



## IMAM IBN AL ATHIR'S RESEARCH METHODOLOGY IN QUOTING HADITH-TRADITIONS: A STUDY OF USD AL-GHABAH FI MARIFAT AL-SAHABAH.

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**IMAM IBN AL ATHIR'S RESEARCH METHODOLOGY IN QUOTING  
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**ABSTRACT**

*This brief research paper covers Izzad-Din Abu al-Hassan Ibn al- Athir al-Jazari's research methodology in hadith traditions in his work entitled 'Usd al-ghabah fi marifat al-sahabah'. Some of these types of traditions mentioned by Ibn al- Athir have been covered in this paper like the Shadhdh (anomalous) traditions of the Prophet's letters to various Kings and rulers, the traditions narrating the historical proofs for the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad and the traditions about the delegations that came to the Holy Prophet for the acceptance of Islam etc. Ibn al- Athir's research methodology while noting these traditions can be summarized in the following points:*

- *He explains the time and place where and when the Quranic verses were revealed.*
- *Total number of the traditions narrated by a companion has also been mentioned.*
- *He explains the genre of Gharīb al-Ḥadīth.*
- *The writer notes the chains of the narrators of a hadith and then points out the weakness or trustworthiness of the reporters.*

*This paper is expected to provide a concise perception of Ibn al- Athir's methodology and his way of research in examining and quoting the hadith traditions in his work 'Usd al-ghabah fi marifat al-sahabah'.*

**KEYWORDS:** Imam ibn Al athir', Research Methodology, Hadith-Traditions, Usd Al-Ghabah Fi Marifat Al-Sahabah

## **1 INTRODUCTION:**

Usd al-ghabah is a fine and comprehensive book on the biographies of the Holy Prophet's companions. It has equally been popular in the eyes of the Ulamas and the traditionists of all ages in history. This authorship has highlighted the various characteristics of the lives of numerous companions. It has also presented real picture of love, care and devotion of the companions for their prophet.

For this purpose, he refers to various works on Hadith and Seerah of the Holy Prophet that display the real features of the prophet's life.

The companions are those historical personalities who achieved innumerable victories through the true love and obedience of the Holy Prophet. In this way, this book presents itself as a roadmap towards achieving same type of victories by loving and following the Holy Prophet. In the same way as the companions did.

Imam Ibn al-Athir mentions various types of Hadith and its terminologies to encourage the devotion and passion for Seerah and Hadith studies in the difficulties of its readers. The writer has tried his best to describe the Hadiths in easy and comprehensive way to save the readers from boredom. In the coming lines we intend to present a concise introduction of the author and his methodology of quoting various types of traditions.

### 1.1 IMAM IZZAD-DIN IBN AL-ATHIR; A BRIEF INTRODUCTION, NAME, RACE AND BIRTH.

His complete name is Abu al-Hassan Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ash-Shaybani. He is better known as Ali Izzad-Din Ibn al-Athir al-Jazari <sup>1</sup>. He was born on 4 of Jumādā al-Awwal (جمادى الاول) 555 A.H. in Jazīrat Ibn ‘Umar<sup>2</sup> (جزيرة ابن عمر) and got his earlier nurture on the same place<sup>3</sup>.

### 1.2 Nurture and Education

The information about Izzad-Din Ibn al-Athir’s earlier life are very rare. It seems that he got his early education in the local schools and mosques of Jazīrat Ibn Umar. He learnt the Holy Quran by heart, mathematics, Arabic language and the basics of religion.<sup>4</sup> After some time, his father migrated to Mosul<sup>5</sup> with two of Izzad-Din’s brothers. Mosul was famous city for

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<sup>1</sup> Kahala Umar ibn Rida ibn Muhammad Raghīb, *Mu’jam Ul Mu’allifin*, vol. 7 (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, n.d.), 228.

<sup>2</sup> Cizre (Arabic: جزيرة ابن عمر Jazīrat Ibn ‘Umar) is a town and district of Şırnak Province in the Southeastern Anatolia Region of Turkey, on the border with Syria, just to the northwest of the Turkish–Syrian–Iraqi tripoint. Cizre is the location of Thamanin, the town founded by Noah at the foot of Mount Judi where Noah's Ark came to rest, and a "tomb of Noah" as well as a "tomb of Mem and Zin" can be visited in Cizre. The Editors of Wikipedia, Cizre, Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., 19 February 2019, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cizre>

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Khallikan Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Abu ‘l-‘Abbās Shams al-Dīn al-Barmakī, *Wafiyatil Aaiyan*, vol. 3 (Beirut: Dar Sadir, n.d.), 349.

<sup>4</sup> Shumaisani Hassan Kamil, *Izzad-Din Ibn al-Athir*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Darul Kutubul Ilmiyyah, 1990), 45–46.

<sup>5</sup> Mosul, capital of Nīnawā muḥāfazah (governorate), northwestern Iraq. From its original site on the western bank of the Tigris River, the modern city expanded to the eastern bank and now encircles the ruins of the ancient Assyrian city of Nineveh. Located 225 miles (362 km) northwest of Baghdad, Mosul is Iraq’s second largest city and constitutes the chief commercial centre of the northwestern portion of the country. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica,

the education of its citizens. Most famous Ulamas of the Nation used to live in this city. He benefitted a lot from the highly learned scholars and traditionists.<sup>6</sup>

Whenever he got a chance to go for pilgrimage, he used to see and meet the Ulamas of Baghdad.<sup>7</sup> In the leisure time he used to visit Damascus<sup>8</sup> to get educational benefits from his learned teachers of this area.

