



The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

The Supporter of the Majority and of the Prophet's Methodology

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[Date]

[Course title]

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Foreword

Praise and thanks are due to Allāh, Whom there is nothing above nor beneath. May He raise the status, honor, and prestige of Muḥammad ﷺ who conveyed the Qur'an and Ḥadīth, and the ranks of his Companions, and that of the scholars, for the knowledge that they bequeath.

Thereafter, certainly the science of ḥadīth - not only honorable and exceptionable, but beautiful and intellectual - is a science which both the scholars and the students cherish. Because of it, the Religion, the Book, and the Sunnah shall not perish. It is one that the laymen desire to understand, and thus translated works of the scholars are in high demand.

Nevertheless, as precious as those works are, and as sincere as the translators have been, God willing, they still leave the laymen with something unfulfilling. Those translations have details and terms that are unearned by the unlearned. Thus, much of it does not stick to the heart of whoever wishes to start.

That is largely due to the combination of two things: The first is their weakness with the Arabic language itself, and the second is their weakness with the special terms of the science. The translators have merely transliterated the Arabic terms, thus charging the beginner with memorizing such words as "mu[^]allaq" and "mukhtaliṭ", along with their technical meanings, and may not have at least offered their literal linguistic meanings. However, the situation's reality is that those words were already at the extremity of unfamiliarity, and thus the person, especially he who reads without a teacher, would not relate to the terminology.

For example, the "mu[^]ḍal" is the ḥadīth whose chain misses two or more consecutive narrators. If the non-Arabic speaking Muslim must memorize this word and its technical meaning, and does not know the literal meaning of the word, he would not know why such a case has that name, and thus he may lose his aim. This is because there should be a link and significance between the linguistic and technical meanings. The word "mu[^]ḍal" literally means "problematic". Such a ḥadīth is described as "mu[^]ḍal" because of the problem caused by such an interruption in the chain.

But in this book, we will instead use the description of the narration, then give its technical designation with brief and simple explanation, so praises are due to the Creator of creation for what He gives of inspiration. So, for example, instead of merely presenting the word "ṣaḥīḥ", we will describe it as "the narration with the highest conditions of acceptability", then define it. Instead of simply starting with the word, "mudallas", it will be described as, "the narration in which the narrator skips his shaykh without lying", and then will be defined, etc. Of course, all of that will be accompanied by the transliterated Arabic term. Thus, the concept rushes to the intellect instantly, avoiding the language barrier, thereby facilitating understanding the material easily. Furthermore, if it be God's will, the special terms of the science will be made distinct on the page when it is relevant, so that they stand out vividly. Then the student who wishes can make a list of them and commit them to memory.

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Also, certain types of hadiths or subjects usually discussed in the books of hadith terminology will be skipped or mentioned only briefly, such as the "musalsal" and the "mudabbaj". Likewise, the scholars' difference about some terms, like the various sayings about the definition of "musnad", will be, for the most part, avoided. Herein, we will settle with that upon which the terminology settled as time passed and scholars became uniform in their terms¹ (i.e., the famous sayings). This book is dedicated to the basics of the field and will leave those details for other books. If the goal is met, after taking this book, you will be able to understand any of the books of hadith terminology.

The book is divided into chapters, which are divided into sections, which may be further divided into branches, benefits or digressions. So, despite the cases that the book will lack, it is loaded with benefits that are only obtained by extracting them from the diaspora of hadith literature, and depositing them together as a rare and priceless collection. Its digressions and benefits tackle issues that are especially relevant in our age, and are greatly clarified through the science of hadith. It even has diagrams.

The arrangement is a sort of imitation of what the Imam, the Shaykh, the savant, and the seal of the Hafidhs Ahmad Ibn Hajar Al-^{Asqalaniyy}, did in his famous gem, 'Nukhbatu-l-Fikar'. May Allah widen and illuminate his grave, descend blessings upon him and increase his reward for his righteous works, and for whoever benefits from this book. As for this gem, its title is:

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology, and Supporter of the Majority and of the Prophet's Methodology ^ﷺ.

And so, from Allah we request guidance to what is best, and that this book supports the Muslims from east to west. May He direct us to select only what is correct, protect us from neglect, and give victory in this life and the next to 'Ahlus-Sunnah wa-l-Jama^{ah}, the Saved Sect. Upon Him is the reliance, of Him is the true fear, He alone deserves the ultimate submission and maximum respect. May He be glorified, for His is the power to take life and to resurrect. Him we beseech to protect us from error, and for reward and safety on the day of most excruciating terror.

¹ In demonstrating that there was a point before their terms settled into conformity, **As-Siyutiyy** said about an issue, copying from **Ibn Hajar** (pg. 113):

... أَوِ الَّذِي اسْتَقَرَّ اتِّفَاقُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ بَعْدَ الْإِخْتِلَافِ الْمُتَقَدِّمِ

"... Or that [jargon] upon which their agreement has settled after the previous inconformity."

And he said about another issue:

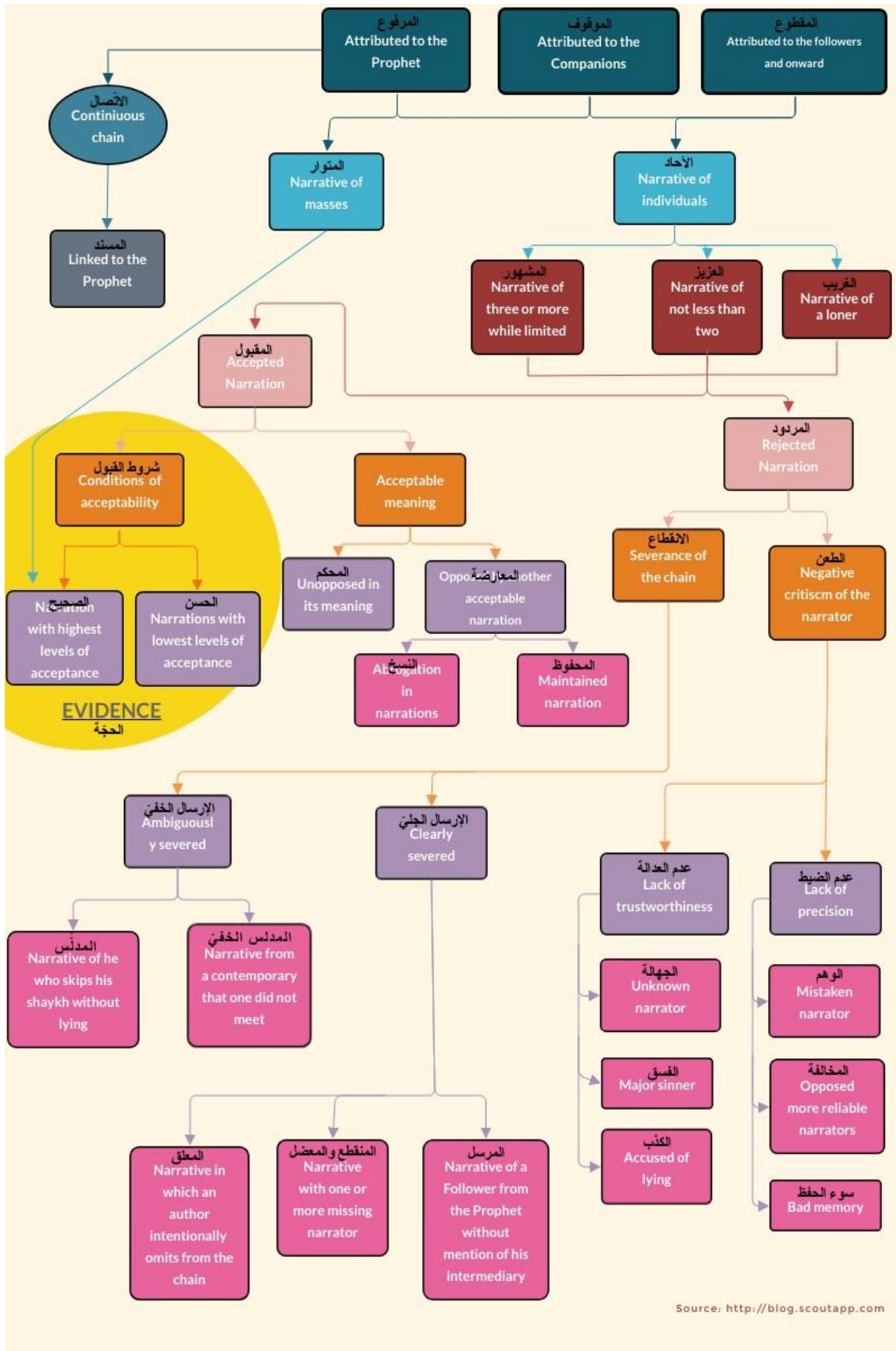
إِلَّا أَنَّ الشَّافِعِيَّ اسْتَعْمَلَ ذَلِكَ قَبْلَ اسْتِقْرَارِ الْإِصْطِلَاحِ، كَمَا قَالَ فِي بَعْضِ الْأَحَادِيثِ: "حَسَنٌ" وَهُوَ عَلَى شَرْطِ الشَّيْخَيْنِ

"... Except that Ash-Shafi^{yy} used that term before the conformity of the terminology, just as he used to say about some hadiths: 'hasan', while they fulfil the conditions of the Two Shaykhs."

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And may the sacred supplications and blessed salutations be upon the best of creations, upon his Companions and their pupils, and upon those Believers who have with him family relations.

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Source: <http://blog.scoutapp.com>

Introduction

Know, may Allāh make your knowledge grow, that **"NEWS (KHABAR)"**, in and of itself, can be possibly true or false. For example, had it been reported that a man named "Zayd" is standing, this could be a true report or a false one. The sound mind alone does not deem either possibility more probable because of the mere claim. Both possibilities of truth and falsehood are equal, for this is the reality of statements. It is not the news itself that makes its truth or falsehood more probable. Rather, something outside of that news, certain **"CLUES (QARA'IN)"**, would point either to its truthfulness or falsehood¹. Examples of such clues include the honesty of the **"REPORTER/TRANSMITTER (MUKHBIR/NAQIL)"**, his dishonesty, or events that take place indicating that the news is true or false.

Know, also, that the Muslims deem some news definitive in truth or falsehood. Definitively true news includes news from God Himself. Assuming that it is proven that the news is from the Creator, then all statements, commands and prohibitions proven to come from Him would be necessarily true and valid, whether people like what they contain or not. Definitively false news includes any claim that contradicts the sound mental judgment. For example, had it been reported that half of something is more than all of it, there would not be any possibility for truthfulness in such news. However, those are exceptional cases. The basis of news, and its intrinsic quality, is that it could be true or false, and thus, needs to be checked for authenticity.

The **"SCIENCE (ʿILM) OF HADITH"**, also named the **"FUNDAMENTALS (USUL) OF HADITH"**, **"HADITH TERMINOLOGY (MUSTALAH)"**, or most famously called, **"AL-MUSTALAH (THE TERMINOLOGY)"** is a science established for determining the authenticity of what is reported about the Choicest of Messengers. Its terms are innovated by the scholars and not transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ, and it is an extremely important science. Its importance is linked to the fact that the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ are evidence in our Religion.

It is the knowledge of a set of rules by which the circumstances of the **"TEXT (MATN)"** and the **"CHAIN (SANAD)"** of a ḥadīth are known². The definitions of all three terms, i.e., "text", "chain" and "ḥadīth" are coming momentarily. By "circumstances", we mean matters such as authenticity or weakness, how the news was conveyed and received, the qualities of the reporters, etc. It is different from the actual act of relating and documenting the ḥadīths. Rather, it is the knowledge of the terms of the People of Ḥadīth, and the governing rules that are the guidelines of the science. It might be said that "al-mustalah" is the clockwork behind the ḥadīth transmission. Thus, it should be learned before busying oneself with the narration of ḥadīths. How could a person be successful in ḥadīth narration specifically, and in the science generally, without knowing the terms of its scholars?³ For example, if one had basic knowledge

¹ Qurratu-l-ʿAyn by *Al-Hattab Al-Malikiyy*, pg. 73

² This is the definition of *ʿIzzu-d-Dīn Ibn Jamaʿah* (Tadrij Ar-Rawī pg. 68)

³ *As-Siyutiyy* copies from *Al-'Akfaniyy* (Tadrij Ar-Rawī vol. 1 pg. 67):

of Arabic, but was unfamiliar with the jargon of the scholars, he may think that they dispraise a hadith by calling it "gharib", because he understands that word to mean "strange", while in fact it does not mean "strange" in their terms, and may be a completely acceptable hadith. Also, he may assume that if they said that one chain is "a^la (higher)" than another, that this means it is better or more authentic, while in fact it may not be better than a "lower ('anzal)" chain. It only means that it is shorter.

A "**HADITH**" refers to a combination of two things: a "**CHAIN (SANAD/'ISNAD)**" and a "**TEXT (MATN)**". Some scholars restrict the word "hadith" to what is reported about the Prophet ﷺ, and his Companions, and they use the word "khabar (news)" for what is more general.¹ In this English document, as in other books of hadith terminology, we will discuss hadiths specifically, and transmitted news generally². Hence, we will use such words as "hadith", "**NARRATIVE/NARRATION (RIWAYAH)**", "**TRANSMISSION/REPORT (NAQL)**", "**NEWS (KHABAR)**", and perhaps even the Arabic words "**ATHAR (TRACE; i.e., TRADITION [of the Companions and the Followers])**" and "**SUNNAH (TRADITION [of the Prophet ﷺ,])**". Presumably, many people use the English word "**TRADITION**".

عِلْمُ الْحَدِيثِ الْخَاصُّ بِالرِّوَايَةِ: عِلْمٌ يَشْتَمِلُ عَلَى نَقْلِ أَقْوَالِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَفْعَالِهِ، وَرَوَايَتِهَا، وَضَبْطِهَا، وَتَحْرِيرِ
أَلْفَاظِهَا. وَعِلْمُ الْحَدِيثِ الْخَاصُّ بِالِدِّرَايَةِ: عِلْمٌ يُعْرِفُ مِنْهُ حَقِيقَةُ الرِّوَايَةِ؛ وَشُرُوطُهَا، وَأَنْوَاعُهَا، وَأَحْكَامُهَا، وَحَالَ الرِّوَاةِ،
وَشُرُوطُهُمْ، وَأَصْنَافُ الْمَرْوِيَّاتِ، وَمَا يَتَعَلَّقُ بِهَا. انْتَهَى.

"The hadith knowledge particular to conveyance is a knowledge that includes transmitting the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ and his actions, and relaying them, and verifying them, and being accurate with its expressions. The hadith knowledge particular to its technical aspect is a knowledge by which the reality of the narration is known; its conditions, its types, its judgements, the status of its narrators, their conditions, the various kinds of narrated news, and what is related them."

¹ **Ibn Hajar:**

الْخَبْرُ عِنْدَ عُلَمَاءِ هَذَا الْفَنِّ مُرَادِفٌ لِلْحَدِيثِ. وَقِيلَ: الْحَدِيثُ: مَا جَاءَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَالْخَبْرُ مَا جَاءَ
عَنْ غَيْرِهِ. وَمِنْ تَمَّ قِيلَ لِمَنْ يَشْتَغَلُ بِالتَّوَارِيخِ وَمَا شَاكَلَهَا الْإِخْبَارِيُّ، وَلِمَنْ يَشْتَغَلُ بِالسُّنَنِ النَّبَوِيَّةِ: الْمُحَدِّثُ. وَقِيلَ: بَيْنَهُمَا عُمُومٌ
وْخُصُوصٌ مُطْلَقٌ، فَكُلُّ حَدِيثٍ خَبْرٌ مِنْ غَيْرِ عَكْسٍ. وَعَبَّرْتُ هُنَا بِالْخَبْرِ لِيَكُونَ لِيَكُونَ أَشْمَلٌ

"The 'khabar (news)', according to the scholars of this field, is synonymous to "hadith". It was said that the hadith is [specifically] what comes from the Prophet, and the khabar is what came from someone else. From there, it was said about the one who is occupied with the study of history and the likes of that: 'ikhbariyy', and of the one who is occupied with the study of the prophetic hadiths: 'mu'addith'. It was said that they have things in common and in contrast, and so every hadith is a khabar, but not vice-versa. Here, I expressed with the word 'khabar' to be more inclusive."

² **As-Siyutiyy** pg. 67:

فَحَقِيقَةُ الرِّوَايَةِ: نَقْلُ السُّنَّةِ وَخَوَّهَا وَإِسْنَادُ ذَلِكَ إِلَى مَنْ غُزِيَ إِلَيْهِ

"Riwayah (relaying; conveying) in essence is: transmitting the Sunnah and its likes, and tracing that back to whomever it is ascribed to."

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The "**CHAIN (SANAD/'ISNAD)**" is the "**PATHWAY/ROUTE (TARIQ)**" of the text¹. It is called "sanad" or "'isnad"², which literally means "reliance/dependence", because the scholars rely on it to determine the strength of the narration³, as will come God willing. It is the "**CHAIN OF NARRATORS**". The scholars call those narrators the "**MEN (RIJAL)**" of the chain, but it is not a condition that the narrators be male, as will be repeated, God willing; calling those reporters "men" is only terminology. Every "**NARRATOR (RAWI)**" is a link in the chain.

The "**TEXT (MATN)**" is the transmitted words at which the chain ends. It is also defined as "the expressions of the ḥadīth by which its meanings stand"⁴. If that text is attributed to the Prophet ﷺ, it may be called a "sunnah" or a "ḥadīth". If it is attributed to a Companion, it may also be called a "ḥadīth". If it is attributed to a Companion or a Follower, it may be called an "'athar". In all cases, it is a "khabar (news)", a "naql (transmission)" and a "riwayah (narration)". As you see, what is attributed to the Companions may be called either a ḥadīth or an 'athar. The text is the ultimate goal that we seek, such as, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, said such and such." Definitions for all three types, i.e., the "Prophet", the "Companion" and the "Follower", will come in their places.

This science is unique to this Muslim nation of Muḥammad; no other Muslim nation and no other religion has this science. Some scholars said:

Certainly, Allāh has generously honored this nation by (giving it) 'isnad (the chain of narration)', and there is not for any of the nations, old or new, a connected chain of narration. All that they have are pages in their hands. They have mixed their books with their own accounts. They have no distinction between what was truly revealed in the Torah and the Injil, and what they have inserted into their books of their own accounts that they have taken from the untrustworthy. This honorable nation, may Allāh increase it in nobility by virtue of its Prophet ﷺ, has only documented the ḥadīth from the trustworthy one who was known in his time for honesty and reliability, and took it from

¹ **Ibn Hajar:**

والمراد بالطرق الأسانيد. والإسناد: حكاية طريق المتن

"The intent by 'pathways' is the 'isnads, and the 'isnad is a mentioning of the route of the text."

² **As-Siyutiyy:**

وَقَالَ ابْنُ جَمَاعَةَ: الْمُحَدِّثُونَ يَسْتَعْمِلُونَ السَّنَدَ وَالْإِسْنَادَ لِشَيْءٍ وَاحِدٍ.

"Ibn Jamā'ah said: The muḥaddiths use 'sanad' and 'isnad' for the same thing."

³ **As-Siyutiyy:**

قَالَ ابْنُ جَمَاعَةَ: وَأَخَذَهُ إِمَّا مِنَ السَّنَدِ، وَهُوَ مَا ارْتَفَعَ وَعَلَا مِنْ سَفْحِ الْجَبَلِ؛ لِأَنَّ الْمُسْنِدَ يَرْفَعُهُ إِلَى قَائِلِهِ، أَوْ مِنْ قَوْلِهِمْ: فَلَانَ سَنَدًا، أَيْ مُعْتَمَدًا، فَسَمِيَ الْإِخْبَارُ عَنِ طَرِيقِ الْمَتْنِ سَنَدًا لِاعْتِمَادِ الْحَفَاطِ فِي صِحَّةِ الْحَدِيثِ وَضَعْفِهِ عَلَيْهِ.

"Ibn Jamā'ah said: It is taken, either from the 'sanad'- which is a mountain face's elevation- because the conveyer of the chain raises the statement up to its original sayer, or it is taken from their saying that So-and-so is a 'sanad', meaning 'a reliance'; that informing about the pathway of the text was called a 'sanad (reliance)' because of the hafidhs' reliance upon it for determining the authenticity of the ḥadīth or its weakness."

⁴ **As-Siyutiyy** copies that definition from **At-Tibiyy** (pg. 70).







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his likes, until the end of the chain. Then they research with the strictest of severe scrutiny; until they know the most prodigious memorizers, and the most prodigious after them, and the most meticulous in exactness, and the most meticulous after them, and who had the longest apprenticeship under the masters above them, and who had the briefest. Then they write the hadith in twenty different ways or more, until they sift out any mistake, verify it, and count its letters, letter by letter. This is the generosity of Allah upon this nation ...¹

Naturally, the chain has two extremes: a beginning and an end. The scholars usually consider the beginning of the chain to be the point that mentions an "**AUTHOR (MU'ALLIF)**" of one of the books of hadith, such as 'Imam Al-Bukhariyy. This is why Ibn Hajar said in 'Nukhbatu-I-Fikar', "The chain would either end at the Prophet ..." And he said, "The omission from the chain would either be from its beginning from the side of the author ..." That author narrates from the one "**ABOVE (FAWQ)**" him i.e., his shaykh who conveyed to him. Accordingly, the end of the chain would be the side that mentions the Companion, who elevates the transmission up to the Prophet ﷺ. Most, if not all books that have diagrams depicting the chain of narration, line the narrators side by side, because we read from side to side, or the diagrams are from top to bottom, because we write from the top of a page to the bottom. However, the terminology of the scholars gives the chain the image of something ascending; it starts from below and ends up above. Therefore, the one "above" the other is the one who came before him. Observe the diagram:

¹ From the explanation of the explanation of Nukhbat Al-Fikar by **Mulla ^Aliyy Al-Qari**.

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End of the Chain	The Prophet of Allah 
Each narrator is the student of the one ABOVE him, i.e., before him, and the shaykh of the one BELOW him, i.e., after him, including the producer of the <u>h</u> adith	 The Companion
	 Narrator
	 Narrator
	 Narrator
Beginning of the Chain	 Author of the Compilation (i.e., producer of the <u>h</u>adith)

Hence, the chain is a series of narrators: the Companion who heard from the Prophet  narrates to the Follower, who, in turn, narrates to the follower of the Follower, who narrates to the one below him, etc., until reaching the "**PRODUCER (MUKHARRIJ)**" of the hadith, which is the author of a hadith compilation, like 'Imam Al-Bukhariyy, 'Imam Muslim, and others. It would be said, "This hadith is narrated/related by Al-Bukhariyy," for example, meaning that he is the producer, i.e., the documenter of the hadith. Very often, in the various books, whether about the Creed, the Law, or any other subject, when a hadith is used as evidence to prove some point, the hadith would be attributed to the producer at the beginning of the chain, and the Companion at its end, without mentioning the entire chain in between. That is because it is not always necessary to mention the entire chain. It would be said about a hadith, for example: "Narrated by So and So (i.e., the name of the producer is mentioned here), from the route of So and So (i.e., the name of the Companion is mentioned here)." Sometimes the hadith would be attributed to the Companion only, such as for it to be said, "It was narrated in the hadith of 'Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet , said such and such", without mentioning the producer of the hadith. The opposite of that is also true; the hadith may be attributed to its producer without mention of the Companion it came through.

Benefit:

Religious Knowledge in General is Transmitted by Chain of Narration

Among the precious knowledge that you should respect and never forget or neglect is that the chain does not stop at the documenter of the hadiths. The fact is that the documenter,

in turn, passes his entire book to the next person, who is now a link in the chain. He then passes that book to the next person, etc. In other words, the entire collection of Al-Bukhariyy should be acquired by chain of transmission, and not merely purchased and read without a teacher. If not, then the chain between the author and the purchaser is broken¹. The purchaser does not become a student of knowledge by buying and reading books. In fact, the scholars said that he who his book is his shaykh, his mistakes will be more numerous than his accuracies.

In fact, all of the religious knowledge is passed by this method of transmission, and not just the hadiths. Consequently, one should learn the knowledge of the Creed (^Aqidah), the knowledge of the practical rules and religious laws (Fiqh), the interpretation of the Qur'an (Tafsir), etc., from teachers who learned from teachers who learned from teachers all the way back to the original authors who documented what they acquired from their teachers who took from their teachers, etc., all the way back to the Prophet ﷺ. This is among the greatest pieces of advice that you can receive; search for proper teachers and learn by 'isnad. Do not settle with merely reading books.

Whoever does not acquire the knowledge in this fashion is a mere page-flipper who follows his own understanding. Beware of the page-flippers, fear being one, and do not learn from them, for they are usually inaccurate and bound to make mistakes. Even the Arabic language, which is a religious science and not merely a language, should be learned from Muslim teachers who teach the books of the scholars, and not from someone simply because he is an Arab. The rules of the Arabic language were clarified by the Muslims. Its movement began at the time of ^Aliyy Ibn 'Abi Talib- by his instruction- by 'Abu-I-'Aswad Ad-Du'aliyy. Since then, the Muslims have transmitted those rules and innovated its terminology. What has been stated here is supported by the hadith narrated by Al-Bukhariyy:

مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا يُفَقِّهْهُ فِي الدِّينِ وَإِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ بِالتَّعَلُّمِ

"If Allāh willed goodness for someone, He makes him knowledgeable in the Religion, and surely, the knowledge is by learning."

This means that it is not by simply reading, but by putting the effort and sitting with qualified teachers. The great 'Imam Ibnu-I-Mubarak said, "The 'isnad is part of the Religion. Had it not been for the 'isnad, whoever wanted to say something (about the Religion) would have said whatever he wanted to say."

We ask Allāh to guide us the straight way, and He knows best.

¹ **Al-'Iraqiyy:**

وَكُلُّ مَا ذُكِرَ مِنَ الرَّوَايَةِ بِالْوَجَادَةِ مَنْقُطٌ، سِوَاءَ وَثَقَ بِأَنَّهُ خَطٌّ مَنْ وَجَدَهُ عَنْهُ، أَمْ لَا

"All of what was mentioned about narrating what one merely finds is considered a severed chain, whether he was certain it was by the person's own handwriting or not."

CHAPTER 1: Narratives Attributed to the Prophet ﷺ, The Companions, The Followers, and Onward

After briefly introducing the chains of narration, and there is plenty more to come in that regard, we will discuss what the chains end at: texts (*mutun*), and in particular, texts attributed to the Prophet ﷺ, his Companions, the Followers, and those who came after them. Allah says¹:

﴿وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ﴾

<The prior and first among the Immigrants and the Supporters, and those who follow them in goodness, Allah accepts them and they are pleased with Him.>

This verse mentions the most elite Companions who immigrated from Makkah, those Companions who received and supported them in Al-Madīnah, and those who came after them, following their beliefs and practices². Those people are our reference. We do not want a reevaluation of the Religion, rather we want to be included in the chain of those who are praised in this verse.

This first chapter has three sections. The first pertains to what is attributed to the Prophet ﷺ, the second to what is attributed to the Companions, and the third is for the Followers and onward. We start with them because they are the source of our Religion. Within these sections there will be relevant branches and digressions.

SECTION 1: Narratives Attributed to the Prophet ﷺ,

Narrations attributed to the Prophet ﷺ are coined by the scholars as "ELEVATED/RAISED (MARFU[^])" They say, "This narration is 'elevated/raised up' to the Prophet ﷺ.

He, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is Muḥammad, son of ^Abdullah, the Arabian Prophet and grandest Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Since we will later define the "Companion" and the "Follower", as they do in the classic works of *muṣṭalah*, we will now define the "Prophet", especially since knowing the qualities of a Prophet is more important than knowing the qualities of other people.

¹ Surat At-Tawbah # 100.

² *An-Nasafiyy* said in his tafsir:

وأما الذين اتبعوا المهاجرين الأولين والأنصار بإحسان، فهم الذين أسلموا لله إسلامهم، وسلخوا منهاجهم في الهجرة والنصرة وأعمال الخير

"As for those who followed the first immigrants and the Supporters in goodness, they are those who submitted to Allah and took their clear path in migration, support and good deeds."

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

Being a “Prophet (Nabiyy)” means that one is a male human who receives the Revelation from Allāh. The “Revelation (Wahy)” is information from Allāh, usually by way of an Angel. A Prophet does miracles to prove his prophethood, and without any oversight, conveys what Allāh reveals to him. Since Allāh gives him the Revelation and supports him with miracles that prove his honesty, we must accept that information he conveys from God, and that is why we are concerned with the authenticity of the ḥadīths.

Being a “Messenger (Rasul)” means that that one is a specialized Prophet: one who receives laws that abrogate the laws of the previous Messenger. Thus, every Messenger is a Prophet, but not every Prophet is a Messenger. Muḥammad ﷺ is the last Prophet and Messenger, and any claim of prophethood after him is not only false but blasphemy.

Concerning the “marfu^” ḥadīth, we are saying “attributed to the Prophet ﷺ” because we are not yet discussing whether or not those texts are authentic, nor if their chains are continuous. Hence, even if the text is not authenticated or if its chain is severed, it may still be “attributed to the Prophet” ﷺ.

The ḥadīths of the Prophet ﷺ include his sayings, doings, descriptions and approvals. Now take some fundamentals about these four:

HIS SAYINGS:

Know with certainty that in reference to his sayings (‘aqwāl), he, as well as all Prophets, does not make mistakes in his conveyance of the Religion; he does not deem the lawful as unlawful, nor vice-versa. It is even impossible that his tongue slips. Hence, whatever he tells of the past or future; of the unseen, like Angels, Paradise, Hell, the pleasure and torture of the grave, etc., or of laws and sins, is all absolutely true. Whoever disbelieves in that is a disbeliever in Islam. Allāh says¹:

﴿وَمَنْ لَمْ يُؤْمِن بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَإِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَعِيرًا﴾

<Whoever does not believe in Allāh and His Messenger, then (he is a blasphemer, and) surely Allāh has prepared Hell for the blasphemers>.

It is not his truthfulness that we are investigating, because he proved his truthfulness by performing miracles. Rather, it is the truthfulness of what is reported about him that we wish to verify, so that we might implement his commands. Allāh says²:

﴿وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا﴾

<Take whatever the Messenger gave you, and refrain from whatever he forbade you>.

¹ Surat Fath # 13

² Surat Al-Hashr #7

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

Let no Hadith Denier fool you by saying that this verse does not include the hadiths, it rather refers only to the distribution of the spoils of war. The answer is that in the verse, Allah says: <[مَا]>, which means: “whatever”; “anything”; “everything that”; “no matter what”; “every kind of thing”; etc. Remember an important rule that will return, God willing: **“The consideration is by the generality of the expression, not the reason it was expressed”**. This means that the rules are based on the wording of the text; If the words are general, the rule is general. The rules are not restricted to the reason the text was stated. Therefore, although the story behind the revelation of the verse was about the spoils, the verse’s wording itself is more general than the reason for its revelation, and the evidence is in the text, not the story. Therefore, what the verse proves is not restricted to the story behind the verse, and among what it proves is that we must accept all hadiths confirmed from the Prophet ﷺ.

HIS ACTIONS:

Know with certainty; that in reference to his doings (‘af^{al}), he is impeccable; protected from blasphemy, major sins and abject small sins. Anything confirmed about any Prophet ﷺ that seems to conflict with this rule must be explained properly. This is why one must learn the fundamentals of the Creed before reading the Qur'an and hadiths without a foundation.

Therefore, also refute the Hadith Deniers, who, to justify their denial of the hadith, disbelieve in his impeccability, thereby disbelieving in him and consequently disbelieving altogether, by misinterpreting the verse¹:

﴿لَمْ تُحْرَمْ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ﴾

<Why have you (O Muhammad) forbidden what Allah made lawful for you>

The correct meaning of his “making forbidden what Allah made”, was his refraining from doing something that was permissible for him to do, not his deeming it a sin². This is just as one may forbid himself from enjoying his wife or eating meat, but without deeming it a sin. In other words, it is a linguistic “tahrim (prohibition)”, not a religious one. We will revisit their denial of his impeccability, and how that lands them in contradictions.

HIS DESCRIPTIONS:

The meaning of his descriptions being hadiths is that the Companions’ sayings, such as, “the Prophet’s face was like this,” and “His voice was like that,” and “His stride was like this,” and “He used to wear such-and-such,” etc., are considered hadiths, although there may not be

¹ Surat At-Tahrim #1

² Check the tafsir of **At-Tabariyy**. He said it means:

لم تحرم على نفسك الحلال الذي أحله الله لك

"Why do you forbid for yourself from that lawful matter that Allah permitted for you?"

an action or saying of his mentioned. The obligatory creed concerning his appearance is that he was the most beautiful Prophet ﷺ. He said:

مَا بَعَثَ اللَّهُ نَبِيًّا إِلَّا حَسَنَ الْوَجْهِ، حَسَنَ الصَّوْتِ وَإِنَّ نَبِيَّكُمْ أَحْسَنُهُمْ وَجْهًا وَأَحْسَنُهُمْ صَوْتًا

“Allah did not send a Prophet except with a beautiful face and a beautiful voice, and certainly, your Prophet is, among them, most beautiful in face and voice.”

Therefore, he was more beautiful than Yūsuf (Joseph). No Prophet had repulsive features. What was said about Prophet ‘Ayyūb (Job) having peeling flesh and emerging worms is a lie that takes whoever believes it out of ‘Islam.

HIS APPROVALS:

The approval (taqrīr) is for someone to do something in his presence without him objecting. This is considered an approval of the Prophet ﷺ- although there may not be a blatant statement from him approving what was done in his presence- because as a rule, according to the people of the correct school, the Prophet ﷺ is not silent in the face of sins, and he does not delay clarifying rules when there is a need for clarification. Therefore, had what was done in his presence been forbidden, he would not have been silent. This is why we know that it is not true that a Prophet who is not a Messenger receives laws that he does not have to convey.

If that is clear, know that Ibn Hajar, may Allah have mercy on him, said that a hadith may be attributed to the Prophet ﷺ, either **“EXPLICITLY (TASRIH[AN])”** or **“VIRTUALLY (HUKM[AN])”**. Scenarios of sayings explicitly attributed to him are like for a Companion to say, “I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying such-and-such,” or “the Prophet ﷺ used to say such-and-such,” etc. For example, it is confirmed that the Prophet ﷺ said, as narrated by Muslim¹ and others²:

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ الْأَوَّلُ فَلَيْسَ قَبْلَكَ شَيْءٌ، وَأَنْتَ الْآخِرُ فَلَيْسَ بَعْدَكَ شَيْءٌ، وَأَنْتَ الظَّاهِرُ فَلَيْسَ فَوْقَكَ شَيْءٌ، وَأَنْتَ
الْبَاطِنُ فَلَيْسَ دُونَكَ شَيْءٌ

“O, Allah, You are Al-‘Awwal (without beginning), and there is nothing before You, and You are Al-‘Aakhir (without end), and there is nothing after You, and You are Adh-Dhahir (Whose existence is obvious), and there is nothing above You, and You are Al-Batin (unimaginable), and there is nothing below You.”

Scenarios of doings explicitly attributed to him are like for a Companion to say, “I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, doing such and such,” or “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to do such and such.” For example, it is confirmed, as narrated by Muslim, that while the Prophet ﷺ made supplication seeking rain, he turned his palms towards the ground.

¹ Chapter of what is said upon sleeping and when getting in bed.

² 'Abu Dawūd, At-Tirmidhiyy and others.

A scenario of an explicit approval is like a Companion saying, “Such and such issue was mentioned to the Prophet ﷺ and he did not scold either party.”

DIGRESSION: The Prophet ﷺ is not Silent in the Face of Sins

We are adamant that it is not obligatory on the believing women to cover their faces, except for the wives of the Prophet ﷺ, because in the hadith known as “**the Hadith of the Lady from the Tribe of Khath^am (Hadithu-l-Khath^amiyyah)**”, the Prophet ﷺ turned his cousin’s face away from her beautiful face and did not command her to cover her face. Had she been obligated to cover her face, he would have ordered her to do as his wives did.

If someone argues that she was in Hajj, in the state of ‘Ihram for performing the rituals of the Pilgrimage, and it is forbidden for a woman to cover her face in that state, he is given two answers:

1. The first is that there is no evidence that she was in the state of ‘Ihram, and it is highly possible that she exited the state of ‘Ihram. Saying that she was in the state of ‘Ihram is an assumption.
2. The second is that even if she was in the state of ‘Ihram, meaning that it would have been forbidden for her to cover her face with a veil that clings to her face, had she had the same obligation as the Prophet’s wives ﷺ, he would have commanded her to do as his wives did:

The Prophet’s wives had a special way to hide their faces during the state of ‘Ihram, because they were observing both rules: their obligation of concealing their faces, and the prohibition of covering the face with a clinging veil while in the state of ‘Ihram: they mounted some sort of rods by which their veils would drape and conceal their faces without clinging to their faces. Women still do this during the Hajj, but not as an obligation. Had the lady from the tribe of Khath^am been obliged to cover her face, he would have commanded her to do as his wives did. His silence to her exposed face is evidence of its permissibility; it is his approval.

This mistake, that the woman is obliged to cover her face, was made by some latter-day Shafi’iyys and Hanafiyys, as well as by the Wahhabiyys. And in this is more benefit and advice for those who only want knowledge that is precise: the word of a scholar is only taken when it complies with the evidence. It is not simply that because a scholar said something that it has weight and consideration. A scholar’s ruling must comply with the Prophet’s ruling, or else it is worthless and weightless, may Allah forgive the scholars and increase them in greatness. The hadith of the Khath^am lady is authentic, narrated by Al-Bukhariyy, Malik, and others. Allah knows best, may He unify the brothers.

As for something “virtually” or “practically” attributed to him, this means that it has the judgment and ruling of being attributed to him, like the explicit attribution. So, what Muslims mention about the beginning of creation, the stories of the Prophets, the prophecies of future wars, events of Judgment Day, and specific rewards or punishments for certain deeds, is

attributed to the Prophet ﷺ, even if the speaker does not say, “The Prophet ﷺ said ...” This is because there is no way to know those details except from the Prophet ﷺ, as long as one is not relying on the books of the Jews and Christians.

As for those books, they are not relied upon in our Religion, because they have been perverted from their original texts. Rather, whatever is in them that agrees with what our Prophet ﷺ said is true, and thus we do not need them, and what disagrees with what he said is false, and so we do not want it. Then, for whatever they may mention that he did not, the Prophet ﷺ said, as narrated by Al-Bukhariyy:

لَا تُصَدِّقُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا تَكْدِبُوهُمْ

“Do not believe the People of the Book and do not belie them.”

An action practically attributed to the Prophet ﷺ is for a Companion to do what is not possible to be from his own determination or deduction (ijtihad). An example is what ‘Imam Ash-Shafi’iyy said about how ‘Imam ^Aliyy prayed the Eclipse Prayer: “In every rak^ah is more than two bows.” Such a prayer format could only be from the Revelation, so it is virtually attributed to the Prophet ﷺ.

