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[Introductory comments by Dr. Mohammad Omar Farooq:

Mostafa Charit, in Bangla, is one of the best works on Seerah, biography of the Prophet. Its distinctiveness lies in its dispassionate approach of a self-critical, research-oriented author, Maulana Mohammad Akram Khan. His was the first work I was exposed to that opened my mind that, despite Sahih al-Bukhari being the most respected hadith collection, not everything in it is acceptable. Maulana Akram Khan offered ten examples from Sahih al-Bukhari. He must have taken the quotations from different sources and editions for which the exact reference, as given in Mostafa Charit, I could not locate. However, for the convenience of contemporary readers, I have provided the same references from more recent English editions of Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim. For #8, I could not locate the exact reference from Sahih al-Bukhari, as used by the author. All my comments and additional references are in maroon color. Of course, I haven't independently verified all the secondary references, such as Fat-hul Bari, Isaba, etc.

As Maulana Akram Khan clarified, his comments and analysis should not cause any one to doubt such collections of hadith in general. Rather, his intent is to make Muslims more vigilant in studying the hadith literature, which is the second fundamental source for Islamic guidance. Just as rejection of the entire hadith literature is an unacceptable extremism, not applying the HIGHEST or STRICTEST standard of scrutiny to a hadith is another extreme and a serious pitfall.]

Excerpts from Maulana Mohammad Akram Khan's Mostafa Charit (in Bangla)

Source: Mostafa Charit (Biography of the Prophet), Dhaka, Jhinuk Pustika,
4th Edition, 1975, pp. 42-51.

About the author:

[Maulana Mohammad Akram Khan (1868-1969) was a journalist, politician, and Islamic scholar. He was editor of several Islamic publications during the British rule in India. His magazine *Sebak* supported the Non-cooperation and the Swadeshi Movements. *Sebak* was banned and he was arrested for his anti-government editorials. In October 1936, he published the *Azad*, the only Bengali daily of that time which contributed greatly to generating support for the muslim league in the pre-1947 days in Bengal. He was directly involved in the Khilafat Movement. He was a scholar of highest repute. He was closely associated with the Ahl-i-Hadith movement. For more information, please visit [Banglapedia](http://Banglapedia.org).]

New Method of Scrutiny: Error at the root

From reading the books, pamphlets and other works of the earliest and the classic traditionists, the readers inevitably get the notion that the kind of attention and scrutiny those traditionist scholars have given to examining the Isnad (chains of narration) or "Textual Criticism," they have not had shown a similar level of attention to or interest in Higher Criticism. After examining the Isnad, if they were satisfied with it, they generally have embraced a hadith as completely authentic (*sahih*). Later, when others have taken up Higher Criticism, they have restricted themselves primarily to those ahadith [note: plural of hadith] that are relevant for ascertaining a law (*hukm*) or creed (*aqeedah*). They felt that it was only for these ahadith that they needed to be extra careful, but not in case of ahadith that are related to history, other-worldly rewards, etc. In the later cases, they were comfortable narrating or recording weak (*daiif*) hadith. We often do register our concern about this matter. However, the fact is that many among our early generations of scholars have held the view that many unauthentic or weak narrations in the books of history and Qur'anic exegeses (*tafsir*) won't do any harm to religious rituals or creeds. This prevented them from applying due scrutiny to these ahadith. ...

Indispensable Method of Higher Criticism

The issue of Higher Criticism leads one to conclude: Even if a hadith is determined to be *sahih* (authentic) based on *riwayah* (reportage), if there is an incontrovertible fact in the isnad or text, which establishes unacceptability of a hadith as an authentic one, we can't accept such hadith without further scrutiny just because its isnad is valid. With compelling evidence, we have to ignore or even reject a hadith with *isnad* that is otherwise determined by the scholars as authentic.

The Claim and the Proof

By advancing such statements, undoubtedly we have undertaken something quite audacious. However, after dedicating oneself for such a long period to the work of this biography (*Mostafa Charit*), it is simply impossible for this humble writer to shy away from such truth like a hypocrite. We hope that our esteemed reader will not judge hastily until after reading this entire chapter.

In our humble submission, the incontrovertible evidence of what we have offered here is present in rather large number in every authoritative hadith collections. However, for the sake of brevity, we have taken some illustrative narrations from the two highest regarded hadith collections, Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim. There is no question about their *Isnad*, as these are from Bukhari and Muslim. Now, we want to demonstrate that even though the *Isnad* is valid, these ahadith cannot be acceptable as faultless, real and authentic hadith.

