

AHaramain

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Sound Knowledge Precedes Correct Action
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Peace Be Upon Those Who Follow Right Guidance



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A Word From The Editors

One of the basic duties of the Muslim who is conscientious of his duties toward Allah is to seek information that will help him to practice and understand the orders of Allah and His Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam). Allah states: Ask Ahlu Dhikr (the people of remembrance i.e. scholars) if you do not know. [Al-Anbiyaa [The Prophets] 21:7]

However, a problem amongst some is the tendency to "fatwa shop". Meaning, they keep asking around until they get a ruling that coincides with their own preconceptions or thinking. This is reprehensible because it contradicts the principle that one should accept the truth even if it be against themselves. Allah also states in the Qur'aan: O you who believe, stand firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be he rich or poor, Allah is a Better Protector to both . So follow not the lusts of your hearts lest you may avoid justice, and if you distort your witness or refuse to give it , verily, Allah is Ever Well-Aquainted with what you do. [An-Nisaa 135]

There is a qualitative difference between the person who seeks another scholars' opinion because there is a genuine question about a particular interpretation, and the one who simply does not like the initial ruling for no other reason than 'It just doesn't seem right' and therefore seeks to find an alternative that will allow them to do what they wish. Very few people are of the level of piety that they can judge the soundness of a religious verdict based solely upon their feeling! The greatest and most pious scholars would not dare take such a position out of fear of Allah and the possibility of contradicting the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam). They would only resort to consulting their own hearts after having exhausted all other textual proofs to the best of their ability and were finally unable to find any clear cut answer.

The Deen of Islam is based upon evidence, not conjecture, and it is Allah Alone who has the right to determine what Islam is. He informed us through revelation of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam). The ruling based on feelings has no place in Islam though it may be used by some claimants who are usually proven to possess little real knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh).

Some may misunderstand the famous hadeeth of the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam): Consult your heart. Righteousness is that which the soul feels tranquil, and wrongdoing is that which wavers in the soul and moves to and fro in the breast even though people again and again have given you their legal opinion in its favor. [Musnad Imaam Ahmed Ibn Hanbal and Ad-Daarimee]

Also If you feel no shame then do as you wish. [Al-Bukhaari]

They take the first hadeeth as meaning 'If I get a ruling that contradicts how I feel in my heart then I don't have to follow it regardless of whether the ruling is based upon the Qur'aan and authentic hadeeth and a reliable and proven interpretation. This leaves the door of corruption and hypocrisy wide open to those whose hearts may be already sinful and corrupt. They would never follow the correct course if left to themselves!

The second hadeeth is misunderstood as 'If I don't have a problem with it, it must be o.k.' This understanding would leave the sinful and corrupted, or the ignorant, to follow each and every desire that appeals to them and could be taken to any extreme to justify wrongdoing.

These ahaadeeth should be correctly understood to mean that if a questioner is aware that their motivation is not totally pure or even the person they have consulted is not fully qualified to give a religious ruling and yet they are given a favorable ruling, they will consequently never feel tranquil or comfortable with the ruling if they have any fear of Allah or are honest with themselves. The questioner will know deep down if he even asked the question correctly or if it was instead 'loaded' or 'slanted' in order to steer the answer his way. If a believer falls into this trap his heart will never rest tranquil, and we seek refuge from that.

As far as the second hadeeth, it may be better understood as meaning that those people who feel no shame will indeed do as they wish, therefore the hadeeth is actually a caution to the Muslim who seeks righteousness to be aware of his own weaknesses or lack of shamefulness. Every Muslim should know that the character of feeling shamefulness (hayaa') is a sign of Eemaan or faith for the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said: Al-Hayaa is a part of Eemaan [Muslim]

The correct position of the believing Muslim (mu'min) is clearly stated in Aayat 36 of Chapter Al-Ahzaab in the Noble Qur'aan: It is not fitting for a believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has indeed strayed in a plain error.

