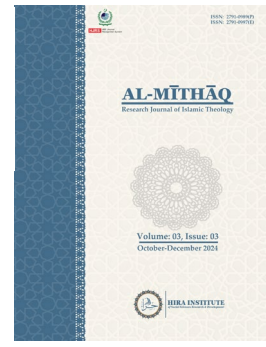




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Āthār e Şahābah and their Importance in the Commentary of the Qur'ān and Biography of the Prophet(ﷺ): A Critical Analysis in the Context of Sharī'ah Sources

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Āthār e Ṣaḥābah and their Importance in the Commentary of the Qur'ān and Biography of the Prophet (ﷺ): A Critical Analysis in the Context of Sharī'ah Sources

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Abstract

The sayings of the Ṣaḥābah, the companions of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), hold a fundamental place in Islamic tradition, offering invaluable insights into the practical application of the teachings of Islam. These sayings, often recorded in the form of Ḥadīth, represent a rich source of guidance that continues to shape the moral, spiritual, and social life of Muslims around the world. The Ṣaḥābah were the closest witnesses to the actions, words, and teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ), making their insights into Islamic practice deeply authoritative and reflective of the authentic understanding of the religion. One key importance of the Ṣaḥābah's sayings is their role in preserving and transmitting the teachings of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). After the death of the Prophet, it was the responsibility of the Ṣaḥābah to preserve his teachings and actions. They did so through their memory, written records, and oral transmission, ensuring the continuity of the Islamic message. Their first-hand experiences and understanding of the Qur'ānic revelations and prophetic practices make their sayings highly valuable for interpreting Islamic texts. The sayings of the Ṣaḥābah also serve as practical examples of how to live a righteous life in accordance with Islam. They acted as living models of Islamic ethics, demonstrating how the teachings of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth were applied in real-life situations. Whether it was in matters of personal conduct, social justice, or community welfare, the Ṣaḥābah's actions and words reflect a deep understanding of how to navigate the complexities of life while adhering to the principles of faith. Their wisdom offers Muslims today clear guidelines on moral conduct, piety, patience, justice, and leadership. Additionally, the sayings of the Ṣaḥābah provide insight into the diverse contexts in which Islam was practiced in the early years of the Muslim community. These contexts included the social, political, and cultural environments of the time, which the companions navigated with the guidance of the Prophet's teachings. This diversity in their experiences enriches Islamic thought by providing a broader understanding of how Islamic principles can be applied in different times and places. In conclusion, the sayings of the Ṣaḥābah are crucial for understanding the essence of Islamic practice. Their words serve as a vital source of Islamic law, ethics, and spirituality. By studying these sayings, Muslims gain not only a deeper understanding of their faith but also a roadmap for leading a life that aligns with the ideals of justice, mercy, and wisdom exemplified by the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) and his companions.

Keywords: *Āthār e Ṣaḥābah, Qur'ān, Ḥadīth, Sīrah, Modern Islamic Interpretations.*

Introduction and Importance of the Topic

In the Qur'ān, Allah has given evidence of the firm faith and righteous deeds of the Companions. Therefore, cursing any Ṣaḥābī is tantamount to demolishing the religion of Islam. Rather, the religion of Islam has shown that it is possible to honour and glorify

them so much that their way should be adopted and faith should be adopted like their faith, then it is possible to go and seek the pleasure of Allah. How, then, can the sayings and opinions of the pious ones, whose faith and deeds Allah Himself guides, be disregarded? Of this class of scholars, the scholars of every language have given importance to the relics of the Companions and have adorned them with their Tafsīr. The scholars of every era took advantage of the relics of the Companions and copied them in their Tafsīr and proved from them the evidence, the reasoning, and the rulings of the Sharī'ah. Rules and regulations were also formulated for the acceptance and rejection of these relics, which were obtained from the Qur'ān and Sunnah itself. Maulānā Muḥammad Taqī Uthmānī writes in Ma'ārif-ul-Qur'ān:

