Unit V

Uloom ul Qur'an

A Brief Introduction to 'Ulum al-Qur'an: The word *'Ulum* is plural form of *'ilm* which means knowledge or science. 'Ulum al-Qur'an, therefore, literally means "The Sciences of the Qur'an." Thus, it can be defined as the knowledge of those sciences that have a direct bearing on the recitation, contents, understanding and implementation of the Qur'an. It is, therefore, a vast field of Islamic learning. It refers to all the fields of knowledge which serve to elucidate the Qur'an or which are derived from it. Included among them are knowledge of *tafsir* (exegesis), *qira'aat* (recitations), *rasm al-Qur'an* (art of writing the Qur'anic script), *i'jaz al-Qur'an* (miraculous aspects of the Qur'an), *asbab al-nuzul* (reasons for revelations), *al-nasikh wa al-mansukh* (abrogating and abrogated verses), *i'rab al-Qur'an* (Qur'anic grammer), *gharib al-Qur'an* (unusual Qur'anic terms), religious rulings and Arabic language and literature.

We can therefore say that the knowledge of 'Ulum al-Qur'an is in reality the knowledge that one is required to know for the proper interpretation of the Qur'an. There are many benefits to the knowledge of 'Ulum al-Qur'an, some of which are as under:

1. It enables the reader to realize the wealth of knowledge and insight that exists with regards to the book of Allah.
2. It enables the students of knowledge to better understand the Qur'an, in that he will be familiar with the history of its revelation and collection, and the various aspects that aids its comprehension. When he reads the books of *tafsir*, he will be able to understand the terms used, and benefit from the knowledge in them to a greater extent. In other words, he will be equipped to further increase his knowledge and to learn about his religion.
3. It increases a person's belief (*iman*) because he will realize the beauty of the Qur'an and the great blessings that he has been given through its revelation. He will understand the miraculous nature of the Qur'an, and thus better cherish the greatest book that mankind has been given. He will be able to defend the Qur'an against its enemies, since he will be equipped with the true and pristine knowledge of the Qur'an, unadulterated by the prejudices of its opponents.

Tafsir: **Meaning and Early Development:** The word "*Tafsir*" is derived from "*Fasr*" which means "to open." It is the verbal noun of *fassara*, and means "the explanation or interpretation of something." However, in Qur'anic sciences, this term is defined as the science by which the Qur'an is understood, its meanings explained, and its rulings and wisdom derived. In other

words it is the uncovering of the meanings and exposing the secrets of the Qur'an. Imam Zarkashi has defined *Tafsir* in brief as: "The knowledge through which one gains understanding of the Qur'an and comprehension of its commandments and wisdom."

The commentator or exegete is called a *mufassir* whose responsibility is to explain the text of the Qur'an as fully as possible. He aims to show where, when and why a subject is written and what it meant during the time of the Prophet (SAAS), his companions and subsequent followers. He eventually tries to make the text communicate meaningfully within his own times.

The conditions for a Mufassir: The scholars have laid down various conditions for a *mufassir* some of which are given as under:

1. A *mufassir* first and foremost must possess a true belief in Islam for his or her *tafsir* to be pure and free from errors. Sincerely believing in Islam does not necessarily mean that one who does so has true belief in Islam. A correct belief exists only when one's conception of Islam is completely in accordance with that of the Prophet (SAAS) and his companions. A *mufassir* should not approach the Qur'an with preconceived ideas and notions for which he wishes to find support in the Qur'an. Such an approach invariably leads to misinterpretations and sectarian explanations.

2. A *mufassir* must adopt the correct methodology while explaining the Qur'an. All honest attempts at *tafsir* must begin with the *tafsir* of the Qur'an by Qur'an itself. What remains unexplained must then be sought in the *sunnah* of the Prophet (SAAS). If the tafsir still cannot be found, the explanations of the *sahabah* and their students must then be turned to. That which is left after the above mentioned steps can be found in the language of the Qur'an.

3. A *mufassir* must have working knowledge of classical Arabic, its grammatical constructions, and its figures of speech because this is the language of the Qur'an. Any *tafsir* which is based solely on a translation of some of the meanings of the Qur'an will be liable to error and distortion. As Mujahid, the student of Ibn 'Abbas said, "It is not allowable for anyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day to explain Allah's Book if he is not knowledgeable in the Arabic language." A *mufassir* should also know the other Islamic sciences which are connected one way or another to the Qur'an, such as *hadith* and *fiqh*. He should also know the fundamental principles of *fiqh* (*usul al-fiqh*) in order to accurately extract or deduce Islamic law from the passages.

Early Development: In order to give clear picture of the development of the *tafsir* of the *Qur'an* the entire period is divided into four stages:

First Stage: *Tafsir* **in the time of Prophet Muhammad (SAAS):** During the lifetime of the Prophet (SAAS), his companions used to ask him questions relating to the interpretation of the Qur'an and the different aspects of the injunctions contained in it. The prophet used to explain to them the revelation. Muslim scholars believe that the result of such inquiries was that the companions came to know all about the causes of revelation (*Asbab al-Nazul)* of different verses. They also became aware of the verses that were abrogated and those verses that were replaced by other verses. The authority to explain Qur'an was granted to the Prophet (SAAS) by Allah himself as laid down in Qur'an.

And We revealed to you the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them and that they might give thought. {Al- Nahal, 16:44}

Therefore, the things said by the Prophet (SAAS) in explanation of the Qur'an or to which he gave silent approval were committed to memory by the companions. Being men of great learning many of them had not only memorized Qur'an but also had full knowledge of when, where and why verses of the Qur'an were revealed.

Second stage: After the death of the Prophet Muhammad (SAAS), the companions taught others the Quran and its interpretation. Scholars recognize that the Khulafa al-Rashidun (Abu Bakar, Umar, Uthman and Ali) were *mufasirin* of the Qur'an. Others from the Prophet's time that were renowned for their profound knowledge of the Quran are Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn Mas'ud, Ubai Ibn Ka'b, Zaid ibn Thabit, Abu Musa Al Ash'ari and 'Abdullah Ibn Zubair. It is generally stated that in this period three schools were established to explain the Qur'an: The Makkan School led by 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, the Madinah School led by Ubai Ibn Ka'b and the Iraqi school led by 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud. The methodology adopted by them was based more on transmission (*riwaya*). They relied mainly upon four basic sources. The first and foremost of them was Qur'an itself. At many places in the Qur'an certain things have been mentioned briefly, but the same thing is explained in detail at another place. The second source for understanding the Qur'an was the Prophetic traditions. Whenever these two sources were found insufficient for explaining any particular verse of the Qur'an the companions resorted to their independent opinion, which later came to be known as *Ra'i*. The forth source upon which the companions also relied was Judeo-Christian traditions for the understanding of the Quran. This had become handy because of the converts from the two communities, who were available to provide required information of their past traditions.

Third stage: Many of the companions of the Prophet (SAAS) taught the Qur'an and its exegesis to the next generation of Muslims, *Tabi'un*. The conversion of many people from different faiths and walks of life made it imperative that the *Tabi'un* should not only treasure the existing information but also build on it a body of learning known as Ulum ul Qur'an.

It is believed that within a half century after Prophet's death three main schools of Qur'anic *tafsir* had developed in Makkah, Madinah and Iraq as stated above. The Makkan group is said to have been taught by Ibn Abbas. The best known of the group among learners are Mujahid, 'Ata and 'Ikrimah. The Madinan group had the best known teachers like Ubai ibn Ka'b. This group had some well known *mufassirin* like Muhammad ibn Ka'b, Abu al 'Aaliyah and Zaid ibn Aslam. The Iraqi group who followed Ibn Mas'ud had centers in Basra and Kufa. The best known among the teachers in tafsir were Hasan al Basari, Masruq and Ibrahim Nak'i.

Fourth stage: In the period following the above, others came forward in this field and some of their work survives in the collections of *Hadith* and recent versions attributed to them. A complete book of *tafsir* by Mujahid is available which is based on a manuscript from the 13th century CE. However, the oldest work of tafsir extant today is of Imam Ibn Jarir al-Tabari. Some believed that he was the first man to write Qur'anic exegesis explaining it side by side with the *Sunnah*.

Since then the process of *tafsir* has continued until today. Some of the classical *tafasir* amongst the Muslims are those of Baghawi, Zamakshari, Baidawi, Qurtubi etc.

Principles of *Tafsir:*   Muslim scholars have laid down certain basic condition for sound *tafsir*. Any *tafsir*, which disregards these principles, must be viewed with great caution, if not rejected altogether. The most important among these conditions are the following:

1. Every word should be explained with its real meaning. In order to achieve that the *mufassir* should have command in linguistic knowledge and grammar so that he should begin the *tafsir* of the Qur'an with the Qur'an.

2. Everything needs to be explained within its reference and context to the main theme.

3. The interpretation should not be contrary to that of the *Sahabah* who witnessed the coming of the revelations of the Prophet Muhammad (SAAS).

4. The majority of Muslim scholars insist that the *muffasir* must be a Muslim. He should be sound in belief (*'aqidah*); well-grounded in the knowledge of Arabic and its rules as a language. He should have the ability for precise comprehension of the Qur'an and abstain from the use of mere opinion.

5. A *mufassir* should have the knowledge of the science of recitation of the Qur'an (*ilm al-tajwid*). He should know *ilm al-hadith* and must have studied thoroughly the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence (*ilm al-fiqh*) along with their principles (*usul al-fiqh*).

6. The *mufassir* should have knowledge of *asbab al-nuzul*, reasons for the revelation of the different verses and should have knowledge about the theory of abrogation of verses of the Qur'an (*al-nasikh wa al-mansukh*).

 In later years, commentators and Qur'anic scholars formulated various rules of interpretation. Foreign thoughts, knowledge and reasoning were also woven into fabric of Islamic thought and culture. This amalgamation emerged in several kinds of *tafsir* and can be divided into two or three groups i.e., *tafsir bil riwaya* (by transmission), *tafsir bil rai* (sound opinion) or and *tafsir bil ishara* (by indication).

Tafsir bil riwaya (also known as *tafsir bil mathur*) includes the interpretation of the Qur'an by the Qur'anic verses and use of explanations of the prophet and his companions. Books of his class of *tafsir* include those attributes to Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn Hatim, Ibn Hibban, and that of Imam Suyuti known as *Al Dur al-Mansur*, Tafsir of Ibn Kathir and Imam Shawkani may also included in this group.

Tafsir bil rai (or *tafsir bil dirayah*) is not based directly on transmission of knowledge from the past, but on reason. Exegesis is derived through opinion based on reason and *ijtihad* or *qiyas*. In this area we find tafasir like *Al-Kashaaf* by Zamaskshari.

Tafsir bil ishara: It goes into the detail of the concepts and ideas associated with the words and verses of Qur'an. This kind of *tafsir* is often produced by mystically inclined authors.

Ibn Jarir has reported through Muhammad ibn Bashshar Muammal, Sufyan and Abul Zanad that Ibn 'Abbas said, "*tafsir* is of four kinds: one which Arabs can know from the language; second which no one can be excused for not knowing; third which only scholars know; and fourth, which God alone knows.''

Following *Mufassirin* and their *Tafsir*:

Tafsir al-Tabari: This book was written by Ibn Jarir al-Tabari under the title *Jami' al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*. It belongs to the most famous books in *tafsir* and is perhaps the most voluminous work on the subject. It belongs to the class of **tafsir bil riwaya** and is based on the reports from the Prophet (SAAS), the *Sahabah* and the *Tabi'un*, giving the various chains of transmission and evaluating them. However, it also contains reports that are not sound, without clearly indicating this, including israiliyat. Tabari also says in some places that one cannot know about certain things and that not to know about them does not do any harm. In

spite of all this the book is nevertheless one of the most important works in *tafsir* referred to by almost every subsequent scholar. In the preface, Imam Tabari has given general facts about the Qur'an including its superiority to any other text, difference between *tafseer* and *tawil*, the seven *qiraat*, companions who commented on the Qur'an and the naming of the *suras* (chapters of the Qur'an). There is great emphasis on the language of the Qur'an. Lexical meanings of words are given, and their use in Arabic culture is examined. Opinions of linguists are given where appropriate. Evidences from Arabic poetry are used frequently, sometimes with their origins.

Al-kashaf 'an Haqa'iq al-tanzil (Tafsir Zamakhshri):

This is a popular interpretation of the Qur'an by renowned 12th century CE Islamic scholar and Qur'anic commentator, al-Zamakhshari. It is considered a literary masterpiece and a primary source by all major scholars. It is famous for its deep linguistic analysis, demonstrations of the supremacy of declamation of Qur'an, and the representation of the method the Quran uses to convey meaning using literary elements and figurative speech. However, it is criticized for the inclusion of *Mu'tazilah* philosophical views.

Al-Zamakahshari strongly insisted that scholars of *mu'tazilah* sect should have a *tafsir* of their own. Therefore, he started writing his commentary in 1132, after he was convinced by Aamir-ibn Vihhas while he was residing in Makkah, and finished it in two years .He himself states that writing such a book in a short time is a blessings of Allah .During his research, he referred to many older works and commentaries which constitute the basis of his work.

In the preface, it is pointed out that commenting on the Quran is a challenging and difficult effort; and any *mufassir* willing to do so must have deep knowledge of Arabic language, literature, eloquence and culture, alongside critical thinking skills, a highly disciplined way of studying and general academic skills. Comments are a blend of logic and narrative, including many *ahadith* and older accounts of Arabic poems. A very elegant analysis of words is done throughout the commentary, while figurative expressions are broken down, and appropriate qira'at is chosen where needed. Abrogated verses are indicated. Verses containing Islamic jurisprudence are deduced according to the Hanfi School of law. Verses that seem contrary are reconciled. Some older comments are criticized, especially those of *sufi* origin.

One of the most criticized aspects of Zamakhshari's interpretations is his adaptation of Qur'anic verses according to the *mu'tazilah* view point. Although *sunni* scholars have recognized his book as a landmark, they have nearly always included comments with the book, clarifying the mistakes and differences of *Mu'tazilah*.

Mafatih al-Ghayb or al-Tafsir al Kabir: This *tafsir* is Fakhr al Din al Razi's major work. Razi was a Shafi'i scholar who excelled in the grammatical sciences as well as philosophy. His *tafsir* is printed in eight large volumes; however, his contemporaries mentioned that he did not complete his *tafsir*. It has been suggested that the work was completed by his disciple, Shams al-Din al-Khuwayyi. Razi's *tafsir* is quite popular among scholars due to its extensive treatment of various topics from a wide range of sciences. This *tafsir* is noted for its concentration on the relationship between verses and chapters. However, the *tafsir* is, for the most part, like an encyclopedia of natural sciences. The author delves into mathematics and natural sciences and evaluates the opinions of astronomers and philosophers using their terminology. The various arguments of *Mu'tazilah* are mentioned and refuted. Razi also discusses grammatical issues, but to a much lesser extent than his discussions of natural sciences.

