50 Scenario Questions

1. Author and Purpose

Scenario: A new student asks, "Who wrote Al-Ibanah al-Sughra and why was it written?"

Question: What should you tell the student?

Answer: Al-Ibanah al-Sughra was written by Imam Abu Abdullah Ubaydullah ibn Muhammad ibn Battah al-Ukbari, known as Ibn Battah al-Ukbari. He was born in 304 AH and died in 387 AH. The book calls Muslims to the Sunnah, warns against Bid'ah and explains important beliefs and manners.

2. The Four Parts of the Book

Scenario: Maryam remembers that the book is divided into four main parts but she mixes them up.

Question: What are the four main parts?

Answer: Part One teaches Sunnah, Jama'ah, knowledge and warnings against Bid'ah. Part Two teaches Iman, Qadar, the Qur'an, Allah's Attributes, the Hereafter and the Companions. Part Three covers Salah, worship, food, family life and Islamic manners. Part Four warns against practices and innovations the author rejects.

3. Meaning of Sunnah

Scenario: Hamza says, "Sunnah only means optional actions."

Question: What important meaning is missing?

Answer: In these notes, Sunnah means the way and guidance of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It includes following his authentic teachings in belief, worship and daily life. It is not limited to something that is only optional.

4. Meaning of Jama'ah

Scenario: A student says, "Jama'ah means whatever the biggest crowd believes must be correct."

Question: How should this statement be corrected?

Answer: Jama'ah means unity upon the truth, the Qur'an, the Sunnah and the way of the Companions. It does not simply mean the biggest number of people. Unity must be based on Allah's guidance.

5. Meaning of Bid'ah

Scenario: Yusuf says, "Any new object or technology is a Bid'ah in religion."

Question: What definition from the notes should he remember?

Answer: Bid'ah means adding a religious belief, rule or act of worship without evidence. The warning is about inventing matters in the religion, not simply using a new worldly tool or technology.

6. Meaning of Hawa

Scenario: A student knows the evidence but chooses an opinion only because it matches what he wants.

Question: Which term from the notes describes this danger?

Answer: The notes use the word Hawa for desire that pulls a person away from the truth. A Muslim should not place personal desire above clear revelation.

7. Qur'an and Sunnah Together

Scenario: Bilal says, "I only need the Qur'an. I do not need the authentic Sunnah to understand the religion."

Question: What lesson from Part One corrects this?

Answer: The Qur'an and authentic Sunnah are followed together. Allah sent the Messenger ﷺ to explain what was revealed. The Sunnah explains the Qur'an and has authority in the religion.

8. When Disagreements Appear

Scenario: Two students disagree about a religious issue. One says they should decide by personal opinion and ignore Prophetic guidance.

Question: What should they do instead?

Answer: They should return to the Qur'an and authentic Sunnah. The Prophet ﷺ told Muslims to hold firmly to his Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided Caliphs when disagreements appear.

9. Good Intention and Invented Worship

Scenario: A person invents a religious act and says, "My intention is good, so Allah must accept it."

Question: What principle from the notes applies?

Answer: A good intention does not make invented worship correct. An invented religious matter that does not belong to Islam is rejected. Worship should follow the guidance of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

10. Knowledge Before Speaking

Scenario: A student is asked a difficult religious question. He does not know the answer but wants to guess so he looks knowledgeable.

Question: What should he do?

Answer: He should not speak about religion without knowledge. The notes teach students to learn before speaking or giving religious rulings and to return difficult questions to trustworthy people of knowledge.

11. Learning or Arguing

Scenario: Two students ask questions. One wants to understand the truth. The other only wants to defeat people in arguments.

Question: Which approach agrees with the notes?

Answer: The correct approach is asking questions to learn. The notes warn against useless argument and disputation done only to win. Knowledge should lead a person to the truth, not pride.

12. Trustworthy Teachers and Friends

Scenario: A student takes religious information from anyone online without checking their knowledge or reliability.

Question: What advice from Part One should he follow?

Answer: He should choose trustworthy teachers and good companions. Religious knowledge should be taken carefully from reliable sources rather than from unknown people or unsupported claims.

