Chapter III

Shaykh al Albānī's Methodology of Ḥadīth Criticism and its Salient Features
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ʿIlm al Muṣṭalah al Ḥadīth [science of methodology of hadīth criticism] is a touchstone to check the āthār and akhbār. This gives an information about the saḥīḥ and saqīm [invalid], weak and sound, accepted and rejected aḥādīth. It establishes that it is obligatory to accept and act on the maqūbīl ḥadīth. The rejected ḥadīth must be relinquished, and it gives the knowledge about Ḥalāl [permitted] and Ḥarām [prohibited] and one is able to distinguish between fard [mandatory] and sunnah. If there would have been no such criterion it would have been most difficult to judge between the saḥīḥ and saqīm, truth and false and we would have been lost in the valleys of ignorance. But Allāh intended to save His Shari‘ah and His Prophet’s Sunnah... therefore, he sent such persons who illuminated the ways of this [Shari‘ah], made its sources evident and reinforced its foundation.

(Shaykh Muḥammad Rāhib al Ṭabbākh, Shaykh fi al Ijāzah of Shaykh Muḥammad Naṣir al Dīn al Albānī)

Shaykh al Albānī was a legendary figure of 20th century who displayed all the traits of a muḥaddith. He produced new critical circles of scholars throughout Islamic world by his revolutionary academic career. He wrote on the delicate subject of ḥadīth criticism and produced scores of research publications. After exploring the weakness and malady of weak and forged aḥādīth of fundamental ḥadīth collections, Shaykh al Albānī came out with a series of different ḥadīth books on various subjects.

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Shaykh al Albānī's books on different religious issues are of great academic and religious significance and set in motion the Taṣfiyyah (Purification of religious sciences) movement throughout the Arab world. Thus, the Shaykh removed the greatest malice, which had afflicted Ummah from the centuries in the form of a huge mass of fabricated *ahādīth*, attributed to the Prophet which had allowed strange, irrational, un-healthy tendencies and trends to emerge in the Muslim community.

Shaykh al Albānī created history when he identified the fabricated, forged *ahādīth* from the huge mass of the *hadīth* books which are considered to be the most authentic sources of *hadīth*. Moreover, he classified *ahādīth* into the classical categorization with new dimensions. His insights into the external and internal conditions of *ahādīth* are unique. The criterion, which Shaykh al Albānī had fixed for scrutinizing *ahādīth*, is in complete conformity with the rules laid by the great earlier scholars of *hadīth*. However, his arguments for or against the authenticity of a *hadīth* are balanced, mature and unassailable. Commenting on his methodology of *hadīth* criticism Shaykh al Albānī says:

I think it is necessary to bring this fact in the knowledge of the readers when I pronounce judgment on *ahādīth* I will not follow any one blindly in giving my decision on any *hadīth*. But I do it according to the scholarly principles set by the *muḥaddithūn*, and in the way in which *muḥaddithūn* had

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pronounced any hadīth authentic or weak, I will also follow the same pattern.²

This is the reason when Shaykh al Albānī evaluates any hadīth he often quotes the opinion of early muḥaddithūn first, and after that he says, “I say”, or gives the conclusion of the discussion in few lines in which he expresses his decision about that particular hadīth.³

With his decisions about any hadīth, Shaykh al Albānī, often discusses, the positive and negative affects of that authentic or weak hadīth respectively on Muslim Ummah. The Silsilatān is the best example of this methodology. Thus, the Shaykh warned the Muslims from the catastrophic implications of fabricated ahādīth and provided the authenticated ahādīth—buried in the rare books—instead.

**Basic Principles of Research in Ḥadīth**

Shaykh al Albānī advises all those who write on the authenticity and the weakness of ahādīth not to make haste and take full time in expressing their decisions on a hadīth. He thinks it better to give an opinion on hadīth only after spending a good time in studying the principles of its science, biographies of the

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² *Silsilah al Ahādīth al Da‘fah wa al Mawdū‘ah*, vol. i, p. 42.
³ This is a most common pattern adopted by the Shaykh and almost all of his research books display this methodology. At the end of the discussion he writes qultu and al khulāsah for "I say" and "the conclusion" respectively. (See *Silsilah al Ahādīth al Da‘fah wa al Mawdū‘ah*, Riyadh, Maktabah al Ma‘ārif, 1420/2000, vol. i, p. 312).
narrators, acquiring the knowledge of their sickness ('illāt). In this way a researcher would find that his results are matching largely with the researches of the outstanding scholars of the hadīth like Imām al Dhahabī, Imām al Zayla‘ī, ‘Allāmah Ibn Ḥajar al ‘Asqalānī etc. This is the reason that one finds the methodology used by the Shaykh in evaluating the hadīth literature in conformity with the methodology used by the earlier scholars of hadīth.

Shaykh al Albānī says that after the authentication of a hadīth there is no space to deny (al inkār) the fact which is brought out by this hadīth. Adding to it, Shaykh al Albānī says if we open the door of denying the ahādīth only because of the reason we have to ignore many of the authentic ahādīth, which is not the approach of Ahl al Sunnah wa al Hadīth (people of Sunnah and Hadīth) but it is the way of al Mu‘tazillah (rationalists) and Ahl al Ahwā‘ (people of desire).

The Shaykh insists that mere a weak chain of a hadīth does not mean the hadīth is a weak and unauthentic one. One should consider it as a cause to err. Therefore, one should declare a hadīth weak only after studying properly the different channels (turūq) and witnesses (shawāhid) of a particular hadīth. Shaykh al

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Albānī says that by acting on this principle, Allāh has saved him from declaring tens and hundreds of vitiate chained *ahādīth* weak.\(^6\)

He further says that the knowledge does not accept stagnation. It is a binding upon a Muslim when he gets aware about his fault he should turn back. It is among the practices of *a’immah* not to insist on a fault.\(^7\)

**Al Sunnah**

As discussed in chapter 1, according to the lexicologists, *Sunnah* means the way or pattern either good or bad.\(^8\) However, the *muḥaddithūn* use this term in a different meaning where they include the sayings of the Prophet, his actions, *taqārīr* (sing. *taqārīr*: tacit approval), physical features, personal qualities and life both before and after his Prophethood in it.\(^9\) Jurists take *Sunnah* in the meaning of Ḥukm Shara‘ī, and claim if a person acts on *Sunnah* he will be rewarded for the same and if he does not act upon it he will not be punished. They take the sayings of

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the Prophet, his actions and taqārīr as the Sunnah and do not include physical appearance of the Prophet in it.10

But Shaykh al Albānī says that literally speaking al Sunnah means the way which encompasses all the manners of the Prophet including fard (obligatory) or nafl (supererogatory). However, conventionally Sunnah is applied only to those practices of the Prophet, which are not fard.12 Shaykh al Albānī says that this is not a correct way to define it. He asks if someone explains the term Sunnah mentioned in the hadith by other than fard then his explanation would not be correct.13

The statement of the Shaykh exhibits that he does not follow the juristic principles while defining the Sunnah. He tries to intermingle these two terms—Sunnah and Fard—which can create confusion and chaos. No doubt the Shaykh had tried to form a broader scope of Sunnah. He takes it at par with the Qur'ān in authority and does not bifurcate them in the watertight compartments of mandatory and Sunnah (supererogatory) but this needs to be dealt in its proper framework.

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10 Dr. Muhammad Diya' al Rahmān al A'zamī, Mu'jam: Īṣṭilāḥāt Ḥadīth, Urdu tr. Dr. Suḥayl Ḥasan ibn 'Abd al Ghaffar Ḥasan, Delhi, Dar al Kutub al Salafiyyah, 2004, p. 195.
11 Al Jaza'īrī, Tawżīḥ al Nāzir, p. 2 quoted in Studies in Hadīth Methodology and literature by Muḥammad Muṣṭafa A'zamī, Indiana, Islamic Teaching Center, 1977, p. 3.
13 Idem.
Grouping of Aḥādīth

As per its transmission ḥadīth can be divided into two groups. If the number of the transmitters is unlimited, it is generally known as al Mutawātir and if the number of the transmitters is limited, it is termed as al Aḥād.¹⁴

• Al Mutawātir

Mutawātir is an active participle (ism al fā‘il) derived from the verbal noun (maṣdar) tawātara and means "to occur again and again." One of the conditions laid for the Mutawātir ḥadīth is that a huge number of narrators should report it.¹⁵ According to Shaykh al Albānī the scholars have extremely disputed in fixing the number of narrators for it and there are more than four opinions about it. It should be noted that merely restricting the number of the narrators could not make al tawātur reliable. But it depends upon the knowledge (al ‘ilm) and the over abundance of narrators which brings disagreement on the lie of the narrators whether it is about their piety, religion etc.¹⁶

He further says that in a ḥadīth al mutawātir there is no condition that the channels (turūq) should be free from the

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 19-20.
weakness because the *tawātir* is seen as a whole and not by the
channels individually.\textsuperscript{17}

- \textbf{Al Āḥād}

  As per the lexicologists, āḥād is a plural of *aḥad* which means
single and *al Āḥād* is a *ḥadīth* which is reported by a single
narrator.\textsuperscript{18} But according to the *ḥadīth* terminology it is a *ḥadīth*
which does not fulfill the conditions of *al Mutawātir*.\textsuperscript{19} Therefore,
generally speaking all the *ḥaḍīth* except *al Mutawātir* are termed
as *al Āḥād*. It is also known as *Khabr Wāḥid*, which has three
kinds:\textsuperscript{20}

  1. *al Mashhūr*
  2. *al ‘Azīz*
  3. *al Gharīb*

1. \textbf{Al Mashhūr}

   Literary speaking *mashhūr* means to make something
widespread by announcing and declaring it. This wide publicity
names this kind of *ḥadīth* as *al Mashhūr*.\textsuperscript{21} According to Shaykh
al Albānī, it is a *ḥadīth* which has been reported by more than two
narrators as described by Ibn Ḥajar in *Sharḥ al Nukhbaḥ*.\textsuperscript{22} The

\textsuperscript{17} Muhammad Nāsir al Dīn al Albānī, *Irwā‘ al Ghalīl*, ed. 2nd, Beirut, al
\textsuperscript{18} Al Tāḥhān, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
\textsuperscript{20} *Mu‘jam. Istilāḥāt al Hadīth*, p. 49.
\textsuperscript{21} Al Tāḥhān, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
\textsuperscript{22} *Al Ta‘līq: Al Kitāb al Bā‘ith al Hadīth Sharah Ikhtisār Ulūm al
Hadīth*, vol. ii, p. 455.

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Shaykh says that conventionally al Mashhūr includes Ṣaḥīḥ and Daʿīf and those aḥādīth which have no basis (lā ʾasl laḥū). Therefore, just the definition of Mashhūr cannot make it a proven hadīth (ḥadīth thābit).23 According to the Shaykh, Ḥadīth Thābit comprises both kinds of Ṣaḥīḥ and Ḥasan aḥādīth, i.e. Ṣaḥīḥ li Dhātihi, Ṣaḥīḥ li Ghayrihi and Ḥasan li Dhātihi, Ḥasan li Ghayrihi respectively.24

2. Al ‘Azīz

Literarily ‘azīz means powerful and strong and is among the group ‘azza yaʿazzu which means little and rare. According to the muhaddithūn all those aḥādīth are ‘Azīz which have at least two narrators in each tābaqah (class). If the number exceeds the two it does not matter in any way, but the important factor is that it should not be less than two in any tābaqah.25

3. Al Gharīb

Linguistically speaking, gharīb means unique, single or far from the kith and kin.26 Most of the ‘ulamā’ name al Gharīb as al Fard.27 Shaykh Nāṣir al Dīn al Albānī says that a ḥadīth which

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24 Ṣifah Sulāḥ al Nabī, p. 40.
26 Al Ṣāḥḥān, op. cit., p. 28.
27 Muʿjam: Istilāḥātī Ḥadīth, p. 257.
has been reported by a single narrator is called a Gharib hadīth.\(^{28}\) He adds that sometimes the gharābah contains the authenticity.\(^{29}\)

Shaykh al Albānī says when the mutafarrid narrator (who practices tafarrud) is a thiqah (authentic) and dābit (accurate) the hadīth will be accepted.\(^{30}\) Similarly, when the narrators of a hadīth are thiqah thābit their tafarrud cannot harm it.\(^{31}\)

**Al Gharīb and Imām Tirmidhī**

The Shaykh discusses Imām Tirmidhī’s view about the Gharīb hadīth at a length. He says that the hadīth which is categorized by Imām Tirmidhī as Ḥasan Gharīb is more authentic than the Ḥasan hadīth of the Imām. This is because the first term is actually Ḥasan li dhātihi (agreeable by itself) while the last term is Ḥasan li ghayrihi (agreeable owing to the existence of others). This is well explained by Imām Tirmidhī at the end of his \*al Sunan\*. The Shaykh claims that Ḥasan li ghayrihi is inferior to Ḥasan li dhātihi. Therefore, the gharābah containing the authenticity is sometimes superior to \*al Ḥasan\* as is said by Imām Tirmidhī.\(^{32}\) However, when he categorizes a hadīth as Gharīb

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\(^{28}\) *Al Taʾlīq ‘Alā Kitāb al Bāʾith al Hathīth Sharah Ikhtisār ‘Ulūm al Hadīth*, vol. 1, p. 100.


\(^{30}\) *Irwāʾ al Gharīb*, vol. viii, p. 302.


only, by it he means Ḍaʿīf (weak), in contrast to his two more terms i.e. Ṣaḥīḥ Gharīb and Ḥasan Gharīb.\(^\text{33}\)

Shaykh al Albānī says that according to Ḥāfīẓ Ibn Ḥajar al ʿAsqalānī, Qutaybah is a thiqah thābit narrator. His tafarrud cannot harm him. Therefore, the suspicion (about his tafarrud) is rejected since there is no argument except the conjecture (ẓann) and the conjecture does not avail against the truth. The conjecture cannot reject the ḥadīth of the authentic narrator. The Shaykh further warns if this door is opened then no ḥadīth will be saved for us.\(^\text{34}\)

**Grading of Ahādīth**

Generally, there are two types of ahādīth, (i) Maqbul (accepted) and (ii) Mardūd (rejected). The authentic ḥadīth is called Maqbul while the weak one is termed as Mardūd.\(^\text{35}\)

Discussing the grades of the ahādīth, Shaykh al Albānī says that with respect to the grades, the ḥadīth has three types:

1. Ṣaḥīḥ (authentic)
2. Ḥasan (agreeable)
3. Ḍaʿīf (weak)\(^\text{36}\)

\(^{33}\) Muhammad Nāṣir al Dīn al Albānī, Naqd Nasūs Ḥadīthiyyah fi Thaqāfah al ʿAmah.


