## AL SUNNAH AS A SOURCE OF ISLAMIC LAW

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# AL SUNNAH AS A SOURCE OF ISLAMIC LAW

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### INTRODUCTION

Al Hadith served not only as extension or supplement to the Quran as a source of law but also served to give shape and demension to the entire structure of Islam. They generate particular kind of atitude to life and message of Quran that the Prophet (PBUH) changed the thinking of his followers and their mental outwork, their vision and approach, their habits and manners, their custom and laws, their culture and civilization, in fact he succeeded in effecting a complete metamorphosis of men and his society. Hadith governs, guides and adorns the entire life in all its complexity.

The study of Hadith is a wide subject and its literature is exceedingly abundant. The theme lands itself to many possibilities, and the religous value attached to the persuit inspired scholars of all ages to take the challenge enthusiastically. The situation, in fact, left the door open to the individual initiatives, thus giving rise to numerous studies on the subject.

In the first chapter of this paper, the status of the Sunnah as a second source of Islamic Law will be discussed, the authority and the role he plays. As it become a second source after the Quran, its relation with the Quran will be looked after.

People today know the Sunnah of Prophet through the collection made by the Muhaddithin. Therefore, it will discuss how the

are and the same a

Sunnah came into writting and the affort made by the Companions to preserve it. Sunnah can be divided in various ways depending on the purpose of classification and the prospective of the investigation. Hence, Sunnah can be classified according to the definition, subject matter (matn) of Sunnah and the manners of its transmission (isnad). In the third chapter, I will discuss various classification of Sunnah which has been classify by the Muhaddithin such as Sunnah Qawliyyah, Sunnah Fi'liyyah, Sunnah Taqririyyah, Mutawatir, Masyhur, Ahad etc.

It cannot be denied that there are people who reject the authority and authenticity of Hadith. They claimed that Al Quran is the soul source of Syariah. This is due to the misunderstanding words the Sunnah brought by the Orientalist writers and it seems that many of the Muslims had been influenced with that ideas. Include in this paper is the critical analysis of what had been written by the Orientalis scholars and the rebuttals made by the Muslim scholars.

#### CHAPTER 1

### AL-SUNNAH - AS A SOURCE OF ISLAMIC LAW

#### 1. DEFINITION

#### a) SUNNAH

Sunnah literally means a clear path or a beaten track. It has also been used to imply normative practice, or an established course of conduct. It may be a good example or a bad example and it may be set by individual, a sect or a community.

The word Sunnah is mentioned in the Quran as continuing custom (العادة المستمرة) or followed way (العادة المستمرة).

Quran says

خد خلت من قبلم سن

"We have passed away before you."2

خقد صفيت سنة الاولني

"The ways of previous people have gone already,"3

In Arabic literature, especially in the early, figh books it has been used in different meanings, such as . established non compulsory religious practice without its being fard or wajth (compulsory).4

- madeine

According to the ulama' of Hadith (muhaddithun) Sunnah refers to all that is narrated from the Prophet, his acts, his sayings and whatever he has tacitly approved plus all the reports which describe his physical attributes and character.5

According to ulama'Usul-fiqh, Sunnah means whatever tranmitted from the Prophet (PBUH) from his sayings, his deeds or approval. Ulama' Usul-fiqh has exclude the description of the physical features of the prophet from the definition of Sunnah.6

Sunnah al Nahi (Prophetic Sunnah) does not occur in the Quran as such. But the phrase "Uswah Hasanah" (excellent conduct) which occurs in surah Al Ahzab:

"Assuredly there has been an excellent pattern for you in the Messenger of Allah."

is the nearest Al Quran equivalent of Sunnah al Nabi. The example of the Prophet, was later interpreted to be a reference to his Sunnah.7

The Quran also uses the word 'hikmah' (wisdom) as a source of guidance that accompanies the Quran itself. In Surah al Jumaah: 2

معدالذى بعث ف الامين رسولا منهم يتلوا عليهم اليته ويزكيهم ويعلمهم الكتب والحكمة

"The God al Mighty sent a messenger to educate and to purify the people by teaching them the Book and the Hikmah".

