

**Ibn Katheer**

The  
**Valley**  
came

**Alive**

Life of the Last Messenger



FROM  
**Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah**

**DARUSSALAM**

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In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

## *Preface to the Revision*

*All* praise and thanks be to Allah, Who revived knowledge of His religion and caused it to blossom forth after it had all but disappeared, and Who demolished the false conjectures of the apostates. I praise Him and I seek refuge with Him from the sins which weigh upon the backs of mankind. I worship Him and seek His aid in removing hindrances and difficulties in the practice of my religion. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, Alone, without partners and I bear witness that Muhammad – who, by Allah's leave, brought about the dawn of faith to the darkness and misguidance which existed in the hearts of mankind – is the slave and Messenger of Allah. May the Blessings and Peace of Allah be upon him in perpetuity.

O, Allah! We seek Your favor and through You we seek to ward off affliction. We ask You to protect us and to grant us mercy. Our Lord! Make not our hearts deviate after You have already guided us. Make it easy for us to perform our deeds in the way that You have taught us. Make us grateful for what You have given us and make plain a path for us which leads to You. Open up the doors between us and You by which we may arrive before You. To You belong the keys to the heavens and the Earth and You are Most Able to do all things. To proceed:

Among the blessings which Allah has bestowed upon us, the community of Muslims is that He has made it easy for us to follow the path of guidance, and He has opened the doors of knowledge by making available to us these new publications, which present to us the writings of the early scholars and reveal to us what they said regarding legal verdicts, history, events, information and lessons. These scholars opened a clear beacon of light for all those Muslims seeking guidance and they set up for us a signpost in which there is neither deviation nor crookedness. Whoever follows it will arrive safely at his desired destination and whoever diverts from it will be lost forever. They have written these books and treatises and made clear to us therein events, information and virtues. Among such books is this unique work, *Al-Bidayah Wan-Nihayah*, by the Imam, the *Hafiz*, the master scholar of *hadeeth*, 'Imaduddeen Isma'eel Ibn Katheer Al-Qurashi – may Allah have mercy on him. This book was greeted with approval by the vast majority of Muslims. No Islamic library would be complete without it. In it, the author has recorded what Allah, Most High has made easy for him about the history of mankind, from the beginning of creation, starting with the creation of the Throne and the *Kursi* (Footstool), the heavens and the Earth and all that they contain and all that lies between them, such as the angels, the jinn and the devils. He also described how Adam عليه السلام was created, and told the stories of the prophets up to the days of the



Children of Isra'eel and the Days of Ignorance (*Jahiliyyah*), until the advent of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, which heralded the end of Prophethood. He then recorded his *Seerah*.<sup>(1)</sup> Then he recorded the events which took place up to his own time. He also spoke of the trials and battles, the signs of the approach of the Hour, then the sending forth of mankind and the terrors of the Resurrection, which he described in detail. He then described the Hell-fire, with all its horrors, and Paradise and all the good things contained therein. He called this particular volume of his book: *An-Nihayah Fil-Fitan Wal-Malahim* (*The Ending in Trials and Battles*). As for the book which is in our hands today, it is *Al-Bidayah*.

By Allah's Grace, I came to know brother Abdul Malik Mujahid, the general manager of Darussalam Publishing in Riyadh. He visited me in my humble office in Damascus and suggested to me the idea of creating a summarised version of this wonderful book. I prayed for Allah's Guidance in the matter and sought help from Him in completing the project. Allah enabled me to make the acquaintance of a number of people of knowledge and experience in this field and a plan of action for the work was written. It consisted of ten principal points and we then started the task, seeking help from the Lord of the heavens and the Earth. All of us exerted our utmost efforts in this task, making repeated revisions and corrections, until we reached the point where, by Allah's Permission, we completed it and it was published in the form which is in your hands today.

### ***The Plan of Action for This Book:***

1. Summarization of the text. This was achieved by concentrating on the most important events narrated in the book. In doing so, we took care not to leave out any important details which

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(1) *Seerah*: Biography, life story, in particular, of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

would cause loss of meaning or import.

2. We relied on a number of printed and handwritten copies of the book and in cases where any contradiction or omission was found, we succeeded in establishing the most accurate and authentic text.
3. We left out the *ahadeeth* which proved to be baseless or weak and confined ourselves to the *ahadeeth* which are authentic or *hasan* <sup>(1)</sup> and those which are acceptable due to the existence of other supporting narrations. On rare occasions, when it was found that there were no other *ahadeeth* in the chapter, we included some weak *ahadeeth* whose weakness was not of an extreme nature.
4. We performed *takhreej* <sup>(2)</sup> of the *ahadeeth* with ascription of the number of the section and the page, the number of the *hadeeth* and in many cases, the precise location of the *hadeeth* in the original source, then the ruling on its authenticity, if it was not from the *Saheehain*, <sup>(3)</sup> because the *ahadeeth* therein do not require any ruling on their authenticity and they have been widely accepted by the Muslim *Ummah*. <sup>(4)</sup> As for the *ahadeeth* in this book, we have relied on the opinions of the Imams and scholars of *hadeeth* – including the earlier scholars, the later scholars and those of the present day. On some occasions, we have recorded the weak *ahadeeth*, while making it plain that they are not authentic. We have not omitted them because the author has included them in order to warn the people against them due to their widespread popularity amongst the Muslims in general. In such cases, we desired not to oppose the author in this effort and so we left them, at the same time making the

