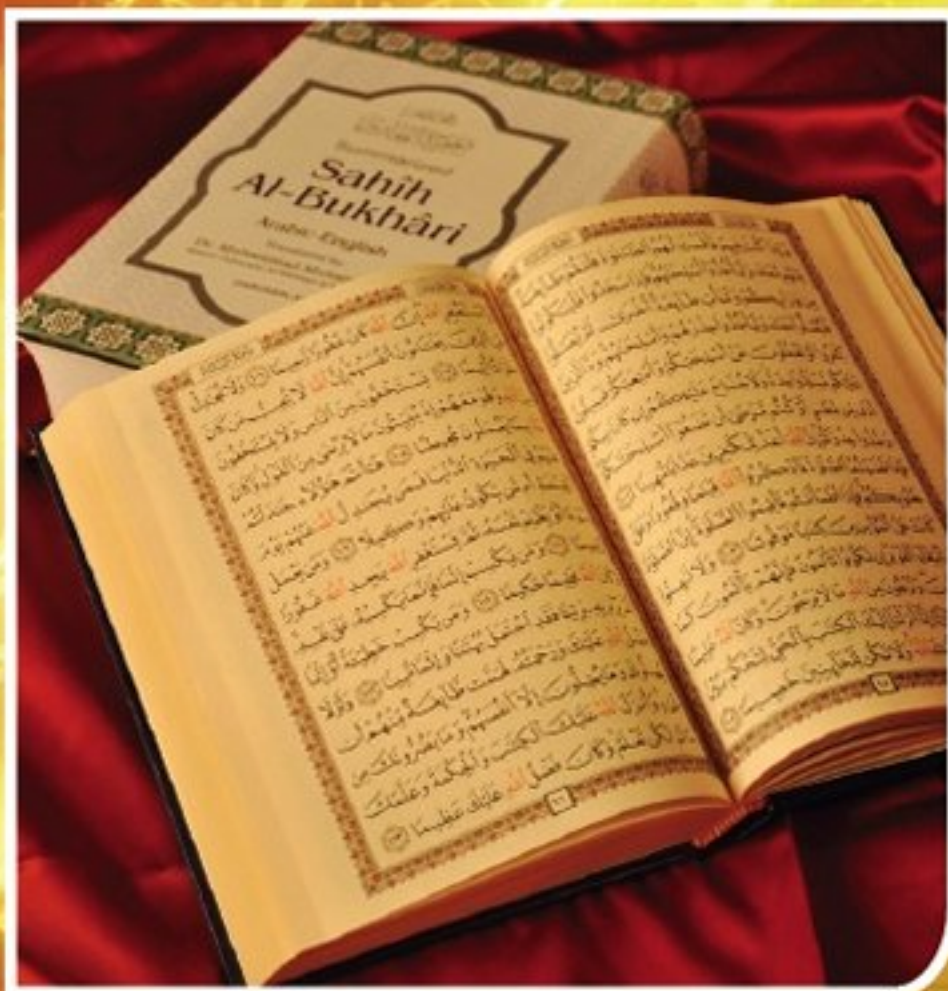


Preservation of Quran & Sunnah



حفظ القرآن والسنة

Zeinab Hassan Ashry



لجنة التعريف بالإسلام
ISLAM PRESENTATION COMMITTEE
جمعية النجاة الخيرية

Preservation of Qur'an and Sunnah

{In the light of Science of Hadeeth }

**{Verily! We sent down the Reminder
And verily we shall preserve it }**

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About the Author

The author of this book, Zeinab Hassan Ashry, is a computer engineer, who spent 12 years in Islamic studies in Dar Al-Qura'n in Kuwait. She is a well-known figure in the field of da'wah (preaching Islam) in Kuwait for English speaking ladies, Muslims and non-Muslims; she spent decades of her life in this field. She has been dedicating most of her time for spreading awareness about Islam. She teaches courses, gives lectures, writes books, articles, and is actively involved in Dawah activities among non-Muslims in Kuwait.

The author provides for the readers authentic Islamic information based on the Noble Quran, sound traditions of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh), authentic Islamic books and references as well as the opinions of great respected Muslim scholars

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Chapter (1)

Definitions

I. *Hadeeths* (Prophet's traditions)

The *Hadeeths* are records of the prophet's sayings and deeds as well as the deeds done by any of his companions in his presence or with his knowledge which were either approved of or not disapproved of by him.

Examples of *Hadeeth*

i- Sayings of the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh):

1. The Prophet (pbuh) said: "Deeds are by intentions and everybody will be rewarded according to his intentions."
2. The Prophet (pbuh) said : "Islam is founded on five pillars: to testify that there is no God but Allah and Mohammad is His messenger, to perform prayers, pay *Zakat*, fast the month of *Ramadan* and perform pilgrimage."

ii- Deeds of the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh):

1. Acts of prayer
2. Rites of pilgrimage
3. Aisha (the mother of the faithful, may Allah be pleased with her) said, "The Prophet used to wake up at night and clean his teeth with *siwak*."

4. It is narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) used to enter the mosque with his right foot first and leave with his left foot first.

iii- Deeds that the Prophet (pbuh) approved:

1. There is a tradition reported by Abu-Dawood and Al-Nisa'i that Abu-Saeed Al Khudri said, "Two men lacked water while traveling. They made *tayammun* (ablutions with clean earth dust) and offered their prayer. After a while they found water. One of them made ablution and repeated his prayer but the other man did not. When they reported the incident to the Prophet (pbuh) he said to the man who did not repeat his prayer, 'You have been guided to Sunnah' (approving his conduct) and said to the other, 'You will be rewarded twice.'"

2. Al-Bukhari narrated that two slave girls were singing on Eid¹ day at Aisha's house while the Prophet (pbuh) was lying down and hearing them. When Abu-Bakr (Aisha's father) entered the house he rebuked Aisha, saying, "The devil's instrument in the Prophet's house?!" The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Let them play. Every people has a feast and this day is our feast" and he let them continue to play.

3. Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, watched some Ethiopians performing in the prophet mosque in Medina while leaning on the Prophet (pbuh) until they had finished.

1. Festival day

II. What is Sunnah?

The Arabic word sunnah has several meanings, one of them being a way of living or a way of acting. What is meant here is the collection of Hadeeth which form the mode of life of the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh), the laws, characters and manners related to the Islamic Code.

1) The Sunnah also includes the Prophet's personal characteristics and manners that form a part of the Islamic code. For example,

- Anas (rra) said, "I served the Prophet (pbuh) for ten years and he never asked me 'Why did you not do so?' or 'Why did you do so?'."
- Ibn Abbas (rra) described the Prophet (pbuh) by saying, "He was the most generous person."

2) However, Sunnah does not include the physical description of the Prophet (pbuh). For example, his hair was somewhat curly; however, it is not Sunnah to curl your hair to look like the Prophet's hair.

3) Also, the Prophet's preferences for certain food, clothes, and so forth are not part of the Sunnah, however, unless they are related to religion. For example:

- i) Breaking fast with some dates is Sunnah because it has been recommended by the Prophet (pbuh) and fasting is an act of worship.

- ii) Eating food that the Prophet (pbuh) used to like such as honey, sweets or pumpkin is not a part of Sunnah. However, if someone prefers these foods out of love for the Prophet (pbuh), he will be rewarded for it.

4) The Sunnah, however, also does not include the Prophet's personal opinions expressed on certain occasions which do not form a part of the Islamic Code.

- An example is found in the story of Bareera (rra) who was a slave girl of Aisha (rra) and who was set free by her. Bareera was married to a slave. According to Islamic law, Bareera, after getting her freedom, she had the option to keep her marriage with her slave husband or divorce him. She decided to divorce him, but he followed her in the streets of Medina, crying and begging her to keep him. Her husband sought the intervention of the Prophet (pbuh) to restore his marriage. The Prophet (pbuh) called for Bareera and advised her to keep her marriage. She asked, "Is this a prophetic advice from God so that I must obey it or is it a personal advice?" The Prophet (pbuh) replied that it was only his personal advice, so she declined to agree, saying, "I have no need for him." The Prophet (pbuh) later remarked to his uncle Al-'Abas (rra), "Do you not wonder at how much he loves her and how much she hates him?"

Sunnah in Fiqh

Notice that Sunnah in *Fiqh* has a more specific meaning; it means the non-obligatory deeds the prophet used to do; they fall into three categories:

1. Very highly recommended Sunnah (سنة مؤكدة) which includes the nonobligatory deeds that were always practiced by the Prophet (pbuh). These include the *Wattr* prayer before sleeping and the Sunnah prayer before the dawn (*Fajr*) obligatory prayer.
2. Recommended Sunnah (سنة مستحبة) which includes the non-obligatory deeds that were regularly practiced by the Prophet (pbuh).
3. Optional Sunnah (سنة مباحة) which includes the non-obligatory deeds the Prophet (pbuh) used to practice occasionally.

However, the meaning of *Sunnah* in *Fiqh* is beyond the scope of this book.

III. *Bida'* بدعة - Innovation in religious matters

Opposite to Sunnah is *Bida'*, which is an innovation in religious matters without any basis in Islam; it gets no support from the Holy Qur'an, or the *Hadeeth*. *Bida'* is a deviation from the well established Sunnah.

Example for Bida'

Extremism even in the acts of worship:

Al-Bukhari narrated that: a group of three men came to the houses of the wives of the Prophet asking how the Prophet worshipped (Allah), and when they were informed about that, they considered the Prophet's acts of worship insufficient for them and said, "Where are we from the Prophet as his past and future sins have been forgiven." Then one of them said, "I will offer the prayer throughout the night forever." The other said, "I will fast throughout my life and will not break my fast." The third said, "I will keep away from the women and will not marry forever." Allah's Messenger called for them and said, "Are you the same people who said so-and-so? By Allah, I am the most God fearing of all of you; yet I fast and break my fast, I do sleep and I also marry women. So, he who turns away from my Sunnah (way of life) is not from me (not one of my followers).

In some versions, the Prophet (pbuh) said to one of them, "Your body has a right over you, your wife has a right over you and your family has a right over you. So give each one his right."

Innovation in Matters of this Life

Notice that innovation is relevant only in religious matters. In matters of the life of this world, innovation is not considered *Bida'*. On the contrary, Muslims are highly enjoined to outdo other nations in progress and innovations in all aspects of this life.

Bida' (innovation in religious matters) is Rejected

Since the religion of Islam was completed and perfected, there is no need for innovation.

1.

قال الله تعالى : ” اليوم أكملت لكم دينكم و أتممت عليكم نعمتى و رضيت لكم الاسلام دينا ” (سورة المائدة 5 : 3)

The Qur'an states : “This day I have perfected your religion for you, and completed my favor unto you, and I have chosen Islam (Submission to God) for you as religion.” (5: 3)

2.

قال رسول الله ﷺ : ” من أحدث فى أمرنا هذا ما ليس منه فهو رد ” (رواه البخارى و مسلم)

Both Al-Bukhari and Muslim narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said, “He who innovates something in this matter (religion) of ours that is not in agreement with it, will have it rejected.”

3.

قال رسول الله ﷺ : ” من عمل عملا ليس عليه أمرنا فهو رد ” (رواه مسلم)

Muslim narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said,: “He who does an act which our matter is not in agreement with, will have it rejected.”

Following *Bida' is an error that* leads one astray from Islam. The Prophet (pbuh) used to say in his sermons, “The best speech is that embodied

in the Book of Allah, and the best guidance is the guidance given by Muhammad. The most evil affairs are their innovations; and every innovation (*Bida'*) is an error.”

The Prophet (pbuh) said in another tradition, “... a servant will be turned away from among those gathered around cistern. Upon this I shall say: My Lord, he is one of my people. He (the Lord) will say: You do not know that he created new things (in Islam) after you.

The Ruling of Bida'

Some scholars reject all forms of innovations. However, many others divide Bida' into “good innovation” and “bad innovation” and they reject only bad innovation. According to this opinion, innovation can be either prohibited (*Haram*), disliked or not recommended (*Makroh*), or permissible (*Mubah*).

Examples of Bida'

1- Prohibited (*Haram*) Bida'

This includes any newly invented practice which is done as part of religion without any evidence from Islamic Shari'ah (Qur'an or Sunnah). It is one of the gravest sins in the matters of the religion. It is very dangerous because the person practicing it does not realize it is a sin. In fact it is considered as a good deed, so there is no point of leaving it.

Examples

- Extremism in respecting the righteous by glorifying them, swearing in their names, making vows to them, celebrating their birthdays, glorifying their graves, or asking for their help.
- Mentioning Allah's name (ذكر) while spinning or dancing and playing music (What is often called religious dancing!).
- Swearing by something or someone other than Allah.
- Vowing to someone other than Allah.
- Circling graves as an act of worship.
- Offering prayers in the grave yard hoping for more reward.
- Adding conditions to the permissible, and desirable acts in Islam, without any religious basis.

2. Not Recommended or Disliked (*Makrooh*) Bida'

This is very close in meaning to the prohibited or *Haram* Bida'.

It includes newly invented practices which are not prohibited in themselves but the methods of practicing them is unauthentic such as reciting some verses a specific number of times in a

gathering; making Tasbeeh or praising Allah (swt) for a specific time, putting conditions for making Dua'a for Allah (swt), or celebrating the night of the middle of Sha'ban.

It also includes newly invented practices which are not done as part of the religion but they include some violations to Islamic principles such as excessive decoration of the mosques, celebrating national days, or birthdays since they involve imitation of non-Muslims.

3. Permissible (*Mubah*) Bida'

Some scholars define the permissible Bida' as a new practice that has some roots in Islam. Its permissibility depends on the intentions behind it and the manner of practicing it. If it is practiced in a manner free from any violations and backed with good intentions then it is permissible, in the sense it is not rejected.

- Celebrating the Prophet's birthday with intention to show respect for him and to remind people of his Sunnah, while avoiding acts violating Islamic teachings.
- Celebrating the occasion of *Issra'* and *Mi'raj* with intention to remind people of the occasion's events and details as reported in the traditions.
- Celebrating the night of Qadr on the 27 night of Ramadan with intention to strive in good deeds and bring himself close to Allah (swt) hoping for His reward.

- Reciting Qura'n for the deceased, with the intention of praying to Allah SWT to grant the reward of recitation to the deceased.

The Good Bida' (Bida' Hasanah)

The term Good Bida' (Bida' Hasanah) or "good innovation" denotes a newly introduced good practice that has basis in Islam or related to an evidence of Qur'an or Sunnah.

This kind of practice is not really an innovation in religion or Bida' in the conventional meaning; it rather means something that has been newly practiced, or has not been done before. So it refers to matters newly initiated in Islam but in agreement with its principles and goals.

Umar (raa), during his Caliphate, gathered Muslims behind one Imam in the Taraweeh prayers in the Masjid; upon seeing the congregation, he was pleased and said, "This is a good innovation".

Imam Al-Shafei was reported to have said, "Innovations are of two types, good innovations and bad innovations." However, Imam Al-Shafei himself explained that the innovation that is according to Sunnah is good and that which is against it is bad.

Examples of this kind of innovations are:

- Compilation of Qur'an during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr (raa). Abu-Bakr (raa) at first hesitated because the Prophet (pbuh) did not do it. Then he realized the importance of collecting the Holy Qur'an into one book in order for preservation of the Book of Allah (swt).
- Uniting Muslims on one Mus-h'af of the Noble Qur'an which was done by Caliphate Uthman (raa).
- Putting dots, vowelization marks, as well as Surahs' information, in the Mus-h'af to help people to recite it correctly.
- Putting stopping and continuation marks, and marks for places of prostration سجود.
- Dividing the Qur'an into thirty parts.
- The development of Fiqh, the Science of Tajweed, and Hadeeth Science.
- The development of the rules of Arabic Grammars (Nahw) and so on.
- Building schools for teaching Qur'an and Sunnah,

Remark

As we see that prohibiting innovation in matters of religion does not mean all the newly introduced things are forbidden without restrictions. In fact the newly introduced matters which are in agreement of Islamic principles are welcomed.

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ ” مَنْ سَنَّ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ سُنَّةً حَسَنَةً فَعَمِلَ بِهَا بَعْدَهُ كُتِبَ لَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِ مَنْ عَمِلَ بِهَا وَلَا يَنْقُصُ مِنْ أَجْرِهِمْ شَيْءٌ وَمَنْ سَنَّ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ سُنَّةً سَيِّئَةً فَعَمِلَ بِهَا بَعْدَهُ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِ مِثْلُ وَزْرِ مَنْ عَمِلَ بِهَا وَلَا يَنْقُصُ مِنْ أَوْزَارِهِمْ شَيْءٌ ” امام مسلم

Imam Muslim reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “Whosoever introduced some good practice in Islam he will get its reward in addition to the rewards of all of those who followed it, without their rewards being reduced in any respect.”

Chapter Two

The significance of Sunnah The Status of Sunnah in Islam

Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh) is one of the fundamentals of Islam; it occupies a position secondary only to the Qur’an . In order to attain guidance, Sunnah should be followed by every true Muslim in his day to day life.

The Prophet (pbuh) was chosen and sent by God as a mercy to all mankind.

قال الله تعالى : ” و ما أرسلناك إلا رحمة للعالمين “
(سورة الأنبياء 21 : 107)

“ We sent you but a mercy to mankind”

(21 : 107)

The Prophet main mission was to teach people the Book of God, the Qur’an . The Prophet’s life was a practical example of all that was preached and enjoined in the Holy Qur’an :

سئلت عائشة رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا عن خلق رسول الله ﷺ قالت: ”كان خلقه القرآن“.

When the prophet’s wife, A’isha (raa), was asked about his character, she replied, “His character

was the Qur'an ", meaning it was a practical interpretation of the Qur'an .

By studying the Prophet's life, we easily recognize that his personality combined all that was best in morals and manners as the Qur'an says about the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh):

قال الله تعالى : ” و إنك لعلی خلقٍ عظیم ” (سورة القلم 68 : 4)

“And you stand on an exalted standard of character” (68: 4)

His life was the perfect model to be followed by all mankind. Even his enemies acknowledged his excellent character. Allah (swt) said in the Qur'an

قال الله تعالى : ” لقد كان لكم فى رسول الله أسوة حسنة لمن كان يرجو الله و الآخر و ذكر الله كثيراً »
(سورة الأحزاب 31 - 21)

“Certainly there is for you in the messenger of Allah an excellent example for those who hope for Allah and the Last day and remember Allah much.” (31:21)

Accordingly, believing in and following the Prophet's example and way of life, is a part of a Muslim's faith. One can not be a true believer unless he follows the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh).

Qur'an Versus Sunnah

The Revelation الوحي

Both the Qur'an and *Hadeeth* are revelation sent down by Allah to Prophet Mohammad (pbuh), as Allah said in Qur'an :

قال الله تعالى : ” و أنزل عليك الكتاب و الحكمة و علمك ما لم تكن تعلم .. ” سورة النساء : 4 : آية 113

“... For (Allah) has sent down to you the Book and Wisdom and taught you that which you did not know before” (4:113)

The verse states that the message sent down to Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) consists of both the Book, the Qur'an , and Wisdom which is understood to be the collection of the teachings of the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh).

قال الله تعالى : ” وما ينطق عن الهوى إن هو إلا وحي يوحى ”
سورة :النجم 53 – الأيات 3-4

“He (prophet Muhammad) says nothing out of his own desire. It is no less than revelation (sent down to him).” 53:3-4

These verses prove that all what the Prophet (pbuh) preached whether Qur'an or *Hadeeth* was nothing but a revelation from Allah. He (pbuh) never spoke out of his own desires or to convey his personal wishes o people. All what he said was according to guidance he received from Allah (swt).

Ways of Revelation

Allah assigned the angel Gabriel to be His messenger to His prophets to reveal to them His message. Allah (swt) says in Surat (A-Shura : 51)

قال الله تعالى : ” وما كان لبشر أن يكلمه الله إلا وحياً أو من وراء حجاب أو يرسل رسولا فيوحى بإذنه ما يشاء إنه علیمٌ قديرٌ ” سورة: الشورى 42 - آية 51

“It is not fitting for a man that Allah should speak to him except by inspiration or from behind a veil or by sending a messenger to reveal with Allah’s permission what Allah wills, for He is the Most High, the Most Wise.” (42:51)

According to the above verse, the prophets of Allah (pbut) received His revelation in the following ways:

- (1) Allah (swt) talked to the prophet from behind a veil, such as it happened with the prophets: Adam, Moses and Mohammad (pbut).
- (2) The angel Gabriel in his angelic nature meets with the prophet and reveals Allah’s message to him directly into his heart. This is the highest rank of revelation and it was the most difficult form on the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh). Before the session of revelation began, the Prophet would hear a sound like a ringing bell as an announcement of the coming of Gabriel (pbuh).

The Prophet (pbuh) said that he felt like he would die each time Gabriel gave him revelations in this manner. A’isha (raa) said, “When the revelation session ends I see droplets of perspiration on the Prophet’s forehead even on a very cold day.”

The entire Qur’an was revealed in this manner.

- (3) The angel Gabriel comes in the shape of a handsome man and meets with the prophet. For example, Muslim reported that Omar said, “One day while we were sitting with the Prophet (pbuh) there appeared before us a man. His clothes were very white and his hair was very black and no sign of traveling was seen on him. None of us knew him. He sat down by the Prophet (pbuh). Resting his knees against his and placing the palms of his hands on his thighs, he said, ‘O Mohammad, tell me about Islam.’ The messenger of Allah said, ‘Islam is to testify that there is no God but Allah and that Mohammad is the messenger of Allah, to perform prayers, to pay *zakat*, to fast *Ramadan* and to make pilgrimage to the House if you are able to do so.’ He said, ‘tell me about Iman. He said, ‘It is to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the last day and to believe in divine destiny, both the good and the evil thereof.’ He said, ‘You have told the truth.’ He said, ‘Tell me about Ihsan.’ The Prophet (pbuh) replied, ‘It is to worship Allah as though you are seeing Him

while you see Him not, yet truly He sees you.’ He said, ‘Tell me about the Hour.’ He replied, ‘The one questioned about it knows no better than the questioner.’ He said, ‘Tell me about its signs.’ He said, ‘The slave girl will give birth to her mistress and the barefooted, naked, destitute herdsmen will be competing in the construction of lofty buildings.’ Then he took himself off and I stayed for a time. Then he said, ‘O Omar, do you know who the questioner was?’ I said, ‘Allah and His messenger know best.’

He said, “It was Gabriel, who came to teach you your religion.”

(4) The angel Gabriel casts the revelation into the heart of the prophet in such a way that the prophet knows that this is an inspiration from Allah and is able to distinguish it from ordinary ideas that cross the minds of humans. For example, there is the tradition that the prophet said, “The Holy Spirit (Gabriel) cast into my mind that no soul shall die before its life span and provisions are fulfilled.”

(5) The prophet may also receive revelation through the angel Gabriel in a vision during his sleep. The prophets’ visions are the truth from their Lord. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, “I sleep but my heart does not sleep.” As an example, the Prophet (pbuh) had a vision that he

and Muslims will visit Mecca and perform Umra (minor pilgrimage). His vision came true one year later, after the Treaty of Hudaibiya.

The Noble Qur’an

The scholars of Qur’anic Sciences defined Qur’an as :

The speech of Allah that was revealed through angel Gabriel to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in Arabic (both the words and meanings) and narrated to us by Tawater² and is holding a challenge to mankind to produce one like the shortest chapter in it.

According to this definition, the Qur’an’s meanings and specific words in Arabic are Allah’s spoken words that were revealed by Allah through angel Gabriel directly to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

The fact that the specific words of Qur’an were revealed by Allah explains why Qur’an must only be narrated in its Arabic words. If we narrate it by its meaning, as in a translation, it is not Qur’an itself but rather a possible meaning of the Qur’anic words.

² The meaning of Tawater will be explained later.

The Book of Qur'an was revealed through the highest rank of revelation where the angel Gabriel (pbuh) meets (in his angelic nature) with the Prophet (pbuh) and casts the words of Allah directly into the Prophet's (pbuh) heart in such a way that the Prophet shall not forget them; then the prophet would recite them after him. In Surat Al-Aa'la, Allah (swt) says,

قال الله تعالى : "سنقرئك فلا تنسى" سورة الأعلى ٨٧ - آية ٦

"We shall teach you and you shall not forget"

(87:6)

In fact, this is a promise of Allah (swt) that the Qur'an will be imprinted in the heart of the Prophet (pbuh) in such a way that he shall never forget any of it. That was the first step of the preservation of the Noble Qur'an .

Qur'an is the Ever-Lasting Miracle

The Qur'an , being a revelation in Allah's specific words, is an outstanding everlasting miracle holding a challenge to all mankind to produce a book like it, or ten, or even one, like the shortest chapter (Surah) of it. As of yet no one has dared to accept the challenge, consequently proving that the Qur'an is the true Book of Allah.

