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The Origins of Tafsīrī Principles: An Analytical Study within the Framework of Uṣūl al-Fiqh

Muhammad Farooq Haider

Department of Arabic & Islamic Studies

GC University, Lahore, Pakistan

Abstract

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Qur'ān, Tafsīr, Fiqh,
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Analysis



Tafsīr is that branch of knowledge in which the message of the Qur'ān is elaborated with the motive of understanding the meanings of Allah's intent; while Uṣūl Al-Tafsīr are those principles by which the words of the Qur'an are interpreted so as to apprehend the meanings of Allah's book. The Prophet (ﷺ) used to elucidate the meanings of the Qur'ān to clarify any ambiguities to the native Arabs, but the prudence to establish the science of Tafsīr was to facilitate non-natives, so that they may be benefitted equally by the Allah's Message. In the previous centuries, Uṣūl Al-Tafsīr used to be described in the context of Uṣūl Al-Fiqh till the time it became an independent science. In this article, the emergence and evolution of Uṣūl Al-Tafsīr has been discussed within the framework of Uṣūl Al-Fiqh and the relation they exhibit therein.

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Introduction:

The evolution of Uṣūl Al-Tafsīr dates back when the Jurists and Scholars of Principles (Uṣūliyyīn) deduced various problems from Islamic texts under the guidance of some rules and regulations. Later on, these jurists not only compiled their but also their mentor's rules and principles. The very first attempt in the chain is Imam Shāfi'ī's (d. 204 A.H.) "Al-Risālah"¹. After it, Hanafī Jurist Imam Jaṣṣāṣ's (d. 370 A.H.) book "Al-Fuṣūl fil Uṣūl" gained extraordinary prominence.

What was the status of Uṣūl al-Tafsīr in the early period of compilation of Uṣūl al-Fiqh? What were the various aspects of relation between Uṣūl al-Tafsīr and Uṣūl al-Fiqh? Why was not any book written on Uṣūl al-Tafsīr in the early centuries? Before answering these questions, it is necessary to explain the meanings of Uṣūl al-Fiqh and Uṣūl al-Tafsīr.

Uṣūl al-Fiqh

"Aṣal" means the lower part of something.² Or it is the foundation of something.³ Terminologically "Aṣal" can be defined as:

"ما يثبت حكمه بنفسه، ويبنى عليه غيره"⁴

Āmidī (d. 631 A.H.) wrote: ⁵والاصل ما يبني عليه غيره.

Moreover, it can also be said: ⁶"ما يتفرع عنه غيره". "Aṣal" is something from which any other thing originates.

There are many other meanings of Aṣal as described by Uṣūliyyīn, such as: "الراجع"⁷, "الدليل"⁸, "قاعدة"⁹ etc.

The above-mentioned definitions indicate that Uṣūl is that foundation on which something else is built. Anything on which some other thing depends or rely is Aṣal, from which other branches and sub-parts originate. When it is said that the Aṣal of something is this, it means that the logic behind it is this.

According to Uṣūliyyīn, Fiqh can be defined as:

"فالعلم بالأحكام الشرعية العملية المكتسب من أدلتها التفصيلية."¹⁰

"Fiqh is the knowledge of those Practical Shariah Injunctions which are extracted from their detailed reasoning."

The history of the sciences ('ulūm) demonstrates that a discipline typically emerges first, followed by the establishment of its foundational principles. After understanding the definition and relative terms of Fiqh, it becomes easier to apprehend Uṣūl al-Fiqh.

Ibn Ḥājib (d. 648 A.H.) defined Uṣūl al-Fiqh in the following words:

"فالعلم بالقواعد التي يتوصل بها إلى استنباط الأحكام الشرعية الفرعية عن أدلتها التفصيلية."¹¹

Imam Asnawī (d. 772 A.H.) described Fiqh in the following way:

"أصول الفقه معرفة دلائل الفقه إجمالاً وكيفية الاستفادة منها وحال المستفيد."¹²

Uṣūl al-Fiqh is the apprehension of reasoning of Fiqh generally, how to benefit from them and the condition of beneficiary.

The summary of the above-mentioned definitions is: If the subject of Fiqh is Practical Shariah Injunctions and their understanding, then Uṣūl al-Fiqh is the principles to extract these injunctions from Shariah Texts.

Uṣūl al-Tafsīr

Uṣūl al-Tafsīr is a compound word which is comprised of two words: Uṣūl and Tafsīr. Aṣal is singular and Uṣūl is plural.

Tafsīr: It has root words ف،س،ر . Ibn Fāris wrote:

”فسر: الفاء والعين والراء كلمة واحدة تدل على بيان شيء وايضاحه.“¹³

فسر is the explanation and elaboration of something.

Lisān al-‘Arab defines Tafsīr as:

”والفسر: كشف المغطى ، والتفسير كشف المراد عن اللفظ المشكل.“¹⁴

Kāfijī (d. 879 A.H.) described the word Tafsīr in the following way:

”التفسير ما خوذ من الفسر وهو الكشف والظهار... وهي على تفعيل للمبالغة.“¹⁵

A brief definition of Tafsīr has been written by Abū Ḩayyān Andalusī (d. 654 A.H.):

”التفسير علم يبحث فيه عن كيفية النطق بألفاظ القرآن و مدلولاتها، واحكامها الافرادية والتركيبية ومعانيها التي تحمل عليها حالة التركيب وتتمتات لذلك.“¹⁶

The science of Tafsīr is that branch of knowledge that deals with the method of delivering the Qur’anic Words, their interpretation, their individual and composite forms and expediencies. It includes the meanings derived from them in their composite state. In the summation of meanings, due consideration is allowed to the background of revelation, the abrogator and abrogated and equivocal stories.

Allama Zarkashī (d. 794 A.H.) stated two definitions of Tafsīr in his book Al-Burhān:

”التفسير علم يعرف به فهم كتاب الله المنزل على نبيه محمد ﷺ وبيان معانيه واستخراج أحكامه وحكمه.“¹⁷

Tafsīr is that branch of knowledge by which the apprehension of the Book of Allah revealed on the Prophet (PBUH), is acquired along with the explanation to its meanings. It helps to extract injunctions and expediencies from the Qur’an.

