



The Dating of the Narration "Khayru Nisā'il Jannah" Transmitted by *Tabarānī* in *Shaykh Ṣadūq's al-Khiṣāl* Using the *Isnād-Matn* Analysis Method

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Abstract

Abul Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad ibn Ayyūb ibn Muṭayyir al-Lakhmī al-Shāmī, known as *Tabarānī*, was one of the greatest Sunni Hadith scholars of the Islamic world and one of the longest-living. In Shi'a books, especially *Shaykh Ṣadūq's al-Khiṣāl*, many of his narrations have been transmitted. *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, through correspondence with him in Isfahan, transmitted the narration "Khayru Nisā' al-Jannah" via writing with his permission. This narration is mentioned in various Sunni sources, but in Shi'a sources, *Shaykh Ṣadūq* was the first to

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introduce it into Imami sources, transmitting it from his Sunni Shaykh, *Lakhmī*. For this reason, regarding to the importance of analyzing the chain of narration (*Isnād*) and text (*Matn*) of this narration in both Sunni and Shi'a sources, especially regarding the chronological order of its narrators, the present study was conducted. To this end, using the *Isnād-matn* analysis method for examining hadiths and a descriptive-analytical approach, after describing the different opinions and views among the hadith scholars in explaining this hadith, we seek a clear answer to the question: 'What changes are there in the main clause of this hadith?' The results of the analysis using the *Isnād* and text method show a high degree of correlation of this hadith in various Sunni sources and a slight difference with the Shi'a transmission. The analysis revealed that almost all Sunni sources transmitted this hadith in a similar manner, whereas in the Shi'a transmission by *Shaykh Ṣadūq* in the main phrase, slight changes in wording were made. However, the meaning and concept remain the same, and the general sense is conveyed to the reader.

Keywords: Hadith Dating, *Isnād-matn*, Narration "Khayr Nisā' al-Jannah," Ṭabarānī, Shaykh Ṣadūq, *al-Khisāl*.

Introduction

Isfahan is located in the central plateau of Iran and was the capital of the Buyid dynasty in the 4th century AH (Amanat, 2021 AD/1400 SH: 166 97-98). The Buyids were Shi'a in their religious orientation (Kahn,

2005 AD/1384 SH: 31). They ruled over all of Iran, including Isfahan, and by creating stability in the city, they were able to some extent promote the spread of knowledge and the creation of Islamic civilization (Bahmanyar, 2004 AD/1383 SH: 22-24). At least until the 4th century, after the Muslim conquest, Isfahan was known as a Sunni city. However, after the rise of the Buyids in the first half of the 4th century, it gradually became a Shi'a city with the migration of Sayyids and Shi'as (Ja'fariyan, 1997 AD/1376 SH: 18). One of the most important factors for the growth of Shi'ism in Isfahan was the residence and propagation of the Buyid minister *Sāhib ibn 'Abbād* in the city (Razavi, 2017 AD/1396 SH: 74).

Shaykh Ṣadūq used Sunni narrators from Isfahan, including *Lakhmī*,¹ and always wanted to travel to Isfahan to benefit from the Shaykhs of that land. However, this opportunity was not provided to

1. Lakhmī with "Khā'" is attributed to Lakhm; they are a large tribe and group that traces its lineage to Lakhm, whose name is Mālik ibn 'Adī ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Adad ibn Zayd ibn Yashjub ibn 'Urayb ibn Zayd ibn Kahlān ibn Saba ibn Yashjab ibn Ya'rūb ibn Qahtan. He was one of the sheikhs of Saduq and used to send hadiths to Ṣadūq from Isfahan via writing. (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 16, 2). Al-Lakhmī with "Khā'" with a "Fatha" on the "Lām" and a "Sukūn" on the "khā'", is attributed to Lakhm, and he is Mālik ibn 'Adī. Lakhm and Judham are two tribes from Yemen, and Lakhmi is *Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad ibn Ayyūb al-Lakhmī*, *Abul Qāsim al-Ṭabarānī al-Ḥāfiẓ*, who lived for a hundred years (ibid: 14, 201). *al-Ḥāfiẓ Abul Qāsim* said: "And he was trustworthy" (Mizzī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 249). *Muslimah ibn Qāsim al-Andalusī* said in the book "al-Ṣilah": "Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Hamdānī narrated from him, and he said: He is righteous." *Al-Nasā'ī* said in "Asāmī Shuyukhihī": "There is nothing wrong with him," and he mentioned his chastity, piety, and trustworthiness ('Asqalānī, 1896 AD/1326 AH: 1, 10).

him, so he chose to correspond with them (Sattar, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 190). For this reason, *Shaykh Şadūq* refers to *Ahmad ibn Ayyūb al-Lakhmī* with the phrase "*Akhbaranī fīmā Kataba Ilayya min Isfahān*" (he informed me in what he wrote to me from Isfahan) or "*Wa Akhbaranā Sulaymān ibn Ahmad ibn Ayyūb al-Lakhmī fī mā Kataba Ilaynā min Isfahān*" (and *Sulaymān ibn Ahmad ibn Ayyūb al-Lakhmī* informed us in what he wrote to us from Isfahan). The word "*Akhbaranī*" in transmitting hadiths indicates transmission by writing along with permission (*Ijāzah*) (Şadūq, *al-Khiṣāl*, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 1, 6, 71 and 41; Şadūq, *Amālī*, 2021 AD/1400 SH: 435; Şadūq, 'Uyūn Akhbār al-Ridā, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 1, 227). Therefore, the permission to narrate "*Khayr Nisā' al-Jannah*" was obtained through correspondence with *Sulaymān ibn Ahmad ibn Ayyūb al-Lakhmī* from Isfahan (Mousavi Khursan, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 2).

