have a few moments where I could do that?”* This is important because if they say no or they are in a hurry or “I just want an answer to my question”, you’ll need to get them to appreciate the importance of understanding these foundational principles... Maybe you’ll only be able to give them a leaflet if they don’t have time because it’s going to require some of their time to hear what you have to say, so we need to get agreement from them to have this conversation.



### **DIFFERENT INITIATION SCENARIOS**

You may find yourself in different scenarios and situations that require you to think a little bit more carefully about how you initiate the conversation. This may require you to know your surroundings, understand cultural sensitivities, and have some context about those you are talking to so you are not putting them off. You may need to use your interpersonal skills to defuse a potentially volatile situation!

#### **Different Initiation Scenarios: YES OR NO!**

You may face a scenario where someone demands a yes or no answer. For instance, *“Is Islam against homosexuality – yes or no!”*

#### **DISCUSSION: *How would you deal with this scenario?***

In this case, we know the simple answer, but it does also depend on the culture and the person you are talking to. The way in which you respond may need to be tactful and considerate. In some countries, they may want you to give a direct answer, whereas in other countries, giving a direct answer may cause offence if it is not backed up with further explanation.

One way to help diffuse such difficult encounters is perhaps to ask them to provide more information about why they need to know this specifically; this will help you to understand more about them. Many times, in dawah conversations, you need to learn to be a good listener before you get to have a good dawah conversation.

#### **Different Initiation Scenarios: CRAZY QUESTIONS**

You may face a crazy question! For example, *“I heard you Muslims want to kill our babies!”*

#### **DISCUSSION: *How would you deal with this scenario?***

In a situation like that it might just be better to say “no, that’s not true, Islam doesn’t teach that” and again you can find out what lead them to say such a thing and ask such a question.

The aim in the end is still the same – to bring the conversation back to having a fruitful conversation about Islam and the basic teachings about Islam. You just need to apply some basic people skills and common sense.



## 2. THE PREMISE OF A GO-RAP CONVERSATION

The premise of a GO-RAP conversation is very important as you can keep going back to it when there are some disagreements in the discussion. All we are trying to do here is get an agreement with the person we are talking with that the best way to make sense of the world around is by using common sense and reason.

If we don't use common sense and reason, what do we use in order to determine whether something is true or not? Is it based on our feelings? Do we rely on our dreams or our experiences? Do we look at what our ancestors said about it: "Oh this is true because my grandfather told me it was." or "I had this amazing spiritual feeling, so I know it's true". Do we expect to see a sign or a miracle?

The problem with all of these methods of making decisions is that these are very subjective. Everyone can all claim to have the same feeling. Some may say, "It's true because I accepted Jesus and my life changed". To this you could reply, "so you're saying that if something changes your life it must be true? Islam changed my life! So, it must be true!"

### COMMON SENSE AGREEMENT

#### DISCUSSION: *Why use common sense?*

It is something that is universal and common! It's something we can all agree on, it's what people agree is the best thing to use to make decisions in their everyday lives and also by and large, it's objective, not subjective.

Simple analogy: what would you do if a man wearing nothing but a pair of red underpants came knocking on your door saying that he'd come to read the electricity meter? What you would do is not so important here as compared to what process you would use and what faculties you would employ to come to a decision about this man and his claim. Would you believe him without thinking and just let him into your house?

Would you just 'have faith?' Or 'a feeling'? Or would you think about the situation, ask some questions and apply reason? I'm pretty sure it would be the latter. Even if you told him to "Get lost you weirdo!", you'd use reason and common sense to make sense of the man in red underpants, just as we do for most things that happen in our lives.

This is our premise and that's what we call 'Common Sense Agreement' – to have an agreement with a non-Muslim, that in our discussion, we will apply common sense and our faculties of reason. We will be rational human beings



## TOPIC 11: G – GOD’S EXISTENCE

The purpose is to show the non-Muslim that there is a God, a creator, using a simple and clear argument. How we get to this point is entirely up to you – whether it is subtle or direct. So, how DO you show this? What argument could we use? Well there are a number of simple arguments available.

