

The Authentication of Hadith: Redefining Criteria

Israr Ahmad Khan

Abstract

Muslim scholars deserve appreciation for their invaluable contribution toward preserving the hadith literature's authenticity. However, much more needs to be done to further strengthen its authenticity. Such great hadith authorities as Malik ibn Anas (d. 179 AH), Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 241 AH), al-Darimi (d. 255 AH), al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), Muslim (d. 261 AH), Ibn Majah (d. 273 AH), Abu Da'ud (d. 275 AH), al-Tirmidhi (d. 279 AH), al-Nasa'i (d. 303 AH), al-Darqutni (d. 385 AH), and al-Bayhaqi (d. 457 AH) did their best to identify original, authentic, and valid versions of the hadiths, mainly through verifying the chain of narrators (*sanad*). However, they did not check the text (*matn*) with the same zeal. This remains the case today, even to the extent that scrutinizing the text scrutiny is considered forbidden. While further verification of hadiths is still needed, this "closed door" toward verifying the text's validity must be opened. The present article represents an attempt to redefine the criteria for checking the texts and then applying these criteria to certain selected hadiths recorded by al-Bukhari and Muslim.¹

The Historical Background

The science of hadith verification can be traced back to Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (d. 13 AH), who would not accept a hadith narrated by a single Companion unless another Companion confirmed it. In this way, he sought to avoid the possibility of intentional or unintentional error.² This approach continued under `Umar ibn al-Khattab (d. 23 AH),³ who once told to Abu Musa that he

Israr Ahmad Khan is an associate professor in the Department of Qur'an and Sunnah Studies, International Islamic University Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur.

was extraordinarily careful about narrating hadiths from the Prophet (saw).⁴ Scholars from among the Companions hesitated to accept hadiths without further verification.⁵ It seems that they adopted this careful approach due to the explosive situation after `Uthman ibn `Affan's murder in 35 AH and the ensuing civil war between the troops loyal to `Ali ibn Abu Talib (d. 40 AH) and Mu`awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan (d. 60 AH). This situation was exploited by people with vested interests who fabricated hadiths concerning Ali's legitimacy.⁶ The ulama did their best to verify traditions attributed to the Prophet (saw).⁷

Al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH) selected traditions for his *Sahih* from approximately 600,000 hadiths⁸; Muslim (d. 261 AH) selected hadiths for his *Sahih* from around 300,000 reports.⁹ Their hadith compilations were followed by many others, all of which have one common feature: they authenticate the hadith by authenticating the chain (*sanad*). No hadith work in which the reports were recorded on the basis of text verification in addition to chain authentication can be identified. Scattered comments and observations on certain hadiths from the angle of texts are attributed to some scholars. However, serious efforts are missing from the legacy.

Al-Shafi`i (d. 204 AH) appears to be the first scholar who raised the issue of checking the hadith's text. Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597 AH) also decreed hadiths unacceptable by looking at their texts. But these two scholars' contribution is very limited. The former referred to the possibility that a hadith already declared to be authentic from the angle of its chain might be defective if its text appeared to contradict the Prophet's (saw) overall mission or if it contrasted with other highly authentic traditions reported by extraordinarily respected reporters.¹⁰ Ibn al-Jawzi seems to have been inclined to talk about a hadith's content only after declaring its chain defective. His *Al-Mawdu`at* bears witness to this approach. He does not seem to be brave enough to declare a report weak or fabricated merely because its content is unusual and contradicts many established standards. Ibn Qayyim (d. 751 AH) also stated categorically in his *Al-Manar al-Munif fi al-Sahih wa al-Da`if* that certain traditions are unacceptable merely due to some problems in the text. The latest addition to this field is Misfir al-Dumayni's doctoral thesis "Maqayis Naqd Mutun al-Sunnah."

Criteria for Checking the Text

Abd al-Rahman ibn Mahdi (d. 198 AH) opines that identifying a deficiency in the traditions requires life-long experience and inspiration. He looks at a

critic of traditions as a jeweler who, on the basis of his expertise and experience, easily differentiates between genuine and non-genuine materials.¹¹ Although this view may not, in essence, be contested, considering one's inspiration as a standard to determine a hadith's authenticity is to allow subjectivity to enter the process. There should be clear guidelines and well-defined principles on how to check the text's authenticity. In this case, the objective criteria are the Qur'an, highly authentic traditions, sound reason, established historical facts, and moderation. The following discussion is based on applying these criteria to selected examples.

The Qur'an

People vary from one another in their approaches and viewpoints when deciding about specific matters. Such differences can be sorted out and settled only with the help of universally established standards. In judging a given hadith's nature, scholars may differ from one another. In such situations, the first criterion to be looked at is the Qur'an, the revealed speech of Allah (as opposed to the thoughts of a human mind). In its own words, the Qur'an is the God-given "criterion" (*al-Furqan*) that reveals what is right and what is wrong.¹² As the Qur'an tells us, Allah revealed two things to the Prophet (saw): the Qur'an and its *bayan* (interpretation).¹³ Since his hadiths and Sunnah interpret the Qur'an, his words and practices symbolize the interpretation. Given this, both the Qur'an and the interpretation should compliment, and be in perfect harmony with, each other. If any component of the interpretation (i.e., hadith) conflicts with the Qur'an, it must be rejected as unacceptable, even if it is attributed to the Prophet (saw). The Qur'an not only guides, but also mediates all disputes (4:59).

Qur'an 4:59 exhorts the Muslims to make Allah and His Prophet (saw) the judge of their disputes. Hadith compilations are not free from controversy in terms of their contents. Since the Qur'an represents Allah's authority, the hadith's contents can be checked against it. If there is no conflict, the hadith should be declared authentic. If there is an insurmountable conflict, it should be declared unreliable.

'A ISHAH S APPROACH. `A'ishah (d. 57 AH) identified flaws in certain hadiths. Some examples are given below. (Space constraints do not allow many quotations.)

Once the Prophet (saw) said: "One who was called to account (on the Day of Judgment) was punished."¹⁴ `A'ishah found this contrary to Qur'an 84:7-8: "As for him whose record shall be placed in his right hand, he will,

in time, be called to account with an easy accounting.” She expressed her concern to the Prophet (saw), who satisfied her by saying: “That is the easy reckoning; but he who was questioned is bound to be doomed.”¹⁵

In this account, her concern shows that no hadith should contradict the Qur’an. After the Prophet’s (saw) death, she commanded the Muslims’ respect not only as a “mother of the believers,” but also as a repository of knowledge. People consulted her on many things, particularly on matters related to the Prophet’s (saw) words. For example, someone asked her: “Is Ibn Umar’s report – the Prophet (saw) said: ‘They (the dead) hear what I say’ – true?” She replied that it was not and told him what the Prophet (saw) had really said: (‘They know what I say is true’), and in the end recited “Verily, you cannot make the dead hear” (27:80) and “You cannot make those hear who are in graves” (35:22).¹⁶ By quoting the Qur’an, she made it clear that the Prophet (saw) cannot say anything against the Qur’an.

