

The Last Reason: The Author's Opinion

It is unfeasible that the prohibition of reporting, writing down, and recording the Hadith was simultaneous or ascribed to one factor only. As a matter of fact, there must be a number of factors and introductions that contributed in the rise of such decision. In my conception, these factors and introductions can be summarized in the following four factors, yet there must have been more factors:

First Factor

The first factor is the aforesaid discussion of the seventh reason, yet in the sense that the prohibition of spreading the exegesis, explanation, and explication of the Hadiths demonstrating the actual status of the Ahl al-Bayt, especially the Hadiths that have definite dimensions striking the other School of Caliphate (i.e. School of Ijtihad and Opinionism) in the depth.

To a great extent, the reporting of the Ahl al-Bayt's merits without enlightenment was not intended by the decision of the comprehensive prohibition from reporting and recording the Hadith. In the same point, the prohibition from spreading the flaws and shortcomings of the famous personalities of Quraysh is included, since the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet have praised certain persons and condemned others.

Hence, the Sahabah's explanatory interpretation of the Holy Qur'an, the expounding recitations of the Qur'anic texts,¹ and the merits and flaws of certain persons²—all these matters were prohibited or, at least, reduced under the claim that they would be confused with the Holy Qur'an or it was anticipated that they would be falsely reported.

Second Factor

As the rulers did not have full acquaintance with the religious laws, they had to, step by step, create for themselves a trend in the Islamic legislation although many people would disagree with them about it. In the first, the caliphs used to refer to the Sahabah as regards what they had not known from the religious

laws mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah and had to submit to the answers without showing any apparent embarrassment.

However, by passage of days, these answers were characterized by finding faults with the rulers and disputing with them on the matters involved, as will be detailedly discussed later on in this book. For instance, it has been narrated that `Umar ibn al-Khattab, once, recited the verse,

“The vanguard (of Islam)—the first of those who forsook (their homes), and of those who gave them aid, and those who follow them in (all) good deeds.” (Holy Qur'an: 9/100)

in an erroneous manner; therefore, Zayd ibn Thabit recited the accurate form before him in order to show him his mistake.

However, `Umar insisted on his mistake, and Zayd said, “Amir al-Mu'minin (i.e. `Umar) must be more knowledgeable!” Yet, `Umar summoned Ubayy ibn Ka'b (the expert in the recitation of the Holy Qur'an) and presented the question before him.

Ubayy said, “Indeed, I recited this verse in the very form recited by Zayd ibn Thabit before the Messenger of Allah while you were abiding in *Baqi' al-Gharqad* (a place far away from the abode of the Holy Prophet).” `Umar thus commented, “You have memorized while I have forgotten, and you devoted yourself to learning this while I was engaged with other affairs, and you witnessed while I was absent...”³

In order to evade such troubles and to lock the door of objections and embarrassments, the best way was to prohibit the reporting, writing down, and recording of the Hadith. Accordingly, the caliphs began to threaten and arrest the reporters of Hadith after they had ordered to reduce reporting it.

Third Factor

On later stages, the caliphs permitted themselves to be semi-sources of the religious legislation. As a result, the conducts of the two Shaykhs, namely Abu-Bakr and `Umar, were legislated to be the partner of the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah, as a first stage, and then other legislations were enacted—all for purpose of corroborating the legislative rulership of the caliphs besides the political authority.

As examples on this legislative authority, `Umar ibn al-Khattab said about the enactment of the *Salat al-Tarawih*, “Excellent is this heresy,”⁴ and about the prohibition of the temporary marriage, “Two issues were allowed during the age of Allah's Messenger, but now I deem them forbidden and will punish anyone who will violate this prohibition. These are the temporary marriage and the allowable period (*Mut`at*) during the Hajj.”⁵

Afterward, these laws have been called 'Ijtihad' and thus the caliph was given the same position of the Holy Prophet and, in the intervening time, they reduced the position of the Holy Prophet to the level of those who issue religious verdicts according to their personal conjectures! This process called for locking

the door of reporting, writing down, and recording the Hadith lest contradiction between the caliph's opinion and the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah would be manifestly clear.

