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رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ
فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ
فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ كَرَزَعٍ أُخْرِجَ شَطَأُهُ فَازَرَهُ فَاسْتَعْلَطَ فَاسْتَوَى عَلَى سَوْقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ
الْكُفَّارَ وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

Muhammad is the messenger of Allāh, and those who are with him are hard on the disbelievers, compassionate among themselves; you will see them bowing down in rukū‘, prostrating themselves in sajdah, seeking grace from Allāh, and (His) good pleasure; their distinguishing feature is on their faces from the effect of prostration. This is their description in the Torah; and their description in the Injil is: like a sown crop that brings forth its shoot, then makes it strong, then it grows thick and stands straight on its stem, looking good to the farmers, so that He may enrage the disbelievers through them. Allāh has promised forgiveness and a huge reward to those of them who believe and do good deeds.

[Sūrah al Fath (the Victory) 48:29]

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

All praise is due to Allāh ﷻ who has blessed us with Islām. Peace and salutations be upon our noble leader and master, Muhammad ﷺ. May the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ be upon the noble companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ for eternity.

During the mammoth task of translating the work '*Tārīkh e Millat*' we have come across various historical narrations that apparently seem to belittle the status of the saḥābah ﷺ. This caused great distress and confusion since seeing that our belief in the great position of the saḥābah ﷺ needs no emphasis. Upon the counsel given by Maulānā 'Abdullāh Amejī, this book was translated. It clarifies every doubt that can arise regarding the historical narrations about the saḥābah ﷺ; reading and understanding it will ensure that our stance in this matter is clear.

This work is an absolute masterpiece, written by a grand scholar who needs no introduction. Muftī Muḥammad Shaḥīd ﷺ has discussed the position of history in Islām, its importance, the narrations regarding the differences amongst the saḥābah ﷺ and what should our stance be in such a superb manner that it would be extremely rare to find a book discussing this subject that can stand parallel to it. May Allāh ﷻ reward him with the greatest of rewards. *Āmīn*

Every Muslim, scholar or layman, is urged to read this book with an open heart and mind and affirm his belief regarding the saḥābah ﷺ. In today's time, we are faced

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with a load of baseless fabrications from certain circles whose purpose is to undermine the great and lofty status of the saḥābah ﷺ. In reality, this is an attack on the foundation of Islām because the saḥābah ﷺ played the greatest role in conveying Islām to the rest of the world.

In this translation, we have tried to the best of our ability to convey the true purport of the author. If we have erred, we seek forgiveness from Allāh ﷻ. We have left out the Arabic texts quoted by the author due to them becoming cumbersome for the average Muslim reader. May Allāh accept this work with complete sincerity and save us from the evil of our shallow words and deeds. *Āmīn*

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

Our Rabb, accept (this service) from us. Indeed, You - and You alone - are the All Hearing, the All Knowing. [Sūrah al Baqarah (the Cow) 2:127]

‘Abdullāh Moolla
Madrasah ‘Arabia Islāmia, Azaadville
13 Jumād al Ukhrā 1434
24 April 2013

FOREWORD

With the praise of Allāh ﷻ, we have the great fortune of presenting the freshly prepared treatise ‘*Maqām e Sahābah* ﷺ’ of Muftī Muḥammad Shafī ﷺ. This book deals with a subject that has become contentious in our time. Besides the *shī’a* and the *ahl us sunnah*, there are different groups among the *ahl us sunnah* themselves that have resorted to extremism regarding this subject. Moreover, the general calamity of the research of the Orientalists has made it worse.

In his special way, Hadrat Muftī Sāhib ﷺ has discussed this matter in the light of research and in an advisory way; he has thrown light on such angles of the subject which were unique until now. In this book, you will find a mixture of his knowledge, intelligence and great love which is a specialty of the *ahl us sunnah*. It is hoped that *inshā allāh*, this book will remove many thorns of doubts and misgivings from the hearts.

واللهُ الموفق والمعين

Muḥammad Rafī ‘Uthmānī
Dār ul ‘Ulūm Karachi



INTRODUCTION

الحمد لله عدد كلماته وزنة عرشه ورضى نفسه والصلوة والسلام على خير خلقه وصفوة رسله
محمد وآله وصحبه الذين هم النجوم المهتدى بهم والقدوة والاسوة في معاني القرآن والسنة وهم
الأدلاء على الصراط المستقيم بعد رسوله صلى الله عليه وسلم ، أما بعد ،

The name of the treatise before you is ‘*Maqām e Sahābah*’. This is so that it should be known from the onset that this is not a book on the virtues and status of the *sahābah* ﷺ. With the praise of Allāh, there are hundreds of books in every language present on this subject. Moreover, there are many chapters on this subject in all the books of *hadīth*. The rank of the *sahābah* ﷺ is very high. The virtues, characteristics, and incidents of the lives of the general pious people of the *ummah* serve as a prescription in order to show the straight path and create a religious revolution in a person’s life. However, this is not the subject matter of this treatise. Similarly, we learn from the title that this is not a history book in which the good and bad conditions of people are discussed and in which someone is called a pious person and someone a sinner or oppressor due to the abundant or brief mention of conditions (of the people).

After the *ambiyā’*, not even the ‘perfect’ person in the world was free from error. In a similar vein, the worst of the people in the world are not void of some good deed. The

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matter will be judged on this point that the person who spent his life doing good deeds and showing noble character, his truthfulness and sincerity will be recognized from his actions. If he happens to commit a sin or a mistake, then too he is counted among the pious of the *ummah*. Similarly, he who spent his life generally in not following the limits and boundaries of religion, if he does a few good deeds, in fact, many good deeds, then too he will not be counted in the group of the pious and the friends of Allāh ﷺ.

The work of history is only to explain the incidents of history with reliability. What are the results of these incidents and what will be the worldly and religious rank of a person in the light of these incidents? This is something separate from the field of history; it could be called *Fiqh ut Tārīkh*, not *Tārīkh*.

Then, this *Fiqh ut Tārīkh*, regarding the individuals and groups generally in the world, is based on historical incidents; and every person who knows the science of history can draw such conclusions, according to his thought and understanding.

In *Maqām e Sahābah* ﷺ I want to show that the companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ are not like the general people of the world, in this way that a decision regarding their rank can be made based only on historical narrations and their biographies (narrated by history) - [T]. But the *sahābah* ﷺ refer to such a noble group that were a means/intermediary between Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the

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ummah. Without this means/intermediary, the *ummah* would not have been able to touch the *Qur'ān*, nor those subjects of the *Qur'ān* which the *Qur'ān* left to the explanation of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. 'So that you explain to the people what has been revealed for them' [Sūrah an Nahl (the Honey Bee) 16:44] No one would have acquired knowledge of *risālat* and its teachings without this means.

They were the life companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. They held his teachings in greater honour than the entire world, their families, and their children. They sacrificed their lives, and spread his message throughout the world. Their biographies are a part of the biography of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. They are not recognized from history works, like the rest of the world, but from the texts of the *Qur'ān*, *Hadīth* and *Sīrah* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. They have a special place in Islām and in the law of Islām. In this treatise, called *Maqām e Sahābah* ﷺ, I want to show this rank of theirs.

The need and necessity for it was felt for a long time, but there was no strong desire for it to be written that could delay other work. It has come when this lowly one is 76 years of age. There is a chain of different types of sicknesses. There was no knowledge and practice from before. Now, whatever little was being done is slowly bidding farewell.

In these conditions, the cause of this strong desire were some present-day incidents which occurred. All know that from the deviated groups of the *ummah*, one sect came about in the era of the *sahābah* ﷺ. They were insolent

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regarding the saḥābah ﷺ and based on this, the general ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ cut themselves off from them. However, the general groups of the ummah, especially the majority, known by the name of *ahl us sunnah wal jamā'ah*, are unanimous on the special rank, honour and nobility of the saḥābah ﷺ. They refrain from making these great personalities the target of their criticism. They regard it to be great disrespect. In rulings, when two saḥābah ﷺ have two opposing views that cannot be practised upon concurrently, then adopting one through *shar'ī ijtihād* is one matter. Making a person the target of criticism is another matter altogether.

THE CALAMITY OF 'RESEARCH'

However, in this time, from the good and evil coming through from Europe into the Islāmic countries, one of these things is research and criticism. Research and criticism is not something bad in itself. The Noble *Qur'ān* has itself called towards it. In *Sūrah Furqān*, under the title of, "Ibād ur Raḥmān", amongst the qualities of the pious servants of Allāh that are mentioned, one of them is,

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَجْرُوا عَلَيْهَا صَمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا

And those who, when they are reminded of the verses of their Rabb, do not fall at them as deaf and blind ones. [Sūrah al Furqān (the Criterion) 25:73]

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What this means is that the pious servants of Allāh ﷺ do not fall like the deaf and blind before the divine verses, but they understand well and practice with foresight.

However, Islām has stipulated limits for everything and for every deed. Staying within these limits, whatever is done will be taken as accepted and beneficial. Whatever is done by breaking the boundaries and the principles is counted as corruption.

WHICH RESEARCH IS COMMENDABLE?

In research and criticism, the first thing that is looked at, as an Islāmic principle, is that one's strength and time should not be spent in researching that which has no benefit for one's religious and worldly life. Research for the sake of research is a useless and baseless activity in Islām. Rasūlullāh ﷺ strongly emphasized that this should be abandoned, especially if it is some research and criticism which will cause *fitnah* and fighting in the world. Research and criticism of this type is like for example, an able son goes into researching whether the person he calls 'father', is he his son in reality or not? He then researches every aspect of his mother's life.

In order to criticize someone, Islām has stipulated a few just and wise principles and it did not permit anyone to say what he likes, against whomever he wants. This is not the place to discuss the details of it; the books of *Jarh* and *Ta'dīl*, in the science of *hadīth*, deals with this.

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However, the research that comes from Europe means free criticism, without any conditions. Respect, honour, and considering limits are things that have no meaning in it.

Regrettably, many writers today have been affected by this new manner of criticism.

It is understood to be service to knowledge and being the sign of a researcher to make great luminaries the target of criticism without any *dīnī* or worldly need. This has been happening from a long time to the luminaries of the *ummah* and to the *imāms* of *dīn*, and now it has increased and has reached the *sahābah* ﷺ. There are many of those who call themselves *ahl us sunnah wal jamā'ah* who have made research into the *sahābah* ﷺ and criticizing them the best place for their research and expertise.

Some people, on one side, have made *Hadrat 'Alī* ﷺ and his progeny, in fact, the entire *Banū Hāshim*, a target of criticism in support of *Hadrat Mu'āwiyah* ﷺ and his son *Yazīd*. In this, leave alone honour and respect for the *sahābah* ﷺ, they broke all the boundaries of the just and wise laws of *Islām* that relate to criticism. On the other hand, others have lifted the pen and have criticized *Hadrat Mu'āwiyah* ﷺ, *Hadrat 'Uthmān* ﷺ and their companions in the same way.

The youth who have recently studied and are ignorant of the knowledge of *dīn* and the etiquettes of *dīn* have this adoration for the new civilization coming from Europe. They have been affected by this and their mouths

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have begun to be free with criticism of the sahābah ﷺ in their circles. The saḥābah ﷺ - who are the intermediaries in between Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the ummah - are portrayed to be in the ranks of the general world leaders - those who fight for power, deviate, and destroy others for their power. The group that curses the saḥābah ﷺ is known for their standing as a deviated group. The general Muslim is not affected by their talk, but hates them. However, this *fitnah* has spread amongst those people who call themselves *ahl us sunnah wal jamā'ah*. It is apparent, that, if, Allāh forbid, the Muslims lose their reliance on the sahābah ﷺ, then they will have no reliance on the *Qur'ān*, or on the *hadīth*, or on any principle of the religion of Islām. What else can be the result of this besides open irreligiousness?

This was the cause that forced me to lift the pen in these conditions and write on this subject. And Allāh is the Helper and upon Him we rely.

THE ORIGINAL CAUSE OF MISUNDERSTANDING

In this era, the signs of Islām are being openly disgraced throughout the world and obscenity, nakedness, consuming *harām*, murder and mutual fighting amongst Muslims are spreading at the speed of a hurricane, and the enemies of Islām are attacking Islām in all places. In this time, why do these researchers understand it to be a great service to Islām to resurrect corpses and sleeping *fitnahs*? Leaving this subject aside, in *Maqām e Sahābah* ﷺ, I want to indicate

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towards that which became a cause for their error. Then, through their action, they became a means for many people falling into error regarding rulings of *dīn*.

The matter is that they have looked at the *sahābah* ﷺ in the light of historical narrations to be like general people of the *ummah*. Whatever conclusion they reached by studying authentic and debated narrations, they stipulated that rank for these great luminaries. They weighed the actions and deeds of the *sahābah* ﷺ based on this.

The outstanding rank which the texts of the *Qur'ān*, *Sunnah* and the agreed upon belief of the *ummah* has given to the *sahābah* ﷺ has been overlooked. The outstanding specialty of the *sahābah* ﷺ is that the *Qur'ān* states regarding all of them that Allāh ﷻ is pleased with them and they are pleased with Allāh ﷻ. It (the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*) has announced their position in *Jannah* and majority of the *ummah* have classified their personalities to be exempt from criticism. In their different views and rulings for us to practice, to give preference to one and leaving the other, within the framework of *ijtihād* and the *sharī'ah*, is a separate matter altogether. Whoever's way/ruling is left; his being is not harmed or criticized in any way. In addition, it is not against etiquette to do this because it is obligatory to practice on the laws of *sharī'ah* and when there are two opposing views, it is impossible to practice on both. Therefore, in order to fulfil a *sharī* obligation, one has to choose one view on condition that the slightest disrespect or insolence is not shown regarding the second person.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY AND ITS RANK

It has been explained above that it is not correct to judge the noble saḥābah ﷺ, their personalities and to stipulate their rank based only on historical narrations. This is because they hold a special position in the light of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* because of being the medium between Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the *ummah*. History does not have such a rank, which based on it; this status could be lowered or increased. The meaning of this can never be understood to be that the science of history is totally unreliable and useless (the need and importance of it in Islām will be clarified later), but the reality is that belief and reliance has various stages.

In Islām, the rank of the belief and reliance that is placed on the *Qur'ān* and *Mutawātir Ahādīth*, that (belief and reliance) is not in the general *Ahādīth*. The rank of the statements of the saḥābah ﷺ is not that of the *Ahādīth* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Similarly, the rank of the belief and reliance on historical narrations is not the same as that of the *Qur'ān*, *Sunnah* or statements of the Saḥābah ﷺ proven through an authentic chain of narration.

However, just as if there is a purport of a *Ghayr Mutawātir Hadīth* in (apparent) contradiction to the text of the *Qur'ān*, then it will be compulsory to interpret it (make *ta'wīl*), or if the interpretation is not understood, then it will be compulsory to leave that *Hadīth* out, the one which contradicts the clear text of the *Qur'ān*. Similarly, if a

historical narration contradicts anything proven in the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*, then it will be left out, or it will be compulsory to interpret it, no matter how reliable and dependable that narration is in historical terms.

This grading of reliability and dependability does not lower the honour and importance of a science, but it enhances the *sharī'ah* and the honour of its laws, such that the highest level of reliability and dependability will be necessary in order to prove them. Then, there is a division of the laws of the *sharī'ah*; in order to prove the beliefs of Islām, every *sharī'* proof is not understood to be sufficient until it is *Qat'ī ath Thubūt*¹ and *Qat'ī ud Dalālat*². For the practical laws, the general *Ahādīth* that have a generally accepted chain of narration will be accepted.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY IN ISLĀM

It is sufficient to gauge the importance of history in Islām from this that history and stories is one of the five important sciences of the Noble *Qur'ān*. The Noble *Qur'ān* gives special importance to explaining the good and bad conditions of the days of before and of past nations. However, the Noble *Qur'ān* has a unique style of explaining history and stories. Instead of mentioning the story in sequence, it divides the story, and narrates it together with

¹ There is no doubt in its authenticity

² There is no doubt in its purport or meaning

other subjects. In addition, the story is not mentioned just in one place, but the *Qur'ān* repeats the story in various places.

Through this special way, the importance of history as well as its objective is clarified. The stories of past nations, mentioned by way of stories are not any human or Islāmic objective. The real objective is the lessons and results that are acquired by pondering over them. An important objective is to look at the good results of doing good works, learning of the bad end of evil works and create hatred for it (evil) and to acquire the subjects of the power and wisdom of Allāh ﷻ through the changes of the times. From past eras, incidents, stories, and narrations were read and heard just for amusement. Islām has firstly taught special etiquettes in the writing of history, and then it has also stated that history, in terms of history, is no objective. However, the objective is to acquire lessons and advice. Hadrat Shāh Walīullāh ﷺ has written in *Al Fauz Al Kabīr*, from a few *‘ārifīn*, that when people adopted the science of *tajwīd* and *qirā’ah*, then they became so engrossed in it that all their attention was devoted to correcting the letters. Concentration in *salāh* and consciousness of the *Qur’ān* – which is the real objective – was lost. Similarly, when some *mufasssīrīn* focused on stories and wrote the entire detail, then the original knowledge of *tafsīr* was lost amongst the stories in their books.

Anyway, one of the five important sciences of the *Qur’ān* is stories and history. It is compulsory to acquire it

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according to one's ability and it is a great act of obedience. Then, when we ponder over the treasure of *Ahādīth* and the *sīrah* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, the entire treasure is a history of the speech and actions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. When people narrated incorrectly and they began to fabricate *Ahādīth*, then there was a need for the history of the narrators; and their original and proper condition needed to be known in order to protect the *ahādīth*. The *imāms* of *hadīth* gave great importance to this. Sufyān Thaurī ﷺ said that when narrators began to lie, then we kept history in front of us in order to oppose them.³

The part of history that deals with the narrators of *hadīth* - whether they are reliable or not - is understood to be a part of *hadīth* from one angle. The *imāms* of *hadīth* took due care to write this part. They named it separately as well, *Asmā' ur Rijāl*. Who can debate about its necessity? The scholars of the *ummah* that have objected and classified the criticism of narrators to be backbiting is only in the case where the criticism goes beyond the limits of the *sharī'ah*, in the case where finding fault and disgracing the person without need and necessity is the objective. Alternatively, there was no justice and balance exercised in the grading of a narrator. Otherwise, a necessary and balanced criticism of the narrators is such a thing that without it, the treasure of *hadīth* will have no standing. When a person with a pious heart will criticize weak narrators with the intention of

³ Al I'lān bit Taubīkh liman Dhamm at Tārīkh of Hāfīz Sakhāwī ﷺ p.9

protecting the *hadīth*, then he is fulfilling the right of the *hadīth* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

Someone said to the famous *imām* of *Jarh* and *Ta'dīl*, Yahyā Ibn Sa'īd Qattān ﷺ, “Do you not fear Allāh that the narrators whom you classify as liars, unreliable or weak will have a case against you on the day of *Qiyāmat*?” He said, “It is better that these people have a case against me on the day of *Qiyāmat* than it is for Rasūlullāh ﷺ to ask me regarding why I did not prevent those who made additions and subtractions in his *ahādīth*”⁴

However, just as the *muhaddithīn* felt the need to scrutinize the narrators; it should be explained clearly whether they are reliable, unreliable, authentic, strong, weak etc. In a similar way, they placed a number of necessary conditions in order to keep this work within the limits of the *sharī'ah*. These have been explained in detail by Hāfiz 'Abdur Rahmān Sakhāwī ﷺ in his work; *Al I'lān bit Taubīkh liman Dhamm at Tārīkh*. In this book, the first condition is that the intention of a person should be correct. The intention must not be to show a fault of a narrator or to disgrace him, but the objective should be well wishing and the protection of *ahādīth*. Secondly, this work should only be done regarding that person who has a link to the narration of a *hadīth* or the benefit or harm of a person or group is involved. Moreover, there is conviction of the reformation of the person by making it apparent or the

⁴ Ibid p.53

people will be saved from harm. Otherwise, it is no work of *dīn* to make the faults of someone a past time.