13. Meaning of Iman

Scenario: A student says, "Iman is only a feeling inside the heart."

Question: What is the fuller definition in the notes?

Answer: Iman includes belief of the heart, speech of the tongue and actions. The notes show that Iman is not only a hidden feeling because speech and good actions are also included under Iman.

14. Six Foundations of Iman

Scenario: A teacher asks Fatimah to name the six foundations of Iman.

Question: What should she answer?

Answer: The six foundations are belief in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and Qadar.

15. Iman Can Increase

Scenario: Omar says, "A person's Iman always stays at exactly the same level."

Question: Which lesson from the Qur'an corrects him?

Answer: The notes teach that Iman can increase. Surah al-Anfal 8:2 describes the believers increasing in faith when Allah's verses are recited. Obedience, knowledge and worship can strengthen Iman.

16. Major Sin and Disbelief

Scenario: A student says, "Every Muslim who commits a major sin automatically leaves Islam."

Question: What distinction do the notes teach?

Answer: A major sin does not automatically make every Muslim a disbeliever. The notes distinguish Shirk and clear disbelief from sins below that level. Specific rulings about people require knowledge and should not be made carelessly by students.

17. Meaning of Tawheed

Scenario: A student says, "Tawheed only means believing that Allah created the universe."

Question: What is missing from this answer?

Answer: Tawheed includes worshipping Allah alone. Believing that Allah is the Creator is not enough if worship is directed to someone besides Him. All acts of worship belong to Allah alone.

18. The Qur'an Is Allah's Speech

Scenario: Someone says, "The Qur'an is only the speech of human beings."

Question: What belief is taught in the notes?

Answer: The Qur'an is the Speech of Allah and is not created. The notes use Surah at-Tawbah 9:6 as evidence because the Qur'an is directly described as the Speech of Allah. The notes also affirm that Allah spoke directly to Musa عليه السلام in a way that suits His Majesty.

19. Rule for Allah's Names and Attributes

Scenario: A student says, "I will only accept an Attribute of Allah if I can imagine exactly how it is."

Question: What rule should he follow instead?

Answer: Accept what is established in the Qur'an and authentic Sunnah without denying it, changing it or comparing Allah to creation. Allah's Attributes are real but their reality suits His Majesty.

20. Nothing Is Like Allah

Scenario: A student hears that Allah is All-Hearing and then imagines Allah's hearing as being like human hearing.

Question: Which verse and principle correct this?

Answer: Surah ash-Shura 42:11 teaches that nothing is like Allah and He is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing. We affirm Allah's Attributes without comparing them to the attributes of creation.

21. Allah Rose Over the Throne

Scenario: A student reads Surah Ta-Ha 20:5 and asks how the notes explain it.

Question: What should you say?

Answer: The notes affirm that the Most Merciful rose over the Throne and teach students to accept the wording in a way that suits Allah's Majesty without comparing Allah to creation.

22. The Last Third of the Night

Scenario: A student asks what practical lesson is connected to the hadith about the last third of the night.

Question: What does the note emphasize?

Answer: The hadith teaches the virtue of night prayer, Du'a and seeking forgiveness. It also affirms what is authentically reported about Allah in a way that suits His Majesty.

23. Seeing Allah in the Hereafter

Scenario: A student says, "Believers will never see Allah, even in the Hereafter."

Question: What do the notes teach?

Answer: The notes teach that the believers will see Allah in the Hereafter. Surah al-Qiyamah 75:22-23 is used as evidence for this belief.

24. Meaning of Qadar

Scenario: Layla says, "Qadar means Allah only learns what will happen after it happens."

Question: How should this be corrected?

Answer: Allah knew everything before it happened and everything happens within His knowledge and decree. Belief in Qadar is one of the foundations of Iman.

25. The Grave Is Part of the Hereafter

Scenario: A student says, "Nothing happens after death until the final Judgement."

Question: Which lesson from the notes corrects this?

Answer: The notes teach that there is questioning in the grave and punishment or comfort in Barzakh. The Prophet ﷺ sought Allah's protection from the punishment of the grave.

26. Resurrection

Scenario: A student says, "Death is the end and people will never be raised again."

