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The Classification of Hadeeth - [Book]

Introduction to the Science of Hadith Classification

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Foreword

All Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. And may the Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon Prophet Muhammed and upon his Family and his Companions.

"We have undoubtedly sent down the Reminder, and We will truly preserve it." [Al-Qur'aan, Soorah al-Hijr (15):9]

Allah's promise in the above verse will be fulfilled, and the pure religion will be available for all those who seek it until the last day, as Allah asks His Messenger to proclaim **"...this Qur'aan has been revealed to me that I may therewith warn you and whoever it may reach."** Soorah al-An'am (6):19

The fulfillment of Allah's promise is obvious by the undisputed purity of the Qur'aan. However, what is often forgotten by many Muslims is that, Allah has promised not only to protect the words of the Qur'aan, but also its explanation and understanding - the Sunnah. It being the perfect and divinely-guided lifestyle of the Prophet and

the best example of the implementation of the Book of Allah. The Sunnah is the Wisdom that the Prophet taught along with the Scripture (the Qur'aan), as Allah says: **"And We sent to you a Messenger from among yourselves, reciting to you our signs, purifying you, and teaching you the Book and the Wisdom (Sunnah), and that which you did not know."** Soorah al-Baqarah (2): 151

Allah preserved the Qur'aan from being initially lost by the martyrdom of its memorizers, by guiding the Khulafaa Raashidoon and the other Companions to compile the ayat (verses) of the Qur'aan into one volume, since before they had been scattered in writing on various materials and in memory amongst many faithful hearts. Allah safeguarded it from corruption by its enemies: disbelievers, heretics and false prophets, by enabling millions of believers to commit it to memory with ease. He preserved its teachings by causing thousands of people of Knowledge to learn from its deep treasures and convey them to the masses, and by sending revivers of his Deen at the beginning of every century.

Similarly, Allah preserved the Sunnah by enabling the Companions and those after them (may Allah be pleased with them all) to memorize, write down and pass on the statements of the Messenger and descriptions of his Way, as well as to continue the blessings of practicing the Sunnah, as the Prophet said to his Companions, **"You hear from me, and others will hear from you; and people will hear from them, who heard from you."** Sunan Abu Dawood (english trans.) vol.3, no.3651 and authenticated by al-Albaanee in Saheeh Sunan Abu Dawood no. 3107

Later, as the purity of the Knowledge of the Sunnah became threatened, Allah caused the Muslim nation to produce outstanding individuals of incredible memory-skills and analytical expertise, who journeyed tirelessly to collect hundreds of thousands of narrations and distinguished the true words of precious wisdom of their Messenger from those that were forged by unscrupulous liars. The Companions and those who followed their way, the Muhadithoon (the Scholars of Hadeeth) worked hard to transmit the legacy of Muhammed. They paid precise attention to the words narrated and recorded minute biographies of the thousands of reporters of Hadeeth. Action being the best way to preserve teachings, the revivers of Islam also revived the practice of the blessed authentic Sunnah.

Unfortunately however, statements will continue to be attributed to the Prophet although the person quoting them may have no idea what the people of Knowledge of Hadeeth have ruled regarding the fabricated Hadeeth. Quoting Hadeeths carelessly without checking for its authenticity is undoubtedly a grave sin punishable with hell-fire, as the Prophet said: **"Whoever lies about me will find his sitting place in the hell-fire."** Sunan Abu Dawood (english trans.) vol.3, no.3643. A similar Hadeeth has been collected in Sahih al-Bukhari (english trans.) vol.1, no.109

This booklet is an effort to explain in brief the classification and preservation of Hadeeth. The Hadeeth are like pearls, in order to acquire them one has to dive deep, and the more you study them the more you appreciate their importance. The Prophet Muhammed explained matters of great importance to the believers, both in this life and the hereafter, in very few and simple words. Those who understood the message of the Messenger, then this

Knowledge of theirs brought a revolution into their lives, for the Hadeeth have in them the Wisdom, that awaken sleeping minds, revive dead hearts and invigorate weak souls.

Then why should not a Muslim devote some of his time for the study of Hadeeth and become the beneficiary of the Duaa (supplication) of the Prophet Muhammed , who said: **“May Allah bless any man who hears a saying of mine, memorizes it and understands it, then conveys it just as he heard it.”** Sunan Abu Dawood (english trans.) vol.3, no.3652 and Sunan at-Tirmidhee. authenticated by al-Albaanee in Saheeh Sunan Abu Dawood no.3108]

The Definition of Hadeeth: 'Hadeeth' literally means a saying or conversation, as in the following Qur'aanic verses:

“Let them then produce a saying (Hadeeth) like unto it.” [Soorah at-Tur (52):34]

“And when the Prophet spoke (Hadeeth) secretly to one of his wives.” [Soorah at-Tahrim (66):3]

But in Islaamic Terminology, Hadeeth is synonymous with Sunnah, though the word 'Hadeeth' is generally used to refer to only the sayings of the Prophet Muhammed . The Hadeeth have been recorded by the Companions and collected in the books of Hadeeth.

If the word 'Hadeeth' is used without any adjective, it always means the Hadeeth of the Prophet, but if any Companion or Successor (Taabee) is meant, clarification is needed by adding Mauquf for the Companion and Maqtu for the Successor.

The following is an example of what a Hadeeth looks like:

Musaddad told us that Yahyaa informed him from Shu'bah, from Qataadah from Anas from the Prophet that he said: “None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.” Collected by al-Bukhari

This means that the Hadeeth scholar Muhammed ibn Ismaa'el al-Bukhari recorded in his book of the collection of Hadeeth called Sahih al-Bukhari the statement: “None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.”, which he heard from his Hadeeth teacher Musaddad, who heard it from his teacher Yahyaa, who was informed by his teacher Shu'bah that he heard it from his teacher Qataadah, a student of the Prophet's Companion, who heard it quoted by the Sahabee (Companion) Anas ibn Maalik from the Prophet Muhammed (May the Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him).

The Structure of Hadeeth A Hadeeth consists of two main parts: **(a) the Sanad** and **(b) the Matn**

The Sanad: Sanad or Isnad, is the chain of narrators that leads to the text of the Hadeeth. The Sanad consists of all those who narrated the text, starting with the last narrator (who records the Hadeeth in his book) and ending with the Prophet. Following is the Sanad of the Hadeeth mentioned before...

Al-Bukhari > Musaddad > Yahyaa > Shu'bah > Qataadah > Anas > Prophet Muhammed (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam)

The Matn: The text of the Hadeeth or what the Prophet actually said or did is called the Matn. In the Hadeeth mentioned before, the Matn is "None of you truly believes until..."

The Preservation of Hadeeth:

The Writing down of Hadeeth [1] There are many authentic narrations collected by the Scholars of Hadeeth, that prove that Hadeeth were recorded in writing even during the time of the Prophet.

Imaam Abu Dawood gives a few examples in his Sunan

Abdullah bin Amr said: "I used to write everything which I heard from the Messenger of Allah . I intended (by it) to memorize it. The Quraish prohibited me, saying 'Do you write everything that you hear from him, while the Messenger of Allah is a human being (Bashr), he speaks in anger and pleasure?' So I stopped writing, and mentioned it to the Messenger of Allah. He pointed with his finger to his mouth and said: 'Write, by Him in whose hand my soul lies, only right (Haqq) comes out from it.'

Sunan Abu Dawood vol.3, no. 3639 and authenticated by al-Albaanee in Saheeh Sunan Abu Dawood no.3099. The collection of Hadeeth of Abdullah bin Amr is known as 'Sahifah Sadiqah'

Abu Hurairah said: "When Meccah was conquered, the Holy Prophet stood up. He (Abu Hurairah) then mentioned the sermon of the Holy Prophet . A man from Yemen, called Abu Shah got up and said, "O Messenger of Allah! Write it for me." The Messenger of Allah said, "Write it for Abu Shah."

Sunan Abu Dawood vol.3, no. 3641 and authenticated by al-Albaanee in Saheeh Sunan Abu Dawood no.3100

"Al-Walid said, I asked Abu Amr - "What are they writing? He said, "The sermon which he heard that day" [Sunan Abu Dawood vol.3 no.3642 and authenticated by al-Albaanee in Saheeh Sunan Abu Dawood no.3101]

Imaam Bukhari mentions a few more examples in his Saheeh in the "Book of Knowledge", chapter "The writing of Knowledge":

The Prophet's Companion, Abu Hurairah has narrated an incident in which a man from Yemen came to the Prophet, while the Prophet was addressing his Companions about the sanctity of Mecca, and asked the Prophet to get what he said written. The Prophet ordered his Companions to write that for him."

Sahih al-Bukhari, vol.1, no.112

"From Abu Qabeel who said: We were with 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr ibn al 'Aas and he was asked which city will be conquered first Constantinople or Rome? So 'Abdullaah called for a sealed trunk and he said, "Take out a book from it". Then 'Abdullaah said, "Whilst we were with the Messenger of Allaah **writing**, The Messenger of Allaah was asked, "Which city will be conquered first, Constantinople or Rome?" So Allaah's Messenger said: "The city of Heracilius will be conquered first " meaning Constantinople."

Saheeh: Related by Ahmad (2/176), ad-Daarimee (1/126) and al Haakim (3/422).

The Prophet approved and encouraged the writing down of the Hadeeth when he said to his Companions, during the last few days of his life, "Bring for me a paper and I will write for you a statement after which you will not go astray."

Sahih al-Bukhari, vol.1, no.114

The Memorizing of Hadeeth:

Narrated by Abu Hurairah, "...I used to stick to Allah's Messenger contented with what will fill my stomach and I used to attend that which they (the emigrants to Madeenah) did not attend and I used to memorize that which they used not to memorize."

Sahih al-Bukhari, vol.1, no.118

Abu Huraira said, "You people claim that Abu Huraira narrates many narrations of Allah's Apostle. (Anyhow) with Allah will be our appointment. I was a poor man, and used to stick to Allah's Apostle contented with what will fill my stomach, and the Muhajirin (emigrants) used to be busy trading in the markets, and the Ansar used to be busy looking after their properties. One day I heard Allah's Apostle saying, 'Who will spread his Rida' (a garment covering the upper part of the body) till I finished my speech and then fold it, (i.e. wrap it over your body), in which case he will never forget anything he had heard from me." So I spread my garment which I was wearing; and by Him Who sent Muhammad with the Truth, ever since, I have never forgotten whatever I heard from him (the Prophet)."

Sahih al-Bukhari, vol.9, no.452

Narrated by Jabir bin Abdullah, "**The Prophet (p.b.u.h) used to teach us the way of doing Istikhara (Istikhara means to ask Allah to guide one to the right sort of action concerning any job or a deed), in all matters as he taught us the Soorahs (chapters) of the Quran...."**

Sahih al-Bukhari, vol.2, no.263

FOOTNOTES

[1] Imaam Abu Dawood has collected the Hadeeth in "Kitaab al-Ilm - the book of Knowledge" in the chapter "Writing the Knowledge". There are four narrations, three of which are mentioned above. The fourth narration [no.3640] has a weak (Da'if) isnad. see Da'if Sunan Abu Dawood no.787

The Significance of the Sanad (the chain of narrators of Hadeeth):

Even though the text (Matn) of a Hadeeth may seem to be logical and reasonable, it needs an authentic Sanad with reliable reporters to be acceptable. The Sanad is thus the most important part of the Hadeeth, as it is the bridge leading to the Hadeeth itself. Abdullah bin al-Mubarak (d. 181 AH), one of the illustrious teachers of Imam al-Bukhari, said:

The Isnaad is from the Deen (religion), if it wasn't for the Isnad anyone would say anything he wished

Related by Imaam Muslim in the introduction of his Sahih - see Sahih al-Muslim (ed. M.F. 'Abdul Baqi. 5 vols., Cairo 1374/1955), [1:15] & Sahih al-Muslim bi Sharh an-Nawawi (18 vols. in 6, Cairo,1349) [1:87].

During the lifetime of the Prophet and after his death, his Companions (Sahabah) used to refer to him directly, when quoting his sayings. The Successors (Tabi'un) followed suit, some of them used to quote the Prophet through the Companions, while others would omit the intermediate authority (such a Hadeeth is called Mursal). During the time of the Successors they either one of two narrators between them and the Prophet. But from then on the need for verification of each isnad rose, as Imaam Malik (d. 179) said: **"The First one to utilize the isnad was Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri(d.124)."**

**Ibn Abi Hatim al-Razi, Al-Jarh wal-Ta'dil (8 vols., Hyderabad, 1360-1373),
1:20**

The need to verify the Hadeeth rose because various sects appeared among the Muslims who fabricated Hadeeth, in order to support their deviant views and heretical philosophies (later such Hadeeth were classified as Maudu or fabricated)

Ibn Sirin (d.110) a Successor said, **"They would not ask about the Isnad. But when the fitnah (turmoil/civil war) happened, they said, 'Name to us your men. So the narrations of the Ahlus-Sunnah (Adherents to the Sunnah) would be accepted, while those of Ahlul-Bidah (Adherents to Innovations) would not be accepted"**

Sahih al-Muslim bi Sharh an-Nawawi (Introduction) Chapter : The Isnaad is from the Deen, p.257 [Maktaba Nazaar Mustafa al-Baaz - Riyadh [1st edition]

The Fabrication of Hadeeth

Incidents of fabrication of Hadeeth were almost non-existent at the time of the Prophet for the Muslims of his time understood well the consequence of lying about the Prophet. The Prophet's Companions took the sayings of their Prophet very serious, and no hypocrite would dare to ascribe to the Prophet that which he did not say. Even if someone lied about the Prophet, he did not survive long enough, as this following incident suggests:

Ibn 'Adi transmitted on the authority of Buraida b. Hussaib al-Aslami, that in the pre-Islamic era a man wanted to marry in the tribe of Bani Laith which had been living a mile away from Madina. But the tribe did not concede to his will. Later he visited them dressed in a fine garment. He told them: 'The Prophet gave me this garment and authorized me to judge among you in all issues regarding money and soul.' Then he came to the woman who he wanted to marry. The people of the tribe sent someone to the Prophet who instantly said: '**The enemy of Allah has lied.**' Then the Prophet deputized a man and instructed him: '**Kill him if you find him alive and burn him if you find him dead.**' The man came to the spot and discovered that he had already met his death by the bite of the snake. So he burnt him. Suyuti, Tahdhib alikhawas min Akadhib al-Qussas [Beirut-1972] page 32-33

Beware O Muslims ... Beware !!!

If this is the verdict of the Prophet about the one who lies about him in matters of this world, what will be the fate of one who lies about the Prophet in matters of the Religion ???

As previously mentioned under 'The Significance of the Sanad', the Fitnah starting from the death of the Caliph Uthman (May Allaah be pleased with him) and leading to the conflict during the Caliphate of Ali (May Allaah be pleased with him), was the period much blamed for the fabrication of Hadeeth. Fabricated Hadeeth in favor Ali and his family on one side and those those denouncing Muawiya and his supporters on the other side and vice versa found their place among Muslims.