Thirdly, a scholar should only suffice on the minimum required in this field, which is that a particular narrator is weak, unreliable or he fabricates narrations. Extra words that point out a fault should be avoided. Whatever is said must only be said after thorough investigation and research.

A few people asked the great *imām* of *Jarh* and *Ta'dīl*, Ibn al Madīnī رحمته الله regarding his father, “What is his rank in the narration of *hadīth*?” He said, “Ask this from someone else.” However, the people insisted that they wanted to find out his view. He sat down with his head lowered for a little while, pondered, and then lifted his head and said,

هو الدين ، إنه ضعيف

“This is a matter of *dīn*. He is weak (*da'īf*)”.⁵

These were the luminaries who were embodiments of honour for the narrators and considered the limits, together with honour for *dīn*. His father was weak in the narration of *hadīth*. In the beginning, he did not want to give the reply to the question, but when there was insistence, he placed honour for *dīn* first and made the reality apparent. However, he spoke according to necessity and he did not speak a single word more than was necessary.

⁵ Ibid p.66

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The summary is that the part of history that deals with the protection of *ḥadīth*, i.e. criticizing the narrators, *jarh* and *ta'dīl* and explaining their biographies is part of those necessary sciences upon which the *ḥadīth* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ depends, to stand as proof. Therefore, no one can debate it being necessary and compulsory. Keeping this part of history in mind, with its specific importance, this became a separate part of history called *Asmā' ur Rijāl*, according to the historians. Now, the debate remained in the part of history generally referred to as 'history' - the part that discusses the creation of the universe, from the time of the descent of *Ḥadrat Ādam* ﷺ until now. The method of collecting and recording historical incidents of all the incidents that occurred in the heavens and earth is very old. These include the birth of the good and bad people in all countries and regions, especially the *ambiyā'* (peace be upon them all) and the pious, the good and bad conditions of the rulers and kings, the revolutions in the world, wars, victories etc. In every country and region, every class of people narrated these incidents from generation to generation and some have come down in book form. However, generally, before Islām, this was nothing but a collection of stories that were heard, incidents, and tales, without any verification and research into its authenticity.

Islām was the first in making a chain of narration necessary. In addition, it made clarification and research into the authenticity of the narration necessary. The Noble *Qur'ān* says,

إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا

If a sinful person brings you a report, verify its correctness. [Sūrah al Hujurāt (the Chambers) 49:6]

Those who recorded the teachings of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, his speech and actions adopted this special method and made more than one science through which the *hadīth* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was protected. Principles were also made for other things that were narrated. In the general history of the world that Muslims began to write, these principles were considered as far as possible.

In this way, there will be no exaggeration if it is said that the Muslims were the ones who gave history the standing of being a proper and reliable science. The Muslims taught the world to write history and to verify it. The scholars of the *ummah* had scrutinized the narrations of the incidents of the *ambiyā'* and then the *ahādīth*. Not only did they separate truth from falsehood, but also they established stages from highest to lowest in the true and reliable narrations. They separated the part of history that deals with *ahādīth*, i.e. *Asmā' ur Rijāl*, made it like a part of *hadīth* and did this important service to *dīn*. These scholars also gave special attention to writing general history, the history of countries and kings, the history of various parts of the world and its geography. There are great *imāms* of *hadīth* and *tafsīr* and other scholars and jurists who have written the various types of history of the *ummah*. Hāfiz 'Abdur Rahmān Sakhāwī ﷺ has written the details of this

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over 90 pages in his work ‘*Al I’lān bit Taubīkh liman Dhamm at Tārīkh*’. This is an interesting and beneficial work that should be studied. However, there is no scope to mention all the aspects of the book here.

My objective here is only to show that the scholars of the *ummah* did not suffice on the part of history that deals with the protection of *ahādīth* and the narrators of *ahādīth*. They also paid attention to writing the general history of the world, geographical aspects, the conditions of kings and rulers, and revolutions and events. Thousands of small and big books were written, from which it is proven that this history also has a status in Islām. In addition, there are many religious and worldly benefits attached to it.

In the first 40 pages of his book, Hāfiz ‘Abdur Rahmān Sakhāwī ﷺ has mentioned the benefits and virtues of history and he has collected the statements of the ‘*ulamā*’ and scholars of Islām regarding it.

THE RANK OF HISTORY IN ISLĀM

Hāfiz ‘Abdur Rahmān Sakhāwī ﷺ has proven the virtues and benefits of history in detail, in the light of the statements of the scholars and wise men. The greatest and most comprehensive benefit is to derive lessons, the temporary nature of the world is learnt through the rise and fall of (nations) and through events and revolutions. Placing the concern for the hereafter before everything is acquired too. Consciousness of the great power of Allāh and

His bounties and blessings and light of the heart through the biographies of the *ambiyā'* and the pious is attained. The importance of staying away from disbelief and sin is learnt by taking lesson from the evil end of the disbelievers and sinners. Benefit in this world and the hereafter is acquired from the experience of the wise men of the past. Despite this science having so many benefits and virtues and having such importance, no one gave this science the status that the beliefs of Islām and laws could be drawn from it. No one gave it such a status that historical reports could be used as proof in the laws of *halāl* and *harām*. Historical reports are not taken as effective in those laws for which there is a need for *shar'ī* proof – the *Qur'ān*, *Sunnah*, *Ijmā'* and *Qiyās*. In addition, there is no path for historical reports to create doubt in any of the laws that have been proven from the *Qur'ān*, *Sunnah*, *Ijmā'* or *Qiyās*.

The reason for this is that although Islāmic history is not baseless tales without a chain of narration like the histories of the era of ignorance, the scholars of the *ummah* have considered a significant number of principles of narration and made an effort to make it reliable and authentic. However, two things cannot be overlooked when studying history and when using it for one's objective. Those who overlook these two things will use history incorrectly and will fall into the trap of many deviated errors.

THERE IS A GREAT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HADĪTH NARRATIONS AND HISTORICAL REPORTS

The first thing is that the *ahādīth* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, i.e. his speech and actions which the *sahābah* ﷺ have heard or seen, is a trust which they were responsible for conveying to the *ummah*, according to the command of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

بلغوا عني ولو آية

“Convey from me, even if it be a verse.”

In this *hadīth*, *verse* could mean a verse of the *Qur’ān*. However, from the context it is apparent that propagation of the *ahādīth* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ is meant, and ‘even if it be a verse’ means even if it is a short sentence. Then, he ﷺ said in the sermon of the farewell *hajj*,

فليبلغ الشاهد الغائب

“Those who are present should convey my speech to those who are not here.”

What possibility could there have been for any companion of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to have not protected the pure words of Rasūlullāh ﷺ or his actions that they saw and not give due importance to conveying it to the *ummah* after this? Besides this, the intense love that the *sahābah* ﷺ had for Rasūlullāh ﷺ was attested to, by not only Muslims, but also the disbelievers knew. They admitted to it with amazement too, that they ﷺ would not let the water he ﷺ used for *wudū’* to fall to the ground; they would rub it on their faces

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and chests. Even if the above-mentioned command to preserve the *ahādīth* and propagate it was not given to them, how can it be fathomed that they would not give due importance to protecting the *ahādīth* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ? They were such luminaries that they would protect the hair that separated from the body of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and his old clothing more than they did their own lives. They would not allow his used water of *wudū'* to be wasted.

The summary is that the immense love of the *sahābah* ﷺ called for them to protect his ﷺ every word and every *hadīth* more than their lives. In addition, he ﷺ gave the above-mentioned command. It is for this reason that a noble group possessing angelic qualities numbering more than a hundred thousand were set into motion for the protection and propagation of the speech and actions of a single person.

It is apparent that this was not the case for even the greatest king, no one had the concern to listen to every word of any person attentively and then remember it forever and propagate it to people, except for Rasūlullāh ﷺ. The incidents of kings, conditions of countries and places, and the changes of times are definitely studied and heard with interest, but who has the concern to remember them properly and propagate them as well.

The summary is that Allāh ﷻ wanted to give the *ahādīth* the same status as that of the *Qur'ān* in terms of the laws of the *sharī'ah* and He wanted to make it a *sharī'* proof too. Therefore, He made the first means of this the

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unparalleled love and obedience of the saḥābah ﷺ. It is quite apparent that no other personality ever possessed this. Therefore, historical incidents and narrations can never have the same status as that of *ahādīth*.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ was commanded to propagate the *Qur'ān* and the teachings of *risālat* throughout the world and to the coming generations. One natural system was the means of the immense love of the saḥābah ﷺ. The second system by way of law, which Rasūlullāh ﷺ mentioned with wisdom, was that on one side, he made it the obligation of every saḥābī ﷺ to convey whatever aspect of *dīn* they heard or saw from Rasūlullāh ﷺ to the *ummah*. On the other hand, he also closed the door to the danger that generally occurs when propagating a law, that the entire law or news is changed when narrating from one person to the next and the reality disappears. He ﷺ arranged for this through this *hadīth*,

من كذب على متعمدا فليتبوأ مقعده من النار

He who wilfully attributes something false to me should prepare his abode in the fire.

This severe warning made the saḥābah ﷺ and the scholars of *hadīth* that came later on so cautious in the narration of *hadīth*, that as long as a *hadīth* was not proven with very strong research, they stayed away from attributing it to him ﷺ. The *hadīth* scholars that came later on did the work of arranging the *ahādīth* in chapters and sections, all of them gave place to only a few thousand *ahādīth*, after great

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research, from the hundreds of thousands that they wrote and knew from memory. In *Tadrīb ur Rāwī* p.12, ‘Allāmah Suyūṭī ﷺ has written,

‘Imām Bukhārī ﷺ said that he chose (the *ahādīth* of) *Sahīh Bukhārī* from a hundred thousand authentic (*sahīh*) and two hundred thousand unauthentic (*ghayr sahīh*) *ahādīth* that he knew from memory. Subsequently, in *Sahīh Bukhārī*, there are four thousand unrepeated *ahādīth*.

Imām Muslim ﷺ said that he chose from three hundred thousand *ahādīth* when writing his *Sahīh*, in it there are only four thousand unrepeated *ahādīth*.

Imām Abū Dāwūd ﷺ says that he wrote five hundred thousand *ahādīth* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ from which he selected for his *Sunan*. In it, there are only four thousand *ahādīth*.

Imām Aḥmad ﷺ says that he chose the *ahādīth* of *Musnad Aḥmad* from seven hundred and fifty thousand *ahādīth*.’

In this way, through natural means and in the shade of the wise administration of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, the *ahādīth* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ were gathered in a grand way and it became the second proof of the *sharī'ah* after the *Qur'ān*.

THE GENERAL HISTORY OF THE WORLD COULD
NEVER ACQUIRE THIS STATUS, NOR DOES IT HAVE
THIS STATUS

This is because, firstly, there was no reason for people to give importance to remembering general incidents and events and then to convey them to people.

Secondly, if the historians had to judge and scrutinize historical reports and record them with the strict research that *hadīth* narrations are, then if three or four thousand narrations were chosen from four hundred thousand in *hadīth*; in historical narrations, not even four hundred would remain. Similarly, ninety-nine percent of historical narrations would be forgotten and obliterated and many worldly and religious benefits attached to them would be lost. This is the reason why the books of the *imāms* of *hadīth* have the status of being principle, reliable works. When the narrators that are classified as weak in them and whose narrations are left come into the field of history, then the narrations of these weak narrators are also included. Wāqidī and Sayf Ibn ‘Umar have been classified weak in *hadīth*, in fact, they have been criticized to a worse extent, but in history, the battles, etc. these very *imāms* of *hadīth* do not see any barrier in narrating from them.

Those scholars who have taken the wrong path of relying on historical narrations and have labelled the *sahābah* ﷺ and have criticized them have accepted this difference between *hadīth* and history in their books as well.

Therefore, there is no need to lengthen the discussion on this difference.

The summary is that the subject of general history and the books compiled in this field are not like the subjects of *hadīth*, *fiqh* and *aqā'id*, which discusses beliefs and rulings of Islām, in which there is a need to investigate and criticize narrations and wherein one's object cannot be acquired without differentiating between authentic and weak narrations. That is why, in the science of history, it is not taken to be a problem to gather all types of narrations, strong, weak, authentic, weak etc. without research and inquiry. In the sciences of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*, the scholars who are leaders in research, inquiry, and investigation are taken to be the masters. When they write a book in the field of history, then although they do not give place to baseless stories and tales like the history of the era of ignorance in their books, but they consider the principles of narration and transmit the narration with a chain of narration. That is why, Islāmic history, in terms of history, has an outstanding rank in terms of truthfulness and reliability. However, in history, the research into the lives and criticism of the narrators is not done, as is the case with the science of *hadīth*. As explained above, if this research is done in the field of history, then ninety nine percent of history will be lost from the world. In addition, the world will be deprived of the benefits, lessons, wisdoms, and experience of the world that are linked to this science. Secondly, when the objectives of beliefs and the laws of the

sharī'ah are not linked to it, then there is no need for this caution, research, and inquiry. That is why the imāms of *Jarh* and *Ta'dīl* have also adopted a wide, accepting stance in the science of history. Weak, strong, reliable, and unreliable narrations have all been gathered in it. The writings of the scholars themselves testify to this. The famous *imām* of *hadīth* and *Usūl ul Hadīth*, Imām Ibn Salāh ﷺ states in his book *'Ulūm ul Hadīth*,
'This aspect is dominant among the historians that they gather many narrations in which authentic, unauthentic, all types of narrations are mixed.'⁶

In *Tadrīb ur Rāwī* p.295 Suyūtī ﷺ has written exactly the same thing. Similarly, Fath ul Mughīth and other works state the same thing.

Ibn Kathīr ﷺ was a famous *imām* and well known researcher. He had an outstanding quality of researching and investigating narrations. However, when this very same luminary writes his history work, *Al Bidāyah wan Nihāyah*, then this level of investigation and inquiry does not remain. After mentioning a few historical narrations in *Al Bidāyah wan Nihāyah* vol.8 p.202, he writes, "I have doubt about their authenticity. However, Ibn Jarīr Tabarī ﷺ and others have transmitted these narrations before me, that is why I have followed suit. If they did not mention them, I would have not brought them into my book."

⁶ 'Ulūm ul Hadīth p.263

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It is quite apparent that in the research of a *hadīth*, he would have never said that despite doubt of its authenticity, because some author has mentioned it, that is why he wrote it. It was because of this status of history that Ibn Kathīr ﷺ classified it permissible.

This is despite the fact that Ibn Kathīr ﷺ has refuted many narrations of Tabarī ﷺ and criticized them in *Al Bidāyah wan Nihāyah*. All these things testify that in the field of history, those who criticize have also understood it to be appropriate that however many narrations are found regarding an incident, they should all be gathered. The *Jarh* and *Ta'dīl*, the study and scrutiny of it should be left to the scholars. This is not the co-incidental error of any individual, but this is the line of thinking of all the *imāms* of the science that it is no fault to mention weak, unreliable narrations in the science of history without criticizing them. The reason for this is that they know that the beliefs in religion or laws of the *sharīah* are not proven through them. Lessons, advice, and the experiences of nations are learnt. If a person wants to use these narrations as proof for a ruling that deals with Islāmic belief or practical deeds, then it is his responsibility to adopt the same laws to study and scrutinize them and delve into the detail of the narrator, as is necessary in the narration of *hadīth*. Without this, it will not be permissible to draw rulings; and to say that this narration is found in the history books of a reliable *imām* of *hadīth* will not absolve the person of responsibility.

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Understand this from this example that there were many *mujtahid imāms* and jurists of the *ummah* who were masters in the field of medicine as well, for example, Imām Shāfiī ﷺ. The works of some of these scholars in the science of medicine are also present. If they happen to write the specialties, effects of certain things in a book of medicine, that liquor has specific qualities, effects, and these are the specialties and effects of the flesh of swine and now someone looks at their words in this book of medicine and states that they are permissible. In drawing his conclusion, he says that a certain *imām* or scholar has written in his book and he did not state that it is *harām*, so, will this conclusion be correct? This is not a fabricated example. What a great scholar of the *ummah* is Shaykh Jalāl ud Dīn Suyūtī ﷺ? He has written a book on probably every one of the *sharī* sciences. No one debates his honour and piety. However, look at his book written on medicine called, ‘*Kitāb ur Rahmah fī at Tibb wal Hikmah*’. Many *harām* things are included in the prescriptions written for the cure of illnesses and acquiring benefit. Now, if someone wants to prove these things permissible, using this book as reference, and he attributes it to Suyūtī ﷺ, then will any person in his sound senses say that this is correct?

Similarly, there are many authored works of the scholars and jurists on the subject of medicine. In all of them, the specifics, effects, and method of usage of *harām* items are mentioned. Blood, urine and excreta...liquor and swine, the specifics of all these are mentioned. In the very

same book, they do not see the need to state their *harām* and impure status. This is because the demand of this science and the subject matter is that the specialties and effects of all things are written. It is not the place to discuss *halāl* and *harām*. They are written as *halāl* and *harām* in the appropriate place. The fault is that of the ‘intelligent’ person who overlooked this reality and began to draw the laws of *halāl* and *harām* from books of medicine. After this lengthy introduction, I come to the basic subject matter that the error of the scholars who took responsibility of deciding in the matter of the differences among the *sahābah* ﷺ based on historical narrations comes from here. The authors of those books from which they took these historical narrations were great and reliable, and were accepted to be *imāms* in the field of *hadīth* and *tafsīr*. They (the scholars who erred) did not think that in their (the historians) books, they did not discuss beliefs and actions of the *sharīah*, but they were writing a history work. In a history work, the practice of gathering authentic, unauthentic and all types of narrations without scrutiny is known and famous. Yes, if a person wants to prove belief or a ruling pertaining to deeds, then it will be his responsibility to study and research the narration and the narrator in the light of *hadīth*. The research scholars have clarified that in beliefs and the actions of the *sharīah*, historical narrations – which are generally a collection of authentic, unauthentic, reliable and unreliable narrations – cannot be presented for a ruling, nor can a ruling be drawn

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from them without the *hadīth*-type research and be presented as proof. Now, it has to be seen whether the matter of the differences of the saḥābah ﷺ is a general historical matter or is it an important chapter of *sharī* laws.