Sunnah (Hadeeth)

The meanings of Sunnah were revealed by Allah in any of the ways of revelation, explained before, and then expressed in the Prophet's words.

Although the collections of *Hadeeth* were not revealed in Allah's specific words, they have a particular eloquent and rich in meanings Arabic style. The Prophet (pbuh) was given the gift of (جوامع الكلم) or the ability to express many meanings in a few eloquent words.

While it is better to use the Prophet's (pbuh) exact words when narrating his sayings (*Hadeeth*), one may use his own words to express the meaning. The requirement of using exact wording, therefore, is one of the distinguishing factors between Qur'an and Sunnah.

Since the meanings of *Hadeeth* are revelation from Allah, they are also part of the Miracle given to Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) and they also hold a challenge to all mankind just exactly like Qur'an .

Modern scientific studies show that the authentic Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh), like the Qur'an , are in complete agreement and harmony with scientific facts, proving that both of them are from the same source, from God, the Creator of the universe.

The Difference between Qur'an and Sunnah

Qur'an	Sunnah
1) Both the words and meanings were revealed in Arabic by the angel Gabriel where he meets in his angelic nature with the Prophet.	1) Meanings were revealed by the angel Gabriel in any of the ways of revelation and then expressed in the Prophet's words.
2) It can only be narrated in its specific words in Arabic.	2) It can be narrated by meanings.
3) Both words and meanings are holding a challenge to all mankind.	3) Meanings are holding a challenge to all mankind.

The Legality of the Sunnah

From time to time we hear calls that spread doubts about books of *Hadeeth* under the pretence that these books are human production and we are not obliged to follow them as we are obliged to follow the Qur'an .

Those people reject the entire Sunnah claiming that the Qur'an is sufficient for us. They name themselves the Qur'anic people (القرآنيون) and preach their call under the slogan "Islam is founded on Qur'an alone " or "the Qur'an is sufficient", thinking that they are defending Islam from any distortion while in fact they are destroying it.

Most of people who support this call do so due to lack of proper knowledge; however, some of them are motivated by evil intentions to ruin the foundation of Islam and misguide Muslims particularly those who are weak in their faith.

i) The legality of Sunnah in the Qur'an

Let us refer to Qur'an to find out what it says about such calls. One can easily find out that the legality of the Sunnah is a well established fact in Qur'an . There are ample evidences in Qur'an about this; examples include the following:

1) Whatever Prophet (pbuh) says is nothing but a revelation sent down to him.

قال الله تعالى : ” ما ضل صاحبكم وما غوى وما ينطق عن الهوى إن هو إلا وحي يوحى علمه شديد القوى“
(سورة : النجم ٥٣ - الآيات ٢٠١)

“Your companion has neither gone astray nor is he misled. Nor does he say of his own desire. It is no less than revelation sent down to him. He was taught by one mighty in power.” (53:2-5)

These verses prove that the sayings of the Prophet (pbuh) are revealed by Allah and that he did not speak out of his own desires or personal wishes.

2) The Muslim must fully accept whatever the Prophet (pub) brought to him:

The Qur’an requires from every Muslim full obedience to the Prophet (pbuh). It says:

قال الله تعالى : ” و ما آتاكم الرسول فخذوه و ما نهاكم عنه فانتهوا “
سورة : الحشر ٥٩ - آية ٧

“Whatever the messenger enjoins, accept, and whatever he forbids, avoid.” (59:7)

One is not even considered a Muslim until he testifies that Mohammad is the messenger of Allah and, of course, this implies total obedience to him, i.e., accepting whatever he enjoins and avoiding whatever he forbids.

It was reported that Abdullah Ibn Masood said, “Allah has cursed those women who pluck the

eyebrows and those who seek to have it done, and the tattooers and the tattooed, and those who shorten their teeth and those who seek to have it done, and those who join their hair with hairpieces and those who seek to have this done, and those who make gaps between their teeth and those who seek to have this done, i.e., those who change what God has created for the sake of beauty”.³ A woman from the tribe of Asd heard about what Abdullah Ibn Masood said, went to him and said, “I heard that you cursed so and so.” He replied, “Why shouldn’t I curse those whom the Prophet (pbuh) cursed, and it is in the book of God.” She said, “I have read the whole Qur’an but I have not found it there.” He replied, “Have you not read the verse, “*Whatever the messenger enjoins, accept, and whatever he forbids, avoid?*”

We understand from this Hadeeth that the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) considered the Sunnah as obligatory as the Qur’an .

³ The general meaning of this Hadeeth is that we should not change what Allah has created for the sake of beauty, as it is a form of deception and falsification., which are condemned in Islam. However, if there is a strong medical reason, whether physical or psychological, reconstructive or plastic surgery is permissible.

3) Obedience to the Prophet is Obedience to Allah (swt)

The Qur'an teaches that obeying the Prophet (pbuh) and following his example is an obedience to Allah.

قال الله تعالى: «من يطع الرسول فقد أطاع الله»
(سورة النساء ٤ - آية ٨٠)

“He who obeys the messenger has indeed obeyed Allah.” (4:80)

It enjoins the believers to abide by the Prophet (pbuh) teachings because obeying the messenger is certainly a part of the obedience of Allah (swt) for it surely guides us to the straightway of Allah (swt).

Therefore, there should be no distinction between the obedience of Allah and His messenger.

4) Obeying the Prophet is a means of attaining Allah's Blessings

The Qur'an says:

قال الله تعالى : “قل إن كنتم تحبون الله فاتبعوني يحببكم الله و يغفر لكم ذنوبكم” سورة : آل عمران- آية ٣١

“Say: “If you love Allah, follow me, and Allah will love you and forgive you your sins.” (3:31)

قال الله تعالى: “وأطيعوا الله و الرسول لعلمكم ترحمون”
سورة آل عمران ٣- آية ٣٢

“And obey Allah and the messenger in order that you may attain Allah's mercy.” (3:132)

These verses state that obeying the Prophet (pbuh) beside obeying Allah is a means of attaining Allah's love, forgiveness and mercy. Disregarding the Sunnah would surely disqualify us for these blessings of Allah.

5) The prophet is the model example for all believers

Allah (swt) reminds Muslims of the great example of the life of Prophet Muhammed, and how it is a model for those seeking success both in this life and the Next:

قال الله تعالى: “لقد كان لكم فى رسول الله أسوة حسنة لمن كان يرجو الله و الآخر و ذكر الله كثيراً”
سورة الأحزاب ١٣ - آية ٢١

“Certainly there is for you in the messenger of Allah an excellent example for those who look unto God and the Last day and remember Allah much.” (31:21)

6) Guidance is the fruit of obeying the Prophet (pbuh)

Qur'an assures that guidance to the straight path is the fruit of following the Sunnah. Allah (swt) says:

قال الله تعالى: “و إن تطيعوه تهتدوا و ما على الرسول إلا البلاغ المبين” سورة : النور ٢٤ - آية ٥٤

“And if you obey (the messenger), you shall be guided and the messenger's duty is only to preach the message clearly.” (24:54)

قال الله تعالى: "و إنك لتهدى إلى صراطٍ مستقيم"
سورة الشورى ٤٢ - آية ٥١

«Verily you are guiding people to the straight path.» (42:51)

7) Sunnah is a source of wisdom and knowledge

Allah states that the Prophet (pbuh) received from Him the book of Qur'an and wisdom; scholar of Tafseer of Qur'an say what is meant by wisdom here is collection of the teachings of the prophet (pbuh) or the Sunnah.

قال الله تعالى: "و أنزل الله عليك الكتاب و الحكمة و علمك ما لم تكن تعلم"
سورة النساء ٤ - آية ١١٣

"And Allah sent down upon you the Book and Wisdom and taught you that of which you had no knowledge." (4:113)

8) Sunnah is a Source of Islamic Laws and Legislation:

Qur'an mentions that the teachings of the prophet (pbuh) include his judgment among people according to the Qur'an and the directions he received from Allah (swt).

قال الله تعالى: "إنا أنزلنا إليك الكتاب بالحق لتحكم بين الناس بما أراك الله"
سورة: النساء ٤ - آية ١٠٥

"We have sent down to you the Book in truth, that you might judge between people as directed by Allah." (4:105)

9) Sunnah is a Reference in Cases of Disputes:

Qur'an directs Muslims to consider Qur'an and Sunnah their main reference in cases of disputes. Allah (swt) says:

قال الله تعالى: "يا أيها الذين آمنوا أطيعوا الله و أطيعوا الرسول و أولى الأمر منكم فإن تنازعتم في شيء فردوه إلى الله و الرسول إن كنتم تؤمنون بالله و اليوم الآخر ذلك خير و أحسن تأويلاً"
سورة: النساء ٤ - آية ٥٩

"O you who believe, obey Allah and the messenger and those charged with authority among you. And if you differ in anything, refer it to Allah and the messenger if you truly believe in Allah and the last day. This is the best for you and the most suitable for final determination." (4:59)

The verse enjoins Muslims to obey Allah and His messenger and the people of authority amongst us; however, to settle their affairs in cases of disputes, they are all enjoined to refer only to Allah and His messenger (Qur'an and Sunnah). Those of authority are not mentioned as references for Muslims. In fact, all Muslims, including their

leaders and rulers, should return to Allah and His messenger in order to get guidance in settling their disagreements and differences.

10) Accepting Sunnah is a Sign of True Faith in Allah

Qur'an asserted that one cannot be a true believer unless he accepts Sunnah, acts according to it, and finds no slight resistance in his heart regarding its judgment in the affairs of his life. Allah (swt) says:

قال الله تعالى : " فلا و رريك لا يؤمنون حتى يحكموك فيما شجر بينهم ثم لا يجدوا فى أنفسهم حرجا مما قضيت و يسلموا تسليما " سورة: النساء ٤- آية ٦٥

"But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith until they make you judge in all disputes between them and find in their hearts no resistance against your judgment but accept it with the fullest conviction." (4:65)

It is a sign of faith to refer to the Prophet (pbuh) and have no doubt regarding his judgment and accept it fully with no hesitation. The verse serves as a warning against rejecting Sunnah and states it clearly that those who do not refer to Sunnah and accept it fully are not true believers.

11) He who Disregards Sunnah Deserves a Serious Punishment from Allah

Qur'an states that whoever turns away from Sunnah has indeed gone astray and become liable to be put into trials and to receive grievous punishment from Allah.

قال الله تعالى : " فليحذر الذين يخالفون عن أمره أن تصيبهم فتنة أو يصيبهم عذاب أليم " سورة النور ٢٤ - ٦٣

"Let those beware who disobey the messenger's orders lest some trial befall them or a grievous penalty be inflicted on them." (24: 63)

These are only a few of the verses of the Qur'an that enjoin obedience to the Prophet (pbuh) exactly as obedience to God. They teach us that obeying the Prophet (pbuh) is part of obeying Allah, a means of attaining God's love and forgiveness, and a means of attaining guidance.

Therefore, if we knowingly disregard the Sunnah we are actually disobeying Allah, rejecting His teachings, distancing ourselves from Him, and disqualifying ourselves for His Mercy, Love, Forgiveness and Guidance.

From all the previous examples, it is clear according to the Qur'an that :

1. Sunnah is nothing but a revelation sent from Allah.
2. The Muslim is required to fully accept Sunnah

3. Following Sunnah is an act of obedience to Allah.
4. Sunnah is a source of guidance for true believers.
5. Sunnah is a means to attain Allah's love, mercy and forgiveness.
6. Sunnah is the model life for true believers.
7. Sunnah is a source of knowledge and wisdom.
8. Sunnah is a source of Islamic laws and legislations.
9. Sunnah is a reference in cases of disputes.
10. Following Sunnah is a sign of true faith.Â
11. Disobeying the messenger of Allah and rejecting his Sunnah makes one prone for tribulations and to receive grievous penalties from Allah.

ii) Legality of Sunnah in the Prophet's teachings

The Prophet's teachings, like the Qur'an , emphasize the legality of Sunnah and refute the claims of discarding it.

1. The Prophet (pbuh) stressed that the Qur'an was not the only revelation he was given but rather it was the Qur'an and Sunnah which is similar to it in source and legality.

قال رسول الله ﷺ : ”ألا إني أوتيت الكتاب و مثله معه ”
رواه أبو داود

The prophet (pbuh) said: “Indeed, I have been given the Book and that which is similar to it” (meaning his traditions). (Abu Dawood)

2. The prophet (pbuh) made it clear that sticking to Sunnah is a protection against going astray:

قال رسول الله ﷺ : ” تركت فيكم أمرين لن تضلوا ما إن تمسكتم بهما كتاب الله و سنتي“

رواه الامام مالك فى الموطأ

The prophet (pbuh) said : “I have left with you two things; if you adhere to them you will never go astray. They are the book of Allah and my Sunnah.” (Imam Malik)

3. The prophet (pbuh) enjoined Muslims to firmly stick to his way of life and the way of life of the guided Caliphs after him.

قال رسول الله ﷺ : ” عليكم بسنتي و سنة الراشدين من بعدى
عضوا عليها بالنواجذ“

رواه أبو داود والترمذى

The prophet (pbuh) said : “Hold on to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the guided Caliphs after me; bite on it with your teeth.”

4. Obeying the Prophet (pbuh) qualifies the person to enter the Paradise

قال رسول الله ﷺ: « كل أمتي يدخلون الجنة إلا من أبى ،
قالوا: ومن يأبى؟ قال: من أطاعني دخل الجنة ومن عصاني
فقد أبى» رواه البخارى

The Prophet (pbuh) said: “All of my nation shall enter Paradise except those who refuse.” A companion asked, “Who would refuse?” He answered, “Those who disobey me are those who refuse Paradise.” (Al-Bukhari)

5. The Prophet (pbuh) disassociated himself from those who disassociate themselves from his Sunnah.

قال رسول الله ﷺ: “ من رغب عن سنتي فليس مني”
رواه البخارى

The Prophet (pbuh) said: “He who turns away from my Sunnah is not from me (my followers).” (Al-Bukhari)

6. The Prophet (pbuh) approved that the Sunnah comes next to Qur’an with regard to Islamic rulings and judgment.

When the Prophet (pbuh) sent Mua’adh Ibn-Gabel to Yemen , he said to him : How will you judge amongst people? He replied: “By the book of Allah, and if I do not find I shall follow the Sunnah of the messenger of Allah and if I do not find I shall do my best”. Then the Prophet (pbuh) was pleased

and said : “Praises are due to Allah that He guided the messenger of the messenger of Allah to what pleases Allah’s messenger”.

iii) The Sahabah and Legality of Sunnah

Consensus of the Sahabah⁴ - may Allah be pleased with all of them - is well established and beyond any doubts. The Sahabah realized the legality of Sunnah and were well aware of the fact that the Qur’an and Sunnah are inseparable. They believed in the Sunnah as they believed in the Qur’an . They followed Sunnah exactly as they followed the Qur’an .

قال أبو بكر الصديق (رضي الله عنه): “ لست تاركا شيئا كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يعمل به إلا عملت به، إني أخشى إن تركت شيئا من أمره أن أزيغ” رواه البخارى و مسلم

Abu-bakr (raa) said : «I would leave nothing the Prophet (pbuh) used to do but I will stick to doing it; for I fear if I leave any of Prophet (pbuh) traditions I shall go astray». (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

For them, Sunnah was a source of Islamic guidance, laws and judgment, for example, when Omar (raa) assigned the judge Shareeh in Al-Kofa, he advised him: “Refer to the Book of Allah, if you do not find (a reference), refer to the Sunnah of the messenger of Allah; if you do not find (a reference), try your best and consult the people of piety and knowledge”

4 . The companions of the Prophet (pbuh)

The Sahabah (raa) always accepted the Sunnah, acted according to it, and applied it in their life. Whenever they faced a new situation or a problem, they would look in the Prophet's traditions for guidance and solutions. The first thing they would usually do is to inquire whether anyone knew a saying from the Prophet (pbuh) regarding it.

iv) Muslim Ummah and Legality of Sunnah

The entire Muslim Ummah since the Prophet's time and until the present has agreed upon the legality Sunnah. Muslims are obliged to believe in Sunnah as they are obliged to believe in the Qur'an ; and they are obliged to apply Sunnah as they are obliged to apply the Qur'an .

The Prophet (pbuh) said, "My nation would never consent upon a matter of misguidance".

قال رسول الله ﷺ: «لا تجتمع أمتي على ضلال»

This tradition stresses that whenever the Muslim community agrees upon something, it must be correct. However, the consent is not a requirement from every Muslim. The consent upon a specific issue is achieved when the people of knowledge and understanding agree on it.

Conclusion

Therefore, the calls to deny and reject the Sunnah are discarded and considered as a tool of the enemies of Islam to destroy the whole religion of Islam. To reject the Sunnah is to reject some parts of the Qur'an and this is an act of disbelief, or kufr. Therefore, to accept and follow the Sunnah is to accept and follow Islam and to reject it is to reject Islam.

Objectives of Sunnah

As it was pointed before, the purpose of the Sunnah is to explain the Qur'an and make it easy for people to understand its meanings and apply them in their daily lives.

قال الله تعالى: "وأنزلنا إليك الذكر لتبين للناس ما نزل إليهم ولعلهم يتفكرون" سورة النحل ١٦ - آية ٤٤

"We have sent down upon you the message (Sunnah) (الذكر) so that you can clarify to people what had been sent to them Qur'an "

(16:44)

The main objectives of the Sunnah can be summarized in the following points :

1. *Giving details for brief Qur'anic teachings.*
2. *Interpreting the verses of Qur'an .*

3. *Setting conditions and restrictions on the general rules and laws mentioned in Qur'an .*
4. *Making exceptions of the general laws and rules mentioned in Qur'an .*
5. *stating laws and rules which are not mentioned in the Qur'an .*

The following is a discussion of the objectives of the Sunnah

1. Giving details for brief Qur'an ic teachings.

For example, the Qur'an orders the believers to establish the prayers; Allah says in Qur'an , "and establish the prayers", (أقيموا الصلاة) . The Prophet (pbuh), in his Sunnah, taught us how to prepare ourselves for the prayers (purify ourselves, make *Wudu'*, direct our faces toward Ka'ba) and how to perform the prayers, their proper times and the number of units, or *rakahs*, in each prayer as the angel Gabriel taught him. He further divided the prayers into three categories: obligatory (*fard*), highly recommended (Sunnah) and recommended (*nafl*).

In a similar manner, the Prophet (pbuh) explained other brief teachings mentioned in the Qur'an such as fasting and paying *zakat* (obligatory charity) and performing (*Hajj* (pilgrimage).

Had these details been mentioned in the Qur'an it would have been a very large book or more than one volume and difficult for Muslims to read and memorize.

2. Interpreting the verses of Qur'an .

It was the Prophet's habit to explain to his companions the meaning of the verses of Qur'an , an example is in the verse (187) in Surat Al-Baqra, Allah (swt) says :

قال الله تعالى : " و كلوا و اشربوا حتى يتبين لكم الخيط الأبيض من الخيط الأسود من الفجر "

سورة البقرة ٢ : آية ١٨٧

"And eat and drink until the white thread becomes distinct to you from the black thread of the dawn, then strictly observe fasting until nightfall." (2: 187)

One of the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) said that when that verse was revealed he took a black thread and a white thread and placed them underneath his pillow. During the night he ate and kept looking at them to see if he could distinguish between them. When he mentioned this to the Prophet (pbuh) in the morning, he said, "It is not so. It is the darkness of the night and the whiteness of the day."

Another example is in one of the verses which mentions those who are foremost in good deeds,

قال الله تعالى : ” و الذين يؤتون ما آتوا و قلوبهم وجلة أنهم إلى ربهم راجعون“
سورة المؤمنون ٢٣ : ٦٠

“And those who do whatever they do while they fear God and believe that they are returning to him.” (23:60)

When this verse was revealed, Aisha asked the Prophet (pbuh), “Does this verse refer to him who steals, commits adultery and drinks wine while he fears God and believes that he is returning to him?” The Prophet (pbuh) said, “No, it is he who prays, fasts and gives charity while he fears God and believes he is returning to Him.” These people are those who, whatever good they do, they feel it is too little in the sight of Allah and, due to their fear of God and belief that they will return to Him.

3. Setting conditions and restrictions on the general rules and laws mentioned in Qur’an .

For example, Qur’an stated that the punishment for the thief is amputating the hand without mentioning conditions required to inflict the punishment :

قال الله تعالى : ” و السارق و السارقة فاقطعوا أيديهما جزاء بما كسبا نكالا من الله و الله عزيز حكيم“
سورة المائدة ٥- آية ٨٨

“As for the thief, both male and female, cut off his hands, a punishment from Allah for their crime. And Allah is exalted in power, all-wise.” (5:88)

Then the Sunnah sets the conditions for amputating the hand of the thief and shows which part of the hand is to be cut.⁵ These conditions are as follows:

- The thief should be mature (not a minor) and sane.
- He should not have been forced to steal out of necessity or coercion, i.e., he/she stole out of his/her own free will.
- The thief should have no share in the stolen property, i.e., it should not belong to his parents, relatives, master, employer or the Muslim State. In addition, the thief should not be a creditor who steals the property of a debtor who denies his debt.
- The stolen property should exceed a certain value (5 Golden Dinar).
- The stolen property must have been properly stored by its owner and not kept in an open place to tempt thieves.
- It should not be a time of famine. For example, in the time of Omar, there was a drought and famine. He discontinued the

⁵ This law may seem very harsh but as a deterrent to theft it is very effective. Under these strict conditions it is rarely applied.

implementation of punishment for theft since there was a possibility that thieves were impelled to steal due to hunger.

4. Making exceptions of the General Laws and Rules Mentioned in Qur'an .

An example is with regard to inheritance laws. The Prophet (pbuh) made the exceptions that :

1. nobody can inherit from a prophet; rather his wealth is left for charity.
2. also, a killer cannot inherit from his victim

Also, the Qur'an forbids the consumption of blood as well as the flesh of animals found dead. However, the Sunnah made the exceptions of dead locusts and sea animals such as fish and whales. The Sunnah also allowed the spleen and liver although they contain a large amount of blood.

5. Stating laws and rules which are not mentioned in the Qur'an .

Besides giving explanation of the Qur'an , the Sunnah states laws and rules which either agree with those in the Qur'an or are not mentioned in the Qur'an .

An example of the former, are statements about a Muslim's property. The Qur'an states:

قال الله تعالى : «و لا تأكلوا أموالكم بينكم بالباطل»
سورة البقرة ٢ : ١٨٧

“Do not eat up your property among yourselves by false means (for vanity).” (2: 187)

In a tradition which has a similar meaning the Prophet (pbuh) said : “The money of a Muslim is not allowed for anyone unless he gives permission willingly.”

قال رسول الله ﷺ : ” لا يحل مال امرئ مسلم إلا عن طيب خاطر“
(رواه)

Further more, depending on this general rule, Sunnah forbade many forms of commercial transactions in which people's rights are not warranted such as selling premature fruits because of the uncertainty of the outcome of the harvest.

Examples of the laws and rules stated by the Sunnah that are not mentioned in the Qur'an include:

1. stoning to death the married person who is a approved of committing adultery,
2. prohibition of :
 - selling premature fruits,
 - eating wild animals with canine teeth, such as lions and wolves, or any bird with talons such as eagles and falcons,
 - marrying a woman and her aunt at the same time,
 - temporary marriage,

- and eating the flesh of donkeys.

While these rules and laws are not specified in the Qur'an , they agree with its basic principles and do not contradict it in any way. This is yet another indication that the Qur'an and Sunnah are inseparable.

Refuting Misconceptions about Sunnah

1. Misconception (1)

The Book of Qur'an is sufficient for us. It contains all we need and covers all aspects of life, as Allah said in Qur'an :

i)

قال الله تعالى : " وما دابة في الأرض ولا طائر يطير بجناحيه إلا أمم أمثالكم ما فرطنا في الكتاب من شيء ثم إلى ربهم يحشرون " سورة الأنعام ٦ : آية ٣٨

"There is not a living being in the earth nor a bird flying on wings but form nations like you. We have (missed) neglected nothing in the Book, and they all shall be gathered to their Lord (at the end)" 6:38

ii)

قال الله تعالى : " .. وأنزلنا عليك الكتاب تبيانا لكل شيء وهدى ورحمة وبشري للمسلمين " النحل ١٦ : ٨٩

" We have sent down to you the Book explaining

all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and a Glad tidings to Muslims " (16 : 89)

Therefore, Muslims need no other source of guidance in addition to the Qur'an .

Refuting Misconception (1)

(1) The context of the first verse indicates that what is meant by the Book is the Book of Decrees which is known as the Preserved Table or اللوح (المحفوظ) which contains all the details regarding all the creatures of Allah (provisions, life spans, deeds , ..., etc.).

