



Research Article

Analysis of the Hadith on the Duration of the Revelation of the Sacred Scriptures in Al-Qur'an, Surah Al-Baqarah (2:185), as Presented in Al-Durr Al-Manthur Fi Al-Tafsir Bi Al-Ma'tsur

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Abstract. This study aims to examine the hadith cited by Imam al-Suyūṭī in al-Durr al-Manthūr when interpreting the verse, (Syahru ramadhanalladzi unzila fihi-l Qur'an...){Qur'an 2:185}, which relates to the timing of the revelation of the divine scriptures during Ramadan. The significance of this topic lies

in the fact that al-Suyūṭī often reports narrations without explicitly judging their authenticity, which necessitates verification of their chains of transmission before relying on them for scholarly inference. Accordingly, the research problem centers on determining the reliability of this hadith in terms of both chain and text, and clarifying its scholarly status based on the principles of hadith authentication and criticism. The study employs a descriptive-analytical library-based methodology, utilizing tools of hadith verification, isnād analysis, and textual criticism, with reference to primary sources such as Musnad Ahmad, the tafsirs of al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr, as well as works on narrators and hidden defects. The findings indicate that all transmission routes converge at 'Imrān ibn Dāwar, from Qatāda, from Abū al-Maliḥ, from Wāthila, and that the isnād is sound at the level of ḥasan li-dhātihi (good in itself), elevated to ḥasan li-ghayrihi (good due to corroboration) through multiple routes and scholarly acceptance. The text itself aligns with the Qur'an and other authentic hadiths. The study recommends that every narration be critically examined before use in exegesis, and calls for broader analytical studies of other exegetical reports, combining isnād and matn analysis, while training students of knowledge in the tools of hadith verification and the use of biographical and critical works.

Keywords: Hadith, Authentication, Ramadan, Revelation, Al-Manthur

INTRODUCTION

The Noble Prophetic Sunnah occupies the second rank in the hierarchy of Islamic legislation after the Qur'an. Through it, the Qur'an is explained in detail, its general statements are specified, and its unrestricted commands are qualified. A proper understanding of Islamic rulings cannot be achieved without referring to the Sunnah.¹ However, the vast number of hadiths scattered across various works, along with the differing criteria of their compilers regarding acceptance and transmission, necessitates that researchers in this field verify the origin of every hadith they cite and identify its location in the primary sources before relying on it for inference or argumentation.² From this need arose the discipline of *takhrīj al-ḥadīth* (hadith authentication), which scholars have defined as the process of indicating the place of a hadith in its original sources that transmitted it with its chain of narration, followed—when necessary—by an assessment of its rank and authenticity.³

It is well known among students of Hadith sciences that the practice of *takhrīj* (hadith authentication) plays a crucial role in guiding the course of scholarly research in this field. Through it, the original source of a hadith is identified, its multiple transmission routes are collected, and variations among its narrations are examined. This enables the researcher to assess the chain of transmission and the text of the hadith in terms of authenticity and weakness.⁴ Moreover, *takhrīj* opens wide horizons for researchers to explore the judgments of critical scholars regarding a single hadith, and to uncover hidden defects (*ʿilal*) that only become apparent

¹ Muḥammad 'Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb, *Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth: 'Ulūmuḥu wa-Muṣṭalaḥuḥu*, (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1409 AH/1989 CE), pp. 27–28.

² 'Abd al-Mahdī ibn 'Abd al-Qādir ibn 'Abd al-Hādī, *Ṭuruq Takhrīj Ḥadīth Rasūl Allāh*, (Cairo: Dār al-ʿItisām, 1987), pp. 9–11.

³ Maḥmūd al-Ṭaḥḥān, *Uṣūl al-Takhrīj wa-Dirāsāt al-Asānīd*, 3rd ed., (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Ma'ārif, 1991), p. 10.

⁴ Nūr al-Dīn 'Itr, *Manhaj al-Naqd fī 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, 3rd ed., (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1997), pp. 45–47.

through gathering its chains and comparing them.⁵ For this reason, *takhrīj* has been regarded as an indispensable pillar for any researcher undertaking a rigorous academic study of hadith texts, whether in a thesis or in a peer-reviewed article.

From this issue, the researcher of this paper seeks to present a clear explanation of the concept of *takhrīj al-hadith* (hadith authentication) in order to make this discipline more accessible. The study then outlines the most important methodologies of *takhrīj* employed by both early and later scholars in tracing the sources of hadiths. This serves as a prelude to applying those methodologies practically to a single hadith, which is taken as a model for this research. In this way, the reader can observe how the theoretical steps of *takhrīj* are transferred into actual scholarly practice.

