

A Distortion in Thaqalain Tradition



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Thaqalain tradition is a famous and well-known tradition that is reported by [both] Sunnites and Shiites. Hundreds of prominent narrators have narrated this tradition. Some self-interested figures have fabricated the tradition of adherence to Book (Quran) and Tradition (Prophet's Tradition) [instead of Quran and Prophet's Progeny] as two weighty things. This book studies this tradition and its reporters, critically examines them and shows the truth to those who seek it.

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In the Name of God the Beneficent the Merciful

Jabir bin Abdullah Ansari quotes the Holy Prophet (s) as saying:

يا ايها الناس! انى تركت فيكم ما ان اخذتم به لن تضلوا: كتاب هلا و عترتى
أهل بيتى

O' people! I have left something (among you) to which if you hold fast, you will never go astray: Allah's Book and my progeny. 1

1. Sahih e Tirmidhi, vol. 5, p. 662, Tradition, no. 3786.

With the prophetic mission of Prophet Muhammad (s), the seal of the prophets, the last and the most perfect divine religion was conveyed to humanity and prophet hood came to an end.

The religion of Islam emerged in Mecca but after twenty three years of arduous efforts made by the Messenger Allah (s) and a handful of his loyal companions it spread all over the Arabian Peninsula.

The continuation of this divine mission was a task that was entrusted publicly on Dhul Hijja, the eighteenth, by Allah, the Glorious, to Ali (a.s), the commander of the faithful and the first personality after the Holy Prophet (s) in the world of Islam.

With the proclamation of Hazrat Ali's guardianship and succession on this day, divine blessings were completed and the religion of Islam was perfected, being announced as the only religion chosen by Allah. That was how unbelievers and pagans got disappointed from destroying Islam.

Soon after the demise of the Messenger of Allah (s), some of the companions of the Holy Prophet (s) based on their pre-hatched conspiracies, brought deviation in the course of guidance and leadership. They closed the gate of the city of knowledge putting Muslims in perplexity. From the very beginning of their rule, they placed the truths of Islam – that were like shining sun – behind the dark clouds of doubt and skepticism by putting a ban on recording prophetic traditions , spreading fabricated traditions , casting doubts and using hypocrisy and deception.

Obviously, in spite of all conspiracies hatched by the enemies of Islam, the truths of Islam and noble sayings of the Messenger of Allah (s) were promulgated by the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (a.s.), his successors and a few of his devout companions and those truths kept flowing and manifesting themselves in one way or the other in the course of history. By explaining the truths, they did away with the doubts, hesitation, illusions, and unfounded beliefs inculcated by the enemies of Islam, making truths clear to all.

In this respect, great scholars and men of knowledge such as Sheikh Mufid, Sayyid Murtadha, Khaja Nasir, Allamah Hilli, Qadhi Nurullah, Mir Hamid Husain, Sayyid Sharafuddin, Allamah Amini etc. are like shining stars for they are the ones who defended Islamic truths, explained the realities of the school of Ahlulbayt (a.s.) and dealt with spurious arguments using their tongues and pens.

In our era, one of the of the scholars and researchers who has, with his eloquent pen and expressive writing, explained the truths of the religion of Islam and astutely defended the leadership and wilayah (guardianship) of the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (a.s.) is Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Husaini Milani.

The Islamic Truths Center is proud to embark on reviving the fruitful and precious works of that great researcher by reviewing, translating and publishing them in a bid to make them available to students, scientific figures and those who are in search for Islamic truths.

The book in your hand is a translation of one of his works, intended to acquaint the English audience with Islamic truths. It is expected that this humble effort will earn the pleasure of the Remnant of Allah, the Imam of Time [the twelfth Shiite Imam] may Allah hasten his reappearance.

Islamic Truths Center

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds and may prayer and peace be upon our master and Prophet, Muhammad, and his pure progeny, and may Allah's curse be upon all their enemies from the first to the last one.

Thaqalain tradition is a famous and well-known tradition that is reported by [both] Sunnites and Shiites. Hundreds of prominent narrators and tradition memorizers belonging to various centuries, have narrated this tradition from around forty male and female companions of the Holy Prophet (s), using numerous ways.

Since there is no objection about the reporters and the content of this tradition, some self-interested figures have fabricated the tradition of adherence to Book (Quran) and Tradition (Prophets Tradition) [instead of Quran and Prophets Progeny] as two weighty things. The Holy Prophet (s) according to this tradition which is quoted by Sunnites, said:

“I am leaving two precious things among you: Allah's Book and my tradition.”

It is worth mentioning that according to some sources the Holy Prophet (s) said this word in his speech in Farewell Hajj.

The present pamphlet studies this tradition and its reporters, critically examines them and shows the truth to those who seek it.

An inquiry into the narrators of Thaqalain tradition and their Traditions

No doubt, the version of Thaqalain tradition that contains 'Book and Tradition' [in place of Book and Prophet's progeny] has appeared only in a few Hadith books and biographical works, which we will now

study.