(2) The second verse means that Qur'an is a comprehensive book that contains, in general, all we need to attain Allah's guidance, mercy, and glad tidings. Claiming that the book of Qur'an contains and explains all we need in all fields of life is a misinterpretation of the verses because Qur'an itself stressed the need for Sunnah to explain to people the revelation of Allah as it was previously illustrated.

(3) The Prophet (pbuh) disapproved this claim in the following traditions narrated by Al-Al-Tirmidhi :

قال رسول الله ﷺ : " ألا هل عسى رجل يبلغه الحديث عنى وهو متكئ على اريكته فيقول : بيننا وبينكم كتاب الله فما وجدناه حلالاً استحللناه و ما وجدناه حراماً حرمناه ألا إن ما حرم رسول الله كما حرم الله " رواه الترمذى

The prophet (pbuh) said: "There may be a man from amongst you who will hear my tradition while resting on his sofa and say : " Let the Book of Allah be between you and us, whatever we find Haram (Unlawful) in it we avoid it, and whatever we find Halal (Lawful) in it we accept it". Indeed whatever the messenger of Allah forbids is as Haram as whatever Allah forbids."

قال رسول الله ﷺ : " لا أعرفن الرجل منكم يأتيه الأمر من أمرى وهو متكئ على أريكته فيقول : ما ندرى هذا ؟ عندنا كتاب الله و ليس هذا فيه . و ما لرسول الله أن يخالف القرآن وبالقرآن هداه الله " . رواه الترمذى

The prophet (pbuh) said: "Let me not know a man from amongst you who will be informed of a saying of mine while resting on his sofa and then say (without making any investigations): "We do not know this !!. We have the Book of Allah; and this is not in the Book of Allah." And how can the messenger of Allah disagree with the Qur'an and Allah has guided him by the Qur'an ? "

The strong tone of these traditions disapproves the conduct of this kind of people who doubts the legality of Sunnah. The Prophet (pbuh) foretells us about an arrogant man of little knowledge of Qur'an who shows no respect to the Prophet (pbuh) and rejects his tradition under the pretense of referring to the Book of Allah forgetting that the Qur'an itself enjoins us to follow Sunnah. Then the Prophet (pbuh) emphasizes that his traditions are as legally binding as the Qur'an

simply because he (pbuh) could never enjoin anything that contradicts Qur'an .

2. Misconception (2)

Qur'an is a book that Allah promised to guard and protect from any kind of distortions or changes, but books of Sunnah are products of humans that are likely to contain mistakes.

قال الله تعالى : "إنا نحن نزلنا الذكر وإنالاه لحافظون"
سورة الحجر ٤ - آية ٩

It is We who sent down the reminder (الذكر) and it is We who are verily guarding it." (14:9)

Refuting Misconception (2)

Many scholar see that the (الذكر) mentioned in the above verse (14:9) means the entire message of Islam that was revealed to Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) for the following reasons:

i) Al-Dhikr (الذكر) in Arabic means "the Reminder" which applies to both the Qur'an and Sunnah.

ii) The Noble Qur'an calls the Sunnah (الذكر)

قال الله تعالى : " و أنزلنا إليك الذكر لتبين للناس ما نزل اليهم و لعلمهم يتفكرون " سورة ١٦ - آية ٤٤

"We have send down upon you the (الذكر) Sunnah so that you can clarify to mankind what had been sent to them (Qur'an)" (16:44)

This verse means that Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) received from Allah (الذکر) *Sunnah* (in addition to the Qur'an) so that he may be able to illustrate to mankind the Book of Qur'an which had been sent to them.

Thus al-Dhikr (الذکر) means both the Qur'an and Sunnah. Accordingly, Allah's promise to protect al-Dhikr (الذکر) in the verse: 14:9] means to guard both the Qur'an and Sunnah. Guarding the Sunnah has been done through the great efforts of *Hadeeth* scholars who collected the *Hadeeth* and classified it.

3- Misconception (3)

There are traditions that forbade Muslims from writing the Prophet's sayings. For example, Imam Muslim narrated that Abu Saeed Al-Khudary reported that the Prophet (pbuh) said, "Do not write any of my sayings. He who has written any saying rather than Qur'an let him erase it. There is no harm in quoting my sayings (orally). And he who has attributed a lie to me; Hamam said: "I think, he (pbuh) said : Let him have his seat in the Fire" "

قال رسول الله ﷺ : " لا تكتبوا عنى و من كتب عنى غير القرآن فليمححه ، و حدثوا عنى و حرج ، و من كذب على ، و قال همام : أحسبه قال : فليتبوا مقعده من النار " (رواه مسلم)

This tradition means that Sunnah is unreliable since the Prophet (pbuh) prohibited its recording.

Refuting Misconception (3)

This misconception is refuted by authentic traditions, in which the Prophet (pbuh) gave general permission to his companions to write down his sayings. For example, Imam Ahmad narrated that when Abdulla Ibn Amr ibn Al-Aas asked the Prophet (pbuh) for permission to write his sayings, he (pbuh) replied, "Scribe my sayings. By Him in whose hand is my soul, all what I say is the truth and nothing but the truth."

قال رسول الله ﷺ : "أكتبوا عنى و الذى نفسى بيده لا أقول إلا الحق" (رواه أحمد)

The traditions that forbid Muslims from writing the sayings of prophet and those that allow them writing his sayings are all authentic and accepted. Studying carefully all these traditions removes the apparent contradiction between them and we come to the conclusion that:

- 1) At the beginning of Islam the Prophet (pbuh) forbade writing his sayings for fear of mixing them with Qur'an . However, he (pbuh) enjoined Muslims to memorize and preach them orally.
- 2) However, later on after the Qur'an was well-memorized, Prophet (pbuh) gave general permission to his companions to write down his sayings. (We shall discuss this point in details later)

Thus the prohibition aimed to keep Qur'an guarded and protected and it should not be used as a prove of the unreliability of Sunnah.

4. Misconception (4)

The entire Qur'an was written at the time of the Prophet (pbuh) according to the instructions he received from the angel Gabriel, but the Sunnah was collected long after the Prophet's death.

Refuting Misconception (4)

There are ample evidences that affirm that the Prophet's traditions, similar to the Qur'an, were recorded and preserved at very early time of Islam, during the Prophet's lifetime as well as after his death.

1. It is confirmed that thousands of traditions were memorized and recorded by the Prophet's companions, men and women, during his lifetime, as it will be detailed later (chapter three). To further encourage the spread of Sunnah, the prophet (pbuh) gave a permission to narrate his traditions even by meaning (not using his exact words).

2. Furthermore, many of the Prophet's traditions were collected by his companions after his death and were accepted by them as a reliable source of Islamic knowledge; they relied on these traditions to settle Fiqh issues and differences of opinions.

3. The authentic books of Sunnah were compiled after carrying out extensive investigations according to very high standards of precision that makes it very unlikely to find mistakes in them.

4. All the Muslim scholars and Muslim Ummah at large, agreed upon these books of Sunnah. Whosoever rejects the Sunnah is indeed rejecting the entire religion of Islam because the Muslim Ummah does not consent on anything wrong as it is reported in authentic traditions.

Chapter (3)

Compiling the Mus-h'af [The Book of the Qur'an]

Introduction

Islam enjoins literacy and learning; in fact, the first verses revealed were:

قال الله تعالى : ” أقرأ باسم ربك الذي خلق × خلق الإنسان من علق × اقرأ وربك الأكرم × الذي علم بالقلم × علم الإنسان ما لم يعلم “ سورة العلق ٩٦ : ٥

*“Read in the name of your Lord who created * created man from a clot * Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous * Who taught by the pen * Taught man that which he did not know.” (96:1-5)*

In spite of the fact that the prophet himself was an illiterate⁶ person, he encouraged learning, reading and writing. For example, he (pbuh) gave any one of the war prisoners (taken in the Battle of Badr) the option of teaching ten children of Medina to read and write as ransom for himself.

However, before Islam there were very few literate Arabs. The Arabs were famous of having excellent

6 . There was great wisdom behind this: it proves that the Qur'an , which is full of knowledge, was not written by Muhammad (pbuh) but rather revealed by Allah.

memory, which may be partially due to their illiteracy. They memorized nearly every thing important to them, especially their history, family trees and ancestral lines. They prided themselves on memorizing poetry and they were famous for it not only at the time of revelation but throughout history. For example, the poet Abu ZamZam was able to recite poems continuously for one month without any repetition.

This sharp memory helped the Arabs to memorize Qur'an and *Hadeeth* easily, for example, Assmaa bent Um'ais said that she memorized Surat Kaf ق after hearing it once during Maghreb prayer behind the Prophet (pbuh).

Al-Bukhari memorized more than 600,000 of the Prophet's traditions.

Here is a story, narrated in authentic books of Arabs history, that indicates the talent of sharp memory the Arabs enjoyed even long after the mission of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh).

The Al-Abasi Caliph Al-Mansoor was able to memorize any thing upon hearing it only once and can recite it instantly. Al-Mansoor's minister was able to memorize any thing after hearing it twice, Al-Mansoor's servant girl was able to memorize any thing after hearing it three times.

The Muslim Caliphs used to encourage poets as a means to enrich the Arabic language. However, Al-Mansoor was a serious person who did not like to waste his time with poets. He made a trick to

discourage poets from visiting him. He announced that he would give prizes for only the new poems that were not recited before. He determined the prize to be an amount of gold equals to the weight of the paper on which the poem is written.

Whenever a poet recites a new poem to Al-Mansoor, he would surprise him by saying, "I know this poem, and if you do not believe me I shall recite it for you." And Al-Mansoor would recite it. After he finished he would puzzle the poet further and say : "My minister can also recite it for you." Then the minister (who has heard the poem twice) would start to recite it. Then Al-Mansoor would say : "Not only me and my minister can recite your poem but also this girl", and the girl (who has heard the poem three times) would start to recite the poem. Then the disappointed poet will have to leave with no prize, too frustrated to visit Al-Mansoor again.

However, the famous linguistic Scholar Al-Asmaa'y was aware of Al-Mansoor trick. He decided to do some thing to regain respect for the poets. He wrote a poem, choosing very hard uncommon words that he collected from Bedouins, on pieces of stones. When Al-Asmaa'y recited his poem to Al-Mansoor, Al-Mansoor failed to memorize it at once and had to give Al-Asmaa'y the prize which was the weight of the stones in gold. Al-Asmaa'y distributed the prize amongst other poets.

This high faculty of remembrance, the Arabs enjoyed played a great role in preserving the Qur'an and Sunnah. It was so easy and natural for thousands of the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) to memorize both Qur'an and Hadeeth by heart.

Compiling the Qur'an

During the Prophet's Lifetime (pbuh)

Qur'an was revealed piecemeal to support the Prophet (pbuh) and the believers, and make it easy for them to memorize, understand and apply it in their lives.

The Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) had approximately forty scribes to write the Qur'an ic revelations, including Omar Ibn Al-Khattab, Ali Ibn Abi Talib, Othman Ibn Affan, Omar Ibn Saeed, Ubi Ibn ka'b and Zaid Ibn Thabit.

Whenever a verse was revealed, the Prophet (pbuh) would recite it to his companions and they would memorize it and write it down. The Prophet (pbuh) would give instructions to write it down, specifying the Surah and its place in the Surah according to the teaching of the angel Gabriel (pbuh). It is also reported that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) would ask the scribes to reread to him what had been dictated so that he could correct any faults.

The angel Gabriel taught the Prophet (pbuh) the

contents of the Qur'an , the order of the Surahs, the order of the verses in each Surah and even the names of the Surahs. The angel Gabriel used to review the Qur'an with the Prophet (pbuh) particularly in the month of Ramadan. And the Prophet (pbuh) used to review the Qur'an with his companions according to the most current revision of the angel Gabriel at the time.

As the Revelation progressed, the Prophet and the believers following him recited the Qur'anic text, so far revealed, from memory and it was also written down by the scribes.

At that time not everybody could write, but almost everyone was able to recite by heart, thanks to their sharp power of memorization.

Thus two elements of authenticity were involved in the process of preserving the Qur'an since this very early time of revelation: 1) recitation by heart, and 2) writing down of the Qur'anic text.

These two elements of authenticity provided a considerable advantage because of the double-checking possible when the Qur'an was compiled.

According to Al-Bukhari, the angel Gabriel (pbuh) used to meet the Prophet (pbuh) every night in the month of Ramadan to study the Qur'an carefully together and review all that was revealed of it at that time. In the last Ramadan of the Prophet's life, Gabriel reviewed the Qur'an with him twice. The Prophet (pbuh) then realized that his mission

would end soon and that his death was approaching and he (pbuh) died in the same year.

When the Prophet (pbuh) died the entire Qur'an was memorized by thousands of his companions. In addition to this, it was also written down on pieces of leather, pieces of primitive papers, wooden tablets, thin slices of stones, soft stone tablets, animal shoulder blade bones

Evidences from the Qur'an

The Qur'an itself provides indications to the fact that it was written down at the time of the Prophet. Four chapters (Surahs) in the Qur'an refer to the writing down of its texts at the time of revelation.

1)

"By no means! Indeed it is a message of instruction

Therefore whoever wills, should remember

On leaves held in honor

Exalted, purified

In the hands of scribes

Noble and pious." Surah 80, verses 11 : 16

2)

"Nay, this is a glorious Qur'an .

On a preserved tablet" Surah 85, verses 21 : 22

3)

"This is a glorious Qur'an

In a book well kept Which none but the purified touch.

This is a Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds." Surah 56, verses 77: 80

4)

*“A messenger from God recites scriptures
Kept pure where are decrees right and straight.”
Surah 98, verses 2 : 3*

5)

*“They said: Tales of the ancients which he has
caused to be written and they are dictated to him
morning and evening.” Surah 25, verse 5*

The verse refers to the accusations made by the Prophet's enemies who treated him as an imposter. But it indicates the fact that the Qur'an was written down from an early time, which is pointed to by the Prophet Muhammad's enemies themselves.

Why the Prophet (pbuh) did not collect Qur'an in one book

Although many of the Prophet's companions made copies of the texts of the Qur'an for themselves, the Prophet (pbuh) was not intent to collect the written Qur'an in one book because:

1. The Prophet (pbuh) was always expecting further revelation from Allah, compiling it in one book during his life could not be final and might give rise to some misunderstanding.
2. Memorization is regarded as the most important method of preserving the Qur'an because changes can be easily done to any written book and can hardly be detected.
- 3- Writing the Qur'an down was intended as a precautionary measure.

Remark:

Dr. Maurice Bucaille wrote in his book, "The Bible, The Qur'an and Science" : "The Qur'an authenticity is undisputed; the text of the Qur'an holds a unique place among the books of Revelation, shared neither by the Old nor the New Testament. The versions of the Judeo-Christian texts showed a lack of definite authenticity and moreover that their authors were not eyewitnesses to the revelation."

During the Caliphate of Abu-Bakr (raa)

A large number of the companions who memorized the entire Qur'an were martyred in the battle of Al-Yamama which took place between the Muslims and Mosailima, the liar, who claimed prophethood.

Omar (raa) suggested to Abu-Bakr (raa) to collect the entire Qur'an and compile it in one book for fear of losing some of it because of the death of the Prophet's companions. Abu-Bakr (raa) at first hesitated, saying, "This is something the Prophet did not do." He was very careful to follow the foot steps of the Prophet (pbuh) and avoid any innovations in religion. He disliked to see himself as more cautious with respect to the Qur'an than the Prophet himself (pbuh).

After discussion with Omar (raa), Abu-Bakr (raa) was convinced that it was vital and important for the Muslim nation to take the extra measure of compiling the Qur'an into one book in order to

preserve the Book of Allah. Abu-Bakr (raa) realized that compiling the Qur'an in one book, even if the Prophet (pbuh) did not do it, is not an innovation but rather an enforcement of the general rules of the Prophet (pbuh) established to protect Qur'an when he instructed his companions to write it down as a precautionary measure.

Then Abu-Bakr (raa) charged Zaid Ibn Thabit (raa) with the task of writing Qur'an and of collecting it in one book. Abu-Bakr (raa) said to Zaid (raa), "You are a youth, a rational person. We know nothing wrong about you, and you used to write the revelation."

Why Zaid (raa)

Abu-Bakr chose Zaid (even though other companions were older than him, or were Muslims for a longer period of time than him) because he was a skillful memorizer of Qur'an and one of the revelation scribes. Zaid was one of the most familiar companions of the contents of Qur'an, its manners of recitation and grammatical rules. Also, Zaid was one of those who reviewed Qur'an with the Prophet (pbuh) according to the last revision of Gabriel in the last Ramadan of the Prophet's life. In addition to this, as Abu-Bakr (raa) said, he was a rational young man with the energy and patience to carry out the task; he had a good reputation and was well-accepted by all people in his religion and honesty.

Initially Zaid (raa) hesitated and said to Abu-Bakr, "How do you do something that the Prophet (pbuh) did not do?" Abu-Bakr replied, "By Allah, it is good." Later Zaid accepted it after he was convinced of the great benefits of the project. However, he said, "If they have charged me of transferring a mountain it would have been easier for me than collecting Qur'an."

Sources of the Collected Qur'an

In spite of the fact that Zaid (raa) was a perfect memorizer of Qur'an, he did not rely on his own memorization. He collected the Qur'an from two sources:

1. the memorized Qur'an from people's hearts,
2. and the Qur'an written during the Prophet's life on pieces of paper, thin stones, leather and shoulder bones.

Zaid's Manner of Collecting Qur'an

1- Before writing a verse, he would check with many people to make certain that the written verse was exactly the same as the memorized verse. Zaid (raa) would sit at the entrance of the mosque waiting for people entering or leaving to ask them about the Qur'an and take their testimony.

2- He would not accept a written verse unless two people witnessed that the verse was dictated by the Prophet (pbuh), written in his presence and according to his instructions.

3- It is worth mentioning here that Zaid (raa) was not working alone; he was under the supervision of Abu-Bakr (raa) and Omar (raa) and had the help of many other great companions of the Prophet (pbuh), may Allah be pleased with them all.

4- No verse of the Qur'an was copied by Zaid before he made extensive investigations to verify that the verse was narrated by many people and had been confirmed in the last revision of the angel Gabriel and had not been abrogated in recitation.

5- Zaid (raa) verified with the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) the order of the verses in every Surah, the order of the Surahs and the names of the Surahs of the Qur'an so that it would be organized according to the latest revision.

It was a heavy task for Zaid, taking him about two years to make a copy of the entire Qur'an according to the above mentioned conditions.

Many of the Prophet's companions reviewed the collected book of Qur'an and authenticated it. After consultation with other companions, they decided to name the collected Book of the Qur'an "Mus-h'af" (مصحف) which means "collected papers."

Zaid's Methodology

Zaid's manner of collecting Qur'an was based on precise scientific research and extensive investigations according to very strict rules in such a way that proves beyond any doubt that the

Qur'an collected by him is exactly the Qur'an that the Prophet (pbuh) dictated to his people and that which was memorized according to that dictation during his lifetime.

Tawater

The scholars of Islam called the manner of narration followed by Zaid *Tawater*, which must meet three conditions to be classified as such:

1. Many people narrated the same subject exactly. Scholars differ about the minimum number of narrators, which may be four, seven, ten or seventy.
2. The narrators must have been from different places or tribes or culture in such a way to make it impossible for them to agree to fabricate the narrated subject.
3. Their narration must rely on the senses to eliminate any doubts. For example, the narrator must witness that he heard the subject with his ears or memorized it by his tongue or wrote it down with his own hand. If the narrator is not quite certain about the subject, saying, for example, "I think" or "I believe it is so and so," it is not accepted from him.

The book of Qur'an compiled at Abu-Bakr caliphate was called Abu-Bakr's Mus-h'af.

It was kept in his house as a reference for all Muslims. After his death it was transferred to Omar's house. After Omar's death it was kept in his daughter Hafsa's house.

Then Othman (raa) gave the order to burn it after he sent reference copies of Qur'an to different Muslim countries so as not to give Muslims any reason to differ about Qur'an as will be discussed in detail in the following pages.

During the Caliphate of Othman (raa)

Different Manners of Recitation

It is reported by Al-Bukhari that Omar Ibn Al-Khattab said, "I heard Hisham Ibn Hakim Ibn Hizam reciting Surat Al-Furqan in a way different from that of mine. Allah's messenger (pbuh) had taught it to me in a different way. So I was about to interrupt his prayer but I waited till he finished. Then I pulled his garment around his neck and brought him to Allah's Messenger (pbuh) and said, 'I have heard him reciting Surat Al-Furqan in a way different to the way you taught me.' The Prophet ordered me to release him and asked Hisham to recite it. When he recited it, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said, 'It was revealed in this way.' He then asked me to recite it. When I recited it he said, 'It was revealed in this way.' Then the Prophet (pbuh) said, 'The Qur'an has been revealed in seven different ways, so recite it in the way that is easier for you.'"

In another tradition reported by Al-Bukhari, the Prophet (pbuh) said, "Gabriel recited Qur'an to me in one way (i.e., dialect). I kept asking him for more variant ways until he recited it to me in seven Harf (letters) or seven different ways."

The Qur'an was originally revealed according to the accent of the tribe of Quraish. Since the Prophet (pbuh) was only allowed to preach Qur'an in the same way Gabriel taught him, he wished that he would recite it to him in different ways according to Arabic dialects so that he would be able to preach Qur'an in these ways. Then the Prophet (pbuh) asked Allah to recite it in other ways so that it would be easy for the various Arab tribes to memorize it without having to learn the accent of the tribe of Quraish in order for it to be recited correctly. Allah answered the Prophet's prayer and, according to previous traditions, let Gabriel recite the Qur'an to him in seven different ways of recitation according to various Arabic dialects. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), therefore, use to teach people the Qur'an according to their accents.

However, after the Qur'an was well-memorized and the accent of Quraish became widespread, the various ways of recitation had served their purpose of making it easy for people to recite Qur'an and some of these manners of recitation were canceled.

Although the Prophet's companions all agreed upon the Mus-h'af of Abu-Bakr and made copies of it for themselves, they recited it in different manners according to what they had individually received from the Prophet (pbuh); they wrote their Mus-h'afs according to their individual manners of recitation and even some of them added comments to their copies.

Meanwhile, Islam was spreading during the time of Omar (raa) and Othman (raa) and the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) settled in different countries of the Muslim world. New Muslims recited Qur'an they were taught by the companions in their countries. Many new Muslims were unaware that there were other manners of recitation that were preached by the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh). Al-Bukhari reported that in the second or third year of the caliphate of Othman (raa) (25 Hijra), the armies of Iraq and Syria combined to fight in the battles of Armenia and Athrabijan. Hothayfa Ibn Al-Yaman (one of the Prophet's great companions), who was in the army, was alarmed when he noticed that Iraqis and Syrians were disputing about their manners of recitation of the Qur'an, each one believing that his was correct and the others were incorrect. Seeing Muslims differing regarding the Qur'an terrified Hothayfa (raa) so much that he fled to Medina to warn Othman (raa) of the matter and advise him to take swift measures to stop the coming danger that might split the Muslim nation. Hothayfa (raa) said to Othman (raa), "Rescue this nation before they differ on their Book as the Jews and the Christians did."

Othman (raa) took the matter very seriously and consulted the companions who decided to form a committee of companions headed by Zaid Ibn Thabit (raa) to make several copies of the Book of Qur'an collected during Abu-Bakr's caliphate and to write the copies in such a way that they may be recited in all manners of recitation. Othman (raa) ordered them to write any words about which they

differ according to the accent of Quraish in which the Qur'an was originally revealed. They then wrote the Mus-h'af with no dots or vowelization marks so that it could be recited in all manners of recitation.

For example:

1. In Surat Hujurat, they wrote the word فتبينوا without dots. In one manner of recitation it is read فتبينوا and in another manner it is read "فتثبتوا". Both words have the same meaning.
2. In Surat Baqara, the word ننسرها without dots can be recited as ننشرها or ننشزها according to the manner of recitation; the two words have the same meaning.
3. In Surat Yousef, the word هيت without dots can be read as هيت in one manner of recitation or as هئت in another; both words have the same meaning.

While writing the Mus-h'af, the committee of the companions differed about only one word: التابوت in Surat Al-Baqara. Zaid wanted to write it التابوة

(with closed Taa (ة)) while others wanted to write it التابوت with open Taa (ت). When they consulted with the Caliph Othman (raa), he ordered them to write it التابوت according to the Quraish manner in which the Qur'an was originally revealed.

Othman's Mus-h'afs

Othman (raa) then sent these copies to different Muslim countries as a reference of the Book of the Noble Qur'an . With every Mus-h'af he sent a just and reliable person who was well aware of Qur'an recitation so that he could teach people how to recite Qur'an correctly.

