

Hadith Terms – Adapted from Ibn Mulaqqin’s Tadhkirah



Ĥadīth are classed in three [main] categories:

Ṣahīh: Sound or Rigorously Authenticated.

Ĥasan: Good or Fair.

Ḍayīf: Weak.

Ṣahīh is that which is safe from criticism; whether in its chain of transmission or in the text. **Muttafaq Ālayh** is from this category. Those Ĥadīth which both the shaykhs, [Bukhārī and Muslim] have included in their [respective] collections are termed “agreed upon”.

Ĥasan is that, in whose *isnād* [narrators] are lesser than the previous [category] in terms of accuracy and exactness. Reports in the first two categories are termed as ‘reliable reports’ [*al-khabar al-qawiyy*] in general.

Ḍayīf, which belongs to neither of the previous two categories.

1. **Musnad:** The report whose chain of transmission is continuous and reaches until the Prophet ﷺ. This is also known as *mawṣūl*.
2. **Muttaṣil:** That report whose chain of transmission is continuous and established, whether *marfūū* or *mawqūf*; this too is termed as *mawṣūl*.
3. **Marfūū:** That which is specifically ascribed to the Prophet ﷺ, whether reported with a continuous and uninterrupted chain [*muttaṣil*] or otherwise.
4. **Mawqūf:** This is a report about the companion [*ṣahābi*] whether a saying or an action etc. [ascribed to them], regardless of the chain of transmission of the report being continuous [*muttaṣil*] or otherwise. Sometimes, [a *maqṭūū* report] is also termed *mawqūf* when specified, as in: “This [report] was terminated [*waqafa*] by so-and-so at Āṭā’a”.
5. **Maqtūū:** The report which stops at the *tābiyī* in word or in deed.
6. **Munqatiy:** That whose *isnād* cannot be continuous in any way.
7. **Mursal:** This is the speech of the *tābiyī* – even if he is not a senior *tābiyī* – who says: **RasūlAllāh** ﷺ **has said...**
8. Another type of this category is that whose being *mursal* is latent.
9. **Mūḍal:** Such a narration in which two or more narrators are omitted; this is also an interrupted [*munqatiy*] narration. Every *mūḍal* is a *munqatiy* narration, but the converse is not true.
10. **Muāllaq:** Truncated; one or more [consecutive] narrators are omitted from the beginning of the chain.
11. **Muānān:** That which is narrated with the word *ān*, such as: X [narrates] **from** Y; this is deemed continuous [*muttaṣil*] so long as there is no *tadlīs* [see the next entry] and the possibility of the meeting of narrators is also plausible.
12. **Tadlīs:** [*Mudallas*] It is disliked, as it gives a [false] impression of meeting the narrator [from whom it is being narrated] or that they are contemporaneous, by saying: “so-and-so [*fulān*] has said.” However, it is milder when it is narrated by referring to the shaykh [narrator upstream in the chain] by a name or appellation that is not well-known.
13. **Shādh:** Anomaly; that narrated solitarily by a trustworthy narrator [*thiqah*] which contradicts a transmission of all other trustworthy narrators [*thiqāt*].
14. **Munkar:** An isolated report by a narrator who is [known to be] inaccurate, and lacks good retention.
15. **Fard:** The report in which a narrator is solitary and is isolated from all other narrators; or when reported through a specific route and there is no other as they say: “The narrators of Makkah are unique in this”.
16. **Gharīb:** Unfamiliar; such reports which are narrated by a single person via imāms who are known for their voluminous reports, such as Zuhri.
17. **Āzīz:** If a report similar to the above is narrated by two or three narrators it is known as *āzīz*.
18. **Mash’hūr:** Famous; if it is reported by a group of narrators.
19. **Mutawātir:** And from the above category (related) is *mutawātir*: it is a report by a group which in itself warrants for its being truth.
20. **Mustafīḍ:** Ample; that in which there are more than three narrators at every level in the chain.

