

Chapter Fifteen

Questions and Answers

This chapter deals with Questions and Answer. Many have been directly and indirectly been answered, however, they will be answered here in more detail, In sha-Allah!

1. Q. If Taqleed was necessary then why did the companions not follow?

This question is like saying, “We are not from anyone’s Ummah because the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was not from anyone’s Ummah” or to say, “Not being of an Ummah is the Sunnah of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).”

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was a Prophet himself, so how could he be anybody’s Ummah? On the contrary, it is necessary for us to be Ummatis. In the same way, the companions are the Imams of all Muslims, so how can anybody be their Imam?

- A.** The companions had no need for Taqleed because through the blessings of the companionship of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), they are the Imams and leaders of the Muslims. Imam Aazam Abu Hanifa, Imam Shafee, etc. all follow the illustrious companions. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “My Companions are like the stars; whoever among them you use for guidance, you will be rightly guided.” And “Regard my Sunnah and that of my righteous Khulafa as necessary to be followed.”¹

¹ Mishkaat, Virtues of the companions.

Narrated by Abu Musa al-Ash`ari whereby the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: “The stars are trust-keepers for the heaven, and when the stars wane, the heaven is brought what was promised (i.e. of the corruption of the world and the coming of the Day of Judgment); and I am a trust-keeper for my Companions, so when I go my Companions will be brought what was promised them (i.e. of fitna and division); and my Companions are trust keepers for my Community, so when they go my Community will be brought what was promised to you (i.e. following hawâ and love for dunyâ).”²

Only those who are far from the Imam in Salaah make their Salaah on the voice of the Mukabbireen. People standing in the front row have no need for the Mukabbireen because they can clearly hear the voice of the Imam.

Therefore, figuratively speaking, the companions were the followers (Muqalids) of the first row and directly gained from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). There is no need for them to now seek guidance from another source.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) can be likened to the ocean of mercy. The river that joined his sea of grace through Imam Aazam Abu Hanifa came to be known as the Hanafi School, the river that joined through Imam Malik became known as the Maaliki School etc. the water of these rivers are all one and have one source, but their names are different. We need these rivers; the companions don't, just as how the chain of narrators (isnad) in a hadith are for us, not for the companions.

² Muslim and Ahmad

2. Q. For guidance the Qur'an and Hadith are sufficient to guide us, the Qur'an has everything, it states: "Nor anything wet nor dry which is not written in a luminous book"³ "And verily, We have made Qur'aan easy for remembering, is there then anyone to remember?"⁴ Why then follow the Imams?

A.Indeed, the Qur'aan and Hadith are sufficient for guidance and encompass everything. However, we should also have the ability to extract rules from them. The sea contains pearls, but we need divers to bring them up, we need to know how to swim, to swim in different conditions like the sea is different, to use the correct equipment, what happens in an emergency, first aid etc. Similarly, the Imams are the ones who dive into the vast ocean of Qur'aan and Hadith and bring up pearls in the form of laws (maasail). Everything is written in books of medicine, but it is necessary for us to go to doctors and acquire prescriptions. The Imams of religion are doctors. No doubt there is nothing wet or dry not written in this book, however, if we understood the Qur'aan and it was clear then what was the need for a Prophet to come and teach it? The Qur'aan states: "And this Nabi teaches them the book of Allah and wisdom."

Ibn 'Uyyana, may Allah be pleased with him, has said, "The hadiths are a source of error except for the jurists."

What he means is that people, other than the scholars, might interpret a tradition based on an apparent meaning, and yet [the hadith may] have another interpretation based on some other hadith that clarifies the meaning or some proof that remains hidden [to the common people]. After a long discussion, he remarks, "That as for their saying, 'How can you leave clear Qur'anic verses and sound hadiths and follow the Imams in their ijtihaads, which have a clear probability of error,'"

His answer to them is as follows: "Surely the following of our [rightly guided] Imams is not abandoning the Qur'anic verses or the sound

3 Surah Anaam. Surah No: 6. Verse: 59

4 Surah Qamar. Surah No: 54. Verse: 17

hadiths; it is the very essence of adhering to them and taking our judgments from them. This is because the Qur'an has not come down to us except by means of these very Imams [who are more worthy of following] by virtue of being more knowledgeable than us in [the sciences of] the abrogating and abrogated, the absolute and the conditional, the equivocal and the clarifying, the probabilistic and the plain, the circumstances surrounding revelation and their various meanings, as well as their possible interpretations and various linguistic and philological considerations, [not to mention] the various other ancillary sciences [involved in understanding the Qur'an] needed.

“Also, they took all of that from the students of the companions (*tabi'in*) who received their instruction from the companions themselves, who received their instructions from the Lawgiver himself (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) divinely protected from every mistake, who bore witness that the first three generations of Muslims would be ones of virtue and righteousness. Furthermore, the prophetic traditions have also reached us through their means given that they were also more knowledgeable than us through their means given that they were also more knowledgeable than those who came after them concerning the rigorously authenticated (*sahih*), the well authenticated (*hasan*), and the weak (*da'if*) channels of transmission, as well as the *marfu'u* [The transmission (*sanad*) goes to the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) the hadith came from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).], *mursal* [A *tabi'i* related it from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace); a companion (*sahaba*) is missing from the line of the transmission.] , *mutawatir* [The hadith comes from so many sources that it is an absolute proof.] , *ahad* [A hadith, that at some point in the line of transmission, has only one narrator.] , *mu'dal* [Two people in a row are missing in the chain of narrators.] and *gharib* [The narrator of the hadith is trustworthy, but no one else related the hadith.] transmissions.

As for the one who leaves their leadership and says, “Allah said and His Messenger said . . . ,” he has relied solely on his own understanding

despite the fact that he is incapable of having any precision in the verses and hadiths that he quotes since he is unable even to provide chains of transmission [with any authority], let alone that he lacks knowledge concerning the abrogated, the absolute and the conditional, the ambiguous and the clarifying, the apparent and the textual, the general and the specific, the dimensions of the Arabic and the cause for revelation, the various linguistic considerations, and other various additional sciences needed. So, consider for yourself which is preferable: the word of a follower who simply quotes the understanding of the Imams, an Imam by consensus—or the word of this ignoramus who said “Allah said and His Messenger said . . .” But it is not the sight that goes blind, but rather the hearts in our breasts.

