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Part 3: In-depth Analysis of the Hadith of al-Nujum

Questions about the Denotation of the Hadith

Having mentioned the hadith and the viewpoints of Sunni scholars regarding its narrators, now we would bring to your view the reasons for the invalidity of this hadith in terms of text and denotation. The questions which arise here in connection with the same hadith are:

Is the issuance of such a hadith possible on the part of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family?

Were all the companions doing the right thing and treading the right path after the demise of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family?

Were all of them eligible and qualified as leaders to be followed by Muslims?

Were all of them truly guided and guiding? If they were indeed so, why did God, the Glorified, say:

If then he dies or is killed will you turn back upon your heels?^{[1](#)}

In another verse, the Holy Quran says:

"And from among those who are round about you of the dwellers of the desert there are hypocrites, and from among the people of Medina (also); they are stubborn in hypocrisy; you do not know them; We know them; We will chastise them twice then shall they be turned back to a grievous chastisement."^{[2](#)}

Furthermore, can we accept that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, was not aware of the future of the Muslim and the events unfolding after his demise? Never can we assume that he had no knowledge of the future events.

Indeed, Muslims believe that the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, was aware of all future events among his companions and ummah until the day of resurrection as also evidenced by numerous traditions which clearly report that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, informed Muslims of future events.

The Prophet of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, has been quoted as having said:

"My ummah will split into seventy-three sects."[3](#)

The Prophet of God (S) Reprimanding Some of the Companions

There are numerous other traditions about the companions of the Prophet which clearly indicate that a lot of the companions suffer from a mental state of confusion and adopt the thoughts and ideals of the era of jahiliyah (ignorance) renouncing their faith and apostatizing after the demise of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family. For instance, we can point out a tradition which has been recorded in Sahih Bukhari. The Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, said:

I will enter the pond of abundance before you; but some of you will be pulled aside and kept away from me, then I say, "O, God! They are of my companions", and God replies, "You are not aware what they did after you."

It has been reported in another tradition as such:

Then, I say, "May Allah's blessings be away from those who distorted the religious commandments after me".

In some other traditions, the Prophet (S) has been quoted as having said:

"They turned back to what they were in the Age of Ignorance."[4](#)

In another saying the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, addressed his companions as such:

"Do not return to disbelief after me."[5](#)

In another tradition, he said:

"Shirk among you people is more inconspicuous than the pace of an ant."[6](#)

In addition, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, has addressed the companions scornfully on different occasions and in many a number of places both individually and collectively. These traditions can be found in many Sunni books. Having said that, can it really be said that it was befitting for the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, to introduce each and every one of his

companions as a guiding star?

Despicable Acts Committed by Some Companions

Many companions of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, including the prominent ones have, on various occasions and unexceptionally, admitted their ignorance, deficiency and mistakes in giving fatwa.

That was why, it was very normal and common for the companions to object and reject one another's views and opinions. Based on some historical accounts, the companions' act of refuting and rejecting one another's view crossed the moderate limit and reached an extent where they labeled one another as either ignorant or infidel.

If we go through the history, we find out that the companions did not consider themselves as guiding stars. Therefore, how can we consider for them a status which they themselves did not accept and believe in?

Swearing, physical and interpersonal violence and banishment of some companions by some others were common and the relations between them turned so sour that they were even prepared to shed one another's blood.

If we look carefully at the conducts of some of the companions, we come to know that many of them were indulged in committing unlawful acts so often that they even drank wine, bore false testimony, committed adultery, sold wine and idols, issued ignorant verdicts and did so many other major despicable acts which have been proved by Muslims to be major sins. Some of the sins committed by them are enumerated as follows:

Lying

Some of the prominent and well-known companions resorted to lying about 'How'ab in the event of the Jamal (Camel) sedition. Not only did they lie but they also persuaded others to give a false testimony.[7](#)

Khalid bin Walid's Crime

During Abu Bakr's era, Khalid bin Abdul Walid attacked upon Malik's tribesmen looting and plundering their property and taking them as captives. In this attack, Khalid bin Walid killed Malik bin Nuwayra, head of the clan, and contracted marriage with Malik's wife on the ensuing night without taking into account the mandatory iddah rule[8](#). This unlawful act on the part of Khalid was later condemned and denounced by Umar bin Khattab.[9](#)

Adultery Committed by Mughayra

Mughayra bin Shu'aba committed adultery and the story has been recorded as follows:

Mughayra bin Shu'aba committed adultery with Umm Jamil daughter of Amr, a woman from Qays clan. People like Abu Bakra, Nafi' bin Harith and Shibl bin Ma'bad gave testimony and confirmed that he had committed adultery.

