

# Sisters' Class - The Status of the Sunnah in Islam

---

## What is the sunnah?

- In the Arabic language: a biography, or a way, or beginning something
- In the religion: The complete guidance of the Prophet (peace be upon him)
- When the *salaf* used to refer to the 'sunnah' they would mean either:
  - The complete guidance of the Prophet (peace be upon him)
  - Or specifically referring to Aqeedah (creed): e.g: "He is upon the Sunnah"
- In a technical sense, it depends on which group of people are talking, eg:
  - The scholars of hadith: "What is narrated from the Prophet (peace be upon him) from his sayings, actions, approval, and description"
  - The scholars of fiqh: "What a person is rewarded for doing and not punished for leaving"

## The rights of the Prophet (peace be upon him) which relate to the status of the Sunnah

- Belief that he passed on the Message
- The belief that the Prophet (peace be upon him) was infallible in the following areas:
  - Passing on the Message
  - He was protected from committing any form of shirk and kufr
  - He was protected from lying
  - He was protected from major sins
- As for the minor sins, the scholars differed. However, the correct opinion is that the Prophet (peace be upon him) committed minor sins but
  - They were genuine mistakes, as a result of him making his best effort
  - He would not be allowed to continue doing so, without us being informed
  - He would make tawbah for every single minor sin

## More rights of the Prophet (peace be upon him)

- Loving him
  - People are of three types:
    - Those who exceed in their love of the Prophet – giving him Allah's rights
    - Those who do not love him enough – not giving him the rights that he deserves
    - Those who take a middle path – the people of sunnah

- Obeying him
- Honour and respect:
  - Allah says: “That you [people] may believe in Allah and His Messenger and honour him and respect the Prophet and exalt Allah morning and afternoon.” [Al-Fath 48:9]

## Glorifying the sunnah

- Ruling by it
- Being pleased with it
- Submitting to it

## What does it mean to glorify the sunnah?

- Not to contradict the sunnah with:
  - Your intellect
  - Analogy
  - *Dhawq* – a term used by some sufis to describe something they ‘just feel is right/wrong’
  - Politics
- That the proof from the sunnah not be accused of being deficient
- That no way be sought to reject the proof contained within the sunnah

## Ways of glorifying the sunnah

- Glorifying what is glorified in the sunnah
- Implementing the sunnah in our actions
- Coming together and co-operating upon it
- Forming friendships and taking enemies based upon it
- Learning it and telling people about it
- Knowing the status of its people
- Being happy because of it, such as when you see the sunnah being implemented in a particular place

## How did the salaf used to glorify the sunnah

- By following it
- By being severe against the people who contradict the sunnah
- By glorifying the sunnah when relating it to others

## Why is the sunnah so important

- The speech of the best of creation
- Most of the rulings in the shari'a come from the sunnah
- The lofty virtue of reviving the sunnah
- It is from giving sincere advice to Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him)
- Explains the condition of the best of creation
- Gives you the meaning of being a companion, even though you can't accompany the Prophet (peace be upon him) in person, you can do so in meaning
- Is more important than other forms of knowledge

## The status of the sunnah in the Qur'aan

- Various aspects:
  - The obligation of believing in it
  - That the Prophet didn't talk from his own desire
  - It explains the book of Allah
  - That he is the best of guides
  - The obligation of obeying him
  - The punishment of those who disobey him
  - The obligation of referring back to the sunnah

## The status of the sunnah in the sunnah

- Various aspects:
  - That which relates to obeying the Messenger
  - That which relates to the sunnah being revelation
  - That which relates to the sunnah containing every form of good
  - The virtue of holding fast to the sunnah
  - Warning those who oppose the sunnah

## Sources of knowledge about the status of the sunnah

- Saheeh Al-Bukhari and Muslim
- The Four Sunan
  - Especially Ibn Maajah in his introduction
- The book of imaam ad-daarimee
- Classical books of aqeedah
- Modern books

## The position of the Sunnah in relation to the Qur'aan

- The sunnah is equal to the Qur'aan
- Even the scholars who said the Qur'aan is better than the sunnah only did so from the point of view that it is the speech of Allah
- It is not allowed to prefer a ruling from the Qur'aan over the sunnah

## Refuting those who reject the sunnah

- This is a topic for a separate class, however there are a few simple points that you should be aware of:
  - The people who reject the sunnah are of different types.
  - The worst of them are those who reject the sunnah entirely (or almost entirely), such as the raafidah (shi'a) and the modernist hadith rejecters
  - They are followed by those who reject a large proportion of the sunnah
    - such as those who reject the ahaadeeth of Ali and Mu'aawiyah (may Allah be pleased with them both), and all of those who sided with either of them. This is commonly seen from the khawaarij.
    - As well as those who reject the hadith which are aahaad (they only have a single chain of narration), such as the mu'tazilah and others
    - Those who reject the hadith which have a single narration are of varying degrees. Some accept all of them, except what disagrees with their intellect.
  - As Imam Ahmad said: "Whoever rejects a single hadith is on the brink of destruction"
- Refuting all of these groups has some general principles that you can be aware of
  - Be aware of the status of the sunnah, and the importance of the sunnah in the Qur'aan and from the speech of the Prophet (peace be upon him)
  - Be aware of the history of the sunnah, and how it was recorded and preserved
  - Be aware of the statements of the great scholars and imams about sticking to the sunnah, as well as their statements about those who reject the sunnah, and the arguments that they use to defeat them
  - Understand the position of the various sects with regard to the sunnah, such as the khawaarij, the mu'tazilah, the raafidah, and others