The hadith selected by the researcher is the narration recorded by Imam Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī in his work *al-Durr al-Manthūr fī al-Tafsīr bi al-Ma'thūr*, in connection with his interpretation of the verse, (*Syahru ramadhanalladzi unzila fihi-l Qur'an...*){Qur'an 2:185}.⁶ In his commentary on this verse, al-Suyūṭī cites a report concerning the times of the revelation of the divine scriptures during the month of Ramadan. The text of the narration is as follows: "*The scrolls of Abraham were revealed on the first night of Ramadan; the Torah was revealed after six days of Ramadan had passed; the Gospel was revealed after thirteen days of Ramadan had passed; the Psalms were revealed after eighteen days of Ramadan had passed; and the Qur'an was revealed after twenty-four days of Ramadan had passed.*"⁷

In summary, the meaning of this narration is that the scrolls of Abraham (peace be upon him) were revealed on the first night of Ramadan; the Torah was revealed after six nights had passed; the Gospel was revealed after thirteen nights; the Psalms were revealed after eighteen nights; and the Noble Qur'an was revealed after twenty-four nights of the month. However, the mere presence of this report in a tafsīr work such as *al-Durr al-Manthūr* does not in itself indicate whether it is authentic or weak. This is because al-Suyūṭī, may God have mercy on him, customarily included narrations in this book with abbreviated or sometimes omitted chains of transmission, without passing judgment on them, relying instead on attributing them to the compilers of the original musnad collections.⁸

Hence, there arises an urgent need to authenticate this narration with precise scholarly rigor, by returning to its original sources, examining its multiple chains of transmission where available, and determining its status in terms of authenticity or weakness, in accordance with the established methodologies of hadith verification. On this basis, the following section of this paper will provide a detailed terminological definition of *takhrīj al-ḥadīth*, then present its various methodologies, before proceeding to apply these methods step by step to the narration, with the aim of identifying its original source and establishing its scholarly rank.

⁵ Al-Ṭaḥḥān, *Uṣūl al-Takhrīj*..., pp. 15–16.

⁶ Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Durr al-Manthūr fī al-Tafsīr bi'l-Ma'thūr*, vol. 2, (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1993), p. 66.

⁷ Al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*..., vol. 2, p. 67.

⁸ Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Dhahabī, *Al-Tafsīr wa'l-Mufasssīrūn*, vol. 1, (Cairo: Maktabat Wahbah, 2000), pp. 258–260.

METHOD

This study employs the method of library research, which involves obtaining all data and information through the review of works relevant to the subject of the study. Library research was chosen because the topic concerns hadiths found in the major hadith collections and classical works of tafsir. Accordingly, the process of data collection is conducted through examining documents, manuscripts, and heritage texts, as well as scholarly literature related to hadith and tafsir. This approach enables the researcher to carry out an in-depth study of both the chains of transmission (*isnād*) and the texts (*matn*), in addition to surveying the diverse scholarly opinions regarding the reliability of the hadiths under investigation—without the need for fieldwork.⁹

From a methodological perspective, this study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach combined with a qualitative orientation. The descriptive approach is employed to clarify the systematic process of transmitting hadith, the pathways of the chains of narration, the identities of the transmitters, and the formulation of hadiths as recorded in various collections. The analytical approach is applied to examine and evaluate the reliability of both the chains and the texts, based on the principles of hadith terminology (*ilm muṣṭalaḥ al-ḥadīth*) and the science of criticism and validation (*ilm al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl*). The qualitative orientation is adopted because this research does not rely on quantitative data; rather, it focuses on the scholarly interpretation of textual data derived from hadith sources and supporting references.¹⁰

The principal methodology employed in this study is the method of *takhrij al-ḥadīth* (hadith authentication). This is a scholarly approach aimed at tracing the original source of a hadith in the foundational hadith collections, identifying its chain of transmission, and determining its reliability based on analysis of both the isnād (chain) and the matn (text). Through this method, the study investigates the narration concerning the duration of the revelation of the Qur'an and other sacred scriptures such as the Psalms, the Torah, and the Gospel. This narration, which relates to Qur'an 2:185, is recorded in *Musnad Ahmad*. The objective of this research is to identify the original source of the hadith, examine variations in its wording, determine the number of transmission chains, and explore the relationship between the different narrations found across various hadith collections.¹¹

After completing the process of verification, the study continues with the method of *al-i'tibār fī al-isnād* (comparative analysis of chains of transmission). This involves collecting and comparing all chains of narration of the hadith as reported by different transmitters. The purpose of this method is to determine whether the hadith possesses corroborating narrations (*mutābi'*) or supporting reports (*shāhid*), or whether it is transmitted through a single chain only. In addition, *al-i'tibār* seeks to

⁹ Mistika Zaid, *Library Research Methodology*, (Jakarta: Obor Foundation, 2018), pp. 3–7.

¹⁰ Lexy J. Moleong, *Qualitative Research Methodology*, revised edition, (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2019), pp. 6–11.

