

101437 - How and where should she start when teaching the principles of Islam?

the question

If one wishes to teach somebody about Islam , how should they start?..and where should they start?.

Detailed answer

Knowledge of Islam and its rulings and principles is obligatory for every Muslim, male and female, to the extent that he or she needs to establish proper belief, worship and behaviour and conduct in accordance with that which Allaah wants. It is narrated in a hadeeth that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Seeking knowledge is a duty on every Muslim.” Narrated by Ibn Majaah (224); classed as hasan because of its many isnaads and corroborating reports by al-Mazzi, al-Zarkashi, al-Suyooti, al-Sakhaawi, al-Dhahabi, al-Manaawi, al-Zarqaani. It is also included in Saheeh Ibn Majaah by al-Albaani.

See also the answer to question no. [10471](#) and [20092](#).

As for teaching knowledge, this is the role of the Prophets, which was borne by the scholars after them, so that the proof of Allaah would remain established among His creation (and there would be no excuse for not knowing), and so that the message of Tawheed would remain fresh as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) taught it to his companions.

It was narrated that Abu'l-Darda' (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: I heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say: “The scholars are the heirs of the Prophets. The Prophets did not leave behind dinars or dirhams, rather they left behind a heritage of knowledge, and the one who acquires it acquires an abundant portion.” Narrated by Abu Dawood (3641) and others; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani.

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: This is one of the greatest qualities of the scholars, for the Prophets are the best of the creation of Allaah, and their heirs are the best of

creation after them. As everything that is inherited passes to the heirs, they are the ones who take his place after he is gone, and there is no one who can take the place of the Messengers in conveying that with which they were sent, except the scholars, who are the most entitled of people to their legacy. This indicates that they are the closest of people to them, for the inheritance only goes to the closest of people to the deceased. Just as this applies to the inheritance of dinars and dirhams, so it also applies to the inheritance of Prophethood, and Allaah singles out for His mercy whomsoever He will. End quote.

Miftaah Daar al-Sa'aadah (1/66).

But what we have stated applies only to those who take the place of the Prophets in teaching people and issuing rulings (fatwas) to the people concerning new issues that they face and what they need, and guide people in accordance with the religion of Allaah.

As for those who convey what they know of the religion of Allaah to others, such as a verse that they have memorized or a hadeeth that they know, or a fatwa that they have heard from trustworthy scholars, this does not require one to be a scholar, only that he should know what he is conveying and enjoining upon the people; he does not have to be a scholar as such.

It was narrated from 'Abd-Allaah ibn 'Amr (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Convey from me even if it is one verse, and narrate from the Children of Israel and there is nothing wrong with it. And whoever tells a lie about me deliberately, let him take his place in Hell." Narrated by al-Bukhaari (3461).

'Abd-Allaah ibn Mas'ood (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: O people, whoever knows anything let him say it and whoever does not know let him say Allaah knows best, for it is part of knowledge when one does not know to say Allaah knows best. Allaah said to His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) (interpretation of the meaning): "Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): No wage do I ask of you for this (the Qur'aan), nor am I one of the Mutakallifoon (those who pretend and fabricate things which do not exist)" [Saad 38:86]. Narrated by al-Bukhaari (4809).

So let us go back to your question: how should one start?

Our advice if you find someone who has already gained some knowledge and adheres to the rulings and etiquette and is one of ahl al-sunnah, is to seek guidance from him and benefit from his experience, because this will save a lot of time and effort in sha Allaah.

Whether or not he has access where he is to scholars and seekers of knowledge who can help him with that, we offer him the following advice:

1 – Pay attention to the Book of Allaah by memorizing, reading and studying, for the Qur’aan is the first book of guidance, and the book of knowledge on which all branches of Islamic knowledge are based. He should take care to understand its meanings and study some tafseer. At that stage we advise him to study al-Tafseer al-Muyassar, published by Dar al-Malik Fahd li Tibaa’ah al-Mus-haf, which is a very useful book; Aysar al-Tafaaseer by Shaykh Abu Bakr al-Jazaa’iri; and the Tafseer of Shaykh al-Sa’di (may Allaah have mercy on him). We do not mean that he should study all of them; whatever he can manage, he can read them and study them.

2 – With regard to hadeeth he should memorize al-Arba’een al-Nawawiyyah (al-Nawawi’s Forty) and the addition thereto by Ibn Rajab (may Allaah have mercy on him), and study some of the commentaries on them such as those by Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen and others. It is also recommended to study some of the audio commentaries on the Majd channel or on websites of Ahl al-Sunnah. When he has finished that, he can study Jaami’ al-‘Uloom wa’l-Hukam by Ibn Rajab, which is good in sha Allaah.