Therefore, among the verses whose interpretation is not known from the Qur'ān or the Ḥadīth, the most important is the sayings of the Companions, so if the Companions agree on the interpretation of a verse, the Companions adopt it and it is not advisable to comment against it. The main principles and rules in this regard are the principles of jurisprudence, the principles of Ḥadīth and the principles of tafsīr. The Islamic scholars have prescribed rulings derived from the Qur'ān and Sunnah with regard to the relics of the Qur'ān. From whom it is known that according to the position and time of the Companions, at what time the opinion of the Companions will be valid and when the opinion of one of them will be accepted in case of disagreement. All these rules and regulations are called injunctions, which are adopted by almost all thinkers.¹

Imām Ibn Taymiyyah (May Allah have mercy on him) has also elaborated the importance of Āthār e Ṣaḥābah writing:

إذالم نجدالتفسير في القرآن ولافي السنةرجعنافي ذلك إلى أقوال الصحابة، فإنهم أدري بذلك لما شاهدوه من القرآن، والأحوال التي اختصوا بها، ولما لهم من الفهم التام، والعلم الصحيح، والعمل الصالح، لا سيما علماءهم وكبرائهم، كالأئمة الأربعة الخلفاء الراشدين، والأئمة المهديين؛ مثل عبد الله بن مسعود.²

If we do not find the interpretation in the Qur'ān or in the Sunnah, we refer to the sayings of the companions, for they are more knowledgeable about it due to their witnessing of the Qur'ān, the conditions they were in, their complete understanding, correct knowledge, and righteous deeds, especially their scholars and elders, such as the four caliphs, the rightly guided imams, like 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd.

At that time, when we do not find the interpretation of the Holy Qur'ān from the Qur'ān and Sunnah, we will refer to the sayings of the Companions. This is because they are the most knowledgeable about its interpretation due to having witnessed its revelation, and they have the greatest understanding of the circumstances in which the Qur'ān was revealed. Additionally, their comprehension was the most complete and their knowledge was the most accurate, and they acted upon it righteously. This is especially true for the great Companions, such as the Rightly Guided Caliphs and 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd, may Allah be pleased with them all.

Regarding the interpretation of the Companions of the Prophet (Ṣaḥābah), this is the general ruling on which all Islamic thinkers agree. If all the Companions are united on a particular interpretation and there is no disagreement among them, then interpreting against that interpretation is an act of innovation (*bid'ah*). However, if there is a disagreement among the Companions regarding the interpretation of a verse, it will be examined based on reason, insight, and evidence, and one of the opinions will be preferred. This is the correct and straight path for the believers.

There is no doubt that the Companions were beneficial to those after them in every way.

But there were differences between them. They were different in every way. Similarly, the relics from them also have different types of significance and orders. It is necessary to know these commandments when the influence of the Companions will be an argument from which deviation will be removed and when there can be a scope within it that it can be disputed on the basis of reason and imitation.

Marfū' e Ḥukmī

Any news or knowledge or practical influence of any Ṣaḥābī which is not derived from Isrā'ilism, nor is it known from intellect and opinion, but its source and source is merely a copy, then such effect is called Marfū' e Ḥukmī. This effect will have the same position as that of an authoritative Ḥadīth. Therefore, it is not only the opinion of the Ṣaḥābah that can be known by reason and opinion, but it is one of the things that cannot be known except in a tangible form. which the human mind cannot comprehend. Therefore, such an *athar* is called Marfū' e Ḥukmī. The Ṣaḥābah do not quote from Isrā'il, nor does it have the influence of his opinion and ziyādah. You can't even understand that a Ṣaḥābī has made a self-made thing on his behalf. Now it remains the case that this Ṣaḥābī heard this effect from the Prophet (ﷺ) and quoted it from him, but did not refer it to the Prophet (ﷺ). That is because no one can give this news except the Prophet (ﷺ). Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (May Allah have mercy on him) wrote:

والحق ان ضابط ما يفسره الصحابي ان كان مما لا مجال للاجتهاد فيه، ولا منقولاً عن لسان العرب فحكمه الرفع والا فلا.³

In fact, the rule is that if a Ṣaḥābī presents a commentary that does not involve the practice of Ijtihad, nor is translated from Arabic traditions, it will be accepted anyways, otherwise not.