Abul Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Ahmad ibn Ayyūb ibn Muṭayyir al-Lakhmī al-Shāmī, known as *Tabarānī*, was born in Akka in 260 AH and died in Isfahan in 360 AH (Dhahabī, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 3, 85). *Tabarānī* was famous for being a traveler and wanderer, as he traveled to many countries, including Hijaz, Yemen, Egypt, Iraq, Fars, and Jazira. He eventually settled in Isfahan and spent 60 years there teaching hadith (Aşbahānī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 3). He is known in the world of hadith as *Musnad al-Dunya* (the narrator of the world) and studied under more than a thousand hadith Shaykhs, including *Miqdād*

al-Nasā'ī, Bishr ibn Mūsā, Hāshim ibn Murthid al-Tabarānī, Brāhīm ibn Mu'ayyid al-Shaybānī, Abū Zar'ah al-Thaqafī, Idrīs ibn Ja'far al-Tayyār, Ali ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Baghawī, and others. Many students also benefited from him, including *Abū Nu'aym al-İsfahānī, al-Husayn ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Marzbān, Abū Bakr ibn Mardawayh, Abū Bakr ibn Abi Ali al-Dhakwānī, Muhammad ibn 'Ubaydullāh ibn Shahrīyār, Abū 'Umar Muhammad ibn Husayn al-Baṣṭāmī, Abul Faḍl Muhammad ibn Aḥmad al-Jārūdī, Abul 'Abbās ibn 'Uqdah, and Abū Nu'aym al-Hāfiẓ*, and others (Dhahabī, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 3, 85; Hamawī, 1995: 4, 18). He was known for his frequent fasting, piety in worship, and night prayers (Aṣbahānī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2). Dhahabī described him as a narrator of hadith, saying: "Wa Kāna min Fursān Hādha al-sha'n ma'a al-Ṣidq wa al-Amānah" (he was one of the knights of this field, with honesty and trustworthiness) (Dhahabī, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 3, 85). Although *Tabarānī* has many works, including *Kitāb Ma'rifat al-Ṣahāba, Kitāb al-Tafsīr, Maqṭal al-Husayn ibn Ali, and Musnād al-'Asharah* (more than a hundred books), he is mostly known for his three famous books, the three *Mu'jams* (*Mu'jam al-Ṣaghīr, al-Kabīr, and al-Awsat*) (Aṣbahānī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 18).

Shaykh Ṣadūq never mentioned his famous name, *Tabarānī*, in *al-Khiṣāl*. He always referred to him as *Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad ibn Ayyūb al-Lakhmī* (Ṣadūq, *al-Khiṣāl*, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 206). A noteworthy point is that in *al-Khiṣāl*, *Ṣadūq* sometimes brought **169**

narrations from *Lakhmī* and then, after narrating the same hadith with a chain of narrators from the Imami Shi'as, brought them together. In fact, he presented the same content with two chains of narration, one Shi'a and one Sunni, to emphasize its content. Perhaps the reason for *Şadūq*'s action was to emphasize the narrators of the chain and the agreement of the two schools on the narration of that hadith. Therefore, in his transmission from *Tabarānī*, *Şadūq* also mentioned one or more narrations related to that hadith from Shi'a narrators, so that on the one hand, he could address the Shi'a view through a Sunni hadith, and on the other hand, he could point to Sunni sources and their agreement with the Shi'a school (*Şadūq*, *al-Khiṣāl*, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 4).

In the book *al-Khiṣāl*, *Shaykh Şadūq* has stated the complete chain of transmission of each narration at the beginning and has included the *Musnad* reports that he has extracted from the famous principles in this book. However, sometimes there are cases in the chain of transmission of some narrations in this book that make them fall outside the level of authentic and good hadith; (*Şadūq*, 1942 AD/1362 AH: 1 and 2). Therefore, the narration in *al-Khiṣāl* does not mean that *Şadūq* approves of that statement or accepts that narration, because in this book he has narrated at least 63 sayings from non-Infallibles (Madani Bajistani, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 1, 378).

The narration "*Khayru Nisā' al-Jannah*" is about the greatest **170** women in the world. This narration is found in the chapter *al-Arba'ah*

(The Four), under the title "The best women of Paradise are four" (as the book is number-centric, it refers to four women who are in Paradise), with hadith number 23, transmitted by *Shaykh Ṣadūq* from *Lakhmī* (Ṣadūq, *al-Khiṣāl*, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 206). Next, we will first examine this narration in *al-Khiṣāl* and then in the texts that appear in Sunni sources with the phrase "*Khayru Nisā' al-Jannah*"—the main phrase of this hadith. Then we will date this narration. The analysis in this article is based on the method of hadith dating and *Isnād-matn*¹ analysis. This article, with its descriptive-analytical method, provides clear answers to questions such as: 'What changes are there in the main clause of this hadith?' 'What is the necessity and benefit of the *Isnād-matn* analysis method in examining this hadith?'

It is assumed that in the main phrase of the narration under discussion, "*Khayru Nisā' al-Jannah*," there is a slight difference in *Ṣadūq*'s transmission compared to the Sunni transmissions.

Therefore, by examining the changes and evolution of the main paragraph of this hadith, which is related to the topic of the best women of the world, we will discuss the virtues and merits of Fatima Zahra (AS) in *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s book *al-Khiṣāl* through a textual-sanctioned analysis of the hadith "*Khayru Nisā' al-Jannah*."

In the present era, researchers have used new analytical methods and studies, including the approach of dating narrations, to examine

hadiths. They seek to discover the original core of the narration within a specific time frame and also pay attention to the main and partial common links in the chain of narration. This method of study serves as a tool for analyzing hadith texts to accurately understand the hadith.

Regarding the way of this research, articles have been written that specifically address the dating of a particular hadith, including:

- The article "Dating the Hadith *Innī Ūtītu al-Kitāb wa Mithlahū Ma‘ah* Based on the *Isnād* and Text Analysis Method" by Fahimeh Gholaminejad and Hossein Sattar, in which the "Hadith of the couch" is examined using the *Isnād-matn* analysis method (Gholaminejad and Sattar, 2023 AD/1402 SH: 19-38).
- An article titled "Investigating the Role of *Shaykh Ṣadūq* in Transmitting the Narration of the Eighteen Virtues of Ali (PBUH) to Shi'a Sources Based on the *Isnād-Matn* Analysis Method" by Fahimeh Gholaminejad et al. was published in 2023 AD/1402 SH. In it, the dating method based on *Isnād-matn* is generally introduced, and then the hadith "*Li Ali (AS) Thamānīyata ‘Ashrata Manqaba*" (Ali has eighteen virtues) is dated using the *Isnād-matn* method (Gholaminejad et al., 2023 AD/1402 SH: 81-97).
- In addition, an article by Fahimeh Gholaminejad, Hossein Sattar, and Mohammad Hassan Saneipour was also published, in which the dating of the hadith "*Hum Khayru man Yashrabu Ṣawba al-Ghamām*" on the topic of the succession and virtues of Imam *Ridā*

(PBUH) is examined using the *Isnād-matn* analysis method (Gholaminejad et al., 2024 AD/1403 SH: 89-107).

