

The Guidance:

22nd Annual Youth Conference of the Islāmic Da'wah Academy

by Muhammad Abdullah

Gardens of Paradise

‘Why not subscribe to our monthly magazine, Riyāḍul Jannah?’ said the young volunteer on my arrival at the Islāmic Da'wah Academy's 22nd Annual Youth Conference. “Riyāḍul Jannah, the gardens of Paradise”. As I entered the IDA's premises with this thought I could see people engaged in the remembrance of Allāh ﷻ in various ways; standing in Ṣalāh, reciting the Glorious Qur'ān and engaged in du'ā. I was surprised by the intense feeling of serenity and tranquilly. Maybe, I pondered, this was because, in this world, the places of dhikr are akin to the gardens of Jannah in the Hereafter.

The main prayer hall began to fill up about an hour before the start of the programme. As I made my preparations for the Ṣalāh, I saw many different people and heard many different accents. Yet, in all this difference, I could sense a unifying zeal to learn, to understand, and to progress. I reflected upon my motivations for attending and prayed that I would also be able to make the most of this unique opportunity and gathering that I had been blessed to attend.

Mawlānā Zaheer Kharodia, who was handling the stage and who is a graduate of the Islāmic Da'wah Academy's full-time 'Ālimīyyah course, initiated proceedings by highlighting the importance of learning and having a continual desire to progress in 'ilm. Summarising the key objectives of the Islāmic Da'wah Academy, Mawlānā Zaheer touched on how the IDA's multi-faceted activities are tailored to share authentic and appropriate 'ilm with people of all ages and from all walks of life.

Compassion & Love

Ibraaheem Patel was the initial reciter of the Glorious Qur'ān. His considered recitation of Sūrah Al-Hāqqah was followed by a heartfelt rendering of an Urdu nashīd by Muftī Bilal Syed, the Imām of Masjid-e-Abu Bakr in Cardiff. Shaykh Mawlānā Yasir Nisar, of the Ar-Rahmah Academy in Chorley, was the first lecturer of the event. His detailed discussion on the role of compassion in Islām provided much food for thought. Utilising various examples from the Sīrah, the Shaykh demonstrated how compassion is an essential component of a Muslim's life. In the final part of his address, Shaykh Yasir focused on the rights of parents and why parents are most deserving of mercy and compassion from their children.

Expanding on the Shaykh's lecture, Mawlānā Zaheer explained how the development of the qualities of the heart, such as compassion, forms an integral part of the IDA's training and learning curriculum. I was intrigued by the innovative design of some of the programmes offered. For example, the adult learning nature of the Ḥifz revision course and Tajwīd sessions was

something I was sure many listeners would be keen to explore further.

The second recitation of the Glorious Qur’ān was delivered by Muhammad Motala and highlighted some very pertinent verses of Sūrah Banū Isrā’īl. Aadil Mogradia then followed with a beautiful nashīd on the greatest man of all, our beloved Prophet ﷺ. Throughout the nashīd the audience recited ṣalāh ‘alan nabī (durūd) upon the mention of the Prophet ﷺ’s name. However, what struck me was a young child who was sitting nearby. His innocent voice echoed clearly and reflected a vibrant love for the most beloved and greatest Prophet of Allāh ﷺ.

By pointing out that the author of the nashīd, Mawlānā Junayd Makda, was a graduate of IDA’s full time institute, Mawlānā Zaheer emphasised how the IDA’s full time ‘Ālimiyyah course prepared graduates who are able to serve the Ummah through various activities and means.

Guide to Success

Lecture number two was delivered by Mawlānā Farhan Vali, another graduate of the IDA, who is currently serving Dīn in the Goodmayes area of London. His impassioned address focused on the need to inculcate the fear of Allāh ﷻ as a means to help one stay away from sin and wrongdoing. Mawlānā Farhan outlined some of the common misconceptions about the individual and collective effects of a life of sin, and how a positive focus on avoiding the displeasure of Allāh ﷻ is a must, particularly in one’s youth.

As Mawlānā ended his lecture, I noticed an increased flow of people moving into the hall. Looking around I was impressed by the enthusiasm of an elderly gentleman who was keen to get a place near the front. I appreciated his keenness. For, as Mawlānā Farhan had alluded to in his concluding remarks, having the opportunity to benefit from the company and teachings of an authentic, reputable Shaykh of academic and spiritual accomplishment is a rarity and a great gift.

Qārī Yahya Ali, a teacher of Tajwīd at the IDA, enlightened the audience with the third recital of the Glorious Qur’ān. A thought provoking Urdu nashīd authored by Shaykh Mawlānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Partabgharī ؒ was then read by a graduate of the IDA, Mawlānā Junayd Hussein.

As Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Muhammad Saleem Dhorat *ḥafīzahullāh* came to the stage I mulled over some of the poetic verses recited; and I looked forward to learning how to inculcate the guide to success that the respected author of the poem had captured with such clarity and passion.

Capturing the Hearts

As the respected Ḥaḍrat *ḥafīzahullāh* began his lecture, I thought about what it is that attracts so many people, time and again, to the Ḥaḍrat’s lectures, lessons and writings. Perhaps it is the applicability of authentic reliable advice, combined with a keen sensitivity and awareness of the need of the time. Perhaps, it is sincerity infused with the light of Divine Love. Or perhaps it is the constant attention and du‘ās of numerous chosen servants of Allāh ﷻ. Whatever the reason, if not all, I waited eagerly to hear the guidance which I and many others from far and wide had travelled to benefit from.

Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Muhammad Saleem Dhorat ḥafīẓahullāh chose a ḥadīth with the following key themes as the subject of his lecture:

- 1) Tie the bond of kinship with those relatives that have broken it.
- 2) Forgive the one who oppresses or wrongs you.
- 3) Be good to the one who does evil to you.

Taking each theme in turn the respected Ḥaḍrat ḥafīẓahullāh used numerous examples from the Sīrah, the lives of the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ and the pious predecessors to comprehensively demonstrate the practical application of these key themes. He also highlighted how our ignorance of these essential elements had contributed to our current state as an Ummah.

“We are friends to nobody, and nobody is our friend. This is because we have become selfish followers of our desires. It is essential that we change this, and actively maintain good relations for the Pleasure of Allāh ﷻ. Let us learn to forgive and forget. Make this the principle of life. And let us be good to those who act wrongly with us. With these three qualities we will succeed in this world and succeed in the Hereafter. It is with these qualities that we will acquire peace of the heart. And it is these akhlāq that will soften hearts.”

Guidance for the Ummah

The concluding du‘ā took place after the ‘Aṣr ṣalāh. As the packed hall echoed with the ‘āmīn’ of the attendees, a particular prayer of Ḥaḍrat ḥafīẓahullāh grabbed my attention. With great emotion, the respected Ḥaḍrat was pleading for the guidance of the Ummah. As the gathering drew to a close and I waited for my turn to leave the venue, I contemplated on the guidance that had just been shared. Guidance which is a cure but which takes courage, emotional restraint, training and steadfastness to apply. However, I was reassured because I knew that I could return to the IDA and continue with my journey on the path of guidance under expert supervision and with the required spiritual advice.

May Allāh ﷻ grant us the ability to follow the guidance shared at the IDA’s 22nd Annual Youth Conference; and may He continue blessing the Islāmīc Da‘wah Academy and in particular our respected Ḥaḍrat ḥafīẓahullāh with all the means required to share Divine guidance again and again. Āmīn.

© Riyāḍul Jannah