



Explanation of *Kitaab At-Tawheed*

From the Commentary of *Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan (haafidhahullaah)*

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Translation: Abu 'Iyaad Amjad Rafiq

Transcription: Umm Sufyaan Fatimah

All praise and thanks is due to Allaah, we praise Him, seek His aid and His Forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah from the evils of our souls and the evils of our actions. Whomsoever Allaah guides there is none to misguide and whomsoever Allaah misguides there is none to guide. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allaah Alone, without any partners and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.

We are going to go through a chapter from *Kitaab At-Tawheed* with the explanation of *Shaykh Saalih Al-Fawzaan*, from his book **إعانة المستفيد بشرح كتاب التوحيد**. This chapter is the 38th chapter and relates to the obedience to the scholars and the rulers in making unlawful that which Allaah has made lawful or making lawful that which Allaah has made unlawful. The chapter heading begins (*Shaykh ul-Islaam* Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab says):

بَابٌ

من أطاع العلماء والأمرء في تحريم ما أحلّ الله أو تحليل ما حرّمه الله فقد اتخذهم أرباباً

CHAPTER

Whoever Obeys the Scholars and the Rulers in Declaring Unlawful (*Haram*) that which Allaah Has Made Lawful (*Halal*) or Obeys Them in Declaring Lawful (*Halal*) that which Allaah has Declared to be Unlawful (*Haram*) Then He Has Taken Them As Lords (*Ar-Baab*)

Before we go into the actual texts that *Shaykh ul-Islaam* bin Abdul-Wahhab has brought under this chapter heading, *Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan* provides some commentary on the heading. He says that *Shaykh ul-Islaam* bin Abdul-Wahhab said “Chapter,” then *Shaykh Saalih* quotes the chapter heading as we’ve just

read, “Whoever obeys the scholars and the rulers...” to the end of the title. *Shaykh* Saalih Al-Fawzaan said that this sentence here is a sentence which contains the mention of a condition and its answer (*ash-shart wa jawaab*). The condition here is, “Whoever obeys the scholars and the rulers” and the *jawaab* (resultant response of the ruling) is that “he has taken them as lords” besides Allaah. The *Shaykh* says this is because declaring something to be *halaal* or something to be *haram*, **التحليل والتحریم**, is the sole right of Allaah (*subhaanahu wa ta’aala*).¹ No one is to share with Him in that. This is like all the other affairs of *Tawheed* and, in fact is a specific element of *Tawheed Al-Uloohiyyah* – for Him to make *Halal* and *Haram* is His sole right. Therefore, anyone who made something to be *halaal* or made something to be *haram* without an evidence from the Book of Allaah or the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam*) has made himself to be a partner to Allaah. This is regarding the one who makes *tahleel* or *tahreem* without any *daleel* from the Book of Allaah or *Sunnah*. As for the one who obeys him in that *tahleel* or *tahreem*, then he has made that person to be a partner alongside Allaah in legislating.

The verse that *Shaykh* Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab (*rahimahullaah*) will shortly bring within this chapter doesn’t actually make a mention of rulers. It is a verse from *Suraah At-Tawbah*; it mentions that they took their priests and rabbis as Lords besides Allaah. So what *Shaykh* Saalih Al-Fawzaan is saying is that the particular *ayah* that *Shaykh* Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab (*rahimahullaah*) uses as a proof here

¹ In the Book of Knowledge, *Shaykh* Ibn ‘Uthaymeen says the following: Know that He is the Creator and all matters are at His disposal. So there is no creator except Allaah, there is no planner for the creation except Allaah, and there is no law for the creation except the law of Allaah. So it is He who obligates and prohibits things, just as He is the one who permits things. **Allaah has rebuked those who make things *halaal* (permissible) and *haram* (impermissible) based upon their whims and desires as He (*subhaanahu wa ta’aala*) says:**