Tafsir Ibn Kathir: It is a classic *tafsir* by Abu al Fida Isma'il ibn Kathir under the title *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim*. It is one of the best known books on *tafsir*, perhaps second to Tabari, with more emphasis on soundness of reports, in particular rejection of all foreign influences such as *israiliyat,* discussing the *sanad* of various reports often in detail, which makes it one of the most valuable and reliable books of *tafsir*. This *tafsir* contains an extensive preface covering the methodology of *tafsir*, and great emphasis has been laid upon the interpretation of Qur'an by Qur'an. Ibn Kathir critically analyses all of his narrations and evaluates the conflicting statements of *Sahabah* and *Tabi'un*. He also warns about *israiliyat* and other false information commonly found in the books of *tafsir*. Legal issues are discussed, and differences of opinions are evaluated.

Unit VI

HADITH:

An in-depth study of second source of Islamic studies.

Sunnah and Hadith; these two words are used interchangeably and almost always used to describe the same thing by the early scholars and the present ones, though there's a slight difference in their meanings. Hadith really means a story or a report and so represent an account of what happened. The word sunah means a practice, a way, or course, a rule, a mode or manner of life, a precedent, a custom. In technical sense it implies the doings and practices of Prophet of Allah (PBUH) The sunnah is actually the embodiment of the will of Allah, shown in the actions of the Prophet of Allah (PBUH).1

HADITH: Linguistically hadith stands for ''something new' 'the plural of which is *Ahadith*.

Technically: Hadith stands for a'' saying, action of prophet or anything permitted by Him''2

IMPORTANCE AND STATUS OF HADITH IN ISLAM:

Dr Allamah Khalid Mahmood in his book''Athar-ul-Hadith comments

'The status and honor that Prophet holds in Islam goes same with hadith too and the status held by the companions is very well held by their sayings too. The words of the creator demands equal respect as that of creator Himself, therefore the value of hadith is the value of revelation'.3

Any kind of doubt in the importance of hadith can exclude one from the preview of Islam. As mentioned in Quran

(But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad PBUH) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission. Surah Nisa verse 65).

Moreover the authenticity of the words of Prophet (PBUH) as guaranteed by the creator himself is evident from the verse of Quran:

'O you who believe! Answer Allah (by obeying Him) and (His) Messenger when he () calls you to that which will give your life, and know that Allah comes in between a person and his heart (i.e. He prevents an evil person

to decide anything). And verily to Him you shall (all) be gathered''.
(Surah Anfal verse 24)

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1 .Hadith and Hadith sciences by Dr Khalid Mahmood Shaikh Adam Publishers and Distributers New Delhi 110002 pg.103.

2.(Istalaahaat-ul-hadith Dr.Mahmood Tauhaan Islamic book foundation New Delhi pg 24)

(3.Athar-ul-Hadith by Dr Allamah Khalid Mahmood publication Hafiz Book depot Deoband pg 33)

IMPORTANCE OF HADITH AMONG COMPANIONS:

Companions showed utmost respect to the sayings of prophet(PBUH)

Narrated by Imam Malik, a person came to meet Sa'eed bin Musaib a famous tabaee and enquired him about the saying of Prophet (PBUH).He was lying at ease and all of a sudden sat straight and started narrating the hadith .The enquirer apologized for the inconvenience to which he replied 'I abhor that I narrate the saying of prophet while I am lying at my back'.4

(Madarij-ul-Nabuwwatby Shah Abdul Haq Dehlvi vol1.pg 541 published by Shabbir brothers)

IMPORTANCE OF HADITH AMONGST TABA-TABAEEN:

Whenever a seeker of knowledge visited Imam Malik (RA).Imam Malik performed ghusul, get dressed in the best possible manner, used to perfume himself before narrating a hadith and then would sit on a pulpit .Thus with extreme respect and concentration would narrate the hadith.5

Many other similar instances leaves one amazed regarding the respect of sunnah of Prophet (PBUH) as evident from the lives of the predecessors.

HADITH COLLECTION DURING THE PERIOD OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (peace be upon him).

An upcoming trend now-a-days introduced by a misled group, feeling pride in calling themselves *Ahl-ul-Quran*is of complete rejection of Hadith claiming of inauthenticity of hadith since it is believed to have been compiled almost after a span of one century and Quran been written down during the prophetic period is the only reliable source. Let's analyze this claim in the light of Quran and the history of Islam.

Quran makes it clear that prophet's words are not the result of any vain desires rather it's the revelation that guides him all the time.

'Nor does he speak of (his own) desire.It is only a Revelation revealed.'(Surah Najm verse 3-4).

Companions were very much sensitive and serious in putting the command of Allah(SWT) into action and the verse of surah Hashr verse 7(*And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad(Pbuh) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it). And fear Allah; verily, Allah is Severe in punishment)* triggered companions to jot down each and every saying of prophet of Allah (SWT).

4.(Madarij-ul-Nabuwwat by Shah Abdul Haq Dehlvi vol1.pg 541 published by Shabbir brothers)

5.(Madarij-ul-Nabuwwat by Shah Abdul Haq Dehlvi vol1.pg 542 published by Shabbir brothers)

Although in the beginning of revelation Prophet(PBUH) prohibited the companions from writing anything other than the Quranic verses fearing mixture

'la taktuboo 'nnee shaian gairal Quran fa man kataba 'nnee shaian gairal Quran falyamhihee.''(kindly type this in Arabic)

But latter on he granted permission as has been narrated by Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-'As , ' *I used to write everything which I heard from the Apostle of Allah (peace_be_upon_him). I intended (by it) to memorise it. The Quraysh prohibited me saying: Do you write everything that you hear from him while the Apostle of Allah (peace_be_upon_him) is a human being: he speaks in anger and pleasure? So I stopped writing, and mentioned it to the Apostle of Allah (peace_be_upon_him). He signaled with his finger to him mouth and said: write, by Him in whose hand my soul lies, only right comes out from it.*6

Moreover the last sermon of prophet infused in them the zeal of spreading the teachings of their beloved Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him).

*'All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly.*7

PRESERVATION OF HADITH BY COMPANIONS:

Companions were the perfect embodiment of prophet of Allah. Their lifestyle was no different from prophet and they would perfectly live upto the commands of the Last Prophet (PBUH).

*Narrated by Abdur-Rahman bin Zaid: I asked Huzaifa bin Yaman to inform me about the companion close to prophet in his actions, so that I could meet and learn hadith from him''.He replied the closest to prophet in his dealings is Abdullah bin Mas'ud(RA).(Tirmizi).*8

'The utmost love of prophet is clearly evident from the life of Abdullah bin Umar(RA).The places where prophet had performed prayers Ibn Umar would look for those places and perform prayers .Where-ever prophet had turned the direction of his she camel Abdullah bin Umar would deliberately do that' .*9*

Those who object the authenticity of Hadith ;tracing its compilation back to the era of Imam Bukhari or Inb Shihab az Zuhri should bare in mind that textual compilation of Hadith had already taken place quite earlier during the period of Prophet Muhammad(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

6. Book 25, Hadith 3639, Abu Dawud

7. Musnad Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal hadith no 19774)

8. Tadween-e-Hadith page 43

9.(Book Ashaabah as mentioned in Tadween-e-Hadith page 43)

Hafiz Ibn Abdul Barra brings this narration in his book *Jami'*,that Hasan (son of Amr bin Umayyah Zambari) (RA) says I narrated a hadith in front of Abu Hurairah .He refuted it.On this I said, 'I have heard it from you', to which he replied if this hadith is narrated by me I should have had preserved it in the written form.Then he took hold of my hand and took me to his room.He showed me a collection of ahadith narrated by Prophet (peace be upon him) and I found my narrated hadith therein to this Abu Hurairah(RA) said, 'didn't I say anything that I have narrated is not but preserved in the written form with me'.10

Moreover mentioned in Mustadrak Hakim: Sa'eed bin Hilal says ,Whenever we asked questions to Anas (RA) he would show us a bundle of inscribed ahadith and would say this is what I have heard from Prophet(peace be upon him) and have presented it to him as well ".11

After the demise of Allah's Prophet (peace be upon him), Abu Bakr(RA) penned down 500 ahadith- (*Az-zahabi).*But latter on destroyed it fearing any lapse in compilation or understanding. Umar (RA) has narrated 200 ahadith. Moreover Abdullah bin Umar (RA) had kept a copy of hadith with him called (*saheefaa-e-saadiqah)*.Among women the most popular narrator was our mother Aishah (RA) who had narrated 2010 ahadith.

HADITH COLLECTION DURING TABAEEN:

Khairul Quroon includes

1. Companions (those who had seen Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and accepted his call.

2. Tabaeen: Those who had not seen prophet but had the opportunity to be in the company of *Sahabas*.

3.Taba Tabaeen: Those who had been in the company of Tabaeen.

Sahabas would instruct their disciples to memorize the hadith the way they had done.

'Your prophet used to narrate *ahadith* to us and we would memorize it thus you too should memorize the *ahadith* the way we did.'(Jami' Bayan-ul-'ilm).

10.Tadwen-e-Hadith pg 56.

11.Tadween Hadith page 60.

In the meanwhile Umar (RA) thought of compiling hadith but fearing the mixture in Quran and Hadith left the idea of compilation.*Narrated by baihaqi on the authority of Urwah bin Zubair that Umar(RA) intended to collect and compile Hadith and he made istikhara for it for a month but later dropped the idea of compilation fearing any sort of mixture in Quran and Hadith.*12

This decision of Umar (RA) was to keep people adhered to Quran.With the result the number of Huffaz kept on increasing day by day.

END OF PERIOD OF COMPANIONS:

After 50 H the tradition of hadith narration got a break through and mention of chain of narration got it's place in this science.The need for this arose when some miscreants like Mutazillites,Khwarijis etc started fabricating hadith.

It is mentioned in the introduction of sahih Muslim as stated by Muhammad bin Seereen(May Allah have mercy on him). "Companions never asked for chain of narration but because of mischief mongers it became an obligation and they used to say *Sammoo lana rijaalakum 'Narrate hadith along with chain of narration'* so that the misled group

may be differentiated from Ahl-Sunnah (Those who strictly adhered to their predecessors, way of Prophet and his companions).

Now three new things got introduced:

1. Chain of Narration

2. Hadith analysis in the guidance of prominent scholars

3. Critical examination .13

12.(Jami'Bayan-ul-ilm vol1 pg 121)

13.Sunan tirmizi by Molana Mufti Se'eed Ahmad Palanpuri, published by Maktaba Hijaz Deoband pg 68

HADITH COMPILATION:

The work left undone by Umar bin Khattab(RA) was taken note of by his descendant Umar bin Abdul Aziz(ra).It was by the end of the first century that Umar became a caliph and instructed governor of Madinah Abu Bakr bin Jazim to collect all the hadith mentioned by the scholars of the city; fearing extinction of knowledge. In the mean while he passed away but the work continued. The end products of this first effort of hadith compilation we have in the form of Muwatta Imam Malik. Other works are missing unfortunately.

2nd ERA OF HADITH COMPILATION:

This era witnessed extreme struggle in the compilation of Jami ' [Jami ' is a work wherein majority of hadith are brought at one place in one compilation]. Eg Jami ' Sufyan Suri ,Musannaf Abdur Razzak Musannaf ibn Abi Shaibah, Musnad Imam Ahmad .(Musnad Imam Ahmad could be a compilation of 3rd Era too, because of his demise in 241 H.)

3RD ERA OF HADITH COMPILATION:

A new idea of mentioning nothing but sahih ahadith erupted in the minds of Muhadditheen(Those who have the knowledge of hadith) in this era.It is the work of this era which is been read now-a-days. During this era the only classification of hadith was either sahih or za 'eef.Hasan did not exist Similarly earlier the sayings of prophet(peace be upon him) and sahabas (RA) both were considered hadith but latter they were distinguished as *Hadith* and *Athaar* respectively.The Hadith left by Scholars of third era was brought in their works by Baihaqi, Tibrani etc via their teachers.

PERIOD OF HADITH COMPILLERS OF SAHIH SITTA

Allah preserved the hadith by enabling the Companions and those after them to memorise, write down and pass on the statements of the Prophet (SAW) . Latter as he purity of the knowledge of hadith became threatened Allah caused muslim Ummah to produce individuals with exceptional memory sills who travelled tirelessly to collect thousands of narrations and distinguish the true words of Prophet (SAW) from those corrupted by weak memories, forgeries, statements of Companions and those who followed their way. The methodology of the expert scholars of hadith in assessing the narrations and sorting out genuine from the mistaken and fabricated ahadith; forms the subject matter of the science of hadith *"Ilm al-Hadith"*. The most important compilers or scholars of hadith and their collections are:

Al Muwata by Al Imam Malik (97-179 A.H).

Al Musnad by Al Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (163-241 A.H.)

Al Jami Al Sahih Al Bukhari by Imam Bukhari (194-256 A.H).

Al Musnad Al Sahih by Imam Muslim (204-261 A.H)

Al Sunan Ibn Majah by Muhammad bin Yazid bin Majah (207-273 A.H.)

Al Sunan Abu Dawud by Abu Dawud Al Sajistani (202- 275 A.H.)

Al Sunan Al Tirmizi by Abu 'Esa Imam Tirmizi (209-279 A.H.)

Al Sunan Al Nisa'i by Ahmad bin Shuaib Al Nisa'i (215- 303 A. H.)

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF SIHAH SITTA:

1) AL JAMI' AL SAHIH (AL BUKHARI).

Sahih Al Bukhari is a collection of Hadith by Imam Muhammad bin Ismail bin Ibraheem al Bukhari. Descendants of Khurasan Imam Bukahri was born in Bukhara (present day Uzbekistan) one of the oldest city of the world also known as Madinah ut Tujjar (City of the Merchants). His collection is considered by the overwhelming majority of the mUslim world to be the most authentic collection of reports of the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). He collected around 6,00,000 ahadith and included only 7275 ahadith (with repetition) in his Sahih (*Al Jami' Al Sahih Al Musnad Al Mukhtasar min hadith I Rasulillah wa Sunanihi wa Ayyamihi*) popularly known as Sahih Al Bukahri. He exhausted all his energies and started collection of Ahadith at the age of 16 from the known scholars of his time of Makkah, Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Hijaz, Baghdad etc. Known for his intellect, spirituality and generosity Imam Bukhari was revered by his teachers as well as fellow students. Other than Sahih Bukhari he has also compiled *Qadâyâ as-Sahâbah wat-Tâbi`în* and the famous book of Asmâ` ar-rijâl (Names of men of transmission) called, *Târîkh al-kabîr*, while sitting by the tomb of the Holy Prophet sallallâhu `alayhi wa sallam during moonlight hours.

