

36. The Hadith of Performance and Delivery

No one shall deliver for me except i or a man from my house

Imam Ahmad in his Musnad recorded that Abu Bakr said: The Prophet sent me with the chapter of Bara-ah to the people of Mecca:

"No pagan should make a pilgrimage after this year.

No naked shall circumnavigate around the Ancient House.

No one shall enter Paradise except a Muslim soul. Any Pagan community that has between them and the Messenger of God a peace accord the accord will end by the end of the specified period (without extention) and God and His Messenger are clear of the pagans."

Abu Bakr traveled on for three days then the Prophet said to 'Ali: "Follow him and send Abu Bakr back to me and go on to deliver the message yourself." 'Ali did that and Abu Bakr came back to the Prophet. He wept and said: Messenger of God did anything happen concerning me? The Prophet said that nothing happened but good.

"But I am commanded that no one should deliver it except myself or a man from me."¹

Al-Hakim in his Sahih Al-Mustadrak recorded through his channel to Jumai-a Ibn Omair Al-Laithi that Abdullah Ibn 'Umar said to him:

"The Messenger of God sent Abu Bakr and 'Umar with the chapter of Bara-ah to the people of Mecca. The two men went on and suddenly a man overtook them. They asked: Who is this? He said: I am 'Ali. Abu Bakr give me the written message which you have. Abu Bakr said: What happened concerning me? 'Ali said: By God I did not know but good. 'Ali took the written message and went on and Abu Bakr and 'Umar went back to Medina and said:

Messenger of God what happened to us? He said nothing but good but I am told: No one should deliver

for you but you or a man from you."2

Al-Nisa-i in his book "Al-Khasa-is Al-Alaweyah" (Distinctions of 'Ali) reported that the Messenger of God sent the chapter of Bara-ah to Mecca with Abu Bakr. Then he ordered 'Ali to follow him. He told him: Take the written message from Abu Bakr and go to the people of Mecca. 'Ali reached Abu Bakr and took the message from him.

Abu Bakr sadly went back and said to the Messenger: Did any Revelation come down concerning me? The Prophet said: No but I am commanded that either I should deliver it or a man from the members of my House.3

Al-Tirmidhi recorded through his channel to Anas Ibn Malik that Anas reported: The Prophet sent Bara-ah with Abu Bakr then he called him and said: No one ought to deliver this except a man from the members of my House He called 'Ali and gave him the chapter."4

Ibn Hisham in his Biography of the Prophet recorded that Muhammad Al-Baqir reported the following:

"When Bara-ah was revealed to the Messenger he sent Abu Bakr to lead the people in pilgrimage. The Prophet was told: Messenger of God it would be good if you send Bara-ah with Abu Bakr so that he will announce it. The Prophet said: No one should deliver for me but a man from the members of my House.

Then he called upon 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib and said to him: Take the verses at the beginning of Bara-ah... 'Ali went on riding the camel of the Messenger "Al-Adba " until he reached Abu Bakr on the road. Abu Bakr said: Are you a commander or commanded? 'Ali said: I am commanded and they went on and Abu Bakr led the people in the Hajj Pilgrimage.

When the Day of Arafat came 'Ali stood up and announced to the people what the Messenger ordered him to announce..."5

It seems that this event was well known. 'Umar did not deny it when Ibn Abbas reminded him of it. Ibn Abbas reported the following:

"... 'Umar said to me: Ibn Abbas I see your man ('Ali) is treated unjustly... I said: Ameer Al-Mumineen give him his right. He pulled his hand from my hand and went on speaking to himself then he stood waiting for me.

When I came to him; he said: Ibn Abbas I think they (the Qureshites) did not give him the leadership only because they thought he was too young for that... I said: By God neither God nor His Messenger considered him too young when they ordered him to take the chapter of Bara-ah from your man. He ('Umar) turned his face away from me and sped up and I went back."6

Al-Hafith Al-Kanji Al-Shafi-i in his book Kifayat Al- Talib page 151 recorded that Al-Harith Ibn Malik reported the following:

"I came to Mecca and met Saad Ibn Abu Waqas I asked him: "Did you hear any recommendation for 'Ali?" He said: I witnessed four for him if one of them were for me I would prefer it to having the whole world living in it as long as Noah lived. The Messenger sent Abu Bakr with Bara-ah to the pagans of Quraish. He traveled a day and night then the Prophet said to 'Ali: Follow Abu Bakr take Bara-ah from him and deliver it and send Abu Bakr back to me. Abu Bakr came back crying. He said: Messenger of God did any revelation come down concerning me? The Prophet said: None but good. No one should deliver for me except myself or a man from me or he said: from the members of my House..."⁷

Whether the Messenger sent Abu Bakr with the chapter of Bara-ah or the chapter came down after he left for the pilgrimage; and whether Abu Bakr went back to the Prophet or he continued in his leadership of the pilgrimage these hadiths unanimously agree that the Messenger declared that no one should deliver for him (or perform for him) but a man from him or a man from the members of his House (and the first two hadiths and the hadith of Ibn Abbas stated that this was by order from God.) That man was 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib.

Let us try to understand what the Messenger meant by his saying "No one should deliver for me except a man from me (or from the members of my House).".

The Holy Prophet did not mean that no one should report his word or deed except a man from the members of his House; otherwise it would be forbidden for people from outside his House to report what he said or did and this is untrue. The Messenger used to say: "Let the present inform the absent."

Nor did the Messenger mean that he should not send a messenger to people except a man from his House because he sent many messengers to kings and princes and tribes and individuals and none of them were from the members of his House.

The rest of the people can report the words and the deeds of the Holy Prophet. But what they report would not be securely free of error. Many times the reporters themselves became confused and they contradicted each other in their reports.

Therefore none of them would be an authority to the Muslims in representing the Messenger and in replacing him as the communicator of the Islamic instructions. The one who represents the Holy Prophet is a man from the members of his House.

The one who delivers for the Messenger and represents him should be the treasurer of the Knowledge of the Messenger knowing all of what was revealed to the Messenger and what the Messenger gave of instructions.

This is exactly what the Messenger meant when he said: "I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is the gate of that city. Whoever wants to enter that city should come through the gate."

The Messenger informed us that the members of his House during his lifetime were only four: 'Ali Fatima

and their two children (Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein). We have mentioned in the second chapter vol. 1 of this book several hadiths which indicate this. Of those hadiths is what Muslim reported through Saad Ibn Waqas: When this verse 'Let us invite our sons and your sons...' the Messenger called 'Ali Fatima and Hassan and Hussein and said: God these are the members of my House."[8](#)

No man was among these four during the time of the Holy Prophet except one person: That is 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib. Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein were still children and Fatima was a grown lady. Thus when the Messenger said:

"No one performs for me except a man from the members of my House " he had meant only 'Ali. Therefore he sent him with the chapter of Bara-ah.

The Messenger did not mean to bestow on 'Ali this office of his representation because he was from his relatives. The Prophet would not elevate his relatives above other people because they are his relatives. He is the one who called upon people to erase all tribal prejudices and declared the human equality and that there is no superiority but through righteousness.

And so the hadith of Ibn Abbas speaks clearly that what the Prophet did was by order from God and not through a human desire. The Almighty of course would prefer 'Ali to the rest of the people only because He purified him and the rest of the members of the House completely.

The quoted hadiths indicate that 'Ali was the only deputy of the Messenger and no one from the Muslims represents the Messenger except he. It is reported that Hubshi Ibn Janadah reported the following:

"I heard the Messenger of God saying: 'Ali is from me and I am from him and no one represents me except 'Ali."

Al-Tirmidhi in his authentic Sunan reported this hadith and said this is good unusual and authentic.[9](#) Ibn Majah reported it also in his authentic Sunan[10](#) and so did Imam Ahmad in his Musnad.[11](#)

'Ali's general representation of the Holy Prophet stands clearly in the hadiths which declared that obedience of 'Ali is an obedience of God and His Messenger; disobedience of 'Ali is a disobedience of God and His Messenger; to slander him is to slander God and His Messenger; to love him is to love God and His Messenger and to be hostile to him is to be hostile to God and His Messenger. Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak recorded that Abu Dharr reported the following:

"The Messenger of God said: 'Whoever obeys me obeys God and whoever disobeys me disobeys God; and whoever obeys 'Ali obeys me; and whoever disobeys 'Ali disobeys me.'" Al-Hakim said: "This is an authentic hadith.[12](#) But the two sheikhs Al-Bukhari and Muslim did not report it." Al-Thahabi in his comment on Al-Mustadrak considered this hadith authentic.

Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak also reported on the same page many hadiths which indicate that to slander 'Ali is to slander the Messenger and to love him is to love the Messenger and to be hostile to him is to be

hostile to the Messenger.

It could be argued that the hadiths of representation and delivery substantiate that 'Ali is the Imam of the Muslims in jurisprudence rather than worldly affairs. It does not substantiate his leadership in rule and administration. Therefore they do not prove that he is the first caliph of the Messenger.

The weakness of this argument is easy to discover when we remember that the hadiths which indicate the imperativeness of his obedience and the prohibition of his disobedience actually announce his leadership in jurisprudence and worldly affairs. In addition to this the separation between religion and worldly affairs has no place in Islam.

Summary of the Previous Four Chapters

It has become clear by now that what was supposed to happen had happened. The Messenger had done what was dictated by the nature of his mission and the principles of his religion along with the grave circumstances under which his nation and state was living.

He responded to all that and to the need of the Muslims for a genuine authority in the Islamic teaching by appointing a genuine Imam for the nation to lead it after him. This is what was expected and this is what took place. The Holy Prophet informed the Muslims in many ways that he chose for them a man to lead them after him.

We have mentioned until now four kinds of statements by the Holy Prophet through which he informed the Muslims that 'Ali is their Imam. He made him their authority when he made him the gate of the city of knowledge and told them whoever wants to enter into that city has to come through the gate. He informed them also on the day of the Home Conference that 'Ali is his brother his minister his executor and his successor.

He also informed them on many occasions that 'Ali to him is like Aaron to Moses in everything except the prophethood. He informed them that God commanded him that no one should represent him but 'Ali. He informed them that their obedience to 'Ali is an obedience to God and His Messenger and that their disobedience to 'Ali is a disobedience to God and His Messenger.

The Hadith Is a Prophecy

The Prophet uttered these important statements in reliance on the Divine revelation. Otherwise he could not declare that obedience to 'Ali is an obedience to God and his disobedience is a disobedience to God. He could declare that only if God informed him through a clear revelation that 'Ali will never in his future life disagree with the command of God and the teachings of His Prophet.

The declaration itself implies a very clear prophecy and it is clear that that prophecy had been realized. The Imam lived after the Messenger about thirty years in which he was a miniature copy of the great

Messenger. He followed his way one hundred per cent and never parted with the order of God and the Prophet's instructions.

The event of the chapter of Bara-ah took place during the days of pilgrimage the ninth year after the Hijra. We shall see that the Messenger during the tenth year after the Hijrah and at the time of his valedictory pilgrimage issued statements which took the shape of general declaration in the presence of thousands of pilgrims. Those statements were directed to the Muslims of every generation. This was on and before the Day of Ghadir Khum.

To try to understand what the Messenger meant in those statements I shall divide these statements into two sections though the two sections were very often put together in one statement. These two sections are the Hadith Al-Thaqalain and Hadith Al-Wilayah.

- [1.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 1 p. 3.
- [2.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 51.
- [3.](#) Al-Nisa-i Al-Khassa-iss Al-Alaweyah (The Distinctions of 'Ali) p. 20.
- [4.](#) Al-Tirmidhi his authentic Sunan part 2 p. 183. (Al-Fairuzabadi Fadha-il Al-Khamsah part 2 p. 343 conveyed it.)
- [5.](#) Ibn Hisham Al-Seerah Al-Nabaweyah (Biography of the Prophet) part 2 p. 547.
- [6.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid in his Commentary on Nahjul-Balagha part 3 p. 105.
- [7.](#) Al-Hafith Al-Kanji Kifayat Al- Talib p. 151 (conveyed by Al-Amini Al-Ghadir part 1 p. 40.)
- [8.](#) Muslim in his Sahih part 15 p. 176.
- [9.](#) Al-Tirmidhi part 5 his authentic Sunan p. 300.
- [10.](#) Ibn Majah his authentic Sunan part 1 hadith no. 145.
- [11.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Munad part 4 pp. 164-165.
- [12.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 121.

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