Notes On The Science Of Hadeeth (1)

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بسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيْم

The Beginning Of Mustalahul Hadeeth

It has its basis in the Qur'aan and the Sunnah of the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam). Allaah (Subhanahu wa ta'ala) says:

﴿ يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوْا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَإٍ فُتَبَيَّنُوا . . . ﴾

"O you who believe! If a rebellious evil person comes to you with a news, verify it…" [Soorah al-Hujuraat (49):6]

The Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said:

"May Allaah make a person happy who hears something from us and transmits it as he heard it, since perhaps the one whom it reaches comprehends it better than the one who heard it." [1]

Imaam Muslim reports in the introduction of his "Saheeh" that Ibn Seereen - the famous taabi'ee - said: "They never used to ask about the isnaad, but when the civil war broke out, they said: "Name to us your narrators, those who belonged to Ahlus-Sunnah, their ahadeeth are accepted and those who are innovators, their ahadeeth are rejected."

The Most Famous Books On The Subject

1) "al-Muhaddithul Faasil baynar-Raawee wal Waa'ee"
- al-Qaadee Aboo Muhammad al-Hasan ibn 'Abdir-Rahmaan ar-Raamahurmuzee (d.360H). First book devoted exclusively to the subject.

2) "Ma'rifat 'Uloomul-Hadeeth"
- Aboo 'Abdillaah Muhammad ibn 'Abdillaah al-Haakim an-Neesaabooree (d.405H).

3) "al-Mustakhraj 'alaa Ma'rifatil 'Uloomil-Hadeeth"
- Aboo Nu'aym al-Isbahaanee (d.430H).

4) "al-Kifaayah fee 'Ilmir-Riwaayah"
- Aboo Bakar Ahmad ibn 'Alee ibn Thaabit al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee (d.463H).

5) "al-Jaami' li.akhlaaqir-Raawee wa Aadaabis-Saami'"
- al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee.

6) "al-Ilmaa' ilaa ma'rifat 'Usoolir-Riwaayah wat-Taqyeedis Samaa'"
- Al-Qaadee 'Iyaad ibn Moosaa al-Yahsibee (d.544H).

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[1] Saheeh: Ahmad, at-Tirmidhee and Ibn Hibbaan from Ibn Mas'ood

7) "Maa laa Yasa'ul-Muhadditha Jahluhu"
- Aboo Hafs 'Umar ibn 'Abdil-Majeed al-Mayaanajee (d. 580H).

8) 'Uloomul-Hadeeth"
- Aboo 'Amr 'Uthmaan ibn 'Abdir-Rahmaan ash-Shahrazooree: Ibnus-Salaah (d.643H). One of the best books, commonly known as "Muqaddimmah Ibnus-Salaah"

9) "at-Taqreeb wat-Tayseer li-ma'rifat Sunanil Basheerin-Nadheer"
- Muheeyuddeen Yahyaa ibn Sharaf an Nawawee (d.676H).

10) "Tadreebur-Raawee fee Sharh Taqreebin-Nawawee"
- Jlaaluddeen 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Abee Bakar as-Suyootee (d.911H).

11) "Nazmud-Durar fee 'Ilmil Athar"
- Zainuddeen 'Abdur-Raheem ibn al-Husayn al-'Iraaqee (d.806H).

12) "Fat-hul Mugheeth fee Sharh Alfiyyatil Hadeeth"
- Muhammad ibn 'Abdir-Rahmaan as-Sakhaawee (d.902H).

13) "Nukhbatul Fikr fee Mustalah Ahlil Athar"
- al-Haafiz ibn Hajar al-'Asqalaanee (d.852H).

14) al-Manzoomatul Baiqooniyyah"
- 'Umar ibn Muhammad al-Baiqoonee (d.1080H).

15) "Qawaa'idut-Tahdeeth"
- Jamaaluddeen al-Qaasimee (d.1332H).

Initial Definitions:

'ilmul mustalah - عِلْمُ المُصْطَلَح

The knowledge of the principles and rules by which the state of the isnaad (chain) and the text (matan) may be known as regards acceptance or rejection. It's usefulness therefore lies in its making possible the distinction between authentic and weak hadeeth.

al-hadeeth – اَلْحَدِيْث

Linguistically   -   Something new
Technically   -   That which is attributed to the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) as regards words, actions or tacit approval, physical features and characteristics

al-khabar – اَلْخَبَر

Linguistically   -   News
Technically   -   There are three sayings :
      1) It is the same as "al-hadeeth"
      2) That which is related from other than the Prophet, (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and
      3) That related from the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) or other than Him

al-athar – الأَثَر

Linguistically   -   A remnant
Technically   -   There are two sayings :
                      1) It is the same as "al-hadeeth", and
                      2) Sayings and actions attributed to the Companions and
                      Taabi'een

al-isnaad – الإِسْنَاد

-   Has two meanings:
    1) Ascribing the hadeeth back to the one who said it - connecting
    the chain of narration, and
    2) The chain of narrators which reaches back to the text - which is
    the same as "as-sanad"

as-sanad – السَّنَد

Linguistically   -   A support
Technically   -   The chain of narrators which reaches the text

al-matan – اَلْمَتَن

Linguistically   -   A hard protruding part of the earth
Technically   -   That which the chain of narration ends at (the text)

al-musnad – اَلْمُسْنَد

Linguistically   -   That which has been attributed to someone
Technically   -   It has three meanings:
                      1) Every book arranged according to the narration's of each
                      Companion separately
                      2) The hadeeth which is traced back to the Prophet, (Sallallahu
                      'alaihi wa sallam) (marfoo') with a connected isnaad (muttasil),
                      and:
                      3) The "sanad"

al-musnid – اَلْمُسْنِد

-   He who narrates the hadeeth with its isnaad

al-muhaddith – اَلْمُحَدِّث

-   He who occupies himself with the science of hadeeth - with both the
    sciences of the texts and the chains of narration - and he knows a
    great many narrations and the condition of their narrators

al-haafiz – اَلْحَافِظ

- There are two sayings :
  1) He is the same as the muhaddith, and:
  2) He is of a higher standard - such that what he knows at every stage is more than what he does not know

al-haakim – اَلْحَاكِم

- He who has knowledge comprehending almost all of the ahaadeeth such that only a very few escape him