TEACHERS:

The most popular among the teachers of Imam Bukhari are, Ahmad bin Hanbal,Muhammad bin Salam al Baiqandi, Ibraheem bin Ash'ad, Yahya bin Ma'een, Ishaq bin Rahwayh, Ali bin Al Madeeni etc.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SAHIH AL BUKHARI:

1) QUALITY: Sahih Al Bukhari has been celebrated for its authenticity and soundness of the chain of narrators. The underlying principles for selecting sound narratives are, firstly the lifetime of the narrator should overlap with the lifetime of the authority from whom he narrates. Secondly, it should be verifiable that narrators have met their source persons.

2) NARRATORS: Muhammad al Bukhari accepted narratives from only those who, according to his knowledge, believed in and practiced the teachings of Islam.

3) SYNCHRONISATION: Sahih Bukhari has a particular arrangement of Chapters. This has made the book a more useful guide in understanding of the religious disciplines.

Characteristics of AL MUSNAD AL SAHIH (SAHIH MUSLIM):

Sahih Muslim is a collection of ahadith compiled by Abul Husain ' Asakiruddin Muslim bin al- Hajjaj al-Qushayri al –Nisaburi popularly known as Imam Muslim. His collection is considered to be one of the most authentic collection of the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW). It , along with Sahih-Al Bukhari forms the "Sahihain" (Two Sahihs). It contains around 7500 ahadith (with repetitions) . Imam Muslim was born into a Persian family in 204 A.H (817/818 CE) in Nisapur and died in 261 AH (874/875 CE). He travelled widely to gather his collection of ahadith in Arabia, Egypt, Syria and Iraq. Out of 3,00,000 ahadith which he evaluated he retained 4,000 based on thorough study and stringent acceptance criteria.

Among his teachers the most popular ones are Ishaq bin Rahweh, Ahmad bin Hanbal, 'Ubaidullah al Qawariri, Qutaiba bin Sa'id etc. Among his students the most prominent ones were Abu 'Esa Tirmidhi, Abu Bakr bin Khuzaimah, Ahmad bin Salama etc. He died at an age of 57 .

Characteristics :

1) PRECISION: Imam Muslim has taken great care in reporting the exact words of the narrators and points out even the minutest difference in the wording of their reports. E.g He has constantly kept in view the difference between the two modes of narration *Haddathana* and *Akhbarana*. (*Haddathana* is said when teacher is narrating the hadith and *Akhbarana* is said when student is reading the hadith in front of the teacher).

2) CHAPTERISATION: Scientific arrangement of themes and chapters makes it easy for the beginners to understand ahadith. Instead of scattering different versions of a narrative , Imam Muslim has compiled all ahadith related to a common topic at one place thus making it easy for comprehension.

3) AUTHENTICITY : Imam Muslim has taken great pains in connecting the chain of narrations .However unlike Sahih Bukhari it doesnot necessarily emphasize on the meeting of the narrators. He has recorded only such narratives as were reported by two reliable successors from two Sahabas through two independent chain of narrations.

SUNAN AL TIRMIDHI:

Jāmi` at-Tirmidhī is a collection of hadīth compiled by Imām Abu `Isa Muhammad at-Tirmidhī (rahimahullāh). His collection is unanimously considered to be one of the six collections of hadith (Kutub as-Sittah) of the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW). It contains roughly 4000 hadīth (with repetitions).Abu 'Esa Muhammad bin 'Esa al-Tirmidhi was born in 200 A.H. in Tirmidhi , a city in Tazakistan. In early years he started his education from the teachers of Khurasan e.g. Ishaq bin Rahweyh then he travelled to Iraq and Hijaz. Among his teachers the prominent ones are Imam Bukhari , Imam Muslim and Imam Abu Dawud. Imam Tirmidhi had exceptionally remarkable memory. If he heard something once he would never forget it. Availing the opportunity of studying under the teachers of his time and benefitting from other works ; Imam Tirmidhi combined the styles of al-Bukhari, Muslim , Abu Dawud, and An-Nisai by focusing on the authenticity of hadith, chain of narration, differences regarding the narrators and also making his compilation a basis for jurists. Imam Al- Zahabi says about this book that Imam Tirmidhi compiled this book and presented to the scholars of Hijaz, Khurasan, Iraq, and they were satisfied with it. His piety was of very high caliber. Hakim says about Abu 'Esa Al-Tirmidhi that Imam Bukhari died and nothing replaced him in Khurasan except Imam Tirmidhi in terms of knowledge, memorization, and zuhud (piety). He died In the year 279 A.H at an age of 79.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUNAN TIRMIDHI:

1) Defining the Status of Ahadith : He would mention only those ahadith which are related to the title and is followed by his opinion regarding the status of the hadith being *Sahih, Hasan, Gareeb, Za'eef etc.*

2) Opinions of Jurists: Imam Tirmidhi mentions the opinions of the different jurists. His principal aim was to discuss the legal opinions of early jurists. He mostly mentioned those ahadith which the jurists used as the basis for their legal decisions and he mentioned which school used which traditions. Thus, this book became an important source for the different view-points of various legal schools supported by proofs.

3) EXPLAINATION: Imam Tirmidhi took great pains in explaining the ahadith regarding what does the narrator say and mean. Thus explaining all the difficult ahadith .

4) AUTHENTICITY: This book lacks any of the fabricated hadith and is appreciated for its authenticity .

5) SEQUENCING: This book has been set out in an excellent sequence , making it easy to look for a hadith . Moreover since this is a guide for jurists , the ahadith categorized are according to the legal rulings e.g, Purification, Salah, Zakah etc.

6) Categorization: Sunan Al Tirmidhi is divided into four categories: The first ,those ahadith categorized as authentic, in agreement with Bukhari and Muslim. The second category are those ahadith which confirm to the standard of the three scholars , al-Tirmidhi, al-Nisai, and Abu Dawud. Thirdly, are the ahadith collected due to the contradiction , in this case he clarifies the flaw. And fourth, those ahadith which some fiqh specialists have acted upon.

AL SUNAN AL NASA'EE

Ahmad bin Ali Abu Abdur Rahman Nasaee popularly known as Imam Nasaee is applauded for his compilation of Hadith Sunan Nasaee. He was born in 215 A.H/829 CE. in a place near Khurasan called Nasa. It was the time when Khurasan was the centre of knowledge and technology. He got is early education in Khurasan and latter travelled far and wide in search

of Hadith. He travelled to Hijaz, Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Algeria and many other places. He was a man of taqwa and had a photographic memory. He died in 303 AH/ 915 CE.

TEACHERS

Among his teachers include Ishaq bin Rahweh, Muhammad bin Bashar, Qutaiba bin Sa'eed, Imam Abu Zara'a, Imam Bukhari

STUDENTS:

His noted students were Imam Abu Bakr bin Ahmad, Muhammad bin Qasim Andlusi, Hafiz Abu Jafar Tahawi

Sunan Nasaee is considered to be one of the collection of hadith (Kutub ul Sitta). It roughly contains over 5000 ahadith.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUNAN NASAEE

1) Chapterisation : It surpasses other book as per its order and style of compilation. Imam Nasai also mentions one Hadith under different chapter like Imam Bukhari.

2) Precision: On the pattern of Imam Muslim, he writes different chains of a tradition and points out the differences in the wordings.

3) Explanation: He discusses the weak points of tradition and their reasons. Imam Nasai is known for expertise about secret weak points of narrations. If there is some confusion in the name, nickname or something else then he states it. He verified whether the narrator met his teacher or not, whether the Hadith is Muttasil or Mursal. At places, he elucidates the meaning of difficult words.

SUNAN ABU DAWOOD

Sunan Abu Dawood is considered to be one of the collection of hadith (Kutub ul Sitta) by Imam Abu Dawud Sulayman ibn al-Ash'ath as-

Sijistani. He was born in the year 202 AH in Sijistan, a province in Khurasan (a region covering parts of present-day Iran and Afghanistan). He was from the Azd tribe of Yemen. He began to travel seeking aḥādīth at a young age, and reached Baghdad in 220 AH when he was 18 years old.His journeys in search of knowledge took him through the lands of Khurasan, Iraq, Hijaz, Sham, Egypt, and Nishapur. He was not only a muḥaddith, but also a prominent faqīh who studied extensively under Imām Aḥmad ibn Hanbal.

He has been praised for his perfect memory and deep knowledge. He possessed a sound mind and perfect intellect. Imām Abū Dāwūd (raḥimahullāh) passed away on Friday, 16 Shawwal 275 AH, at the age of 73 and was buried in Basrah

Teachers and Students:
He studied under around 300 great scholars of his time. Some of his famous teachers include Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Musaddad ibn Musarhad, Yaḥya ibn Ma`īn, Qutaibah ibn Sa`īd, Abū Bakr ibn Abī Shaibah etc . Among his noted students were his son Abū Bakr `Abdullāh ibn Abī Dāwūd, Imām at-Tirmidhī, Imām an-Nasā'ī etc.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUNAN ABI DAWOOD

1) AUTHENTICITY: This book lacks any of the fabricated hadith and is appreciated for its authenticity . Imam Abu Dawood has made the topic of his book those ahadith on which the Imams of fiqh have based their fatwa, called Mustadlaat.

2) SEQUENCING: This book has been set out in an excellent sequence , making it easy to look for a hadith . Moreover since this is a guide for jurists the arrangement a ahadith is from a juristic point of view.

3) CATEGORISATION: The traditions in Sunan Abi Dawood are divided in three categories. The first category consists of those traditions that are mentioned by Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim. The second category are those which fulfill the conditions of Imam Bukhari or Imam Muslim. However it is also known to contain some weak ahadith (some of which he has pointed out and others which he hasn't).

SUNAN IBN MAJAH

Sunan Ibn Mājah is a collection of hadīth compiled by Imām Muḥammad bin Yazīd Ibn Mājah al-Qazvīnī (raḥimahullāh). It is widely considered to be the sixth of the six canonical collection of Ḥadīth (Kutub as-Sittah) of the Sunnah of the Prophet (saws). It consists of 4341 aḥādīth in 37 books.

life

Abū `Abdullāh Muḥammad bin Yazīd bin `Abdullāh ar-Rab`ī al- Qazvīnī, famously known as Ibn Mājah, was born in 209 AH to a non-Arab tribe by the name of Rab`i in Qazvin (Iran). Ibn Mājah spent his early years studying Ḥadīth in his hometown of Qazvin, which had by then become a major center of hadith sciences. In 230 AH, at the age of 21 or 22, he travelled to various countries to seek more knowledge. He travelled to Khurasan, Iraq, Hijaz, Egypt and Sham to attend the gatherings of hadīth scholars. He also studied under scholars in Makkah and Madinah, and later travelled to Baghdad the seat of the caliphate and knowledge. He never gave up on his quest for knowledge and became a pupil of the major scholars of ḥadīth of those times.

Imām Ibn Mājah was a great Ḥadīth scholar, interpreter of the Qur'ān, and historian, whose rank has been acknowledged by various scholars of different ages. Imām adh-Dhahabī says, "Imām Ibn Mājah remembered aḥādīth by heart. Imām Abū `Abdullāh Muḥammad Ibn Mājah Al-Qazvīnī died on Monday, 22 Ramadan, in the year 273 AH at the age of 64.

CHARACTERISITICS OF SUNAN IBN MAJAH

The Sunan of Ibn Mājah is a collection of aḥādīth mostly arranged according to Fiqh chapters, but also includes other topics such as 'Aqīdah, interpretation of dreams, tribulations, and asceticism (piety, taqwa, spirituality). Sunan Ibn Mājah is considered one of the greatest works of Ḥadīth.

Sunan Ibn Mājah contains 37 books, 1560 chapters and 4341 aḥādīth. It includes 1339 additional aḥādīth, known as Zawā'id of Sunan Ibn Mājah which are not found in the other five major books of Ḥadīth. Sunan Ibn Mājah contains a larger number of aḥādīth than any of the other five books without repetition. It also includes a greater number of weak aḥādīth than the other five. Ibn Mājah was enthusiastic about finding evidences for Fiqh issues. His purpose may have been to collect as many aḥādīth, and find the chain of narrations for the aḥādīth that were the

basis of rulings on Fiqh issues of the time, regardless of their authenticity or chain of narrators.

- It is written in an excellent style; the chapter titles are in harmony with the ḥadīth listed and follow the same order as books of Islamic Jurisprudence.
- The chapters are well-ordered and well-arranged, with no repetition of aḥādīth (a quality lacking in other Ḥadīth books).
- It is brief but comprehensive with respect to legal rulings.
- On several occasions, Ibn Mājah identified aḥādīth that are Gharīb (unfamiliar). Imām at-Tirmidhī had done this earlier, but Ibn Mājah's classification in some special chapters are unique.
- Ibn Mājah gives the name of the town the narrator of a ḥadīth belonged to.
- He added 482 new Ṣaḥīḥ aḥādīth that are not in the other five books of Ḥadīth.
- Sunan Ibn Mājah includes 3002 aḥādīth that are common with the other five books, but Ibn Mājah narrated them with different channels of narration. The multiplicity of channels strengthen these aḥādīth. This distinguishing quality is unique to Ibn Mājah and is not found in any other book of Ḥadīth.
- It contains 1339 aḥādīth that are not found in any of the other five books. These additions, also known as Zawā'id have elevated Sunan Ibn Mājah to the position of the "sixth of the Six".

TYPES OF HADITH

Soon after the demise of Prophet (SAW) , companions had a special concern to safeguard the teachings and practice of Prophet of Allah (SAW). Gradually a whole system of preservation of hadith developed the like of which never seen before. Based on this each Hadith is checked on three areas called Sanad, Matan and Taraf

A Hadith is composed of three parts.

1: Sanad: (pl. Asnad): Sanad refers to the chain of narration which comprises the names of the persons delivering and receiving the hadith.

1. Matan : Matan means the text, the content or the actual substance of what was reported.
2. **Taraf** : The part, or the beginning sentence, of the text which refers to the sayings, actions or characteristics of the Prophet[(P)], or his concurrence with others action.

   Thus Hadith are classified based on Authenticity, Subject Matter (Matan , Text), Asnad (Chain of Narration), Manner of Transmission .
   Classification of Hadith Based on Authenticity:
   1. **Sahih**   2. **Hasan**   3. **Za'if**   4. **Mawdu '**

1. **Sahih:** It is an authentic Hadith, which is related by an unbroken chain of narrators, and its reporters are all trustworthy, having good and strong memories.
2. **Hasan : I**t is like Sahih tradition, except for the fact that some of its narrators have been found to have a weaker memory in comparison to the narrators of Sahih Ahadith .
3. **Da 'if:** This refers to that tradition in which there is some problem in either the chain of transmission, in the proper understanding of the transmitter or its contents, which may be in disagreement with Islamic beliefs and practices.

