

220074 - Doubts about the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) and a response to those doubts

the question

In Kitaab as-Sunnah by Ibn Abi 'Aasim it is narrated that Imam 'Ali said: No man will be brought to me who gives me precedence over Abu Bakr and 'Umar but I shall flog him with the hadd punishment of one who fabricates lies. If Imam 'Ali himself acknowledged that Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) were more deserving of the caliphate than him, then why did he, along with some other Sahaabah, refuse to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr as the caliph? With regard to the second matter, it is when 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan (may Allah be pleased with him) beat 'Ammar ibn Yaasir (may Allah be pleased with him) twice: once because he disagreed with 'Uthmaan openly in the mosque about 'Uthmaan's right to use of the (public) wealth of the Muslims, and he beat him in the presence of 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib, and the second occasion was when he delivered a message to 'Uthmaan from his opponents, telling him that he had failed to follow the example set by the caliphates of Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them). Did 'Ali see 'Ammar being beaten without doing anything? How sound are such claims?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

I.

The Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) – even though they are the best of people – were also human, and there occurred among them that which usually occurs among people of disputes and differences of opinion. But they were the swiftest of people in doing good, and they were the foremost in knowledge of the truth, acting upon it and the swiftest to acknowledge and correct

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their mistakes, if one of them made a mistake, like any other human.

What is required of anyone who is accountable is to refrain from discussing the differences that arose among the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) and to think positively of every one of them.

Where could you find any people who are better than those who accompanied the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), migrated with him, strove with him in jihad, and prayed behind him?

See the answer to question no. [127028](#).

II.

It was narrated by 'Abdullah ibn Ahmad in as-Sunnah (1312), Ibn Abi 'Aasim in as-Sunnah (1219) and al-Bayhaqi in al-I'tiqaad (p. 358) that 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib said: No one gives me precedence over Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) but I shall flog him with the hadd punishment of one who fabricates lies.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It is proven via many isnads from 'Ali that he said: No man will be brought to me who gives me precedence over Abu Bakr and 'Umar but I shall flog him with the hadd punishment of one who fabricates lies.

End quote from Majmoo' al-Fataawa (4/479).

He also said:

It was narrated from 'Ali via approximately eighty isnaads or more that he said on the minbar of Kufah: The best of this ummah after its Prophet are Abu Bakr and 'Umar.

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End quote from Majmoo' al-Fataawa (4/407).

III.

It is proven in as-Saheehayn that 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib swore allegiance to Abu Bakr, even though it was delayed by a few months.

'Ali did not show any disagreement towards Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) or express any disapproval of the caliphate of Abu Bakr, and never expressed any dissent. Rather he delayed giving his allegiance to Abu Bakr. The reason for that was that he objected to Abu Bakr, 'Umar and others among the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) deciding the matter of the caliphate without him, despite his virtue, honour and high status, for he had the right to be present and be consulted about the matter, and that no decision should be taken without him.

The excuse that the Sahaabah gave was that they had hastened to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr so as to ward off fitnah and turmoil in the Muslim community, because they feared that disputes and conflicts might arise if they delayed it.

Another reason for the delay [in 'Ali swearing allegiance to Abu Bakr] was the fact that Faatimah (may Allah be pleased with her) got angry with Abu Bakr's response to her when she asked him about her inheritance (from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)), and 'Ali thought that he should show sympathy to her by staying away from Abu Bakr, especially since she was going through sorrow, distress and grief at the passing of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) did not refuse to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him); rather he delayed doing so for the reasons mentioned above. Then he came and swore allegiance to him without being forced to do so.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

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It is known via tawaatur reports that no one held back from swearing allegiance to him – namely Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq (may Allah be pleased with him) – except Sa’d ibn ‘Ubaadah. As for ‘Ali and Banu Haashim, all of them swore allegiance to him, according to consensus, and none of them died until after swearing allegiance to him. But it was said that ‘Ali delayed swearing allegiance to him for six months, or that he swore allegiance to him on the second day. Whatever the case, they swore allegiance to him without being forced to do so.

End quote from Minhaaj as-Sunnah (8/232).

See also the answer to question no. [147540](#).

IV.

It is not proven that ‘Uthmaan beat ‘Ammar (may Allah be pleased with them both), let alone that ‘Ali saw that and did not object. All of the reports that have been narrated concerning that are not sound in their isnaads (chains of narration).

Ibn Shabbah said in Taareekh al-Madinah (3/1098):

Al-Qaasim ibn al-Fudayl told us: ‘Amr ibn Murrah told me, from Saalim ibn Abi’l-Ja’d, who said: ‘Uthmaan (may Allah be pleased with him) called some of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), among whom was ‘Ammar, and said: I am going to ask you something; I adjure you by Allah, do you know that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to give precedence to Quraysh over all other people, and he used to give precedence to Banu Haashim over the rest of Quraysh? The people remained silent, so he said: If the keys of Paradise were in my hand, I would give them to Banu Umayyah so that all of them, to the last man, would enter it. By Allah, I would surely give to them and appoint them (to positions of authority), in spite of you. ‘Ammar said: In spite of me? ‘Uthmaan said: In spite of you. ‘Ammar said: And in spite of Abu Bakr and ‘Umar? ‘Uthmaan (may Allah be pleased with him) got

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angry and leapt up, and started to beat him severely, and the people intervened and pushed him away from 'Ammar.