Although the *Isnād-matn* analysis method has been used by researchers to date a few specific hadiths, the *Isnād-matn* method has not yet been used by researchers and hadith scholars to examine the hadith "Khayru Nisā' al-Jannah." The different approach in this research is the use of the *Isnād-matn* analysis method to examine this narration, and for this reason, it has a new and fresh perspective.

1. Analysis of the Variants of the Narration "*Khayru Nisā' al-Jannah*"

The narration transmitted on the topic of the greatest women in the world from *Lakhmī* in *al-Khisāl*, in which *Ikrimah* narrates from *Ibn 'Abbās* that he said: "The Messenger of God (PBUH) drew four lines and then said: "The best women of Paradise are Maryam the daughter of *Imrān*, *Khadījah* the daughter of *Khuwaylid*, *Fātimah* the daughter of Muhammad, and *Āsīyah* the daughter of *Muzāhim*, the wife of Pharaoh," is narrated through "*Sulaymān ibn Ahmad ibn Ayyūb al-Lakhmī*" from "*Ali ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz*" from "*Hajjāj ibn al-Minhāl*" from "*Dāwūd ibn Abi al-Furāt al-Kindīyy*" from "*'Ilbā' ibn Ahmar*" from "*'Ikrimah*" from "*Ibn 'Abbās*." (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 206)

This narration is frequently transmitted in Sunni sources.¹ Below, we will analyze the *Isnād* and text of this narration by selecting and

1. Cf. Ṭabarī, 1386: 1/186; Qundūzī, 1422: 2/54.

tracing five different texts and versions, taking into account their different chronological order and examining them against the text of the narration transmitted in *Sadūq*'s *al-Khiṣāl*.

Sadūq is the first hadith scholar to introduce this hadith into Imami sources, transmitting it from his Sunni Shaykh, *Lakhmī*. After Shaykh *Sadūq*, only Allamah *Majlīsī* included this narration in *Bihār al-Anwār*, and that too with the same similar transmission and the same chain of narration as *Sadūq* (*Majlīsī*, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 13, 162; 14, 201; 16, 2; 108, 163).

This narration can be categorized chronologically as follows:

- A) *Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal* (d. 241 AH) Hadith number 2668 (*Ibn Hanbal*, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 3, 194);
- B) *Fadā'il al-Šahāba* by Nasā'ī (d. 303 AH) Hadith numbers 252 and 259 (*Nasā'ī*, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 1, 74 and 76);
- C) *al-Khiṣāl* by Shaykh *Sadūq* (d. 381 AH) Chapter *al-Arba'ah*, hadith number 23 (*Sadūq*, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 206);
- D) *al-Iṣṭī'āb* by *Ibn 'Abd al-Barr* (d. 463 AH) (*Ibn 'Abd al-Barr*, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 4, 1822 and 1895);
- E) *al-İṣāba fī Tamyīz al-Šahāba* by *Ibn Hajar* (d. 852 AH) (*Ibn Hajar*, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 8, 264).

1-1. *Isnād* Analysis of the Narration "Khayru Nisā' al-Jannah"

As mentioned above, the variants of this narration can be categorized

related, there are slight differences in some of them. However, the main common link of this narration is a single narrator, the famous companion *Ibn 'Abbās* (d. 68 AH).

Next, we will analyze the *Isnād-matn* of these variants, examining the individuals in the chain of narration and the changes in the text of the said hadith. Certainly, in some versions, there are differences in the chains of narration, the individuals in the chain, and even in parts of the hadith text, such as changes in wording, the format of the narration, and the elements of the text, which we will address in the *Isnād-matn* analysis.

1-1-1. Transmission and *Isnād* Analysis of Variant A

Based on figure 1, which will follow, according to the narration in *Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal*, two narrators in the successor's generation, *Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt* and *'Ilbā' ibn Ahmar*, heard this narration from *'Ikrimah* from *Ibn 'Abbās*. The last narrator in the companion generation is *Ibn 'Abbās*, who can be considered the final narrator in all transmission paths. This narration is, in fact, *Mawqūf* (stopped at a companion); *Ibn 'Abbās*, as the common narrator, published the narrations. Therefore, the categorization must begin with the generation of *Ibn 'Abbās* (the main common link of the hadith), as the transmission of variant 'a' is from sources before *Shaykh Ṣadūq* and represents the primary chronological limit of this narration. It is also the most explicit transmission in terms of text. Thus, this transmission is chosen as the main text, and other narrations

will be compared with it.

The text of the hadith through this chain is as follows: "*Haddathanā Yūnus, Haddathanā Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt an 'Ilbā' an 'Ikrimah an Ibn 'Abbās, Qāla: Khaṭṭa Rasūl Allāh fī al-ArdAarba 'ata Khuṭūṭ, Qāla: "Tadrūna mā Hādhā?" Faqālū: Allah wa Rasūluh A'lam, Faqāla Rasūl: Afdal Nisā' Ahl al-Jannah Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid, wa Fātimah Bint Muhammad, wa Āsīyah Bint Muzāhim Imra'at Fir'awn, wa Maryam ibn 'Imrān.*" (Ahmad ibn Hanbal, 1416 AH: 3/194)

This hadith is *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Isnād* (Dhahabī, 1409: 3/46). In the hadith, all the narrators are trustworthy, except for "'Ilbā'," who is considered a narrator of Muslim's collection.¹ Although he was also a witness to the hadith of Anas with the words "*Hasbuka min Nisā' al-Ālamīn...*",² 'Ilbā' was a successor and also a narrator of the hadith of *Mubāhalah* (Husaynī Milani, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 8-9).

