

Conclusion

After finishing discussion of the Muhammadan *hadith* and its history, I found it proper to conclude my book with chapters containing researches related to *hadith* and comprehending it. And also which manner should be followed by the knowledge-seeker so as to realize the sahih of *hadith*, with rules and principles of Islam with which no one can dispense. Certainly these chapters are essential and complementary to the book, for which I will prelude with a pleasant statement for the eminent historian Ibn Khaldun in his discussion of philosophy of history and sociology.

In his widely-known Muqaddimah he wrote: When depending upon oral tradition in reporting the akhbar, without following the prevalent principles and rules of politics, nature of populousness, and conditions in the human society, nor qiyas (analogy) was adopted everywhere, then they would not be immune against slips and deviation from truth path.

Mostly the historians, exegetes and leaders of transmission were liable to errors in tales and events due to reliance in citing them merely on oral tradition, whether be authentic or weak, without subjecting them to their foundations, nor comparing them to their identical ones, nor fathoming them with criterion of wisdom so as to be aware of the dispositions of mankind, nor investigating the *akhbar*, the fact caused them to wander from path of truth and go astray in the wilderness of illusion and error.¹

And since falsity naturally creeps into the *khbar*, with necessitating causes, of which being inclinations and bigotry toward opinions and *madhahib*, then if the self be moderate in approving the report, it will put it to the test and investigation till distinguishing its true aspect from the false one.

But if be overwhelmed by *tashayy'* (partiality) to an opinion or some creed, it will easily approve of all the reports that suit it, as this inclination and partiality would curtain the mind's eye from scrutiny and investigation, as a result of which the self would have no alternative but to accept and report the lies.

Among the reasons prompting to falsification of *akhbar* we can refer to having confidence in the transmitters, the verification of which is owing to *jarh* and *ta'dil*. Of them also is diversion from the intentions, a large number of transmitters were not aware of the purpose of what they used to see and

hear, reporting the *hadith* according to their surmise and conjecture, the fact entailing their liability to falsity. Also of the reasons is imagining the truth, which occurs mostly because of trusting the transmitters. Besides unawareness of application of the states with the incidents, because of the obscurity and affectation overwhelming them, so they would be transmitted by the reporter in the way he saw them, that is by feigning other than their truth.

Another reason is the people's seeking favouritism near the magnates and chiefs through flattery and adulation, with circulation of remembrance to the extent that the reports would convey that contrarily to reality, as the selfs being fond of hearing flattery, and people are anxious to gain the worldly lusts and means, like magnanimity and affluence, not interested mostly in virtues or competing to be of their owners.

The foremost of reasons leading to falsity being unawareness of nature of conditions in populousness, as for every incident — abstract or act — there should be a certain nature belonging especially to itself in essence, and to what it encounters. If the hearer be acquainted with natures of events and conditions in the existence, and their requirements, that will verily help him rectify the *khobar* so as to discern truthfulness from falsity, which being the most effective way in verification from every aspect. Most often it may occur to the listeners to admit and transmit some impossible *akhbar* that would be taken from them.²

Verification of Akhbar By Recognizing Tempers Of People

He (Ibn Khaldun) said also: The best and most authentic methods in verification of *akhbar* being only in recognizing the tempers of people, so as to discern the real from false ones. This method is prior to verification through *ta'dil* of the narrators, to which it should not be referred but only after realizing that the *khobar* being possible or impossible in itself. If it be impossible, then it would be futile to consider the *ta'dil* and *tajrih* (for giving judgement).

Men of insight regarded impossibility of indication of the word and interpreting it with what is refused by reason, to be one of points of defamation in the *khobar*. Whereas *ta'dil* and *tajrih* (sarcasm) used to be the considered criterion for determining the veracity of legal reports, since most of them being originating impositions, which the legislator obligated to perform them till they were believed to be true, and the means to attain reality being having confidence in the narrators, in respect of reliability and precision.³

When talking about longevity of the world he said: During the first epoch of Islam it was depended in this regard upon the traditions reported from the Sahabah, particularly those who embraced Islam from among the Children of Israel, like Ka'b al-Ahbar and Wahb ibn Munabbih and their likes.

In his statement about exegesis of the Qur'an he wrote: The antecedents have compiled books and were engaged in this job, but their books and reported traditions contained the poor and authentic, the accepted and rejected things. That was because the Arabs were not educated or knowledgeable, but

mostly bedouins and illiterate, and when desiring to know anything, among what all the human souls love much including causes of beings, initiation of creation, and secrets of existence, they would inquire people of the book who preceded them and learn from them.

These people include the followers of the Torah, among the Jews and those who adopted their religion, of the Christians. And people of the Torah were that time bedouins like the Arabs, knowing nothing except what common people of the Book were aware of, most of whom were from Himyar, who embraced the Jewish religion. On embracing Islam, they kept on believing in things that had nothing to do with the legal rules for which they would take precautions such as reports on commencement of creation, and what is related to misfortunes of life and epics, and alike, among whom we can mention Ka'b al-Ahbar, Wahb ibn Munabbih and Abd Allah ibn Salam and their likes.

The books of *tafsir* (exegesis) became then filled with these traditions reported by such people, since the exegetes showed leniency in this regard, filling their *tafsir* books with these reports brought by people of the Torah, the fact that made them acceptable among people since time immemorial.⁴

Research on Sciences of Hadith

Research On Sciences Of Hadith⁵

In this regard he said: The *mujtahid* leaders (imams) differed in opinion regarding being prolific or unprolific in this art. About Abu Hanifah, it is said that he narrated 17 traditions, and Malik approved of those traditions he recorded in his *Muwatta'* which numbered about 300 ones, while Ahmad ibn Hanbal reported in his *Musnad* 50 thousand traditions.⁶ Those who narrated less among them have done so for evading the attacks that they faced on this way, and the defects they encountered, particularly the sarcasm that was launched by the majority of people.

So this led them to abandon adopting the traditions and ways of *isnad* that causing them to face such campaigns, which when increasing would lead to diminish their narrations due to weakness in ways of transmission. The narrations of al-Imam Ahmad were only decreased when he became strict in the provisions of (accepting) the *riwayah*, tolerance, and weakness in the narration of the positive *hadith* when it be opposed by the psychological reaction,⁷ as a result of which he started to diminish his narrations. That should not be seen as if he had forsaken reporting of *hadith* deliberately, but due to the reasons cited before, while others showed more leniency in the provisions, as a consequence of which their traditions were so numerous, since everyone had his own opinion.

He further said:⁸ Not all the companions were competent to issue *fatawa* (verdicts), nor the teachings of religion were taken from them all, but these characteristics were appertaining only to the holders of the Qur'an, who being aware of its *nasikh* (abrogating) and *mansukh* (abrogated), *mutashabih* (allegorical) and *muhkam* (clear, decisive), and all other indications, in the way they learnt it from the Prophet or from those who heard it from him, who were called *al-qurra'* (reciters), i.e. who used to recite the Book since

the Arabs were illiterate at that time.

The Greatest Calamity Inflicted to Islam

Al-Ustadh Muhammad Abduh said: Islam was never inflicted with a calamity greater than the *bida'* (heresies) ascribed to it by those pretending to be Muslims, and the fabrications invented by the *Ghulat*, which corrupted the minds of Muslims and made others mistrust the foundations of religion.

Consequently falsification spread tremendously against the Muhammadan religion in its early centuries, continuing till the era of the Companions, and rather falsity was practised against the Prophet (S) during his lifetime. But the misfortune of falsification exacerbated and prevailed everywhere during the rule of the Umayyads, where the narrators increased in number and the truthful decreased, with many of the honourable Sahabah refraining from reporting the *hadith*, except from those whom they trusted to be truthful, for fear from the perversion that inflicted the narrations.