The second definition which has been quoted by Allama Zarkashī contains different Qur’anic Sciences and Qawā‘id Uṣūliyyah Lughawiyah.

”هو علم نزول الآية وسورتها وأقاصيصها والإشارات النازلة فيها ثم ترتيب مكملها ومدنيتها ومحكمها ومتشابهها وناسخها ومنسوخها وخاصها وعامتها ومطلقها ومقيدها ومجملها ومفسرها وزاد فيها قوم فقالوا: علم حلالها وحرامها ووعدتها ووعيدها وأمرها ونهيها وغيرها وأمثالها.“¹⁸

The above-mentioned definition is very important and distinctive with the aspect that it manifests the dimensions of Uṣūl al-Fiqh. In this definition, different Qawā‘id Uṣūliyyah Lughawiyah have been formulated by various past jurists and scholars of principles to deduce meanings and injunctions from the Qur’an.

Allama Kāfijī defined terminologically the Science of Tafsīr in these words:

”علم التفسير هو علم يبحث فيه عن احوال كلام الله المجيد من حيث انه يدل على المراد بحسب الطاقة البشرية.“¹⁹

The Science of Tafsīr is a science in which the context of Allah’s Glorious Words is described, so that their meaning can be searched according to human capacity.

Not only the modern scholars in their Qur’anic Commentaries, but also the scholars of Qur’anic Sciences and Principles of Tafsīr quoted the aforementioned definition in the same way.

Uṣūl al-Tafsīr:

The purpose of mentioning these definitions is not only to apprehend Uṣūl al-Tafsīr but also to find out the context and relation of Uṣūl al-Fiqh and Uṣūl al-Tafsīr. It can be well understood by the mentioned definitions of Tafsīr that what are its contents and what should be rules of implying these contents in the Qur’anic Commentaries. Hence, that definition by Allama Zarkashī which contains the apprehension of meanings of Allah’s Book as well as extraction of injunctions and expediencies, can be particularized with respect to rules and principles and can be redefined as:

“Those principles which are mandatory to apprehend the meanings of Allah’s book and to deduce injunctions and expediencies from it are called Principles of Tafsīr”

Variant methodologies have been adopted in modern books of Principles of Tafsīr with respect to its definition. Khalid Abdul Rahman distinguished between the definitions of Tafsīr and Principles of Tafsīr.

”هو أن الاصول هي المناهج التي تحد و تبين الطريق الذي يلتزمه المفسر في تفسير الايات الكريمة“²⁰

Principles are the approaches that limit and show the way to which an interpreter adheres to in interpreting the noble verses.

”اما التفسير فهو ايضاحها مع التقييد بهذه المناهج“²¹

Tafsīr is used to clarify it (verses) with the restriction of the above-mentioned principles. Just as the principles of interpretation were established for interpretation, the same is the case with other sciences and their principles.

”علم اصول التفسير هو ميزان للمفسر يضبطه ويمنعه من الخطاء في التفسير ولانه ميزان فا نه يتبين به التفسير الصحيح من التفسير الفاسد كما يعرف بالنحوالكلام الصحيح من غير الصحيح وهكذا.“²²

The basis of definition of any knowledge is related to its purpose.

”وفائدته حصول القدر والملكة في العقل البشري لاستخراج أحكام القرآن الكريم وحكمه، ومعرفة مراتب الحجج والأدلة من آياته و كشفها وتوضيح معانيها و ادراك مواطن ، عبرها إلى غير ذلك على وجه الصحة والدقة العلمية.“²³

Allama Al-Majīdī has made the definition of Uṣūl al-Fiqh the basis to clarify the definition of Uṣūl al-Tafsīr. However, he did not include the word (Al-Qawā'id) in the definition of Uṣūl al-Tafsīr, which is already

included in the definition of Uṣūl al-Fiqh. In the context of Uṣūl al-Fiqh, Uṣūl al-Tafsīr has been described as follows:

”وأما اصطلاحاً ، فإذا كان تعريف (اصول الفقه): هو العلم بالقواعد التي يتوصل بها الى الفقه فإن علم اصول التفسير هو : العلم بالمبادي التي يتوصل بها إلى التفسير، وتبنى عليها جزئيات التفسير، ويعرف بها فهم القرآن، ومناهج المفسرين –“²⁴

Allama Makki has defined Uṣūl al-Tafsīr in these words:

”وهو العلم با الأصول القواعد التي يعرف بها معاني آيات الكتاب العزيز“²⁵

Allama al-Rumi has described Uṣūl al-Tafsīr as follows:

”وأما (ا اصول التفسير) اصطلاحاً فهي : القواعد والاسس التي يقوم عليها علم التفسير وتشمل : وما يتعلق بالمفسر من شروط و آداب. وما يتعلق بالتفسير من قواعد و طرق ومناهج وما إلى ذلك“²⁶

At another place, Uṣūl al-Tafsīr has been described in these words:

”العلم الذي يتوصل به الى الفهم الصحيح للقرآن ويكشف الطرق المنحرفة أو الضالة في تفسيره“²⁷

According to Allama al-Tayyār, Uṣūl al-Tafsīr means:

”اصول التفسير: الاسس العلمية التي يرجع اليها المفسر حال بيانه لمعاني القرآن و تحريره للاختلاف في التفسير.“²⁸

A careful consideration of the definitions of Uṣūl al-Tafsīr leads to the fact that in drafting these definitions, the definitions of Tafsīr stated by Abū Ḥayyān Andalusī and Zarkashī have been consulted, and on the other hand, the definitions of Uṣūl al-Fiqh have also been accessed.

Core Discussions in Classical Texts of Uṣūl al-Fiqh

The subject of Fiqh (Jurisprudence) is the Shariah practical rulings and the subject of the Uṣūl al-Fiqh (Principles of Jurisprudence) are the Shariah evidences that prove the rulings of the Shariah. Therefore, in Uṣūl al-Fiqh, the Qur’an, Sunnah, Ijmā’ and Qiyās are discussed in a way that these are the sources of Shariah rulings; and through them, the rules of Shariah are proved. If there is any introductory or supplementary discussion in Uṣūl al-Fiqh in this regard, then it will not be really intended.

