

The Concept of Fitna in Islam and Its Synonymous Terms

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Abstract

This research undertakes a foundational and conceptual study of the term “fitna” in Islamic thought and its historical context, clarifying the dimensions of the word and its multiple connotations. The study begins with an etymological effort, tracing the linguistic root of the word “fatana”, and reviewing the opinions of lexicographers such as Al-Jawhari, Ibn Manzur, and AlKhalil ibn Ahmad. It becomes evident that the original meaning revolves around trial and testing, as in “to assay gold with fire to determine its quality.” The research then proceeds to examine the concept in its technical usage within Islamic jurisprudence, as defined by exegetes and scholars such as Al-Jurjani, Al-Zamakhshari, and AlRazi. It concludes that fitna represents a critical trial through which an individual or community passes, revealing their true essence—whether through political conflicts and social upheavals that disrupt the community, or through personal trials of prosperity and adversity that test the believer’s faith.

The study devotes ample space to tracing the term in the Qur’anic text, drawing upon the classification of Yahya ibn Sallam al-Qayrawani, who identified eleven distinct usages of fitna in the Qur’an, ranging from polytheism, trial, punishment by fire, sin, disbelief, killing, obstruction from the path, and confusion. In the historical and hadith context, the research highlights how the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) warned against the succession and proliferation of fitan, carefully following the semantic transformation of the term in the writings of historians, particularly Imam alTabari in his History. The study shows how alTabari’s usage evolved from denoting external persecution during the Meccan period to signifying internal division, collapse of central authority, and the mingling of truth with falsehood during the Great Fitna and subsequent political conflicts.

Furthermore, the research addresses the semantic distinctions between fitna and its synonymous terms such as ibtalā’ (trial), imtiḥān (examination), and ikhtibār (testing), demonstrating that fitna denotes the most severe and consequential form of trial. The study concludes by categorizing fitan in the historical context into multiple types: political fitnas arising from power struggles and imbalance of authority; economic fitnas linked to the worship of wealth and worldly rivalry; and social fitnas that undermine human bonds and sow discord and enmity within society.

Chapter One: The Concept of Fitna Linguistically and Terminologically

First: Fitna in Language and Terminology Fitna is derived from the linguistic root “fatana”⁽¹⁾; and this serves as the foundation from which all other linguistic derivatives stemming from this root originate. The letters fā’, tā’, and nūn constitute a sound linguistic root that denotes trial and testing. From this root the term fitna is derived. Thus it is said: fatantu al-dhahab bil-nār — “I assayed the gold with fire,” meaning “I tested it.” One says maftūn (tempted, tried) and faṭīn (tested), while al-fattān refers to Satan.”

(2).

((1)Al-Farahidi, Abi Abd al-Rahman bin Ahmed al-Farahidi (d. 170 AH), Al-Ain, edited by: Mahdi Makhzoumi and Ibrahim al-Samarrai, AlHilal House and Library, d.t.) • 8/127.

(2) Ibn Faris, Abu al-Husayn Ahmad ibn Faris ibn Zakaria (d. 395 AH), Dictionary of Language Measures, edited by: Abd al-Salam Muhammad Haroun, (Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, Lebanon, 1399 AH), 4/472.

This is confirmed by Ismā'īl ibn Ḥammād al-Jawharī⁽³⁾, who stated: "Fitna is trial and testing; you say 'fatantu al-dhahab' when you place it in the fire to examine its quality. ⁽⁴⁾" The concept of fitna thus denotes burning with fire, from which comes the expression al-waraq al-fatīn, meaning "burnt paper." Al-Khalīl also said⁽⁵⁾: "Al-fatn is burning, and the goldsmith is called al-fattān. From this, the black stones that appear as though scorched by fire are called al-fatīn." ⁽⁶⁾

Ibn Manḥūr⁽⁷⁾, citing al-Zuhr⁽⁸⁾, summarized the meaning of fitna as trial, examination, and testing ⁽⁹⁾. Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazarī added: "Fitna is trial and testing, but its usage became frequent in reference to what the test produces of disliked outcomes. It then expanded until it was used to mean sin, disbelief, fighting, burning, removal, and diversion from something. ⁽¹⁰⁾"

Based on the foregoing, we find that the linguistic meaning of fitna essentially revolves around trial and testing. This meaning later developed into its legalreligious usage, where it came to denote the divine examination to which human beings are subjected, as is evident in numerous passages of the Qur'an.

Fitna in Terminology:

Despite the clarity of its linguistic denotation, the concept of fitna acquired broad terminological dimensions among exegetes and scholars, depending on the context in which it appears. Among the most prominent perspectives are:

1- Al-Jurjani: Fitna is "what shows the condition of man in terms of good and evil."

2 – Al-Zamakhshari: Fitna is "the test of the hardships of the mandate from the paradox of the homelands, the struggle of the enemies, the veils of hard obedience, the abandonment of desires and refuge, poverty and drought, all kinds of calamities in lives and money, and the patience of the disbelievers for their harm, scheming and harm."

3 – Al-Razi: Fitnah is the will of Allah Almighty to afflict a slave in order to show what is in his heart of disbelief, misguidance or hypocrisy, or to torture or expose him, and no one is able to stop him from doing so.

By extrapolating from the previous definitions, we can derive a terminological definition of fitnah, which revolves around two axes:

1. At the collective level: It is in essence a disorder and difference that affects the group, which leads to the disruption of the order, whether the cause is a sectarian conflict or a political conflict, which results in harm in religion and the world, or both.

2 – On the individual level: It is all that God Almighty tests the servant with, whether it is good or bad, grace or adversity, in order to determine his faith and show the extent of his steadfastness, whether it is through blessings or adversity. Thus, fitnah is the testing juncture through which a person (individually or a group) passes through to reveal the true essence of man.

Second: Fitnah in the Qur'an:

(3) Al-Jawhari: The Imam of the Language, Ismail bin Hammad Al-Turki Al-Jawhari "Abu Nasr", one of those who are exemplary in controlling the language, he has a book on performances and an introduction to grammar, and he was the first to try to fly and died for him in Nishapur in 393 AH. See: Al-Zarkali, Khair al-Din bin Mahmud bin Muhammad bin Ali bin Faris al-Zarkali (d. 1396 AH), Al-Alam, (7th edition, Dar al-Ilm Li Millions, Beirut, Lebanon, 1413 AH / 1992 AD), 1/313.

(4) Ibn Manzoor, Abu al-Fadl Muhammad ibn Makram ibn Ali, Jamal al-Din ibn Manzoor al-Ansari al-Ruwaifa'i al-Ifriqi (d. 711 AH), Lisan al-Arab, (Dar Sader, Beirut, Lebanon, 1414 AH, 3rd edition), 13/317.

