

# ***Ahadith:* Significance, Collection, & Criticism**

**Sultan-i-Rome**

**L**iterally, the term *hadith* (pl. *ahadith*) means a narration, talk, tale, or utterances, etc. Technically, it embraces all the words, counsels, and oral precepts (or *qul*) of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), his actions and practices (or *fe'ʿl*), and his silence (or *taqreer*) implying a tacit approval of an act committed by his Companions (RAA).<sup>1</sup>

There is another term, *Sunnah*, which is sometimes considered synonymous with *hadith*; however, there is a difference between the two. The term *Sunnah* literally means customs and precedents, and technically it means the practices and doings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

## **Significance of Ahadith**

*Hadith* stands second in authority to the Holy Qur'an, and is therefore the second of the two fundamental doctrinal sources of Islam. It was but the duty of the Holy Prophet (SAW) to elaborate, elucidate, and transmute the message of Almighty Allah (SWT) into practical reality under his direct guidance.<sup>2</sup> So it has been ordained that:

Whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it). (Al-Hashr 59:7)

Besides, the life and practices of the Prophet (SAW) have been declared as a model to be followed:

Verily in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow, for the one who looks

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towards Allah and the Last Day (with hope)  
and remembers Allah much. (Al-Ahzab 33:21)

Furthermore:

Whoever obeys the Messenger, obeys Allah.... (Al-Nisa 4:80)<sup>3</sup>

*Hadith* represents the practical explanation and elucidation of the Holy Qur'an, as Almighty Allah (SWT) addressed His Messenger (SAW):

... that you may explain clearly to mankind that which has been revealed for them.... (Al-Nahl 16:44)

The Holy Qur'an further illustrates:

... he enjoins them that which is right and forbids them from that which is wrong; he makes lawful for them all good things and prohibits them only the foul; and he releases them from their burden and from the fetters that were upon them.... (Al-A'raf 7:157)<sup>4</sup>

And,

... say: I follow only that which is revealed to me from my Lord.... (Al-A'raf 7:203)<sup>5</sup>

Thus, *hadith* is the verbal and practical explanation of the Qur'an — the sacred source of Islamic teachings and practices, the fountainhead of Islamic morality, and treasure of laws and injunctions for all people and for all times to come.

This is because:

Say (O Muhammad): O mankind! Verily, I am the Messenger of Allah to you all.... (Al-A'raf 7:158)

... a warner to (all) the peoples.... (Al-Furqan 25:1)

... and We have sent you (O Muhammad) as a messenger towards mankind.... (Al-Nisa 4:79)

Furthermore:

And we have not sent you (O Muhammad) except

as a giver of glad tidings and a warner towards all mankind.... (Saba 34:28)

These and other *ayaat* of the Glorious Qur'an make it absolutely clear that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was not only a prophet and a messenger of Allah (SWT) for a specific race and time but that he has been sent for the entire world and for all times to come, and that following his teachings and actions is obligatory upon all.

### **Collection of Ahadith**

Since the Prophet's (SAW) sayings and actions are a source of Islamic teachings and law, it is obvious that, from the very beginning, the Muslims were interested in what the Prophet (SAW) said and did. Even during the life-time of the Holy Prophet (SAW), it was unavoidable for all Muslims to inquire, talk about, and transmit the sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). His Companions (RAA), with wonderful memory, retained whatever they saw in his life and heard from him. Some of them even wrote them down.

I have heard Abu Hurairah (RAA) speaking: none of the Companions of the Prophet (SAW) possesses more *ahadith* from him than me, save Abdullah Ibn Amr (because) he used to write while I did not.<sup>6</sup>

However, it has been reported that the Holy Prophet (SAW) asked his Companions (RAA) to abstain from writing other books with the Holy Qur'an.<sup>7</sup> A *hadith* of *Sahih Muslim* too state that the Prophet (SAW) told:

Do not write from me, and whosoever has written from me other than the Qur'an he may erase that; and narrate from me, in which there is nothing wrong; and whosoever attributes falsehood to me, (Hammam [narrator of the *hadith*] says that he deems that he [the Prophet SAW] said "delebrately"), let him seek his abode in fire.<sup>8</sup>

This *hadith* clearly shows that though the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) ordered the Muslims not to write from him other than the Qur'an, he asked them to narrate from him (his sayings and deeds) to others, and that there is nothing wrong in doing so. He even encouraged memorization and transmission of *ahadith*.