‘UMAR S STAND. `Umar ibn al-Khattab once rejected a statement attributed to the Prophet (saw) by Fatimah bint Qays, a female Companion, as unacceptable because it was against the Qur’an. Fatimah claimed that after her husband had divorced her three times, the Prophet (saw) ruled that she had no right to alimony and lodging.¹⁷ `Umar’s rejection was based on Qur’an 65:1: “Do not expel them (i.e., divorcees) from their homes; and neither shall they leave unless they become openly guilty of [an] immoral act.”¹⁸

LIES ATTRIBUTED TO ABRAHAM. Al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others recorded the following hadith on Abu Hurayrah’s authority: “The Prophet (saw) said: ‘Abraham (as) never spoke lies, except for three times,’”¹⁹ even though the Qur’an says: “And call to mind, through this divine writ, Ibrahim. Behold, he was a man of truth, a prophet” (19:41).

The Qur’an describes Abraham as a paragon of truth (*siddiq*), whereas the hadith qualifies this quality. The Qur’anic word *siddiq* means “perfectly truthful.”²⁰ Al-Raghib al-Asfahani (d. 502 AH) mentions four views concerning its meaning: one in whose life truth dominates, one who never lies, one who is so truthful that it is impossible for him/her to lie, and one whose deeds correspond to his/her words.²¹ In fact, prophet Ibrahim was a man of truth in all of these senses. In Arabic, this form of any word signifies perfection.

If this hadith is considered authentic, the Qur’anic statement would be meaningless. If the Qur’an’s sanctity is maintained, this tradition would have to be classified as unreliable. Ibn Hajar al-`Asqalani (d. 852 AH), a highly recognized commentator of al-Bukhari’s *Sahih*, seems to incline toward maintaining this tradition’s authenticity. He quotes Ibn `Aqil (d. 513 AH) as

saying that Abraham's situation forced him to lie. According to him, what Abraham did was quite logical.²² Al-Qadi Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabi (d. 543 AH) approves this hadith by saying that his position as a prophet and friend of Allah required him to be truthful, but that he was allowed – and accepted – a concession to lie.²³ Al-Qurtubi (d. 671 AH) tries to justify the hadith by using Ibn al-'Arabi's argument.²⁴

Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597 AH) rejects the allegation of Abraham's lies as unfounded, saying that these "lies" are no more than equivocations (*ma`arid*). To prove his point, he advances several examples from Islamic history.²⁵ However, he does not declare the hadith unacceptable. Al-Alusi (d. 1270 AH) also finds no problem with its authenticity, for the reported lies are "metaphorical" (*majaz*) in nature.²⁶ The metaphorical application of "lie" may not generally be considered a problem, but to use it for a prophet is certainly undesirable. Moreover, it is unimaginable that Prophet Muhammad (saw) would apply the word *kadhib* (lie) even metaphorically for Abraham, about whom the Qur'an itself uses the most honorable title of *siddiq* (the most truthful).

Amin Ahsan Islahi (d. 1997 CE) also seems to justify its authenticity, arguing that *kadhib* has three connotations: lie, mistake, and double entendre. He asserts that the hadith uses this word in the sense of double entendre. He further argues that since Arab poets used *kadhib* in that sense, there may not be any problem in the report.²⁷ Even though Arab poets and orators used *kadhib* in the sense of double entendre, it is hard to imagine that the Prophet (saw) would use a word that could mislead people, particularly when the Qur'an takes a very clear stand on Abraham's status.

Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 606 AH) states that this hadith is a lie, suggesting that it is more appropriate to accuse the narrators, as opposed to the prophets, of lying.²⁸ Syed Mawdudi (d. 1979 CE) criticizes the approach of those who consider it authentic. According to him, such people hold the truthfulness of al-Bukhari's and Muslim's sources of information so dear that they do not mind if a prophet is accused of lying. It is unreasonable, he argues, to attribute such a gross statement to Prophet Muhammad (saw) merely because the chain of narrators of such a tradition is not defective.²⁹ Syed Qutb (d. 1966 CE) writes that there is no need to refer to Abraham's supposed lies, for they are no more than satirical answers meant for the people.³⁰

Some might advance the concrete examples of these lies: "I am sick" (Qur'an 36: 89), "Nay, it was done by the largest one! Ask them, if they can talk" (Qur'an 21:63), and "She (his wife Sa'rai) is my sister" (Genesis 12:19). Are these statements lies? Most probably, he really was physically or men-

tally sick when he said that he was sick. There is no evidence to prove that he was healthy, sturdy, and strong at that time. When he told his people to ask the largest idol if it had destroyed the other idols, he was using a satirical statement to make the people realize their folly of idol worship.

Some might not see any problem in attributing these lies to Abraham on the ground that one can lie in three situations: war, trying to reach a compromise between two people, and among a married couple to maintain the marriage. In Islamic terms, this is called concealment (*tawriyah*) and equivocation (*ma`arid*), but not lie (*kadhib*).³¹ Moreover, the tradition “The Prophet (saw) said: ‘He who effects compromise between people is not a liar,’”³² which apparently grants permission to lie, does not allow the person concerned to be called a liar. If the Prophet (saw) does not consider the person who tries to reconcile warring parties through tricks a liar, how can one imagine that he would use this derogatory term for Abraham?

MOSES POWER TO DELAY HIS DEATH. Al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others recorded this tradition on Abu Hurayrah’s authority: The Prophet (saw) said: “The angel of death went to Moses and asked him to respond to his Lord’s call to die. Moses hit the angel in the eye and knocked it out. The angel returned to Allah and complained: ‘You sent me to such a servant of yours who does not want death; he gouged my eye out.’ Allah then returned his eye to him and asked him to check with Moses whether he wanted life...”³³

This tradition, even after a cursory look, seems to be derived from Judeo-Christian traditions (*Isra`iliyat*). It reminds us of similar stories, such as Jacob wrestling with – and beating – Yahweh.³⁴ Some scholars have denied its authenticity on the ground that Moses, as a human being, could not possibly harm an angel. Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 AH), who calls such scholars *heresiarch* (*al-mubtadi`ah*),³⁵ argues that the angel entered Moses’ home in the form of a man and that Moses, considering him an intruder, hit him. Had Moses, he maintains, recognized the angel, such an event would not have happened.³⁶ This line of argument, however, is no more than his imagination and speculation. Moreover, it makes no difference whether the angel appeared as a man and entered Moses’ house, for a human being cannot harm an angel.

Interestingly, al-Bukhari recorded this report as a story related by Abu Hurayrah. Only at its end does he observe that another chain of narrators, consisting of Ma`mar, Hammam, and others, narrates it from Abu Hurayrah

as a statement of the Prophet (saw). Even Muslim quoted it first of all as a story told by Abu Hurayrah himself.³⁷ It seems more reasonable to consider this tradition a story related by someone other than the Prophet (saw).