\(^{35}\) Dr. Subhī Sālih, Ḫilāf al Ḥadīth, Urdu tr. Prof. Ghulām ʿAlmād Ḥarrī, Delhi, Islamic Book Foundation, 1422/2002, p. 167.

1. *Al Sahīh*

In lexicography, the word *sahīh* (sound) is used as an opposite of *saqīm* (sick). If a person is healthy then he is *sahīh* and if he is sick or handicapped, he is *saqīm*. In case of health, it is taken in a real sense, while in case of *hadīth* it has a metaphorical meaning.\(^{37}\)

According to Shaykh al Albānī one of the conditions of the *hadīth* to be authentic is that it must not be *Shādh*. Subscribing the view of the *muḥaddithūn* he says that *Ṣahīh hadīth* is one which has continuity in *isnād* and is authentic. The *hadīth* should be transmitted by righteous (*‘ādil*) and accurate (*dābiṭ*) narrator on the authority of another righteous and accurate narrator. The same process should continue up to the end. It should not be *Shādh* and *Mu‘allal* (sick). In this way the *hadīth* must not be *Mursal*, *Munqata‘*, *Shādh* or having any other grave reason (*‘illah qādahah*), which is a kind of *jarah* in its transition.\(^{38}\)

He rules out that the authenticity of a *hadīth* should be made on the principles laid by Imām al Bukhārī and Imām Muslim.\(^{39}\) He substantiates his claim by saying that there are a good number of

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\(^{37}\) Al Tāḥhān, *op. cit.*, p. 34.


\(^{39}\) *Silsilah al Ahādīth al Sahīhah*, vol. i, p. 342.
authentic *ahādīth* which are not included in their two books and therefore do not follow the principles of the duo.\(^{40}\)

He does not make it necessary that an authentic *ḥadīth* should be received from authentic channels (*turūq*) only. The *ḥadīth* can be *ḥasan li dhatīhī* which can become *ṣaḥīh li ghayrīhī* with the support of other channels. If the channel is weak then the *ḥadīth* can be *ḥasan* or *ṣaḥīh li ghayrīhī* as per the support of less or multiple number of channels respectively.\(^{41}\)

The Shaykh puts it in accordance with the established rules of the ‘ilm al muṣṭalah and says that it is not permitted to reject an authentic *ḥadīth* because of the disagreement with the more authentic *ḥadīth*, but both should be combined (*jama‘*) and reconciliation (*tawfīq*) should be made between the two.\(^{42}\) Only that *ḥadīth* will be authenticated and will get strengthening (*taqwiyah*) whose chain will be *ṣāliḥ li al i‘tibār*.\(^{43}\)

Discussing the compilers of the authentic books, the Shaykh writes, as far as they are concerned they did not intended to collect all authentic *ahādīth* in their books. Imām Muslim has

\(^{40}\) *Idem.*


\(^{42}\) Silsīlah al Aḥādīth al ṣaḥīhah, vol. i, p. 748.

clearly mentioned it in his book and a number of ahādīth that have been declared authentic or agreeable by Imām al Bukhārī and some of which have been mentioned by Imām al Tirmidhī in his al Sunan are not quoted from his al Šaḥīḥ.44

All Narrators are Authentic Narrators?

Shaykh al Albānī says in the worthy preface of his book Tamām al Mannah, as per the definitions of Šaḥīḥ hadīth, it should not contain any sicknesses (ʿilal) like shadhūdhih, confusion (iḍṭirāb), concealment of defects (tadhīs) etc. On these bases some muḥaddithūn comment on a hadīth by using these terms, rijālūhū riǰāl al šaḥīḥ (its narrators are among the authentic narrators) or riǰalūhū thiqāt (its narrators are authentic).45

The Shaykh clears the ambiguity of this statement and says that these terms are not at par with the term like isnāduhū šaḥīḥ (its chain is authentic) because the later one encompasses all those conditions along with the condition of being free from the sickness, which is necessary for the authentication of a hadīth. But the former two terms does not encompass it and show only the fairness (ʿadālah) and trustworthiness (thiqāhah) of the narrators. He says that it is known to every one that only these two conditions cannot prove a hadīth authentic.46

46 Idem.
He adds to his previous statement that sometimes a *hadith* endorsed by the comments of the *muḥaddithūn* in former two terms is also free from the sickness, but in spite of that it is not authentic. It is because it contains such a narrator among the authentic ones who is not an authority (*hujjah*), however his *hadith* is accepted for witnessing (*istishhād*) or *maqrūn* because of his poor memory or being among those who have been confirmed (*tawthīq*) only by Ibn Ḥibbān. Among these narrators, which have been confirmed by Ibn Ḥibbān, some are *līn*. This refrains one from claiming the authenticity of the *hadith* based on these confirmations.47

**Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth and its Legal Status**

All the *ʿulamāʾ* are unanimous on the authoritative nature of the *Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth*. There is no excuse for any Muslim not to act upon it.48 Shaykh al Albānī writes in the footnote of his famous book, *Manāšik al Ḥajj wa al ‘Umrah* that the lack of knowledge in any matter does not mean the inexistence of the fact. Therefore, when a *ḥadīth* is related from the Prophet it is obligatory to act upon it without searching if any one among the earlier scholars have acted upon it.49 Quoting Imām Shāfī‘ī, Shaykh al Albānī says that

47 *Idem.*
48 Al Tāḥhān, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
'Umar ibn Khattāb sentenced fifteen camels for the amputation of a thumb. When he found in the book of Āl ‘Amr ibn Ḥazm, that the Messenger of Allāh has said, "Ten camels are for each finger." He expressed not to accept the book of Āl ‘Amr ibn Ḥazm as long as it was proven that it was the book of the Messenger of Allāh.⁵⁰

Commenting on this hadith Shaykh al Albānī quotes Imām Shāfi‘ī who says that this hadith has two denotations:

1. To accept the hadith.

2. To accept a hadith after being proven even if no Imām has acted upon it. It also exhibits if an Imām practices a particular action and a hadith is reported against his practice, the practice of the Imām will be discontinued because of the authentic hadith. It also points out that the hadith of the Prophet is self-evident and needs not to be attested by the actions of the scholars.⁵¹

2. Al Hasan

All those Sahīh ahādīth are considered as Hasan by Ḥāfīz Ibn Ḥajar al ‘Asqalānī whose narrators are weak in memory.⁵² Shaykh

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⁵⁰ Tamām al Mannah, p. 40.
⁵² Al Tāhhān, op. cit., p. 46.
al Albānī defines the *Hasan hadīth* in simple words and says that between the two grades i.e. *Sahīh* and *Daʿīf*, there is a moderate grade called *al Hasan*. It is not a *Sahīh hadīth* but is superior to *Daʿīf* one in the rank.

According to the Shaykh in a chain of a *Hasan hadīth* there is a weakness; and there is a distinct difference between the scholars who say *isnād fihi duʿf* and who declare *bayna isnādihī daʿīf*. If the narrator is designated as *ṣadūq* the *hadīth* will be graded as *al Hasan*. To get the knowledge of this grade one has to consult the opinion of those scholars who have specialization in this field. Here Shaykh al Albānī produces the views of the two well-known scholars of *hadīth*, Ḥāfīz Shamas al Dīn al Dhahabī and Ḥāfīz Ibn Ḥajar al ‘Asqalānī. As per the former the pyramid of *taʿdīl* of acceptable narrators goes as under:

- **Degree first:** *Thabt hujjah, thabt ḥafīẓ, thiqah mutqin* and *thiqah thiqah*
- **Degree second:** *Thiqah*

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54 *Al Nasīḥah*, p. 112.
• Degree third: Ṣadūq, lā ba'sa bih, laysa bihi ba'sa. mahallah al ṣidq, jayyid al ḥadīth, sālih al ḥadīth, shaykhun wasṭun, shaykhun ḥasan al ḥadīth, ṣadūq in shā' Allāh, suwayliḥ etc.\(^57\)

According to second scholar, Ḥāfīz Ibn Ḥajar al ‘Asqalānī, the pyramid of degrees of narrators goes as under:

• Degree third: One who is designated with the attributes like thiqah or mutqan or thabt.

• Degree fourth: Which falls little short to third degree; it is pointed by ṣadūq or lā ba'sa bihī, or laysa bihi ba'sa.\(^58\)

Shaykh al Albānī comments on it and says that it is evident that Ḥāfīz al Dhahabī puts the narrator who is designated as ṣadūq with the jayyid al ḥadīth and ḥasan al ḥadīth in his degree pyramid. Ḥāfīz Ibn Ḥajar al ‘Asqalānī did not put him there. If in the case of Ibn Ḥajar the narrator falls in the third degree then the ḥadīth would be Ṣaḥīḥ, and if he would be from the fourth degree the ḥadīth would be Ḥasan.\(^59\)

\(^{57}\) Idem.

\(^{58}\) Idem.

\(^{59}\) Adab al Zifāfī fī al Sunnah al Mutaharrah, pp. 154-155.
In addition to above, he says if a hadith is apparently weak, one has to find and evaluate its channels and witnesses so that the hadith can be elevated up to the grade of strength (quwwah). This is called Hasan li ghayrihi or Ṣaḥīh li ghayrihi. Therefore, Ḥasan li ghayrihi is the most inferior but acceptable (al maqbul) hadith, which can be used as an authority in the rulings (Iḥkām).

He says further that Ḥasan li ghayrihi and Ḥasan li dhātihi are more delicate and more complicated in the science of hadith because they deal with the contradictions of scholars in their remarks, between the strengthened (muwaththaq) and weakened (muda‘‘af), and there is no reconciliation (al tawfiq) between the two or where one remark of a scholar cannot be preferred on the others remark. Only one, who knows the principles and rules of science of hadith; has a sound knowledge of al jarah wa al ta‘dīl; has practiced this science for a long time; has benefited from the books of takhrij, criticism of masters of critique, knows who among them is strict and who is lenient and who is moderate between the two can practice this science. This is the difficult job and only little show patience for this and get its fruits.

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60 Inva ‘al Ghalil, vol. i, p. 11.
61 Muhammad Nāṣir al Dīn al Albānī, Ghāyah al Marām fi al Takhrīj Ahādīth al Ḥalāl wa al Harām, ed. 4th, Beirut, Maktab al İslāmî, p. 9.
Discussing his view about the decisions made by Imām al Tirmidhī, Shaykh al Albānī says that the Imām does not take Ḥasan hadīth similar to Ḥasan isnād. However, he takes it similar to the weak chain (isnādun daʿifun) which has come from another channel and there is no accused (muttaham) in the chain and makes the hadīth Ḥasan li ghayrihi. This is further explained by the Shaykh that sometimes a hadīth, because of its witnesses, can be Ḥasan in the opinion of al Tirmidhī and others, but the chain by which the hadīth is reported cannot be Ḥasan, which points towards the weakness of the chain but not the grave weakness in his opinion; and this slight weakness can be removed by the other channels. The later scholars call these ahādīth as Ḥasan li ghayrihi.

The Shaykh makes it clear that Ḥasan li ghayrihi is inferior in authenticity to Ḥasan li dhātihi and this in turn is inferior to Sahīh li ghayrihi which is inferior to Sahīh li dhātihi. Similarly, al Mashhūr is inferior in authenticity to al Mustafīd, which in turn is inferior to al Mutawātīr.

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63 Ghāyah al Marām, p. 196.
64 Tamām al Mannah, p. 416.
65 Ghāyah al Marām, p. 100.
66 Tamām al Mannah, p. 416.
Unreliability of Silence of Abū Dā'ūd

Shaykh Muḥammad Nāṣir al Dīn al Albānī quotes Abū Dā'ūd and says that he has mentioned about his book, *al Sunan* that in which *ḥadith* he has found a grave weakness (*waḥnun shadīdun*) he has pointed it out, and he has not commented anything on those *aḥādīth* which are Ṣāliḥ (righteous).68

According to the Shaykh, scholars have disputed about the intention of Abū Dā'ūd with respect to the term "Ṣāliḥ". Some believe that it is used for Ḥasan (agreeable) *ḥadīth* which can be used as an authority (*ḥujjah*), while others believe in its general meaning and include all those *aḥādīth* which can be taken as authority (*ḥujjah*) or witness (*istiṣḥād*) and are safe from grave weaknesses.69

The Shaykh says that the above-mentioned meaning is exhibited by the statement of Abū Dā'ūd, "...in which *ḥadīth* he has found a grave weakness (*waḥnun shadīdun*)..." which shows that he will comment only on those *aḥādīth* which have grave weakness and will remain mum about those *aḥādīth* which have little weaknesses.70

The Shaykh claims that it is not necessary that all those *aḥādīth* about which Abū Dā'ūd has maintained silence will be Ḥasan in

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68 *Tamām al Manāhī*, p. 27.
69 *Idem.*
70 *Idem.*
his opinion. This is also substantiated by the fact that he has a good number of such *aḥādīth* on whose weaknesses no ʿālim can doubt but Abū Dāʾūd has maintained silence about them. That is why Imām al Nawawī has said about few such *aḥādīth*, "Abū Dāʾūd has not mentioned the weakness of this [*hadīth*] as its weakness is quite known."71

3. *Al Daʿīf*

In lexicon *daʿīf* (weak) is used as an opposite of *qawīyy* (strong). In *hadīth* terminology, *Daʿīf* *hadīth* is one which falls short in attaining the grade of *al ʿHasan*.72 According to Shayk al Albānī, it is not correct that a *hadīth* having weak chain needs no further study, but it is must for a researcher to study more and widen the scope of his research so that he may find other chains which may support it.73 The Shaykh quotes Imām Ibn Taymiyyah in this respect, who says that in the opinion of scholars of *hadīth*, *Daʿīf* *aḥādīth* are of two types:

1. Weak which does not restrain to act upon it, which is just like *al ʿHasan* in the terminology of al Tirmīdī.
2. Weak, whose weakness compels to relinquish it and is baseless.74

71 Idem.
72 Al Tāḥhān, op. cit., p. 63.
73 al Nasīḥah, p. 221.
Shaykh al Albānī makes it clear that a ḥadīth having a weak chain may not be fabricated (al mawdū‘) as it is not essential that it would be Ṣaḥīh also. If there are other channels (ṭuruq), or witnesses (shāhid) it can be elevated up to the degree of al Ḥasan or al Ṣaḥīh.\textsuperscript{75} If most of the channels are containing grave weaknesses, Shaykh al Albānī says that he does not strengthen a weak ḥadīth with them.\textsuperscript{76} If the action of the Companion of the holy Prophet—like the holy wives of the Prophet—is against to what they are attributed to report it indicates towards the weakness of the ḥadīth (report).\textsuperscript{77}

Quoting ʿAbd al Barr, Shaykh al Albānī says that a weak ḥadīth can not be neglected. If this is not used as an authority but often a weak chained ḥadīth (Daʿīf al Isnād) is authentic by its meaning (Ṣaḥīh al ma‘nā).\textsuperscript{78} The reason for a weak ḥadīth but authentic by the meaning is its agreement with the legal texts (nusūṣ al shari‘ah) but it is not permitted to attribute it to the Prophet.\textsuperscript{79} Similarly, if a noted Companions gave the decrees in concordance with a marfu‘ and weak ḥadīth, their decrees can support the marfu‘ and weak ḥadīth.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{75} \textit{Silsilah al Ahādīth al Da‘īfah wa al Mawdū‘ah}, vol. i, pp. 629-630.
\textsuperscript{76} \textit{Irwā‘ al Ghalīl}, vol. vi, p. 270.
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Ibīd.}, p.183.
\textsuperscript{78} ʿAbd al Barr, \textit{al Tamhīd}, vol i, p. 58, quoted in \textit{Tahrīm Ālāt al Ṭarb}, by Muhammad Nāṣir al Dīn al Albānī, p. 74.
\textsuperscript{79} \textit{Tahrīm Ālāt al Ṭarb}, p. 74.
\textsuperscript{80} \textit{Irwā‘ al Ghalīl}, vol. iv, p.30.
How to Quote a Da‘īf Ḥadīth?

