

MIFTAAH HADITH INTENSIVE

Introduction

- We have to do our best to apply the shariah of Allah and establish Deen into our lives. This should be our ultimate objective in everything we do.
- There are different avenues to extract and understand the shariah of Allah. Four pathways to do this:
 - The Qur'an
 - The Sunnah
 - Consensus (ijma)
 - Analogical reasoning (qiyas)

Understanding the Authority of Hadith

- The tradition of hadith is established through the Qur'an. There are multiple verses in the Qur'an which establishes the Prophet's sunnah. Therefore, we cannot deny the authority of hadith.
- Allah has made it clear:

قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْهِ مَا حُمِّلَ وَعَلَيْكُمْ مَّا حُمِّلْتُمْ وَإِن
تَطِيعُوهُ تَهْتَدُوا

Say, "Obey Allah and obey the Messenger; but if you turn away - then upon him is only that [duty] with which he has been charged, and upon you is that with which you have been charged. And if you obey him, you will be [rightly] guided." (24:54)

- Allah also said:

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

But no! By your Lord, they will never be 'true' believers until they accept you 'O Prophet' as the judge in their disputes, and find no resistance within themselves against your decision and submit wholeheartedly. (4:65)

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ

Say, 'O Prophet,' "If you 'sincerely' love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins. (3:31)

- According to Ibn Hajar, more than sixty per cent of the details of our Deen derives from hadith, while the principles derive from the Qur'an. This is why the authority of the tradition of hadith should not be downplayed – it is a necessary component for every Muslim.
- Some companions of Mu'adh ibn Jabal said: When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) intended to send Mu'adh ibn Jabal to the Yemen, he asked:

" كَيْفَ تَقْضِي إِذَا عَرَضَ لَكَ قَضَاءٌ " . قَالَ أَقْضِي بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ . قَالَ " فَإِنْ لَمْ تَجِدْ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ " . قَالَ فَبِسُنَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ . قَالَ " فَإِنْ لَمْ تَجِدْ فِي سُنَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَلَا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ " . قَالَ أَجْتَهِدُ رَأْيِي وَلَا أَلُو . فَضَرَبَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ صَدْرَهُ وَقَالَ " الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي وَفَّقَ رَسُولَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ لِمَا يُرْضِي رَسُولَ اللَّهِ "

How will you judge when the occasion of deciding a case arises?

He replied: I shall judge in accordance with Allah's Book. He asked: (What will you do) if you do not find any guidance in Allah's Book? He replied: (I shall act) in accordance with the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).

He asked: (What will you do) if you do not find any guidance in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and in Allah's Book?

He replied: I shall do my best to form an opinion and I shall spare no effort.

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) then patted him on the breast and said: Praise be to Allah Who has helped the messenger of the Messenger of Allah to find something which pleases the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). (Sunan Abi Dawud)

- There are certain details that Allah has intentionally omitted in the Qur'an. These are the reasons:
 - Allah is the ultimate decider. Thus, He decides to reveal His word as He wishes to.
 - It is a manifestation of Allah's love and mercy for His creation, according to Ibn Hajar.
 - Denying anything in the Qur'an will make one leave the fold of Islam (i.e. justifying alcohol is halal). While denying anything from the hadith will make one sinful but it will not take them out of the fold of Islam (i.e. not accepting a certain hadith).
 - Keeping up with the commandments will be too overwhelming and it will be difficult for us to follow and abide. Hence, it was shared by the Prophet (ﷺ) in the hadith.
 - Allah's principles come from His Book. However, the details come from the Prophet (ﷺ), who understands it better than anyone else. Hadith supports the details that are missing in the Quran (i.e. the ways to perform our prayer).
- The Difference Between Sunnah and Hadith:
 - Every sunnah is a hadith. But not every hadith is a sunnah.
- There are two classifications of Sunnah:
 - 1. Sunnah al-huda – the sunnah directly related to our Deen – it is for guidance (e.g. praying two raka'ah before fajr)
 - Two categories of sunnah al-huda:
 - Muakaddah – highly emphasized (e.g. praying witr)
 - Ghair muakkadah – not highly emphasized (e.g. praying ishraq)
 - 2. Sunnah al-zawaid – sunnah that is related life; it does not pertain to anything to do with worship (e.g. emulating the way the Prophet (ﷺ) dressed etc.)

The Different Applications of Hadith

- Every hadith is acceptable until proven otherwise. Majority of hadith becomes a practiced tradition which is sunnah – meaning, it is something we should do.
- Based on different categorizations and ranking, a hadith can create different outcomes.

Outcomes of Affirmation

- 1. Wujub
 - It has the authority to make something fard/wajib (obligatory), which means that it is something we have to do, but only if it comes from the highest level of hadith.
 - Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,
لَوْلَا أَنْ أَشُقَّ عَلَى أُمَّتِي أَوْ عَلَى النَّاسِ لَأَمَرْتُهُمْ بِالسَّوَاكِ مَعَ كُلِّ صَلَاةٍ
"Were it not a burden upon my nation, I would have ordered them to use the toothstick before every prayer." (Sahih al-Bukhari)
- 2. Sunnah
 - It is anything the Prophet (ﷺ) said, did or approved of (verbally or silently).
- 3. Mustahab
 - It is anything that is encouraged and it is beloved to the Prophet (ﷺ), which means that it is something that is good for us to do.
 - Mustahab and nafl are used interchangeably. Mustahab pertains to general acts, while nafl is in relation to acts of worship.
 - For example, mustahab is drinking water in three sips, and performing the awwabin after maghrib salah is called nafl.
- 4. Mubah
 - It is able to show permissibility; when something is allowed/permissible to do.
 - Just because the Prophet (ﷺ) allowed something once or a few times, it does not make it sunnah.
 - Narrated Hudhaifa:

لَقَدْ أَتَى النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سُبَاطَةَ قَوْمٍ فَبَالَ قَائِمًا.

to the dumps of some (came (ﷺ) or the Prophet) coming (ﷺ) I saw Allah's Messenger people and urinated there while standing. (Sahih al-Bukhari)

Outcomes of Prohibition

- 1. Haram
 - It can make something haram, which means that it can make something impermissible.
- 2. Makruh
 - It can make something makruh (discouraged). This refers to something the Prophet (ﷺ) highly dislikes. Hence, it is better to avoid it.
 - The tiers of makruh are also based upon the strength of the hadith.
 - Makruh Tahrimi – Actions disliked in the same vein as haram actions
 - Makruh Tanzihi – Actions disliked in order to keep oneself pure; it is something that is not desirable though not sinful
- 3. Ghair Awla
 - This refers to actions which are not preferred; they are not halal nor haram, and not makruh. For example, haircuts that are uneven.

The Companions' Application of Hadith:

- The Companions used to accept and act upon any hadith that they heard.
- Sa'd Ibn Waqqas related that they used to not differentiate between the Qur'an and the Prophet's statement.
- They were always cautious and observed the way the Prophet (ﷺ) acted and reacted around them – they constantly carried the Sunnah in their lives.

The Science of Hadith

- Three main terms used for hadith:
 - 1. Hadith
 - It refers to something that is new; in comparison with the Qur'an
 - 2. Khabar
 - It means information; predominantly used for the statement of the Companions
 - 3. Athar
 - It refers to traces that go back to the Prophet (ﷺ); mainly statements of the tabi'i (followers after the Companions)

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- Definition of hadith:
 - A statement, action, tacit approval or characteristics attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ).
- Two branches of the science of hadith:
 - 1. Dirayatul hadith – the science of understanding hadith
 - Refers to understanding the content and context of the hadith; the application in our lives, the know-how of the hadith whether it is sunnah, mustahab etc.
 - This is learnt through the application of the Companions – how they acted upon the hadith in their lives and how we can apply it in the context of our time.
 - 2. Riwayatul hadith – the science of hadith transmission
 - Refers to the knowledge of hadith transmission which primarily has to deal with the chain of transmission (sanad).
 - For example, the chain of narrators, the credibility of narrators etc. according to the sanad.
- Every hadith has two components:
 - Sanad – the chain of transmission (a verified chain which links back to the Prophet (ﷺ))
 - Matn – the text of the hadith

Preservation and Compilation of Hadith

- There is no other religion that is immaculately preserved in all its aspects as our Deen
- When Allah perfected our Deen, He has made arrangements of its preservation until the Day of Judgment.
- After its completion and perfection, no alteration was made. Thus, nothing will change. This is why the Jews are envious as they did not have the seal of finality.
- None can compare to the preservation of Islam; the Qur'an and teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ). For example, the bible is continuously being revised until this day.
- Islam's history and chronology of the revelation of the Qur'an and teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ) set a new standard in the world of religion for what preservation is.

- Dhikr in this verse pertains to the preservation of the words of the Qur'an as well as its meanings.
- Allah safeguarded the Qur'an after revealing it. And hikmah in the Qur'an denotes the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ).
- The only way one can understand it, is through the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ)
- The Qur'an is brief and concise in its commandments and its details to implement it are only found in the Sunnah. For example, the general timing of salah is given in the Qur'an, but the details are in the hadith.
- The Prophet's teachings are comprehensive and they touch every facet of human life.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) does not bring teachings out of his own whim; it was revealed by Allah – it is unrevealed revelation. Allah confirms this in many places in the Qur'an.