Needless to say that the traditionalists were much worried about this situation. The Fitnah turned out to be a turning point when questioning about the isnad first started, as implied by Ibn Sirin's saying.

But what did they mean by asking about Isnad?

The Isnad consists of the names of the reporters. Once the name of the reporter has come to light it was quiet possible to investigate whether he was trustworthy or not and whether he actually heard the person from whom he claimed the report. Criticism of this nature later came to be known as 'Ilm al-Jarh wal-Ta'dil (Disparaging and authenticating).

Since a number of spurious (fabricated) Hadeeth found their way into the Hadeeth literature, the science of Hadeeth known as *Mustalah* or *Ilm Usul al-Hadeeth* developed to distinguish between the authentic Hadeeth and the fabricated ones. The Scholars of Hadeeth have dealt with each Hadeeth as an independant case, subjecting both its individual Isnad and Mastn (text) to extensive verification

according to the principles laid down in this science. This is how separate collections of authentic Hadeeth and those of fabricated ones came into being.

[More details on the deliberate fabrication of Hadeeth will be discussed later on under the chapter - "Who Fabricated Hadeeth?"]

Mustalah al-Hadeeth (the Classification of Hadeeth)

There are many books about the science of Hadeeth that one can refer to, the best of which is Ikhtisar Ulum al-Hadeeth by ibn Katheer. The best print for this book is the Egyptian print, corrected and reviewed by Ahmed Shaker called "Al-Ba'ith al-Hathith, Sharh Ikhtisar Ulum al-Hadeeth

The books on this subject speak of a number of classes of Hadeeth in accordance with their status. The following broad classifications can be made, each of which is explained in the later sections. This section serves as an introduction to the science of Hadeeth and gives a general prospective to the common reader.

Classification according to the beginning of the Sanad (chain of narrators), they are

- 1.** marfu (elevated) i.e. Sanads that go up to the Prophet
- 2.** mauquf (stopped) i.e. a Sanad that goes up to a successor (Tabi'ee)
- 3.** maqtu (severed) i.e. a Sanad that goes up to at-Tabaa at-Tabi'een

1- Marfu' (elevated) It is a narration from the Prophet, that is when the narrator (a Sahabee, a Taabee or other) says, "The Messenger of Allaah said ..."

For Example : The very first Hadeeth in Saheeh al-Bukhari is as follows al-Bukhari --
- Al-Humaidi 'Abdullah bin al-Zubair --- Sufyan --- Yahya b. Sa'id al-Ansari ---
Muhammed b. Ibrahim al-Taymi --- Alqamah b. Waqqas al-Laithi, who said: I heard Umer bin al-Khattab saying, while on the pulpit, "I heard Allaah's Messenger saying, 'The reward of deeds depends on the intention. ...'"

i.e. Sanads that go up to the Prophet

2-Mauquf (stopped) A narration from a Companion only, i.e. his own statement; e.g. al-Bukhari reports in his Saheeh in Kitaab al-Fara'id (Book of the Laws of Inheritance), that Aboo Bakr, Ibn Abbas and Ibn al-Zubair said, "The grandfather is (treated like) the father."

It should be noted that certain expressions used by a Companion generally render a Hadeeth to be considered as being effectively marfu' although it is mauquf on the face of it, e.g. the following expressions

- "We were commanded to ..."
- "We were forbidden from ..."
- "We used to do ..."
- "We used to say/do while the Messenger of Allaah waws amongst us."
- "We did not used to mind such and such ..."
- "It is from the Sunnah to ..."
- It was revealed in the following circumstances ...", speaking about a verse of the Qur'aan.

i.e. a Sanad that goes up to a successor (Tabi'ee)

3- Maqtu' (Severed) A narration from a Successor, e.g. Imaam Muslim reports in the introduction to his Sahih that Ibn Sirin (d.110) said, "This knowledge (i.e. Hadith) is the Religion, so be careful from whom you take your religion."

i.e. a Sanad that goes up to at-Tabaa at-Tabi'een

The authenticity of each of the above three types of Hadeeth depends on other factors such as the reliability of its reporters, the nature of the linkage amongst them, etc. However, the above classification is extremely useful, since through it the sayings of the Prophet can be distinguished at once from those of Companions or Successors; this is especially helpful in debate about matters of Fiqh.

Imaam Malik's, al-Muwatta', one of the early collections of Hadeeth, contains a relatively even ratio of these types of Hadeeth, as well as Mursal Hadeeth (which are discussed later). According to Aboo Bakr al-Aohari (d.375), al-Muwatta contains the following ...

600 Marfu' Hadeeth
 613 Mauquf Hadeeth
 285 Maqtu Hadeeth
 228 Mursal Hadeeth ; a total of 1726 Hadeeth

Muhammed Adib Salih, Lamahat fi Usul al-Hadeeth (2nd ed., al-Maktaba al-Islami, Beirut, 1389) p.143

Classification according to the link in the isnad

(i.e. whether the chain of reporters is interrupted or uninterrupted) They are.....

- 1-Musnad (supported)
- 2-muttasil (continuous)
- 3-Munqati' (broken)
- 4-mu'allaq (hanging)
- 5-Mu'dal (perplexing)
- 6-mursal (hurried).

1- Musnad (supported)

Al-Hakim defines a Musnad (supported) Hadeeth as follows:

"A Hadeeth which a narrator reports from his teacher from whom he is known to have heard Hadeeth at a time of life suitable for learning, and similarly in turn for each teacher, until the Sanad reaches a well-known Companion, who in turn reports from the Prophet .

Muhammed b. Abdullah al-Hakim, Ma'rifah 'Ulum al-Hadeeth (Cairo - 1937) p.17

Al-Hakim gives the following definition of a Musnad Hadeeth:

We reported from Abu 'Amr 'Uthman b. Ahmed al-Sammak al-Baghdadi --- Al-Hasan b. Mukarram --- Uthman b. Amr --- Yunus --- al-Zuhri --- Abdullah b. Ka'b b. Malik - -- from his father, who asked Ibn Abi Hadrad for a payment of a debt he owed to him, in the mosque. During the ensuing argument, their voices were raised until heard by the Messenger of Allaah , who eventually lifted the curtain of his apartment and said, "O Ka'b! Write off a part of your debt" - he meant remission of a part of it. So he agreed and the man paid off.

Al-Hakim then remarks,

"Now my hearing from Ibn al-Simak is well-known, as is from Ibn Mukarram; al-Hasan's link with Uthman b. Amr and the latter's with Yunus b. Zaid are known as well. Yunus is always remembered with az-Zuhree, and the latter with the sons of Ka'b b. Malik, whose link to their father and his companionship of the Prophet are well-established."

Muhammed b. Abdullah al-Hakim, Ma'rifah 'Ulum al-Hadeeth (Cairo - 1937) p.17

The term musnad is also applied to those collections of ahadith which give the Hadeeth of each Companion separately. Among the early compilers of such a Musnad were Yahya b. 'Abd al-Hamid al-Himmani (d. 228) at Kufah and Musaddad b. Musarhad (d. 228) at Basrah. The largest existing collection of ahadith of Companions arranged in this manner is that of Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 241), which contains around thirty thousand ahadith. Another larger work is attributed to the famous Andalusian

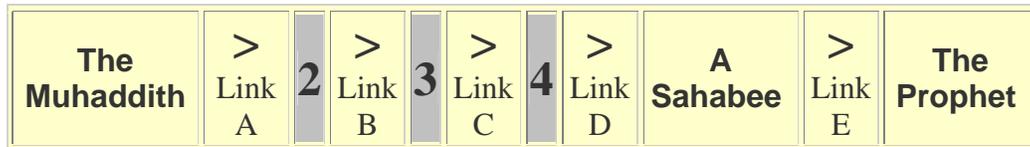
Mursal - Munqati' - Mu'dal - Mu'allaq

If in the Sanad of a particular Hadeeth, the link between the Successor (Tabi'ee) and the Prophet is missing, the Hadeeth is Mursal (hurried), eg. when a Successor (Tabi'ee) says, "The Prophet said"

However, if a link anywhere before the Successor (i.e. closer to the Muhaddith recording the Hadeeth) is missing, the Hadeeth is Munqati' (broken). This applies even if there is an apparent link (e.g. The Sanad is continuous but one of the narrators is known to have never heard Hadeeth from his immediate authority, even though he may be his contemporary). The term Munqati' is also applied by some scholars to a narration such as, where a reporter says, "a man narrated to me", without naming his authority.

If the number of consecutive missing reporters in the Sanad exceeds one, the Sanad is Mu'dal. If the reporter omits the whole Sanad and quotes the Prophet directly the Hadeeth is called Mu'allaq (hanging) It is sometimes known as balaghah (to reach); eg. Imaam Maalik sometimes says in al-Muwatta', "It has reached me that the Messenger of Allaah said".

To Summarize



If Link E is missing, the Sanad (chain) is Mursal.

If Link B or C is missing, the Sanad (chain) is Munqati'.

If both Link B and C are missing, the Sanad (chain) is Mu'dal.

If Links B, C, D and E all are missing, the Sanad (chain) is Mu'allaq

Example of a Munqati' Hadeeth

Al-Hakim reported from Muhammad b. Mus'ab --- al-Auza'i --- Shaddad Abu 'Ammar --- Umm al-Fadl bint al-Harith, who said: I came to the Messenger of Allaah and said, "I have seen in a vision last night as if a part of your body was cut out and placed in my lap." He said, "You have seen something good. Allah Willing, Fatimah will give birth to a lad who will be in your lap." After that, Fatimah gave birth to al-Husain, who used to be in my lap, in accordance with the statement of the Messenger of Allah . One day, I came to the Messenger of Allah and placed al-Husain in his lap. I noticed that both his eyes were shedding tears. He said, "Jibril came to me and told me that my Ummah will kill this son of mine, and he brought me some of the reddish dust of that place (where he will be killed)."

Al-Hakim said, "This is a sahih Hadeeth according to the conditions of the Two Shaykhs (i.e. Bukhari & Muslim), but they did not collect it." Al-Dhahabi says, "No, the hadith is munqati' and da'if, because Shaddad never met Umm al-Fadl and Muhammad b. Mus'ab is weak."

Al-Dhahabi, Talkkis al-Mustadrak (printed with Mustadrak ai-Hakim 4 vols. Hyderabad), 3:176

Example of a Mu'dal Hadeeth

Ibn Abi Hatim --- Ja'far b. Ahmad b. Al-Hakam Al-Qurashi in the year 254 --- Sulaiman b. Mansur b. 'Ammar --- 'Ali b. 'Asim --- Sa'id --- Qatadah --- Ubayy b. Ka'b, who reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "After Adam had tasted from the tree, he ran away, but the tree caught his hair. It was proclaimed: O Adam! Are you running away from Me? He said: No, but I feel ashamed before You. He said: O Adam! Go away from My neighbourhood, for By My Honour, no-one who disobeys Me can live here near Me; even if I were to create people like you numbering enough to

fill the earth and they were to disobey Me, I would make them live in a home of sinners."

Ibn Kathir remarks, "This is a gharib hadith. There is inqita', in fact I'dal, between Qatadah and Ubayy b. Ka'b, may Allah be pleased with them both."

Abu 'I-Fida' 'Imad al-Din Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'aan al-Azim (4 vols., Cairo, N.D.). 1:80

Classification according to the number of reporters involved in each stage of isnad

- 1-mutawatir (consecutive)**
- 2-Ahad (isolated).**

The Ahad Hadeeth is further divided into

- **1-Gharib (strange)**
- **2-Aziz (rare)**
- **3-Mashhur (famous).**

1-Mutawatir (consecutive)

A Mutawatir Hadeeth is one which is reported by such a large number of people that they cannot be expected to agree upon a lie, all of them together.

al-Jaza'iri, p.33

Al-Ghazali (d.505) stipulates that a mutawatir narration be known by a sizeable number of its reporters equally in the beginning, in the middle and in the end. He is correct in this stipulation because some narrations or ideas, although known as mutawatir among some people originally have no tawatur. There is no precise definition for a large number of reporters, although the numbers four, five, seven, ten, twelve, forty, seventy, among others, have been suggested as a minimum, the exact number is irrelevant because some reporters, eg. Scholars of Hadeeth carry more weight than others who are their contemporaries. The important condition is that the possibility of coincidence or "organized falsehood" be obviously negligible.

Ibn Hajr al-Askalani, Sharh Nukhbah al-Fikr (ed. M. Aud & MG Sabbagh, Damascus. 1410/1990] p.8-9

Examples of Mutawaatir practices are the five daily Prayers, Fasting, Zakaah, the Hajj and the recitation of the Qur'aan. Among the verbal Mutawatir Hadeeth, the following has been reported by at least sixty-two Companions from the Prophet, and has been widely-known amongst Muslims throughout the ages:

"Whoever invents a lie and attributes it to me intentionally, let him prepare his seat in the Fire."

Also the Hadeeth related to the description of Haud Kauthar (the Basin of Abundant Goodness) in the Hereafter, raising the hands at certain postures during the prayer, rubbing of wet hands on rubber socks during ablution, revelation of the Qur'aan in

seven modes, and the prohibition of intoxicants are further examples of verbal Mutawatir Hadeeth.

al-Jaza'iri, p.49; Muhammed b. Isma'il al-Amir al-San'ani, Taudih al-Afkar (2 vols./Cairo/1366 (2:405)

2- Ahad (isolated).

A Hadeeth Ahad or a Khabr Waahid is one which is narrated by people whose number does not reach that of the Mutawatir case. Ahad is further classified into:

1- Gharib (strange), 2- Aziz (rare) & 3-Mashhur (famous).

A Hadeeth is termed Gharib (scarce, strange) when only a single reporter is found relating it at some stage of the Sanad. For Example the saying of the Prophet , **“Travel is a piece of punishment”** is Gharib; the Sanad of this Hadeeth contains only one reporter in each stage:

Maalik --- Yahya b. Abi Salih --- Abu Hurairah --- The Prophet (sallahu alaihe-wa-sallam)

With regard to this Sanad, the Hadeeth is Saheeh, although most Gharib Hadeeth are weak. Imaam Ahmed said, “Do not write these Gharib Hadeeth because they are unacceptable, and most of them are weak.”[al-Sanani 2:409]

A type of Hadeeth similar to Gharib is “fard” (solitary) and is known in three ways:
1 - It is similar to Gharib, i.e. a single person is found reporting it from a well-known Imaam.
2 - The people of one locality only are known to narrate the Hadeeth.
3 - Narrators from one locality report the Hadeeth from narrators of another locality, such as the people of Makkah reporting from the people of Medina.

al-Haakim, p.96-102

If at any stage in the Sanad, only two reporters are found to narrate the Hadeeth, it is termed as “Aziz” (rare, strong). For eg, Anas reported that the Messenger of Allaah said,

“None of you truly believes until I become more beloved to him than his father, his son, and all the people.”