According to Shaykh al Albānī, in the present times many writers belonging to different schools of thought quote the ahādīth attributed to the Prophet without knowing the weak ahādīth among them because of their ignorance about Sunnah or lack of interest or sluggishness in consulting the specialized books in this field. While some specialists show their laziness particularly in case of those ahādīth which deal with the virtues of actions (fadā‘il al a‘māl). Shaykh al Albānī quotes Abū Shāmah who says:

> It is right to quote that ḥadīth whose status is known to him, or be among those who get the threat as per the saying of [the Prophet]: 'مَنْ حَدَّثَ عَنِّي حَدِيثًا يَبْيِعِهُ أَنَّهُ كَذَّبَ فَهُوَ أَحَدُ الْكَذَّابِينَ' [whosoever reports from me a hadīth and knows it is a lie, is one among the two liars]. 'Reported by Muslim.'

Shaykh al Albānī passes his remarks on the statement of Abū Shāmah and says that this is a verdict about those who keep mum about the action on weak ahādīth of virtues, then what will be the decree about the silence in case of those weak ahādīth dealing with the rulings (al ahkām)? Shaykh al Albānī says that one who hides the weakness of a hadīth is also one among the two liars:

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81 Tamām al Mannah, pp. 32.
82 Al Bā‘īth ‘Alā Inkar al Bada’ wa al Ḥawādith, p. 54, quoted in Tamām al Mannah by al Albānī, p. 32.
83 Tamām al Mannah, pp. 33-33.
1. If he knows the weakness of *ahādīth* but did not warn the people about it, then he deceives Muslims and verily he is included in the above-mentioned threat. Shaykh al Albānī refers to Ibn Ḥibbān and says that the Prophet did not mention, "One should be certain that it is a lie" but said "...and knows it is a lie..." which includes every one in the threat of this saying even if he has only a doubt about its authenticity.\(^{84}\)

2. If he does not know its weakness still then he commits a sin because he has dared to attribute it to the Prophet without knowledge as said by the Prophet, \(\text{سُجِّدُتْ بَلَاءَ كَلِبَةَ أَنْ تَحَدِّثُ بَكَلَّ مَآ تَنْفَعُ} \) (it is sufficient for a man to be a liar, who narrates everything what he listens).\(^{85}\) Therefore, he has a share among the sins of the forger about the Messenger (*al Kādhib ‘alā al Rasūl*) as the Prophet has pointed towards it by saying "... who narrates everything what he listens." The shaykh says that same is the case with a writer, and he is one among the two liars. Among these two liars, one forges a lie and other propagates it.\(^{86}\)

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\(^{84}\) Ibn Hibbān, *al Du‘afā*‘, vol. i, pp. 7-8, quoted in *Tamām al Mannah* by al Albānī, p. 33.

\(^{85}\) *Muslim*, no. 5, quoted in *Tamām al Mannah* by al Albānī, p. 33.

\(^{86}\) *Tamām al Mannah*, p. 33.
According to Shaykh al Albānī, Imām Nawawī has said that the
research scholars and ‘ulamā’ have remarked when a ḥadīth is
weak one should not call qālā (said) or fa’ala (did) or amara
(ordered) or nahā (abstained) or ḥakama (decided) or dhakara
(mentioned) Rasūl Allāh. Other such terms which are close to
these above-mentioned terms, particularly ṣīghah al jazam
(Arabic active verbs) should also be avoided. Similarly, in case of
Followers (tābi‘īn) terms like ruwiya ‘anhu or naqala ‘anhu or
ḥakā ‘anhu or yadhkuru ‘anhu or yaḥkā or yarwā and other
ṣīghah al tamrīd (Arabic passive verbs) should be used to show
the weakness instead of ṣīghah al jazam.87

The Shaykh further quotes Imām Nawawī saying that the
muḥaddithūn have mentioned that the ṣīghah al jazam has been
used for the authentic and agreeable ahḍāth while the ṣīghah al
tamrīd has been used for other than these two types of ahḍāth.
The reason is quite clear that the ṣīghah al jazam asks for the
authentic appendix and its use in unauthentic statements is not
correct.88 It is, therefore, the agreed upon principle to quote a
weak ḥadīth with the term ruwiya.89 If someone does not adhere
to this principle, he will be taken as a liar. However, the majority

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88 Idem.
of jurists and scholars except few *muḥaddithūn* have interchanged these terms and have indulged into a grave negligence.\(^9^0\)

Adopting a unique methodology, Shaykh al Albānī says that it is evident by the law to talk to the people in the way they could understand. These above discussed terms are for the researchers, which are not understood by the majority of the people. That is why they are unable to differentiate between the terms *qāla Rasūl Allāh* and *ruwiya ‘an Rasūl Allāh* of a narrator.\(^9^1\) The Shaykh, therefore, suggests that one should mention the authenticity or the weakness of a *ḥadīth* clearly while quoting it so that the ambiguity can be overcame as pointed by the Prophet, "leave what causes you doubt and turn to what does not cause you doubt."\(^9^2\)

Excluding the authentic narrators from this rule Shaykh al Albānī says, if a narrator—like Ibn Kaysān—is a *thiqah* (authentic) and safe from *tadlīs*, there is no difference between the terms used by him, like *qāla* (he said), ‘*an* (from), *dhakara* (he mentioned) etc.\(^9^3\)

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\(^8^9\) *Tamām al Mannah*, p. 44.
\(^9^0\) *Al Majmū‘ Sharah al Muḥadhdhib*, vol. i, p. 63 quoted in *Tamām al Mannah* by al Albānī, p. 39.
\(^9^1\) *Tamām al Mannah*, p. 40.
\(^9^2\) *Al Nasā‘ī and al Tirmīdḥī*, also explained in *Irwā‘ al Ghalīl*, h. 2074 quoted in *Tamām al Mannah* by al Albānī, p. 40.
\(^9^3\) *Silsilah al Ahādhīth al Sahihah*, vol. vi, part i, p. 379.
**Action on a *Du‘if Ḥadīth*?**

Shaykh al Albānī says that the view that one can act upon a weak ḥadīth in *fadā‘il a‘māl* is not correct. The statement of Imām al Nawawī who quotes consensus upon it create this misconception but there is a need to study (*naẓr*) it further, as it has met an eminent disagreement from the scholars. Some of the research scholars have absolutely rejected *‘aml* on them whether in *ihkām* (rituals) or *fadā‘il* (virtues). According to Shaykh Jamāl al Dīn al Qāsimī it also seems the view point of Ibn Ma‘īn, Imām al Bukhārī, Imām Muslim, Abū Bakr ibn al ‘Arabī, and Ibn Ḥazm.

Shaykh al Albānī says that one should not act absolutely on a weak ḥadīth either in *fadā‘il* or *mustaḥbāt* (desirables). Shaykh al Albānī shares the view of Shaykh al Qāsimī on the following reasons:

1. The weak ḥadīth avails the possible conjecture (*al zann al marjūḥ*) and there is consensus on the prohibition of *‘aml* on it. Therefore, a person acting on a weak ḥadīth about virtues has to produce a sound argument.

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94 Jamāl al Dīn al Qāsimī *Qawā‘id al Tahdīth*, p. 94, quoted in *Tamām al Mannah* by al Albānī, p. 34.
96 Idem.
97 *Tamām al Mannah*, pp. 34-35.
2. Those actions which have been established by the law (sharī‘ah) if encloses a weak hadith which mentions a special reward, the ‘aml is allowed on this hadith of virtues. The reason is clear that it is not a weak hadith that establishes the action but it announces only the special reward on the action which is already established by the law. One who acts on it can hope for this reward; and some scholars have taken the same meaning from the permission of Imām al Nawawī, like Shaykh ‘Alī al Qārī in al Mirqāh. Shaykh al Albānī further insists on the consensus that al tashri‘ (legislation) is not allowed by a weak hadith which benefits nothing but al żann al marjūh (possible conjecture).

Shaykh al Albānī says that Ibn Ḥajar al ‘Asqalānī suggests:

The antagonists should know that it is not allowed to act on weak ahādīth of virtues in general sense. It is well known that the scholars, because of their leniency quote such ahādīth in virtues which are weak but not spurious. If a person acts on this weak hadith he must keep its weakness in mind and should not propagate it so that some one may not act on it, and make such things permissible for himself that were not permitted to him; or any ignorant may not take it as an authentic Sunnah. This has been also stated by Abū Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al Salām and others so that a man can remain cautious and may

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98 Tamām al Mannah, p. 35.
not be included in the threat of this saying. "So there is no difference between the action on hadith of al iḥkām or al fāḍā'il because all is law."

Shaykh al Albānī evaluates this quote of Ḥāfīz Ibn Ḥajar and says that according to the Ḥāfīz there are three important conditions for those who wish to act upon a weak hadith of virtues:

1. It should not be Mawdū' (spurious).
2. If someone acts on it he must know that it is a weak hadith.
3. He should not propagate it.

According to Shaykh al Albānī as far as these conditions are concerned, it is open that the majority does not mind them. He feels that Ibn Ḥajar himself was inclined towards the impermissibility of action on weak aḥādīth as he himself has said, "so there is no difference between the action on hadith of al iḥkām or al fāḍā'il because all is law."

Shaykh al Albānī confirms what Ḥāfīz Ibn Ḥajar says, as the weak hadith has no support and has the possibility of being a forgery, and often it is so. No one, therefore, who is not sure

100 Tabyīn al 'Ajāḥ, pp. 3-4, quoted in Tamām al Mannah by al Albānī, p. 36.
101 Tamām al Mannah, p. 36.
102 Ibid., p. 37.
about its authenticity, should quote it or he will be included in the threat of the saying of the Prophet.\textsuperscript{103}

The Shaykh insists that actually HEST  has discussed these conditions for those who are lenient about quoting \textit{ahādīth} in the chapter of the virtues as long as these are not spurious. HEST  Ibn  Hajjar advises them to be adherent to these conditions, it does not in any way mean that he was also with them in acting upon the weak \textit{ahādīth} after following these three conditions, as it is also depicted by his last line quoted above.\textsuperscript{104}

Reacting to the statements of  Imām  Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mahdī and ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mubārak that they have practiced strictness while reporting the \textit{ahādīth} of \textit{al ḥalāl} and \textit{al ḥarām} and were lenient in reporting the \textit{ahādīth} of virtues. Shaykh al Albānī first quoted ‘Allāmah Aḥmad Shākir saying that in those days there was no distinction between \textit{al Sahīh} and \textit{al Ḥasan}; and the \textit{muḥaddithūn} judged \textit{ahādīth} only as \textit{al Sahīh} and \textit{al Daʿīf}. Therefore, these scholars meant what they have reported in the chapters of virtues is not as authentic as \textit{al Sahīh} but falls in the grade of \textit{al Ḥasan}, which is the later term.\textsuperscript{105} After this quote,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{103}  \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 36-37.
\item \textsuperscript{104}  \textit{Idem.}
\end{itemize}
Shaykh al Albānī claims one more reason and says that the leniency of these scholars could be taken in the meaning of “mere reporting of ahādīth along with their chains and abstaining from judging them as Daʿīf as it is known that chains facilitate the knowledge about the weakness.”\textsuperscript{106}

Shaykh al Albānī says that the permissibility of action on the weak hadīth of virtues is not permitted because of al qawl al marjūh\textsuperscript{107} or al ḥān al marjūh\textsuperscript{108} as it is going against the basis (al asl) and there is no evidence of it.

Endorsing the view of Shaykh Jalāl al Dīn al Dawānī, Shaykh al Albānī says that we cannot prove the five rulings of the law (al īthār al khamsah al šarīʿah) including al īstihbāb (desirables) by a weak hadīth because of the impermissibility of action on al ḥān (conjecture) by the holy Qurʾān and the hadīth.\textsuperscript{109}

And surely conjecture does not avail against the truth at all.\textsuperscript{110}

They follow nothing but conjecture.\textsuperscript{111}

Similarly, as reported by Imām al Bukhārī and Imām Muslim the Messenger of Allāh said:

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{106}] Muhammad Nasīr al Din al Albānī, Sahīh al Jamīʿ al Saghir wa Ziyādhah (al Fath al Kabīr), ed. 3rd, Beirut, al Maktub al Islāmī, vol. i. p. 52.
\item[\textsuperscript{107}] Ghāyab al Marām, p. 9.
\item[\textsuperscript{108}] Sahīh al Jamīʿ al Saghir wa Ziyādhah (al Fath al Kabīr), vol. i. p. 50.
\item[\textsuperscript{109}] Sahīh al Jamīʿ al Saghir, vol. i. p. 51.
\item[\textsuperscript{110}] Al Qurʾān, 53:28
\item[\textsuperscript{111}] Ibid., 53:23
\end{itemize}
Beware of *al zann* [conjecture or suspension], for *al zann* is the worst of false tales.  

He further says that no one among the great scholars have permitted the authoritative status of a weak *hadith* in the legal rulings (*al iḥkām al shari‘ah*). However, all of them have agreed upon that in case of the rulings (*al iḥkām*) the *hadith* should be an acceptable (*al maqībūl*) one, the lowest grade of which is Ḥasan *li ghayrihi*. Therefore, one cannot act on a weak *hadith*, neither in virtues and nor in optionals (*Musṭaḥābat*).