He got education from Abu'l Fadl Toosi, Abu'l-Faraj Yahya al-Thaqafi, Muslim Ibn Ali al-Sahih, in Mosul. In Baghdad he went to Abd al-Munim Ibn Kulaib, Ya'eesh Ibn Sadaqah, Abd al-Wahhāb Ibn Sakina, Abu Ahmad Abd al-Wahhāb Ibn Ali al-Sufi. In Damascus his teachers were Abu al-Qasim Ibn Sasri and Zain al-Umana<sup>9</sup>

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Mosul, Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc, September 17, 2014, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Mosul>

<sup>6</sup> Ibn Duqmāq Ṣārim al-Dīn Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad, *Nuzhat Al-Anām Fi Tareekh al-Islam*, 1st ed., vol. 1 (Beirut: Al Maktaba al-Asria, 1999), 53.

<sup>7</sup> **Baghdad**, ... capital of [Iraq](#) and capital of Baghdad governorate, central Iraq. It is situated on the Tigris River at its closest point to the Euphrates, 25 miles (40 km) to the west. The city was founded in 762 as the capital of the ['Abbāsīd dynasty](#) of caliphs, and for the next 500 years it was the most significant cultural of Islamic civilization. The city was largely destroyed at the hands of the Mongol Empire in 1258. (Louay Bahry and Phebe A. Marr, Baghdad, Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. January 17, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Baghdad>

<sup>8</sup> Damascus, city, capital of Syria. Located in the southwestern corner of the country, it has been called the “pearl of the East,” praised for its beauty and lushness; the 10th-century traveler and geographer al-Maqdisī lauded the city as ranking among the four earthly paradises. Nasser O. Rabbat, Damascus, Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., July 26, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Damascus>

<sup>9</sup> Al-Dhahabi Shams al-Din Abū 'Abdullah Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Uthmān ibn Qāymāz, *Tadhkirat Al-Huffaz*, 1st ed., vol. 4 (Beirut: Darul Kutubul Ilmiyyah, 1998), 129.

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### **1.3 Students**

A lot of people travelled to see him because of his educational popularity. That's why the number of his students was in thousands. Some of his most popular students are mentioned here:

- Ibn Khallikan
- Ahmad Ibn Abdullah
- Ahmad Ibn Yusuf al-Marrakshi
- Muhammad Ibn Saeed al-Ḥajjāj
- Kammaluddin Ibn Al-Adeem

### **1.4 Publications**

- ✓ Usd al-ghabah fi marifat al-sahabah.
- ✓ Kamil fi al-Tarikh
- ✓ Al Lubāb fi Tehzeeb ul Ansaab
- ✓ al-Tarikh al-Bahir fi al-Dawla al-Atabekiya

He is also author of some other incomplete books; the detail of which is given below:

- Al Jamay As Sagheer fi 'Ilm al-Bayan
- Tarikh al-Musal

### **1.5 Educational Status**

'Izz al-Din Ibn al-Athir's popularity was not limited up to the studies of History of hadith literature but rather he was considered among the famous learned figures in linguistics, Arrtifilocoins, Genecology, literature and other arts. Historians have mentioned usability of his literary works and his academic status in golden words.

As Imam Shams al-Dīn Al-Dhahabi reports about him:

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## Imam Ibn Al Athir's Research Methodology in Quoting Hadith-Traditions

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"وكان إماما، علامة، أخباريا، أديبا، متفننا، رئيسا، محتشما، كان منزله مأوي طلبة العلم."

"He was an Imam, erudite scholar, traditionist, belletrist, dedicated and learned person. His home was a grand residence for the students<sup>10</sup>

Ibn Khallikan describes him as:

" وكان إماما في حفظ الحديث ومعرفته وما يتعلق به، وحافظا للتواريخ المتقدمة والمتأخرة، وخبيرا بأنساب العرب

وأخبارهم وأيامهم ووقائعهم."

He was an Imam of Hadith and relevant literature. He was so familiar with old and new history, the genealogy of the Arabs and the history of Arabian events and situations<sup>11</sup>.

### 1.6 Death

He was died on 25<sup>th</sup> of Sha'ban 630A.H. in Mosul<sup>12</sup>.

## 2 Introduction to *Usd al-ghabah fi marifat al-sahabah*:

*Usd al-Ghabah Fi Marifat al-Sahabah* is a great comprehensive works on the biographies of the prophet's companions. Allama Ibn al-Athir not only included the earlier work on the companions but also did additional works on them. He has included the biographies of 7554 companions in alphabetical order. He describes the companions' complete name, his genealogy, the details of his migration, his participation in wars with the Holy Prophet, his services during the first caliphate of his first four

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<sup>10</sup> Al-Dhahabi, *Siyar A`lam Al-Nubala*, 3rd ed., vol. 22 (Beirut: Mu'assisah al-Risālah, 1985), 354.

<sup>11</sup> Ibn Khallikan, *Wafiyatil Aaiyan*, vol. 3 (Beirut: Dar Sadir, n.d.), 348–49.

