> Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) said: 'Among the rights of a scholar is that you do not overwhelm him with questions, nor trouble him with answers. Do not press him when he is tired, and do not grab his garment when he stands. Do not disclose his secrets, nor backbite anyone in his presence. Do not seek his flaws, and if he makes a mistake, accept his apology. You must show respect and reverence to him for the sake of Allah, as long as he upholds Allah's command. Do not sit in front of him (without permission), and if he needs something, rush to serve him before others.

QUR'ANIC SCIENCES:
TAFSĪR, TA'WĪL, AND RELATED DISCIPLINES

THE PROPHETIC TRADITION:
THE CRISIS OF REJECTING HADĪTH

AL-HIDĀYAH
MAGAZINE

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Quranic Sciences

BY:

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QURANIC SCIENCES

TAFSĪR, TA'WĪL, AND RELATED DISCIPLINES

LINGUISTIC EXPLORATIONS

Linguistically, the Arabic term "Tafsīr" originates from the root word "Fasara," meaning to unveil, reveal, or interpret. In a medical context, a specimen or sample that reveals a patient's condition to a physician is aptly termed "tafsirah," echoing the root word's connotation of disclosure.

The word "Ta'wīl" stems from the root letters alif, waaw, and laam, or the root word "āla," signifying a return or reversion. In scholarly terminology, Ta'wīl denotes the process of tracing a word or phrase from the Qur'ān back to one of its plausible meanings.

TERMINOLOGICAL EXPLORATIONS

The terminological meanings of Tafsīr and Ta'wīl have sparked diverse opinions among scholars:

(1) Abū 'Ubaidah رَحَمَهُٱللَّه posits that the two terms are interchangeable synonyms, conveying identical meanings.

(2) Imām ar-Rāghib رَحَمَهُٱللَّه distinguishes between the two, defining Tafsīr as a general term that encompasses the interpretation of both divine and human discourse, whereas Ta'wīl is exclusively reserved for the exegesis of divine scriptures.

(3) Imām Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī رَحَمَهُٱللَّه offers a nuanced perspective, suggesting that Tafsīr entails a definitive and explicit interpretation of the Qur'ān's implications, whereas Ta'wīl involves a more flexible and indefinite approach, selecting one possible interpretation among multiple plausible meanings of a given Qur'ānic passage.

In our view, the three perspectives are not mutually exclusive, but rather complementary. The scholars of the former era (Mutaqaddimīn) employed Tafsīr and Ta'wīl interchangeably, often using Ta'wīl as a substitute for Tafsīr, as exemplified in Ibn al-Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī's رَحَمَهُٱللَّه Tafsīr. Abū 'Ubaidah's assertion of their synonymy is rooted in this earlier terminology. In contrast, the scholars of the

latter era (Muta'akkhirīn), as represented by Imām Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī ﷺ, distinguished between Tafsīr, which involves interpreting divine texts with definitive evidence, and Ta'wīl, which entails selecting one possible meaning from multiple options through indefinite reasoning. The difference highlighted by Imām Rāghib ﷺ is not a literal one, but rather a terminological nuance stemming from the context in which the terms are applied: Ta'wīl is specifically related to the interpretation of divine scripture, whereas Tafsīr has a broader application.

(4) A further perspective posits that Tafsīr involves interpreting the Qur'ān through explicit textual evidence, whereas Ta'wīl entails interpreting the Qur'ān through rational or intellectual evidence.

(5) Another viewpoint suggests that Tafsīr represents a direct, literal interpretation of the Qur'ānic text, whereas Ta'wīl involves an indirect, inferential interpretation.

All of these nuanced distinctions are specific to the Muta'akkhirīn's terminology, whereas the Mutaqaddimīn

generally regarded the terms as synonymous. The author of al-Qāmūs has illuminated this terminological evolution, and 'Allāmah Ālūsī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّه has comprehensively discussed the Muta'akkhirīn's terminology in Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī.

DEFINITION, SCOPE, AND OBJECTIVE

In his Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī, 'Allāmah Ālūsī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّه defines the science of Tafsīr as a comprehensive discipline that encompasses the art of reciting the Qur'ān, unraveling the meanings and implications of its individual words, examining their contextual relationships, and exploring related fields of study. According to the author of Manāhil al-'Irfān, a concise definition of Tafsīr is that it is a Qur'ān-centric science dedicated to uncovering the divine intentions underlying the sacred text's wordings. In line with the terminology of the Mutaqaddimīn, the Qur'ān employs the terms Tafsīr and Ta'wīl interchangeably, conveying a unified concept. In Sūrah al-Furqān, Allāh reveals:

﴿ وَلَا يَأْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ إِلَّا جِئْنَٰكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَأَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيرًا ٣٣ ﴾ الفرقان: ٣٣

"And they do not come to you with an argument except that We bring you the truth and the best in terms of explanation."
(25:33)

Elsewhere, Allāh states:

﴿ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُۥ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ ﴾ آل عمران: ٧

"And no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allah."
(3:7)

The subject matter of the science of Tafsīr is the divine speech of Allāh, and its ultimate objective is to attain a profound understanding of the divine implications, enabling believers to follow the guidance theoretically and practically.

ETIQUETTES AND ESSENTIALS

Acquiring proficiency in Tafsīr and unlocking the profound meanings of the Qur'ān necessitates fulfilling specific conditions, as meticulously outlined in renowned works such as Rūĥ al-Ma'ānī, al-Itqān, al-Burhān, and Manāhil al-'Irfān, among others. In this exposition, we will

delineate these essential conditions and provide a comprehensive examination of the supporting evidence and rationale underlying each one.

(1) **'Ilm al-Lughah or 'Ilm al-Lisān:** A mufassir (Qur'ānic exegete) must possess comprehensive expertise in 'Ilm al-Lughah, also known as 'Ilm al-Lisān, encompassing the Arabic language in which the Qur'ān is revealed. Attaining mastery in Arabic requires proficiency in four essential sciences:

> (1) 'Ilm al-Lughah (linguistics and / or lexicology), which unlocks the underlying implications and contextual usage of individual Qur'ānic wordings.

> (2) 'Ilm aṣ-Ṣarf wal-Ishtiqāq (morphology), which provides insight into the diverse forms and effects of Qur'ānic wordings.

> (3) 'Ilm an-Naĥw (grammar and syntax), which elucidates the intricacies of compound words, diacritical marks, and their underlying causes.

(4) 'Ilm al-Balāghah (sociolinguistics and rhetoric), revealing the wisdom, secrets, and deliberate selection of Qur'ānic words.

The initial audience of the Qur'ān, comprising the Ṣaḥābah رَضِىَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ (companions of the Prophet صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) and other Arabs, never required formal knowledge of linguistic sciences during the revelation. As native speakers, they instinctively grasped the language's nuances and purposes through their innate literary expertise and cultural immersion. However, as time passed, mastering these sciences became crucial for non-Arabs and later generations of Arabs to accurately comprehend the Holy Qur'ān. Even the latter Arabs lost their natural linguistic refinement due to cultural exchange with other nations. The Qur'ān itself emphasizes the importance of understanding Arabic. Allāh reveals:

﴿ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَتَنزِيلُ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ۝ نَزَلَ بِهِ ٱلرُّوحُ ٱلْأَمِينُ ۝ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُنذِرِينَ ۝ بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِىٍّ مُّبِينٍ ۝ ﴾ الشعراء: ١٩٢ - ١٩٥

"Indeed, the Qur'ān is the revelation of the Lord of the worlds, brought down by the Trustworthy Spirit upon your heart, [O Muhammad], that you may be of the warners, in clear Arabic language" (26:192-195).

Furthermore, Allāh states:

﴿ إِنَّآ أَنزَلۡنَٰهُ قُرۡءَٰنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَّعَلَّكُمۡ تَعۡقِلُونَ ۞ ﴾ يوسف: ٢

"We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'ān, that you might understand" (12:2).

These verses make it explicit that the Qur'ān has been revealed in Arabic, adhering to the language's intrinsic rules and linguistic conventions. Consequently, attaining mastery in 'Ilm al-Lisān and encompassing various branches of Arabic is essential for a profound understanding. Literary masterpieces in any language demand proficiency in their respective languages to unravel its depths. Renowned works like Dīwān-e Ghālib and Dīwān-e Mūman, which are Urdu language masterpieces, require a strong command of Urdu to appreciate their nuances and complexities. Without
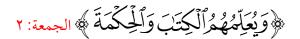
linguistic proficiency, a genuine comprehension of these works would be highly improbable.

(2) **'Ilm as-Sunnah:** Understanding the Qur'ān is inextricably linked to knowledge of the Sunnah, the tradition of the Prophet صَلَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, which provides indispensable context and insight. It is impossible to grasp the full meaning of the Qur'ān without considering the Messenger صَلَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, the primary recipient and interpreter of the revelation. This is where knowledge of the Sunnah and Ĥadīth becomes crucial, as it illuminates the historical context, reasons, and circumstances surrounding the revelation of specific verses, resolves ambiguities, and clarifies the intended meaning of general or open-ended verses.

For example, the Qur'ān commands us to establish Ṣalāh and pay Zakāh, yet it does not provide explicit answers to critical questions regarding their implementation, such as: What are the precise timings for each Ṣalāh? How many units (Raka'āt) are required for each prayer? What are the essential components of Ṣalāh,

and how are they structured? What are the prerequisites and conditions for a valid Ṣalāh? Similarly, concerning Zakāh, which types of wealth are subject to it, and which are exempt? Is it a monthly or annual obligation? What are the specific thresholds and amounts for each type of wealth that trigger the obligation of Zakāh? What are the conditions and regulations governing Zakāh? Where should the collected funds be allocated, and who are the rightful beneficiaries? The Qur'ān alone does not provide detailed explanations for these essential aspects, which is where the Sunnah plays a vital role. This same principle applies to other fundamental practices mentioned in the Qur'ān, such as Ṣaum (fasting) and Ĥajj (pilgrimage).

Just as proficiency in the Arabic language is essential to comprehend the Qur'ān's words, knowledge of the Ĥadīth and Sunnah is crucial to understand the practical application of its commandments. This necessity stems from our own limitations; not from any deficiency in the Qur'ān itself. We require these essential tools to unlock the benefits of the Qur'ān, just as we need wells, streams, or rivers to access water — the water itself is independent of these means, but we rely on them to tap into its benefits.

The Qur'ān itself emphasizes the importance of the Ĥadīth and Sunnah, comprising the Prophet's ﷺ statements, actions, and tacit approvals, to grasp its deeper meanings. Allāh highlights this in the verse:

﴿ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ ﴾ الجمعة: ٢

"and he teaches them the Book and Wisdom" (62:2).

Here, "teaching" refers to the elucidation of the Qur'ān's meanings, complementing the recitation of its verses mentioned earlier in the same verse:

﴿ يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ ﴾ الجمعة: ٢

"and he recites to them His verses."

Clearly, a teacher who merely recites a book's text to a student without explaining its meanings cannot be said to have truly "taught" the material. To impart knowledge, the teacher must also convey the book's underlying messages and interpretations. This principle is reinforced in the Qur'ān, where Allāh declares:

﴾وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ ٱلذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ٤٤﴿ النحل: ٤٤

"And We revealed to you the message so that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them." (16:44)

Numerous similar verses throughout the Qur'ān emphasize that comprehending its teachings is contingent upon familiarity with the Ĥadīth, underscoring the interdependence of the two sources.

(3): 'Ilm al-Āthār: To grasp the meanings of the Qur'ān, one must also possess knowledge of the Āthār (narratives) of the Ṣaĥābah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ and the Tābi'īn رَحِمَهُمُٱللَّهُ (successors and students of the Ṣaĥābah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ), who served as the primary custodians of the Qur'ānic legacy. The Ṣaĥābah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ received the Qur'ān directly from the Prophet صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ, while the Tābi'īn رَحِمَهُمُٱللَّهُ acquired it through the Ṣaĥābah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ. Consequently, their comprehension of the Qur'ān is far more precise, reliable, and authentic compared to subsequent generations. In his seminal work, ar-Risālah, Imām Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ notes:

اِجْتِهَادُهُمْ فَوْقَ اجْتِهَادِنَا.

"Their independent judgment carries significantly more weight than our own."

The Qur'ān itself testifies to the Ṣaḥābah's رَضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ exceptional status:

﴿رَّضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ﴾ البينة: ٨

"Allāh is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him."
(98: 8)

The divine endorsement of Allāh's pleasure with the Ṣaḥābah رَضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ is the greatest guarantee and certification there can be, leaving no room for doubt regarding the accuracy and reliability of their Qur'ānic interpretations. The pleasure of Allāh is a seal of authenticity, precluding the possibility of their interpretations being incorrect or misleading. Furthermore, familiarizing oneself with the Āthār of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and the Tābi'īn رَحِمَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ provides valuable insights into their authoritative interpretations, safeguarding the exegete from deviating into erroneous or contradictory explanations. Such

deviations risk distorting the Qur'ān's meanings, a transgression for which the Qur'ān warns of severe consequences:

﴿وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ ٱلرَّسُولَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ ٱلْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِۦ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصْلِهِۦ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴾ النساء: ١١٥

"And whoever opposes the Messenger after guidance has become clear to him and follows other than the way of the believers - We will give him what he has taken and drive him into Hell, and evil it is as a destination" (4:115).

This verse establishes that opposing the Messenger ﷺ is a grave offense, and by extension, opposing the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم is equally reprehensible, since they were the contemporaneous believers at the time of the Qur'ān's revelation. Consequently, any interpretation that contradicts the consensus of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم is deemed a distortion and a serious transgression, punishable by Hellfire.

