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Fifth Reason: Justifications Of Al-Khatib Al-Baghdadiy And Ibn `Abd Al-Barr

Al-Khatib al-Baghdadiy says,

"The following question may be cited: Why did `Umar reproach and prevent the Sahabah from reporting to the Holy Prophet as intensely as he could?

To answer, he did that so as to sustain the religion and choose the best for Muslims; he anticipated that they would pass over the acts of obedience to Almighty Allah and depend upon the outward significances of the narrations.

Not all the narrations can be understood through their seeming significances and not are their actual meanings feasible for everybody; it happens that a Hadith is reported in its general sense, while to understand it requires proficient deduction and interpretation.

On this account, `Umar anticipated that Hadiths would be misunderstood as their outer significations would be adopted. Furthermore, `Umar's preventing the Sahabah from reporting has safeguarded the Hadith and warned the others from forgery against the Holy Sunnah."1

Having quoted the aforementioned essay, Dr. Muhammad 'Ajjaj al-Khatib says,

"In addition to al-Khatib al-Baghdadiy, this opinion has been adopted by Ibn `Abd al-Barr and many other master scholars. I myself, too, adopt the same opinion."2

Many questions can be aroused against the aforementioned opinion:

Did `Umar ibn al-Khattab care for the religion more than the Holy Prophet?

What was the meaning of such care for the religion while the Holy Prophet answered him who asked his permission to record the Hadith, 'Feel free to report,' and 'Feel free to record?'

Why did the grand Sahabah, such as Abu-Dharr al-Ghifariy about whom the Holy Prophet said, 'Neither the blue sky nor has the dingy earth ever shaded or carried a speaking creature that is more honest than Abu-Dharr,'3 lbn Mas`ud and many others—did they not care for the religion in the same degree as `Umar did?

All the incidents of `Umar ibn al-Khattab's prohibiting the reporting and recordation of the Hadith as well as his arresting of some of the Sahabah, such as Abu-Dharr, Ibn Mas`ud, Abu-Mas`ud and others—all these incidents proves obviously the forgery of the narrations about the Holy Prophet's having prohibited the reporting and recordation of the Hadith that were ascribed to those Sahabah.

It is illogic that the same Sahabah whom `Umar ibn al-Khattab, as proven by authenticated reports, put under house arrest in al-Madinah because they did not stop reporting to the Holy Prophet, had reported from the Holy Prophet that he prohibited the reporting and recordation of the Hadith.

Had they really heard the Holy Prophet prohibiting the reporting and recording, they would certainly have never reported a single word from him! Likewise, had they reported the decision of the prohibition, `Umar would not have had to gather them to warn against reporting the Hadith.

Moreover, by this justification, 'Umar actually poured scorn on the Sahabah and belied Ibn Hajar's claim that all of them are, divinely, saved from forgery, error, inattention, suspicious, and arrogance!

If the Sahabah recorded the Hadith little by little and out of their own desires, how would it be permissible for `Umar to violate their deeds? If not, how would it be permissible for him to bring to him all their records? This is sufficient evidence on the permissibility to record the Hadith during the Holy Prophet's lifetime.

How can one imagine that the Holy Prophet did prohibit people from reporting and recording his sayings that comprise clear messages for mankind whereas he had said,

'May Allah have mercy upon anyone who listens to my saying, understands it, and then conveys it to others.'4

The strangest matter in this regard is the claim that the prohibition of reporting and recording the Hadith is considered maintenance for the religion, while the objection to the decision of the prohibition is in fact the actual maintenance of the religion, because the prohibition causes the loss of many religious rulings as well as the waste of Almighty Allah's judgments, while the reporting and recordation of the Hadith, although making the Hadith exposed to errors and other discommended things, will surely yield advantageous results for Muslims who, without the Hadith, will plunge in ignorance and lack understanding of the religious laws.

