

ANALYSIS OF THE QUR'ĀNIC METHODOLOGY OF
DA'WAH FOR THE CONTEMPORARY WESTERN
CONTEXT

BY

NASSER KARIMIAN

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Usūl al-Dīn and
Comparative Religion.

Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and
Human Sciences
International Islamic University Malaysia

FEBRUARY 2020

ABSTRACT

Although the Western world has historically been associated with Christianity, statistical evidence suggests that the traditional religious roots from which the Western civilization emerged are taking a backseat to secular ideologies, namely, atheism and agnosticism. As these ideologies continue to spread, the Muslim population in the Western world continues to increase due to immigration from Muslim countries, the high birth rates of Muslim families, and conversion to Islam. As Muslims become increasingly exposed to these proliferating ideologies, it becomes incumbent upon Muslim scholarship to defensively address the doubts raised by these views in an attempt to preserve the faith of the more impressionable devotees, while simultaneously educating them on how to proselytize and spark interest in Islam. This research seeks to analyze the intellectual credibility of these beliefs from the Qur'anic perspective, while extracting necessary lessons that are helpful to the average Western Muslim on how to approach a non-Muslim. The objective is to extract Qur'anic answers to the growing doubts of both atheism and agnosticism in their various forms, while simultaneously deriving lessons from two of the most frequently mentioned archetypes of proselytization: Noah ﷺ and Abraham ﷺ. The Qur'an frequently recounts the conversations they had with their obstinate communities, thus providing us with insight into the divine wisdom as conveyed by the Almighty's Messengers, which is then interpreted by the author and elucidated upon, thus making it relevant for a modern audience.

مُلخَصُ البَحْثِ

على الرغم من أن العالم المسيحي مرتبط تاريخياً بالمسيحية؛ تشير الدلائل الإحصائية إلى أن الأصول الدينية الاعتيادية التي ظهرت منها الحضارة الغربية قد أخذت المقعد الخلفي للتيار العلماني الجديد بدافع من الإلحاد والتشكيك، ومع استمرار انتشارهما؛ تزداد أعداد المسلمين هناك بسبب الهجرة من البلاد الإسلامية، وارتفاع معدلات المواليد في الأسر المسلمة، بالإضافة إلى اعتناق غير المسلمين الإسلام، ومع ازدياد تعرُّض المسلمين للأفكار الإلحادية والتشكيكية؛ أصبح من الواجب على علمائهم أن يتصدوا لها إذ نشأت من خلال وجهات النظر التي تحاول الحفاظ على إيمانهم، وفي الوقت نفسه توعيتهم بكيفية الدعوة ونشر الاهتمام بالإسلام، وعليه؛ يسعى هذا البحث إلى تحليل الصدقية الفكرية لمعتقدات تلك المذاهب الفكرية من المنظور القرآني، مع استخراج الدروس المستفادة؛ لمساعدة العامة من مسلمي الغرب في كيفية تقديم الإسلام لغير المسلمين، والهدف استخراج الإجابات القرآنية للريب المزداد من جهة الملحدون والمشككين على اختلافهم، من خلال الدروس المستفادة من أنموذجين من أكثر الأنموذجات التي تُذكر في مقام الدعوة؛ أي نوح وإبراهيم عليهما السلام، فالقرآن الكريم يروي في استمرار الحوارات التي أجراها النبيان مع قوميهما المعاندين، مما يوفر لنا نظرة ثاقبة في الحكمة الإلهية التي بلَّغها رسل الله سبحانه، ويُفسرها الباحث ويوضحها؛ لتكون أكثر ملاءمة للجمهور الحديث.