First Proof

A hadith has been reported in both Bukhari and Muslim. (Since the narration in Muslim is somewhat clearer, we are providing the essential meaning here.) Anas narrated: When the verse- "O believers, don't raise your voices above the Prophet's" - was revealed, Thabit ibn Qais, a companion, became afraid, as his voice was quite loud. For that reason, instead of being in presence of the Prophet any longer, he started staying at home. After not seeing him for a few days, the Prophet asked Sa'd ibn Ma'az: "Why don't I see Thabit? Is he ill?" With permission from the Prophet, Sa'd then visited Thabit's home. They two met, conversed and Sa'd informed Thabit about the Prophet's inquiry. Thabit mentioned about his voice vis-a-vis the newly revealed verse: "I am afraid that I might be hell-bound." Upon hearing from Sa'd what Thabit has conveyed, the Prophet assured Thabit not to be afraid about this matter. [Bukhari;

[Muslim: Book 001, Number 0214:](#)

It is narrated on the authority of Anas b. Malik that when this verse: "O ye who believe I raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor shout loud unto him in discourse, as ye shout loud unto one another, lest your deeds should become null and void, while you perceive not" (xlix. 2-5), was revealed. Thabit b. Qais confined himself in his house and said: I am one of the denizens of Fire, and he deliberately avoided coming to the Apostle (may peace be upon him). The Apostle (may peace be upon him) asked Sa'd b. Mu'adh about him and said, Abu Amr, how is Thabit? Has he fallen sick? Sa'd said: He is my neighbour, but I do not know of his illness. Sa'd came to him (Thabit), and conveyed to him the message of the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him). Upon this Thabit said: This verse was revealed, and you are well aware of the fact that, amongst all of you, mine is the voice louder than that of the Messenger of Allah, and so I am one amongst the denizens of Fire, Sa'd Informed the Holy Prophet about it. Upon this the Messenger of Allah observed: (Nay, not so) but he (Thabit) is one of the dwellers of Paradise.

[Bukhari: Volume 6, Book 60, Number 369:](#)

Narrated Anas bin Malik:

The Prophet missed Thabit bin Qais for a period (So he inquired about him). A man said. "O Allah's Apostle! I will bring you his news." So he went to Thabit and found him sitting in his house and bowing his head. The man said to Thabit, "What is the matter with you?" Thabit replied that it was an evil affair, for he used to raise his voice above the voice of the Prophet and so all his good deeds had been annulled, and he considered himself as one of the people of the Fire. Then the man returned to the Prophet and told him that Thabit had said, so-and-so. (Musa bin Anas) said: The man returned to Thabit with great glad tidings. The Prophet said to the man. "Go back to him and say to him: "You are not from the people of the Hell Fire, but from the people of Paradise."

This hadith can never be accepted as authentic for the following reasons.

a. This verse was revealed during 9th Hijri year, when deputations from various tribes visited the Prophet), in the context of Aqaba. Everyone agrees on this. [see Bukhari, Fat-hul Bari, Tafsir chapter, Vol. 20, 338]

b. Sa'd ibn Ma'az was wounded during the Battle of Trenches. A few days after the Campaign of Banu Quraizah, in ZulQida month of 5th Hijra yar, he died. This fact is undisputed. [see Bukhari, Muslim, Isaba, 3:197; Tajrid, 2: 185; Ikmal, etc.]

As we see, Sa'd was dead four years before this verse was revealed. Therefore, any meeting or conversation of Sa'd with the Prophet or Thabit is either false or erroneous. Thus, even though its *isnad* is valid, we humbly have to admit some kind of error or problem in regard to this hadith.

Second Proof

Anas, Ayesha and Ibn Abbas is narrating: "Allah sent him (as an Apostle) at the age of forty (and after that) he stayed for ten years in Mecca, and for ten more years in Medina." [Bukhari,

4:747-748; 7:787; Muslim #5794.]

[Bukhari Volume 7, Book 72, Number 787:](#)

Narrated Anas bin Malik:

The Prophet was neither conspicuously tall, nor short; neither, very white, nor tawny. His hair was neither much curled, nor very straight. Allah sent him (as an Apostle) at the age of forty (and after that) he stayed for ten years in Mecca, and for ten more years in Medina. Allah took him unto Him at the age of sixty, and he scarcely had ten white hairs on his head and in his beard.

[Bukhari Volume 4, Book 56, Number 747:](#)

Narrated Rabia bin Abi Abdur-Rahman:

I heard Anas bin Malik describing the Prophet saying, "He was of medium height amongst the people, neither tall nor short; he had a rosy color, neither absolutely white nor deep brown; his hair was neither completely curly nor quite lank. Divine Inspiration was revealed to him when he was forty years old. He stayed ten years in Mecca receiving the Divine Inspiration, and stayed in Medina for ten more years. When he expired, he had scarcely twenty white hairs in his head and beard." Rabi'a said, "I saw some of his hairs and it was red. When I asked about that, I was told that it turned red because of scent."

[Bukhari Volume 4, Book 56, Number 748:](#)

Narrated Anas:

Allah's Apostle was neither very tall nor short, neither absolutely white nor deep brown. His hair was neither curly nor lank. Allah sent him (as an Apostle) when he was forty years old. Afterwards he resided in Mecca for ten years and in Medina for ten more years. When Allah took him unto Him, there was scarcely twenty white hairs in his head and beard.

[Muslim Book 030, Number 5794:](#)

Anas b. Malik reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) was neither very conspicuously tall nor short-statured, and his color was neither glaringly white nor brown; his hair was neither very curly nor very straight; Allah commissioned him (as a Prophet) when he had reached the age of forty years, and he stayed in Mecca for ten years and for ten years in Medina; Allah took him away when he had just reached the age of sixty, and there had not been twenty white hair in his head and beard.

[Muatta Book 49, Number 49.1.1:](#)

Yahya related to me from Malik that Rabia ibn Abi Abd ar-Rahman heard Anas ibn Malik say, "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was not excessively tall or short. He was not very pallid nor dark. He did not have curly hair or lank hair. Allah commissioned him at the age of forty. He stayed in Makka ten years and at Madina for ten years and Allah the Mighty, the Majestic made him die when he was sixty. There were not twenty white hairs in his hair or beard, may Allah bless him and grant him peace."