The Tradition of Malik bin Anas

Based on researches made the most ancient narrator of this tradition is Malik bin Anas (d. 179 AH). In his al-Muwatta, he quotes the Holy Prophet (s)¹ as saying:

“I leave two things among you, as long as you follow them, you will never go astray: Allah’s Book and His Prophet’s tradition.”

The Tradition of Ibn Hisham

Another person who has narrated this tradition is Ibn Hisham (d. 218 AH). In his al-Sira al-Nabaviyya, which is an abridgment of al-Sira by Muhammad bin Ishaq, he quotes the Holy Prophet (s) as having said in his Farewell Hajj:

“...And I have left something among you to which if you resort, you will never go astray and they are clear issues: Allah’s Book and His prophet’s tradition.”

Hakim’s Tradition

Hakim e Nayshaburi (d. 405 AH) has also narrated this tradition. He has mentioned it in his al-Mustadrak and, commenting on it, he says:

It is narrated from Abu Bakr Ahmad Ibn Ishaq Faqih, from Abbas Ibn Isqati, from Ismael Ibn Abi Uwais from Muhammad Bin Fazl Sha’arani from his grandfather, from Ibn Abi Uwais, from his father, from Thawr Ibn Ziyad Dily, from Akrama, from Ibn Abbas that he quoted the Holy Prophet as saying in his Farewell Hajj:

“Satan is disappointed from being worshiped in your land, but he is satisfied to be obeyed through those acts of you which are not acts of worship and which you underestimate. So be careful.

O’ people! I left two things among you as memorials to which if you resort, you will never go astray: Allah’s Book and His Prophet’s tradition.

As a matter of fact each Muslim is a brother of another Muslim and actually all Muslims are brothers. No one is allowed to use his brother’s possession without his permission. And never commit oppression and do not return to the state of disbelief after me, killing each other.”

After narrating this tradition, Hakim begins assessing its chain of reporters. He says: While narrating this tradition, Bukhari has relied on Akrama, whereas Muslim has referred to Ibn Abi Uwais. As to the other reporters of this tradition, they are accepted by all scholars.

After assessing its chain of reporters, Hakim assesses its text, saying: This tradition is a part of the Holy Prophet's sermon. All scholars agree that the Holy Prophet (s) has said:

“O people! I left two things among you, to which if you resort, you will never go astray: Allah's Book (about which I will ask you and to which you will be answerable) [and His Prophet's tradition].

To mention the issue of resorting to Prophet's tradition sounds strange, but this is really something that is needed.

Hakim thereupon says: Nevertheless I have found some evidence in Abu Huraira's narrations that attests to the truth of the subject under discussion.

It is narrated from Abu Bakr bin Ishaq Faqih, from Muhammad bin Isa bin Sakan Wasiti, from Dawood bin Amr Dabbi, from Salih bin Musa Talhi, from Abd al-Aziz bin Rafi'a, from Abi Salih, from Abu Huraira, from the Holy Prophet (s) that he said:

“I leave two things among you. You will never go astray after [following] them: Allah's Book and my tradition. These two will never get separated from each other until they join me by the pool.”²

Bayhaqi's Tradition

Abu Bakr Bayhaqi (d. 458 AH) has narrated this tradition via two chains of narrators.

First Chain

Abu Abdullah Hafiz narrates from Ismael bin Muhammad bin Fazl Sha'arani, from his grandfather, from Bin Abi Uwais, from his father, from Thawr bin Zaid Dily, from Akrama, from Ibn Abbas who quotes the Holy Prophet (s) as having said in Farewell Hajj:

“O' people, no doubt, I leave something among you to which if you resort, you will never go astray: Allah's Book and His prophet's tradition.”

Second Chain

Abu al-Husain Bin Bushran al-Adl in Baghdad reports from Ahmad Hamzat Bin Muhammad Bin Abbas, from Abdul Karim Bin Haytham, from Abbas Bin Haytham, from Saleh Bin Musa Talhi, from Abdul Aziz Bin Rafi, from Abi Saleh, from Abu Hurairah who quoted the Holy Prophet (s) as saying:

“There is no doubt that I have left two things among you after me to which as long as you hold fast or by which as long as you abide, you will never go astray: Allah's Book and my tradition. These two will never separate from each other until they join me by the pool.”³

Ibn Abd al-Barr's Tradition

Ibn Abd al-Barr (d. 463 AH) is another person who has narrated this tradition, using two chains of transmitters ⁴

First Chain

Based on this chain, Ibn Abd al-Bar narrates this tradition from Dawood bin Amr Dabbi, from Salih bin Musa Talhi, from Abd al-Aziz bin Rafi'a, from Abi Salih, from Abu Huraira. This tradition is the same as the tradition reported by Hakim in his book, which we will assess later on.