“May Allah give life to the servant who listens to my speech, memorizes it and then transmits it. There are some people who carry knowledge but are void of its understanding. And there are some who carry this knowledge to those who understand it better than they.”⁵

When the police are involved in an incident they will arrive at a scene and try to resolve the problem for the time being. This will then have to go to court if serious for a judge to decide, surely the police have authority to deal with it, but it goes to a higher authority for it to be resolved.

There are many sects in the world today, do these sects not pray the Qur’an and read the hadith, of course but without following the Salaf, they intercept which suits them.

5 Ahmed Timidhi, Abu Dawood, Ibn Maja, Darimi from Zaid ibn Thabit. Mishkaat: vol.1, page 35

3. Q. The Qur'an states the evils of those who use Taqleed:

“They have taken their priests and monks as gods besides Allah and also Mesih son of Maryam...”⁶ “And that, this is My straight path, then follow it and follow no other paths for they will deviate you from His path.”⁷ “*And when they are told to follow what Allah has revealed, they say, ‘We will follow that on which we found our forefathers,’*”...⁸

A. I have already discussed the particular case of Taqleed which the Qur'aan has censored in Chapter One. The “other paths” mentioned in the second verse refers to the path of the Jew, Christians, etc. (contrary to Islam). Hanafi, Shafee, etc. are different paths. Figuratively speaking, they are likened to streams leading to rivers towards an ocean. Paths become different when beliefs are changed, and the beliefs of our four Schools are all the same. It is only in practices and Islamic rules that they differ, just as how the companions had different views on certain Islamic rules of Fiqh themselves.

4. Q. In Taqleed, a person makes someone besides Allah the decider and this is Shirk (polytheism). Hence, Taqleed is Shirk. Allah States, “There is no Judgement but of Allah.”⁹

A. If taking someone besides Allah as the decider is associating partners to Him, then accepting the Hadith will also be shirk. Also, the Muhadditheen and Mufasireen will become polytheists because Imam Tirmidhi, Imam Muslim, Imam Abu Dawud, etc. were all followers of the Imams and Imam Bukhari etc. were students of Muqallids.

Any Hadith that has an open transgressor (Fasiq) as a narrator causes it to become a weak narration (Dhaif) or fabricated (Mowdu). So, if a Muqalid enters the chain of narrators then, according to the above, a

6 Surah Tawbah. Surah No: 9. Verse:31

7 Surah Anaam. Surah No: 6. Verse: 153

8 Surah Baqarah, Surah No: 2. Verse 170

9 Surah Yusuf. Surah No: 12. Verse: 40

polytheist has infiltrated it and the Hadith will be rejected. If this is the case, the narrations of Imam Tirmidhi, Imam Abu Dawud, etc. are all rejected because they were Muqalids and “Mushriks”. So too do the narrations of Imam Bukhari, etc. become rejected as they were the students of Muqalids. Where are we to take Ahadith from now?

The Qur’aan states: “And if you fear a dispute between husband and wife, then appoint an arbiter from the side of the family of man and an arbiter from the side of the family of woman, if these two will desire reconciliation, then Allah will cause unity between them.” 10

‘Ali and Mu’awiya (may Allah be pleased with them) appointed a decider (Hakm) in the Battle of Siffeen, and even the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) himself appointed Sa’ad ibn Muaz (may Allah be pleased with him) as the judge over the case of the Banu Quraizah. The correct sense of the Qur’anic verse is that true judgement and rule belongs to Allah alone, and are all indirectly His. If the verse meant that accepting a judgement besides Allah’s is polytheism, then today the entire population of the world, who all accept the judgement of courts and judges, will become polytheists.

5. Q. Imam-e-Aazam said, if you find a Sahih Hadith then that is my Madhab, so we left his rule and followed the Hadith.

How hypocritical, you follow this saying of Imam Abu Hanifa as it suits you and reject the rulings that have been taken from the Qur’aan and Hadith. You take the meaning that suits you, what did Imam Abu Hanifa mean when he said this? Let me explain, without doubt this is what he said, that if you find an authentic Hadith then to act upon that Hadith is my Madhab. This proves the unquestionable piety possess by the great Imam, because deduction (Qiyaas) of a Mujtahid occurs only where there is no dictated text, such as the Qur’an and Hadith. however, in our age, is there a Muhaddith who has complete knowledge of all Hadith and their

10 Surah Nisa. Surah No: 4. Verse: 35

Chains of Narrations? Such a person who also knows every Hadith upon which the rulings of Imam Abu Hanifa are based on. Our knowledge does not properly encompass even the six major compilations of Hadith. how then can we ascertain which Hadith a particular ruling of the Imam has been extracted from? A Hadith also states: “Whenever any of my Hadith reaches you, place it against the Book of Allah. If it is conformity to the Divine Text, then accept it. If it contrary to it, then do not take it.”

So just as how the sayings of the Chakraalwis (*those who reject the legality of the Hadith*) is baseless (“*We do not accept the Hadith because many of it are against the Qur’aan. For example, the Qur’aan states that the estate of the deceased is to be distributed while the Hadith states the estate of the Prophet is not inherited.*”), so too is your objection baseless.

For instance:

I said to a good friend there is a closing down sale up to 75% in a particular shop. He told someone else who told others. When this message reached to another person may be few hours or even a day later and went to the sale and found the shop had sold most of its items or the shop closed down. It would not be said that the statement of the first person was incorrect or lying but when the message got to the last person the original information had been changed due to the time.

It is correct that if an Imam says something, which opposes an authentic hadith, then we should reject his sayings and follow the hadith. But what exactly does an ‘authentic hadith’ mean? Is an authentic hadith that which is written in Bukhari or Muslim? Or is it a hadith, which fulfils the criterion of being an authentic hadith? Or is an authentic hadith that which has been called authentic by the scholars of Ahadith?

