

# Introduction

## Definition of the Book

*In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful*

وَالَّذِينَ اجْتَنَبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ أَنْ يَعْبُدُوهَا وَأَنَابُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَى ۚ فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ  
أَحْسَنَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللَّهُ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

***“And those who shun the worship of the idols<sup>1</sup> and turn they unto God, for them is the glad tidings, so bear thou the glad tidings unto My servants. Those who hearken unto the word and follow the best of it; those are they whom God hath guided; and those it is who are the men of understanding.” (39: 17, 18)***

It is almost concurred among all, with no need for any proof, that the *Muhammadan hadith* being so esteemed and sublime that requiring the best care and accurate research, so as to study and learn the treasures it contains, of religion, morals, wisdoms and precepts, beside other worldly and hereafter advantages and interests. But, despite the dignified position and noble status it had, the scholars and men of letters have never given it the due attention, care and investigation, leaving it to be handled and circulated by the so-called men of *hadith*, studying it according to their way of thinking.

The method adopted by these people was based on inanimate unchangeable principles. So we see the former ones among them, who laid down these rules, have confined their attention on recognizing the *hadith* narrators, and searching – as much as possible – into their biography, never caring then about whatever uttered by them: whether being veracious or not, reasonable or other than this. The reason behind this being their full dependence upon the *sanad* (chain of transmitters) alone, without any slight regard for the meaning and denotation.

Then it was the turn of their successors, who blindly stuck at the limits and boundaries laid by those who preceded them, without even thinking of trespassing or turning away from them. Thus the science of *riwayah* (narration), since the earlier centuries, became so rigid and lifeless without any vitality or

change. Then we noticed how these and those people clung only to the superficialities of *hadith* as indicated by the narrations, fully believing in and following without the slightest investigation or verification.

While doing their utmost in studying science of *hadith*, extremely caring for its *sanad* to the extent it was said: The science of *hadith* has fully developed and was burnt,<sup>2</sup> but on the other hand they have all neglected a highly serious point that had to be realized and conceived before going into this science and studying its books. This point being searching for the real context of the veracious traditions uttered by the Prophet (S), and whether he has commanded to write down this very text when disclosing it – as he did in the case of the Qur'an – or ignored it, forbidding its inscription?

Further, have the Companions and their followers written it down, or forsaken that job? What was the matter with them when embarking on narrating it? And was whatever reported identical with the very utterances of the Prophet – in wording and meaning – or contradictory to them? Also what be the factors intrigued into the *hadith* from the propensities of his (Prophet's) enemies? Beside the effects befalling it from the purposes of his friends till spoiling it and making strange words to creep into it? Then at what time the parts narrated were registered? And was the *tadwin* (writing down) done through only one method without any modification with passage of ages and consecution of generations? Also what was the form and manner in which it recently came out in his books that people took for granted? And what was the stance of the *Ummah ulama* toward it? And the extent of their trust in or disagreement with it, after all that (distortion) which inflicted it and whatever affected it?

Beside alike significant matters that should be known by every Muslim or researcher in Islam before considering the *hadith* and adopting what its words and meanings denote.

But all this and whatever relevant to history of *hadith*, was altogether discarded by scholars and researchers, leaving them only as *akhbar* scattered in the books, and sayings concealed inside the *asfar* (history books), with no book undertaking their promulgation, or influential researcher undertaking the task of classifying them.<sup>3</sup>

Before indulging into the science of *hadith*, they had to get acquainted with its history, since the scholars made it compulsory for everyone to recognize the history of every science before embarking on studying it, exclaiming: The position of the history of every element and matter to it being exactly as that of sight to the body.<sup>4</sup>

## **Motives behind Compilation of this Book**

On launching to study, with intellect and thought, my religion, after learning it through dictation and imitation, emotionally, I opined that I should trace back its prime sources and correct chains (*asanid*). When reaching the *hadith* books adopted by the Sunnites I came across traditions, whose words and denotations could never be found in any way among his (S) wise utterances and rhetorical speech. That

which astonished me even more was to find in the denotations of many traditions, things that neither reason would make sense of, nor proper knowledge would confirm, nor could be supported by an external sense or any authentic book. [5](#)

Such falsities I have found in a large number of the traditions that were filling exegesis and history books, and others! That which excited my wonder being: whenever reading a statement uttered by any of the Arab arrogants, I would tremble because of its rhetoric, with manifold feeling overwhelming me due to its strong wording.

