

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Story of Mu'adh b. Jabal's Prostration to the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)

By al-'Allāmah, al-Shaykh Rabī' b. Hādī al-Madkhalī

Translated by Abū al-Ḥasan Mālik al-Akhḍar

قال الإمام ابن ماجه رحمه الله: حدثنا أزهر بن مروان، حدثنا حماد بن زيد، عن أيوب، عن القاسم الشيباني، عن عبد الله بن أبي أوف، قال: لما قدم معاذ من الشام، سجد للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: ما هذا يا معاذ؟ قال: أتيت الشام، فوافقتهم يسجدون لأساقفتهم وبطارقتهم، فوددت في نفسي أن نفعل ذلك بك، فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ((فلا تفعلوا، فإني لو كنت أمرا أحدا أن يسجد لغير الله، لأمرت المرأة أن تسجد لزوجها، والذي نفس محمد بيده، لا تؤدي المرأة حق ربها حتى تؤدي حق زوجها، ولو سألتها نفسها وهي على قتب لم تمنعه)).

IN HIS *SUNAN*, *Imām* Ibn Mājah says: Azhar b. Marwān related to us: Ḥammād b. Zayd narrated to us, on the authority of Ayyūb, from al-Qāsim al-Shaybānī, on the authority of 'Abd Allāh b. Abū Awf who said: "When Mu'adh returned from Sham, he prostrated to the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). The Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: 'What is this, O Mu'adh?' Mu'adh said: 'I went to Sham, and I found them prostrating to their bishops and patricians, and I wished that we would do that for you.' The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: 'Do not do this, for were I to command anyone to prostrate to anyone besides Allāh, I would have commanded the woman to prostrate to her husband. And by the One in Whose Hand is the soul of Muḥammad, a woman has not given her Lord His rights until she has given her husband his rights. If he calls to her [for intimacy] while she is riding camel back, she should not refuse him.'"

Regarding this narration, *al-'Allāmah, al-Shaykh Rabī' b. Hādī al-Madkhalī* said: "The Ḥadīth of Mu'adh, regarding his prostration to the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), is not authentic, not in its chain of narration, nor its meaning.

1. As for its meaning, it has not been established that he (i.e. Mu'adh) went to Sham during the life of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Rather, what is established is that he went to Sham during the time of 'Umar b. Khaṭṭāb and died there during the Plague. And in another Ḥadīth, it states, "...when he returned from Yemen..." However, [Mu'adh] did not go to Yemen until the end of the Prophet's (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) life, and Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) died while [Mu'adh] was in Yemen, and he did not return until the successorship of Abū Bakr. Moreover, he is from the most distinguished of the Companions and from their scholars; [thus], it is far-fetched that he would be upon this level of ignorance. Regarding the text, there is discordance within it, as will be clarified shortly.
2. As for its chain of transmission, it contains *Nakārah* (anomalousness), and revolves around [the narrator] al-Qāsim b. Awf al-Shaybānī. Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Qaṭṭān rules him weak [in narration],

along with Shu'bah, as indicated by al-Qaṭṭān. Abū Ḥātim said: “*Muḍṭarib al-Ḥadīth**; I consider him truthful.” Al-Nasā'ī said: “He is weak.” Ibn Ḥibbān mentioned him in *al-Thiqāt*. In *al-Kāshif*, al-Dhahabī said: “There is difference of opinion concerning his condition.” Al-Ḥāfiẓ [Ibn Ḥajr] said: “Truthful, narrates independent of others.” Refer to his biography in *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* (8/326-327), *al-Kāmil* by Ibn 'Adiy (6/37), *al-Mīzān* by al-Dhahabī (3/376), *al-Kāshif* by al-Dhahabī, and *al-Taqrīb* by al-Ḥāfiẓ b. Ḥajr.

Aḥmad collects this Ḥadīth (4/381) by way of Ismā'īl b. 'Ulayyah, on authority of Ayyūb, from al-Qāsim b. Awf al-Shaybānī, on authority of 'Abd Allāh b. Abū Awfa who said: “Mu'adh went to Yemen, or he said Sham, and saw the Christians prostrating to their patricians and bishops, so he considered to himself that the Prophet had more right to be honored. [The Prophet] (ﷺ) said: “Were I to command anyone to prostrate to anyone besides Allāh, I would have commanded the woman to prostrate to her husband.”

Aḥmad also relates it on authority of Wakī', from al-'Amash, from Abū Zībyān, on authority of Mu'adh b. Jabal, who said: “O Messenger of Allāh, I saw men in Yemen prostrating to one another, so should we not prostrate to you?” He replied: “If I were to command any person to prostrate to another person, I would command the woman to prostrate to her husband.”

And he relates it by way of Ibn Numayr, who said, I heard Abū Zībyān narrate on authority of a person from the *Anṣār*, from Mu'adh with a similar meaning. (*al-Musnad* 4/277)

So the Ḥadīth, by way of al-Qāsim and Abū Zībyān, does not mention that Mu'adh prostrated to the Prophet (ﷺ); rather, it merely mentions the notion of prostrating to the Prophet (ﷺ), and his rejection of that.

This is what is found in these two wordings, and with that, the narration, of al-Qāsim has been graded defective by Abū Ḥātim due to disruption. Refer to *al-'Ilal* by his son (2/253). Likewise, al-Dāraquṭnī found the Ḥadīth of Abū Zībyān defective due to discordance in his chain, as well as being broken, because Abū Zībyān did not hear [directly] from Mu'adh. See *al-'Ilal* (6/39-40).

Concerning the statement that Mu'adh prostrated to the Prophet (ﷺ), it is collected by Ibn Mājah (no. 1853), Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no. 4171), and al-Bayhaqī (7/292), with chains on Ḥammād b. Zayd, on authority of al-Qāsim al-Shaybānī, from 'Abd Allāh b. Abū Awfa. These chains revolve around al-Qāsim al-Shaybānī. Al-Dāraquṭnī mentions in *al-'Ilal* (6/37-39) that it has other chains, some that have preceded; and from them, on the authority of [al-Qāsim], on Zayd b. Arqam, on authority of Mu'adh; also, on [al-Qāsim], on authority of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abū Layla, on his father, on authority of Mu'adh; also, on authority of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abū Layla, on his father, on Ṣuhayb, on authority of Mu'adh. [Al-Dāraquṭnī] then says: “The disruption in it is from al-Qāsim b. Awf.”

So this is the condition of this Ḥadīth which has been attributed to Mu'adh; it contains a number of weaknesses:

* [TN] *al-Muḍṭarib* is a category of Ḥadīth which is reported through different chains of narrators with equal degree of strength, and it is not possible to give preponderance to any particular narration.

First: The weakness of al-Qāsim b. Awf al-Shaybānī

Second: The disruption in the chains of narration

Third: The discordance in the text

Fourth: The break in the chain of Abū Z̧ibyān between him and Mu'adh

Fifth: The *ikhtilāf*, and we find it far-fetched that the likes of this would take place with the noble companion, the *faqīh*, Mu'adh b. Jabal (رضي الله عنه).

And what is like this is not foundation for an Islamic ruling, let alone a matter of creed.

As for the Ḥadīth: "If I were to command any person to prostrate to another person..." it is authentic, Allāh willing, by means of the gathering of its chains, on authority of Abū Hurayrah, Anas, and 'A'ishah. Refer to *al-Irwa* by al-'Allāmah al-Albānī (7/54-55).*



* See <http://www.sahab.net/home/?p=727>