(5) Al-Khalil: He is Al-Khalil bin Ahmad bin Amr bin Tamim Al-Farahidi "Abu Abd al-Rahman", one of the Imams of language and literature, and the author of the science of propositions, and he is the teacher of Sibawayh al-Nahwi, he was born in Basra in 100 AH and died there in 170 AH. See: Al-Zarkali, Al-I'lam, 2/314.

((6) Ibn Manzoor, Lisan al-Arab, 13/317;

(7) Ibn Manzoor: He is Muhammad bin Makram bin Ali Abu al-Fadl bin Manzoor al-Ansari al-Afriqi, the author of "Lisan al-Arab", the linguistic Imam al-Hajjah, a descendant of Ruwaifa bin Thabit al-Ansari, born in Egypt and said to be in Tripoli in the west in 630 AH, and died in Egypt in 7 AH. See: al-Zarkali, al-'Alam, 7/108.

(8) Al-Azhari: He is Muhammad bin Ahmed bin Al-Azhar Al-Harawi "Abu Mansour", one of the Imams in language and literature, born in 370 AH, born and died in Kharasan in Kharasan, attributed to his grandfather Al-Azhar. See: Al-Zarkali, Al-I'lam, 5/311.

(9) Ibn Manzoor, Lisan al-Arab, 13/317.

(10) Ibn al-Athir, Majd al-Din Abi al-Sadat al-Mubarak ibn Muhammad al-Jazari (d. 606), The End in Gharib al-Hadith wa al-Athar, edited by: Taher Ahmad al-Zawi and Mahmoud al-Tanahi, Scientific Library, Cairo, Egypt, 1383 AH – 1963 AD (3/410-411).

Fitna in the Holy Qur'an has been mentioned in many different meanings, and it has been classified and interpreted by Yahya ibn Salam al-Qayrawani (d. 200 AH / 815 AD) on eleven aspects, including:

- 1- Al-Jurjānī defined fitna as: "That by which the state of a person is revealed, whether good or evil. ⁽¹¹⁾"
- 2- Al-Zamakhsharī explained fitna as: "Testing through the hardships of religious obligations—such as leaving one's homeland, striving against enemies, enduring demanding acts of worship, abandoning desires and pleasures, facing poverty and famine, and various afflictions in lives and wealth, as well as persevering against the harm, plots, and oppression of disbelievers. ⁽¹²⁾"
- 3- Al-Rāzī stated that fitna is: "Allah's will to test the servant so that what lies in his heart of disbelief, misguidance, or hypocrisy may be exposed, or so that He may punish or disgrace him, and none can prevent Him from doing so. ⁽¹³⁾"

From surveying these definitions, we can derive a comprehensive terminological definition of fitna, which revolves around two main axes:

1. At the collective level: Fitna is essentially a disturbance and division afflicting the community, leading to the disruption of order—whether caused by sectarian conflict or political strife—resulting in harm to religion, worldly affairs, or both.

At the individual level: Fitna is everything by which Allah tests His servant, whether through prosperity or adversity, blessing or affliction, in order to refine his faith and reveal the extent of his steadfastness, whether in ease or hardship. Thus, fitna represents a critical trial through which human beings—individually or collectively—pass, revealing their true essence. ⁽¹⁴⁾

Second: Fitna in the Qur'an: Fitna in the Qur'an has appeared with multiple and diverse meanings. Yahyā ibn Sallām al-Qayrawānī (d. 200 AH / 815 CE) classified and interpreted it into eleven distinct aspects, among them:

- 1- Fitna has been mentioned with the meaning of polytheism (shirk), which represents the highest and most dangerous level of fitna. Among its usages is the Almighty's saying: "And fight them until there is no more fitna and the religion is entirely for Allah" ⁽¹⁵⁾ And His saying: "And fitna is more severe than killing" ⁽¹⁶⁾
- 2- Fitna also comes with the meaning of trial, testing, and affliction. Among its usages is the Almighty's saying: "And We tested you with many trials" ⁽¹⁷⁾ (Qur'an, 20:40), meaning We tried you. And His saying: "And We certainly tested those before them, so Allah will surely make evident those who are truthful, and He will surely make evident the liars" ⁽¹⁸⁾ (Qur'an, 29:3), meaning We examined them.
- 3- In another context, fitna has been mentioned with the meaning of punishment. Among its usages is the Almighty's saying:

"Then indeed, your Lord—for those who emigrated after they had been subjected to fitna" ⁽¹⁹⁾, meaning they were tortured.

And His saying: "Taste your fitna" ⁽²⁰⁾ And His saying: "He made the fitna of the people like the punishment of Allah" ⁽²¹⁾. It also comes with the meaning of torture and burning with fire, as in the Almighty's saying:

(11)Al-Jurjani, Ali bin Muhammad bin Ali Al-Zain Al-Sharif, Definitions, (1st edition, Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut, Lebanon, 1405 A.H. / 1985 A.D.), p. 171.

(12)Al-Zamakhshari, Abu al-Qasim Jarallah Mahmoud ibn Amr ibn Ahmad (d. 467 A.H.), Tafsir al-Kashaf al-Haqiqat al-Ta'zil wa Ayun alAqawil fi Wajwa al-Taw'il, (3rd edition, Dar al-Ma'rifa, Beirut – Lebanon, 1430 A.H. / 2009 A.D.), 20/812.

(13)Al-Razi, Muhammad ibn Omar ibn al-Hasan ibn al-Husayn al-Taymi, alias Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 606 AH), al-Tafsir al-Kabir, (1st edition, Al-Bahiyya al-Masriyya Press, Cairo, 1357 AH / 1938 AD), 56/22.

(14)Ibn Tha'laba, Yahya bin Salam bin Abi Tha'laba, Al-Basri al-Ifriqi al-Kairouani (d. 200 AH), Al-Tafsir for the interpretation of the Qur'an from what its names and meanings have been, researched: Hind Chalabi, (Tunisian Distribution Company, Tunis, 1979), p. 179.

(15)Surah Al-Baqarah: [193].

(16)Surah Al-Baqarah: [217].

(17)Surah Taha: [40].

(18)Surah Al-Ankabut: [3].

(19)Surah An-Nahl: [110].

(20)Surah Al-Dhariyat: [14].

(21)Surah Al-Ankabut:[10]

"Indeed, those who put to trial the believing men and believing women"⁽²²⁾, meaning they tortured them with fire.