It should therefore be clear, dear reader, that as long as we are assured that the ruling of a scholar is based upon the Qur'aan and its proper interpretation from the authentic hadeeth and the hadeeth itself is understood in light of other statements by the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and the understanding of the Companions (radiallahu anhum), that we are obliged to adhere to that ruling and may Allah reward the scholar for his efforts.

May Allah increase all of us in knowledge, Ameen.



Feature

» Islam: The True Path

Man does not live by bread alone. His physical needs and mundane desires may be very important but the physical comforts are not the only things essential for his purposeful survival. His social and spiritual needs are equally important. It is not an exaggeration to say that his social and spiritual needs are in some ways more important than anything else.

What's Wrong

The modern trend of suicide, drug abuse, alcoholism, and depression among the well-to-do and wealthy people of many societies substantiates the point that social and spiritual needs of man are more vital than the material ones. The affluent societies of modern times have proved how miserable the life of those people who have all imaginable physical comforts and worldly resources at their disposal can be, when it is empty of the richness of the social and spiritual aspects of life. Society devoid of social and spiritual purposefulness could very easily turn vegetative in its nature. No society with a little bit of wisdom would like to choose to live like a cabbage. When man ignores his spiritual and social make-up and development he can be even worse than a cabbage. He then really falls to the lowest level of creature. Man through the ages has tried to solve his problems of social and spiritual wants by accepting and following a belief system which could guide him to meet his non-material needs and save him from being vegetative in his nature. Belief is an innate part of humans. Every one of us has some form of beliefs. Even in our day-to-day life we base many of our acts and actions on a certain belief. How often every one of us utters the phrase "I believe" in order to assure himself and also others of the opinions and views he holds about one thing or another.

The Need For Correct Belief

Belief is an essential part of man's life. The belief of an individual exercises its influence on the material and mundane aspects of life. It is belief which finally serves as a torch light for a human being when he comes to a point of making a decision about right and wrong. The choice between right and wrong and good and bad could be arbitrary or subject to a defined pattern of a value system. The value system which finally governs man's conduct could be laid down by man himself or it could have a super-human force. This pattern of beliefs and values falls onto the arena that we call "religion" or a "system of faith." The best system of faith and value pattern for human beings must be the one which has a close proximity with the nature of man. This is the only rightful system which could be suitable and beneficial for him. Certainly man has not created himself. He is one of the creatures of a supreme Being, namely, Allah.

Man is the best of all creatures and has been created in the most suitable proportions. Since man has not created himself, he can have no claim whatsoever to possess an ultimate knowledge of himself and his nature. Consequently, if he tries to create a value system for himself, he is not able to evolve it in accordance with his own nature. Even if we presume that he might evolve a value pattern which may be close to his own nature, he cannot claim a certainty on this score, as he, being the subject of his own nature, cannot claim to have a total understanding of it.

Only Allah Has All The Answers

It is only the Creator, Allah, who has total knowledge of man and his nature. Since man's created value system cannot, with confidence, be claimed to be totally in accordance with his own nature, it cannot be the perfect system which could be followed completely without giving rise to situations of conflict between that man-made value system and human nature. Man has often tried to create a perfect value system to suit his own nature, and every time such an effort ended

up in utter failure. Thus he has always been in dire need of a value system which is perfect in itself and which is also in accordance with his nature.

The basic need and desire of man to discover a perfect value system for himself has always been fulfilled by man's Creator, as He knows perfectly that man himself would not be able to solve his problems on his own. He, therefore, sent His prophets from time to time for the rightful guidance of man. To send prophets and Messengers for the guidance of man was in itself meant to help man to fulfil his natural desire to have a religion and a belief system for his life. Divine Guidance for man began right from the creation of the first man, Adam, who was also the first prophet of Allah.

Islam Is The Answer

As time passed, the human race forgot and strayed from the Divine Guidance. Allah sent prophets to remind people of the path they ought to follow. In most cases, people even changed and distorted the Divine Guidance after the death of the prophet, therefore a new prophet was sent by the Lord, Glorified be He. This process continued until Allah sent His last prophet, Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam), who was given the final and complete guidance for all human beings for all time to come. The guidance which Allah designed for man was given the name 'Islam' by Allah Himself. Islam has been the right path for all human beings throughout the history of mankind, and it will remain the right path for man for all time to come.