20 years duration of his prophethood, 10 year residency in Makkah and death at 60 - all three of these information are erroneous. He migrated after residing in Makkah for 13 years, and after completing 23 years as a Prophet, he died at the age of 63. It is a historical fact; the narrators of Bukhari and Muslim themselves have reported it. There is no need for further evidence, because the two mutually contradictory narration from Bukhari and Muslim cannot be true at the same time. Therefore, one of the narration is wrong or unauthentic, everyone has to admit it.

So we see - Isnad, the chain of narration of the hadith is authentic (sahih), but the hadith is unacceptable. [Dr. Farooq's note: See the ahadith in the footnote#1 that mention that the

Prophet stayed in Meccah for thirteen years and the ahadith that say even fifteen years.]

Third Proof

The readers will be presented with the Bay'at (allegiance) of Aqabah at the appropriate place. There is a narration about this matter from Jabir Ibn Abdullah in Bukhari. According to that hadith, Jabir was present at that event of Bay'at along with his maternal uncle Bara' ibn Ma'rur. [Bukhari, 15 -464], However, it has been definitively established that Bara' is not maternal uncle of Jabir. Anisah, Jabir's mother, had only two brothers: Tha'laba and Amr. They were present during the second Aqabah [Fat-hul Bari, ibid.]. So there is something definitely wrong in this hadith, and some kind of Ta'wil (interpretive artifice) would be necessary to make it right.

[Bukhari Volume 5, Book 58, Number 230:](#)

Narrated Jabir bin 'Abdullah:

I was present with my two maternal uncles at Al-'Aqaba (where the pledge of allegiance was given). (Ibn 'Uyaina said, "One of the two was Al-Bara' bin Ma'rur.")

Fourth Proof

In Bukhari, it is narrated from Ayesha: Some of the wives of the Prophet asked him: "Who among us would die first after you?" He replied: She, who has the longest arm among you." After hearing this, the wives started measuring their arms with a measuring stick and found that the arms of Hadrat Sauda are the longest. Hadrat Ayesha added: "Then, we came to realize that her arms grew longer through charities. She was the first among us to die. [1-191]

[Bukhari Volume 2, Book 24, Number 501:](#)

Narrated 'Aisha:

Some of the wives of the Prophet asked him, "Who amongst us will be the first to follow you (i.e. die after you)?" He said, "Whoever has the longest hand." So they started measuring their hands with a stick and Sauda's hand turned out to be the longest. (When Zainab bint Jahsh died first of all in the caliphate of 'Umar), we came to know that the long hand was a symbol of practicing charity, so she was the first to follow the Prophet and she used to love to practice charity. (Sauda died later in the caliphate of Muawiya).

[Muslim Book 031, Number 6007:](#)

'A'isha, the Mother of the Faithful, reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: One who has the longest hands amongst you would meet me most immediately. She farther said: They (the wives of Allah's Apostle) used to measure the hands as to whose hand was the longest and it was the hand of Zainab that was the longest amongst them, as she used to work with her hand and Spend (that income) on charity.

From this hadith we know that according to the prophecy of the Prophet, among the wives of the Prophet, Hadrat Sauda was to die first. But that wasn't the case. Long before Hadrat Sauda, Hadrat Zainab passed away . So, if the hadith is to be taken as authentic, then we have to conclude that the prophecy of the Prophet was inaccurate. Instead, we have to say that some narrators must have messed up in regard to this hadith. In another hadith from Muslim (see #6007 above), it is clearly specified that the arms of Hadrat Zainab were the longest, and she was the first to die among them. Yet, some people have found hatred against Bukhari as the problem, and attempted to come with imaginative answers to address the skepticism of the Bukhari-haters. However, we are not interested in such frivolous sophistry. What we are demonstrating is that the way the hadith appears in Bukhari, and the way we take the plain meaning of ahadith, it does not apply in this case. That's why *muhaddith* Ibn Battal has described this hadith as incomplete. Ibn Jawzi has said: "It must be an error of the narrator."

What is amazing is that such error does appear in Bukhari. That even luminaries like Khattabi could not even detect the problem is surprising. He (Khattabi - in support of Bukhari) mentioned: The death of Sauda is a proof of the veracity of the Prophet's prophecy, i.e. the genuineness of his prophethood. [see footnote for this hadith in Aini and Fat-hul Bari].