Allah (SWT) may please (bless) the person who listened to my utterances and conveyed them (to others).<sup>9</sup>

Allah (SWT) may please (bless) the person who listened *ahadith* from us, then preserves it until he conveys to the others.<sup>10</sup>

And,

So that the present one convey to who is absent.<sup>11</sup>

Though the aforementioned *hadith* of *Sahih Muslim* states that the Holy Prophet (SAW) forbade the writing of *ahadith* (during the revelation period of the Qur'an, so as to protect it from any ambiguity or doubt), this and other *ahadith* make it clear that the Prophet (SAW) had stressed the need that his sayings should not only be memorized but must be transmitted and conveyed to others with full accuracy. As such, "The Arabs, who memorized and handed down poetry of their poets, sayings of their soothsayers and statements of their judges and tribal elders, cannot be expected to fail to notice and narrate the sayings of one whom they acknowledged as the Prophet of God."<sup>12</sup>

Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah contends that most of the *ahadith* which speak of the orders of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) about abstaining from writing *ahadith* are not sound; according to him, the Prophet (SAW) did allow his Companions (RAA) to write *ahadith*, and some of them compiled collection of *ahadith* in his life time with his consent.<sup>13</sup>

Some of the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) started compiling *sahifas* of *ahadith*. Such as the *Sahifah Sadiqah* compiled by Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Aas (d. 63 A.H.); *Sahifah* of Ali Ibn Abi Talib (d. 40 A.H.); *hadith* collection of Rafi' Ibn Khadij (d. 73 or 74 A.H.); Jabir Ibn Abdullah (d. 78 A.H.); Samurah Ibn Jundab (d. 60 A.H.); Abu Hurayrah (d. 59 A.H.); Abdul Rahman Ibn Auf (d. 95 A.H.); Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (d. 32 A.H.); Hammam Ibn Munabih (d. 101 A.H.)<sup>14</sup>; Zayed Ibn Thabit (d. 45 A.H.) who gave his collection of *ahadith*, relating to laws of inheritance, the title *Kitab Al-Faraid*, and Abdullah Ibn Abbas (d. 68 A.H.). "These are the blessed names of some of

those Companions who kept a record of the Prophet's utterances and addresses, judgments and verdicts on different issues, and his actions and deeds in all sets of circumstances".<sup>15</sup>

In spite of the extra-ordinary care of the first four caliphs in respect of *ahadith* "the quest for collecting the Prophetic words or reports of the Prophet's deeds went on increasing, and the devotees of Islam preserved the Prophetic wisdom with great care and reverence."<sup>16</sup> Anas Ibn Malik (d. 93 A.H.) asked his son:

O my son! Preserve this knowledge (*ahadith*) by writing.<sup>16</sup>

His pupil Aban also used to listen and write *ahadith* from him.<sup>17</sup> Urwa Ibn Zubair (d. 94 or 99 A.H.) and Qasim Ibn Muhammad (d. 101 A.H.) wrote and transmitted *ahadith* from Ayesha (d. 49 or 57 A.H.). References are also found of a *risalah* on the topic of *talaq* by Al-Sha'bi (d. 103 A.H.). May Allah (SWT) be pleased with the Companions of His Prophet (SAW), and have mercy on their Successors.

Thus, compilation of *ahadith* started by the Companions (RAA) was continued and carried on by the Successors (RA). With the dawn of the second century *Hijrah* begins the second phase of the collection of *ahadith*. The *hadith* scholars of this period collected the as yet uncollected *ahadith* from various sources and different cities of the vast Muslim territory. A large number of *ahadith* were still preserved in memory and were transmitted orally, as was the practice of the time. However, due to the fear that these traditions may be lost with the death of the *hadith* scholars, a tremendous amount of effort was made to collect and preserve them in written form. Even some of the rulers felt and acknowledged the need for collecting and preserving them. Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz (RA) wrote to Abi Bakr<sup>18</sup> (Ibn Muhammad) Ibn Amr, that:

See what is from the *hadith* of the Messenger of Allah (SWT) or his *Sunnah* or *hadith* of Umar<sup>19</sup> and so forth. So write them down for me, for I dread the disappearance of the knowledge (of *hadith*) and the

death of the scholars (who possess it).<sup>20</sup>

Whereas according to *Sahih Bukhari* he wrote:

See what is from the *hadith* of the Messenger of Allah (SWT), so write them down for I dread the disappearance of the knowledge (of *ahadith*) and the death of the scholars (who possess it) Do not accept but (only) *hadith* of the Prophet (SAW).<sup>21</sup>

Muslim scholars under took tiresome and painstaking assignments to collect *ahadith*. Prominent among them were Muhammad Ibn Muslim Ibn Ubaidullah Shihab Al-Zuhri (d. 124 A.H.), Makhool (d. 116. A.H.), Abdul Rahman Ibn Qasim Ibn Abi Bakr (d. 126 or 118 A.H.), Yazid Ibn Abi Habib (d. 128 A.H.), Rabi'a Al-Rai (d. 136 A.H.), Sha'ba Ibn Al-Hajjaj (d. 160 A.H.), Sufyan Thauri (d. 161 A.H.), and Laith Ibn Sa'd (d. 165 A.H.).

The *hadith* scholars traveled through out the extensive Islamic domains to acquire and collect *ahadith*. They carried out collection and compilation of *ahadith* subject wise under the concerned and appropriate books (*kutub*), chapters (*abwab*), and topics. This pattern was first adopted by Rabi' Ibn Sabih (d. 160 A.H.) and his contemporary Sa'id Ibn Urubah<sup>22</sup> (d. 156 A.H.). Their other contemporaries who adopted the same pattern were: Abu Muhammad Abdul Malik Ibn Abdul Aziz Ibn Jurayj (d. 150 A.H.) in Makkah, Abu Amir Abdul Rahman Ibn Amr Auza'i (d. 157 A.H.) in Syria, Muhammad Ibn Abdul Rahman Ibn Abi Dhaib (d. 159 A.H.), and Malik Ibn Anas (d. 179 A.H.) in Madinah, Sufyan Ibn Sa'id Thuri (d. 161 A.H.) in Kufah, Abu Samah Hamad Ibn Saimah Ibn Dinar (d. 167 A.H.) in Basrah, Abdullah Ibn Mubarak (d. 181 A.H.) in Khurasan, and Jamil Ibn Abdullah Hamid (d. 188 A.H.) in Ray.

From the beginning of the third century *Hijrah*, and even before, compilation of *Musnad* took place. "The compiler of *Musnad* tried to transmit all the traditions (*ahadith*) of a *Sahabi* irrespective of contents. The arrangement was solely based on the name of the Companion cited as the ultimate authority for a group of traditions".<sup>23</sup> Some of the scholars who compiled *Musnads* were: Zayd Ibn Ali (d. 120 or 122 A.H.), Ja'far Al-Sadiq (d.

148 A.H.), Mu'ammarr Ibn Rashid (d. 153 A.H.), Al-Awaza'i (d. 157 A.H.), Rabi' Ibn Habib (d. 170 A.H.), Abdullah Ibn Wahab (d. 197 A.H.), Ubaidullah Ibn Musa Bughdadi (d. 213 A.H.), Na'im Ibn Hammad Al-Khuza'i (d. 229 A.H.), Abu Bakr Abdullah Ibn Shibah (d. 235 A.H.), Ishaq Ibn Rahuyah (d. 238 A.H.), Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d. 241 A.H.) and Ahmad Ibn Urwah Ibn Abdul Khaliq Abu Bakr Bazaz (d. 292 A.H.).