- 4- Fitna has also been mentioned with the meaning of sin. Among its usages is the Almighty's saying: "And among them is he who says, 'Grant me leave and do not put me into fitna.' Surely, they have already fallen into fitna" (Qur'an, 9:49), meaning they have fallen into sin. ⁽²³⁾

- 5- Fitna has also been mentioned with the meaning of disbelief (kufr). Among its usages is the Almighty's saying: "As for those in whose hearts is deviation, they follow what is unspecific of it, seeking fitna" ⁽²⁴⁾ And His saying: "They had certainly sought fitna before" ⁽²⁵⁾.
- 6- It also comes with the meaning of killing and destruction, as in the Almighty's saying: "If you fear that those who disbelieve may put you to fitna" ⁽²⁶⁾ meaning kill you. And His saying: "But no one believed in Moses except some youths of his people, out of fear of Pharaoh and their chiefs that he might put them to fitna" ⁽²⁷⁾, meaning kill them.
- 7- Furthermore, fitna occurs with the meaning of turning away from the straight path, as in the Almighty's saying: "And indeed, they were about to put you to fitna" ⁽²⁸⁾ And His saying: "And beware of them lest they put you to fitna" ⁽²⁹⁾, meaning to divert you, or as some said, to cast you into affliction by turning you away from what has been revealed to you.
- 8- It also comes with the meaning of confusion and misguidance, as in the Almighty's saying: "And whomever Allah intends his fitna" ⁽³⁰⁾, meaning his misguidance. And His saying: "You are not to be fitnin (causing misguidance) over it" ⁽³¹⁾, meaning not to mislead.
- 9- Moreover, fitna has been used with the meaning of excuse or pretext, as in the Almighty's saying: "Then their fitna was only that they said, 'By Allah, our Lord, we were not polytheists'" ⁽³²⁾, meaning their excuse.
- 10- It also comes with the meaning of madness and heedlessness, as in the Almighty's saying: "So you will see, and they will see, which of you is the muftūn" ⁽³³⁾, meaning the one afflicted with madness.
- 11- Finally, fitna occurs with the meaning of lesson or admonition, as in the Almighty's saying: "Our Lord, do not make us a fitna for the wrongdoing people" ⁽³⁴⁾

Third: Fitna in Prophetic and Historical Usage: The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) spoke about fitan. It is narrated from Usāmah ibn Zayd (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ascended one of the fortresses of Medina and said: "Do you see what I see? Indeed, I see the places of fitan among your houses like the falling of raindrops." ⁽³⁵⁾ Al-Nawawī said: "The comparison with raindrops refers to abundance and universality, meaning that they will be numerous and will encompass the people, not confined to one group. This is a reference to the wars that occurred among them, such as the Battle of the Camel, ḥifḥīn, al-Ḥarrah, the killing of 'Uthmān, the killing of al-ḥusayn (may Allah be pleased with them both), and other such events." ⁽³⁶⁾ The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was also asked: "Will Islam have an end?" He said: "Any household among the Arabs or the

(22) Surah Al-Buruj: [10]

(23) Surah Al-Tawbah: [49] (24) Surah Al-Imran: [7]

(25) Surah Al-Tawbah: [48]

(26) Surah An-Nisa: [101]

(27) Surah Yunus: [83]

(28) Surah Al-Isra'a: [73]

(29) Surah Al-Ma'idah: [49]

(30) Surah Al-Ma'idah: [41]

(31) Surah Al-Safat: [162]

(32) Surah Al-An'am: [23]

(33) Surah Al-Qalam: [5] [6]

(34) Surah Yunus: [85]

(35) Al-Bukhari, Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ismail bin Ibrahim bin Al-Mughirah Al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), Sahih Al-Bukhari, (1st edition, Dar Al-Tasael, Cairo, Egypt, 1433 AH/2012 AD), Kitab al-Hajj, Chapter: Atam Al-Madinah, Hadith No. [1889], 3/62. (Sites of fitnah) the places where they occur and fall. (During your houses) between them and their surroundings, there is a combination of imbalances, which is the spectacle between the two things. (such as the locations of the tow) such as the rainfall that spreads around and places.

(36) Al-Nawawi, Abu Zakaria Muhyiddin Yahya bin Sharaf (676 A.H.), Al-Minhaj Sharh Sahih Muslim Ibn Al-Hajjaj, (2nd edition, Dar Ihya Al-Narath Al-Arabi, Beirut – Lebanon, 1392 A.H.), 18/7.

nonArabs for whom Allah intends good, He brings Islam into them." The man said: "Then what?" He replied: "Then fitan will occur like layers of shade." The man said: "No, by Allah, if Allah wills." The Prophet said: "Yes, by Him in Whose hand is my soul, you will surely return to them as serpents crawling⁽³⁷⁾, striking each other's necks." ⁽³⁸⁾

In the historical context, fitan encompassed both the general and the particular, affecting individuals and groups, the entire community and its societies, rulers and the ruled, doctrines and obligations, morals, manners, and conduct, as well as hearts, minds, and ideas, together with media, education, institutions, and platforms of governance. They began in the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs with attacks against caliphs and governors, the spreading of lies and accusations, the fabrication of innovations, the charge that the Companions betrayed the Prophet peace be upon him and concealed the testament of succession to the Ahl al-Bayt, the incitement of discord among Muslims, the stirring of disputes, the instigation of fighting and the drawing of swords, and the innovation of assassination as a method of killing—something unknown to the Arabs and not practiced by them.

The “first bullet” was directed at the great Caliph ‘Umar, the symbol of human justice. With his assassination, the barrier of fitan was broken, and they began to spread throughout the community, surging like the waves of the sea. Over time, with the expansion of the Islamic state, the multiplication of its peoples, and the diversity of its ethnicities, fitan increased both in quantity and quality, sweeping across all affairs of the Muslims. Each fitna that arose proved more violent than the one before it, more grave in consequence, and deeper in impact.⁽³⁹⁾

If the term sedition has acquired a dominant connotation during history, especially in the Abbasid era, it refers to political or social disturbances that lead to division, bloodshed, and insecurity, as Ibn al-Muqaffa expressed this by saying: "Fitna is fighting people and war breaks out between them,"⁽⁴⁰⁾ and it is noted that historians, including al-Tabari, have used the term as a general description of events that threaten the unity of the community or the stability of the state, without obligation to specify precisely the causes or parties.

In his history, al-Tabari mentioned the term fitna in several places, as he used it extensively to describe the grave events that struck the Islamic society, foremost of which was the "great fitna" that followed the death of the third caliph Uthman ibn Affan (may Allah be pleased with him). In al-Tabari's writings, "fitna" was not just a description of political turmoil, but rather a complex concept that refers to:

1. The collapse of the central authority: The absence of the imam or caliph who collects the word of the Muslims is one of the most prominent manifestations of strife.
2. Differences leading to fighting: When a dispute between Muslims escalates to the point of fighting, it is classified as fitnah.
3. Mixing truth with falsehood: One of the characteristics of fitnah, as portrayed by al-Tabari, is the difficulty of distinguishing the right from the wrong, as each party sees that it is right.