Preservation of Hadith in the first era: Life of the Prophet (ﷺ)

- The preservation of hadith can be seen:
 - 1. In the practice of the Prophet (ﷺ)
 - 2. In the practice of those who took from the Prophet (ﷺ)
 - This refers to whoever who heard the Prophet (ﷺ) instructing or prohibiting etc. – they would implement it immediately. Hence, the preservation was immediate in terms of its actions and deeds.
 - This preservation is the practice of the people who came in contact with the Prophet (ﷺ) in his lifetime. Through their amal, people learned how the Qur'an is supposed to be implemented.
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) did not leave a society rich with knowledge that he passed on. He created a society that was designed to convey the knowledge he had passed on. Hence, the Companions were mandated to convey any information they received.
 - This knowledge is entrusted to us to transmit. This is why the Prophet (ﷺ) also made du'a for the one who conveys the knowledge, regardless of our level of understanding.

- On the other hand, he gave severe warnings. If one conceals the knowledge that they learn or lies about knowledge they did not receive, they will be punished.
- In the process of transmitting knowledge, we must be very careful and diligent in attributing anything to the Prophet (ﷺ). This is why the Companions were cautious when they relayed or narrated anything from the Prophet (ﷺ).
- For example, Abu Hurairah fainted due to fear of narrating something he heard directly from the Prophet (ﷺ) because he understood the cruciality of the task.
- The Companions had an understanding of the Deen – this stems from what they gained from the Prophet (ﷺ). Hence, their statements is the direct teachings from the Prophet (ﷺ).
 - Narrated Malik bin Huwairith: I came to the Prophet (ﷺ) with some men from my tribe and stayed with him for twenty nights. He was kind and merciful to us. When he realized our longing for our families, he said to us,

ارْجِعُوا فَكُونُوا فِيهِمْ وَعَلِّمُوهُمْ وَصَلُّوا، فَإِذَا حَضَرَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَلْيُؤَذِّنْ لَكُمْ أَحَدُكُمْ وَلْيُؤَمِّمْكُمْ أَكْبَرُكُمْ

"Go back and stay with your families and teach them the religion, and offer the prayer and one of you should pronounce the Adhan for the prayer when its time is due and the oldest one amongst you should lead the prayer." (Sahih al-Bukhari)'

- This shows us that the Prophet (ﷺ) not only imparted knowledge, but he made sure his Companions were demonstrating what they learned to others.
- For example, Ali RA demonstrated wudu to the people of Iraq. Thus, their teachings are connected directly to the Prophet's actions.
- The hadith is also preserved in very specific applications in fiqh. Our shariah is grounded in hadith – we cannot have shariah in the absence of hadith.
- The entire framework of Islam revolves around hadith. This is why there are various views in fiqh which stem from various hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ) whereby he performed specific actions at specific occasions.

- As a result, there are different madhahib; different schools of thoughts which all stem from the same teachings.
- 3. In the practices of the ummah
 - The preservation of hadith is through the continuation of the Deen for all of this time.
 - The implication of hadith is known; it is clear what is Islam and what isn't, what needs to be practiced or not.
 - The fact that the Deen has been consistently practiced is a manifestation of the preservation of hadith.
 - For the Companions, Allah has specifically commanded them to hold on to the practices.
 - The Companions loved the Prophet (ﷺ) more than they loved their most beloved people. Hence, they would go to great lengths to preserve anything that is affiliated with the Prophet (ﷺ).
 - For example, Abdullah ibn Umar used to specifically stop to pray at the spot in which the Prophet (ﷺ) incidentally stopped to pray on his way to hajj.

Methods of Preservation

- Tadwin al-hadith refers to the transmission and documentation of ahadith.
- There are two methods of preservation:
 - 1. By memory
 - This was a common method used in the past and a common feature of Arabs at that time.
 - They used to rely on their memory for preserving an immense amount of information all at once.
 - They used to preserve their genealogies of their tribes, bloodlines of their animals etc.
 - They had tremendous memorizing capacities.
 - They would be able to hear something once and remember it for the rest of their lives – they prided themselves on this.

- For example, once, Abdullah ibn Abbas heard a poem with seventy verses and it was committed to his memory.
- Qatadah relayed that whenever he heard something, it would be sealed in his memory. He never had to write down anything or have anything repeated.
- Imam Shafi'i said he never had to put black to white, meaning ink to paper. Whatever he wanted to memorize would be effortless and he frequently recited poetry from memory.
- Ubaidullah bin `Adi went to see Wahshi in Syria. Ubaidullah was wearing his turban and Wahshi could not see except his eyes and feet. Ubaidullah said, "O Wahshi! Do you know me?" Wahshi looked at him and then said, "No, by Allah! But I know that `Adi bin Al-Khiyar married a woman called Um Qital, the daughter of Abu Al-Is, and she delivered a boy for him at Mecca, and I looked for a wet nurse for that child. (Once) I carried that child along with his mother and then I handed him over to her, and your feet resemble that child's feet."
- Although some of them, like Abu Hurairah, had trouble memorizing, he was blessed with the miracle of the Prophet (ﷺ) to preserve his memory.
- This shows us that Allah has gifted them in this manner and therefore, they were able to memorize thousands of ahadith based on how much time they spent with the Prophet (ﷺ).
- Abu Hurairah became the leading transmitter of hadith which surpassed all the other Companions. Many have argued that he narrated too many hadith even though he knew the Prophet (ﷺ) for such a short time.
- Top narrators of hadith:
 - 1. Abu Hurairah: 5,374 narrations
 - 2. Abdullah Ibn Umar: 2,630 narrations
 - 3. Anas ibn Malik: 2,286 narrations
 - 4. Aisha: 2,210: narrations
 - 5. Abdullah ibn Abbas: 1,660 narrations
 - 6. Jabir ibn Abdullah: 1,540 narrations

- 7. Abu Said al-Khudri: 1,170 narrations
 - 8. Abdullah bin Mas'ud: 848 narrations
 - 9. Abdullah ibn 'Amru ibn Al-'Ash: 700 narrations
 - 10. Umar ibn al-Khattab 537: narrations
- 2. In writing:
- The Prophet (ﷺ) would instruct people to write down what they heard when they could not memorize or forget his narrations.
 - For example, he told his Companions to write down his khutbah for a new Muslim.
 - Abu Hurairah said: When Mecca was conquered, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) stood up. He (Abu Hurairah) then mentioned the sermon of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). He said: A man of Yemen, who was called Abu Shah, got up and said: Messenger of Allah! Write it for me. He said: “Write it for Abu Shah” (Sunan Abi Dawud)
 - Abu Rafi asked permission from the Prophet (ﷺ) if he could write down hadith, and he was granted permission. His collection was relied upon that Abdullah ibn Abbas would copy down his writings.
 - Abdullah ibn Amr reported:

كُنْتُ أَكْتُبُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَسْمَعُهُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أُرِيدُ حِفْظَهُ فَنَهَيْتَنِي قُرَيْشٌ وَقَالُوا أَتَكْتُبُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ تَسْمَعُهُ وَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَشَرٌ يَتَكَلَّمُ فِي الْغَضَبِ وَالرِّضَا فَأَمْسَكْتُ عَنِ الْكِتَابِ فَذَكَرْتُ ذَلِكَ لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَوْمَأَ بِأَصْبُعِهِ إِلَيَّ فِيهِ فَقَالَ أَكْتُبْ فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ مَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ إِلَّا حَقٌّ

I would write down everything I heard from the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, wanting to memorize it, but the Quraysh told me not to do it. They said, “Do you write down everything you hear from him? The Prophet is a human being! He speaks when he is angry and pleased.” So, I stopped writing things down. I mentioned it to the Prophet, and he pointed to his mouth and said, “Write, for by the One in whose hand is my soul, nothing comes out of it but the truth.” (Sunan Abi Dawud)

- Anas ibn Malik, who was the servant of the Prophet (ﷺ) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) told them to preserve knowledge by writing it down. Hence, whenever he heard hadith directly from the Prophet (ﷺ), he would write them down. He also advised his students, “Whenever you find people with knowledge, write down the knowledge they convey to you.”

- Some who dispute about hadith used the argument that the Prophet (ﷺ) forbade his Companions to write anything from him, based on the following hadith:

- Abu Sa'id Khudri reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

" لَا تَكْتُبُوا عَنِّي وَمَنْ كَتَبَ عَنِّي غَيْرَ الْقُرْآنِ فَلْيَمْحُهُ وَحَدِّثُوا عَنِّي وَلَا حَرَجَ وَمَنْ كَذَبَ عَلَيَّ - قَالَ هَمَّامٌ أَحْسِبُهُ قَالَ - مُتَعَمِّدًا فَلْيَتَّبِعُوا مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ . "

Do not take down anything from me, and he who took down anything from me except the Qur'an, he should efface that and narrate from me, for there is no harm in it and he who attributed any falsehood to me-and Hammam said: I think he also said:" deliberately"-he should in fact find his abode in the Hell-Fire. (Sahih Muslim)

- The background of this hadith:
 - Whenever revelation was revealed, the Prophet (ﷺ) would dictate it to his one of his scribes. They were then copied onto scrolls to be shared with others.
 - After transcribing, everyone would gather in the masjid to recite the newly revealed verses and the Prophet (ﷺ) would explain it.
 - In order to make sure the explanation of the Qur'an was separate from the hadith, the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited them to write it at that time – he did not want them to mix it up.
 - The prohibition to write hadith was later abrogated, although the Prophet (ﷺ) forbade it at an earlier time.
- The Companions would compile their writings and it was actively used and narrated at that time. Many are passed down and studied. For example:
 - Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As had a compilation of hadith called Sahifah al-Sadiqah (The Truthful Scripture). His son had passed away and therefore, after his demise, the compilation was passed down to his grandson, Shuayb, who later passed it down to his son, Amr. Hence, the muhaditheen agree this is a very strong chain.

