

نقد و تقییم نظریه الاكتفاء بالقرآن لدى القرآنیین مع التأكید علی حجیة السنة النبویة ومكانتها

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الملخص

معلومات مقال

هدف البحث: يهدف هذا البحث إلى التفكير النقدي والتقييم المعرفي لأطروحة تيار القرآنیین القائلين بكفاية القرآن الكريم التامة في استيعاب سائر الأحكام والشرائع، وتجريد السنة النبوية من مكانتها التشريعية والتبیینية في المنظومة الإسلامية، وبيان تهاافت الأسس الكلامية والتاريخية لهذا الاتجاه.

المنهجية: اعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي بنزعة نقدية برهانية؛ حيث وظفت قواعد الاستدلال الكلامي والحديثي القائم على نصوص القرآن القطعية، والسنة النبوية المتواترة، وسيرة العقلاء المطبقة في قبول خبر الثقة والعدل، مع استقراء تاريخي لمسارات نشأة هذا الفكر المعاصر وتطورات.

النتائج: أظهرت النتائج العلمية أن دعوى الاستغناء عن الحديث النبوي تستند إلى فهم غير دقيق لشمولية النص القرآني، واختزال كفرمان نبوي في نطاق الرأي البشري غير الملمز، والتمسك غير الموجه بمسألة تأخر التدوين. وقد دحضت نصوص القرآن الكريم كآية التبیین والآيات القاطعة بوجوب طاعة الرسول ونفي النطق عن الهوى هذه الدعاوى جملة وتفصيلاً.

الخاتمة: تعد السنة النبوية بياناً لا ينفك عن القرآن الكريم وشارحاً تطبيقياً لأصوله ومجملاته؛ وإن إقصاءها يعطل عملياً إقامة الفرائض الأساسية كالصلاة والزكاة ومناسك الحج، ويفتح الباب أمام التأويل الفردي والاضطراب المذهبي، مما يجعل التمسك بالسنة الثابتة الضامن الوحيد لوحدة الفهم الديني.

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المقدمة والمدخل المفاهيمي

تشكل السنة النبوية المطهرة الأصل التبييني والركيزة التطبيقية الأولى للقرآن الكريم في صياغة الفقه الإسلامي واستنباط المقاصد الكلية للأحكام. وقد شهد العصر الحديث تصاعداً لتيار يتبنى مبدأ إسقاط حجية السنة النبوية والاختصار الحصري على متن القرآن بدعوى استغنائه التام عن أي مصدر بياني خارجي. وقد قاد هذا الاتجاه عدد من الكُتاب في الهند ومصر متكئين على تفسيرات خاصة لنصوص الوحي. ويهدف هذا البحث إلى تفكيك جذور هذا الطرح وتقييم أبعاده المعرفية لبيان تهافت القول بالاكْتفاء المفضي إلى تفريغ الخطاب التشريعي من مضامينه العملية.

منهجية البحث

ينتظم هذا البحث ضمن الدراسات النقدية المقارنة، معتمداً المنهج الوصفي التحليلي المدعم بالاستدلال البرهاني والتخريج الأصولي. وقد سار البحث في مسارات منهجية متكاملة شملت: الاستقراء التاريخي لجذور إنكار الحديث، الحصر الشامل لأدلة هذا التيار وتبويبها في ثمانية محاور كلية، ثم مقارعتها بالأدلة القطعية من القرآن الكريم والسنة المتواترة الثابتة، مع تحكيم المنهج العقلائي في حجية الأخبار الموثوقة، لإبراز وجوه القصور والخلل في مقدمات هذا الفكر.

النتائج التخصصية ونقد المحاور الثمانية

أسفرت المباحث التحليلية عن رد شبهات القرآنيين ودحضها وفق المحاور التالية:

المحور الأول؛ دعوى الشمولية والاستغناء عن البيان: زعموا أن وصف القرآن بأنه تبيان لكل شيء ينفي الحاجة لبيان النبي. ويُرد على ذلك بأن شمولية الكتاب إنما تتحقق من خلال تبيين الرسول المفوض بنص آية سورة النحل التي قررت وظيفته الإيضاحية لألفاظ الوحي ومجملاته.

المحور الثاني؛ نفي وحيانية السنة ووصفها بالبشرية: ادعوا أن الوحي محصور في ألفاظ القرآن، وما سواه رأي بشري. وترد نصوص سورة النجم القاطعة بأنه عليه الصلاة والسلام لا ينطق عن الهوى، وأن حديثه وتشريعه يندرجان تحت الرعاية الإلهية المعصومة المذكورة في سورة الحاقة.

المحور الثالث؛ التقيد الزمني للسنة بعصر النبوة: ادعوا زوال حجية السنة بوفاة النبي. وهو مردود بخلود الشريعة وعمومية الرسالة الخاتمة لجميع البشرية بنص القرآن، فضلاً عن الوصايا النبوية القطعية بوجوب إبلاغ الغائبين في كل عصر.

المحور الرابع؛ نفي القصد التشريعي والاحتجاج بالنهي عن الكتابة: زعموا أن النهي المروي عن الكتابة يسلب السنة قيمتها القانونية. وثبتت الدراسة أن الرواية معلولة سنداً وممتنا وغائبة عن مدرسة أهل البيت، بينما تتكاثر الشواهد المتواترة على إذن النبي بالكتابة ومبادرة الصحابة لتدوين الصحف الموثقة.

