7. Abu Bakr's Presence in the Army of Usamah

There is another fundamental twist to the whole saga about Abu Bakr's alleged leadership of the *salat* during the Prophet's fatal illness, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa alihi*, which creates a new major crisis for the official Sunni narrative. Imam al-Bukhari (d. 256 H) records:

> حدثنا خالد بن مخلد حدثنا سليمان قال حدثني عبد الله بن دينار عن عبد الله بن عمر رضي الله عنهما قال : بعث النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم بعثا وأمر عليهم أسامة بن زيد فطعن بعض الناس في إمارته فقال النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم إن تطعنوا في إمارته فقد كنتم تطعنون في إمارة أبيه من قبل وايم الله إن كان لخليقا للإمارة وإن وكان لمن أحب الناس إلي وإن هذا لمن أحب الناس إلي بعده

Khalid b. Makhlad – Sulayman – 'Abd Allah b. Dinar – 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him:

The Prophet, peace be upon him, sent troops and appointed Usamah b. Zayd as their *amir* (commander). But, some people criticized his appointment as *amir*. Then, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If you criticize his appointment as *amir*, you used to criticize the appointment of his father as *amir* before. I swear by Allah, he (Usamah's father) deserved the appointment as *amir* indeed, and he used to be one of the most beloved persons to me, and now this (Usamah) is certainly one of the most beloved persons to me after him."[1]

Dr. al-Bagha has some comments on this narration:

> فطعن (قدح وتكلم فيها) بعض الناس. (وكان أشدهم في هذا عياش ابن أبي ربيعة المخزومي رضي الله عنه)

(criticized) disparaged and condemned. (Some people) the most severe of them in this was 'Ayyash b. Abi Rabi'ah al-Makhzumi, may Allah be pleased with him.[2]

Al-Hafiz (d. 852 H) also has these words on the *hadith*:

قوله) باب بعث النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أسامة بن زيد في مرضه الذي توفي فيه(إنما أخر المصنف هذه الترجمة لما جاء أنه كان تجهيز أسامة يوم السبت قبل موت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بيومين

His statement (Chapter on the Appointment of Usamah b. Zayd by the Prophet, peace be upon him, during his Fatal Illness): The author (i.e. al-Bukhari) has only given this biography a late timing due to what is narrated that the mobilization of Usamah (for war) was on Saturday, two days before the death of the Prophet.[3]

This was well into the period when Abu Bakr was supposed to be leading the *salat*! What is going on here? Well, al-Hafiz has some more information:

وكان ممن انتدب مع أسامة كبار المهاجرين والأنصار منهم أبو بكر وعمر وأبو عبيدة وسعد وسعيد وقتادة بن النعمان وسلمة بن أسلم فتكلم في ذلك قوم منهم عياش بن أبي ربيعة المخزومي فرد عليه عمر

Among those conscripted with Usamah were senior Muhajirun and Ansar, **among them Abu Bakr, 'Umar, Abu 'Ubaydah**, Sa'd, Sa'id, Qatadah b. al-Nu'man, and Salamah b. Aslam. So, a group criticized that, among them 'Ayyash b. Abi Rabi'ah al-Makhzumi, and 'Umar opposed him.[4]

So, the Messenger of Allah deployed Abu Bakr and 'Umar as ordinary foot soldiers under the command of Usamah, just two days before his death. This is huge indeed.

Elsewhere, al-Hafiz submits further:

قال بن سعد ولد أسامة في الاسلام ومات النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وله عشرون سنة وقال بن أبي خيثمة ثماني عشرة وكان أمره على جيش عظيم

Ibn Sa'd said: "Usamah was born during the Islamic era, and the Prophet, peace be upon him, died **while he (Usamah) was twenty years old." Ibn Abi Khaythamah said, "He was eighteen years old"**. He (the Prophet) made him the *amir* (commander) of a huge army.[5]

Usamah was old enough only to be a grandson of Abu Bakr. He was barely a teenager. Yet, the Messenger of Allah, in his divinely-inspired wisdom, made him the *amir* over Abu Bakr and 'Umar. Besides that, Usamah was *amir* just a few days before the Prophet's death, during the most serious phase of his fatal illness when he was no longer able to appear in the mosque. The direct implications of this are clear:

1. Abu Bakr and 'Umar were under the command of Usamah. Therefore, they both were supposed to be at the army camp, and Usamah was their appointed Imam in *salat* as long as their deployment lasted.

2. The Messenger never intended either Abu Bakr or 'Umar to be his *khalifah*. Otherwise, he would not

have sent them away from Madinah during what obviously were his very last days on the earth.