Islam simply means obedience and surrender to the will of Allah. This was the main message which was brought by all the prophets. All the prophets obeyed Allah and persuaded their people to follow the same path. Islam is the religion which was practiced and preached by all the prophets of Allah from Adam till Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam). All brought the same message for man, i.e. God is One and is unlike His creation, and complete surrender to His will by obeying His commands and orders in every aspect of life.

This guidance was sent by Allah in the form of the last Revelation - The Qur'aan. It was not only preached by the final prophet of Allah, Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam), but was practiced by him in its minutest details in order to set an example for all people to come. Islam's demand of obedience and surrender to the will of Allah necessarily means following the teaching of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah which encompasses the speech, actions, and tacit approvals of the last prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam). Allah states clearly in the Qur'aan: Today I have perfected your religion for you, and completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. [Al-Maida 5:3] Thus the only right path for man to follow for all time to come is the universal faith of Islam.

(Adapted from The Study of Al-Qur'aan - Al Qur'aan Society)



AQEEDAH (BELIEFS)

» THE MEANING OF THE DUAL TESTIMONY OF FAITH (SHAHAADATAIN)

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam), and on his household and all of his Companions.

How many times have you heard or even said the following words? Ash hadu allaa ilaaha illallah wa ashadu anna Muhammadar Rasoolullah. [I bear witness that there is no deity except Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah]. Yes indeed, it is the two-part testimony or declaration of faith by which the one who utters it enters into the fold of Islam. More importantly however, is whether you as a listener or as the one who has made this declaration have really considered the meaning of this great declaration and its implications for the one who utters it?

Importance of Understanding The Testimony

This testimony of faith is the foundation upon which Islam is based. The concept of life, the universe and man is diffused from it, and upon it is based the message of all Messengers ('alahimus salaam) beginning with Noah ('alaihi salaam) and ending with Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam), peace be upon them all. The first half of the testimony constitutes what is also known as al-kalima, which literally means 'the word' Laa ilaaha illallah.

Allah the Exalted says: We did not send a Messenger before you without revealing to him: 'There is no God worthy of being worshiped except I, therefore worship Me' [Al-Anbiyaa - 21:25]

The Testimony Comprises Two Pillars: Denial And Affirmation

1. The first half of this first part Laa ilaaha - There is no Ilaah (deity) - denies everyone and everything other than Allah, the Exalted, the attribute of divinity. This is known as nafy (negation) in Arabic.

2. The second half of this declaration illallah (except Allah) affirms and restricts divinity to Allah alone. That is, the slave must believe that Allah is the only true God, and therefore must not dedicate any act of worship to other than Allah. This is known in Arabic as ithbaat (affirmation).

Conditions Of The First Half Of The Declaration

Confessing the testimony of faith must be coupled with fulfilling its seven conditions. Every door has a key that unlocks it. These conditions may be analogized with the teeth of that key in order that it function properly. Though one may have indeed entered Islam upon uttering the words it can also be said that complete faith cannot be attained unless he fully understands the implications of his testimony.