If we believe that authentic Ahadith are those only to be found in Bukhari and Muslim, we would just be blind followers of Imams Bukhari and Muslim. If we say that authentic hadith are those which fulfil the requirements laid down by hadith principles, we would just be blindly following those scholars who have written down these

principles? Also, if we say that authentic Ahadith are those which were claimed to be authentic by Muhaditheen, we would simply be following them “blindly.”

The Ahl-e-Sunnah say that the Imams of the four Madh-habs said to follow an authentic hadith, they said this to their close students who were Mujtahids, as the Mujtahids cannot follow anyone except what they are not qualified in. this has been explained in chapter four. Hence, I quote the following to back this up:

1) *“When the Mufti is such that he is a Mujtahid, then the lay person must follow him, even if the Mufti has erred in his judgement.”* This is how Hasan has narrated from Imam Abu Hanifa; Ibn Rustum from Muhammad and Bashir ibn Waleed from Abu Yusuf.”¹¹

2) Imam Abu Yusuf continues:

*“The lay person must follow the jurists since he is not capable of understanding the hadith independently.”*¹²

3) Ibn Taymiyah¹ reported that Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal used to: “Instruct the lay person to ask Ishaq, Abu Ubaid, Abu Thaur and Abu Mus’ab. However, he used to prohibit his own Companions like Abu Dawud, ‘Uthman ibn Sa’eed, Ibrahim al-Harbi, ‘Abu Bakr al-Athrum, ‘Abu Zar’ah, ‘Abu Hatim and Muslim (among others) to follow anyone. He would say to them:

“You must follow the sources of the Qur’an and Sunnah.””¹³

It was to such students that Imam Abu Hanifa addressed his words: *“It is unlawful for whoever does not know my evidence to give my position as a fatwa”* and, *“It is not lawful for anyone to give our position as a fatwa until he knows where we have taken it from.”*

11 Kifayah: the commentary on Hidayah in the chapter of Fasting.

12 Abu Yusuf cited previously from Hidayah. Vol: 1. Page 226

13 Fatawa ibn Taymiyah. Vol: 2. Page 240

It can be concluded, that if we took any of the above opinions we would still be following someone. Ibn Taymiyyah writes that there has never been anyone from among the Imams who has deliberately opposed the Sunnah. When we find a statement from an Imam which goes against the Sunnah, the hadith in question does not fulfil the requirements of authentication of that Imam. This each Imam has their own sets of rules which determine if a hadith is authentic or weak so what may be an authentic hadith to one Imam may not be recognised as authentic by another.¹⁴ As is the case with Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim they have different conditions for a Sahih Hadith, in reality Imam Muslim may classify a hadith as Sahih when Imam Bukhari won't.

6. Q. Imam-e-Aazam knew only few Hadith this is why he has not narrated many Hadith and those that he has narrated are of a weak transmission.

A. Imam Abu Hanifa (may Allah have mercy upon him) was a renowned Muhaddith. Without having knowledge of Hadith, how is it possible for him to extract so many laws? His expertise in the Science of Hadith is apparent in his book, Musnad Abu Hanifa, and from the work of Imam Muhammad, Mu'atta Imam Muhammad.

Narrations by 'Abu Bakr Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him) are found to be few, does this mean he was not a Muhaddith? Caution and care is the reason for the minimum amount of narrations. The narrations of Imam Abu Hanifa (may Allah have mercy upon him) are all Sahih as his time was very close to the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). After his era, some traditions gained weakness. This weakness has no consequence on the Imam, because the chain of narrations only gained weakness after progressing beyond him. If a hadith is authentic, weak etc. remember the hadith is not authentic or weak but this is the chain of narration that has been classified as authentic or weak, and Allah knows best.

¹⁴ Rafu'l malaam, pages 15-16, by Ibn Taymiyyah

For instance if I was to tell a true story to someone, when it reached the tenth person many changes have been made and the story has now changed its original form, it is no proof that I told a false story, but my story was the truth but as it got to the tenth person it was all changed.

An example can be given by looking at the Ahadith, which Imam Abu Hanifah received from his teachers who were the *sahaba* of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and their students (Tabi'een). As these *Ahadith* reached Imam Abu Hanifah through direct narration from the *sahabah* and their students, no question can be raised as to their authenticity. But when these same *hadith* reached scholars of later generations the chains of narrators could contain some unreliability. If someone studies a *hadith* whose narrator is unreliable, and then says that a *fatwa* of Imam Abu Hanifah that is based upon this *hadith*, is contrary to the *Sunnah*, it would be unfair.

If a *fatwa* given by a certain school appears to contradict a narration in *Bukhari* or *Muslim*, it does not mean that it is against the *Sunnah* or a Sahih hadith as they are following other authentic Ahadith, and therefore, not opposing the *Sunnah*. To say Imam Abu Hanifa said follow authentic hadith is baseless, this has already been talked about.

Once a scholar trimmed his nails on a Wednesday as this hadith was weak (*Dhaif*) and not authentic (*Sahih*). As he did not practise even a weak hadith as a consequence he became leprosy. That night when he went to sleep he saw the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) in his dream who said that, "Did you not hear that I warned you against trimming your nails on Wednesday?" The scholar said, "The hadith is weak." The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Was it not sufficient that a hadith had reached you from me." The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) then wiped his blessed hands over the scholar curing him from his illness. The scholar repented and said that, "I will never go against a hadith." ⁱⁱ *Subhanallah!*

The companions would be very careful in narrating to the extent they would forbid others not to narrate hadith. ‘Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) collected 500 hadith but had difficulty in sleeping all night. He burnt them all and said I was afraid that I die, and these hadith remain and there remains a hadith in which I thought a narrator is trustworthy or I thought he may be trustworthy and the hadith that has been narrated to me is not as he narrated.’¹⁵

When ‘Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) became Caliph after his sermon he said, ‘You narrate hadith and dispute and after you many people will fall in dispute so do not narrate.’

