



Historical-Rijālī Slip-ups in the Book "Ma‘rifatul Ḥadīth" Related to Faḍl ibn Shādhān and His Student ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qutayba

Mahdi Bayat Mokhtari*

Associate Professor, Department of Shi‘a History Studies, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, NeyshAbūr University, NeyshAbūr, Iran.

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Abstract

The writings of *Shaykh Ṣadūq* (d. 381 AH) increasingly contain narrations from "*Faḍl ibn Shādhān*" (d. 260 AH) from Imam *Riḍā* (AS). Over the past centuries, theologians and jurists have relied on these reports as a basis for their arguments and interpretations in theological and jurisprudential matters. However, Professor Muḥammad Baqir Behboudi, citing the *Rijāl* of *Kashshī* and *Ṭūsī*, claims that "*Ibn Shādhān*" was born after the martyrdom of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) and thus considers those narrations to be unreliable. In his view, the responsibility for attributing the narration of "*Faḍl*" from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) lies with "*‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qutayba*," whom

* bayatmokhtari@neyshAbūr.ac.ir

he deems to be a false and untrustworthy individual. In contrast, the author of this article, through a review of the *Rijāl* of *Kashshī* and *Ṭūsī* and other sources, and by considering various evidences, reaches a different conclusion in both areas, positing that *Ibn Shādhān* was born around the year 180 AH or earlier, which would allow for the possibility of reporting from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) (who died in 203 AH). Moreover, the reports from "‘*Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qutayba*" recognized as a Shi‘a narrator and theologian contemporary with Imam *Hādī* and Imam ‘*Askarī* (AS), are transmitted in "*Tehdhīb al-Aḥkām*," "*al-Istibṣār*," "*Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhul Faqīh*," and the writings of *Shaykh Ṣadūq* as well as other foundational Hādīth sources. The author, through a deep exploration of the statements of *Kashshī*, *Najāshī*, *Ṭūsī*, *Hillī*, and other experts in the field of *Rijāl* such as *Mirdāmād*, *Wahid Behbahani*, *Shūshtarī*, and *Zanjani*, firmly establishes that "*Ibn Shādhān*" is a highly esteemed scholar, trustworthy, and one of the eminent luminaries of the Ahl al-Bayt school of thought.

Keywords: Imam *Riḍā* (AS), *Faḍl ibn Shādhān*, Muḥammad Baqir Behboudi, ‘*Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qutayba*.

Introduction

Muḥammad Baqir Behboudī, a contemporary Hādīth scholar, emphasizes two main points in his book "*Ma‘rifat al-Ḥadīth*" under the sections: "*Masā’il Faḍl ibn Shādhān fī ‘Ilal al-Sharāyi‘ wal Aḥkām*," "*Risālah al-Imām Abī al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (AS) ilal Ma‘mūn*," and "*Abū Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qutayba al-Nīsābūrī*":

A) He states, "It is necessary that *Faḍl*'s birth occurred shortly after the death of *Riḍā* (AS), and it is not v'Alīd for him to narrate from *Riḍā* (AS);" he emphasizes that *Ibn Shādhān* (d. 260 AH) was born after the martyrdom of Imam *Riḍā* (AS), and therefore, it is impossible for him to report from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) (Behboudi, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 379). Consequently, works such as "*ʿIlal al-Sharāyiʿ wal Aḥkām*" and "What *Riḍā* (AS) wrote to *Ma'mūn* about the Essence of Islam," as well as other reports transmitted by "*Faḍl*" from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1404 AH: vol. 2/106, 129; *ibid*, 1965 AD/1385 AH: 1/251), are deemed incorrect. Moreover, *Ṭūsī* lists "*Faḍl*" only among the companions of Imam *Hādī* and Imam *ʿAskarī* (AS).

B) The responsibility for attributing the narration of "*Faḍl*" from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) falls on "*ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qutaybah*," who is considered a "Liar," "Forger," "Fabricator," and "Compiler." *Ibn Qutaybah* changed the content and narratives, mixing them together. The "*ʿIlal al-Sharāyiʿ*" from which *Ibn Qutaybah* quotes "*Faḍl*" from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) contains the same issues that were transmitted by "*Muḥammad ibn Sinān*" from Imam *Riḍā* (AS), which, in principle, lacks credibility due to its questionable nature (*Wajādah*) and has since been altered (Behboudi, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 261 and 299).

Based on the aforementioned perspectives, the present study is organized into two sections:

- 1) Proving the authenticity of the narrations of *Faḍl ibn Shādhān* from Imam *Riḍā* (AS);

- 2) The credibility of *‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qutaybah* from the viewpoint of the *Rijālīs*.

1. Background

According to the studies conducted so far, there has not been an independent written work on this subject akin to the current article. However, there are writings that can be influential in advancing the topic and contain detailed or summarized sections of this article. Mukhtari (2009 AD/1388 SH) in the article "The instability of *Faḍl ibn Shādhān*'s Narrations from Imam *Riḍā* (AS)," and the same author (2009 AD/1388 SH) in the article "The Shortcomings of the Encyclopedia of Islamic Culture Regarding *Faḍl ibn Shādhān*," and also (2010 AD/1389 SH) in the article "The Mistakes of the Book *Ma‘rifatul Ḥadīth* Regarding *Faḍl ibn Shādhān*'s Narrations from Imam *Riḍā* (AS)," and again (2011 AD/1390 SH) in the article "Evaluating the Criticism of *Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Qutaybah*," have addressed this area.

2. Methodology

The author of these paper, by gathering library resources and information and presenting it in an analytical-descriptive method, attempts to provide a well-documented and reasoned boundary on two topics: "Proving the authenticity of the narrations of *Faḍl ibn Shādhān* from Imam *Riḍā* (AS)" and "The Credibility of *‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qutaybah* from the Viewpoint of the Scholars of Narration," and to explain the errors and deviations that have occurred.

3. Proving the Authenticity of *Faḍl* Ḥādīths from Imam *Riḍā* (AS)

To prove the above goal, we will address several topics:

3.1. The Reason for the Inconsistency of "*Faḍl*" Ḥādīths from Imam *Riḍā* (AS)

Narrators are divided into three categories: Some always narrate directly from the impeccable Imams, while others exclusively narrate through intermediaries, and a group has both direct and indirect narrations from the Prophet (PBUH) and the Imams (AS) (Māmaqānī, 1970 AD/1350 SH: 1, 194).

The narrations of "*Ibn Shādhān*" from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) are on par with other narrators. His narrations from that Imam fall into two categories:

A) Direct Narrations: *Faḍl*'s direct transmission from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) is not exclusively found in "*al-ʿlal*" or "The letter of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) to *Ma'mūn*," each of which is considered a book in itself (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 106 and 129). He also reports many other Ḥadīths related to monotheism, prophets, Imams, commandments, and more from that Imam (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 187; 2, 19, 25, 26, 106; *ibid*, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 58; *ibid*, 1988 AD/1398 SH: 137, 269; *ibid*, 2010 AD/1413 AH: 4, 419).

B) Indirect Transmission: In some cases, *Ibn Shādhān* has conveyed narrations from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) through his teacher, "*Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā*," (Kulaynī, 1943 AD/1363 AH: 1, 36) and it has occasionally happened that he has narrated with two intermediaries from the Imam (AS) (*ibid*: 3, 32).