¹¹ Maḥmūd al-Ṭaḥḥān, *Uṣūl al-Taḥrīr wa-Dirāsāt al-Asānīd*, (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Ma'ārif, 1996), pp. 9–32.

reveal the relationships among the various chains, thereby showing the extent to which each chain strengthens the others (*ta'awud al-asānīd*). Thus, the evaluation of the hadith's reliability does not rely on a single chain alone but rather considers the entire network of available transmissions.¹²

The next stage is isnād criticism (evaluation of the chain of transmission), which is the process of assessing the authenticity of a hadith's chain according to the principles established by hadith scholars. The isnād is analyzed with reference to the five essential conditions of a sound hadith: continuity of the chain, integrity of the transmitters, accuracy in memorization or documentation, freedom from irregularities (*shudhūdh*), and absence of hidden defects (*'illah*). To obtain an objective evaluation of each transmitter, this study relies on the classical works of *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* (biographical criticism), such as *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, and *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, which provide biographical details and scholarly assessments of the credibility of each narrator.¹³

In addition to isnād criticism, this study also applies matn criticism (evaluation of the text), as an integral part of the process of hadith assessment. The text is analyzed to ensure that its content does not conflict with the principles of the Qur'an, other authentic hadiths, sound reason, or accepted historical facts. Furthermore, this research compares variations in wording (*ikhtilāf al-alfāz*) across different narrations to determine whether additions, omissions, or changes in phrasing may affect the understanding of the hadith's meaning. Thus, the evaluation of a hadith is not based solely on the strength of its chain of transmission but also considers the overall soundness of its content.¹⁴

The data used in this study consist of both primary and secondary sources. The primary data include hadith collections that directly contain narrations regarding the duration of the revelation of the Qur'an and other sacred scriptures, most notably *Musnad Ahmad*, as well as the tafsīr work *al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm* by Imam Ibn Kathīr, which serve as the main references for this research. These two works are considered fundamental sources in the process of tracing chains of transmission, identifying variations among narrations, and analyzing the texts of the hadiths under investigation.¹⁵

The secondary data consist of references that support the analysis of both the chain and the text, particularly works related to *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* (biographical criticism), hadith terminology, and the methodology of hadith evaluation. Among the sources used are *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl* by al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* and *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb* by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, his *Nuzhat al-Nazar*, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'* by al-Dhahabī, and *Tadrīb al-Rāwī* by al-Suyūṭī, in addition to numerous scholarly articles and academic journals addressing the methodology of hadith authentication. All of

¹² Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *Nuzhat al-Nazar fī Tawḍīḥ Nukhbat al-Afkār*, (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2006), pp. 97–112.

¹³ Nūr al-Dīn 'Itr, *Manhaj al-Naqd fī 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1997), pp. 73–118.

¹⁴ Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Adabī, *Manhaj Naqd al-Naṣṣ 'inda 'Ulamā' al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī*, (Beirut: Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadidah, 1983), pp. 21–63.

¹⁵ Ismā'īl ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm*, ed. Sāmī ibn Muḥammad Salāmah, (Riyadh: Dār Tayyibah, 1999), 1:502–503.

these sources were employed as the theoretical foundation for analyzing the reliability of the chains and texts, thereby ensuring that the findings of this research possess academic validity and can be defended.¹⁶

RESULT & DISCUSSION

Hadith Authentication: Linguistic and Technical Definitions¹⁷

In the Arabic language, the term *takhrīj* carries several meanings, including derivation or inference, as noted in the lexicon: “*al-istikhrāj* and *al-ikhtirāj* mean deduction.” It can also signify training and guidance, as in the expression “*kharraja al-mas’alah*,” meaning he directed it and gave it a proper explanation. Another usage refers to bringing forth or making manifest, which is the sense adopted by hadith scholars. Thus, when they say “*akhrajahu al-Bukhārī*,” it means that al-Bukhārī presented the hadith and made it known to people by citing its chain of transmission, i.e., the narrators through whom the hadith was conveyed. From this, the original usage of the term *takhrīj* among hadith scholars came to denote the act of showing the source of a hadith—its point of transmission—by listing its narrators.

Among hadith scholars, the term *takhrīj* is used with three principal meanings. First, it is synonymous with *ikhraj*(reporting), meaning the narration of a hadith and the mention of its source, as noted by Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ in his *‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*. Second, it refers to extracting hadiths from various compilations and narrating them, as defined by al-Sakhāwī in *Fath al-Mughīth*: “*Takhrīj* is the process by which a hadith scholar brings forth hadiths from the depths of collections, shaykh-lists, and books... commenting on them and attributing them to those who transmitted them.” Third, it denotes identifying the original sources of a hadith and attributing it to them. This meaning was highlighted by al-Manāwī in *Fayḍ al-Qadīr* when explaining al-Suyūṭī’s words, and it has become the most prevalent usage among hadith scholars, particularly in later centuries.