THE SAḤĀBAH ﷺ AND THE DIFFERENCES AMONG THE SAḤĀBAH ﷺ

The entire *ummah* is unanimous that the recognition of the saḥābah ﷺ, and the decision of the differences that occurred among them is not a general historical matter. In fact, the recognition of the saḥābah ﷺ is an important part of the science of *hadīth*, as Hāfiz Ibn Hajar ﷺ has written in the introduction of *Isābah* and Hāfiz Ibn ‘Abdul Barr ﷺ has clarified in the introduction of *Istī‘āb*. The scholars of the *ummah* have classed the rank of the saḥābah ﷺ, their virtue and rank, and the differences between them to be a matter of belief. Moreover, this is written as a separate chapter in all the books of Islāmic beliefs.

This is such a matter that deals with Islāmic beliefs and based on this matter, many Islāmic groups were formed. It is also apparent that the texts of the *Qur‘ān* and *sunnah* and a *sharī* proof, like the consensus of the *ummah*, is necessary for this decision. If a person wants to draw a ruling from a narration, then it will be necessary to weigh it in the light of the principles of *hadīth*. Searching for it among historical narrations and relying on it is an error in principle. No matter how reliable and authoritative scholars

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of *hadīth* wrote those history works, in terms of its standing amongst the sciences, it is history, in which it is the general practice to gather authentic and unauthentic narrations.

This is the reason why the scholars of the *ummah* looked at the work ‘*Al Istīāb fī Ma‘rifatil Ashāb*’ of Hāfiz Ibn ‘Abdul Barr ﷺ with appreciation. However, he included a number of unverified (*ghayr mustanad*) historical narrations regarding the differences among the *sahābah* ﷺ, so the scholars of the *ummah* and the *imāms* of *hadīth* classified this as a taint on the work. “*Ulūm ul Hadīth*’ written by the sixth century *hadīth* scholar Ibn Salāh ﷺ is taken to be the soul of the principles of *hadīth*. The *hadīth* scholars that came later on quoted from it. He writes in the thirty ninth chapter, while discussing the recognition of the *sahābah* ﷺ, ‘The recognition of the *sahābah* ﷺ is a great science, scholars have written many books on it and the most virtuous, high ranking and beneficial work is ‘*Al Istīāb*’ of Ibn ‘Abdul Barr ﷺ, if only he did not make the work defective by including historical narrations regarding the differences among the *sahābah* ﷺ. He did not base this on the narrations of the *muhaddithīn*. It is apparent that the historians mostly gather many narrations, the authentic, and unauthentic are all mixed up in them.’⁷

Similarly, while discussing the recognition of the *sahābah* ﷺ, ‘Allāmah Suyūtī ﷺ has written about *Al Istīāb* in *Tadrīb ur Rāwī* in a similar way to that of Ibn Salāh ﷺ in

⁷ ‘*Ulūm ul Hadīth* p.262

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his *‘Ulūm ul Hadīth*. He also objected to the inclusion of historical narrations in the discussion of the differences of the saḥābah ﷺ.⁸

Other *muḥaddithīn* have refuted this method of Ibn ‘Abdul Barr ﷺ in *Fath ul Mughīth* and other works as well, that why did he include historical narrations when discussing the aspect of the differences among the saḥābah ﷺ?

The reason is that the book *‘Al Istī‘āb’* of Ibn ‘Abdul Barr ﷺ is not a general history book, but it is a book that deals with the subject of recognition of the saḥābah ﷺ. This is a part of the science of *ḥadīth*. If Ibn ‘Abdul Barr ﷺ wrote a book on history, and he included these unverifiable (*ghayr mustanad*) narrations, then probably no one would have raised an objection, as Ibn Jarīr ﷺ and Ibn Kathīr ﷺ and others have done. None of the *imāms* of *ḥadīth* raised this objection on the history books.

A FEW SPECIALTIES OF THE SAḤĀBAH ﷺ

The sections above have clarified that the noble group of saḥābah ﷺ are not like the general individuals of the *ummah*; they have a special status and are outstanding in the general *ummah* because of being noble intermediaries between Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the *ummah*. This status and outstanding rank has been given to them by the clear texts

⁸ Tadrīb ur Rāwī p.295

of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*, and this is why the *ummah* is unanimous upon this as well. It cannot be lost in the heap of authentic and unauthentic narrations. Even if there is a narration in the treasure of *hadīth* that undermines this status of theirs, it will be left out when brought before the clear texts of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*, and the consensus of the *ummah*. What can be said regarding historical narrations?

QUR'ĀNIC TEXTS

1.

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

You are the best ummah ever raised for mankind. [Sūrah Āl 'Imrān (the family of 'Imrān) 3:110]

2.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ

In the same way, We made you a moderate ummah, so that you should be witnesses over the people. [Sūrah al Baqarah (the Cow) 2:143]

The real and first addressees of these two verses are the *sahābah* ﷺ. The rest of the *ummah* can be referred to by these verses, in accordance to their deeds. However, it is proven from the *mufassirīn* and *muhaddithīn* with consensus that the correct addressee of these verses are the *sahābah*

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ﷺ. From these verses, it is clearly proven that after Rasūlullāh ﷺ, the most virtuous, highest, just and reliable group of people were the saḥābah ﷺ. This is stated by Ibn ‘Abdul Barr ﷺ in the preface of *Al Istī‘āb*. ‘Allāmah Safārīnī ﷺ has stated in *Sharḥ ‘Aqīdah Ad Durrah al Mudī‘a* that majority of the *ummah* are of the view that after the *ambiyā’*, the saḥābah ﷺ are the most virtuous of the creation. Ibrāhīm Ibn Sa‘īd Jauharī says, “I asked Ḥadrat Abū Umāmah regarding who is more virtuous between Ḥadrat Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ and Ḥadrat ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz ﷺ. He replied,

لا نعدل بأصحاب محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم أحدا . الروضة الندية شرح العقيدة الواسطية لابن

تيمية ص ٤٠٥

“We do not equate anyone to the companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.”

3.

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءَ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ

Muḥammad is the messenger of Allāh, and those who are with him are hard on the disbelievers, compassionate among themselves; you will see them bowing down in rukū‘, prostrating themselves in sajdah, seeking grace from Allāh, and (His) pleasure; their distinguishing feature is on their faces from the effect of sajdah.

[Sūrah al Faṭḥ (the Victory) 48:29]

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The general *mufasssirīn*, Imām Qurtubī ﷺ and others have stated that ‘those who are with him’ is general. The entire group of *sahābah* ﷺ is included and it (this verse) has the purity, praise, and just nature of the *sahābah* ﷺ coming from the Owner of the universe Himself.

Abū ‘Urwah Zubayrī says that one day we were in the gathering of Imām Mālik ﷺ. The people mentioned someone who spoke ill of the *sahābah* ﷺ. Imām Mālik ﷺ recited the above verse and then said that whoever has ill feeling in his heart regarding any of the *sahābah* ﷺ of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he is the target of this verse, i.e. his *īmān* is in danger because ill feeling towards any of the *sahābah* has been classified as a sign of the ill feeling of the disbelievers.

4.

يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِي اللَّهُ النَّبِيَّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ

On the day when Allāh will not disgrace the messenger and those who believed with him. [Sūrah at Tahrīm (the Prohibiting)

66:8]

‘Those who believed with him’ includes all the *sahābah* ﷺ, without exception.

5.

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ

وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ

As for the first and foremost of the emigrants and the supporters and those who followed them in goodness, Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Allāh, and He has prepared for

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them gardens beneath which rivers flow. [Sūrah at Taubah
(Repentance) 9:100]

Two categories of the saḥābah ﷺ have been mentioned in this verse. One is the first and foremost (among the saḥābah ﷺ) and the second are those who believed later on. An announcement is made regarding both categories that Allāh ﷻ is pleased with them and they are pleased with Allāh ﷻ. Their status and perpetual abode in *Jannah* is stipulated. All the saḥābah ﷺ are included in this. Who are the foremost among the emigrants (*muhājirīn*) and helpers (*ansār*)? Ibn Kathīr ﷺ in his *Tafsīr* and Ibn ‘Abdul Barr ﷺ in the preface of *Istī‘āb* have narrated both views, with chains of narrations. One is that the foremost are those who performed *ṣalāh* with Rasūlullāh ﷺ facing both *qiblahs*, i.e. *Bayt ul Muqaddas* and the *Baytullāh*. This view is that of Abū Mūsā Ash‘arī ﷺ, Sa‘īd Ibn Musayyib ﷺ, Ibn Sīrīn ﷺ and Hasan Baṣrī ﷺ. The summary of this is that the foremost companions are those who were honoured with Islām before the *qiblah* direction was changed from *Bayt ul Muqaddas* to the *Baytullāh* in the 2nd year of the *hijrah*, and they had the honour of the companionship of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

The second view is that the foremost companions are those who participated in the pledge of *Ridwān*, i.e. in *Hudaybiyyah* in 6 A.H. This view is narrated from Imām Sha‘bī ﷺ.

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The Noble Qur'ān has made a general announcement regarding all the saḥābah ﷺ who pledged allegiance under the tree in Hudaybiyyah.

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ

Allāh was pleased with the believers when they were pledging allegiance with you (by placing their hands in your hands) under the tree. [Sūrah al Fath (the Victory) 48:18]

It is for this reason that this pledge was named Bay'ah ar Ridwān. In a ḥadīth, Hadrat Jābir Ibn 'Abdullāh ﷺ narrates that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

لا يدخل النار احد من باع تحت الشجر . ابن عبد البر في الاستيعاب

Whoever pledged allegiance under the tree will not enter the fire.⁹

Anyway, whether the foremost are those who performed salāh towards both qiblahs or those who participated in the pledge of Ridwān, the other saḥābah ﷺ that came thereafter and acquired the honour of companionship have all been included in the verse 'and those who followed them in goodness'. In this way, Allāh ﷻ has promised His complete pleasure and announced the eternal bounty of Jannah (for them).

After narrating this, Ibn Kathīr ﷺ says,

يا ويل من أبغضهم أو سبهم أو سب بعضهم (الى قوله) فأين هؤلاء من الإيمان بالقرآن إذ يسبون من

رضي الله عنهم . ابن كثير

⁹ Ibn 'Abdul Barr ﷺ in Al Istī'āb

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‘There is painful punishment for those who have hatred for them or for some of them, or speaks ill of them. What do such people have to do with *īmān* in the *Qur’ān*, those who speak ill of those regarding whom Allāh has made an announcement of His pleasure?’

After stating the same verse in his *Al Istī‘āb*, Ibn ‘Abdul Barr ﷺ says, ‘Those with whom Allāh is pleased, He will never be displeased with them, *inshā allāh*.’

This means that Allāh ﷻ has knowledge of all past and future things. He can only be pleased with the person who will not do something against His pleasure in future. Therefore, the announcement of the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ for someone is guarantee that his end will be on that same pious condition and that no deed contrary to the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ will happen from him in future too. Hāfīz Ibn Taymiyyah has also discussed this subject matter in *Sharḥ ‘Aqīdah Wāsiyyah* and *Safārīnī* ﷺ in *Sharḥ Durrah Muḍiyyah*. Through this, the doubt of the heretics is automatically removed; they say that these announcements of the *Qur’ān* were for the time when their conditions were in order. Afterwards – may Allāh save us – their conditions were spoilt. That is why; they did not remain deserving of this honour and nobility. This implies that Allāh ﷻ was pleased with them from the beginning out of ignorance and later this status quo changed, may Allāh save us.

At this point, probably someone could have a doubt about the *ḥadīth* (إني فرطكم على الحوض), which states,

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ليرون على أقوام أعرفهم ويعرفوني ثم يحال بيني وبينهم ، وفي رواية فأقول أصحابي فيقول لا تدري ما أحدثوا بعدك . بخاري

From the apparent wording, it seems as though in the plains of resurrection, some of the companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ will come to him, and they will be moved away. Although the commentators have discussed the commentary of this at length and there are a number of views narrated regarding whom this narration refers to, but according to us, looking at all the narrations as well as the virtues of the saḥābah ﷺ narrated in the *Qur'ān* and *hadīth*, the statement of Imām Nawawī ﷺ seems correct. After stating a number of views, Hāfiz Ibn Hajar ﷺ writes, 'Imām Nawawī ﷺ said, "This *hadīth* refers to the hypocrites and those people who were not Muslims at heart in the era of *nubuwwah*, but they apparently took on the face of Muslims. They had turned away from apparent Islām after the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. These people would perform *wudū'* with the Muslims for show and they would come for *salāh*. Therefore, their hands and feet will also be white, as an effect of *wudū'*. On account of this sign, Rasūlullāh ﷺ will call them but the reply will be given that they changed conditions after your demise, i.e. besides the condition you left them in. They did not remain in that condition but they became open disbelievers. In terms of their apparent claim of Islām, this was *irtidād*.'"

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According to us, this view is correct because it is in harmony with the following verse of the Qur’ān,

يَوْمَ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا انظُرُونَا نَقْتَبِسْ مِنْ نُورِكُمْ قِيلَ ارْجِعُوا وَرَاءَكُمْ فَالْتَمِسُوا
نُورًا

The day when the hypocrite men and hypocrite women will say to those who believe, “Wait for us, so that we may have a share from your light.” It will be said (to them), “Go back to your rear, and search for light.” [Sūrah al Hadīd (the Iron) 57:13]

It is clear from the verse that on the day of Qiyāmah the hypocrites will join the believers initially, and they will then be separated. Some scholars have taken the meaning of the word ‘irtaddū’ in the above *hadīth* to mean that after Rasūlullāh ﷺ, some people had become *murtad*, may Allāh save us. According to us, the truth is that if *irtidād* means turning away from religion, then it means those Arabs who came into the fold of Islām verbally but Islām did not entrench itself in their hearts. The Qur’ān explains this in the following words,

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُلْ لَمْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ

The Bedouins say, “We have come to believe.” Say, “You have not come to believe; instead, you (should) say, “We have surrendered” and the belief has not entered your hearts so far. [Sūrah al Hujurāt (the Chambers) 49:14]

Hāfiz Khattābī ﷺ has written beautifully, ‘None of the saḥābah ﷺ became *murtad*. Some Bedouins who had no share in assisting the religion (they only recited

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the *kalimah*), they became *murtad* in the era of Hadrat Abū Bakr ﷺ. This does not create doubt on the famous *ṣahābah* ﷺ. Moreover, the words of the *hadīth*, (أصحابي) instead of (أصحابي), i.e. in diminutive form, indicate towards this.’¹⁰

6.

قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي

Say, “This is my way. I call (people) to Allāh with full perception, both I and my followers.” [Sūrah Yūsuf (12:108)]

It is apparent that all the *ṣahābah* ﷺ were followers of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, all of them are included in this.

7.

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مُقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ

Then We conveyed the book as a heritage to those of our slaves whom We chose. Now, some of them are those who wrong their own selves, and some of them are mediocre, and some of them are those who outpace (others) in righteous deeds with Allāh’s permission. This is the great bounty. [Sūrah Fāṭir (Originator) 35:32]

In this verse, the *ṣahābah* ﷺ have been termed as ‘chosen servants’. One type of them has been mentioned ahead, ‘some of them are those who wrong their own selves’. From this, we learn that if a sin happened from any *ṣahābī*, then he

¹⁰ Fath ul Bārī vol.11 p.324

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was forgiven, otherwise they would not have been mentioned as part of the chosen servants.

It is apparent that the first people to inherit the book, i.e. the *Qur'ān* were the *sahābah* ﷺ and in terms of the clear text of the *Qur'ān* they are the chosen servants of Allāh. Moreover, in the first verse, the peace of Allāh is conveyed to these chosen servants of Allāh. In this way, all the *sahābah* ﷺ are included in the divine peace of Allāh (as stated by Safārīnī ﷺ in *Sharh Ad Durrah al Mudiyyah*).

8.

In *Sūrah al Hashr* (the Gathering), Allāh ﷻ divided all the Muslims present during the era of *risālat* and those to come later into three groups, the first is the *muhājirīn* (emigrants). Allāh ﷻ passed this decision regarding them,

أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ

They are the truthful. [Sūrah al Hashr (the Gathering) 59:8]
The second is the *ansār* (helpers). After mentioning their qualities and virtues, the *Qur'ān* states,

أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

They are the successful. [Sūrah al Hashr (the Gathering) 59:9]
The third group comprises all those besides the *muhājirīn* (emigrants) and *ansār* (helpers) to come until *qiyāmah*. The *Qur'ān* states regarding them,

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِن بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا
غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا

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And for those who came after them saying, “Our Rabb, forgive us and those of our brothers who preceded us in faith, and do not place in our hearts any rancour against those who believe.”

[Sūrah al Ḥashr (the Gathering) 59:10]

Hadrat Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ says in the *tafsīr* of this verse that Allāh ﷻ has given the command to all the Muslims to seek forgiveness on behalf of the *muhājirīn* (emigrants) and *ansār* (helpers). This command was given in the condition when Allāh ﷻ knew that they would fight and war against each other in future. The scholars have said that from this verse we learn that after the *sahābah* ﷺ, there is no place in Islām for the person who does not love the *sahābah* ﷺ and he does not make *du‘ā* for them.

9.

وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَبٌ إِلَيْكُمْ الْإِيمَانَ وَرَيْنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَهُ إِلَيْكُمْ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ
الرَّاشِدُونَ ﴿٩﴾ فَضلاً مِنَ اللَّهِ وَبِعَمَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

But Allāh has endeared to you the faith, and made it beautiful in your hearts, and made detestable to you disbelief, sins and disobedience. Such people are rightly guided, as a grace from Allāh, and as a blessing. And Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

[Sūrah al Ḥujurāt (the Chambers) 49:7,8]

In this verse, it is stated regarding all the *sahābah* ﷺ, without exception, that Allāh placed the love of *īmān* in their hearts, together with hatred for disbelief and sin.

At this juncture, it is not our objective to cover all the verses pertaining to the virtues of the *sahābah* ﷺ. One

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or two verses are sufficient to prove their rank and status. From these, it is proven that Allāh accepted them, Allāh ﷻ was pleased with them and they have been blessed with the eternal abode of *Jannah*.

At this point, it should be borne in mind that these are the verses of the Being Who is aware of every breath and every step of every person and their good and bad deeds they will commit before creating them. The glad tidings that He gave regarding the saḥābah ﷺ of His complete pleasure and *Jannah*; He gave these glad tidings while being aware of all these incidents and occurrences that would happen during the era of *risālat* or later on as well.

Ibn Taymiyyah says in *As Sārim al Maslūl ‘alā Shātim ar Rasūl* that Allāh ﷻ will be pleased with the person regarding whom it is known that he will fulfil the requirements of His pleasure until the end; and whomever Allāh is pleased with, He will never be displeased with him again.

THE SPECIAL RANK OF THE SAḤĀBAH ﷺ IN THE AHĀDĪTH

It is not an easy task to compile the *ahādīth* that mention the virtues and status of these luminaries (the saḥābah ﷺ), and there is no need for it too. Therefore, a few narrations are written here; narrations that state the virtues and specialties of the entire group of the saḥābah ﷺ. Whatever

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has been said about certain individuals or certain groupings among them has been left out.