The fact that he has reports both directly and indirectly from the Imam (AS) is quite normal and has many examples among narrators. *Ibn Abī 'Umayr*, although counted among the companions of Imam Ṣādiq (AS) (Ibn Dāwūd, 1971 AD/1392 AH: 159), narrates some Hadiths with two or three intermediaries. *Ḥammād ibn 'Īsā*, also from the companions of Imam Ṣādiq (AS), has the same characteristic (Irfaniyan, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 76). The companions of the Imams (AS) are not always present with them, and it happens that the Imam (AS) delivers a legislative statement in a meeting where the narrator is not present, resulting in the transmission of those narrations through intermediaries. *Kulaynī* narrates from *'Abdullāh ibn Ja'far al-Ḥimyarī* and *Sa'd ibn 'Abdullāh Ash'arī*, sometimes with intermediaries and sometimes directly (Kulaynī, 1943 AD/1363 AH: 1, 107 and 326, 341, 457, 468).

Several points can be mentioned to explain the inconsistency in the narrations of the narrators:

- A) The possibility of meeting between the narrator and the one narrated about is not always present; sometimes a brief opportunity, such as during the *Ḥajj*, occurs when some Hadiths are received directly from them while the remaining reports are transmitted through intermediaries;
- B) Sometimes the narrator receives Hadiths from his teacher, who later dies, and then reports some directly from memory while conveying others he has forgotten through intermediaries;
- C) At times, a student receives a number of Hadiths from his teacher and then, for various reasons, does not see him again. To ensure the

remaining reports, he receives them through one of the more established narrators who had previously had more contact with the teacher. *Ibn Qūlawayh* received only four Hadiths directly from *Sa'd ibn 'Abdullāh al-Ash'arī*, while the others were transmitted through his father or brother (Najāshī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 123).

3.2. The Teachers and Students of *Faḍl ibn Shādhān*

If "*Faḍl*'s" teachers passed away in the years close to the martyrdom of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) (d. 203 AH), his narration from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) is strengthened. Reflecting on two points assists us in understanding the truth: *Many Rijāl* sources consider the age of 20 as the age for acquiring Hadith, and the minimum maturity of the narrator is taken into account. On the other hand, receiving Hadiths from a teacher has a continuity feature and may have occurred at the beginning, middle, or end of the scholarly life of either of those narrators.

A) Hishām ibn Ḥakam: *Ṭūsī* has transmitted a report from "*Hishām ibn Ḥakam*" through "*Ibn Shādhān*." (1944 AD/1364 SH: 9, 226) "*Faḍl*" is said to have passed away in the year 179 (Kashshī, 1404: 2/526), while Najāshī states that he died in the year 199 (Najāshī, 1427: 433). Shūshtarī considers *Faḍl*'s dating to be more accurate due to his familiarity and notes that "*Hishām ibn Ḥakam*" died before *Hārūn* (d. 193 AH) as a result of fear of being arrested, which he believes is more reliable than *Najāshī*'s chronology (1417: 10/556). Even if *Najāshī*'s transmission is established, it does not undermine our purpose.

B) Ismā'il ibn 'Ayyāsh: *Ṭūsī*, at least twice, transmitted from "*Ismā'il ibn 'Ayyāsh 'Anasī*," who was a hadith scholar from the caliphate school

in Syria, through *Faḍl ibn Shādhān* (Ṭūsī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 454 and 470). He passed away in 181 at the age of over seventy (Khaṭīb Baghdādī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 6, 221; Ibn Ḥajar, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 98; Ibn Abī Ḥātam, 1951 AD/1371 AH: 1, 191; Dhahabī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 8, 312).

C) Dāwūd ibn Kathīr Raqqī: *Dāwūd ibn Kathīr Raqqī* is also among *Faḍl*'s hadith teachers (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 24, 303; Istarābādī, 1886 AD/1306 AH: 1, 19; Ḥusaynī Istarābādī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 21). He died in the year 203, shortly after the martyrdom of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) (Najāshī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 156).

D) Yūnus ibn ‘Abdul Raḥmān: "*Ibn Shādhān*" has at least two hadiths reported from "*Yūnus*" (Kulaynī, 1943 AD/1363 AH: 3, 339 and 7, 10). He passed away in 208 (Ḥillī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 296).

E) Ḥammād ibn ‘Īsā: A statistical analysis indicates that *Faḍl* transmitted from *Ḥammād* at least 90 times in "*al-Kāfī*," 36 times in "*Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*," and 14 times in "*al-Istibṣār*." He died in 209 (Najāshī: 142; Mufīd, n.d.: 205).

F) Ṣafwān ibn Yahyā: *Faḍl* transmitted from "*Ṣafwān*" at least 208 times in "*al-Kāfī*," 84 times in "*Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*," and 28 times in "*al-Istibṣār*." Additionally, other hadith books also contain transmissions from *Faḍl* regarding him (Ṭūsī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 41). Furthermore, there are numerous reports from *Ṣafwān* in the writings of "*Ibn Shādhān*" (*Faḍl ibn Shādhān*, 1988 AD/1409 AH: hadiths 4, 8, 18). *Ṣafwān*, who is counted among the companions of consensus, went to Medina to meet Imam *Jawād* (AS) in the year 210 and passed away there (Najāshī: 197).

G) Naṣr ibn Muzāḥim: In the narrative sources, at least three reports of *Faḍl* have been transmitted from him (Ṭūsī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 185, 441; Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 52, 209 and 212). Naṣr ibn Muzāḥim passed away in the year 212 (Dhahabī, 1962 AD/1382 SH: 4, 25).

H) Muḥammad ibn Abī 'Umayr: He is counted among the companions of consensus and had an extraordinary influence on the character of "*Ibn Shādhān*." Initially, *Faḍl* visited him alongside his father and later alone, acquiring most of the time for receiving and transmitting hadith from him. In "*al-Kāfī*," there are at least 268 reports, in "*Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*," 87 reports, and in "*al-Istibṣār*," 24 reports attributed to "*Ibn Abī 'Umayr*." To this statistic, dozens of other reports from "*Ibn Abī 'Umayr*" in other sources should also be added (Faḍl ibn Shādhān, 1988 AD/1409 AH: Ḥādīth 2, 6, 16, 17; Ṭūsī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 161, 163). He passed away in 217 (Najāshī: 326). Although "*Ibn Shādhān*" is known to have interacted with around 100 teachers, both prominent and general, he transmitted over 95% of his reports from *Ḥammād ibn 'Īsā* (d. 209 AH), *Ṣafwān ibn Yahyā* (d. 210 AH), and *Ibn Abī 'Umayr* (d. 217 AH). How could *Faḍl*, born after the year 203, have received hadith from teachers who died in those years and before?

On the other hand, if the sources indicate that *Faḍl*'s students were companions of Imams *Riḍā*, *Jawād*, *Hādī*, and 'Askarī (AS), there is no doubt that his narration from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) would be credible. We will mention two individuals:

A) Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim: Ṭūsī enumerates several ways to access the works of "*Ibn Shādhān*" in "*al-Fihrist*" and "*al-Mashīkhah*," in some

of which *Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim* has narrated from him; in addition, his narration from "*Faḍl*" appears in the book "*Tahdhīb al-Ahkām*." (1944 AD/1364 AH: 7, 6) If we consider *al-Ṭūsī*'s account to be without credibility, at least it should be acknowledged that "*Faḍl*" falls within his ranks. *Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim* was a companion of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) and had met with him (Ṭūsī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 35; ibid: 1994 AD/1415 AH: 353).

B) ‘Abdullāh ibn Ḥamdawīyyah: He met *Ibn Shādhān* and benefited from his hadith and theological teachings (Kashshī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 748). Ṭūsī counts him among the companions of Imam ‘*Askarī* (AS) (1994 AD/1415 AH: 400), and in a letter that the Imam (AS) wrote to him, he pointed out aspects to affirm the status of *Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abduh Nīshābūrī*, his representative in the *Nīshābūr* region, and clarified the scope of his activities (Kashshī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 848; Ṭūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 397).

