

Sources of Islam

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Sources of Islam

Islam is the guidance which was first inspired by the Almighty in human nature and after that it was given by Him with all details to mankind through His prophets. Muhammad (sws) is the last of these prophets. Consequently, it is now he alone who in this world is the sole source of this religion. It is only through him that man can receive divine guidance and it is only he who, through his words, deeds or tacit approvals, has the authority to regard something as part of Islam until the Day of Judgement. The Qur'ān says:

(:)

It is He who has sent among the unlettered a Messenger from amongst themselves who rehearses upon them His verses and purifies them and for this he instructs them in *sharī'ah* and in *ḥikmah*. (62:2)

It is this *sharī'ah* (law) and this *ḥikmah* (wisdom) which is termed as "Islam". The source of this religion is the Prophet Muḥammad (sws) from whom it has been given to the *ummah* through the consensus of his Companions (rta) and through their perpetual practice and perpetual recitation in two forms:

1. The Qur'ān
2. The Sunnah

1. The *Qur'ān*

Every Muslim knows that the Qur'ān was revealed by Allah to Muḥammad (sws) – the last of the prophets – and it has since

then remained with the *ummah* with the unanimous verdict from the *ummah* itself that it is this very book which was revealed to the Prophet (sws), and which his Companions (rta), through their consensus and through their perpetual recitation, delivered to the world without the slightest alteration.

2. The Sunnah

By Sunnah is meant that tradition of Prophet Abraham's (sws) religion which the Prophet Muḥammad (sws) instituted among his followers as religion after reviving and reforming it and after making certain additions to. The Qur'ān has directed Muḥammad (sws) to obey this Abrahamic tradition in the following words:

(:)

Then We revealed to you to follow the ways of Abraham, who was true in faith and was not among the polytheists.
(16:123)

The following portion of Islam has been given to us through the Sunnah:

Worship Rituals

- i. The Prayer
- ii. *Zakāh* and *Ṣadqah* of *ʿId al-Fiṭr*
- iii. Fasting and *ʿItikāf*
- iv. *Hajj* and *ʿUmrah*
- v. Animal Sacrifice and the *takbīrs* during the days of *tashrīq*¹

Social Sphere

- i. Marriage and Divorce and their relevant details
- ii. Abstention from coitus during the menstrual and the puerperal period

Dietary Sphere

- i. Prohibition of pork, blood, meat of dead animals and animals slaughtered in the name of someone other than Allah
- ii. Slaughtering in the prescribed manner of *tadhkiyah* by

1. The tenth, eleventh and twelfth of *dhū al-hijjah*.

taking Allah's name

Customs and Etiquette

- i. Remembering Allah's name before eating or drinking and using the right hand for eating and drinking
- ii. Greeting one another with *assālamu 'alaykum* (peace be to you) and responding with *wa 'alaykum al-salām* (and peace be to you)
- iii. Saying *alḥamdu lilāh* (praise be to Allah) after sneezing and responding to it by saying *yarḥamu kallāh* (may Allah have mercy on you)
- iv. Saying *adhān* in the right ear of a new born baby and saying *'iqāmah* in its left ear
- v. Keeping moustaches trimmed
- vi. Shaving pubic hair
- vii. Shaving the hairs under the armpits
- viii. Cutting nails
- ix. Circumcising the male offspring
- x. Cleaning the nose, the mouth and the teeth
- xi. Cleaning the body after excretion
- xii. Bathing after the menstrual and the puerperal period
- xiii. *Ghusl-i Janābah*²
- xiv. Bathing the dead before burial
- xv. Enshrouding a dead body and preparing it for burial
- xvi. Burying the dead
- xvii. *ʿId al-Fiṭr*
- xviii. *ʿId al-Aḍḥā*

This is all what the Sunnah is, and it can be said with certainty that there is no difference between it and the Qur'ān as far as their authenticity is concerned. Just as the Qur'ān has been received by *ummah* through the consensus of the Prophet's Companions (rta) and through their perpetual recitation, the Sunnah has been received by it through their consensus and through their perpetual practice and stands validated like the Qur'ān in every period of time through the consensus of the *ummah*. Consequently, there is no doubt or debate about it now.

2. The ceremonial bath performed after ejaculation or after sexual intercourse.

All that is Islam is constituted by these two sources. Nothing besides these two is Islam or can be regarded as its part.

A narrative of the words, deeds or tacit approvals of the Prophet (sws) called Ḥadīth and the knowledge gained from them can never be regarded as absolutely certain. Hence, a Ḥadīth does not add anything to the content of Islam stated in the Qur’ān and Sunnah. Āḥadīth (plural of Ḥadīth) only explain and elucidate what is contained in these two sources and also describe the exemplary way in which the Prophet (sws) followed Islam. This only is the sphere of Ḥadīth which falls within the ambit of Islam. Outside this sphere, there exists no narrative which can be called or accepted as Ḥadīth.

Within this sphere, however, every person who after being convinced of a Ḥadīth accepts it as one containing the words, deeds or tacit approvals of the Prophet must follow it. In no circumstances can he evade or ignore it; in fact, it becomes incumbent upon him to accept any directive or decision of the Prophet (sws) depicted in that Ḥadīth.

(Translated from Ghāmidī’s *Mizān* by Shehzad Saleem)