Bukhārī, Muslim and all the source books transmit from *Hadrat ʿImrān Ibn Ḥaṣīn* ﷺ that *Rasūlullāh* ﷺ said,

خير الناس قرني ثم الذين يلونهم ثم الذين يلونهم فلا أدري ذكر قرنين أو ثلاثة ثم ان بعدهم قوم يشهدون ولا يستشهدون ويخونون ولا يؤتمنون وينذرون ولا يوفون ويظهر فيهم السمن . جمع الفوائد

ج ٢ ص ٤٩٠

“The best generation is mine, then the one after, then the one after.” The narrator says, “I do not remember whether the people that were mentioned thereafter were two generations or three generations.” “Then there will be such people who will be ready to give testimony without being requested, they will misappropriate and will not be trustworthy, they will break their promises and will not fulfil them and on account of no concern, obesity will appear among them.”

In this *hadīth*, if the people who were mentioned ‘thereafter’ was twice, then the second generation is that of the *sahābah* ﷺ and the third is that of the *tābiʿīn*. If it was mentioned thrice, then the fourth generation of the *tabʿ ut tābiʿīn* will also be included.

In *Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd* and *Tirmidhī*, it is narrated from *Hadrat Abū Saʿīd Khudrī* ﷺ that *Rasūlullāh* ﷺ said,

لا تسبوا أصحابي فإن أحدكم لو أنفق مثل أحد ذهباً ما بلغ مد أحدهم ولا نصيفه . جمع الفوائد

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“Do not speak ill of my *sahābah* because if any of you were to spend gold equal to Mount *Uhud* in the path of *Allāh*, then it would never equal a *mudd*, in fact, not even half a *mudd* that a *sahābī* spent.”

Mudd is an Arab measurement that equals approximately one *ser* nowadays, in terms of weight. This *hadīth* shows that visiting and having the companionship of Rasūlullāh ﷺ is such a great bounty, through whose blessings, the action of a *sahābī* ﷺ, when compared to others, has such a relationship that their one *ser*, or half a *ser* is equal to mountains of others'. One cannot compare their actions to the actions of others.

The *hadīth* begins with the words, '*lā tasubbū ashābī*', i.e. do not do *sabb* of my *sahābah*. In Urdu, it is generally translated as 'swear'. This is not the correct translation because swearing is the translation of '*fuhush kalām*', whereas the word '*sabb*' is more general in Arabic. Every speech that lowers a person is referred to as *sabb* in Arabic. The word that denotes swearing in Arabic perfectly is '*shitm*'.

Ibn Taymiyyah says in *As Sārim al Maslūl* that the word *sabb* in this *hadīth* denotes a general meaning. The purport of it is to curse or vilify. Therefore, this lowly one (Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' ﷺ) has translated the word as 'to speak ill of'.

Tirmidhī transmitted from Hadrat 'Abdullāh Ibn Mughaffal ﷺ that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

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الله الله في أصحابي لا تتخذوهم غرضا بعدي فمن أحبهم فبحبي أحبهم ومن أبغضهم فببغضي أبغضهم ومن آذاهم فقد آذاني ومن آذاني فقد آذى الله ومن آذى الله فيوشك أن يأخذه . جمع

الفوائد ج ٢ ص ٤٩١

“Fear Allāh, fear Allāh regarding my saḥābah. Do not make them a target (of abuse) after me because whoever loves them, he loved them with my love, and he who hates them, then he hates them with my hate. Whoever harmed them, he has harmed me, and whoever has harmed me, he has given trouble to Allāh and whoever wants to give trouble to Allāh, then soon Allāh will catch him in punishment.”

The sentence, *whoever loves them, he loved them with my love* in the *ḥadīth* above could have two meanings. One is that loving the saḥābah is a sign of love for me, i.e. whoever has love for me will love them. The second meaning could be that whoever has love for any of my saḥābah, then I love him. In this way, his love for the saḥābī is a sign that I have love for him. These could be the two meanings of the second sentence: ‘that he who has hatred for the saḥābah, in reality, he has hatred for me’. Or, whoever has hatred for them, then I have hatred for that person.

Whichever of the two meanings are applicable, this *ḥadīth* is sufficient warning to those who have freely made the noble saḥābah ﷺ a target of criticism and they attribute such things to them which will cause the onlooker to think bad of them, or faith in them will not remain in his

heart, at the very least. If we ponder, then this will be in the ruling of rebelling against Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

In *Tirmidhī*, it is reported from Hadrat ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

إذا رأيتم الذين يسبون أصحابي فقولوا لعنة الله على شرکم . جمع الفوائد ج ٢ ص ٤٩١

“When you see such people who speak ill of my saḥābah, then say to them, “May the curse of Allāh be upon the one who is more evil than you two, i.e. the saḥābah and you.””

It is quite apparent that in comparison to the saḥābah ﷺ, the most evil person will be the one who speaks ill of them. In this *hadīth*, the person who speaks ill of the saḥābah is said to be deserving of curses. It has also passed above that the word ‘sabb’ in terms of Arabic does not only refer to lewd talk and swearing, but to every such talk through which someone could be belittled or disgraced or his heart could be tormented by it. Every such statement is included in ‘sabb’.

In *Abū Dāwūd* and *Tirmidhī*, it is narrated by Hadrat Sa‘īd Ibn Zayd ﷺ that he heard some people speaking ill of Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ in front of some of the governors. So, Hadrat Sa‘īd Ibn Zayd ﷺ said, “How sad, I see that ill is spoken of the saḥābah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in front of you and you do not object and you do not stop it. I heard, with my ears, Rasūlullāh ﷺ saying, (and before explaining the *hadīth* he said that understand also that I have no need to attribute anything to Rasūlullāh ﷺ which he did not say, because when I meet Rasūlullāh ﷺ on the day of *Qiyāmah*, then he

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will take me to task for it. He then said), “Abū Bakr is in *Jannah*, ‘Umar is in *Jannah*, ‘Uthmān is in *Jannah*, ‘Alī is in *Jannah*, Talha is in *Jannah*, Zubayr is in *Jannah*, Sa‘d Ibn Mālik is in *Jannah*, ‘Abdur Raḥmān Ibn ‘Auf is in *Jannah*, ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah Ibn al Jarrāh is in *Jannah*.” He took the names of these nine saḥābah ﷺ and did not take the name of the tenth. When the people asked regarding the tenth, he said that it is Sa‘īd Ibn Zayd (he did not mention his own name out of humility; he made it apparent upon the insistence of the people). Then, Hadrat Sa‘īd Ibn Zayd said, “By Allāh, the participation of any of the saḥābah in *jihād* with Rasūlullāh ﷺ in which his face becomes dusty is better than the worship and deeds of a person who is not a saḥābī, even if he gets the life of Nūh ﷺ.”¹¹

Imām Ahmad ﷺ narrates from Hadrat ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas‘ūd ﷺ that he said, “Whoever wants follow, he should follow the saḥābah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ because they had the purest of hearts of the *ummah*, and they were the deepest in terms of knowledge. They were away from formality; they were balanced in habits and the best in terms of conditions. They were the people that Allāh liked for the companionship of His *Nabī* and for the establishment of religion. So recognize their status and follow their ways because they were on the straight path.”¹²

¹¹ Jam‘ ul Fawā‘id vol.2 p.492

¹² Sharh ‘Aqīdah Safārīnī vol.2 p.280

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Abū Dāwūd Tayālisī narrates from Hadrat ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas‘ūd ﷺ, “Allāh looked at all the hearts of His servants, so He found the best heart among them that of Muḥammad ﷺ. He appointed him to convey His message. After the heart of Muḥammad ﷺ, He looked at the other hearts, and He found the hearts of the companions of Muḥammad ﷺ to be the best from the hearts of all the servants. He liked them for the companionship of His Nabī and for assisting the religion.”¹³

In *Musnad Bazzār*, with an authentic chain of narration, Hadrat Jābir ﷺ narrates that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

ان الله اختار أصحابي على العالمين سوى النبيين والمرسلين واختار لي من أصحابي أربعة يعني أبا بكر وعمر وعثمان وعلياً فجعلهم أصحابي وقال في أصحابي كلهم خير

“Indeed Allāh chose my companions over the universe, except over the ambiyā’ and messengers and He chose for me from my companions four; Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī. He made them my companions and He said that there is goodness in all my companions.”

It is narrated from Ibn Sā‘īdah ﷺ that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

ان الله اختارني واختار لي أصحابي فجعل منهم وزراء واطحاناً واصهاراً فمن سبهم فعليه لعنة الله والملائكة والناس أجمعين ولا يقبل الله منه يوم القيامة صرفاً ولا عدلاً . تفسير فرطبي . سورة

الفتح

¹³ Ibid vol.2 p.280

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“Verily Allāh chose me and He chose my companions for me, He made ministers among them and our fathers in law, and sons in law. Whoever speaks ill of them, upon him is the curse of Allāh and the angels and all the people and Allāh will not accept from him on the day of Qiyāmah...”¹⁴

Hadrat ‘Irbād Ibn Sāriyah ﷺ narrates that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

انه من يعيش منكم فسيرى إختلافا كثيرا فعليكم بسنتي وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين عضوا عليها بالنواجذ وإياكم ومحدثات الامور فان كل بدعة ضلالة . رواه الإمام أحمد وأبو داؤد والترمذي وابن ماجة وقال الترمذي حديث حسن صحيح وقال أبو نعيم حديث جيد صحيح . سفاريني ص

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“Whoever lives after me will see much differences, so it is necessary upon you to adopt my Sunnah and the Sunnah of my khulafā’ ar rāshidīn. Hold firm to it with your molars and stay away from innovation, because every innovation is deviation.”

In this *hadīth*, Rasūlullāh ﷺ has classified following the Sunnah of the khulafā’ ar rāshidīn to be compulsory and a means of salvation from trials just as is the case with his own Sunnah. Similarly, in various *ahādīth*, he ﷺ took the names of various sahābah ﷺ and instructed that they be followed and guidance be sought from them. All these narrations are in the books of *hadīth*.

¹⁴ Tafsīr Al Qurtubī, Sūrah al Fath

SUMMARY OF THE RANK OF THE SAHĀBAH ﷺ IN THE QUR'ĀN AND AHĀDĪTH

The above quoted verses of the *Qur'ān* and *ahādīth* not only praises the *sahābah* ﷺ and gives them the glad tidings of the pleasure of Allāh and *Jannah*, but it commands the *ummah* to honour and respect them, and follow them as well. There are severe warnings announced for speaking ill regarding any of them. Love for them is classified as love for Rasūlullāh ﷺ and hatred for them is said to be hatred for Rasūlullāh ﷺ. In the light of this status of the *sahābah* ﷺ, this treatise '*The Rank of the Sahābah* ﷺ' is presented.

CONSENSUS OF THE UMMAH

Leaving aside a deviated group or two, the *ummah* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ were always unanimous upon the principle that has been proven above from the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*.

After the *sahābah* ﷺ, the next generation that followed was the *tābi'īn*. They are included in the *khayr ul qurūn* (best of eras) in the *ahādīth* discussed previously. Amongst the *tābi'īn* of *khayr ul qurūn*, 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz ﷺ is accepted to be the most virtuous. In one of his letters, he clarified the status of the *sahābah* ﷺ and he emphasized upon the people to adhere to this (stance). This lengthy letter is recorded in the famous book of *hadīth*, the first *Musnad*, *Abū Dāwūd*, with a chain of narration. A few

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important sentences relating to the status of the saḥābah ﷺ are presented forthwith,

‘You should adopt that path for yourselves which the nation (saḥābah ﷺ) have adopted. This is because the limit at which they stopped, they stopped there with wisdom; and whatever they stopped people from; it was based on far-sightedness. Undoubtedly, they had the ability to uncover deep wisdom and solve confusing matters. They were deserving of the most virtue in whatever work they did. So, if the path you are on is taken to be guidance, then it means that you have preceded them in virtues, (which is totally impossible). If you say that these things came about after them, (that is why this way is not narrated from them), then understand that the inventers are those who are not on their path and those who stay away from them. This is because they are the vanguard who spoke about religion to a sufficient degree and they spoke that much which cures. So, there is no chance for shortcomings and pitfalls in their way. Also, there is no courage to go beyond it. Many people remained far from the objective because of falling short in their way and many people intended to go beyond the limit in their way; they were involved in exaggeration, whereas these people were on a straight path between exaggeration, falling short and pitfalls.’

Besides a deviated group or two, the entire *ummah* is unanimous upon this very belief regarding the saḥābah ﷺ, in accordance to the statement of the most virtuous of the *tābi‘īn*, ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz ﷺ. Some scholars have

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counted his era of *khilāfat* to be part of the *khilāfat ar rāshidah*. The execution of Islāmic law and the elevation of the signs of Islām in his era of *khilāfat* were in accordance to the way of the *khilāfat ar rāshidah*. This consensus is generally found discussed under the title of ‘all the *sahābah* are just’ in the books of *hadīth* and books of ‘*aqā'id*. The purport of the statement ‘all the *sahābah* are just’ is the same as that written regarding the status and rank of the *sahābah* with reference from the *Qur'ān* and *sunnah*.

THE PURPORT OF ‘ALL THE SAHĀBAH ARE JUST’

The word ‘*adūl* (just), is the plural of ‘*adl*. This is originally a root word. It means ‘to make equal shares’. In common speech, the person who is established on the truth and justice is called ‘*adl*. This word also comes repeatedly in the *Qur'ān*. There is a discussion of it in *hadīth* and the books of *tafsīr* as well. In *usūl ul hadīth*, *usūl ul fiqh* and in the general *fiqh* books, the meaning of this word is stipulated as well. Ibn *Salāh* ﷺ says, ‘The detail of this is that a person should be a Muslim, mature, sane and he should be protected from the causes of sin. In addition, he should be protected from anything uncultured.’¹⁵

¹⁵ ‘*Ulūm ul Hadīth* of Ibn *Salāh* ﷺ

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Shaykh ul Islām Imām Nawawī ﷺ mentions the same thing in *Taqrīb*, and so does ‘Allāmah Suyūṭī ﷺ in *Tadrīb*.¹⁶

Hāfiz Ibn Hajar ‘Asqalānī ﷺ writes in *Sharh Nukhbah*, ‘*Adl* refers to such a person who has such characteristics that push him onto being firm on *taqwā* and human nature. *Taqwā* refers to staying away from polytheism, sin, innovation and similar deeds.’

In *Durr e Mukhtār*, the explanation of ‘*adālat* is given as follows, ‘and that person (is also ‘*ādil*) from whom a minor sin happens, without continuity. This is on condition that he stays away from all major sins and his good/correct deeds are more than his minor sins. This is the meaning of ‘*adālat*. When any person commits a major sin, his ‘*adālat* will fall away.’

Ibn ‘Abidīn ﷺ writes in the commentary of this, ‘It is written in *Fatāwā Sughrā* that ‘*adl* refers to the person who stays away from all major sins, to the extent that even if he commits one major sin, then his ‘*adālat* will fall away and a significant amount is considered in minor sins, or doing a minor sin continuously. This is because in this case, a minor sin will become a major sin. Therefore, the author of *Durr e Mukhtār* said that the person’s correct deeds should be more. What the author (of *Durr e Mukhtār*) said that the ‘*adālat* of a person falls away by committing a major sin, this

¹⁶ Tadrīb ur Rāwī p.197

should be added that if he repents, then his ‘*adālat* will return.’

The explanation of ‘*adl* and ‘*adālat* is the same from the above quoted texts of the *fuqahā’* and *muḥaddithīn*. The summary of it is that when a Muslim is sane, mature, he stays away from major sins, he does not do minor sins continuously, and he is not habituated to committing many minor sins, this is termed as ‘*adālat*. This is also the *sharī* purport of *taqwā*, as is explained in the above text of Ibn ‘Ābidīn ﷺ. *Fisq* is the opposite of this. The person whose ‘*adālat* has fallen away is called a *fāsiq* in the terms of the *sharīah*. This explanation of ‘*adl* and ‘*adālat* is drawn from the texts of all the scholars who have stated the consensus of the *ummah* regarding the *sahābah* being ‘*adūl*.

AN OBJECTION AND THE REPLY

At this point, a doubt arises that on one side, it is the belief of the *ummah* that the *sahābah* ﷺ are not *ma’sūm*. They could commit major or minor sins, and it did happen as well. On the other hand, this belief has been explained above that all of them are ‘*adūl* and the meaning of ‘*adl* according to all the scholars is also, ‘the person who does not commit a major sin or does not commit minor sins continuously.’ The person who committed a major sin or it is proven that he committed a minor sin continuously, then he will be someone from whom ‘*adālat* has fallen away. The

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technical term referring to such a person is '*fāsiq*'. This is a clear contradiction between the two beliefs.

The answer according to majority of the scholars is that although a major sin might be committed by a *sahābī*, and they were actually committed - but there is a difference between them and the general individuals of the *ummah*, and that is, whoever is a *fāsiq* or his '*adālat*' falls away from him, it could be restored through repentance (*taubah*). Whoever repented or it is known through some means that Allāh has forgiven his sin due to good deeds, then he will be referred to with the words '*adl*' and *muttaqī*. The person who did not repent will be referred to as a '*fāsiq*' or someone from whom '*adl*' has fallen away.

Now, in the matter of repentance, there is a special differentiation between the individuals of the *ummah* and the *sahābah* ﷺ. Regarding the general individuals of the *ummah*, there is no guarantee that they repented and it is not known whether their good deeds have wiped out their sins. As long as repentance is not proven for them, or there is no knowledge of their forgiveness from Allāh through some means, they will be classified as *fāsiq* and *sāqit ul 'adālah*. His testimony will not be accepted, nor will he be considered in other matters.

However, the matter of the *sahābah* ﷺ is different. Firstly, those who know their lives are aware how much they feared sin and stayed away from it, and if they had to commit a sin, they not only repented verbally, but they would even present themselves for the worst of

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punishment. One of them would tie himself to the pillar of the *masjid* and as long as his repentance was not accepted, he would remain perplexed. The demand of this fear of the *sahābah* ﷺ is that we have the good thought regarding those whose repentance was not made apparent, that they also repented. Secondly, their good deeds are so great and so much that in comparison to it, even a life of sin, or half a life of sin should be forgiven, in accordance to the promise of Allāh, ‘Surely good deeds erase bad deeds.’ [Sūrah Hūd 11:114]

For every Muslim, it is the demand of intelligence and justice to have this belief, without any clear proof. However, this is not just our thought regarding the *sahābah*. The Noble *Qur’ān* has verified this thought repeatedly. Sometimes it announced regarding special groups among the *sahābah*, sometimes it announced for the foremost and the last among the *sahābah*, that Allāh ﷻ is pleased with them. The pledge taken at *Hudaybiyyah* is also known as *Bay’ah Ridwān* because of the glad tidings of the Noble *Qur’ān* regarding it. It is also called *Bay’ah Shajarah*. Approximately one and a half thousand *sahābah* ﷺ participated in it. The clear words of the *Qur’ān* regarding this are,

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ

Allāh was pleased with the believers when they were pledging allegiance with you (by placing their hands in your hands) under the tree. [Sūrah al Fath (the Victory) 48:18]

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Rasūlullāh ﷺ said in a *hadīth* that whoever participated in this pledge under the tree will not be touched by the fire of *Jahannam*. There are a number of *ahādīth* on this subject, in different words, with authentic chains of narration found in the books of *hadīth* and *tafsīr*. *Sūrah at Taubah* mentions the following announcement regarding all the *sahābah* ﷺ,

وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ
وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

As for the first and foremost of the emigrants and the supporters and those who followed them in goodness, Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Allāh, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, where they will live forever. That is the supreme achievement. [Sūrah at Taubah (Repentance) 9:100]

Sūrah al Hadīd (the Iron) announces regarding the *sahābah* ﷺ,

وَكُلًّا وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَى

Allāh has promised the good (reward) for each. [Sūrah al Hadīd (the Iron) 57:10]

Then, *Sūrah al Ambiyā'* (the Prophets) mentions regarding 'the good (reward)',

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِنَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ

As for those for whom the good (news) from Us has come earlier, they will be kept far away from it, i.e. Jahannam. [Sūrah al Ambiyā' (the Prophets) 21:101]

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The purport of this is apparent, that it was decided about all the saḥābah ﷺ that they will be kept far away from *Jahannam*.