**DISCUSSION:** *How would you articulate an argument that God exists?*

### A SIMPLE DESIGN ARGUMENT

Let’s take a mobile phone as an example. A mobile phone is a good practical example to use because most of us have one and you can show this to the non-Muslim as you’re talking to them.

Here is the argument: *“Your mobile phone - what is it made of? It’s composed of a few basic elements – plastic, glass, silicon for the chip, and some precious metals. Plastic comes from oil and glass and silicon come from sand. So basically, what you are holding in your hand is oil and sand. Now, what if I told you that I was walking along in the desert of Arabia (where there’s lots of oil and sand) and picked up a mobile phone which I just found lying there. What if I said this was a product of billions of years of random events? So, the wind blew, the sun shone, the rain fell, the lightning struck, the oil bubbled, and after millions and millions of years, the mobile phone formed itself...and naturally I pick it up, push the call button and call my mum! Is there a chance that this mobile phone could have randomly formed itself through these natural processes? Using our common sense, none of us would ever come to this conclusion!*

Once we’ve made this point, get them to think about the universe: *“If we would not accept this for a mobile phone, would we accept such an explanation for our universe and the life within it? After all, what are our options? That this vast universe all came about by a series of random events? Could it just have come from nothing? Perhaps the man in the red underpants spontaneously appeared!*

*But ask yourself – do we ever see something coming from nothing? Could it have created itself? Surely that would need a starting point to begin with also. And if this is the case, then why not*



*apply these to everything else in life? Do you behave as if things just appeared out of nowhere and things happen just like that or do you believe that everything has a cause?*

*Common sense tells us that someone designed the phone using these components, so common sense would also tell us the same thing with the universe, with all its laws and systems – which are much more complex by the way than a mobile phone. It also points to an even greater intelligence to design and create the universe. The existence of design is a signpost to a designer. The complexity and the perfection of the design indicates something about the intelligence and capacity of the designer.”*

### **ORDER IN THE UNIVERSE**

In addition to this, we can also show how there is evidence of order in the universe, and that these laws that govern the universe are so finely tuned, that life could not exist without this degree of fine tuning. We probably wouldn't have life, let alone be able to thrive and develop as human beings!

- Our Earth rotates on its axis once every 24 hours. Imagine the earth was spinning really, really slowly, in a day was 30 or 40 years long. If this happened, one part would be exposed to sunlight and the other in darkness. So, the earth's surface would be both super-heated and super-cooled and it's very unlikely you would have life existing at all.
- Our planet is in the 'Habitable Zone' (or the Goldilocks Zone) - if we were fractionally (in cosmological terms) closer to the sun or further away, it would be too hot or too cold.
- If the composition of gases in our atmosphere was not exactly the right blend of oxygen, carbon dioxide and nitrogen, or if there was no ozone to filter out the harmful effects of the sun's radiation.
- When we look at the 'Big Bang Theory' that explains the origins of the universe, are our rational minds really willing to accept that it caused such order? Since when do explosions form intricate and balanced systems and complex life forms? Does chaos give rise to order? If I threw a grenade into a scrapyard, would I come out with a fully functional car?

All of these things have the right balance and give us the optimal conditions for life to exist. Without them, we'd probably not have life! Are we seriously saying all this fine tuning is by chance and coincidence? Again, the order in the universe indicates the intelligence of the creator!

### **AGREEMENT**

Once we've given these arguments, like we did in the initiation stage, we want to get an agreement from the non-Muslim to see whether or not they agree with what we've said so far – is it true or not? Does it make sense or not? So, ask them something like this: “does that make sense to you?” “Do you agree with what I've said so far?” If they don't agree and have some contentions, then it's easier to deal with them at this stage, rather than get to the end of the GO-RAP and have to go back!





### TOPIC 13: O – GOD’S ONENESS

The purpose here is to show why there can only be One God, One Designer, One Creator of the universe, and how it must be the case that this Creator is not like the Creation. We are beginning to deal with some important attributes concerning the nature of who God actually is.