<sup>12</sup> *Mu'jam Ul Mu'allifin*, vol. 22, 228.

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## Imam Ibn Al Athir's Research Methodology in Quoting Hadith-Traditions

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caliphs, date of death, place of burial and the traditions reported by him. He also describes the names of these successors (تابعين) and the younger

companion reported various traditions from the specific companion. Because of Imam Ibn al-Athir comprehensive methodology this work got a prominent status in the historical works on the biographies of the companions.

Allama Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Sakhāwi credits him in this way:

"ثم العز أبو الحسن بن الأثير اخو صاحب النهاية في كتابه أسد الغابة جمع فيه بين عدة من الكتب السابقة كابن مندة وأبي نعيم وابن عبد البر وذيل أبي موسى وعول عليه من جاء بعده حتى إن كلا من النووي والكاشغري اختصره واقتصر الذهبي على تجريد وزاد عليه العراقي عدة أسماء -"

Then brother of Al-Nihayah's (النهاية) author 'Izz al-Din Abu al-Hassan wrote his book Usd al-ghabah and he combined the necessary information of the books like Ibn Mandah, Abu Nu`aym, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr and Abu Musa. His work Usd al-ghabah was also summarized by Imam Nawawī and Imam Kashghari. Imam Dhahabi wrote his book Tajreed on it. Imam 'Iraqi has added some more names to this work<sup>13</sup>.

### 2.1 Way and methodology of Ibn al-Athir in quoting the traditions

Hadith is a narration which is directly connected to the Prophet of Allah

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<sup>13</sup> al-Sakhāwi Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Abd al-Raḥman, *Al-I'lān Bi-l-Tawbīkh Li-Man Dhamm al-Tarikh*, 1st ed., vol. 1 (Beirut: Mu'assiah al-Risālah, 1407 AH), 162.

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### Imam Ibn Al Athir's Research Methodology in Quoting Hadith-Traditions

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concerning his sayings, actions, tacit approvals, descriptions and manners. In his book Imam Ibn al-Athir describes the rare information about the companions from the historical and seerah books. He also mentions the hadiths narrated by the companions. The details of his selected methodology in his book about hadiths are as below:

#### 2.2 Description of the circumstances of the revelation of Quranic verses

He normally mentions various prophetic Hadiths for the description of the time and circumstances in which various verses were revealed. As he notes that the verse <sup>14</sup> " ولا تصل على أحدٍ منهم مات أبدا ولا تقم على قبره " was revealed when the Holy Prophet wanted to say the burial prayer of Abd-Allah ibn Ubayy<sup>15</sup>. In the same way he says with the reference of the verse

<sup>16</sup> "الزاني لا ينكح إلا زانية أو مشركة" that it was revealed about Marthad ibn Abi Marthad al-Ghanawi when he asked permission from the Holy Prophet to marry a prostrate lady named Anaaq<sup>17</sup>. He describes that the verse <sup>18</sup> "وإن جاهدك علي أن تشرك بي ما ليس لك به علم فلا تطعهما وصاحبهما في الدنيا معروفا" was revealed about the companion Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās when his mother agitated against his conversion to Islam and said that she would neither sit in shade nor would eat or drink anything until he would return to atheism<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> *Al-Quran*, 9:84

<sup>15</sup> Ibn al-Athir Izzad-Din Abu al-Hassan Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ash-Shaybani, *Usd Al-Ghabah Fi Marifat al-Sahabah*, 1st ed., vol. 3 (Beirut: Darul Kutubul Ilimiyah, 1994), 297.

<sup>16</sup> *Al-Quran*, 24:3

<sup>17</sup> Ibn al-Athir , *Usd Al-Ghabah Fi Marifat al-Sahabah*, vol. 5, 132.

<sup>18</sup> *Al-Quran*,31:15

<sup>19</sup> *Usd Al-Ghabah Fi Marifat al-Sahabah*, vol. 2, 452.

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### **2.3 Number of the Narrations of the companions**

Ibn al-Athir normally also mentions those companions who narrated traditions in large number. As he mentioned Jabir ibn Abdullah as one of these companions who narrated a good number of traditions<sup>20</sup>. In the same way he describes Anas ibn Malik as a reporter of many traditions<sup>21</sup>. The author also explains the name of those companions who have narrated not more than a single tradition. These are Sa'īd ibn Haidah<sup>22</sup>, Uwaymir Abū Tamīm<sup>23</sup>, Bishr ibn Hilal al-Abdi<sup>24</sup>, Hajar ibn Rabi'a<sup>25</sup>, Hantab ibn al-Harith<sup>26</sup>, al-Akhram al-Asadi<sup>27</sup> and Usamah ibn Akhdari al-Tamimi<sup>28</sup>.

In the same way he also explains the names of those companions who have reported the traditions in least number for example he says about a companion Sa'sa`ah ibn Sawhan al-Abdi (صعصعة بن صوحان العبدى) that

"وهو ممن سيره عثمان إلى الشام، وتوفي أيام معاوية، وكان ثقة قليل الحديث"<sup>29</sup>. (He is one of those who were sent to Syria by Uthman ibn Affan. He died in the caliphate of Mu'āwiyah. He was authentic narrator of traditions in least number.)