The reporters Qatadah and Abdul Aziz b. Shu'aib, report this Hadeeth from Anas , and two more reporters narrate from each of them: Shu'bah and Said report from Qatadah, and Isma'il b. Ulayyah and Abd al-Warith from Abd al-Aziz, then a group of people report from each of them. [al-San'ani, 2:455]

A Hadeeth that is reported by more than two reporters is known as Mashhur (famous). According to some scholars, every narrative that comes to be known widely, whether or not it has an authentic origin, is called Mashhur. A Mashhur Hadeeth might be reported by only one or two reporters in the beginning but becomes widely-known later, unlike Gharib or Aziz, which are reported by one or two reporters in the beginning and continue to have the same number even in the times

of the Successors and those after them. For example, if only one or two reporters are found narrating Hadeeth from a reliable authority in Hadeeth such as al-Zuhree and Qatadah, the Hadeeth will remain either Gharib or Aziz. On the other hand, if a group of people narrate from them, it will be known as Mashhur. al-Iraqi, p.268

According to al-'Ala'i (Abu Sa'id Khalil Salah al-Din, d.761) a Hadeeth may be known as Aziz and Mashhur at the same time. By this he means a Hadeeth which is left with only two reporters in its isnad at every stage while it enjoys a host of reporters in other stages, such as the saying of the Prophet ,

“We are the last but (will be) the foremost on the Day of the Resurrection.”

The Hadeeth is Aziz in its first stage, as it is reported by Hudaifah b. al-Yamman and Abu Hurairah only. It later becomes Mashhur as seven people report it from Abu Hurairah (May Allaah be pleased with him) .

Classification according to the manner in which the Hadeeth has been reported

such as by using the words: haddathana (he narrated to us), akhbarana (he informed us) or sami'tu (I heard) and 'an (on the authority of), In this category fall the discussion about mudallas (concealed) and Musalsal (uniformly-linked) Hadeeth.

The first three ways of reporting, i.e. indicate that the reporter personally heard from his teacher, whereas the mode can denote either hearing in person or through another reporter.

1- Mudallas Hadeeth and Tadlis

A Mudallas (Concealed) Hadeeth is one, which is weak due to the uncertainty caused by Tadlis. Tadlis (concealing) refers to an isnad where a reporter has concealed the identity of his teacher. Ibn al-Salah describes two types of Tadlis:

a) Tadlis al-Isnad :

A person reports from a teacher (whom he met) but reported that which he did not hear from him, or a person reports from a contemporary of his whom he did not meet, in such a way as to create the impression that he heard the Hadeeth in person. A Mudallis (one who practices Tadlis) here usually uses the mode An (on the authority of) or (he said) to conceal the truth about the Sanad.

b) Tadlis al-Shuyukh.

The reporter does not mention his teacher by name, but uses a less well-known name, by-name, nick-name, etc., in order not to disclose his teacher's identity. al-Iraqi, p.96

c) Tadlis al-Taswiyyah

Al-Iraqi (d.806) in his notes on Muqaddimad Ibn al-Salah, adds a this type of Tadlis. To explain it let us assume a Sanad which contains a trustworthy reporter reporting from a weak authority, who in turn reports from another trustworthy authority. Now the reporter of this Sanad omits the intermediate weak authority, leaving it apparently consisting of reliable authorities. He plainly shows that he heard from the trustworthy authority but uses the mode, "on the authority of", to link his immediate chain to the trustworthy one. To an average student, this Sand seems free of any

doubt or discrepancy. This is known to have been practiced by Baqiyyah b. al-Walid, Walid b. Muslim, al-A'mash and al-Thauri.

Reliable Authority Reliable Authority

Ibn Hajar classifies those who practised Tadlees into five groups in his essay *Tabaqat al-Mudallisin*:

- Those who are known to do it occasionally, such as Yahya b. Sa'id al-Ansari
- Those who are accepted by the Muhaddithoon, either because of their good reputation and relatively few cases of Tadlees, eg. Sufyan ath-Thauri (d.161) or because they reported from authentic authorities only, eg. Sufyan Ibn Uyainah (d.198).
- Those who practised it a great deal, and the Muhaddithoon have accepted such Hadeeth from them which were reported with a clear mention of hearing directly. Among these are Abul' Zubair al-Makki, whose Hadeeth narrated from the Companion Jabir b. Abdullah have been collected in *Saheeh al-Muslim*. Opinions differ as to whether they are acceptable or not.
- Similar to the previous category, but the Muhaddithoon agree that their Hadeeth are to be rejected unless they clearly admit of their hearing, such as by saying, "I heard"; an example of this category is Baqiyyah b. al-Walid.
- Those who are disparaged due to other reasons apart from Tadlees, their Hadeeth are rejected, even though they claim of hearing them directly. Exempted from them are reporters such as Ibn Lahi'ah, the famous Egyptian Judge, whose weakness is found to be of a lesser degree. Ibn Hajar gives the names of 152 such reporters in *Tabaqat al-Mudallisin* (Cairo - 1322), p.7f.

Tadlees especially of those in the last three categories, is so disliked that Shu'bah (d.170) said, "Tadlees is the brother of lying" and "To commit adultery is more favourable to me than to report by way of Tadlees." [al-Iraqi, p.98].

2- Musalsal

A Musalsal (uniformly -linked) Sanad is one in which all the reporters, as well as the Messenger of Allaah use the same mode of transmission such as 'an, haddathana, etc., repeat any other additional statement or remark, or act in a particular manner while narrating the Hadeeth.

Al-Haakim gives eight examples of such Sanads, each having a different characteristic repeated feature:

- use of the phrase sami'tu (I heard)
- the expression "stand and pour water for me so that I may illustrate the way my teacher performed ablution"
- haddathanna (he narrated to us)
- amarani (he commanded me)
- holding one's beard
- illustrating by counting on five fingers
- the expression, "I testify that"
- interlocking of fingers.

Knowledge of Musalsal helps in discounting the possibility of Tadlis

Classification according to the nature of the matn and isnad

eg. additional words added by a reliable narrator, known as ziyadatu thiqah; or opposition by a lesser authority to a more reliable one, known as Shadhdh (irregular), In some cases a text containing an unreasonable remark or obviously-erroneous statement is rejected by the Muhaddithoon oversight without consideration of its Sanad: such a Hadeeth is known as Munkar (denounced). If an expression is proved to be an addition by a reporter to the text, it is declared as Mudraj (interpolated).

Shadhdh irregular & Munkar denounced.

According to al-Shafi'i, a shadhdh ("irregular") Hadeeth is one which is reported by a trustworthy person but goes against the narration of a person more reliable than him. It does not include a Hadeeth which is unique in its contents and is not narrated by someone else (al-Haakim, p.119). In the light of this definition, the well-known hadith,

"Actions are (judged) according to their intentions" ... is not considered shadhdh since it has been narrated by Yahya b. Sa'id al-Ansari from Muhammad b. Ibrahim al-Taimi from 'Alqamah from 'Umar, all of whom are trustworthy authorities, although each one of them is the only reporter at that stage.

Ibn Kathir, Ikhtisar 'Ulum al-Hadith (ed. Ahmad Shakir, 2nd imp., Cairo, 1951), p.57

An example of a shadhdh Hadeeth according to some scholars is one which Abu Dawood and al-Tirmidhi transmit, through the following isnad:

'Abdul Wahid b. Ziyad --- al-A'mash --- Abu Salih --- Abu Hurairah --- the Prophet
"When one of you offers the two rak'ahs before the Dawn Prayer, he should lie down on his right side."

Regarding it, al-Baihaqi said, "'Abdul Wahid has gone against a large number of people with this narration, for they have reported the above as an act of the Prophet, and not as his saying; 'Abdul Wahid is alone amongst the trustworthy students of al-A'mash in narrating these words." al-Suyuti, 1:235; M. A. Salih. p. 260

According to Ibn Hajar, if a narration which goes against another authentic Hadeeth is reported by a weak narrator, it is known as munkar (denounced) al-San'ani, 2:3.

Traditionists as late as Imaam Ahmad used to simply label any Hadeeth of a weak reporter as munkar

al-San'ani., 2:6.

Sometimes, a Hadeeth is labelled as munkar because of its contents being contrary to general sayings of the Prophet .

Al-Khatib (d. 463) quotes al-Rabi' b. Khaitham (d. 63) as saying, **"Some Hadeeth have a light like that of day, which we recognise; others have a darkness like that of night which makes us reject them."**

He also quotes al-Auza'i (d. 157) as saying, "**We used to listen to Hadeeth and present them to fellow traditionists, just as we present forged coins to money-changers: whatever they recognise of them, we accept, and whatever they reject of them, we also reject.**" al-Khatib, p. 431

Ibn Kathir quotes the following two Hadeeth in his Tafsir, the first of which is acceptable, whereas the second contradicts it and is unreliable:

(i) Ahmad --- Abu Mu'awiyah --- Hisham b. 'Urwah --- Fatimah bint al-Mundhir --- Asma' bint Abi Bakr, who said, "My mother came (to Madinah) during the treaty Quraish had made, while she was still a polytheist. So I came to the Prophet and said to him, 'O Messenger of Allah, my mother has come willingly: should I treat her with kindness?' He replied, 'Yes! Treat her with kindness'."

(ii) Al-Bazzar --- 'Abdullah b. Shabib --- Abu Bakr b. Abi Shaibah --- Abu Qatadah al-'Adawi --- the nephew of al-Zuhri --- al-Zuhri --- 'Urwah --- 'A'ishah and Asma', both of whom said, "Our mother came to us in Madinah while she was a polytheist, during the peace treaty between the Quraish and the Messenger of Allah . So we said, 'O Messenger of Allah, our mother has come to Madinah willingly: do we treat her kindly?' He said, 'Yes! Treat her kindly'."

Ibn Kathir then remarks: "This (latter) hadith, to our knowledge is reported only through this route of al-Zuhri --- 'Urwah --- 'A'ishah. It is a munkar Hadeeth with this text because the mother of 'A'ishah is Umm Ruman, who was already a Muslim emigrant, while the mother of Asma' was another woman, as mentioned by name in other Hadeeth " Ibn Kathir, Tafsir. 4:349

In contrast to a munkar Hadeeth, if a reliable reporter is found to add something which is not narrated by other authentic sources, the addition is accepted as long as it does not contradict them; and is known as ziyadatu thiqah (an addition by one trustworthy)

Ibn Kathir, Ikhtisar, p. 62

An example is the Hadeeth of al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud : "I asked the Messenger of Allah , "Which action is the most virtuous?' He said, 'The Prayer at its due time'." Two reporters, Al-Hasan b. Makdam and Bindar, reported it with the addition, "... at the beginning of its time"; both Al-Hakim and Ibn Hibban declared this addition to be sahih.

al-Suyuti, 1:248

Mudraj

An addition by a reporter to the text of the saying being narrated is termed mudraj (interpolated)

al-Haakim, p.39

. For example, al-Khatib relates via Abu Qattan and Shababah --- Shu'bah --- Muhammad b. Ziyad --- Abu Hurairah --- The Prophet , who said,

"Perform the ablution fully; woe to the heels from the Fire!"

Al-Khatib - rahimahullaah - then remarks, "The statement, 'Perform the ablution fully' is made by Abu Hurairah , while the statement afterwards, 'Woe to the heels from the Fire!', is that of the Prophet . The distinction between the two is understood from the narration of al-Bukhari, who transmits the same hadith and quotes Abu Hurairah as saying, "Complete the ablution, for Abu'l-Qasim said: "Woe to the heels from the Fire!" al-Iraqi, p.129f

Such an addition may be found in the beginning, in the middle, or at the end, often in explanation of a term used. Idraj (interpolation) is mostly found in the text, although a few examples show that such additions are found in the isnad as well, where the reporter grafts a part of one isnad into another.

A reporter found to be in the habit of intentional idraj is generally unacceptable and considered a liar - al-Suyuti, 1:274

However, the traditionalists are more lenient towards those reporters who may do so forgetfully or in order to explain a difficult word.

Classification according to a hidden defect found in the isnad or text of a Hadeeth

Although this could be included in the previous categories, a Hadeeth mu'allal (defective Hadeeth) is worthy to be explained separately.

Sheikh ul-Islaam, Ibn Taimeeyah, "They (the scholars of Hadeeth) have even considered some ahaadeeth reported by reliable (thiqah), true (sideeq) and correct narrators (al-dhabt) to be weak in which they are able to find out some defects. The science that discusses these reasons is called *'ilm ilal al-hadeeth*, the science of the hidden defects of hadeeth, which is one of their noblest disciplines. A hadeeth which is reported by a reliable and correct narrator sometimes has errors which can be easily detected. It is for instance, known that the Prophet married Maymoonah (radiyallaahu 'anha) when he was putting on ihraam, and prayed two rak'ahs in the Haram. Hence the hadeeth of Ibn 'Abbaas would be regarded as incorrect which says that the Prophet married Maymoonah (radiyallaahu 'anha) when he had put off the ihraam, and did not pray two rak'ahs'

For the ahadeeth on the subject see Sunan at-Tirmidhi , Hajj, 23, 24; Sunan Abu Dawood, Manaasik, 21, 38; Ahmad, Musnad, vol 6:393; , Sunan al-Daarimee, 21; Sunan an-Nass'ai Manaasik, 90; Saheeh al-Bukhari , Sayd, 12, Nikah, 30, Maghaazee, 43; Saheeh al-Muslim, Nikah: 46,47,48." Sheikh ul-Islaam, Ibn Taimeeyah in Muqadamah fee Usool at-Tafseer, p.38

Before discussing ma'lul (defective) Hadeeth, a brief note on mudtarib (shaky) and maqlub (reversed) Hadeeth would help in understanding ma'lul.

Mudtarib

According to Ibn Kathir, if reporters disagree about a particular shaikh, or about some other points in the isnad or the text, in such a way that none of the opinions can be preferred over the others, and thus there is uncertainty about the isnad or text, such a hadith is called mudtarib (shaky). Ibn Kathir, Ikhtisar, p. 72

For example with regard to idtirab in the isnad, it is reported on the authority of Abu Bakr that he said, "O Messenger of Allah! I see you getting older" He replied, "What made me old are Surah Hud and its sister surahs."

Al-Daraqutni says, "This is an example of a mudtarib hadith. It is reported through Abu Ishaq, but as many as ten different opinions are held about this isnad: some report it as mursal, others as muttasil; some take it as musnad of Abu Bakr, others as musnad of Said or 'A'ishah. Since all these reports are comparable in weight, it is difficult to prefer one above another. Hence, the hadith is termed as mudtarib."

As an example of idtirab in the text, Rafi' b. Khadij said that the Messenger of Allah forbade the renting of land. The reporters narrating from Rafi' give different statements, as follows:

1. Hanzalah asked Rafi', "What about renting for gold and silver?" He replied, "It does not matter if it is rent for gold and silver."
2. Rifa'ah --- Rafi' --- the Prophet, who said, "Whoever owns a piece of land should cultivate it, give it to his brother to cultivate, or abandon it."
3. Salim --- Rafi' --- his two uncles --- the Prophet, who forbade the renting of farming land.
4. The son of Rafi' --- Rafi'--- the Prophet who forbade the renting of land.
5. A different narration by Rafi' from the Prophet, who said, "Whoever owns a piece of land should either cultivate it or give it to his brother to cultivate. He must not rent it for a third or a quarter of the produce, nor for a given quantity of the produce."
6. Zaid b. Thabit said, "May Allah forgive Rafi'! I am more aware of the Hadeeth than he, what happened was that two of the Ansar (Helpers) had a dispute, so they came to the Prophet, who said after listening to their cases, 'If this is your position, then do not rent the farms.' Rafi' has only heard the last phrase, i.e., 'Do not rent the farms'."