For better understanding of the topic under discussion, in the context of Uṣūl al-Fiqh, the four sources of Shariah have been briefly discussed. Moreover, those points have also been identified partially as to how these sources are the Principles of Tafsīr of the Holy Qur’an. Further, those Qawā’id Uṣūliyyah Lughawiyyah were briefly explained in the commentaries of the Qur’an, which are of fundamental importance in Uṣūl al-Fiqh as they are used to interpret the texts of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah and the injunctions are derived therefrom.

First Source: The Qur’an

The Qur’an is the collection of words and meanings. Meanings are accessed through words. It means that the words are the sources to understand the meanings. The different ways by which the words are

related to the meanings, Uṣūliyyīn, after pondering upon the Arabic language in various aspects, described four types of words and meanings to understand Shariah rulings. The same types are called the methods to derive rulings, the principles to interpret the texts and Qawā'id Uṣūliyyah Lughawiyyah.

Qawā'id Uṣūliyyah Lughawiyyah

The following is the detail of Qawā'id Uṣūliyyah Lughawiyyah for deriving rulings, which is also called the division of the Qur'an.

1. There are four types of the words according to their depiction for a certain meaning. This is the first division of the words.

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| a) Khāṣṣ | b) 'Āmm |
| c) Mushtarik | d) Mu'awwal |

2. There are eight types of words depending on whether they are clear or unclear in their meaning.

According to Clarity: four types

- | | |
|-------------|-----------|
| a) Zāhir | b) Naṣṣ |
| c) Mufassir | d) Muḥkam |

According to Non-Clarity: four types

- | | |
|-----------|---------------|
| a) Khaḥfī | b) Mushkil |
| c) Mujmal | d) Mutashābih |

This division can also be explained as the four types of the first mentioned word are in terms of appearance and the four types of the second mentioned word are in terms of hidden meaning.

3. There are two types of words according to its usage in a certain meaning.

- | | |
|------------|----------|
| a) Ḥaqīqat | b) Majāz |
|------------|----------|

It means that a word is used in the meaning for which it was drafted and also for a meaning for which it was not drafted.

4. There are four types of words according to the ways of denoting their meaning.

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| a) Ibārat al- Naṣṣ | b) Ishārat al- Naṣṣ |
| c) Dalālat al- Naṣṣ | d) Iqtadā al- Naṣṣ |

In this discussion, the classification of words and meanings from the foundational texts of Uṣūl al-Fiqh has been briefly outlined. Some of these principles were initially presented by Imām Shāfi'ī in his work Al-Risālah, and later elaborated upon by Imām Jaṣṣāṣ according to the Ḥanafī methodology. The book in which the above-mentioned principles were explained for the first time in a very coherent manner is Imam Bazdawī's Kanz al-Wuṣūl.²⁹

Here, among the principles of interpretation of texts, the approach of the Uṣūliyyīn and commentators has been briefly explained in the description of 'Āmm and Khāṣṣ. Also, light has been shed on the approach of Hanafī and Shāfi'ī scholars regarding the relationship between 'Āmm and Khāṣṣ and their meaning.

Khāṣṣ (Specific) and 'Āmm (General)

Khāṣṣ and 'Āmm are the common discussions among Uṣūl al-Fiqh and Uṣūl al-Tafsīr. The book of Uṣūl in which it has been discussed for

the very first time is Imam Shāfi'ī's Al-Risālah. Imam Ahmad b. Ḥanbal described the stature of Imam Shāfi'ī in discussions of Khāṣṣ and 'Āmm with respect to Uṣūl.

”لم نكن نعرف الخصوص والعموم حتى ورد الشافعي.“³⁰

Before going into detailed discussion, it is necessary to define both the terms Khāṣṣ and 'Āmm. Allama Bazdawī stated the terminological definition of **Khāṣṣ** as:

اما الخاص: فكل لفظ وضع لمعنى واحد على الانفراد، وانقطاع المشاركة، وكل اسم وضع لمسعى معلوم على الانفراد.“³¹

Thus, Khāṣṣ is any word that is uniquely formulated for a particular thing without including anything else, and is a noun that is uniquely formulated to denote a noun known.

Allama Sarakhsī defined Khāṣṣ in followings words:

”كل لفظ موضوع لمعنى معلوم على الانفراد، وكل اسم لمسعى معلوم على الانفراد.“³²

An example from the Qur'an and inference of Hanafite scholars from it are quoted below:

(وَالْمُطَلَّقَاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ)³³

Imam Bazdawī explained that how the meaning of (قُرُوءٍ) becomes evident due to the presence of word (ثَلَاثَةٌ).

قلنا المراد بها الحيض: لأننا إذا حملنا على الإظهار انتقص العدد عن الثلاثة فصارت العدة قرءين وبعض الثالث وإذا حملنا على الحيض كانت ثلاثة كاملة والثلاثة اسم خاص لعدد معلوم لا يحتمل غيره كالفرد لا يحتمل العدد والواحد لا يحتمل الاثنين فكان هذا بمعنى الرد والإبطال.³⁴

We say that the word Qurū' denotes menstruation, because if we considered its meaning as state of purity, the number three would have not been validated; the waiting period would be two tuhar and some days more. When we considered it as menstruation, the number three just fitted in properly. The word thalāthah (ثَلَاثَةٌ) is a specific word which denotes a particular number and does not doubt any other ones, just like the word one cannot mean Two. Hence, this implies to refutation and negation.

Similarly, **Allama Sarakhsī** writes:

قال علماءنا رحمهم الله في قوله تعالى ﴿ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ﴾ إن المراد الحيض لأننا لو حملناه على الأظهار كان الاعتداد بقرأين وبعض الثالث ولو حملناه على الحيض كان التبرص بثلاثة قروء كوامل واسم الثلاث موضوع لعدد معلوم لغة لا يحتمل النقصان عنه بمنزلة اسم الفرد فإنه لا يحتمل العدد واسم الواحد ليس فيه احتمال المثنى ففي حمله على الأظهار ترك العمل بلفظ الثلاث فيما هو موضوع له لغة ولا وجه للمصير إليه.³⁵

Our scholars consider ”ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ“ as three menstruation cycles. If we take it as a state of purity, it would be two complete cycles and some days of the third and if we mean menstruation here, the waiting period would be completed after three cycles. In lexicons, the word thalāth has been drafted for a known number just as a singular does not mean plural and one does not mean two.

