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Usul al-Fiqh for Beginners, Lesson 1: What is Usul al-Fiqh

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[Usul al-Fiqh for Beginners](#)

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Allah revealed the Quran and commanded us to reflect over it and understand it (Sad:29, Muhammad, 24).

كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ (ص:٢٩)
أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا (محمد:٢٤)

Pondering the Quran has principles. Whoever wants to understand the Quran without the principles will misunderstand it.

Understanding the book and the sunnah is based on understanding these principles.

The first person to write down the principles in a single book was Imam Shaf'ie.

Usul al-Fiqh is knowledge of the principles that are used to deduce the rulings directly from the proofs. It is concerned with a study of shariah proofs.

It is divided into four categories;

1. General overview of the shariah rulings. Eg scholars say this is wajib, etc. what does the word wajib mean?
2. What constitutes valid evidence. For example the quran and sunnah is proof. Note: there could be valid differences amongst scholars as to what constitutes proof.
3. Principles for understanding the book and the sunnah. Example when is a wording a command or information?
4. Who utilises Usul alfiqh to deduce rulings from the texts

Usul alfiqh is taken from the arabic language and the divine texts - the quran and the sunnah.

For example the principle: command is for obligation is taken from the language, when you give an instruction if they do not carry it out you respond you have disobeyed me, and from the book and the sunnah because Allah says (beware of those who go against his command...) al-Nur:

63)

لَا تَجْعَلُوا دُعَاءَ الرَّسُولِ بَيْنَكُمْ كَدُعَاءِ بَعْضِكُمْ بَعْضًا قَدْ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ يَتَسَلَّلُونَ مِنْكُمْ لِوَاذَةٍ فَلْيَحْذَرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِ أَنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (النور:٦٣)

shows that imperative verb is for obligation. And in the sunnah the hadith: if i did not want to make it difficult for my ummah, i would have ordered the siwak with every wudu'

(لولا أن أشق على أمتي لأمرتهم بالسواك عند كل صلاة [متفق عليه])

shows that imperative is for obligation.

It is an obligation to learn usul al-fiqh for the person who is giving fatawa and a fard al-keyfiyah for anybody else.

Five principles for student of usul alfiqh:

1. Sincerity

2. Take the principles from the book, sunnah and the arabic language
3. Find a trustworthy teacher. Whoever takes his book as his teacher will get more things wrong than right
4. Apply the Usul principles to the texts.
5. Studying in stages. Beginner text, intermediate text, advanced text. etc