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Part 1: Sayings of Sunni Leaders and Memorizers about Hadith of al-Nujum

Clear Words

The fact is that a great many Sunni scholars and experts in hadith, exegesis, and biography (rijal) have clearly and explicitly considered Hadith of al-Nujum and its entire text and chains of transmission to be poor so much that it leaves no doubt as to the fact that it is unreliable and inauthentic. Some Sunni scholars' sayings regarding the said tradition will be mentioned below along with a brief account of their lives. [1](#)

Ahmad bin Hanbal Sheibani: a glimpse of his life

Ahmad bin Hanbal Sheybani, born in 241, does not consider Hadith of al-Nujum as authentic and valid. This opinion has been narrated by a group of scholars including Ibn Amir al-Haj in *Al-Taqrir al-Tahbir fi Sharh al-Tahrir*, Ibn Qudamah in *al-Muntakhab* and Amir Padshah

Hanafi in *Al-Taysir fi Sharh al-Tahrir*. [2](#)

All biographical books have somehow dealt with Ahmad bin Hanbal's life. Commenting on him, Zahabi says: Ahmad bin Hanbal was Shaykh al-Islam [3](#) and master of Muslims in his era. He was a memorizer (hafiz) and authority for Muslims.

Ali bin Madini says about him: "Verily, God endorsed this religion through Abu Bakr and in the days of tribulation through Ahmad bin Hanbal. It was at a time when Arab clans had apostatized after the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family."

Commenting on Ahmad bin Hanbal, Abu Ubaidah also says, "Knowledge ended up in four people the most learned of whom was Ahmad bin Hanbal."

Quoting Ibn Ayyash about Ahmad bin Hanbal, Ibn Mu'een says: "The clerics wanted me to become like Ahmad bin Hanbal but I could not become like him."

Hamam Sakooni has also made a remark about him; he says: "Ahmad bin Hanbal has not seen the like of himself."

Muhammad bin Hammad Tehrani says: "I heard Aba Thawr say: Ahmad bin Hanbal is more learned and more knowledgeable than Thawri."^{[4](#)}

Abu Ibrahim Mazna: a glimpse of his life

Abu Ibrahim Mazna is another scholar who believes that Hadith of al-Nujum is not authentic. Abu Ibrahim Mazna is Shafi'ei's student and companion. He was born in the year 264 A.H. Hafiz Ibn Abd al-Barr quotes him as such: "Mazna says about Hadith of al-Nujum, the alleged prophetic tradition:

"If this hadith were true, then that means that whatever the companions have narrated from the Holy Prophet (S) and evidences they present can be trusted. Therefore, based on the tradition in question, all the companions are reliable and they quote the Prophet (S) honestly.

That is what I believe is the meaning of the Hadith. However, if what the companions have uttered were acceptable to them, they would not contradict or falsify one another. None of them would turn to another companion to seek his advice. So, think over it."^{[5](#)}

What is useful for our discussion is the sentence "If this hadith were true..." but the connotation he has drawn out of Hadith al-Nujum should be judged by hadith experts.^{[6](#)}

Now, we shall have a short glimpse of Abu Ibrahim Mazna's life keeping in view that all the biographers have praised him for his reliability.^{[7](#)}

Yafi'ei writes about him: Imam Abu Ibrahim Ismail bin Yahya Mazna was Shafi'ei, a pious jurist, and a profound thinker, a precise debater who tutored and trained many students.

Commenting on him, Shafi'ei says: "Manza is a helper of my religion."

He is the leader of Shafi'eites and most acquainted with the Shafi'ei methods and verdicts and whatever is narrated from him. He has written many books and was most pious and God-fearing who were learned and mediocre in knowledge and of little knowledge?! Silsilat al-Ahadith al-Dha'eifa wa al-Mawdu'ah, 1/82.

Abu Bakr Bazzaz: a glimpse of his life

Hafiz Abu Bakr Bazzaz has also criticized Hadith of al-Nujum and elaborated on various dimension of the hadith finally considering it as poor and unreliable. Hafiz Ibn Abd al-Barr writes:

Muhammad bin Ibrahim bin Saeid narrated to me that Muhammad bin Ahmed had reported that Muhammad bin Abyyub had said: "Abu Bakr Ahmed bin Amr bin Abdul Khaliq says: "He is asked about the traditions on the tongue of people ascribed to the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, and it is said by people that he said:

"Verily, the like of my companions is that of the stars – or my companions are like stars – whomever you follow, you will rightly guided."

This saying has not been correctly reported from the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family. This tradition has been narrated by Abdur Rahim bin Zayd Ammi, from his father, from Saeid bin Musayib, from Ibn Umar, from the Prophet (S).

In some versions of the report, Abdur Rahim has reported from his father, from Ibn Amr omitting Saeid bin Musayyib. Moreover, this hadith is weak because the scholars of hadith have refrained to quote him or narrate any traditions from him.

On the other hand, this saying narrated from the Prophet (S) is unknown and does not seem to be from him because it has been reported from the Prophet (S), with a reliable chain of transmission that he said:

"Adhere to my sunnah and the sunnah of the rightly-guided successors after me. Hold on to it and cling on to it stubbornly."

If Abdur Rahim's tradition is proved to be true, this hadith will be in contravention with that hadith. If it is not proved to be true and authentic, there will be no contravention.

Moreover, the Prophet of Islam, peace be upon him and his family, does not allow Muslims to have differences after him and God knows best.[8](#)

As for this saying of Bazzaz, it suffers from many setbacks and the foregoing tradition, "Adhere to my sunnah and the sunnah of the rightly-guided successors after me. Hold on to it and cling on to it stubbornly," has been discussed in a separate article.[9](#)

Having mentioned Abu Bakr Bazzaz's viewpoint, we shall now have a glimpse of his life. Abu Bakr Bazzaz was born in the year 292 A.H. Biographers have commented on him. Zahabi writes in Tazkerat al-Huffaz: Allamah Abu Bakr Ahmad bin Amr bin Abdul Khaliq Basri is the writer of Musnad Kabir and Kitab Mu'allah.

He has heard traditions from people like Hudbah bin Khaled, Abdul A'laa bin Hammad, Hasan bin Ali bin Rashed, Abdullah bin Mu'awiyah Jamhi, Muhammad bin Yahya bin Fayyadh Zamani and people of the same ranks with them. Narrators such as Abdul Baqir bin Qani', Muhammad bin Abbas Najih, Abu Bakr Khatla, Abdullah bin Hasan, Abu Al- Shaykh and many others have reported traditions from him.

He migrated to cities like Isfahan, Syria and other regions to spread his knowledge and wisdom. Daru

Qutni has recorded his biography and praised him as such: "Bazzaz is a reliable person who sometimes errs and he is someone who relies on his memory."^{[10](#)}

Ibn Adi: a glimpse of his life

Another Sunni scholar who has reported Hadith of al-Nujum in his book is Abu Ahmad Abdullah bin Adi, better known as Ibn Qattan. In his al-Kamil – which has been written about poor and reprimanded narrators as well as about fabricated traditions – Ibn Qattan deals with the life of Ja'far bin Abdul Wahid Hashemi Qadhi and Hamza Nasibi.

Now we shall take a brief look at Ibn Adi's life. Different scholars have praised him and commented on him. Sam'ani writes the following about him:

"Hafiz Abu Ahmad Abdullah bin Ali bin Muhammad Gorgani, better known as Ibn Qattan, is the great memorizer of his time. He moved to Alexandria and Samarqand as well as entered many other cities and studied with many teachers. He was a strong and unmatched memorizer. Hamzah bin Yusuf Sahmi says that he asked Daru Qutni to write a book on weak and unreliable narrators and he asked me in return if I did not have Ibn Adi's book.

I said that I did.

He said: "That book is enough and nothing is added to it." Ibn Adi died in the year 365 of the Islamic calendar.^{[11](#)}

Abul Hasan Daru Qutni: a glimpse of his life

One of the scholars who have considered Hadith al-Nujum to be weak and unreliable is Daru Qutni (d. 385 A.H). Ibn Hajar Asqalani says: He has pointed out this tradition in Malik's Gharaib considering the tradition as weak.^{[12](#)} A text of what he has said will follow.