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, vol. 1, 492.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, vol. 1, 294.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, vol. 2, 473.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, vol. 4, 306.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, vol. 1, 392.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, vol. 4, 418.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, vol. 2, 81.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, vol. 1, 180.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, vol. 1, 193.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, vol. 3, 21.

## **2.4 Explaining the unfamiliar words in Hadith**

Sometimes, Allama Ibn al-Athir mentions the name of the companion who narrates the traditions having uncommon or seldom used words (غريب الحديث).

As he reports about Zaban ibn Qaisur "وروى حديثنا كثير الغريب في ألفاظه" (and he reports the traditions having any uncommon words)<sup>30</sup>. In the same way he

describes about Qais ibn Makhrumah that "وهو حديث طويل كثير الغريب" (He narrates long traditions containing uncommon words)<sup>31</sup>. Sometimes he

goes in detail towards description and explanation of unfamiliar words as he explains the uncommon words in the report about Raqiqah ibn Saifi

"في هذا الحديث غريب نشرحه مختصرا قوله: لدة عبد المطلب، أي: علي سنه. وأقحلت: أي بست. الخ" (in this Hadith uncommon words, we shall briefly explain them, he says: contemporary of Abd al-Muttalib means who is the same age, famine an extreme lack of food in a region<sup>32</sup>).

In the same way he simplifies the difficult words mentioned in the tradition about Sakhr ibn Sa`sa`ah. "والمضعف: الذي دابته ضعيفة، والمصعب: الذي دابته صعبة" (that the weaker is he whose conveyance is powerless, and the worrier is he whose conveyance is making problem.)<sup>33</sup>

## **2.5 The ways of quoting Hadith**

If in the text of some word(s) of some traditions that contain some confusion, Allama Ibn al-Athir tries his best to explain the word(s) in a

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, vol. 2, 303.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, vol. 7, 238.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, vol. 7, 112.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, vol. 3, 10.

### **Imam Ibn Al Athir's Research Methodology in Quoting Hadith-Traditions**

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simplified way. As he quotes Abu Nu`aym's quotation about al-Aswad ibn Asram al-Muharibi "هل أنت إلا إصبع دميت وفي سبيل الله ما لقيت" Abu Nu`aym quotation that it is reported by Yūnus ibn Bukair, while on the other side the authentic statement is that Sufyan al-Thawri, Shu`bah, Sufyan ibn `Uyaynah, Abū `Awāna, Hasan al-Basri quoted from Jundub al-Bajali to Aswad ibn Qays that I was in the cave with the Holy Prophet when he said these words. The writer said that neither the companion Jundub al-Bajali was in the cave nor he was a Muslim at that time.

"كنت مع النبي ﷺ في الغار" "Had he said that he was with the Holy Prophet, this statement would have been understood, but the words "I was in the cave" has made the statement doubtful.<sup>34</sup>

Sometimes, he clarifies the incorrect statements of the traditionists by quoting the authentic text of a tradition. As he says about Zaynab bint Humaid that the chain of the narrators mentions that Zaynab is grandmother of Abdullah ibn Hisham, while hadith text shows her as the mother of Abdullah ibn Hisham. So, in the end the author states that the statement mentioned in hadith text that Zaynab bint Humaid is the mother of Abdullah ibn Hisham is correct.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 223.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, vol. 7, 129.

If some traditionist feel doubt in some tradition, the author describes it in following words

’اشتبه عليه<sup>36</sup>، ’ولا شك قد اشتبه عليه<sup>37</sup>، ’لعله اشتبه عليه<sup>38</sup>، ’انما اشتبه عليه<sup>39</sup>، ’انما اشتبه علي الناس<sup>40</sup>،  
” . ’فلا أدري كيف اشتبه عليه<sup>41</sup>“

If the companionship of some companion is doubtful among various traditionists, then the writer takes help from the hadith text as it is famous about Iyas ibn Tha`labah that he was martyred in the Battle of Uhud. The writer says to remove the doubt that Imam Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj has mentioned a tradition from Iyas ibn Tha`labah from Abdullah ibn K'ab who is a successor (تابعي) here Iyas Ibn Tha`labah taking a tradition from Abdullah ibn K'ab. It means Iyas ibn Tha`labah remained alive up to the time of his contact with Abdullah ibn K'ab. Had there been no contact with them Imam Muslim would have not accepted this tradition as authentic.<sup>42</sup>

## 2.6 Author's methodology in Shadhdh (anomalous) traditions

If some tradition contains some Shadhdh (anomalous) information the writer tries his best to resolve the contradiction as he mentioned a tradition from Aws ibn Abdullah that narrates both the Holy Prophet and Abu Bakr were riding on a single camel. The writer describes that it is a historical

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid, vol. 7, 152.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 572.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 606.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, vol. 2, 537.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, vol. 4, 87.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 439.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 335.