In the orders in which the opinion and interpretation of the Companions will be final, are matters which belong to the unseen and Mughībāt. That matter has been described in detail by the scholars of tafsir and all the following types fall under the jurisdiction of Marfū' e Ḥukmī:

- Matters related to the creation of creatures and their destiny (Taqdīr).
- The symptoms of the Resurrection Day.
- The details of the life of *Barzakh*.
- The attributes of heaven and hell.
- History of the previous nations and prophets.
- A special reward for special worship.
- A specific punishment for a specific crime.
- Issues which are related to the unknown.
- Causes of Revelations of verses and Sūrah.

This is the view of the learned scholars and philosophers, such as Ṭaḥāwī, Ibn Marduyah, Bayhaqī and Ibn 'Abd al-Barr.⁴

Although these narrations were not made by the Ṣaḥābah towards the Prophet, it was said that these narrations could not be made by any Ṣaḥābah on their own. That is because the Companions are the righteous ones, who are free from telling lies in the matter of religion, which is against their greatness. And there is no room for opinion. Therefore, it is possible that the Ṣaḥābah used to narrate Ḥadīth in the same way as the Prophet used to narrate it. I also support the traditional interpretation. As known, the tradition of the Companions was sometimes direct one and sometimes indirect order. Imām Ibn al-Qayyim (May Allah have mercy on him) has also mentioned it in his book.⁵

Examples of Marfū' e Ḥukmī

Sometimes the Companions used to narrate the news of a Prophet (ﷺ), but they did not refer it to him, and in the same way, sometimes they used to order a problem, but they

used to avoid referring it to the Prophet (ﷺ). It is also from this type that it was the extent of care that they avoided from attributing it to the Prophet (ﷺ) without perfect validation. This is clear from the examples:

- ‘Abdullāh Bin Mas'ūd (R.A.) narrates that "فكان قاب قوسين او ادنى" refers to Gabriel who came near Allah's Apostle and whom Allah's Apostle saw when Gabriel was with about six hundred feathers.⁶
- Similarly, in Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, it is narrated that ‘Abdullāh Bin Mas'ūd said about Allah's commandment, "لقد رأى من آيات ربه الكبرى" that Prophet (ﷺ) looked at the green that covered the horizon.⁷

It is clear from these signs that ‘Abdullāh Bin Mas'ūd (May Allah be pleased with him) is telling the news. It cannot be known by reason and wisdom, nor is it derived from Israelism. This is what the Prophet (ﷺ) said. Believing this is as important as believing the Ḥadīth. Because it is also at the level of Marfū‘ e Ḥukmī. Similarly, Ibn 'Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him) has described about the whole Qur'ān:

انزل الله القرآن الى السماء الدنيا في ليلة القدر، فكان الله اذا اراد يوحى منه شيئاً اوحاه ، او ان يحدث منه في الارض شيئاً احدهه.⁸

Allah sent down the Quran to the lowest heaven on the Night of Qadr, and whenever Allah intended to reveal something from it, He revealed it, or whenever He intended to bring about something from it on the earth, He brought it about.

It is a sin to think of the companions of Prophet (ﷺ) as having said such great things on their behalf in the explanation of the Qur'ān. While they were learned and righteous disciples of the righteous teacher. They were careful not to attribute anything to the Prophet (ﷺ). When we study the books written on tafsir of the Qur'ān, we find that a considerable part of the tafsir of the Qur'ān is based on the narrations and sayings of the Companions. Most of these traditions are from what the Companions have narrated to the Prophet (ﷺ). They narrated what they heard from Prophet (ﷺ) regarding the interpretation of the Qur'ān. Abū Bakr (R.A), 'Umar (R.A), Uthmān (R.A), 'Alī (R.A), the Anṣār and others who followed the Prophet (ﷺ) after the conquest of Makkah. This can be gauged by reading the detailed material that is available regarding the relics of the Companions. Ibn e Qayyim describes:

When the Ṣaḥābī makes a statement, decision, or fatwa, there are some of the Ṣaḥābī's authoritative sources about it, which are special to him only. And there are some common grounds between us and them. One of the unique and special sources of knowledge of the Ṣaḥābah is the possibility that he heard it directly from the Prophet (ﷺ) or from any other Ṣaḥābah who heard it from the Prophet (ﷺ). Therefore, it is not possible to cover the individual knowledge of the Companions. Every Ṣaḥābī did not get a chance to explain all his demons. Where are the traditions of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, 'Umar Fārūq and other Companions? In fact, they were afraid to relate anything to the Prophet (ﷺ). They were frightened and frightened. It was a big thing for them. Therefore, they used to narrate the news very rarely in relation to the Prophet (ﷺ). They were afraid that they would mention the name of the Prophet (ﷺ) and if they fell short, they would be guilty of a great sin. In the same way, if they heard something from the Prophet (ﷺ) several times, they would not mention the name of Prophet (ﷺ) while narrating it.⁹

In support of the above article, there are aphorisms in which one tafsir is narrated from one Ṣaḥābī and that tafsir is also narrated from another Ṣaḥābī. And it's also one of the

unknown. As Imām Tirmidhī (R.A.) says:

When Abū Umāmah saw the dead bodies falling on the stairs of Damascus, he said:

كلاب النار شر قتلى تحت اديم السماء ، خير الناس من قتلوه ثم قرء "يوم تبيض وجوه و تسود وجوه" -¹⁰

Hearing this, Abū Ghālib said, "Have you heard this from the Prophet?"

Abū Umāmah said: I would have not told you if I had not heard it thrice from the Prophet (ﷺ).¹¹

It is clear from this Ḥadīth that Abū Umāmah did not attribute the statement to Prophet (ﷺ), but he said it on his own behalf, but when the Prophet (ﷺ) asked him, he clarified that if I had not heard such a great thing from Prophet (ﷺ) so many times, I would never have said a great statement about Allah's Qur'ān from my own opinion.¹²

‘Abdullāh Bin Mas‘ūd (May Allah be pleased with him) is the Prophet's guardian and messenger. They say: "These are heights for everything and height of the Qur'ān is Baqarah."¹³ The same is also reported from the Prophet (ﷺ). As narrated by Sahl bin Sa'd.¹⁴ In this regard, Khaṭīb Baghdādī writes:

In describing a tradition as Mauqūf and Marfū‘, it does not affect the meaning of the Ḥadīth. Because the Ṣaḥābī sometimes narrates the Ḥadīth as Mauqūf and Marfū‘. Sometimes it can be described as a fatwa. Thus, the Ḥadīth is transmitted from the Ṣaḥābah in both ways. Imam Sufyān bin ‘Uyyaina used to do such things. For example, when a Ḥadīth is narrated by Marfū‘, the same Ḥadīth is sometimes narrated by Mauqūf.¹⁵

Consensus of the Companions in the Tafsīr

If the tafsīr from the Companions is valid and their difference from the other Companions is not known, then such tafsīr sayings are the order of consensus which is the proof and *Hujjat*. On it all the principles of jurisprudence will come true.¹⁶

Famous Sayings of the Ṣaḥābah

If a Ṣaḥābī interprets a verse and the statement of a Ṣaḥābī does not prevail against it, it is called a famous saying and it can be agreed upon. This will also be a source of inspiration for scholars. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (May Allah have mercy on him) writes:

واما اقوال الصحابه فان انتشرت ولم تنكر في زمانهم فهي حجة عند جماهير العلماء.¹⁷

The statements of the Companions (Ṣaḥābah), if they became widespread and were not objected to during their time, are considered authoritative (a valid proof) by the majority of scholars.

The Unknown Sayings of the Ṣaḥābah

If in the interpretation of a verse there is a non-famous saying of the Ṣaḥābī or there is no knowledge of fame or notoriety about it, then there is a difference of opinion among the scholars of Islam about considering such a statement as a proof. Imām Abū Ḥanīfa, Imām Shafī‘ī, Imām Mālik, Imām Aḥmad and Ishāq bin Rahwiyah. However, there is no consensus for Aḥnāf, Mālikiyyah, Shāfi‘ah, Ḥanbalah, and the learned people of latter time. That is because the Ṣaḥābī is submissive and there is a possibility of both rightness and wrongness. Therefore, his admitted in its place, but it cannot justify his unique sayings and various sayings. This change in the opinion and theory of jurists is due to the influence of scholars and philosophers.