21. **Muállal**: [Defective upon closer examination] that which is apparently safe from any defect, but nevertheless there are defects and factors which thwart it from being a sound report.
22. **Mudṭarib**: Ambiguous; that which is reported via different routes of equal rank.
23. **Mudraj**: in which an [unintended] addition is made to the text, etc.
24. **Mawḏūū**: That which is a forgery [*maṣnūū*]; the following terms are also used to describe this:
 - a) **Mardūd** – Rejected b) **Matrūk** – Forsaken
 - c) **Bāṭil** – Invalid d) **Mufsid** – Corrupt
25. **Maqlūb**: That whose chain of narration is mixed-up with narrators of a different ḥadīth.
26. **Āālī**: This is a superior attribute that is avidly sought as this makes one closer to the Prophet ﷺ, and the imāms of ḥadīth, and when a narrator passes away [before other contemporaries can get to hear from him].
27. **Nāzil**: it is the opposite of *āālī*.
28. **Mukhtalif**: two ḥadīth that apparently contradict each other as far as the literal meaning is concerned. Such [apparently contradicting] ḥadīth are either reconciled, or one will be given precedence over the other [*yurajjah*].
29. **Muṣaḥḥaf**: when a word or its meaning is transposed. Sometimes, this occurs in the text [*matn*], sometimes in the chain of transmission [*isnād*]. Scholars have written separate works on this subject.
30. **Musalsal**: is that in which successive narrators in the chain follow [or imitate] the previous ones, whether in attribute or the state in which it was narrated; only a few of such *musalsal* ḥadīth are sound [*ṣaḥīḥ*].
31. **Iyṭibār**: Scrutiny; for example, Ḥammād ibn Salamah narrated from Ayyūb from Ibn Sīrīn from Abū Hurayrah; has anyone else narrated from Ayyūb?
32. **Mutābaāh**: Corroboration; when someone narrates from Ayyūb other than Ḥammād. This is considered as perfect corroboration.
33. **Shāhid**: When another ḥadīth of similar meaning is reported.
34. **Ziyādatu Thiqāt**: Supplementary information added by trustworthy narrators. The general opinion is that [additional words] are acceptable.
35. **Mazīd fī Mutṭaṣil al-Asānīd**: Superfluous narrator in the continuous chain. When one or more narrators are erroneously added superfluously in the chain.
36. **Ṣifat al-Rāwī**: Attributes of the narrator; that he is upright [*ādil*] and accurate [*dābiṭ*]. This also includes knowledge of:
 - ▶ Criticism and appraisal of narrators [*jarḥ wa tāḏīl*]
 - ▶ The age at which [the narrator] heard it
 - ▶ That mentioned above is the age of discerning [*tam'yiz*] and this is usually deemed [the age of] five
 - ▶ Knowledge of how the report was heard [*samāā*]
 - ▶ How it was carried and delivered [*taḥammul*]
37. **Kitābatu'l Ḥadīth**: inscribing Ḥadīth; this is deemed permissible by consensus - and efforts should be expended to keep that accurate [i.e., documentation].
38. **Aqsāmu Ṭuruq al-Riwāyah**: Categories of how the narration was conveyed, and these are eight:
 - a) **Samāā min Lafẓ al-Shaykh**: Hearing the words of the shaykh
 - b) **Qirā'ah ālayh**: That one reads in front of the shaykh
 - c) **Ijāzah [bi anwāyihā]**: Permission to narrate [in various forms]
 - d) **Munāwalah**: Handing over by the shaykh (whether from his own notes or if he says: “Thus I have heard,” etc.)
 - e) **Mukātabah**: Written down by the shaykh
 - f) **Iylām**: Informed by the shaykh
 - g) **Waṣiyyah**: Conveyed by the shaykh in his Will
 - h) **Wijādah**: Find it written in the writing of the shaykh
39. **Ṣifatu'r Riwāyati wa Adā'ihā**: The mode of narration and how it was conveyed, which also includes paraphrased narration [*riwāyah bi'l maānā*] and abridgement of ḥadīth [*ikhtisār*].
40. **Aādāb al-Muḥaddith wa Ṭālib al-Ḥadīth**: The manner of a ḥadīth scholar and the etiquette of a seeker of ḥadīth.
41. **Mārifatu Gharīb wa Lughatih**: Knowledge of uncommon/rare words and lexical aspects; and the meanings of words and derivation of rulings based on those words.
42. **Āzw**: Attribution, ascription [of a ḥadīth, statement] to the companions [*ṣaḥābah*] their followers [*tābiyīn*] and their successors [*tabā al-tābiyīn*].

