
An Analysis on the attention given to the Sunnah in the time of the Four-Rightly Guided and Guiding Caliphs' Period (May Allah be Pleased with them)

Dr. Ahmad Maigari Dutsinma

Department of Islamic Studies, Faculty of Arts and Islamic Studies, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria

DOI: 10.55559/sjaes.v1i04.26

Received: 19.10.2022 | Accepted: 10.11.2022 | Published: 14.11.2022

Electronic reference (Cite this article):

Dutsinma, D. A. M. (2022). An Analysis on the attention given to the Sunnah in the one of the Four-Right Guided and Guiding Caliphs' Period (May Allah be Pleased with them). *Sprin Journal of Arabic-English Studies*, 1(04), 58–64. <https://doi.org/10.55559/sjaes.v1i04.26>

Copyright Notice:

© 2022 The Author(s). This is an open access article published by Sprin Publisher under the Creative Commons' Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Abstract

Allah, the beloved creator and Sustainer of the entire universe, is deserving of all prayers and thanks. The most honourable Prophet Muhammad, the one who bears the seal of Allah's Prophets, along with their noble families, associates, and followers down to the final day, may Allah's most flawless and most abundant blessings be upon them. The paper contains examples from the lifetime of the four rightly guided and guiding caliphs and their existence on the sunnah despite their political engagements, and then instances of how they gave prior attention to the sunnah.

Keywords: Caliph Abubakar, Sunnah, Caliphs, Sahabah (Companion)

Introduction

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious the Most Merciful

The Sahabah (May Allah be please with them) were so keen in following and upholding to the Prophets sunnah to the extent that they profound it over their personal opinions and they kept to it strictly and willingly and rejected anything they understand to be in contradiction with it.

Caliph Abubakar (May Allah be pleased with him) after being unanimously accepted by all Muslims as the first representatives of the Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessing be upon him) to lead the Muslim Ummah, he took decisions which clearly showed this deep concern and attachment and commitment to the Prophet may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him and his sunnah:

- i. He continued with the expedition appointment by the Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) under the leadership of Usamah bin Zaid ibn Harithah (May Allah be pleased with both) who was popularly known as Hibbu Rasulallah and his father because of the Prophet's love for his father and him. He was appointed by the Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessing be upon him) to lead the Syrian campaign for Islam. Some of the companions (May Allah be pleased with them) suggested to him to appoint a more senior companion but he refused to do so, so as not to change a decision already taken by the Prophet (May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him) shortly before he left this world.
- ii. He appointed and refrained Khalid Bin Al-Walid (May Allah be pleased with him) as the commander of the Muslim army and general combined because of the constant praises the Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessing be upon him) used to shower upon them. He was known as the sword of Allah the highest the most exalted.
- iii. He refused Fatimah (May Allah be pleased with her) her claim in the Prophet's property after his demise because of the fear of contradicting the Prophet's order that the Prophets of Allah were never inherited and that whatever they left behind should be considered as charity (*Sadaqah*). He expressed that he would never leave a single sunnah of the Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) for fear of going astray¹
- iv. He fought those who apostatised and those who refused to pay Zakat from among the Banu Hanifah especially those who rallied round the false Prophet Musailamah (May Allah curse him) and some others like Tulahah and Sajah (a woman who claimed prophecy but the two later repented and came back to the fold of Islam. This regardless of the counter argument given by "Umar (May Allah be pleased with him) as regards those who refused to pay Zakat, for fear of changing what was known during the Prophet's life time².

The second caliph 'Umar (May Allah be pleased with him), was also very keen in following the Prophet's sunnah.

There were many examples in his lifetime which showed that the day he was striking by Abdul-Rahman Ibn Muljim this assassinator, it was said to him; will you appoint a Caliph? He said; if I did not appoint (A Caliph) one then, verily, the one who is better than me had also left

¹ Imam Al-Bukhari, Sahih Al-Bukhari, Kitab, Al-Sara'id

² Khatib, M.A, Al-Sunnah Qabl Al Tadwin, Lebanon: (Beirut) Dar Al-Fikr, 1400 A.H (1980 C.E) paid edition, PP-80-82-3. Ibid, p.83.

without appointing a Caliph the Apostle of Allah (May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). And if I appoint a Caliph then verily, one who is better than me had also appointed a Caliph meaning Abubakar (May Allah be pleased with him).³

There are many reasons that did not permit the Sural Caliph to order for compilation of the sunnah at official level as we have seen above under his reign, like it was the case for the Qur'an.

