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Sh□'ahs And The Purified Sunnah

Both Parties' Stand Towards The Sunnah

One of the lies circulated against the Sh□'ahs by some fools is that Sh□'ahs reject the Sunnah of the Chosen One, peace and blessings of All□h be upon him and his progeny, a nonsense beyond which there is no other nonsense. Following we would like to transmit some views of Sunni scholars about the stand of the Sh□'ahs with regard to the Purified Sunnah.

In his book titled *Al-Im□m al-S□diq* (*'a*), Shaykh Muhammad Ab□ Zuhra says, "Consecutively reported Sunnah is to them an evidence in the validity of which there is no contention, and consecutive reporting to them obligates decisive knowledge... Denying the cherished Prophetic Sunnah, which is consecutively reported from the Messenger of All□h (□), is apostasy because it means denying the Message brought by Muhammad (□). As regarding denying the use of statements by the Im□ms as evidence, it is much less than that; it is regarded as straying from the right path, not apostasy."1

Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghaz□li, in his book titled *Dif□' an al-'Aqeeda wal Shar□'ah dhidd Mat□'in al-Mustashriqeen* (a defense of the doctrine and the Shar□'ah against the charges of Orientalists), says the following: "Among these liars are those who propagate saying that the Sh□'ahs are followers of Ali ('a), that the Sunnis are the followers of Muhammad (□), that the Sh□'ahs are of the view that Ali ('a) was more worthy of the [Prophetic] Message, or that it was erroneously diverted from him to others, and all of this is ugly rubbish and shameful fabrication."

Then he goes on to say, "Sh□'ahs believe in Muhammad's Message and realize the honor of Ali ('a) in his kinship to this Messenger and in upholding his Sunnah. Like all other Muslims, they see no human being, from the early generations or from the last, greater than the Truthful One, the most Trusted one; so, how can such hallucination be attributed to them?!"2

There is no contention between the Sunnis and the Sh□'ahs about the status of the Purified Prophetic Sunnah and that it has to be acted upon, but they have differed [from the Sunnis] about the method of how to transmit such a Sunnah to generations which succeeded the Prophet's generation or how to

verify it. Sunnis suffice themselves by transmitting the *isn□d* of the *had□th* by quoting one trusted person who cites any member of the *sah□bah* in whose justice they believe, and they believe in *all* of them.

To them, the traditions recorded in the *Sah□h* books of al-Bukh□ri and of Muslim are never to be doubted, so much so that these books have become as though they were on par with the Holy Qur'□n in as far as accuracy is concerned; otherwise, what is t he meaning of the vast majority of Sunnis taking upon themselves to accept all what these *Sah□h* books contain?!

In order to underscore this, let us quote the view of Shaykh Ab□ 'Amr ibn al-Sal□h in the Introduction to al-Nawawi's *Sharh* of Muslim's *Sah□h* as follows: "ALL what is decided by Muslim, may All□h have mercy on him, as being authentic in his book [Muslim's *Sah□h*] is *absolutely* authentic. The same applies to what al-Bukh□ri decided in his book as being authentic. This is so because the nation has received such an acceptance, with the exception of those whose contention is disregarded, through consensus." He adds saying, "The view of an infallible person cannot miss, and the nation in its consensus is [thus] protected against falling into error."[3]

As for the Sh□'ahs, they precondition, first and foremost, the rendering of *isn□d* of *had□th* to any of the Im□ms from among Ahlul Bayt ('a), basing their argument on the following statement of the Messenger of All□h (□): "I have left among you that which, if you uphold it, you shall never stay: the Book of All□h and my *'itrat*, my Ahlul Bayt."[4] and also on this verse of the Almighty:

***"All□h only wishes to remove all abomination from you, O members of the family* (*Ahlul Bayt*), *and to make you pure and spotless"* (*Qur'□n, 33:33*).**

As for the other conditions, the most important among them is to compare the narrative with the text of the Book of All□h (□) then to look into its context and *isn□d* then compare it with others the decisive *taw□tur* (consecutive reporting) of which has already been fixed and, finally, judging it through reason. Following any narrative which lacks any of these conditions is to be seriously considered and contemplated.

The major *ah□d□th* book with the Sh□'ahs are four: *Al-K□fi, Man l□ Yahduruhu al-faq□h, Al-Istibs□r* and *Al-Tahdheeb*, and *all* the narratives in these books are subject to investigation [rather than taking them for granted as is the case with our Sunni brethren]. They contain what is lean and what is fat, and Sh□'ahs do not consider all the narratives in these books as being accurate, for the Sh□'ahs see no book which can be compared with the Book of All□h in as far as accuracy is concerned as is the case with both Shaykhs, namely al-Bukh□ri and Muslim, with regard to their *Sah□h* books.

For example, in the book titled *Mas□dir al-Had□th 'inda al-Sh□'a al-Im□miyya* (sources of *had□th* according to Im□mite Sh□'ahs) by the critic Sayyid Muhammad Husayn al-Jal□li, who classifies the traditions in *Al-K□fi*, we read the following: "The number of *ah□d□th* in it is 16,121 of which 9,485 are weak, 114 are good, 118 are confirmed, 302 are strong and 5,702 are authentic."

This clearly demonstrates how Sh□'ah scholars themselves consider thousands of *ah□d□th* in *Al-K□fi*; so, where is this "fact" which comes out of the mouths of some liars such as Zahir and al-Khateeb who claim that *Al-K□fi* is regarded by the Sh□'ahs just as al-Bukh□ri's *Sah□h* is regarded by the Sunnis, then they claim that its title is '*Sah□h* al-K□fi"?! This is an outrageous lie which they repeat in their poisoned books with the objective to mislead the reader by labeling weak traditions which they derived from *Al-K□fi* or other Sh□'ah books of *had□th* as "authentic" in order to use this as an argument against them and to indict them...

