

The Sunnah: A Source of Knowledge and Civilization, N° 2

# Education and Economy in the Sunnah

Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi

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# EDUCATION & ECONOMY IN THE SUNNAH

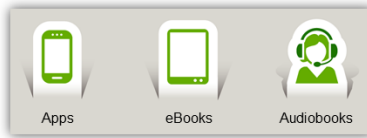
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## **Preface**

After the Glorious Qur'an comes the Sunnah to be the second fundamental source of Shari`ah (Islamic Law) to explain and interpret the Glorious Qur'an and to provide the practical aspect of the Divine Law:

*(And We have sent down unto thee (the Prophet) the message, that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them and they may give thought.)*

(16: 44)

*(You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah an excellent (of conduct).)*

(33: 21)

Islam, as a comprehensive way of life, came with a full system encompassing all aspects of human life with the aim of achieving welfare and good interest of man in this present life and in the Hereafter.

As a matter of fact, the Sunnah as a fundamental source of Shari`ah is concerned with achieving this very aim to make the life of human beings sound and healthy whether spiritually, morally or physically.

Actually, we hope that you have fully realized - from our previous book Hygiene in the Sunnah - how the Sunnah cares about hygiene in an all-embracing and wonderful manner.

Here in this book Education and Economy in the Sunnah, we proceed further trying to grasp the great concern and care of the Prophetic Traditions in these two serious areas.

Specialists in education and economics will surely be surprised, even astonished when they go on reading the Prophetic instructions and teachings concerning these important aspects of man's life.

Nevertheless, for a Muslim, there is no wonder for he repeatedly reads in the Glorious Qur'an the verse that goes:

*(Nor does he (the Prophet) speak out of caprice. It is nothing but a Revelation revealed (Qur'an). He (Muhammad) was taught by one mighty in power (the Angel Gabriel).)*

(53: 3-5)

We should know, however, that this book is a translated part of the precious Arabic book Al-Sunnah: Masdarun Lil Ma`rifati Wal Hadarah (The Sunnah: A Source of Knowledge and Civilization) by the great scholar, Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi. On our part, we thank and appreciate the great efforts made by Dr. Nansy Ewis in translating this precious book.

*Finally, all praise and thanks are due to Allah without*



*Whose Help and Guidance nothing can be accomplished*

General Director  
Sheikh Muhammad `Abdu

## Chapter One

### **The Sunnah and Education**

I have studied the issue of knowledge, learning and teaching in the light of the Sunnah<sup>1</sup>, i.e., through the two main divisions of the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him): The Sound Hadith (Hadith Sahih)<sup>2</sup> and the Good Hadith (Hadith Hasan).<sup>3</sup> This study came out in my book The Prophet and Knowledge, and I could see how the Prophet (Peace be upon him) - even though being illiterate - cared about knowledge and praised scholars. He even set basics for the morals that should control the behavior of scholars and guide them through (the process of teaching). This study also shows how the Sunnah was way ahead in establishing the best rules and the greatest educational values that many people - even among the Muslims - still believe they are an outcome of modern contemporary studies that nobody came to know but the West.

You will find proof of what I am saying in the following titles:

1. Learning and related manners.

2. What is obligatory for each Muslim to learn.
3. Observing the right Niyah (intention).
4. Continuous seeking of knowledge.
5. To be patient with the problems associated with seeking knowledge.
6. Treating the teacher with dignity and asking questions in a polite manner.
7. Caring of the Muslim Society about the scholars and stressing their esteem.
8. Solidarity of the society in teaching its members.
9. Welcoming the student and being cheerful with him.
10. Being merciful and sympathetic towards the student.
11. Rewarding the good students and praising them.
12. Feeling pity towards the mistaken ones.
13. Assuming a gradual attitude in teaching and making things easy rather than difficult.
14. Taking individual differences and variations into consideration.
15. Being moderate (in the amount being taught) and avoiding putting the student in a state of boredom.

16. Making good use of practical situations for the sake of education and guidance.

17. Making use of educational aids.

18. Choosing the best modes (like similitude, giving examples, telling stories).

19. Attracting the student's attention by asking questions and leading live conversation.

You shall find under each of these titles: Prophetic directions, educational instructions and awakening remarks portrayed in the sayings of the Prophet, deeds and consent of the Prophet that shed a light on the Prophet's attitude towards education.<sup>4</sup>

There are more specialized studies, that show the educational aspects of the Sunnah in a more detailed manner.<sup>5</sup>

Whoever delves deeper into the Sunnah, will find an incomparable source of information in that field.

### **Taking individual variations into consideration**

Here, I will just concentrate on shedding light on one authentic educational or teaching value or principle that the Sunnah offered. This principle is taking into consideration the variations between people; whether individual, environmental, or differences according to species.

What is right for one person is not necessarily right for another, and what is suitable for a certain environment is not necessarily suitable for the other. What is right for a certain group or sex is not necessarily right for another, also what could be right for a certain period of time or age is not always suitable for other times or ages.

A clever teacher, is one who gives every human being - whether individually or in groups - his share of knowledge which suits him most and which is right for him to take. This share is also given in a suitable amount and at the time which is most beneficial for the student.

The chief and principal teacher of humanity - Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) - was the best to take these factors into consideration from both aspects theoretical and practical.

There are several proofs that these variations were actually and practically taken into consideration by the Prophet (Peace be upon him):

1. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) gave different advises to different individuals - who asked for them - depending on their character.