The "'Ilbā'" meant here is the same '*'Ilbā' ibn Ahmar al-Yashkuri*' (Ahmad ibn Hanbal, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 4, 409). In biographical books, it

1. And *al-Hākim* said: "Its chain of narration is correct," and *al-Dhahabī* agreed with him. I say: And its narrators are trustworthy men of *al-Bukhārī* other than '*'Ilbā' ibn Ahmad*, for he is among the men of Muslim. And it has a supporting narration from the hadith of Anas, in a *Marfū'* form, with the wording: "Enough for you from the women of the worlds..." (al-Albānī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 4, 13-14)
2. And from Anas, may God Almighty be pleased with him, who said: "The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, said: "Enough for you from the women of the worlds are four: Maryam, the daughter of 'Imrān, Āsīya, the wife of Pharaoh, Khadija, the daughter of Khuwaylid, and Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad." (Ṭahāwī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 140; Suyūṭī, 2011 AD/1432 AH: 2, 194; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1973 AD/1352 SH: 3, 214)

is written: "*Ilbā' ibn Ahmar al-Yashkūrī al-Baṣrī* is one of the narrators of *al-Tahdhīb*." (Qaysī Dimashqī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 6, 226)

Ibn Ḥibbān also mentions him in his book *al-Thiqāt* and writes about him: "*Ilbā' ibn Ahmar al-Yashkūrī Sakana Marw Aṣlūhu min al-Baṣrah Yarwī an Abī Zayd al-Anṣārī wa Huwa Jadduhū wa Ism Abī Zayd 'Amr ibn Akhṭab Rawā 'anhu Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt wa Ḥusayn ibn Wāqīd*" [*Ilbā' ibn Ahmar al-Yashkūrī* lived in Marv, but he was originally from Basra. He narrated from *Abū Zayd al-Anṣārī*, who was his grandfather, and the name of *Abū Zayd* was '*Amr ibn Akhṭab. Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt and Ḥusayn ibn Wāqīd* narrated from him] (*Ibn Ḥibbān*, 1972 AD/1393 AH: 5, 280). *Al-Dārimī* also, quoting *Ibn Ma'īn*, introduces him as trustworthy (*Thiqā*) (*Ibn Ma'īn*, n.d.: 1, 182).¹

Another important point in this transmission is that the narration "*Khayru Nisā' al-Jannah*" in *Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal* has a greater difference in its *Isnād* with other variants. The difference in the latter transmission, which is the oldest in Sunni sources related to this narration, is the existence of three different paths and narrators (the said narration appears with three paths and numbers 2668, 2901, and 2957 in *Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal*) in the chain of narration:

"Haddathanā 'Abd al-Ṣamad, Haddathanā Dāwūd, Qāla: Haddathanā 'Ilbā' ibn Ahmar an Ikrimah an Ibn 'Abbās: Anna Rasūl Allah Khaṭṭa Arba'a Khuṭūṭ, Thumma Qāla: Atadrūna lima Khaṭṭatū

1. For more information on the translation of '*Ilbā' ibn Ahmar al-Yashkūrī*', see: *Hāfiẓ al-Mizzī*, 1406: 20/293; *Ibn Nuqṭa*, 1408: 1/121.

Hādhihī al-Khuṭūṭ? Qālū: Lā. Qāla: Afḍal Nisā' al-Jannah Arba'a: Maryam Bint 'Imrān wa Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid wa Fāṭimah ibn Muhammad wa Āsīyah Bint Muzāhim."

Regarding this chain, *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal* writes: Its *Isnād* is *Ṣaḥīḥ*, its narrators are trustworthy narrators of *Ṣaḥīḥ*. *‘Abd al-Ṣamad*: "He is *Ibn ‘Abd al-Wārith ibn Sa‘īd*, and *Dāwūd*: "He is *Ibn Abī al-Furāt al-Kindī al-Marwazī*." (Ibn Ḥanbal, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 5, 113) In another chain in *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, it is narrated: "*Haddathanā Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān, Haddathanā Dāwūd an ‘Ilbā’ an ‘Ikrimah an Ibn ‘Abbās, Qāla: Khaṭṭa Rasūl Allah fi al-Ard Arba'a Khuṭūṭ, Qāla: Atadrūna mā Hādhā? Qālū: Allah wa Rasūlu A‘lāma. Faqāla Rasūl Allah: Afḍalu Nisā'i Ahl al-Jannah Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid wa Fāṭimah Bint Muhammad wa Maryam Bint ‘Imrān wa Āsīyah Bint Muzāhim Imra'at Fir‘awn.*"

This chain, as is clear, is narrated from *Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān* (Ibn Ḥanbal, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 5, 77).

Another point that is noteworthy in the narration of the three chains in *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal* is that in all three chains of *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, due to the antiquity of the hadith in terms of chronological order and its narration by *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, there is only one narrator in the generation of the followers of the followers in the chain of the hadith. That is, in the first chain, *Yūnus*, in the second, *‘Abd al-Ṣamad*, and in the third, *Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān* are the only narrators in the generation before *Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt al-Marwazī*. Of

course, the chain we are examining in this research from among these three mentioned chains in the book *Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal* is number 2668 (Ahmad ibn Hanbal, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 3, 194).

The chain mentioned in number 2668 is slightly different in text from the other chains narrated in *Musnad Ahmad* and is more similar and closer to the narration mentioned in the other chain in *Shaykh Ṣadūq's al-Khiṣāl*, which is narrated from *Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Ismā'il*. In fact, *Shaykh Ṣadūq* also narrated this hadith in *al-Khiṣāl* through two chains: "*Akhbaranī Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Ismā'il, Qāla: Akhbaranā Abū al-'Abbās ibn Manī', Qāla: Ḥaddathanā Shaybān ibn Farrūkh, Qāla: Ḥaddathanā Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt, Qāla: Ḥaddathanā 'Ilbā' ibn Ahmar, Qāla: Ḥaddathanā 'Ikrimah an Ibn 'Abbās, Qāla: Khaṭṭa Rasūl Allah Arba'a Khiṭāṭ fil Arḍ wa Qāla a Tadrūn mā Hādhā Qulnā Allah wa Rasūlu A'lamu fa Qāla Rasūl Allah: Afdaul Nisā' ahl al-Jannah Arba' Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid wa Fāṭimah Bint Muhammad wa Maryam Bint 'Imrān wa Āsīyah Bint Muzāhim Imra'at Fir'awn.*" (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 206)

As is clear, this chain is narrated from *Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Ismā'il* by *Shaykh Ṣadūq* in *al-Khiṣāl*. The other chain is from *Sulaymān ibn Ahmad ibn Ayyūb al-Lakhmī*, which is narrated in *al-Khiṣāl* (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 206). Of course, our examination of this narration from the two chains narrated in *Shaykh Ṣadūq's al-Khiṣāl* is of the chain from *Sulaymān ibn Ahmad ibn Ayyūb al-Lakhmī*, which will be discussed next.