43. The aforementioned attribution is dependent on knowledge of five things:

- a) *Wujūb* – Obligatory d) *Karāhah* – Disliked
- b) *Nadb* – supererogatory e) *Ibāhah* – Permissible
- c) *Tahrīm* – Forbidden

And all these are concerning:

- a) *Khāṣ* – Specific; that which imparts only one meaning.
 - b) *Ām* – Generic; that which holds true for two things though coming from one route.
 - c) *Muṭlaq* – Absolute; which has only one meaning, without any condition and without choice.
 - d) *Muqayyad* – Restricted; which indicates a certain meaning, when certain conditions are specified.
 - e) *Mufaṣṣal*: The objective and meaning of which is clearly explained by the words and it does not require any further exposition.
 - f) *Mufassar*: That which is not understood by its words outright; and which requires further explanation.
44. *Tarājīh*: Preference, precedence; to give preference to the narrators who narrate from more routes, when both narrators are considered equal in memory; and also on account of copious narrations which are distinctly clear, etc.
45. *Mārifah al-Nāsikh wa'l Mansūkh*: Knowledge of abrogator and the abrogated.
46. *Mārifah al-Ṣaḥābah*: Knowledge about the Companions.
47. *Tābiyīn*: Followers of the Companions.
48. *Akābir ān Aṣāghir*: Seniors narrating from juniors; for example, the Prophet ﷺ narrates from Tamīm al-Dārī and [Abū Bakr] al-Ṣiddīq etc. This is also termed:
- ▶ *Fādīl ān Mafḍūl*: Superiors narrating from those lesser than them
 - ▶ *Shaykh ān Tilmīdh*: The teacher from his student as is the case of Zuhri, Yaḥyā ibn Sa'yīd, Rabi'ah and others narrating from Mālik.
49. *Nazīr ān Nazīr*: Those who are equals narrating from one another - such as Abū Ḥanīfah and [Sufyān] al-Thawrī who narrate the following ḥadīth from Mālik: “A widow has more right in dispensing of her affairs than her guardian.”
50. *Aābā'a ān Abnā'a*: Fathers narrating from sons; such as Abbās ؓ narrating from his son Fadl ؓ; and

vice-versa; similarly, [is the case of] mothers narrating from sons.

51. *Mudabbaj*: Mutual [or Bilateral] Report; this is a report which contemporaries [*aqrān*] narrate from each other. It is not *mudabbaj* if only one contemporary reports from another.
52. *Riwāyah al-Ikhwah wa'l Akhawāt*: Reports of siblings; narrations of brothers and sisters - like Ūmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and Zayd ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ.
53. *Sābiq wa'l Lāhiq*: Those who are in the chain and the narrators and their deaths are separated by a very long number of years such as [the narrator] Sarrāj; Bukhārī narrates from him, and so also has Khaffāf narrated from him and the dates of deaths [of Bukhārī and Khaffāf] are separated by 137 years or more.
54. Those *ṣaḥābah* from whom only one narrator has reported, such as Muḥammad ibn Ṣafwān and only Shaābī and none other has reported from him.
55. Those who are known by multiple names and descriptions: such as Muḥammad ibn al-Sāyib al-Kalbī, the scholar of tafsīr.
56. *Asmā'a, Kunā, Alqāb*: Knowledge of names of narrators, their agnomens and their appellations.
57. Those who are known by a single names; and those with only their names sans any agnomen [*kunyah*] and vice-versa: [only by an agnomen and not by their names].
58. Narrators whose name is the same as their own father's name.
59. *Mu'talif and Mukhtalif*: Homographs and distinctly different names.
60. *Muttafiq and Muftariq*:
- a) When the names of narrator and names of their fathers coincide; such as Khalīl ibn Aḥmad – there are six such narrators and the first is the shaykh of Sibawayh.
 - b) When the names of the narrator, his father and grandfather are the same: such as Aḥmad ibn Jaáfar ibn Ḥamdān - there are four such contemporary narrators, all of them in the same rank.
 - c) When the name, agnomen [*kunā*] and surnames [*nisbah*] are all the same: for example, there are two narrators who are both named Abū Ḥamrān al-Jūnī.
 - d) The [narrator's] name, father's name and the surname/appellation [*nisbah*] are all the same: there are two Muḥammad ibn Ábdullāh al-Anṣārī.