Fourth Factor

The factors of environment and society influenced the mentalities and cultures. Those who prohibited the reporting and recording of the Hadith grew up in a society that had not paid any attention to the recordation and writing; rather it had concentrated on poetry, history of campaigns, and pomposity. In fact, this was another motive that led to the issuance of the decision of prohibiting reporting and recording the Hadith. It goes without saying that the exaggeration in such matters, by virtue of historical necessity, cut across the general culture of Islam.

The seven reasons previously discussed have not been convincing enough to stand as perfect motives for the prohibition of reporting and recording the Hadith. To explore the actual motives of the decision, we have to, first of all, pass through two introductions that will be useful in the discussion involved:

1. The Sahabah used to recite certain Qur'anic texts with explanation, such as that it has been narrated that the copies of the Holy Qur'an kept by `Uishah, Hafsah, and Ummu-Salamah comprised the following verse, "Guard strictly your (habit of) prayers, especially the Middle Prayer;" with the addition, "the `Asr Prayer." Similarly, it has been narrated that `Abdullah ibn `Abbas, Ubay ibn Ka'b, `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud, and Imam `Ali ibn Abi-Talib used to add the statement, "to a fixed period' whenever they recited the holy verse, "...seeing that ye derive benefit from them, give them their dowers (at least) as prescribed. 4/24" Books of Hadith and history have comprised many alike examples.

2. For instance, it has been recorded in al-Suyuti's al-Durr al-Manthur 2:298 on the authority of `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud that during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, the Muslims used to add the statement,

"that `Ali is the master of the believers," to the following holy verse, "O Messenger! Proclaim that which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord. If thou didst not, thou wouldst not have fulfilled and proclaimed His mission. And Allah will defend thee from men who mean mischief. For Allah guideth not those who reject Faith. 5/67"

Similar narrations have been recorded about the holy verses,

"O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done. 49/6"

"O ye who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak aloud to him in talk, as ye may speak aloud to one another, lest your deeds become vain and ye perceive not. 49/2"

"If ye two turn in repentance to Him, your hearts are indeed so inclined; But if ye back up each other against him, truly Allah is his Protector, and Gabriel, and (every) righteous one among those who believe,- and furthermore, the angels - will back (him) up. 66/4"

"Behold! We told thee that thy Lord doth encompass mankind round about: We granted the vision which We showed thee, but as a trial for men,- as also the Cursed Tree (mentioned) in the Qur'an: We put terror (and warning) into them, but it only increases their inordinate transgression. 17/60"

3. Ibn `Abd al-Rabb al-Qurtubiy: Jami`u Bayan al-`Ilm wa-Fadlih(i) 11:7; al-Hakim al-Nisapuriy: al-Mustadrak `Ala`l-

Sahihayn 3:305; al-Suyutiy: al-Durr al-Manthur 3:269; al-Tha`labiy: al-Kashf wa'l-Bayan 5:183 (with a further addition); Ibn Jinni: al-Muhtasib 1:300. Later on in this book, many narrations regarding finding faults with `Umar ibn al-Khattab will be cited.

4. Sahih al-Bukhariy 2:707 H. 1906; Sahih ibn Khuzaymah 2:155 H. 1100; al-Bayhaqiy: al-Sunan al-Sughra 1:481 H. 847; al-Bayhaqiy: al-Sunan al-Kubra 2:493 H. 4379.

5. Sharh Ma`ani al-Akhbar 2:146; Sa`id ibn Mansur: Kitab al-Sunan 1:352 H. 852; Ibn `Abd al-Barr: al-Tamhid 8:355, 10:113, 23:365; Ibn Hazm: al-Muhalla 7:107; al-Dhahbiy: Tadhkirat al-Huffadh 1:366; al-Jassas: Ahkam al-Qur'an 2:153.

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