(4): 'Ilm al-Qawā'id wa Uṣūl al-Istimbāṭ: i.e., the science of extrapolation rules and principles. To accurately

interpret the Qur'ān, an exegete must possess knowledge of the science of extrapolation rules and principles. Mastery of the laws governing the meanings, realities, and demands of various verse types - including Mujmal (concise), Mufaṣṣal (detailed), 'Ām (general), Khāṣ (specific), Muṭlaq (open-ended), Muqayyad (restricted), Āmir (instructive), and Nāhī (prohibitive) - is crucial to avoid errors in extrapolating injunctions and ensure a sound exegesis. This expertise is acquired through 'Ilm Uṣūl al-Fiqh (the science of jurisprudential principles), a profound discipline of the Arabic language studied by esteemed scholars known as 'Ahl al-Istimbāṭ (master extrapolaters). These experts develop the ability to accurately extrapolate rulings from the Qur'ān due to their deep understanding and proficiency in jurisprudential principles. The Qur'ān alludes to such authorities in the verse:

﴿ وَإِذَا جَآءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْنِ أَوِ ٱلْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا۟ بِهِۦ ۖ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ وَإِلَىٰٓ أُو۟لِى ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَنۢبِطُونَهُۥ مِنْهُمْ ۗ ﴾ النساء: ٨٣

"And when there comes to them information about peace or fear, they spread it around. But if they had referred it back to the Messenger or to those of authority among them, then the ones who [can] draw correct conclusions from it would have known about it." (4:83)

Divine injunctions can be categorized into two types: imperative instructions that embody the facet of peace, and prohibitive directives that embody the facet of fear. To determine whether a particular action is divinely ordained or prohibited - in essence, to discern whether it falls under the umbrella of peace or fear - requires tracing it back to the ultimate sources: Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ, i.e., the Qur'ān and Sunnah. This enables mujtahidīn (masters of independent judgment) to cross-reference the issue at hand with explicit Qur'ānic and Sunnahic references, facilitating accurate extrapolation of its ruling. However, precise extrapolation necessitates expertise in specific Arabic language rulings beyond standard grammatical principles. The correct understanding of Qur'ānic law hinges on this approach, and 'Ilm Uṣūl al-Fiqh provides the essential jurisprudential framework for this purpose.

(5): 'Ilm Qawā'id al-Ilāhiyyāt: i.e., theological and metaphysical rulings. It is essential for the exegete to possess a profound understanding of what is right and wrong concerning the essence of Allāh, recognizing the implications of His absolute independence and transcendence beyond physical constraints, such as appearance, direction, place, or time. The exegete must also comprehend Allāh's boundless, praiseworthy attributes of perfection. Acquiring this knowledge is crucial to ensure the exegete navigates commentaries on Qur'ānic verses related to metaphysics, supernatural phenomena, and the essence and attributes of Allāh with confidence and accuracy, avoiding potential misinterpretations.

A Clarification: Some may argue that the sciences deemed essential for Qur'ānic exegesis did not exist during the time of the Qur'ān's revelation. However, while the formal composition of these sciences - including Ṣarf (morphology), Naĥw (syntax), Lughah (linguistics), Balāghah (rhetoric), Ĥadīth (prophetic tradition), Āthār (tradition of the Ṣaĥābah رَضِىَاللَّهُعَنْهُمْ and the Tābi'īn رَحِمَهُمُاللَّهُ), 'Aqā'id or Kalām (creed), and Uṣūl al-Fiqh

(jurisprudential principles) - occurred after the revelation, their underlying principles and concepts were already present. The crucial distinction lies between the existence of these sciences and their formal systematization. In reality, these sciences were inherent in the Arabic language and integral to everyday communication, long before the Qur'ān's revelation. Their later compilation and organization did not create new knowledge but rather formalized existing understanding, making them indispensable tools for accurate Qur'ānic exegesis.

For instance, the fundamental principles of Arabic grammar and rhetoric, such as the fā'il being marfū', the maf'ūl being manṣūb, the distinction between 'Ām and Khāṣ, and the difference between Muṭlaq and Muqayyad, as well as the various rhetorical principles of Ṣarf and Naĥw, were inherently embedded in the Arabic language from its inception. The Arabs intuitively applied these principles in their everyday communication, long before they were systematically compiled and formalized. Although the compilation of these principles occurred later, their existence and usage predated the advent of the Qur'ān in Arabia. The sciences of Ĥadīth and Āthār, on

the other hand — encompassing the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ, Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, and the Tābi'īn رَحِمَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ — emerged concurrently with the Qur'ān as its explanatory commentary, and were formally compiled after the completion of the Qur'ān's revelation. All in all, the fact that these principles were compiled during or after the Qur'ān's revelation does not undermine their essentiality for comprehending the Qur'ān.

(**6**): **'Ilm al-Mawhibah:** Attaining mastery in Qur'ānic exegesis necessitates the acquisition of 'Ilm al-Mawhibah, also referred to as 'Ilm Ladunnī (divine inspiration) by Shāh Waliullāh Muḥaddith Dihlawī رَحَمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. This divine inspiration emanates from the radiant light of Īmān (faith) and Taqwā (God-consciousness). The Qur'ān succinctly states,

﴿لَّا يَمَسُّهُۥ إِلَّا ٱلْمُطَهَّرُونَ ٧٩﴾ الواقعة: ٧٩

"None touch it except the purified." (56:79)

This verse also implies that just as physical purity is required to handle the physical pages and words of the Qur'ān, internal purity is essential to access its internal

meanings. This inner purification and illumination are direct consequences of obeying Allāh and cultivating consciousness of Him. Paralleling the requirement for external purification to engage with the Qur'ān's exterior, inner purification is necessary to connect with its inner essence. In his seminal work, al-Itqān, Imām Jalāl ad-Dīn Suyūṭī رَحِمَهُٱللَّه references a passage from Imām Burhān ad-Dīn Zarkashī's رَحِمَهُٱللَّه al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, which further elucidates this concept:

اِعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا يَحْصُلُ لِلنَّاظِرِ فَهْمُ مَعَانِي الْقُرْآنِ، وَ لَا يَظْهَرُ أَسْرَارُهُ وَ فِي قَلْبِهِ بِدْعَةٌ أَوْ

كِبْرٌ أَوْ هَوًى أَوْ حُبُّ الدُّنْيَا أَوْ مُصِرٌّ عَلَى ذَنْبٍ، أَوْ غَيْرُ مُتَحَقِّقِ الْإِيْمَانِ أَوْ ضَعِيْفُ

التَّحْقِيْقِ أَوْ يَعْتَمِدُ عَلَى مُفَسِّرٍ لَيْسَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ، أَوْ رَاجِعٌ إِلَى مَعْقُوْلِهِ، و هٰذِهِ كُلُّهَا

حُجَبٌ وَ مَوَانِعُ، بَعْضُهَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ بَعْضٍ، وَ هٰذَا مَعْنٰى قَوْلِهِ تَعَالٰى:

﴿سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ ءَايٰتِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ﴾ الأعراف: ١٤٦

قَالَ سُفْيَانُ بْنُ عُيَيْنَةَ: يَقُوْلُ: أَنْزِعُ عَنْهُمْ فَهْمَ الْقُرْآنِ. أَخْرَجَهُ ابْنُ أَبِيْ حَاتِمٍ . قَالَ

سُفْيَانُ الثَّوْرِيُّ: لَا يَجْمَعُ فَهْمُ الْقُرْآنِ وَ الْإِشْتِغَالُ بِالْحُكَّامِ فِيْ قَلْبِ مُؤْمِنٍ.

"Know well that true comprehension of the Qur'ān's meanings and access to its profound secrets remain elusive as long as one's heart is inclined towards bid'ah (innovations in

religion), harbors arrogance, or is swayed by vain desires, worldly attachments, or persistent sinfulness. Additionally, a lack of firm faith, superficial research, reliance on the ignorant, or prioritizing personal intellect can also serve as significant obstacles. These hindrances vary in magnitude, but all impede spiritual growth. This is precisely what Allāh warns against in the verse: "I will turn away from My verses those who are arrogant upon the earth without right." (7:146) According to Sufyān bin 'Uyaynah رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ, Allāh is saying that He will deprive them of the understanding of the Qur'ān. This narration is reported by Ibn Abī Ĥātim رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ. Sufyān Thaurī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ astutely observes that a believer's heart cannot accommodate two things simultaneously: a deep understanding of the Qur'ān and the habit of flattering rulers."

This underscores the requirement of an illuminated heart for a profound understanding of the Qur'ān. One who lacks inner light will inevitably be veiled from the Qur'ān's inner essence. This light is nurtured by completely abstaining from the impediments mentioned earlier, and it is a prerequisite for deriving benefit from Allāh, the Almighty. Known as 'Ilm al-Mawhibah, it serves

as a gateway to unlocking a deeper comprehension of the Qur'ān, revealing its hidden treasures and subtleties.

TAFSĪR BIR-RA'Y

Tafsīr bir-ra'y, literally translating to "commentating (on the Qur'ān) through personal opinion," is an approach vehemently discouraged by the Prophet ﷺ. In a stern warning reported by Abū Dāwūd, Tirmizhī, and Nasa'ī, the Prophet ﷺ cautions, "Whoever interprets the Qur'ān based on personal opinion has erred, even if their interpretation appears correct." Another narration by Abū Dāwūd emphatically states, "Whoever commentates on the Qur'ān through personal opinion shall take up his residence in the Hellfire." The condemnation of tafsīr bi ar-ra'y is a consensus shared by all scholars of the ummah.

IMPLICATIONS OF TAFSĪR BIR-RA'Y

What are the implications of tafsīr bir-ra'y? It's important to note that it doesn't imply a complete absence of personal opinion in Qur'ānic commentary, as some level of intellectual engagement is inevitable. In fact,

the Qur'ān actively encourages its readers to ponder and contemplate its words, as evident in verses such as:

$$وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ۝ ﴿ النحل: ٤٤$$

"So that they may give thought." (16:44)

and

$$﴿ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ ﴾ النساء: ٨٢$$

"Then do they not reflect upon the Qur'ān?" (4:82).

Therefore, utilizing one's intellect and opinion in understanding the Qur'ān is not only permissible but also encouraged. However, the condemned form of tafsīr bir-ra'y has two critical implications:

(1) The first implication of tafsīr bir-ra'y is that an individual preconceives an opinion and then forcibly attempts to align the Qur'ānic verses and phrases with their preconceived notion, subordinating the divine words to their personal perspective. This approach constitutes a condemned reversal, leading one astray and

towards the Fire. In this context, the ب in تفسير بِالرأي signifies 'based on,' implying 'exegesis based on opinion.' However, employing one's opinion to interpret the Qur'ān, while considering the broader context and adhering to proper Arabic grammatical principles, without contradicting the fundamental objectives of the Qur'ān and Islam, is commendable and does not fall within the scope of condemned tafsīr bir-ra'y. In this instance, the ب denotes the utilization of opinion as a mere tool or auxiliary means, such as in كَتَبْتُ بِالْقَلَمِ (I wrote with the pen, i.e., I wrote with (the assistance of) the pen).

(2) To grasp the second implication of the condemned tafsīr bir-ra'y, it's crucial to recognize that Qur'ānic exegesis encompasses two distinct dimensions: textual exegesis and intellectual exegesis. Textual exegesis involves understanding the specific meanings of individual Qur'ānic wordings, the historical context and circumstances surrounding the revelation of particular verses, the identification of abrogating and abrogated verses, the clarification of ambiguities within the Qur'ān, and the various Qirā'āt (forms of recitation). These aspects

can only be accurately discerned through reliable textual information, leaving no room for personal opinion or intellectual speculation. Therefore, any attempt to inject personal opinion into these matters constitutes condemned tafsīr bir-ra'y.

On the other hand, utilizing opinion and intellect to select a preferred interpretation from multiple possible understandings of a particular verse, or to derive a ruling through extrapolation principles, or to uncover the underlying wisdom behind a Qur'ānic injunction, does not constitute tafsīr bir-ra'y. This is because such endeavors inherently involve intellectual engagement and opinion-based analysis, distinct from narrative or textual information.

In summary, tafsīr bir-ra'y occurs when one inappropriately injects personal opinion into the textual framework, forcibly imposing intellect upon matters already discernible through reliable textual information, thereby committing a transgression.

TAFSĪR OF THE ṢŪFIYYAH AND THE BĀṬINIYYAH

The Ṣūfiyyah (mystics) and Baṭiniyyah (esoterics) have also authored Qur'ānic commentaries, but with a crucial distinction: the Ṣūfiyyah's tafsīr is exempt from tafsīr bir-ra'y, whereas the Baṭiniyyah's is not. What underlies this differentiation? Renowned scholars, including the authors of al-Burhān, al-Itqān, and Rūĥ al-Ma'ānī, as well as 'Allāmah Taftāzānī رَحَهُمُٱللَّه, have elaborated on this. In essence, the Ṣūfiyyah, while remaining faithful to the Qur'ān's literal meanings, explore its possible internal connotations to broaden the scope of intellectual exploration. Their interpretations align with established Islamic principles, refraining from rejecting fundamental tenets. In stark contrast, the Baṭiniyyah's tafsīr posits internal meanings as the sole authentic interpretations, categorically denying the Qur'ān's explicit meanings. 'Allāmah Ālūsī رَحَهُٱللَّه writes:

وَ أَمَّا كَلَامُ الصُّوْفِيَّةِ فِي الْقُرْآنِ فَهُوَ مِنْ بَابِ الْإِشَارَاتِ تَنْكَشِفُ عَلَى أَرْبَابِ السُّلُوْك

وَ يُمْكِنُ التَّطْبِيْقُ بَيْنَهَا وَ بَيْنَ الظَّوَاهِرِ الْمُرَادَةِ، وَ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ كَمَالِ الْإِيْمانِ وَ مَحْضِ

الْعِرْفَانِ، لَا أَنَّهُمُ اعْتَقَدُوْا أَنَّ الظَّاهِرَ غَيْرُ مُرَادٍ أَصْلًا، وَ إِنَّمَا الْمُرَادُ الْبَاطِنُ فَقَطْ؛ إِذْ ذٰلِكَ اعْتِقَادُ الْبَاطِنِيَّةِ الْمُلَاحِدَةِ، تَوَصَّلُوْا بِهِ إِلَى نَفْيِ الشَّرِيْعَةِ بِالْكُلِّيَّةِ، وَ حَاشَا سَادَاتِنَا مِنْ ذٰلِكَ. وَ قَدْ حَضُّوْا عَلَى التَّفْسِيْرِ الظَّاهِرِ، وَ قَالُوْا: لَا بُدَّ مِنْهُ أَوَّلًا؛ إِذْ لَا يُطْمَعُ فِي الْوُصُوْلِ إِلَى الْبَاطِنِ قَبْلَ إِحْكَامِ الظَّاهِرِ. وَ مَنِ ادَّعٰى فَهْمَ أَسْرَارِ الْقُرْآنِ قَبْلَ إِحْكَامِ الظَّاهِرِ فَهُوَ كَمَنِ ادَّعَى الْبُلُوْغَ إِلَى صَدْرِ الْبَيْتِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُجَاوِزَ الْبَابَ.

"Regarding the Qur'ānic interpretations of the Ṣūfiyyah, these represent inner dimensions divinely revealed to them. These connotations harmoniously align with the external meanings of the Qur'ān, and the synergy is a testament to the perfection of their faith and divine recognition. In sharing these inner insights, the Ṣūfiyyah do not intend to supplant the external meanings of the Qur'ān, unlike the Bāṭiniyyah, who fabricate inner connotations to undermine the Sharī'ah. The Bāṭiniyyah's true aim is to erase the divine law, disguising their innovations as profound interpretations. In stark contrast, our venerable Ṣūfiyyah elders are innocent of such blasphemy. Instead, they have consistently emphasized the importance of mastering external Qur'ānic exegesis. As they wisely observed: "One cannot access the interior without first grasping the exterior. Mastery of the outer dimensions is essential; anyone claiming to unlock the Qur'ān's secrets

without laying this foundation is like one who claims to enter a house without passing through its door."

