

## A HADİTH AND ITS INDICATION PROBLEM WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAITH AND DEEDS

Hüseyin Kahraman

*Bursa Uludağ University, Bursa-Turkey*

huskahraman@hotmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1345-4429>

(Corresponding author)

Hacer Şahin

*Bursa Uludağ University, Bursa-Turkey*

bursa\_hacer@hotmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0514-8920>

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### Abstract

The ḥadīth on the importance of *ṣalāb*, namely, “Whoever performs five daily prayers (*ṣalāb*) is guaranteed heaven by Allah. Whoever does not fulfil it, however, shall have no guarantee in the presence of Allah; Allah, at His will, may torment him or put him in His Heaven,” has been considered by numerous scholars as evidence that a person who abandons *ṣalāb* partially or completely with no reasonable excuse may still be forgiven by Allah. The followers of this approach construe the phrase “whoever does not fulfil it” as “whoever does not perform five daily prayers.” Nevertheless, the indication “whoever performs five daily prayers” in the initial section of the ḥadīth is reinforced by expressions such as “without missing any rule,” “without undervaluing it,” and “paying attention to its time, bows (*rukūʿ*), and prostration (*sujūd*)” in various narratives of the same ḥadīth. Given this fact, the phrase “whoever does not fulfil it” in the second part of the ḥadīth may be pointing at the essentials of *ṣalāb* and not at *ṣalāb* itself. In addition, the latter approach is supported by the general attitude of Islam about

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forgiving sins, conveniences with regard to the performance of *ṣalāb*, as well as various Qurʾān verses and ḥadīths that concretely outline the punishment for abandoning *ṣalāb*. In light of the foregoing, it seems inappropriate to consider the abovementioned ḥadīth as evidence with regard to the relationship between faith and deeds, and particularly “punishment of abandoning *ṣalāb*,” rather, the ḥadīth may concern the complete fulfillment of the essentials of *ṣalāb*.

*Key Words:* Five times of *ṣalāb*, abandoning of *ṣalāb*, faith and deeds.

## Introduction

Faith-deed relations and the effects of the unexcused abandonment of *ṣalāb* on faith have been highly debated issues throughout the history of Islamic thought.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the issue has been discussed not only by Kalām but also by Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), Ḥadīth, and Tafsīr (Islamic exegesis), and scholars have tried to arrive at a conclusion by means of rational and scriptural proof. One narrative that constitutes a basis for discussion is the following ḥadīth by the Prophet:

خَمْسُ صَلَوَاتٍ كَتَبَهُنَّ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ، فَمَنْ جَاءَ بِهِنَّ، لَمْ يُضَيِّعْ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْئًا، اسْتِخْفَافًا بِحَقِّهِنَّ، كَانَ لَهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدٌ أَنْ يُدْخِلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ. وَمَنْ لَمْ يَأْتِ بِهِنَّ، فَلَيْسَ لَهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدٌ؛ إِنْ شَاءَ عَذَّبَهُ وَإِنْ شَاءَ أَدْخَلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ.

Allah made it *farḍ* for His subjects to perform five daily *ṣalāb*. Whoever performs these prayers without missing and undervaluing their essentials will have a guarantee of heaven before Allah. Whoever does not fulfil it, however, shall have no guarantee by Allah; Allah, at His will, may torment him or put him in Heaven.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For various opinions about abandoners of *ṣalāb*, as well as further information on and evaluations of relevant persons and evidence, see Abū l-Faḍl Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fatḥ al-bārī bi-sbarḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Imām Abī ʿAbd Allāh al-Bukhārī*, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Bāz, Muḥammad Fuʾād ʿAbd al-Bāqī, and Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1959), I, 76; Abū Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Aḥmad al-ʿAynī, *Umdat al-qārī fī sbarḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: n.p., 2006), I, 321.

<sup>2</sup> For this narrative of the ḥadīth, see Abū ʿAbd Allāh Mālik ibn Anas al-Aṣḥaḥī, *al-Muwattaʿa*, “al-Ṣalāh,” 14; Abū Bakr ʿAbd al-Razzāq ibn Ḥammām ibn Nafīʿ al-

Actually, this ḥadīth confirms many Qurʾān verses and other ḥadīths about the importance of *ṣalāb*. Nevertheless, the indication of the expression “وَمَنْ لَمْ يَأْتِ بِهِنَّ” in the second part, especially the location of the pronoun “هِنَّ” therein, seem to be the main emphasis of the ḥadīth. Indeed, the initial expression “فَمَنْ جَاءَ بِهِنَّ” explicitly points to “five daily *ṣalāb*.” Nevertheless, the following pronoun “هِنَّ” might be pointing at essential elements of *ṣalāb* such as *rukūʿ*, *sujūd*, *waqt*, and *kbushūʿ*, given the initial phrase “لَمْ يُصَيِّعْ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْئًا، اسْتِخْفَافًا بِحَقِّهِنَّ.”