- e) Both the agnomen [*kunya*] and father's name of narrators are same; such as three different people, who are all named Abū Bakr ibn Āyyāsh.
- f) Both names and agnomens of the narrator and his father are the same: such as Ṣāliḥ ibn Abū Ṣāliḥ – there are four such tābiyīn.
- g) When their names OR agnomens coincide. For example, when they say Ābdullāh:
- it refers to Ibn Zubayr ؓ in Makkah
 - in Madīnah, it is Ibn Ūmar ؓ
 - in Kūfah it is Ibn Masūūd ؓ
 - in Baṣrah, it is Ibn Ābbās ؓ
 - in Khurāsān, it is Ibn al-Mubārak ؓ
 - in Shām/Levant, it is Ibn Āmr ibn al-Āaṣ ؓ
- h) As for agnomens being the same: for example, Abū Ḥamzah; this is the kunyah of seven narrators - six of them Abū Ḥamzah [with *ḥaa* and *zaay*] one narrator with [*jīm* and *rā* – Abū Jamrah] and all of them narrate from Ābdullāh ibn Ābbās ؓ.
- i) Cases where the appellation is the same word, but the sources of the appellation are different. For example: “Ḥanafī” - there is a tribe to which the person is attributed as Ḥanafī, and so also are the followers of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah [known as Ḥanafī].
61. The category of those narrators that combines both kinds [*mu'talif-mukhtalif* and *muttafiq-muftariq*] mentioned above.
62. **Mutashābih**: Confusingly similar and appears identical; but is actually distinct and different.
63. **Mansūb ilā Ghayri Abīh**: Attributed to someone other than his father, for example: Bilāl ibn Ḥimāmah.
64. An attribution that gives an impression that it is on account of something, whereas it is not true in reality, such as Abū Masūūd al-Badrī. One would think he was present in the Battle of Badr [hence Badrī] but actually, he was not one among the Badrī companions; rather, he settled in Badr, hence the appellation al-Badrī.
65. **Mub'hamāt**: Unnamed, Anonymous.
66. **Tawārikh wa'l Wafyāt**: Chronologies, biographies and dates of death.
67. **Mārifatu's Thiqāt wa'l Duāfā'a**: Knowledge of trustworthy and weak narrators and those upon whom there is a conflicting opinion, one should use “*Mizān [al-Iyṭidal of Dhahabī]*” for clarification.

68. Those trustworthy [*thiqah*] narrators who mixed-up things [confused narrations, isnad etc] in their advanced years, or those who became senile [*khariḥ*]. Thus, whatever they narrated before this age of senility is accepted; otherwise it is not.
69. That narrator, whose books were burnt or lost; so he narrates from what is retained in his memory, but makes mistakes [when narrating from memory].
70. **Man Ḥaddatha wa Nasīy**: Those who have narrated and then forgotten; thereafter, they narrate from those who heard from them in the first place [for example, X narrates to Y and forgets; then he takes it from Y].
71. Knowledge of the ranks of narrators and scholars.
72. Knowledge of slaves and clients [of tribes/families. *mawāliyy*].
73. Knowledge of tribes, places, occupations and ornaments.