1-1-2. Transmission and *Isnād* Analysis of Variant B

The narration by *Nasā'ī* in the book *Fadā'il al-Sahāba* is presented through two chains. The first chain is from Amr ibn Mansur from *Hajjāj ibn al-Minhāl* (*Nasā'ī*, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 1, 76) and the second chain is from *Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb* from *Abū al-Nu'mān* (*Nasā'ī*, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 1, 74). However, in both ways, the *'Ikrimah* is the same in the category of the followers.

1. Isnād Analysis of Variant B-1

The text of the narration through the first chain (variant B-1) is as follows: "*Akhbaranā 'Amr ibn Mansūr Qāla ana al-Hajjāj ibn al-Minhāl Qāla Thanā Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt an 'Ilbā' an 'Ikrimah an Ibn 'Abbās Qāla Khaṭṭa Rasūl Allah fil Ard Khuṭūṭan Qāla Atadrūna ma Hādhā Qālū Allah wa Rasūlu A'lama faqāla Rasūl Allah Afḍala Nisā' Ahl al-Jannah Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid wa Fātimah Bint Muhammad wa Maryam Bint 'Imrān wa Āsīyah Bint Muzāhim Imra'at Fir'awn*" [*'Amr ibn Mansūr* informed me, he said: *al-Hajjāj ibn al-Minhāl* informed me, he said: *Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt* narrated to us from *'Ilbā'* from *'Ikrimah* from *Ibn 'Abbās* that he said: The Messenger of God drew lines on the ground and said: Do you know what this is? They said: "God and His Messenger know best. Then the Messenger of God said: The best women of the people of Paradise are *Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid*, *Fātimah* the daughter of Muhammad,

180 Maryam the daughter of *'Imrān*, and *Āsīyah* the daughter of *Muzāhim*

the wife of Pharaoh]. Nasā'ī included this hadith in his book under *Manaqib Fātimah Bint Rasūl Allah sallalahu alayhi wa sallam radi Allah anha* (Nasā'ī, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 1, 76).

2. *Isnād* Analysis of Variant B-2

The text of the narration through the second chain (variant B-2) is also as follows: "*Akhbaranā Brāhīm ibn Ya'qūb Qāla ana Abū al-Nu'mān Qāla ana Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt an 'Ilbā' ibn Ahmar an 'Ikrimah an Ibn 'Abbās Qāla Khaṭṭa Rasūl Allah fil Ard Arba' Khuṭūṭ Thumma Qāla hal Tadrūn mā Hādhā Qālū Allah wa Rasūlu A'lama faqāla Rasūl Allah Afḍala Nisā' ahl al-Jannah Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid wa Fātimah Bint Muhammad wa Maryam Bint 'Imrān wa Āsīyah Bint Muzāhim Imra'at Fir'awn.*" (Nasā'ī, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 1, 74).

Regarding the internal differences of these two chains narrated by Nasā'ī, it should be noted that in addition to the difference in the chain of narration, another different part of these two chains is the mention of the word "*Khuṭūṭan*" in the first chain's narration, while in the second chain, this part is "*Arba' Khuṭūṭ*." In fact, in the second chain, the details and number of lines are expressed more precisely. Also, in the first chain, the interrogative particle in the phrase "*Atadrūna ma Hādhā?*" is a *Hamza*, while in the second chain, it is a *Hal*, and the narration is transmitted as "*Hal Tadrūna*." However, the chain of narration for both of these narrations in Nasā'ī's *Fadā'il al-Šahāba*, from *Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt* onwards in the Successor generation, is 181

the same as the earlier Sunni sources, such as *Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal*, which is about half a century older, and also with the later Shi'a sources, such as *Shaykh Ṣadūq's al-Khiṣāl*, which was narrated about 80 years later.

1-1-3. Transmission and *Isnād* Analysis of Variant C

Shaykh Ṣadūq in the chapter *al-Arba'ah* narrates the said hadith from *Lakhmī* with this chain: "Akhbaranā Sulaymān ibn Ahmad ibn Ayyūb al-Lakhmī, Qāla Ḥaddathanā Ali ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, Qāla Ḥaddathanā Hajjāj ibn al-Minhāl, Qāla Ḥaddathanā Dāwūd ibn Abi al-Furāt al-Kindīyy an 'Ilbā' ibn Ahmar an Ikrimah an Ibn 'Abbās, Qāla: Khaṭṭa Rasūl Allah s Arba' Khiṣāt Thumma Qāla khayr Nisā' al-Jannah Maryam Bint 'Imrān wa Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid wa Fātimah Bint Muhammad wa Āsīyah Bint Muzāhim Imra'at Fir'awn." (Ṣadūq, 1942 AD/1362 AH: 1, 206)

The transmission of this narration in *Shaykh Ṣadūq's* book *al-Khiṣāl* has more differences with the transmissions of variants A (*Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal*) and B (*Fadā'il al-Sahāba* by Nasā'ī), which chronologically preceded Ṣadūq's *al-Khiṣāl*. The difference in the latter transmission, which is in the 3rd century AH, is the presence of more narrators in the generation of the followers of the Successor.¹ This means that in *Musnad*

1. "The *Tābi'iñ* is the plural of *Tābi'i* (successor). A *Tābi'i* is someone who has not met the Prophet himself, or if he has seen him, he was not a Muslim at the time of the meeting; but he has met the companions of the Prophet in the state of Islam. And if someone has not seen any of the Companions in the state of Islam, but has met the *Tābi'iñ* (in the state of Islam), he is called followers of the successor."

Ahmad ibn Hanbal, there was only one narrator in the Successor generation, and in Nasā'ī's *Fadā'il al-Sahāba*, there were two narrators, whereas in *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s *al-Khiṣāl*, there are three narrators in the Successor generation in the chain of narration.

It also seems that *Shaykh Ṣadūq* introduced this narration into Shi'a sources with one more intermediary in the generation of the followers of the Successor from Nasā'ī's *Fadā'il al-Sahāba*, which was a source before *al-Khiṣāl*. That is, *Shaykh Ṣadūq* narrated this narration from *Sulaymān ibn Ahmad ibn Ayyūb al-Lakhmī* from *Ali ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz* from *Hajjāj ibn al-Minhāl* in the Successor generation, and Nasā'ī narrated this hadith from *Amr ibn Mansur* from *Hajjāj ibn al-Minhāl* in the Successor generation.

