

## The obligation of applying the Sunnah and deeming whoever denies it a Kaafir

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

All praise be to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds. May the good end be for the pious. May Allaah's peace and blessings be upon His Slave and Messenger, our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who was sent as a mercy to the worlds and evidence that leaves no room for disbelief. May Allaah's peace and blessings be upon his family and Companions who conveyed Allaah's Book and the Messenger's Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) to those who came after them very honestly and thoroughly, while preserving the meanings and the words. May Allaah be pleased with them, please them, and make us among their followers in righteousness.

Scholars in the past and present have unanimously agreed on the fundamentals on which rulings are based and by which that which is Halaal (lawful) and that which is Haraam (prohibited) is known. These sources are:

1. Allaah's Book, which falsehood cannot approach it;
2. the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) who never spoke of his own desire but only according to Wahee (Revelation);
3. and then Ijma` (consensus of scholars).

Scholars disagreed over other sources, especially Qiyaas (analogy). However, the Jumhoor (dominant majority of scholars) consider it supporting evidence if all its conditions are met. The evidence of these sources are many.

The first source is Allaah's Book. In many Ayahs (Qur'aanic verses), Allaah (Glorified and Exalted be He) indicates the obligation of following this Book (the Noble Qur'aan), adhering to it, and not going beyond its limits. Allaah (Exalted be He) says: **[Say (O Muhammad ﷺ) to these idolaters (pagan Arabs) of your folk:] Follow what has been sent down unto you from your Lord (the Qur'aan and Prophet Muhammad's Sunnah), and follow not any Auleeyaa' (protectors and helpers who order you to associate partners in worship with Allaah), besides Him (Allaah). Little do you remember!]**<sup>1</sup> Allaah (Exalted be He) also says: **[And this is a blessed Book (the Qur'aan) which We have sent down, so follow it and fear Allaah (i.e. do not disobey His Orders), that you may receive mercy (i.e. be saved from the torment of**

<sup>1</sup> Soorah al-A'raaf [7:3]

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Hell).]<sup>2</sup> And: [Indeed, there has come to you from Allaah a light (Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) and a plain Book (this Qur'aan). Wherewith Allaah guides all those who seek His Good Pleasure to ways of peace, and He brings them out of darkness by His Will unto light and guides them to the Straight Way (Islaamic Monotheism).]<sup>3</sup> And: [Verily, those who disbelieved in the Reminder (i.e. the Qur'aan) when it came to them (shall receive the punishment). And verily, it is an honourable well-fortified respected Book (because it is Allaah's Speech, and He has protected it from corruption. Falsehood cannot come to it from before it or behind it: (it is) sent down by the All-Wise, Worthy of all praise (Allaah عز وجل).]<sup>4</sup> And: [...this Qur'aan has been revealed to me that I may therewith warn you and whomsoever it may reach.]<sup>5</sup> And: [This (Qur'aan) is a Message for mankind (and a clear proof against them), in order that they may be warned thereby]<sup>6</sup> There are many Ayahs that stress this meaning. Saheeh (authentic) Hadeeths were reported from the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) ordering us to adhere to the Qur'aan, indicating that adherence to it leads to guidance and negligence of it leads to misguidance. It was authentically reported that the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) said in his Khutbah (sermon) in the Farewell Hajj: [I am leaving you that which if you adhere to you will not go astray: the Book of Allaah.]<sup>7</sup> It was also related in Saheeh Muslim on the authority of Zayd ibn Arqam (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [I am leaving among you two weighty things, the first of which is the Book of Allaah in which there is guidance and light, so hold fast to the Book of Allaah and adhere to it.] Thus, the Prophet (peace be upon him) urged us to adhere to the Book of Allaah. Then, he said: [...and the members of my family; I remind you (of your duties) toward the members of my family.] In another narration: He (peace be upon him) said about the Qur'aan, ['It is the Rope of Allaah. Whoever holds on to it will be on the right path; and whoever abandons it will go astray.']<sup>8</sup>

There are many Hadeeths that stress this meaning. People of knowledge and 'Eemaan (faith) among the Sahaabah (Companions of the Prophet) and those who came after them unanimously agreed on the obligation of adhering to Allaah's Book as well as referring to it and to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him). This is enough, and we need no further evidence in this regard.

