

# **A Guide to Giving Da'wah To Non-Muslims**

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### About the Author

The author of this book, Zeinab Hassan Ashry, is a computer engineer, who spent 12 years in Islamic studies in Dar Al-Qura'n in Kuwait. She is a well-known figure in the field of da'wah (preaching Islam) in Kuwait for English speaking ladies, Muslims and non-Muslims; she spent decades of her life in this field. She has been dedicating most of her time for spreading awareness about Islam. She teaches courses, gives lectures, writes books, articles, and is actively involved in Dawah activities among non-Muslims in Kuwait.

The author provides for the readers authentic Islamic information based on the Noble Quran, sound traditions of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh), authentic Islamic books and references as well as the opinions of great respected Muslim scholars

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## 1. Introduction

I received an urgent phone call to meet with some body who was interested to get some information about Islam.

I was surprised to find out that it was not a lady as I expected but rather a whole family: father, mother, son and daughter. They have been in Kuwait for only two months.

The father was an engineer in the oil company where he had his first contact with Islam. He was so impressed by Islam that he has accepted it from all his heart within his first week in Kuwait. He felt he was a Muslim all his life but he was not aware of it.

He was working hard with his family to guide them; thanks to Allah his wife and children accepted Islam. He brought all of his family members to get more support and guidance. He encouraged them to ask questions and increase their knowledge about Islam.

He wanted to educate himself and his family about Islam in order to be able to make Da'wah in their community after returning to their country.

I was amazed how easily this family converted to Islam. They were just waiting for the first spark to ignite their faith in the True one God, Allah.

Few years ago, I read a similar amazing story of a French model who was very unhappy, and unsatisfied with her life although she had all what she can dream of. She decided to do some thing valuable in her life; she went to Afghanistan to help in the relief efforts for the refugees. There in Afghanistan, she discovered the true Islam. She converted to Islam, put the Hijab, quitted her work as a model, and dedicated the rest of her life for Islam.

These enlightening and inspiring stories are happening repeatedly all over the world. As millions of people entered Islam in the past, there are, at present, millions of people from all races, and all nationalities, who have discovered the truth of Islam and found the solace of their souls and comfort of their hearts in its teachings, in spite of the relentless propaganda against it.

These new Muslims come from a variety of backgrounds; they include simple people, intellectuals, scientists, priests, and artists, young and old, Christians and Jews, Hindus and Buddhists, as well as atheists.

Islam gives them what they were missing; it enlightened their hearts, and made their life meaningful. They found in its guidance answers to their questions and solutions to their problems.

They realized that by embracing Islam, they were actually

reverting to their original pure state in which Allah created them. For this reason, many of the new Muslims see that ‘reverting to Islam’ is actually a more appropriate term for them than ‘converting to Islam’.

Islam is the fastest growing religion in the U.S.A and the world according to leading American news agencies (ABC NEWS, CBS NEWS, CNN, US NEWS) and magazines (Angeles Times, YORK TIMES, Seattle Times, and TIMES MAGAZINE)<sup>1</sup>

This fast spread of Islam, in spite of the adverse conditions of the Muslims, is an evidence that Islam is a religion taken care of by Allah, the Almighty. Even with the misunderstanding and bias, Islam is gaining followers every day more than other religions.

There are millions of potential Muslims around the world sincerely searching for the truth but they have no access to it; they have no guidance, simply because Muslims are not doing enough.

I always ask myself: are not we the carriers of the Last and Final message? Is it not our duty to make the call of Islam reach everywhere in earth? Would Allah (swt) excuse us for not doing enough?

It is true that the Muslim Ummah can not, at present time, compete with developed nations in material progress.

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1 . See appendix I

However, Muslims have a lot to contribute for the welfare of humanity. They are the carriers of Allah’s Guidance. Upon their shoulders lies the responsibility of conveying the Truth of Islam, the message of all the prophets of Allah, to all peoples wherever they are. They are entrusted with the task of rescuing humankind from the evil consequences of the disbelief and bringing them to the light of the true faith of monotheism.

In fact, what Muslim Ummah can contribute for the welfare of humanity is much more important than food and water.

Currently, there are many people, particularly in the developed societies, thirsty for the guidance of Allah. There are millions of people, who are unhappy with their modern and unfulfilling material life. Modern civilization failed to give them the spiritual satisfaction they need. These people are in need for sincere Muslims who are capable of bringing them to the Truth of Islam; to a balanced and happy life.

Let us not underestimate the power of Islam to win people’s hearts; it is tremendous and beyond our expectation. It is amazing how Islam brings hearts together; one only needs to visit any Islamic Da’wah center and see people who have come to Islam from all religions, cultures, colors and races in harmony and brotherhood; it reminds Muslims with the holy verse:

“If you had spent all that is in the earth you could not have attuned their hearts, but Allah has attuned them “Qur’an <sup>(8-63)</sup>

If Muslims intensify their efforts to portray the true image of Islam and expose its beautiful human nature to mankind, a mass conversion to Islam from among all races would surely happen.

Many millions of people from all over the world are expected to embrace Islam in the future; it happened in the past, and it is happening now, and will certainly happen in the future in a wider scale as a fulfillment of Allah's unfailing promise of victory to Muslim Ummah:

“When there comes the help of Allah and the victory. And you see people entering the religion of Allah in companies. Then celebrate the praise of your Lord, and ask His forgiveness; surely He is oft-returning. Qur'an (110 – 1:3)

## 2. What is Da'wah?

The literal meaning of “Da'wah” in Arabic is to invite or call to something. When it is used in combination with Islam it means to invite mankind to submit to Allah willingly, meaning to worship Him alone, follow His Straight Path, and keep away from all sorts of disbeliefs and evil. Allah (swt) says:

“Invite to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching,, (Qur'an (16:125))

This is the call of Islam: the message, all the Prophets and Messengers of Allah preached the same message to their peoples. Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) says,

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ فَمِنْهُمْ  
مَنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكذِبِينَ ﴿١٦-٣٦﴾

“Certainly, We have raised among every nation a Messenger who declared, ‘Serve Allah and shun false objects of worship.’ Thus were some guided by Allah, while ruin was justified on others. Travel over the earth and see what befell those who rejected their Messengers.” Qur'an (16 - 36)

The ultimate aim of the Da'wah is the total obedience to Allah, sincerely from one's heart, in his inward and outward, in his private as well as public life.

## **Dawah must be based on Compassion**

Successful Da'wah must stem from sincere compassion, kindness, and the love of all goodness to people both in this life and the Hereafter. The Dai'ah<sup>2</sup> main concern is to bring people to the light of the truth, save them from the disbelief and its evil consequences, and to free them from all forms of slavery of the life of this world.

This task was beautifully summarized by the Companion Rib'ea Ibn A'amer when the commander of Persian army asked him: "What has brought you from your land? If it is hunger go back and we will send to you food and clothes." Rib'ea proudly told him,

"Allah has sent us, with His Message to mankind, so that He releases whoever He desires from the worship of people to the worship of the Lord of people, from the narrowness of the life of this world to the boundless grace of the Hereafter, and from the injustice of man-made religions to the justice of Islam."

## **How to Deliver Da'wah**

The Dai'ah's aim and focus should be insuring that Da'wah is delivered to people with wisdom and in good manners. He/she should make sure that Allah's Message reaches people in clear, proper, and convincing ways so that they are targeted according to their level of understanding, background and culture.

## **Results are in Allah's Hand**

The Dai'ah should not be frustrated if he gets no results in return to his efforts, for the outcome of his/her Da'wah is in

2 . Dai'ah is the person who gives Daawah.

Allah's Hand alone and is decreed according to His perfect wisdom and surrounding knowledge.

The Dai'ah should realize that he has no control whatsoever over people's hearts and minds. People's souls are fully under the control of Allah; and He knows who is qualified for His guidance. Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala says to His Messenger,

"You can not guide whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills" Qur'an (28:56)

The Noble Qur'an confirms in many verses that the duty of the Dai'ah is only to preach Allah's Message in clear terms and in the best possible manners. This means that he/she should support his Da'wah with logical proofs and clear evidences; and do his best to remove any type of misunderstandings or obstacles that may prevent people from accepting his call.

"And obey Allah and obey the Messenger and be cautious; but if you turn away, then know that the Messenger's duty is only to convey the message in a clear way" Qur'an (5:92).

"your duty is only to convey (the message) and on Us is the reckoning." Qur'an (13:40)

When the Dai'ah is fully aware of these facts, he/she would continue his Da'wah steadily regardless of the response of people. Getting no response from people does not mean the Da'wah is fruitless or ineffective. The change is always difficult; people usually take time to accept new ideas and need more time to make decisions to change themselves.

The successful Dai'ah should not be incapacitated by the negative response of people so that he/she gives up his

Da'wah and abandons his duty. The Dai'ah should not worry about such obstacles because this Da'wah is taken care of by Allah (swt). He (swt) promised to make its path easy and let it go in spite of the obstacles. As we see, although Muslims are doing almost no effort to spread Islam, Islam is the fastest growing religion in world.

“And We will make your way smooth to a state of ease. Therefore do remind, surely reminding does profit. He who fears will mind. And the most unfortunate one will avoid it” Qur'an (87- 8:11)

Allah (swt) would guide through sincere Da'wah those who are qualified for His mercy: those who have good hearts and are sincerely searching for the truth. And He will turn away from it those who chose to divert from His guidance and opposed His way and thus disqualified themselves for His mercy.

### **No compulsion in Religion**

Da'wah is not to allure people or put pressure on them to convert to Islam. The Dai'ah must be aware that his/her job is not to compel people to enter Islam exploiting their needs, weakness, circumstances, or poverty, as it is commonly practiced by the Christian missionaries. Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala said:

“There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the right path has become distinct from the wrong path.” Qur'an (2:255).

He/She is only responsible to make the Message reach them in clear and appropriate manners but not responsible of forcing them into accepting his call, against their will or inclinations.

“Say: “Obey Allah and obey the Messenger but if you turn away know that he (the Messenger) is only responsible for the duty placed on him (conveying the Message) and you for that placed on you (accepting that). And if you obey him, you shall be rightly guided.” Qur'an (24- 54:55)

Moreover, one has to put in the back of his mind that he/she is not a guardian over people, as Qur'an says:

- “If then they turn away, we have not sent you as a guard over them, and your duty is only to convey (the message).” Qur'an (42:48).
- “So remind them - you are only one who reminds. You are not a dictator over them.” Qur'an (88 - 21:22)

The Dai'ah should respect people's freedom of thought, expression, and belief. His aim is to help them take the right decision and make the proper choice. His ultimate goal is to enable them to recognize the truth and accept it, and recognize the falsehood and reject it, without exercising any pressure over them.

He should do his best to present the truth to them in attractive and convincing manners. He should explain to them the benefits they gain from embracing Islam and the positive changes it will bring to their life.

The Dai'ah should remove the misconceptions about Islam and stress its great principles such as: tolerance, equality of mankind, justice, opposition to all types of exploitations in all their forms, freedom of worship, freedom of speech, and freedom of expression. Islam works to emancipate people from all types of worldly slavery. Islam helps people live a decent, peaceful and happy life. Islamic societies have the

lowest rates of social evils: crimes, child abuse, domestic abuse, incest, homosexuality, sexual diseases, premarital relationships, extramarital relationships, and the like.

### **Be Consistent in your Da'wah**

The successful Dai'ah should stick to his Da'wah under all circumstances and never abandon it. If people turn away from the Dai'ah, he/she should exercise more patience and keep carrying on his/her duties with confidence that that the seed he sow, will one day prosper.