In the chosen opinion of the scholars of Islam, according to the book of *مناهل العرفان للزرقانى* (Sources of Knowledge, by Al-Zarakani) Othman (raa) made six copies of the Qur'an :

- One copy for himself as the Muslim Caliph;
- One copy was kept in Medina (Zaid Ibn Thabit was assigned the task of teaching the people of Medina the Qur'an);
- One copy was sent to Mecca with Abdullah Ibn Al-Sa'ib;
- One copy was sent to Kufa with Abu Abdul-Rahman Al-Salmi;
- One copy was sent to Basra with Amer Ibn Qais;
- One copy was sent to Syria with Al-Mughera Ibn Shihab.

In other opinions he sent seven or eight reference Mus-h'afs, one of them was sent to Egypt.

Othman (raa) ordered Muslim rulers to consider

the copy of Qur'an he sent as the only authentic reference and to burn all other books of Qur'an written by individuals.

The Response to Othman's Order

1- All the companions supported Othman (raa), cooperated with him and complied completely to his request to burn their Mus-h'afs and regarded his Mus-h'af as the only authentic reference; one of them objected to this.

Abu-Dawood reported in an authentic tradition that when some people accused Othman (raa) of burning the Qur'an , Ali (raa) said, "Do not say anything about Othman but good. By Allah, he did what he did regarding Mus-h'afs openly after we all unanimously agreed with him."

In another tradition it is reported that Ali (raa) said : " If I were in Othman's place, I would have done exactly what he did "

2- When people in other Muslim countries received the Mus-h'af of Othman they realized that it is unanimous book, a book that is agreed upon by the companions of the prophet so they fully accepted it.

3- Therefore the entire Islamic world was content with Othman's Mus-h'af because it was a product of the Prophet's companions whom Allah praised and the Prophet (pbuh) enjoined us to follow their way when he said : "Adhere to my way and the way of those rightly guided Caliphs after me , bite on it by your teeth "

4- It is not allowed to violate the rules of Othman's Mus-h'af because it has been agreed upon by the entire Muslim nation and as the prophet (pbuh) told us this nation can never agree on something wrong.

That is why for a manner of recitation to be authentic it must comply with the inscription of Othman Mus-h'af.

Dots and Vowelization Marks

As we know Othman Mus-h'af had no dots or vowelization marks. The Arab Muslims were so skillful in Arabic that they could read Qur'an fluently without the need of putting dots and vowelization marks on the letters.

When Islam spread and the land of Islam extended to the east and west many non Arabs embraced Islam and many Arabs married to non Arabs. Since it was difficult for new non Arab Muslims to distinguish the Arabic letters and pronounce them correctly it became common to do pronunciation mistakes when reciting Qur'an ; this kind of mistakes is called *Lah'an* . لحن

The Muslim rulers realized the need to put extra marks in Mus-h'af to help people recite it in the proper manners in order to preserve the Qur'an and guard it from any kind of distortion in both its pronunciation and meaning.

Vowelization Marks

The first one to put vowelization marks in Mus-h'af was Abu Al-aswad Aldua'li (أبو الأسود الدؤلي). The Amir of Believers, Moa'weya Ibn Abi-Sufyan, (معاوية بن أبي سفيان) wrote to زياد Zeiad, the ruler of Basra, to let his son visit him in Demascus. When Moa'weya talked to Zeiad's son, he noticed that he does mistakes in Arabic, then he wrote back to Zeiad blaming him for not teaching his son proper Arabic pronunciation and urging him to spare no effort in doing something to help people preserve the proper Arabic tongue lest they should do mistakes in Qur'an .

Zeiad, ordered Abu Al-asswad Aldua'li (أبو الأسود الدؤلي) to study this matter and try to find some way to make it easy for Muslims to recite Quiran properly in the same way it was revealed.

Al-asswad Aldua'li (أبو الأسود الدؤلي) put additional dots in different color to Othman's Mus-h'af to indicate the vowelization marks (فتحة - ضمة - تنوين). He put one dot above the letter for فتحة *Fat'ha*, one dot underline the letter for ضمة *Dammah* and two dots for تنوين *Tanweeen*.

Dotting Letters

As more non Arab people accepted Islam it became increasingly difficult for them to distinguish between the Arabic alphabets of similar shape for example: (س . ش . ح . خ . ج) without putting dots on them .

The Caliph Abdullah Ibn Marawan enjoined الحجاج Al-Hajjaj, the ruler of Iraq to take steps to help people recite Qur'an correctly. الحجاج Al hajjaj, appointed two of famous Qur'an scholars يحيى بن يعمر Nasr Ibn 'Asem and يحيى بن يعمر Yahya Ibn Ya'amer. They added to the Mus-h'afs extra dots in different color to distinguish the alphabets of similar shapes.

Later at AL-Abasi Caliphate, the famous Arabic linguistic scholar El-khaleel Ibn Ahmad El-Basry (الخليل بن أحمد البصري) exchanged the dots added by Abu Al-asswad Aldua'li (أبو الأسود الدؤلي) with marks that are similar to vowelization marks in the Mus-h'afs at the present time. He also added extra marks for Shadda, شدة , and Sokoonسكون , along with some marks for Mad روم , مد , Roum and إشمam Ishmam.

However, these marks were subjected to some minor modifications and improvements until they were developed to the present day form.

Surahs' Information

Later on, a remark before each Surah (chapter) was inserted that indicates the number of the surah, number of verses in the surah , the surah's name and whether the surah is Makke (revealed before hijra) or Madane (revealed after hijra). The verses were also numbered. The verse number is put at the end of each verse enclosed in a circle.

Stopping and Continuation Marks

To guard against any misconception or misunderstanding of the meanings of Qur'an , stopping and continuation marks were also added in order to help the reader of the Qur'an to stop at the appropriate places in order to avoid distorting the meaning of the verses.

Prostration (Sojood) Marks

Aslo signs were added to indicate the places of prostration سجود , Sojood, at the end of the verses the prophet (pbuh) used to prostrate when reciting Qur'an .

Partitioning Marks

To make it easy for Muslims to recite and memorize Qur'an on regular bases, additional marks (partitioning marks) were added to the Mus-h'af. These marks divide Qur'an into thirty parts, جزء, every part is divided into two sections, حزب, and every section is further divided into four quarters ربع . Thus by reciting one part جزء per day one can easily recite the entire Qur'an in one month as it recommended in some traditions.

The Science of Tajweed

It is not only the words and the meanings of Qur'an that are preserved but also the correct Arabic pronunciation of Qur'anic words was preserved through the Science of Tajweed and Qura'at (Manners of Recitations). The science of Tajweed, is a branch of Qur'anic sciences that

formalizes the methods of Arabic pronunciation of Qur'an to help Muslims to observe the correct recitation of Qur'an as it was exactly revealed to Prophet Mohammad (pbuh).

That is why Qur'an is a book that must be taught orally by qualified reciters according to the rules of Tajweed Science in order to avoid any distortion of its Arabic pronunciation.

Remark

- It is worth to emphasis that all these additional marks that were added to Othman's Mus-h'af have nothing to do with the words and the meanings of Qur'an . These marks are meant to serve the purpose of preserving the Arabic pronunciation and manners of recitation of Qur'an to make it easy for Muslims to study, understand, and memorize Qur'an correctly.
- Muslim nation concern and respect of their book the Holy Qur'an is remarkable. No Mus-h'af is printed and published before it is carefully reviewed to insure that it is in full conformity with Othman's Mus-h'af.

Historical Evidence

It is an irrefutable historical truth that the text of the Glorious Qur'an existing today is, word for word, exactly the same as the Prophet (pbuh) had offered to all mankind as the Word of God.

Qur'an today is still pure in its original language without the slightest alteration in its vocabulary.

Two of the original manuscripts of the Qur'an compiled more than 1400 years ago still exist today; one is in the Topkapi Saray Museum in Istanbul, Turkey, and the other in Tashkent, Russia. Both of these copies are found identical with the Qur'an available all over the world today.

Interestingly, an Institute of Munich University in Germany conducted a research on forty two thousand copies, manuscripts, and different printed texts of the Glorious Qur'an, collected from various parts of the Islamic World at different periods of history. The research continued for about half a century, at the end of which the researchers concluded that apart from copying mistakes, there was no inconsistency in the texts of these forty-two thousand copies, even though they belonged to the period from the 1st century to the 14th century of the Islamic calendar.

The Glorious Qur'an Today

Thus the Qur'an, the final Message of God revealed for the guidance of mankind, is **the only scripture** that was compiled during the lifetime of the Prophet who had received it; and it remains **the only scripture** available in the original language it was revealed without the slightest alteration in its vocabulary.

Moreover, the Arabic language in which the Qur'an was revealed is still a living language at present time; it is the mother tongue of more than three hundred million people in ther Arab world. In the

non-Arab countries too, hundreds of thousands of people study and teach this language; and it is used by millions of Muslims around the world in their worshipping.

The grammar of the Arabic language, its lexicon, its phonetic system and its phraseology, has remained intact for more than fourteen hundred years. A modern Arabic-speaking person can comprehend the Glorious Qur'an as did the Arabs of fourteen centuries ago.

Muslims today all over the world are bent intent on studying, reciting, and memorizing the Qur'an. The Glorious Qur'an is the most frequently and recurrently recited and rehearsed book in the world. The word "Qur'an" means in Arabic 'something to be repeatedly recited'.

At present, every day, every hour, every minute, in fact every second of the 24 hours of the 365 days of every year of the past centuries has been alive with the reading of the Qur'an. This memorization and recitation of the Qur'an continued from the very beginning of the revelation and it is still going on in a very systematic manner in every part of the Muslim world. Now the volume and scope of this phenomenon multiplies in every imaginable way with the arrival of multimedia.

And how can any one expect any alterations or changes in the Qur'an, when there have existed millions of memorizers "*Huffaz*" from all over the Islamic world, from all classes and ages: men, women, and children, in every generation since

the time of the Prophet (pbuh) until today? Should anyone alter a word of the original text of the Qur'an, these memorizers would at once expose the mistake.

Conclusion

- Thus the Qur'anic words, meanings, and manners of recitation are all preserved and guarded from any kind of distortions, no matter how slight they are due to the great efforts of Muslims since the time of prophet Mohammad (pbuh) until now. Thus, Allah (swt) has been fulfilling his promise to guard and protect the book of Qur'an from any distortion.
- According to this brief study, the Book of Qur'an "Mus-h'af" at the present time certainly contains the Qur'an that was revealed to the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) from Allah (swt).

Chapter (4)

Recording and Preserving the *Hadeeth*

Recording the Sunnah

Collecting Sunnah in the Prophet's Lifetime (pbuh)

Sunnah like Qur'an , was revealed piecemeal according to circumstances to help Muslims memorize and understand it.

Sunnah similar to the Qur'an was collected at very early time of Islam. In the Prophet' (pbuh) life time, recording Sunnah passed through three stages.

1- **First:** At a very early time of Islam, for fear of mixing Sunnah with Qur'an, the Prophet (pbuh) prohibited recording his traditions but he enjoined preaching them orally.

2- **Second:** In the second stage, he (pbuh) gave permission only to some of those companions who were well familiar of the Qur'an and Sunnah to write his traditions.

3 **Third:** Finally, when there was no fear of mixing Qur'an and Sunnah, Muslims in general, were permitted to record Sunnah.

1. Permission to Narrate Sunnah ONLY Orally

In the early stages of Islam, the Prophet (pbuh) forbade his sayings to be written for fear of them being mixed with Qur'an . Abu Saeed Al-Khudary reported that the Prophet (pbuh) said,

قال رسول الله ﷺ: " لا تكتبوا عني و من كتب عني غير القرآن فليمحاه ، و حدثوا عني و حرج ، و من كذب علي ، و قال همام : أحسبه قال : فليتبوا مقعده من النار " رواه مسلم

"Do not write any of my sayings. He who has written any saying rather than Qur'an let him erase it. There is no harm in quoting my sayings (orally). And he who has attributed a lie to me; Hamam said : "I think, he said : Let him have his seat in the Fire" "7 (Narrated by Muslim)

Although this tradition prohibits recording the Prophet's sayings, it enjoins Muslims to memorize, quote and preach them orally, "There is no harm in quoting my sayings (orally)". But it warns people against fabricating Prophet's traditions and this warning serves as an indirect permission to narrate them.

To encourage Muslims to preach Sunnah, Imam Ahmad narrated that the prophet (pbuh) said, "May Allah brighten the face of he who heard

7. Those who reject the Sunnah use this Hadeeth to support their assertions that the Sunnah is unreliable since the Prophet (pbuh) prohibited its recording. They forget, however, that this prohibition was only at the beginning of Islam and for a temporary period of time. The Prophet (pbuh) later gave permission to write his sayings.

something from us and preached it as it is (no more, no less). Maybe the one who received it is a better memorizer than the one who conveyed it .

قال رسول الله ﷺ : ” نضر الله وجه امرئ سمع شيئاً منا فحفظه حتى يبلغه قرب مبلغ أحفظ من سامع ”

(رواه أحمد)

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbil commented : “If there is no honor for the people of *Hadeeth* but this tradition, it would be enough for them.”

قال الإمام أحمد بن حنبل: ” لو لم يكن لأهل الحديث فضيلة غير هذا الحديث لكفتهم “

Furthermore, the prophet (pbuh) warned Muslims against concealing knowledge, Al-Bukhari narrated that he (pbuh) said, “Whosoever was asked about some knowledge and concealed it, he will be bridled with a bridle of fire on the day of judgment “

قال رسول الله ﷺ : ” من سئل عن علم فكتمه ألجم بلجام من نار يوم القيامة ” (رواه البخارى)

Of course, Islamic knowledge includes Sunnah which is the collection of the Prophet’s teachings and directions to Muslims.

2. Restricted Permission to record unnah

After some time the Prophet (pbuh) gave permission only to some of his companions to scribe his sayings, especially those whom he was sure would not mix Qur’an ic verses with Sunnah. One of these companions was Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-Aas.

Imam Ahmad reported that when Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-Aas asked the Prophet (pbuh) for permission to write his sayings he (pbuh) replied, “Scribe my sayings. By Him in whose hand is my soul, all what I say is the truth and nothing but the truth.”

قال رسول الله ﷺ : ” ا كتبوا عنى و الذى نفسى بيده لا أقول إلا الحق ” (رواه أحمد)

3. General Permission to record Sunnah

When nearly all of the Qur’an had been revealed and well-memorized by the Prophet’s companions, the Prophet (pbuh) gave general permission to record his sayings in writing. Examples of this permission include:

1. Al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) also gave permission to transcribe his sermon for Abu Shah on the day of the Conquest of Mecca, twenty years into his mission.
2. Al-Turmidhi الترمذى reported that one of the companions complained of his inability to memorize the prophet’s traditions and was advised by the Prophet (pbuh) to seek the help of his right hand, i.e., to write things down.
3. It is reported that Rafa’a Ibn Khudij asked the Prophet (pbuh), “We hear your sayings, should we write them down?” The Prophet (pbuh) replied, “There is no harm in writing them.”

4. Many traditions of the prophet (pbuh) were recorded in the letters and books the prophet (pbuh) sends to kings, tribes, and the rulers he assigned to Muslim regions. For example, the Prophet (pbuh) sent Amr Ibn Hazam to Najran to teach them Qur'an and the rules of Islam and to collect their charity. The Prophet (pbuh) dictated a book for him that contains his traditions that outline the general rules of Islam.

5. Many companions collected thousands of traditions and wrote them on papers. This will be discussed in more detail later.

Permission to Narrate Sunnah by Meaning

To further encourage the spread of Sunnah, the prophet (pbuh) later on gave a permission to narrate his traditions even by meaning (not using his exact words). A man came the prophet (pbuh) and said: "O Prophet I hear from you but I can not narrate your sayings exactly as I hear them from you, maybe I add a letter or omit a letter". The Prophet (pbuh) said, "There is no harm; So long as you do not make the unlawful lawful and the lawful unlawful narrate the exact meaning."

However the scholars of *Hadeeth* put conditions in order to narrate the prophet's traditions by meaning :

1. The narrator must be well aware of Arabic language.
2. He must make it clear that what he is narrating is not the exact words of the prophet (pbuh). For

example, he should avoid saying : "The prophet (pbuh) said so and so; and he may say: "It is reported so and so... "

Some other scholars, because of poor knowledge of Arabic language, particularly at the present time, prohibit narrating the Prophet's traditions by meanings for the sake of preserving them.

Conclusion

In the Prophet's lifetime, Sunnah like Qur'an , was well preserved:

- 1. Most of his companions, men and women, memorized his traditions and preached them.*
- 2. Many companions collected thousands of traditions and wrote them on papers.*
- 3. Many of his traditions were collected in the books which he (pbuh) sent to kings, tribes and the rulers he assigned to Muslim regions.*

This affirms that the Prophet's traditions were recorded and preserved both during his lifetime and after his death.

It also refutes the claim of some orientalist that the Sunnah was not recorded in the lifetime of the Prophet (pbuh) and that it was recorded at least one hundred years after his death. These claims are baseless; and aim only to spread doubts about the reliability of the Sunnah. However, there are some western scholars who sincerely researched the Sunnah and concluded that it was recorded during the lifetime of the Prophet (pbuh) and considered it a reliable source of Islamic knowledge.

Role of Sahaba⁸ in Collecting Sunnah

1. During the Prophet's lifetime

Since Sunnah is the practical translation, and the application of the Holy Qur'an the Sahaba (men and women) were very much intent to be in the Prophet's presence to learn from him.

1- They always turned to him for guidance. He (pbuh) used to interpret the meanings of Qur'an, explain Islamic rules as circumstances require, answer their questions and give advices.

2- The Sahaba paid great attention to all the sayings and actions of the Prophet. They used to get together to study and memorize them; and whatever they did not understand they would turn to the prophet (pbuh) to clarify it for them.

- Anas Ibn Malik (raa) said : "When we were in the Prophet's presence, we hear from him the *Hadeeth*. After we leave, we study whatever we heard from him carefully together till we memorize it."
- Omar (raa) said : "A neighbor of mine from Al-Ansar, and me lived far in Madina suburb of Umaia Ibn Zaid. I used to take daily turns with my neighbor to visit the Prophet (pbuh). In his day, he reports to me whatever he heard from the Prophet (pbuh) and in my day, I do the same."

3- The Prophet's wives (Mothers of the believers) memorized thousands of the Prophet's traditions and recorded very precisely all the details of his daily life. They (raa) not only memorized the Sunnah but also carried the task of preaching and teaching it to men and women alike.

4- Women also, were very eager to learn Sunnah, one lady companion said: "O Prophet, men are taking much of your time, set a day for us, women. Then he (pbuh) specified a day to meet with women and teach them.

5- It is also confirmed that the Prophet's traditions were not only well memorized during his lifetime but also were collected and preserved in scriptures by his companions. The following are some examples:

- a. Abdullah Ibn Amr (raa) wrote a thousand sayings and called his paper "As-Sadiqa," or the "Truthful."
- b. Ali (raa) collected many of the traditions regarding Islamic laws in a paper called "Al-Qadaya'", or that which contains certain Islamic laws.
- c. Saa'd Ibn A'bada (raa) collected a large variety of the Prophet's (pbuh) traditions in a book which he used in teaching Sunnah.
- d. Samra Ibn Gundib (raa) wrote many traditions in a book which his son used to narrate them after him.

8 . The companions of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh)

- e. Jaber Ibn Abdullah (raa) collected the traditions regarding the rites of Haj (pilgrimage) in a book.

2. After Death of the Prophet (pbuh)

After the Prophet's death, the Sahaba continued to follow his footsteps as they did in his life.

[1] They always acted according to the Sunnah, applied it, and handled problems by the Prophet's (pbuh) example.

Whenever a problem arisen, they would get together to discuss it and inquire whether any one knew a saying from the Prophet (pbuh) regarding it. Here are some examples:

- After the Prophet's (pbuh) death, Muslims were wondering where to bury him. This matter was set by the tradition: " Prophets are buried wherever they die."
- Muslim community also faced the problem of choosing a caliph. This was settled by a tradition narrated by Abu Bakr. The Prophet had said, "Leadership must be in the Quraish," perhaps because it was the biggest and most respected Arab tribe.
- Fatima, the Prophet's (pbuh) youngest daughter asked Abu-Bakr (raa) for her share in the inheritance from her father, however that claim was rejected by the tradition Abu-Bakr narrated: "We, Prophets are not inherited from; whatever we leave is a charity".

- When a grandmother asked Abu-Bakr (raa) for her share in the inheritance, he said : "No thing is specified for you in the Book of Allah and I know no tradition in Sunnah that prescribe a share for you. Wait till I ask people." Then Abu-Bakr (raa) gave her the same share of the mother according to a tradition reported by two of the Sahaba⁹.

[2] The Sahaba were more concerned to record Sunnah after the Prophet' (pbuh) death than in his life.

- 1- It is confirmed that Abu-Bakr (raa) who were aware of all the details about the Prophet's life, according to his daughter Aisha he wrote for himself a collection of traditions in a paper¹⁰. He also has a paper that contains the rules of charity (Sadaqah) and he used to send copies of it to rulers of Muslim regions.
- 2- Also Omar (raa) wrote for himself many traditions in many papers which included the paper of charity (Sadaqah) of Abu-Bakr (raa) and he used to also send copies of it to rulers of Muslim regions.
- 3- Abu-Hurairah (raa), (the famous Sahabi who memorized and narrated a great deal of Sunnah), during the Prophet's life he used to depend

9 . Reported by Al-Baihaqy and Al-Dhhabi

10 . It is reported that he burnt this paper later for fear of not being very accurate in narration

basically on memorizing traditions rather than on writing them down. He said: "No body narrated more traditions than me but Abdullah Ibn Amr; He used to write but I did not."

However, after the Prophet' (pbuh) death many of the traditions Abu-Hurairah narrated were written by some followers¹¹ in many books and reviewed with him. Abu-Hurira (raa) was keeping these books in his home as references.

4- Hamam Ibn Munabeh collected many of the traditions narrated by Abu-Hurairah in a paper called "The upright". One copy of this paper is available now in Damascus and one in Berlin. These traditions were later narrated in the book of Al-Bukhari and Musnad of Imam Ahmad.

5- Many of the Sahaba traveled long distances to collect traditions from other Sahaba who heard them directly from the Prophet (pbuh) in his life time¹².

For example, Abu-Ayuob Al-ansari (raa) traveled to Egypt to hear a tradition of another Sahabi 'Auqba Ibn 'Aamer who heard it from the Prophet (pbuh) in his lifetime.

6- The minor Sahaba¹³ were very much interested in collecting Sunnah. Many of them used to travel from region to region to collect traditions from other Sahaba who heard them directly from the Prophet

11 . Those who lived in the lifetime of Sahaba but they did not see the prophet (pbuh)

12 . As Islam spreaded the Sahaba scattered in the Muslim world.

13 . The Sahaba who were very young at the lifetime of the Prophet (pbuh).

(pbuh) in his lifetime. Abdullah Ibn Abbas used to wait at the Mosque doors and houses of Madinah for the Sahaba to ask them about traditions of the Prophet (pbuh). It is reported that he (raa) collected many traditions of the Prophet (pbuh) in many so many books that they were equivalent to a camel loads.

3. The Sahaba used to teach people Sunnah exactly as they used to teach them the Qur'an .

Sessions were held in every place by Hundreds of the Prophet's companions and followers to preach Sunnah. In fact the Mosques all over the entire Muslim world were serving as universities to propagate both Qur'an and Sunnah.

One may raise the question:

Why did not the Sahaba collect and compile Sunnah in one book as they did with the Qur'an ?.

The answer is that they felt no urgent need for the compilation of the Sunnah, for the following reasons :

- Sunnah was well memorized by the Sahaba who were living in Medina and a great part of it was recorded on papers as well.
- Since Muslims at that time were very God-fearing, fabrication of traditions was unheard of, therefore the Sahaba felt no reason for a complete compilation of Sunnah.

- Moreover, the art of composing books in a systematic manner was unknown at that time.

However, it is reported that it was recommended to Omar (raa) to collect Sunnah in books as it was done with the Qur'an but he declined because the Prophet (pbuh) did not do this in his life-time as he did with Qur'an . Also Omar felt that might make people so busy with Sunnah that they neglect the Book of Allah.

Compilation of the Books of *Hadeeth*

(i) The End of First Century A.H.

From the previous discussion we come to the conclusion that Muslims memorized, recorded, acted upon and preached the Prophet's traditions, both in his life and after his death.

However, unlike Qur'an , which was collected in one book under the supervision of the state, the task of recording Sunnah was left to the individuals because the Muslim authority at that time felt no urgent need to adopt the project of compiling all the Prophet's traditions in one book.

The Fast Spread of Islam

At the end of the first century, because the land of Islam was extending far and wide and so many non-Arabs converted to the new faith of

Tawheed, the need for a complete and accurate compilation of Sunnah arisen. Although the new non-Arabs Muslims loved the Arabic language (as the language of Qur'an), were proud of it, and learnt it, they did not had the highly developed faculty of memorization as did the Arabs, and they needed complete references of Sunnah in order to fully understand Islam.