Again, how you transition from God’s existence to God’s oneness is up to you, so long as you get to this point (i.e. *“So David, now we’ve agreed there is a creator for this universe, let’s discuss who or what this Creator is.”*)

**DISCUSSION:** *How would you articulate that God is One?*



### THE NATURE OF THE CREATOR

Based on our conclusions, we can deduce that the nature of the Creator must be different from the universe. In other words: “the Creator and creation are not the same!” Why? Go back to our original argument: by looking at the ordering of the universe, we can simply conclude that it needs a creator. The reason is because the universe could not have come from nothing. That makes no sense at all. You can’t get something from nothing let alone something as complex as the universe.

### THE UNIVERSE CREATED ITSELF?

The universe also clearly could not have created itself. There’s nothing to suggest that anything in the universe or the whole universe collectively could have that ability to organise and create itself. Back to the mobile phone example, no rational person would conclude that the mobile phone organised itself into a fully functioning mechanism.

### WHO CREATED THE CREATOR?

If the Creator of the Universe was like the universe, then its nature would also be the same; that would mean it would also have a need for a designer, an organiser and a systemiser. This on its own is fine from the point of view of logic the problem comes when we keep asking the question. “So, what then created this complex being that created the complex universe? It must be something even more powerful and complex.” But then we can ask the same question about that, and then the next and the next. You could then ask this question again and again. You’d keep needing a creator to create a creator to create a creator – ad infinitum forever. There’s a problem with this, as it would never allow us to explain how we have the universe here and now.

**REFLECTION:** *Imagine that I want to lift a table, but it’s too heavy for me to lift alone! So, I ask my friend to help me, he says: “yes sure, but I’m only going to help you if someone else helps me” and then that person also makes the same condition. “Then I’m only going to help you if someone else helps me. So, imagine if this went on and on and everyone is saying: “I will only help if somebody else helps”. Will the table ever be lifted?*

This example shows the problem about when it comes to the creator of the universe being created, and that also being created and that creator having a creator and so on and so forth – we cannot have creators creating creators forever because, just as the table will never be lifted, the creation will never be created. But it’s here, the universe exists – where does that leave us?



### **AN UNCREATED CREATOR**

A rationale conclusion would be - again, using our reasoning - that the Creator of the Universe was NOT created. Meaning, this Creator, what we would more commonly call God or Allah, is the uncaused Creator, who is different in nature from the creation.

If this is the case, we can also highlight how this would apply in all aspects – so for example, if the creation is needy, then the Creator should be self-sufficient. If the creation is temporary, the Creator should be eternal, and if the creation is confined by space and time, the Creator should be free of space and time. It's also not really conceivable that there could be more than one such being, because if there was more than one, each would limit the other and we would return to our same problem.

### **AGREEMENT**

Again, after giving this argument, we can again get an agreement to see whether or not they agree what we've said makes sense and is true to them. If they agree – then we can move on to the rest of the GORAP.



## TOPIC 15: THE LINK BETWEEN GO & RAP

At this point, we are shifting into another area. We've covered God – His Existence and Oneness – and now we are linking this belief and agreement to the **need** for Revelation and Prophethood.

The argument goes something like this:

*We can observe that the Creator of this universe has provided the means for every need that we have to be fulfilled. The needs could be physical, like the need for food and drink and air, or they can be emotional, like the need for love, companionship and security. Would it also not be reasonable to assume that, since God – this Creator – has provided a means to satisfy our every need, that He would also provide means to satisfy our existential and spiritual needs as well.*

*What do we mean by existential needs? Well these are the “big” questions like:*

- What is the purpose of our existence as human beings?*
- Why is there suffering in the world?*
- If there is a Creator, why does this Creator let bad things happen?*
- Why are we here and what's it all for?*
- Where are we going?*
- Is there life after death?*

*These spiritual questions are connected to God. Since one has understood that there must be a Creator, then we naturally want to know more about this being.*

