

The Quantity of his Traditions

All those who collected the Hadith agreed unanimously that Abu Hurayra had narrated traditions more than any one else at all. ¹ They counted his traditions to find that they were five thousand and three hundred and seventy-four traditions. He had in al-Bukhari's Sahih only four hundred and forty-six traditions. ²

We found that all what was narrated by the four caliphs in comparison with Abu Hurayra's traditions was less than twenty-seven percent. Abu Bakr had narrated one hundred and forty-two traditions. ³ Omar had narrated five hundred and thirty-seven traditions. ⁴ All what Othman had narrated were one hundred and forty-six traditions. ⁵ And five hundred and eighty-six traditions were narrated from Imam 'Ali (a.s.) ⁶. So the total is one thousand and four hundred and eleven traditions, which if you compare to Abu Hurayra's traditions you will find the ratio exactly as we said.

Let any prudent one think of Abu Hurayra, the short period of his being a Muslim, his obscurity, his illiteracy and all what would make him be mean, then think of the four caliphs, their priority in Islam, their attendance during the legislation of the laws of Shari'ah, their braveries throughout fifty-two years; in twenty-three of them they were at the service of the Prophet (S.) and in twenty-nine of them, they governed the umma and mastered the other nations. They conquered the countries of Kasra and Caesar. They built towns and countries, spread Islam, and declared laws of Shari'ah and Sunna. So how would it be possible for Abu Hurayra, alone, to narrate so many times as much as they had narrated of the Prophet's (S.) traditions?

Also Abu Hurayra was not like Aa'isha, although she narrated too much. The Prophet (S.) had got married to her ten years before Abu Hurayra became a Muslim. ⁷ She was in the house where Allah (S.w.T.)'s inspiration was revealed to the Prophet (S.) and the place of coming and going of Gabriel and Michael for fourteen years. She died a little before Abu Hurayra's death. ⁸

What a difference between the two companionships and the two ones' acumen was! As to the companionship it was known. But as to acumen, her acumen competed with her hearing and her heart preceded her ears. She was very acute. Nothing happened to her unless she recited poetry about it. Orwa said that he had not seen anyone having more knowledge in jurisprudence, medicine, or poetry

than Aa'isha. Masrouq said that he had seen some of great companions asking her about religious duties.

She was forced to spread her traditions that she sent her callers to the countries and led that great army to Basra. And in spite of all that, her traditions were two thousand and two hundred and ten.⁹ So her traditions were less than a half of Abu Hurayra's traditions.

If you add Aa'isha's traditions to that of Um Salama (the Prophet's (S.) wife), who died after the death of Abu Hurayra in a long time, the rest of the Prophet's (S.) wives, Imam Hasan, Imam Hussayn, Fatima (the daughter of the Prophet) and the four caliphs, you find that they altogether were less than Abu Hurayra's traditions. This was a terrible thing! Let the prudent think of it.

Besides that, Abu Hurayra pretended that the Prophet (S.) had informed him alone of some traditions that he would never reveal to any one. He kept them inside his conscience and buried them in his chest. And as you know that Abu Hurayra had a well-fortified chest and an inscrutable conscience! So he said: "I had kept from the Prophet two vessels. I spread the first, but if I would spread the other, this throat would be cut."¹⁰

He said: "If I told you all what I knew, people would throw potteries at me and say: Abu Hurayra is mad."

He said: "If I told you all what I had in my chest, you would throw dung at me."

He said: "They say that Abu Hurayra told too many traditions. I swear by Allah (S.w.T.) that if I told you all what I had heard, you would throw dunghill at me and you would never debate with me."¹¹

He said: "I had memorized from the Prophet (S.) some traditions that I didn't tell you of. If I told you of them you would throw stones at me."¹²

He said: "I had memorized from the Prophet (S.) five bags of traditions. I told of two of them and if I told of the third, you would throw me with stones."¹³

Abu Hurayra was neither the Prophet's (S.) heir apparent nor the caliph after him to prefer to the others and tell him secrets and knowledge that he would not tell anyone of his close companions or relatives.

What was the use of telling him those secrets since he was a weak man with meanness that prevented him to say something of those secrets unless he would be thrown with stones, dung and trashes or that his throat would be cut?

Would it not be better for the Prophet to tell those secrets for the caliphs after him, who led people by one will and to whom the nations submitted and the necks of the Arabs and non-Arabs yielded? They were better than Abu Hurayra in doing that. If they had had those secrets, they would spread them throughout the countries like the rays of the sun. Far be it from the Prophet to do something in vain. Would he entrust Abu Hurayra with his secrets to be lost uselessly? And who was Abu Hurayra to be

singled out of the first Muslims?

(And the foremost are the foremost. These are they who are drawn nigh (to Allah (S.w.T.)))

50:10–11.