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mistake. The correct statement is that both of them were riding on two separate camels.<sup>43</sup>

On the other occasion, he mentions a report from Abdullah Ibn Abbas that quotes the names of those companions who were left behind on the Battle of Tabuk as mentioned below: Abu Lubabah ibn Abdul Mundhir, Wada`ah ibn Khidam and Aws ibn Tha`labah and then he quotes Ja`far that the real name of these companions are as Ka`b ibn Malik, Hilal ibn Umayyah and Murarah ibn al-Rabee.<sup>44</sup>

## 2.7 The traditions of Prophet's letters

The writer Ibn al-Athir describes the details of the Prophet's letters contained in some traditions. As a letter about Malik ibn Ahmar is mentioned.<sup>45</sup> In the same way, he writes the details of Prophet's letter to al-Zahhak ibn Sufyan Kilab

<sup>46</sup>" إن رسول الله ﷺ كتب إلى الضحاك بن سفيان الكلبي، أن يورث امرأة أشيم الضبائي من دية زوجها."

and Prophet's letter to al-Harith ibn Abd Kalal, Nu`aim ibn Abd Kalal and Zur`ah ibn Abu Dhu Yazn. The writer describes the detail of this letter in this way.

" بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ، من محمد رسول الله إلى الحارث بن عبد كلال، وإلى نعيم بن عبد كلال، وإلى النعمان، قيل: ذي رعين ومعافر، وإلى زرعة بن ذي يزن، أما بعد، فإني أحمد إليكم الله الذي لا إله إلا هو، أما بعد فقد وقع بنا رسولكم مقفلنا من أرض الروم فلقينا بالمدينة، فبلغ ما أرسلتم به، وأنبأنا بإسلامكم، وقتلكم المشركين وإن الله

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 324.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 411.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 7.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, vol. 2, 313.

قد هداكم بـمـدايتـه، إن أصلحتـم وأطعتم الله ورسوله، وأقمتم الصلاة، وآتيتـم الزكاة، وأعطيتـم من المغامـم خمس الله،  
وسهم النبي وصفية.<sup>47</sup>

## 2.8 Dalaa'il An-Nubuwwah (دلائل النبوة) traditions (Signs of prophethood)

Ibn al-Athir notes the signs of Prophethood's traditions under the heading of a companion's tradition, as he reported about Mazin bin al-Ghadhubah that he listened to the preaching of Muhammad's prophethood from an idol kept in Oman and he embraced Islam<sup>48</sup>. He mentioned the traditions containing the events that happened at the time of prophet's death among the traditions reported by Haani' al-Makhzumi Abu Makhzum and another tradition had been mentioned by the author coming from Abu Dhubab al Sa`di about prophethood-signs<sup>49</sup>. The writer has also noted traditions of Prophet's miracles as the Prophet foretold about the arrival of Waa'il bin Hajar<sup>50</sup>.

If some famous event about some companion comes across the intention of the author, he writes its down inside the traditions from the specific companion. As the question of Aswad from the Holy Prophet about entrance in the paradise and then his sudden death<sup>51</sup>. As he describes the tradition of Uhban bin Aws al-Aslami that talked to a wolf during the life of Prophet.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid, vol. 2, 317.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 4.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 357.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 405.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 225.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 308.

## 2.9 The traditions about morning and Evening Supplications

One of the qualities of Usd al-ghabah is that Ibn al-Athir also mentions the traditions from a companion regarding the supplications of the Holy Prophet. For example, the prisoned son of Malik ibn Awf al-Ashja'i was released when his father said " لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله " <sup>53</sup>.

(There is no might nor power except in Allah) on the suggestion of the Holy Prophet He also noted the traditions of merits of these words:

" سبحان الله، والحمد لله، ولا إله إلا الله، والله أكبر، ولا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله " <sup>54</sup>. (Hallowed be Allah; all praise is due to Allah, there is no god but Allah, Allah is the Greatest and there is no might nor power except in Allah.) In the same way, he described the tradition that describes

" لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله " as a gem from the gems of the paradise <sup>55</sup>. In the same way the author has mentioned eight virtues (four in this world and four in the hereafter.) of these words " سبحان الله العظيم وبحمده، ولا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله " <sup>56</sup>.

(Glorified be Allah the Mighty and with His praise and there is no might nor power except in Allah) <sup>56</sup>.

The writer has also reported the daily prayers of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for example Ibn al-Athir suggested to say

" لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله، ما شاء الله، توكلت على الله، حسبي الله ونعم الوكيل " while going from home <sup>57</sup>. (Sufficient is Allah for me, for He is the best disposer of affai) .

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 37.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 81.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 58.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, vol. 4, 366.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 87.



Similarly, the writer has also noted the hadiths from the Holy Prophet to decrease the poisonous effects of various insects. Once a companion complained that he was bitten by a scorpion, the Holy Prophet suggested him to read <sup>58</sup> "أعوذ بكلمات الله التامة من شر ما خلق".

### 2.10 Methodology in the chain of narrators

Imam Ibn al-Athir also has great knowledge in the art of criticism and endorsement (علم الجرح والتعديل). He scrutinizes the narrators of traditions. Mostly he keeps silence about the narrators but if some confusion in the chain comes across, he explains it in detail. For example, he writes about a narration from Makhariq ibn Abdullah <sup>59</sup> "وله أحاديث بهذا الإسناد مضطربة أيضا" about another tradition of Abu Usaid he says:

ابو اسيد بن ثابت الأنصاري وقيل عبد الله بن ثابت يعد في المدنيين روى عنه عطاء الشامي، أنه قال: قال رسول

<sup>60</sup> الله ﷺ: "كلوا الزيت وادهنوا به، فإنه من شجرة مباركة" إسناده مضطرب، ولا يصح.

