

MIFTAAH HADITH

INTENSIVE

Preservation of Hadith in the second era: Life of the Companions

- The Companions were protective and extremely wary of this tradition. Whenever they heard a hadith from a fellow companion, they would verify it in order not to compromise the tradition.

- Abu Sa'id reported:

أَنَّ أَبَا مُوسَى، أَتَى بَابَ عُمَرَ فَاسْتَأْذَنَ فَقَالَ عُمَرُ وَاحِدَةً . ثُمَّ اسْتَأْذَنَ الثَّانِيَةَ فَقَالَ عُمَرُ ثَنَتَانِ . ثُمَّ اسْتَأْذَنَ التَّالِيَةَ فَقَالَ عُمَرُ ثَلَاثَ . ثُمَّ انْصَرَفَ فَاتَّبَعَهُ فَرَدَدَهُ فَقَالَ إِنْ كَانَ هَذَا شَيْئًا حَفِظَتْهُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَهَا وَإِلَّا فَلَا جُعْلَنَّكَ عِظَةً . قَالَ أَبُو سَعِيدٍ فَأَتَانَا فَقَالَ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " الْإِسْتِئْذَانُ ثَلَاثٌ " . قَالَ فَجَعَلُوا يَضْحَكُونَ - قَالَ - فَقُلْتُ أَتَأَكُمْ أَخْوُكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِمُ قَدْ أَفْزَعَ تَضْحِكُونَ انْظَلْقُ فَأَنَا شَرِيكُكَ فِي هَذِهِ الْعُقُوبَةِ . فَأَتَاهُ هَذَا أَبُو سَعِيدٍ .

Abu Musa al-Ash'ari came to the door of 'Umar and sought his permission (to get into his house).

Umar said: That is once. He again sought permission for the second time and 'Umar said: It is twice. He again sought permission for the third time and Umar said: It is thrice. He (Abu Musa) then went back. He (Umar) (sent someone) to pursue him so that he should be brought back. Thereupon he (Umar) said: If this act (of yours is in accordance with the command of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) you have preserved in your mind, then it is all right, otherwise (I shall give you such a severe punishment) that it will serve as an example to others. Abu Sa'id said: Then he (Abu Musa) came to us and said: Do you remember Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) having said this: " Permission is for three times"? They (Companions sitting in that company) began to laugh, whereupon he (Abu Musa) said: There comes to you your Muslim brother who had been perturbed and you laugh. Abu Sa'id said: (Well), you go forth. I shall be your participant in this trouble of yours. So he came to him (Umar) and said: Here is Abu Sa'id (to support my statement). (Sahih Muslim)

- In this era, hadith was taught and narrated. The Companions would never narrate anything they doubted. They would often cross-check with one another to establish the credibility of narrations the Prophet (ﷺ) had narrated to them.
- There were more than 17 Companions that were known to narrate over a thousand narrations.
- Abu Hurairah only spent between two to three years of his life with the Prophet (ﷺ) when he was alive, but he collected and narrated the most hadith – over 5,000 hadith.
- The other Companions that had more narrations were Anas ibn Malik and Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As. Anas spent his time in the Prophet's service and therefore, he was able to memorize a large number of his words.
- Abdullah ibn Umar was young and spent a lot of time with the Prophet (ﷺ). This gave him an opportunity to learn, teach and spread the hadith.
- Aisha enjoyed the company of the Prophet (ﷺ) and was known for her extensive knowledge of hadith. She learned a large number of hadiths from her husband and also showed critical appreciation of them and corrected many Companions' mistakes in understanding.
- Abdullah ibn `Abbas learned a few hadiths directly from the Prophet (ﷺ) and he learned many hadiths through years of hard labor.
- The commonality between all these top narrators were that they not only spent the most time with the Prophet (ﷺ), but they were youthful in age and therefore have the ability to retain more knowledge. This shows us that the preservation of our prophetic tradition begins with the youth.
- People would travel from faraway lands to hear narrations from the Companions just to hear one narration.
- In this time, there was not a dire need for books. Hence, they would hear a narration and write it down not for the sake of compiling books, but to learn and preserve the tradition.