Because of these various versions, Ahmad b. Hanbal - rahimahullah - said, "The ahadith reported by Rafi' about the renting of land are mudtarib. They are not to be accepted, especially when they go against the well-established Hadeeth of Ibn 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah gave the land of Khaibar to the Jews on condition that they work on it and take half of the produce."

Ibn 'Abdul Barr, Al-Tamhid, 3:32, as quoteo by Luqman al-Salafi, Ihtirnam al-Muhaddithin bi Naqd al-Hadith, p. 381f.

Maqlub

A hadith is known as maqlub (changed, reversed) when its isnad is grafted to a different text or vice versa, or if a reporter happens to reverse the order of a sentence in the text.

As an example relating to the text, in his transmission of the famous hadith describing the seven who will be under the shelter of Allah on the Day of Judgment, Muslim reports one of the categories as, "a man who conceals his act of charity to

such an extent that his right hand does not know what his left hand gives in charity.” This sentence has clearly been reversed by a reporter, because the correct wording is recorded in other narrations of both al-Bukhari and Muslim as follows: “... that his left hand does not know what his right hand gives ...”

Ibn Kathir, Ikhtisar, p. 88

The famous trial of al-Bukhari by the scholars of Baghdad provides a good example of a maqlub isnad. The traditionists, in order to test their visitor, al-Bukhari, appointed ten men, each with ten Hadeeth. Now, each hadith (text) of these ten people was prefixed with the isnad of another. Imam al-Bukhari listened to each of the ten men as they narrated their Hadeeth and denied the correctness of every hadith. When they had finished narrating these ahadith, he addressed each person in turn and recounted to him each of his ahadith with its correct isnad. This trial earned him great honour among the scholars of Baghdad

Ibn Kathir, Ikhtisar, p. 87

Other ways in which Hadeeth have been rendered maqlub are by replacement of the name of a reporter with another, e.g. quoting Abu Hurairah as the reporter from the Prophet although the actual reporter was someone else, or by reversal of the name of the reporter, e.g. mentioning Walid b. Muslim instead of Muslim b. Walid, or Ka'b b. Murrah instead of Murrah b. Ka'b

Shams al-Din Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sakhawi, Fath al-Maghith Sharh Alfiiyah al-Hadith li l-Iraqi (Lucknow, N.D.), 1:278..

Ma'lul or Mu'allal

Ibn al-Salah says, “A ma'lul (defective) hadith is one which appears to be sound, but thorough research reveals a disparaging factor.” Such factors can be:

1. declaring a Hadeeth musnad when it is in fact mursal, or marfu' when it is in fact mauqf;
2. showing a reporter to narrate from his shaikh when in fact he did not meet the latter; or attributing a Hadeeth to one Companion when it in fact comes through another.

'Uthman b. 'Abd al-Rahman al-Dimashqi Ibn al-Salah, 'Ulum al-Hadith (commonly known as Maqaddimah ed. Al-Tabbakh. Halab, 1350), p. 116

Ibn al-Madini (d. 324) says that such a defect can only be revealed if all the isnads of a particular Hadeeth are collated. In his book al-'Ilal, he gives thirty-four Successors and the names of those Companions from whom each of them heard Hadeeth directly. For example, he says that al-Hasan al-Basri (d. 110, aged 88) did not see 'Ali (d. 40), although he adds that there is a slight possibility that he may have seen him during his childhood in Madinah

Ali b. 'Abdullah b. Ja'far Ibn al-Madini, Kirab al- Ilal p.58.

Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani mentions that the Imams of Hadith have agreed that al-Hasan al-Basri did not hear a single word from 'Ali.

Such information is very important, since for example, many Sufi traditions go back to al-Hasan al-Basri, who is claimed to report directly from 'Ali .

Being a very delicate branch of Mustalah al-Hadith, only a few well-known traditionists such as Ibn al-Madini (d. 234), Ibn Abi Hatim al-Razi (d. 327), al-Khallal (d. 311) and al-Daraqutni (d. 385), have compiled books about it. Ibn Abi Hatim, in his Kitab al-'Ilal, has given 2840 examples of ma'lul Hadeeth about a range of topics.

An example of a ma'lul hadith is one transmitted by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah , who reports the Prophet as saying, "Allah created the land on Saturday; He created the mountains on Sunday; He created the trees on Monday; He created the things entailing labour on Tuesday; He created the light (or fish) on Wednesday; He scattered the beasts in it (the earth) on Thursday; and He created Adam after the afternoon of Friday, the last creation at the last hour of the hours of Friday, between the afternoon and night."

Sahih Muslim, (english trans.) vol.4, no.1462, Sharh Nawawi, 17:133

Regarding it, Ibn Taimiyyah says, "Men more knowledgeable than Muslim, such as al-Bukhari and Yahya b.Ma'in, have criticized it. Al-Bukhari said, 'This saying is not that of the Prophet , but one of Ka'b al-Ahbar'

Sheikh ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyyah, Majmu' Fatawa (37 vols., ed. 'Abd al-Rahman b. Qasim & his son Muhammad Riyad, 1398), 18:18f.

Ibn Taimiyyah mentions that Imam Muslim's authentication of this hadith is supported by Abu Bakr al-Anbari & Ibn al-Jauzi, whereas al-Baihaqi supports those who disparaged it.

Al-Albani says that it was Ibn al-Madini who criticized it, whereas Ibn Ma'in did not (the latter was known to be very strict, both of them were shaikhs of al-Bukhari). He further says that the Hadeeth is sahih, and does not contradict the Qur'an, contrary to the probable view of the scholars who criticized the hadith, single what is mentioned in the Qur'an is the creation of the heavens and the earth in six days, each of which may be like a thousand years, whereas the hadith refers to the creation of the earth only, in days which are shorter than those referred to in the Qurtan (Silsilah al-Ahadith as-Sahihah, no. 1833)

Classification according to the Reliability and Memory of the Reporters

The finally classification is according to the reliability and memory of the reporters; the judgment on a Hadeeth depends crucially on this factor. Verdicts such as Saheeh (sound), Hasan (good), Da'if (weak) and maudu' (fabricated) rest mainly upon the nature of the reporters in the isnad.

Among the early traditionists, mostly of the first two centuries, Hadeeth were classified into two categories only: Saheeh and da'if; al-Tirmidhi was to be the first to distinguish Hasan from da 'if. This is why traditionists and jurists such as Ahmad, who seemed to argue on the basis of da'if Hadeeth sometimes, were in fact basing their argument on the Hadeeth which were later to be known as Hasan.

Ad-Dhahabi, p. 27

We now examine in more detail these four important classes of Hadeeth.

Saheeh

Imaam Al-Shafi'i - rahimahullah - states the following requirement in order for a Hadeeth which is not mutawatir to be acceptable, he says

"Someone has asked me: Will you state what the minimum proof for a narrative related by a few [transmitters] (i.e. a Ahad Hadeeth) should be in order to be binding upon scholars?

[Shafi'i] replied: [The minimum proof] is that the narrative must be related by one person from another [before him] back to the Prophet , or to one next to the Prophet. Such a person might be one of the Prophet's companions

The proof for such a tradition is not established unless certain conditions are fulfilled: He who relates a tradition must merit confidence in his religion, and be known as reliable in his transmitting, comprehending what he transmits, aware of any pronunciation that might change the meaning of the tradition, capable of transmitting the tradition word for word as he heard it, not merely transmitting [in his own words] its meaning; for if he transmits only the meaning and is unaware of what might alter its sense, he might unknowingly transmute the lawful into the unlawful and vice-versa so if he transmits word for word there remains no ground for fearing a change of the meaning. [Furthermore], he should have learned the tradition by heart, if he relates it from memory, and should have memorized the written text [of traditions] if he relates it in its written form; when he participates with others in relating a tradition from memory, that which they relate must agree. He must not be an interpolator* attributing to someone whom he has not met that which he has not heard from him, or attributing to the Prophet something different from that which reliable authorities relate from him. The same [qualifications] must be possessed by transmitters preceding him until the transmitter relates back to the Prophet or to him who carries it back closest to him, for each of them vouches for the tradition as he received it and verifies it for him to whom he passes it. So none of them should lack [the qualifications] I have just described."

Ar-Risaalah, by Imaam Shafi'i (english trans.) p.239-240 (374f)

*Tadlis literally means "deceit," which consist either of interpolating the name of a trustworthy authority or eliminating the name or names of discreditable transmitters from the isnad or the chain of authorities. See Ibn Hajar, Maratib al-Mudallisin (Cairo, 1322/1904), pp. 2-4; 1

Ibn al-Salah, however, defines a Saheeh Hadeeth more precisely by saying:

"A Saheeh Hadeeth is the one which has a continuous isnad, made up of reporters of trustworthy memory from similar authorities, and which is found to be free from any irregularities (i.e. in the text) or defects (i.e. in the isnad)."

By the above definition, no room is left for any weak Hadeeth, whether, for example, it is munqati', mu'dal, mudtarib, maqlub, shadhdh, munkar, ma'lul, or contains a mudallis. The definition also excludes Hasan Hadeeth, as will be discussed under that heading.

Of all the collectors of Hadeeth, al-Bukhari and Muslim were greatly admired because of their tireless attempts to collect Saheeh Hadeeth only. It is generally understood

that the more trustworthy and of good memory the reporters, the more authentic the Hadeeth.

The isnad:

al-Shafi'i --- Malik --- Nafi' --- 'Abdullah b. 'Umar --- The Prophet (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam)

is called a "golden isnad" because of its renowned reporters

al Dhahabi, p.24

Some traditionists prefer Saheeh al-Bukhari to Saheeh Muslim because al-Bukhari always looked for those reporters who had either accompanied or met each other, even if only once in their lifetime. On the other hand, Muslim would accept a reporter who is simply found to be contemporary to his immediate authority in reporting.

al-Nawawi, Muqaddimah, p.14

The following grading is given for Saheeh Hadeeth only:

- 1. those which are transmitted by both al-Bukhari and Muslim;**
- 2. those which are transmitted by al-Bukhari only;**
- 3. those which are transmitted by Muslim only;**
- 4. those which are not found in the above two collections, but which agree with the requirements of both al-Bukhari and Muslim;**
- 5. which agree with the requirements of al-Bukhari only;**
- 6. which agree with the requirements of Muslim only; and**
- 7. those declared Saheeh by other traditionists.**

al-Tibi, al-Husain b. 'Abdullah, al-Khulasah fi usul al-Hadith (ed. Subhi al-Samaira'i, Baghdad, 1391), p. 36

Hasan

Al-Tirmidhi means by Hadeeth Hasan: a Hadeeth which is not shadhdh, nor contains a disparaged reporter in its isnad, and which is reported through more than one route of narrations

ibid, p.38

Al-Khattabi (d. 388) states a very concise definition, "It is the one where its source is known and its reporters are unambiguous. "

By this he means that the reporters of the Hadeeth should not be of a doubtful nature, such as with the mursal or munqati' Hadeeth, or one containing a mudallis.

Ibn al-Salah classifies Hasan into two categories:

1. one with an isnad containing a reporter who is mastur ("screened", i.e. no prominent person reported from him) but is not totally careless in his reporting, provided that a similar text is reported through another isnad as well;

2. one with an isnad containing a reporter who is known to be truthful and reliable, but is a degree less in his preservation/memory of Hadeeth in comparison to the reporters of Saheeh Hadeeth.

In both categories, Ibn al-Salah requires that the Hadeeth be free of any shudhudh (irregularities)

al-Nawawi, Muqadditnah, p. 43.

Al-Dhahabi, after giving the various definitions, says, "A Hasan Hadeeth is one which excels the da'if but nevertheless does not reach the standard of a Saheeh Hadeeth."

al-Dhahabi, p. 26

In the light of this definition, the following isnads are Hasan according to al-Dhahabi:

1. Bahz b. Hakam --- his father --- his grandfather;
2. 'Amr b. Shu'aib --- his father --- his grandfather;
3. Muhammad b. 'Amr --- Abu Salamah --- Abu Hurairah

Reporters such as al-Harith b. 'Abdullah, 'Asim b. Damurah, Hajjaj b. Artat, Khusaif b. 'Abd al-Rahman and Darraj Abu al-Samh attract different verdicts: some traditionists declare their Hadeeth Hasan, others declare them da'if.

Ibid., pp. 32-33

Example of a Hasan Hadeeth

Malik, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi and al-Hakim reported through their isnads from 'Amr b. Shu'aib --- his father --- his grandfather, that the Messenger of Allaah said, "A single rider is a devil (i.e. disobedient), two riders are two devils, but three makes a travelling party."

Al-Tirmidhi declares this Hadeeth to be Hasan because of the above isnad, which falls short of the requirements for a Saheeh Hadeeth. al-Albani, Silsilah al-Hadeeth as-Saheehah, no. 62.

Several weak Hadeeth may mutually support each other to the level of Hasan

According to the definitions of al-Tirmidhi and Ibn al-Salah, a number of similar weak Hadeeth on a particular issue can be raised to the degree of Hasan if the weakness found in their reporters is of a mild nature. Such a Hadeeth is known as Hasan li ghairihi (Hasan due to others), to distinguish it from the type previously discussed, which is Hasan li-dhatihi (Hasan in itself). Similarly, several Hasan Hadeeth on the same subject may make the Hadeeth Saheeh li ghairihi, to be distinguished from the previously-discussed Saheeh li dhatihi.

However, in case the weakness is severe (e.g., the reporter is accused of lying or the Hadeeth is itself shadhuh), such very weak Hadeeth will not support each other and will remain weak. For example, the well-known Hadeeth,

"He who preserves forty Hadeeth for my Ummah will be raised by Allah on the Day

of Resurrection among the men of understanding”, has been declared to be da’if by most of the traditionists, although it is reported through several routes.”

al-Jaza’iri, p.149

Da’if

A Hadeeth which fails to reach the status of Hasan is Da’if

The scholars of Hadith agree that a da’if or maudu’ Hadeeth must not be attributed to the Prophet ? , e.g. by saying, “The Prophet said: ...”, even if the meaning is considered to be correct or if it is actually the saying of a Muslim scholar, for that would be a way of lying about the Prophet (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam)

Usually, the weakness is one of discontinuity in the isnad, in which case the Hadeeth could be mursal, mu’allaq, mudallas, munqati’ or mu’dal, according to the precise nature of the discontinuity, or one of a reporter having a disparaged character, such as due to his telling lies, excessive mistakes, opposition to the narration of more reliable sources, involvement in innovation, or ambiguity surrounding his person.