3. The story of Abu Bakr's leadership of *salat* in the Prophet's mosque is false. If Abu Bakr was in Madinah, it was only because he had mutinied from the Islamic army. Mutineers are never rewarded with any form of leadership in Islam.

Understandably, Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) was very disturbed:

> قال الرافضي التاسع أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم قال جهزوا جيش أسامة وكرر الأمر بتنفيذه وكان فيهم أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان ولم ينفذ أمير المؤمنين لأنه أراد منعهم من التوثب على الخلافة بعده فلم يقبلوا منه
>
> والجواب من وجوه أحدها المطالبة بصحة النقل فإن هذ لا يروي بإسناد معروف ولا صححه أحد من علماء النقل ومعلوم أن الاحتجاج بالمنقولات لا يسوغ إلا بعد قيام الحجة بثبوتها وإلا فيمكن أن يقول كل أحد ما شاء
>
> الثاني أن هذا كذب بإجماع علماء النقل فلم يكن في جيش أسامة لا أبو بكر ولا عثمان وإنما قد قيل إنه كان فيه عمر وقد تواتر عن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم أنه استخلف أبا بكر على الصلاة حتي مات وصلى أبو بكر رضي الله عنه الصبح يوم موته وقد كشف سجف الحجرة فرآهم صفوفا خلف أبي بكر فسر بذلك فكيف يكون مع هذا قد أمره أن يخرج في جيش أسامة

The Rafi[illegible]i said: "The ninth (point) is that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "Mobilize the army of Usamah" and repeatedly gave the order for its dispatch. And among them (i.e. the soldiers under Usamah) were Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman. But, he did not conscript Amir al-Muminin, because he (the Prophet) intended to prevent them (i.e. those in the army) from jumping over the *khilafah* after him. But, they did not accept it from him".

The answer is from a number of angles. One of them is request for evidence of the authenticity of the report. **This is because this (claim) is not narrated with any known chain, and none of the scholars of narrations ever declared it authentic**. It is, of course, known that the use of reports as evidence is not permissible except after providing proof of their authenticity. Otherwise, everyone would say whatever he likes.

The second (answer) is that this (report) is a lie by the consensus of the scholars of narrations. Therefore, neither Abu Bakr nor 'Uthman was in the army of Usamah. It is only said that 'Umar was in it. Meanwhile, it has been narrated in *mutawatir* reports from the Prophet, peace be upon him, that **he deputized Abu Bakr to lead the *salat* until he (the Prophet) died**. Moreover, Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, performed the *Subh* (early morning) prayer of the day of his (i.e. the Prophet's) death. He (the Prophet) had drawn the curtain of the room, and saw them in congregational rows behind Abu Bakr, and he was pleased with that. So, with this, how could he (i.e. the Prophet) have ordered him (i.e.

Abu Bakr) to go out with the army of Usamah?[6]

Here, our Shaykh has muddled things up. First and foremost, according to the "sahih" *hadith* of 'Aishah, the Messenger – during his lifetime – literally took over the *salat* from Abu Bakr, thereby effectively terminating the latter's alleged appointment (assuming it ever existed). It was the *Zuhr* prayer of that Monday, and that was the last recorded *salat* of the Prophet. As such, Abu Bakr's prayer leadership – even if it had been true – was cut off before the Messenger's death.

Besides, Ibn Taymiyyah submitted that the reports about Abu Bakr's conscription into Usamah's army had no known chains. How true was this claim? Our Shaykh further stated that *all* the Sunni scholars of narrations, without a single exception, from the time of the Prophet up to his own lifetime, had explicitly declared those same narrations as "a lie". So, we should be able to easily harvest from hundreds, or perhaps thousands, of ancient Sunni books tons of statements to that effect.

The truth, however, is the opposite. Malik b. Anas (d. 179 H), Ibn al-Mubarak (d. 181 H), al-Shafi'i (d. 204 H), al-Tayalisi (d. 204 H), 'Abd al-Razzaq al-San'ani (d. 211 H), al-Humaydi (d. 219 H), Ibn Ja'd (d. 230 H), Ibn Sa'd (d. 230 H), Ibn Abi Shaybah (d. 235 H), Ibn Rahwayh (d. 238 H), Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 241 H), al-Darimi (d. 255 H), al-Bukhari (d. 256 H), Muslim (d. 261 H), Ibn Majah (d. 273 H), Abu Dawud (d. 275 H), Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276 H), al-Tirmidhi (d. 279 H), Ibn Abi 'Asim (d. 287 H), al-Bazzar (d. 292 H), al-Nasai (d. 303 H), Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 H), al-'Aqili (d. 322 H), Ibn Abi Hatim (d. 327 H), Ibn Hibban (d. 354 H), al-Tabarani (d. 360 H), al-Daraqutni (d. 385 H), Ibn Shahin (d. 385 H), al-Hakim (d. 403 H), al-Bayhaqi (d. 458 H), al-Baghdadi (d. 463 H), Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (d. 463 H), al-Khawarazmi (d. 568 H), Ibn Asakir (571 H), and al-Nawawi (d. 676 H) did NOT declare *riwayat* about Abu Bakr's conscription into Usamah's army as "a lie" in *any* of their books! In fact, Ibn Taymiyyah – from all indications – was the first ever human being to describe them as "a lie".

