

MUTAWĀTIR FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF HADITH SCHOLARS, IBN MUJĀHID, AND AL-ṬABARIYY

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the second objective of the study, which is the concept of *mutawātir* in *qirā'āt* according to al-Ṭabariyy and Ibn Mujāhid. Before presenting them, it first introduces the importance of *mutawātir* in Islamic sciences and its general notion in the perspectives of hadith and *qirā'āt* scholars. The two final sections of the chapter will then discourse the views of both imams.

5.2 Hadith Scholars' Conception of *Mutawātir*

5.2.1 Etymological and Technical Definition of *Sanad*

Sanad etymologically means the surface rising from the foot of a mountain or valley. Its sole plural form is *asnād*. Something upon which a thing rests is called *musnad*. One may say *سند إلى الشيء يسند سنوداً* and *واسنّد وتساند وأسند غيره*. Here, the word takes various forms: *sanada-yasnudu* (finite past and present verbs), *sunūd* (verbal noun), and *istanada, tasānada* and *asnada* (augmented verb forms). One may also say *ساندته إلى الشيء وهو يتساند إليه*; here, the word is used in two different augmented verb forms. *Sanad* also means to climb a mountain, as mentioned in an *aḥad*²⁴² hadith, “I saw

²⁴²A hadith that does not fulfil the criteria of *mutawātir*.

women climbing the mountain.”²⁴³ One may also say ساندت الرجل مساندة if he is assisting or figuratively supporting someone else.²⁴⁴

In hadith terminology, *sanad* means the path of the *matn* (text of the hadith), that is, the series of narrators who transmitted the *matn* from the original source. This chain is called *sanad* for either one of two reasons: (a) the *musnid* (i.e. the *narrator*) relies upon it to ascribe the *matn* to its source or (b) scholars refer to the *musnid* to determine the authenticity of a hadith.

Isnād means to attribute a hadith to its orator, that is, presenting the path of a *matn* by narrating the hadith with a *sanad*. *Isnād* is also used to refer to *sanad*, a common practice of using the verbal noun form to refer to the passive participle, much like using the word *al-khalq* (the act of creating) to denote *al-makhlūq* (creations).²⁴⁵ According to *Ibn Jamā‘ah*,²⁴⁶ hadith scholars use *isnād* and *sanad* interchangeably.²⁴⁷

5.2.2 The Devotion of Muslim Scholars to Isnād

Muslims place such high regard and significance to *isnād* that they outshine other communities. It is never absent from any Islamic sciences, albeit it does appear

²⁴³Ibn al-Jazariyy. 2006. *Ghāyah al-Nihāyah*. Juz’ 2: p. 408.

²⁴⁴Ibn Manzūr. 2010. *Lisān al-‘Arab*. Juz’ 3: p. 220; al-Jūhariyy, Ismā‘il ibn Ḥammād. 2009. *Al-Ṣiḥāh Tāj al-Lughah wa Ṣiḥāh al-‘Arabiyyah*. Al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Ḥadīth. Juz’ 2: p. 489.

²⁴⁵Al-Suyūfī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr. 2010. *Tadrīb al-Rāwī fī Sharḥ Taqrīb al-Nawawiyy*. Al-Dammām: Dār Ibn Jawziyy. Juz’ 1: p. 41; al-Khaṭīb, Muḥammad ‘Ijāj. 1997. *Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth ‘Ulūmuh wa Muṣṭalahuh*. Bayrūt: Dār Ibn Ḥazm. p. 32.

²⁴⁶Abū ‘Abdullāh Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Sa‘dillāh ibn Jamā‘ah, born in 639 AH and studied under Ibn Mālik, imam of the grammarians, Ibn Daqīq al-‘Ayd, and Ibn al-Bukhāriyy al-Muqrī. He passed away in 733 AH. See: al-Ḥusayniyy, Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī. n.d. *Dhayl Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffaz li al-Dhahabiyy*. Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah. p. 107; al-‘Asqalāniyy, Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī. 1980. *Al-Durar al-Kāminah fī A’yān al-Mi‘ah al-Thāminah*. Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah. Juz’ 3: p. 367; al-‘Akriyy, ‘Abd al-Ḥayy ibn Aḥmad. 1986. *Shadharāt al-Dhahab fī Akhbār Man Dhahab*. Dimashq: Dār Ibn Kathīr. Juz’ 6: p. 105; Ibn Kathīr, Ismā‘il ibn ‘Umar. 2015. *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*. Qatar: Wizārah al-Awqāf wa al-Shu‘ūn al-Islāmiyyah. Juz’ 14: p. 163.

²⁴⁷Al-Qāsimiyy, Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn. 2004. *Qawā‘id al-Taḥdīth min Funūn Muṣṭalah al-Ḥadīth*. Bayrūt: Mu‘assasah al-Risālah. p. 202.

more prominently in some. Transmitted sciences, such as al-Qur'ān, prophetic traditions, *tafsīr*, and language, are all inseparable from *isnad*. Nonetheless, its essentiality is more urgent for al-Qur'ān and hadith, as the veracity (or weakness) of a *sanad* determines the authenticity of the Qur'ān, the *maqrū'* (text), and the Shariah and its laws that are derived from various hadiths about *'ibādāt* (rituals) and *mu'āmalāt* (social relations). Allah the Exalted has endowed *isnād* only to this *ummah* and no other communities, as confirmed by the Qur'ān, hadith, and traditions of the early scholars.

Allah and his Prophet have ordained Muslims to ascertain and verify the authenticity of news and to relay it from its source. Allah said in three separate verses, “O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done,”²⁴⁸ “...such as ye choose, for witnesses...,”²⁴⁹ and “...and take for witness two persons from among you...”²⁵⁰

These verses indicate that the news borne by a *fāsiq* (deviant) should not be accepted, and that the testimony of someone who is not *ādil* (of good repute and upright demeanor) is rejected. The meanings of news (*khabar*) and testimony (*shahādah*) in Arabic largely overlap, and thus scholars dismiss the news and reject the testimony of a *fāsiq*. Like the Qur'ān's ordain in regard to the news of the *fāsiq*, the hadith also forbids the narration of false news, as exemplified by a popular narration, “Whoever relates from me a saying that he knows to be false is himself a liar.”²⁵¹

²⁴⁸Al-Qur'ān. Al-Ḥujurāt 49:6.