Despite lack of official collection of the Surah in this period, it has indeed played a very important role as much as the Qur'an in shaping the religious, political, economic, individual and social aspects of the Muslim ummah in that period.

Caliph Abubakar, whenever an issue whose used to reign to the Qur'an and its explanation from the sunnah. If he knew something from the sunnah, he would apply it, otherwise, he would assemble the Sahabah (Companions) and display the matter before them. There were times when he accepted reports given to him without seeking for witnesses in order to teach people to be caution or confirmation from others when he was sure of the extension and sound memory of the reporter. But at other times he used to seek confirmation or witnesses in order to teach people to be cautions in reporting to Hadith from the Prophet (May Allah peace and blessing be upon him), not because he suspected the informer because of his knowledge that no Sahabi (Companion) of the Prophet (May Allah peace and blessing be upon him) would never fabricate against the Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessing be upon him). It was the first to set foundation of caution in reporting the Hadith. One day a grandmother came to Abubakar Al-Siddiq seeking for her share (of inheritance) from the legacy of her deceased grandson, he said: " I cannot find anything for you grandmother, of the deceased. Then, he asked people. AlMugherah Ibn Shu'bah stood up and said: I heard and witnessed the Apostle of Allah (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) giving her sixth. He asked; was there anyone together with you, then? Muhammed Ibn Maslamah (May Allah be pleased with both) gave witness with similar halation and Abubakar Al-Siddiq executed for her (accordingly)⁴.

The first Caliph was, indeed, very keen in spreading the sunnah of the Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessing be upon him) despite his Caliphal engagements. One day, he passed by Azib the father of Al-Barra'.

All of the two were companion (May Allah be pleased with both) and bought a camel saddle ((Which is like a horse saddle) then he said: Ask Barra' to take it to my house. He (Al-

³ Ibid, P, 83

⁴ Al-Naisaburi, M.A Nacrifal Ulum Al-Hadith, Edited by Husaini, A.M, Lebanon: (Beiruk) Markaz Al-Mausuah Al-Islamiyyah, (R.d.), pp. 14 – 15.

Barra') said: No, until you narrate to us what you did when Allah's Apostle (May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) went out (for Hijrah) while you were with him. He then narrated to him the story of the Hijrah⁵.

As for the second Caliph Umar Ibn Al-khattab (May Allah be pleased with him) was also very busy in his 13 years of reign. He was setting the solidifying aspects of the internal policies of the Islamic State, expanding its territories as well as consolidating some of the policies that were left standing during the previous Caliphate. Like Caliph Abubakar, Umar was also concerned in narrating and accepting Hadith of the Prophet (May Allah peace and blessing be upon him) from people so as to teach them its competence and the necessity of observing caution in reporting it. Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri (May Allah be pleased with him) reported that: I was in one of the assemblies (Majalis) among the assemblies of the Ansar when Abu Musa (a renowned companion (May Allah be pleased with him) came to us as if he had been overpowered, (and) said; I have asked permission to enter the house of Umar thrice and I was not given permission and I retreated. He (then, came out and said; what prevented you (From continuing)? I said: I sought for permission thrice and I was not permitted and I retreated since the Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) had said: if any one of you sought for permission thrice and was not granted the permission, let him retreat (and go away). He said: By Allah! You must be witness for this. Have you anyone who heard this from the Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). Ubay ibn Ka'b (May Allah be pleased with him) (in the gathering) said: By Allah! None shall go with you except the most junior among us (indicating that the sunnah was known to senior and junior companions alike). Then I was the youngest among us and I went together with him and informed Umar that the Prophet (May Allah's peace and Blessings be upon him) said the same. 'Umar said to Abu Musa (Al-Ashari): Verily, I am not suspecting you but I feared that people should not unwillingly attribute a saying to the Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessing be upon him)⁶.