Further exposing the "lie" of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah is this report by Imam Ibn Asakir:

> أخبرنا أبو بكر وجيه بن طاهر أنا أبو حامد الأزهري أنا أبو محمد المخلدي أنا المؤمل بن الحسن نا أحمد بن منصور نا أبو النضر هاشم بن القاسم نا عاصم بن محمد عن عبيد الله بن عمر عن نافع عن ابن عمر أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم استعمل أسامة بن زيد على جيش فيهم أبو بكر وعمر فطعن الناس في عمله فخطب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم الناس ثم قال قد بلغني أنكم قد طعنتم في عمل أسامة وفي عمل أبيه قبله وإن أباه لخليق للإمارة وإنه لخليق للأمرة يعني أسامة وإنه لمن أحب الناس إلي فأوصيكم به

Abu Bakr Wajih b. Tahir – Abu Hamid al-Azhari – Abu Muhammad al-Makhladi – al-Muammal b. al-Hasan – Ahmad b. Mansur – Abu al-Na□r Hashim b. al-Qasim – 'Asim b. Muhammad – 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar – Nafi' – Ibn 'Umar:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, appointed Usamah b. Zayd as the commander over an army WHICH INCLUDED ABU BAKR AND 'UMAR. But, the people criticized his appointment. So,

the Prophet, peace be upon him, addressed the people, and then said: “News has reached me that you have criticized the appointment of Usamah and the appointment of his father before him. His father deserved the appointment as *amir*, and he too deserves the appointment as *amir*, that is Usamah. He is also one of the most beloved people to me. Therefore, I advise you concerning him.[7]

We know that – contrary to the wild claim of Ibn Taymiyyah – the narration actually has a known chain of transmission! So, what is its authenticity? Imam al-Dhahabi (d. 748 H) states about the first narrator:

> وجيه بن طاهر ابن محمد بن محمد بن أحمد، الشيخ العالم العدل، مسند خراسان، أبو بكر، أخو زاهر الشحامي النيسابوري

Wajih b. Tahir b. Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Ahmad, the Shaykh, the scholar, **the trustworthy,** the top scholar of Khurasan, Abu Bakr, brother of Zahir, al-Shahami, al-Naysaburi.[8]

Concerning the second narrator, al-Dhahabi similarly declares:

> الأزهري :العدل، المسند، الصدوق، أبو حامد، أحمد بن الحسن بن محمد ابن الحسن بن أزهر الأزهري، النيسابوري، الشروطي، من أولاد المحدثين.

Al-Azhari: **the trustworthy, the top scholar, the highly truthful,** Abu Hamid, Ahmad b. al-Hasan b. Muhammad b. al-Hasan b. Azhar al-Azhari, al-Naysaburi, al-Shuruti, from the descendants of *hadith* scholars.[9]

So, what about the third narrator? Al-Dhahabi has this verdict about him too:

> المخلدي :الإمام الصادق المسند، أبو محمد، الحسن بن أحمد بن محمد بن الحسن بن علي بن مخلد بن شيبان المخلدي النيسابوري العدل

Al-Makhladi: **The truthful Imam, the top scholar**, Abu Muhammad, al-Hasan b. Ahmad b. Muhammad b. al-Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Mukhlid b. Shayban al-Mukhlidi al-Naysaburi, **the trustworthy**.[10]

Then, we proceed to the fourth narrator, and the words of al-Dhahabi concerning him:

> المؤمل بن الحسن ابن عيسى بن ماسرجس المولى، الرئيس الامام المحدث المتقن، صدر خراسان، أبو الوفاء الماسرجسي النيسابوري.