Second Chain

In this chain, Ibn Abd al-Barr has, linking one tradition to another in Al-Muwatta states: Abd al-Rahim Bin Yahya narrates from Ahmad Bin Saeed, from Muhammad Bin Ibrahim, from Ali Bin Zaid Arayezi, from Hunaini, from Kathir bin Abdullah Bin Amr Bin Auf, from his father from his grandfather, from the Holy Prophet (s) who said:

"I leave among you two things to which as long as you hold fast, you will never go astray: Allah's Book and His Prophet's tradition."

Qazi Ayad'a Tradition

Qazi Ayaza Yahsibi (d. 544 AH) concerning how he related this tradition, said: *"I read this tradition to Qazi Abu Ali Husain Bin Muhammad and he [commenting on the tradition] said:*

"I narrate this tradition from Sheikh Imam Ab al-Fazil Ahmad Bin Ahmad Isfahani, from Abu Naeem Ahmad Bin Abdullah Hafiz, from Abdullah Bin Muhammad Bin Ja'afar, from Banan Bin Ahmad Qattan, from Abdullah Bin Umar Bin Aban, from Shuaib Bin Ibrahim, from Sial Bin Umar, from Aban Bin Ishaq Asadi, from Sabah Bin Muhammad, from Abu Hazim, from Abu Saeed Khedri from the Holy Prophet (s) that he said:

"O' people! I leave among you two precious things: Allah's Book and my tradition. So, do not destroy them, because as long as you keep them both, your eyes will never get blind, your steps will never stumble and your hands will never be in need of anything." ⁵

Suyuti's Tradition

Jalal al-Din Suyuti (d. 911 AH) has also narrated this tradition. In his al-'Jami'a al-Saghir', he says that Hakim in his al-Mustadrak, narrates from Abu Huraira that he quotes the Holy Prophet (s) as saying:

"I leave among you two things. You will not go astray after [following] them; Allah's Book and my tradition. These two will never separate from each other until they join me by the pool." ⁶

The Tradition of Muttaqi Hindi

Sheikh Ali Muttaqi Hindi (d.975 AH) has devoted the second part of the first volume of his Kanzul Ummal, to [a discussion titled] “holding fast to [Allah’s] book and [Prophet’s] tradition”. Here he has related this tradition via many channels:

In his Ghilaniyat, Abu Bakr Shafi’ai says that Abu Huraira has quoted the Messenger of Allah (s) as saying:

“I left two things among you after me. You will never go astray after [following] them; Allah’s Book and my tradition. These two will never separate from each other until they join me by the pool.”

In his al-Mustadrak, Hakim Nayshaburi says that Abu Huraira has quoted the Messenger of Allah as saying:

“I left two things among you after me. You will never go astray after [following] them; Allah’s Book and my tradition. They will never separate from each other until they join me by the pool.”

In his al-Mustadrak Hakim Nayshaburi says that Ibn Abbas has quoted the Holy Prophet (s) as saying:

“Satan has become disappointed from being worshiped in your land....”

Bayhaqi narrates from Ibn Abbas that the Holy Prophet (s) said:

“O’ people! I leave things among you to which if you hold fast, you will never go astray; Allah’s Book and His Prophet’s tradition.”

In his al-Abana, Abu Nasr Sajzi says that Abu Huraira has quoted the Holy Prophet (s) as saying:

“Allah’s Book and my tradition will never separate from each other until they join me by the pool.”

After quoting this tradition, he says: This tradition is really strange⁷.

1. The letter ‘s’ stands for ‘peace be upon him and his progeny’. Though the Sunnite sources suffice to saying ‘peace be upon him’ after mentioning the name of the Prophet (s), omitting ‘and his progeny’, we have intended to mention the whole version of this supplication, whenever we have used the abbreviation ‘s’.

2. Al-Mustadrak, vol. 1, p. 93.

3. Al-Sunan al Kubra, vol. 10, p. 114

4. It is worth mentioning that Ibn Abd al-Aziz has written two books concerning Al-Muwatta and its chains of reporters. The author of Kashf al-Dunoon has mentioned the names of these two books. (see, Kashf al-Dunoon, vol. 2, p. 1907). One of these books is al-Tamheed lima fi Al-Muwatta mi al-Ma’ani wa al-Asanid. The tradition quoted above is the 32nd of the traditions under the heading ‘Balaghani’, taken from a manuscript. We could not, due lack of space, relate the entire chain.

5. Al-Ilma’a Fi Dabti Al-Riwayah wa Taq’yiidi Al-Sama’a, pp. 8 & 9.

6. Faiz al- Qadir, Sharh al- Jami’a al- Saghir, vol. 3, p. 240.

7. Kanzul Ummal, vol. 1, p. 73; Traditions No. 875, 876, 184, 941, 187, 954 and 955.

A Glance at the Chain of this Tradition

In part one, we mentioned the most important chains of the forged Thaqalain tradition available in Sunnite sources. Before assessing the chains of this tradition, it is necessary to mention a few points.