Accordingly, *takhrīj* is technically defined as “indicating the location of a hadith in its original sources that recorded it with its chain of transmission, followed—when necessary—by a statement of its status.” What is meant here is attributing the hadith to its original sources, such as *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *al-Mu’jam* of al-Ṭabarānī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, and others. These sources include the collections of Sunnah compiled with full chains of transmission, such as the Six Books, *al-Muwatta’* of Mālik, *Musnad Aḥmad*, *al-Mustadrak* of al-Ḥākim, and *al-Muṣannaḥ* of ‘Abd al-Razzāq. They also include supplementary works, such as *al-Jam’ bayna al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* by al-Ḥumaydī, *Tuḥfat al-Ashrāf bi-Ma’rifat al-Aṭrāf* by al-Mizzī, and *Tahdhīb Sunan Abī Dāwūd* by al-Mundhirī, in addition to works of tafsīr, jurisprudence, and history—such as *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* and *al-Umm* by al-Shāfi‘ī—provided that their authors transmit the hadiths with their own chains. By contrast, attributing a hadith to books that merely cite earlier compilations without independent chains does not constitute *takhrīj* in the technical sense; it is simply an indication of where the hadith appears.

¹⁶ Jamāl al-Dīn al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 1980).

¹⁷ Al-Ṭaḥḥān, *Uṣūl al-Takhrīj*..., pp. 18–19.

Introduction to Surat Al-Baqarah

Sūrat al-Baqarah is the longest chapter of the Noble Qur'an. It is the second chapter in the arrangement of the muṣḥaf, following Sūrat al-Fātiḥah. According to most Qur'an reciters, it contains 286 verses. By consensus of the scholars, it is a Madinan sūrah, revealed in al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah after the Prophet's migration, and it is considered among the earliest revelations received in Madinah. The chapter was named "al-Baqarah" (The Cow) in reference to the story of the cow that God commanded the Children of Israel to sacrifice, as narrated in verses 67–73. This account contains lessons that highlight the obstinacy of the Israelites and their opposition to their prophets.¹⁸

The chapter became widely known by this name until it came to serve as its distinctive designation. The themes of Sūrat al-Baqarah revolve around affirming the foundations of faith, describing the conditions of believers, disbelievers, and hypocrites, and legislating numerous practical rulings such as fasting, pilgrimage, transactions, and family matters. For this reason, some scholars have regarded it as a "constitution" for the emerging Muslim community in Madinah.¹⁹ Among its most prominent topics are the rulings related to fasting, found in verses 183–187, one of which is the verse that forms the focus of this study.

Surat Al-Baqarah 185: (*Syahru Ramadhan alladzii unzila fihi-l Qur'an...*)

Aḥmad, Ibn Jarīr, Muḥammad ibn Naṣr, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, al-Rānī, al-Bayhaqī in *Shu'ab al-Īmān*, and al-Aṣbahānī in *al-Targhib*, all narrated from Wāthilah ibn al-Asqa' that the Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "The Scrolls of Abraham were revealed on the first night of Ramadan; the Torah was revealed after six nights of Ramadan had passed; the Gospel was revealed after thirteen nights of Ramadan had passed; the Psalms were revealed after eighteen nights of Ramadan had passed; and the Qur'an was revealed after twenty-four nights of Ramadan had passed."

Explanation of the Hadith and Its Meaning

1. The Text of the Hadith

الحديث قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "أُنزِلَتْ صُحُفُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ أَوَّلَ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ، وَأُنزِلَتِ التَّوْرَةُ لِسِتِّ مَضْيَنٍ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ، وَأُنزِلَ الْإِنْجِيلُ لِثَلَاثِ عَشْرَةَ لَيْلَةً خَلَتْ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ، وَأُنزِلَ الزَّبُورُ لِثَمَانِ عَشْرَةَ خَلَتْ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ، وَأُنزِلَ الْقُرْآنُ لِأَرْبَعٍ وَعِشْرِينَ خَلَتْ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ"

The Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "The Scrolls of Abraham were revealed on the first night of Ramadan; the Torah was revealed after six nights of Ramadan had passed; the Gospel was revealed after thirteen nights of Ramadan had passed; the Psalms were revealed after eighteen nights of Ramadan had passed; and the Qur'an was revealed after twenty-four nights of Ramadan had passed."

¹⁸ Muḥammad 'Alī al-Ṣābūnī, *Ṣafwat al-Tafāsīr*, (Beirut: Dār al-Qur'ān al-Karīm, 1981), 1:47

¹⁹ 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Nāṣir al-Sa'dī, *Taysīr al-Karīm al-Raḥmān fī Tafsīr Kalām al-Mannān*, (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 2000), 1:39–40.

2. Explanation of the Hadith's Expressions

The phrase “*Ṣuḥuf Ibrāhīm*” refers to the scriptures revealed by God to His Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). They are mentioned in the Qur'an in the verse: “The Scriptures of Abraham and Moses” (Q.S. 87:19) and are considered independent texts of divine revelation. The statement “on the first night of Ramadan” indicates that the Scrolls of Abraham were revealed all at once on the first night of the month, in the form of a complete revelation (*al-inzāl al-jumli*) rather than gradual revelation (*al-inzāl al-tanjīmī*), like the way some other divine scriptures were revealed. The expression “after six nights had passed” refers to the Torah being revealed following six days of Ramadan, employing a common Arabic style of indicating the passage of days and nights.