### Reasons of Weakness of a *Hadith*

A *hadith* is termed as *Da’īf* because of two important reasons:

1. Breaks in a chain
2. Fault in a narrator

Because of the first reason, it can be divided into different types like; *Mu‘allaq, Mursal, Mu‘dal, Munqata‘, Mudallas, Mu‘an‘an, Mawqūf, Maqtū‘* etc. and because of the second reason a *Da‘īf hadith* can be divided into a number of types like; *Mawdū‘, Matrūk, Munkar, Mu‘allal, Mukhālifah al Thiqāt, Mudraj, Muṭṭarab, Shādh* etc.

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112 *Sahih al Jami‘ al Saghir wa Ziyādah*, vol. i, h. 2679, p. 521.
113 *Ghāyah al Marām*, p. 9.
114 *Sahih al Jami‘ al Saghir*, vol. i, p. 50.
1. **Weakness by Breaks in Isnād**

Shaykh al Albānī was a skillful *muḥaddith* who like earlier *muḥaddithūn* analyzed the *magnum corpus* of *ḥadīth* and studied their chains with the full scholarship. He discussed the chains of *ahādīth* in a scholarly manner and majority of his books are based mainly on these discussions. Here the Researcher discusses the standards of the Shaykh about the different types of weak *ḥadīth* which are termed *Da'īf* because of the break(s) in their chains.

**Al Muʿallaq**

If a narrator or a number of narrators are missing from the beginning of a chain the *ḥadīth* is termed as *al Muʿallaq*.\(^{116}\) Discussing the *Muʿallaqāt* of the *Ṣaḥīḥ al Bukhārī*, Shaykh al Albānī claims it as an established rule in the science of *ḥadīth* that the *ahādīth* of the *Ṣaḥīḥ al Bukhārī* are of two kinds:

1. Those *ahādīth* in which Imam al Bukhārī has carried the chain of a *ḥadīth* upto the Prophet with the continuity (*ittiṣāl*). These *ahādīth* are authentic in view of *ʿulamāʾ* except very slight suspicion by some scholars.

2. Those *ahādīth* which have been narrated by Imam al Bukhārī without continuing (*ittiṣāl*) it to the Prophet are known as *al Muʿallaq ahādīth*. The Shaykh claims that

\(^{116}\) Al Ṭāhān, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
these ḥadīth can be al Ẓahīh, al Ḥasan and al Daʿīf. Unlike kind first, it is impossible to get the knowledge from this kind by referring merely to Imām al Bukhārī.\textsuperscript{117}

Shaykh al Albānī makes it clear when a Muʿallaq (broken) ḥadīth is handed down with the ṣīghah al jazm—qāla (he said), rawā (he reported), dhakara (he mentioned) etc—the ḥadīth is authentic in his view; and when the ḥadīth is handed down with the ṣīghah al tamrīd—turwā (it is reported), dhukira (it is mentioned) etc—the ḥadīth is weak in his opinion because they do not meet the standard in his view.\textsuperscript{118}

He further makes a researcher cautious by saying that many ḥadīth reported with the ṣīghah al jazm are weak and sometimes the ḥadīth handed down with the ṣīghah al tamrīd are authentic in his (Imām al Bukhārī’s) view because of many reasons (al asbāb). The only way to get the knowledge of the authenticity of these ḥadīth which have been handed down by Imām al Bukhārī as broken (Muʿallaq) is to consult other books of ḥadīth like al Sunan etc where one can study their chains and can declare their befitting grade.\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{117} Muhammad Nāṣir al Dīn al Albānī, Naqd Nasīṣ Hadīthiyah fī Thaqāfah al Ḥamah, pp. 7-8.
\textsuperscript{118} Idem.
\textsuperscript{119} Idem.

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The Shaykh claims that there are many who does not know this fact and deem that every hadith, which is cited by Imām al Bukhārī, is Sahih. That is why they sometimes quote a broken hadith referring it to the Sahih al Bukhārī. In this way, they deceive the people as they are themselves in an illusion that they are quoting an authentic hadith. For this reason the ‘ulamā’ have agreed upon that whenever they quote a Mu‘allaq hadith from Sahih al Bukhārī they should point out it with the terms like rawāhu al Bukhārī mu‘allaqan (al Bukhārī reported it [hadith] as broken) or dhakarahu al Bukhārī bidūn isnād (al Bukhārī mentioned it without a chain), so that people may not be deceived.  

Shaykh al Albānī advises a student if he intends to quote a broken hadith from Sahih al Bukhārī, he should not use the term rawa al Bukhārī because this term is specific for al Musnad hadith. Similarly, when in case of Muḥammad ibn Bishār—the teacher of Imām al Bukhārī from which Imām Bukhārī has heard and narrated many ahādith—Imām al Bukhārī says qāla Ibn Bishār (Ibn Bishār said) it is taken as continuous (Muttaṣil) and

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120 Idem.  
121 Dīfā‘ ‘un al Hadith al Nabawī wa al Sīraḥ, p.29.
not broken (Mu'allaq) as claimed by Ibn Ḥazm and Hishām ibn Ṭāmār. The later calls it Mawsūl ḥadīth.\textsuperscript{122}

Giving his opinion on the authoritative nature of the Mu'allaq hadīth, Shaykh al Albānī says "Mu'allaq hadīth is a type of Munqatā' hadīth, which points towards its weakness."\textsuperscript{123} The Shaykh clears the doubt from the authority of al Bukhārī and says that it is well-known in the circles of 'ulamā' that the broken but al Majzūmah (reported with ṣīghah al tamrīd) ahādīth of Sahīh al Bukhārī are Sahīh.\textsuperscript{124}

\textit{Al Mursal}

Defining a Mursal ḥadīth, Shaykh al Albānī says, if a Follower (al ṭābi’ī) does not narrate a ḥadīth from the Companion of the Prophet the ḥadīth is called as Mursal ḥadīth. Here mursal is in the meaning of munqatā'; which exhibits that al inqītā' (break) is between a ṭābi’īy and a person among the Companions of the Prophet. Summarizing the views of Imām al Bayhaqī and al Ṣayraḍī Shaykh al Albānī says if the ṭābi’ī states sami’tu rajulan min al ṣāḥābah (I heard from a person among the Companions) then the ḥadīth is accepted and if he reports only by ‘an (from)

\textsuperscript{122} Irwā’al Ghāfīl, vol. vii, p.260.
\textsuperscript{123} Al Nasīḥah, p. 144.

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the *hadīth* is rejected. Shaykh al Albānī says that he views to restrict the last condition by putting it like this, if a ṭābi‘ī is *al mu‘an‘an* and known for *tadlīs* the *hadīth* will be rejected; if the case is not so this *hadīth* will also be accepted. The Shaykh admits that similarly, *Marāsīl al Ṣaḥābah* are also an authority.

He says that some of the scholars take *Hasan* *hadīth* authentic because there is no such a flaw in the chain on whose faultiness the scholars have reached on agreement. Similarly, they take a *Mursal* *hadīth* as authority because they regard the dropped narrator as the mentioned and fair one, which is not correct.

Shaykh al Albānī claims that no one among the ‘ulamā‘ declared clearly the authentic but *Mursal* *hadīth* absolutely acceptable; but there is a disagreement about it. If a *Mursal* *hadīth* is reported by an authentic *mursil* narrator it is not an authority unless and until it is supported by other channels. It is the *jahālāh* about the narrator that makes it unauthentic. Quoting al Khaṭīb al Baghdadī and Ḥāfiz Ibn Ḥajar al ‘Asqalānī in his support Shaykh al Albānī says that it is not permissible to accept a *khabr* (news) unless and until one knows the authenticity of the

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124 *Al Nasīḥah*, p. 229.
126 *Ghayāḥ al Ma’rūm fī al Taḥrīj Ahādīth al Halāl wa al Harām*, p. 133.
127 *Muqaddimah Targhīb wa Tarhib*, pp. 16-36.
reporter. That is why, Ibn Ḥajar has discussed ḥadīth al Mursal in the rejected (al mardūd) types of the ḥadīth because of the anonymity of the dropped narrator who can be either a ṣaḥābī or a tābiʾī; if he is a tābiʾī he can be either daʿīf or a thiqah; if he is a thiqah he can either narrate from a ṣaḥābī or from one more tābiʾī; if tābiʾī then the probabilities may repeat.\(^\text{129}\)

The Shaykh further adds when there is multiplicity in the channels of al marāṣil and they are free from the deliberate agreement or there is an unintentional agreement then the marāṣil are authentic. The report (al naql) may be either agreeing with the news (al khabar) or is the deliberate lie from the liar or a mistake. Whenever a report is safe from the intentional lie and mistake it is a doubtless truth (ṣidqan bilā rayyib).\(^\text{130}\)

Explaining it further, he says when a ḥadīth is reported from two or more than two channels and it is known that the reporters do not agree on the fabrication, it is also established that the agreement on the fabrication is not possible unintentionally and merely by chance, therefore, the report is authentic.\(^\text{131}\)

Shaykh al Albānī quotes an example given by Ibn Taymiyyah in this regard. If a person reports a past incident in detail and refers to the particular sayings and the deeds. Meanwhile a

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\(^{129}\) Nasb al Majānīq li Nasf Qissah al Gharānīq, pp. 41-42.
person, who is known for his disagreement with the first one, comes and says what the first person had said in detail, and he refers to the sayings and deeds already quoted by the first. Then one should know that this reported incident is true as a whole. If it had been all deliberate lie from these two persons or a mistake, then it would have been impossible to report the details with such an agreement. In this way the common truth (ṣidq ʿāmmah) is known with the help of different channels (jihāt) of al monqūlāt.\footnote{Shaykh al Albānī further quotes Ibn Taymiyyah in his support and says when a hadīth comes from the Prophet in two ways with the information that one reporter has not taken it from the other. This determines that the report is a truth (ḥaqq); especially when it is known that the reporters are not those who lie deliberately. In this situation only the fear of forgetting and the chances of mistakes from the two narrators persist. Therefore, one of the channels supports the other but the fear of the bad memory of the narrators and their mistakes limit it to the grade of al Ḥasan only.\footnote{Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmūʿah Fatāwā, pp. 18-25 quoted in Tahrīm Ālāt al Tarb, p. 73.}}

By this the Shaykh claims that one is benefited from a Majhūl or a Mursal hadīth. That is why the people of knowledge were
quoting such *ahādīth* and according to them they are capable for *al shawāhīd* (witnesses) and *al i'tibār* and are not useful for other matters.\(^{134}\) If it is reported by a Ḥāfiz Imām,\(^ {135}\) or as a *Mawṣūl* from the other channels its weakness is removed. It is then capable to be used as an authority, but the channels having grave weakness cannot be used for witness (*istishhād*).\(^ {136}\) Therefore, these individual but weakest channels cannot provide strength to a weak *ḥadīth*.\(^ {137}\)

Shaykh al Albānī says if it is not clear that the narrator—like ʿUmar ibn al Šāʿīb—is the Companion of the holy Prophet or the Follower. The *ḥadīth* is declared dropped for the argumentation (*al istidlāl*) because of the anonymity of the status of the narrator; as the narrator could be a *tabiʿī* whose authenticity is uncertain. Shaykh al Albānī says this is also a reason why the scholars of *ḥadīth* do not base their arguments on a *Mursal hadīth*.\(^ {138}\)

Shaykh al Albānī argues that there are two obstacles for a *Mursal hadīth* which disqualify it for the argumentation in spite of being reported from a number of *mursal* channels; one, there may be a single source of the two *Mursal aḥādīth*. Second, there may be addition of weaknesses of the individual channels which

\(^{134}\) *Idem.*

\(^{135}\) *Nash al Majāniq li Nasf Qissah al Gharaqq*, p.39.


results in the grave weakness of the channels as a whole.\textsuperscript{139} If a \textit{Mursal hadīth} has \textit{Sahīh} chain up to the \textit{mursil} narrator and this \textit{mursil} narrator receives the \textit{hadīth} from the teachers (\textit{Shayākh}) other than the teachers of the first \textit{Mursal} chain. This makes one satisfied that one \textit{Mursal} chain strengthens the other. If one of the conditions is not present, for example, one of the \textit{Mursal} chains is a weak or authentic but it is not known whether its teachers are different from the teachers of the another \textit{Mursal} chain, then this \textit{Mursal} chain cannot be used as a strengthener. This is because there are the chances that the two \textit{Mursal} channels meet on a single narrator who is the teacher of these two \textit{Mursil} narrators then the \textit{hadīth} will be called as \textit{Gharīb}. This is also the view of Imām Nawawī.\textsuperscript{140}

Shaykh al Albānī further says if the \textit{mursil} narrator is Ḥasan Başarī in the view of the majority it is a weak \textit{hadīth}.\textsuperscript{141} Shaykh al Albānī has made it clear that the \textit{ahādīth} which are narrated by Ḥasan Başarī from Samrah when reported with ‘\textit{an’ānah} are not \textit{hujjah}.\textsuperscript{142}

\begin{enumerate}
\item [\textsuperscript{139}] \textit{Nash al Majānīq li Nasf Qissah al Gharānīq}, p. 45.
\item [\textsuperscript{141}] \textit{Silsilah al Ahādīth al Da’īfah wa al Mawdū‘ah}, vol. 1, p. 55.
\item [\textsuperscript{142}] \textit{Irwā‘ al Ghalīl}, vol. v, p.349.
\end{enumerate}
**Al Munqata**

In lexicography word *munqata* is derived from *inqaṭa‘a yanqaṭa‘u*. It is an opposite of *ittiṣāl* and means to be cut off.\(^{143}\) Shaykh al Albānī insists that as long as *al inqīṭā‘* of a *ḥadīth* is not proved it shall be taken as an authentic *ḥadīth*. Mere lack of *al simā‘* can not prove the *ḥadīth al munqata‘*.\(^{144}\)

The Shaykh says that *Munqata‘ ḥadīth* is among the weak *aḥādīth* because of the *jahālah* (anonymity) of the dropped narrator. No one among the scholars declared the authentic but *Mursal ḥadīth* acceptable, there is an open disagreement about it. Mere the presence of *Munqata‘ ḥadīth* in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* can not negate its *qadah* because if their continuity could not have been proved by other channels these would have also been declared weak.\(^{145}\)

**Al Mu‘dal**

*Mu‘dal* is derived from an Arabic word *a‘dalah* which means to be or become problematic.\(^{146}\) In *ḥadīth* terminology a *Mu‘dal ḥadīth* is one in which two or more than two narrators are dropped successively. *Mu‘dal* is regarded as a kind of *Munqata‘ ḥadīth* because all *Mu‘dal aḥādīth* are *Munqata‘* but all *Munqata‘* are not

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\(^{143}\) Al Ţāhān, *op. cit.*, p. 77.
\(^{144}\) *Irwā‘ al Ghādir*, vol. i, p. 124.
\(^{145}\) Al Mas‘ah ‘alā al Jawrābāyn, p. 30.
\(^{146}\) Al Ţāhān, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

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Mil 'dal. Shaykh al Albani regards al Mil 'dal as one of the kinds a weak hadith.  

