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Publisher's Foreword

Islam has given two reliable pathways for the guidance of mankind. One of them is the clear Verses of Qur'an while the other, quite consistent with the first, is what we call *Sunnah* or *Ḥadīth*.

To explain and interpret its basic and brief teachings, Qur'an has itself mentioned the need for *Sunnah* and the Prophet's model lifestyle. The latter explains the former. The *Sunnah* is an indispensable guide to understand the commandments and passages of Qur'an. Without *Aḥādīth*, the entire faith and the entire *Shari'ah* (Islamic Law) will become no better than a riddle. It is to be noted that the wealth of expository material relating to *Shari'ah*, as found in *Aḥādīth*, was also given to the Prophet ﷺ by Allāh through the archangel Gabriel (Jibrā'il). This is why Qur'an is called Revelation Recited (*Wahy Matlu*) while the *Ḥadīth* is called Revelation Unrecited (*Wahy Ghair Matlu*).

The Arabic word *Ḥadīth* means: conversation, account, narrative, report, and also novel or modern. But as a technical term, however, it means the deeds, utterances, circumstances and matters of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ or, in other words, whatever has come down to us concerning Allāh's Messenger ﷺ and his mission (through his Companions and their followers). *Ḥadīth* is also called *Sunnah* (Tradition), *Akḥbār* (information, report, communication, and message) and *Alghar* (track, trace, sign, mark). *Ḥadīth* may be verbal, or practical or just tacit (that is, when the Prophet ﷺ did not object to some thing, thereby giving his tacit approval). However, some include even the Prophet's *Shamā'il* (his physical descriptions, natural disposition and habits) under the general heading of *Ḥadīth*.

The authority of *Ḥadīth*, its truth and its position in *Shari'ah* is indisputable. The proper art of writing began soon after the Prophet ﷺ began his mission. The Verses of the Revelation "Who has taught by the pen,"^[1] and "Nūn; by the pen and by what they write (therewith),"^[2] gave impetus to the art of writing during the era of the Prophet ﷺ. The people of Arabia who boasted of a retentive memory and their ability to reproduce with accuracy what they

[1] *Al-Alaq* 96:3.

[2] *Al-Qalam* 68:4.

committed to memory now began to set down what they learnt in writing. We have come to know from varied sources that the scribes of Qur'ân totalled more than fifty in numbers. As for the narration and recording of *Ahâdîth*, a much wider and more elaborate system evolved in the succeeding ages.

The things being set down in writing, in addition to Qur'ân, during the Prophet's era were: official letters of the Islamic state, the Prophet's letters, the State constitution, the Prophet's sermons, treaties, deeds of gift, writs guaranteeing security, census, writs of manumission of slaves, names of governors and officials appointed for different regions and provinces, state instructions and guidelines, details of revenues and expenditures of *Baitul-Mâl* (Exchequer), and the *Ahâdîth* based on what the Companions saw the Prophet ﷺ do or heard him say. All these documents, written down with great care and accuracy, make an invaluable treasure. Moreover, we have authentic details that prove the Companions recorded *Ahâdîth* carefully and responsibly.

On many an occasion did the Prophet ﷺ instruct his Companions to put in writing what he said. For example, the Farewell pilgrimage sermon was set down in writing at the request of Abu Shah of Yemen.

These traditions dating back to the era of the Prophet ﷺ, and his Companions set in motion a trend that continued during the successive generations of Muslims till an elaborate science of *Hadîth* blossomed forth with many technical terms like *Riwayah* (narration), *Dirayah* (cognizance), *Al-Jarhu wat-Ta'dil* (Science of Validation of *Ahâdîth*), terms that gave a scientific dimension to this branch of knowledge ensuring the safeguarding, preservation, and interpretation of *Ahâdîth*. The Biographies of Narrators (*Asmâ'ur-Rijâl*), a branch of *Hadîth* sciences, holds a prominent place among the arts and sciences developed by mankind. It is about this branch of knowledge that German Orientalist Dr Springer, while editing *Al-Isâbah fi Tamizis-Sahâbah*, remarked: "No nation in the past or in modern times ever invented an outstanding science like *Asmâ'ur-Rijâl* that provides information about five hundred thousand Muslims."