- Similarly, there was a set of instructions pertaining to sadaqah which the Prophet (ﷺ) had dictated to be sent out to all his governors but he passed away before he could implement it. Nevertheless, Abu Bakr implemented it, followed by Umar etc. because the Companions had made copies and it was sent out to various areas where Muslims ruled. Today, we find these instructions quoted in various books of hadith; Sahih al-Bukhari, Al-Tirmidhi etc.
- Amr ibn Hazm was sent to Yemen while dictating instructions for him to implement. He had his own compilation. The Sahifah Amr ibn Hazm which was widely known at that time. Umar would issue rulings based upon it. Today, we can find quotations of it in existing books of hadith; Sunan an-Nasai etc.
- Other Companions who had their own compilations were Abdullah ibn Abbas, Jabir ibn Abdullah, Samura ibn Jundub, Muadh ibn Jabal, Abdullah ibn Umar, Sa'd ibn Ubadah, among others.
- The Companions would often reference these compilations, while the tabi'i would travel to hear these narrations from the Companions, and if they allowed, they would make a copy for themselves.
- The hadith was preserved at many different levels simultaneously. The ummah felt the weight of their duty to pass down the tradition, and they were very committed to it.
 - For example, Hammam ibn Munabbih was one of the students of Abu Hurairah. Before Abu Hurairah's passing, he recited every narration he learnt and confirmed the authenticity of his narrations. Hammam had his own Sahifah which became sought after.
 - Imam Ahmad later produced in his Musnad, Hammam's Sahifah almost in its entirety. The original manuscript later fell into the hands of the Orientalists, which can be found in the University of Berlin.
 - One of the Muslim scholars published a copy of Hammam's Sahifah and now it is widely available. This is one of the obvious proofs that hadith was preserved from the earliest era.

- The Companions were truly passionate and devoted to preserving hadith; they were followers unlike any other followers of prophets before. Their amal became ilm for those who came after them and they disseminated knowledge to the world. If they did not fulfill their duty, we would not have Islam in its preserved form today – this is an immense legacy.

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 وَاجِدَهُ . ثُمَّ اسْتَأْذَنَ الثَّانِيَةَ فَقَالَ عُمَرُ ثِنْتَانِ . ثُمَّ اسْتَأْذَنَ الثَّلَاثَةَ فَقَالَ عُمَرُ ثَلَاثٌ . ثُمَّ انْصَرَفَ فَاتَّبَعَهُ فَرَدَّهُ فَقَالَ إِنْ كَانَ هَذَا شَيْئًا حَفِظْتَهُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَهِيَ وَإِلَّا فَلَأَجْعَلَنَّكَ عِظَةً . قَالَ أَبُو سَعِيدٍ فَأَتَانَا فَقَالَ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " الْإِسْتِئْذَانُ ثَلَاثٌ " . قَالَ فَجَعَلُوا يَضْحَكُونَ - قَالَ - فَقُلْتُ أَتَاكُمْ أَخُوكُمُ الْمُسْلِمُ قَدْ أَفْرَعَتْ تَضْحَكُونَ أَنْطَلِقُ فَأَنَا شَرِيكَكَ فِي هَذِهِ الْعُقُوبَةِ . فَأَتَاهُ فَقَالَ 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 يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ﴿٤﴾

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 فِرْقِهِمْ وَخَيْرِ الْفَرِيقَيْنِ ثُمَّ تَخَيَّرَ الْقَبَائِلَ فَجَعَلَنِي مِنْ خَيْرِ قَبِيلَةٍ ثُمَّ تَخَيَّرَ الْبُيُوتَ فَجَعَلَنِي مِنْ خَيْرِ بُيُوتِهِمْ 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 سَنُلْقِي 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. Dabt
 - 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. Dabt (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 أَشُقَّ عَلَى أُمَّتِي لِأَمْرَتُهُمْ بِالسَّوَاكِ عِنْدَ كُلِّ 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).

Sahih Bukhari: Chapter on The Beginning of Revelation (Cont.)

Hadith #3

- This hadith tells us how we should receive revelation. When the Prophet (ﷺ) first receives divine revelation and he is told to read, he negates himself: مَا أَنَا "I am not".
- This indicates an extremely essential adab when engaging the Qur'an. We have to humble ourselves in front of it instead of projecting our collective opinions on the Qur'an if we want to receive nur, hidayah, shifa etc. from it.
- When we negate ourselves and submit to the fact that "I am not" we are embodying the Prophet (ﷺ) and his orientation. This is contradictory to Iblis whose insistence is upon "I am" due to his lack of willingness to submit.
- The "I am" principle denotes a false sense of supremacy and it is a pathway of self-destruction. It was what brought Iblis to his exile and made him the accursed.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) enjoyed being in the cave of Hira, but he was suddenly constricted after facing this intense experience. These constrictions represent a few things:
 - 1. Physical submission:
 - He could not move his body and it entered him into a totality of submission in his servanthood.
 - This is what we should aspire to be, ibad al-Rahman.

- Intellectual submission:
 - He acknowledged his incapability to fulfill the command of Allah.
 - Imam Ghazali says the command to read is reading the reality as it is; that Allah is al-Haqq.
- 3. Spiritual submission:
 - He became fearful, that even his place of comfort became a place of fear.
 - The reality of the divine is from the divine. Hence, the reality of our soul is that it cannot be devoid of Allah.
- The secret to opening the door of the divine was finally revealed after three times. The key is in ب - whereby everything is by Allah; in the name of Allah.
- This is an acknowledgement of لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ, "There is no power and no strength except with Allah."
- We cannot function without Allah and we are insignificant in our essence. The reality of ourselves is that we are nothing but a clinging clot.
- The only real dignity is the pathway to Allah, as He is The One that dignifies. He is Al-Akram (the Most Generous) to afford us dignity.
- The bond between the Prophet (ﷺ) and Khadija RA was unbreakable. She was a beloved wife who supported him as a seeker at this time.
- The experience was unsettling for the Prophet (ﷺ) that he became worried about himself. Scholars say, the first step in the station of a seeker is discomfort.
- Most people fail as they are unable to withstand the agitation of this station. Nevertheless, we have to embrace it and push through it.
- Khadija referenced the Prophet's characteristics at the beginning of revelation. This is important to highlight as our character represents who we are.
- She also displayed the spirit of helping others. To genuinely come to the aid of others in their times of hardship is to feel for them deeply in our hearts, and this is a heavy burden to carry.
- Khadija's cousin, Waraqa, was a learned person who was able to read and write in both Hebrew and Arabic. This shows us that he was able to comprehend the previous scriptures.

- The interaction between them is filled with kindness, respect and the usage of beautiful language.
- النَّامُوسُ – Means the carrier of secrets; referring to Jibril
- The scholars say, at this time, the Prophet (ﷺ) is a Nabi and not yet a Rasul. His Messengership began with the revelation of Surah Al-Muddaththir.
- The Prophet's shocked reaction that his people would turn against him tells us the reality that when Islam enters into a space, it problematizes the space – it shifts the status quo.
- In presenting Islam, we are bound to face rejection and dislike from others. Hence, we should not be obsessed with the notion of being socially validated or accepted.
- Islam is what it is, we have to embrace it. Our mission is to preserve, convey, and represent the Deen with dignity.

Hadith #4

- This hadith tells us about fatrat al-wahy, the temporary cessation of revelation. It was a period of time that caused the Prophet (ﷺ) a lot of agony after tasting the sweetness of revelation.
- In the cave of Hira, the Prophet (ﷺ) did not see Jibril in his full form. However, when Jibril appeared this time, he saw him sitting on a chair between the heavens and the earth.
- Revelation was temporarily cut-off because the Prophet (ﷺ) did not say insha'Allah as he had been accustomed to receiving it upon being questioned.
- This teaches us that we should never lose sight as everything happens by the will of Allah.
- When we are being questioned, it is also part of our tradition to say "لا أدري" "I don't know".
- We have to acknowledge our ignorance. Imam Malik once answered 36 questions saying, "I don't know."
- Beyond this, it is important to study and learn in order not to stay ignorant. This is why اِفْرَأْ is not a command to profess our knowledge. It is a command to increase and acquire knowledge.

Narrator Criticism

- The science of narrator criticism refers to the process of determining the reliability of a narrator. It ultimately boils down to two aspects; *adalah* and *dabt*.
- The scholars of hadith documented everything that they could about a narrator. They used four methods to assess the reliability of a narrator and determine their standing:
 - 1. Observation
 - They would spend time with the person and observe his everyday life.
 - 2. Asking questions
 - Through personal interrogation, they would ask questions to see if the person is making up information.
 - 3. Asking people around
 - By using existing information about the person, they would check with others if they see discrepancies, if the person cannot be trusted etc.
 - 4. Comparative analysis
 - Verifying the person's track record through their narrations and making a cross analysis.
 - For example, they would categorize the students or the source into different groups and then compare against the narrations of those who are reliable to determine if the person is acceptable.
 - This was the most frequently used method.
- The scholars have gone to great lengths to make sure all lives of these narrators are documented. Once they went through this process, they documented it in books of *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl*.
- These books are the largest repositories of Islam; they were based on different genres and categorizations.
- Some methods of compilation for *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* books were based on: reliable/unreliable narrators, different regions, compilation of narrators from different books etc.

