

Recommended Additional Reading

Being a refutation to those who deny the authority of Sunnah.

Importance of Sunnah

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The following is a request from a close friend of mine. This is an article that briefly reminds the true believer of the authority of the Sunnah of Muḥammad (ﷺ). I pray that Allāh accepts this from me and that He forgives me and my family and that He increases me in beneficial knowledge. Āmīn.

Bismillāh wa'lḥamdulillāh wa'ṣ-Ṣalātu wa's-Salāmu 'alā ashrafil anbiyā' wa'l-Mursalīn. Nabiyyinā wa Ḥabībīnā Muḥammad b. Abdillāh.

Amma ba'd.

On the authority of Abū Ruqayyah, Tamīm bin Aws ad-Darī (رضي الله عنه) who reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said : "The **Dīn** is **an-Naṣiḥah** (sincerity/good counsel)." We said, "For whom." He said, "For Allāh, his Book, His Messenger, and for Muslim leaders and commoners." [Muslim]

Let me take a moment of your time and remind each of us of a very important aspect of our daily lives - Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ). From the aforementioned ḥadīth, sincerity to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) means to firmly believe in the prophecy of Muḥammad (ﷺ) and to firmly obey his commands. It also means to follow his actions and to avoid what he has prohibited for his ummah. In addition, it means to give full loyalty and support to those who gave their loyalty and support to him (ﷺ). Thus, this would include the Saḥāba raḍiyallāhu 'anhum ajma'in and those that followed them.

In the 20th century, Islām has been attacked from all angles lately. One of the primary sources of attack happens to come from some people who have used their finite intellect to conclude that the Sunnah need not be an authoritative entity in the lives of every Muslim. They are under the impression that the Qur'ān is a sufficient the Muslim. Since these people feel this way, then let us use the Qur'ān to remind these persons (and may Allāh guide them and us to full obedience, Amīn) of the Sunnah in a three-fold fashion: its **status**, **obedience** (i'tā'ah) and **following** (ittibā').

Status of the Sunnah

Messengers were not sent to simply deliver Allāh's message. They were sent to explain the divine Book that was revealed to them, interpret it, expound upon it, demonstrate the ways of its application and to present a practical example of its contents. Allāh says: "Allāh has surely blessed the believers with His favour when He raised in their midst a Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His verses and makes them pure and teaches them the Book and the wisdom, while they were, earlier, in an open error." [Qur'ān 3:164]

The same functions were attributed to Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) in the prayer of Khalīlullāh Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) when, in the Qur'ān, he prayed: "Our Lord, raise in their midst a messenger from among themselves who recites to them Your verse and teaches them the Book and the wisdom and purifies them." [Qur'ān 2:129]

With these āyāt, we see that the Qur'ān leaves no ambiguities in the fact that the Prophet (ﷺ) is not to merely recite the verses and then leave the interpretation according to conjecture and frivolous applications. Instead, he was ordained to do four tasks:

- a** — To be the authority in the way the Book has to be recited.
- b** — To be the final word in the interpretation of the Book.
- c** — To be the only source at which the wisdom based on divine guidance can be learned.
- d** — To be entrusted with the practical training of the people to bring his teachings into practice.

These functions cannot be carried out unless his teachings (oral, practical, etc.) are held to be authoritative for his followers; and the Muslims who are given under his training are made bound to obey and follow him.

Obedience to the Messenger

There are many places in the Qur'ān where Allāh uses the phrase, "Obey Allāh and obey His Messenger..." Here are three āyāt which illustrate this: "Say, Obey Allāh

and the Messenger but if they turn their backs, Allāh loves not the disbelievers." [Qur'ān 3:32]

"And obey Allāh and the Messenger so that you may be blessed." [Qur'ān 3:132]

"O you believe, obey Allāh and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allāh and His Messenger if you believe in Allāh and in the Last Day. This is better and more suitable for final determination." [Qur'ān 4:59]

The **obedience** of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) is not a new principle. This principle was applied to all of the previous prophets and messengers. Allāh says : "And we sent no messenger, but that he should be obeyed by the leave of Allāh." [Qur'ān 4:64]

The Qur'ān also clarified that the **obedience to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) is actually obedience to Him**. As we find in the Qur'ān : "And whoever obeys the Messenger, thereby obeys Allāh." [Qur'ān 41:80] Conversely, we find that Allāh warns against disobedience to His Messenger (ﷺ): "And whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger, for him there is the fire of Jahannam. There they will remain forever." [Qur'ān 72:23]

So, we see from all of this the uncompromising obligation that every Muslim must obey the Messenger (ﷺ). If this is not enough proof, then refer to the following list of āyāt:

- "So fear Allāh and set things right between you and obey Allāh and His Messenger if you are believers." [Qur'ān 8:1]
- "O you who believe. Obey Allāh and His Messenger if you are believers." [Qur'ān 8:20]
- "And obey Allāh and His Messenger and do not quarrel with each other, so as to lose heart." [Qur'ān 8:46]
- "Say, 'Obey Allāh and obey the Messenger; then if you turn away, upon him rests what is laid on him, and upon you rests what is laid on you. If you obey him, you will be guided.'" [Qur'ān 24:54]
- "O you who believe, obey Allāh and the Messenger and do not make your deeds go in vain." [Qur'ān 47:33]
- "So establish ṣalāh and pay zakāh and obey Allāh and His Messenger." [Qur'ān 58:13]
- "And obey Allāh and obey the Messenger, but if you turn your backs, Our Messenger has only to deliver the clear message." [Qur'ān 64:12]
- "And whoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger, Allāh shall admit him in the Gardens underneath which rivers flow." [Qur'ān 4:13]

- "And whoever obeys Allāh and the Messenger - they are in the company of those whom Allāh has blessed." [Qur'ān 4:69]
- "All that the believers say, when they are called to Allāh and His Messenger that he may judge between them, is that they say, 'We hear, and we obey:' It is these who are successful. Whoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger and fears Allāh and has awe of Him - it these who are the winners." [Qur'ān 24:52]
- "And whoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger, he has won great success." [Qur'ān 33:71]
- "If you obey Allāh and His Messenger, He will not diminish you anything of your deeds." [Qur'ān 49:14]
- "And we sent no messenger, but that he should be obeyed by the leave of Allāh." [Qur'ān 4:64]
- "And the believers, men and women, are friends of each other, they enjoin the good and they forbid the evil; they establish ṣalāh and pay zakāh and they obey Allāh and His Messenger. These are those upon whom Allāh shall have mercy; Allāh is All-Mighty, All-Wise." [Qur'ān 9:71]
- "And whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger and transgresses His limits, He shall admit him in the Fire of Hell where he shall remain there forever." [Qur'ān 4:14]
- "And whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger has clearly gone astray." [Qur'ān 33:36]
- "And whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger, for him there is the fire of Jahannam. There they shall remain forever." [Qur'ān 72:23]
- "And whoever makes a breach with Allāh and His Messenger, then Allāh is severe in punishment." [Qur'ān 8:13]
- "Did they not come to know that whoever opposes Allāh and His Messenger, for him there is the fire of Jahannam." [Qur'ān 9:63]
- "And establish ṣalāh and pay zakāh and obey the Prophet, so that you may be blessed." [Qur'ān 24:56]
- "And if you obey him (the Prophet), you shall find the right path." [Qur'ān 24:54]
- "On that day those who disbelieved and disobeyed the Messenger will wish that the earth might be levelled with them." [Qur'ān 4:42]
- "And whoever makes a breach with the Messenger after the right path has become clear to him, and follows a way other than that of the believers, We shall let him own what he chose and shall admit him in the Jahannam, and

what an evil place." [Qur'ān 4:115]

- "And it is not possible for a human being that Allāh should speak to him, except by revelation, or from behind a curtain, or that He should send a messenger and he reveal by His leave what He wills." [Qur'ān 42:51],
- "And whoever obeys the Messenger indeed obeys Allāh." [Qur'ān 4:80]
- "And he (the Prophet) does not speak out of his own desire. It is not but a revelation revealed (to him)." [Qur'ān 53:3]

Ittiba' (following) of the Prophet (ﷺ)

We will now remind each other of the necessity to follow our noble Prophet (ﷺ). Allāh says in the following āyāt :

- "Say, if you love Allāh, then follow me and Allāh will love you and forgive you your sins." [Qur'ān 3:31]
- "Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet whom they find written down with them in the Torah and Injeel..." [Qur'ān 7:157]
- "O Prophet, sufficient to you for you is Allāh and whose who followed you of the believers." [Qur'ān 8:64]

The Prophet (ﷺ) was sent to the people to set a practical example of what he teaches and preaches. His acts were not confined to just talk. Rather, his acts demonstrate to the Muslims the proper way of living. This is supported by the following āyah: "Surely in the Messenger of Allāh there is an excellent example for the one who hopes (to meet) Allāh in the Hereafter, and remembers Allāh abundantly." [Qur'ān 33:23]

Here are some other references that one can find proof of the obligation to follow Muḥammad b. Abdullāh b. Abdul-Muṭṭalib (ﷺ):