When a fourth witness named Ziad bin Sumayyah – or Ziad bin Abih – came to testify against Mughayra, Umar bin Khattab made him understand that he should give an implicit testimony least Mughayra should be denigrated and humiliated with punishment.

Then Umar asked Ziad about his observations: "Did you see Mughayra penetrating and withdrawing like kohl needle entering the Kohl bottle?"

"No," said Ziad.

Umar then said: "Allahu Akbar, O Mughayra, stand up and punish the witnesses." There and then Mughayra stood up and punished all the three witnesses. [10](#) Samura bin Jundab Selling Wine

Samura bin Jundab began to sell wine during the time of Umar bin Khattab, the second caliph. When Umar heard of this, he said: "May God destroy him..." [11](#)

Mu'awiyah Selling Idols

The story of Mu'awiyah bin Abu Sufyan selling idols has been narrated in Al-Mabsut fi al-Hanafi as such: "Masruq has been quoted as having said: Mu'awiyah sent some sculptures made of copper to India."

Seeing this cargo, Masruq said: "By Allah, if I were certain that Mu'awiyah would not kill me, I would have thrown them into the sea but I am scared lest he should torture and mislead me. By Allah, I don't know what kind of a human being Mu'awiyah is?! He is a man whose despicable acts Shaitan has adorned to make them look beautiful to him or he is a man who has despaired of the hereafter and is now trying to enjoy this world." [12](#)

Abdur Rahman bin Umar Drinking Wine

When his father ruled Arabia as a caliph and Amr Aas was the governor of Egypt, Abu Shahma Abdur Rahman bin Umar bin Khattab drank wine in this land. Umar sent for him and he was brought from Egypt to Medina where he was punished for drinking wine. Amr Aas also flogged him for drinking wine (due to which he had fallen ill) and then put him in prison. It was due to the punishment for drinking wine that he fell ill and died in prison. [13](#)

Ignorance of Some Companions

Some of the eminent companions were in complete ignorance of the Islamic laws and even the meanings of Arabic words. They were opinionating about these laws and words without knowledge of them.

Despite the fact that the word *kalalah* occurs in the Quran and that the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, also explained its meaning to people, but as it is known, Abu Bakr did not know the meaning of this word. When asked about the meaning of the word *kalalah*, he said: I have my view about *kalalah*. If it is true, it would be by the grace of God, the One and the Unique, and if it is untrue, it has come out of me and the Shaitan and God is detached from him... [14](#)

Mu'awiyah Betraying in Sale of Commodity

Mu'awiyah bin Abu Sufyan sold goods and things for more than they actually weighed. For example, it has been reported in al-Muwatta' that Zayd bin Aslam heard Ata bin Yasar say the following: "Mu'awiyah had a container made of gold and which he used to drink water with, or he had some dinar which he sold for more than their weight.

At this time, Abu Darda said: "I heard the Prophet (S) forbid such a transaction except for when every (homogenous) commodity should be sold for exactly the same weight.

"I don't see any problem in this transaction," Mu'awiyah said.

Abu Darda replied, "If you are fair enough, you would see that I have just informed Mu'awiyah of the saying of the Messenger of Allah (S) but he gives me his own opinion. O Mu'awiyah, I will not reside in the land that you are living in." [15](#)

Zayd bin Arqam's Action

Zayd bin Arqam committed an act for which he repented. According to Aisha, if he did not repent for that offense, he would have lost all the divine rewards which he had earned while doing jihad and fighting alongside the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family. Some traditionists, jurisprudents and exegetes of the Holy Quran have quoted Umm Yunus that Umm Bahna, the slave woman of Umm Walad, said to Aisha, the wife of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family: "O Mother of the Faithful, do you know Zayd bin Arqam?"

Aisha responded that she knew him.

