Series:

Arafat Al-Muhammadi's Reckless Approach to the Science of Hadith, His Evil Manners Toward Senior Scholars, and His Deliberate Targeting of Imam Al-Albani—may Allah have mercy on him

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Part One: "Between Scholarship and Audacity: Exposing Arafat Al-Muhammadi's Fallacies Regarding the Payment of Zakat al-Fitr"

All praise be to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah. To proceed:

One who examines the titles of some of Arafat Al-Muhammadi's treatises notices sweeping assertions that betray a lack of scholarly caution, as well as arrogance and a sense of superiority over eminent Imams.

An example is the title of his treatise: *It-haf al-Sa'il bi-anna Wujub Khuruj al-Nisa' lil-Eid Laysa Lahu Qa'il* ("Enlightening the Seeker: There Is No Proponent for the View that Women's Attendance at the Eid Prayer Is Obligatory").

This is an unsubstantiated claim; for the view that it is obligatory has indeed been held by a group of scholars—as demonstrated by several researchers, including Dr. Sharif Al-Turbani (may Allah preserve him), who cited the statements of respected Imams to this effect.

Such a sweeping denial of the existence of an opinion does not align with the practice of meticulous scholars. They are usually cautious with such phrasing, preferring to say, "I know of no one who holds

this view," or similar expressions, thereby safeguarding knowledge against claims made without exhaustive research.

Similarly, consider his treatise titled: Jawaz Ikhraj Zakat al-Fitr Ba'd al-Eid ("The Permissibility of Paying Zakat al-Fitr After Eid"). Its apparent meaning contradicts what is indicated by authentic Hadiths—such as those narrated by Ibn Abbas and Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with them)—which mandate that it be paid before the Eid prayer.

This is the position held by the majority of scholars, including Imams Abdul Aziz bin Baz, Muhammad bin Salih Al-Uthaymeen, and Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani.

In such matters, the proper course of action is to precisely define the point of contention, faithfully report the various scholarly opinions, and refute views that contradict the evidence using sound arguments and proofs—all while observing the etiquette of scholarly disagreement and avoiding ambiguous or sweeping language that could be misinterpreted.

The hadith of Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) regarding Zakat al-Fitr—narrated with the wording: "*The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) enjoined Zakat al-Fitr as a purification for the fasting person from idle talk and obscene speech, and as food for the needy; whoever pays it before the prayer, it is an accepted Zakat, and whoever pays it after the prayer, it is [merely] a charity among charities*"—is a hasan (sound/good) hadith, according to a number of leading scholars.

It was recorded by Abu Dawud (1609), Ibn Majah (1827), Al-Daraqutni (219), Al-Hakim (1/409), and Al-Bayhaqi (4/163) via the chain of narration: Marwan ibn Muhammad, who said: Abu Yazid al-Khawlani—a truthful elder from whom Ibn Wahb used to narrate—told us; he said: Sayyar ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Sadafi told us, from Ikrimah, from Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both).

First: The rulings of the Imams on the hadith:

1- Al-Daraqutni said: “There is no one among them who is impugned [in terms of reliability].”
2- Al-Hakim said: “It is Sahih (authentic) according to the criteria of Al-Bukhari,” and Al-Dhahabi agreed with him (though the application of that specific criterion is open to scrutiny).
3- Al-Nawawi classified it as hasan in Al-Majmu’.
4- Ibn Qudamah did the same in Al-Mughni.
5- Imam Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani said in Al-Irwa’ (3/332, no. 843): “It is hasan.”

He then clarified—may Allah have mercy on him—the reason why some mistakenly deemed it weak, stating in essence: The narrators in the chain are truthful (saduq), except for Marwan, who is trustworthy (thiqah); thus, the chain of narration is hasan.

Second: Refuting the claim that Abu Yazid al-Khawlani is an unknown narrator (majhul):

How can someone—pretending to possess knowledge they do not have—weaken the hadith of Ibn Abbas when the leading scholar of our time, Al-Albani (may Allah have mercy on him), classified it as hasan in Al-Irwa’ [3/332, no. 843]?!! Herein lies the evidence of his ignorance; he possesses knowledge only of ‘ilal (hidden defects in a hadith) that are obvious and patent. As for the subtle defects—discernible only to the leading masters and deeply grounded scholars—they are far beyond his reach.

The basis for his classification of the hadith as weak (da’if) was a subtle defect that he—due to his ignorance and lack of expertise in this field—mistook for an obvious one. He claimed that the hadith was narrated by Abu Yazid al-Khawlani, whom al-Hafiz (Ibn Hajar) had labeled as majhul (unknown/unidentified).

This is a misconception born of haste and a deliberate intent to contradict the leading scholars—driven by a desire for notoriety—not to mention a lack of precision and verification regarding biographical accounts (tarajim). For there were two individuals known as Abu Yazid al-Khawlani:

* One was majhul (unknown).