Fifth Proof

That the Prophet was unlettered is clearly established from the Qur'an. [Surah al-A'raf, 157; Jumuah, 2, etc.] That the Prophet could not read or write is clearly mentioned in Surah Ankabut: 48. However, in a hadith in Bukhari about the Treaty of Hdaybiya, a companion by the name Bara' is reporting that the Prophet took the treaty paper from Ali and wrote down himself. [17-22]

[Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 49, Number 863:](#)

Narrated Al-Bara':

When the Prophet intended to perform 'Umra in the month of Dhul-Qada, the people of Mecca did not let him enter Mecca till he settled the matter with them by promising to stay in it for three days only. When the document of treaty was written, the following was mentioned: 'These are the terms on which Muhammad, Allah's Apostle agreed (to make peace).' They said, "We will not agree to this, for if we believed that you are Allah's Apostle we would not prevent you, but you are Muhammad bin 'Abdullah." The Prophet said, "I am Allah's Apostle and also Muhammad bin 'Abdullah." Then he said to 'Ali, "Rub off (the words) 'Allah's Apostle' ", but 'Ali said, "No, by Allah, I will never rub off your name." So, Allah's Apostle took the document and wrote, 'This is what Muhammad bin 'Abdullah has agreed upon: No arms will be brought into Mecca except in their cases, and nobody from the people of Mecca will be allowed to go with him (i.e. the Prophet) even if he wished to follow him and he (the Prophet) will not prevent any of his companions from staying in Mecca if the latter wants to stay.' When the Prophet entered Mecca and the time limit passed, the Meccans went to 'Ali and said, "Tell your Friend (i.e. the Prophet) to go out, as the period (agreed to) has passed." So, the Prophet went out of Mecca. The daughter of Hamza ran after them (i.e. the Prophet and his companions), calling, "O Uncle! O Uncle!" 'Ali received her and led her by the hand and said to Fatima, "Take your uncle's daughter." Zaid and Ja'far quarrel ed about her. 'Ali said, "I have more right to her as she is my uncle's daughter." Ja'far said, "She is my uncle's daughter, and her aunt is my wife." Zaid said, "She is my brother's daughter." The Prophet judged that she should be given to her aunt, and said that the aunt was like the mother. He then said to 'All, "You are from me and I am from you", and said to Ja'far, "You resemble me both in character and appearance", and said to Zaid, "You are our brother (in faith) and our freed slave."

Hafiz Ibn Hazar is never so ready to give up his passion for the chain of narration. For the same reason, he has worked extra hard to make the hadith about the Prophet's lenience in idolworshipping acceptable. He has not spared in this case as well in trying to uphold the authenticity of this hadith. According to the hadith, the responsibility of writing the treaty of Hdaybiya fell on the shoulder of Ali. He wrote: "We are signing this treaty with Muhammadur Rasulallah on these basis ..." The Quraish objected to the use of the word "Rasulallah", saying: "We don't recognize you as a messenger from God. We know you as the son of Abdullah. Write that (instead of Rasulallah). Then, the Prophet instructed Ali to strike out the part "Muhammadur Rasulallah" and write "Muhammad ibn Abdullah."The writer (Ali) is young, emboldened with the spirit of faith. He responded: "I can't strike out that part. Please forgive me." Then, the Prophet took the paper from Ali and wrote it himself

Hafiz Ibn Hajar is arguing, what's wrong with this? It has been reported in many places, "The Prophet wrote a letter to Kaiser." The meaning of the hadith is that the Prophet took the paper from Ali, struck out the part that was objected to and (then he returned it to Ali, as Ali) wrote it again. Another word, we have accept the part in parenthesis as missing or absent. If we can

come with such parenthetical comments, then explaining hadith as we desire would be very easy or convenient. That his argument is rather weak and far removed from the actual incident is quite easily understandable. From "The Prophet wrote a letter to Kaiser," we can't know for sure that he wrote with his own hands. Firstly, that is the protocol of royal or governmental communications. Secondly, it is all too well known that the responsibility of writing letters for the Prophet was assigned to specific companions. Thirdly, that the Prophet could not write is a premise firmly accepted by Muslims. In this context, if we learn that the Prophet has written to Kaiser, it would be understood as someone else has written on his behalf. However, here it is reported unambiguously that the Prophet took the paper from Ali and wrote down himself. ... In light of all that, the inconsistency between the hadith and the report about letter to Kaiser is evident. So, we see that this hadith in Bukhari contradicts evidence in the Qur'an and the agreed upon historical facts. Therefore, even though the *isnad* is valid, the hadith is unacceptable. [*See, footnote #2 for Dr. Farooq's note.*]

Sixth Proof

There is a hadith narrated in Bukhari by Hadrat Ali, which states: The Prophet addressed those who joined the Battle of Badr and proclaimed: You can do whatever you like as the Paradise is guaranteed for you. [16:14]

[Bukhari Volume 4, Book 52, Number 251:](#)

Narrated 'Ubaidullah bin Abi Rafi:

I heard 'Ali saying, "Allah's Apostle sent me, Az-Zubair and Al-Miqdad somewhere saying, 'Proceed till you reach Rawdat Khakh. There you will find a lady with a letter. Take the letter from her.' " So, we set out and our horses ran at full pace till we got at Ar-Rawda where we found the lady and said (to her). "Take out the letter." She replied, "I have no letter with me." We said, "Either you take out the letter or else we will take off your clothes." So, she took it out of her braid. We brought the letter to Allah's Apostle and it contained a statement from Hatib bin Abi Balta a to some of the Meccan pagans informing them of some of the intentions of Allah's Apostle. Then Allah's Apostle said, "O Hatib! What is this?" Hatib replied, "O Allah's Apostle! Don't hasten to give your judgment about me. I was a man closely connected with the Quraish, but I did not belong to this tribe, while the other emigrants with you, had their relatives in Mecca who would protect their dependents and property . So, I wanted to recompense for my lacking blood relation to them by doing them a favor so that they might protect my dependents. I did this neither because of disbelief nor apostasy nor out of preferring Kufr (disbelief) to Islam." Allah's Apostle, said, "Hatib has told you the truth." Umar said, O Allah's Apostle! Allow me to chop off the head of this hypocrite." Allah's Apostle said, "Hatib participated in the battle of Badr, and who knows, perhaps Allah has already looked at the Badr warriors and said, 'Do whatever you like, for I have forgiven you.'"