The foregoing difference is very important since, according to the first meaning, it is the situation of “abandoners” that is left to the will of Allah. Therefore, the ḥadīth means that whoever completely or partially abandons *ṣalāb* without any excuse can be, perhaps, forgiven by Allah. Hence, many scholars have interpreted the ḥadīth in this way. Nevertheless, according to second interpretation of ḥadīth, it is “the correct fulfilment of the essentials of performed *ṣalāb*” that is left to the will of Allah. Thus, the ḥadīth no longer involves abandoners of *ṣalāb*; consequently, there is no use referring to this ḥadīth in discussions about persons who abandon prayer.

This paper will concentrate on the indication that is actually pointed to or on which indication may be stronger. In this regard, we will collect various narrations of the ḥadīth and reveal details about their chains of narrators and texts to assist in the identification of the mentioned indication. Accordingly, this section can be considered within the context of “singular examination of a certain ḥadīth.” Then, we will consider the views about the content of the ḥadīth and try to reach a conclusion in the light of other data and evidence about *ṣalāb*. Therefore, our paper does not deal with the “earthly or otherworldly status of Muslims who abandon *ṣalāb* without excuse.” Indeed, such a

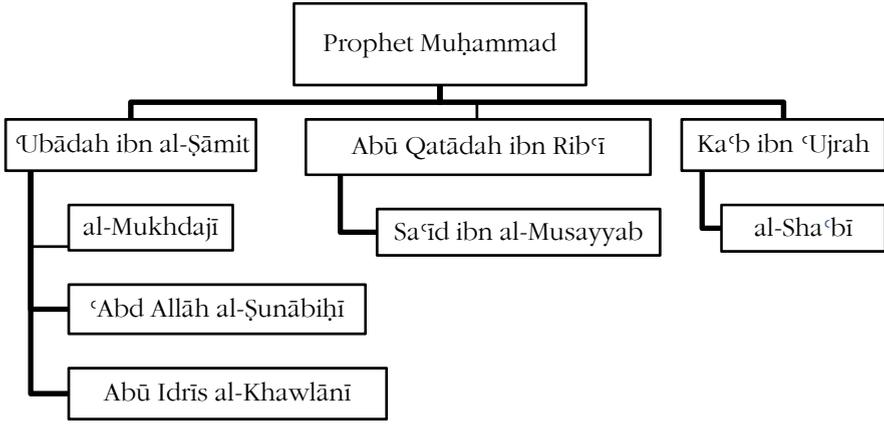
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Ḥimyarī al-Ṣanʿānī, *al-Muṣannaḥ* (along with Maʿmar ibn Rāshid's *Kitāb al-jāmiʿ*), ed. Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-Aʿzamī (Johannesburg: al-Majlis al-ʿIlmī, 1983), III, 5; Abū Bakr ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr al-Ḥumaydī, *Musnad al-Imām Abī Bakr ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr al-Qurashī al-Ḥumaydī*, ed. Ḥusayn Salīm Asad al-Dārānī (Damascus: Dār al-Saqā, 1996), I, 375; Abū Bakr ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Shaybah al-ʿAbsī, *al-Kitāb al-muṣannaḥ fi l-aḥādīth wa-l-āthār*, ed. Kamāl Yūsuf al-Ḥūt (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 1989), II, 91; al-Dārimī, “al-Ṣalāh,” 208; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnāʿūt et al. (Beirut: Muʿassasat al-Risālah, 2001), XXXVII, 366, 377; Ibn Mājah, “Iqāmat al-ṣalāh,” 194; al-Nasāʿī, “al-Ṣalāh,” 6.

detail would require the inclusion of evidence as to relevant opinions. Such a detailed study, however, exceeds the limitations of this paper.

### I. Narratives, Evidential and Textual Features of the Ḥadīth

Various narratives of the same ḥadīth show that it was told by the Prophet via three Companions, namely, ‘Ubādah ibn al-Şāmit, Abū Qatādah ibn Rib‘ī, and Ka‘b ibn ‘Ujrah.