- In the 300s, the science of al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl began. Ibn Abi Hatim al-Razi who was born in Rayy (north-eastern Iran) saw the gaps that needed to be filled in this science.
- Ibn Abi Hatim al-Razi devised a dictionary of hierarchy in terms of reliability and unreliability narrators. Hence, this was when al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl was cemented.
- There are three aspects of al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl:
 - Terms used for discussing narrators
 - Criteria
 - Process of critique and validation
- Expressions of accreditation:
 - 1. Thiqaḥ (Reliable), Mutqin (Expert), Thabt (Precise)
 - This is the highest tier of reliability
 - Narrations can be adduced in legal discourse
 - 2. Sadiq (Truthful), Mahalluhu al-sidq (His place is of truth), La ba's bihi (No problem)
 - Narrations will be recorded and examined
 - 3. Shaykh (Venerable)
 - Narrations will be recorded and examined, but status is below the sound category
 - 4. Salih al-hadith (Suitable in hadith)
 - Narrations will be recorded for consideration
- Expressions of criticism:
 - 1. Layyin al-hadith (Lenient in hadith)
 - Narrations will be recorded and examined for consideration
 - 2. Laysa bi qawi (Not strong)
 - Like the first in writing of narrations but lower status
 - 3. Da'if al-hadith (Weak in hadith)
 - Below the second and the narrations will be considered
 - 4. Matrūk al-hadith (Abandoned in hadith), Dhahib al-hadith (Unreliable in hadith), Khadhab (liar)
 - This is the worst level
 - Unreliable and narrations will not be recorded

Analysis of Counter Arguments

- In the year 400-500, all the hadith narrations and their chains of transmission have been preserved in books of hadith.
- According to scholars of hadith, the Companions are exempt from the process of verification – and this made them all reliable narrators. However, there were contentions over this matter.
- The major contentions were:
 - 1. The presence of hypocrites
 - 2. The Companions would criticize one another
 - 3. The maxim defies human nature
 - 4. Some Companions reportedly committed major offences

Types of Weak Ahadith

- Common misconceptions about da'if hadith:
 - It is baseless
 - It is an evil that has crept into society
 - Any books featuring da'if hadith should be shunned
 - Anyone who narrates da'if hadith should be shunned
- There are different levels of weaknesses in a da'if hadith. A hadith that is da'if doesn't necessarily mean that the narration is weak.
- A hadith may be considered weak due to three things:
- #1. The weakness of its narrators
 - Their character
 - Their capacity and ability to accurately transmit the hadith
 - Despite the weakness of its narrators, it can be strengthened through other narrations.
 - There are different approaches taken by scholars based on al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl, which changes the outcome of a hadith. And some scholars were stricter than others in ruling out a narrator.
 - Criticism of a narrator are mainly based on:
 - Adalah
 - If they are a good practicing Muslim; did they adhere to the tenets of Islam
 - If they had the correct belief system

- If they had accurate speech; were they truthful and honest
- Dabt
 - If they were alert and able to capture exactly as it was transmitted
 - If they narrated with precision and accuracy as it was narrated
 - Contention arises when the mistakes made are frequent; it shows that their memory is unreliable and their documentations are inaccurate.
- #2. The relationship between the narrators and the teacher
 - There is a missing link between the narrator and teacher; one or more names were not mentioned.
 - Have they met each other and at what phase did they meet etc.
- #3. The wording of the hadith
 - The wording of the narration is completely different that it cannot be reconciled with other narrations.

Scholars' Approach on Weak Ahadith

- There are differences in opinion with regards to da'if hadith. However, the opinion of one scholar does not break consensus, nor does it change the view about something.
- Imam Nawawi summarizes the collective approach to da'if hadith:
 - It is permissible to the scholars of hadith as well as other scholars of Deen, to use a lenient approach in matters of da'if hadith provided that it is not fabricated.
 - It is permissible to act upon da'if hadith because the message it is conveying will be well-established in Deen and well-known to the scholars of Deen – that the teaching has a strong basis in Islam.
- Ibn al-Salah makes a clear distinction between fabricated (mawdu') hadith and weak (da'if) hadith:
 - The worst of all hadith is the fabricated one. For anyone who knows that it is fabricated, it is not halal for them to narrate it in any context except with the disclaimer to explain that it is fabricated.

- As for other hadith that fall into the category of da'if, in which there is a strong possibility that the matter that is conveyed is actually true, it is permissible to narrate such ahadith in matters of targhib (virtues of good deeds) and tarhib (warnings to abstain from bad deeds).
- This shows us that the practical implementation of weak ahadith is permissible in the context of encouragement of virtuous deeds as well as abstaining from bad deeds.
- With regards to rulings for halal and haram, or necessitating something as fard or wajib, we do not rely on da'if hadith. Nevertheless, for rulings on makruh, mustahab and masnun, da'if hadith have been used.
- Da'if hadith have also been relied upon in matters in which there are no rulings found in sahih hadith. This is because it has some basis in the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ).
- It is better to take a hadith that is weak in terms of its chain, but in which its meaning and ruling that it is conveying is absolutely sound rather than take someone's opinion.
- The da'if hadith can be implemented if it is supported in the usul of Deen and other hadith. Therefore, da'if hadith should not be shunned.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

مَنْ حَدَّثَ عَنِّي بِحَدِيثٍ يُرَى أَنَّهُ كَذِبٌ فَهُوَ أَحَدُ الْكَاذِبِينَ

"Whoever narrates a Hadith from me thinking it to be false, then he is one of the two liars." (Either the one who invents a lie or the one who repeats it; both are liars). (Sahih Muslim)

- Based on the above mentioned hadith, Imam Tirmidhi asked his teacher, Imam Darimi, who was a great scholar of al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl: "If someone narrates hadith knowing there is a flaw in the chain, will he be included in the warning of the hadith?"
- Imam Darimi responded, "No. The context of the hadith is that someone narrates a hadith and there is no known basis of the narration but he goes and narrates it anyway."
- According to Ibn Taymiyyah, "If a hadith is da'if and it has no known basis in the source of it, but the primary teaching of the hadith is well-established or it falls under one of the principles of Deen, then it is permissible to narrate and practice."

- In their fiqh approach, both Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal and Imam Abu Hanifa, preferred taking a weak hadith over someone else's opinion.
- The greatest muhadditheen who were most stringent in ilm ar-rijāl were very lenient when it came to using da'if hadith for virtues and warnings. These are some examples:

- Abdullah ibn Mubarak, whose narrations are hujjah and is one of the scholars of al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl, compiled various narrations from sahih to da'if hadith in his book, Kitab az-Zuhd. He justified its usage in targhib and tarhib.
- Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal in his renowned Musnad and Kitab az-Zuhd similarly gathered narrations from sahih to da'if but none of the hadith pertained to aqaid, halal and haram. They were simply about virtues.
- Imam Abu Dawud in his Sunan brought various ahadith into his collection. His objective was to bring any hadith that is used as evidence by one of the fuqaha.
- Imam Bukhari, whose book is the gold standard for what is sahih, in his book Al-Adab Al-Mufrad, compiled ahadith about etiquettes and hukuk and used many da'if hadith.
- Other scholars who have compiled books with da'if hadith: Yahya ibn Ma'in, Ibn Abi Dunya, Ibn Taymiyyah, among others.

Dealing with Problematic Hadith

- Problematic hadith:
 - It means apparently problematic – For example, it may seem unscientific, outdated, illogical etc.
 - It is any objection anyone has against hadith and anything one struggles to understand about a hadith that they come across.
- Reasons people may find issues with a hadith:
 - 1. Unscientific

- Narrated Abu Dharr:

كُنْتُ مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ عِنْدَ غُرُوبِ الشَّمْسِ فَقَالَ " يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ أَتَدْرِي أَيْنَ تَغْرُبُ الشَّمْسُ ". قُلْتُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ. قَالَ " فَإِنَّهَا تَذْهَبُ حَتَّى تَسْجُدَ تَحْتَ الْعَرْشِ، فَذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى {وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَهَا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ}"

Once I was with the Prophet (ﷺ) in the mosque at the time of sunset. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "O Abu Dharr! Do you know where the sun sets?" I replied, "Allah and His Apostle know best." He said, "It goes and prostrates underneath (Allah's) Throne; and that is Allah's Statement:-- 'And the sun runs on its fixed course for a term (decreed). And that is the decree of All-Mighty, the All-Knowing....' (36.38) (Sahih al-Bukhari)

- 2. Absurd

- Narrated `Aisha:

أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَزَوَّجَهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ سِتِّ سِنِينَ، وَبَنَى بِهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ تِسْعِ سِنِينَ. قَالَ هِشَامٌ وَأُنْبِئْتُ أَنَّهَا كَانَتْ عِنْدَهُ تِسْعَ سِنِينَ.

that the Prophet (ﷺ) married her when she was six years old and he consummated his marriage when she was nine years old. Hisham said: I have been informed that `Aisha remained with the Prophet (ﷺ) for nine years (i.e. till his death). (Sahih al-Bukhari)