Al-Muammal b. al-Hasan b. ‘Isa b. Masarjisa the freed slave, **the leader, the Imam, the *hadith* scientist, the extremely precise narrator, the foremost in Khurasan**, Abu al-Wafa al-Masarjisi al-

Naysaburi.[11]

The fifth narrator is like that too, as stated by al-Hafiz:

أحمد بن منصور بن سيار البغدادي الرمادي أبو بكر ثقة حافظ طعن فيه أبو داود لمذهبه في الوقف في القرآن

Ahmad b. Mansur b. Sayyar al-Baghdadi al-Ramadi, Abu Bakr: ***Thiqah*** **(trustworthy), a *hadith* scientist**. Abu Dawud criticized him due to his opinion of neutrality concerning (the creation of) the Qur'an.[12]

Imam al-Dhahabi confirms:

الامام الحافظ الضابط، أبو بكر، أحمد بن منصور بن سيار بن معارك، الرمادي البغدادي: الرمادي.

Al-Ramadi: **the Imam, the *hadith* scientist, the accurate narrator**, Abu Bakr, Ahmad b. Mansur b. Sayyar b. Mu'arik, al-Ramadi al-Baghdadi.[13]

Al-Hafiz has these words on the sixth narrator as well:

هاشم بن القاسم بن مسلم الليثي مولاهم البغدادي أبو النضر مشهور بكنيته ولقبه قيصر ثقة ثبت

Hashim b. al-Qasim b. Muslim al-Laythi, their freed slave, al-Baghdadi, Abu al-Na□r, well-known with his *kunya* and nickname Qaysar: ***Thiqah*** **(trustworthy),** ***thabt*** **(accurate)**.[14]

About the seventh narrator, al-Hafiz proceeds:

عاصم بن محمد بن زيد بن عبد الله بن عمر بن الخطاب العمري المدني ثقة

'Asim b. Muhammad b. Zayd b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar b. al-Khattab al-'Umari al-Madani: ***Thiqah*** **(trustworthy)**.[15]

He equally states concerning the eighth narrator:

عبيد الله بن عمر بن حفص بن عاصم بن عمر بن الخطاب العمري المدني أبو عثمان ثقة ثبت

'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar b. Hafs b. 'Asim b. 'Umar b. al-Khattab al-'Umari al-Madani, Abu 'Uthman: ***Thiqah*** **(trustworthy),** ***thabt*** **(accurate)**.[16]

And, with regards to the last narrator, he declares:

> نافع أبو عبد الله المدني مولى ابن عمر ثقة ثبت فقيه مشهور

Nafi', Abu 'Abd Allah al-Madani, freed slave of Ibn 'Umar: ***Thiqah*** **(trustworthy),** ***thabt*** **(accurate)**, a well-known jurist.[17]

So, the chain is fully connected and all the narrators are trusted people. Therefore, it is *sahih*, or at least *hasan*.

Furthermore, there is a *mutaba'ah* for Asim b. Muhammad, documented by Imam al-Bazzar:

> حدثنا محمد بن حسان الأزرق، حدثنا أبو النضر، حدثنا عاصم بن عمر، عن عبيد الله بن عمر، عن نافع، عن ابن عمر أَن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم استعمل أسامة بن زيد على جيش فيهم أبو بكر وعمر فطعن الناس في عمله ، فخطب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال قد بلغني أنكم طعنتم في عمل أسامة وفي عمل أبيه من قبله، وإن أباه كان خليقا للإمارة وإنه لخليق للإمارة يعني أسامة وإنه لمن أحب الناس إلى وإني أوصيكم به أحسبه قال خيرا.

Muhammad b. Hassan al-Azraq – Abu al-Na[illegible]r – **'Asim b. 'Umar** – 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar – Nafi' – Ibn 'Umar:

The Prophet, peace be upon him, appointed Usamah b. Zayd as commander over an army which included Abu Bakr and 'Umar. So, people criticized his appointment. As a result, the Prophet, peace be upon him, delivered a sermon and said, "News has reached me that you criticized the appointment of Usamah and the appointment of his father before him. Verily, his father deserved the appointment as *amir*, and he too deserves the appointment as *amir*, that is Usamah. He is also one of the most beloved of mankind to me. I advise you to think good of him."[18]

Al-Bazzar comments:

> وهذا الحديث لا نعلم رواه عن عبيد الله بن بن عمر إلا عاصم بن عمر، وإنما يعرف من حديث موسى بن عقبة ، عن سالم، عن أَبِيه.