Both Parties' Stand Regarding The Prophet's Infallibility

While some people with vested interested in addition to some liars circulate erroneous rumors by saying that the Sh□'ahs prefer their Im□ms over the Messenger of All□h (□), as many Sunnis think, I have found, from my research, that the Sh□'ahs sanctify the Prophet (□) to a degree that is by far greater than that viewed by the Sunnis. Sh□'ahs sanctify the Sunnah of the Prophet (□) and are of the view that anyone who denies a ruling mandated by the Prophet (□) is an apostate.

They see the Prophet (□) as the very best of the first generations and of the last. They simply regard upholding the Twelve Im□ms from among Ahlul Bayt ('a) based on their being the most authentic to transmit the Sunnah of the Prophet (□). They reject any and all doubts and hearsay about the Prophet's infallibility. In their view, he is infallible with regard to the matters relevant to the creed and to life, prior to his Prophetic mission and thereafter.

As for the Sunnis, they, too, prefer the person of the Prophet (□) over all early generations and the last, but they see his infallibility limited to theological matters only. These, in their view, are matters related to conveying the Message and nothing more. As for anything less than that, he is like all other human beings: He may be wrong, or he may be right.

Before we rebut the latter view, we would like to show the reader portraits of what the Sunnis believe with regard to the Prophet's infallibility so that we may clearly and truly see their stand in this regard and from what they regard as the most accurate books next to the Book of All□h.

'□'isha has said, "... till the truth took him by surprise at the Hira cave. In it, the angel came to him and said, 'Read!' (Or 'Recite!'). The Prophet (□) said to him, 'I am not a reader.' [The Prophet (□) went on to say] He took me and covered me till I was exhausted then released me. Then he released me and thrice said, 'Read!'"

'□'isha goes on to say, "He returned shivering till he entered Khad□ja's chamber and said, 'Cover me.' He was covered till fear abandoned him. He then said, 'O Khad□ja! What is wrong with me?' Khad□ja took him and set out to Waraqah ibn Nawfal ibn Asad ibn Abd al-Uzza ibn Qusayy, cousin of Khad□ja, [son of her uncle] her father's brother, a man who embraced Christianity during the *j□hiliyya*, and he used to write in Arabic.

He used to write the Bible in Arabic whatever All□h wanted him to write, and he was an old man who had lost his eye sight. Khad□ja said to him, ‘O cousin! Listen to your nephew!’ Waraqah said, ‘O cousin! What do you see?’ The Prophet (□) informed him of what he saw. Waraqah, therefore, said, ‘This is the same Code which was revealed to Moses! How I wish I could be alive when your people get you out [of Mecca]!’ The Messenger of All□h (□) said, ‘Shall they really get me out?’...”5

Is it accepted by reason that the Messenger of All□h (□) did not know that what was revealed to him was the Prophetic mission and that Waraqah ibn Nawfal, the Christian, was more knowledgeable than him and that he was the one to tell him?!

‘□’isha goes on to finish her narrative and to state what is more strange than this and from which the bodies shiver: “... Waraqah then died and the revelation ceased to come, so much so that the Prophet (□) grieved very much. We came to know that his grief took control of him to the extent that many times he used to go to high mountain summits in order to throw himself down from there. Whenever he reached the summit of a mountain in order to throw himself down from it, Gabriel came to him and said, ‘O Muhammad! You truly are the Messenger of All□h!’ He, therefore, would enjoy some calm, then he would return. If the revelation took too long to visit him, he would do the same. So, if he then went to the summit of a mountain, Gabriel would come to him and say the same to him.”6

And can a Muslim believe that the Messenger of All□h (□) did not know the Qur’□n in its entirety? Look, then, to what al-Bukh□ri states, relying on the authority of ‘□’isha who said, “The Messenger of All□h (□) heard a man reciting the Qur’□n at the mosque, so he said, ‘May All□h have mercy on him! He reminded me of such-and-such a verse which I dropped from such-and-such a Sura!’”7

As regarding their claim that it was acceptable to believe that the Prophet (□) used to forget, it is narrated on the authority of J□bir ibn Abdull□h [al-Ans□ri] that during the Battle of Khandaq (moat), ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab went to him and said, “O Messenger of All□h! I was about to perform my prayers when the sun had almost set after a fasting person would break his fast.”

The Prophet (□) said, “By All□h, you have not then performed it.” ‘Umar goes on to say, “The Prophet (□) went down to valleys in my company. He made his ablution then performed the *Asr* prayers after the sun had already set, then he prayed the *Maghrib* thereafter.”8

Ab□ Hurayra is quoted as having said, “Prayers were called for, rows were prepared standing, so the Messenger of All□h (□) came out to us. As soon as he stood up in his prayer area, he said he had *jan□ba* (uncleanness due to seminal discharge), so he said to us, ‘Stay where you are.’ He returned and made his *ghusul*. Then he came out and his head was dripping. He made the *takbeer* and we prayed with him.”9

Ab□ Hurayra is also quoted as having said, “... so the Prophet (□) led our noon prayers in two prostrations [apparently *qasr*, shortened], then he went to a wooden board in the forefront of the mosque and put his hand on it. Among the people were Ab□ Bakr and ‘Umar. They felt too much respect for him

to ask him about it. People went out quickly.

They said, ‘Were the prayers shortened?’ Among the people was a man whom the Prophet (ﷺ) used to call ‘the man with two hands’ and who said to the Prophet (ﷺ), ‘O Prophet of Allﷺh! Why did you shorten the prayers?!’ The Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘I did not forget, nor did I shorten them.’ They said, ‘You did, indeed, forget, O Messenger of Allﷺh (ﷺ)!’ He then said, ‘The man of the two hands has said the truth.’”[10]

Imagine! They go as far as claiming that a Jew was able to expose the Prophet (ﷺ) to his magic, so the Prophet (ﷺ) imagined doing something which he did not do! And that he had to ask ‘ﷺ’isha whether the *wahi* had descended upon him or not! Or he might forget whether he had an intercourse with his wife or not!