- 3. Impossible

- When the Prophet (ﷺ) was taken up to the heavens on his night journey, Malik bin Sasaa narrated that he (ﷺ) said:

ثُمَّ أُتِيَتْ بِدَابَّةٍ أَبْيَضٍ يُقَالُ لَهُ الْبُرَاقُ فَوْقَ الْجَمَارِ وَدُونَ الْبَغْلِ يَقَعُ خَطْوُهُ عِنْدَ أَقْصَى طَرْفِهِ فَحُمِلْتُ عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ انْطَلَقْنَا حَتَّى أَتَيْنَا السَّمَاءَ

I was then brought a white beast which is called al-Buraq, bigger than a donkey and smaller than a mule. Its stride was as long as the eye could reach. I was mounted on it, and then we went forth till we reached the lowest heaven. (Sahih Muslim)

- 4. Contradictory

- Standing while drinking

- Forbidden: Anas reported Allah's Apostle (ﷺ) disapproved the drinking of water while standing. (Sahih Muslim)
- Recommended: Ibn Abbas reported: I served (water of) Zamzam to Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), and he drank it while standing (Sahih Muslim)

- Every hadith whose content is seen as problematic has a specific explanation. In dealing with such issues, we have to give the hadith a second thought.
- Two basic things we should do:
 - 1. Ensure its authenticity
 - We must analyze the hadith to determine its authenticity and ensure it is not fabricated.
 - 2. Ensure a holistic understanding
 - Ali ibn al-Madini said, "Any hadith, until you gather all relevant hadith and build an entire picture, you will never appreciate and understand what is happening."
 - This means we should gather all the different routes of the hadith then see if there are different versions that can resolve the problem.
- Principles used when dealing with contentious hadith:
 - 1. The limits of human reason and experience
 - We have to stop essentializing/universalizing our own experience. Each and every one of us has a world view. There are a lot of assumptions that we take in without questioning.
 - Above our five senses, we have rationality. Therefore, we need to make some deductions and think about it.
 - Using the five senses in our realm, we should rationalize – there is the ghayb and nothing in our tradition or shariah is irrational.
 - Once we realize the subjectivity of our experience and understand the objectivity of the shariah as a governing force, we will read the hadith in a different light.
 - There are things in this world that are beyond our comprehension.
 - 2. The importance of contextualization
 - Our understanding of what's right and wrong should not be imposed on the past. We have to appreciate the context.
 - We cannot superimpose our cultural norms and project on the past society – it is unfair.
 - Understanding the Prophet's life will help contextualize hadith and objections people may have.

- For example, the hadith concerning the Prophet's marriage to Aisha at her young age. It was common in pre-modern society and the marital ethics of the Prophet (ﷺ) was done in a certain context. Hence, we should not be quick to judge after reading a hadith.
- 3. The usage of figurative speech (Al-Haqiqah wal-Majaz)
 - When the Prophet (ﷺ) speaks in Arabic, there is a literal way to understand it, yet there is majaz (metaphor) and forms of mubalagha (exaggeration, hyperbole).
 - If we are too literal, we will not be able to appreciate the beauty of the message that is being delivered. One should not get hung up on the words used.
 - We should not read the Qur'an and hadith from a materialistic lens.
 - Science is not the objective of the shariah.
 - For example, the hadith about the sun setting earlier, the Prophet (ﷺ) was trying to make Abu Dharr appreciate that the beauty of the sun is from Allah – we should not see the forest for the trees.
- 4. The need to distinguish between impossibility and unlikelihood
 - Impossibility vs Improbability: Something impossible can never come into existence; it is something that does not make sense. While something improbable or unlikely; it is a subjective assessment.
 - For example, the hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ) flying on the buraq. It is not physically impossible but it is improbable.
 - A lot of things that people think are impossible are actually improbable.
 - Our inability to make sense of improbability stems from our lack of knowledge and weakness. There is so much of the world we have yet to know and grasp.
 - Anything is possible with time and technology, and there is likelihood that it will happen – the same can be said about the akhirah.
 - When we have this outlook and consider these perspectives, over time, things will begin to make more sense and our perspective will change.

Collective Reliability of the Companions (Adalah al-Sahabah)

- The default view on Companions is that they hold a special place in Islam as mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah.
- There were 2,500 Companions who dedicated their lives to narrating and transmitting hadith.
- From amongst the 50 prolific narrators of hadith from the Companions, their lives were well-documented. Their lives bear testimony to their reliability.
- These are reasons why the Companions are unverified as narrators:
 - They are verified in the Qur'an and Sunnah
 - Allah praises the Companions and He was pleased with them.
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) said never to criticize his Companions.
 - Anyone who studies about the Companions' lives know that they had no ulterior motive or incentive to lie, make mistakes, or make up information
 - The Companions put their lives at the forefront of Islam and were the first to sacrificed everything for the Prophet (ﷺ) and Allah.
 - The concept of corroborations also existed amongst the Companions
 - When one of them was narrating, others were also there and they could determine based on corroboration.
 - The Companions came from an oral tradition and had strong memory
 - They are unlikely to falter in their memory as they had impeccable memory; they even memorized their genealogy etc.
 - When they relate information, it is firsthand information. The chances of them forgetting something they heard is highly unlikely – they were there.
 - When the Prophet (ﷺ) taught hadith, he would repeat it at least three times, and they would retain it. They then revised and reiterated it to the other Companions before transmitting it.
- As for the presence of hypocrites during the time of the Companions, they were well-known and their lives were also documented. For example, Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul, it is very clear that he is a hypocrite.

- Just by the basic study of their lives, one is able to identify who is a hypocrite. For example, the hypocrites were those who never participated in the battles that took place.
- The bigger picture in accepting a hadith is in viewing the shariah holistically and having an understanding of what Islam is. If it is aligned with the shariah, then it is accepted.

Classification According to Authority

- This classification is based on the primary narrator of the statement. There are four types:
 - 1. Hadith Qudsi (from Allah)
 - A narration from the Prophet (ﷺ) attributed to Allah
 - It is subject to the same critique as other ahadith
 - It is the highest form of hadith
 - Difference between Qur'an and Hadith Qudsi:
 - Qur'an is the uncreated speech of Allah; Hadith Qudsi is the speech of the Prophet (ﷺ) used to express meanings inspired by Allah
 - Reciting Qur'an is a act of worship that is rewarded; Hadith Qudsi is not
 - Qur'an is mutawatir (divinely protected); Hadith Qudsi is not
 - 2. Hadith Marfu' (from the Prophet (ﷺ))
 - A saying, action, approval or characteristic directly attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ)
 - It is the highest raised hadith.
 - Four types of hadith marfu':
 - Statements – what the Prophet (ﷺ) said; this is the strongest type
 - Actions – what the Prophet (ﷺ) did
 - Tacit approvals – what the Prophet (ﷺ) approved/disapproved
 - Characteristics – the Prophet's attributes
 - 3. Hadith Mawquf (from a Companion)
 - A saying, action, approval that is attributed to a Companion.
 - It means that the chain of narrators stops at the Companions.
 - This type of hadith can be a proof in the absence of hadith marfu'.

- If there were two different opinions present between the Companions – we accept both.
- If there were something the Companion agreed upon – the ummah will agree upon.
- Sometimes the Companions were weary of attributing a hadith to the Prophet (ﷺ) out of fear of misquoting him. Hence, they attribute it to themselves.
- Three types of hadith mawquf:
 - Statements; what a Companion said
 - Actions; what a Companion did
 - Tacit approvals; what a Companion approved/disapproved
- 4. Hadith Maqtu' (from a Successor)
 - A saying or action that is attributed to a Successor
 - Their statements are important as it was from the Companions.
 - Majority are commentary on hadith – they were not laws, but reminders.
 - This type of hadith can be a proof in the absence of hadith marfu' and hadith mawquf.

Hadith and Fiqh

- There are tiers of hadith that we can use to derive rulings of fiqh.
- Tier #1: Mutawātir
 - A hadith that is classified as mutawātir stands on the same footing as the Qur'an in its authority.
 - All scholars agree that a mutawātir hadith is qaṭī (definitive) in terms of its sourcing and is used to derive rulings from.
 - It is irrevocable; its words do not change. Even if the words may differ, the meaning is the same.
 - It has the power to abrogate a verse of the Qur'an.
 - For example, the timing of salah was established through a tawatur hadith.
- Tier #2: Mashhūr
 - A hadith that is classified as mashhūr is conveyed by two or three or more narrators in every generation; it is a famous narration.
 - It is rarely contentious but it is not mutawātir. Scholars agree that a mashhūr hadith ḡannī in terms of its sourcing, meaning, it is probable, but not certain.

- Tier #3: Ahad
 - It is a solitary hadith also known as Khabar al-Wahid; one narrator in every generation.
 - A majority of scholars will have disagreements in terms of deriving rulings of fiqh from an ahad hadith.
 - The narrations are at the same level of authority but it boils down to giving preference of one over the other due to principles.
 - An example of Khabar al-Wahid:
 - Abu Hurairah reported the Prophet (ﷺ) saying, “When a dog drinks out of a vessel belonging to any of you, he must wash it seven times”. (Bukhari and Muslim)
 - Despite this hadith, there are other narrations that state it should be washed three times. In addition, the amal of the Companions was to purify themselves three times.
 - Nevertheless, the hadith is still accepted and can be applied. It falls under the category of istihbab, mandub or mubah. Meaning, it is encouraged to be more cautious and wash seven times.
 - This hadith was narrated after the impermissibility of dogs was established. However, the last ruling of the Prophet (ﷺ) was to wash it three times.
 - Each madhhab has different conditions when basing their fiqh off its narrations.
 - Imam Abu Hanifa has three conditions:
 - That the narrator does not practice in contradiction to what he is narrating.
 - For example, Abu Hurairah narrates a hadith about washing the bowl that a dog drank out of seven times but Abu Hurairah himself only washed it three times.
 - That the subject matter of the hadith is not something applicable to most people/happens often.
 - If something related to religious matters is narrated by one companion, but it is relevant to everyone, then it creates some doubt. For example, the hadith of Ibn Umar about raising hands in salah.
 - That the narration does not contradict the general principles of the shariah if the narrator is not a faqih.

