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## Unknown Excellences

The fifth fabricated tradition is reported by Tirmidhi. In his *Sunan* in a chapter on 'excellences of Ma'az bin Jabal, Zaid bin Thabit, Ubai bin Ka'ab and Abu Ubaida bin Jarrah, he narrates a tradition using two different chains of transmitters:

Sufyan bin Waki'a narrates from Hamid bin Abd al-Rahman from Dawood Attar from Mu'ammara from Qutada, from Anas bin Malik who quotes the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

Abu Bakr is the kindest person, Umar the strictest person in applying divine commandments, Uthman bin Affan the most modest individual, Ma'az bin Jabal the most knowledgeable in divine commands and prohibitions, Zaid bin Thabit the most knowledgeable in inheritance rules and Ubai bin Ka'ab the best reciter of the Holy Quran among my followers. Every community has a trustworthy and the trustworthy of my community is Abu Ubaidah Jarrah.

This is a good but strange tradition which is quoted by no one other than Qutada. A similar tradition has been reported by Abu Qalaba from Anas bin Malik from the Holy Prophet (S). The tradition reported by Abu Qalaba is more popular.

Muhammad bin Bashshar narrates from Abd al-Wahhab bin Abd al-Majid Thaqafi from Khalid Hazza from Abu Qalaba from Anas bin Malik who quotes the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

Abu Bakr is the kindest person, Umar the strictest person in applying divine commandments, Uthman bin Affan the most modest individual, Ma'az bin Jabal the most knowledgeable in divine commands and prohibitions, Zaid bin Thabit the most knowledgeable in inheritance rules and Ubai bin Ka'ab the best reciter of the Holy Quran among my followers. Every community has a trustworthy and the trustworthy of my community is Abu Ubaidah Jarrah.

However others have also narrated this narration, among whom is Ibn Majah. He narrated this tradition via two chains of transmitters that are as below:

Muhammad bin Muthanna narrates from Abd al-Wahhab bin Abd al-Majid from Khalid Hazza from Abu

Qalaba from Anas bin Malik who quotes the Messenger of Allah (S) as saying:

Abu Bakr is the kindest person, Umar the strictest person in applying divine commandments, Uthman bin Affan the most modest individual, Ma'az bin Jabal the most knowledgeable in divine commands and prohibitions, Zaid bin Thabit the most knowledgeable in inheritance rules and Ubai bin Ka'ab the best reciter of the Holy Quran among my followers. Every community has a trustworthy and the trustworthy of my community is Abu Ubaidah Jarrah.

Like Ibn Qudama, Ali bin Muhammad narrates this tradition from Waki'a from Sufyan from Khalid Hazza from Abu Qalana from Anas bin Malik who quotes the Messenger of Allah (S) as saying:

Abu Bakr is the kindest person, Umar the strictest person in applying divine commandments, Uthman bin Affan the most modest individual, Ma'az bin Jabal the most knowledgeable in divine commands and prohibitions, Zaid bin Thabit the most knowledgeable in inheritance rules and Ubai bin Ka'ab the best reciter of the Holy Quran among my followers. Every community has a trustworthy and the trustworthy of my community is Abu Ubaidah Jarrah.

Hakim also narrates this tradition saying: Abd al-Rahman bin Hamdan Jallab (from Hamadan), narrates from Abu Hatam Razi from Muhammad bin Yazid bin Sunan Rahawi from Abu Muhammad Kowthar bin Hakim Halabi from Nafi'a from Ibn Umar who quotes the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

Abu Bakr is the kindest person, Umar the strictest person in applying divine commandments, Uthman bin Affan the most modest individual, Ubai bin Ka'ab the best reciter of the Holy Quran, Zaid bin Thabit the most knowledgeable in inheritance rules, Ali bin Abi Talib the most knowledgeable in judging, Ma'az bin Jabal the most knowledgeable in divine commands and prohibitions, and Abu Zar the most truthful person in my followers. In fact, Abu Ubaidah Jarrah is the trustworthy of my community and the religious scholar of my community is Abdullah bin Abbas.<sup>1</sup>

## **Evaluation of transmitters of tradition**

What we mentioned above were the most important chains in the most authentic Sunni sources. If we mention all chains it will keep us away from the aim of this booklet. We will thus suffice to evaluating a few chains of the transmitters of this tradition.