It is natural, in the course of the Da'wah, to face hardships and obstacles; but this should not make the Da'iah think of him/herself as disqualified for Da'wah or magnify his/her mistakes or adopt more forceful methods for Da'wah.

The Da'iah has a good example in Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) who faced stubborn resistance from his people, although they were aware that he was truthful in his call. He was sad because of their rejection but it did not make him stop his Da'wah. He felt so sorry for them because they made themselves eligible to a punishment from Allah in this world; and if they die as unbelievers, they would suffer the endless torment of the Fire. In spite of his sadness for them, frustration and despair had no place in his life (pbuh); he always prayed for them: *“O my Lord guide my people for they do not know.”*

Sadness is a normal human emotional response to difficult life experiences, disappointments, or painful events. Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) was, in first place, a human being. It was natural for him to feel sad because of his people insistence on disbelief. In a number of verses in Qur'an, Allah (swt) consoles His Messenger for his sorrow over them:

- “So destroy not yourself in sorrow for them.”

Qur'an (35:8)

- “And grieve not over them.” Qur'an (16:127)

- “It may be that you are going to kill yourself with grief, that they do not become believers.” Qur'an (26:3)

- “Perhaps, you would kill yourself in grief, over their footsteps, because they believe not in this narration.” Qur'an (18:3)

These verses comforted the Prophet (pbuh); they do not instruct him to repress his natural feelings of sadness but rather advice him not to let their rejection trouble him by intensifying his sorrow for them.

The message included in these verses is: “Your duty is only to continue conveying the Message of Allah to them. Whoever follows the right path, then he does so only for the benefits of himself. And whoever rejects it and goes astray, then he strays at his own loss. So be cautious not to exhaust yourself in grief over those who turn away.”

This message is not only for the Prophet but applies also for every Da'iah. On the light of these verses and the exemplary life of the Prophet (pbuh), the Da'iah should always bring his feelings of sadness, resulted from people's negative responses, under control. In other words, the Da'iah must acquire the skills of coping successfully with these unpleasant feelings in healthy manners and positive attitudes. He should rise above people's rejection; and not to let their displeasing responses incapacitate him.

## **Coping with Undesirable Results**

### **1) Open Not Doors For Devil**

If Da'iah was not appreciated, he should not think of himself as inadequate or incompetent for Da'wah. Do not despair and sink into debilitating grief. This is one of the tricks of the devil to make you stop your Da'wah. Maybe one day, those who refuse to respond to your Da'wah, turn to be its strongest supporters by the Will of Allah; this is happening in the present, had happened in the past, and will certainly happen in the future.

### **2) No Place for Guilt**

There should be no place for guilt in the life of Da'iah so long as he is fulfilling his duties, simply because he is not responsible for the results. Allah (swt) says: "Not upon you (Muhammad) is their guidance, but Allah guides whom He wills." Qur'an (2 - 272). This also applies to all Muslim callers not only prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

### **3) Self Evaluation**

Of course the Da'iah must always monitor his own Da'wah. He/She should evaluate his or her performance from time to time and determine the actions that could be taken to improve his/her Da'wah methodologies. He/She needs to assess his/her own strengths and weaknesses in each area of Da'wah activities.

The Da'iah should learn lessons from his/her mistakes, analyze the causes that may have led to the undesirable results, and then take concrete actions to improve his/her skills. It will be a great help to share your experience of Da'wah with those working in the same field in a sincere manner.

### **4) Be Patient and Continue your Da'wah**

The Da'iah's attitudes must be balanced. Think positive, and do not allow your negative feelings of sadness or anger diminish your interest in Da'wah. Continue your Da'wah regardless of the adverse reactions you are facing; be careful not to lose interest because people are careless about your activities or respond in improper, impolite, or aggressive ways. Let not people's inappropriate reactions discourage you, disrupt your agenda, or influence your Da'wah in a negative way.

In other words, the Da'iah must acquire the skills to cope with these unpleasant feelings in healthy manners and positive attitudes. He/She needs to exercise more patience and keep carrying on his/her duties with confidence that that the seed he sow, will one day prosper.

### 3. The Significance of Giving Da'wah to Non-Muslims

Da'wah among non-Muslims occupies a very high rank in Islamic good deeds because it is the heritage of the prophets of Allah, the continuation of their mission, and the core of their message.

#### Islam is for all peoples, not for Muslims only

The Muslim Ummah is entrusted with the duties of Da'wah among non-Muslims because Islam is the final message of Allah to all mankind.

Every prophet before Islam was sent to his people only. And after he left this world, another prophet carried his mission after him. Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) was not only the last Prophet but was also sent to all peoples; there are no Prophets coming after him to continue preaching the message of Allah as it used to be with previous nations. Therefore, the task of delivering the final message of Allah to mankind after him (pbuh) has been laid on the Muslim nation.

#### Universality of Islam

This universal message of Islam is stressed in the Holy Qur'an in many verses:

i) Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) was sent as a mercy from Allah to all peoples at all times and ages. This mercy includes all mankind not only Muslims.

- "And We have not sent you but as a mercy to all the worlds." Qur'an (21:107)
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"Blessed is He Who sent down the criterion to His servant, that it may be an admonition to all the worlds" Qur'an (25:1)

- "And We have not sent you but to all mankind as a bearer of good news and as a warner, but most people do not know." Qur'an (34:28)

- "Say: "O mankind! surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, of Him Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth; there is no god but He; He gives life and causes death; therefore believe in Allah and His Messenger, the illiterate Prophet who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him so that you may be rightly guided" Qur'an (7:158)

ii) Qur'an is a reminder to all peoples: (38:87) - (68:52) - (81:27):

- "It (Qur'an ) is nothing but a reminder to all peoples." Qur'an (38:87)
- "And you do not ask them for a reward for this; it is no less than a Message to all creatures." (Yusuf 12:104)

iii) Qur'an is the only scripture that addresses all peoples saying : "O mankind....". Qur'an calls all mankind to worship Allah alone, and warns them against the evil consequences of rejecting His Message. Here are examples of these verses:

- "Say: "O mankind! surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you all (7:158)
- mankind! Worship your Guardian-Lord, Who created you and those who came before you, that you may learn righteousness; Qur'an (2-21)

- “Thus Allah makes His Signs clear to mankind! that they may learn righteousness.” Qur’an (2-187)
- “O mankind! fear your Lord, who created you from a single soul, and created of it its mate, and from them scattered (like seeds) countless men and women” Qur’an (4-1)
- “O mankind! Your rebellion is against your own souls” Qur’an (10-23)
- “O mankind! There has come to you indeed an admonition from your Lord and a healing for what is in the breasts and a guidance and a mercy for the believers.” Qur’an (10-57)
- “Say: O you mankind! if you are in doubt as to my religion, then (know that) I do not worship those whom you worship besides Allah but I do worship Allah, Who will take your souls (at death); and I am commanded that I should be of the believers. Qur’an (10-104)
- “Say: O you mankind! indeed there has come to you the truth from your Lord therefore whoever goes aright, he does so for the good of his own soul, and whoever goes astray, he does so to his own loss, and I am not (set) over you to arrange your affairs.” Qur’an (10-108)
- “O mankind! fear your Lord! For the convulsion of the Hour (of Judgment) will be a thing terrible!” Qur’an (22-1)

iv) Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) stressed the universality of his mission in many authentic traditions. He always emphasized that he was sent to all peoples: the Arabs and

non-Arabs, the black and white. He (pbuh) called for the equality of mankind for they all belong to the same parents. They all are created from the dust of the earth. There is no superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab or of a white over a black.

v) Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) spent his life calling all kinds of peoples, coming from different backgrounds, to Islam: the slaves and masters, kings and their subjects, the young and old, the Arabs and non-Arabs, the Christians and Jews, and the black and white, without any differentiation between them. The Sahabah<sup>3</sup> were from among the slaves and masters, the rich and poor, the Arabs and non-Arabs. Among the prominent Sahabah were: Salman (the Persian), Huhaib (the Roman), and Bilal (the Ethypian).

He (pbuh) invited the Arab kings in north and south of Arabia as well as kings, leaders, and rulers beyond Arabia to Islam. Deputations were sent to Negus, king of Ethiopia, Hercules, Roman Emperor, Chosroes, Emperor of Persia, and vicegerent of Egypt (Muqawqas). The message to all of them was one and the same; he (pbuh) declared that he was the last Messenger of Allah to all peoples; and invited them to accept Islam and then they will be safe in this life and the Next life.”

vi) After Prophet Mohammad (pbuh), the Sahabah followed his way and carried the message of Islam to all peoples; in a relatively short time the whole of Arabia accepted Islam; then the call of Islam spread to Spain in the west and India in the east irrespective of the barriers of race, nationality, languages, or geographical boundaries.

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3 . The contemporary companions of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh).

Thus as we see, the Muslims are the ambassadors of the last Prophet (pbuh); the carriers of the message of Tawhid<sup>4</sup> ; and the Muslim nation is a universal na

It is the responsibility of Muslims to make the message of Islam reach people in every place of the world, and from all backgrounds.

We Muslims, must put the strategies to share with non-Muslims the mercy of Islam and open their hearts and minds to see the beauty of the truth of Islam.

Muslims have indeed succeeded through the ages to convince millions of people to accept Islam as their way of life. And Islam is still capable of winning new followers from all walks of life.

#### 4. The Ruling of Da'wah

- i) Da'wah is the way of Prophet (pbuh) and his Sunnah
- ii) Da'wah is a collective Obligation on Muslims
- iii) Da'wah is the Most Honorable Deed

##### i) Da'wah is the way of Prophet (pbuh) and his Sunnah

###### The First Command

Since the very beginning of Islam, the Prophet (pbuh) received the first command from Allah (swt) to arise and give Da'wah to people :

“O you enveloped in garments. Arise and warn. And magnify your Lord. And purify your garments. And keep away from the idols. And do not slacken in seeking more good. And be patient for the sake of your Lord.” Qur'an (74-1:7)

The first task the Prophet (pbuh) was entrusted with, was to give warning to people and declare to them the greatness of Allah, their Lord. He was advised to prepare himself for this big task by keeping away from inwardly and outwardly impurities. And keep being patient and consistent in his work for the sake of Allah, his Lord. Since that time, the Prophet (pbuh) had started calling people to Islam and continued to do so all his life.

Furthermore, Allah (swt) addressed Prophet Mohammed saying:

“O Prophet, We have sent you as a witness, bearer of glad tidings, warner, caller to Allah, with His permission, and a light giving torch” Qur'an (33: 45).

4 . The Oneness of God.

Qur'an also stated that giving Da'wah is the way of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) and his true followers:

“Say: “This is my way: I do invite unto Allah, on *Baseerah* (clear proofs and evidences), I and whoever follows me; Glory to Allah! and never will I be of polytheists (Al-Mushrikin)” [12 - 108 ]

“Say”: is an important command from Allah to the Prophet (pbuh) in particular, and Muslims in general to declare to mankind that their way is inviting people unto the religion of Allah, the pure Tawheed, glorifying Allah, and keeping away from all forms of polytheism.

This holy verse summarizes the basics of Da'wah methodology. Da'wah should be given on *Baseerah*. *Baseerah* could be translated into “strong proofs and evidences that make the truth crystal clear as if one is seeing it by his own eyes”.

Thus, it is the way of the Prophet (pbuh) to use in Da'wah all types of evidences and proofs in order to make the truth clear to the recipient of Da'wah as if he is seeing it with his own eyes. To be on *Baseerah*, the caller should also be knowledgeable, wise, open-minded, respectful, well-mannered, modest, yet not compromising Islam.