There are three narrators in the line of ‘Ubādah ibn al-Şāmit. Among them, the text in the narrative by al-Mukhdajī and ‘Abd Allāh al-Şunābiḥī is attributed to the Prophet (*marfū‘*: elevated), while in his narrative, Abū Idrīs al-Khawlānī attributes it to Allah (*qudsī*: divine). In the narrative lines of other Companions, namely, Abū Qatādah ibn Rib‘ī and Ka‘b ibn ‘Ujrah, the text is narrated with reference to Allah once again.

These lines are considered in the same context because the promises and threats regarding persons who do and do not fulfil prescribed conditions of the *ṣalāb* performed five times a day are identical in all narratives. Certainly, the slight differences, apparently due to narration, should also be taken into account. In addition, the narration of both elevated and divine texts from ‘Ubādah ibn al-Şāmit by this Companion in a discussion about “rule of *witr* prayer” is proof that all foregoing lines point to the same ḥadīth.

### A. Structure of Chain and Text in Transmission via “‘Ubādah ibn al-Ṣāmit → al-Mukhdajī”

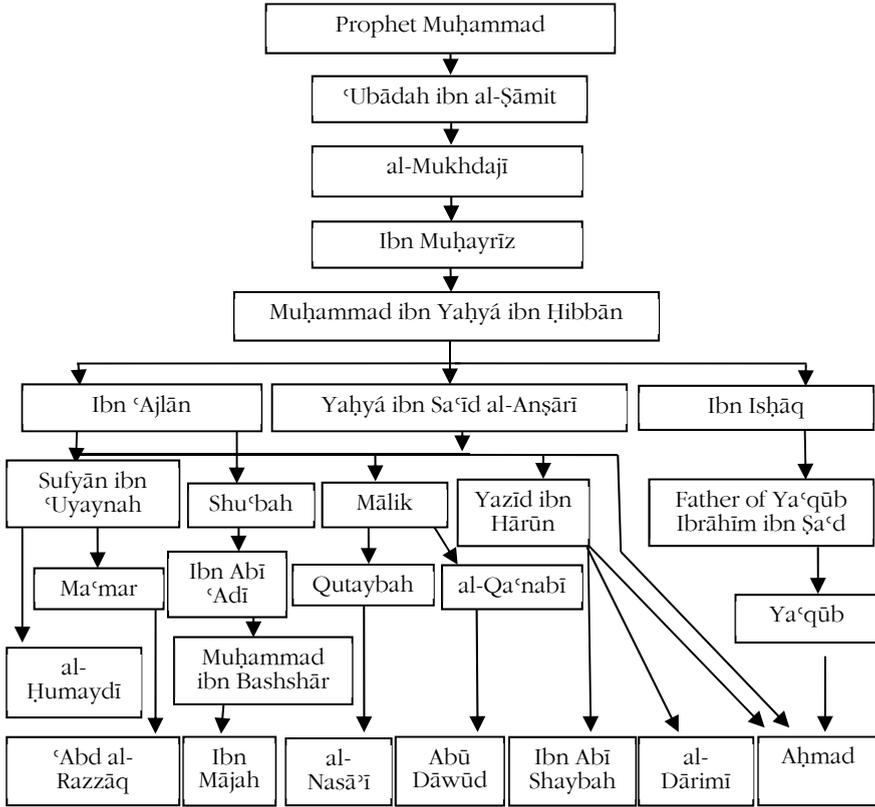
Most authors, who included this ḥadīth in their books, quote the elevated narrative from the line “‘Ubādah ibn al-Ṣāmit → al-Mukhdajī.” Authors such as Mālik, ‘Abd al-Razzāq ibn Hammām, al-Ḥumaydī, Ibn Abī Shaybah, al-Dārimī, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah, and al-Nasā’ī have quoted from this line.<sup>3</sup> The following text quoted by al-Imām Mālik from this line is the earliest available source:

... أَنَّ رَجُلًا مِنْ بَنِي كِنَانَةَ يُدْعَى "الْمُخْدَجِيَّ" سَمِعَ رَجُلًا بِالشَّامِ يُكْنَى أَبُو مُحَمَّدٍ، يَقُولُ: إِنَّ الْوُتْرَ وَاجِبٌ، فَقَالَ الْمُخْدَجِيُّ: فَرُخْتُ إِلَى عُبَادَةَ بْنِ الصَّامِتِ فَأَعْتَرَضْتُ لَهُ، وَهُوَ رَائِحٌ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ، فَأَخْبِرْتُهُ بِالَّذِي قَالَ أَبُو مُحَمَّدٍ، فَقَالَ عُبَادَةُ: كَذَبَ أَبُو مُحَمَّدٍ، سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: خَمْسُ صَلَوَاتٍ كَتَبَهُنَّ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ، فَمَنْ جَاءَ بِهِنَّ، لَمْ يُضَيِّعْ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْئًا، اسْتَحْفَافًا بِحَقِّهِنَّ، كَانَ لَهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدٌ أَنْ يُدْخِلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ. وَمَنْ لَمْ يَأْتِ بِهِنَّ، فَلَيْسَ لَهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدٌ؛ إِنْ شَاءَ عَذَبَهُ وَإِنْ شَاءَ أَدْخَلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ.

A man from Banū Kinānah called “al-Mukhdajī” heard in Damascus from a man known as Abū Muḥammad that “*witr* prayer is obligatory [*wājib*].” Al-Mukhdajī says: “Thereupon, I left for ‘Ubādah ibn al-Ṣāmit. I met (him) entering the mosque. I told him what Abū Muḥammad said.” ‘Ubādah answered: “Abū Muḥammad is wrong. Indeed, I heard Rasūl Allāh saying: ‘Allah declared five daily *ṣalāb* as duty [*farḍ*] for His subjects. Whoever performs these prayers without missing and undervaluing their essentials will have a guarantee of heaven before Allah. Whoever does not fulfil it, however, shall have no guarantee by Allah; Allah, at His will, may torment him or put him in heaven.’”

The collection of chains from authors constitutes the following scheme:

<sup>3</sup> See Mālik, *al-Muwattaʿa*, “al-Ṣalāh,” 14; al-Ṣanʿānī, *al-Muṣannaḥ*, III, 5; al-Ḥumaydī, *Musnad*, I, 375; Ibn Abī Shaybah, *al-Kitāb al-muṣannaḥ*, II, 91; al-Dārimī, “al-Ṣalāh,” 208; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 366, 377; Ibn Mājah, “Iqāmat al-ṣalāh,” 194; al-Nasā’ī, “al-Ṣalāh,” 6.



Al-Mukhdajī, Ibn Muḥayrīz, and Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyá ibn Ḥibbān are the most notable names in this scheme, as they are included in the chains given by all authors.

There is almost no biographical information about al-Mukhdajī. In fact, saying “ʿUbādah ibn al-Şāmit has a narrative about *witr* prayer,” al-Dhahabī admits “he does not know ʿUbādah.”<sup>4</sup> A narrator is

<sup>4</sup> It is indicated that the actual name of al-Mukhdajī might be “Rafīʿ.” Nevertheless, some claim that “Rafīʿ” is the name of his son. Abū ʿAbd Allāh Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-iʿtidāl fī naqd al-rijāl*, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad al-Bijāwī (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1963), IV, 600; al-ʿAsqalānī, *Kitāb Tabdhīb al-Tabdhīb* (Hyderabad: Maṭbaʿat Majlis Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif al-ʿUthmāniyyah, 1326), XII, 86, 295.

considered weak<sup>5</sup> in case of nonrecognition (ignorance/*jabālah*); therefore, the ḥadīth he narrates also becomes weak.

According to critics, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥayrīz al-Jumāhī is reliable [*thiqab*].<sup>6</sup> Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Ḥibbān (d. 121/739) is also a reliable narrator who reported many ḥadīths.<sup>7</sup>

Aside from foregoing characteristics about the chain structure of the narrative, there are certain differences between texts by different authors. For example, the expression “كَتَبَهُنَّ اللَّهُ” in the narrative by al-Imām Mālik is given as “أَفْرَضَهُنَّ اللَّهُ” in others.<sup>8</sup>

Some narratives employ “لَمْ يَنْتَقِصْ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْئًا” instead of “لَمْ يُصَيِّعْ مِنْهُنَّ”<sup>9</sup>

In some narratives this last expression is supplemented with the word “لِلْقَادِرِينَ,” whereupon it is given as “لَمْ يَنْتَقِصْ مِنْ حَقِّهِنَّ شَيْئًا لِلْقَادِرِينَ”<sup>10</sup>

There are certain narratives where “كَانَ لَهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدٌ” is transferred as “فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ جَاعِلٌ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَهْدًا”<sup>11</sup>

The expression “فَمَنْ جَاءَ بِهِنَّ” is reported as “مَنْ أَتَى بِهِنَّ”<sup>12</sup> in some narratives, while as “فَمَنْ لَقِيَهُ بِهِنَّ”<sup>13</sup> in some others.