While reading most of the utterances ascribed to the Prophet, I would never feel the same joyance, nor that trembling. I was quite surprised how would such non sensical feeble speech devoid of rhetoric – could be uttered by the Prophet (S) while he being the best of Arabic-speaking rhetoricians...or how would such feeble language be produced from him while being the wisest man inviting to guidance! The main reason behind my wonder was that I used to hear from men of religion – may God forgive them – that the traditions contained in the Sunnah books all being true and correct, with their words and denotations, and that all Muslims should absolutely admit them with whatever they contained!

When reading the *hadith*: “Whoever said lies against me deliberately, he should occupy his abode in fire”, I became so astonished of such restriction that could never be issued by a messenger who was delegated with truth and commanded to do it, forbidding from lying (*kidhb*) and warning against it. Since it is quite obvious for all that to lie is to tell about something in a way contrary to its truth and reality, whether being produced by Muhammad or other than him.

I kept on this belief till eagerness to realize the truth motivated me to seek and search for the origin and narration of the *hadith*, with its biography from the correct sources and authentic *asanid*, hoping to get acquainted with that which relieves me of the straitness in my bosom, eliminating my inside disturbance. This was due to the fact that this sensitive matter has never enjoyed an all inclusive compilation that could satisfy the researcher’s greed, and make the seeker’s quest to come true I persisted for a long time on investigation and seeking for truth, sparing no book that would be beneficial even with one word to help me reaching my sought quest, trying my best without giving up my efforts or submitting to the self calls to take rest and relieving it of this toilful process.

I countered these calls with calling myself to patience, forbearance and persistence, till my trip was concluded with reaching amazing realities and extremely critical results! As I came to know that all *hadith* books were almost devoid of what they called *sahih* (correct) or even *hasan* (good) tradition, which was cited and recorded according to the very words and syntax of sentences uttered by the Prophet (S). I found out also that those traditions which they termed as *sahih*, had been no more than denotations as conceived by some narrators, with only very few words that might have remained with no change in several short traditions, and in very rare cases.

It became quite obvious for me that what they used to call as a correct *hadith* was in fact veracious only

in the perspective of its narrators, just indicating that al-Bukhari and Muslim concurred on reporting it, no more, no less. While in fact, the *hadith* being decisively determined in regard of its theme was not among the conditions for the correct traditions, because of the liability to error, forgetfulness and inattention on the part of the *thiqah* (trustable narrator). That is why these traditions appeared and reached us with no any sign or hint of his (S) eloquence except for dim light and scanty beam. It is out of scope here to enumerate all the facts I discovered and came across due to their multiplicity and abundance, as they being exposed in details in this book.

The first of the facts that were revealed to me, being that the Prophet (S) has never appointed certain scribes for writing down the traditions that were disclosed by him, as he did for the Qur'an, letting them (traditions) to be freely conveyed to people's ears. And this task was executed according to the power of memory, that could never be denied or disputed by anyone through inattention or fancy, or error or oblivion, leading thus to dissociation of the *hadith's* words syntax and breaking down its course of denotations. He (S) has not only left the matter in this state but also has forbidden the inscription of traditions (uttered by him), expressing: – as reported by Muslim and others – “Never write anything from me other than the Qur'an. Whoever did write other than the Qur'an should erase it.”

This forbiddance was obeyed and fulfilled by his Companions, who not only did not inscribe from his utterances other than the Qur'an, but also abstained from reporting the *hadith*, with forbidding people from that act, showing severe preservation toward whatever narrated to them. Abu Bakr and Umar used to reject every *hadith* from any Companion whatever his rank be near them, except when bringing a witness giving testimony that he had heard it from the Prophet, even that Ali (a.s.) was obliged to exact an oath from the (Prophet's) Companion to confirm what he used to narrate to him. This practice was followed during the era of the Companions, so how would be the case after them?!

Worshipping and obeying the *taghut* being always the cause leading to tyranny and renegading from religion, on the part of a creature who is worshipped a chief who is imitated and a desire (*hawa*) which is followed. Ibn al-Qayyim said: The *taghut* is everything with which the bondman trespasses his limits, as a worshipped or followed or obeyed person. The *taghut* of every people is that whom they take as a judge to settle their disputes, other than Allah and His Messenger, or worship other than Allah, or follow him with no perception from Allah, and obey him in matters which they know to be submitted to Allah.