Of course, we concede that the enemies of Islam, hypocrites and liars fabricated some *Ahâdîth* in an attempt to spread them. But, then, the *Hadîth* scholars goaded by faith and endowed with keen observation, knowledge, and comprehension, while using scientific methods of inquiry, challenged and eliminated those fabrications from the treasure of (genuine) *Ahâdîth*. No doubt, it was a notable achievement worthy of praise in the annals of human knowledge. Here is an incident illustrating the scholars' achievement in this field:

The Abbasid caliph Hârûn Rashid (170 AH-193 AH) had a disbeliever arrested for fabricating *Ahâdîth* and ordered his execution. The disbeliever said to the king: "O Commander of the Faithful, how will you deal with those four

thousand *Ahâdîth* I have already fabricated, making lawful things unlawful and the unlawful lawful although not a word in those *Ahâdîth* was ever spoken by Allâh's Messenger." Thereupon, the king retorted: "O enemy of Allâh, how can you escape from Abû Ishâq Fazâri and 'Abdullâh bin Mubâarak? They will sieve them out and eliminate them letter by letter."

It is a well-known fact that the painstaking efforts of scholars gave *Ahâdîth* a high degree of reliability next to Qur'ân. When the *Ahâdîth* had been read over carefully, revised, corrected and expounded in the light of the principles of *Hadîth* sciences like *Jarh* (invalidation), *Ta'dil* (validation), and *Asmâ'ur-Rijâl*, the stage for the recording of *Ahâdîth* was set. Thanks to the exhausting efforts of *Hadîth* scholars and their deep sense of responsibility, the Muslim nation got, in addition to *Shîhâh Sittah* (the Sound Six books of *Hadîth*) a vast treasure that included *Musannafât* (*Hadîth* compilations according to subject-headings), *Jawâmi'* (comprehensive books of *Ahâdîth*), *Sunan* (collections of legal and doctrinal *Ahâdîth*), *Masânid* (*Hadîth* compilations according to complete chains), *Mâ'âjim* (compilations arranged according to names of Companions or regions or names of teachers of compilers), *Mustadrakât* (compilations of *Ahâdîth* meeting the conditions of other compilers but not found in their books), and *Mustakirajât* (compilations containing *Ahâdîth* of other compilers with different chains of narration), the manuscripts of which – numbering in thousands – researched, edited and furnished with explanatory and marginal notes, exist even today in international libraries attracting the attention of research scholars. Anyhow, among those compilations, the six canonical books of *Ahâdîth* (*Shîhâh Sittah*) rank as the centerpiece.

I have a wish since long to present the Sound Six (*Shîhâh Sittah*) translated into modern English in such a way as to list the inferences and gainful conclusions drawn from each *Hadîth* to remove any misgiving and misunderstanding, satisfying the mind and soul, and reinforcing the faith. With this noble cause in view, Darussalam has solicited the services of several learned scholars and researchers who are working with zeal on the translation of the Sound Six and writing commentaries on them.

All the *Ahâdîth* of this collection have been documented, referenced and traced by the great research scholar, Hâfîz Zubair 'Ali Za'i.

'Abdul-Mâlîk Mujâhid

Servant of Qur'ân and *Sunnah*

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Note: One thing I want to mention is that in these collections, the original Arabic texts of the *Alḥadīth* contain complete chain of narrators while in translation, for the sake of simplicity, only the name of the first narrator is mentioned who narrated the *Ḥadīth* from the Prophet ﷺ.

As regards the collection, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, the readers will find three numbers with each *Ḥadīth*. The first one in brackets is introduced by Darussalam. It begins with the first *Ḥadīth* and continues to the last. The second number denotes the *Ḥadīth* number according to the various books mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. If this number is to be written for reference, then the name of the book must be written with it, for example if you see chapter 2, it is cited as: [2]1-(1). Here the [2] is serial # introduced by Darussalam, '1' is the first *Ḥadīth* of this chapter, and '(1)' is the number given by Fuwâd 'Abdul Bâqi. This number is used mainly while giving references like, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 3; or *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Ḥadīth* : 3. In this system, with each new *Ḥadīth*, Fuwâd 'Abdul-Bâqi allotted a new number, while the other versions of the same *Ḥadīth* with different chains have been given without any number.

