

Da'wah Course DP206 at IIU

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Recommended books.

1. The History of the Qur'anic Text by Muhammad Mustafa Al-A'zami
U.K. Islamic Academy, P.O. Box 6645, Leicester LE5 5WT, U.K.
2. Studies in Hadith Methodology and Literature by Muhammad Mustafa Al-A'zami
Contact ISNA for Islamic Book Service address and contact information.
There are other books and CD by the same author, which I highly recommend.
3. Hadith Literature, Its Origin, Development and Features by Muhammad Zubayr Siddiqui
Islamic Text Society, 5 Green Street, Cambridge CB2 3JV, U.K.

Reading assignment.

1. Call to Islam by Amin Ahsan Islahi, pp 190-229
2. Handling People, Section D: Handling Disagreements and Conflicts.
3. Relevant articles at www.ilaam.net

Developing Islamic Personality.

A. Challenge to become Allah's helper, Qur'an 61:8-14, 2-3.

1. The enemies of Islam desire to blow out the light of Allah, which means they want to destroy Islam. Who are they in our time? We have discussed these groups in one of my very early lectures. I put them in six groups: (a) Secular Fundamentalists, (b) Zionist Fundamentalists, (c) Christian Fundamentalists, (d) Hindu Fundamentalists, (e) the Slaves that includes Russians and the Serbs, and (f) Some among those who call themselves "Muslim" such as, Qadiyanis, the Nation of Islam of Islam (Farrakhanis), Pervezis (rejecters of Hadith), some Sufi cults, some exclusivist extremists and many lost individuals. Very certainly the Bush government is in the hands of such enemies of Islam and the driving force behind them is Neo-Con Cabal.
2. Allah assures that He will complete this light however much the rejecters of Islam may hate it. It means that Islam will enter every house in the world.
3. Allah sent His Messenger with guidance and the Deen of truth so that this Deen may dominate over every other Deen in the world however much the idolaters may hate it. Here idolaters mean those who prefer other Deens or Adyan (capitalism, socialism, etc.) to Islam. A Deen is a way of life that provides guideline and regulates certain aspects of human life including political, economic, social, family and individual lives. Anyone who prefers any other Deen than Islam is eternally a loser (see verses 3:18 and 85).
4. It is noteworthy that Allah has planned to make Islam dominant in the world. However, Allah will not come to the earth to do it Himself.
5. Allah is enticing the believers to enter a business that will free them from the painful doom in the life hereafter. Here Allah is enticing the believers to take up the challenge.
6. The business is to believe in Allah and His Messenger and to strive in His path with their wealth and their persons (time, talent and life when necessary).
7. The profit of this business is forgiveness of sins and entry in the paradise where rivers flow underneath pure and comfortable mansions.
8. Entry into paradise is the supreme success.

9. People desire some quick results for this life, which Allah is promising to give as the success of worldly life. In the Qur'anic language, success of the world manifests in two way,
 - (a) victory in obtaining our goals for the sake of Allah, and (b) happiness and contentment with oneself and whatever one has or does not have; This happiness and contentment with oneself is a gift from Allah.
10. After giving assurances about Allah's own plan and promise of help and victory He is calling Muslims to become Allah's helpers.
11. He is giving the example of Jesus and His disciples, some among them became his helpers and were accepted as believers while others walked away and became rejecters.
12. Allah gave victory to those who became helpers of Jesus thereby becoming helpers of Allah. Allah is calling you and me to become His helper.
13. If you made a commitment, you have been accepted by Allah as a believer but if you turned away from this challenge you have become a hypocrite.
14. If you do not keep your commitment, you should know that Allah does not like those who commit to do something but do not do.