Question: What does the Qur'an evidence in the notes teach?

Answer: People die and then will be raised on the Day of Resurrection. Surah al-Mu'minun 23:15-16 is used to show that death is not the end.

27. The Scale

Scenario: Two students discuss the Judgement. One says Allah may treat people unfairly when their deeds are weighed.

Question: What does the note about the Scale teach?

Answer: Allah will set up just scales and no one will be wronged. Surah al-Anbiya 21:47 teaches that Allah's judgement is perfectly fair.

28. Intercession

Scenario: Someone says, "A person can intercede whenever he wants without Allah's permission."

Question: What correction is needed?

Answer: Intercession is real but it is completely under Allah's authority. No one can intercede except with Allah's permission, as taught in Surah al-Baqarah 2:255.

29. Paradise and Hell

Scenario: A student asks whether Paradise and Hell are only symbols that will be created much later.

Question: What do the notes teach?

Answer: The notes teach that Paradise and Hell are real and already created. They are part of the real events and final homes of the Hereafter.

30. Main Angels in the Notes

Scenario: A teacher asks Sami to match the angels with their roles.

Question: What should he remember?

Answer: Jibril عليه السلام brings revelation. Israfil blows the Trumpet. The angel of death takes souls. The notes also teach that the dead are questioned in the grave.

31. The Reality of Jinn

Scenario: A student says, "Jinn are only stories and none of them can believe in Allah."

Question: What does Surah al-Jinn 72:1-2 teach?

Answer: Jinn are real created beings. Some believe and some disbelieve. The notes mention a group of jinn who listened to the Qur'an and believed.

32. Learning About the Dajjal

Scenario: A student receives a dramatic online rumour about the Dajjal and shares it immediately.

Question: What approach do the notes teach?

Answer: The Dajjal is a real future trial but Muslims should learn about him from authentic evidence, not rumours. The Prophet ﷺ warned his Ummah about the Dajjal.

33. Return of Isa عليه السلام

Scenario: A student says the return of Isa ibn Maryam عليه السلام is only a made-up story.

Question: What do the notes teach?

Answer: The notes teach that Isa ibn Maryam عليه السلام will descend near the end of time. His return is one of the signs of the Last Day and is established in authentic hadith.

34. Best Generations

Scenario: A student asks why the early Muslims are given special importance in these notes.

Question: What hadith-based lesson should you give?

Answer: The Prophet ﷺ said the best people are his generation, then those after them, then those after them. This is why the earliest generations have a special rank and their understanding is important.

35. Order of the Four Caliphs

Scenario: A student mixes up the order presented in the book for the four rightly guided Caliphs.

Question: What order should he remember?

Answer: The order presented is Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman then Ali, may Allah be pleased with them all. The notes also teach love and respect for all the Companions.

36. Aishah's Innocence

Scenario: Someone repeats the old false accusation against Aishah رضي الله عنها.

Question: Which part of the Qur'an should a student remember?

Answer: Surah an-Nur 24:11-26 contains the verses that cleared Aishah رضي الله عنها from the false accusation. The notes teach that the Qur'an established her innocence.

37. Obedience to Leaders

Scenario: A leader tells a Muslim to do something clearly sinful. The Muslim says, "I must obey every command no matter what."

Question: What rule do the notes teach?

Answer: Obedience is only in what is right. No human being is obeyed in a command to disobey Allah. This principle prevents obedience from being used as an excuse for sin.

38. Calmness in Salah

Scenario: Ahmad rushes through every position in Salah and barely becomes still before moving again.

Question: What should he correct?

Answer: He should pray calmly and become settled in each position. The Prophet ﷺ told the man who prayed badly to repeat his prayer and become calm in each part.

39. Following the Imam

Scenario: A person in congregational Salah keeps moving before the Imam because he wants to finish first.

Question: What manner from the notes is he ignoring?

Answer: He should follow the Imam and not race ahead. Congregational Salah should be performed calmly with the worshippers following the Imam properly.

40. Jumu'ah and Business

Scenario: A shop owner hears the call for Jumu'ah but says, "Business is more important. I will keep selling."

