

**MESSENGERS
OF PEACE**

A C A D E M Y



OPERATION SALAM
DA'WAH IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Module One:

Introduction to Da'wah

Module 1

In this module

- Learn the definition and introduction to da'wah
- Learn the ruling on giving da'wah
- Learn the benefits of da'wah
- Learn the pitfalls to giving da'wah

Unit One: Obligation of Da'wah

Definition of Da'wah

The term da'wah has a variety of different meanings in the Qur'an. Linguistically, it means: To call, request, encourage, incline (towards), supplicate, command, seek aid, ask, and command.

In an Islamic context it means, to call or to invite people to Allah.

It is referred to in Qur'an as enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil.



An invitation means it is not a fight or a debate. Have you ever been invited to someone's house for food with their fist in your face?

Importance of Da'wah

Calling to Allah was the essential duty of all the Prophets (peace be upon them). In the Qur'an, Allah gives the Prophet (ﷺ) the following command:

“Say: This is my way; I call to Allah upon clear knowledge, I and those who follow me. Glory be to Allah! And I am not of those who engage in polytheism.”

[Sūrah Yūsuf: 108]

The Prophet (ﷺ) carried out this duty throughout his life. It was then taken up by his Companions and those who followed after them. The Muslims have been carrying this duty out ever since.

Calling people to Allah is an activity that is open to all Muslims. It is not restricted to any group of people. It is not some exclusive discipline that can only be practiced within a narrow conceptual framework. It is a general volunteer enterprise that can be carried out by all Muslims in all walks of life. They can call people to Allah in in the context of all their lawful pursuits.

When a person has knowledge and insight into that which he is calling to, then there is no difference between the one who has a great amount of knowledge, or a student of knowledge who has recently started in pursuit of knowledge or a lay person – as long as he has certain knowledge of the issue at hand.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Convey from me, even if it is one verse.” [Al-Bukhārī]

So it is not a condition upon the caller to attain a great amount of knowledge, but the condition is that one must have knowledge of what one is calling to. If this calling is established upon ignorance and built upon emotion and passion, then it is not permissible.



Calling people to Allah is a duty that has been voluntarily carried out throughout the ages not only by preachers, scholars, and reformers, but by all those who care about Islam and the Muslims, and who long for Islam to spread

Calling to Allah is generally considered by scholars as an obligation on every Muslim according to their abilities.

It has been instructed by Allah in the Qur'an and by Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) in his *Sunnah*.

With regard to its obligation, Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious; for your Lord knows, best who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance."

[Sūrah An-Nahl; 16:125]

"The Believers men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practice regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power, Wise."

[Sūrah At-Tawbah; 9:71]

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: *"The religion is sincere advice."* [Al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

He (ﷺ) also said: *"Convey (my teachings) to the people even if it were a single verse."* [Al-Bukhārī]

Da'wah is an obligation on everyone who has the ability, from scholars to Muslim rulers and preachers, until the message of Islam reaches every corner of the earth in the various languages of the people. This is the type of propagation that Allah has commanded. He, Most High, instructed His Prophet to disseminate the message of Islam as follows:

"O Messenger, convey what was revealed from your Lord."

[Sūrah Al-Mā'idah, 5: 67]

Thus, it was obligatory on the Prophet (ﷺ) to deliver the message in the same way that it was obligatory on all the messengers of God.

However, scholars have made a distinction between the individual obligation of *da'wah* and the community obligation.

Two Levels of Da'wah

There are two levels of Da'wah to Allah: The first is an individual obligatory duty and the second is a collective obligatory duty.

It is an individual obligatory duty on you when no one in [your] country, region or tribe takes up the responsibility of da'wah, if you have knowledge. It becomes obligatory on you specifically to give da'wah, to enlighten people to the rights of Allah, to command what is good and prohibit evil. However, if there are present those who give da'wah teach people and guide them, then it would be *sunnah* and not obligatory.

Allah's Curse

In order to stress the gravity of *da'wah* as a duty on Muslims, Allah warned those who did not fulfill their responsibility in this regard of His curse and the curse of all His creatures.