A virtual approval is for a Companion to say, “We used to do such and such during the time of the Prophet ﷺ,” like the hadith of Ibn ^Abbas, also narrated by Al-Bukhariyy, **“that raising the voice with ‘dhikr’ when people finish the Prescribed Prayer was done during the era of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.”** This is a virtual approval because it is unlikely that the Companions had a habitual practice without the Prophet ﷺ knowing, and there are two reasons for that:

1. They were very extremely diligent to ask him about the rulings of their deeds. If they did something or wanted to do something, they would bring it to his attention, and:
2. Allah used to reveal to the Prophet ﷺ the judgments of their actions. This is why the Prophet said¹:

حَيَاتِي خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَمَمَاتِي خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ تُحَدِّثُونَ فَيُحَدِّثُ لَكُمْ ...

“My life is good for you and my death is good for you. My life is good for you because you act and then the Revelation comes for you ...”

There are also other ways to consider a hadith virtually attributed to the Prophet ﷺ.

¹ Related by Al-Bazzar in his Musnad. Al-Haythamiyy said that its narrators are relayers of sahih hadiths.

BRANCH: The Elevated Narration with a Continuous Chain

In the event that an elevated ḥadīth has a “**CONTINUOUS (MUTTAṢIL) CHAIN**” then it is not merely an elevated narration, but “**LINKED (MUSNAD)**” to him ﷺ. Accordingly, a “musnad” narration has two features: being elevated to the Prophet ﷺ, while having a continuous chain. According to this definition¹, every “musnad (linked to the Prophet)” is “marfu[^] (raised to the Prophet)”, but not every “marfu[^]” is “musnad”. This still is not a discussion about whether the text is authentic or not.

SECTION 2: Narratives Attributed to the Companions

If a narration does not go beyond the Companion, and thus is not elevated up to the Prophet ﷺ, then it is “**STOPPED (MAWQUF)**” at the Companion.

A “Companion (Sahabiyy)”, a title that will be capitalized herein, is someone who met the Prophet ﷺ, in a natural manner, believed in him, and died as a Muslim. Therefore, people who lived at his time but did not meet him, like 'As-ḥamah An-Najashī and 'Uways Al-Qaraniyy, are not considered Companions, as will be further clarified. Also, whoever met him in a supernatural manner is not considered a Companion. An example is the Prophets who met Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ on the night of the Night Journey (Al-'Isrā'), because they came forth from their graves, except for [^]Iṣā (Jesus), who descended from the sky. As well, whoever met him without believing in him is not a Companion, and whoever met him, believed in him, but later committed apostasy and died as a non-Muslim is not a Companion. However, if he returned to 'Islām and died as a Muslim, then he is still counted as a Companion.

Whatever is a saying or doing of theirs, whether explicit or virtual, is “stopped” at them, whether or not its chain is continuous, such as the saying of [^]Aliyy:

كَانَ اللهُ وَلَا مَكَانَ وَهُوَ الْآنَ عَلَى مَا عَلَيْهِ كَانَ

“Allah existed and there was no place, and now He is as He was.”

This is copied by Hafidh Al-Baghdadiyy in his book ‘Al-Farq Bayna-l-Firaq’.

As for something done in their presence without them objecting to it, it is not given the same judgment as the Prophet’s silence about a matter. This is because what is true and acceptable is that they are not impeccable.

¹ Al-'Iraqiyy:

(والثالثُ) ، وهو أنَّ المسندَ لا يقعُ إلا على ما رُفِعَ إلى النبيِّ - صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - بإسنادٍ متصلٍ، وبه جزمَ الحاكمُ أبو عبدِ اللهِ التَّيْسَابُورِيُّ في " علوم الحديث "

“The third [saying] is that ‘musnad’ is only applicable to what is elevated to the Prophet ﷺ with a continuous chain. Al-Ḥakim ‘Abu ^Abdillāh An-Naysaburiyy was definitive about that in [^]Ulumul-Ḥadīth.”

DIGRESSION: The Trustworthiness of the Companions

Yes, the hadith scholars said about the Companions that all of them are “**TRUSTWORTHY/UPRIGHT (^ADL)**”, and this is true. However, they meant that they are upright in reference to their hadith narration, not all of their behaviors absolutely. They meant that none of them lie on the Prophet ﷺ, so all of their reports are acceptable. This is proven by such verses as¹:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا﴾

<Allah has made you a moderate nation>.

The Prophet ﷺ himself explained what this “moderation” means by saying²:

عَدْلًا

“Upright”

So protect yourself from a silly mistake by knowing that the uprightness of the Companions that the scholars of hadith confirmed is not a negation that a Companion might possibly sin. Whoever thinks that the scholars meant that they are all pious has an erroneous blunder and an unjust bias. One can effortlessly open the hadith books to the chapters pertaining to the capital punishments (hudud) and find that some of them stole and thus had a hand amputated, or fornicated and thus were whipped or stoned, etc. The Prophet ﷺ said about more than one of them that they will be tortured after death, and he supplicated against some.

If some unreasonable person stubbornly claims that only the Prophet ﷺ can make mention of their sins, then how was it permissible for some Companions to report other Companions to the Prophet ﷺ? And how was it permissible for the hadith scholars to document their names and their sins for the Muslims all over the earth and throughout the ages to memorize and pass on?

The correct explanation of hadiths such as³:

اللَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي أَصْحَابِي، لَا تَتَّخِذُوهُمْ غَرَضًا بَعْدِي

“[Fear] Allah, [fear] Allah in (reference to) my Companions! Do not take them as targets after me ...”

¹ Al-Baqarah #143

² Sahih Al-Bukhariyy

³ At-Tirmidhiyy, chapter on whoever insulted the Companions of the Prophet.

is that they are general statements forbidding the dispraise of all of them as a group. It does not mean that it is absolutely forbidden to mention what some of them did when there is a need to clarify religious rules. How would that be a sin in reference to the Companions when Allah says about 'Adam¹:

﴿وَعَصَى آدَمُ﴾

<'Adam sinned>,

And 'Adam is a Prophet?

Similarly, when reliable scholars like At-Tahawiyy and An-Nasafiyy stated that it is the Muslim belief that it is forbidden to mention the Companions except with goodness, they meant the dispraise of the entire group of Muslims called “the Companions (Sahabah)”. They did not intend that what the Prophet ﷺ, the Companions and the scholars have done when mentioning the wrong doings of individual Companions is a sin. This case is clear for anyone who can see and hear.

The school of the people of the Prophet’s methodology is that the pious among the Companions are generally the most elite of the Nation, and the scholars among them are generally the greatest scholars, and not absolutely. This is because the Prophet ﷺ, said²:

فَرُبَّ مُبَلِّغٍ أَوْعَىٰ مِنْ سَامِعٍ

“How many there are (who have the hadith) conveyed to (them) and understand (it) more than the one who heard (it).”

This means that there are many Companions who hear the hadith directly from the Prophet ﷺ and convey it to some from the next generation who understand it better than those who heard it first-hand. Whoever believes that every one of them is absolutely better and more knowledgeable than anyone else without exception has a misconception. Rather, loving them is obligatory, dispraising them (altogether) is blasphemy, and following their Creed is mandatory. May Allah accept their good deeds and grant them glory.

SECTION 3: Narratives Attributed to the Followers and Onward

If a narrative is neither elevated up to the Prophet ﷺ, nor stopped at a Companion, then it is “**SEVERED; CUT-OFF (MAQTU^)**”, i.e., attributed to the Followers or those who come after them. Do not mix this word “maqtu^” with another hadith term that will come later: “munqati^”.

¹ Surat Ta-ha #121

² Sunan At-Tirmidhiyy, chapter of what came concerning conveying the heard hadiths

A “Follower (Tabi’iyy)”, which will also be capitalized herein, and translated by some as “Successor”, refers to one of those Believers who met the Companions. The scholars differed about the details of that meeting to be considered a Follower, and we will not delve into those details, but for that reason they differed about whether ‘Imam ‘Abu Hanīfah was a Follower.

You should know, however, that the Followers have different **LEVELS (TABAQAT)**¹. If the majority of one’s narrations come from the Companions, then he is a “Senior (Kabīr) Follower”. If they mostly come from other Followers, then he is a “Junior (Ṣaghīr) Follower”². As well, those who lived at the Prophet’s time ﷺ but did not meet him, and so in age and era are like the Companions, are Senior Followers. Some of them we did already mention, so review for retention. Among the Followers were Al-Ḥasan Al-Biṣriyy, who is famously referred to in the books as “Al-Ḥasan”, Ibn Sīrīn, the dream interpreter, ‘Abu-l-‘Aswad, who documented the rules of syntax (naḥw), and Yaḥyā Ibn Ya‘mar, who innovated the dots on the letters in the Qur’an.

¹ **Ibn Hajar:**

وَالطَّبَقَةُ فِي اصْطِلَاحِهِمْ: عِبَارَةٌ عَنْ جَمَاعَةٍ اشْتَرَكُوا فِي السِّنِّ وَلِقَاءِ الْمَشَايخِ. وَقَدْ يَكُونُ الشَّخْصُ الْوَاحِدُ مِنْ طَبَقَتَيْنِ بَاعْتِبَارَيْنِ؛ كَأَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ؛ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ ثُبُوتُ صُحْبَتِهِ لِلنَّبِيِّ ﷺ يُعَدُّ فِي طَبَقَةِ الْعَشْرَةِ مِثْلًا، وَمِنْ حَيْثُ صِغَرُ السِّنِّ يُعَدُّ فِي طَبَقَةٍ بَعْدَهُمْ. فَمَنْ نَظَرَ إِلَى الصَّحَابَةِ بَاعْتِبَارِ الصُّحْبَةِ جَعَلَ الْجَمِيعَ طَبَقَةً وَاحِدَةً كَمَا صَنَعَ ابْنُ حِبَّانَ وَغَيْرُهُ. وَمَنْ نَظَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ بَاعْتِبَارِ قَدْرِ زَائِدٍ، كَالسَّبْقِ إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ أَوْ شُهُودِ الْمَشَاهِدِ الْفَاضِلَةِ جَعَلَهُمْ طَبَقَاتٍ. وَإِلَى ذَلِكَ جَنَحَ صَاحِبُ «الطَّبَقَاتِ» أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ سَعْدِ الْبَغْدَادِيِّ، وَكَتَابُهُ أَجْمَعُ مَا جُمِعَ فِي ذَلِكَ. وَكَذَلِكَ مَنْ جَاءَ بَعْدَ الصَّحَابَةِ - وَهُمْ التَّابِعُونَ - مَنْ نَظَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ بَاعْتِبَارِ الْأَخْذِ عَنْ بَعْضِ الصَّحَابَةِ فَقَدْ جَعَلَ الْجَمِيعَ طَبَقَةً وَاحِدَةً كَمَا صَنَعَ ابْنُ حِبَّانَ أَيْضًا. وَمَنْ نَظَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ بَاعْتِبَارِ اللَّقَاءِ قَسَمَهُمْ كَمَا فَعَلَ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ سَعْدٍ. وَلِكُلٍِّ مِنْهُمَا وَجْهٌ.

"The 'ṭabaqah (level)' in their terminology refers to a group who share in age and in taking from the shaykhs. It could be that one person is from two different levels by two different considerations, like 'Anas Ibn Malik- may Allāh accept his deeds; from the perspective that his companionship to the Prophet ﷺ is known, he is counted in the same level as the Ten [greatest Companions], and from the perspective of his young age, he is in a level after them. So whoever looked at the Companions from the perspective of [mere] companionship makes them all of one level, and whoever looked at them by considering some additional factor, like earliness in embracing 'Islam or participating in some of the meritorious battles, makes them into levels. This is what the author of At-Ṭabaqat did, 'Abū ‘Abdillāh Muḥammad Ibn Sa‘d Al-Baghdādiyy, and his book is the most comprehensive of what was compiled in that regard. Likewise, those who came after the Companions- and they are the Followers: whoever looked at them from the perspective of taking from some of the Companions made them all one level, like what Ibn Hibban also did, and whoever looked at them from the perspective of [merely] meeting [Companions] divided them, like what Muḥammad Ibn Sa‘d did. Each way has a point."

² **Al-‘Iraqiyy:**

أَكْثَرُ رَوَايَاتِهِمْ عَنِ التَّابِعِينَ وَلَمْ يَلْقَوْا مِنَ الصَّحَابَةِ إِلَّا الْوَاحِدَ وَالْآثِنِينَ

“Most of their narrations are from the Followers, and they did not meet among the Companions but one or two.”

BENEFIT: The Documentation of the Hadiths

It was during this era, the era of the Followers, that the movement to document the hadiths began. The command was given by the Guided Caliph, the saint and master savant, ^Umar Ibn ^Abdi-l-^Aziz¹, who was himself a Follower. He ruled in the year 100 AH and was the Renovator (Mujaddid) of that century.

Knowing this history is important for warding off the whispers of the Hadith Deniers who often lie and say that the hadiths were not written for 200 years. By that, they intend the compilation of Al-Bukhariyy.

Know that Al-Bukhariyy's book was not the absolute first². Rather, it was the first compilation dedicated to only authentic "elevated" narrations, as will return, God willing. In fact, 'Imam Malik's book, Al-Muwatta' preceded Al-Bukhariyy's, and still was not the first. It was mentioned to Malik that someone had already compiled a Muwatta' even bigger than Malik's. He responded, "Whatever was done for the sake of Allah shall remain."

¹ *As-Siyutiyy* (pg. 156):

وَأَمَّا ابْتِدَاءُ تَدْوِينِ الْحَدِيثِ فَإِنَّهُ وَقَعَ عَلَى رَأْسِ الْمِائَةِ فِي خِلَافَةِ عُمَرَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ بِأَمْرِهِ، فَفِي صَحِيحِ الْبُخَارِيِّ فِي أَبْوَابِ الْعِلْمِ: وَكَتَبَ عُمَرُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ إِلَى أَبِي بَكْرٍ بْنِ حَزْمٍ: انظُرْ مَا كَانَ مِنْ حَدِيثِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَارْتَبِطْ بِهَا خِفْتُ دُرُوسَ الْعِلْمِ وَذَهَابَ الْعُلَمَاءِ.

"As for the beginning of the hadith documentation, it happened at the head of the second century, during the caliphate of ^Umar Ibn ^Abdi-l-^Aziz- by his command. In Sahih Al-Bukhariyy, in the chapters of knowledge: ^Umar Ibn ^Abdi-l-^Aziz wrote to 'Abu Bakr Ibn Hazm: 'Look into whatever there is of the hadiths of the Messenger of Allah and write it down, for surely I fear the disappearance of the knowledge and that the scholars would go away.'"

² *As-Siyutiyy* (pg. 154):

وَقَدْ كَانَتْ الْكُتُبُ قَبْلَهُ مَجْمُوعَةً مَمْرُوجًا فِيهَا الصَّحِيحُ بَعْدَهُ، وَكَانَتْ الْأَثَارُ فِي عَصْرِ الصَّحَابَةِ وَكِبَارِ التَّابِعِينَ غَيْرَ مُدَوَّنَةٍ وَلَا مُرْتَبَةِ، لِسَبِيلَانِ أَذْهَابِهِمْ وَسَعَةِ حِفْظِهِمْ، وَلَأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا هُنَا أَوْلَى عَنْ كِتَابَتِهَا، كَمَا ثَبَتَ فِي صَحِيحِ مُسْلِمٍ؛ خَشْيَةَ اخْتِلَاطِهَا بِالْقُرْآنِ، وَلَأَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ كَانَ لَا يُحْسِنُ الْكِتَابَةَ، فَلَمَّا انْتَشَرَ الْعُلَمَاءُ فِي الْأَمْصَارِ وَكَثُرَ الْإِبْتِدَاعُ مِنَ الْخَوَارِجِ وَالرَّوَافِضِ دَوَّنَتْ مَمْرُوجَةً بِأَقْوَالِ الصَّحَابَةِ وَتَنَاقُؤِ التَّابِعِينَ وَغَيْرِهِمْ.

"The books before [Sahih Al-Bukhariyy] were compiled with the authentic mixed with other than the authentic. It happened that [originally], the reports of the Companions and the Followers were not documented nor arranged, but that was due to the fluidity of their intellects and the vastness of their memorization, and because, in the beginning, they were forbidden from writing them- as confirmed in Sahih Muslim- for fear of mixing that with the Qur'an, and because most of them were not good at writing. Then, when scholars multiplied throughout the regions, and when the heresy increased from the Khawarij and the Rawafid, the hadiths were compiled in books that also had sayings of the Companions and edicts of the Followers and others blended throughout."

The Hadith Deniers also claim that the compilation of hadiths is self-contradictory due to the hadith¹:

لا تَكْتُبُوا عَنِّي شَيْئاً إِلَّا الْقُرْآنَ، وَمَنْ كَتَبَ عَنِّي شَيْئاً غَيْرَ الْقُرْآنِ فَلْيَمْحُهُ

“Do not write from me something other than the Qur’an, and let whoever wrote something from me other than the Qur’an erase it.”

They say, “You Muslims have written a hadith that forbids you from writing a hadith!” So, know that the scholars have several explanations for this:

1. It was said that this hadith is abrogated by such hadiths as²:

اَكْتُبُوا لِأَبِي شَاهٍ

“Write for ‘Abu Shah.”

‘Abu Shah was a man who could not remember everything that the Prophet ﷺ said, and complained to the Prophet ﷺ about his memory. As such, the Prophet ﷺ gave permission to write his hadiths. The issue of abrogation will return, God willing.

2. It was said that what was intended was writing something other than the Qur’an alongside the Qur’an or on the same page. That was for fear of blending them. This is because they used to hear the interpretation with its recitation, and in fact there are some transmissions of the Qur’an mixed with tafsir, and they are deemed anomalous. However, when the Qur’an was thoroughly memorized, that fear was gone, and the reason for not writing vanished.

3. It was said that this is specific to the one with a reliable memory, so that he would not abandon his talented memory to rely on his writing.

‘Abu Dawud narrated that ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Amr said, "I used to write everything I heard from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ", and that he mentioned that to the Prophet, to which he ﷺ said:

"Write."

Al-Bukhariyy narrated that ‘Abu Hurayrah said: "There is no one among the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ transmitting hadiths from him more than me, except for what was from ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Amr, for he used to write, and I did not used to write." Commit these sayings to memory³ and protect yourself and others from an irritating pest, and Allah knows best!

¹ Al-Madkhal by Al-Bayhaqiyy

² Sahih Al-Bukhariyy

³ Al-Iraqiyy (vol.3 pp. 231-232)

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As for the followers of the Followers, they include 'Imam Malik and 'Imam 'Abu Hanifah, according to those who do not count him as a Follower. After them come the likes of Ash-Shafi'iyy. After his level come the likes of 'Imam 'Ahmad, who was recorded as having memorized a million narrations. Then come such stars as Al-Bukhariyy and At-Tirmidhiyy ...

An example of a "cut-off" narrative - since it includes what comes from those after the Followers - is what 'Imam Al-Bayhaqiyy narrates with his own chain back to Ash-Shafi'iyy that he said¹:

المُحَدَّثَاتُ مِنَ الْأُمُورِ ضَرَبَانِ: أَحَدُهُمَا: مَا أُحْدِثَ يُخَالِفُ كِتَابًا أَوْ سَنَةً أَوْ أَثَرًا أَوْ إِجْمَاعًا , فَهَذِهِ الْبِدْعَةُ
الصَّلَالَةُ. وَالثَّانِيَةُ: مَا أُحْدِثَ مِنَ الْحَيْرِ لَا خِلَافَ فِيهِ لِوَاحِدٍ مِنْ هَذَا , فَهَذِهِ مُحَدَّثَةٌ غَيْرُ مَذْمُومَةٍ

"The innovated matters are of two types: The first is what was innovated among what opposes the Qur'an, Sunnah or Consensus. This is the innovation of misguidance. The second is what is innovated of the good; it has no opposition to any of that. This is the innovation that is not dispraised."

All those generations are included in the hadith²:

خَيْرُ النَّاسِ قَرْنِي ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُوهُمْ ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُوهُمْ

"The best of people are my century, then those who come after them, then those who come after them."

The first three centuries are known as "the Salaf (Predecessors)". They are the authorities for the Muslims who came after them, by virtue of this aforementioned hadith.

Year one of the Islamic calendar is the year of the Prophet's Immigration. The first month of every Islamic year is Muharram. The Muslim calendar was innovated by 'Umar Ibnu-I-Khattab, who decided that year one should be the year of the Immigration. Remember that the first century is from year 1 to year 100. The second century is from 101 to 200, and the third is from 201 to 300.

Therefore, the Salaf does not refer to Ibn Taymiyah who lived in the seventh century, nor to his followers, like Muhammad Ibn 'Abdi-I-Wahhab who lived in the 13th century, nor Ibn Baz, Ibn 'Uthaymin or Al-'Albaniyy, who are from the 15th century. Using the term "Salaf" for them is incorrect, as well as the description "Salafiyy (follower of the Salaf)". The Muslims have been following the Salaf since the fourth century and they did not call themselves "the Salafiyy". Had anyone been deserving of the name "Salafiyy", the people of the fourth century would have been. After all, who else were they following? The people who came after the Salaf are called the "Khalaf (latter-day peoples)".

¹ Manaqib Ash-Shafi'iyy

² Sunan At-Tirmidhiyy

SECTION 4: The Narration with a Continuous Chain

A hadith is called “**CONNECTED (MUTTASIL/MAWSUL)**” when it has a continuous chain of narration. However, unless they specify, they do not call a narration “connected” unless it is “elevated” up to the Prophet ﷺ or stopped at a Companion. As for what is cut off at the Followers, they do not call it “connected”- even if its chain is connected- unless they qualify it and specify. Al-[^]Iraqiyy said:

وَأَمَّا يَمْتَنِعُ اسْمُ الْمُتَّصِلِ فِي الْمَقْطُوعِ فِي حَالَةِ الْإِطْلَاقِ. أَمَا مَعَ التَّقْيِيدِ فَجَائِزٌ وَقَعَّ فِي كَلَامِهِمْ، كَقَوْلِهِمْ: هَذَا مُتَّصِلٌ إِلَى سَعِيدِ بْنِ الْمُسَيَّبِ، أَوْ إِلَى الزُّهْرِيِّ، أَوْ إِلَى مَالِكٍ وَنَحْوِ ذَلِكَ.

“They only prevent the name ‘muttasil’ for the ‘cut-off’ narration when being absolute. As for qualifying it, that is permissible, [and in fact] has occurred in their speech, like their saying, ‘This is muttasil to Sa[^]id Ibnu-l-Musayyab’, or to Az-Zuhriyy, or to Malik, etc.”

The synopsis of the chapter is that if a narrative is attributed to the Prophet ﷺ, it is called “**marfu[^] (elevated/raised)**”. The marfu[^] is what is intended if it were said, “Such and such was narrated in the Sunnah,” or “From the Sunnah is such and such.” When a marfu[^] narration has a continuous chain, it is called “**musnad (linked [to the Prophet])**”, and may also be called, “**muttasil/mawsul**”. If it is attributed to the Companions, it is called “**mawquf (stopped)**”. If a mawquf narration has a continuous chain, it may also be called “**muttasil/mawsul**”, and that does not require qualification of the statement. Hence, the term “hadith” can be used for what is marfu[^] or mawquf, just like “**muttasil/mawsul**”. If a narration is attributed to the Followers or onward, it is “**maqtu[^] (cut-off/severed)**”, and when this one has a continuous chain, they do not call it “**muttasil**” unless they qualify it. It is also not called mawquf without qualification¹. ‘Imam Ibn Hajar says that the last two are collectively known as the “**athar**”. As-Siyutiyy said:

وَمِنْ مَطَانِ الْمَوْقُوفِ وَالْمَقْطُوعِ " مُصَنَّفُ ابْنِ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ "، وَعَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ، وَتَفَاسِيرُ: ابْنِ جَرِيرٍ، وَابْنِ أَبِي حَاتِمٍ، وَابْنِ الْمُنْدَرِ، وَغَيْرِهِمْ.

"And among the books thought to be sources of "mawquf" and "maqtu[^]" narrations is the

¹ Al-[^]Iraqiyy:

وَأِنْ اسْتَعْمَلْتَ الْمَوْقُوفَ فِيمَا جَاءَ عَنِ التَّابِعِينَ فَمَنْ بَعْدَهُمْ، فَتَقَيَّدْ بِهِمْ. فَقُلْ: مَوْقُوفٌ عَلَى عَطَاءٍ، أَوْ عَلَى طَاوُسٍ، أَوْ وَقْفُهُ فَلَانَ عَلَى مُجَاهِدٍ، وَنَحْوَ ذَلِكَ. وَفِي كَلَامِ ابْنِ الصَّلَاحِ أَنَّ التَّقْيِيدَ لَا يَتَّقِيْدُ بِالتَّابِعِيِّ، فَإِنَّهُ قَالَ: وَقَدْ يَسْتَعْمَلُ مَقْيَدًا فِي غَيْرِ الصَّحَابِيِّ. فَعَلَى هَذَا يُقَالُ مَوْقُوفٌ عَلَى مَالِكٍ، عَلَى الثَّوْرِيِّ، عَلَى الْأَوْزَاعِيِّ، عَلَى الشَّافِعِيِّ، وَنَحْوِ ذَلِكَ.

"If you were to use 'mawquf' in reference to what came from the Followers or whoever came after them, then qualify your expression by actually mentioning them. Say: "mawquf on [^]Ata'; mawquf on Tawus; or "So-and-so considered it mawquf on Mujahid, and the likes of that. The talk of Ibnu-s-Salah eludes to that qualifying it is not specific to the Follower, for he said: 'It might be used qualified for other than a Companion.' According to this, it is said: mawquf on Malik, or on Ath-Thawriyy, or on Al-[^]Awza[^]iy, on Ash-Shafi[^]iy, and the likes of that."

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Muṣannaf of Ibn 'Abī Shaybah, and that of ^Abdu-r-Razzaq, and the tafsirs of Ibn Jarir, Ibn 'Abī Hatim, Ibnu-l-Mundhir and others."

Commit this paragraph to memory, and in sha'allah, you will distinguish between all these terms.

CHAPTER 2: The Difference Between the Report of Masses and The Reports of Individuals

Now we will discuss the “**QUANTITIES (KATHRAH)**” of routes of the different narratives. Was the narrative reported by only one person? If so, it may still be true. Was it reported by two? If so, that does not mean it is true. Was it reported by three, or even more, but while there is still room for even the slightest possibility of falsehood in it, as improbable as that falsehood may be? Was it narrated by the masses in such a way that all possibility of falsehood is eliminated? Knowing this is important for distinguishing what must be accepted from what must be researched before acceptance.

SECTION 1: The Report of Masses

What is meant by “**THE REPORT OF MASSES (AL-KHABARU-L-MUTAWATIR)**” is something very specific and delicate. Its conditions must all be present for its meaning to be relevant, and the students often stumble over it because of overlooking an element. We ask Allah for guidance to expressions that are eloquent and evident.

The Arabic term for the report of masses is “mutawatir”. According to the terminology, among the conditions to be counted as a “report of masses” is that it is reported by so many people that it is normally impossible that they all conspired to a lie or coincidentally agreed to the same mistake. The scholars have several sayings about this number; some said 20, some said 40, some said more, some said less. What is correct is that there is not a number that promotes this impossibility in every circumstance¹. Therefore, it is enough to say that if it is an amount by which it is normally impossible for them to conspire to a lie or coincidentally agree, then this is merely one of several conditions² to be a “narrative of masses”. Hence, be attentive. Your first mistake will be assuming that if something is reported by a large number that it is a report of

¹ **Ibn Hajar:**

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ عَيَّنَ فِي الْأَرْبَعَةِ وَقِيلَ: فِي الْخُمْسَةِ. وَقِيلَ: فِي السَّبْعَةِ. وَقِيلَ: فِي الْعَشْرِ. وَقِيلَ: فِي الْإِثْنَيْ عَشَرَ. وَقِيلَ: فِي الْأَرْبَعِينَ. وَقِيلَ: فِي السَّبْعِينَ. وَقِيلَ غَيْرُ ذَلِكَ. وَتَمَسَّكَ كُلُّ قَائِلٍ بِدَلِيلٍ جَاءَ فِيهِ ذِكْرُ ذَلِكَ الْعَدَدِ؛ فَأَفَادَ الْعِلْمَ. وَلَيْسَ بِلَازِمٍ أَنْ يَطَّرَدَ فِي غَيْرِهِ؛ لِاحْتِمَالِ الْإِخْتِصَاصِ.

"Some specified it at four, and it was said five, and it was said seven, and it was said ten, and it was said twelve, and it was said forty, and it was said seventy, and other than that was said, with every sayer holding fast to some evidence mentioning that number and knowledge was achieved. However, it is not necessary that the knowledge achieved in those cases would happen in every case, for the possibility that that was particular to that case."

² **Ibn Hajar:**

بَلْ تَكُونُ الْعَادَةُ قَدْ أَحَالَتْ تَوَاطُؤَهُمْ عَلَى الْكَذِبِ، وَكَذَا وَقَوْعُهُ مِنْهُمْ اتِّفَاقًا مِنْ غَيْرِ قَصْدٍ

"... Rather, it would be that the norm makes impossible their conspiring to a lie or for [the falsehood] to occur from them by coincidence without intent."

masses, or that because it was reported by a large group that it is impossible for them to have conspired, and this is not necessarily the case¹.

According to this, the modern Bible is not a report of masses. This is because a selected group of individuals actually did conspire, or, if that is too strong of a word, agree amongst themselves what to include and what to exclude from what will be called “the Word of God”. Then they spread it to the people.

Among the ḥadīths counted as “mutawātir” is²:

وَيْحَ عَمَّارٍ تَقْتُلُهُ الْفِئَةُ الْبَاغِيَّةُ

“Woe is ^Ammar, the unjust group will kill him.”

This ḥadīth is narrated by 24 Companions. Another is the ḥadīth³:

مَنْ كَذَبَ عَلَيَّ مُتَعَمِّدًا فَلْيَتَّبِعُوا مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ

“Whoever intentionally lied on me, let him prepare himself for his seat in Hell.”

This was reported by over 100 Companions.

Another condition is that this large group must convey to a group as large as they are. Then this second group, the next generation, must convey to a group as large as they are, etc. This must continue until the end of the chain⁴. Therefore, what was claimed by a small group - and claims can be true or false - and then spread until it was said by a large group to another large group, is not what we are naming a “report of masses”. An example is the authentic ḥadīth narrated by 'Abū Dawūd⁵:

مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ كَانَ وَمَا لَمْ يَشَأْ لَمْ يَكُنْ

“Whatever Allāh willed shall be, and whatever He did not will shall not be.”

¹ **Ibn Hajar:**

وتلك الكثرة أحد شروط التواتر

“That large number is [merely] one of the conditions of tawātur.”

² Sahih Al-Bukhariyy and other books.

³ Sahih Al-Bukhariyy, Sahih Muslim, and other books.

⁴ **Ibn Hajar:**

فإذا ورد الخبر كذلك، وانضاف إليه أن يستوي الأمر فيه في الكثرة المذكورة من ابتدائه إلى انتهائه – والمراد بالاستواء: أن لا تنقص الكثرة المذكورة في بعض المواضع، لا أن لا تزيد؛ إذ الزيادة مطلوبة هنا من باب الأولى ...

"So if the news is narrated like that, and added to that is that the mentioned multitudes of people are consistent from its first state to its last- and what is meant by consistency is that the mentioned multitudes do not diminish at some stages, not that it would not increase, since increase is more so preferred here ...

⁵ Sunan 'Abi Dawūd

The Prophet ﷺ, taught this to one of his daughters, then it spread to the Muslims at large. Therefore, it is not a mutawātir narration, but it is confirmed.

Not knowing the origin of a report or a claim is a reason for people who lack knowledge and discretion to be swayed in the wrong direction. They would treat something as a report of masses, meaning that they see impossibility of error in the report, when it is not the case. This is because they had never previously heard other than what they were upon, or because most of the people in their circles are upon the same thing. This is why some people are overwhelmed by a Wahhābiyy influence; it is the majority of what they read and hear. However, the Wahhābiyy ideology is a distortion of the truth. Likewise, some people are unyieldingly convinced about the incorrect northeast prayer direction in North America, simply by the sheer numbers of people upon that mistake. We ask Allāh to help us see reality and not to be fooled by a fallacy.

A third condition is that what they are reporting is something that was witnessed; either seen or heard, not mentally deduced or inferred¹, such as the world having a creator or “one” being half of “two”. These two cases: “one” being half of “two”, and the world having a creator, are examples of deduction and inference, and therefore, such news is not technically a report of masses, although it is spread amongst people at large. Rather, the condition is that it must be an event witnessed, such as the existence of Muḥammad ﷺ.

According to this, the claims of modern scientists about the size, temperature and distance of stars, and the material from which they are made, and the substance of their cores, the age of the earth and even the dinosaurs, are not reports of masses, for they have never witnessed any of that. The truth is that they are conclusions drawn from what they consider to be clues. Then they spread those conclusions to the people at large while using expressions that give the impression that the information is definitely known to be true. They make sure to teach some of these things to the children so that they would grow up believing them. For us, their claims must be held against the religious evidence, and the religious evidence does not have to be explained in accordance with their claims. For example, scientists claim that the earth is many hundreds of millions of years old, not because it was conveyed to them authentically, rather because of stones and fossils that they test by machines or other means to determine their ages. However, if one were to trace the history of the Prophets, with Muḥammad ﷺ living about 1,400 years ago, Jesus being about 600 years before that, Moses about 2,000 before that, etc., all the way through Abraham to Noah, and back to Adam, who was created on the last of the six days in which the heavens and earth were created, he would

¹ *Ibn Hajar:*

وَأَنْ يَكُونَ مَسْتَنْدُ انْتِهَائِهِ الْأَمْرَ الْمُشَاهَدَ أَوْ الْمَسْمُوعَ، لَا مَا ثَبِتَ بِقَضِيَّةِ الْعَقْلِ الصَّرْفِ، كَالوَاحِدِ نِصْفِ الْاِثْنَيْنِ

"And that the source of the matter ends at something witnessed or heard, not by the mere judgment of the mind, like one being half of two."

see that according to that, the earth is not even one million years old, even though those first six days were 1,000 years long each. Allāh says¹:

﴿مَا أَشْهَدْتُهُمْ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَا خَلْقَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ﴾

<I (Allāh) did not make them witness the creation of the heavens and earth, nor the creation of their own selves>.

So be careful what you believe and monitor your convictions, for on Judgment Day the accountable people must answer the questions.

Whenever something is reported in this fashion, i.e., with these conditions, then the report is definitely true without room for error. The concept of definitive truth will later be explained further, God willing. This is the answer to the silly, profoundly ignorant people who say, “How do you know that Muḥammad even existed? You were not there!” Respond: “It is reported by masses.” Supposing he says, “Santa Claus is reported by masses, yet we deny his existence,” respond, “When we, the Muslims, say, ‘the report of masses’, we mean something very specific ...” Then clarify its conditions without missing any. Master your lessons so that you can convince the doubtful and silence the petty.

It is because of the mutawātir report that we are certain of the existence of the kings of old and faraway lands. Those are among the matters that we definitively know to be true. Although we did not witness those events, the original transmissions are based on first-hand witnessing by a group so large that it is impossible that they could conspire to a lie. Then that first level transmitted what they witnessed to a group that, although they did not witness the event, they are as large or larger than the group that did. Then they transmit to a group like them, and so on, until the end of the chain without the number of reporters in every level dwindling. The literal meaning of “mutawātir” is “successive”, as mentioned in the dictionary ‘Al-Miṣbah-u-l-Munir’. If it did dwindle to a number less than that which has been described, then it is no longer a report of masses.

What is meant by “first-hand witnessing” in this context is something clearly witnessed - not obscurely - while the senses of the witnesses are sound and unhindered. This excludes the one suffering under the relentless heat of the sun, for he may think that he sees something that is not truly there. Likewise, one may be under the influence of drugs, and thus his senses are compromised. Also, one may be seeing through water or glass, and thus perceive something bigger or smaller, or closer or farther than it is in reality. All of these cases are not the true unhindered, unadulterated witnessing intended here.

For this reason, the scholars said that the report of masses replaces the sound senses. This means that just as you have definitive knowledge that what you clearly saw or heard actually took place, you have definitive knowledge that what was reported by masses,

¹ Surat Al-Kahf #51

according to the conditions mentioned, took place. You know that China exists, even if you did not see it, and if you did see it, you will not be more certain than you already were.

Hence, we are definitely sure that Muḥammad existed, and that he performed miracles, and prayed in a certain way, and fasted, etc. We are also sure that the Kaʿbah exists, just as we are certain about wars of the past, even without the existence of photographs. Besides, as is common knowledge, photographs alone are truly not definitive, nor are videos or fingerprints. In our day, images are manipulated so professionally that it sometimes takes a skilled expert to determine their authenticity. It was said, “There is no way to tell the difference between NASA and Hollywood.”

By this knowledge, we deny that the claimed crucifixion of Prophet ʿĪsā (Jesus) is a historical fact. Firstly, it is denied in the Qurʾān, which is a report of masses, as will be clarified. Allāh says¹:

﴿وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ﴾

<They did not kill him and they did not crucify him>.

Furthermore, the claimed crucifixion was not a report of masses. Rather, the man who was killed upon a pole was seen from afar by a few individuals, and as we said, what was reported by few, but then spread to many, is not a report of masses, nor what was seen obscurely. Do not misunderstand; saying that it is not a report of masses does not mean that it is false, but it does mean that it is not necessarily true. This is besides the fact that the Qurʾān confirms that they disputed amongst themselves about whether the man they killed was Jesus or not, and they were not certain that they killed him, although they said that they did. Allāh says²:

﴿وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا﴾

<And they did not kill him with certainty>.

Also, the book of the Jews is not transmitted by masses from Prophet Mūsā (Moses), its impeccable source. This is because they lost it after the onslaught of the tyrant Bukhtanassar, which eliminates any mass transmission. They did not retrieve it until Allāh resurrected the saint ʿUzayr, who had been dead for a century. Then he, a single man who was not a prophet - since it was reported that his body decayed, and the bodies of the Prophets do not decay - recited it to them from memory. They transcribed his verbal recitation.

The text of the Qurʾān, however, is reported by masses from Muḥammad, its impeccable source. Thousands of Companions memorized it, either totally or partially, as well as documented it. Then they passed it on to the next generation who was as large as the generation of the Companions, in fact even larger. They too memorized it in the thousands and

¹ Surat An-Nisā' #157

² Surat An-Nisā' #157

documented it. This continued, with every generation getting larger and larger, until today. And the Qur'an will last until the world's end. Allah says¹:

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴾

<Surely, We (Allah) revealed the 'Dhikr' (the Qur'an), and Surely We protect it>.

However, know that although the Qur'an is a perfectly preserved narration of masses, the interpretation of those perfectly preserved words may be disputable or even incorrect. So, understand the difference between the authenticity of its text and that of its interpretation. Allah says about the Qur'an:

﴿ يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِي بِهِ كَثِيرًا ﴾

<He (Allah) misguides many by [the Qur'an], and He guides many by it>.

Many of the Prophet's hadiths are narrated by masses, but most are not. His various mentioning of the torture of the grave is a narration of masses when gathered and totaled. Also, his specific miracles of water springing from between his fingers and the moaning tree stump are reported by masses. Also, his miracles in general, i.e., the fact that he performed miracles, are reported by masses, although most individual miracles were reported by individuals.