B. Striving for Allah, 22:78.

1. It is the commandment of Allah to strive for Allah as much as He has His right upon you. What are the limits of Allah's right upon you? Naturally, there are no limits on time, talent, wealth and even life, as all belongs to Allah. I interpret that we are in the service of Allah 60/60/24/7, every second, every minute, every hour, every day and every week.
2. Despite His unlimited right upon you, He has not put any hardship beyond your abilities, see the Qur'an 2:286.
3. You belong to the community of your father, Abraham; he was a Muslim as Allah has named you Muslim for the community of believers of old and the followers of Muhammad. There is no other name given but "Muslims". How unfortunate it is that the Muslim community has divided itself into sects and denominations, such as, Shi'ah-Muslim, Sunni-Muslim, Hanafi-Muslim, Ja'afari-Muslim, Shafe'i-Muslim, Salafi-Muslim, Maliki-Muslim, Hanbali-Muslim and so on. The worse happened, that is, Allah given name is dropped and people became Shi'ah, Sunni, Hanafi, Salafi and so on and each sect takes pride in its own tenets. Allah has condemned this sectarianism in Surah Ar-Rome, 30:32.
4. Your job as Muslims is to become witnesses against mankind and the Messenger is a witness against you. The Messenger delivered the message to you as a result you are a Muslim. There is a whole lot of humanity that is not in Islam, why? Because you have not done your job of delivering the message to them. On the Day of Judgment these people will be witnesses against you unless you have done your best to call them to Islam. After they receive the message and if they reject the call, you become witnesses against them. See my articles THE VISION, ONE FAMILY A MONTH and DA'WAH: A NECESSITY AND A DUTY on my website www.ilaam.net.
5. As a Muslim you must establish prescribed daily prayers (Salat), pay the wealth cleansing tax (Zakat) and hold fast to Allah Who is a blessed Patron and a blessed Helper.

C. Disgrace is the result of pick and choose, 2:85.

Allah asks a question: Do you believe a part of this book and reject other parts? Allah is not asking whether you give lip service to the Book or not but His question is, do you obey all commandments of this Book or not? If you ignore some of the commandments, you are disbelieving them or rejecting them.

Allah asks a follow up question: What is the reward of those who implement some of the commandments but reject others? They pick and choose.

Allah responds that the reward of such people is disgrace in the life of this world and there is a painful doom in the next life.

Look around, you will find that an overwhelming majority of Muslims are ignoring the commandments of Salat, Sawm, Zakat and moral teachings of Islam. Over 99.99% of the Muslims are ignoring the commandment of Da'wah, particularly to non-Muslims. Allah sees that ignoring His commandments means you are disbelieving them as commandments. If your boss orders you something to do and you ignore him and continue to ignore him day after day, would you be able to keep your job?

This verse explains the disgraceful position of the Muslim Ummah. The real problem is that Muslims have been detached from the Qur'an and Hadith by the ignorant religious leadership who have degrees and certificates from religious schools but have no knowledge. To hide their ignorance they keep the whole Ummah ignorant and this way they are successful in keeping their followers obedient and loyal. Many of these religious leaders have made the rule that masses should not ask them for evidence from the Qur'an and Hadith for their rulings. Some take an offense of asking questions and their orders to their followers is to listen and obey.

Da'wah Outreach Methods. Calling people to Islam through education.

1. Family members including children five and above: Weekend Qur'an study (30-45 minutes) and daily very brief (5-10 minutes) Hadith study. Suggested sources: Towards Understanding the Qur'an by Zafar Ishaq Ansari; In the Shade of the Qur'an by Syed Qutub; Translation and Commentary of the Qur'an by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (Saudi publication or Amana Publications); The Message of the Qur'an by Muhammad Asad; Tafsir Ibn Kathir, English translation, published by Ta-Ha Publications, U.K. It is best to select one as a base of study but refer to others for reference; in my view no single translation and commentary is adequate. I would not touch Noble Qur'an translated by Muhsin Khan and Taqiuddin Hilali with a ten-foot pole because this is among the worst translations done by Muslims.