The second source is the authentic Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him). The Sahaabah and people of knowledge and 'Eemaan who came after them all believed in this principal source, used it as evidence, and taught it to the Ummah (nation). They wrote many books about this and clarified it in the books of Usool-ul-Fiqh (principles of Islaamic

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<sup>2</sup> Soorah al-An'aam [6:155]

<sup>3</sup> Soorah al-Ma'idah [5:15-16]

<sup>4</sup> Soorah Foosilat [41:41-42]

<sup>5</sup> Soorah al-An'aam [6:19]

<sup>6</sup> Soorah Ibraaheem [14:52]

<sup>7</sup> Related by Muslim in his Saheeh

<sup>8</sup> Saheeh Muslim

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jurisprudence) and Mustalah al-Hadeeth (Hadeeth terminology). There are many pieces of evidence for this, including the order in Allaah's Book to follow and obey the Prophet (peace be upon him). The people who lived during the Prophet's era as well as the following generations are meant by this order, because he was the Messenger of Allaah to mankind. People are ordered to follow him until the Day of Judgment. He (peace be upon him) was the one who interpreted Allaah's Book and clarified it with his words, actions and approvals. Without Sunnah, Muslims would not have known the number of Rak'ahs (units of Prayer) of each Salaah (Prayer), the way to perform it and its obligations. They would not have known the details of the rulings on Sawm (Fast), Zakaah (obligatory charity), Hajj, Jihaad (fighting in the Cause of Allaah), propagation of virtue and prevention of vice, or the details of rulings on transactions, prohibitions, Hudood (ordained punishments for violating Allaah's Law), and so on.

Allaah (Exalted be He) says in Soorah al-'Imraan: **[And obey Allaah and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) that you may obtain mercy.]**<sup>9</sup> He (Exalted be He) says in Soorah al-Nisaa': **[O you who believe! Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allaah and His Messenger (ﷺ), if you believe in Allaah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.]**<sup>10</sup>

He (Exalted be He) also says in Soorah al-Nisaa': **[He who obeys the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), has indeed obeyed Allaah, but he who turns away, then we have not sent you (o Muhammad ﷺ) as a watcher over them.]**<sup>11</sup> How could we obey the Prophet (peace be upon him) and refer to his Sunnah in disputable matters if his Sunnah did not provide evidence or was not recorded? If we suppose so, Allaah has thus referred His slaves to something that does not exist, which is the most misleading falsehood and the gravest form of Kufr (disbelief) and mistrust in Allaah. Allaah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in Soorah al-Nahl: **[And We have also sent down unto you (o Muhammad ﷺ) the Dhikr [reminder and the advice (i.e. the Qur'aan)], that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them, and that they may give thought.]**<sup>12</sup>

In another Ayah, Allaah (Exalted be He) says: **[And We have not sent down the Book (the Qur'aan) to you (o Muhammad ﷺ), except that you may explain clearly unto them those things in which they differ, and (as) a guidance and a mercy for a folk who believe.]**<sup>13</sup> How would Allaah (Glorified be He) entrust His Messenger (peace be upon him) with clarifying what was revealed to him if his Sunnah did not exist or was not considered to be supporting evidence? Allaah (Exalted be He) says in Soorah al-Noor: **[Say: "Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger, but**

<sup>9</sup> Soorah al-'Imraan [3:132]

<sup>10</sup> Soorah al-Nisaa' [4:59]

<sup>11</sup> Soorah al-Nisaa' [4:80]

<sup>12</sup> Soorah al-Nahl [16:44]

<sup>13</sup> Soorah al-Nahl [16:64]