### **Sufyan bin Waki'a**

The first chain of transmitters of this tradition used by Tirmidhi contains the name of Sufyan bin Waki'a. Scholars of traditions have made certain comments about him.

Bukhari is of the view that scholars are critical of Sufyan due to the warnings they had given to him. Abu Zar'a says he is accused of lying. Ibn Abi Hatam says that when his father was asked about Sufyan he

said: He was careless in narrating traditions. Commenting on him, Sufyan says that he is not a trustworthy person. Elsewhere he mentions that Sufyan is not a worthy person. According to Ajuri, Abu Dawood refused to narrate his narrations. Zahabi has considered him as one of those people who were weak in terms of transmitting traditions. According to Ibn Hajar, Sufyan had a writer who would write down what he would dictate. He jotted down things as traditions which were not in reality traditions. When Sufyan was told to change his mind about him, he refused to accept it. Thus his traditions are not authentic.

### **Dawood 'Attar**

Dawood 'Attar is another person the first chain of Tirmidhi includes. Hakim Nayshabur quotes Yahya bin Mu'aeen as saying that his traditions are weak. Azdi says that scholars are critical of him.[2](#)

### **Qutada**

He is another person the first chain of Tirmidhi includes. He was a fatalist and was a propagandist of this school of thought. On the other hand, he was

known as a deceiver. According to Sha'abi, he was mixing authentic and unauthentic traditions together.[3](#)

### **Muhammad bin Bashshar**

He is among the narrators of the second chain used by Tirmidhi. Fallas has regarded him as a liar. Dawraqi says that he saw Yahya bin Mu'aeen who did not pay attention to him, regarding him as weak in narrating tradition. Qawariri did not like him either. He was the owner of a bath.[4](#)

### **Abd al-Wahhab bin Abd al-Majid**

He is another person this chain includes. Commenting on him, Ibn Abi Hatam quotes his father as saying: He is an unknown person. Ibn Mahdi places his name among those who narrated traditions from others' books but were not able to keep them. Quoting Ibn Mu'aeen, Dawri says he was suffering from absent-mindedness. According to Abu Dawood he was suffering from sense disruption. On Aqili's view, he was among weak narrators.[5](#)

### **Khalid Hazza**

He is also among those narrators this chain includes. Concerning him Abu Hatam says the scholars record his traditions but do not act on them. In his *Ta'arih*, 'Aqili quoting Yayha bin Adam through Abu Shahab as saying: Rely on Hajjaj bin Artat and Muhammad bin Ishaq, because they are among the memorizers of tradition. However conceal the traditions reported by Khalid Hazza and Hisham, from me when we are among Basrans. Yahya said that he asked Hammad bin Zaid as to what was the fault of

Khalid Hazza. In response he said that he came here from Syria but we do not accept him as a memorizer.

Abbad bin Abbad says that Shu'aba wanted to criticize Khalid but Hammad bin Zaid and I met him and told him not to do so. We threatened him and as a result he was silent. Quoting Ahmad bin Hanbal, 'Aqili says: when one of his traditions was narrated to Ibn Illiyya, he did not pay attention to it and said that he was weak. Ibn Hajar, commenting on their words, says that they made such remarks, because Khalid had lost his memory towards the end of his life or because he had chosen to be an agent of the ruler of his time. [6](#)

## Abu Qalaba

Another reporter of this chain is Abu Qalaba Abdullah bin Zaid Jarmi. He had hostility towards Ali (a.s) and was impolite towards him. That is why he did not narrate any tradition from him. Moreover, all including those who did not see him, agree that he was a deceitful person. Commenting on him, Abu al-Hasan Qabsi Malik is reported to have said that he was among the jurists of tabi'a'een and from the viewpoint of people he was a foolish person.[7](#)

## Two points

Based on what was mentioned above the chain used by Ibn Majah is not acceptable either. Two points have to be mentioned in regard with the chain of this tradition.