Preservation of Hadith in the third era: Life of the Tabi'un (Successors)

- The tabi'un were the students of the Companions who lived in the same era.
- They were encouraged to write and preserve the tradition as the Companions were passing away.
- This generation took the initiative to formally compile and structure the hadith that they gathered from the Companions.
- During the rule of Umar ibn Abdul Aziz, he officially sanctioned the recording of hadith and collecting of hadith by sending a group of scholars to complete the task. These compilations were then sent to all his governors to be used as reference.
- With the rise of many fitan, whereby various sects were fabricating hadith, the scholars found it a necessity to compile the sanad.
- At the end of the first century to the beginning of the second century, they started compiling the hadith that they collected by putting them into books, as well as compiling the chains of the narrations.
- The scholars were constantly aware of the need of the ummah. Hence, they directed all of their time and energy based on the needs of the era.
- For example, after the Prophet's demise, the primary need was to narrate hadith, explain the tradition and explain the Deen. Therefore, the first generation of scholars amongst the tabi'un were predominantly known to be scholars of fuqaha.
- The third century was the era in which hadith studies flourished and the six most authentic books of hadith, Sahih Sittah, were compiled.
 - 1. Sahih al-Bukhari (194-256)
 - 2. Sunan Abu Dawud (202-275)
 - 3. Sahih Muslim (206-261)
 - 4. Jami al-Tirmidhi (209-279)
 - 5. Sunan Ibn Majah (209-273)
 - 6. Sunan an-Nasa'i (215-303)
- These books were compiled in the same era, in accordance with the needs of their era, and all its authors were from the same region – Transoxiana.

- Apart from these six recognized books, the book deemed most authentic was Imam Malik's Muwatta as it one of the earliest collections of hadith. His compilation was focused on fiqh. Hence, his chapters were titled based upon laws. It served a very unique purpose.
- After these books were compiled in the way that we have them today, we start referring to them more than we refer to the scholars of hadith.

Sahih Bukhari: Chapter on The Beginning of Revelation

- Imam Bukhari begins his sacred collection of hadith with the chapter on how revelation started to the Prophet (ﷺ).
- This denotes that no one should look at this collection outside of revelation as the Prophet (ﷺ) speaks from divine revelation.
- Jibril came down with the Sunnah, just as he came down to reveal the Qur'an to the Prophet (ﷺ). Allah confirms this:

وَمَا يَنْطَقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۝ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ۝

Nor does he speak of his own whims. It is only a revelation sent down 'to him'. (53:3-4)

- The Prophet's speech is synonymous to revelation, and it is a continuation of Quranic revelation.

Hadith #1

- This is the hadith of niyyah (intention). Niyyah is the heart and soul of our tradition in all matters of our affairs.
- This hadith is similarly placed in the beginning of all hadith books as well.
- Imam Bukhari related that if this hadith is suitable as the opening of Umar's sermon, then it is suitable at the beginning of his collection.
- According to Imam Shafi'i, "This hadith constitutes a third of all knowledge." While other scholars opined, "It is relevant to 70 chapters/types of knowledge."
- His teacher who narrated this hadith is Al-Humaydi Abdullah ibn Az-Zubayr, is a Qurayshi as well as a great scholar of Makkah. He was known to be one of the most knowledgeable of the Quraysh.

- Imam Bukhari chose this teacher because he wanted to follow the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ) by placing the Quraysh first.
- Narrated Al-'Abbas bin 'Abdul-Muttalib: "I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! Indeed the Quraysh have sat and spoken between themselves about the best of them, and they made your likeness as that of a palm tree in a wasteland.' So the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ الْخَلْقَ فَجَعَلَنِي مِنْ خَيْرِهِمْ مِنْ خَيْرِ فِرَقِهِمْ وَخَيْرِ الْفَرِيقَيْنِ ثُمَّ تَخَيَّرَ الْقَبَائِلُ فَجَعَلَنِي مِنْ خَيْرِ قَبِيلَةٍ ثُمَّ تَخَيَّرَ الْبَيُوتُ فَجَعَلَنِي مِنْ خَيْرِ بَيْوَتِهِمْ فَأَنَا خَيْرُهُمْ نَفْسًا وَخَيْرُهُمْ بَيْتًا .

