19) Hadith Sadd Al-Abwab, A Tale of Two Hadiths

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) states:

> وكذلك قوله وسد الأبواب كلها إلا باب علي فإن هذا مما وضعته الشيعة على طريق المقابلة فإن الذي في الصحيح عن أبي سعيد عن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم أنه قال في مرضه الذي مات فيه إن أمن الناس علي في ماله وصحبته أبو بكر ولو كنت متخذا خليلا غير ربي لاتخذت أبا بكر خليلا ولكن أخوة الإسلام ومودته لا يبقين في المسجد خوخة إلا سدت إلا خوخة أبي بكر

And likewise, **his statement "and close all doors except the door of 'Ali", verily, this is part of what was fabricated by the Shi'ah** in order to oppose. This is because that which is recorded in the *Sahih* from Abu Sa'id from the Prophet, peace be upon him, is that he said during his fatal illness: "**The one among mankind who has conferred upon me the most FAVOURS with his money and his company is Abu Bakr**. If I were to choose a friend (*khalil*) other than my Lord, I would have chosen Abu Bakr as a friend (*khalil*). However, the Islamic brotherhood and his kindness (are enough). **Close all the wickets in the mosque except the wicket of Abu Bakr**." 1

There are a number of quick points from the above:

1. There are two irreconciliably contradictory reports – one of them in favour of 'Ali, *'alaihi al-salam*, and the other in favour of Abu Bakr.

2. Both *hadiths* have the same contents.

3. Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah thinks that the Shi'ah fabricated the report in favour of 'Ali in order to oppose that in favour of Abu Bakr.

The *hadith* in favour of Abu Bakr, which our dear Shaykh has quoted, however has some fatal problems. For instance, Imam Muslim (d. 261 H) records that the Prophet, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa alihi*, had said:

لا تبقين في المسجد خوخة إلا خوخة أبي بكر

No WICKET shall remain in the mosque except the WICKET of Abu Bakr.2

This calls for the *destruction* or *removal* – and not closure – of all wickets in the mosque. Meanwhile, it directly contradicts another "sahih" version quoted by our Shaykh:

لا يبقين في المسجد خوخة إلا سدت إلا خوخة أبي بكر

Close all the WICKETS in the mosque except the WICKET of Abu Bakr.

Imam Ahmad (d. 241 H) also documents that the Messenger of Allah had said:

ان أمن الناس على في صحبته وماله أبو بكر ولو كنت متخذا من الناس خليلا غير ربي لاتخذت أبا بكر ولكن إخوة الإسلام أو مودته لا يبقى باب في المسجد الا سد الا باب أبي بكر

The one among mankind who has conferred upon me the most FAVOURS with his company and his money is Abu Bakr. If I were to choose from mankind a friend (*khalil*) other than my Lord, I would have chosen Abu Bakr as a friend (*khalil*). However, the Islamic brotherhood or his kindness is enough. Close all the DOORS in the mosque except the DOOR of Abu Bakr.3

Shaykh al-Arnaut comments:

صحيح وهذا إسناد حسن

It is *sahih*, and this chain is *hasan*.4

Imam al-Tirmidhi (d. 279 H) seals it:

حدثنا محمد بن حميد حدثنا إبراهيم بن المختار عن إسحق بن راشد عن الزهري عن عروة عن عائشة أن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم أمر بسد الأبواب إلا باب أبي بكر

Muhammad b. Hamid – Ibrahim b. al-Mukhtar – Ishaq b. Rashid – al-Zuhri – 'Urwah – 'Aishah:

The Prophet, peace be upon him, ordered the closure of the doors except the DOOR of Abu Bakr.5

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

صحيح

Sahih[6]

Of course, a “wicket” is an entirely *different* thing from a “door”! So, what exactly did the Prophet mention? Was it a wicket or a door? Moreover, what instruction did he give exactly? Destruction or removal of wickets? Closure of wickets? Or, closure of doors? These are *fundamental* inconsistencies in these reports of the same *hadith*, and this only suggests that they were mere “rushed” polemical arts.