We do not know anyone who has narrated this *hadith* from 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar except 'Asim b. 'Umar, **and it is only known through the** ***hadith*** **of Musa b. 'Uqbah, from Salim, from his father**.[19]

The mistake of al-Bazzar is apparent. 'Asim b. Muhammad also narrated it from 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar, apart from Asim b. 'Umar. Obviously, al-Bazzar did not have sufficient information concerning the transmission of this *hadith*. In fact, his mistake becomes clearer when we consider his statement that the narration is known only through the *hadith* of Musa b. 'Uqbah. If, by the *hadith* of this Musa, he meant

the narration on Usamah's army without the explicit mention of Abu Bakr and 'Umar (and this is most likely al-Bazzar's position), then certainly he was in error, as 'Abd Allah b. Dinar also related that. In any case, the misjudgements of scholars are never accepted as proofs in academic researches.

In the chain of 'Asim b. 'Umar above, we already know that Abu al-Na□r, 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar and Nafi' were *thiqah* (trustworthy). So, we are left with only Muhammad b. Hassan al-Azraq and 'Asim b. 'Umar to investigate. Well, al-Azraq too is *thiqah* (trustworthy) according to al-Hafiz:

> محمد بن حسان بن فيروز الشيباني الأزرق أبو جعفر البغدادي التاجر أصله من واسط ثقة

Muhammad b. Hassan b. Fayruz al-Shaybani al-Azraq, Abu Ja'far al-Baghdadi al-Tajir, his root was from Wasit: ***Thiqah*** **(trustworthy)**.[20]

However, as confirmed by al-Hafiz, 'Asim b. 'Umar was weak:

> عاصم بن عمر بن حفص بن عاصم بن عمر بن الخطاب العمري أبو عمر المدني ضعيف من السابعة وهو أخو عبيد الله العمري.

'Asim b. 'Umar b. Hafs b. 'Asim b. 'Umar b. al-Khattab al-'Umari, Abu 'Umar al-Madani: □***a'if*** **(weak)**. He was from the seventh (*tabaqah*), and he was the brother of 'Ubayd Allah al-'Umari.[21]

Yet, the chain of al-Bazzar is *sahih li ghayrihi* due to the corroboration of 'Asim b. 'Umar by 'Asim b. Muhammad, from 'Ubayd Allah in the *riwayah* of Ibn Asakir.

Finally, Imam Ibn Sa'd has a third report:

> حدثنا عبد الوهاب بن عطاء العجلي قال أخبرنا العمري عن نافع عن بن عمر أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بعث سرية فيهم أبو بكر وعمر استعمل عليهم أسامة بن زيد فكان الناس طعنوا فيه أي في صغره فبلغ ذلك رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فصعد المنبر فحمد الله وأثني عليه وقال إن الناس قد طعنوا في إمارة أسامة وقد كانوا طعنوا في إمارة أبيه من قبله وإنهما لخليقان لها وإنه لمن أحب الناس إلي آلا فأوصيكم بأسامة خيرا

'Abd al-Wahhab b. 'Ata al-'Ijli – al-'Umari – Nafi' – Ibn 'Umar:

The Prophet, peace be upon him, deployed an army. **Among them were Abu Bakr and 'Umar. He appointed Usamah b. Zayd over them as their commander**. So, people criticized it, that was his young age. News of that reached the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him. Therefore, he climbed the pulpit, thanked Allah and extolled Him, and said, "People have criticized the appointment of Usamah as *amir*. They had earlier criticized the appointment of his father as *amir* before him. Yet, both of them (i.e. Usamah and his father) deserve it (i.e. the commandership), and he (Usamah) is one of the most

beloved of mankind to me. Verily, I advise you to be good to Usamah.[22]

We know about Nafi' already. So, we only have to investigate the first and second narrators. Al-Hafiz says about the first narrator:

> عبد الوهاب بن عطاء الخفاف أبو نصر العجلي مولاهم البصري نزيل بغداد صدوق ربما أخطأ أنكروا عليه حديثا في العباس يقال دلسه عن ثور

'Abd al-Wahhab b. 'Ata al-Khaffaf, Abu Nasr al-'Ijli, their freed slave, al-Basri, a resident of Baghdad: ***Saduq*** (**very truthful**), maybe he made mistakes. They denied a *hadith* from him about al-'Abbas. It is said that he narrated it in an *'an-'an* manner from Thawr.[23]

The second narrator is al-'Umari. His name is 'Abd Allah. Al-Hafiz declares concerning him:

> عبد الله بن عمر بن حفص بن عاصم بن عمر بن الخطاب أبو عبد الرحمن العمري المدني ضعيف عابد

'Abd Allah b. 'Umar b. Hafs b. 'Asim b. 'Umar b. al-Khattab, Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-'Umari al-Madani: ***da'if*** (**weak**), **a great worshipper of Allah**.[24]

However, this defect in the chain of Ibn Sa'd is removed by the corroboration of 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar by 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar. Both have transmitted the same report from the same Nafi'. As such, the *sanad* of Ibn Sa'd is *hasan li ghayrih* due to al-Khaffaf.