In the statement “after thirteen nights had passed,” it is indicated that the Gospel was revealed following thirteen days of the month. Meanwhile, the expression “after twenty-four nights had passed” specifies that the Qur'an was revealed after twenty-four days of Ramadan. This is the point at which the hadith explicitly connects the revelation of the Qur'an with the blessed month, in agreement with the Qur'anic verse: “*Syahru Ramadhan alladzi unzila fihi-l Qur'an...*” (Q.S. 2:185). Thus, the hadith provides a precise chronological detail that harmonizes with the Qur'anic text and further enhances its clarity and explanation.

3. The Manner of Al-Qur'an's Revelation (Reconciling the Hadith with Other Verses)

From the statement in the hadith, “*Wa unzila-l Qur'an li arba'i wa 'isyriina khallat min ramadhaana,*” it is understood that the intended meaning is its descent in a single transmission from the Preserved Tablet (*al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfūz*) to the House of Glory (*Bayt al-'Izzah*) in the lowest heaven on the Night of Decree (*Laylat al-Qadr*). Thereafter, it was revealed gradually and in portions to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) over a period of twenty-three years, in accordance with specific events and circumstances. This is the reconciliation mentioned by most exegetes between this hadith and the Qur'anic verse: “*Innaa anzalnaahu fii laylati-l qadri*” (Q.S. 97:1).²⁰ In this way, any perceived contradiction between the Qur'an's revelation in its entirety and its subsequent gradual revelation is resolved.

4. Lessons and Benefits Derived from the Hadith

This noble hadith highlights the superiority of the month of Ramadan over all other months, as God made it the occasion for the revelation of four divine scriptures along with the Qur'an, thereby underscoring its immense blessing and exalted status. The hadith also reveals God's care in sending messengers and revealing scriptures for the guidance of humanity throughout the ages, which strengthens faith in the unity of the source of divine revelations and their harmony in serving humankind. In addition, it affirms the inclusion of the Scrolls of Abraham (peace be upon him)

²⁰ Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm...*, 1:502–503.

among the revealed scriptures, as mentioned in the Qur'an, demonstrating the consistency of the hadith with a firmly established Qur'anic foundation.

This hadith carries both pedagogical and legal significance. It encourages Muslims to make the most of the month of Ramadan by increasing their recitation and reflection upon the Qur'an, since it is the month honored by God through the revelation of His Book. It also highlights a fundamental legal principle: the specification of the revelation of scriptures to nights corresponds with the Sharī'ah rule that the night marks the beginning of the lunar day. This reflects the precision of the Prophet's expression and its harmony with the legal system governing the determination of time.

Hadith Criticism

Considering the preceding discussion on *al-i'tibār* (comparative analysis of transmission routes), which gathered twenty-two chains of narration for this hadith, it becomes evident that all these routes converge upon a single, consistent point of transmission. This chain begins with Wāthilah ibn al-Asqa' (the Companion), through 'Āmir ibn Usāmah (known as Abū al-Milīḥ), from Qatādah ibn Di'āmah al-Sadūsī, from 'Imrān ibn Dāwar. From this juncture, the transmission branches out to more than ten different narrators, ultimately reaching over fifteen distinct sources in the fields of hadith, tafsīr, and history.

a) *Sanad Criticism (Naqd al-Sanad)*

1) *Connection of the Chain (Ittisāl as-Sanad)*

The levels of this chain of transmission are connected in terms of contemporaneity and the well-documented hearing between each narrator and his teacher, as recorded in the biographical works. 'Āmir ibn Usāmah (Abū al-Milīḥ) is a recognized Successor (*tābi'ī*) known for narrating from Wāthilah ibn al-Asqa'. Qatādah is well known for narrating extensively from Abū al-Milīḥ, while 'Imrān ibn Dāwar is among Qatādah's close disciples and constant companions. However, Qatādah is described in the biographical sources as "trustworthy, reliable, and renowned for *tadlīs* (concealing the immediate source of transmission)."²¹ In all the collected chains, his narration from Abū al-Milīḥ appears with the formula *'an* ("from"), which is linguistically open to the possibility of *tadlīs*, without explicit mention of direct hearing. This requires careful attention, even though most hadith critics tend to be lenient regarding this potential weakness, since Qatādah is known for frequent direct transmission from Abū al-Milīḥ, and he is among those who rarely practice *tadlīs* except from narrators he had heard from.