Among the historical evidences in al-Tabari's History that included the term fitna are the following:

a. "Fear of fitna" (in the context of the migration to Abyssinia):

Al-Tabari reports: "At that time the Muslims from among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) departed to the land of Abyssinia out of fear of fitna."⁽⁴¹⁾ Here, fitna clearly refers to the harm and torture inflicted upon the early Muslims by Quraysh to turn them away from their religion. The migration was thus an escape from this trial that threatened both creed and life.

(37) Al-Zuhri said: Aswad Saba: The black serpent, if he wanted to be eaten, he rose like this, and then he was stabbed. Al-Qurtubi, Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmed bin Abi Bakr bin Farah Al-Ansari Al-Khazraji Al-Andalusi Al-Qurtubi (d. 671 AH), The Reminder of the Conditions of the Dead and the Matters of the Hereafter, Edited by: Sadiq Muhammad Ibrahim, (1st edition, Dar Al-Minhaj Library for Publishing and Distribution, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 1425 AH), 3/1058.

(38) Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Salihi al-Shami (d. 942 A.H.), Paths of Guidance and Guidance in the Biography of Khair al-'Abbad, edited by: Adel Ahmed Abd al-Mawoud, (1st edition, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut, Lebanon, 1414 A.H./1993 A.D.), 10/142.

(39) Abdul Sattar Al-Sheikh, The Great Strife in the Era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, Presentation, Analysis, Criticism and Rooting, (Dar Al-Qalam, Damascus, 2018), p. 9.

(40) Ibn al-Muqaffa, Abdullah ibn al-Muqaffa (d. 142 A.H.), Kalila and Dimna, (Amiri Press, Bulaq, Cairo, 1936, 17th edition), p. 111.

(41) Al-Tabari, Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Jarir al-Tabari (d. 310 AH), History of the Messengers and Kings, edited by: Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim, (2nd edition, Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo, Egypt, 1387 AH / 1967 AD), 2/331.

b. "And the last fitna" (in the context of the Islam of the people of Medina):

Al-Tabari narrates: "Islam spread in Medina, and its people began coming to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in Mecca. When Quraysh saw this, they conspired to put them to fitna and intensify their persecution. They seized them and strove to put them to fitna, so they suffered severe hardship. This was the last fitna, and there were two fitnas: one that drove some of them to migrate to Abyssinia when he commanded them and permitted them to go, and another when they returned and saw those who came to them from the people of Medina."⁽⁴²⁾ Here, fitna means the escalation of persecution. Al-Tabari distinguishes between

two stages: the first leading to migration to Abyssinia, and the second as Quraysh's reaction to Islam gaining supporters in Medina, which increased their oppression of the Muslims in Mecca.

c. "You only intended fitna by this" (ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib's words to Abū Sufyān):

When the people gathered to pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr, Abū Sufyān came saying: "By Allah, I see a tumult that none can extinguish but blood! O sons of ʿAbd Manāf, how is Abū Bakr involved in your affairs? Where are the two oppressed ones? Where are the two humiliated ones—ʿAlī and al-ʿAbbās? O Abū al-ḥasan, extend your hand so that I may pledge allegiance to you." ʿAlī refused, and Abū Sufyān recited verses of al-Mutalammis. ʿAlī rebuked him, saying: "By Allah, you intended nothing by this except fitna, and by Allah, you have long sought evil for Islam. We have no need of your counsel." ⁽⁴³⁾

Here, al-Tabari uses fitna to mean inciting discord and division. The term no longer denotes external persecution but rather an attempt to provoke internal strife among Muslims after the Prophet's death. In ʿAlī's view, Abū Sufyān's stance was not sincere advice but an effort to ignite a struggle for power and fracture Muslim unity.

D. When the fitna occurred after Mu'awiya Kafr al-Shah (in the context of the conquest of Makran) and in his talk about the conquest of Makran, he said: "When the sedition occurred after Mu'awiya Kafr al-Shah," ⁽⁴⁴⁾ here al-Tabari meant the civil war and political turmoil, the "fitna" here refers specifically to the conflict that erupted after the death of Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan over the caliphate, which led to major events such as the battle of al-Hurra and the revolt of Ibn al-Zubayr. Covenants and rebellion

e. (In the context of Shura (in the context of Shura Consultation): Speaking about Shura (Shura Consultation), he said: "O Miqdad, fear Allah, I am afraid of fitnah for you" ⁽⁴⁵⁾ The significance here: being dragged into a whim or falling into a mistake, in this sensitive context (choosing the Caliph), "Fitna" means the fear that one will be influenced by personal opinion, nervousness, or the pressure of the situation, so that he will lean away from the truth or make a decision that does not serve the interest of the Ummah, which leads to serious consequences, it is the Fitnah of Choice and responsibility: (Saying of Sa'id ibn al-'Aas in Kufa): Speaking about the reason for the dismissal of 'Uthman al-Waleed from Kufa and his assumption of happiness over it, he said: "Then Sa'id went up to the pulpit, praised Allah and praised him, and said: By Allah, I have sent to you and I hate him, but I did not find any reason when I was ordered to pass except that the fitnah had been revealed Her nose and her eyes, and God will strike her face until I suppress her or appoint me, and I am the pioneer of my soul today and I will descend" ⁽⁴⁶⁾ . " What is meant here is the state of grievances and appeals against the governors and the policies of Caliph Uthman that began to appear in Kufa, "fitna" here is the beginning of rebellion and discord that has not yet reached the level of fighting, but represents a serious threat to the unity of society and its stability.

These examples that I have given confirm that the term "fitna" in the history of al-Tabari is not rigid, but rather a vital term whose meaning is shaped according to the historical and social context in which it is used, moving between religious affliction, political strife, civil war, and signs of rebellion.

Second Topic: Synonymous Terms of Fitna and its Significance in the Abbasid Era

(42) Al-Tabari, History of the Messengers and the Kings, 2/366.

(43) Al-Tabari, History of the Messengers and the Kings, 3/209. (44) Al-Tabari, History of the Messengers and the Kings, 4/181.

(45) Al-Tabari, History of the Messengers and the Kings, 4/233.

(46) Al-Tabari, History of the Messengers and the Kings, 4/279.

The term "fitna" has been used in Islamic sources, along with other terms close to meaning, which requires clarifying the semantic differences between them, and explaining the limits of its use in this study.

First: Trial, Examination, and Testing in the Context of the Concept of Fitna Linguistically:

Ibtalā' (trial) in language: Balawtu al-rajul balwan wabalā'an waibtalaytuhu, wabalāhu yabluwhu balwan—meaning "I tested him and examined him." Ibtalaytuhu fa-ablānī means "I inquired of him and he informed me."