4. **Maudu`** - This refers to a <u>h</u>adith whose text goes against the established norms of the Prophet's sayings, or its reporters include a liar. Fabricated <u>h</u>adith are also recognized by external evidence related to a discrepancy found in the dates or times of a particular incident. This has no place in the true and authentic ahadith collections.

Classification of Hadith Based on Subject Matter:

1) **Hadith Qudsi**- It is the Hadith narrated by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) saying Allah says so and so…
2) **Marfu`** - It is a narration from the Prophet‛ (SAW) without any break or defect in the transmission , e.g., I heard the Prophet (SAW) saying ...
3) **Mauquf**- It is a narration from a companion of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) e.g. Ali bin Talib (RA) said, " Talk to people in a way they can understand you, do you want they should falsify Allah and His Rasul"? (sahih Bukhari)
4) **Maqtu`** - It is a hadith going back to Taba‘i , (the one who has met or accompanied any companion of Prophet (SAW).

Classificatio of Hadith Based on Sanad (Text):

1) **Musanad** – (supported): When asnad of a Hadith is uninterrupted and goes back to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) , it is called Musanad Hadith.
2) **Mutt<u>as</u>il** – (continuous): a <u> </u>hadith with an uninterrupted **isnad** which goes back only to a companion or successor.
3) **Mursal** – (hurried): if the link between the successor (Tab‘i) and the Prophet (SAW) is missing, e.g., when a successor (tab‘i) says "The Prophet said...".Here the Tab ‘i doesnot mention from which companion he received the statement.
4) **Munqa<u>ti</u>`** - (broken): A tradition that has a discontinuous chain of transmitters i.e an asnad having a link missing somewhere in the middle in one place o the other.
5) **Mu`a<u>d</u>al** – (perplexing): is a <u>h</u>adith whose reporter omits two or more consecutive reporters in the **isnad**.
6) **Mu`allaq** – (hanging): is a <u>h</u>adith whose reporter omits the one or more authority from the beginning and quotes the Prophet (SAW) directly (i.e., the link is missing at the beginning).

Classification of Hadith with reference to the Manner of transmission:

1) **Mutawatir** – (Consecutive): is a ḥadith which is reported by such a large number of people that they cannot be expected to agree upon a lie, all of them together.
2) **Aḥad** – (isolated): is a ḥadith which is narrated by people whose number does not reach that of the mutawatir.

It is further classified into:

   a. **Mash'hur** – (famous): ḥadith reported by more than two reporters originally and later on their authority these were reported by several other narrators.
   b. **`Aziz** – (rare, strong): at any stage in the **isnad**, only two reporters are found to narrate the ḥadith.
   c. **Gharib** – (strange): It is the hadith transmitted by a single narrator either initially or at any stage.

Unit VII

Fiqh

Fiqh , Meaning and Early Development , Sources of Fiqh , Important Schools of Fiqh (Origin and Characteristics).

MEANING OF FIQH:

Fiqh literally means, the true understanding of what is intended. An example of this usage can be found in the Prophet Muhammad's statement: "To whomsoever Allaah wishes good, He gives the Fiqh (true understanding) of the Religion" . Technically, however, Fiqh refers to the science of deducing Islamic laws from evidence found in the sources of Islamic law. By extension it also means the body of Islamic laws so deduced.

The Development of Fiqh

The development of Fiqh falls traditionally into six major stages named as follows: Foundation, Establishment, Building, Flowering, Consolidation, and Stagnation and Decline. These stages occur respectively in the following historical periods:

a) Foundation : the era of the Prophet (SW.) (609-632 CE)10

b) Establishment : the era of the Righteous Caliphs, from the death of the Prophet (SW.) to the middle of the seventh century CE (632-661)

c) Building : from the founding of the Umayyad dynasty (661 CE) until its decline in the middle of the 8th century CE.

d) Flowering : from the rise of the 'Abbaasid dynasty in the middle of the 8th century CE to the beginning of its decline around the middle of the 10th century CE.

e) Consolidation : the decline of the 'Abbaasid dynasty from about 960 CE to the murder of the last 'Abbaasid Caliph at the hands of the Mongols in the middle of the 13th century CE.

f) Stagnation and Decline : from the sacking of Baghdad in 1258 CE to the present.

1. The First Stage: FOUNDATION

The first stage in the development of Fiqh covers the era of the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) prophethood (609-632 CE) during which the only source of Islamic law was divine revelation in the form of either the Qur'aan or the Sunnah [the saying and actions of the Prophet (SW.). The various sections of the Qur'aan were generally revealed to solve the problems which confronted the Prophet (SW.) and his followers in both Makkah and Madeenah. A number of Qur'anic verses are direct answers to questions raised by Muslims as well as non-Muslims during the era of prophet hood. Many of these verses actually begin with the phrase "They ask you about." For example, "They ask you about wine and gambling. Say, 'There is great evil in them as well as benefit to man. But the evil is greater than the benefit.' (Surah Baqarah 219)

THE SECOND STATE: ESTABLISHMENT

This stage represents the era of the Righteous Caliphs and the major Sahaabah (companions of the Prophet (s.w.). It extends from the caliphate of Abu Bakr (632-634CE) to the Islamic state were rapidly expanded during the first twenty years of this stage to include Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, and Persia. Thus, Muslims were suddenly brought into contact with totally new systems, cultures, and patterns of behavior for which specific provision was not to be found in the laws of Sharee'ah. To deal with the numerous new problems, the Righteous Caliphs relied heavily on decisions by consensus (Ijmaa') as well as Ijtihaad, in which they had been trained by the Prophet (s.w.) while they were with him after his migration to Madeenah. In the course of their extensive use of Ijmaa' and Ijtihaad, these caliphs established procedures which later became the basis for legislation in Islaam, that is Fiqh.

Problem-solving Procedures of the Righteous Caliphs

Faced with a new problem, the caliph of this period would generally take the following steps in order to solve it:

(1) He would first search for a specific ruling on the problem in the Qur'aan.

(2) If he did not find the answer there, he would then search for a ruling on it in the Sunnah, the sayings and actions of Prophet (s.w.).

(3) If he still did not find the answer, he would then call a meeting of the major Sahaabah and try to get unanimous agreement on a solution to the problem. (This unanimity was referred to as Ijma'.)

(4) If unanimity could not be arrived at, he would then take the position of the majority.

(5) If however, differences were so great that on over-whelming majority opinion could be determined, the caliph would make his own Ijtihaad, which would then become law. It should also be noted that the caliph had the right to over-rule the consensus.

The fiqh during this time was based on actual problems rather than on hypothetical or imaginary ones. The majority of the Sahaabah preferred to stick closely to the literal meanings of texts of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. As a general practice, they avoided giving personal interpretations.

THE THIRD STAGE: BUILDING

This stage covers the rise and fall of the Umayyad dynasty. The Umayyads were in power for approximately one century, extending from the death of the last of the Righteous Caliphs ('Alee ibn Abee Taalib) in 661 CE and the ascendancy of the founder of the Umayyad dynasty, Caliph Mu'aawiyah ibn Abee Sufyaan, until the last of the Umayyad caliphs around the middle of the eighth century CE.

In this period the narrations of Hadeeth became widespread and there was an increasing tendency towards fabrication of Hadeeth. Finally, the period marked the first attempts at compilation of Fiqh, which was aimed at preserving the Ijtihaads of the Sahaabah. It was in this period too that scholars of Islamic Law first divided into fairly clearcut schools of thought, establishing various Madh-habs which in later periods were reduced to four major ones.

During the period of Four Righteous Caliphs (632-661 CE) there was no compilation of the Fatwaas (legal rulings) which had been made by the Sahaabah. It was during the Umayyad period that the very first attempts at a compilation of legal rulings occurred.

THE FOURTH STATGE: THE FLOWERING

This stage extends from approximately 750 CE to 950 CE, and covers the rise of the 'Abbaasid Dynasty founded by Caliph Abul-'Abbaas (reign 750-754), its consolidation and the beginning of its decline. It was during this period that Fiqh took shape as an independent Islamic science; Islamic scholarship was actively supported by the caliph and it flourished as discussion and debate on controversial issues became widespread; Madhabs multiplied' various compilations of Hadeeth and Fiqh were made.

The early 'Abbaasid Caliphs made a show of great respect for Islamic law and its scholars. Consequently, the 'Abbaasid caliphs of this period all took pride in sending their children to study under the major scholars of the time, and, what is more, some of the caliphs became scholars of Islamic law in their own right; for example, Caliph Haroon arRasheed (rule 786-809 CE). However, it should be noted that although scholars and judges were allowed a greater measure of freedom of opinion, they were often subjected to severe punishment if their rulings ran counter to political policy. For example, Imaam Malik was jailed, beaten and tortured for giving a Fatwaa that challenged an official policy of the 'Abbaasid Caliph.

During this stage there was increase in Centers of learning, Scholars and students from the various centers of learning began journeying back and forth in search of further knowledge about the conclusions reached by their contemporaries in other parts of the Muslim State. Whenever scholars or their students met, they would exchange thoughts on various Islamic issues which had arisen in their particular areas.

The Sources of Islamic Law

Following Sources of Law were used by the jurists in formulating legal verdicts:

1. **The Qur'an**: The Qur'an was the first source of law and its passages were accepted unanimously as being authentic.

2. **The Sunnah**, ahadith of the Prophet (s.w.) wee next in importance. However, scholars for their acceptance and application set various conditions.

3. **Opinion of the Sahaabah** The opinion of the Sahaabah either as a group or individually was considered the third most important source of law. This source was divided into two parts according to the positions taken by the Sahaabah. (a) If they were united on an opinion it was referred to as Ijmaa'. (b) If they had different opinions on a single issue, each opinion was referred to as a Ra'i (personal opinion).

4. **Qiyaas** (Analogical deduction): Ijtihaad based on evidence found either in the Qur'aan, the Sunnah or Ijmaa' was next in order of importance. The method of reasoning used was a form of analogical deduction called Qiyaas. An example of Qiyaas is the prohibition of marijuana based on the Prophet's statement: "Every intoxicant is Khamr and every form of Khamr is Haraam." Since Marijuana has as intoxicating effect it can be classified as Khamr and thus Haraam (prohibited).

5. **Istihsaan** (Legal Preference) This principle involves the preference of an opinion based on a circumstantial need over an opinion based on Qiyaas. This principle, referred to by various names, scholars of most schools of thought used (e.g. Istislaah). An application of Istihsaan is seen in the treatment of a contract for the manufacture and salw of as item. According to Qiyaas, based on the Prophet's statement, "Whoever sells food should not do so until he has in his own possession", contracts of this type are invalid, since the item is nonexistent at the time of the contract. However, since such contracts have been universally accepted by people and the need for such contracts is obvious, the ruling by Qiyaas

was dropped and the contracts were allowed, based on the principle of preference (Istihsaan).

6. **'Urf** (Custom) Local customs were accepted as a source of law in a given region as long as they did not contradict any of the principles of Islamic law.

PROMINENT SCHOOLS OF ISLAMIC LEGAL THOUGHT

THE HANAFEE MADHAB
The founder: Imaam Abu Haneefah (703-767CE): This Madh-hab is named after its founding scholar, Abu Haneefah, whose actual name was Nu'maan ibn Thaabit. He was born in the year 702 CE. Kufah, (Iraq). Abu Haneefah was considered among the minor Taabi'oon (students of the Sahaabah), because he had met a few of the Sahaabah and had related some Hadeeths from them. Imaam Abu Haneefah base his teaching method on the principle of Shoorah (group discussion). He would present a legal problem to his students for debate and discussion and tell them to record its solution whenever they arrived at a unified position.
Characteristics of Hanafee Madh-hab The early jurists of this Madh-hab deduced Islamic laws from the following sources, which are listed in the order of their importance:

1. The Qur'aan They considered the Qur'aan to be the primary unquestionable source of Islamic law. In fact it was used to determine the accuracy of the other sources. Accordingly any other source that contradicted the Qur'aan was considered inaccurate.

2. The Sunnah: The Sunnah was consulted as the second most important source of Islamic law, but with some qualification as to its use. They stipulated that it was not suffcient that a Hadeeth be accurate (Saheeh), but it had to be also widely known (Mash-hoor), if it was to be used as a legal proof.

3. Ijmaa' of the Sahaabah: Ijmaa' of the Sahaabah was given precedence over the personal opinions of Abu Haneefah and his students in their deduction of Islamic law.

4. Individual opinion of the Sahaabah :If there were different opinions among the Sahaabah on a particular point of law and no Ijmaa' was subsequently formed, Abu Haneefah

would choose the opinion which appeared most appropriate to the case in question.

5. Qiyaas (Analogical deduction): Abu Hanifa would consider himself the equal of the Taabi'oon and would make his own Ijtihaad based on the principles of Qiyaas which he and his students established.

6. Istihsaan (Preference): This may involve the preference of a Hadeeth which is specific over a general one, or it may even involve the preference of a more suitable law over the one deduced by Qiyaas.

7. 'Urf (Locar Custom): Local customs were given legal weight in areas where there were no binding Islamic customs available.

Main students of the Hanafee Madh-hab
The most famous of Abu Haneefah's students were Zufar ibn al-Hudhayl, Abu Yoosuf and Muhammad ibn al-Hasan.

THE MAALIKEE MADH-HAB The Founder: Imaam Maalik (717-801 CE)

The founding scholar of this Madh-hab, Maalik ibn Anas ibn 'Aamir, was born in Madeenah in the year 717 CE. His grandfather, 'Aamir, was among the major Sahaabah of Madeenah. Imaam Maalik continued to teach Hadeeth in Madeenah over a period of forty years and he managed to compile a book containing Hadeeths of the Prophet (s.w.) and Athars of the Sahaabah and their successors which he named al-Muwatta' (the Beaten Path).

Formation of the Maalikee Madh-hab Imaam Maalik's method of teaching was based on the narration of Hadeeths and the discussion of their meanings in the context of problems of that day. He would either narrate to his students Hadeeths and Athars (statements of the Sahaabah) on various topics of Islamic law then discuss their implications, or he would inquire about problems which had arisen in the areas from whence his students came, then narrate appropriate Hadeeths or Athars which could be used to solve them. After Maalik completed al-Muwatta', he used to narrate it to his students as the sum total of his Madh-hab, but would add or subtract from it slightly, whenever new

information reached him. He used to strictly avoid speculation and hypothetical Fiqh and thus his school and its followers were reffered to as the people of Hadeeth (Ahl al-Hadeeth).

