

Foreword

The International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) has great pleasure in presenting this scholarly work on the Sunnah, originally published in Arabic in 1990 under the title *Kayfa Nata'amal ma'ala al-Sunnah*. The author, Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, a graduate of al-Azhar University, is an internationally renowned scholar and specialist in the field.

In this work he brings his extensive scholarship and experience as a teacher to elucidation of the Sunnah, emphasizing its harmonious, integrative nature, its balance and moderation. His argument is subtle and challenging, applying traditional knowledge of the Shari'ah to issues faced by Muslims in the present day. He discusses the controversies around various interpretations of hadiths, exposing the confused, often misinformed, reasoning that underlies the (unfortunately widespread) misunderstanding of them. He examines the problem of weak hadiths, clarifying their relationship to legal injunctions, and their relevance and authority for moral instruction. He argues for ease in applying the Sunnah to our daily lives; for, as he points out, the Sunnah is a vehicle for the mercy of the Qur'an, meant to offer hope, not hardship. Muslims must, he argues, recover from their neglect and backwardness in understanding the Sunnah; strive to become proficient and discriminating in their knowledge of it, and apply it with the proper wisdom, decorum, sincerity and moderation.

The IIIT, established in 1981, has served as a major center to facilitate serious scholarly efforts based on Islamic vision, values and principles. Its programs of research, seminars and conferences

over the last twenty-five years have resulted in the publication of more than 300 titles in English, Arabic, and other languages.

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Anas S. Al-Shaikh-Ali,
Academic Advisor,
IIIT London Office, UK