APPROVAL PAGE

The thesis of Nasser Karimian has been approved by the following:

Thameem Ushama
Supervisor

Che Amnah Bahari
Internal Examiner

Anis Ahmad
External Examiner

Mohd Abdur Rahman Anwari
External Examiner

Saim Kayadibi
Chairman

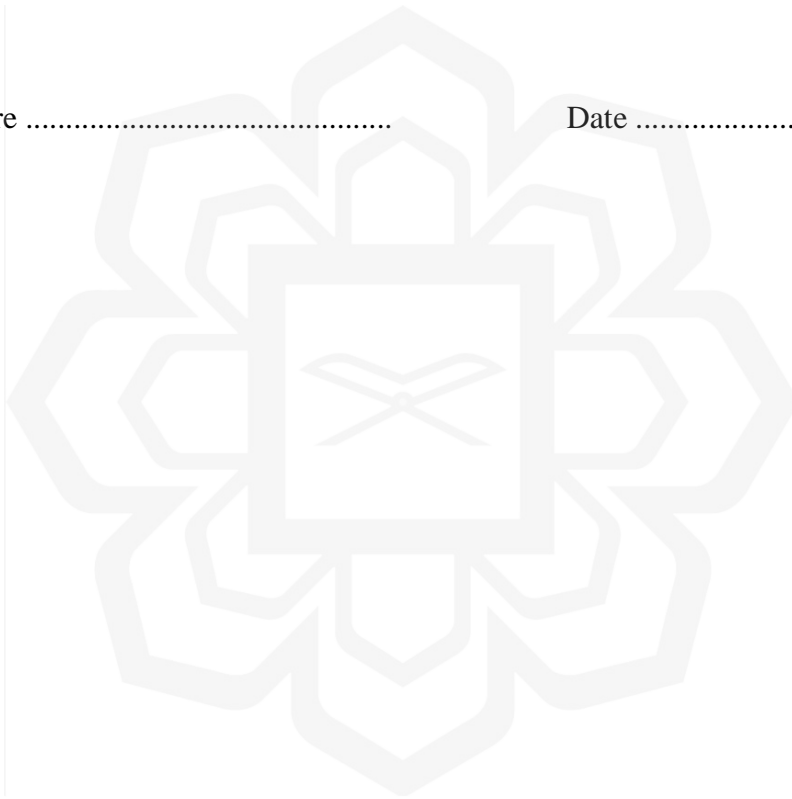
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Nasser Karimian

Signature

Date



INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

**DECLARATION OF COPYRIGHT AND AFFIRMATION OF
FAIR USE OF UNPUBLISHED RESEARCH**

**ANALYSIS OF THE QUR'ĀNIC METHODOLOGY OF
DA'WAH FOR THE CONTEMPORARY WESTERN CONTEXT**

I declare that the copyright holders of this dissertation are jointly owned by the student and IIUM.

Copyright © 2020 Nasser Karimian and International Islamic University Malaysia.
All rights reserved.

No part of this unpublished research may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior written permission of the copyright holder except as provided below

1. Any material contained in or derived from this unpublished research may be used by others in their writing with due acknowledgement.
2. IIUM or its library will have the right to make and transmit copies (print or electronic) for institutional and academic purposes.
3. The IIUM library will have the right to make, store in a retrieved system and supply copies of this unpublished research if requested by other universities and research libraries.

By signing this form, I acknowledged that I have read and understand the IIUM Intellectual Property Right and Commercialization policy.

Affirmed by Nasser Karimian

.....
Signature

.....
Date

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my wife, Ifrah



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Indeed, all praise is due to Allah ﷻ, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful. May His peace and blessings be upon our Noble Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his family and his followers till the Day of Judgement. I wish to begin these acknowledgements by appreciating my supervisor, Professor Dr. Thameem Ushama. I am wholeheartedly indebted for his support.