## **Narrating Hadith through Denotation**

When the idea of narrating the Prophet's traditions to people struck the minds of some of the Companions, during the occasions necessitating this reporting, though numerous years elapsed since hearing them, with realizing their inability to convey the *hadith* in its original wording, as uttered by the Prophet, they (Companions) deemed it lawful for themselves to narrate according to the denotation. This method was followed up by those narrators who succeeded them, in a way that the latter taking from the former whatever he was reporting from the Messenger implicitly (through its meaning), conveying it then

to another one in accordance with what he could conceive out of it. This being an undisputable fact, common among all that Wukay uttered his famous dictum: “Had not the meaning been expansive, people would have perished.” Sufyan al-Thawri said too: “ If I tell you that I am reporting to you (the *hadith*) as I heard, you should never believe me! As it is verily the denotation (that I got).”

In this way the words remained liable to differences and denotations used to change in accordance to the change of the narrators, among whom – as said by al-Suyuti – were the non-Arabs and half-blooded and others who were other than Arabs, having non-pristine impure Arabic accent!

Even further, al-Bukhari, though being the chief of traditionists, with his book being widely known among the *jumhur* (Sunnites) who were considering it to be the most authentic book after the Book of Allah, used to narrate by way of meaning! And narrating the *hadith* through meaning had – certainly – its extreme disadvantage on religion, language and literature, as will be seen later on.

They have, moreover, allowed themselves to receive the *hadith* even when being inflicted with intonation, or mispronunciation, or its syntax of wording being disordered by bringing words forward and backward, beside accepting a part of the *hadith* and discarding the other part. All these points will be clarified in their due places of this book, God-willing.

## **Hadith of That Who Lied Against Me**

I have exerted much effort in seeking the truth of this *hadith*, till after extreme toiling, I found that the word “deliberately” was never mentioned in the narrations of eminent Companions. Seemingly this word crept into this *hadith* through the means of idraj (inclusion), that was common among men of *hadith*, so as it be taken by the narrators as a reliable basis in whatever they report from others through mistake, or misconception, or error, or misunderstanding.

Through this they intended to ward off the sin of lying and evade any interdiction in narrating, as that who errs being not sinful. Or that this word (deliberately) was inserted in the *hadith* in order that those who were unpurposely composing and fabricating traditions, could justify their practice, to support by it their utterances and gain the trust of people.[6](#)

## **The Compositions**

Throughout its whole history, Islam was never inflicted with a misfortune more dangerous than those composed traditions, the fabrication of which was done by both the enemies and lovers of Islam, for numerous reasons we demonstrated in their places. Beside the Israeliyyat which were disseminated by the Jews, like Ka’b al-Ahbar and Wahb ibn Munabbih and others. Moreover we can refer to the Masihiyyat and other similar fabrications that were foisted into our religion from the un-Islamic religions and creeds, but believed and accepted by Muslims without any investigation, or taking notice of them (their being fabricated).

## Abu Hurayrah

Abu Hurayrah was the most prolific Companion in reporting (traditions) from the Messenger of Allah, though not keeping the Prophet's company more than a year and nine months, as I verified and recorded in my book Shaykh al-Mudirah,<sup>7</sup> with his narrations containing that abundance of troubles which survived for a long epoch and will be there for ever. Because of these facts I have dedicated for him a separate special exposition in which I fulfilled my duty toward knowledge, seeking only the truth, citing in it whatever be in his benefit and whatever be against him, fearing no one in demonstrating the truth, or hesitating in disclosing knowledge, as truth is verily superior and greater than Abu Hurayrah.

## Collecting and Inscribing the Qur'an

Before giving detailed information about inscription of *hadith*, I would like to pave the way with a short recapitulation on writing down the Qur'an, in which I stated a complete abridgement of this subject, so as to make clear for people how our ancestors were seeking full accuracy and extreme confirmation when collecting the Qur'an. Thus the Qur'an reached us through a fully authentic chain of narrators (*mutawatir*), deeming as an infidel whoever denying anything of it. Had the *hadith* been written down in the same way followed for the Qur'an, through the same means of investigation and accuracy, it would have reached us fully *mutawatir* too, devoid of that much difference among Muslims that no one could – throughout long ages – avoid.