²⁴⁹Al-Qur'ān. Al-Baqarah 2:282

²⁵⁰Al-Qur'ān. Al-Ṭalāq 65:2.

²⁵¹Muslim. 2014. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Juz' 1: p. 62.

Abū ‘Abdillāh Mālik ibn Anas (d. 179 AH), Imam of Madinah, Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi‘iyy (d. 204 AH), Abū ‘Abdillah Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241 AH), ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak (d. 181 AH), Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn ‘Ubaidillāh Abū Bakr al-Zuhriyy (d. 124 AH), and other imams had elaborated on the significance, benefits, and merits of *isnād*. They also agreed that it is something that Allah has exclusively granted to this *ummah*. Mālik interpreted that the verse, “The (Qur’ān) is indeed the message, for thee and for thy people...,”²⁵² refers to one’s account, “My father told me as he was told by my grandfather.”²⁵³ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal also said, “Searching for high *isnād* is the tradition of early scholars,”²⁵⁴ while al-Shāfi‘iyy stated, “One who seeks hadith without *isnād* is like a firewood gatherer in the night: he carries a bundle of firewood, hiding among them a poisonous snake, yet he is unaware of it.”²⁵⁵

‘Abdullāh ibn Mubārak declared, “*Isnād* is part of the religion; were it not for *isnād*, anyone would say whatever they wanted.”²⁵⁶ In the introduction of his *Ma‘rifah ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, al-Ḥākim Abū ‘Abdillāh al-Naisābūriyy²⁵⁷ quoted Ibn Mubārak’s statement, then added, “Had it not been for *isnād* and this group’s search for it and

²⁵²Al-Qur’ān. Al-Zukhruf 43:44.

²⁵³Abū Ghuddah, ‘Abd al-Fattāh. 2014. *Al-Isnād min al-Dīn*. Bayrūt: Dār al-Bashā’ir al-Islāmiyyah. p. 19.

²⁵⁴Ibn al-Ṣalāh, ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Abd al-Rahmān. 1986. *Muqaddimah Ibn al-Ṣalāh*. Dimashq: Dār al-Fikr. p. 130.

²⁵⁵Al-Sakhāwīyy, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Rahmān. 2005. *Fath al-Mughūth bi Sharḥ Alfīyyah al-Ḥadīth*. Riyād: Maktabah Dār al-Minhāj. Juz’ 3: p. 5; Abū Ghuddah. 2014. *Al-Isnād min al-Dīn*. p. 20.

²⁵⁶Muslim. 2014. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Juz’ 1: p. 87; al-Khaṭīb, Muḥammad ‘Ijāj. 1984. *Al-Muḥaddith al-Fāṣil baina al-Rāwī wa al-Wā’i*. Al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Fikr. p. 209; Ibn al-Ṣalāh. 1986. *Muqaddimah Ibn al-Ṣalāh*. p. 130.

²⁵⁷Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥamdayh, known as Ibn al-Bay‘, born in 321 AH. He narrated from his father, Abū al-‘Abbās Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb al-Aṣam, Abū Ḥāmid ibn Ḥasnawayh al-Muqrī, and others. He passed away in 405 AH. See: al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdadiyy, Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī. 2001. *Tārīkh al-Baghdād*. Bayrūt: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmiyy. Juz’ 5: p. 473; Ibn al-Jawziyy, ‘Abd al-Rahmān ibn ‘Alī. *al-Muntazam fī Tārīkh al-Mulūk wa al-Umam*. Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah. Juz’ 7: p. 247; Ibn al-Mubarrad, Yūsuf ibn Ḥasan. 2011. *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz wa Tabṣirah al-Ayqāz*. Dimashq: Dār al-Nawādir. Juz’ 3: p. 1039; al-Dhahabiyy. 2004. *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*. Juz’ 17: p. 162.

commitment to preserve it in studying the sciences of Islam, the atheists and innovators would have fabricated the hadith and muddled the *sanad*. The hadith, without any *isnād*, is crippled.”²⁵⁸ Ibn Mubārak also said, “One who seeks any affair of his religion without using *isnād* is akin to one who climbs a roof without a ladder,”²⁵⁹ and, “The difference between us and the other group is *al-qawā’im*.”²⁶⁰ By “*al-qawā’im*”, he means *isnād*, and by “the other group”, the innovators and their ilk.

Ibn Abī Farwah²⁶¹ was once saying before al-Zuhriyy, “The Apostle of Allah peace be upon him once said, the Apostle of Allah peace be upon him once said...” Al-Zuhriyy then told him, “May Allah curse you, O Ibn Abī Farwah! What makes you so bold against Allah? You neglect the *sanad* of your hadith, and you narrate to us hadith without neither fang nor bite [i.e. strengths].”²⁶² Sufyān al-Tsauriyy²⁶³ once stated, “*Isnād* is the weapon of the believer. Without a weapon, how would he enter into battle?”²⁶⁴ Al-Rāmahurmuziyy²⁶⁵ in *al-Muḥaddiths al-Fāṣil bain al-Rāwī wa al-Wā’i*

²⁵⁸Al-Ḥākim, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdillāh. 2010. *Ma’rifah ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth wa Kammiyyah Ajnāsih*. Riyād: Maktabah al-Ma’ārif. p. 6.

²⁵⁹Al-Sakhāwiyy. 2005. *Fath al-Mughīth*. Juz’ 3: p. 4; al-Sam’āniyy, ‘Abd al-Karīm ibn Muḥammad. 1993. *Adab al-Imlā’ wa al-Istimlā’*. Jiddah: Maktabah al-Mahmūdiyyah. p. 6.

²⁶⁰Muslim. 2014. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Juz’ 1: p. 88.