Even if we condescendingly accept that `Umar's care for the religion incited him to prohibit recording the Sunnah, we will be faced by the problem of `Umar's repetitive precipitancy in assuming inaccurate

situations throughout his life whether before or after Islam.5

Such precipitancy does not comport with his apprehension that 'they –the Muslims– would pass over the acts of obedience to Almighty Allah and depend upon the outward significances of the narrations,' in the words of al–Khatib, because `Umar ibn al–Khattab was known of impetuosity and recklessness; therefore, he used to rash in many situations and then feel sorry.

On many occasions, he felt sorry for previous actions, such as the issue of al-Hudaybiyah Truce, 6 and that when the Holy Prophet offered prayer for (the dead body of) a hypocrite, 7 and that of the prisoners of the Battle of Badr.

For instance, the Holy Prophet, once, was urging al-Hakam ibn Kaysan, who had been presented before him as prisoner, to embrace Islam; but when that took a long time, `Umar intruded saying, 'O Allah's Messenger: what for are you talking to this man? He will never become Muslim! I swear it by Allah! Let me behead him so that he will go straightly to Hell!' Being indifference to `Umar's statements, the Holy Prophet kept up urging al-Hakam until he embraced Islam.

Commenting on the incident, 'Umar said,

"As I saw al-Hakam embrace Islam and become a pious Muslim, I felt sorry for what I had said. I then said to myself, 'How could I drive myself in a matter about which the Holy Prophet is more knowledgeable than I am! However, I only wanted to provide an advice for sake of Allah and His messenger!

Al-Hakam acted as a pious Muslim and fought for the sake of Allah until he was martyred in the battle of Bi'r Ma'unah; hence, he was honored by the satisfaction of the Holy Prophet and, naturally, Paradise will be his abode."8

Even during the reign of Abu–Bakr, `Umar had similar injudicious situations; once, a group of the inclined for Islam (*al–Mu'allafah Qulubuhum*) ocame to and showed him a document in which Abu–Bakr had ordered for them to receive their shares from the alms, but `Umar refused, tore that paper into pieces, spit on it, and threw it at their faces. Having become furious, they returned to Abu–Bakr and asked, 'Which one of you is the caliph (ruler)? Is it he or you?' Abu–Bakr answered, 'He is, if he wants!'10

During his reign, `Umar's injudicious decisions increased; he once exiled Nasr ibn Hajjaj because his wife raised her voice in his face, 11 legalized a divorce that was said three times on the same occasion, 12 and decided to strip the gold of the Holy Masjid, but the Sahabah rejected, 13... etc.

From the previous, we conclude that `Umar ibn al-Khattab's conduct does not support the claim that he had prohibited the reporting and recordation of the Hadith for his care for the religion, since rashness and baseless decision are completely the opposite of precaution and concentration.

Another question must also be cited: What about the other Sahabah who objected to the decision of the

prohibition and did report and record the Hadith? Did they not care for the religion? Or did they understand that the carefulness for the religion lied in the opposition of `Umar's viewpoints? How is it acceptable to claim that `Umar cared for the religion and, thus, issued the decision of the prohibition, while the Sahabah advised him to record the Holy Sunnah?

Neglecting the Sahabah's opinions, 'Umar followed his own view, set fire to the records of the Holy Sunnah, and prohibited the reporting and recordation of the Hadith. As a result, 'Umar's violation of the congruity of the Sahabah has become care for the religion!

The actual care for the religion is to accept and implement the Sahabah's advice because Almighty Allah has said,

"... And their rule is to take counsel among themselves, (Holy Qur'an: 42:38)"

and `Umar himself believed in the principal of Shura (taking counsel); therefore, the violation of the Sahabah's advice is the actual breach of the carefulness for the religion and infringement of the principle of Shura that was strongly adopted by `Umar ibn al-Khattab himself.

From the previous discussions, we can obviously see the weakness of the justifications of al-Khatib al-Baghdadiy and Ibn `Abd al-Barr whose opinions collapsed in the presence of logical critiques. Let us now refer to another justification, hoping we will find a solution for our problem.