[Bukhari Volume 4, Book 52, Number 314:](#)

Narrated Sad bin 'Ubaida:

Abu Abdur-Rahman who was one of the supporters of Uthman said to Abu Talha who was one of the supporters of Ali, "I perfectly know what encouraged your leader (i.e. 'Ali) to shed blood. I heard him saying: Once the Prophet sent me and Az-Zubair saying, 'Proceed to such-and-such Ar-Roudah (place) where you will find a lady whom Hatib has given a letter. So when we arrived at Ar-Roudah, we requested the lady to hand over the letter to us. She said, 'Hatib has not given me any letter.' We said to her. 'Take out the letter or else we will strip off your clothes.' So she took it out of her braid. So the Prophet sent for Hatib, (who came) and said, 'Don't hurry in judging me, for, by Allah, I have not become a disbeliever, and my love to Islam is increasing. (The reason for writing this letter was) that there is none of your companions but has relatives in Mecca who look after their families and property, while I have nobody there, so I wanted to do them some favor (so that they might look after my family and property).' The Prophet believed him. 'Umar said, 'Allow me to chop off his (i.e. Hatib's) neck as he has done

hypocrisy.' The Prophet said, (to 'Umar), 'Who knows, perhaps Allah has looked at the warriors of Badr and said (to them), 'Do whatever you like, for I have forgiven you.' " 'Abdur-Rahman added, "So this is what encouraged him (i.e. Ali)."

[Bukhari Volume 5, Book 59, Number 319:](#)

Narrated 'Ali:

Allah's Apostle sent me, Abu Marthad and Az-Zubair, and all of us were riding horses, and said, "Go till you reach Raudat-Khakh where there is a pagan woman carrying a letter from Hatib bin Abi Balta' a to the pagans of Mecca." So we found her riding her camel at the place which Allah's Apostle had mentioned. We said (to her), "(Give us) the letter." She said, "I have no letter." Then we made her camel kneel down and we searched her, but we found no letter. Then we said, "Allah's Apostle had not told us a lie, certainly. Take out the letter, otherwise we will strip you naked." When she saw that we were determined, she put her hand below her waist belt, for she had tied her cloak round her waist, and she took out the letter, and we brought her to Allah's Apostle Then 'Umar said, "O Allah's Apostle! (This Hatib) has betrayed Allah, His Apostle and the believers! Let me cut off his neck!" The Prophet asked Hatib, "What made you do this?" Hatib said, "By Allah, I did not intend to give up my belief in Allah and His Apostle but I wanted to have some influence among the (Mecca) people so that through it, Allah might protect my family and property. There is none of your companions but has some of his relatives there through whom Allah protects his family and property." The Prophet said, "He has spoken the truth; do no say to him but good." 'Umar said, "He as betrayed Allah, His Apostle and the faithful believers. Let me cut off his neck!" The Prophet said, "Is he not one of the Badr warriors? May be Allah looked at the Badr warriors and said, 'Do whatever you like, as I have granted Paradise to you, or said, 'I have forgiven you.'" On this, tears came out of Umar's eyes, and he said, "Allah and His Apostle know better."

[Bukhari Volume 8, Book 74, Number 276:](#)

Narrated 'Ali:

Allah's Apostle sent me, Az-Zubair bin Al-Awwam and Abu Marthad Al-Ghanawi, and all of us were horsemen, and he said, "Proceed till you reach Rawdat Khakh, where there is a woman from the pagans carrying a letter sent by Hatib bin Abi Balta'a to the pagans (of Mecca)." So we overtook her while she was proceeding on her camel at the same place as Allah's Apostle told us. We said (to her) "Where is the letter which is with you?" She said, "I have no letter with me." So we made her camel kneel down and searched her mount (baggage etc) but could not find anything. My two companions said, "We do not see any letter." I said, "I know that Allah's Apostle did not tell a lie. By Allah, if you (the lady) do not bring out the letter, I will strip you of your clothes! When she noticed that I was serious, she put her hand into the knot of her waist sheet, for she was tying a sheet round herself, and brought out the letter. So we proceeded to Allah's Apostle with the letter. The Prophet said (to Habib), "What made you o what you have done, O Hatib?" Hatib replied, "I have done nothing except that I believe in Allah and His Apostle, and I have not changed or altered (my religion). But I wanted to do the favor to the people (pagans of Mecca) through which Allah might protect my family and my property, as there is none among your companions but has someone in Mecca through whom Allah protects his property (against harm). The Prophet said, "Habib has told you the truth, so do not say to him (anything) but good." 'Umar bin Al-Khattab said, "Verily he has betrayed Allah, His Apostle, and the believers! Allow me to chop his neck off!" The Prophet said, "O 'Umar! What do you know; perhaps Allah looked upon the Badr warriors and said, 'Do whatever you like, for I have ordained that you will be in Paradise.'" On that 'Umar wept and said, "Allah and His Apostle know best."