Even if this particular tradition is considered a statement of the Prophet (saw), it cannot be considered authentic, for it does not agree with what the Qur'an says. The angel in question is the Angel of Death. Given that the Qur'an states that the time of death is divinely appointed and cannot be postponed (4:78, 6:61, 7:34, 10:49, 16:61, and 63:11), Moses could not have postponed his death by hitting the Angel of Death. Al-Nawawi (d. 676 AH), in a bid to prove the tradition's authenticity, suggests that the Angel of Death did not approach Moses the first time to cause him to die; rather, the angel was being tested to see whether it could carry out its duty.³⁸ This far-fetched idea cannot be proved either rationally or Qur'anically. Here, it appears that the *ahl al-hadith* do not hesitate to use unfounded arguments based on speculation (*zann*). However, speculation cannot be a substitute for the truth (10:36).

Some may claim that these verses mentioned do not apply to prophets (as); hence, Prophet Musa could delay his death. This interpretation is not acceptable, for there is no evidence that such is the case. Possibly, the tradition that "The Prophet said: 'No prophet ever died before he was shown his place in paradise and then given the choice'"³⁹ may be cited to prove the exception supposedly made for prophets that they could choose when they would die. But there is no way such an interpretation can be derived from this tradition. The choice given to all the prophets was permanent life in this world or permanent life in paradise. This is strengthened further by another tradition: "The Prophet (saw) said: 'I was given the keys of the earthly treasures plus permanence therewith and paradise. I was then given the right to choose between them, and I chose the meeting with my Lord and paradise.'"⁴⁰

TRANSFERRING MUSLIMS SINS TO JEWS AND CHRISTIANS. Only Muslim recorded, on Abu Musa al-Ash`ari's authority, three traditions with the same theme: "The Prophet (saw) said: 'On the Day of Judgment, Allah will produce to every Muslim a Jew or a Christian and say: 'This is your ransom'"⁴¹; "The Prophet (saw) said: 'No Muslim dies but Allah consigns a Jew or a Christian to hell in his place'"⁴²; and "The Prophet (saw) said: 'On the Day of Judgment, many Muslims will appear with as much burden of sins as mountains. Allah will forgive them for their sins, which He will place on Jews and Christians.'"⁴³

Al-Nawawi, Muslim's commentator, seems unable to advance any rationale for these traditions. Therefore, he tries (unsuccessfully) to interpret them in a bid to maintain their sanctity. He writes that what Abu Hurayrah reported from the Prophet (saw): – "For everyone there are two places reserved, one in hell and the other in paradise. If a believer enters paradise, his place in hell will be taken over by a disbeliever due to his disbelief"⁴⁴ – explains the above hadiths. In other words, he means to say that Jews and Christians will enter hell because of their own sins, not because of the sins of Muslims. In order to strengthen his stand, he derives an argument from another hadith – "He who introduces an evil act will have to bear the sin of everyone who does it"⁴⁵ – that the non-Muslims will bear the Muslims' sins due to their having introduced evil acts.⁴⁶

Such arguments hardly withstand scrutiny. The traditions in question clearly state that Allah will transfer the Muslims' sin to the Jews and Christians. The second tradition, which he quoted to explain the matter, does not say what he derives from it; he took only one part of it and left the other part. According to this hadith, one who introduces a sin will be burdened not only with that sin, but with the sin committed by others, while the sin of others will not be commuted. These hadiths are categorical in their transfer of the Muslims' sin to the Jews and Christians, who will be burdened with two categories of sins: their own and those of the Muslims. Moreover, these hadiths are in profound contradiction with "And whatever any human being commits rests upon himself alone. No bearer of burdens shall be made to bear another's burden" (6:164).

The Qur'an rejects the idea of transferring one person's sin to another, whereas these three traditions contain a totally different message. Al-Nawawi feels very strongly about this contradiction, but suggests an interpretation of the latter so as to remove the conflict. As we saw earlier, his attempted compromise between two apparently contradictory ideas fails miserably. It is interesting to note that when Abu Burdah (d. 104 AH) quoted the above tradition on the authority of his father Abu Musa al-Ash`ari, Caliph `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz (d. 101 AH) was surprised and asked him three times: "Did your father really narrate this from the Prophet (saw)?" He even asked him to take oath to that effect.⁴⁷ This pious caliph's question, which seems to be genuine, leaves an impact on the mind that creates doubt about the tradition's authenticity. Although Abu Burdah took the oath and confirmed that he had heard the tradition from his father, the caliph's doubt about its authenticity remains.

Rationally Authentic Traditions

For Muslims, the Prophet (saw) is a judge (4:65) whose verdicts are final (33:36). Only the Prophet (saw) was authorized to review his own statements. His authority represents the authority of Allah (4:80). As said earlier, all disputes must be referred to Allah and His Prophet (saw).⁴⁸

The Prophet (saw) carried out his mission for over two decades. During this time he explained the Qur'an, taught his followers how to implement Allah's commands in their daily lives, guided them in all matters, resolved disputes, admonished the people for doing wrong, counseled them in their problems, and Islamized their lives (62:2). All of these constitute the Islamic legacy, which is meant to continue leading people in general, and Muslims in particular, in every age and place. Unfortunately, this legacy was mishandled by those who pursued their own interests. Consequently, their wishes and whims were circulated in the name of our beloved Prophet (saw). In this situation, well known *sunnah* and hadith, as well as the Qur'an itself, could be used to determine the nature of other traditions related to the Prophet (saw).

The Prophet (saw) said: "If an act done by someone is not approved by us, it is to be rejected as unacceptable."⁴⁹ Here, one sees a reference to a criterion of accepting or rejecting a tradition as hadith. In other words, that which conforms to the Prophet's (saw) known traditions is to be accepted as authentic; that which appears to be in stark contrast with highly authentic *sunnah* and hadith is to be rejected.

‘A ISHAH S APPROACH. `A'ishah is reported to have rejected certain sayings attributed to the Prophet (saw) based on her own experience and knowledge of the matters concerned. For example, Muslim and others recorded the following hadith on the authority of Abu Zarr and Abu Hurayrah: "The Prophet (saw) said: 'The woman, the donkey, and the dog break the prayer.'⁵⁰ When this tradition was mentioned to her, she reacted sharply: "You have likened us (women) to donkeys and dogs. By God, I used to lie in front of the Prophet (saw) while he was praying."⁵¹ She also rejected another hadith recorded by Muslim: Abu Musa al-Ash`ari once asked her about what makes *ghusl* obligatory. She answered: "The Prophet (saw) said: 'When someone sits in front of a woman's four organs and the two genitals touch each other, *ghusl* is obligatory.'⁵²

This response contrasts strongly with a hadith recorded by al-Bukhari and Muslim. Narrated on Abu Sa`id al-Khudri's authority, it says: "The Prophet (saw) went to an Ansari's house and called him. When he came out,

drops of water were falling from his head. The Prophet said: ‘Probably we caused you to hurry up.’ He replied: ‘Yes, O Prophet of Allah.’ Upon this, the Prophet (saw) said: ‘If you were caused to hurry without ejaculation, *ghusl* is not obligatory, only *wudu*.’”⁵³ Some claim that the first hadith abrogated the second one.⁵⁴ If this were the case, `A’ishah would have surely mentioned it. However, she merely quoted the Prophet’s (saw) statement on the matter.