* The other was saduq (truthful/reliable)—and he is the very narrator of this specific hadith.

Failure to distinguish between the two led to this error, as the ruling applicable to one was erroneously applied to the other without evidence.

Therefore:

The claim of jahalah (unidentified status) here is invalid; rather, it stems from haste and confusion between the two narrators. Upon careful verification, it becomes clear that the isnad (chain of transmission) is not invalidated by this alleged defect.

This underscores that the study of ‘ilal requires precision, meticulous verification, and a comprehensive gathering of the scholars’ statements, rather than relying on fragmented or unverified citations.

1) Abu Yazid al-Khawlani (the Elder): His name: Yazid ibn Rabah. He is majhul (unknown)—as stated by Al-Dhahabi and Ibn Hajar.

2) Abu Yazid al-Khawlani (the Younger)—the narrator of this hadith: His name: Yazid ibn Muslim. Marwan ibn Muhammad narrated from him and stated: “Ibn Wahb used to narrate from him.” Marwan said of him: “He was a truthful sheikh (shaykh sidq).”Ibn Hajar said of him: “Saduq” (truthful/reliable).

Thus, it is established that: The narrator of the hadith is not the unknown individual, but rather the truthful (saduq) one; consequently, the basis for classifying the hadith as weak is entirely negated.

Do you see, esteemed readers, the haste involved in this approach—rushing to contradict the Imams and positioning oneself as an authority before fully mastering the tools of scholarly verification? It involves singling out senior scholars for rebuttal regarding subtle issues, as if the aim were merely to hunt for what are perceived to be their errors.

Undoubtedly, this methodology fosters an attitude of audacity toward scholarship and scholars alike. It stands in stark contrast to the path of true researchers—those who hold the Imams in high esteem, recognize

their stature, and harbor a favorable opinion of them, never dissenting without clear, manifest evidence, and always maintaining propriety and fairness.

Third: The Hadith-related conclusion:

At the very least, the chain of narration is hasan (sound/good)—if not sahih (authentic) when considering the aggregate of its transmission paths, as will be explained:

1- It contains no narrator whose reliability is impugned.
2- The alleged defect (obscurity of a narrator's identity, or jahalah) is unfounded.
3- The hadith is supported by corroborating reports (shawahid) from Ibn 'Umar and others.
4- I came across a very useful partial corroboration (mutaba'ah qasirah) that elevates the hadith—specifically the segment upon which Arafat "the Cunning Fox" based his flawed treatise: "(that one should) give Sadaqat al-Fitr before the prayer"—to the level of authenticity (sahih) when considering the collective chain of transmission:

Ibn Abi Shaybah recorded it in his Musannaf (5584 and 3/169 [10424]), stating: 'Abd al-Rahim ibn Sulayman narrated to us, from Hajjaj, from 'Ata' ibn Abi Rabah, from Ibn 'Abbas, who said: "It is part of the Sunnah to give Sadaqat al-Fitr before the prayer, and not to go out [for the prayer] until one has eaten."

I observe: Its chain of transmission contains a weakness due to Hajjaj ibn Artah; however, he was corroborated regarding part of it by Ibn Jurayj. This corroboration was recorded by 'Abd al-Razzaq in his Musannaf (5734), as well as by Ahmad (2866), Al-Tabarani (11296), and Al-Daraqutni (1709 and 2136).

Fourthly: The jurisprudential ruling:

Based on the established authenticity of the hadith:

It is obligatory to give Zakat al-Fitr before the Eid prayer.

Whoever delays it without a valid excuse—it counts merely as an ordinary act of charity (sadaqah) and does not suffice as Zakat al-Fitr according to the majority of scholars.

This is also the position held by contemporary Imams such as Imam ‘Abd al-’Aziz ibn Baz and Imam Muhammad ibn Salih al-Uthaymeen and Imam Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani—may Allah have mercy on them all—as well as others, such as His Eminence the Grand Mufti, our Sheikh and Imam Saleh al-Fawzan—may Allah preserve him.

I write this in haste due to the limited time, as the morning of the blessed Eid al-Fitr is upon us. We ask Allah to bring us and you goodness from it, and prosperity, and blessings; to accept your fasting, night prayers, and righteous deeds; and to make all your days filled with obedience and His pleasure.

People should be diligent in paying Zakat al-Fitr before the Eid prayer and pay no heed to the clamor and idle chatter of those who seek to sow confusion regarding eminent Imams. Success comes from Allah alone; what matters is the truth and the evidence, not personal whims or audacity toward scholars.

Whoever holds fast to the truth finds salvation and is blessed by Allah—and whoever does not (hold to truth) does not (find salvation), and Allah is the One who guides to the Straight Path.

Written by:
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