Characteristics of the Maalikee Madh-hab

Imaam Maalik deduced Islamic law from the following sources which are listed in the order of their importance.

1. **The Qur'aan**: Like all the other Iaams, Maalik considered the Qur'aan to be the primary source of Islamic law and utlized it without laying any pre-conditions for its applications.

2. **The Sunnah:** The Sunnah was used by Imaam Maalik as the second most important source of Islamic law, but, like Abu Haneefah, he put some restrictions on its use. If a Hadeeth were contradicted by the customary practice of the Madeenites, he rejected it.

3. **'Amal (practices) of the Madeenites:** Imaam Maalik regarded common Madeenite practices as a form of highly authentic Sunnah narrated in deeds rather than words.

4. **Ijmaa' of the Sahaabah :** Maalik like Abu Haneefah considered the Ijmaa' of the Sahaabah, as well as that of later scholars, as the third most important source of Islamic law.

5. **Individual Opinion of the Sahaabah:** Imaam Maalik gave full weight to the opinions of the Sahaabha and where there was no consensus, their individual opinions were given precedence over his own opinion.

6. **Qiyaas**: Maalik used to apply his own deductive reasoning on matters not covered by the previously mentioned sources.

7. **Customs of the Madeenites** Imaam Maalik also gave some weight to isolated practices found among a few people of Madeenah so long as they were not in contradiction to known Hadeeths. He reasoned that such customs, must have been handed down from earlier generations and sanctioned by the Sahaabah or even the prophet (s.w.) himself.

8. **Istislaah (Welfare)** The principle of Istihsaan developed by Abu Haneefah was also applied by Maalik and his students except that they called it by the name Istislaah which means seeking that which is more suitable.

9.**'Urf (Custom)**: Like Abu Haneefah, Maalik considered the various customs and social havits of people throughout

the Muslim world as possible sources of secondary laws as long as they did not contradict either the letter or the spirit of the Sharee'ah.

THE SHAAFI'EE MADH-HAB

The founder: Imaam Ash-Shaafi'ee (769-820 CE) The full name of the scholar after whom this school of legal thought has been named was Muhammad ibn Idrees ash-Shaafi'ee. He was born in the town Ghazzah on the Mediterranean coast of what was then known as Shaam in the year 796 CE, but travelled to Madeenah in his youth to study Fiqh and Hadeeth under Imaam Maalik. Ash-Shaafi'ee remained under Maalik until the latter died in 801 CE. Then he went to Yemen and taught there.

Formation of the Shaafi'ee Madh-hab: Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee combined the Fiqh of Hijaaz (Maalikee thought) with that of Iraq, (Hanafee thought) and created a new Madh-hab which he dictated to his students in the form of a book called al-Hujjah (The Evidence). This book and period of his scholarship are usually referred to as al-Madh-hab al-Qadeem (the old school of thought) to differentiate it from the second period to his scholarship which occurred after he reached Egypt. In Egypt he absorbed the Fiqh of Imaam al-Layth ibn Sa'd and dictated al-Madh-hab alJadeed (the new school of thought) to his students in the form of another book which he named al-Umm (he Essence). Because of his exposure to a completely new set of Hadeeths and legal reasoning, in al-Madh-hab al-Jadeed, he reversed many of the legal positions which he had held while in Iraq. Imaam ash-Shafi'ee holds the distinction of being the first Imaam to systematize the fundamental principles of Fiqh which he recorded in his book called ar-Risaalah.

Characteristics of the Shaafi'ee Madh-hab :

Shafi'I Madh-habs used following sources of Law
1. **The Qur'aan**: Ash-Shaafi'ee did not differ from the previously mentione Imaams, in their uncompromising stand in relation to the primacy of the Qur'aan among the sources of Islamic law.

2. **The Sunnah:** Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee laid down only one condition for the acceptance of Hadeeths, namely that they be authentic (Saheeh).

3. **Ijmaa'** Although ash-Shaari'ee had serious doubts about the possibility of the Ijmaa' in a number of cases, he conceded that in the few cases where it was known to have occurred, it should be regarded as the third most important source of Islamic law.

4. **Individual Opinions of the Sahaabah:** Importance was given by Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee to the individual opinions of the Sahaabah on condition that they were not at contradiction with each other.

5. **Qiyaas :** Qiyaas was, in the Imaam's opinion, a valid method for deducing further laws from the previous sources. However, he placed it last in order of importance, considering his personal opinions inferior to proofs based on the opinions of the companions.

6. **Istis-haab (Linking)** Both the principle Istihsaan used by Abu Haneefah and Istislaah used by Maalik were rejected by ash-Shaafi'ee and considered a form of Bid'ah (innovation), since, in his opinion, they were based nostly on human reasoning in areas where revealed laws already existed. However, in dealing with similar issues ashShaafi'ee was obliged to use a principle similar to Istihsaan and - 91 - Istislaah which he called istis-haab.144 Istis-haab literally means seeking a link, but legally it refers to the process of deducing Fiqh laws by linking a later set of circumstances with an earlier set.

Followers of the Shafafi'ee Madh-hab

 The majority of the followers of the Shaafi'ee Madh-hab are now to be found in Egypt, Southern Arabia, (Yemen, Hadramout), Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Malaysia, and East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania) and Surinam in South America.

The Hambalee MADH-HAB

The Founder: Imaam Ahmad (778-855 CE) : The scholar to whom this Madh-hab is attributed is Ahmad ibn Hambal ash-Shaybaanee, who was born in Baghdad in the year 778 CE. He became one of the greatest memorizers and narrators of Hadeeth of his time. Concentrating on the study of

Hadeeth, Ahmad studied Fiqh and Hadeeth science under Imaam Abu Yoosuf, the famous student of Abu Haneefah, as well as under Imaam ashShaafi'ee himself.

Formation of the Hamblee Madh-hab: Imaam Ahmad's greatest concern was the collection, narration, and interpretation of Hadeeth. His teaching method consisted of dictating Hadeeths from his vast collection known as alMusnad, which contained over 30,000 Hadeeths, as well as the various opinions of the Sahaabah concerning their interpretation. He would then apply the Hadeeths or rulings to various existing problems. If he could not find a suitable Hadeeth or opinion to solve a problem, he would offer his own opinion while forbidding his students to record any of his own solutions. As a result, his Madhhab was recorded, not by his students but by their students.

Sources of Law Used by the Hambalee Madh-hab

 1. The Qur'aan: There was no difference between the way Ahmad ibn Hambal approached Qur'aan and that of those who preceded him. In other words, the Qur'aan was given precedence over all else under all circumstances.

 2. The Sunnah : Likewise, the Sunnah of the Prophet (s.w.) occupied the number two position among the fundamental principles used by the founder of this school in the deduction of laws. His only stipulation was that it be Marfoo', i.e. attributed directly to the Prophet (s.w.).

 3. Ijmaa' of the Sahabah Imaam Ahmad recognized the consensus of opinion of the Sahaabah, and placed it in the third position among the fundamental principles.

4. Individual Opinions of the Sahaabah: If a problem arose in an area where the Shaabah had expressed conflicting opinions, Ahmad, like Maalik, would give credence to all the various individual opinions.

5. Hadeeth Da'eef (Weak Hadeeth) : For a ruling on a case where none of the previous four principes offered a ready solution, the Imaam used to prefer to use a weak Hadeeth rather than applying his own deductive reasoning (Qiyaas).

6. **Qiyaas:** As a last resort, that is when no other major principle could be directly applied, Ahmad would reluctantly apply the principle of Qiyaas and deduce a solution based on one or more of the previous principles.

JA'FARI SCHOOL OF FIQH:

The Ja'fari school of though was headed by Imam Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq who lived from 83Ah to 148 AH. He was born in and died in the holy city of Madina , and he is the sixth imam of the twelve designated Imams of the school of Ahlul Bayt. The Imams had animosity with the Umayyad and Abbasid Khulafa thus once the Umayyad government became weak , Imam Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq found the golden opportunity to formulate and spread the tradition of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his family. His teachings were collected in 400 usul (foundations) which were written by his students. After a period of time , three distinguished scholars categorized these 400 Usul in four books which are the main sources of hadith for the Shi'a school of thought. They are: Usul al-Kafi by al-Kulayni (d. 329 H). *man la yahduruh al Faqih* by al-Sadiq *(d. 381 AH) al Tahdib* and *al-Istibsar* by al-Tusi(d. 460 H).

Characteristics:

While these four books are the main sources the authors have not claimed it to be authentic. If any particular tradition contradicted Qur'an then it was not accepted a legal and valid. Jafae al-Sadiq recognizes four sources of Islamic law: the Qur'an, the Sunnah (including the traditions reported by the Prophet (SAW)and the Imams).. concensus (which must include Prophet's or imams opinion to establish it's validity)., Qiyas (reasoning),. Since 1959 the Jafari School of Jurisprudence has been afforded the status of "fifth school" along with the four Sunni schools by Azhar University in Cairo. The other two legal schools that share the Jafari origin are the Zaidi and the Mustali Fatimid Ismaili jurisprudences.

Unit V:

'Ilm al-Kalam and Tasawwuf

Ilm al-Kalam and Important Mutakallimun

Ilm al-Kalam literally means 'speech' or 'word'. Technically it means the discipline of seeking theological knowledge through debate, discussion and argument.

The people who are masters of this science are referred to as a *mutakallimun*. It is not easy to establish exactly when *Ilm al- Kalam* came to regard as an independent religious science or branch of knowledge. The term *Kalam*, rapidly acquired the senses of logical argument, conversation, and discussion. Al-Farabi views *Ilm al-Kalam* as a branch of science which enables a man to obtain the victory of the dogmas and actions laid down by the Legislator of the religion, and to rebut all opinions contradicting them and those involved in this field *(mutakallimun)* themselves were to take a very similar view. At times it is also defined as the science which is concerned with resolutely setting up the religious beliefs by providing proofs and thereon evicting doubts. The science in other terms helps in the elucidation and protection of the content of the faith and takes the firm stand against doubters and deniers.

(i) Al-Ashari

Al-Ashari was born at Basrah. His full name is Abu Al-Hassan 'Ali ibn Ismail al-Ashari. There are different views regarding his date of birth. Ibn Khallikan mentions that he was born in 260 or 270A.H. /873 or 883C.E. and died at Baghdad in 330/ 941C.E. or sometime after that. It is said that he was a descendent of Abu Musa al-Ashari, one of the famous companions of the Messenger. Al-Ashari in his early youth became a disciple of a Mu'tazilite scholar of the Basrite School, Abu Áli Muhammad bin Ábu al-Wahhab al- Jubbai'. The result was that he remained associated with this school and supported its doctrines up to the age of forty. After this period, a sudden change took place in his mind. One day he declared, "He who knows me, knows who I am, and he who does not know me, let him know that I

am Abu al- Hasan Áli al-Ashári, that I used to maintain that the *Qur'an* is created, that the eyes of man shall not see God, and that the creatures create their actions. Lo! I repent that I have been a Mu'tazilite. I renounce these opinions and I take the engagement to refute the Mu'tazilites and expose their family and turpitude." How this sudden change came in al-Ash'ari is not definitely known to us.

After the 'transfer of ideology', Ashari wrote a number of books and some reports mention that their number amounted to three hundred. Some of his famous works are *Kitab al Sharah w-al- Tafsil*, *al-Ibanah ál- Usul al-Diyanah, Luma', Mu'jaz, Iádah al- Burhan, Tabi'ín and al-Maqalat al- Islamiyyin wa Ikhtilaf al-Musalliyyin*. Of these books, *al- Maqalat al-Islamiyyin* is the most authentic book on the views of different schools about religious dogmas and doctrines. Imam Ibn Taymiyyah says in his *Mihaj al-Sunnah* , that the most comprehensive books he went through on the views of different people on the basic principles of Islam was al- Ashari's *al-Maqalal al- Islamiyyin* and that he discussed many of such views in detail as were not even mentioned by others. Ibn al-Qayyim has also praised this work.

Asharite Theology

Asharism was a remonstration against rationalism of the Mu'tazilites and was the name of philosophic- religious school of thought that developed during tenth and eleventh centuries of Christian era. This movement was an endeavour not only to purge Islam of all non-Islamic doctrines and elements but also to harmonize the religious consciousness with the religious thought of Islam. This school was the foundation of an orthodox Islamic theology or Orthodox *Kalam*, as opposed to the rationalist *Kalam* of the Mu'tazilites. The circumstances at the end of ninth century were such that it was inevitable to develop such a movement. Other school of theology, similar to that of al-Ashari arose simultaneously in other regions e.g. Zahirites School in Spain, Al-Tahawi's School in Egypt, and al-Matrudi's School in Samarqand. But al-Ashari's school superseded them all and flourished, the reason being that it had such able adherents and exponents as al-Ghazali, Fakhr al-Din Razi, al-Baqalani etc.

Main Doctrines of Asharite Theology

1) Conception of God and the Nature of His Attributes

According to Ash'arite theology, God is one, unique, eternal, existent being; He is not a substance, not a body, not an accident, not limited to any direction, and not in any space. He possesses attribute like knowledge, power, life, will; He is hearing, seeing, and has speech.

The Asha'rites held that God has qualities which are unique and fundamentally different from those of created beings and these qualities should not be compared with them. This is known as doctrine of *Mukhalafah lil Hawadith*, or absolute difference. The qualities and attributes of God must be inapplicable to created beings and we should not ask 'how and draw comparisons.' The attributes of God differ from created beings not only in degree but also in their whole nature as well. The Asha'rites stated that God has such attributes that we are not to speculate about them but have to accept them as *bila kayf* (without how).

2) Possibility of Beatific Vision

Asha'rites provided following proofs in support of their view about the possibility of beautific vision, and based their views by taking the support of the *Qur'an* and *Hadith* .

(A) Proof from the Qur'an (Revelation)

Asha'rites came out with references of different *ayats* of the *Qur'an* in support of their position.

"That day will the faces be resplendent, looking towards their Lord." (75:22, 23)

It is clearly indicated in this *ayat* the possibility of beautific vision according to Ash'arites. They also held that it

is a gift, granted by God to the People of *Jannah* on the Day of Resurrection.

Musa (Allah's Blessings be Upon Him) said:

"O, my Lord, show thyself to me so that I can see Thee." (7:143)

Al-Ash'ari contended that had seeing been impossible Musa (Allah Blessings be Upon Him), would have not asked for it. How is it possible that a man like Musa (Allah Blessings be Upon Him) would have asked for an absurd and impossible thing?

(B) Proof from the *Hadith*

Asha'rites apart from the holy *Qur'an* support their views by quoting the *Hadith* in which, in reply to a question about the possibility of seeing God on the Day of Resurrection, he is reported to have said:

"You will see your Lord as you see the full moon while you will not disagree amongst yourselves."