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if you turn away, he (Messenger Muhammad ﷺ) is only responsible for the duty placed on him (i.e. to convey Allaah's Message) and you for that placed on you. If you obey him, you shall be on the right guidance. The Messenger's duty is only to convey (the message) in a clear way (i.e. to preach in a plain way)."<sup>14</sup> In the same Soorah, Allaah (Exalted be He) says: [And perform As-Salaat (Iqaamat-as-Salaat), and give Zakaat and obey the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) that you may receive mercy (from Allaah).]<sup>15</sup>

He (Exalted be He) says in Soorah Al-A'raaf: [Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allaah - to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. Laa ilaaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He). It is He Who gives life and causes death. So believe in Allaah and His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e. Muhammad ﷺ), who believes in Allaah and His Words [(this Qur'aan), the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and also Allaah's Word: "Be!" - and he was, i.e. 'Isaa (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary), عليهما السلام], and follow him so that you may be guided."]<sup>16</sup>

These Ayahs clearly indicate that following the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) leads to guidance and mercy. How could this be attained if his Sunnah is not applied or said to be unreliable? Allaah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in Soorah al-Noor: [And let those who oppose the Messenger's (Muhammad ﷺ) commandment (i.e. his Sunnah - legal ways, orders, acts of worship, statements) (among the sects) beware, lest some Fitnah (disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquakes, killing, overpowered by a tyrant) should befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them.]<sup>17</sup> He (Exalted be He) also says in Soorah al-Hasher: [And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it).]<sup>18</sup>

There are many Ayahs to this effect, indicating the obligation of obeying the Messenger (peace be upon him) and following what he was sent with, typically as the previous evidence indicated the obligation of following Allaah's Book and adhering to its commands and prohibitions. They are two inseparable sources; whoever denies one of them has denied the other, and this is Kufr, deviation, and departure from Islaam according to Ijma`. Many Hadeeths ranked as Mutawaatir (a Hadeeth reported by a significant number of narrators throughout the chain of narration, whose agreement upon a lie is impossible) were reported from the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) indicating the obligation of obeying him and following what he was sent with, and the prohibition of disobeying him. This entails both his contemporaries and the following generations until the Day of Resurrection. This includes the Hadeeths authentically reported from him in the Two Saheeh (authentic) Books of

<sup>14</sup> Soorah al-Noor [24:54]

<sup>15</sup> Soorah al-Noor [24:56]

<sup>16</sup> Soorah al-A'raaf [7:158]

<sup>17</sup> Soorah al-Noor [24:63]

<sup>18</sup> Soorah al-Hasher [59:7]

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Hadeeth (i.e. al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) on the authority of Aboo Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **[Whoever obeys me has obeyed Allaah; and whoever disobeys me has disobeyed Allaah.]** It was also mentioned in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **['My entire Ummah will enter Jannah (Paradise) except those who refuse.' It was asked, 'O Messenger of Allaah, who will refuse?' He (peace be upon him) said, 'Whoever obeys me will enter Jannah; and whoever disobeys me is the one who refuses.']** It was related by Ahmad, Aboo Dawood and al-Hakim through an authentic Isnaad (chain of narration) on the authority of Al-Miqdam ibn Ma'dy Karib that the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) said: **[I have been given the Qur'aan and the like of it with it (i.e. the Sunnah); yet the time will come when a satiated man leaning on his couch will hear some of my Hadeeths and will say, 'The judge between you and us is the Book of Allaah; what we find in it to be Halaal, we will declare as Halaal; and what we find in it to be Haraam, we will declare as Haraam.']**