For Hadith study, begin with various Forty Hadith collections, such as Nawawi, Qudsi and others. There are a few 100 Hadith collection and 200 Hadith collection. For larger collections, begin with Buloogh Al-Maram because he discusses authenticity of each Hadith and the reader learns something from brief discussions. Riadus-Saliheen by Nawawi has four or five different translations and all are equally bad but something is better than nothing. Riadus-Saliheen is limited in its scope because it does not include legal issues; however, this is a good source to study some aspects of Islam. Muwatta Imam Malik is a must for study; translation published by Islamic Text Society is good. For a comprehensive study of Hadith as a source of learning Islam, my favorite is Al-Mishkat Al-Masabih, commonly known as Mishkat. There are two complete translations, one by James Robson, which is a reasonably good rendering. The other is by Fazlul Karim under the title Al-Hadis published in four volumes from India and Pakistan. Fazlul Karim has edited the original, rearranged Ahadith and translated them with introduction to each chapter and section with added brief commentaries. It has some translation problems and very poor typesetting of English as well as Arabic parts; printed on newsprint and has very bad binding yet it is a good source of learning the Hadith. After studying Mishkat one may undertake the study of Bukhari translated by anyone but

Muhsin Khan. Translation of Muslim by Abdul Hameed Siddiqui is excellent. Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi and Nasai have been translated and published and should be available for reference.

2. Near Relatives and close Friends. A weekly or at least monthly gathering for the study of the Qur'an and Hadith combined with socialization should be helpful. Also encourage people to take up some outreach work for the delivery of the message of Islam to non-Muslims.
3. Program at the Islamic center or Masjid. Muslim community locally should get involved in get together to learn about Islam at the Islamic center. Sponsor at least a monthly program to include a guest speaker. A weekly Tafseer program at the center is very instructive.
4. Non-Muslims in the neighborhood. There must be a periodic Islam presentation program for the non-Muslims in the vicinity of the Islamic center. Such a program should be led by a learned person who is well versed in Islam, Christianity, the Qur'an, Hadith and the Bible. If this program is conducted well, you will find people entering Islam in droves. I know of one scholar who catalyzed the process of the entry of 10,000 people in ten years through his weekly lectures and discussions. Another one was giving 5-15 Shahadah every week.
5. Approaching Non-Muslims. There are many ways, such as, (a) knocking on the doors and handing over an invitation or an announcement, introducing yourself and handing over a brochure, (b) leaving one or two brochure in a plastic bag and hanging it by the door knob, (c) inviting one family a month to your home for snacks, dinner, tea or coffee and some friendly chat with light introduction to Islam.
6. Interaction with non-Muslim community in the city or town.
 - (a) Seeking invitation to speak at the Church, school, college, university, community organization meetings, etc.
 - (b) Inviting non-Muslims in groups to the Islamic center for a talk or a seminar.
 - (c) Arranging lunch for the local fire department staff members, police department or taking lunch to their place and serving them and handing over a few brochures.
 - (d) Ramadan invitation to observe and participate in our fast breaking, dinner and possibly Salat at-Taraweeh.
 - (e) Dinners for the media personnel, politicians and others in leadership positions.
 - (f) Lectures and seminars at colleges and universities.
 - (g) Talking to school students about Islam and Muslim life.
 - (h) One-Day Seminars for the executives in business and government. This will be pay for service meaning people who attend pay a fee for the seminar.
7. Brochure Distribution. Refer to the guidelines given in one of my lectures.
 - (a) On campuses
 - (b) In the street corners
 - (c) At the shopping centers
 - (d) At the county fairs
 - (e) At the trade seminars and conferences
 - (f) Wherever there is an opportunity.
8. Direct Mail. This is what the Prophet Muhammad used to invite heads of states but he did not send it by mail but by his couriers.
 - (a) Politicians that include administration, legislature, judiciary and bureaucrats.
 - (b) News media people to include management, editorial staff and reporters.
 - (c) Entertainment media people to include actors, actresses and people at all levels.
 - (d) Business executives in the big companies.
 - (e) Small and medium size business people.