## ii) Da'wah is a collective Obligation on Muslims<sup>5</sup>

As we made it clear before, since Islam is the final Divine Message to mankind, and Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) is the last Prophet, the Muslims as a nation and individuals are entrusted with the heavy task of preaching this Divine Message to all people.

5 . It means that if some people carry out this obligation then there is no blame on other Muslims, but if no one does it then all Muslims of the community are sinners.

Scholars of Islam say that Da'wah among non-Muslims is a collective obligation on the Muslim Ummah; meaning that there have to be trained and specialized groups and individuals in every community to deliver Da'wah to non-Muslims on behalf of all others. But if no one fulfills this duty then all Muslims of the community are sinners. Furthermore, it is the duty of all Muslims to provide all kinds of support to the Da'wah work.

Qur'an and Prophet's traditions guide Muslims, as a nation and individuals, to fulfill the duties of Da'wah and regard this as a vital part of the mission of Islam. Therefore, Da'wah must be delivered as a genuine part of Islam not as an accidental or secondary activity, according to circumstances, or as a reaction to missionaries activities in the Islamic world.

## a- Da'wah Obligation on Muslim Ummah

Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, says:

“Let there arise from among you a nation of people inviting to all that is good: enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong. Such are they who attain the true success.” Qur'an (3-104)

Muslim Ummah is addressed in this verse to practice Da'wah which is inviting mankind to the truth, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong. The verse is addressing the entire Muslim community to gather together and be a nation that invites to what is good, and forbids what is wrong. It is also a call for Muslim community to prepare a group of qualified people who are capable of carrying out the duties of Da'wah until they achieve

its ultimate goal of :

- 1) removing the worst evil, which is disbelieving in Allah and associating partners with Him,
- 2) and guiding to the best righteous deed, which is worshipping Allah alone.

If Muslim Ummah fulfills this the duties of Da'wah it would indeed be eligible for the position of the best nation as Allah (swt) mentions in Qur'an :

“You are the best nation that has ever been raised up for mankind. Enjoining what is right, Forbidding what is wrong and believing in Allah.”

Qur'an (3-110)

### **b- Da'wah Obligation on Muslim individuals**

Da'wah is an obligation upon every Muslim individual according to his/her ability, capacity, and knowledge. Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, says:

“Invite to the Way of your Lord [Islam] with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better” [16:125].

Allah's Order “*invite*” as stated in this verse is presented in a general form indicating that all Muslims, individually and collectively, are included in this obligation. The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, has said: “*Convey from me, even one verse.*” [Al-Bukhari]

Accordingly, it is an obligation on the Muslim Ummah to deliver Da'wah to non-Muslims individually and collectively. Muslims at all levels have to work hard to remove all types of obstacles from the way of Da'wah so that the Message of Islam could reach every place in the world.

### **iii) Da'wah is the Most Honorable Deed**

Da'wah is the most honorable deed in the sight of Allah. Qur'an states that inviting people to Allah is one of the noblest acts that entails a high reward:

“Who is better in speech than he who invites

(people) to Allah, works righteousness, and says I am of the Muslims (those who surrender to Allah)?” Qur'an (41:33).

Those who deliver Da'wah are promised to attain the true success both in this world the Hereafter, if they perfect their work hoping for nothing but the pleasure of Allah.

With regard to the reward, the Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said:

“Whoever guides [another] to a good deed will get a reward similar to the one who performs it.” (Muslim)

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, also said ,

“By Allah, if Allah were to guide one man through you it would be better for you than the best type of camels.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

In order for the Da'wah to succeed in propagating Islam it must be put in its rightful place as a primary element of our existence as a Muslim nation. Therefore, it is the duty on all Muslims to exert every possible effort to pave the way of Da'wah so that the message of Islam, the last message from Allah to Mankind could reach every place in the world in the best possible manners.

### **The present Situation**

A close look at the situations of the Islamic world, from the east to the west, one can see that Da'wah among non-Muslims has lost its place in the lives of Muslims. It is clear that Muslims are becoming increasingly unaware of their primary mission in this world, which is calling mankind to Allah's path.

At the present time, only very little effort, comparing to the

great resources of the Islamic world, is done for Da'wah among non-Muslims. Da'wah among non-Muslims has been moved from the top of their priorities to be a non-essential religious practice. Furthermore, many Muslims have become shy to present Islam to others.

### **The Causes:**

1. Many thinkers and historians see that the decline of Muslims did not begin with Western penetration to the Islamic world but it was rather the result of gradual degradation of their religious practices and spiritual values in addition to their failure to be up to date with new developments in science and technology. As the Algerian thinker Malek Bennabi mentioned, "Muslims became colonized because they had become "colonizable"".
2. These adverse situations were further complicated after the fall of Islamic Caliphate and western colonization that led to the division of Islamic world into conflicting countries and states. Thus, the Islamic world was plagued by loss of freedom, dependence on international power, internal disputes, conflict after conflict purposely created by outsiders. And Muslims were caught in a vicious cycle of internal division, conflict, and weakness.
3. The decline of Da'wah was the natural result of this turning down of the affairs of the Muslim Ummah.
4. As a result, new generations of Muslims lost the sense of their Islamic identity due to spread

of misunderstanding and misconceptions about Islam, in addition to poverty, ignorance, and over dependence on non-Muslims.

5. Islamic scholars and reformers concentrated their efforts on correcting these adverse conditions in the Islamic world. Reforming Muslims and turning them back to Islam, removing misconceptions about Islam, and defending Islam were set at the top of their goals and priorities.
6. Muslims became so absorbed in their own problems that they became indifferent to Da'wah among non-Muslims. That is why modest efforts were done for the sake of the spread of Da'wah among non-Muslims.

### **Conclusions**

1. Da'wah among non-Muslim should go in parallel with Da'wah among Muslims no matter how big is the gap between the true Islam and Muslims situations.
2. Obstacles in the way of Da'wah should not discourage us or turn us away from our main mission of calling mankind to the truth because the world is in bad need for this mission.
3. The obstacles of ignorance, prejudice and hostility

against Islam should not distance us from non-Muslims.

4. We should fill the gaps and build bridges between us and non-Muslims so that it becomes easy for us to reach them.
5. As we pointed before, we should be consistent in our Da'wah even if we did not get the results we expected for guidance comes from Allah : *"You can not guide whom you like but Allah guides whom He wishes"*
6. We must always remember that Da'wah is taken care of by Allah. He would guide through it those who are qualified for His mercy; those who have good hearts are sincerely searching for the truth.
7. And He will turn away from it those who do not deserve His mercy; those who chose to divert from His way; all of this is decreed according to His perfect wisdom and surrounding knowledge.
8. As we see Islam is the fastest growing religion in world although Muslims are doing almost no effort to spread it. Islam is gaining new followers every day who will one add to its revival.

## 5. Who Should Give Da'wah?

Muslims at all levels, as a nation, groups and organizations, as well as individuals must strive in conveying Allah's last message of guidance to mankind. To be fruitful, Da'wah should be performed at these three levels concurrently.

### 5.1. The Role of the Muslim Ummah

Muslim nation should not live for itself; it is a global nation that was raised as mercy for mankind. Unlike a secular state, the Islamic Ummah was established for a higher goal. It must promote faith and protect high virtues by enjoining mankind to what is good till good prevails and forbid them from what is wrong till evil is restricted. Allah (swt) says,

*"You have been the best Ummah (nation) ever presented to mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong and believing in Allah"*

Qur'an (3-110)

Muslim nation has been the best nation ever presented for all peoples because it is founded on faith, brotherhood, justice, and equality; it serves the interests of all mankind not just its own people; the tie amongst its people is brotherhood instead of citizenship; it is a nation with no boundaries; it is open for all people regardless of their race, color, or religion.

The Muslim Ummah is a Da'iah nation who works to attract people to Islam. Enjoining what is right, forbidding what

is wrong and believing in Allah is an essential goal of the universal nation of Islam. If this goal ceases to exist, the Muslim nation position will surely suffer serious setbacks.

In order to keep its position as a Da'iah nation, the Muslim Ummah should promote the principles of brotherhood and equality among all peoples by removing discrimination based on race, color, family, class, wealth, power, position, privileges, and ranks. The Muslim nation should be the best example in justice, equality, social fairness, counseling (shurah), and protection of people's rights to prove to the world the superiority of the Islamic system over man-made systems.

### **Examples from History**

In the past, the Muslim Ummah was a leading nation in justice and tolerance.

1) It is narrated that when Saa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas (may Allah be pleased with him) conquered Hims (a city of in Syria), he collected the Jiziah (taxes) from its people, who were Christians. Then he was ordered to leave the city to some place else. Before he left, he returned the taxes back to them saying: "We collected this money in return of your protection but now we are leaving so you take it back".

Upon seeing this they were amazed and said : "No one has ever treated us like this, neither the Romans nor the Persians" and they all entered Islam.

2) The caliph Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz (may Allah be pleased with him) was a bright example of the just ruler. During his Caliphate, poverty was eradicated, maybe for the first time in history, and Muslims could not find poor people to give them the Zakat.

At his time, so many non-Muslims entered Islam that some of his governors complained of the lack of Jizyah (tax on non-Muslims) revenue. He sent to them that Allah (swt) had sent Mohammad to mankind as a guide not a tax collector.

There are ample examples from history, but this is out of the scope of this book. I do not claim that Muslim nation was exemplary at all times; I know there were periods in history in which it deviated from its path. But what I want to stress is that Da'wah for Islam is vital for the well-being of the Muslim Ummah; if Da'wah declines, the entire Ummah declines. The opposite is also true; if the Ummah declines, the Da'wah will certainly decline.

At present, the Da'wah delivered by Muslim countries is confined in running Mosques, supervising Islamic studies, or directing and supporting various Da'wah activities in non-Muslim societies. However, Muslims efforts are not united and lacking coordination; furthermore their work in Da'wah is not adequate and focusing mainly on helping Muslims minorities.

If the Muslim Ummah works hard in the right direction, it can restore its position as a Da'iah nation in spite of the discouraging political realities of the Islamic world at present. This can only be achieved when the Muslim Ummah fully recognizes that its sole mission in this world is not only to achieve political power and economic advantages but basically to deliver Allah's Message to mankind, and be a model nation in justice, tolerance, humanitarian services, good dealings, respect of people's rights, ...est.

The first step for the Muslim Ummah is to return to the true Islam as the only source of power and dignity. Islam alone can end the state of powerlessness and desperation that has swept over the Islamic world, and it alone can resurrect the spirit of faith and struggle. The fact that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the entire world at present, in spite of the adverse conditions in the Islamic world, is one of the most reassuring signs that Muslim Ummah will succeed in restoring its position in the near future.

Muslims have to make sincere efforts to change their poor circumstances. Muslims should stop blaming the others for their weakness; their main attention should be centered on resolving the problems that led to their decline; to correct the poor political, economic, and social conditions that have afflicted all Islamic countries without exception. Elimination of oppression, dictatorship, autocracy, tyranny, illiteracy and poverty must be our top priorities. The Muslim Ummah must apply Islam by protecting the life, wealth, honor, mind, and religion of every individual belongs to it whether a Muslim or a non- Muslim

Muslims have to establish a system based on the principles and teachings of Islam; a system that convinces the world of the supreme nature of Islam by translating Islamic ideals, values, practices, rules and laws, into beautiful realities.