Biographers have looked upon him with high regard. Ibn Kathir writes in this regard:

The great memorizer, Ali bin Umar bin Ahmad bin Mahdi bin Masud bin Dinar bin Abdullah Daru Qutni was an expert in criticism of narrators from his time as of this era. He had seen many narrators. He was a skilled writer, critique and a leader of his time in the science of biography (rijal) and criticism of narrators (jarh and ta'dil). He has authored and composed a valuable book in this regard. He had extensive knowledge of traditions and complete information of Ilm al-Dirayah (science of the text of Hadith).

His book is the best and most famous book in this regard. He has excelled his predecessors and his followers will not be able to write a book like him unless they seek assistance from the sea of his knowledge and act like him.

He has authored another book titled Al-Ilal in which he has precisely elaborated on hadith- related points and expressions. Another book authored by him is al-Ifrad which none is able to understand unless he is a good memorizer and critique and profound thinker.

Daru Qutni used to be described as having a strong memory, keen-mind and profound knowledge. Hakim Neishabouri writes about him: "The like of Daru Qutni has never been seen."

Ibn Jawzi says: Daru Qutni had combined merits and knowledge of many fields including knowledge of hadith, recitation, syntax, jurisprudence and poetry. He was just and correct in his beliefs.

Daru Qutni was asked if he had met anyone like himself and he answered: "When it comes to a specific field, I have seen people superior to me but I have not seen anyone to have knowledge of different skills and sciences as I do."

Ibn Hazm Andalusí: a glimpse of his life

One of the Sunni scholars who have expressly rejected Hadith of al-Nujum and asserted its invalidity is Ibn Hazm Andalusí (d. 456 A.H.). As reported by a number of Sunni scholars, he has stated in clear terms that this hadith is fabricated. For instance, while narrating this tradition, Ibn Hayyan says: "Abu Muhammad Ali bin Ahmad bin Hazm writes in a treatise in criticism of ra'y (lit. Opinion) [13](#) analogy, istihsan (lit. preference), ta'lil and taqlid: "This false report is fabricated and forged; it is never authentic." [14](#)

Biographers have written about Ibn Hazm Andalusí's life. Ibn Hajar Asqalani writes about him: "He is a jurist, memorizer, literalist [15](#) and prolific writer. Indeed, he had a strong memory as he had memorized numerous traditions but since he relied too much on his memory, he was careless in his utterances and speech especially when he was talking for and against narrators or when he was making mention of their names, thus creating a very bad impression of himself."

Saa'ed bin Ahmad Rab'ei says: "Amongst the Andalusids, Ibn Hazm had more knowledge of various branches of sciences as compared to others. Besides, he was acquainted with figurative science (bayan), eloquence and genealogy."

Humaidi describes him as such: "He was a memorizer and had the ability to derive and deduce Islamic laws from the Quran and tradition. He was an expert of and adherent to different branches of science. I have not seen a clever and sharp-minded man, a fast memorizer, a pious and dignified man like him."

An Andalusid historiographer, Abu Marwan bin Hebban, have also commented on him describing him as such: "Ibn Hazm was an expert in hadith, jurisprudence, genealogy and literature. Additionally, he also had knowledge of old sciences. There is no doubt that he was not free of mistakes in acquiring those skills but he had sought all those skills with courage and confidence." [16](#)

There are accounts and reports about Ibn Hazm's life in other Sunni books also. [17](#)

Ahmad bin al-Hussein Bayhaqi: a glimpse of his life

One of the Sunni scholars who have criticized the soundness Hadith of al-Nujum and described it as poor and unreliable is Abu Bakr, Ahmad bin Hussein Bayhaqi (d. 457). Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani has said that in his Al-Madkhal, Bayhaqi has considered Hadith of al-Nujum to be poor and inauthentic. [18](#)

Sunni scholars' books in Ilm Rijal (biography of narrators) are replete with praises and recommendations about Bayhaqi. Ibn Taghary Bardi says: Ahmad bin Hussein bin Abdullah Hafiz Abu Bakr Bayhaqi was born in the year 384 after Hegira. He was the leading figure of his time in the science of hadith and jurisprudence. He authored many books and compiled Imam

Shafi'i's works in ten volumes. He died in the month of Jamadi al-Thani in Neishabour. [19](#)

Ibn Abd al-Barr: a glimpse of his life

Another renowned Sunni scholar who has studied and criticized Hadith of al-Nujum is Abu Umar ibn Abd al-Barr (d. 463). He writes:

Abu Shahab Hannat narrates from Jazri from Naafi' that Ibn Umar said: The Messenger of Allah said:

Verily, my companions are like stars. Whoever's saying you act upon, you will be guided aright.

This isnad or chain of transmission is not authentic because no one reports any tradition from Nafi' to be used for argument. This hadith has been narrated by Bazzaz with another chain of transmission: Ahmad bin Umar narrates from Abd bin Rooh, from Salam bin Sulaym, from Harith bin Ghusayn, from A'mash, from Abu Sufyan that Jabir said: The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

"My Companions are like the stars; whoever among them you follow, you will be rightly guided."

Abu Umar says: "There is no evidence to indicate that this chain of transmission is authentic because Harith bin Ghusayn is an anonymous and unknown individual." [20](#)

With that said, we shall now take a look at Ibn Abd al-Barr's life. Biographers have studied his life and commented on him. Zahabi is one of the Sunni scholars who writes about him as such: He was the imam, memorizer and Shaykh al-Islam of Tunisia (Maghrib).

He was born in Rabi' al-Thani 368 A.H. During his teenage period, he engaged in acquiring knowledge of hadith. Indeed, he was the chief of his time in terms of memorizing traditions, precision and profundity.

Abu Walid Baji says: "In Andalusia, no one was as learned as Abu Umar in the science of hadith."

Ibn Hazm says: "Al-Tamhid is a book authored by my friend Abu Umar. I know no one as strong and capable in theology, jurisprudence and hadith as he let alone being superior to him."

Ibn Sakrah also has commented on him as such: I heard Abu Walid Baji say: "Abu Umar is a person best known for his memorization in Tunisia."

Humaidi has also commented on him. He says: Abu Umar is a jurisprudent, memorizer, kathir al-hadith (i.e. one who narrates a lot of traditions), expert in readings and discrepancy of the Quran, in the sciences of hadith and biography. He lived with ilm al-hadith and was inclined jurisprudentially towards Imam Shafi'ei.[21](#)

Ali bin Hasan ibn Asaker: a glimpse of his life

Another renowned Sunni scholar who has considered Hadith of al-Nujum to be weak and inauthentic is Abul Qasim ibn Asaker. The text of his statement will be mentioned together with Mannwi's comment. Some biographers have praised and commended him. Yafi'ei describes him as such:

Abul Qasim Ali bin Hasan Hebatullah bin Asaker was a jurisprudent, imam (leader), outstanding traditionist, profound memorizer, precise, having extensive knowledge, Shaykh al-Islam, muhaddith (narrator) of sham (Levant), helper of prophetic tradition, eliminator of innovations, pride of memorizers, sea of knowledge, head of traditionists, capable mystic, reliable in religion, known during his time as a person of high status with none being like him amongst his contemporaries.

He possessed both intelligible and textual knowledge and distinguished authentic from inauthentic traditions. He was one of the great scholars of his time. He was considered a prominent Shafi'ei jurisprudent. He had made advancements in the science of traditions and was known for his progress in this field. He was an honest memorizer who gathered both texts and chains of transmission...[22](#)

Ibn Jawzi: a glimpse of his life

Another prominent Sunni scholar who has discredited Hadith of al-Nujum and denied its soundness is Ibn Jawzi. In his Al-Ilal al-Mutanahiyah, he writes:

Nu'aym bin Hammad is quoted as saying: Abdur Rahim bin Zayd al-Amami related to us from Saeid bin Musayyib from Umar bin al-Khattab that the Apostle of Allah (S) has said: "I asked my Lord about what my companions would differ in after me. Then, He revealed to me:

"O Muhammad! To Me your companions are like stars in the sky, some of them are brighter than others; so, to Me, whoever takes hold of any of the things they differ about would be rightly guided."

