197164 - What are the definitively proven hadiths?

the question

I want to ask about the definitively proven hadiths. As far as I understand, they are the reports concerning which there is no doubt that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said those words, so that we can quote them without having to mention the isnaad. Then I want to ask about the phrase that refers to the one-eyed liar, i.e., “al-maseeh al-dajjaal,” because the first word (al-maseeh) could make one think that this refers to ‘Eesa, but the second word (ad-dajjaal) refers to a liar. Please note that I know that this phrase is mentioned in al-Bukhaari. But if someone says “Kaleemullah [i.e., Moosa],” then follows it with a word like that [i.e., “liar” and the like], it would make me wonder.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The definitively proven hadiths are hadiths concerning which there is certainty that they are soundly attributed to the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). They are of four types.

The first type: mutawaatir hadiths.

The mutawaatir hadith is one that is narrated by a number of people who could not all have agreed to tell lies at every level of its isnaad (chain of narration).

For a detailed definition of the mutawaatir hadith and the categories thereof, please see the answer to question no. 34651 .

The second type: that which was narrated by al-Bukhaari and Muslim, and accepted by the

ummah.

Excluded from that are the few hadiths that were narrated by them in their *Saheehs* concerning which some of the scholars had some reservations. Apart from that, their hadiths are definitively proven, according to the more correct scholarly view, because they are supported by corroborating evidence and because the fact that the ummah unanimously accepts them indicates that they are sound.

Ibn as-Salaah (may Allah have mercy on him), in his *Muqaddimah* (p. 28-29), is of the view that the hadiths of *as-Saheehayn* are definitively sound and we should be certain about them, because the ummah is unanimously agreed on the soundness of the hadiths of *as-Saheehayn*, and the ummah is protected from error in its consensus – apart from a few hadiths in *as-Saheehayn* which some of the scholars critiqued, such as ad-Daaraqutni and others.

But an-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) commented [on what Ibn as-Salaah said] in *at-Taqreeb*, where he said:

The shaykh stated that whatever both of them [al-Bukhaari and Muslim] or one of them narrated is definitively sound, and we are certain about any of the knowledge acquired from them, but the scholars who specialized in hadith and the majority of scholars disagreed with him and said: The hadiths are probably sound (and not definitively sound), unless they are mutawaatir." (*Tadreeb ar-Raawi* 1/141).

A number of the scholars who specialized in hadith followed the view of Ibn as-Salaah and differed from an-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him). As-Suyooti (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Similarly, Ibn ‘Abd as-Salaam criticized Ibn as-Salaah for this view.

Al-Bulqeeni said: What an-Nawawi and Ibn ‘Abd as-Salaam said, and those who followed them in this view, is not to be accepted. Some later scholars of hadith narrated a view similar to that of Ibn as-Salaah from a number of Shaafa‘i scholars, such as Abu Ishaaq, Abu Haamid al-Isfaraayeeni, al-Qaadi Abu’t-Tayyib and Shaykh Abu Ishaaq ash-Shiraazi; and from as-Sarakhsi among the Hanafis;

al-Qaadi ‘Abd al-Wahhaab among the Maalikis; Abu Ya‘la, Abu’l-Khattaab and Ibn az-Zaaghooni among the Hanbalis; Ibn Foorak and most of the scholars of kalaam among the Ash‘aris; and all the scholars of hadith. The view of all of the salaf (early generations) is that the hadith that is widely accepted among the ummah is definitively sound.

Shaykh al-Islam – meaning Ibn Hajar – said: What an-Nawawi mentioned in Sharh Muslim was by way of claiming that the majority agreed with him. As for those who specialized in hadith, no [they did not agree with him]. There were many specialized scholars who also agreed with Ibn as-Salaah.