Fabrication of Traditions

Another reason there was a need for a full record of authentic Sunnah was because the fabrication of traditions had started at the end of the first century after the wide spread of Islam, generally due to hypocrisy, ignorance or radical thinking.

Hypocrites pretended to accept Islam so they could fabricate or invent traditions and mix them with authentic ones to distort Islam and distract people from the pure religion. For example, Abdel-Karim Ibn Al-'Awja' confessed that he fabricated 4000 traditions that made prohibitions permissible and permissible things prohibited in an attempt to confuse the Muslims.

Ignorant Muslims also invented some traditions. Abu A'sma Nuh Ibn Abi Mariam, for example, said that he saw people distracted away from the Qur'an so he invented traditions about the merits or virtues of all the Surahs, or chapters, of Qur'an to encourage people to recite them. For example, he cited a tradition that recommended reciting certain chapters a certain number of times on certain days with the promise of a very great reward for that.

Radical schools of thought also emerged after the spread of Islam eastward and westward. Their followers invented traditions to support their schools of thought and to prove that the others were wrong.

As fabrication of traditions started, Muslims felt the necessity and urgency of developing some method of control to help distinguish the authentic traditions from the false ones.

(i) The Call of Caliph, Omar Ibn Abdul-Aziz

The first caliph Allah guided to preserve His prophet's Sunnah was Omar Ibn Abdul-Aziz¹⁴. He sent letters to his rulers all over the entire Muslim world to call the scholars of Islam to collect and compile all true traditions of the Prophet (pbuh) because he feared the loss of the authentic Sunnah with the death of learned people and the spread of fabrication of traditions.

Muslim scholars all over the Islamic land realized the significance of the call of Omar Ibn Abdul-Aziz and responded to it positively. They not only started to record and collect Sunnah but also they set rules to find out the sources of the traditions, giving special attention to both the substance of the traditions and the narrators. Data

14 . He was a grand son of the second caliph Omar Ibn Al-Khtab. He was famous of being great scholar, pious, God-fearing and so just that during his caliphate no poor people eligible for Zakat were found.

was collected about the narrators of traditions, paying special attention to their schools of thought, biographies and characters, especially regarding honesty. Measures were also established to judge the substance of traditions.

Abu-Bakr Ibn Hazm , the ruler of Al-Madina and Ibn-Shihab Al-Zuhary, the great scholar of Madina, were the first compilers of the traditions according to these standards. The caliph Omar Ibn Abdul-Aziz sent a letter to the ruler of Madinah to entrust them with the task of compiling all authentic traditions.

However, although the work of these two great scholars, Ibn-Shihab Al-Zuhary and Abu-Bakr Ibn Hazm paved the road for the collection of authentic Sunnah was still not enough.

(ii) Hadeeth in the Second Century A.H.

In the second century there were many famous scholars of *Hadeeth* . They included:

1. Imam Malik¹⁵, the founder of the school of Malikiya, which is followed in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Morocco. His book, *Al-Mauti'*, contained 1700 traditions.
2. Sufyan Al-Thawry in Kufa, Iraq
3. Hamad Ibn Salama in Basra, Iraq
4. Al-Awza'y in the Levant (Syria)
5. Abdulla Ibn Mubarak in Khurasan in Iran

15. d 179 A.H.

6. Abu Hanifa¹⁶ in Baghdad, Iraq, the founder of the school of Hanifaya, which is followed in Egypt, Afghanistan and Pakistan.
7. Al-Shafa'y, founder of school of Shafaiya, which is followed in Egypt and Mecca.
8. Ibn Hanbal in Baghdad, Iraq

The main work of these great scholars was *Fiqh*, or deducing Islamic legislation from Qur'an , *Hadeeth* , and setting Islamic rules and laws, rather than pure *Hadeeth* books.

Their work in compiling *Hadeeth* was not very comprehensive since their books of *Hadeeth* were mixed with *Fiqh*.

There were no books specializing in *Hadeeth* except for Imam Malik's book, and it was confined only to acts of worship; it did not contain traditions related to the Prophet's (pbuh) character and morals, his life, or explanations of Qur'an ic verses. The work of compiling the *Hadeeth* in the second century, therefore, was not comprehensive.

(iii) *Hadeeth* in the Third Century A.H.

The third century of *Hijrah* was known as the golden age of *Hadeeth* .

- More comprehensive *Hadeeth* books were compiled to cover all subjects.

16 . Abu Hanifa had a vision that he was following the footsteps of the Prophet (pbuh). It was interpreted that he will preserve his Sunnah.

- The scholars of *Hadeeth* established a solid foundation for the process of separating authentic traditions (Saheeh) from false ones.

The Books of Al-Bukhari and Muslim

The most famous books of authentic *Hadeeth* are Saheeh Al-Bukhari and Saheeh Muslim, compiled by Imam Al-Bukhari¹⁷ and Imam Muslim¹⁸ in the third century A.H.

These two books contain only sound or *Saheeh* traditions. They are the main reference of Islamic knowledge next only to the Book of Qur'an .

Conditions of Al-Bukhari and Muslim

Imam Al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim were famous for being very strict and careful in choosing the *Hadeeth* so that:

1. Each tradition reported was prefaced by a chain of authorities going back to the original narrator to the Prophet (pbuh). This process was called *Isnad*, or chain of narrators.
2. Detailed investigations were carried out regarding the narrators of the traditions, their biographies, moral character, truthfulness and power of memory.

Al-Bukhari was More Strict than Muslim

Studying the books of Al-Bukhari and Muslim, it is

17 . Al-Bukhari was Born in 194 H and died in 256 A.H in Bukhara.

18 . Muslim was born 204 H in Khurasan in Iran and died 261 A.H

noticeable that Al-Bukhari was known to be more strict in his investigations than Muslim.

One of his conditions to accept and narrate the *Hadeeth* is that both the person who is quoted and the narrator should have met for some time, enough for the narrator to hear and memorize the *Hadeeth*. This condition is affirmed in the way Al-Bukhari transmitted his *Hadeeth*.

He narrated the *Hadeeth* using verbs or remarks that indicate the meeting of the two narrators such as:

- Haddathana حدثنا (He told me),
- Sami'tu سمعت (I heard),
- Amarani أمرني (He ordered me),
- Shahittu شهدت (I witnessed),
- "He poured water..",
- "He performed ablution..",
- "He hold his beard..",
- "He interlocked his fingers" .

Therefore, his chain of narration might read,

Al-Bukhari reported that Ali told him that Omar told him that Ahmad told him that Abdullah Ibn Muso'od told him that he heard the Prophet (pbuh) saying, "..."

Thus Al-Bukhari and Ali should have met for some time, enough for Al-Bukhari to hear and memorize the tradition from Ali. And Ali should have met with Omar for some time, enough for him to hear and memorize the tradition from Omar.

Same thing is applied to (Omar and Ahmad) and also to (Ahmad and the companion Abdullah Ibn Muso'od). Of course, the companion Abdullah Ibn Muso'od met with the Prophet (pbuh) for enough time to quote the tradition from him.

However, Muslim did not set the strict condition that Al-Bukhari did regarding the meeting of the narrators. It was sufficient evidence for him that the person who is quoted and the narrator lived at the same time, both being God-fearing, trustworthy and just.

His chain of narration might read,
Muslim reported that Ali told him that on the authority of Omar according to Ahmad according to Abdullah Ibn Muso'od that the Prophet (pbuh) said, "....."

The narrators did not have to necessarily meet, as long as they were both strict and careful in their narration. In Muslim's opinion the just and truthful narrator would only quote from just and truthful narrators like himself.

Al-Bukhari's Book of Sound *Hadeeth*

It is worth to mention here that it took Al-Bukhari 16 years to collect his book of authentic and sound traditions (*Al-Saheeh*). He visited many places all over the Islamic world to meet the scholars of *Hadeeth* and he transmitted *Hadeeth* from more than one thousand narrators. His book of compiled authentic traditions was selected from no less than

600,000 traditions. It includes 7,563 *Hadeeth* with repetition and 2,607 without repetition.

It is reported that before selecting a *Hadeeth* for his book, Al-Bukhari used to make full Ghusil¹⁹, pray two Raka'a (units of Islamic prayer) then ask Allah for assistance and guidance.

It is reported that Al-Bukhari lost his sight in his childhood. His mother prayed to Allah to return his sight back. Allah answered her prayer in a dream in which the prophet Ibrahim told her, "Allah answered your prayer and gave your son his sight back." Next morning she was amazed to see her son restoring his sight back.

It is also reported that Al-Bukhari had a vision in his sleep that he was holding a paper fan in his hand and fanning flies away from the Prophet (pbuh). It was interpreted that he would defend the lies from the Prophet (with his work)

Muslim's Book of Sound Hadeeth

The traditions in Muslim's book were selected from 300,000 *Hadeeth*. It includes 9,200 *Hadeeth* with repetition and 3,030 without repetition.

Muslim was a student of Al-Bukhari. Many leaders of *Hadeeth* scholars transmitted *Hadeeth* through him. He authored books in *Hadeeth* Sciences other than the "Saheeh Traditions".

19 . Take a full shower for purification.

The Hadeeth Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim

Al-Bukhari and Muslim agreed upon 1,906 *Hadeeth*. They are collected in a book called, "*The Pearls and the Coral that the Two Sheikhs Agreed Upon.*" These traditions are the most sound of all.

Muslim Unanimity Consensus on Al-Bukhari

We conclude that all of the traditions of Al-Bukhari and Muslim are the most sound, and Al-Bukhari is more sound than Muslim. There is unanimity among Muslims upon these two books; they are regarded as the most authentic books after the Holy Book of the Qur'an .

Major References of Hadeeth

Besides Al-Bukhari and Muslim books, there were other compilers of *Hadeeth* . They include:

1. Abu Dawood (202-275 A. H) compiled a book of 5,274 *Hadeeth*.
2. Al-Al-Tirmidhi (209-279 A. H) compiled a book of *Hadeeth* which included *Hadeeth* from Al-Bukhari, Muslim and Abu Dawood. However, he added new rules to judge the degree of reliability of a tradition. He classified the traditions in his book as sound, good, weak and rejected, giving reasons for each. His book is a reference in determining the defects of the traditions.

3. Al-Nisa'i (215-303 A. H) lived in Egypt and was famous for his great knowledge about the *Hadeeth* narrators. He compiled a book of *Hadeeth* and then summarized it in a book of 5,761 *Hadeeth*.

4. Ibn Majah (206-273 A. H) compiled a book of Sunnah which contains 4,341 *Hadeeth*.

5. Ahmed Ibn Hanbal (164-241 A. H) is the founder of the Hanbali school of thought. He compiled a book of *Hadeeth* and arranged its chapters according to the names of the companions. His book is known as Musnad Imam Ahmed.

6. Al-Muatta' was compiled by Imam Malik and contains 1,700 *Hadeeth*.

Other books of *Hadeeth* include those by Al-Tabarani, Dar Qutni, Al-Hakim, Al-Sayyoutti, and Ibn Hebban.

The Six Main References of *Hadeeth*

The scholars, however, have agreed upon six references of *Hadeeth*. The first two are *Sahih Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*, the only two books that contain purely *Sahih*, or sound traditions.

The others are the books of Al-Tirmidi, Abu Dawood, Al-Nisa'i, and Ibn Majeh; they are called "*As-hab As-Sunan* أصحاب السنن", or Companions of the Sunnan.

Whenever a tradition is reported by each of these six sources it is said to be "agreed upon"; it is the highest rank of reliability.

Other sources of *Hadeeth*, such as Musnad of Imam Ahmad and Al-Muatta' of Imam Malik are not included among the six main references because the six major references include all the traditions reported by them.

The two books of Al-Bukhari and Saheeh Muslim are the only books that contain purely *Saheeh*, or sound traditions; the other four of the six references contain a mixture of *Saheeh* and non-*Saheeh* traditions. The main concern of these four books was to collect as many traditions as they can. That is why they did not focus on the reliability of the *Hadeeth* as it is the case with are Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim.

Common *Hadeeth* Terms

1) **Al-Sahehan** الصحيحان : It refers to the books of Al-Bukhari and Muslim for they contain only *Saheeh* or sound traditions.

2) **As-hab As-Sunan** أصحاب السنن (the Companions of the Sunan): It refers to the books of Al-Tirmidi, Abu Dawood, Al-Nisa'i, and Ibn Majeh;

3) "**Reported by the two Sheikhs**" رواه الشيخان : It refers to a *Hadeeth* reported by both Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

4) “Agreed upon” متفق عليه or “Reported by the six (references)” رواه الستة : It refers to a *Hadeeth* reported by all the six main references of *Hadeeth* and the scholars of *Hadeeth* agreed upon it. This kind of *Hadeeth* is the most authentic and accepted of traditions.

5) “Reported by As-hab As-sunan (the companions of Asunan)” رواه أصحاب السنن : It refers to a *Hadeeth* reported by each of Al-Tirmidi, Abu Dawood, Al-Nisa’i, and Ibn Majeh;

Chapter (5)

Methods of Classification of the *Hadeeth*

Many studies and investigations have been carried out by *Hadeeth* scholars to establish the rank and degree of reliability of a tradition. This degree of reliability of a tradition depends on two important factors:

- 1) the Isnad (the chain of narrators),
- 2) and the Matn (the reported saying or action of the Prophet (pbuh) or the substance of the *Hadeeth*).

An example is:

Al-Bukhari reported that Al-Humaidy Abdullah Ibn al-zobair told him that Sufian told him that Yahya Ibn Saa’ed Al-Insari told him that Mohammad Ibn Ibraheem al-Taimii heard A’ilqimah Ibn Waqqas al-Laithiay saying I heard Omar Ibn al-Khattab on the منبر saying that he heard the Prophet (pbuh) saying, “ Deeds are but by intentions....”

i- The Isnad (chain of narrators) is :

Al-Bukhari reported that Al-Humaidy Abdullah Ibn al-zobair told him that Sufian told him that Yahya Ibn Saa’ed Al-Insari told him that Mohammad Ibn Ibraheem al-Taimii heard A’ilqimah Ibn Waqqas al-

Laithiy saying I heard Omar Ibn al-Khattab on the منبر saying that he heard the Prophet (pbuh).

The companion who narrated this tradition was Omar Ibn al-Khattab (raa).

ii- And the Matn or the reported substance of the Hadeeth is "Deeds are but by intentions....."

Establishing the Rank of a Hadeeth

In order to establish the rank and degree of reliability of a Hadeeth , both its *Isnad* and *Matn* must be thoroughly investigated. This degree of reliability depends on the following:

1. Completeness of its *Isnad*, or the chain of narrators.
2. The reliability of the narrators themselves.
3. The reliability of the substance of the Hadeeth , i.e., it must be free from defects or abnormalities.

1) The *Isnad* (chain of narrators) الإسناد

Scholars first investigate the chain of narrators to find out whether it is complete or broken.

To achieve this, they study carefully the life of each narrator such as his birthplace, the place he lived, the countries he visited, and his place of death. For example, if the narrator said he met a person from whom he acquired the tradition in Egypt, and careful studies revealed that the person referred to never visited Egypt during the lifetime of the narrator, then the Hadeeth would be classified as

having a broken chain (because there is a missing narrator between these two narrators in the chain), and is therefore rejected.

2) The reliability of the Narrators الرواة

The complete chain of narrators is not enough to judge the reliability of a given Hadeeth . The characters of the narrators must also be thoroughly investigated. In order for the Hadeeth to be accepted, all of the narrators in the chain must be people of good character and excellent memory, and have the power of retention which makes them able to report the tradition in the same words every time they narrate it.

i. Good Character

All of the narrators in the chain must be known as God-fearing people who avoid major and minor sins as well as innovative religious practices. They must be righteous, honorable and respectable.

They must be people of learning, and must not have uttered lies or given false evidence. Their religious beliefs, piety, and honesty must also be considered before accepting their narration.

The scholars of Hadeeth were so strict in their conditions that they did not accept the Hadeeth of anyone who once ate in public or uncovered his head in public as these were considered disrespectful at that time. Al-Bukhari did not accept the Hadeeth of a man who, in an attempt to attract the attention of his horse, deceived him by pretending to have some food in his hand.

ii. Good Memory and Power of Retention

Finally, the reliability of their memory must be studied. Not only should their memory must be good, but they must also have the power of retention which implies that they should have properly heard the words of the speaker, understood their exact meaning and produced them with accuracy at the time of narration.

Branches of the science of *Hadeeth* that deal with the study of the *Isnad* are:

1. *Ilm Al-Riwayah* علم الرواية : Science of Narration.
2. *Ilm Al-Rijal* علم الرجال : Knowledge about the Narrators, which deals with their history.
3. *Ilm Al-Jarh* علم الجرح : The process by which a narrator is declared unreliable. The narrator maybe classified as an unjust person, liar, fabricator, falsifier, forger, or having a defective memory or poor power of retention.
4. *Ilm Al-Ta'deel* علم التعديل : The process by which a narrator is declared as reliable. The narrator maybe classified as a just person, truthful, trustworthy, a Hafez (having good memory and power of retention).

3) The reliability of the *Matn* المتن (the substance of the *Hadeeth*)

However, investigating the chain of narrators and the character of the narrators is not enough to declare the *Hadeeth* as *Saheeh* or sound. Sometimes the chain of narrators is complete and there is nothing found to prove the unreliability of the narrators, yet the tradition is not accepted due to some kind of weakness in its substance.

That is why the scholars of *Hadeeth* stipulate that the substance of the tradition (the Prophet's actual words) must be free from any abnormality or defectiveness in order to be accepted.

i) Abnormalities الشذوذ

The *Matn* of the *Hadeeth* must not be abnormal. In other word it must not contradict the text of the *Qur'an*, a well-known sound tradition, as well as the known general principles of Islam. For example, a *Hadeeth* should not promise a huge reward for a simple deed or prescribe a heavy penalty for a small fault. The *Hadeeth* must not contain any inconsistency to Islamic beliefs in Allah (swt) and His attributes, prophets, angels, and Books. It also must not make any accusations against the Prophet (pbuh), his family members or his companions.

ii) Defectiveness العلة

In addition to to absence of abnormalities, the substance of the *Hadeeth* must be free from any

defect of style. It must be in good Arabic style, free from any immoral or offensive words, and must not contain words or expressions that were not known to be used at the time of the Prophet (pbuh).

Ilm Al-Derayah علم الدراية

Ilm Al-Deeriah علم الدراية is the science that takes care of the examination of the substance of the *Hadeeth*.

Investigating the substance of the *Hadeeth* is very important because when the complete chains of reliable narrators were commonly known, some fabricators of *Hadeeth* would invent traditions and relate them to the reliable chains. For example, a well known *Hadeeth* fabricator, Sa'ad Ibn Tareef سعد ابن طريف, saw his son crying on his way home from school; when he asked why he was crying, the boy replied that his teacher hit him. Saeed said, "Today I will cover them with shame." He fabricated a *Hadeeth* with a known chain of reliable narrators that: "The teachers of your children are the worst amongst you for they are less merciful with the orphans and cruel with the poor."

This fabrication is obvious since its substance is contradictory to the accepted *Hadeeth* that "The best amongst you are those who learn Qur'an and teach it."

Careful studies about this narrator by *Hadeeth* scholars revealed his unreliability. Ibn Hajar calassified him as "his *Hadeeth* is discarded"; and Ibn Hebban regarded him as "a fabricator".

Classes of *Hadeeth*

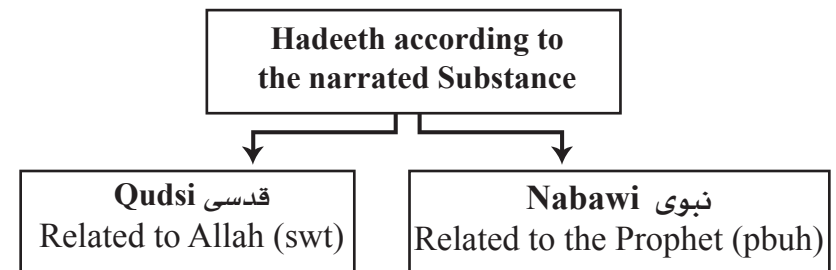
Not anyone can judge the reliability of a *Hadeeth*; only scholars of *Hadeeth* are eligible to judge them and determine their class. *Hadeeth* scholars divided the traditions of the Prophet (pbuh) into classes and gave them separate names according to their studies of the chain of narrators, the reliability of narrators, and the substance of the *Hadeeth*.

The most common classifications of *Hadeeth* are based on

- 1) the substance of the *Hadeeth*
- 2) the number of narrators
- 3) and the rank of reliability of the *Hadeeth*.

1) Classes of *Hadeeth* according to its substance

The *Hadeeth* are classified into Qudsi and Nabawi with respect to reference its substance is related to.



Hadeeth Qudsi

The *Hadeeth Qudsi* is Allah's saying expressed in the Prophet's (pbuh) words. It is a saying of the Prophet (pbuh) referring to Allah. It starts with

the words like (قال الله تعالى : Allah the Most High said:).

Hadeeth Nabawi

It is a simple saying of the Prophet (pbuh). Its meaning is inspired by Allah and expressed in the Prophet's (pbuh) words. Many examples have been mentioned in chapter (1).

Examples of *Hadeeth Qudsi*:

1. Imam Muslim narrated by Mustawrid al-Qurashi that Allah's messenger (pbuh) said that Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, said: "My servants, I have made oppression unlawful for Me and unlawful for you, so do not commit oppression against one another. My servants, all of you are astray except he whom I guide, so seek right guidance from Me and I shall guide you"
2. Al-Bukhari narrated by Abu Huraira (raa) that Allah's messenger said, "Allah said, 'All the deeds of Adam's sons (people) are for them, except fasting which is for Me, and I will give the reward for it.'"
3. At-Termidhi narrated that Anas (raa) said that the Allah's messenger said, "Allah said, 'O son of Adam! So long as you return to Me hoping for My forgiveness I would not mind forgiving you whatever you have done'"

The differences between the Qur'an and *Hadeeth Qudsi*

Both the Qur'an and *Hadeeth Qudsi* are both revelation from Allah. The distinctive feature between them is that the Qur'an is the exact saying of Allah (swt) while *Hadeeth Qudsi* is the saying of Allah (swt) but expressed in the Prophet's words. Because of this feature, although the *Hadeeth Qudsi* is the speech of Allah (swt) is not treated like Qur'an .

In other words the rules related to the Qur'an are not applied to *Hadeeth Qudsi*. Here are the main differences between them:

- (1) We can not recite *Hadeeth Qudsi* during prayers.
- (2) The purity of the one who touches *Hadeeth Qudsi* is not required as it is when reading the Qur'an .
- (3) Qur'an must be narrated by its exact words. If Qur'an is narrated by meaning it would be just a possible meaning of it not the Qur'an itself. Unlike Qur'an , *Hadeeth Qudsi* can be reported by meaning similar to other *Hadeeth*.
- (4) The Qur'an is a miraculous book which holds a challenge to mankind to produce a chapter or a book like it. *Hadeeth Qudsi* holds no challenge to mankind in this regard.
- (5) The entire Qur'an was narrated through

Tawater i.e., through a very large number of narrators in all layers or places of the chain up to the prophet (pbuh). But *Hadeeth* Qudsi could be narrated through different ways of narration.

Please, refer to “*Qur’an versus Sunnah*” in chapter (2) for more clarification.

Classification According to a Particular Authority

Traditions are also further divided according to the reference to a particular authority into these general classes:

i) Elevated (Marfu’) - مرفوع

A tradition with connected and an uninterrupted chain of narration *Isnad* which goes back up to the Prophet (pbuh). The narrator whether a Companion, Successor at the end of the chain would relate the text of the *Hadeeth* to the Prophet (pbuh) saying, “The Messenger of Allah said so and so...” or “The Messenger of Allah did so and so ...”

ii) Stopped (Mauquf) - موقوف

It is a tradition with a connected chain of narrators or *Isnad* only up to a Companion. The tradition is the statement of a Companion; it is not related to the Prophet (pbuh).

However, if certain phrases are used in the tradition,

they will cause the *Hadeeth* to be effectively “elevated or *marfu’* although it is technically “stopped or *mauquf*” because they imply that the reported text is from the Prophet (pbuh).

Examples are as follows:

- “We were commanded to ...”
- “We were forbidden from ...”
- “We used to do ...”
- “We used to say/do so and so while the Messenger of Allah was amongst us.”
- “We did not use to mind such-and-such...”
- “It used to be said ...”
- “It is from the Sunnah to ...”
- “It was revealed in the following circumstances: ...”, speaking about a verse of the Qur’an.

