



The Status of Hadith/ Sunnah: Its Position, Basis and Necessity

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Abstract

The paper started by defining the terms *Sunnah* or Hadith with literally and technically acting verse of the Qur'an and *Sunnah* to buttress these definitions, the paper continues to sure the categorization of *Sunnah* viewing its different types and the find that it was a revelations like the Qur'an and it is the meaning of the term *Hikmah* which it mentioned in so many places in the Qur'an side by side with the Kitab. The paper further outlined the position of the *Sunnah* in Islamic Law and the fact that it is the explanation of the Glorious Qur'an. The paper further outlined the evidence from the Qur'an that shared the necessity of obedience to the Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and that it is a condition of being a believer and the only way to achieve success in the world and the next and concluded that it is the only way to achieve prosperity.

Keywords: Status, Hadith, *Sunnah*, Position, Basis and Necessity.

INTRODUCTION

The name of Allah the most Gracious, the most merciful all prayers are due to Allah the creator, the cherisher and the sustainer of the entire universe, may the most perfect blessing and peace be upon the seal of Allah's Prophet s and messengers, Muhammad Ibn Abdullahi the Qurashite, the Hashmite and the Adnanite, his noble household most prestige companion and their followers up till the last day Amin Ya Allah.^[1] The status of Hadith/*Sunnah* in Islam: its position, basis and necessity.

Definition of Hadith/*Sunnah*

The word Hadith is an Arabic word derived from Haddatha, Yahaddithu, Hadithan meaning that he reported he is reporting the report. Hadith literally signifies speech conversation, report, account of something that happened, tale, narration message or utterance, as indicated by the statement of Allah, the Most High in various verses of the Glorious Qur'an. He said to Prophet Muhammad many Allah's peace and blessing upon him: You would only purchase from yourself to death, following after them in grief, if they believe not in this message^[2], Hadith in this verse means this verse means this message referring to the message of Islam and specifically, to the Glorious Qur'an see also Qur'an 77:50 and 53:59, 93:11, and 51:24 among others.

Al-Hadith denotes the saying of the noble Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessing be upon him) had used the word. Its was transmitted in Sahih at Bukhari from the Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him, that he said: I said oh the messenger of Allah who is most successful in benefitting from your intercession in the day of judgment? He said: I strongly thought that no one will ask me about this Hadith earlier than you because of what I observed in you of your earnestness in preserving this Hadith. The most successful in getting my intercession in the Day of judgment is he who said: *Lailaha Illa Allah* sincerely from his inner self.^[3]

¹ Covan, J. M, Hans Waver Dictionary of Modern Arabic (Arabic to English) India New Delhi 1960, P. 61

² Yusuf A.A The Holy Qur'an text Translation and Commentary (Syria) Dar Al-Arabiyya, Qur'an 18:6

³ Imam Al-Bukhari Sahih Albukhari Kitabu Ilmu, Imam Muslim Kitabu Attahara. From Uqba Ibn Amir where the word Hadith was mention by the Prophet May Allah's mercy and blessing be upon him) se also Immamu Atirmith sunan al-tirmith Aburah al-ilmi.

There are many definitions given to the word Hadith by different Islamic scholars based on their disciplines, but the most comprehensive was given by the Hadith scholars (*Muhaddithun*). The word Hadith in the terminology of the Hadith scholars stands for what was reported from the Prophet (may Allah's peace and Blessing be upon him) of his saying, deed, or approval or physical or moral qualities, or biography whether it was before or after he started receiving revelation with this definition Hadith is synonymous to *Sunnah*.^[4]

Sunnah linguistically, refers to a way or a path or usage or sanctioned tradition, customary procedures or action hadith or practice.^[5]

This path could either be praiseworthy or blameworthy as indicated by the Prophets statement:

"من سن في الإسلام سنة حسنة فله أجرها وأجر من عمل بها إلى يوم القيامة. ومن سن في الإسلام سنة سيئة فعليه وزرها ووزر من عمل بها إلى يوم القيامة."

"Whenever guided to a good path (way) is Islam, he will have its reward and he rewards those who acted according to it up till day of judgment. whoever guided to a bad path (way) he will have its.