²⁶¹Ishāq ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Farwah al-Madaniyy, *mawlā* (freedman) of the family of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān. He narrated from Mujāhid and Nāfi’, but he was a weak narrator. Al-Bukhāriyy and Aḥmad abandoned his narration. He passed away in 144 AH. See: al-Jarjāniyy, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Adīyy. n.d. *Al-Kāmil fī Ḍu‘afā’ al-Rijāl*. Al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Fikr. Juz’ 1: p. 320; al-‘Aqīliyy, Muḥammad ibn ‘Amr. 1984. *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā’ al-Kabīr*. Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah. Juz’ 1: p. 102; al-Dhahabiyy, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad. n.d. *Mizān al-‘Itidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl*. Bayrūt: Dār al-Ma’ārif. Juz’ 1: p. 193.

²⁶²Al-Ḥākim. 2010. *Ma’rifah ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*. p. 6; al-‘Aqīliyy. 1984. *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā’ al-Kabīr*. Juz’ 1: p. 102.

²⁶³Abū ‘Abdullāh Sufyān ibn Sa’īd ibn Masrūq ibn Ḥabīb ibn Rāfi’ al-Tsauriyy, *Shaykh al-Islām* and *Imām al-Ḥafīz*. He was born in 97 AH, he narrated from his father, Abū Ishāq al-Shaibānī, and Sulaymān al-Taymiyy. He passed away on 161 AH. See: al-Mazziyy, Yūsuf ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. 1983. *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*. Bayrūt: Mu’assasah al-Risālah. Juz’ 11: p. 154; Ibn Sa’d. 2001. *Al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā*. Juz’ 6: p. 371; Ibn Ma’bad, Muḥammad ibn Ḥibbān. 1991. *Mashāhīr ‘Ulamā’ al-Amṣār wa A’lām Fuqahā’ al-Aqtār*. Al-Manṣūrah: Dār al-Wafā’. p. 169; al-Dhahabiyy. 2004. *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*. Juz’ 7: p. 229; Ibn al-Athīr, ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad. 1987. *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*. Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah. Juz’ 6: p. 56.

²⁶⁴Al-Sam’āniyy. 1993. *Adab al-Imlā’ wa al-Istimlā’*. p. 8.

²⁶⁵Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Khallād al-Fārisiyy al-Rāmaharmuziyy. He narrated from his father, Zakariyyā al-Sājī, Ja’far ibn Muḥammad al-Faryābī, and others. He passed away

narrated from Shu‘bah ibn al-Hajjāj²⁶⁶, who said, “Every hadith unaccompanied by , ‘Someone told us,’ or, ‘Someone informed us,’ is meaningless,”²⁶⁷ that is, it is nugatory and should not be referred to due to the absence of its *isnād*.

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Baqiyyah ibn al-Walīd²⁶⁸ said, “I recited several hadiths from memory before Ḥammād ibn Zayd²⁶⁹, who then remarked, ‘How nice would it be if they had wings [i.e. *isnād*].’”²⁷⁰ He implied in his saying “if it had wings” that the hadiths had fallen to the ground, unable to rise, due to their lack of *isnād*. Some scholars claimed, “*Al-asānīd* (p. *isnād*) is the *al-qawā’im* of hadith,” that is, the supports on which a hadith founds itself.²⁷¹ Imam al-Awzā’iyy²⁷² declared, “Knowledge will not be lost except with the disappearance of *isnād*.”²⁷³

in 360 AH. See: Ibn al-Mubarrad. 2011. *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*. Juz’ 3: p. 905; al-Dhahabiyy. 2004. *Siyar A‘lam al-Nubalā’*. Juz’ 16: p. 73; al-Ṣafadiyy, Khalīl ibn Ayyub. 2000. *Al-Wāfi‘ bi al-Wafayāt*. Bayrūt: Dār Ihyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabiyy. Juz’ 12: p. 64; al-Ḥamawīyy, Yāqūt. 1993. *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’ Irshād al-Arib ilā Ma‘rifah al-Adīb*. Bayrūt: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmiyy. Juz’ 9: p. 5.

²⁶⁶Abū Baṣṭām Shu‘bah ibn al-Hajjāj ibn al-Ward al-Azadī, *Amīr al-Mu‘minīn fī al-Ḥadīth*. He was born in 80 AH and narrated from Anas ibn Sūrīn and Ismā‘īl ibn Rajā’, and Sa‘īd ibn Abū Sa‘īd al-Maqbarī. See: Ibn Sa‘d. 1998. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*. Juz’ 7: p. 280; al-Aṣḥāniyy, Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdillāh. 1996. *Ḥilyah al-Auliya’ wa Ṭabaqāt al-Aṣfiya’*. Al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Fikr. Juz’ 7: p. 144; al-Mazziyy. 1983. *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*. Juz’ 12: p. 479; al-Dhahabiyy. 2005. *Siyar A‘lam al-Nubalā’*. Juz’ 7: p. 202.

²⁶⁷Al-Khaṭīb. 1984. *Al-Muḥaddith al-Fāsil*. p. 517; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādiyy, Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī. 1938. *al-Kifāyah fī ‘Ilm al-Riwāyah*. Ḥaydarābād: Dā‘irah al-Ma‘ārif al-‘Uthmāniyyah. p. 283.

²⁶⁸*Al-Ḥāfiẓ* Abū Yuhmid Baqiyyah ibn al-Walīd ibn Sa‘īd ibn Ka‘b al-Ḥimṣī. He was born in 110 AH, narrated from ‘Uthmān ibn Zufar, Ḥuṣayn ibn Mālīk al-Fazārī, Shu‘bah ibn al-Hajjāj, and others, and passed away on 197 AH. See: Ibn Khayyāt, Khalīfah. 1993. *Ṭabaqāt Khalīfah ibn Khayyāt*. Al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Fikr. p. 317; al-Mazziyy. 1983. *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*. Juz’ 4: p. 192; al-‘Aqiliyy. 1984. *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā’ al-Kabīr*. Juz’ 1: p. 162; al-Dhahabiyy. 2005. *Siyar A‘lam al-Nubalā’*. Juz’ 8: p. s455.

