

## Ḥadīth of Ādam's *tawassul* through the Prophet ﷺ

by GF Haddad—Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1427—April 2006

- The ḥadīth of Ādam's *tawassul* through the Prophet ﷺ is related from three Companions – Maysara, Ibn ʿAbbās, and Ibn ʿUmar – with chains varying in strength from strong to very weak:

I. Ibn al-Jawzī narrated in *al-Wafāʾ* with his chain through al-Bayhaqī's and al-Khaṭīb's shaykh, the trustworthy ḥāfiẓ Abū al-Husayn ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh, known as Ibn Bishrān al-ʿAdl al-Umawī al-Baghdādī al-Muʿaddal (d. 411 or 415) in his *Fawāʾid*, from the trustworthy ḥāfiẓ and *Musnid* of Baghdād Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAmr ibn al-Bakhtarī al-Razzāz, from Aḥmad ibn Ishāq ibn Šāliḥ al-Wazzān al-Jurjānī (d. 281 “*lā baʿsa bihi*” according to al-Dāraquṭnī), from Muḥammad ibn Sinān al-ʿAwqī (d. 223, al-Bukhārī's shaykh in the *Ṣaḥīḥ*), from Ibrāhīm ibn Ṭahmān (one of the narrators of the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*), from Budayl ibn Maysara (one of the narrators in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*), from ʿAbd Allāh ibn Shaqīq (one of the narrators in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*), from the Companion Maysarat al-Fajr رضي الله عنه:

I said: “Messenger of Allāh, when were you made a Prophet?” He replied: “When Allāh created the earth and turned to the heavens, arranging them into seven heavens, and He created the Throne, He wrote on the leg of the Throne: MUḤAMMAD IS THE MESSENGER OF ALLĀH AND THE SEAL OF PROPHETS. And Allāh created Paradise in which He made Ādam and Ḥawwāʾ dwell, then He wrote my name [there] on the gates, the tree-leaves, the houses and tents, while Ādam was still between the spirit and the body. When Allāh Most High brought him to life, he looked at the Throne and saw my name, whereupon Allāh Most High informed him: ‘He is the liege-lord of your offspring.’ When shayṭān deceived them, they repented and sought intercession with my name from Him.”

The ḥadīth master al-Šāliḥī cited it in *Subul al-Hudā wal-Rashād* (Beirut ed. 1:86=Cairo ed. 1:104) and said “Its chain is good and there is no harm in it.”<sup>1</sup> Al-Ḥalabī also cited it in his *Sīra* (1:355).

Al-Bayhaqī narrates with the above chain only the reply “While Ādam was still between the spirit and the body” in his *Dalāʾil al-Nubuwwa* (1:84) while Ibn Taymiyya cites the entire wording with the full chain in *Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā* (2:150-151) but he adds “from Muḥammad ibn Šāliḥ” between Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Wazzān and Ibn Sinān al-ʿAwqī. If correct, this additional link could be either the trustworthy ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad ibn Šāliḥ ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Anmāṭī al-Šūfī known as Kaylaja (d. 271) or Muḥammad ibn Šāliḥ al-Wāsiṭī Kaʿb al-Dhirāʿ who is also trustworthy, so the chain remains a strong chain, and Allāh knows best.

II. Al-Khallāl narrated in *al-Sunna* (1:261): Al-Faḍl ibn Muslim al-Muḥaribī narrated to us: Muḥammad ibn ʿIṣma narrated to us: Jundul [ibn Wāliq, *thiqa* per al-Haythamī] narrated to us: ʿAmr ibn Aws al-Anšārī [*mastūr* per al-Dhahabī] narrated to us: from Saʿīd ibn Abī ʿArūba: from Qatāda: from Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab: from Ibn ʿAbbās: “Allāh Most High revealed to ʿĪsā عليه السلام: ‘O ʿĪsā, Believe in Muḥammad and command whosoever reaches his time among your Community that they believe in him. Were it not for Muḥammad, I would not have created Ādam, and were it not for Muḥammad, I would not have created Paradise or Hellfire. Indeed, I created the Throne on top of the water and it shook, so I inscribed upon it LĀ ILĀHA ILLĀ ALLĀH MUḤAMMADUN RASŪLULLĀH, whereupon it stood still.” Al-Khallāl said: “I read it to Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Bishr ibn Sharīk and he concurred with it,” *i.e.* with its being authentic.