The smaller the number and importance of defects, the less severe the weakness. The more the defects in number and severity, the closer the Hadeeth will be to being maudu’ (fabricated) al-Sakhawi 1:99.

Some Hadeeth, according to the variation in the nature of the weakness associated with its reporters, rank at the bottom of the Hasan grade or at the top of the da’if grade. Reporters such as ‘Abdullah b. Lahi’ah (a famous judge from Egypt), ‘Abd al-Rahman b. Zaid b. Aslam, Abu Bakr b. Abi Maryam al-Himsi, Faraj b. Fadal, and Rishdin b. Sa’d attract such types of varying ranks as they are neither extremely good preservers nor totally abandoned by the traditionists. al-Dhahabi, pp. 33-34

Maudu’

Al-Dhahabi defines maudu’ (fabricated, forged) as the term applied to a Hadeeth, the text of which goes against the established norms of the Prophet’s sayings, or its reporters include a liar, e.g. the forty Hadeeth known as Wad’aniyyah or the small collection of Hadeeth which was fabricated and claimed to have been reported by ‘Ali al-Rida, the eighth Imam of the Ithna ‘Ashari Shi’ah. *ibid.*, p. 36.

A number of traditionists have collected fabricated Hadeeth separately in order to distinguish them from other Hadeeth; among them are Ibn al-Jauzi in al-Maudu’at,

al-Jauzaqani in Kitab al-Abatil, al-Suyuti in al-La'ali al-Masnu'ah fi 'l-Hadeeth al-Maudu'ah, and 'Ali al-Qari in al-Maudu'at.

Some of these Hadeeth were known to be spurious by the confession of their inventors. For example, Muhammad b. Sa'id al-Maslub used to say, "It is not wrong to fabricate an isnad for a sound statement." al-Sakhawi 1:264

Another notorious inventor, 'Abd al-Karim Abu '1-Auja, who was killed and crucified by Muhammad b. Sulaiman b. 'Ali, governor of Basrah, admitted that he had fabricated four thousand Hadeeth declaring lawful the prohibited and vice-versa *ibid.*, 1:275.

Maudu' Hadeeth are also recognised by external evidence related to a discrepancy found in the dates or times of a particular incident an-Nawawi, Taqrib, 1:275

For example, when the second caliph, 'Umar b. Al-Khattab decided to expel the Jews from Khaibar, some Jewish dignitaries brought a document to 'Umar apparently proving that the Prophet had intended that they stay there by exempting them from the jizyah (tax on non-Muslims under the rule of Muslims); the document carried the witness of two Companions, Sa'd b. Mu'adh and Mu'awiyah b. Abi Sufyan . 'Umar rejected the document outright, knowing that it was fabricated because the conquest of Khaibar took place in 6 AH, whereas Sa'd b. Mu'adh died in 3 AH just after the Battle of the Trench, and Mu'awiyah embraced Islam in 8 AH, after the conquest of Makkah!."

An Important Argument regarding the Ahad Hadeeth

Taken from, "An Introduction to the Principles of Tafseer", by Sheikh ul-Islam Ibn Taimeeyah. p.32

Mursal [1] Hadeeth which have been transmitted through numerous channels, and not been produced by collusion between the transmitters, and whose agreement with each other is merely incidental, are definitely true. For a Hadeeth is either authentic and true to the event, or it is a lie willfully concocted by the narrator, or erroneous wherein he has inadvertently committed some error. The report which is free from deliberate lie and accidental error is certainly

Hence if a Hadeeth is reported through two or more channels, and if the transmitters are not found to have conspired, and if it is true that agreements on such things did not happen without collaboration, simply by chance, we can be sure of its authenticity. Suppose, a person reports an event and gives details of what was said and done, then another person whom we know that he did not discuss with the first, reports the event and mentions all the words and actions the first had reported, we will conclude that the event is true and has been, on the whole, correctly reported. For if both give a wrong report, whether deliberately or by mistake, it is very unusual that one would come out with the same details as the other. This would not be possible unless one conspires with the other. To be sure, it is very much possible that a person composes one verse of poetry and another composes the same verse without knowledge of the first, or that one tells a lie and another person tells a similar lie. But it is certainly not possible that a poet composes a whole long poem with all its embellishments and charms in a particular meter and rhyme, and another poet composes the same poem without any difference in language, content or size. If

such a thing does happen, we will only conclude that one has taken it from the other. Similarly, if one produces a long report and mentions a lot of things, and another gives the same report, he has either colluded with the other or taken it from him, or else the report is true.

In this way we become sure of the authenticity of most of the Hadeeth that have been transmitted by many channels. However, it is true that a Hadeeth which has been transmitted by only one channel will not be enough; if it is mursal, or if there is some weakness in the transmission. Even multi-channelled Hadeeth do not guarantee the accuracy of words or details; these things cannot be ascertained in this way. We have to have another method to establish the accuracy of words and details. For example: we know that the battle of Badr occurred before the battle of Uhud. This is established by tawaatur (that is, by a stream of traditions with unbroken continuity). We also know that Hamzah (an uncle of the Prophet), 'Alee and Ubaydah came out to meet 'Utbah, Shaybah and al-Waleed during the combat, and that 'Alee killed al-Waleed and Hamzah killed his combatant; but we are not sure as to whom Hamzah fought, 'Utbah or Shaybah. One must keep this principle in mind: for it is the criterion by which one can ascertain the truth of many of the Hadeeth in the field of Tafseer and maghaazee as well as the reports about the life and the words of other people.

Hence, if a Hadeeth to which this principle may apply is reported from the Prophet by two men, and we come to know that neither took it from the other, we will be sure of its authenticity, particularly when it is known that the reporters do not lie, even though they might forget something or commit some error in their reporting. Those who know the companions like Ibn Mas'ood [2], Ubay ibn Ka'b [3], Ibn 'Umar [4], Jaabir [5], Abu Sa'eed [6], Abu Hurayrah [7] and others, definitely know that none of them would tell a lie about the Prophet and certainly not those Companions who are greater than them. It is just like knowing the veracity [8] of someone whom you have experienced and tested for a long time that he does not steal money, or commit robbery or give false witness, etc.

Similarly, one who knows the successors of Madeenah, Makkah, Syria and Basrah such as Abu Saalih al-Sammaan, al-A'raj, Sulaymaan ibn Yaasir [9], Zayd ibn Aslam and others like them know certainly that they would not lie in Hadeeth, not to mention those who are better than them like Muhammad ibn Seereen [10], al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad [11], Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib [12], 'Ubaydah al-Salmaanee [13], Alqamah and al-Aswad, etc. Sure, they may err; for people often forget and commit errors. However, there are huffaz (memorisers and narrators) of Hadeeth such as al-Sha'bee, al-Zuhree, Urwah, Qataadah [14] and al-Thawree who have been known to be far from error. Al-Zuhree and al-Thawree, in particular, were famous for that in their time. It has been common saying that Ibn Shihaab al-Zuhree never commits error though he has memorised a lot of Ahadeeth.

Therefore if a long Hadeeth is reported by two different channels without prior discussion between the report, it cannot be wrong on the whole, even though it might not be completely free from error. Hence, if someone relates a long and elaborate story, and another relates exactly as the first without prior discussion between them, the story as a whole cannot be wrong. Nor can its reporters be imagined to have lied if they had not previously entered into a conspiracy.

".....In fact, the great majority of the Ahadeeth which al-Bukhaaree and Muslim have in their books, have definitely been said by the Prophet. The greater part of his collection has been found to be of this kind, and scholars have approved of them and accepted them, and the ummah does not agree on something which is not true..... (If the ummah approved of a false Hadeeth) it would mean that they agreed on approving a thing which was in fact false. It would amount to a consensus (Ijma) on untruth, which is ruled out However, if there is a consensus on a Hadeeth, we would be sure that it is true in meaning as well as wording. This is the basis of the principle on which the scholars of all schools of thought agree and that if the ummah accepts a one-man Hadeeth (khabar al-waahid) and approves of it and acts upon it, it gives Knowledge.

Those who are well acquainted with the lives of the transmitters of Hadeeth can make the best use of a Hadeeth. (This is why they have collected) Hadeeth reported by transmitters who are not well known or who are quite weak in their memory, as well as Hadeeth that are Mursal. (This is because) even though by themselves these Hadeeth do not prove anything, they can nonetheless be used to strengthen other Hadeeth. Ahmed ibn Hambal has said that sometimes he notes down the Hadeeth of a person just to strengthen other Hadeeth. As an example he has mentioned the name of Abdullah ibn Lahay'ah (d.174/790) the Qadi of Egypt. The man narrated a lot of Hadeeth and was one of the best men of Hadeeth. But since his books were burned in a fire, he began to make errors in his narration. Consequently, Ahmed used his Hadeeth only as a supporting evidence.

The Important points of this section by Sheikh ul-Islam Ibn Taimeeyah are

- Ahad Hadeeths that have multi channels of transmissions are a valid source of Knowledge, if there had been no prior discussion or agreement between the reporters; because in this way the possibility of deliberate fabrication is eliminated.
 - The reliability of the reporters of the Hadeeth must be taken into consideration, because narrations by some reporters carry more weight than others.
 - Ijmaa' (consensus) of the scholars on a particular Hadeeth is another important factor, because the Messenger of Allaah said, "Indeed Allah will never unite this Ummah upon misguidance." Reported by at-Tirmidhi (no.2269) in the Book of Fitan.
 - Scholars of Hadeeth often use a Hadeeth, which suffers from error caused by weakness of memory as a supportive evidence.
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FOOTNOTES

[1] If in the Sanad of a particular Hadeeth, the link between the Successor (Tabi'ee) and the Prophet is missing, the Hadeeth is Mursal (hurried), eg. when a Successor (Tabi'ee) says, "The Prophet said" A detailed discussion on the authority of a Mursal Hadeeth in light of the various scholars of Hadeeth shall follow after this section

[2] Abu Abdur-Rehman ibn Masood (d.32/652) was one of the earliest six to embrace Islaam, was in the service of the Prophet for many years. He was among the most Knowledgeable Companions, of the Qur'aan. Umer sent him to Koofah to teach the Qur'aan, where he served as a qadee and incharge of the government treasury

[3] Ubay ibn Ka'b al-Ansaaree, one of the scribes of the Qur'aan who wrote part of it at the Prophet's bidding, taught the Qur'aan at Madeenah. He died during the rule of 'Umar b. al-Khattaab.

[4] Abdullah ibn Umer b. al-Khattab (d.74/693) one of the most outstanding young Companions, and a learned scholar known for his piety and strict imitation of the Prophetic precepts, distinguished himself as a narrator of Hadeeth, next only to the most prolific narrator, Abu Hurairah .

[5] Jaabir b. 'Abdullaah al-Ansaaree (16/607-78/687) one of the prolific transmitters of Hadeeth, taught Hadeeth at the mosque of the Prophet at Madeenah

[6] Abu Sa'eed Sa'd ibn Maalik b. Sinaan al-Khudree was one of those men who were in the service of the Prophet at different times. He has narrated quite a lot of hudeeth. He died at Madeenah

[7] Abu Hurayrah (d.58/678), the greatest narrator of Hadeeth has narrated according to a very cautious recent study, some 1236 Ahadeeth ('Azami, Studies in Hadeeth Methodology and literature, Indianapolis, American Trust Publication, 1977, p.26.)

[8] ve•rac•i•ty -ties 1 : devotion to truth : TRUTHFULNESS 2 : conformity with fact : ACCURACY 3 : something true

[9] Abu Saalih Zakwaan b. 'Abdullaah al-Sammaan (d.203/818), Abu Hazi Abd al-Rahmaan b. Hurmooz al-A'raj (d. 117/735), and Sulaymaan b. Yaasir (d. 107/725) are all from Madeenah and are well known narrators of Hadeeth.

[10] Muhammad ibn Seereen (d.110/728), a very distinguished successor and scholar of Hadeeth was own for his piety and devotions

[11] Al-Qaasim b. Muhammad, the grandson of Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq ? and a scholar of Hadeeth and fiqh died in 106/724

[12] Abu Muhammed Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib (d.94/712), a great scholar of Hadeeth, fiqh and the Qur'aan is hailed as the leader of the Successors (Sayyid al-Tabi'een).

[13] Ubaydah b. 'Amr Salmaanee, a well known narrator of Hadeeth, a faqeeh and a judge from Yemen died the year 72/691

[14] Abu I-Khattaab Qataadah b. Du'amah (d. 118/736), a man of extraordinary memory was the most distinguished narrator of Hadeeth at Basra

Authenticity of a Mursal Hadeeth

There has been a great deal of discussion amongst the scholars regarding the authenticity of the Mursal Hadeeth (pl. Marasil) since it is quite probable that a Successor might have omitted two names, those of an elder Successor and a Companion, rather than just one name, that of a Companion.

If the Successor is known to have omitted the name of a Companion only, then the Hadeeth is held to be authentic, for a Successor can only report from the Prophet through a Companion; the omission of the name of the Companion does not affect the authenticity of the isnad since all Companions are held to be trustsvorthy and reliable, by both Qur'anic injunctions and sayings of the Prophet .

However, opinions vary in the case where the Successor might have omitted the names of two authorities (since not all the Successors were reliable in matters of Hadith). For example, two widely-differing positions on this issue are:

1. The Marasil of elder Successors such as Sa'id b. Al-Musayyab (d. 94) and 'Ata' b. Abi Rabah (d. 114) are acceptable because all their Marasil, after investigation, are found to come through the Companions only. However, the Marasil of younger Successors are only acceptable if the names of their immedeiate authorities are known through other sources; if not, they are rejected outright.
2. The Marasil of Successors and those who report from them are acceptable without any investigation at all. This opinion is supported by the Kufi school of traditionists, but is severely attacked by the majority.

To be precise in this issue, let us investigate in detail the various opinions regarding the Mursal Hadith:

- 1) The opinion held by Imam Malik and all Maliki jurists is that the Mursal of a trustworthy person is valid as proof and as justification for a practice, just like a musnad hadith.

Yusuf b. 'Abdullah Ibn 'Abdul Barr, Tajrid al-Tamhid lima fi I-Muwatta' min al-Asanid (Cairo, 1350), 1:2

This view has been developed to such an extreme that to some of them, the mursal is even better than the musnad, based on the following reasoning:

"the one who reports a musnad hadith leaves you with the names of the reporters for further investigation and scrutiny, whereas the one who narrates by way of Irsal, being a knowledgeable and trustworthy person himself, has already done so and found the hadith to be sound. In fact, he saves you from further research."ibid

2) Imaam Abu Hanifah (d. 150) holds the same opinion as Malik; he accepts the Mursal Hadith whether or not it is supported by another hadith. Al-Suyuti, 1:198

3) Imam al-Shafi'i (d. 204) has discussed this issue in detail in his al-Risalah; he requires the following conditions to be met before accepting a mursal hadith:

[A] In the narrative, he requires that one of the following conditions be met:
that it be reported also as musnad through another isnad;
that its contents be reported as mursal through another reliable source with a different isnad;
that the meaning be supported by the sayings of some Companions;
that most scholars hold the same opinion as conveyed by the mursal Hadeeth.