Besides the aforementioned names, other scholars who traveled, memorized, collected, discoursed, composed, and compiled various genres of *ahadith* works were: Ayub al-Sakhtiyani (d. 131 A.H.), Ibn Abi Najih (d. 131 A.H.), Awf Ibn Abi Jamil Abdi (d. 146 A.H.), Zaidah Ibn Qudamah (d. 163 A.H.), Ibrahim Ibn Tamam al-Khurasani (d. 163 A.H.), Hamad Ibn Salamah (d. 167 A.H.), Laith Ibn Sa'id d. 175 A.H.), Yahya Ibn Sa'id Al-Qatan (d. 178 A.H.), Abu Utbah Isma'il Ibn Ayash (d. 181 A.H.), Yazid Ibn Zuraj (d. 182 A.H.), Hisham Ibn Bashir (d. 183 A.H.) Yahya Ibn Zakriyah Ibn Zidah (d. 183 A.H.), Mu'afe Ibn Ibrahim Abu Mas'ud Al-Azdi (d. 185 A.H.), Muhammad Ibn Hassan Al-Shibani (d. 189 A.H.), Ibn Ulayyah (d. 198 A.H.), Sufyan Ibn Uyaynah (d. 198 A.H.), Abdul Rahman Abdul Razaq Al-San'ani (d. 211 A.H.), Abu Qurrah Musa Ibn Tariq Al-Zabidi (d. 203 A.H.), Muhammad Ibn Idris Al-Shafi'i (d. 204 A.H.), Rawh Ibn Ubadah (d. 205 A.H.), Mu'afa Ibn Imran Al-Hamsi (d. 207 A.H.), Abdul Razaq Al-Sa'abi (d. 211 A.H.), Sa'id Ibn Mansur (d. 227 A.H.), Abu Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Sabbah Al-Dulabi (d. 227 A.H.), Ahmad Ibn Harb Al-Nishapuri (d. 234 A.H.), Ali Ibn Al-Madini (d. 234 A.H.), Muhammad Ibn Islam Al-Tusi (d. 242 A.H.), Muhammad Ibn Isma'il Bukhari (d. 256 A.H.), Muslim Ibn Hajjaj Nishapuri (d. 261 A.H.), Muhammad Ibn Yazid Ibn Abdullah Ibn Majah (d. 272 A.H.), Abu Dawud Sulaiman Ibn Ishaq (d. 275 A.H.), Baqi Ibn Makhlad (d. 276 A.H.), Muhammad Ibn Isa Tirmidhi (d. 279 A.H.), Ahmad Ibn Shu'aib Al-Nasai (d. 303 A.H.), and many others. May Allah (SWT) have mercy on all of them.

So, by the end of the third century *Hijrah*, Muslim scholars had collected, sifted, composed, and compiled large number of *hadith* with great care, zeal, devotion, and dedication. Their works are of various genres, such as: *Sahifah*, *Kitab*, *Risalah*, *Nuskhah*, *Arba'in*, *Juz*, *Mu'jam*

*Amali, Atraf, Jami', Sunan, Musannaf, and Musnad.*<sup>24</sup>

### **Importance of *Isnad* in *Ahadith***

Each *hadith* consists of two parts, i.e., *sanad* (chain of transmission) and *matan* (text), e.g.,

Qutaybah Ibn Sa'eed informed us that: Sufyan reported to us on the authority of Zuhri, on the authority of Humayd... on the authority of Nu'man Ibn Bashir, that his father bestowed him a slave; whereupon he came to the Prophet (SAW) so as to make him a witness upon it. He (the Prophet ) asked: Have you bestowed (a slave each) to all of your children; he (Bashir) replied no. So he (the Prophet) asked (Bashir): take him (the slave) back.

The first part of this *hadith* i.e., from “Qutaybah Ibn Sa'eed informed us” to “Nu'man Ibn Bashir” is *sanad* (pl. *Isnad*) and the second part, i.e., from “that his father” to “take him (the slave) back.” is *matan*.

*Isnad* were used for the documentation and authentication of *ahadith*. Due to its important position in the science of *hadith*, Abdullah Ibn Mubarak (d. 181 A.H.), a renowned *muhadith* (*hadith* scholar) of Khurasan and a teacher of Imam Bukhari, stated:

*Isnad* is a part of religion; had it not been for the *isnad*, whoever wished to would have said whatever he liked.<sup>26</sup>

Another renowned *muhadith* Muhammad Ibn Sirin says:

Verily this science (*ahadith*) is religion. Be careful from whom you are acquiring your religion.<sup>27</sup>

Due to the *fitnah* (mischief) of the fabrication of *ahadith*, the *hadith* scholars were extremely careful about *isnad*. They had criticized and evaluated the transmitters without fear or favor. So, “the critical investigation of *isnad* has caused the Muslim scholars to make thorough researches.”<sup>28</sup>

The terms usually applied in *isnad* are *An*, *Za'ama*, *Balagha*, *Dhakara*, *Anba'a*, *Haddatha*, *Akhbara*, *Akhbarna*, and *Haddathana*. The last two, i.e. *Akhbarana* and



*Haddathana* possess high esteem in the chain of transmission (*sanad*). Al-Shahabi says that “any *isnad* that does not contain *haddathana* and *akhbarana* is like a meal without food value.”<sup>29</sup> *Isnad* may be described as the backbone of *ahadith*, upon which their authenticity and spuriousness largely depends.