The ending phrase “وَمَنْ لَمْ يَأْتِ بِهِنَّ فَلَيْسَ لَهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدٌ” is reported as “وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِهِنَّ قَدْ انْتَقَصَ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْئًا، اسْتَحْفَافًا”<sup>14</sup>; “وَمَنْ صَيَّعَهُنَّ اسْتَحْفَافًا جَاءَ وَلَا عَهْدَ لَهُ”

<sup>5</sup> For further information about the term “*majbūl*,” see Abdullah Aydınli, *Hadis Istılabları Sözlüğü* (Istanbul: Hadisevi, 2006), 180.

<sup>6</sup> For further information about ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥayrīz, see Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Ju‘fī al-Bukhārī, *al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*, ed. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Yaḥyā al-Mu‘allimī (Hyderabad: Dār al-Ma‘ārif al-‘Uthmāniyyah, 1360), V, 193; al-‘Asqalānī, *Kitāb Tabdbīb al-Tabdbīb*, VI, 20.

<sup>7</sup> For further information about Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Ḥibbān, see al-Bukhārī, *al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*, I, 265; al-‘Asqalānī, *Kitāb Tabdbīb al-Tabdbīb*, IX, 448.

<sup>8</sup> Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 414; Ibn Mājah, “Iqāmat al-ṣalāh,” 194.

<sup>9</sup> Al-Ḥumaydī, *Musnad*, I, 375; Ibn Mājah, “Iqāmat al-ṣalāh,” 194.

<sup>10</sup> Al-Ḥumaydī, *Musnad*, I, 375.

<sup>11</sup> Ibn Mājah, “Iqāmat al-ṣalāh,” 194.

<sup>12</sup> For example, see al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaḥ*, III, 5; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 366; al-Dārimī, “al-Ṣalāh,” 208; Ibn Mājah, “Iqāmat al-ṣalāh,” 194.

<sup>13</sup> For example, see Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 414.

<sup>14</sup> For example, see Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 393.

”وَمَنْ لَمَّا وَقَدْ انْتَقَصَ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْئًا اسْتِحْفَافًا“<sup>15</sup> ”بِحَقِّهِنَّ“<sup>16</sup> Or “وَمَنْ لَمَّا يُضَيِّعُ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْئًا، اسْتِحْفَافًا بِحَقِّهِنَّ“<sup>17</sup> in various narratives.

Certain narratives report the phrase “وَمَنْ لَمَّا يُضَيِّعُ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْئًا، اسْتِحْفَافًا بِحَقِّهِنَّ“<sup>18</sup> as “لَمَّا يَنْقُصُ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْئًا اسْتِحْفَافًا بِحَقِّهِنَّ“<sup>18</sup>

The expression “وَأِنْ شَاءَ أَدْخَلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ“<sup>19</sup> has become “وَأِنْ شَاءَ عَفَّرَ لَهُ“ in some narratives.<sup>19</sup>

Aside from foregoing differences, some narratives of the ḥadīth include certain additions. For example, “فِي الْيَوْمِ وَاللَّيْلَةِ“ is added at the end of first phrase, to make it “خَمْسُ صَلَوَاتٍ كَتَبَهُنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ فِي الْيَوْمِ وَاللَّيْلَةِ“<sup>20</sup>

## B. Structure of Chain and Text in Transmission via “‘Ubādah ibn al-Şāmit → ‘Abd Allāh al-Şunābiḥī”

Herein, the line is reported by Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and Abū Dāwūd.<sup>21</sup> Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal quotes the narrative as follows:

... عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الصُّنَابِحِيِّ قَالَ: رَعِمَ أَبُو مُحَمَّدٍ أَنَّ الْوُتْرَ وَاجِبٌ، فَقَالَ: عِبَادَةُ بْنُ الصَّامِتِ كَذَبَ أَبُو مُحَمَّدٍ أَشْهَدُ لَسَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: "خَمْسُ صَلَوَاتٍ افْتَرَضَهُنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ مِنْ أَحْسَنَ وَضُوءَهُنَّ وَصَلَاهُنَّ لَوْفَتِهِنَّ، فَأَتَمَّ رُكُوعَهُنَّ وَسُجُودَهُنَّ وَخُشُوعَهُنَّ كَانَ لَهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدٌ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لَهُ، وَمَنْ لَمْ يَفْعَلْ فَلَيْسَ لَهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدٌ إِنْ شَاءَ عَفَّرَ لَهُ، وَإِنْ شَاءَ عَذَّبَهُ.