Umm Bahna said: "I sold a male-slave for eight hundred (dirham or dinar) on credit to Zayd bin Arqam but he needed the money (which he wanted to give me for the slave). Therefore, before the due date, I

bought the slave for six hundred (dirham or dinar) back from him."

Aisha then said: "What a bad transaction you have carried out. Tell Zayd that if he does not repent, he has destroyed his jihad alongside the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family."

Umm Bahna said: Can I waive him of the two hundred (dirham or dinar) and just take the six hundred?"

Aisha said: "Yes, because the Quran says:

"To whomsoever then the admonition has come from his Lord, then he desists, he shall have (the profits of) what has already passed, and his affair is in the hands of Allah." [16](#)

Aisha and Hafsa's Conspiracy

Aisha and Hafsa worked out a conspiracy against Zainab bint Jahsh. It has been reported in a narration as such: "The Prophet used to stay for a long while with Zainab bint Jahsh and drink honey at her house. So Hafsa and I decided that if the Prophet came to anyone of us, she should say to him, "I detect the smell of Maghafir [17](#) in you. Have you eaten Maghafir?"

"So the Prophet visited one of them and she said to him similarly. The Prophet said, "Never mind, I have taken some honey at the house of Zainab bint Jahsh, but I shall never drink of it anymore. Do not let anyone know about it." [18](#)

Closing Word on Hadith of al-Nujum

To sum it up, the noble verses of the Qur'an, the Prophetic traditions, and the books of jurisprudence and history are all witnesses to the invalidity of the Hadith of al-Nujum and denote that simply because the Apostle of Allah (S) had a sahabi in his company does not allow us to follow and emulate that sahabi; for, as you noticed, there have been hypocrites, impious, and criminals among the companions.

Therefore, the meaning of the Hadith of al-Nujum is, in itself, another reason that this hadith is fabricated and concocted by the counterfeiters, not mentioning the weakness of all the transmitters and the ways of transmission of this hadith which was described in details to the respected readers. [19](#)

Ahl al-Bayt, the Guiding Stars

It is very pertinent to mention that there are traditions narrated from the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family in Sunni books and authentic sources. We believe in the significations of those traditions and act upon what they purport. According to us, there is no objection to such traditions. Some of those traditions are as follows:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, says:

"Stars are security for the inhabitants of the heavens and my Ahl al-Bayt are security for my umma."

In another tradition, the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, has been quoted as having said:

"Stars are security for the inhabitants of the heavens, and if they vanish, the people of the heavens will also vanish, and my Ahl al-Bayt are security for the people on earth, and if my Ahl al-Bayt depart [from the world], the people of the earth will vanish."[20](#)

In another beautiful saying, the Messenger of Allah (S) says:

"The stars are security for the people of the earth against drowning (when at sea) and Ahl al-Bayt are a security to the people of the earth against discord. And if any tribe or group opposes my Ahl al-Bayt it will itself become fraught with discord and become a party to Iblis."[21](#)

Shiites accept such beliefs and doctrines due, mainly, to the fact that they are in consonance with the verses of the Holy Quran and sayings of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family. The infallibility of the Imams and Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them (i.e. Imam Ali and eleven of his noble descendants) has been proved through the Quran and Sunnah.

The family of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his household, have never had discord among themselves regarding any of the Islamic laws. They made their best effort to implement Islam's sacred Shari'ah.

In closing, we shall repeat asking the same question and would say:

Is the issuance of such a hadith possible on the part of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family? Could he have said what some of the Sunni scholars claim?

We would say in response: Never, because a careful contemplation on the sayings of Sunni leaders regarding the hadith of al-Nujum as well as on its purport will clearly show that this hadith is invalid with all its wordings and sanads and referring and holding on to it is by no means appropriate.

The readers have noticed that in order for us to prove the illusiveness and invalidity of the Hadith of al-Nujum, it was attempted in this book to refer to just the most reliable resources of hadith, and historical and biographical sources of the leading Sunni scholars and their views and opinions concerning this hadith.

We pray to Allah, the Glorified, to purify our deeds and help us know and follow the genuine tradition of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, as well as assist us in following those who are worthy of following and obedience.