In the introduction to his Sahih, Muslim said: "I have never seen the righteous people telling lies in anything more than in the *hadith* and then evil of slandering spread, with fabrication and invention exacerbating and extending with passage of time." Whoever going through the introduction of al-Imam Muslim, would verily realize how intense toil and fatigue he experienced in compiling his Sahih, and how much falsified traditions were foisted by fabricators into religion with which it had nothing to do.

And men of insight in history were fully aware of the fact that Islam has overshadowed sights of the world with brightness of might, rising above heads of nations with power of authority, inundating among people like rushing streams, with some of them covetting certain desires in it, and some imagining in it dreads, with manifest signs established for men of insight.

Hence, those embracing this Din were of several divisions: Some people believed in it submissively to the need for it and for obtaining its light, and those were the truthful. Some others were of different cults who arrogated its title and began to be branded with its mark, either out of desire in its spoils, or out of fear from assaults of its followers, or priding themselves in belonging to it. So they covered themselves with it but couldn't be conscious of its real slogan, covering their superficial conditions under the disguise of Islam, without sensing it by their hearts, following their religions inwardly while resembling the Muslims with their apparent aspects. Allah the Exalted said in regard of their equals:

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُلْ لَمْ نُؤْمِنُوا وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ

***"The wandering Arabs say: We believe. Say (unto them, O Muhammad): Ye believe not, but rather say: "We submit," for the faith hath not yet entered into your hearts."*(49: 14)**

Among these people there was someone exaggerating in *riya'* (dissimulation) to the extent that people

would start to count him among the pious. On seeing some people trusting and believing in his utterances, he would begin to relate them traditions from his old creed, ascribing them to the Prophet (S) or some of his Companions, as a result of which all the *Israeliyyat* (Jewish traditions) and whatever was contained in the expositions of the Torah were recorded in the Islamic books as being Prophetic traditions. [10](#) And some of them have deliberately fabricated traditions which if their meanings be firmly rooted in the minds, they would deteriorate the morals and impel to neglect and think little of legal and religious duties, slackening people's resolute from supporting the truth.

Of them those traditions indicating the end of life of Islam — we seek protection by God — or enticing greediness to God's forgiveness with deviating from His *shar'* (legislation), or those impelling full submission to the *qadar* (fate) through letting alone the reason indulged in what improving the *Din* and the world. All these traditions were fabricated by the fabricators on purpose with the aim of corrupting the Muslims and diverting them from the original rules of their religion, so as to disturb the order of their life and weaken their might.

Among the liars there were some believing that increasing in the *akhbar* and narrating abundant sayings would elevate the position of religion, so they babbled whatever they willed, seeking by this reward and *thawab*, while they would not gain but heavy burden and punishment.

It is them in regard of whom Muslim in his Sahih said: I have not seen the righteous telling lies more than in the *hadith*. [11](#) He means by 'the righteous' those who used to prolong their *sibal* (beard), widen their trousers, bow down their heads, keep low their voices, frequent regularly to the mosques with their ghosts, while being the farthest among people from them with their spirits, move with remembrance their lips and follow them with moving their rosaries.

But in fact they were as described by Amir al-Mu'minin Ali ibn Abi Talib who said in their regard: They made the *Din* one of the locks of insight and blockages of intellect. They are self-deceived and deluded, doing evil but thinking to do good. They imagine oppression to be justice, and treachery to be a virtue, so they believe that ascribing what they surmise to the Prophet's Companions will increase in their honour and make others hold them in higher esteem, so as to be fit for what is said in their regard: "A wise enemy is much better than an ignorant lover, [12](#)(with some abbreviation).

When broaching to `ilm al-*hadith* in the bill he laid down for reforming the education, and what method should be followed, he (Muhammad Abduh) said: "Art of *hadith* is considered acceptable when it is viewed as interpreting the Qur'an and expositor for it, with deleting from it whatever contradicting the Quranic text, like the unauthentic traditions and exertion of opinion (*ijtihad*), so as to restore the correct traditions to it, if their outward appearance deludes of being contradictory (to the Qur'an). [13](#)

In an address to one of brothers (in Din), counselling him to keep on reading the Qur'an and the Prophetic *sirah* (conduct), he said: "Keep on reading the Qur'an and learn its imperatives, the forbidden things, counsels and lessons, as it used to be recited for the believers and disbelievers in the time of

(coming of) revelation. Beware of going over the books of *tafsir* but only for understanding the meaning of some word that you could not realize what the Arabs intended by it, or connection between a word and another the conjunction of which was unknown for you. Then betake yourself to what the Qur'an designated for you, bear down upon what it assaults, and attach to this study of the Prophetic conduct, admitting the reasonable correct matters, keeping your eyes away from the weak and rejected things. [14](#)

In interpreting the Qur'an and comprehending the religion, he said: In this regard that which should be followed is only the decisive proof, since this issue comes under *bab al-aqa'id* (doctrines), and it is dependable upon certainty that can't be taken through conjecture and imagination. [15](#)

Believing In Message of Muhammad

Believing In Message Of Muhammad (S) [16](#)

Al-Ustadh Muhammad Abduh says:

It should be believed in what he (S) reported and had faith in whatever he brought, with which I mean what is expressed clearly in the holy Book, and what was successively narrated (*mutawatir*) through an authentic chain of transmitters that having all the necessary conditions. That is the *khbar* that is reported by a group of people against whom charge of collaboration on falsity can never be levelled by anyone, as is usual in the case of sensible matters, such as the conditions after death like *ba'th* (resurrection) and bliss in the paradise, or torment in the hell, reckoning for the *hasanat* (merits) and guilts, beside other known alike issues.

But when it is related to belief and faith, we should depend only upon what is plain in the *khbar*, and it is impermissible to annex the conjectural to the decisive. The provision for soundness of belief lies in its devoidness of anything spoiling the probity and highness of the Deity above being resembled to the creatures.

But in case of *akhbar al-ahad*, believing in whatever is cited in them is obligatory upon whoever heard them and trusted the veracity of their narration. Whereas that who has not received the *khbar*, or it reached him with a suspicion seeming to him in its veracity, while it being not *mutawatir*, entailing that non-believing it would not slander his faith. The basis to be followed in all that being: Whoever denies anything [17](#) while knowing that it was disclosed or acknowledged by the Prophet (S), he has in fact confuted the truthfulness of the message and negated it. The same is true in regard of that who neglected the successively narrated (*mutawatir*) knowledge, though being aware of its being necessarily of the religion and found in the Book, and little of the *Sunnah* is got from the acts. [18](#)

Can Anyone Authenticated By Earliers Be Deemed Thiqah?

One of al-Azhar shaykhs was displeased with the behaviour of al-Sayyid Rashid Ridha', when he

criticized Ka'b al-Ahbar and Wahb ibn Munabbih, and declared distrust in their narrations. This was responded with a long, interesting and dumbfounding reply, of which I quote the following:

“If we admit that whoever is authenticated by the antecedent *Jumhur* to be *thiqah* — even if the opposite proved true by evidence — we will open the door wide for defamation against ourselves due to abandoning the proof, adopting its preludes through imitation, and contradicting the guidance of the holy Qur'an.”

And after stating the fact that criticizing the narrators of *hadith* was a subject of debate among men of *jarh* and *ta'dil*, he said: In regard of verification of the texts of narrations and their consistency or inconsistency with truth, matter of fact, the decisive or preponderant *usul* (foundations) or *furu'* (branches) of the *Din* or other than this, being not of their (men of *hadith*) profession, and it was rarely practised by the researchers among them. And if any of them — like al-Imam Ahmad or al-Bukhari — practised it, he would not fulfill it as is due, as was stated by al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar when talking about the contradiction among the correct narrations for him and others.