Moreover, considering the word Qurū' as a state of purity, the literal meaning of thalāth would be compromised and there is no reason to do so here.

Mulla Jīwan states

The word Khāṣṣ has been formulated for a known meaning which does not denote something more or less. Divorce is doubtful in the state of purity rather than menstruation. Hence, if a woman is divorced in the state of purity, and this ṭuhār is also included in the waiting period, as Shafiites believe, then this waiting period would comprise of two ṭuhār and a few days of the third. And if the ṭuhār in which divorce occurs is not included in the waiting period, then it would comprise of three ṭuhār and a part of fourth one. Hence, it is proved that if state of purity is considered, the ruling of Khāṣṣ would have to be abandoned and if it is considered as three menstruation cycles, the waiting period would be completed without a day more or less.³⁶

Allama Bazdawī stated the terminological definition of 'Āmm as:

كل لفظ ينتظم جمعا من الاسماء، لفظا او معنا.³⁷

Every word that includes all names, either verbally or in meaning, is commonly referred to as General ('Āmm).

He clarified the wording of his definition in the following words:

و معنى قولنا: من الاسماء: يعنى من المسميات هنا و معنى قولنا لفظا او معنا : هو تفسير الانتظام، يعنى ان ذلك اللفظ انما ينتظم الاسماء مرة لفظا، مثل قولنا: زيدون، ونحوه، ومرة معنى، مثل قولنا: من، وما، ونحوهما.³⁸

And here, by our statement (من الاسماء), we mean appellations. Our statement is for the purpose of clarification and explanation of the term "الانتظام" meaning that this term, at times, in terms of wording, encompasses all names. Just as our statement "زيدون" and similar words or in meaning encompasses all individuals, like our statement "من و ما" and similar words.

يعنى العام من الكتاب و السنة المتواترة لا يحتمل الخصوص اى لا يجوز تخصيصه بخبر الواحد والقياس لانهما ظنيان فلا يجوز تخصيص القطعى بهما.³⁹

The Book of Allah (Qur'an) and the recurrent tradition (Sunnah Mutawātirah) do not generally allow specific inference, meaning that neither solitary reports (Khabar al-Wāhid) nor analogical reasoning (Qiyās) can establish specification of the general. This is because both solitary reports and analogical reasoning are speculative. Therefore, through them, definitive rulings cannot be established.

Allama Sarakhsī states:

Therefore, the directive of the Prophet (PBUH) “لا صلاة الا بفاتحة الكتاب” does not necessarily specify a general command of Allah Almighty, “فَاقْرَءُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ” This means that designating the recitation of Surah Al-Fatiḅah as an essential component of prayer is not inherently established, and in the same way, the statement of Allah Almighty,

“وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ” is a general statement without specific limitations. Regarding the matter of forgetfulness, it has been incorporated under the classification of the people who remember (dhākirīn), considering his general faith, so that leniency remains for the one who forgets. Thus, for those who forget, there is relaxation in the matter. Therefore, using solitary reports or analogical reasoning to specify this generality is not correct.⁴⁰

Mulla Jīwan writes:

According to us (Hanafis), there cannot be any specific portion designated for recitation in the prayer. However, Imam Shāfi‘ī has said that reciting Al-Fātiḅah in the prayer is farḅ due to specification by the saying of the Prophet (PBUH), “لا صلاة الا بفاتحة الكتاب” and in the school of Imam Mālik, combining another Surah with Surah Al-Fatiḅah is also necessary due to the instruction of the Prophet (PBUH) “لا صلوة الا بفاتحة الكتاب و السورة” and according to the Hanafis, both these actions are wājib. This is because the scholars of principles have mentioned that the guidance of Allah Almighty “مَا تَيَسَّرَ” is general and according to our view, the general is absolute.

So, the saying of the Noble Prophet (PBUH) “لا صلوة الا بفاتحة الكتاب” cannot be contrary to this generality, because this narration is a solitary report (Khabar al-Wāḅid), and solitary reports are always considered speculative unanimously and does not establish ‘ilm al-yaqīn. Therefore, the utmost level of a solitary report is to establish an action as obligatory (wājib) and not to establish knowledge with certainty (‘ilm al-yaqīn). Consequently, the status of a solitary report can only be that it obligates an action, and does not establish knowledge with certainty. Hence, we have placed every solitary report (Khabar al-Wāḅid) and every aspect from the Book of Allah in their appropriate positions and ranks. Therefore, recitation is established as Farḅ, and reciting Al-Fatiḅah is considered Wājib, and in the same manner, combining another Surah with it is also deemed Wājib.⁴¹

Whether it is the classical or modern exegetical literature, or the study and examination of the principles of Tafsīr (most of which were authored

in more recent times), it can be confidently stated based on thorough study that the divisions of language and meaning, that is, Qawā'id Uṣūliyyah Lughawiyah are basically the foundation of interpretation. These were established by scholars of principles to discern the intentions of the legislator (i.e., Allah), whether they are inferred from the wording of the text or from other means, whether they are inferred from the literal reality of the words or from metaphorical usage, whether they are general or specific, and likewise other divisions. For further clarification of this matter, in addition to the definitions of Uṣūl al-Tafsīr, if one examines the contents of books written on this subject, they also reveal the same reality.

Second Source: The Sunnah

In Islamic jurisprudence, after the Qur'an, the second fundamental source is Sunnah. The sayings, actions, and tacit approvals of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are referred to as Sunnah.

Allama Ibn Ḥazam stated:

السنن تنقسم ثلاثة أقسام : قول من النبي أو فعل منه أو شيء راه وعلمه فأقر عليه ولم ينكره⁴²

Sunnah is divided into three categories. It consists of the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), his actions, or something he observed and about which he had knowledge, and he upheld it and not denied it.