1. Knowledge which negates Ignorance. Allah states: So know (O Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam), Peace be upon him) that La ilaaha Illa-Allah.(There is no God but Allah). [Q 47:19]. The more a believer knows about Allah and His Deen the less likely is he to fall prey to the traps of Satan and more likely to benefit himself and others.
2. Certainty which negates Doubt. Only those are the believers who have believed in Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam), and afterward doubt not but strive with their wealth and their lives in the Cause of Allah. They are the truthful. [Al-Hujuraat - 49:15]. The declaration should be made with the fullest conviction and confidence that Allah is One and Alone and Islam is indeed the true religion.
3. Sincerity and purity of intent which negates Shirk. Surely the religion (i.e. worship and obedience) is for Allah only. [Az-Zumar - 39:3]. No deed will be accepted if it is not done with pure intent and aim to please Allah.
4. Truthfulness which negates Hypocrisy. Do people think that they will be left alone because they say 'We believe' and will not be tested? And we indeed tested those who were before them. And Allah will certainly make known those who are true and will certainly make known those who are liars. [Al-Ankabut - 29:2,3]. It is very simple for one to feign belief but it is Allah who indeed knows the inner truthfulness of all who claim to believe in Him.
5. Love and devotion which negates disdain of Allah's religion. And to mankind are some who take some (associates for worship) besides Allah as rivals; they love them as they love Allah. But those who believe love Allah more (than anything else). [Al-Baqarah - 2:165]. Loving Allah necessitates that the believer put full trust in him and loves all that he learns of what Allah has commanded and forbidden. Therefore the true believer loves each and every aspect of Islam and he loves those others who likewise do so.
6. Submission which negates Disobedience. And turn in repentance to your Lord and submit to Him in Islam. [Az-Zumar 39:54]. To willfully disobey when Allah's commands have been made clear is to belie the declaration of faith.
7. Acceptance which negates Rejection or Denial. Truly when it was said to them: 'There is no God except Allah', they puffed themselves up with pride (i.e. denied it). And (they) said : 'Are we going to abandon our gods for the sake of a mad poet? [As-Saffaat 37:35-36]. There can be nothing but full acceptance of the truth of the declaration. Partial acceptance is like no acceptance at all.

The Second Half Of The Testimony: Muhammadan Rasoolullah

This is the declaration that "Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) is the Messenger of Allah". This second part of the testimony of faith is no less important than the first. In fact. It is impossible for one to be a true believer in the first part without also believing in the second. It necessitates belief in the following:

1. Total submission to Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) in whatever he ordered. Allah states: But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions and accept them with full submission. [Q4:65] and He who obeys the Messenger has indeed obeyed Allah [Q4:80]
2. Avoiding what he (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) forbade. And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam), gives you, take it and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it). [Al-Hashr 59:7].
3. Believing in all those matters he informed us about. The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord and so do the believers [Q2:285]
4. Loving the Messenger (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam). The Prophet has said about himself None of you truly believes until I am more beloved to him than his parents [lit. father], his children [lit. son] and all of mankind. [Al-Bukhaari]

A Sobering Thought

Allah states: O Prophet, We have sent you as a witness and a bringer of glad tidings and a Warner. And as one who invites to Allah (i.e, to worship Him Alone) by His Leave and as a Lamp spreading Light (through your instructions). [Al-Ahzaab - 33:45, 46]

In an age when there is actually controversy over whether or not a Muslim must actually obey Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and adhere to his way, no true Muslim should remain ignorant of the great meanings contained within the two-part testimony by which one joins this great Deen of Islam. It may well be true as is said by some "There are many who have been Muslims for all of their lives who are really in need of taking the Shahaadatain all over again." The Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) is the one who brought us Islam in its final form and exemplified it in his speech and character. Through him (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) Allah has spread His light all over this earth and surely in such a dark place as the world can at times be, there is nothing more needed than a beacon to show us the way .



Understanding The Qur'aan

» The Difference Between Qur'aan & Hadeeth

Islam is very clear on the concept of God and the concept of Prophet so that there is no confusion or ambiguity in the minds of Muslims between the two. Islam distinguished between a) The word of Allah brought by the angel Jibreel (Gabriel) as revelation, known as the Qur'aan;

and b) The words of Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) which are known as the Hadeeth.

This separate identity of Allah and His creation is very vital if you study the history of old religions and Islam ensured that they were not mixed. How was this done?

How Was The Integrity Of The Qur'aan Insured?

The companions (radiallahu 'anhum) on the instruction of Prophet Mohammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam), wrote down the words of Allah as revealed and also kept them in memory, so as to ensure that from the time of revelation until now the word of Allah remains pure and untainted. However, the Prophet commanded the companions not to write down the hadeeth during the early period of Islam, and the wisdom behind this was not to mix the hadeeth with the word of Allah. It is very important for Muslims to understand the differences between the hadeeth, hadeeth Qudsi, and the Qur'aan.