(47)

1. Ibn al-Athīr said: "Al-Qutaybī stated: It is said, in the case of good, *ibtalaytuhu ablihi iblā'an*, and in the case of evil, *balawtuhu abluwhu balā'an*. The wellknown usage is that trial occurs in both good and evil without distinction between the two forms. Among its usages is the Almighty's saying: 'And We test you with evil and with good as *fitna*' ⁽⁴⁸⁾. *Iblā'* means favor and beneficence; it is said: *balawtu al-rajul waabliytu 'indahu balā' ḥan asanan*. The original meaning of *ibtilā'* is examination and testing; it is said: *balawtuhu waabliytuhu waibtalaytuhu*. ⁽⁴⁹⁾"
2. Al-Fīrūzābādī, author of *al-Qāmūs*, said: "Ibtalaytuhu means I tested him; and *al-rajul fa-ablānī* means I inquired of him and he informed me. I examined and tested him as in *balawtuhu balwan wabalā'an*. *Al-balā'* also means grief, as though it wears down the body. Obligation is called *balā'* because it is burdensome on the body, or because it is a test. *Al-balā'* may be a gift or a trial. ⁽⁵⁰⁾"
3. Ibn Fāris said: "*Balwā*: the letters *bā'*, *lām*, *wāw*, and *yā'* have two roots: one is the wearing out of a thing, and the other is a type of testing, which also includes inquiry. The other root is in their saying *balā al-insān waibtalā*, which refers to examination and testing. *Al-balā'* occurs in both good and evil. Allah, exalted is He, tests the servant with good trial and with evil trial, and it returns to this meaning, for by it he is tested in his patience and gratitude." ⁽⁵¹⁾

Al-Manāwī said: "*Balā'* is like *baliyya*. Grief is called *balā'* because it wears down the body." ⁽⁵²⁾
Terminologically:

Abū al-Baqā' said: "*Ibtilā'* in origin is the imposition of a burdensome command, derived from *balā'*. But since it entails examination with respect to one who is ignorant of outcomes, they were thought to be synonymous. Some said: *Ibtilā'* occurs in both good and evil; in good it is said *abliytuhu*, and in evil *balawtuhu balā'an*." ⁽⁵³⁾

Al-Ḥabarī said: "The origin of *balā'* is examination and testing, then it is used in both good and evil, because examination and testing may be by good just as they may be by evil." The Almighty said: "And We tested them with good things and bad things that they might return" ⁽⁵⁴⁾, meaning We examined them. And He said: "And We test you with evil and with good as *fitna*" (Qur'an 21:35), meaning with prosperity and hardship, and both are trial ⁽⁵⁵⁾.

Al-QurḤubī said: "*Balā'* may be good or evil, and its origin is affliction. The meaning is: We test you, so that We may know the fighter and the patient with knowledge of direct witnessing." As in His saying: "And in that was a great trial from your Lord" (Qur'an 2:49).

(47)Ibn Manzoor, *Lisan al-Arab*, 14/83.

(48)Surah Al-Anbiya:[35]

(49)Ibn al-Athir, *The End in Gharib al-Hadith wa al-Athar*, 1/155.

(50)Al-Firouzabadi, Muhammad al-Din, *The Surrounding Dictionary*, edited by: Muhammad Naim al-Arqsoussi, (6th edition, Al-Risala Foundation, Beirut, Lebanon, 1419 AH / 1998 AD), p. 1264.

(51)Ibn Faris, *Dictionary of Language Measures*, pp. 292-293.

(52)Al-Manawi, Muhammad Abd al-Raouf (952 A.H.), *Arrest on the Tasks of Definition*, edited by: Abdul Hamid Saleh Hamdan, (1st edition, Dar Alam Al-Kitab, Cairo, 1410 A.H./1990 A.D.), p. 183.

(53)Abu al-Baq'a'a, Ayyub ibn Musa al-Husayni al-Kafawi (d. 1094 AH), *Al-Kulayyat*, edited by: Adnan Darwish and Muhammad al-Masri, (2nd edition, Al-Risala Foundation, Beirut – Lebanon, 1419 AH / 1998 AD), p. 34.

(54)Al-Tabari, *Tafsir al-Tabari*, 10/534.

(55)Surah Al-A'raf: [168].

It is said: We tested them ⁽⁵⁶⁾, as the Almighty said: "And We test you with evil and with good as *fitna*" ⁽⁵⁷⁾, meaning with prosperity and hardship, and both are trial. ⁽⁵⁸⁾

Al-QurḤubī said ⁽⁵⁹⁾: "*Balā'* may be good or evil, and its origin is affliction. The meaning is: We test you, so that We may know the fighter and the patient with knowledge of direct witnessing." ⁽⁶⁰⁾As in His saying: "And in that was a great trial from your Lord" ⁽⁶¹⁾

Al-Ālūsī said: “Ibtilā’ is Allah’s treatment of His servants as one who examines them with what is disliked and what is liked, so that it may be made clear whether they are patient and grateful or not. It occurs sometimes with blessings so that they may be thanked, and sometimes with hardships so that they may be endured. Affliction requires patience, and blessing requires gratitude by fulfilling its rights.”⁽⁶²⁾

Thus, from the foregoing, ibtilā’ is considered one of the terms with a religious and admonitory dimension, connected to the idea of divine examination of individuals or groups. This term became widespread in the discourse of scholars and jurists when interpreting the occurrence of trials and disturbances. Accordingly, ibtilā’ differs from fitna in that the former focuses on the doctrinal and ethical dimension, while fitna in historical writing tends to describe events and their effects on society and the state.

Examination linguistically:

1. Ibn Manḥūr said: “Al-miḥna is experience. He has tested him. To test a statement means to examine and consider it.” In al-Tahdhīb: ‘Utbaḥ ibn Abd al-Sulamī, on57e of the Companions of the ‘ Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), narrated that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "The slain are three: a believing man who strove with his self and wealth in the way of Allah, and when he met the enemy he fought them until he was killed. That is the martyr tested in the army of Allah under His Throne, whom the Prophets do not surpass except by the degree of Prophethood.”⁽⁶³⁾ Al-Zamakhsharī said: “He fell into miḥna and maḥan, and soandso was tested and examined⁽⁶⁴⁾. A man is mamḥūn and mumtaḥan.” As in His saying: “Allah has tested their hearts for taqwā”.⁽⁶⁵⁾
2. The author of al-Qāmūs said: “Maḥanahu, like man’ahu and ḍarabahu, means he tested him, as in imtaḥanahu. The noun is miḥna with kasrah. To test a statement means to examine and consider it.”⁽⁶⁶⁾

Examination (Terminologically):

Al-Manāwī said: “Al-imtiḥān is an intense test or a severe trial.”⁽⁶⁷⁾

Ibn al-Athīr said regarding it: “‘That is the martyr al-mumtaḥan’—meaning the purified and refined one. You say: maḥant al-fiḥḥa when you purify and refine silver with fire. In the narration of al-Sha’bī: ‘Al-miḥna is an innovation,’ meaning that the ruler takes a man and tests him, saying: ‘Did you do suchandsuch?’ and

(56)Al-Tabari, Muhammad bin Jarir, Abu Ja'far (d. 310 AH), Tafsir al-Tabari from his book Jami' al-Bayan on the interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an, edited by: Abdullah bin Abd al-Muhsin al-Turki, (1st edition, Dar Hajar for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, Cairo, Egypt, 1422 AH / 2001 AD), 10/534.