When the non-Muslims nations see Muslims excelling in civilizations, organization, and values, and capable of providing solutions for the problems of humanity, tolerant and peaceful, as a result of applying Islam, then, multitudes of people are expected to turn to Islam and embrace it.

### **Present Situation**

At present, none of Muslim countries is fulfilling its Da'wah duties toward non-Muslims at full scale, neither domestically nor globally. Secularization of most of the Islamic states, lack of freedom, tyranny regimes, repression, and oppression led to degradation of Islamic countries which is backwardly affecting the role of Islamic states in Da'wah.

If Muslims continue to fail to portray a practical model of the principles of the message of Islam, due to their problems and civilization backwardness, then, surely they themselves would become the main obstacle obstructing the propagation of Islam.

## Warning

As we see, the Ummah role in Da'wah is the most effective way to spread Islam. That is why, Allah (swt) warned this Ummah if it turns away from Allah's path and fails to promote Da'wah, Da'wah will not fail; Allah promised to bring a better Ummah to take its place and uphold the banner of Da'wah, in Surat Mohammed Allah (swt) says, "And if you turn away, He will exchange you for another people and they will not be the likes of you"

Qur'an (47-38)

## 5.2 The Role of Organizations and Institutes

The role of organizations and institutes comes next to the state. Allah (swt) says:

- "Let there arise from among you a group of people inviting to all that is good enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. Such are they who attain the true success." Qur'an (3-104)

- "The believers men and women are loyal and helpers to one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong." Qur'an (9:71)

- "It is not for all the Believers to go forth together, so why not a group go forth from amongst every party to seek deeper knowledge of their religion in order to warn their people when they return to them, so that they may beware." Qur'an (9:122)

These verses are promoting Muslims to work together and be helpers to one another, men and women, and form groups to carry out the tasks of Da'wah of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong and inviting people to the path of the true success.

Verse (9:122) indicates that it is a collective obligation (Fard Kifayah) on Muslim Ummah to train groups of specialized people to give Da'wah on behalf of all other Muslims.

In other words, there have to be qualified professional groups from among Muslims to bear the responsibilities of Da'wah, such as scholars, Imams, teachers, reformers, social workers, and all types of leaders. They should carry out their duties through institutes such as mosques, universities, Da'wah centers, organizations, .. etc.

Their responsibility, in addition to delivering Da'wah, includes teaching Da'wah techniques, conducting Da'wah research, preparing programs, making framework for Da'wah activities, removing misconceptions about Islam, defending Islam and Muslims interests, communicating with other Muslims and non-Muslim groups, dealing with media, ... etc.

They also should be references for workers in Da'wah. They should be always ready to give guidance, advises, consultation, and recommendations in Da'wah matters as the Holy Qur'an says,

“Ask people of knowledge and understanding if you do not know”.

The responsibilities of these organizations and institutes include:

- coordination and cooperation with other similar Muslim organizations,
- issuing books, magazines, pamphlets, news papers, .. etc.
- dealing with the press and media,
- arranging Da'wah programs and activities such as lectures, debates, visits, conferences, camps, .. etc.

- maintaining good relations with non-Muslims organizations and institutes,
- designing Da'wah programs to fit the realities and needs of specific environments.
- providing recommendations, suggestions, and counseling,
- and passing Fatwa (Islamic verdict) in Da'wah field,

The work of these groups and organizations is a key factor in the success of the Da'wah movement, because they provide the Muslim community with well trained, qualified, skillful Da'iahs who are capable of taking responsibility, can handle the challenges, and deliver the Da'wah effectively. Moreover, the groups and organizations help improving Da'wah practices and methodologies and make it more efficient by providing corrections, as well as good planning and organization.

### **The Problem of Disunity and Division**

Unfortunately, we see nowadays many Muslim groups and sects working in Da'wah plagued with the diseases of division, disagreements, and discord, in total contrast to the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah. This problem of disunity and division is the greatest challenge Muslims have to deal with today.

Muslims should be cautious of those Da'wah groups which claim to be the only representative of true Islam and attribute disbelief to the others. In many cases such groups neglect their duties in Da'wah and focus in opposing and eliminating others.

## Evil Consequences of Division

1. Shielding Allah's mercy and support.
2. Lose of power and strength.
3. Failure to achieve our goals.
4. Division substitutes love with hatred, trust with suspicion, and peace with conflict.
5. Division dissipates our energy in empty arguments instead of benefiting ourselves and others.
6. Division distracts people away from Da'wah.
7. Division leads to disgrace in the Hereafter.

## Hold Fast Together and Let Nothing Divide You

The first step in handling this serious problem is to be aware of its dangers, because division and disunity weaken our communities and open the doors to our enemies. Qur'an warned against division and disputes:

“And obey Allah and His Messenger; and fall not into disputes, lest you lose heart and your power depart from you; and be patient; surely Allah is with the patient.”  
Qur'an (8:46)

We should realize that working toward unity of the Muslim groups is a collective duty upon all of us. We need to focus our efforts to purify ourselves and eliminate from our communities all those problems that cause division and disunity. Muslim groups must work together to correct their faith, follow the Sunnah of the Prophet, cooperate on good purposes in all fields. Then as a result of this, Allah (swt) will unit their hearts. Qur'an says:

“If you had spent all that is in the earth you could not have attuned their hearts, but Allah has attuned them “ [8-63]

Here are some advises for those who working in Da'wah to keep in the back of their minds:

1. Stick firm to the way of Allah and let nothing divide you, no matter how little it might seem.
2. Unity is one of the great blessings of Allah.
3. Your unity must be your first priority.
4. Seek protection in your unity and work together under the spirit of one team.
5. Beware of those who want to divide you; do not give them a chance.
6. Your unity must be based on Islamic principles: faith, brotherhood, justice, and equality.
7. The purpose of your unity must be serving the interests of all people regardless of their color, race and it must not be achieving some casual benefits for only a group of people.

Efforts of Da'wah groups would not be fruitful unless they forget their differences, make Da'wah the center of their interests, cooperate with each other, and coordinate their work. They should not forget that they are working for the same aim and under the same banner. They must all hold fast together to the way of Allah, not for gaining followers of this group or that, or achieving worldly interests. Qur'an says,

“And hold fast, all of you together, to the rope of Allah and let nothing divide you.” Qur'an (3-103).

However, working under the spirit of one team does not mean not to have any kind of disagreements at all. The companions of the Prophet were in complete harmony with each other and were sincere brothers, but in spite of this, they had disagreements concerning different matters of the branches of faith.

The famous Muslim thinker of modern times, Rasheed Rida, laid a golden principle:

“We must cooperate in matters wherein we agree and excuse one another in those wherein we disagree.”

However, disagreements must be avoided, under all circumstances, if they are related to the fundamentals of the religion, work against the interests of Muslims, or may lead to disputes, conflict, and disunity among Muslims.

### **5.3. The Role of Individuals and Small groups:**

Personalized Da’wah from small groups and individuals can be very effective way of delivering the message of Islam if they are qualified, well trained, and skillful in the techniques of Da’wah.

This kind of Da’wah of is very important because individuals and small groups can easily connect with other individuals, neighboring families, co-workers, as well as members of their communities.

Most of the Da’wah activities at present are conducted by individuals and small groups.

#### **Evidences from Qur’an and Sunnah**

There are abundant evidences from both the Qur’an and Sunnah encouraging Muslim individuals, men and women, to give Da’wah according to their capacities.

1) Qur’an indicates that conducting Da’wah is important for maintaining our Islam and keeping ourselves away from Shirk. Allah says in Qur’an :

- “and invite to your Lord and be not of Al-Mushreekeen (those who ascribe partners to Allah)”

Qur’an (28-87)

- “And who is better, in speech, than one who invites people to Allah and does righteous deeds, and says “I am one of Muslims, those who submitted to God.” Qur’an (28-87)

2) Da’wah is the most significant Sunnah of prophet Mohammad (pbuh) and the way of his true followers after him. Allah (swt) says:

- “Say: “This my way: I do invite unto Allah, on clear proofs and evidence, I and whoever follows me; Glory to Allah! and never will I be of Al-Mushreekeen” Qur’an (12 – 108)

- “O Prophet, deliver that which has been sent down to you from your Lord. If you do not, you will not have delivered His message. God will protect you from men” Qur’an (5: 6).

3) Qur’an tells that Lukman advised his son to practice Da’wah saying: “Enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and be steadfast”

4) Every Muslim is requested to do his best to practice Da’wah to change what is wrong. It is reported that the prophet (pbuh) said:

“Whosoever sees some thing wrong let him change it by his hand (by actions), if he can not let him change it by his tongue (advice), if he can

not let him deny it by his heart (not to accept or ignore it but to keep waiting for the nearest chance to change it). This is the weakest rank of faith.”

Al-Bukhari

5) It is also reported that

the Prophet (pbuh) was asked “Who is the best one amongst people?” He said: “It is he who excels other people in reading the Qur’an , God-fearing, enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong, fearing Allah, and keeping good relationship with his relatives”. Ahmed

### **Methods of Personalized Da’wah**

Personal Da’wah can be delivered in various ways such as teaching classes, preaching, giving lectures, engaging in dialogues, discussions and debates, writing books and articles, ..., distributing pamphlets and Da’wah material, exchanging visits, ..., etc.

The Dai’ah can use appropriate Da’wah medium such as press, radio, television, and internet. Of course this requires constant education, preparation and training.

In addition, to guarantee the success of Da’wah, the Dai’ah should choose the most effective methods of Da’wah for the people whom he/she is targeting, according to circumstances.

### **The Key for the Success of Personalized Da'wah**

The key for the success of Da'wah by example is consistency in words and actions. Dai'ah must not contradict what he/she preaches.

1) Allah has severely condemned those who contradict what they preach:

“O you who believe why do you say that which you do not do (act according to it)? It is the most hateful in the sight of Allah that you say that which you do not do”

2) Allah says in Qur'an rebuking the Jews:

“Do you enjoin the good for mankind, while you, yourselves forget to practice it and you are reading the scripture; have you then no sense?

3) Al-Bukhari reported the prophet (pbuh) said,

“A man will be cast into the Hell; his punishment will be so severe that his intestines will rotate around him like a donkey rotating around the mill-stone. Then the people of the Fire will gather around him, and they will ask him exclaiming, “Did you not used to enjoin the right and forbid the wrong?” He will say: “I used to enjoin the right but not do it and I used to forbid the wrong and do it”.

### **Remark:**

However, the above evidences do not mean that the non-practicing Muslim is totally unqualified to practice Da'wah. He should practice Da'wah whenever there is a chance, and at the same time he should try to correct himself. Because giving Da'wah is the responsibility of everybody in the Muslim community.

### **Da'wah by Example**

Personalized Da'wah is not only practiced through the methods mentioned before, but also through the image the Dai'ah portrays about his/her beliefs, values, virtues, and convictions. By being a good example and through thoughtful interactions with non-Muslims, the Muslim can teach them a lot of things about Islam without speaking a word. He can also inspire them to seek out information about Islam.

Indeed, the personal example by word and action is the most powerful method for a successful Da'wah.

Indeed, every practicing Muslim, a man or a woman, is a Dai'ah by nature. His/her life should be a practical application of his/her faith. In fact, the Da'wah and faith nurture each other. As strong faith is vital for Da'wah, Da'wah is also essential for the survival of one's faith.

Through history, Da'wah by example was the most effective way of attracting people to Islam; people saw Muslims as promoters of justice, equality, peace, and tolerance for the benefits of all mankind.