It is also mentioned in Sūrah at Taubah (Repentance),

لَقَدْ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ فِي سَاعَةِ الْعُسْرَةِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا كَادَ يَزِيغُ قُلُوبَ فَرِيقٍ مِّنْهُمْ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّهُ بِهِمْ رُؤُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

Surely, Allāh has relented towards the Messenger and the emigrants and the supporters who followed him in the hour of hardship after the hearts of a group of them were about to turn crooked, then He relented towards them. Surely, to them He is very kind, very merciful. [Sūrah at Taubah (Repentance) 9:117]

The purport of this is that the Noble Qur'ān has given guarantee that if any of the saḥābah ﷺ commits any sin in their lives, then they will not remain on it. They will repent. Or, Allāh ﷻ will forgive them on account of the companionship of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, their helping him and the countless good deeds in the great service of *dīn*. In addition, their death will not come before their sins are forgiven and wiped clean. Therefore, no saḥābī ﷺ can be said to be *sāqit ul 'adālah* or a *fāsiq*. At the time of committing a sin, the laws that apply to other Muslims will apply to them as well. The law of the *sharī'ah* or the punishment that is given to the general Muslims will be executed on them. At the time of committing a sin, that deed will be called *fisq*, as we learn from Sūrah al Hujurāt (the Chambers) 49:6. However, because their repentance is known through a clear text of

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the *Qur'ān*, that is why they will never be called *sāqit ul 'adālah* or *fāsiq*. This corresponds to the explanation of Ālūsī ﷺ in *Rūh al Ma'ānī*.

Qādī Abū Ya'la ﷺ has written under the verse of *Ridwān*, 'The pleasure of Allāh is an eternal quality of His. Therefore, Allāh ﷻ will only be pleased with that person regarding whom it is known that he will be a person who possesses those things which necessitate His pleasure and the person with whom Allāh ﷻ is pleased, He will never be displeased with him.'

This is the reply of majority of the scholars and the jurists regarding the apparent contradiction of the *sahābah* ﷺ not being *ma'sūm* and *'adūl*, and it is totally clear.

In order to be saved from the contradiction of the *sahābah* ﷺ not being *ma'sūm* and them being *'adūl* in general, some scholars have modified the definition of *'adālat*. They state that *'adālat* here does not mean all the qualities and deeds, but it means not to be a liar in narration. This is an addition in lexical terms, as well as to the *sharī'ah*. There is no reason or need for it. The viewpoint of these scholars by this modification is also not that in the light of it, a *sahābī* could be referred to as *sāqit ul 'adālat* or a *fāsiq*. Their words in other places negate this.

Similarly, there is an article attributed to Hadrat Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz ﷺ, with reference from his *fatāwā*. This subject matter is such that it is not understood how could such an article be attributed to an all-encompassing luminary like Hadrat Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz ﷺ. Regarding the

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collection published under the name of *Fatāwā ‘Azīzī*, everyone knows that Hadrat Shāh ‘Abdul ‘Azīz ﷺ did not compile it himself, nor was it published during his life. It is not known how many years after his demise that his letters and *fatāwā* that were spread amongst different people were collected and it was published. There could be various possibilities. Someone could have attributed something incorrect to him and included it in the collection of *fatāwā*. Assuming that it is the statements of Hadrat Shāh ‘Abdul ‘Azīz ﷺ, then too, it will be left out when compared to the view of the majority of the scholars and jurists. And Allāh ﷻ knows best.

In probably all the books of *‘aqā'id* and *kalām*, and similarly in the books of *usūl ul hadīth*, there is consensus mentioned regarding this. We have only sufficed on a few of them here.

The imām in *hadīth* and *usūl ul hadīth*, Imām Ibn Salāh ﷺ writes in *‘Ulūm ul Hadīth*, ‘All the *sahābah* ﷺ have a specialty, and that is, their *‘adālat* cannot be questioned because it is a decided matter that is proven from the clear texts of the *Qur’ān* and *Sunnah*, as well as through the consensus of the reliable people. Allāh ﷻ says, ‘You are the best *ummah* ever raised for mankind’. Some scholars are unanimous that this verse refers to the *sahābah* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.¹⁷

¹⁷ ‘Ulūm ul Hadīth p.264

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Hāfiz Ibn ‘Abdul Barr ﷺ wrote in the introduction of *Istī‘āb*,

‘The saḥābah ﷺ are the most virtuous people of every era and they are the best nation that was chosen for the guidance of the people by Allāh. Their ‘*adālat* is proven in this way that Allāh ﷻ praised them and mentioned their qualities, and so did Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Who can be more ‘*ādil* than those who were chosen for the companionship and help of Rasūlullāh ﷺ by Allāh ﷻ.’ There can be no greater testimony of the ‘*adālat* and reliability of a person than this.¹⁸

Imām Aḥmad ﷺ states in a journal, as narrated by Istakhrī,

‘It is not permissible for anyone to mention anything evil regarding them, or to accuse them of any fault or shortcoming. It is compulsory to discipline such a person. Maymūnī ﷺ says that he heard Imām Aḥmad ﷺ saying, “What has happened to the people that they speak ill of Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ! We seek safety with Allāh.” Then he said to me, “When you see any person speaking ill of the saḥābah ﷺ, then understand his Islām to be doubtful.”

Imām Nawawī ﷺ writes in *Taqrīb*,
‘All the saḥābah ﷺ are just, those who were affected by the *fitnah* of differences as well as the others.’

¹⁸ Al Istī‘āb vol.1 p.2

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In proving this, ‘Allāmah Suyūṭī ﷺ has mentioned in his commentary of *Taqrīb, Tadrīb ur Rāwī*, after quoting the verses and *ahādīth* (some of which were mentioned above), ‘All of them being just and beyond any criticism is because they were the carriers of the *sharī‘ah*. If there is doubt about their ‘*adālat*, then the *sharī‘ah* of Muḥammad ﷺ will remain confined to the era of Muḥammad ﷺ only. It could not be made general for the generations until *Qiyāmah* and for the far off countries and areas.’

He then wrote in refutation of those scholars who have written a different angle to this matter, ‘It is the view of the majority of the scholars that all the *sahābah* ﷺ in general are just and this is the acceptable view.’¹⁹

‘Allāmah Kamāl Ibn Humām راجع الحديث writes in his comprehensive book on Islāmic beliefs, *Musāyarah*, ‘The belief of the *ahl us sunnah wal jamā‘ah* regarding the *sahābah* ﷺ is that of purity, i.e. they are explained to be free of sin in this way that they are all proven to be ‘*ādil*; and one should refrain from criticizing them in any way. They should be praised just as Allāh ﷻ praised them.’²⁰ Then Ibn Humām ﷺ mentions the verses and narrations that were mentioned above.

Ibn Taymiyyah says in *Sharḥ ‘Aqīdah Wāsitiyyah*,

¹⁹ *Tadrīb ur Rāwī* p.400

²⁰ *Musāyarah* p.132, Deoband

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‘It is part of the principles of belief of the *ahl us sunnah* that they should keep their hearts and tongues pure regarding the matters of the *sahābah* ﷺ, just as Allāh ﷻ has mentioned in this verse, ‘*and those who came after them*’²¹

‘Allāmah Safārīnī ﷺ has written a book on the beliefs of the pious predecessors called *Ad Durrah al Muḍiyyah*. The commentary *Lawāmi‘ al Anwār al Bahiyyah Sharḥ ad Durrah al Muḍiyyah* has been published too. He states therein,

‘The *ahl us sunnah wal jamā‘ah* is unanimous upon this that it is compulsory upon every person to take the *sahābah* ﷺ to be pure, to prove them as just, to abstain from leveling objections upon them and to praise them and mention their qualities. This is because Allāh ﷻ praised them in a number of verses of His noble book. If there was nothing besides this narrated from Allāh ﷻ and His Rasūl ﷺ about the virtue of the *sahābah* ﷺ, then too we would have had to have faith that they are just and pure and it would have been necessary to believe that after Rasūlullāh ﷺ, they are the most virtuous individuals of the *ummah*. The reason for this is that their lives demanded this. They migrated, waged *jihād*, sacrificed their lives and wealth in the assistance of religion, they were prepared to kill their sons and fathers and they acquired the highest stage in well wishing in the matter of religion and in faith and conviction.’²²

²¹ Sharḥ ‘Aqīdah Wāsitiyyah p.403, Egypt

²² ‘Aqīdah Safārīnī vol.2 p.338

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In the same book, Imām Abū Zur‘ah ‘Irāqī ﷺ, a senior teacher of Imām Muslim ﷺ is quoted,

‘When you see anyone belittling the saḥābah ﷺ, then understand that he is a *zindīq* because the *Qur’ān* is the truth, Rasūlullāh ﷺ is true, the teachings that he ﷺ brought are true and the ones who brought all this to us are the saḥābah ﷺ. So, whoever speaks ill regarding them, he is classifying the *Qur’ān* and *Sunnah* as baseless. Therefore, it is more appropriate to mention his status and state the ruling of deviation and being *zindīq*. This is better and more just.’

In the same book, the following view on this matter is narrated from Hāfiz al Hadīth Ibn Hazm Andalūsī, “Allāmah Ibn Hazm ﷺ says that all the saḥābah ﷺ are definitely among the dwellers of *Jannah*. The proof is that Allāh ﷻ says, ‘those who spent before the conquest (of Makkah) and fought are not at par (with others). Those are much greater in rank than those who spent later and fought, though Allāh has promised the good (reward) for each.’²³ and Allāh says, ‘As for those for whom the good (news) from Us has come earlier, they will be kept far away from it, i.e. *Jahannam*.’²⁴

The famous book taught as part of the *Dars e Nizāmī*, ‘*Aqā’id Nasafiyyah*, states, ‘The belief of Islām is that the saḥābah ﷺ are not mentioned except with goodness.’

²³ Sūrah al Hadīd (the Iron) 57:10

²⁴ Sūrah al Ambiyā’ (the Prophets) 21:101

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Similarly, in the well known book of Islāmic belief, *Sharh Mawāqif*, Sayyed Sharīf Jurjānī ﷺ writes in the seventh objective (*maqṣad sābi'*),

‘It is compulsory to honour all the saḥābah ﷺ and to refrain from raising objections regarding them. This is because Allāh ﷻ is great and He has praised them in many places in His book. (Then the verses praising them have been mentioned). Rasūlullāh ﷺ loved them and he lauded them in many *ahādīth* as well.’

This same commentator of *Mawāqif* writes in another place, a view from some of the *ahl us sunnah*, that the error of those who fought Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ reaches the limit of sin. However, we could not find any basis for this view of the commentator of *Mawāqif*. We have not seen this in the speech of any of the scholars of the *ahl us sunnah*, that they have classified Hadrat ‘Ā’isha *radīyallāhu anḥā* and Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ to be sinners (*fāsiq*). Subsequently, Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī ﷺ has vehemently refuted this view of the commentator of *Mawāqif* in his *Maktūbāt*. Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī ﷺ writes,

‘And this that the commentator of *Mawāqif* has written that many of our ‘scholars’ are on this stance that the battle with Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ was not based on *ijtihād*, I do not know which group is meant by ‘scholars’. The belief of the *ahl us sunnah* contradicts this, as explained before. Moreover, the books of the scholars of the *ahl us sunnah* are filled with clarification of ‘a mistake in *ijtihād*’, as Imām Ghazālī ﷺ, Qādī Abū Bakr Ibn ‘Arābī ﷺ and others have written.

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Therefore, it is not permissible to refer to those who fought against Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ as sinners or astray.

Qādī ‘Iyād ﷺ has transmitted a statement of Imām Mālik ﷺ in *Shifā’* that whoever speaks ill of the saḥābah ﷺ, no matter who among them it may be; whether it be Abū Bakr ﷺ, ‘Umar ﷺ, ‘Uthmān ﷺ or Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ, or ‘Amr Ibn al ‘Ās ﷺ, if the person says that they were deviated or they were on disbelief, then he will be killed. If he swears them in general terms, he will be severely punished. Therefore, in the light of this statement of Imām Mālik ﷺ, those who fought Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ are not disbelievers, as is the thinking of some extreme *Rawāfid*, nor were they sinners, as some think. The commentator of *Mawāqif* has attributed this to many of his contemporaries. The texts of some jurists have the word ‘*jawr*’ mentioned regarding Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ and they said that Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ is a ‘*jā’ir*’ leader. So, this means that in the era of the *khilāfat* of Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ, his *khilāfat* was not on the truth. It does not refer to that ‘*jawr*’ and oppression which results in sin and deviation. This explanation is necessary so that it could be harmonious with the views of the *ahl us sunnah*. Together with this, those who adhere to *dīn* refrain from using such words for these noble people, such words through which there could be confusion and the contrary objective is created. I do not understand it permissible to use any harsher word than ‘mistake’ for them.²⁵

²⁵ Maktūbāt Imām Rabbānī, letter 251, vol.2 pp.67-69, Lahore

THE BELIEF AND PRACTICE OF THE UMMAH
REGARDING THE DIFFERENCES (*MUSHĀJARĀT*)
AMONG THE SAHĀBAH ﷺ

The word '*mushājarah*' is derived from '*shajr*'. The original meaning is 'a tree with branches', such branches that spread to the sides. The mutual differences and arguments are referred to as '*mushājarah*', because of this similarity that the branches of a tree also clash with each other and go forward to others. The differences amongst the saḥābah ﷺ reached the point of open war. The scholars of the ummah did not refer to these mutual wars and differences as war and battle, but out of respect, they used the word '*mushājarah*' because, on the whole, it is not a defect if the branches of a tree grow into each other and bump each other. In fact, it is the beauty and perfection of the tree.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

The status and position of the saḥābah ﷺ in Islām has been proven from the texts of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*, and through the consensus of the ummah and the texts of the senior scholars. After this, a question that naturally arises is that when it is compulsory to honour all the saḥābah ﷺ and they are all just, reliable and pious, so if a difference of opinion arises among them regarding a matter, then what should our way be? It is apparent that two contradictory views cannot both be correct and practiced upon. It is

necessary to take one and leave the other. So, what should be the standard that is adopted for taking one and leaving the other? Also, how can the respect and honour for these luminaries remain established, when the view of one is left out and classified as unworthy (*majrūh*)?

This question is especially more difficult in those matters in which the differences among these luminaries reached war and bloodshed. It is apparent that a group among them will be upon the truth and the other will be in error. It is necessary to make the decision of error and correctness for the sake of practice and belief. However, in this case, how can the honour and respect for both groups remain equal at the same time? Whichever one is classified to be in error, it will necessarily result in them being lowered.

The answer is that it is incorrect to say that if one view from two different ones is classified as true or preferred, and the second is said to be incorrect or inferior, so it necessitates a group to be lower or blameworthy. The pious predecessors of the *ummah* have brought together both aspects in this way that for practice and belief, they adopted the view of one group in accordance to the accepted principles of *ijtihād* (of the *sharīah*) and they left one. However, the person whose view was left, not a single sentence was said regarding his being and personality through which he would be lowered or be made to seem inferior or blameworthy. This is especially regarding the *mushājarāt* of the *sahābah*, just as the *ummah* has reached

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consensus that it is necessary to honour both groups and it is not permissible to speak ill regarding any of the two groups, there is consensus that in the battle of Jamal, Hadrat 'Alī ﷺ was on the truth and in opposition to him, his opponents were in error. Similarly, in the battle of Siffīn, Hadrat 'Alī ﷺ was on the truth and in opposition to him, Hadrat Mu'āwiyah ﷺ and his companions were in error. However, their error is classified as an error in *ijtihād*, which is not a sin in the *sharī'ah* and for which there is no punishment from Allāh ﷻ. According to the principles of *ijtihād*, after a person has made effort, and errs, then too, he will not be deprived of reward; he attains one reward.

By the consensus of the *ummah*, the difference of opinion of the *sahābah* ﷺ is classified as a difference of opinion in *ijtihād*. Through this, the personalities of the two groups will not be blameworthy or lowered.

In this way, the error and that which is correct has been clarified. On the other hand, the rank and status of the *sahābah* ﷺ has also been considered. In addition, holding one's tongue and adopting silence regarding the *mushājarāt* of the *sahābah* ﷺ has been classified as the safest and it has been emphasized that it is not permissible to delve into these narrations and incidents without reason; narrations that state what they said to each other during war. Study the statements of the pious predecessors regarding the *mushājarāt* of the *sahābah* ﷺ.

Tafsīr Qurtubī has gathered the views of the pious predecessors regarding the *mushājarāt* of the *sahābah* ﷺ,

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accompanied by excellent research under the verse, ‘if two groups of the believers fight each other’²⁶. It is presented forthwith,

‘It is not permissible to attribute wrong to any saḥābī with certainty and conviction. This is because all of them exercised *ijtihād* in their method of action. The objective of all of them was the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ. All of them are our leaders and we have been commanded to hold our tongues regarding their mutual differences and always speak of them in the best way. This is because being a saḥābī is something of great honour and Rasūlullāh ﷺ prohibited us from speaking ill regarding them. He ﷺ has also informed that Allāh ﷻ has forgiven them and He is pleased with them. Besides this, the following *hadīth* is proven from a number of chains of narration that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said regarding Hadrat Talha ﷺ, “Indeed Talha is a walking martyr.”

Now, if Hadrat Talha ﷺ’s coming out to war against Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ was an open sin, then by him being martyred in this battle, he would have never acquired the status of martyrdom. Similarly, if this action of Hadrat Talhā ﷺ is classified as an error in interpretation and shortcoming in fulfilling a compulsion, then too he would not have achieved the position of martyrdom. This is because martyrdom is achieved when a person is killed in the

²⁶ Sūrah al Hujurāt (the Chambers) 49:9

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obedience of Allāh ﷻ. Therefore, it is necessary to interpret their matter upon the belief that was previously explained.

Another proof of this is the authentic and famous *hadīth* which is narrated from Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ in which Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “The killer of Zubayr is in *Jahannam*.”

In addition, Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ says that he heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ saying, “Give news of *Jahannam* to the killer of the son of Safiyyah.”