A Life Sketch of Imâm Muslim

Preserving the Revelation

Allâh, the Most High, sent Revelation through His Messengers to different peoples at different times for their guidance, but none of their peoples clung to the Revelation sent to them tenaciously enough to be able to keep it in its pristine purity. Through the entire history of mankind, none other than Muslims guarded, by grace of Allâh, the Revelation received by them and preserved it intact, both by committing it to memory and in writing. In addition to the Revelation—the Qur'ân, Muslims did the same with *Alḥadīth* of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ which is also known as Unrecited Revelation. In order to protect and keep it safe, they evolved a unique system that made any type of tampering or interpolation impossible. This system of guarding and preserving, evolved by grace of Allâh, rules out, by its very nature, every likelihood of omission or neglect.

Preserving The Qur'ân (Revelation Recited)

Allâh said:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَنَاطِقُونَ﴾

“Verily, We, it is We Who have sent down the *Dhikr* (i.e., the Qur'ân) and surely We will guard it (from corruption).”^[1]

The Qur'ân was revealed to a Messenger who was unlettered. His people (*Ummah*), too, were mostly unlettered. The Qur'ân was revealed, little by little, a few Verses each time, making it easy to commit it to writing as well as memorizing. Moreover, since this Revealed Guidance was for all mankind and for all times, one could not benefit by it fully or act by it unless it was easy to remember and easy to understand. So Allâh made it easy:

﴿وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدْرِكٍ﴾

“And We have indeed made the Qur'ân easy to understand and remember; then is there any that will remember (or receive admonition) ?”^[2]

[1] *Sûrat Al-Hijr* 15:9.

[2] *Sûrat Al-Qamar* 54:22.

Just as the Qur'ân, before it was revealed to mankind, had been on honoured, exalted, Preserved Tablet in the hands of noble and righteous angels, so did the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, charge revered, righteous and honest scribes, memorizers and reciters from among his own Companions to preserve it.^[1]

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, promised, in clear terms, a similar reward to the later generations: The similitude of the one who recites the Qur'ân and takes care of it is that of one who keeps the company of honoured, righteous scribes (i.e. angels).^[2] There were among the foremost Companions as well as among other Companions who would recite the Qur'ân from memory. Later on, when Abû Bakr ؓ prepared the canonical copy of the Scripture, unanimously acknowledged to be correct as to script, spelling and arrangement of chapters, he called memorizers and reciters of Qur'ân from among the Companions to bear witness as to the authenticity and correctness of each chapter and each Verse and each word of the Qur'ân. It is to be noted that the script they used to write the Qur'ân with, has ever endured across centuries to this day, even though their style of writing differs sometimes from the standard principles of writing in vogue today, yet another manifestation of popular reverence for the scribes of the Divine Revelation.

In order to transcribe the Revelation with integrity, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, trained his scribes. Zaid bin Thâbit ؓ says: "I used to write down the revealed Verses....when I had finished writing, he ﷺ would ask me to read it to him. If the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, detected an error, he would correct it. Only then did I communicate it to others."^[3]

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, also forbade scribes writing anything they heard from him into the text of the Qur'ân. The purpose was to keep the Qur'ân pure and unmixed, clear of extraneous things.^[4]

The Qur'ân was recited again and again, prayer after prayer, before the congregation of worshippers. The Companions used to recite it themselves as well as hear it from each other. This practice began from the very first day of the Revelation and has been continuing ever since. Even today there are hundreds of thousands of people who remember the Qur'ân by heart and recite it in public day and night. This rules out any doubt as to the accuracy of the Qur'ân. There is absolutely no likelihood of any addition or diminution, tampering or alteration or interpolation in the text of the Noble Qur'ân as it was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ.

[1] See *Jâmi'ul-Bayân* 30/69.

[2] *Saḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī: Ḥadīth* 4937.

[3] *Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabeer* by At-Tabarānī 5/142, *Ḥadīth* no. 3889.

[4] *Saḥīḥ Muslim: Ḥadīth* no. 7510.