There is another important aspect to hadeeth. The actions and sayings of the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) provided clarification of the meanings of Qur'aan. When inquired about the character of Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam), his wife Aisha (radiallahu 'anhaa) replied, His character is the Qur'aan. This indicates that Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) gave further explanation of the Qur'aan with what he said or did during his lifetime. For example, the Qur'aan mentions prayer and the hadeeth or the Sunnah shows Muslims how and when to do it. The following details will help clarify the matter further.

Defining The Types Of Hadeeth

The meaning of Hadeeth is news, report or narration. They are reports about the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) in the following:

- * What he said (qaul)
- * What he did (fi' l)
- * What he approved in other people's action (taqrir)
- * There are also reports about him i.e. what he was like (sifa)

There is agreement among most Muslim scholars, that the contents of the sunnah are also from Allah. However, these were expressed by the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) in his own words or actions. They are the words and actions of a human being transmitted by the companions and family members (radiallahu 'anhum), who memorized the words or closely observed the actions of Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) for the benefit of the Muslim Ummah.

Hadeeth Qudsi

Qudsi means holy or pure. There are some reports from Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) where he relates to the people starting with a statement "Allah (said) says" or "Allah (did) does", but this information is not part of the Qur'aan. These are called Hadeeth Qudsi. For example: Abu Dharr Al-Ghifari reported, that Allah's messenger related from his Rubb is that He said: O My slaves, I have forbidden oppression for Myself and have made it forbidden amongst you, so do not oppress one another...O My slaves, all of you are astray except for those I have guided, so seek guidance of Me and I shall guide you. O my slaves, all of you are hungry except for those I have fed, so seek food of Me and I shall feed you... [Reported by Muslim]

The Difference Between Hadeeth Qudsi and the Qur'aan

While the common factor between Hadeeth Qudsi and the Qur'aan is that both contain words from Allah which have been revealed to Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam), the main points of differences are:

1. In the Qur'aan the precise wording is from Allah, while wording in the Hadeeth Qudsi is given by the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam);
2. The Qur'aan has been brought to the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) only by the angel Jibreel (Gabriel), while Hadeeth Qudsi may also have been inspired otherwise, such as e.g. a dream;
3. The Qur'aan is inimitable and unique, while the Hadeeth Qudsi is not;
4. Qur'aan has been transmitted by numerous persons (tawaatur), whereas the Hadeeth Qudsi is often only transmitted by a few or sometimes even by one individual. There are also Hadeeth Qudsi which are graded as Saheeh (highest authenticity), or hasan (authentic), or even da'if (weakness in the transmission or text). There is no such doubt about any of the verses of the Qur'aan.
5. Hadeeth Qudsi cannot be recited in the prayer.

The Qur'aan was recorded at the time of revelation and the verses and chapters were arranged on the instructions of Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) during his lifetime. Every year during the month of Ramadhan the angel Jibreel came to the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and recited the Qur'aan with him, and during the year the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) died, the angel Jibreel came twice and recited the Qur'aan with him. This was not so in the case of Hadeeth.

All chapters and verses of the Qur'aan were collected and arranged during the caliphate of Abu Bakr (radiallahu 'anhu). They were written on sheets and bound together as a book during the caliphate of Uthman (radiallahu 'anhu) in the same order as shown by the Prophet Mohammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) himself. Additional copies of the Qur'aan were made during this occasion and sent to several Islamic cities. However, the compilation of hadeeth did not start

until very much later and by that time, the Qur'aan was already available in the final form of a bound book.

The science of collecting, analyzing, compiling, grading and reporting of hadeeths became a special field of studies after the period of companions (radiallahu 'anhum). The leading reports are from Al-Bukhari, Muslim, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasai, Ibn Majah, and Abu Dawood which are known as the six most authentic books (As-Sihaahus-Sittah). The validity of a hadeeth depends solely on its agreement with the Qur'aan and the grading of a hadeeth depends on the reliability of the chain of narrators who reported it. In order to do this, the reporter studied the characters and the life of every single person who were mentioned in the chain of narrators. We notice that utmost care was exercised not only in reporting the exact words, but also sifting through the characters of persons who reported them. If a single person in the chain of narrators is reported to be of doubtful character or unreliable, then the entire hadeeth is either rejected or this fact is noted down and specifically mentioned.