'Allāmah Ālūsī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ 's insightful explanation highlights four key factors distinguishing the Ṣūfiyyah's tafsīr from the Bāṭiniyyah's:

(1) The Qur'ān's primary implications lie in its external meanings.

(2) Mastery of these external implications is a prerequisite for accessing internal connotations.

(3) Internal connotations align with the external meanings.

(4) The internal connotations arise from divine inspirations, grounded in divine recognition, not in heresy or personal desires.

This approach is reinforced by a prophetic Ĥadīth:

لِكُلِّ آيَةٍ ظَهْرٌ وَ بَطْنٌ، وَ لِكُلِّ حَرْفٍ حَدٌّ، وَ لِكُلِّ حَدٍّ مَطْلَعٌ.

"Every verse possesses an exterior and an interior; every letter has a limit, and every limit has a horizon."

Here, the "exterior" refers to the external implications, while the "interior" alludes to the internal secrets and subtleties hidden within the verse.

To illustrate the distinction between the Ṣūfiyyah's and Bāṭiniyyah's tafsīr approaches, let us consider a prophetic Ĥadīth:

إِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ لَا تَدْخُلُ بَيْتًا فِيهِ كَلْبٌ وَ لَا صُوْرَةٌ.

"Surely the angels of mercy do not enter a room containing a dog or a picture of a living thing."

This translation represents the Ĥadīth's external, literal meaning.

Building upon this foundation, a nuanced interpreter might extract a profound analogy. For instance, they may see the room as symbolizing the heart, the dog

representing bestial or animalistic tendencies, and the picture embodying worldly attachments. This interpretation suggests that angelic guidance cannot penetrate a heart beset by carnal instincts or worldly love. Crucially, this inner understanding remains anchored to the original meaning.

In this exemplary Ṣūfiyyah approach, the interpreter:

- Preserves the Ĥadīth's external implications
- Unlocks complementary inner dimensions
- Recognizes the interplay between literal and metaphorical significance
- Upholds the original prohibition against keeping dogs or pictures of living things in one's home without necessity

On the other hand, if someone rejects the literal interpretation of the Ĥadīth, dismissing the prohibition on dogs and pictures of living things as merely figurative, and redefines the Ĥadīth's essence as solely symbolic, referring only to abstract concepts like animalistic traits and worldly love, then this reinterpretation veers into heresy and constitutes a willful distortion.

Take another example from the Qur'ān. Allāh commands the Israelites — who were trying to solve the mystery behind a murder in their midst — to slaughter a cow, take a piece of its flesh, and place it on the murdered man's corpse, causing the corpse to revive and reveal the killer's identity. (2:67-73) This account has both literal and symbolic significance.

Now, if someone interprets this event solely allegorically, claiming:

- The cow represents the inner, bestial self
- Slaughtering the cow symbolizes eradicating animalistic tendencies through spiritual growth
- The corpse's awakening signifies spiritual self-awareness
- The revelation of the killer's identity represents the inner struggle between angelic and opposing animalistic traits

while denying the literal, historical event, this constitutes heresy.

However, if one preserves the original narrative's implications and uses it as a foundation to derive

complementary inner meanings, there is no objection. Qāzhī Baydāwī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ frequently employs such symbolic interpretations in his Tafsīr, recognizing their value as spiritual insights.

TYPES OF TAFSĪR BIR-RA'Y

In his seminal work, al-Itqān, 'Allāmah Suyūtī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ quotes Ibn an-Naqīb رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, identifying five perilous scenarios of prohibited speculative Tafsīr (Tafsīr bir-ra'y):

مَا تَحْصُلُ فِيْ مَعْنَى حَدِيثِ التَّفْسِيرِ بِالرَّأْيِ خَمْسَةُ أَقْوَالٍ، أَحَدُهَا: التَّفْسِيْرُ مِنْ غَيْرِ حُصُوْلِ الْعُلُوْمِ الَّتِي يَجُوْزُ مَعَهَا التَّفْسِيْرُ، وَ الثَّانِيْ: تَفْسِيْرُ الْمُتَشَابِهِ الَّذِيْ لَا يَعْلَمُهُ إِلَّا اللهُ، وَ الثَّالِثُ: التَّفْسِيْرُ الْمُقَرَّرُ لِلْمَذْهَبِ الْفَاسِدِ بِأَنْ يَجْعَلَ الْمَذْهَبَ أَصْلًا وَ التَّفْسِيْرَ تَابِعًا، فَيَرُدُّ إِلَيْهِ بِأَيِّ طَرِيْقٍ أَمْكَنَ وَ إِنْ كَانَ ضَعِيْفًا، اَلرَّابِعُ: أَنَّ مُرَادَ اللهِ كَذَا بِالْقَطْعِ مِنْ غَيْرِ دَلِيْلٍ، اَلْخَامِسُ: اَلتَّفْسِيْرُ بِالْإِسْتِحْسَانِ وَ الْهَوٰى.

"There are five scenarios of prohibited Tafsīr bir-ra'y:
(1) Commentating on the Qur'ān without mastering essential sciences for exegesis.
(2) Interpreting Mutashābah (ambiguities known only to Allāh).

(3) Forcing Qur'ānic commentary to conform to a particular, flawed school of thought
(4) Asserting definitive meanings without evidence.
(5) Interpreting based on personal preference or desire.

Engaging in these forms of Tafsīr bir-ra'y incurs the risk of the Hellfire. Unfortunately, most contemporary Qur'ānic exegeses fall prey to one or more of these pitfalls. We seek refuge in Allāh.

TAFSĪR CATEGORIES AND CONDITIONS

'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās رَضِيَاللَّهُعَنْهُمَا categorized tafsīr into four types:

(1) Implications discernible through mastery of Arabic language and grammatical principles.

(2) Clear, self-evident injunctions related to both theory and practice, understandable to the layperson through basic Arabic knowledge, requiring no specialized grammatical expertise. Examples include:

﴿ فَٱعۡلَمۡ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ ﴾ محمد: ١٩

"So know that there is no deity except Allāh" (47:19)

﴿ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ ﴾ البقرة: ٢٧٧

"Establish Ṣalāh and pay Zakāh" (2:288)

Misunderstanding these verses is inexcusable due to their clarity.

(3) Implications accessible only to expert jurists, known as ta'wīl. These include:

- Jurisprudential extrapolations
- Clarifying ambiguities
- Specifying generalities
- Restricting open-ended themes
- Canonical considerations
- Balancing linguistic, jurisprudential, and environmental or societal implications (al-Ĥaqīqah al-Lughawiyyah, al-Ĥaqīqah as-Shar'iyyah, and al-Ĥaqīqah al-'Urfiyyah) and
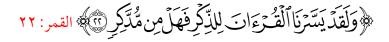
knowing where to prefer one over the other. For instance, in the phrase:

﴿ وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلَوٰتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَّهُمْ ﴾ التوبة: ١٠٣

"invoke (Allah's blessings) upon them. Surely, your invocation serves as reassurance for them" (9:103),

contextual evidence dictates that the word Ṣalāh retains its linguistic implication, which is to invoke or supplicate.

(4) Knowledge exclusively reserved for Allāh, such as:

- The Mutashābah (ambiguous) verses
- The exact time of Judgment Day
- The soul's precise nature

The famous Qur'ānic verse,

﴿ وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴾ القمر: ٢٢

"And We have certainly made the Qur'ān easy to heed, so is there any who will pay heed?" (54:22)

alludes to the second category of tafsīr.

This is inferred by the word "zhikr" (heed and / or remembrance), implying that the easiness refers to themes requiring thoughtful reflection and remembrance.

The only type of tafsīr the facilited themes align with are the second type, which encompasses clear, self-evident injunctions understandable through basic Arabic knowledge.

Imām Zarkashī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّه has endorsed and expressed his liking for Ibn 'Abbās's رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا categorization.

It is also crucial to recognize that the third category of tafsīr, accessible only to distinguished scholars and termed at-Ta'wīl al-Maĥmūd (commendable interpretation), must meet specific conditions to avoid being classified as at-Ta'wīl al-Mazhmūm (condemned interpretation). These essential prerequisites include:

(1) Consistency with the preceding verse.
(2) Harmony with the following verse.

(3) Linguistic plausibility, ensuring a discernible and reasonable meaning.

(4) Non-contradiction with the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

In al-Itqān, 'Allāmah Suyūṭī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ cites:

قَالَ قَوْمٌ مِنْهُمُ الْبَغَوِيُّ وَ الْكَوَاشِيُّ: التَّأْوِيْلُ: صَرْفُ الْآيَةِ إِلى مَعْنًى مُوَافِقٍ لِمَا قَبْلَهَا وَ مَا بَعْدَهَا تَحْتَمِلُهُ الْآيَةُ، غَيْرِ مُخَالِفٍ لِلْكِتَابِ وَ السُّنَّةِ.

"A group of scholars, including al-Baghawī and al-Kawāshī, stipulate that an interpretation is valid if:
- It aligns with the preceding context.
- It harmonizes with the subsequent verse.
- It does not conflict with the Qur'ān and Sunnah."

(5) Imām Zarkashī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ adds a fifth crucial condition, citing 'Allāmah Zamakhsharī, which stipulates that a valid interpretation must not compromise the Qur'ān's miraculously inimitable rhetorical excellence.

In other words, the interpretation should preserve the Qur'ān's unique literary and rhetorical flair, ensuring it remains uncompromised and intact.

قَالَ الزَّمَخْشَرِيُّ: مِنْ حَقِّ مُفَسِّرِ كِتَابِ اللهِ الْبَاهِرِ وَ كَلَامِهِ الْمُعْجِزِ أَنْ يَتَعَاهَدَ فِيْ مَذَاهِبِهِ بَقَاءَ النَّظْمِ عَلَى حُسْنِهِ وَ الْبَلَاغَةِ عَلَى كَمَالِهَا.

"'*Allāmah Zamakhsharī says: it is an indispensable obligation upon the exegete of Allāh's Sublime Book and His miraculously inimitable speech: that he preserve in his connotations the original excellence of its language and the perfection of its rhetorical beauty.*"

'Allāmah Zamakhsharī's insight forms the fifth essential condition for sound Qur'ānic interpretation, and his perspective is unequivocally correct.

A valid interpretation of a Qur'ānic verse must align with its intended purpose, preserving the miraculously inimitable nature of the divine revelation.

Alterations to the original meaning compromise the Qur'ān's unique excellence and undermine its interpretive integrity.

Furthermore, fabricated interpretations disrupt the coherence and consistency of Qur'ānic language, severing connections between words, implications, and context.

(6) The Qur'ān and Sunnah convey divine truth. As obvious as it is, the truth is naturally single and indivisible. Consequently, when interpreting a verse, an exegete must ensure that their understanding does not conflict with the broader implications of the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

Any interpretation contradicting other verses or the Sunnah's implications is inherently flawed, indicating fabrication or distortion. The sixth principle of non-contradiction is paramount. Truth, by definition, cannot contradict itself, and hence, the accepted interpretation must be entirely contradiction-free. Here, "contradiction" refers to literal inconsistencies.

Apparent contradictions — which seem conflicting, but can be resolved through thoughtful analysis and reconcile upon reflection — do not invalidate an interpretation.

To avoid contradictions, an exegete requires an extensive understanding of the entire Qur'ān and a vast array of Aĥādīth. This ensures their interpretations align with both scriptoral and prophetic contexts.

(7) The illustrious scholars of the Khair-ul-Qurūn (the best of ages), comprising the Ṣaĥābah رَضِیَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, Tābi'īn رَحِمَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ (successors and students of the Ṣaĥābah), and Tab' at-Tābi'īn (successors and students of the Tābi'īn) رَحِمَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ, were invested with a profoundly deep understanding of the Qur'ān.

Any interpretation contradicting the collective spirit of their exegesis is considered a distortion and unacceptable.

However, a master Qur'ānic exegete, adhering to established conditions, may derive new implications not explicitly mentioned by predecessors, provided they do not conflict with existing understanding.

The Qur'ān's depths are inexhaustible. The door to uncovering fresh, Qur'ānic insights remains open, as the

process of extrapolating secrets, wisdom, and implications will continue until the end of time.

As evidenced by a Ĥadīth:

<div dir="rtl">

لَا يَنْتَهِيْ عَجَائِبُهُ.

</div>

"The fascinations of the Qur'ān will never cease."

Imām Shāfi'ī ﵁ states:

<div dir="rtl">

جَمِيْعُ مَا تَقُوْلُهُ الْأُمَّةُ شَرْحٌ للسُّنَّةِ، وَ جَمِيْعُ السُّنَّةِ شَرْحٌ لِلْقُرْآنِ، وَ جَمِيْعُ الْقُرْآنِ شَرْحٌ لِلْأَسْمَاءِ الْحُسْنٰى وَ صِفَاتِهِ الْعُلْيَا.

</div>

"All that is decided by scholarly consensus nationwide is an interpretation of the Sunnah, and all of the Sunnah is an interpretation of the Qur'ān, and all of the Qur'ān is an interpretation of Allāh's Noble Names and Exalted Attributes."

Shedding light on the mysteries of the Qur'ān, Imām Bayhaqī ﵁ quotes the following in al-Madkhal from 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd ﵁:

مَنْ أَرَادَ الْعِلْمَ فيْثَوِّرَ الْقُرْآنَ، فَإِنَّ فِيْهِ عِلْمَ الْأَوَّلِيْنَ وَ الْآخِرِيْنَ.

"Whoever seeks knowledge should immerse themselves in the Qur'ān, as it holds within it the knowledge of the former and the latter."

Allāh describes the Qur'ān as:

﴿ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَىْءٍ ﴾ النحل: ٨٩

"a clarification for everything" (16: 89)

﴿ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ ﴾ يوسف: ١١١

"a detailed explanation of everything." (12: 111)

In essence, the Holy Qur'ān encapsulates all the fundamental principles of religion. Moreover, its inner secrets and mystical interpretations emanate from within, inspired by divine guidance to select servants of Allah. 'Allāmah Ālūsī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّه elaborates on this concept in Rūh al-Ma'ānī.

These inspired interpretations are classified as at-Tafsīr al-Ishārī. In contrast, the Bāṭiniyyah's interpretations are rejected for disregarding the Qur'ān's explicit meanings.