‘ﷺ’isha has said, “The Prophet (ﷺ) remained for a period of time imagining that he had cohabited with his wife but he in reality had not. One day he said to me, ‘O ‘ﷺ’isha! Allﷺh passed His verdict to me with regard to something about which I sought His verdict. Two men came to me. One of them sat near my foot while the other sat near my head. The one near my foot said to the one near my head, ‘What is wrong with the man?’ He said, ‘He is enchanted.’ ‘Who enchanted him?’, asked the other.

He said, ‘Labeed ibn A’sam.’”[11] ‘ﷺ’isha has also been quoted as having said, “The Messenger of Allﷺh (ﷺ) was enchanted, so much so that he would imagine doing something which he never did till one day, while he was with me, he kept praying to Allﷺh then said, ‘Have you felt that Allﷺh has issued a verdict about something for which I sought His verdict?’”[12]

Shaykh Muhammad Abdoh rejected these narratives which claim that the Messenger of Allﷺh (ﷺ) had fallen under the effect of sorcery because they contradict this verse:

“The wicked ones say, ‘You follow no one other than a bewitched man’” **(*Qur’ﷺn, 28:8*).**

As regarding the Prophet’s control of his carnal desires, al-Bukhﷺri has stated in his *Sahﷺh* a narrative through Abﷺ Hishﷺm saying, “When the Messenger of Allﷺh (ﷺ) was sick, he kept going in a circle around his women and saying, ‘Where am I supposed to be tomorrow? Where am I supposed to be tomorrow?’ out of his concern for ‘ﷺ’isha. ‘ﷺ’isha said, ‘When it was my own turn [to cohabit with the Prophet (ﷺ)], he calmed down.’”[13]

‘ﷺ’isha has also said, “Whenever the Prophet (ﷺ) was about to make a trip, he would cast lots about his women. Anyone chosen by the lot he used to choose to go out with. And he used to divide for each woman her day and night, but Sawda daughter of Zam’ah granted her day and night to ‘ﷺ’isha wife of the Prophet (ﷺ).”

Anas ibn Mﷺlik said, “The Prophet (ﷺ) used to spend one hour making a round of his wives in the night and the day, and they were eleven.” Anas was asked, “Was he able to manage all of that?!” Anas said, “We used to talk and say that he (ﷺ) was granted the stamina of thirty men!”[14]

Sunnis claim that the following sacred verses were revealed to rebuke the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) for having frowned at Abdullah ibn Maktoom, who was blind, and that the reason behind his turning away from the man, as the Sunnis narrate, was his being busy talking to 'Utbah ibn Rabi'ah, Abu Jahl ibn Hishim, al-Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib, Ubayy and Umayyah ibn Khalaf inviting them to believe in Allah and hoping they would embrace Islam.

Ibn Maktoom had asked the Prophet (ﷺ) then to recite something from the Holy Qur'an and to teach him from what Allah had taught him till hatred surfaced on the face of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) because his speech was interrupted and he said to himself, "These prominent persons would say that he [the Prophet (ﷺ)] is followed only by the slaves and the blind," so he turned away from him and paid his full attention to the folks to whom he was talking.

These verses are:

***"He frowned and turned away, because the blind man came to him,* (*interrupting*)*. But what could tell you that he might grow* (*in spiritual understanding*)*? Or that he might receive admonishment, and the teaching would benefit him?"* (*Qur'an, 80:1-4*).**

The Shi'ahs reject this story entirely saying that these verses were revealed about a man from Bani Umayyah, not the Messenger of Allah, who had turned away from that same blind man. *'Allama* Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai, in his exegesis titled *Al-Mizan*, has said the following: "These verses are not at all clearly indicative that they were addressed to the Prophet (ﷺ).

Rather, it is a mere narrative not directly telling who it implicates. Rather, they contain an indication that someone else [other than the Prophet (ﷺ)] is meant because frowning in the face of others is never a habit of the Prophet (ﷺ) even with his own enemies who differed with him, let alone the believers who seek more guidance. Moreover, the individual implicated in them is described as paying attention to the rich and turning away from the poor, and this does not fit the Prophet's gracious manners.

Instead, Allah has described his manners as being great, saying, even before the revelation of this chapter [Chapter 80 quoted above], 'You surely are endowed with great manners;' so, how can anyone believe that Allah grants him recognition for his great manners at the start of his Prophetic mission then He turns to rebuke him for what he did and speak ill of him such as describing him as courting the rich even when they are unbelievers and turning away from the poor even when they are believers and are seeking guidance."[15]

Based on the above-quoted narratives and their likes, the Sunnis derived their belief that the infallibility of the Prophet (ﷺ) included *only* matters relevant to the religion and the message. But Allah ordered us to emulate His Messenger absolutely and without any term or condition:

***"Nor does he say* (*anything*) *of* (*his own*) *desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him"* (*Qur'an, 53:3-4*).**

Add to this the following verse:

"Take what the Prophet assigns to you, and abstain from what he withholds from you. And fear All□h, for All□h is strict in punishment" (***Qur'□n, 59:7***).

These verses prove that his infallibility is not restricted but absolute. Had it been permissible for the Prophet (□) to err, All□h would then have ordered us to follow error. This is something from saying it we seek All□h's protection.

The infiltration of narratives casting doubts about the infallibility of the Prophet (□), besides their being the work of forgers, so that they may be used to cast doubt about the Islamic creed, may have other reasons as to why they were fabricated, so that they may support the stand of some *sah□bah*, the same *sah□bah* who claimed that the Prophet (□) was "hallucinating" during his last sickness when he asked them to bring him some writing material so he would dictate to them the writing of something after the writing of which they would never stray.

