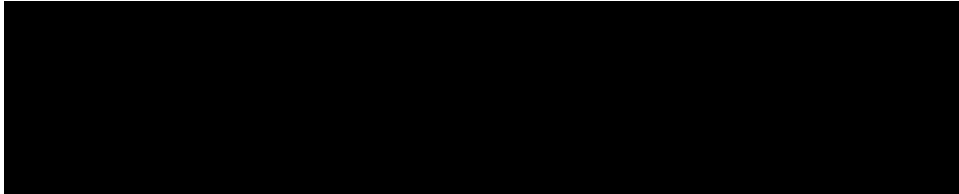




Yahya Ibn Ma'een: A Master in Hadeeth Criticism!

Description



Yahyā Ibn Ma'īn, Abū Zakariyyā, was the Imam, Hadith Master, and the Shaikh of the Scholars of Hadeeth.

His Dedication to Hadith

Ibn 'Adī narrated from a scribe who claimed to be related to **Yahyā ibn Ma'īn**:

*"Yahyā's father, Ma'īn, was the tax collector of Rayy. When he died, he left his son **one million dirhams.**"*

“Yaḥyā spent every last coin on collecting hadith—until he had nothing left to buy even a pair of sandals.”

His Fearless Honesty in Hadith Criticism

The poet **Ibn al-Rūmī** said:

*“I have never seen anyone speak the truth about scholars like **Yaḥyā (ibn Ma‘īn)**. Others were biased in their speech.”*

I (Imam Dhahabi) say:

- This statement by ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Rūmī is not accepted.
- We do not claim infallibility for the hadith critics, but they are:
 - **The most accurate scholars.**
 - **The least prone to error.**
 - **The most just and impartial.**
 - **The furthest from bias.**

As a result, when they agree on the reliability or weakness of a narrator, hold on to their judgment firmly, and do not deviate from it, lest you regret it.

As for the occasional outlier opinions, they are not to be followed—so do not waste your effort debating them.

The Role of Hadith Critics in Protecting Islam

*“Leave the work to the craftsmen, for by Allah, if not for the great hadith masters, the heretics (**zanādiqa**) would have given sermons on the pulpits!”*

Even when **a preacher from the people of innovation** delivers a sermon, he does so:

- **Using the sword of Islam,**
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- Speaking in the language of Sharia,
- Claiming the prestige of Sunnah,
- And appearing to follow the Messenger .

May Allah protect us from misguidance!

His Wisdom on Collecting Hadith

Al-Abbār narrated in his *Tārīkh*:

Yahyā ibn Ma‘īn said:

“We recorded hadith from liars, then we used them as firewood for the oven, baking well-cooked bread with them!”

He also advised:

“When you write hadith, gather everything (*qammish*). But when you narrate, scrutinize (*fattish*).”

His Witty Reply to a Hasty Student

Ja‘far ibn Abī ‘Uthmān narrated:

*“We were sitting with **Yahyā ibn Ma‘īn**, when a man in a hurry approached and said:*

‘O Abū Zakariyyā, narrate to me a hadith that I may remember you by!’

Yahyā replied:

‘Then remember me for this: You asked me to narrate a hadith, and I refused!’”

His Poetry on Piety and Wealth

Yahyā ibn Ma‘īn uttered some lines of poetry saying:

هُمَآثَا دَغِ يَفِ يَ قَبْتِ وَأَمَوِي ... هُمَآرِحُ وَهَلْ حَبَهْذِي لَامِلَا
هُمَاعَطُو هَبَارِشُ بِيْطِي يَتَح ... هَهَلْإِلَ يَقْتَمِبِ يَقْتَلَا سِيْلَ
هُمَالَكْ ثِيْدِحَالَا نَسَحِ يَفِ نَوَكِي وَ ... هَفَكْ بَسْكَتْ وَيُوحِتْ أَمَ بِيْطِي وَ
هُمَالَسُو هَتَالِصِ يَبْنَلَا يَلْعَف ... هَبَرْنَعْ هَبَانَلَا يَبْنَلَا قَطْن

***“Wealth departs, whether gained lawfully or unlawfully,
Yet its sins will remain, to be accounted for tomorrow.***

***A man is not truly pious until his food and drink are pure,
Until his earnings are lawful, and his wealth is clean.***

***Until his words are good and honest,
As the Prophet conveyed to us from his Lord“***

May Allah have mercy on him!

(Siyar A’laamin Nubalaa: 11/71)

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Category

1. Ilm-ur Rijal (The Science of the Narrators of Hadeeth)

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