Say: "Tell me, what provision Allaah has sent down to you! And you have made of it lawful and unlawful." Say: "Has Allaah permitted you, or do you invent a lie against Allaah?" And what think those who invent lies against Allaah, on the Day of Resurrection? [Suurah Yumus 59-60]

And He (*subhaanahu wa ta’aala*) also says:

And say not concerning that which your tongues put forth falsely: "This is lawful and this is forbidden," so as to invent lies against Allaah. Verily, those who invent lies against Allaah will never prosper. A passing brief enjoyment, but they will have a painful torment. [Suurah Nahl 116-117]

Certainly from amongst the greatest sins is for a person to say something is *halaal* or *haram* while he does not know Allaah's (*subhaanahu wa ta’aala*) judgment upon it. Or he says something is *wajib* (obligatory) while he does know that Allaah (*subhaanahu wa ta’aala*) has made it *wajib*, or he says something is *ghayr wajib* (not obligatory) while he does not know that Allaah (*subhaanahu wa ta’aala*) has made it *ghayr wajib*. Certainly, these are serious offenses and ill-manners towards Allaah (*subhaanahu wa ta’aala*).

How is it O servant of Allaah, that you know the judgment is for Allaah alone and you put yourself forward before Him and say about His religion and His Law that which you do not know? Allaah has linked such a statement without knowledge to *shirk* (associating partners with Him), as He (*subhaanahu wa ta’aala*) says:

Say: "The things that my Lord has in deed forbidden are *al-Fawaahish* (great evil sins) whether committed openly or secretly, sins, unrighteous oppression, joining partners with Allaah for which He has given no authority, and saying things about Allaah of which you have no knowledge." [Suurah Al-A’raf(33)]

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for this Chapter from the *Qur'aan* doesn't actually mention the rulers. It just really refers to the scholars (the priests and the rabbis). The verse [...] indicates, however, by implication, that the scholars and the rulers are to be obeyed in that which entails obedience to Allaah.

Afterward, the *Shaykh* brings an *ayah* and says that the verse is an indication to the saying of Allaah,

وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّا أَطَعْنَا سَادَتَنَا وَكُبَرَاءَنَا فَأَضَلُّونَا السَّبِيلًا

“And they will say: "Our Lord! Verily, we obeyed our chiefs and our great ones, and they misled us from the (Right) Way.” [Suurah Al-Ahzaab (73):67]

Here, Allaah (*subhaanahu wa ta'aala*) is quoting some people who will say “Our Lord! Verily, we obeyed our chiefs and our great ones, and they made us stray from the (Right) Way.” What is indicated in this verse here is what is called *ash-shirk ut-ta'aa* (*shirk* of obedience); when the obedience to someone deviates you from the (straight) path. That obedience is called *ash-shirk ut-ta'aa*. The *Shaykh* says, when we look at *'ibaadah* (worship) – which is due to Allaah Alone – its meaning is, to obey Allaah (*subhaanahu wa ta'aala*) by performing His Commands and abandoning His Prohibitions. And included within this, is the issue of obviously declaring something to be *halaal* or *haraam*. Hence the issue of *tahleel* or *tahreem* enters into *'ibaadah*.

What is the evidence for this? The *Shaykh* says, we know this is from *'ibaadah* (to make *tahleel* or *tahreem*) by way of the saying of Allaah, the Most High, when He made mention of the *mushrikuun* declaring the eating of the dead to be permissible when Allaah declared it to be *haraam*.