My special thanks to my dear friend Akram Rashid who has always given me invaluable advice, Muhammad Junaid Mughal who offered help when it was critically needed, and most importantly, my mother, Jennifer Karimian, who has always supported me, and who has always been the greatest role-model in reading, writing, and religious dedication. I thank Allah ﷻ that He gave me a mother who was so hardworking, so passionate about literature, and so committed to faith.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Arabic Abstract.....	iii
Approval Page	iv
Declaration	v
Copyright Page.....	vi
Dedication	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
Table of Contents	ix
Table of Transliteration	xi
CHAPTER ONE:INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	4
1.3 Research Questions	5
1.4 Research Objectives.....	5
1.5 Significance of the Study	6
1.6 Scope of the Study	6
1.7 Research Methodology.....	7
1.8 Literature Review	8
CHAPTER TWO:QUR'ĀNIC ARGUMENTS AGAINST ATHEISM	14
2.1 Man without a Soul.....	14
2.2 Atheism & Free Will.....	15
2.3 Implications of Atheism.....	16
2.4 Morality	19
2.5 Logic & Reason	22
2.6 Identity	27
2.7 Meaning.....	30
2.8 Atheism's Failure.....	35
2.9 Evidence For God.....	39
2.9.1 Why Something Instead of Nothing	39
2.10 Kalam Cosmological Argument	40
2.11 Fine Tuning	47
2.12 Human Design	51
2.13 Consciousness	58
2.14 Human Ambition	65
2.15 Self-Evident Truth / Human Nature / Transcendental Argument.....	67
CHAPTER THREE:QUR'ĀNIC ARGUMENTS FOR AGNOSTICISM.....	70
3.1 Mild Agnosticism	72
3.2 Apathetic Agnosticism.....	83
3.3 Strong Agnosticism.....	96
3.4 Hyper-Skeptical Agnosticism.....	107
3.5 Hopeless Agnosticism.....	118
3.6 Conclusion.....	128

CHAPTER FOUR: QUR'ĀNIC DA'WAH TECHNIQUES OF PROPHET

Nūḥ ﷺ	131
4.1 Sūrah A'rāf (7:59-64).....	132
4.2 Sūrah Yūnus (10:71-74).....	138
4.3 Sūrah Hūd (11:25-47)	142
4.4 Sūrah Mu'minūn (23:23-31).....	155
4.5 Sūrah Shu'Arā' (26:105-122).....	160
4.6 Nūḥ (71:1-28)	164

CHAPTER FIVE: QUR'ĀNIC DA'WAH TECHNIQUES OF IBRĀHĪM

ﷺ	178
5.1 Maryam (19:41-50).....	179
5.2 Shu'Arā' (26:69-90).....	184
5.3 Ṣāffāt (37:83-113).....	190
5.4 Anbiyā' (21:51-73)	196
5.5 'Ankabūt (29:16-27)	205
5.6 An'Ām (6:74-84)	212
5.7 Baqarah (2:258)	217
5.8 Zukhruf (43:26-28)	220
5.9 Mumtaḥinah (60:4)	222
5.10 Dhāriyāt (51:24-37).....	223
5.11 Conclusion	226

BIBLIOGRAPHY	236
---------------------------	------------

TABLE OF TRANSLITERATION

Table of the system of transliteration of Arabic words and names used by the
International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)

ء	'	خ	kh	ش	Sh	غ	Gh	ن	N
ب	B	د	D	ص	ṣ	ف	F	هـ	H
ت	T	ذ	dh	ض	ḍ	ق	Q	و	W
ث	Th	ر	r	ط	ṭ	ك	K	ي	Y
ج	J	ز	z	ظ	ẓ	ل	L		
ح	ḥ	س	s	ع	ʿ	م	M		

Short Vowels	
ـَ	a
ـِ	i
ـُ	u

Long Vowels	
ا + ـَ	ā
ي + ـِ	ī
و + ـُ	ū

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Qur'ān is Allah's final testament, a divine light guiding humanity and a personal message from the Creator of the heavens and the earth to each and every individual until Judgment Day. Allah ﷻ says that the Qur'ān is a clarification for all things and a guidance, mercy, and glad tidings for the believers. Despite the plethora of Muslim voices clamoring for reform, there is only one means by which Muslims are able to achieve progress and to maintain much needed solidarity according to Allah's infinite wisdom, as Allah ﷻ admonishes Muslims to hold firmly to the rope of Allah ﷻ all together and do not become divided. The majority of scholars agree that the "rope of Allah" is most certainly the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān is the ultimate solution for the various challenges Muslims are facing today and will face tomorrow. As such, some of the most momentous problems currently present within this Ummah are unfortunately directly related to our neglect of this Divine Text. This phenomenon however, is no surprise. We have been forewarned that the Prophet ﷺ will complain on the Day of Judgment that the Muslims have abandoned the Qur'ān.