And he goes on to add:

The soundness of this tradition is uncertain on the side of two transmitters, hence unreliable; one is Nu'aym bin Hammad who is discredited and disapproved, and the other is 'Abdur Rahim bin Zayd al-Amami about whom Yahya bin Mu'een has said: "Abdur Rahim is a liar".[23](#)

It should be noted that historians have given Ibn Jawzi's biography with praise and admiration. Ibn Khalakan says in his admiration as such:

Abul Faraj Abdur Rahman bin Abul Hasan Ali bin Muhamamd bin Ali bin Ubaidullah bin Abdullah bin Hammadi bin Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Ja'far Jawzi is one of the Hanbali jurists. He was a sermonizer who was given the epithet Jamaluddin, the great memorizer. He was the most learned scholar of his time, the leader of his age in hadith, oratory skill and in giving sermons. He has written books on different arts and skills.[24](#) He died in the year 597 A.H.

Ibn Dihya: a glimpse of his life

Ibn Dihya (d. 633 A.H) has also discredited hadith of al-Nujum and denied its soundness. His very words as quoted by Zayn Iraqi in this respect are as follows:

Ibn Dahiyya has said: "I have related the hadith (My companions are like stars); this hadith is not sound."[25](#)

Biographers have reported his biography with respect and admiration. In his Husn al-Muhadherah, Jalaluddin Suyuti writes about him: Al-Imam al-Allama, the great memorizer, was insightful on hadith, and attached great importance to that knowledge. He had knowledge of etymology and Arabic literature. He has authored works in this regard. He lived in Egypt and undertook training the prince as well as teaching in Kamiliyah School.[26](#)

Abu Hayyan al-Andalusi

Another scholar and great memorizer who has discredited Hadith of al-Nujum is Abu Hayyan Andalusi (d. 745). He has an interesting research about the Hadith of al-Nujum which we will partly quote here because of its usefulness. First, he relates the following from al-Zamakhshari:

Al-Zamakhshari said: If you ask how the Qur'an elucidates everything, I would say it means that the Qur'an has explicated everything of religious affairs; it has asserted some of them and has referred some to sunna since He (Allah) has commanded to follow the Apostle of Allah (S) and obey him, and has said:

"Nor does he speak out of [his own] desire."[27](#)

Moreover, He has encouraged Muslims to follow what has been unanimously agreed. He says:

"And follows other than the way of the believers."[28](#)

The Apostle of Allah (S) has permitted his umma to follow his companions and emulate his deeds as he said: "My companions are like stars, whomever among them you follow, you will be guided". The fact, this hadith is not uttered by the Apostle of Allah (S) and this fabricated hadith is by no means true to be from the Apostle of Allah (S).

He states that Hafiz Abu Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Hazm has also said in his treatise in refutation of al-Ra'y wa al-Qiyas, Ta'lil and Taqlid:

This [i.e., the Hadith of al-Nujum] is a tradition which is a fabricated lie against the Prophet (S) and it can never have been said by the Prophet (S).

Bazzaz, the author of Musnad, has mentioned the chain of transmission. He says: The people narrate from the Prophet (S.) as saying: "My companions are comparable to the stars – or are like stars –, whomever among them you follow, you will be guided". This saying does not belong to the Prophet (S).

Abdur Rahim bin Zayd al-Amami has related on the authority of his father from Saeid bin Musayyib from Ibn Umar from the Prophet (S). The weakness of this hadith is on the side of Abd al-Rahim, as the scholars have avoided transmitting his hadith.

It is to be said that the popular biographer, Ibn Mu'een, has commented in his Al-Mawdu'at about Abdur Rahim bin Zayd al-Amami, one of the transmitters in the chain of the transmission of the above hadith, as follows: "Abdur Rahim bin Zayd is a liar and untrustworthy." Similarly, Bukhari has said in his Al-Dhu'afa: "He [i.e., 'Abdur Rahim] is abandoned".

Hamza al-Jazri has also narrated the same tradition. Hamza's narration is disreputable and abandoned.[29](#)

A Look at Abu Hayyan Andalusi's Life

Now we shall look at Abu Hayyan Andalusi's life who died in the year 745 A.H. He has been praised by biographers. Ibn Imad said about him: "Al-Imam Athir al-Din Abu Hayyan, the renowned grammarian of his time and a philologist, interpreter, and traditionist, expert in syntax, reciter, historiographer etc. He became well-known and was known everywhere. Many great scholars acquired knowledge from him and achieved progress during his lifetime.

Safdi praises him as such: Amongst my teachers, I have never seen anyone more preoccupied and busier than him because I have always seen him glorifying Allah, writing and studying. He was precise and exact in narrating and recording traditions. He had a good command of etymology. He was the leading and peerless figure in syntax and deflections. He had spent most of his time acquiring these two skills. He had a lot of experience and knowledge in the field of exegesis, hadith, lives and biographies of people especially those of the people of the Maghrib (Morocco and Tunisia).

Kamaluddin Odfoi says: Abu Hayyan was a precise and honest authority with a sound belief.[30](#)

Shams al-Din Zahabi: a short glimpse of his lifeShams al-Din Zahabi: a short glimpse of his life

Shams al-Din Zahabi (d. 748 A.H.) has in numerous cases discredited the Hadith of al-Nujum in his Mizan al-I'tidal fi Naqd al-Rijal. For instance, in a biography of Ja'far bin Abd al-Wahid Hashimi al-Qadhi, after quoting the scholars' sayings about him, he adds:

Among his evils is his narration on the authority of Wahab bin Jarir from his father from A'mash from Abu Salih from Abu Huraira, from the Prophet (S) that he said:

"My companions are like stars, whoever follows anything from them, he will be guided."[31](#)

In another instance, writing the biography of Zayd al-Amami, and after relating the hadith, he said: "This hadith is invalid."[32](#)

Now we shall take a short look at Zahabi's life. All books of biography have admired and praised him. Ibn Taghri Burdi said about him: "Al-Shaykh, al-Imam, the memorizer, the historian, and the author of fruitful writings, Shams al-Din Abu Abdullah Zahabi Shafi'ei is one of famous memorizers."

He had heard a lot of traditions and travelled to many cities. He was a writer, author, compiler and historiographer. He checked and corrected traditions and had special knowledge in the science of hadith and other related sciences. He obtained principles, processed them and read out the seven qira'at (recitations) to a group of experts in qira'at (recitations).[33](#)

Taj al-Din Ibn Maktum: a glimpse of his life

Another scholar who has discredited and questioned the credibility of Hadith of al-Nujum is Taj al-Din Ibn Maktum (d. 749 A.H.) Attesting to the sayings of his teacher,

Abu Hayyan, whom we have talked about before, he (Ibn Maktum) has related his very statement about the Hadith of al-Nujum from Al-Bahr al-Muhit in his (Ibn Maktum's) Al-Dur al-Laqt min al-Bahr al-Muhit. It is pertinent to mention that Ibn Maktum's biography is presented with praise in different Sunni sources. Jalaluddin Suyuti has said about him:

"Ahmad bin Abdul Qadir bin Ahmad bin Maktum Taj al-Din Abu Muhammad al-Qaysi was an embodiment of jurisprudence, syntax and philology." He wrote the history book Al-Najat and Al-Dur al-Laqt min al-Bahr al-Muhit. He was born in the year 682 A.H. and departed in 749 A.H."[34](#)

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzi: a glimpse of his life

Another Sunni scholar who has criticized the soundness of Hadith of al-Nujum is Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzi (d. 751 A.H.). He has discredited the Hadith of al-Nujum and has commented in rejection of the

"imitators" and their reasons as follows:

The forty fifth reason is this saying of theirs: For the validity of emulation this well-known hadith suffices that: "My companions are like the stars, whomever among them you follow, you will be guided."

The answer to this saying can be given from several perspectives: One is that this hadith has been transmitted by way of Al-A'mash from Abu Sufyan bin Jabir from Saeid bin al-Musayyib's hadith from Ibn Umar, and by way of Hamza al-Jazri from Nafi' from Ibn Umar, and none of them is proven and authenticated.