Worse still, the *hadith* assumes that people used to do “favours” to the Messenger of Allah with their company and their wealth. But, what is a favour? It is an act of kindness that is performed *beyond* what is due or normal, to which the beneficiary is NOT entitled at all *by right*. If the beneficiary is entitled to it by right, then it is no longer a “favour”. So, if we accepted the *hadith* cited by our Shaykh, we must conclude that the Prophet had *no* right to the company of his Sahabah! Rather, they only kept him company out of their magnanimity to him. As such, it was something he should be thanking them all for, especially Abu Bakr who supposedly did the most “favours” in this regard! The Qur’an, however, has directly refuted all that:

يمنون عليك أن أسلموا قل لا تمنوا علي إسلامكم بل الله يمن عليكم أن هداكم للإيمان إن كنتم صادقين

They regard as a favour upon you (O Muhammad) that they have embraced Islam. Say: “**Count NOT your Islam as a favour upon me. Rather, Allah has conferred a favour upon you**, that He has guided you to the Faith, if you are truthful”.[7]

So, the Islam of Abu Bakr – the *obligations* of which [if genuine] would certainly have included his spendings in the Way of Allah and his companionship – was *never* a favour upon the Messenger of Allah! By contrast, it was the Prophet who had done favour to him by giving him guidance and his own blessed company. This is further indicated in this verse:

لقد من الله على المؤمنين إذ بعث فيهم رسولا من أنفسهم يتلو عليهم آياته ويزكيهم ويعلمهم الكتاب والحكمة وإن كانوا من قبل لفي ضلال مبين

Indeed, Allah has conferred a favour upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting unto them His Verses, and purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom, while before that they had been in manifest misguidance.[8]

Therefore, there is no doubt about it. The Prophet of Allah was the one doing the favour, on behalf of Him, to Abu Bakr and the other Sahabah. It was *never* the other way round. No Muslim ever did a single favour to the Messenger. The Qur’an is very explicit about this.

Honestly, it is also a grave insult to the office of *nubuwwah* to suggest that Abu Bakr was doing a "favour" to the Prophet by keeping him company! There is even an element of blasphemy in it. If Abu Bakr was the one conferring a "favour" upon the Prophet – and not the other way round – through his company, does this not suppose that the former was the *superior* party? The "favour" of companionship is conferred only by masters. Subordinates *serve* their superiors through their companionship, while friends exercise it as a *duty* of their bond, and never as a "favour".

The third fatal problem with the report of Abu Sa'id – which is far more serious – is that it presupposes that the Prophet did not have any *khalil* (friend) among his followers – not even a single one! That indeed is extremely weird! A *khalil* is a friend or companion *whom you love and who loves you*! So, the Messenger of Allah did not have a single friend or companion among the Muslims whom he loved, and who loved him?! Is that not a *very* reckless submission?

The truth however is that all pious people are *akhilla* (plural of *khalil*) of one another. Each loves all the others, and is loved by them. Allah says:

> الأخلاء يومئذ بعضهم لبعض عدو إلا المتقين

Friends (*akhilla*, plural of *khalil*) on that Day will be foes one to another, **except the pious**.[9]

Al-Hafiz Ibn Kathir (d. 774 H) comments:

> وقوله: {الأخلاء يومئذ بعضهم لبعض عدو إلا المتقين} أي: كل صداقة وصحابة لغير الله فإنها تنقلب يوم القيامة عداوة إلا ما كان لله، عز وجل، فإنه دائم بدوامه.

His Statement {Friends on that Day will be foes one to another, except the pious}, means: ***every* friendship or companionship** that is not for the sake of Allah will turn on the Day of Resurrection into enmity, except what was for the sake of Allah the Almighty the Most Glorious, which will survive forever.[10]

Imam al-Baghwi (d. 516 H) also submits:

> {الأخلاء} على المعصية في الدنيا، {يومئذ} يوم القيامة، {بعضهم لبعض عدو إلا المتقين} إلا المتحابين في الله عز وجل على طاعة الله عز وجل.