²⁶⁹*Al-Ḥāfiẓ* Abū Ismā‘īl Ḥammād ibn Zayd ibn Dirham al-Azadī al-Baṣriyy. He was born in 98 AH, narrated from Anas ibn Sūrīn, ‘Amr ibn Dīnār, Thābit al-Yamanī, and others, and passed away in 179 AH. See: Ibn Sa‘d. 1998. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*. Juz’ 7: p. 286; al-Mazziyy. 1983. *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*. Juz’ 7: p. 293; Ibn Ma‘bad. 1991. *Mashāhīr ‘Ulamā’ al-Amṣār*. p. 157; al-Dhahabiyy. 2005. *Siyar A‘lam al-Nubalā’*. Juz’ 7: p. 456.

²⁷⁰Al-Sakhāwiyy. 2005. *Faṭḥ al-Mughīth*. Juz’ 3: p. 5.

²⁷¹Muslim. 2014. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Juz’ 1: p. 88.

²⁷²*Shaykh al-Islām* Abū ‘Amr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Amr ibn Yuhmad al-Awzā’iyy. He was born in 88 AH, narrated from Aṭṭā’ ibn Abī Rabāḥ, Makhūl, Qatādah, and others, and passed away in 157 AH. See: Ibn Sa‘d. 1998. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*. Juz’ 7: p. 488; al-Mazziyy. 1983. *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*. Juz’ 17: p. 207; Ibn al-Mubarrad. 2011. *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*. Juz’ 1: p. 178; al-Dhahabiyy. 2005. *Siyar A‘lam al-Nubalā’*. Juz’ 7: p. 107.

²⁷³Abū Ghuddah. 2014. *Al-Isnād min al-Dīn*. p. 20.

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Yazīd ibn Zuray²⁷⁴ said, “Every religion has their horsemen. For this religion, they are the scholars of *isnād*.”²⁷⁵ *Al-Ḥāfiẓ* Abū Sa‘d al-Sam‘āniyy²⁷⁶ wrote, “The words of the Prophet peace be upon him must be relayed, but their authenticity can only be known through an authentic *isnād*. The veracity of an *isnād* can only be known from the transmission of a *tsiqah* (trustworthy narrator) from another *tsiqah* and of an *‘adl* from an *‘adl*.”²⁷⁷ Abū ‘Alī al-Jayyāniyy²⁷⁸ stated, “Allah has conferred the *ummah* three special favors never granted to those before: *isnād*, lineage, and language.”²⁷⁹

Ibn Ḥazm²⁸⁰ explained in *al-Faṣl fī al-Mīlal wa al-Ahwā’ wa al-Niḥāl* that the transmission from a *tsiqah* to another that reaches the Prophet pbuh is an exclusive favor

²⁷⁴Abū Mu‘āwiyah Yazīd ibn Zuray‘ al-‘Aishiyy (or al-Taymiyy) al-Baṣriyy. He was born in 101 AH, narrated from Sulaymān al-Taymiyy, Ḥumayd al-Ṭawīl, Khālid al-Ḥizā’, and others, and passed away in 182 AH. See: Ibn Sa‘d. 1998. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*. Juz’ 7: p. 289; al-Mazziyy. 1983. *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*. Juz’ 32: p. 124; Ibn Ma‘bad. 1991. *Mashāhīr ‘Ulamā’ al-Amsār*. p. 162; al-Dhahabiyy. 2005. *Siyar A‘lam al-Nubalā’*. Juz’ 8: p. 263.

²⁷⁵Al-Dhahabiyy. 2005. *Siyar A‘lam al-Nubalā’*. Juz’ 8: p. 264.

²⁷⁶Abd al-Karīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Maṣṣūr al-Tamīmī al-Sam‘āniyy al-Khurāsāniyy. He was born in 506 AH, narrated from Abū ‘Abdillāh al-Farāwī, ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Anmāṭiyy, and others, and passed away in 562 AH. See: al-Subkiyy, ‘Abd al-Wahāb ibn ‘Alī. 1964. *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyyah al-Kubrā*. Al-Qāhirah: Faiṣal ‘Isā al-Babī al-Ḥalabī. Juz’ 7: p. 108; Ibn Kathīr. 2015. *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*. Juz’ 12: p. 175; Ibn Taghrībirdiyy, Yūsuf. 1963. *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣra wa al-Qāhirah*. Miṣra: Wizārah al-Thaqāfah. Juz’ 5: p. 375; al-Dhahabiyy. 2005. *Siyar A‘lam al-Nubalā’*. Juz’ 20: p. 456.

²⁷⁷Al-Sam‘āniyy. 1993. *Adab al-Imlā’ wa al-Istimlā’*. p. 4.

²⁷⁸Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Ghassāniyy al-Andalusiyy al-Jayyāniyy. He was born in 427 AH, narrated from Ḥakan ibn Muḥammad al-Judhāmī, Abū Bakr ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, Abū al-Walīd al-Bājiyy, and others, and passed away in 498 AH. See: Ibn Bashkuwāl, Khalaf ibn ‘Abd al-Malik. 1989. *Al-Ṣilah*. Al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyy and Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-Lubnāniyy. Juz’ 1: p. 233; al-Dabbīyy, Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā. 1989. *Bughyah al-Multamis fī Tārīkh Rijāl Ahl al-Andalus*. Al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyy and Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-Lubnāniyy. Juz’ 1: p. 327; al-Dhahabiyy. 2005. *Siyar A‘lam al-Nubalā’*. Juz’ 19: p. 148; Ibn Taghrībirdiyy. 1963. *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*. Juz’ 5: p. 192.

²⁷⁹Al-Suyūṭiyy. 2010. *Tadrīb al-Rāwī*. Juz’ 2: p. 160.