المحور الخامس؛ اتخاذ نقد الأسانيد ذريعة للإسقاط: إن تسرب الدخيل والإسرائيليات لم يكن مبرراً لإلغاء الصحيح؛ بل كان دافعاً لظهور علوم الجرح والتعديل ونقد المتن لفرز السقيم وحفظ الثابت النقي.

المحور السادس؛ دعوى أن السنة مصدر الافتراق: زعموا أن الروايات شتت الأمة، بينما الواقع يثبت أن إسقاط السنة هو الذي فتح باب التأويلات الذاتية والآراء المتضاربة داخل تيار القرآنيين أنفسهم، وأن السنة الصحيحة هي المعيار الجامع لوحدة الفهم.

المحور السابع؛ التشكيك لفاصل التدوين الرسمي: إن نقل السنة استمر حياً عبر الحفظ الصدري الدقيق، والصحف المبكرة، والرعاية الموصولة من أئمة أهل البيت والعلماء الحفاظ، ولم تتعرض السلسلة لانقطاع يخل بالوثوق التاريخي.

المحور الثامن؛ كفاية السنة العملية المتوارثة: إن الممارسة العملية المجردة عاجزة بذاتها عن إيصال تفاصيل مقادير الزكاة ومبطلات الصلاة وأحكام المعاملات دون الرجوع للنص البياني القولي والفعلي المحفوظ في كتب الحديث.

Critique and Evaluation of the Qur'anists' Theory of Qur'anic Sufficiency with an Emphasis on the Authority and Status of Sunnah

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted with the aim of evaluating and critiquing the perspective of the Qur'anists (extreme Qur'anic sufficers) regarding the relationship between the Book (the Qur'an) and the Sunnah. This intellectual movement, which has roots in the statement of the second caliph and the groups that denied the Sunnah in the late second century AH, is pursued in the contemporary era by figures such as Ahmad Parwez, Abdullah Chakralawi, and Ahmed Subhy Mansour in the Indian subcontinent and Egypt. The Qur'anists believe that the Qur'an alone is sufficient to express all propositions, rulings, general principles, and details of the religion, and therefore, there is no need for the Sunnah as an independent or complementary source alongside the Qur'an.

Employing a descriptive-analytical method and a critical approach, this paper first addresses the historical genealogy and the factors underlying the formation of this thought, and then categorizes and presents its proponents' most important arguments into eight main axes. These arguments include: relying on the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an, viewing the Sunnah as non-revelatory and human, limiting the Sunnah to the Prophet's era, the non-legislative nature of the Sunnah, the lack of authenticity due to its criticizability, its divisive nature, the delay in codification, and sufficiency with the practical Sunnah. In critiquing these arguments, the authors — by adhering to Qur'anic verses such as the Verse of Clarification (Qur'an 16:44) which positions the Prophet as the clarifier of the Qur'an, verses commanding obedience to the Messenger, and verses denying speech out of personal whim (Qur'an 53:3-4), as well as relying on mutawatir (successively narrated) and definitively issued (qati' al-sudur) hadiths and the rational method (sirat al-uqala) of accepting the reports of trustworthy narrators—explore the pathology of each of these arguments. They demonstrate that the claim of Qur'anic sufficiency is plagued by confusion and error regarding its theological, historical, and hadith foundations.

The research findings indicate that arguing for the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an to negate the Sunnah overlooks the explanatory role of the Messenger of Allah, and the claim that the Sunnah is non-revelatory contradicts the verses concerning the oral infallibility of the Prophet. Furthermore, historical arguments, such as the prohibition of writing hadith, lack sufficient validity and pertained to specific conditions. The final results of the article emphasize that the Sunnah is complementary to and a clarifier of the Qur'an, and abandoning it leaves Muslims confused and subject to subjective differences of taste in understanding the objectives of Sharia. More clearly, adherence to the Sunnah is not a factor of division; rather, under a correct understanding of it, a harmonious and coherent interpretation of the Qur'an can be achieved, preventing the fragmentation of opinions that is the natural outcome of extreme Qur'anic sufficiency.

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Introduction

Alongside and subsequent to the Qur'an, the Sunnah is the most important source of religious knowledge and the most efficient tool for its clarification; indeed, failing to correctly understand the Sunnah ultimately leads to a failure in understanding the Qur'an. This issue is visible in the opinions and views of some, such as the Qur'anists. However, it must be noted that the Qur'anist movement can be divided into two branches: moderate and extreme. In its moderate branch, the understanding of the Qur'an begins from the Qur'an itself and its indications and concludes by focusing on the Qur'an itself, yet it does not neglect other sources, including the Sunnah, and utilizes the Qur'an to correct and deepen its understanding. In contrast, the extreme branch looks solely at the text of the Qur'an; the only source is the Qur'an itself, and the entirety of religion is summarized within it. This extreme branch, despite considering the Qur'an independent in comprehension and interpretation, occasionally accepts the role of the Sunnah in areas where the Qur'an is silent.

Research Methodology

The present study, titled 'Critique and Evaluation of the Qur'anists' Theory of Qur'anic Sufficiency with an Emphasis on the Authority and Status of Sunnah,' is fundamentally a basic-critical research in terms of its purpose, and a library-based and documentary study regarding the nature of the data and the method of information gathering. This study is structured within the framework of a 'descriptive-analytical' method with a critical approach; meaning it both provides an accurate description of the perspectives and arguments of the extreme Qur'anic sufficiency movement (Qur'anists) and evaluates the validity of those arguments through qualitative content analysis and both intra-religious (internal) and extra-religious (external) critique. The critical approach of the research entails the simultaneous utilization of three levels of argumentation: referencing the definitive texts of the Holy Qur'an, adhering to mutawatir (successively narrated) or qati' al-sudur (definitively issued) Sunnah, and relying on the rational method (sirat

al-uqa'la) regarding the authority of reports from trustworthy narrators (khabar al-thiqah). This methodological combination elevates the evaluation beyond mere polemics and turns it into an analysis rooted in theological, historical, and hadith foundations.