Question: Which verse in the notes corrects this?

Answer: Surah al-Jumu'ah 62:9 teaches that when the call for Jumu'ah is made, ordinary trade should be left and Muslims should go to the remembrance of Allah. Jumu'ah takes priority over ordinary business.

41. Khutbah and Masjid Manners

Scenario: During the Khutbah, two students keep talking loudly and treating the Masjid like a social market. Another group is competing over expensive decoration.

Question: What manners should they remember?

Answer: They should listen quietly to the Khutbah, walk to the Masjid calmly and respect the Masjid as a place of worship. The notes warn against turning the Masjid into a marketplace and against competing in decoration.

42. Food Manners

Scenario: A young student begins eating without mentioning Allah, uses his left hand and reaches across everyone's plate.

Question: Which three manners from the notes should he practice?

Answer: He should mention Allah's Name, eat with the right hand and eat from what is near him. The notes show that Islam teaches good manners even in ordinary daily actions.

43. Family and Character

Scenario: A husband says, "Islamic manners only matter in the Masjid. At home I can be harsh and ignore my family's rights."

Question: What lesson from Part Three corrects him?

Answer: The notes teach kindness to spouses, fairness, protection of family privacy and good treatment of neighbours, workers and dependants. Surah an-Nisa 4:19 teaches living with wives in kindness.

44. Calling Things Halal or Haram

Scenario: A student dislikes a food and says, "I do not like it, so it must be haram."

Question: What rule should he remember?

Answer: Personal dislike does not make something haram. The notes warn against declaring something halal or haram without evidence. Religious rulings require knowledge.

45. Fortune-Telling and the Unseen

Scenario: Someone visits a fortune-teller and says, "This person knows the unseen by himself."

Question: Which principle from Part Four corrects this?

Answer: No one in the heavens and earth knows the unseen except Allah. Fortune-tellers and astrologers do not have independent knowledge of the unseen. Claims about the unseen must be judged by revelation.

46. Astronomy and Astrology

Scenario: A student says, "Studying the movement of stars for calendars is exactly the same as claiming the stars control people's future."

Question: What distinction should be made?

Answer: Astronomy studies the created universe and its movements. Astrology makes claims connecting stars to hidden knowledge, fate or future events. The notes warn against astrology and claims to the unseen.

47. Graves and Worship

Scenario: A person says, "Because a righteous person is buried here, I can turn the grave into a place of worship."

Question: What warning from the notes applies?

Answer: The Prophet ﷺ warned against taking graves as places of worship. Respect for righteous people must not become worship at their graves. Worship belongs to Allah alone.

48. Religious Performance and Mushaf Decoration

Scenario: A reciter turns Qur'an recitation into a theatrical performance and someone treats an expensive decorated Mushaf mainly as a display item.

Question: What two warnings from Part Four apply?

Answer: A pleasant voice is not the problem. The warning is against turning recitation into theatrical singing that changes its dignity or form. The Qur'an is also meant to be read, understood and followed, not treated mainly as a luxury decoration.

49. Historical Labels and Careless Judgements

Scenario: A student learns the names of old sects in the book and starts applying those labels to people today without knowledge.

Question: What caution from the notes should stop him?

Answer: Students should learn the beliefs being discussed rather than use historical labels carelessly. Technical labels should not be applied without knowledge. The notes also make clear that students are not given permission to make personal takfir judgements.

50. Final Comprehensive Challenge

Scenario: Abdullah says, "As long as I have good intentions, I can ignore the Sunnah, follow any religious opinion I like, speak without knowledge, invent worship and believe rumours about the unseen."

Question: Correct Abdullah using the main lessons of Al-Ibanah al-Sughra.

Answer: Good intentions do not replace revelation. A Muslim should worship Allah alone, follow the Qur'an and authentic Sunnah, remain with the truth, avoid Bid'ah and Hawa and learn before speaking. Beliefs about Allah, Iman, Qadar and the Hereafter must come from authentic evidence. Daily worship and manners should also follow Prophetic guidance. A Muslim should use trustworthy sources, avoid careless labels and ask Allah to remain firm upon Islam and Sunnah.