`Abd Allah ibn `Abbas once asked her whether `Abd Allah ibn `Umar’s report from the Prophet (saw) – “Verily, the deceased is caused to taste suffering due to his people’s wailing over his death” – was correct. She brushed this report aside, saying: “Once when a funeral procession of a Jew passed by the Prophet (saw), in which the deceased’s people were wailing. The Prophet (saw) said: ‘They are wailing, whereas he is being caused to undergo suffering.’” She added that Ibn `Umar had not reported the statement accurately.⁵⁵ Another time she corrected Ibn `Umar’s report from the Prophet (saw): “The Prophet did not say: ‘They (the deceased) are hearing what I say.’ What he said was: ‘They know what I say is true.’”⁵⁶

DRINKING CAMEL URINE. Al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others recorded, on Anas ibn Malik’s authority, that: “Some people from the `Uraynah tribe came to Madinah and, due to non-suitability of the climate, fell ill. The Prophet (saw) advised them to drink milk and urine of the camels given in charity. They did so and were cured.”⁵⁷

This tradition suggests that there is cure for certain diseases in a camel’s milk and urine. The question here is not whether camel urine is efficacious or not, but whether the Prophet (saw) advised the people concerned to drink it, since urine is a forbidden drink. Psychologically, it is disdainful to even imagine and mention such an act. As al-Bukhari and Muslim reported, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah and Anas ibn Malik, respectively, when a man once urinated in the mosque, the Prophet (saw) asked people to wash it away with water.⁵⁸ According to another hadith, on `Abd Allah ibn `Abbas’ authority, the Prophet (saw) said that a man suffered in the Hereafter because he did not keep himself clean of urine.⁵⁹ Another hadith, on Abu Hurayrah’s authority, advises Muslims not to urinate in the source of stagnant water and then bathe in it.⁶⁰

From these hadiths, it is clear that urine is an impure substance, since whatever comes into contact with it must be washed and cleansed with water. So, why would the Prophet (saw) advise Muslims to drink it for medical purposes? The Malikis and the Hanafis, on the basis of this alleged

advice, consider the urine and the feces of *halal* animals as pure and *halal*.⁶¹ This is a blind approach. Urine is not among the *tayyibat* (good and pure), but among the *khaba'ith* (bad and impure). The Prophet (saw) made lawful only what is good and pure.⁶²

The mere existence of such a hadith does not mean that the Prophet (saw) actually said it. There is a possibility that someone advertently or inadvertently inserted urine (*abwaliha*) beside milk (*albaniha*). Any purported hadith suggesting that the Prophet (saw) advised drinking urine in addition to milk is disgusting.

DOUBLE PUNISHMENT FOR THE ADULTERER. Muslim and others (not al-Bukhari) recorded a hadith on `Ubadah ibn Samit's authority: "The Prophet (saw) said: 'Take from me, take from me. Allah has made a way out for the women. Punishment for the unmarried adulterer is 100 lashes and one year of exile. For the married adulterer, it is 100 lashes and stoning to death.'" ⁶³

Part of this tradition goes against what the Prophet (saw) did. Al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others recorded several of his judgments on adultery cases. For example: Ma`iz ibn Malik, a married Muslim, came to the Prophet (saw), pleaded guilty to adultery, and was stoned to death⁶⁴; a married woman from the Juhaynah tribe came by herself to the Prophet (saw), pleaded guilty to adultery, insisted on being punished, and was stoned to death⁶⁵; a Jew and a Jewess who had committed adultery were brought to the Prophet (saw) and, when they pleaded guilty, they were stoned to death⁶⁶; a Jewish adulterer was stoned to death⁶⁷; a bachelor servant became sexually involved with his master's wife, and the Prophet (saw) sentenced him to 100 lashes and a year of exile; the woman was sentenced to death by stoning⁶⁸; and as per the Prophet's (saw) order, a slave girl was stoned to death for adultery.⁶⁹

All of these judgments do not bear any sign of double punishment for the married adulterer. According to the tradition reported by `Ubadah ibn Samit, the Prophet (saw) prescribed two punishments for a married adulterer: 100 lashes and stoning to death. This contrasts with the Prophet's (saw) highly authentic and historically established verdicts. Some claim that the tradition prescribing double punishment was valid but abrogated at a later date.⁷⁰ There may not be a strong argument for making such a claim. Muslim jurists are divided into two camps: one favors the double punishment provision on the basis of the above tradition, while the other supports the single punishment code for the married adulterer.⁷¹

Islahi observes: “It is this report on the authority of `Ubadah ibn Samit that Qur’an 24:2 has been claimed as abrogated, even though nothing but the Qur’an can annul a provision in the Qur’an. When this tradition could not prove efficacious, it was abrogated by another tradition. It is these approaches that cause people to fall victim to misgivings about Islam.”⁷²

Sound Reason

Reason plays a very important role in human life (2:170), for it elevates humanity to the highest position on Earth (2:30-38). Its proper application helps people maintain their humanity (21:10), whereas its misuse, abuse, or non-use removes their superiority over most of the other creatures (8:22). The total suspension of independent reasoning reduces people to the level of animals (7:179). The Qur’an lays so much emphasis on each person’s intellectual power that possessing true faith and doing good deeds seem to be impossible without its guidance (67:10).

All of Allah’s prophets invited their respective people to the divine message by appealing to their reason (2:44, 3:65, 7:169, and 21:67). Most of the Muslims’ appreciable qualities have been mentioned, one of them being that they do not fall upon the revelation as deaf and blind beings (25:73). Al-Zamakhshari (d. 537 AH), while explaining Qur’an 25:73, says that Muslims keep their eyes and ears wide open when listening to the revealed words.⁷³ In other words, they use their mental powers to acquire a true understanding of the message concerned. When the Qur’an invites the people to ponder upon (*tadabbur*) its verses (47:24), it actually asks them to use their minds to grasp the verses’ true purport. Qur’an 47:24 refers to the human heart (*qalb*) as the tool of learning, understanding, analyzing, criticizing, and pondering. Thus, one has to use one’s mind to understand the true message of Allah. If intellectual power is a means to understand the Qur’an, it should also be a means to understand what is what in the hadith literature.

Islamic jurisprudence is based on two categories of arguments: revelational (*shar`i*) and rational (*`aqli*). Jurists recognize induction (*istqra`*) and deduction (*istinbat*) as major roles of reason. Al-Shatibi (d. 790 AH) even considers rational arguments (*adillah `aqliyah*), at times, to be as absolute (*qata`i*) as revelational arguments (*adillah shar`iyah*).⁷⁴ In that case, sound reason (*`aql salim*) merits consideration as a reliable tool for recognizing the nature of a particular hadith’s text.