More astonishing than these measures were those that Allâh Himself took to secure the Qur'ân. In the whole cosmos an intensive network of tight security was laid by divine command. Right from heaven to earth, angels were placed on guard to prevent devils from eavesdropping or overhearing until it reached the heart of Allâh's Messenger. The *jinn* (genii) were made powerless to do any mischief, according to their own confession:

﴿وَإِنَّا لَمَنَّا لَسَمَاءٌ فَوَجَدْنَاهَا مُلْتَمِسَةً حَرَسًا شَدِيدًا وَشِهَابًا ﴿٨﴾ وَإِنَّا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقْعَدًا لِّلشَّمْعِ فَمَنْ يَسْتَمِعِ لَهَا يُصَلِّتْ فَسَأَلْنَا مَن رَّصَدَا ۗ﴾

"And we have sought to reach the heaven; but found it filled with stern guards and flaming fires. And verily, we used to sit there in stations, to (steal) hearing, but any who listens now will find a flaming fire watching him in ambush...."^[1]

At the end of the chapter of *Jinn*, Allâh says:

﴿عَلَيْكُمْ اللَّعْنَةُ فَلَا يُظَاهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا ﴿١٦﴾ إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِن رَّسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَسْمَعُ مِمَّا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصَدًا ﴿١٧﴾ لِّيَعْلَمَ أَن قَدِ ابْتَلَوْنَا رِيسَلَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَهَاظِرًّا بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ وَأَحْصَىٰ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَدَدًا ۗ﴾

"(He Alone is) the All-Knower of the *Ghaib* (Unseen), and He reveals to none His *Ghaib* (Unseen). Except to a Messenger (from mankind) whom He has chosen (He informs him of the Unseen as much as He likes), and then He makes a band of watching guards (angels) to march before him and behind him. He (Allâh) protects them (the Messengers)], till He sees that they (the Messengers) have conveyed the Messages of their Lord (Allâh). And He (Allâh) surrounds all that which is with them, and He (Allâh) keeps count of all things (i.e. He knows the exact number of everything)."^[2]

Preservation of *Ḥadīth* (Revelation Unrecited)

As for the *Ḥadīth* (which is, Revelation Unrecited), Allâh charged the *Ummah* to preserve it. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, said: "May Allâh make the man flourish who hears from me a *Ḥadīth*, commits it to memory and then communicates it (to others)."^[3]

[1] *Sūrat Al-Jinn* 72:8,9.

[2] *Sūrat Al-Jinn* 72:26-28.

[3] *Jâmi' At-Tirmidhī, Ḥadīth* no. 2656.

No *Ummah* in history has so successfully preserved the sayings of its Messenger as the Muslims have. Indeed, none has given a fraction of that care to its revealed book which the Muslims gave to the preservation of the sayings and actions of their Messenger ﷺ. In the whole history of mankind, there has never ever been an example similar to the system evolved by Muslims to preserve the *Ḥadīth* and *Sunan* of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

The Verses of the Qur'ān were committed both to memory and to writing as they were revealed but the sayings of Allāh's Messenger were committed to memory only and, later, communicated to those not present at the moment. Documents and necessary instructions were written for those who needed them, at the Messenger of Allāh's bidding. For example, Imām Bukhārī relates that Abū Shah ﷺ, a Companion living in Yemen, requested the Messenger for a written copy of the sermon he had delivered on the day of the conquest of Makkah dealing with the inviolability of Makkah and with the blood-money. The Messenger said: "Write (it) down for Abū Shah."^[1]

When the system of writing the Qur'ān had developed well and stabilized, the Companions were allowed to note down all the sayings of the Messenger of Allāh, ﷺ, without distinction. 'Abdullāh bin 'Amr ﷺ narrates: "I used to note down each and every thing I heard from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, and liked to memorize it. The Quraysh said to me: 'You write down everything you hear from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. The Messenger of Allāh is a human being. He speaks both in anger and pleasure'. So I stopped writing. I told the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, about it. He replied: 'Write. By the One in Whose Hands my soul is, nothing comes out from my mouth except the truth.'"^[2]