When this is the case, then it is proven that Hadrat Talha ﷺ and Hadrat Zubayr ﷺ were not sinners on account of fighting this battle. If this was not the case, then Rasūlullāh ﷺ would not have called Hadrat Talha ﷺ a martyr and he would not have given news of *Jahannam* to the killer of Hadrat Zubayr ﷺ. Moreover, he is counted among the *‘asharah mubash sharah*; and the testimony of them being dwellers of *Jannah* is almost *mutawātir*.

Similarly, those *sahābah* ﷺ who withdrew from these battles, they cannot be said to be in error when interpreting the situation. In fact, their way was also correct in this sense that Allāh ﷻ kept them firm on their *ijtihād*. When this is the case, then it can never be correct in any way to criticize them, to disclaim association with them and call them sinners, or to nullify their virtue, sacrifice and their great status in religion.

Some scholars were questioned regarding their view of the blood that was shed in the *mushājarāt* of the *sahābah* ﷺ. They recited the following verse in reply,

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تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

These are a people who have passed away. For them is what they earned, and for you is what you earned, and you shall not be questioned about what they have been doing. [Sūrah al Baqarah (the Cow) 2:141]

Another pious person was asked, so he said, “This is such blood that Allāh ﷻ has saved my hands from being colored in it. Now I do not want to soil my tongue in it too.” This means that he did not want to classify any group to be in error with certainty.

‘Allāmah Ibn Faurak ﷺ says, “Some of our companions said that the example of the *mushājarāt* amongst the *sahābah* ﷺ is like the incidents that took place between *Hadrat Yūsuf* ﷺ and his brothers. Despite these differences, they did not go beyond the scope of *wilāyat* and *nubuwwah*. The incidents that took place between the *sahābah* ﷺ is exactly the same.”

Muhāsibī ﷺ says, “Regarding this bloodshed, it is difficult for us to say anything because there were differences among the *sahābah* ﷺ themselves. *Hasan Basrī* ﷺ was asked about the fighting amongst the *sahābah* ﷺ, so he said, “This was such a battle in which the *sahābah* ﷺ were present and we were absent, they were aware of the entire situation, we do not know. We shall follow the *sahābah* in those matters wherein they were unanimous and we shall remain silent in those matters wherein they had differences.”

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Muhāsibī ﷺ says that we say the same thing that Hasan Baṣrī ﷺ said that we know that whatever the saḥābah ﷺ participated in, they knew about it much more than us. Therefore, our work is that whatever they have reached consensus upon, we should follow, and that in which they had differences, we should adopt silence and not create new opinions from our own side. We have conviction that they all resorted to *ijtihād* and they desired the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ. That is why they are all above and beyond any doubt in the matter of religion.'

In this lengthy text, 'Allāmah Qurtubī ﷺ has explained the belief of the *ahl us sunnah* in the best way. In the beginning, he has thrown light on this matter by mentioning the *ahādīth* that were narrated about the martyrdom of Hadrat Talha ﷺ and Hadrat Zubayr ﷺ. Through these (narrations), special light is thrown on this matter. Hadrat Talha ﷺ and Hadrat Zubayr ﷺ are both among the die-hard companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. They are also part of the ten fortunate nobles whom Rasūlullāh ﷺ gave the glad tidings of *Jannah* by name; these are called the "Asharah Mubash sharah". Both of them opposed Hadrat 'Alī ﷺ in order to seek *qisās* for Hadrat 'Uthmān ﷺ and they were martyred in this cause. In the above quoted *ahādīth*, they have been classified as martyrs by Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

On the other side was Hadrat 'Ammār Ibn Yāsir ﷺ. He was among the close companions of Hadrat 'Alī ﷺ. He faced the opposition of Hadrat 'Alī ﷺ with full strength. Rasūlullāh ﷺ also prophesized martyrdom for him. If we

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ponder, then these very *ahādīth* are a clear proof that in these battles, none of the groups were on clear and open falsehood. In fact, every group was working for the pleasure of Allāh, in accordance to their *ijtihād*. Otherwise, it is apparent that if this difference of opinion dealt with truth and falsehood, then he ﷺ would not have prophesized martyrdom for the leaders of both groups at the same time. These *ahādīth* have clarified that Hadrat Talha ﷺ and Hadrat Zubayr ﷺ were also fighting for the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ and that is why they were also martyrs. The objective of Hadrat ‘Ammār ﷺ was also nothing but to acquire the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ and therefore he is also deserving of praise and honour. The difference of opinion they had was not based on some worldly objective, but it was based on *ijtihād* and opinion. No group can be classified as blameworthy and be criticized.

The following is stated in *Sharh Mawāqif, Maqсад Sābi’*,

‘Regarding that *fitnah* and battles that took place among the *sahābah* ﷺ, the Shāmī group have rejected their occurrence totally. There is no doubt that this is rejection without proof because of the *tawātur* with which the martyrdom of Hadrat ‘Uthmān ﷺ and the battles of Jamal and Siffīn have been narrated. As for the scholars who did not refute their occurrence, some of them have adopted complete silence regarding these incidents and they have not attributed wrong to any particular group, neither have they stated that one particular group is correct. These

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scholars are a part of the *Ahl us Sunnah*. If they mean that this is a useless activity, then well and good, because Imām Shāfi'ī ﷺ and other scholars among the pious predecessors have stated that this is such blood from which Allāh ﷻ has kept our hands pure and therefore we should also keep our tongues pure from it.'

Shaykh Ibn al Humām ﷺ has stated in *Sharh Musāmarah*,

'The belief of the *Ahl us Sunnah* is that they necessarily accept all the *sahābah* ﷺ to be pure because Allāh ﷻ has purified all of them. Also, they (the *Ahl us Sunnah*) refrain from leveling objections against them and praise all of them, just as Allāh ﷻ praised them...and Rasūlullāh ﷺ has also praised them...and the battles that took place between Hadrat 'Alī ﷺ and Hadrat Mu'āwiyah ﷺ were based on *ijtihad*.'

Ibn Taymiyyah has discussed this issue at length in *Sharh 'Aqīdah Wāsitiyyah*. He writes about the belief of the *Ahl us Sunnah*. A few sentences of his are presented forthwith,

'The *Ahl us Sunnah* have exonerated themselves from the ways of the *Rawāfid*, who hate the *sahābah* ﷺ and speak ill of them. Similarly, they also exonerate themselves from the ways of the *Nāsibīs*, who cause harm to the *Ahl Bayt* by their talks, not deeds. The *Ahl us Sunnah* adopt silence regarding the differences among the *sahābah* ﷺ and they say that some of the narrations that speak ill of the *sahābah* ﷺ are totally false, some are such that they have been tampered

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with and the correct purport has been changed. Even in the narrations that are authentic, the saḥābah ﷺ are excused. Some of them resorted to *ijtihād* and reached the truth, some used *ijtihād* and erred. Together with this, it is not the belief of the *Ahl us Sunnah* that every individual among the saḥābah ﷺ are *ma'sūm* from every minor and major sin, but it is possible for sins to occur from them. However, their virtues and achievements are so many that even if a sin comes from them, these virtues will necessitate their forgiveness, to such an extent that the opportunities of their forgiveness are so many that no-one after them will be able to acquire them.'

In the same book, Ibn Taymiyyah states after a lengthy discussion, 'And when this became the principle of the pious predecessors of the *Ahl us Sunnah wal Jamā'ah*, then understand that the crux of their statement is that whatever sins or evil are attributed to some saḥābah ﷺ, majority of them are lies and fabrications. A part of them is such that they adopted a ruling of the *sharī'ah* and understanding of religion based on *ijtihād*. However, many people do not know the reason or the reality behind their *ijtihād*. Therefore, they classify it as sin. Even in a particular matter, if it has to be accepted that they did not err in *ijtihād*, but they committed a sin in reality, then understand that even that sin has been forgiven, or they have been forgiven because of repentance (just as their repentance is narrated in various places in the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*).

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Alternatively, on account of their other thousands of good deeds and acts of obedience, they have been forgiven or they have been given recompense for the sin by having been afflicted with difficulty and trouble. Besides these, there are other causes of forgiveness too. (The reason for classifying their sins as forgiven is that) it has been proven from the proofs of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* that they are among the dwellers of *Jannah*, therefore it is impossible that such a deed remains as part of their record of deeds that will become a cause for receiving punishment in *Jahannam*. It has been learnt that none of the saḥābah ﷺ will pass away in this state that they will have something that will serve as a cause for entry into *Jahannam*. Besides this, nothing can prevent them from being deserving of *Jannah*.

Besides the '*Ashara Mubash sharah*, although we cannot say with certainty regarding a specific person that he is a dweller of *Jannah*, but it is not permissible to state regarding any person, without *shar'ī* proof, that he is not deserving of *Jannah*. This is because it is not permissible to state this regarding a general Muslim about whom we do not know any proof of him being a dweller of *Jannah*. Moreover, we cannot give this testimony regarding them (the general Muslims) that they will definitely go to *Jahannam*. So, how can it be permissible regarding the most virtuous of the believers and the best believers (the saḥābah ﷺ)? It is very difficult for us to acquire knowledge of all the outer and inner deeds, good actions and bad actions and the details of the *ijtihād* of every saḥābī. It is also forbidden

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to make a decision regarding any person without knowledge and research. Therefore, silence in the matter of the *mushājarāt e sahābah* is better because it is forbidden to pass judgment without proper knowledge.²⁷

After this, Ibn Taymiyyah explains the following incident, as narrated authentically,

‘A person leveled three accusations on Hadrat ‘Uthmān Ghanī ﷺ in front of Hadrat ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ. One was that he was among those who fled from the battle of Uḥud. The second is that he did not participate in the battle of Badr. The third was that he did not participate in the pledge of Ridwān.

Hadrat ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ answered these accusations, that in the battle of Uḥud, he did flee, but Allāh ﷻ announced forgiveness for him. However, yet you do not forgive, thereby making him blameworthy. Regarding him not participating in Badr, that was by the command of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and that is why he ﷺ counted ‘Uthmān Ghanī ﷺ among the fighters and allocated a share of the booty for him. At the time of the pledge of Ridwān, he was sent by Rasūlullāh ﷺ to Makkah Mukarramah and in order for him to participate in the pledge, Rasūlullāh ﷺ classified his own hand to be the hand of Hadrat ‘Uthmān ﷺ and pledged allegiance with his own hands. It is apparent that if ‘Uthmān Ghanī ﷺ would have been present, his hand would have been in that place and he would not have

²⁷ Sharh ‘Aqīdah Wāsitiyyah pp.456-457

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acquired the virtue because the blessed palm of Rasūlullāh ﷺ is a thousand times better.’

Ponder over this incident. After accepting one of three accusations to be correct he gave the reply, that now there is no fault in him when Allāh ﷻ has forgiven him. He explained that the other two accusations are incorrect and baseless. By narrating this, Ibn Taymiyyah says that this is the condition of all the saḥābah ﷺ. Whatever sin is attributed to them, either it was not a sin, but a good deed, or it was a sin that has been forgiven by Allāh ﷻ.²⁸

In his book, *Ad Durrah Al Mudiyyah*, and then in the commentary, ‘Allāmah Safārīnī ﷺ discusses this issue very well. Part of it is mentioned here. First, two poems of the original are presented,

‘And refrain from taking part in the mutual arguments among the saḥābah, in which any of them are belittled. This is because whatever they did was based on *shar‘ī ijtihād*. Adopt the path of safety. Allāh will disgrace the person who speaks ill of them.’

He then writes in the commentary,

‘This is because the arguments, disagreements, the confrontation and fighting among the saḥābah ﷺ was based on the *ijtihād* that the leaders of the two groups made and the objective of both the groups was good. Although in this *ijtihād*, the group on the truth is only one; and that was Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ and his companions. Those in error were

²⁸ Sharh ‘Aqīdah Wāsitiyyah pp.460-461

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those that argued and disputed against Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ. However, the group that was in error will also get one reward. Only the stubborn and rebellious ones will have a difference of opinion in this belief. Therefore, it is compulsory to explain even the authentic narrations regarding the *mushājarāt e saḥābah*, such explanation which removes the accusation of sin from them. Hence, the bitter talk between Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ and Hadrat ‘Abbās ﷺ is not blameworthy for anyone. Also, in the beginning, where Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ did not pledge allegiance at the hands of Abū Bakr ﷺ, it was on account of one of two reasons; either he was not consulted – as he had shown regret upon this, or, pleasing the heart of Hadrat Fātimah *radīyallāhu anḥā* was the objective. She understood that she should get her share of the inheritance of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, then undoubtedly Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ will pledge allegiance at the hands of Hadrat Abū Bakr ﷺ in front of everyone. Through the grace of Allāh, the matter of the Muslims was unified and the objective was attained.

Similarly, the delay of Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ in taking *qisās* from the killers of Hadrat ‘Uthmān ﷺ was either based on the fact that the killers were not known with certainty or because there was fear of an increase in *fitnah* and corruption. Hadrat ‘Ā’isha *radīyallāhu anḥā*, Hadrat Talḥa ﷺ, Hadrat Zubayr ﷺ, Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ and their followers understood it permissible to wage war against Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ. Among them were those who made *ijtihād* and some were followers.

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The people of truth are unanimous on this that in these wars, the truth was undoubtedly with Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ. The true belief about which there is no compromise is that all the saḥābah ﷺ were just. This is because, in all these wars, they adopted *ta’wīl* and *ijtihād*. That is why, according to the people of truth, although the truth is one, but upon making an error after striving in order to reach the truth and not falling short in one’s effort, the person will still get reward, he will not be sinful.

In reality, the cause of these wars was confusion regarding the matters. This confusion was so severe that the views of the saḥābah that were based on *ijtihād*; differed and they were divided into three groups. One group of the saḥābah ﷺ was the one whose *ijtihād* took them to the result that the truth is with a particular group and those who oppose this group are rebels. Therefore, according to their *ijtihād*, helping the group that is on the truth and fighting the rebel group is compulsory. Subsequently, they did this. It is quite apparent that whoever is in this state, it will never be appropriate for him to fall short in his duty of aiding the just and true leader and fighting the rebels.

The second type is the opposite. Whatever applied to the first type will apply to them as well.

A third group among the saḥābah ﷺ was the one who felt it difficult to pass a decision. It could not be clarified regarding whom preference should be given. This group was the neutral one. It was compulsory for them to remain neutral because as long as no *shar’ī* reason became

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clear, it was not permissible to take steps to fight Muslims. This is the reason why all the worthy scholars among the people of truth are unanimous that their testimony and narrations are accepted. Moreover, ‘*adālat*’ is proven for them all. That is why the scholars of our country – and all the scholars of the *Ahl us Sunnah* – among whom is Ibn Hamdān ﷺ (*Nihāyatul Muḥtadī’in*), who said, ‘It is compulsory to have love for the saḥābah ﷺ and to refrain from writing, reading, teaching, hearing and lecturing regarding the incidents that took place amongst themselves. It is compulsory to mention their good qualities, to show happiness with them, to love them, to abandon the culture of objecting to them, to excuse them, and it is necessary to have this conviction that whatever they did, they did it based on permissible *ijtihād*, from which *kufṛ* will not be necessitated, nor will sin be proven. In fact, they will sometimes earn reward because this was their permissible *ijtihād*.’

He then says, ‘Some scholars have said that the truth was with Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ and whoever fought him, his mistake has been forgiven.’

In the poem of *Ad Durrah al Muḍiyyah*, the thinking and discussion regarding the *Mushājarāt* that we have been forbidden from, is because Imām Ahmad ﷺ has criticized the person who engages in this discussion. He used to accept the *Aḥādīth* that mention the virtue of the saḥābah ﷺ and exonerate himself from those who say that the saḥābah ﷺ are astray or disbelievers. He used to say that

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the correct way regarding the *mushājarāt e sahābah* ﷺ is to adopt silence.²⁹

This was a short collection of the beliefs and statements of the early and latter day scholars of the *ummah*. In them, there is consensus regarding the just and reliable nature of the *sahābah* ﷺ and they also reflect consensus that we should not delve into the *mushājarāt* that occurred amongst them, or that we should adopt silence. Alternatively, we should refrain from saying anything regarding them that will stand as criticism.

THE SAHĀBAH ﷺ WERE NOT SINLESS, BUT THEY WERE FORGIVEN AND ACCEPTED

Together with this, all these scholars are also unanimous on this that the *sahābah* ﷺ are not *ma'sūm* (pure of sin) like the *ambiyā'* (*alayhim as salām*). Errors and sin can occur from them, and it did. Upon this, Rasūlullāh ﷺ executed the *hadd* and punishment. All these incidents in the *ahādīth* cannot be denied. In the previous section, this is clarified. See the discussion of Ibn Taymiyyah on page 83. However, despite this, the *sahābah* ﷺ have a number of outstanding characteristics that makes them stand out from the general people. This is based on a few reasons.

1. Through the blessings of the companionship of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Allāh ﷻ made them such that the

²⁹ Sharh 'Aqā'id Safārīnī vol.2 p.386

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sharī'ah became their nature. An action contrary to the *sharī'ah* or a sin coming from them was extremely rare. They performed good deeds, sacrificed their lives, wealth and children all for Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the religion of Islām, and they had made the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ and Rasūlullāh ﷺ their way of life. They made so much sacrifice that an example of this cannot be found in previous nations. Compared to these good deeds, virtues and perfections, if a sin had to occur in their lives, it would be wiped out (on account of the deeds etc.).

2. The love and honour of Allāh ﷻ and Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and their fear upon committing a sin was such that they would immediately repent. In fact, they would present themselves for punishment and they would insist that it be given. This is well known in the *ahādīth* and other narrations. According to the ruling in the *hadīth*, sin is wiped out by repentance and a person becomes as though he did not commit the sin at all.
3. According to the verse of the *Qur'ān*, the good deeds of a person automatically wipe out his sins. (إن الحسنات يذهبن السيئات)
4. In extremely difficult and torrid times, they made effort with Rasūlullāh ﷺ and waged war in order to establish religion and aid Islām, such that there is no example like theirs in other nations of the world.

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5. The saḥābah ﷺ are a means between Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the *ummah*. The *Qur'ān*, *Hadīth* and all the teachings of religion reached the rest of the *ummah* by means of them. If they had shortcomings or left out something, then the religion would not have been protected until *Qiyāmah* and it would not have been possible to spread it to the corners of the world. Therefore, through the blessings of the companionship of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, their character, habits, movements and deeds were made to follow the religion. Sin would not emit from them in the first place and if any sin did occur from them, which was extremely rare, they would immediately repent and thereby compensate. They were also well known for making effort and striving in the matter of religion more than before (having committed the sin).
6. Allāh ﷻ chose them for the companionship of His Nabī and He made them a means and link for religion. He also gave them this special honour that He announced forgiveness of their mistakes and His pleasure in this world. Moreover, He promised *Jannah* to them in the Noble *Qur'ān*.
7. Rasūlullāh ﷺ told the *ummah* that love and honour for them is a sign of *īmān* and to criticize them or belittle them is a danger to *īmān*. It is also a means of causing hurt to Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

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Based on these reasons, despite them not being *ma'sūm* and sin occurring rarely from them, the belief of the *ummah* has been established that no fault or sin should be attributed to them. Everyone should stay away from even the slightest criticism or belittling of them. In their mutual differences that even reached the level of fighting, one group in these *mushājarāt* was on the truth and the consensus of scholars of the *ummah* is clearly explained that Hadrat 'Alī ﷺ was on the truth and those who fought him were in error. However, together with this, based on the above quoted texts of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*, they have all reached consensus that the group that was in error, their error was in *ijtihād*. It was not a sin. In fact, it is proven from an authentic *hadīth* that they will get one reward. And if an error or sin came from them in the commotion of war and fighting, then too, they regretted and repented, as such speech has been narrated from most of them. (This will be mentioned ahead).

