

[Home](#) > [Sciences of Hadith](#) > [Meeting 5: Causes for Weak Ahadith in the books of Shia](#) > 8. Not every Authentic Hadith should be accepted and not every weak should be rejected

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## Meeting 5: Causes for Weak Ahadith in the books of Shia

### 1. Different versions

Some of the problems of the Ahadith are due to different versions of the manuscripts of the books. In the old days, the publication of a book was by writing many copies from the original manuscript. The books were either dictated to a calligrapher or he would copy the contents of the book. It would be quite natural to make mistakes in either mishearing a word or misspelling it.

For instance, we mentioned a Hadith earlier from Imam Baqir (a.s.) concerning Al-Jame'a in which the Imam (a.s.) was answering the questions of Hakam Ibn Oyayna. In one of the manuscripts of Al-Najashi it is written that the Imam (a.s.) answered him Mokreman (respectfully), whereas in the other manuscript it is written Mokrehan (without any interest). As you can see the change of a letter (H or M) changes the meaning significantly.

### 2. Perversions

Another reason for weak Ahadith is the deliberate perversions occurred in their books of Hadith. Such perversions would usually occur at the time of duplication of the secondary copies. The book of Solaim Ibn Qays is an example of this type of perversion.

### 3. Political pressure

Although the law of Hadith prohibition was removed from the second century, the followers of Ahlul-Bayt (a.s.) had no freedom to narrate or compile their books of Hadith. Listening to a Hadith from the Imams of Ahlu-Bait (a.s.) was sometimes so hard that often they had to attend the house of the Imam (a.s.) as a fruit seller or the like.

Keeping books of Hadith for many Shia was an offence. Some Shia narrators had hidden their books all their life until they died. Others lost their books naturally during their imprisonment such as Ibn Abi Omair.

## 4. Sectarianism

Tyrants have always been ruling people by dividing them into small groups and creating disputes amongst them. The Abbasid rulers caused some divisions amongst the Shia. Sects such as Kisaniyyah, Fatahiyyah, Ismaeiliyyah, Zaidiyyah, Gholat and the like were created to divide and pervert the path of Ahlul-Bayt (a.s.). The followers of such groups often fabricated some Hadith to justify their sects. Sometimes naive Shia narrated from them assuming that they are Shia.

For instance, Ammar Ibn Musa Al-Saabaati was one of the companions of Imam Sadiq (a.s.) and Imam Kadhem (a.s.). He then became one of the chiefs of the Fatahiyyah sect. <sup>1</sup> The Shia scholars argue about the authenticity of Ammar. Sheikh Tousi (died in 460 A.H) asserted: "Narrations that are narrated only by Ammar Ibn Musa cannot be relied upon." <sup>2</sup> Thus, one of the sciences of Hadith is the study of different sects amongst the Shia.

## 5. Defamation of narrators

Another reason for regarding some Ahadith as weak is defamation of some narrators. Scholars of the sciences of Hadith rely on the testimony of the early scholars about the narrators. For instance, if Al-Najashi (died in 450 A.H) testifies the justice of a narrator we consider him just and rely on his narration. Unfortunately, however, some books were fabricated and related to the early Shia scholars in which many Shia narrators are regarded unjust.

An example of such books is the book of Al-Dho'afa (the weak narrators). This book is claimed to be compiled by Al-Ghadha'eri; Al-Husain Ibn Abdullah; one of the Shia scholars died in 411 A.H, or by his son; Ahmad Ibn Al-Husain. If the book is truly related to them, then many Ahadith become weak. The scholars however disagree as whether the book is truly compiled by Al-Ghadha'eri or his son or it is a fabrication to detest many Shia narrators.

## 6. Narrating from the Sunnis

The Hadith narrated from the unreliable Sunni sources <sup>3</sup> are not reliable. Sadly, often the Shia scholars have quoted some Ahadith from the Sunni books without any comments on them or unknowingly have formed an opinion based on the Sunni Ahadith. For instance, the eminent Shia scholar of the 5th century; Sheikh Tousi in his interpretation of the Quran; Al-Tebyan under the Ayah 11-16 of Surah 24 narrated the myth concerning the accusation of the hypocrites towards Aisha from the Sunni sources without any comments.

Similarly, Sheikh Mahdi Naraqhi (died in 1209 A.H) in his book 'Jame' Sa'adat' quoted some Hadith from 'Ehya'o Oloome Din' written by Al-Ghazali; the famous Sunni Sufi (died in 505 A.H). Finally, Mohaddeth Al-Noori (died in 1320 A.H) formed a wrong opinion concerning the perversion of the Quran based on many unreliable Ahadith he quoted from the Sunni books. [4](#)

## [7. Al-Taqiyyah \(Protection\)](#)

Al-Taqiyyah (protection) is a Quranic principle that the Shia believe in. There are quite a number of Ahadith that are expressed by the Imams of Ahlul-Bayt (a.s.) with the intention of protecting the Shia. although these Ahadith could have been the actual words of the Imams (a.s.) the Shia scholars do not act upon them for they Imams (a.s.) had expressed it for certain circumstances only.

## [8. Not every Authentic Hadith should be accepted and not every week should be reject](#)

We shall learn in the coming lessons that sometimes a Hadith is weak as far the chain of the narrators are concerned, yet the scholars accept its content. On the other hand, there may be an authentic Hadith as far as the chain of its narrators is concerned. Yet the scholars do not rely on it. For if a narrator is weak it does not mean he would never tell the truth. Similarly, it could be that a Hadith is truly narrated from one of the Imams (a.s.), yet the Imam did not have a real intention in expressing it such as the Ahadith of Taqiyyah.

Finally, according to the absolute majority of the Shia scholars [5](#) there is no book of Hadith that all its Ahadith are authentic. Thus, every Hadith in every book is subject to scholarly investigation.

- [1.](#) Those who believed in the Imamate of Abdullah al-Aftah after Imam Sadiq (a.s.).
- [2.](#) Al-Tahzib 7: under Hadith 435 [an example of a Hadith that is narrated only by Ammar is his narration concerning the value of the ring donated by Imam Ali (a.s.) whilst he was in the statue of Roku'. See Tafsir al-Borhan 2:487 under the interpretation of the Ayah 55 Surah 5]
- [3.](#) As we will explain in the coming lessons being a mere Sunni is not a reason for the weakness of a Hadith.
- [4.](#) For further information see lesson five of 'the Science of the Quran' from the author.
- [5.](#) The Traditionalists (Al-Akhbariyoun)– a margin group amongst the Shi'a scholars – believe in the authenticity of at least the Four Books of Hadith, specially al-Kaafi. In the next lesson we shall cite some vivid examples of the false Hadith narrated even in al-Kaafi

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