

The Quran and its Message

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Salamun Alaikum (Peace be upon you)

DOES 'HIKMAH' (WISDOM) MEAN SUNNA OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD?^(pbuh)

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It is asserted by many Muslims that the existence of the 'sunna' of Muhammad^(pbuh) which remains compulsory on Muslims to follow is attested by the following verse.

033:034

"And remember what is recited in your houses of the verses **(Arabic: ayati)** of God and the wisdom **(Arabic: hikmati)**; surely God is Knower of subtleties, Aware"

It is further asserted that the 'Prophetic sunna' is embodied in certain [Islamic secondary sources](#). The reader will note that there is no direct mention of the Arabic term 'sunna' in the above quoted verse (33:34), despite the term 'sunna' being well attested and utilised by the Quran.

(Please see a related article [1] below)

The word 'hikmah' has been used in the Quran many times. Given its multi-faceted usage in different contexts, it clearly denotes the 'enlightenment' or 'wisdom' one acquires from an accumulated body of work or knowledge.

This 'hikmah' (wisdom) is also not restricted to the Prophets or messengers of God, but granted to anyone who reflects, ponders and attempts to grasp the message of God and ultimately, to whom God pleases.

002.269

"He grants wisdom **(Arabic: hikmata)** to whom He pleases; and he to whom wisdom **(Arabic: hikmata)** is granted receives indeed a benefit overflowing; but none will grasp the Message but those of understanding. **(Arabic: albab)**

Note the word 'albabī' above who are invariably those who make use of the faculty of thinking and of understanding. These individuals are linked by the grace of God with receiving 'hikmah'. Therefore, this 'hikmah' is available to anyone (God willing) who attempts to understand the message of God by extracting the best meaning.

039:018

"Those who listen to the Word (the Quran) and follow the **best meaning in it**: those are the ones whom God has guided and those are the one's endowed with understanding (**Arabic: albabī**)

'Hikmah' is also not restricted to Prophet Muhammad ^(pbuh) nor does it refer to his 'particular sunna' as all Prophets of God possessed 'hikmah' (wisdom)

003.081 (Part)

"And when God took the covenant of **the prophets**, saying: "I have given you a Book and Wisdom (**Arabic: hikmatin**)..."

With regards the people / generation of Prophet Abraham: ^(pbuh)

004.054

"Or do they envy mankind for what God has given them of his bounty? but We had already given the people of Abraham the Book and Wisdom (**Arabic: hikmata**), and conferred upon them a great kingdom"

With regards Prophet David: ^(pbuh)

038.020

"We strengthened his kingdom, and gave him wisdom (**Arabic: hikmata**) and sound judgment in speech and decision.

With regards Prophet Jesus: ^(pbuh)

043.063

"When Jesus came with Clear Signs, he said: "Now have I come to you with Wisdom (**Arabic: hikmati**), and in order to make clear to you some of the (points) on which ye dispute: therefore fear God and obey me".

Also all believers are asked to use 'hikmah' (Wisdom):

016.125

"Invite / Call (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom (**Arabic: hikmati**) and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for thy Lord knows best, who have strayed from His path, and who receive guidance.

FINAL THOUGHTS

To assert that the term 'hikmah' (wisdom) mentioned in verse 33:34 is proof and representative of the 'sunna' of Prophet Muhammad ^(pbuh) is untenable from the Quran's perspective. This is especially

the case when the sunna that is often being implied refers to a body of work not fully canonised until centuries after the death of the Prophet.

Albeit the terms 'sunna' and 'hadith' are used synonymously in general parlance, there exists a crucial **difference between the two transmissions**. However, none of these transmissions is a reference to the 'hikmah' within the context of verse 33:34.

The Quran remains the primary source for the interpretation of any term and it is clear from the few examples quoted above that 'hikmah' is the enlightenment and wisdom one receives and is extractable from a source text or revelation. All Prophets of God possessed this 'hikmah' as do those that ponder deeply about God's verses and whom God blesses.

Related Articles:

- (1) [The Difference Between Hadith and Sunna](#)
- (2) [Understanding the term 'Sunna' from a Quran's Perspective](#)

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