- Will He help us?*
- If so how?*
- Is there some way to express gratitude and thanks for the great gifts and blessings that have been bestowed upon us?*
- How can we express that in an appropriate way?*

*This is what we call “worship” and it is a powerful and strong impulse in all humans.*

### **ONLY IF GOD TELLS US**

Using and introducing the example of *why there is suffering* (often called The Problem of Evil), can be very powerful. This is because it's a very common question that people have, especially in the West. A few points to mention:

1. Suffering is not something that negates the existence of a creator. This is because we have already come to the rational conclusion that God exists.
2. The question is actually more emotional than rational. In fact, all they can really ask is “*why does God allow suffering and evil to exist?*”
3. The only way we can really know the answer to this question is if God tells us. It's the same with our purpose in life. The only way to be sure is if the Creator of life tells us!
4. From the spiritual perspective, what we know about God through reason is very limited. Our intellect can only take us so far – what we need from here is for God to direct us and fill the gaps.



### MAKING THE LINK

The link we're making at this point is the **NEED** for us to have God explain certain things to us. There is a **NEED** for some form of communication from God to:

- tell us what He wants from us
- what our purpose in life is
- to tell us about life after death
- what is going to happen to us when we die

Now only that, but also:

- to announce His presence to mankind
- to explain His nature
- how to have a relationship with Him
- what would that relationship look like?
- what is worship?

Once we've made this link, and shown the strength of this need, then we can move to establish that Revelation – the Quran – is from God and also Prophethood – Prophet Muhammad ﷺ – is the Prophet of God.

Remember: our focus is, **giving people compelling reasons as to why Islam is the truth**. First, we need to articulate this link, and then we can move on to Revelation and Prophethood.



## TOPIC 17: R – REVELATION

### TRANSITIONING TO REVELATION

The objective of the R section is to give reasons as to why a particular revelation – the Quran – is from God. To transition to this topic, we can use a very simple analogy: *Every time we buy an electrical gadget or a device – like a mobile phone for example - what do we usually get with it in the box? An instruction manual. This manual is there to show us how to use the device properly, the do's and don'ts, all the warnings and recommendations, etc. God has sent revelation as our instruction manual – how we should behave, the do's and don'ts, warnings and recommendations of life and how to live it. We believe the Quran is that manual for life.*

Now we're in a position to argue its case. There are a number of arguments for why the Quran is from God, many of them are found in the Quran itself

**DISCUSSION:** *How would you argue that the Quran is Revelation from God?*



### ARGUMENT 1: PRESERVATION

Allah says: **“It is certainly We Who have revealed the Reminder [the Quran], and it is certainly We Who will preserve it.” [15:9]** You could pick up a copy of the Quran anywhere in the world, and compare them with manuscripts dating to within thirty years after the death of the Prophet Mohammed ﷺ and you would find the text to be the same (apart from the style of writing and certain marks placed to aid pronunciation).

Not only is it preserved in written form, but more importantly it is also preserved orally, with millions of people memorising the text worldwide. Even the fact that so many people speaking so many languages have been able to memorise it in its entirety is also an indication of its divine origin.

### ARGUMENT 2: INIMITABILITY OF THE QURAN

Allah says: **“And if you all are in doubt about what I have revealed to My servant, bring a single chapter like it, and call your witnesses besides God if you are truthful. [2:23]** The Quran challenged the Arabs, who were masters of poetry and linguistic skill, to produce even one chapter like it. The shortest chapter of the Quran is a mere three verses (Surah al-Kawthar). Many embraced Islam just from hearing the Quran being recited, and they were dumbfounded and unable to meet this challenge despite their linguistic skills.

### ARGUMENT 3: CLEAR MESSAGE OF WHO GOD IS

What the Quran teaches about the Creator matches what can be understood rationally by everybody everywhere - that is to say, that there is One Creator that is unlike the creation. There are lots of verses in the Quran that talk about this, such as:

- The uniqueness of God [112:1]
- He created all things [39:62]
- Everything depends on Him [35:15]
- He alone is worthy of worship [20:14]

If you don't have these to hand, then Surah Ikhlas is a simple one to go by, **“Say: He is God, the One and Alone, God the one whom everything needs and who Himself needs nothing, He is not born, nor does He beget, and there is nothing that can be compared to Him.” [112]** You can show this to non-Muslims that after our rational discussion on who or what this Creator should be, then the Quran matches this concept exactly!