So, it is not odd after that to find some narratives describing one of the *sah□bah* as being right while in its regard the Prophet (□) was wrong, as those who promote such narratives claim. One of them is what is attributed to him regarding the revelation of the verse about the veil after 'Umar ibn al-Khatt□b had pointed out to the Messenger of All□h (□) the importance of his women being veiled! Anas has said, "'Umar said, 'I said: O Messenger of All□h! The good and the bad persons come to see you.

Perhaps you ought to order the mothers of the faithful to veil themselves.'" According to another narrative, 'Umar said to the Messenger of All□h (□), "Veil your women." She ['□'isha] said, "He did not; therefore, All□h revealed the verse of veiling."[16]

Also among what the Sunnis attribute to him (□) regarding performing the funeral prayers for the hypocrites, they say it was revealed in support of a stand by 'Umar after the Messenger of All□h (□) had insisted on performing it on [Abdull□h] the son of Ubayy, the hypocrite.

It is narrated that Abdull□h ibn 'Umar said, "When Abdull□h ibn Ubayy died, his son went to the Messenger of All□h (□) and said, 'O Messenger of All□h (□)! Give me your shirt so I may shroud him in it, and do perform the funeral prayers for him and seek forgiveness for him.' He (□) gave him his shirt and said to him, 'Once you are through with him, call the *adh□n*.' When he finished calling the *adh□n*, he (□) came to perform the funeral prayers for him, whereupon 'Umar pulled him (aside) and said, 'Has not All□h prohibited you from performing funeral prayers for the hypocrites?'

He said:

'Whether you ask for their forgiveness or not, (***their sin is unforgivable:***) ***If you ask seventy times for their forgiveness, All□h will not forgive them because they have rejected All□h and His Prophet, and All□h does not guide those who are perversely rebellious'*** (***Qur'□n, 9:80***),

so this verse was revealed: ‘

Nor should you ever pray for any of them who dies, nor stand at his grave, for they rejected All□h and His Prophet and died in a state of perverse rebellion’ (Qur’□n, 9:84),

so he (□) abandoned the idea of praying for them.”[17]

In another narrative from ‘Umar himself, he said, “... so I was very surprised at my own daring with the Messenger of All□h (□).”[18]

The truth in that incident is that the Messenger of All□h (□) was given the option to pray for the hypocrites and to seek forgiveness for them by the token of the verse saying,

“Seek forgiveness for them or do not seek it; even if you seek forgiveness for them seventy times, All□h will not forgive them” (Qur’□n, 9:80).

The Prophet (□) opted to pray for that particular hypocrite due to the great benefit, tot he anticipated interest and to win the hearts of the man’s own people, the Khazraj, from among whom one thousand men embraced Islam. His prayers (□) for that hypocrite took place before the prohibition had descended.

The verse saying, “Seek forgiveness for them or do not seek it..., etc.” does not convey the prohibition which ‘Umar understood and because of which he objected to the Messenger of All□h (□) and whom he saw as “wrong”. The revelation of the verse prohibiting praying for the hypocrites does not at all prove that the Messenger of All□h (□) was wrong in praying for Abdull□h ibn Ubayy, All□h forbid; so, it would have been wrong had he done so after its revelation and not before.

This incident does not serve a purpose except to demonstrate how wrong ‘Umar was and how strongly he objected to the Messenger of All□h (□). ‘Umar himself admits the same; he is quoted as having said, “I slipped in Islam a slip worse than which I never slipped when the Messenger of All□h (□) wanted to pray..., etc.”[19]

Similar to it is the incident of accepting blood money from the captives in the aftermath of the Battle of Badr. This verse:

“It is not fitting for a Prophet that he should have prisoners of war until he has thoroughly subdued the land. You look on the temporal goods of this world, but All□h looks to the hereafter, and All□h is Exalted in might, Wise. Had it not been for a previous ordinance from All□h, a severe penalty would have reached you for the (ransom) that you took” (Qur’□n, 8:67)

was revealed, according to the view of the Sunnis, in order to rebuke the Messenger of All□h (□) for having accepted ransom from the prisoners of the Badr war instead of killing them at the time when ‘Umar ibn al-Khatt□b wanted to kill them all, so this verse was revealed supporting ‘Umar’s opinion. They narrate what supports their opinion, statements which they themselves have said then attributed to

the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) regarding the meaning of the previous verse which contains a threat of a severe punishment. But what was that threat really for?!

The Sunnis narrated saying that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to weep with Abu Bakr who said, “We almost were subjected to a great penalty on account of the disagreement of the son of al-Khattab, and had a penalty descended, only the son of al-Khattab would have slipped from it.”20 The truth about this incident is as follows:

The past verse was revealed before the Battle of Badr rebuking the *sahabah* who preferred the trade caravan and what Abu Sufyan’s trade caravan was carrying over fighting when they were consulted by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) who wanted to see how ready they were and how willing to fight the polytheists.

The prohibition in the verse is not absolute regarding the Prophet (ﷺ) taking war prisoners. Rather, it prohibits taking war prisoners without [first] fighting the polytheists, as was the desire of some *sahabah* who were consulted by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to either take the trade caravan from them or to fight them. How can it be reasonable to believe that this verse, which threatens those who do not wish to fight, was revealed to rebuke the Prophet (ﷺ) who had already killed the polytheists?! Seventy war heroes from Quraysh were killed in that battle.

Abu Hurayra And The Abundance Of His Ahadith

Due to the large number of *ahadith* narrated by Abu Hurayra, I decided to shed some light on his personality. Traditionists have unanimously agreed that Abu Hurayra narrated more traditions about the Messenger of Allah than anyone else although he did not keep the Prophet (ﷺ) company except for one year and nine months or, according to some narratives, three years. The *Sahih* books of the Sunnis have included 5,374 traditions of which al-Bukhari narrated 446.