3.3. *Rijālī* and Historical Clues

A) Shādhān as a Narrator of Imam Kāẓim (AS): Considering that "*Shādhān*," the father of "*Faḍl*," was a narrator of Imam *Kāẓim* (AS) (Kulaynī, 1363: 8/152), his son is most likely one generation later and could be among the companions of Imam *Riḍā* (AS).

B) Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Īsā: He has extensively narrated from "*Shādhān*," the father of "*Faḍl*." The reports of "*Shādhān*" in the Four Books are all transmitted through "*Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Īsā*," except for one instance narrated by *Muḥammad ibn Jumhūr* (Kulaynī, 1943 AD/1363 AH: 2, 83; 3, 24, 29, 45; 8, 152). He had frequent meetings with Imam *Riḍā* (AS). (Najāshī: 81; Ṭūsī, 1994

AD/1415 AH: 351; Barqī, 1963 AD/1383 AH: 59) Since "*Faḍl*" is in the same class and is among the students of "*Shādhān*," and moreover, he passed away several years after "*Faḍl*," it is thus natural for "*Faḍl*" to narrate from Imam *Riḍā* (AS).

C) Connection with the Deputy of Imam *Riḍā* (AS): One of the hadith scholars of *Ibn Shādhān* was "*ʿAbdulʿazīz ibn Muhtadī*," one of the special representatives of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) (Kashshī, 1404: 779). "*Faḍl*" met him several times and described him as devout and a role model for the people of Qum (ibid: 795). Given that with the death of the appointed representative, the title of deputy becomes meaningless, it is highly probable that these meetings occurred during the lifetime of Imam *Riḍā* (AS).

D) The Mention of *ʿAbdullāh Ṭāhir*'s Governorship: *ʿAbdullāh ibn Ṭāhir* was appointed as the governor of Khorasan in the year 213. He effectively started his work in the year 215, choosing "*Nīshābūr*" as his capital and residing there for 17 years [213-230 AH] (Akbari, 2005 AD/1384 SH: 185). According to *Kashshī*, he tried "*Ibn Shādhān*" for his views and exiled him from *Nīshābūr* (1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 818). This event likely occurred at the very beginning of *ʿAbdullāh*'s arrival. During that time, "*Faḍl*" must have been an esteemed and well-known scholarly figure. How could "*Faḍl*," born several years after the martyrdom of Imam *Riḍā* (AS), be considered a beginning point for scholarly pursuits and hold the title of reference?

E) 50 Years of Narration from Consensus Companions: *Sahl ibn Baḥr Fārsī* recounts that in the last meeting he had with "*Ibn Shādhān*," he

expressed: "I am the successor of many of my elders who have passed away. I have met *Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā* (d. 210), *Ibn Abī 'Umayr* (d. 117), and other prominent figures of the Imamiyah and have narrated hadith from them for 50 years." (Kashshī: 2, 818) Undoubtedly, "*Faḍl*" is not indulging in self-praise. Receiving and narrating hadith from those reputable scholars over such an extensive period implies that he was born around the year 180 and was among the long-lived.

F) Narrating from Imam Sajjād (AS) with Three Intermediaries: "*Faḍl*," who is ranked among the seventh class of hadith scholars, has narrated from Imam *Sajjād* (AS), who passed away in the year 94, solely through three intermediaries (Kulaynī, 1943 AD/1363 AH: 1, 100; 2, 107).

G) Narration with Two Intermediaries from Imam Bāqir and Imam Ṣādiq (AS): In some cases, "*Ibn Shādhān*" has narrated with two intermediaries from Imam *Bāqir* (AS), who passed away in the year 114 (Kulaynī, 1, 413 and 3, 330). According to the author of this text's investigation in the Four Books, "*Faḍl*" has reported around 860 hadiths, of which more than 95 percent have been transmitted with two links from Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS). This means he narrated through one of his two teachers, *Ibn Abī 'Umayr* and *Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā*, from *Mu'āwīya ibn 'Ammār*, *Hishām ibn Ḥakam*, *Jamīl ibn Darrāj*, and others, who are well-known companions of Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS). 'Is it not reasonable, considering his narration with three intermediaries from Imam *Sajjād* (AS) and two intermediaries from the Imams *Bāqir* and *Ṣādiq* (AS), which he also narrated from Imam *Riḍā* (AS)?'

3.4. Becoming a Reference for the Ṭūsī's Rijāl

Behboudi emphasized that Ṭūsī has only counted "*Faḍl*" among the companions of Imam and Imam 'Askarī (AS) (Ṭūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 390, 401). In response, it can be said that proving one thing does not negate others. Shaykh Ṭūsī has included "*Faḍl ibn Sinān Nīshābūrī*" among the deputies of Imam Riḍā (AS) in his biographical works (ibid: 363). Therefore, in all *Rijālī* works and narratorology, "*Faḍl ibn Sinān*" is mentioned among the narrators of Imam Riḍā (AS) (Ḥillī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 229; Ibn Dāwūd, 1971 AD/1392 AH: 151; Māmaqānī, 1929 AD/1350 AH: 3, 8; Jazāyirī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 4, 186; Istrābādī, 1886 AD/1306 AH: 260; Qahpāyī, 1944 AD/1364: 5, 21; Ardibīlī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 2, 5; Ḥā'irī, 1374: 241; Namāzī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 6, 207; Tajlīl, 1943 AD/1363 AH: 95; Khu'ī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 14, 308).

The author strongly suspects that "*Faḍl ibn Sinān Nīshābūrī*" refers to "*Faḍl ibn Shādhān Nīshābūrī*." Changes such as the alteration of "*Shīn*" to "*Sīn*" and vice versa in biographical and narrative texts, especially in earlier works, have occurred frequently. Several clues strengthen this approach:

A) Shaykh Ṣadūq, a century before Ṭūsī, reported "*Ṭal al-Aḥkām*" and other narrations of "*Faḍl*" from Imam Riḍā (AS) with several chains and undoubtedly had access to those writings. However, he did not categorize him under the title "*Faḍl ibn Sinān*" among the companions of Imam Riḍā (AS). This indicates that the intended

meaning of "*Faḍl ibn Sinān*" in his *Rijāl* entries is likely "*Faḍl ibn Shādhān*," which has undergone a textual alteration.

- B)** From Ṭūsī's "*Fihrist*" and "*al-Mashīkha*," it becomes evident that he has several chains for all narrations of "*Faḍl ibn Shādhān*," including "*Ilal*" from *Ṣadūq*. Therefore, it reinforces the possibility that the "*Faḍl ibn Sinān*" he refers to is "*Faḍl ibn Shādhān*." (Ṭūsī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 199; *ibid*, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 10, 86)
- C)** Given that "*Faḍl ibn Sinān*" does not appear in the chain of narration of any hadith, and it is unlikely that an impeccable Imam's representative would not have any mention of him in any narration, this impression is confirmed.
- D)** Some contemporary *Rijālī* scholars, such as Musa Zanjani and Muhammad Taqī Shūshtarī, consider this possibility surrounded by indications of validity. Shūshtarī stated, "*Faḍl ibn Sinān Nīshābūrī* has not been found in any narration, so perhaps he is a corrupted reference to *Faḍl ibn Shādhān Nīshābūrī*, who was among the companions of Imam Riḍā (AS), but the Shaykh did not include him in his listed companions." (Shūshtarī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 8, 404; Zanjani: 2, 563) On the other hand, Azizullah Atarodi cites Ṭūsī, who lists "*Faḍl ibn Shādhān*" among the companions of Imam Riḍā (AS), and because Ṭūsī's printed works do not include "*Faḍl ibn Shādhān*" among those companions, it becomes clear that either his version recorded "*Faḍl ibn Shādhān*" or he read "*Faḍl ibn Sinān*" as "*Faḍl ibn Shādhān*" and deemed it correct (Atarodi, 1988 AD/1367 SH: 341). Imam Riḍā (AS) had held the responsibility of Imamate 17 years before coming to Khorasan, and during that time, "*Faḍl*"

could have been appointed as a deputy. The reception of hadith from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) and representation on his behalf could likely have occurred after his arrival and residence in "Nishābūr" or during approximately two years spent in Marv (Ḥākim Nīshābūrī, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 208).