1. This tradition is one of those traditions that are disregarded by Bukhari and Muslim. They have not mentioned it in their “Sahihain”. This is while Sunnites leave aside many correctly transmitted traditions just because these two Sheikhs have unanimously avoided mentioning them in their books.
2. This tradition is mentioned in none of the other Sunnite sources called “Sihah” and thus the authors of al-Sihah al-Sit, have agreed to avoid mentioning it.
3. This tradition has not appeared in anyone of the reliable Musnads like the Musnad of Ahmad Bin Hanbal. Ahmad bin Hanbal is on the other hand, quoted as having said that the traditions that have not appeared in his Musnad are not correct.
4. Most of the narrators of this tradition have said that it is a strange tradition. Commenting on this tradition, Hakim Nayshaburi says that the phrase “holding fast to tradition in this sermon” is very strange.

Let us now assess the chains of this tradition in the above-mentioned books.

The Chain of this Tradition in al-Muwatta

The position of this tradition is the same is that of the tradition of Malik Bin Anas in al-Muwatta. We will assess it from three angles.

1. An evaluation of al-Muwatta

Commenting on this book, the author of Kash al-Dunoon, says: “As pointed out by al-Nukat al-Wafiyya, al-Muwatta is an old and blessed book. His author wanted to include in it only the sahih (authentic) traditions but the traditions his book contains are sahih only from his point of view not from the viewpoint of people of tradition. This is because Malik considers marasil and balaghat 1 (formats of tradition that are generally below the standards of an authentic tradition) as sahih. 2

Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, commenting on al-Muwatta, says: “Khatib Baghdadi and other scholars have mentioned that Al-Muwatta is [historically] prior to all Jawami’a and Masanid”.

He then points out: “Al-Muwatta is thus historically after Hakim Nayshabruri’s Sahih”. 3

In his Tanwir al-Hawalik, Suyuti, commenting on al-Muwatta, says: “Ibn Hazm in his Maratib Diyanat, says that he has counted the traditions in [al-Muwatta], of which more than 500 were musnad, more than 300 mursal and more than 70 traditions ignored by himself. It definitely includes traditions

weakened by the majority of scholars”. 4

2. A glance at Malik's biography

The second part of our discussion is devoted to the biography of Malik bin Anas. He is criticized and weakened due to many things. Let us now go through his biography.

A. Malik was a member of Khawarij (a notorious group in early Islam)

In a discussion pertaining to Khawarij, Abu al-Abbas al-Mubarrad, says: “Some scholars including Akrama, Ibn Abbas’s freed slave, are related to Khawarij. Malik Bin Anas is also said to have had ties with Khawarij. Zubayriyun believe that Malik bin Anas used to speak ill of Uthman, Ali (a.s), Talha and Zubair, saying: “By Allah, they did not fight with each other except for a dusty broth” 5

B. Malik was a Mudallis

Describing some Mudallis⁶ [the plural form of Mudallis], Khatib Baghdadi points out that Malik bin Anas was a Mudallis. 7

C. Malik joins the ruling class ignoring their crimes

Abdullah Bin Ahmad quotes his father as saying: “*Ibn Abi Daeb and Malik were regularly visiting the rulers. The former used to give them directions whereas the later was silent. Ibn Daeb was far better than Malik*”.⁸

D. Playing musical instruments

In his al-Aghani, Abu al-Faraj Isfahani mentions that Malik used to play musical instruments.⁹

E. Scholars on Malik

Commenting on him, Khatib Baghdadi said: “*During the time of Malik, some scholars were critical of him*”.

Among those criticized by scholars are according to him Ibn Abi Daeb, Abd al-Aziz Majeshun, Ibn Abi Hazim and Muhammad Bin Ishaq.¹⁰

Concerning Malik, Ibn Abd al-Aziz says: “*Ibn Abi Daeb has made about Malik some unkind remarks, which I do not like to mention*”¹¹.

Other people have also commented about Malik. Ibrahim Bin Sa'd has cursed Malik. Abd al-Rahman Bin Zaid bin Aslam and Bin Abi Yahya have also made some remarks about Malik.¹²

3. An evaluation of the chain of tradition of Malik

The third part of our discussion goes to assessing the tradition of Malik from the viewpoint of its chain of transmitters. There is no chain of transmitters for this tradition in al-Muwatta. In his commentary on al-Muwatta, Suyuti says: “Bin Abd al-Barr has connected this book [to the Holy Prophet (s)] through the tradition of Kathir bin Abdullah Bin Amr Bin ‘Awf from his father, from his grandfather. 13

We will speak about the chain of this tradition in accordance with the tradition of Bin Abd al-Azia in al-Tamheed.