The execution process of this research was designed and pursued in six main stages:

The first stage involved the historical genealogy and background of the formation of Qur'anist thought. In this stage, by referring to historical sources, works on sects and schools of thought (Milal wa al-Nihal), and ancient reports, including the report of 'Hasbuna Kitab Allah' (The Book of Allah is sufficient for us) in Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, as well as al-Shafi'i's account in the book al-Umm regarding the group that rejected reports (Munkir al-Akhbar), the historical roots of denying the Sunnah in early Islam and subsequent periods were analyzed. Then, utilizing contemporary studies such as the works of Khadem Hossein Elahi-Bakhsh (Dirasat fi al-Firq al-Qur'anoyyah) and Muhammad Mustafa Azami (Studies in Early Hadith Literature / Dirasat fi al-Hadith al-Nabawi), the contemporary branches of the movement in the Indian subcontinent (Ahmad Parwez, Abdullah Chakralawi, Ahmad al-Din Amr Tastri) and Egypt (Muhammad Tawfiq Sidqi, Ahmed Subhy Mansour) were identified. In this stage, the methodology was descriptive-historical, and through systematic note-taking from primary and secondary sources, a clear picture of the origins and developments of this movement was drawn.

The second stage involved conceptualization and defining the scope of the research. By distinguishing between the moderate and extreme branches of Qur'anism, only the extreme view, which believes in the absolute independence of the Qur'an from the Sunnah and its complete sufficiency for all propositions, rulings, generalities, and details of the religion, was selected as the subject of study. This distinction prevented the confusion of moderate views that defend the Sunnah with extreme Qur'anists.

The third stage was the systematic extraction and categorization of the Qur'anists' arguments. Through a complete induction of the written works of the prominent figures of this movement (including Ahmad

Parwez's Maqam-e-Hadith, Chakralawi's Tark-e-Iftira-e-Ta'amul, the writings of Ahmed Subhy Mansour, and articles in the journal Isha'at al-Qur'an), their primary arguments were classified into eight main axes: 1. Sufficiency with the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an and lack of need for the Prophet's clarification; 2. Regarding the Sunnah as non-revelatory and human, and restricting revelation to the Qur'an; 3. Limiting the Sunnah to the Prophet's era and its lack of efficacy after his death; 4. The non-legislative nature of the Sunnah in the Prophet's view and the companions' prohibition of its writing; 5. The criticizability of the Sunnah and the infiltration of human opinions into it, resulting in a lack of authenticity; 6. The divisive nature of the Sunnah and the creation of discord among Muslims; 7. The delay in the official codification of hadiths until the third century AH and the impossibility of attributing them to the Prophet; 8. The sufficiency of the practical Sunnah (such as the method of prayer and Hajj) and the lack of need for narrations. This categorization formed the analytical framework of the article, and each group of arguments was considered as an independent unit of analysis.

The fourth stage consisted of the critique and analysis of each of these arguments based on the three foundations of Qur'an, hadith, and reason (Qur'an 16:44; 53:3–4; 69:44–47; 34:28; 33:40). The method of analysis in this stage was 'argumentative content analysis' and a comparative comparison between the claims and the accepted principles of both sides. For instance, in critiquing the argument of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness, reference was made to the Verse of Clarification (Qur'an 16:44), which establishes the Prophet's role as the clarifier of the Qur'an and shows that the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an is not parallel to the Sunnah's clarification, but is realized through it. In critiquing the notion that the Sunnah is non-revelatory, the verses of Surah al-Najm (53:3–4), which describe the Prophet's speech as revelation, and the warning verses of Surah al-Haqqah (69:44–47) concerning the severing of the life-vein (aorta) in case of attributing falsehood to Allah, formed the basis of analysis. Furthermore, by pointing out the authority of trustworthy reports (khabar al-thiqah) in the rational method, even non-mutawatir reports

were removed from the realm of invalidity. In rejecting the argument of the temporal limitation of the Sunnah, the universality of the Qur'an's address (Qur'an 34:28), the finality of the Prophet (Qur'an 33:40), and hadiths such as 'Let the witness convey to the absent' (li-yuballigh al-shahid al-gha'ib) were employed. In analyzing historical arguments (the prohibition of writing and the delay in codification), alongside challenging the chain of transmission and textual indication of the report 'Do not write from me anything other than the Qur'an' (la taktubu 'anni ghayra al-qur'an), numerous pieces of evidence of writing hadith during the prophetic era, the dedication of the companions, and the role of the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (a.s.) in purifying and preserving the Sunnah were put forward, referencing historical and biographical (rijal) studies (such as *Tadwin al-Sunnah al-Sharifah* by Jalali and *Ma'alim al-Madrasatayn* by Askari). In critiquing the claim that the Sunnah is divisive, by distinguishing weak narrations from the definitive Sunnah and highlighting the differences arising from abandoning the Sunnah among the Qur'anists themselves, it was demonstrated that the crisis of division is not a product of the Sunnah's existence, but a consequence of sidelining the infallible clarifier. In all these analyses, a continuous comparison was made between the foundations of the Qur'anists and their logical and theological implications alongside definitive texts, to evaluate the synergy and internal consistency of the arguments.