So, there is a *sahih li dhatihi* (i.e. independently *sahih*) or *hasan li dhatihi* (i.e. independently *hasan*) chain for the *hadith* of Ibn 'Umar which places Abu Bakr and 'Umar in the army of Usamah. There is another, which is *sahih li ghayrihi* (i.e. *sahih* by corroboration), ad there is a third that is *hasan li ghayrihi* (i.e. *hasan* by corroboration). Each of these chains sufficiently establishes the fact that both Abu Bakr and 'Umar were conscripts under Usamah's command. Of course, the army of Usamah was mobilized on Saturday, two days before the final breath of the Messenger of Allah.

Among the Sunni scholars of narrations, one of their earliest to affirm this fact was 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr. Imam Ibn Hibban says concerning him:

> عروة بن الزبير بن العوام القرشي أخو عبد الله بن الزبير أمهما أسماء بنت أبي بكر الصديق من فقهاء المدينة وأفاضل التابعين وعباد قريش

'Urwah b. al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwam al-Qurshi, the brother of 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr. Their mother was Asma bint Abi Bakr al-Siddiq. He was one of the jurists of Madinah, **and one of the best of the Tabi'in**, and one of the devout worshippers from Quraysh.[25]

Al-Hafiz, who grades him “thiqah” (trustworthy)[26], further states that he narrated from many of the Sahabah, including his father (al-Zubayr b. al-‘Awwam), his mother Asma bint Abi Bakr, Umm al-Muminin ‘Aishah, Amir al-Muminin ‘Ali b. Abi Talib, *‘alaihi al-salam*, Zayd b. Thabit, Ibn ‘Abbas, Ibn ‘Umar, Usamah b. Zayd, Abu Ayub al-Ansari, Abu Hurayrah, Umm Salamah, and Jabir b. ‘Abd Allah al-Ansari[27]. Apparently, ‘Urwah was no small fish in Sunni *hadith* scholarship. So, did he really claim that the report – which states that Abu Bakr and ‘Umar were part of Usamah’s army – was “a lie”, as alleged by Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah?

Imam Ibn Abi Shaybah records his clear testimony here:

> حدثنا عبد الرحيم بن سليمان عن هشام بن عروة عن أبيه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كان قطع بعثا قبل موته وأمر عليهم أسامة بن زيد، وفي ذلك البعث أبو بكر وعمر

‘Abd al-Rahim b. Sulayman – Hisham b. ‘Urwah – his father (‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr):

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, deployed an army before his death and appointed Usamah b. Zayd as the *amir* over them. **In that army were Abu Bakr and ‘Umar**.[28]

The first narrator is *thiqah* (trustworthy), as stated by al-Hafiz:

> عبد الرحيم بن سليمان الكناني أو الطائي أبو علي الأشل المروزي نزيل الكوفة ثقة

‘Abd al-Rahim b. Sulayman al-Kanani or al-Tai, Abu ‘Ali al-Ushil al-Maruzi, a resident of Kufah: ***Thiqah*** **(trustworthy)**.[29]

Hisham too, the son of ‘Urwah, was like that, according to al-Hafiz:

> هشام بن عروة بن الزبير بن العوام الأسدي ثقة فقيه ربما دلس

Hisham b. ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr b. al-‘Awwam al-Asadi: ***Thiqah*** **(trustworthy)**, a jurist, maybe he did *tadlis*.[30]

So, the chain is *sahih* up to ‘Urwah. Shaykh Dr. Asad confirms this while treating another *riwayah*:

> حدثنا أبو بكر بن أبي شيبة حدثنا عبد الرحيم بن سليمان عن هشام بن عروة عن أبيه عن عائشة... إسناده صحيح

Abu Bakr b. Abi Shaybah – ‘Abd al-Rahim b. Sulayman – Hisham b. ‘Urwah – his father – ‘Aishah ... **Its chain is *sahih***.[31]

He actually believed the incident to have been true, and had taught it to his son! So, basically, the following claims of Ibn Taymiyyah are false:

1. The *hadith* mentioning Abu Bakr in the army of Usamah is false.

2. All the Sunni scholars of narrations, up till his time, had each explicitly declared that *hadith* to have been "a lie".