**Al Mudallas**

In lexicography, *Mudallas* is a passive participle of an Arabic word *tadlis*, which means to conceal the defects of goods from the customer. *Tadlis* is itself derived from *dalasa*, which means the awful darkest night. In hadith terminology it deals with a report in which *tadlis* (concealment of defects) is practiced, and such hadith is called as Mudallas hadith. Therefore, this definition fits to its literal meaning in respect of its darkness that encloses the condition of its chain. According to Shaykh al Albānī *tadlis* is of three types:

a) **Tadlis al Isnād**

The Shaykh says that it is a hadith in which a narrator narrates from that person with whom he has met, but has not heard from him that particular hadith or he has lived as his contemporary but has not met him. Sometimes there are one or more

147 Dr. Subhī Sālih, *op. cit.*, p. 199.
148 Ghāyah al Marām fi al Tahrij Ahādith al Halāl wa al Harām, p. 27.
149 Al Tāḥhān, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
150 *Mu'jam: Istilahātī Hadith*, p. 316.
151 Al Tāḥhān, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
152 *Tamam al Mannah*, p. 18.
153 *Idem*.
[narrators] between them. The narrator does not use terms like *akhbaranā* (reported to us), and *haddathanā* (narrated to us). He uses terms like *qala* (said) and *'an* (from) while transmitting the *ḥadīth* which gives the false impression of direct hearing from him.\textsuperscript{155}

b) *Tadlis al Shayūkh*

The Shaykh says if a narrator names a teacher (*shaykh*)—after hearing a *ḥadīth* from him—by such a name, epithet, lineage or attribute which is not commonly known for him so that his identification can not be made, this practice of the narrator is called as *tadlis al shayūkh*.\textsuperscript{156} This kind of *tadlis* has been declared extremely forbidden. The *shaykh* whose name has been concealed is usually unauthentic, and his name has been concealed by the narrator so that his state (*al ḥāl*) cannot be identified; or he is called by an unusual name or epithet, which matches with the name or epithet of an authentic narrator, so that a false impression is given that the *shaykh* is someone else among the authentic narrators.\textsuperscript{157}

\textsuperscript{155} Tamām al Mannah, p. 18.
\textsuperscript{156} Idem.
\textsuperscript{157} Al Tawassul, p. 93.
c) *Tadlis al Taswiyah*

Defining this type of *tadlis* the Shaykh says if a *mudallis* narrator narrates such a *hadith* which he has heard from an authentic (*thiqah*) teacher (*shaykh*), in his turn this authentic teacher narrates it from a weak (*da'if*) teacher and this weak teacher transmits it on the authority of an authentic teacher. The *mudallis* who hears from the authentic teacher drops the weak authority of his authentic teacher. He then links the chain of his authentic teacher with the next authentic narrator with probable (*muhtamal*) terms, like ‘an’anhú etc. This exhibits the whole chain as authentic. He declares the continuity between him and his authentic teacher. In this case, the critics find such an element in the chain which itself calls for its rejection. That is why it is the worst kind of *tadlis*, which is followed, by first and second types. Shaykh al Albānī informs the researchers that Walīd ibn Muslim is known for this type of *tadlis*. That is why the researchers do not take the *ahādith* of Walīd as an authority except when the chain is *musalsal* (continue) with *al taḥdīs* or *al simā*.

The Shaykh discusses one more type of *tadlis* and writes if a narrator says *haddathānā* or *sami’tu* and after a pause he utters

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158 Tamām al Mannah, p. 18.
159 Silsilah al Ahādīth al Daʾifah wa al Mawdū’ah, vol. iii, pp. 409-410.
the names like Ḥishām ibn ‘Urwah or al A‘mash giving false impression that the narrator has listened from them whereas the case is not so. This practice is called taddīs al sukūt. 160

Causes for Taddīs

As per Shaykh al Albānī, the known causes that make a narrator to practice taddīs are; when he narrates from a younger in age and drops the younger narrator in the passion of elevating the chain or when he knows that the ḥadīth is mardūd in view of muḥaddithūn. 161

Shaykh’s Verdict About al Mudallas

According to the Shaykh few scholars did not accept Mudallas ḥadīth absolutely, but he rejects this view and accepts a Mudallas ḥadīth if the narrator is righteous, accurate and declares the taddīs. 162 He subscribes this view partially to Ḥāfīz Ibn Ḥajar al ‘Asqalānī. 163 He further says that as per the majority the ḥadīth of a mudallas narrator cannot be accepted unless and until he declares al simā’, which is in contrast to Ibn Ḥazm who does not accept al mudallas at all in spite of the clear declaration by the narrator. 164

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163 Tamām al Mannah, p. 19.
164 Irwā’ al Ghalīl, vol. i, p. 87.
Shaykh al Albānī further says when a mudallis narrates a hadīth using the word ‘an (from) the hadīth is not used as an authority.\textsuperscript{165} Similarly, the ‘an’anah who is known for his tadlīs is an ‘illah (reason) in a hadīth and ceases the fairness of the report.\textsuperscript{166}

\textit{Al Mu’an’an}

In literal sense \textit{mu’an’an} means to say ‘an, ‘an (from, from). According to \textit{usūl al hadīth} terminology, a saying of a narrator which begins with ‘an (from) is called as \textit{al Mu’an’an}.\textsuperscript{167} The Shaykh says if a Mu’an’an is safe from tadlīs and there is a chance of meeting between the narrators, his ‘an’anah is taken as \textit{al ittiṣāl}.\textsuperscript{168} Referring to Imām Abū Muḥammad ibn Ḥazm—known for his vehemence in this field—Shaykh al Albānī declares if a fair (\textit{al ‘adl}) narrator reports from that who is known to be fair then it is similar for the liqā’ and the simā’ whether he says akhbānā or hadathanā or ‘an fulān or qāla fulān; this is all taken as simā’ from him.\textsuperscript{169}

Shaykh al Albānī further says if a narrator—like Ibn Kaysān—is a thiqah (authentic) and also safe from tadlīs, therefore, there is

\textsuperscript{165} Ghāyah al Mūram p.25.
\textsuperscript{167} Al Tahān, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 86-87.
\textsuperscript{168} Al Nasīḥah, pp. 99-100.
\textsuperscript{169} Idem.
no difference between the terms used by him, like qāla (he said), ‘an (from), dhakara (he mentioned) etc.¹⁷⁰

Discussing the stand of Imām al Bukhārī in this issue, Shaykh al Albānī writes that in the view of the Imām the proof of meeting between the narrators is necessary for the authentication of a ḥadīth. Shaykh al Albānī says that this is al marjūh view near the majority. Imām Muslim has refuted this view in the prelude of his al Sahīḥ and has proven that al mu‘āṣarah is sufficient but the narrator must not be Mudallis.¹⁷¹ As said earlier Shaykh al Albānī has made clear that those aḥādīth which are narrated by Hasan Baṣārī from Samrah with ‘an’anah are not ḥujjah.¹⁷²

‘An’anah of Zakariyyā and Imām al Tirmidhī

Shaykh al Albānī informs the researchers that Zakariyyā is a Mudallis narrator as said by Abū Dā’ūd and others. His ‘an’anah aḥādīth have been taken by al Tirmidhī as Ḥasan. But the Shaykh makes it clear that the ‘an’anah aḥādīth if considered are taken only as a reason (sabab) for weakness and not agreeability (al tahsīn).¹⁷³

¹⁷² Ibid., vol. v, p. 349.
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2. **Weakness by Fault in a Narrator**

Being the expert in evaluating the narrators of a chain, Shaykh al Albānī created history by separating the fundamental *ḥadīth* books in separate *Ṣaḥīḥ* and *Daʿīf* parts. Almost all of these works are based on the books of *Jaraḥ* and *Taʿdīl*. Shaykh al Albānī discussed a great number of narrators in his *Silsilatān* and brought to the fore the reasons for their acceptance or rejection. Here the Researcher discusses the standards adopted by the Shaykh in evaluating and estimating the merits and demerits of the narrators of *aḥādīth*.

**Al Mawdūʿ**

*Mawdūʿ* is a passive participle derived from the Arabic phrase *waḍaʿu al shayʿ*, which means to bring down. As the grade of the *Mawdūʿ* *ḥadīth* is the lowest one, therefore, this nomenclature befits it. In *ʿilm al hadīth* the *Mawdūʿ* is a lie which has been forged by a narrator and attributed to the Prophet. Shaykh al Albānī says *al Mawdūʿ* (spurious) is a report in which there is a liar or a forger in the chain or has the impression of forgery evident from its text. He makes it clear that the research scholars do not pronounce their opinions only when they find

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174 Al Tāḥhān, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
slander (*al ta' n*) in the chain of a *haddith*, but in contrary to it they also study the text (*al matan*) of the *haddith*. If they find it in disagreement with *al Sharī'ah* (law) or with its fundamentals they do not hesitate to judge it as a forgery (*al waḍa'*) in spite of its sound chain.\(^{176}\) Here multiplicity of channels does not matter in any way; therefore, the spurious narrations cannot be strengthened.\(^{177}\)

The Shaykh makes it clear if an authentic narrator makes a mistake in the text of a *haddith* it does not make the whole *haddith* *Munkar* or *Mawdū* because the forgery is proved only when the narrator is a forger or a liar.\(^{178}\) If a person speaks lie—indeed harms his piety (*taqwā*) and shows *fisq*—his *haddith* is not listed as *al Mawdū* or *al Makdhūb* but judged as a very weak (*da'ifun jiddan*) *haddith*; the report is judged as *al Mawdū* only when it is known that the narrator is known for lying in the sayings of the Prophet.\(^{179}\)

Discussing the indications of *Mawdū* *ahādīth*, Shaykh al Albānī says that one of the indications of *Mawdū* narration is that

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\(^{176}\) *Silsilah al Ahādīth al Da’ifah wa al Mawdū’ah*, vol. ii, p. 86.

\(^{177}\) Ibid., p. 101.

\(^{178}\) *Dīfā’ an al Haddith al Nabawī wa al Sīrah*, pp. 76-77.
al salf al sālih (pious predecessors) did not continued to act on it. Some of the scholars, like Ibn Jawzī, consider it as a big indication of forgery that a hadīth is in conflict with reason (al 'aql), or report (al naql), or is against the fundamentals (al asāl) of religion. The Shaykh explains that to be against the fundamentals of religion means that it would not be available in al masānīd and in the well-known hadīth books.

Al Munkar

Shaykh al Albānī says when a da'īf narrator contradicts an authentic narrator in a word, the hadīth is categorized as rejected, Munkar. Shaykh al Albānī further says that some of the muḥaddithūn have labeled a narration Munkar only because of the uniqueness (al tafarrud) and does not meant by it the weakening (al tad‘īf) of the hadīth as seen in the Muqaddimah of Ibn al Ṣalāḥ.

Al Mu‘allal

Mu‘allal is a passive participle of a‘allahu. It is a hadīth which is apparently free from any weakness but on deep study, it reveals

\[\text{References:}\]

180 Silsilah al Ahādīth al Da‘ifah wa al Mawdū‘ah, vol. i, pp. 629-630.
a significant fault. Shaykh al Albānī says that as far as the ḥadīth critic is concerned, he is not supposed to vilify a ḥadīth if he feels it is contradicting with the jurisprudential issue. This contradiction cannot be a reason for him to reject the ḥadīth. By doing this he may vilify the number of sound channeled aḥādīth.

Shaykh al Albānī says that as far as the ‘illah of aḥādīth are concerned it makes one to understand the importance of the study of the different channels of aḥādīth, and to ascertain the identity of their narrators. This study helps a lot to unveil the ‘illah of a ḥadīth. He regrets that the majority of the scholars, both old and new, do not practice it.

The Shaykh reveals that Ibn Ḥazm evaluates the chain superficially and declares it authentic. He says that this may be suitable for the Zāhiriyyah school of thought but the people of knowledge do not satisfy merely by this, they study the chains and the biographies of the narrators in depth. By doing this, they satisfy themselves and ascertain whether there is any ‘illah in ḥadīth. That is why the knowledge of the ‘illah of a ḥadīth is among the finest sciences of the Ulūm al Ḥadīth.

184 Al Taḥḥān, op. cit., p. 99.
186 ‘Illah is a finest defect present in a ḥadīth which affects its authenticity.
Some Other Types of Hadīth

There are other types of hadīth which possess different reasons to fall in their respective categories. Some of these different types which have been discussed by the Shaykh are as follows:

Al Mudraj

As per the lexicographers, mudraj is derived as an Arabic passive participle of adrajat and means to insert or include one thing in the other. As per the muhaddithūn Mudraj is a hadīth in which words have been inserted in the text or chain without indicating it, or change has been induced in the isnād of a hadīth. Here a narrator contradicts the other authentic narrators, which is the seventh reason for weakening of a hadīth. Shaykh al Albānī comments on this act and says that it is not permitted to add anything based on personal opinion in the hadīth unless a narrator declares it.

Al Mudṭarab

Muḍṭarab is the passive participle of al iḍṭirāb which means anxiety, confusion and disorder. As per ‘ilm al hadīth, a hadīth which is narrated with different chains and texts are so much contradictory that the agreement between them is not reached.

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189 Al Tāḥḥān, op. cit., p. 103.
190 Ibid., p. 102.
addition to it, all these chains and texts are at par with respect to strength and grade, which makes the preference of one on the other impossible.\(^{193}\)

According to Shaykh Al Albani one of the conditions of a Ṣaḥīḥ hadith is that it must not be Mu’āllal (sick). Iḍīrāb (confusion) is also among the ‘illal of a hadith.\(^{194}\) Keeping this in view a Mudṭarab (confused) hadith can be defined as under:

A hadith which has different versions [riwāyah] is called a Mudṭarab hadith. Some report it one way and some narrate it in a different way. This hadith is called Mudṭarab when both the versions are at par with each other [and one can not be preferred to another]. However, when one of the versions carry greater weight and the other cannot withstand it for the reason that the narrator of first one is a better memorizer or has spend more time in the company of his authority [marwi ‘anhu] or has other reliable reasons for preponderance, then the decision [ḥukm] will be given in favour of the preponderant [al ṭārij]. At this time, the hadith will not be treated as Mudṭarab.