2) *Justice and Precision ('Adaalah and Dhabt)*

All the narrators from Wāthilah up to Qatādah are described as trustworthy and possessing complete precision (*thiqa, thiqa thabt mashhūr bi-l-tadlīs*). This indicates that this portion of the chain is sound in terms of both integrity and accuracy, apart from the previously mentioned potential issue of *tadlīs*. As for 'Imrān ibn Dāwar (Abū

²¹ Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Al-Kāshif fī Ma'rifat Man Lahu Riwayah fī al-Kutub al-Sittah*, ed. Muḥammad 'Awwāmah, (Jeddah: Dār al-Qiblah, 1992), 2:131 (entry on Qatādah ibn Di'āmah).

al-‘Awām al-‘Amī al-Qaṭṭān), who serves as the link between Qatādah and the later transmitters, he has been characterized as “truthful but prone to error and accused of holding Khārijite views.” This evaluation establishes his integrity (*ṣidq*) while acknowledging a deficiency in perfect precision, as he was occasionally subject to mistakes.

3) Uniqueness of Transmission and Its Impact

From the comparative table of transmission routes, it is observed that all twenty-two chains pass exclusively through ‘Imrān ibn Dāwar from Qatādah. None of these chains provide evidence of another narrator directly corroborating ‘Imrān’s transmission from Qatādah, which indicates his relative uniqueness in narrating this hadith from him. However, this uniqueness is confined to the level between ‘Imrān and Qatādah alone. Beyond ‘Imrān, the hadith was transmitted by more than ten trustworthy narrators—such as ‘Abd Allāh ibn Rajā’, ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abd Allāh, Aḥmad ibn Maṣṣūr, Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, and others—spreading across over fifteen sources. This wide dissemination after ‘Imrān strengthens confidence that the wording of the hadith was preserved as he narrated it, and it rules out the likelihood of error or interpolation from the later transmitters. Nevertheless, it does not eliminate the possibility of error originating from ‘Imrān himself in his transmission from Qatādah, since the uniqueness lies specifically at that level of the chain.

4) On the Accusation of *Khawarij* Views

Hadith scholars have established that the narration of an innovator (*mubtadi*) is accepted so long as he is not an active propagator of his innovation and is described as truthful in his transmission. This is the position of most hadith specialists and jurists.²² None of the biographical sources indicate that ‘Imrān ibn Dāwar was a preacher of his opinion. Moreover, the content of this hadith bears no relation to the theological issues disputed between the Sunnis and the *Khawarij*. Therefore, this accusation does not appear to affect the acceptance of his narration of this hadith.

And summary of *Isnad* Criticism, based on the foregoing analysis, the pivotal narrator of this hadith—‘Imrān ibn Dāwar—did not attain the rank of the most reliable transmitters whose solitary narrations are generally accepted. Rather, he is classified as *ṣadūq yahim* (“truthful but prone to error”), a level at which a hadith is judged to be *ḥasan* (sound) rather than *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic), provided that the other conditions are met. Accordingly, the chain of transmission of this hadith through ‘Imrān from Qatādah is considered *ḥasan* but not *ṣaḥīḥ*, while remaining free from discontinuity or other serious defects.

b) Textual Criticism (*Naqd al-Matan*)

1) Agreement with Al-Qur’an

The content of this hadith is consistent with what the Qur’an affirms regarding the existence of earlier divine scriptures. The Qur’an mentions the Scrolls of Abraham in the verse: “*Inna hadzaa lafi-s shuhufi-l ‘uulaa. Shuhufi ibraahiima wa*

²² Nūr al-Dīn ‘Itr, *Manhaj al-Naqd fi ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1997), pp. 91–93; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Nuzhat al-Nazar Sharḥ Nukhbat al-Fikr*, (Damascus: Maṭba‘at al-Ṣabāḥ, 2000), pp. 46–47.

muusaa" (Q.S. 87:18–19). It also refers to the Torah, the Gospel, and the Psalms in multiple passages. Thus, the hadith does not introduce anything that contradicts the Qur'an; rather, it provides further clarification of the Qur'an's general statement: "*Syahru ramadhaan alladzi unzila fiihi-l Qur'anu...*" (Q.S. 2:185), by specifying the night of its revelation and linking it to the times of revelation of the earlier scriptures.

2) Agreement with Other Hadiths

This hadith does not contradict what is established in the Qur'an regarding the revelation of the Qur'an on the Night of Decree: "*Innaa anzalnaahu fii laylati-l Qadri*" (Q.S. 97:1). The reconciliation offered by the exegetes explains that the statement "*after twenty-four nights of Ramadan had passed*" refers to its descent in a single transmission from the Preserved Tablet (*al-Lawh al-Mahfuz*) to the House of Glory (*Bayt al- 'Izzah*) in the lowest heaven. Thereafter, it was revealed gradually and in portions over a span of twenty-three years, in accordance with events and circumstances. This explanation, as detailed earlier in the discussion of the hadith, resolves any apparent tension between the Qur'an's complete descent and its subsequent gradual revelation.