And know, finally, that although something may be transmitted by masses, this does not necessitate that everyone has heard that news. Therefore, something may be definitively true and transmitted by masses, while some people have never heard these reports. Some may even deny them upon hearing them, like some deny the miracles of the Prophet ﷺ. Their denial does not negate the reality of the transmission or its truthfulness. Rather, it confirms their ignorance², and Allah knows best.

SECTION 2: The Reports of Individuals

The essential difference between the report of masses and the "REPORTS OF INDIVIDUALS (KHABARU-L-'AHAD)" is that the report of masses promotes KNOWLEDGE (ʿILM), while the reports of individuals do not, except in some cases for the very skilled scholar of hadith. Rather, the reports of individuals promote "SUPPOSITION/SPECULATION (DHANN)".

¹ Surat Al-Hijr # 9

² *Ibn Hajar*:

وقد يُقالُ: إِنَّ الشُّرُوطَ الأربعةَ إِذَا حَصَلَتْ اسْتَلْزَمَتْ حَصولَ العِلْمِ، وَهُوَ كَذَلِكَ فِي الغالبِ، لَكِن، قَدْ يَتَخَلَفُ عَنِ البَعْضِ مَنَعٌ.

"And it might be said that indeed, if the four conditions are all gathered, that mandates the occurrence of knowledge. And this is the case usually. However, knowledge of the transmitted news could miss some people for some preventive reasons."

This means that depending on the clues and indications, the scholars can, with blessed expertise, safely suppose or speculate the authenticity of a report or its fraudulence. Sometimes a report is unlikely false, and thus we must abide by it. Sometimes it is unlikely true, and thus must be rejected. Since the narration of masses promotes necessary knowledge of the truthfulness of the report, it must always be accepted. Since the reports of individuals do not necessarily promote knowledge, they must be researched for authenticity, and it is this type of narration with which the science of hadīth deals. This is why the scholars of hadīth said that the narration of masses is not actually a subject of the science of 'isnad; such reports must be accepted without researching the narrators¹. It is only mentioned in the books of the mustalah because of its significance, however the essence of the science does not apply to the mutawatir.

It was said in the title “the reports of individuals” in the plural form, for the fact that the narrations of individuals are divided into different types. In fact, there are three branches: the narrative of three or more while limited, the narrative of not less than two, and the narrative of a loner². Now, we will delve into the basics of each branch.

BRANCH 1: The Narrative of Three or More that Misses a Condition of Mass Narration

The first branch of the reports of individuals is the narrative of three or more, but limited in such a way that it does not reach the level of mass narration. It may even be that its routes are unlimited, like the mass narration, but it misses one or more of the other conditions³. So, remember, as was already alluded to, that it is not simply that a report has unlimited routes that it is a report of masses.

¹ **Ibn Hajar** (pg. 16-17):

ليس من مباحث علم الإسناد إذ علم الإسناد يُبحث فيه عن صحّة الحديث أو ضعفه؛ ليعمل به أو يُترك من حيث: صفات الرجال وصيغ الأداة¹، والمتواتر لا يُبحث عن رجاله بل يجب العمل به من غير بحث

"It is not a subject of the science of the chain, since the knowledge of the chain - from the perspective of the qualities of the narrators and expressing the mode of transmission - is researched for the authenticity of the hadith or its weakness, so that it would be applied or set aside. The narrators of the mutawatir are not researched, rather applying it in mandatory, even without research."

² **Ibn Hajar**:

وكُلّها أي الأقسام الأربعة المذكورة سوى الأوّل - وهو المتواتر - آحاد، ويقال لكلّ منها خبر واحد. وخبر الواحد في اللغة: ما يرويه شخص واحد. وفي الاصطلاح: ما لم يجمع شروط التواتر

"And all of them, i.e., the mentioned four types, except the first which is the mutawatir, are 'ahad, and each can be called 'khabaru wahid'. In the language, 'khabaru-l-wahid' is what one person narrates, and in the terminology, it is anything that falls short of the conditions of tawatir."

³ **Ibn Hajar**:

This type of narrative is called “**FAMOUS (MASH-HUR)**”, and in this book, will be called “famous” hereafter. It is named as such because of its popularity. Know, though, that sometimes it is famous only to the scholars of hadith, i.e., technically famous, but not widely known to the laymen. Also, sometimes a known report is “famous” merely because of its popularity, not because of being narrated by at least three individuals. In other words, something that may have only two, or one, or perhaps no chain whatsoever, may be literally “famous”, meaning “widely known”, but not be technically famous according to the terminology of the field.

An example of a famous hadith that is not “mash-hur” is the hadith that only has one considered route¹:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

“The deeds are by the intentions.”

Another is the baseless report, “Seek the knowledge from here to China.” These two are not technically famous although they literally have fame. Therefore, do not confuse the name, so not to lose the aim. An example of a hadith that is technically famous is²:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ انْتِزَاعًا يَنْتَزِعُهُ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ، وَلَكِنْ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ بِقَبْضِ الْعُلَمَاءِ، حَتَّى إِذَا لَمْ يُبْقِ عَالِمًا اتَّخَذَ النَّاسُ رُءُوسًا جُهَالًا، فَسُئِلُوا فَأَفْتَوْا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ، فَضَلُّوا وَأَضَلُّوا

“Surely Allah does not take the knowledge by stripping it from the slaves. Rather, He takes the knowledge by taking the scholars. Eventually, He will not leave a scholar remaining. Then the people will take ignorant heads for themselves. They are asked and they answer without knowledge. They go astray and lead others astray.”

BRANCH 2: The Narrative of at Least Two

The next is the narrative of not less than two. This means that at least two have narrated from at least two, who have narrated from at least two, from at least two, and so on - without the number of transmitters being less than that. In Arabic, the scholars name such a rendition “**^AZIZ**”, which could linguistically mean either “supported” or “rare”. If it means “supported”, that is because one narrator’s narration supports the other’s. If it means “rare”, it is because this type of transmission seldom occurs.

وَخِلَافُهُ قَدْ يَرِدُ بِلَا حَصْرِ، أَيْضًا، لَكِنْ، مَعَ فَقْدِ بَعْضِ الشَّرُوطِ أَوْ مَعَ حَصْرِ بَمَا فَوْقَ الْاِثْنَيْنِ، أَيْ بِثَلَاثَةٍ فَصَاعِدًا، مَا لَمْ تَجْتَمِعَ شُرُوطُ التَّوَاتُرِ

"Something that is not mutawatir could come with unlimited chains also, however, while lacking some other conditions, or while its chains are limited to more than two- meaning three or more- as long as the conditions of tawatir are not gathered."

¹ Sahih Al-Bukhariyy, chapter of the beginning of revelation.

² Sahih Al-Bukhariyy, chapter of how the knowledge is taken.

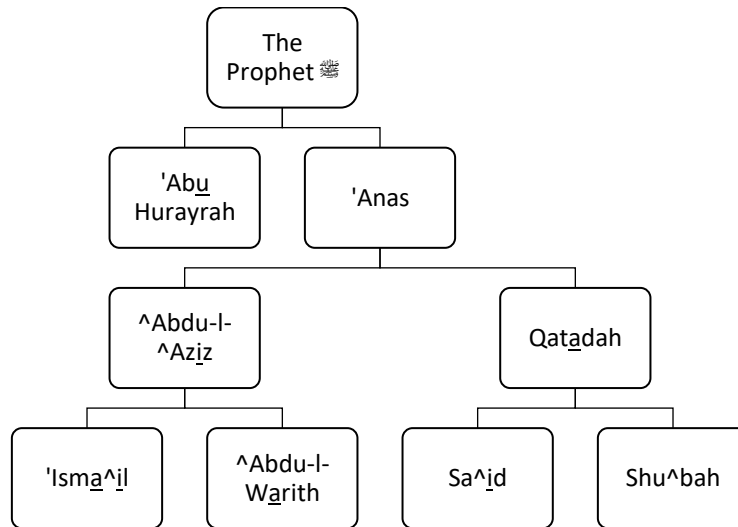
The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

In fact, some scholars have denied that the narrative of two from two from two even exists. Ibn Hajar said that if what is being negated is the narration of only two, from only two, from only two, then that is possible to be acknowledged. However, there does exist narrations from not less than two, from not less than two. An example is the hadith¹:

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ، حَتَّىٰ أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ وَالِدِهِ وَوَلَدِهِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ

“The faith of one of you is imperfect until I am more beloved to him than his father, and his child, and the people entirely.”

This hadith was transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ, by ‘Anas Ibn Malik and ‘Abu Hurayrah. It was transmitted from ‘Anas by Qatadah and ^Abdu-l-^Aziz Ibn Suhayb. It was narrated from Qatadah by Sa^id and Shu^bah, and from ^Abdu-l-^Aziz by ‘Isma^il and ^Abdu-l-Warith. Observe the diagram:



As can be seen, there are at least two narrators at every **“LEVEL (TABAQAH)”**.

You should also know that it is not a condition for a narration to be authentic that it comes through at least two routes, and soon we will discuss authenticity. An example of an authentic hadith that came through less than two routes is the previously mentioned hadith²:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

“The deeds are by the intentions.”

¹ Sahih Al-Bukhariyy

² Sahih Al-Bukhariyy

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

Al-Bukhariyy narrated this in the beginning of his book famously called ‘Sahihu-I-Bukhariyy’. It is only confirmed from the route of ^Umar Ibnu-I-Khattab, to ^Alqamah, to Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim, to Yahya Ibn Sa^id. Under him, it became very famous among the people. This hadith is authentic although it is not supported by another narration. Observe the diagram:



BRANCH 3: The Narrative of a Loner

This is called in Arabic “GHARIB (LONER/STRANGER)”. It is also called “UNIQUE/SINGULAR (FARD)”.¹ As stated, such a narration may still be reliable, and there are

¹ *Al-Iraqiyy*:

فلَمَّا ارتفعَ إلى درجةِ الصحةِ أثبتَ له الغرابةَ باعتبارِ فردِيتهِ

“... So when it elevated up to the level of soundness, [At-Tirmidhiyy] confirmed it as a gharib by considering its being fard.”

Ibn Hajar (pg. 19):

الغريب: وهو ما يتفرد بروايته شخص واحد في أي موضع وقع التفرد به من السند. على ما سنقسم إليه الغريب المطلق والغريب النسبي

"The gharib is what only a single person uniquely narrated, regardless of the spot in which that singularity occurred in the chain, according to what we shall categorize when discussing the absolutely gharib and the relatively gharib."

I say: He means by that: the absolutely fard and the relatively fard, as will come.

many. An example in the previous branch we did just mention, so review for retention. However, most are weak. ‘Imam ‘Aḥmad said, “Do not write these singular narrations, for they are objectionable and most are from the weak (reporters).” Maḥlik said, “The worst knowledge is the single (report), and the best knowledge is the obvious one narrated by people (at large).”

Furthermore, sometimes a ḥadīth is “**ABSOLUTELY SINGULAR (FARD MUTLAQ)**”, which is when its source of singularity is from the reporting Companion, i.e., from the origin of the narration, and sometimes it is “**RELATIVELY SINGULAR (FARD NISBIYY)**”, which is when the ḥadīth branches off somewhere in the chain and is narrated uniquely by one of the narrators in the chain in comparison to the others. This issue will return later.

The synopsis of this chapter, with its sections and branches, is that a ḥadīth may come through so many routes that, along with other conditions, it is definitely true. It may come through at least three routes, or not less than two, which is not a condition for authenticity. It may come through only one route, and that is not a reason for it to be rejected.

Since the first category, the narration of masses, is definitely correct, there is no need to research the narrators of the report. Thus, the science of ḥadīth does not actually apply to it. Since the other three are all narratives of individuals, there is a need to research the narrators. For this research, the science of ḥadīth was established. Before moving to the third chapter that deals with acceptance and rejection of the narratives of individuals, let us digress to an important benefit:

BENEFIT: Refuting Ḥadīth Deniers

Ḥadīth Deniers, the self-proclaimed “Qur’anists”, have several claims that are audacious and fallacious. They deem the science of ḥadīth and the Sunnah that it confirms as jokes. They say that they only want the Qur’an since it is confirmed by mass narration, unlike the ḥadīths, and that the chains of narration are a hoax. They ask, “If these ḥadīths are revelation, how can they be entrusted to fallible individuals, and if a report is only supposed or speculated to be true, and not definitely true, why should we be bound to abide by it? Therefore, we only use the Qur’an, and we explain the Qur’an by the Qur’an.”

Firstly, they are liars in their claim of only using the Qur’an to explain other parts of the Qur’an, and thus refusing the Sunnah as explanation for it. For example, how do they explain such verses as¹:

﴿إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ﴾

<Surely, We (Allāh) have given you (O Muḥammad) the (river of) Kawthar>?

¹ Surat Al-Kawthar, # 1

What makes them know that the “Kawthar” is a river in Paradise other than the hadith about that? If not, then what makes them know any explanation for it? Their shameful answer whenever confronted with what they can only answer through hadiths is, “We do not have to know what it means.” This is verbal flatulence, a disgraceful call to ignorance, and wretched arrogance. How does that comply with the verse¹:

﴿ كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ ﴾

<A book that We (Allah) have revealed, blessed, so that they might ponder its verses>?

If there was no way to know its meaning, the pagan Arabs would have used that to discredit the Qur’an as a miracle. And what about the verse²:

﴿ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ﴾

<Allah is ‘As-Samad’>?

They would have to rely on something other than the Qur’an itself to explain this; the words of fallible people, whether interpreters, which they actually do not accept, authors of dictionaries, or translators, who, by the way, had to occasionally refer to the hadiths for clarity when translating. What made them rely on those non-Qur’anic sources to explain the Qur’an, yet reject the hadiths because they are not the Qur’an? Nothing more than a heart’s illness enacting an anti-Islamic plan.

They would say, “However, according to you, those hadiths are revelation entrusted to fallible individuals, and the truth is that as long as it does not reach the stage of mass narration we are not definitive of its correctness. Therefore, we do not want to use them as explanation for the Qur’an.”

However:

1. If the lack of tawatur is truly their concern, then why do they also reject the hadiths that are mass narrations?
2. And if they accept them, how did they know that they are mass narrations except by tracking their routes? Then they are resorting to the science of hadith.
3. And how do they know the difference between mutawatir and ‘ahad except through the scholars of hadith who clarified the difference?
4. And if the only thing they reject from fallible individuals is revelation, then what stopped them from accepting what is “mawquf” and “maqtu^”?

¹ Surat Sad, # 29

² Surat Al-Ikhlās, # 2

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5. If revelation cannot be accepted from fallible individuals, why do they accept the Qur'an from Muḥammad ﷺ while believing that he is fallible? Denying his infallibility and his miracles is something they blatantly and disrespectfully say frequently.

Their response is that the Qur'an has no contradictions, thereby proving its authenticity, for had it been from anyone other than God, it would have had contradictions. Then they recite the verse¹:

﴿وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا﴾

<Had it been from other than Allāh, they would have found in it abundant inconsistencies>.

However:

1. While it is true that it has no contradictions, this does not negate their claim that revelation should not be entrusted to or accepted from fallible individuals. Since they believe that he is a normal man, then according to their claim, it should have never been given to him nor accepted from him, even if it is devoid of contradictions.
2. If the Prophets of the Creator are not impeccable, then who is? If none of the people are impeccable, then why would there be any revelation at all, or why not come from Angels instead of men?

If by chance they say that this is an exception, for the lack of its contradictions makes it acceptable even if it came from an ordinary man, this still does not answer why it was entrusted to him. Then, as a technicality, it still should not be accepted from him, whether it has contradictions or not. If this is an exception, what prevents them from accepting the vast majority of ḥadīths that have no opposition in their meanings? That is an issue later to return in the sixth chapter.

Therefore, they should abandon their fallacious rule of not entrusting revelation to or accepting it from fallible individuals. They should also abandon their wrong belief that the Prophet ﷺ is fallible. It does nothing to strengthen their argument, instead it impedes it, and it is blasphemy. 'Ahlu-s-Sunnah wa-l-Jamā'ah confirm that the Prophets are all impeccable (ma[^]sum); protected from all blasphemies, major sins and small sins that display low character. They are also impeccable in their deliverance of the Revelation. Allāh says about Muḥammad² ﷺ:

﴿وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ * إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ﴾

<He does not utter from whims * It is but revelation revealed>.

¹ Surat An-Nisā', # 82

² Surat An-Najm, # 3-4

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By their fallacy, they have validated what Allah invalidated: the rejection of those who refused the Prophets sent to them because they said that they were mere men. Allah said that some of the pagans said¹:

﴿لَوْلَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ فَيَكُونُ مَعَهُ نَذِيرًا﴾

<Had only an Angel come along with him as a warner>

And some said about Prophet Salih²:

﴿فَقَالُوا أَبَشَرًا مِّنَّا وَاحِدًا نَّتَّبِعُهُ إِنَّا إِذَا لَفِيَ ضَلَالٍ وَسُعُرٍ﴾

<A single man from amongst us all would we follow? In that case we would be misled and insane! Was the Revelation given solely to him from amongst us all? No, rather he is an arrogant liar!>

Therefore, had their conviction about the Prophet ﷺ been correct, what would be wrong with these statements and the others like them spread throughout the Qur'an?

Added to that, applying and abiding by what is likely true and unlikely false is normal. For that reason, had someone that you consider honest told you that he was robbed, you would feel concerned or angry for him, or call the police, or take other action, although his news is possibly false. It is possible that he lied, or that he was misinformed, or even delusional. However, when you determined that his being a liar or delusional was unlikely, although possible, you accepted that report and acted accordingly. Had he told you of the death of his loved one, you would console him although his claim is possibly false. On the other hand, if someone you deem a liar or a scoundrel told you of some misfortune of his, and that because of it he needs money from you, you would be doubtful or skeptical, and perhaps deny him any money, despite that his news is possibly true.

So, in the first case, the case of the one whom you considered honest, you applied the transmitted news although it was possibly false. In other words, you accepted it because you supposed or speculated its truthfulness and correctness. In the second case, the case of the known liar, you did not apply the information while it was possibly true. Therefore, their rejection of the hadiths because of the word “dhann (speculation/supposition)”, or because the narrators are fallible, is a double standard and a contradiction.

In fact, it is practically impossible to live normally without applying news that is likely true while possibly false. Let those people, then, reject every bus and plane schedule since there exists the possibility of falsehood, such as a typo. And let them deny all that they are told by their families and friends since they are fallible. If they cannot bear that, then let them leave

¹ Surat Al-Furqan, # 7

² Surat Al-Qamar, # 24

their fallacious argumentations and accept the authenticated narrations from the best of creations that are transmitted by the best of nations.

You can surmise that they distrust the scholars of hadith. In fact, they accuse them of corruption and conspiracy. They blatantly call Al-Bukhariyy a liar, in fact, “the greatest liar in Islam”, and attack him viciously. However, they have no proof that he is a liar. Our scholars said that “**NEGATIVE CRITICISM (JARH)**” of an accredited narrator requires clarification (bayyinah). Their proof is only that they dislike what is in the hadiths. They say that the hadith scholars invented the hadiths and their chains for the rulers to subdue the masses, which is an immature fib. Let them prove their claim by producing the reports of what it was like before this supposed great conspiracy to subdue the masses. Then, let them reject those reports since they are from fallible individuals, like they reject the reports of the Companions and the Followers. The true reason they reject the hadiths is to destroy the Religion and to justify for themselves doing sins and leaving obligations.

If they say that only the worldly issues are acceptable from reliable sources, respond that, no, also the faithful, practicing, honest Believer is a reliable source for religious information when he is precise. If not, then what made them accept the Qur’an from a man that they believe is prone to mistakes; i.e., why did they even give him a chance by analyzing his religious information to see that it is free of contradictions?

There is no evidence from the Qur’an itself that religious news should be rejected if it is not the Qur’an. Prophet Musa (Moses) embarked on a great journey to meet Al-Khadir and learn from him¹:

﴿قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَىٰ هَلْ أَتَّبِعُكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُعَلِّمَنِي مِمَّا عَلَّمْتَ رُشْدًا﴾

<Moses said to [Al-Khadir], “Can I follow you so that you can teach me what you have been taught (from Allah) as guidance?”>.

Also, Allah commands asking people when we do not know²:

﴿فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الدِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

<Ask the people of ‘dhikr’ if you do not know>.

We explain this last verse to mean, “the people of knowledge”, and those deniers disagree with that. Do not argue with them about the meaning of ‘dhikr’. Rather, get to the point immediately and say, “the verse commands us to ask people – end of story.” Therefore, they have no evidence that religion should not be taken from people.

¹ Surat Al-Kahf # 66

² Surat Al-'Ambiyā', # 7

Thus, the religious texts teach us to accept the word of those who are trustworthy, even if they are fallible. In Surat Ya Sīn, 14, Allāh tells us of those who went to call people to the Religion. There were only two of them, then a third came to support them. A Hadīth Denier would likely deny the explanation of some scholars that they were some individuals dispatched by their Prophet to call people to Islām, because he also denies the interpretations of the scholars of tafsīr (interpretation). Strangely, he accepts the literal translations of the Qur'an by fallible individuals who surely had to refer to hadīths occasionally for clarity. Surely those translations are not the actual Qur'an, because the Qur'an is only in Arabic, as Allāh said¹:

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا﴾

<Surely, We (Allāh) have revealed it as an Arabic Qur'an>.

They also accept the dictionaries of fallible non-Muslim orientalisks, but for some reason refuse the dictionaries of the Muslim scholars. However, even if he insists that the verse in Surat Ya Sīn refers to the Prophets who were sent by Allāh, he is still faced with his claim that the Prophets are fallible, so why even be sent?

Also, the Prophet ﷺ, sent individuals to people to convey to them from him. He sent Mus'ab and the blind man, Ibn 'Umm Maktūm, to the people of Al-Madīnah. He sent Mu'adh Ibn Jabal to Yemen. Furthermore, he accepted news from individuals, such as his acceptance of Ibn 'Umar informing him of his sighting the crescent of Ramadān. He applied that news by ordering the Muslims to fast. Additionally, the Companions used to take from each other. Also, the Followers took from the Companions and from each other.

In their infantile imaginations, the Prophet ﷺ, did nothing more than recite the Qur'an; he did not explain it, he did not answer questions, he did not settle disputes, he did not deliver speeches, and he did not give lessons - unless any of that was in the form of mere recitation of the Qur'an. To them, all of what has been narrated about these matters is fabricated. In their delusions, if someone asked him a question, or if he was dealing with chiefs of tribes, such as making a treaty, or if he gave battle commands, he cleverly only recited the Qur'an and had no other relevant speech. They claim that no one ever misunderstood the Qur'an or needed to ask him for explanation.

¹ Surat Yusuf, # 2

So, let those silly, arrogant people admit, since they reject the hadiths, that they do not know that Muhammad is from Makkah, and that he immigrated to Al-Madinah, and that his parents are ^Abdullah and Aminah, and that he married Khadijah and ^Aishah, and that Abu Bakr was his Companion. Let them say that they are not sure that the Prophet ﷺ died. However, the reality is that they know these facts without the slightest doubt, and they know them from the hadiths. Instead of admitting that they know these facts, and of course, avoiding the lie that they do not know them, they say “Since these details are not in the Qur’an, we do not have to know them.” Then they persist in their denial of the hadiths.

It has thus become clear that they are misguided, wicked and vile, and from Allah on this nation yet another tribulation, affliction and trial.

And what kind of Qur’anists are they when they do not know how to recite it? And by chance one knew how, the rules of recitation are documented by the scholars! There is no doubt that there is absolutely no way to perfect one’s recitation without sitting under a proficient teacher who coaches and trains the student until his recitation is perfected. It is furthermore known that the Qur’an has various recitations, so how is the difference between the recitations of Hafs and Warsh known? Of course, through the chains of narration.

Why is one recitation named “the Recitation of Hafs from ^Asim”, and another “the Recitation of Warsh from Nafi[^]”, and a third, “the Recitation of Khalaf from Hamzah”, etc.? It is because those are among the outstanding reciters who became like hubs for those recitations. The people who recite in those particular modes have chains of transmission back to those imams, who have chains back to the Prophet ﷺ.

And lastly, so that we may return to our point – although we are not completely done with these deniers yet - know that the word “hadith” refers to different things depending on the context. The Qur’an refers to itself as a “hadith” in several verses, such as¹:

﴿فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

<In what “hadith” after (i.e., instead of) it (i.e., the Qur’an) would they believe?>

¹ Surat Al-Mursalat, # 50

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This does not mean to not believe in the hadith of the Prophet ﷺ because they are a hadith other than the Qur'an; it means: "What hadith would one believe in if he does not believe in the Qur'an?" However, whoever believes in the Qur'an must certainly believe in the hadith. So, if theirs is the explanation of this verse that they want to practice, let them reject every "hadith" of every speaker who ever spoke, and of course they cannot live like that. Once they believe any "hadith" of any speaker - whoever he may be, whatever he may have said - then they have contradicted themselves once again, because it is not the hadith called the Qur'an,

And Allah knows best!

CHAPTER 3: Acceptance and Rejection

After introducing the meanings of the “matn” and the “sanad”, and discussing at whom those chains end, i.e., whether the report was “marfu^u”, “mawquf” or “maqtu^u”, and then discussing the fact that any of that could be “mutawatir” or “ahad”, we will now generally discuss acceptance and rejection¹ of narrations before discussing details of authentication.

As repeated several times, the reports of individuals need to be researched to be accepted or rejected. Being “**ACCEPTED (MAQBUL)**” means that the truthfulness of the narrator is preponderant, and thus it is obligatory to apply. Being “**REJECTED (MARDUD)**” means that the truthfulness of the transmitter is outweighed, and that instead, his dishonesty or lack of precision is preponderant. Thus, the transmission is rejected and not applied.

There is a category between the two: the “**SUSPENDED (MUTAWAQQAF FIH)**”. This is the one in which neither the transmitter’s truthfulness nor lack thereof is more apparent than the other (to the researcher in question). Thus, it is neither accepted nor rejected. It is noticed however, that this category has some semblance to the rejected narration, because neither the rejected narration nor the suspended one are applied, and neither are accepted. The difference between the two, as should be obvious, is that the dishonesty or lack of precision is preponderant in the rejected, while neither the honesty and precision nor the dishonesty or lack of precision is preponderant in the suspended. If there later appears anything that annexes the suspended narration to either side, i.e., if the reasons for acceptance or rejection appear, then that suspended narration will be annexed.

This case makes way for several benefits that no believer or student of knowledge should go without. They hone his understanding, sharpen his awareness, strengthen his precision, and protect him from being careless:

BENEFIT 1: The Difference Between Application and Conviction

When saying that it is obligatory to apply the accepted narration, this does not mean that one is obligated to believe that the Prophet ﷺ said those exact words. This is because most hadiths are transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ by meaning, and he did not obligate his Companions to memorize everything he said to the very letter before conveying it. That is different from the Qur’an; he did obligate the Muslims to transmit its exact expressions word for word. However, he did encourage the memorization of his hadiths when he said²:

¹ *As-Siyutiyy* (pg. 76):

وَأَحْكَامُهَا: الْقَبُولُ وَالرَّدُّ.

"A narration's judgments are: acceptance and rejection."

² Sunan At-Tirmidhiyy

نَضَرَ اللهُ امْرَأً سَمِعَ مَقَالَتي فَوَعَاها فَأَدَّأها كَمَا سَمِعَها

“May Allah beautify the face of the person who heard my saying, memorized it, and conveyed it as he heard it.”

Also, one is not obligated to believe that the Prophet ﷺ said those very words for the fact that it is possible for a precise narrator to be mistaken, or for one who is usually honest to lie, although those possibilities are unlikely. This is why the scholars said that when a hadith is authenticated, that is based on what appears from the chain¹, and it is not a confirmation of the Prophet ﷺ definitively saying those exact words². This is why ‘Imam Malik used to say after narrating a hadith:

"أَوْ كَمَا قَالَ"

“... or this is similar to what he said.”

Take clarity from the hadith famously named “The Hadith of the Slave Girl (Hadithu-l-Jariyah)”. The Wahhabiy sect, those who name themselves “the Salafis”, select a particular version of this hadith, the one that is most suitable for their agenda, while they know that this hadith has other versions with other wordings. They choose ‘Imam Muslim’s rendition, in which the Prophet ﷺ, asked the slave girl³:

أَيْنَ اللهُ

This seems to mean, “Where is Allah?”, and they are certain that it literally means that. However, ‘Imam Malik narrated the same hadith with different words. According to his rendition⁴, the Prophet ﷺ asked her:

أَتَشْهَدِينَ أَلَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ

“Do you witness that no one is God except Allah?”

In a third version, narrated by Al-Bayhaqiyy¹ and Ibn Hibban², he asked her:

¹ *Shaykh Samir* said while explaining Al-Bayquniyyah: “Usually, because of this chain of narrators, you can differentiate: Is this saying authentic or not?”

² *Al-Iraqiyy* (vol. 1, pg.15):

حيثُ قال أهلُ الحديثِ: هذا حديثٌ صحيحٌ، فمرادُهُم فيما ظهرَ لنا عملاً بظاهرِ الإسنادِ، لا أَنَّهُ مقطوعٌ بصحَّتِهِ في نفسِ

الأمرِ، لجوازِ الخطأِ والنسيانِ على الثقةِ، هذا هو الصحيحُ الذي عليه أكثرُ أهلِ العلمِ

“Wherever the People of Hadith said: ‘This is a sahih hadith’, their intent is: ‘according to what appears to us, out of applying what appears from the chain, not that its authenticity is definitive in reality’. That is to acknowledge the possibility of mistake and forgetfulness for the trustworthy one. This is what is correct, and what most of the people of knowledge are upon.”

³ *Sahih* Muslim, Chapter on the prohibition of talking in prayer

⁴ *Muwatta'* Malik, chapter of emancipating slaves

مَنْ رَبُّكَ

“Who is your Lord?”

Thus, unlike them, one should not have the conviction that the Prophet ﷺ specifically asked her:

أَيْنَ اللَّهُ

which seems to mean “Where is Allah?” Instead, he should merge all of the narrations to realize the common meaning, even if he is unsure of the exact words that the Prophet ﷺ said in the original incident. The common meaning between all of the narrations is that he asked her about her belief in Allah, and not about a place for Him, for He, the Exalted, is glorified from time, direction, space and place, as proven by the definitive and explicit mental and textual evidence. This hadith will be revisited, if Allah the Almighty permits.

So, what the scholars said is that the accepted hadiths are to be applied, i.e., their meanings are to be applied, and Allah is the one who deserves to be exalted and not denied.

BENEFIT 2: Knowledge and Ignorance

The next benefit is very closely related to the first. The scholars of the Creed, of the fundamentals of law and of hadith spoke about the difference between knowledge and ignorance and what comes in between them. The summary of that is as follows:

1. **KNOWLEDGE (ʿILM)** is the realization of something as it is in reality. In the realm of transmitted information, knowledge is obtained either by mass narration or by hearing directly from a Prophet who performed a miracle and conveys from Allah. As for the one who heard from the one who heard from a Prophet, he does not have the same certainty as the one who heard directly, for it is possible that he changed a word when he conveyed from that Prophet, even if the meaning is the same.

Sometimes definitive knowledge can be achieved from something less than a mass narration, and for other than the one who heard directly from a Prophet, but only for the skilled, proficient hadith master.

Also, a person may have definitive knowledge of a report’s falsehood if it contradicts what must certainly be true.

¹ Sunan Al-Bayhaqiyy

² Sahih Ibn Hibban

2. **SUPPOSITION¹ (DHANN)** is the “**OVERWHELMING THOUGHT (GHALABUT-DH-DHANN)**” of the correctness of a matter, because of the clues that indicate its truthfulness. It is deeming the incorrectness unlikely while possible. This is obtained by accepted narrations of individuals, as previously clarified. Sometimes the truthfulness and correctness of an issue is so preponderant and dominant, and its falsehood, while possible, is so extremely improbable, that this speculation is figuratively called, “knowledge”. It is not the true, literal knowledge just clarified, but its being true is so extremely likely, that it is close to knowledge, and might even symbolically be called “knowledge”. This is why it is valid to say, “I know you are telling the truth,” when you strongly believe that one is telling the truth but is possibly lying, and likewise to say, “I know you are lying,” when, because of the clues, you believe strongly that one is lying and unlikely being honest.

3. **DOUBT (SHAKK)**, in this context, is when the truthfulness and falsehood of a matter are equal to the doubter, and neither side dominates the other. When this occurs for narrated information, the report is suspended. However, in terms of belief, the doubt is not a “fifty-fifty” issue. Rather when it comes to the Creed, the slightest uncertainty in the essentials of the Belief renders one a blasphemer and is an exit from the Religion. Thus, if a person was only 99.99% sure that Islam is the correct religion, and that no one is God except Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger, he would not be a Muslim. Allah says²:

﴿إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا﴾

<The Believers are those who believe in Allah and His Messenger, and they have no doubt>.

However, for other than the issues of the fundamental convictions, “doubt” is a “fifty-fifty” issue, i.e., the equal uncertainty of the correctness or falsehood of the issue. Also, sometimes a narrator says, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said this or that.” This is called, the “**DOUBT OF THE NARRATOR (SHAKKU-R-RAWI)**”.

4. **NOTION/WHIM/FANCY (WAHM)** is the opposite of what we mean by speculation/supposition. Therefore, it is when the truthfulness of a matter is outweighed, farfetched and improbable, although possible. Consequently, its falsehood is preponderant. In the realm of narration, such a report is rejected.

5. **IGNORANCE (JAHL)** is obviously the opposite of knowledge. When that ignorance is the mere lack of knowledge, then it is simple, unadulterated ignorance, which is not necessarily blameworthy. What is blameworthy is being ignorant of the personal obligatory knowledge of the Religion. For example, we are ignorant of all that is in the depths of the seas. This is

¹ Supposition - A notion or idea that the thing in question is true, held without certainty or assurance, but as sufficiently probable to be assumed or admitted on account of agreement with the facts of the case (OED 1888).

² Surat Al-Hujurat, # 15

ignorance that is not mixed with a misunderstanding. Allah forbids us from speaking about what we do not know, when he said¹:

﴿وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ﴾

<Do not pursue what you do not know>.

For example, it is not permissible to say that Prophet Muḥammad's soul is made of light, because there was nothing narrated about that, and it is forbidden to speak without knowledge.

The Muslims at large are ignorant about what it takes to correctly grade a ḥadīth, and therefore must resort to those who have the knowledge. Also, knowing Arabic is not enough to know how to explain the ḥadīths, nor is the ability to read translations. The ignorant person is not allowed to give tafsīr (interpretation) to the Qur'an or the ḥadīths.

Sometimes, one is ignorant of the fact that he is ignorant. This means that he has a misconception of reality and is unaware that he is wrong. This is called, "compounded ignorance (jahl murakkab); ignorance upon ignorance, like those foes who believe that the Prophet ﷺ knows all that Allah knows, or those who believe that Allah is a body that casts shadows and comes and goes, or those who believe that the world has no commencement. They are all doubly ignorant and religiously indigent.

BENEFIT 3: A Reason for Different Opinions

You should also know, and understand from what was said previously, that while a ḥadīth might be rejected or suspended according to some, it may be accepted according to others among the qualified 'imams. Therefore, their differences about an accepted or rejected ḥadīth is one of several reasons for differing opinions, i.e., different schools (madh-habs).

For example, 'Imam Ash-Shāfi'īyy was neutral about the ḥadīth that would prove that eating camel meat invalidates the wuḍu', and thus said, "If the ḥadīth is authentic, then it is what I go by." However, some ḥadīth scholars who follow his school were certain of its authenticity. Thus, within the Shāfi'īyy school, there are two differing opinions: that of those who do not apply the ḥadīth like their 'imam, and therefore do not count eating camel meat as an invalidator of wuḍu', and that of those who apply it because they determined its authenticity, and thus count the eating of camel meat as a wuḍu' invalidator. If you were to ask, "How is their opinion part of the school if the imam himself did not apply the ḥadīth and it is his school?", the answer is that he gave a condition for it to be a saying of his school when he said, "If the ḥadīth is authentic, then it is what I go by." Based on that, they say that it is as if the invalidation by eating camel meat is a saying of Ash-Shāfi'īyy himself, because they concluded that the ḥadīth is authentic. This is an example of different sayings within one school.

¹ Al-'Isrā', # 36

Also, in regard to the hadith about the man who, when scratching his inner thigh, touched his penis with his hand, and the Prophet ﷺ judged that his wudu' was not broken, the Shafi'iyys do not accept it, and thus do not apply it. Instead, relying on other evidence, they say that touching the penis does invalidate the wudu' if that was by the inner palm. They furthermore said that if it were an acceptable hadith, its meaning would be that the man touched his private part with the back-hand side since he was scratching his thigh, i.e., his palm was toward his leg, and that is why his wudu' was not invalidated. The Hanafiyyys did accept the hadith, and explained that the judgment of not invalidating the wudu' included the inner palm touching the penis. This is an example of different sayings between two schools.

It should be very clear that saying "they did not accept the hadith" is not a matter of stubbornness, but a matter of research and scholarship. As for the Hadith Deniers, their rejection of the hadiths is a matter of stubbornness, and by no means a matter of scholarship. Had there been in their approach any trace of scholarship, then the childish disrespect that they display would not pour forth from them so abundantly, and they would not attack the Muslims and the Sunnah like heathens. Rather, they reject all or most hadiths without research or prerequisites, and not based on any conditions other than their opinions of what is moral or proper.

The case of the true Believer is that he prefers the Prophet's Sunnah over his own opinions, like the freed slave woman who refused to remarry her ex-husband, but would have done so had the Messenger ﷺ commanded her¹. Instead, the Deniers were too much inclined toward their own opinions, so much so that they denied the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. For example, they say, "What is wrong with a woman plucking her eyebrows? It must be, then, that forbidding that is a lie on the Prophet!"² Thus, they had no evidence to deny it except their opinions. The Prophet ﷺ said³:

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونَ هَوَاهُ تَبَعًا لِمَا جِئْتُ بِهِ

"The faith of one of you is deficient until his inclination follows what I have come with."

¹ Sahih Al-Bukhariyy:

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، أَنَّ زَوْجَ بَرِيرَةَ كَانَ عَبْدًا يُقَالُ لَهُ مُغِيثٌ، كَأَنِّي أَنْظَرُ إِلَيْهِ يَطُوفُ خَلْفَهَا يَبْكِي وَدُمُوعُهُ تَسِيلُ عَلَىٰ حَبِيبَتِهِ، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِعَبَّاسٍ: «يَا عَبَّاسُ، أَلَا تَعْجَبُ مِنْ حُبِّ مُغِيثِ بَرِيرَةَ، وَمِنْ بُغْضِ بَرِيرَةَ مُغِيثًا» فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «لَوْ رَأَيْتَهُ» قَالَتْ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ تَأْمُرُنِي؟ قَالَ: «إِنَّمَا أَنَا أَشْفَعُ» قَالَتْ: لَا حَاجَةَ لِي فِيهِ

From Ibn ^Abbas: The husband of **Buraydah** was a slave called Mughith. It was as if I was looking at him following behind her, crying while his tears were flowing on his beard. The Prophet ﷺ said to Al-^Abbas: "O ^Abbas, aren't you amazed at Mughith's love for Buraydah and Buraydah's disdain for Mughith?!" Then the Prophet ﷺ said to her: "Had only you taken him back!" She said, "O Messenger of Allah, do you command me to do so?" He said: "I am only interceding." She said: "I have no need for him."