They declared eating of the dead to be lawful and said that which was already dead was more worthy of being eaten than that which was alive and then sacrificed. This is because that which is alive and then sacrificed has been slaughtered by people. But as for that which is already dead, then it is Allaah who slaughtered it. So on that logic, on that reasoning; the *mushrikuun* declared it to be permissible. And in reality, this particular saying that the *mushrikeen* came with was taken from the *majjuus* (fire worshippers). So Allaah (*subhaanahu wa ta'aala*) revealed a passage in the *Qur'aan*:

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ بِآيَاتِهِ مُؤْمِنِينَ

“So eat of that (meat) on which Allaah's Name has been pronounced (while slaughtering the animal), if you are believers in His *Aayat* (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.).” [Suurah Al-An'aam (6):118]

And it continues until the final part of this passage, in which Allaah (*subhaanahu wa ta'aala*) says:

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَإِنَّهُ لَفِسْقٌ وَإِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ لَيُوحُونَ إِلَىٰ أَوْلِيَائِهِمْ لِيُجَادِلُوكُمْ وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ

“Eat not (O believers) of that (meat) on which Allaah's Name has not been pronounced (at the time of the slaughtering of the animal), for surely it is *Fisq* (a sin and disobedience of Allah). And certainly, the *Shayatin* (devils) do inspire their friends (from mankind) to dispute with you, and if you obey them [by making *Al-Maitah* (a dead animal) legal by eating it], then you would indeed be *Mushrikun* (polytheists).”

[*Suurah Al-An'aam* (6):121]

So the *Shaykh* comments: Meaning, if you were to obey them in treating the dead animals as being permissible, then you have opposed the command of Allaah, and you would then, be *mushrikuun*. Meaning, by obeying them in that, you would be associating others alongside Allaah in the issue of *tahleel* and *tahram*. They have sent themselves up as legislators alongside Allaah, and you obeyed them in that. So you made them as partners with Allaah in the *tahleel* and *tahreem*.

Now that we've seen the basis of this chapter heading which comes from the incident referred to by the aforementioned *Qur'aanic* passage, the *Shaykh* then clarifies the ruling upon this issue. This is because there is detail to this issue; it is not just absolute – that anyone who obeys (the scholar or ruler) automatically sets up someone as a partner with Allaah. Rather there is a clarification because the action falls into three categories. The *Shaykh* explains: Obedience to the scholars and rulers in the likes of this is *shirk*. (Meaning, in making *tahleel* over what Allaah has made *haram* or making *tahreem* over what Allaah has made *halaal*).

First Category: Major *Shirk*

If the person who obeyed them, knows that they have opposed the command of Allaah in whatever the issue was, and deliberately and willfully obeyed them, and considered that action to be permissible, then this would be the major *shirk* which expels from the religion. Meaning, he knew he was opposing the command of Allaah, but proceeded upon deliberately and willfully obeying them, alongside the scholar/ruler, considering the ruling to be permissible, then this is a major *shirk*.

Second Category: Minor *Shirk*

If the person who obeyed them in the ruling believed and knew that whatever they've judged is wrong, and that it is indeed *haram*, but the only reason he obeyed them was because of, perhaps, some sort of desire that he sought after, or some aspiration that he had that he was seeking, yet at the same time, he knew that he was committing a sin, then this person's belief is sound (he knows the particular issue is *haram* even though they've made it *halaal* and he knows he's made an error) but he is still committing minor *shirk*. This person falls into the category of minor *shirk*.

Third Category: Lack of Knowledge

The third is regarding one who obeys them but does not have any knowledge, he is not aware that they have opposed the legislation of Allaah (*subhaanahu wa ta'aala*). He just thinks that they are upon the truth,

so he follows them in that, but he does not really have any *ilm*. This person is excused. He is not blameworthy and there is no sin upon him in that. He is excused because he was genuinely ignorant of that.

So these are the three situations:

1. One who obeys the scholars/rulers knowingly and willfully, while knowing they have opposed the command of Allaah, yet still considers their ruling to be permissible. This is major *shirk*;
2. One whose belief in the *halaal* and *haraam* is established and firm, and he knows what he is doing is wrong and that they have opposed the command of Allaah, but he has a desire. So he falls into the minor *shirk*;
3. One who is ignorant and does not know any better, so he is excused.