He goes on to say:

Ibn Abd al-Barr said: Muhammad bin Ibrahim bin Saeid has related to us that Abu Abdullah bin Mufarraj has narrated to him on the authority of Muhammad bin Ayyub Samut that Bazzaz has said: As for what is related from the Prophet (S) as having said, "*My companions are like the stars, whomever among them you follow, you will be guided*" is not a sound hadith from the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, because it has not been reported through a valid chain of transmission.[35](#)

Now we shall take a brief look at Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzi's life. Most biography books have mentioned and praised him. Ibn Kathir says about him: "On Thursday night, the 13th of the month of Rajab, our friend, Al-Shaykh al-Imam al-Allama Shams al-Din, the leader of al-Jawziya and their custodian, died.

He began his education by acquiring knowledge of Ilm al-Hadith. He carried on his studies until he acquired proficiency in several branches of sciences including exegesis, hadith, theology, jurisprudence etc.

He recited the Quran beautifully and was well-mannered. He was kind and never felt jealous of anyone nor did he hurt anyone. He did not backbite anyone nor did he carry any spite against any people.[36](#)

Zayn al-Din Iraqi

Another scholar who has rejected Hadith of al-Nujm and considered it as inauthentic is Zayn al-Din Iraqi (d. 806 A.H). He has the following to say about the Hadith of al-Nujum:

The hadith "My companions are like the stars, whomever among them you follow, you will be guided" has been related by Daru Qutni in Al-Fadha'il, and Ibn Abd al-Barr in his Jami' Bayan Al-'Ilm has narrated from Jabir's hadith on his own authority that: "This isnad is not authentic and there is nothing to indicate that it is authentic, since al-Harith bin Ghusayn, one of its narrators, is unknown and anonymous.

He also relates:

Abd bin Humaid has related it in his Musnad and Ibn Adi has related it in Al-Kamil from the narration by Hamza bin Abi Nusaybi from Nafi' from Umar by the phrase "whomever among them you adopt his

words " instead of "you followed" and said that "its isnad is weak because of the presence of Abu Hamza, as he is accused of lying.

Also, Bayhaqi in his Al-Madkhal has related it from Amr and Ibn Abbas and the same hadith in another way with an incomplete isnad (mursal) and has said that: "Its text is well-known but its isnad is poor and unproven."

Bazzaz has also quoted Abdur Rahim bin Zayd Ammi who narrated from his father, from Ibn Umar that he said: "This hadith is unknown and inauthentic."

Ibn Hazm has commented on this tradition. He says: "This tradition is false, fabricated and invalid."

Bayhaqi's remark about this tradition is the following: Part of this tradition (My companions are like stars) is implied by Abu Musa's tradition which has been reported by Muslim Neishaburi. In that hadith, the Holy Prophet (S) has been quoted as having said:

*"The stars are security for inhabitants of the heavens and my companions are security for my ummah..."*³⁷

Now we shall take a look at Zayn al-Din Iraqi's life. All lexicographers and biographers have praised and admired him. Ibn Imad has said about him in the events of the year 806/1404: "The memorizer [of the Qur'an] Zayn al-Din Abd al-Rahim bin Iraq al-Shafi'ei, the memorizer of the age...departed from this world."³⁸

Ibn Hajar Asqalani: a glimpse of his life

Shahab al-Din Ibn Hajar Asqalani has also questioned the credibility of Hadith of al-Nujum. The hadith "My companions are like stars, whomever among them you follow, you will be guided" is related by Abd bin Humaid in his Musnad on the authority of Hamza al-Nasibi from Nafi' from Ibn Amr; and Hamza is very weak [in transmission of hadith].

He also says:

Daru Qutni has related this hadith in his Al-Mutalif from the narration transmitted by Salam bin Sulaym from al-Harith bin Ghusayn from A'mash from Abu Sufyan from

Jabir in a marfu' manner and said: "Salam [bin Sulaym] is weak" and has related it by way of Hamid bin Zayd in Malik's Ghara'ib from Ja'far bin Muhammad from His father from Jabir along with a hadith in which it is related:

"Then, whomever among my companions that you take his words, you will be guided; indeed, my companions are comparable to stars, whoever follows one star from among them will be guided" and has said: "It is not proved to be from Malik, and its transmitters, except for Malik, are unknown."

And Abd bin Humaid and Daru Qutni have related it in Al-Fadha'il from the hadith of Hamza Jazri from Nafi' from Ibn Hamza and said: "Hamza has been accused of fabrication of hadith."

In Musnad al-Shahab, Qadha'i also has quoted Abu Huraira with a chain of transmitters including Ja'far bin Abdul Wahid Hashemi whose reports biographers have rejected and discredited.

And Ibn Tahir has related it from the tradition of Bushr bin Hussein from Zubayri, from Anas that Bushr too was accused of lying.

And Bayhaqi has related it in Al-Madkhal from the narration of Juwaybir from Dhahhak, from Ibn Abbas as saying: "Juwaybir is an abandoned individual". Also, he has related it from the narration of Juwaybir from Jawab bin Abdullah in a marfu' (lit. elevated) manner which in this case would be mursal (incomplete in chain of transmitters). Bayhaqi then says: This text is famous but all its chains of transmission are poor.

Similarly, he has related the following in Al-Madkhal from Ibn Umar, albeit in a marfu' manner that the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, said:

"I asked my Lord about what my companions would differ in after me. Then, He revealed to me: O Muhammad! To Me your companions are like stars in the sky, some of them are brighter than others; so, to Me, whoever takes hold of any of the things they differ about would be rightly guided."

Then under this tradition, he comments as such: "Among the narrators of this hadith is Abdur Rahim bin Zayd al-Amami who is abandoned."[39](#)

Now, we shall take a short look at Ibn Hajar Asqalani's life. He has been remembered with respect and admiration. Jalaluddin Suyuti writes about him: "He was leading among the memorizers in his time, the chief justice (qadhi al-qudhat) with students from different parts of the country. During his time, there was no memorizer except him.

He wrote many books on different subject. Some of the books authored by him are the following: Sharh Bukhari, Ta'liq al-Ta'liq, Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, Taqrib al-Tadhib, Lisan al-Mizan, Al-Isabah fi Ma'refat al-Sahabah, Nokat Ibn al-Salah, Rijal al-Arba'ah and its Exposition and Al-Alqab.[40](#)

Ibn al-Hammam: a glimpse of his life

Kamal al-Din Muhammad bin Abdul Wahid al-Siwasi, better known as Ibn Hammam al-Hanafi (d. 861) was one of the leaders of the Hanafi School. He has expressly said that the Hadith of al-Nujum is an unknown hadith.[41](#)

Ibn al-Hammam is a celebrated leader. Historians and biographers have narrated his biography with respect and dignity. Ibn Imad has said about him in the events of the year 861/1456: "And in this year

Kamal al-Din Muhammad bin Abdul Wahid al-Siwasi al-Iskandari, the leading Hanafi scholar died."

It has been reported in Bughyat al-Wu'at that Ibn Hammam was a man of profuse knowledge and an expert in jurisprudence, legal theories, syntax, deflections, eloquence, Sufism, music and a lot of other sciences. He used to say: "I do not follow anyone in rational sciences."[42](#)

Ibn Amir al-Haj: a glimpse of his life

Another Sunni scholar who has criticized the soundness of Hadith of al-Nujum is Shams al-Din Muhammad bin Muhammad, better known as Amir al-Haj Hanafi (d. 879 A.H.). He has clearly stated the weakness and invalidity of Hadith of al-Nujum:

It is also replied that: Each one of these two traditions i.e. "my companions are like stars" and "take half of your religion from Aisha" are contradictory as it signifies the permissibility of following the companions and Aisha, even though it may be opposite to the words of the two Sahykh [Abu Bakr and Umar] or the four caliphs. Of course, the first hadith [i.e., the hadith of stars] is not known.

He also said:

According to Ibn Hazm in his significant treatise [Risalat al-Kubra], it is an invalid and fabricated hadith, although it has its own ways (turuq) of transmission through Amr bin Umar, Jabir, Ibn Abbas, and Anas in different wordings, the closest of which to the wordings of the hadith is the one reported from Umar by Ibn Adi in Al-Kamil and Ibn Abd al-Barr in Bayan al-Ilm as follows:

The Apostle of Allah (S) said: "My companions are comparable to the stars by which the people are guided, whomever among them you adopt his words, you will be guided."

And the hadith that Daru Qutni and Ibn Abd al-Barr have related from Jabir is as follows:

The Apostle of Allah (S) said:

"My companions among my umma are like stars, whomever among them you follow, you will be guided".