Firstly, Muslims are unaware that promoting the Message of truth is an obligation upon each and every single one of us, as Allah ﷻ declares that the Ummah is the best nation produced for mankind because they enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. In short, they share the truth with those who have not yet received it.

Enjoining good and forbidding evil is a defining characteristic of the believer. This quality of preaching is known in Arabic as *da'wah*, and it is an indispensable

property of the Muslim. Each adherent is responsible relative to their capacity to influence, yet this doesn't take away from the fact that each believer must strive towards imparting a positive influence on those around him.

Secondly, the majority of Muslims are detached from the Qur'ān. Although the majority of Muslims read or listen to the Qur'ān on a regular basis,¹ the fact remains that only a fraction of them understand the Qur'ān. Roughly 15% of the Muslim world is Arab,² and most Muslims do not learn Arabic as a second language. This is an alarming fact as a connection to the divine text is an invaluable asset which not only brings us closer to our Lord, but is also the means by which Allah ﷻ has instructed us to spread the message of Islam. Allah ﷻ has commanded His Prophet ﷺ to admonish with the Qur'ān.

As a Muslim born and raised in the West, it is fitting that the researcher gears his da'wah towards a Western audience. This principle is established in the Qur'ān itself which clarifies that a *da'ee* (preacher) should focus on his own people as he is familiar with their language, culture, and norms.

The religious landscape of the Western has taken a dramatic shift in recent history. Roughly 70% of the United States is Christian, yet Christianity is on the steady decline while irreligiosity is on the rise.³ In England, citizens who identified as “not belonging to a religion” has gone from 3% in 1964, to 26% in 1983, to 38% in

¹ Liu, Joseph. "Chapter 2: Religious Commitment." *Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project*. N.p., 08 Aug. 2012. Web. 12 Mar. 2017. <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/08/09/the-worlds-muslims-unity-and-diversity-2-religious-commitment/>

² Business, EENI- School of International. "Muslim population." *Muslim population by countries: Indonesia Saudi Arabia*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Mar. 2017. <http://en.reingex.com/Muslim-population-countries.asp>

³ Wormald, Benjamin. "America's Changing Religious Landscape." *Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project*. N.p., 11 May 2015. Web. 12 Mar. 2017. <http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>

2005.⁴ Christianity in Canada has gone from approximately 88% of the population in 1971, to 66% in 2011, while “religiously unaffiliated” has gone from 4% to 24% in that same time span.⁵ From these figures, it is safe to conclude that, although Christianity maintains its position as the dominant religion of the land, it is on the steady decline while irreligiosity has been steadily increasing. The “religiously unaffiliated” tend to fall within two main categories: atheists and agnostics.

Aside from the religious requirement to give da‘wah, the Muslim minorities in the West are in dire need of reaching out to the general population from a social and political point of view. It is no secret that the Western media has put a strain on Muslim-non-Muslim relations through relentless propaganda that Muslims are barbaric, misogynistic, and a threat to civilization. Consequently, Muslims have predominantly hidden away from society, enclosed themselves in Mosques and remained distant from the public eye in fear of further scrutiny. Unfortunately, this reaction only perpetuates the paranoia. The more isolated the Muslims are, the more suspicious the masses feel towards them, which often transforms into distrust, hatred, and ultimately, violence.

