121290 - Types of hadeeth according to who it is attributed to

the question

I have a question about some terminology that I would like you to explain to me. In some audio lectures I hear words such as “a marfoo‘ hadeeth” or “a maqtoo‘ hadeeth.”.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The scholars of hadeeth have a number of categories for reports, which vary according to the criteria they are looking at. One such case is the division of hadeeth into categories based on who the hadeeth is attributed to. They say:

Hadeeth may be divided into categories according to who is speaking in the hadeeth or who it is attributed to. There are four categories:

1.Hadeeth qudsi

This is a hadeeth transmitted to us from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), in which he attributes the words to his Lord, may He be glorified and exalted, and in which the narrator says: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said, narrating from his Lord, may He be glorified and exalted, and so on.

2.Marfoo ‘ hadeeth

This is a hadeeth in which words, actions, approval or a description are attributed to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

3.Mawqoof hadeeth

This is a hadeeth in which words, actions, approval or a description are attributed to the Sahaabi,

i.e., it is words or actions that came from the Sahaabi, not from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

An example of this is the words of ‘Ali ibn Abi Taalib (may Allah be pleased with him): “Love the one you love without going to extremes, for some day he may become one whom you hate; and hate the one you hate without going to extremes, for one day he may become one whom you love.” Narrated by al-Bukhaari in al-Adab al-Mufrad, 447.

Al-Khateeb al-Baghdadi said:

The mawqoof report is that which the narrator attributed to the Sahaabi and did not go beyond him. End quote.

Al-Haakim added the condition that the isnaad should be complete and not interrupted. He (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The hadeeth should go back to the Sahaabi, without being mursal or mu‘dal, and when it reaches the Sahaabi it says that he said such and such, or did such and such, or enjoined such and such. End quote.

This terminology (mawqoof) may be used with regard to someone other than the Sahaabi, but it should state that, for example saying: This is a hadeeth which stops at al-Zuhri, or at ‘Ata’, and so on, both of whom are Taabi‘een or followers of the Taabi‘een.

4.Maqtoo ‘ hadeeth

This is a hadeeth in which words, actions, approval or a description are attributed to the Taabi‘i. It may also be known as “athar” (a report).

For example, Masrooq ibn al-Ajda‘ said: “It is sufficient knowledge for a person to fear Allah, and it is sufficient ignorance for a man to think highly of his deeds.”

Ibn al-Salaah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

I found the use of the word maqtoo‘, as opposed to munqati‘ (interrupted) in the words of Imam al-Shaafa‘i, Abu’l-Qaasim al-Tabaraani and others. End quote.

Muqadimmat Ibn al-Salaah fi ‘Uloom al-Hadeeth, p. 28.

Among the books in which there are many mawqoof and maqtoo‘ reports are:

Al-Musannaf by Ibn Abi Shaybah

Al-Musannaf by ‘Abd al-Razzaaq al-San‘aani

Jaami‘ al-Bayaan fi Ta’weel Aayi al-Qur’aan by Imam al-Tabari

-- and the books of Ibn al-Mundhir, and many others.

To learn more about the division of hadeeth into various categories, please see Nukhbat al-Fikr by al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar, p. 21. For other information please see Fath al-Mugheeth by al-Sakhaawi, 1/108-112; Tahreer ‘Uloom al-Hadeeth by Dr. ‘Abd-Allah al-Judayyi ‘, 1/25 ff; and Tayseer Mustalah al-Hadeeth by Dr. Mahmoud al-Tahhaan, p. 67

And Allah knows best.