As for Abu Hurayra himself, he has said, “No companion of the Prophet (ﷺ) narrated more traditions than I have except Abdullah ibn ‘Umar, for he can write and read [whereas I cannot].”21 But all what Ibn ‘Umar transmitted are 722 traditions from which al-Bukhari quotes only seven and Muslim only twenty...

As for the reason why Abu Hurayra kept the Prophet (ﷺ) company so much, he himself answers this question when he says, “They say that Abu Hurayra narrates too many traditions, and Allah is the One Who promises; and they say, ‘Why do the Muhajirun and the Ansar not narrate as he narrates?’

My brothers from among the Muhajirun kept busy making transactions at the market, and my brothers from among the Ansar kept busy by their money being invested, and I was a poor man who kept company with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in order to fill his belly. So I was present when they were absent, and I remembered when they forgot.”22

He also said, “People say, ‘Abu Hurayra has narrated too many [traditions].’ I used to keep the

Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) company in order to satisfy my stomach, so that I do not have to eat what is prohibitive nor wear silk nor be served by this man or by that woman. And I used to tie a stone to my stomach on account of acute hunger, although I would recite a verse with me so that he might feed me.

The most kind man to the destitute was Ja'far ibn Abu Talib. He used to take us to feed us whatever he had in his own house, so much so that he used to bring us a container which had nothing it, so we would tear it and lick what is in it."23

Abu Hurayra expressed his appreciation of the food charity of Ja'far ibn Abu Talib by saying the following about him, "Nobody who ever put on sandals, or ride animals, or tread the dust after the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was better than Ja'far ibn Abu Talib."24

So, what criterion did Abu Hurayra apply in favoring Ja'far ibn Abu Talib over all other *sahabah*?!

In his *Sahih*, Muslim has narrated saying that 'Umar ibn al-Khattab beat Abu Hurayra when he heard him quoting the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) as having said, "Whoever says, 'La ilaha illa Allah' [there is God except Allah] enters Paradise."25

Ibn Abd al-Birr has quoted Abu Hurayra himself saying, "I have brought you traditions which, had I narrated them during the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, Umar would have beaten me with the club."26

The traditionist-faqih Rasheed Rida has said, "Had 'Umar's life-span extended till the death of Abu Hurayra, such numerous *ahadith* would not have reached us." Mustafa Sadiq al-Rafi'i, therefore, says, "He, meaning Abu Hurayra, was the first traditionist in Islam to be charged [with fabricating *hadith*]."

When the Battle of Siffin took place, Abu Hurayra sided with Mu'awiyah and was rewarded with plenty of money for doing such a "good job" in narrating *hadith* and for supporting the Umayyads. Marwan ibn al-Hakam, for example, used to appoint him as his own deputy in his job as the *wali* [governor] of the city. His conditions, hence, improved a great deal.

Ayyub ibn Muhammad is quoted as having said, "We were once with Abu Hurayra, and he was wearing two beautiful linen garments. He blew his nose, so he said, 'How can this be?! Abu Hurayra blows his nose while wearing linen?! I remember being the very last one in the distance between the pulpit of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and the chamber of 'A'isha, losing my consciousness. One would come and put his foot on my neck, thinking I am mad. I was not mad; I was only hungry."27

What is linked to his support for the Umayyads is his deliberately keeping silent about some traditions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) because narrating them would have jeopardized his own life [not just his pocket]. Abu Hurayra himself has said, "I learned from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) two pouches [of *ahadith*]. As for one of them, I disseminated it. As for the other, had I disseminated it, this throat would have been cut off."28

Where does this statement stand in comparison to this following statement by Abu Hurayra himself:

“People say that Abū Hurayra has narrated too many traditions. Had it not been for two verses in the Book of Allāh, I would not have narrated a single *hadīth*:

‘Those who conceal the clear (Signs) and the guidance We have sent down after We have made it clear for the people in the Book!the curse of Allāh, and the curse of those entitled to curse, shall be upon them, except those who repent and make amends and openly declare (the truth): I turn to them; for I am oft-Returning, Most Merciful’ (Qur’ān, 2: 159-160).”[29]

From all these irrefutable proofs, the truth becomes quite clear about Abū Hurayra and his “integrity” in narrating *hadīth* and which makes him similar to the “sultans’ preachers” in our own time. And it becomes quite clear why the Shī’ahs turn away from his traditions: It is their answer to the Sunnis who exaggerate in accepting Abū Hurayra’s traditions, charging anyone who is critical of him.

In the book titled *Ikhtisār ‘Ulūm al-Hadīth* [summarizing the sciences of *hadīth*], Ibn Hanbal, Abū Bakr al-Hameedi and Abū Bakr al-Sayrafi are all quoted as having said, “We do not accept the narration of one who tells lies about the traditions of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) even if he repents thereafter.”[30] Al-Sam’āni has said, “One who tells a lie in one single narrative, all his previous narratives must be dropped.”[31]

Following we would like to display some of the “traditions” narrated by Abū Hurayra which al-Bukhāri has recorded in his *Sahīh*:

Let us start with Abū Hurayra claiming that Moses, peace be upon him, gouged the eye of the angel of death!!! Abū Hurayra has said, “The angel of death was sent to Moses, peace be on him. When he said to him [to accompany him], he pushed him back, so he [the angel] returned to his Lord and said, ‘You sent me to a servant who does not want to die.’