## Practicing Da'wah by Example

1- The Dai'ah's life should be a practical invitation to people to see the beauty and virtues of Islam. So that when people deal with him/her they would feel the positive impact Islam makes on one's life. In fact, it is the duty of every Muslim, male or female, young or old, to be a good model of Islam among the people. In other words, when people deal with a Muslim person they find him/her helpful, kind, polite, caring, respectful, supportive, truthful, trustworthy, honest, responsible, reliable, and sincere.

2- Therefore, the successful Dai'ah should use his common sense to grow closer to people and influence them. He/she should be wise and pay attention to people's concerns, and make use of current events, situations, and occasions to introduce Islam to people in a casual, natural, and informal ways.

3- In order to be a good example, the caller needs to exercise a great deal of patience and self-control to keep himself close to people, tolerate their errors, and to keep his responses and reactions within the limits of Islam.

4- One should also be very careful not to give any impression of being better or superior to others, because this is against the nature, spirit and methodology of Da'wah; and it may turn people away from Islam.

## Problems of Personalized Da'wah

The personalized or person to person Da'wah plays the basic role in the success of propagating the message of Islam. The output of this kind of Da'wah depends to a large extent on the Dai'ah's education, qualifications, wisdom, skills,

patience and endurance, preparedness to respond whenever Da'wah opportunity comes, how much he/she is organized, how he/she sets his/her priorities, and how he/she deals with the challenges and the problems.

To guarantee the success and survival of Person to person Da'wah, there have to be some sort of supervision and guidance to keep the Dai'ah always determined, encouraged, devoted, and active. Because, as it is expected, problems and difficulties will arise; and they have to be handled in proper manners in order to achieve the desirable results. In fact, lack of supervision and management is one of the biggest challenges, this kind of Da'wah is facing.

Here are some observations that shed light on the nature of these problems and difficulties:

1- The unprofessional, Dai'ah who is practicing Islam, yet lacking adequate training as well as communication skills.

2- The outdated, conservative Dai'ah who is unaware of contemporary issues and modern life challenges, although he/she may have good religious education.

3- The un-practicing Dai'ah who contradicts what he/she preaches.

4- The impatient Dai'ah who thinks that his/her Da'wah is going slowly, and ineffective.

5- The so called modern Dai'ah who compromises Islam to fit into modern life style.

6- The disorganized Dai'ah who wastes his/her time and efforts in useless or unimportant activists.

7- The part-time Dai'ah whose commitment and response to Da'wah opportunities is inadequate.

8- Lack of financial resources.

9- Lack of support from spouse, family, friends, or Muslim communities in general.

10- Lack of suitable Da'wah material.

11- The unavailability of follow up programs to guide and moderate the Dai'ah's work.

## **6. Da'wah should be Delivered Gradually and in Phases**

Da'wah is not only the act of informing someone about Islam, but it is rather an a long and open process of interacting, monitoring, and changing.

The Dai'ah's focus should be insuring that Da'wah is delivered to people with wisdom and in good manners. He/she should target people according to their level of understanding, background and culture, to insure that Allah's Message reaches them in clear, proper, and convincing ways

In order to make it easy for people to comprehend and accept Da'wah, the Dai'ah should introduce Islam to them gradually and in a way that matches their abilities and personal responses.

Islamic concepts should be presented to people in stages and according to circumstances, so that they can easily understand them. Forceful Da'wah will turn people off. And hastening the results of Da'wah is the shortest way for failure.

The Dai'ah should first focus on the Shahadah, the core of what Islam is all about. The Prophet (pbuh) sent letters to the kings and princes of the neighboring countries inviting them to the Shahadah without any more details about Islam saying, "Accept Islam and you will be save".

### **The Model of the Prophet's Da'wah**

It is essential for Muslims to follow the supreme model of

the Prophet (pbuh); he (pbuh) stayed in Macca for thirteen years, calling people to the Oneness of Allah (swt).

### **1- Prophet's Da'wah was Gradual**

When he (pbuh) sent Muadh Ibn Jabal to Yemen he instructed him to teach people the pillars of Islam step by step, in the order of their importance and according to their response, otherwise they may refuse the whole matter. He (pbuh) said,

“Invite the people to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and I am Allah's messenger, and if they obey you to do so, then teach them that Allah has enjoined on them five prayers in every day and night, and if they obey you to do so, then teach them that Allah has made it obligatory for them to pay the Zakat from their property and it is to be taken from the wealthy among them and given to the poor.”

[Al-Bukhari].

### **2- The Prophet's Da'wah was in Stages**

We have in the Prophet (Peace be upon him) the best example. His Da'wah to Islam was gradual and went on in phases with unwavering will and determination till Islam was deeply rooted in Arabic and started to make its way into neighboring countries.

#### **First Phase (Secret Da'wah)**

At the beginning of his mission, the Prophet (Peace be upon him) called people to Islam individually and secretly focusing on the Shahada, faith, and heart purification.

After the first three years of Islam, a small community of sincere believers emerged as a result of these constant efforts. They had strong faith; detached themselves from the deceptive pleasures and desires of life. They were ready to do every thing possible for establishing and propagating the call of Islam.

#### **Second Phase (Open Da'wah)**

Allah (swt) commanded his prophet to conduct his Da'wah openly to the people of Mecca, particularly to those who are very close to him, his relatives and tribe. As a result, the early followers of Islam faced a wave of persecution. Some of them had to leave their homeland, Mecca, to Ethiopia. In spite of this Islam was growing stronger.

#### **Third Phase (Da'wah beyond Mecca)**

In this stage of Da'wah, Islam propagated outside Mecca to Madinah. Near the end of tenth year, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) made a treaty of alliance with people of Madinah. Muslims started their migration to Madinah. This migration was a turning point in Islamic history. A new Muslim society was established. Islam gained power and respect, and a new state based on Islamic principles emerged.

#### **Fourth Phase (Da'wah beyond Arabia)**

After the peace treaty of Al-Hudaibiyah, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) intensified his ceaseless efforts in propagating the Islamic Da'wah. He (pbuh) initiated some sort of correspondence with kings and princes of the neighboring countries to spread the message of Islam beyond Arabia. The following is a list of these letters:

1. Letter & deputation to Abyssinia (Ethiopia).
2. Letter to the ruler of Egypt, called Muqawqas.
3. Letter to Emperor of Persia.
4. Letter to Caesar, King of Rome.
5. Letter to Mundhir bin Sawa, Governor of Bahrain:
6. Letter to Harith bin Abi Shamir Al-Ghassani, King of Damascus.
7. Letter to the King of Oman, Jaifer, and his Brother ‘Abd Al-Jalandi.

### **Guidelines for Priorities of Da’wah**

The following is a suggested order of Da’wah priorities to introduce Islamic concepts to a non-Muslim:

1. The foundation of Da’wah should be Allah’s existence, oneness, and perfect attributes and names; stress that no one is similar or equal to even His likeness (swt).
2. Biography of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) and evidences of his truthfulness.
3. The miraculous nature of Qur’an and its agreement with scientific facts, and the unanswered challenge it has been making to mankind since it was revealed from Allah to produce a book similar to it.

4. The Hereafter: provide proofs that there must be resurrection and reckoning, otherwise the good and wicked will be made equal.
5. The uniqueness of the generation of the Sahabah.
6. Islamic virtues and manners.
7. The positive changes Islam can bring to our world.
8. The impact of Islam upon the world.
9. Islam and science.
10. Islamic arts and architectures.

### **Do’s and Don’t’s**

1. Prioritize your objectives according to importance and people’s responses.
2. Focus on the benefits Islam offers to non-Muslims both in this world and the Next.
3. Give people what they need and when they ask for.
4. Be brief, simple, and clear.
5. Concentrate on teaching the basics, and avoid long talks as well as details and differences of opinions.

6. Do not give issues like Hijab the highest priority of your Da'wah agenda.
7. Do not begin with talking about punishments in the grave, Day of Judgment, and torture of the Fire; delay them for a later time.
8. Avoid discussions of no interest to non-Muslims such as the detail of forms of minor or major shirk, Fiqh issues, or politics for they are often boring.
9. Avoid any reaction that could be interpreted as exercising pressure on the person to accept Islam.
10. Avoid using names and terms unfamiliar to non-Muslims for they create confusion.

## 7. The Successful Caller (Dai'ah)

Da'wah is a lifetime commitment. The Dai'ah cannot be successful in his Da'wah unless he/she lives it and it becomes his whole life. It requires from full dedication of all his/her being for Allah, guided by the example of the prophet (pbuh) as Qur'an said,

”Say: ‘My prayers, my acts of worship, my life, and death are all for Allah. There is no partner with Him..’”

Qur'an (6 : 162)

Briefly, the successful Dai'ah should be a just person (A'dl) which means to be dutiful toward Allah (swt), fair and honest with people. Here are further requirements in the Dai'ah in order to influence people and make a difference in their lives.

### Qualifications of the Successful Dai'ah

1. He should be knowledgeable, adequately trained, has good linguistics skills, and good speaking skills.
2. Patience, steadfastness, and endurance are basic requirements for the success of Da'wah.
3. Tolerance, moderation, forgiveness, and soft-heartedness are the most significant resources needed to win people's hearts.

4. He must be generous, kind, respectful, and good mannered.
5. He must be consistent in words and actions. Allah (swt) says, “O you who believe! why you say that which you do not? It is most hateful in the sight of Allah that you say that which you do not”. (61: 2-3)
6. He should constantly put his trust in Allah (swt) and turn to Him for support and guidance.
7. He must be skillful in communications and cooperation with other Muslims working in Da’wah.
8. He must be prepared for sacrificing time, money, and self-pride for Allah (swt).
9. He should be capable of opening communication channels with non-Muslims communities.
10. He should be aware of current problems, events, and important contemporary issues in his community as well as the world.

The above conditions may or may not all be in every Dai’ah. However, experience shows that some of these conditions are more critical than others when considering individual personalities. It is the overall impact and impression that is made, that is more important than the possession of one characteristic or the lack of it to make Da’wah successful.

## 8. Manners of Da’wah

### Do’s

1. Always look at your best for people are impressed by appearance more than any thing else.
2. Be simple, informal, and moderate.
3. Welcome people warmly and give them sincere respect.
4. Listen to them carefully and show your deep concern to what they say.
5. Be a big brother/sister. Affirm your willingness to help at any time.
6. Try to understand the background and culture of those you deal with.
7. Praise their good qualities and the good things in their way of life and culture.
8. Deal with people in respectful manners; tolerate their faults and shortcomings for every one of us has his own imperfections.
9. Address people according to the level of their understanding.
10. Exchange visits and gifts.
11. Give information in a simple convincing manner.
12. Be patient and return good for evil.

13. Face problems with more endurance.

### Don't's

1. Avoid giving Da'wah while your are sick, under stress, or not ready.
2. Be very careful not to contradict yourself.
3. Be always in time and do not break your promises for it creates mistrust.
4. Avoid defaming people's culture, religion, or way of life.
5. Avoid criticism; always find excuses for people.
6. Avoid giving the impression that you are all right and they are all wrong. Allah (swt) teaches us to argue with non-Muslims on basis of equality, *"Allah is our Lord and your Lord. Unto us our works and unto you your works"* (42-15)
7. Avoid inviting people to disorganized places or to unprofessional Dai'ahs for they may be turned off.
8. Do not be discouraged by problems and attacks on Islam, because the conflict between the truth and falsehood is part of human life.
9. Avoid wasting time in useless arguments; the aim of the Da'wah is not to win a score or an argument but rather to open the hearts of people to the truth.