One: This tradition, in addition to having the afore-mentioned flaws, is reported in a mursal format. Ibn Hajar and other commentators of *Sahih Bukhari* have mentioned this point. In his commentary, Manavi, quoting Ibn Hajar, says: Tirmidhi and Ibn Hayyan have narrated the full version of this tradition from Khalid Hazza through Abd al-Wahhab Thaqafi. This tradition begins with the word 'kindest' and its chain is authentic. The memorizers of traditions have however said that the starting part of this tradition is mursal (broken) and the portion that is muttasil (connected) is reported by Bukhari.[8](#)

Two: The narrator of this tradition is Anas bin Malik who has lied on several occasions. Thus one cannot rely on him.

## Reporters of Hakim's tradition

### Muhammad bin Yazid Rahavi

He is one the reporters the chain of Hakim includes. Scholars of tradition have criticized him. Dar Qutni says he is weak in transmitting traditions. According to Nisae, he is not strong in narrating traditions. Ibn Hatam quoting his father says that he is not a worthy reporter. He ignores his father. On Bukhari's view, Abu Farwa is muqarib al-hadith (mediocre in transmitting traditions), but his son, Muhammad has

narrated unknown traditions from him. According to Ajuri as quoted by Abu Dawood, Abu Farwa Jazri was not a valuable reporter. Neither was his son. According to Tirmidhi, his traditions are not reliable and he is weak in narrating tradition. Based on Ibn Hajar's view, he is not strong in terms of narrating traditions.<sup>9</sup> Dahabi has touched his life in *al-Mughni fi al-Du'afa*.<sup>10</sup>

### [Kawthar bin Hakim](#)

He is another reporter his chain includes. In *al-Du'afa wa al-Matrukin*, Bukhari says that his traditions are unknown. Nisae also says in the same book that his traditions are rejected. Abu Dar'a, commenting on him says that he is weak. According to Ibn Mu'een he is not an important narrator. In Ahmad's point of view, his traditions are false whereas in Dar al-Qutni's opinion his traditions are rejected. In *al-Mughni*, Dahabi Dahabi says that the scholars of tradition have abandoned his traditions which are strange.<sup>11</sup>

Thus it is plain that those who considered his traditions not only weak but also fake and fabricated were right.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup>. – Al-Mustadrak al-Sahihain, vol. 3, p. 616, tradition, no. 6281.

<sup>2</sup>. – Mizan al-Itidal, vol. 3, p. 18 and Tahdib al-Tahdib, vol. 3, p. 173.

<sup>3</sup>. – Tahdib al-Tahdib, vol. 8, pp. 307–309. See also other Sunni sources.

<sup>4</sup>. – Mizan al-Itidal, vol. 6, p. 79.

<sup>5</sup>. – Ibid, vol. 4, p. 434.

<sup>6</sup>. – Tahdib al-Tahdib, vol. 3, pp. 110 and 111.

<sup>7</sup>. – Ibid, vol. 5, p. 201 and 202. Mizan al-Itidal, vol. 4, p. 103 and 104.

<sup>8</sup>. – Fayd al-Qadir, vol. 5, p. 589.

<sup>9</sup>. – Mizan al-Itidal, vol. 6, p. 372, Tahdib al-Tahdib, vol. 9, p. 452, Taqrib al-Tahdib, vol. 2, p. 174.

<sup>10</sup>. – Al-Mughni fi al-Du'afa, vol. 2, p. 388.

<sup>11</sup>. – See the above mentioned works and also al-Mizan, vol. 5, p. 504 and Lisan al-Mizan, vol. 4, pp. 589–590.

<sup>12</sup>. – Fayz al-Qadir, vol. 1, p. 589.