Basis of the *Ummah's* greatness and honour

The Muslims broke free from the shackles of color, race and tribal prejudices and began to organize themselves into a great brotherhood which, in the course of two or three decades, became a super power of their times. They were the very people who had been paupers and wretched just a few years ago but were now the rulers of the most fertile regions of the world. Abū Hurairah ﷺ, the most prolific narrator of *Ḥadīth*, says about himself: 'I grew up as an orphan, migrated as a poor man, labored for Bint Ghazwān in exchange for food enough to fill my stomach and a pair of shoes; I would sing to quicken the pace of camels as they rode on and gather wood as they dismounted. Praise be to Allāh who made faith the basis (of honor and greatness) and Abū Hurairah a

[1] *Saḥīh Al-Bukhārī, Ḥadīth* no. 6880, *Saḥīh Muslim: Ḥadīth* no. 3305

[2] *Al-Mausū'ah Al-Ḥadīthiyya (Musnad Ahmad)* 11/59. The chain of narration is authentic and its narrators are trustworthy.

chieftain.^[1] He was also appointed governor of Al-Madīnah and during the reign of Marwān bin Al-Ḥakam worked as his deputy in Al-Madīnah.

It is quite obvious that this great revolution in human history, inspired by unparalleled wisdom enshrined in the Qur'ān, owed itself to the lifestyle of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, who had set a model for his Companions. The Qur'ān and the sayings and actions of Allāh's Messenger became an inalienable part of the Companions' lives. They were given the responsibility to remember the *Ḥadīth* and communicate them to others. Hence, in this new social setup, the most honored among them were those who modelled their lives on the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*, and taught others the same. Each Companion became a repository of knowledge, a virtual academy by himself. Masses thronged to them, listened to *Ḥadīth*, and sought guidance and knowledge from them. The closer a Companion was to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, or the more one remembered his sayings, the greater his stature as a reference-guide.

Many a person eager to seek knowledge would travel long distances and come from far-off places to the Mothers of the Believers, especially 'Aishah ﷺ, to hear *Ḥadīth* from them and receive answers to their many questions. Great care was taken not to let anyone, even if he be a Companion, relate a *Ḥadīth* on the authority of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ, unless it was *Mahfūz* (Conforming).^[2] For example, Abū Mūsā Al-Ash'arī ﷺ narrated that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, had said that one should seek permission to enter a house and, in case one does not receive a response, one should turn back. 'Umar ﷺ asked him to bring a witness. Abū Mūsā went to a place where the *Anṣār* used to gather. He asked them if anyone of them could bear witness. They offered to send the youngest of them, Abū Sa'eed Al-Khudhri ﷺ. He came and testified that the *Ḥadīth* was genuine.^[3]

It is to be noted that 'Umar ﷺ did not doubt Abū Mūsā's narration, but he did so as a matter of principle and precaution.

Even in the times of monarchy following the era of the Caliphate, the Companions would narrate the *Ḥadīth* of Allāh's Messenger to the common masses as well as the rulers. None could dare restrain preachers admonishing people through the sayings of the Messenger of Allāh because the society, especially the Companions, could never keep quiet over any attempt to hide the sayings of Allāh's Messenger, come what may. Abū Dharr Al-Ghiffārī ﷺ, on seeing the rulers' dislike for those monitoring their conduct or narrating the *Ḥadīth* of Allāh's Messenger, said openly: "If you place a sharp-cutting sword on

[1] *Tadhkiratul-Ḥuffāz*: 1/29.

[2] *Ḥadīth* whose narrator is trustworthy and does not contradict another narrator more trustworthily than himself. It is the antonym of *Shāḥih* (Contradicting).

[3] *Saḥīh Al-Bukhārī*, no. 2062.

it (pointing to his nape) and I felt that I could narrate a *Ḥadīth* I had heard from Allāh's Messenger ﷺ before the sword could pierce my neck, I would do so.^[1]

Zeal to acquire knowledge

Faith depends on the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. In those times, knowledge was synonymous with the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. Moreover, learned scholars were honored and revered. They were the polestars and reference-guides for the people, a fact that produced a universal impulse to acquire knowledge. Towards the end of the first century and the beginning of the second century of the *Hijra* calendar, caravans of *Ḥadīth* students on their way to centers of learning were a common sight. Mosques and houses of teachers became schools of learning. Sometimes, students numbered hundreds and even more. Pen, inkpot and paper in hands, their occupation was to hear *Aḥādīth* and note them down. Often a teacher would narrate *Aḥādīth* from memory while someone, often a pupil, would have also a transcript copy of the *Aḥādīth* in front of him. In this process of learning, memorization and writing went together, the latter a means of ratification. In this process, the listener would write the word *Ḥaddathana* (he narrated to us) followed by the name of the teacher followed by the chain of narrators (*Sanad*).