² Sahih Al-Bukhariyy: chapter of dressing, section on hair weaving; Sahih Muslim: chapter of dressing and beautification, section on the prohibition of the action of the female hair weaver and the woman who seeks that weaving and of the female tattoo artist and the woman who seeks that tattooing.

³ Al-Madkhal by Al-Bayhaqiyy, and other books

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

'Imam ^Aliyy said:

لَوْ كَانَ الدِّينُ بِالرَّأْيِ لَكَانَ أَسْفَلُ الخُفِّ أَوْلَى بِالمَسْحِ مِنْ أَعْلَاهُ، وَقَدْ رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَمْسَحُ عَلَى ظَاهِرِ خُفِّهِ

“Had the Religion been by opinion, wiping on the bottom of the foot gear instead of the top would have been better, however I saw The Messenger of Allah ﷺ wiping the top”.

And Allah knows best

CHAPTER 4: Conditions of Acceptance

Acceptance of the hadīth has two points of view: acceptance from the viewpoint of fulfilling certain conditions¹, and acceptance from the viewpoint of its meaning. Before discussing rejection, we will dedicate this chapter to the conditions of acceptance, then the next to examining the meanings of a hadīth, because the meaning must be acceptable, i.e., compliant with the religious fundamentals.

SECTION 1: Continuity of the Chain

The first condition of acceptability is “**CONTINUITY/CONNECTIVITY (ITTISAL)**” of the chain. For the hadīth to be acceptable to all scholars, it must be continually linked, one narrator before the other, by each one hearing from the one above him. This “**HEARING (SAM^/SAMA^)**” is the strongest way to acquire the hadīths, and the knowledge in general².

The scholars differed about which way of hearing is stronger: should the student hear from the shaykh, or should he present to the shaykh while the shaykh listens and approves what the student presents?³ Most said that hearing the shaykh is stronger. Others, like ‘Imam ‘Abu Hanīfah, said that “**PRESENTING (^ARD)**”⁴ to the shaykh is better, because it draws his attention and keeps him alert. However, both are valid⁵ and both are called “hearing”. This hearing is the strongest mode of reception, whether a person heard alone or with peers, whether he read on the shaykh, or someone else read on the shaykh while he listened. When

¹ *As-Siyutiyy* (pg. 67):

وَشُرُوطُهَا: تَحْمُلُ رَاوِيَهَا لِمَا يَرُوِيهِ بِنَوْعٍ مِنْ أَنْوَاعِ التَّحْمُلِ، مِنْ سَمَاعٍ أَوْ عَرَضٍ أَوْ إِجَازَةٍ وَنَحْوِهَا.

"Its condition is for its narrator to have acquired what he narrates by some form of (accepted) acquisition, such as hearing, presenting, permission or the likes."

² *Al-Iraqiyy*:

وَجُوهُ الْأَخْذِ لِلْحَدِيثِ وَتَحْمُلِهِ عَنِ الشُّيُوخِ ثَمَانِيَةٌ. فَارْفَعِ الْأَقْسَامَ وَأَعْلَاهَا عِنْدَ الْأَكْثَرِينَ: السَّمَاعُ مِنْ لَفْظِ الشَّيْخِ، سِوَاءَ حَدَّثَ مِنْ كِتَابِهِ أَوْ حَفِظَهُ بِإِمْلَاءٍ أَوْ غَيْرِ إِمْلَاءٍ

"There are eight ways of taking and passing the hadīths from the shaykhs, and the highest and greatest type according to the majorities is hearing the utterance of the Shaykh, whether he conveyed from his book or from his memory, with dictating it or not."

³ *Al-Iraqiyy*:

وَاخْتَلَفُوا فِي الْقِرَاءَةِ عَلَى الشَّيْخِ هَلْ تَسَاوَى الْقِسْمَ الْأَوَّلَ - وَهُوَ السَّمَاعُ مِنْ لَفْظِهِ - أَوْ هِيَ دُونَهُ، أَوْ فَوْقَهُ؟ عَلَى ثَلَاثَةِ أَقْوَالٍ

"They differed about reading on the shaykh: is it equal to the first type, which is hearing his utterance, or less than it, or better? They have three sayings ..."

⁴ *Al-Iraqiyy*:

وَيَسْمِيهَا أَكْثَرُ الْمُحَدِّثِينَ عَرَضًا، بِمَعْنَى أَنَّ الْقَارِئَ يَعْضُ عَلَى الشَّيْخِ ذَلِكَ

"Most of the muhadiths name it 'ard', meaning that the reciter presents that to the Shaykh."

⁵ *Al-Iraqiyy*:

وَأَجْمَعُوا عَلَى صِحَّةِ الرِّوَايَةِ بِالْعَرَضِ

"They have a consensus about the validity of narration by presentation."

conveying, he says, “He told me,” or “He told us,” or “I read on him,” or “So-and-so read on him while I was listening,” etc. However, when it comes to taking the Qur’an, the student must present to the shaykh so that the shaykh can hear his recitation and correct him if need be. It is not enough to hear the shaykh recite to consider having a chain for whatever the shaykh recited.

For this reason, the students travelled from town to town, and from country to country to hear from the scholars and study under them and did not merely read books. Whoever wishes to be successful in the knowledge must have a teacher and must not settle with reading on his own. Al-Bukhariyy relates that the Prophet ﷺ said¹:

مَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَطْلُبُ بِهِ الْعِلْمَ سَهَّلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ طَرِيقًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ

“Whoever takes a path by which he seeks the knowledge, Allah will facilitate for him a path to Paradise.”

And since one must sit under the people of knowledge, he must love them and not be envious of them or underestimate them. Whoever has ill will towards them will not get the complete benefit from them.

The people of hadith have specific terms for expressing their **“TRANSMISSION (‘ADA’)** and **“RECEPTION (TAHAMMUL)”** of the hadiths. Herein, we will only mention a portion and save the rest for other books. Therefore, to determine the mode by which the narrator took his hadith, the scholars look at his expression, such as for him to say, “I heard him saying ...” This is the most explicit because it eliminates any intermediary. After it comes, “He told me ...” That is not the same as merely saying, “He said,” because saying, “He said,” does not necessarily mean that the transmitter heard it directly from him. Likewise, the transmitter saying, “From So-and-so,” is not an explicit expression of **“TAHDITH”**, i.e., directly hearing from the one above him, and this last point shall return.

Some people objectionably say: “What you have just described is exactly like the ‘telephone game’.” What we have described is not at all identical to the ‘telephone game’. In this game, a group sits together. Someone writes an expression, and the first person in the group whispers what was written to the next and is not allowed to repeat it. Then the next whispers to the third without repeating, etc. The last person openly pronounces what he thinks he heard from the one before him. What he says aloud is then compared to what is written and is usually a gross distortion of the original statement. However, when the narrators of the expression are not whispering, and instead are teaching openly and loudly, and dedicated, and double and triple checking, and repeating proudly, and reviewing time and again, and documenting, and memorizing soundly, the result is a well-preserved expression. If they were to play that game with every person reciting aloud, everyone would probably memorize the expression and no one would pervert it, so do not get the wrong impression. Rather, study and memorize and join the procession.

¹ Sahih Al-Bukhariyy

BENEFIT: Nursing an Expression While Transmitting

Al-[^]Iraqiyy said:

إذا أردت نقل حديثٍ ضعيفٍ، أو ما يُشكُّ في صحته وضعفه بغير إسناده، فلا تذكره بصيغة الجزم، كقَالَ وفعل، ونحو ذلك. وأت به بصيغة التمريض، كزُوي، وروى، وورد، وجاء، وبلغنا، وروى بعضهم، ونحو ذلك. أما إذا نقلت حديثاً صحيحاً بغير إسناده فاذكره بصيغة الجزم.

"If you want to copy- without a chain- a weak hadith, or something whose authenticity or weakness is doubtful, then do not mention it with "AN EXPRESSION OF DEFINITIVENESS (SIGHAT JAZM)" like "He said" and "He did", etc. Rather, come with an "EXPRESSION FOR NURSING THE CONVEYANCE (SIGHAT TAMRID)", like "it is narrated", "it was narrated", "it came", "it reached us", "some have narrated", and the likes of that. As for your mentioning an authentic hadith without a chain, mention it with an expression of definitiveness."

He said in another spot:

لأن هذه الألفاظ استعملها في الضعيف أكثر، وإن استعملت في الصحيح

"Because these expressions are most frequently used for what is weak, although they may be used for what is authentic."

BENEFIT: Other Ways of Acquiring a Hadith

As stated, the scholars have documented several ways of receiving a hadith. In this beginner's manual, we will only mention a couple besides hearing.

One way to get a hadith and be included in the continuity of the chain is by "**PERMIT/LICENSE ('IJAZAH)**". However, in our day, some people are more impressed with this type than they should be. Today, when some hear about another having an 'ijazah, they assume that he is a high ranking scholar or authority, and this is not necessarily the case.

To have an 'ijazah is permission to narrate, especially what one did not hear. For example, if a student was taking a book from his shaykh, and he dozed off from time to time, so he did not hear some of the words of the book, or perhaps he was absent for a session, then he should go to his shaykh or peers and read to them what he missed, or have them read to him, or he could be given an 'ijazah in the book, which patches the gaps that he missed. Or perhaps a shaykh knew that a student has the proficiency and understanding in the information in a certain book, so he gives him permission in the book without the student hearing it¹. If he knows his shaykh's chain, and he has a verified copy of the book, he can narrate it. He says something like: "I narrate by 'ijazah from So-and-so."

¹ Or like for the Shaykh to say to the student, I now authorize you with my "fihrisah (index)". That is the book containing one's shaykhs and different chains (paraphrasing from Shaykh Samir).

However, hearing, as already stated, is greater than a license¹. In fact, some of the old, elite imams completely rejected the idea of an 'ijazah². However, this opposition has gone extinct and was overcome by its widespread acceptance³. The best type of 'ijazah is one that comes with physically handing over a copy of the licensed book to the licensed person. Due to the overwhelming ignorance of our time, one would be more impressed by hearing that someone has an 'ijazah than by hearing that he sat with and heard from the people of knowledge. Some scoundrels use that to their advantage to make people believe that they are scholars, and perhaps some actually think of themselves as scholars. How would that be farfetched when some people think of themselves as scholars merely due to the books they read, and they neither have a teacher nor an 'ijazah? Among the people are those who travel the lands asking scholars for 'ijazahs while neglecting to ask for verbal lessons. They collect many 'ijazahs, then go out to the people saying: "I have ijazah from So-and-so and So-and-so ..."

Now that you have put the 'ijazah in its proper place, know that although the 'ijazah gives permission to transmit what one may not have heard, it is not enough to then pick up any copy of the licensed book and convey from it. Before conveying from that book, the licensed person should check the copy that he wants to use by comparing it to a reliable, checked copy. After comparison and adjusting his copy, he can transmit from it. After knowing that, think

¹ *Al-'Iraqiyy*:

الإجازة وهي دون السماع

"The 'ijazah is inferior to hearing."

² *Al-'Iraqiyy*:

وما حكاه الباجي من الإجماع في مُطلق الإجازة غلط، قال ابن الصلاح: هذا باطل فقد خالف في جواز الرواية بالإجازة جماعات من أهل الحديث والفقهاء والأصوليين وذلك إحدى الروايتين عن الشافعي، وقطع بإبطالها القاضي حسين، والماوردي، وبه قطع في كتابه "الخواوي" وعزاه إلى مذهب الشافعي، وقالوا جميعاً كما قال شعبة: لو جازت الإجازة لبطلت الرحلة. وممن قال بإبطالها إبراهيم الحزبي وأبو الشيخ عبد الله بن محمد الأصبهاني وأبو نصر الوائلي السجزي، وأبو طاهر الدباس من الحنفية، وأبو بكر محمد بن ثابت الحنندي من الشافعية، وحكاه الأمدئي، عن أبي حنيفة، وأبي يوسف.

"What Al-Bajjiyy said of a consensus about the unrestricted 'ijazah is a mistake. Ibnu-s-Salah said: This is invalid, for groups of the people of hadith and fiqh and 'usul have opposed narration by 'ijazah, and that is one of two reports about Ash-Shafi'iy. Judge Husayn was definitive about abolishing it, as well as Al-Mawardiyy; he was definitive about that in his book Al-Hawj and ascribed that position to the Shafi'iy school. They both said as Shu'bah said: "If the 'ijazah were valid, the trips for acquiring the knowledge would be cancelled!" Among who said of abolishing it is 'Ibrahim Al-Harbiyy, and 'Abu-sh-Shaykh 'Abdullah Ibn Muhammad Al-'Asbahaniyy and 'Abu Nasr Al-Wa'iliyy As-Sijziyy. There is also 'Abu Tahir Ad-Dabbas among the Hanafis and 'Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Thabit Al-Khudanjiyy among the Shafi'is, and Al-'Amidiyy reports that about 'Abu Hanifah and 'Abu Yusuf."

³ *Al-'Iraqiyy*:

لكن الذي استقر عليه العمل، وقال به جماهير أهل العلم من أهل الحديث وغيرهم: القول بتجوير الإجازة وإجازة الرواية بها، وحكاه الأمدئي عن أصحاب الشافعي وأكثر المحدثين.

"However, that upon which the practice has settled, and by which the majorities of the people of knowledge- whether people of hadith or others- say, is the sanctioning the 'ijazah and permitting its narration, and Al-'Amidiyy conveys that about the companions of Ash-Shafi'iy and most of the muhaddiths."

about how many people simply buy a copy of Al-Bukhariyy, for example, and without a teacher, or a license, or even checking their copy, sit before the people and teach from it.

One should have a reliable copy, even if he wrote it out by hand. It does not have to be printed to be taken seriously. Your handwritten copy of a book may be more valuable than a printed copy if it is more precise and through sound 'isnad. How did the scholars of old make copies? They wrote their copies by hand, or took a copy of what they wanted duplicated to professional, trustworthy scribes. What is the source of the modern printed copies? Handwritten manuscripts. A reliable copy is of the utmost importance, because a misprint could fall anywhere, even in the title. There could be a missing word, sentence or entire paragraph. There could be a misspelling or incorrect grammar that may or may not alter the meaning. People of knowledge have made mistakes due to corrupted copies, so how about laymen? In fact, unless one has memorized his **"ORIGINAL COPY ('ASL)"**, which is his personal, verified copy, he should not even convey from a book that he actually did hear while the copy he has in his hands is not his own, checked copy¹. There could be a misprint, addition or subtraction in that foreign copy that is not in his own copy. Perhaps he made an adjustment or a note for clarity in his copy that he does not recall. Some publishers are very sloppy and inaccurate, and some are even devious. Do not let an 'ijazah be your target, let it be strong, authentic transmission, with or without an 'ijazah.

The 'ijazah is the excuse that some Wahhabiyy have given to Al-'Albaniyy. They claim he is a world-class hadith scholar, so when questioned about his qualifications by it being said to them: "Produce a chain of narration from Al-'Albaniyy back to the Prophet ﷺ if he is a hadith scholar," they say, while unable to produce a single chain, "He has 'ijazah." This is a horrible answer, for even if he had an 'ijazah, that does not negate the existence of a chain. Also, having an 'ijazah is not at all sufficient to be a hadith scholar, for almost anyone can get an 'ijazah, even the mere students, and even a layman. Some scholars, at the end of their books, have given 'ijazah to everyone.

Furthermore, had he had a chain, this still would not make him a scholar, for the mere students have chains. The true scholars not only have chains, but many, many chains. In fact, they may have many chains for any individual book, as a testimony to how many times they reviewed the same book on different shaykhs as they travelled the lands, benefitting from scholar after scholar.

Thus, his lack of even a single chain is an indication that he is not among the people of hadith, and that, instead, he is bankrupt and corrupt for posing as one. A Wahhabiyy once claimed to have a chain for Al-'Albaniyy. When it was requested of him to produce it, he refused, claiming that it must be protected from the hands of the enemies! The chain is the tool

¹ **Al-'Iraqiyy:**

إذا أراد الراوي أن يُحدِّثَ ببعضِ مسموعاته فليزوهِ مِنْ أَصْلِهِ الَّذِي سَمِعَ مِنْهُ، أَوْ مِنْ نَسْخَةٍ مَقَابِلَةٍ عَلَى أَصْلِهِ بِمَقَابَلَةِ ثِقَةٍ

"If the narrator wants to convey some of his heard information, then let him narrate it from his original copy in which he heard, or from a copy compared to his original by someone reliable."

for distinguishing the authentic from the fraudulent. What is the point of having a chain and keeping it secret?

Another way to acquire a ḥadīth is by “**FINDING (WIJADAH)**”. This is the last way to get a ḥadīth. But when the scholars spoke about “finding” a ḥadīth, they meant finding it in the handwriting of the shaykh, while, of course, recognizing the handwriting. In such a case, when conveying, one would say, “I found in his handwriting that he said ...”¹ If finding a ḥadīth in the shaykh’s handwriting is a weak acquisition, what would be the strength of relying on an unchecked copy that is printed in some standard font, and thus is not in any particular person’s handwriting, especially when one does not have an ‘ijazah or a shaykh?

A Wahhābiyy once said to a Sunniyy with whom he was disputing, “The difference between us is that you continually tell me what you heard, while I tell you what I read,” thinking that the fact that his information was from books made it more authentic and relevant. Throughout all of his reading, did he not read in the ḥadīth books all of the chains that say, “I heard...” and “He told me...”?

So, again, if you wish to acquire and transmit the knowledge soundly, let determination bind you. Put the effort to sit before the people of knowledge, then study and memorize, and put the worldly distractions behind you. We ask Allāh to make us among preservers of the Religion, and among the people of sound reception and transmission.

SECTION 2: Lack of a Defect

Due to the commonality between them, as well as the lack of details that will be mentioned, we will, in this section, merge the mentioning of two different conditions². Of course, each will be given its own branch.

¹ *Al-ʿIraqiyy*:

والوَجَادَةُ أَنْ تَجِدَ بِحَيْثُ مَنْ عَاصِرْتَهُ لِقِيَّتِهِ أَوْ لَمْ تَلْقَهُ أَوْ لَمْ تُعَاصِرْهُ، بَلْ كَانَ قَبْلَكَ؛ أَحَادِيثَ يَرُويهَا، أَوْ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ مِمَّا لَمْ تَسْمَعْهُ مِنْهُ،
وَلَمْ يُجِزْهُ لَكَ، فَلَا تَقُولَ أَنْ تَقُولَ وَجَدْتُ بِحَيْثُ فَلَانٍ

"Wijadah is for you to find in the handwriting of your contemporary that you met or did not meet, or one who was not your contemporary and instead was before you, ḥadīths that he narrates, or something else among what you did not hear from him, nor did he give you an 'ijazah to narrate. In that case you may say: "I found in the handwriting of So-and-so ..."

² *Al-ʿIraqiyy* (vol. 1, pg. 15):

(غَيْرُ مَا شَدُوذٍ وَعِلَّةٍ قَادِحَةٍ) ، احْتِرَازٌ عَنِ الْحَدِيثِ الشَّاذِّ وَالْمَعْلَلِ، بَعْلَةٌ قَادِحَةٌ

“Saying, ‘Not irregular nor effectively defective’ excludes the ‘irregular ḥadīth’ and the [ḥadīth that is] defective with an effective defect.”

BRANCH 1: Lack of an Indistinct Defect

The second condition of acceptability is for the ḥadīth to be free of an “EFFECTIVE, INDISTINCT/FAINT DEFECT (ʿILLAH KHAFIYYAH QADIHAH)”, which is a defect that does not appear except to a skilled ḥafīdh of ḥadīth. We will revisit the “DEFECTIVE (MUʿALLAL)” ḥadīth when we reach the chapters pertaining to rejection, God willing. We will also later discuss who the “ḥafīdh” of ḥadīth is. Had the scholar not detected the faint defect, he would have accepted the ḥadīth.

It is said “effective defect” because it is possible for a ḥadīth to have a defect that does not affect its acceptability. To give you an idea about that, say a reliable narrator’s name was mistakenly replaced by another reliable narrator’s name, in such a way that whichever of the two the ḥadīth came from, it would have been acceptable. That would be an ineffective defect. They said, “faint/indistinct defect”, because if the hidden defect is effective, then more so would be the obvious defect.

BRANCH 2: Lack of an Anomaly

An “ANOMOLY/ODDITY (SHUDHUDHDH)” in the ḥadīth is also a defect, and that is why it is counted under the same section as the hidden defect, but it is a specific type of defect¹. It is a reliable narrator’s opposition to a more reliable narrator or a group of narrators in such a way that it is not possible to reconcile between the two narrations. Accordingly, the lack of such an irregularity is the third condition of acceptability.

Thus, what is intended is that the “ANOMALOUS/IRREGULAR (SHADHDH)” narration apparently fulfills the conditions of acceptability, and had it not been for the other opposing narration, this one would not have been considered anomalous, i.e., irregular. Once it was found that this narration conflicts with another, more reliable narration in a way that they cannot be merged, and no harmony between them can be achieved, which is a topic soon to be clarified, then this apparently acceptable narration is actually rejected for the narration of the more reliable or more numerous.

¹ *As-Siyutiyy*:

وَيُغَايِرُ الْمُعَلَّلَ بِأَنَّ ذَلِكَ وَقَفَ عَلَى عِلَّتِهِ الدَّالَّةِ عَلَى جِهَةِ الْوَهْمِ فِيهِ، وَالشَّادُّ لَمْ يُوقَفْ فِيهِ عَلَى عِلَّةٍ كَذَلِكَ

"[The irregular] is different from the defective by the fact that the defective hadith's defect that is the very delusion in was discovered, while the irregular hadith's particular defect was not discovered like that."

SECTION 3: Trustworthiness

The fourth condition of acceptance is the narrator's "TRUSTWORTHINESS/UPRIGHTNESS (ADALAH)"¹. This includes three things:

The first is for the narrator to be clear of apparent major sins. This will be detailed when we discuss rejection. The second is that he not insist on committing small sins until they outnumber his good deeds. For then he will have a major sin called "insisting on sinning (istirsāl)". As for the Companions, they are all trustworthy in their hadīth narration, even the sinner among them, as previously mentioned.

The third is to behave in accordance with the manners of the people of his status. This means that he should avoid what may not be a sin, but it compromises his virtue (murū'ah). Thus, the scholar would not walk through the market eating if he is not among the people of the market. In some cultures, he should not go out with his head uncovered. Among what affects the narrator's virtue is frequent joking, "flying pigeons" and frequently playing chess.

Being a free male, is not a condition. Thus, women and slaves are trusted with hadīth narration. Not everything that applies to giving testimony applies to hadīth narration. Lastly, trustworthiness in this context is not a synonym for piety. One may be extremely pious while unreliable for hadīths².

SECTION 4: Precision

The fifth condition of acceptance is "PRECISION (DABT)". The highest level of precision is for the narrator to memorize his narrations, including the chains, to the extent that they are engraved in his heart and he is able to recall them whenever he wishes, and his mistakes are rare. This is called "COMPLETE/PERFECT PRECISION (DABT TAMM)", and "PRECISION OF THE

¹ *Al-Iraqiyy* (vol.1, pg. 14):

(بنقلِ عدلٍ) ، احترازُ عما في سندهِ مَنْ لم تُعرفِ عدالتهُ، إما بأن يكونَ عَرِفَ بالضعفِ أو جهَلَ عيناً، أو حالاً

"Saying: 'by the transmission of a reliable one' excludes that which in its chain is whom his reliability is not known, either because he is known for weakness, or his person is unknown, or his situation is unknown.

² *Al-Iraqiyy* (vol.1, pg. 14):

ولا شكَّ أنَّ ضَبَطَ الراوي لا بُدَّ من اشتراطه؛ لأنَّ مَنْ كَثُرَ الخطأُ في حديثه، وفَحُشَ؛ استحقَّ التَّركَ، وإنَّ كَانَ عدلاً

"And there is no doubt, that the precision of the narrator, there is no alternative to making it a condition, because whoever had frequent mistakes in his hadīths, or [his mistakes were] atrocious, then he deserves abandonment, even if he were upright."

He also said (vol. 2. 149):

قال ابنُ الصلاح: أجمعَ جماهيرُ أئمةِ الحديثِ والفقهِ، على أنَّه يشترطُ فيمنَ يُتَّخَذُ بروايته أن يكونَ عدلاً ضابطاً لما يرويه

"Ibnu-s-Salah said: The majorities of the 'imams of hadīth and fiqh have agreed that it is a condition in the one used as a reference that he be [both] trustworthy and precise in what he narrates."

CHEST (DABTU-S-SADR)". For example, he may recall tens of thousands of hadiths with their chains- without reviewing first, and make fewer than five mistakes.

This is a matter unfathomed by the Hadith Deniers. They cannot conceive how the hadiths could be passed on verbally with their entire chains of narration by generations without being written. Of this matter they are very skeptical, and for that they doubt the validity of all or most hadiths.

And this skepticism is due to the fact that they are not students of knowledge, for even the beginning students are charged with memorization. Whoever challenges himself with memorization of the Qur'an, hadiths and texts of the scholars can easily conceive such a feat as the memorization of the hadith scholars, especially when seeing that some of his peers are outstanding in memorization. In fact, a person may be a great memorizer without knowing his talent until he starts. Even if he was not, just like anything else, it gets stronger with practice and persistence. Memorizing is an Islamic legacy, and for some scholars, a hobby. Unfortunately, our modern lifestyles hinder and distract us from achieving what they achieved. Our children watch television and play with computers and phones for hours. The adults use 16 out of 24 hours per day for working and sleeping, let alone eating and other matters. But do not let this discourage you. Even dedicating an hour per day is better than nothing. To achieve what those scholars achieved, one must dedicate his life to the knowledge like they did. The scholars said, "The knowledge will not give you some of itself until you give it all of yourself."

There are many stories documented about the memories of some scholars. Among them is the famous story of Al-Bukhariyy, that story that beautifies any book of mustalah, in which he came to Baghdad and its scholars wished to test him, as he had become famous for being a great hadith scholar. They selected 100 hadiths and mismatched their texts and chains, putting this text with that chain and that text with this chain, and then distributed them among ten men. The people gathered—scholars, statesmen and laymen—to hear the session. The first man asked Al-Bukhariyy his ten hadiths, one by one, and he would say about each one, "I do not know it." The same was done with the second man, then the third, and so on, until all ten recited to him their hadiths with interchanged chains. To all 100, he did not say more than, "I do not know it."

The people of knowledge knew merely from this that Al-Bukhariyy was a master. They turned to each other saying, "The man understands!" However, the laymen thought that he was weak and deficient, for how could a hadith scholar not know a single hadith out of 100? Then, when he perceived that they finished asking him, he turned to the first one and said to him, "What is correct is such and such," and he put the proper text to the first chain presented to him, then the proper text to the second chain, then the third and fourth, until completing the entire hundred. Then all the people conceded to his knowledge, mastery and merit.

What is amazing is that some hadith scholars commented on this, saying that for Al-Bukhariyy to return every text to its chain was not amazing, because a hadith scholar can do so. What was truly amazing to those amazing scholars is that he even remembered the order of

every one of the hundred chains presented to him, and matched the texts to the chains in the order presented.

This is the high level of precision that we are referring to. There are also stories about Ibn Abi Dawūd, Ad-Daraqutniyy, Ash-Shafi'iy, Al-Uqayliyy, and others. Some scholars said about themselves, "Every book in this library is on the tip of my tongue." Some said, "I memorize the entire collection of Al-Bukhariyy like you memorize Al-Fatihah."

Thus, those Hadith Deniers only discredit this issue because they have not tasted the sweetness of engraving the knowledge into their hearts through hard work and determination. Instead, they prefer to serve those who wish to destroy rather than to help to preserve the Nation, may Allāh increase our determination.

The synopsis of this chapter is that the hadith that is acceptable without any difference in opinion is the one with a continuous chain, no hidden defect, no irregularity, and all its narrators are upright and precise. If the hadith fulfills the conditions mentioned in the previous chapter, then it would be "**ACCEPTABLE (MAQBUL)**". The scholars have a range of words they use to describe such narrations, like "**STRONG (QAWIYY)**" and "**GOOD (JAYYID)**", which are both occasionally synonyms for "sahih". 'Abū Dawūd used "**SUITABLE (SALIH)**" for the "sahih" and the "hasan" because they can both be used as evidence, and for the weak hadith that can be used for reinforcing narrations. Al-Bayhaqiyy has said on occasion, "*This is a chain that has no dust on it.*"

May Allāh include us in the chain, clear us of defect, make us upright and precise, and without any previous torture, admit us to Paradise.

CHAPTER 5: LEVELS OF THE HADITHS

After discussing the conditions of acceptability, it is suitable to discuss the varying levels of the hadiths, from most authentic to rejected.

SECTION 1: The Narration That Fulfills the Highest Conditions of Acceptability

If the narration has gathered the highest conditions of acceptability, it has "**AUTHENTICITY (SIHHAH)**". This kind of hadith is famously called "**SAHIH (SOUND/AUTHENTIC)**". Literally, "sahih" means "healthy"¹. Because it has the meaning of "soundness", it is used to mean "correct". Here, we will call it "sound" or "authentic". If its authenticity is not dependent upon any outside element, as will be clarified, God willing, it

¹ *As-Siyutiyy* (pg. 144):

وَهِيَ حَقِيقَةٌ فِي الْأَجْسَامِ، وَاسْتِعْمَالُهَا هُنَا مَجَازٌ أَوْ اسْتِعَارَةٌ تَبَعِيَّةٌ.

"In a literal sense it is a quality of bodies, and its usage here is a figure of speech or metaphor."

would then be “**INTRINSICALLY SOUND (SAHIH BI-DH-DHAT)**”. This means that it is authentic by itself.

BENEFIT: The Traditional Arrangement of Hadīth Terminology Books

This is how the books of muṣṭalah usually begin; they start with the clarification of the sahih hadīth, because that is the diamond that we are searching for. Then they mention what comes after it in strength, then what follows. The author of Al-Bayquniyyah said¹:

إِسْنَادُهُ وَمَ يَشُدُّ أَوْ يُعَلِّنُ مُعْتَمِدٌ فِي ضَبْطِهِ وَنَقْلِهِ	أَوْهَا الصَّحِيحُ وَهُوَ مَا اتَّصَلَ يَرْوِيهِ عَدْلٌ ضَابِطٌ عَنِ مِثْلِهِ
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“The first is the sound (hadīth). It is: that which its chain is continuous, it is not irregular or defective. An upright, precise person narrated it from someone like himself²; he is reliable in his precision and transmission.”

Ibn Hajar, may Allah give him everlasting pleasure, was the first to start a book of muṣṭalah by discussing the routes through which the hadīths come instead of first discussing their strength. This is why he said in the beginning of An-Nukhbah:

عَلَى تَرْتِيبِ ابْتِكَارَتِهِ

“... According to a sequence that I invented.”

This amateur attempt that you are reading is a trace of his genius, except that this book started with the people who are the source of our Religion, and then mentioned the number of routes that a report may have, as you have seen, and Allah knows best.

SECTION 2: The Narration That Fulfills the Lowest Conditions of Acceptability.

If the precision of the narrator was less than what was described, however, he took care of his books by double checking them for correctness and by protecting them by, for example,

¹ The Text of Al-Bayquniyy, lines 3-4

² Al-Iraqiyy (lines 12, 13):

بِنَقْلِ عَدْلٍ ضَابِطِ الْفُؤَادِ وَعِلَّةٍ قَادِحَةٍ فَتُوذِي	فَالْأَوَّلُ الْمُتَّصِلُ الْإِسْنَادِ عَنِ مِثْلِهِ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَا شُدُّوْذِ
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“The first is the one with the chain connected by the transmission of a reliable one who is precise of heart, from his likes, without any irregularity or a defect that is effective, and thus harmful [to the authenticity of the hadīth].”

not leaving them in simply any corner, or on any chair or table, and by being biased about to whom he lends his books, and therefore can safely and precisely convey from his books whenever he needs them, then this is the precision called **“BOOK PRECISION (DABT KITAB)”**. It is not the “complete precision” needed for his narrations to be intrinsically sound, however, his reports still have **“FAIRNESS; GOODNESS (HUSN)”**, i.e., they are still, all by themselves, reliable and strong. Thus, they are **“INTRINSICALLY GOOD (HASAN BI-DH-DHAT)”**. The word “hasan” linguistically means “good” or “beautiful”. Herein, we will call it a **“STRONG HADITH”**.

Thus, we are using “authentic” or “sound” for what is stronger than what we are calling “strong”, so be sure to follow along. It is also clear for you that there are two types of precision: the “precision of the chest”, which is when one memorizes masterfully, and the “precision of the book”, which is when one gives great heed to his books. Yes, the scholars of old had several sayings about what a hasan hadith is¹, but the saying upon which the terminology settled is that it is that which fulfills the conditions of acceptability, except that its narrator’s precision is deficient in comparison to that of the narrator of the sound hadith².

Now know that a strong hadith can be strengthened by other hadiths with the same meaning. If the strong hadith is strengthened, it becomes sound³. However, it is not intrinsically

¹ *Al-Iraqiyy:*

وقال ابن الصلاح بعد ذكر هذه الحدود الثلاثة: كلُّ هذا مُستهِمٌ، لا يَشْفِي الغليلَ، قال: وليس في كلام الترمذي، والخطابي ما يفصلُ الحسنَ من الصحيح. انتهى

“After mentioning three definitions for the hasan hadith, Ibnu-s-Salah said: ‘All of that is vague, it does not quench the thirst, and the talk of At-Tirmidhiyy and Al-Khattabiyy lack what distinguishes the hasan from the sahih.’”

² *Al-Iraqiyy:*

القسم الثاني: أن يكون راويه من المشهورين بالصدق والأمانة، غير أنه لا يبلغ درجة رجال الصحيح؛ لكونه يقصر عنهم في الحفظ والإتقان، وهو مع ذلك يرتفع عن حال من يُعدُّ ما ينفرد به من حديثه منكرًا

"The second division is for its narrator to be among those famous for honesty and reliability, however, he does not reach the echelon of the men of the sahih [narrations], due to his being inferior to them in memorization and mastery. Despite that, he is higher than the case of whose singular narration of hadith is unwanted."

³ *Al-Iraqiyy:*

والحسن الذي راويه مشهور بالصدق والعدالة، إذا أتت له طرق أخرى حكمت بصحته، كحديث محمد بن عمرو، عن أبي سلمة، عن أبي هريرة؛ أن رسول الله - صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - قال لولا أن أشق على أمتي لأمرتهم بالسواك عند كل صلاة قال ابن الصلاح محمد بن عمرو بن علقمة من المشهورين بالصدق والصيانة لكنه لم يكن من أهل الإتقان حتى ضعفه بعضهم من جهة سوء حفظه وثقة بعضهم لصدقه وجلالته فحديثه من هذه الجهة حسن، فلما انضم إلى ذلك كونه روي من أوجه أخرى، زال بذلك ما كنا نخشاه عليه من جهة سوء حفظه وانجبر به ذلك النقص اليسير، فصح هذا الإسناد، والتحق بدرجة الصحيح

"If the hasan that its narrator is famous for honesty and reliability also came from another route, it would be judged as sahih, like the hadith of Muhammad Ibn ^Amr from 'Abu Salamah, from 'Abu Hurayrah, that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Had it not been that I would burden my nation, I would have mandated on them using the siwak before every prayer'. Ibnu-s-Salah said: Muhammad Ibn ^Amr Ibn ^Alqamah is among those who

sound, rather, it is sound by some outside element¹, so it is **“INCIDENTALLY/NON-ESSENTIALLY SOUND (SAHIH BI-L-GHAYR)”**.

BENEFIT: Among the books that are thought to be a source of “hasan” hadiths is the *Sunan* of 'Abu Dawud. Al-[^]Iraqiyy said:

قال ابن الصَّلَاح: ومن مظانِّه - أي: الحسنِ - سننُ أبي داودَ السجستانيِّ - رحمه اللهُ تعالى - رُوينا عنه أنَّه
قال: ذكُرْتُ فيه الصحيحَ وما يُشبهُه ويقارِبُه.

“Ibnu-s-Salah said: ‘Among its assumed places- i.e., the hasan- is the Sunan of 'Abu Dawud As-Sijistaniyy, may Allah have mercy upon him. We were made to narrate from him that he said: ‘I have mentioned therein what is sahih, and what resembles it, and what comes close to it ...’.”

As-Siyutiyy added:

مِن مَظَانِّ الحَسَنِ اَيْضًا سُنَنُ الدَّارِقُطَنِيِّ فَإِنَّهُ نَصَّ عَلَيَّ كَثِيرٍ مِنْهُ.

“Among the assumed places of the hasan, also, is the Sunan of Ad-Daraqutniyy, for surely he documented many of that type.”

On the other hand, the books of sunan are not generally said to be books of hasan hadiths, as opposed to Al-Baghawiyy. Al-[^]Iraqiyy said:

والبغويُّ رَدُّ عليه في تسميته في كتابِ المصابيحِ ما رواه أصحابُ السننِ الحِسانِ إذ في السننِ غيرُ الحسنِ من
الضعيفِ والصحيحِ

“Al-Baghawiyy was rejected concerning his naming- in his book Al-Masabih- that which the Authors of the Sunan narrated as hasan hadiths, for in the Sunan there are other than hasan hadiths, whether da^if or sahih.”

are famous for honesty and reliability and loyalty, however he was not among the people of mastery; some have even weakened him from the aspect of bad memory, and some have validated him for his honesty and greatness.

So from this perspective, his hadith narration is a hasan one. Then, when added to that its being narrated from other ways, what we had feared from him of bad memory goes away, and by that other report, his light deficiency is patched, and the chain is actually sahih, and is annexed to the rank of sahih."

¹ Such as the hadith coming through another chain, or by being received and passed by the nation with acceptance. **As-Siyutiyy** said:

قال بعضهم: يُحْكَمُ لِلْحَدِيثِ بِالصِّحَّةِ إِذَا تَلَقَّاهُ النَّاسُ بِالْقَبُولِ وَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ إِسْنَادٌ صَحِيحٌ

“Some of them said: The hadith is judged with authenticity if the people have received it and passed it on with acceptance, even if it did not have an authentic chain.”

And he copies from '**Abu 'Is-haq Al-'Isfarayiniyy**:

تُعْرَفُ صِحَّةُ الْحَدِيثِ إِذَا اشْتَهَرَ عِنْدَ أَئِمَّةِ الْحَدِيثِ بِغَيْرِ نَكِيرٍ مِنْهُمْ

“The authenticity of the hadith is known if was famous to the imams of hadith with acceptance without any objection from them.”

If the narration misses one or more of the conditions of acceptability¹, then it is “**WEAK (DA^IF)**”, which is also called “**REJECTED (MARDUD)**”². There are many types of weak hadiths³ and reasons for rejection. We will discuss several them when we reach the chapters dedicated to rejection, God willing.

Therefore, a missing narrator in the chain is a type of weakness, a hidden defect is another, an anomaly is yet another, and a weak narrator is a fourth, and they may have various scenarios⁴. If a narration misses two conditions, then that is another weakness, and every combination of missing conditions is another type, etc.⁵

¹ **Al-Iraqiyy**:

ما قَصَرَ عَلَى رتبةِ الحسنِ فَهُوَ ضَعِيفٌ وَقَوْلُ ابْنِ الصَّلَاحِ هُوَ مَا لَمْ يَجْمَعْ صِفَاتِ الصَّحِيحِ، وَلَا صِفَاتِ الْحَسَنِ فَذَكَرَ الصَّحِيحَ
غَيْرُ مَحْتَاجٍ إِلَيْهِ؛ لِأَنَّ مَا قَصَرَ عَنِ الْحَسَنِ فَهُوَ عَنِ الصَّحِيحِ أَقْصَرُ

"What falls short of the level of hasan is da^if. Ibnu-s-Salah's expression is: 'It is what lacks the qualities of the sahih and the hasan', and mentioning the sahih is not needed, because whatever falls short of being hasan falls even shorter of being sahih."