{Friends} upon sin in this world, {on that Day} the Day of Resurrection, {will be foes one to another, except the pious} except **those who love one another** for the sake of Allah the Almighty the Most Glorious, upon obedience to Allah the Almighty, the Most Glorious.[11]

Imam Abu Sa'ud (d. 951 H) further states under the verse:

الأخلاء {المتحابون}

{Friends [*akhilla*]} [means] **people who love one another.**[12]

So, we ask: did the Prophet not have any friend or companion who loved him and whom he loved? If he did, then such a friend or companion was his *khalil*! If there none, there could be only one possible explanation: none of the Sahabah was pious! 'Allamah al-Albani has copied a *hadith* proving such a conclusion:

إن أوثق عرى الإسلام: أن تحب في الله و تبغض في الله

Verily, **the strongest handhold of Islam is that you love for the sake of Allah** and hate for the sake of Allah.[13]

The 'Allamah states:

حسن

Hasan[14]

Since the Messenger loved and hated only for the sake of Allah, then he certainly loved all the pious ones among his Sahabah, at the least due to this verse:

إن الله يحب المتقين

Surely, Allah loves the pious.[15]

Of course, it is completely unthinkable that any Muslim could be pious without loving the Messenger of Allah! As such, we affirm that the Prophet did have *akhilla* – friends and companions who loved him for the sake of Allah and whom He too loved for His sake. There, in fact, were many of them! The most noticeable of them, of course, in the *ahadith* of the Messenger is none other than Amir al-Muminin. Imam Muslim records:

حدثنا قتيبة بن سعيد ومحمد بن عباد (وتقاربا في اللفظ) قالا حدثنا حاتم (وهو ابن إسماعيل) عن بكير بن مسمار
عن عامر بن سعد بن أبي وقاص عن أبيه قال أمر معاوية بن أبي سفيان سعدا فقال ما منعك أن تسب أبا التراب؟
فقال أما ذكرت ثلاثا قالهن له رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم فلن أسبه ...سمعته يقول يوم خيبر لأعطين الراية

رجلا يحب الله ورسوله ويحبه الله ورسوله قال فتطاولنا لها فقال ادعوا لي عليا فأتى به أرمد فبصق في عينه ودفع الراية إليه ففتح الله عليه

Qutaybah b. Sa'id and Muhammad b. 'Abbad – Hatim b. Isma'il – Bukayr b. Musmar – 'Amir b. Sa'id b. Abi Waqqas – his father (Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas):

Mu'awiyah commanded Sa'd, and therefore said, "What prevented you from cursing Abu al-Turab (i.e. 'Ali)?" So, he (Sa'd) replied, "As long as I remember three things which the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said about him, I will never curse him ... I heard him saying on the Day of Khaybar, "**I will give the flag to a man who loves Allah and His Messenger, and Allah and His Messenger too love him**." So, we longed for it (i.e. the flag). **Then he said, "Call 'Ali for me"**, and he was brought to him. He was sore-eyed. He applied saliva to his eye and gave the flag to him, and Allah granted him victory."[16]

This leaves absolutely no questions. Amir al-Muminin was a confirmed *khalil* of both Allah and His Messenger. Interestingly, the report quoted by Ibn Taymiyyah claims that Abu Bakr was NEVER a *khalil* of the Prophet! Rather, there was only a *wish* that he was! So, that *hadith* – apart from its serious defects – actually undermines, rather than promote, the cause of Abu Bakr! It, among others, shows that there was no reciprocated love between him and the Messenger of Allah. This, in turn, casts grave doubts upon a number of claims made about Abu Bakr, especially those concerning his piety.

Perhaps, the greatest threat *against* the *hadith* about Abu Bakr is the version about 'Ali itself! Al-Hafiz (d. 852 H) writes about it at length:

منها حديث سعد بن أبي وقاص قال أمرنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بسد الأبواب الشارعة في المسجد وترك باب علي أخرجه أحمد والنسائي وإسناده قوي

وفي رواية للطبراني في الأوسط رجالها ثقات من الزيادة فقالوا يا رسول الله سددت أبوابنا فقال ما انا سددتها ولكن الله سدها

وعن زيد بن أرقم قال كان لنفر من الصحابة أبواب شارعة في المسجد فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم سدوا هذه الأبواب الا باب علي فتكلم ناس في ذلك فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اني والله ما سددت شيئا ولا فتحته ولكن أمرت بشئ فاتبعته أخرجه أحمد والنسائي والحاكم ورجاله ثقات