In the time of ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) it was against the law to narrate hadith. he would imprison those who would do so. This is one of the reasons you will rarely find hadith narrated by ‘Abu Bakr and Imam-e-Aazam.

7. Q. Did Imam Abu Hanifa have a weak memory?

One of the common attacks on the great Imam is that he had a weak memory, let us take a look at this and decide if this is true!

Imam Ibn Hajar¹⁶ calls Imam Abu Hanifah al-Imam, and al-faqih al-mashhur (the well-known jurisprudent), and Imam Dhahabi includes him among the hadith masters in his Tadhkirat al-huffaz (Memorial of the Hadith Masters). These titles are not given to anyone who is declared weak in hadith. And Imam Dhahabi before Imam ibn Hajar, and Imam al-Mizzi before Imam Dhahabi, all concurred that no position claims Imam Abu Hanifa's weakness should be retained, as Imam Dhahabi said¹⁷: “Our Shaykh Abu al-Hajjaj al-Mizzi did well when he did not cite anything (in Tahdhib al-kamal) whereby he (Abu Hanifa) should be deemed weak as a narrator.”

¹⁵ Tazkratul Huffaaz and Fiqh Al-Faqiya, p. 31

¹⁶ Taqrib al-tahdhib 1993 ed. 2:248 #7179

¹⁷ Tahdhib al-tahdhib 4:101

The remainder of the “Salafi’s” references are therefore irrelevant and over-ruled, especially in view of Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr’s statement that “Those who narrated from Imam Abu Hanifa, who declared him trustworthy, and who praised him, outnumber those who criticized him” as related by Imam ibn Hajar al-Haytami.¹⁸

Muhammad ibn Sa’d al-‘Awfi said: I heard Ibn Ma’in say: “Imam Abu Hanifa was trustworthy, and he did not narrate any hadith except what he had memorized, nor did he narrate what he had not memorised.”

Salih ibn Muhammad al-Asadi said on the authority of Ibn Ma’in: “Imam Abu Hanifa was trustworthy in hadith.”

a) Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr relates¹⁹ ‘Abd Allah ibn Ahmad al-Dawraqi said: Ibn Ma’in was asked about Imam Abu Hanifa as I was listening, so he said: “He is trustworthy, I never heard that anyone had weakened him: No less than Shu’ba wrote to him (for narrations) and ordered him to narrate hadith.”

Imam Ibn Hajar said in Kharija ibn al-Salt’ notice²⁰: “Ibn Abi Khaythama said: If al-Shu’bi narrates from someone and names him, that man is trustworthy, and his narration is used as proof.”

b) Al-Haytami²¹ and al-Qurashi²² relate that Imam ‘Ali ibn al-Madini said: “From Imam Abu Hanifa narrated: Imam al-Thawri, Imam Ibn al-Mubarak, Imam Hammad ibn Zayd, Imam Hisham, Imam Waki` (ibn al-Jarrah al-Kufi), ‘Abbad ibn al-‘Awwam, and Ja’far ibn ‘Awn. He (Imam Abu Hanifa) is trustworthy and reliable. Shu’ba thought well of him.” Ibn Ma’in said: “Our colleagues are exaggerating concerning Imam Abu

18 al-Khayrat al-hisan fi manaqib Abi Hanifa al-Nu`man (p. 74).

19 al-Intiqa’ p. 127

20 Tahdhib al-tahdhib 3:75-76

21 al-Khayrat al-hisan p. 74

22 al-Jawahir al-mudiyya 1:29

Hanifa and his colleagues.” He was asked: “Does he lie?” Ibn Ma’in replied: “No! He is nobler than that.”

c) Imam Dhahabi²³ cites Ibn Ma’in’s statement about Imam Abu Hanifa: “There is no harm in him”, i.e. he is reliable. Ibn Salah²⁴ and Imam Dhahabi²⁵ have shown that this expression by Ibn Ma’in is the same as declaring someone as trustworthy: “Ibn Abi Khaythama said: I said to Ibn Ma’in: You say: “There is no harm in so-and-so” and “so-and-so is weak?” He replied: “If I say of someone that there is no harm in him: he is trustworthy, and if I say da’if: he is not trustworthy, do not write his hadith.” “Abu Ghudda in his commentary to Lucknawi’s Raf’²⁶ has indicated that the equivalency of saying “There is no harm in him” with the grade of trustworthy is also the case for other early authorities of the third century such as Ibn al-Madini, Imam Ahmad, Duhaym, Abu Zur’a, Abu Hatim al-Razi, Ya’qub ibn Sufyan al-Fasawi, and others.

We find many of the past Scholars that have proven the state of the great Imam. When we read the amazing biography of the great Imam we find that Imam Abu Hanifa was afraid of Allah, was engaged in teaching or worship and always had the rights of others in mind. To complete I will quote the saying of two scholars as those who don’t follow an Imam are always taking faults, hence:

Al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: *“One of the knowers of Allah said: A certain group that has not yet come up in our time but shall show up at the end of time will curse the scholars and insult the jurists.”* 27

Imam Tahawi (may Allah have mercy upon him) writes: *“The learned men of the first community and those who followed in their footsteps – the people of virtue, the narrators of ahadith, the jurists and analysts –*

23 Tadhkirat al-huffaz 1:168

24 Muqaddima p. 134

25 Lisan al-mizan 1:13

26 p. 222 n. 3

27 Tafsir al-Qurtubi. 7:191

must only be spoken about in the best way. Anyone who speaks ill of them is surely not on the right path.” 28

8. Q. How could Imam Aazam collect all the hadith that we have in front of us today, he probably made the rulings on the small amount of hadith that he collected?

A. Ibn Taymiyyah writes in Raf’ul Malam: “Verily, the Imams who came before the period of the compilation of the books of Hadith were declared far more knowledgeable about the Sunnah than those who followed, because a large amount of (Ahadith) that reached them and were declared authentic by them, only reached us later via anonymous narrators, or with broken chains, or did not reach us at all.”