²⁸⁰Abū Muḥammad ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn Sa‘īd ibn Ḥazm ibn Ghālib al-Fārisiyy. He was born in 384 AH. He narrated from Yaḥyā ibn Mas‘ūd ibn Wajh al-Jannah, Yūnus ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn Mughīth, Abū ‘Amr, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Ṭalamankiyy, and others. He passed away in 456 AH. See: al-Ḥamīdiyy, Muḥammad ibn Futūḥ. 1989. *Judhwah al-Muqtabis fī Tārīkh ‘Ulamā’ al-Andalus*. Al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyy and Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-Lubnāniyy. Juz’ 2: p. 489; Ibn Kathīr. 2015. *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*. Juz’ 12: p. 19; Ibn Khallikān, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad. 1972. *Wafayāt al-A‘yān wa Anbā’ Abnā’ al-Zamān*. Bayrūt: Dār Ṣādir. Juz’ 3: p. 325; al-Dhahabiyy. 2005. *Siyar A‘lam al-Nubalā’*. Juz’ 18: p. 184.

for Muslims from Allah. Narrations characterized by *irsāl*²⁸¹ or *i‘dāl*²⁸² are present in most Judaism sects, but the temporal distance between them and Mūsā is not as close as between Muslims and Prophet Muḥammad pbuh. According to Ibn Ḥazm, their gap with Mūsā was more than 30 generations, equivalent to more than 1,500 years²⁸³, and their narrations reached only Simeon and his ilk. As for Christians, their narrations are only limited to the prohibition of divorce, and even then, the narrator was an infamous fabricator. Indeed, those narrations transmitted by liars or unknowns are aplenty in Judaism and Christianity. Additionally, it is completely impossible for Jewish narrations to reach a companion or successor of a prophet, or for Christian ones to go beyond Simeon and Paul the Apostle.²⁸⁴

Ibn Taimiyyah²⁸⁵ confirmed, “*Isnād* is one of the properties of this *ummah* and Islam. In Islam, it is among the properties of the People of *Sunnah*. The Rafidites, on the other hand, place the least attention to *isnād* since they only attest to narrations that confirm their desires; contradicting these, they claim, is a sign of fabrication. For this reason, ‘Abd al-Rahmān ibn Mahdiyy²⁸⁶ commented, ‘The righteous scholars write

²⁸¹The direct attribution of a saying to the orator by someone who is not a contemporary or immediate successor of the orator.

²⁸²The omission of two or more consecutive narrators from the *isnād*.

²⁸³Note this gap was at the time of Ibn Ḥazm.

²⁸⁴Ibn Ḥazm, ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad. n.d. *Al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā’ wa al-Niḥal*. Al-Qāhirah: Maktabah al-Salām al-‘Ālamiyyah. Juz’ 2: p. 81-83; Al-Suyūṭiyy. 2010. *Tadrīb al-Rāwī*. Juz’ 2: p. 159.

²⁸⁵*Shaykh al-Islām* Abū al-‘Abbās Taqīyy al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Ḥarrāniyy. He was born in 661 AH, narrated from Ibn ‘Abd al-Dā’im, Ibn Abī al-Yusr, Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, and others. He passed away in 728 AH. See: Ibn al-Mubarrad. 2011. *Tadhkirah al-Huffāz*. Juz’ 4: p. 1496; Ibn Ṭulūn, Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī. 1949. *Al-Qalā’id al-Jawhariyyah fī Tārīkh al-Ṣālihiyyah*. Dimashq: Maktab al-Dirāsāt al-Islāmiyyah. p. 328; al-‘Asqalāniyy. 1980. *Al-Durar al-Kāminah*. Juz’ 1: p. 154; Ibn Kathīr. 2015. *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*. Juz’ 14: p. 163; Ibn Rajab, ‘Abd al-Rahmān ibn Aḥmad. 2005. *Al-Dhail ‘alā Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*. Riyād: Maktabah al-‘Abīkān. Juz’ 2: p. 387.

²⁸⁶Abū Sa‘īd ‘Abd al-Rahmān ibn Mahdiyy ibn Ḥassān ibn ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-‘Anbariyy. He was born in 135 AH, narrated from ‘Umar ibn Abū Zā’idah, Hishām ibn Abū ‘Abdillāh al-Dastawā’iyy, Shu‘bah, and others, and he passed away in 198 AH. See: Ibn Sa‘d. 2001. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*. Juz’ 7: p. 298; al-Mazziyy. 1983. *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*. Juz’ 17: p. 430; al-Dhahabiyy. 2005. *Siyar A‘lam al-Nubalā’*. Juz’ 9: p. 192.

everything that supports and challenges their arguments, but the deviants only record that which supports their contentions. The innovators contrive and tread a third path: they disregard the hadith and even the Qur’ān in their principles unless to buttress their assertions, never for invocation.”²⁸⁷

The Qur’ān is the subject of scholars of diverse sciences—the exegete, the reciter, the hadith scholar, and so forth. Each field has its own specific nomenclatures, and scholars have laid down principles unique to their respective areas. It is therefore said, “One who talks outside his expertise will come up with nonsense.” Though the scholars of hadith and *qirā’āt* agree that *tawātur* (= *mutawātir*) means circulation and abundance, they differ on the methodology and criteria to establish it.

5.2.3 *Tawātur* according to *Hadīth* Scholars

Maḥmūd al-Ṭaḥḥān in his book *Taisīr Muṣṭalaḥ al-Ḥadīth* etymologically defined *mutawātir* as an active participle derived from *al-tawātur*, which means continuance. One may say نواتر المطر, which means the rain is falling down continuously. Technically, it is the narration of such a great number of individuals that their conspiracy to fabricate it becomes virtually impossible.

The author of *al-Mukhtaṣar fī ‘Ilm al-Ḥadīth* wrote, “*Al-khabar al-mutawātir* is a narration transmitted by a large number of narrators such that it is typically impossible for them to conspire its fabrication. This condition must persist at the start, middle, or end of a chain. Examples of it are the Qur’ān and the five obligatory prayers.”

²⁸⁷Ibn Taymiyyah, Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm. 1986. *Minhāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah fī Naqḍ Kalām al-Shī‘ah al-Qadariyyah*. Riyāḍ: Jāmi‘ah al-Imām Muḥammad ibn Sa‘ūd al-Islāmiyyah. Juz’ 7: p. 37.