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- (1) *Hasan*: Good, sound. An acceptable *hadeeth*, although it does not reach the level of *saheeh* (authentic).
- (2) *Takhreej*: Referencing the sources of a *hadeeth* and evaluating them.
- (3) *Saheehain*: *Saheeh Al-Bukhari* and *Saheeh Muslim*.
- (4) *Ummah*: Nation or people; in this case, what is referred to is the scholars of the *Ummah*.



scholars' ruling on them clear, so as to warn the people against them.

5. We summarised the *asaneed* <sup>(1)</sup> present in the book, in most cases mentioning only the Companion who narrated the *hadeeth*, or the person who reported it from him.
6. We omitted many of the *Isra'eeliyyat* <sup>(2)</sup> found in this book which the author referred to in the preface, where he said: "We do not record the *Isra'eeliyyat* except those which the Lawgiver has permitted, i.e., those which do not contradict the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ. These are stories which are neither believed nor belied and they have been recorded because they provide details of unclarified narratives that we have, or they provide names for people and places that have only been mentioned in passing in our Revelation, due to there being no benefit in specifying them for us. Thus we have reported them in order to provide extra detail and not with the intention of citing them as evidence or placing any reliance on them. Only the Book of Allah and the authentic Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ may be relied and depended upon. It is from Allah that we seek help and it is He in Whom we place our trust; there is no help and no power except in Allah, the All-Powerful, the Most Wise, the Most High, the Almighty.
7. In some instances, we have referred back to the original manuscript in order to verify the wording of a *hadeeth* from its source. In some cases, the author has combined two narrations of the same *hadeeth* together and so where this has occurred, we have noted it and separated the two narrations, placing our own words between brackets, i.e., (and in another narration...) and we have also identified the source of the addition in the footnotes.

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(1) *Asaneed* (sing. = *isnad*): Chains of narrators of the *ahadeeth*.

(2) *Isra'eeliyyat*: Narrations of Jewish origin.

8. We have written the Qur'anic Verses in the Uthmani script, in conformity with the copy of the Qur'an published by Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah Printing Complex.
9. We vowelised the words of many of the *ahadeeth* in the book and, in addition, the poetic verses, wherever possible.
10. We mentioned the meters of the poetic verses between parentheses.
11. We explained the meanings of some difficult or obscure words, relying on dictionaries, books containing *ghareeb* <sup>(1)</sup> *ahadeeth* and narrations and other sources.
12. We furnished a brief biography of the author, Hafiz Ibn Katheer though in reality, he requires no introduction and no description.

Finally, I ask Allah, Most High, to accept this humble work from us and to acknowledge it as having been done purely and sincerely with the aim of pleasing Him and to grant us and our brothers, who assisted us in the production of this book, pardon and forgiveness in religious and secular matters. In addition, we ask Him that He include this work in the weight of our good deeds on the Day of Resurrection – a Day on which neither wealth nor sons will benefit anyone – except for those whom Allah has blessed with pure hearts.

And our final declaration is that all praise and thanks are due to Allah, and we invoke blessings and peace upon Prophet Muhammad and upon all his righteous family and Companions until the Day of Reckoning.

**Yoosuf Al-Hajj Ahmad,**

The humble slave of Allah.


Damascus, Ash-Sham (Syria).

2<sup>nd</sup> of Dhul-Hijjah, 1428 A.H.

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(1) *Ghareeb*: A *hadeeth* which is reported at one or more stages in its chain of narrators by a single narrator.





## *Publisher's Preface*

Verily, all praise and thanks are due to Allah. We seek His aid and we ask forgiveness of Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the wickedness in ourselves. Whomsoever Allah guides, there is none who can misguide him and whomsoever He sends astray, there is none who can guide him. I bear witness that none is worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger. He sent him with guidance and the true Religion and with the light (of truth), the admonition and wisdom, at a time when no Messengers were sent for a long period, when there was little religious knowledge and the people had gone astray, when the Hour was drawing nearer. Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has followed the right course, while whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger erred from it and gone far astray. To proceed:

# سيرة خاتم المرسلين

مأخوذة من

**البداية و النهاية**

(باللغة الإنجليزية)

Darussalam is proud to present the abridged English translation of the classic work: *Al-Bidayah wan Nihayah*, focusing exclusively on the life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. This volume contains a detail account of the life and times of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ taken from a number of historical and traditional sources. The book reports the events of his blessed life, his battles, military campaigns, the delegations that met him, and sheds light upon the unique exemplary qualities, virtues and signs of his Messengership that make him a guide and role-model for all of humanity until the end of time.

*Al-Bidayah wan Nihayah (The Beginning and The End)* by the renowned scholar Abu Al-Fida 'Imad ad-Deen Isma'eel bin 'Umar ibn Katheer, is considered one of the most authoritative sources on Islamic history.



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