The fifth stage involved comparative analysis and synthesis of findings to clarify the relationship between the Qur'an and the Sunnah. In this stage, it was demonstrated that all of the Qur'anists' arguments suffer from a fundamental confusion of premises: they have interpreted the comprehensiveness and sufficiency of the Qur'an as negating any external interpretive authority, whereas, from the Qur'anic perspective, the Sunnah stands in alignment with the Book, in the position of clarifying and detailing it. This conclusion was reinforced by relying on verses commanding obedience to the Messenger (Qur'an 4:80; 24:63) and the principle of non-separation between obedience to Allah and obedience to the Messenger.

The sixth and final stage was the formulation of results and final deduction in which, through analytical synthesis, it was emphasized that the Sunnah, as the clarifier and complement of the Qur'an, is not only not a factor of division, but is indeed the only path to achieving a coherent and harmonious interpretation of the Divine Book, and that extreme Qur'anic sufficiency leads to the fragmentation of opinions and confusion in understanding the objectives of Sharia.

In summary, this study, by combining descriptive methods in the stages of genealogy and extraction of arguments with analytical-critical methods in the critique stages, provides a comprehensive overview of the foundations, arguments, and deficiencies of the Qur'anist perspective. The primary tool for data collection was research index cards from exegetical, hadith, and historical sources, as well as the works of both proponents and opponents of Qur'anic sufficiency, and data analysis was conducted based on intra-religious and rational arguments. The validity of the findings is guaranteed through references to definitive texts of the Qur'an, mutawatir Sunnah, and the views of scholars of the field, ensuring that the research results possess scientific robustness and logical authority.

Conceptualization of the Qur'anists

Qur'anists believe that the Qur'an is sufficient to express religious propositions and rulings and encompasses the entirety of religion, both in general and in detail, containing all generalities and particulars of faith without leaving anything out. Therefore, there is no need for the Sunnah to understand the teachings of religion and receive its rulings. Figures such as Ahmad Parwez, Abdullah Chakralawi, and Ahmed Subhy Mansour are among the well-known proponents of this extreme view in the contemporary era (Elahi-Bakhsh, 1411 AH, p. 210).

The Qur'anists' Views on the Sunnah

Some believe that authenticity belongs solely to the Qur'an, and that the Sunnah and hadiths hold no position; because everything we need in religion is mentioned in detail in the Qur'an.

According to historical testimony, the beginning of this extreme view may have its roots in the statement of the second caliph. When the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) requested a pen and ink to write a testament, the caliph uttered the sentence: 'The Book of Allah is sufficient for us' (al-Bukhari, 1411 AH, Vol. 1, p. 1, Hadith 174, Hadith 4432, & Vol. 2, Hadith 4432; Muslim, 1424 AH, Hadith 3413, pp. 726–727). After this event (around 154–244 AH), a group arose in the late second century AH to deny the Sunnah and pay no heed to it. Al-Shafi'i, in his jurisprudential book *al-Umm*, in a chapter titled 'The Account of the Saying of the Group That Rejected All Narrations' (*Hikayat Qawl al-Ta'ifah al-Lati Raddat al-Akhbar Kullaha*), reported the belief of a group that denied all narrations. He described his conversation with some of them but refrained from mentioning their names. However, there is a disagreement among researchers in determining his exact intended meaning regarding this group. Some have associated them with a faction of the Mu'tazilites of Basra, while others have identified them as a faction of the Kharijites of that era (Khidari Bek, 1314 AH / 1934, p. 117; Elahi-Bakhsh, 1411 AH, p. 15).

Another prominent advocate of Qur'anic sufficiency was Abdullah Chakralawi. Subsequently, Mawlawi Ahmad al-Din Amr Tastri, Aslam Jairajpuri, and Ghulam Ahmad Parwez also joined this group (Elahi-Bakhsh, 1411 AH, p. 11; see also Azami, 1413 AH, p. 26).

Ahmad al-Din Amr Tastri (1936) founded a sect in India named 'Ummat-e-Muslimah,' which currently has branches in most Pakistani cities, and its main center is Lahore (**Elahi-Bakhsh, 1411 AH, p. 57**).

Ghulam Ahmad Parwez (born 1903) also founded the 'Tolu-e-Islam' (Dawn of Islam) sect in India, which is considered the most active Qur'anist faction in the contemporary era. This sect has branches in Pakistani cities and even in Europe, and its influence is greatest among intellectuals and the educated class. The main center of this faction is in Lahore, and its official publication is named *Tolu-e-Islam*, which has been published for over fifty years (Azami, 1413 AH, Vol. 1, p. 62).

Egypt is another birthplace of this perspective. Muhammad Tawfiq Sidqi, Abu Shadi Ahmad Zaki, and Ismail Adham are among the proponents of this theory in Egypt (Elahi-Bakhsh, 1411 AH, pp. 153–181; see also Rashid Rida, 1324 AH, Vol. 9, p. 481; Abu Shadi, n.d.).