Yes, nothing of this hadith is true and reported through a valid chain of transmission, and for this reason Ahmad bin Hanbal said: "The hadith is unsound."

Bazzaz said: "This hadith is not true and cannot be from the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family." Meanwhile, Bayhaqi has said in his Al-I'tiqad: We have received this tradition in an uninterrupted (muttasil) and not-strong enough sanad (chain of transmission) and in another hadith with an interrupted [munqati'] sanad.

Of course, the authentic tradition which constitutes part of the concept of this tradition asserts that it is Abu Musa's hadith that has been related in a marfu'ah (elevated) way.[43](#)

Now, we shall take a brief a look at the life of Ibn Amir al-Haj. Great Sunni scholars have praised him. Ibn Imad has said about him: "Shams al-Din Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Hasan known as Ibn Amir al-Haj al-Halabi al-Hanafi, had been the head of Hanafi scholars in Aleppo. He was a leading scholar and a writer who wrote invaluable and famous books. He had many great students who were proud of studying with him. He died at the age of 54 in the city of Aleppo in the month of Rajab.[44](#)

Getting to Know Sakhawi

Another prominent Scholar who has commented on Hadith of al-Nujum is Shams al-Din Abu al-Khayr Muhammad bin Abdu Rahman bin Muhammad bin Abi Bakr bin Uthman bin Muhammad Sakhawi. In this regard, he says:

"The tradition which says that 'difference of opinion among my ummah is a blessing' has been reported by Bayhaqi in al-Madkhal from Sulayman bin Abu Karimah, from Juwaybir, from Dhahhak, from Ibn Abbas who said: One day the Apostle of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, said:

"What is given to you from the Book of Allah brings to you knowledge and no one is excused to abandon it; and if [a ruling were] not in the Book of Allah, then refer to my past sunna; and if there were no sunna of mine available [in that respect], then whatever my companions say [would be right]. Verily, my companions are like the stars in the sky, whomever among them you emulate, you will be guided, and the difference among my umma is a blessing".

Quoting this hadith, Sakhawi says: This hadith has been reported by Tabarani and Deylami in their Musnads with the same chain of transmission.

It is pertinent to mention that one of the narrators of this tradition is Juwaybir who is seriously weak in narrating traditions. Moreover, Dhahhak's report from Ibn Abbas is interrupted. That is to say, there is a gap between Dhahhak and Ibn Abbas.[45](#)

Now, we shall take a cursory look at Sakhawi's life and personality by referring to some biographical books. His biography is given in most of the biographical and historical books. Ibn Imad writes in the events of the year 902 A.H: It was in this year that Shams al-Din Abu al-Khayr Muhammad bin Abdu Rahman bin Muhammad bin Abi Bakr bin Uthman bin Muhammad Sakhawi died.

He excelled in jurisprudence, Arabic, recitation, hadith and history. He also took part in mathematics, exegesis, principles of jurisprudence, meeqat and a lot of other fields of science.

The things he has read and which have been reported from him are innumerable. He acquired knowledge from a group of scholars consisting of more than 400 people. Many scholars allowed him to give fatwa, present lectures and dictate.

He acquired and sought much of his knowledge from his teacher, Ibn Hajar Asqalani. For example,

Sakhawi is said to be next to Ibn Hajar Asqalani in the science of Jarh and Ta'dil (criticism of narrators). Also, it is said that Sakhawi excelled in Ilm al-Rijal or biographical evaluation (.lit "knowledge of men") and there was none, except Zahabi, to follow his methodology.[46](#)

Ibn Abi Sharif Shafi'ei: a glimpse of his life

Another scholar has criticized and discredited Hadith of al-Nujum is Kamal al-Din Ibn Abi Sharif Shafi'ei (d. 906 A.H.). In this regard, he has followed his master Ibn Hajar Asqalani. Quoting the latter, he has discredited Hadith of al-Nujum as shall be brought up in the later sections when we shall bring up Manawi's words and comments.

It is pertinent to mention that his biography has been related in many biographical and historical books. Ibn Imad has said about him: Kamal al-Din Abu al-Ma'ali, Muhammad bin Amir Naser al-Din Muhammad bin Abi Bakr bin Ali bin Abi Sharif Muqaddasi Shafi'ei Marri, grandson of Shahab al-Din Umairi Maliki known as Ibn 'Awjan. He was Shaykh al-Imam, Shaykh al-Islam, the king of the notable scholars."[47](#)

Jalal al-Din Suyuti: a glimpse of his life

Another prominent scholar who has criticized the soundness of Hadith of al-Nujum is Jalal al-Din Suyuti (d. 911 A.H.). He has quoted the Hadith of al-Nujum in his Al-Jami' al-Saghir min Ahadith al-Bashir al-Nadhir, and in the end marked it with the letter "d" [da'if = weak], which was his code for weakness of the hadith.[48](#)

We will now take a cursory look at his life. Ibn Imad has said about him in the events of the year 911: "And in that year, the memorizer Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti Shafi'ei, the great traditionist, researcher, profound thinker and the author of many useful writings, died."

Dawoodi, his student says: "Suyuti has been the most learned scholar of his age in the science of hadith and its skills."[49](#)

Ali Muttaqi Hindi: a glimpse of his life

Another prominent scholar who has criticized the soundness of Hadith of al-Nujum is Shaykh Ali Muttaqi Hindi (d. 975 A.H.). He has pointed out the Hadith of al-Nujum in his famous book Kanz al-Ummal as well as in Muntakhab al-Kanz and has proclaimed it to be weak in the same way as Suyuti (his master) did.[50](#)

Muttaqi Hindi's biography is recorded with compliments and respect. Ibn Imad has said about him: "Ali al-Muttaqi bin Hesam al-Din Hindi Makki was from among the practicing scholars and the pious servants of Allah.

He was a God-fearing man, a man of continence and devotion and renunciation of evil actions. He authored many books and held many statuses and posts. Muttaqi Hindi lived for many years in the holy city of Mecca. He died in the same city and was buried in the Mu'alla cemetery.[51](#)

Getting to Know Ali Qari

Sheikh Ali Qari Makki has also discredited and criticized Hadith of al-Nujum. He has quoted Ibn Rabi' as saying: As reported by Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti in Takhrij Ahdith al- Shifa, the tradition "My companions are like stars" has been reported by Ibn Majah. To be honest, I did search Ibn Majah's Sunan to find this tradition but I did not find it.

Moreover, Ibn Hajar has quoted it in Takhrij Ahadith al-Rafi'i in the chapter Adab al- Qadha and has sufficiently talked about it, adding that: "This hadith is weak and insignificant"; furthermore, he has quoted Ibn Hazm as saying: "This [i.e. Hadith of al- Nujum] is fabricated and invalid."

Meanwhile, he has quoted Bayhaqi as saying: "There is a tradition which Muslim Neishaburi has narrated and which implicitly refers to the said hadith. That is the hadith in which the Holy Prophet (S) has been quoted as having said:

"The stars are peace for inhabitants of the heavens and my companions are peace for my ummah..."[52](#)

Ibn Hajar comments: Bayhaqi has told the truth. This hadith draws similarity between the companions and the stars but it makes no reference to following or imitating them. Indeed, being guided by stars also seems to require emulating the stars.

Sheikh Ali Qari has said under the same comment: "It seems that being guided is something that requires emulation."

He goes on saying: The hadith apparently refers to seditions which took place after the extinction of the companions in the wake of which the traditions were destroyed, the innovations emerged and injustices spread across the land.

Thereupon, Sheikh Ali Qari says: Ibn al-Subki has reported this tradition in Sharh Ibn al-Hajib while discussing the justice of the companions but he has ascribed it to Ibn Majah.

In his Jami al-Usul, Ibn Athir has narrated this tradition in a marfu' (lit. elevated)[53](#) manner from Ibn Musayyib from Umar bin Khattab that the Apostle of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, said:

"I asked my Lord..."

Having narrated this hadith, he then says that this tradition is among the traditions which Razin has narrated in Tajrid al-Usul and which he (Ibn Athir) did not come to know about in the said Usul.