It was also related by Aboo Dawood and Ibn Maajah with a Saheeh Sanad (chain of narrators) on the authority of Ibn Aboo Rafi` on the authority of his father that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **[Let me not find one of you, reclining on his couch, upon hearing something that I have commanded or forbidden, say, 'I do not know this. What we find in Allaah's Book we will follow.']** It was also reported on the authority of al-Hassan ibn Jaabir that he heard al-Miqdam ibn Ma'dy Karib (may Allaah be pleased with him) saying: **[The Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) prohibited some matters on the Day of Khaybar, and then he said, 'Some of you will belie me (i.e. my Hadeeths) while reclining on comfortable cushions. They will be told of my Hadeeths and they will say, 'The Book of Allaah is a judge between you and us. What we find in it to be Halaal, we will declare as Halaal; and what we find in it to be Haraam, we will declare as Haraam.' Indeed, that which the Messenger of Allaah declares to be Haraam is as forbidden as that which Allaah has declared to be Haraam.]]**<sup>19</sup> Mutawaatir Hadeeths were reported from the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) in which he (peace be upon him) asked the attendants of his Khutbahs to notify those who were absent, saying to them: **[The informed one might comprehend it (what I have said) better than the present audience.]**<sup>20</sup> This also includes the Hadeeth recorded in the Two Saheeh Books of Hadeeth that when the Prophet (peace be upon him) delivered a Khutbah to the people in the Farewell Hajj, on the Day of `Arafah (9th of Dhul-Hijjah) and on the Day of Sacrifice (10th of Dhul-Hijjah), he said to them: **[Let those who are present convey it (this information) to those who are absent. The informed one may comprehend it (what I have said) better than the present audience (who will convey it to them).]**<sup>21</sup> If his Sunnah was not a proof against those who hear it and those to whom it is conveyed, and if it were not to remain valid until the Day of Resurrection, then the Prophet (peace be upon him) would not have commanded them to convey it. Thus, by hearing the Hadeeths directly from the Prophet (peace be upon him) or by having them reported through authentic Isnaad, the evidence is established and there can be no excuse.

<sup>19</sup> Related by Al-Hakim, Al-Tirmidhee and Ibn Maajah through an authentic Isnaad

<sup>20</sup> Saheeh Bukhaaree

<sup>21</sup> Saheeh Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim

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The Sahaabah preserved the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him), whether his verbal or practical teachings. They conveyed it to the Tabi'oon (Followers, the generation after the Companions of the Prophet), who in turn conveyed it to the following generations. Thus, trustworthy scholars conveyed it from generation to another and from a century to another. They also compiled it in books, classified it into Saheeh (authentic) and Da'eef (weak) categories of Hadeeth, and developed rules for the Saheeh and Da'eef Hadeeths. Scholars have preserved the books of the Sunnah, such as the Two Saheeh Books of Hadeeth just like Allaah (Exalted be He) has preserved His Book from distortions and atheism in fulfilment of His Words: **[Verily, We, it is We Who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Qur'aan) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption).]**<sup>22</sup>

There is no doubt that the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) was divine revelation. Allaah preserved it just the same as He preserved His Book. He appointed for it great scholars to protect it from distortions of the liars and interpretations of the ignorant, and to defend it against all that was falsely ascribed to it by ignorant people, liars and atheists. Allaah (Glorified be He) made the Sunnah an interpretation of the meanings of the Qur'aan in which the rulings of the Qur'aan are clarified in detail. It also includes other rulings that are not stated in the Qur'aan, such as the rulings on breastfeeding, inheritance, prohibition of marrying a woman and her paternal or maternal aunt, and such other rulings mentioned in the Saheeh Sunnah but not mentioned in the Qur'aan.

Below are some statements of the Sahaabah, Tabi'oon, and the scholars who followed them about the obligation of honouring and applying the Sunnah. It was reported in the Two Saheeh Books of Hadeeth on the authority of Aboo Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) that he said: **[When the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) died and some of the Arabs became Murtad (apostates), Aboo Bakr Al-Siddeeq (may Allaah be pleased with him) said, 'By Allaah, I will fight those who differentiate between Salaah (Prayer) and Zakaah (obligatory charity).'** `Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) wondered, **'How can you fight them although the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: I have been ordered to fight the people so that they testify that La ilaha illa Allaah (there is none worthy of worship but Allaah alone). If they say it, they have saved their lives and property from me, provided that they fulfil its conditions?' Aboo Bakr Al-Siddeeq said, 'Is Zakaah not one of its conditions? By Allaah, if they refuse to give me even a young she-goat they used to give to the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him), I will fight them for that.'** `Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) said, **'When I saw that Aboo Bakr has already decided to fight, I knew that it is the truth.'** The Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) followed suit and fought the Murtads until they returned to Islaam and killed those who insisted on Riddah (apostasy). This is a clear evidence of the obligation of honouring and applying the Sunnah.