One of the earnest followers of the extreme Qur'anist approach in Egypt was Muhammad Abu Zayd al-DamANHuri, whose publication of an exegetical book titled *al-Hidayah wa al-Irfan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an bi-al-Qur'an* (Guidance and Discrimination in Interpreting the Qur'an by the Qur'an) in 1341 AH in Egypt intensely provoked the community of Islamic scholars, eventually leading to its confiscation and seizure (Rashid Rida, 1346 AH, Vol. 5, pp. 111 & 146; Elahi-Bakhsh, 1411 AH, p. 581; as cited in *Isha'at al-Qur'an Journal*, Vol. 3, p. 41; al-Sabuni, 1425 AH, p. 186).

Additionally, Sayyid Ahmad Ramadan Maseer, in his book *al-Sunnah ma'a al-Qur'an*, is among those who have both presented and critiqued the Qur'anists' perspective. He writes: 'This group, relying on the verse, "...We have neglected nothing in the Book..." (Qur'an 6:38), claims that God has omitted nothing in the Qur'an; hence, the Prophet, in his capacity of clarification, added nothing to it, and they deem acting upon the Sunnah as a form of polytheism (shirk)' (Maseer, 1412 AH, p. 36).

Subsequently, some of these individuals, such as Fathallah Khawli and the author of *Islam Bila Madhhab* (Islam Without a Sect), following the Qur'anists, asserted the absolute independence of the Qur'an in clarifying rulings and rejected any compliance with the Sunnah, believing that God has detailed all rulings in the Qur'an and that the Sunnah adds nothing to it (Asadi et al., 1389 SH, p. 317).

Quranist Arguments: The Eight Core Arguments and Rebuttals

Argument 1: Absolute Sufficiency with the Comprehensiveness of the Qur'an

Chakralawi states: 'The Book of God is complete and detailed, and it requires no explanation, exegesis, clarification, or scholarly instruction by the Prophet in accordance with the Qur'an's requirements' (Chakralawi, n.d., p. 14; see also al-Hafiz, 1953; Elahi-

Bakhsh, 1411 AH; as cited in *Isha'at al-Qur'an Journal*, Vol. 3, p. 41; al-Sabuni, 1425 AH, p. 186).

Critique: This perspective assumes that, even if reaching an authentic Sunnah and referring to it were possible and permissible, there is fundamentally no need for it because the Qur'an contains the explanation and detail of all religious needs; they believe the Qur'an possesses absolute comprehensiveness and has no need for the Sunnah. However, one must note that within the Qur'an itself, there are verses calling us to follow and obey the commands of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) in his directives, prohibitions, and judgements (Qur'an 4:59; 5:92; 8:20; 24:54; 47:33; 58:12; and 33:36), and presenting him as the clarifier and explainer of the Qur'anic verses: '...And We revealed to you the message [the Qur'an] that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them...' (Qur'an 16:44). This verse explicitly indicates that God revealed the Qur'an to the Prophet so that he would clarify its concepts to the people, a clarification that is impossible except through the Sunnah. Therefore, one cannot dismiss the role of the Sunnah in interpreting and clarifying the Qur'an by invoking the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an. Moreover, other verses such as, 'He who obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah...' (Qur'an 4:80) and, 'So let those beware who dissent from the Prophet's order, lest fitnah strike them or a painful punishment afflict them' (Qur'an 24:63) emphasize the obligation of obeying the Prophet. If the Sunnah lacked authority, obedience to the Prophet would be meaningless, and God does not command His servants to follow something that lacks authority.

Argument 2: Sunnah is Not Divine Revelation and Represent Human Speech

The Sunnah is not divine revelation; rather, it is human speech, and only the Qur'an is revelation; hence, following it is not necessary. This argument is based on contesting the origin of narrations from the Holy Prophet and restricting divine revelation to the Qur'an revealed by Gabriel (peace be upon him). The implication of this assertion is that the Sunnah is not equal to divine revelation, rendering the Sunnah invalid and unworthy of being followed.

Critique: First, there are numerous mutawatir (mass-transmitted) hadiths, such as the Hadith of al-Thaqalayn (al-Majlisi, 1403 AH, Vol. 2, p. 226), whose attribution to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) cannot be doubted. On the other hand, it is not the case that all hadiths have invalid chains of transmission and unverified origin from the Prophet. Even if a report is not mutawatir, the standard rational method of mankind (uqa'la) is to act upon the word of a trustworthy and just narrator (thiqah and adil). Second, there are verses in the Qur'an according to which the revelation sent down through Gabriel is not restricted to the Qur'an; for instance, 'Nor does he speak from [his own] inclination. It is not but a revelation revealed' (Qur'an 53:3–4); meaning that the Messenger of Allah does not command or forbid based on personal desire, but rather through divine revelation. Also, the verses: 'And if the Prophet had made up about Us some sayings, We would have seized him by the right hand; then We would have cut from him the life-vein [aorta]. And there is no one of you who could prevent it' (Qur'an 69:44–47); meaning that if the Prophet, hypothetically, falsely attributed some words to Us, We would have certainly seized him firmly, then severed his life-vein, and none of you could have prevented that punishment. These verses demonstrate that the Prophet's words are endorsed and protected by God, and they are all revelatory; therefore, it cannot be claimed that the Sunnah is not divine revelation. This view is incorrect because it falsely assumes that the Sunnah contradicts the Qur'an; whereas, throughout the Qur'an, obedience to the Sunnah and the Messenger of Allah is commanded. Beyond this, we possess many mutawatir and definitively issued hadiths that do not contradict the Qur'an. Furthermore, by referring to the Qur'an, we see that the Sunnah operates in the capacity of clarifying and explaining the Qur'an, rather than independent legislation; hence, there is no contradiction between them. Additionally, it is worth noting that just as the audience of the Qur'an is general, the audience of the Sunnah is also general; because the Qur'an's addresses are to all humanity, and the Sunnah, as the clarifier of the Qur'an, is not confined to a specific era. Those who claim that the addresses of the Sunnah are restricted to the Arabs of

the Prophet's time are inconsistent in their reasoning; for the Qur'an was also revealed in Arabic and its primary audience was the contemporary Arabs, yet this does not restrict the Qur'an to them. Therefore, the Sunnah, like the Qur'an, is for all ages and all people, and the claim that the Sunnah is confined to the Prophet's era contradicts many verses.