This moves us onto the issue of obedience to the scholars and the rulers in something which actually does not entail disobedience to Allaah. The ruling upon this is that it is *waajib*. So in any issue, in which the rulings of the scholars or rulers do not oppose the *Sharee'ah* of Allaah, it is obligatory to follow them.

The *Shaykh* brings a verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

“O you who believe! Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger (Muhammad (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*)), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority.” [Suraah An-Nisaa (4):59]

So to obey the scholars and the rulers in something which does not entail the disobedience to Allaah is an affair that Allaah has obligated upon the people. And here, the *Shaykh* clarifies, that “أُولِي الْأَمْرِ” (those of you (Muslims) who are in authority) has been said to refer to the rulers. But what is correct is that this verse “those of you (Muslims) who are in authority” actually comprises of both scholars and rulers. This is because both the scholars and the rulers are “أُولِي الْأَمْرِ”. They are the people who have the authority. In the sense that the scholars are the ones who clarify and explain the rulings and the rulers are the ones who implement them. So therefore, both the scholars and rulers are from the “أُولِي الْأَمْرِ”. The scholars derive the rulings, explain and clarify them, whereas the rulers merely just implement those rulings. So they both enter into the phrase of “أُولِي الْأَمْرِ”.

Therefore, built upon this clarification that we now have about obedience to someone in the *tahleel* and *tahreem*, and the clarifications regarding that and likewise, the fact that the obedience to the rulers and scholars in that which does not oppose the *shari'ah* is *waajib*, we then see in this whole issue of obedience to the rulers and scholars is neither absolutely forbidden nor is it absolutely permissible. This is what has become apparent from this discussion. Rather, the clarification that has just been given of these four instances is what is required and necessary to help explain this issue. This is what we need to understand.

And when we look at the chapter heading, the particular wording that *Shaykh Ul-Islam* Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab used, we find that he made it clear that he was referring to the prohibition of obeying them in the *tahleel* and *tahreem*. He specifically mentioned that in the chapter heading, “Whoever obeys the scholars and rulers in **declaring to be unlawful** that which Allaah **has made lawful** or **declaring to be lawful** that which Allaah **has made unlawful**, then he has taken them as lords.” He did not give it a general meaning, he did not say, “Whoever obeys the scholars and the rulers.” Rather he specified it and did not make the prohibition to be general. That is the clarification or commentary from the *Shaykh* regarding the chapter heading.

Shaykh Ul-Islam Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab then brings some narrations from the *salaf* which helps clarify and explain the meaning which is contained in the chapter heading. From them is the saying of Ibn ‘Abbaas (*radiallaahu ‘anhuma*) who said:

وقال ابن عباس: يوشك أن تنزل عليكم حجارة من السماء أقول: قال رسوالله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - وتقولون: قال أبو بكر وعمر

“I fear that there may descend upon you stones from the sky when I say to you, the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu ‘alayhe wasallam*) said such and such, and you say: Abu Bakr and ‘Umar said such and such.”

Concerning this narration, *Shaykh Saalih Al-Fawzaan* comments upon it and says: Ibn ‘Abbaas is the sage of this *Ummah* and the explainer of the *Qur’aan*. He is Abdullaah bin Abbaas bin Mutallib, the nephew of the Prophet (*salallaahu ‘alayhe wasallam*).

The *Shaykh* says (in explaining the meaning of the words within the *hadeeth*): It is close or near that stones may descend upon you from the sky as a punishment upon you, just like the stones descended upon those people who came before you from those who disobeyed the Messengers. {**When I say to you, the Messenger of Allaah said (such and such) and you say: Abu Bakr and ‘Umar said (such and such)**} This is the reason that would have necessitated or obligated that stones should fall from the sky upon them. What is this? It is obedience to the scholars and rulers in that which opposes the legislation of Allaah.