[B] Regarding the narrator, he requires that one of the following conditions be met:
that he be an elder Successor
that if he names the person missing in the isnad elsewhere, he does not usually name an unknown person or someone not suitable for reporting from acceptably that he does not contradict a reliable person when he happens to share with him in a narration.

For the discussion in detail, see al-Shafi'i, Al-Risalah (ed. Ahmad Shakir, Cairo, 1358/1940, pp. 461-470; English translation: M. Khadduri, 2nd ed., Islamic Texts society, Cambridge, 1987, pp. 279-284, where the mursal hadith has been translated as "interrupted tradition"

On the basis of these arguments, al-Shafi'i accepts the Irsal of Sa'id b. Al-Musayyab, one of the elder Successors. For example, al-Shafi'i considers the issue of selling meat in exchange for a living animal: he says that Malik told him, reporting from Zaid b. Aslam, who reported from Ibn al-Musayyab that the Messenger of Allah forbade the selling of meat in exchange for an animal. He then says, "This is our opinion, for the Irsal of Ibn al-Musayyib is fine."
al-Suyuti, 1:199; Muhammad b. Mustafa al-Ghadamsi, Al-Mursal min al-Hadith (Darif Ltd., London. N.D.), p 71

4) Imam Ahmad b. Hambal (d. 241) accepts mursal and (other) da'if (weak) Hadeeth if nothing opposing them is found regarding a particular issue, preferring them to qiyas (analogical deduction). By da'if here is meant ahadith which are not severely weak, e.g. batil, munkar, or maudu', since Imam Ahmad classified Hadeeth into sahih and da'if rather than into sahih, hasan and da'if, the preference of most later traditionists. Hence, the category da'if in his view applied to ahadith which were relatively close to being sahih, and included many Hadeeth which were classed as hasan by other scholars.

Ibn al-Qayyim, I'lam al-Muwaqqi'in (2nd ed., 4 vols. in 2, Dar al-Fikr, (1397/1977), 1:31

Overlooking this fact has caused misunderstanding about Imam Ahmad's view on the place of da'if Hadeeth in rulings of Fiqh and in matters of Fada'il al-A'mal (virtues of various acts of worship).

5) Ibn Hazm (d. 456) rejects the Mursal Hadeeth outright; he says that the Mursal is unacceptable. Whether it comes through Sa'id b. Al-Musayyib or al-Hasan al-Basri.

To him, even the Mursal which comes through someone who was not well-known to be amongst the Companions would be unacceptable.

Ibn Hazm Al-Ihkam fi Usul al-Ahkam (Maktaba al-Sa'adah, Cairo, 1345), 2: 135

6) Abu Dawud (d . 275) accepts the Mursal under two conditions:
that no musnad hadith is found regarding that issue; or
that if a musnad hadith is found, it is not contradicted by the mursal hadith.

Al-Hazimi, Shurut al-A'immah al-Khamsah (ed. M.Z. al-Kauthari, Cairo, N:D.), p. 45

7) Ibn Abi Hatim (d. 327) does not give a specific opinion about the Mursal Hadith. However, he did collect an anthology of 469 reporters of hadith, including four female reporters, whose narratives were subjected to criticism due to Irsal. This collection is known as Kitab al-Marasil.

8) Al-Hakim (d. 405) is extremely reluctant to accept the Mursal Hadith except in the case of elder Successors. He holds, on the basis of the Qur'an, that knowledge is based on what is heard (directly), not on what is reported (indirectly). In this regard, he quotes Yazid b. Harun who asked Hammad b. Laith:
"O Abu Isma'il! Did Allah mention the Ahl al-Hadith (scholars of Hadith) in the Qur'an?" He replied, "Yes! Did you not hear the saying of Allah, **"If a party from every expedition remained behind. They could devote themselves to studies in religion and admonish the people when they return to them, that thus they may guard themselves (against evil)"** Soorah al-Tauba (9) : 122

{According to the different interpretations of this verse, "they" here could refer to those who stay behind, or those who go forth}

This concerns those who set off to seek knowledge, and then return to those who remained behind in order to teach them. Al-Hakim then remarks, "This verse shows that the acceptable knowledge is the one which is being heard, not just received by way of Irsal." al-Hakim, p. 26

9) Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (d. 462) strongly supports the view of those who reject the Mursal except if it comes through an elder Successor. He concludes, after giving a perusal of different opinions about this issue, "What we select out of these sayings is that the Mursal is not to be practised, nor is it acceptable as proof. We say that Irsal leads to one reporter being ambiguous; if he is ambiguous, to ascertain his reliability is impossible. We have already explained that a narration is only acceptable if it comes through a reporter known for reliability. Hence, the Mursal should not be accepted at all"

Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, Al-Kifayah fi 'Ilm al-Riwayah (Hyderabad, 1357), p.387

Al-Khatib gives the following example, showing that a narrative which has been reported through both musnad and mursal isnads is acceptable, not because of the reliability of those who narrated it by way of Irsal but because of an uninterrupted isnad, even though it contains less reliable reporters:

The text of the hadith is: "No marriage is valid except by the consent of the guardian"; al-Khatib gives two isnads going back to Shu'bah and Sufyan al-Thauri; the remainder of each isnad is:

Sufyan al-Thauri and Shu'bah --- Abu Ishaq --- Abu Burdah --- the Prophet.

This isnad is mursal because Abu Burdah, a Successor, narrates directly from the Prophet . However, al-Khatib further gives three isnads going back to Yunus b. Abi Ishaq, Isra'il b. Yunus and Qais b. al-Rabi'; the remainder of the first isnad is:

Yunus b. Abi Ishaq --- Abu Ishaq --- Abu Burdah --- Abu Musa --- the Prophet .

The other two reporters narrate similarly, both of them including the name of Abu Musa , the Companion from whom Abu Burdah has reported. Al-Khatib goes on to prove that both al-Thauri and Shu'bah heard this hadith from Abu Ishaq in one sitting unlike the other three reporters heard it in different sittings. Hence, this addition of Abu Musa in the isnad is quite acceptable. *ibid.*, pp. 411-413

10) Ibn al-Salah (d. 643) agrees with al-Shafi'i in rejecting the Mursal Hadith unless it is proved to have come through a musnad route.

11) Ibn Taimiyyah (d. 728) classifies Mursal into three categories. He says, 'There are some acceptable, others unacceptable, and some which require further investigation:

- if it is known that the reporter does so (i.e. narrates by Irsal) from reliable authorities, then his report will be accepted;
- if he does so from both classes of authorities, i.e. reliable and unreliable, we shall not accept his narration (on its own, without further investigation), for he is narrating from someone whose reliability is unknown;
- all such mursal ahadith which go against the reports made by reliable authorities will be rejected completely."

12) Al-Dhahabi (d. 748) regards the Mursal of younger Successors such as al-Hasan al-Basri, al-Zuhri, Qatadah and Humaid al-Tawil as the weakest type of Mursal.

Later scholars such as Ibn Kathir (d. 744), al-'Iraqi (d. 806), Ibn Hajar (d. 852), al-Suyuti (d. 911), Muhammad b. Ibrahim al-Wazir (d. 840), Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi (d. 1332) and Tahir al-Jaza'iri (d. 1338) have given exhaustive discussions about this issue, but none of them holds an opinion different to those mentioned above

Rijal al-Hadeeth (the study of the reporters of Hadeeth):

Mustalah al-Hadeeth is strongly associated with Rijal al-Hadeeth (the study of the reporters of Hadeeth). In scrutinising the reporters of a Hadeeth, authenticating or disparaging remarks have been made by recognized experts among the Salaf about the reporters of Hadeeth.

- Imaam (leader)
- Hafiz (preserver)
- Reliable. trustworthy
- makes mistakes
- weak
- abandoned (by the Muhaddithoon)

- Liar, used to fabricate Hadeeth

Reporters who have been unanimously declared by statements such as the first two may contribute to a saheeh (sound) isnad. An isnad containing a reporter who is described by the last two statements is likely to be da'if jiddan (very weak) or maudu' (fabricated). Reporters who are subject to statements such as the middle two will cause the isnad to be da'if, although several of them relating the same Hadeeth independantly will often raise the rank of the Hadeeth to the lever of hasan (good). If the remarks about a perticular reporter conflict, a careful verdict has to be arrived at, after in-depth analysis.

Among the earliest available works in this field are Tarikh of Ibn Ma'in (d. 233), Tabaqat of Khalifa b. Khayyat (d. 240), Tarikh of al-Bukhari (d. 256), Kitab al-Jarh wa 'I-Ta'dil of Ibn Abi Hatim (d. 327) and Tabaqat of Muhammad b. Sa'd (d. 320).

Who Fabricated Hadeeth

From "The Criticism of Hadith" by Sheikh Suhaib Hassan

The reasons for the fabrication of Hadeeth and those groups most notorious for the fabrication of Hadeeth shall be discussed here in details. Though some of the groups date back to the time of the Calphate of Ali - radiyallahu anhu - their principles are found even today among the various deviant and innovative sects.

Political Differences :

Muslim history witnessed a lot of termoil and disorder after the murder of the third Caliph Uthman . The battles between the supporters of Ali and those of A'aisha and later with the supporters of Muawiyah led to the creation of the Shi'aa and Khawarij. A great deal of fabricated Hadeeth in favour of Ali and the house of the Prophet came from the Shi'a themselves, as admitted by a well-known Shi'aa source.

Ibn Abi al-Hadid says: "Lies were introduced in Hadeeth on merits originally by Shi'a. They in the beginning fabricated many Hadeeth in favour of their man motivated by enmity towards their opponents. When Bakriyya (the supporters of Abu Bakr) found out what Shi'a had done they fabricated on their part Hadeeth in favour of their man."

Ibn Abi al-Hadid: Sharh Nahj al-Balagha, Dar al-Kutub al-Arabiya al-Kubra, Cairo [1:135]

One of their well-known reports in this connection is the Hadeeth of Ghadir Khumm (the spring of Khumm). It says:
 "The Prophet took hold of Ali's hand in the presence of the Companions, on his way back from the farewell Hajj. He let him stand till all of them knew him. Then he said: This is my attorney and brother and the Caliph after me. So listen to him and obey him."

Ibn Katheer: al-Bidaya wal-Nihaya [7:347]

Iraq has always been the central place for the fabrication business.

A'isha is reported to have said: "O people of Iraq, the people of Sham (Syria) are better than you. A great number of the Prophet's Companions went to them. So they reported to us what we know. But to you a small number of them went. But you reported to us what we know and what we did not."

Ibn Asakir: al-Mudu'at al-Kubra [1:4]

Abd al-Rehman b al-Mahdi reported to Malik that the amount of Hadeeth he heard in Medina during forty days was no more than he heard in Iraq in one day. On hearing this, Imaam Malik remarked (addressing the people of Iraq): "From where did you get this coinage? You make it (the Hadeeth) at night and let it circulate the following day."

Ibn Taimiya: al-Muntaqa min Minhaj al-I'tidal, p.88

But it does not necessarily mean that there was no one to check this tendency. Traditionists (or the scholars of Hadeeth) like Qatada, Yahya b. Abi Kathir, Hammad b Salama, Jarir b Hazim and Hisham al-Dastawa'i at Basra and Ibn Ishaq al-Amash, Thauri, Ibn Uyaina and Isra'il at Kufa were known to be prominent figures in this field.
ibid

Khawarij on the other hand appeared to be strong opponents to both Ali and Mu'awiya, but due to their strict principle regarding lies, which was a great sin to them, they would hardly fabricate Hadeeth. Reports that they too fabricated Hadeeth are disputed, with many scholars speaking favourably about them, among them Ibn Taimiyah who is known to be very strict in giving judgment on Hadeeth.

Ibn Taimiyah : Minhaj al-Sunnah, Bulaq, 1321 A.H. [3/31]

Factions based on issues related to faith:

During the last days of the Umayyad Caliphate and throughout the Abbasid period, a number of issues related to faith and attributes of Allah were raised. Such disagreements led to the creation of various factions known as Qadariyya, Jabariyya, Mu'tazila, Murji'a, Mujassima and Mu'atila.

Contradicting Hadeeth either supporting one opinion or rejecting it were fabricated by the supporters of each opinion. As admitted by Muhriz Abu Rajaa, a strong supporter of Qadariyya (who were behind a lot of spurious Hadeeth), who says: "Don't report anything from anyone among the Qadariyyah as we used to fabricate Hadeeth in order to persuade people to believe in Qadar with an intention of receiving reward from Allah."

Ibn Hajar : Lisan al-Mizan [1:12]

Zandaqa:

They were those surrendered to the Islaamic faith but never accepted it wholeheartedly. They despised Islaam both as a belief and as a state. Hadeeth giving an unrealistic and illogical picture of Islaam were circulated by them.

Abd al-Karim b Abi al-Auja is one of them who admitted at the moment when he was put to death by the order of Muhammed b Sulaiman b Ali, the Amir of Busra: "By God I have fabricated four thousand Hadeeth forbidding what is allowed or allowing what is forbidden." Ibn al-Jauzi : [1: 31]

A ridiculous Hadeeth about the origin of the creator is regarded as being one of their daring ventures. It goes as follows: "When Allah Almighty wanted to create Himself He created the horse first and let it gallop till it sweated. Then He created Himself from its sweat."

Suyuti : al-Lail al-Masnu'a fi al-Ahadith al-Maudu'a [1: 3]

Another notorious fabricator, Muhammed b Sa'id al-Muslub, who was put to death by the Abbasid Caliph, invented the following Hadeeth on the authority of Anas that the Prophet said: "I am the seal of the Prophets except if Allah wishes." Suyuti : Tabrib, p.186

Clearly the man wanted to give credence to his claim of prophethood by adding the exceptional cause. Sayings like: "Looking at a pretty face brightens the eye and looking at an ugly face leaves it stern"

Ibn Iraq : Tanzih al-Shari'a al-Marfu'a, Cairo [1: 179]

Story-tellers :

Amazing stories full of incredible events and attractive exposition were always a source of inspiration for the common man. This is what the story-tellers used to do in the mosques. To give credence to their material, they used to precede it with a full Isnad. Most of such narrations were strongly rejected by the scholars of Hadeeth. Sulaiman b Mihran al-Amash, a famous scholar of Hadeeth, entered one of the mosques of Basra where he heard a story-teller saying: "A'mash reported to us on the authority of Abu Ishaq who reported from Abu Wa'il etc. On hearing this A'mash seated himself in the middle of the circle and started plucking hairs from his armpit. The story-teller was much annoyed and said: 'Shame! What are you doing while we are discussing matters of Knowledge? A'mash replied: "I am better than what you are." He asked: 'How?' A'mash replied, "Because I am doing what is the Sunnah while you are telling lies. I am A'mash and I reported nothing of the sort you are saying."