### **Criticism of Ahadith**

The work of collecting and compilation of *ahadith* was started by the Companions (RAA) and later carried on by the Successor and subsequently by their successors. However, with the passage of time various groups and individuals started to fabricate *ahadith*, and at the turn of the first century *Hijrah* it took place on a large scale. Even “there were pious men who were so disturbed by the laxity of their times that they invented traditions to exhort men to live righteously,”<sup>30</sup> in spite of the warning of the Holy Prophet (SAW) that:

Do not attribute falsehood to me, because  
whosoever attributes falsehood to me will enter the  
Fire.<sup>31</sup>

The collectors and compilers of the *hadith* works were fully aware of the forgery and fabrication *ahadith*. So they performed the task of criticism in a thorough and scholarly manner and with missionary zeal. An entirely new science was developed and *ahadith* were divided in the categories of *Sahih*, *Hasan*, and *Da'if*. These were further divided in sub-categories of *Musnad*, *Muttasal*, *Marfu'*, *Mu'an'an*, *Mu'allaq*, *Munqati'*, *Murasal*, *Fard*, *Musalsal*, *Mauquf*, *Maqtu'*, *Mu'adal*, *Shadh*, *Munkar*, *Mu'allal*, *Muddallas*, *Mudtarib*, *Maqlub*, *Maudu'*, *Munfasil*, *Mutawatir*, *Mustafid*, *Ahad*, *Mubham*, *Munqalib*, *Mudraj*, *Muharraf*, *Musahaf*, *Mudabbaj*, *Ma'ruf*, *Majhul*, *Maqbul*, *Mahfuz*, *Mardud*, *Matruk* and *Matruh*.

Various other technical terms of great importance in the science of *hadith* were developed; e.g., a number of recognized methods of receiving *ahadith*; i.e. *Sama'a*, *Ard*, *Ijazah*, *Munawalah*, *Mukatabah*, *Wasiyyah*, and *Wijadah*; different words used in the transmission of *ahadith*, e.g., *Haddathani*, *Haddathana*, *Akhbarani*, *Akhbarana*, *Sami'tu*,

*Anba'ni*, and so forth.<sup>32</sup>

Muslims introduced the science and methodology of criticism, composed voluminous works for the criticism of *ahadith* and introduced new branches of the science, such as *Al-Jirah wa Al-Ta'dil* and *Asma Al-Rijjal*. P.K. Hitti observes:

Among all peoples Muslims stand unique in having developed a science (*ilm*) out of their mass of religious traditions (*ahadith*).<sup>33</sup>

The validity of *ahadith* rests not only on *isnad* and their criticism is restricted not only to the chain of transmitters, but the *matans* are also exposed to criticism. Though the transmitters may be reliable and the *sanad* a sound one, the tradition may still not be acceptable. This is because, besides the *sanad*, the contents of the *matan* is also analyzed.<sup>34</sup> These rules have been laid down by Allah (SWT) in the Holy Qur'an, by the Prophet (SAW), and by his Companions (RAA).

Some of the sincere Companions (RAA) were among those who had passed on the lie against Ummul Mo'mineen Ayesha (RAA), without inquiry or criticism. The slander was originally fabricated and spread by the hypocrites of Madinah, especially by their chief Abdullah Ibn Ubi'. The Holy Qur'an states:

Lo! They who spread the slander are a group among you.... (Al-Noor 24:11)

If only the trustworthiness of the transmitters is to be reckoned, the Companions (RAA) were trustworthy and the slander should have been considered true. But this was not the case. Many of the Muslims trusted the transmitters and did not think that the report itself is un-believable and hence a false one. So Allah (SAW) addressed them:

Why did not the believers, men and women, when you heard it, think good of their own folk, and say: It is a manifest untruth? (Al-Noor 24:12)

Furthermore:

When you were propagating it with your tongues,

and uttering with your mouths that whereof you had no knowledge, you counted it a trifle thing, while with Allah it was very great. (Al-Noor 24:15)

Not only this, but they (and other believers) were told and cautioned:

Allah admonishes you that you repeat not the like thereof ever, if you are (in truth) believers. (Al-Noor 24:17)

So only the trustworthiness of the narrators should not be relied upon but the narration or the text should also be judged, sifted, and criticized. Another *ayah* of the Holy Qur'an states:

O you who believe! If an evil person comes to you with a news, verify it, lest you smite some people in ignorance and afterward repent of what you did. (Al-Hujurat 49:6)

The Holy Prophet (SAW) too taught:

It is sufficient for the falsehood of a person that he transmits (with out ascertaining) whatever he hears.<sup>35</sup>

The Companions (RAA) followed, maintained, and used these Qur'anic and Prophetic injunctions. Two examples will be sufficient here:

1. When it was stated to Ayesha (RAA) that Abdullah Ibn Umar (RAA) says:

Verily the dead one is punished due to the mourning of the alive.<sup>36</sup>

She explained:

Allah (SWT) may bless Abi Abdul Rahman (Abdullah Ibn Umar), he did not state falsehood but has forgotten or mistaken. (The fact is that) Allah's Messenger (SAW) passed through a (dead) Jewish woman, whose heirs were mourning upon her. He (the Prophet) said: Verily you are mourning upon her while she is being punished in her grave.<sup>37</sup>

A *hadith* of *Sahih Bukhari* adds that Ayesha (RAA) told:

Qur'an is sufficient for you, (which state that) No laden soul can bear another's load (then how and why the dead ones are to be punished for the wrong doings of the alive, when they have no share or will in it).<sup>38</sup>

2. The Companions (RAA) debated whether ablution remains intact if one eats something cooked on fire. In this respect Abu Hurairah (RAA) narrated a *hadith* stating that ablution will break in this case. Abdullah Ibn Abbas (RAA) objected that, in such a case, ablution should break by drinking hot water as well.<sup>39</sup>

In spite of the fact that Abu Hurairah (RAA) was by no means a liar or a weak narrator in the sight of Abdullah Ibn Abbas (RAA), nor did Abdullah Ibn Umar (RAA) in the sight of Ummul Mo'mineen Ayesah (RAA), they did not accept their narration but told that either they had mistaken, misunderstood, or forgotten what the Prophet (SAW) has said.

Thus, the Qur'anic and Prophetic injunctions were applied in the criticism of *ahadith* by the Companions (RAA), the Successors (RA) and *hadith* scholars of later times with utmost honesty and without fear or favor. It is a misconception of the orientalist "that the criticism (of *ahadith*) did not go far enough."<sup>40</sup> The examples given by them are not sound for such a conclusion, as Muslim scholars of *ahadith* have already criticized such traditions and shown them to be false. The remaining are also open to criticism in accordance with the rules and methodologies developed by the *hadith* scholars. In responding to those who question the reliability and validity of *ahadith* because of the presence of fabricated ones, Muhammad Asad justly observes:

The existence, therefore, of false *ahadith* does not prove anything against the system of *ahadith* as a whole — no more than a fanciful tale from Arabian Nights could be regarded as an argument against the authenticity of any historical report of the corresponding period.<sup>41</sup>

## **Conclusion**

An important doctrinal source in Islam, next only to the Holy Qur'an, the Prophetic *ahadith* contain perfect scripts of various aspects of the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet (SAW), who elucidated the message of Allah (SWT) in practical reality and transmitted it to the Companions (RAA) under his direct guidance. The Prophet (SAW) asked his Companions (RAA) to memorize and transmit them. Some of the Companions (RAA) even compiled the traditions in book forms even during the lifetime of the Prophet (SAW). The Companions (RAA) continued the process of collection and compilation of *ahadith* after the death of the Prophet (SAW). The quest went on and the succeeding generations and the devotees of Islam preserved, collected, sifted, criticized, and compiled *ahadith* with great care, zeal, and reverence.