“Indeed those who hide the clear messages and guidance that I have revealed after I have made it clear to people in the scripture; those are cursed by Allah and cursed by all who curse.”

[Sūrah al-Baqarah; 2:159]

Unit Two: Virtues of Da'wah

1. Da'wah is the Best of Speech

Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to Allah, works righteousness, and says 'I am of those who bow in Islam'"

[Sūrah Fuṣṣilat 41:33]

2. It is the way of the Prophets

Allah says in the Qur'an:

"We sent aforetime our messengers with Clear Signs and sent down with them the Book and the Balance (of Right and Wrong), that men may stand forth in justice.."

[Sūrah al-Hadīd: 57:25]

"And verily, We have sent among every nation a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid all false deities."

[Sūrah An-Naḥl 16:36]

3. It is the way of the Prophet (ﷺ) and those who follow him.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

Say: "This is my way; I invite unto Allah with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me.

[Sūrah Yūsuf 12:108]

4. There is great Reward in it.

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“Verily the one who guides (someone) to good, is like the one who does it (in reward).”

[At-Tirmidhi]

He (ﷺ) also said:

“For Allah to guide one person through you is better for you than the red camels.”

[Al-Bukhārī]

"Better for you than red camels" is an allegory for everything that is better than anything else. Red camels used to be precious in Arabia, and their reference here is to highlight the value of guidance. Thus, this ḥadīth brings into prominence the importance of calling people towards Allah.

5. It is one of the reasons why we were favored over other nations.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

“Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. If only the People of the Book had faith it were best for them; among them are some who have faith, but most of them are perverted transgressors.”

[Sūrah Āl-Imrān:110]

6. It is a sign strong faith in the heart.

You would not call others to something unless you know it and have no doubt in it. So, Da'wah is part of belief. One of the meanings of Shahādah (testimony of faith) is to inform others.

7. It strengthens Faith.

Many people make the mistake of waiting for their faith to increase before they go and call people to Allah. The truth is, giving da'wah is itself an action that increases faith.

Unit Three: Benefits of Da'wah

1. Fulfill an Obligation Upon Us

Da'wah is recognised as being obligatory upon every Muslim. The act of da'wah is something of great importance within Islam and more importantly to Allah (ﷻ). Consequently, by fulfilling our obligatory acts we can look to achieve the pleasure of Allah and get close to Him.

Allah states in a hadīth:

“...And My slave does not come close to Me with anything more beloved to Me than what I have made obligatory upon him. My slave continues to come nearer to Me through voluntary deeds until I love him, and when I love him, I become his ears with which he hears, I become his sight with which he sees, I become his hands with which he strikes, I become his legs with which he strides. If he asks Me, I shall surely grant his request.”

[Al-Bukhārī]

This beautiful hadith highlights the massive reward of completing the obligatory acts that can motivate us to carry out this important duty. In contrast, it is worth considering the consequences of neglecting something that is obligatory upon us.

Consequently, we should give great consideration to da'wah before abandoning or even neglecting this and therefore look to making it part of our lives in some way, shape or form.

2. Doing the Job of our Beloved Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)

The occupation of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) along with all other prophets was to be a Dā'ī (caller to Islam). For us to be given the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of the greatest man to have ever lived is a huge honour and favour given to us by Allah.

As we are followers of the Prophet (ﷺ), the responsibility of continuing this work falls on our shoulders, which is something worth remembering. Therefore, we should keep in mind whom we are imitating by giving da'wah. This will inspire us to continue with this important duty by following the one who should be more beloved to us than ourselves.

As stated in a ḥadīth:

“None of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father, his children and all mankind.”

[Al-Bukhārī]

3. Be From Those Who are Remembered in the Supplication of Others

Through helping someone convert to Islam or return to practising Islam, you will find that person being a happier individual than before. As an expression of gratitude, it is often likely that a person will personally thank you. Hopefully they will also remember you in their supplications for being there to give them valuable advice, offer support and pass on beneficial knowledge to help direct them to the straight path.