If some unknown narrators occur in the chain of narrators, he describes it in a clear explanation. For example, he says that Yazid father of Hajjaj, as considered unknown in the opinion of Imam Ibn e Manda<sup>61</sup>. If he narrates some traditions from a successor (تابعى) he clearly defines that the narrator concerned is not a companion but a successor. (تابعى) For example he narrates a tradition from Umayyah ibn Khalid and notes him a successor

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 369.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 115.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 11.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 449.

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(تابعي) instead of a companion<sup>62</sup>. Likewise, he mentions that the companionship of Bajad ibn al Saa'ib is doubtful<sup>63</sup>. Imam Ibn al-Athir is an imam of Hadith and history, therefore if a traditionist or a historian writes wrong name of some narrators he corrects it. He removes the various mistakes of other traditionists about the correct name of Yasaar slave of al-Mugheerah bin Shu`bah<sup>64</sup>. If some unknown transmitters are written as companions, he corrects this mistake as he clarifies the name of Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Salam instead of Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Salool<sup>65</sup>.

One of prominent literary qualities of Ibn al-Athir in Usd al-ghabah is that if some weak transmitter comes in the chain of transmitters the author notes the weakness of the transmitter with reference to the statement of some other traditionists as as he quoted the statement of Imam Ibn e Abdul Barr about al-Mugheerah ibn Abdul Rahman

<sup>66</sup> "قال أبو عمر: المغيرة بن عبد الرحمن هذا هو الخزامي، ضعيف"

In the same way he describes the statement of Imam Abu Ahmad Al askari about Ya`laa ibn al ashdaq.

<sup>67</sup> "قال أبو أحمد العسكري: يعلى بن الأشدق ضعيف، كان أعرابيا يسأل الناس"

Sometimes, the writer himself considers and states various traditions as weak. For example, his statement about Harith ibn Badal. Likewise, he

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 278.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 349.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 482.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 95.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, vol. 2, 81.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, vol. 3, 197.

notes under Ali ibn Qareen as a weak transmitter<sup>68</sup>. If some difference occurs about the name of some narrators, the writer explains the reality of this name clearly. For instance, he states about Makhrabah ibn Adi that this name has been written in three different styles by various writers (Makhrabah, Makhzamah, Majrabah)<sup>69</sup>.

If the writer feels some unknown nickname in the chain of transmitters, then he writes the complete name with nickname of the transmitter. For example, he writes the name of Auf ibn Malik ibn Nadla to the nickname Abu al ahwas (أبو الاحوص). If some name of the narrators is changed in the chain of a transmitters the writer explains this change clearly as he writes about Mazeedah ibn Jabir al-Abdi al-Asri.<sup>70</sup>

If some (مرسل)tradition comes across the writer, he describes it with reference to some traditionist as he states with reference to Ibn e Mandah that Iyas ibn Malik is a successor (تابعى)and the tradition reported by him is loose(مرسل)<sup>71</sup>.

### **2.11 The status of the traditions**

It is out of question that Ibn al-Athir is a great scholar of hadith studies. This is why if some baseless traditions come across, he clearly defines that there is no basis for it. He states about a tradition coming in the biography of Marthad ibn Jabir al-Kindi that "وهو عندي حديث لا أصل له".<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 549.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 118.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 304.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 341.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 30.

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In the same way, he states a tradition coming in the biography of Mudrik ibn Ammarah that "وحدِيثه هذا لا أصل له" <sup>73</sup>.

If some unfamiliar chain of narrators occurs, he clearly defines it as he said about a tradition coming with reference to Abu Urs his words are as "الحديث من وجه مجهول ضعيف" <sup>74</sup>. Similarly, he says about a tradition coming with reference to Abu Ma`mar "وهذا إسناد مجهول" <sup>75</sup>.

If some weak tradition comes before him sometimes he states, the weakness about it in the beginning for example he states about the transmission of Umm e Ra'lah

"روي بإسناد ضعيف عن الأوزاعي" <sup>76</sup> while sometimes he mentions this weakness in the end. For example, he notes about the narration of Tamim ibn Zaid "وهو حديث ضعيف الإسناد" <sup>77</sup>.

Mostly the writer describes the reason of the weakness of the tradition. For instance, he writes Abu Laylaa al-Ash`ari's statement

"ومُحَمَّدُ بنُ أَبِي قَيْسٍ هو: مُحَمَّدُ بنُ سَعِيدِ المصْلُوبِ الشَّامِي، وهو أبو عمر العَبْسِي، وكثيراً ما يدلّس به أهل الحديث <sup>78</sup> ليخفي أمره، وهو ضعيف متروك الحديث، ومدار الحديث عليه."

like this, he says about Mas`ud bin Amr al-Thaqafi"

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 26.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 206.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 290.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, vol. 7, 320.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 431.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 236.