'Indeed, Allah created the creation and made me [from the best of them,] from the best of their categories, and the best of the two categories (Arabs and Non-Arabs), then He chose between the tribes and made me from the best tribe, then He chose between the houses and made me from the best house. So I am the best of them in person and the best of them in house.' (Jami `at-Tirmidhi)

- Another subtlety is that it is befitting when speaking of wahy which descended in Makkah, that he begins with a narrator from Makkah. The next narrator is Sufyan ibn Uyayna who is a scholar from Madinah.
- This shows us that the scholars were very thoughtful. They came from a place of profound respect for the tradition and carefully curated their every move.
- Imam Bukhari was very meticulous and scrupulous with his compilation. He invested a lot of time and he is telling us a story through his collection.
- This is why Sahih al-Bukhari became the soundest text after Allah's Book as it stemmed from his pure intention.
- The cause of this revelation was due to a man in Makkah who intended to marry his beloved, Umm Qais, in Madinah. Thus, he made the intention to migrate at the same time. Hence, he was nicknamed Muhajir Umm Qais.
- Actions are contained in its entirety in the intention. Therefore, the scholars say, actions without intention are merely a habit. However, a habit performed with an intention is an ibadah (act of worship).
- All the rewards and stations we will attain in this life and in the afterlife is a function of niyyah. This is why we have to be very vigorous in our intention because Allah always knows.

- Migration had a higher level of reward compared to marriage. Therefore, the intention to migrate for marriage lowered the reward for this man.
- Imam Bukhari omits the text which is implicitly known. This hadith is mafhum; it is the implicit meaning of the text. He presents the hadith in this manner to drive the point in which he wants to highlight.
- This tells us that our journey in life as believers should entirely be revolved around the Prophet (ﷺ).
- If we don't love the Prophet (ﷺ) more than anything beloved to us, then our iman is incomplete. His standing should never be questioned and he should never be dismissed in our lives.
- The second part of the hadith indicates the lion's share of human pursuits in this world; wealth, career, family etc. Hence, the Prophet (ﷺ) highlights this fact so we will be careful of our pursuits which are other than for the sake Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ).
- First and foremost, we should never forget our identity as a servant of Allah. This is what we should be at all times as we are nothing without Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ).

Hadith #2

- The next concept Imam Bukhari brings into his book is revelation. This is because once we set the right intention to study, we must understand that it all began with revelation.
- The narrator of this hadith, Aisha RA, holds many sacred stations in our heritage; she was the beloved of the Prophet (ﷺ) and he would receive revelation on her bed, Allah relieved her from slander through revelation, and the Prophet (ﷺ) passed away in her arms and was buried in her room.
- Aside from being one of the top hadith narrators, Aisha RA was a scholar of the Qur'an and Sunnah.
- The man who asked the question, Al-Harith ibn Hisham, is the brother of Abu Jahl who became Muslim on Fatah Makkah, and he was a devout Muslim.
- This question shows us that the Companions were inquisitive and curious as to how revelation descended – it is indicative of a heart that really cares.

- This is the type of curiosity that brings ihsan in our growth. It teaches us that we should try developing a habit that is generally curious about the Prophet (ﷺ) and our tradition.
- The Companions were very keen to learn and know everything with meticulous detail. If we truly love the Prophet (ﷺ) in the same vein, we would want to know everything.
- The most intense form of revelation the Prophet (ﷺ) would receive is the ringing of the bell that he would be sweating due to its weightiness.
 - Allah said:

إِنَّا سَنُلْقِنَ عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا

'For' We will soon send upon you a weighty revelation. (73:5)

- This sound is a mode of communication from the angel designated for revelation to the Prophet (ﷺ) in which he understood.
- The most common form in which Jibril will come is in the form of a man; the most handsome Companion named Dihyah al-Kalbi, and this is the easiest form.
- No matter how intense the Prophet's experience was, there was no ambiguity in the divine message he received and he would understand it clearly.

Hadith #3

- Six months before the beginning of revelation, from Rabi al-Awwal until Ramadan, the Prophet (ﷺ) would see dreams when he sleeps at night and he will see it clearly coming to fruition in his wakeful state.
- The scholars say this was Allah's way of preparing him for the revelation to come, the Qur'an, which is a significant moment.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) loved going into khalwa (spiritual seclusion). According to scholars, this type of seclusion was a feature found of those in his lineage.
- He chose a location in the cave of Hira where he could see the ka'aba, and the nature of his ibadah was in the form of tadabbur and tafakkur; deep thoughts and contemplation in the reality of the Divine.
- There was no conclusive indication of his length of stay there. However, some say it was a few weeks or months.

- Whenever he longed for his loved ones, he would return home and connect with them. Then, after replenishing his sustenance, he would once again remain in seclusion.
- This shows us despite the Prophet's spiritual journey and connection to Allah, he was not devoid of his connection to the world.
- It teaches us that we should not deprive ourselves from being with our loved ones – these are essential and enriching components we need for us to continue our journey.