- For example, reciting the Surah al-Fatiha in salah. The Prophet (ﷺ) consistently recited it in his prayers and therefore, it is an established practice which cannot be contradicted. However, it can be supplemented as the Qur'an says, "So recite what is easy from it and establish prayer (73:20)."
- Imam Shafi'i has four conditions:
 - The narrator is reliable.
 - The narrator is knowledgeable about the matter he is narrating.
 - The narrator has precise recollection of the narration.
 - The narration is not in contrast to other widely narrated ahadith.

Mishkat al-Masabih: Heart Softeners

- Mishkat al-Masabih is one of the fundamental books of hadith which contains approximately 6,000 narrations.
- Some scholars are of the opinion that those who master this book in detail would not need to study hadith beyond it.
- It is a comprehensive selection of hadith and it is a combination of two books.
- Imam Baghawi originally wrote Al-Masabih:
 - He categorized the narrations into two sections: Al-Fasl al-Awwal (first section) collected from the Sahihayn and labeled them sahih (the authentic), and in Al-Fasl al-Thani (second section) those collected from the other books (Ad-Darimi, Ahmad, Al-Bayhaqi and others).
 - He did not reference the source.
 - He did not mention the isnad of the hadith.
- Imam Khatib at-Tabrizi refined the book by making three major changes:
 - He referenced the source for every hadith in the book (i.e. Bukhari, Muslim etc.)
 - He added a name of the Companion who narrated in the sanad.
 - He added a third section which consisted of athar (from the sahabah and tabi'un) and other ahadith that he felt fit into the chapter.
- There are many weak narrations and some questionable narrations in it, but this book gained the acceptance of the scholars and is cherished thoroughly in the Muslim world.

- Many commentaries were written on it. The most famous Arabic commentary is Mirqat Al-Mafatih Sharh Mishkat Al-Masabih by Al-Mula 'Ali Al-Qari. Al-Hadis is an English translation and commentary of Mishkat Al-Masabih by Maulana Fazlul Karim.
- Both Imam Baghawi and Imam at-Tabrizi were fiqh scholars of the Shafi'i madhhab.
- Kitab ar-Riqaq refers to Heart Softeners. These are hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ) that would soften the heart – meaning, they pertain to turning away from worldly pleasures and desiring for the Hereafter.

Hadith #1

- There are many blessings we have from Allah and if we were to enumerate them, it would be impossible.
- It is through the act of gratitude that we will be able to fulfill the right due to Allah for the blessings He has showered upon us.
- Imam Ghazali points out that in order for gratitude for Allah's blessings to be complete there are three stages:
 - 1. Ilm (Knowledge)
 - Having the knowledge or acknowledging that every blessing is from Allah.
 - The first blessing and sign of Allah's blessing is that He has given us the ability to recognize His blessings.
 - 2. Hal (State)
 - Once a person acknowledges that the blessing is from Allah, they will experience a state of gratitude.
 - 3. Amal (Deeds)
 - After the first two, now a person is able to express gratitude through their actions.
 - This can be expressed in three ways:
 - Shukr bi'l qalb: Gratitude expressed by our inner feeling of what is in our heart.
 - Shukr bi'l lisan: Gratitude expressed by tongue. For example, saying 'Alhamdulillah'.
 - Shukr bi'l-badan wa'l-arkan: Gratitude expressed through the body and limbs in our good deeds and actions.

- Acknowledging Allah's blessings requires dhikr. When a person remembers Allah frequently, then it becomes easier for them to connect everything around them in the universe to Allah.
- This is why in the Qur'an and Sunnah, dhikr and shukr are frequently mentioned side by side. Only then can we perfect our worship.
- The two blessings narrated in this hadith:
 - **صِحَّة** Good health: We have to value our wealth. When we have good health, we often waste it.
 - **فَرَاغ** Free time: We have to value our time. If you cannot take control of our time, we are wasting our most important asset that you need on this journey.
- We can indulge in some luxury and leisure but it shouldn't be what defines us.
- There is a connotation in this hadith of a transaction that when it comes to the interaction that people have with these blessings, they are losing out on that transaction.
- People only understand the value of a blessing once it no longer exists. Hence, these are reminders to never take our blessings for granted.
- The chapter begins with this hadith to help us draw closer to softening the heart. And the vessel for this change to occur is within our time and our health.

Hadith #2

- If we were to compare all the material this dunya has to offer to all the blessings and promises Allah has stored in the Hereafter, the example would be like someone dipping their finger into the sea – the moisture will be little due to the vastness and depth of the ocean.
- This hadith reminds us not to over invest in the material world. Those who commit to the dunya, it comes at a cost.
- Everything that distracts us from Allah is considered ghaflah. However, if the material world takes us to Allah, it is praiseworthy.
- The material possessions of this world are necessary for human existence. What matters is how we engage in it.
- The dunya is beneficial as long as we are able to control it and not let it enter into our heart.

- Whatever this material world has to offer, when we look at it, we look at it as that which distracts from Allah and that which attracts to Allah.
- For example, while sightseeing, one can either look at the mountains and be distracted or be reminded of Allah.
- This is a reminder not to get caught in the charm of the dunya as what awaits us in the Hereafter is much greater and more rewarding.

Hadith #3

- In this hadith, the Prophet (ﷺ) divides good deeds into two categories; those performed by a believer and a disbeliever.
- When a believer does a good deed, Allah rewards them in the dunya; contentment, barakah etc. and in the akhirah, there will be rewards awaiting them.
- When a disbeliever does a good deed, they will see its benefit in the world but there will be no reward for them in the Hereafter.
- To benefit from reward of the Hereafter, the condition is iman. However, there are narrations that tell us that a disbeliever will benefit from their good of this world in the Hereafter – not in the form of Jannah, in the form of takhfif al-ahzab.
- For example, Abu Talib left this world without entering into the folds of Islam but he dedicated his entire life protecting the Muslims and serving the Prophet (ﷺ). Hence, Allah will show Him grace by reducing the severity of his punishment in the Hereafter.

Hadith #4

- If a person were to see the torture and torment of the fire of hell they would run away from it. Whereas, if a person were to see the beauty of Jannah they would run towards it.
- The road to Jannah comes with challenges and difficulties along the way. But if one remains patient and forbearing to overcome those struggles, they will get there.
- There are undesirable things we need to face and overcome in the dunya. When a person withdraws from worshiping Allah, they immediately fall into the trap of shahwa.

- Two main temptations in the dunya to be mindful of:
 - 1. Carnal passion
 - 2. Appetite
- Giving in to our temptations will make us lose our sense of direction between right and wrong, moral and immoral, ethical and unethical, and so forth.
- When a person gets caught up in their temptations, it will become a cycle. They will continuously feed their desires to the point that they lose their value as a human being and turn into animals.
- There is no sin that a person cannot return from in terms of their relationship with Allah, but it requires more work – there needs a spiritual reform.

Hadith #5

- This hadith is brief in its words but very deep in its meaning. It is meant for reflection.
- The world that we live in is actually a prison as it locks us in, prevents us from reaching our potential, and strips us away from our freedom.
- We will always be loyal to someone. But we have to question where our loyalty lies – either with the human being or the Creator of the human being.
- According to Shaykh Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Surah al-Kahf is the solution to fitnah because Dajjal is the epitome of materialism. He is everything that the Qur'an and hadith has warned us about.
- We are a materialistic nation and materialism is widespread because people are abandoning Allah and leading a God-centric way of life. It is faith versus materialism.
- Reciting Surah al-Kahf reminds us that all the causes and effects are on one side – everything will do whatever Allah commands it to do. Its message is perfectly presented in this verse:

وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَيْءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَلِكَ غَدًا إِلَّا أَن يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ

And never say of anything, "I will definitely do this tomorrow," without adding, "if Allah so wills!"
(18:23-24)

- We have to break the loyalty we have to the material world. There has to be a greater purpose to all of this. Once we limit ourselves here, we will just keep running after it until our time's up and then the truth will hit us.

وَمَا تَقَدَّمُوا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ مِّنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

And whatever good you put forward for yourselves – you will find it with Allah (2:110)

The Life of Imam Bukhari

- Muhammad ibn Ismail Al-Bukhari was one icon of knowledge who was instrumental in not only preserving hadith but he served as a beautiful example for all of those who came after him.
- Imam Bukhari's life is an example of not only what a person can do with their talent but also an example of what knowledge looks like, what seeking knowledge looks like and what commitment to knowledge looks.