3. The *hadith* does not have any known chain of narration.

The truth, as we have proved through Allah's Grace, is below:

1. That *hadith* has been narrated by one independently *sahih* or *hasan* chain.

2. It has also been narrated by one *sahih li ghayrihi* chain, as well as another which is *hasan li ghayrihi*.

3. No scholar before Ibn Taymiyyah ever called the *hadith* "a lie" – not a single one!

4. Instead, 'Urwah, who was one of the greatest scholars of narrations in Sunni Islam affirmed that both Abu Bakr and 'Umar were *really* in the army of Usamah!

So, Abu Bakr was conscripted into the army of Usamah during the Prophet's fatal illness. Moreover, it was only the despatch of the army for war that occurred on Saturday, two days before the Messenger's death. The army itself had been formed long before then. Al-Hafiz comes in once again:

> قوله) باب بعث النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أسامة بن زيد في مرضه الذي توفي فيه (إنما أخر المصنف هذه الترجمة لما جاء أنه كان تجهيز أسامة يوم السبت قبل موت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بيومين وكان ابتداء ذلك قبل مرض النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فندب الناس لغزو الروم في آخر صفر ودعا أسامة فقال سر إلى موضع مقتل أبيك فأوطئهم الخيل فقد وليتك هذا الجيش ... فبدأ برسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وجعه في اليوم الثالث فعقد لأسامة لواء بيده فأخذه أسامة فدفعه إلى بريدة وعسكر بالجرف وكان ممن انتدب مع أسامة كبار المهاجرين والأنصار منهم أبو بكر وعمر ... ثم أشتد برسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وجعه فقال أنفذوا بعث أسامة

His statement (Chapter on the Appointment of Usamah b. Zayd by the Prophet, peace be upon him, during his Fatal Illness): The author (i.e. al-Bukhari) has only given this biography a late timing due to what is narrated that the mobilization of Usamah (for war) was on Saturday, two days before the death of the Prophet, peace be upon him. Meanwhile, the beginning of that was before the illness of the Prophet, peace be upon him. He had delegated people to go to war with Rome at the end of Safar and called Usamah and said, "Go to the place where your father was martyred. Equip them with the horses, for I have appointed you as the *wali* of this army...."

Then, the illness of the Messenger of Allah began on the third day (of the next month, Rabi' al-Awwal), and he passed the flag to Usamah, who in turn passed to Buraydah. Solders were (camped) at al-Jurf.

Among those conscripted with Usamah were senior Muhajirun and Ansar, **among them Abu Bakr, 'Umar** ... Then, the illness of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, became serious, and he said, "**Dispatch the army of Usamah**."[32]

The Prophet of Allah died on the 12th of Rabi' al-Awwal. His formation of the army of Usamah occurred in the end of the preceding month – Safar – before his fatal illness. On the 3rd day of Rabi' al-Awwal, nine days from his death, he passed the flag of war to Usamah, the commander. His soldiers were already at their military camp at al-Jurf. He included the senior Muhajirun and Ansar in the army, and made Usamah – a teenager – their *amir*. Abu Bakr and 'Umar were among the soldiers under him. The Messenger's illness became very serious on Thursday, such that he was unable to lead the *'Isha* prayer of its evening. On the following Saturday – two days before his demise – he gave an order for the dispatch of the army for war.

Both Abu Bakr and 'Umar were soldiers under Usamah in this expedition. So, they were supposed to be with their colleagues at al-Jurf. But, they both jumped camp and stayed in Madinah instead! This, undeniably, was in unmistakable disobedience to the Command of Allah and His Messenger. This made them mutineers. Interestingly, our brothers from the Ahl al-Sunnah want us to believe that one of these mutineers was then rewarded by the *Rasul* with leadership of the *salat* in his mosque?! How is that even logical? Moreover, their only evidence are only a bunch of warring reports, each of them slashing the throat of the other! Besides, Abu Bakr was NOT even qualified to lead either the Messenger or the Sahabah in *salat*, to begin with! Why then would the Prophet of Allah appoint an unqualified mutineer as *salat* leader for his obedient, qualified disciples?

1. Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Ibrahim b. Mughirah al-Bukhari al-Ju'fi, al-Jami' al-Sahih al-Mukhtasar (Beirut: Dar Ibn Kathir; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Mustafa Dib al-Bagha], vol. 3, p. 1365, # 3524
2. Ibid
3. 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. 8, p. 115
4. Ibid
5. Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Hajar al-'Asqalani, al-Isabah fi Tamyiz al-Sahabah (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1415 H) [annotators: Shaykh 'Adil Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Mawjud and Shaykh 'Ali Muhammad Ma'u[illegible]], vol. 1, p. 202, # 89
6. 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. 8, pp. 292-293
7. Abu al-Qasim 'Ali b. al-Hasan b. Habat Allah b. 'Abd Allah, Ibn Asakir al-Shafi'i, Tarikh Madinah Dimashq (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr; 1415 H) [annotator: 'Ali Shiri], vol. 8, p. 60
8. Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Ahmad b. 'Uthman al-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam al-Nubala (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risalah; 9th edition, 1413 H) [annotators of the twentieth volume: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut and Muhammad Na'im al-'Arqisusi], vol. 20, p. 109, # 67
9. Ibid, vol. 18, p. 254, # 127
10. Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Ahmad b. 'Uthman al-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam al-Nubala (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risalah; 9th edition, 1413 H) [annotators of the sixteenth volume: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut and Akram al-Bushi], vol. 16, p. 539, # 395
11. Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Ahmad b. 'Uthman al-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam al-Nubala (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risalah; 9th edition, 1413 H) [annotators of the fifteenth volume: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut and Ibrahim al-Zaybaq], vol. 15, pp. 21-22, # 9
12. Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Hajar al-'Asqalani, Taqrib al-Tahdhib (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabah al-'Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H)

[annotator: Mustafa ‘Abd al-Qadir ‘Ata], vol. 1, p. 47, # 113

13. Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Ahmad b. ‘Uthman al-Dhahabi, Siyar A’lam al-Nubala (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risalah; 9th edition, 1413 H) [annotators of the fifteenth volume: Shu’ayb al-Arnaut and Ibrahim al-Zaybaq], vol. 15, p. 389, # 170

14. Ahmad b. ‘Ali b. Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Taqrib al-Tahdhib (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Mustafa ‘Abd al-Qadir ‘Ata], vol. 2, p. 261, # 7282

15. Ibid, vol. 1, p. 459, # 3089

16. Ibid, vol. 1, p. 637, # 4340

17. Ibid, vol. 2, p. 239, # 7111

18. Abu Bakr Ahmad b. ‘Amr b. ‘Abd al-Khaliq al-Bazzar, Musnad al-Bazzar (Madinah al-Munawwarah: Maktabah al-‘Ulum wa al-Hukm; 1st edition) [annotator: ‘Adil b. Sa’d], vol. 12, p. 155, # 5754

19. Ibid

20. Ahmad b. ‘Ali b. Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Taqrib al-Tahdhib (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Mustafa ‘Abd al-Qadir ‘Ata], vol. 2, p. 66, # 5827

21. Ibid, vol. 1, p. 458, # 3079

22. Muhammad b. Sa’d, al-Tabaqat al-Kubra (Beirut: Dar al-Sadir), vol. 2, p. 249

23. Ahmad b. ‘Ali b. Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Taqrib al-Tahdhib (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Mustafa ‘Abd al-Qadir ‘Ata], vol. 1, pp. 626-627, # 4276

24. Ibid, vol. 1, p. 516, # 3500

25. Abu Hatim Muhammad b. Hibban b. Ahmad al-Tamimi al-Busti, Mashahir ‘Ulama al-Amsar (Dar al-Wafa li al-Taba’at wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi’; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Marzuq ‘Ali Ibrahim], p. 105, # 428

26. See Ahmad b. ‘Ali b. Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Taqrib al-Tahdhib (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Mustafa ‘Abd al-Qadir ‘Ata], vol. 1, p. 671, # 4577

27. See Shihab al-Din Ahmad b. ‘Ali b. Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Tahdhib al-Tahdhib (Dar al-Fikr; 1st edition, 1404 H), vol. 7, pp. 163-164, # 352

28. ‘Abd Allah b. Muhammad b. Abi Shaybah Ibrahim b. ‘Uthman b. Abi Bakr b. Abi Shaybah al-Kufi al-‘Ubsi, Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah fi al-Ahadith wa al-Athar (Dar al-Fikr; 1st edition, 1409 H) [annotator: Prof. Sa’id al-Laham], vol. 7, p. 532, # 3

29. Ahmad b. ‘Ali b. Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Taqrib al-Tahdhib (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Mustafa ‘Abd al-Qadir ‘Ata], vol. 1, p. 598, # 4070

30. Ibid, vol. 2, p. 267, # 7328

31. Abu Ya’la Ahmad b. ‘Ali b. Muthanna al-Mawsili al-Tamimi, Musnad (Damascus: Dar al-Mamun li al-Turath; 1st edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Dr. Husayn Salim Asad], vol. 7, p. 425, # 4447

32. 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. 8, p. 115