With the passage of time, various individuals and groups started fabrication and concoction of *ahadith* for their own ulterior motives. So, keeping in view the Qur'anic and Prophetic injunctions, the scholars of *ahadith* performed the task of sifting and criticism. They adopted various ways and means; new branches of knowledge came into being and an entirely new science developed out of our religious traditions (*ahadith*).

### **Endnotes**

1. Ameer Ali, Sayed., *The Spirit of Islam*, (Lahore: A-One Publisher, n.d.), p. 288
2. Siddiqui, Abdul Hamid "Introduction", *Sahih Muslim* (Eng. tr.) Vol. 1. (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, Kashmiri Bazar, 1973) p.1.
3. See also Aal-e-Imran 3:31. A *hadith* of *Sunan Ibn Majah* states: whosoever obeyed me, verily he obeyed Allah (SWT); and whosoever disobeyed me, verily he disobeyed Allah (SWT). Cf., Ibn Majah (RA), *Sunan Ibn Majah*, (with Urdu tr.) Vol. I, (Lahore: Islami Academy, 1990) p. 35 A *hadith* of *Sahih Bukhari* makes it further clear: So whosoever obeyed Muhammad (SAW) verily he obeyed Allah (SWT) and whose disobeyed Muhammad (SAW) verily (he) disobeyed Allah (SWT). Cf., Imam Bukhari (RA), *Sahih Bukhari* (with Urdu tr.) Vol. IX (Karachi: Taj Co. Ltd., n.d.) pp. 308, 309.
4. See also Aal-e-Imran 3:164 and Ibn Majah (RA), op. cit; Vol. I,

- pp. 40, 41; Abu Dawod (RA) *Sunan Abu Dawud* (with Urdu tr.) Vol. III (Lahore; Farid Book Stall, 1985) pp. 432, 433.
5. See also Yunas 10:15
  6. Imam Bukhari (RA), *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 95; Imam Tirmidhi (RA), *Jami' Tirmidhi* (with Urdu tr.) Vol. II (Lahore: Farid Book stall, 1984) p. 234.
  7. *Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal*, 3:12, Quoted in Jamil Ahmad, *Bahar-e-Hadith* (Karachi: Tahir Sons, 1984) p. 12.
  8. Imam Muslim (RA), *Sahih Muslim* (with Urdu tr.) Vol. VI (Lahore: Khalid Ihsan Publishers, 1981) p. 501. (For the last portion of the *hadith* also see: *ibid*, Vol. I, pp. 27, 28. Imam Bukhari (RA), *op.cit*; Vol. I, pp. 90, 91 and Vol. II, p. 266; Ibn Majah (RA), *op. cit*; Vol. I, pp. 50, 51; Imam Tirmidhi (RA), *op. cit*; Vol. II, p. 232. That is why it was a peculiar feature of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (RAA) — d. 32 A.H. — that while giving information about the Prophet (SAW) he would tremble, sweat would exude from his forehead, and he would express himself with deliberate and hesitant caution, lest he transmit something inexact. Cf., Ibn Sa'd, Vol. III, part I, pp. 110, 111, Quoted in P.K. Hitti *History of the Arabs*, (Houndmills: Mac Millan Education Ltd; 1986) p. 243. Also see Muhammad Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd* (Urdu tr.) Vol. III (Karachi: Nafees Academy, 1980) p. 272.
  9. Ibn Majah (RA), *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 653
  10. Imam Tirmidhi (RA), *op.cit*: Vol. II, p. 232.
  11. Imam Bukhari (RA), *op.cit*; Vol. I, p. 62.
  12. Fazlur Rehman, *Islamic Methodology in History* (Karachi: Central Institute of Islamic Research, 1965), p. 31.
  13. Hamidullah, Dr. Muhammad., *Khutbat-e-Bahawalpur* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1992) pp. 41-82. See also *Introduction to Islam* by the same author (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1983) pp. 29-31 and Jamil Ahmad, *op.cit*; pp. 17, 18. According to Maulana Sayyid Abul A'la Maududi, while the Prophet (SAW) had initially prohibited the Companions (RAA) from writing down anything other than the Qur'an so as to keep it pure and uncorrupted, he did give the permission to write down his sayings and orders later on, as confirmed by numerous authentic traditions. Cf., Maududi, Sayyid Abul A'la., *Sunnat ki Aaeni Haithiat*, 14th printing (Lahore: Islamic Publications Ltd., 1992) pp. 349-351.
  14. Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah has searched out a copy of the script of a *Sahifah* in Berlin and had edited and published it. Cf., Abul Qayum Quraishi "Introduction: First Edition," in

