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Usul al-Fiqh for Beginners, Lesson 7: The Qur'an and the Sunnah as Evidence

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Evidence

What constitutes evidence and what does not constitute evidence?

Evidence is the Book, the Sunnah, Ijma and Qiyas.

- The Book is the Quran. Its definition is the words of Allah revealed to the Prophet Muhammad via the angel Jibrail.
- The Sunnah is the sayings, actions and approvals of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)
- The sayings of Companions such as, 'we used to do such and such during the lifetime of the Prophet' constitute a part of Sunnah of approval or Taqririya. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri said that 'for the charity of 'id al-Fitr, we used to give a sa' of dates or of barley', which is a matter that could not have remained hidden, so it constitutes a sunnah taqririyah.
- The actions of the Prophet is divided into two categories:
 1. an action intending closeness to Allah and His obedience (worship)
 2. an action that is not intending closeness to Allah and His obedience.
- Another way is to say that the actions of the Prophet are either **customary acts**, such as dress and matters of the home, or necessary acts such as eating when hungry or sleeping when tired, or **acts of worship**, with the intention to draw closer to Allah. The ruling of these actions are that they are mandub. We know that the Prophet used to use miswak whenever he entered his home (Sahih Muslim). This is an action he did but that he did not order muslims to do. Therefore, using siwak when entering the house is considered mandub.
- Certain actions specific to the Prophet does not constitute general law. There is a hadith where the Prophet forbade continuous fasting while he himself performed that fast.