

A Critical Analysis of The Amalgamation Of An Absurd Tradition In Seerat-e-nabvi (SAW)

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Abstract

Scholastic research is a continuous and ceaseless process. Research work being composed and compiled in any period is never deemed to be the last and final. It is evident from the changing interpretations of the texts of ‘Hadith’ and ‘Fiqa’ in different times. It is incumbent on the Muslim Scholars to accomplish more and more research work on the various aspects of ‘Seerat-e-Nabvi (SAW), keeping in view the trends of modern age and using the latest methodology in order to differentiate the false and fabricated traditions and events from the accurate and authentic ones. On the one hand, such false narratives are frequently quoted by the so-called religious preachers throughout the Islamic world, who are just story-tellers and whose sole purpose is to attract the common illiterate people towards them by narrating these amazing and astonishing events. On the other hand, the Orientalists use such exaggerated, absurd and irrational traditions and events as a weapon for the defamation of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

The following article is aimed at scrutinizing a false and fabricated tradition in respect of ‘Abdullah’, the father of the Holy Prophet (SAW). This strange and unbelievable narrative has been quoted by Muhammad bin Ishaque, the very first biographer of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Similarly, the same tradition has also been recorded by some other biographers in their books.

Thus, the aforesaid absurd narrative is minutely scrutinized in the light of the opinions and remarks of the most reliable scholars of ‘Hadith’ as well as the most learned and renowned figures of the ‘Art of the names and particulars of the narrators’.

Key Words:

Seerat: Life of The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

Hadith: Anything (sayings and deeds) related to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

Fiqa: Islamic Jurisprudence

1.Introduction:

Hafiz Ibne Kathir narrates on the authority of Ibne ishaque that:

“Once Abdul-Mutalib and his son Abdullah were walking hand and hand with each other. They passed by Umme-e-Qital, the sister of Warqa bin Nofal; who was sitting near ka`ba at that time. After looking at the face of Abdullah, she surreptitiously asked him to copulate with her. She offered to grant him one hundred camels, if he agreed to satisfy her sexual desire. Abdullah replied that he was accompanied by his father and could not quit his company. Thereafter, they parted from her and paid a visit to Wahab Abde-e-Manaf who established a matrimonial alliance between his daughter A`amina and Abdullah. As the custom of the time, he copulated with her at her home and she became pregnant. Then Abdullah returned to the woman and sought her opinion about the offer she had previously made, but she no longer needed him, because the refulgence which formerly appeared on his holy forehead had vanished”. (1)

2.Discussion:

The above mentioned tradition is narrated by Hafiz Ibne Kathir on the authority of Abu Bakar Ja`afar bin Sahal Al-Kharaity. The same tradition has also been quoted by Hafiz Abu Nuaim Al-Asfahani in Dalai-Al-Nubuwa in partially different words. (2)

Ibn-e-Sa`ad has quoted this tradition through four different chains of narrators. (3)

Tabari has quoted it through three different chains in his 'Tareekh-e-Al-Tabari' (4)

And Imam Baihaqi has narrated it through two different chains of narrators (5).

These traditions are weak and unreliable in terms of both 'texts' and 'chains of narrators'. Though unacceptable, yet if accepted these narrations would detract from the honor and prestige of the holy Prophet (SAW), proving his father to be a lustful man.

The unreliability and weakness of the tradition can be substantiated on the following grounds:

Hafiz Ibne Kathir has quoted the tradition on the authority of Ibne Ishaque who has used the words (they thought). It is evident from the use of such words that it is a 'false conjecture' and not a proven reality.

This woman is mentioned with the following different names;

Ruqayya binte Nofal

Rafiqa binte Nofal

Laila Al-Adawiyya

Qateela binte Nofal bin Asad

Kahin (Soothsayer) from the tribe of Tabala Mathooda.

A woman from the tribe of Nai Asad bin Abdul Uzza, called Umme Qatal, sister of Waraqa bin Nofal.

The difference of opinions regarding the time of the occurrence of this event has also added a great deal to the unreliability of the tradition.

Some scholars are of the opinion that it took place before A'amina's marriage with Abdullah. Some hold the view that it occurred after Amina's marriage with Abdullah.

While others claim that it occurred two or three days after A'amina's engagement with Abdullah.

There is an 'internal contradiction' in the words of the tradition. Abdullah's reaction to the woman's offer has been recorded in the following words;

It is better to die than to commit an unlawful act (Haram)

As far as virtuous deed (Halal) is concerned, its merits are beyond count.