#### ARGUMENT 4: UNIVERSAL MESSAGE OF THE QURAN

Not only is the belief in God one that matches our rational mind, but we can also talk about the message of the Quran being a universal one. It is not limited to some particular tribe or group of people - It is for everybody, regardless of their race or status.

The laws and guidance given in the Quran are universal and something we can all apply, as well as being in line with what we'd expect in order to have a good life, such as:

- The need for justice [16:90]
- Honouring your parents [17:23]
- Being good to your neighbours [4:36]
- Saving lives [5:32]
- Don't be prideful [17:37]
- Don't cheat people [17:35]
- Don't steal
- Don't bribe [17:35]
- Don't commit adultery [17:32]

#### ARGUMENT 5: FALSIFICATION TEST

The Quran itself gives a sort of falsification test; a good test to apply to any book that claims to be from the Creator. Allah says: **“Do they not then consider the Quran carefully? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein contradictions in abundance”** (4:82)

#### ARGUMENT 6: ACCURACIES IN THE QURAN

What links well with the falsification test is that, not only that it does not contain any contradictions, but in fact, it seems to be making statements about history, theology, philosophy, law and the natural world that challenges a normal human explanation.

##### Historical Accuracies

- The accurate title used for the ruler of Egypt during the time of Yusuf and Musa: during the time of Yusuf عليه السلام, the ruler of Egypt is referred to as a King, but at the time of Musa عليه السلام, he is referred to as Pharaoh (to learn more about this, download or order our publication 'The Eternal Challenge'. Go to [iera.org/shop](http://iera.org/shop).)
- Other accuracies include the name of Haman that has been discovered in historical records, and the preservation of Pharaoh's body.

##### Multi-Layered Nature

When the Quran talks about the natural world, it speaks of it in a way that would appeal and make sense to readers during that time, but it also makes sense to us today.

- The description of the origins of the universe: **“Do the disbelievers not realize that the heavens and earth were ‘once’ one mass then We split them apart? (21:30)**. For the 21st century man, this verse allows for our current understanding of how the universe came into being – what we refer to as the big bang (i.e. the universe started out as a singularity that expanded.)
- The Quran calls our attention to how we humans were created from humble origins, **“Then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot (alaqah).” (23:14)**. The Quran uses the word





*alaqah*, which can mean a clinging substance, a leech or a worm, and a blood clot, or blood in a general sense. Yes, the ancient Greek physicians and ancient Hebrews predating the Quran also described the embryo as a clinging substance and a blood clot, but interestingly the word *alaqah* also refers to a worm or a leech. And this is what the embryo actually looks like at around days 22-25 of its development.

#### **UNDERSTANDING “SCIENTIFIC MIRACLES” IN THE QURAN**

It is impossible to claim scientific miracles, due to the fact that science does not lead to absolutes and that the verses of the Quran (in many cases) have multiple interpretations. The Quran is not meant to be a book of science, but it is a book of signs. Whilst we live in times where science is popular, it is in no way a benchmark to test the Quran. Science is constantly changing its view on things based on new data. The Quran does not talk about the natural world from a scientific perspective per say, but it’s a reflective perspective. It asks us to think deeply and contemplate that these are all signs that point to the power and wisdom of the Creator – this is the reason that we could use such arguments.

Think about how you could use any of these arguments for the Quran and how you would articulate them in your own words during the GO-RAP conversation. To learn more arguments for Revelation, download or order our publication ‘The Eternal Challenge’. Go to [iera.org/shop](http://iera.org/shop).

#### **AGREEMENT**

Again, do not forget to get an agreement from the non-Muslim, to see whether or not they have understood or agreed with what you have said so far is true.