The chain of this tradition in Ibn Hisham’s al-Sira al-Nabawiyya

This tradition has appeared without any chain in Ibn Hisham’s al-Sira al-Nabawiyya. Under a heading “Prophet’s sermon in Farewell Hajj” in this book, the author writes: “Ibn Ishaq says: *Thereupon the Holy Prophet (s) went on Hajj pilgrimage ... After performing the Hajj rituals, he gave a sermon*”. 14

The narrator of this tradition is Ibn Ishaq. According to most great scholars of rijal, Ibn Ishaq is a weak person, not immune from criticisms. He was accused of being a deceitful person who was following Shiism. A great number of scholars including Sulaiman Timi, Yahya Qattan, Wahab Bin Khalid and Malik Bin Anas, commenting on Ibn Ishaq, have said that he was profusely lying. 15

The chain of this tradition in al-Mustadrak

As mentioned before, this tradition has also appeared in Hakim’s al-Mustadrak, which has related this tradition through two ways:

1. through Ibn Abbas

The focal point in Hakim’s tradition from Ibn Abbas is ‘Ismael bin Abi Uwais’. We thus suffice to evaluating Ibn Abi Uwais. He is Malik’s nephew. Some scholars of the science of Jarh and T’adil 16 (criticizing and praising) have said something about this person, which I will relate on the basis of Ibn Hajar’s words¹⁷: “*Muawiyya bin Salih, commenting on Ibn Abi Uwais, quotes Ibn Mu’een as saying: He and his father are weak in transmitting traditions*”.

He further quotes Ibn Mu’een as saying: “*Ibn Abi Uwais and his father used to steal traditions*”.

He likewise quotes him as saying that Ibn Abi Uwais mixes up traditions, lies and is not reliable.

Commenting on Ibn Abi Uwais, Nisaei says that he is weak in terms of transmitting traditions. Elsewhere he says that Ibn Abi Uwais is not a thiqa (a reliable person).

Referring to Nisaei’s views, Lalkaei says: “Nisaei did not hesitate to speak ill of Ismael bin Abi Uwais.

He has seriously spoken against him to the extent that he has abandoned his traditions. Probably Nisaei knew something about Ibn Abi Uwais, which others did not know. All scholars of Ilm Rijal (a science that evaluates the transmitters of traditions) eventually agree that he was weak in transmitting traditions.

Concerning Ibn Abi Uwais, Ibn Udai says that he has narrated gharib (strange) traditions from his uncle whom no one else has followed.

In his al-Du'afa, Dulabi has also talked about him, quoting Nasr Ibn Salma Maruzi as having said: "Ibn Abi Uwais is a liar. He used to narrate Ibn Wahab's issues from Malik.

'Aqili has also paid attention to him in his al-Du'afa, saying that Usama Zaffar Basri told me that he had heard Yahya Ibn Mu'een saying: *"Ibn Abi Uwais is not worth a penny"*.

Commenting about him, Dar Qutni also says that he does not include him in the chain of any authentic tradition.

In his al-Muhalla, Ibn Hazm quotes Abu al-Fath as having said: *"Saif Ibn Muhammad told me that Ibn Abi Uwais fabricated traditions"*.

Regarding him Salma Ibn Shabib says: *"I heard Ismael Bin Abi Uwais say: 'When the people of Madina were divergent on a particular issue, I fabricated many traditions for them'"*.

2. through Abu Huraira

There is a person in the chain of Abu Huraira's tradition, called 'Salih bin Musa Talhi Kufi' about whom the scholars of Jarh and Ta'adil have said certain things which I will relate – as in the case of Ibn Abi Umair– through the words of Ibn Hajar 'Asqalani. 18

Regarding Salih Ibn Musa, Ibn Mu'een says that he is not reliable. Elsewhere he mentions that Salih and Ishaq, the two sons of Musa are not reliable and thus their traditions are not recorded.

Hashim bin Murdad quotes Ibn Mu'een as saying that Salih Ibn Musa is not reliable in terms of transmitting traditions. Commenting on him Juzjani says that he, though good, is weak in terms of transmitting traditions.

Ibn Abi Hatam is quoted as having said: *My father commenting on Salih said: He is really weak in terms of transmitting tradition. He narrates unacceptable traditions from reliable persons.*

I said: Can we record his tradition? He said: I do not like his traditions.

Concerning this person, Bukhari says that the traditions of Salih are unacceptable due to his reliance on Sahl Ibn Salih.

Describing Salih, Nisaei says that his traditions being weak are not recorded. Elsewhere he points out that his traditions are rejected.

Concerning on Salih, Ibn Udai says: *“No one narrates the traditions narrated by Salih. In my point of view, he is a person who purposely lies, without things being mixed up for him, causing him thus to commit error. No one has narrated the traditions he has narrated in favor of his grandfather”*.

Commenting on him, Tirmidhi also confirms that some scholars have spoken ill of him.

Abdullah bin Ahmad says: I asked my father about Salih bin Musa but he said: I do not know anything about him. However it seems as if he is not liked.

‘Aqili talking about him, says that no one follows his traditions in order to prove anything.

Ibn Hannan, speaking about him, says that he used to narrate traditions from reliable people in a manner that did not resemble the tradition of reliable people. When a person hears his traditions he testifies that they are fabricated or inverted. Thus one cannot appeal to them.