- "Allāh has surely relented towards the Prophet and the Emigrants and the Helpers who followed him in an hour of difficulty." [Qur'ān 9:117]
- "(The believers say:) Our Lord, we have come to believe in what You revealed, and followed the Messenger. So, write us among those who bear witness." [Qur'ān 3:53]
- "Say, 'This is my way. I call to Allāh with sure knowledge, I and whoever follows me.'" [Qur'ān 12:108]
- "The closest of the people to Ibraheem are those who follow him." [Qur'ān 3:68]
- "And We set in the hearts of those who followed him (jesus) tenderness and mercy." [Qur'ān 57:27]

- “And warn the people of the day when the punishment comes on them and those who did evil shall say, ‘Our Lord, defer us to a near term; and we shall respond to Your call and shall follow the messengers.’” [Qur’ān 14:44]
- “And We did not appoint the Qiblah on which you were earlier, but that We might know the people who follow the Messenger, as distinct from those who turn back on their heels.” [Qur’ān 2:143]
- “He said, ‘My people follow the messengers.’” [Qur’ān 36:20]
- “(Moses said:) And your Lord is the Raḥmān (the All-Merciful). So follow me and obey my command.” [Qur’ān 20:90]
- So, they (the disbelievers) said, ‘Shall we follow a single human being from among us?’ Then, indeed we should be in error and insanity.’” [Qur’ān 54:24]

O Muslims! It is **not conceivable** that Allāh would have sent a Prophet and not mentioned the need to follow him. As in [Qur’ān 33:23] we find that for the one who is a Muslim, one must follow the Prophet (ﷺ). **Why?** To be avoid the wrath of Allāh in this world and in the Hereafter. For those who insist on **not obeying and following the Prophet** (ﷺ), then know that the he/she is walking a **path of destruction**. The same Qur’ān that some people claim is sufficient for them did not read these āyāt that we have cited in this article. Therefore, we advise these people to look at the Qur’ān again and fear Allāh!

Verdict (**fatwah**) **regarding those who deny the Authority of the Sunnah** from the previous portions of this paper, we gave proof from the same Qur’ān that the so-called “**Qur’āniyyūn**” use to deny the authority of the sunnah. We showed an abundant number of evidence about the need to obey and follow the Prophet (ﷺ). So, the question is now asked, “What about the one who denies the Authority of the Sunnah in obedience and following?” **The answer** is based on the following two āyāt in the Qur’ān.

Allāh says in Sūratu’n-Nisā’, āyah 65 : “But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith until they make you (i.e., Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ)) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept them with full submission.”

Allāh also says in the same sūrah in āyah 61 : “And when it is said to them: ‘Come to what Allāh has sent down and to the Messenger,’ you see the hypocrites turn away from you with aversion.”

Thus, the one who refuses to acknowledge that the Sunnah is an authoritative entity in the lives of the Muslim has committed **unbelief (kufr)**.

So, this person or persons is **not a Muslim**. He or she has negated his **shahādah** because he does not accept the Sunnah to be an authoritative entity in his **Dīn**.

If we say that the Qur'ān is the source of legislation and only take portions of the Qur'ān but disregard others like the **Qur'āniyyūn**, then one has in essence stated that the Qur'ān is incomplete and contradictory in its diction. Thus, one is stating that Allāh contradicts Himself! Again this is **kufr**.

In addition, the **shahādah** is the statement that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh and that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is His slave and Messenger. The one who states this openly, but hates the Sunnah by refusing to accept its authority is a **hypocrite** whose destination is the lowest depths of the Hell-Fire, for eternity.

We advise the ignorant one to return to the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ) and stop uttering the words of the deviant disbelievers who deny the authority of the Sunnah. As for the one who refuses to repent to his Lord, may we remind you of an *āyah* in the Qur'ān - the Book which these deviants say they follow: "And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger after the Right Path has been shown clearly to him, and follows other than the believers' way, We shall keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell - what an evil destination." [Surah An-Nisaa :115]

The choice is yours!

O Allāh, the turner of the hearts, please keep our hearts firmly to your obedience!

O Allāh, forgive us.

O Allāh have mercy on us.

O Allāh, pardon us of our sins.

O Allāh bestow abundant and infinite bounties on Your beloved Messenger (ﷺ).

Amīn.

Wa Subḥānaka 'Allāhumma wa biḥamdik. Ash-hadu an lā ilāha illā anta. Astaghfiruka wa 'atūbu ilayk.

Wa's-Salāmu 'Alaykum wa Raḥmatullāhi wa Barakātuh.