O woman! How I can satisfy your lustful desire? Respectable people take care of their honor and religion.

Then it is mentioned that after meeting A'amina, Abdullah returned to the woman and reminded her 'the offer'. (and this obviously contradicts the first statement).

Abu Nuaim narrates that Abdullah was returning from his under-construction house and his body was covered with dust when he passed by that woman. But, according to the tradition of kharaity, Ibn-e-Asa'akar and Abu Nuaim, Abdul Mutalib and his son Abdullah set out on a journey during which they passed by a soothsayer, (from table, a tribe from Yaman) who was well versed in divine books. But according to Ibne Sa'ad Abdullah was busy at performing Rami and Jemar (Ritual of throwing pebbles at satan during Umra or Hajj) and met the woman at that time. Both Ibn-e-Asa'akar and Ibne Sa'ad narrate on the authority of Urwa and say that the woman was Qatal, Sister of Nofal. Once when Abdullah was passing by her, she caught him and asked him to fulfill her lustful desire. According to another tradition, Abdullah was a pretty handsome man, One day he was combing his hair at a place called Batha: on seeing him, Laila Al-A'adawiyya tried to tempt and seduce him.

In short, such considerable discrepancies in the text go a long way towards proving the uncertainty of the occurrence. Besides, being weak in the text, the tradition also contains weak points in its chain of narrators.

Hafiz Ibne Kathir has quoted it on the authority of Ibne Ishaque as well as on the following authority:

From Abu Bakar Bin Muhammad Bin ja'afar Bin Sahal Al-Kharaiti Said: that Ali Bin Harb Told him, Muhammad Bin A'ammara Al-Qarshi Told him, that Muhslim Bin Khalid Al-Zanji Told him, that Ibne Juraj From Atta Bin Abi Rabah From Ibne Abbas Said That.....: (6)

2.1. This chain of narrators contains Muslim bin Khalid Al-Zanji who is an unreliable And disputed person. He is a taba tab'ee (follower of the disciples of the Companions). He was known as Abu Khalid, and he was a religious scholar of Makka. His narrations are available in Abu Dawood and Ibne Maja. Imam Shafi, Humaidi and Musaddad have acknowledged and accepted narrations from him. But Immame Bukhari holds the view that his narrations are

not authentic. Abu Hatham has the opinion that his arguments are unquotable for corroboration; sagi says that he commits many mistakes and disbelieves in destiny; Ali Al-Madini remarks that he is nothing. Abu Dawood looks upon him as weak and unreliable narrator. Al-Azraqi regards him as a jurist who used to fast perpetually (that is: due to excessive engagement, he could not devote much attention to the memorization of Hadith) (7).

He died in 10 H/796 A at the age of eighty. Abu Nuaim has narrated this tradition through three chains:

Said Umer Bin Muhammad Bin Ja'afar, Said that Ibahim Bin Al-Sandi Said, that Al-Nudar Bin Salma Said, He Said that Ahmad Bin Muhammad Bin Abdul Aziz From his Father Said that Ibne Shihab said that from Abu Bakr Bin Abdul Rahman From Umme Salma and A'amir Bin Sa'a from Him father Sa'ad Said That.....: (8).

In this chain of narrators, Nadar bin Salma and Ahmad bin Muhamad bin Abdul Aziz are unreliable narrators.

Nadar bin Salma was known as Sha'azan Al-Maroozi. Abu Hatham Al-Razi Says about him that he used to fabricate spurious traditions.

Ibne A'adi says about him that he used to live in Madina and was known as Abu Muhammad.

Abdaan says that he asked Abdur ur Rahman about the authenticity of Ghulam Khalil's narrations which he had received from the scholars of Madina, he replied that he had stolen them from Abdullah bin Sa'aib, who, in his turn, had stolen them from Shaza'an and Shaza'an had concocted them. Shaza'an's real name is Nazar bin Salam. (9)

Al-Dar-e-Qutni has termed him as forsaken. Aqeel has dubbed him as a liar and a fabricator of traditions. Ibne Hibban says that he used to plagiarize traditions; therefore, it is not permissible to narrate from him. Hower, it is permissible to quote his tradition with a view to disclosing his untrustworthy. Abdul karim says that he was a liar and used to fabricate traditions. (10)

Muhammad bin Abdul Karim is yet another disputed narrator in this chain who used to quote from his father and Imam Zuhri says: he was a judge in Madina. Imam Maalik was lashed at his suggestion. Imam Nisae termed him as forsaken (Matrook). Al-Dar-e-Qutni called him untrustworthy and weak narrator (11).