A grandmother came to Al-Siddeeq (may Allaah be pleased with him) asking him about her share in inheritance, he said to her: "There is nothing prescribed for you in Allaah's Book, nor do I know anything prescribed for you in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him),

<sup>22</sup> Soorah al-Hijr [15:9]

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but I will ask the people." He (may Allaah be pleased with him) asked the Sahaabah. Some of them testified that the Prophet (peace be upon him) gave the grandmother one sixth of the inheritance, so he gave it to her.

`Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) used to ask his governors to judge among the people according to Allaah's Book. If they failed to find a solution to a case in Allaah's Book, they would refer to the Sunnah of the Messenger (peace be upon him). When he could not decide the ruling on Imlas (miscarriage of a foetus due to aggression against its mother), he asked some of the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) about it. Muhammad ibn Maslamah and Al-Mugheera ibn Shu`bah (may Allaah be pleased with them) testified that the Prophet (peace be upon him) gave a verdict of paying the value of a male or female slave, so he (may Allaah be pleased with them) gave the same verdict.

When `Uthmaan (may Allaah be pleased with him) was confused about the ruling on a woman spending `Iddah (woman's prescribed waiting period after widowhood) in the house of her husband or moving to her parents' house, Furay`ah bint Maalik ibn Sinan, sister of Aboo Sa'eed (may Allaah be pleased with them both), testified that the Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded her to spend `Iddah in her husband's house. Therefore, `Uthmaan (may Allaah be pleased with him) gave that verdict. Also, the judgment of the Sunnah was applied by implementing the Had (ordained punishment for violating Allaah's Law) of drinking Khamr (intoxicant) upon Al-Waleed ibn `Uqbah.

When `Alee (may Allaah be pleased with him) was told that `Uthmaan (may Allaah be pleased with him) forbade Tamattu` Hajj (`Umrah during the months of Hajj followed by Hajj in the same year with a break in between), `Alee (may Allaah be pleased with him) performed Tamattu` Hajj and said: "I shall never leave an act of Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) because of the opinion of any person."

When Ibn `Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him and his father) heard some people objecting to his Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) regarding Tamattu` Hajj, taking as evidence the opinion of Aboo Bakr and `Umar (may Allaah be pleased with them) who preferred Ifrad Hajj (performing Hajj only), Ibn `Abbaas said: "Stones from the sky are about to fall on you. I am telling you that the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) said such and such, and you say that Aboo Bakr and `Umar said such and such!" If those who contradict the Sunnah and favour the opinions of Aboo Bakr and `Umar are liable to punishment, what about those who contradict it favouring the opinion of someone less important or for personal opinions?

When some people argued with `Abdullah ibn `Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him and his father) about some matters pertaining to the Sunnah, `Abdullah said to them: "Are we commanded to follow the Prophet (peace be upon him) or follow `Umar?" While `Imraan ibn Hussayn (may Allaah be pleased with him) was telling the people about the Sunnah, a man asked him to tell them about the Qur'aan. He (may Allaah be pleased with him) became angry and said that the Sunnah is

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the interpretation of the Qur'aan; without the Sunnah we would not have known that Dhuhr (Noon) Prayer is four Rak'ahs, Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer is three Rak'ahs, and Fajr (Dawn) Prayer is two Rak'ahs. We would not neither have known the details of the rulings on Zakaah, in addition to other details mentioned in the Sunnah. There are many cases reported from the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) about honouring the Sunnah, the obligation of applying it, and warning about violating it. When `Abdullah ibn `Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him and his father) told the people the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him): **[Do not forbid the female servants of Allaah from going to the Masjids (mosques) of Allaah]**<sup>23</sup> one of his sons said: "By Allaah, we will forbid them." `Abdullah became very angry at him and said: "I am telling you 'The Messenger of Allaah said' and you tell me 'By Allaah we will forbid them'?"