Another similar incidence happened when the verdict for blood money (Diyah) for a woman who had miscarriage as a result a beating she received from another woman was decided. In that incidence, Mujhirah Ibn Shu'beh (May Allah be pleased with him) testified that she was to be given a share (Mahar Female) as retaliation (i.e compensation) and Muhammad Ibn Maslameh (May Allah be pleased with him) who had also witnessed the

⁵ Imam Al-Bukhari, Sahih Al-Bukhari, Kitab Al-Maneqh, from Al-Bara' Ibn 'Azib

⁶ Imam Muslim, Sahih Muslim, Kitab Al-Bir Wa Al-Adeb from Abu Sa'id Al-Kudri also Imam Mahk, Muwatta, Malik, Kitab Al-Jamic from Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri and others.

occasion (during the Prophetic period) confirmed the decision⁷. Just as he had done in the lame of Caliph Abubakar about the grandmother.

There were, however, witness whereby Caliph ‘Umar did not seek for witnesses for a Sunnah related to him from the Prophet (May Allah’s peace and Blessings be upon him) there was a time when they wanted to enter into Sham (Syria Province) and an epidemic disease broke out.

‘Abdul-Rahman Ibn Auf (May Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (May Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) had said: if you hear about an epidemic in a land don’t enter into it. However, if it occurred on a land in which you are already present, do not go out of it running away therefrom⁸. Caliph Umar acted accordingly when the people asked him, he said: we are running from one destiny of Allah to another destiny of Allah”. He had also asked, one day, about the treatment of the Majus (Pagans) with repaid to poll tax (*Jizyah*) and Abdur-Rahman Ibn Auf informed him of the Hadith: “treat them the way the people of the book are being treated”⁹ Caliph Umar (May Allah be pleased with him) encouraged the Sahabah that: learn the inheritance and the sunnah (as much as) the way you learn the Qur’an¹⁰.

He had once contemplated on compiling the sunnah, officially, but he decided against it because he feared the attention of the Muslims would be diverted from the Qur’an¹¹.

During the third Caliphate period, Uthman Ibn Affan the third Caliph (May Allah be pleased with him) was very much concerned about acting in accordance with the Prophet’s sunnah. He also used to seek confirmation accepting Hadith from people. Are the other hand, there was witness which showed that he accepted single reports without seeking for testimony (witness). For example, when he asked Bin Malik Ibn the sister of Abu Said Al- Khudri (May Allah be pleased with) about her Iddah (waiting reward for purification from former marriage) for the death of her husband and acted according to her information.

There was a day he performed accusing in the presence of the Sahatah (May Allah be pleased with them) and he said “ O you people! Is it like this, they said; yes¹².

Another strategic decision of Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) was that he allowed the companions to travel far and wide to disseminate the knowledge of the Qur’an and

⁷ Al-Siba’i M.H. *Al-Sunnah wa Makanatuha Fi Al-Tashri’ Al-Islamiy* (Published Ph.D Thesis) Syria: Damascus, Bon Att (1960 – C.E) P. 66 (Beirut), (n.d), p, 186.

⁸ Imam Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, Kilab Al-Ruqa WalAtlib, See also Imam Al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, See also *Sahih, Muslim, Kitab Al-Dhikr wa Al-Du’a wa Al-Taubah wa Al-Ishghfar* from Abu Hurairah.

⁹ Imam Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*

¹⁰ Al-Shafi, M.I *Al-risalah*, Edited by Shakir, Ahmad, Second Edition, Lebanon.

¹¹ Abdul Bar, Ibn, Yusuf Ibn Abdullahi, *Jam’c Bayan Al-Ibm Wasadlh*, Lebanon, (Beirut(Dar Al-Fikr.

¹² Imam Abu Dawud, *SunanAbi Dawud*, Kilab Al-Taharah

sunnah bestowed on them, especially to the new revertees in the ever-expanding Islamic State. It was also to be noted that civil strife started in this sign and there was hardly time for making a standard completion of the sunnah as had done with the Qur'an.