Suyuti : Tahdhir, p.214

It is reported that a story-teller from Baghdad was explaining the following verse: "Soon will your Lord raise you to a station of praise and glory" Soorah Israa (17): 79 He said that Allah would seat the Prophet next to Him on His Throne. This explanation was reported to Muhammed b Jarir at-Tabari (d.310 A.H) who rejected the idea outright and inscribed on his door the following line: "Glorified is He who has neither a companion nor anyone sitting beside Him on the Throne." This created a fury among the people of Baghdad who pelted his house with stones till the door was covered by them .Suyuti : Tahdhir p.161

Ignorant Ascetics (Soofis) :

In order to make people devote much of their time in non-obligatory (Nawafil) forms

of worship, the Soofis used to fabricate Hadeeth on the merits of various actions. About four hundred of such Hadeeth are known to be invented by Ghulam Khalil (d. 275 A.H.) one of the renowned Soofis of Baghdad. His death caused the whole market to close its doors in mourning." Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi : Tarikh al-Baghdad, [5: 79]

Some of the Karramiya

Karramiya : They are named after Muhammed b Karram al-Sijistani who believe that the attributes of Allah are similar to those possessed by human beings made a daring contribution to the fabrication of Hadeeth on the merits of some particular actions. They admitted that the Prophet said: "Whoever speaks a lie against me intentionally, should reserve his seat in the fire." But they remarked: "We did not speak a lie against him but instead for him."

Ibn Katheer : al-Ba'ith al-Hathith, p.79

People like Maisra b Abd Rabbihi and Abu Isma Nuh b. Abi Maryam al-Marwazi used to invent Hadeeth on the merits of each Soorah of the Qur'aan. They justified their acts by saying: "I found people deserting the Qur'aan and occupying themselves with Fiqh of Abu Hanifa and Maghazi (battles) of Ibn Ishaq, so I invented there Hadeeth for a sake of reward (from Allah)."

Another example given by Sheikh al-Albaani is, "The world is prohibited to the people of the hereafter and the hereafter is prohibited to the people of the world. And both are prohibited to the people of Allah."

Sheikh Nasir ud-Din al-Albaani : Silsilat al-Ahadeeth al-Da'ifa wal-Maudu'a, Beirut, (1384 A.H.), [1:50

Prejudice for town, race or one's Imam :

(I) Hadeeth literature contains a lot of material on the merits or otherwise of various towns, most of them proved to be fabricated. Prejudice for a certain place was indeed a major factor behind such fabrication. Hadeeth on the merits of Jeddah, Basra, Jordan, Khurasan, Asqalan, Qizwin, Nisibin, Antioch, Ibadan (Iraq) and condemning Constantinople, Tabriya, Antioch, the burnt city and San'aa comprise a large section in Ibn Iraq's work.

Ibn Iraq, pp.2:45-65

(ii) Prejudice for or against a race is another factor behind the circulation of Hadeeth such as the following:

"A Zanj (black) commits adultery when he is satisfied and steals when he is hungry. There is generosity and a helping spirit among them as well."

Ibn Iraq, p.231

"Love the Arabs for three reasons. I am an Arab. The Qur'aan is in Arabid and the people of paradise will converse in Arabic."

Ibn Iraq, 2:30

“The one who has nothing to give as charity should curse the jews instead.”

al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, 14:270

(iii) Prejudice for one’s own Imaam and hate for another is well depicted in the following fabricated Hadeeth :

“There shall be in my Ummah by the name of Muhammed b Idris (i.e. ash-Shafi’i) who will be more dangerous to my Ummah than Iblis and there shall be a man from my Ummah known as Abu Hanifah who is the lamp of my Ummah.”

Ibn Jawji in al-Mawdoo’at [1/457] & Ibn Iraq, 2:3. For a complete eplanation of the statement refer to “the Prophet’s Prayer described” by Sheikh al-Albaani

Similar factors seem to be at work in fabricated Hadeeth which support a legal issue held by one Imaam or denounce altogether the opinion of another.

Inventions for personal motives:

A good example is the Hadeeth that have been fabricated about the merits of perticular vegetables or grains. Ibn Qayyim has collected many such Hadeeth that he came accross, in his collection called ‘al-Manar al-Munif fi al-Sahih wal-Da’if’. Among them are Hadeeth that show the advantages of water-melon, lentils, fish, egg-plant, grapes, beans, broad beans, salt, leek, pomegranate and other vegetables. To quote one example, “Use the pumpkin as it brightens the head and use the lentils as it has been glorified by seventy messengers.”

Sheikh al-Albani, Silsilat il-Ahadeeth al-Da’ifah wal-Maudu’a, 1:57

Sayings of wisdom turned into Hadeeth :

Some have tried to credit to the Prophet different parables and sayings of wisdom. For example the following saying is known to be that of Harith b Kalda, a well-known doctor in the Arabs, “The abdomen is the house of disease and prevention is the head of remedies.”

Muhammed Adib Salih : Lamahat fi Usul al-Hadeeth, Damascus, 1393 A.H., p.305

Brief Biographies of the eminent Scholars of Hadeeth:

From the English Translation of Bulugh al-Maraam | Published by Daar as-Salaam

The Seven Great Imaams of Hadeeth

1. AHMAD (Ibn Hanbal):

He is Abu ‘Abdullah, Abmad bin Muhammad bin Hanbal Ash-Shaibani, known by the name Ibn Hanbal. He was a celebrated theologian, jurist and a Hadeeth scholar. He is also one of the four Fiqh Imam. Imaam Ahmad was born at Baghdad in Rabi’-ul-Awwal, 164 H. He studied the Hadeeth and Fiqh together with other Islaamic disciplines in Baghdad, then travelled to Ash-Sham and Hijaz for further studies. He was persecuted during the rule of Al-Ma’mun bin Harun Ar-Rashid for refusing to acknowledge the Bid’aa (innovation) of claiming that the Qur’aan was the creation of

Allaah * introduced by the Mu'tazila. He however, stood firm against all the trials and saved the Sunnah from the innovation of the wretched Mu 'tazila thoughts. He was the mostly persecuted and most firm one amongst all the Imam. He is most famous for collecting the Hadeeth of the Prophet compiled in the Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal, which contain 28 to 29 thousand Hadeeth. It was said that Ibn Hanbal memorized one million Hadeeth. Ibn Hanbal died in Baghdad on Friday, 12 Rabi'-ul-Awwal 241 H.

* The Creed of the Ahlus-Sunnah is that the Qur'aan is the Kalaam or Word of Allaah

2. AL-BUKHARI , Muhammad bin Isma'il:

He is the Amir-ul-Mu 'mimn in the knowledge of Hadeeth, and his full name is Abu 'Abdullah, Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Ibrahim bin Al-Mughira bin Bardizbah Al-Ju'fi Al-Bukhari. He was born in Shawwal 194 H. In Bukhara in what is now Uzbekistan. Al-Bukhari studied Hadeeth at an early age and travelled widely over the Muslim world collecting Hadeeth and compiled the most authentic ones in his book Al-Jami 'As-Sahih, which later became known as As-Sahih Al-Bukhari and contains 2602 Hadeeth which he selected from the thousands of Hadeeth that he had memorized. Al-Bukhari studied under famous Hadeeth Imam like Malik bin Anas and Yahya bin Ma'in. He died in Samarqand, the present day capital of Uzbekistan. Nowadays, the capital is Tashkent.

, the night of 'Eid-ul-Fitr, 256 H. Al-Bukhari was unique in the science of the methodology of Hadeeth and his book Al-Ja'mi 'As-Sahih is considered to be the most authentic book after the Qur'an. Saheeh al-Bukhari has been translated to English and is easily available.

3. MUSLIM bin Hajjaj:

Muslim's full name is Muslim bin Al-Hajjaj Al-Qushairi An-Nishapuri. He was born in 204 H., in the city of Nishapur near the city of Mashhad in present Iran. Muslim is considered second only to Al-Bukhari in the science of the methodology of Hadeeth. He started the study of Hadeeth at an early age and travelled to 'Iraq, Hijaz, Ash-Sham and Egypt and studied under the scholars of Hadeeth at that time like Al-Bukhari, Ahmad bin Hanbal and Ibn Abee Shaiba. He also taught the famous Hadeeth scholars like At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Abu Haatim.

Muslim compiled the Hadeeth book Al-Musnad As-Sahih, which became known as Sahih Muslim. This book, which is considered by the Muslim 'Ulama as the second most authentic Hadeeth book after Al-Bukhari, contains 9,200 Hadeeth. Imam Muslim died at his birthplace in Rajab 261 H. Saheeh al-Muslim has been translated to English.

4. ABU DA'UD, Sulaiman bin Al-Ash'ath:

Abu Da'ud, Sulaiman bin Al-Ash'ath bin Ishaq Al-Azdi As-Sijistani, who was one of

the eminent Imam of Hadeeth, was born in 202H. He studied Hadeeth under Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal along with Al-Bukhari and taught many of the later scholars of Hadeeth, like At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasaa'ee. Though Abu Da'ud collected 5,00,000 Hadeeth, he compiled 4,800 Hadeeth only in his book entitled As-Sunan, which he taught in Baghdad and other major cities at that time. He died at Basra on Friday in the month of Shawwal 275 H. Sunan Abu Dawood has been translated to English.

5. AT-TIRMIDHEE, Abu 'Iesa Muhammad bin 'Iesa:

Abu 'Iesa, Muhammad bin 'Iesa bin Sura At-Tirmidhee was born in 209 H. In a town called Tirmiz in Uzbekistan near the northern border of Afghanistan. He was a student of Al-Bukhari, and compiled 4,000 Hadeeth in his book called Al-Jami which later came to be known as Sunan At-Tirmidhi. He also contributed tremendously to the methodology of Hadeeth and composed a book on it called Al-'Ilal (the discrepancies). He was famous for his piousness. He became blind and finally died on 13 Rajab 279H. An abridged version of Sunan at-Tirmidhi is available in English in the Alim computer software CD.

6. AN-NASA'I, Abu 'Abdur-Rahman Ahmad bin Shu'aib:

Abu 'Abdur-Rahman, Ahmad bin 'Ali bin Shuiaib bin 'Ali Al-Hafiz was born in 215H. In Nisa', a city in Khurasan. He became famous for the study of the methodology of Hadeeth, memorizing and mastering it. His book known as Sunan An-Nasa'ee is third to Sahih Al-Bukhari in terms of containing the least weak Hadeeth. He lived in Egypt then moved to Damascus in Syria and died in Makkah in the year 303 H.

7. IBN MAJAH, Muhammad bin Yazid:

Abu 'Abdullah, Muhammad bin Yazid bin Majah Al-Qizwini was born in 207H. He studied under Imam Malik and others, and many people narrated Hadeeth from him. He was one of the eminent scholars of Hadeeth, but his Sunan contains many weak and even Munkar Hadeeth. Ibn Majah died in Ramadan in 273H. Sunan Ibn Majah has been translated to English, and printed by Kazi Publications, Lahore.
Other Hadeeth Scholars

8. IBN RAHWAIH, Ishaq bin Ibrahim:

Abu Ya'qub, Ishaq bin Ibrahim At-Tamimi Al-Hanzali Al-Marwazi was an eminent and great Haafidh, who was a resident and the 'Aalim of Nishapur. He was also considered as the Sheikh of the east of his time and was known as Ibn Rahawaih. Imam Ahmad said, "I don't know an 'Aalim equal to Ishaq in Iraq. Abu Zar'a also said, "There was no body so good at memorizing the Hadeeth than Ishaq." Abu Hatim also said, "His mastery (of the Hadeeth), accuracy and accuracy and

memorization were very surprising." Ibn Rahwaih was born in the year 166 H and died on 15th Sha'ban 238 H.

9. AL-ISMA'ILI, Ahmad bin Ibrahim:

Abu Bakr, Ahmad bin Ibrahim bin Isma'il bin Al-'Abbas Al-Isma'ili Al-Jurjani was born in 277 H. He was considered as an Imam and a Hafidh, and was given the title Sheikh-ul-Islam due to his wide knowledge and because he was the leader of the Shafi'ees in his region.

10. AL-BAZZAR, Ahmad bin 'Amr:

Abu Bakr, Ahmad bin 'Amr bin 'Abdul-Khaliq Al-Basri was one of the eminent and learned Hadeeth scholars who had attained the rank of Hafidh in the memorization of Hadeeth. He authored two books on Hadeeth which are Al-Musnad Al-Kabir and Al-'Ilal. He studied under At-Tabarani and others. Al-Bazzar died in 292 H.

11. AL-BAIHAQI, Ahmad bin Al-Husain:

Abu Bakr, Ahmad bin Al-Husain was born in Sha'ban in the year 374H. He was considered a learned Hafidh among the eminent Imams of Hadeeth and a jurisprudence scholar in the Shafi'ee Madhhab. He wrote many books like As-Sunan Al-Kubra and As-Sunan As-Sughra. Adh-Dhahabi said, "His books exceed one thousand volumes." Al-Baihaq, which he is named after, is a town near Nishapur. Al-Baihaqi died in 458 H.

12. ABU HATIM AR-RAZI, Muhammad bin Idris:

Abu Hatim, Muhammad bin Idris bin Al-Mundhir Al-Hanzali Ar-Razi was born in the year 195 H. He was an eminent Hafidh and an Imam and one of the prominent scholars who excelled in the methodology of Hadeeth. He was also one of the most respected scholars in the knowledge Al-Jarh wat-Ta'dil (verifying the reliability and unreliability of the narrators of the Hadeeth).

13. IBN AL-JARUD, 'Abdullah bin 'Ali:

Abu Muhammad, 'Abdullah bin 'Ali bin Al-Jarud An-Nishapuri, who lived near Makkah, was an Imam and a Hafidh who was among those 'Ulama who mastered the recitation of the Qur'an. He authored Al-Muntaqa fil-Ahkam and was among the pious scholars of his time. Ibn Al-Jarud died in 307 H.

14. AL-HARITH bin Abu Usama:

Imam Abu Muhammad, Al-Harith bin Abu Usama Muhammad bin Dahir At-Tamimi Al-Baghdadi was a Hafidh and authored Al-Musnad which he did not arrange. Ibrahim Al-Harbi and Abu Hatim verified him as reliable, and Ad-Daraqutni said, "He is truthful." Al-Harith was born in 186 H. And died on the day of 'Arafa 282 H.

15. AL-HAKIM, Abu Abdullah:

Abu 'Abdullah, Muhammed 'Abdullah An-Nishapuri Al-Hakim known as Ibn Al-Baiyi' was born in 321H. He was a celebrated Imam in the verification of Hadeeth. He authored Al-Mustadrak in the methodology of Hadeeth. It is said that he studied under one thousand professors and authored many valuable books. Al-Hakim was pious and religious. He died in Safar 405 H.

16. IBN HIBBAN, Abu Hatim Ibn Hibban:

Abu Hatim, Muhammad bin Hibban bin Ahmad bin Hibban Al-Busti was born in Bust in Sijistan. He was one of the celebrities in the knowledge of Hadeeth, pious, Faqih, learned and one of the students of Ibn Khuzaimah. He died in Samarqand in 354 H., while in his eighties.