E) The fact that Ṭūsī counts *Faḍl* among the companions of Imam *Hādī* and *ʿAskarī* (AS) does not negate his companionship in relation to Imam *Riḍā* and Imam *Jawād* (AS). The narration of Ṣadūq, which is two generations earlier and was composed a century before Ṭūsī, explicitly states that *Ibn Shādhān* was among the companions of Imam *Riḍā* (AS), and Ṭūsī's statement cannot be used to dismiss this notion.

F) Moreover, Ṭūsī's reports are not established on comprehensive and definitive criteria:

1) Ṭūsī only lists "*Dāwūd ibn Kathīr Riqqī*" among the companions of Imams *Ṣādiq* and *Kāẓim* (AS) (1994 AD/1415 AH: 202, 336), even though he also narrates from Imam *Bāqir* (AS) (Ibn Qūlawayh, 1955 AD/1375 AH: Chap. 72, hadith 5).

2) Ṭūsī only counts *Ṣafwān ibn Yahyā* among the companions of Imams *Kāẓim*, *Riḍā*, and *Jawād* (AS) (Ṭūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 338, 359, 376), although he also has narrations from Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 3, 293).

3) He only identifies *Ja'far ibn ʿIsā ibn ʿUbayd* as a companion of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) (ibid: 353), even though he narrates from Imams *Ṣādiq* and *Kāẓim* (AS) as well (Khu'ī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 5, 57).

4) He considers *Shādhān ibn Khalīl* among the companions of Imam

Jawād (AS) (ibid: 376), yet he also narrates from Imam *Kāẓim* (AS) (Kulaynī, 1943 AD/1363 AH: 8, 152).

5) *Ṭūsī* lists '*Abdul Raḥmān ibn Abī Najrān* solely among the companions of Imams *Riḍā* and *Jawād* (AS) (1994 AD/1415 AH: 360, 376), but he also narrates from Imam *Kāẓim* (AS) (Ṣadūq 1992 AD/1413 AH: 1, 108).

3.5. The Paths of Shia Scholars to the Hadith of "*al-'Ilal*" and Its Authenticity

First-rate Shi'a scholars have pathways to the hadith of "*al-'Ilal*" and the "Letter of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) to *Ma'mūn*," which categorize the reliability of these two as untrustworthy and as corruptions attributed to *Ibn Qutaybah*.

1) *Shaykh Ṣadūq* (d. 381 AH) has several chains and pathways to the hadiths of "*al-'Ilal al-Sharāyi' wal Aḥkām*" and "What *Riḍā* (AS) wrote to *Ma'mūn* about pure Islam," wherein "*Faḍl*" explicitly states that he quotes them from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 106, 129; ibid, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 4, 457).

2) *Shaykh Ṭūsī* (d. 460 AH) mentions 33 titles from "*Faḍl*'s" works, including "*al-'Ilal*," "*Ithbāt al-Raj'a*," "*al-Dībāj*," and so on. He writes that he has accessed all the hadiths and writings of *Ibn Shādhān* through two routes:

A) *Mufīd* → *Ṣadūq* → *Ibn Walīd* → *Aḥmad ibn Idrīs* → '*Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qutaybah*.

B) *Mufīd* → *Ṣadūq* → *Ḥamzah ibn Muḥammad 'Alawī* → *Qanbar ibn 'Alī ibn Shādhān* → '*Alī ibn Shādhān* (Ṭūsī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 197).

3) Since *Shaykh Mufīd* (d. 413 AH) is present in Ṭūsī's chain, he too has a pathway to "*al-ʿIlal*" of *Faḍl* and other narrations and works of his.

4) *Najāshī* (d. 450 AH), who lists 48 titles from "*Faḍl*'s" works, including "*al-ʿIlal*," states: "My way to the narrations and books of *Ibn Shādhān* is: *Abū al-ʿAbbās ibn Nūḥ* → *Aḥmad ibn Jaʿfar ibn Sufyān* → *Aḥmad ibn Idrīs al-Qummī* → *ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad (Muḥammad) ibn Qutaybah*." (*Najāshī*: 306)

The vast majority of the individuals mentioned in the above chains are trustworthy, just, and commendable, and therefore, contemporary jurists who adhere to the principles of *Rijāl* have presented very high evaluations regarding the authenticity of the hadith of "*al-ʿIlal*" and the "Letter of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) to *Maʿmūn*." Descriptive terms such as authentic, in the realm of authentic, good, akin to authentic, credible, strong, and good have been used. Some jurists, such as the *Āl ʿUṣfūr* (2, 143), *Muḥammad Ḥasan Najafī* (17, 32 and 33), *Āghā Riḍā Hamadānī* (2, 599), *Sayyid Aḥmad Khānsārī* (1, 459), *Sayyid Ruhollah Khomeini* (1989 AD/1368 SH: 1, 245), and *Sayyid Muḥammad Ṣādiq Rūḥānī* (1991 AD/1412 AH: 8, 381 and 387), have referred to "*Faḍl ibn Shādhān*" as "Authentic." *Shaykh Murtaḍā Anṣārī* has also expressed that the chain of "*al-ʿIlal*" and the letter of the Imam to *Maʿmūn* "Does not fall short of authenticity;" it is considered "In the realm of authenticity." (1996 AD/1417 AH: 2, 11)

Their expressions regarding the chain leave no doubt that the chain is sound, which directly results in proving that "*Faḍl*" is a companion of Imam *Riḍā* (AS).

4. 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qutaybah in the Eyes of Rijālī Scholars

Mohammad Baqir Behboudi considers *Faḍl* (d. 260 AH) to have been born after the martyrdom of Imam *Riḍā* (AS), thus he subjects "‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qutaybah," the narrator of "*al-‘Ilal*" and the "letter of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) to Ma’mūn," who reports through "Faḍl" from Imam *Riḍā* (AS), to severe criticism, consequently denying his justice (Behboudi, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 261 and 299).¹ In the opinion of the author, Mr. Behboudi's approach is far from scientific and distant from the truth. The types of narrations from *Ibn Qutaybah* about Imam *Riḍā* (AS) are diverse and varied:

- 1) Sometimes he reports narrations through "*Faḍl*" from Imam *Riḍā* (AS), and this particularity does not exist in "*al-‘Ilal*" or the "Letter of the Imam to *Ma’mūn*," which was criticized by Behboudi. He has