The author of Al-Mishkat has also mentioned it and has thereupon said: "This tradition has been narrated by Razin."[54](#)

Now we take a cursory look at the life of Sheikh Ali Qari. Muhibbi has commented about him: "Ali bin Muhammad bin Sultan Herawi known as Qari, resident in Mecca and one of the fountainheads of knowledge, and peerless in his time. He had an amazing method in research and exposition of passages.

His reputation is enough to be an indication of his traits." He is well-known and spoken about everywhere. He authored many valuable books the most important and the greatest of which is his Mirqat fi Sharh al-Mishkat which consists of several volumes.

Getting to Know Abdur Rauf Manawi

Another prominent scholar who has criticized the soundness of Hadith of al-Nujum is Abdur Rauf Manawi (d. 1029). He narrates this tradition from the Holy Prophet (S) who said:

"I asked my Lord about what my companions would differ in after me..."

In exposition of this hadith he says: Al-Sajzi has reported this tradition in Al-Ibanah 'An Usul al-Diyanah, Ibn Asaker al-Dimashqi in the History of the City of Damascus (Tarikh Madinat al-Dimashq) when narrating Zayd al-Hawari's biographical account. As well, Bayhaqi and Ibn Adi have narrated this tradition from Umar bin Khattab.

Ibn Jawzi has related in Al-'Ilal: "This hadith is not sound" and Nu'aym [one of its transmitters] is discredited; and Ibn Mu'een has viewed Abd al-Rahim as liar and untrustworthy. It has been said in Mizan al-I'tidal: "This hadith is invalid."

Similarly, Ibn Hajar has said in Takhrij al-Mukhtasar: It [the hadith of al-Nujum] is an unusual tradition about which Bazzaz was asked and he replied: "This saying has not been reported from the Holy Prophet (S) through a valid chain of transmission."

Also, Kamal bin Abi Sharif said: "It is implied from the words of our teacher (Ibn Hajar) that this hadith [of al-Nujum] is a confused (mudhtarib) tradition."

Manawi further adds: It seems that according to the writer's view, Ibn Asaker has quoted this tradition and he has refrained from commenting on it whereas the fact is not as such because Ibn Asaker says after quoting the hadith: Ibn Sa'd said: "Zayd al-Amami Abu al-Hawari was weak in narrating hadith and Ibn Adi says about him: "All of the individuals which he has reported traditions from and all of those who have narrated from him are poor (dha'if) in terms of reporting traditions."[55](#)

Now we shall look briefly at the life of Abdur Rauf Manawi. Biographers have remembered him and

spoken about him with awe and respect. Muhibbi has commented about him: "Abdur Rauf bin Taj al-Arefeen bin Ali bin Zayn Al-Abedin titled Zayn al-Din al-Haddadi al-Manawi, al-Qahiri al-Shafi'i, [was] a great religious leader, an authoritative and trustable exemplar with well-known works."

Without doubt, he was a great scholar of his age. He was a learned, pious, devoted and humble leader submissive to God. He was highly esteemed. He sought nearness to God by doing good deeds. He was patient and tolerant remembering God constantly and continually. He sufficed to eating only one meal during the day and night. He acquired knowledge of different sciences and disciplines in his time excelling all his contemporaries.

Shahab Khafaji: a glimpse of his life

In his Sharh al-Shifa, Sheikh Shahab al-Din Khafaji (d. 1096) has admitted the weakness of Hadith of al-Nujum. Then, in order to reject Abuzar Halabi – who has protested Qadhi 'Ayadh's act of narrating the hadith in al-Shifa in a decisive manner – he has embarked on defending Qadhi Ayadh.

Khafaji's biography has been brought up in many biographical books. Muhibbi comments about him as such:

Sheikh Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Umar, the Chief Judge titled Shahab al-Din Khafaji, the Egyptian, the Hanafi, has authored many famous works. He is a scholar known for his excellence and skill among all other scholars. He was the moon of the sky of knowledge, the star of the horizon of prose and poem, the leader of writers and head of the authors. The glimmer of his fame encompassed the world and his name was uttered frequently by people like a proverb.

All those who had seen him – some of whom we have seen and some we have heard of – admit the fact that he was peerless in terms of meticulous and beautiful writing. None of the said people could compete him nor could they make such a claim. It was at a time when some people claimed to have merits which they never seemed to have. He authored a lot of interesting and acceptable books which can be found everywhere in the country...[56](#)

Qadhi Behari: a glimpse of his life

Qadhi Mohibullah Behari (d. 1119 A.H.) denied the authenticity of consensus (ijma') of Al-Shaykhayn or the two caliphs (Umar and Abu Bakr), and said:

"It is said in the narrations: "Follow those who come after me, namely, Abu Bakr and Umar", and "follow my sunna and the sunna of the guided caliphs". We must say: This tradition is addressed to the imitators (muqallidin) and implies the eligibility of emulating the caliphs. That was because the mujtahids [those who practiced ijtihad] opposed them and the imitators sometimes imitated people other than them.

As for the contradiction between the two traditions i.e. "My companions are like stars" and "Take half of

your religion from Al-Humayra (Aisha)" and the tradition reported in Al-Mukhtasar, this contradiction is resolved because these two traditions [the Hadith of al-Nujum and the Hadith which says "Take half of your religion"] are very weak."[57](#)

Behari's life has been brought up in biographical sources. Zirkili says about him:

Mohibullah bin Abd al-Shakoor Behari Hindi engaged in Judgment and he was considered to be one of the notable scholars of the city of Behar which is a big city located on east India.

Behari was born in a place named Karah. Later he was appointed as the judge of Lucknow and then of Dakan district. In the following years, Behari became the ruler of the state of India and was granted the title "Fazil Khan" but he died immediately thereafter.

Among the works authored by him are Musallam al-Thubut fi Usul al-Fiqh, al-Jawhar al-Fard, Sullam al-Ulum fil Mantiq etc. [58](#)

Qadhi Shawkani: a glimpse of his life

Qadhi Shawkani (d. 1250 A.H) commented about consensus (ijma'):

And in this manner, the hadith "My companions are like stars, whomever among them you follow, you will be guided" implies the authenticity of the words of each one of them; [however] there is a widely known objection to this hadith because, the sanad (chain of transmission) includes Abd al-Rahim al-Amami quoting his father, who are both very weak [in transmission of hadith].

Similarly, Ibn Mu'een has said: "Abd al-Rahim is a liar." Bukhari has described him as matrāk (abandoned). And Abi Hatam has asserted likewise.

This hadith has been related in another way, too, in which Hamza al-Nasibi is named as one of the transmitters. He [Shawkani] said about him: "He is very weak". Bukhari says: "Hamza al-Nasibi's ahadith (traditions) are unknown" and Ibn Mu'een has said, "He is not worth anything." Ibn Adi has said about him: "All his narrations are fabricated." Also it is related on the authority of Jamil bin Zayd about him: "He is unknown"[59](#)

Shawkani's biography has been presented in many biographical books authored by Sunni scholars. Zirkili says about him: "Muhammad bin Ali bin Muhammad bin Abdullah Shawkani was among the great Yemeni scholars and jurists who lived in Sana'a. He was born in Hijra of Shawkan, one of the districts of Yemen's Kholan province but then he moved to Sana'a and was brought up there.

In the year 1229, Shawkani was appointed as the judge of Sana'a and he died when he was the ruler of this city. He considered taqlid (imitation) to be forbidden and left behind 114 volumes of books.[60](#)

Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan: a glimpse of his life

Commenting on Idala al-Sahaba (the justice of the companions), Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan (d. 1307 A.H.) has found it sufficient to mention this hadith and say: His saying "My companions are like stars" has been extensively criticized.[61](#)

Siddiq Hasan Khan's biography has been presented in Sunni biographical sources. Zirkili says: Abu Tayyib Muhammad Siddiq Khan Hasan bin Ali bin Lotfullah Hussein Bukhari Qanauji is considered to be among the modernist figures of the Islamic movement. Born and brought up in the Indian town of Qanauj he was educated in Delhi.

He moved to Bhopal of India to earn his living and it was a great success for him as he managed to earn huge wealth. He writes about his own life: He settled in Bhopal and chose to live there. There he began to acquire wealth and reputation. He became a minister and then a member of the parliament. He also spent his life compiling and writing books.