[Muslim Book 031, Number 6087:](#)

Ubaidullah b. Rafi', who was the scribe of 'All, reported: I heard 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him) as saying: Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) sent me and Zubair and Miqdad saying: Go to the garden of, Khakh [it is a place between Medina and Mecca at a distance of twelve miles from Medina] and there you will find a woman riding a camel. She would be in

possession of a letter, which you must get from her. So we rushed on horses and when we met that woman, we asked her to deliver that letter to us. She said: There is no letter with me. We said: Either bring out that letter or we would take off your clothes. She brought out that letter from (the plaited hair of) her head. We delivered that letter to Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) in which Hatib b. Abu Balta'a had informed some people amongst the polytheists of Mecca about the affairs of Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him). Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: Hatib, what is this? He said: Allah's messenger, do not be hasty in judging my intention. I was a person attached to the Quraish. Sufyan said: He was their ally but had no relationship with them. (Hatib further said): Those who are with you amongst the emigrants have blood-relationship with them (the Quraish) and thus they would protect their families. I wished that when I had no blood-relationship with them I should find some supporters from (amongst them) who would help my family. I have not done this because of any unbelief or apostasy and I have no liking for the unbelief after I have (accepted) Islam. Thereupon Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) said: You have told the truth. 'Umar said: Allah's Messenger, permit me to strike the neck of this hypocrite. But he (the Holy Prophet) said: He was a participant in Badr and you little know that Allah revealed about the people of Badr: Do what you like for there is forgiveness for you. And Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, said: " O you who believe, do not take My enemy and your enemy for friends" (Ix. 1). And there is no mention of this verse in the hadith transmitted on the authority of Abu Bakr and Zubair and Ishaq has in his narration made a mention of the recitation of this verse by Sufyan.

This is completely contrary to the teachings of Islam. Qur'an clearly warns even the Prophet that if even he sinned, he would have to face the punishment/consequence. If we accept this hadith as authentic, then we have also to admit that the Prophet gave a general license to commit sins to the Badr-participants as they liked. It is wrong, unacceptable and unislamic. We can't even entertain such a thought about the Prophet that he could have uttered or did utter such thing. So, we have to say that there is something wrong in the reports of the narrators.

Seventh Proof

In the beginning of the chapter about the Battle of Mustaliq, Imam Bukhari mentioned: ... Musa bin Uqba said: that battle took place in the 4th Hijrah year." In reality, Musa bin Uqba is talking about 5th Hijrah year, instead of the 4th year. [16-17] It must be an error of scribing. The issue here is that not everything in Bukhari is authentic (Sahih).

"Chapter: The Ghazwa (i.e., battle) of Banu Al-Mustaliq who belongs to the tribe of Khuza'a. It is also called the Ghazwa of Al-Muraisi.

Ibn Ishaq said, 'It took place in the 6th year (of the Hijra).' Musa bin 'Uqba said: 'It was in the 4th year (of the Hijra).'" [Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 5. comments/intro before chapter 31, the Ghazwa of Banu Mustaliq, p. 317]

[Dr. Farooq's note: There is a problem in the years specified by the author. The Bukhari's report mentions 4th or the 6th year. Maulana Akram Khan mentions that it should be 5th Hijra year. Regardless, the contradiction between the reports in Bukhari is obvious: it can't be both 4th and 6th Hijra year.]

Eights Proof

Another example. In regard to the incident of Bir Mauna, Imam Bukhari has narrated a hadith from Anas, in which he described 'Haram' as "wa huwa rajulun a'raj" (a lame person). However, the lame person is actually another person by the name Ka'b ibn Zaid. The description should have been 'fantalaqa Haram huwa wa rajulun a'raj'. The readers will learn in

an appropriate place more about the problems arising from this error. Of course, this is also an error of scribing.

[Bukhari, Volume 5, Book 59, Number 417:](#)

Narrated Anas:

That the Prophet sent his uncle, the brother of Um Sulaim at the head of seventy riders. The chief of the pagans, 'Amir bin At-Tufail proposed three suggestions (to the Prophet) saying, "Choose one of three alternatives: (1) that the bedouins will be under your command and the townspeople will be under my command; (2) or that I will be your successor, (3) or otherwise I will attack you with two thousand from Bani Ghatafan." But 'Amir was infected with plague in the House of Um so-and-so. He said, "Shall I stay in the house of a lady from the family of so-and-so after having a (swelled) gland like that she-camel? Get me my horse." So he died on the back of his horse. Then Haram, the brother of Um Sulaim and a lame man along with another man from so-and-so (tribe) went towards the pagans (i.e. the tribe of 'Amir). Haram said (to his companions), "Stay near to me, for I will go to them. If they (i.e. infidels) should give me protection, you will be near to me, and if they should kill me, then you should go back to your companions. Then Haram went to them and said, "Will you give me protection so as to convey the message of Allah's Apostle ?" So, he started talking to them' but they signalled to a man (to kill him) and he went behind him and stabbed him (with a spear). He (i.e. Haram) said, "Allahu Akbar! I have succeeded, by the Lord of the Ka'ba!"

[Dr. Farooq's note: Unless the original text in Arabic Maulana Akram Khan had access to had a different reading, I checked the Arabic text in the Arabic-English text of Bukhari by Dr. M. Muhsin Khan. There I found the Arabic text as Maulana Akram Khan suggested it should be, not the inaccurate way he may have found and reported.]