² It is also called “saqim (sick)”. **Al-Iraqiyy** quoted **Al-Khattabiyy** (vol.1, pg. 14) as having said in “Ma^alim As-Sunan”:

اعلموا أَنَّ الْحَدِيثَ عِنْدَ أَهْلِهِ عَلَى ثَلَاثَةِ أَقْسَامٍ: حَدِيثٌ صَحِيحٌ، وَحَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ وَحَدِيثٌ سَقِيمٌ

“Know that the hadith according to its people are of three divisions: “sahih hadith”, “hasan hadith” and “saqim hadith.”

³ **Al-Iraqiyy**:

وَمِنْ أَقْسَامِ الضَّعِيفِ مَا لَهُ لِقَبٌّ خَاصٌّ كَالْمُضْطَرِّبِ، وَالْمَقْلُوبِ، وَالْمَوْضُوعِ، وَالْمُنْكَرِ،

"Among the categories of the da^if is what has a special name, like 'the inconsistent', 'the flipped', 'the fabricated' and 'the objectionable'."

⁴ **Al-Iraqiyy** said (lines 90-93):

مَرَّتَبَةَ الْحَسَنِ، وَإِنْ بَسَطْتُ بَعْضِي:	أَمَّا الضَّعِيفُ فَهُوَ مَا لَمْ يَبْلُغْ
وَأَتَيْنَ قِسْمٌ غَيْرُهُ، وَصَمُّوا	فَفَاقَدَ شَرْطَ قَبُولِ قِسْمٍ
وَعُدَّ لِشَرْطٍ غَيْرِ مَبْدُودٍ فَذَا	سِوَاهُمَا فَثَالِثٌ، وَهَكَذَا
قَدَّمْتُهُ ثُمَّ عَلَى ذَا فَاحْتَدَى	قِسْمٌ سِوَاهَا ثُمَّ زِدْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي

“As for the da^if, it is that which did not reach the level of hasan, and if details are sought: Whatever lacks a condition of acceptance is a division, and what lacks two is another division. If they included other than those two, then that’s a third, etc. Then start over with a different (missing) condition; for that is another division, then add to it other than what you previously presented, then do like that.”

⁵ **As-Siyutiyy** (273-274):

قَسَّمَهُ ابْنُ الصَّلَاحِ إِلَى أَقْسَامٍ كَثِيرَةٍ بِاعْتِبَارِ فَقْدِ صِفَةٍ مِنْ صِفَاتِ الْقَبُولِ السِّتَّةِ، وَهِيَ الْإِتِّصَالُ وَالْعَدَالَةُ وَالصَّبْطُ وَالْمُتَابَعَةُ فِي الْمَسْتَوْرِ وَعَدَمُ الشُّدُودِ وَعَدَمُ الْعِلَّةِ، وَبِاعْتِبَارِ فَقْدِ صِفَةٍ مَعَ صِفَةٍ أُخْرَى تَلْبِيهَا أَوَّلًا، أَوْ مَعَ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ صِفَةٍ إِلَى أَنْ تَفْقِدَ السِّتَّةَ.

"Ibnu-s-Salah categorized them into many categories by considering the lack of any of the six qualities of acceptance- which are connectivity, trustworthiness, precision, a follow up for an unvetted narrator, the lack of irregularity and the lack of a defect- and by the lack of a quality along with another quality, or with more than one other missing quality, until all six are missing."

Also, weakness varies¹. Some hadiths are only slightly weak², such as³:

اعْمَلُوا بِمُحْكِمِهِ، وَآمِنُوا بِمُتَشَابِهِهِ

“Apply what is explicit [of the Qur’an] and believe in its ambiguous,”

and some are at the apex of weakness, the worst being the fabrication. God willing, we will end the book with that type as a sign of its debasement and wretchedness⁴, like the author of *Al-Bayquniyyah*.

It is not always the case that a weak narration can be strengthened¹, but if it is, then it becomes strong, but **“INCIDENTALLY/NON-ESSENTIALLY STRONG (HASAN BI-L-GHAYR)”**. Now take several benefits:

To give an idea of these various combinations, take an excerpt from *Al-Iraqiyy*:

الثالث مرسلٌ في إسناده ضعيفٌ الرابع منقطعٌ فيه ضعيفٌ الخامس مرسلٌ فيه مجهولٌ السادس منقطعٌ فيه مجهولٌ السابع مرسلٌ فيه مغفَّلٌ كثيرٌ الخطأ، وإن كان عدلاً الثامن منقطعٌ فيه مغفَّلٌ كذلك

"... The third is the mursal with a weak narrator in its chain, the fourth is the severed chain with a weak narrator, the fifth is the mursal with an unknown narrator, the sixth is the severed chain with an unknown narrator, the seventh is mursal with a careless, frequently mistaken narrator- even if he was upright, the eighth is the severed chain with a careless narrator ..."

¹ *As-Siyutiyy* (pg. 275):

(وَيَتَفَاوَتْ ضَعْفُهُ) بِحَسَبِ شِدَّةِ ضَعْفِ رُؤَاتِهِ وَخَفَّتِهِ.

"Its weakness varies in accordance with the intensity of the weakness of its narrators."

² *As-Siyutiyy* (pg. 153):

يَقُولُونَ: هَذَا أَصَحُّ مَا جَاءَ فِي الْبَابِ وَإِنْ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا، وَمُرَادُهُمْ أَرْجَحُهُ، أَوْ أَقْلَهُ ضَعْفًا

"They (may) say (about a hadith): 'This is the most authentic of what came in this subject', even if it is weak, and their intent is the most preponderant or the least weak."

³ In explaining the words of *Shaykh ^Abdullah Al-Harariyy*, *Shaykh Samir Al-Qadi* said in *Nur As-Sirat*:

وَهُوَ مَا رَوَاهُ الْحَاكِمُ فِي الْمُسْتَدْرَكِ وَأَبْنُ حَبَّانٍ فِي صَحِيحِهِ مَرْفُوعًا (اعْمَلُوا بِمُحْكِمِهِ وَآمِنُوا بِمُتَشَابِهِهِ) اهْ وَهُوَ حَدِيثٌ (ضَعِيفٌ ضَعْفًا خَفِيفًا) فَإِنَّهُمَا رَوَاهُ مِنْ طَرِيقِ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ وَقَدْ قَالَ ابْنُ عَبْدِ الْبَرِّ إِنَّ أَبَا سَلَمَةَ لَمْ يَلْقَ ابْنَ مَسْعُودٍ فَفِيهِ انْقِطَاعٌ كَمَا قَالَ الْحَافِظُ فِي الْفَتْحِ

"It is what Al-Hakim narrated in *Al-Mustadrak*, and Ibn Hibban in his *sahih*, elevated [to the Prophet]: <Apply what is explicit [of the Qur’an] and believe in its ambiguous>. It is a hadith that is weak slightly, for those two [imams] have relayed it from the route of 'Abu Salamah Ibn ^Abdi-r-Rahman from ^Abdullah Ibn Mas^ud. Ibn ^Abdi-l-Barr said: 'Abu Salamah did not meet Ibn Mas^ud, so in its chain there is an interruption, as the Hafidh said in *Al-Fathh* ..."

⁴ *As-Siyutiyy*:

(وَ) هُوَ (شَرُّ الضَّعِيفِ) ، وَأَقْبَحُهُ

"And it is the worst of the da'if, and its ugliest."

BENEFIT 1: Considering Versions of Hadith

If what has been mentioned is clear, then it is understood that a hadith can have more than one “**VERSION/RENDITION/NARRATION (RIWAYAH)**”. Knowing this is important for many reasons.

One of them is that among what can strengthen a hadith is its various versions, as already stated. Therefore, if it is weak by itself, other versions can make it strong, and if it were already strong by itself, other narrations can make it sound. Accordingly, some scholars have mentioned a sixth condition of acceptability². The entire six are:

1. Continuity of the chain³,
2. Lack of anomaly,
3. Lack of an effective defect,

¹ *Al-Iraqiyy* copies from *Ash-Shafi'iyy* that he said:

لَيْسَ كُلُّ ضَعْفٍ فِي الْحَدِيثِ يَزُولُ بِمَجِيئِهِ مِنْ وَجْهِهِ، بَلْ ذَلِكَ يَخْتَلِفُ فَمِنْهُ ضَعْفٌ يُزِيلُهُ ذَلِكَ، بَأَن يَكُونَ ضَعْفُهُ نَاشِئاً مِنْ ضَعْفِ حَفِظِ رَاوِيهِ مَعَ كَوْنِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصِّدْقِ وَالِدِيَانَةِ. فَإِذَا رَأَيْنَا مَا رَوَاهُ قَدْ جَاءَ مِنْ وَجْهِ آخَرَ عَرَفْنَا أَنَّهُ بِمَا قَدْ حَفِظَهُ وَلَمْ يَخْتَلِفْ فِيهِ ضَبْطُهُ لَهُ. وَكَذَلِكَ إِذَا كَانَ ضَعْفُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ الْإِرْسَالُ زَالَ بِنَحْوِ ذَلِكَ كَمَا فِي الْمُرْسَلِ الَّذِي يُرْسَلُهُ إِمَامٌ حَافِظٌ، إِذْ فِيهِ ضَعْفٌ قَلِيلٌ يَزُولُ بِرَوَايَتِهِ مِنْ وَجْهِ آخَرَ. - قَالَ -: وَمِنْ ذَلِكَ ضَعْفٌ لَا يَزُولُ بِنَحْوِ ذَلِكَ؛ لِقُوَّةِ الضَّعْفِ؛ وَتَقَاعُدِ هَذَا الْجَابِرِ عَنِ جَبْرِهِ وَمَقَاوِمَتِهِ. وَذَلِكَ كَالضَّعْفِ الَّذِي يَنْشَأُ مِنْ كَوْنِ الرَّاويِّ مَتَهَمًا بِالْكَذْبِ أَوْ كَوْنِ الْحَدِيثِ شَاذًا. قَالَ: وَهَذِهِ جَمَلَةٌ تَفَاصِيلُهَا تَدْرِكُ بِالْمُبَاشَرَةِ وَالْبَحْثِ، فَاعْلَمْ ذَلِكَ فَإِنَّهُ مِنَ النَّفَائِسِ الْعَزِيزَةِ، وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ.

"Not every weakness in the hadith vanishes by the hadith coming through another route. Rather, that varies; there is a type of weakness that is removed by that, because of its weakness being a result of its narrator's weak memory, while he is among the people of honesty and devotion. So if we have seen what he narrates coming from another route, we knew that this was among what he correctly narrated and his precision of it was not mistaken. Likewise, if its weakness was due to it being mursal, the weakness goes away by another narration, like a mursal from an 'imam who is a hafidh. There is only slight weakness in it that goes away by being narrated from another route ..." He said: "There is [also] a weakness that does not go away by something like that, due to the strength of the weakness, and the fixer being incapable of patching it and resisting that weakness. That is like the weakness that comes from a person being accused of lying, or the hadith being irregular ..." He said: "This is a general case whose details can be realized by practice and research, so know that, for it is among the precious rarities, and Allah knows best."

² Sharh *Al-Iraqiyy* (vol.1, pg. 67):

³ *Al-Iraqiyy*:

اتصال السند حيث لم ينجبر المرسل بما يؤكدُه

"Connectivity of the chain when the mursal is not patched by what reinforces it."

4. Precision of the narrator¹,
5. Trustworthiness of the narrator, and
6. A “**STRENGTHENER/SUPPORTER (^ADUD)**” when needed².

Tracing the chains spread throughout the different books to match narrations is called “**REGARD/CONSIDERATION (I^TIBAR)**”. If the various narrations of a hadith do not strengthen it, then there is no regard given to those narrations. This is what the scholars said about the hadith³:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

“The deeds are by the intentions.”

Al-^Iraqiyy said that the other chains for this hadith are not considered, and thus do not take it out of the realm of being a narration of a loner. However, as you know, this singular hadith is already sound by itself.

If a hadith does have other considered renditions, then either those variations occurred from the Companions who heard directly from the Prophet ﷺ, or they occurred somewhere in the chain under some of the shaykhs.

If there is a narration from the Prophet ﷺ from a Companion, and a second narration comes from him through another Companion other than the first, then this is famously called the case of the “**REFERENCE (SHAHID)**”. An example is what was narrated by ‘Imam An-Nasa’iyy, from the route of Muḥammad Ibn Hunayn, from the Companion Ibn ^Abbas, that the Prophet ﷺ said⁴:

الشَّهْرُ تِسْعٌ وَعِشْرُونَ، فَلَا تَصُومُوا حَتَّى تَرَوْا الْهِلَالَ

“The (lunar) month is (no less than) 29 (days), so do not fast until you see the crescent ...”

¹ Al-^Iraqiyy:

والسلامة من كثرة الخطأ والغفلة

"And being clear of frequent mistakes and carelessness."

² Al-^Iraqiyy:

ومجيء الحديث من وجه آخر حيث كان في الإسناد مستور لم تُعرف أهليته، وليس متهماً كثيراً بالغلط

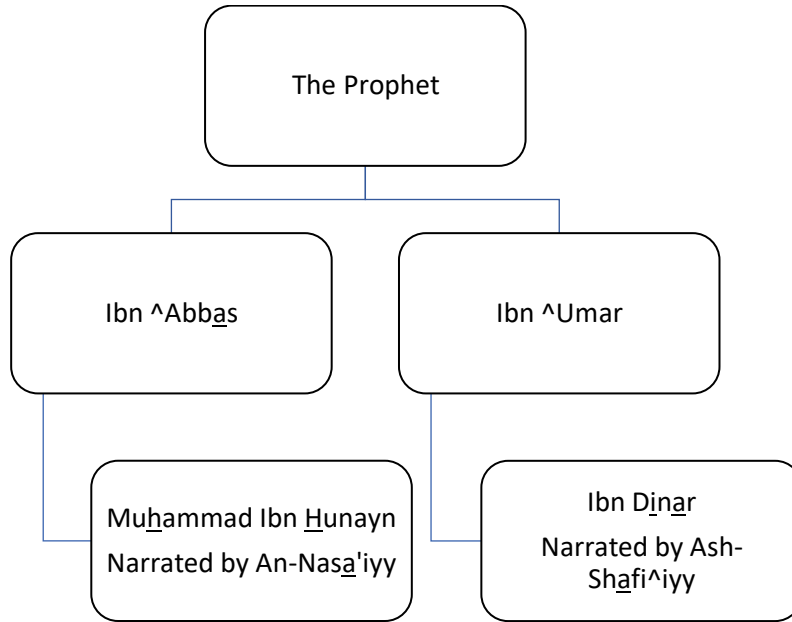
"And the hadith's coming from another route when there was an unvetted narrator whose qualification is unknown, and he is not someone accused nor frequently mistaken."

³ Sahih Al-Bukhariyy

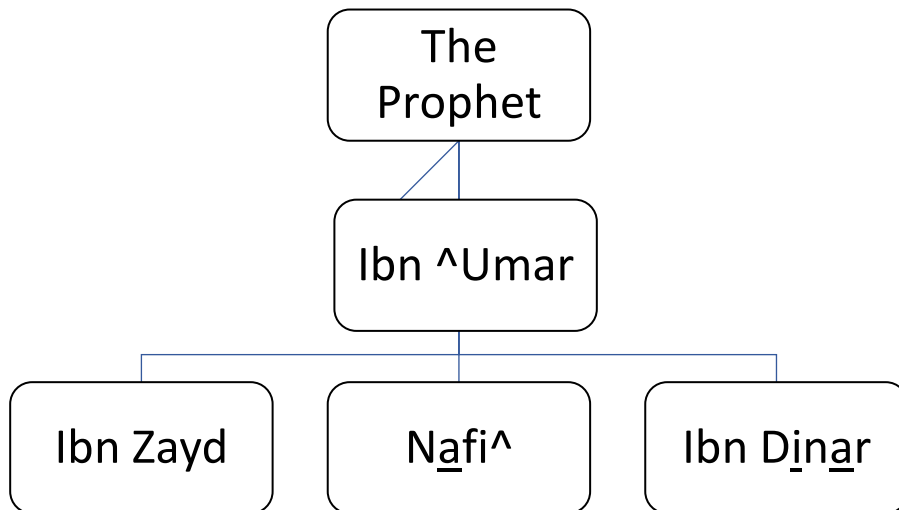
⁴ Sunan An-Nasa’iyy

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This hadith was also narrated by ‘Imam Ash-Shafi‘iyy from the route of Ibn Dinar, from the Companion Ibn ‘Umar, who is different from the first Companion, Ibn ‘Abbas. Observe the diagram:

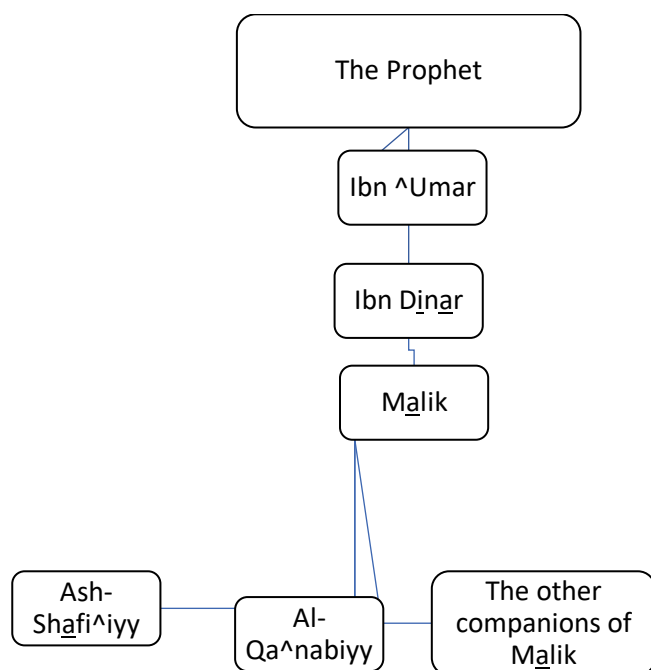


On the other hand, if the different versions of a hadith return back to the Prophet ﷺ through the same Companion, whether the expressions matched or only the meaning, then this is famously called the case of the **“FOLLOW-UP (MUTABI‘)”**. An example is this same hadith’s chain converging on Ibn ‘Umar though not only Ibn Dinar, but also through Muhammad Ibn Zayd and Nafi‘. Observe the diagram:



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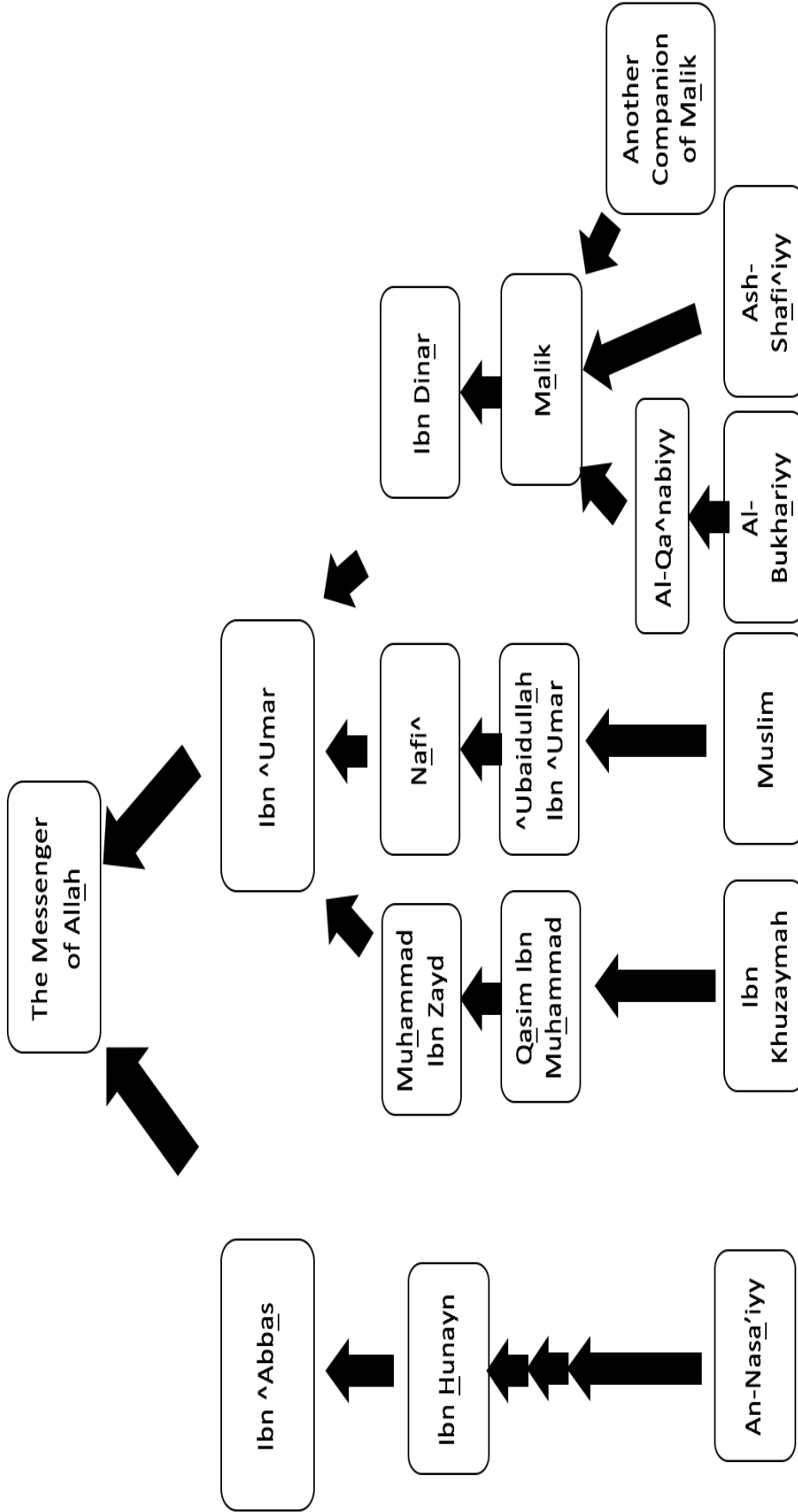
Furthermore, if the narration diverges under one of the shaykhs in the chain, and one of those versions was thought to be **“UNIQUE (FARD)”** to a narrator, however, a follow-up was found for that version, then this is a more specific type of follow-up called, **“COMPLETE (TAMMAH)”**. An example is the aforementioned narration of Ibn Dīnār from Ibn ^Umar; Mālik narrates from Ibn Dīnār, then two versions spawn from Mālik: one from the routes of both Ash-Shāfi^iyy and Al-Qa^nabiyy, and one from the other Companions of Mālik. Observe the diagram:



Some scholars thought that Ash-Shāfi^iyy’s narration from Mālik was unique to Ash-Shāfi^iyy, because it is different from what is reported from Mālik from his other companions. However, once it was known that Al-Qa^nabiyy also narrated from Mālik the same expression that Ash-Shāfi^iyy narrated, it adds more strength to Ash-Shāfi^iyy’s rendition, and by that it was known that Mālik actually conveyed two expressions for the ḥadīth from Ibn Dīnār, and that what Ash-Shāfi^iyy narrated was not unique to him.

In that is another benefit of regarding the various narrations: determining the precision of the narrators. Now observe the diagram with all three scenarios of considering the narrations; the “reference”, the “follow-up” and the “complete follow-up”. If you understood the diagram, you have understood the case:

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BENEFIT 2: Authentication is only for the Hafidh

After knowing the conditions of acceptance and the levels of the hadiths, know the people of hadith, and who is entitled to grade them as authentic, strong or weak.

The lowest level of the people of hadith is that of the mere “**HADITH CONVEYOR (MUSNID)**”, may Allāh raise the status of the righteous and sincere among them. He can relate hadiths from himself back to the Prophet ﷺ. This level does not require in-depth knowledge of the field¹. He may be like an advanced student- an apprentice if you will- who can competently convey the hadith books that he took from the shaykhs, but he may not know if the hadith or its chain has an addition or subtraction. He should not be called a muhaddith. And we say without malice or slander, rather only in truth, that Al-'Albaniyy is not even of this level, for he does not narrate back to the Prophet ﷺ by any chain. This fact is repeated, not to anger his followers, but to advise them and to warn the Muslims, for the Prophet ﷺ said²:

مَنْ غَشَّنَا فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا

“Whoever cheats us is (as if he is) not one of us.”

Although the Prophet ﷺ said this in reference to one who cheated in his sales, the wording is general, as per the rule mentioned in the beginning of the book, and includes, more so, the one who cheats the Muslims in their Religion. Posing or promoting someone as the pinnacle of the modern hadith scholars, and the mind who realized all the mistakes of the old masters, while he is not even a student, is cheating the Muslims in their Religion.

Above the hadith conveyor is the “**HADITH SCHOLAR (MUHADDITH)**”. He has memorized many thousands of hadiths with their chains, including “the Six Books” that will be mentioned shortly.

Above him is the “**HAFIDH**”. He is the elite savant of the field and the grand master. The word “hafidh” linguistically means “preserver/protector”, and therefore is used for a grand memorizer. But none of those words is strong enough to express his high rank. “Hafidh” is the same title given to the Qur’an memorizer, but being a Qur’an hafidh, though meritorious, does not make one a scholar. Therefore, do not confuse him and the hadith hafidh. In this text, we

¹ *As-Siyutiyy* (pg. 73):

اعْلَمْ أَنَّ أَدْنَى دَرَجَاتِ الثَّلَاثَةِ، الْمُسْنِدُ بِكَسْرِ التُّونِ، وَهُوَ مَنْ يَرْوِي الْحَدِيثَ بِإِسْنَادِهِ، سَوَاءً كَانَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ بِهِ أَوْ لَيْسَ لَهُ إِلَّا
مُجَرَّدُ رَوَايَةٍ، وَأَمَّا الْمُحَدِّثُ فَهُوَ أَرْفَعُ مِنْهُ

"Know that the lowest of the three levels is the 'musnid', the one who narrates the hadith with his chain, whether he has knowledge of it or has nothing but mere relaying. As for the muhaddith, he is higher than him"

² *Sahih* Muslim

will call him the “**HADITH MASTER/SAVANT**”, or simply a “hafidh”. It is fine to refer to a hafidh as a muḥaddith¹, but a muḥaddith who is not a hafidh should not be called one².

He is a high-ranking hadith scholar whose memorization surpasses that of the muḥaddith. He also has vast knowledge of the chains and the “**BIOGRAPHIES (SIYAR)**” of the men. In fact, he is to the science of hadith what the “**mujtahid**” is to the science of Islamic Law (fiqh). His knowledge is so encompassing that he, and only he, is qualified to grade the hadiths, which is called “**AUTHENTICATION (TAS-HIH)**” and “**DEPRECIATION (TADʿIF)**”. Take the statement of the master, Hafidh As-Siyutiyy as a rule:

وَحُذُّهُ حَيْثُ حَافِظٌ عَلَيْهِ نَصٌّ أَوْ مِنْ مُصَنَّفٍ بِجَمْعِهِ يُخَصُّ

“Take it (as authentic) when a hafidh documents it, or from a compilation dedicated for it (i.e., only authentic hadiths).”

This means that either a hafidh would explicitly state about a particular hadith that it is authentic³, or he would document the hadith in a book that is dedicated only to authentic hadiths. In that case, there would be no need to repeatedly say for each hadith, “...and this hadith is authentic, and this hadith is authentic...” This is the case of “Sahih Al-Bukhariyy”, and we will come back to that, God willing. Now take a few important points from this benefit:

1. The people of the hadith are not those who undeservingly call themselves “‘Ahlu-l-Hadith (the People of Hadith)”, while what they mean is that the Qurʿan and hadiths suffice them from needing to rely on the scholars. Yes, their ignorance in this regard is not as profound as that of

¹ *As-Siyutiyy* (pg. 79):

وَقَدْ كَانَ السَّلَفُ يُطَلِّقُونَ الْمُحَدِّثَ وَالْحَافِظَ بِمَعْنَى

"The Salaf used to use 'muḥaddith' and 'hafidh' for the same thing."

² *As-Siyutiyy*:

وَالْحَقُّ أَنَّ الْحَافِظَ أَخْصُّ

"The truth is that the hafidh is more specialized."

³ *Al-ʿIraqiyy* (vol. 1, pp. 30-31):

حُذُّهُ إِذْ تَنَصُّ صَحَّتْهُ أَيُّ: حَيْثُ يَنْصُ عَلَى صَحْتِهِ إِمَامٌ مَعْتَمِدٌ كَأَبِي دَاوُدَ، وَالتِّرْمِذِيُّ، وَالنَّسَائِيُّ وَالدَّارِقُطِيُّ، وَالْخَطَّابِيُّ، وَابِيهَيْقِي فِي مَصْنَفَاتِهِمُ الْمُعْتَمَدَةِ. كَذَا قَبْدَهُ ابْنُ الصَّلَاحِ بِمَصْنَفَاتِهِمْ، وَلَمْ أَقْبِدْهُ بَمَا، بَلْ إِذَا صَحَّ الطَّرِيقُ إِلَيْهِمْ أَتَمَّ صَحْحُوهُ وَلَوْ فِي غَيْرِ مَصْنَفَاتِهِمْ، أَوْ صَحْحَهُ مَنْ لَمْ يَشْتَهَرْ لَهُ تَصْنِيفٌ مِنَ الْأُمَّةِ كِيَحْيَى بْنِ سَعِيدِ الْقَطَّانِ، وَابْنِ مَعِينٍ، وَنَحْوَهُمَا، فَالْحُكْمُ كَذَلِكَ عَلَى الصَّوَابِ

“Take it when its authenticity is documented, i.e., when its authenticity is documented by a reliable ‘imam, like ‘Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhiyy, An-Nasaʿiyy, Ad-Daraqutniyy, Al-Khattabiyy, and Al-Bayhaqiyy, in their reliable works. This is how Ibnu-s-Salah restricted it. [However], I (Al-ʿIraqiyy) do not restrict it as such. Rather, [it is sufficient] if the chain about the report of them authenticating the hadith is authentic, even if that is outside of their works, or [even] if it is authenticated by one of the ‘imams whom it is not famous about him that he has an authoring, like Yahya Ibn Saʿid Al-Qattan, Ibn Maʿin, and the likes of those two. The judgment is correctly like this.”

the hadith deniers, for they reject the hadiths and the scholars. However, their position is still problematic, as will return momentarily.

2. Also, the people of hadith are not those who fraudulently call themselves “the ‘Athariyyis”, or “‘Ahlu-l-Athar (the people of the ‘athar)”, while what they mean is that they believe only in the literal meanings of the hadiths about the Attributes of Allah and do not explain any of them according to any reasoning or rationale, and this will come back also.

3. And know that what some unqualified people in our day do, like Al-‘Albaniyy and others, is that they go to the books of “**DISCREDITING (JARH) AND ACCREDITING (TA^DIL)**” narrators, search for the biographies of the men in a chain, read what the real scholars have said about each one, then make their own determination about the level of the hadith. Of course, anyway, if the hadith does not comply with their opinions, they will weaken it in one way or another. Had this been a sufficient method of authentication, the only qualification would be the ability to read.

Had it not been for those books, the imposters, unlike the true masters, would be unable to speak about the levels of the hadiths. This is because the knowledge is not in their hearts, as opposed to the genuine scholars. They did not put in the years of work, memorization and study as did those masters. Rather, they came centuries later and merely flipped pages. Some of them, using computers, do not even take the time to search through books. If what they did was proper, then what is the merit of the 'imams of old if they did what even the beginning student could do?

4. Be also aware that a hafidh's mere documentation of a hadith is not his authentication of it. Remember that point for an issue that will come, God willing. Instead, some of them dedicated books to only authentic hadiths, and some have dedicated books for only mutawatir hadiths. Some have commented on the grade of every hadith, one by one, and others have documented their hadiths without commenting on the levels, or rarely commenting, although they are qualified to comment. Some have even compiled books for fabricated hadiths¹.

DIGRESSION: Since we are on the topic of the different books, know that some have arranged their books according to the chapters of fiqh, thus gathering the hadiths related to wudu', then those related to prayer, then those to Zakah, then fasting, then Hajj, etc. This type is called a “**JAMI^**”. Some have arranged their books according to the names of the Companions who transmitted them from the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, they gathered what came from 'Abu Bakr, then what came from ^Umar, etc. According to that, the subjects of the hadiths are mixed up; arranging their topics was sacrificed for the sake of arranging them by the names of the

¹ *As-Siyutiyy* (pg. 277):

صَنَّفَ ابْنُ الْجَوْزِيِّ كِتَابًا فِي الْأَحَادِيثِ الْوَاهِيَةِ، وَأُورِدَ فِيهِ جُمْلًا فِي كَثِيرٍ مِنْهَا عَلَيْهِ انْتِقَادٌ.

"Ibnu-l-Jawziyy authored a book about weak hadiths and produced in it an amount, many for which he was criticized."

Companions. This type is called a “**MUSNAD**”¹. Some have reversed that and documented their hadīths according to the names of their shaykhs from whom they transmit. This is called a “**MU^JAM**”. These different types are mostly dedicated to what is elevated up to the Prophet ﷺ and some books are dedicated to not only the elevated narrations, but also what is stopped at the Companions, and perhaps even what is cut-off at the Followers, and may even include legal verdicts. Those include the types called “**MUSANNAF**” and “**MUWATTA**”. Some made hadīth indexes in which they mention only the first few words of a hadīth, then in what books it is documented. The type in which all of the hadīths in the book deal with the same subject is called a “**JUZ**”. The type that deals with explanation of the hadīths and bringing together its various renditions is a “**SHARH (EXPLANATION)**”. Allāh knows best.

Any of that could be without the goal of specifying authentic hadīths². If the author did not comment on the level, other hafidhs would, and sometimes they disagree.

Among those who dedicated a book to the authentic, and the first to do so, was Al-Bukhāriyy. Among those who commented on each hadīth was At-Tirmidhiyy, though one needs to compare his copy of At-Tirmidhiyy to a reliable copy. Among those who usually did not comment was ^Abdu-r-Razzaq and At-Tabarāniyy. In “Fat-hu-l-Bari”, the explanation of “Sahih Al-Bukhāriyy”, Ibn Hajar’s standard was that any hadīth he mentions is “sound” or “strong”, unless he says otherwise.

¹ **Al-^Iraqiyy:**

ودون السنن في رتبة الصحة ما صنّف على المسانيد، وهو ما أُفرد فيه حديث كل صحابي على حدة من غير نظر للأبواب كمسند أبي داود الطيالسي ويُقال إنه أول مسند صنّف وكمسند أحمد بن حنبل وأبي بكر بن أبي شيبة، وأبي بكر البزار، وأبي القاسم البغوي، وغيرهم وقد عدّ فيها ابن الصلاح مسند الدارمي، فوهم في ذلك؛ لأنه مُرتب على الأبواب، لا على المسانيد

"Lower than the books of Sunan in the ranks of authenticity is what was authored in the form of musnads. In that type, each Companion's hadīths were singled out one by one without considering its subject, like the musnad of 'Abū Dawūd At-Ṭayālisiyy. It is said that it is the first musnad authored. There is also the musnad of 'Aḥmad Ibn Ḥambal, that of 'Abū Bakr Ibn 'Abī Shaybah, 'Abū Bakr Al-Bazzar, 'Abū-l-Qasim Al-Baghawīyy, and of others. Ibnū-ṣ-Ṣalāh counted among them the Musnad of Ad-Darimiyy, and he was mistaken about that, because it is arranged according to subject, not chains from Companions."

² **Al-^Iraqiyy:**

قال ابن الصلاح: روينا عنه أي: عن أبي داود ما معناه أنه يذكر في كل باب أصح ما عرفه في ذلك الباب. وقال أبو عبد الله ابن منده عنه: إنه يخرج الإسناد الضعيف إذا لم يجد في الباب غيره؛ لأنه أقوى عنده من رأي الرجال. وقال ابن منده: إنه سمع محمد بن سعد البواردي بمصر يقول: كان من مذهب أبي عبد الرحمن النسائي أن يخرج عن كل من لم يجمع على تركه.

Ibnū-ṣ-Ṣalāh said: "We have narrated from him, i.e., from 'Abū Dawūd, that which means that he mentions in his book the most authentic of what he knows in each chapter." 'Abū ^Abdillāh Ibn Mandah said: "He will produce a weak chain if he does not know another hadīth in that subject, because according to him, that is stronger than men's opinions (i.e., ijtihād)." Ibn Mandah said that he heard Muḥammad Ibn Sa^d Al-Bawardiyy in Egypt saying: "The way of 'Abū ^Abdi-r-Raḥman An-Nasa'iyy was to narrate from the route of anyone whom they did not agree to abandon."

5. Let it be furthermore known that being a master savant in the field of hadith does not, in and of itself, free a person from having to follow a master savant in the field of Islamic Law. This is proven by the hadith¹:

فَرُبَّ حَامِلٍ فِقْهٍ لَا فِقْهَ لَهُ

“How many a carrier of [the hadiths that are evidence for] fiqh (i.e., the practical details) who has no fiqh.”

In other words, even a hafidh of hadith must follow the school of a mujtahid of fiqh in terms of religious rules, unless he is, besides being a hafidh, a mujtahid of fiqh. In another version of this hadith that was repeated twice already, the Prophet ﷺ, said²:

فَرُبَّ مُبَلِّغٍ أَوْعَىٰ مِنْ سَامِعٍ

“How many there are [who have the hadith] conveyed to [them], and understand (it) more than the one who heard (it).”

This proves that there are those who carry the hadiths to those more knowledgeable than themselves, who, in turn, take those hadiths and understand from them what the carrier of the hadith did not understand. They would be able to extract religious rules from those hadiths while the deliverer of the hadith was unable to do so; he only understood what appears from the hadith. Meanwhile, the mujtahid of fiqh may be able to pull 10 or 20 benefits and rules from that hadith.

The Wahhābiyyis often discredit the followers of the Four Schools- which is the majority of the Nation- by calling them “blind followers”. They claim that those Muslims follow the scholars instead of following the Prophet ﷺ. They have deemed themselves, “the People of Hadith” who suffice with the Qur’an and the Sunnah. For them, the details in the hadiths free them from needing the scholars. So, if a scholar says something different from what they understand from a hadith (in their limited knowledge), they reject him for their own opinion.