In Australia, “Sydney Muslims experience discrimination at three times the rate of other Australians.”⁶ There has been a 70% increase in Islamophobia in London between 2014 and 2015.⁷ Similarly, “there has been an eight-fold increase in anti-

⁴ British Election Studies, in British Social Attitudes 2006/2007, p9. National Center for Social Research. Qtd. in <http://www.vexen.co.uk/UK/religion.html#OrganizedReligion>

⁵ Wormald, Benjamin. "Canada's Changing Religious Landscape." *Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project*. N.p., 26 June 2013. Web. 12 Mar. 2017. <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/06/27/canadas-changing-religious-landscape/>

⁶ Taha, Justine Kearney and Mohamed. "Sydney Muslims experience three times more discrimination than other Australians: study." ABC News. N.p., 30 Nov. 2015. Web. 12 Mar. 2017. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-11-30/muslims-discrimination-three-times-more-than-other-australians/6985138>

⁷ Adesina, Zack, and Oana Marocico. "Islamophobic crime in London 'up by 70%'" BBC News. BBC, 07 Sept. 2015. Web. 12 Mar. 2017. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-34138127>

Muslim hate crimes” between 2000 and 2014 in the United States of America.⁸ And as such, Muslims in North America live in fear.⁹

In the following essay, the objective is twofold. In the first two chapters the author explores the Qur’ān to extract arguments which pertain to the major groups within the Western world: agnostics and atheists. In the next two chapters, the author expounds upon the many speeches given by some of the most frequently mentioned Prophets in the Qur’ān, namely: Prophet Nūḥ ﷺ and Prophet Ibrāhīm ﷺ. Thus the reader will not only be equipped with Qur’ānic arguments which are most relevant to a Western audience, but they will additionally be familiar with the da‘wah techniques to ensure an exemplary delivery as well.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Qur’ān highlights methodologies of da‘wah applied by various Prophets ﷺ in inviting their people to Islam catering to their respective contexts. Although these methods are understood by Muslim scholars, they are typically presented in a general light, thus they do not produce the expected positive results for the Western context. As this is the crucial problem, the proposed thesis will critically analyze and discuss the rational and empirical Qur’ānic methodologies in order to allow contemporary Muslims to understand them and apply them in their respective contexts without difficulty. Specifically, the readers will understand how to respond to two ideologies that are gaining traction in the West, namely: atheism and agnosticism, while gaining

⁸ Juan Cole / Truthdig. "How Americans Hate: 8-Fold Increase in Islamophobic Crime Since 2000." *Alternet*. N.p., 15 Apr. 2016. Web. 12 Mar. 2017. <http://www.alternet.org/belief/how-americans-hate-8-fold-increase-islamophobic-crime-2000>

⁹ Lussenhop, Jessica. "The fear of being Muslim in North America." *BBC News*. BBC, 08 Dec. 2015. Web. 12 Mar. 2017. <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35044958>

insight into the Prophetic techniques employed by Prophet Nūḥ ﷺ and Prophet Ibrāhīm ﷺ mentioned in the Qur'ān.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What are the methodological principles and methods that the Qur'ān has highlighted?
2. How does the Qur'ān address the doubts raised by atheists?
3. How does the Qur'ān address the doubts raised by agnostics?
4. What are the da'wah techniques and methods of Prophet Nūḥ ﷺ in the Qur'ān?
5. How are the da'wah techniques of Prophet Nūḥ ﷺ and Prophet Ibrāhīm ﷺ relevant to the contemporary Western context?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The proposed research will attempt to achieve the following objectives:

1. To analyze the Qur'ānic methodology of addressing atheism.
2. To study the Qur'ānic methodology of addressing agnosticism.
3. To evaluate the da'wah techniques of Prophet Nūḥ ﷺ in the Qur'ān.
4. To critically examine the da'wah techniques of Prophet Ibrāhīm ﷺ in the Qur'ān
5. To explore the da'wah techniques of Prophet Nūḥ ﷺ and Prophet Ibrāhīm ﷺ and their relevance to the contemporary Western context?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Western Muslims are well aware that outreach is necessary. CAIR (Council on American Islamic Relations) is one example of a Muslim organization which recognizes the need for Muslims to be in the media, portraying a positive message while clarifying the many misconceptions that exist about Islam and Muslims. Many Mosques have made connections with local churches and synagogues to forge friendships and to work together on mutual interests.