INDEX

1. <i>Musnad</i>	28. <i>Mukhtalif</i>	42. <i>Āzw</i>
2. <i>Muttaṣil</i>	29. <i>Muṣaḥḥaf</i>	43. <i>Khāṣ</i>
3. <i>Marfūū</i>	30. <i>Musalsal</i>	<i>Āām</i>
4. <i>Mawqūf</i>	31. <i>Iyṭibār</i>	<i>Muṭlaq</i>
5. <i>Maqtūū</i>	32. <i>Mutābaāh</i>	<i>Muqayyad</i>
6. <i>Munqatīy</i>	33. <i>Shāhid</i>	<i>Mufaṣṣal</i>
7. <i>Mursal</i>	34. <i>Ziyādatu Thiqāt</i>	<i>Mufaṣṣar</i>
8. <i>Mūdal</i>	35. <i>Mazīd fī Muttaṣil al-Asānīd</i>	44. <i>Tarājīḥ</i>
9. <i>Muāllaq</i>	36. <i>Ṣifat al-Rāwī</i>	45. <i>Mārifah al-Nāsikh wa'l Mansūkh</i>
10. <i>Muānān</i>	<i>Jarḥ wa Tādīl</i>	46. <i>Mārifah al-Ṣaḥābah</i>
11. <i>Tadlīs</i>	<i>Tam'yiz</i>	47. <i>Mārifah al-Tābiyīn</i>
12. <i>Mudallas</i>	<i>Samāā</i>	48. <i>Akābir ān Aṣāghir</i>
13. <i>Shādh</i>	<i>Taḥammul</i>	<i>Fādīl ān Maḥdūl</i>
14. <i>Munkar</i>	37. <i>Kitābatu'l Ḥadīth</i>	<i>Shaykh ān Tilmīdh</i>
15. <i>Fard</i>	38. <i>Aqṣamu Ṭuruq al-Riwāyah</i>	49. <i>Nazīr ān Nazīr</i>
16. <i>Gharīb</i>	<i>Samāā min Lafẓ al-Shaykh</i>	50. <i>Aābā'a ān Abnā'a</i>
17. <i>Āziz</i>	<i>Qirā'ah</i>	51. <i>Mudabbaj</i>
18. <i>Mash'hūr</i>	<i>Ijāzah</i>	52. <i>Riwāyah al-Ikhwah wa'l Akhawāt</i>
19. <i>Mutawātir</i>	<i>Munāwalah</i>	53. <i>Sābiq wa'l Laḥiq</i>
20. <i>Mustafīd</i>	<i>Mukātabah</i>	56. <i>Asmā'a, Kunā, Alqāb</i>
21. <i>Muāllal</i>	<i>Iyṭām</i>	59. <i>Mu'talif and Mukhtalif</i>
22. <i>Mudṭarīb</i>	<i>Waṣiyyah</i>	60. <i>Muttafiq and Muftariq</i>
23. <i>Mudraj</i>	<i>Wijādah</i>	62. <i>Mutashābih</i>
24. <i>Mawdūū</i>	39. <i>Ṣifatu'r Riwayati wa Adā'ihā</i>	63. <i>Mansūb ilā Ghayri Abih</i>
<i>Mardūd</i>	40. <i>Aādāb al-Muḥaddith wa Ṭālib al-Ḥadīth</i>	65. <i>Mub'hamāt</i>
<i>Matruk</i>	41. <i>Mārifatu Gharīb</i>	66. <i>Tawārikh wa'l Wafyāt</i>
<i>Bāṭil</i>		67. <i>Mārifatu's Thiqāt wa'l Duāfā'a</i>
<i>Muṣid</i>		68. <i>Man Ḥaddatha wa Nasīy</i>
25. <i>Maqlūb</i>		
26. <i>Āāl</i>		
27. <i>Nāzil</i>		