Al Shafei interpreted the 'hikmah' in this context means the Sunnah of the Prophet.8

Both the term Sunnah and Sunnah Rasullullah have been used by the Prophet himself and his Companions. Thus, when the Prophet sent Muadh bin Jabal as judge to the Yaman, he was asked as to the source on which he would rely in making decisions. In reply Muadh referred first to the Book of Allah and then to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah:

طاراد دسول المدوم ان يبعث معاذ بن جبل إلى الين قال له: كنف تقون اذا عرف لك قضاء ؟ قال اقوني بعاني لتا ب الله، خال خان لم قبر في كتا بالله فال افلب نه رسول الله، قال افان لم يكن في سنة رسول الله قال: اجتهد الله، قال افان لم يكن في سنة رسول الله قال: اجتهد

In another hadith, the Prophet is reported to have said,

# تدكت فيكم اننين لن تضلعا ماتمسكم بماكتاب المعوسنة

"I left two things among you, you shall not go astray so long as you hold on to them : the Book of Allah and my Sunnah."9

The Ulama' has used the word Sunnah and Hadith interchangeably. However, these two terms have meanings of their own.

#### b) HADITH

Literally, Hadith means the narrative, communication or news consisting of the factual account of an event. The word occurs 23 times in the Quran and the word also was used in the same by the Prophet, as it has been used in the Quran. In all cases, it carries the meaning of a narrative or communication.10

According to Muhaddithin, Hadith is what tranmitted on the authority of the Prophet, his deeds, sayings, tacit approval or description of his features.

However, physical appearance of the Prophet is not included in the definition used by the jurists. Hadith is the saying of the Prophet in his capacity as messenger. Therefore, saying before the Prophethood is not Hadith.11

Al Hadith may be best defined as " the total records of the words and deeds of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) as well as his silent approval and description of his person.12

Accordingly, al Hadith is composed of four categories:

1. The Prophet's speeches, which, after the Holy Quran, are in the highest order of eloquence and are full of wisdom

- 2. Reports of the Prophet's conduct in all situations, domestic, political, ritual, etc.
- 3. The Prophet's tacit approval; i.e. the silence of the Prophet about things which happened or were practised under his eyes and with his knowledge
  - 4. The description of the Prophet's person i.e. his personal features.

Hadith differs from Sunnah in the sense that hadith is a naration of the conduct of the Prophet whereas Sunnah is the example or the law that is deduced from it. Hadith in this sense is the vehicle or the carrier of Sunnah, although Sunnah is wider concept and used to be so especially before its literal meaning gave way to its juristic usage. Sunnah thus referred not only to the Hadith of the Prophet but also to the established practice of the community. But once the literal meanings of Hadith and Sunnah gave way to their technical usages and were both exclusively used in reference to the conduct of the Prophet, the became synonymous. This was largely a result of al-Shafei's efforts who insisted that the Sunnah must always be derived from a genuine Hadith and that there was no Sunnah outside the Hadith. In the pre-Shafei period, Hadith was also applied to the statements of the Companions and their successors, the Tabi'un. It thus appears that Hadith began to be used exclusively for the acts and sayings of the Prophet only after the distinction between the Sunnah and Hadith W & S set aside.13

### c) KHABAR AND ATHAR

There are two other terms, namely Khabar and Athar which have often been used as alternatives to Hadith. Literally khabar means news or report. According to ulama Hadith, khabar has three interpretations, that are:-

- 1. It is similar to the Hadith which is means that the meaning of khabar is the meaning of Hadith.
- 2. It is different from the Hadith whereas the Hadith implies to what has come from the Prophet (PBUH), khabar is from the others.
- 3. It is more general than Hadith, while Hadith implies to what has come from the Prophet (PBUH), khabar is from Him and the other.14

Athar literally means impression, vestige or impact. In the terminology of the science of Hadith, it has two interpretations:-

- It is synonym to the Hadith.
- 2. It is different from the Hadith for the Athar is whatever related to the Companions and the Successors from among their saying and actions.15

### 1.2PROOF (HUJJAH) OF SUNNAH

The ulama are unanimous to the effect that Sunnah is a source of syariah and in its meaning with regard to halal and haram it stands on the same footing as the Quran. The Sunnah of the Prophet is a proof (hujjah) for the Quran testifies to its authority and enjoins the Muslim to comply with it.16

And in more than one place, the Quran enjoins obidience to the Prophet and makes it a duty of the believers to submit to his judgement and his authority without question. The following ayah are all explicit on this theme:

"And whatever the Messenger gives you, take it and whatever he forbids you, obstain from it."17

"Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those who are in charge of affairs among you. Should you happen to dispute over something, then refer it to Allah and the Messenger." 18

To refer the judgement of the dispute to Allah means recourse to the Quran and referring it to the Messenger means recourse to the Sunnah.