Besides, it was inaccessible for men of *hadith* to recognize congruity or contradiction of some traditions to the truth, like the outward of *hadith* of Abu Dharr in view of al-Bukhari and Muslim and others:

[19](#)Where will be the sun after it sets? As what was thought by the predecessors being that the sun sets away from the earth as a whole, with its light being stopped from shining over it during the night, resting under the throne waiting for permission to rise again! But it has become decisively known for hundreds of millions of people that the sun never sets from the earth during the night, but it sets from some countries and rises over others. So when it is day here, it will be night in the other hemisphere and vice versa, as is understood from the holy verse:

يُكَوِّرُ اللَّيْلَ عَلَى النَّهَارِ وَيُكَوِّرُ النَّهَارَ عَلَى اللَّيْلِ

“He maketh night to succeed day, and He maketh day to succeed night” (39:5)

And also the verse:

يُعْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيئًا

He covereth the night with the day, which is in haste to follow it. (7:54)

So we — after coming to know for certain this established fact and decision in its regard — will have to choose one of the two alternatives left before us: Either impeaching the chain of *sanad* (transmission) of the *hadith*, even if it be rectified, as narrating what contradicting the decisively confirmed (*hadith*) was one of indications of fabrication in the eyes of the narrators themselves.

And the least cause impelling to doubt veracity of the *hadith* whose narrators were known of truthfulness and precision, lies in the fact that the Companion or Follower heard it from Ka'b al-Ahbar or his likes. And it is known for all that Abu Hurayrah used to report from Ka'b al-Ahbar abundantly and trust him, the reason why we see many of his traditions appearing *mu'an'annah*, that he couldn't declare to have heard them from the Prophet (S).

The indisputable fact being that he hasn't heard so many of them directly from the mouth of the Prophet (S) due to embracing Islam so lately, and he most likely heard them from Ka'b al-Ahbar. And the Companion's *mursal* tradition (one reported with no chain of transmitters) would be *hujjah* when being heard from another Companion,²⁰ the fact that can be said in regard of Ibn Abbas and others who used to report from Ka'b al-Ahbar and trust him.

Interpreting the *hadith* narrated on basis of meaning and which some of its narrators couldn't comprehend what is intended by it, led them to express what they could conceive of it, as in the case of not comprehending of the narrator of this *hadith* – which I referred to as an example – what is denoted by the Prophet's saying: "The sun will be prostrating under the throne ... etc.", about which he said what indicated that it sets of the earth as a whole. Till he said: The *hadith* was interpreted by the exposers of the two *Sahihs* in a way agreeing with the opinion of the precedent astronomers, whose *ta'wil* came to be feigned, that would be refuted by the outward aspect of the *hadith*, especially the prolonged narration by Muslim.

Like that is the relation of some of the narrators for Ka'b and Wahb from the books of the Children of Israel. Yahya ibn Mu'in, Ahmad, Abu Hatam and his son and their likes,²¹ were unable to discern which ones were correct and which ones were incorrect among these traditions due to their not being acquainted with those books, and non-availability of an evidence proving the falsity of the narrators well-versed in fabricating narrations which they ascribed to these books.

If it appeared for those succeeding them during that age or before it or after it, what was not discovered by them in regard of non-truthfulness of two or more of these narrators, can he then argue pertinaciously or deny the truth and believe them falsely and hypocritically? Or can he hide the truth from the Muslims so as not to be disagreeing with those who were before him, in respect of whatever became known for him but not for them! Hence the critic,²² altruist over the *sunnah*, couldn't realize that the atheists, whose impeachment in the *sunnah* with the *ta'dil* of Ka'b and Wahb, used to mistrust the Muslims in respect of the *usul* and definite issues, and even the Qur'anic texts!

I reiterate and emphasize that exposure of falsity of Ka'b and Wahb for us would never entail losing any of the *usul* or *furu'* of our religion, as what is dependable in the *Din* being the Qur'an and the Prophet's *mutawatir* (successive) *sunan*, the practical ones (his acts), like way of performing prayers and other rituals, beside the oral traditions which were adopted by the antecedent *Jumhur*. All other than these *sunan* and traditions, such as *ahadith al-ahad* which being not decisively proved and confirmed, are liable to exertion of *ijtihad* (opinion).

And it is known that some of the leading *mujtahids* have not approved of many *sahih* traditions, even those reported by the two Shaykhs (al-Bukhari and Muslim), the practice that is still followed by millions of people, for which other Muslims can never consider them as pervers. Al-Muhaqqiq Ibn al-Qayyim has cited more than a hundred excerpts of these *sahih* traditions that were opposed by the Hanafis and others, who constitute the majority of Muslims of present time.

So what value would be for the narrations of this Israeli man (Ka'b al-Ahbar) and this Persian (Wahb ibn Munabbih), the most of which are only Jewish superstitions, that distorted the books of *tafsir* (exegesis) of the Book of Allah and other books, and raised doubts against Islam that were misused by its atheist enemies to charge it with being religion of superstitions and suspicions. And other than the superstitions may contain bigger doubts, like the one stated by Ka'b about the description of the Prophet in the Torah,[23](#) which was confirmed to be reported from him by the critic.

He continued by saying: The sarcasm we raise against them both (Ka'b and Wahb) was only for some defect that was unknown for earlier men of jarh and ta'dil, which being a reasonable and acceptable cause. And the narrations that were known to be authentic and correct are sufficient to prove their falsity.

After all that I would say: If through what I stated I could prove the falsity of these two men, out of what they mentioned, there will be no room for doubting that they used to cheat the Muslims, foisting into their religious books and narrations things entailing slander against their *Din*. Consequently no one would wonder to see them affiliating themselves with Jewish and Magian societies, which used to conspire against Islam and Arabs.[24](#)

Criticism by Ulama' of Fiqh Al-Hadith

He (Muhammad Abduh) said also: Beside the criticism of the ulama' of fiqh al-*hadith* against the asanid (chains of transmission) of reports and works, there was another criticism to the texts in respect of their meanings and expressions, and how viewed by reason and Islamic law (Shar') and their contradiction with others. In this kind of criticism they were shared by men of philosophy, literature and history, and it is called in the present age the analytical criticism (al-naqd al-tahlili). Afterwards, they began to doubt and impeach many traditions, even the ones of the authentic asanid, speaking against their expositions, with some of them compiling books dedicated for this purpose, the most famous of which being: Mushkil al-athar of al-Tahawi.[25](#)

On the whole, the concern of men of jarh and ta'dil was concentrated on verifying the narrators of the traditions, in respect of goodness of memorization and precision, and non-oddity as far as possible. They were rarely charging the *hadith* to be confused, if the disagreement occurring in the text, but verifying the texts of narrations or their contradiction to the truth, and to the preponderant decisive religious *usul* and *furu'* was not their profession, and practised by very few of the researchers among them. There were so many traditions, in the chain of transmitters of which only one trustworthy narrator can be found, while they be defective and weak, as the *sahih* one cannot be known only through its

narrators but through comprehension and committing to memory.

Most of Ahadith Al-Ahad Weren't Abundant In First Age

In the introduction to the book al-Mughni wa al-Sharh al-kabir, the following statement is cited:

“Out of proofs of the *madhahib* it can be deduced that most of the traditions that are used by men of *hadith* to argue men of opinion²⁶ and analogy from among *ulama'* of *riwayah*, being *ahadith* al-ahad that were not so abundant in the first stage of Islam, or nothing was reported from the Sahabah and Tabi'un contravening to their theme. Thus it became known for all that they couldn't be counted of the universal legislation, according to which the Prophet and his Companions used to act, not among the precepts recommended by the Prophet, but were among the judicial questions the solutions of which people used to ask and get answers (verdicts). If he did not ask, he would be free to exert his opinion in its regard, and it would be better for him and people, as had it been among necessities of the *Din* that Allah wanted to impose upon His bondmen as duties, He would have manifested them without questioning, since Allah the Exalted knows better what benefits people more.²⁷

The Prophet (S) was averse to asking abundant questions, forbidding from this habit so as not to be a cause to multiplying the obligations, the undertaking of which the *Ummah* will fail to do. Therefore the Messenger of Allah (S) said: “Let me alone as long as I leave you. Surely it was this asking abundantly and difference concerning the prophets which caused those who have gone before you to perish. When I forbid you from anything, you should refrain from (doing) it. And when I command you to do a thing you have to perform as much as you can of it.” This *hadith* was reported by al-Bukhari, and Muslim, but narrated by al-Daraqutin in another version. Thereat the following verse was revealed:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنْ أَشْيَاءٍ إِنْ تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ تَسْؤُكُمْ

“O ye who believe! Ask not of things which, if they were made known unto you, would trouble you...” (5: 101)

He (S) said also: “Allah has imposed upon you obligations, which you should not transgress, and laid down limits that you should not approach. He has prohibited things that you should not violate, and kept silent of (left) things out of mercy for you, not out of forgetfulness, so you should never inquire about them.” It is reported by al-Daraqutni and al-Nawawi in the book al-Arba'in.

