

Shaykh Mashhūr Hasan Āl Salmān
(hafidhahullāh)

ON THE MODERN “MAQRA’” AND IJĀZAH-HUNTING PHENOMENON¹

Question:

“There are some students of knowledge who attend gatherings of readings of the books of hadeeth and when the book is completed, those who were present are given an Ijāzah with a chain which connects to the book, although these sessions go on for only a few days. So what is the ruling on these [Maqra’] gatherings?”²

Answer from Shaykh Mashhūr:

The presence of chains of transmission of hadeeth, and Imām al-Bukhārī, from the Prophet (*sallallahu ‘alayhi wassallam*), or from the books of hadeeth, be it Saheeh Muslim or any other hadeeth collections, is an old habit with the people of knowledge and this is a good thing. Some of our brothers who are enthusiastic in this regard, may Allāh increase them in goodness, participate in

¹ From the Q&A session of our Shaykh dated Friday 29th November 2013, after 45:35 minutes:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LSuOXw4A5io&list=UU5zBCGzT2TI-CQgkNUpTHvA>

Translated by ‘AbdulHaq al-Ashanti

² These Maqra’ sessions are largely indulged in by proponents of the modern, so-called “traditional Islam” movement in the West. It has also been taken on board by many of those who also seek proximity to this movement in the name of “mutual co-operation and respect”. It is also of interest to note that many of the adherents of the “traditional Islam” movement in fact read over hadeeth which in practical application they do not even accept! Favouring instead the views of their Madhhab or a scholar from “their school”, over the very ahadeeth which they have just read, and in rejection of the very hadeeth for which they claim to want “blessing”!? This is if they even understand what they are reading in the first place!

reading [Iqrā’] of hadeeth collections, wherein one reads and others listen and when the book is finished the reader will say “I give you Ijāzah [to relay] this book”.

Now, I personally have been given Ijāzah by many of the people of knowledge, all praise is due to Allāh, from many lands. I was given Ijāzah by some of the Shaykhs from India, Morocco and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. A large number. Now, if I was to relay to you the isnad what is the benefit in that to you? You will not benefit anything. Moreover, some of the readers read with errors and the one trying to keep up does not understand anything. A reader does so with errors and then later says he will give Ijāzah?!

Furthermore, the Maqra’ gatherings, if the students of knowledge in attendance are strong, [then maybe]. So for example, if a person was given an Ijāzah in Saheeh al-Bukhārī, after six days or a month, and then someone was to read Bukhārī for him to hear – then he would benefit. So who benefits? The one who is strong, as this contributes to revision. As for a person who has nothing, yet is just concerned in hunting for an Ijāzah all the time, then within Ijāzah itself are liars and fabricators. There used to be a doctor who would compete in gatherings with us just in order to gain Ijāzāt.

Last night, I was going through the Ijāzāt in a bulky manuscript from the al-Aqsa Library and within it are mention of scholars who gave Ijāzah to their wives, daughters, sons, relations by suckling. So for example it states “so and so was present” which means that they were present before they were of the age of puberty, or that a person was merely present. These Ijāzāt contain the blessing of a connected chain of transmission back to the Salaf, however these gatherings contain transgression of the bounds and errors in reading, and thus it is only useful for a certain type of people [serious in knowledge] and Allāh knows best.