((57)Surah Al-Anbiya:[35]

(58)Al-Tabari, Tafsir al-Tabari, 16/269.

(59)Al-Qurtubi: He is Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr ibn Faraj al-Ansari al-Khazraji al-Andalusi, Abu Abdullah al-Qurtubi, one of the great commentators, Salih Mu'abed, from the people of Cordoba, who traveled to the east and settled in Minyah ibn Khasib in the north of Asyut, Egypt, and died there in the year 671 AH - 1273 AD, from his books "The Collector of the Provisions of the Qur'an". See: Al-Zarkali, AlAlam, 5/322.

(60)Al-Qurtubi, Abi Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad Al-Ansari, Al-Jami' li'l-Ahkam al-Qur'an, (2nd edition, Dar al-Kutub al-Masriyya, Cairo, 1353 AH / 1935 AD), 1/387.

(61)Surah Al-Baqarah:[49]

(62)Shihab al-Din Muhammad al-Alusi, (d. 1270 AH), The Spirit of Meanings in the Interpretation of the Great Qur'an and the Second Seven, (Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, Beirut – Lebanon, d. 17/47).

(63)Ibn Manzoor, Lisan al-Arab, 13/401.

(64)Al-Zamakhshari, Jarallah Abi Al-Qasim Mahmoud Ibn Omar, The Basis of Rhetoric, edited by: Mahmoud Fahmy Hijazi, (General Authority for Cultural Palaces, Cairo, 2003), 2/370.

(65)Surah Al-Hujrat: [3].

(66)Al-Firouzabadi, Muhammad Al-Din, Al-Qamus Al-Muheem, edited by: Muhammad Naim Al-Arqsousi, (6th edition, Al-Risala Foundation, Beirut – Lebanon, 1419 AH / 1998 AD), p. 1233.

(67)Al-Manawi, Muhammad Abd al-Raouf (952 A.H.), Arrest on the Tasks of Definition, edited by: Abdul Hamid Saleh Hamdan, (1st edition, Dar Alam Al-Kitab, Cairo, 1410 A.H./1990 A.D.), p. 61.

continues until he collapses and says what he did not do, or what is not permissible to say. He meant that this action is an innovation.”⁽⁶⁸⁾

Testing

(Linguistically):

Testing (ikhtibār) means inquiry, knowledge of something. Khabarahu khabran (with Ḥamma) ⁽⁶⁹⁾ and khibratan (with kasra): balāhu ka-akhbarahu (“he tested him as he informed him”).

Al-Farāhīdī said in Kitāb al-‘Ayn: “Ikhtibār is derived from the verb khabara. Ikhtibār means experience. You say: inta abṭ an bihi khibrahu (‘you became acquainted with his inner state’) and aṭ wala bihi ‘ashara (‘you prolonged companionship with him’).” ⁽⁷⁰⁾

Testing

(Terminologically):

Al-Jurjānī said: “Ikhtibār is the act by which something is made manifest. From Allah, it is the manifestation of what He knows of the secrets of His creation. For Allah’s knowledge is of two kinds: one precedes the existence of the thing in the Preserved Tablet, and the other follows its existence in the manifestations of creation. The trial which is ikhtibār is this latter kind.” ⁽⁷¹⁾

After defining ibtilā’ (trial), imtiḥān (examination), and ikhtibār (testing) both linguistically and terminologically, it becomes clear that they are nearly synonymous, with only very slight differences.

For example:

- Ibtilā’ was defined as the imposition of a burdensome command.
- Imtiḥān was defined as an intense test or severe trial.
- Ikhtibār was defined as the act by which something is made manifest.

All of them converge in the same semantic field of divine testing.

The difference between fitna and ikhtibār/imtiḥān: Fitna is the most severe and emphatic form of testing, and it occurs in both good and evil. Blessings are made fitna because they are intended as an intensified test of the one who receives them—like gold when its quality is examined by being placed in fire. As the Almighty said: “The Day they will be tried upon the Fire” ⁽⁷²⁾. And He said: “Indeed, your wealth and your children are fitna” ⁽⁷³⁾. And He said: “We would have given them abundant water so that We might test them thereby” ⁽⁷⁴⁾. Thus, blessings are made fitna because they are intended as an intensified test of the recipient. Allah does not test the servant to change his state from good to evil or vice versa, but rather the purpose is the severity of the obligation ⁽⁷⁵⁾.

The Difference Between Ikhtibār (Testing) and Ibtilā’ (Trial): Ibtilā’ usually occurs only through imposing hardships and difficulties, whereas ikhtibār may occur through that as well as through what is pleasing. Do you not see that it is said: “He tested him by bestowing favor upon him,” but it is not said: “He subjected him to trial by that,” nor is one described as mubtalā (tried) by a blessing. However, it may be said that he is mukhtabar (tested) by it. It is permissible to say: “Ibtilā’ entails extracting from the tried person what lies within him of obedience or disobedience, while ikhtibār entails the occurrence of knowledge of his state in that regard. Khabar (report) is the knowledge that occurs of the essence and reality of a thing. Thus the difference between them is clear.” ⁽⁷⁶⁾

In the sources, other related terms also appeared connected to the subject of fitna, such as miḥna (ordeal), ‘Ṣi yān (disobedience), khurūj (rebellion), iḥḥirāb (disturbance), and thawra (revolution). These were often used to describe specific cases or contexts, without replacing the term fitna as the broader framework.

Second: Types of Fitna in the Historical Context

(68) Ibn al-Athir, *The End in Gharib al-Hadith wa al-Athar*, 4/304.

(69) Al-Firuz al-Abadi, *Al-Qamoos al-Muheeth*, p. 382;

(70) Al-Farahidi, *Al-Ayn*, 1/383

(71) Al-Jurjani, *Definitions*, p. 13.

(72) Surah Al-Dhariyat: [13]

(73) Surah Al-Taghabun: [15]

(74) Surah Al-Jinn: [16-17].

(75) Saleh bin Abdullah bin Humaid and Abdul Rahman bin Malouh, *Encyclopedia of Nazarat al-Na'im fi Makarem Akhlaq al-Rasool al-Noble*, (1st edition, Dar al-Wasila, Jeddah, 1418 AH / 1998 AD), p. 8.