Allama Āmidī wrote:

وهي في اللغة عبارة عن الطريقة، فسنة كل احد ما عهدت منه المحافظة عليه، والاكثر منه، كان ذلك من الأمور الحميدة أو غيرها. وأما في الشرع فقد تطلق على ما كان من العبادات نافلة منقولة عن النبي ﷺ وقد تطلق على ما صدر عن الرسول من الأدلة الشرعية مما ليس يمتلو، ولا هو معجز، ولا داخل في المعجز، وهذا النوع هو المقصود بالبيان ههنا. ويدخل في ذلك أقوال النبي ﷺ وأفعاله وتقاريره⁴³

Linguistically, it refers to the method. The Sunnah signifies everything that has been intended for preservation and is practiced extensively, whether it is in line with commendable acts or contrary to them. In the realm of Shariah, it is applied to non-obligatory acts (nawāfil) of worship transmitted from the Prophet (PBUH), and it can also refer to evidence from the Prophet's teachings that is not recited, not itself the Qur'an, and not part of the miraculous word of Allah (Qur'an). This category is what is intended to be clarified here. It includes the sayings, actions, and tacit approvals of the Prophet (PBUH).

Allama Taftāzānī opines:

في اللغة الطريقه والعادة في الاصطلاح في العبادات النافلة وفي الأدلة وهو المراد ههنا ما صدر عن النبي ﷺ غير القرآن من قول ويسمى الحديث أو فعل أو تقرير.⁴⁴

Linguistically, the meaning of Sunnah is method and habit.

Terminologically, it refers to non-obligatory acts of worship and in the legal evidence, it means whatever is apart from the Qur'an, said by the Noble Prophet (PBUH), whether it is in the form of a statement (called Hadith), an action, or a tacit approval.

In the Book of Allah, there are many verses that indicate the obedience to the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) commands to the extent that his obedience is equated with the obedience of Allah. It is as if it is not only the explanation of the Qur'an but also a constant source of Shariah. Imam Shāfi'ī discussed this matter in his book Al-Risālah, dedicating four sections to the discussion of Sunnah. The titles of these sections are as follows:

١. بيان فرض الله في كتابه اتباع سنة نبيه

Allah Almighty has made it obligatory in His Book to follow the Sunnah of His Prophet.

٢. باب فرض الله طاعة رسول الله ﷺ مقرونة بطاعة الله ومذكورة وحدها

Allah Almighty has decreed the obedience to the Prophet (PBUH) as an obligation, and this is mentioned both in ways, in conjunction with obedience to Allah and separately also.

٣. باب ما أمر الله من طاعة رسول الله ﷺ

The rules and commands that Allah Almighty has given concerning the obedience to the Noble Prophet (PBUH).

٤. باب ما أبان الله لخلقه من فرضه على رسوله اتباع ما أوحى إليه وما شهد له به من اتباع ما أمره ومن هداه وأنه هاد لمن اتبعه

Allah Almighty has clearly stated to His creation that it is necessary to follow the revelation that comes from Allah to the Messenger (PBUH), and Allah also testifies that the Prophet (PBUH) follows the commands given to him. Likewise, there is testimony of his guidance and that he is a guide for those who follow him.

Imam Shāfi'ī states:

ومنها: ما بينه عن سنة نبيه بلا نص كتاب.⁴⁵

One of the scenarios is that there is no specific textual reference from the Book of Allah regarding a particular matter, and Allah Almighty has clarified it through the Sunnah of His Prophet (PBUH). This means that Sunnah is the second fundamental source of the Shariah. It can also be said that if Sunnah explains the nature of the explicit commands of the Qur'an, then in cases where there is no direct textual reference in the Book of Allah for a certain issue, Allah Almighty provides clarification through the Sunnah.

''وكل شيء منها بيان في الكتاب الله.''⁴⁶

And everything within the scope of the Sunnah is the clarification of the Book of Allah.

Imam Shāfi'ī clarified this principle by stating that Sunnah is, in a comprehensive sense, the interpretation of the Book of Allah. It is as if Sunnah can be interpreted as the explanation of the Book of Allah.

Nāsikh and Mansūkh

The texts of the Qur'an and Sunnah do not inherently conflict with each other, but in some instances, when apparent contradictions or differences arise, the scholars have established principles for resolving such situations. Among these principles, the most important and detailed discussion revolves around the concept of Nāsikh and Mansūkh.

Within the Noble Qur'an, there are certain verses that cannot be acted upon simultaneously. The foundation of these verses lies in the concept of abrogation in the Qur'an. In these cases, Allah Almighty has provided guidance:

(مَا نُنسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِمَّا أَوْ مِثْلِهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)⁴⁷

In the Noble Qur'an, there are verses and rulings where the possibility of contradiction is apparent. In such cases, either there is a way to reconcile the two, or if no reconciliation is possible, and the meanings of these verses indicate clearly that combining them is not feasible, then the ruling revealed earlier is abrogated and replaced by the ruling revealed later. The abrogated ruling is known as "Mansūkh," and the abrogating ruling is called "Nāsikh." The concept of abrogation in the Qur'an led to debates and discussions among scholars, with the earliest formulation of principles on this matter. Along with defining this concept, its applications and implications were clarified, and detailed discussions were conducted regarding the possible scenarios of abrogation. Within this context, there was a disagreement among scholars about whether the Qur'an can abrogate the Sunnah and vice versa. Additionally, the identification of abrogated verses and the detailed explanation of abrogating verses were provided. Different forms of abrogation within the Qur'an were also discussed, including identifying which verses remain recited and their rulings have been abrogated, or both recitation and ruling have been abrogated, or the preservation of the ruling while the recitation has been abrogated, and so on. Scholars' meticulous analysis and attention to details enabled them to establish principles of abrogation through careful examination of the textual evidence. Imam Jaṣṣās defined the term Naskh as follows:

وَاللَّسْخُ فِي الشَّرِيعَةِ هُوَ بَيَانُ مُدَّةِ الْحُكْمِ الَّذِي كَانَ فِي تَوْهُمِنَا وَتَقْدِيرِنَا جَوَازَ بَقَائِهِ. فَتَبَيَّنَ لَنَا أَنَّ ذَلِكَ الْحُكْمَ مُدَّتُهُ إِلَىٰ هَذِهِ الْعَايَةِ. وَأَنَّهُ لَمْ يَكُنْ قَطُّ مُرَادًا بَعْدَهَا.⁴⁸

The legal meaning of abrogation (Naskh) refers to the clarification on the duration of a ruling that was intended to remain according to

our understanding and estimation, but with the revelation of the abrogating ruling, it became evident that the duration of that initial ruling was specific to a particular time, and thereafter, it was not Allah's intention to continue that ruling.

