

Was Shaykh al-Albaanee the first to classify some Hadeeth in al-Bukhaaree as weak?

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Translated by Rasheed ibn Estes Barbee <http://mtws.posterous.com/was-shaykh-al-albani-the-first-to-classify-so>

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Questioner:

O our Shaykh the question is; was the Shaykh preceded by anyone in declaring some Hadeeth in Saheeh Bukhaaree to be weak and collecting them in a book. And if this has occurred were you preceded by some of the scholars in that? We would appreciate references may Allaah reward you with good.

Shaykh al-Albaanee (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)¹:

Define the demonstrative, “in that”; in what? Because your question contains two things. Have you been preceded in classifying some Hadeeth in Bukhaaree as weak and did you collect this in a book? So in your question, “have I been preceded in that”, what do you mean? Have I been preceded in classifying some Hadeeth in Bukhaaree as weak or have I been preceded in authoring a book containing these weak Hadeeth?

Questioner: Both

Shaykh al-Albaanee (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ):

(Laughs) Both? As for if I was preceded in classifying some Hadeeth found in Bukhaaree as weak then this is a reality which is obligatory to acknowledge and it is not permissible to deny it; and there are numerous reasons for this.

First of all; all the Muslims whether they are from the scholars, the students of knowledge or the ignorant Muslims; they are all in agreement that there is no one who is infallible in this religion except the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم)².

And from this we also understand another undeniable conclusion and that is, any book that crosses the mind of a Muslim, or any book title that he hears of, even before he reads the manuscript, it is incumbent that he must have firmly established in his mind that this book will surely contain some errors in it. Because the aforementioned belief states that no one will obtain infallibility except for the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

¹ (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him

² (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him

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And on this note it has been narrated that Imaam Shaafi'ee (رَجْمَةُ اللَّهِ) said, "Allaah has refused to perfect any book except for His own."

And this is the truth, it is not debatable. So this is the first affair, this is the principle.

As for the applied science concerning this matter; then we, due to the virtue of Allaah upon us and upon the people, but most of the people do not know, but most of the people are not grateful. Allaah the Exalted has given me firmness in the study of Hadeeth...its foundation matters, subsidiary matters, its criticisms and collections to the extent that I became grounded with a high level in this science due to the virtue of Allaah and His mercy. Also I know the authentic Hadeeths from the weak, from the fabricated due to my studies of this science. I applied this study to some of the Hadeeths that appear in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree. Thus I found that the result of this study that there are some Hadeeths that are not considered to be on the grade of Hasan much less the level of Saheeh, in Saheeh Al Bukhaaree not to mention Saheeh Muslim.

This is my answer for that which relates to me, myself. As for that which relates to other than me, from that which came in your question; has anyone proceeded me? Then I say: All praises belong to Allaah. I have been preceded by many people who are more grounded and more knowledgeable than me concerning this noble science; and preceding me by almost one thousand years.

Imaam Daraqutnee and others have scrutinised Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim concerning dozens of Hadeeths. As for me, then I did not reach the extent of criticising dozens of Hadeeths. That is because during this time I am not able to devote myself to criticising the Hadeeths in al-Bukhaaree then the Hadeeths in Muslim, that is because we are in greater need to scrutinise the Hadeeths found in the four Sunans not to mention the chains of narration, terminology and the like in order to ascertain the authentic from the weak. As for al-Bukhaaree and Muslim then they both performed the task of purifying the Hadeeths that are collected in their two books, from the hundreds of thousands Hadeeths. And this effort was extremely tremendous. For this reason, it is not from knowledge or wisdom that I focus on criticising Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim and leave alone the Hadeeths found in the four Sunans and other than them, where it is not known if they are authentic or weak.

But during my knowledge based research I passed over some Hadeeths in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim or in one of them and it was revealed to me that there are some Hadeeths that are weak. But whoever is in doubt about what I judge concerning some Hadeeths then return to the explanation of Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and he will find a great deal of things criticised by al-Haafidh Ahmad ibn Hajr al-'Asqalane³; the one who is rightfully called the leader of the believers Hadeeth. The one who I believe; and I believe

³ Haafidh Ibn Hajr al-Asqalane (رَجْمَةُ اللَّهِ) wrote the famous explanation of Saheeh al-Bukhaaree called Fath ul-Baaree.