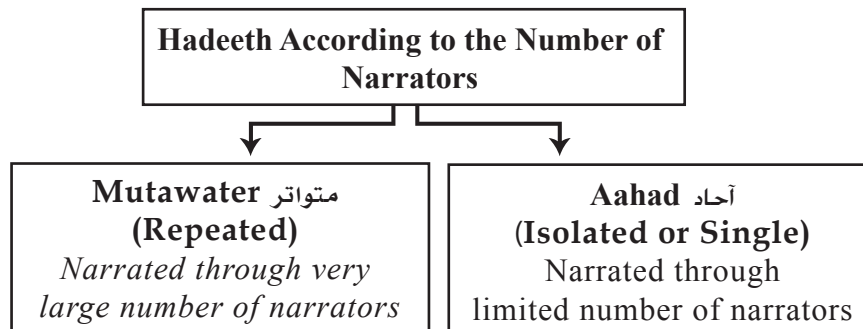
iii) Severed (Maqtu’) - مقطوع

It is a tradition with a connected chain of narrators or *Isnad* only up to a Successor (a Companion of the Prophet Companions). So it is a narration from a Successor.

An example is the narration of Imam Muslim in the Introduction to his *Sahih* that Ibn Sirin (a Successor) said, “This knowledge (of *Hadeeth*) is the Religion, so be careful from whom you take your religion.”

ii) Classification of *Hadeeth* with respect to the Number of Narrators

Scholars of *Hadeeth* classified *Hadeeth* according to the number of narrators in the chain of narration into two classes: 1) *Mutawater* متواتر or repeated and 2) *A'had* آحاد or Isolated.



1. *Mutawater* متواتر or Repeated

It is a *Hadeeth* which is continuously reported by a large number of people at different times in all layers of narration, precluding the fear of a false report. There are different opinions regarding the least number of the narrators in order to declare the *Hadeeth* as *Mutawater*, which are: 70, 40, 10, or 4 narrators in every place of the chain of narration.

More specifically, the *Mutawater* or repeated *Hadeeth* should satisfy the following conditions:

1. It must be reported by at least four of the Prophet's (pbuh) companions

- and each one of them should be quoted by at least four other persons, and so on until the end of the chain.
2. The reporters of the *Hadeeth* should be from different tribes, races, countries, and belong to different schools of thought so that it is impossible for them to fabricate the *Hadeeth*.
3. Also, their narration must rely on the senses to eliminate any doubts. For example, the narrator must say that he heard the one he quoted by his ears or saw him by his eyes. If he says "I think or I believe it is so and so," it would not be accepted from him as *Mutawater* because of the uncertainty of the narration.

To satisfy these conditions means that the information given in the *Hadeeth Mutawater* must be accurate as there is no room for falsehood.

Because of these strict conditions, there are only about 300 *Hadeeth* in this class which is very few compared to the total number of reported traditions.

The rule of *Mutawater Hadeeth*

1. There is no doubt about its authenticity of the *Mutawater Hadeeth*, its position of a *Mutawater Hadeeth* is second to Qur'an. The *Mutawater Hadeeth* does not need any more investigations it is totally accepted since similar to the

Qur'an . Qur'an 's authenticity and accuracy is not questioned because it was collected through Tawater. That is why we are sure that the Qur'an which we have now is the true book revealed to the Prophet (pbuh), without any additions or omissions.

2. *Mutawater Hadeeth* are the most authentic traditions. Muslims do not need to make any sort of investigation about them, unlike the other classes of *Hadeeth*.

3. It is used as a doubtless proof for all matters of Islamic faith and beliefs.

4. Believers must accept such *Hadeeth* and are obliged to act according to them.

The *Mutawater Hadeeth* are further divided into *Mutawater* by meaning or by words.

Mutawater by words متواتر لفظی

All the narrators reported the *Hadeeth* using the same words.

Mutawater by meaning متواتر معنوی

The *Hadeeth* is reported by many narrators in different expressions or wording but all have the same meaning.

Examples of Hadeeth Mutawater

1) The *Hadeeth* : "Whosoever attributes to me anything which I did not say, his resting place shall

be in Hell." according to Sayyoutti²⁰ was reported by seventy two companions.

2) The *Hadeeth* : "My Allah brighten the face of he who heard something from us and preached it as it is.." according to Ibn Hajar²¹, it was narrated by 42 companions.

3) The *Hadeeth* : "Whosoever witnessed that there is no god save Allah he would be admitted to Paradise" according to Sayyoutti, it was narrated by over 34 companions.

4) The *Hadeeth* : "I am the seal of all prophets. There is no prophet after me" is mentioned in different sources of *Mutawater Hadeeths*.

5) Examples of *Mutawater Hadeeth* by meaning are:

- Description of punishment and bliss in the grave.
- Performing ablution and Salah.
- Raising hands while making Dua'a (supplication).
- The story of Israa' and Mi'raj (the trip to Jerusalem and the ascension to heaven).

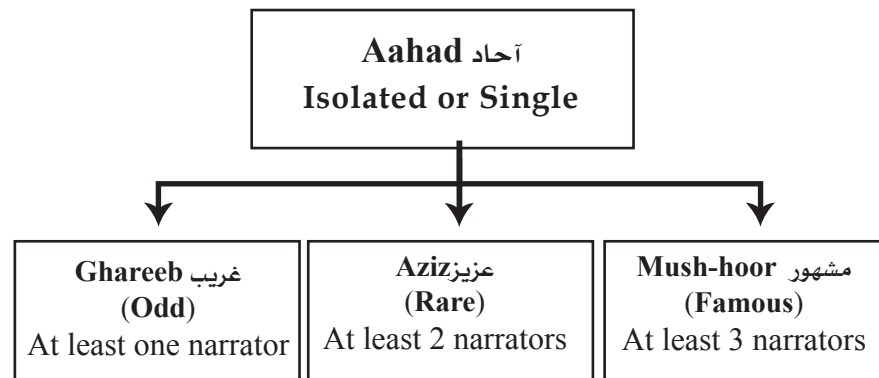
The meanings of these traditions are reported in different books of authentic Sunnah in many ways of narration but not in the exact wording.

20 . A great scholar of Hadeeth. He collected the Mutaawter Hadeeths in his book "Al-Azhar".

21 . A great scholar of Hadeeth science. He is the author of the famous Saheeh Al-Bukhari explanation "Fat-h Al-Bari Fi Sharh Saheeh Al-Bukhari"

2.The Aahad Hadeeth (Isolated or Single)

This type of *Hadeeth* does not satisfy the conditions of the number of narrators of the *Mutawater Hadeeth*. It is noticeable that most of the traditions belong to this class of *Hadeeth*.



Classes of Aahad Hadeeth

The Aahad *Hadeeth* are further divided into three types according to the number of narrators at all places in the *Isnad*, the chain of narration.

(i) Mash-hoor مشهور (Famous or widespread)

It is reported by at least three narrators at any place of the chain.

(ii) Aziz عزيز (Rare)

It is reported by at least two narrators at any place of the chain.

(iii) Ghareeb غريب (Odd)

The *Hadeeth* is classified as *Ghareeb* or *Odd* if there is only one narrator at any place of the chain.

The ruling of Aahad Hadeeth (أحاديث الأحاد)

The *أحاد* (Single or Isolated) *Hadeeth* needs to be investigated in order to determine if it is reliable, and if so, its degree of reliability.

iii) Classification of Hadeeth with respect to its Rank of Reliability

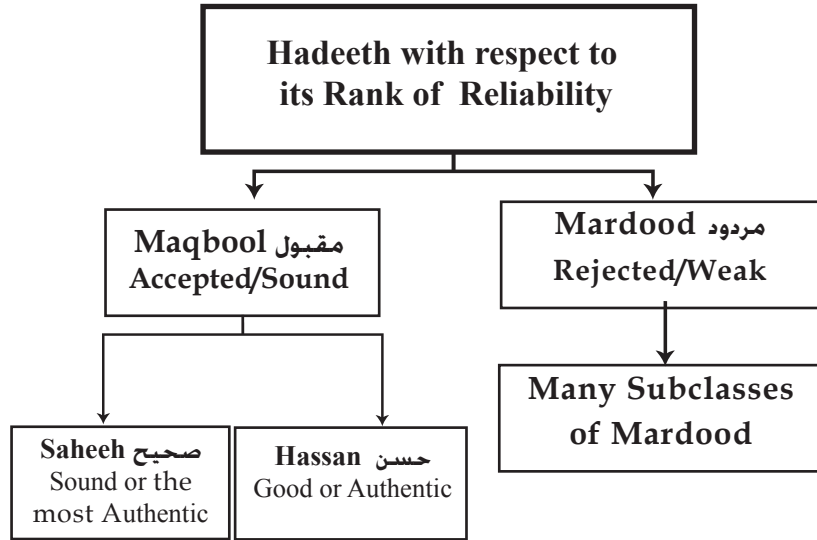
The third way of classifying *Hadeeth* is based on its reliability.

In order to determine the rank of reliability of the *Hadeeth* the chain of narrators (*Isnad*), the narrators themselves and the substance of the *Hadeeth* (*Matn*) must be thoroughly investigated.

According to rank of reliability the *Hadeeth* are divided into two general classes:

- **Maqbool مقبول (Accepted/Sound)**
- **Mardood مردود (Rejected/Weak)**

Each of these two general classes is further subdivided into other sub-classes.



1) Maqbool مقبول (Accepted/Sound)

Within the Maqbool مقبول or accepted class there are two sub-divisions,

1. Saheeh صحيح / Sound or the Most Authentic *Hadeeth*
2. Saheeh Leghahre, صحيح لغيره or Saheeh due to others
3. Hassan حسن Good or Authentic *Hadeeth*
4. Hassan Laghayreh حسن لغيره (Good due to others)

The details of these categories are given below:

1. Saheeh صحيح / Sound or the Most Authentic *Hadeeth*

Saheeh صحيح *Hadeeths* are the strongest and most authentic of the prophetic traditions after the *Mutawater Hadeeth*.

Conditions of Saheeh Hadeeth

The *Hadeeth* is Saheeh if it satisfies the following conditions:

1. The *Isnad*/chain of narrators is connected and complete up to the Prophet (pbuh), which means that there is no gap in the narration until the saying of the Prophet (pbuh) i.e., no narrators are missing in the chain.
2. All the narrators must be just and reliable as defined before regarding their character.
3. All the narrators must be known for their good memory and high power of retention i.e., they must be able to produce the *Hadeeth* in its exact words at any time.
4. The *Matn*/substance of the *Hadeeth* must be free from any kind of abnormality such as being contradicted by Qur'an or another strong *Hadeeth*.
5. The *Matn*/substance of the *Hadeeth* must also be free from any defects in its meaning, wording, or style.

If any of these conditions are not met then the *Hadeeth* is not considered *Saheeh*.

Example of Saheeh Hadeeth

Al-Bukhari narrated that Abdullah Ibn Yousof told him that Malik Ibn Anas told him that Ibn Shihab Al-Zohari told him that Mohammad Ibn Jubbair told him that Jubbair Ibn Muta'am told him that he heard the Prophet (pbuh) reciting Surat Al-Toor in Maghreb Prayer.

1. The Isnad:

Al-Bukhari narrated that Abdullah Ibn Yousof told him that Malik Ibn Anas told him that Ibn Shihab Al-Zohari told him that Mohammad Ibn Jubbair told him that Jubbair Ibn Muta'am

The *Isnad* or chain of narrators is connected and complete up to the prophet (pbuh). According to Al-Bukhari every two consecutive narrators have met for enough time to acquire the *Hadeeth*; he expressed this saying (*told him that*).

2. The narrators

All the narrators of the *Hadeeth* are all just and reliable and known of having good memory and power of retention. They are classified and described as:

- **Al-Bukhari** : a well known *Hadeeth* scholar, Hafez²² and compiler of the Saheeh.
- **Abdullah Ibn Yousof** : trustworthy, reliable and precise.

²² . He has excellent memory and faculty of remembrance and recollection.

Malik Ibn Anas : An Imam, Hafez, reliable and precise.

Ibn Shihab Al-Zohari: a scholar, Hafez, agreed upon his reliability and high position.

Mohammad Ibn Jubbair : a trustworthy and reliable.

Jubbair Ibn Muta'am: a companion of the Prophet (pbuh).

3. The Matn

The Hadeeth Matn: (Prophet (pbuh) recited Surat Al-Toor in Maghreb Prayer) is free from any abnormalities, contradictions or defects.

According to this careful investigation the Hadeeth is ranked as Saheeh.

The Ruling of Saheeh Hadeeth

Information provided by the Saheeh *Hadeeth* is reliable and true. The Muslim is obliged to accept the *Saheeh Hadeeth* and act according to them because they are considered to be one of the major references of Islam and an authentic source of Islamic knowledge.

Sources of Saheeh Hadeeth

There are several books of *Saheeh Hadeeth* such as those by Muslim and Al-Bukhari. Al-Bukhari's *Hadeeths* are stronger than Muslim's *Hadeeths* because of the stricter conditions he applied in compiling the *Hadeeth* as it was clarified before.

Other books of *Saheeh Hadeeth* include Saheeh Ibn Kuzaima, Saheeh Ibn Hebban, and Mustadrak of Al Hakim. But the compilers of these books were more lenient in their conditions than Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Ranks of Saheeh Hadeeth

There are seven ranks of *Saheeh Hadeeth* , the first being the highest:

1. Those *Hadeeths* agreed upon by both Al-Bukhari and Muslim.
2. The *Hadeeth* reported by Al-Bukhari alone.
3. The *Hadeeth* reported by Muslim alone.
4. The *Hadeeth* that satisfies the conditions of both Al-Bukhari and Muslim but were not reported by either of them.
5. The *Hadeeth* that satisfies the conditions of Al-Bukhari but were not reported by him.
6. The *Hadeeth* that satisfies the conditions of Muslim but were not reported by him.
7. Those *Hadeeth* that satisfies the conditions of *Hadeeth* compilers other than Al-Bukhari and Muslim.
8. The *Hadeeth* classified as (Saheeh due to others صحيح لغيره) which is a Hassan (good-حسن) tradition supported by other Hassan traditions narrated in different

ways. Saheeh due to others tradition is ranked as the least sound of *Hadeeth* Saheeh. This class of *Hadeeth* will be discussed later.

2. Hassan حسن Good or Authentic Hadeeth

The second division of *Maqbool* مقبول or accepted class of *Hadeeth* is حسن Hassan / Good.

The *Hassan Hadeeth* , similar to *Saheeh Hadeeth* , is an authentic and accepted tradition. However, its position comes next to the *Saheeh*. It satisfies the conditions of *Saheeh Hadeeth* except that the power of memorization, retention, or recollection of at least one of its narrators is good enough to accept the *Hadeeth* , but not as sharp as that of the narrators of *Saheeh* traditions.

In other words, the *Isnad* is complete and connected; the *Mantain* is free from contradictions, abnormalities and defects; all the narrators are just and truthful but maybe one or more of them are unable to produce the *Hadeeth* at each time of narration in its exact wording.

The scholars of *Hadeeth* further classified *Hassan/Good* traditions into four ranks according to the memory and retention powers of the narrators.

3. Saheeh Leghahre, صحيح لغيره or Saheeh due to others

However, if a good *Hadeeth* is also supported by other traditions of the same or a higher rank, then the rank of that *Hadeeth* is raised to what is called *Saheeh Leghahre*, or Saheeh due to others.

This sort of tradition, in itself, does not meet all of the conditions of Saheeh but because it is strengthened by the other *Hassan* traditions or narrated in different ways of narrations it is regarded as *Saheeh*.

However, *Saheeh Leghairyeh* tradition is ranked as the least sound of *Saheeh* traditions and the highest rank of *Hassan* traditions.

An example of Saheeh Leghairyeh

An example of *Saheeh Leghairyeh* is the tradition narrated by Al-Tirmidhi and others on the authority of Muhammed Ibn Amr Ibn A'ilqimah on the authority of Abi Salamah that Abu Hurairah (raa) said that the Prophet (pbuh) said, "Had it been that I make it hard for my people, I would have ordered them to use Siwak²³ with every prayer"

Although Muhammed Ibn Amr Ibn A'ilqimah is famous for his honesty, reliability, and truthfulness, his proficiency in narration is less than the narrators of *Saheeh* traditions. Because of this, this *Hadeeth* is classified as *Hassan*. However, because this tradition is narrated from other authentic ways it is raised to the rank of *Saheeh Leghairyeh*, *Saheeh due to others*.

Hadeeth Hassan/Saheeh حسن صحيح

Al-Tirmidhi and others classified some *Hassan* traditions as "*Hassan Saheeh*" which is apparently conflicting because *Hassan* is less in status than *Saheeh*. This is explained in three ways:

23 . A piece of wood used to clean teeth.

i- Ibn Hajar explained this apparent contradiction saying that a tradition could be classified as "*Hassan Saheeh*" with respect to its ways of narration: according to some ways it is judged as *Saheeh* and according to others it is judged as *Hassan*.

ii- While other scholars see that a tradition could be *Hassan Saheeh* with respect to the opinions of the scholars of *Hadeeth* ; some of them see it as *Saheeh* while others see it as *Hassan*.

iii- Others explain that maybe Al-Tirmidhi classified a tradition as "*Hassan Saheeh*" because he did not have enough evidences to conclude whether it is *Saheeh* or *Hassan*; he found the tradition in a status between them; it is stronger than *Hassan* but not reached the strength of *Saheeh*.

The Ruling of Hassan/Good Hadeeth

Muslims are obliged to accept the good *Hadeeth* and act according to them because they, like *Saheeh Hadeeth*, are authoritative sources of Islamic knowledge.

Sources of Hassan/Good Hadeeth

There no special books that collect only *Hassan Hadeeth* but many are included in the four books of Sunan by Abu Dawood, Al-Tirmidi, Al-Nisa'i, Ibn Majeh and others.

4. Hassan Laghayreh حسن لغيره (Good due to others)

It will be explained later.

Mardood مردود : Unaccepted, Weak or Rejected

The second general class of *Hadeeth* on the basis of the reliability of the tradition is the *Mardood* مردود **Unacceptable**.

This class includes all the traditions that do not satisfy the conditions of *Saheeh* or *Hassan Hadeeth*.

They are given the general name of weak (*Da'eef*) or Weak opposite to strong.

The reasons for judging a *Hadeeth* as weak (*Da'eef*) or Weak could be any of the following:

- 1) The incompleteness of *Isnad*, the chain, i.e., there is a gap at any place in the chain of narrators.
- 2) The unreliability of any of the narrators due to weak memory or defective character.
- 3) A defect or abnormality in *Matn*, the substance of the *Hadeeth*.

The *Da'eef* / weak traditions are further classified according to the reasons and degree of their weakness. There are more than 40 divisions of weak traditions. They are classified as: weak, very weak, discarded, baseless or fabricated.

Hassan Laghayreh حسن لغيره (Good due to others)

However, if a *Da'eef* / Weak tradition which is confirmed by other versions, it will be raised to the rank of *Hassan Laghayreh* حسن لغيره because of the support of other traditions.

However, three conditions must be satisfied:

- 1) The other versions of the tradition must not be weaker than it.
- 2) The weakness of the traditions must not be due to one or more of the narrators being accused of lying, or of being sinful or untrustworthy.
- 3) The weak tradition must not contradict the Qur'an or a sound tradition or a known principle of Islam.

Hassan Laghayreh حسن لغيره is an accepted *Hadeeth*. However, it comes at the end of the list of accepted *Hadeeth*.

Investigating *Da'eef* / Weak Traditions

Intensive investigations are required in order to determine whether the weak traditions should be accepted as a source of Islamic information or rejected.

In some cases, the *Da'eef* / Weak traditions are supported by evidences and proofs that make them accepted مقبول such as the following circumstances:

(1) None of the narrators is accused of lying, dishonesty, or of being sinful, or untrustworth

(2) No defects or abnormalities are detected in the *Matn*, the substance of the *Hadeeth* .

(3) Further more, the *Matn* is supported by evidences from the Qur'an or sound traditions.

(4) The incompleteness of *Isnad*, the chain, does not affect the rank of the tradition for example if the missing narrator is a companion (Sahabi) or a follower (Tabi'i) because lying in *Hadeeth* was unknown at their time.

Example

As an example, there is a famous *Hadeeth* of Aisha (raa) that her sister Assmaa visited her wearing some transparent clothes. When the Prophet (pbuh) saw her he turned his face and said, "O Assmaa, when a girl reaches puberty, nothing of her body should be seen except this and that and he (pbuh) pointed to his face and hands."

When we examine this *Hadeeth* we find that its *Isnad*/chain of narrators does not satisfy the conditions of the sound traditions because one of the narrators is missing at the end of the chain, between Khalid Ibn Dareek and Aisha (raa). Because Khalid was not living at the time of Aisha; he never heard from her personally. This kind of *Hadeeth* is called *Mursal*.

However, despite the incompleteness of the chain this *Hadeeth* is accepted by majority of the scholars for the following reasons:

- None of its narrators is accused of sinning or telling lies.
- The missing narrator at the end of the chain is a follower of one of the Prophet's companions who lived during the first century of Islam. There is no harm in omitting a companion or one of his followers since the fabrication of *Hadeeth* was unknown at their time.
- The meaning of the *Hadeeth* is confirmed by many other versions which are stronger than it.
- There are no Sound *Hadeeth* that contradicts it.
- This *Hadeeth* is confirmed by other *Hadeeths* that report that the Prophet (pbuh) saw some Muslim women who were uncovering their faces and he did not object (reported by Bukhari).
- The *Hadeeth* is supported by the interpretation of Ibn Abbas of the verse in Surat Al-Nur that says: "Tell the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their modesty and not to display their beauty except what ordinarily appears." (24:31). Ibn Abbas interpreted the words "what ordinarily appears" as the face and hands.
- The famous four schools of Fiqh agree that it is not obligatory on woman to cover face and hands.

For these reasons, the *Hadeeth*'s rank was raised to that of *saheeh* traditions, and is accepted by many scholars of Islam.

The *Hadeeth* implies that Muslim women may uncover their hands and faces but no more than that. Covering the hands and faces, therefore, is not obligatory. However, to do so is exemplary conduct and highly recommended since the Prophet's wives and daughters, as well as most of the believing women at the Prophet's (pbuh) time, used to cover their faces.

Remark

We should not attempt to judge and reject or accept the traditions, lacking conditions of the *Saheeh*, by ourselves. Instead, we should follow the scholars of *Hadeeth* who have enough knowledge to judge and classify the *Hadeeth*.

One of the problems Muslims face at the present time, is that some people (not well versed in *Hadeeth* and do not have deep knowledge in the science of *Hadeeth*) judge the traditions and reach conclusions that in many cases are misleading and cause confusion amongst Muslims.

Degree of Weakness

As there are levels of *Saheeh* traditions there are degrees of *Da'eef*/Weak traditions. The degree of weakness depends on the weakness of the narrator and the chain of narration. The range of weakness varies as follows:

- *Da'eef* / Weak ضعيف
- *Da'eef Jiddan* / Very Weak ضعيف جدا
- *Wahi* / Baseless واهى
- *Munkar*/Denounced منكر (weak and contradicting something more authentic)

- *Mawdu'*/Fabricated موضوع which is the worst of weak traditions.

The Ruling of Weak Traditions

Muslim scholars differ about the weak *Hadeeth* as a source of Islamic knowledge. There are two broad schools:

(1) A minority of scholars refuse the weak traditions completely on the basis that there are many sound traditions which cover all aspects of life, eliminating the need for weak traditions. Hence, they forbid narrating weak traditions without indicating that they are weak.

(2) The majority of scholars allow the narration of weak traditions, without pointing to their weakness, if they are not related to Islamic religious beliefs such as God's attributes or the unseen (such as angels, jinn, or the Judgment Day) or Islamic legislation and laws of the prohibited (*haram*) and permissible (*halal*).

Weak traditions on these topics are not allowed to be narrated at all because the source of knowledge of Islamic beliefs, laws and legislations must originate only from Qur'an and sound traditions.

Traditions, lacking conditions of the *Saheeh*, may be narrated when telling stories or exhorting people to good morals and virtues such as generosity, good manners and good deeds such as extra prayers.

Conditions of Acting According to Weak Traditions

Acting according to weak traditions is allowed under the following conditions:

1. The *Hadeeth* should not be very weak.
2. The meaning should agree with the basis of the religion of Islam. If the *Hadeeth* contradicts with any of the basics of Islam, it should be rejected.
3. The *Hadeeth* must not be related to religious beliefs and legislation such as those concerning *haram* and *halal*.

Examples

1) As an example, there is a *Hadeeth* that recommends reciting Surat Al-Kahf on Friday. This *Hadeeth* is weak but acting according to it is allowed because reciting Qur'an is a good deed, whether on Friday or on any other day.

2) Another example is the tradition that states that there are angels that sit at the doors of the mosques on Fridays and ask God's forgiveness for those who wear a white headdress. This *Hadeeth* is very weak and, since it is related to the unseen (angels), it is rejected, as the source of knowledge of the unseen must only be from Qur'an or sound traditions.

Sources of Weak Hadeeth

Many of Weak *Hadeeth* are included in the four

books of Sunan by Abu Dawood, Al-Tirmidi, Al-Nisa'i, Ibn Majeh and others. There are special books that collected Weak *Hadeeth* such as those by Al-Albany.