However, using one’s intellectual power here does not mean freeing the mind from all bounds and limits. Absolute freedom spoils the mind, for a

mind that crosses its limits loses its balance. The mind or reason, which may be deemed as a criterion to understand the nature of hadith texts, is required to work within its given limits. A prejudiced mind may not be accepted as a criterion for that purpose.

In the Islamic context, the mind should be governed by Islamic faith, knowledge, wisdom, and sincerity toward Allah and the Prophet (saw). Someone with an antagonistic approach toward the Qur'an and the Sunnah cannot be expected to do justice with his/her intellectual ability. This is why the proposed criterion is not simply "mind," but rather "sound mind" or "sound reason." This may be defined as a critical and analytical faculty governed by the Islamic principles of loyalty and accountability to Allah (*tawhid*), God-consciousness (*taqwa*), justice (*`adl*), honesty (*amanah*), truthfulness (*sidq*), sincerity (*ikhlas*), and deep knowledge of the Shari'ah's major and minor objectives (*maqasid al-shari'ah*).

Some may cite the Qur'anic parable of Moses (as) and his mysterious teacher Khidr (18:60-82) to annul the efficacy of having a sound mind on the ground that Khidr criticized Moses for questioning his actions. Thus, Moses' application of his sound mind to criticize Khidr's three acts was "flawed." If an infallible prophet (pbuh) was not considered justified in his use of sound reason, then how could ordinary people, who are fallible in their intellectual capacity, be given free reign to check the authenticity of Prophet Muhammad's (saw) hadiths through sound reason? The fact that Moses used his mind to question his teacher's actions was not basically wrong. Rather, their ensuing dialogue clearly shows that human reason cannot fully grasp Allah's wisdom, which transcends human imagination and calculation. Applying reason to what lies beyond human perception is actually an abuse of reason. Likewise, applying reason to what is within human reach is highly desirable.

Others might argue against the validity of reason by referring to "And if you are at variance on any matter, refer it to Allah and His Messenger" (4:59). It is true that the Qur'an and the Sunnah constitute the final criteria on any dispute. But there is a problem as to the authenticity of hadith literature. The Qur'an's authenticity is beyond doubt, whereas the hadith literature contains authentic, weak, and fabricated reports. Using sound reason and other criteria is the only way to check and ensure this literature's authenticity. The examples given below use sound reason as a criterion to judge the nature of the traditions concerned.

BREASTFEEDING A MAN. Muslim and others (not al-Bukhari) recorded, on `A'ishah's authority, the following tradition:

Salim mawla Abu Hudhayfah lived with Abu Hudhayfah and his family. One day, Sahlah bint Suhayl, Abu Hudhayfah's wife, came to the Prophet (saw) and said: "Salim has reached the age of puberty. He visits us. In his presence, I guess, there is a sign of disapproval in the eyes of Abu Hudhayfah." Upon this, the Prophet advised: "Breastfeed him so that you become prohibited (*haram*) for him, and it will cause what is in Abu Hudhayfah's heart to disappear." She returned. As she herself said, she breastfed Salim and Abu Hudhayfah was no longer uncomfortable.⁷⁵

While commenting on this report, al-Nawawi says that all of the scholars among the Companions and the Followers, as well as in the Muslim world, agree that the age to establish foster relationship through breastfeeding is less than two years old. He refers to three exceptions: two-and-a-half years (Abu Hanifah), three years (Zufar), and two years and a few days (Malik ibn Anas). Al-Nawawi claims that Salim's case was an exceptional provision meant only for him.⁷⁶ This learned commentator of Muslim seems to ignore the tradition in which `A'ishah advised Umm Salamah, another wife of the Prophet (saw), to breastfeed a young man, Ayfa`, because the Prophet (saw) had advised Sahlah to do the same with her freed slave.⁷⁷ If the case of Salim was special, why did `A'ishah advance it as a precedent? He prefers the view of the Prophet's (saw) other wives, who considered Salim's case to be special. `A'ishah's intelligence and knowledge make her superior to these other wives. However, the nature of breastfeeding Salim appears to be controversial.

Instead of insisting on a ruling derived from the above tradition, one must decide whether the information available therein is rationally acceptable. For example, did Sahlah bint Suhayl have milk in her breast at that particular time? If not, the tradition cannot be accepted. According to history, she could not have had milk in her breast. She and Abu Hudhayfah had only one child, who was born during their stay in Abyssinia in 5 AH. When they returned to Makkah about a month later, they remained in Makkah until the Prophet's (saw) emigration to Madinah eight years later. This incident, as reported in the tradition, took place in Madinah. Thus, there was apparently a gap of around 8-10 years between giving birth to Sahlah and breastfeeding Salim.⁷⁸

Normally, a woman's breast may secrete milk for around three years after she gives birth. Given this, Sahlah could not have had milk in her breast at the time when she is said to have breastfed Salim. Physiologically, a white substance secretion from a woman's dry breast is possible if the nipple is regularly sucked for several days. If this was the case, Salim would have had to suck Sahlah's breast for several days continuously. But what would even-

tually come out cannot be classified as milk. According to the scholars, only breast milk, not something that may be similar to it, establishes the foster relationship (*rida`ah*).

In order to breastfeed, Sahlah had to uncover her breast, which is considered *`awrah* and cannot be shown to an unrelated person (*ghayr mahram*) (24:31 and 33:59). All scholars agree that a woman's *'awrah* includes everything but her face, hands (up to her wrist), and feet (up to her ankles). (There is some controversy over whether her face, hands, and feet should be covered as well.) The Qur'an tells women to cover their charms, including their breasts (24:31). Moreover, breastfeeding involves a type of physical contact that is forbidden: men and women who are not related to each other cannot have physical contact, except in certain exceptional circumstances such as a medical check-up. The Prophet (saw) never allowed women to pledge their loyalty to him by putting her hand on his hand, as men did.⁷⁹ At this juncture, al-Qadi Hasan (d. 592 AH) suggests another possibility: Sahlah might have placed her milk in a pot and then given it to Salim, thereby observing the rules.⁸⁰ This is far-fetched, especially since a foster relation is established only through direct breastfeeding.⁸¹

Biologically, a woman's breasts are among the most sexually sensitive organs. A man's sucking them easily arouses carnal passion in both. Islam forbids men and women to prolong and deepen their gaze upon the opposite sex (24:29-30) and exhorts them to avoid adultery and any other acts that may lead to it (17:32). The above tradition suggests an act against established Islamic norms.

Psychologically, one may not feel uncomfortable with his son's presence in front of his mother. According to Arab tradition, Salim, being Abu Hudhayfah's adopted son, was considered his real son. People's attitude toward others is governed not only by hereditary traits of behavior, but also by the cultural traits of behavior. Since Arabs looked at their adopted children as their biological children, it is hard to imagine that Abu Hudhayfah would have looked suspiciously at Salim when he saw him near Sahlah. This tradition has another obvious discrepancy: if Abu Hudhayfah was sensitive to Salim's presence in front of his wife, how could he allow her to breastfeed him? A normal man cannot tolerate seeing his wife in such a compromising situation with another man. Arabs were more sensitive to their honor, and a wife represents her husband's honor. Such things create doubt about this tradition's authenticity.