In another passage, the Quran emphasises :

" Whoever obeys the Messenger verily obeys Allah.19

And the Quran is categorical to the effect that the definitive ruling of the Quran and the Sunnah are binding on the believers in that they are no longer of liberty to differ with the dictates of the divine will or to follow resource of their own choice.

"Whenever Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, it is not for a faithful man or woman to follow another source of his or her own choice."20

In yet another place, the Quran stresses that submission to the authority of the Prophet is not a matter of mere formalistic legality but it is an intergral part of the Muslim faith.

# خلا وربك م يوفمنون متى بى كمدك فيما شجوبينهم م لا يجلسوا فى اننسسهم حدجا كماقر فسيت ويستلموات ليما

"By the Lord, they will not believe till they make them a judge regarding disagreement between them and find in themselves no resistance against accepting your verdict in full submission."21

It is concluded from those and other similar pessages in the Quran and that the Sunnah is a proof next to the Quran in all Syarai matters and that conformity to the terms of Prophetic legislation is a Quranic obligations. 22

### 1.3 QURANIC AYATS ON THE AUTHORITY OF SUNNAH

As unanimously agreed, Sunnah is the second source of Islamic law and its authority is derived from the Quran itself. There are many verses in the Quran to this effect. The quranic ayat on the authority of Sunnah can be divided into five types.

Firstly, there are verses which demonstrate that faith in the Prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) and also to all things which come from him whether it is in the Holy Quran or not is an obligation. 23

Allah swt said:

"By Lord, they will not believe till they make you the judge regarding the disagreement between them and find in themselves no resistance against the verdict, but accept it in full submission."24

It is clear that the obidience to the Prophet is an obligation for a Muslim. Allah swt also said:

ما كان عرف وكو من منة اذا قبني المعورسوله امراان يكون لهم المنين عن اصرهم ومن ليعمل المعورسوله فقد فنل مملال بعيد الذ is not for the true believer, man and woman to take their choice in their affairs if Allah and His Apostle decree otherwise. He who disobeys Allah and His Apostle strays far indeed."25

Allah swt also said:

ما ما الذين امنو المتوابسه ويسعله والكتب الذي نزل على سيسيله والكتب الذي اثن من خبل ومن تبلغ باسه ومليكت وكنيم ويسعله والكتب الذي اثن من خبل ومن تبلغ باسه ومليكت وكنيم ويسعله والديم الاخر خفد فبل مثلا بعيد "O Believers, have faith in Allah and His Messenger and the Book He formally revealed. He that denies Allah, His Angels, His Scriptures, His Apostle and the Last Day has stayed far from the truth."26

It is clear from these verses that a person has no perfect faith unless he believe in Prophet.

Secondly, there are verses in the Holy Quran which instruct us that the Prophet explains and clarifies the ambivalent of the Holy Quran. Here a few of verses will be quoted as an example to prove the point.

Allah swt said: اندلنا إلىك الذكر كتبين للناس مانول اليمم ولعلم بتغكرون

"And We have revealed to you the Reminder (Quran) so that you may make clear to men what has been reveals to them, and that they may give thought."27

Allah swt said:

"Indeed We have sent down forth to you an Apostle of your own people who will recite to you Our Revealation and purifies you of sin, who will instruct you in the Book and wisdom and teach you that of which you have no knowledge." 28

Allah swt said:

"Remember the favour He has bestowed upon you, and the Book and the wisdom which He has revealed for your instruction."29

Thirdly, there are verses in the Holy Quran which indicate to the believers to obey the Prophet in whatever he commands or prohibits.

Allah swt said:

"He who obeys the Prophet obeys Allah Himself."30

Allah swt also said:

"Whatever the Apostle gives you accept it and whatever forbids you for bear from it."31

And also,

"O believers, obey Allah and the Apostle and those in authority among you. Should you disagree about anything refer it to Allah and Last Day. This will be better and more just."32

Ali r.a. regarding the interpretation of this verse said that the word () radd here referred to Allah and His Messenger is directed to all believers whether they were at the time of the Prophet or come later because it is directed to the whole community. Thus, there is no base for anyone to say that it is only directed to those who could see the Prophet.

