

Imam Shafi'i & his view about Ahle Hadith
By Shaykh Abdal Hakim Murad

Ibn Abi Zayd al-Maliki reports Sufyan ibn `Uyaynah as saying:

"Hadith is a pitfall except for the fuqaha (Jurists)"

Ibn Abi Zayd comments:

"He [Sufyan ibn `Uyayna] means that other than the jurists might take something in its external meaning when, in fact, it is interpreted in the light of another hadith or some evidence which remains hidden to him; or it may in fact consist in discarded evidence due to some other [abrogating] evidence. None can meet the responsibility of knowing this except those who deepened their learning and obtained fiqh (jurisprudence)."

Yahya ibn Sulayman narrated from Ibn Wahb that he heard Imam Malik say:

"Many of these hadiths are [a cause for] misguidance; some ahadith were narrated by me and I wish that for each of them I had been flogged with a stick twice. I certainly no longer narrate them!"

By his phrase, "Many of these ahadith are misguidance," Imam Malik means their adducing them in the wrong place and meaning, because the Sunnah is wisdom and wisdom is to place each thing in its right context.

Imam Malik's companion `Abd Allah ibn Wahb said:

"Hadith is a misguidance except for the Ulema (Scholars). Every memoriser of hadith that does not have an Imam in fiqh is misguided, and if Allah had not rescued us with Imam Malik and al-Layth [ibn Sa'd], we would have been misguided."

Ibn Wahb is also reported to have said:

"I met three hundred and sixty learned people of knowledge but, without Malik and al-Layth, I would have strayed."

Another versions states:

"Were it not for Malik ibn Anas and al-Layth ibn Sa`d I would have perished; I used to think everything that is [authentically] related from the Prophet – Allâh bless and greet him – must be put into practice."

Another version states:

"I gathered a lot of ahadith and they drove me to confusion. I would consult Malik and al-Layth and they would say to me, 'take this and leave this.'"

Ibn Wahb had compiled 120,000 narrations according to Ahmad ibn Salih. Hence, Ibn `Uqda replied to a man who had asked him about a certain narration:

"Keep such hadiths to a minimum for, truly, they are unsuitable except for those who know their interpretation."

Source