## Inscribing the Hadith

The other fact I reached through researching, was that the inscription of *hadith* was only done in the 2nd century (H), i.e. more than a hundred years after the Prophet's demise. It was not the narrators who motivated to this but the governors who were feeling interdicted of writing the *hadith*, for fear of perpetrating that which was forbidden by the Prophet (S).

In the outset this inscription was incomplete, going then into different and changeable stages, till coming out in its recent shape, at about the middle of the 3rd century and beginning of the 4th *Hijrah* Century. This delay in writing down the *hadith* had its bad effect and great disadvantage to which we referred in its place of the book.

## Origin of Science of Hadith

Since '*ilm al-hadith*' is relevant to our research, we brought about a good abstract of it, to be a guidance for anyone intending to recognize it. We have also stated information about the famous *hadith* books to demonstrate their reality, with what limitations attached to them and the comments said about them. Then we have referred to the issue of *jarh* (sarcasm) and *ta'dil* (modification), moving then to the reliability of the companions and the scholars' controversy regarding it, beside their positions in respect

of knowledge and virtue. Out of all this we concluded our research to the true school of thought (*fitnah*), which discards both extravagance (*ifrat*) and intemperance (*tafrit*) concerning this reliability.

## Scholars' Stance toward Hadith

As previously mentioned, the inscription of *hadith* has originated only in the 2nd century, with its books widely-known among *Ahl al-Sunnah* – of al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi and al-Nasa'i having not come out but only during the 3rd and 4th centuries, containing many unsuccessfully-narrated (*ahad*) ones entailing only surmise. Due to all these facts the *Ummah ulama* have never accepted such traditions with absolute submission and approval as they did in regard of the Qur'anic verses, never considering them among successive authentic (*mutawatir*) reports that should be indisputably agreed, but rather they have contradicted most of them with making protracted controversies.

The *Mutakallimun* and scholars of *usul* – as they classify the *khobar* into *mutawatir* and *ahad*, the *mutawatir* giving the certain knowledge considered only in the doctrines (*'aqa'id*), while the *ahad* giving only the conjecture, that can by no means take the place of truth, – have never found, in their searching, in the *hadith* books, any *khobar* to which the rule of *tawatur* can be applied so as its indication be certain.

The scholars of *hadith* also have never offered to do any research on it since it is beyond the limits of their knowledge, and due to its means of reaching them being through single transmitters (*ahad*) which being only of conjectural inference upon which it can never be based in case of doctrines. So they have rejected every *hadith* that was contradictory to the principles on which they concurred, and the regulation they laid down, with the rule agreed by all experts: That the single (*ahad*) traditions can never be considered reliable in case of doctrines, however strong and authentic be their chains (*asanid*) and multiple be their means of transmission.

While the imitators of schools of thought, who used to call themselves scholars of *fiqh* (jurisprudence), were restricted by imitation, that made them neglect *hadith* books that appeared after the decease of their leaders (imams), never giving them their due of research and study to the extent they did for the books of their *shaykhs*, or taking them as proofs in their rules and judgements. When one of them coming across any tradition – even that feeble one – that going in line with the school of thought he follows, he would cling to it with rejecting every other one even if being more authentic than the *hadith* he took for granted.

Further he might take and accept part of the *hadith* and discard the other part! But as regards whatever contradicting his *fitnah*, he would discard and never accept it even though being among those traditions narrated by the company (*jama'ah*).<sup>8</sup>

That which prompted them to so doing was the fact that all the jurisprudents' evidences were based on conjecture only, without the condition of *tawatur*, and everyone is free to accept, without any interdiction,

all the traditions of which his heart is quite confident.

When referring to the books of investigators, particularly A‘lam al-muqi‘in of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, we verily come across numerous traditions numbering one hundred or more, that were disapproved by magnates of *fiqh*, who never contradicting their creeds for their sake. When asked about their full adherence to whatever their *madhahib* contained with discarding everything other than them, they would say that: their leaders have accepted only the traditions and verdicts (*fatawa*) of the ancestors of which their hearts felt assured and confident, and that which they considered correct, and was applied during their lifetimes. Further (they say *that*) these leaders were, due to their nearness to the Companions and great Followers (*Tabi‘un*), more knowledgeable and profound in *fiqh* than the authors of the *Sunnah* books which became so widely known only after the elapse of the early centuries, that were the best according to a *hadith* reported by them in this respect.