Sometimes the confusion may be in the text or the chain of a hadith. While it may be in one narrator or in a group of the narrators. This confusion is the cause of the weakness [du’af] of a hadith, as it displays that the [narrator] has not maintained the accuracy [dabt].\(^{195}\)

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192 Al Tahhān, op. cit., p. 112.
193 Mu’jam: Istilahatī Ḥadīth, p. 349.
194 Tamām al Mannah, p. 17.
Therefore, according to the Shaykh, the Mudtarab hadith is one in which the reasons of preference (al tarjih) like memory of its narrators or accuracy of its reporters or length of the company of its transmitters etc. are at par with each other and the principle of preference is not applicable. It is, therefore, an established fact that the idtirāb is an evidence of weakness of a hadith and the inaccurateness ('adm dābt) of its narrators which also points towards their poor memory. For this reason, one has to declare its weakness clearly as this kind of hadith is not acceptable in the view of the scholars. Shaykh al Albānī says that the scholars believe in two types of idtirāb:

1. When a hadith transmits from different channels (wujuh) having the same strength and it is not possible for us to prefer a channel (wajh) on another because of the similarity in strength.

2. When the channels of idtirāb are different from each other, so that the preference would be possible between them.

The Shaykh says that the first type causes sickness ('illaf) in a hadith and in the second type one has to look for al rājiḥ.

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197 Tamām al Mannah p. 263.
199 Sahih al Sirah al Nabawīyyah, pp. 18-19.
The Shaykh affirms if there is the switching of narrators—among the Companions of the holy Prophet—in a chain of a *hadīth*, this *iḍṭirāb* cannot affect the authenticity of a *hadīth*. The interchanging of *sahābī* narrators in a chain does not harm its authenticity. He gives a famous *hadīth* as an example, in which the Prophet has said, "When three are on a journey, they should appoint one of them as their commander."

In this famous *hadīth* Ibn ‘Ajlān sometimes gives the chain as, from (*‘an*) Nāfī‘, from Abū Salmah, from Abū Sa‘īd and sometimes he narrates it with the chain of Abū Hurayrah as, from Abū Salmah, from Abū Hurayrah. Shaykh al Albānī judges this *hadīth* as *Sahīh* and *Hasan Sahīh*.

Al Shādh

Literally, *shādh* is a present participle (*ism al fā‘il*) and is derived from *shadha* which means to be unique or isolated. According to Shaykh al Albānī, a *Shādh hadīth* is a *hadīth* which is reported by an accepted and trustworthy (*thiqah maqībūl*) narrator but is contradictory to the more accepted and trustworthy

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203 *Irwā‘ al Ghaṭil*, vol. viii, p. 106.
204 *Sahīh Jāmi‘ al Sahīr wa Zayādah*, vol. i, p. 148, h. 500.
205 *Sahīh Abū Dāwūd*, vol. iii, p. 36, h. 2608.
206 *Mu‘jam: Išṭilāḥāti Hadīth*, p. 204.

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narrator. He says that one of the conditions of the *hadīth* to be authentic is that it must not be *Shādīh*. Shaykh al Albānī quotes Ibn Ṣalāḥ in his support who has thoroughly discussed *al Shādīh* in his famous book *al Muqaddimah*.

When a narrator is unique in any respect, he should be studied. If in his uniqueness he contradicts with the narrator who is better than him in memory and accuracy [*dabī]*, then his *hadīth* will be listed as *Shādīh* and rejected [*Mardūd*]. Moreover, if he does not contradict the other better *riwāyah* [*narration*], and is reported only by him and not by the other, this unique narrator will be studied [further]. If the narrator is righteous [*‘ādīl*] and memorizer [*ḥāfīz*] and his skillfulness [*ītqān*] and accuracy is confirmed, then [the *hadīth*] in which he is unique can be accepted. His uniqueness cannot vilify it. If because of this uniqueness his memory and skill cannot be relied, therefore, his uniqueness can be his fault and his *hadīth* will be kept off from the definition of *al Sahīh*.

Now according to its condition [*al ḥāl*] it will be suspended between different grades [*marātib*]. If the unique narrator is not far from the grade of a such memorizer and accurate narrator, who falls in the acceptable grade then his *hadīth* will be graded as *Hasan* [*agreeable*] and cannot be declined as *Da‘īf*. In addition to it, if he is far from such acceptable degree then his uniqueness will be rejected and his *hadīth* will be listed among *Shādīh* and *Munkar*.

From this quote, Shaykh al Albānī concludes that the *Shādīh* *hadīth* is a *Munkar* (relinquished) and *Mardūd* (rejected) one because it is a mistake and the mistake cannot provide strength to

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207 Tamām al Mannah, pp. 15-16.
the other. It is this mistake which makes a *hadith* contradictory to other one. Therefore, *Shādīh* and *Munkar aḥādīth* are not accounted. He declares that it is extremely incorrect to use them as a witness; rather they are of no use. In case if a narrator narrates what has not been reported by the other authentic narrators; then this *hadith* will not be taken as *Munkar* or *Shādīh* but will be authentic as in the case of Aflāḥ ibn Ḥamīd. According to Shaykh al Albānī, it is a definition of Imām Shāfi‘ī which clears this principle that *Shādīh* is a *hadith* which is reported by an authentic narrator in contradiction to what has been reported by the others, whereas it does not include that *hadīth* which has not been narrated by any one else.

The Shaykh further says that *shadhūdīh* can be in chain as well as in text. In case of *shadhūdīh* in text, he says if there is a disparity of words in the text of one of the authentic channels of a *hadīth* but the other authentic narrators does not agree with this disparity. All of them agree on the other word, and have more authentic narrator in their chains the disparity will be taken as unauthoritative and *Shādīh*. The *hadīth* having more authentic

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211 *Idem*.
212 *Idem*.
213 *Irwa’ al Ghaṭil*, vol. iv, p. 177.
214 *Tamām al Mannah*, p. 16.
narrators will be taken as authority. Therefore, a person feels easier with a hadith of a group of the narrators than with a hadith of one narrator who contradicts all of them and is also isolated (al fard).

The Shaykh affirms that the muḥaddithūn have agreed upon the condition of Sahih hadith that it must be safe from shadhūd. The people who examine and study the books of hadith know it better that there are extraordinary contradictions in the accuracy (daḥīt) of the text of the ahādīth reported by the authentic narrators. Not all reasons of these contradictions can be obtained, therefore, it is must to prefer some on the others, and the preponderant (al Rājah) will be called as al Mahfūz and the non-preferable (al Marjūḥ) as al Shādh, which is a type of the Daʿīf hadīth.

Al Ḥākim and Shādh Ahādīth

Shaykh al Albānī comments on the remarks of Imam al Ḥākim who judges a particular hadith as Shādh and Sahih al isnād. Shaykh al Albānī says that this is a unique term used by al Ḥākim and as per his own [al Ḥākim's] definition "a Shādh hadīth is one, which is reported by an authentic narrator lonely and there is no

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216 Irwā’al Ghalīl., vol. iv, p. 218.
217 Al Masah ’alā al Jawrābayn, p. 37.
Shaykh al Albānī claims that this definition is in contradiction with the definition of Imām al Shāfi‘ī, who stated that a ḥadīth which is not narrated by any one else is not Shādh. According to the Shaykh, this is the definition that has been accepted by the majority of the earlier and later scholars; and what contradicts it is al Shādh. The Shaykh expresses his astonishment and expresses if the definition given by al Ḥākim is accepted it will reject hundreds of authentic ahādīth particularly those ahādīth which are in his own book al Mustadrak.

Al Majhūl

Literary jahila is the opposite of 'alima. The narrator who is unknown is termed as al Majhūl. In the definition of al Majhūl (the unknown) narrator, Shaykh al Albānī subscribes to the view of Imam al Khaṭīb:

In the view of Ašhāb al Ḥadīth, Majhūl is a narrator who is not well-known in 'ulamā‘ in seeking the knowledge, and his ḥadīth is know only by a single narrator.

The Shaykh claims that the muḥaddithūn are unanimous that the riwāyah of the unknown narrator should not be used as a
There is a strong likelihood that the anonymous narrator might be weak or a liar. However, it is also known that the jahālah (anonymity) of the Companions does not harm in anyway. Therefore, if the name of a Companion is not given it does not matter in any way because all the Companions are fair ('udūl). If the narrator is a Follower or anyone else, it is not necessary that he must be confirmed (tawthīq) by a person from his own tāḥqāh, but it is enough that he is confirmed by any imām of jaraḥ and taʿdīl irrespective of the conditions whether he belongs to his tāḥqāh or not. If the name of the Follower is not given and he is a majhūl his ḥadīth is a Mursal one and can be used as a witness (shāhid) only. The Shaykh says that al Majhūl has three kinds:

1. Majhūl al 'Ayn

This is a narrator, who has only been named and except one and no one narrates from him. His riwāyah cannot be accepted unless the narrator is confirmed. Shaykh al Albānī says jahālah

223 Tamām al Manḥah, p. 271, 347.
225 Ghayāh al Marām, p. 154, 204.
228 Al Ṭāḥhān, op. cit., p. 121.
229 Idem.
al 'ayn gets cleared by the reporting of two or more than two narrators and the hadīth is listed as Majhūl al hāl or al Mastūr.\textsuperscript{230}

2. Majhūl al Ḥāl

This is a narrator from whom two or more than two persons have narrated, but no one has confirmed him. This narrator is called as al Mastūr.\textsuperscript{231} As discussed above, Shaykh al Albanī says jahālah al 'ayn gets cleared by the reporting of two or more than two narrators and the hadīth is listed as Majhūl al hāl or al Mastūr. One group of the scholars have accepted it while the majority (al jamhūr) has rejected it.\textsuperscript{232} Shaykh al Albanī expresses that he feels satisfied if he uses al Mastūr ahādīth of the Followers as an authority, and he claims that many of the researchers have adopted the same way.\textsuperscript{233} He quotes a few famous muḥaddithūn like Ibn Rajab and Ibn Kathīr who declared the Mastūr ahādīth of the Followers as Ḥasan.\textsuperscript{234}

3. Al Mubham

Some of the Muḥaddithūn include Mubham in al Majhūl. Mubham is a narrator whose name has not been mentioned in a

\textsuperscript{230} Tamām al Mannah, p. 19.
\textsuperscript{231} Al Tahhan, op. cit., p. 121.
\textsuperscript{232} Tamām al Mannah, p. 19.
Shaykh al Albānī insists that as long as the name of the anonymous narrator is not known his confirmation cannot be accepted.

The Shaykh claims that mere naming a narrator cannot even clear the ṣahālah al ‘aynīyyah of the narrator not to speak of ṣahālah al ḥāl. Similarly, if the name of the ancestor of the narrator, or the name of any other relations of the narrator is given it cannot elevate the ḥadīth from the category of ṣahālah al ‘ayn to ṣahālah al ḥāl or ṣahālah al wasf. It is evident that the clearance of the ṣahālah al ‘ayn does not mean the clearance of ṣahālah al ḥāl. If a majhūl narrator is a person among the great Followers (Kibār al Ṭabī‘ūn) this even cannot clear the ṣahālah al ‘ayn of the narrator not to speak of ṣahālah al wasf. Mere anonymity of the narrator makes a ḥadīth weak and needs no further explicit jaraḥ of any kind.

Discussing the ways to clear the ṣahālah (anonymity) of a narrator the Shaykh says that the least way to clear the ṣahālah is that two or more than two narrators, well-known in knowledge, should report on his authority. Expressing his view on this Shaykh

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235 Al Ṭāḥhān, op. cit., p. 121.
238 Ibid., vol. ii, pp. 277-278.
239 Ibid., vol. i, p. 302.
240 Ibid., vol. ii, p. 280.
241 Idem.
al Albānī says that mere the reporting of two cannot prove his fairness (al 'adālah).  

In addition to above, Shaykh al Albānī says if a single reporter narrates on the authority of the unknown (al Majhūl) it is known as Majhūl al 'ayn. It is this anonymity which gets cleared by the reporting of two or more than two narrators and it is listed as Majhūl al hāl and al Mastūr. One group of the scholars has accepted it while as the majority (al jamhūr) has rejected it. Shaykh al Albānī quotes Ḥāfiz Ibn Ḥajar al 'Asqalānī to substantiate his view:

It is proven that a ḥadīth of Mastūr, where there is the probability [iḥtīmāl], cannot be taken as accepted or rejected one. However, it will be suspended [Mawquf] up to the verification of the integrity as resolved by Imam al Haramayn.  

Shaykh al Albānī adds that its integrity can be confirmed (tawthīq) by a reliable (muʿtamid) Imām only as the Ḥāfiz points towards it. According to Ḥāfiz Ibn Ḥajar, Majhūl al hāl is a narrator on whose authority two or more than two transmitters narrate a ḥadīth but could not confirm his integrity.  

Shaykh al Albānī explains the reason for accepting the confirmation of "a reliable Imām" only; as per him, there are some

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243 Tamām al Mannah, p. 19.
244 Shurh al Nukhbah, p 24, quoted in Tamam al Mannah by Shaykh Nasir al Din al Albānī, p. 20.
245 Tamām al Mannah, p. 20.
muhaddithūn on whose confirmation one cannot rely because they have deviated from the path of the majority and have confirmed al Majhūl, Ibn Ḥibbān is one among them. If the group of authentic narrators has taken the Majhūl as an authority, his hadith can be accepted but his hadith should not contain such a statement that is denied by the others. The later memorizers like Ibn Kathīr, al ‘Irāqī, al ‘Asqalānī etc., also hold the same view.\footnote{Idem.}

Ibn Ḥibbān and his Confirmation of al Majhūl

As discussed above, Shaykh al Albānī repeats that a hadith of Majhūl narrator along with its two types is not accepted by the majority of scholars.\footnote{Idem.} However he claims that Ibn Ḥibbān is well known for his carelessness in the confirmation of Majhūl narrators.\footnote{Al Marām fi al Takhrij Ahadīth al Halāl wa al Harām, p.101. Tamām al Munannah, p.20.} The deviation of Ibn Ḥibbān is that he accepted the ahadīth of Majhūl and based his arguments on them. He also collected these ahadīth in his Sahīh.\footnote{Idem.}

The Shaykh quotes a statement of Ḥāfiz Ibn Ḥajar al ‘Asqalānī, who claims that Ibn Ḥibbān has said:

The justification [ta‘dīl] of a Munkar al hadīth narrator can be permitted only after his critical evaluation. If he is among those who narrate Munkar ahadīth and agrees with the authentic narrators in akhbār the narrator will be ‘Ādil Maqbūl
al riwāyah, because the people talk good about a person unless a cause for defect is evident upon them. This is a verdict in case of well-know narrators but the unknown from whom only the weak narrators have narrated are always relinquished [Matrūk].