Sometimes, a person other than the teacher used to read out the collection of *Aḥādīth*. In this case, the listener would write the *Ḥadīth* beginning with the word *Akharana* (he informed us).

If a teacher spotted a talented student, he would give him permission to narrate his collection of *Aḥādīth* without his having listened to all those *Aḥādīth* first. This form of permission was known as *Munāwalah* or *Ijāzah* (licence or permission). In such a case, he would narrate or write those *Aḥādīth*, beginning the chain of narration with the word *Anba'ana* (he informed us).^[2] *Ijāzah* was a kind of permission, oral or written, given by teacher to student authorizing him to relate some particular book or books of the teacher or his Sound narrations. According to the system of *Munāwalah* or *Arḍh*, an expert *Ḥadīth* memorizer, in order to benefit by the teacher, would present a written collection (of *Aḥādīth*) to him. The teacher would review and check it and, when he was sure it contained only the *Aḥādīth* narrated by him, would say to the student: 'I know the collection you gave me. I recognized its contents. They are my own narrations from my teachers (*Sheikhs*). You may narrate them on my behalf.' Imām Ḥākim says that the *Ḥadīth* scholars (*Muḥaddith*) of Al-Madīnah, Makkah, Kūfa, Syria, Egypt, Khorāsān and other places gave this kind of permission to their students.

[1] *Sahīh Al-Bukhārī, Kitābul-'Ilm, bābul-'Ilm qablal-qaul wal 'amal.*

[2] *Jāmi'ul-Usool li Ibn Kathīr: 39.*

Imām Mālik was once asked whether he had directly listened to all the *Aḥādīth* he narrated. He replied: 'Some of them were those I listened to directly from my *Sheikhs*, and some I received through *'Arḍh* (*Munāwalah*). Anyhow, we believe that the latter is in no way inferior in quality than the former.'^[1]

Perfect system of preservation

All these methods of learning and teaching *Aḥādīth* prove that, right from the beginning, great care was taken to safeguard and preserve the *Aḥādīth*. Even during the era of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ, measures were taken to preserve *Aḥādīth*, the Unrecited Revelation, by writing as well as by memorization. There is no nation on the whole earth that can match the way the Muslims memorize the Qur'ān. Great scholars of the world are wonder-struck how the Qur'ān remained preserved in the memory of countless men across centuries. Today those who remember the Qur'ān by heart number in the millions. There has never been a tradition in any community to memorize their basic book of faith nor did they ever have the courage to do so. It is the Muslim people alone whose ancestors evolved a system of preserving the Qur'ān as well as *Aḥādīth* over the centuries, a system that inspires awe and respect.

How the Companions preserved the sayings of Allāh's Messenger perfectly well is best illustrated by an example. Of all the Companions, the most prolific narrator of *Aḥādīth* was Abū Hurairah who died in 58 AH. Young Companions like Ibn 'Umar, Ibn 'Abbās, Jābir and Anas ﷺ narrated *Aḥādīth* on the authority of Abū Hurairah and, according to Imām-Bukhārī, the *Tāba'in* (followers of the Companions) who narrated from him during his lifetime numbered over eight hundred.^[2] Among his pupils was Hammām bin Munabbah who penned down all the narrations of Abū Hurairah. If we compare the collection of Hammām with the authentic *Aḥādīth* narrated by others at different times in the course of half a century, we find no difference between them. For as long as half a century, Abū Hurairah kept on repeating his *Aḥādīth* from his memory in the same words.

Comparison and Evaluation of Aḥādīth

This system of memorizing and writing continued to strengthen further and still further over the years. The *Tāba'in* heard the *Aḥādīth* from the Companions, memorized them, and recited them to groups of students who had themselves listened those *Aḥādīth* from the different pupils of the Companions and *Tāba'in*. They would compare the wordings of different narrators and verify them. In the

[1] *Jāmi'ul-Usool li Ibn Kathīr, 1:43.*

[2] *Tadhkiratul-Ḥuffāz 1/28, 29.*