3) Anomalous Variants (*Syudzudz*)

In tracing the wording of this hadith across its various sources, a slight variation is observed regarding the number of nights in which the Psalms were revealed. Some narrations mention "*after eighteen nights*", while another narration—transmitted through a chain not involving 'Imrān ibn Dāwar—states "*after twelve nights*." This represents a difference in wording among narrators rather than *shudhūdh* in the technical sense recognized by hadith scholars. True *shudhūdh* requires that a trustworthy narrator contradicts one who is more reliable, and none of the available chains reach the level of definitive authenticity that would warrant such a judgment. Therefore, it suffices to note this variation without classifying it as *shudhūdh*.

4) Hidden Defects (*'Illah*)

No significant defect was identified in the text of this hadith, such as interpolation, reversal, or disruptive inconsistency. The only noteworthy issue remains the minor weakness in precision previously noted in the chain of transmission, specifically concerning 'Imrān ibn Dāwar.

5) Consistency with the Principles of *Shariah*

The content of this hadith is in complete harmony with the foundational principles of Islamic belief, particularly the doctrine of the unity of the source of divine revelations and the honor bestowed by God upon the month of Ramadan through the revelation of these scriptures within it. There is nothing in the hadith that contradicts any established legal ruling or affirmed theological principle.

c) Scholarly (*Ulama'*) Opinions on the Hadith

Imām Aḥmad (may God have mercy on him) did not issue a specific judgment regarding this hadith when including it in his *Musnad*. He followed his general practice of recording narrations he deemed suitable for citation without explicitly declaring each one authentic or sound. Al-Ṭabarānī adopted the same approach in his *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* and *al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ*, as did al-Bayhaqī in the three of his

works in which he transmitted this hadith. These scholars sufficed with narrating and attributing the report, without providing explicit rulings of authenticity or improvement for it individually. Among the scholars who explicitly evaluated this hadith or its isnād is:

- 1) Imām al-Munāwī (may God have mercy on him). He ruled that the narrators of the chain found in al-Ṭabarānī's *al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ* (no. 3740) were trustworthy (*thiqat*).²³
- 2) Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Haythamī (may God have mercy on him). Al-Haythamī, when commenting on another hadith narrated from Wāthilah ibn al-Asqa' with the same chain through 'Imrān ibn Dāwar, reported that Ibn Ḥibbān and others considered him trustworthy, while al-Nasā'ī and others regarded him as weak. He further noted that the remaining narrators in the chain were reliable.²⁴ This evaluation applies equally to the chain of our hadith, since both share the same pivotal transmitter.
- 3) Shaykh Shu'ayb al-Arna'ūṭ (may God have mercy on him). Al-Arna'ūṭ judged the chain of transmission of another hadith narrated from Wāthilah ibn al-Asqa'—sharing with our hadith the pivotal transmitter 'Imrān ibn Dāwar, from Qatādah, from Abū al-Miliḥ—as *ḥasan* (sound). He described 'Imrān ibn Dāwar as “ḥasan al-ḥadīth” (acceptable in narration), while affirming that the rest of the narrators were trustworthy and belonged to the ranks of al-Bukhārī and Muslim.²⁵ This evaluation applies precisely to the chain of our hadith, which is identical in its pivotal link: 'Imrān ibn Dāwar from Qatādah from Abū al-Miliḥ from Wāthilah.
- 4) Shaykh Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (may God have mercy on him). Al-Albānī graded this very hadith as *ḥasan* (sound). He included it in his *Silsilat al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah* under number (1575), and in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr* under number (1497).²⁶
- 5) Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr (may God have mercy on him). Ibn Kathīr cited this hadith in his commentary on the verse: “*The month of Ramadan in which the Qur'an was revealed*” (Q 2:185), using it as supporting evidence for the virtue of Ramadan in being the month of the revelation of the divine scriptures.²⁷ He did not follow it with any remark of weakness, which indicates his acceptance of the hadith in the exegetical context of citation, even though he did not explicitly issue a formal judgment on its chain of transmission.

It may also be noted, as discussed earlier in the section on corroborative evidence (*i'tibār*), that several leading scholars—including Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, Ibn Abī

²³ Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Manāwī, *Al-Taysīr bi-Sharḥ al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr*, 3rd ed., (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī, 1988), 1:380.

²⁴ 'Alī ibn Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, *Majma' al-Zawā'id wa-Manba' al-Fawā'id*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1988), 7:46.

²⁵ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, ed. Shu'ayb al-Arna'ūṭ et al., (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 2001), commentary on hadith no. 16982, 28:169.

²⁶ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Silsilat al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah wa-Shay' min Fiqhīhā wa-Fawā'idihā*, (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Ma'ārif, 1995), hadith no. 1575; and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr wa-Ziyādatuh*, (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1988), hadith no. 1497.

²⁷ Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm*..., 1:502.