Allama Juwainī defined Naskh briefly as:

"هو اللفظ الدال على ظهور انتفاء شرط دوام الحكم الاول"⁴⁹

Abrogation (Naskh) is the term used to indicate the negation of the condition for continuation of the initial ruling.

Imam Bazdawī clarified in his legal definition of abrogation that it does not imply to the change in Allah's knowledge; rather, it is the perpetuation of the ruling itself to the extent that the legislator (Allah) had intended to maintain it.

"وهو في حق صاحب الشرع: بيان محض لمدة الحكم المطلق الذي كان معلوما عند الله تعالى الا انه اطلقه، مضار ظاهرة البقاء في حق البشر فكان تعديلا في حقنا، بيانا محضا في حق صاحب الشرع"⁵⁰

In the context of the legislator (Allah), abrogation refers to mentioning duration of an explicit ruling, which was already known to Allah, but He made an explicit statement about the ruling when it was previously continuing indefinitely in the case of individuals. Therefore, from our perspective, there is a change based on our knowledge, but from Allah's perspective, it is merely a statement (of the previous ruling).

Wisdom behind Abrogation

Imam Shāfi'ī expressed the wisdom of abrogation in the following words at the beginning of his discussion:

وأُنزل عليهم الكتاب تبيانا لكل شيء، وهدى ورحمة، وفرض فيه فرائض أثبتنا، وأخرى نسختها، رحمةً لخلقهم، بالتخفيف عنهم، وبالتوسعة عليهم، زيادة فيما ابتدأهم به من نعمه. وأثابهم على الانتهاء إلى ما أثبت عليهم: جنّته، والنجاة من عذابه؛ فعَمَّتهم رحمةً فيما أثبت ونسخ، فله الحمد على نعمه.⁵¹

And Allah revealed to them the Book which is explanation for everything, guidance and mercy, and He ordained therein precise obligations and there are other rulings that He abrogated. This is out of mercy for His creation that He eased the burden on them and expanded the scope for them, in addition to what He initially blessed them with. He rewarded them with what He promised them, His Paradise and salvation from His punishment. So whatever Allah maintains or abrogates, everything is in accordance with Allah's Mercy.

The following is an example of the principle discussions that Imam Shāfi'ī has described regarding Naskh:

Mutual Abrogation of the Qur'an and Sunnah

Imam Shāfi'ī has taken the stance regarding the abrogation of texts that neither can the Qur'an abrogate the Sunnah, nor can the Sunnah abrogate the Qur'an. He writes:

وأبان الله لهم أنه إنما نسخ ما نسخ من الكتاب بالكتاب، وأن السنة لا ناسخة للكتاب، وإنما هي تبع للكتاب، يُمَيَّلُ ما نَزَلَ نصّاً، ومضبَّرةً معنى ما أنزل الله منه جُملاً.⁵²

Allah Almighty has also clarified that He has abrogated the commands of the Book of Allah and He abrogated it through the means of the Book of Allah itself. Also, that the Sunnah is not the way of abrogating the Qur'an; it is subordinate to the Qur'an, or whatever Allah Almighty has revealed and presented in a brief manner, the Sunnah interprets and elucidates its meanings.

Among the Qur'anic verses from which Imam Shāfi'ī has inferred regarding to Naskh, the following verse of Surah Al-Baqarah is of fundamental importance:

(مَا نُنسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)⁵³

He clarified this principle under the same verse:

فأخبر الله أن نسخ القرآن، وتأخير إنزاله لا يكون إلا بقرآن مثله.⁵⁴

In this verse, Allah Almighty has conveyed that there is no possibility of abrogation or delay in the revelation of the Noble Qur'an by any other means or source similar to the Qur'an itself.

As far as Sunnah is concerned, his argument is that the Sunnah can only abrogate the Sunnah. In other words, it is necessary for texts, whether from the Qur'an or the Sunnah, to be analogous to each other for one to abrogate the other. He writes:

وهكذا سنة رسول الله، لا يُنسخها إلا سنة لرسول الله؛ ولو أحدث الله لرسوله في أمر سنّ فيه، غير ما سنّ رسول الله؛ لسنّ فيما أحدث الله إليه، حتى يُبَيِّنَ للناس أن له سنة ناسخة للتي قبّلها مما يخالفها. وهذا مذکور في سنته - صلى الله عليه وسلم -.⁵⁵

This is also the case with the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH), that it can only be abrogated by the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH). If in any matter, Allah Almighty had to issue a decree that was separate from the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH), then the Prophet (PBUH) would have started practicing according to the new decree, so that it became clear to people that in that issue as well, there was a Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) which had abrogated the previous Sunnah, and this too is mentioned in Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH). Regarding the understanding of the Sunnah from the Qur'an, he raised a question himself and in response, he wrote the following statement:

فإن قال قائل: هل تُنسخ السنة بالقرآن؟ قيل: لو نُسخَت السنة بالقرآن، كانت للنبي فيه سنة تُبَيِّنُ أن سنته الأولى منسوخة بسنته الأخيرة حتى تقوم الحجة على الناس، بأن الشيء يُنسخ بمثله.⁵⁶

If someone asks whether the Sunnah can be abrogated through the Qur'an, the answer to this would be: that if the Sunnah were to be abrogated through the Holy Qur'an, then there would still be some Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) that would clarify the matter and show that his earlier Sunnah has been abrogated by his later Sunnah. This would establish the argument that anything can be abrogated only by its equivalent.