In the time of the fourth caliph, Ali ibn Abi Talib, (May Allah be pleased with him) there was hardly any period of rest because of the continuity of the civil strife. He had in fact, a troubled and hectic sign. But despite all these, he was very keen in preserving the sunnah of the Prophet (May Allah peace and blessings be upon him).

He said, about his policy in preserving the sunnah; 'when I heard a hadith from the Prophet (May Allah peace and blessings be upon him), I used to benefit from it as much as Allah willed for me to be benefitted. If anyone else narrated to me I used to make him swear, if he swore, I will confirm his statement. Abubakar once narrated to me and Abubakar had spoken the truth (that) he heard the Prophet (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: that is no Man who commits a sin, then, performs ablution and pray a two *Raka'at* prayer, then, seeks the forgiveness of Allah (*Azza Wa Jalla* the most exalted the Most High) except that he forgives him"¹³.

It was reported of him that during his reign, he used to exchange knowledge of the sunnah with the other companions. One day Ka'b Al-Ahbar a renowned Sahabi Scholar (May Allah be pleased with him) said to him: "O Ali! have you ever heard the Prophet (May Allah peace and blessing be upon him) saying anything about the things called the Deliverance virtues from the Hell fire (Al-Munjiyyat). He said: No, but I have heard him saying about the destructive sins (Al-Mubiqat), Ka'b then said to Ali, inform me about the destructive sins and I will inform you about the deliverance values. Then Ali said: I heard the messenger of Allah (May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) saying: the destructive sins are: Abandoning the sunnah, breaching allegiance and leaving the Muslim community" Ka'b then said to 'Ali; the deliverance virtues are: Restraining your tongue, sitting in your houses and shedding tears (if regrets) are your sin's repentance).

Conclusion

These are four witnesses as regard to the concern and keenness of the four rightly guided and guiding Caliphs had for the Sunnah. They never overlooked a decision passed by the Qur'an and sunnah as long as they were aware of it, and they encouraged and directed others to do the same. Praises and gratitude be to Allah at the end as at the beginning.

¹³ Ibn Hanbal, Ahmad, Musnad Imam Ahmad, from the Hadith of Ali and Abubakar Al-Siddiq

References

- Abdul Ban ibn, Yusuf Ibn Abdullahi, Jami' Al-Bayan Ilm Wa Fadlihi, Lebanon (Berut) Dar Al-fikr
- Ahmad , Ibn Hanbal, (N,D), Musnad Imam Ahmad, (NP), (NP).
- Al-Bukhari, M. I. (2009), *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Muhsin, M. (trans.): Beirut. Daru al-Arabia.
- Al-Bukhari, M.I.(2005), *Sahih al-Bukhari*, S.J.al-Attar (ed.), *Dar al-Fikr*, Beirut.
- Al-Darami, Imam, (n,d), Sunan Al-Darami, np, np.
- Al-Khatib, M.V. (1980), *Al-Sunnah Qool al-Tadwn*, Labenan: (Beirut). Darul Fikr, Third Edition.
- Al-Naisaburi, M.A (n.d.) Ma'rifat Ulum Al-hadith, edited by Hussain A. M lebanon (Berut) markez Al-mausuat Al-Islamiyyah.
- Al-sibal, M.H. (1960) *Al-sunnah wa Makamatuha Fi Al-tashri Al-Islami*, published Ph. D thesis, Syria: (Damascus).
- Cowan, T.M (1960), *Hans wever Dictionary of Modern Arabic (Arabic to English)*, India (New Delhi)
- Khatib, M.A. (1980) *Al-Sunnah Qabl Al-Tadwin*, Lebanon: (Beirut) Dar Al-Fikr, Third edition.
- Majah Ibn, Imam, Sunan Ibn Majah.
- Muhammad, M.I. (n.d), *Al-Jami' Al-Kabir*, Sunan Al-Tirmidhi, Vol. 5. Dar Al-Garb Al-Islamy: Beirut.
- Muslim, M.H. (2005), *Sahih Muslim*, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, Lebanon.
- Yusuf "A.A": *The Holy Qur'an, Text, Translation and Commenter's*, (Syria) Darul Arabiyya.