As per the Shaykh, ‘Allāmah Ibn Ḥajar al ‘Asqalānī evaluates this statement and says:

The opinion of Ibn Hibbān is strange about the fairness [al ‘adālah] of jahālah ‘ayn as long as he is not investigated [jarah]. Instead of this, the majority is against it. This view of Ibn Ḥibbān is expressed in Kitāb al Thiqāt.... It shows that in view of Ibn Ḥibbān jahālah al ‘ayn gets cleared by the reporting of a single well-known [Mashhūr] narrator. His teacher, Ibn Khuzaymah, also holds this opinion but others retain his jahālah al ḥāl unaffected.

Shaykh Nāṣīr al Dīn al Albānī clears the misunderstanding about the Ḥafiz's evaluation, "in view of Ibn Ḥibbān jahālah al ‘ayn gets cleared by the reporting of a single well-known (Mashhūr) narrator." Shaykh al Albānī says that this statement gives misimpression that Ibn Ḥibbān confirms only those Majhūl narrators who have been taken as an authority by the authentic ones. He contradicts Ḥafiẓ Ibn Ḥajar al ‘Asqalānī and gives arguments that Ibn Ḥibbān does not consider jahālah al ‘ayn as jarah. He further says that Ibn Ḥibbān believes the jahālah is

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251 Tamām al Mannah, p. 21.
252 Ibid., p. 22.
253 Ibid., p. 24.
cleared only by a single narrator despite the narrator is weak or unknown.\textsuperscript{254}

Concluding his view about Ibn Ḥībbān’s confirmations Shaykh al Albānī advises that one should remain reserve and cautious while taking the confirmations of Ibn Ḥībbān because he opposes the ‘ulamā’ while confirming the unknown narrators. If a narrator is taken as an authority by a group of authentic narrators and is confirmed by Ibn Ḥībbān, his hadith can be accepted as a truthful (ṣadūq) but his hadith should not contain such a statement, which is denied by the others.\textsuperscript{255}

**Types based on Attribution of Khabar**

As per to the attribution of khabar to anyone, the hadith is divided into four categories:

1. *Al Qudsiyy*

   In lexicography, Qudsiyy refers to al Quds, which means 'Holy'. As per the hadith terminology, it is a hadith which is attributed to Allah. It is narrated by the Prophet and comes down to us in such a way that the Prophet attributes it to Allah.\textsuperscript{256}

2. *Al Marfū‘*

   Literally, marfū‘ is a passive participle (ism al maf‘ūl) of rafa‘a which means to elevate and is an opposite of wada‘a (to put

\textsuperscript{254} Ibid., p. 23.
\textsuperscript{255} Ibid., p. 25.
\textsuperscript{256} Al Tāḥhān, *op. cit.*, p. 127.
According to muhaddithūn when a saying, action, taqrīr or a physical feature is attributed to Prophet Muhammad and is narrated by the Companion it is known as al Marfu'.

Shaykh al Albānī comments on this type of hadīth and says when a hadīth is known as Marfu', then it is of no benefit to restrict it as a Mawqūf saying of few of the Companions.

The Shaykh says further when the Companion says something—which is among the unseen (ghaybī) matters and cannot be said by mere opinion or which explains (tafsīr) an āyāh (verse) of the holy Qur'ān—then the statement is taken as al Marfu' instead of al Mawqūf with certainty.

3. Al Mawqūf

Al mawqūf is a passive participle (maf'ūl) of verbal noun, al waqf, which means to suspend or stop. In usūl al hadīth a saying, action or a taqrīr that has been attributed to the Companion of the Prophet is called as al Mawqūf.

According to the Shaykh if there is an explanation of the text of a hadīth and if the explanation is the Mawqūf one, it is considered as an authority (hujjah) because the explanation of a narrator does not

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257 Ibid., p. 128.
259 Al Thamr al Mustatib, 1422, p. 277.
260 Al Tawassul, pp. 113-114.
262 Al Tāḥhān, op. cit., p. 130.
263 Idem.
not contradict the *hadīth* in anyway, and the narrator knows the best what he is narrating.\(^{264}\)

The Shaykh further affirms that the *jahālah* of the *sahābī* does not harm a *hadīth* because all the Companions are fair (*‘Adūl*) in view of *Ahl al Sunnah* (people of *Sunnah*).\(^{265}\) The order (*amr*)\(^{266}\) of a *sahābī* and his commentary (*tafsīr*) on the Qur’ān\(^{267}\) will be taken as *al Marfū‘*. When the Companion says, *amaranā bi kadhā* (we were ordered to do like this) or *nahaynā ‘an kadhā* (we were refrained from this)\(^{268}\) this will be all taken as *al Marfū‘*.\(^{269}\) If the Companion says, *min al sunnah kadhā* (in the *Sunnah* it is like this),\(^{270}\) this will be also included in the *Marfū‘* category.\(^{271}\)

Similarly, the explanation of a *tābi‘ī* especially when he is a narrator of a *hadīth*, and it is supported by the juristic rules (*al qawā‘id al usūliyyah*) is *hujjah*.\(^{272}\) This explanation will be preferred on the others especially when it does not contradict any *hadīth*\(^{273}\).


\(^{265}\) *Silsilah al Ahādith al Sahīhah*, vol. v, p. 399.

\(^{266}\) *Ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 271.

\(^{267}\) *Ibid.*, p. 188.


\(^{270}\) *Idem.*


\(^{272}\) *Ghayah al Marām*, p.79.

\(^{273}\) *Irwā‘ al Ghaṭīl*, vol. iv, p. 134.
The Shaykh further says that sometimes a Companion remains unaware about a *hukm* of the *Sharī'ah* because of not receiving a particular *hadīth*. So due to his negligence he either denies the *hadīth* or gives the opinion, which contradicts the *hadīth*. He, therefore, errs but instead of that he is rewarded.\footnote{Ibid., vol. v, pp. 156-157.}

4. *Al *Maqtū‘*

*Maqtū‘* is a passive participle of *qata‘a*, which means 'to cut' and it is an opposite of *wasala*. In *‘ilm al hadīth*, *al Maqtū‘* is a report which is attributed to a Follower or to anyone below them.\footnote{Al Tāḥhān, *op. cit.*, p. 133.} Shaykh al Albānī says when a narrator is a Follower (*al Ṭābi‘ī*) and he says, *min al Sunnah kadha* (in *Sunnah* it is like this), the statement is not taken as the *Marfu‘* one, in contrary to a same statement if stated by the Companion it will be taken as *al Marfu‘*.\footnote{*Al Ajūbūh al Nāṣir ah*, p. 34 and *Irwā‘al Ghail*, vol. vii, p. 338.} Simply speaking, the Shaykh believes that mere statement of a Follower cannot confirm the *Sunnah*.\footnote{277}

**Ziyādah al Thiqaḥ**

*Ziyādah al thiqaḥ* (addition by an authentic narrator) are those additional words, which have been added in any *hadīth* by any authentic narrator while as the other authentic narrators have not
mentioned these words in the same hadith.\textsuperscript{278} Shaykh al Albānī says that the lack of knowledge in any matter does not mean the inexistence of the fact. Sometimes the fact remains there and only few know about it.\textsuperscript{279}

He declares that the ziyyādah al thiqaḥ are acceptable (al maqṣūl).\textsuperscript{280} When the chain (al sanad) is elevated (raf'a) [to the Prophet] and it is free from shadhūd then the addition (al ziyyādah) is accepted because the addition of an authentic narrator is acceptable.\textsuperscript{281} Sometimes a narrator elevates a hadith to the Prophet and sometimes he does not ascend it and the hadith remains mawqūf. Therefore, who remembers (hafiz) is hujjah on the one who does not remember.\textsuperscript{282}

The Shaykh expresses his personal experience and says that a person feels more comfortable with a hadith reported by a group of narrators than with a hadith reported by a single narrator who contradicts all of them and is also isolated (al fard).\textsuperscript{283} He says if two groups of narrators vary in the number of ahādīth, the group having more number of ahādīth will be preponderant (al arjāh) because more number means addition of knowledge ('ilm).

\textsuperscript{277} Irwā al Ghalīl, vol. iii, p. 156.
\textsuperscript{278} Mu'jam Ishtilāhī Hadīth, p. 186.
\textsuperscript{279} Al Nasīhah, p. 63.
\textsuperscript{280} Irwā al Ghalīl, vol. iv, p. 69.
\textsuperscript{281} Ibid., p.136.
\textsuperscript{282} Ibid., pp.157 & 244.
Therefore, one who knows is a *hujjah* for one who does not know.\textsuperscript{284} He further explains that this principle of preponderance (*al tarjīḥ*) is acceptable when there is a contradiction between the two *ahādīth* and the reconciliation (*al tawfiq*) is not possible between them.\textsuperscript{285} Similarly, if sometimes a narrator narrates a *hadīth* as a *Musnad* and sometimes he narrates it as a *Mursal*, the *hadīth* containing more knowledge (*ʿilm*) i.e. *al Musnad*, related to the Prophet, is taken as an authority.\textsuperscript{286}

The Shaykh says that the bases for accepting the *riwāyah* (narration) of an authentic narrator is as it is reported. Therefore, it is not permitted to reject an authentic *hadīth* on the basis of probabilities (*al ihtimalāt*) and suspicions (*al tashkik*).\textsuperscript{287}

The Shaykh clears his stand about few narrators and says if a narrator like Maṭr al Wāraq is a truthful (*ṣadūq*) but makes many mistakes (*al khataʾ*) his additions will not be accepted, because this is the sickness (*ʿillah*) of the *hadīth*.\textsuperscript{288} He further adds that sometimes the contradiction arises because of the shortening (*al ikhtisār*) of the text or the chain. The authentic narrator sometimes reports a portion of a *hadīth* according to the situation and does

\textsuperscript{283} Ibid., p.218.
\textsuperscript{284} Ibid., p.90.
\textsuperscript{285} Ibid., vol. i, p.217.
\textsuperscript{286} Ibid., vol. iii, p.191.
\textsuperscript{287} Ibid., vol. vii, p.134.
\textsuperscript{288} Ibid., vol. v. p. 283.
not ascend (rafa'a) it to the Prophet believing that the audience knows it well or due to the other reasons which later on create contradictions. Therefore, if there is the addition or alteration in the aḥādīth it is not taken as a contradiction and all of them are Sahīh.²⁸⁹

The Shaykh further says, "When an authentic ḥadīth resembles with the weak or weakest ḥadīth, this resemblance does not libel the authentic ḥadīth but on the contrary, the weak ḥadīth if resembled and agreed with the authentic one can be authenticated."²⁹⁰

Al I'tibār, al Shāhid and al Mutābi‘

Al I’tibār is the verbal noun of i’tabara which means to contemplate on things in such a way that other similar things may be identified. As per the ‘ilm al ḥadīth, al I’tibār means to find out other channels for a ḥadīth which has been narrated by a single narrator so that one may know other narrators who share this report.²⁹¹

In lexicography, al Mutābi‘ is an active participle of tāba‘a which means to follow and agree. As per usūl al ḥadīth, al Mutābi‘ is that ḥadīth in which its narrators agree with the narrators of its ḥadīth al fard in words and meaning or only in

²⁸⁹ Al Nasīḥah, pp. 44-45.
meaning, and all the narrators meet on the name of a particular Companion, which indicates that all the narrators have reported it on the authority of a single narrator.  

Similarly, in lexicography *shahid* is an active participle of *shahādah*. It is named as *shahid* because it gives testimony that the *hadīth al fard* has a base. It reinforces it in such a way as the witness reinforces the plaintiff’s stand. In *ilm al hadīth, al Shāhid* is that *hadīth* in which its narrators agree with the narrators of its *hadīth al fard* in words and meaning or only in meaning, but differs in the Companion, which indicates that these narrators have reported on the authority of different Companions.

Shaykh al Albānī says that a narrator who is truthful (*al sadūq*) but weak in memory can be a witness (*al Shahid*) and is capable for *al mutābi'ah?* The witness need not to be authentic but should be safe from grave weaknesses. Therefore, an un-authoritative (*ghayr al ihtijaj*) reporter can also act as a witness. Commenting on a *hadīth* Shaykh al Albānī makes it clear that *al i‘tibār* and *al istishhād* are almost similar in meaning.

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291 Al Ṭāḥhān, *op. cit.* p. 141.
292 Idem.
293 Idem.
294 *Al Nasīḥah*, p. 206.
296 *Sirāj al Ḥadīth al Da‘ifah wa al Mawdū‘ah*, vol. viii, p.293.
297 *Irwā‘ al Ghalīl*, vol. iii, p.250.
Multiplicity of Channels

Shaykh al Albānī says when there is a multiplicity (kathrah) in the channels (turuq) of al Marāsīl and they are free from the deliberate agreement or there is an unintentional agreement then the marāsīl are authentic. The report (al naql) may be either agreeing with the news (al khabar) or is the deliberate lie from the liar or a mistake. Whenever a report is safe from the intentional lie and mistake it is a doubtless truth (sidqan bilā rayyib).\(^{298}\) He further says that one of the reasons why a channel cannot be strengthened in spite of having many more channels is that, it lacks the narrators who should be at least among Ahl al Šidq.\(^{299}\)

Shaykh al Albānī says if a hadīth is reported through a number of channels it gets strengthen and becomes hujjah no matter if its channels are weak (Da‘if) individually. The Shaykh says that it is not generalized and is limited only to those weak ahādīth of different turuq whose weakness is because of the weak memory of their reporters\(^ {300}\) and are authentic (thiqah).\(^ {301}\) Their weakness should not be because of the accusations (tuḥmah) about their sidq (truth) or Dīn (religion). If the case is so then its multiplicity


\(^{299}\) Dīfā‘ ān al Hadīth al Nabawī wa al Sirah, pp. 6119-121.

\(^{300}\) Tamām al Mannah, p. 31.
of channels cannot strengthen it. The Shaykh claims that the same has also been reported by the great scholar, al Manāwī in *Fayd al Qadīr* on the authority of different scholars. The Shaykh further adds that *Matrūk* hadīth, *Daʿīf* hadīth with the weakness of having accusation of lie (*muttaḥam bi al kadhib*) on the narrator and *hadīth Shādīh* cannot be strengthened. When the channels are themselves very weak (*daʿīfunjiddan*) they cannot strengthen the others.