Ḥātim al-Rāzī, al-Wāhidī, Ibn 'Asākir, and al-Suyūṭī in *al-Durr al-Manthūr*—cited this hadith in their exegetical and historical works without offering any objection or criticism. This indicates that the scholarly community generally received the hadith with broad acceptance in the domains of virtues (*faḍā'il*) and Qur'anic tafsir.

d) Ruling on the Hadith

By synthesizing the results of the isnād criticism, the textual analysis, and the scholarly opinions presented above, the following judgment is reached:

- **Regarding the chain of transmission (*sanad*).** Its isnād is *ḥasan li-dhātih* (sound in itself) through the route of 'Imrān ibn Dāwar, from Qatādah, from Abū al-Miliḥ, from Wāthilah ibn al-Asqa'. This is because its pivotal narrator, 'Imrān ibn Dāwar, is classified as *ṣadūq yuham* ("truthful but prone to error"), while the rest of the narrators are free from criticism. The chain is also free from explicit discontinuity, and the weakness associated with Qatādah's occasional *tadlīs* (concealment of sources) is minimal.
- **Regarding the Text (*Matan*).** The text of this hadith is free from *shudhūdh* (anomalous contradiction) and from any significant defect. It agrees with the Qur'an, consistent with other authentic hadiths, and fully harmonious with the foundational principles of Islamic belief.
- **Regarding The Scholarly Reception (*Talaqqi-l 'Ulama*).** Shaykh al-Albānī (may God have mercy on him) explicitly graded the hadith as *ḥasan* (sound). His judgment was supported in principle by Imām al-Munāwī, al-Haythamī, and Shaykh Shu'ayb al-Arna'ūṭ—each of whom evaluated the pivotal narrator in a similar manner (in the case of al-Arna'ūṭ, through a hadith sharing the same chain). Moreover, leading exegetes and hadith scholars cited this narration without objection, which reflects its general acceptance among the scholarly community in the domains of virtues (*faḍā'il*) and Qur'anic Mufassir.

Final Judgment on the Hadith, the researcher concludes that the final ruling on this hadith is that it is *ḥasan li-dhātih* (sound in itself). It rises to the level of *shahih* or close to it, in view of the multiple transmission routes beyond 'Imrān ibn Dāwar and the broad scholarly acceptance it has received. Thus, it is valid to cite this hadith in the domain of *faḍā'il al-a'māl* (virtues of deeds) and historical reports, in accordance with the established practice of hadith scholars in dealing with narrations of the *ḥasan* category. And God knows best.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion of the Research, the investigation into the transmission of the report cited by Imām al-Suyūṭī in *al-Durr al-Manthūr* under the verse "*Syahru ramadhaan alladzi unzila fiihi-l Qur'an...*" (Q 2:185) concludes that the hadith narrated from Wāthilah ibn al-Asqa' (may God be pleased with him) appears in multiple sources, including the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad, the compilations of al-Ṭabarānī, the works of al-Bayhaqī, Ibn Ṭalḥah's *Fawā'id*, al-Marwazī's *Qiyām Ramaḍān*, and the tafsir collections of al-Ṭabarī, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, and al-Wāhidī, as well as Ibn 'Asākir's *Tārikh Dimashq*. It is further corroborated by narrations from Jābir ibn 'Abd Allāh, Ibn 'Abbās, 'Ā'ishah, Abū Dharr, and al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib (may God be pleased with them

all). All chains converge on 'Imrān ibn Dāwar, from Qatādah, from Abū al-Milīh, from Wāthilah, before branching out through more than ten reliable transmitters, reflecting both multiplicity of transmission and strength of corroboration.

Isnād analysis shows that the chain is *ḥasan li-dhātih* (sound in itself), since its pivotal narrator, 'Imrān ibn Dāwar, is classified as *ṣadūq yahim* ("truthful but prone to error"), while the remainder of the narrators are reliable and free from explicit discontinuity or critical defects. The text itself aligns with the Qur'an and other authentic hadiths, is consistent with the principles of Islamic creed, and is free from anomaly or disruption. Consequently, the hadith is judged *ḥasan li-dhātih*, elevated to *ḥasan li-ghayrih* (sound due to corroboration) through its multiple routes and scholarly acceptance, and may be validly employed in the domain of *faḍā'il al-a'māl* (virtues of deeds) and historical reports. It further serves as a clear example of exegetical narration (*tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr*), clarifying the verse by specifying the night of revelation and linking it to the timing of earlier scriptures, which Suyūṭī deemed worthy of citation for added clarity.

The last, the researcher recommends that every hadith intended for use as evidence be critically examined before reliance, especially those found in exegetical works that often cite narrations without full chains or explicit rulings, as is the case with Suyūṭī in *al-Durr al-Manthūr*. Greater attention should be devoted to critical *takhrīj* studies of other exegetical narrations in this and similar works, in order to distinguish the authentic from the weak. Such studies must integrate both isnād and textual analysis, since neither alone suffices for a comprehensive scholarly judgment. Students of hadith criticism are further advised to practice using diverse tools of *takhrīj*, while recognizing the limits of each, and to consult the biographical and defect literature (*kutub al-rijāl wa'l-'ilal*) when evaluating chains, rather than relying solely on basic citation. God knows best, and He is the One who guides to the straight path. May blessings and peace be upon our master Muḥammad, his family, and his companions.

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