<sup>79</sup> He also says about Ummul Waleed bint Umar "حديثها عند الوازع بن نافع، وهو منكر الحديث، وهو متروك الحديث".<sup>80</sup> Sometimes, the writer indicates the doubt in a tradition with a word other than weak (ضعيف). As he gives his statement about a tradition in these word "في إسناده" and with the reference to Raafi` ibn Rifaa`ah he states "في إسناده نظر"<sup>81</sup> On another occasion, he states about a transmitter with reference to "حديثه يدور على خالد بن عمرو القرشي، وهو منكر الحديث، متروكه" Sahl ibn Malik<sup>82</sup> Sometimes, the author mentions the weakness of some transmitter in the words of some other traditionists. For example, he notes the statement of Imam Uqaili about Asad bin abi Khadijah "وذكره العقيلي، وقال: في إسناده مقال"<sup>83</sup> Like this, he describes the statement of Imam Ibn e Abdul Barr about Aswad ibn Imran "قال أبو عمر: في إسناده مقال"<sup>84</sup> Mostly, Ibn al-Athir writes the statement of sound(صحيح)with reference to other traditionists, for instance he notes the statement of Imam Tirmidhi about a tradition coming with reference to Ashyam al-Dhibabi. Imam Tirmidhi's statement is "قال أبو عيسى: هذا حديث حسن صحيح"<sup>85</sup> In the same way, he mentions the report of Imam Tirmidhi about a tradition coming with reference to Ruqaiqah bint Saifi. Imam Tirmidhi

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 159.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, vol. 7, 397.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 560.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, vol. 2, 234.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, vol. 2, 581.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 201.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 232.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 333.

says about it " هذا حديث حسن عال " <sup>87</sup>. Sometimes, the author himself states the soundness (صحيح) of a hadith. For example, he explains about the transmission of Tamim ibn Aus " حدث عن النبي ﷺ حديث الجساسة، وهو حديث <sup>88</sup> " " وهذا حديث صحيح <sup>89</sup> like this he also says about Jafsheesh Ibn e Noman صحيح

The author clearly describes the trustworthiness of a narrator if he occurs in the chain of narrators. Sometimes in the beginning he indicates the trustworthiness of the narrator. For instance, he said about Abu Ja`far " حدثنا أحمد بن عبود أبو جعفر ثقة " <sup>90</sup>. Similarly, he also states about a narrator Mishar ibn Abd al-Malik <sup>91</sup>. Sometimes, he notes the trustworthiness of the transmitter in the end of the chain of the narrators as he says about Sa`sa`ah ibn Sawhan al-Abdi " وكان ثقة قليل الحديث " <sup>92</sup>.

likewise, he explains the trustworthiness of a transmitter with the statement of the other traditionists. For example, he mentions the statement of Ali ibn Madini about Abdullah ibn Al Harith

<sup>93</sup>. "قال علي بن المديني: روى عبد الله بن الحارث بن نوفل، عن عمر... وأم هانئ، وكان ثقة"

## 2.12 The traditions about medicines

The author has included medical traditions in his work Usd al-ghabah. For instance, he mentions about the benefits of false spikenard (إذخر مكّي) and

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid, vol. 7, 112.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 428.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 547.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, vol. 2, 332.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, vol. 4, 102.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, vol. 3, 21.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, vol. 3, 208.

hone<sup>94</sup>. He has written a tradition about the importance of treatment in the traditions of Usamah bin Shareek al-Tha`labi<sup>95</sup> Similarly, he has noted the benefits of pure cow ghee as he notes "ألبانها شفاء، وسمنها دواء"<sup>96</sup>.

### 2.13 Traditions of Prophet's absolute characteristics

Ibn al-Athir describes the traditions about the characteristics of Holy Prophet in the Hadiths about companion for example he writes under the heading of Sanabih ibn al-A`sar

"ألا إني فرطكم على الحوض، وإني مكاثر بكم الأمم، فلا تقتتلوا بعدي"<sup>97</sup> In the same way, he reported a hadith about the place of pulpit of Prophet and his home. For example, "ما بين بيتي ومنبري روضة من رياض الجنة"<sup>98</sup>.

### The traditions about virtues of the Companions

The writer has included the traditions about the virtues and qualities of companions. For example, he notes a tradition of Abu Zar

"أبو زر في أمي على زهد عيسى ابن مريم"<sup>99</sup> He also mentions a tradition about Abu Bakr al-Siddiq "إني لأبرأ إلى كل ذي خلة من خلته، ولو كنت متخذاً خليلاً لا تتخذت أبا بكر خليلاً، ولكن"<sup>100</sup> in the same way, he describes a tradition about Sa`d ibn Mu`adh that reads. "اهتز عرش الرحمن لموت سعد بن معاذ"<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 4.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 197.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, vol. 7, 260.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, vol. 3, 36.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 514.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 96.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 555.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 492.

#### 2.14 Infrequent traditions of Seerah

Allama Ibn al-Athir mentions the traditions about the gifts of the Holy Prophet that were given to various companions as it has written about Abu al-Rabee that the Prophet gifted him a shawl .<sup>102</sup> In the same way, it has been reported in his book that Prophet gifted Muhaisah ibn Mas`ud thirty Awsuq (One Wasuq = 60 Sa's) and 1 Sa'= 3 kg. Approximately) of barleys and thirty Awsuq of dates.<sup>103</sup>

If a land has been gifted by the Holy Prophet to any of the companions the author describes it in his book Usd al-ghabah. For instance, the writer mentions a report in which the Holy Prophet is reported that he gave a piece of land to his companion Majja'a ibn Murara the words of this report are as:

"عن جماعة بن مرارة، أن رسول الله ﷺ أعطاه أرضا باليمن، يقال له: غورة، وكتب له كتابا: " من مُجَّد رسول الله  
<sup>104</sup>لجماعة بن مرارة، من بني سليم، إن أعطيتك الغورة، فمن حاجه فيها فليأتني.