Why did Ibn Abbaas say this? He said it because it reached him that Abu Bakr and ‘Umar, the two rightly guided *Khulaafaah*, held a view that it was not permissible for a person, who did not bring the sacrificial animal with him, to join together the *Hajj* with the *Umrah*. The Messenger (*salallaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam*), however, said it was okay and commanded the person to perform *Hajj* alongside *Umrah*. This was the view of Abdullaah bin Abbaas because this was what was obviously commanded by the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu ‘alayhe wasallam*). He indicated the obligation to perform (*Hajj* and *Umrah* together) regarding the person who did not bring his sacrificial animal with him.

The Messenger of Allaah (*'alayhi ssallaatu wa sallam*) commanded his *sahabah* and encouraged them upon this, and emphasized it. So when these two *Khulafaah*, Abu Bakr and 'Umar, held the view that it was not obligatory, and rather doing it one by one was better – the reason why they held this view was because they thought if someone came along and combined between his *Hajj* and *Umrah* and did it in just one journey instead of coming twice, it would mean that the *Bayt* (the *Ka'bah*) would be abandoned for the rest of the year. The people would only come once and it will generally be abandoned. For this reason, they saw that it shouldn't be really combined.

Of course, on their behalf, this is a matter of *ijtihaad* and whenever the *ijtihaad* opposes the evidence then it is not permissible to act in accordance with it. Now let's take a look at the context of the statement of Ibn Abbaas. If Ibn Abbaas was rejecting the person who just took the mere view of the two *khaalifahs*, Abu Bakr and 'Umar, because it is an *ijtihaad* which opposes the texts – it is an *ijtihaad* first of all, and it opposes the texts, and that action itself necessitates punishment. Then how much more so of a punishment would it be for the one who *actually* obeys the scholars and rulers in the issue of *tahleel* and *tahreem*? It is obviously far worse (esp. without having any evidence). In this incident here, Abu Bakr and 'Umar made *ijtihaad* and that *ijtihaad* was mistaken (they are obviously rewarded for that *ijtihaad* even though they are wrong) and Ibn Abbaas made a statement regarding such an issue. So how much more so for the one who obeys the scholars and rulers in the actual issue of *tahleel* and *tahreem* without any telling evidence.

What does the statement from Ibn Abbaas indicate? The *Shaykh* says that it indicates the obligation of respecting the *Sunnah* of the Messenger (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*) and that it is the *Sunnah* we must turn to, it is the turning point after the Book of Allaah (*subhaanahu wa ta'aala*). So whatever the evidence is established upon, we take it and whatever opposes the evidence, then we must abandon it, even if the one who said it was the most superior and most excellent of people, such as (in this instance) Abu Bakr and 'Umar – let alone anyone besides them.²

² Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen says in *The Book of Knowledge*: As for *Imaam* as Shaafi'ee, the quotations from him are most numerous and beautiful, and his followers were the best in sticking to them:

1. "The *sunnahs* of the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhi wasallam*) reach, as well as escape from, every one of us. So whenever I voice my opinion, or formulate a principle, where something contrary to my view exists on the authority of the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhi wasallam*), **then the correct view is what the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhi wasallam*) has said, and it is my view.**"

2. "The Muslims are unanimously agreed that if a *sunnah* of the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhi wasallam*) is made clear to someone, **it is not permitted for him to leave it for the saying of anyone else.**

3. "If you find in my writings something different to the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhi wasallam*), then speak on the basis of the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhi wasallam*), and leave what I have said."

In one narration: "...then follow it (the *Sunnah*), and do not look sideways at anyone else's saying."

4. "When a *hadeeth* is found to be *saheeh*, then that is my *madhhaab*."

"You are more knowledgeable about *Hadeeth* than I, so when a *hadeeth* is *saheeh*, inform me of it, whether it is from *Koofah*, *Basrah* or *Syria*, so that I may take the view of the *hadeeth*, as long as it is *saheeh*."