1. How surprising!! Aḥmad Amīn Miṣrī, who has a negative stance towards Shi'a beliefs and scholars, wrote years before Behboudi: "Shi'a people mention "Ibn Qutaybah" in their writings and narrate from him. Sunni people believe that he is 'Abdullāh ibn Muslim ibn Qutaybah al-Dīnawarī (d. 276 AH), the famous and trustworthy author and hadith scholar of the Sunnah, although the "Ibn Qutaybah" that the Shi'a narrate from is considered a Rāfiḍī and among the Ghulāt (extremists and exaggerators)." (Amin, 1996: 275) In response to Aḥmad Amīn Miṣrī's biased remarks, Sayyid Muḥsin Amīn wrote: "Ibn Qutaybah Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Nīshābūrī is among the distinguished Shi'a scholars, and the claim that he is a fabricator is the statement of someone who does not care about what they say." He judges contrary to the truth, asserting that Ibn Qutaybah is indeed "Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Qutaybah al-Nishaburi," who is a prominent scholar of the Shi'a. The assertion that he is a "Fabricator" and "Exaggerator" comes from someone who lacks attention and scrutiny over their own words (Amīn, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 55).

also reported other hadiths related to Oneness (*Tawḥīd*), Prophets, Imams (AS), commandments, and more from that Imam (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 4, 419; *ibid*, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 109 and 187, and 2, 25, 26; *ibid*, 1977 AD/1398 AH: 137, 269; *ibid*, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 58);

- 2) *Ibn Qutaybah* has narrated numerous hadiths through his other teacher "*Ḥamdān ibn Sulaymān*," who is among the trustworthy and contemporary figures of *Faḍl*, from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1,119 and 124; *ibid*, 1976 AD/1397 SH: 242, 416);
- 3) In some instances, *Ibn Qutaybah* reports narrations from Imam *Kāẓim* (AS) through *Faḍl ibn Shādhān*, which he transmitted from his two teachers, *Ibn Abī 'Umayr* or *Ṣafwān* (Ṣadūq, 1978 AD/1398 AH: 76, 356).

In this section, we will address the weaknesses of Behboudi's approach by outlining specific chapters:

4.1. The Status of *Ibn Qutaybah* in Shi'a Hadiths

Ibn Qutaybah has a prominent presence in the hadiths and *Rijālī* sources and plays a commendable and foundational role in transmitting the heritage of Shi'a Islam from the previous generation to the later period after him. His narrations are notably found in early sources such as "*Rijāl Kashshī*," "*Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhul Faqīh*," "*Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*," and "*al-Istibṣār*" (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 3, 378 and 4, 419; Ṭūsī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 4, 209; *ibid*, 1943 AD/1363 AH: 2, 97) and in the works of *Ṣadūq* and later hadith collections such as "*Wasā'il al-Shī'a*" and "*Biḥār al-Anwār*." In hundreds of instances in "*Wasā'il al-Shī'a*," hadiths that include *Ibn Qutaybah* in their chain

of narrators are documented, and both past and present jurists have cited them as references for their Ijtihad (jurisprudential reasoning) and practice. Additionally, he appears in the chains of *Kashshī*, *Ṣadūq*, *Muḥīd*, *Ṭūsī*, and *Najāshī* as one of the esteemed Shia scholars.

Kashshī cites reports through him and relies on his statements for criticism and validation. The reporting of *Faḍl*'s narrative legacy by him reaches dozens of instances (*Kashshī*, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 56, 104, 154... 951, 979, and 1033).

Ṣadūq (d. 381 AH) has access to multiple chains regarding the narrations of "*Faḍl*," with two of those chains involving "*Ibn Qutaybah*." Furthermore, in "*al-Mashīkhah*," he enumerates his chains to many narrators, including "*Ḥamdān ibn Sulaymān*" and "*Ibn Qutaybah*." (*Ṣadūq*, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 4, 457, 528; *ibid*, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 106)

Ibn Qutaybah appears in two ways from the *Muḥīd*'s (d. 413 AH) ways to *Ibn Shādhān* (*Ṭūsī*, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 197; *ibid*, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 10, *al-Mashīkhah*: 47). According to the author, *Ṭūsī* has multiple chains to "*Faḍl*," and in four of those chains, "*Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qutaybah*" is included (*Ṭūsī*, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 197; *ibid*, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 10, *al-Mashīkhah*: 47 and 86). *Najāshī*, in the introduction to his "*Rijāl*," has specified that he has different chains to some individuals, but he has mentioned only one. He has only referred to "*Ibn Qutaybah*" in his chain leading to the works and writings of "*Faḍl*." (*Najāshī*: 306)

4.2. The Teachers of *Ibn Qutaybah*

Although the trustworthiness of a teacher does not necessarily guarantee

the trustworthiness of a student, understanding the principles of the inseparable nature of the learning process from the nurturing and influence of credible teachers on the formation of students' perspectives allows us to open a window into *Ibn Qutaybah*'s character by recognizing his mentors. He did not limit his studies to the region of Khorasan; rather, he met with other scholars from various lands and engaged in learning from them, the majority of whom were credible individuals and companions of the Imams *Riḍā*, *Jawād*, *Hādī* and 'Askarī (AS). Considering the generation of his teachers, *Ibn Qutaybah* lived in the second half of the third century AH.

A) Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn ibn Abī al-Khaṭṭāb

He is regarded as one of *Ibn Qutaybah*'s teachers (Kashshī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 456) and was a companion of the Imams *Jawād*, *Hādī*, and 'Askarī (AS). All *Rijāl* scholars have introduced him as a reliable hadith narrator, jurist, author, and theologian of the Imamate school (Kashshī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 796; Ṭūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 379, 402; *ibid*, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 215; Najāshī: 334). This figure is included in the chains of dozens of hadiths in the "Four Books" and has narrated hadith from *Shādhān ibn Khalīl*, *Ḥasan ibn Maḥbūb*, *Ibn Faḍḍāl*, *Bazanṭī*, *Ḥammād ibn 'Īsā*, *Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā*, and others (Khu'ī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 16, 313).

B) Ḥamdān ibn Sulaymān

The "Four Books" of Shi'a and the writings of *Shaykh Ṣadūq* abundantly contain narrations of *Ibn Qutaybah* from "*Ḥamdān ibn Sulaymān Nīshābūrī*." (Ṭūsī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 4, 209; *ibid*, 1943

AD/1363 AH: 2, 97; Ṣadūq, 1943 AD/1363 AH: 3, 378; ibid, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 1, 33; ibid, 1977 AD/1397 AH: 242, 416; ibid, 1941 AD/1361 AH: 180; ibid, 1942 AD/1362 AH: 163) Ṭūsī has categorized him as a companion of the Imams *Riḍā*, *Hādī*, and '*Askarī* (AS) and, by consensus of *Rijālī* scholars, he is considered trustworthy (Ṭūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 356, 386, 398; ibid, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 118; Najāshī: 138).

C) Faḍl ibn Shādhān

Ibn Qutaybah is listed among the students and even the companions of *Faḍl*. *Ibn Shādhān* was a trustworthy, jurist, and theologian among the companions of the Imams *Riḍā*, *Jawād*, *Hādī*, and '*Askarī* (AS). Ṭūsī and *Najāshī* have specifically counted *Ibn Qutaybah* as one of the students of "*Faḍl*" (*Najāshī*: 306, 327; Ṭūsī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 198; ibid, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 429). According to my calculations, he ranks second in terms of the quantity of narrations from "*Ibn Shādhān*," following "*Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl Nīshābūrī*," and some say he precedes him in rank (*Zanjani*: 2, 565). His numerous narrations from *Faḍl* are cited in "*Rijāl al-Kashshī*," "*Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhul Faqīh*," and other works of *Ṣadūq*, as well as in foundational narrative sources like "*Wasā'il al-Shī'a*," "*Biḥār al-Anwār*," and others.