If some companion fell ill and the Holy Prophet went to enquire after him Ibn al-Athir mentions it also in his book Usd al-ghabah. For example, the Holy Prophet enquired after Abu Amrah.<sup>105</sup>

The writer is so expert in the field of Hadith studies that sometimes he removes the conflict about the tribe of a narrator with the help of words of Hadith. For instance, he rejects the statement of Ibn e Mandah about Ikrash ibn Zuaib is according to a hadith Ikrash ibn Zuaib the alms of

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 103.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 247.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, vol. 2, 409.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 226.

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Banu Murrah ibn 'Ubayd so he was from the clan of Banu Murrah ibn

'Ubayd. a everyone used to collect alms from one's own tribe.<sup>106</sup>

If the Holy Prophet changed the name of some companion Imam Izzad-Din quoted the tradition in which the name of companion was changed by the Holy Prophet. For example, (Holy Prophet named Waleed as Muhajir).<sup>107</sup>

If the Holy Prophet gives first diet to some baby of a companion just after his birth the author also mentions it. For instance, he describes about Abdullah ibn al-zubair ibn al-Awam that he was given first diet by the Holy Prophet.<sup>108</sup>

### **2.15 The traditions of merits and Blessings of Ramadan**

The writer has written various reports in which the Holy Prophet credits various months of Islamic calendar for example he quoted a hadith about the blessings of Ramadan " *عمرة في رمضان تعدل حجة* " <sup>109</sup>. Umra in Ramadan is equal to Hajj (in reward).)

### **2.16 The Traditions about afflictions**

Ibn al-Athir often notes the various traditions in which various predictions of upcoming evils, afflictions and incidents for the day of judgement has

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid, vol. 4, 66.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, vol. 5, 265.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, vol. 3, 241.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 145.

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been said by the Holy Prophet. For example, he has mentioned various afflictions following the name of Abu al-Ghadiyah.<sup>110</sup>

### 2.17 Methodology of comprehension

One of the author's qualities is that he avoids writing hadiths in detail and comprehension. He mentions his statements with a few words like

"<sup>114</sup> ذكر حديثنا طويلا)<sup>113</sup>, (في الحديث قصة)<sup>112</sup>. (الحديث)<sup>111</sup>, (ذكر الحديث)."

### 2.18 Difficult words

Occasionally, the author writes various traditions incomplete. To avoid the difficult words in the texts of specific traditions. He indicates his readers to this act by writing the following words.

<sup>115</sup> "تركنا ذكره، فإن رواته نقلوه بألفاظ غريبة، وبدلوها وصحفوها، تركناها لذلك"

### 2.19 Miscellaneous Traditions

Allama Ibn al-Athir contains various rare and precious types of information. For instance, it contains a tradition in which various types of martyred have been mentioned.<sup>116</sup> If the writer notes some loose (مرسل) traditions in his work, then he supports this tradition with a continuous (متصل) narration. For example, he writes a tradition from Ibrahim al-Ansari and declares him a successor (تابعي) and says that this tradition is loose

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid, vol. 6, 232.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid, vol. 2, 332.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 695

<sup>113</sup> Ibid, vol. 4, 335.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid, vol. 2, 172.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid, vol. 4, 273.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid, vol. 2, 229.

"عن إبراهيم، عن أبي سعيد" (مرسل) but he takes another chain of narrators that reads according to which this tradition is considered as Elevated (مرفوع).<sup>117</sup> Sometimes, he quotes various names of the transmitters declared by various great traditionists. For example, he mentions various names of Ubai ibn Malik that read 'Malik, Abu Malik, Amir ibn Malik' and then he says that Imam Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari wrote his name Ubai ibn Malik in his book Tarikh al Kabeer (The Great History) while other tradition has given several other names and says in the end Allah knows the best <sup>118</sup>.

## 2.20 Conclusion:

- Normally Ibn al-Athir notes a tradition reported by a companion for the introduction of the companion and sometimes he writes this tradition as a source of argument.
- The Author describes various types of traditions loose (مرسل), Hanging (معلق) perplexing, (معضل) Irregular (شاذ) and disclaimed Hadith (منكر).
- Services and the characteristics of the companion have been mentioned under the heading of their bibliography.
- He not only mentioned the only sayings about the hadiths in his book but also mentioned their authenticity or in authenticity.
- If some confusion comes across the writer, he tries his best to remove it. In the same way.

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 159.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, 171.

- Imam Ibn al-Athir writes various types of traditions regarding the seerah of Holy Prophet, signs of prophethood, qualities of prophethood, medical traditions, virtues of companion's traditions etc.
- If it is difficult for the reader to understand a tradition, the compiler explains its difficult words to make it comprehensible.
- As an introduction to the companion concerned, the author notes various traditions without the chain of the narrators but if he finds some traditions concerning the specific companion from his traditions, he writes it with complete chain of its narrators.
- Ibn al-Athir avoids unnecessary length and detail and tries his best to maintain his brevity while writing various traditions in his work 'Usd al-ghabah'.
- He has cited the hadiths by mentioning the names of his teachers-cum-narrators of the Hadiths. By doing so he has made his book a source of recognition for Imam Ibn al-Athir's teachers.



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