

## 2. Hadith Al-Qadha, Confessions Of The Sahabah

The companions of the Messenger of Allah, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa alihi*, used to admit, unanimously, that Amir al-Muminin 'Ali b. Abi Talib, *'alaihi al-salam*, was indeed the best judge among them. Imam Ahmad (d. 241 H), for instance records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا وكيع ثنا سفيان عن حبيب بن أبي ثابت عن سعيد بن جبير عن بن عباس قال قال عمر رضي الله عنه: علي أفضانا وأبي أقرؤنا

'Abd Allah (b. Ahmad b. Hanbal) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Waki' – Sufyan – Habib b. Abi Thabit – Sa'id b. Jubayr – Ibn 'Abbas:

'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said: “**Ali is the best judge among us**, and Ubayy is the best reciter among us.”<sup>1</sup>

Shaykh al-Arnau<sup>2</sup> says:

إسناده صحيح على شرط الشيخين

Its chain is *sahih* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.<sup>2</sup>

Imam Ahmad further records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا يحيى بن سعيد عن سفيان حدثني حبيب يعني بن

أبي ثابت عن سعيد بن جبير عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما قال: قال عمر علي  
أقضاننا وأبي أقرؤنا

‘Abd Allah (b. Ahmad b. Hanbal) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Yahya b. Sa’id – Sufyan – Habib b. Abi Thabit – Sa’id b. Jubayr – Ibn ‘Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both:

‘Umar said: “**Ali is the best judge among us**, and Ubayy is the best reciter among us.”<sup>3</sup>

Al-Arnau<sup>4</sup> again comments:

### إسناده صحيح على شرط الشيخين

Its chain is *sahih* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.<sup>4</sup>

This is the third *athar* recorded on the same matter by Ahmad b. Hanbal:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا سويد بن سعيد في سنة ست وعشرين ومائتين ثنا  
علي بن مسهر عن الأعمش عن حبيب بن أبي ثابت عن سعيد بن جبير عن ابن  
عباس قال خطبنا عمر رضي الله عنه على منبر رسول الله صلى الله عليه و  
سلم فقال: علي رضي الله عنه أقضاننا وأبي رضي الله عنه أقرؤنا

‘Abd Allah (b. Ahmad b. Hanbal) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Suwayd b. Sa’id – ‘Ali b. Mashar – al-A’mash – Habib b. Abi Thabit – Sa’id b. Jubayr – Ibn ‘Abbas:

‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, delivered a sermon on the pulpit of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, and said: “**Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, is the best judge among us**, and Ubayy, may Allah be pleased with him, is the best reciter.”<sup>5</sup>

Shaykh Shu’ayb al-Arnau<sup>6</sup> has a simple verdict on it:

صحيح

Notably, ‘Umar mentioned this publicly and none among the Sahabah present – including the most senior ones – objected. This evidences their unanimous concurrence with him on the matter.

Imam al-Bukhari (d. 256 H) records the same *athar* in his *Sahih*:

حدثنا عمرو بن علي حدثنا يحيى حدثنا سفیان عن حبيب عن سعيد بن جبیر  
عن ابن عباس قال قال عمر رضي الله عنه: أقرؤنا أبي وأقضانا علي

‘Amr b. ‘Ali – Yahya – Sufyan – Habib – Sa’id b. Jubayr – Ibn ‘Abbas:

‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said: “The best reciter among us is Ubayy, **and the best judge among us is ‘Ali.**”<sup>7</sup>

Apart from ‘Umar, all the other Sahabah also explicitly declared that the best judge among them – including their most senior ones living in Madinah – was none other than Amir al-Muminin. Imam al-Hakim (d. 403 H) records:

أخبرني عبد الرحمن بن الحسن القاضي بهمدان ثنا إبراهيم بن الحسين ثنا آدم  
بن أبي إياس ثنا شعبة عن أبي إسحاق عن عبد الرحمن بن يزيد عن علقمة عن  
عبد الله قال كنا نتحدث أن أقضى أهل المدينة علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله  
عنه

‘Abd al-Rahman b. al-Hasan al-Qadi – Ibrahim b. al-Husayn – Adam b. Abi Iyas – Shu’bah – Abu Ishaq – ‘Abd al-Rahman b. Yazid – ‘Alqamah – ‘Abd Allah (b. Mas’ud):

“**We used to SAY that the best judge among the people of Madinah was ‘Ali b. Abi Talib**, may Allah be pleased with him.”<sup>8</sup>

Al-Hakim says:

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *hadith* is *sahih* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.<sup>9</sup>