These efforts are admirable and necessary, yet a key element remains missing from the equation. Before engaging with any group, it is necessary to have familiarity with our own sacred text to ascertain how Allah's speech addresses their particular views. Furthermore, connecting with people on a personal level is always more impactful than in the media. While media presence is absolutely necessary, we mustn't overlook the fact that each and every Muslim is responsible to represent his or herself as an ambassador of this faith and an embodiment of the Qur'ānic teachings.

In the following, the author will provide the common Western Muslim with the tools necessary to understand the popular beliefs which surround them, along with the techniques essential to engage with the adherents of those belief systems in a positive and fruitful way. The reader will understand the Qur'ānic views on the most popular beliefs that he or she encounters on a regular basis, and they will become equipped with the Prophetic examples set forth for us in the divine text.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

It is difficult to produce entirely novel material for Qur'ānic exegesis because there has been fourteen hundred years of scholarship analyzing every jot and tittle of Allah's divine word. As such it would be presumptuous for to posit that the work will

exhaust all resources or go beyond any previous work with regards to the Qur'ān's approach to given beliefs, or the lives of particular Prophets. That being said, Muslims have only migrated to Western nations in significant numbers relatively recently in history. As such, Western Muslims are still behind with regards to acquiring the knowledge of our great tradition and repackaging it for a Western audience. The intention is to utilize both English and Arabic sources (largely relying upon primary Arabic sources), in order to exploit the best of what the Muslims have to offer and systematically exhibit it in such a way that the average Western believer can benefit from the clear, practical, and most importantly, Qur'ānic principles put forward within this work.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Since the research is a qualitative one, it will mainly involve library resources. The study relies on different types of qualitative research methods. Although the study relies chiefly on analytical methodology of research, other methods will be employed such as critical analysis to unpackage the content under question and prescriptive analysis to provide the reader with practical guidelines necessary for engaging with their audience. The study will include a comparative element between the prophetic techniques employed by Prophet Nūḥ ﷺ and Prophet Ibrāhīm ﷺ.

The objective of this study is to tackle the predominant beliefs of atheism and agnosticism. Therefore, the focus will remain on fundamental beliefs as opposed to secondary or tertiary doctrinal details as such points are likely to prove to be irrelevant to an average audience. Furthermore, the verses of the Qur'ān which will be used for either the criticism of false beliefs or used to demonstrate proselytization techniques will be researched through the works from both classical and contemporary

scholarship, predominantly relying upon Rāzī and Qurṭubī for classical commentary, and Ibn ‘Ashūr and Sha‘rāwī for a contemporary perspective. Thereafter the material will be communicated for a present-day Western demographic through explanations and examples that are most suitable for said audience.

1.8 LITERATURE REVIEW

The topic is a combination of two overarching themes. Firstly, to present the Qur’ānic arguments to refute the false beliefs that are prevalent in the Western world. Secondly, to extract the most effective proselytizing techniques found within the Prophetic examples of two of the most mentioned Prophets in the Qur’ān; Prophet Nūḥ ﷺ and Prophet Ibrāhīm ﷺ. The objective is to provide the reader with both: the arguments necessary to highlight the shortcomings of these widespread false beliefs, and the methodology to present said arguments in the best possible manner. There are many works which deal with aspects of this thesis, yet bringing these topics together while gearing this work towards a Western audience will be treading on new territory and the following will mention some of the works I’ll be utilizing and some of the new grounds I’ll be exploring if Allah ﷻ wills.

There are some works that have been produced with a similar goal to mine, however in each case the works fall short in one regard or another. For instance, Shaykh Rabee bin Haadee’s book *The Methodology of the Prophets in Calling to Allaah: That is the Way of Wisdom & Intelligence*¹⁰ is one dimensional. The book primarily showcases the various verses of the Qur’ān in which Prophets call to the Oneness of Allah.