Whatever the four Imams have said was final. Throughout their lives, the Imams have changed their opinions as they received further information. Also, after their deaths, their students would check their respective Imam’s work and modify their opinions to accommodate the new information. Their students, and so on also repeated this again. This structure is known as a school of fiqh (madhhab). Also, the Madh-hab was made up of the practices of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) through the companions, i.e. the Hanafi Madh-hab was mostly made up with the actions and ahadith that ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ud (may Allah be pleased with him) had learnt. Who was ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ud? This has already been covered in the first part of the book.

9. Q. How did all this knowledge reach Kufa where Imam Abu Hanifa was from?

Imam Ibn Sa’ad, ibn ul-Qayyam, ibn Taymiyyah write:
‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) gave an order to build the city of Kufa, when the city was built, people from various Islamic areas came

28 Aqidah at-Tahawiah. P.19

to live in the city. Many companions of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant Him peace) moved to Kufa and started to live there. ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) sent ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ud and Ammar bin Yasar to teach the people in Kufa.

After 16 or 17 years, when ‘Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) became the Khalifah, he transferred the capital from Madinah to Kufa. A large number of companions moved to Kufa. They taught people about Islam. Kufa became the centre point for Islamic Scholars. ²⁹

Kufa was the central point of Islamic Knowledge, which is why so many Scholars of Hadith travelled to it repeatedly to gain knowledge. Hafidh Asqalani writes:

Imam Bukhari travelled to various cities to gain knowledge of Hadith. He went to the city of Jazeerah twice, Basrah four times, and stayed in Hijaz (Makkah and Madinah) for six years. Imam Bukhari said himself that he could not account for how many times he went to Kufa and Baghdad to learn knowledge of Hadith. ³⁰

10. Q. Why don't we follow the Ahadith in Bukhari and Muslim, and ignore the Imams?

1) If we should ignore the Imams and depend only upon Muslim and Bukhari, why did both these great Imams follow Imam Shafi'i?

Imam Ibn Atheer has written that Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim were Shafi'i's. ³¹

Tajaddin as Subki, has mentioned Imam Bukhari's name in the list of Scholars belonging to the *Shafi'i* School. ³²

29 Tabaqat, Ibn Sa'ad, minhaajusSunnah a'laamul-mu'wakkieen, chapter on Kufa

30 Muqaddamah FathulBaari, biography of Imam Bukhari

31 Jamee'ul-usool, biographies of Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim, by Ibn Atheer

32 Tabaka Al-Sah'fee by Imam Subkee.

Nawaab Siddeeq Hasan Khan has also mentioned Imam Bukhari in the list of *Shafi'i* scholars. ³³

When Imam Muslim and Imam Bukhari to follow Imam Shafi'i how can it be enough for ordinary Muslims to go direct to the hadith books?

Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim did not gather all the authentic Ahadith in Bukhari and Muslim. Many authentic Ahadith have been left out.

Imam Bukhari said: I have left many authentic *Ahadith* out of *Bukhari* as the book would have been too large. ³⁴

Hafidh Ibn Kathir says that neither Imam Bukhari nor Imam Muslim gathered all the authentic Ahadith. Some of the left-out narrations are present in Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, Nasa'i and, Abu-Dawood. Furthermore, Imam Bukhari himself said that he knew of more than two hundred thousand Ahadith that are Musnad. ³⁵

- 3) Bukhari and Muslim are not easy books to follow as Hafidhh Asqalani wrote 17 volumes of commentary on Bukhari and Imam Ay'nee wrote 25 volumes on Bukhari. Imam Nawawi wrote a commentary on Muslim. Yet there were some *hadith* which these great scholars of Islam could not understand. So how can we encourage ordinary Muslims to pick up *Muslim* and *Bukhari* and start following them?
- 4) We should not follow only Bukhari and Muslim otherwise we would become blind followers of Imam Muslim and Imam Bukhari and ignore many books of *hadith* which were written before Imam Muslim and Imam Bukhari were even born!

33 Abjad-ul-Uloom By Nawaab Siddeeq Hasan Khan

34 Muqadamah Fathul Bari, page 9 by Hafidh Asqalani

35 Uloom-Ahadith and Tareekh Ibn Kathir, biography of Imam Bukhari

5) If it is essential to follow only Imam Bukhari or Muslim, then why did Imam Bukhari, himself not follow his own Ahadith narrations? For example:

(a) Hafidhh Asqalani and Imam ibn Kathir write that Imam Bukhari prayed that Allah Almighty should take his life, during the period when he was being persecuted by people.³⁶

When, Imam Bukhari also states a *hadith* that the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant Him peace) said that a Muslim should never ask Allah to take his life³⁷

(b) Imam Bukhari was known to complete the entire recitation of the Qur'an in one night during the month of Ramadhan. This opposes the *hadith* narration's which he collected himself that mentions that the Qur'an should be completed within 5 to 7 days.³⁸

(1) Albani writes that the *hadith*, which is attributed to our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and that states 'Isa and Imam Mahdi (may Allah bless them and grant them peace) are the same person is completely untrue.

Although Imam ibn Maajah, Imam Hakim, Imam Abdul Burr and other scholars of Islam have quoted the above *hadith* in their books. The reason this narration is false is because both Imam ibn Hajar and Imam Bhaihaqi write that the narrator is Muhammad bin Khalid, who is unknown. Furthermore, Imam Dahabi also considers this *hadith* to be false. Imam Sagani said that this *hadith* is fabricated; Imam Sayuti said that the people have fabricated this *hadith*. Imam Qurtubi considers this *hadith* to be weak.³⁹

It can be observed from the above how Shaykh Albani takes the opinions of an aforementioned Imam as evidence. Moreover, if Imam Dahabi says

36 Tahdeeb Al Tahdeeb and Tareekh Ibn Khathir, by Hafidhh Asqalani and Hafidhh Ibn Kathir, Biography of Imam Bukhari

37 Bukhari, Al Marda

38 Bukhari, "Fadaa'il Qur'an"

39 Silsala Ahadith Da'eefa, Hadith no, 77 by Nasir Uddin Albani

this *hadith* is untrue then Albani says likewise. If Shawkani says this *hadith* is fabricated, then Albani also says it is fabricated. What one can say about this research, is Albani following Qur'an, Sunnah or the Imams?