5.2.4 Conditions of *Mutawātir* according to *Hadith* Scholars

According to al-Ṭaḥḥān, a hadith is considered as *mutawātir* if it satisfies the four following criteria:

1. It is narrated by many individuals, though the precise threshold remains a moot point. The preferred opinion, nonetheless, is 10 narrators.
2. This minimum figure must be present in all levels of the *sanad*.
3. Their conspiracy to forge the hadith should be typically impossible.
4. The transmission must be based on the senses, such that the narrator states, “I heard, we heard, or we touched.” If it is instead based on reason, such as his opinion on the temporal creation of the world, the narration cannot be labelled as *mutawātir*.

Mutawātir hadith is categorized as *‘ilm al-ḍarūrī* (compelling, undeniable knowledge), and as such every *mutawātir* is accepted without any need to investigate its narrators. Hadith scholars classify *mutawātir* into two:

1. *Al-mutawātir al-lafziyy*: a hadith that is *mutawātir* in both text and meaning.
2. *Al-mutawātir al-ma‘nawiyy*: a hadith that is *mutawātir* in meaning only.

5.3 *Qiraat* Scholars' Conception of *Mutawatir*

According to *qirā'āt* scholars, *sanad* is the chain of narrators who relay the *qirā'ah*,²⁸⁸ *riwāyah*,²⁸⁹ *ṭarīq*,²⁹⁰ and *wajh*²⁹¹ from the original source. Put simply, it is the path (of narration) that leads to the Qur'ān.²⁹²

5.3.1 Devotion of *Qirā'āt* Scholars to *Isnād*

Scholars of *qirā'āt* have placed much attention to *isnād*: they travel in search for it; distinguish which of it is 'āliyy, nāzil²⁹³, *muttaṣil* (unbroken), or *munqaṭi'* (broken; missing narrator); and explain its flaws. This is a science seemingly obscure to many students as they believe that tracing and investigating the *isnād*, as well as examining each level of the chain and each narrator, are the sole jurisdiction of hadith scholars. Likewise, their apparent unawareness of the exhaustive endeavors of *qirā'āt* scholars to identify the people, levels, and narrators of their *isnād* may have caused the students to overlook this science. This custom of preserving *isnād*, in fact, has continued to the present day—a time where similar paths and chains in other sciences have long discontinued. This is part of Allah's promise to preserve His book until the Final Day.

Indeed, reading the introduction of acclaimed *qirā'āt* books that compile the entire *riwāyāt* and *ṭuruq* relayed by imams of *qirā'āt*, one will be astonished by the

²⁸⁸The entirety of narrations and *ṭuruq* from a single imam.

²⁸⁹What is attributed to one of the narrators of an imam.

²⁹⁰What is attributed to someone below the *rāwī* of an imam or lower.

²⁹¹Choices or alternatives (in recitation) narrated from the imam through one of his *rāwī*. To illustrate: reciting the *basmalah* between two chapters according to the *qirā'ah* of Ibn Kathīr and 'Āṣim, a *riwāyah* of Qālun from Nāfi', and *ṭarīq* of al-Aṣbahāniyy from Warash. Here, one can say that there are three *wujūh* (p. *wajh*) for reciting the *basmalah* between two chapters, but it is incorrect to say that there are three *qirā'āt*, *riwāyāt*, or *ṭuruq*. See: Ibn al-Jazariyy. n.d. *Al-Nashr*. Juz' 2: p. 199.

²⁹²Al-Qaṣṭallāniyy, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad. 2013. *Laṭā'if al-Ishārāt li Funūn al-Qirā'āt*. Al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah: Mujamma' al-Malik Fahd li Ṭabā'ah al-Muṣḥaf al-Sharīf. p. 173.

²⁹³If there are two chains for the same hadith, then the chain with the least amount of levels (*ṭabaqah*) is called 'āliyy, while the other nāzil.

prodigious quantity of those *asānīd*, which have been subjected to meticulous attention and carefulness up to their apices. Whenever they find any aberration or fault in an *isnād*, scholars would call to its attention, elaborate its flaw, and alert others of that *ḍaʿīf* (weak), *majhūl* (unknown), or *matrūk* (abandoned) *isnād*. Such is the immense effort put forth by the reciters to preserve and review their *asānīd*. *Al-Ḥāfiẓ* Muḥammad ibn al-Jazariyy (d. 833 AH) remarked, “One who observes the *asānīd* of *qirāʾāt* books and understand the biographies of the narrators will understand the extent of our inquiry, review, consideration, and authentication. This science is neglected, and its entry locked: these are the main reasons for the abandonment of most *qirāʾāt*. May Allah preserve the remainders.”²⁹⁴

5.4 Ibn Mujāhid’s Criteria of *Tawātur*

Ibn Mujāhid likened the *āthār* concerning the *hurūf* of the Qurʾān to those regarding the hadith in terms of acceptance, rejection, authenticity, and weakness. These must be verified by observing the *asānīd* and investigating the narrations on the part of specialist, expert scholars. He explained:

“The *āthār* narrated about *hurūf* [i.e. *qirāʾāt*] are similar to those narrated about laws: some are unanimously agreed [to be authentic], prevalent, and well-known; some are abandoned and detested, dishonoring those who practice them, even if they had been previously narrated and memorized; some are relayed by narrators who have muddled their contents: he forgets his narration and what he had listened due to the passing of time, such that if the hadith is mentioned in front of an expert, he will identify and

²⁹⁴Ibn al-Jazariyy. n.d. *Al-Nashr*. Juz’ 1: p. 193; Ibn al-Jazariyy. 2006. *Ghāyah al-Nihāyah*. Juz’ 1: p. 139; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādiyy. 2001. *Tāriḫ al-Baghdād*. Juz’ 5: p. 144.

correct the error. His narration is disregarded if he persists on his error and is unwilling to part from it. This is perhaps the most common reason for narrators whose hadith is abandoned and narration criticized. Nevertheless, such criticism is the sole authority of scholars proficient in *akhbār*, [matters of] *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*, and laws, not those who are unknowledgeable in hadith or unobservant in *riwāyah* and *ikhtilāf* [difference in opinion]. Similarly, some *āthār* narrated about the *hurūf* of the Qur’ān are grammatically sound, common, and clear; some are grammatically sound and clear but uncommon; some are of irregular and uncommon language; some have weak syntactic meaning but are nonetheless still read; some are muddled due to poor retention, leading to faulty recitations—either an obvious grammatical error known to even those who understand little Arabic, or an obscure one known only to brilliant scholars. The *āthār* on *qirā’āt* have come in all these forms.²⁹⁵