His Early Life

- Imam Bukhari was born 194 AH in Bukhara. Shortly after his birth his father, Ismail, passed away.
- His father was a pious man and a prominent muhaddith who was extremely diligent in preserving hadith. He had seen Imam Malik, Abdullah ibn Mubarak, Hammad ibn Zaid.
- One of his contemporaries, Imam Abu Hafs Al-Kabir, who was his close friend and one of his teachers, was with Ismail in his last moments. At the time of his death, he (Ismail) said: "There is no Dirham of my money that comes through illegal or doubtful acts."
- Due to Ismail's halal earnings, he left a sizable inheritance for his family but this also led to the piety of his offspring.
- Imam Bukhari lost his eyesight in early childhood and his mother made excessive and constant du'a for her son as there was no cure for his blindness. One night she saw Ibrahim AS in her dream – giving him the glad tiding of his vision; and he was fully cured.
- He had memorized the Qur'an at a young age. At the age of nine or ten, he was inspired with memorizing hadith and this became a passion for him.

- In his early period of acquiring knowledge, he went to muhadditheen in his area to listen to hadith but he never wrote anything down. Allah had blessed him with a photographic memory.
- At age eleven, when he was in the gathering of one of the muhadditheen in the area, he was able to correct a chain that was narrated.
- One of the earliest scholars Imam Bukhari greatly benefited from was Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Ju'fi – he was the progeny of Yaman al-Ju'fi.
- Imam Bukhari similarly carries the nisba al-Ju'fi because Yaman al-Ju'fi was the man who brought Islam to Bukhara and his family accepted Islam at his hands. Hence, it was the custom to continue carrying the nisba.
- He was also known as Al-Hadith al-Musnadi because he had the greatest collection of those Musnad that have an unbroken chain to the Prophet (ﷺ) which he used to narrate.
- At the age of sixteen, he had memorized all the major compilations of hadith that were available at that time. He also ventured outside of Bukhara to learn – he had memorized and learned all of the fiqh views.
- In 210 AH, he performed the hajj with his elder brother Ahmad and his mother. After completing his hajj, he stayed on to further his education with the scholars there and shortly after, his brother passed away.
- Imam al-Humaydi, one of his teachers, was the greatest student of Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, who was a prominent student of Imam Zuhri.
- It was during his stay in Madinah that he compiled his first works. The first book that he compiled was a book on the verdicts of the Sahabah and Tabi'i.
- Then, he wrote At-Tarikh al-Kabir, which was a huge compilation containing nearly 20,000 biographies of hadith narrators. He would wait for nights that were well lit by the moon and sat at Masjid Nabwi to compile this book.
- He returned but then continued traveling to Basra, Iraq, Sham, Egypt, Khorasan and he also performed hajj every year. He was privileged to be acquainted with muhadditheen of various generations.
- During this time, everyone notices his skills and talent as well as his power of retention that his teachers endorsed his ilm – they appointed him to narrate hadith and people started taking hadiths from him.

- Many tried to challenge his memory. One day, some scholars recited 100 hadiths and unbeknownst to him, the chains of narration of the hadith were mixed and matched with the actual texts of the hadith. Each scholar would read the hadith and ask if he knew them, he replied no for all 100. When the scholars finished narrating, one by one, he began to repeat all the incorrect hadith in their order to the same scholar who narrated it and pointed out the exact error of narration – and left everyone in shock.

His Character, Uprightness and Piety

- His scribe, Muhammad ibn Hatim, reports that Imam Bukhari used to wake up very frequently at night. Every time, he would light the lamp by flint, make some remarks on a certain hadith, before going back to sleep. One night, he did this 25 times. “I said to him once, ‘Why do you not call me to attend to this task instead of taking all this trouble yourself?’ He said: ‘You are a young man and you need your rest. I do not wish to disturb you.’”
- Imam Bukhari was an expert archer, and his scribe said, “I only saw him miss his target twice”. Once, while they were out shooting, his arrow struck the peg of a bridge and it broke the peg. He sent his men to tell the owner, to first ask permission to allow them to repair the bridge or tell them the cost to repair it, and secondly, to forgive them for this mistake. The owner was a pious man. When he learned that this was Imam Bukhari, he said, “All my wealth and my property should be sacrificed on him”. Imam Bukhari was so happy that the man forgave him, and so he went to a gathering of ilm and narrated 500 hadith to his students and gave 300 Dirhams to charity as gratitude.
- Imam Bukhari also participated in the construction to build an inn for wayfarers. Once, when he was hauling bricks with all the workers, about 100 people showed up because everyone wanted to be a part of it.
- Imam Bukhari had a business in which he would invest as a silent partner. He would give his money whereby someone would invest on his behalf and merchandise would be sent and deals would be made and people would pick it up wholesale and, in this way, he would carry out his expenses. Once, a group of merchants came to him and offered 5,000 Dirhams for the merchandise. He told them to come back tomorrow without committing anything nor closing the deal.

- The next day, before that first group came back, another group of merchants came and offered him 10,000 Dirhams for the merchandise. He did not accept their offer because he felt bad that he had made an intention the previous night to sell it to the first group.
- Imam Bukhari had a piece of land that he used to rent out to a farmer for 720 Dirhams a year. Once a year at the time of harvest, the farmer who was using that land would bring one or two cucumbers of a specific type that he liked. He accepted the gift and would give him a gift of 100 Dirham for those two cucumbers.
- There was a man who owed Imam Bukhari a huge debt of 25,000 Dirhams. When he and his students were at one city, they came to find out that the man who is indebted to him is nearby. They informed Imam Bukhari and suggested that he confront the man, or ask the governor of the area to intervene, or write a letter to him, but he disapproved of all their suggestions to not frighten the man. He replied, "I will never ever give up my Deen for someone else's dunya." Meanwhile, the man had found out that Imam Bukhari was in a nearby town, so he went off further away to another town but the students tracked him down and they wrote letters to the merchants there. The merchants who were very fond of Imam Bukhari intervened and they spoke to the local authorities and they arrested this man. When they called Imam Bukhari to claim his debt, he was very upset with his students but they had to agree to a settlement. So, he said, "I'll settle for a repayment of 10 Dirhams per year from a debt and let him go."
- His scribe was going to purchase a house for 920 Dirhams. On the day that he was going to make the payment, Imam Bukhari called him to see his wakil – he gave him money for the payment of his house. When his scribe refused to accept it, he said, "When I look at the treatment of the Ansar for the Muhajireen and the brotherhood that they had, it brings in me the fear that I could be held accountable in the sight of Allah because of all the work that you do for me. So, please accept this." After he accepts the money and they continue working, his scribe makes a request, "My request to you is that I would like to gift you a thousand Dirhams. Can you please accept it." Imam Bukhari was now compelled to accept his gift but told him to buy fruits at the market. He goes out and buys Imam Bukhari's favorite fruits.

- Imam Bukhari was once traveling on a ship for several weeks and befriended a man who came to know that he had a pouch of a thousand Dinars. The man devised a plot to steal the pouch by telling the guards that he lost it. They searched everywhere but could not find the pouch. When they were getting off the ship, he told Imam Bukhari, "You and I both know that you had that money. What did you do with it? How did you hide it?." He answered, "Did you think that I am going to allow my reputation to be tainted for a thousand Dinars. The whole world looks up to me because of my authenticity and my integrity. I have a reputation of preserving the hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ) and people trust me with that. What you did would lead to me being accused of theft and to me that is more precious than all the treasures in the world. So, I threw it overboard. Even if it was more than a thousand Dinars, my reputation is worth more."
- Imam Bukhari related, "I've never backbitten anyone. The moment I read that backbiting is haram, since then, I have never backbited anyone. I hope to stand in front of Allah in such a state that no one can take me to account for anything wrong that I've done to them." When someone in the audience questioned what he wrote in At-Tarikh al-Kabir whereby he criticized narrators, he replied that he merely reported from the previous scholars and it was an amanah when conveying about the Prophet (ﷺ), and this was similar to what the Prophet (ﷺ) himself had done.
- Once, Ishaq ibn Rahwayh, his teacher, came to see him when he fell ill. His teachers were aware that he fasted frequently. So, he asked if he had kept his fast or stopped fasting. Imam Bukhari told him that he did not fast and began narrating a hadith to his teacher a riwayat he did not have which relayed about not fasting during sickness.
- In Ramadan, Imam Bukhari would finish the Qur'an daily before maghrib. And then he would gather all his students and he would make du'a because at every completion of the Qur'an, there's a du'a that's accepted. For tarawih, he would recite 20 ayah until he completed the Qur'an. And in tahajjud, he would read anywhere from one-third to half of the Qur'an every single night. This was his practice throughout his life.

- He was known for eating very little as eating less is a way to build memory and preserve memory. His student said he ate two to three almonds a day. Once, he became sick and they examined his urine. The physician said, "It looks like this person has not been eating properly and he does not use any condiments. He's eating the driest rawest things and he doesn't have a proper diet." When he was told about the results, he admitted to not eating any condiments for the last 40 years. When he was advised to eat some condiments as his treatment, he said, "The best I can do is have a lump of raw sugar with my bread, but I'm not going to go beyond this."