Abu Na’eem, regarding him says that he is rejected from the viewpoint of transmitting traditions as he has narrated unacceptable traditions.

The chain of this tradition in Bayhaqi's al-Sunan al-Kubra

This tradition has also appeared in Bayhaqi's al-Sunan al-Kubra through two chains of transmitters, one of them being through Ibn Abbas and the other through Abu Huraira. The former includes Ibn Abi Uwais whereas the later Salih bin Musa Talhi. We evaluate the cases of both transmitters while assessing the chain of the tradition in al-Mustadrak by Hakim Nayshaburi.

The chain of this tradition in al-Tamheed

Ibn Abd al-Barr has similarly mentioned this tradition in his al-Tamheed. Although its chain of transmitters include many individuals whom we need to assess, the assessment of the biography of Kathir bin Abdullah is sufficient. Kathir bin Abdullah is the one through whom Ibn Abd al-Bir has changed a mursal (disconnected) tradition into a muttasil (connected) one.

We will now assess his biography through the words of Ibn Hajar Asqalani. 19

Abu Talib quotes Ahmad as saying that Kathir bin Abdullah was a person whose traditions were not acceptable and reliable.

Abdullah bin Ahmad says: My father did not accept the traditions by Kathir bin Abdullah in his Musnad and thus he did not narrate anything from him.

Abu Khatima quotes Ahmad as saying: Do not quote anything from Kathir bin Abdullah.

Dawri quotes Ibn Mu'aeen as saying: His grandfather was a companion of the Holy Prophet (s), but he himself is weak in terms of transmitting traditions.

Commenting on Kathir, Marra says: He is not reliable. Darmi says the same thing about him.

Ajuri says: When Abu Dawood was asked about him, he said: He is a person who lies a lot.

Ibn Abi Hatam says: I asked about him from Abu Zar'ah who said: His tradition is weak and worthless. Elsewhere Abu Hatam says: He is not a righteous person. Nisaei says that he is not a reliable person.

Commenting on him, Ibn Udai says: His entire traditions are not acceptable.

Abu Na'aeem Isfahani, commenting on him, says: Ali bin Madini has regarded him as weak.

Ibn Sa'ad in regard with him says: Kathir bin Abdullah's traditions were few and far between and he was considered as weak.

Ibn Hajar, describing him, says: Saji has regarded Kathir as weak.

Ibn Abd al-Barr has claimed that there is a consensus on his weakness saying: Kathir is weak in terms of transmitting traditions. It is rather said that his weakness in terms of transmitting tradition is a matter of consensus among scholars.

Kathir narrates from his father and grandfather! Commenting on this issue, Ibn Hayyan says: He narrates fabricated traditions from his father and grandfather, which we are not permitted to mention in our book. We must not narrate any tradition from him except to show our astonishment.

Speaking about him, Ibn Sikkin says: Kathir narrates from his father from his grandfather – a thing that demands review.

Commenting on him Hakim says: Kathir narrates from his father from his grandfather traditions that include unacceptable traditions

Mentioned above were the criticisms about Kathir bin Abdullah by scholars of rijal. From among these criticisms, the criticism of Ibn Abd al-Barr is enough. He says: His weakness in terms of transmitting traditions is a matter of consensus among scholars.

The chain of tradition in al-Ilma'a

This tradition has also appeared in al-Ilma'a, the chain of which includes more than one weak and objectionable person. This is because the narrator of this tradition is Shu'aib bin Ibrahim who is the narrator of the books of Saif bin Umar. Ibn Udai has criticized him saying: He is not a famous and well-

known person. 20

Another narrator of this chain is Aban bin Ishaq Asadi, about whom Azdi says: His traditions are not acceptable. 21

The third person included in this chain is Sabbah bin Muhammad Ahmasi. No one other than Tirmidhi has reported from him. However Tirmidhi has once narrated a tradition from him, from Ibn Masud, which he himself has considered as gharib (strange). He is a person who used to narrate from reliable narrators, fabricated traditions.

Concerning him 'Aqili says: His tradition is false and incorrect. He narrates mawquf traditions as marfu'a traditions. 22

It is enough for the evaluation of this chain that it includes Saif bin Umar as one of its transmitters. Concerning him, Ibn Hajar 'Asqali states: Concerning him, Ibn Mu'een says that he is weak in terms of transmitting traditions.

Describing him, Abu Hatam says: His traditions are not acceptable. Concerning him, Abu Dawood says: His traditions are not reliable.

Regarding him, Nisaei says: He is weak in terms of transmitting traditions.

Dar Qutni says the same thing about him.

Speaking about him, Ibn Udai says: Some of his traditions are well-known, but generally speaking, his traditions are not acceptable and reliable.

In regard with this figure, Ibn Hannan says: He used to narrate fabricated traditions from reliable and trustworthy persons.

Elsewhere he points out: It is said that he fabricates traditions.