Ibn Mujāhid made clear reference to *al-tawātur al-qirā’ī* (*mutawātir* in recitation), by which he meant the consensus of the people of a given province on the *qirā’ah* of a reciter and their reciting according to that *qirā’ah*. He clearly distinguished between *tawātur* in hadith and *qirā’ah* by explaining that the ascription of a *qirā’ah* to a reciter is based on the consensus of the people of his province of residence, not because he is the sole reciter of that particular *qirā’ah* in the region. Ibn Mujāhid wrote, “The people of Madinah, Makkah, Kufa, Basra, and *al-Shām* read according to the *qirā’ah* that they have learned from those before them. That is, a person from each province that had studied under the successors, and whose *qirā’ah* is the subject of consensus of scholars and the public, so that they follow his path (of *qirā’ah*) and grasp

²⁹⁵Ibn Mujāhid. 1980. *Kitāb al-Sab’ah*. p. 48-49.

his school (of *qirā'ah*), in accordance to the narration of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, Zayd ibn Thābit, 'Urwah ibn al-Zubayr, Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir, 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, and 'Āmir al-Sha'biyy, that 'the *qirā'ah* is a tradition taken by the successor from the forebear, so recite however you were taught.'"²⁹⁶

Concluding his discussion on the reciters of the provinces, Ibn Mujāhid stated, "These seven reciters from Hejaz, Iraq, and *al-Shām* succeeded the *qirā'ah* of the successors. Their *qirā'ah* are adhered to by the people of these named provinces and their neighboring regions, excepting for parts of the *qirā'ah* where the reciter, for his own recitation, had elected upon certain irregular *hurūf* [i.e. *wujūh*] narrated from those before him. Such selection is not part of the *qirā'ah* of the public. It is also most inappropriate for the intellectual to overstep the traditions of past imams and scholars by reciting in a *wajh* that he views as grammatically acceptable in Arabic or that which was read by a reciter whose *qirā'ah* is not agreed upon."²⁹⁷

He explained that the consensus on the *qirā'ah* of a reciter must come from every populace of the province. For example, he narrated that Mālik and Ibn Wahab said, "The *qirā'ah* of Nāfi' is a tradition (*sunnah*)."²⁹⁸ Clarifying that *qirā'ah* Nāfi' is the *qirā'ah* of his province of residence, Ibn Mujāhid relayed an affirmation from 'Abdullāh ibn Wahab, "The *qirā'ah* of the Madinans is a tradition." Someone asked him, "Do you mean *qirā'ah* Nāfi'?" He replied, "Yes, the Madinans, scholars and otherwise, all recite according to *qirā'ah* Nāfi'."²⁹⁹ and continued, "The Madinans

²⁹⁶ibid. p. 49-50. Note the inclusion of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb as one of the reciters among the companions, which *al-Dhahabiyy* did not mention in *Ma'rifah al-Qurrā' al-Kibār*.

²⁹⁷ibid. p. 87.

²⁹⁸ibid. p. 62.

²⁹⁹ibid. p. 62-63.

continue to recite until today according to his *qirā'ah*.³⁰⁰ Ibn Mujāhid posited that the people of a province may abandon the *qirā'āt* of certain reciters due to the loss of *al-tawātur al-qirā'ī*. For instance, he commented on *qirā'ah Ibn Muḥaiṣin*, “Not all Makkans recited according to his *qirā'ah* as they did with Ibn Kathīr’s. Ḥumayd ibn Qays, the brother of ‘Umar ibn Qays Sandal, was also in Makkah, and he studied under Mujāhid and recited in full accordance with his *qirā'ah*. The *qirā'ah* on which the Makkans collectively recite today is that of Ibn Kathīr.”³⁰¹

Ibn Mujāhid relayed another example of *al-tawātur al-qirā'ī* from Masrūq, who said, “‘Abdullāh (ibn Mas‘ūd) taught us *qirā'ah* in the mosque, after which we would sit and correct the recitations of others. Only *Qirā'ah ‘Abdullāh* was recited in Kufa, and its people did not know of any other *qirā'āt*.” Ibn Mujāhid said, “The first to teach *qirā'ah* according to the *muṣḥaf* compiled by ‘Uthmān was Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Salmiyy, whose name was ‘Abdullāh ibn Ḥabīb. He sat in the largest mosque and dedicated himself to teach the Qur’ān. He remained doing so for 40 years, as told by Abū Ishāq al-Sabī‘iyy.”³⁰²

While commenting Ibn Mujāhid’s work, Ibn Jinniyy suggested that *al-tawātur* is of varying qualities, “In one form, it is the consensus of the majority of reciters in a province; this is the one laid down by Abū Bakr Aḥmad Mūsā ibn Mujāhid in his *Qirā'āt al-Sab‘ah* ... the other form contradicts the first, and our contemporaries have labelled it as *shādhah* ...”³⁰³

³⁰⁰ibid. p. 64.

³⁰¹ibid. p. 65-66.

³⁰²ibid. p. 68.

³⁰³Ibn Jinniyy, ‘Uthmān. 1999. *Al-Muḥtasab fī Tabyīn Wujūh Shawādh al-Qirā'āt wa al-Īdāh ‘anhā*. Al-Qāhirah: al-Majlis al-A‘lā li al-Shu‘ūn al-Islāmiyyah. Juz’ 1: p. 32.