11. Q. Some people say that all four Imams are correct; whatever happens only one can be correct. Imam-e-Aazam said to pray Surah Fatiha behind the Imam is Makrooh-e-Tehrimi and Imam Shafi said it is Wajib, then it is either Wajib or Makrooh.

A. The meaning of 'Haqq' here does not mean 'correct', but that if you follow any of the four Schools, you will not be rebuked by Allah because the erring and mistake of a Mujtahid is forgiven. War took place between Ameer Mu'awiya and 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with them) and also between Sayyidah 'Aisha and 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with them). Only one of them was on Haqq but both were said to be so, i.e. none of them will be reproached by Allah. A person who is lost in the jungle does not know the direction of the Qibla. Through his opinion, he faces a certain direction for Salaah but changes his direction whilst reading due to a change in his reasoning. The Qibla is only one but the Salaah is valid because (in this case) all four directions are correct. Even if a Mujtahid makes a mistake, still too does he attain one reward. The Qur'an speaks about the error in judgement of Prophet Dawud (upon whom be peace) and the correct verdict of Prophet Sulaiman (upon whom be peace). It did not rebuke any of them, but said, "*Undoubtedly, We sent towards you a Book in which there is glory for you. Have you then no wisdom?*"⁴⁰

Amr bin al-Aas narrates the Messenger of Allah said that "*A judge who exercises his personal judgment (ijtihad) and does not reach correct decision will get one reward, while a judge who exercises his personal judgment (ijtihad) and reaches the correct decision will get two fold reward.*"⁴¹

40 Surah Ambiz. Surah No: 21. Verse: 10

41 Bukhari, kitab al-I'tisam, Muslim, Kitab al-Adidah, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, etc.

This also explains why Rafa Yadain (raising the hands before and after Ruku in Salaah) performed by a Shafee is correct whilst the very same Rafa Yadain performed by someone against Taqleed is incorrect, the Shafee has judged this action by a haakim (decider) and Mujtahid according to the Shari'ah. Therefore. Even if he makes a mistake, still too is it forgiven. The Ghair Muaqlid, however, did not determine this action by a Mujtahid. Thus, even if the action is correct, still will he be wrong. Today, without the decision of a judge, if a person takes the law into his own hands, he will be a criminal. However, if he decides to accept the ruling of a judge, he will not be apprehended as the judge is responsible for the decision. Even if the judge made a error, still he will not be accountable. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) emplaced monetary tax (fidya) on the prisoners of the Battle of Badr solely based on his juristic reasoning (Qiyaas), but a verse was revealed thereafter against it. It can be deduced that Allah (The Exalted) was not pleased with this Qiyaas but the money of the fidya was not returned. Rather, it was ordered, "Use the money because it is pure." Accordingly, we conclude that mistaken does not incur any reproach.

Jundub bin 'Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him narrates the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Any person who forms an opinion regarding any verse of the Qur'an of his own accord (i.e. without being qualified to do so) has indeed erred even though his opinion may actually conform to the truth."⁴²

12. Q. The four Imams had differences amongst themselves, so why do we still follow them?

Even Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim had differences between themselves. Imam Muslim in his Book; *Muslim*, in the first part, has criticised Imam Bukhari. There also existed many differences amongst the *Sahaba*. So, does this imply that we should not follow any of the

42 Tirmidhi and Abu Dawud

sahaba or Imam Muslim or Imam Bukhari as they had differences amongst them?

The hadith Scholars (Muhaditheen) have given different levels of authority to the hadith. Although some hadith Scholars differ in the category of hadith some have given the same hadith Hasan (well authenticated) and Dhaif (Weak) this will be due to the information they have found out about a particular narrator.

It is not necessary for the text (matan) to be Dhaif (weak) only because the chain of narration is Dhaif (weak). It is possible that a hadith may be Dhaif (weak) from a chain, Hasan (well authentic) from another and Sahih from a third. This is the reason Imam Tirmidhi states regarding a hadith: “This hadith is Sahih, Hasan and Ghareeb.” The meaning of Imam Tirmidhi is this hadith has different chains of narration, one chain of narrators is Sahih, another chain of narrators is Hasan and from another chain the same hadith is Ghareeb.

13. Q. How can we be certain about the credibility of these four Imams?

- A.** This can be verified by the glowing tributes and remarks made by recognized scholars from amongst their contemporaries as well as the attestations of knowledge authorities of Islam throughout the centuries. Authors of each School and biographers have written hundreds of pages on the lives of each one of them. About these illustrious Fuqaha, Imam Ghazali (may Allah have mercy upon him) remarks: “The scholars of Fiqh possessed five distinguishing features: Ibadah (intense devotion), Taqwa (fear of Allah) the knowledge of the Akhirah (hereafter) understanding the welfare of the creation and striving to seek Allah’s pleasure through Fiqh”.

14. Q. If you call yourselves Hanafis then why follow Imam Yusuf who is the student of Imam Abu Hanifa in some rules?

A. This question has already been answered and explained in Chapter four too. The Mujtahid Imams trained a number of scholars who were at this level. Imam Shafi'i had al-Muzani, and Imam Abu Hanifa had Abu Yusuf and Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Shaybani. It was to such students that Imam Abu Hanifa addressed his words: "It is unlawful for whoever does not know my evidence to give my position as a fatwa" and, "It is not lawful for anyone to give our position as a fatwa until he knows where we have taken it from."