Whereas the leading grammarians have never considered the *hadith* among the texts they used to quote for confirming their grammatical rules, as they fully realized the fact that the *hadith*’s correct text had lost its earmarks, and whatever reported from the Prophet was not according to its true wording, with no one certainly knowing the correct form of the traditions uttered by the Prophet. Therefore it was improper to quote the *hadith* (as an evidence), beside the fact that the traditions disclosed by the Prophet were never accepted by them while they used to quoting the sayings of the Arab rudes who did not know how to urinate!

## A General Word

As soon as becoming aware of all these facts and other than them stated in my book, and uncovering the truth of the *Muhammadan hadith* in a clear-cut pure shape like a polished mirror, I became well-acquainted with all the traditions ascribed to the Messenger, taking whatever I take with consent and discarding that which I discard with confidence, fearing no blame or guilt in this or that.

It is not to be fancied that I be a heretic in this respect, as the *Ummah* scholars<sup>9</sup> have never approved of every *hadith* reported in the *Sunnah* books, so let them have capacity for whatever I encompassed, after it was demonstrated to them. This verily being a common fact known for men of discernment with no disagreement between even two scholars, except for the *Hashwiyyah* who believe in all the traditions narrated to them whether being correct or incorrect, as long as their chain (*sanad*) be established in their viewpoint.

Ibn Abi Layla said: “Any man can never comprehend the *hadith* till he takes some and rejects some”. Abd al-Rahman ibn Mahdi said too: “No one can be a leader (imam) in *hadith*, when following up the eccentric and odd traditions, or telling of whatever he hearing, or reporting from whosoever (with no verification)”. Many examples proving this can be found in their proper places of this book.

No one has paid due attention to this subject – as previously stated – in the past, while studying it was

extremely necessary before going into the books of *hadith*, *tafsir* (exegesis), *fiqh*, *usul*, history and grammar (*nahw*), with alike topics relevant to religion of Islam. It was supposed that a separate book be authored about it a thousand years ago, when the well-known *hadith* books came to scene after spread of *fiqhi* schools of thought among Muslims, so as these books occupy their proper places of religion, and truth of the traditions reported in them be revealed for people so as to be well-acquainted with them.

Had I come across, throughout the expansive Arabic Library, only one book covering this weighty and sensitive subject – of which every Muslim should be aware – I would have been relieved of this heavy burden,<sup>10</sup> which I shouldered for the sake of research and exploration into hundreds of books and *asanid* to which I referred, and from which I quoted and reported. After spending protracted years in rushing into and treading this tedious road that was never paved before, nor had a beacon to guide the misled, I at last managed to find those abundant materials that enabled me to prepare and compile this all-inclusive book. Also I could publish this book – which is verily considered the first and unique in type – making it available for all people so as to be well-acquainted with the Muhammadan *hadith*, and be able to study it scientifically and comprehend it with logic and reason, far from bigotry.

And due to the fact that this research – as said before – being delicate and novel, with the probability of being opposed and disputed by some of the Hashwiyah (Marginalists) and short-sighted people, so I have cited in it a large number of decisive indisputable proofs, and invulnerable evidences.

Through the book's chapters, some of these proofs and evidences might have been repeated here and there due to a necessitating exigency or a compelling reason, or an unresolved interrelation with the course of speech in a way that meaning be incomplete unless they be there, and antecedent and following statements be badly lacking them. Besides, my intention being to evade and abstain from criticism and analysis in this book, though they being the principles upon which every proper scientific authorship is based and established in the contemporary time.

I found myself obliged to so doing, since our people have just recently been acquainted with such kind of research. Nevertheless my only hope is to see the end of the epoch in which only hypocrisy in knowledge and '*riya*' (dissimulation) in religion be prevalent, with the absence of good morals that deserve the pleasure of those who allege to be among the traditionists or scholars. I hope too to see people living in a time where only uttering and disclosing the truth is established, and nothing is set up but only the good deeds, with only the useful and beneficial knowledge be remaining on earth.