As the discussion proceeds, Ibn Hajar says: Based on the remaining part of Ibn Hayyan's words, he was accused of being a disbeliever.

Barqani quotes Dar Qutni as saying: His traditions are unacceptable.

Hakim Nayshaburi has also commented on him saying: Saif is accused of being a disbeliever and he is worth nothing in terms of transmitting traditions. 23

The chain of this tradition in al-Ja'mi'a al-Saghir

Al-Jami'a al-Saghir has quoted this tradition from Hakim's al-Mustadrak. Since we have talked about this in detail before, we are not going to make any repetition now.

The chain of this tradition in Kanz al-Ummal

Another figure who has reported this tradition is Muttaqi Hindi. He has narrated this tradition from Hakim Nayshaburi and Abu Bakr Sha'fi'ai, from Abu Huraira.

It goes without any saying that based on what we have said thus far the fate of Abu Huraira's tradition is also obvious. Muttaqi Hindi has narrated this tradition from Hakim Nayshaburi who has narrated it from Ibn Abbas. This chain was also evaluated before. Bayhaqi has narrated this tradition from Ibn Abbas, a case that was also made clear before.

Muttaqi Hindi has narrated this tradition from al-Ibana which has narrated it from Abu Huraira. After narrating this tradition he says: The author of al-Ibana has mentioned that this tradition is gharib (strange). This is because this tradition is narrated from Abu Huraira.²⁴

1. Marasil is the plural form of Mursal. It describes a tradition in whose chain one or more than one transmitters are omitted. Balaghat stands for those traditions that are begun with the term 'balaghani', meaning 'it reached me'.
2. Kashf al-Dunoon, vol. 2, p. 1907.
3. Tadrib al-Rawi, vol. 1, p. 83.
4. Tanwir al-Hawalik, vol. 1, p. 9.
5. Al-Kamil fi al-Adab, vol. 1, p. 159.
6. Mudallis is a person who deceives his customers by veiling the defects [of his goods]. In Hadith terminology, Tadlis is used in two senses: a) Tadlis in Isnad (chain of transmitters) in which the transmitter narrates a tradition from a person whom he has not seen or omits mentioning a weak transmitter in order to make the tradition in question look 'hasan' or 'sahih'. It is said that tadlish is similar to lying. B) Tadlis in a transmitter's attributes in which a person describes a transmitter using unreal attributes in order to conceal the real identity of the transmitter.
7. Al-Kifaya fi Ilm al-Riwaya, p. 365.
8. Al-Ilal wa Ma'arifa al-Rijal, vol. 1, p. 179.
9. Al-A'ani, vol. 2, p. 224.
10. Tarikh e Baghdad, vol. 10, p. 224.
11. Jami'a Bayan al-Ilm wa Fadlihi, vol. 2, p. 157.
12. Ibid, p. 158.
13. Tanwir al-Hawalik, vol. 2, p. 208.
14. Al-Sira al-Nabawiyya, vol. 4, p. 603.
15. See Rijal sources for his biography. You can also refer for further information about him to what Hafiz Bin Sayyid al-Nas (d. 734 AH) has mentioned in his preface to Yun al-Athar.
16. Jarh wa Ta'adil (criticizing and praising) is a branch of Rijal Science. Jarh means criticizing and objecting whereas Ta'adil means praising and considering a narrator as just and fair.
17. Tahdib al-Tahdib, vol. 1, p. 271.
18. Ibid, vol. 4, p. 354.
19. Ibid, vol. 8, p. 377.
20. Lisan al-Mizan, vol. 3, p. 145.
21. Tahdib al-Tahdib, vol. 1, p. 84.
22. Ibid, vol. 4, p. 358.
23. Ibid, vol. 4, p. 259.
24. See related discussions in this book, about the content of this tradition.

Fabricated Tradition

Given the preceding discussions, it is clear that the tradition containing the word ‘thaqalain’ (two weighty things) and its likes has no originality and is not thus correct. This is because one cannot trace any tradition containing any recommendation to ‘Book and Tradition’ under the heading ‘thaqalain’ in Sihah or Masanid.

The traditions that have appeared in some books – though they have originally appeared in al-Muwatta and Hakim’s al-Mustadrak– have no sound basis, particularly the rare versions of this tradition that is together with this phrase: the Holy Prophet (s) made this comment in his sermon in Farewell Hajj.

The motive and goal of the inventor

There is a strong probability that those who invented this tradition with this text aimed at confronting and challenging the real „thaqalain“ tradition by this invented tradition. The real thaqalain tradition is the tradition that is a matter of consensus among Muslims and there exists certainty that the Holy Prophet (s) has mentioned it.

The real ‘Thaqalain’ tradition

The Holy Prophet (s) has presented thaqalain tradition in different places, the most well-known of which is Ghadir where the Holy Prophet (s) after performing his Farewell Hajj gave his well-known Ghadir sermon. This is where he recommended his community to hold fast to the Book and Tradition and ordered them to follow these two precious things and stop opposing them.