This is especially so when the Noble *Qur'ān* has praised them and Allāh ﷻ has announced His pleasure for them. This is a rank higher than being forgiven. See the last four quotes of the previous section.

Who has the right to mention the sins of those luminaries whose co-incidental sins and mistakes have been forgiven by Allāh ﷻ, blacken his record of deeds and thereby spoil his belief and reliance on this noble group of the *ummah* and strike at the foundations of religion? Therefore, the pious predecessors of the *ummah* have

generally restrained their tongues and adopted silence and have thereby protected their *īmān*. They have adopted the way explained from *‘Aqīdah Wāsitiyyah* above regarding all the objectionable things that have been attributed to both groups regarding the mutual wars.

Most of the objectionable things are lies and fabrications that have been placed in the history works and have been narrated from the *Rawāfiḍ*, *Khawārij* and hypocrites. Even those narrations that are correct, they are also not a sin, not because they have permitted it through their *ijtihād*, but they have adopted it for religion, understanding it to be necessary.

Even though their *ijtihād* might be wrong, it is still not a sin. And if this is accepted in a particular matter that the error was not in *ijtihād*, then it will definitely be a sin. Therefore, apparently, out of the fear of Allāh and concern for the hereafter, they have repented, whether it was announced or not. If it is not in the knowledge of people, then their good deeds and services to religion are so great that because of them, it is close to conviction that they will be forgiven.

However, some scholars have discussed the *mushājarāt e saḥābah* in order to remove the misunderstanding that has been created by the narrations that have been proliferated by the *Rawāfiḍ*, *Khawārij* and hypocrites. This is correct in its place but it is still a slip of the foot and it is not easy to come out of it without

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difficulty. Therefore, majority of the *ummah* and the pious among the predecessors did not like it.

A summary of the advices of the pious predecessors and the scholars of the *ummah*;

1. Hadrat ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas‘ūd ﷺ said regarding all the saḥābah ﷺ, without exception, “They had pure hearts, they were the best in character, they were the chosen servants of Allāh, appreciate them.” (Imām Ahmad ﷺ)
2. When Hadrat ‘Uthmān ﷺ was accused in front of Hadrat ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ, then even though one of the three accusations was apparently correct, Hadrat ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ defended him and declared the accuser to be blameworthy. (see page 85)
3. The most virtuous of the *Tābi‘īn*, ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz ﷺ said regarding all the saḥābah ﷺ, without exception, “The saḥābah are the furthest ahead among the *ummah* and they are their (the *ummah*’s) leaders and they are on the straight path.”(Abū Dāwūd , Kitāb us Sunnah, narration 1)
4. Hadrat Hasan Basrī ﷺ was asked regarding the mutual fighting of the saḥābah ﷺ. He said, “This matter is such that the saḥābah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ were present there and we were not. They knew the

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true reality of the conditions and affairs, we do not know. Therefore, whatever they agreed upon, we followed and that in which they had difference of opinion, we have adopted reservation and silence.” (Qurtubī)

5. Hadrat Muhāsibī ﷺ said that we say the same thing that Hadrat Hasan ﷺ says that whatever action the saḥābah ﷺ chose; they possessed more knowledge about it. Therefore, our stance is that whatever they have reached consensus upon, we shall follow them in it; and that in which they had a difference of opinion, we shall adopt reservation and silence. We shall not bring a new view because we know that whatever they did, it was based on their *ijtihād*, and their objective was only to carry out the command of Allāh; they were not such people who were accused in the matter of religion. (Qurtubī)
6. Imām Shāfiī ﷺ said regarding the *mushājarāt e saḥābah*, “This is the blood from which Allāh ﷻ has kept our hands clean (because we were not present at the time). Therefore, we should also not stain our tongues with this blood, i.e. we should not speak about any saḥābī and not accuse them of anything, but we should adopt silence. (Sharḥ Mawāqif)

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7. When a person belittled the saḥābah ﷺ in front of Imām Mālik ﷺ, he recited the verse of the Qurʾān, Sūrah al Fath (the Victory) 48:29, and said that whoever has any ill feeling regarding the saḥābah ﷺ in his heart, he is objecting to this verse. (Quoted by Khatīb Abū Bakr). Imām Mālik ﷺ stated regarding those who belittle the saḥābah ﷺ that the objective of these people is to belittle Rasūlullāh ﷺ. However, they did not have the audacity to do it, so they speak ill of his saḥābah ﷺ so that people understand that, Allāh protect us, Rasūlullāh ﷺ himself is an evil person. If he was good, then his companions would also have been pious. (As Sārim al Maslūl of Ibn Taymiyyah).
8. Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal ﷺ said, “It is not permissible for a Muslim to speak ill of the saḥābah ﷺ or to pick out any fault of theirs or to criticize any of their shortcomings. If someone does this, then it will be compulsory to punish him.” He also said that if you see anyone who speaks ill of the saḥābah, then understand his Islām and imān to be blameworthy and doubtful. Ibrāhīm Ibn Maysarah says that I have never seen Hadrat ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz ﷺ personally hitting anyone except one person who swore and spoke ill of Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ. He personally lashed the person. (As Sārim al Maslūl of Ibn Taymiyyah)

9. Imām Abū Dhur‘ah ﷺ, the teacher of Imām Muslim ﷺ said, “If you see anyone belittling the saḥābah then understand that he is a *zindīq* who wants to remove the faith of the *ummah* in the *Qur‘ān* and *Sunnah*. Therefore, it is correct to call him a *zindīq* and astray.”

These were a few specific statements of the pious predecessors of the *ummah*. Besides this, in the above quoted narrations and texts, it has been classified the unanimous belief of the *ummah*, from which it is not permissible to turn away.

Regarding the *mushājarāt e saḥābah*, it is the belief and decision of the saḥābah, *tābī‘īn* and *mujtahid imāms* that we accept them all to be the accepted servants of Allāh, whether it is because we are not completely aware of the conditions through which they passed, or it is because the *Qur‘ān* and *Sunnah* praises them and the divine glad tidings demand it. Even if some error occurred from them, it should be classified as forgiven and no word should be uttered, due to which they are belittled, debased or it could be a means of hurt for them. This is because hurting them is hurting Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Very wretched is the person who shows himself to be a researcher and think-tank and takes the responsibility of bearing an accusation on them.

ANSWERS TO THE ORIENTALISTS AND HERETICS

In these times, whichever scholars of Egypt, India and Pakistan have made the *mushājarāt e saḥābah* the subject of their research and have written books on it, in essence, it is defense and replies in the face of the Orientalists and heretics. They have understood this to be service of Islām.

In this time, among the general Muslims, due to absence of education and new heretical teachings coming to the fore, a large number of Muslims have become estranged from Islām, the beliefs of Islām and the laws of Islām. Respect and honour for the pious predecessors has become a meaningless word in their minds. This has been termed 'free thinking'.

The Orientalists and heretics have always been attacking Islām from various angles and they have been engaged in leading people astray. They have taken advantage of the situation and have begun to attack Islām on this front that they (the Orientalists and Heretics) should spread such things about the saḥābah ﷺ that will cause the reliance and belief present in their hearts to go away. When reliance on this noble group will be removed, then the path of irreligiousness will be prepared. For this objective, they have begun to work on the history works of the Muslims in the name of research and study. They have chosen incidents and narrations from the books of history that contain authentic and unauthentic narrations, and even the narrations of the *Rawāfid* and *Shī'a*; and have

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brought them in the open. Due to this, the standing of the sahābah ﷺ does not remain anything more than leaders who desire to be followed. Moreover, a very despicable picture of their lives has been drawn. Our newly educated class, who are unaware of their own matters and have been kept ignorant of the necessary beliefs and laws of Islām read the books of the Orientalists with great interest. Unfortunately, they read this subject matter taking it to be knowledge and have fallen into the trap of the Orientalists and heretics.

Looking at this, a number of Muslim authors began working to defend them (the sahābah ﷺ). Undoubtedly, this is a service to Islām that has been done from a long time by the *Mutakallimīn* under the science called *‘Ilm Kalām*.

However, the method adopted for this work was incorrect in principle. The result of this was that they fell into the trap themselves. The work of harming the nobility and purity of the sahābah ﷺ was completed in the books of these authors, such harm which the Orientalists and heretics could not do. As Muslims awoke to the reality, they would not trust their narrations, regarding them to be enemies of Islām.

The reason for this is that Islām has stipulated specific principles in order to criticize a person or in order to establish an accusation against him. These principles are intellectual and are based on the *sharī‘ah*. As long as these criticisms are not brought in line with these principles of *Jarh* and *Ta’dīl*, it will be a crime and oppression in Islām to

criticize someone. This is to such an extent, that it is forbidden in Islām to accuse even a person well known for oppression and tyranny, without proof and research. A person accused Hajjāj Ibn Yūsuf in front of some senior scholars of the *ummah*. Hajjāj Ibn Yūsuf's oppression and tyranny was famous in the world. The pious person said, "Do you have a *shar'ī* proof stating that Hajjāj Ibn Yūsuf did this?" There was no proof. Because Hajjāj Ibn Yūsuf was disgraced and known for openly sinning, the narrator did not even deem it necessary to present proof.

The pious person said, "Understand well that if Hajjāj is an oppressor and Allāh has given retribution for the thousands that were killed, then remember too that if someone wrongly accuses Hajjāj, retribution will be meted out to him as well. The law of justice of the *Rabb* of the universe does not permit that baseless accusations are leveled against any person, even a sinner, or a disbeliever."

When this is the way of Islām with general people, even with disbelievers and sinners, then think about the group or individual who, after believing in Allāh and Rasūlullāh ﷺ, sacrificed everything for His pleasure, at every step and every breath made the execution of the command of Allāh ﷻ his life; in terms of character and justice, even his enemies testified! Regarding such a person, how can the just law of Islām tolerate that those who disgrace these noble personalities and accuse them are just let off to criticize them by quoting any wrong and mixed up narration without any research and study?

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The Orientalists and heretics are the enemies of Islām. If they willfully overlook this just principle of Islām, then it is not far-fetched. However, regret is upon those people who have come into this blood-filled quagmire in order to defend them, and they have overlooked this Islāmic principle and have adopted the same method regarding the saḥābah ﷺ which the Orientalists have adopted. Through their thinking, understanding and planning, they have used this method against Islām and the luminaries of Islām. This method is that they have leveled accusations upon the saḥābah ﷺ by making the baseless and mixed-up historical narrations the subject of research and using these narrations and incidents as a basis (for their accusations).

The lives of these luminaries (the saḥābah ﷺ), and their conditions is a part of the *ahādīth* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. The science of *hadīth* was arranged with great caution and criticism. Similarly, a great portion of the *Qur'ān* speaks of them. This is because many verses of the *Qur'ān* were revealed specifically about the incidents of the saḥābah ﷺ. Then, although the command of the *Qur'ān* is general for all Muslims, but this particular saḥābī (for instance) was referred to. If we think in this way, then many conditions and circumstances of the saḥābah ﷺ will be learnt. In order to understand their lives and their conditions, there are resolute verses of the *Qur'ān* and the *ahādīth* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ that was compiled with great caution and research present. On the other hand, there are

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historical narrations. Regarding these, it is the consensus of the *imāms* of history that there is no consideration given to the chain being correct. There is no *hadīth* method employed regarding the reliability of the narrators. In fact, the ‘religious’ work of the historian is just this that whatever narration reaches him about a particular incident, he gathers it all, even if it be contrary to his path and *madh hab*. How can this be justice that regarding a particular person, these authentic and unauthentic historical narrations are taken and regarding a particular person, they are given effect and an accusation is leveled against him and preference is given to these debatable, baseless historical narrations over the testimony of the *Qur’ān* and *hadīth*?

This is not only a matter of Islāmic belief and support of the *sahābah* ﷺ, but it is a matter of intelligence and justice. I pose this question to the non Muslim Orientalists and their cronies. If there are two types of narrations regarding a person or a group of people; in one type of narration, the entire chain of narration is protected, the narrators have been gauged according to the yardstick of *Jarh* and *Ta’dīl*, complete caution was exercised in preserving the words, while the second type of narration comprises such narrations that are correct, incorrect, authentic, without any chain of narration, in some places there might be a chain of narration, but the narrators have not been scrutinized and the words have not been

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scrutinized. In such conditions, which type of narrations will you give preference to in your research and study?

If there is something like intelligence and justice today, then do a study and see those who are at the forefront in the *mushājarāt e sahābah* and in the mutual battles. They are Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ, Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ, Hadrat Talha ﷺ, Hadrat Zubayr ﷺ, Hadrat ‘Amr Ibn ‘Ās ﷺ and others. Their biographies and the discussions between them are found in the books of *hadīth* and have been scrutinized in the light of the principles of *hadīth*. There are historical narrations explaining their biographies and statements as well. Weigh both of these narrations separately and gauge your hearts and minds that what effect do the narrations of *hadīth* have regarding their affairs? In contrast, what effect do the historical narrations leave? Do a comparison and see. No doubt will remain that the narrations compiled in the *hadīth* books, even if some transgression or error of a *sahābī* is learnt, the collective effect is never that the personality of the person is harmed or taken to be unreliable. In opposition to historical narrations, if a person reads them, then he will classify both sides; or, at least one side as wrong, hankering after leadership.

The objective of the Orientalists was precisely to create divisions and differences in the ranks of the Muslims. If not all the groups of the *sahābah* ﷺ are affected, then some are and they are classified as unreliable. It is not far-fetched if they have closed their eyes to the clear texts of

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the *Qur'ān*, *Sunnah* and narrations, and they have formulated a decision regarding the *sahābah* ﷺ based only on historical narrations. Regret is upon the Muslim authors, who, together with stepping into this field, have overlooked the just principles of Islām in criticism and the wise principles of *Jarh* and *Ta'dīl* and have made historical narrations their basis.

Those luminaries regarding whom the clear, resolute texts of the *Qur'ān* and *hadīth* have made *Ta'dīl* of, i.e. classified them as just and reliable, in weighty words, and it has testified to them as being reliable in the matter of religion, regarding whom the texts of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* have also proven that even if they made an error or committed a sin, they did not remain on it; they are forgiven by Allāh and mercy has been shown to them. If after this, they are made the target of criticism through historical narrations, it is against Islām firstly, and it also opposes intelligence and justice.

The consensus of the *ummah*, that of the *sahābah* ﷺ, the *tābi'īn* and the later scholars that has been mentioned above, that in the *mushājarāt e saḥābah* and in the incidents that took place between them, their outstanding characteristic was to adopt silence and hold one's tongue. It is not appropriate to mention the narrations and incidents regarding this matter as well.

This is not blind belief or fleeing from research, but it is the correct, just and cautious decision.

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As explained above, in the light of the clear texts of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*, this is the noble group which Allāh ﷻ chose to be a means between His Rasūl and the *ummah*. The alchemy of the companionship of Rasūlullāh ﷺ's effect created the great change in their beliefs, actions, character and habits, such that despite not being sinless, their feet were never lifted contrary to the *sharī'ah* of Islām. Their help in the service of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the religion of Islām is astonishing. The enemies of Islām have also lauded it. Major portions of some of the objectionable actions attributed to them are lies and fabrications, obscenities fabricated by the *Khawārij* and *Rawāfiḍ*. Some of them are apparently contrary to the *sharī'ah* but in reality, they do not contradict the *sharī'ah*. In fact, there is a specific form of practicing on the *sharī'ah* which they have stipulated, based on their *ijtihād* and have taken it to be necessary for religion. Even if they erred in it, it is not a sin. In fact, according to the clear words of the *hadīth*, they will also attain one reward.

Even if such an action had to come from them which was not an error in *ijtihād*, but it was a sin in reality, then firstly, such an action throughout their lives was so rare that it is not even worthy of mention when compared to their hundreds of thousands of good deeds and their important services to Islām. Then, looking at their fear of Allāh and their knowledge and foresight, it is apparent that they did not remain on it (sin), but they repented.

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Even if this was not the case, then the rare sin or error has been forgiven on account of their grand services to Islām and hundreds of thousands of good deeds. This announcement of forgiveness has been made in the *Qur'ān* under the topic of the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ.

In these circumstances, is it not the demand of intelligence and justice that even if the historical narrations, narrations of the hypocrites and those opposed to Islām are accepted to be empty of lies, they should be classified as blameworthy and worthy of abandoning when compared to the *hadīth* narrations and verses of the *Qur'ān*?

EVEN DURING BATTLE, THE SAHĀBAH ﷺ CONSIDERED THE LIMITS

The group of *sahābah* ﷺ is that noble and divinely selected group who would fear Allāh ﷻ in their permissible actions, in fact, even in their actions of obedience and worship, such that when they would be informed of an error in *ijtihād*, they would attest with regret and it was their habitual practice to seek forgiveness. In the *mushājarāt e saḥābah*, the group that was on the truth, by consensus of the *ummah*, under the duress of the truth, lifted their swords on others and achieved victory too. They were not pleased with their victory, nor did any haughty words leave the tongues of the victors when they subdued the others. In fact, they understood the 'opposition' group to be people of Allāh, pious, but involved in an error of *ijtihād*. They also showed

regret and sorrow upon them being martyred. There was a large group of the saḥābah ﷺ who remained aloof from both groups and did not side with anyone. They were excused. In fact, they were lauded as good. The narrations that follow hereunder is sufficient to prove this,

1. From the accusations that were leveled against Hadrat ‘Uthmān ﷺ, those things that were proven to be contrary to the *sharī‘ah*, he clearly announced his repentance from them.³⁰
2. Similarly, Hadrat ‘Ā’isha *radiyallāhu anhā* made her regret apparent upon undertaking the journey to Basra, where the Battle of Jamal took place. When she would remember this incident, she would cry so much that her *dupatta*³¹ would become wet.³²
3. Hadrat Talha ﷺ would show his regret upon his shortcoming in that he slipped up in helping Hadrat ‘Uthmān ﷺ.³³
4. Hadrat Zubayr ﷺ showed his regret upon his journey in which the Battle of Jamal took place.³⁴
5. Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ would show his regret upon many incidents that occurred (despite him being on the truth in these battles.)