In addition to *Qur'an* and *Hadith,* the Asha'rites gave logical arguments in support of their views like God can show us everything that exists. He exists therefore he can show Himself to us.

3) Free Will

About free will, Asha'rites followed middle path. They made a visible difference between creation *(Khalq)* and acquisition *(Kasb)* of an action. Man cannot create a thing; God is only creator, nor does man's power produce any effect on his actions at all. According to them God is the creator of human actions and man is the acquisitor. God creates in creature power *(Qadrah)* and choice *(Ikhtiyar).* Then he creates in him actions corresponding to the power and choice thus created. According to al-Ash'ari, though the action of the creature is created by God, yet it is acquired by creature. Acquisition *(Kasb)* corresponds to the creature's power and choice previously created in him; he is the only locus *(Mahall)* or subject of his action.

In this way, Asha'rites made man responsible for his actions. For example, a man writes with a pen on a piece of paper. God creates in his mind the will to write, thus bringing about the apparent motion of the hand and the pen and the appearance of the words on the paper.

Asha'rites introduced the doctrine of "acquisition" by which God creates actions and human beings "acquire" them and accordingly they could account for man's free will and lay responsibility upon him.

4) Eternity of the *Qur'an* (Createdness or Uncreatedness of the Qur'an)

A period witnessed a great controversy over the question that what is the relation between God and the *Qur'an*? In other words is the *Qur'an* created or uncreated? Asha'rites strongly upheld the uncreatedness and the eternity of the *Qur'an*. They held that the attributes of God are eternal and the divine speech
i.e., the *Qur'an* is also eternal and they say that it is "not he and not other than he." They put forward the *ayats* of the *Qur'an* in support of their views:

"The command is God's first and last",

That is the command which is indeed through God's word (Kalam Allah) is eternal and uncreated.

"Are not the Creation and the Command His..." (7:54)

According to Asha'rites God's command does not belong to the category of created thing and also God's command by its very nature is through his word or speech; hence Kalam Allah or the *Qur'an* is uncreated.

The *Qur'an* is the "Knowledge from God"; it is therefore inseparable from the attribute of Knowledge of God, which is eternal and uncreated. Hence, *Qur'an* is also eternal and uncreated. God created everything by his word *'Kun'* (Be). Asha'rites argued if the *Qur'an* is supposed to be 'created' the word *'Kun'* (Be) must have been uttered to it before it could have come into existence. If God should say *'Kun'* (Be) to the *Qur'an*, which is itself, the 'word of God', and a word would be said to another word then it implies that a word should be uttered to another word so that latter should come into existence. In this way, one word would depend upon another and the other upon the next and so on and so forth to infinity, which according to them is unthinkable and impossible. Thus by removing a supposition to an absurdity and irrationality, Asha'rites claimed to have proved that the *Qur'an* is uncreated.

5) God's seating Himself upon the Throne

It is one more doctrine that Asha'rites propounded and held. They tried to make it clear by giving reference of different *ayats* of the *Qur'an* that God is seated on His Throne.

> *"The Merciful is seated on the throne"* (20:4)

What! Are you sure that he who is in the heaven will not clear the earth beneath you? "And thou shall see the angels' circling around the throne, uttering the praises of their Lord" (39:75)

Their views were further strengthened and cemented by a tradition of Muhammad (peace be upon him) in which he is reported to have said that God descends every night to the lower heavens and asks; is there anyone who is to make a request? I am here to grant it to him. Is there anyone who asks for forgiveness? I am here to forgive him. This goes on till dawn.

Imam al-Ghazali

Abu Hamid Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ta'us Ahmad al-Tusi al-Shafi'i was a born at Tabaran in 450 A.H. / 1058 C.E. He is popularly known by al-Ghazali. He has been called by some the greatest Muslim, though also criticized at times. In his early childhood, al-Ghazali began the study of theology, first in his native town under Shaykh Ahmad Ibn Muhammad al-Radhkhani and then at Jurjan under Abu Nasr al-Isma'ili.

He also studied at Nizamiyyah academy of Nishapur under Abu al-Ma'ali known as Imam al-Haramayn, the most famous Asha'rite theologian of the day and al-Ghazali stayed there until al-Ma'ali's death in 1085 C.E. The curriculum included wide range of subjects like theology, philosophy, logic dialectics, natural sciences etc. Indeed, it was during his studentship in Nizamiyyah Academy of Nishapur, that al-Ghazali became impatient of dogmatic teaching and freed himself from the bondage of authority *(Taqlid)*.Within no time, the reputation of his learning spread very quickly in the Islamic world. He then moved to the headquarters of Nizam al-Mulk (*Wazir* of Saljuqs) who was a great patron of scholarship. Al-Ghazali's profound and deep knowledge of Muslim law, theology and philosophy impressed Nizam al-Mulk that he appointed him to the Chair of Theology in the Nizamiyyah Academy. At that time, he was only thirty-four. This was the highest of all the honours in the then Muslim world and one which had not been previously conferred on any at so an early age. In this academy as a professor al-Ghazali was a complete success, the brilliance of his lectures, the extent of his learning, and the precision of his explanations attracted larger and larger classes including the chief savants of the time. He came to be looked upon as the greatest theologian in the Ash'arite tradition. An emotional breakdown in 1095 C.E. stopped him from displaying the duty as teacher and accordingly left Baghdad. He went to Damascus and spent his time in ascetic and spiritual exercises and then he again visited Baghdad for a brief period. In 1099 he went to Tus and wrote his important work *Ihya' Ulum al-Din* (The Revival of the Religious Sciences). In 1106 he was requested by the present *Wazir*, the son of Nizam al-Mulk to teach in the Nizamiyyah and he worked there for about four or five years. In his later life, al-Ghazali established a Madrasah at Tus, where he used to teach both theology and *tasawwuf*. He remained in Tus until his death in 505 A.H. / 1111 C.E.

Al-Ghazali occupies a unique position in the history of religious and philosophical thought. With him, we come to one of the famous, greatest and original thinkers in the history of human thought. He has been conferred with the title of 'Islam's Convincing Proof' *(Hujjat al-Islam),* 'The Ornament of Faith' *(Zain al-Din),* and the Renewer of Religion *(Mujaddid).* Al-Ghazali was a philosopher, a mystic, a theologian, a traditionalist and a moralist. He occupies an eminent position as the theologian of Islam.

Philosophy of Al-Ghazali

One of the prominent things about al-Ghazali's system of thought is the courage to know and the courage to doubt. This is best mentioned in his His autobiography, *al-Munqidh min al-Dhalal* (The Deliverer from Error), which he wrote some five years before his death. In this work, al-Ghazali makes critical examination of the ways and methods of various schools of thought in a way similar to that of Descartes. This work is most important source to explore al-Ghazali's relative spiritual exercises with regard to various schools of thought around him. He had been moving through them all these years, studying them very closely and finally provides a critical analysis in a summary fashion.

Descartes doubted and al-Ghazali had courage to doubt. Descartes starting with doubt disbelieved the senses, distrusted all the knowledge acquired by him and disowned all the traditional authority and finally stopped at thought, finding truth in the dictum *'cogito ergo sum'* 'I think; therefore, I am.' In a similar way al-Ghazali also passed through all these stages of doubt, but he did not stopped his journey at thought and doubted even thought as an organ for acquiring the knowledge of reality. While Descartes held that reason was competent to explain the ultimate truth, but al-Ghazali disbelieved in absolute powers of reason also and found it insufficient to answer different metaphysical questions raised by it. Al-Ghazali proved the impossibility of building up metaphysics on reason alone in his *Tahafat al-Falasifah* (The Refutation of the Philosophers)

Al-Ghazali and His Attack on the Philosophers

One of the important stages of al-Ghazali is his critical evaluation of the method and the doctrines of the philosophers like Aristotle and their Muslim representatives such as al-Farabi and Ibn- Sina and criticized them on twenty points. Al-Ghazali becomes very bitter and charges philosophers with infidelity (*kufr)* particularly with reference to the three doctrines of the philosophers, viz:
1) eternity of the world
2) denial of God's knowledge of the particulars and
3) denial of bodily resurrection
1) Eternity of the World
Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina believed that God is the eternal creator of the universe, but at the same time they also affirmed that the world although is created but has no beginning - eternal. They believed that God, the eternal creator constantly

combines matter with new forms; God did not create the universe out of sheer nothingness at a definite time in the past.

Al-Ghazali believed that the most important problem is the eternity of the world. He holds firmly that God created the world out of sheer nothingness, at a certain moment in the past and his view is in accordance with the teachings of *Qur'an*. Therefore, Al-Ghazali believes that God has created this universe at some specific moment and insists that it is not for human even to have the shadow of a comprehension of God's creative activity.

2) God's Knowledge of the Particulars

Al-Ghazali rejects all those views that circumscribe knowledge of God. Different philosophers tried to restrict and limit the knowledge of the God merely to that of the universals or things in general. "God knows the creeping of the black ant upon the rugged rock in a dark night, and he perceives the movement of the mote in the midst of the air." Ibn Sina did not deny at all that God's knowledge envisages the knowledge of all the particulars and subscribes to the view that God knows everything and has maintained this in his major philosophical work *al-Shifa'*. Ibn Sina says in this book that nothing not even as much as a particle of dust in the heavens or on the earth, remains hidden from His knowledge. Still al-Ghazali charged Ibn Sina of infidelity on the point that God knows all the particulars, He knows them only in a universal way. This follows that God cannot have the perceptual knowledge of particular things but knows them in a universal way.

The most important point to mention al-Ghazali's criticism revolves round the consideration of time. The philosophers are of the opinion that God knows particular events before hand from all eternity and not the time when they occur. This implies that God knows human beings universally and eternally and not in their particular "heres" and particular "nows". This further follows that God knows Harun, for instance, but He does not know about the change that takes place in Harun. God only knows that Harun would be either a believer or an infidel and he cannot know about any new state of the Harun, because God can only know belief or unbelief of a human being in a universal way and not in specific way that too in relation with the individuals. This philosophy creates a void between God and man because God is eternal and man is temporal. All the experiences of human beings do change with time.

3) Bodily Resurrection

Philosophers believed in spirituality and immortality of the soul and to support their views, they put forward many rational arguments; of them, al- Ghazali in his Tahafat has mentioned about ten. These philosophers denied resurrection of the bodies, denied physical pains and pleasures and denied the physical existence of paradise and hell. They believed that life hereafter is purely spiritual and that paradise and hell are not localities but only the states of one's soul. These philosophers recognized that many *ayats* of the *Qur'an* mention the life hereafter but according to them; in these *ayats* the language that is used is symbolic and metaphorical.

Al-Ghazali strongly criticizes the views of these philosophers on the account that it was mere deception and duplicity. According to him they had given the reference of only those *ayats* of the *Qur'an* which made their way clear enough and were able to interpret them in their own terms and in a philosophical manner.

These philosophers used to put forward their arguments like the body of man will be reduced to dust or will be eaten by worms. Is it still possible for this body to be resurrected again, they similarly made use of other arguments to support their philosophy. However, al-Ghazali is of the opinion that how much strong these arguments may be, they still fail to prove the impossibility of bodily resurrection.

Imam Ibn Taymiyyah

Ibn Taymiyyah was born in Harran in northern Syria in 1263C.E. and died in Damascus in 728 A.H/1328C.E. He lived in a time when the Islamic world was dominated by two powers- Mamluks and Mongols. In 1258 C.E. Mongols sacked Baghdad and were advancing towards Damascus. The huge flood of Mongols and their advance was stopped by the Mamluks in 1260 C.E. in the south of Damascus at a place known as Ain Jalut. Thus the Islamic world was suffering from external aggression and internal strife. The crusaders had not been fully expelled from the Holy Land, and the conflict between Mongols and Mamluks continued for a considerable period till 1295 C.E. when Mongol leaders accepted Islam. Within Muslim society, different Sufi orders were spreading beliefs and practices not condoned and criticized by orthodox Islam, while the orthodox schools of Jurisprudence were stagnant in religious thought and practice. It was in this setting of turmoil and conflict that Ibn Taymiyyah formulated his views on the causes of

the weakness of the Muslim nations and on the need to return to the Qur'an and *Sunnah* as the only means for revival.

It is said that Ibn Sina was the greatest of the philosophers and al-Ghazali the greatest of the Muslims, Ibn Taymiyyah was without any doubt the greatest of the mavericks. Ibn Taymiyyah gave the call for the establishment of the society that was totally in conformity with the Shari'ah. Ibn Taymiyyah was a staunch defender of Islam based on strict adherence to the Qur'an and *Sunnah.* He believed that these two sources contain all the religious and spiritual guidance indispensable for our salvation in the Hereafter. Thus, he rejected the arguments and ideas of both philosophers and Sufis regarding religious knowledge, spiritual experiences and ritual practices. According to him, Ibn Sina was one the prominent and several major dangers to the belief and about al-Ghazali; he says represents a kind of compromise that was also dangerous.

He believed that logic is not a reliable means of attaining religious truth and that the intellect must be subservient to revealed truth. He also came into conflict with many of his fellow Sunni scholars because of his rejection of the rigidity of the Schools of Islamic Thought (Madhhabs) in Islam. He believed that the four accepted schools of jurisprudence had become stagnant and sectarian, and also that they were being inappropriately influenced by aspects of Greek logic and thought as well as *Sufi* mysticism. His challenge to the leading scholars of the day was to return to an understanding of Islam in practice and in faith, based solely on the Qur'an and *Sunnah.*

Although Ibn Taymiyyah was educated in the Hanbali School of Thought, he soon reached a level of scholarship beyond the restrictions of that school. He was fully versed in the opinions of the four schools, which helped him to reach the conclusion that blind adherence *(taqlid)* to one school would bring a Muslim into conflict with the letter and spirit of Islamic law based on the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah.* Similarly, he had acquired a deep understanding of philosophical and mystical texts. In particular, he focused on the works of Ibn Sina and Ibn al-'Arabi as examples of philosophical and mystical deviation in Islam, respectively. Both of these trends had come to exert strong influence on Muslim scholars and lay people alike.

Ibn Taymiyyah placed primary importance on revelation as the only reliable source of knowledge about Allah and about a person's religious duties towards Him. The human intellect *('aql)* and its powers of reason must always be

subservient to revelation. According to Ibn Taymiyyah, the only proper use of intellect *('aql)* was to understand Islam in the way the Messenger and his Sahabah did, and then to defend it against deviant sects. When discussing the nature of God, he argued, one must accept the descriptions found in the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* and apply the orthodox view of "without how" *(bila kayf)*. This means that one believes in all the attributes of God mentioned in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* without investigating the nature of these, because the human mind is incompetent of understanding the eternal God. For instance, if *Qur'an* says that Allah is seated on His throne, we must accept this while remembering that *Qur'an* also says, "There is nothing like him" (42:11). Any further explanation leads away from the truth. The same attitude should be held for all of God's attributes such as His sight, His hearing or His hand.