The Imams who undertook this enormous task of compiling and reporting the hadeeths exercised great care in their lifetime effort, because these studies laid the foundation for the guidelines in understanding and practicing Islam in the life of every Muslim.



The Sunnah

» The Sunnah as a Decision Factor

One of the biggest calamities that hinders Muslims of today, whether commoners or those considered to be of knowledge, is the lack of knowledge of the Sunnah in deciding matters for themselves or guiding others. As Muslims, the decision making process for our daily lives is made easy for us as we are aided divinely by the Qur'aan and Sunnah (the speech, action or approval of a speech or action by Prophet Muhammad . Anas reported that the Messenger of Allaah said (which means) : "I have left with you two things that (if you hold fast the them) you will never be misled after them (as long as you hold fast to them): The Book of Allaah and my Sunnah. They will not separate from each other till they meet me on the Hawdh (The pool of Paradise river water that flows outside the gates of Paradise on the Hereafter)." [Malik & Al-Hakim.] Furthermore, it is clear in the Qur'aan that Allaah has directed all Muslims to seek help from Him and the Prophet : "O you who believe! Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger and those charged with authority among you; and if you differ in anything among yourselves, then refer it to Allaah and the Messenger if you do believe in Allaah and the Last Day. That is best and most suitable for final determination." [4:59]

What Path Do We Take?

The Muslims must continue to strive in the footsteps of the Prophet's Companions as they hankered after knowledge in every facet of their lives in what the Prophet said and did. The Prophet instructed his followers to make his Sunnah as widely known as possible, taking care that they should not attribute to him anything falsely. He asked his followers to acquire knowledge and teach it to others. In his farewell address the Prophet declared, "Convey to others even if it a single verse from me". Thus the Companions regarded the knowledge of the Sunnah as a sacred trust which they must convey to others and to practice themselves.

There are numerous examples set by the Companions which show how emphatically they abided by the Sunnah of the Prophet, in addition to taking long and arduous journeys to obtain a single hadeeth. So great was the Companions attachment and allegiance to the Sunnah and with such intense zeal and devotion did they follow the Prophet, that if they saw someone ignoring or deviating from the Sunnah, they would exhort him to follow it. History has recorded that once Abdullaah ibn Umar, who is well-known for his adherence to the Sunnah, saw his son Bilal stopping his wife from going to the Mosque. Umar said, "Don't do that because the Messenger of Allaah has said: "Don't stop the slave-girls of Allaah from entering the Houses of Allaah." Bilal was adamant he would not allow her even after listening to this saying. Ibn Umar was so upset he swore never to speak to him again until his dying day.

Asking For Evidence

In following the Sunnah, there could be many instances that someone tells us something or performs a certain action, and they say it's okay to do it, or its "Sunnah", and maybe quote a hadeeth. In whatever case, or if you have some doubts about their source, it is acceptable to ask the individual for proof. Once Abu Musa asked permission to enter upon 'Umar, but seeing that he was busy, he went away. 'Umar then said, "Didn't I hear the voice of 'Abdullaah bin Qais? Allow him to come in." He was called in and 'Umar said to him, "What made you do what you did." He replied, "We have been instructed (i.e. to leave if not admitted after asking permission thrice) thus by the Prophet ." 'Umar said, "Bring proof (witness) for this, otherwise I will do so-and-so to you." Then 'Abdullaah bin Qais went to a gathering of the Ansaar who then said, "None but the youngest of us will give the witness for it." So Abu Saïd Al-Khudri got up and said, "We used to be instructed thus (by the Prophet)." 'Umar said, "This tradition of the Prophet remained hidden from me. Business in the market kept me busy." (Al-Bukhaari)

Allaah has instructed us to hold fast to His Rope, i.e., Islaam (which means): "And hold fast, all of you together to the Rope of Allaah and be not divided among yourselves, and remember Allaah's favor on you, for you were enemies one to another but He joined your hearts together, so that by His Grace, you became brethren..." [3:103]. The Rope of Allaah includes the Sunnah of His Messenger as evident by the knowledge of the correct performance of salaah. Given the instructions in the Qur'aan that we must pray, there are no instructions on how we should perform the prayer. Without the Sunnah of salaah from the Messenger of Allaah, Muslims would be in dispute with one another or be divided among ourselves. So, we cannot exclude the Sunnah from being knots in the Rope of Islaam.