The Western scholar Madelung wrote: "In Nishabur, Shi'a Islam flourished greatly regarding the efforts of *Faḍl*, the son of *Shādhān*, a renowned Imami narrator, scholar, jurist, theologian, and author of many books, who had independent theories. He is famous for applying reasoning and thought in jurisprudence and theology, and for this

reason, he was particularly criticized. His student and disciple, 'Alī ibn Muḥammad, son of Qutaybah Nīshābūrī, disseminated his numerous books and teachings." (Madelung, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 137)

Despite facing some criticism, *Ibn Qutaybah* undoubtedly devoted himself to strengthening Shi'a perspectives during a time of unparalleled dominance of theological and jurisprudential sects in the Khorasan region, and those who did not comprehend "*Faḍl*" received his legacy through *Ibn Qutaybah*.

D) Ja'far ibn Muḥammad

Ja'far ibn Muḥammad Rāzī Khārī is one of the teachers of *Ibn Qutaybah*. He was among the theologians, hadith narrators, and authors of the Imami School (Kashshī: 1, 37, 338; Ḥillī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 91).

E) Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm

Another of his teachers is "*Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm Marāghī*." He was a companion of Imam 'Askarī (AS), and Ḥillī and *Ibn Dāwūd* listed him in the first section of their *Rijāl* works, which is dedicated to reliable and praised individuals (Kashshī: 2, 815, 816; Ṭūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 397; Ḥillī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 68; *Ibn Dāwūd*: 36).

F) Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Bilāl

Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Bilāl is also among the teachers of *Ibn Qutaybah*. Ṭūsī has considered him trustworthy and one of the companions of Imams *Hādī* and 'Askarī (AS). He is part of a group of representatives who met Imam *Mahdī* (AS), and moreover, Imam 'Askarī (AS) in a letter sent to "*Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abduh Nīshābūrī*,"

referred to him as "Trustworthy," "Faithful," and "Aware of what is required." (Kashshī: 2, 837, 847; Ṭūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 397)

G) ‘Abdullāh ibn Ḥamdawīyyah Bayhaqī

He is also considered one of the teachers of *Ibn Qutaybah*. Ṭūsī regarded him as one of the companions of Imam ‘Askarī (AS), and *Ibn Dāwūd* counted him among the praised individuals (Kashshī: 2, 818; Ṭūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 400; *Ibn Dāwūd*: 119). It seems that some Shi‘a were doubtful about the authenticity of the letter of Imam ‘Askarī (AS) to "*Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abduh Nīshābūrī*," his representative in the Nishabur region. Therefore, the Imam confirmed it by sending a letter to "*‘Abdullāh ibn Ḥamdawīyyah*." (Kashshī: 2, 848) The fact that the Imam (AS) wrote to him and, upon introducing his representative, requested the Shi‘a to refer to him, along with the special "Mercy" granted to "*‘Abdullāh ibn Ḥamdawīyyah*," indicates his high status, greatness, dignity, and influence. One way to recognize the trustworthiness of individuals is if they receive the "Mercy" of the Imam (Ḥusaynī Ṣadr, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 50).

H) Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Walīd

Among the teachers of *Ibn Qutaybah* is "*Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Walīd*." (Kashshī: 1, 402, 2, 706) Is he the same as "*Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad ibn Walīd*," the teacher of Ṣadūq, or are they different? Some of the scholars of *Rijāl* have considered the two to be the same (Khu‘ī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 16, 29). *Ibn Walīd* was contemporary with *Kulaynī* and is regarded as a scholarly and trustworthy figure in the fields of jurisprudence, hadith, and the

critique of narrators (Ṭūsī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 237; Najāshī: 383). However, some correctly identify "*Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Walīd*" as the uncle of "*Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad ibn Walīd*." (Kalbāsī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 2, 462)

4.3. Students of *Ibn Qutaybah*

‘*Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qutaybah* undertook to compile and publish two books, "*Masā’l al-Buldān*" and "*Maj‘alīs al-Faḍl ma‘a Ahl al-Khilāf*." (Najāshī: 259) Additionally, a number of hadith narrators from the school of Shi‘a studied under him and transmitted hadith.

A) ‘*Alī ibn Ḥusaynn ibn Bābawayh*

‘*Alī ibn Ḥusaynn al-Qummī* (d. 329), known as *Ṣadūq* the First and one of the great figures of the Imami School, is considered one of the students of "*Ibn Qutaybah*." (Ṣadūq, 1942 AD/1362 AH: 101; *ibid*, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 76; Majlisī: 4, 296, etc.) Ṭūsī described him as a jurist, of high status, trustworthy, and an author of numerous books (Ṭūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 432; *ibid*, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 157). He appears in the chains of dozens of hadiths in the Four Books. During the period of the Minor Occultation, he came to Baghdad and had a close relationship with "*Ḥusayn ibn Rūḥ Nubakhtī*." He wrote a letter to the Imam *Mahdī* (AS), requesting him to pray that Allah would grant him a child. The response arrived from the holy presence stating that Allah would grant him two righteous sons (Najāshī: 261).

B) *Aḥmad ibn Idrīs Qummī*

One of the narrators of *Ibn Qutaybah* is *Aḥmad ibn Idrīs Qummī* (Ṭūsī, 1989 AD/1411 AH: 41, 160; Majlisī, 51, 43). *Najāshī* and Ṭūsī

considered him one of the trustworthy jurists of the Imami School and a companion of Imam ‘Askarī (AS). He is the author of the book "*al-Nawādir*" and is included in the chains of hundreds of narrations in the Four Books (Najāshī: 92; Ṭūsī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 71; *ibid*, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 397).

C) ‘Abd al-Wāḥid ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdūs

He was a close and trustworthy student of *Ibn Qutaybah*. *Ṣadūq* met him in Nishabur in the year 352 AH and received the narrations of *Ibn Qutaybah* through him. *Ṣadūq*'s abundant commendation of him, according to the opinions of Wahid Behbahani and Māmaqānī, indicates his reliability (*Ṣadūq*, 1943 AD/1363 AH, 4, *al-Mashīkhah*: 457; *ibid*, 1965 AD/1385 AH: 1, 8, 59, 158, 245; 2, 568; Behbahani, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 53; Māmaqānī: 1, 210).

D) Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ‘Alawī

Among the narrators of *Ibn Qutaybah* is *Abū ‘Alī Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ‘Alawī*. *Ṣadūq* referred to him as "*Sharīf*," indicating his high status (*Ṣadūq*, 1978 AD/1398 AH: 356).

E) Ḥasan ibn Ḥamzah ‘Alawī Mar‘ashī

Among the students of *Ibn Qutaybah* is *Ḥasan ibn Ḥamzah ‘Alawī Mar‘ashī* (d. 358 AH) (Majlisī, 23, 110). He is regarded as a highly esteemed figure among the Imami sect, a prominent jurist, a skilled author, an eloquent speaker, a mystic, a pious scholar, ascetic, and rich in good qualities (Najāshī: 64; Ṭūsī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 104).

F) Muḥammad Kashshī

He had a strong connection with *Ibn Qutaybah* and frequently

transmitted from him; he relied on his statements regarding the criticism and assessment of narrators (Kashshī: No. 54, 56, 104, 120, 154...). All scholars of *Rijāl* have regarded *Kashshī* as one of the trustworthy and reliable figures (Ṭūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 440; *ibid*, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 217; Najāshī: 372).

G) Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Zīyārah

Ṣadūq transmitted from *Ibn Qutaybah* through *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Zīyārah* 'Alawī, referring to *Ibn Zīyārah* as "*Sharīf al-Dīn*" and a "*Ṣadūq*," which explicitly affirms his reliability (Ṣadūq, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 239).

The transmission of these illustrious figures, especially the meticulous and discerning narrators from Qum, and their trust in him clearly indicates the exalted status of *Ibn Qutaybah*. They would never transmit from someone who is not "Trustworthy."