He (i.e., al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar) said in *Sharh an-Nukhbah*: The report that is supported by corroborating evidence is definitively proven, contrary to the view of some. The definitively proven reports are of several types, including those which were narrated by al-Bukhaari and Muslim in their *Saheehayn* which did not reach the level of being mutawaatir, but there is other corroborating evidence which supports them.

That evidence includes: the great knowledge of al-Bukhaari and Muslim in this field, and their preeminence in distinguishing sound hadiths, in which they excelled others, and the fact that the scholars accepted and embraced the books. This acceptance alone is stronger evidence to prove that their hadiths are definitively sound than the hadiths which were narrated through many isnaads but did not reach the level of being mutawaatir. But this [superiority of the hadiths in *as-Saheehayn*] is limited to the hadiths concerning which none of the scholars expressed any reservations. … Apart from [those few hadiths], there is consensus that we should accept that they [the hadiths in *as-Saheehayn*] are sound and embrace them.

Ibn Katheer said: I agree with the view of Ibn as-Salaah.

I (as-Suyooti) say: This is the view that I favour, and I have no other view concerning this issue." (*Tadreeb ar-Raawi* 1/142-145).

The third type of hadiths which are definitively proven: those which the ummah unanimously accepts and embraces, even if they are not in *as-Saheehayn*, because of what was noted above,

that the ummah is protected from error in what it is unanimously agreed upon.

The fourth type: the report which is widely circulated and is narrated through many isnaads which there is no problem.

See: *an-Nukat ‘ala Kitaab Ibn as-Salaah*, by Ibn Hajar (1/378).

Some of the scholars stated that the hadith which is narrated by a chain of narrators, all of whom are scholars of hadith – such as if Imam Ahmad narrated a hadith from Imam ash-Shaafa‘i, and ash-Shaafa‘i narrated it from Imam Maalik – this type of hadith is definitively sound and proven, because of the high calibre of its narrators. That is on condition that there should be more than one isnaad.

See: *Tadreeb ar-Raawi* (1/144).

All these types of hadith are definitively sound.

To sum up, the mutawaatir report and the ahaad report that is supported by corroborating evidence on the basis of which it may be deemed to be definitive – such as that which the ummah accepted and embraced, whether it was in *as-Saheehayn* or in one of them, or it was narrated elsewhere – are to be regarded as definitively proven.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The sound view is the view of the majority, that a report may be deemed to be definitively proven sometimes because of the large number of narrators, or because of the qualities of the narrators, such as their strong faith and religious commitment and their strong memory. And sometimes a report may be deemed to be definitively proven because of corroborating evidence that supports the report, because of which it may be deemed to be definitively proven. Also, the report that the ummah has accepted and believed to be true or acted in accordance with it is to be deemed definitively proven, according to the majority of later and earlier scholars. This is similar to that which is mutawaatir." (*Majmoo‘ al-Fataawa* 18/48).

Based on the above, if a hadith is one of these types, there is nothing wrong with quoting it without an isnaad, but it is better to mention which of the authors of the books of hadith narrated it, such as al-Bukhaari, Muslim and Ahmad. You should also quote which of the scholars classed it as saheeh, so as to reassure the listener or reader of the soundness of this hadith.

For more information, please see the answer to question no. 122507 .

Secondly:

There is nothing wrong with saying “al-maseeh ad-dajjaal,” because when the word al-maseeh (messiah) is used on its own, it refers to al-Maseeh ‘Eesa ibn Maryam (the Messiah Jesus son of Mary, peace be upon him). But when using the phrase “al-maseeh ad-dajjaal,” it is known that this refers to someone else.

Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The word “al-maseeh” refers both to the Dajjaal and to ‘Eesa ibn Maryam (peace be upon him), but if we are referring to the Dajjaal, we must specify that. End quote.

For more information, please see the answer to question no. 8806 .

Moreover, it is proven in more than one hadith that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) referred to the Dajjaal as “al-maseeh ad-dajjaal.” As this is proven from the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) you should not have any doubts or hesitate to use this phrase.

And Allah knows best.