Classification of Hadith According to Strength and Weakness

- In our journey to Allah, we have to appreciate this vast legacy and vigorous process of preservation that Muslim scholarship has presented us with. It is something unique to the Qur'an and Sunnah.
- What distinguishes the Muslim ummah in the intellectual sphere is how we instituted certain methods and processes of verification.
- For example, when we say, "قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ", we can tell others to what level and degree we are saying this. This is the heart of hadith preservation.
- The scholars of hadith left a process of authentication that was unparalleled for civilizations before them and came after them.
- The way the scholars preserved the legacy of the Prophet (ﷺ) is similar to the principles of modern-day journalism, only that it was theorized before its existence. For example, there are different news anchors reporting with different methods.
- The process of hadith verification and classification is a very normal human process; there are rational grounds in which the scholars had divided them in, but they did this in a very sophisticated way and with very high standards.
- The scholars of hadith had the task of gathering the information and then applying the information.
- The process of gathering information requires:

- 1. Looking at the source
 - The scholars were very critical in how they would assess the information. Hence why the isnad is a beautiful concept for verification.
 - Abdullah ibn Mubarak said, "If it was not for isnad, everyone could say what they wanted."
 - In interrogating the source, they scrutinized two things:
 - #1. Adalah
 - The trustworthiness of the narrator based on their integrity and honesty
 - Whatever verification process is applied to the narrator is similarly applied to the chain. Meaning, the same process is carried out to examine the narrator's teacher going back to the Prophet (ﷺ).
 - The strength of the chain is its weakest link. Hence, they made sure each person heard from the other with continuity.
 - #2. Dabit
 - The competence of the narrator in terms of their memory/narrating with precision
 - Not every righteous or truthful person is a precise narrator. Hence, they looked for memory and accuracy. One's memory needs to be intact.
 - Good memory is being able to retain the information they heard. This could mean through their photographic memory or through the quality of their written material.
 - There was a combination of oral and verbal transmission. Hence, not all the material was written down.
- 2. Looking at the content
 - This pertains to examining the details of the information that is relayed and whether it has a significant implication.
 - How one determines the content is based on their understanding of the shariah.
- 3. Looking for corroboration
 - One's interrogation depends on the type of information that is received. Something that isn't severe does not require corroboration.

- A single piece of information requires corroboration. Meaning, if a person relays a hadith, they must have one source or multiple sources attesting to what they are saying.
- These three components put together is the method the scholars used to verify and classify hadith.
- Based on the principles above, the scholars classified hadith into three groups:
 - 1. Sahih (Authentic)
 - 2. Hasan (Sound/Fair)
 - 3. Daif (Weak)
- Five conditions that determines the classification of a hadith as Sahih, Hasan or Daif:
 - 1. Adalah (Reliability) – to ensure a person is upright, trustworthy, truthful etc.
 - 2. Dabit (Memory retention) – to ensure good memory
 - 3. Ittisal (Continuity in the chain of transmission) – to ensure those connected in the chain meet the first two conditions
 - 4. 'Adam al-shudhudh (Absence of anomaly) – to ensure corroboration
 - 5. 'Adam al-'ilal (Absence of hidden defects) – to ensure the content is fine
- A narration that meets all these five conditions is the highest of the spectrum – Sahih.
- A narration decreases on the spectrum depending on which five of these conditions it lacks.
- If it lacks a little in one of these conditions, it falls under the category of Hasan which is still deemed as reliable. However, if it is extremely questionable and does not meet the conditions, it decreases to Daif.
- In between these three categorizations, there are different levels.
 - For example, a Hasan hadith may increase in its spectrum due to corroborating evidence and be elevated to Sahih li Ghayrihi. This is because it was narrated through another chain that is similar or stronger than it.

- An example of a hadith that is Sahih li Ghayrihi:
 - Abu Hurairah narrated that: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

لَوْلَا أَنْ أَشْقَى عَلَى أُمَّتِي لَأُمْرَتُهُمْ بِالسُّوَالِ إِنَّ كُلَّ صَلَاةٍ

"If it were not that it would be difficult on my nation, then I would have ordered them to use the Siwak for each prayer." (Jami `at-Tirmidhi)
- Another example is a hadith narrated by weak narrators where the narrators made a lot of mistakes but was not accused as a liar. In addition, there are numerous supporting narrations from other narrators. It becomes Hasan li Ghayrihi instead of Daif.
- The lowest classification of Daif is a fabrication of hadith which is known as Mawdu'. These are words created or invented but is said to be the words of the Prophet (ﷺ).