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11. Hadith Al-Qadha, 'Ali Versus 'Umar

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) launches a spirited campaign to bring down 'Ali's status as the best judge in the *Ummah* in order to place 'Umar above him. He simply cannot stomach the possibility of Amir al–Muminin 'Ali, 'alaihi al–salam, surpassing the second Sunni *khalifah* in anything, especially in such highly sensitive, knowledge–based areas as justice dispensation. The reason for these panicky moves can be discerned from these words of our dear Shaykh:

In (*Sunan*) al-Tirmidhi and others, it is narrated from him, peace and blessings be upon him, that he said, "If I had not been sent as a messenger among you, 'Umar would have been sent as a messenger among you instead." The text of al-Tirmidhi reads, "If there were to be a prophet after me, it would have been 'Umar". Al-Tirmidhi says: *A hasan hadith*.1

Elsewhere, he reiterates this:

It is recorded in (*Sunan*) al-Tirmidhi: "If I had not been sent as a messenger among you, 'Umar would have been sent as a messenger instead and if there were to be a prophet after me, it would have been 'Umar".2

Those two one-sided, sectarian reports establish two realities:

1. 'Umar and the Messenger of Allah, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa alihi*, had *equal* credentials and abilities to be the master of the prophets, sent to the entirety of mankind till the Hour. Therefore, 'Umar was a perfect replacement for the Prophet.

2. Due to 'Umar's status as the sole match – in qualification – to the Messenger, he was the only one qualified to be the first prophet after Muhammad, had prophethood not ceased.

The bottom–line is that 'Umar was far better than Abu Bakr in all ways and in all things! So, if 'Ali were superior to 'Umar, then he was the master of both the first and the second *khalifahs*. In any case, those two *hadiths* are one–sided (and therefore of no probative value in our research), and contradict the Verse of *Istafa*, the Verse of *Ta\text{\text{\text{Bhir}}}* and several *sahih* and *mutawatir ahadith* (such as *Hadith al–Ghadir*, *Hadith al–Manzilah*, *Hadith al–Tayr*, *Hadith al–Thaqalayn*, etc). The most important part is that both reports about 'Umar go against well–established historical facts about him, his knowledge and his abilities. From all angles, both *hadiths* were motivated by polemical motives, and manufactured to "raise the stakes" for the second *khalifah*.

Shavkh Ibn Taymiyyah makes an interesting strike:

There were LOTS of *fatwas* from 'Umar, 'Ali and others that contradicted the revealed texts (i.e the Qur'an and Sunnah), such that al-Shafi'i compiled a whole volume on the contradictions of 'Ali and Ibn Mas'ud (to the Qur'an and Sunnah), and Muhammad b. Nasr al-Maruzi compiled a huge book on that.3

He concedes that both 'Umar and Ibn Mas'ud contradicted the Qur'an and Sunnah *massively* in their verdicts. We agree with him, as there exists solid evidence from both Sunni and Shi'i sources confirming that. It is a wonder then how our dear Shaykh manages to believe that 'Umar was perfectly fit for prophethood despite this embarrassing fact! What else would he have been other than a prophet who would have opposed the Qur'an and the Sunnah on "lots" of occasions?! This reality reveals that the purely one–sided, sectarian *hadiths* could not have genuinely originated from the Messenger of Allah. He *never* uttered anything that falls out of line with simple logic.

But then, did Imam al-Shafi'i and al-Maruzi really compiled books detailing Amir al-Muminin Ali's "contradictions" to the Qur'an and Sunnah? Well, there is no evidence of *any* such books in our times! Besides, our dear Shaykh seems confused on the exact authorship of those "books". First, he claims that both al-Shafi'i and al-Maruzi wrote *separate* books. However, this is a contrary submission he also makes:

وقد جمع الشافعي ومحمد بن نصر المروزي كتابا كبيرا فيما لم يأخذ به المسلمون من قول علي لكون قول غيره من الصحابة أتبع للكتاب والسنة

Al-Shafi'i AND Muhammad b. Nasr al-Maruzi compiled a huge book about what the Muslims rejected from the statement of 'Ali, because the statement of others from the Sahabah were more in compliance with the Qur'an and Sunnah.4

So, it was after all a *joint* authorship! What exactly do we believe now? Moreover, where exactly *is* this book? Has anyone in history *ever* quoted it? Has anyone in history *ever* referenced it? The reality is that no such book *ever* existed! Imam al–Subki (d. 773 H) reveals the truth about the book of al–Maruzi:

وقال أبو ذر محمد بن محمد بن يوسف القاضى كان الصدر الأول من مشايخنا يقولون رجال خراسان أربعة ابن المبارك ويحيى بن يحيى وإسحاق بن راهويه ومحمد بن نصر المروزى وقال أبو بكر الصيرفى لو لم يصنف المروزى إلا كتاب القسامة لكان من أفقه الناس فكيف وقد صنف كتبا سواها وقال الشيخ أبو إسحاق الشيرازى صنف محمد هذا كتبا ضمنها الآثار والفقه وكان من أعلم الناس باختلاف الصحابة ومن بعدهم فى الأحكام وصنف كتابا فيما خالف فيه أبو حنيفة عليا وعبد الله رضى الله عنهما

Abu Dharr Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Yusuf al-Qadhi said, "The pioneers among our Shaykhs used to say that the scholars of Khurasan (in Iran) were four: Ibn al-Mubarak, Yahya b. Yahya, Ishaq b. Rahwayh and Muhammad b. Nasr al-Maruzi." Abu Bakr al-Sayarfi said, "If al-Maruzi had never authored any book except *Kitab al-Qasamah* alone, he would nonetheless have been among the most knowledgeable of mankind. Meanwhile, he wrote many books other than it." Shaykh Abu Ishaq al-Shirazi said, "Muhammad (b. Nasr al-Maruzi) wrote books which contained reports and Islamic jurisprudence, and was one of the most knowledgeable of mankind concerning the differences of the Sahabah and those after them on *al-ahkam* (jurisprudence). He wrote a book concerning the contradictions of Abu Hanifah to 'Ali and 'Abd Allah (b. Mas'ud), may Allah be pleased with them both.5

So, the book – in reality – was only about Abu Hanifah's contradictions to 'Ali and Ibn Mas'ud! We leave the judgment to the esteemed reader.

There are authentic Sunni reports which further expose the fallacy of the allegations of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah against Amir al–Muminin. For instance, Imam Ahmad (d. 241 H) records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي حدثني يحيى عن الأعمش عن عمرو بن مرة عن أبي البختري عن على رضي الله عنه قال: بعثني رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم إلى اليمن وأنا حديث السن قال قلت تبعثني إلى قوم يكون بينهم أحداث ولا علم علم لى بالقضاء قال ان الله سيهدى لسانك ويثبت قلبك قال فما شككت في قضاء بين أثنين بعد

'Abd Allah (b. Ahmad) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Yahya – al–A'mash – 'Amr b. Marrah – Abu al–Bakhtari – 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him:

I was sent by the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, to Yemen, and I was young of age. I said,

"You are sending me to a people among whom exist disputes, and I have no knowledge in justice dispensation." He replied, "Verily, Allah will guide your tongue and make your heart firm." I never have doubt while dispensing justice between *any* two people ever after.6

Shaykh al-Arnau® says:

Sahih, its narrators are trustworthy, narrators of the two Shaykhs7

Imam al-Hakim (d. 403 H) also records:

حدثني علي بن حمشاد ثنا العباس بن الفضل الأسفاطي ثنا أحمد بن يونس ثنا أبو بكر بن عياش عن الأعمش عن عمرو بن مرة عن أبي البختري قال علي رضي الله عنه: بعثني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى اليمن قال: فقلت: يا رسول الله إني رجل شاب وأنه يرد علي من القضاء ما لا علم لي به قال: فوضع يده على صدري وقال الله إني رجل شاب وأنه يرد علي من القضاء ما لا علم لي به قال: فوضع عده على صدري وقال اللهم ثبت لسانه واهد قلبه فما شككت في القضاء أو في قضاء بعد

'Ali b. Hamshad – al-'Abbas b. al-Fadhl al-Asfa®i – Ahmad b. Yunus – Abu Bakr b. 'Ayyash – al-A'mash – 'Amr b. Marrah – Abu al-Bakhtari – 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him:

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah be pleased with him, sent me to Yemen. So, I said, "O Messenger of Allah, I am a young man, and disputes will be brought to me for judgment, of which I have no knowledge." Therefore, he placed his hand on my chest, and said, "O Allah, make firm his tongue and guide his heart." I never have doubt while dispensing justice ever after.8

Al-Hakim comments:

This hadith is sahih upon the standard of the two Shaykhs9

Al-Dhahabi (d. 748 H) agrees:

(Sahih) upon the standard of al-Bukhari and Muslim10

Imam Abu Dawud (d. 275 H) documents a mutaba'ah for the report of Abu al-Bakhtari:

حدثنا عمرو بن عون قال أخبرنا شريك عن سماك عن حنش عن علي عليه السلام قال :بعثني رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم إلى اليمن قاضيا فقلت يارسول الله ترسلني وأنا حديث السن ولا علم لي بالقضاء ؟ فقال " إن الله سيهدي قلبك ويثبت لسانك فإذا جلس بين يديك الخصمان فلا تقضين حتى تسمع من الآخر كما سمعت من الأول . فإنه أحرى أن يتبين لك القضاء " قال فما زلت قاضيا أو ما شككت في قضاء بعد

'Amr b. 'Awn – Sharik – Simak – Hanash – 'Ali, peace be upon him ('alaihi salam):

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, sent me to Yemen as a judge. So, I said, "O Messenger of Allah, you are sending me while I am young of age and have no knowledge of justice dispensation." Therefore, he said, "Verily, Allah will guide your heart and will make firm your tongue. Whenever two disputants sit in front of you, do not give judgment until you have heard both parties. This will make clear to you the (correct) judgment." I never cease to be a judge, or never have doubt while dispensing justice, ever since. 11

'Allamah al-Albani (d. 1420 H) says:

حسن

Hasan12

Imam Ahmad also records this shahid:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا يحيى بن آدم ثنا إسرائيل عن أبي إسحاق عن حارثة بن مضرب عن على رضي الله عنه قال: بعثني رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم إلى اليمن فقلت إنك تبعثني إلى قوم وهم أسن مني لأقضى بينهم فقال: بعثني رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم إلى اليمن فقلت إنك تبعثني الله سيهدى قلبك ويثبت لسانك

'Abd Allah (b. Ahmad) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Yahya b. Adam – Israil – Abu Ishaq – Harithah b. Mudhrab – 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, sent me to Yemen. So, I said, "You are sending me to a people who are older than me that I should judge between them." He replied, "Go, for Allah will guide your heart and make firm your tongue." 13

Shaykh al-Arna'us states:

إسناده صحيح

Its chain is sahih 14

Whenever Amir al-Muminin set out to judge on any matter, Allah would always guide both his heart and his tongue, and would also make them firm. This removes the possibility of error or misguidance in whatsoever judgments he ever gave:

And whomsoever Allah guides, for him there can be NO misleader. 15

With this in mind, it is apparent that whosoever attributes errors to the judgments and verdicts of 'Ali is actually attributing them to Allah as well! So, we ask Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah and his followers: was it Allah Who was "guiding" his heart and his tongue to those "contradictions" to the Qur'an and Sunnah? We seek His refuge from such blasphemy. No truth – whether in narrations or mere submissions – can be in *anything* that denigrates the Almighty Lord.

- 1. Abu al-'Abbas Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Halim b. Taymiyyah al-Harrani, Minhaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah (Muasassat Qurtubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muhammad Rashad Salim], vol. 7, p. 508
- 2. Ibid, vol. 8, p. 303
- 3. Ibid, vol. 7, p. 502
- 4. Ibid, vol. 8, p. 281
- 5. Taj al-Din b. 'Ali b. 'Abd al-Kafi al-Subki, 🗈 abaqat al-Shafi'iyyah al-Kubra (Hajr li al-🗈 aba'at wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'; 2nd edition, 1413 H) [annotators: Dr. Mahmud Muhammad al-🗈 anahi and Dr. 'Abd al-Fattah Muhammad al-Halwi], vol. 2, p. 247
- 6. Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qurtubah) [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut], vol. 1, p. 83, # 636
- 7. Ibid
- 8. Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah al-Hakim al-Naysaburi, al-Mustadrak 'ala al-sahihayn (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Mustafa 'Abd al-Qadir 'Ata], vol. 3, p. 145, # 4658
- 9. Ibid
- 10. Ibid
- 11. Abu Dawud Sulayman b. al-Ash'ath al-Sijistani, Sunan Abi Dawud (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani], vol. 3, p. 327, # 3584
- **12.** Ibic
- 13. Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qurtubah) [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut], vol. 1, p. 156, # 1341
- **14.** Ibid
- 15. Qur'an 39:37

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