Imam al-Dhahabi (d. 748 H), on his part, keeps silent about it. The reason is unclear since the *athar* has

a perfectly *sahih* chain. Meanwhile, he has personally authenticated the *sanad* and all its narrators in the same book in other *ahadith*! For example, al-Hakim records this chain:

أخبرنا عبد الرحمن بن الحسن القاضي ثنا إبراهيم بن الحسين ثنا آدم بن أبي  
إياس ثنا شعبة عن منصور عن إبراهيم عن علقمة عن عبد الله رضي الله عنه

‘Abd al-Rahman b. al-Hasan al-Qadi – Ibrahim b. al-Husayn – Adam b. Abi Iyas – Shu’bah –  
Mansur – Ibrahim – ‘Alqamah – ‘Abd Allah (b. Mas’ud), may Allah be pleased with him.<sup>10</sup>

The only differences in this *sanad* from that of the *athar* are Mansur and Ibrahim. Al-Hakim declares:

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *hadith* is *sahih* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.<sup>11</sup>

Interestingly, al-Dhahabi confirms the verdict:

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Sahih*) upon the standard of al-Bukhari and Muslim.<sup>12</sup>

This proves that ‘Abd al-Rahman b. al-Hasan al-Qadi, Ibrahim b. al-Husayn, Adam b. Abi Iyas,  
Shu’bah and ‘Alqamah are *thiqah* (trustworthy) narrators!

But, what is the status Abu Ishaq and ‘Abd al-Rahman b. Yazid – the only remaining narrators of Ibn  
Mas’ud’s *athar*? Note this chain documented by Imam al-Hakim:

أخبرنا أبو زكريا العنبري ثنا محمد بن عبد السلام ثنا إسحاق أنبأ يحيى بن آدم  
ثنا إسرائيل عن أبي إسحاق عن عبد الرحمن بن يزيد عن عبد الله رضي الله  
عنه

Abu Zakariyah al-‘Anbari – Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Salam – Ishaq – Yahya b. Adam – Israil – **Abu Ishaq**  
– ‘Abd al-Rahman b. Yazid – ‘Abd Allah (b. Mas’ud), may Allah be pleased with him.<sup>13</sup>

Al-Hakim comments:

## هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *hadith* is *sahih* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs. 14

Al-Dhahabi also reiterates:

## على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Sahih*) upon the standard of al-Bukhari and Muslim. 15

As such, all the narrators of the *athar* are *thiqah* (trustworthy).

But then, is there any break between Shu'bah and Abu Ishaq? We have seen the unbroken connection between all the other narrators except these two. This chain, recorded by al-Hakim, puts the seal on things:

حدثني محمد بن صالح بن هانئ ثنا المسيب بن زهير ثنا عاصم بن علي ثنا  
شعبة عن أبي إسحاق قال : سمعت وهب بن جابر يحدث عن عبد الله بن عمرو  
رضي الله عنهما

Muhammad b. Salih b. Hani – al-Musayyab b. Zuhayr – ‘Asim b. ‘Ali – **Shu’bah** – **Abu Ishaq** – Wahb b. Jabir – ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Amr, may Allah be pleased with them both<sup>16</sup>

Al-Hakim states:

## هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *hadith* is *sahih* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs. 17

Al-Dhahabi agrees:

## على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Sahih*) upon the standard of al-Bukhari and Muslim. 18

Simply put, the chain of the *athar* of Ibn Mas'ud is *sahih*. All the narrators are *thiqah* (trustworthy), and there is no disconnection whatsoever in the *sanad*.

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1. Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurtubah) [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut], vol. 5, p. 113, # 21122
  2. Ibid
  3. Ibid, vol. 5, p. 113, # 21123
  4. Ibid
  5. Ibid, vol. 5, p. 113, # 21124
  6. Ibid
  7. Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Ibrahim b. Mughirah al-Bukhari al-J'ufi, al-Jami' al-Sahih al-Mukhtasar (Beirut: Dar Ibn Kathir; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Mustafa Dib al-Bagha], vol. 4, p. 1628, # 4211
  8. Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah al-Hakim al-Naysaburi, al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Mustafa 'Abd al-Qadir 'Ata], vol. 3, p. 145, # 4656
  9. Ibid
  10. Ibid, vol. 4, p. 372, # 7963
  11. Ibid
  12. Ibid
  13. Ibid, vol. 2, p. 244, # 2888
  14. Ibid
  15. Ibid
  16. Ibid, vol. 4, p. 536, # 8505
  17. Ibid
  18. Ibid

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