Al-Ḥākim similarly narrated in the *Mustadrak* (2:614-615=2:271): ʿAlī ibn Ḥamshādh al-ʿAdl (258-338) [Abū al-Ḥasan al-Naysābūrī, a major trustworthy ḥāfiẓ] narrated to us by dictation: Hārūn ibn al-ʿAbbās al-Hāshimī (208-275) [*thiqa* per al-Khaṭīb] narrated to us: Jundul ibn Wāliq narrated to us, to the end of the above chain and text. Al-Ḥākim said: “This is a sound-chained ḥadīth but al-Bukhārī and Muslim did not narrate it.”<sup>2</sup>

Al-Dhahabī in his *Talkhīṣ al-Mustadrak* and *Mīzān al-ʿIṭidāl* (*s.v.* ʿAmr ibn Aws) conjectures that Ibn ʿAbbās's narration is forged (“*ʿazunnuhu mawḍūʿan*”) but brings no proof, as its chain contains neither a liar nor a forger and is a fair chain by the *Salaf*'s criteria for *faḍāʾil* ḥadīths.

III. Al-Ṭabarānī narrated in *al-Muʿjam al-Ṣaghīr* (2:82 §992) and *al-Muʿjam al-Awsaṭ* (6:313-614 §6502) : Muḥammad ibn Dāwūd ibn Aslam al-Šafādī narrated to us: Aḥmad ibn Saʿīd al-Madanī al-Fihri narrated to us:

<sup>1</sup>A grading confirmed by ʿAbd Allāh al-Ghumārī in *Murshid al-Hāʾir* (p. 37) and *al-Radd al-Muḥkam* (p. 138-139) as well as his student Maḥmūd Mamdūh in *Rafʿ al-Mināra* (p. 247-249).

<sup>2</sup>Also Abū al-Shaykh in *Tabaqāt al-Aṣṭahāniyyīn* according to al-Lacknawī in *al-Āthār al-Marfūʿa* (p. 44), and Abū Saʿd al-Naysābūrī in *Sharaf al-Muṣṭafāʾ* (1:163-165 §15).

‘Abd Allāh ibn Ismā‘īl al-Madanī narrated to us: from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Zayd ibn Aslam, from his father, from his grandfather, from ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه:

The Prophet ﷺ said: “When Ādam committed the sin he made, he raised his head toward the Throne and said: ‘I am asking You by the right of Muḥammad to forgive me.’ Allāh Most High revealed to him: ‘What is Muḥammad? Who is Muḥammad?’ He replied: ‘Glorified be Your Name! When You created me I raised my head toward Your Throne and [saw] there was written on it: LĀ ILĀHA ILLĀ ALLĀH MUḤAMMADUN RASŪLULLĀH. I knew that there was no one more magnificent in Your sight than him whose name You placed next to Your Name.’ Allāh Most High revealed to him: ‘O Ādam, truly He is the last of the Prophets from your seed and his Community are the last of all Communities from your seed. Were it not for him, O Ādam, I would not have created you.’”

The above is also narrated by al-Ḥākim (2:615) and al-Bayhaqī in *Dalā’il al-Nubuwwa* (5:488–489) thus: Abū Sa‘īd ‘Amr ibn Muḥammad ibn Maṣū‘ al-‘Adl narrated to us: Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ḥanzalī narrated to us: Abū al-Ḥārith ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muslim al-Fihri narrated to us in Egypt: Ismā‘īl ibn Maslama narrated to us: ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Zayd ibn Aslam informed us: from his father: from his grandfather: from ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه:

The Prophet ﷺ said: “When Ādam committed his mistake he said: ‘O my Lord, I am asking you to forgive me for the sake of Muḥammad.’ Allāh Most High said: ‘O Ādam, and how do you know about Muḥammad whom I have not yet created?’ Ādam replied: ‘O my Lord, after You created me with your hand and breathed into me of Your spirit, I raised my head and saw written on the heights of the Throne: LĀ ILĀHA ILLĀ ALLĀH MUḤAMMADUN RASŪLULLĀH. I knew that You would not place next to Your Name but the most beloved one of Your creation.’ Allāh Most High said: ‘O Ādam, I have forgiven you, and were it not for Muḥammad I would not have created you.’”<sup>3</sup>

So the pivot of this narration is ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Zayd ibn Aslam whom al-Bayhaqī declared weak although Ibn ‘Adī in his *Kāmil* considered that his narrations were overall fair. Al-Dhahabī went to excess in declaring the ḥadīth forged.