On top of all this, comes the Almighty's saying:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

“This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you as religion, al-Islam.” (5:3)

It would be verily glaring ignorance and an offence against the *Din* to demolish these great foundations and principles with comparisons taken from conjectures of opinion and *qiyas* (analogy).

It is proven that the Prophet used to answer every questioner about any judicial issue in a way appropriate to his condition and level, and some of his fatawa were general or special permissions. For example he granted license to Aqabah ibn ‘Amir and Abu Burdah to sacrifice the *jidh*’ (trunk) or atud of the goat, which meant that one which used to pasture (of grass) and became strong, with completing one full year. Al-Jawhari said: The best of it is that which reached the age of one year. This *hadith* is unanimously concurred, while *Ahl al-Sunnah*, including the four imams (of the schools) prohibited sacrifice of the trunk and goats.²⁸

Can Traditions Be Counted A General Law?

Al-Sayyid Rashid Ridha’ says: Can the traditions – which they call oral *sunan* – be considered a general *Din* and *Shari’ah*, though they weren’t followed *sunan* in practice (acts) with no dispute or controversy, particularly during the first era of Islam?

If we say yes, we will be faced with the biggest suspicion, as the Prophet (S) forbade from writing anything other than the Qur’an, and the Sahabah’s not committing the *hadith* to writing! Beside ignorance of their *ulama’* and leaders, like the caliphs to reporting of traditions! It is reported rather, that they were disdaining from the *hadith*.

What Is Refuting Khabar Al-Wahid

In his book al-Luma’, under the *bab*: “Bayan ma yuradd bihi khabar al-wahid”, al-Shirazi writes: If the *khabar* be related by a thiqah, it can be refuted by several things:

First: If it be contradictory to the necessities of minds, when its falsehood would be known since the *shar’* can be approved by permissibilities of minds,²⁹ not the contrary way.

Second: If it be contradictory to a text of the Book or *mutawatir* (successive) *Sunnah*, when it will be recognized to be of no origin or abrogated.

Third: If it disagrees with the *ijma’* (unanimity), the fact indicating its being abrogated, or baseless, as it can’t be correct and not abrogated while the *Ummah* is unanimously concurring on its contrary.

Fourth: If a *wahid* (single) narrates alone that which should be known by all people, the fact indicating its being of no root, as it is unreasonable that it has an origin but he alone be aware of it from among all people.

Fifth: If a single narrator narrates individually the tradition that is usually known to be reported by men of *tawatur*, as a result of which it can't be accepted since he is unallowed to singly narrate such a tradition. If it came to be contradictory to *qiyas*, or the single narrator reports alone a tradition with which the calamity prevails everywhere, it would not be refuted. I have discussed the controversy regarding this elaborately in another book (Tawjih al-nazar, p. 82), so no need is there for reiteration.

In al-Mustasfa, al-Ghazali says: The second division of *akhbar*, the falsity of which is known, are confined in four kinds as follows:

First: That which can be known to be contrary to truth either by reason necessity, or view, or sense, or sighting, or *akhbar al-tawatur*. On the whole, whatever contradicted the commonly known rules through the six *madarik* (faculties).

Second: That which disagrees with the decisive confirmed text of the Book (Qur'an) and the *mutawatir* Prophetic *Sunnah* (Tradition), and unanimity of the *Ummah*, since it came to be contradicting Allah the Exalted and His Messenger and the *Ummah*.

Third: That *khobar*, the falsity of which is declared by a large number of traditionists who can never be generally collaborating on telling lies when saying: We were present with him at that time (at the meeting) and we haven't found any root for the event he related.

Fourth: That which the majority of narrators refrained from reporting and relating, though attending and witnessing the happenings of the episode, and despite the impossibility of refraining from citing it due to availability of motives encouraging to report it.

Al-Qarrafi is reported to have said: Five things indicate the falsity of any *khobar*: Its contradiction to what is necessarily known by all, or to consideration, or decisive evidence, or what was fit to be *mutawatir* but hasn't come so, and the legal rules, or its contradiction to all of these things in a whole, like the miracles or that which was sought to obtain from the memories or books of the narrators after searching into the traditions, but could not be found.³⁰

State of People during First Era and After It

Al-Imam Abu Zayd al-Dabbusi, in his book *Taqwim al-adillah*, says: People of the first era (of Islam), i.e. the *Sahabah* and *Tabi'un* and *Salihun* (Righteous), used to base their affairs on the *hujjah* (proof). So they used to act according to the Book, then to the *Sunnah* of the Messenger,³¹ and after him to the utterances of those who succeeded him, particularly those which can be proved right through proof. Thus someone may act according to utterance of Umar in a certain issue, but then he may contradict it with a saying of Ali in another question.

It is known about the companions of Abu Hanifah that they once agreed with him and disagreed another, in accordance with what he made clear to them through the *hujjah*. The legal *madhhab* was neither

Umari nor Alawi but the ascription was in origin to the Messenger of Allah, as he was the source of *ahadith*, so he (S) extolled those people who used to depend on the proof not their *ulama'* or own selves.

But when people kept far from God-fearing during the 4th century, and lazied themselves from seeking the proofs, they turned to acknowledge their *ulama'* as *hujjah* (authority), following and imitating them. As a result of this, some of hem became Hanafis, some Malikis, and some others Shafi'is, reinforcing the *hujjah* with the *rijal*, believing the veracity to lie in being born on that *madhhab*. Then, every community coming after them embarked on following the guide of their leader, whomsoever, without any consideration to qualifications, the fact led to substituting the *sunan* with the *bida'* (innovations) and making the truth lost among desires.³²

Fiqh during the Prophet's Lifetime

Wali Allah al-Dihlawi, in his treatise 'al-Insaf fi bayan sabab al-ikhtilaf, wrote:

During his (S) lifetime *fiqh* was not written down, and searching for the rules then was not like the searching made nowadays by the *fuqaha'*, who do their utmost to manifest the *arkan* (cornerstones), provisions and norms, portray the images from their own invention, embarking then on talking about these imposed images, laying down limits for what is fit for being limited, confining what can be confined, and so on.

During his lifetime, the Messenger of Allah (S) used to perform ablution and the Companions would learn from him and imitate him, without his embarking on clarifying which part being *rukn* and which are being recommended. Also when he was performing prayers, they would observe his way of praying and follow his example in prayers,³³ and the same is said in the case of doing the rites of *hajj* ((pilgrimage to God's House)).³⁴

That was his way of teaching the legal rules to the Muslims, without manifesting for instance, the obligations of *wudu'* to be six or four, or supposing that some one might take ablution without *muwalat* (consecutive order), so as to judge his *wudu'* to be valid or invalid, and they were rarely inquiring him about such matters.