Allāh answered him by saying, ‘Go back to him and tell him to put his hand on the back of a bull, for then he will be granted for each hair one more year to live.’ He said, ‘Lord! What after that?’ Allāh said, ‘Death.’ He, therefore, asked Allāh to bring him close to the holy land the distance of a stone’s throw.”[32]

Abū Hurayra has said, “... It will be said to hell: ‘Are you now full?’ It will say, ‘Is there any more?’ It will then be the time when the Lord, Praised and Exalted is He, would put his foot on it, and it would say, ‘Now, only now, am I full.’”[33]

Abū Hurayra has said, “The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, ‘Our Lord, Praised and Exalted is He, descends every night to the lower heavens during the last third of the night and says, ‘Who is there to plead to me, so I shall grant him? Who is there to seek My forgiveness, so I shall forgive him?’”[34]

The latest narrative contradicts what the Sunnis believe of Allāh (ﷻ) firmly established on the ‘Arsh. His descending to the lower heavens of the night, as Abū Hurayra claims, implies His staying there for the 24 hours of the night and the day on account of the presence of another time of the night in another area

of the earth, in various places, since the earth is like a ball! Had Ab Hurayra known that the earth looks like a ball, would he have narrated “traditions” like these?!

Ab Hurayra has also said, “The Prophet ( ) said, ‘The Children of Israel used to bathe in the nude, so each one of them would look at the other, but Moses used to bathe by himself, so they said, ‘By All h! Nothing prohibits Moses from bathing with us except that he has no sexual organs.’ Moses went once to bathe. He put his garment on a rock. The rock rolled down, carrying his garment with it. Moses chased the rock saying, ‘Bring my garment back, O rock! Bring my garment back, O rock!’ till the Children of Israel saw Moses and said, ‘By All h! There is no harm in [the body of] Moses!’ He took his garment and started beating the rock [to discipline it!!!].’” Ab Hurayra went on to say, “By All h! He asked six or seven other [rocks] to beat that rock with him.”35

Ab Hurayra has also said, “The Messenger of All h ( ) said, ‘When the call for the prayers is made, Satan would then run away. He would keep farting so that the *adh n* may not be heard. When the call terminates, he returns till the prayer is held; it is then that he will run away again. Once it is over, he returns and so on. One would keep telling himself, ‘I remember such–and–such! I remember such–and–such [things or people, etc.]!’ He would keep telling himself like that till he does not know how he prayed.”36

In fact, the past “traditions” exist in the books of the Israelites which Ab Hurayra used to quote quite often. This was due to keeping company so much with Ka’b al–Ahbar, the Jew who pretended to have embraced Islam.

About entering Paradise, Ab Hurayra has narrates saying, “I heard the Messenger of All h ( ) say, ‘A group from among my nation will enter Paradise who are seventy thousand in number; their faces will shine like the moon.’ ‘Akk shah ibn Muhsin al–Asadi stood up and said, ‘O Messenger of All h! Do pray for me so that All h may let me be one of them!’ He ( ) said, ‘O Lord! Do let him be among them!’

Then a man from among the Ans r said, ‘O Messenger of All h! Do pray for me so that All h may let me be one of them!’ The Messenger of All h ( ) said, ‘‘Akk shah has already beaten you to it!’”37

Ab Hurayra also says, “While we were in the company of the Prophet ( ), when I was asleep, I saw myself [in a vision] in Paradise. I found a woman making her ablution beside a mansion. I inquired, ‘To whom does this mansion belong?’ They said, ‘To ‘Umar ibn al–Khatt b.’ I remembered then how jealous he is, so I fled away. ‘Umar wept and said, ‘I am jealous only for your own sake, O Messenger of All h!’”38

We would like to conclude Ab Hurayra’s “traditions” by citing some *fatwas* narrated about him and attributed to the Messenger of All h ( ) whom he quotes as having said, “If anyone looks inside your house without your permission, and if you threw a rock at him and gouged his eye, you will not then be blamed.”39

As for other “fatwas” from Ab□ Hurayra, one says that the Messenger of All□h (□) has said, “None of you should walk wearing only one single sandal. Let him wear them both or take them off both.”[40]

A Halt With Al-Bukh□ri In His Sah□h

It has become necessary to cast a look, though swift, at al-Bukh□ri’s *Sah□h* as the most accurate of all the books of *had□th* according to the Sunnis who, on one hand, believe in the authenticity of all what is narrated in it. On the other hand, it contains many narratives by Ab□ Hurayra and such a huge quantity of the narratives which cast doubt about the infallibility of the Prophet (□) in addition to other such narratives.

Al-Bukh□ri records*ah□d□th* which, according to him, are authentic from among 600,000 (six hundred thousand) traditions, as narrated about him. He himself has said, “I have not included in this book except what is authentic, and what I have not included of such authentic *ah□d□th* is even more numerous.”

The first objection which we have against al-Bukh□ri, the mentor, is his reliance on the “justice” of a series of traditionists as the *only* condition for fixing the authenticity of the narrated *had□th* and without considering its context, what meanings it contains, etc. This explains the presence of instability, error and contradiction in many narratives which he has recorded.

Even if the narrator is just, this does not stop him from forgetting a portion of one *had□th* which he had heard in addition to the possibility of his narrating the *had□th* according to its meaning, not in the wording which he had heard. This causes the *had□th* to lose some of its original wording which may have another meaning to which the narrator did not pay attention especially since the series of the narrators is so lengthy and may sometimes include seven or eight persons.