Argument 3: Temporal Limitation to the Prophet's Era

The Sunnah was confined to the Prophet's era and is not applicable after his death. This argument of the Qur'anists is based on the premise that, even assuming its attribution to the Messenger of Allah, the Sunnah holds no authority because it is restricted to the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah and ceases to be applicable after his death.

Critique: The claim that the Prophet's teachings are confined to his era is hollow and baseless. If such a claim were to be raised about the Prophet's Sunnah, it would have to be raised about the Qur'an as well, because the source of rulings—namely the Qur'an and the Sunnah—is one (Elahi-Bakhsh, 1411 AH, p. 232). Nonetheless, the Qur'an and Sunnah are identical in their address and discourse to the generation of revelation/issuance and subsequent generations. Therefore, this claim contradicts many Qur'anic verses; we will mention two examples: First: 'And We have not sent you except comprehensively to mankind as a bringer of good tidings and a warner...' (Qur'an 34:28); meaning that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is sent to all of humanity, not merely the people of Hejaz; thus, his Sunnah is also universal for all people, not restricted to specific individuals. Second: 'Muhammad is not the father of [any] one of your men, but [he is] the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the prophets...' (Qur'an 33:40); meaning that since the Messenger of Allah is the last prophet and no prophet will come after him, his religion and law must be eternal and not confined to specific individuals, environments, or places. As established in previous arguments, religion and legislation are not restricted to the Qur'an; thus, it is necessary that the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is also not restricted to specific individuals, times, or locations. If some rulings were context-

specific to certain individuals, they can be applied universally through the principle of eliminating specificities (ilgha-ye-khususiyyat). Arguments can also be drawn from the Sunnah itself. Maududi states: 'There is no difference between the guidance of the Qur'an and the guidance of Mustafa. If it is temporary and limited, both are; and if it is eternal and for the worlds, both are' (Maududi, 2000, p. 39). If the Prophet's Sunnah were confined to his own lifetime, he would not have commanded the conveying of the Sunnah to others. In a hadith, it is stated: 'Memorize it and inform those behind you' (al-Bukhari, 1401 AH, Book of Knowledge, Chapter 25, Hadith 87), and in another hadith: 'Let the witness convey to the absent, for the witness might convey it to one who is more receptive to it than himself' (al-Bukhari, Book of Knowledge, Chapter 1, Hadith 67; see also Chapter 35, Hadith 105; Muslim, 1424 AH, Vol. 7, Book of Hudud, Chapter 1, Hadith 4303). Since the Qur'an describes the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) as a warner for 'whomsoever it reaches' [Qur'an 6:19], and based on the mentioned hadith where the Prophet commands the conveyance of his hadiths to those who are absent, it becomes clear that the Messenger of Allah's commands are not confined to his era.

Argument 4: Sunnah Not Intended as Legislation and Prohibition of Writing

Ahmad Parwez writes: 'If the Sunnah were considered a part of religion, the Messenger of Allah would have established a specific method for it (similar to the Qur'an, for which he instituted preservation through writing, memorization, and discussion) and would not have closed his eyes to the world with peace of mind without codifying the Sunnah. The status of prophethood requires him to deliver the religion in a preserved and complete form to the Ummah. Yet, while he exercised extreme caution regarding the Qur'an using all means and possibilities, he did nothing for the Sunnah; indeed, he even prohibited writing it: "Do not write from me, and whoever has written from me anything other than the Qur'an, let him erase it"' (Parwez, n.d., p. 7; see also Mansour, 2005; Elahi-Bakhsh, 1411 AH, pp. 223–224).

Critique: This claim is also incorrect and invalid for several reasons. First, as stated in the rebuttal of the previous argument, obeying the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is obligatory according to the verses of the Qur'an. Moreover, the Prophet never speaks out of personal whim, meaning his commands and prohibitions originate from God. This being the case, how can the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah not be considered legislation? Second, the issue of the prohibition of writing hadith was merely a political policy that appears only in Sunni hadith sources, where the prophetic prohibition and the significance of the prevention or refusal by certain companions and successors are mentioned. However, the prophetic prohibition of writing hadith is not established in Shia historical and narrative sources, and the prevention or refusal by certain companions is traced back to specific causes and factors (Jalali, 1413 AH, p. 478). Third, the hadith relied upon by them is contestable both in its chain of transmission (sanad) and its textual indication (dalalah): a) In terms of transmission, we find only a single narration that is classified as authentic according to Sunni biographical evaluation (rijal) standards and attributed to the Prophet. The rest of the narrations are technically mawquf (stopped at a companion) or maqtu' (severed at a successor), or suffer from weaknesses in their chain or indication (Jalali, 1413 AH, pp. 287–315; Azami, 1413 AH, Vol. 1, pp. 71–74). The mentioned narration is reported from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri via Humam ibn Yahya, and one of its wordings is: 'Do not write from me, and whoever has written from me anything other than the Qur'an, let him erase it' (Muslim, 1424 AH, Vol. 8, p. 221; al-Nawawi, 1413 AH, Vol. 18, p. 121). b) Even assuming the Prophet's (peace be upon him) prohibition of writing hadith in specific circumstances is proven, there are abundant other textual and Qur'anic pieces of evidence showing that under normal conditions, writing hadith was recommended by the Prophet and diligently practiced by many companions, with researchers reporting numerous instances of this (Jalali, 1413 AH, pp. 47–111 & pp. 236–242; Azami, 1413 AH, Vol. 1, p. 12). Additionally, the hadiths themselves have been subjected to criticism regarding their text and transmission, and hadith scholars have scrutinized their