Imam Sahib has cited examples of abrogating and abrogated verses from the Qur'an and one of these examples is as follows:

قال "الشافعي": فكان بيتاً في كتاب الله نسخ قيام الليل ونصفه والنقصان من النصف،
والزيادة عليه بقول الله: ﴿فَأَقْرَهُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنْهُ﴾.⁵⁷

In situations where there is a conflict between texts, Imam Shāfi'ī established principles regarding abrogation, among which he adopted the stance that abrogation in the Qur'an is only possible through a text present within the Qur'an itself. This means that the Qur'an cannot abrogate the Sunnah, and the Sunnah cannot abrogate the Qur'an, because for abrogation, there must be equivalent evidence. Although there is significant variation among scholars of principles in the discussion of abrogation, but the intention here is not to delve into the details of these differences. Therefore, the predominant portion of the discussion on abrogation is derived from Imam Shāfi'ī's work Al-Risālah, so that the primary objective of this section can be fulfilled. The discussions on abrogation regarding its principles, have been extensively addressed by later scholars of principles, experts of the Qur'anic Sciences, and those who specialize in principles of Tafsīr. These discussions have been incorporated into the writings of both contemporary and modern authors to varying degrees.

Third Source: Ijmā' (Consensus)

The third source in Islamic jurisprudence is consensus (Ijmā'). All the scholars of principles have mentioned consensus as the third source of Shariah in their works, emphasizing it as a fundamental principle. The legitimacy of consensus is established through citations of verses and hadiths as well as transmissions. Whether it's Imam Shāfi'ī or later scholars of principles, they all have treated consensus as a foundational principle in their works on principles. Consensus is considered source of Shariah and principles of Islamic jurisprudence.

Consensus refers to the unanimous agreement of scholars of the Muslim community in a specific period on a religious matter.

Imam Ghazali has defined consensus in the following words:

الاجماع فانما نعني به اتفاق أمة محمد ﷺ خاصة على أمر من الأمور الدينية⁵⁸

Consensus (ijmā') is, in reality, the unanimous agreement of specifically Muslim community (Ummah) upon a matter of religious significance.

Allama Āmīdī stated:

الاجماع عبارة عن اتفاق جملة أهل الحل والعقد من أمة محمد في عصر من أعصار على حكم واقعة من الوقائع⁵⁹

The agreement of Muslim community (Ummah) in any era, regarding the Shariah ruling of a particular event that occurs, is known as Ijmā'.

After the terminological definitions of consensus, the justification for its legitimacy is derived from certain Qur'anic verses.

For instance, **Imam Jaṣṣāṣ** has used the following verse as evidence to establish the legitimacy of consensus:

﴿وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾⁶⁰

This verse establishes the obligation of following the believers and warns against opposing them. Therefore, it indirectly signifies the correctness of their consensus. It is because the community cannot be devoid of believers, as it is mentioned in the Qur'an: (هُوَ سَمُكُمُ الْمَسْلُومِينَ مِنْ) (وفي هذا) (Surah Al-Ḥajj, 22:78) (قبل). If it is accepted that mistake has occurred amongst them, then those who are commanded to follow must also be designated to follow what is wrong. Allah Almighty has mandated to follow the believers for them, and this mandate is based on what is right and appropriate. Furthermore, Allah has emphasized this by warning of punishment for abandoning their guidance.⁶¹

Consensus (ijmā') serves to clarify and solidify the definitive rulings derived from textual sources of Islamic law. It essentially emphasizes and confirms the certainty of established rulings. Furthermore, any interpretation given contrary to such consensus in matters such as beliefs ('aqā'id) or obligations (farā'id) is condemned. Consensus can also address cases where a text contains multiple possible meanings, meanings that are not certain (Qaṭ'i) but initially speculative (Zannī). In such situations, consensus can be used to determine the intended meaning and subsequently establish certainty once the ambiguity is resolved through consensus. For instance, in the verse⁶² (حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ) consensus establishes that the terms "أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ" and "بَنَاتُكُمْ" do not only refer to biological mothers and daughters but also include grandmothers, granddaughters, and other relationships. This consensus clarifies the scope of the prohibited relationships. An other form of consensus involves analogy (Qiyās) based on the foundation of the Qur'an. For instance, in the case of⁶³ (وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ) (وَالْمُحْصَنَاتِ), through analogy, it has been established that those men who are harmed are also included in the prohibition. This consensus is based on analogical reasoning derived from the Qur'an.

Fourth Source: Qiyās (Analogy)

The fourth source of Islamic Shariah is Qiyās. According to **Imam Jaṣṣāṣ**, terminological definition of qiyās is as follows:

”والقياس: أن يحكم للشيء على نظيره المشارك له في علته الموجبة لحكمه“⁶⁴

Analogy is to apply a ruling to a case based on a precedent that shares some common reason to apply that ruling.

In other words, analogy means applying a ruling to a certain thing based on a similar case that shares the same underlying reason for the ruling. The elements of analogy have been explained as follows:

- i. Maqīs (مقيس): The subject of analogy, which is the thing being analyzed. It is also called the Far' (فرع).
- ii. Maqīs ‘alayh (مقيس عليه): The original case from which the analogy is drawn. It is the Aṣl upon which the analogy is based.
- iii. ‘Illah (علت): The reason that is common to both the original case and the subject of analogy.
- iv. Ḥukm (حكم): The ruling that is applied from the original case to the subject of analogy based on the common reason (‘illah).

All scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah unanimously agree that analogy is a valid legal reasoning and constitutes the fourth source of Islamic jurisprudence. Imam Jaṣṣāṣ, in support of the validity of analogy, cites various evidences, one of which is the following verse from Surah Al-Nisā’ in the Qur’an, wherein the justification for the validity of analogy is explained:

(فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ)⁶⁵

The apparent implication of this verse is that disputes arise in the matters that have not been defined in Islamic texts. This is because, typically, disputes and disagreements among Muslims do not occur in matters that are explicitly addressed in the Qur’an and Sunnah. Therefore, a verdict has been given to refer the disputing matter to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH), if it arises during the lifetime of Allah’s Messenger (PBUH), then direct the matter to him and if arises after his death, then direct towards his Sunnah. Referring to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah means extracting rulings from both through exertion of effort (Ijtihād), intellectual contemplation.⁶⁶

In addition to this, there are numerous hadiths that provide evidence for the validity of analogy, and scholars have discussed them in detail. One such hadith is the narration of Mu’ādh b. Jabal⁶⁷, which holds a significant position in supporting the legitimacy of analogy. The following verse of the Holy Qur’an is made the subject of discussion regarding Qiyās:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾⁶⁸

In this verse, there is a difference of opinion between the Hanafī and the majority schools of thought regarding the definition and scope of the term "khamr" (خمر). According to Hanafī school, "khamr" is specific and refers to a particular type of beverage, but according to other schools of thought, it encompasses all intoxicating substances which overshadows the intellect of a person.