Also, as the Prophet (ﷺ) says:

“God, His angels and all those in the Heavens and on Earth, even ants in their ant-hills and fish in the water, call down blessings on those who instruct others in beneficial knowledge.”

[At-Tirmidhī]

This highlights the great rewards that can be achieved through giving da'wah and passing on useful knowledge to others. Being remembered in the supplication of others is something we should all want to have.

4. Be Part of the Change You Wish to See

It is a bit of a cliché when people talk about the state of the Muslim world and the attacks by the media etc. But for change to come about, we would need to change ourselves and look at what we realistically are able to achieve.

As Allah says:

“Verily! Allah will not change the good condition of a people as long as they do not change their state of goodness themselves.”

[Sūrah Ar-Rād 13:11]

This can involve little changes for example giving da’wah to a non-Muslim colleague about Islam or looking at our own areas of weakness as individuals and looking to rectify those weaknesses with the help and grace of Allah. We cannot change the world individually and Allah is not expecting us to either. However, we should try to strive and impact positively on our local environment and society with whatever skills and abilities He has blessed us with.

5. Strengthen Your Faith and Relationship with Allah the Almighty

It is commonly mentioned by those involved in da’wah that the first person to benefit from the knowledge passed on is yourself. Through continuously passing on the message of Islam and reminding others of the greatness of Allah, you strengthen your belief and relationship with Allah. Consequently, this helps to prevent you from becoming neglectful of Him.

Performing rituals without adding to them can cause you to become stagnant and possibly act as a barrier to strengthening your relationship with Allah.

Take the example of a person who always lifts 10kg with the same amount of repetitions each time. Is that person likely to get stronger?

The person may not become weak, but he will not become stronger either. We as Muslims should strive to push ourselves to do better. A higher level of faith is likely to lead us closer to Allah and therefore offer us greater rewards and as a result, make us winners in this life as well as the hereafter.

6. Find Yourself Leading a Happier Life

This is likely to be achieved through knowing you have helped somebody else to feel happier, which is a result of them coming close to Allah and following the way of his beloved Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

Think about a non-Muslim neighbour or colleague you have and how you would feel if they accepted Islam on your hands with the grace of Allah. Again, it is worth thinking about that person and if they died in that state of disbelief.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“By Allah, if a single person is guided by Allah through you, it will be better for you than the best of camels.”

[Al-Bukhārī]

Additionally, Almighty Allah says about the people that are successful:

“Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining good and forbidding evil. And it is they who are successful.”

[Sūrah Āl-Imrān: 3:104]

Who would know better than Our Creator about what is success and those that are successful?

7. Continue to Achieve Good Deeds After You Have Passed Away

This would occur through the good deeds committed by others as a result of the knowledge you have passed on.

Think of the following situation: you give da'wah to a non-Muslim friend who at the age of 19 or 20 becomes a Muslim with the guidance of Almighty Allah. After a few years, that friend may settle down and get married, and have children who are raised as Muslims, having long and pious lives. A portion of the reward achieved by all these individuals would come back into your book of deeds.

Unfortunately, some people miss the opportunity to do good deeds before passing away, after which it is too late to go back. This requires us to make an investment now for the hereafter so that we pick up good deeds in the grave even when we physically do not have the capacity to do good deeds.

As the Prophet (ﷺ) perfectly said:

“When a man dies, his good deeds come to an end except three: on going charity, beneficial knowledge and righteous offspring who will pray for him.”

[Muslim]

8. Help Your Cause Against the Questioning in the Hereafter

We understand as Muslims we will be asked about how we lived our lives e.g. whether it was in obedience to Allah or not. We are also going to be asked about the knowledge we possess, which includes basic knowledge, such as the testimony of faith (shahādah).

The Prophet (ﷺ) talked about the consequences of those who do not spread possessed knowledge:

“Whoever is asked about some knowledge that he knows, then he conceals it, he will be bridled with bridle of fire.”