The ḥadīth is also narrated from our liege-lord ‘Umar in *mawqūf* form by the Shāfi‘ī ḥadīth master Abū Bakr al-Ājurri al-Makkī – he was the shaykh of Ibn Bishrān’s brother Abū al-Qāsim ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Bishrān – in *al-Sharī‘a* (p. 432) with his chain.

Al-Ājurri also narrates it (p. 430 §963) from the *Tābi‘ī* Abū al-Zinād with an extremely weak chain.

A similar wording is also narrated from Muḥammad al-Bāqir by Ibn al-Mundhir in his *Tafsīr* according to al-Suyūṭī in *al-Durr al-Manthūr* (1:60).<sup>4</sup>

The exchange “How do you know of Muḥammad” and our liege-lord Ādam’s reply is also narrated from Ibn Mas‘ūd by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā with his chain in *al-Ishrāf fī Manāzil al-Ashrāf* (p. 113–114 §24).

### Additional Narrations

Al-Daylamī in *al-Firdaws bi-Ma’thūr al-Khiṭāb* (5:227 §8031) cited without chain from Ibn ‘Abbās: “Allāh Most High says: ‘I swear it by My Power and My Glory! Were it not for you [O Muḥammad], I would not have created the world.’”<sup>5</sup>

Al-Albānī rejected it in his *Silsila Ḍa‘īfa* (§282). Al-Khallāl in *al-Sunna* (1:237) narrated it from the Ḥanbalī Hārūn ibn al-‘Abbās al-Ḥāshimī who added that whoever rejects this ḥadīth is a *zindīq*. This ruling is reminiscent of the expression of the Shāfi‘ī Imām Taqī al-Dīn al-Ḥiṣnī in the book he wrote against Ibn Taymiyya entitled *Da‘‘ Shubahi man Shabbaha wa-Tamarad* in which he said:

Whoever denies the use of the Prophet ﷺ as intermediary (*al-tawassul bihi*) and the use of him as intercessor (*al-tashaffu‘ bihi*) after his death, or claims that his sanctity ended with his death, has announced to the people and proclaimed against himself that his state is worse than that of the Jews, who used him as intermediary before he appeared into existence, and that there is in his heart a

<sup>3</sup>Cited also by Abū Sa‘īd al-Naysābūrī in *Sharaf al-Muṣṭafā* (1:165–166 §16) and Ibn Kathīr in *al-Bidāya* (1:81=1:91 and 2:322=2:393), *al-Sīra al-Nabawiyya* (1:320), and *Qīṣaṣ al-Anbiyā’* (1:29)

<sup>4</sup>Reproduced in full by Mamdūh in *Raf‘ al-Mināra* (p. 246–247).

<sup>5</sup>Cf. *Kanz al-‘Ummāl* (§32025).

Al-Şāliḥī in *Subul al-Hudā* (‘Ilmiyya ed. 1:75) cites it as narrated from our liege-lord ‘Alī by al-‘Azafī in his *Mawlid* and Ibn Sabī‘ in *Shifā’ al-Şudūr* in the wording: “O Muḥammad! I swear it by My Power and My Glory! Were it not for you, I would not have created my earth, or my heaven, nor would I have raised up this sky or flattened this land.”

He also mentions that Ibn ‘Asākir (3:517-518) narrated with a very weak chain from Salmān: “Since I took Ibrāhīm as my intimate friend (*khalīlī*), I took you as my beloved friend (*ḥabībī*), and I did not create anything dearer to Me than you, and I have created the world and its people to make your honor and rank known to them, and were it not for you I would not have created the world.” This is part of a much longer narration which Ibn al-Jawzī declared “forged beyond doubt” in his *Mawḍū‘āt* (1:288-289).