When `Abdullah ibn Al-Mughaffal Al-Muzanee (may Allaah be pleased with him) saw one of his relatives throwing pebbles, he forbade him to do this and said, **'The Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade throwing pebbles since it neither leads to hunting a prey, nor does it defeat an enemy, but it may break a tooth or gouge out an eye.'**<sup>24</sup> Later, he saw him throwing pebbles, so he said, 'By Allaah I will never talk to you again. I told you that the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) forbade throwing pebbles, but you insist on doing it.'

It was related by Al-Baihaqee on the authority of Ayoob Al-Sakhtiyanee, the honourable Tabi'y that he said: "If a person when told about an act of Sunnah says, 'Forget about it and tell us about the Qur'aan,' indeed, he is misguided."

Al-Awza`ee (may Allaah be merciful to him) said: "The Sunnah is considered the authoritative expounder of the Qur'aan." This means that the Sunnah narrows or restricts what was mentioned generally in the Qur'aan, or mentions rulings that are not stated in the Qur'aan, as in the Words of Allaah (Glorified be He): **[And We have also sent down unto you (O Muhammad ﷺ) the Dhikr [reminder and the advice (i.e. the Qur'aan)], that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them, and that they may give thought.]**<sup>25</sup>

Moreover, as previously quoted, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **[I have been given the Qur'aan and the like of it with it (i.e. the Sunnah).]**<sup>26</sup> It was related by Al-Baihaqee on the authority of `Amir Al-Sha`by (may Allaah be merciful to him) that he said to some people: "You went astray when you ignored (the Prophetic) reports," i.e. authentic Hadeeths.

It was also related by Al-Baihaqee on the authority of Al-Awza`ee (may Allaah be merciful to him) that he said to one of his friends: "If you hear a Hadeeth reported from the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him), never give an opinion according to other than it, for the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) was delivering the Message on behalf of Allaah (Exalted be He)." It was

<sup>23</sup> Saheeh Muslim

<sup>24</sup> Saheeh Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim

<sup>25</sup> Soorah al-Nahl [16:44]

<sup>26</sup> Sunan Abee Dawood - Saheeh [al-Albaanee]



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also related by Al-Baihaqee on the authority of the great Imaam, Sufyaan ibn Sa'eed Al-Thawree (may Allaah be merciful to him), that he said: "All knowledge is based on (Prophetic) reports." Maalik (may Allaah be merciful to him) said: "The views of anyone of us can be refuted except that of the one who is buried in this grave." And he pointed to the grave of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Aboo Haneefah (may Allaah be merciful to him) said: "If a Hadeeth is reported from the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him), it is willingly and graciously accepted."

Al-Shaafi'ee (may Allaah be merciful to him) said: "If I ever narrate a Hadeeth from the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) and I do not work accordingly, I call you to witness that my mind has gone." He also said: "If I ever say anything and a Hadeeth of the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) tells otherwise, ignore my statement."

Imaam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may Allaah be merciful to him) said to one of his friends: "Do not imitate me, Maalik or Al-Shaafi'ee, rather take from the same source on which we based our opinions." He (may Allaah be merciful to him) also said: "I wonder at people who have known that a Hadeeth is authentically reported from the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him), yet they prefer the personal opinion of Sufyaan, although Allaah (Glorified be He) says: **[And let those who oppose the Messenger's (Muhammad ﷺ) commandment (i.e. his Sunnah - legal ways, orders, acts of worship, statements) (among the sects) beware, lest some Fitnah (disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquakes, killing, overpowered by a tyrant) should befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them.]**<sup>27</sup> He then said: "Do you know what Fitnah (trial) implies here? Fitnah is Shirk (associating others with Allaah in His Divinity or worship). Perhaps by rejecting some of the statements of the Prophet (peace be upon him) some deviation happens in the heart and the person is ruined."