وعن ابن عباس قال أمر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بأبواب المسجد فسدت الا باب علي وفي رواية وأمر بسد الأبواب غير باب علي فكان يدخل المسجد وهو جنب ليس له طريق غيره أخرجهما أحمد والنسائي ورجالهما ثقات

وعن جابر بن سمرة قال أمرنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بسد الأبواب كلها غير باب علي فربما مر فيه وهو جنب أخرجه الطبراني

وعن ابن عمر قال كنا نقول في زمن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم خير الناس ثم أبو بكر ثم عمر ولقد أعطى علي بن أبي طالب ثلاث خصال لان يكون لي واحدة منهن أحب إلي من حمر النعم زوجه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ابنته وولدت له وسد الأبواب الا بابه في المسجد وأعطاه الراية يوم خيبر أخرجه أحمد وإسناده حسن

واخرج النسائي من طريق العلاء بن عرار بمهملات قال فقلت لابن عمر أخبرني عن علي وعثمان فذكر الحديث وفيه وأما علي فلا تسأل عنه أحدا وانظر إلى منزلته من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قد سد أبوابنا في المسجد وأقر بابه ورجاله رجال الصحيح الا العلاء وقد وثقه يحيى بن معين وغيره

وهذه الأحاديث يقوي بعضها بعضا وكل طريق منها صالح للاحتجاج فضلا عن مجموعها

Among them is the *hadith* of **Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas**: "The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, ORDERED us to close all the doors opening into the mosque, and he left (open) the door of 'Ali." Ahmad and al-Nasai recorded it **and its chain is *qawi* (strong)**.

And in the report of al-Tabarani in *al-Awsat*, **whose narrators are trustworthy**, there is the addition: "So they said, 'O Messenger of Allah! You have closed our doors.' He replied, 'I have not closed it. Rather, Allah has closed it.'"

Zayd b. Arqam also narrated: "Some of the Sahabah had doors opening into the mosque. So, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said, 'Close all these doors except the door of 'Ali.' Then, some people criticized that (order). As a result, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said, 'I swear by Allah, I have not closed anything or open it. Rather, I was ordered (by Allah) to do something, and I followed it (i.e. the order).'" Ahmad, al-Nasai and al-Hakim recorded it **and its narrators are trustworthy**.

Ibn 'Abbas further narrated: "The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, commanded that the doors of the mosque be closed except the door of 'Ali." In another report (he said): "He ordered the closure of the doors other than the door of 'Ali. So, he used to enter the mosque after having a seminal discharge before performing his purification bath. He had no other path except it (i.e. the mosque)". **Ahmad and Nasai recorded it and their narrators are trustworthy**.

Jabir b. Samurah also narrated: "The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him ordered us to close all the doors except the door of 'Ali. So, perhaps, he would pass through it (i.e. the mosque) after having a

seminal discharge before performing his purification bath." Al-Tabarani recorded it.

Ibn 'Umar narrated: "We used to say during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, is the best of mankind, then Abu Bakr, then 'Umar. 'Ali b. Abi Talib has been given three qualities, if I had just one of them, it would be more beloved to me than a red camel. The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, married his daughter to him, and she gave birth to his children. **He (the Prophet) also closed the doors in the mosque except his door**. And he gave him the flag on the Day of Khaybar." Ahmad recorded it **and its chain is *hasan***.

And al-Nasai recorded through the route of al-'Ala b. 'Arar: "I said to Ibn 'Umar: 'Tell me about 'Ali and 'Uthman'." Then he (al-Nasai) mentioned the *hadith* (as above), and added (that Ibn 'Umar said), "As for 'Ali, do not ask anyone about him. **Just look at his status from the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him**. He had closed our doors in the mosques and left his door open." **Its narrators are narrators of the *Sahih* except al-'Ala, and Yahya b. Ma'in and others have declared him *thiqah* (trustworthy)**.