.... وقد تركت فيكم ما ان اخذتم بهما لن تضلوا بعدي: كتاب هلا و اهل بيتي

“... I left something among you. As long as you hold fast to them, you will never go astray after me: Allah’s Book and my progeny”. 1

The Holy Prophet (s) in this sermon says emphatically that as long as his community holds fast to the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet’s progeny (which do not separate from each other until they join him by the pool), they will not go astray.

Thaqalain Tradition and its Narrators

Numerous narrators including hundreds of Hadith scholars and Huffaz (memorizers of traditions), belonging to various centuries, have narrated thaqalain tradition from around forty male and female companions of the Holy Prophet (s) through innumerable channels, to the extent that some great

scholars have compiled a book in order to collect the chains of the transmitters of this tradition. For instance scholars including Muslim bin Hajjaj, Ahmad bin Hanbal, Tirmidhi, Abu Dawood, Ibn Maja, Nisae, Hakim Nayshaburi, Tabari, Tabarani etc. have related this tradition.

Thaqalain Tradition and its Signification

Thaqalain tradition clearly signifies that it is obligatory on Muslims to follow Prophet's progeny in every matter, religious or secular. There is no doubt in the authenticity of its chain of transmitters and the clarity of its content (in explaining the position of the Holy Prophet's progeny), though some have however, attempted in vain to question its chain and signification or distort its words and text. Others have tried to introduce the fabricated tradition of laying emphasis on holding fast to Book and Tradition, as 'thaqalain tradition'. They have taken refuge to this fabricated tradition with the aim to replace it with the real thaqalain tradition that is no doubt stated by the Holy Prophet (s)!

Based on the assessments made, we made it – thanks to God– clear that the tradition of enjoining adherence to Book and Tradition is invented and fabricated.

A mere probability

The tradition of adherence to Book and Tradition is forged and invented. If we suppose that this tradition is correct having a sound origin, there is no incoherence between recommending adherence to Book and Tradition and recommending adherence to Book and Prophet's progeny. This is because there is a consensus among Muslims that all is obliged to act in accordance with the Book and prophetic tradition. The tradition of adherence to the Book and Prophet's progeny intends to say that it is necessary to take the Holy Prophet's tradition from Prophet's progeny – not anyone else. This is what the scholars of Hadith and the commentators on this tradition have pointed out. As an instance, Muttaqi Hindi has mentioned both of these traditions under the heading "holding fast to Book and Tradition" – a thing that does not remain hidden from the sight of those who read it.

Peace and blessing of Allah be upon Muhammad and his pure progeny.

All praise belongs to Allah.

1. Kanz al-Ummal, vol. 13, p. 140, Tradition no. 36441.

1. Qazi, Ayaz bin Musa Yahsabi, Al-Ilma' fi Dabt al-Riwaya wa Taqeed al-Sima'a.
2. Khatib Baghdadi, Tarikh Baghdadi, Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, first edition, 1417 AH.
3. Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, Tadrib al-Rawi, Beirut, Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, 1414 AH.

4. Ibn Abd al-Barr al-Qurtabi, al-Tamheed li ma fi al-Muwatta mi al- Ma'ani wa al-Asanid, Cairo, Dar al-Faruq al-Haditha, first edition, 1420 AH.
5. Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, Tanweer al-Hawalik, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, Beirut. No Date.
6. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, Tahdib al-Tahdib, Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al- Ilmiyya, 1415 AH.
7. Ibn Abd al-Barr, Jami'a Bayan al-Ilm wa Fadlihi, Saudi Arabia, Dar Ibn al-Jawzi, second edition, 1416 AH.
8. Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, al-Jami'a al-Saghir, Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al- Ilmiyya, 1410 AH.
9. Bayhaqi, al-Sunan al-Kubra, Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al- Ilmiyya, second edition, 1414 AH.
10. Ibn Hisham, al-Sira al-Nabawiyya, Cairo, 1383 AH.
11. Ahmad bin Hanbal, al-Ilal wa Ma'arif al-Rijal, Beirut, al-Maktab al-Islami (Dar al-Khani), first edition, 1408 AH.
12. Manawi, Fayz al-Qadir, Sharh al-Jami'a al-Saghir, Beirut, 1415 AH.
13. Mubarrad, al-Kamil, Fi al-Adab, Saudi Arabia, Dar al-Nasr, 1386 AH.
14. Haji Khalifa, Kash al-Dunoon, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, 1414 AH. 15. Khatib al-Baghdadi, al-Kifaya fi Ilm al-Riwaya, Beirut, Dar al-Kutub
15. al-Ilmiyya, 1409 AH.
16. Ibn Hajar, Lisan al-Mizan, Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, first edition, 1416 AH.
17. Hakim al-Nayshaburi, al-Mustadrak, Beirut, first edition, 1411 AH.

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[12] <https://www.al-islam.org/feature/shia-beliefs-explained>