Sin (recorded against him) and the sin of those who acted accordingly till the day of judgment^[6] there are different connotations when it comes to the terminology of the Hadith scholars concerning the definition of the word *Sunnah*. It is divided into different categories *Sunnah Qauliyyah* which refers to the verbal statement of the Prophet (may the peace and blessing Allah be upon him), *Sunnah Fi'liyyah* (*Sunnah* of action referring to practical acts of the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessing be upon him) and *Sunnah Taqririyyah* (*Sunnah* of Approval) referring to deeds of the Sahabah or statement said or done in the presence of the Prophet (May Allah's peace and Blessing be upon him) which he did not object or better still accompanied by verbal or practical approval. You can also talk of *Sunnah Khalqiyyah* or *Khuliqiyyah* (Natural *Sunnah*) and *Sunnah* of characters or *Sunnah Tarkiyyah* which means whatever he did not act in the name of *Ibadah* (Worship) we should not do it like drawing straight lines in the modern *Masjid* to straighten the laws of prayer. *Khususiyyah Sunnah* that is restricted to the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessing be upon him) and one should not do it or observe it like marrying more than four wives not eating Sadaqah (which is also applicable to his kith and Kin (Ahlal Bait) and the necessity of Qiyam al-Lail) (or *Tahajjud*) which is obligatory only to him but *Sunnah* recommended for his community.

Sunnah according to the majority of Hadith Scholars is synonymous to Hadith while some of them prefer to restrict *Sunnah* to the actual deeds or actions of the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessing be upon him) and Hadith to his sayings or to the record or report of the *Sunnah* itself. In other words Hadith is described as container while *Sunnah* is its content.

Lastly it could be said that, the saying of the Prophet (may Allah's peace and Blessing be upon him) if reviewed as Hadith and his deed if viewed as *Sunnah* each support and emphasizes one another. Their subject matter is the same, which is explanation of the Prophet's pattern of life and as the significance of Allah's statement: "You have indeed in the messenger of Allah excellent example for him in whose hopes are in Allah and the final Day, and who remembers Allah much⁷ could be realized. Therefore, it is never out of place to refer Hadith and *Sunnah* as synonymous.

The position of *Sunnah* and Islam

Sunnah is the next source of the *Shari'ah* after al-Qur'an (ie The *Kitab*). The Qur'an and the *Sunnah* aid *Isma* are called by Islamic legal experts as the primary and unalterable source of *Shari'ah* spiritual.

Every issue, spiritual or mundane, has to be referred first to the *Kitab* and *Sunnah* for the solution. Whatever these two consider and *Sunnah* for the solution. Whatever these find consider to be permissible remains permissible and whatever they regard as forbidden remains forbidden therefore, their rulings is final and decisive.

⁴ Al-khatib M.U, al-Sunnah Qabl al-tadawin, Lebenon: (Beirut) Darul Al-Fiqir, Third Edition 1400AH, 1980CE page 16

⁵ Covan J.M Opcit, P. 433

⁶ Imamu Muslim Sahid Muslim Kitabu Al-ilmu from jabir Ibn Abdullah see also Imamu Dairami in his sunan al-darami under the title wof Hadith from Jarir, Jarir and Abu Hurairah (May Allah be please with them)

⁷ Ibn Majah Sunan Ibn Majah, al Ahkam from Aishah May Allah be pleased be with her

The *Sunnah* is no doubt the commentator and explainer of the Glorious Qur'an. It is the practical manifestation of the meaning and teachings of the Qur'an. Aishah the mother of the believers one of the noble wives of the Prophet (Nouh) Allah's peace and blessing be upon him) may Allah be pleased with them all, reported here said about the Prophet (may Allah's piece and blessing be upon him): His pattern of behavior reflects what is embodied in the Qur'an.

Basis and necessity of obedience to the Prophet may Allah's peace and Blessing be upon him

To understand the basis of the *Sunnah*, we have to realize that the verse of the Glorious Qur'an, Showed that the (Prophet may Allah's peace and Blessing be upon him) was given the *Kitab* as well as the *Hikmah* (wisdom) concurrently. It is an established fact among the Muslim Ummah that the *Kitab* referred in these verses referred to no other than Qur'an. In the same way the *Hikmah* expanded in those refers also referred to the *Sunnah* Allah the Most High saying the Glorious Qur'an that "Allah did confer a great favor on the believers when he sent them on apostle from among themselves, rehearsing unto them sayings of Allah sanctifying them and instructing them in scripture and wisdom (*Al-Hikma*) – although they had been before that in error manifest⁸" According to Imam Shafi'i (May Allah have mercy on him) he has head many scholars whom he is sure of their depth of understanding that in all those verses the Qur'an where *Al-Kitab* and it *Hikmah* were mentioned side by side. *Al-Hikmah* refers to no other than Prophet's *Sunnah* because it is associated with *Al-Hikmah* which is Al-Qur'an and throughout the Qur'an obedience to Allah is mentioned side by side with obedience to the Prophet (May Allah's be peace and blessing be upon him) likewise belief in Allah is not fruitful except with belief in His apostle (May Allah's peace and Blessing be upon him). Abu Dawud, Transmitted in his *Sunnah* from Miqdam Ibn Ma'd Yakirib (May Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (May Allah's peace and Blessing be upon him) said:

إلا إني أوتيت القرآن ومثله معه

Behold! I was given Something like it together with it^[9]

Necessity of obedience to the Prophet (May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him). Having seen the evidences which proved that *Sunnah* is the wisdom given to the Prophet (May Allah's Peace and Blessings be Upon him) other them *Al-Kitab* which refers to the Qur'an there are also many evidences to serve as a proof for obedience to the Prophet (May Allah's Peace and Blessings be Upon him) and therefore to his *Sunnah*.

Allah the Most High the Most exalted says; "Oh you who believe, obey Allah and obey the apostle, and those charged with authority among you. If you differ in anything among yourselves, refer to Allah and His messengers of you believe in Allah and the last day. That is best and most suitable for final determination^[10]".

In another verse, he said; "It is not fitting for a believer man and woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and his Apostle, to have any option about their decision. If anyone disobeys Allah and his Apostle, He is indeed clearly on wrong path^[11]".

These two verses show that for the recognition of one's faith in Allah and the last Day, obedience to the Prophet may Allah's peace and blessing be upon him, must be ensured and invariably also to the *Sunnah*. They also show that obedience to Allah and His Apostle may Allah's peace and blessing be upon him is unconditional, while obedience to any other than them is contingent upon their obedience their obedience to Allah and His Apostle.

Any command therefore, apart from the one coming from Allah and His Apostle may Allah's peace and blessing be upon him, must never go contrary to theirs, otherwise, it should be flatly disregarded.

Other verses pointing to the same verdict could not be enumerated here, reference could be made to the following: Allah the Most High the Gglorified says: So take whatever the Apostle assigns to you and deny yourselves that which he

⁸ Ibid Qur'an 3:164 see also Ibid Qur'an 62:2-3, Qur'an 4:113, Qur'an 2:231 and Qur'an 33:34.

⁸ Abu Dawud, Musnad Ahmad, sunan Al-Tirmidhi and sunan Al- Darami all from miqdad (May Allah be Pleased with him)

¹⁰ Qur'an 4:59

¹¹ Ibid, Qur'an 33:36

¹² Ibid, Qur'an 59:7

¹³ Ibid, Qur'an 3:132

¹⁴ Ibid Qur'an 4:80 and Qur'an 4:64

¹⁵ Ibid, Qur'an 2:165

¹⁶ Ibid, Qur'an 3:22

withholds from you and fear Allah: for Allah is strict in punishment^[12] and Allah says: and obey Allah and His Apostle; that you may receive mercy^[13]”. Here it is made a condition for obtaining mercy of Allah to obey Allah and His Apostle and that is the paramount need or hope for any sincere behave.

To those who may think that obedience to the Apostle is not obedience to Allah, the Qur`an replied: He who obeys the Apostle, obeys Allah^[14]:

Love for Allah is the first prerequisite for a sound belief itself, a behavior must love Allah above anyone else^[15] But this love for Allah could itself never be considered sound or meaningful without love obedience to the Prophet may Allah`s peace and blessing be upon him). This is clearly in the Qur`an, where Allah says: if you do love Allah follows me. Allah will love you and forgive you yours sins. For Allah is forgiving, most merciful9” there are so many verses that pointed the same fact.

CONCLUSION

Having seen the definition of the word Hadith and Sunnah and their position and basis in the Shari`ah coming next after the Qur`an, it is pertinent to realize that the basis of the Sunnah is highly and basically established in the glorious Qur`an and further outlined in the Sunnah itself. Verily comprehending this fact in the and understanding it very well is very important for one`s spiritual progress in whatever capacity it is reviewed. Since there is no prosperity in this world and the next life without realizing this fact in practice.

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