Ibn Abbas is reported to have said: I have never encountered people better than the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (S) ... they have not asked about anything except thirteen issues till he passed away, all of which being stated in the Qur'an. Among them the following:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ

“They question thee (O Muhammad) with regard to warfare in the sacred month,” (2:217)

and the verse:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ

They question thee (O Muhammad) concerning menstruation).” (2:222)

Then he (Ibn Abbas) said: They were not questioning but about things that avail them. Al-Qasim said: You are questioning with regard to things about which we never used to inquire, and searching for things that we were not seeking for ... I have never met people of easier *sirah* (conduct), or less strictness than the Sahabah.[35](#)

On the whole, such was his (S) noble habit, so each one of the Sahabah would take whatever he found easy to apply of his worship, *fatawa* (verdicts) and rules, which he learned by heart and comprehended, realizing for every one of them a certain aspect according to the evidences indicating it. Their main dependable criterion in this regard was only the inner consciousness and confidence,[36](#) without paying attention to ways of inference, as the Arabs used to conceive the denotation of words among themselves.[37](#)

Aspects of Preponderance Contain Contradiction

Al-Allamah al-Shaykh Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi, in his book *Qawa'id al-tahdith*, says:

“Whoever looks into conditions of the Companions and Followers, and their followers, will verily find them concurrent upon acting according to the preponderant rule and abandoning the preponderated. The ways of preponderation are so many, and pivot of preponderation would increase the investigator in strength of his insight, in a proper manner congruent to the legal channels, the product of which will be valid and preponderant. And preponderation can be got through the *isnad*, and the text, and the denotation, and an external aspect.”

Then he cited many aspects and factors of preponderation according to the *isnad* (chain of transmission), of which I state the following:

1. Preponderation by abundance of narrators: Al-Karkhi said: They are equivalent, and there may be a reliable narrator who was equal to a thousand *thiqah* (trustworthy) men, as said in regard of Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj that he was compared to two hundred men. Also the Companions used to give priority to narration of al-Siddiq over others.
2. Preponderating the narration of the faqih, since he being better knowledgeable of the denotations of words.
3. Preponderating the narration of that who being more authentic and better in memorizing.

4. One of them being one of the Four Caliphs not the other.
5. When the reliability of one of them be established through *tazkiyah* (exculpation), and the other by external aspect only.
6. Priority of the narration of that who was not disapproved over narration of that who was disapproved.
7. Priority of narration of that who was more known of reliability and trustworthiness than the other, as this can prevent falsity.

On the other side, the preponderation in consideration of other factors:

1. Priority should be given to what was supported by another evidence over that which was not supported.
2. Priority should be given to the narration that was applied in practice by the ancestors over that one which was not followed, as the former is more entitled to be correct.
3. If one of them be in agreement with the acts of the Four Caliphs.
4. The one that be more similar to the exterior of the Qur'an should be given priority.[38](#)

In al-Qasimi's book *Tanbih al-talib ila ma'rifat al-fard wa al-wajib*, [39](#) there are regular rules, of which I state the following:

1. It is concurred that the *wujub* (obligation) being one of the legal decrees (*hukm*). The *ulama'* defined the *hukm* thus: It is an address (*khitab*) from Allah, related to acts of the *mukallafun* (responsible, charged with duties). And *khitab* is to address people with speech for making them comprehend. While the *wujub* is a *hukm* and the *hukm* can't be but from a *hakim* (ruler) and the ruler is Allah the Most High alone, no one else.
2. In regard of the product: Know that fairness tells us that there is no means for certainty to benefit from these verbal evidences, unless when they be yoked with contexts indicating *yaqin* (certainty), whether these contexts be witnessed or reported to us through *tawatur*. Because if they be neither witnessed nor *mutawatir*, they should be reported through *ahad* which indicating nothing but conjecture. That was a brief excerpt from *Minhaj al-Baydawi*.
3. Some of the Hashwiyyah inferred the *hadith* "Every serious matter" to indicate *wujub* of initiating with Basmalah in his view, when he said: Since the *hadith* is a predicate verbally, and composition of a meaning, as it gives the meaning of imperative, which indicates *wujub*; and it is said to him: the condition of the *amr* (imperative) indicating *wujub* lies in two facts:

First: Its establishment should be definite, that may be with a verse of the Book of Allah, or *mutawatir* tradition.

Second: Its indicating the meaning be definite, that it is improbable for the word to have another meaning. If one of the two factors of the imperative loses consideration, it will not indicate *wujub*. Then he became dumbfounded and amazed.

4. Only the *mujtahid* can issue *fatwa*: This was declared by Ibn al-Hammam (may God's mercy be upon him). Ibn Yusuf and Zafar and others said: It is not lawful for anyone to issue fatwa on our utterance, unless he be aware of the source of our saying. That is because if he gives decision to obligate or prohibit anything, he should rely upon manifest evidence, in which he has to do his utmost. Whereas the imitator is not permitted to do so since he has closed all the doors in front of him, loosening as much as he could of veil and cover. Al-Ghazali, in his book *Faysal al-tafriqah*, writes: It is more proper for the imitator to keep silent and to be left free (not to speak against him). That was the excerpt I quoted from this book.[40](#)

Rules and Principles

On starting to lay down the foundations of this book, I haven't thought it to be so protracted, so I tried my best then to delete from it as much as I could of the researches I came across, and stop my pen from going farther. But I found it inevitable to margin it with important rules, some of which I picked up from the fruit borne by its bushes, initiating that with verses from the holy Qur'an, followed by traditions reported from the noble Messenger (S), the veracity of which can be sensed through the accuracy of their meanings.

– Allah the Most High said:

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَن سَبِيلِهِ

“And (know ye) verily this My path, is the straight (right) one, so ye follow it, and follow ye not (other) ways for they will scatter you away from His path...” (6: 153)

– The Almighty said too:

اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا مِن دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ

“(O people!) Follow ye what hath been sent down unto you from your Lord, and follow ye not (any) other than Him, as guardians (or friends).” (7:3)

In another verse He said:

وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مَبَارَكٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

“And this (Qur’an) is a Book, We have sent it down, blessed, so follow it, and guard (yourselves against evil) so that ye may be done mercy.” (6: 155)

– He also said:

كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِي مَا
اختلفوا فيه

“Mankind was but one people; and God sent apostles as bearers of good tidings and warners and sent down with them the Book with the Truth that it might judge between men in that wherein they differed...” (2:213)

– Further He said:

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ

“...and We have sent down upon thee the Book (Qur’an) explaining everything, and a guidance, and mercy, and glad tidings unto those who submit themselves (to God).” (16:89)

– The Most High said also:

مَا فَرَطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ

“... We have not neglected in the Book (Qur’an) anything...”⁴¹(6:38)

– He said too:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

“This day have I perfected for you, your religion, and have completed My favour on you, and chosen for you Islam (to be) the Religion.” (5:3)

The two Shaykhs (al-Bukhari and Muslim) reported that it was said to Abd Allah ibn Awfa:⁴²

Did the Messenger of Allah left a will? He said: No. It was said to him: How is that! While he has prescribed on people to leave a will? He said: He recommended with (heeding to) the Book of Allah.

Exposing this *hadith*, Ibn Hajar said: He means by this abiding by the Qur’an and acting according to its precepts and teachings... and he may be referring to the Messenger’s *hadith*: “I am leaving behind

among you that which if you hold fast to, you will never go astray: the Book of Allah.” He confined his will and recommendation to the Book of Allah since it is greater and more important than anything else, and containing manifestation of everything, either through the text or by means of *istinbat* (inference). So if people follow what the Qur’an contains, they will verily act according to whatever it commanded them to do.

The *hadith* to which Ibn Hajar referred, was reported by Muslim in the course of citing the *Hijjat al-Wada’* (Farewell Pilgrimage) made by the Prophet (S), who said: “O people, I am leaving among you that which if you hold on to, you shall never go astray.” In another narration reported by Jabir as saying: The Messenger of Allah addressed us on the Day of Arafat saying: “I am leaving among you that which you will never go astray, if you hold fast to it: the Book of Allah.” And in al-Muwatta’: “and my *Sunnah*”, while the *Sunnah* known at that time was only the practical *Sunnah* (the Prophet’s acts).