These *ahadith* strengthen one another, **and each of the chains is qualified to be used as a *hujjah***, much less their combination.[17]

Imam al-Tirmidhi further records:

> حدثنا محمد بن حميد الرازي حدثنا إبراهيم بن المختار عن شعبة عن أبي بلج عن عمرو بن ميمون عن ابن عباس أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم أمر بسد الأبواب إلا باب علي

Muhammad b. Hamid al-Razi – Ibrahim b. al-Mukhtar – Shu'bah – Abu Balj – 'Amr b. Maymun – **Ibn 'Abbas**:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, ORDERED that all doors be closed **except the door of 'Ali**.[18]

And 'Allamah al-Albani comments:

> صحيح

Sahih[19]

Imam al-Haythami (d. 807 H) also documents:

> وعن عبد الله بن الرقيم الكناني قال : خرجنا إلى المدينة زمن الجمل فلقينا سعد بن مالك بها فقال: أمر رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم بسد الأبواب الشارعة في المسجد وترك باب علي

Narrated ‘Abd Allah b. al-Raqim al-Kanani:

We went to Madinah during the time of (the Battle of) al-Jamal (between ‘Ali and ‘Aishah) and we met **Sa’d b. Malik** there (i.e. in Madinah), and he said, “The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, ORDERED that all the doors opening into the mosque must be closed, **and he left (open) the door of ‘Ali**.”[20]

Then, he says:

رواه أحمد ... وإسناد أحمد حسن

Ahmad narrated it ... **and the chain of Ahmad is *hasan***.[21]

Meanwhile, ‘Allamah al-Albani has some additional comments:

قلت: ولعله يشير إلى حديث أبي بلج: حدثنا عمرو بن ميمون عن ابن عباس مرفوعا مختصرا بلفظ :" سدوا أبواب المسجد غير باب علي". قال: " فيدخل المسجد جنبا وهو طريقه، ليس له طريق غيره ".

أخرجه أحمد (1/330 ـ 331 و 331) عن أبي عوانة، والترمذي (2/301) ، والنسائي في " الخصائص " (63/42) عن شعبة عنه نحوه؛ دون دخول المسجد وقال: "حديث غريب".

قلت: وإسناده جيد، رجاله ثقات رجال الشيخين؛ غير أبي بلج ـ وهو الفزاري الكوفي ـ وهو صدوق ربما أخطأ كما في "التقريب".

وهذا القدر من الحديث صحيح له شواهد كثيرة يقطع الواقف عليها بصحته

I say: Perhaps he is referring to the *hadith* of Abu Balj – ‘Amr b. Maymun – Ibn ‘Abbas from the Prophet in a summarized manner with this wording, “**Close the doors of the mosque except the door of ‘Ali**.” He said, “So he (‘Ali) used to enter the mosque after having a seminal discharge before performing the purification bath. It (i.e. the mosque) was his pathway, and he had no other pathway except it.”

Ahmad (1/330-331 and 331) recorded it from Abu ‘Awanah, and al-Tirmidhi (2/301), and al-Nasai in *al-Khasais* (42/63) from Shu’bah from him, **without (mentioning) the entrance into the mosque** and he (al-Tirmidhi) said, “a *gharib* (strange) *hadith*.”

I say: **Its chain is *jayyid* (good)**. Its narrators are trustworthy, narrators of the two Shaykhs, apart from Abu Balj – and he is al-Fazari al-Kufi – and he is *saduq* (very truthful), maybe he made mistakes, as

stated in *al-Taqrib*.

This part of the *hadith* is *sahih*. It has a lot of *shawahid* (witnesses), **which absolutely necessitate accepting it as *sahih*.**[22]

These reports basically cancel out those about Abu Bakr, and leave no room for reconciliation or harmonization. If we assumed – for the sake of argument – that both events *might* haved occurred, then one of them must at least have preceded the other. So, which was it? The highly interesting part is that whichever of them is placed earlier cancels out the possibility of the other. Apparently baffled by the huge clash between the two *hadiths* – one in favour of Abu Bakr and the other in favour of ‘Ali – al-Hafiz makes a desperate attempt to find a middle ground:

> الجمع بينهما بما دل عليه حديث أبي سعيد الخدري يعني الذي أخرجه الترمذي ان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال لا يحل لاحد ان يطرق هذا المسجد جنبا غيري وغيرك والمعنى ان باب علي كان إلى جهة المسجد ولم يكن لبيته باب غيره فلذلك لم يؤمر بسده ويؤيد ذلك ما أخرجه إسماعيل القاضي في احكام القران من طريق المطلب بن عبد الله بن حنطب ان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لم يأذن لاحد ان يمر في المسجد وهو جنب الا لعلي بن أبي طالب لان بيته كان في المسجد
>
> ومحصل الجمع ان الامر بسد الأبواب وقع مرتين ففي الأولى استثنى علي لما ذكره وفي الأخرى استثنى أبو بكر ولكن لا يتم ذلك الا بان يحمل ما في قصة علي على الباب الحقيقي وما في قصة أبي بكر على الباب المجازي والمراد به الخوخة كما صرح به في بعض طرقه وكأنهم لما أمروا بسد الأبواب سدوها وأحدثوا خوخا يستقربون الدخول إلى المسجد منها فأمروا بعد ذلك بسدها فهذه طريقة لا بأس بها في الجمع بين الحديثين

Hamonization between the two (*hadiths*) is through what is proved by the *hadith* of Abu Sa’id al-Khudri, that is the one recorded by al-Tirmidhi, that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said (to ‘Ali), “It is not permissible for anyone to pass through this mosque after having a seminal discharge before performing his purification bath except me and you (i.e. ‘Ali).” **The meaning is that the door of ‘Ali opens into the mosque and his house had no other door. This was why he was not commanded to close it.**

This is confirmed by what Isma’il al-Qadhi recorded in *Ahkam al-Qur’an* from the route of al-Mutalib b. ‘Abd Allah b. Hantab that the Prophet, peace be upon him, did not permit anyone to pass through the mosque after having a seminal discharge, before performing his purification bath, except ‘Ali b. Abi Talib, because his house was in the mosque.”

The outcome of the harmonization is that the command to close the doors occurred twice. **In the first instance, only ‘Ali was exempted due to the reason mentioned. In the other instance, only Abu Bakr was exempted.** However, that will not be fully correct except by interpreting what is (mentioned) in the story of ‘Ali (i.e. the door) literally, and what is (mentioned) in the story of Abu Bakr (i.e. the door) metaphorically. What is meant by it (i.e. the door in Abu Bakr’s story) is his wicket, as explicitly stated

through some of its chains. It is as though he (the Prophet) ordered that the doors be closed. They (the Sahabah) closed them but made wickets instead through which they entered into the mosque. Then he (the Prophet) ordered that they too be closed. There is no problem with this method of harmonizing the two *hadiths*.[23]

Through this submission, al-Hafiz seeks to kill three birds with a single stone:

1. Remove the inconsistencies in the *hadith* about Abu Bakr by re-interpreting "wicket" to mean "door".

2. Explain away the reason for allowing 'Ali to leave his door open.

3. Placing the story of 'Ali ahead in time before that of Abu Bakr.

However, this in fact only creates even more severe problems! Our Hafiz submits that the house of 'Ali had no other door except that in the *masjid*. Therefore, if his only door had been closed, he would have had no way of accessing his house any longer, and his family would have been caged inside it.

As such, he was excused and exempted the first time. But then, why would the Messenger of Allah have nonetheless gone ahead later to issue a new order against 'Ali to seal his sole door? After all, no evidence is led to show that Amir al-Muminin had later built a second exit from his house! Did the Prophet really intend to siege Imam 'Ali and his family in, or banish them from, their house, as al-Hafiz suggests?!

Besides, the Sunni narrative of the two incidents do not place their Sahabah in a good light. Al-Hafiz states:

> والمراد به الخوخة كما صرح به في بعض طرقه وكأنهم لما أمروا بسد الأبواب سدوها وأحدثوا خوخا يستقربون الدخول إلى المسجد منها فأمروا بعد ذلك بسدها فهذه طريقة لا بأس بها في الجمع بين الحديثين

What is meant by it (i.e. the door in Abu Bakr's story) is his wicket, as explicitly stated through some of its chains. It is as though he (the Prophet) ordered that the doors be closed. They (the Sahabah) closed them but made wickets instead through which they entered into the mosque. Then he (the Prophet) ordered that they too be closed. There is no problem with this method of harmonizing the two *hadiths*.

Simply put, the Messenger *ordered* his companions to "close" their doors which had opened into his mosque. The order to *close* meant that the doors were NOT to be removed or replaced. Rather, they were to be left *intact*, but under lock.