Among the tafsīrs of the Ahl as-Sunnah Ṣūfiyyah, four works stand out the most:

(1) Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān wa Raghā'ib al-Furqān (at-Tafsīr an-Nayshāpūrī) by Nizhām-ud-Dīn Nayshāpūrī (d. 850 A.H.).

(2) Tafsīr at-Tusturī by Sahl bin 'Abdullāh at-Tusturī (d. 283 A.H.), although incomplete.

(3) Rūḣ al-Ma'ānī fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azhīm was-Sab' al-Mathānī (Tafsīr Ālūsī) by 'Allāmah Ālūsī رَحَمَهُٱللَّه (d. 1270 A.H.).

(4) Tafsīr Ibn al-'Arabī by Muḣy ud-Dīn Muḣammad Ibn al-'Arabī رَحَمَهُٱللَّه (d. 638 A.H.).

Notably, these authors consistently acknowledge and respect the Qur'ān's explicit meanings before offering their mystical interpretations.

Imām Zarkashī discusses the Ṣūfiyyah's Tafsīr in his al-Burhān in the following words:

كَلَامُ الصُّوْفِيَّةِ فِي تَفْسِيرِ الْقُرْآنِ قِيْلَ: لَيْسَ بِتَفْسِيرٍ، وَ إِنَّمَا هُوَ مَعَانٍ وَ مَوَاجِيْدُ يَجِدُوْنَ عِنْدَ التِّلَاوَةِ.

"It is argued that the Ṣūfiyyah's interpretations in Qur'ānic exegesis are distinct from traditional tafsīr, instead representing reflections and personal insights that are evoked by the text during recitation."

Ibn aṣ-Ṣalāĥ writes in his Fatāwā:

وَجَدْتُّ عِنْدَ الْإِمَامِ أَبِي الْحَسَنِ الْوَاحِدِيِّ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: صَنَّفَ أَبُوْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَانِ السُّلَمِيُّ حَقَائِقَ التَّفْسِيرِ''، فَإِنْ كَانَ اعْتَقَدَ أَنَّهُ تَفْسِيرٌ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ''. قَالَ ابْنُ الصَّلَاح: إِنَّهُ لَمْ يَذْكُرْهُ تَفْسِيرًا، وَ لَا ذَهَبَ بِهِ مَذْهَبَ الشَّرْحِ لِلْكَلِمَةِ؛ فَإِنَّهُ لَوْ كَانَ كَذٰلِكَ كَانُوْا قَدْ سَلَكُوْا مَسْلَكَ الْبَاطِنِيَّةِ، وَ إِنَّمَا ذٰلِكَ مِنْهُمْ ذِكْرُ نَظِيْرٍ لِمَا وَرَدَ بِهِ الْقُرْآنُ؛ فَإِنَّ النَّظِيْرَ يُذْكَرُ بِالنَّظِيْرِ.

"I found an excerpt of Imām Abul-Ĥasan al-Wāĥidī which reads: "Abū 'Abdurraĥmān as-Sulamī authored Ĥaqā'iq at-Tafsīr, a work offering insightful perspectives on Qur'ānic interpretation. Now, if as-Sulamī intended Ĥaqā'iq at-Tafsīr as a literal tafsīr, it would constitute kufr (disbelief). I, Ibn aṣ-Ṣalāĥ, however, say that a careful examination reveals he never presented his insights as authoritative explanations of

the Qur'ānic text. Rather, as-Sulamī's work employs analogies to illustrate Qur'ānic concepts, without implying equivalence between his interpretations and the divine text. This approach diverges from the Bāṭiniyyah's methodology. In essence, Ĥaqā'iq at-Tafsīr utilizes symbolic analogies to convey Qur'ānic meanings, and it is obvious that analogies are presented based only on analogy."

These statements underscore the Ṣūfiyyah's nuanced approach, wherein their insights serve as symbolic analogies illuminating the Qur'ān's objectives, rather than purported definitive tafsīr.

This distinction starkly contrasts with the Bāṭiniyyah's methodology, highlighting a fundamental divide between their interpretive approaches. Unlike the Bāṭiniyyah, who reject the Qur'ān's explicit meaning, the Ṣūfiyyah unequivocally accept it.

As the author of Manāhil al-'Irfān notes:

وَ مِنْ هٰهُنَا يُعْلَمُ الْفَرْقُ بَيْنَ تَفْسِيرِ الصُّوْفِيَّةِ — الْمُسَمّٰى بِالتَّفْسِيرِ الْإِشَارِيِّ — وَ بَيْنَ تَفْسِيرِ الْبَاطِنِيَّةِ الْمُلَاحَدَةِ، فَالصُّوْفِيَّةُ لَا يَمْنَعُوْنَ إِرَادَةَ الظَّاهِرِ، بَلْ يَحُضُّوْنَ عَلَيْهِ، وَ يَقُوْلُوْنَ لَا بُدَّ مِنْهُ أَوَّلًا؛ إِذْ مَنِ ادَّعٰى فَهْمَ أَسْرَارِ الْقُرْآنِ، وَ لَمْ يَحْكُمِ الظَّاهِرَ كَمَنِ ادَّعٰى بُلُوْغَ سَطْحِ الْبَيْتِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُّجَاوِزَ الْبَابَ.

"This distinction highlights the fundamental difference between the Ṣūfiyyah's mystical interpretation (at-Tafsīr al-Ishārī) and the heretical Bāṭiniyyah's approach.

Unlike the Bāṭiniyyah, the Ṣūfiyyah do not reject the Qur'ān's outer implications; instead, they emphasize its importance. They contend that mastering the explicit meaning is a prerequisite for understanding the inner secrets of the Qur'ān.

As the Ṣūfiyyah wisely observe: "One who claims to grasp the inner essence of the Qur'ān without first mastering the outer implications is akin to someone who claims to have reached the heart of a house without crossing the threshold."

The author of Manāhil establishes five essential conditions for the validity of a Tafsīr Ishārī:

(1) Alignment with the original, outer implications: The interpretation must not contradict the explicit meaning.

(2) No substitution of literal meaning: The Tafsīr Ishārī should not claim to replace the original, literal interpretation, nor dismiss the outer meaning as insignificant.

(3) Linguistic plausibility: The interpretation must not stretch the Arabic language's limits, ensuring the original words remain consistent with their linguistic context.

(4) Conformity with Sharī'ah and rationality: The Tafsīr Ishārī should harmonize with Islamic law and sound intellectual principles.

(5) Cross-validation: The mystical interpretation must be substantiated by another reputable Qur'ānic, Sunnahic, or scholarly text.

Imām Ibn Taymiyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ clearly stipulates that any Qur'ānic interpretation contradicting the understanding and exegesis of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ and the Tābi'īn رَحِمَهُمُٱللَّهُ is flawed.

He articulates this in his Uṣūl at-Tafsīr:

وَ فِي الْجُمْلَةِ مَنْ عَدَلَ عَنْ مَذَاهِبِ الصَّحَابَةِ وَ التَّابِعِينَ وَ تَفْسِيرِهِمْ إِلَى مَا يُخَالِفُ ذٰلِكَ، كَانَ مُخْطِئًا فِي ذٰلِكَ بَلْ مُبْتَدِعًا، لِأَنَّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِتَفْسِيرِهِ وَ مَعَانِيْهِ، كَمَا أَنَّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِالْحَقِّ الَّذِيْ بَعَثَ اللهُ بِهِ رَسُوْلَهُ.

"In summary, to stray from the exegetical traditions of the Ṣaḥābah and Tābi'īn towards that which conflicts their understanding leads to error, and in fact, makes one a mubtadi' (innovator), for they possessed unparalleled knowledge of the Qur'ān's interpretation and implications, just as they possessed an unparalleled depth of knowledge regarding the truth Allah revealed through His Messenger ﷺ."

Imām Suyūṭī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّه speculates on this in al-Itqān by saying:

وَ هُوَ نَفِيسٌ جِدًّا.

"This is an invaluable statement."

However, he adds that verifying the authenticity of the chains of transmission is crucial when examining the exegetical narratives of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُم and Tābi'īn رَحِمَهُمُ ٱللَّه, as some narrations may contain weaknesses or fabrications.

Imām Aĥmad رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ aptly notes:

<div dir="rtl">ثَلَاثَةُ كُتُبٍ لَا أَصْلَ لَهَا: الْمَغَازِيْ، وَ الْمَلَاحِمُ، وَ التَّفْسِيْرُ.</div>

"Three genres of books lack reliability: Maghāzī (battle records), Malāĥim (apocalyptic prophecies), and Tafsīr (Qur'ānic exegesis)."

Commentators explain that these texts often suffer from flawed or incomplete chains of transmission and a scarcity of authentic Ṣaĥīĥ Aĥādīth.

Furthermore, these works sometimes incorporate Israeli traditions, necessitating rigorous scrutiny and purification. However, exemplary exegetes like Ibn Kathīr رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ are diligent in evaluating narratives within their commentaries.

AN ANALYSIS

Al-Itqān records a Ĥadīth on the authority of Ĥasan al-Baṣrī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ, directly linked to the Prophet صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ:

<div dir="rtl">لِكُلِّ آيَةٍ ظَهْرٌ وَ بَطْنٌ، وَ لِكُلِّ حَرْفٍ حَدٌّ، وَ لِكُلِّ حَدٍّ مَطْلَعٌ.</div>

"Every verse has an exterior and an interior, and every letter has a scope, and every scope has a horizon."

The initial phrase of this Ĥadīth, "Every verse has an exterior and an interior," can have multiple interpretations:

(1) Exterior refers to the literal wording; interior refers to the deeper meanings.

(2) Exterior refers to its implementation of contemporaries during revelation; Interior refers to the application of future generations.

(3) As Abū 'Ubaidah رَحِمَهُٱللَّه explains, exterior refers to the destructive events of past nations; interior refers to warnings for subsequent generations.

(4) Ibn an-Naqīb رَحِمَهُٱللَّه's perspective is that exterior refers to explicit Qur'ānic injunctions; interior refers to the underlying secrets.

In our view, the fourth interpretation is the most compelling.

The next phrase, "every letter has a scope," delineates the boundaries of Ĥalāl (lawful) and Ĥarām (unlawful), defining the divine parameters.

The final phrase, "Every scope has a horizon," illuminates the consequences of adhering to these boundaries, encompassing the promised rewards of Jannah and the dire warnings of Hellfire.

This understanding is encapsulated in the timeless words of 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās رَضِيَاللَّهُعَنْهُمَا', as recorded by Ibn Abī Ĥātim:

إِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ ذُوْ شُجُوْنٍ وَ فُنُوْنٍ، وَ ظُهُوْرٍ وَ بُطُوْنٍ، لَا تَنْقَضِيْ عَجَائِبُهُ، وَ لَا تُبْلَغُ غَايَتُه فَمَنْ أَوْغَلَ فِيْهِ بِرِفْقٍ نَجَا، وَ مَنْ أَوْغَلَ فِيْهِ بِعُنْفٍ هَوٰى. أَخْبَارٌ وَ أَمْثَالٌ، وَ حَلَالٌ وَ حَرَامٌ، وَ نَاسِخٌ وَ مَنْسُوْخٌ، وَ مُحْكَمٌ وَ مُتَشَابَهٌ، وَ ظَهْرٌ وَ بَطْنٌ، فَظَهْرُهُ التِّلَاوَةُ، وَ بَطْنُهُ التَّأْوِيْلُ، فَجَالِسُوْا بِهِ الْعُلَمَاءَ، وَ جَانِبُوْا بِهِ السُّفَهَاءَ.

"The Qur'ān boasts of majestic dimensions and sprawling branches; of multifaceted exteriors and interiors; of ceaseless wonders and boundless depths. Approach it with humility, and you shall find safety; confront it with arrogance, and you risk downfall. It holds stories and parables, the Ĥalāl (lawful)

and the Ĥarām (unlawful), the abrogator and the abrogated, the Muĥkam (clear) and the Mutashābah (ambiguous), the exterior and the interior; its exterior is revealed through recitation, and its interior through interpretation; engage with it alongside the scholars, but beware of discussing it with the uninformed."

Regarding this verse,

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِىٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا لَا يَخْفَوْنَ عَلَيْنَآ ﴾ فصلت: ٤٠

"Surely, those who inject deviation into Our verses are not concealed from Us." (41: 40)

Imām Suyūṭī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ mentions the following interpretation of 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās رَضِىَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمَا in al-Itqān:

هُوَ أَنْ يُوْضَعَ الْكَلَامُ غَيْرَ مَوْضِعِهِ.

"injecting deviation refers to the misplacement of a text, where it is taken out of its original context and inserted elsewhere."

"Those who inject deviation" include the Bāṭiniyyah sects and Orientalist heretics. The Bāṭiniyyah comprise

various Shī'ah factions such as the Qarāmiṭah, Ismā'īliyyah, and Imāmiyyah. Shī'ah denominations are ominously known to distort Qur'ānic words to fit their own beliefs. For instance, they profess that:

- "And Sulaymān inherited Dawūd عَلَيْهِمَاالسَّلَامُ" (21:78) signifies 'Alī's رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ inheritance of knowledge.
- Janābah (impurity) means disclosing secrets.
- Ghusl (bath) represents renewing vows or covenants.
- Ṭahārah (purification) entails purging beliefs except loyalty to the Imam.
- Ṣaum (fasting) means withholding secrets.
- Ṣafā and Marwah symbolize the Prophet صَلَّىاللهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ and 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.
- The Ka'bah represents the Prophet صَلَّىاللهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ, with its door signifying 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.
- Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِالسَّلَامُ fire alludes to Namrūd's anger.
- Mūsā's عَلَيْهِالسَّلَامُ staff embodies his proof.
- including numerous other unutterably ridiculous absurdities

Similarly, modern Western-influenced tafsīr writings often always veer into heresy.

'Abdul-'Azhīm az-Zurqānī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ warns in Manāhil al-'Irfān:

"No affliction poses a greater threat to Islam and Muslims than these insidious distortions, which aim to eradicate the faith from its very roots."

WAĤY AND NUZŪL - REVELATION AND DESCENT

EXPLORATIONS IN WAĤY

(Waĥy, in English, can be translated as inspiration, revelation, disclosure, guidance, or illumination, depending on the context; here, however, we will choose to translate it mainly as 'revelation' — translator.)

Linguistically, waĥy (in Arabic) is defined as "a swift indication" (اَلْإِشَارَةُ السَّرِيعَةُ) or "a secret notification" (اَلْإِعْلَامُ في خِفَاء). This is known as Waĥy Lughawī (linguistic

revelation). In Shar'ī (canonical) terms, waĥy signifies "divine revelation of injunctions" (اَلْإِعْلَامُ بِالشَّرْع). This is called Waĥy Shar'ī (canonical revelation).