## TOPIC 19: P – PROPHETHOOD

The last stage for GO-RAP is Prophethood. The objective here is to show the non-Muslim how the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is truly a messenger of Allah and that he was a man chosen and sent by God. The easy way to do this is, if you have proven the Quran is true, the Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is also true, because the Quran says: “Say, [O Muhammad], “O mankind, indeed I am the Messenger of Allah to you all.” [7:158]. This works in the opposite way too, meaning that we could GO-RAP or GO-PAR because, once you establish one, you automatically establish the other.

**DISCUSSION:** *How would you argue that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is a Prophet of God?*



### LIAR, DELUDED OR TRUTHFUL?

One way to examine the claim to Prophethood is by using a process of elimination. This is a method that can be applied to anyone making a claim about anything and it essentially can be reduced to three fundamental choices:

- That the person making the claim is a liar.
- Or they are telling the truth.
- Or they think they are telling the truth but they are deluded or mad.

### LIAR

To claim that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ lied has no merit. You can show that he was known for having an amazing character, even before claiming prophethood. You can refer to the time period that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was alive in, where corruption was widespread, yet he would not engage with the evils of that society. Instead, he would look after the orphans and elderly and would help improve the community. As a result, the people honoured him ﷺ with the title: “The Truthful and the Trustworthy”. Not only that, but even after his prophethood, he was well known for his truthfulness, even by his enemies!

An example of this is the incident of Abu Sufyan, who was a non-Muslim at the time and a staunch enemy of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and his meeting with Heraclius, the Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire. Heraclius started asking him different questions about the Prophet ﷺ: **“What is his family status amongst you?” “Are his followers increasing or decreasing?” And then he asks him “Have you ever accused him of telling lies before his claim (to be a Prophet)?” Abu Sufyan said “No” and Abu Sufyan said when he was narrating this incident, “By Allah! Had I not been afraid of my companions labelling me a liar, I would not have spoken the truth about the Prophet.” Heraclius says near the end of the narration, “I asked, whether he was ever accused of telling lies before he said what he said, and your reply was in the negative. So, I wondered how a person who does not tell a lie about others could ever tell a lie about Allah.” (Bukhari)**

We could also rationally argue that, if we think about people who lie, they do so to either avoid some pain or for some sort of benefit and gain. But the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ didn't avoid pain - he was persecuted, boycotted and exiled, starved of food and stoned by children. Nor did he gain any sort of benefit - he didn't live a lavish lifestyle, ate simple meals, used to patch his own clothes and mend his own shoes. At one point, the pagan Arabs offered him riches, women and power, if he'd just stopped spreading his message, but he rejected this outright. When he died, all he had in his possession was his white riding mule, his shield, and a piece of land which he left to charity.



### DELUDED?

Deluded is a nice way of saying someone is mad or they have mental problems. By analysing the teachings of Islam that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ brought, how is it possible that a man could come with a whole system for life, including dietary laws, marriage laws, and economical system, family life, criminal law, hygiene, ritual etiquettes – a complete system covering every aspect of life? Where did he get it from? To this day, Islam continues to massively improve and positively affect people's lives – both on a practical and spiritual level.

Prophecies are another powerful way to show how a man that foretold the future could not do so unless God - who knows all things - told him! For instance, a famous prophecy, is **“that you will see the barefooted, unclothed bedouins competing in the construction of tall buildings”** We are seeing this prophecy right in front of our eyes as the Arabs across the Middle East (i.e. the Burj Khalifa in Dubai and the Kingdom Tower currently being built in Saudi Arabia). If he was deluded, how is it possible for a deluded man to make such accurate statements about the future?

Finally, if we look at the life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, he had many experiences that, if he were deluded or a liar, he could or would have used them as a proof to support his lies or delusion. One example of this is when his son, Ibrahim, passed away on the same day, there was a solar eclipse. Many of the locals thought that God made the eclipse happen because of the death of the Prophet's ﷺ son. Now, if the Prophet ﷺ was deluded or a liar he would have used such an opportunity to reinforce his claim. However, he didn't; he said: “The sun and the moon do not eclipse because of the death of someone from the people but they are (two) signs amongst the signs of God. When you see them, stand up and pray.”