Shaykh al Albānī says that one who wants to strengthen a *ḥadīth* by its multiplicity of channels, he must be well acquainted with all the narrators of all the channels so that he can know the degree of its weakness. The Shaykh further says it is very regretful that only very few scholars do the same and the later scholars in particular strengthen a *ḥadīth* without knowing its different channels and depend only on imitation; and do not bother to know about the degree of its weakness.

He produces an ʾāyah of the holy Qurʾān to prove the principle of strengthening the *aḥādīth* by different channels, "so that if the

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301 *Al Thamr al Mustafāb*, vol. 2, pp. 828-829.
302 *Tamām al Mannah*, p. 31.
303 Ibid., p. 410.
305 Idem.
306 *Tamām al Mannah*, pp. 31-32.
one erreth the other will remember." He further says that the strengthening of a hadith needs a deep understanding of ahādīth, its channels and words and the acquaintance with the situations where their witnesses can be taken into account. In this respect, a scholar cannot depend much on the instant indexes of hadith for assistance but it is an established science for a person who has practiced it for a long time.

He quotes Ibn Taymiyyah in his support and says that a narrator can be weak because of the abundance of the mistakes in a hadith and he can be authentic because of the credibility (al i'tibār) and support (al i'tīdād) attached to him. Indeed this is the number of channels and their multiplicity which provide strength to one another. He illustrates it and says that the significance of al i'tibār can be seen in case of 'Abd Allāh ibn Lahī'ah. When fire destroyed his books he narrated from his memory by which he committed many mistakes in his ahādīth but Imām Ahmad wrote hadith from him because of al i'tibār attached to him.

**Jarāh and Ta‘dīl**

As discussed in chapter I, the study of the presence or absence of conditions in a narrator which makes him or her acceptable or

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308 Tahrīm Alā‘ī al Tarb, p. 71.
309 Ibn Taymiyah, Majmū‘ah Fatāwā, pp. 18-25 quoted in Tahrīm Alā‘ī al Tarb, by Muhammad Nāsir al Dīn al Albānī, p. 71
rejected is called 'Ilm al Jaraḥ wa al Ta’dīl.\(^{310}\) By this science one discusses particular terminology of Jaraḥ and Ta’dīl about the narrators and their degrees.\(^{311}\) Shaykh al Albānī was a great scholar of this science. He evaluated the narrators and discussed the degree of their ahādīth. It is noteworthy to mention here that the Shaykh followed the same principles and the set of rules, which were laid by the earlier scholars of this science. It is for this reason that his judgments on different ahādīth almost agree with the opinions of the earlier scholars.

**Conditions for a Narrator to be Authentic**

The Shaykh insists that the two basic conditions for every authentic chain is that its narrators should be well known in al ‘adālah (fairness) and al ḍabṭ (accurateness).\(^{312}\) It is not necessary for an acceptable narrator that he should be an adolescent (bālīgh). It is enough that he has a proper realization (tamyīz).\(^{313}\) Shaykh al Albānī says as far as the narrator who is not a Mudallis is concerned, it is sufficient that he is a contemporary (al mu‘āṣir) of the other and does not need the proof of the continuity (al ittiṣāl).\(^{314}\) He further adds that before this consensus there were four conditions for the proof of al ittiṣāl:

311 Dr Iqbal Ahmad Ishāq Biskūhārī, Jaraḥ wa Ta’dīl. N. Delhi, al Kitāb International, 2003, p. 179.
312 Al Tawassul, p. 118.
1. *Al Muʿāṣarah* (to be contemporary)

2. *Al Liqāʾ* (meeting)

3. *Al Simāʾ* (Reading by the teacher to the student)

4. *Ṭūl al Suḥbah* (length of association)\(^{315}\)

Shaykh al Albānī quotes Imām al Nawawī who says that a *Muʿanʿan* chain is a *Muttaṣil* with the condition that the *Muʿanʿan* should not be Mudallis and the narrators should have the possibility (*imkān*) of meeting with each other. As far as the conditions like proof of meeting, length of association (*ṭūl al suḥbah*) and acquaintance with the narrator are concerned, there is a disagreement about it. Among those who do not take them as the preconditions is Muslim ibn al Ḥajjāj, and he claims consensus on it.\(^{316}\)

Commenting on the view of Imām Nawawī, Shaykh Nāṣir al Dīn al Albānī says, “from the quote of Imām Nawawī one feels that there was a grave disagreement among the scholars on the conditions of continuity between the two narrators after which there was the consensus on the sufficiency of *al muʿāṣarah* only. This is the basic condition while as the others are the conditions

\(^{315}\) *Idem.*

\(^{316}\) *Idem.*

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of superiority (*kamāl*). It is followed by the compilers of *al Šīhāh*, and *al Sunan* etc.\(^{317}\)

Reacting to a statement of Ibn ‘Abd al Manān, in which the later expressed the proof of meeting as a necessity for the continuity of a chain who in turn referred it to Imām al Bukhārī and ‘Alī ibn al Madīnī,\(^{318}\) Shaykh Nāṣir al Dīn al Albānī says that Imām al Dhahabī supports the view of Imām Muslim by listing Imām al Bukhārī and his teacher’s—‘Alī ibn al Madīnī’s—view as more correct (*al āswāb*) and stronger (*al aqwā*); which automatically shows that the view of Imām Muslim is at least correct (*sawāb*) and strong (*qawī*).\(^{319}\)

Shaykh al Albānī admits that for a long period he desisted from accepting the view that Imām al Bukhārī maintained this standard in his *al Šahīh* only. However, after a long time he found a *ḥadīth*\(^{320}\) in *al Sunan* of Imām al Tirmidhī about which Imām al Bukhārī informed Imām al Tirmidhī that the *ḥadīth* is *al Ḥasan*, instead of the fact that the meeting between the narrators of this *ḥadīth* cannot be proved.\(^{321}\) Similar to this he found many other statements and *ahādīth* which made him firm that *al muʿāṣirah* is

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\(^{317}\) Idem.

\(^{318}\) Idem.

\(^{319}\) Idem.


indispensable whereas the proof of meeting is a plus and a condition for superiority (kamāl) only.  

Shaykh al Albānī does not wipe out the necessity of the condition of al mu'āṣirah but maintains the distinction between the conditions necessary for fairness (ṣiḥah) i.e. al mu'āṣirah and the conditions of superiority, which only benefits at the time of contradiction (al ta'āruḍ) and preference (al tarjīḥ).  

In this way, Shaykh al Albānī claims that for the authentication of a hadīth there is a consensus among the scholars that the narrators must be contemporary to each other and there should be the possibility (imkān) of meeting between the two and the chain should be safe from al tadlīs. Mere proof of seeing (al ru'yah) cannot be taken as al simā'.  

He further clears that sometimes a liar may speak truth. Similarly, a truthful (al sadūq) may lie. Likewise, it is not necessary for the trustworthy narrator to be ever trustworthy.  

Symbols Used by Jalāl al Dīn al Suyūṭī  

According to Shaykh Nasīr al Dīn al Albānī the symbols given by Jalāl al Dīn al Suyūṭī in his book al Jāmiʿ al Śaghīr are not reliable however many of the scholars depend on the decisions of

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322 Idem.  
323 Idem.  
324 Idem.  
al Ṣuyūṭī in case of Ṣaḥīḥ, Ḥasan or Daʿīf aḥādīth.\textsuperscript{328} The Shaykh claims that there are two main reasons for this unreliability:

1. The scribes have erred in the symbols of al Jāmiʿ al Sagḥīr which can be proven if many of its aḥādīth are compared with the aḥādīth of the commentary of al Manāwī who had copied these symbols directly from al Suyūṭī's handwritten manuscript, both of them differ with each other. In few of the manuscripts the symbols representing al Suyūṭī's verdict about the authenticity, agreeability and weakness of a ḥadīth by using the Arabic small letters, ṣād, ḥā' and ḍād respectively is not reliable because of the errors of the scribes.\textsuperscript{329}

2. Shaykh al Suyūṭī is known for his leniency in case of authenticating (tāḥīḥ) or weakening (tāḍīf) of aḥādīth because many of his aḥādīth which he has declared authentic or agreeable were refuted by the commentator, al Munāwī; the number of these refutations go beyond hundreds. One of the strange facts is that there are many aḥādīth present in this book which have been declared spurious by al Suyūṭī himself in his other book.\textsuperscript{330}

\textsuperscript{327} Ibid., p. 1275.
\textsuperscript{328} Tamām al Mannah, p. 28.
\textsuperscript{329} Tamām al Mannah, p. 28-29.
\textsuperscript{330} Ibid., p. 29.
Shaykh's Opinion about Some Famous Narrators

Shaykh al Albānī had a peculiar view about some of the famous narrators of the *hadith*. He based his views on his breathtaking research which contributed a healthy addition to the science of *Jaraḥ* and *Taʿdīl*. He not only pronounced his decisions on the narrators but also discussed the reasons behind his views. He mentioned the views of the earlier scholars of this science and provided arguments, which either supported their opinions or rebutted them. His views about some of the famous narrators are as under:

**Ḥasān Baṣārī**

Shaykh al Albānī says if a *Mursil* narrator is Ḥasān Başarī, then in the view of the majority, it is a weak *ḥadīth*.\(^{331}\) He quotes three views about Ḥasān Başarī and his *ḥadīth* reported from Samrah:

- He heard from Samrah, this is the view of ʿAli ibn al Maḍīnī, al Bukhārī and al Tirmidhī.
- He did not hear from him, this is the view of Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd al Qaṭān, Yaḥyā ibn Maʿīn and Ibn Ḥibban.
- He heard from him only the *ḥadīth* of al ʿaqīqah, this is the view of al Nasāʾī and is adopted by Ibn ʿAsākir, and ʿAbd al Ḥaqq.

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\(^{331}\) *Silsilah al Ahādīth al Daʿīfah wa al Mawdūʿah*, vol. i, p. 55.
Shaykh al Albānī has adopted the third view and has made clear that the ahādīth which are narrated by Ḥānā Basārī from Samrah when reported with ‘an‘anah are not ḥujjah.\(^{332}\)

**Ibn Jarīj**

Shaykh al Albānī says according to Ibn Ḥazm, Ibn Jarīj is among the authentic and accurate narrators, but Dār al Quṭnī and others, treat him as al Mudallis. The Shaykh further expresses that this is clear that Ibn Ḥazm does not know it. Therefore he would not have based his arguments on his ahādīth, because Ibn Ḥazm held the view that a Mudallis narrator is not an authority no matter he declares it or not, which is in contradiction to the view of the majority who accept the hadīth of a Mudallis as his simā when there is a clear declaration.\(^{333}\)

**Abū Isḥāq**

The Shaykh is of the view that Abū Isḥāq is famous for his tadlīs and is placed in the third category (tābaqah) of al mudallisūn (concealers of defects). This is the category of the mudallisūn whose ahādīth are not taken as an authority by the scholars except in those ahādīth where al simā is clear. Some of the scholars absolutely reject their ahādīth while some accept them.\(^{334}\)

\(^{332}\) *Irwā‘al Ghašil*, vol. v, p.349.

Ibn Kaysān

The Shaykh says that Ibn Kaysān is a thiqah narrator and safe from tadlīs. Therefore, there is no difference between the terms used by him, like qāla (said), ‘an (from), dhakara (mentioned) etc.

Qatādah

The Shaykh claims that the tadlīs practiced by Qatādah is very little and negligible. That is why Imām al Bukhārī and Imām Muslim have avoided it and have completely taken him as an authority as have also been pointed out by Imām al Dhahabī. For this reason Ḥāfiz Ibn Ḥajar al ‘Asqalānī has not mentioned him as a Mudallis in al Taqrib, but he has marked him as thiqah thabit (proven authentic).

Abū al Zubayr al Makkī

According to the Shaykh, Abū al Zubayr al Makkī is a Mudallis and ‘An‘anah narrator. Shaykh al Albānī says when Abū Zubayr narrates from Jābir or others with the term ‘an or with similar other terms, and not with the chain of Layth ibn Sa‘d it is better to suspend it for argumentation as long as his simā‘ is established or one may get the shahādah or the supporter for it.

334 *Silsilah al Ahādīth al Sahīh*, vol. vi, part i, p. 588.
337 *Silsilah al Ahādīth al Da‘ifah wa al Mawdū‘ah*, vol. i, pp. 161-163.
Walīd ibn Muslim

As per the Shaykh Walīd ibn Muslim is known for *tadlīs al taswiyah*. That is why the researchers does not take the *ahādīth* of Walīd as an authority except when the chain is *musalsal* (continue) with *al tahdis* or *al simā‘*.\(^{338}\)

Ibn Khaṣīfah

The Shaykh says even if Ibn Khaṣīfah is an authentic narrator but Imām Aḥmad—in case of a particular *ḥadīth* which is reported by him—has mentioned him as *Munkar al ḥadīth*. That is why Imām al Dhahabī has mentioned him in *al Mizān* (which includes only those narrators who are disputed). In the remark of Imām Aḥmad there is an indication if Ibn Khaṣīfah narrates any *ḥadīth* lonely and that is not narrated by other authentic narrators, then his *ḥadīth* will be rejected and when he contradicts a better memorizer than him, his *ḥadīth* will be taken as *Shādh*.\(^{339}\)

Aflah ibn Ḥamīd

The Shaykh claims that it is by the mutual agreement that Aflah ibn Ḥamīd is a *thiqah* narrator. Both the *shayūkh* (i.e. Imām al Bukhārī and Imām Muslim) have taken him as an authority. The Shaykh says if he narrates what other authentic narrators


\(^{339}\) *Ṣalāḥ al Tarawīḥ*, pp.57-58.
have not reported, then his hadīth cannot be categorized as Munkar or Shādh.340

These were the and major standards that were used and applied by Shaykh al Albānī to carry out his study and research in hadīth literature. Except few exceptions, he has largely followed the standards laid by the torchbearers of this science. He mostly propped on the Muqaddimah of Ibn al Ṣalāḥ and while pronouncing his opinion on hadīth he frequently quoted the earlier hadīth scholars like ‘Allāmah Ibn Ḥajar, ‘Alī ibn al Madīnī, al Dhahabī, Ibn Taymiyyah and other stalwarts in this field. It cannot be denied that the Shaykh's decision on any hadīth cannot be the final or irrevocable but it is also noteworthy to mention here that he has tried his best to remain closer to the opinions of the earlier scholars. Silsilatān and other books, which share its plan of explicit discussions on the chains has brought his yardsticks to the open and any one can reexamine or reevaluate the standards established by the Shaykh. Despite all this, the Shaykh pronounced such views on different and sensitive issues, that raised questions on his applied methodology, as almost all of these controversial views were based on his extensive research in the hadīth literature.

340 Irwāʿ al Ghalīl. vol. iv, p.177.