[At-Tirmidhī]

Consequently, by giving da'wah and passing on whatever correct knowledge we have, can protect ourselves in the hereafter from the wrath of Allah. By engaging in da'wah, we can help our cause in this world by protecting ourselves against the punishment of Allah, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“By Allah, in whose Hands is my soul, you will enjoin the good and prohibit the evil (or else), Allah will soon send upon you a punishment from Him, then you will call upon Him and He will not answer you.”

[At-Tirmidhī]

It is also worth reflecting on the potential pitfalls of neglecting this important duty. A point to consider is that with so many virtues relating to da'wah, they provide strong evidence about the importance of da'wah and how it should be a feature of our lives.

Unit Four: Pitfalls of Da'wah

CASE STUDY

Umar went to a lecture where the local scholar talked about the importance of da'wah and the rewards for the one who calls others to Islam. Whilst going home, Umar met his class mate Hamza, and told him that he intends to join the local da'wah group. Hamza gave a puzzled look and remarked, how can you give da'wah when you yourself are not a perfect Muslim? We need to sort the Muslims out first before we invite non-Muslims!

Do you agree with Hamza?

Below are some of the most common excuses used for not giving daw'ah:

Don't have enough knowledge

During the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) we find people who accepted Islam, and stayed in Madīnah for a short time and then return to their people and invite their families and their whole tribe to Islam. They were not required to spend years learning about Islam, before they could invite.

The Prophet (ﷺ) also instructed us to convey even if we know one verse.

Moreover, seeking knowledge is easy now compared to the earlier times. During earlier times there was no internet, books and scholars were not easily accessible, transport was not easy yet they learned and excelled in the knowledge of Islam.

Now, with the easy accessibility of knowledge, we have no excuse.

I am a Sinful Slave. How can I give da'wah?

Da'wah is a duty that should be carried out even by those Muslims who regard themselves as sinners. All people are sinners. We are all human, and we all make mistakes. If every sinner refrained from exhorting others to righteousness, then who would exhort others to righteousness after the Prophet (ﷺ)?

For those who commit sins frequently, then doing Da'wah will help them become better practicing Muslims. When you share something with others, you have the inclination to practice it yourself.

First we should make our own Muslims better Muslims, then we should do Da'wah

This is one of the most common excuses given by Muslims. It is true that we must never neglect our own Muslim communities, but these are not exclusive responsibilities. We can invite non-Muslims to Islam and also try and reform our own communities.

In Madīnah, at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) there were some Muslims who committed sins, and neglected certain acts of worships, but that did not prevent the Muslims from calling non-Muslims to Islam. It is unrealistic to expect all Muslims to be of a certain standard before we can give da'wah to non-Muslims.

My Da'wah will not be effective.

Our responsibility is to convey the message, even if it does not result in conversions. The Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him) gave da'wah for almost a century and only a small number embraced his message.

It will create provocation among the non-Muslims

Provocation is not the purpose of da'wah but it may result in some people resenting the message. The Prophet (ﷺ) and the companions were persecuted for giving da'wah, but they did not use that as an excuse to not fulfil their duty. The pagan leaders, who loved him before, became his worst enemies. Did it make him stop from what Allah had commanded him?

I'm too shy

Shyness is at times rooted in fear and a lack of confidence. If you passionately believe in the message, then you will be able to overcome this challenge. There are additional tips you will learn in this course which will help you overcome shyness.



Questions for critical reflection

1. Consider the reward you can accumulate by calling people to Islam. Imagine on the Day of Judgment, having hundreds of people enter paradise because of your da'wah? Consider how pleased Allah will be with you!
2. Reflect on the trials and tribulations the Prophets went through in order to give da'wah. How fortunate must you be if you were also chosen to do the work of the Prophets!
3. In life we cannot see anyone in pain. How can we tolerate others going towards the fire of hell, and not do anything about it?

Summary

- ✓ Calling to Allah is the essential duty of Prophets.
- ✓ Da'wah is an obligation on every Muslim according to their abilities.
- ✓ Giving da'wah is a continuous investment for the Next Life.