17. IBN KHUZAIMA, Muhammad bin Ishaq:

Ibn Khuzaima, Muhammad bin Ishaq was born in 223 H. In Nishapur. He was considered as a Sheikh-ul-Islam (the most learned 'Aalim of Islam) and one of the eminent and senior Hafidh. He was the Imam and Hafidh of Khurasan during his time. He also authored more than 140 books. Ibn Khuzaima died in Nishapur in 311 H.

18. IBN ABU KHAYTHAMA:

Abu Bakr, Ahmad bin Abu Khaythama Zuhair bin Harb An-Nasa'i Al-Baghdadi was a celebrated Imam, Hafidh and an authority. He authored At-Tarikh Al-Kabir. Ad-Daraqutni said about him, "He was reliable and trustworthy." Al-Khatib also said, "He was reliable 'Aalim (learned), accurate Hafidh, knowledgeable in the history of people, and the narration of poetry." He studied Hadeeth under Ahmad bin Hanbal and Ibn Ma'in. Ibn Abu Khaythama died in Jumada-ul-Ula 289 H., at the age of 94 years.

19. AD-DARAQUTNI, 'Ali bin Umar:

Abul-Hasan, 'Ali bin 'Umar bin Ahmad bin Mahdi Al-Baghdadi. He was nicknamed after a big store called Dar Al-Qutn in Baghdad. He was a great Hafidh and a unique Imam who was born in the year 306 H. He was the authority in the methodology of Hadeeth, the knowledge of the weaknesses of the Hadeeth narrations and names of the Hadeeth narrators of his time. Ad-Daraqutni died on 8th Dhul-Qa'da 385 H.

20. AD-DARIMI, 'Abdullah bin 'Abdur-Rahman:

Abu Muhamrnad, 'Abdullah bin 'Abdur-Rahmnan bin Al-Fadl bin Bahram At-Tamimi Ad-Darimi As-Samarqandi was born in the year 181 H. He was a celebrated Imam, Hafidh and Sheikh-ul-Islam of Samarqand and the author of Al-Musnad Al- 'Aali. He heard Hadeeth at Al-Haramain, Khurasan, Ash-Sham, Iraq and Egypt. Muslim, Abu Da'ud, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and others transmitted Hadeeth from him. He was described to be very intelligent and very virtuous and was considered to be an exemplary person in piousness, patience, hardwork, worship and abstinence. Ad-Darimi died on 8th Dhul-Hijja 255H.

21. ABU DA'UD, Sulaiman bin Da'ud At-Tayalisi:

Sulaiman bin Da'ud bin Al-Jarud Al-Basri was a Persianby origin and the freed slave of Az-Zubair. He was a great Hafidh and one of the eminent 'Ulama. Al-Qallas and Ibn Al-Madini both said about him, "I have not seen someone who is more versed with the Hadeeth more than him." Ibn Mahdi said, "He is a most truthful person." He recorded Hadeeth from more than one thousand scholars. Abu Da'ud died in the year 204 H.

22. IBN ABU AD-DUNYA, 'Abdullah bin Muhammad bin 'Ubaid:

Abu Bakr, 'Abdullah bin Muhammad bin 'Ubaid bin Sufyan bin Abu Ad-Dunya Al-Qurashi Al-Baghdadi, the freed slave of Banu Umaiya, was born in 208 H. He was a Muhaddith and truthful 'Aalim. He wrote some books and educated more than one of the caliphs' sons like Al-Mu'tadid. Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya died in Jumada Al-Ula, 281 H.

23. ADH-DHUHLI, Muhammad bin Yahya:

Abu 'Abdullah, Muhammad bin Yahya bin 'Abdullah bin Khalid bin Faris, the freed slave of Banu Dhuhl was born in 170 of the Hijra. He was a Sheikh-ul-Islam and Amir-ul-Mu'minin in the knowledge of Hadeeth and theHafidh of Nishapur. He acquired Hadeeth from many professors in Al-Haramain, Ash-Sham, Egypt, Iraq, Ar-Ray, Khurasan, Yemen and Al-Jazira and became very competent in this field and became the authority of knowledge in Khurasan. Ahmad said, "I never saw someone

who knows the Hadeeth of Az-Zuhri from Muhammad bin Yahya than Adh-Dhuhli. He died in Rabl'-ul-Awwal, 258H.

24. ABU ZUR'A AR-RAZI, 'Ubaidullah bin Abdul-Karim:

'Ubaidullah bin 'Abdul-Karim bin Yazid bin Faroukh, Abu Zur'a Ar-Razi Al-Qurashi by clientship was a Hafidh and an eminent scholar of the Hadeeth. He was also considered among the Imam of 'Al-Jarh wat-Ta'dil (the critical study of the Hadeeth narrators). Muslim, At-Tirmi&i, An-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah and others narrated Hadeeth from him. Adh-Dhahabi said, "Many people heard Hadeeth from him in Al-Haramain, 'Iraq, Ash-Sham, Al-Jazira, Khurasan, and Egypt." He was also well acclaimed for his memorization, brightness, piousness, sincerity, knowledge and the good application of his knowledge. Abu Zur'a Ar-Razi died towards the end of 264 H. At the age of 64 years.

25. IBN AS-SAKAN, Sa'id bin 'Uthman:

Abu 'Ali Sa'id bin As-Sakan Al-Baghdadi was born in 294 H. He was a celebrated Hafidh and an authoritative Imam. He paid much attention to the study of Hadeeth, and collected and wrote books on Hadeeth, thus becoming very famous in this field. Ibn As-Sakan died in the year 353 H.

26. SA'ID bin Mansur:

Sa'id bin Mansur bin Shu'ba Al-Marwazi or At-Taliqani then Al-Balkhi lived near Makkah. He authored the book As-Sunan. Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal praised him immensely. Harb Al-Karmani said, "He (Sa'id) dictated to me about ten thousand Hadeeth from his memory." Sa'id bin Mansur died in Makkah in Ramadan 227 H, while in his nineties.

27. ASH-SHAFI'EE, Muhammad bin Idris:

Abu 'Abdullah, Muhammad bin Idris bin Al-'Abbas bin 'Uthman bin Shafi'ee bin As-Sa'ib bin 'Ubaid bin 'Abd Yazid bin Hashim bin 'Abdul-Muttalib bin 'Abd Manaf Al-Qurashi Al-Makki was born in 150 H. in Ghaza and was taken to Makkah while a baby. He lived in Egypt where he died in 204 H. He was considered to be one of the most learned persons amongst the Muslim Ummah, unique, learned and the founder of the science of Usul Al-Fiqh (the principles of jurisprudence). His grandfather Shafi'i was a Sahabi who met the Prophet while a growing up boy. Imaam Shafi'ee's book, ar-Risaala on Usool al-Fiqh has been translated to English (Islaamic Texts Society - UK, 1961) and is available with us for reference.

28. IBN ABEE SHAIBA, Abu Bakr:

Abu Bakr 'Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Abee Shaiba Ibrahim bin 'Uthman bin Hawasi Al-'Ansi (by clientship) was a unique Hafidh. He authored Al-Musnad wal-Musannaf and other books. He was a leader in the knowledge of Hadeeth and Abu Zur'a, Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud and Khalaf narrated it from him. Abu Bakr died in Muharram, 235 H.

29. AT-TABARANI, Sulaiman bin Ahmad:

Abul-Qasim, Sulaiman bin Ahmad bin Ayub bin Mutair Al-Lakhmi At-Tabarani was born in 260 H. in Tabariya As-Sham. He was an authoritative Imam and narrated Hadeeth from more than one thousand scholars. He left Ash-Sham to acquire the knowledge of Hadeeth and spent thirty-three years of travelling in its pursuance. He authored many interesting and amusing books, among them are Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabir, Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat, and Al-Mu'jam As-Saghir. At-Tabarani lived in Asfahan and died there on 27th Dhul-Qa'da, 360 H.

30. AT-TAHAWI, Ahmad bin Muhammad:

Abu Ja'far, Ahmad bin Muhammad Salama bin Salama Al-Azdi Al-Misri At-Tahawi Al-Hanafi was born in the year 228 H. or 227 H. He was nicknamed after a village called Taha in Egypt. He was a follower of the Shafi'ee Madhaab (school of jurisprudence) and a student of Al-Muzni, his nephew until the latter one day told him, "By Allah, you will never become anything." At-Tahawi then became angry and moved to Abu 'Imran Al-Hanafi and not only became a Hanafi (a follower of the Hanaf Madhhab) but very enthusiastic in proving the Hanafi Madhhab by strengthening the reports, adducing the Hadeeth weakened by the others as evidence to support his Madhhab. Al-Baihaqi also said that he used to weaken the unfavourable Hadeeth to his Madhhab through methods not approved of by the scholars of the Hadeeth. Among his most famous books is Sharh Ma'ani Al-Athar. At-Tahawi died in the beginning of Dhul-Qa'da, 321 H.

31. IBN 'ABDUL-BARR, Yusuf bin 'Abdullah:

Abu 'Umar, Yusuf bin 'Abdullah bin Muhammad bin 'Abdul-Barr bin 'Asim An-Namari Al-Qurtubi was born in Rabi'-uth-Thani, 368 H. He was a celebrated learned Imam and was the Sheikh-ul-Islam and Hafidh of Al-Maghrib (North West Africa). He was considered as the master of his time in the memorization and accurate rendering of the Hadeeth. He was also skilled in the science of genealogy and history. Ibn Hazm said, "I cannot talk about the knowledge of the Hadeeth like 'Abdul-Barr, so how can I do better than him?" He has authored many books, the most famous of which is Al-Isti'ab. Ibn 'Abdul-Barr died on a Friday in Rabi'-uth-Thani, 463 H. At the age of 95 years.

32. 'ABDUL-HAQ bin 'Abdur-Rahman:

Abu Muhammad, 'Abdul-Haq bin 'Abdur-Rahman bin 'Abdullah bin Husain bin Sa'id Al-Azdi Al-Ishbili was born in 510 H. He was a Hafidh and an authority in the knowledge of Hadeeth. He resided in Bijaya in Spain where he spread his knowledge and authored books. He was famous and a celebrated 'Aalim and was appointed as the Khatib of Bijaya. He was a Faqih and knowledgeable in the methodology of the Hadeeth, its weak ones and the history of the Hadeeth narrators. He was also described to be virtuous, pious and a strict follower of the Sunnah. He also took interest in the arts and recited poetry. 'Abdul-Haq died in Bijaya in Rabi'-uth-Thani, 581 H.

33. 'ABDUR-RAZZAQ bin Humam:

Abu Bakr, 'Abdur-Razzaq bin Humam bin Nafi' Al-Himyari (by clientship) As-San'ani was considered as one of the strongholds of knowledge. Ahmad, Ishaq, Ibn Ma'in and Adh-Dhuhli narrated Hadeeth from him. He became blind in his old age and became senile. 'Abdur-Razzaq died in 211 H. At the age of 85 years.

34. IBN 'ADI, 'Abdullah:

Abu Ahmad, 'Abdullah bin 'Adi Al-Jurjani was born in 279 H. He was a famous Imam, an eminent Hafidh and one of the celebrated 'Ulama. He was also nicknamed Ibn Al-Qisar. Ibn 'Adi died in Jumada-ul-Akhir, 365 H.

35. AL-'AQILI, Muhammad bin 'Amr:

Abu Ja'far, Muhammad bin 'Amr bin Musa bin Hamad Al-'Aqili was a Hafidh, an Imam and the author of Kitab Ad-Du'afa' Al-Kabir. He was a celebrated scholar, and the author of many books. Al-'Aqili lived in Al-Haramain and died in 322 H.

36. 'ALI bin Al-Madini:

Abul-Hasan, 'Ali bin 'Abdullah bin Ja'far bin Najih As-Sa'di by clientship - Al-Madini was born in 161 H. And was considered as the most knowledgeable person regarding the Hadeeth of the Prophet and Al-Bukhari said in this context, "I never belittled myself before anyone else except before 'Ali Al-Madini." He was considered to be the Imam of Al-Jarh wat-Ta'dil, the Hafidh of his time and the exemplary of Ahl Al-Hadeeth (the scholars of the Hadeeth). 'Ali Al-Madini died at Samira in present Iraq at a place called Katibata Al-Qa'qa in the year 234 H.

37. IBN AL-QATTAN, 'Ali bin Muhammad:

Abul-Hasan, 'Ali bin Muhammad bin 'Abdul-Malik Al-Fasi was born in Qurtuba in Spain in 562 H. And lived in Fas in Morocco. He was a Hafidh, an Imam and a learned critic of the Hadeeth methodology. Moreover, he was more knowledgeable about the Hadeeth methodology and the mastery of the names and history of the narrators of the Hadeeth than anyone else of his time. He also authored many books and died in Rabi'-ul-Awwal, 628 H.

38. IMAM MALIK, Malik bin Anas:

Abu 'Abdullah, Malik bin Anas bin Malik bin Abu 'Aamir Al-Asbahi (Dhi Asbah, his ninth grandfather was from one of the noblest tribes of Yemen) was born in 93 H. or 94 H. He was the Imam of Dar Al-Hijra (Al-Madina), the Faqih of the Ummah and the leader of Ahl al-Hadeeth. He studied under more than nine hundred professors and a large number of people learnt from him, among them being Imam Ash-Shafi'ee. The Muwatta of Imaam Malik has been translated to English.

39. IBN MANDA, Muhammad bin Ishaq:

Abu 'Abdullah, Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Muhammad bin Yahya bin Manda was born in 310 H. And was a Hafidh, an Imam and a traveller. He was also one of the eminent scholars, who mastered many Hadeeth. It is said that he travelled all over the Muslim world of his time and returned with about forty loads of books and his teachers were one thousand seven hundred. Ibn Manda died in Dhul-Hijja 395H.

40. ABU NU'AIM, Al-Asfahani:

Ahmad bin 'Abdullah bin Ahmed bin Ishaq bin Musa bin Mahran Al-Asfahani was born in Rajab 334 H. He was a famous Hafidh, one of the eminent Muhaddithin and one of the great Huffaz. He studied under the celebrated scholars and himself taught many virtuous 'Ulama. He authored many books, among them Al-Mustakhraj 'Ala Al-Bukhari, and Al-Mustakhraj 'Ala Muslim and Hulyat-ul-Awliya, which is one of the best books. It is said that when he took it to Nishapur, it sold for four hundred Dinar. Al-Asfahani died in Safar or 20th Muharram, 430 H. at-Asfahan.

41. ABU YA'LA, Ahmad bin 'Ali:

Al-Hafiz Ahmad bin 'Ali bin Al-Muthanna bin Yahya bin 'Iesa bin Hilal At-Tamimi was born in Shawwal, 210 H. He authored Al-Musnad Al-Kabir and was considered as the Muhaddith of Al-Jazira. He was truthful, trustworthy, tolerant and religious. As-

Sam'ani said, "I heard Ismail bin Muhammad bin Al-Fadl Al-Hafiz say: 'I read the Musnad of Al-'Adani, the Musnad of Ibn Mani" and other Masanid, which are like rivers, but the Musnad of Abu Ya'la is like the sea into which all the rivers flow'." Abu Ya'la died in the year 307 H.

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