Al-Suyūṭī in al-Durr al-Manthūr (3:117) and al-Şāliḥī (1:85=Cairo ed. 1:104) mentioned that Ibn Abī ‘Āşim in his *Musnad* (= *al-Sunna* p. 306) and Abū Nu‘aym narrated from Anas that Allāh Most High said to Mūsā: “O Mūsā, whoever meets Me disbelieving in Muḥammad, I shall cause him to enter the Fire.” Mūsā said: “Who is Muḥammad?” He replied: “O Mūsā, I swear it by My Power and My Glory! I never created anything dearer to Me than him. I have written his name together with My Name on the Throne before I created the heavens and the earth and the sun and moon by two thousand years.” Its chain is so weak that al-Dhahabī in his *Mizān* declared it among the forgeries of Sa‘īd ibn Mūsā al-Umawī. This is also cited from Ibn ‘Abbās<sup>6</sup> and the “two thousand year” period is also related from the Tābi‘ī ‘Aṭā’.<sup>7</sup>

Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in his *Manāzil al-Ashrāf* (p. 113 §23) narrated with his chain that Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr said: “The children of Ādam differed over who was the dearest of creatures to Allāh Most High, some of them saying it was the angels who never disobey Allāh. They went to Ādam who replied: ‘Truly, I am the dearest of all creatures except that when the spirit was breathed into me, it had hardly reached my feet before I sat up fully and the Throne glimmered before me and I gazed at it; lo and behold! there was [written] on it MUḤAMMADUN RASŪLULLĀH. In reality, he is the dearest of all creatures to Allāh.’”

The Ulema generally agreed that creation was for the sake of the Prophet ﷺ. Hence, when they mentioned the narration that were it not for him Allāh would not have created anything, they said its meaning was true.<sup>8</sup> Ibn Taymiyya gave the most eloquent expression of this verification of the meaning:

Muḥammad ﷺ is the Chief of the Children of Ādam, the Best of Creation, the noblest of them in the sight of Allāh Most High. This is why some have said that “Allāh created the Universe due to him,” or that “Were it not for him, He would have neither created a Throne, nor a Footstool, nor a heaven, earth, sun or moon.” However, this is not a hadith on the authority of the Prophet ﷺ... but it may be explained from a correct aspect...

Since the best of the righteous of the children of Adam is Muḥammad ﷺ, creating him was a desirable end of deep-seated purposeful wisdom, more than for anyone else, and hence the completion of creation and the fulfillment of perfection was attained with Muḥammad ﷺ... The Chief of the Children of Ādam is Muḥammad, may Allāh Exalted bless him and grant him peace, Ādam and his children being under his banner. He, may Allāh Exalted bless him and grant him peace, said: “Truly, I was written as the Seal of the Prophets with Allāh Most High, when Ādam ﷺ was going to-and-fro in his clay,” *i.e.* that my prophethood was decreed and manifested when Ādam was created but before the breathing of the Spirit into him, just as Allāh decrees the livelihood, lifespan, deeds and misery or happiness of the slave when He creates the embryo but before the breathing of the Spirit into it.

Since man is the seal and last of all creation, and its microcosm, and since the best of man is thus the best of all creation absolutely, then Muḥammad ﷺ, being the Pupil of the Eye, the Axis of the Mill, and the Distributor to the Collective, is as it were the Ultimate Purpose from amongst all the purposes of creation. Thus it cannot be denied to say that “Due to him all of this was created,” or that “Were it not for him, all this would not have been created,” so if statements like this are thus explained according to what the Book and the Sunna indicate, it is acceptable.<sup>9</sup>

And Allāh knows best.

<sup>6</sup>By Abū Sa‘īd al-Naysābūrī in *Sharaf al-Muṣṭafā* (1:166-167 §17) and al-Suyūṭī in *al-Durr al-Manthūr* (6:418-419) after Ibn Mardūyah.

<sup>7</sup>With a very weak chain by al-Ājurī in *al-Sharī‘a* (p. 429-430 §962).

<sup>8</sup>Cf. al-Khallāl in *al-Sunna* and those he cites, Abū Muḥammad Makkī and Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī as cited by al-Ḥiṣnī in *Daf’ Shubah man Shabbaha wa-Tamarrad*, al-Qaṣṭallānī in the *Mawāhib* and al-Zurqānī in its *Sharḥ*, al-Şāliḥī in *Subul al-Hudā*, al-‘Ajlūnī in *Kashf al-Khaṭā’*, al-Qārī in the *Asrār*, al-Lacknawī in *al-Āthār al-Marṭū‘a*...

<sup>9</sup>Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā* (11:95-97).