content and narrators. Hence, they argue that something subject to criticism and open to human opinions cannot qualify as religion; and Islam has been accused because of these very hadiths which Muslims deem authentic, whereas Islam is free from them (Parwez, 1976, p. 154; see also Elahi-Bakhsh, 1411 AH, p. 233).

Argument 5: Criticizability Negates Authenticity

Since criticisms have been leveled against the Sunnah, the Sunnah lacks authenticity. In this argument, the Qur'anists state that because criticisms have been directed at the Sunnah, it lacks authenticity.

Critique: This statement is fundamentally invalid. If mere critique and objection directed at the Sunnah were evidence of its invalidity, then the boundless doubts raised by adversaries and opponents against the Qur'an would have to strip this heavenly Book of its authenticity, yet no one has ever made such a claim. On the other hand, the statement that 'something subject to criticism cannot qualify as religion' is incorrect, because these critiques serve to distinguish the pure from the impure and to arrive at pristine hadiths, causing no harm to authentic reports. Furthermore, while we acknowledge the presence of fabricated and Judeo-Christian narrations (Isra'iliyyat) within hadith sources, the existence of such reports—which are resolved by referring to sciences such as biographical evaluation (rijal), terminology (dirayah), and comprehension (fiqh al-hadith)—does not justify turning away from all hadiths and discarding pristine narrations.

Argument 6: Divisive Nature of the Sunnah

The Sunnah is a source of division and fragmentation among Muslims. The Qur'anists believe that, unlike the Qur'an which is a source of unity and solidarity among Muslims, the Sunnah is a precursor to division and fragmentation. Abdullah Chakralawi writes in this regard: 'Division and discord will never be lifted from Muslims, nor will any banner unite them, nor will any unified school of thought gather them as long as they remain holding fast to the narrations of Zayd and 'Amr [i.e., this or that person]' (Isha'at al-Qur'an Journal, 1906, p. 31; see also Elahi-Bakhsh, 1411 AH, p. 238); meaning that

division and discord will not be erased from Muslims, and they will not assemble under one banner or be brought together by a single thought as long as they cling to the narrations of this and that person.

Critique: First, contrary to the Qur'anists' assumption, extreme Qur'anism and the exclusion of the Sunnah from religious sources in understanding the Qur'an do not lead to unity; rather, they lead to division, as evidenced by the conflicting opinions of the proponents themselves. In fact, this movement attempts to fill intellectual gaps and answer questions and ambiguities regarding the teachings of the Qur'an and religion by relying on subjective personal opinion, which naturally yields divergent views and tastes. Second, Islamic unity from the Qur'anic perspective spans two domains: the theological-theoretical domain and the social domain. Unity in the theological and theoretical domain is an ideal objective, but not at the cost of abandoning theoretical and doctrinal principles. In the social domain, unity means overlooking intellectual and theological differences and reaching consensus based on commonalities to enable peaceful coexistence or create a platform for constructive and beneficial dialogue toward discovering the truth. This does not contradict the belief in the role of the Sunnah and hadiths in religious and Qur'anic understanding (Asadi et al., 1389 SH, p. 317). Third, we admit that a small portion of differences stems from weak and unknown narrations present in Sunni hadith collections. However, alongside these hadiths, we possess authentic hadiths and Sunnah definitively attributed to the Infallible (peace be upon him). Claiming that these authentic hadiths also cause division is highly baseless; because as emphasized earlier, the Qur'an does not differentiate between itself and such a Sunnah, and it is nonsensical that the Sunnah, which articulates the Divine will, would be a source of division among Muslims (Nasiri, 1385 SH, pp. 221–322; see also Nasiri, 1383 SH, Vol. 1, pp. 73–75).

Argument 7: Two-Century Delay in Codification

The narrations in hadith collections were codified at least two centuries after the Prophet's death; thus, they are unreliable. Qur'anists believe that the narrations in hadith collections were codified at least