As mentioned earlier, *Ṣadūq*'s *Isnād* in the chains of this hadith has more narrators in the Successor generation compared to the versions in *Musnad Ahmad* and Nasā'ī's *Fadā'il al-Sahāba*, which are older than *Ṣadūq*'s *al-Khiṣāl*. In fact, from the generation of *Dāwūd ibn Abi al-Furāt* onwards, this hadith is narrated through three chains in the generation of the followers of the Successor: one is the "Chain of *Sulaymān ibn Ahmad ibn Ayyūb al-Lakhmī al-Tabarānī Abū al-Qāsim al-Hāfiẓ*, the author of the three *Mu'jams*," about whom it is said that he was one of the trustworthy and authoritative hadith scholars of the companions of *Duhaym*¹ (Dhahabī, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 16, 119-129,

1. *Duhaym* is the title of *Abū Sa'īd 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Ibrahim*, a judge and hadith scholar of the second and third centuries. *Duhaym* is a diminutive of *Duhmān* and means "Wicked," which is why *Abū Sa'īd 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Ibrahim* disliked →

no. 86; Māmaqānī, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 33/23; Dhahabī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 3, 278). He heard hadith from the age of thirteen and sent hadiths to *Ṣadūq* from Isfahan through correspondence. In fact, *Ṣadūq* transmitted the hadith from him through writing¹ (Namazi Shahroudi, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 4, 120).

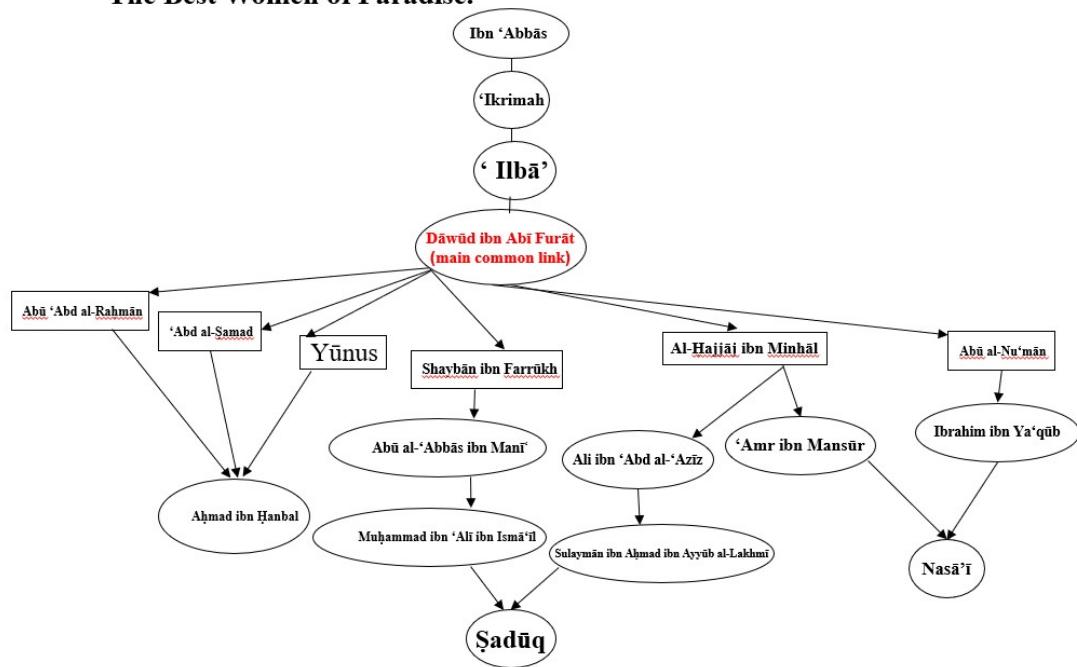
Another narrator is "Ali ibn 'Abd al-‘Azīz," who is *Ali ibn 'Abd al-‘Azīz al-Fazārī al-Kūfī*. This is because in the chains of Imami hadiths, *Ali ibn 'Abd al-‘Azīz al-Muzanī* or *Ali ibn 'Abd al-‘Azīz al-Umawī* is certainly not the intended person, as these two are not famous narrators, and the attribution of *Ali ibn 'Abd al-‘Azīz* to them is not correct (Dhahabī, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 4, 449). In fact, what is clear from *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s *Mashīkha* (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 4, 517, *al-Mashīkha*, under the heading "Bayān al-Tariq ilā Ali ibn 'Abd al-‘Azīz") is that the intended *Ali ibn 'Abd al-‘Azīz* is *Ali ibn Abd al-‘Azīz al-Fazārī*, whose kunya is *Ghurāb Abū al-Mughayra*, meaning the same *Ali ibn Ghurāb* and *Ibn Abīal-Mughayra* (Khu'ī, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 13, 79; Sistani, 2016 AD/1437 AH: 1, 372). The other

the title Duḥaym. Ṭabarānī is one of the hadith scholars who were companions of Duḥaym and heard hadith from him (for he was a h̄adīth scholar, from the companions of Duḥaym). Hadith scholars such as Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn praised Duḥaym and considered him trustworthy and an authority (Khudkar, 2013 AD/1393 SH: 17, 385-386, under Duḥaym). For more information on the translation of Duḥaym, see: (Mizzī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 16, 495).

1. For more information on the translation of Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad ibn Ayyūb al-Lakhmī al-Ṭabarānī, see: (Dhahabi, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 3, 278; Māmaqānī, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 33, 23).

narrator is "*Hajjāj ibn al-Minhāl al-Anmātī*" in the follower of Successor generation in this chain (Dāraqutnī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 115), whose *kunya* was *Abū Muhammad* and was a trustworthy, prolific, and virtuous hadith scholar. He died in Basra in 217 AH (Mizzī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 5, 457; Ibn Sa‘d, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 7, 220).

Figure 1: Spider-web Diagram of the Chains of Transmission for the *hadīth* "The Best Women of Paradise."