As for the actual issue of *ijtihaad*: What is *ijtihaad*? *Ijtihaad* is permissible and defined as, extracting the rulings of the *Shari'aah* from the evidences of the Book and the *Sunnah*. This is *ijtihaad*; to extract and to derive the rulings of the *Shari'aah* from the texts or from the evidences of the Book and the *Sunnah*. However, when it comes to applying these rulings, then obviously it is not permissible to take anything unless the evidence is established upon it. So we don't take any of the sayings of the people of knowledge unless it is established upon the evidences. As the *Shaykh* says, it is not permissible for us to start taking the sayings of anyone just because we have some kind of partnership towards them. Neither (is it permissible) to take the saying merely because it agrees with our desires and our aspirations. Rather, the real reasoning and the real basis for it (should be) the book and the *Sunnah*. As Allaah says in the *aayah*:

قَانَ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

“(And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allaah and His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*), if you believe in Allaah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.” [Suraah An-Nisaa (4):59]

As for the common person, he merely asks the people of knowledge and takes their statements. If he doesn't know their meanings, he should just ask them and take their statements. And this is in accordance with the saying of Allaah:

فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“So ask (you, O pagans of *Makkah*) of those who know the Scripture [learned men of the *Taurat* (Torah) and *Injeel* (Gospel)], if you know not.” [Suraah An-Nahl (16):43]

These are some of the connected issues rising from this statement of Ibn Abbaas (*radiallaahu 'anhu*). The next statement the *Shaykh* brings is the saying of *Imaam* Ahmad bin Hanbal (*rahimahullaah*) who says:

عَجِبْتُ لِقَوْمٍ عَرَفُوا الْإِسْنَادَ وَصَحَّتْهُ يَذْهَبُوا إِلَى رَأْيِ سُفْيَانَ، وَاللَّهِ تَعَالَى يَقُولُ: فَلْيَحْذَرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِ أَنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

“I am amazed at a people who knew the *isnaad* and its authenticity, yet tended to the view of Sufyaan. Allaah, The Most High, says: Let those who oppose the Messenger's (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*)

5. “In every issue where the people of narration from a report from the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) to be *saheeh* which is contrary to what I have said, then I take my saying back, whether during my life or after my death.”

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commandment (among the sects) **beware, lest some *Fitnah* should befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them.**" [*Suraah An-Nuur* (24):63]

Shaykh Saalih Al-Fawzaan comments upon this and says: **{Imaam Ahmad said}** He is the noble *Imaam* Ahmad, the *Imaam* of *Ahl us-Sunnah* and the one who was patient upon the trial that came to him regarding the statement of the creation of the *Qur'aan*.

Shaykh Saalih says, **{I am amazed}** Meaning: This is an amazement of rejection. Sometimes you are amazed with something from the perspective of admiration, and often-times you can be amazed about something from the perspective of rejection. So this amazement here is an amazement of rejection.

{Regarding a people who knew *isnaad* and its authenticity} Meaning: These people have knowledge of the evidence (In this case, a particular *hadeeth* and its authenticity). And *isnaad* means the chain of the narrators, who narrated the *hadeeth* from the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam*) from the narrator at the end, right back down to the Messenger of Allaah.

[...] whether that chain of narration is lengthy or short (this is what's normally called in the terminology of *hadeeth* as *Al'alee* or *An-Nzazil*). The *Shaykh* says: The *isnaad* itself requires study in order for it to be known and in order for its narrators to be known regarding their position, their trustworthiness and level of precision – whether these three factors exist or do not exist. The *Shaykh* says, when all the conditions are fulfilled in the chain of narration (from the beginning of the chain to the end of the chain), in the sense that its narrators have a good precision in their memory, and obviously the rest of the factors mentioned, and the same time, we don't find that there's any hidden defects in this chain, or that this chain opposes that which is found elsewhere in stronger chains of narration, then this is considered to be *saheeh*.