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everyone who participates in the science will agree with me, that no woman gave birth to the likes of him after him. This is Imaam Ahmad ibn Hajr al-'Asqalaneer, he clarifies during his explanation many mistakes in the Hadeeths of al-Bukhaaree. He not only address that which is not found in the Hadeeths of Saheeh Muslim rather (he also addresses) what appears in some of the reports and some of the chain of narrations.

The criticism found in the Hadeeths of Saheeh al-Bukhaaree is sometimes related to the entire Hadeeth, meaning it is said; this Hadeeth is weak. And sometimes the criticism is concerning a portion of the Hadeeth. The origin of the Hadeeth is authentic but there is a part of it that is not authentic.

An example of the first type is the Hadeeth of ibn Abbass; he said: "The Prophet, (عليه الصلاة والسلام)⁴, married Maimoonah while in a state of Ihraam." This Hadeeth is not from the Hadeeths which is only found in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and not Saheeh Muslim, rather they both agreed upon the narration of the Hadeeth in their books. And the reason for this, is the report of this Hadeeth comes from the narrator and he is Abdullah ibn Abbass, and he is morally impeccable. Thus the chain of narration is authentic; no one is able to criticise its narrator. Whereas there are other Hadeeth where there is room to criticise the Hadeeth just from the standpoint of the narrator.

An example from the men of al-Bukhaaree, there is a man named: Fulaih bin Sulaiman. Ibn Hajr described him, in his book al-Taqreeeb, as Sadooq (one who is a level below reliable) with a bad memory. Therefore if this person narrates a Hadeeth in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, as a lone narrator and it is not supported by a Mutabi'ah (Two or more Hadeeth which are the same, narrated by the same Companion, while the rest of the men in the chain are different) nor it is supported by a Shaahid (Two or more Hadeeth which are the same narrated by different Companions) then his Hadeeth remains at the level of weak, that which can be strengthen with a Mutabi'ah or a Shaahid.

As for the Hadeeth of Maimoonah, that the Messenger of Allaah (عليه الصلاة والسلام), married her while he was in a state of Ihram, there is no room to criticise the chain of narration due to the lone narration as in the case of Fulaih bin Sulaiman for example. No, all of the people in the chain of narration are reliable and trustworthy. For that reason you do not find those who criticise this Hadeeth from the scholars, who preceded us by generations, that they found any angle to criticise this Hadeeth except concerning the first narrator in the Hadeeth, ibn Abbass and he is a noble Companion.

They said this was a surmise from ibn Abbass and that is because he was young; from one standpoint. And from another standpoint, in his narration his contradicted the person in the Hadeeth, meaning the wife of the Prophet (عليه الصلاة والسلام), who was Maimoonah. As it has been authentically narrated from her the Prophet (عليه الصلاة والسلام), married her while neither

⁴ (عليه الصلاة والسلام) (alayhi as-Salaat wa Salaam) Upon him prayer and peace

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of them was in a state of Ihram. Therefore this Hadeeth was the surmise of the first narrator, him being ibn Abbass. Thus this Hadeeth is weak. And it is as you see; a limited number of words. “He married Maimoonah while while is a state of Ihram.” Four words (in the original Arabic) “He married Maimoonah while while is a state of Ihram.”

Similar to this Hadeeth and perhaps it is longer, there is another example in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree.

The second category: The Hadeeth could be in its origin authentic, but one of the narrators erred by inserting in the text a sentence that was not from the Hadeeth of the Prophet, (عليه الصلاة والسلام).

An example of that is the well-known Hadeeth in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree that the Prophet, (عليه الصلاة والسلام), said: “**Verily my nation will come on the Day of Judgment with bright streaks of light from the traces of wudoo.**”

Up until this point the Hadeeth is authentic, and it has many supporting Hadeeths. One of the narrators in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree added: “Thus whoever is able to extend his streaks then let him do so.” Al Haafidh bin Hajr al-Asqalaneer, and Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, and his Shaykh ibn al-Taymeeyah, and Al-Haafidh al-Mundhiree, and other scholars have said this addition was inserted and it is not from the speech of the Messenger of Allaah, (عليه الصلاة والسلام); rather it is from the speech of Aboo Hurairah.

Thus the answer is complete in reference to the first condition, meaning I criticised some Hadeeths and I have been proceeded by many Imaams. As for did I or someone other than me author a book (surrounding this topic) then I did not author a book. As for other than me, then they have authored books, but we are not able to mention a book today in this regard. This is the answer to what you asked.