

His Drolleries

Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal mentioned¹ a tradition about Abu Hurayra narrated by Muhammad bin Ziyad saying: “Marwan, who was wali of Medina during the reign of Mu’awiya, sometimes assigned Abu Hurayra to be his deputy when he left Medina. Abu Hurayra beat the ground with his feet saying: “Clear the way! Clear the way! The Amir has come.” He referred to himself.

Ibn Qutayba ad-Daynouri mentioned in his book² that Abu Rafi’ had said: “Marwan sometimes assigned Abu Hurayra to be Amir of Medina (when he traveled). He rode a donkey with a saddle on its back and a fiber of date-palm on its head. When he met any one, he said: “Clear the way! The Amir has come.” He might sometimes pass by the children playing in the night. He suddenly jumped among them and beat the ground with his feet...”³

Abu Na’eem mentioned⁴ that Tha’laba bin Abu Malik al-Qardhi had said: “One day Abu Hurayra, who was then the Amir assigned by Marwan, came through the market carrying a bundle of firewood. He said: “Clear the way for the Amir, o ibn Malik!” I said: “This is enough.” He said: “Clear the way for the Amir with his bundle.”

Abu Na’eem also mentioned a tradition narrated by Ahmed bin Hanbal from Othman ash-Shahham that Farqad as-Sabkhi had said: “Abu Hurayra went around the Ka’ba saying: “Woe to my stomach! If I satiate it, it will be surfeited and if I leave it hungry, it will shame me.”

It was mentioned by Rabee’ul Abrar that Abu Hurayra said: “O Allah (S.w.T.), grant me grinding teeth, a digesting stomach and a scattering anus.”⁵

Also it was mentioned by Rabee’ul Abrar that Abu Hurayra liked (madheera).⁶ He ate it with Mu’awiya but when the time of prayer came, he offered the prayer behind Imam ‘Ali (a.s.). When he was asked about that, he said: “The (madheera) of Mu’awiya was fatter but the prayer behind Ali was better.” Therefore he was called (sheikh al-Madheera).⁷

Abu Othman an-Nahdi said that once Abu Hurayra was in travel with others. They stopped to rest. When they served food, they sent one of them to invite Abu Hurayra where he was offering the prayer.

He said that he was fasting. When they were about to finish eating, he came and began to eat. They looked at their friend, whom they had sent to invite Abu Hurayra. He said: “Why do you look at me? I swear that he said to me he was fasting.” Abu Hurayra said: “He was right. I heard the Prophet (S.) saying: “Fasting Ramadan and three days of every month equals fasting all the age.” I fasted the first three days of the month. I fasted for the duplication of fasting and I broke my fasting according to the easing of Allah (S.w.T.).”⁸

Al-Bukhari mentioned⁹ that Muhammad bin Sireen had said: “We were with Abu Hurayra (in his house). He was clothed in two brocaded linen dresses. He blew his nose with his cloths and said: “What great! Abu Hurayra blows his nose with the linen. I remember when I fell to the ground faintly between the minbar of the Prophet (S.) and the room of A’isha. The comers put their feet on my neck thinking I was mad. But it was no madness. It was but of hunger.”

Ibnul Atheer said in his book al-Bidayeh wan-Nihayeh that he saw Abu Hurayra playing a game called “Seh Dar” or “three doors”, which was a Persian game that involved gambling.

Ibn Mandhooor, in his book Lissan ul-Arab, added to that as in the tradition of Yahya bin Abi Katheer: “The Seh Dar is the little Devil. He means that it is a satanic thing.”¹⁰

Ad-Dimyari said in his book Hayat ul-Haywan (the animals’ life) about the chess game: “As-Sa’louki narrated that Amirul Mu’mineen Omar bin al-Khattab, Abul Bissr and Abu Hurayra permitted playing chess. It was famous in the books of jurisprudence that Abu Hurayra played chess. Al-Aajuri narrated that Abu Hurayra had said: “The Prophet (S.) said: “If you pass by those who play the azlam,¹¹ the chess and the dice, don’t greet them.”¹²

1. In his Musnad, vol.2, pg.34.

2. Al-Ma’arif, pg.94 (biography of Abu Hurayra).

3. It was also mentioned by ibn Sa’d in his Tabaqat, vol.4, pg.60 (biography of Abu Hurayra).

4. In Hilyatul Awliya’, vol. 1, pg.382.

5. Sheikh Qummy in his biography of Abu Hurayra in his book Alkuna wal alQaab references Rabee’ul Abrar.

6. A kind of soup cooked with sour yogurt.

7. According to this story it seemed that he attended the battle of Siffeen (between Ali and Mu’awiya) and that he flattered the two sides in order not to prevent himself to return to the victorious side. I have seen near Siffeen, between Iraq and Syria, a shrine called Abu Hurayra. More than one had told me that Abu Hurayra, in some days of the battle of Siffeen, offered the prayer with the army of Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) and ate with the army of Mu’awiya, but if the fight began he went to the mountain. When he was asked about that, he said: “Ali is more aware, Mu’awiya’s (food) is fattier and the mountain is safer.”

8. Refer to Abu Na’eem’s Hilyatul Awliya’, vol. 1, pg.385.

9. Refer to his Sahih, vol4 chapter of Alltisar bil-kitab wal-Sunnah, pg. 157. It was also mentioned by Abu Na’eem in his Hilytul Awliya’, vol. 1, pg.379.

10. Refer to Lissan al-Arab, vol.6, pg.30.

11. A game of gamble.

12. Ad-Dimyari doubted the narrators of this tradition and denied what as-Sawli said that Imam Zeinul Aabideen had

permitted playing the chess. It was certain that all the infallible imams prohibited playing chess. So did Malik bin Anass, Ahmed bin Hanbal and Abu Haneefa.

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