The truth is that the Muslims follow the Prophet ﷺ, through the scholars. Saying that they follow the scholars instead of the Prophet ﷺ is an underhanded way of saying that the scholars do not follow the Prophet ﷺ. This is because if the scholars do follow the Prophet ﷺ, then those who follow the scholars also follow the Prophet ﷺ, and if following the scholars is not following the Prophet, then what were the scholars following? If they were following other than the Prophet ﷺ, then they did not fear Allāh, but they are the people that Allāh said about them³:

¹ Musnad 'Aḥmad and other books

² Sunan At-Tirmidhiyy

³ Surat Fatir, # 28

﴿إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ﴾

<<Those who fear Allah from among His slaves are the scholars.>>

The Wahhābiyyis either did not know, or they knew but ignored the fact, that the hadīth scholars themselves were among the followers of the Four Schools. ‘Imām Muslim and others among the greatest hadīth masters followed the Shāfi‘iyy school. Even Al-Bukhārīyy is counted among the practitioners of Shāfi‘iyy law, as documented in the famous book about Shāfi‘iyy scholars, “Tabaqatu-sh-Shāfi‘iyyah” by Ibnu-s-Subkiyy. If the hadīth masters were following schools, then what excused the ignorant laymen, who in the first place, have no true share in the science of hadīth?

What excuses one from following another’s school is to be a mujtahid in the Law himself. If so, then he can rely directly on the Qur’an and the hadīths without imitating another scholar, as long as he does not break the Consensus of the scholars before him. He is, therefore, bound to comply with whatever they have altogether agreed upon. Unless one reaches that level, which for most people is unachievable because of the high qualifications, one must follow those who reached it, even if he is a mujtahid in the field of hadīth, i.e., a hafidh.

The job of the hafidh is to grade the hadīths, not to deduce rulings from them. The job of the mujtahid is to deduce rulings. The job of the layman is to follow the hafidhs and mujtahids, as proven by the saying of Allah¹:

﴿فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

<<Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know.>>

And with minimal contemplation, one can realize the mistake of the Wahhābiyy in this issue, because to follow the hadīths, one still must follow the scholars: the hadīth scholars. What then made him follow one group of qualified scholars and not another, other than his devious desire? This is besides the fact that he follows Ibn Taymiyah and is suspicious of anyone who does not.

If he says, “The difference is that ‘blind following’ is following a scholar without knowing his proof,” then he is asked what the hadīth scholar’s proof is. If he says, “The chains,” then he is challenged to recite even a single chain by heart. If he cannot, then he follows the hadīth scholar without knowing his proof. Therefore, he is a blind follower in his own standard.

If by slim chance he can, then he is challenged to explain why the chain is proof, by clarifying the status for every narrator. If he cannot, then he is still a blind follower.

¹ Surat Al-‘Ambiyā, # 7

If by even slimmer chance he can, then he is asked two questions:

1. The first is, “How do you know the status of those narrators except by following the scholars?” Therefore, he is still trapped in the corner of a blind follower.
2. The second is, “What of the one who cannot explain the chains? Is he a blind follower who should abandon the hadīth scholars like you abandon the fiqh scholars, and consequently abandon the hadīths altogether like you abandon the schools?” Here, he will be silenced, because his true conviction is that we must follow the hadīths and accept from those scholars, even if we do not know their proof. The problem is that he is not being consistent.

They say about the scholars of fiqh, “They are men and we are men.” By that, they equate themselves with people that Allāh elevated over them when He said¹:

﴿هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

<<Are those who know equal to those who do not know?>>

For sure they are not.

As stated, among the hadīth scholars were those who were also fiqh masters who had their own schools. Among them was ‘Imam Maḥlik, the compiler of “Al-Muwatta’”. Among them was ‘Imam ‘Aḥmad, the author of “Al-Musnad”. Even Ash-Shāfi‘iyy and ‘Abū Ḥanīfah were among them, although some are ignorant of ‘Abū Ḥanīfah’s mastery of the science of hadīth. It was even said of Al-Bukhārīyy that he attained the level of a mujtahid after being a follower of Ash-Shāfi‘iyy, and that his “Sahīh” is not merely a book of hadīth, but a clarification of his school.

BENEFIT 3: The Soundest of Hadīths

After knowing the conditions of acceptability, the levels of the hadīths and who is entitled to grade them, know which hadīths are considered the soundest and most authentic of all. It should already be clear that any hadīth that is a “report of masses” is at the highest level of authenticity, but usually the scholars start by mentioning something else²:

A hadīth that is, as they call it, “**AGREED UPON (MUTTAFAQ ^ALAYH)**” is the “**SOUNDEST OF AUTHENTIC ('ASAHHU-S-SAHIH)**”. What is meant by being “agreed upon” is that it is narrated by both of “**THE TWO SHAYKHS**”, Al-Bukhārīyy and Muslim³- excluding that

¹ Surat Az-Zumar, #9

² *As-Siyutiyy* (pg. 204):

الأوّل: أوردَ عَلَى هَذَا أَقْسَامٌ: أَحَدُهَا: الْمُتَوَاتِرُ، وَأَجِيبُ بِأَنَّهُ لَا يُعْتَبَرُ فِيهِ عَدَالَةُ، وَالْكَلامُ فِي الصَّحِيحِ بِالتَّعْرِيفِ السَّابِقِ.

"The first [note] is that this [sequence] was criticized by some types [of hadīth]. The first is the mutawātir, and that was rebutted because trustworthiness is not considered for this type, and the discussion here is concerning the hadīth described as authentic according to the aforementioned definition."

³ *Al-‘Iraqiyy* (vol. 1, pg. 36):

for which they have been criticized. This is due to their exceptional talent for distinguishing authentic texts from other texts¹.

Anyone who has learned even the most basic books of mustalah knows that the scholars say, "...except that for which they have been criticized²." So, believing that every single hadith in those two books is undisputed is compounded ignorance. There are indeed hadiths narrated by the Two Shaykhs, or by either of them, for which they have been criticized, and the Hadith of the Slave Girl is one of them. Therefore, do not let a Wahhabiyy fool you about that hadith by saying, "It is narrated by Muslim, and his is the second most authentic book."

The second level is that which is narrated by Al-Bukhariyy and not Muslim³. This is because the conditions that Al-Bukhariyy used to include a hadith in his book are stricter than Muslim's conditions, and because he is 'Imam Muslim's shaykh⁴. Muslim followed in his footsteps, and Al-Bukhariyy is generally more knowledgeable than him. Some scholars said, "Had it not been for Al-Bukhariyy, Muslim would have never come or gone." But be mindful! This preference of Al-Bukhariyy's book is a generality; it is not intended that every hadith that Al-Bukhariyy uniquely narrated is more authentic than any that Muslim uniquely narrated⁵.

أحدها: -وهو أصحُّها- ما أخرجَه البخاريُّ ومسلمٌ، وهو الذي يُعبَّرُ عنه أهلُ الحديثِ بقولهم: ((متفقٌ عليه))

"The first [of the levels], which is the soundest of them, is what is produced by Al-Bukhariyy and Muslim, and that is the one that the People of Hadith refer to as: 'muttafaq[un] ^alayh[i] (agreed upon)'."

¹ **Ibn Hajar:**

والإجماعُ حاصلٌ على أنَّهُمَا مَرَبَّةٌ فيما يَرُجَعُ إلى نَفْسِ الصِّحَّةِ

"The consensus is concluded that those two have a peculiar distinction [over others] concerning authenticity."

² **Al-Iraqiyy** (vol. 1, pg. 39):

ولمَّا ذَكَرَ ابنُ الصَّلاحِ: أنَّ ما أسنَداهُ مقطوعٌ بصحَّتِهِ. قال: سِوَى أَحْرَفٍ سِيرةً، تَكَلَّمَ عَلَيْهَا بَعْضُ أَهْلِ النِّقْدِ، كَالدَّارِقُطِيِّ وَغَيْرِهِ، وَهِيَ مَعْرُوفَةٌ عِنْدَ أَهْلِ الشَّانِ

"When Ibnu-s-Salah mentioned that what the two of them narrated with continuous chains is definitively authentic, he interjected [into his own statement]: except for a few. Some of the experts of criticism, like Ad-Daraqutniyy and others, spoke about them. They are known to the people of this craft."

³ **Al-Iraqiyy** (vol.1, pg. 25):

وكتابه أصحُّ من كتاب مسلم عند الجمهور، وهو الصحيح. وقال النووي: ((إنه الصواب))

"[Al-Bukhariyy's] book is sounder than Muslim's book according to the majority. That is what is 'sahih (correct)'. An-Nawawiyy said, "It is the 'sawab (correct thing)'."

⁴ **As-Siyutiyy** (pg. 161):

لأنه أشدُّ اتِّصَالاً وَاتِّقَنُ رِجَالاً، وَبَيَانَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ وَجْهِهِ

"... Because [Al-Bukhariyy's book] has stronger connectivity and narrators with more mastery, and the clarification of that is through different points ..."

⁵ **As-Siyutiyy** (pg. 206):

قَالَ الرَّزْكَسِيُّ: وَمِنْ هُنَا يُعْلَمُ أَنَّ تَرْجِيحَ كِتَابِ الْبُخَارِيِّ عَلَى مُسْلِمٍ إِنَّمَا الْمُرَادُ بِهِ تَرْجِيحُ الْجُمْلَةِ، لَا كُلِّ فَرْدٍ مِنْ أَحَادِيثِهِ عَلَى كُلِّ فَرْدٍ مِنْ أَحَادِيثِ الْآخَرِ.

The third level is what is narrated by Muslim and not Al-Bukhariyy. The merit that some scholars gave to Muslim's book over Al-Bukhariyy's is not about authenticity¹, but to its neat arrangement and systematic presentation. For example, Muslim gathered all the narrations of a hadith together, while Al-Bukhariyy's presentation is more scattered- although that was for goals that he had in mind. Al-Bukhariyy may have mentioned a portion of a hadith in one chapter, and the other portion in another chapter, because that one hadith contained evidence for two issues.

The fourth level is what fulfills the conditions of the Two Shaykhs but was not narrated by them. The fifth is what fulfills the conditions of Al-Bukhariyy, and the sixth is what fulfills the conditions of Muslim. The seventh is the conditions of others².

Therefore, the soundest hadith book is "Sahih Al-Bukhariyy", then "Sahih Muslim"³, although what is in both books together is stronger than what is in either, so give that a ponder. Then, contrary to what some may think, in terms of authenticity and not popularity, the third is "Sahih Ibn Khuzaymah". The fourth is "Sahih Ibn Hibban", and the fifth is "Al-Mustadrak" by Al-Hakim⁴, who died before he could finish editing his book. As-Siyutiyy says in "Tadrij Ar-Rawi":

"Az-Zarkashiyy said: From here it is known that the weightiness of Al-Bukhariyy's book over Muslim's is merely a general weightiness, not every individual one of his hadiths over every single one of the other. "

¹ **Al-Iraqiyy** copied from **Ibnu-s-Salah** (vol. 1, pg. 26):

وإن كان المراد به: أن كتاب مسلم أصح صحيحاً، فهذا مردودٌ على من يقوله

"If one meant that Muslim's book is more authentic, then this is thrown back to whoever said it."

² **Al-Iraqiyy** (vol. 1 pg. 37):

والسابع: ما هو صحيحٌ عند غيرهما من الأئمة المعتمدين، وليس على شرط واحدٍ منهما

"The seventh is what is authentic according to reliable imams other than those two, and is not according to the conditions of those two."

As-Siyutiyy said:

(ثم إن الزيادة في الصحيح عليهما (تعرف من) كتب (السنة المعتمدة كسنة أبي داود، والترمذي، والنسائي) وابن خزيمة،
والدارقطني، والحاكم، والبيهقي

"The sahih other than the Two is also known from the books of the reliable sunan, like 'Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhiyy and An-Nasa'iyy, as well as the books of Ibn Khuzaymah, Ad-Daraqutniyy, Al-Hakim, and Al-Bayhaqiyy."

³ **Al-Iraqiyy**:

وعلى كل حال فكتاباهما أصحُّ كتب الحديث

"Regardless, the books of those two are the soundest of the hadith books."

⁴ **Al-Iraqiyy** (vol. 1, pp. 31-32):

ويؤخذ الصحيح أيضاً من المصنفات المختصة بجمع الصحيح فقط، كصحيح أبي بكر محمد بن إسحاق بن خزيمة، وصحيح أبي حاتم محمد بن حبان البستي، المسمى بالتقاسيم والأنواع، وكتاب المستدرک على الصحيحين لأبي عبد الله الحاكم. وكذلك ما يوجد في المستخرجات على الصحيحين من زيادة أو تيممة لمخدوف، فهو محكوم بصحته

"The authentic is also taken from the works that are specified for compiling the authentic only, like the Sahih of 'Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn 'Is-haq Ibn Khuzaymah, the Sahih of 'Abu Hatim Muhammad Ibn Hibban Al-Bustiyy- which is called 'At-Taqaṣim wa-l-'Anwā' - and 'Al-Mustadrak ^Ala-s-Sahihayn' by 'Abu ^Abdillah Al-Hakim.

قَدْ عَلِمَ مِمَّا تَقَدَّمَ أَنَّ أَصَحَّ مَنْ صَنَّفَ فِي الصَّحِيحِ ابْنُ خُرَيْمَةَ ثُمَّ ابْنُ حِبَّانَ ثُمَّ الْحَاكِمُ، فَيَنْبَغِي أَنْ يُقَالَ: أَصْحُهَا
بَعْدَ مُسْلِمٍ مَا اتَّفَقَ عَلَيْهِ الثَّلَاثَةُ، ثُمَّ ابْنُ خُرَيْمَةَ وَابْنُ حِبَّانَ أَوْ وَالْحَاكِمُ، ثُمَّ ابْنُ حِبَّانَ وَالْحَاكِمُ. ثُمَّ ابْنُ خُرَيْمَةَ فَقَطْ،
ثُمَّ ابْنُ حِبَّانَ فَقَطْ، ثُمَّ الْحَاكِمُ فَقَطْ، إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنِ الْحَدِيثُ عَلَى شَرْطِ أَحَدِ الشَّيْخَيْنِ، وَلَمْ أَرْ مَنْ تَعَرَّضَ لِذَلِكَ،
فَلْيَتَأَمَّلْ.

"It is known from what preceded that the best to author books only for authentic hadiths (after the Two) are Ibn Khuzaymah, then Ibn Hibban, then Al-Hakim. It should therefore be said: the most authentic of hadiths after Muslim is what those three agreed upon, then Ibn Khuzaymah with [either] Ibn Hibban or Al-Hakim, then [what is agreed on by] Ibn Hibban and Al-Hakim, then Ibn Khuzaymah only, then Ibn Hibban only, then Al-Hakim only- as long as it was not according to the conditions of the Two Shaykhs. I have not seen anyone discuss this, so let that be considered."

The reason for saying, “contrary to what some may think” is that the books of **“THE FOUR IMAMS”** are more famous than the last three books just mentioned. Those four are ‘Imams Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhiyy, An-Nasa’iyy and Ibn Majah. These four books are famously called **“THE SUNAN”**. The word “sunan” is the plural of “sunnah”. These books are called as such because of the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ that they contain. Consequently, those Imams are called **“THE AUTHORS OF THE SUNAN (‘AS-HABU-S-SUNAN)”**. They are more frequently used by the scholars for the proofs that they contain not because they are the most authentic¹.

The synopsis of this point is that in terms of authenticity, the five previously mentioned books are the soundest. However, in the terms of fame and being most widely used as references, there are **“THE SIX BOOKS (AL-KUTUB AS-SITTAH)”**, which are the books of the Two Shaykhs—with a capital “T” and a capitol “S”—and the books of the Four Imams—with a capital “F and a capitol “I”.

Hence, when the people of hadith say, “the Two Shaykhs”, they mean Al-Bukhariyy and Muslim, and their books being the top books does not mean that they are the greatest hadith scholars of all time. It means that their books have a merit over other books, even if some imams were higher in the science than them, like Malik and ‘Ahmad. Shaykh Kamal Hut told us that the Shaykh said that if Malik and ‘Ahmad wanted to make books for only authentic hadiths,

Likewise, whatever exists in the [types of books called] ‘Mustakhrāj of the Two Books of Sahih’, such as an additional statement, or the completion of something omitted; it is judged as authentic.”

And he said: (vol. 1, pg. 32):

وابْنُ حِبَّانَ الْبُسْتِيُّ يُقَارِبُ الْحَاكِمَ فِي التَّسَاهُلِ، فَالْحَاكِمُ أَشَدُّ تَسَاهُلًا. قَالَ الْحَاكِمِيُّ: ((ابْنُ حِبَّانَ أَمَكَنُ فِي الْحَدِيثِ مِنَ الْحَاكِمِ))
“Ibn Hibban Al-Bustiyy is close to Al-Hakim in leniency. Thus, Al-Hakim is more lenient. Al-Hazimiyy said, Ibn Hibban is stricter in the hadith than Al-Hakim.”

¹ **Al-‘Iraqiyy:**

وَمَنْ أَطْلَقَ الصَّحِيحَ عَلَى كِتَابِ السُّنَنِ، فَقَدْ تَسَاهَلَ

“Whoever generalized in describing the books of *Sunan* as “sahih” has been [too] lenient.”

they could have made books bigger and sounder than the Two Shaykhs' books. When they say, "the Four Imams", or merely "the Four", they mean the four mentioned, and when they say, "THE SIX", they, of course, intend the total of those great Imams. There is also an outstanding Imam from the later scholars who was unsurpassed by any who came after him, and thus was nicknamed "the Seal of the Hafidhs". He is very often called simply "THE HAFIDH". He is Imam 'Ahmad Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalaniyy. May Allah admit them all to the highest levels of Paradise for their service to the Muslims and their sacrifice. Do not confuse those four 'Imams with the Four Imams of fiqh: 'Abu Hanifah, Malik, Ash-Shafi'iy and 'Ahmad, nor the Four Imams who were the first caliphs. Every field has its special terms and its outstanding stars.

And when we say, "their books" about the Two Shaykhs, its means specifically their books of sahih and not all their books. For example, Al-Bukhariyy has a book called "Al-'Adab Al-Mufrad"; and it is not dedicated to only authentic hadiths.

The last thing to mention under this benefit is that the scholars also spoke about which chains of narration are the soundest of all. Al-Bukhariyy deemed "THE GOLDEN CHAIN (AS-SILSILATU-DH-DHAHABIYYAH)" to be from Malik, from Nafi, from Ibn Umar, from the Prophet ﷺ. Other scholars mentioned other chains. However, what is the stronger opinion is that it should not be said that one chain is strongest of all chains¹. What is more conceivable is that there be a strongest chain from the route of a certain Companion, or from the people of a certain region², and Allah knows best.

BENEFIT 4: Using Hadiths as Evidence

You are now acquainted with the four types of acceptable hadiths: intrinsically sound, incidentally sound, intrinsically strong, and incidentally strong. You are also aware that a hadith being acceptable means that it is to be applied, which means that it is "EVIDENCE (HUUJAH)"³. If the hadith is weak, and thus rejected, it is not used as evidence, except for what will be mentioned.

Since the highest and noblest knowledge is that of the Creed (^Aqidah), i.e., the correct belief in Allah and His Messenger, its evidence must be sound. One scholar said that for a

¹ *Al-'Iraqiyy* (vol. 1, pg. 16):

لأنَّ تَفَاوُتَ مَرَاتِبِ الصَّحَّةِ مَتَرْتَبٌ عَلَى تَمَكُّنِ الْإِسْنَادِ مِنْ شُرُوطِ الصَّحَّةِ، وَيَعَزُّ وَجُودُ أَعْلَى دَرَجَاتِ الْقَبُولِ فِي كُلِّ فَرْدٍ فَرْدٍ مِنْ تَرْجِمَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ بِالنِّسْبَةِ لِجَمِيعِ الرِّوَاةِ

"... Because the variance in the levels of authenticity is based on the chain having the conditions of authenticity, and it is rare to find the highest levels of acceptance in every narrator one by one ... for all of the narrators."

² *Sharh Alfyyat Al-'Iraqiyy* (vol. 1, pp. 21-24)

³ *Al-'Iraqiyy*:

وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْحَدِيثِ مَنْ لَا يَفْرُدُ نَوْعَ الْحَسَنِ وَيَجْعَلُهُ مَنْدَرَجاً فِي أَنْوَاعِ الصَّحِيحِ؛ لِأَنْدَرَجِهِ فِي أَنْوَاعِ مَا يَحْتَجُّ بِهِ

"Among the people of hadith is who does not single out the hasan hadith, and instead makes it included under the sahih, because it is included under the types that are used as evidence."

hadith to be admissible as evidence in the Creed, it must be a report of masses, but this is not correct. The Hanafiyy masters said that any hadith evidence for the Creed must be at least “famous”. Some said that it is not a condition to be at that level, but it must at least be a sound hadith in which there is no difference about the trustworthiness of all its narrators.

According to this standard, the Hadith of the Slave Girl is not evidence for the matters of the Creed. It is neither a narration of masses, nor is it famous- with the technical meaning. It is not even a narration in which all of the scholars agree on its authenticity.

In Muslim’s version, the story is that the slave woman was tending to a flock of sheep when a wolf attacked one. Her master smacked her, but then regretted and wanted to set her free. In Ibn Hibban’s version, a man wanted to fulfill his dead mother’s will and free a slave on her behalf. In some versions, the man with the slave woman was named Mu[^]awiyah. In some, ^Amr, and in some it was a woman, not a man. In a version from Al-Bayhaqiyy, she was mute, in some versions, the Prophet ﷺ communicated with her in sign language, and in some, they spoke to each other. Therefore, the scholars of ‘Ahlu-s-Sunnah did not use this hadith as evidence for the Creed. Instead, they used it for rules of freeing slaves. ‘Imam Muslim himself narrated it in the chapter pertaining to the prohibition of speaking in the Prayer, not the Creed. Among those who weakened this hadith is Hafidh As-Subkiyy.

Also, the fabricated “Hadith of Jabir”, being fabricated, is not a narration of masses, nor famous, nor a report whose authenticity is agreed upon. Allah permitting, we will return to this hadith with details. But before that, let it be known that the people who rely on this fabrication to claim that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was the very first creation in the world, or that his body is made of light and not true flesh- two silly claims rejected by not only normal taste and common sense, but religious evidence, often produce the names of many who mentioned this hadith in their books. One answer among many- although arguing with ignorant, stubborn people is usually a waste of time- is that it is enough that Imam As-Siyutiyy said, “It is not confirmed.” This excludes it as unanimous evidence for the Creed, and the reliability of evidence for the Creed must be undisputed according to the People of Truth.

As for the rules of the Religion, i.e., the lawful (halal) and unlawful (haram), its evidence does not have to be at the strength of a matter of belief, but it cannot be weak. Therefore, when saying that the weak hadith cannot be evidence, this is about the Creed and the Law, i.e., the rules.

However, a weak hadith can be used in certain matters, such as explanation for Qur’anic verses, mentioning good merits of people, and doing good deeds¹. All of that, however, is with

¹ As-Siyutiyy (pg. 455):

(وَيَجُوزُ عِنْدَ أَهْلِ الْحَدِيثِ وَغَيْرِهِمُ التَّسَاهُلُ فِي الْأَسَانِيدِ) الضَّعِيفَةَ (وَرَوَايَةُ مَا سِوَى الْمَوْضُوعِ مِنَ الضَّعِيفِ وَالْعَمَلُ بِهِ مِنْ غَيْرِ بَيَانِ ضَعْفِهِ فِي غَيْرِ صِفَاتِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى) ، وَمَا يَجُوزُ وَيَسْتَحِيلُ عَلَيْهِ، وَتَفْسِيرُ كَلَامِهِ، (وَالْأَحْكَامَ كَالْحَلَالِ وَالْحَرَامِ، وَ) غَيْرِهِمَا، وَذَلِكَ كَالْقَصَصِ وَفَصَائِلِ الْأَعْمَالِ وَالْمَوَاعِظِ، وَغَيْرِهَا (مِمَّا لَا تَعَلُّقَ لَهُ بِالْعَقَائِدِ وَالْأَحْكَامِ) .

the condition that none of that contradicts the religious fundamentals. This is because saying that a ḥadīth is weak is not a denial that the Prophet ﷺ said it. Rather, it is a confirmation that one or more of the conditions of acceptability is missing, so we cannot rely on it¹.

And when saying that a weak ḥadīth can be used to mention someone's good merits, this does not at all include fabricated ḥadīths. So, know that 'Imams Ibn Rahawayh, Al-Bukhariyy, 'Aḥmad, An-Nasa'iyy Ibnu-l-Jawziyy and Ibn Hajar, all of whom are among the greatest savants of ḥadīth, have deemed all of the narrations about the merits of the companion Mu'awiyah Ibn 'Abī Sufyān as fabricated, not merely weak, as documented in "Fat-hu-l-Bari". Therefore, it should not be said about him that just as the wives of the Prophet ﷺ are the "Mothers of the Believers", he is the "Uncle of the Believers". Nor should it be said that the dust from his horse is greater than a believing Muslim. In fact, this last fabrication is blasphemy, because it contradicts the saying of Allāh²:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ﴾

<<Surely, those who believe and do good deeds, they are the best of the creation.>>

'Imam An-Nasa'iyy, one of the Six, was killed over this, may Allāh grant him everlasting bliss.

The synopsis is that acceptability has conditions, and based on those conditions, the levels of the ḥadīths vary. If the conditions are fulfilled, then the ḥadīth is good for evidence. If not, then it is not- generally speaking- for a weak ḥadīth may be used in some instances. The one qualified to grade a ḥadīth is a ḥafidh and a ḥafidh alone.

And Allāh knows best

"It is permissible according to the people of hadith and others to be lenient concerning weak chains, and to narrate what is weak as long as it is not fabricated, and to practice it without clarification of its weakness in other than the Attributes of Allah ta'ala, and what valid to attribute to Him and what is impossible, and "

¹ *Al-Iraqiyy* (vol. 1, pg. 15):

وكذا قولهم: هذا حديثٌ ضعيفٌ فمرادهم أنه لم يظهر لنا فيه شروطُ الصحة، لا أنه كذبٌ في نفس الأمر، لجوازِ صدقِ الكاذبِ،

وإصابة مَنْ هو كثيرُ الخطأ

"... And likewise, their saying, 'This is a da'if ḥadīth'; their intent is that there did not appear to us the conditions of authenticity in it, not that it is a lie in reality. This is due to the possibility of the liar being honest and the one who is frequently mistaken being correct."

² *Surat Al-Bayyinah*, #7

CHAPTER 6: Difference in the Meanings of the Hadiths

As stated previously, acceptability has another point of view: its meaning. Thus, before moving to discuss rejection with more details, we must tackle the issue of acceptance from its other perspective; the meaning of the hadith must be compliant with the religious fundamentals. For this topic, the scholars have authored chapters and books about "**DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE HADITHS (IKHTILAFU-L-HADITH)**". An-Nawawiyy said in At-Taqrīb:

هَذَا فَنُّ مِنْ أَهَمِّ الْأَنْوَاعِ، وَيَضْطَرُّ إِلَى مَعْرِفَتِهِ جَمِيعُ الْعُلَمَاءِ مِنَ الطَّوَائِفِ، وَهُوَ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ حَدِيثَانِ مُتَضَادَّانِ فِي الْمَعْنَى ظَاهِرًا، فَيُؤَوِّقُ بَيْنَهُمَا، أَوْ يُرْجِحُ أَحَدَهُمَا

"This is sub-discipline among the most important types, and the scholars of all fields need to know it. It is for there to be two hadiths whose meanings apparently conflict, so [the scholar] makes them comply or preponderates one over the other."

Among those fundamentals is what should be obvious for anyone with consciousness, which is that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ does not contradict himself, nor does he contradict the Qur'an. Ibn Khuzaymah said:

لَا أَعْرِفُ حَدِيثَيْنِ مُتَضَادَّيْنِ؛ فَمَنْ كَانَ عِنْدَهُ فَلْيَأْتِنِي بِهِ لِأُؤَلِّفَ بَيْنَهُمَا

"I do not know two conflicting hadiths, so whoever has that, let him come to me so that I can explain how they conform."

Another is that Allah absolutely does not resemble the creations in any way whatsoever. The third is that it is absolutely impossible that the mujtahids of the Nation would unanimously agree to a mistake. There are many fundamentals that cannot be bent or compromised. One acquires them when learning the proper information in the proper fashion. Whoever does not learn those basics will fall into enormous blunders when interpreting the Qur'an and hadiths, because he will not have the proper guidelines to aid him, protect him, and help him maneuver, as you shall see

Based on these mentioned basics, as well as others, a hadith may need clarification, or even rejection, even if it appears through its chain that it is acceptable. This is why Imam Al-Khattabiyy said in his book "Al-Faqih wa-l-Mutafaqqih":

إِذَا رَوَى الْحَبْرَ تَقَةً رَدَّ بِأُمُورٍ أَحَدُهَا أَنْ يُخَالَفَ مُوجِبَاتِ الْعُقُولِ فَيُعْلَمُ بَطْلَانُهُ لِأَنَّ الشَّرْعَ إِذَا يَرِدُ بِمُجَوِّزَاتِ الْعُقُولِ وَأَمَّا بِخِلَافِ الْعُقُولِ فَلَا وَالثَّانِي أَنْ يُخَالَفَ نَصَّ كِتَابٍ أَوْ سُنَّةٍ مُتَوَاتِرَةٍ فَيُعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لَا أَصْلَ لَهُ أَوْ مَنْسُوخٍ وَالثَّلَاثُ أَنْ يُخَالَفَ الْإِجْمَاعَ فَيُسْتَدَلُّ بِهِ عَلَى أَنَّهُ مَنْسُوخٌ أَوْ لَا أَصْلَ لَهُ لِأَنَّهُ لَا يَجُوزُ أَنْ يَكُونَ صَحِيحًا غَيْرَ مَنْسُوخٍ وَتُجْمَعُ الْأُمَّةُ عَلَى خِلَافِهِ

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

“If the upright, trusted one narrated a report with a continuous chain, it could (still) be rejected for (several)matters. One of them is that it opposes what is dictated by the intellects. Thereby its invalidity is known, because the Law only comes with what is permitted by the intellects. As for what opposes the intellects, no. The second is that it opposes the explicit text of the Book or the mass reported sunnah. It is thereby known that it has no basis or it is abrogated. The third is that it opposes the Consensus. It would thereby be inferred that it is abrogated or that it has no basis, because it is not possible that it would be sound, not abrogated, and (yet) the Nation has agreed to what is against it.”

Yes, a hadith may not be explicit (nass) in what it proves, meaning that the qualified scholars may have different ways of explaining the same hadith, and both explanations are considerable. That is another reason for different schools, but it is not the type of conflict that we will discuss. However, take an example: Al-Bukhariyy narrates the hadith that the Prophet ﷺ said¹:

لَا يُصَلِّيَنَّ أَحَدٌ الْعَصْرَ إِلَّا فِي بَنِي قُرَيْظَةَ

“No one prays Asr except at Banu Quraydhah.”

One school among the Companions took it by its seeming meaning, which is that the Prayer must not be performed until they arrive. The other took it as a way to say, “rush so diligently that by the time you get there, there is still enough time to pray,” but that it was not permission to pray the Prayer out of its time if they did not arrive before sunset. Thus, some prayed and some delayed. That was mentioned to the Prophet ﷺ and he did not scold either group. This proves the validity of different schools when the people who differed are qualified mujtahids. Examples of such occurrences are plenty and not truly the point of this chapter. Rather, this introduction was just to open up your mind to the concept of interpreting the hadiths. This was a case of two opposing meanings for a hadith while both meanings were acceptable.

Now we will get directly to our point and discuss acceptable meanings of hadiths when they conflict- or seem to conflict. But know, firstly, that countless hadiths, in fact, the vast majority of them, are unopposed in their meanings. This means that nothing stands in conflict with them, not the intellect, nor the Consensus, nor another hadith. Actually, there are not two sound hadiths that contradict each other. When a hadith is unopposed in its meaning, it is “**DECISIVE (MUHKAM)**”. This is different from the “muhkam (decisive/explicit)” hadith that is contrary to a “mutashabih (ambiguous)” hadith, and that will be addressed soon. However, slightly before all of that, know that if a hadith is weak and rejected, this does not mean that its meaning is unacceptable. Rather, there are plenty of weak hadiths whose meanings are correct or do not conflict with the religious fundamentals.

¹ Sahih Al-Bukhariyy

SECTION 1: Conflict

So, know that sometimes it seems that two acceptable hadīths contradict each other. If the scholars can reconcile the seeming conflict, they do so as much as possible. You have already had a taste of that in this book, and you shall taste more. When they reconcile between the two, then there is actually no conflict between them. For that we say, “it seems” that they conflict. The scholars have numerous ways to reconcile between narrations upon “**CONFLICT (TA^ARUD)**”, the majority of which we will skip. However, let us give two examples, the first being relevant in our times. Let us start with specifying the generality. Sometimes what appears from the text is a general, all-inclusive rule, while what is actually intended by that text is something more specific than what appears. That would be known by merging it with another text. For example, 'Abu Dawūd narrated the authentic hadīth¹:

وَكُلُّ بَدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ

Which seems to mean: “**Every innovation is misguidance.**”

What appears from this hadīth is that it is inclusive of all innovations, i.e., everything that the Prophet ﷺ did not do or order to be done, and is not mentioned explicitly in the Qur'an to be done. It seems from this hadīth that there is no exception whatsoever, and this is what the Wahhābiyy faction claims to hold fast to. And if this is its meaning, then it should include the religious and worldly innovations.

However, there is another authentic hadīth narrated by Muslim:

مَنْ سَنَّ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ سُنَّةً حَسَنَةً، فَلَهُ أَجْرُهَا، وَأَجْرُ مَنْ عَمِلَ بِهَا بَعْدَهُ، مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ يَنْقُصَ مِنْ أَجُورِهِمْ شَيْءٌ،
وَمَنْ سَنَّ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ سُنَّةً سَيِّئَةً، كَانَ عَلَيْهِ وِزْرُهَا وَوِزْرُ مَنْ عَمِلَ بِهَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ، مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ يَنْقُصَ مِنْ أَوْزَارِهِمْ
شَيْءٌ

“Whoever paves a good path (i.e., starts a good sunnah, i.e., practice) in Islam, then for him is its reward and the reward of whoever practices it after him until Judgment Day. And nothing of their (own) rewards is diminished. And whoever paves an evil path in Islam, upon him is its sin and the sin of whoever practices it after him until Judgment Day. And nothing of their (own) sins is diminished.”

This hadīth confirms reward for the one who starts a good practice, i.e., innovates a good innovation.

The question is: how could there be reward for the one who starts a good practice if every innovation is misguidance? The answer is that there is no true conflict, because although the terms of the first hadīth are general, its intended meaning is specific to only the innovations

¹ Sunan 'Abu Dawūd

that contradict the Religion, which is most of them. In other words, because most innovations are misguidance, he said, “every innovation”, and the good practices that were innovated are not included in this hadith.

For more clarity, the word “كُلُّ” literally means “all/every”, but when there is evidence, it figuratively means “most”—just like in English. It could be said, “Everyone does it,” or “You always do that,” meaning, “most” and “usually”. Allāh says about the windstorm inflicted on the tribe of Ad:

﴿تُدَمِّرُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ﴾

<(It was) destroying everything.>

Any person with a speck of intelligence knows that this wind did not destroy absolutely everything, rather, it destroyed most things in that area. For example, it did not destroy the mountains. Did not the Prophet ﷺ say about ‘Abu Jahm¹:

فَلَا يَضَعُ عَصَاهُ عَنْ عَاتِقِهِ

“He does not take the stick from his shoulder.”?

This does not mean that he never takes it from his shoulder. Likewise, “every” innovation, here means “most innovations”, or it means “every innovation that does not comply with the Religion”—which is most of them. It cannot mean absolutely all, because the Prophet ﷺ, said that whoever starts a good practice in Islam has its reward and the reward of whoever practices it until Judgment Day.

BENEFIT: Refuting Wahhābiyyis in the Issue of Innovations

This is the explanation of the People of Truth: Ash-Shāfi^ʿīyy said so, as in the beginning of the book, as well as Ibn Hajar, An-Nawawīyy, and many others. This explanation enables us to keep both hadiths without rejecting either and without twisting the language or being dishonest. The Wahhābiyyis cannot accuse us of twisting the language here because “كُلُّ” means “most” as a figure of speech when there is evidence, and we have just shown the evidence. On the other hand, their insisting that it means absolutely every innovation causes them, firstly, to twist the language of Muslim’s “كُلُّ”, and secondly, to fall into contradictions and hypocrisy when they practice what they forbid:

As for their twisting the language of Muslim’s hadith:

¹ Sahih Muslim, chapter on the woman who was divorced thrice not deserving spousal support.

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

1. They may say that this hadith is only related to the specific people in the particular story that happened when the Prophet ﷺ said the hadith.

This is against the language of the hadith, and the well-known rule that was mentioned in the beginning of the book:

الإعتبارُ بِعُمُومِ اللَّفْظِ لَا بِخُصُوصِ السَّبَبِ

“The consideration is given to the generality of the expression, not the specific reason (for the expression)”.

This means that although there may be a specific reason for a hadith to be said or an 'ayah to be revealed, and there may be particular people involved, the ruling of the text is not restricted to that if its language is more general than the incident itself or the people involved. This is why some of the Companions said, “An ayah would be revealed about a person, then be general after that. Hence when the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ سَنَّ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ سُنَّةً حَسَنَةً، فَلَهُ أَجْرُهَا

“Whoever starts a good practice in Islam has its reward ...”,

we knew from the language that the rule was not only from the people involved in the incident.

2. They may say that this hadith is only for the time of the Prophet ﷺ, or the time of his Companions.

This is untrue because the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ سَنَّ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ سُنَّةً حَسَنَةً

“Whoever starts a good practice in Islam...”,

and Islam will last until world's end, so it is not restricted to any particular time over another.

3. They may say that it means, “whoever revives a Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ has its reward”.

This is wrong again, and for three reasons:

Firstly, there is nothing in the hadith that means “to revive”, i.e., to restart what was already established. Rather, the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ سَنَّ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ سُنَّةً حَسَنَةً

“Whoever paves a good path (i.e., starts a good practice) in 'Islam...”,

Therefore, that is also a blatant perversion of the language of the hadith.

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

Secondly, if it refers to a Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, then the second half of the hadith:

وَمَنْ سَنَّ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ سُنَّةً سَيِّئَةً

“Whoever starts an evil Sunnah in Islam ...”,

would mean that the Prophet ﷺ has evil sinful Sunnahs, and that whoever revives Them has their sin, and this is impossible.

Thirdly, this explanation contradicts the incident: A man put an item on the ground for some poor Muslims, then following his example, another did so, then another, until a heap of charities was piled for them. Upon that, the Prophet ﷺ said that whoever starts a good practice—like that Companion did—has its reward and the reward of everyone who practices it—like those who followed that Companion’s example. So where was the Prophet ﷺ talking about reviving his Sunnah?

Hence, every excuse they attempt is a perversion of the hadith and a manifestation of their stubbornness.

And according to their explanation of ‘Abu Dawud’s hadith, they should abandon cars and phones. They may say that the hadith:

وَكُلُّ بَدْعٍ ضَلَالَةٌ

“Every innovation is misguidance”,

only means “every religious innovation”, and that the worldly innovations like cars and phones are fine. If this is their explanation, then they have refused the generality and restricted the hadith like we did; they are saying that “كُلُّ” does not mean every single innovation without exception, just as we say. Therefore, they ran into what they fled from.

As for them contradicting themselves, contrary to their claim, they do accept religious innovations. If they do not, then let them reject and consider as misguidance the very Muṣ-ḥaf (book of the Qur’an) itself, since it was Abu Bakr’s compilation done by the advice of Umar, not the Prophet ﷺ. At first Abu Bakr was uncomfortable with the idea, saying to Umar, “Do you want to do what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, did not?”