Imam Bukhari holds him as a "narrator of unauthentic narrations" (12).

This chain contains two weak narrators. One is Yaqub Muhammad bin Isa and the second is Abdul Aziz bin Imran. Hafiz Al-Zahabi writes (13):

From Ibrahim Bin Sa'ad and Al-Munkadir Bin Al-Munkadir and their people made mistakes who Said: that he copies from Hisham Bin Urwa He did not meet him because he was born after the death of Hisham. Ibne Sa'ad Said: He would use to accompany Scholars and was "Hafiz". Ibne Mueen Said: Whatsoever he listened from the authentic people, he would write. Abu Zura'a said: He is nothing (in hadith), he was near to Al-Waqidi. And Hajaj Bin Al-Sha'aer Said: He is Unauthentic. Abu Hatham Said: he was A'adil. Imam Ahmad said: He is nothing (in hadith). Murra Said: His narrations are not good. Al-Saji called him Munkir-ul-Hadith. Al-Uqaili said: that his narrations contains a lot of suspicion. (14)

The second weak narrator in this chain is Abdul Aziz bin Imran Abi Sabit bin Umar bin Abdur Rahman bin Auf Madant. Ibne Hibban says: that people of Madain and Iraq have narrated traditions from him. He has narrated un-authentic traditions from famous narrators. He was more influenced by poetry and literature than knowledge. Ibne Hibban says that he had heard it from Muhammad bin Mahmood who, in his turn, had taken it from Darmi that he asked Yahya bin Mueen, "What do you think about Abi Sabit?" He replied: "he is unreliable, and he is a poet (15).

Abu Hatham says that Abu Zara forbad people from narrating traditions from him. Tirmizi and Al-Dar-e-Qutni have termed him as a weak narrator. (16).

The third chain of narrators is:

Suleman Bin Ahmad said, Ahmad Bin Muhammad Bin Sadaqa said, that Ali Bin Harb said him that Muhammad Bin Ammara Al-Qarshi said: He said that Mushlim Bin Khalid Al-Zanji from Juraij from Atta from Ibne Abba said:..... (17)

In this chain Muslim bin Khalid Al-Zanji is an unreliable narrator. He has been discussed in detail previously.

Ibne Sa'ad has quoted it with the following different variations:

Muhammad bin Amr bin Waqid Al-Aslami.

Hisham from Muhammad bin Saaib Al-Kalbi, from his father who from father of salih.

Hisham from Muhammad bin Saib Al-Kalbi, from father of Al-Fayaz Al-Khasmi.

Wahab bin Jareer bin Hazim (18).

In the first chain the first narrator is Al-Waqidi. His full name is Muhammad Bin Umar Al-Waqidi. His grandfather was the slave of Abdullah bin Barida bin Al-Haseeb Al-Madani And because of this connection, he is called Salami and Madani. He has been a judge in Baghdad. He has written several books. Hafiz Al-Zahabi says; "in spite of his weakness, he was regarded as a great scholar, especially well-versed in biography and maghazi of the prophet (SAW), chronicles and jurisprudence".

Ibn-e-Maja narrates a tradition by him but it does not bear his name. He has been termed as a "Sheikh only". He was born in 130 H/747 A and died in 207 H/228 A. Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal says "he is a liar, he steals Ahadith, fabricates Ahadith from his nephew Al-Zuhri on Muamar etc".

Al-Waqidi is a liar and keeps altering the traditions and attributes Zuhri's Nephew's traditions to Mua'amar. Yahya bin Mue'en once said: "he is not reliable". And, on another occasion, he said, "His traditions should not be written", Abu Hatham says: "He is forsaken". The same Abu Hatham and Imam Nisae say: "He fabricates traditions". Al-Dar-e-Qutni says: "He is weak". Ibne A'adi says: "His traditions are not safe and it is all his mischief. Ibne Al-Jozi says that in order to deceive the people, he used to call himself Muhammad bin Abi Shamla. Ali bin Madini says that he used to fabricate traditions. Sulaiman Al-Shaz Al-kufi says;" Al-Waqidi is either a very truthful person or a very untruthful person because I wrote some traditions from him and when I decided to go back, he brought a written collection of traditions; I asked him about them and he did not change a single letter. Imam Abu Dawood says, Ali bin Al-Madini used to say: "Al-Waqidi has quoted thirty thousand "Gharib" Traditions. Ibne Al-Madini says, I am neither satisfied with Waqidi's knowledge of traditions nor his knowledge of genealogy nor anything else". Ishaque Bin Al-Taba says: "I saw Al-Waqidi on the way to Makka. He does not know how to perform prayer (Salat). Ishaque bin Rahoya says, "To my mind, he concocts traditions. Imam Zahabi says," according to the unanimous view of scholars, Al-Waqidi is unreliable (19).