Peace and blessings of Allah be upon our master, Muhammad, the guide, the honest and his pure

family. Wal-hamdu lillahi rabbil Aalameen.

- [1.](#) Chapter Aal-e Imran, verse 144.
- [2.](#) Chapter Al-Tawbah, verse 101.
- [3.](#) This hadith has been reported a number narrators. Muqbeli writes in Al-Ilm al-Shamikh: The tradition of division of Muslim Ummah into seventy three sects" have been narrated by different narrators. The different narrations corroborate and confirm one another in such a way that no doubt as left as to its denotation and signification. Tarikh al-Mazaheb al-Islamiyah by Muhammad Abu Zuhra, 11.
- [4.](#) Sahih Bukhari, chapter on the Pond (al-Hawdh), 4/87 & 88. This and other hadiths have also been narrated in other Sunni hadith books especially the Seha.
- [5.](#) Irsha al-Fohul, 76.
- [6.](#) Al-Jami al-Saghir, 2/303, letter (sh) No. 4934. Manawi says that Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal and Abu Ya'la have narrated this hadith from Abu Nafisa. As well, Ahmad bin Hanbal and Tabarani have narrated this hadith from Abu Musa. And Abu Na'eim Isfahani has narrated this hadith from Abu Bakr in Hilyat al-Awlia. Faidh al-Qadir, 4/229.
- [7.](#) This is a famous story among prominent historians including Tabari, Ibn Athir, Ibn Khaldun, Masudi, Abul Fida, etc.
- [8.](#) In Islam, iddah or iddat (period of waiting) is the period a woman must observe after the death of her spouse or after a divorce, during which she may not marry another man.
- [9.](#) This story is also well-known to historians and it has been recorded in historical, biographical and theological books. It is considered to be one of the points of criticism and objections to Abu Bakr bin Abi Quhafa.
- [10.](#) Wafiyat al-A'ayan, 6/364; Tarikh al-Tabari, 3/168 – 170, Al-Bedayah wa al-Nehayah, 7/93 & 94. As it is clear, this text is in clear conflict with the conspicuous and evident Shari'ah and Islamic laws.
- [11.](#) Sahih Bukhari, 2/774 & 775, Kitab al-Boyu', chapter La-Yuzab Shuhm a-Mayyita< hadith 2110 and other books.
- [12.](#) Al-Mabsut fi al-Hanafi, 24/46; Kitab al-Arbrar
- [13.](#) Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, 12/104 – 106; As is clear, this story in clear contrast with shari'ah texts from many aspects.
- [14.](#) All exegetes and theologians have reported this saying.
- [15.](#) Al-Muwatta', 2/634; Kitab al-Buyu', Baab Bay' Zahab bil fidha tabran wa 'aynan, hadith 33, vide: Sharh al-Muwatta', Suyut, 2/135 and 136.
- [16.](#) Tafsir ibn Qathir, 1/335. Al-Dur al-Manthur, 1/645. This story has been reported in both of these two books in the interpretation of verse 275 of Surah al-Baqarah which forbids usury. Ibn Kathir further says that this story is famous. This story has been reported by Ibn Athir in Jami' al-Usul, Al-Marghinani in Al-Hedayah and Kashani in Badaye'.
- [17.](#) Maghafir is the plural of "maghfur". Maghfur a sticky and sweet gum from the urfut tree having an unpleasant smell.
- [18.](#) This story can be found in Seha of Ahl-e Sunnah and other hadith books.
- [19.](#) A number of the scholars of hadith like Bazzaz – as pointed out earlier – ibn Qayyim and Ibn Hazm, have expressly state the invalidity of this hadith. See I'lam al-Mawq'ayn 2/231 and 232. Silsilat al-Ahadith al-Dha'ifa wa al-Mawdu'ah, 1/83. Ibn Hazm says, "It is impossible for the Prophet (S) to have given such a command." That is to say, it is not acceptable even to make such an assumption.
- [20.](#) Zakha'er al-Uqba, 49; Is'aaf al-Ragheben (printed on the margin of Noor al-Absar), 130. In both, the tradition has been narrated on the authority of Ahmad bin Hanbal.
- [21.](#) Ihya al-Mayyit, 85 as narrated by Hakim Neishabouri, Is'aaf al-Ragheben, 130. In this source, the text of