1-1-4. Transmission and *Isnād* Analysis of Variant D

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr in the book *al-Istī‘āb fī Ma‘rifat al-Ashāb* narrates this hadith through two chains:

1. Isnād Analysis of Variant D-1

"*Wa Akhbaranā Qāsim ibn Muhammad, Haddathanā Khālid ibn Sa‘d, Haddathanā Ahmad ibn 'Amr, Haddathanā Ibn Ishāq, Haddathanā 'Ārim, Haddathanā Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt an 'Ilbā' ibn Ahmar an 185*

'Ikrimah an Ibn 'Abbās, Qāla: Khaṭṭa Rasūl Allah fil Ard Arba'a Khuṭūṭ, Thumma Qāla: Atadrūna mā Hādhā? Qālū: Allah wa Rasūlu A'lama. Faqāla Rasūl Allah: Afḍala Nisā' ahl al-Jannah Arba'a: Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid wa Fāṭimah Bint Muhammad wa Maryam Bint 'Imrān wa Āsīyah Bint Muzāhim Imra'at Fir'awn" [Qāsim ibn Muhammad informed us, *Khālid ibn Sa'd* narrated to us, *Ahmad ibn 'Amr* narrated to us, *Ibn Ishaq* narrated to us, *'Arīm* narrated to us, *Dāwūd ibn Abi al-Furāt* narrated to us from *'Ilbā' ibn Ahmar* from *'Ikrimah* from *Ibn 'Abbās* that he said: "The Messenger of God, peace be upon him, drew four lines on the ground," then said: "Do you know what this is?" They said: "God and His Messenger know best." Then the Messenger of God (PBUH), said: "The best women of the people of Paradise are four: *Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid*, *Fāṭimah* the daughter of Muhammad, Maryam the daughter of *'Imrān*, and *Āsīyah* the daughter of *Muzāhim*, the wife of Pharaoh]." (Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 4, 1822)

The hadith transmitted by *Ibn 'Abd al-Barr* with this chain (variant D-1) in the book *al-Iṣṭī‘āb*, which chronologically came after the three transmissions A, B, and C, meaning in the 5th century AH, follows the same main phrase of the hadith as variants A and B. Only in *Sadūq*'s transmission did the main phrase of the hadith change from "*Afḍala Nisā' Ahl al-Jannah*" to "*Khayru Nisā' al-Jannah*." That is, in all the Sunni transmissions, the main phrase of the hadith did not change or evolve from the beginning of the 3rd century AH to the 9th century

AH, and only in the Shi'a transmission by *Shaykh Ṣadiq* in *al-Khiṣāl* did this change and slight transmission by meaning in the main phrase of the hadith occur.

2. *Isnād* Analysis of Variant D-2

"*Akhbaranā Qāsim ibn Muhammad, Qāla: Haddathanā Makhlad ibn Sa'd, Qāla: Haddathanā Ahmad ibn 'Amr, Qāla: Haddathanā Ibn Sanjar, Qāla: Haddathanā Arim, Qāla: Haddathanā Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt an 'Ilbā' ibn Ahmar an Ikrimah an Ibn 'Abbās, Qāla: Khaṭṭa Rasūl Allah fil Ard Arba'a Khuṭūṭ, Thumma Qāla: Atadrūna mā Hādhā? Qālū: Allah wa Rasūlu A'lama. Faqāla Rasūl Allah: Afḍala Nisā' ahl al-Jannah Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid wa Fātimah Bint Muhammad wa Maryam Bint 'Imrān wa Āṣīyah Bint Muzāhim Imra'at Fir'awn.*" (Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 4, 1895)

The narration in *Ibn 'Abd al-Barr*'s book *al-Iṣṭī'āb* (variant D-2), as is clear, is accompanied by many narrators in the follower of Successor generation. The reason for the multiplicity of these narrators is the time gap of about three centuries from variant A. However, in the Successor generation, the two narrators named "*Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt al-Kindī al-Marwazī*," who was also trustworthy and from whom *Bukhārī*, *Tirmidhī*, *Nasā'ī*, and *Ibn Mājah* narrated (Şafadī, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 13, 472; Ḥusaynī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 1, 451; 'Ajlī, 2007 AD/1428 AH: 148),¹ in the narration of *Ibn*

1. For more information on the translation of *Dāwūd b. Abī al-Furāt*, see: al-Dhahabī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 10, 176.

‘Abd al-Barr, there is this hadith:

1-1-5. Transmission and *Isnād* Analysis of Variant E

Ibn Hajar in *al-Isāba fi Tamyīz al-Šahāba* narrates the said narration after a gap of 4 centuries from variant D, without mentioning the complete chain of narration and he narrated the hadith only by mentioning the narrator in the category of the companions, namely *Ibn ‘Abbās*. Therefore, *Ibn Hajar* (d. 852 AH) certainly did not hear this narration directly from the companion *Ikrimah* (d. 15 AH), as he died in 852 AH. With this time gap, it is clear that the last narrator has been omitted from the chain of narration, and the last narrators in the companion generation have been mentioned in the chain. In fact, *Ibn Hajar* paid more attention to the core and essence of the hadith, which is the virtues of *Fātimah Zahrā* (SA), and narrates the hadith under the title "*Fātimah al-Zahrā*" as follows: "*Wa Qāla Ikrimah an Ibn ‘Abbās: Khaṭṭa al-Nabī (PBUH) Arba‘a Khuṭūt, faqāla: Afḍala Nisā’ ahl al-Jannah Khadījah wa Fātimah wa Maryam wa Āsīyah.*" (*Ibn Hajar*, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 8, 264).

Under this hadith, *Ibn Hajar* writes to explain: "*Rijāluhum Rijāl al-Sahīh*." (*Ibn Hajar*, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 8, 264)

1-2. *Matn* (Text) Analysis of the Narration "*Khayru Nisā’ al-Jannah*"

The main core of our discussion in this narration is the phrase "*Khayru*

188 *Nisā’ al-Jannah*" (*Şadūq, al-Khiṣāl*, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 206).

However, in all variants A, B, D, and E, that is, in all Sunni transmissions, the main core of the hadith is "*Afdalu Nisā' Ahl al-Jannah*" (Ahmad ibn Hanbal, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 3, 194; Nasā'ī, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 1, 74 and 76; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 4, 1822 and 1895; Ibn Ḥajar, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 8, 264). Although the meaning is not very far apart, the word "*Khayr*" fundamentally means attention and inclination as opposed to "*Sharr*" (evil), and any good deed or kindness to others is considered "*Khayr*" (Ibn Fāris, 1978 AD/1399 AH: 2, 232). However, "*Afdala*" refers to an increase and abundance in something, including "*Khayr*" (Ibn Fāris, 1978 AD/1399 AH: 4, 508). For this reason, in the Shi'a transmission by *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, this phrase underwent lexical changes and a transmission by meaning. But in all Sunni transmissions, this phrase has been narrated in the same way from the beginning of the 3rd century AH to the 9th century AH.

The reason for this change by *Shaykh Ṣadūq* may be related to the method of acquiring and receiving the narration. As we mentioned, *Shaykh Ṣadūq* received this hadith from *Lakhmī* through correspondence and not in person. It is probable that this method of receiving the narration contributed to the slight lexical change in the main phrase of the hadith.