He married Bhopal queen and was then honored with the title "Nawab, Bahadur Shah. He authored more than sixty books in various languages including Arabic, Farsi and Hindi.[62](#)

Hadith of al-Nujum and Other Scholars' Opinion

It is worth mentioning that the scholars and experts who have discredited and criticized Hadith of al-Nujum, are not restricted to those mentioned above. Many other thinkers have clearly asserted the weakness of this hadith, the details of which are omitted here for the sake of brevity.

Included among such thinkers are: Ibn Mulaqqin, Ibn Taymiya, Jalal al-Mahalla, Abu Nasr Sajazi, Abudhar al-Halabi, Ahmad bin Qasim al-Ibadi, Al-Subki, the author of Minhaj al-Usul, Abd al-Ali Bahr al-Ulum, the author of Sharh-i Muslim al-Thubut, and (from among the modern scholars): Muhammad Nasir al-Din Albani[63](#), and Sayyid Muhammad Aqil al-Alawi.[64](#)

All in all, it may be concluded from the viewpoints of these dignitaries that the prevailing view of both ancient and modern Sunni scholars concerning the Hadith of al-Nujum is that they allow the possibility of erring by the Sahaba and do not regard all of them as men of justice and do not believe in their immunity from mistakes and sins. It is pertinent to mention that the names of some of those scholars were mentioned in the beginning of this book.

And the reason for stating the biographies of the renowned Sunni dignitaries from their own books of biography was for the readers to know that the invalidity and illusiveness of the Hadith of al-Nujum has been uttered by the Sunni scholars and dignitaries.

Supplementary Discussion

As we pointed out before, some of the channels through which the Hadith of al-Nujum has been transmitted include another hadith as well. In that hadith, it is stated that the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, has been quoted as having said:

"The difference among my umma is a blessing."

Some Sunni traditionists (muhaddithin) have considered the chains of the transmission of both traditions as poor. Therefore, it is befitting to mention the sayings of the traditionists concerning this tradition. Zayn al-Din Iraqi says:

In his Resalah al-Ash'ariyah, Bayhaqi has mentioned this tradition in the form of ta'liq (hadith missing its beginning) whereas he has narrated the hadith in Al-Madkhal in the form of musnad from Ibn Abbas that the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, said:

"The difference among my umma is a blessing for you."

Then Zayn Iraqi says: "This hadith has a weak chain of transmission." [65](#) Muhammad Tahir Hindi (d. 986)[66](#) writes in Al-Maqasid:

The hadith "The difference among my umma is a blessing" has been narrated by Bayhaqi as part of a long tradition in an elevated (marfu') manner from Dhahhak from Ibn Abbas. Part of the hadith as quoted by Ibn Abbas says: "The difference among my umma is a blessing for you."

Tabarani and Deylami have also narrated this tradition in the same manner as Bayhaqi. It has to be noticed that Dhahhak narrates the above tradition in an interrupted and disconnected way. Zayn Iraqi says, "This hadith is mursal (hurried)[67](#) and weak."[68](#)

Muhammad Naser al-Din Albani, a contemporary scholar, while quoting some scholars about this hadith says that this hadith is undocumented and baseless.[69](#)

Now that we have mentioned prominent Sunni scholars' sayings and opinions in rejection and criticism of Hadith of al-Nujum let us have a cursory look at how this hadith has been transmitted by the narrators and transmitters so that we may know in detail the Sunni scholars' perspectives about it.

[1.](#) It goes without saying that points quoted or mentioned in praise of Sunni scholars are meant to show their status among Sunni Muslims in respect of refuting and rejecting the fabricated "Hadith Al-Nujum", or else Shiites do not subscribe to these endorsements.

[2.](#) Al-Taqrir al-Tahbir fi Sharh al-Tahrir, 3/99; Al-Taysir fi Sharh al-Tahrir, 3/243; Silsilat al-Ahadith al-Dhaifah wa al-Mawdu'ah, 1/79

[3.](#) Shaykh al-Islam is a title of superior authority in the issues of Islam.

[4.](#) For further information about Ahmad bin Hanbal, vide: History of Baghdad, 4/412; Hulyat-ul Awliya, 9/161; Tabaqat al-Shafe'iyah, 2/27 – 63; Tazkirat al-Huffaz, 2/17; Wafiyat al-A'yan, 1/47; 1/47; Shazarat al-Zahab, 2/96; Al-Nujum al-Zahera,

2/304, etc.

[5.](#) Jami' Bayan al-Ilm wa Fadhlehi, 2/923.

[6.](#) Al-Bani, one of the contemporaries say: It seems that the text of this hadith is against the meaning understood by Mazna. In fact, it refers to utterances made by the companions according to their own opinions. Therefore, the meaning of the hadith indicative of it being fabricated and ascribed falsely to the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family. That because we cannot imagine that the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, allowed us to follow every companion despite the fact that there were people exercising precaution. His prayers were answered and none of the Shafi'ites considered himself superior to him. He was also the individual who gave ritual ablution (ghus) to Imam Shafi'ei.

[7.](#) For further information in this regard, vide: Wafiyat al-A'yan, 1/196; Mer'at al-Jenan, 2/177 and 178; Tabaqat al-Shafi'eyah, 2/93 and 109; Al-Ibar, 2/28; Hosn al-Muhadherah, 1/307.

[8.](#) Jami' Bayan al-Ilm wa Fadhlehi, 2/923 and 924. Vide: E'lam al-Mawq'ayn, 2/232, Al-Bahr al-Mohit fi Tafsir al-Quran, 5/528 etc.

[9.](#) Vide: Tradition of Prophet or of the Caliphs: a series of ideological researches, No. 23 by the same author.

[10.](#) For further information about his life, vide: History of Baghdad, 4/334; Tazkerat al-Huffaz, 2/228; Shazarat al-Dhahb, 2/209; History of Isfahan, 1/104; Mizan al-E'tidal, 1/59; Al-'Ebar, 2/92.

[11.](#) For further information about Ibn Adi, vide: Al-Ansar, Nasab Jorjani, Tazkerat al-Huffaz, 3/161; Shazarat al-Zahab, 3/51; Mer'at al-Jenan, 2/381. Al-Ibar, 2/337.

[12.](#) Al-Kaf al-Shaf fi Takhrij Ahadith al-Kashaf, 2/603.

[13.](#) Ra'y is used when there is an unresolved matter for which no firm or indirect regulations in the Koran or the hadiths can be found.

[14.](#) Al-Bahr al-Muhit fi Tafsir al-Quran, 5/528. Vide: Silsilat al-Ahadith al-Dha'eifa wal-Mawdu'ah, 1/78.

[15.](#) Literalism is the interpretation or translation of the explicit and primary sense of words of the Quran and traditions. Thus, according to it one has to act upon the outward meaning of the words of the narrations without having to interpret them.

[16.](#) Lisan al-Mizan, 4/239 – 241.

[17.](#) For further information about Ibn Hazm, vide: Nafah al-Tayyib, 1/364; Al-Ibar, 3/239; Wafiyat al-A'yan, 3/7–13; Taaj al-Aroos, 8/245; Lisan al-Mizan, 4/198.

[18.](#) Al-Kaf al-Shaf fi Takhrij Ahadith al-Kashaf, 2/604

[19.](#) For further information about Bayhaqi, vide: Shazarat al-Zahab, 3/304; Tabaqat al-Shafi'iyah, 4/168; Al-Ibar, 3/242; al-Nujum al-Zahera, 5/77, Wafiyah al-A'yan, 1/57 & 58; Tazkerat al-Huffaz, 3/309.

[20.](#) Jami Bayan al-Ilm wa Fadhlehi, 924 & 925.

[21.](#) For further information about him vide: Wafiyat al-A'yan, 6/63; Mer'at al-Jenan, 3/89; al-Mukhtasar, 2/187 and 188; Al-Ibar, 3/255; Tazkerat al-Huffaz, 3/349; Taaj al-Aroos, 3/37.

[22.](#) For further information about him vide: Tabaqat al-Shafi'eyah, 4/273; Al-Mukhtasar, 3/59; Wafiyat al-A'yan, 2/471; al-Ibar, 3/212; Mer'at al-Jenan, 3/393; Tatimmat al-Mukhtasar, 2/124; Mu'jam al-Udaba, 13/773 and 78; Al-Bedayah wa al-Nehayah, 12/294.