¹⁰ Bin Haadee, Shaykh Rabee. *The Methodology of the Prophets in Calling to Allaah: That is the Way of Wisdom & Intelligence*. 2nd ed. N.p.: Troid. <http://www.troid.ca/media/pdf/methodology.pdf>

Shaykh Rabee bin Haadee's contribution is undoubtedly beneficial and in fact critical as it painstakingly underlines the absolute centrality of Allah's Oneness as the message of all Prophets and Messengers throughout time. This undeniable fact is unfortunately overlooked by some Muslims who engage in boundless philosophizing and as such, Shaykh Rabee bin Haadee's book was intended for audiences that are clouded in the confusion of sectarian division and thus require an abundance of examples of Prophets calling to the same, intelligible, uncluttered message of Tawhīd.

The crucial concept of Tawhīd (monotheism) is the central precept in Islam upon which all other ideas, beliefs and practices are built, however, once this point is sufficiently emphasized, practical da'wah requires more skills, secondary and tertiary lines of reasoning and logic, and a deeper understanding of false beliefs, all of which the Qur'ān provides. The objective is to extract those gems and explicate them, indicating the various aspects which will prove to be advantageous for the audience.

Ziaul Haque's book, *Prophets and Progress in Islam*¹¹ is on the other side of the spectrum. The author sets out to paint each Qur'ānic Prophet as having a unique struggle, each challenging the social ills of their peoples, yet each social ill being entirely unrelated to any other Prophet. While it is important to accentuate each Prophet's distinct battle, the Qur'ān clearly indicates the overlap which exists between them as the fight between good and evil repeats its patterns no matter what age we evaluate. The book sets out to display the wide range of social ills the Qur'ān seeks to cure through its numerous historical accounts, however it does not specifically target the techniques that are identifiable and reproducible in the believer's daily life. The work is more historical in nature, while the intention is to formulate more of a

¹¹ Haque, Ziaul. *Prophets and Progress in Islam*. Utusan Publications & Distributors SDN BHD, Kuala Lumpur, 2008

practical handbook, a da‘wah syllabus that can be taught throughout the thousands of Mosques which are in desperate need of this kind of education in the Western world.

The book *Training Guide for Islamic Workers*¹² by Hisham Altalib is another valuable addition, yet its focus is leadership development and organization building. It does not address the widespread doubts raised by the atheist and agnostic communities, nor does it delve into exegesis in order to equip the average Muslim with the necessary understanding of the Qur’ān to defend their beliefs. Not every Muslim can be a leader or community organizer, but each Muslim should seek to understand the Qur’ān, implement its edict to convey the Message of Islam according to their capacity, and defend their beliefs from uncertainty.

This work intends to engage in, yet not stop at, the most important aspects of da‘wah (Tawḥīd) and explore the beliefs and attitudes which hinder the common Westerner from embracing this noble faith, along with comprehensive guidelines on how to refute these false beliefs and combat these negative attitudes. Furthermore, this work will supplement these points with a clear and precise Qur’ānic principles on the methodology of presenting said arguments.

The researcher will undoubtedly be using both the classical and contemporary works of the famous exegetes of Islam, for instance: Ibn Kathīr, al-Rāzī, al-Ālūsī, Ibn ‘Ashūr, Sayyid Quṭb in order to profit from their astute observations with regards to the particular verses that either challenge the beliefs of atheism and agnosticism, or that contain the words of Prophets as they preach the message of truth to skeptics and disbelievers.

Many of the “Da‘wah Training” videos available for the Western audience are exceedingly beneficial, such as the works of renown scholars and speakers such as

¹² Altalib, Hisham. *Training guide for Islamic workers*. Herndon, VA: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2001. Print.