In another version of the narration, he said: “Verily, I am leaving behind two precious things (*thaqalayn*) among you: the Book of Allah and my *’itrah* (kindred), my *Ahl al-Bayt* (household).”

This *hadith* was reported in several different versions with the same meaning in many Sunni books, and whoever desiring to be acquainted with these narrations, can refer to the book al-Muraja’at, in which al-Sayyid Sharaf al-Din al-Musawi stated the debates that took place between him and the eminent scholar al-Shaykh Salim al-Bishri, the former chief of al-Azhar, in the page 20 and onwards, in the 4th edition.

– Another *hadith* is reported from Abu al-Darda’ with a chain of transmission going back to the Prophet, reading thus: “Whatever Allah deemed *halal* (lawful) in His Book is lawful, and whatever He forbade is *haram* (unlawful), and whatever He left (with no decision) is good health, so accept from Allah His good health, as Allah verily never forgets anything, and your Lord was never forgetful.” This *hadith* is reported by al-Bazzaz and Ibn Abi Hatam and al-Tabarrani.

– Marasil ibn Abi Mulaykah is reported to have said: Abu Bakr al-Siddiq has gathered people after the demise of the Prophet (S), addressing them: “I was informed that you relate from the Messenger of Allah traditions regarding which you differ,⁴³ and people who follow you will be more differing. So never relate anything from the Messenger of Allah! And when asked by anyone you can say: The Book of Allah is (the arbitrator) between us and you. You should deem lawful what is considered lawful in it, and deem unlawful what it prohibits.”

– In another *hadith*: After the Messenger of Allah (S) had performed prayers during his last illness, he addressed the people and warned them against the seditions, raising his voice till coming out of the mosque saying: O people, fire is kindled, and seditions are coming forward like dark night clouds. By God you cannot find in me any fault to blame for, as I have never deemed lawful but only what is permitted (as lawful) by the Qur’an, nor forbidden except what the Qur’an forbade (as unlawful).⁴⁴

– When the Prophet’s she-camel was lost during the Battle of Tabuk, the hypocrites (mockingly) said:

He cannot foretell of the whereabouts of his she-camel, so how can he be aware of the *khobar* of the heaven (prophecy of future)? On hearing this saying, he (S) said: I have no knowledge of anything but only of that which Allah taught (revealed to) me.[45](#)

– When A'ishah was inquired about the morals of the Prophet, she said: The Prophet's morality was the Qur'an itself. This *hadith* was reported by Ahmad, Muslim and Abu Dawud.

– Al-Imam Muhammad Abduh said: The Muslims have no leader in this time except the Qur'an, and the correct true Islam being that which was followed and practised by the Muslims of the first stage before the emergence of the seditions.

– He also said: This *Ummah* can never rise (progress) as long as these books are found in it,[46](#) and will not rise or flourish but only by the morale that used to be possessed by the first people, which was the Qur'an. Anything other than it, is no more than a veil standing between it and endeavour and knowledge.

– In interpretation of Surat al-Fatihah he (Abduh) said: If we weight what our brains contain of the beliefs, with the Book of Allah the Exalted, without imposing them on it, it will be manifested for us whether we be guided or misled! But if we insert and foist what our brains have of beliefs into the Qur'an, we will verily fail to discern between guidance and deviation, due to intermingling of the weighed thing with the balance, whereat one will be unable to recognize the weighed thing of that with which it is weighed (*mawzun bih*). What I want to say is that the Qur'an should be the main origin upon which all the *madhahib* and opinions in religion must be based, not the opposite, i.e. the *madhahib* be the origin and the Qur'an be dependent on them, or referred to them through *ta'wil* or *tahrif* (perversion), as was done by the disappointed and thought wrongly by the astray.[47](#)

– Learning a lesson from the *aqa'id* (beliefs), through the definite indication. And all the doctrines on which the veracity of Islam depends mainly, are established and proved by the Qur'anic texts and unanimity of the Muslims, with no one of them depending on *ahadith al-ahad* which are doubted most often. So also the principles of the *ibadat* (rituals), being all definite and proved by the Qur'an and the *mutawatir* practical *Sunnah* (Prophet's acts), that can never depend on *akhbar al-ahad*. Besides, whatever established of the rules of *ibadat* by *ahadith al-ahad*, without gaining unanimity of the leaders of knowledge, can never be the dependable origin for (proving) veracity of Islam, though they be correct in themselves.

– The main dependable source for the Din is verily the Qur'an, and whatever indicating it definitely should be believed and adopted, in respect of knowledge and acts and abstention. While whatever being of indefinite *dalalah* (indication) of them, will be liable to *ijtihad* on the part of those knowledgeable of the styles of its language. And whoever acts according to the unanimously concurred rule (or *hadith*) will be verily a delivered Muslim.

– It should be known that the Prophet's successively narrated (*mutawatir*) *sunan* – the practical *sunan* – are altogether definite and established in a way that no one can deny or negate through *ta'wil*

(interpretation) or *ijtihad* (exertion of opinion). The examples for this: the *wajib* (daily) prayers being five: the dawn (morning) prayer being two rak'ahs, the maghrib being three, and the other ones being four rak'ahs each. And also, every rak'ah comprises of a *qiyam* (standing), a *qira'ah* (recitation of two surahs), a *ruku'* (kneeling down) and two *sajdahs* (prostration), beside other moves and acts that were commonly known since the time of the Messenger till the present time.

– This being the (true) *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allah before our eyes, but calling whatever including the traditions by this name is verily a recently-invented term.

– The *ahadith* al-ahad that were not followed in practice by the jumhur of ancestors (salaf), are verily subject to *ijtihad*, in regard of their asanid, texts and denotations, as whatever be of a correct *sanad* among them would be individually related to its narrator.

– When any of these traditions proved to be correct in the eyes of anyone, he can act according to it, but it can't be made a general *tashri'* (law) incumbent upon the *Ummah* as an obligation, out of imitating that who adopted it.

– The correct *hadith* cannot be recognized through its narrators alone, but rather it can be known through comprehension and committing to memory. As so many traditions are there, in the *isnad* of which there being only *thiqah* (trustworthy) transmitters, but they be defective and weak.

– The *sahih* traditions are useful, for applying the principle of most likelihood (*ghalabat al-zann*) which is commonly followed by the *fuqaha'* for proving the veracity of traditions. In Sharh Muslim, al-Nawawi says: Because that being the case with the ahad traditions, which cannot be of benefit for the *burhani* (proof) knowledge and logical certainty, and no difference is there between the two Shaykhs, al-Bukhari and Muslim and the others. This is verily the *sahih* tradition, contrarily to that who held that: "The *khbar al-wahid* necessitates *'ilm* (knowledge)."

– The text of any *hadith* whose *sanad* be correct, is not necessarily be *sahih*, and vice versa, i.e., not every *hadith* the *sanad* of which be correct, its text be necessarily correct.

– Unanimity of the *Ummah*⁴⁸ on acting according to the traditions recorded in Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, and can never be counted as unanimity on determining their being uttered by the Prophet (S), nor that whatever stated in them being correctly ascribed to the Prophet, and evaluating whatever reported in them (the two Sahihs) was to be done by those who followed them.

– The Four Imams followed by majority of the Muslims in regard of the practical rules were with the books of *hadith*, and the traditions were not written in books so as to be taken from them, particularly by al-Imam Abu Hanifah. Despite this fact, his leadership and *ijtihad* were acknowledged by his followers and others from among *Ahl al-Sunnah*, and neither Sahih al-Bukhari nor other *hadith* books have come out but only after the going away of the good of passed folks.

– No one from among the Ummah ancestors and leaders of *fiqh* claimed that having knowledge of the *Din* depends upon being thoroughly acquainted with all the traditions reported by the *muhaddithun*, or most of them.

– *Ulama'* of *usul* concurred on this rule: “The occurrence of probability in the *marfu'* of the facts of conditions, will cover them with guise of generality, with which the inference (*istidlal*) with it will be invalid.”