After managing in tearing down the veils and disclosing the truth regarding the Muhammadan traditions, which they (Sunnites) considered to be the second source for the legal proofs after the practical *Sunnah* (Prophet's acts), taking them as *asanid* (documents) for supporting the Islamic sects and communities (*firaq*), and evidences for their superstitions and fancies, which they claimed to be relevant to religion. Also after succeeding in divulging to people the hidden facts about *hadith*, demonstrating a pristine and truthful profile of its history, I sincerely hope that I have succeeded in hitting the mark and attaining the prime purpose for which I exerted a great deal of effort and toiling, and spent that much of my life: being

to defend the wordily *Sunnah* (of the Prophet) and protect it against any blemish, so as the Messenger's speech be immune and invulnerable against any foisted words composed by the liars, or be spoiled by the intrigues of the hypocrites and enemies of religion.

My aim was also to keep noble essence far from being described with epithets unfitting and improper for its sublime status and glorious worth, as he (S) – having the highest peak of knowledge, wisdom and rhetoric – was more honourable than to produce anything out of ignorance, or utter anything of his own desire.

If it is for this book to change – undoubtedly – the opinions of many Muslims in regard of the beliefs they inherited (from ancestors), and the rules they learned, it will, God-willing, make them acquainted with numerous realities increasing in their perception and knowledge in religion. It will further give solutions for the miscellaneous problems of which their bosoms are annoyed, with repelling and eliminating suspicions misused by the Muslims' opponents and religion restrainers. In this way the consideration will be concentrated upon recognizing the principles of religion (*usul al-Din*), and all viewpoints of Muslims and non-Muslims shall be straightened apprehending its purposes.

This book will, God-willing, remain a lofty light stand guiding toward the earmarks of the Muhammadan *hadith* biography throughout all stages of history, as long as this *hadith* be read or taught to people on earth.

I introduce my work – after Allah the Glorified and Exalted – to the learned among Muslims in particular, and to those concerned with Islamic studies in general, as it is these and those who are well-aware of its value and realize its worth. I implore Allah to help them all to find in it that which can satisfy their eagerness, and please knowledge and truth altogether.

I beseech Him the Glorified, to render my work sincerely devoted for His pleasure, prescribing for it a success and succour from His Own, so as to attain the aim I intended from it, that is to serve religion and demonstrate the truth, for the benefit of all people. He is the One Who responds to supplication.

**From Jizat al-Fustat,**

**Saturday 5 Jumada al-Ula, 1377 H. December 7, 1957**

**Mahmud Abu Riyyah**

1. Worshipping and obeying the taghut being always the cause leading to tyranny and renegading from religion, on the part of a creature who is worshipped a chief who is imitated and a desire (hawa) which is followed.

Ibn al-Qayyim said: The taghut is everything with which the bondman trespasses his limits, as a worshipped or followed or obeyed person. The taghut of every people is that whom they take as a judge to settle their disputes, other than Allah and His Messenger, or worship other than Allah, or follow him with no perception from Allah, and obey him in matters which they know to be submitted to Allah.

2. It is said: The sciences are of three kinds: One which has ripened but hasn't burnt, which is 'ilm al-nahw' (grammar) and 'al-usul'. The second is a science that has neither ripened nor burnt, which is 'ilm al-bayan' (rhetoric), and exegesis. The

third one is a science that has ripened and burnt which is 'ilm al-hadith' and 'fiqh' (jurisprudence).

3. It is said a naqqab man, meaning an influential and potent man.

4. The book Manahij wa tajdid, by Amin al-Khuwalli, p. 88.

5. The only mutawatir book is verily the Qur'an, no book else.

6. Like the storyteller, and others.

7. This book has been published twice, and I am preparing it for the third edition, God-willing.

8. By al-Jama'ah I mean: Ahmad (Ibn Hanbal), the two Shaykhs, al-Bukhari and Muslim, Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'i and al-Tirmidhi

9. Abu Umar and other eminent ulama' said: There is unanimous concurrence among people that the imitator can never be counted among men of knowledge, and that knowledge can only be realized through evidence (dalil). Commenting on this saying, Ibn al-Qayyim said: "These two unanimities included dropping the bigot to desire and blind imitators from among the elite of ulama", as those who being superior to them acquired the qualifications to be inheritors of the prophets. The ancestors used to use the word jahil (illiterate, ignorant) for the imitator, since they believed that the 'alim should be independent in comprehending the knowledge, and inferring evidences for his comprehension. They used to say: The parable of man who imitates (others) is like an animal that is guided by others.

10. This being the way with which Dr. Taha Husayn described my work, in his valuable foreward, with which I initiated this edition of the book.

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