No Question Of What The Criterion Is

The actions and deeds of the Prophet were divinely inspired. Therefore, the same emphasis that we give to following the Messenger of Allaah in the correct performance of prayer, should also be given to following his Sunnah in our daily decision making. For the Sunnah are not to be taken as wise saying of sages and philosophers or the verdicts of rulers and leaders. However, one should believe with full conviction that the words and actions of the Prophet represent the will of Allaah, and thus by following the Sunnah as the Companions did, who were universally regarded as the living embodiment of the Sunnah, we are likewise blessed with Allaah's support, guidance and have set to motion an acknowledgment and renewal of our faith in Allaah's command (which means): "It is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allaah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have an option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allaah and His Messenger, he has indeed strayed in a plan error." [33:36] In other words, by not following the Sunnah of the Prophet, one does not secure Allaah's support, help, inspiration to do good or His protection. He who does not enjoin Divine Guidance (Qur'aan & Sunnah) in his decision making is seized by Satan, especially if he is aware of Allaah instructions and the examples of the Messenger of Allaah, and instead embodies disunity, hatred, lack of brotherhood, religious differences and sectarian practices.

The Prophet taught the method of worship and prayer. He taught equality of mankind, rightful justice, worker rights and complete obedience to Allaah. He explained and showed us the responsibilities an individual has to himself, his parents, his family, his relatives, his neighbors, his friends, other religious sects, the society at large and animals. He taught the method of keeping oneself safe, clean, tidy, healthy, and pious. He taught us the correct ways of carrying out businesses. He taught us of the correct means of earning and spending our money. He taught us to be good and polite with others. He gave details of good manners and decency. He also showed us, from his own examples, how to talk, walk, deal with others, and move about in society. He showed us what our life style at home should be like. He showed us the ways and methods of ruling and governing our society and the world. In short, the Sunnah of the Prophet, is complete. It tells and shows us everything that a Muslim needs to know to make rightfully guided decisions in our daily life, and eliminate the need to associate oneself with any other sources of secular guidance. The Sunnah is one of the preserved sources of Islaamic knowledge, which must be studied, and more importantly implemented in the daily lives of Muslims. And finally, we are told of the punishment one would get in the next world if he refuses to follow this guidance: "And whosoever obeys Allaah and His Messenger will be admitted to Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise), to abide therein, and that will be the great success. And whosoever disobeys Allaah and His Messenger and transgress His Limits, He will cast him into the Fire, to abide therein, and he shall have a disgraceful torment." [4:13-14]

Compiled from: The Authority & Authenticity of Hadeeth as a Source of Islaamic Law - Justice Muhammad Taqi Usmani; The Hadeeth is Proof Itself in Belief and Laws - Shaykh Nadir Ad-Din Al-Albani; The Way of the Prophet - Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq; An Introduction to the Sunnah - Suhaib Hasan, The Study of Al-Qur'aan - Al Qur'aan Society; A Treasury of Hadeeth - Dr. Mazhar U. Kazi.



Rulings (Fataawa)

» Giving Da'wah

Question: Is da'awa (calling) to Allah (i.e. Islam) obligatory upon every Muslim man and woman, or is it to be left for the scholars and the students of Islamic knowledge only? Is it permissible for the average person to do da'wa to Allah?

Answer by Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Saalih Ibn Al-Uthaimen

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 common person - as long as he has certain knowledge of the issue at hand. The Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said: Convey from me even if it is one aayah (verse) [Al-Bukhaari]. So it is not a condition upon the daa'ee (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.