It is worth to mention here that the two *Hadeeth* Books, Saheeh Al-Bukhari and Saheeh Muslim, do not contain any Weak Traditions not even Hassan Traditions; they contain only Sound or *Saheeh* Traditions. That is why, they occupy a very high position in the Islamic sources.

Classes of Weak traditions

Weak traditions are classified according to the reasons for their weakness. There are classes of weakness and within each class there are different types. The number of classes of Weak traditions is over forty. Classification of Weak traditions depends on two main factors:

1. Weakness due to incompleteness of the chain of narration.
2. Weakness due to the unreliability of the narrators.

1. Weakness due to Incompleteness of the Chain of Narration.

1. Suspended - Hanging (*mu'allaq*) معلق

where one or more of the narrators is missing at the beginning of the chain. The reporter of the *Hadeeth* may omit the whole *Isnad* by saying, "The Prophet (pbuh) said, ... "

2. Unattached - Hurried (*mursal*) مرسل

where one of the narrators is missing at the end of the chain. The link between the Successor and the Prophet (pbuh) is missing, e.g. when a Successor says: "The Prophet said..." without relating the *Hadeeth* to the Companion (Sahabi) who originally narrated it.

The *mursal* contains a gap in the *isnad* between the Successor and the Companion from whom he learned it. However, since all Sahaba are upright, then if a *mursal* has an acceptable chain all the way to a Successor, the whole *Isnad* is considered acceptable. In other words, the interruption of the *Isnad* in this case is not viewed as a problem.

Imam Malik sees that the *mursal* of a trustworthy person is a valid tradition, just like a *musnad Hadeeth*. Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal accepts *Mursal* and (other) *Da'eef / Weak* traditions if nothing opposing them is found regarding a particular issue, preferring them to *Qiyas* (analogical deduction).

3. Broken (*Munqat'i*) منقطع

where one or more narrators is missing in the middle of the chain before the Successor.

4. Problematic - Perplexing (*ma'adl*) معضل

where two consecutive narrators are missing in any part of the chain or *Isnad*.

Traditions with Connected *Isnad*

1- Continuous (*Mutassil*) متصل

where the link of *Isnad* of the tradition is continuous and uninterrupted, meaning that there is no narrator missing in any part of the chain. Not only does it mean that the narrators need to have lived at the same time, they must also have met each other for enough time to acquire the tradition.

2- Supported (*Musnad*) مسند

is a tradition reported by a narrator based on what he studied from his teacher at a time of life suitable for learning; similarly - in turn - for each narrator and his teacher in the chain until the *Isnad* reaches a well known Companion, who in turn, reports from the Prophet (pbuh).

The *musnad* or "supported" *Hadeeth*, like the *Mutassil*, contains no breaking in the chain of authorities reporting the *Hadeeth* back to the Prophet (pbuh).

Remarks

1- The broken *Isnad* is some kind of weakness in the tradition, however, if the narrators are good, and the substance of the *Hadeeth* agrees with the principle of Islam (Qur'an and authentic traditions) the tradition would be accepted.

2- The *Hadeeth* which has connected link of *Isnad*, e.g., *Mutassil* and *Musnad*, still needs investigation of the narrators characters as well as its substance in order to judge its reliability.

2. Weakness due to the Unreliability of the Narrators.

Weakness of a tradition is not only because of the interrupted chain of narration but could also be due to the unreliability of the narrator(s). The more defects (in number and severity) are detected in a *Hadeeth*, the weaker it is. The smaller the number and the less important defects, the less severe the weakness.

Reasons of Unreliability of a Narrator

There are ten reasons to render a narrator as unreliable:

1. five reasons are due to the defective character of the narrator particularly his untrustworthiness;
2. and the other five are linked to problems of the narrator memory, power of retention, and recollection of the *Hadeeth* .

i- Defective character

1. Known of telling lies,
2. Accused of telling lies,
3. Known of open sinning
4. Involvement in innovation,
5. Ambiguity surrounding his person.

ii- Memory and Precsion Problems

1. Poor memory.
2. Contradicting more reliable narrators.
3. Making many errors excessive mistakes, i.e. narrating things by mistake.

4. Headlessness of mistakes in the narration or the inability to distinguish the the mistakes in the narration.
5. Opposition to the narration of more reliable sources.

The following examples are the most common of types of weak *Hadeeth* due to the unreliability of the narrators.

1. Defective (*al-mu'allel*) معطل

This kind of tradition may appear sound or intact but studies would reveal a hidden defect in either the chain or substance of the *Hadeeth* .

One or more of the narrators might have misinterpreted the words of the *Hadeeth* , or added a mistaken notion to it, such as narrating the comment of a narrator as part of the *Hadeeth* . This kind of defect is detected by, for example, finding in a *Hadeeth* , phrases not used at the Prophet's time; or maybe it mentions some type of clothes or food that did not exist at the Prophet's time.

There are two types of *Hadeeth mu'allal* are known as *maqlub* (overturned) and *mudtarib* (disturbed).

2. Disturbed - Shaky (*Mudtarib*) مضطرب

A tradition is described as *Mudtarib* (shaky or disturbed) if it is narrated through conflicting ways of narrations, or is narrated in in many versions which contain contradicting texts, and there is no way that one of narrations could be preferred over

the others, then all of these versions of a traditions will be called *Mudtarib*.

3. Overturned - Reversed (Maqlub) مقلوب

A hadith is known as *maqlub* (overturned or reversed) when its *Isnad* is insert to a different text or vice versa, or if a narrator happens to reverse the order of a sentence in the text.

4. Denounced (al-munkar) منكر

One or more narrator has made mistakes in the course of the narration because of defects in memory or hearing.

In some cases, the tradition is evaluated as munkar if its text containing a flawed statement, an offensive expression, or unreasonable remark.

According to Ibn Hajar, if a *Hadeeth* goes against another authentic tradition is reported by a weak narrator, it is known as munkar.

Imam Ahmad used to simply label any *Hadeeth* of a weak narrator as munkar.

5. Discarded (matrook) متروك

It is a tradition where one or more of the narrators is accused of falsehood and telling lies in a matter other than the narration of traditions.

6. Abnormal or Irregular (Shaz) شاذ

According to al-Shafi'i, it is a tradition which is reported by a reliable narrator but contradicted by a tradition of a more reliable narrator than him.

7. Interpolated (Mudraj) مدرج

It is a tradition which contains an addition to the text of the *Hadeeth* made by one of the narrators. Such addition may be found in the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the tradition, it is often meant to explain a term used.

The *Idraj* (interpolation) is mostly found in the text of the tradition, but it is sometimes found in the *Isnad* as well, where the narrator inserts a part of one *Isnad* into another.

If a narrator is found to be in the habit of intentional *Idraj* he would be generally unacceptable and considered a liar. However, scholars of *Hadeeth* are more lenient towards those narrators who may do so forgetfully or in order to explain a difficult word.

8. Falsified or Forged (Mudallas) مدلس

Mudallas is a tradition which includes some sort of *tadlis* (hidden falsification). The tradition is weak due to the uncertainty caused by this *tadlis*.

Schoalrs describe two types of *tadlis*: in *Isnad* (the chain of narration), and in the narrators.

The *mudallis* (one who practices *tadlis*) reports the tradition in such a way to give impression that all narrators in the *Isnad* are strong, for example, he omits a *weak* narrator between two strong ones.

Sometimes the *mudallis* uses unknown name or a nickname in order not to disclose the identity of the reporter from whom he acquired the *Hadeeth*. He usually uses terms such as ("on the authority

of”) or (“he said”) to conceal the truth about his narrator.

Scholars of *Hadeeth* consider *tadlis* as the brother of falsehood or telling lies in the narration.

9. Fabricated, Forged (*Mawdu'*) موضوع

Fabricated tradition is the opposite of sound, where one narrator is accused of falsehood in the narration of traditions. Because of the danger of this type of traditions more discussion will be provided in the next chapter.

Chapter (6)

Fabrication of *Hadeeth*

Fabricated or Forged Traditions (*Mawdu'*) موضوع

The fabricated traditions include two categories of *Hadeeth* :

- 1- Intentionally fabricated traditions
2. Unintentionally fabricated traditions

1- Intentionally Fabricated Traditions

Fabricated or forged tradition (*Mawdu'*) موضوع is a fabricated statement that is attributed to the Prophet (pbuh). It is completely invented and is a lie against the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).

The *Mawdu'* is defined as a tradition which its chain of narration includes a liar and/or its substance contains something against the established norms of the Prophet's sayings (pbuh).

2. Unintentionally Fabricated Traditions

Unintentionally fabricated traditions include the very weak (*Da'eef Jidan* - ضعيف جدا) traditions due to serious problems in the Isnad and/ or the narrators. This class of *Hadeeth* is referred to as invalid (*Batil* - باطل), baseless (*Wahi* - واهى), or <very unreliable>. Because of being very weak, many

of *Hadeeth* scholars join them to the fabricated traditions, *Mawdu'*.

Unintentionally fabrication is usually due to unreliability and disqualification of the narrator. The narrator may be known of his poor memory, imprecision, inaccuracy, or having the habit of making serious mistakes. For example, if the narrator whose memory is poor has lost his books, or failed to write down the traditions he acquired, then he started narrating from his memory making many mistakes.

Warning

The Prophet (pbuh) warned against narrating any tradition that is suspected of fabrication. He said,

“Whoever fabricates a lie on me, then let him find his seat in the hellfire.”

“Whoever narrates a tradition of mine that he suspects is a lie, then he is one of the liars.”

Appearance of Hadeeth Fabrication

Fabrication was unknown at the time of the Prophet as well as his Companions. Careful investigations proved that there had never been found any slight historical or scientific evidence that traditions were fabricated at that time.

Researchers agree that it is an irrefutable historical fact that the fabrication of Hadeeth was not known in the generation of the Companions, Sahabah, (raa).

All the Companions (raa) loved the prophet (pbuh) even more than themselves; they sacrificed their life and wealth for Islam. They were God-fearing. They spent their life preaching the message of God. They all were reliable and trust worthy. That is why it was impossible to find any fabricated sayings at their time.

Barrier against Fabrication

Moreover, the presence of Companions and the followers (raa) after them was a barrier against fabrication of Hadeeth. The Companions were careful about even the slightest fault in accordance with the Prophet's instruction. Had any Hadeeth been fabricated and attributed to the Prophet (pbuh) they would have been immediately be able to recognize it.

The hypocrites and disbelievers were aware of this, although they caused a lot of trouble to Muslims, they did not dare to fabricate *Hadeeth* because they were sure they would be exposed.

The End of the First Century A.H

The end of first century A.H marked the end of the period of the Companions. There is consensus among Hadeeth scholars that there were no Companions living after 102 A.H.

The end of the first century A.H. was a period when opposing parties and sects emerged and the number of careless and insincere *Hadeeth* reporters increased and hence fabrication of Hadeeth started. Most of the Companions did not witness this increase in the *Hadeeth* fabrication.

The movement of *Hadeeth* fabrication started and developed in the critical period after the first century A.H because of the following causes:

1- Because of the fast spread of Islam at that era, millions of people accepted Islam but those new Muslims did not have knowledge deep enough to recognize the false Hadeeth, which paved the road for the spread of fabricated traditions.

2- The fast spread of Islam gave rise to secret anti-Islamic movements. Those conspirators plotted to distort Islam. They fabricated traditions to confuse new Muslims about their religion and distract them away from Islam.

They were not able to alter Qur'an because it was collected and preserved, and distributed all over Muslim worlds and memorized by thousands of Muslims. They were well aware that if they fabricate any verse, it will very soon be uncovered and rejected so they find it easy to fabricate hadeeth.

3- Political divisions among Muslims gave rise to the appearance of many radical movements and later led to fabrication of Hadeeth. Every section fabricated traditions to support the one whom they follow; traditions were also fabricated in merits and virtues of certain people, Imams, or race.

4- Other ignorant Muslims propagated false teachings, for personal advantage or to express zealous piety.

The scholars of *Hadeeth* exposed those liars and fabricators. They wrote books that include fabricated traditions proving why they are fabricated to let all Muslims know that they are liars and warning people not to accept any narration from them.

Women and Transmission of Hadeeth

Muslim women played a great role in transmission of Hadeeth since the time of the prophet (pbuh). Wives of the Prophet (raa), mothers of the faithful, transmitted many traditions; Aisha Bent Abu Bakr Assiddiq (raa) in particular transmitted thousands traditions. She (raa) alone narrated important events such as the tradition concerning the first revelation, as reported by Imam Bukhari, upon which the religion of Islam was established.

The Companions used to learn from Wives of the Prophet (raa), mothers of the faithful (raa), ask them questions about *Hadeeth*, and take their advices particularly in matters related to women.

Female Companions of the prophet (pbuh) reported many traditions. An example is Rubiyya bint Muawidh Ibn Afrah (raa) was a great narrator of Hadith. Her narrations can be found in Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Majah, and other compilations.

She narrated how the Prophet (pbuh), performed ablution after actually witnessing his performance of the purificatory ritual

Many of the Muslim women through history

were great narrators of Hadeeth. There is no book of Hadeeth but you find in every chapter of it a female narrator.

An example is the great female Successors Amrah bint Abdur-Rahman. She was a scholar professional in Hadeeth. The great Caliph Omar Ibn 'Abdul-`Aziz said about her, "If you want to learn *Hadeeth* go to Amrah." Imam Al-Zuhri, the prominent early compiler of Hadeeth used to say: "Go to Amrah, she is the vast vessel of *Hadeeth*."

Another female great Successor was Umm Darda who used to teach in Umayyad Mosque, as well as Al-Quds. Her classes were attended by many seekers of knowledge including *Hadeeth* scholars.

Also the female scholar, Aisha bint Abdul-Hadi used to teach in a Mosque of Damascus. The Sultan of that time could not find any man better than her so he appointed her as the Master of *Hadeeth* to teach the Book of Imam Al-Bukhari. The prominent *Hadeeth* scholar, Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani traveled to Damascus and studied more than one hundred books with her

There are many exemplary women in the history of Islam who were great reprotes and teachers in the subject of *Hadeeth* and without their efforts, maybe a big part of the Islamic knowledge could not have reached us.

However, it is amazing that scholars of *Hadeeth* agree that female narrators were always truthful in transmitting religious knowledge. There was

no woman in the history of Islam who has been accused of fabrication. There was no single Hadeeth which has been rejected from a woman on account of her being a fabricating liar. Imam Al-Dhahabi affirmed: "There are many men who have fabricated Hadith. However, no woman in the history of Islam has been accused of fabrication."

Mawdu' is the Worst Kind of Weak Traditions

- This type of tradition is the worst kind of weak traditions.
- Since Mawdu' is completely made up and is a lie against the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), it is entirely rejected.
- Some scholars do not even consider them *Hadeeth* . They call them "the fabricated", contrived or invented traditions.
- Fabricated tradition cannot be used for anything except for the purpose of explaining to somebody it's classification.
- Hence, scholars of *Hadeeth* have agreed that it is forbidden to quote any fabricated traditions without explicitly mentioning its fabrication.
- Mawdu' must not be quoted or transmitted by anyone as part of Islamic knowledge even though tis meaning agrees with Islamic principles because it is "a lie" and the Prophet (pbuh) said, 'He who lies (about a speech) of mine then let him find his seat in the hellfire."

Al-Karrameyya

A minor school of thought called “Al-Karrameyya” does not object to fabricating *Hadeeth* which enjoins people to do good deeds and abstain from wrong deeds. They claim that it is not wrong to tell lies for the purpose of supporting the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and his teachings. They believe that it is a good deed to invent a *Hadeeth* to attract people to Islam.

This opinion and attitude is entirely rejected by the majority of schools for three reasons:

- 1- The *Hadeeth* is a revelation and nobody has a right to change it.
- 2- There are enough authentic traditions that cover all aspects of religion and life and hence there is no need to invent new tradition.
- 3- A lie is a lie and the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) warned us that, “Whoever lies about me intentionally, let him have his seat in the Hellfire.”

Methods of *Hadeeth* Fabrication

There are three methods of fabrication:

- 1- To invent a saying then relate to the Prophet (pbuh).
- 2- To quote a proverb and relate it to the Prophet (pbuh).
- 3- To mix these two methods together.

The First Method

(1) The first method is to invent a saying then relate it to a known chain of successive narrators up to the Prophet (pbuh).

For example, Amr Ibn Sabih gave a sermon and related it to the Prophet (pbuh) through a reliable chain.

The Second Method

(2) The second method is to quote a proverb and relate it to a chain of successive narrators up to the Prophet (pbuh).

- For example, the saying, “The stomach is the origin of disease and a defensive diet (denying a patient harmful foods) is the best source of all remedies.”

This proverb is a saying of a famous Arab doctor who lived before the Prophet (pbuh). *Hadeeth* fabricators took such a saying and narrate it as a prophetic one.

- Another example is the saying, “Whosoever acts according to his religious knowledge, God will grant him knowledge of what he does not know.” An examination of this *Hadeeth* shows that it is a saying of the prophet Jesus and not of the prophet Mohammad (pbuh).
- The tradition: “Work for your life in this world as if you are living forever; and work for your life in the Hereafter as if you shall die tomorrow.” is not a *Hadeeth* of the Prophet

(pbuh) as it is commonly thought; Sheik Al-Al-Bani, in his chain of the weak traditions (63/1), said, "It is Mawdu - Baseless' as a narration from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), but that it is a statement of Abdullah Ibn Amro Ibn Al-A'as." It is a proverb said by some of Sahabah or followers then

- The Israelite traditions which are known as "Isra'iliyat" where texts are quoted from the Jewish and the Christian scriptures, and then they were wrongly attributed to the Prophet (pbuh).

The Third Method

(3) The third method is to quote a proverb and mix it with his invented saying then relate it to a chain of successive narrators up to the Prophet (pbuh).

Scholars Opinions of Hadeeth fabricators

There are three opinions:

1- Some scholars consider the *Hadeeth* fabricator a disbeliever, whether the subject of the fabrication is belief and faith, or morals and virtues. Their reasoning is that since the Prophet's sayings are revelations from God, and attributing a *Hadeeth* to the Prophet that he did not say is telling a lie concerning God, therefore *Hadeeth* fabrication is an act of disbelief.

2- However, the majority of scholars consider the fabrication of *Hadeeth* as a major sin and the fabricator as a sinner and not a disbeliever. The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Whoever attributes a saying to me which I did not say, his seat shall be in the Hellfire."

But he (pbuh) did not say that he would be a disbeliever.

3- Other scholars believe that it depends on the substance of the fabricated tradition:

- i- if the substance is beliefs and faith, then the fabricator is considered a disbeliever,
- ii- if its substance is good morals and virtues, then the fabricator is a sinner and not a disbeliever.

Remarks

1. Muslims should be extremely careful when narrating the Prophet's traditions, trying their best to narrate them in their exact words, and if that is impossible, they should try to narrate their exact meaning.
2. If a Muslim makes a mistake in a tradition unintentionally or intentionally, he should repent and confess what he has done and do his best to correct it.
3. More attention should be given to translations of the Prophet's traditions so that the intended meanings are carefully presented in a way that gives no way for misinterpretation or misunderstanding.

Recognizing Fabricated Traditions

There are several ways to recognize fabricated traditions.

1- Confessions of the Fabricators

The first method is through the confessions of the fabricators who said they did so with good intentions.

For example,

- Abu 'Esma Nuh Ibn Abi Mariam confessed that he fabricated traditions about the merits of all the chapters of the Qur'an to encourage people to read them.
- Abdel-Karim Ibn Al-Awjaa was crucified by the governor of Al-Basrah confessed that he fabricated 4000 traditions to make the lawful unlawful and the unlawful lawful in order to confuse Muslims.
- A Persian man, Maysara Ibn Abdulla Al-Farisy, confessed that he fabricated 70 traditions about the merits of Ali and other traditions about the merits of different chapters of the Qur'an .
- Amr Ibn Sabih also confessed that he fabricated a sermon and narrated it to the Prophet (pbuh).
- Muhammad Ibn Sa'id al-Maslub used to say, "It is not wrong to fabricate an isnad for a sound statement."

2- Investigating the History and the Characters of the Narrators

The second method of recognizing fabricated traditions is to study the history and the characters of the narrators. A tradition is *Mawdu'* if errors, inconsistency, or contradictions to well known facts, dates, or times are found in it.

1- Histroical Errors

If the narrator claimed that he acquired the *Hadeeth* from specific person but careful studies showed that this person died before the birth of the narrator, then this narrator would be classified as a liar and the *Hadeeth* as fabricated.

1. For example, the tradition that Al-Hassan Abasri narrated that when he was born, he was taken to the Prophet (pbuh), who in turn wiped on his head by his hand and prayed to Allah to grant him sincere knowledge. It is well known that Al-Hassan Abasri was born after the death of the Prophet (pbuh). Another example, Yahya Ibn Ma'een asked a reporter he suspected to be a liar, "From whom have you acquired this *Hadeeth*." He named a certain reporter. Then, Yahya Ibn Ma'een asked, "When?" He answered, "in 172 AH." Then Ibn Ma'een said, "Did you know that he died in 170 H?" And then Ibn Ma'een mockingly commented, "What, did you narrate the *Hadeeth* from his grave?"

2. Another example, when Omar Ibn al- Khattab (raa) decided to expel the Jews from Khaibar according to the Prophet' recommendation, a Jew brought to Omar (raa) a document claimed to be made by the Prophet (pbuh) at the conquest of Khaibar to prove that the Prophet (pbuh) had intended to exempt them from the *Jizyah* (tax on non-Muslims). The document was witnessed by Sa'ad Ibn Mu'adh and Mu'awiyah Ibn Abi Sufyan. Omar (raa) promptly rejected the document, knowing that it was fabricated because the conquest of Khaibar took place in 6 AH, while Sa'ad Ibn Mu'adh died shortly after the Battle of the Clanes, in 3 A.H.; and Mu'awiyah embraced Islam after the conquest of Mecca, in 8 A.H.

2- The Narrator is Known of Telling lies

Also if investigation of the character of the narrator shows that he had been accustomed of telling falsehood in the course of narration, then his *Hadeeth* would be considered fabricated.

For example, Sa'ad Ibn Tareef was known of lying in the narration, that is why his traditions were rejected. Ibn Mu'een, a great *Hadeeth* scholar, warned, "It is unlawful (*haram*) for any Muslim to narrate his (Sa'ad Ibn Tareef) *Hadeeth* , for he has the habit of fabricating *Hadeeth* in all occasions."

3- Investigating the Substance (Text) of the *Hadeeth*

The third method of recognizing fabrications is careful investigation of the substance of a

Hadeeth. For example, if the text of the *Hadeeth* reports something very important, which was witnessed by a large number of people and was so extraordinary that it is expected to be reported by many of them, but was then narrated by only one person, it would be evidence of the fabrication of the *Hadeeth* .

1-Few People Reported an Extraordinary Event

As an example of this case, there is a tradition that states that the Prophet (pbuh) sent Ali (raa) on some errands that he could not finish until after sunset and he missed the afternoon (*asr*) prayer. When he returned, the prophet ordered the sun to return after it had set so that Ali could pray *asr*, and people witnessed it.

This *Hadeeth* is narrated by one person only, making it Strange, or *Ghareeb* tradition. Apart from this, the reliability of this *Hadeeth* is questioned because in spite of the fact that the returning of the sun after its setting is something very unusual and must have been witnessed by all people and narrated by many of them, yet it was reported by only one person; this is considered, without doubt, an evidence of fabrication.

As an additional evidence of its fabrication, one can consider that the Prophet (pbuh) himself was not honored by the returning of the sun when he missed the afternoon prayer during the Battle of the Clans; he prayed it at the time of the evening (*isha*) prayer. Ali would not be alone honored by the returning of the sun when the Prophet (pbuh) was not.

2-Poor Style of the *Hadeeth*

By studying thousands of traditions, the *Hadeeth* scholars developed a sense for distinguishing between the authentic and fabricated *Hadeeths* due to their wording and style. They say that the true *Hadeeth* has the light of the revelation that identifies them.

The poor language and style of the substance of a *Hadeeth* is an evidence of its fabrication.

For example, there is a *Hadeeth* that states, "If rice were a man, he would have been gentle. No hungry person would eat it, but he would be full and satisfied."

The meaning of this *Hadeeth* is very trivial and its Arabic is so poor and inadequate that it could not be related even to ordinary people. It could not be a saying of the Prophet (pbuh), who was given the quality of comprehensive eloquent speech (*Jawami' Alkalim*), or the ability of expressing many good meanings in few words.

3- Contradicting the Qur'an and Authentic Traditions

Contradicting the text of the Qur'an, authentic traditions, or the basics of Islam is an indication of the fabrication of the tradition.