- 1. Al-Khatib al-Baghdadiy: Sharaf Ashab al-Hadith 97-8.
- 2. Muhammad `Ajjaj al-Khatib: al-Sunnah qabl al-Tadwin 106.
- 3. Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal 2:163 H. 6519; Sunan Ibn Majah 1:55 H. 156; Sunan al-Tirmidhiy 5:669 H. 3801; al-Ehad wa'l-Mathani 2:231 H. 986; al-Bukhariy: al-Kuna 1:23 H. 181. In brief, this famous Hadith shows that Abu-Dharr has never been untruthful.
- 4. Sunan al-Tirmidhiy 5:34 H. 2658; al-Musnad al-Mustakhraj `Ala Sahih Muslim 1:41 H. 12; Sunan Ibn Majah 1:84 H. 230, 1:85 H. 231, 1:86 H. 236; Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal 4:80 H. 16784, 4:82 H. 16800.
- 5. Ahmad ibn Habib al-Baghdadiy: al-Munammaq fi Akhbar Quraysh 130.
- 6. Sahih al-Bukhariy 2:978 H. 2581, 3:1162 H. 3011, 4:1832, 1785.
- 7. Ibn Shabbah: Tarikh al-Madinah al-Munawwarah 1:372. on the authority of al-Shi`biy, it has been narrated that `Umar ibn al-Khattab said, "In Islami, I have made an unprecedented flaw..." This 'flaw' was that when the Holy Prophet offered the ritual Dead Prayer for `Abdullah ibn Ubayy, the hypocrite, but `Umar objected to him and pulled him from the dress in order to prevent him from offering that prayer. See al-Suyutiy: al-Durr al-Manthur 3:264; al-Muttaqiy al-Hindiy: Kanz al-`Ummal 2:419 H. 4393.
- 8. Ibn Sa`d: al-Tabaqat al-Kubra 4:137: Biography of al-Hakam ibn Kaysan; al-Khasa'is al-Kubra 2:26; Ibn al-Jawziy: al-Muntadham 3:209.
- 9. The inclined for Islam are those whose hearts are made to incline to truth by giving them a share in the almsgiving. Their share is determined by Almighty Allah Who says: "Alms are only for the poor and the needy, and the officials (appointed) over them, and those whose hearts are made to incline (to truth) and the (ransoming of) captives and those in debts and in the way of Allah and the wayfarer; an ordinance from Allah; and Allah is knowing, Wise. 9:60"
- 10. Ahmad ibn Hanbal: Fada'il al-Sahabah 1:292; Muhammad Rashid Rida: Tafsir al-Manar 10:496; Al-Kila`iy al-Andalusiy: Al-Iktifa' Bima Tadammanahu min Maghazi Rasul Allah wa'l-Thalathah al-Khulafa' 3:90; al-Muttaqiy al-Hindiy: Kanz al-`Ummal 3:914 H. 9151, 12:546 H. 35738; Ibn `Asakir: Tarikh Dimashq 9:196 H. 797.
- 11. Ibn Sa`d: al-Tabaqat al-Kubra 3:285; Ibn `Abd al-Barr: al-Isti`ab 1:326; Ibn Hajar al-`Asqalaniy: al-Isabah fi Tamyiz

- al-Sahabah 6:485; al-Sarakhsiy: al-Mabsut 9:45.
- 12. Sahih Muslim 2:1099 H. 1472; al-Hakim al-Nisapuriy: al-Mustadrak `Ala'l-Sahihayn 2:214 H. 2792-2793; al-Musnad al-Mustakhraj `Ala Sahih Muslim 4:153 H. 2472-2474; Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal 1:314 H. 2877; Sunan al-Bayhaqiy al-Kubra 7:336 H. 14749, 14750, 14751.
- 13. Ibn Hazm: al- Ihkam fi Usul al-Ahkam 2:152, 6:249; Ibn Hajar al-`Asqalaniy: Fath al-Bari fi Sharh Sahih al-Bukhariy 3:456-457; Sunan Abi-Dawud 2:215 H. 2031; Sunan Ibn Majah 2:1040 H. 3116; Sunan al-Bayhaqiy al-Kubra 5:159 H. 9511.

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