Abu Hurayra often said: “Abu Hurayra neither keeps secret nor writes down.”¹⁴ How did this saying agree with his saying: “I had memorized from the Prophet two vessels. I spread one of them. If I spread the other, this throat would be cut” and the other sayings having the same meaning that he kept secret?

Let us ask those, who research for the divine secrets that the Prophet (S.) entrusted Abu Hurayra with and that Abu Hurayra kept secret to preserve himself or to keep his dignity. Were those secrets of the kind of secrets that the Prophet (S.) entrusted his guardian Imam Ali (a.s.) with? Did they concern the caliphate and caliphs after him? Were they of another kind? If they were of the first kind, why would Abu Hurayra turn away from them and contradict them completely? His opinion would be like all the other Muslims’ opinion for he was just one person among the others. But if those secrets were of another kind, he would not refrain from telling offensive and disgraceful traditions!

Did he not narrate that the Prophet slept and missed the Fajr prayer? And that the Satan came to him to disturb his prayers?

Didn’t he narrate that once the Prophet forgot and offered a two section prayer instead of four and when they asked him:

Did you forget or restrict the prayer? He answered: I neither forgot nor restricted?

Did he not tell that the Prophet hurt, abused, cursed and whipped innocent people just because he became angry?

Did he not ascribe to the apostles many things that were impossible for them to commit according to the Shari’ah and reason? He narrated that Prophet Muhammad (S.) had said: “We are worthier than Abraham to be in doubt.” He also narrated that Prophet Lot’s trust in Allah (S.w.T.) was not certain.

Did he not dare to defame Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, who must be honored?

Did he not ascribe to Moses that he had slipped the angel of death and gouged his eye? And that once Prophet Moses ran nakedly in front of the Israelites, who looked at his private parts?

Did he not narrate that Solomon (a.s.), the son of David (a.s.), had broken the verdict of his father? And that he refused to say inshAllah (S.w.T.), so his deed failed?

Did he not ascribe to Allah (S.w.T.) what could never be accepted neither by the Shari’ah nor by reason? He said that Hell will not be full, unless Allah (S.w.T.) puts His leg in it. In his tradition about the Day of Resurrection, he said that Allah (S.w.T.) comes to people in an image different from that which they know saying to them: “I am your god.” They say: “Allah (S.w.T.) forbid!” Then He comes to them in

the image, which they know! They say: “You are our god.” Abu Hurayra said that Adam was created in an image like the image of the Beneficent (Allah (S.w.T.))! And that Allah (S.w.T.) had created Adam like His image. He was sixty cubits long and seven cubits wide.

You will find many many of his wonders in the next chapter which cause to cut the throat, so why he told of them easily? In fact he narrated those traditions as if he had done people a favor. He told of superstitions but no one threw at him a stone, dung, or trash as it was clear for any one knew him. But we are afflicted with unjust people and we do not have save Allah (S.w.T.) to resort to.

We want to draw the prudent researchers’ attention that Abu Hurayra said¹⁵: “No one have narrated traditions from the Prophet (S.) more than I have, except Abdullah bin Amr bin al-Aass, because he wrote down but I didn’t.”

He confessed that Abdullah bin Amr had narrated traditions more than he had. We researched on Abdullah’s traditions and we found that they were no more than seven hundred.¹⁶ So they were less than one seventh in comparison with Abu Hurayra’s traditions.

The researchers were very confused how to excuse Abu Hurayra in this contradiction. But Ibn Hajar al-Qastalani and sheikh Zakariya al-Ansari found an excuse when they explained this tradition in their books¹⁷ that Abdullah bin Amr bin al-Aass lived in Egypt and those, who went to Egypt, were very few, therefore he narrated a little of his traditions, while Abu Hurayra lived in Medina, which was the destination of Muslims from everywhere, so his traditions were so many.

Abu Hurayra’s saying was clear to abort this excuse. He acknowledged that no one had narrated traditions from the Prophet (S.) more than he had except Abdullah bin Amr. The man, himself, confessed that Abdullah’s traditions were more than his so there was no way for the excuse of the two authors.

The great position and respect Abdullah bin Amr had in Egypt were a good cause to let him narrate his many traditions. There was no one else than him in Egypt, whom people knew very well, except some very few companions or travelers. So he was the only expert in the Qur’an, the Shari’ah and the Sunna that people resorted to. What a difference between his position in Egypt and Abu Hurayra’s position in Medina was! For Abdullah had the rank of the veracious jurisprudent and the glory of the conqueror’s son in the Egyptians’ hearts, where Abu Hurayra, in Medina, was just one of thousands of the Prophet’s (S.) companions.