For example, the *Hadeeth* that states, "If one thinks well of a stone, it will help him." It contradicts the Qur'an, Sunnah and the basis of Islam, which are based on monotheism. The *Hadeeth* contradicts monotheism: stones could never help anyone. It is God alone who is the Benefactor.

4- Contradicting Historical Facts

If the substance of the *Hadeeth* contradicts historical facts, it would be an indication that it has been fabricated. For example, there is a *Hadeeth* of the Prophet's servant: "I entered the Turkish bath and saw the Prophet (pbuh) sitting and wearing *mi'zer* (some type of dress)."

However, Turkish baths and *mi'zer* were only known in Syria and they were not known in Mecca and Medina at the lifetime of the Prophet (pbuh). Hence, this is a clue that the *Hadeeth* must be fabricated.

5- Contradicting Reason and Logic

Contradiction to reason and logic is an evidence of fabrication. There is a *Hadeeth*, for example, that states that Noah's Ark went around Kaaba seven times. This tradition is not sensible. We know from the Qur'an that the flood covered everything, even the mountains, so the ark could not have gone around Kaaba.

6- Prescribing a Heavy Penalty for a Minor Offense

If a *Hadeeth* prescribes a heavy penalty for a minor offense it is an indication of its fabrication. For example, a tradition says that "whoever eats garlic on Friday night let him fall into Hellfire for seventy years."

7- Promising a Huge Reward for a Simple Deed

Likewise, a *Hadeeth* which promises a great reward for a simple deed is suspect of fabrication, such as the *Hadeeth* that says that whoever prays the forenoon prayer a certain number of times will be given the reward of seventy prophets.

The one who fabricated this *Hadeeth* failed to realize that if any ordinary person spent one thousand years in continuous worship he would not be given the reward of one prophet, simply because prophethood is a gift from God -- it cannot be attained by doing good deeds.

Another *Hadeeth* says that whoever reads Surat Al-Ikhlās (chapter 112) of the Qur'an during his final illness will not be questioned in his grave; he will be saved from the compression of the grave and the angels will carry him in their arms until he passes the bridge over Hell and safely reaches Paradise.

This *Hadeeth* promises a reward nearly equivalent to that of a martyr for merely reciting one short surah, which indicates that it is fabricated.

Reasons for Fabrication of *Hadeeth*

There are many reasons behind fabrication of *Hadeeth*, they include:

1. Drawing people nearer to Allah.
2. Supporting racist viewpoints or particular school of thought.

3. Distracting people away from Islam
4. Pleasing or flattering rulers.
5. Telling interesting stories.
6. Taking revenge or seeking fame or fortune.
7. Propaganda purposes.

1- Drawing People Nearer to Allah

Some Muslims not well learned worshippers but considered righteous in the eyes of people fabricated traditions in order to encourage people to do good deeds and avoid evil deeds.

They thought that by doing so they would draw people nearer to Allah (swt). Those fabricators wanted to encourage people to be more virtuous. When reminded of the traditions threatening those who lie against the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), they say, "We do not tell lies against him but for him". This is a gross misinterpretation of the meaning, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) intended.

Examples

Examples of people who fabricated *Hadeeth* in order to draw people nearer to Allah include:

- 1- Maysara Ibn Abd Rubih, who said he fabricated traditions about the merits of reading Qur'an to encourage people to read it.
- 2- Abu 'Esma Nuh Ibn Abi Mariam was asked from where you have got the traditions about the merits of surahs of the Qura'n; he said that I saw people

distracted from the Qur'an and became busy studying *fiqh* (Islamic laws) so I invented them to encourage people to recite the Qur'an .

However good their intentions were, these fabricators are sinful. The Prophet's (pbuh) sayings are revealed by God and telling lies concerning the Prophet (pbuh) is actually telling lies about God. In addition, the religion of Islam was completed by God -- it does not need the fabrications of liars to convince people to follow it.

They were in fact the worst kind of *Hadeeth* fabricators because they had the trust of the people and transferred their fabrications as reliable *Hadeeths*.

2- Supporting Racist Viewpoint or a Particular School of Thought.

Besides fabricating *Hadeeth* to draw people nearer to God, some fabricators have invented *Hadeeth* to support radical, political and religious schools of thought.

As was explained before, innovations began after the spread of Islam and different sections and groups of radical thought appeared like Al-Khuwarij who were anti-Ali and Shi'ite who were pro-Ali, among others.

Prejudice for one's own beliefs, race, or Imam motivated the fabricators to invent traditions that praise their beliefs, race, culture, or school of thought.

These sects started to fabricate *Hadeeth* in order to support their viewpoints to prove that they were not wrong. One of them said, "Whenever we had a different opinion we fabricated a *Hadeeth* for it."

Ibn Abi Al-Hadid the famous commentator of the book of Nahj Al-Balaghah, said: "Lies were introduced in *Hadeeth* originally by the *Shi'ah*. They in the beginning fabricated many traditions in favor of their men, motivated by enmity towards their opponents. Then their opponents responded by fabricating traditions in favor of their men too."

That is why the scholars of *Hadeeth* rejected the traditions narrated by those tellers of lies, as they were not considered adequate enough to accept.

Examples

1- Examples of this include the *Hadeeth* about the sun returning after sunset so that Ali could pray the afternoon prayer, and the tradition that says, "Ali is the best of all mankind; whoever has doubts about him is a disbeliever."

This tradition contradicts the basics of Islam. Since one would only be a disbeliever if he denies God, His attributes or His messengers, having doubts about Ali could never lead to disbelief since he was not a prophet. Ali (raa) could never be the best of mankind since the Prophet (pbuh) said about himself, "I am the best of the sons of Adam." For these reasons, the *Hadeeth* is suspected of fabrication in order to support a school of thought, and is therefore rejected.

2- Other example of fabricated *Hadeeth* in order to support a particular school of thought includes that which says, "Loving Ali is a good deed by which no evil deed will harm you, and hating him is a bad deed by which no good deed will benefit you." This also contradicts Qur'an ic teachings specified in Surat Al-Zilzalah:

"So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom shall see it, and whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom shall see it." (99:7-8)

3- Another example, is the tradition that says, "When Abu Bakr was born Allah (swt) turned to the Paradise and said: "By my Majesty and Power, no one shall enter you but he who loves him (Abu Bakr)"

4- An example of prejudice for one's own Imam is the tradition cited by As-Siba`i which praises Abu Hanifah while degrading Ash-Shafi`i. It says, "There shall be in my Ummah a man by the name Muhammad Ibn Idris who will be more dangerous to my Ummah than Iblis and there shall be a man in my Ummah known as Abu Hanifah who will be the lamp of my Ummah"

5- An example of prejudice for one's own race is the report cited by Ibn Al-Qayim which states that "When Allah gets angry, He reveals the Qur'an in Persian. And when He is satisfied, He reveals it in Arabic" (Ibn Al-Qayim 59).

3- Distracting People away from Islam

Another reason to fabricate *Hadeeth* is to distort Islam, distract people away from it, and spread confusion about it. This kind of traditions were fabricated for this purpose by some disbelievers and atheists who were not able to criticize Islam openly, so they indirectly attacked Islam through inventing traditions that spread doubts and misunderstandings amongst Muslims regarding the basics of their religion, and the lawful and unlawful.

Examples of those who fabricated *Hadeeth* for this reason are Mohammad Ibn Saeed Al-Shami, Samaan Al-Mahdi, who appeared in Iraq claiming divinity for Ali, and Abdel-Karim Ibn Al-Awja', who confessed that he fabricated 4000 traditions in order to make the lawful unlawful and the unlawful lawful.

Scholars of *Hadeeth* have counted 14,000 of this kind of fabricated traditions.

Examples

1- One of these fabricated traditions states that God comes down at the end of the day riding a black and white camel, shaking hands with riders and hugging pedestrians. This tradition makes God comparable to man which contradicts the Islamic concept of God's unique attributes and that there is nothing similar to His likeness.

2- Another tradition states that the Prophet (pbuh) said, "I am the seal of all prophets; there is no prophet after me unless God wills."

This was invented by Hameed Ibn Annas to raise doubts about the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) as the last prophet and to pave the way for false prophets to justify their calls and distort the religion of Islam.

4- Pleasing or Flattering Rulers

Some fabricators of traditions did so to please or flatter Caliphs or rulers; they invented *Hadeeth* to match their sinful behaviors or desires.

For example, Ghayath Ibn Ibrahim Al-Kufi visited the Caliph Al-Mahdi and found him engaged in pigeon race. He immediately mentioned a reliable chain of narrators up to the Prophet (pbuh) that he said, "No race should be run except by an arrowhead, a hoof or a wing." He added the phrase, "or a wing" to an otherwise reliable *Hadeeth*.²⁴ The Caliph realized that Ghayath added the phrase just to please him and approve of his race, immediately regretted what he had been doing, and gave orders to slaughter the birds. He said, "I made him (Ghayath) do it."

5- Telling Interesting Stories.

Another group of *Hadeeth* fabricators were storytellers who used to make money telling people stories. They fabricated *Hadeeth* to make their stories more interesting and amusing in order to attract people to listen to them and pay them money.

²⁴ Bird-racing is not allowed because there is no good purpose behind it; it is rather a waste of time. Archery and the racing of camels and horses, however, are useful as a kind of sport and military training.

Ibn Al-Jawzi reported an example of such traditions that Imam Ahmed Ibn Hanbal and Yahya Ibn Maeen (two great *Hadeeth* scholars) prayed in a mosque of Rusafah, and after the prayer a man sat to tell stories. He mentioned a chain of successive narrators up to Anas, that the Prophet (pbuh) said, "Whoever says: There is no god but Allah, but Allah will create for him for every word he utters a bird with a beak of gold and feathers of pearls...." Then he proceeded to describe the bird and the reward of the recipient in such a detail as cannot be contained even in twenty pages.

When he finished and started collecting tips from the people, Yahya asked him, "Who reported to you that tradition?" He replied, "Ibn Hanbal and Ibn Maeen." Yahya angrily said, "But I am Yahya Ibn Maeen and this is Ahmed Ibn Hanbal! We never heard your tradition."

The man asked, "Are you Yahya Ibn Maeen?" Yahya answered, "Yes!" He said, "I heard all the time that Yahya Ibn Maeen is idiot, but I never realized it until this moment." Then Yahya said to him, "How did you know that I was idiot?" He replied, "Do you think that there is no other Ibn Hanbal and Ibn Maeen but you. As for me, I have narrated traditions from seventeen persons by the names Ibn Hanbal and Ibn Maeen." Then Ahmad whispered to Yahya, "Let him go."

6- Taking Revenge or Seek Fame or Fortune

Other reasons for inventing *Hadeeth* include seeking fame for narrating a strange *Hadeeth* or a chain of narration, to achieve some other worldly benefits, or to take revenge on somebody.

7- Propaganda Purposes

Propaganda for a specific school of thought, a particular food, drink, perfume or type of dress motivated ignorant Muslims to invent traditions to achieve some gains.

Ignorant supporters of Imam Abu Hanifa invented a *Hadeeth* that says, "There will be a man from my nation called Abu Hanifa. He is the light of my nation," and a *Hadeeth against* As-Shafi'e that says, "There will be a man from my nation called Mohammad As-Shafi'e. He is more harmful to my nation than the devil."

Some blind followers of different schools of Islamic legislation (*fiqh*) invented *Hadeeth* as well, to support their *fiqh* views such as the tradition that states, "Whoever raises his hands in prayer, his prayer is invalid."

Another reason for fabrication is racism. For example, one tradition states, "Whenever God is angry He will send a book in Arabic," and "When God is happy He will send a revelation in Persian."

Special Books of Fabricated Traditions

Some *Hadeeth* scholars composed books of

fabricated traditions in order to distinguish them from other traditions and warn Muslims against their danger.

The most famous of these books are:

- Al-Maudu'at, *Ibn Al-Jawzi*; it is the oldest book in this subject.
- Al-La'ali al- Masnu'ah fi 'l-Ahadith al- Maudu'ah, Al-Suyuti
- Al-Fawaid Al-Majmoo'a fi Ahadith al- Maudu'ah, *Al-Shawkani*
- Kitab Al-Abateel, *Al-Jawzaqani*
- Mukhtasr Al-Abateel wa Al-Maudu'at, *Shams El-Deen Al-Dhahabi*

Books of Tafseer

Many of Muslim authors particularly in the subject of *tafseer* (interpretation of Qur'an) used to collect as many traditions in their books as possible without verifying their sources and reliability. That is why some *tafseer* books, contain many fabricated traditions without pointing out that they are fabricated. Although their books are generally good and useful, they should be formally investigated in order to clear them of fabricated traditions. Many of the fabricated traditions in these books were Israelite traditions quoted from the scriptures of the Jews and Christians. In many cases they give misleading interpretations of Qur'anic verses. Such books include those by *Al-Baidawi*, *Al-Zamakhshary*, *Al-Wahidi*, and *Al-Tha'alabi*.

Impact of Fabricated Traditions on Muslims

Thanks to the great efforts of the *Hadeeth* scholars who spent their lives in protecting the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) through developing a solid methodology of examining the *Hadeeth* and categorizing traditions according to their degrees of authenticity.

Although today the genuine traditions are sorted out from the false/fabricated ones, the false unauthentic traditions are still circulating in the Muslim societies. In fact, fabricated traditions have negatively influenced Muslims lives in many ways.

1- Renouncing the life of this world and Decline of Muslims

These false traditions motivated Muslims to renounce the life of this world and put more emphasize on worshipping, much more than what is reported in authentic traditions. Example is the saying, "Exaggerate in remembering Allah until others call you mad." This kind of forged traditions led to the decline of Muslims in many fields of life until its enemies dominated them.

2- Corrupted beliefs and Innovations

Because of these false traditions, corrupted beliefs were gradually introduced into Islamic creed and deviant practices and rituals were developed slowly such as putting more emphasize on

righteous persons, seeking God's blessings through them, glorifying their graves, and making them mediators between people and Allah (swt). Also innovations in creed as well as religious practices emerged as a result of bad impact of these forged traditions.

3- Corrupted belief in Prophet Muhammed (pbuh)

Qura'n and authentic traditions state clearly that the Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) was a human being; Say, «I am but a man like you who is divinely inspired that your god is but One God.» (Quran 18:10); thus encouraging people to follow his example as the most righteous model for all mankind. The invented traditions distort this important fact by raising the status of the prophet above humans. Some of these traditions tell that he (pbuh) was created of light; others say he was created before Adam was created, and even before heavens and earth were created. Ibn Al Jawzi mentioned many of this kind of forged tradition in «*Mawdu'at*». Examples include:

- "I was a Prophet before Adam and before the water and the mud...."
- "I was a prophet when there was no Adam and no clay"
- "Verily, before the creation of anything else, Almighty Allah created the Noor of your prophet from His Noor."
- ".. He (pbuh) used to be Light surrounding the Throne"

- “Seek to draw closer to Allah by virtue of my status (by my Jaah), for my status (my Jaah) with Allah is great”,
- “O Muhammad! Were it not for you, the Garden would not have been created, and were it not for you the Fire would not have been created.”
- “.. He (pbuh) used to be Light surrounding the Throne”

4- Divisions and Disagreements

Forged traditions contributed in creation of divisions and disagreements amongst Muslim Ummah until today. Many of *Hadeeth* fabricators invented traditions in order to create mischief and dispersion in religion and to misguide Muslims of weak convictions. Religious sects and factions invented sayings to support their views. Political groups fabricated sayings in favor of their leaders.

Unfortunately there are a lot of invented sayings of this kind of repulsive lies which are totally against the spirit of Islamic brotherhood; the Qura'n says, “.. and hold fast, all of you together, to the rope of Allah, and be not divided among yourselves”

These forged traditions led to religious divisions, hatred, racial prejudice, political disputes, and disunity among Muslims. They gave rise to various misconceptions and difficulties for Muslims.

Many of today's disagreements among Muslims can be traced to these forged traditions.

5- Degradation of Muslim Women

Many of the false sayings attributed to the Prophet (pbuh) degrade women to draw them back to era of ignorance before Islam. degradation of women led to the degradation of the entire Muslim Ummah. These false sayings are contradicted by the Qura'n, authentic traditions, the prophet (pbuh) conduct, as well as Muslim women' great contributions for Islam through ages since the early time of Islam. These baseless sayings were sorted and recognized by the great Hadeeth scholars such as Ibn al-Jawzi's *al-Mawdu'at* and al-Suyuti's and other, examples include:

“A straw mat in the corner of the house is preferable to a barren woman” Ibn Al- Jawzi mentioned it in “*Mawdu'at*”

“The woman is a toy, whoever takes her let him care for her [or do not lose her].”

“Had it not been for women, God would have truly, truly been worshipped”

“Men perished the day they obeyed the women”

“Obedience to a woman's advice causes regret”

“Consult women (listen to what women have to say) and act contrary”. These tradition are contradicted by authentic tradition that after the treaty of Hudaibiyyah was concluded, the Prophet

(pbuh) consulted with his wife Um Salamah (raa) and acted according to her advice.

We should realize the damaging and dangerous effects of the fabricated traditions to Muslims all over the world. They distort the image of Islam, weaken the Muslim Ummah and open the door to its enemies to dominate it.

It is a necessity for the Muslim Ummah to exert more efforts and conduct more research, not only in sifting the fabricated traditions from the authentic ones, but also in purifying the Muslims life from the terrible consequences produced by those forged sayings.

There is no way for the Muslim Ummah to restore its leading position in the world as the best nation ever introduced to mankind, unless it returns back to the pure sources of Islam, the Noble Qura'n and the authentic Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh) which Allah (swt) promised to preserve and guard.

Conclusion

From this study we realize that the science of *Hadeeth*, which includes the methods of recording, preserving, investigating and classifying *Hadeeth*, is a great Islamic achievement of which every Muslim should be proud.

If this work is judged honestly and fairly, it would seem like a miracle especially that it started in a time when the art of printing and publishing was in its infancy and that it was accomplished in a

relatively short period of time.

This preservation of the *Hadeeth* is like the preservation the Qura'n is, in fact, the fulfillment of the promise given by Allah, the most Glorified, to preserve the entire message revealed to the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh), as Allah (swt) said in Surat Hijr:

**{Verily! We sent down the Reminder
And verily we shall preserve it }**

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Suhaib Hassan - English

Test Your Knowledge

Q (1) Mark the correct answer.

- 1) Sunnah is the collection of the Prophet's
(p.b.u.h) :
 - 1) sayings.
 - 2) actions .
 - 3) deeds done in his presence and he has
approved them.
 - 4) all the above.
- 2) The objective of Sunnah is to :
 - 1) give details of brief Qur'anic teachings.
 - 2) interpret Qur'an.
 - 3) put limits to some of Quranic laws
 - 4) make exceptions of some Qur'anic verses.
 - 5) state laws that are not mentioned in Qur'an.
 - 6) all the above.
- 3) The books of Al-Bukhary and Moslem contain:
 - 1) only sound (saheeh) Traditions .
 - 2) only good (hassan) traditions.
 - 3) only weak traditions.
 - 4) all the above.
- 4) The books of Ass-hab Assonan contain :
 - 1) only sound (saheeh) Traditions .
 - 2) only good (hassan) traditions.
 - 3) only weak traditions.
 - 4) all the above.

- 5) The accepted traditions are divided into the following types :
- 1) Famous (Mushhoor) , Rare (A'zeez) and Odd (Ghareeb)
 - 2) Single and Mutawater.
 - 3) Nabawii and Qudsi.
 - 4) Sound (Saheeh) and Good (Hassan).
- 6) A tradition classified as “Saheeh because of others” is :
- 1) any tradition that is reported in many versions.
 - 2) any Good tradition that is supported by other Good traditions.
 - 3) any weak tradition that is supported by a stronger tradition.
- 7) A tradition is rejected because of :
- 1) the incompleteness of the chain
 - 2) the unreliability of any of the narrators
 - 3) the bad character of any of the narrators
 - 4) a defectiveness or an abnormality of its substance
 - 5) any of the above.
- 8) Alim Arrigal علم الرجال is the science that:
- 1) deals with the history of the narrator.
 - 2) declares the reliability of the narrator.
 - 3) examines the character of the narrator.
 - 4) examines the memory of the narrator.

- 9) Alim Al-Jarh علم الجرح is the science that:
- 1) deals with the history of the narrator.
 - 2) declares the unreliability of the narrator.
 - 3) examines the character of the narrator.
 - 4) examines the memory of the narrator.
- 10) Alim Ad-derayyah: علم الدراية is the science that:
- 1) examines the substance of the tradition.
 - 2) declares the reliability of the narrator.
 - 3) examines the character of the narrator.
 - 4) examines the memory of the narrator.
- 11) Alim Al-Rewayyah: علم الرواية is the science that:
- 1) declares the reliability of the narrator.
 - 2) judge the character of the narrator.
 - 3) examines the chain of narration.
 - 4) examines the memory of the narrator.
- 12) Alim Ataa'deel: علم التعديل is the science that:
- 1) deals with the history of the narrator.
 - 2) declares the reliability of the narrator.
 - 3) examines the character of the narrator.
 - 4) examines the memory of the narrator.
- 13) The reliable narrators must be
- 1) God-fearing, righteous, and honest
 - 2) Knowledgeable and having correct religious beliefs.
 - 3) Avoiding major and minor sins as well as

innovative religious practices.

- 4) Never uttered lies or given false evidence.
- 5) All of the above.

Q (2) State whether the following is true or false :

- 1- () Sunnah includes the Prophet's personal opinions expressed at certain occasions.
- 2- () Bada' is a deviation from the established Sunnah
- 3- () Bada' is are rejected by all scholars of Islam.
- 4- () Obeying the Messenger is a part of obeying Allah.
- 5- () The prophet Mohammad p.b.u.h. had been given only one kind of revelation, the book of Qur'an.
- 6- () Moslems are obliged to follow Quran only.
- 7- () The whole Qur'an was written at the life time of the prophet Mohammed p.b.u.h.
- 8- () Abu-Bakr (raa) collected the whole Qur'an and compiled it in one book, called the (Moss-haff).
- 9- () What Othman (raa) did was just making copies of the Moss-haff compiled at Abu-Bakr time, and distributing them, as references, all over the Islamic world.

10- () The entire Qur'an was collected by the way of narration called Tawator.

11- () Most of the prophet traditions were memorized, and recorded at his life time and at the time of his companions.

12- () The only reason of rejecting a tradition is the incompleteness of the chain.

13- () The most authentic traditions are those reported by all the major six references of Hadeeth.

14- () The sources of Islamic laws and beliefs are only the Qur'an and the accepted traditions of the prophet p.b.u.h

15- () "Agreed upon" means to be reported by only Al-Buhkari and Moslem.

16- () "Good because of others" is a weak tradition that is supported by other traditions that are not weaker than it.

17- () Generally a weak tradition may be reported without pointing out to its weakness.

18- () Moslems may act according to weak traditions under some conditions.

Q (3): Why did the prophet p.b.u.h. forbid writing his sayings at the beginning of Islam and allowed it later?

Q (4): Allah the Almighty said:

- 1) "Whatever the messenger enjoins you accept and

whatever he forbids you avoid” Surat Al-Hashr (59) verse (7)

2) “Your companion is neither gone astray nor is he misled. Nor does he say of his own desire. It is no less than a revelation sent down to him” Surat Al-Najm (53) verse (2:5)

These verses state a very important fact about Sunnah. What is it?

Q (5): Mention the differences between Quran and Sunnah.

Q (6): Mention the reasons behind Hadeeth fabrication.

Q (7): Mention three signs that help scholars recognize fabricated traditions.

Q(8): Allah The Almighty said in Surrat Al-Hijr :
*“We have sent down the Reminder **الذکر** , and We will surely guard and preserve it”*

- i- What is the “Reminder” **الذکر** ?
- ii- Explain the meaning of this verse in the light of your studies of Hadeeth science.

Books of the Author

Published

- 1- The Islamic Concept of God in the light of the greatest verse in Quran (Ayat-Ul-Kursi) -Second Edition - Revised
- 2- Sincerity and Our Deeds - Second Edition - Revised
- 3- The Perfect Believer - Second Edition - Revised
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Respected Dear Readers

Please pray for forgiveness and mercy of Allah, Subhanahu Wata'la, for the author, her parents, her family, all Muslims, particularly the misfortunate and the less privileged around the world.

I constantly pray to Allah, Subhanahu Wata'la, to bring Muslims from darkness to light, to cover our faults and mistakes in this life, and forgive us for them in the Next life, to seal our work with the best good deeds, and let the best of our days be the day when we shall meet with Him, and make the best part of our lives the end of it.

I also pray to Allah, Subhanahu Wata'la, from all my heart to accept this work and make it sincerely for His sake.

“Say : Truly, my prayers, my services of sacrifice, my life, and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of all the worlds. There is no partners with him. This am I commanded, and I am the first of Moslems (of those who submit to His will)” (Quran 6- 162, 163)

And let the last of our prayers be All praises are due to Allah the Lord of all the worlds»

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