4.4. The High Status of *Ibn Qutaybah* According to *Rijāl* Scholars

Since the third century, many scholars of *Rijāl*, narrators, and jurists have recognized and praised the status of *Ibn Qutaybah*:

1) Kashshī: *Kashshī* is considered a pioneer in the field of *Rijāl* and a student of *Ibn Qutaybah*, having authenticated him at least twice. *Kashshī* writes under the title "What has been narrated about *Ishāq ibn Ismā'īl al-Nīsābūrī*...": "Some trustworthy individuals in Nisabur narrated that a message was sent to *Ishāq ibn Ismā'īl* from *Abū Muḥammad* (AS): "O! *Ishāq ibn Ismā'īl*...", some of the "Trustworthy" individuals residing in Nishabur reported that a letter had been sent by Imam 'Askarī (AS) to *Ishāq ibn Ismā'īl* (*Kashshī*: **63**

2, 844). Immediately afterward, *Kashshī* writes under the title "What has been narrated regarding 'Abdullāh ibn Ḥamdawīyyah al-Bayhaqī and Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abdah al-Nīshabūrī": "Some trustworthy individuals have reported that *Abū Muḥammad* (AS) wrote to *Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abdah...*," some of the "Trustworthy" individuals reported that a letter was sent by Imam 'Askarī (AS) to *Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abdah* (ibid: 2, 848). There is no doubt that the term "Some trustworthy individuals" refers to *Ibn Qutaybah*, as *Ṣadūq* transmitted the letter of Imam 'Askarī (AS) to *Ishāq ibn Ismā'īl al-Nīshabūrī* from *Ibn Qutaybah* (Shūshtarī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 7, 571). As previously mentioned, *Kashshī* has narrated from *Ibn Qutaybah* in various instances. The transmission by esteemed individuals and specialists from someone with a background of plurality indicates a certain level of his high status and credibility.

2) **Ṣadūq** (d. 381 AH): In the introduction to "*Man lā Yaḥḍuruhul Faqīh*," he writes: "The goal of recording all reports, even if they are not credible, is not invalid. In this book, I have collated reports that I judge to be authentic, and I believe that they are a proof between me and my God. All these narrations are taken from reliable, well-known, and authoritative books." (Ṣadūq, 1943 AD/1363 AH: 1, 3) On the other hand, he has transmitted several narrations from *Ibn Qutaybah* (ibid: 1, 299, 305, 310, 454, 541, and 4, 419). Therefore, *Ibn Qutaybah* at a minimum possesses the general commendations of *Ṣadūq*.

3) **Najāshī** (d. 450 AH): He wrote that *Ibn Qutaybah Nīshabūrī*, whom *Kashshī* relied upon in his book of *Rijāl*, is among the companions of virtue and a narrator of his books. His works include

"*Majālī al-Faḍl ma'a Ahl al-Khilāf*" and "*Masā'il Ahl al-Buldān*." (Najāshī: 259) The fact that *Najāshī* introduced him as "The relied upon" of *Kashshī*, without himself engaging in authentication or disparagement, implies an endorsement and validation of *Kashshī*'s approach, as it cannot be accepted that *Najāshī*'s lack of authentication and disparagement of *Ibn Qutaybah* is considering his being unknown, since his narrations were present in the hadith books viewed by *Najāshī*.

4) Ṭūsī (d. 460 AH): *Ṭūsī* writes that *Ibn Qutaybah* is a student of virtue and a "Virtuous" person (1994 AD/1415 AH: 429). Some consider the title "Virtuous" to be a useful form of authentication and adjustment, while others see it as a term containing praise (Mīrdāmād, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 60; Shahīd Thānī, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 205; Ṣadr: 399).

5) Allama Ḥillī (d. 726 AH): Allama includes him first in the first part of his *Rijāl*, which is dedicated to trustworthy and praiseworthy individuals whose narrations are acted upon. He introduces him as a "Virtuous" and "Reliable" individual in *Kashshī*'s account. Secondly, in his *Rijāl*, he considers two narrations mentioned by *Ibn Qutaybah* regarding *Yūnus ibn 'Abdulrahmān* to be "Authentic in chain." Thirdly, in his books, he categorizes the narrations that include "*Ibn Qutaybah*" as "Authentic." He writes at one point: "In the chain of this narration, *Ibn 'Abdūs* is included, and his status regarding trustworthiness is unclear to me. If he is reliable, then based on the reliability of *Ibn Qutaybah*, the narration is authentic and its practice becomes established." (Ḥillī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 177, 296; *ibid*,

1991 AD/1412 AH: 3, 448; ‘Āmilī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 6, 87; Maḥmūdī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 156)

6) Ibn Dāwūd (d. 740 AH): He lists *Ibn Qutaybah* in the first section of his book, which is dedicated to praiseworthy individuals, and cites the remarks of *Allama Ḥillī*, which are a combination of the statements of *Najāshī* and *Ṭūsī* regarding him (1971 AD/1392 AH: 141).

7) Muḥammad Ḥillī (d. 770 AH): He addresses the authentication of *Ibn Qutaybah* in the margin of a narration in which he is one of the narrators (1969 AD/1389 AH: 4, 80).

8) Shahīd Thānī (d. 965 AH): He declared a narration to be authentic in which "*Ibn Qutaybah*" is part of the chain (1992 AD/1413 AH: 10, 16).

9) ‘Abdul Nabī Jazā’irī (d. 1021 AH): He includes "*Ibn Qutaybah*" in the section on "Trustworthy Individuals" in his book (1997 AD/1418 AH: 2, 49).

10) Mirdāmād (d. 1041 AH): He writes in one instance: "In the way of *Kulaynī*, *Kashshī*, and others, two esteemed virtuous individuals, *Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl* and *‘Alī ibn Muḥammad Qutaybah*, are included among the earlier Shi‘a narrators. Their prominence among those skilled in the field of *Rijāl* is greater and more well-known than any definitions can convey. The hadiths of both is *Ṣaḥīḥ*, not merely *Ḥasan*." (Mirdāmād, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 121) In another of his works, he states: "The narrations of *Ibn Qutaybah Nīshabūrī* are *Ṣaḥīḥ* just as *Ḥillī* mentioned in *al-Mukhtalif* and *al-Muntahā*, and *Shahīd* in *al-Dhikrā* and *Sharḥ al-Irshād*." (Mirdāmād, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 38)

11) Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdul Riḍā Baṣrī (d. 1085 AH): *Baṣrī* identifies him as one of the most reliable individuals in the field of hadith, a scholar, and a trustworthy figure (1960 AD/1380 AH: 135).

12) Muḥammad Amīn Kāẓimī (11th century AH): The author of "*Hidāyat al-Muḥaddithīn*" also listed *Ibn Qutaybah* among the "Trustworthy." (Kāẓimī, n.d.: 218)

13) Muḥaqqiq Sabziwārī (d. 1090 AH): He writes that *Ṭūsī* praised "*Ibn Qutaybah*" as a "Virtuous" individual and that *Najāshī* regarded him as "Trustworthy," relating him to the companions of *Faḍl* and mentioning him as a narrator of his books. Undoubtedly, these characteristics denote the high status of his personality (Sabziwārī, n.d.: 1, 510).

14) Ḥurr ‘Āmilī (d. 1104 AH): He wrote that the extensive reliance of *Kashshī* on him indicates his authenticity (Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 30, 434).

15) Allama Majlisī (d. 1111 AH): *Majlisī* considered him to be praiseworthy and commendable (1958 AD/1378 AH: 265).