His Teachers' Testimonials

- Ismail ibn Abi Uwais once asked Imam Bukhari for a favor to go through his entire collection of hadith, to review them and sift them out. He said, "In exchange, I will give you my entire property and on top of that, I will be grateful to you until the end of my life." Whenever he would narrate a hadith, he would tell his students that these are the hadith that Muhammad had selected from my collection.
- Imam Bukhari related, "I never felt inferior or insufficient in front of any of my teachers except for Ali ibn al-Madini." When someone relayed this comment to Ali ibn al-Madini, he commented, "Leave his statement." In other words, he is just saying that out of humility as he has never seen anyone like Imam Bukhari in his life, so forget about him.
- Another one of his teachers, Bundar, says, "He is the most knowledgeable of all Allah's Creation in our time."
- When he was 18, Imam Bukhari visited Imam al-Humaydi. At that time, he was having a debate with another muhaddith over a particular hadith. Imam Bukhari was told to make a verdict, and it favored Imam al-Humaydi.
- Ishaq ibn Rahwayh took Imam Bukhari's At-Tarikh al-Kabir and showed it to a governor of that area, Abdullah ibn Tahir and said, "Should I show you a work of magic. Look at this book that my student has compiled."
- Abdullah ibn Muhammad Al-Musnadi al-Ju'fi relayed, "Imam Bukhari is an imam. Whoever does not see him as such, should be suspected in their Deen and there is something wrong with their Deen."
- Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal said, "Khorasan has not produced a man like Imam Bukhari."

His Sahih

- The original name of his work is Al-Jami Al-Musnad Al-Sahih Al-Mukhtasar Min Umur Rasul Allah Sallá Allah Alayhi Wa-Sallam Wa-Sunanihi Wa-Ayyamihi (الجامع المسند الصحيح المختصر من أمور رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلّم وسننه وأيامه), which means "The shortened authentic (sahih) collection with isnads from the affairs of the Messenger, peace be upon Him, and His traditions and His days". Now, it is referred to as Sahih al-Bukhari.
- He compiled Sahih al-Bukhari in the Haram and Makkah. Before writing down anything, he would make wudu' and prayed two rak'ah.
- For the chapter titles, he would sit by the grave of the Prophet (ﷺ). The whole of Sahih al-Bukhari revolves around the chapter titles. He would make ghusl and pray istikhara before writing them down.
- The chapter titles that he has placed are not just topics, but rather each chapter is designed to prove a point or to refute someone or to make a correction or to express his ijthad in a particular matter – he is a mujtahid in fiqh and hadith.
- For this book, he has his own methodology in approaching, his own methodology in ascertaining the authenticity of a narrator and the authenticity of a narration.
- The condition that he has placed for this specific book is stricter and more stringent than was used for any other book.
- He was inspired to write this book after his teacher Ishaq Ibn Rahwayh said, "If only you would compile a book of only authentic narrations of the Prophet (ﷺ)."
- His greater objective is to prove specific points whether it is in relation to beliefs, worship or historic events like the seerah of the Prophet (ﷺ).
- At every single chapter title, he is trying to prove something – it needs to be deciphered. Hence, from this perspective, Sahih al-Bukhari is the most complex book of all the hadith compilations.
- It is a book to sharpen our minds. It pushes the limits of a person's ability to think, fact check, research and form the right conclusion. It is as if he's challenging us to figure out his purpose of compiling the narrations as such.

- Scholars have extracted 70 principles that are used to decipher the meaning of the chapter title and what it is that he's trying to prove through the hadith that follows it, from over 3,400 chapter titles.
- He brings his own unique methodology. For example, many times, under the chapter title, he does not put any hadith but a verse of the Qur'an, and sometimes, he will bring statements of a tabi'i, some are left blank etc.
- The rest of the book was compiled in different places; Bukhara, Iraq and wherever he was at that time. This process took many years – roughly over a decade or more to complete this book.
- This book has such widespread acceptance due to his piety as well as his acceptance in the sight of Allah.
- Not only was this a very exhausting exercise from an intellectual perspective, from the amount of time and energy that he put into it, but it was also an act of worship for him because he was constantly turning to Allah throughout the process.

The End of His Life

- Towards the end of his life, when he arrived in Nishapur, Muhammad ibn Yahya Ath-Thuhli gave him a grand entrance. He set up tents for miles outside the city like pavilions to honor his arrival. Imam Muslim who was from Nishapur says, "I have never seen the people of Nishapur welcome anyone into their city in this way the way Imam Bukhari was welcomed."
- Muhammad ibn Yahya Ath-Thuhli advised his students to sit and learn hadith from him – the crowd became so large that it was hard to manage. As a result of this, Imam Ath-Thuhli's students began reducing in numbers and this created animosity.
- Imam Bukhari and Imam Muhammad had some difference of views which predated this issue. Some troublemakers who raised the question about their different stance on the Qur'an had misinformed Imam Muhammad about Imam Bukhari's response during the gathering.
- Imam Muhammad became upset and shunned Imam Bukhari. He was accused of spreading false information about the religion and being a deviant. Hence, he was expelled from Nishapur and returned to Bukhara.

- Imam Muslim, who was also a student of Imam Muhammad showed solidarity towards Imam Bukhari. He sent back the thousands of narrations he had compiled from Imam Muhammad and stated, "I will never narrate anything from you."
- In Bukhara, Imam Bukhari was pressured by the governor to give private lessons to his children – but he refused to do so and told them to attend his lessons in the masjid.
- A movement was created by the upset governor, with support from people of Nishapur, until Imam Bukhari was forced out of his home city. This was a great trial for Imam Bukhari.
- He traveled and settled in Kharteng, a village on the outskirts of Samarkand. Before his passing, he made du'a: "O Allah, the earth, despite its vastness, is becoming narrow and troubling me greatly, so take me back to You".
- With news of Imam Bukhari's passing, hundreds of thousands of people flocked his janazah.
- Where he was laid to rest, a beautiful fragrance emanated from his grave. Many people started scooping up handfuls of dirt that the soil around his grave became empty – and because this happened frequently, they had to build a wall around it.
- Despite the wrongful accusations and judgments about him, Allah proved every one of them to be wrong. His book remains the gold standard for what is hadith and no one can take that away from him.
- Today, the entire ummah collectively have nothing but love and reverence for him. This is not his achievement but what Allah gave to him.

Sahih Bukhari: Chapter on Faith

- Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim both structure the beginning of their Sahih books with the chapter on faith (iman) as it is the essential aspect of our tradition.
- In his introduction to this chapter, Imam Bukhari gives a commentary on what constitutes iman; what makes a person a believer.
- Iman is built on three elements:
 - 1. Taqir bil Lisan – Verbal affirmation of one's belief
 - 2. Tasdiq bil Qalb – Firm belief in one's heart
 - 3. Amal bil Jawarih – Practical implementation through one's limbs

- There are different levels of iman for every believer. The beauty and excellence of their faith is based upon these different levels.
- Iman increases and decreases depending on the output of one's good deeds.

Hadith #1

- This hadith was narrated in Madinah, near the ninth year post-hijrah.
- It was the narration that the Prophet (ﷺ) would use to welcome people in the fold of Islam, whereby he taught them the fundamentals of our faith.
- The five pillars of Islam are the foundation of our faith; it certifies that we are believers.
- To solidify our iman, we need to do good deeds and hence, these five pillars are our building blocks.

Hadith #2

- بَضْعٌ – Can refer to any number from three to nine from three to nine
- سِتُّون – Sixty; The way that the translation says is more than sixty, anywhere between 63 and 69.
- There is a narration by Imam Muslim that says iman has 70 branches.
- There are different levels of iman. The highest is tawhid while the lowest can be removing something harmful from someone's path.
- Imam Bukhari chose this hadith to prove that iman should prevent a person from disobeying Allah.
- The more faith a person has, the more they are able to control their desires, temptations etc.
- A person's faith is entirely found in their ability to have haya (modesty). Haya is synonymous with iman.
- The weaker the iman, the weaker the haya of person – which then leads them to acts of disobedience.
- Haya comes from the same root as hayat (life). This indicates that a person's life is only truly a life worth living if they have haya in their life.
- We should be able to protect ourselves because of people because it does matter what people think about us and it does have an impact.

- Imam Ghazali says haya has three tiers:
- 1. Haya with the creation
 - A person who doesn't have haya will never seek tawba because once someone loses the idea of modesty, they become shameless and they start believing that they're not doing anything wrong.
- 2. Haya with the Prophet (ﷺ)
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) is informed of our amal.
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) has done so much for us. Hence, we would not want him to be heartbroken because of our weakness and our inability to seek tawba.
 - On the Day of Judgment, we want to meet him at the Kawthar and we would not let him lose respect for us.
- 3. Haya with Allah
 - We have to have the most haya in front of Allah.
- Three areas in which a person should have haya:
- 1. On the tongue
 - Refraining from backbiting, speaking too much etc.
- 2. On the thoughts
 - Before a sin becomes a sin, it was always a what a thought.
 - In order to protect our thoughts, we have to protect our senses, our environment (i.e. the places we go to and people we surround ourselves with).
- 3. On the limbs
 - Haya needs to be manifested in how we use our limbs.
 - We need to use the blessings Allah has given us in a manner that pleases Him, knowing that He is watching us.

Hadith #3

- Iman and amal go hand in hand. Meaning, a proof of a person's iman lies in their acts of submission and goodness.
- Our actions are what allows iman to grow. This is why we have to be wary of our tongues and be careful with the words that we say.
- Allah speaks about the worst type of people who will face the harshest punishment in the deepest valley of Jahannam.

- As Muslims, we have to make people feel safe and comfortable around us.
- For example, in gatherings, people can trust that we won't harm them physically or hurt them with our words.
- Every action has to begin with intention when it comes to our ibadat. Therefore, we should make an intention and never compromise our actions.