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2. Hadith Al-Qadha, Confessions Of The Sahabah

The companions of the Messenger of Allah, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa alihi*, used to admit, unanimously, that Amir al–Muminin 'Ali b. Abi Talib, *'alaihi al–salam*, was indeed the best judge among them. Imam Ahmad (d. 241 H), for instance records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا وكيع ثنا سفيان عن حبيب بن أبي ثابت عن سعيد بن جبير عن بن عباس قال قال عدثنا عبد الله عنه: على أقضانا وأبي أقرؤنا

'Abd Allah (b. Ahmad b. Hanbal) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Waki' – Sufyan – Habib b. Abi Thabit – Sa'id b. Jubayr – Ibn 'Abbas:

'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "'Ali is the best judge among us, and Ubayy is the best reciter among us." 1

Shaykh al-Arnau® says:

Its chain is sahih upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.2

Imam Ahmad further records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا يحيى بن سعيد عن سفيان حدثني حبيب يعنى بن أبي ثابت عن سعيد بن جبير عن بن عباس رضى الله عنهما قال: قال عمر علي أقضانا وأبي أقرؤنا

'Abd Allah (b. Ahmad b. Hanbal) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Yahya b. Sa'id – Sufyan – Habib b. Abi Thabit – Sa'id b. Jubayr – Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both:

'Umar said: "'Ali is the best judge among us, and Ubayy is the best reciter among us."3

Al-Arnau® again comments:

Its chain is sahih upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.4

This is the third athar recorded on the same matter by Ahmad b. Hanbal:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا سويد بن سعيد في سنة ست وعشرين ومائتين ثنا علي بن مسهر عن الأعمش عن حبيب بن أبي ثابت عن سعيد بن جبير عن بن عباس قال خطبنا عمر رضي الله عنه على منبر رسول الله صلى الله على على رضى الله عنه أقضانا وأبى رضى الله عنه اقرؤنا

'Abd Allah (b. Ahmad b. Hanbal) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Suwayd b. Sa'id – 'Ali b. Mashar – al–A'mash – Habib b. Abi Thabit – Sa'id b. Jubayr – Ibn 'Abbas:

'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, delievered a sermon on the pulpit of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, and said: "'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, is the best judge among us, and Ubayy, may Allah be pleased with him, is the best reciter."5

Shaykh Shu'ayb al-Arnau® has a simple verdict on it:

صحيح

Sahih6

Notably, 'Umar mentioned this publicly and none among the Sahabah present – including the most senior ones – objected. This evidences their unanimous concurrence with him on the matter.

Imam al-Bukhari (d. 256 H) records the same athar in his Sahih:

حدثنا عمرو بن علي حدثنا يحيى حدثنا سفيان عن حبيب عن سعيد بن جبير عن ابن عباس قال قال عمر رضي الله عنه: أقرؤنا أبي وأقضانا علي

'Amr b. 'Ali - Yahya - Sufyan - Habib - Sa'id b. Jubayr - Ibn 'Abbas:

'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "The best reciter among us is Ubayy, and the best judge among us is 'Ali."7

Apart from 'Umar, all the other Sahabah also explicitly declared that the best judge among them – including their most senior ones living in Madinah – was none other than Amir al–Muminin. Imam al–Hakim (d. 403 H) records:

أخبرني عبد الرحمن بن الحسن القاضي بهمدان ثنا إبراهيم بن الحسين ثنا آدم بن أبي إياس ثنا شعبة عن أبي إسحاق عن عبد الرحمن بن يزيد عن علقمة عن عبد الله قال كنا نتحدث أن أقضى أهل المدينة علي بن أبي طالب رضى الله عنه رضى الله عنه

'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Hasan al-Qadi - Ibrahim b. al-Husayn - Adam b. Abi Iyas - Shu'bah - Abu Ishaq - 'Abd al-Rahman b. Yazid - 'Algamah - 'Abd Allah (b. Mas'ud):

"We used to SAY that the best judge among the people of Madinah was 'Ali b. Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him."8

Al-Hakim says:

This hadith is sahih upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.9

Imam al-Dhahabi (d. 748 H), on his part, keeps silent about it. The reason is unclear since the *athar* has a perfectly *sahih* chain. Meanwhile, he has personally authenticated the *sanad* and all its narrators in the same book in other *ahadith*! For example, al-Hakim records this chain:

'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Hasan al-Qadi – Ibrahim b. al-Husayn – Adam b. Abi Iyas – Shu'bah – Mansur – Ibrahim – 'Alqamah – 'Abd Allah (b. Mas'ud), may Allah be pleased with him 10

The only differences in this sanad from that of the athar are Mansur and Ibrahim. Al-Hakim declares:

This hadith is sahih upon the standard of the two Shaykhs. 11

Interestingly, al-Dhahabi confirms the verdict:

(Sahih) upon the standard of al-Bukhari and Muslim. 12

This proves that 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Hasan al-Qadi, Ibrahim b. al-Husayn, Adam b. Abi Iyas, Shu'bah and 'Alqamah are *thiqah* (trustworthy) narrators!

But, what is the status Abu Ishaq and 'Abd al-Rahman b. Yazid – the only remaining narrators of Ibn Mas'ud's *athar*? Note this chain documented by Imam al-Hakim:

Abu Zakariyah al-'Anbari – Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Salam – Ishaq – Yahya b. Adam – Israil – **Abu Ishaq** – '**Abd al-Rahman b. Yazid** – 'Abd Allah (b. Mas'ud), may Allah be pleased with him. 13

Al-Hakim comments:

This hadith is sahih upon the standard of the two Shaykhs. 14

Al-Dhahabi also reiterates:

(Sahih) upon the standard of al-Bukhari and Muslim. 15

As such, all the narrators of the *athar* are *thiqah* (trustworthy).

But then, is there any break between Shu'bah and Abu Ishaq? We have seen the unbroken connection between all the other narrators except these two. This chain, recorded by al-Hakim, puts the seal on things:

Muhammad b. Salih b. Hani – al-Musayyab b. Zuhayr – 'Asim b. 'Ali – **Shu'bah** – **Abu Ishaq** – Wahb b.

Jabir - 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr, may Allah be pleased with them both 16

Al-Hakim states:

This hadith is sahih upon the standard of the two Shaykhs. 17

Al-Dhahabi agrees:

(Sahih) upon the standard of al-Bukhari and Muslim. 18

Simply put, the chain of the *athar* of Ibn Mas'ud is *sahih*. All the narrators are *thiqah* (trustworthy), and there is no disconnection whatsoever in the *sanad*.

- 1. Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qurtubah) [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut], vol. 5, p. 113, # 21122
- 2. Ibid
- 3. Ibid, vol. 5, p. 113, # 21123
- 4. Ibid
- 5. Ibid, vol. 5, p. 113, # 21124
- 6. Ibid
- 7. Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Ibrahim b. Mughirah al-Bukhari al-J'ufi, al-Jami' al-Iahih al-Mukhtasar (Beirut: Dar Ibn Kathir; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Mustafa Dib al-Bagha], vol. 4, p. 1628, # 4211
- 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, # 4656
- 9. Ibid
- 10. Ibid, vol. 4, p. 372, # 7963
- **11.** Ibid
- 12. Ibid
- 13. Ibid, vol. 2, p. 244, # 2888
- **14.** Ibid
- <u>15.</u> Ibid
- 16. lbid, vol. 4, p. 536, # 8505
- 17. Ibid
- <u>18.</u> Ibid

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