(76) Saleh bin Abdullah bin Humaid and Abdul Rahman bin Malouh, *Encyclopedia of Nazarat al-Na'im*, p. 8.

1. Political Fitna: This is a state of disorder that arises in society as a result of imbalance in authority and the struggle of forces influencing governance, leading to the decline of justice, the spread of oppression, and the weakening of adherence to the legal framework that is supposed to regulate the relationship between ruler and ruled. The manifestations of this fitna intensify when rulers deviate or become tyrannical, when religion is exploited to justify oppression, or when people of interests and desires interfere in directing political

decisionmaking. This negatively affects the stability of the community and threatens its religious and social structure⁽⁷⁷⁾..

The danger of this type of fitna is supported by Prophetic texts. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) warned against corrupt leadership, saying: "Indeed, I fear for my community only the misguided leaders. ⁽⁷⁸⁾" This is an explicit warning of the impact of political deviation on the community. In another narration, he emphasized the danger of approaching rulers and engaging in suspicious circumstances that lead to falling into fitna, saying: "Whoever lives in the desert becomes harsh, whoever pursues hunting becomes heedless, and whoever comes to the doors of rulers will be tried. ⁽⁷⁹⁾" This hadith indicates that associating with rulers without proper religious safeguards may drag a person into deviation, and that corrupt authority or scholars of the rulers constitute one of the most significant gateways to political fitna. `

From Usayd ibn HuḤayr, that a man from the AnḤār was alone with the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said: "Will you not appoint me as you appointed soandso?" The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Indeed, you will encounter favoritism after me, so be patient until you meet me at the Basin." ⁽⁸⁰⁾

Ibn Hajar said: "He indicated thereby that authority would pass to others, who would then be given wealth exclusively, and the matter was exactly as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) described." ⁽⁸¹⁾ This hadith points to the fact that rulers' favoritism toward certain people with wealth, gifts, privileges, and important positions is among the causes of fitna, which constitutes a political challenge that contributes to the corruption of governance and the corruption of the governed. Therefore, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) urged patience and refraining from addressing corruption with greater corruption, until the Day of Judgment and meeting the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) at his Basin.

Second: Economic Fitna: Economic fitna is a disorder that afflicts the individual or society as a result of excessive attachment to wealth and its dominance over human behavior, until it mixes with the heart, so that one expends effort, time, and energy to acquire it—even at the expense of religious and moral values. Wealth thus becomes the axis toward which desires are directed, souls contend over it, and its effects negatively reflect on the stability and cohesion of the community. ⁽⁸²⁾

This fitna manifests in various forms, most notably: worship of wealth, preoccupation with accumulating it without legal restraints, fierce competition over it, preferring worldly possessions over the Hereafter, and the erosion of standards of lawful and unlawful. As the Almighty said: "And know that your wealth and your children are but a fitna, and that with Allah is a great reward". ⁽⁸³⁾

Prophetic traditions indicate the danger of this type of fitna. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, describing the effect of wealth on the human heart: "Perish the slave of the dinar, the

(77)Nader Ahmed Al-Otoun and Asmaa Abdul Muttalib Bani Younis, Future Challenges Related to Fitnah in the Books of Hadith, (Journal of the Islamic University, Islamic University, Gaza, Vol. 28, No. 4, 2020), p. 416.

(78)Al-Tirmidhi, Abi Issa, Muhammad bin Isa al-Tirmidhi (279 A.H.), Sunan al-Tirmidhi, edited by: Bashar Awwad Maarouf, (1st edition, Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, Beirut – Lebanon, 1996, vol. 4), Bab al-Fitan, hadith no. [2229], 4/84.

(79)Al-Tirmidhi, Sunan al-Tirmidhi, al-Fitn, 4/523, hadith no. 2256.

(80)Muslim, Abu al-Hasan Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi (d. 206 AH), Sahih Muslim, Bab al-Imarah, hadith no. [1845], 3/1474.

(81)Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, Fath al-Bari with the explanation of the Sahih of Imam Abi Abdullah Muhammad bin Ismail al-Bukhari, edited by: Muhib al-Din al-Khatib wa Qusay Muhib al-Din, (Salafi Press, Fustat, 1390 AH), 7/118.

(82)Al-Attoum, Bani Yunus, Future Challenges Related to Fitna in the Six Books of Hadith, pp. 417-418. (83)Surah Al-Anfal:[28]

dirham, the fine cloth⁽⁸⁴⁾, and the garment⁽⁸⁵⁾. If he is given, he is pleased; if he is not given, he is displeased." This description shows how wealth enslaves a person until he becomes its servant, pleased when given and displeased when deprived⁽⁸⁶⁾. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) also warned of the fitna caused by wealth, saying: "Indeed, every nation has its fitna, and the fitna of my nation is wealth. ⁽⁸⁷⁾" This is an explicit text confirming that wealth is the greatest door of fitna for the community.

One of the manifestations of economic strife is the intensity of competition over this world, when he said: "I am excessive to you, and I am a witness against you, and I am by Allah to look at my basin now, and I have been given the keys of the treasures of the earth, or the keys of the earth, and I, by Allah, I am not afraid that you will associate others after me, but I am afraid that you will compete in them."⁽⁸⁸⁾ He also called for (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) to seek refuge from the effects of these temptations, saying: "... O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the trial of the Fire and the torment of the Fire, the trial of the grave and the torment of the grave, the evil of the trial of riches, and the evil of the temptation of poverty..."⁽⁸⁹⁾ It combines the temptation of wealth and the temptation of poverty, because both may distract a person from religion and push him to deviation, transgression, or disbelief in grace.

Third: Social strife: It is a state of division and fissures in the social structure that gnaws away at the body of society, when social ties turn from bonds of faith and human fraternity into tools of conflict and conflict, a strife that begins with the seeds of hatred and hatred in the hearts, and ends with the collapse of family and collective cohesion, so that social disintegration becomes the dominant feature, and enmity is the dominant language between individuals and groups⁽⁹⁰⁾.

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) warned his Ummah against this malignant disease, indicating that disagreement is not evil in itself, but rather fitnah in the treatment of souls with it. In the saheeh hadith narrated by Muslim from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "The Shaytaan has despaired of worshipping the worshippers in the Arabian Peninsula, but in inciting among them."⁽⁹¹⁾

Al-Nawawi said: This hadith is one of the miracles of the Prophethood.. and it means that Satan is not to be worshipped by the people of the Arabian Peninsula, but he sought to stir up discord among them through rivalries, charges, wars and seditions⁽⁹²⁾

Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that he heard the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say: "The throne of Iblis is on the sea, and he sends his armies and they tempt the people, and the greatest of them is⁽⁹³⁾ the greatest of them."