### TRUTHFUL

If he wasn't a liar and he wasn't deluded, what's the only possible conclusion? That is he was speaking the truth! He was a messenger of God. This is how we might conclude the Prophethood section. Do not forget to get an agreement!



## TOPIC 21: SUMMARY AND CONTENTIONS

Alhamdulillah, we've finished the GO-RAP.

Let's summarise: A systematic approach to giving dawah. A GO-RAP conversation where, if a person asks you any question about Islam, we are able to take it back to the foundations and give them compelling reasons why Islam is the truth.

The different stages:

- Initiation stage – redirected the conversation by telling them we need to go over some basic concepts.
- The Premise (Common Sense Agreement) – agree that our conversation will be based upon on common sense, so that we maintain a level of objectivity.
- God's Existence – give compelling reasons why God exists.
- God's Oneness – give compelling reasons why God is One and not like the creation.
- Link to Revelation and Prophethood – show them that our limited minds can only take us so far as to what God wants from us, our purpose, and the “big” questions in life. We need revelation.
- Revelation – give compelling reasons why the Quran is from God
- Prophethood – give compelling reasons why the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is a man chosen and sent by God. That's it.



**DISCUSSION:** *How would you deal with the following contentions on God's Existence and Oneness?*

- There is no physical evidence
- Who created God?
- Evolution
- The Problem of Evil
- Jesus is God
- Jesus is the son of God



**DISCUSSION:** *How would you deal with the following contentions on Revelation and Prophethood?*

- What about Revelation And Prophethood? They may say something like:
- Muhammad ﷺ copied the Quran from different sources including the bible.
- Why doesn't God show Himself or send an angel?
- I don't follow organised religion
- It was inspired by the devil
- science is a matter of interpretation and you're connecting the Quranic verses to natural phenomena is not tenable.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DAWAH TRAINING COURSE NOTES [22-25]

SHAHADAH  
DEVELOPING & SUPPORTING  
CALL TO ACTION



## TOPIC 22: SHAHADAH

If we've gone through the GORAP and we've had an agreement from the non-Muslim in each of these sections, we're really left with one more stage – the Shahadah; or rather, the invitation to accept Islam.

### SUMMARISE GO-RAP

Before you finish, summarise the GO-RAP with them. Go over the points that we've covered briefly.

### SUMMARISE ISLAM

Once you've done that, the next step is to summarise Islam. Show them that Islam is not something that is extremely overcomplicated or difficult! It's easy, but more importantly, it's a life that is pleasing to God because it is how God wants us to live our lives. Mention the five pillars:

- To accept there is only One God worthy of worship, without partners or rivals, and that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the final messenger of God. Explain that, in order to worship God, we should follow the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as his path is the path of God.
- This guidance tells us to pray five times a day
- Give in charity to those less fortunate.
- Fast in the month of Ramadan.
- Perform the pilgrimage (or Hajj) to Makkah

We can also explain that Islam teaches us to have good character and good qualities, such as speak the truth and not lie, keeping our promises, fulfilling our trusts, always be just, even against your own family or even yourself, respect your parents and to be kind to them, especially in old age, be good to one's neighbour, and encourage what is good and discourage what is wrong. These are all essential characteristics of the true believer.

### MAKE THE INVITATION

If they've understood and agreed what everything you've told them, make the invitation. Invite them to join Islam. It is so important to do this - many people have shown an interest and believed in Islam, but no one has ever invited them to be Muslim! It can be as simple as *“David, after having this discussion on Islam, and now you know much more about this religion, I'd like to know your thoughts. Does it make sense to you? Does it make more sense than what you currently believe in? If it does, then I would sincerely ask you to think about it and I invite you to accept Islam as your religion and way of life”* Remember, whether they do or not accept, is not in your hands. Guidance is in the hands of Allah.