It is in our times that these words are sometimes quoted as though they were addressed to ordinary Muslims. If it were unlawful for the carpenter, the sailor, the computer programmer, the doctor, to do any act of worship before he had mastered the entire textual text of the Qur'an and thousands of hadiths, together with all the methodological principles needed to weigh the evidence and comprehensively join between it, he would either have to give up his profession or give up his religion. A lifetime of study would hardly be enough for this, a fact that Imam Abu Hanifa knew better than anyone else, and it was to scholars of *istinbat*, the Mujtahids, that he addressed his remarks. Whoever quotes these words to non-scholars to try to suggest that Abu Hanifa meant that it is wrong for ordinary Muslims to accept the work of scholars, should stop for a moment to reflect how insane this is, particularly in view of the life work of Abu Hanifa from beginning to end, which consisted precisely in summarizing the *fiqh* rulings of the religion for ordinary people to follow and benefit from.

Imam Shafi'i was also addressing this top level of scholars when he said: "When a hadith is Sahih, it is my school (*madhhab*)"—which has been misunderstood by some to mean that if one finds a hadith, for example, in Sahih al-Bukhari that is inconsistent with a position of Shafi'i's, one should presume that he was ignorant of it, drop the *Fiqh*, and accept the hadith.

I think the examples we have heard tonight of joining between several hadiths for a single ruling are too clear to misunderstand Shafi'i in this way. Shafi'i is referring to hadiths that he was previously unaware of and that Mujtahid scholars know him to have been unaware of when he gave a particular ruling. And this, as Imam Nawawi has said, "is very difficult," for Shafi'i was aware of a great deal. We have heard the opinion of Shafi'i's student Ahmad ibn Hanbal about how many hadiths a faqih must know, and he unquestionably considered Shafi'i to be such a scholar, for Shafi'i was his sheikh in fiqh. Ibn Khuzayma, known as "the Imam of Imams" in hadith memorization, was once asked, "Do you know of any rigorously authenticated (sahih) hadith that Shafi'i did not place in his books?" And he said "No" (Nawawi: al-Majmu', 1.10). And Imam Dhahabi has said, "Shafi'i did not make a single mistake about a hadith" (Ibn Subki: Tabaqat al-Shafi'iyya, 9.114). It is clear from all of this that Imam Shafi'i's statement "When a hadith is sahih, it is my position" only makes sense—and could result in meaningful corrections—if addressed to scholars at a level of hadith mastery comparable to his own.

Hadith Authentication. The last point raises another issue that few people are aware of today, and I shall devote the final part of my speech to it. Just as the Mujtahid Imam is not like us in his command of the Qur'an and hadith evidence and the principles needed to join between it and infer rulings from it, so too he is not like us in the way he judges the authenticity of hadiths. If a person who is not a hadith specialist needs to rate a hadith, he will usually want to know if it appears, for example, in Sahih al-Bukhari, or Sahih Muslim, or if some hadith scholar has declared it to be Sahih or hasan. A Mujtahid does not do this.

Rather, he reaches an independent judgment as to whether a particular hadith is truly from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) through his own knowledge of hadith narrators and the sciences of hadith, and not from Taqlid or "following the opinion of another hadith scholar."

It is thus not necessarily an evidence against the positions of a Mujtahid that Bukhari, or Muslim, or whoever, has accepted a hadith that contradicts the Mujtahids evidence. Why? Because among hadith scholars, the reliability rating of individual narrators in hadith chains of transmission are disagreed about and therefore hadiths are disagreed about in the same manner that particular questions of fiqh are disagreed about among the scholars of fiqh. Like the schools of Fiqh, the extent of this disagreement is relatively small in relation to the whole, but one should remember that it does exist.

Because a mujtahid scholar is not bound to accept another scholar's ijtiḥad regarding a particular hadith, the Ijtiḥad of a hadith specialist of our own time that, for example, a hadith is weak (da'if), is not necessarily an evidence against the ijtiḥad of a previous mujtahid that the hadith is acceptable. This is particularly true in the present day, when specialists in hadith are not at the level of their predecessors in either knowledge of hadith sciences, or memorization of hadiths. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "it may be that one carries understanding without being a person of understanding; it may be that one carries understanding to someone who possesses more understanding than he."⁴³

A scholar who is a Mujtahid in his school follows and adopts an absolute Mujtahi's principles of extracting and deriving rules (usool but possesses the ability to extract laws directly from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Such a Mujtahid may differ with his Imam on certain details and rules but follows the majority of the rulings with in the school. Imam Abu Yusuf and Imam Muhammad from the Hanafi school: Imam Muzni and Imam ibn Qasim from the Maliki school and Imam Ibrahim al-Harbi and Imam Abu Bakr al-Athram from the Hanbali school are all examples of Mujtahids with in their respective schools who differed with the founders of their schools. Shaykh Ibn Abi Deen introducing these scholars writes:

43 A mass-transmitted (Mutawaatir) Hadith. Narrated by 19 companions, in Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, Ahmad, Al-Darimi, Ibn Hibban, Tabarani etc.

“The Second level (of Mujtahids) are those who Mujtahids in their School of the thought like Abu Yusuf and Muhammad and all other Hanafi scholars who are capable of deriving rules from the above-mentioned proofs based on the principles of their teacher (Imam). These scholars, although differing with their teacher in certain details, follow him in the bases of his principles.” 177

This is the reason why Imam Abu Yusuf and Imaam Muhammad are considered to be Hanafi scholars even though they differed with Imam Abu Hanifa in many details.

15. Q. Can you list some of the most distinguished scholars of Hadith, who lived in different centuries, and hailed from various lands, that followed each of the four Mathaahib respectively?

Hanafi scholars

- Abu Yusuf Ya'qub ibn Ibrahim Al-Ansari. A renowned scholar of Hadith and the most senior student of Imam Abu Hanifa, and also a student of Imam Malik. He was the first scholar that was conferred with the title “Qadi Al Qudadh (chief Justice) in Islam. Demise 182AH.
- Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Al-Muthanna. He was from the progeny of Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) , the noble companion of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). He was the Qadi (Islamic Justice) of Basrah. He was also one of the Shuyukh (teachers in Hadith) of the Imams Bukhari, Ahmad ibn Hambal, Yahya ibn Ma'in and others (may Allah have mercy on them all). Demise 215AH.
- Ahmad ibn Muhammad, Abu Ja'far, At-Tahawi. An Imam in Hadith and Fiqh. Author of comilatopns of Hadith such as ‘Mushkil Athar. Sharh Ma’ani Al-Athar, etc. some scholars even regard him to have been a Mujtahid. Demise 321AH.