- Khutbat-i-Bahawalpur*, op. cit., p. 18 and Jamil Ahmad, op. cit., p. 17.
15. Siddiqi, Abdul Hamid., *op.cit.*; p. iii.
  16. Amanullah Khan, "Ilm Al-Hadith and its influence on Historiography," *Journal of Research* Vol. I (July, 1966) p. 164.
  17. *Darmi*, 68; Quoted in Jamil Ahmad, *op.cit.*, p. 16.
  18. One of the Ansar whom Umar II appointed a judge at Madinah. Cf., Alfred Guillaume, *The Traditions of Islam* (Lahore: Universal Books, 1977) p. 19, Whereas according to Jamil Ahmad he was the governor of Madinah (Jamil Ahmad, *op.cit.* p. 22).
  19. The cited book of Imam Muhammad and its Arabic edition (Karachi: Qadimi Kutubkhana, 1961) p. 391., gives the name Umar, whereas Alfred Guillaume (*op.cit.*, pp. 18, 19) and Jamil Ahmad (*op.cit.*; p. 22) gives it Amra Ibnt Abdul Rahman Ansariah (d. 98 A.H.).
  20. Imam Muhammad (RA), *Muwata Imam Muhammad* (with Urdu tr.) (Lahore: Muslim Academy, 1983) p. 506. Cf., Alfred Guillame, *op.cit.*, p. 18.
  21. Imam Bukhari (RA), *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p.85
  22. According to some scholars it was Ibn Jurayj (d. 150 A.H.) who first compiled a book of *ahadith* on this pattern.
  23. Shaukat, Jamilah, "Classification of *Hadith* Literature," *Islamic Studies*, Vol. XXIV (No. 3, 1985) p. 364.
  24. For the discussion that which of the these genres came first and which latter see *Ibid*, p. 265.
  25. Imam Nasai (RA), *Sunnah Nasai*, *op.cit.*, Vol. III, p. 30.
  26. Imam Muslim (RA), *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. 34.
  27. Imam Muslim (RA), *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. 33.
  28. Khan, Amanullah., *op.cit.*, p. 165.
  29. Shaukat, Jamilah., "The *Isnad* in *Hadith* Literature," *Islamic Studies*, Vol. XXIV (No. 4, 1985) p. 449.
  30. B. Lewis et. el., *op.cit.*, p. 24.
  31. Imam Muslim (RA), *op. cit.*, Vol I, p.27; Imam Tirmidhi (RA), *op.cit.*, Vol. III, p. 232.
  32. It is beyond the scope of this article to describe all these terms and other technicalities. For details, cf., Hasan, Suhaib., *An Introduction to the Science of Hadith* (London: Al-Qur'an Society, 1994)
  33. Hitti, P.K., *op. cit.*, p. 393.
  34. The first type of criticism which deals with *isnad* of *ahadith* is

called *riwayat*; the second type in which one deals with the *matans* is called *dirayat*. These may be called external and internal criticisms in modern terminology, which is a relatively late development in the West.

35. Imam Muslim (RA), op. cit., Vol. I, p. 28.
36. Imam Malik (RA), *Muwata*, op. cit., p. 214.
37. Ibid., see also Imam Muhammad (RA), op. cit., p. 158. Imam Bukhari (RA), op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 264, 265.
38. Imam Bukhari (RA), op. cit., Vol. II, p. 264. See also Al-Qur'an: Al-Isra 17:15; Fatir 35:18; Al-Zamar 39:7.
39. Kandihlavi, Habibur Rahman, *Madhhabi Dastanain aur unki Haqiqat*, Vol. II (Karachi: Anjuman Uswah Hasnah, 1987) p. 10.
40. B. Levis et. el. op. cit., p. 26.
41. Asad, Allama Muhammad., *Islam at the Crossroads* (Lahore: Arafat Publications, 1955), p. 128.