Waĥy Lughawī subdivides into three subsets:

(1) Waĥy Fiṭrī (innate revelation)
(2) Waĥy Ījādī (innovative revelation)
(3) Waĥy 'Irfānī (spiritual revelation)

Waĥy Fiṭrī refers to the innate, divine guidance bestowed upon living creatures which empowers them to navigate their natural environments, adapt, thrive, survive, grow, mate, and flourish. Waĥy Fiṭrī enables animals to execute complex behaviors vital to their existence.

For example, honeybees construct hives, gather pollen, convert it into honey, and store it through a remarkable process of divine inspiration.

As the Qur'ān eloquently attests:

﴿وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى ٱلنَّحْلِ أَنِ ٱتَّخِذِى مِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ ٱلشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ ۝ ثُمَّ كُلِى مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ فَٱسْلُكِى سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا ۚ يَخْرُجُ مِنۢ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهُۥ فِيهِ شِفَآءٌ لِّلنَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ۝﴾ النحل : ٦٨ – ٦٩

"And your Lord inspired to the bee, "Take for yourself among the mountains, hives, and among the trees and [in] that which they construct. Then eat from all the fruits and follow the ways of your Lord laid down [for you]." There emerges from their bellies a drink, varying in colors, in which there is healing for people. Indeed, in that is a sign for a people who give thought." (16: 68-69)

Waĥy Ījādī denotes the creative spark that inspires visionaries, scientists, and innovators. It directs their attention toward groundbreaking discoveries and potential breakthroughs.

Waĥy Ījādī empowers pioneers to pursue their ideas. It inspires their minds to grasp the conceptual blueprint of their sought-after innovation, revealed by the Creator.

Through Waĥy Ījādī, innovators bring forth novel creations and transform ideas into reality.

Consider the pioneer who first conceived the airplane, inspired by the effortless flight of a bird soaring above. Driven by curiosity, he dedicated himself to unraveling the mysteries of aerodynamics and persevered through numerous trials and setbacks.

Waĥy Ījādī intervened through the process and gradually illuminated his mind with the comprehensive design of a functional aircraft.

In this collaborative dynamic, the innovator focused on his objective, while the Creator guided him toward achieving it, revealing the essential blueprint.

This exemplifies Waĥy Ījādī – divine creative inspiration. And it is available to all humans, regardless of faith or creed. Allāh reveals:

$$\text{﴿} كُلّاً نُّمِدُّ هَـٰٓؤُلَآءِ وَهَـٰٓؤُلَآءِ مِنْ عَطَآءِ رَبِّكَ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ عَطَآءُ رَبِّكَ مَحْظُورًا ٢٠ \text{﴾}$$

<div align="center" style="color:red">الإسراء: ٢٠</div>

"To all do We extend - to these (the believers) and to those (the non-believers) - from the gift of your Lord. And never has the gift of your Lord been restricted." (17: 20)

The third category, Waĥy 'Irfānī, is a privileged form of divine inspiration reserved exclusively for Allāh's saints and devout servants.

A person becomes receptive to Waĥy 'Irfānī once his heart is purified through rigorous adherence to the Sharī'ah and spiritual devotion.

Waĥy 'Irfānī awakens intuitive wisdom. It imparts subtle instincts and insights upon its recipient.

The Qur'ān confirms:

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ جَٰهَدُوا۟ فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمَعَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝ العنكبوت:﴾

٦٩

"And those who strive in Our cause – We will most surely guide them to Our ways" (29:69).

Waĥy 'Irfānī represents a unique, elevated form of guidance which stems from divine recognition, distinct from the customary guidance afforded by faith.

Notably, Men of Allāh initially receive guidance through faith, which precedes and prepares them for the refined inspiration of Waĥy 'Irfānī.

This exclusive guidance is reserved specifically for Allāh's chosen servants.

The triad of Waĥy Fiṭrī (universal instinct), Waĥy Ījādī (creative inspiration), and Waĥy 'Irfānī (spiritual illumination) – falls under Waĥy Lughawī, with Waĥy Fiṭrī being universally available to creatures, Waĥy Ījādī being accessible to all humans regardless of creed, and Waĥy 'Irfānī being exclusive to Men of Allāh.

WAĤY SHAR'Ī

Waĥy Shar'ī can be viewed as either a fourth subset of Waĥy Lughawī or as a standalone category, separate from Waĥy Lughawī. Waĥy Shar'ī is exclusive to prophets of Allāh.

As chosen servants of Allāh, prophets are already endowed with Waḥy 'Irfānī, but their Waḥy 'Irfānī is tied to Waḥy Shar'ī. This means that the Waḥy of prophets holds canonical authority in Sharī'ah — a privilege not extended to non-prophetic saints.

Theological texts establish a key principle:

وَ الْإِلْهَامُ لَيْسَ بِحُجَّةٍ عِنْدَ الشَّرْعِ.

"The inspirational guidance of an ordinary saint of Allāh lacks canonical authority in the Sharī'ah."

Waḥy Shar'ī represents the divine infusion of guidance from Allāh into a prophet's being in the form of inspired words conveyed through angelic intermediaries, prophetic dreams, or waking revelations.

This phenomenon is the quintessence of Waḥy Shar'ī and it embodies the very spirit of prophethood.

The definition above is the most comprehensive and encompasses the diverse forms of Waḥy Shar'ī documented in Islamic texts.

THE PLAUSIBILITY OF WAḤY SHARĪ

The phenomenon of Waḥy and prophethood, spanning from Ādam, the first man and prophet عَلَيْهِٱلسَّلَامُ, to the final messenger صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ, is neither irrational nor implausible.

In fact, considering human innovations, it's remarkably feasible. Humans, completely insignificant in comparison to Allāh, can record and transmit voices through lifeless machines like tape recorders, which is a commonplace marvel.

Given this reality, is it not infinitely more plausible for the Omnipotent Creator of humanity and the universe to inspire divine words within a sacred, living vessel – a prophet?

Modern scholarly research also validates the phenomenon of Waḥy, offering reassurance to skeptics. In Manāhil al-'Irfān, the author draws upon the expertise of a top German doctor specializing in hypnosis, a type of mesmerization, and reveals a few fundamental discoveries.

One of the discoveries is that a person with optimal mental faculties possesses a latent, superior intelligence beyond their ordinary cognitive abilities.

This hidden, higher intelligence enables connection to the realm of the unseen and transcends the perceptible, material world.

Through this link, individuals can access information from the unseen realm and transmit realities that are not present in the material world, yet authentic and true.

The author of Manāhil then goes on to recount a personal experience of his in Egypt, where he witnessed Christian missionaries employing hypnosis to proselytize. They targeted a susceptible individual, inducing a trance-like state that impaired his cognitive faculties.

During the hypnosis, the missionaries manipulated the person's identity, replacing his real name with a fabricated one. After the hypnosis wore off, the individual astonishingly adopted the implanted name and rejected his true identity.

This demonstrates the profound potential of human influence. It shows that it is possible for a human creation to transmit and implant thoughts into another's spirit, and that human souls are capable of soul-to-soul impact.

Given this reality, why should it be implausible for the Omnipotent Creator to transmit Waĥy to chosen prophets — directly or through angelic intermediaries, like the mighty Jibrīl عَلَيْهِٱلسَّلَامُ, infinitely more powerful than all of humanity?

This modern discovery has confounded Waĥy skeptics, compelling recognition of spiritual influences beyond the material realm.

For further exploration, consult Farīd Wajdī's Dā'irat-ul-Ma'ārif, specifically the section on Rūĥ.

Today, the validity of Waĥy is no longer debatable. Allāh states:

﴿سَنُرِيهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا فِى ٱلْأَفَاقِ وَفِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ﴾ فصلت: ٥٣

"We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth."
(41: 53)

IMPLICATIONS OF NUZŪL

The Arabic word "nuzūl" in Arabic has multiple meanings, with three prominent implications:

(1) The settlement or establishment of a physical matter in a location, for example:

نَزَلَ الْأَمِيْرُ الْمَدِيْنَةَ.

"The commander stayed / camped in the city."

﴿ رَّبِّ أَنزِلْنِي مُنزَلًا مُّبَارَكًا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ ٱلْمُنزِلِينَ ۝ ﴾ المؤمنون: ٢٩

"And say, 'My Lord, let me land at a blessed landing place, and You are the best of accommodators.'" (23: 29)

(2) the descension of a physical matter from a higher to a lower point, for example:

﴿ وَنَزَّلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً مُّبَٰرَكًا فَأَنۢبَتۡنَا بِهِۦ جَنَّٰتٍ وَحَبَّ ٱلۡحَصِيدِ ۞ ﴾ ق: ٩

"And We have sent down blessed rain from the sky and made grow thereby gardens and grain from the harvest." (50: 9)

The Holy Qur'ān transcends material boundaries and is unfettered by spatial constraints, which means it cannot literally "settle" or "descend". Consequently, the term "nuzūl-ul-Qur'ān" (lit. descension of the Qur'ān) signifies the divine transmission of the Qur'ān from Allāh to the Messenger of Allāh through angelic intermediation.

The word "nuzūl" is used in this context either to highlight the Qur'ān's majesty and grandeur by emphasizing humanity's reception of something of elevated stature, or it is used to reference Archangel Jibrīl's عَلَيْهِٱلسَّلَامُ celestial descent to Earth to convey the Qur'ān. In this context, the Qur'ān's "nuzūl" is synonymous with Jibrīl's عَلَيْهِٱلسَّلَامُ "nuzūl".

(3) The third dimension of "nuzūl" (lit. descension) pertains not to physical settlement or descension, but instead signifies a connection to the realm above, either

alluding to the divine will which shapes reality, or to celestial forces which influence existence.

The Holy Qur'ān employs this nuanced connotation of "nuzūl" when referring to the divine provision of iron, livestock, and cloth.

﴿وَأَنزَلْنَا ٱلْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَـٰفِعُ لِلنَّاسِ﴾ الحديد: ٢٥

"We <u>sent down</u> iron, wherein is great military might and benefits for the people." (57: 25)

﴿وَأَنزَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَنْعَـٰمِ ثَمَـٰنِيَةَ أَزْوَٰجٍ﴾ الزمر: ٦

"And He <u>sent down</u> for you from the grazing livestock eight mates." (39: 6)

﴿قَدْ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُوَٰرِى سَوْءَٰتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا﴾ الأعراف: ٢٦

"We have <u>sent down</u> upon you clothing to conceal your private parts and as adornment." (7: 26)

The presence of all three of these commodities is influenced by celestial forces.

- "Nuzūl" has two main derivatives: "tanzīl" and "inzāl".

- "Tanzīl" signifies gradual, periodic descension.

- "Inzāl" encompasses a broader sense of descension, wether instantaneous or incremental.

For example, "inzāl" has been used for sudden divine retribution, as well as the Qur'ān's revelation, which unfolded progressively over time:

﴿ إِنَّا مُنزِلُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَهۡلِ هَٰذِهِ ٱلۡقَرۡيَةِ رِجۡزًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ ﴾ العنكبوت: ٣٤

"Indeed, we will <u>bring down</u> on the people of this city punishment from the sky." (29: 34)

﴿ ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ عَلَىٰ عَبۡدِهِ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ ﴾ الكهف: ١

"All praise is to Allah , who has <u>sent down</u> upon His Servant the Book." (18: 1)

THE QUR'ĀN'S TRIPLE DESCENT

The Qur'ān's inaugural revelation unfolded from the divine realm to al-Lauĥ al-Maĥfūzh, the sacred slate of predestination.

Allāh reveals in Sūrah al-Burūj:

﴿ بَلْ هُوَ قُرْءَانٌ مَّجِيدٌ ۝ فِي لَوْحٍ مَّحْفُوظٍ ۝ ﴾ البروج: ٢١ – ٢٢

"Nay, but it is a majestic Qur'an, inscribed in a Preserved Tablet." (85:21-22)

The second revelation of the Qur'ān unfolded with its descent from the Preserved Tablet to the celestial realm above the human world, specifically Bayt al-'Izzah, the revered House of Nobility.

This phase of revelation is referenced in three distinct sūrahs: ad-Dukhān, al-Qadar, and al-Baqarah:

﴿ إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُّبَرَكَةٍ ﴾ الدخان: ٣

"Surely, We sent it down during a blessed night." (44: 3)

﴿ إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ فِى لَيْلَةِ ٱلْقَدْرِ ۝ ﴾ القدر : ١

"Surely, We <u>sent it down</u> during the Night of Decree." (97: 1)

﴿ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ ﴾ البقرة: ١٨٥

"The month of Ramadhan [is that] in which was <u>revealed</u> the Qur'an." (2: 185)

The first two revelations of the Qur'ān occurred simultaneously, in a single, instantaneous event.

The aforementioned verses do not pose a contradiction, as the "Blessed Night" and the "Night of Decree" refer to the same night, which in turn occured in the month of Ramadan.

In a nutshell, the second revelation of the Qur'ān unfolded from the Preserved Tablet to the celestial realm during Ramadan, specifically on the revered Night of Decree.

Imām Ĥākim in al-Mustadrak, Imām Nasa'ī, and Imām Bayhaqī رَحَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ corroborate this account on the authority of 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās رَضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا.

The third revelation unfolded through the agency of Archangel Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ, who bore the divine message from Bayt al-'Izzah and infused it directly into the noble heart of the Prophet Muḥammad صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Allāh testifies to this transmission in Sūrah as-Shu'arā':

﴿ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَتَنزِيلُ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ۝ نَزَلَ بِهِ ٱلرُّوحُ ٱلْأَمِينُ ۝ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُنذِرِينَ ۝ بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُّبِينٍ ۝ ﴾ الشعراء: ١٩٢ – ١٩٥

"And surely, the Qur'an is the revelation of the Lord of the worlds. The Trustworthy Spirit has <u>brought it down</u>, upon your heart, [O Muhammad] — that you may be of the warners — in a clear Arabic language." (26: 192-195)

This third, final revelation of the Qur'ān unfolded progressively over a span of approximately twenty-three years.

Contrary to speculative interpretations, the Qur'ān's revelation encompassed not merely its meanings, but the precise words themselves.

Allāh emphatically underscores this fact by stating that it was revealed "in a clear Arabic language" (lisānin 'arabiyyin mubīn). The specific reference to "clear Arabic language" confirms the revelation of the actual Arabic words, rather than solely their semantic content.

This shows that the Qur'ān underwent a unique triple revelation process. The first two descents of the entire Qur'ān to the Preserved Tablet and subsequently to Bayt al-'Izzah, situated in the celestial realm, were both singular events, whereas it's final revelation to the Prophet ﷺ was progressive.