Bilal Philips' *The Ultimate Dawah Course*,¹³ Abdur-Raheem Green's *Da'wah*,¹⁴ Hamza Tzortzis' *Learning how to do Dawah*,¹⁵ Kamal el Mekki's *Shahadah: Fiqh of Da'wah*¹⁶, and Yusuf Estes' *Dawah Training*,¹⁷ yet where they lack is in a Qur'ānic framework. Their speeches often provide many dynamic and effective techniques and helpful anecdotes, yet the number of arguments and techniques that are grounded in the verses of the Qur'ān are less in comparison to the arguments that are not. As such, the intention is to provide a unique work in which each argument is traced back to its Qur'ānic origin. The hope is to popularize this protocol, make it the standard for da'wah training, and by the Will of Allah ﷻ, transform the way da'wah training is taught throughout the Western world.

Far too often we find that da'wah techniques are taught while Qur'ānic references are few and far between. Regrettably, the popular model is to sprinkle verses of the Qur'ān in between the content to ensure that the Qur'ānic flavor still remains. This is not to criticize these works by claiming that they are somehow evil or misguiding the Muslims. On the contrary, they are momentarily beneficial and they provided the believer with the essential tools to convey his faith. However, above mentioned model, albeit useful, will serve as a stepping stone in the history of Islam in the West as da'wah becomes more Qur'ān centric. Indeed, the Qur'ān is present within each da'wah course and their contributions have made an irreversible impression, the effects of which will be felt evermore. That being said, improvements

¹³ Khalifahklothing. "Introduction to Dawah - Part 1 - The Ultimate Dawah Course - Bilal Philips." *YouTube*. YouTube, 03 Nov. 2007. Web. 12 Mar. 2017.

¹⁴ Ak745579. "NEW Series by Abdur Raheem Green - 'Da'wah'" *YouTube*. YouTube, 28 Mar. 2016. Web. 12 Mar. 2017.

¹⁵ 877whyislam. "Learning how to do Dawah by Hamza Tzortzis." *YouTube*. YouTube, 11 June 2014. Web. 12 Mar. 2017.

¹⁶ Khalifahklothing. "How to Give Da'wah - Kamal el-Mekki - Part 1/2." *YouTube*. YouTube, 12 Aug. 2011. Web. 12 Mar. 2017.

¹⁷ HabibifloDE. "Sheikh Yusuf Estes Dawah Training Questions and Answers." *YouTube*. YouTube, 03 July 2012. Web. 12 Mar. 2017.

can be made. The aim is to embed the Qur'ānic curriculum throughout this work in order to demonstrate the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān, as it is the absolute authority in da'wah and it is entirely sufficient for our proselytizing needs.

I believe that the Muslim world needs to reconnect to the Book of Allah, and this vital and monumental mission should begin with our preachers, as they are the frontline and the best and brightest the *Ummah* (the Muslims nation) has to offer. They are undertaking the jobs of the Prophets, and just as Prophets were given divine revelation to aid them along their journey, so too is it imperative that the preacher holds himself to that same standard by utilizing the Qur'ān as their proselytizing instruction manual.

In contrast, this work will not be engaging in sectarian differences within Islam as Muslims are a minority in Western lands and it is of utmost importance that Muslims know how to engage the majority of the people that surround them in their daily affairs as opposed to exhaustively focusing on the minorities they may or may not encounter.

There are several books which deal with individual chapters of this work, for instance: books such as *البرهاني القرآني في كشف الإلحاد النفساني* expound upon the Qur'ānic solution for atheism. Many of these works are in the Arabic language and have not yet been translated to English for a Western, this work sets out to provide the most convincing evidences in these precious works to the Western world, where they will be of most value.

However, the subject of agnosticism is still somewhat untouched by both Muslims in the East and West. Perhaps the reason it remains predominantly unchallenged is due to its more or less ambiguous nature. The following work demonstrates the various dimensions of agnosticism, provide synoptic categories to

aid the preacher (dā‘ī) understand the specific problems preventing the agnostic from accepting Islam, and most importantly, outline the Qur’ānic methodology in addressing these ailments in order to overcome the obstacles preventing Islam from entering the heart.