However, what did the Sahabah do instead? They *disobeyed* the order by *removing* the doors and *replacing* them with wickets! One of these rebellious companions was Abu Bakr. What Sunni Islam wants us to believe, however, is that the Prophet later legitimized their disobedience and recognized their wickets! Worse still, he even proceeded to refer to those illegal wickets as "doors"!

Meanwhile, we consider it utterly unthinkable that the Messenger of Allah would have referred to "wickets" as "doors" in *any* circumstance! It is like designating a kitchen knife as a sword! The Prophet was the master of language, knowledge and wisdom on the earth. It would be highly blasphemous to suggest that he did not know the difference between wickets and doors, or that he equated the two!

Moreover, disobedience to Allah and His Messenger is never okayed or rewarded in Islam. It is instead condemned and sanctioned appropriately. Abu Bakr's wicket – in line with the theory of al-Hafiz – was installed, in clear *disobedience* to Allah and His Messenger. The order to him was to *keep* his door intact, but closed. However, he *replaced* it instead with his wicket. As such, it was nothing but an *illegal* entity. Obviously, the Prophet of Allah would never have applauded such rebellion or its symbols!

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. 5, p. 35
2. Abu al-Husayn Muslim b. al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi, Sahih Muslim (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Fuad 'Abd al-Baqi], vol. 4, p. 1854, # 2382 (2)
3. Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qurtubah) [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut], vol. 3, p. 18, # 11150
4. Ibid
5. Abu 'Isa Muhammad b. 'Isa al-Sulami al-Tirmidhi, al-Jami' al-Sahih Sunan al-Tirmidhi (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani], vol. 5, p. 616, # 3678
6. Ibid
7. Qur'an 49:17
8. Qur'an 3:164
9. Qur'an 43:67. This verse, among others, brings down a notion which is very widespread among common Sunnis that the word khalil refers to the person most beloved to another. If such were the case, then the Prophet would have been the sole khalil of every pious Muslim. However, each pious Muslim is a khalil of the other, in this world and in the Hereafter, and this is very explicit from the verse.
10. Abu al-Fida Isma'il b. 'Umar b. Kathir al-Qurshi al-Dimashqi, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim (Dar al-Taybah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'; 2nd edition, 1420 H) [annotator: Sami b. Muhammad Salamah], vol. 7, p. 237
11. Abu Muhammad al-Husayn b. Mas'ud al-Baghwi, Mu'alim al-Tanzil (Dar Tayyibah; 4th edition, 1417 H), vol. 7, p. 221
12. Abu Sa'ud Muhammad b. Muhammad al-'Imadi, Irshad al-'Aql al-Salim ila Mizaya al-Qur'an al-Karim (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi), vol. 8, p. 54
13. Abu 'Abd al-Rahman Muhammad Nasir al-Din b. al-Hajj Nuh b. Tajati b. Adam al-Ashqudri al-Albani, Sahih al-Jami' al-Saghir wa Ziyadatuhu (Al-Maktab al-Islami), vol. 1, p. 342, # 883 (2009)
14. Ibid
15. Qur'an 9:4
16. Abu al-Husayn Muslim b. al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi, Sahih Muslim (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Fuad 'Abd al-Baqi], vol. 4, p. 1870, # 2404 (32)
17. Shihab al-Din Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah li al-Taba'ah wa al-Nashr; 2nd edition), vol. 7, pp. 12-13
18. Abu 'Isa Muhammad b. 'Isa al-Sulami al-Tirmidhi, al-Jami' al-Sahih Sunan al-Tirmidhi (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani], vol. 5, p. 641, # 3732
19. Ibid
20. Nur al-Din 'Ali b. Abi Bakr al-Haythami, Majma' al-Zawaid (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr; 1412 H), vol. 9, p. 149, # 14672
21. Ibid
22. Muhammad Nasir al-Din b. al-Hajj Nuh al-Albani, Silsilah al-Ahadith al-Dha'ifah wa al-Mawdhu'ah wa Atharihah al-Sayyiah fi al-Ummah (Riyadh: Dar al-Ma'arif; 1st edition, 1412 H), vol. 6, pp. 481-482, # 2929

23. Shihab al-Din Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah li al-Taba'ah wa al-Nashr; 2nd edition), vol. 7, p. 13

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