- Mahmud ibn Ahmad, Al-Badr Al’Aini. Author of ‘Umdatul Qari, the famous and voluminous commentary on Sahih Bukhari. Demise 855AH.
- Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahid, Kamaluddin, “Ibn Humaam”. Known to have been an expert in almost every branch of religious knowledge. Some even claim that he was fit to have been a Mujtahid. Author of ‘Fat-hul Qadir’ etc. demise 861AH.
- ‘Ali ibn As-Sultan Muhammad Al-Qari, AL-Harawi, Al-Makki better known as Mulla ‘Ali Qari. Author of ‘Mirqatul Mafatih’ a famous commentary of the book of Hadith ‘Mishatul Masabih, and other books. Demise 1014.

Shaf’i’i scholars

- ‘Abdullah ibn Muhammad, Abu Bakr, ibn Abu Shaibah. Shaykh (teacher) of Imam Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud and ibn Majah. Author of ‘Musannaf’. Demise 235AH.
- Abu Bakr, Ahmad ibn Al-Husain, Al-Baihaqi. The author of the voluminous work in Hadith ‘Sunan al-Baihaqi’. Demise 458AH.
- Husain ibn Mas’ud, Abu Muhammad, Al-Baghawi. The author of ‘Sharh As-Sunnah’ and Masabih’ in Hadith, and ‘Ma’alimut-Tanzil’ in Tafsir. Demise 512AH.
- Abdul-Azim ibn ‘Abdul-Qawiy, Al-Munthiti. An authority in the science of Hadith. Author of ‘At-Taghib wat Tarhib’. Demise 656AH.
- Muhyiddin Abu Zakariyya, yahya ibn Sharaf, An-Nawawi. Commentator of Sahih Muslim and author of many books. Demise 676AH.
- Isma’il ibn ‘Umar, ‘Imadudin ibn Kathir. Authority in the fields of Tafsir and Hadith. Author of ‘Al-Ba’ithul Hadith’, and the famous ‘Tafsir ibn Kathir’ etc. demise 774AH.

- Ahmad ibn ‘Ali, ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani. An authority in the field of Hadith. Author of ‘Fat-hul-Bari’ the most famous commentary of Sahih Bukhari. Demise 852AH.

- ‘Abdu-Rahim ibn Abu Bakr, Jalaluddin As-Suyuti. Author of many famous works in the field of Hadith. Demise 911AH.

Maliki scholars

- Isma’il ibn Ishaq, Abu Ishaq, Al-Qadi, Al-Jahdami. A contemporary of Imam Bukhari. An expert in Hadith, Fiqh, ‘Ilmul Qira’at, etc. demise 282AH

- Yusuf ibn ‘Abdullah, ibn ‘Abd Al-Barr, Al=Qurtubi. An expert in Hadith and history. Author of ‘At-Tamhid’ an extensive commentary on the ‘Muwatta’ on Imam Malik, and author of a number of other authoritative books in the field of Hadith. Demise 463AH.

- Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullah, Al-Ish-bili, ibn Al-‘Arabi. An expert in Hadith and Fiqh. Some scholars believe him to have reached the status of Ijtihad. Author of ‘Aridatul Ahwadhi (commentary of ‘Sunan At-Tirmidhi’) demise 543AH.

- ‘Iyad ibn Musa, Al-Yahsabi, Al-Qadi, Al-Andalusi. Authority in the sciences of Hadith, etc. author of a commentary on Sahih Muslim. Demise 544AH.

- Sulayman ibn Khalaf Al-Baji. An Authority in Hadith and Fiqh. Author of ‘At-Ta’lilu wat-Tajrih Liman Rawa ‘Anhul Bukhariyyu fis-Sahih’. Demise 474AH.

Hanbali scholars

- Ahmad ibn Ja’far, Abu Bakr, Al-Qati’i, Musnidul Waqt. A teacher of many of the famous Muhaddithin such as Daruqutni and others. One of the narrators of the Musnad of Imam Ahmad via the son of Imam Ahmad named ‘Abdullah. Demise 368AH.

- ‘Abdullah ibn Ahmad ibn Qudamah, Muwaffaquddin. An authority in Fiqh, Hadith, and Tafsir and an authority in ‘Ilmul Fara-id, Usul, etc. author of Al-Mughni, etc. demise 620AH
- Ahmad ibn ‘Abd Al-Halim, Abu Al-Abbad, ibn Taymiyyah. A Hafiz of Hadith. Demise 728AH
- ‘Abdur Rahman ibn Ahmad, ibn Rajab. One of the commentators of ‘Sunan At-Tirmidhi’, and Sahih Bukhari. An authority in the fields of Hadith and Fiqh. Demise 795AH.

These are just a hand full of names and there are many more.

16. Q. Are the Sahihain (i.e. Bukhari and Muslim) the only books that contain all the authentic hadith?

A. Ibn Kathir says that the Musnad of Imam Ahmad contains many (Ahadith with) chains of narration and texts that are equal (in authenticity) to the Ahadith of Muslim, and even Bukhari. These Ahadith are not to be found in the Sahihain or in the four Sunan (i.e. Nasa’i, Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah).⁴⁴

Allamah ‘Abdurrashid Nu’mani mentions about ibn Majah, that it contains many Ahadith that are more authentic than even the Ahadith of Sahih Bukhari.⁴⁵

i A Ghair Muaqlid/Wahabi/Salafi. When the fatwas of ibn Taymiyya are looked at, in some places he has written for Taqleed and in some against Taqleed. It seems he did not know whether he was going straight, right or left.

ii Usool-e-Hadith, p. 44 & Naseem-ur-Riyaz Sharah Shifa, Vol: 1, p. 344. Published by Darul Fikr, Beirut, Lebanon.

44 Undhur Hadeetul Darari. Page: 104

45 Undhur Hadeetul Darari. Page: 104