If we add the difficulty of verifying the “justice” of traditionists, especially the hypocrites from among them whose inner secrets are known only to the Lord of all, the greatest fault with al-Bukh□ri’s procedure in recording traditions becomes quite obvious. Underscoring this point, Ahmad Amin has said, “Some traditions whose traditions he recorded are not trustworthy. *Huff□z* (those who know the Qur’□n by heart) have deemed about eight [out of ten] of those quoted by al-Bukh□ri as weak.”[41]

Following are some of the traditions which al-Bukh□ri labels as “authentic” (*Sah□h*) and, as time passed by, the Sunnis adhered to their contents:

Ab□ Sa’□d al-Khudri is quoted as having said that the Messenger of All□h (□), with regard to Judgement Day, said the following, “... so they shall keep falling (into hell) till only those who used to worship All□h, be they righteous or sinners, remain, and it will be said to the latter, ‘What keeps you while all other people have gone?’ They will say, ‘We parted with him, and we this Day need such parting the most, and we heard a caller saying that all people should join those whom they used to worship; we, therefore, are waiting for our Lord.’

The Mighty One will come to them not in the form in which they saw Him the first time, and He will say, 'I am your Lord.' They will say, 'You are our Lord,' and only the prophets will speak to Him. One will ask them, 'Is there between yourselves and Him any sign whereby you *identify* Him?' They will say, 'It is the leg,' so He will unveil His leg, and every believer will prostrate to Him..."[42]

Jar□r ibn Abdull□h is quoted as having said, "One night, we were sitting with the Prophet (□). He looked at the moon when it was the fourteenth of the month and said, 'You shall see your Lord just as you see this [moon], and you shall not be blamed for seeing Him.'"[43]

Suffices to rebut these past two "traditions" what al-Bukh□ri himself records when he relies on the *isn□d* of Masruq who says, "I asked '□'isha, 'Mother [of the faithful]! Did Muhammad (□) ever see his Lord?' She said, 'My hair stood up on account of what you have said. Where do you stand with regard to three things which, if anyone mentions them to you, he lies? Whoever told you that Muhammad (□) saw his Lord lies. Then she recited the following verse:

'No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp encompasses all vision: He is above all comprehension, yet He is acquainted with all things' (***Qur'□n, 6:103***)***,'***

'It is not fitting for a man that All□h should speak to him except by inspiration, or from behind a veil or by sending a messenger to reveal, with God's permission, whatever All□h wills, for He is Most High, Most Wise' (***Qur'□n, 42:51***)***."***[44]

'All□ma al-'Askari says, "The verse saying,

'Some faces that Day will beam (***in brightness and beauty***)***, looking to their Lord'*** (***Qur'□n, 75:22***)

means they look in anticipation for the Command of their Lord [to be lodged in Paradise], that is, they are expecting it. It is like the context of the following verse about what the sons of Jacob who said to their father:

'Ask the town where we have been' (***Qur'□n, 12:82***)***,***

that is, 'Ask the people of the town.' Thus, interpreting the verses in the light of their outward meaning leads to All□h, the most Praised, the most Exalted One, has a body."[45]

Among the other Israelite concepts found in al-Bukh□ri's book is one narrated about Abdull□h saying, "A rabbi went to the Messenger of All□h (□) and said, 'O Muhammad! We find [in our books] how All□h will place the heavens on a finger, the trees on a finger, the water and the earth on a finger and all other creation on a finger, then He will say, 'I am the King!' The Prophet (□) laughed till his molar teeth became visible on account of testifying to the truth of what that rabbi had said. Then the Messenger of All□h (□) recited this verse:

'They did not estimate All□h as He deserves' (***Qur'□n, 6:91***)***."***[46]

[Abdull□h] Ibn ‘Umar is quoted as having said, “The Messenger of All□h (□) said, ‘If the sun’s arch comes out, abandon saying the prayers till the sun comes out [completely]. And when the sun’s arch sets, abandon the prayers till it sets, and do not time your prayers with the rising of the sun or with its setting, for it rises between both horns of the devil.’”47

I do not know how anyone can believe such superstitions!

Here is another from Ab□ Dharr al-Ghif□ri who is supposed to have said, “The Prophet (□), when the sun set, said to Ab□ Dharr, ‘Do you know where it went?’ I [Ab□ Dharr] said, ‘All□h and His Messenger know best.’ He (□) said, ‘It truly goes till it prostrates under the ‘Arsh. It will seek permission, and it will be granted permission, and it almost prostrates under the ‘Arsh, so it seeks permission, and it is granted permission.

And it almost prostrates, but it is not accepted from it. It seeks permission, and permission is not granted to it. It will be said to it, ‘Return from where you have come,’ so it rises from its setting place. This is a reference to this verse of the Almighty:

‘And the sun runs its course for a period determined for it: That is the decree of the One Exalted in might, the all-Knowing One’ (Qur’□n, 36:38).’”

‘Umar ibn al-Khattab is quoted as having said, “Have you not come to know that the deceased person is tormented by the living weeping over him?” despite this verse of the Almighty:

“No bearer of the burden (of sins) bears the burden of someone else” (Qur’□n, 17:15).

Abdull□h is quoted as having said, “The name of a man was pronounced in the presence of the Prophet (□). It was said that he kept sleeping till the morning and did not wake up for the prayers. The Prophet (□) said, ‘Satan urinated in his ears.’”48

J□bir ibn Abdull□h (al-Ans□ri) is quoted as having supposedly said, “Put lids over your pots, cover your drinks, close your doors and keep your children at home during the night, for the jinns spread and snatch. Put out the lamps when you go to bed, for the oil lamp’s tape may burn and may cause the house to burn.”49

We find this much of such narratives sufficient, and others are quite numerous, causing a large question mark to be placed before al-Bukh□ri and his *Sah□h*. The first that is based on our proving the error of the common claim that all what is recorded in this *Sah□h* is accurate is that any tradition in it deserves to be used as evidence simply because al-Bukh□ri granted it the adjective “authentic.”

We, therefore, have to cast a second look at the beliefs which were derived based on some of this book’s traditions such as the possibility of seeing All□h Almighty, His placing His foot in Hell, the infallibility of the Prophet (□) being incomplete, the Prophet (□) not memorizing the entire text of the Qur’□n, Moses gouging the eye of the Angel of Death and many, many such stuff which has occupied a

place of prominence and in which [some] people believe despite the doubts and superstitions which it carries and which can be used to level charges against the Islamic faith itself. The same applies to other books of *had□th* as well.