two centuries after the Prophet's death, and that prior to this, for a century, the writing and codification of hadith was prevented. Given this, how can these narrations be attributed to the Prophet? The founder of the Qur'anist sect writes: 'The Sunnah was not codified during his [the Prophet's] lifetime up to the third century AH. If our listeners cannot recall what we spoke about in last week's Friday sermon, how can they recall what was heard a hundred years ago and guarantee its accuracy?' (Parwez, 1977, p. 41; see also Al-Haq, n.d., p. 22; Elahi-Bakhsh, 1411 AH, p. 243); meaning the Sunnah was not compiled during the Prophet's life and was transmitted orally from chest to chest until the third century AH. When one of our listeners cannot fully recount our speech in a Friday sermon delivered just a week ago, how is it possible that after the passage of a hundred years, people would be capable of accurately conveying spoken words? He states elsewhere: 'The Sihah al-Sittah (the Six Authentic Books) which are took pride in and which the Qur'an is claimed to need—all of those books were collected and codified in the third century AH according to the acknowledgment of the hadith scholars' (Parwez, 1977, p. 41). Ahmed Subhy Mansour writes on this matter: 'And this narrated Sunnah or hadiths were not codified until the third century AH, i.e., after more than two hundred and eighty years from the Prophet's death. This first confirms their belief in the Prophet's prohibition of writing from him, and secondly, the infiltration of numerous fabricated and disputed hadiths into this Sunnah during the three centuries prior to and during its codification. For this reason, the Qur'anists exclude the verbal Sunnah, or what are called the prophetic hadiths, from the sources of Islamic legislation; according to them, it is impermissible to construct the Sharia on doubtful foundations' (as cited in Wikipedia, n.d.); meaning hadiths were not codified until the third century AH, which is more than 280 years after the death of the Prophet. In addition, many fabricated and contradictory hadiths emerged during these three centuries; therefore, the Qur'anists do not consider the verbal Sunnah, or what is termed prophetic hadiths, as sources of Islamic legislation. Based on this, in their view, it is not permissible for the Sharia to be built upon doubtful foundations.

Critique: First, the prophetic Sunnah was never completely consigned to oblivion and destruction among the Islamic Ummah from the beginning of Islam. Despite the delay in the official codification of hadiths under the pressure of certain rulers or personal motives (Jalali, 1413 AH, pp. 414–422; Azami, 1413 AH, Vol. 1, p. 44), there were always scholars who undertook the preservation of hadiths and diligently worked on their oral and written propagation (Jalali, 1413 AH, p. 117; Azami, 1413 AH, Vol. 1, p. 84). Second, according to the school of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them), the prophetic Sunnah benefited from infallible and inerrant preservers and defenders until the mid-third century AH. Hadith seekers could refer to them and present their hadith booklets and compilations to verify the accuracy or inaccuracy of the narrations (see Askari, 1408 AH, Vol. 2, pp. 316 & 321).

Argument 8: Sufficiency of the Practical Sunnah Alone

Practicing the practical Sunnah (such as prayer and Hajj) is sufficient, and there is no need for narrations. Qur'anists believe that if Muslims practice the practical Sunnah, there is no longer any need to refer to hadith books; because all Muslims agree on this, and they also believe that the Prophet's Sunnah consists solely of the Prophet's practice of what is mentioned in the Qur'an and nothing more. Ahmed Subhy Mansour writes on this: 'At the same time, the Qur'anists act upon what they call the "practical Sunnah," which refers to actions transmitted through mass transmission (tawatur), such as the method of prayer, Hajj, Zakat, and other matters not mentioned in detail in the Qur'an, but transmitted from one generation to another. Almost all Muslims agree on the method of performing them without needing the narrations mentioned in hadith books. It is noted that the Qur'anists express that the Prophet's Sunnah mentioned in the Qur'an is the Prophet Muhammad's practice of what is in the Qur'an and his commitment to the principles of Islam represented in the divine revelation sent down to him, which is the Qur'an and nothing more. Accordingly, Muslims should follow the Messenger by practicing what is in the Qur'an, and that is their understanding of the verse:

"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often" (Qur'an 33:21)' (as cited in Wikipedia, n.d.); meaning that the Qur'anists practice what they term the practical Sunnah, which comprises actions transmitted via mass transmission, such as the details of prayer, Hajj, Zakat, and other matters whose particulars are not mentioned in the Qur'an but have been passed down from generation to generation, and almost all Muslims agree on how to perform them, without any need for the hadiths in hadith books. The Qur'anists believe that the Prophet's Sunnah consists of the Prophet's compliance with the limits set in the Qur'an and nothing more; therefore, Muslims must follow the Prophet by acting on what is mentioned in the Qur'an, as stated in the verse: 'There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern...' (Qur'an 33:21); meaning: 'For you, if you have hope in Allah and the Last Day and remember Allah much, the Messenger of Allah is a commendable role model.'

Critique: First, the details of all rulings, such as prayer and Zakat, have not been transmitted through mutawatir (mass-transmitted) practice alone; rather, where they have been transmitted, it is in the form of hadith. Since hadith represents the verbal statements, actions, and tacit approvals (taqrir) of the Infallible (peace be upon him), acting upon the narration becomes obligatory. Second, the Qur'anists' belief that the Prophet's Sunnah consists solely of the Prophet's practice of what is mentioned in the Qur'an and nothing more is incorrect. This is because the Prophet's Sunnah itself is not written in the Qur'an, and the verse cited regarding the Holy Prophet being an excellent pattern instructs people to follow the Prophet (peace be upon him) because of his status as a role model in all of his actions, whether those practices are mentioned in the Qur'an or not.

conclusion

The Qur'anists put forward several arguments against the authority of the Holy Prophet's Sunnah. The non-revelatory nature of the Sunnah, its divisive nature, the delay in its codification, and its

speculative nature are among these arguments. However, none of these arguments are correct, and they do not render us independent of the Sunnah. Rather, the Sunnah remains one of the primary sources of Islamic legislation and the most critical and efficient source for understanding religion, as it clarifies the religious teachings within the Qur'an. On the other hand, by depriving ourselves and others of the interpretation of the verses through the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), there remains no doubt that understanding and comprehending many verses will become difficult and problematic, which in turn leads to severe division and discord in the interpretation of the Qur'an.

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