10. Avoid provocative talks and attitudes.

11. Do not compare Islam to other religions to prove they are wrong, unless you are asked to clarify some points, because the aim of the Da'wah is not to win a score or an argument but rather to open the hearts of people to the truth.
12. Do not be discouraged if you get no results; people take time to respond; and after all guidance comes from Allah (swt), *"You can not guide whom you like but Allah guides whom He wishes"* (28 – 56)

## 9. Presenting Islam to Non-Muslims

Islam should be presented in a simple, clear, wise way. One should bear in mind the misconceptions and stereotypes associated with Islam; and work hard for removing them by his words and actions. The following features of Islam should be emphasized:

1. Islam is total submission to Allah (swt) willingly.
2. Allah is not the God of Muslims. The word “Allah” in Arabic means “The true one God”; it is used by Arabs, Muslims and non-Muslims alike.
3. Islam is not the religion of Arabs only, it is rather a universal religion. Muslims come from different races and ethnic backgrounds. Arabs form a minority among Muslims.
4. Islam is a major religion in the world; they are about one quarter of the world’s population; supply figures.
5. Islam is not a new religion; it was preached by all prophets of Allah.
6. Affirm the true meaning of Islam, security and safety for all people : *“The true Muslim is he from whose hand and tongue people are safe”*
7. Qur’an is Allah’s word, His last message of guidance to mankind.
8. All people are equal in Islam.
9. There is no compulsion in religion.
10. Islam is the religion of ease and tolerance; no soul is charged with more than it can bear.
11. Emphasize man’s personal responsibility for himself, and the inevitability of the Judgment Day. In Islam, no soul will be questioned about the misdeeds of another soul.
12. Islam is an integrated way of life that satisfies man’s both physical and spiritual needs.
13. Differentiate between pure Islamic teachings and the practices of Muslims which are very often mixed with traditions and customs rejected by Islam.
14. Advise people to turn to the pure sources of Islam, Qur’an and Sunnah, to obtain a good understanding of it.
15. Stress the human side of Islamic teachings (Qur’an and Sunnah).
16. Explain how the Islamic social and economic system offers solutions to problems of modern societies such as poverty, violence, homelessness, crimes, AIDS, women and children abuse, drug abuse and family disintegration. The crime rates in states that apply Islamic laws are the lowest in the world according to UN statistics.
17. Muslim communities in North America and Europe have the lowest incidents in teenagers problems, violence, crimes, drug abuse, child abuse and family disintegration.

18. Women are elevated in Islam and have many rights. Stress that many women from the west accepted Islam and are pleased with it as a way of life.
19. Islam is the religion of the future; it is the fastest growing religion in North America and around the world. Many people around the world accepted it in spite of the adverse conditions in the Islamic world.

### **Da'wah Approaches**

Here are some suggestions for good Da'wah approaches:

1. Mix with non-Muslims and take active part in the activities going in their communities.
2. Cooperate with organizations of humanitarian interests such as fighting drugs and crime, breast-feeding, helping patients, caring for the homeless, children, and orphans. Sharing in such humanitarian activities reflects the human face of Islam. The first Qur'an ic teachings revealed in Mecca enjoined people to feed the poor, emancipate slaves, and help the distressed and orphans.
3. Individual and small groups can conduct Da'wah in public places such as universities, schools, churches, and prisons.

4. On Islamic occasions, try to project a good image of Islam and Muslims: arrange cultural festivals, public lectures, bazaars, good planned presentations; distribute food for the homeless and treats for children.
5. Arrange cultural talks about history, traditions, customs, food, clothes, feasts, and marriages in different Islamic countries.
6. Invite professional people (Muslims and non-Muslims) to talk about contemporary issues important to the community.

## 10. Misconceptions about Islam and Stereotyping of Muslims

### 10.1 Present Situation

Muslims, particularly in the West, are stereotyped in a very negative way; and their religion has become the object of distortion and misrepresentation. Muslims have been associated with terrorism, suicidal attacks, mistreatment of women, .. etc. And Islam is linked with countless wrong notions and misconceptions. These wrong notions, misinformation, disinformation, and misconceptions are constantly stirred up against Islam, in the media and press, as well as books and academic studies. Islamophobia and prejudice against Muslims have been reported to be rising in the West since September, 11 attack. Muslim stereotyping did exist before however, it became more prominent and more negative after it.

This defaming propaganda is intensified and escalated day after day. The Noble Prophet of Islam (pbuh) and the Holy Qur'an have been under fierce attacks. A Danish newspaper published heinous caricatures picturing the Prophet as a terrorist. The noble Qur'an was desecrated in the USA and some other countries.

Furthermore, there have been many rigid regulations and extremist procedures enacted against Muslims in the US and European countries under the pretext of "war on

terror". Muslims are ill-treated, harassed, subjected to sophisticated checking and screening procedures, and looked upon as "suspects".

But in spite of this unabated campaign, the world is witnessing waves of new non-Muslims converting to Islam; since Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> attack, 30000 people embraced Islam, in the USA alone.

### 10.2 The Source of Misconceptions Linked to Islam<sup>6</sup>

These stereotypes and misconceptions against Islam are not new; they are the same old lies invented by the churches and Orientalists.

Orientalist scholars initiated a lot of myths, misconceptions, and misleading notions about Islam to facilitate their countries colonization of Muslim lands. They attacked not only Islam but also "the Arabs and Muslims" who were depicted as irrational, frightening, untrustworthy, anti-Western, and dishonest.

Unfortunately, these wrong notions shaped the Western minds and were accepted as unquestionable facts and absolute truth.

These myths of Orientalism were backed by the media propaganda that Westerns are superior, and Muslims and Arabs are inferior. Disrespect for Islam, Muslims and Arabs was and still is manifested in their policies, research, and attitudes.

At present, many of these myths and misconceptions have been re-cycled and stirred up against Islam. There have been massive and calculated aggressive attacks on the

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6 . Excerpted from: "Orientalism" book by Edward Said.

contemporary societies of the Arab and Muslims under such notions as their backwardness, lack of democracy, modernity, and enlightenment, as well as abuse of human rights, and abrogation of women's rights.

They still use the same old claims of the Oriental scholars, the same demeaning stereotypes, the same justifications for power and violence, that power is the only language the Arab and Muslims understand.

Arabs and Muslims have been told that you have failed, you have gone wrong, as says the modern Orientalists. Still today the West insists that it has a mission to enlighten, civilize, bring order and democracy, and that it uses force only as a last resort.

### 10.3 Muslims Responsibilities

One of the great challenges Muslims of today as states, and groups, and individuals are facing is how to deal with this ruthless propaganda and fierce campaigns against Islam and Muslims in effective and wise ways.

It is the duty of every Muslim to help remove these misconceptions and correct the wrong notions, and misreporting related to Islam; and to strive to portray the genuine beautiful image of Islam to the non-Muslims.

1- First we, Muslims, should not make this propaganda affect us in any way. It must not make us feel inferior or awkward because it is not based on the truth; it is based on the falsehood and falsehood is perish and the truth will always prevail as the Holy Qur'an teaches us, *"And say: Truth has come and falsehood has vanished away. Verily! falsehood is ever bound to vanish."* Qur'an (17: 81)

2- Muslims should be aware that weakness and submission to super powers will not stop their evil, it will rather encourage more corruption.

3- We should strive to maintain our Islamic identity particularly of our future generations. We need to make serious changes in our education system, restore the role of mosques, include the topic of this anti-Islam movement in schools curriculum, and Fridays Khutbah should be used to spread awareness and teach Muslims how to counter act this propaganda.

4- Islam is the source of our power; practicing it and sticking more to it is the solution. Negative Stereotyping of Muslims is based on fear of the steady growth of Islam; to counteract it and make it ineffective, we, simply, must work together to become better Muslims in every field of life: policy, economy, social affairs, justice, equality, .. etc.

5- Muslims can make these evil campaigns unsuccessful by uniting and holding fast together to the way of Allah. At present, political unity is not possible but Muslims still can unite and gather together on many other issues and matters presenting a model of true Islam.

6- Under all circumstances Muslims need to exercise more patience, endurance, and steadfastness, fortitude, in order to be able to face this hostility. Allah (swt) says in the Qur'an : *" ... and you will certainly hear from those who received the scripture, and from the idol worshipers, a lot of insults. If you steadfastly persevere, and guard against evil,- then that will be a determining factor in (the success of) all affairs"* (3 :186)

7- Muslims should work together to uncover the underlying purposes behind this on going hostility towards Islam. Stereotyping and fears are used to justify ill-treatment and discriminatory practices towards Muslims, allowing persecution and killing of thousands of Muslims all over the globe, as well as military intervention in Muslim countries.

History proves that negative stereotyping is one of the tools of the devil. It was used to justify concentration camps, tortures, and genocide by Hitler; and mass genocide of the Bosnian Muslims by the Serbs Christians. At Present, it seems to be the same case, negative stereotyping is going side by side with the genocide of hundreds of thousand of humans, including children, in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kashmir,

#### **Duties of Muslim states**

It is the duty of every Muslim state to establish ministries, offices, or bureaus for improving the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, dispelling these negative stereotyping of Muslims, and correcting wrong understanding of Islam. Their work should include

- 1- using the same weapon of propaganda and media, to counteract these campaigns because they are a major factor in shaping public opinions and people's attitudes,
- 2- monitoring foreign media, press, publications, movies, ... etc. and connecting with them or their countries embassies for corrections and/or presentation of Islamic points of views,
- 3- putting short term as well as long term plans for confronting this defaming propaganda,
- 4- supporting Muslim minorities by all possible means,

5- publishing books, magazines, and newsletters; producing films, TV shows, Radio programs as well as other material to refute the misconceptions of Islam.

6- cooperation with other Muslim states, organizations and groups working in the same field.

7- organization of conferences, seminars, forums, symposiums, and workshops to dialogue with non-Muslims to help dispel rumors, myths, stereotypes and negative propaganda,

8- inviting non-Muslim students, youth, as well as public figures such students, politicians, journalists, correspondents, academics, and writers whose work is related to shaping public opinions to live with Muslims for some time to see the reality of Islam.

#### **10.4 Da'wah and Stereotyping of Muslims**

Stereotyping Muslims have certainly influenced the outcome of Da'wah in a negative way because it reflects a superficial and negative image about Islam. Islamic Da'wah can not find its way to win non-Muslims' hearts at a large scale unless these negative stereotypes and the misconceptions about Islam and Muslims are corrected, and the true image of Islam is promoted.

Therefore, the aims of Da'wah should include correcting the popular untrue beliefs about Islam and dispelling the negative stereotypes using the language of facts and figures.

### **1- Education is the answer**

The fundamental key to combat the negative stereotypes and misconception is education. The success of this evil propaganda is mainly due to lack of knowledge. Majority of people do not realize that what they are told by media is not true; they do not recognize what they hear and see is as an assault against the religion and culture of other innocent people.

A recent survey conducted by CAIR, Council on American-Islamic Relations, indicated that bias against Muslims decreases when people have access to accurate information about Islam and relate to ordinary Muslims.

Therefore, the Dai'ah's main focus should be on the education of the non-Muslims about Islam. This could be done in many ways such as offering free introductory classes (specially designed to non-Muslims), distribute free Da'wah material; writing books, magazines, and newsletters, participating in TV shows, radio programs, conferences, seminars, and forums; using the internet resources such as websites, discussions groups, e-mail groups, and forums.

### **2- Removing the Misconceptions**

The Dai'ah should be educated and adequately trained to refute the misconceptions, myths, and wrong notions the media injects into the minds of people to stir up hatred against Islam.