[23.](#) Al-Ilal al-Mutanahiyah fi al-Ahadith al-Wahiyah, 1/283. Vide: Faydh al-Qadir, 4/101.

[24.](#) For further information about him vide: Al-Bedayah wa al-Nehayah, 13/28; Wafiyat al-A'yan, 2/321 and 322; Tatimmat al-Mukhtasar, 2/118; Al-A'laam, 4/489 and 90.

[25.](#) Takhrij Ahadith al-Minhaj, Baydhwai, 85.

[26.](#) For further information about Ibn Dihya, vide: Bughyat al-Wu'at, 2/218; Shazarat al-Zahab, 4/160; Wafiyat al-A'yan, 3/121; Husn al-Muhadherah, 1/355.

[27.](#) Surah al-Najm, verse 3.

[28.](#) Surah al-Nisa, verse 115.

[29.](#) Al-Bahr al-Mohit fi Tafsir al-Quran, 5/527 & 528.

[30.](#) For further information about him, see: Al-Durar al-Kaminah, 4/302; Fawat al-Wafiyat, 2/555.

[31.](#) Bughyat al-Wu'at, 1/280 & 281; Al-Badr al-Tali', 2/288; Tabaqat al-Qura, 2/285; Nafhal-Tib, 3/289; Shazarat al-Zahab, 6/145 & 146; al-Nujum al-Zahera, 10/111.

[32.](#) Mizan al-I'tidal, 2/141 & 142.

- [33.](#) For further information about him, vide: Al-Durar al-Kaminah, 3/336 – 338; Tabaqat al-Shafi'eyah, 5/216; Fawat al-Wafiyat, 2/370 – 372; Al-Badr al-Tali', 2/110 and 112; al-Wafi bil-Wafiyat, 2/163 – 168; Shazarat al-Zahab, 6/153; Al-Nujum al-Zahera, 1/182; Tabaqat al-Qura', 2/71.
- [34.](#) For further information about him, vide: Al-Durar al-Kaminah, 1/174; Husn al-Muhadhera, 1/47; Tabaqat al-Qura', 1/70; Al-Jawaher al-Mudhi'ah fi Tabaqat al-Hanifa, 1/75.
- [35.](#) Il'am al-Mawqi'ayn, 2/231 & 232.
- [36.](#) For further information about his life, vide: Al-Durar al-Kaminah, 3/400 – 403; Al-Badr al-Tali', 2/143 – 146; Al-Wafi bil-Wafiyat, 2/270 – 272, Bughyat al-Wu'at, 1/62 and 63, Tarikh Ibn Kathir, 14/234.
- [37.](#) Takhrij Ahadith al-Minhaj, Baydhwai, 81–86. Bayhaqi's chain of transmission in Al-Madkhal will soon be proven to be weak and inauthentic. This is the tradition reported from Ibn Abbas and incorporating the hadith of 'Ikhtilaf'.
- [38.](#) For further information about his life, vide: Tabaqat al-Qura', 1/382; Al-Dhaw' al-Lami', 4/171 – 178; Al-Badr al-Tali', 1/354 – 356, Shazarat al-Zahab, 7/55 and 56.
- [39.](#) Al-Kaf al-Shaf fi Takhrij Ahadith al-Kashaf, 2/603 & 604.
- [40.](#) For further information about him, vide: Husn al-Muhadherah, 1/363 – 316; Al-Badr al-Tali', 1/87 – 92, Al-Dhaw' al-Lami', 2/36– 4–; Shazarat al-Zahab, 8/270 – 273, etc.
- [41.](#) Al-Tahrir bi-Sharh Amir Badshah Husseini, 3/243 (under consensus).
- [42.](#) For further information about him, vide: Al-Badr al-Tali', 1/201 & 202; Husn al-Muhadherah, 1/474; Bughyat al-Wu'at, 1/166 – 169; Hadyat al-Arefeen, 2/201; Al-Taysir fi Sharh al-Tahrir, 1/3 & 4; Shazarat al-Zahab, 7/298, etc.
- [43.](#) Al-Taghrir wa al-Takhyir fi Sharh al-Tahrir, 3/99; Vide: Al-Taysir fi Sharh al-Tahrir, 3/243.
- [44.](#) For further information about him, vide: Al-Daw' al-Lami', 9/210/ Shazarat al-Zahab, 6/328; Al-Badr al-Tali', 2/254, etc.
- [45.](#) Al-Maqasid al-Hasanah fi Bayan Kathir min al-Ahadith al-Mushtahira Alaa al-Alsenah, 46.
- [46.](#) For further information about him, refer to Shazarat al-Zahab, 8/15 – 17; Mufakehat al-Khallan, 1/178; Al-Daw' al-Lami', 8/2 – 32; Al-Badr al-Tali', 2/184; Al-Noor al-Saafir, 16, etc.
- [47.](#) For further information about him, vide: Al-Daw' al-Lami', 9/64 – 67; Al-Badr al-Tali', 2/243 & 244; Al-Uns al-Jalil, 2/288; Mufakehat al-Khallan, 1/126 and 211; Shazarat al-Zahab, 8/29, etc.
- [48.](#) Al-Jami' al-Saghir, 2/287, letter "s", No. 4603.
- [49.](#) For further information about him, vide: Husn al-Muhadharah, 1/335 & 344; Al-Badr al-Tali', 1/328, 335, Shazarat al-Zahab, 8/51, 55, Mufakihat al-Khallan, 1/294, etc.
- [50.](#) Kanz al-Umma, 1/104; Kitab al-Iman wa al-Islam, second chapter on Belief in the Quran and Sunnah, hadith No. 913; Muntakhab Kanz al-Ummal, 1/117 & 118; Kitab al-Iman wa al-Islam, second chapter, al-E'atisham bil-Kitab wa al-Sunnah.
- [51.](#) For further information about him, vide: Al-Noor al-Safir, 315 – 139, Sabhat al-Marjan, 34,
- [52.](#) Vide page 60 of this book.
- [53.](#) An attributed tradition is a tradition which is not prove to have a continuous chain of transmission.
- [54.](#) Al-Mirqat fi Sharh al-Mishkat, 5/523. Also, it is pertinent to mention that in Sharh al-Shifa, 3/423 & 424, he has admitted that this hadith is weak. As well, this hadith has been reported in al-Mawdhu'at al-Kubra page 372.
- [55.](#) Faydh al-Qadir, 4/101.
- [56.](#) For further information about him, vide: Khulasat al-Athar, 1/331–333, Reyahanat al-Albaa, 272 – 309, Al-E'lam, 1/227 and 228, etc.
- [57.](#) Musallam al-Thubut, bi-Sharh al-Ansari, 2/231.
- [58.](#) For further information about him, vide: Sabhat al-Marjan, 76 –78; Abja al-Ulum, 905; Kashf al-Dhunun, Hadiyat al-Arefeen Idhah al-Maknoon wa al-E'lam, 6/169.
- [59.](#) Irshad al-Fohul, 126.
- [60.](#) For further information about Shawkani, vide: Al-Badr al-Tali', 2/214 & 225; Abjad al-Ulum, 877, al-E'lam, 7, 190 & 191 etc.
- [61.](#) Husul al-Ma'mool min Ilm al-Usul, 56.
- [62.](#) For further information about him, vide: Al-E'lam, 7, 36 and 37; Abjad al-Ulum, 939; Idhah al-Maknoon, 1/10, etc.
- [63.](#) Silsilat al-Ahadith al-Dhaifah wa al-Mawdhu'ah, 1/78.
- [64.](#) Al-Nasayih al-Kafiyah, 181 – 182.

- [65.](#) Al-Mughni 'An Haml al-Asfar (printed on margin of Ihya al-Ulum), 1/27.
- [66.](#) For further information, vide: Shazarat al-Zahab, 8/410; Al-Noor al-Safir, 261 and Abjad al-Ulum, 3/224.
- [67.](#) If the narrator between the Successor and Muhammad is omitted from a given isnad, the tradition is said to be mursal.
- [68.](#) Tadhkerat al-Mawdu'at, 90 & 91.
- [69.](#) Silsilat al-Ahadith al-Dha'ifah wa al-Mawdu'ah, 1/76 – 78.

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