THE PROPHETS SELF-INDICTMENTS ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT. Al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others record a long tradition generally known as Hadith al-Shafa'ah, the gist of which is:

On the Day of Judgment, humanity will be gathered together at one place. Being in a state of deep sorrow and pain, they will decide to approach Adam for help. When they approach him and draw his attention to their plight, he will express his helplessness due to his sin of eating the prohibited tree's fruit. The people will then seek Noah's help. He will be unable to help them because of being empty-handed, as he used the supplication that he had been granted against his people. They will then visit Abraham, who will extend the excuse, referring to his three lies he had spoken. They will then meet Moses, who will express his inability to help them due to his killing a person without reason. They will then go to Jesus, who will send them to Prophet Muhammad (saw). In the end, they will reach the Prophet (saw), who will try to help them...⁸²

In essence, only the Prophet (saw) will be able to help humanity in his role as an intercessor with Allah on the Day of Judgment. It seems to be acceptable; however, the way it is described seems highly objectionable: Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses are shown as sinful people and, because of their sins, will not dare ask Allah to help humanity. Adam will refer to his sin of eating the forbidden fruit, even though he repented and was forgiven. Repentance and forgiveness make the person concerned innocent. Of course Adam would be aware of this, so why would he mention this forgiven sin?

Noah's curse was not a sin. He spent around 600 years calling his people to God, and the vast majority refused to listen to him. This situation warranted that he ask Allah to punish them. He felt that if these people continued to live, human life would sink into chaos. He did not actually pray against his people; rather, he asked Allah to help him establish peace and justice, the first step of which was to cleanse society from its anti-social elements. What he did was just and right. It was not a sin, for his prayer saved humanity. And yet the above hadith presents him as feeling guilty. Noah was a prophet; he knew what was wrong and what was right. If he did not do anything wrong, why should he feel guilty?

As for Abraham's self-indictment, we have already seen that the information concerning his alleged lies cannot be accepted as genuine. Allah has described him as "the man of truth" (*siddiq*; 19:41). Thus, how could the Prophet (saw) use a humiliating and derogatory remark when speaking of him? Moses' mention of his sin does not seem to be justified. He did not kill

the person intentionally; it was an accident. After he was granted prophethood, he was no longer to be blamed for this act. He spent his life praying for his people, and all of his prayers were granted. Why, then, did he not remember his sin while praying to Allah? It is strange that he would be afraid to talk with Allah on the Day of Judgment, given that Allah chose him as a prophet. If this hadith's portrayal of Moses is accurate, it means that he is ignorant about the nature of his relationship with Allah. This is impossible for any prophet.

The above tradition does not refer to any sin of Jesus, and yet he is unable to help the people. It is unbelievable. The tradition's main theme is to prove the inability of other prophets to help the people due to a sin on their part. But Jesus, who is shown to be innocent, is also deprived of the right to help. According to the tradition, he will say to the people: "Go to Muhammad, because Allah has forgiven all of his sins previous as well as future." It means the Prophet Muhammad (saw) will be able to help the people only because Allah has forgiven him. Is this only the privilege of the last Prophet (saw), or an honor granted to all prophets? Allah's forgiveness is conditioned with true faith and sincere deeds. Therefore, whoever fulfills this condition deserves His forgiveness (3:31).

Does this general rule not apply to all of the prophets who were protected throughout their life from committing any sin? Allah forgave all of them. If this is the case, any claim that the last Prophet's (saw) privilege of intercession with Allah is due to his being forgiven by Allah is untenable. In addition, this tradition contradicts the Prophet's advice to his followers: "It is not appropriate for anyone to say that I (Muhammad) am better than Jonah son of Matthew."⁸³ This tradition is a clear example of extolling the Prophet (saw) at the cost of honoring all of the other prophets sent by Allah.

Established History

History, which represents accounts of past events, is a mirror of a people's past that helps correct mistakes that occurred earlier. The Qur'an presents history as a teacher. Both it and the Bible describe the history of many nations and individuals. However, many Biblical accounts seem incorrect in the light of Qur'anic accounts. For example Lot and Lut are the same individual, but their portrayals in both sources contradict each other. The Bible depicts him as a man of low character who, when drunk, had sexual intercourse with his daughters,⁸⁴ whereas the Qur'an presents him as a man of high character and integrity.⁸⁵ If an event is described wrongly, it is not the

description of history. Here, the true description available in history may be used to declare certain accounts null and void.

In the hadith literature one can find many historical accounts or reports, some of which corroborate history and others that contradict it. In a situation of contradiction between the report and established history, the tradition, regardless of its chain's authenticity, is to be rejected or at least categorized as dubious.

SAWDAH OR ZAYNAB: THE FIRST TO DIE AFTER THE PROPHET (SAW). Al-Bukhari recorded, on `A'ishah's authority: "Some of the Prophet's wives asked the Prophet (saw) which of them would be the first to die after him. The Prophet (saw) answered: 'The one with the longest hand.' They measured their hands and found that Sawdah had the longest hand. She was the first wife to die after him. When she died, they realized that the meaning of the longest hand was the most generous in charity, as she loved charity work very much."⁸⁶

However, history reports that Zaynab bint Jahsh died in 20 AH⁸⁷; Sawdah died in 54 AH.⁸⁸ Thus, the above tradition is defective. Muslim recorded another one on A'ishah's authority, according to which Zaynab bint Jahsh was the most generous of the Prophet's (saw) wives and the first to die after him.⁸⁹ Ibn Hajar, after a long discussion on the above report of al-Bukhari, concludes that some reporter made a mistake.⁹⁰ Al-Nawawi declares this report to be false.⁹¹

THE TIME GAP BETWEEN BUILDING AL-MASJID AL-HARAM AND AL-MASJID AL-AQSA. Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded, on Abu Dharr's authority: "Abu Dharr asked the Prophet (saw) which mosque was built first. He answered: 'Al-Masjid al-Haram.' He then asked which one was built after that? The Prophet (saw) replied: 'Al-Masjid al-Aqsa.' He asked: 'What is the time gap between them?' The Prophet (saw) said: 'Forty years.'"⁹²

This report contradicts historical truth. Al-Masjid al-Haram was built by Abraham and Ishamel,⁹³ and al-Masjid al-Aqsa was built by Solomon.⁹⁴ There is a gap of several generations between these people. Ishaq, Abraham's youngest son, had a son named Jacob (also a prophet) whose son Joseph (also a prophet) settled in Egypt,⁹⁵ where he invited his other brothers to settle. During his time in Egypt, the Children of Israel flourished.⁹⁶ It seems that after many prosperous years there, they gradually degenerated into slaves who served the ruling dynasty. During these trying days, Moses was raised to redeem their lost glory.⁹⁷ After he established his people's authority over a large area of the Middle East, the Israelites enjoyed com-

fort. A few generations later, David came to power⁹⁸; his son Solomon built al-Masjid al-Aqsa.⁹⁹