This distinctive pattern contrasts with other divine scriptures, which were all revealed in a single, instantaneous event.

The Qur'ān is the only scripture which harmoniously integrated both singular and progressive revelation.

The plausible wisdoms underlying this phenomenon are multifaceted:

- Educating angels across the universes about the Qur'ān's finality as divine scripture.
- Intensifying the Prophet's ﷺ eagerness to receive the revelation, as proximity to the beloved increases desire.
- Ensuring and guaranteeing the Qur'ān's flawless preservation and eliminating doubts about its integrity.

As a humble author, I propose that the ultimate purpose of this multi-stage revelation was to ensure an immaculate and integral arrangement of the Qur'ān, being the final divine scripture.

Initially, the Qur'ān was preserved in the Preserved Tablet, the central repository of divine governance, serving as a general blueprint for its safeguarding.
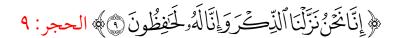
Subsequently, it was preserved in Bayt al-'Izzah, facilitating its celestial organization.

The third stage involved its preservation in the noble heart of the Messenger Muhammad ﷺ, marking its terrestrial anchorage.

Further, the Qur'ān was embedded in the collective hearts of the Ummah, the global Muslim community, constituting its physical safeguard.

Then, under divine inspiration, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmān رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ compiled the Qur'ān in written form, accomplishing its written preservation and codification through periodic stages. This concluded the fifth and final stage of its preservation.

As Allāh assures in the Qur'ān:

$$\text{﴿ إِنَّا نَحۡنُ نَزَّلۡنَا ٱلذِّكۡرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَٰفِظُونَ ٩ ﴾ الحجر: ٩}$$

"Indeed, it is We who have sent down the Reminder (the Qur'ān), and indeed, We are its Guardian." (15: 9)

THE METHOD OF JIBRĪL'S RECEPTION

The mechanism by which Archangel Jibrīl عَلَيۡهِٱلسَّلَامُ received the Qur'ān's words has been a subject of inquiry.

The correct opinion is that Jibrīl عَلَيۡهِٱلسَّلَامُ directly heard the divine words from Allāh, as Imām Bayhaqī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ

explains in his exposition of the Quranic phrase "Surely, We revealed it" (15:9).

This is reinforced by a Ĥadīth narrated by Nawwās bin Sam'ān ﷺ, which is recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī and traces back to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ:

إِذَا تَكَلَّمَ اللهُ بِالْوَحْيِ أَخَذَتِ السَّمَاءُ رَجْفَةً شَدِيْدَةً مِنْ خَوْفِ اللهِ، فَإِذَا سَمِعَ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ صَعِقُوْا وَ خَرُّوْا سُجَّدًا، فَيَكُوْنُ أَوَّلُهُمْ يَرْفَعُ رَأْسَهُ جِبْرَئِيْلُ، فَيُكَلِّمُهُ اللهُ بِوَحْيِهِ مَا أَرَادَ، فَيَنْتَهِيْ بِهِ حَيْثُ أُمِرَ.

"When Allāh initiates divine communication through Waĥy, the heavens tremble with profound intensity, overcome by awe and reverence for the Almighty. As the celestial inhabitants catch wind of Allāh's voice, they are instantly overwhelmed and fall into prostration. Jibrīl is the first one to regain composure and lift his head in readiness. At this moment, Allāh directly addresses Jibrīl through Waĥy. Jibrīl then carries out his noble duty, conveying the revelation to its designated recipient, as divinely instructed."

The precise mechanism of Jibrīl's عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ reception of Waĥy lies within the realm of the unseen and defies

definitive explanation through human reasoning. Any intellectual attempt to fully comprehend this process is inherently limited. That's why scholars have mainly chosen to concur with the previously mentioned perspective.

Notably, renowned works such as Manāhil al-'Irfān and al-Itqān propose alternative understandings, suggesting Jibrīl's عَلَيْهِٱلسَّلَامُ reception of Waĥy occurs through either spiritual inspiration or mediation of the Preserved Tablet.

DIVINE AUTHORSHIP

Consider a person who conceives an idea and expresses it through structured language. Regardless of how many others subsequently utter those exact words, authorship remains attributed to the original articulator.

For instance, the poems of Imra' al-Qais and al-Ĥarīrī's Maqāmāt remain attributed to their creators, irrespective of the number of readers or recitations.

Similarly, Allāh conveyed His intent through the Qur'ān's words, which were then conveyed by Jibrīl عَلَيْهِٱلسَّلَامُ, the Prophet صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ, and countless others. Nonetheless, the Qur'ān remains divine speech, attributed solely to Allāh.

The Qur'ān affirms this by calling itself "the speech of Allāh" (10:6) and establishes its divine authorship by stating that it was revealed from Allāh "in a clear, Arabic language" (26:195).

Even when ideas originate from someone else, as with Zayd's concept articulated by 'Amr, credit goes to the articulator, 'Amr. Articulation — not conception — determines authorship.

As such, both the Qur'ān's words and meanings are divine and compiled solely by Allāh.

Avoiding unnecessary literary entanglements and complexities — given the absence of practical benefits, we refer readers to Manāhil al-'Irfān for further exploration.

THE QUR'ĀN, ĤADĪTH, AND ĤADĪTH QUDSI

Imām Suyūṭī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ cites from Imām Juwaini رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ that the Qur'ān is distinguished by its dual divine origin: both its words and meanings are revealed from Allāh through the agency of Jibrīl.

In contrast, Ĥadīth is characterized by divine revelation of its subject matter, while its wording and sentence structure are attributed to the Prophet Muĥammad صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Ĥadīth Qudsi, however, occupies a distinct category: its words originate from Allāh, yet lack the miraculous inimitability inherent to the Qur'ān. Consequently, reciting Ĥadīth Qudsi does not yield the same reward as reciting each letter of the Qur'ān, nor is it to be recited in Ṣalāh.

I humbly propose that both Ĥadīth Nabawi (a term used to distinguish ordinary Ĥadīth from Ĥadīth Qudsi — translator) and Ĥadīth Qudsi derive their subject

matter from Allāh, albeit with a crucial distinction: Ĥadīth Nabawi's attribution to Allāh remains implicit.

Although Ĥadīth Nabawi's essence originates from Allāh, its attribution is neither explicitly stated nor mandated, whereas Ĥadīth Qudsi features explicit divine attribution, emphasizing its sacred nature.

This distinction has significant implications: altering the words of a Ĥadīth Qudsi and narrating only its subject matter is prohibited, whereas conveying Ĥadīth Nabawi's subject matter alone is permissible, provided its meaning and implications remain intact.

Despite its divine attribution, Ĥadīth Qudsi falls under the broader category of Ĥadīth, inherently associated with the Prophet's ﷺ words.

The term "Qudsi" (meaning "holy" or "divine" — translator) is appended to emphasize its exceptional significance and importance, stemming from its explicit divine connection.

WAĤY: FORMS OF DESCENT

Waĥy descends either through the channel of angelic agency — known as Waĥy Malaki or Waĥy bil-Wāsiṭah — or through direct revelation, known as Waĥy biz-Zhāt.

Waĥy Malaki comprises three distinct forms: Taṣalṣulī, Tamatthulī, and Rū'ī.

(1) Waĥy Taṣalṣulī: Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ transmits revelation in his original angelic form.

According to a Ĥadīth in Bukhārī, the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ described this experience as "the most excruciating of Waĥy upon me" due to the disparity between human and angelic capacities.

This process requires the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to ascend higher towards his angelic nature, influencing his essence and posing a significant challenge.

(2) Waĥy Tamatthulī: Jibrīl عَلَيْهِٱلسَّلَامُ assumes a human form to convey Waĥy, transitioning from his angelic state to human properties.

Bukhārī highlights the difficulties associated with Waĥy Taṣalṣulī and Waĥy Tamatthulī in the beginning of his Ṣaĥīĥ, with the former being more challenging.

Typically, Qur'ānic Waĥy occurs through these two scenarios.

(3) Waĥy Rū'ī: Jibrīl عَلَيْهِٱلسَّلَامُ directly infuses the Prophet's صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ heart with Waĥy, bypassing any form of auditory exchange.

Al-Ĥākim alludes to this form in his al-Mustadrak.

Waĥy biz-Zhāt, or direct divine revelation, manifests in two forms:

(1) Wakeful revelation: Allāh Ta'ālā communicates directly with the Prophet صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ while he is awake.
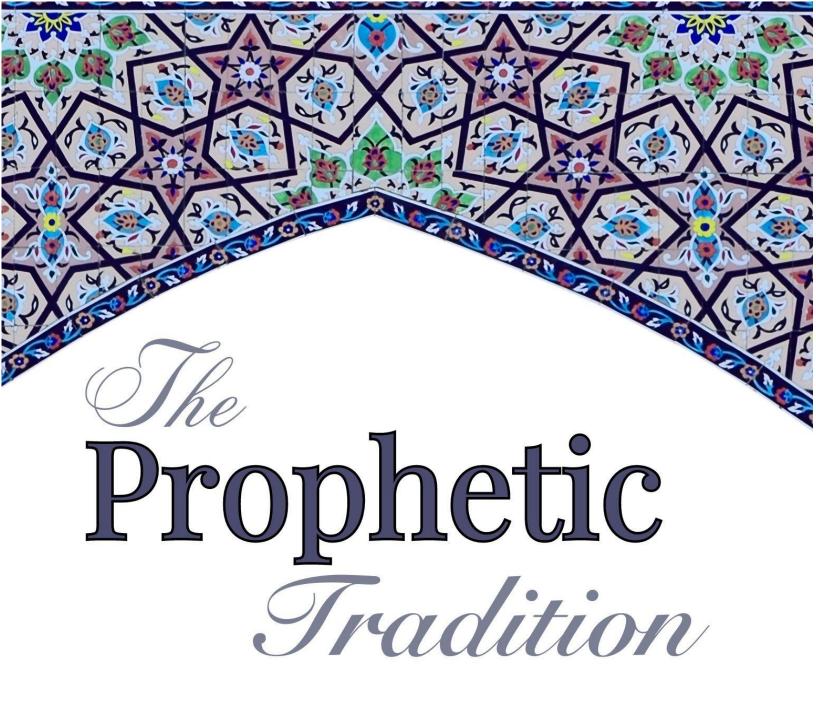
A notable example is the Mi'rāj night, where Allāh Ta'ālā directly conveyed the obligation of five daily Ṣalāhs and revealed the final verses of Sūrah al-Baqarah.

(2) Dream revelation: Waĥy biz-Zhāt occurs through prophetic dreams.

The Ĥadīth of Mu'ādh ﷺ illustrates this, where Allāh Ta'ālā appears and inquires about the angelic assembly's discussion. The Ĥadīth begins with,

أَتَانِيْ رَبِّيْ، فَقَالَ: فِيْمَ يَخْتَصِمُ الْمَلَأُ الْأَعْلٰى؟

"My Lord came to me and said, 'What is the Exalted Assembly discussing?'"

The
Prophetic
Tradition

By: Mufti Abdullah Maroofi حفظه الله

THE PROPHETIC TRADITION

THE CRISIS OF REJECTING ĤADĪTH

Upon recognizing the intrinsic link between the Quran and Hadith, it becomes clear that Hadith holds a legislative status, as it serves as an exhaustive explanation of the Quranic teachings. The entirety of Hadith collectively provides a comprehensive commentary on the Quran. Consequently, if the Quran holds legislative authority, then its explanation, the Hadith, must also possess legislative status. This belief has been consistently held by the Muslim nation, from the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ (Sahabah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُم) to the present day. Rejecting Hadith altogether is a clear denial of reality, but accepting Hadith while denying its legislative authority is an even more egregious rejection of the obvious. Although many Hadith are not Mutawatir (mass transmitted), the belief in the legislative status of Hadith is, in fact, a Mutawatir belief itself, universally accepted among Muslims throughout history. Both Muslims and non-

Muslims agree on the legislative status of Hadith. Can anyone seriously believe that the tireless effort to memorize Hadith throughout history was only meant to preserve a historical record, without any deeper purpose or application? The first major discord (fitna) to afflict the Muslim community was the emergence of the Khawarij sect, followed by the fitna of the Shia sect. The Khawarij sect emerged in the 4th decade of the 1st century. Later, in the wake of various factors, including a growing inclination towards rationalism, the Mu'tazila arose. Despite the extensive list of misguided beliefs and deviant ideologies held by these sects, they still refrained from rejecting the authority of Hadith and its legislative status. It is well-established that the status of Hadith was not universally clear to some of the Tabi'een (the generation following the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ), as exemplified by the following:

According to a report in Hakim's Mustadrak, Hasan Basri narrates that Imran Bin Husain � was sharing some of the Prophet's ﷺ Hadith when a man

approached him and said, "'O Abu Najeed! recite to us from the Qur'an" Imran ﷺ replied, "You and your companions recite the Quran, but can you show me the method and details of prayer, or the specifics of Zakat, such as the wealth thresholds for gold, silver, camels, and cows, solely from the Quran?" He then added, "I regularly attended the Prophet's ﷺ gatherings, whereas you did not." Imran ﷺ proceeded to explain the details of Zakat as obligated by the Prophet ﷺ. The man exclaimed, "You have given me new life! May Allah grant you life!" Hasan Basri notes that this man went on to become a remarkable Faqih. (Al-Mustadrak: Hadith No. 372)

According to another report in Hakim's Mustadrak, Umayyah Bin Abdullah Bin Khalid asked Abdullah Bin Umar ﷺ: "The Quran mentions prayer in situations of domicile and fear, but not during travel. How do we know the correct procedure?" Abdullah Bin Umar ﷺ replied: "O My nephew! Allah sent Muhammad ﷺ as a

prophet when we were ignorant. We follow only what we saw him do." (Al-Mustadrak, Hadith No. 946)

Even after the era of the Sahabah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ, a notion emerged among a few individuals that the Quran should be the sole source for resolving all issues. However, the scholars and Muhadditheen of the time, such as Ayyub As-Sukhtiyani (d. 161 AH), refuted this idea and emphasized the importance of considering the Hadith in addition to the Quran. He states:

إِذَا حَدَّثْتَ الرَّجُلَ بِالسُّنَّةِ فَقَالَ: دَعْنَا مِنْ هذَا، وَحَدِّثْنَا الْقُرْآنَ؛ فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ ضَالٌّ مَضِلٌّ

"When you tell someone a Hadith, and he dismisses it by saying, 'We don't need this, just show us the Quran!', it's a clear indication that they are misguided and leading others astray."