Allama Ṣābūnī, a prominent scholar, explains this difference in his words as follows:

Khamr is the name for that substance which affects the mind and covers it. This is the opinion of the majority of scholars. The Hanafīs said that khamr is specific to this kind: the juice of grapes, when it is boiled and heated until it froths. According to them, only this kind of beverage is referred to as khamr, while other intoxicating substances that affect the mind are not called khamr, even though they may be prohibited. According to the majority, khamr includes not only grape juice that has been boiled and heated, but also any other intoxicating beverage. They agree on the prohibition of all intoxicating substances, and the difference is merely apparent.⁶⁹

Conclusion

1. When the Arabic language was influenced by other languages, experts in linguistics established principles and rules to ensure the preservation of the Arabic language. These principles are called Linguistic Principles (Lughawī Qawā'id).
2. After deep thought and contemplation, scholars and jurists further expanded the linguistic principles. They examined the Qur'anic texts and Sunnah and organized these principles into a systematic framework. These principles, known as "Qawā'id Uṣūliyyah Lughawiyah" which do not represent complete principles of jurisprudence (Uṣūl al-Fiqh), but they are a fundamental part of its foundation. These are the principles used to aid in interpreting the texts of the Qur'an.
3. Since the Qur'an is the primary source of Islamic law, scholars of principles (Uṣūliyyīn) introduced these linguistic principles to help deduce legal rulings from its texts for interpretation and explanation.
4. The initial books on Uṣūl did not present these linguistic principles in a comprehensive and organized manner. However, the effects of these principles are found in the first book on this topic, Al-Risālah.

Furthermore, Imam Jaṣṣāṣ explained these principles in his book Al-Fuṣūl with detailed explanations and elaborations. Imam Bazdawī, considering words and meanings, first compiled the divisions of these principles systematically in his book Kanz al-Wuṣūl.

5. The linguistic principles are categorized into four divisions based on the relationship between words and their meanings:
 - First division is based on the consideration of the literal meaning of words.
 - Second division considers how words are used in their meanings, whether as they were originally intended or in different senses.
 - Third division depends on clarity or ambiguity of a word in its connotation.
 - Fourth and final division is based on the methods by which words or speech indicate their meanings.

This is the division that has been described by scholars of principles in the discussion of the Book of Allah and some later ones have explained it under a different title apart from the discussion of the Book of Allah.

6. Factually, Qawā'id Uṣūliyyah Lughawiyyah are the very principles used for interpreting the Qur'an, which were for the first time presented by scholars of principles to derive legal rulings from the Qur'anic text. There are many principles in Qawā'id Uṣūliyyah Lughawiyyah stated in the books of Uṣūl al-Tafsīr, which have been discussed under the discussions of Tafsīr al-Qur'an by the Qur'an itself and Tafsīr al-Qur'an by the Sunnah.
7. These are the same principles that are applicable in second source of Islamic law, the Sunnah. However, regarding this matter, the discussion within the Uṣūl books revolves around the legitimacy of the Sunnah, its authority, and its legal basis. The Recurrent Sunnah provides corroborating evidence for the beliefs and obligations in the Qur'an. This pattern is present in every issue that pertains to the fundamental needs of Muslims. Additionally, Khabar al-Mashhūr and Khabar al-Wāḩid are also used for interpreting Qur'anic verses, as, in general, the Sunnah serves as an interpretation of the Qur'an.
8. Uṣūl scholars have created a subject of discussion around conflicts between Islamic Sources, especially focusing on the topic of abrogation (Naskh), which holds fundamental importance. This topic has also been addressed by interpreters in their own Commentaries based on the verses of abrogation. Since this is a principle without which interpretation cannot be understood, hence, it holds a central

- position in the field of Uṣūl al-Tafsīr.
9. There is consensus among all Uṣūliyyīn regarding the status of Consensus as the third source of Islamic law. Uṣūl books define and discuss the authority, different types, and aspects of consensus. In the context of Qur'anic interpretation, consensus is an important source, regardless of its nature within the realm of interpretation. While the specifics of consensus may vary within interpretation, in cases where there is agreement among scholars on the meaning of a word or its legal implications, interpretations contradicting this consensus are considered rejected.
10. There is consensus among the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah that analogy is the fourth legal source. Uṣūl books, along with the elaboration on the legitimacy of analogy, its components, and detailed discussions on its principles, also present examples of its application. In the interpretation of the Qur'anic verses, analogy is also introduced in cases where interpreters establish its legitimacy and employ it to argue specific issues. Moreover, within the field of Uṣūl al-Tafsīr, there is a form of interpretation through Ijtihād known as Tafsīr al-Rā'ay.

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- ¹ Shāfi'ī jurists have commended Imam Shāfi'ī in their books of principles: الشافعي أول من صنف في أصول الفقه صنف فيه كتاب الرسالة وكتاب "أحكام القرآن"، "واختلاف الحديث"، وإبطال الاستحسان" و "كتاب "جماع العلم" وكتاب "القياس" الذي ذكر فيه تضليل المعتزلة ورجوعه عن قبول شهادتهم، ثم تبعه المصنفون في الأصول.
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- Allama Zarkashī has quoted Imam Juwaynī's statement regarding the status of the book Al-Risālah:
- لم يسبق الشافعي أحد في تصانيف الأصول ومعرفتها.
- Al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ fī Uṣūl al-Fiqh, 1:18
- The renowned scholar and a prominent figure in Shāfi'ī jurisprudence, Imam al-Suyūṭī, established consensus as evidence for the priority of 'Al-Risālah' in the principles of jurisprudence. He clarified that it serves as an introduction to his book Al-Umm:
- وأول من ابتكر هذا العلم الإمام الشافعي بالإجماع وألف فيه كتاب الرسالة الذي أرسل به إلى ابن مهدي وهو مقدمة الأم.
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- ³ Fayyūmī, Ahmad b. Muhammad, Al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, n.d.), 1:21 (Root word: اصل)

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- 12 Nihāyatul Sūl, 1:7
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