It was related by Al-Baihaqee on the authority of Mujaahid ibn Jabir, the honourable Tabi'ee, that he commented on Allaah's Words (Glorified be He): **[(And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allaah and His Messenger (ﷺ)]** by saying that referring to Allaah means referring to the Qur'aan, while referring to the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) means referring to his Sunnah. It was also related by Al-Baihaqee on the authority of Al-Zuhree (may Allaah be merciful to him) that he said: "Our scholars in the past used to say that adhering to the Sunnah guarantees salvation." Muwaffaq Al-Din ibn Qudamah (may Allaah be merciful to him) said in his book Rawdat Al-Nazhir fi Bayan Usool Al-Ahkam: "The second source of evidence is the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him). The words of the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) are supporting evidence, whose veracity is upheld by the miracle therein (e.g. news of the Ghayb (the Unseen) and foretelling of future events). Moreover, Allaah (Exalted be He) ordered the people to obey him and warned them against disobeying his orders." Al-Haafidh ibn Katheer (may Allaah be merciful to him) interpreted Allaah's Words (Exalted be He): **[And let those who oppose the Messenger's (Muhammad ﷺ)**

<sup>27</sup> Soorah al-Noor [24:63]

## The obligation of applying the Sunnah and deeming whoever denies it a Kaafir

**commandment (i.e. his Sunnah - legal ways, orders, acts of worship, statements) (among the sects) beware, lest some Fitnah (disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquakes, killing, overpowered by a tyrant) should befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them.]**<sup>28</sup>

He said that the commandment of the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) comprises his path, course, way, methodology and law. Any words or deeds should be weighed against his words and deeds (peace be upon him); any word or action that complies with them will be accepted; and if not, they will be rejected, no matter who says or does them. It was authentically reported in the Two Saheeh Books of Hadeeth and others that the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) said: **[Anyone who does an action which is not in accordance with this matter of ours (Islaam) will have it rejected.]** This means that a person who violates Sharee'ah, whether explicitly or implicitly, should beware **[...lest some Fitnah (disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquakes, killing, or tyranny) should befall them.]**<sup>29</sup> This means Kufr, hypocrisy or Bid'ah (innovation in religion) occurs in their heart. ...or a painful torment be inflicted on them. This means in this world by being killed, imprisoned or Had inflicted upon them. It was related by Imaam Ahmad that `Abdul-Razzaq told him that Ma`mar reported on the authority of Hammam ibn Munabbih that Aboo Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) said: **[The similitude of you and I is that of a man who lit a fire and there began to fall into it moths and insects that normally fall into a fire. The man tried his best to prevent them from falling into the fire, but they overpowered him and rushed into the fire. He (peace be upon him) said, 'This is what our situation is like. Similarly, I take hold of your waistbands to prevent you from falling into the fire, saying, 'Beware of the fire!', but you insist on falling into it.]**<sup>30</sup> This Hadeeth was narrated on the authority of `Abdul-Razzaq.

Al-Suyooty (may Allaah be merciful to him) said in his thesis entitled Muftah Al-Jannah fi Al-Ihtijaj bil-Sunnah: "Please be advised, may Allaah have mercy on you, that whoever denies that an authentic Hadeeth of the Prophet (peace be upon him), whether words or actions, is supporting evidence, although it meets the known conditions set by the principles of Islaamic jurisprudence, is considered a Kaafir (disbeliever), rendered outside of the fold of Islaam and would be gathered on the Day Resurrection with the Jews, the Christians, or any other categories of Kaafirs." There are many reports from the Sahaabah, Tabi'oon and those who followed them about honouring the Sunnah, obligation of applying it, and warning against violating it. I hope the Ayahs, Hadeeths, and reports we have cited will be enough and convincing to truth-seekers. I ask Allaah to guide all Muslims and us to what pleases Him, protect us from the reasons that incur His Wrath, and guide us all to His Straight Path. Indeed, He is All-Hearer, Ever-Near.

May Allaah's peace and blessings be upon Allaah's Slave and Messenger, Prophet Muhammad, his family, his Companions, and those who follow them in righteousness.

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<sup>28</sup> Soorah al-Noor [24:63]

<sup>29</sup> Soorah al-Noor [24:63]

<sup>30</sup> Saheeh Bukhaaree