The second and third chain contains the name of Hisham after Muhammad bin Sa'eb Al-Kalbi.

Hafiz Al-Zahabi says about him," his name is Muhammad bin Al-Sa'eb, and he is famous by Abu Nadar. He belongs to Banu Ka'b family. He is the citizen of Kufa. He is a genealogist, an exegete and a historian. Imam Shabi says that his son Hisham and Abu Muaviya used to narrate traditions from him. His traditions are found in Tirmizi.

Sufyan Sori quoted Kalbi's own words, "my teacher Abu Salih once advised me not to pass on to others those traditions of Ibne Abbas which I had heard from him,". Abu Muavivya says, "I have heard Kalbi saying, "I had memorized the holy Quran in six or seven days and my failure of memory is also worthy to be noted; one day I held my beard in my hand in order to cut the extra hair but applied the pair of scissors to the upper part instead of the lower part of my beard.

Imam Yazid bin Haroon says that kalbi told him "I never forget anything which I have once memorized. One day I invited a barber and grasped my beard in my hand and got the upper part cut instead of the lower part. Ya'ala bin Ubaid says that Imam Sufyan Sori said to the people, "avoid kalbi's tradition" someone said to him that he himself narrates traditions from him. He replied;" I can distinguish between his truth and falsehood, i.e. I know what is correct and what is incorrect.

Imam Bukhari says that Yahya bin Saeed Al-Qattan and Abdur Rahman have refused to accept his traditions. Then Imam Bukhari has quoted the works of Imam Sori with a chain of narrators," kalbi himself has told me whatever I quote on the authority of Abu Salih is pure falsehood. Ya'ala says, "I used to learn Quran from kalbi. One day he said "one day I fell severely ill and forgot everything due to illness. I paid a visit to the relatives of Muhammad (SAW).One of them spat into my mouth and I recalled whatever I had forgotten. Yazid bin Zaree says and that he was Sabae. Imam A'amash Kufi says, "beware of these sabaees, because scholars term them as liars. Imam Sufyan bin Uyaina quotes these words of kalbi," once Abu Salih said to me, "I know everybody in Makka and rather know everybody's father". Ibne Hibban says: kalbi belongs to that faction of Sabaees who believed that Hazrat Ali had not passed away and he would return to this world and fill the world with as much justice as it is filled with cruelty. Whenever these people see a piece of cloud, they would say:, Amir-ul-Mumineen (Ali RA) is present in it. Hamam says that kalbi would categorically say that he was a sabae. Abu A'awana says that I have heard kalbi

saying, "Gabriel used to bring revelation to Muhammad (SAW) and when he would be in the toilet, the former would bring it to Ali (RA). Ahmad bin Zuhair says that he asked Imam Ahmad bin Hanble as to whether it is permissible to study the exegesis of Kalbi or not. He replied," No. Yahya bin Mueen is of the opinion that kalbi is not reliable. Al-Dar-e-Qutni and a group of Hadith scholars believe that he is not forsaken (not acceptable). Al-Jauzjani considers him to be a liar. Imam Ibne Hibban says that his religion is evident and his untruth is well known. He gives interpretation of Quran from Ibne Abbas on the authority of Abu Salih whereas Abu Salih has never met Ibne Abbas. He has heard a word or two from Abu Salih, and when he has to tell a lie, he brings Abu Salih from the depth and darkness of the earth. His traditions should not be mentioned in any book, and never used as an argument (20). His students Atya bin Sa'ad Al-Aufi spread his traditions. This kalbi was known as Abu Nadar as well as Abu Saeed. Atya has quoted his traditions as," narrated by Abu Saeed" people would mistake him for Abu Saeed Khudri, the Companion of the prophet (SAW). Imam Ahmad says "Atya used to visit kalbi and learn exegesis from him. Atya deliberately used Abu Saeed to deceive the people leading them to believe that it was Abu Saeed Khudri (21).