Ibn al-Jawzi doubts this report's authenticity on the ground that the time gap between Abraham and Solomon is more than 1,000 years.¹⁰⁰ Al-Qurtubi finds a contradiction between this report and history. He tries to solve this problem by referring to an unsubstantiated story that Adam built the Ka`bah and one of his sons built al-Masjid al-Aqsa, thus making the time gap around forty years.¹⁰¹ Al-Tabarani and al-Khattabi also adopted this line of argument. In a bid to protect the report's sanctity, Ibn Hajar suggested two possibilities: either Adam, the angels, or Jacob had built al-Masjid al-Aqsa, or Abraham did not build the Ka`bah but only raised the building on an already existing foundation. He favored the theory that Jacob was the original builder of al-Masjid al-Aqsa and that Abraham was the original builder of the Ka`bah, trying to validate the forty-year time gap. Yet, he seems to be uncomfortable with his speculation and declares that Ibn al-Jawzi's view is preferable.¹⁰²

The idea that Adam was the first architect cannot be easily substantiated. The Qur'an says that Allah told Abraham to build the Ka`bah at a particular place in Makkah.¹⁰³ As for the construction of al-Masjid al-Aqsa, al-Nasa'i recorded on `Abd Allah ibn `Amr ibn al-`As' authority: "The Prophet (saw) said: 'When Solomon the son of David built Jerusalem, he asked Allah to grant him three things.'"¹⁰⁴ In the light of the above Qur'anic verse and authentic hadith, as recorded by al-Nasa'i, it is beyond doubt that Abraham built the Ka`bah and that Solomon built al-Masjid al-Aqsa. As a result, there is no room for the mythology that Adam built the Ka`bah and that his son built Jerusalem. Thus, the above report cannot be considered authentic.

Moderation

By nature, humanity prefers what is moderate and tends to reject, or at least dislike, what is immoderate. Islam, all of whose rules and regulations are moderate, is in total agreement with human nature. Thus, anything that is attributed to Islam and appears to be exaggerated may not be originally Islamic. For example, the Qur'an and hadiths inform people about the rewards and the punishments in the Hereafter. The Qur'an provides such information in a general manner. It says, in various places, that denying the truth will lead to grievous suffering and humiliation, and that obedience to Allah and the Prophet (saw) will be rewarded graciously on the Day of Judgment. At times, it mentions some of the details. But nowhere does it seem to be disproportionate.

The case of hadith literature, however, is quite different, for it contains many reports giving minute details of rewards and punishments that, at times, appear to be exaggerated. Some traditions proclaim too much of a reward for even negligible good acts and too severe a punishment for small evil deeds. Hadith scholars have declared these traditions to be fabricated. There is no need to look at their chains, for merely looking at their text reveals their value. Ibn Qayyim opines that such exaggerated reports are unreliable.¹⁰⁵

I failed to identify any tradition recorded by al-Bukhari and Muslim that may fall into the category of exaggeration. Other works of hadith are not free from this problem. But since this article's scope is limited to al-Bukhari and Muslim, I do not provide such examples here. Thus, moderation may serve as a criterion for checking the authenticity of a tradition that says something about reward, punishment, praise, and condemnation.

Conclusion

The hadith literature, which serves as the second source of Islamic thought and life, has been reviewed continuously to ensure the authenticity of its contents. This authentication process remains ongoing. But for that purpose, only one component of hadith, namely, its chain of narrators (*sanad*), is studied. The other component, namely, the text (*matn*), remains almost ignored. Justice demands that equal attention be paid to both components of a tradition. To verify the text's validity, universally acceptable criteria have to be put in place. In this discussion, I have tried to develop and justify five criteria (e.g., the Qur'an, rationally authentic traditions, sound reason, established history, and moderation) to check the authenticity of the hadith's text.

Endnotes

1. I am grateful to Professor Nejatullah Siddiqi (King Faisal Award winner), Professor Ibrahim Zein (an expert in *fiqh*), Dr. Tahir al-Mesawi (an expert in *usul al-fiqh*), Dr. Jamal Bashir Badi (an expert in hadith), and Dr. Mohammed Abullais (a hadith scholar) for their valuable comments and encouraging remarks on my earlier draft, which is far larger than the present form. May Allah bless all of them.
2. `Umar ibn `Uthman Falatah, *Al-Wad` fi al-Hadith* (Damascus: Maktabah al-Ghazzali, 1981), 1:178.
3. Abu Da'ud, *Sunan* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1996), vol. 3, "Kitab al-Adab," hadith no. 5180.
4. *Ibid.*, hadith no. 5183.

5. Falatah, *Al-Wad` fi al-Hadith*, 1:180.
6. Muslim, *Sahih* [with al-Nawawi's commentary] (Beirut: Dar al-Ma`rifah, 1997), 1:39-40, hadith nos. 22-24.
7. *Ibid.*, 1:38-42, hadith nos. 19-25.
8. Muhammad `Uwaydah Kamil Muhammad, *A`lam al-Fuqaha' wa al-Muhaddithin: Al-Imam al-Bukhari* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1992), 9.
9. *Ibid.*, 14.
10. Mohamed Abullais al-Khayrabadi, "Al-Manhaj al-`Ilmi`ind al-Muhaddithin fi al-Ta`amul ma` Mutun al-Sunnah," *Islamiyat al-Ma`rifah*, no. 13 (summer 1998): 15.
11. Al-Suyuti, *Tadrib al-Rawi* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1989), 1:252-53.
12. Qur'an 2:185 and 25:1.
13. Qur'an 75:17-19.
14. Muhammad ibn Isma`il al-Bukhari, *Sahih* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-`Arabi, 1400 ah), vol. 1, "Kitab al-`Ilm," hadith no. 103.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 3, "Kitab al-Jana'iz," hadith no. 2151.
17. *Ibid.*, vol. 5, "Kitab al-Talaq," hadith nos. 3681-704.
18. *Ibid.*, hadith no. 3694.
19. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, vol. 2, "Kitab al-Anbiya'," hadith nos. 3357-58; Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 8, "Kitab al-Fada'il," hadith no. 6097.
20. Ibrahim Mustafa et al., eds., *Al-Mu`jam al-Wasit* (Istanbul: Al-Maktabah al-Islamiyyah, n.d.), 511.
21. Al-Raghib al-Asfahani, *Al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Qur'an* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma`rifah, 1998), 280.
22. Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari* (Riyadh: Dar al-Salam, 2000), 6:473.
23. Abu Bakr ibn al-`Arabi, *Ahkam al-Qur'an* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1996), 3:262-63.
24. Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami` li Ahkam al-Qur'an* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 2000), vol. 6, part 11, pp. 198-200.
25. `Abd al-Rahman ibn `Ali ibn al-Jawzi, *Zad al-Masir fi `Ilm al-Tafsir* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 2002), vol. 3, part 4, pp. 266-68.
26. Al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Ruh al-Ma`ani* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-`Arabi, 1999), vol. 9, part 17, pp. 85-87.
27. Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Tadabbur-e-Qur'an* (Delhi: Taj Company, 1997), 5:162-63.
28. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, *Mafatih al-Ghayb* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-`Arabi, 1997), 8:156.
29. Abul A'la Mawdudi, *Tafhim al-Qur'an* (Lahore: Idara Tarjuman al-Qur'an, 1997), 3:167-68.
30. Syed Qutb, *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an* (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1996), 4:2387.
31. Muhy al-Din al-Nawawi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma`rifah, 1997), 8:373-74.

32. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 8, hadith no. 6576.
33. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, vol. 2, "Kitab Ahadith al-Anbiya'," hadith no. 3407; Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 8, "Kitab al-Fada'il," hadith no. 6101.
34. Genesis 32:22-32.
35. Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari*, 6:538.
36. Ibid.
37. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 8, hadith no. 6100.
38. Al-Nawawi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, 8:128.
39. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 8, hadith no. 6247.
40. Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari*, 8:
41. Ibid., "Kitab al-Tawba," hadith no. 6942.
42. Ibid., hadith no. 6943-44.
43. Ibid., hadith no. 6945.
44. Ibn Majah, *Sunan* (along with al-Sindi's commentary) (Beirut: Dar al-Ma`rifah, 1997), vol. 4, "Kitab al-Zuhd," hadith no. 4341.
45. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 4, "Kitab al-Zakat," hadith no. 2348.
46. Al-Nawawi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, 9:87-88.
47. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 9, "Kitab al-Tawba," hadith no. 6943.
48. Qur'an 4:59.
49. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, vol. 4, "Kitab al-Ṭisam bi al-Sunnah," bab no. 20.
50. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 2, "Kitab al-Salat," hadith nos. 1137-39.
51. Ibid., hadith nos. 1142-44.
52. Ibid., "Kitab al-Taharah," hadith no. 783.
53. Ibid., hadith no. 776; al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, vol. 1, "Kitab al-Wudu'," hadith no. 180.
54. Al-Nawawi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, 2:261-62.
55. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 3, "Kitab al-Jana'iz," hadith nos. 2146-50.
56. Ibid., hadith no. 2151.
57. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, vol. 1, "Kitab al-Wudu'," hadith no. 233; Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 6, "Kitab al-Qasamah," hadith nos. 4329-35.
58. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, vol. 1, "Kitab al-Wudu'," hadith no. 220; Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 2, "Kitab al-Taharah," hadith nos. 657-59.
59. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, vol. 1, "Kitab al-Wudu'," hadith no. 216.
60. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 2, "Kitab al-Taharah," hadith no. 654.
61. Al-Nawawi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, 6:155-56.
62. Qur'an 7:157.
63. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 6, "Kitab al-Hudud," hadith nos. 4390-93.
64. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, vol. 4, "Kitab al-Hudud," hadith no. 6825; Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 6, "Kitab al-Hudud," hadith nos. 4396-407.
65. Muslim, *Sahih*, "Kitab al-Hudud," hadith nos. 4406-4408.
66. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, "Kitab al-Hudud," hadith no. 6819; Muslim, *Sahih*, "Kitab al-Hudud," hadith nos. 4412-14.
67. Muslim, *Sahih*, "Kitab al-Hudud," hadith no. 4415.

68. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, "Kitab al-Hudud," hadith nos. 6827-28; Muslim, *Sahih*, "Kitab al-Hudud," hadith nos. 4410-11.
69. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 6, "Kitab al-Hudud," hadith no. 4425.
70. Al-Nawawi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, vol. 6, "Kitab al-Hudud," 190.
71. *Ibid.*, 189-90.
72. Islahi, *Tadabbur-e-Qur'an*, 5:366.
73. Mahmud ibn `Umar al-Zamakhshari, *Al-Kashshaf* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1995), 3:287.
74. Ibrahim ibn Musa al-Shatibi, *Al-Muwafaqat fi Usul al-Shari`ah* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma`rifah, 1997), 1:29-34.
75. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 5, "Kitab al-Rida`," hadith nos. 3585-90.
76. Al-Nawawi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, 5:273-74.
77. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 5, "Kitab al-Rida`," hadith nos. 3588-89.
78. This is the summary developed on the basis of information available in the biographies of Abu Hudhayfah, his wife Sahlah bint Suhayl, and Salim. For details, see Ibn al-Athir, *Usd al-Ghabah* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma`rifah, 1997), 4:416-17 (for Abu Hudhayfah), 5:316-17 (for Sahlah bint Suhayl), and 2:260-62 (for Salim).
79. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 7, "Kitab al-Imarah," hadith nos. 4811-12.
80. Al-Nawawi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, 5:274.
81. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 5, "Kitab al-Rida`," hadith nos. 3575-81. In these traditions, three different terms are used to refer to a foster relationship: *massah*, *rad`ah*, and *imlajah*. All of them mean sucking milk directly from the breast.
82. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, "Kitab Ahadith al-Anbiya'," hadith no. 3340 and 3361; Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 2, "Kitab al-Iman," hadith nos. 474-81.
83. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 8, "Kitab al-Fada'il," hadith nos. 6109-10.
84. Genesis 19:29-38.
85. Qur'an 21:74-75.
86. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, vol. 1, "Kitab al-Zakat," hadith no. 1420.
87. Ibn al-Athir, *Usd al-Ghabah*, 5:296.
88. Ibn Sa`d, *Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-`Arabi, 1996), vol. 4, part 8, p. 269. Ibn al-Athir says that Sawdah died toward the end of `Umar's caliphate (i.e., 23 AH). See his *Usd al-Ghabah*, 5:319). Whether she died in 23 AH or in 54 AH, it is clear that she died after Zaynab bint Jahsh.
89. Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 8, "Kitab Fada'il al-Sahabah," hadith no. 6266.
90. Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari*, 3:364.
91. Al-Nawawi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, 8:227.
92. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, vol. 2, "Kitab Ahadith al-Anbiya'," hadith no. 3366; Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 3, "Kitab al-Masajid," hadith nos. 1161-62.
93. Qur'an 22:25-26.
94. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-`Arabi, 1999) 1:157-58.
95. Qur'an 11:71 and 12:4-6.

96. Qur'an 12:54-56.
97. Moses' story is spread over many chapters of the Qur'an.
98. Qur'an 2:251.
99. Qur'an 38:30.
100. Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari*, vol. 6, "Kitab Ahadith al-Anbiya'," 494.
101. Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami` li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, vol. 2, part 4, pp. 88-89.
102. Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari*, 6:495.
103. Qur'an 22:26.
104. Al-Nasa'i, *Sunan* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1991), vol. 1, "Kitab al-Masajid," hadith no. 772.
105. Ibn Qayyim, *Al-Manar al-Munif fi al-Sahih wa al-Da`if* (Halab: Maktab al-Matbu`at al-Islamiyyah, n.d.), 50-51.