The delegations visiting Medina went to the famous great companions, whom Abu Hurayra was not one of. Also he was accused of narrating too much many traditions from the Prophet (S.). People of Medina often blamed him by saying: “Why didn’t the Muhajireen and the Ansar narrate as much as his traditions.”¹⁸ His position in Medina would not let him narrate so many traditions. It was unbelievable that his traditions were more than Abdullah’s; especially after his confession that Abdullah’s traditions were more than his. In addition that Abdullah bin Amr lived long after Abu Hurayra’s death.¹⁹

In fact Abu Hurayra confessed of that at the beginning after the Prophet's (S.) death, when he was not so excessive in narrating traditions. He became so excessive during the reign of Mu'awiya where there was neither Abu Bakr, Omar, Ali nor any one of the great companions whom Abu Hurayra feared.

- [1.](#) Refer to the last line of page 240, vol. 4 of Ibn Hajar's book al-Issaba which included the book al-Issti'ab in the margins.
- [2.](#) Refer to al-Qastalani's book Irshad as-Sari, vol. 1, pg. 212, the explanation of the first tradition of Abu Hurayra mentioned by al-Bukhari in his Sahih, you will find that Abu Hurayra had narrated from the Prophet (S.) 5374 traditions and that he had in al-Bukhari's Sahih 446 traditions. Ibn Hazm in his book al-Milal wen-Nihal vol. 4, pg. 138, said that Abu Hurayra had narrated 5374 traditions.
- [3.](#) It was mentioned by as-Sayouti in his book Tareekh al-Khulafa' (the history of the caliphs), an-Nawawi in his book at-Tahtheeb. Ibn Hazm in his book al-Milal wen-Nihal, vol. 4, pg. 137 and ath-Thahabi in his book Mizan al-I'tidal, who said that the true traditions of Abu Bakr were less than twenty.
- [4.](#) As-Sayouti said in his book Tareekh al-Khulafa' that Omar's traditions were five hundred and thirty-nine. Ibn Hazm mentioned in his book al-Milal wen-Nihal, vol. 4, pg. 138 the same number and said that the true traditions of Omar were nearly fifty traditions.
- [5.](#) Jalaluddin as-Sayouti in his book tareekh al-Khulafa'.
- [6.](#) As-Sayouti, Tareekh al-Khulafa' (Ali's biography). Ibn Hazm in his book al-Milal wen-Nihal, vol. 4, pg. 137.
- [7.](#) Ibn Abdil-Birr said in his book al-Isstee'ab that the Prophet (S.) had got married to Aa'isha in the tenth year after his prophecy -three years before hijra- so her marriage was before Abu Hurayra being a Muslim in ten years because he became Muslim in the seventh year of hijra.
- [8.](#) She died in fifty-seven of hijra before Abu Hurayra's death in a short time. Abu Hurayra offered the prayer for her- the prayer for the dead- by order of al-Waleed bin Otba bin Abu Sufyan, who was made wali of Medina by his uncle Mu'awiya. He wanted to honor Abu Hurayra by that. Aa'isha was buried in Baqee'.
- [9.](#) Ibn Hazm's book al-Milal wen-Nihal, vol. 4, pg. 138.
- [10.](#) Al-Bukhari's Sahih, vol. 1 chapter of "Knowledge", section on "Memorizing Knowledge", pg. 24.
- [11.](#) The three previous traditions were mentioned by Ibn Sa'd in his book Tabaqat, vol. 4, pg. 57.
- [12.](#) Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak, vol. 3, pg. 509, ath-Thahabi in his Talkheess. What a dignity Abu Hurayra had! He said:..you would throw at me stones, potteries, dunghill. And when he said about himself:... the comers put their feet on my neck.. and when he talked about his stomach, lice and his other affairs.
- [13.](#) Abu Na'eem, Hilyatul-Awliya', pg. 381 (biography of Abu Hurayra).
- [14.](#) Ibn Sa'd's Tabaqat, vol. 2, pg. 119.
- [15.](#) A tradition narrated by Wahab bin Munabbih from his brother Humam from Abu Hurayra, mentioned in al-Bukhari's Sahih, vol. 1 chapter of "Knowledge", section on writing knowledge, pg. 22.
- [16.](#) Al-Qastalani's book Irshad as-Sari fee Sharh Sahih al- Bukhari, vol. 1, pg. 373.
- [17.](#) Al-Qastalani's Irshad as-Sari and Zakariya's Tuhfatul-Bari. They were printed together in twelve volumes. You will find this excuse in vol. 1, pg. 373.
- [18.](#) Muhajireen (emigrants): the first Muslims of Mecca who emigrated to Medina. Ansar (helpers and assistants): the people of Medina who believed in the prophet and assisted him and his companions.
- [19.](#) Abu Hurayra died, as it was mentioned in al-Issaba of Ibn Hajar, in fifty-seven or fifty-eight of hijra and it was said fifty-nine. Abdullah died, according to the same reference, in sixty-five or sixty-eight or sixty-nine of hijra. Al-Qaysarani said in his book Rijal-as-Sahihayn that he had died in ninety-two. Allah (S.w.T.) is the most aware.

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