16) Muḥaddith Baḥrānī (d. 1186 AH) points out four points:

A) The *Rijāl* of *Kashshī* indicates that *Ibn Qutaybah* is one of the reliable and frequently referenced scholars;

B) *Ḥillī* considered "*Ibn Qutaybah*" to be authentic in narration. The differentiation between "*Ibn Qutaybah*" and "‘Abdul Wāḥid ibn ‘Abdūs" in terms of the former's lack of authentication and the latter's authentication is an illogical approach since *Ibn Qutaybah* has greater credibility.

C) *Ḥillī* mentioned him among the praiseworthy and trustworthy **67**

individuals.

D) *Ibn Qutaybah* is considered one of the scholarly authorities whose hadiths are unanimously accepted as authentic and do not require validation from *Rijāl* books. The acceptance of narration and reliance of the earlier scholars on someone is stronger than the authentication found in *Rijāl* books (Baḥrānī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 6, 48; 13, 221).

17) Wahid Behbahani (d. 1206 AH): He writes that the reliance of the scholars on a person signifies their "Trustworthiness," which is the apparent implication of the remarks of *Najāshī* and *Hillī* regarding "*Ibn Qutaybah*." If scholars depend on an individual, especially when they consider the justice of the narrator to be a condition and do not accept the reports of unknown narrators, it undoubtedly contains significant trust and even "Authenticity." (Behbahani, n.d.: 49)

18) Sayyid Baḥr al-‘Ulūm (d. 1212 AH): *Baḥr al-‘Ulūm*, after mentioning the narration in which "*Ibn Qutaybah*" is included in the chain, wrote: According to *Najāshī*, he is a reliable companion of *Faḍl* and a narrator of his books, and *Ibn Tāwūs* and *Hillī* have explicitly confirmed the authenticity of his hadith (Baḥr al-‘Ulūm, 1943 AD/1363 AH: 1, 404).

19) Abū ‘Alī Ḥā’irī (d. 1216 AH): He initially referred to the lack of authenticity of *Ibn Qutaybah* from "*Madārik al-Aḥkām*," but then reported his authentication as quoted by *Hillī*, *Baḥrānī*, and *Kāẓimī*.

68 He emphasized that asserting the lack of authenticity of *Ibn*

Qutaybah while considering *Ibn 'Abdūs*, his student, to be trustworthy is unfounded and contrary to the evidence (1995 AD/1374 SH: 5, 68).

20) Mirzā Qummī (d. 1231 AH): He writes that the statements of *Ḥillī* and *Shahīd Thānī* indicate the authentication of "*Ibn Qutaybah*," in addition, according to *Najāshī*, he is acknowledged as trustworthy (1958 AD/1378 AH: 5, 172).

21 and 22) Mullah 'Alī Kanī (d. 1306 AH) and **Mahdī Kajūrī Shirāzī** (d. 1293 AH): These two have mentioned the words of Wahid Behbahani, which contain praise and, indeed, the authentication of "*Ibn Qutaybah*," without any deficiencies (Kanī, 1959 AD/1379 AH: 207; Kajūrī Shirāzī, 2003 AD/1424 AH: 107).

23) Sayyid 'Alī Burūjirdī (d. 1313 AH): He introduces "*Ibn Qutaybah*" as a reliable figure, a student of "*Fāḍil*" *ibn Shādhān*, and a narrator of his books, with a tone of praise (1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 210).

24) Māmaqānī (d. 1351 AH): He also regarded "*Ibn Qutaybah*" as a distinguished and esteemed figure (1929 AD/1350 AH: 2, 308).

25) Abū al-Hudā Kalbāsī (d. 1356 AH): He writes that both *Ibn 'Abdūs* and *Ibn Qutaybah*, who are part of the chains of narration, are among the "Trustworthy" individuals, and we have discussed in detail the rejection of the view of the author of "*al-Madārik*." (1998 AD/1419 AH: 1, 121)

26) Mūsā Zanjānī (14th century AH): The aforementioned scholar wrote: "I consider *Ibn Qutaybah* to be a trustworthy and distinguished figure, although some, like *Majlisī*, have regarded him

as praiseworthy. The author's position in *Madārik al-Aḥkām* regarding the hesitance to accept a narration from him is unfounded." (Zanjānī, n.d.: 2, 436)

27) Muḥammad Taqī Shūshtarī (d. 1414 AH): He regarded *Ibn Qutaybah* as a "Distinguished" personality and elsewhere mentioned him among the "Trustworthy" based on the statement of *Kashshī* (1996 AD/1417 AH: 1, 456; 7, 571).

Conclusion

1) Behboudi, the author of "*Ma'rifatul Ḥadīth*," portrayed *Faḍl* (d. 260 AH) as having been born after the martyrdom of Imam *Riḍā* (d. 203 AH), and thus he deemed the narrations attributed to him from the Imam—which are reported in various books of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*—to be without credibility, attributing this misrepresentation to *Ibn Qutaybah*, a student of *Ibn Shādhān*, and subjected him to severe criticism. The author of this article considers both of Behboudi's views to be erroneous and devastating slips.

2) How could *Faḍl*, who was supposed to be born after the martyrdom of Imam *Riḍā* (AS), narrate hadith from figures like *Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam* (d. 179 or 199 AH), *Ismā'īl ibn 'Ayyāsh* (d. 181 AH), *Dāwūd ibn Kathīr* (d. 203 AH), *Yūnus ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān* (d. 208 AH), *Ḥammād ibn 'Īsā* (d. 209 AH), *Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā* (d. 210 AH), *Naṣr ibn Muzāhim* (d. 212 AH), *Muḥammad ibn Abī 'Umayr* (d. 217 AH), and others? Accepting Behboudi's statement necessitates the rejection of hundreds of narrative and jurisprudential reports of *Faḍl* that are documented in the four principal books from the

aforementioned teachers. Multiple historical indications show that *Faḍl* was at least born by the year 180 AH or earlier. Additionally, *Shaykh Ṭūsī* identifies "*Faḍl ibn Sinān Nīshābūrī*" as the representative of Imam *Riḍā* (A), who scholarly consensus believes to be a scribal error for "*Faḍl ibn Shādhān Nīshābūrī*."

- 3) The narrations of *Ibn Qutaybah* are mentioned in the works of *Kashshī*, *Man lā Yaḥḍuruhul Faqīh*, *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, and *al-Istibṣār*, among others. He received hadith from great and trustworthy Shi'a scholars such as *Faḍl ibn Shādhān*, *Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn ibn Abī al-Khaṭṭāb*, *Ḥamdān ibn Sulaymān*, *Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Bilāl*, *'Abdullāh ibn Ḥamdawīyyah Bayhaqī*, and others. Prominent narrators such as *Shaykh Ṣadūq Awwal*, *Aḥmad ibn Idrīs Qummī*, *Kashshī*, and others have reported from him. The reports from the scholars of Qum, with their precise scrutiny and reliance on him, clearly signify the greatness of *Ibn Qutaybah*.
- 4) Since the third and fourth centuries until now, many scholars, narrators, and jurists such as *Kashshī*, *Ṣadūq*, *Ṭūsī*, *Najāshī*, *Allamah Ḥillī*, *Ibn Dāwūd*, *Shahīd Thānī*, *Mirdāmād*, *Ḥurr 'Āmilī*, *Baḥrānī*, *Wahid Behbahani*, *Baḥr al-'Ulūm*, *Mīrzā Qummī*, *Māmaqānī*, *Kanī*, *Zanjānī*, *Shūshtarī*, and others have attested to his reliability and, at the very least, praised him.

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