The fourth chain ends at Abu Yazid Madani Tabiee. Hafiz Ibne Hajar writes: "Abu Yazid Madani was a citizen of Basra. He used to narrate on the authority of Abu Huraira. Ibne Abbas, Ibne Umar, Asma Binte A'amees, Umme-Aiman, Akrama, Maula Ibne Abbas. And from him, the following people quoted, "Abu Al-Hisham. Qutan bin Ka'ab, Abu A'amir Al-Harani, Ismaeel bin Muslim Al-Makki. Ibni Abi Hatham quotes his father's saying" Somebody asked Imam Malik about abu Yazid. He replied that he did not know him. Imam Dawood says that he asked Imam Ahmad about Abu Yazid. He replied "you are asking about a man from whom Ayub used to narrate traditions". Ishaque bin Masoor says that Yahya bin Mueen said that he was reliable. Abu Zua'a says that he does not know him. Ibn Abi Hatham says that he quotes from Ibn Abbas but sometimes makes a mention of Akrama in the midst. Ibne Abi Hatham says: I asked my father about him. He replied that traditions can be accepted from him. I asked about his name. He replied he is nameless" (22)

Ibne Jarir has presented the tradition in the following three manners:

From Ibne Shihab, From Qabisa Bin Zoaib from Humaid from Salima Bin Al-Fadal from Muhammad bin Ishaque.

From Ibne Humaid, from Salima said that Muhammad Bin Ishaque From His father Ishaque bin Yassar.

From Ali Bin Harb Al-Mosali said that Muhammad Bin Ammara Al-Qarshi said that Al-Zanji Bin Khalid from Ibne Jurajj from Ibne Abbas. (23).

The first chain ends at Muhammad Ibne Ishaque and narrators after Ishaque are absent and it is known that Ibne Ishaque died in 151 Al-Hijra/768 A.D (24)

Ibne Ishaque tradition has been discussed in this research paper. The second chain ends at ishaq Ibne Yassar. Besides this, Hafiz Al-Zahabi narrates from Al-Dar-e-Qutni regarding Ishaque bin Yassar, "his arguments are not reliable". (25)

In the third chain, Muslim bin Khalid Al-Zanji is a weak narrator, Abu Nuaim has narrated the event with the same chain of narrators in Dalail Al-Nnubuwa, (discussed previously). Imam Baihaqi has narrated it in the following ways:

Abdullah Al-Hafiz informed us that Abu Al-Abbas Muhammad Bin Yaqub said that Ahmad Bin Abdul Jabbar said that Yunas Bin Bukair from Muhammad Bin Ishaque....

Abu Abdullh Al-Hafiz informed us that Abdul Baqi Bin Qanie said that Abdul Waris Bin Ibrahim said that Musaddad said that Muslima Bin Alqama from Daud Bin Abi Hind from Ikrama from Ibne Abbas.... (26).

The first is like that of Ibne Ishaque which is discussed earlier.

The second chain of narrators contains the name of Muslim bin Alqama who is regarded as weak and unreliable. There are many others who are not properly known. Ibne A'adi writes in Al-Kamil about Muslim bin Alqama; "Ibn Hamad from Abdullah and Abdullah, in his turn, narrated from his father that Alqama is an unreliable narrator of Hadith. He quotes traditions from Daud bin Abi Hind and several of such traditions have been mentioned by him (27).

3. Conclusion:

1. The editor of Dalail Al-Nubuwa, Dr. Abdul Muthi comments thus: it is a fabricated and unauthentic tradition; there is no tradition to strengthen and support it and rather it contradicts those Ahadiths which speak of the dignity and purity of the prophet's family.

2. These are nothing but lies and vicious slanders against the prophet of Islam, fabricated by the enemies of Islam.
3. All such traditions contradict one another and therefore, go a long way towards proving their untruth.
4. The poetic verses in these traditions are sub-standard, futile and affected, incorrectly rhymed and they prove the fact that it is a false report.
5. And the words of Ibne Ishaque and Al-Tabari such as “they conjecture” prove the fact that it is a false report and the words of Ibne Ishaq and Al-Tabari also serve as an argument to substantiate that it was a false conjecture (28).

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