The Dai'ah should invite non-Muslims to regular meetings, seminars, lectures, forums, conferences, or workshops where discussions on topics related to negative stereotypes and misconceptions can be opened. He/She must have the logic and knowledge to dialogue with non-Muslims to dispel stereotypes and negative propaganda; and to explain in simple and clear manner how they are untrue and unfair.

### **3 - Presenting Islamic point of view**

The Dai'ah should be qualified to present Islamic point of view in contrast to media biased practice in the West. The Dai'ah should stress the facts that

i- Islam is a universal religion; Muslims do not have a distinctive color, features, clothes, language, or culture. They come from all races and nationalities.

ii- In Islam, all people are created equal and the best of them is the most righteous before Allah (swt); hence they all have equal rights and deserve to be treated as equal without any sort of discrimination. No one has the right to judge people and label some of them as evil and others as good, inferior and superior, or ugly and beautiful, on basis of their color, race, culture, or religion.

iii- In Islam, demeaning innocent people by portraying them in an ugly image is a heinous lie, an insult, and an assault against their values, religion and culture.

iv- The Dai'ah should be cautious not to use same tactics of negative stereotyping and evil propaganda to avert the assaults of media. The Muslim should return good for evil.

### **4- Exposing the Double Standard**

The Dai'ah has to expose the double standard of the West; they call for equality of all peoples yet they do not portray them as equal. Their media injects their poisonous propaganda into the minds of people and keeps away from them important information in order to create a public opinion that supports their ill-treatment of others to achieve political goals.

The Dai'ah can support his/her point of views with examples from current events; he/she can contrast the leniency of

media with Western alliances to its stiff stance with Arabs and Muslims. He/She can supply figures and evidences to prove they were doing exactly what they claim they stand against

### **5- Establishing Strong Relations with Media**

Establishing strong relations with media is a very powerful tool in improving public perception of Islam and dispelling the stereotyping of Muslims. It requires constant monitoring of mass media, press, publications, movies, ... etc. and connecting with them for corrections and/or presentation of Islamic points of views.

However, only skillful and qualified people should deal with media; they should be alert and ready to act quickly in time whenever an incident against Islam takes place. One should be careful not to supply inaccurate information or defame people or stereotype them.

### **6- Connecting with Non-Muslims**

The reality is that the majority of non-Muslims have never known the true Islam. That's why this false propaganda continues and that's why it is believed.

The best way to dispel the negative stereotypes is face to face encounters with non-Muslims. Therefore, an outreach program for non-Muslims is an integral part of Da'wah. Emphasis should be put on young people and youth because they are the leaders of the future. Here are some suggestions:

1- Invite non-Muslim students and youth to share with Muslim youth activities such as sports, camps, workshop,

or public services and charitable projects.

2- Offer free trips for distinguished non-Muslim youth and young people to visit Muslim countries.

3- Invite non-Muslim students/youth to live with Muslim families for a period enough to know the Muslim daily life, say a month.

4- Non-Muslims, particularly public figures in the community, should be invited to local Muslim communities on regular basis. For example, a monthly open day meeting in local mosques, Islamic centers, or Muslim schools.

The Dai'ah also can take the opportunity of the Islamic occasions, such as holy month Ramadan and feasts, to share with the neighboring non-Muslims the celebration, and distribute treats and small gifts

5- Arrange 'door-to-door' visits to non-Muslims in the neighborhood. Arrange Da'wah visits to schools, churches, public libraries, prisons, and rehabilitation centers to present the true Islam.

6- Invite non-Muslims, working in media. Radio, TV, newspapers, and other jobs related to public opinions, to Da'wah centers, institutes, and mosques, so that that can see the reality of Islam.

7- Stress that the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in Europe and U.S.A, has witnessed the emergence of a large number of distinguished Muslim scientists, engineers, doctors, and scholars almost in every field of life who have great contributions to human civilization contrary to the distorted image of a Muslim on the media.

8- Stress that fact that Muslims unlike other minorities in Europe and U.S.A are highly educated. Prepare Da'wah

material which emphasis the achievements of Muslim great figures at present and the past; print fliers with their pictures and contributions to science and civilization.

### **7- Unfolding the underlying Reasons**

Media demeaning propaganda is so subtle that it is not easily recognized by people; people do not realize that what they read, hear or see is actually an attack against the religion and culture of other innocent people. That is why this propaganda continues and that is why it is believed by many people.

The Dai'ah's duty is to unfold the underlying purposes of negative stereotypes and points to its evil consequences. The Dai'ah can explain that mass media is indeed a very dangerous weapon if it is used to demean others. Evidences from history can be represented to support his/her views.

The negative stereotypes stem from the unjustified fears of the spread of Islam. They want to put obstacles to hinder the spread of Islam. False propaganda serves this cause. It is one of the weapons used against Muslims to cover-up their ill-treatment, hostility, discriminatory practices, killing and persecution of Muslims. It is used as a pretext for launching wars against Muslim countries, and occupying Muslims lands, which led to genocide of Muslims and slaughter of thousands of Muslims all over the globe.

The Dai'ah can provide examples from history of using negative stereotyping to justify killing, tortures, and genocide such as the case of Hitler in Germany; the Serbs

Christians in Bosnian. At Present, it is the same case, negative stereotyping is going side by side with the genocide of hundreds of thousand of Muslims, including children, in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kashmir.

## 11. Specialized Da'wah Institutions

To carry out the huge tasks of Da'wah at modern time, Muslims need to establish, all over the world, international faculties, colleges, academies, and institutes specialized in Da'wah among non-Muslims. Islamic universities should have departments for Da'wah among non-Muslims that offer programs for Bachelor, Master, and Ph.D. degrees based on the ethical and moral standards as stated in the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet (pbuh). The goals of these institutions include preparing professional and skillful Dai'ahs to work among non-Muslims, in addition to conducting research in this field of Da'wah.

The objectives of these programs are to provide the Dai'ahs with sufficient Islamic knowledge and training to present pure Islam as a comprehensive system and a way of life to non-Muslims, in convincing ways. Dai'ahs should be trained and specialized to work with non-Muslims from different backgrounds and cultures.

Short term training programs to keep the Dai'ahs up to date should also be available in summer vacations and long week ends.

The responsibilities of these institutions should include:

1- Ensuring continues development of Da'wah programs to meet up to date challenges the Muslims are facing.

2- Arranging international camps, conferences, and conventions where Muslim scholars, intellectuals and Da'wah activists from all over the world meet to share their experiences, find solutions to the challenges encountering Dai'ahs, and revise Da'wah plans and programs.

3- Establishing means of communication, cooperation, and coordination with similar Da'wah groups and associations in various countries of the world.

4- Strengthening the bond of brotherhood and coordination between Muslim organizations all over the world through training, supplying Da'wah materials, communication and cooperation.

5- Establishing a relationship of dialogue, understanding and coordination with non-Muslim organizations.

6- Publishing books, magazines, newsletters, brochures, and educational material in various languages by capable writers or by research teams on different Islamic issues of importance for Da'wah

7- These institutions should not only be concerned with Da'wah studies and research but also with other Islamic studies as well as languages, literature, cultural, religions, ... etc.

8- In addition to studies of Da'wah among non-Muslims, these institutions should also serve as centers of religious revival, learning, and guidance for Muslims.

## 12. Da'wah Centers

Da'wah centers are specially prepared places where non-Muslim are welcome in a friendly environment where they have answers to their questions, reading materials, and a place to talk to Muslims.

Da'wah centers, run in a professional manners, have proven to be the most effective factor in the success of Da'wah; an example is "IPC Islam Presentation Committee" in Kuwait.

Getting-together in these centers with professional Dai'ahs from different countries, colors, and races, working together for Allah's cause proved to be more effective Da'wah than many hours of talks and lectures on equality of mankind and brotherhood in Islam.

Here are some tips to insure the success of such centers:

- 1- Da'wah centers should be clean, well-maintained and organized.
- 2- There should be there, in addition to professional Da'wah staff, friendly people for reception to welcome visitors, give guiding information, and answer questions. They should be able to speak the language of the people around them fluently with no heavy accents.
- 3- There should be follow-up programs for new-

Muslims, to provide them with the information and support they need.

4- Well planned, relevant programs should be prepared for new Muslims and non-Muslims alike and given by professional Dai'ahs who are well aware of the current issues in their community.

5- Da'wah centers should have books, video tapes, audio tapes, booklets, flyers and other materials that can be either borrowed or distributed free-of-cost to non-Muslim.

6- A time table of the upcoming activities should be prepared in advance and made available in addition to a list of phone numbers to contact. Important people in the community should be invited to talk about issues of interest to the public.

7- Educational courses for Muslims and non-Muslims alike should be offered.

8-Interesting entertainment programs should be offered.

Proper planning is essential for the success of Da'wah centers. One of the vital issues is financing Da'wah activities. Da'wah' fund can be established to collect contributions from the community or abroad. Fund raising campaigns have to be arranged from time to time to insure constant financial resources. Da'wah activities could also be financed from Zakat.

If Da'wah centers are not available, a separate room in the mosque, somebody's house, or a reserved hall could be used for Da'wah on regular basis; it is proved to be successful.

### **13. Da'wah and Modern means of Communications**

The latest communication technology will continue to broaden Da'wah opportunities and make the message of Islam reach every where and enable all peoples to hear the truth in their own languages and in the comfort of their own homes.

Using the latest modern communication technology is important for fruitful Da'wah at present. Means of mass communication such as Radio, TV satellite channels, and the Internet net work are very efficient for both local and international mass-Da'wah to propagate the message of Islam to almost every man, woman and child on earth.

Radio and TV's educational and informative Islamic Programs, interviews, advertising, news, on-line Fatwa, professional internet sites, a large scale Islamic database, mail lists, .. etc., are effective tools for spreading Islamic awareness, protecting Muslims from cultural invasion, correcting hostile attitudes against Islam, and defending Muslims in addition to propagating the message of Islam to almost every man, woman and child on earth.

To maximize Da'wah efforts, Muslims should have their own radios and TVs networks and at the same time work hard to develop positive relations with media to improve the image of Islam.

## **Electronic Da'wah/E-Da'wah**

The World Wide Web is a global communication network that can be accessed from almost every place in the world with a phone line facility. Electronic Da'wah or E-Da'wah is using the Internet resources for the purpose of propagating Islam. Unlike traditional means of communication, the Web is extremely fast and convenient. It can be used for Da'wah purposes in a variety of ways. It offers world-wide resources such as texts, images, audios, and videos. E-mail lists, News lists, Usenet newsgroups, and Text Chatting, are powerful means of communication and can easily be used for E-Da'wah.

The Web saves time, money, efforts and makes learning reachable for all users. It offers up-to-the-minute information and allows the Dai'ahs to easily and inexpensively communicate with people from around the world.

Although it cannot replace face-to-face Da'wah, E-Da'wah is more efficient, effective, and less expensive. E-Da'wah activities include:

- creating Islamic internet websites specialized in giving Da'wah to non-Muslims.
- engaging in online research/education, teaching, preaching, dialogues and discussions for the purpose of propagating Islam.
- Islam-related information can be made available for all users or e-mailed to Muslims and non-Muslims alike.
- using news lists and e-mail lists for distributing Da'wah martial and interesting articles, lectures, ..., etc.

- using chat rooms in interfaith dialogues.
- allowing the Dai'ahs to contact and be contacted by users.
- communication with media outlets such as news paper editors and television producers for Da'wah purposes.
- Web search engines are a great help for the Dai'ah to find the information he/she needs.

