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## 9) Hadith Al-Khalifatayn: The Messenger Named His Successors (Part 2)

The Prophet of Allah, sallallahu 'alaihi wa alihi, further named the Qur'an and his offspring as the two khalifahs (al-khalifatayn) over the Ummah after him. This means that the Book of Allah is one khalifah, and the offspring is another khalifah.

As we established at the end of the last chapter, the word "khalifah" may be employed in reference to a group, to indicate the khilafah of each one of them. So, the Qur'an is the khalifah of Muhammad over his Ummah, and members of his offspring are also his khulafa (successors) over them.

Imam Ibn Abi Shaybah (d. 235 H) records one of these ahadith naming the two khalifahs:

أبو داود عمر بن سعد عن شريك عن الركين عن القاسم بن حسان عن زيد بن ثابت يرفعه قال: إني تركت فيكم الدوض الخليفتين كاملتين: كتاب الله وعترتى، وإنهما لن يتفرقا حتى يردا على الحوض

Abu Dawud 'Umar b. Sa'd – Sharik – al-Rukayn – al-Qasim b. Hassan – Zayd b. Thabit – the Prophet:

"I have left behind over you the two all-comprehensive khalifahs: the Book of Allah and my offspring. Verily, both shall never separate from each other until they meet me at the Lake-Fount."1

The annotators declare:

The hadith is sahih. It has witnesses (shawahid).2

The only new name here that needs verification is 'Umar b. Sa'd, the first narrator. Concerning him, al–Hafiz (d. 852 H) states:

عمر بن سعد بن عبيد أبو داود الحفري بفتح المهملة والفاء نسبة إلى موضع بالكوفة ثقة عابد

'Umar b. Sa'd b. 'Ubayd, Abu Dawud al-Hafari: Thiqah (trustworthy), a great worshipper of Allah.3

So, the chain is sahih, or at least hasan.

Imam Ahmad (d. 241 H) too documents:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا الأسود بن عامر ثنا شريك عن الركين عن القاسم بن حسان عن زيد بن ثابت قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم انى تارك فيكم خليفتين كتاب الله حبل ممدود ما بين السماء والأرض أو ما بين السماء والأرض وعترتى أهل بيتى وإنهما لن يتفرقا حتى يردا على الحوض

'Abd Allah (b. Ahmad) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – al-Aswad b. 'Amir – Sharik – al-Rukayn – al-Qasim b. Hassan – Zayd b. Thabit:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said, "I am leaving behind over you two khalifahs: the Book of Allah – a rope stretching between the heaven and the earth or from the heaven to the earth – and my offspring, my Ahl al–Bayt. Verily, both shall never separate from each other until they meet me at the Lake–Fount."4

Shaykh al-Arnaut comments:

The hadith is sahih through its shawahid (witnesses), except his statement "Both shall never separate from each other until they meet me at the Lake-Fount." This chain is dha'if due to the poor memory of Sharik.5

So, his only problem with the chain is Sharik. However, the hadith of Sharik is either sahih or hasan, as we have established in the last chapter. The position of al-Arnaut is therefore nothing but an unnecessary exaggeration.

There is only one narrator in this chain of Ahmad that needs to be investigated: al-Aswad b. 'Amir. This is what al-Hafiz says about him:

Al-Aswad b. 'Amir al-Shami, a resident of Baghdad, his kunya was Abu 'Abd al-Rahman and his lagab

was Shadhan: Thigah (trustworthy).6

Therefore, the chain is sahih, or at least hasan due to Sharik.

Ahmad further records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا أبو أحمد الزبيري ثنا شريك عن الركين عن القاسم بن حسان عن زيد بن ثابت قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم إني تارك فيكم خليفتين كتاب الله وأهل بيتي وإنهما لن يتفرقا حتى يردا على الحوض جميعا

'Abd Allah (b. Ahmad) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Abu Ahmad al-Zubayri – Sharik – al-Rukayn – al-Qasim b. Hassan – Zayd b. Thabit:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "I am leaving behind over you two khalifahs: the Book of Allah and my Ahl al-Bayt. Verily, both shall never separate from each other until they meet me together at the Lake-Fount."7

Al-Arnaut again says:

The hadith is sahih through its shawahid, except his statement, "Both shall never separate from each other until they meet me together at the Lake-Fount."8

The sole unverified narrator here is al-Zubayri, and this is what al-Hafiz submits concerning him:

Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr b. 'Umar b. Dirham al-Asadi, Abu Ahmad al-Zubayri al-Kufi: Thiqah (trustworthy), thabt (accurate), except that he made mistakes in the hadith of al-Thawri.9

Well, this is not an hadith of al-Thawri. As such, the chain is sahih – or at least, hasan. Through it, all the parts of the hadith, including those denied by al-Arnaut, are firmly established.

Imam Ibn Abi 'Asim (d. 287 H) has documented the hadith too:

ثنا أبو بكر، ثنا عمرو بن سعد أبو داود الحفري، عن شريك، عن الركين عن القاسم بن حسان، عن زيد بن ثابت قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: إنى تارك فيكم الخليفتين من بعدي، كتاب الله وعترتى أهل بيتى وإنهما

Abu Bakr – 'Amr b. Sa'd Abu Dawud al-Hafari – Sharik – al-Rukayn – al-Qasim b. Hassan – Zayd b. Thabit:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said, "I am leaving behind over you the two khalifahs after me: the Book of Allah and my offspring, my Ahl al-Bayt. Verily, both shall never separate from each other until they meet me at the Lake-Fount." 10

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

It is a sahih hadith. But, its chain is dha'if due to the poor memory of Sharik, and he was Ibn 'Abd Allah the Judge. Also, al-Qasim b. Hassan is majhul al-hal (i.e. his status is unknown). The hadith is recorded by Ahmad (5/181–182, 189, and 190) through two other chains from Sharik with it. I have only declared it sahih because it has witnesses (shawahid) that strengthen it.11

Obviously, our 'Allamah too was infected by the anti-Sharik fallacy. In any case, Sharik was hasan alhadith. Moreover, al-Qasim b. Hassan is not majhul al-hal. His status is known, and he is thiqah (trustworthy), as we have proved.

The new name here is Abu Bakr, and this is what al-Hafiz says about him:

'Abd Allah b. Muhammad b. Abi Shaybah Ibrahim b. 'Uthman, of Wasiti origin, Abu Bakr b. Abi Shaybah al-Kufi: Thiqah (trustworthy), a hadith scientist, author of books. 12

So, the chain is either sahih or hasan.

- 1. Abu Bakr 'Abd Allah b. Abi Shaybah, Musnad Ibn Abi Shaybah (Riyadh: Dar al-Watan; 1st edition, 1418 H) [annotators: 'Adil b. Yusuf al-'Azazi and Ahmad b. Farid al-Mazidi], vol. 1, p. 108
- 2. Ibid
- 3. 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. 718, # 4920
- 4. Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qurtubah) [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut], vol. 5, p. 181, # 21618

- 5. Ibid
- 6. 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. 102, # 504
- 7. Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qurtubah) [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut], vol. 5, p. 189, # 21697
- 8. Ibid
- 9. 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. 95, # 6036
- 10. Abu Bakr b. Abi 'Asim, Ahmad b. 'Amr b. al-Dhahhak b. Mukhlid al-Shaybani, Kitab al-Sunnah (al-Maktab al-Islami; 1st edition, 1400 H) [annotator: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani], vol. 2, pp. 350-351, # 754
- 11. Ibid, vol. 2, p. 351, # 754
- 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. 528, # 3586

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