- (f) Professionals, such as, lawyers, medical, professors, engineers, teachers and others.
 - (g) Middle class people particularly those living in exclusive neighborhoods in the cities and suburbs.
9. Establishing radio and TV stations. This can begin with renting time on radio and TV for one-half to one hour weekly. Expand it to twice and more often in a week and sell some commercials to raise funds and make appeal for funds to establish your own station.

All this work requires operation from a base of a Da'wah organization. You may establish your own organization or join an exclusive Da'wah organization like the Institute of Islamic Information & Education (visit www.iiie.net).

Handling People.

Read section D. Handling Disagreements and Conflicts in Da'wah work, the last section of the Handling People article.

Frequently Raised Questions.

1. Why was the Qur'an revealed in Arabic? Discuss rationally and in the light of the Qur'an verses 41:44, 14:4 and 54:17. Simply ask counter question, if not Arabic then which language would he choose and why? When revelation was given to an Arab Prophet should be in Chinese?
2. Why an Arab Prophet? Because God promised to make Abraham a great nation. He gave the chance to Bani Israel to prove themselves worthy of being a great nation for over 2,000 years but they failed. Naturally God gave a chance to the other branch of Abraham's progeny, that is, Bani Isma'il and they have proven themselves worthy of trust and becoming a great nation. Today Muslims are over one billion whereas Jews are under 15 million. Muslims are spread and rule over 50 countries whereas Jews cannot hold on to one strip of land without the help of the U.S. Muslims created a great civilization that gave reformation and renaissance to Europe.
3. Were Prophets really infallible? Yes, in the sense that they did not commit disobedience to the commandments of Allah. Also, they delivered the message of Allah to mankind and became role models as sinless people. However, they were not protected from errors of personal judgments. They did not lie nor did they deceive. See the Qur'an verse 3:161. Some of the errors of judgment of the Prophet Muhammad are recorded in the Qur'an with correction by Allah, see 80:1-10, 66:1 and 33:37.

On the other hand the Bible makes many false allegations against many prophets, such as, lying and cheating against Jacob (Gen 27:1-40), Idol worship against Aaron (Ex 42:1-6), incest against Lot (Gen 19:30-38), adultery against David (2 Sam 19:41), drinking against Noah (Gen 9:20-22) and much more.

4. Why Muslims have fallen so low? The Muslims have left true Islam and hanging on to cultural Islam. They have become ignorant of the Qur'an and Hadith, they do not live by the commandments of the Qur'an, which is like disregarding them as irrelevant. It is God's promise to disgrace them in this life the way He disgraced Bani Israel for the same crime. There is not a single "Islamic country" but they are Muslim majority countries.
5. Is Islam compatible with democracy? Different Muslims have different understanding. There are three points of view, (a) There is no compatibility, (b) complete compatibility, and (c) some compatibility. Group (c) contends that democracy means two things, democracy as an ideology and democracy as methodology. As an ideology democracy means sovereignty belongs to the people, which is not compatible with Islam because in Islam sovereignty belongs only to Allah. As a methodology democracy means

governance by the elected representatives, which is compatible with Islam. I agree with this view.

6. Is Islam compatible with capitalism? If capitalism means freedom of ownership of property by the people, free enterprise system, invention and incentives of profit making and accumulation of wealth, freedom of thought – Islam is compatible. However, in western capitalism greed is a virtue but in Islam greed is a vice. Islam demands Taqwa, God consciousness, that is, one's accountability to God and fear of punishment by the All-Seeing, the All-Knowing. Under western capitalism there is the fear of law but the enforcers of the law are buyable and they are neither all-seeing nor all-knowing. Our terminology would be that western capitalism is greed-capitalism and Islamic capitalism is taqwa-capitalism.