Ninth Proof

During the early periods of revelation, the Prophet used to move his mouth and tongue faster to rush to memorize the verses of the Qur'an faster. Another word, he used to recite to himself. In Surah Qiyamat, (in a particular verse) he was commanded not to do so. It is reported in Bukhari that, while narrating this, Ibn Abbas demonstrated how the Prophet used to move his mouth/face. Said Ibn Zubair narrated and demonstrated to others the same based on his observation of Ibn Abbas. In another report, Ibn Abbas said, "I am showing you the movement of the face as the Prophet used to." [1-16] In another source, it has been further reported from Ibn Abbas, "I am showing you the way I have seen the Prophet moving his lips." [Fat-hul Bari, Tafsir Qiyamah]

[Bukhari Volume 1, Book 1, Number 4:](#)

Narrated Said bin Jubair:

Ibn 'Abbas in the explanation of the Statement of Allah. 'Move not your tongue concerning (the Quran) to make haste therewith." (75.16) Said "Allah's Apostle used to bear the revelation with great trouble and used to move his lips (quickly) with the Inspiration." Ibn 'Abbas moved his lips saying, "I am moving my lips in front of you as Allah's Apostle used to move his." Said moved his lips saying: "I am moving my lips, as I saw Ibn 'Abbas moving his." Ibn 'Abbas added, "So Allah revealed 'Move not your tongue concerning (the Qur'an) to make haste therewith. It is for us to collect it and to give you (O Muhammad) the ability to recite it (the Qur'an) (75.16-17) which means that Allah will make him (the Prophet) remember the portion of the Qur'an which was revealed at that time by heart and recite it. The Statement of Allah: And 'When we have recited it to you (O Muhammad through Gabriel) then you follow its (Qur'an) recital' (75.18) means 'listen to it and be silent.' Then it is for Us (Allah) to make It clear to you' (75.19) means 'Then it is (for Allah) to make you recite it (and its meaning will be clear by itself through your tongue). Afterwards, Allah's Apostle used to listen to Gabriel whenever he came and after his

departure he used to recite it as Gabriel had recited it."

[Bukhari, Volume 9, Book 93, Number 615:](#)

Narrated Musa bin Abi 'Aisha:

Sa'id bin Jubair reported from Ibn 'Abbas (regarding the explanation of the Verse: 'Do not move your tongue concerning (the Qur'an) to make haste therewith) . He said, "The Prophet used to undergo great difficulty in receiving the Divine Inspiration and used to move his lips.' Ibn 'Abbas said (to Sa'id), "I move them (my lips) as Allah's Apostle used to move his lips." And Said said (to me), "I move my lips as I saw Ibn 'Abbas moving his lips," and then he moved his lips. So Allah revealed:--

'(O Muhammad!) Do not move your tongue concerning (the Qur'an) to make haste therewith. It is for Us to collect it and give you (O Muhammad) the ability to recite it. (i.e., to collect it in your chest and then you recite it).' (75.16-17) But when We have recited it, to you (O Muhammad through Gabriel) then follow you its recital.' (75.18) This means, "You should listen to it and keep quiet and then it is upon Us to make you recite it."

The narrator added, "So Allah's Apostle used to listen whenever Gabriel came to him, and when Gabriel left, the Prophet would recite the Qur'an as Gabriel had recited it to him."

[Muslim, Book 004, Number 0901:](#)

Ibn Abbas reported with regard to the words:" Do not move thy tongue there with to make haste," that the Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him) felt it hard and he moved his lips. Ibn 'Abbas said to me (Sa'id b. Jubair): I move them just as the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) moved them. Then said Sa'id: I move them just as Ibn 'Abbas moved them, and he moved his lips. Allah, the Exalted, revealed this:" Do not move your tongue therewith to make haste. It is with US that its collection rests and its recital" (al-Qur'an, ixv. 16). He said: Its preservation in your heart and then your recital. So when We recite it, follow its recital. He said: Listen to it, and be silent and then it rests with Us that you recite it. So when Gabriel came to the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him), he listened to him attentively, and when Gabriel went away, the Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him) recited as he (Gabriel) had recited it.

From these ahadith we come to know that - before the revelation of this verse in Surah al-Qiyamah - when the Prophet used to make such movements, Ibn Abbas directly observed the Prophet doing so. However, that can't be correct. This is because Surah Al-Qiyamah was revealed during the early stages of Makkah period, when Ibn Abbas wasn't even born. [According several credible sources], he was born during the 10th year of prophethood, i.e., three years before the Hijrah (migration). His father, Abbas, embrace Islam quite a few years later. Therefore, it was simply impossible for him to observe the Prophet to fast move lips to rush to memorize. Once again, we find the hadith *sahih* (authentic) in terms of *isnad* (chain of narration), but information-wise unacceptable.

Tenth Proof

There is a hadith narrated by Anas in both Bukhari and Muslim. It reports: Once, when the Prophet was in presence of Abdullah ibn Ubay, the hypocrite, Abdullah showed disrespect to him. That led to squabbling and wrangling between the Muslims present there and the people of Abdullah. The following verse in Surah Hujurat was revealed during that time. "When two groups of believers engage in fights/conflicts, make peace between them." Upon revelation, the Prophet recited this verse before everyone, and the fighting stopped.