Fourthly, there are verses in the Holy Quran which indicate that it is an obligation upon a believer to follow the Prophet in whatever comes from for the sake of Allah's love.

Allah swt said:

# خل ان كنت مخبون الله ما تبعون يحبكم ، للم وليغزلم ونوبكم والله عقوررميم

"Say, if you love Allah, follow me. Allah will love you and forgive your sins. Allah is forgiving and merciful."33

Allah swt said:

"You have a good example in Allah's Apostle for anyone who looks to Allah and the Last Day and remember Allah always."34

Fifthly, there are verses in the Holy Quran which made it the responsibility of the Prophet to follow whatever is revealed to him and to convey it to the people and prohibited him from any changes.

Allah s.w.t said :

"And now we have set you on the right part, follow it and do not yelled to the desire of the ignorant man".35

Allah s.w.t. said:

"We have not sent forth but as marcy to mankind".36

All these five categories of the verses of the Holy Quran are proof for the authority of the Sunnah.

### 1.4. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN QURAN AND SUNNAH

The question may arise what role the Sunnah plays in relation to the Quran. The relationship of the Quran and Sunnah are as follows:-

1) The Sunnah may consist of rules which merely confirms or reitrate the Quran. All Ahadith pertaining to five pillars of Islam and other matters such as right of its own parents, respect for the property of others and ahadith which regulate homicide, theft and false testimony are basically reaffirmed the Quranic principles.37

There are some examples to illustrate the points. The Prophet said that Islam is based on five affirms the Quranic verses regarding the obligations such as prayers fasting, zakat, hajj.

Another example:

"It is unlawful to take the property of a Muslim without his consent".

This Hadith merely confirms the Quranic verse which order to Muslim to devour not each other's property unlawfully unless it be through trade by your consent.38

Thus, it is right to say that this kind of Sunnah confirms or reaffirms the Quranic provisions.

2) The Sunnah may consist of rules regarding the explanation or clarification to the Quran or it may clarify the ambivalent (mujmal), qualify its absolute or specify the general terms of the Quran.39

in the Quranic verse :

"Until you tell a white thread from a black one is explained as the light of day and the darkness of the light".

The ulama are in agreement that these two types of Sunnah are intergal part of the Quran. The two cannot be taken separately or taken independently.

3) The Sunnah may consist of rules on which the Quran is silent in which case the ruling originates in Sunnah itself. For example, the prohibition regarding simultanous marriage to the maternal or paternal aunt of ones's wife, the right

of pre-emption, the grandmother entitlement to a share in the inheritance, the punishment of rajm originate in the Sunnah.40

4) The Sunnah may consist of rules which abrogate the Quranic provisions for example, the hadith:

"No bequest to the heirs".

abrogate the Quranic verse :

"It is decreed that when death approaches those of you that have wealth shall bequeath it equitably to parents and kindred. This is a duty incumbent on the righteous".41

### 1.5) IS SUNNAH AN INDEPENDENT SOURCE

With regards to the first and the second types of Hadith discussed above there is no disagreement among the jurists that it is not an independent source. However, the disagreement surrounds the third type of Hadith. Some ulama of the latter age including of al-Shatibi and al-Shawkani have held their views that the Sunnah is an independent source. Their reasonings are as follows:

- 1) They maintain that the Sura al-Nahl (16:44): "We have sent down to you the Rememberance so that you may explain to the people what has been revealed to them" is inconclusive despite its being clear on the point that the Prophet interpret the Quran, it does not over rule the recognition of the Sunnah as an independent source.
- Allah s.w.t. command men to obey the Prophet and obedience to the Prophet is mentioned next to the obidience to Allah. The obidience refers to all what the Prophet orders or prohibits and it is not confined only to what the Prophet explains the Quran. They maintain that if the obidience is only confined to explanation of the Quran by the Prophet then it was redundant to mention the obidience of the Prophet.
- 3) They also quote the Hadith og Muadh bin Jabal in order to support their view.

However, the majority of the ulama' represented by Imam Shafii are of the view that even if the Sunnah enacts the original legislation is explanation and intergal to the Quran. For example, all ahadith which provide details as to lawful and unlawful food and prohibit which is unclean (Al-A'raf 7:157). They argue as follows:

1) They refer to the saying of Aishah r.a, who attempted the