If considering the compilation of the Qur’an between two covers a misguidance is too strong of an imposition, then let them remove the dots from its letters, since that was an innovation of the Followers. Additionally, let them remove the names of the Surahs (chapters), and the numbers of the verses, and the signals for how to stop when reciting, and where each of the 30 parts are. In fact, let them not divide it into 30 parts in the first place.

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

Also, let them stop copyrighting the Qur'an as if the Speech of Allah is their own possession and no one has the right to copy it but by their permission. And let them stop copyrighting all their books since our law does not validate retaining any possession of or right over what one sells.

And let them stop splitting the Tawhid into three aspects. And if they accept adding to the Religion that three equals one, why do they reject acknowledging the Prophet's birth, which was accepted by all the scholars since it was first done?

And let them refuse a microphone and speakers for the Adhan, because the Adhan is a dhikr. If they accept that because they are merely devices for amplification, let them accept dhikr beads since they are merely a device for counting and calculation.

And let them demolish Medina University, since the Prophet ﷺ did not take his Companions through freshman to senior years, and did not give them a bachelor's degree or ijazah in religious knowledge. And let them refuse the science of hadith since the Prophet ﷺ did not classify his hadiths or their chains. And let them reject the terms of all the religious sciences if they are true to their claims.

So the absurdity of taking [كُلِّ] "every/all" by its absolute literal meaning is obvious and gleaming, and you can feel safe from the other texts that they pervert to deny good innovations, although they are not mentioned here.

Consequently, there is no true conflict between the two hadiths.

A second example, commonly mentioned in the books of mustalah, is in such hadiths as¹:

لَا عَدْوَى وَلَا طَيْرَةٌ

"There is no contagion and no bad omen,"

and:

لَا يُعْدِي شَيْءٌ شَيْئًا

"Nothing infects another (by contagion)."

These two hadiths appear to negate contagion. However, the Prophet ﷺ also said²:

¹ Sahih Al-Bukhariyy, chapter on the judham disease

² Sahih Al-Bukhariyy, Chapter on the judham disease.

فِرَّ مِنَ الْمَجْدُومِ فِرَارَكَ مِنَ الْأَسَدِ

“Flee from the one with ‘judham’ like you flee from a lion,”

and¹:

إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ بِالطَّاعُونَ بِأَرْضٍ فَلَا تَدْخُلُوهَا، وَإِذَا وَقَعَ بِأَرْضٍ وَأَنْتُمْ بِهَا فَلَا تَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا

“If you hear of a land with the plague, do not enter it, and if it befell a land while you are there, do not leave it.”

These seem to verify contagion. Both sets of hadiths are confirmed, so they must be merged if possible, and the scholars had more than one way to do so.

Some merged them by saying that the negation of contagion is not a denial that someone may catch a sickness from another, it is only a denial that sickness is contagious without the creating of Allāh. According to them², the Prophet ﷺ denied contagion with these expressions out of opposing the pagan belief of the old Arabs that sicknesses transfer by their natures, i.e., without the creating of Allāh. It is as if he said, “there is no contagion in the way that you Arabs believe there to be”.

According to this, the Prophet’s confirmation of contagion in the other hadiths refers to the contagion being by the creation of Allāh, and not independent. This is just as Allāh said³:

﴿وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَى﴾

<<You (O Muḥammad) did not throw when you threw, rather, Allāh threw.>>

In this verse, there is a negation that the Prophet ﷺ threw, and yet its confirmation. So, the negation, i.e., saying, “You did not throw,” is a denial that he acted without the creating of Allāh, and the confirmation, i.e., saying, “when you threw,” refers to his actual, confirmed created act. Therefore, this verse truly means: “You did not create the throwing when you did the act of throwing those pebbles, rather, Allāh is the Creator of your throwing”. Likewise, the negation of contagion in some hadiths is only a denial that contagion occurs without Allāh’s creating, and the confirmation in other hadiths refers to the actual existence of contagion, however as a creation of Allāh. Therefore, there is no true conflict.

Others⁴ merged them by saying that the Prophet’s negation of contagion is a literal reality; there is no contagion whatsoever. They said that the hadith like the command to flee from the person who is sick with judham does not explicitly confirm contagion, as opposed to the other hadiths that explicitly deny it, so the reason to flee from such a person is other than

¹ Sahih Al-Bukhariyy, Chapter on what was mentioned about the plague.

² Among them is Ibnū-ṣ-Ṣalāh, Al-Bayhaqiyy, An-Nawawiyy and others.

³ Surat Al-'Anfal #17

⁴ Besides Ibn Hajar, others who preferred this position include Malik, Ibn Wahb, Al-Bajjiyy, and Al-Qurtubiyy.

contagion. Rather, when such a sick person mingles with a healthy person, it may intensify his regret and sadness for his own situation, and the healthy person may unwittingly offend that sick one or annoy him, and because if he does happen to get sick, he may say, "If not for that sick one, I would be healthy", and that breaks the heart of the sick. Ibn Hajar said¹ about that:

فَيُظَنُّ أَنَّ ذَلِكَ بِسَبَبِ مُخَالَطَتِهِ فَيَعْتَقِدُ صِحَّةَ الْعُدْوَى فَيَقَعُ فِي الْحَرَجِ فَأَمَرَ بِتَجَنُّبِهِ حَسْمًا لِلْمَادَّةِ

"One would think that his sickness is due to his mingling with the sick, and then he would believe in the validity of contagion, and then fall into the problem of believing different from what the Prophet said. He was therefore commanded to refrain from that mingling to close the door on that from the beginning."

Also, when the sick encounters the healthy, the healthy are repelled and offended, and this bothers the feelings of both sides. Therefore, the reason for this prohibition of the Prophet ﷺ is the emotional harm involved, not contagion. Furthermore, there is permission for the healthy person who has strong reliance on Allāh and the stomach to mingle with the sick to mingle with them, and had sickness been by contagion, it would not have been permissible. The Prophet ﷺ said²:

وَلِيُحَلَّ الْمُصِحُّ حَيْثُ شَاءَ

"Let the healthy person go where he wishes."

This is why the Prophet ﷺ silenced the man who questioned the Prophet's denial of contagion by saying to him:

فَمَنْ أَعْدَى الْأَوَّلَ

"Who, then, infected the first?"

Thus, had the sickness been by contagion, the first one would have never gotten sick, because there was no one before him to infect him. Instead, Allāh creates the sickness in the second one as He creates it in the first, i.e., without contagion.

Consequently, there is still no true conflict between these hadiths.

BRANCH: Clarification of Some Ambiguous Texts

Before moving to discuss abrogation, because that is a type of conflict, let us discuss the correct explanations of a few "ambiguous (mutashābih)" hadiths.

¹ Explanation of Nukhbah (pg. 36)

² Sunan Al-Bayhaqiyy

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

By “ambiguous hadith”, we mean those hadiths that, if taken by their apparent meanings, conflict with not only the decisive, explicit (muḥkam) texts, but also the judgment of the sound mind and the consensus of the Nation.

As for the sound mental judgment, it is unacceptable and irrational that Allāh would be a body. Had He been a body, then He would be inside of something or outside, and He would be in contact with something else, i.e., connected to it, or disconnected, i.e., separated from it. And if He were a body, he would be moving or still. This is because it is impossible that there exists a body without any of those qualities. Then, had He been inside of something, he would have been contained, like the sun, the stars and the Angels that are contained within the universe, and He would be smaller than what contains Him so that He could fit inside of it. Had He been outside of something, He would have edges by which He would be separate from that thing. Then, He would either be bigger than it, smaller, or of its very size. Whichever of those would be the case, He would need a specifier to give Him those limits instead of others, because everything that has a limit did not give itself that limit. Whoever needs a specifier is a creation and is not God, deserving of worship. If He were in contact with something, He would be touching it, which means that He would have a surface and thus a structure. If He were disconnected from something, He would be a body either at a limited distance from that thing, or unlimited. Whichever the case, he would have specifications, and that is impossible. So had Allāh been in the sky, or one who moves, or sits, or had organs, as one would imagine if he took those ambiguous texts literally, the sound mind dictates that He would be a creation; a body with limits and similitudes to the creation, and that is what Allāh negated from Himself.

As for the explicit texts, meaning those texts that cannot have any alternative explanation, they include the saying of Allāh¹:

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ﴾

<Nothing is whatsoever like Him.>

This explicitly proves that Allāh is not in a place or direction, and that He has no bodily qualities. Another explicit text is the Prophet’s saying²:

كَانَ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ لَمْ يَكُنْ شَيْءٌ غَيْرُهُ

“Allāh was, and there was nothing other than Him.”

This explicitly proves that He existed when there was no place or direction, no time or space, and no skies in which to ascend or descend. If this is valid for Him before the creations, it is also valid for Him after the creations. These two texts, as well as others, are explicit in clearing Allāh from resembling the creation. It is clearly known from them that He is exalted from having a

¹ Surat Ash-Shura #11

² Sahih Al-Bukhariyy, Chapter of the beginning of creation.

shape, form, color, time, or place. Since they are explicit and authentic, nothing can contradict them.

As for the Consensus of the Muslims that Allāh does not change and is not bound by directions, Imām At-Tahāwiyy said: “He did not increase by His creation’s existence by anything that He was not attributed with before they existed,” and “The six directions do not contain Him as is the case of the created things.” Also, Al-Baghdādiyy said in “Al-Farqu Bayna-l-Firaq”, “They have agreed that He is not in a place.” Therefore, He did not start going up and down in His creation after creating them, because that was not His attribute before creating them. Nor was He in the sky after creating the creation because that was not His attribute before creating the creation.

So, if a ḥadīth is authentic and seems to conflict with an explicit text, the intellect, or the consensus, it must be given an “alternative explanation (ta’wīl)” that complies with the Religion and the language.

Now know how to reconcile a few of those narrations, for in their proper explanation there is among the most important of clarifications:

The Ḥadīth of the Slave Girl:

You have already known the correct meaning of the Prophet’s question to the slave girl. Review it in the first benefit under the third chapter, if need be. By merging the narrations, one also knows the meaning of her answer to his question. Although in the version of Muslim, she answered the Prophet ﷺ by saying: [فِي السَّمَاءِ] which seems to mean, “in the sky”, but in the version of 'Imām Malīk, when the Prophet ﷺ asked her if she testifies that no one is God except Allāh and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, she said, “Yes,” and she did not say, “in the sky”. Also, in the version when he asked her about her Lord, she said, “Allāh”, and she did not say, “in the sky.”

Thus, when merging the different expressions of what her answer to him was, it is known that she was not saying that Allāh is “in” or “above” the sky, which is something impossible. Rather, she was confirming that she worships Allāh alone.

Ḥadīths about “Who is in the Sky”:

The Angels are those who are correctly referred to in “the Ḥadīth of Mercy” reported by At-Tirmidhiyy:

ارْحَمُوا مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَرْحَمَكُم مَّن فِي السَّمَاءِ

“Have mercy upon whoever is on earth, and ‘who is in the sky’ will have mercy on you,”

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

This is proven by the rendition of 'Imam 'Ahmad¹ and others:

ارْحَمُوا أَهْلَ الْأَرْضِ يَرْحَمَكُمُ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ

“Have mercy upon the people of the earth and the people of the sky will have mercy on you.”

Since it is impossible that Allāh could be “the people of the sky”, we know that “who is in the sky” refers to the Angels, for they are the people of the sky. If it were asked, “*If it is not Allāh having mercy on you, then what is the meaning of the Angels having mercy on you?*” The answer is that their having mercy on the merciful people is by supplicating for them, asking Allāh to forgive them, and protecting them from harm, and the likes. Similar to these is the hadith of the Two Shaykhs:

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ مَا مِنْ رَجُلٍ يَدْعُو امْرَأَتَهُ إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ فَتَأْبِي عَلَيْهِ، إِلَّا كَانَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ سَاخِطًا عَلَيْهَا حَتَّى يَرْضَى عَنْهَا

“I swear by the One Who controls my soul, there is no man who calls his woman to his bed and she refuses him, except that ‘who is in the sky’ is displeased with her until her husband is pleased with her.”

It is clarified by the other narration, also narrated by the Two Shaykhs as well as others, which is more famous than the first, in which he ﷺ said:

لَعَنَتَهَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ

“... the Angels damn her until the morn.”

This is why ‘Imam Al-‘Iraqiyy and others explained that the Angels are meant by the 16th verse of Surah Al-Mulk:

﴿ءَأَمِنْتُمْ مَّن فِي السَّمَاءِ﴾

<Do you feel safe from ‘who is in the sky’?>

Some said Angel Jibril specifically, for the Angels are appointed with bringing the torture upon whomever Allāh commanded.

The Hadith of ‘Nuzul (Descent)’

Also, there is the famous ‘Hadith of Descent (Nuzul)’:

¹ Musnad 'Ahmad, Chapter of the reports of ^Abdullah Ibn ^Amr Ibnu-l-^As

يَنْزِلُ رَبُّنَا تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا حِينَ يَبْقَى ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ الْآخِرِ يَقُولُ: مَنْ يَدْعُونِي، فَاسْتَجِبْ لَهُ مَنْ يَسْأَلُنِي فَأَعْطِيهِ، مَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُنِي فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ

It seems to mean, “Our Lord descends every night to the lowest sky, when the last third of the night remains, and then says: “Is there a supplicant so that I may answer him, is there a repentant one so that I may forgive him, is there an asker so that I may grant him?” However, like the other hadiths, it also refers to an Angel. He descends by Allah’s command and calls out conveying these words from his Lord, as proven by the version of An-Nasa’iyy¹ that was authenticated by ^Abdu-l-Haqq:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَمْهَلُ حَتَّى يَمْضِيَ شَطْرُ اللَّيْلِ الْأَوَّلِ، ثُمَّ يَأْمُرُ مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي يَقُولُ: هَلْ مِنْ دَاعٍ يُسْتَجَابُ لَهُ، هَلْ مِنْ مُسْتَغْفِرٍ يُغْفَرُ لَهُ، هَلْ مِنْ سَائِلٍ يُعْطَى

"Surely, after the first half of the night passes, Allah commands a caller to call out, ‘Is there a supplicant so that he may be answered, is there a repentant one so that he would be forgiven, is there an asker so that he would be granted?’ "

Someone may ask, “How could the one who descends and asks be other than Allah when the Prophet ﷺ said, “Our Lord descends and HE SAYS, ‘Is there a supplicant so that I may answer him?’” The answer is that explaining this to mean that the Angel is conveying from Allah, is like another hadith in the Two Books of Sahih that the Prophet ﷺ said about when he was in the heavens on the Night of the Ascension:

فَلَمَّا جَاوَزْتُ نَادَى مُنَادٍ: أَمْضَيْتُ فَرِيضَتِي، وَخَفَّفْتُ عَنْ عِبَادِي

“When I went beyond, a caller called out: ‘I have settled what I made obligatory and I have lightened (the burden) for my slaves’.”

In this last hadith, just as the caller who was an Angel, was conveying from Allah, for it is as if the Prophet ﷺ said, “... A caller called out (conveying from his Lord): I have settled what I made obligatory...”, in the Hadith of Descent, it is as if the Prophet ﷺ said: “(The Angel of) Your Lord descends and says (your Lord says): is there a supplicant so that I may answer him?” And the Prophet ﷺ only said what seems to mean, “Our Lord descends”—according to that famous version of the hadith—because Allah is the One Who commands for the descent. This is just as it is said, “The general attacked,” or “The judge imprisoned him,” with the meaning that the action was by their command, not that the general personally attacked or that the judge personally put the person in a jail cell.

Since these hadiths fulfilled the conditions of acceptability, the scholars strove to explain them in a way that complies with the religious fundamentals. There are plenty of hadiths that require proper explanation, as well as verses from the Qur’an. There is no need to

¹ ^Amal Al-Yawmi wal-Laylah, Chapter of the time in which repentance is recommended.

go further here. The scholars have written books in which they explained these ambiguous texts, like “‘Asasu-t-Taqdīs” by Ar-Razīyy, and “Daf‘u Shubahi-t-Tashbīh” by Ibnu-l-Jawziyy. Therefore, there is no true conflict in these hadiths.

Before moving to the next segment, take the quote of At-Tilimsāniyy:

“...We say: Every expression that came in the Law about the Self, the Names and the Attributes (of Allah), and gives the (false) impression of what conflicts with the intellect, would either be a report of masses or of individuals. If it were a report of individuals and was blatant, unaccepting of an alternative explanation, then we are definitive about belying its reporter, or his forgetfulness, or that he is mistaken. If it was (only) seeming, then the seeming meaning is not the intent. If it were a mass narration, then it is inconceivable that it would be blatant and unaccepting of an alternative explanation. There is (therefore) no escape from it either being (only) the seeming meaning, or it possibly bearing (several) equal meanings. Upon that, we say that the possibility that the intellect disproves is not the intent ...”

Some silly Hadith Deniers said, “In some hadiths it mentions that the Prophet ﷺ sat to urinate, and in others that he stood. Which was it?” The very easy answer is, “Both are correct. Sometimes he sat, other times he stood.” Surely, there is no scholarship or intelligence in their approach.

As for there being a real irreconcilable conflict between two apparently acceptable hadiths, then either one of them abrogates the other, or one of them is irregular and not truly acceptable, i.e., a narrator made a mistake in his transmission, because the Prophet ﷺ does not contradict himself.

SECTION 2: Abrogation

If it is known about two conflicting hadiths that cannot be reconciled that one preceded the other, then this is the case of “**ABROGATION (NASKH)**”¹. The later one abrogates the earlier one, i.e., lifts the judgment of the previous one². Hence, the first one, i.e., the earlier one, is the

¹ **Al-Iraqiyy:**

ويعرفُ بنصِّ الشارعِ عليه، أو بنصِّ صاحبٍ من الصحابةِ عليه، أو بمعرفةِ التاريخِ للواقعتين، أو بأنَّ يُجمَعُ على تركِ العملِ
بمحدثٍ

"[Abrogation] is known by the law-bringer specifically stating that, or by the authority of a Companion reporting that, or by knowing the dates of the two incidents, or by there being a consensus in opposition to the application of a hadith."

² **Al-Iraqiyy:**

والمرادُ برفعِ الحكمِ: قطعُ تعلُّقهِ بالمكلفين

"What is meant by 'the lifting of the judgment' is making it no longer applicable to the accountable people."

“**ABROGATED (MANSUKH)**” hadith whose ruling is removed, and the second, i.e., the later one is the “**ABROGATING (NASIKH)**” hadith establishing a new rule. An example is the Prophet ﷺ previously forbidding visiting the graves, then later permitting it, as 'Imam Muslim narrated:

كُنْتُ هَيْئَتِكُمْ عَنْ زِيَارَةِ الْقُبُورِ، فَزُورُوهَا فَإِنَّهَا تُدَكِّرُ الْآخِرَةَ

“I had forbidden you from visiting the graves. Visit them, for surely they give reminder of the Afterlife.”

Another example is what was narrated by the Four from the route of Jabir, that he said, “*The last of two issues from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was considering the wudu’ still valid after eating cooked food.*” This means that it was previously revealed to the Prophet ﷺ that eating cooked food invalidates the wudu’, then this ruling was abrogated.

There are numerous cases of abrogation, both in the Qur’an and the hadiths, like the prayer direction being changed from Jerusalem to the Ka’bah, and the Muslims being forbidden from fighting being abrogated to the permission to fight. The branches of abrogation are not a topic for this summarized beginner’s book, rather its details and types are discussed in the science of 'usulu-l-fiqh. Nevertheless, it is very important for the defender of hadiths to be strong in abrogation in general, for it is a weak spot for the Hadith Deniers.

Sometimes they produce hadiths that are subjects of abrogation, intending to discredit all hadiths in general, because of contradiction. If the Muslim mentions abrogation, those Deniers will become enraged and then argue their hardest. Sometimes, before the Muslim mentions anything about abrogation, they initiate the subject to cut off the Muslim from the start, saying, “... And do not try to use abrogation as an excuse for these contradictions.” However, be neither nervous nor intimidated. Stand up to them and establish the fact of abrogation.

For them, abrogation is an excuse fabricated by Muslims to explain irreconcilable conflicts in some hadiths. What is true, though, is that abrogation being a part of the Revelation is the Muslim creed. We believe that Allah reveals laws to some Messengers and abrogates them by other Messengers. We say that some Prophets and their followers had to pray once per day, others twice, and we, the followers of Muhammad ﷺ, pray five times per day. In the Law of Adam, a man could marry his sister who was not his twin. In the laws of all other Prophets, that is forbidden; with a twin or not. In the Law of Lut (Lot), a Muslim woman could marry a non-Muslim man, while in the Law of Muhammad, that is invalid. We also believe that Allah may reveal laws to a Messenger, and abrogate them within the life of that Messenger, like Allah commanding Prophet Ibrahim to slaughter his son, and then abrogating that. By the death of the Messenger, abrogation is cut-off, because it is Revelation, and only Prophets receive the Revelation.

By abrogation, there are many known rules, as well as by the hadiths in general, since they explain what is generalized in the Qur’an. For this reason, the Hadith Deniers- who should

not be called “Qur’anists”, and instead they are anti-Qur’anists and anti-Islamists- actually have no laws. They deny the Five Prayers, which is blasphemy, they belittle the *istinjā’*, they have no laws for marriage, etc.

The basis of abrogation is explicitly confirmed in the Qur’an:

﴿مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا﴾

<<Whatever verse We (Allah) abrogate, or make forgotten, We bring better than it or like it.>>

It is confirmed in the Book and is not an excuse for the verses, and likewise it is not an excuse for the *hadīths*, rather it is a fact. Unfortunately, those people are very dishonest and ignorant, so debating with them is almost pointless. It is a nobler goal to refute them in front of people to protect the people from their harm than trying to convince one of them, but Allah controls the hearts and guides whom He willed. It takes one who is strong in the knowledge to dispute with them; I mean, those of them who have trained to defend their position. Also, one needs to be clever, knowing which of their claims to ignore and which to respond to, and what points to present as arguments and what to hold on to.

Their denial of the very obvious matters of the Religion causes them to pervert the meanings of the verses, making them nothing more than an abortion of the *Batiniyyah* sect, those who pervert the meanings of the Qur’an by assigning alternative meanings to its words and verses without evidence to do so.

SECTION 3: Preponderance

If there is irreconcilable conflict between two acceptable *hadīths*, and their dates are not known so to judge it as a case of abrogation, then one of them is actually not acceptable, and thus “**PREPONDERANCE (TARJIH)**” must be given to one of them over the other.

The scholars have a number of ways to determine which of the two is outweighed, and consequently is “**ANOMALOUS/IRREGULAR (SHADHDH)**”, and which is preponderant, i.e., weighty, and consequently “**MAINTAINED (MAHFUDH)**”.

If one of those conflicting *hadīths* is from a reliable narrator, however, the other is from a more reliable source, such as a stronger narrator or more numerous narrators, then preference is given to the more reliable. This is because it is less likely that the stronger or the more numerous or more knowledgeable, for example, would be mistaken in comparison to the less reliable or less numerous. That other *hadīth* that seemed to be acceptable is actually weak and thus rejected.

If there was no way to give preference to one over the other, then both are suspended.

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

An example is the addition of, “The Day of ^Arafah,” in the hadith:

أَيَّامُ التَّشْرِيقِ أَيَّامٌ أَكَلٍ وَشُرْبٍ

“The Days of Tashriq are days of eating and drinking.”

The version that has the addition is from the route of Musa Ibn ^Aliyy Ibn Rabah, from his father, from ^Uqbah Ibn ^Amir, and numerous scholars authenticated the hadith. However, all the other pathways of this hadith do not have that addition, and it is known that the day of ^Arafah is a day of fasting.

As for the report of an unreliable narrator, it would have no influence in the face of a reliable narrator’s report.

The synopsis is that the rejected narration of a reliable narrator, because of conflict with the more reliable, is “anomalous”. The accepted, opposed narration of the more reliable is “maintained”. As for the narration of a weak narrator opposing that of a strong one, it is “**OBJECTIONABLE/DISAPPROVED (MUNKAR)**”, and the narration of the strong narrator that is opposed by the weak one is called “**COMPLIANT (MA^RUF)**”.

An example is what Ibn 'Abi Hatim narrated from Hubayyib Ibn Habib from 'Abu 'Is-haq from Al^Ayzar Ibn Hurayth from Ibn ^Abbas, elevated up to the Prophet ﷺ:

مَنْ أَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَحَجَّ وَصَامَ وَقَرَى الضَّيْفَ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ

“Whoever performed the Prayer, paid the Zakah, made Hajj, fasted, and honored his guest will enter Paradise.”

'Abu Hatim said: “It is objectionable, because other than him (i.e. Hubayyib) among the trustworthy have narrated it from 'Abu 'Is-haq stopped (at the Companion).” This means that the defect is in the chain, not the text.

So, the commonality between the “anomalous” and the “objectionable” is that they both stand contrary to what is more acceptable. The difference is that the anomalous is from a trusted narrator while the objectionable is from the weak one.

By this, we have finished the study of what is related to accepted narrations, with subtle references to some rejected narrations. Now we will begin studying rejected narrations,

And Allah knows best.

CHAPTER 7: Reasons for Rejection

The Hafidh summarized the reasons for rejection into two points: interruption in the chain and negative criticism of the narrator. Following his lead, we will start with disconnection of the chain.

CHAPTER 8: Disconnection of the Chain

A chain's "INTERRUPTION/SEVERANCE (INQITA[^])" may be obvious or not. It may be from the beginning of the chain or its end, and it may be one narrator at a time or consecutive narrators.

SECTION 1: Ambiguous Disconnection

Sometimes the disconnection of the chain is not obvious, meaning that only the skilled, proficient hadith masters realize the disconnection. They are able to detect it by their superior awareness of the various routes of the hadiths, the biographies of the narrators; when and where they were born and died, where they traveled, who they learned from and what they learned, etc., and by their vast knowledge of the defects of the chains, etc.

The first type of ambiguous disconnection is that which involves "TRICKERY (TADLIS)". However, not every attempt at trickery is a disconnection: Sometimes, to hide the identity of one's shaykh because he is weak, or not weak but young, or for some other reason, the narrator does actually mention his shaykh from whom he heard the hadith, so the chain is continuous, however, he mentions him with a name or description by which this shaykh is not known. An example is the statement of 'Abu Bakr Ibn Mujahid Al-Muqri, "Abdullah Ibn 'Abi ^Abdillah told us...", and he meant ^Abdullah Ibn 'Abi Dawud. This is called "TRICKERY IN THE SHAYKHS (TADLIS-SH-SHUYUKH)". It is when he actually drops his shaykh, the narrator above him, that a disconnection occurs.

BRANCH 1: The Narration of He Who Skips His Shaykh Without Lying

When the narrator skips his shaykh and uses such words as, "From so and so," or, "... that So and so said," while this person that he is mentioning is actually in the chain, and therefore this narration is truly "from" him, so he did truly say it, and in fact, the narrator who is skipping his shaykh has— according to Ibn Hajar —indeed met this person that he is mentioning, however, the narrator's expression gives the false impression that he heard the hadith directly from the one he is mentioning, then this is not a lie, but a type of trickery called "TRICKERY IN THE CHAIN (TADLISU-L-'ISNAD)", and such a narration is "RIGGED/MANIPULATED (MUDALLAS)", i.e., a narration in which he skips his shaykh without lying.

Some scholars said that "trickery" is akin to lying. However, it is not a lie. Rather, it is the use of an expression that is actually true, because the hadith is "from", i.e., "through the route of" the one he is mentioning, so had he personally heard the hadith from him or not, the expression he is using is true.

Thus, if "Person A" heard from "Person B" who heard from "Person C". However, "Person A" merely says, "...from 'Person C',"—which is true, but it gives the impression that he

heard it directly from “Person C” when he did not, and he previously met “Person C”, and may have even heard other narrations directly from him, but not this one, then this is trickery in the narration. It is a sort of damaging the chain because he considers him a weak one, for example, then attempting to cover that damage. He wants to beautify a chain that has a blemish in it.

Trickery is very disliked in narration¹. If the scholars discover that someone is a “**TRICKSTER (MUDALLIS)**”, even if he only did it once, his narrations are rejected unless he explicitly states that he heard the narration from the one he is mentioning above him. ‘Imam Ash-Shāfi‘iyy said, “Whoever is known for trickery (even) once, then not accepted from him is what is accepted from the people of honest advice until he says, ‘He told me,’ or ‘I heard.’” This is his judgment, meaning that he is not completely rejected and instead accepted under a condition, because besides being a trickster, he is a reliable narrator. Had he not been, he would not be accepted in the first place, trickster or not.

DIGRESSION: The Mu^{an}an Hadith

Do not misunderstand or be confused. It is not simply because a narrator says, “...From So-and-so,” that he is a trickster or that his narration is rejected unless his terms are more explicit. No, in fact, most scholars² consider such a chain connected and continuous with two conditions: that the one who does it is not a trickster³, and that he met the person from whom he is reporting⁴, or at least, to some, was his contemporary. A narration in which the reporter

¹ **As-Siyutiyy:**

فَائِدَةٌ: اسْتُدِلَّ عَلَى أَنَّ التَّدْلِيْسَ غَيْرُ حَرَامٍ، بِمَا أَخْرَجَهُ ابْنُ عَدِيٍّ، عَنِ الْبَرَاءِ قَالَ: لَمْ يَكُنْ فِيْنَا فَارِسٌ يَوْمَ بَدْرٍ إِلَّا الْمِقْدَادُ، قَالَ ابْنُ عَسَاكِرٍ: قَوْلُهُ فِيْنَا؛ يَعْنِي الْمُسْلِمِينَ؛ لِأَنَّ الْبَرَاءَ لَمْ يَشْهَدْ بَدْرًا.

"Benefit: It was inferred that trickery in narration is not forbidden by what Ibn ^{Adiyy} produced from Al-Bara', that he said: "We did not have amongst us a horseman on the Day of Badr but Al-Miqdad." Ibn ^{Asakir} said: 'When he said: "amongst us", he meant the Muslims, because Al-Bara' did not attend the Battle of Badr."

² **Al-^{Iraqiyy}:**

وَذَهَبَ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى أَنَّ الْإِسْنَادَ الْمَعْنَى مِنْ قَبِيلِ الْمُرْسَلِ وَالْمَنْقَطِعِ، حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ اتِّصَالُهُ بِغَيْرِهِ

"Some have taken the position that the mu^{an}an chain is a type of mursal and severed chain, until its connectivity becomes clear through another route."

³ **Al-^{Iraqiyy}** (vol. 1, pg. 46)

وَحُكْمُهُ كَمَا سَأَتِي فِي مَوْضِعِهِ الْإِتِّصَالُ بِشَرْطِ ثُبُوتِ الْإِقَاءِ، وَالسَّلَامَةِ مِنَ التَّدْلِيْسِ

"Its judgment, as will come in its proper place, is 'connectivity', with the condition of confirmation of meeting and being clear of trickery."

He means what he said here:

وَإِخْتَلَفُوا فِي حُكْمِ الْإِسْنَادِ الْمَعْنَى، فَالصَّحِيْحُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْعَمَلُ، وَذَهَبَ إِلَيْهِ الْجَمَاهِيْرُ مِنْ أئِمَّةِ الْحَدِيْثِ وَغَيْرِهِمْ، أَنَّهُ مِنْ قَبِيلِ الْإِسْنَادِ الْمُتَّصِلِ بِشَرْطِ سَلَامَةِ الرَّوَايِ الَّذِي رَوَاهُ بِالْعِنْعِنَةِ مِنَ التَّدْلِيْسِ.

"They differed about the judgment of the 'mu^{an}an' chain. What is correct and common practice, and that which is the position of the majorities of the 'imams of hadith and of other sciences, is that it is a type of connected chain, with the condition of its narrator who narrated in such fashion to be clear of trickery ..."

⁴ **Al-^{Iraqiyy}:**

says, “From So-and-so, from So-and-so, from So-and-so...” is called “**MU^AN^AN**”, which means a narration in which the narrator merely says, “^an (from)”, without explicitly expressing that he heard it or was told or informed¹. This is not rejected in and of itself². It is when the one who does that is a trickster that it becomes an issue. Similar to this is saying, “So and so said (or mentioned), that So and so said (or mentioned) ...”

Know that Al-Bukhāriyy does not accept the “mu^an^an” narration for his “Sahih” unless it is confirmed that the two narrators met, even if only once. ‘Imām Muslim, however, accepts such a narration for his “Sahih” if the narrator is trustworthy—which should be obvious—and it is confirmed that they lived in the same era, even if it is not confirmed that they met³. It is clear, then, that Al-Bukhāriyy’s condition is the stricter of the two. That is only one example of why Al-Bukhāriyy’s book of “Sahih” has priority over Muslim’s. The mu^an^an ḥadīth is usually given its own chapter in the muṣṭalaḥ books, and for that reason it was given a digression here.

BRANCH 2: The Narration from a Contemporary That One Did Not Meet

The second type of ambiguous disconnection is someone’s narrating from one of his contemporaries whom he did not meet, and thus did not hear from him. This is called “**MURSAL KHAFIYY**”. The difference between this type and the one before it is the issue of “**MEETING (LUQIYY)**”. To be a narration of trickery, one would have to have met the one he is narrating from without hearing that narration from him. As for this second type, it is not known that the narrator met the contemporary that he is narrating from.

Among the benefits of this distinction is excluding that group of senior Followers known as “Al-Mukhadrimun” from being tricksters when they attribute a narration to the Prophet ﷺ, although they never met him.

وما ذكرناه من اشتراطِ ثبوتِ اللقاءِ هو مذهبُ عليّ بنِ المدينيّ، والبخاريّ وغيرِهما من أئمةِ هذا العلمِ.

"What we have stated of confirmation of meeting being a condition is the position of ^Aliyy Ibn Al-Madīniyy, Al-Bukhāriyy and others."

¹ **Al-^Iraqiyy:**

العَنْعَنَةُ: مصدرٌ عنعنَ الحديثَ، إذا رواه بلفظِ: عَنْ، مِنْ غيرِ بيانٍ للتحديثِ، والإخبارِ، والسماعِ

"^An^anah is to narrate the ḥadīth with the word "an (from)" without explicit mentioning of hearing or being informed."

² **Al-^Iraqiyy:**

قد يظهرُ عدمُ اتّصالِهِ بوجهٍ آخرَ، كما في الإرسالِ الحفويّ، على ما سيأتي في موضعه

"Its lack of connectivity could appear by another way, like in the case of the ambiguously severed, according to what shall come in its proper place."

³ **Al-^Iraqiyy:**

وأنكرَ مسلمٌ في خُطبةٍ صحيحِهِ اشتراطَ ذلكِ ...

"In the introduction of his Sahih, Muslim denied that as a condition."

They are the people who lived during the Prophet's time, but without confirmation that they met him. Thus, in age and era, they are like the Companions. Sometimes they elevate a narration up to the Prophet ﷺ without mentioning their intermediary between them and him, and they are not tricksters for that, and Allah knows best.

SECTION 2: Obvious Disconnection

Sometimes the disconnection in the chain is obvious, meaning that even the one who is not a skilled hadith master can realize the disconnection, which is by knowing the histories of the people in the chain.

Since the beginning of the chain is its edge from the producer of the hadith, and its end is the edge from the Companion, we will start this section with the disconnection on the part of the producer, and end with the disconnection from the other side of the chain.

BRANCH 1: The Narration in Which the Author Intentionally Omits from the Chain

Sometimes the author intentionally, purposefully omits some or all of the chain for any of various reasons. It could be that he mentioned the chain elsewhere in his book, or that the hadith that he is presenting is a digression from his goal, etc.¹ In such cases, he might omit the entire chain and simply say, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said ..." He may omit all of the chain except for the Companion, or the Companion and the Follower. Ibn 'Abi Jamrah has a booklet famous as "The Summary (Mukhtasar) of Ibn 'Abi Jamrah", in which he selected almost 300 hadiths from Al-Bukhariyy and intentionally omitted the chains, except for the reporting Companion, and sometimes the Follower below the Companion. The students memorize that booklet as a beginner's text. The Hafidh said this type is considered a rejected narration because the omitted narrators are unknown, and soon we will discuss unknown narrators. Such a narration is called "HANGING/SUSPENDED (MU^ALLAQ)".

Al-Bukhariyy has a number of such hadiths in his "Sahih", and the scholars have differed about them. Some said that his entire book is authentic, except that for which he has been

¹ *As-Siyutiyy* (pg. 157):

وَالَّذِي فِي الْبُخَارِيِّ قَدْ حُذِفَ إِسْنَادُهُ عَمْدًا لِقَصْدِ التَّخْفِيفِ إِنْ كَانَ ذَكَرَهُ فِي مَوْضِعٍ آخَرَ مَوْصُولًا، أَوْ لِقَصْدِ التَّنْوِيعِ إِنْ كَانَ عَلَى غَيْرِ شَرْطِهِ لِيُخْرِجَهُ عَنِ مَوْضِعِ كِتَابِهِ، وَإِنَّمَا يَذَكُرُ مَا يَذَكُرُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ تَنْبِيْهَا وَاسْتِشْهَادًا وَاسْتِئْنَابًا وَتَفْسِيرًا لِبَعْضِ آيَاتِ،
وَعَبْرٍ ذَلِكَ

"As for that type appearing in Al-Bukhariyy, its chain was omitted intentionally for the sake of brevity if he had already mentioned it in another spot connected, or for the sake of variety if that was not as per his fundamental conditions of authenticity, or as something that is not from the essential content of his book. He only mentions what he mentions of that for taking note of a point, or as a reference, or for familiarity, or as a tafsir for some verses, or other than that."

criticized, and his “hanging” narrations¹, for those need to be checked as opposed to the rest of his book.²

BRANCH 2: The Narration in Which a Narrator or More is Dropped

Severance in the chain, as already mentioned, is generally called “**INTERRUPTION (INQITĀʿ)**”. Therefore, the previously mentioned case of the “mu^ʿallaq”, as well as the coming cases under this chapter are all “interrupted (munqatīʿ)”. However, there is also a very specific usage for this name, for which you must be alert: if a narrator, from the Follower or lower, is missing from the chain, this is specifically called “**INTERRUPTED (MUNQATĪʿ)**”³.

That specific ḥadīth is called “munqatīʿ” as long as there is not more than one narrator omitted consecutively. Therefore, if it is missing two narrators, but not in a row, it is called “interrupted from two spots”. If it is missing three, but not in a row, it is “interrupted from three spots”, etc.

If it has two or more narrators missing consecutively, it is no longer called “interrupted” in the technical sense, rather it would then be called “**PROBLEMATIC (MU^ʿDAL)**”⁴. Al-ʿIraqiyy said:

¹ *As-Siyutiyy* (pg. 157):

فَظَهَرَ هَذَا أَنَّ الَّذِي فِي الْبُخَارِيِّ لَا يُخْرِجُهُ عَنْ كَوْنِهِ جَرْدًا فِيهِ الصَّحِيحُ

"So it become clear by this that this type which exists in Al-Bukhāriyy does not take the book out of having been dedicated only to the authentic."

² *Al-ʿIraqiyy* (vol.1, pg. 25):

والمراد ما أسنده دون التعليق والتراجم.

“What is intended [by the authenticity of *Sahih* Al-Bukhāriyy] is what he narrated with a continuous chain, not what he ‘suspended’, nor the ‘tarajim’.”