[Bukhari Volume 3, Book 49, Number 856:](#)

Narrated Anas:

It was said to the Prophet "Would that you see Abdullah bin Ubai." So, the Prophet went to him, riding a donkey, and the Muslims accompanied him, walking on salty barren land. When the Prophet reached 'Abdullah bin Ubai, the latter said, "Keep away from me! By Allah, the bad smell of your donkey has harmed me." On that an Ansari man said (to 'Abdullah), "By Allah! The smell of the donkey of Allah's Apostle is better than your smell." On that a man from 'Abdullah's tribe got angry for 'Abdullah's sake, and the two men abused each other which caused the friends of the two men to get angry, and the two groups started fighting with sticks, shoes and hands. We were informed that the following Divine Verse was revealed (in this concern):-- "And if two groups of Believers fall to fighting then, make peace between them." (49.9)

In reports from Usama in Bukhari and Muslim, we find that Abdullah has not publicly embraced Islam at that time, whereas the verse is talking about reconciling between two groups of believers. Abdullah and his people had not become Muslims at the time of the revelation of this verse. Therefore, the underlying suggestion that this verse was revealed in the context of this incident is unacceptable.

We present the above few ahadith merely as examples. Through further effort, additional examples can be found. The purpose of this presentation is to establish the fact that the validity/authenticity of chain of narration (isnad) does not make the hadith itself authentic or acceptable.*

*[author's note:] Using examples of such cases, some people blame Imam Bukhari. That is due to either ignorance or prejudice. Imam Bukhari's work was based on determining isnad as those reached him. He copied those chains of narrations based on what he could authenticate. The narrator, not Bukhari, should be blamed for the inaccuracy in isnad. To correct Isnad by Bukhari would have been falsification/manipulation of the works.]

Dr. Farooq's notes:

1. See below that some of the hadith confirm the historical fact that it was thirteen years in Mecca, and there are other variations that suggest even fifteen years.

[Bukhari Volume 5, Book 58, Number 190:](#)

Narrated Ibn 'Abbas:

Allah's Apostle was inspired Divinely at the age of forty. Then he stayed in Mecca for **thirteen** years, and then was ordered to migrate, and he migrated to Medina and stayed there for ten years and then died.

[Bukhari Volume 5, Book 58, Number 242:](#)

Narrated Ibn Abbas:

Allah's Apostle started receiving the Divine Inspiration at the age of forty. Then he stayed in Mecca for **thirteen** years, receiving the Divine Revelation. Then he was ordered to migrate and he lived as an Emigrant for ten years and then died at the age of sixty-three (years).

[Muslim, Book 030, Number 5809:](#)

Ibn 'Abbas reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) stayed in Mecca for **fifteen** years (after his advent as a Prophet) and he heard the voice of Gabriel and saw his radiance for seven years but did not see any visible form, and then received revelation for ten

years, and he stayed in Medina for ten years.

[Muslim, Book 030, Number 5805:](#)

'Ammar, the freed slave of Banu Hashim, reported:

I asked Ibn 'Abbas how old was he when death overtook the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him). He said: I little know that such a thing is not known to a man like you who belong to his people. He said: I asked people about it but they differed with me, and I liked to know your opinion about it. He said: Do you know counting? He said: Yes. He then said: Bear this in mind very well that he was commissioned (as a Prophet) at the age of forty, and he stayed in Mecca for **fifteen** years; sometime in peace and sometime in dread, and (lived) for ten years after his migration to Medina.

2. What actually happened is clarified in the following two ahadith. The Prophet asked Ali to rub off or strike out the part that was objected to by the Meccan Quraishite elders. When Ali refused to honor the Prophet's request, the Prophet merely struck that part out himself. He DID NOT WRITE as mentioned in Bukhari, 3:863.

[Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 49, Number 862:](#)

Narrated Al-Bara bin 'Azib:

When Allah's Apostle concluded a peace treaty with the people of Hudaibiya, Ali bin Abu Talib wrote the document and he mentioned in it, "Muhammad, Allah's Apostle ." The pagans said, "Don't write: 'Muhammad, Allah's Apostle', for if you were an apostle we would not fight with you." Allah's Apostle asked Ali to rub it out, but Ali said, "I will not be the person to rub it out." Allah's Apostle rubbed it out and made peace with them on the condition that the Prophet and his companions would enter Mecca and stay there for three days, and that they would enter with their weapons in cases.

[Muslim Book 019, Number 4401:](#)

It has been narrated on the authority of al-Bara' b. 'Azib who said: 'Ali b. Abu Talib penned the treaty between the Holy Prophet (may peace be upon him) and the polytheists on the Day of Hudaibiya. He wrote: This is what Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, has settled. They (the polytheists) said: Do not write words" the Messenger of Allah". If we knew that you were the Messenger of Allah, we would not fight against you. The Prophet (may peace be upon him) said to 'Ali: Strike out these words. He (Ali) said: I am not going to strike them out. So the Prophet (may peace be upon him) struck them out with his own hand. The narrator said that the conditions upon which the two sides had agreed included that the Muslims would enter Mecca (next year) and would stay there for three days, and that they would not enter bearing arms except in their sheaths or bolsters.