But, when any of these things are not found, or the chain are narrators are deficient from this, meaning their precision in memory is not at a good enough level, then it becomes *Hasan*. Or it can become *da'eef*. The *Shaykh* says: The scholars are the ones who distinguish and judge all of this and the only ones who know this, as well as, those people who have reached the level of knowledge where they can distinguish the authenticity of the narration and its being ascribed to the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam*). And the authenticity in the chain of narration itself indicates the authenticity in the *musnad* (meaning the actual text). So the authenticity of the chain indicates the authenticity of the text, which is the meaning of what *Imaam* Ahmad said.

In the statement of *Imaam* Ahmad, there is also a refutation of some of the contemporary people, the 'Aqlaneeyeen (people of modernism) and the likes. They claim that even if the chain of narration was authentic, this of itself would not indicate the authenticity of the text. But, we hold that if the chain of narration is authentic and fulfills the conditions required, then it indicates that the text is authentic as well in its meaning and that it is worthy. As for these people, then they say, just because the *isnaad* is authentic,

it does not indicate that the text is authentic. They (even) begin to criticize certain *ahadeeth* found in *Saheeh ul-Bukhaaree* whose *asaneed* are most certainly authentic!! They criticize them because *it does not agree to their deficient intellects*. And this, the *Shaykh* says, is either due to their ignorance or due to their boldness. Meaning, they are being bold in transgressing against the speech of the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*). Why? This is because it opposes their desires and it opposes their intellects. So the *Shaykh* says, How Free is Allaah from every imperfection! Should the speech of Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*) be subdued and submitted unto the people's intellects? Is this how it is? Rather it is obligatory upon the one who believes in the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*) that he gives precedence to his saying (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*) and that he believes in it, acts upon it without any disputation and argumentation. The *Shaykh* then brings the *aayah* in *Suraah Al-Ahzaab*:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مِؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ

“It is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allaah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision.” [*Suraah Al-Ahzaab* (33):36]

From the meaning of the *Shahadah* (testimony), from the meaning of when we testify that “Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah”, is that we believe him in whatever he informs us about. It is to make *tasdeeq* of whatever he informs us about. Any person who does not make *tasdeeq* of that, who does not believe in the correctness and truth of that which the Messenger (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*) informed us with by way of the *Sunnah* but tries to make it subservient to his own desires, or to his own principles of logic (has fallen into a very dangerous affair).

Sometimes, these people might even say, we have to evaluate it in the light of *'ilmul ahadeeth* (?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?! Allaah's refuge is sought). What they mean by *'ilmul hadeeth* is not the *'ilmul hadeeth* that we know, but rather, something else that they've devised themselves. So it as if this person hasn't actually believed that the Messenger is the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*). And this is a very, very, very dangerous affair. This is alongside our knowledge that the text which is being narrated authentically never ever opposes the sound intellect in its meaning in anyway. It should be known that anything established from the revelation in the authentic texts of the *Sunnah* will never ever oppose the correct and sound upright intellect. Therefore, if one of the two opposed each other, then there is a deficiency. For example, if the intellect opposed the text, then obviously the deficiency is in the intellect. And this was explained by *Shaykh Ul-Islam* Ibn Taymiyyah. He has a whole book on this subject and this meaning is indicated by *Shaykh Ul-Islam* Ibn Taymiyyah.

{Yet they tended to the view of Sufyaan} They knew the authenticity of the *isnaad*, yet they still went to Sufyaan. Meaning they left the chain of narration which is authentic to the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*), while having knowledge of that, and went to the viewpoint of Sufyaan.

Sufyaan, here, is Sufyaan Ath-Thauree. He is the noble *Imaam*, the *Faqeeh*, the one with precision. He is Sufyaan bin Sa'eed Ath-Thauree. He was a *muhaddith*, a *mujtahid* and he also had a *madhhab* in *fiqh*. But his *madhhab* in *fiqh* wasn't preserved because he didn't have [...] students or followers who preserved it and [...] studied it as was the case with the four well-known *Imaams*. However, though, much of the *madhhab* of Sufyaan Ath-Thauree has been transmitted and narrated through many of the compilations of *fiqh*, such as *Al-Mughnee* and *Al-Muhalla* of Ibn Hazm. Likewise, you often find it in the books of *Tafseer*, the books of explanation of *ahadeeth*, and so forth. He has a great deal of knowledge in *fiqh*, *hadeeth* and *tafseer*.