Ibn Mujāhid also indicated toward another criterion of *al-tawātur al-qirā'ī*, which is congruence with the text of the *muṣḥaf*. He adduced the text as evidence for the authenticity of a *qirā'ah*, and so he considered the Qur'ānic orthography as a measure of authentic recitation. For example, in Āl 'Imrān 3:184, Ibn 'Āmir, alone, read *al-zubur* with an additional *bā'* (بالبينات وبالزير), as it is written so in the *muṣḥaf* of the people of *al-Shām*. Conversely, other imams omitted it (بالبينات والزير).³⁰⁴ In Ghāfir 40:21, Ibn 'Āmir read كانوا هم أشد منكم قوة, with a *kāf* in *minikum*, while other imams read كانوا هم أشد منهم قوة with a *hā'*, as written in their *maṣāḥif*.³⁰⁵ In al-Ḥadīd 57:24, Nāfi' and Ibn 'Āmir omitted the pronoun *huwa*, so that the clause reads فإن الله الغني الحميد, as written in the *maṣāḥif* of Madinah and *al-Shām*, whereas the others read it as فإن الله هو الغني الحميد, as found in the *maṣāḥif* of Makkah and Iraq.³⁰⁶

Summarizing the above discussion, Ibn Mujāhid's defined three criteria for *al-tawātur al-qirā'ī*:

1. The acceptance and recitation of a *qirā'ah* by the populace of a given province; the *qirā'ah* should be based on what they have been taught by the reciters among the companions who lived among them.
2. Consistency with Arabic rules.
3. Congruence with *muṣḥaf al-imām* that 'Uthmān had sent to the provinces.

Based on these criteria, Ibn Mujāhid heavily criticized narrations that contradict the consensus in terms of either recitation or language. He wrote, “Some phrases where *izhār* is forbidden are (al-Ankabūt 29:35) ولقد تركنا, (al-Baqarah 2:256) قد تبين وقال طائفة

³⁰⁴Ibn Mujāhid. 1980. *Kitāb al-Sab'ah*. p. 221.

³⁰⁵ibid. p. 569.

³⁰⁶Ibn Mujāhid. 1980. *Kitāb al-Sab'ah*. p. 627. In *Ḥirz*, al-Shāṭibiyy showed the legal authenticity of the Qur'ānic orthography in several places. See: al-Shāṭibiyy, al-Qāsim ibn Fiyyurah. 2010. *Ḥirz al-Amānī wa Wajh al-Tahānī fī al-Qirā'āt al-Sab'*. Dimashq: Maktabah Dār al-Hudā. p. 47-85.

(Āl ‘Imrān 3:72), وهمت طائفة (Āl ‘Imrān 3:122), and their likes. They must solely be recited with an *idghām*. However, Ibn al-Musayyibiyy narrated from his father that the *dāl* is read with an *izhār* when it meets *tā’*. This is what I have told you, that reading it with an *izhār* is an aberration from acceptable Arabic speech and is a notably unsightly utterance due to the propinquity between the place of articulation of *dāl* and *tā’*, making the articulation of *izhār* difficult. Likewise, it is not permissible to read *tā’ sākinah* with an *izhār* if it precedes a *dāl*. For example, فلما أثقلت دعوا الله (al-A‘rāf 7:189) and أجيب دعوتكما (Yūnus 10:89) must only be read with an *idghām*. However, it was narrated once more from al-Musayyibiyy that it is read with an *izhār* in Yūnus.³⁰⁷

5.5 Al-Ṭabariyy’s Criteria of *Tawātur*

Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabariyy’s conditions for *ikhtiyār* could be found through a careful examination of his *Jāmi‘ al-Bayān*. The Imam was particularly strict in establishing and clarifying these conditions and distinguishing the untrue from the authentic. He did not suffice with the three aforementioned criteria (authenticity of the *sanad*, consistency with Arabic, and consistency with ‘Uthmānic orthography), and so he defined some additional stipulations, as will be discussed later. The reason for this was the uncertainty of valid *qirā’āt* and narrations during his time, so that people would recite at times with a common language, at times an uncommon language, or at times in contradiction to the *mushaf*. The imam was therefore determined to select for the *ummah* the highest and most popular of narrations. He did so with the highest ardor and sharpest observation, and he laid three conditions for the acceptability of a narration and reciter: the consensus

³⁰⁷Ibn Mujāhid. 1980. *Kitāb al-Sab‘ah*. p. 115.

of reciters on a *qirā'ah* and its prevalence and popularity among them. It is with these three expressions that Ibn Jarīr presented his *ikhtiyār*. At times, he would use “the consensus of the reciters”, sometimes “prevalence”, on occasion “the popular *qirā'ah*”, infrequently both “prevalence” and “the popular *qirā'ah*”, and rarely the combination of these terms.

5.6 Summary

This chapter has discussed the definition of *sanad*, the importance of *sanad* among *qirā'āt* scholars, the conception of *mutawātir* according to both, and the views of Ibn Mujāhid and al-Ṭabariyy on *mutawātir* in *qirā'āt*. Muslim scholars, past and present, have placed the utmost attention to *isnād*, so much so that its negligence would nullify the authenticity of a science or nullify one's credibility. Both hadith and *qirā'āt* scholars, likewise, greatly value *isnād*, though the efforts of the latter are seemingly obscure to most students. In fact, their tradition of preserving *isnād* is still enduring until today. Hadith scholars generally considered as *mutawātir* any narrations that are transmitted by a defined number of narrators at each level whose conspiracy to lie is virtually impossible. They also divided *mutawātir* into *ma'nawiyy* and *lafziyy*. *Qirā'āt* scholars make no such division, and their criteria of *mutawātir* may differ from a scholar to another. According to Ibn Mujāhid, a *qirā'ah* that is *mutawātir* should be one that is unanimously agreed upon and recited by the populace of the province in which the reciter resides. Al-Ṭabariyy, on the other hand, stated that a *mutawātir qirā'ah* is the consensus of *qirā'āt* scholars on a given *qirā'ah* as well as its prevalence and popularity among them. The relation of both scholars' criteria to Ibn 'Āmir's *qirā'ah* will be explained in the following chapter. It will discuss the third and fourth objectives of this

study, which is the factors behind al-Ṭabariyy’s rejection and Ibn Mujāhid’s acceptance of *qirā’ah* Ibn ‘Āmir, as well as the evaluation of his chain, *ṭurūq*, and *uṣūl*.