### **IF THEY DO NOT ACCEPT**

If they are willing to accept Islam, then get ready to take their shahadah. If they do not accept, don't think your dawah ends there. Give them space and time. Inform them of your local dawah organisation or masjid if they have any follow-up questions. Give them your contact information. We also have a specific course on New Muslim Mentorship, so be sure to enrol on this to learn how to effectively support new Muslims.

### **IF THEY DO ACCEPT**

Anyone accepting Islam should also understand what the shahadah entails and that they should recognise the truthfulness of this statement of faith. Does he or she truly understand what it means and entails? By saying the shahadah, what they are doing is:

- Entering into a covenant with Allah: A commitment to worship Him alone, and not worship anyone or anything else but Him.
- It means Taking the Prophet ﷺ as our role-model: Our example of guidance in terms of worshipping Allah and living a life pleasing to Him.
- Proclaiming (publically) that he has now joined the fold of Muslims, accepting all of the rights and responsibilities that this implies.

It is vital that the shahadah is an informed decision! Do not try and manipulate people into taking the shahadah or tricking them into it! It's their choice and they should know what they are getting themselves into. That said, our duty is not over!



## TOPIC 24: DEVELOPING & SUPPORTING NEW MUSLIMS

It is highly important that everyone involved in dawah understands the following –The dawah does not end at the shahadah! It is necessary to establish a support system for those that accept Islam. It's very sad to see how active dawah is on both a national and international scale, with thousands of people coming to Islam every year; but, there is not an effective follow-up system or plan for new Muslims.

**ACTIVITY:** *After a lengthy discussion with David and after you invite him to accept Islam, David agrees and is ready to take the shahadah. Alhamdulillah - he is now a Muslim! Now it is time to think about your new Muslim plan for David. Put a plan in place to help David on his new journey as a Muslim. Also consider what type of advice you would give him*



### **NEW MUSLIM PLAN**

Once someone accepts Islam, the focus should shift onto that new Muslim. Support and mentorship for the new Muslim should begin. If you're out on the street giving dawah, for example, drop that and take care of the new Muslim.

We need to offer some initial advice – tell them to take it slow and steady. This is a journey, not a race. Like on any journey, we need to be well-prepared. We need to know that we will encounter hardships, difficulties, moments of ease and pleasure. But it's all worth it, because this journey is to Allah and to His Paradise. Also assure them that they will have the support and help off us on this journey.

Other ideas include: Connecting them with a mentor, to the masjid, stay in regular contacts with them and make du'a for them.



## DISCUSSION

*You take David to the local masjid, and introduce him to the local brothers and the imam. You even pair him up with a New Muslim mentor. David is still a new Muslim. He is still going through situations where he would need support at any odd time. Who should you make David's first point of contact?*

One of the most important things to do is connect the new Muslim to Allah – through Salah and Du'a. While it is important to connect a new Muslim to the masjid and other mentors, the most important focus is to connect them to Allah and build their spiritual relationship. Therefore, the first thing you focus on is the salah! Salah! Salah! Practically, everything else is secondary. The most important thing is to get the new Muslim to establish a relationship with their Creator, with their Lord. It is only through connecting with Allah will life's problems be dealt with. Salah also prevents evil and wrongdoing.

Use the P.R.A.Y. with E.A.S.E. methodology to teach the salah (discussed during the New Muslim Success Course)



## TOPIC 25: CALL TO ACTION

Allah tells us: **“Call to the way of your Lord...”** Allah is talking to us and telling us to make the call to Him and give to dawah. Imagine if this was our parents or our boss - how quickly would we do it? If you know something is true, then you should share it.

If we reflect over our Ummah today, we can sometimes be quite saddened or demotivated by our situation! But there is hope. The Prophet ﷺ spoke the truth: **“This matter (Islam) will reach where the night and day reach, and Allah will enter it into every home, even if they were made from mud or hair, by the might of those who are mighty, and the disgrace of those who are disgraced; with glory that Allah glorifies Islam, and disgrace that He will disgrace disbelief with.”** [Ahmad]

This is a guarantee from Allah. It’s going to happen - with or without us! The question is – will you be part of it or not?