– There is no blame against that who did not believe in some of the traditions due to a suspicion he might have found in the text and the *sanad*, the reason for which he belied its content or contradicted, even if he be right, and he should be answered with that which is better.

– The precedent *ulama'* held that: “The axis (*madar*) of apostasy from Islam lies in the unanimous rejection of what is necessarily known about the religion.”

– The *Ummah* have never adhered in their worship but to a *khobar* that is most likely true as they were commanded to depend only on that which they thought to be veracious. And the judgement can be taken from the predominant supposition, and its veracity in their view cannot necessitate its veracity in reality. Also the unanimity on any rule cannot necessitate its compliance with God's rule in the same matter.

The *Sunnah* of the good ancestors in the non-successive (not *mutawatir*) traditions decided that whoever receiving any *hadith* of them through a chain (*tariq*) which he trusts to be authentic, he can act according to it. But they never obligated upon anyone – even if he be devoted to seeking knowledge – to search for all these reported traditions and act according to them. How is that, while the Sahabah have neither committed the *ahadith* to writing, nor undertaken the task of collecting them or dictating them to people, and rather some of them have even forbidden from narrating the *hadith*.

Al-Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal says: Three things have no *isnad*: *tafsir* (exegesis), *malahim* (epics) and *maghazi* (moral lessons). Ibn Taymiyyah, who succeeded Ahmad in leading the Hanbalis, says: For the *mu'adda* there are no *usul*, i.e. *isnad* (chain of transmission), as the majority of them being *marasil* [49](#) (traditions with no chain of narrators).

– The Sahabah have not collected (or compiled) the oral (*qawli*) *Sunnah*, as they did in the case of the Qur'an which they collected (compiled) and concurred in its regard.

– The leaders of Muslims have never agreed upon the sahih traditions, and everyone of them has contradicted, in his *madhhab*, many of them, even if they were viewed as correct by other leaders... etc.

Original Rules of Rituals and Transactions

Rule of *ibadat* (rituals) is invalidity, till evidence be established to confirm their veracity. And rule of

mu'amalat and contracts is veracity, till a proof be presented showing their invalidity, and *tahrim* (prohibition).

The difference between these two, being that Allah, the Glorified, cannot be worshipped but only through what He decreed and legislated by means of His apostles (with their tongues), as worship is only His obligation upon His bondmen, and His right that He Himself has warranted, legislated and been pleased with.

Concerning the contracts, *shurut* (provisions) and transactions, they are valid till introducing evidence proving their invalidity. So Allah – Subhanahu – has forbidden the *mushrikun* (polytheists) from contradicting these two principles, which is prohibiting what He hasn't prohibited, and seeking His pleasure through what He has not decreed. Because the *halal* being verily that which Allah regarded lawful, and the *haram* (unlawful) being that which He has prohibited, and whatever He left (with no express hukm) being *'afw*.

There may be a narrator deemed *thiqah* by Abd al-Rahman ibn Mahdi, and *majruh* (suspected) in view of Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Qattan, or vice versa. And these two were leaders (imams) and pivot of criticism in *naql* (transmission), and upon them depend most of the traditions.

Whatever was of decisive indication in the texts, is the general *shar'*, that should be followed and adopted in acts and adjudication. Whereas that which was conjectural denotation, is in fact entrusted to the exertion of *ijtihad* (opinion) by some individuals in regard of acts of worship and *muharramat* (prohibited acts), and to the *ulu al-amr* (authorities) in the adjudication rules.

The rule whose indication on *tahrim* (prohibition) being conjectural (*zanni*) not definite, can never be considered a universal law for which all the *Ummah* being answerable and asked to follow. But each one can apply it according to his *ijtihad*, and whoever conceiving of its indication to prohibiting anything, would abstain from it, while that who couldn't comprehend that, he would follow the rule of *ibahah* (permission).

In Ma'alam *usul* al-Din, al-Fakhr al-Razi writes: The *naqli* (traditional) evidences can never indicate *yaqin* (certainty).

A'ishah used to refute and disapprove every *hadith* contrary to the Qur'an, holding the narration of the truthful with mistakenly hearing or misunderstanding.

Al-Sayyid Rashid Ridha' says: I never believe in veracity of the *sanad* of any *hadith* or utterance of any Companion contradicting the exterior of the Qur'an, even if his *rijal* be authenticated. As there may be a narrator that is deemed *thiqah* out of being deceived by his outward complexion, while he being of bad inward. He added: Had the narrations been criticized in respect of import of their texts, as they are criticized with regard to their *sanad*, the texts would have judged many of the asanid with incongruity.

We can say for certain that we have forgotten and lost a large number of the Prophet's traditions, due to the fact that the Sahabah ulama' have not committed to writing whatever they heard (of traditions). But these (lost) traditions do not include those ones exposing and explaining the Qur'an or any of the issues related to the *Din* as they are recognized from the Qur'an, and manifested in the practical *Sunnah*. Whatever is other than the traditions can only increase in the guidance and manifestation.[50](#)

1. The people were not charged with what is correct near God, as that cannot be done on His part and He never tasks or imposes what cannot be endured, but they were tasked with what they thought to be right. The *Ushulis* defined *ijtihad* as the faqih's doing his best and exerting what he possesses of power on a conjectural acquisition with a legal *hukm*. Their expression: conjectural acquisition with a legal *hukm*, "since the definite *ahkam* of religion can never be subject to *ijtihad* whatsoever."

2. Among the rules widely known among them is that their supposing the veracity of the khabar does not necessitate its veracity in reality.

Following are some of the established *Shari'ah* rules, and their definite principles:

- The rules of relieving of the haraj (interdiction) and distress and confirming and preponderating of easiness.
- The rule that the origin being innocence of guilt.
- The rule that primarily all the evils and adversities are prohibited, and for all dainties the rule is permission.
- The rule that necessity knows no law.
- The rule that neither detriment nor adversity⁵¹ (*la darar wa la dirar*).

Al-Imam Abu Hanifah says: "My opposition to every man relating from the Prophet anything disagreeing with the Qur'an is not to be taken as a refutation or negation to the Prophet's speech, but it is a refutation to that who falsely reporting from him, and he will be charged with the offence not the Prophet. And we respect the Prophet, and believe in whatever he said and uttered, witnessing that it is actually as said by him. We also witness and admit that he has never commanded to do anything contrary to God's commands, nor innovated or claimed other than what Allah said, nor has he been among the feigning forgers (*mutakallifun*)."

 (P. 99, of *Manaqib Abi Hanifah*).

Al-Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal is reported to have said: Be careful in taking the rules of your *Din*, as imitating other than the *ma'sum* (infallible) is an abominable act, causing blindness for insight and perception.[52](#)

At this point I will put aside my pen and stop writing, after presenting an effort and research which Allah succoured and helped me to do, having recourse to Allah to bringing it out for all people, in a sincere way supported by the most established proofs and strongest *asanid*. Pleasing God was my aim from the work on which I spent long years going through hundreds of references, and exerting that effort in selecting from them that which fits my book. The hardship I faced in preparing its material, and arranging its chapters, specially because this compilation which had neither example in the past to follow, nor a way, paved for us by someone of those who went before us, so that to tread and proceed on. And as is said, classifying and arranging any book is the most important step on the way of compiling it.

If my this work can gain the pleasure and approval of the enlightened and educated intellectuals, this being in fact what I look forward, and it is sufficient for me. But if some people be annoyed and wearied of it (the book), this would be of no concern on my part and of no importance, as such people can never be of any peril against us, or taken into consideration on our part.

Through the work I produced, I wish I had managed – as I said before – to reflect and manifest honestly all the traditions reported from the Messenger of Allah, showing them (to readers) as they are in reality. Also I hope that I could give those who seeking to be guided to the roots of these narrations, a luminous light, divulging what is true and what is false among them.