However, it's essential to note that these views were not representative of a specific school of thought or widespread movement. Rather, they were isolated opinions held by a few individuals, primarily in the Iraqi

region. For instance, the incident involving Imran Bin Husayn ﷺ occurred in Busra, and Ayyub Sukhtiyani was also from Busra.

The rejectors of Khabar-ul-Wahid, whom Imam Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّه refuted in his book 'Ar-Risala', also belonged to Basra.

Nevertheless, no remnants of such notions can be found among the people of Hijaz.

THE KHAWĀRIJ STANCE

According to Dr. Mustafa Sabaa'i, the Khawarij initially held all Sahabah in high esteem, referring to them as "Aadil" (just and fair). However, following the fitna (dissension) among the Sahabah, they began to denounce several prominent figures as Kuffār, including Uthman, Ali, the sahabah who participated in the battles of Jamal and Siffeen, the two arbitrators, and anyone who supported either party, and believed them to be truthful رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ.

Consequently, the Hadith of the majority of the Sahabah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ lost credibility in the eyes of the Khawarij.

However, Dr. Mustafa A'zami holds a differing view, suggesting that many groups affiliated with the Khawarij sect have become extinct, except for the Ibaadhiyya sect. Their literature indicates that they accept Hadith as a source of authority. They report narrations from prominent companions, including Ali, Uthman, Aisha, Abu Hurairah and Anas رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ. They have also established the permissibility of deriving legal rulings through Akhbaar-ul-Aahaad (narrations of individual companions) in their Usool-ul-Fiqh texts.

THE MU'TAZILAH STANCE

According to Imam Shāfi'ī's رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ writings, Allamah Khidhri concludes in تاريخ التشريع الإسلامي (The History of Islamic Legislation) that the Mu'tazila sect rejects all Hadith. Dr. Mustafa Sabaai also inclines towards this view.

However, the accurate stance is that scholars hold different opinions regarding the Mu'tazila's position on Hadith.

The following questions remain: Do they consider both Mutawatir (widely transmitted) and Non-Mutawatir Hadith as authoritative, like the majority? Or do they reject both categories? Or do they accept Mutawatir Hadith while rejecting Khabar-ul-Wahid?

The stance of Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī, a prominent Mu'tazili scholar, is established through his writings, wherein he posits that the authoritative status of a Hadith is contingent upon its being Aziz (Al-'Aziz refers to a hadith that is reported exclusively by two narrators from their narrator, either throughout all levels of the chain of transmission or in one level of the chain of transmission). In other words, for a hadith to be considered authoritative, it must possess the quality of being Aziz.

But the verified stance is that the Mu'tazila align with the majority (Jamhur) on the issue of establishing the validity of Hadith. However, some Mu'tazili scholars have specified that a Hadith must be Mutawatir (widely

transmitted) to be considered valid, a requirement not universally accepted among the Mu'tazila.

The Mu'tazila's doctrine does not outright reject the authority of Hadith. However, they rejected certain Hadith that contradicted their beliefs or interpreted them in a way that aligned with their views, just as they interpret the Quran to support their positions.

THE SHĪ'AH STANCE

Regarding the Shia sect, it is evidently clear that there are numerous sub-sects within it, some of which declare each other as disbelievers.

Presently, the predominant Shia sect is the Ithna-Ashari, who also endorse the use of reasoning in conjunction with Hadith. However, their disagreement with the Ahl-us-Sunnah lies in the authentication of Hadith. This stems from their belief that most Sahabah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ apostatized, except for a select few. As a result, they reject the narrations of the majority of companions and

only consider the narrations of the Ahl-ul-Bayt (the Prophet's family ﷺ) as authoritative.

It is essential to note that in Islamic history, the term 'Shia' has also been used to describe individuals who simply affirm Sayyiduna Ali's ﷜ superiority over the first two caliphs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Sayyiduna Umar ﵂), while still acknowledging the integrity of the majority of the Sahabah ﵐ. These individuals are, in fact, considered part of the Ahl-us-Sunnah.

The summary of the entire discussion is that until the mid-13th century, the Muslim Ummah consistently regarded Hadith as a primary source and foundation of Islamic law (Shariah). Although some individuals raised doubts about hadith after the time of the Sahabah ﵐ, these doubts were largely dispelled by the end of the 3rd century. Consequently, in addition to Mutawatir Hadith (widely transmitted reports), reliable and authentic Ahad hadith (reports with a single chain of narration) were also widely accepted as authoritative by the Muslim Ummah.

These Hadith form the basis of many rules and regulations in Islamic law.

MODERN ĤADĪTH REJECTORS

In the 13th Islamic century, with the fall of the Islamic caliphate and the rise of Western imperialism, a movement emerged that rejected the authority of Hadith. This ideology was, in fact, a manifestation of the criticisms propagated by European orientalists aimed at undermining Islam.

Shaikh Muhammad Abdah from Egypt offered his insights on these concepts, stating:

"إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ إِمَامٌ فِي هذَا العَصْرِ غَيْرُ القُرْآنِ، وَإِنَّ الإِسْلاَمَ الصَّحِيْحَ هُوَ مَا كَانَ عَلَيْهِ الصَّدْرُ الأَوَّلُ قَبْلَ ظُهُورِ الفِتَنِ. وَقَالَ: لَا يُمْكِنُ لِهَذِهِ الأُمَّةِ أَنْ تَقُومَ مَا دَامَتْ هَذِهِ الْكُتُبُ فِيْهَا، وَلَنْ تَقُومَ إِلَّا بِالرُّوحِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ فِي القَرْنِ الأَوَّلِ، وَهُوَ القُرْآنُ، وَكُلُّ مَا عَدَاهُ فَهُوَ حِجَابٌ قَائِمٌ بَيْنَ الْعِلْمِ وَالْعَمَلِ وَبَيْنَهُ."

(أضواء على السنة المحمدية لمحمود أبي رية)

"The Muslims have no imam (leader) in this age except the Quran, and the correct Islam is what the first generation (of Muslims) was upon before the emergence of tribulations. He further adds: This nation cannot rise (to its former glory) as long as these books are present among them, and it will not rise except with the spirit that was present in the first century (of Islam), which is the Quran. And everything else is a barrier standing between knowledge and action and between the Qur'ān."

Following in the same footsteps, and even taking a step further, Dr. Tawfeeq Sidqi emerged. He published two articles titled "Islam is only the Qur'an" in the magazine "Al-Manār", where he attempted to deduce from Qur'anic verses the supposed uselessness and redundancy of the Hadith. According to his own interpretation, he presented what he considered to be solid proofs.

Allamah Rashīd Raza not only wrote publisher's notes in support of this view, but also consistently advocated for it in his writings. However, upon realizing

the reality of the matter, he later revised his stance and retracted his support.

Then came Ahmad Ameen, who published his book "Fajr al-Islam", in which he, seemingly influenced by European intellectuals, attempted to elegantly package their illogical notions as knowledge and literature. He excessively emphasized the weaknesses of certain Hadith narrators, to the point of dismissing the entire Hadith tradition as mere fiction and mythology.

Then, in the year 1353 hijri, a man by the name of Ibrahim Adham, in the result of his so-called research, arrived at the conclusion that the Hadith lack a solid foundation and are thus doubtful in nature. He further asserted that fabrication is a prevalent characteristic among them.

Then a person by the name of Mahmood Abu Rayyah took up the mantle of hadith rejection, and his book, "Adwa' 'ala al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah", posed a significant challenge to the scholars.

However, Abu Rayyah's contribution was not a novel opinion or original evidence, but rather a compilation of the ideas and arguments of his intellectual predecessors, presented in a single work.

What is interesting is that this person blindly follows the ideologies and theories of Ibrahim Adham, Rashid Raza, and Tawfiq Sidqi, and he claims ijtihad regarding himself.

In his opinion, 'Hadith' denotes only the Prophetic model that has reached the ummah through widespread transmission (tawaatur). Essentially, he dismisses not all Hadith, but specifically the solitary narrations (Akhbār-ul-Ahād) and Non-Mutawatir verbal statements attributed to the Prophet ﷺ.

ANALYSIS OF ĤADĪTH REJECTION MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

In India, the rejection of Hadith is a legacy of colonial influence.

The English understood that as long as the concept of jihad remained a driving force among Muslims, it would be impossible to achieve control over the region.

Therefore, to solely criticize the Hadith related to jihad, certain pseudo-scholars (mawlawis) were created, who began to drum up support for the abrogation of jihad through their misguided interpretations. They even went so far as to declare the Hadith regarding jihad as unreliable.

The likes of Mawlawi Chirag Ali and Mirza Qadiyani are the direct outcome of this strategic influence.

Furthermore, the Muslim's experience of defeat and deprivation created an environment in which some 'enlightened' individuals felt compelled to demonstrate their loyalty as a means of reclaiming their honor and self-respect.

As a result, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, 'Abdullāh Chakdhālwi', Mawlawi Ahmaduddin Amritsari, and others dismissed specific Hadith that either contradicted

the European thought and values or transcended their intellectual grasp.

They dismissed Hadith related to the afterlife, including descriptions of Heaven and Hell, the weighing of deeds, and miraculous events. They also rejected the concept of the veil (hijab) and the prohibition of usury deeming commercial interests permissible, etc.

Among them, Abdullāh Chakdhālwi systematically articulated this ideology. This led to his recognition as the founder of the Ahl-ul-Quran movement. His primary objective was the wholesale rejection of Hadith.

Following Abdullāh Chakdhālwi, Aslam Jirajpuri propagated this ideology with slight modifications, such as accepting Mutawatir Hadith while rejecting the rest. Later, Ghulam Ahmad Parwez fully embraced and spearheaded this movement, and his writings resonated profoundly with the youth, which led to its widespread dissemination during his era.

In reality, Ghulam Ahmad Parwez's work was largely a manifestation of Tawfiq Sidqi's ideas, with Parwez's sole contribution being the translation of Sidqi's writings into Urdu.

Tawfiq Sidqi's article 'Islam is only the Qur'an' and Gulam Ahmad Parwez's books share a striking similarity in both their thematic focus and methodological approach.

Not only does he reject the Akhbār-ul-Āhād (isolated reports), but also the Mutawatir Hadith (widely transmitted Hadith) and Amal-ul-Mutawarith (established practices).

For instance, he claims that the Quran only mandates the establishment of salah, without elaborating on its methodology. He believes that the specifics of its performance are to be determined by the governing authority, through a process of consultation. He asserts that whatever approach the ruler decides upon becomes, in effect, the Shariah.

Similarly, Sidqi expressed the same views in his previously mentioned article. However, it is fortunate that Sidqi later renounced this ideology before his demise, whereas Parwez persisted in this deviant belief until his death, ultimately leading others astray.

Concurrently, Mawlawi Aslam Jirajpuri appears to be heavily influenced by Mahmood Abu Rayyah, as both exclusively accept the Mutawatir Hadith as authoritative, while dismissing all other categories of Hadith.

THE OBJECTIVE OF ĤADĪTH REJECTION

Muhaddith-ul-Hind, Mawlana Habeeb-ur-Rahman A'zami, the first Ameer-ul-Hind, states:

"In my opinion, the only cause for rejecting Hadith is 'not adhering to a madhhab' (Laa Madh'habiyyat). The underlying reason for this is that rejecting Hadith opens up a vast expanse of possibilities, allowing for unbridled innovation and liberal interpretations. As a result, religious constraints will either vanish entirely or be

reduced to mere lip service. The only remaining authority will be the Quran, but its meanings and interpretations will be vulnerable to manipulation and distortion by individuals who wish to impose their own judgments and opinions, unrestricted and unaccountable. If someone objects that this interpretation contradicts the Hadith and Tafaseer, they will be told that if the narrator or exegete's explanation was based on their own understanding, then we are not obligated to follow it. And if the explanation was based on a prophetic Hadith, then the Hadith itself is deemed unreliable and lacks credibility. This means that the interpretation of any verse can be tailored to suit one's preferences, without any constraints or limitations."

Alhamdulillah, by the blessings and influence of Darul Uloom Deoband and the Islamic Madaris that followed in its footsteps, this fitna was effectively contained and ultimately collapsed. As a result, the majority of the Muslim public, with the exception of a small segment of secular-educated individuals, remained shielded from its harmful effects. Since the partition of

India, this fitna has largely dwindled and remained confined to a few isolated districts in Pakistan, with minimal presence in India.

However, in recent years, as part of a global campaign to incite public rebellion against Islamic scholars, madaris, and literature, the baseless claims of individuals like Barq and Shaz, along with other self-proclaimed thinkers and writers, have begun to spread rapidly in our country.

Their agents discreetly targeted major cities, misleading vulnerable Muslims who, despite holding degrees from secular institutions, sought to understand Islamic teachings primarily through independent study.

These individuals covertly disseminated the literature of the aforementioned Hadith rejectors, and in controlled environments, they engaged in discussions that fostered a sense of disdain towards authentic scholars and reliable Islamic literature. This ultimately led to the indoctrination of those exposed to the literature, who would then go on to mislead others.

Therefore, madrasa graduates have a critical responsibility to prepare themselves to refute and respond to the claims of hadith rejectors, taking their arguments into account. The following section provides a critical examination of some of their key arguments.

ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE ON ĤADĪTH REJECTION

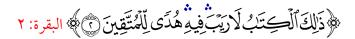The hadith rejectors have presented various arguments in support of their baseless self-appointed ideologies. Nevertheless, most of these arguments are so weak and devoid of intellectual rigor that engaging with them would be to grant them a level of credibility they do not deserve.

However, certain arguments that they consider particularly compelling and present with great emphasis are addressed below:

FIRST ARGUMENT

The hadith rejectors argue that the principles of din must be founded on absolute certainty (dalīl qaṭ'ī) and definitive proof (dalīl yaqīnī), asserting that basing din on uncertain premises (dhann) and conjecture (takhmeen) undermines its very foundation, effectively weakening it.

In support of this claim, they reference a handful of Quranic verses, whose meanings they have clearly misinterpreted to suit their narrative. For instance, Allah says:

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبُ لَا رَيۡبَۛ فِيهِۛ هُدٗى لِّلۡمُتَّقِينَ ۝ ﴾ البقرة: ٢

"This is the Book, there is no doubt in it, a guidance for the righteous."(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:1)

They misinterpret this verse to claim that the Quran is the sole source of absolute certainty and worthy of reliance.

Similarly, Allah states:

﴿ وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ هُوَٱلْحَقُّ ﴾ فاطر: ٣١

"That which We have revealed to you of the Book is the truth."
(Surah Fatir, 35:31)

They interpret this verse to mean that only the Quran is absolutely true, while acknowledging that some Hadith are Mutawatir (widely transmitted) and therefore certain (qati) in their validity. However, such Mutawatir Hadith are scarce, and the majority of Hadith fall under the category of Ahad (isolated reports), which are considered dhanni (probable) in nature.