As a result, we are obligated to refer to our Islamic history and cast another look at a great deal of what al-Bukh□ri and other traditionists have narrated about the status of a *sah□bi*, be he this person or that, especially with the presence of the disputes among these *sah□bah* and which stirred a dissension the results of which are apparent in our own time: the presence of different sects which divided and weakened the Muslims.

1. Shaykh Muhammad Ab□ Zuhra, Al-Im□m al-S□diq (`a).
2. Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghaz□li, Dif□` an al-`Aqeeda wal Shar□`ah dhidd Mat□`in al-Mustashriqeen.
3. Muslim`s Sah□h as explained by al-Nawawi, Vol. 1, p. 14 (D□r al-Sha`ab edition).
4. Al-Tirmidhi, Sah□h, Vol. 13, p. 201 in the book dealing with the merits of the Family of the Prophet (□) (D□r al-Kit□b al-`Arabi).
5. Al-Bukh□ri, Sah□h, Vol. 9, p. 92 in the book of interpretation in a chapter about the Messenger of All□h (□) being the first to start it.
6. Ibid., Vol. 9, p. 932
7. Ibid., Vol. 9, p. 93.
8. Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 349 in the book of ath□n in a chapter about the Prophet (□) saying, "We have not prayed" to someone.
9. Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 168 in the book of ghusul in a chapter about when it is said at the mosque that one has jan□ba.
10. Ibid., Vol. 8, p. 48 in the book of manners in a chapter of what people may say.
11. Ibid., Vol. 8, p. 57 in the book of manners in a chapter about All□h enjoins justice and kindness.
12. Ibid., Vol. 7, p. 444 in the book of medicine in a chapter about magic.
13. Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 77 in the book about the virtues of the sah□bah in a chapter about the virtues of `□`isha.
14. Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 165 in the book of ghusul in a chapter about one cohabiting then doing it again and about one who cohabits with his women in one ghusul.
15. `All□ma Sayyid Muhammad Husayn al-Tabatabai, Tafs□r al-Mizan, Vol. 20, p. 203 (2nd edition), 1974 A.D.
16. Al-Bukh□ri, Sah□h, Vol. 6, p. 296 in the book of exegesis; Vol. 8, p. 170 in the book of seeking permission to enter.
17. Ibid., Vol. 7, p. 462 in the book of outfits in a chapter about wearing a garment.
18. Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 252, in the book of coffins.
19. Al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, Kanz al-`Umm□l, had□th No. 4404.
20. Ibid.
21. Al-Bukh□ri, Sah□h, Vol. 1, p. 86 in the book of knowledge.
22. Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 313 in the book of farming in a chapter about the horse.
23. Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 47 in the book of the virtues of the sah□bah in a chapter about the merits of Ja`fer ibn Ab□ T□lib.
24. Al-Tirmidhi, Sah□h, Vol. 13, p. 189 (D□r al-Kit□b al-`Arabi edition), Beirut, Lebanon. The compiler follows this statement by saying that its isn□d is authentic.
25. Muslim, Sah□h, Vol. 1, p. 201 in a chapter about one who says "There is God except All□h" out of firm belief enters Paradise.
26. Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghaz□li, Fiqh al-Seera, p. 41 (sixth edition).
27. Al-Bukh□ri, Sah□h, Vol. 9, p. 317 in the book of upholding the Book and the Sunnah in a chapter about what the Prophet (□) stated according to the agreement of people of knowledge.
28. Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 89 in the book of knowledge in a chapter about memorizing knowledge.
29. Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 88.
30. Ikhtis□r `Ul□m al-Had□th, p. 111.
31. Al-Nawawi, Al-Taqreeb, p. 14.

32. Al-Bukh□ri, Sah□h, Vol. 2, p. 236 in the book of coffins.
33. Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 353 in the book of exegesis in a chapter about the verse “Is there any more?”
34. Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 136 in the book of tahajjud.
35. Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 169 in the book of ghusul in a chapter about one who bathes isolated in the nude.
36. Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 336 in the book of ath□n in a chapter about the rewards of calling the ath□n.
37. Ibid., Vol. 7, p. 473 in the book of outfits in a chapter about the outer garments, mantles and towels.
38. Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 306 in the book of the beginning of creation in a chapter about the characteristics of Paradise.
39. Ibid., Vol. 9, p. 18 in the book of blood monies in a chapter about one who takes his own right or sought qis□s without having to refer to the sultan.
40. Ibid., Vol. 7, p. 496 in the book of outfits in a chapter about one who walks wearing one single sandal.
41. Ahmad Amin, Duha al-Islam, Vol. 2, pp. 117- 118.
42. Al-Bukh□ri, Sah□h, Vol. 9, p. 396 in the book of tawh□d in a chapter about “Faces that Day shall be fresh”.
43. Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 355 in the book of tafs□r in a chapter about the verse “... So celebrate your Lord`s praises” (Qur`□n, 20:130).
44. Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 359 in the book of tafs□r in a chapter about Surat al-Najm.
45. Al-`Askari, Ma`□lim al-Madrasatayn, Vol. 1, p. 31 (2nd edition).
46. Al-Bukh□ri, Sah□h, Vol. 6, p. 317 in the book of tafs□r in a chapter about “They did not estimate All□h as He deserves.”
47. Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 319 in the book about the beginning of creation (genesis) in a chapter about the characteristic of Iblis and his hosts.
48. Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 135 in the book of tahajjud.
49. Ibid., vo. 4, p. 336 in the book of the beginning of creation (genesis) in a chapter about “If flies fall into the drink of one of you, let him take it out with a piece of bread.”

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