³ *Al-ʿIraqiyy*:

اختلفَ في صورة الحديث المنقطع. فالمشهور: أنه ما سقط من روايته راوٍ واحد غير الصحابي.

"There is difference about the exact scenario of what a munqatīʿ ḥadīth is. What is famous is that it is that from which one of its narrators dropped from the chain- other than a Companion."

⁴ *Al-ʿIraqiyy*:

معضلاً: ما سقط من إسناده اثنان فصاعداً من أي موضع كان. سواء سقط الصحابي والتابعي، أو التابعي وتابعه، أو اثنان قبلهما، لكن بشرط أن يكون سقوطهما من موضع واحد. أما إذا سقط واحد من بين رجلين، ثم سقط من موضع آخر من الإسناد واحد آخر فهو منقطع في موضعين.

"The mu^ʿdal is what dropped from its chain two or more from any spot, whether a Companion with a Follower, or a Follower with his follower, or two ahead of them, but with the condition that their omission is from one spot. As for when someone drops from between two men, then there fell from the chain someone else from a different spot, then this is called 'munqatīʿ from two spots'."

ومثّل أبو نصر السّجزيّ المعضّل بقول مالك: بلغني عن أبي هريرة أنّ رسول الله - صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ -، قال: ((للمملوك طعامه وكسوته، ... الحديث)).

“Abu Nasr As-Sijziyy gave an example of a mu^ʿdal by Malik’s saying: “It reached me from ‘Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘The owned [slave] deserves his food and clothing ...’ etc.”

BRANCH 3: The Narration of a Follower from the Prophet ﷺ, Without Mention of the Intermediary

If a Follower says, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said such-and-such,” this is called a **“RELEASED (MURSAL)”** narrative, for it is as if he released it and elevated it directly up to the Prophet ﷺ. This is the omission from the end of the chain.

Due to the ignorance of who is missing from the chain, this type of narrative is rejected by most scholars¹. This is because it is possible that the reporting Follower heard it from another Follower, and not necessarily a Companion, and it is possible that that Follower is a weak narrator. Accordingly, it should not be said that the “released” hadith is the one in which the Follower skips the Companion between him and the Prophet ﷺ. Had it been known that the missing narrator is a Companion, the hadith would not be rejected. This follows the rule that was discussed previously, that the Companions are all reliable in their transmission from the Prophet ﷺ. Their reliability frees us from having to check their statuses. Thus, ignorance of the transmitting Companion has no negative effect on the hadith². This is why the scholars did not reject the narrations of Companions from other Companions from the Prophet ﷺ, without mentioning their intermediary³. Therefore, the precise wording is that the mursal hadith is the one in which the Follower does not mention his intermediary between him and the Prophet ﷺ, not the one in which he skips the Companion. Understand the difference and take the correct opinion.

Some scholars do accept the mursal hadith, using as evidence for its acceptance the hadith:

¹ *Al-Iraqiyy*:

وذهب أكثر أهل الحديث إلى أنّ المرسل ضعيف لا يحتج به

"The Majority of the people of hadith have taken the position that the mursal is weak; it is not used as evidence."

² *Al-Iraqiyy* copies from Ibnu-s-Salah:

والجهالة بالصحابيّ غير قاذحة؛ لأنّ الصحابة كلّهم عدول

"Ignorance of the Companion is does not have a negative effect, because the Companions are all trustworthy."

³ *Al-Iraqiyy*:

أما مراسيل الصحابة فحكمها حكم الموصول

"As for the mursals of the Companions, their judgment is that they are connected."

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

خَيْرُ النَّاسِ قَرْنِي، ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُوهُمْ، ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُوهُمْ

“The best of the people are from my century, then those who come after them, then those who come after them.”

Acceptance of such hadiths results in accepting the rulings that they may contain, and rejecting them results in rejecting their rulings¹. This obviously results in different opinions. An example is the hadith from the Follower, Mak-hul, from the Prophet ﷺ:²

لَا رِبَا بَيْنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَبَيْنَ أَهْلِ دَارِ الْحَرْبِ فِي دَارِ الْحَرْبِ

“There is no usury between the Muslims and the non-Muslims in the non-Muslim land.”

'Imam As-Sarakhsiyy the Hanafiyy said³:

وَهَذَا الْحَدِيثُ، وَإِنْ كَانَ مُرْسَلًا فَمَكْحُولٌ فَقِيَةٌ تَقَّةٌ، وَالْمُرْسَلُ مِنْ مِثْلِهِ مَقْبُولٌ، وَهُوَ دَلِيلٌ لِأَبِي حَنِيفَةَ وَمُحَمَّدٍ رَحِمَهُمَا اللَّهُ

“Although this hadith is mursal, Mak-hul is a trustworthy scholar. The mursal from his likes is acceptable, and it is evidence for 'Abu Hanifah and Muhammad (Ash-Shaybaniyy), may Allah have mercy on them...”

Those who did not accept the hadith said that there is no usury with anyone, Muslim or not, in the Muslim country or elsewhere.

There are some Followers who are known to skip the Companions who conveyed to them, and thus their narrations have a different judgment. Also, if the “mursal” comes from another route, it can be used as evidence⁴.

BENEFIT: As-Siyutiyy said:

¹ **Al-Iraqiyy:**

اختلف العلماء في الاحتجاج بالمرسل، فذهب مالك بن أنس وأبو حنيفة النعمان بن ثابت وأتباعهما في طائفة إلى الاحتجاج به.

"The scholars differed about there being evidence in the mursal. Malik Ibn 'Anas, An-Nu^man Ibn Thabit and their followers are among a party who lean towards there being evidence in it."

² Al-Mabsut

³ Al-Mabsut

⁴ **Al-Iraqiyy:**

المرسل يُحتجُّ به إذا أُسندَ من وجهٍ آخر، أو أرسلَهُ مَنْ أَخَذَ الْعِلْمَ عَنْ غَيْرِ رِجَالِ الْمُرْسَلِ الْأَوَّلِ.

"The Mursal is used as evidence if it is narrated continually from another route, or if someone else reported it as mursal, but he took the knowledge from other than the narrators from the first one who gave the mursal report."

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

مِنْ مَظَانِّ الْمُعْضَلِ، وَالْمُنْقَطِعِ، وَالْمُرْسَلِ، كِتَابُ "السُّنَنِ" لِسَعِيدِ بْنِ مَنْصُورٍ، وَمُؤَلَّفَاتُ ابْنِ أَبِي الدُّنْيَا.

"Among the expected places the mu[^]dal, munqati[^], and mursal is the book "As-Sunan" by Sa[^]id Ibn Mansur, and the works of Ibn 'Abi-d-Dunya".

CHAPTER 9: CENSURING A NARRATOR

A hadith may be rejected due to “**NEGATIVE CRITICISM (JARH)**” of the narrator. His person may be unknown, his reliability may be unknown, he may be frequently mistaken, delusional or have a bad memory. He may be a major sinner, accused of lying, or even be a known fabricator. The Hafidh summarized all these cases into two categories: one which questions the narrator’s precision, and one which questions his trustworthiness. God willing, we will mention the various types of narratives related to these criticisms, along with appropriate details. In general, these are the cases of “**CENSURING (TA^N)**”.

SECTION 1: The Unknown Narrator

Sometimes a person is ambiguously mentioned in the text of the hadith, such as for it to be said, “A man came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ,” or “A woman asked him ...” However, lack of identity in the text does not harm the authenticity of the hadith. The person’s identity could be known by him being named in another rendition of the hadith.

The harm is when this “**AMBIGUITIY ('IBHAM)**” falls in the chain, such as for a narrator to say, “A man told me,” or, “a shaykh said,” etc. The case of “**IGNORANCE OF THE NARRATOR (JAHALAH)**” has four levels, as mentioned by Shaykh Mulla ^Aliyy Al-Qari in his explanation of the explanation of An-Nukhbah:

1. The first is the unnamed narrator. Such a narration is rejected as long as this unnamed person is not identified, which could be by his name appearing in another chain of the hadith. For example, An-Nasa’iyy narrated the famous “Hadith of the Man Who Invalidated His Prayer (Hadithu-l-Musi’ Salatah)”, from ^Aliyy Ibn Yahya Ibn Khallad, from his father, from an uncle of his who was from the people of Badr. In ‘Abu Dawud, the unidentified uncle was identified as Rifa^ah Ibn Rafi^.
2. In the event that he is named, however, he is not known for hadith narration, meaning that he is only mentioned from the route of a single narrator from him, nor is he known for anything else, like being a famous pious man or war hero, then the scholars call him “**AN UNKNOWN PERSON (MAJHULU-L-^AYN)**”, and this is the second level.
3. This unknown status is removed by there being at least two narrators under him. However, if he is not approved or discredited, which we will mention soon, God willing, then there is still something unknown about him: his reliability. In such a case, he is “**A PERSON WITH AN UNKNOWN STATUS (MAJHULU-L-HAL)**”, and this is the third level. He is the one they call “**VEILED (MASTUR)**”. The scholars have sayings about the acceptance of his narration, which will be left for other books, like Al-^Iraquiyy’s millennial poem. Know, though, that his hadith can be a follow-up.

4. Similar to this unknown status is the person who is actually known, however, he is named with a name by which he is not famous, or he has many names and nicknames, and thus would be mistaken for someone else. This is the fourth level. An example is Muḥammad Ibn As-Sa'ib Ibn Bishr Al-Kalbiyy; some have attributed him to his grandfather, and thus called him Muḥammad Ibn Bishr. Some called him Ḥammād Ibn As-Sa'ib. Some called him Abu-n-Nadr, some 'Abū Sa'īd, and some 'Abū Hishām. Thus, he was thought to be a group while he is only an individual.

The difference between this and trickery is that in trickery the narrator wants to hide the identity of his shaykh by giving him a name by which he is unknown.

It is clear that the problem with being unknown is the lack of knowing the narrator's trustworthiness and precision. After knowing this, what is the strength of news reporters who, not only do they not fit our religious standards of reliability, but on top of that, they say, "Our sources have told us," or "So-and-so is responsible for such-and-such," without citing their sources? The one who learns the science of ḥadīth knows better than to accept their unverifiable claims.

SECTION 2: Lack of Precision

Assuming that the narrator is known, then there is still the question of his piety and exactness. Assuming he is pious — and the basis is to think well of a Muslim and not to deem him a sinner without proper religious evidence — then remaining is the question of his exactness and precision, because being religious and pious is still not sufficient for reliable ḥadīth narration¹; for sure the narrator should be precise, and we already discussed that in the fourth section of the fourth chapter. Sometimes the narrator is not precise, although he is apparently a good Muslim, so his ḥadīth would be rejected. So, what scenarios arise from lack of precision?

Sometimes the narrator is simply mistaken although usually precise. This is called "IMAGINATION (WAHM)".

One might imagine that someone is in the chain while it is another person, especially with a similar name. An example is the ḥadīth in At-Tirmidhiyy, from Muṣā Ibn 'Uqbah, from Suhayl Ibn 'Abī Salīh, from his father, from 'Abū Hurayrah²:

¹ *Al-Iraqiyy*:

(ضابطاً) ، احترازاً عما في سنده راو مغفلٌ، كثير الخطأ، وإن عُرف بالصدق والعدالة.

"Saying 'precise' excludes that which in its chain is a careless narrator [who is] frequently mistaken, even if he is known for honesty and uprightness."

² Sunan At-Tirmidhiyy

مَنْ جَلَسَ فِي مَجْلِسٍ فَكَثُرَ فِيهِ لَعَطُهُ فَقَالَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَقُومَ: سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ

**“Whoever sat in a session and had many blunders, and said before standing, ‘subhanaka-
llahumma wa bi-hamdik ...”**

It is truly narrated from Musa Ibn 'Isma^ʿil from Wuhayb Ibn Khalid Al-Bahiliyy, from Suhayl, from ^ʿAwn Ibn ^ʿAbdillāh. For that, Al-Bukhariyy said, “It is a narration from Musa Ibn 'Isma^ʿil. As for Musa Ibn ^ʿUqbah, it is not known that he heard anything from Suhayl.”

He might connect a disconnected chain or disconnect a connected one. He might stop a hadith at a Companion while it is truly elevated to the Prophet ﷺ, or vice versa. Such hadiths are **“DEFECTIVE (MU^ʿALLAL¹)”**, and the different scenarios have different names. This is the mistake discovered by the skilled, proficient hafidh, for some defined the “defective” hadith as: “a hadith in which obscure matters occurred to it and effected it.” The Hafidh said, “It is better defined as a hadith that is apparently sound and after research was found to be defective.”

Sometimes the mistake is realized by his opposition to more reliable narrators, like those who are more numerous than him, just as we discussed previously about the “anomalous” hadith. For example, he may have blended two chains or two texts while the others narrated them separately. This defect is called **“INSERTION (‘IDRAJ)”**. An example is the hadith of Sa^ʿid Ibn Abi Maryam, from Malik, from Az-Zuhriyy, from ‘Anas, from the Prophet ﷺ:

وَلَا تَبَاغَضُوا، وَلَا تَحَاسَدُوا، وَلَا تَنَافَسُوا ...

Do not hate each other, do not envy each other, do not compete against each other (for worldly gain) ...”

The part:

وَلَا تَنَافَسُوا

“Do not be cut-throats when competing against each other.”

is from another hadith of Malik, from 'Abu-z-Zinād, from Al-‘A^ʿraj, from ‘Abu Hurayrah, from the Prophet ﷺ:

إِيَّاكُمْ وَالظَّنَّ فَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ أَكْذَبُ الْحَدِيثِ، وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا تَنَافَسُوا

“Beware of suspicion, for surely suspicion is the most mendacious hadith and do not spy on each other, and do not compete against each other ...”

¹ **Al-‘Iraqiyy:**

سمّ الحديث الذي شملته علة من عليل الحديث معللاً. ولا تسميه معلولاً
“Call the hadith that contains a ‘mu^ʿallal’, and do not call it ‘ma^ʿlul’.”

Ibn 'Abi Maryam blended it with the first and put them under one chain, which was imagination on his part, as said by Al-Khatib. He and others said that Ibn 'Abi Maryam opposed all the other narrators from Malik in this.

Some may have narrated a text one way while someone narrates it with its words “**REVERSED (MAQLUB)**”, like the hadith of Muslim¹:

وَرَجُلٌ تَصَدَّقَ بِصَدَقَةٍ فَأَخْفَاهَا حَتَّى لَا تَعْلَمَ يَمِينُهُ مَا تُنْفِقُ شِمَالُهُ

“... And a man who gave a charity that he hid, so that his right hand does not know what his left hand gave ...”

It is truly²:

حَتَّى لَا تَعْلَمَ شِمَالُهُ مَا تُنْفِقُ يَمِينُهُ

“... So that his left hand does not know what his right hand gave ...”

Likewise, he might pronounce a word one way, while others pronounced it another way. He might add a narrator to the chain while others narrated it without that addition, which is the opposite of dropping a narrator.

When the narrator is usually exact, the hadith is not rejected for the narrator himself. However, in case he is frequently mistaken, i.e., his accuracies are not greater than his mistakes, then the hadith is rejected because of the narrator, due to his lack of mastery.

Know, also, that a narrator’s bad memory may be his natural, original situation (lazim), or it may be incidental (tari'). Being incidental means that he was precise but lost his precision. The narration of the narrator who lost his precision is rejected if he narrated the hadith after he lost it, not before.

He may have lost his precision due to old age, or blindness, or due to the loss of his books by such tragedies as flood, fire, or theft. It could be that he lacks access to his books. Such a narration— or the narrator himself— is “**MIXED-UP (MUKHTALIT)**”. As for what he narrated while still precise, it is acceptable. Accordingly, the scholars must know who narrated from him and when.

SECTION 3: The Major Sinner

For the narration to be acceptable, the narrator must be clear of committing apparent major sins. There are about 40 major sins. Among them is murder, adultery, dealing in usury, drinking wine, abandoning prayers, and not fasting out of laziness, neglecting the obligatory

¹ Sahih Muslim

² Sahih Al-Bukhariyy, Sahih Muslim

support, spending money sinfully, not learning the personal obligatory knowledge, and eating forbidden meat.

The worst sin, which is a major sin, but because of its abominable atrocity and detestable obscenity is in a category of its own, is blasphemy (kufr). The hadīths are not taken from a blasphemer (kafir). However, if he becomes a Muslim, he can transmit what he acquired in his days of blasphemy. Thus, it is a condition that the hadīth transmitter be a Muslim.

The reason we say that the narrator must be clear of “apparent” major sins is that the Muslim who has some heretical beliefs may still have an acceptable narration, as will now be clarified.

The heretical belief is what the scholars refer to when they use the word “bid[^]ah (innovation)” without any restriction or qualification. Examples of heretical beliefs that do not take a person out of Islam are like believing that ‘Abu Bakr, ^Umar, and ^Uthman all wronged ‘Imam ^Aliyy by taking the rulership before him, or that Paradise and Hell are not yet existing.

All heretical beliefs are major sins, and therefore are of two types: those that take one out of Islam, and those that do not. However, the place of the belief is in the heart, and consequently, those major sins are not apparent. Hadīths can be accepted from such a person when his apparent situation is religiousness, and he is precise. It is, however, a condition that he does not transmit what supports his invalid creed, nor call to it. It is not difficult to conceive a person who refrains from lies and outward major sins, fulfills his prayers, fasting, and other obligations, but unfortunately has some mistake in his beliefs, but masters his hadīths and can be trusted with them.

Those who categorically reject such narrators are refuted by the books of the Two Shaykhs, for some of the narrators they relied upon in their chains are documented as affiliates of Shi’ites, Mu[^]tazilites, or other factions of misguidance. Their narrations were accepted because of their mastery, study, and precision, along with their apparent good behavior and the fact that they did not believe in blasphemy, narrate what supports their misguidance, or propagate their beliefs to others. He who calls people to his heretical beliefs and argues for them is rejected and not considered trustworthy.

If it is known that he has a blasphemous belief, then no hadīths are accepted from him. Like those who believe that Allah has a body (tajsim), resides in a place, has organs, body parts, a direction, that He moves from place to place, or any other bodily characteristics. Likewise, it is blasphemy to deny any of His Attributes that are necessary to attribute to Him, such as Life, Knowledge, Power, Will, Sight, Hearing, (uncreated) Speech, and Everlastingness. Also, blasphemy is denying destiny, believing in a new Prophet after Muhammad ﷺ, or even the possibility of one. It is also blasphemy to believe that something other than Allah has no beginning, to contradict the well-known rules of the Religion, to believe that Allah dwells in the bodies of His creatures or merges or unites with them, or that a Prophet would drink wine, worship other than Allah, etc.

If the major sinner (*fasiq*) repents, his *hadiths* can be accepted. Repentance from sins is by stopping the sin, being determined to never do it again, and most importantly, to regret disobeying Allah. If one missed an obligation, he must do those three things plus make up that obligation, and if he wronged someone, he must do those three things as well as fulfill that person's right, such as repaying him or apologizing. Repenting from blasphemy is by abandoning the blasphemy and saying the *shahadah* with the intention of leaving the blasphemy and entering Islam.

BENEFIT: Warning Against People

This is among the greatest benefits and clarifications in this book, for many Muslims have a misconception about the permissibility, in fact, the necessity and obligation of warning against some people. However, this is application of the saying of Allah¹:

﴿كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ﴾

<<You are the best nation sent out to the people, you bid the good and forbid the evil ...>>

As for the science of *hadith*, the books are loaded with terms that the scholars used for describing rejected narrators and warning from them. The scholars have written entire books about “**DISCREDITING (JARH) AND ACCREDITING (TA^DIL)**” narrators². The first to compile such a book was 'Imam Yahya Ibn Sa'iid Al-Qattan, may Allah have mercy on him. Many followed in his footsteps, like Al-Bukhariyy, 'Ahmad, and others. Among the most famous of those books is “*Lisanu-l-Mizan*” by the *Hafidh*, and “*Al-Jarhu wa-t-Ta^dil*” by Ar-Raziyy. The scholars have said such descriptions about some narrators as: “imposter”, “the biggest liar”, “mendacious”, “fabricator”, “the source of lies”, “abandoned”, “ignored”, “accused of lying”, “he is not given any consideration”, “untrustworthy”, “distrusted”, “weak”, “not strong”, “not a reference”, “unreliable”, “unacceptable”, “he is criticized”, “too lenient”, “the scholars spoke about him”, “he has a bad memory”, “his mistakes are horrendous”, etc.

¹ Surat 'Al 'Imran #110

² *An-Nawawiy* said in *At-Taqrīb*:

النُّوعُ الْحَادِي وَالسُّتُونَ: مَعْرِفَةُ النَّقَاتِ وَالضُّعْفَاءِ، هُوَ مِنْ أَجْلِ الْأَنْوَاعِ، فِيهِ يُعْرَفُ الصَّحِيحُ وَالضَّعِيفُ، وَفِيهِ تَصَانِيفُ كَثِيرَةٌ:
مِنْهَا مُفْرَدٌ فِي الضُّعْفَاءِ: كَكِتَابِ الْبُخَارِيِّ، وَالنَّسَائِيِّ، وَالْعَقِيلِيِّ، وَالِدَارَقُطِيِّ وَغَيْرِهَا، وَفِي النَّقَاتِ: كَالنَّقَاتِ لِابْنِ حَبَّانَ. وَمُشْرَكٌ:
كَتَارِيخِ الْبُخَارِيِّ، وَابْنِ أَبِي خَيْثَمَةَ، وَمَا أَعَزَّ فَوَائِدُهُ! وَابْنِ أَبِي حَاتِمٍ وَمَا أَجَلُّهُ!

"The sixty first type is knowing the trustworthy reporters and the weak reporters. It is among the greatest types, for by it the *sahih* and the *da'if* are known, and there are many works authored about it. Some of them are dedicated to the weak reporters, like the books of Al-Bukhariyy, An-Nasa'iyy, Al-Uqayliyy, Ad-Daraqutniyy and other books. Some are dedicated to the trustworthy reporters, like 'Ath-Thiqat' by Ibn Hibban, and some are for both, like *At-Tarikh* by Al-Bukhariyy, Ibn 'Abi Khaythamah's book- and Oh, how embedded with benefits it is- and Ibn 'Abi Hatim's book, and how great it is!"

This is necessary for protecting our Religion and the Muslims from taking from those who should not be taken from, lest the Religion be corrupted and lost¹. Warning from people for the benefit of the Muslims is confirmed from the Prophet ﷺ, the Companions, the Followers, and the 'Imams². An example is the hadith of Muslim³:

مَا أَظُنُّ أَنَّ فُلَانًا وَفُلَانًا يَعْرِفَانِ مِنْ دِينِنَا شَيْئًا

“I do not think that So-and-so and So-and-so know anything about our Religion.”

Like 'Imam 'Aḥmad said, this is advice for the Muslims⁴. They must be protected from those who cheat them. The Prophet ﷺ warned against the one who cheats when selling and buying by saying⁵:

مَنْ عَشَّنَا فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا

“Whoever cheated us is (as if he is) not one of us.”

He warned Faṭimah Bint Qays from two men who proposed to her when he said:

أَمَّا أَبُو جَهْمٍ، فَلَا يَضَعُ عَصَاهُ عَنْ عَاتِقِهِ، وَأَمَّا مُعَاوِيَةُ فَصُعُوكُ لَا مَالَ لَهُ

“As for 'Abu Jahm, he does not take his stick from his shoulder, and as for Mu^awiyah, he is poor, he has no money ...”

¹ **An-Nawawiyy** said in At-Taqrīb:

وَجُورُ الْجُرْحِ وَالتَّعْدِيلُ صِيَانَةٌ لِلشَّرِيعَةِ

"Discrediting and Accrediting reporters is permitted for protecting the Religion."

² With slight adjustment to the statement, As-Siyutiyy said (pg. 127):

إِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ابْنِ عَلِيَّةٍ مِنَ الْفُقَهَاءِ الْمُحَدِّثِينَ، إِلَّا أَنَّهُ مَهْجُورُ الْقَوْلِ عِنْدَ الْأَئِمَّةِ، لِمَيْلِهِ إِلَى الْإِعْتِرَالِ، وَقَدْ كَانَ الشَّافِعِيُّ يَرُدُّ عَلَيْهِ وَيُحَدِّرُ مِنْهُ.

"Ibrahīm Ibn Isma^il Ibn ^Ulayyah is among the faqih̄s and the muḥaddiths, however, he is censured according to the 'imams because of his inclination to the Mu^tazilah, and Ash-Shafi^iyy used to refute him and warn against him."

³ **Sahih Muslim**

⁴ **As-Siyutiyy**:

وَقَالَ أَبُو تُرَابٍ النَّخَشَبِيُّ لِأَحْمَدَ بْنِ حَنْبَلٍ: لَا تَغْتَبِ الْعُلَمَاءَ. فَقَالَ لَهُ أَحْمَدُ: وَيْحَكَ، هَذَا نَصِيحَةٌ لَيْسَ هَذَا غَيْبَةً. وَقَالَ بَعْضُ الصُّوفِيَّةِ لِابْنِ الْمُبَارَكِ: تَغْتَابُ، قَالَ اسْكُتْ إِذَا لَمْ تُبَيِّنْ، كَيْفَ نَعْرِفُ الْحَقَّ مِنَ الْبَاطِلِ؟

"Abu Turab An-Nakhsha^iyy said to 'Aḥmad Ibn Ḥambal: 'Do not gossip about the scholars!' So 'Aḥmad responded: 'Woe is you! This is sincere advice, not gossip!' A sufiyy said to Ibnu-l-Mubarak: 'You are gossiping!' He responded: Be quiet! If we do not clarify, how would we know the truth from the falsehood?"

⁵ **Sahih Muslim**

If it is necessary to warn the Muslims from those who harm them in their worldly affairs, it is more so necessary to warn them from those who harm them in their Religion. So, let this subject be properly understood, for it is among the most important things for protecting the brotherhood.

For this misunderstanding, many Muslims are displeased with warning against 'Ahmad Ibn Taymiyah Al-Harraniyy, and some people cheat the Muslims by calling him "Shaykhu-l-'Islam (the Shaykh of 'Islam)", while they know about his numerous deviant sayings, let alone those who believe in his mistakes. He was a stern supporter of, and in fact, a leading imam of the "Mushabbihah (Likeners)" and "mujassimah (anthropomorphists)" belief system, and this is known to anyone who has seen his books and those of his followers. In his book "Bayanu Talbisi-l-Jahmiyyah", he talked extensively about Allah having sides from all directions¹, and in "Majmu' Al-Fatawa" that Allah will seat the Prophet with Him on the Throne². He also said that Hell will come to an end, and in fact dedicated an entire book to that. His apprentice, Ibnu-l-Qayyim, copied that in his book "Hadi-l-Arwah", agreed with him, and also talked about it at length³. All these claims are blasphemy and they are all confirmed from him. He also has many, many, many other deviant beliefs⁴, including the claim that a man could divorce his wife three times and still return her without her marrying another man.

Warning against him is a religious obligation, especially in this time in which his followers, the Wahhabiyy, spread his teachings. One should not be fooled by his many works, fame and followers, for surely among the slaves of Allah are those who are misguided with knowledge.

Some say, "Assume that he repented." However, his sayings are spread throughout his books without any retraction. Some say, "Take the good from him and leave the bad."

¹ *Ibn Taymiyah* (Bayanu Talbis Al-Jahmiyyah [M.S. pg. 679. Vol.3]):

أما قولنا إنه يمتنع أن يكون غير متناه من جميع الجوانب فيدل عليه ...

"As for our saying that it is impossible that He be without limits from all sides, what proves that is ..."

² He claimed (M.S. vol. 4 pg. 374):

إِذَا تَبَيَّنَ هَذَا فَقَدْ حَدَّثَ الْعُلَمَاءُ الْمَرْضِيُّونَ وَأَوْلِيَاؤُهُ الْمَقْبُولُونَ: أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُجْلِسُهُ رَبُّهُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ مَعَهُ.

"... If this is clear, then [know that] the accepted scholars, and Allah's esteemed saints relay that Muhammad, ﷺ his Lord shall seat him on the throne with Him."

³ *Ibnu-l-Qayyim* (M.S. pg. 363):

وأما الطريق الثاني وهو دلالة القرآن على بقاء النار وعدم فنائها فأين في القرآن دليل واحد يدل على ذلك

"... As for the second way, which is the evidence of the Qur'an for the perpetuity of Hell and that it does not perish, where is there in the Qur'an a single piece of evidence that proves that? ..."

⁴ He also said in more than five different books that "kinds of things exist without a beginning". This is an idea taken from philosophy, and it is shirk, because only Allah exists in eternity. He also claimed that travelling to visit the Prophet's grave takes a person out of Islam.

However, once it is clear that his sayings are deviant, then whatever he says is either something that no one else said, or something that others said. If he says what no one else said, such as that traveling to visit the Prophet's grave is blasphemy, then we do not want it, and he can keep it for himself. If he said what others said, then we take what those others said and we do not need to take it from him. Warning from him and his likes is not forbidden gossip.

SECTION 4: Lying

All of what has been mentioned is in reference to one who has not been accused of lying. The "lie (kadhib)" is to intentionally say what is different from reality while knowing the reality. Sometimes it is a small sin, like a lie that does not harm anyone. Sometimes it is a major sin, like when someone lies about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. In this science, a narrator might be accused of lying, whether in his ordinary speech, or in his hadith narration, and he may be judged as a fabricator.

BRANCH 1: Being Suspected of Lying

In case one was accused of lying, whether in his ordinary speech or in his hadiths, his narration is rejected as an "**ABANDONED (MATRUK)**" hadith. Being accused of lying in one's normal speech is not as severe as being accused of lying on the Prophet ﷺ, and saying that one is "**ACCUSED (MUTTAHAM)**" of lying on the Prophet ﷺ is not blatantly calling him a fabricator. Therefore, although this hadith is rejected, it is lighter than a fabrication. They accuse a person when the hadith comes only from his route and stands in opposition to the religious fundamentals.

BRANCH 2: The Fabricated Narration

As for the scholars confirming that a person has lied on the Prophet ﷺ, then that person is called a "**FABRICATOR (WADI[^])**", and his hadith is "**FABRICATED (MAWDU[^])**", which literally means "put". It is called a "put hadith", meaning here, "low and degraded", because it can never be supported or rectified. And they called it a hadith, not because it is one, but because its fabricator put it under the guise of being one. It is the lowest of the low, and for that reason it is the last of what will be listed in this book.

Just like authentication, the scholars deem a hadith fabricated by "**OVERWHELMING SPECULATION (GHALABATU-DH-DHANN)**", i.e., because it is most likely fabricated and improbably not fabricated, not by "**DEFINITENESS (QAT[^])**". This is because even the most audacious mendacious one might utter the truth, and this is even in the event of the fabricator's own confession to fabricating. Despite that, the scholars still said that we will not say with complete definitiveness that it is fabricated, because it is possible that he is lying in his confession. This does not mean that we will not deal with it as a fabrication. It has already been clarified in the beginning of the book that lack of definitiveness does not dictate lack of action, and that instead, if the clues point toward the truthfulness of a matter, we act accordingly. It is

unlikely that one would confess to such a heinous misdeed without a religious or worldly reason, so we take him at his word, while recognizing that it could be a false confession.

Another way to determine a ḥadīth as fabricated is that it contradicts, in such a way that it does not accept an alternative explanation, what is explicit from the Qur'an, or the explicit "mass-narrated" ḥadīth, like some reports that have a blatant "tajsīm (anthropomorphism)". These two sources are specified here, because, as you should know by now, they are definitively correct. This is different from opposing the narration of individuals, because they are speculative in themselves. Another sign of fabrication is for the narration to be against the definitive mental judgment. Review, if you wish, the quote of Al-Khattabiyy in chapter six.

Another indication of fabrication is "FEEBLENESS (RAKAKAH)" in expression or meaning. An example of that is the previously mentioned so-called "Ḥadīth of Jabir", in which it is claimed that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

أَوَّلُ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ نُورَ نَبِيِّكَ يَا جَابِرُ خَلَقَهُ اللَّهُ مِنْ نُورِهِ قَبْلَ الْأَشْيَاءِ

"The first of what Allāh created, O Jabir, is the light of your Prophet. He created it from His light before other things."

The clarity of that feebleness is that if the so-called "light of Muḥammad" is the first thing that Allāh created, then what is that light from which Allāh created it?

- ❖ If it is a creation of Allāh, then the "light of Muḥammad" was not the first creation, and therefore the second sentence is contradicting the first.
- ❖ If it is supposed to be a part or an attribute of Allāh, then the calamity is even worse, because they are claiming that Muḥammad was created from a part of Allāh, like the Christians believe that Jesus is a part of Allāh, and that is blasphemy.

Not to mention, it is confirmed in three authentic ḥadīths that water is the first creation of Allāh. One of them is the ḥadīth of Ibn Hibbān from the route of 'Abū Hurayrah, that the Prophet ﷺ said:

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ خُلِقَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ

"Everything was created from water."

Another is what the Hafidh, in "Fat-ḥu-l-Bari", attributes to As-Suddiyy, that he narrated in his book of tafsīr with numerous chains from sons of the Companions that their fathers told them that the Prophet ﷺ said¹:

¹ Fat-ḥu-l-Bari

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَخْلُقْ شَيْئًا مِمَّا خَلَقَ قَبْلَ الْمَاءِ

“Surely Allah did not create anything among what He created before the water.”

The third is the famous hadith of Al-Bukhariyy from the route of ^Imran Ibn Huṣayn, that the Prophet ﷺ said:

كَانَ اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ شَيْءٌ غَيْرُهُ، وَكَانَ عَرْشُهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ

“Allah was, and there was nothing other than Him, and His ^Arsh was over the water.”

By merging this last hadith with the first two, we know that the water was the first creation, then the ^Arsh was second.

DIGRESSION: A Brief Refutation of the Hadith of Jabir

This feebleness alone is enough for anyone with intelligence and a thirst for the truth. However, if Allah lead someone’s heart astray, no one can guide it, and thus there are people who hold fast to this feeble fabrication with both hands and abandon all reason. Fully understanding the contradiction embedded in the hadith when it is explained to them, they argue that denying that the “light of Muḥammad” is the first creation, or that Muḥammad himself is the first creation, or that he is created from light, is degrading the status of Muḥammad. However, if denying this “light of Muḥammad” is degrading to the Prophet ﷺ, what about the rest of the Prophets? If not confirming some mystical light for each one of them is not degrading them, and they still have high, lofty statuses as Prophets without any special “light”, then why would it be any different for Muḥammad ﷺ?

And why was this creed not known in the early days of ‘Islam? All the early books of creed, like Al-Fiqhu-l-'Akbar and At-Tahawiyah, have no mention of such a creed, nor do any of the other classical hadith books, not the Six Books nor other famous and accepted works. Nor do they have any documentation about this creed from the Four Imams, i.e., the Imams of the Four Schools.

They list the names of quite a number of latter-day scholars, and figures who may be thought to be scholars, who mentioned this hadith in their books, like Al-Haytamiyy, Al-Qastalaniyy- who is from the tenth century- and Yusuf An-Nabahaniyy- who is from the 14th century- and Az-Zurqaniyy. However, not a single one of them is a hafidh, although Az-Zurqaniyy is the most acquainted among them with the science of hadith. The only true hafidh they cite is Imam ^Abdu-r-Razzaq Aṣ-Ṣan^aniyy, and sometimes they hope you will be ignorant enough for them to throw Imam Al-Bayhaqiyy’s name in there without you challenging them. They claim that this hadith exists in the lost portion of ^Abdu-r-Razzaq’s book, “Al-Muṣannaf”, so we are curious where they found it, and why no one else has it! And for the sake of argument, had ^Abdu-r-Razzaq truly narrated this hadith, that does not mean that he authenticated it. You are, by now, well aware that a scholar simply mentioning a hadith in his

book does not mean that it is authentic. It was this hadith that Hafidh As-Siyutiyy was talking about when he said in his book, “Al-Hawī li-l-Fatawa”:

وَالْحَدِيثُ الْمَذْكُورُ فِي السُّؤَالِ لَيْسَ لَهُ إِسْنَادٌ يُعْتَمَدُ عَلَيْهِ،

“As for the hadith mentioned in the question, it does not have a chain relied upon.”

And Allah knows best.

Know that the fabricator does not always conjure up his own words. Sometimes he takes some speech from the wise, pious Salaf, or from the philosophers, or from the Jewish tales. He may take a weak hadith and give it an authentic chain so that it can circulate.

There are several reasons one might fabricate. Sometimes it is his irreligious position or hypocrisy in conviction, wanting to mislead the people and belittle the Religion. It could be that his abominable ignorance drove him to fabricate, like those who fabricated hadiths to encourage people to do good. They think that they are doing good while they are committing grave sins. Some may fabricate to support their opinions, schools and factions. It was said about someone who used to be a shaykh of the Khawarij and then repented that he said, “Look (thoroughly) into from whom you take the knowledge, for surely, if we liked some notion, we would make it a hadith and be pleased with the idea that you would go astray by it.” Some would fabricate to please rulers and others would fabricate so that they would be famous for having hadiths that no one else has. Some were paid story tellers who fabricate in their stories.

Fabricating is forbidden by the Consensus of the Muslims, in fact a major sin, and no consideration is given to the Karramiyys and others who believe that it is permissible to fabricate what encourages the good and discourages the bad. When confronted with the mutawatir hadith:

مَنْ كَذَبَ عَلَيَّ مُتَعَمِّدًا، فَلْيَتَبَوَّأْ مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ

“Whoever lies on me intentionally, let him prepare for his seat in Hell.”

They said, “We are not fabricating on the Prophet ﷺ we are fabricating FOR him.” This is ignorance on their part, as already mentioned, for surely the Religion is already loaded with authentic encouragements to do the good and discouragements from doing the bad. It is also forbidden to convey a fabricated hadith without clarification that it is fabricated. Muslim narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said¹:

¹ Sahih Muslim

The Prodigy in Hadith Terminology

مَنْ حَدَّثَ عَنِّي بِحَدِيثٍ يَرَى أَنَّهُ كَذِبٌ، فَهُوَ أَحَدُ الْكَاذِبِينَ

“Whoever told a hadith from me while he sees it as a lie, then he is one of the liars.”

AND ALLAH KNOWS BEST

This is the end of what Allāh made easy to compile. Pardon is sought from everyone who reads this humble document, for it was written in haste upon an antique machine while far from my books. Let anyone who finds a mistake herein correct it and give the appropriate advice. May Allāh have mercy upon me and forgive me and make these pages heavy in the Scales of Justice. May Allāh reward our shaykhs who taught us what they taught us of the science of hadith, Shaykh ^Abdullāh Al-Harariyy, Shaykh Samīr Al-Qadi, Shaykh Kamal Hut, and Shaykh Khalīl Dabbagh. May Allāh have mercy upon Ibn Hajar Al-^Asqalaniyy, and may Allāh pardon and have mercy upon Shaykh Mullā ^Aliyy Al-Qari, and raise his rank. May Allāh grant support to the Muslims by this book and relieve our calamities. May the rank, honor, and prestige of our beloved master, Muḥammad ﷺ be raised, and that of his family, his Companions, and those who follow them in goodness.

Allāh knows best and is Wisest.

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And the Last of our call is:

“Al-Hamd[u] li-Ilaah[i] Rabb[i]-l-^Alamin!”