Fourth: Sectarian strife: ⁽⁹⁴⁾⁽⁹⁵⁾ The ⁽⁹⁶⁾word madhhab is derived from the linguistic root (gold), so it is said that gold goes back and forth⁽⁹⁷⁾, so it goes to a good doctrine. The madhhab is also called the "belief" that he goes to, so it is said that so-and-so went to his gold, i.e., for his madhhab to which he goes, and it

(84)Velvet: It is a garment that has velvet, i.e., one who works for it and takes care of its collection. See: Ibn al-Athir, The End in Gharib alHadith wa al-Athar, vol. 4/84.

(85)Al-Khamisa: It is a garment of fur or wool that was worn by the people in the past, and it was collected by the Khamis, see: Ibn al-Athir, The End in Gharib al-Hadith and Athar, vol. 2, p. 81

(86)Al-Asqalani, Fath al-Bari, Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari, 11/254-255.

(87)Al-Tirmidhi, Sunan al-Tirmidhi, 4/161, chapter on what is said that the fitnah of this nation is in the matter of money, hadith no. 2336.

(88)Muslim, Sahih Muslim, 4/1795, chapter on the proof of the basin of our Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and its attributes, hadith no. 2296.

(89)Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, 8/221, chapter on seeking refuge from the meanest of life, from the fitnah of the world and the fitnah of the fire, hadith no. 6383.

(90)Al-Attoum, Bani Yunus, Future Challenges Related to Fitna in the Six Books of Hadith, pp. 420-421.

(91)Muslim, Sahih Muslim, 4/2166, Bab on the inciting of the Shaytaan and broadcasting his secrets to the fitnah of the people, hadith no. 2812.

(92)Al-Nawawi, Abu Zakaria Yahya bin Sharaf bin Marri (d. 676 AH), Al-Minhaj Sharh Sahih Muslim bin Al-Hajjaj, (Cordoba Foundation, Cairo, Egypt, 1414 AH / 1994 AD, 2nd edition), 17/228.

(93)Muslim, Sahih Muslim, 4/2167, Bab Tarrish al-Shaytaan, Hadith No. 2813.

(94)Ibn Faris, Dictionary of Language Measures, 2/362.

(95)Ibn Faris, Dictionary of Language Measures, 2/362; Ibn Manzoor, Lisan al-Arab, 1/395.

(96)Al-Zamahshari, Asas al-Balaghah, 1/307; Ibn Manzoor, Lisan al-Arab, 1/394.

(97)Al-Firuzabadi, Al-Qamoos al-Muheem, 1/86;

also means "the way", so it is said that so-and-so went to a good doctrine, i.e., he walked a good path following a good way, and so-and-so went to say so-and-so, i.e., he took it, and the madhhab of so-and-so went to his intention and path⁽⁹⁸⁾.

As for the meaning of the doctrine in the terminology, it is the belief in jurisprudential and jurisprudential principles that the jurists have clarified in their opinions, and they do not represent an ijtihaad opinion towards the fixed text, but rather a process of evolutionary intellectual construction related to the vision of the concept of ijtihaad⁽⁹⁹⁾.

Through the linguistic and idiomatic meaning of both sedition and sectarianism, we can say that the concept of sectarian strife is nothing but a reflection of the sectarian affiliation difference of individuals who have gone beyond the stage of intellectual dialogue between each other to the stage of conflict and fighting, which resulted in the occurrence of sectarian strife due to intellectual fanaticism and authoritarian intervention.

Fifth: Intellectual fitna: Intellectual fitna is defined as one of the most dangerous fitnahs, in which bid'ah wears the garment of the Sunnah, and falsehood is adorned with the adornment of reason and logic, in which the features are lost, in which understandings are disturbed, and the dressing is applied to the private and the public⁽¹⁰⁰⁾.

The Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet have indicated the danger of intellectual fitnah, as it is a deviation in understanding before it is a deviation in behavior, as the Qur'an linked following the similar and seeking fitnah, and the Sunnah of the Prophet warned against groups that fell into error due to corruption of understanding and misinterpretation, despite their apparent adherence to the texts, which makes intellectual strife one of the most dangerous types of strife and the most influential on the unity and stability of the nation.

The Almighty said: "It is He from whom He has sent down to you the Book clear verses, which are the mother of the Book, and others that are similar, but those in whose hearts are deviant follow what is similar to it, seeking to cause fitnah and to interpret it." ⁽¹⁰¹⁾

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "My Ummah will be divided into seventy-three divisions, all of them in the Fire except one." ⁽¹⁰²⁾ Conclusion:

1. Based on the progress of the study, the most prominent findings and conclusions can be summarized in the following points:
2. The term fitna in its linguistic origin stems from the process of melting gold with fire to distinguish the good from the bad, which is reflected in its idiomatic meaning, which expresses the test at which attitudes are differentiated and the truths of the worshippers are revealed.
3. Fitna in legal and Qur'anic usage acquires very broad connotations, as it is not limited to the meaning of adversity or fighting, but extends to include the meanings of punishment, punishment, shirk, and sin, according to the context in which the verses are mentioned.
4. The term fitna has gained a high dynamic and dynamic in Islamic history, as it has shifted from expressing the persecution of the believers by the polytheists at the beginning of the call, to expressing civil wars and internal political turmoil that threatened the unity of the nation and the stability of the state.
5. The historical view of Imam al-Tabari has shown that fitna is structurally linked to the absence of a rational central authority, the disintegration of the group's contract, and the mixing of ways so that it is difficult for the public to distinguish the right from the wrong.

(98) Al-Zamahshari, *Asas al-Balaghah*, 1/321; Ibn Manzoor, *Lisan al-Arab*, 1/394.

(99) Al-Qarafi, Shihab al-Din Abi al-Abbas Ahmad bin Idris al-Masri (d. 626 AH), *Al-Ahkam fi Distinction of Fatwas from Rulings and Actions of the Imam Judge*, edited by: Abd al-Fattah Abu Ghuddah, (Dar al-Bashayer al-Islamiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 1416 AH / 1995 AD, 2nd edition), pp. 195-196;

(100) Hudhayfa bin Hussein al-Qahtani, *Fifty Plans and Rules in Combating Intellectual Strife*, (D.M., Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, D.T.), p. 2.

((101) Surah Al-Imran: [7].

(102) Al-Tirmidhi, *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, 5/25-26, chapter on what is mentioned in the separation of this ummah, hadith no. 2641.

6. There are precise methodological differences between fitna and the terms that are close to it, as the affliction is related to the preaching and religious dimension of the mandate, while sedition in historical studies predominates the description of field realities and societal and political effects.
7. Strife is numerous in its historical course and its motives are varied, some of which are political due to the dispute over governance, some of which are economic and arise from the competition for wealth, and some of which are social that lead to the severing of ties and the disintegration of family and community ties.