In the said hadith, the order of naming these women is almost the same in all Sunni transmissions. In fact, in all variants a, b, d, and e, the blessed name of *Fātimah Zahrā* is the second name mentioned. **189**

This arrangement and order of names also indicates the importance and high status of *Fātimah Zahrā* (SA) and her placement after the name of *Khadījah*, the esteemed wife of Islam. Only in the Shi'a transmission by *Shaykh Sadūq* is this order slightly different, and the name of *Fātimah Zahrā* (SA) is placed in the third part of this phrase in variant C. There are also other minor textual differences in the body of the hadith. For example, in some transmissions, it is generally mentioned that the Prophet (PBUH) drew some lines on the ground, but in some other transmissions, the exact number of these lines, four, is also mentioned. Another difference is that in some variants, the interrogative particle in the phrase "*Tadrūn mā Hādhā?*" is different; sometimes it is "*Mā*" and sometimes it is a *Hamza*. This difference is shown in the table below.

Table 1: Textual differences of the hadith in various variants

Variant	First Difference	Second Difference	Third Difference	Fourth Difference
Difference in Hadith text in narration Variant A	<i>Arba'ata</i>	<i>Tadrūn</i> <i>mā</i>	<i>Afdal Nisā' Ahl al-Jannah</i>	<i>Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid,</i> <i>Fātimah Bint Muhammad,</i> <i>Maryam Bint 'Imrān, and</i> <i>Āsīyah Bint Muzāhim,</i> <i>Imra'at Fir'awn</i>
Difference in Hadith text in narration Variant B	<i>Khuṭūṭ</i>	<i>Hādhā?</i>		<i>Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid,</i> <i>Fātimah Bint Muhammad,</i> <i>Maryam Bint 'Imrān, and</i> <i>Āsīyah Bint Muzāhim,</i> <i>Imra'at Fir'awn</i>

Variant	First Difference	Second Difference	Third Difference	Fourth Difference
Difference in Hadith text in narration Variant C	<i>Arba 'Khīqatīn</i>	-----	<i>Khayru Nisā' al-Jannah</i>	<i>Maryam Bint 'Imrān, Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid, Fātimah Bint Muhammad, and Āsīyah Bint Muzāhim Imra'at Fir'awn</i>
Difference in Hadith text in narration Variant D	<i>Arba 'ata</i> <i>Khuṭūt</i>	<i>Atadrūna mā</i> <i>Hādhā?</i>	<i>Aṣdal Nisā' Ahl al-Jannah</i>	<i>Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid, Fātimah Bint Muhammad, Maryam Bint 'Imrān, and Āsīyah Bint Muzāhim Imra'at Fir'awn</i>
Difference in Hadith text in narration Variant E	<i>Arba 'ata</i> <i>Khuṭūt</i>	-----	<i>Aṣdal Nisā' Ahl al-Jannah</i>	<i>Khadījah, Fātimah, Maryam, and Āsīyah</i>

Conclusion

Based on this research, it has become clear that *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, by narrating from "*Abul Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Ahmad ibn Ayyūb ibn Muṭayyir al-Lakhmī al-Shāmī*" as one of his Sunni Shaykhs in the chain of the narration "*Khayr Nisā' al-Jannah*," sought to express the virtues of *Fātimah Zahrā* (SA) from the perspective of Sunni narrators themselves. In fact, by using these Sunni narrators, he sought to find confirmation for these virtues.

This hadith is *Mawqūf*, narrated from the companion in the final 191

generation of the chain.

This hadith was also narrated by *'Ubā' ibn Ahmar*, who considered him weak and one of the Muslim men of authority; however, *Ibn Hibbān* mentions him in his book *al-Thiqāt*, and *Dārimī*, from *Ibn Ma'īn*, has called him trustworthy.

In the follower of Successor generation, there are also multiple narrators in each variant, and their number increases in each transmission compared to variant A.

In fact, the transmission of this narration in version A appears in sources prior to *Shaykh Ṣadūq* and thus represents the earliest chronological stage of the report; it is also the most articulate rendering of the narration in terms of its wording. Therefore, version A constitutes the most ancient form of this narration. The transmission in version B is presented through two chains. In addition to differences in the chains of transmission, another point of divergence between the two is that the first chain contains the word "*Khuṭūṭan*," whereas the second presents this portion as "*Arba'a Khutūṭ*." In the second chain, in fact, the details and number of the lines are stated with greater precision and specificity. The transmission of this narration in version C by *Shaykh Ṣadūq* also appears to have entered Shī'i sources from *Fadā'il al-Šahābah* of *al-Nasā'i*, an earlier source than *al-Khiṣāl*, with one additional intermediary belonging to the generation of the followers of the followers. Likewise, version D is transmitted through two chains as well and is accompanied by

numerous transmitters from the generation of the followers of the followers, the multiplicity of who is due to the roughly three-century temporal gap between version A and this version. In version E, *Ibn Hajar*, in *al-Isābah fī Tamyīz al-Šahābah*, transmits the aforementioned narration four centuries after version D, without citing the complete chain of transmission. In reality, *Ibn Hajar* was primarily concerned with the essence and core content of the hadith, which highlights the virtues of *Fātimah al-Zahrā'* (AS), and thus he cites the narration under the entry "*Fātimah al-Zahrā'*."

In the main phrase of the narration under discussion, "*Khayr Nisā' al-Jannah*," the transmission by *Sadūq* is slightly different from the other transmissions. However, this evolution does not change the general understanding of the meaning of the hadith. In fact, *Shaykh Sadūq*'s narration differs from the other narrations only in this phrase. Even in Sunni narrations, after a chronological period of about two centuries, the main phrase of the hadith is still "*Afdala Nisā' Ahl al-Jannah*." When we examine the evolution of the versions and variants A, B, D, and E and then study the transmission of variant C, there is a slight change in the main phrase of the hadith, namely the phrase "*Khayr Nisā' al-Jannah*." Given that this difference exists only in this one transmission and did not appear in subsequent periods, the possibility of a transmission by meaning in *Shaykh Sadūq*'s narration seems more plausible, although this change does not alter the overall understanding of this phrase of the hadith. Therefore, this *Mawqūf* **193**

hadith is narrated in Sunni and Shi'a hadith collections with different chains and paths and has historical authenticity.

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