Thus, we see that some of the brothers who call to Allah do not have except a little knowledge. We see them, due to their strong emotions, prohibiting that which Allah has not prohibited, while making obligatory that which Allah has not made obligatory upon His worshippers. This is a very dangerous matter, since permitting what Allah has made haraam (unlawful) is like prohibiting what Allah has made halaal (lawful). So when they begin prohibiting people for making a particular matter halaal, then others will rebuke them for making it haraam. Allah Subhaanahu wa ta'ala says: And do not say, concerning that which your tongues falsely put forward, 'This is lawful and this is forbidden,' so as to invent lies against Allah. Indeed, those who invent lies against Allah will never prosper. [Soorah An-Nahl 16:116 -117]

As for the common person, then he must not call to Allah if he does not have knowledge. Rather it is essential to have knowledge - in accordance with the saying of Allah subhaanahu wa ta'ala: Say: This is my path. I call to Allah upon sure knowledge. [Soorah Yusuf 12:108] So it is a must to call to Allah upon knowledge. However, if a matter is clearly known to be evil or good, then one can command it if it is good, or forbid it if it is evil.

So the callers to Allah must start with knowledge. Whosoever calls to Allah without knowledge will cause greater harm than good, as is evident. It is obligatory for a person to first acquire knowledge, then to do da'wa. As for the clear evils and that which is clearly good, then the good is enjoined and the evil prohibited.



Arabic Terminology Glossary

This brief glossary is to assist the non-Arabic speaker or reader to become familiar with some terminology and statements that are commonplace among Muslims. Transliteration into English phonetic spelling is only a guide and we shall use these forms in the articles within this publication. We shall expand it in the issues to come, in shaa Allah. Consult an Arabic speaker for correct pronunciation.

1. 'alaihi salaam - An invocation of security and sanctity said on behalf of the prophets and messengers of Allah and the angels when hearing their names mentioned. Sometimes rendered (as) pl.'alahimus salaam
2. alhamdulillah - 'The praise is for Allah' This invocation is said by the Muslim upon any occasion of joy, acceptance of an occurrence good or bad, or as a response to an inquiry of 'How are you?'. Its meaning is very broad and it denotes giving thanks to Allah as well as reaffirming that He Alone is to be praised for all that occurs.
3. hafithahullah - 'Allah protect him' Said for any Muslim but usually said as a prayer for the Islamic scholar in particular.
4. in shaa Allah - 'If Allah wills' should be said by every Muslim before undertaking any action as it is a recognition that Allah is in fact in control.
5. maa shaa Allah - 'Allah has willed' Said after the occurrence of any event, again recognizing that it was due to Allah alone.
6. radiallahu 'anhu - Allah be pleased with him. Usually said in deference to the companions of the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam upon hearing their names mentioned in recognition of the favor that Allah has bestowed upon them as the forebearers of the Islamic message. Sometimes rendered (ra) or (raa) pl. 'anhum, fem. 'anhaa, du. 'anhumaa
7. rahimahullah - 'Allah have mercy upon him' Said when remembering a deceased Muslim. fem. rahimahallah also Allahu yarhamu
8. sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam - This is an invocation of blessing that should be said upon mentioning or hearing the name of the Prophet Muhammad. It is usually translated as simply meaning 'Peace be upon him' or 'Peace and blessings be upon him' and at times signified with (pbuh) or (saaws). It is in fact a supplication that Allah mention Muhammad to the high angels and that the angels in turn praise Muhammad before Allah. This is a form of praise and blessing to Muhammad and a request that he suffers no harm and is given a sanctified station in the Hereafter. It also makes the one who mentions it worthy of praise and reward. It is allowed to mention it for other prophets and messengers of Allah. Also 'alaihi salaam wa salaam or salawaatullahi was salaamuhu 'alah

9. Subhaanallah - Usually translated as 'Glory Be To Allah' however its significance is more in-depth because it is a recognition and affirmation by the one who states it in the fact that Allah is free of any type of defect, imperfection, or shortcoming.
10. Subhanahu wa ta'alaah - This is an epitaph attached to the name Allah. The first part signifies recognition that Allah is free of any defects or shortcomings and is to be glorified and praised. The second word is actually a verb that signifies that Allah is high above His creation in every aspect. see Subhannallah