Discord among the Companions in the interpretation of Qur'ān

If there is a person who is innocent in the commandments of Allah, it is the person of Muḥammad (ﷺ). On whose tongue Allah used to speak the truth. And the Qur'ān was

revealed in the language of Allah. While the Companions of Prophet (ﷺ) are not innocent, there is also a possibility of error in their ijtihādāt. Therefore, if the tafsīr sayings of the Companions are contradictory and contradictory at any place, then the Ulema of Islam have decreed that one of the sayings of the Companions should be preferred on the basis of reason and imitation and the tafsīr should be explained accordingly. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (May Allah have mercy on him) said:

If the Companions differ among themselves, the decision will be returned to the Prophet. And in this discordant situation, the sayings of the Companions will not be a justification.¹⁸

Allah has given the greatest authority to the Prophet, Muhammad (ﷺ). As the Qur'ān says:

فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ.¹⁹

And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger.

When someone's saying conflicts with the saying of Prophet (ﷺ), the Ummah agrees that his saying should be rejected and the saying of Prophet (ﷺ) should be accepted. The same procedure will be followed in the case of demarcation marks. Yes, if there is no guidance from the Prophet (ﷺ) at any stage, then it is best to give preference to one of the discordant sayings of the Companions in such a situation.

Conclusion

The Companions witnessed the revelation and comprehend its explanation and meanings directly from the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). Their deeds and character were praised by Allah in the Holy Qur'ān. The majority of Jurists and Muḥaddithīn considered their deeds and saying as the most reliable sources of interpretation and explanation of the Qur'ān. In the same way through which Ummah received the Ḥadīth, the sayings and actions also been received. Jurists agreed that deeds and sayings of companions are actually deeds and sayings of the Prophet.

Ḥadīth books contain a large collection of the sayings and actions of the Companions. The jurists clarified the authenticity and legal status of the deeds and saying of the Companions. Regarding legislative status it will first be seen whether the other Companions contradict it or not. If there is no contradiction, it will be followed. If there is, it will be seen whether those who oppose are superior in knowledge and grace or not, if they are, their opinion will be preferred, otherwise that opinion will be accepted. Similarly, if there is conflict between opinion of Companion and Qiyās the opinion will have priority and Qiyās will be abandoned.

Recommendations and Considerations for the Sayings of Ṣaḥābah

- The Companions themselves witnessed the revelation and explained its demands and meanings directly to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Their (ﷺ) good deeds and good character were praised by Allah in the Holy Qur'ān and the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) declared his era as the era of Khair al-Qurūn. It has been considered as the most reliable source and has been declared as evidence of Sharī'ah.
- In the same way that the Ummah has received the Ḥadīth through chain of transmission and tradition, the sayings and actions of the Companions have also been received by the Ummah through chain of transmission. In the Ḥadīth books, not only the mentioned Ḥadīths are transmitted, but they also contain a large collection of the sayings and actions of the Companions. The legislative status has also been clarified.

- In the presence of the Prophet (ﷺ), there were generally three types of Ijtihād of the Companions, the first two types of Ijtihād were accepted and the third was not accepted. The second case was that a companion performed Ijtihād in the presence of the Prophet (ﷺ) and presented the issue deduced from it before the Prophet (ﷺ). In the presence of the Prophet (ﷺ) the Companions wanted to enforce any order forever without his command and knowledge, and it was impossible.
- Regarding the saying of a Ṣaḥābī, it will first be seen whether the other Ṣaḥābah contradict him or not. If there is no objection, it will be followed. If there is opposition, it will be seen whether those who oppose are superior in knowledge and grace or not, if they are superior, then their opinion will be preferred, otherwise, the opinion of this Ṣaḥābī will be taken. Similarly, the opinion of Ṣaḥābī and Qiyās If there is a conflict, the opinion of the Ṣaḥābī will have priority and Qiyās will be abandoned.

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