And as long as my work is dedicated purely for the sake of God, so I seek no recompense for it, nor expecting any praise or flattery from anyone. As He, Subhanahu is alone sufficient for us, and Most Excellent is He in Whom we trust, in Whose hand being the good... He guides to the straight path whoever He wishes, recompensing him of His county abundant reward. And all praise belongs to Allah, in the beginning and the end. And we seek from Him permanence of success...He is Hearer and He is Responsive.

[1.](#) Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldun, p. 9.

[2.](#) Ibid., pp. 35, 36.

[3.](#) Ibid., p. 37.

[4.](#) Ibid., p. 439.

[5.](#) Ibid., pp. 444, 445.

[6.](#) Refer to my previous commentary on the Muwalta' and Musnad Ahmad.

[7.](#) That means to submit the matter to the psychological, environmental and social temperament

[8.](#) Op. cit., p. 446. For this reason Abu Hanifah never approved or adopted whatever verdicts reported by Abu Hurayrah and Anas ibn Malik and Samurah ibn Jundab, for several reasons, among which their not being among men of verdict (casuists). Refer to my book Shaykh al-mudirah.

[9.](#) Muslim reported this statement in the introduction to his Sahih, from Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Qattan, with these words, and with the word al-salihin (the righteous) instead of ahl-al-khayr (benevolent).

[10.](#) Refer to the chapter of Isra'iliyyat in this book.

[11.](#) Refer to the chapter "The Good Fabricators" in this book.

[12.](#) Ta'rikh al-isnad of al-Imam Muhammad Abduh, vol. II, pp. 347-349.

[13.](#) Ibid., p. 516.

[14.](#) Ibid., p. 559.

[15.](#) Ibid., p. 643.

[16.](#) Risalat al-Tawhid, pp. 200 – 202.

[17.](#) That is of the rules of religion which being the subject of the message and propagation from God the Most High.

[18.](#) Most of the successive (mutawatir) sunan being the practical ones like the description of the salat and hajj. While the oral mutawatir traditions, it is said that they didn't amount to the maximum plural of paucity (commentary of al-Sayyid Rashid Ridha').

[19.](#) This hadith was reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, authors of Sunan and Musnads, beside exegetes and al-Bayhaqi with similar words.

[20.](#) This when the riwayat was cited so, but it came to be otherwise, as the Companion would never refer to the name of the narrator from whom he heard the hadith, the case in which the arguing authority vanishes.

[21.](#) He was one among leaders of hadith and ulama' of jarh and ta'dil.

[22.](#) The name of that critic who used to doubt the authenticity of Ka'b and others was al-Shaykh Abd al-Rahman al-Jamjamuni.

[23.](#) See p. 151 and the following pages.

[24.](#) Al-Manar Journal, vol. XXVII, pp. 614 – 619.

[25.](#) Al-Manar Journal, vol. XXXIV, p. 620. Mushkil al-athar was published in India in four big volumes. We can also find many problems in exposition of Ibn Hajar for al-Bukhari which is called Fath al-Bari.

[26.](#) Fiqh among Ahl al-Sunnah was on two systems of belief: the system of men of opinion and analogy (qiyas), who were from Iraq. And system (tariqah) of men of hadith who were from Hijaz. It is known that people of Iraq practised qiyas abundantly and skillfully, the reason for which they were called Ahl al-Ra'y.

Their leader was Abu Hanifah, while the leader (imam) of people of Hijaz was Malik and after him al-Shafi'i. There was another fiqh for other madhahib like Zaydi Shi'ah, and Imami Shi'ah and other Muslim communities, and every community has its leader and sunnah.

[27.](#) No one knows the reasons or times or occasions of these issues, which are verily necessary factors for apprehending them.

[28.](#) See vol. I, pp. 18, 19.

[29.](#) This issue is unanimously agreed by all farsighted men. Ibn Taymiyyah said: It is impossible for two definite evidences to contravene each other, whether they be both rational, or one of them be rational and the other be traditional (sam'i).

[30.](#) Tawjih al-nazar, p. 82.

[31.](#) What is intended here by sunnah is the practical one (Prophet's acts).

[32.](#) Qawa'id al-tahdith, p. 334.

[33.](#) The Messenger of Allah said: Perform prayers in the way you saw me pray. It is unanimously concurred.

[34.](#) Muslim and Abu Dawud and al-Nasa'i reported from Jabir that the Messenger of Allah said: Take (learn) your rituals (manasik) from me.

[35.](#) This statement of Ibn Abbas was reported by Ibn Abd al-Barr in his Jami' bayan al-'ilm wa fadlih (vol. II, p. 141). It is also stated by al-Suyuti in al-Itqan, by saying: They are twelve questions. But al-Razi cited them with the expression: 14 letters, eight of them in Surat al-Baqarah, in the following way

(1) And when My servants question thee concerning Me;

(2) They ask thee (O Muhammad) of new moons;

(3) They ask thee what they shall spend;

(4) They question thee with regard to warfare in the sacred month;

(5) They question thee about strong drink and games of chance;

(6) And they question thee concerning orphans;

(7) They question thee concerning menstruation,

(8) And they question thee what they ought to spend. Say: That which is superfluous. And six others in other surahs:

(9) They ask thee what is made lawful for them;

(10) They ask thee of the (destined) Hour;

(11) They ask thee of the spoils of war;
(12) They are asking thee concerning the Spirit;
(13) They will ask thee of Dhu al-Qarnayn;
(14) They will ask thee of the mountains... and those who ask concerning the Spirit and Dhu al-Qarnayn are the polytheists of Makkah and the Jews, as mentioned in Asbab al-nuzul, not the Sahabah. Hence the cleared ones will be 12 questions, as stated by al-Suyuti.

[36.](#) The Messenger of Allah said to Wabisah, when he asked him about the birr (godliness): Consult your heart...the godliness is that in which the soul and heart have confidence, and then what is woven in the soul and what falters inside the bosom, even if people consult you and give verdict to you. This hadith is reported by Ahmad and al-Darimi.

[37.](#) Al-Risalah, pp. 2, 3, Hujjat Allah of the author of al-Risalah, vol. I, pp. 140, 141.

[38.](#) Qawa'id al-tahdith, pp. 301, 304.

[39.](#) Ibid., pp. 13, 14, 37, 38.

[40.](#) See pp. 47, 55, 57.

[41.](#) That is the Qur'an is thoroughly acquainted with all the principles and rules of religion and other than the religion, of what God created.

[42.](#) Abd Allah ibn Awfa was one among those who swore allegiance to the Prophet under the tree at the Hdaybiyyah, and fought beside the Prophet in six battles. He was wounded in the Battle of Hunayn, and was the last who died among the Sahabah in the Kufah.

[43.](#) It can be observed here how disagreement started during the caliphate of Abu Bakr, and became intense after him till the present time.

[44.](#) Sirat Ibn Hisham, vol. IV, p. 332, and in a narration by al-Baladhuri in Ansab al-ashraf: By God I never deem lawful for you but that which is prescribed lawful by Allah, and never prohibit but only that which is decreed unlawful by Allah (vol. I, pp. 558, 559).

[45.](#) Ibn Abd al-Barr, al-Isti'ab, vol. I, p. 111.

[46.](#) He means the books that were taught in al-Azhar and the alike.

[47.](#) See p. 54.

[48.](#) This unanimity, which is claimed by those who call themselves Ahl al-Sunnah, is not agreed by all, as there are the Shi'ah, Zaydiyyah and Ibadiyyah and other many groups of repute, who never abide by acting according to it, as every group has its own sunnah and leader.

[49.](#) Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir, edition of Damascus, p. 14.

[50.](#) Tafsir al-Qur'an al-hakim, of al-Imam Muhammad Abduh and al-Sayyid Rashid Ridha', vol. VI, p. 288.

[51.](#) In his exposition of this hadith al-Imam al-Tukhi said: In the transactions the convenience is given priority over nass (text) and ijma' (unanimity).

[52.](#) Al-Islam al-sahih, p. 297.

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