The philosophical argument that the oneness of God precludes a multiplicity of attributes was not acceptable to Ibn Taymiyyah, because God says that he is one and that he has various attributes. This denial of the attributes of God based on rationalism was adopted by the Mu'tazilites, of whom Ibn Taymiyyah was chiefly critical. Even the more orthodox views of the Ash'arites, who accepted seven attributes basic to God, were criticized by Ibn Taymiyyah. However, he did not go so far as to declare these two groups heretical, for they deviated only in their interpretation of God's nature. But he did not spare the label of apostate for those philosophers such as al-Farabi and Ibn Sina who, in addition to the denial of God's attributes, also denied the createdness of the world and believed in the emanation of the universe from God. He also criticized both philosophers generally and al-Ghazali in particular on the grounds that their goal was knowledge of God, whereas the real goal is obedience to God.

Ibn Taymiyyah attacked the idea of emanation not only in its philosophical but also in its mystical context, as adopted by the *Sufis*. He felt that the beliefs and practices of the *Sufis* were far more dangerous than were the ideas of the philosophers. The latter were an undersized elite group that had little straight effect on the masses. The *Sufis*, however, were widespread and had a large popular following. However, Ibn Taymiyyah saw a link between the ideas of the philosophers and those of the *Sufis*, even though apparently they had little in common. Ibn Taymiyyah approved moderate *Tasawwuf* which would help people to obey Allah but he forcefully criticized and opposed the main tenet of *Sufi* thought as propounded by Ibn al-'Arabi that is the concept of the Oneness of

Existence *(Wahdat al-Wujud)*. He criticized the theory by saying, "God, praises be to Him, is not his own creature, and not a part of His creation or an attribute of it". To propound that we share "existence" with God is misleading, because this shared "existence" is only in our minds, not something "out there". The proper goal is not unity of existence but unity of will, where the believer desires and does only what God desires. Through this belief, *Sufis* think they are able to effect a merging of their souls with God's essence. That is, when God reveals his truth to an individual, that person realizes that there is no difference between God and the self. Ibn Taymiyyah saw a link between the *Sufi* belief of *Wahdat al-Wujud* and the philosophical concept of emanation. Although the philosopher would deny that a human soul could flow into, and thus be, the First Cause, the mystical experience of the *Sufis* took them beyond the realm of intellectual discourse. According to the mystic, a merging occurred but could not be expressed in rational terms. For Ibn Taymiyyah, both the philosopher and the mystic were deluded, the former by reliance on a limited human intellect and the latter by excessive emotions.

Ibn Taymiyyah's argument against the *Sufis* is on two levels. First, there is the theological position that God has attributes and that one of these attributes is God as creator. Ibn Taymiyyah believed that the *Qur'an* firmly establishes that God is the one who created, originated and gave form to the universe. Thus there exists a distinction between God the creator and the created beings. This is an absolute distinction with no possibility of merging. He then went on to say that those who strip God of his attributes and deny that he is the creator are just one step away from falling into the belief of *Wahdat al-Wujud*. This is the basis for the second part of his argument. Ibn Taymiyyah believed that a *Sufi* is simply someone who is overcome by an outburst of emotion. For example, someone may deny God's attributes but could then be overwhelmed by a feeling of love for God. However, the basis of that person's knowledge is not the authentic information from the *Qur'an*, and so their weak intellectual foundation collapses with the onslaught of emotion. For, according to Ibn Taymiyyah, sense perception and emotions cannot be trusted, and the likelihood of being led astray by them is compounded when one has a basis of knowledge which is itself errant and deviant. One holds a proper belief in God and maintains a proper relationship with him, Ibn Taymiyyah argued, by establishing a foundation of knowledge based on the *Qur'an* and authentic *Sunnah*.

The Greek Philosophers spoke of the eternity of matter (an eternal universe) and the *Ahl al-Kalam* (Mu'tazilites, Ash'arites, Maturidites, and Karamites etc) attempted to affirm the origination of the universe by employing the conceptual tools of those same Greek Philosophers to devise a rational proof. In the process some were forced into divestment of Allah's attributes *(ta'til)* and others fell into *tajsim*. When those who were upon the way of the Greek Philosophers such as al-Farabi (d. 339A.H) and Ibn Sina (d. 429A.H), saw the inherent flaw in this proof, they pounced and used it as an argument to bolster and reinforce their claim of the universe being eternal, despite the fact that they never had any fundamental proof that the universe is eternal to begin with. In this manner, the *Ahl al-Kalam* opened up a door of great evil upon the Ummah. Ibn Taymiyyah observing the errors of the *Mutakallimin* wrote extensively on this matter and aided the Mutakallimin against the Philosophers by correcting the errors of the Mutakallimin pointing out the flaws in their argument and showing them the correct way to combat and contest the Philosophers and destroy their arguments. Ibn Taymiyyah corroborates that everything besides Allah is originated, has a beginning and is preceded by its own non-existence.

This matter is stated in abundance by Ibn Taymiyyah in many of his famous and well-known works, such that none can claim to be ignorant of this fact. For instance in the book *al-Safadiyyah*, Ibn Taymiyyah refutes of the Philosophers on two aspects. Firstly, they claim that the miracles of the Messengers are merely manifestations of the strength of inherent faculties and secondly, that the universe is eternal. To this Ibn Taymiyyah replied:

"And this is from that by which the futility of their saying about the eternity of the universe is made clear, and a clarification that everything that is besides Allah is originated, [coming to be] after it was not" (Al-Safadiyyah, 1/21)

He also wrote:

"However, that which the [revealed] books and messengers spoke with is that Allah is the creator of every single thing, so whatever is besides Allah from the planetary orbits, the angels and other than that, it is all created (makhluq), originated (muhdath), coming to be after not existing, preceded by its own non-existence. And there is nothing [present] in the universe alongside Allah anything eternal with His eternity, neither the planetary orbits, nor the angels - irrespective of whether they are called intellects or souls or not". (Al-Safadiyyah, 1/14)

And also:

"And we shall explain the futility of their evidence for the eternity of the universe upon this other consideration..." (Al-Safadiyyah, 1/17)

And also: *"And this is a noble evidence for the origination of everything besides Allah, absolutely, and it is built upon correct foundational principles which are acknowledged by the Philosophers and others besides them".* (Al-Safadiyyah, 1/79). And also:

"And this arena [of discussion] is from the mighty principles in which the chiefs of the people of inspection, philosophy and kalam have stumbled. Whoever traversed the lofty prophetic path will know that sound reason agrees with authentic revealed text, and he will speak in accordance with the necessity of reason in this [affair] and in that [affair], and he will affirm what the Messengers affirmed of the creation of the heavens and earth in six days, that Allah is the Creator of everything, its Lord and its Owner, and that He never made anything besides Allah to be eternal alongside Him. Rather, everything besides Him is originated, coming to be after not being..." (Al-Safadiyyah, 1/146-147)

This is only a small sample of the abundance of what is found in this great work and excellent refutation of the secular atheist Philosophers and their baseless views that oppose both sound reason and authentic revelation. As for the *Ahl al-Kalam*, when they resorted to the conceptual language and tools of the Philosophers themselves in devising their proof *(Huduth al-Ajsam),* they were forced, in order to remain consistent with their proof, to deny Allah's names, attributes and actions, to varying degrees. However, they were all united in denying that Allah has speech and action tied to His will and power, in other words Allah's chosen actions *(Af'al Ikhtiyariyyah).* Because of this, they were unable to satisfactorily refute the atheist Philosophers, despite make a display of pomp and glitter of it.

Ibn Taymiyyah left a considerable body of work – often republished in Syria, Egypt, Arabia, and India – that extended and justified his religious and political involvements and was characterized by its rich documentation, sober style, and brilliant polemic. In addition to countless legal opinions based on religious law *(fatwās)* and several professions of faith, the most beautiful of which is the *Wāsitīyah*. In addition to it, two works merit particular attention. One is his *al-Siyāsat al-Sharʿīyah* (Treatise on Juridical Politics), available English translation. The other, *Minhāj al-Sunnah* (The Way of Tradition), is the richest work of comparative theology surviving from medieval Islam.

Tasawwuf: Origin and Early Development

There are two aspects of Islam, the outward and the inward. In the outward aspect of Islam the emphasis is on the observance of Law; in the inward aspect the emphasis is on seeking the Truth/reality. Sufism has been defined as an attempt of individual Muslims to realize in their personal experience the living presence of Allah. It is the quest for nearness to God. The goal of Sufism is 'Spiritual upliftment' and Vision of God, made synonymous with *Tauhid* which entails a total loss of the self—annihilation of the individual will and its subservience to the Divine will, and obedience to the commands of the Lord. The '*Ulama* emphasize the social aspect of Islam, and concentrated on the observance of the ritual and external practices. The Sufis emphasize the individual aspect and seek to purify and spiritualize their souls by giving Islam a deeper mystical meaning.

According to William Chitick, "Sufism (Mysticism) is the quest for direct communion with God (ultimate reality).

Sufism is the science based on experience where the *Zat* (divine Escence) and *Sifat* (attributes) of Allah are discussed. It also discusses the methods, ways, means and experience which leads to purification of inner self (*Tazkiyya e-nafs)*. According to *Abdu Hassan Noori* of *Khurasan* "Sufism is neither performing religious rituals nor is it knowledge of science and philosophy. It means moral perfection and purification. It means freedom, manliness, non-attachment (to the worldly desires) and generosity (self-sacrifice).

Tasawwuf is a term for the process of realizing ethical and spiritual ideals; meaning literally "becoming a Sufi," The etymologies for the term *Sufi* are various. The primary obvious meaning of the term comes from *suf*, "wool," the traditional ascetic garment of prophets and saints in the Near East. The term has also been connected to *safa*, "purity," or *safwa*, "the chosen ones," emphasizing the psychological dimension of purifying the heart and the role of divine grace in choosing the saintly. Another etymology links *Sufi* with *suffa* or bench, referring to a group of poor Muslims contemporaneous with the prophet Muhammad [peace be upon him], known as the People of the Bench, signifying a community of shared

poverty. In practice, the term *Sufi* was often reserved for ideal usage, and many other terms described particular spiritual qualities and functions, such as poverty *(faqir, darvish)*, knowledge *(alim, arif)*, mastery *(shaykh, pir)*, and so on. *(Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World)*

Although *Tasawwuf* has always been associated with the spiritual dimension of Islam, the term "*Tasawwuf*" does not seem to have been used until many years after the emergence of Islam. What, then, is the history of *Tasawwuf*, and where did it originate? *Tasawwuf* is a blend of various thoughts and philosophies. By intermingling, a few traces of Islamic teachings with it, the *Sufi* thinkers attempted to sanctify their doctrines and demonstrate its conformity to Islam.

In all times and places there have been individuals whose deep thirst and inner restlessness have drawn them to spend time inmeditation, prayer or retreat. Such a person was the Muhammad (peace be upon him), who even before receiving prophetic revelations would periodically withdraw to a cave outside *Makkah* to worship Allah.

The emergence of the first individuals to be labelled *"Sufis"* is commonly linked to the historical developments of the seventh and eighth centuries. Between 622 and 632 C.E., the Muhammad (peace be upon him) established in Madinah a society that reflected Islamic principles of equity, justice, consensus, piety and sensitive leadership. After his lifetime, the first four successors to his authority, the Rightly Guided Caliphs, followed his guidance closely. They governed the Muslims' rapidly expanding territories in accordance with the teachings of the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah.*

After a period of hundred years, there was considerable political turmoil, and leadership of the Muslim community passed out of the hands of its most religiously devout members. Various sub-groups observed that their rulers had become immersed in worldly affairs and selfish ends. Many well known and respected Muslims, as a result, cut themselves from the government altogether. Some of those who rejected such government started to be called *Sufis*. The Persian shaykh Abu Halim Kufi (d. about 776 C.E) was the first person to be known by this name. Between 660 and 850 C.E., the earliest *Sufi* circles emerged.

The second phase in the spread of *Sufi* teachings coincides with another important aspect of Islamic history, from 850 C.E. until the tenth century. Greek philosophy and sciences had become current among Muslims, and Islamic society faced a storm of rationalism. The common people found their beliefs shaken to the

core. Doubts assailed them. To neutralize these influences *Sufi* masters stressed the doctrine of passionate love *('ishq)* and the experiences attained through spiritual states of the heart.

The third stage of the development of *Tasawwuf* took place in the tenth century C.E. The sages of this era tried to reawaken areligious spirit that would infuse people's day-to-day lives. They realized that human behavior could not progress as long as human hearts were consumed with devil concerns. They emphasized purification of the self, guiding people to overcome the conditioning that comes with worldly pursuits and rational thinking. They helped people to revivify their inner lives by providing a framework and discipline for ethical and moral outer lives.

Between the tenth and twelfth centuries, *Tasawwuf* became a widely respected discipline. Many great scholars and spiritual masters taught during this period, establishing the *Sufi* practices and terminology. Several orders (*tariqahs*) were also founded. By the end of the thirteenth century, *Tasawwuf* had become a well-defined science of spiritual awakening. Through experimentation and investigation, *Shaykhs* had developed transferable techniques for self-refinement, the efficacy of which was confirmed by numerous aspirants. The Sufi *tariqahs* had become the basis for a widespread mystical movement, lending new life to humanity's age-old spiritual desire.

Some Important Sufis and their Role

1. **Hassan al-Basri**

Abu Sa'id al-Hasan ibn Abi Hasan Yasar al-Basri, (642 –728 C.E, 21-110A.H.), also known as Imam Hasan al- Basri, born in 21 AH in Madinah during the reign of Hadhrat Umar was a well-known Muslim theologian and scholar of Islam. He was the son of a freedwoman named Umm Salamah. It is said that his mother took him as a child to Hadhrat Umar who supplicated for him with the words: "O Allah! Make him wise in the Religion and beloved to people." As a man, he became known for his strict and encompassing embodiment of the *Sunnah* of the Muhammad (peace be upon him), famous for his immense knowledge, piety and simple living *(zuhd)*, fear less remonstrance of the authorities, and power of attraction in both discourse and appearance. Before he was fourteen years old, he managed to memorize the Holy *Qur'an*. He also learnt reading, writing, and some

mathematics. When he was fifteen years old, Hasan al-Basri moved to Basrah (Iraq) in 36 A.H., 656 C.E, he started learning *Fiqh*, *Hadith,* and the Arabic language at the hands of a large number of the Sahabah who were living in Basrah at that time. Delivering sermons and recounting religious tales appealed to Hasan al-Basri and he took a place in the *Masjid* of Basrah to teach people. He used to talk about the life after death, reminding people of death, drawing their attention to the religious and moral defects they may have, and how they could overcome them according to what he had learn from the Book of Allah, the *Sunnah* of Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Hasan al- Basri had a large class in the *Masjid* of Basrah in which he taught people *Qur'an*, *Hadith, Fiqh*, Arabic language, and rhetoric. He also conducted a special class in his house to teach people about asceticism and deliver touching speeches.