³⁰ Sharḥ ‘Aqīdah Wāsitiyyah

³¹ A silk or muslin shawl or headscarf. (The Chambers Dictionary, 10th Edition, 2006, Edinburgh)

³² Sharḥ ‘Aqīdah Wāsitiyyah

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Ibid

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The following is an incident of Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ, transmitted by Ishāq Ibn Rāhūyah ﷺ with his chain of narration that on the occasions of the Battle of Jamal and the Battle of Siffīn, he heard a person saying things filled with exaggeration regarding the opposition army. He ﷺ said, “Do not speak anything but good about them. They have understood that we rebelled against them and we understand that they have rebelled against us. That is why we are fighting them.”³⁵

Moreover, once it was asked of Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ, “What will be the end result of those who fought in the Battle of Jamal and the Battle of Siffīn?” Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ indicated towards both groups and said, “Whichever person from among them passed away with a clean heart will enter *Jannah*.”³⁶

He used to say during the nights of the Battle of Siffīn that excellent is the position that ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ and Sa’d Ibn Mālik ﷺ chose, that they remained aloof from this battle because if they did this correctly, then what doubt can there be in their reward? Even if they have sinned by staying away from battle, then their matter is very light. He used to address Hadrat Hasan ﷺ saying, “O Hasan, O Hasan, your father never had the thought that the

³⁵ Minhāj us Sunnah vol.2 p.61

³⁶ Muqaddamah Ibn Khaladūn p.385, Section 30

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matter will reach this stage. The hope of your father is that if only he had passed away 20 years before this incident.” After returning from the Battle of Siffīn, he said to the people, “Do not think badly of the government of Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ because when he will be no more, you will see necks flying from the heads.”³⁷

In *Mu‘jam Tabrānī Kabīr*, Talḥa Ibn Maṣraf narrates that when Hadrat Talḥā ﷺ was martyred by the army of Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ, Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ came down from his horse and picked him up. He dusted his face and cried. He said, “If only I had passed away 20 years before this incident.”³⁸

In *Sunan Bayhaqī*, with the chain of narration, it is stated that in the Battle of Jamal, Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ was asked regarding those who were fighting in opposition to him, “Are these people polytheists?” Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ said, “They have fled from polytheism to Islām.” He was then asked, “Are they hypocrites?” He said, “The hypocrites remember Allāh but a little (and these people remember Allāh in abundance).” He was then asked, “What is this?” He said, “These are our brothers who have rebelled against us.”³⁹

³⁷ Sharḥ ‘Aqīdah Wāsitiyyah pp.458-459

³⁸ Jam‘ ul Fawā'id vol.2 p.214

³⁹ Sunan Bayhaqī vol.8 p.172, Dā'iratul Ma'ārif, Deccan

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In *Sunan Bayhaqī*, Hadrat Ribī Ibn Kharāsh narrates that Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ said, “I have hope that on the day of *Qiyāmah*, Talha, Zubayr and I will be from among those about whom Allāh ﷻ said, ‘We will remove whatever amount of malice they had in their hearts.’”⁴⁰

6. Similarly, it is narrated from Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ that he took an oath and said, “‘Alī is better than me and more virtuous than me.” And, “The difference of opinion I have with him is only in the matter of *qisās* for Hadrat ‘Uthmān ﷺ. If he takes recompense for the blood of ‘Uthmān, then I shall be the first of the people of Shām to pledge allegiance at his hands.”⁴¹
7. When news of the martyrdom of Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ reached Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ, he began to cry. His wife asked, “During his life, you fought him, now you cry?” Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ said, “You do not know what jurisprudence and knowledge has departed from this world upon his demise.”⁴²
8. Once, Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ said to Dirār Sudāī, “Mention the qualities of ‘Alī ﷺ before me.” Upon this, he praised Hadrat ‘Alī ﷺ in great words. Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ said, “May Allāh have mercy upon Abul Hasan (‘Alī ﷺ). By Allāh, he was definitely such.”⁴³

⁴⁰ Sunan Bayhaqī vol. 8 p.173

⁴¹ Al Bidāyah wan Nihāyah vol.7 p.129, vol.7 p.259

⁴² Ibid vol. 8 p.129

⁴³ Al Istī‘āb vol.3 pp.43-44

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9. The Ceaser of Rome took advantage of the infighting of the Muslims and he intended to attack. Hadrat Mu'āwiyah ﷺ was informed, so he wrote a letter addressed to the Ceaser of Rome,
'If you have resolved to carry out your intention, then I take an oath that I shall reconcile with my companion (Hadrat 'Alī ﷺ). Then, I shall join the first battalion his army that heads for you, and burn Constantinople to ashes. I shall uproot your kingdom like carrots and radish and fling it aside."⁴⁴
10. A number of historians have narrated that during the Battle of Siffīn and other battles, during the day, the two sides would battle, and at night the soldiers of both armies would take part in shrouding and burying the martyred of both sides.⁴⁵

The summary of this discussion is that whichever saḥābah ﷺ were at the fore front in battle, based on *sharī* reasons, and each one of them understood themselves to be on the truth, while they were forced to fight, they did not transgress the limits of the *sharīah* even at the time of battle. After the *fitnah* settled, their outlook regarding each other also changed. Moreover, they displayed regret and sorrow upon the harm they caused to the opposite side.

⁴⁴ Tāj ul 'Urūs vol.7 p.208

⁴⁵ Al Bidāyah wan Nihāyah vol.7 p.227

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Before these incidents took place, Allāh ﷻ was aware of the hearts of this noble group, as well as their sincerity. (He was also aware of) their regret and repentance. Therefore, whilst knowing all this, He announced His pleasure for them in the *Qur'ān* and that they will dwell in *Jannah* forever. In reality, this was an announcement that even if a sin has to be committed by them, they will not remain on it, they have repented and it has been effaced from their record of deeds.

How astonishing it is to note that some people, in the name of service to Islām, close their eyes to all this and have taken the path of the Orientalists and heretics? They have begun to lay accusations on these luminaries by using the wrong and mixed-up narrations and incidents of history, such luminaries who have been forgiven by Allāh ﷻ. They (the Orientalists and heretics) have not forgiven them. Allāh ﷻ and His Rasūl ﷺ have announced their pleasure with them, but they (the Orientalists and heretics) are not pleased with them.

When this is said to them, they feel it sufficient to reply that they have narrated from the books of such reliable and trustworthy history scholars, (so reliable) that no one debates them being reliable and sound. They did not think as to why they separated *hadīth* from history; why the standard of criticism and research in *hadīth* is not the same in history. In history, there is no need understood for the chain of narration to be complete, nor is there a need felt for the *Jarh* and *Ta'dīl* of the narrators. According to them

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(the history scholars), this very same treasure of historical narrations is not to prove any aspect of belief, nor is it there to criticize any personality based on them – without research. The matter of the *sahābah* ﷺ is very great. None of the general Muslims have been permitted to refer to them as sinners, or someone worthy of punishment or to criticize them without proper research – based on historical narrations, nor are they permitted to write of them (the *sahābah* ﷺ) in such a way that the reader will feel that they were worshippers of leadership and they were not worried about whatever the *sharīah* permitted and prohibited.

NOTE:

It has been clarified in the introduction of this book that this does not necessitate, in any way, that the science of history is unreliable and it is useless. The importance that Islām gives to this science testifies to the services that the scholars of Islām did in this field (and in reality, the Muslims are the ones who gave this science a standing of being a science). However, every science has a status and rank. It is not the status of history, that in the light of historical narrations, the *sahābah* ﷺ are judged, leaving aside the texts of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*, and that the foundations of belief are placed on it, just as the rulings pertaining to *halāl*, *harām*, pure and impure cannot be drawn from the books of medicine, although the books of medicine have been authored by the senior scholars.

MUSHĀJARĀT E SAHĀBAH AND HISTORY WORKS

At this point, it should not be overlooked that in general incidents and matters, the amount of reliance that can be placed on historical narrations, that amount of reliance cannot be placed on those very historical narrations regarding the *mushājarāt e sahābah* ﷺ. The reason for this is that firstly, the hands of the hypocritical movement, the *Sabā'īs*, played a foundational role in the level of fighting to which the *mushājarāt* reached. Their enmity of Islām is clear and open. Then, as a result of this movement, two sects; the *Rawāfiḍ* and the *Khawārij*, were created in the era of the *sahābah* ﷺ. They (these two sects) had enmity for some of the *sahābah* ﷺ. In this time, just as the hypocrites work slowly among every class of the Muslims in the form and shape of Islām, in the same way today, these sects that were against the *sahābah* ﷺ, did not stand as a specific group, that their books are separate from *hadīth* and *fiqh* and all their work was separate from that of the *ahl us sunnah wal jamā'ah*.

At that time, there was no way of informing the general Muslims. All of them mixed and joined with all the groups and classes of the Muslims. Many Muslims, on account of their good thoughts and their inability to differentiate, began to rely on their teachings and narrations. According to one *tafsīr*, the *Qur'ān* itself explains that some Muslims are affected by the talks of the hypocrites. 'And among you are listeners'; the meaning of

listeners is 'a spy'. In this way, the fabricated narrations of the hypocrites, the *Rawāfid* and the *Khawārij* began to come from the tongues of many reliable Muslims. This was not a matter of the *hadīth* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in the first place that great caution should be adopted in accepting these narrations and alertness should be shown regarding it.

Those people who have experience about *fitnah*, the conditions of commotions as well as the famous narrations about them know that if there is a commotion in one side of the city, then no reliance remains on the narrations of the people of that time and not even on the residents of that place. This is because whichever person heard from them, he took them to be reliable and narrated, but it happens that this reliable person did not witness the incident himself, he heard it from someone else. In this way, narrating from one person to the next, a baseless fabrication takes the form of a narration from someone reliable.

How can the *mushājarāt e sahābah* ﷺ be separated from this, when the representatives of the *Sabā'ī* movement and the plots of the *Rawāfid* and *Khawārij* have a part in this? Therefore, Islāmic history works which have been compiled by the senior *hadīth* scholars and other reliable people; they gathered all the narrations that reached them about an incident, without scrutiny. This was done according to the principles of history and religiousness.

Now understand the level of reliance that can be placed on this collection of narrations. Generally, these

dangers are not present in the historical narrations that have been gathered regarding the incidents and conditions of the world in general. Therefore, the part of history that deals with the *mushājarāt e saḥābah*, no matter how reliable scholars may have written it, it can never be considered to be of the same level as that of general historical incidents.

If you ponder over whatever Hasan Basrī ﷺ said regarding this issue, then nothing besides it will be worthy of saying or listening to. This statement of Hasan Basrī ﷺ has passed, with reference from Qurtubī. The words are, ‘Hadrat Hasan Basrī ﷺ was asked regarding the mutual fighting of the saḥābah ﷺ. He said, “This matter is such that the saḥābah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ were present there and we were not. They knew the true reality of the conditions and affairs, we do not know. Therefore, whatever they agreed upon, we followed and that in which they had difference of opinion, we have adopted reservation and silence.” (Qurtubī)

Hadrat Muhāsibī ﷺ said, “We say the same thing that Hadrat Hasan ﷺ says that whatever action the saḥābah ﷺ chose; they possessed more knowledge about it. Therefore, our stance is that whatever they have reached consensus upon, we shall follow them in it and that in which they had a difference of opinion, we shall adopt reservation and silence. We shall not bring a new view because we know that whatever they did, it was based on their *ijtihād*, and their objective was only to carry out the

command of Allāh; they were not such people who were accused in the matter of religion.” (Qurtubī)

IS THIS THE DECISION OF INTELLIGENCE AND JUSTICE OR FLEEING FROM RESEARCHING THE TRUTH?

Ponder, in conditions of commotion and the confusion and doubt created by spreading the narrations of the *Rawāfid* and *Shī'a* over the decision of Hadrat Hasan Basrī ﷺ! Is it a decision based on a sound mind and fairness, or is it blind following and fleeing from the truth? May Allāh save us from the latter.

At this juncture, the point worthy of consideration is that Hadrat Hasan Basrī ﷺ, who is among the greatest of the *tābī'īn*, among those who saw the *sahābah* ﷺ, is saying this regarding the incidents that took place among the *sahābah* ﷺ that we do not know of their conditions. The result of this can only be that he did not have such firm knowledge, in accordance to the principles of the *sharī'ah*, based on which an accusation could be laid on someone.

So, the historians that came later, even if they be *imāms* in *hadīth* like Ibn Jarīr ﷺ, Ibn Athīr ﷺ and others, how could they have knowledge of this standard centuries later, such a standard upon which a belief or practice can be based? They did not claim this either, but they adopted the way that has existed from the beginning, of gathering every

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type of narration, whether authentic or not – and gathered every type of narration in their history works.

This decision of Hadrat Hasan Basrī ﷺ is such that there is no interference of belief or *madh hab* in it. Even if a non-Muslim favors justice, then too, there will be no scope for any decision but this one in the world of confused and mixed up historical narrations and to classify silence as the safest in the absence of necessary and reliable knowledge. Moreover, there are scholars who have stated, based on the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*, that even if a sin or error is definitely proven on any of them, then at their final end, they have been cleared of that sin and error by Allāh ﷻ. Therefore, it is not permissible for anyone to make such deeds of theirs a subject of discussion. If the Orientalists reject, then they can, because they do not believe in the *Qur'ān* and the *Rasūl* to begin with. They say that the teachings of the *Qur'ān* and *Rasūlullāh* ﷺ are incorrect. How can the veracity of anyone be established, based on their work?

However, for a Muslim, there is no scope even when defending, to accept this disbelief and rejection and take up this discussion. This trap has been spread by the Orientalists so that the Muslims who are not aware of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* or the unconcerned Muslims can be ensnared and lose reliance on the noble group of *sahābah* ﷺ. If these people are to be defended, then the front is not that where they want to bring Muslims, but their battle front is that the truthfulness and veracity of the *Qur'ān* and the *Rasūl* should be spoken about – which they do not

believe. What is the path then to make the Muslims accept the nobility of a group? In such conditions, the *Qur'ān* has shown the path, to say 'for you is your faith, and for me, my faith'⁴⁶ and to protect one's *īmān* and to be concerned about strengthening it. The Muslims should be satisfied with the texts of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* and they should abandon worrying about the objections of others.

The summary is that the majority of the scholars of the *ummah* have classified silence and holding one's tongue regarding the *mushājarāt e saḥābah* as the safest. They have stated it to be a danger to *īmān* to discuss and debate this issue. This is not a result of dumb faith but a decision based on a sound mind, justice and equity.

In today's time, if the objective of those who have taken up the subject of the *mushājarāt e saḥābah* and have written books on it is really to answer the heretics and Orientalists and to defend, then it is their duty to adopt the path of Hadrat Hasan Baṣrī ﷺ and to inform them of their deviation. (Their deviation is) that the luminaries who have been given a great status by friends and enemies alike in terms of deeds, character, ways and practice, the weapons that you are using to criticize them are useless. No one can be accused by using historical narrations that have no chains of narrations and no research behind them, as long as it does not reach the level of *tawātur*.

⁴⁶ Sūrah al Kāfirūn (the Disbelievers) 109:6

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Alternatively, they should be told that all praise is due to Allāh, we are Muslims. We believe in Allāh ﷻ and His Rasūl ﷺ. Whoever has been classified as just by Allāh ﷻ and His Rasūl ﷺ, if any narration against them comes before us, then we shall classify it as lies and fabrications or at least debatable and flawed.

هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي

This is my way. I call (people) to Allāh with full perception, both I and my followers. [Sūrah Yūsuf 12:108]

Besides these two ways, there can be no third way of defending and pushing away the Orientalists and heretics. If, Allāh forbid, the objective of this discussion is not to defend, but only to complete the enthusiasm for research, then this is not a good deed for one's *īmān*, neither is it a good service for the Muslims.

A COMPASSIONATE REQUEST

At this time, I am experiencing different types of sicknesses and day by day, I am in a weak state, during the last days of my life. I am closer to death, than I am to life. This is a time in which even a sinner turns back, a liar begins to speak the truth, and a stubborn person leaves his stubbornness.

Nothing happened by crying at night

Now the lament of the morning will reach them

It is the call of the injured heart

If only the matter settles in your heart

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No desire for authoring and compiling has made me write these pages during these times, but for the sleeping *fitnah* of the Muslim *ummah* which has led hundreds of thousands astray.

The deep movement of the heretics and Orientalists has awakened it and has added a new *fitnah* to the many others in order to destroy the Muslims. Maybe our public and newly educated people are not aware of the evils of the heretics and Orientalists, but the Muslims who have knowledge and foresight at least know. They are not so much affected by their talks, but the books of our Muslim authors have completed the work that the Orientalists could not do. They have made the minds of educated Muslims and Muslims with firm faith, shaky about the noble *sahābah* ﷺ. The newly educated youngsters have begun to criticize and object to these luminaries, as is done with the modern day leaders vying for a following. This is done while freeing themselves from religion and being ignorant of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*.

This is such a level of deviation that after it, the *Qur'ān*, *Sunnah*, *Tauhīd*, *Risālat* and the principles of religion will be taken as unreliable.

Therefore, these pages are being written out of the enthusiasm of well wishing and advice to the general Muslims, our newly educated class and the authors themselves. It will not be surprising if Allāh ﷻ places effect in it and these people read my request with a clear mind and not worry about replying. They should place the

hereafter before themselves and ponder that the path of salvation in the hereafter cannot be different from the path of the majority of the *ummah*. The matter in which they have adopted silence was not out of cowardliness or out of fear of opposing, but they adopted it in accordance to the principles of religion and having a sound mind. Separating from their way and putting a show of research bravery is not a good thing. If any of their errors become manifest, they should try to save themselves from it in future and they should give due importance to saving the Muslims. They should also make up for their past errors as much as possible. This display of discussions, questions and answers will soon end and the reward or punishment for it remains.

مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يُنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ

What is with you will perish and what is with Allāh will last.
[Sūrah an Nahl (the Honey Bee) 16:96]

I complete with the following *du‘ā’* for myself and all the scholars,

اللهم ارنا الحق حقا وارزقنا اتباعه وارنا الباطل باطلا وارزقنا اجتنابه . وصلى الله
تعالى على خير خلقه وصفوة رسله محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم وعلى اصحابه

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خيار الخلاق بعد الانبياء ونسأل الله ان يرزقنا حبهم عظمتهم ويعيدنا من الوقوع في
شيء يشينهم وان يحشرنا في زميرهم قد اخذت في تسويده لغرة ربيع الاول ١٣٩١
فجاء بعون الله سبحانه وحده في احد عشر يوما كما تراه والله سبحانه وتعالى
اسأل ان يقبله

The weak and low servant,
(Muftī) Muḥammad Shafī ﷺ
Dār ul ‘Ulūm Karachi
Friday,
11 Rabī al Awwal 1391
7 May 1971

مَشَى

*All praise is due to Allāh, Rabb of the worlds. Translation
completed in Madrasah ‘Arabia Islāmīa, Azaadville on 12
Jumād al Ukhrā 1434, 23 April 2013*

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اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد وعلى آل سيدنا محمد . اللهم يا رب إني أسئلك أن تغفر لي وترحمي وتوب على وتعافيني من جميع البلاء والبلواء ، الخارج من الأرض ، والنازل من السماء ، إنك على كل شيء قدير برحمتك ، وأن تغفر للمؤمنين والمؤمنات ، والمسلمين والمسلمات ، الأحياء منهم والأموات ، ورضي الله عن أزواجه الطاهرات أمهات المؤمنين ، ورضي الله عن أصحابه الأعلام أئمة الهدى ومصابيح الدنيا ، وعن التابعين وتابع التابعين لهم بإحسان إلى يوم الدين ، والحمد لله رب العالمين

سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

To You belongs all purity! We have no knowledge except what You have given us. Surely, You alone are the All Knowing, All Wise.

[Sūrah al Baqarah (the Cow) 2:32]