Then he should study – every day if possible – Riyadh al-Saaliheen by Imam al-Nawawi (may Allaah have mercy on him), and memorize one hadeeth from every chapter, and read the commentary of Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen thereon.

3 – With regard to ‘aqeedah, he should start with al-Usool al-Thalaathah wa Adillatuha, by Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhaab (may Allaah have mercy on him), and study some of the commentaries thereon, by Shaykh al-‘Uthaymeen and Shaykh al-Fawzaan. If he can listen to them then that is better.

Then he should move on to Kitaab al-Tawheed by Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhaab, with some of the simple commentaries on it, such as that by Shaykh Saalih Aal al-Shaykh. It is

simple and beneficial, in sha Allaah. Or there are other commentaries. In addition he should study al-‘Aqeedah al-Waasitiyyah with its commentary, by Shaykh al-Fawzaan or Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen.

He should pay attention to all of the above, and study them and understand them.

With regard to ongoing reading and study, he should pay attention [?] to the series on ‘Aqeedah in the Light of the Qur’aan and Sunnah, by Shaykh ‘Umar Sulaymaan al-Ashqar (may Allaah preserve him). [This series is available in English, published by the International Islamic Publishing House of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia].

4 –With regard to fiqh, there are some easy books with which he may start, such as Arkaan al-Islam by Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him), Fiqh al-‘Ibaadaat by Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him), Mukhtasar Sifat al-Salaah by Shaykh al-Albaani (may Allaah have mercy on him), Tayseer al-‘Allaam Sharh ‘Umdat al-Ahkaam by Shaykh Bassaam (may Allaah have mercy on him). We also advise him to make use of the books of fatwas by our contemporary scholars, such as Fataawa ‘Ulama’ al-Balad al-Haraam, compiled by Dr. Khaalid al-Juraysi, which is a useful compilation in sha Allaah.

5 – With regard to seerah (the biography of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)), he can study Mukhtasar Zaad al-Ma’aad by Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhaab, and al-Raheeq al-Makhtoom by Shaykh al-Mubaarakfoori (may Allaah have mercy on them both). [The latter is available in English translation under the title The Sealed Nectar, published by Darussalam of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia]

With regard to general history and biography, he may study al-Tareekh al-Islami by Prof. Mahmood Shaakir, and some books of biography such as Siyar A’laam al-Nubala’.

6 –With regard to akhlaaq (morals and manners) and raqaa’iq (heart softeners), he should read the books of Ibn al-Qayyim a great deal, such as al-Da’ wa’l-Dawa’, al-Risaalah al-Tabookiyyah, and the letter of Ibn al-Qayyim to one of his brothers. He may also study Mukhtasar Minhaaj al-Qaasideen by Ibn Qudaamah, or Tahdheeb Maw’izat al-Mu’mineen by Shaykh al-Qaasimi (may Allaah have mercy on him), and he should also pay attention to the essays of Ibn Rajab (may

Allaah have mercy on him), such as Kashf al-Kurbah, Sharh Hadeeth Ma Dhi'baan Jaa'i'aan, Tahqeeq Kalimat al-Ikhlaas and others, most of which have been compiled in one four-volume collection.

7 – He should pay attention to studying the adhkaar of the Prophet, because this is an important part of knowledge and action, and he should try to memorize some of the books, such as Saheeh al-Kalim al-Tayyib by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, abridged by al-Albaani, or Husn al-Muslim (available in English as The Fortress of the Muslim) as well as reading al-Waabil al-Saayib by Ibn al-Qayyim.

Finally, we must reiterate the importance of learning from and listening to scholars who are specialized in sharee'ah, which is something that is easy nowadays, praise be to Allaah, via some useful channels or the internet. Perhaps you have heard of the Majd channel which presents lessons from which all people may benefit. You can also subscribe to their programs which take the student through stages. As for the internet it is full, by Allaah's grace, with lessons of trustworthy scholars and you can follow some of them directly via Paltalk or download recordings from the Islamway website.

An important matter when it comes to learning is to pay attention to the correct method, by which we mean adopting the correct gradual approach. So the student should start with easy fields and short books, then move on to longer books with detailed commentary, until he becomes able to read lengthy books and specialized research material.

He has to choose lessons from the Majd channel or the internet that are suitable for him, and he should not try to follow every lesson that is offered, because it may not be suitable for him at present.

You can find more advice on our site in the answer to question no. [14082](#) and [20191](#).

And Allaah knows best.