

# السنة النبوية

## *The Prophetic Tradition*

also known as

## *Sunnah; Hadith*

### تعريف السنة

### Definition of Sunnah

The literal meaning of Sunnah is way, (trodden) path, nature, habitual or customary practice, whether this practice is good or bad, principal, and law.

The Sunnah, according to the scholars of hadeeth, is everything that has been related from the Messenger (peace be upon him) of his statements أقواله, actions أفعاله, tacit approvals تقريراته, personality, physical description الخلقية والخلقية, or biography سيرته. It does not matter whether the information being related refers to something before the beginning of his prophetic mission, or after it سواء قبل البعثة أم بعدها.

- ◆ The prophet's sayings are the pronouncements about what is required or prohibited for Muslims such as:

"Fear Allah wherever you are..." "أتق الله حيثما كنت"

"Verily deeds are but by intentions, and every person will have only what he intended." "إنما الأعمال بالنيّات.."

- ◆ The actions of the Prophet include everything that the Prophet did that was related to us by his Companions. This includes how he made ablutions, how he performed his prayers, and how he made the Hajj pilgrimage.
- ◆ The tacit approvals of the Prophet includes everything that his Companions said or did that he either showed his favor towards or at least did not object to. Anything that had the tacit approval of the Prophet is as valid as anything that he said or did himself.

An example of this is the approval that was given to the Companions when they used their discretion in deciding when to pray during the Battle of Bani Quraydhah. God's Messenger had said to them:

*"None of you should perform your afternoon prayers until you arrive at Bani Quraydhah."*

(لا يصلّين أحد العصر إلّا في بني قريظة).

The Companions did not arrive at Bani Quraydhah until after sunset. Some of them took the Prophet's words literally and postponed the afternoon prayer, saying: "We will not pray until we get there." Others understood that the Prophet was only indicating to them that they should hurry on their journey, so they stopped and prayed the afternoon prayer on time.

The Prophet learned about what the two groups had decided, but did not criticize either of them.

فأدرك بعضهم العصر في الطريق، فقال بعضهم: لا نصلي حتى نأتيها، وقال بعضهم: بل نصلي، لم يُرد منا ذلك، فذكر للنبي ﷺ، فلم يعنف واحداً منهم.

- ◆ As for the Prophet's personality, this would include the following statement of Aishah (may God be pleased with her):

*"God's Messenger was never indecent or vulgar, nor was he loud at the marketplace. He would never respond to the abuse of others with abuses of his own. Instead, he would be tolerant and forgiving."*

(لم يكن فاحشاً ولا متفحشاً، ولا سخاباً في الأسواق، ولا يجزي بالسيئة السيئة، ولكن يعفو ويصفح).

- ◆ The physical description of the Prophet is found in statements like the one related by Anas (may God be pleased with him):

*"God's Messenger was neither overly tall nor was he short. He was neither exceedingly white nor black. His hair was neither excessively curly nor lank."*

كان رسول الله ﷺ ليس بالطويل البائن ولا بالقصير. وليس بالأبيض الأمهق (أي: ليس شديد البياض)، ولا بالآدم. ولا بالجعد القلط (أي: منقبض الشعر)، ولا بالسبط (أي: المنبسط المسترسل)..

But the Sunnah, according to scholars of Usul al-Fiqh (legal theorists), as a source of legal rulings, is only the sayings, deeds, and consent (tacit) of the Prophet after the beginning of his prophetic mission.