However, Sufyaan Ath-Thauree was like others from the scholars, i.e. it is not permissible that we put forward his saying ahead of the saying of the Messenger (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*). And he himself wouldn't be pleased would that. He (*rahimahullaah*) wouldn't be pleased with that. He is just like the others from the scholars who wouldn't be pleased with that either. For this reason, *Imaam* Maalik said:

**ولهذا يقول الإمام مالك: "كلنا رادٌّ ومردود عليه إلا صاحب هذا القبر" يعني: رسول الله -
- صلى الله عليه وسلم**

"Everyone amongst us will have his statement accepted or rejected, except the companion of this grave. Meaning, (pointing to the) Messenger (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*)."

Likewise, *Imaam* Ash-Shafi'ee (*rahimahullaah*) has a similar statement in which he said:

ويقول الإمام الشافعي: "إذا صحَّ الحديث فهو مذهبي"

"When a *hadeeth* is found to be *saheeh*, then that is my *madhhab*."

Another statement:

**"إذا خالف قولِي قولَ رسولِ الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - فخذوا بقول رسول الله واضربوا
بقولِي عرض الحائط"**

"Whenever one of my statements opposes the Messenger (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*) then take the statement of the Messenger (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*) and throw mine against the wall."

He also said:

**ويقول - رحمه الله - "أجمع المسلمون على أن من استبانت له سنة رسول الله - صلى الله
عليه وسلم - لم يكن له أن يدعها لقول أحد كائنًا من كان"**

"The Muslims are unanimously agreed that if a *sunnah* of the Messenger of Allaah (*salallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam*) is made clear to someone, it is not permitted for him to leave it for the saying of anyone else, whoever that person is."

Likewise, *Imaam* Maalik said something similar:

ويقول الإمام مالك - رحمه الله - "أَوْ كَلَّمَا جَاءَنَا رَجُلٌ أَجْدَلٌ مِنْ رَجُلٍ تَرَكْنَا مَا نَزَلَ بِهِ جِبْرِيلَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - الْجِدَلَ هَؤُلَاءِ؟"

"Is it the case whenever a man comes to us in order to argue with us that we should leave that which has been revealed by way of Jibreel upon Muhammad (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*) just because of the argument of those people?"

Shaykh Saalih Al-Fawzaan then brings some statements also from Abu Haneefah (*rahimahullaah*) where he indicates the obligation of taking that which comes from the Messenger (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*) and the *sahabah*. The *Shaykh* brings all these statements, and by way of these statements, he's made it clear that it is obligatory to take from that which is authentic from the Messenger (*salallaahu 'alayhe wasallam*). Regarding the *ijtihadat*, the rulings derived by the scholars are obviously to be benefited from and are to be studied, and whenever any of them opposes the *daleel*, then it is obligatory to take the *daleel* and it is not permissible to start showing partisanship and bigotry to anyone who held that particular viewpoint.

The *Shaykh* then rounds off our discussion by saying, we don't reject *fiqh* outright. Rather we consider it to be a great heritage and it has a great deal of knowledge. So we study this *fiqh* but we don't take from it except that which is based upon evidence. And whatever we know opposes the evidence, it is *haraam* upon us that we take from it. And obviously, we excuse the person who held the viewpoint and we respect him because he didn't deliberately intend to make that opposition. He was a *mujtahid*; he could be right or wrong. If he's right, he has two rewards and if he's wrong, he has one reward. And this is what is found in the *Sunnah*. And Allaah knows best.