He was a pious man who used to desist himself from committing any prohibited act. He adhered to the straight path in all his affairs. He shouldered the responsibility of guiding and advising people to save his society from the deviations and aberrations that were beginning to prevail.

Hasan al-Basri adopted the doctrine of the Sahabah. He was their student and had the pleasure of accompanying them. He was influenced by their methodology and steered their course.

Hasan al-Basri had been gifted with noble virtues and brilliant capabilit ies vital to make his exhortation for revival of Islam. He was distinguished for his usual temperament, friendly and considerate, winning and enchanting, on one hand and for his scholarship and profound learning strengthened with good judgment and wisdom on the other. In his knowledge of the *Qur'an* and *Hadith,* he excelled all the learned men of his times. He had the opportunity of being an associate of the Sahabah. He was fully aware of the deficiencies in practices that had crept in among the different sections of the society, and the ways necessary to wipe out them.

Hasan al-Basri was considered an equally good elocutionist (to have an art of speaking). Rabi ibn Anas says that he had the privilege of being closely associated with Hasan al-Basri for ten years and almost every day, he found something new not heard of earlier in his lectures.

Never blame anybody for something that Allah did not grant you. Allah created people and they steer the course predetermined for them. Whoever thinks

that extra care and interest will increase his provisions let him try such extra care and interest in increasing his life span. While comparing the moral condition of his own times with that of the Sahabah, he observes:

"Dignified in the company of their friends, praising Allah when they were left alone, content with the lawful gains, grateful when ease of means, resigned when in distress, remembering Almighty Allah among the idle and craving the grace of Allah. When among the pious, such were the Sahabah, their associates and their friends. No matter what position they occupied in life, they were held in high regard by their companions and when they passed away, their spirit took flight to the blessed companionship high as the most celebrated souls. O Muslims, those (Sahabah) were your righteous ancestors, but when you deviated from their right path, Almighty Allah too withheld his blessings from you."

By Allah! I have met seventy veterans of Badr. Most of their garments were wool. Had you seen them you would have said they are crazy, and had they seen the best among you they would have said: "Those people will have no part in the Hereafter." Had they seen the worst among you they would have said: "Those people do not believe in the Day of Reckoning." I have seen people for whom this world was cheaper than the dust under their feet. I have seen people the like of who would come home at night, not finding more than his own portion of food, and yet say: "I shall not put all of this into my belly. I shall certainly give some away for the sake of Allah." Then he would give away some of his food in charity, even if he were more in need of it than its recipient.

Imam al-Ghazzali relates al-Hasan's words on the personal struggle against one's lusts *(Jihad al-Nafs),* in the section of his *Ihya'* that al-Hasan al-Basri said: Two thoughts roam over the soul, one from Allah one from the enemy.

Allah shows mercy on a servant who settles at the thought that comes from Him. He embraces the thought that comes from Allah, while he fights against the one from his enemy. If man follows the dictates of anger and appetite, the dominion of devil *(Satan)* appears in him through idle passions *(Hawa)* and his heart becomes the nesting-place and container of devil *(Satan),* who feeds on idle passions *(Hawa)*. If he does combat with his passions and does not let them dictate his ego *(Nafs),* imitating in this the character of the angels, at that time, his heart becomes the resting-place of angels and they alight upon it. About the memorizers of *Qur'an* al-Hasan said: The reciters of the *Qur'an* are of three types. The first type takes the *Qur'an* as merchandise by which to earn their bread; the second type

upholds its letters and lose its laws, aggrandizing themselves over the people of their country, and seeking gain through it from the rulers. Many memorizers of Qur'an belong to that type. Finally, the third type have sought the healing of the *Qur'an* and placed it on the sickness of their hearts, fleeing with it to their places of prayer, wrapping themselves in it. Those have felt fear and put on the garment of sadness.

Al-Hasan al-Basri died on the first of Rajab, which was a Thursday night, 110 A.H./728 C.E. His funeral was attended by a large number of people.

2. Bayazid Bastami

Bayazid Bastami also known as Abu Yazid Bastami or Tayfur Abu Yazid al-Bastami, (804-874 or 877/8 CE) was a Persian Sufi born in Bastam. The name Bastami means "from the city of Bastam." Bayazid's grandfather was a Zoroastrian who converted to Islam. His grandfather had three sons, Adam, Tayfur and 'Ali. All of them were ascetics. Bayazid was born to Tayfur. Not much is known of his childhood, but he spent most of his time in isolation in his house and the *Masjid*. Although he remained in isolation, he did not isolate himself from the *Sufi* realm.

He welcomed people into his house to discuss *Tasawwuf*. Bayazid also led a life of asceticism and renounced all worldly pleasures in order to be one with God. Ultimately, this led Bayazid to a state of "self annihilation", which, according to *Tasawwuf*, is the only state a person, could be in order to attain union with God. Bayazid became known as the first "intoxicated" *Sufi* because of the openness of his expressions he felt towards God *(Shatahat)*. He is regarded as being one of the most influential mystics due to the fact of how controversial he was at the time.

Bayazid's predecessor Dhu al-Nun al-Misri (d. CE 859) formulated the doctrine of *m'arifa* (gnosis) presenting a system which helped the disciple *(murid)* and the guide *(shaykh)* to communicate. Bayazid Bastami took this a step further and emphasized the importance of ecstasy, referred to in his words as *drunkenness* (*shukr* or *wajd*), a means of self-annihilation in the Divine Presence. Before him, *Tasawwuf* was mainly based on piety and obedience and he played a major role in placing the concept of divine love at the core of *Tasawwuf*.

Bayazid was one of the first to speak of "annihilation of the self in God" *(fana fi Allah)* and "subsistence through God" *(baqa bi Allah)*. The "annihilation of the self" *(fana fi Allah)* refers to the annihilation of the ego or the individualized self with all its attachments that results in attaining union with God or becoming

God realized. When a person enters the state of *fana* it is believed that one has merged in God. His paradoxical sayings gained a wide circulation and soon exerted a captivating influence over the minds of students who aspired to understand the meaning of the Unity of Being *(Wahdat al-Wajud).*

When Bayazid died, he was over seventy years old. Before he died, someone asked him his age. He said: "I am four years old. For seventy years, I was veiled. I got rid of my veils only four years ago." Bayazid died in 874 C.E and is buried either in the city of Bastam in north central Iran or in Simnan, Iran.

An intoxicated *Sufi* is one who expresses their feelings openly without disregarding the social consequences in doing so. Bayazid was most famous for openly expressing himself. Unlike the *Sufi* Junayd who was a sober, meaning that he reserved his feelings within himself and not allowing for such expressions to be observed to the outside world. This was the acceptable comportment of a *Sufi*, however when Bayazid began to express himself openly, many shunned him. The people opposed to his openness accused Bayazid of being a heretic due to his bizarre sayings. Not only his sayings are controversial, but Bayazid also claimed to have travelled through the seven heavens in his dream.

Some of Bayazid's famous sayings that caused him to be labeled as an intoxicated *Sufi* are:

• Glory be to me! How great is my majesty!

• Thy obedience to me is greater than my obedience to Thee

• I am the throne and the footstool

• By my life, my grasp is firmer than His

• I saw the *Ka'bah* walking round me

3. <u>Junayd al-Baghdadi</u>

The full name of Junayd al-Baghdadi was Abul-Qasim al- Junayd Ibn Muhammad al-Khazzaz al-Nahawandi. He was born and bred in 'Iraq. He was a son of a glass merchant and nephew of a famous *Sufi* Sari al-Saqati. Right from his childhood, he was an earnest seeker after Allah, well disciplined and quick in understanding things. He was a routine student in a school. One day while, he was returning from the school, he found his father weeping. He asked his him about the reason. The father replied that I had given some alms to your maternal uncle, Sari

al-Saqati, but he reposed to receipt it. Junayd took the alms with him and reached the house of hismaternal uncle Sari al-Saqati. He put forward a statement:

"I beg you to take it, by the Allah who has dealt so graciously (kindly) with you and is justly with my father. Allah wasgracious to you in vouchsafing (granting) yourpoverty. To my father Allah was just in occupying him with worldly affairs.

You are at liberty to accept or reject as you please. He, whether likes it or not, must convey the due alms on his possession tothe one deserving of it. Sari al-Saqati replied, 'before I opendoor of my house I open door of my heart to you.' He told himthat I have accepted you and have also accepted these alms". It was after this episode that Junayd got training from his maternal uncle.

Junayd al-Baghdadi studied jurisprudence under Abu Thawr, the disciple of Imam al-Shafa'j. Among his spiritual masters were his maternal uncle Sari al-Saqati, al-Harith, al-Muhasibi and other renowned *Mashayikh*. Abul 'Abbas ibn Surayj, had been his disciple, and used to say his auditors, when they were in administration at his discourses on the dogmatically and secondary points of law:

"Do you know from whom I had that? That is one of the blessed results of my intercourse with Abul-Qasim al-Junayd."

Junayd al-Baghdadi used to say: "Our system of doctrine is firmly bound with the dogmas of faith and the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah"*. He was seen one day with a rosary in his hand, and a person said to him: "How! You who have reached such an exalted degree of sanctity, carry a rosary? To which he replied: "I quit not the way which led me to my Lord."

The following anecdote is related by him: "My uncle, Sari al-Saqati said to me: 'give lectures; but a feeling of difference prevented me, for I had doubts whether I was worthy thereto; but one Friday evening, I saw the blessed Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who said to me: 'give lectures'. I woke immediately and went to al-Saris' door before he had risen, and having knocked, (I related him what had passed). He answered: 'you would not believe me till you were told to do so. That morning I started preaching in the mosque, a gathering of 40 people were there. Out of these 27 fell unconscious. The news spread among the people that al-Junayd was lecturing. In the second gathering, a young Christian in disguise stood up before me and said: 'O *Shaykh* what did the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) mean by these words: Dread the physiognomic talent of a true believer, for he seethe by means of Allah's height!' I reflected with

down cost eyes, and, raising then my head, I said: 'become Muslim; the time of your conversion has arrived!' and the youth accepted Islam."

Junayd al-Baghdadi said: "There is nothing from which I draw so much profit as from some verses which I once heard" On being asked what they were, he answered: "As I passed through the *Darb al-Qaratis* (the Paper Street or bazaar). I listened to a slave girl who was singing in a house, and I heard her say: "When I say to thee: 'Departure lath given me the raiment of decay;' thou repliest: where it not for departure, love had not been proved sincere'. If I say: 'I am not in fault;' thou answerest: 'they existence is a famlit to which no famlit can be compared!"

On this, I uttered a loud cry and swooned away. When I was in that state, the master of the house came out and said: 'what is this, Sir?' and I replied: 'the effect of what I heard;' on which he said: 'I take you to witness that I now make her a present to you;' and I answered: 'I accept her, and declare her free before God? I afterwards gave her to one of our companions in the comment, and she had by him a fine boy, who grew up well''.

Once Sari al-Saqati was asked, whether the rank of disciple is ever higher than that of his spiritual director? He replied: "yes' there is manifest proof of this: the rank of Junayd is above mine." It was the humility and insight of Sari al-Saqati that caused him to say this.

It is related that he said: "I was eagerly desirous of seeing *Iblis*. One day, when I was standing in the mosque an old man came through the door and turned his face towards me. Horror seized my heart. When he came near, I said to him, 'who are thou? 'For I cannot bear to look on thee, or think of thee' He answered: I am he whom you desired to see: I exclaimed, 'O accursed one! What hindered thee from bowing down to Adam? He answered, 'O Junayd, how can you imagine that I should bow down to anyone except God?' I was amazed hearing his reply, but a secret voice whispered: Say to him, thou liest. Hadst thou been an obedient servant, thou wouldst not have transgressed his command. *Iblis* heard the voice in my heart. He cried out and said, 'by God, you have burnt me!' and vanished". This incident shows that God preserves his saints in all circumstances from the meticulous plans of *Satan*.

On another occasion, one of Junayd's disciples bore him a grandee, and after leaving, he returned one day with the intention of testing him. Junayd was aware of this and said, replying to his question: "Do you want a formal or a spiritual answer? The disciple said: "Both". Junayd replied: The formal answer is that if you

had lasted yourself you would not have needed to test me. The spiritual answer is that I depose you from your saint ship." The disciples face immediately turned black. He cried, "The delight of certainty *(Yaqin)* is gone from my heart," and earnestly begged to be forgiven, and abandoned his foolish self-conceit. Junayd said to him: "did not you know that God's saints possess mysterious powers? You cannot endure their blows". He cast a breath at the disciple, who forth with resounded his former purpose and repented of criticizing the *Shaykhs*.

Junayad was well versed in theology, jurisprudence and ethics and was acclaimed as a leader on the science of *Tasawwuf* by the *Sufis* of all schools. He was perhaps the first mystic who explicitly expressed his indebtedness to 'Ali for mystic knowledge, for 'Ali, according to him, possessed an abundance of both exoteric and esoteric knowledge ('Ilm and hikmah). He studied law under Abu Thawr, associated himself with Muhasibi, and discussed different problems of *Tasawwuf* during walks with him. He was one of the greatest *Sufis* of Islam. He was a sound scholar of theology and was recognized as a leading spiritual master on the mystic path. *Sufis* of the later periods were greatly influenced by his spiritual love of God.

He was acclaimed as a leader in the science of *Tasawwuf*. He was given the title of 'peacock of the learned.' Junayd al- Baghdadi made the pilgrimage alone and on foot thirty times: his merits are numerous.

He died at Baghdad, A.H. 297 (C.E 910) on Sunday, but some say that his death took place on Friday, in the last hour of the day in A.H. 298. He was buried, on the Sunday following, near the grave of his maternal uncle Sari al-Saqati. Before his death, he had just recited over the entire *Qur'an*, and was reciting the *Surah al-Baqarah*, of which he had read the first seventy *ayats* when he died.

An eyewitness said that the *katibs* of Baghdad went to learn from al-Junayd for his choice of words; the philosophers for the stability of his discussions; the poets for the elegance of his language, and the dogmatic theologians for his profound ideas. When he was a boy at play, his uncle Sari al-Sqati asked him what was thanking (to God), and received this answer: "To act so that his favour may not conduce to disobedience towards him".

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