This is a da'eef (weak) isnad. Saalim ibn Abi'l-Ja'd did not hear [reports] from 'Uthmaan. Al-Haafiz al-'Alaa'i (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Saalim ibn Abi'l-Ja'd al-Kufi is well known; he narrated many mursal reports from the senior Sahaabah such as 'Umar, 'Ali, 'Aa'ishah, Ibn Mas'ood and others (may Allah be pleased with them). Abu Zar'ah said: [Reports narrated by] Saalim ibn Abi'l-Ja'd from 'Umar, 'Uthmaan and 'Ali are mursal.

End quote from Jaami' at-Tahseel (p. 179)

Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi said in al-'Aqd al-Fareed (5/57):

In a hadith narrated by al-A'mash from Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah, he said: The companions of 'Uthmaan wrote down his mistakes on a page and wrote down people's criticisms of him. They said: Who will take this to him? 'Ammar said: I will. So he took it to him, and when he read it he [Uthmaan] said: May Allah cause your disgrace. 'Ammar said: And Abu Bakr and 'Umar too? 'Uthmaan stood up and beat him until he fell unconscious. Then 'Uthmaan regretted it, and he sent Talhah and az-Zubayr to him to say to him: Choose one of three: either forgive me, or accept compensation for the injury, or retaliate in kind [qisas]. 'Ammar said: By Allah, I will not accept any of them until I meet Allah! Abu Bakr [ibn Abi Shaybah, the narrator of this report] said: I mentioned this hadith to al-Hasan ibn Saalih, and he said: 'Uthmaan could not have done more than he did (to seek reconciliation).

This is a da'eef (weak) isnad, like the previous report. Al-A'mash is regarded as being among the junior Taabi'een; he was born too late to have met 'Uthmaan or 'Ali or 'Ammar.

See: Mizaan al-I'tidaal (2/224) and at-Tahdheeb (4/196).

In fact, Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, who quoted this report in his book, did not trace its isnad back to al-

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A'mash. As it is possible that this report may be traced to someone who comes before al-A'mash [in the chain of narration], it is also possible that it may be traced to someone who comes after him, whom Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi omitted between Ibn Abi Shaybah and al-A'mash.

Ibn Abi Bakr al-Maaliqi said: If it is said that 'Uthmaan (may Allah be pleased with him) beat 'Ammar, it should be pointed out that this is not proven. Even if it could be proven, the imam (ruler) has the right to discipline some of his subjects, as he sees fit, even if he is mistaken.

Do you not see that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) allowed people to settle scores with him. Similarly, Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) disciplined some of their subjects slapping and hitting with a stick, and they allowed others to settle the score with them.

If someone says that 'Uthmaan did not allow anyone to settle a score with him,

It should be said to him: How can that be true, when he made offers to that effect in an unprecedented manner, especially when he was under siege in his house, when he said: O people, if you find in the Book of Allah that you should put my feet in fetters, then do so."

End quote from Shubuhaat hawla as-Sahaabah: Dhu'n-Noorayn 'Uthmaan (p. 144).

There are sounder reports which contradict that. It was narrated by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his Musannaf (7/521) and Ibn Shabbah in Taareekh al-Madinah (3/1101), via Husayn ibn 'Abd ar-Rahmaan who said: Juhaym, a man from Banu Fihr, told me: I witnessed this event. He said: Sa'd and 'Ammar came and sent word to 'Uthmaan, saying: Please come; we want to remind you of something novel that you introduced, or things that you did. He sent word to them telling them: Leave for today, because I am busy; your appointment is on such and such a day.

So Sa'd left, but 'Ammar refused to leave.

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So 'Uthmaan's messenger grabbed him and beat him.

When they and those who were with them gathered at the appointed time, 'Uthmaan said to them: What grievances do you have against me?

They said: Our grievance is your beating of 'Ammaar.

'Uthmaan said: Sa'd and 'Ammaar came, and I sent word to them, then Sa'd left but 'Ammaar refused to leave, so a messenger grabbed him and beat without me instructing him to do that. By Allah, I did not give any instruction to that effect and I am not pleased with it. This is my hand for 'Ammaar; let him retaliate.

There is nothing wrong with this isnad, and its men are thiqaat (trustworthy). Juhaym is a Taabi'i from whom two trustworthy narrators narrated, and he was classed as trustworthy by Ibn Hibbaan, so his hadith may reach the level of hasan.

This report is the soundest of those that were narrated about 'Uthmaan beating 'Ammaar.

Conclusion:

It is not proven that 'Uthmaan beat 'Ammaar in the first place, let alone any notion that he beat him in the presence of 'Ali and that 'Ali remained silent and did not defend him. What is required of us is to acknowledge the high status of the companions of our Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), to love them and defend them.

It is not permissible to rely on everything that has been narrated in the books of history, except for that which is proven to be sound. How good are the words of Ibn Khaldoon:

How often the historians, mufasssireen and narrators of reports make mistakes in the stories they narrate, because their method is mere transmission of reports, whether sound or unsound, without examining these reports and their chains of narration, and comparing them to other, similar

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reports, and without examining them in the light of reason and in the light of human nature. Thus they drifted away from the path of truth and fell into grievous mistakes and errors.

And Allah knows best.