## **Distance Education**

Distance Learning is teaching through the Internet using the Web facilities. The Web made people no longer dependent upon the traditional educational system of having a teacher and classroom. Actually, today the Web is becoming a key educational means because it provides a solution to the problem of lack of resources.

We can use E-learning in teachings the fundamentals of Islam in all languages, deepening Muslims understanding of their religion, clearing Islam from any forms of innovations and suspected beliefs, interfaith dialogues, defending Islam and its messenger (pbuh), and any other subject related to Islam. However, it requires a professional Da'wah staff to teach and answer questions about Islam.

## **Establishing Islamic Media Institutes**

Muslims need to establish media institutes to prepare highly professional staff to work for Da'wah using modern technology and mass media communication networks.

These institutes offer certificates, Diplomas and Bachelor's degrees, in mass media and media related specialties as well as Islamic studies, in addition to development and training programs.

They should also support open education and distance learning where useful religious knowledge can reach its seekers wherever they are, using the latest means of communication. The curriculums should be specifically tailored to meet the needs of the targeted Muslims or non-Muslims.

They should help in producing documentary films, Islamic graphic designs, editing, Websites design, preparing news from an Islamic perspective, advertisement, and other material related to media and Da'wah work.

## **14. Our children and Da'wah**

Children of today are the future leaders of their communities. Muslim parents, with the support from their communities, need to cultivate in their children the love of Allah, His messenger, and His religion, the concept of Tawhid, the perfect nature and supreme power of Allah, Day of Judgment, Paradise and Hellfire.

The most important factor for this Da'wah to continue is raising Dai'ahs from the new generation of Muslims who are well learned about Islam and aware of their future responsibility to establish the religion of Allah on earth.

### **Preparing Children for Da'wah**

It is the responsibility of parents, the entire Muslim community, particularly Islamic schools, mosques, and Dai'ahs, to establish long term interesting educational programs for the youth and children to strengthen their faith, accustom them to Islamic practices, assert their Islamic identity, and protect them against negative Islamic stereotypes they may receive from their environment.

Special classes for children such as weekend Islamic schools or regular mosque' lessons are a great help for preparing the Dai'ahs of the future. Children learn faster by example. They need to mix with good Muslims to learn their religion by practice. Knowledge, if not supported by regular practice evades fast. The worst thing in the child life happens when he is taught by a person, who himself

contradicts what he is teaching. This would create double standards between parents and child, and make him lose confidence in the guidance, provided by adults.

It is very important that children (future Dai'ahs) are treated in a mature way with respect; they should be given responsibilities and not to be provided with all kinds of luxury. When the child is given responsibilities he grows up more confident, stronger; this will sharpen his inner skills and make him more capable to face challenges.

The practice of giving Da'wah and involvement in Da'wah related activities should be a part of our children upbringing. They should be made aware that they are the future carriers of Islam; and Islam is their identity; without it they are lost.

Islamic schools, mosques, Da'wah centers should offer Da'wah training for children from an early age. A question like: "*Did you make any Da'wah today?*" should be a common daily question of parents to their children. Children should be rewarded according to their efforts in Da'wah, and kindly directed if they do mistakes.

Children, from early age, can participate in organization of Da'wah activities, share Da'wah activities with other kids, go to training camps, and involve in training Da'wah work shops, and join door to door visits for distribution of Da'wah material, so that the child grows up with love to propagate Islam to others.

To have dynamic successful Dai'ahs for new generation brilliant youth should be sent to Islamic universities to improve their Arabic and obtain good knowledge and understanding of Islam. They also should be involved in training programs, follow up programs, camps, and conferences to enhance their practical skills in propagation of Islam.

## 15. Da'wah in History

Islam is a natural religion; once obstacles are removed from its way, it will spread like fire. Islam spread from Arabia to Persia and India in the east and to north Africa and Spain in the west, in a relatively short time. Many orientalist<sup>7</sup> see this fast spread of Islam a miracle that has no parallel in history.

In Islam; there is no compulsion in religion; people always entered it willingly. The presence of non-Muslims minorities among Muslims is an evidence of tolerance of Islam.

Islam spread in the most populated Muslim countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Africa through the contact between native people and Muslim travelers, merchants who brought with them not only goods but also the great values of Islam: straight dealing, honesty, and generosity.

The impact of Muslims upon these non-Muslim communities was tremendous. In Singapore, I visited the Arab Street, near the port, where the Arab traders used to land. I was told that the natives used to prefer to buy from Muslim merchants because they expected good treatment and fair prices.

In my opinion it is unfair to compare the spread of Islam

in Asia and Africa with the spread of Islam in the west, and blame Muslims for not doing an effective Da'wah in the west. People in these countries, unlike in the west had no misperceptions about Islam; their history was free from hostility and enmity against Muslims; that is why their conversion to Islam was natural and easy.

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<sup>7</sup> . J.W.H. Stobart, in his book "Islam and its founder", and William Muir, in his book "Life of Mohammad".

## 16. Could Da'wah fail?

Proper Da'wah, backed with sincere efforts for Allah's sake, must succeed. Under no way this Da'wah could fail to achieve its objectives. Once the seed is implanted it would flourish one day.

Allah (swt) would guide through Da'wah those who are qualified for His mercy; those who have good hearts and are sincerely searching for the truth. And He will turn away from it those who do not deserve His mercy; those who chose to divert from His way; all of this is decreed according to His perfect wisdom and surrounding knowledge.

The success of Da'wah is guaranteed as a fulfillment of Allah's promises; *".. and who is more truthful than Allah."*[4-87]

1. Allah (swt) promised to make the way for Da'wah easy for Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) and his followers alike, *"We shall ease your way unto the state of ease"* [87-8]
2. Allah (swt) promised to preserve Qur'an, His last guidance to mankind, and guard it from any sort of distortion, changes, or

modifications: *"Verily we have sent down the Reminder and We shall indeed preserve it"*[15-9]. Qur'an contains the proofs of truth from Allah.

3. Allah (swt) promised to make Da'wah prevail and reach everywhere in the earth so that all mankind will be aware that Islam is the truth from their Lord: *"We shall show them our signs in the horizons and within themselves till it will be manifest unto them that it is the Truth"*[42 - 53]
4. Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) assured that Islam is the religion of the future and it will spread all over the world; he said, *"Verily Islam will reach every place as the day and night reach. There is no house (in city or desert) on earth but Islam will enter it"* [Ahmad and at-Tabari]

Due to all of these reasons, the Da'wah could never fail; that is why Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) expected his followers to outnumber the followers of other prophets.

He (pbuh) said, "None of the prophets before me but was given (physical) miracles because of which people believed him. But the miracle which has been given to me is indeed a revelation Allah (swt) revealed to me (Qur'an and Sunnah). So I hope, on the Day of Judgment, my followers will outnumber the followers of other prophets". [Al-Bukhari]

## Test Your Knowledge

- Q1. What is Da'wah?
- Q2. What should the main concern of the Da'iah be?
- Q3. Should the Da'iah be concerned with the results of his/her Da'wah? and why?
- Q4. What should the motive behind Da'wah be?
- Q5. Explain the importance of giving Da'wah among non-Muslims.
- Q6. Explain why the Muslim Ummah is entrusted with the duties of Da'wah.
- Q7. Why is Da'wah among non-Muslims the most honorable deed in Islam?
- Q8. Do you think Muslims are carrying out their duty of Da'wah among non-Muslims at present?
- Q9. What are the reasons of this situation? What do you think the solution?
- Q10. Give an evidence from Qur'an and/or Sunnah to state the ruling of Da'wah.
- Q11. What are the levels of Da'wah?
- Q12. How can the Muslim Ummah invite people to Allah?
- Q13. What are the responsibilities of Da'wah organizations and institutes?
- Q14. Explain the role of individuals in Da'wah. Give an evidence from Qur'an that supports this role.
- Q15. What is the condition for the success of Personalized Da'wah?
- Q16. What are the priorities of the Da'iah when introducing Islam to non-Muslims? Give examples from the life of the prophet (pbuh).

Q17. Give examples of the proper etiquettes of successful Da'wah.

Q18. Give examples of the manners that may make Da'wah ineffective.

Q19. What are the conditions for successful Da'iah?

Q20. What is meant by Da'wah by example and why it is more effective than other methodology of Da'wah?

Q21. What do you recommend for the Da'iah in order to make his/her Da'wah effective?

Q22. What should the Da'iah avoid in order to make his/her Da'wah effective?

Q23. How should the Da'iah present Islam?

Q24. How to refute the claim that Islam spread by force?

Q25. Give historical evidences for the success Da'wah.

Q26. Explain how Da'wah can never fail.

Q27. Explain the role of Da'wah institutes and centers.

Q28. Explain the role of small groups and individuals in Da'wah.

Q29. Explain how could the use of modern means of communications enhance Da'wah?

Q30. Preparing children for Da'wah is important

Q31. Stereotyping of Islam is one of the challenges Muslims are face. Give explanation how the Da'iah be prepared to deal with challenge.

Q32. Put the following Da'wah activities in order according to their importance.

1. The foundation of Da'wah should be Allah's existence, oneness, and perfect attributes; stress that no one could be similar or equal to Him (swt).
2. Biography of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) and evidences of his truthfulness.
3. The miraculous nature of Qur'an and its agreement with scientific facts, and the unanswered challenge it has been making to mankind since it was revealed from Allah to produce a book similar to it.
4. The Hereafter: provide proofs that there must be resurrection and reckoning and it is easy for Allah otherwise the good and the wicked will be made equal.
5. The uniqueness of the Sahabah.
6. Islamic virtues and manners.
7. The impact of Islam upon the world.

## Books of the Author

### Published

- 1- The Islamic Concept of God in the light of the greatest verse in Qur'an (Ayat-Ul-Kursi) -Second Edition - Revised
- 2- Sincerity and Our Deeds - Second Edition - Revised
- 3- The Perfect Believer - Second Edition - Revised
- 4- The True Muslim - First Edition
- 5- Preservation of Qur'an and Sunnah - First Edition
- 6- Death... Crossing the Bridge to the Hereafter - First Edition
- 7- Palestine ... the Blessed Land, Past, Present and Future.

### Under Print

1. Al-Wahy – The Divine Source of Qur'aan and Sunnah.
2. Miraculous Nature of Al-Wahy - Scientific Evidences
3. Evidences of Mohammad's Prophethood
4. The Beautiful Names of Allah
5. Questions and Answers about the Forty Hadith
6. Watching Our Tongues
7. Oppression and its Evil Consequences
8. The Power of Duaa'
9. Repentance ... Returning back to Allah
10. The Day of Judgment

A GUIDE TO GIVING DA'WAH TO NON-MUSLIMS

## Respected Dear Readers

*Please pray for forgiveness and mercy of Allah, Subhanahu Wata'la, for the author, her parents, her family, all Muslims, particularly the misfortunate and the less privileged around the world.*

*I constantly pray to Allah, Subhanahu Wata'la, to bring Muslims from darkness to light, to cover our faults and mistakes in this life, and forgive us for them in the Next life, to seal our work with the best good deeds, and let the best of our days be the day when we shall meet with Him, and make the best part of our lives the end of it.*

*I also pray to Allah, Subhanahu Wata'la, from all my heart to accept this work and make it sincerely for His sake.*

***“Say : Truly, my prayers, my services of sacrifice, my life, and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of all the worlds. There is no partners with him. This am I commanded, and I am the first of Moslems ( of those who submit to His will)”***

***(Quran 6- 162, 163)***

***And let the last of our prayers be All praises are due to Allah the Lord of all the worlds»***

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