If the Din is comprised of both the Quran and Hadith, and one component (Hadith) is considered dhanni (probable), then the entire Din would be deemed dhanni, since the combination of qati (certain) and dhanni yields dhanni, as the outcome is dictated by the weaker link. However, Allah commands us to follow what is certain and true, Allah states:

﴿وَمَا لَهُم بِهِۦ مِنۡ عِلۡمٍۖ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا ٱلظَّنَّ وَإِنَّ ٱلظَّنَّ لَا يُغۡنِى مِنَ ٱلۡحَقِّ شَيۡـًٔا ٢٨﴾ ﴿ النجم: ٢٨

They do not have knowledge about it. They follow nothing but conjecture, and conjecture is of no avail in (the matter of) Truth. (Surah Najm, 53:28)

﴿وَلَا تَقۡفُ مَا لَيۡسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلۡمٌۚ﴾ الإسراء: ٣٦

And do not follow a thing about which you have no knowledge. (Surah Isra, 17:36)

These verses imply that we should adhere to matters that are qati and yaqeeni (absolute and certain), and avoid those that are dhanni (conjecture). Therefore, the combination of the Quran and Hadith, which is dhanni, cannot be considered the definitive Din.

This argument is common not only among traditional Hadith rejectors but also among modern Hadith rejectors, including Dr. Tawfiq Sidqi and the Ahl-ul-Quran.

REFUTATION

Accusing those who act upon and regard Ĥadīth as authoritative of following dhann is a clear misrepresentation and a blatant deception.

There are two reasons for this:

Firstly, if isolated reports (Akhbaar-ul-Aahaad) are considered as providing probabilistic knowledge (dhann), then do not numerous Quranic verses also offer probabilistic interpretations? Since the indications of many verses are not definitive (qaṭ'ī) or absolutely certain (yaqīnī), they may be open to multiple interpretations. In fact, even esteemed scholars and jurists (mufassireen and mujtahideen) have differing opinions when assigning intended meanings to such verses.

While the Quran's authenticity is unquestionable (Qati-uth-thuboot), the certainty of its interpretation is not uniformly applicable to every verse. Some verses have clear and definitive indications (Qati-ud-dalalah), whereas

others have probabilistic or ambiguous indications (Dhanni-ud-dalalah).

This reasoning leads to a paradox: if Hadith is dismissed due to its probabilistic nature (dhann), then, by extension, the Quran should also be rejected, since many of its verses also yield probabilistic interpretations. However, neither party agrees to reject the Quran.

The second point is that the dhann (probabilistic knowledge) condemned by Allah is the type that clashes with clear-cut (qati) or absolutely certain (yaqeeni) textual evidence. In contrast, establishing Hadith as an authority does not fall into this category. Rather, it refers to the probabilistic knowledge that the Quran itself endorses and commands to be followed:

﴿وَمَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَىٰكُمۡ عَنۡهُ فَٱنتَهُواْ﴾ الحشر: ٧

And whatever the Messenger gives you, take it, and whatever he forbids you from, abstain (from it). (Hashr: 7)

Apart from that, there also must not be an explicit (sarih) and definitive (qati) text that contradicts it.

The claim that the Quran commands the following of such 'dhann' is self-evident, requiring no additional proof or evidence.

For instance, the Quran ordains accepting the testimony of two witnesses despite the inherent possibility of intentional or unintentional false testimony:

﴿وَٱسْتَشْهِدُوا۟ شَهِيدَيْنِ مِن رِّجَالِكُمْ﴾ البقرة: ٢٨٢

And bring to witness two witnesses from among your men.
(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:282)

An intriguing debate ensued between Imam Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ and a Hadith rejector, which is worthy of mentioning here.

A Hadith rejector asked Imam Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ: "When definitive knowledge (yaqeen) is absent, how can speculations and presumptions be validated? Is there any

evidence that permits something deemed haram by a decisive text to become halal through speculative texts?"

Imam Shāfiʿī ﷺ replied, "Yes, definitely!"

The rejector inquired, "What is the evidence?"

Imam Shāfiʿī ﷺ posed a counter-question: "What is your assumption about the person sitting beside me? Are his life and property not protected?"

He replied, "Yes!"

Imam Shāfiʿī ﷺ continued, "What if two witnesses testify that this person committed murder and theft, and the stolen goods are in his possession?"

He responded, "I would impose the penalty of qisaas, executing him for the crime, and return the stolen goods in his possession to the heir of the deceased."

Imam Shāfiʿī ﷺ pressed on, "Is it not possible that the witnesses lied or erred unintentionally?"

He acknowledged, "Yes, that's a possibility."

Imam Shāfi'ī رَحَمَهُٱللَّه pressed, "How did you deem permissible the taking of life and property, which was previously prohibited by a decisive text, based solely on the potentially fallible testimony of two witnesses?"

He responded, "I am obligated to accept their testimony."

Imam Shāfi'ī رَحَمَهُٱللَّه concluded, "By the same principle, we are obligated to accept khabar-ul-wahid (isolated reports)."

SECOND AND THIRD ARGUMENT

The Hadith rejectors' second and third arguments lead to a similar conclusion. Allah states in the Quran, describing the comprehensive and explanatory nature of the Quran:

﴿وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ تِبْيَٰنًا لِّكُلِّ شَىْءٍ﴾ النحل: ٨٩

"And We have sent down to you the Book as a clear explanation of everything." (Nahl: 89)

﴿وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ إِلَيۡكُمُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ مُفَصَّلًا﴾ الأنعام: ١١٤

"It is He Who has sent down the Book to you, fully explained."
(Al-An'am: 114)

Furthermore, Allah emphasizes the Quran's comprehensiveness, stating:

﴿مَّا فَرَّطۡنَا فِى ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ مِن شَىۡءٍ﴾ الأنعام: ٣٨

"We have not neglected anything in the Book." (Al-An'am: 38)

Given the Quran's comprehensive and explanatory nature, as evident in the previous verses, the question arises: If Allah has indeed explained everything in the Book, and left out nothing, then what necessity arises for seeking additional guidance from external sources, such as Hadith?

REFUTATION

The response to both arguments is that you seem to have overlooked crucial aspects of the Quran. While it is indeed described as تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ (a clarification for all things), it also states:

﴿ وَأَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ ﴾ النحل: ٤٤

"We have revealed this Quran to you so that you may openly explain to the people the revelations that have been sent to them." (Nahl: 44)

Considering Allah, the Revealer of the Qur'an, has designated the Prophet ﷺ as its official interpreter, is it permissible for any believer to disregard this authoritative explanation? Doesn't the verse:

﴿ أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ ﴾ البقرة: ٨٥

"...Do you believe in a part of the Scripture and disbelieve in another?" (Baqarah: 85),

aptly describe those who reject the Prophet's ﷺ explanatory guidance?

Similarly, invoking verse 38 of Surah Al-An'am to dismiss the authority of Hadith is inconsistent, as Allah's declaration:

﴿مَّا فَرَّطۡنَا فِي ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ مِن شَيۡءٍۚ﴾ الأنعام: ٣٨

"We have not neglected anything in the Book." (Al-An'am: 38)

must be considered alongside another crucial verse:

﴿وَمَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَىٰكُمۡ عَنۡهُ فَٱنتَهُواْۚ﴾ الحشر: ٧

And whatever the Messenger gives you, take it, and whatever he forbids you from, abstain (from it). (Hashr: 7)

Allah stresses the Prophet's ﷺ authoritative role in Surah Al-Ahzab:

32

﴿ وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ أَمْرًا أَن يَكُونَ لَهُمُ ٱلْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ ﴾

الأحزاب: ٣٦

"It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, to have any choice in their affair." (Ahzab: 36)

This verse establishes that the Prophet's ﷺ decisions, even if not explicitly mentioned in the Quran, are binding upon believers. Rejecting his guidance constitutes disobedience to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and is considered open depravity.

FOURTH ARGUMENT

Allah's intent is clear: the Quran serves as the singular, authoritative source of legislation. Allah guaranteed its preservation stating:

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا ٱلذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَٰفِظُونَ ۹ ﴾ الحجر: ۹

"Verily, We have revealed the Reminder, and verily, We will preserve it." (Hijr: 9).

In line with this, the Prophet ﷺ focused on compiling and preserving the Quran, whereas Hadith, without a similar divine assurance, were not accorded the same level of attention by the Prophet ﷺ or the Sahabah ﵁.

During the Prophetic era, writing Hadith was explicitly prohibited. The Prophet ﷺ would strongly forbid anyone attempting to record his sayings, and command those who had already written them to erase their records.

According to Abu Saeed Khudri's ﷺ narration:

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لَا تَكْتُبُوا عَنِّي، وَمَنْ كَتَبَ عَنِّي غَيْرَ الْقُرْآنِ فَلْيَمْحُهُ.

</div>

"Whoever has written anything from me besides the Quran, should erase it." (Sahih Muslim, Hadith No.3004)

The esteemed Shaykhayn Abu Bakr and Umar رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمَا also followed suit. They ordered the destruction of written Hadith, directing them to be either burned or thrown into water.

REFUTATION

The claim that no arrangement existed for preserving the Hadith is inaccurate. In reality, a preservation mechanism, suited to the inherent properties and characteristics of Hadith, was, in fact, established.

Given the Quran's unique status, where both its words and meanings are revealed from Allah, the Messenger of Allah صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ exercised utmost care in dictating its verses, whereas Hadith convey divine meanings from Allah but are expressed through the Prophet's صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ own words.

Another factor was the scarcity of writing materials and commodities in the Arabian Peninsula. Given the scarcity of writing materials, the early Muslims resorted to

using unconventional surfaces such as camel bones, leather scraps, and white stones. This led to a practical challenge: the potential commingling of Quranic and non-Quranic text on the same limited surface, especially during the ongoing revelation of divine messages.

The potential for confusion between Quranic and non-Quranic texts prompted the Prophet صَلَّىَٰاللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ to prohibit the companions from writing down Hadith. Meanwhile, he vigorously promoted the preservation, memorization, and oral transmission of the Quran. Accordingly, the Prophet صَلَّىَٰاللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ is reported to have frequently instructed:

لِيُبَلِّغِ الشَّاهِدُ الْغَائِبَ

"Those present should convey my Hadiths to those who are absent." (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith No. 67)

The companions رَضِوَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ took this command to heart, implementing it with utmost diligence. Notably,

renowned companions like Umar ﷺ and an Ansari companion adopted a systematic approach, taking turns to attend the gatherings and share the Prophet's ﷺ sayings with each other while the other was preoccupied with duties (as recorded in Bukhari, Hadith No. 89).

Anas ﷺ recounted: "We would attend the Prophet's ﷺ gatherings, and afterwards, we would engage in discussions among ourselves, reviewing the Hadiths shared during the session. (Majma-uz-Zawaid, Hadith No. 734)

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ complained to the Prophet ﷺ about his poor memory. The Prophet ﷺ responded, "Spread your cloak." Abu Hurayrah ﷺ did as instructed. He ﷺ then placed something intangible with both his blessed hands into it and instructed, "Fold it." Abu Hurayrah ﷺ complied. He later testified, "From that moment on, I never forgot anything!" (as recorded in Bukhari, Hadith No. 119).

Had the Hadith been unnecessary, the Prophet ﷺ would have responded to Abu Hurayrah's ؓ complaint by saying, "Don't worry about memorizing it; it's not necessary." However, instead, he took proactive measures to enhance Abu Hurayrah's ؓ memory.

The Prophet ﷺ supplicated for those individuals who listen to his Hadith, memorize it, and share it with others, saying:

نَضَّرَ اللهُ امْرَأً سَمِعَ مِنَّا حَدِيثًا فَحَفِظَهُ حَتَّى يُبَلِّغَهُ ؛ فَرُبَّ حَامِلِ فِقْهٍ إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ أَفْقَهُ مِنْهُ، وَرُبَّ حَامِلِ فِقْهٍ لَيْسَ بِفَقِيهٍ

"May Allah bless the person who hears a Hadith from us, memorizes it, and conveys it to others. For often, a carrier of knowledge may convey it to one more knowledgeable than himself, and sometimes, a bearer of knowledge may not (necessarily) be a learned person." (Abu Dawood, Hadith No. 3660).

The Sahabah ؓ would frequently engage in discussions among themselves about Hadith, prioritizing

their preservation. They also emphasized the importance of sharing Hadith with their students.

Ibn Abbas ﷺ would instruct his students:

تَذَاكَرُوا هَذَا الْحَدِيثَ، لَا يَنْفَلِتْ مِنْكُمْ

'Discuss these Hadith among yourselves, lest you forget!'
(Darami, Hadith No. 624).

Abdullah ibn Masood ﷺ said:

تَذَاكَرُوا الْحَدِيثَ فَإِنَّ حَيَاتَهُ مُذَاكَرَتُهُ

"Discuss and recall these Hadith, for their life and vitality lies in their discussion." (Marifatu Uloom-il-Hadith, page no. 141)

Abu Saeed al-Khudri ﷺ strongly discouraged writing down Hadith. He advocated for oral discussion and memorization, advising:

لَا نُكْتِبُكُمْ وَلَا نَجْعَلُهَا مَصَاحِفَ؛ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ يُحَدِّثُنَا فَنَحْفَظُ، فَاحْفَظُوْا عَنَّا

كَمَا كُنَّا نَحْفَظُ عَنْ نَبِيِّكُمْ. (جامع بيان العلم)

We will not dictate to you (the words of the Prophet ﷺ), neither will we make it into scriptures. Just as we directly heard from the Prophet ﷺ and committed Hadith to memory, you too should follow the same approach."

Ali ibn Abi Talib ؓ advised:

تَزَاوَرُوا، وَأَكْثِرُوا ذِكْرَ الْحَدِيثِ، فَإِنَّكُمْ إِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا يَنْدَرِسُ الْحَدِيثُ.

"Gather frequently and abundantly discuss Hadith, for if you fail to do so, the Hadith will fade away." (Marifatu Uloom-il-Hadith, page no. 141)

From this, it is clear that the Sahabah ؓ leveraged their impressive memorization capabilities to safeguard and pass down Hadith.

Acknowledging memory's potential flaws, the Sahabah ؓ adopted a collaborative approach,

through peer discussion and verifying Hadith among themselves, and refraining from writing them down. The Sahabah's رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ reluctance to write Hadith stemmed from two key considerations: The risk of conflating Quranic text with non-Quranic narrations, and the fear that relying on written records would weaken memory and undermine the oral tradition. As a result, the writing of Hadith was formally prohibited, and the Sahabah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ accordingly refrained from committing them to writing.