... ‘Abd Allāh al-Şunābiḥī said: Abū Muḥammad claimed *witr* was obligatory. (Hearing this) ‘Ubādah ibn al-Şāmit said: Abū Muḥammad is wrong. I testify in person to have heard the Prophet Muḥammad saying: “Five daily *ṣalāh*, which is declared *farḍ* by Allah for His subjects. Whoever appropriately performs ablution, performs prayer in total submission to Allah, and completely fulfils its *rukū‘* and *sujūd*, he will obtain a guarantee that Allah will forgive him. Whoever does not

<sup>15</sup> Ibn Mājah, “Iqāmat al-ṣalāh,” 194.

<sup>16</sup> For example, see Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 414.

<sup>17</sup> For example, see Ibn Abī Shaybah, *al-Kitāb al-muṣannaḥ*, II, 91.

<sup>18</sup> For example, see al-Şan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaḥ*, III, 5.

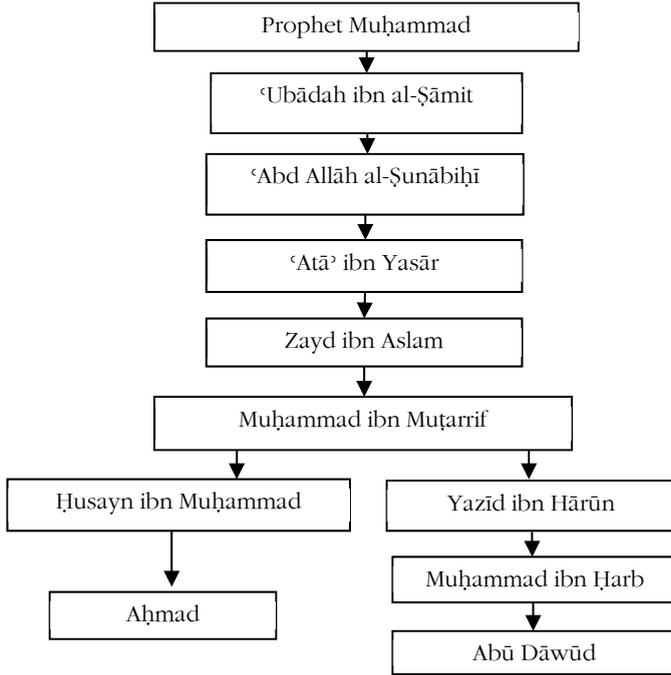
<sup>19</sup> For example, see Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 366, 414.

<sup>20</sup> See al-Ḥumaydī, *Musnad*, I, 375.

<sup>21</sup> Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 377; Abū Dāwūd, “al-Ṣalāh,” 9.

do this has no guarantee in the presence of Allah; Allah may either forgive or punish him.

The collection of chains from authors constitutes the following scheme:



Muḥammad ibn Muṭarrif (d. 170/786),<sup>22</sup> Zayd ibn Aslam (d. 136/754),<sup>23</sup> ‘Atā’ ibn Yasār (d. 103/721),<sup>24</sup> and ‘Abd Allāh al-Ṣunābiḥī,<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> For further information about Muḥammad ibn Muṭarrif, see al-Bukhārī, *al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*, I, 236; Abū Ḥātim Muḥammad ibn Ḥibbān al-Bustī, *Kitāb al-thiqāt*, ed. al-Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn Aḥmad (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1975), VII, 426; al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i’tidāl*, IV, 43; al-‘Asqalānī, *Kitāb Tabḍīb al-Tabḍīb*, IX, 408.

<sup>23</sup> For further information about Zayd ibn Aslam, see al-Bukhārī, *al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*, III, 387; Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-jarḥ wa-l-ta’dīl*, ed. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Yahyā al-Mu‘allimī (Hyderabad: Maṭba‘at Majlis Dā’irat al-Ma‘ārif al-‘Uthmāniyyah, 1941-1953), III, 555; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-thiqāt*, IV, 236.

<sup>24</sup> For information about ‘Atā’ ibn Yasār, see al-Bukhārī, *al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*, VI, 461; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Kitāb al-jarḥ wa-l-ta’dīl*, VI, 338.

<sup>25</sup> For further information about ‘Abd Allāh al-Ṣunābiḥī, also known as “‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Usaylah,” see al-Bukhārī, *al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*, V, 321; Ibn Abī Ḥātim,

who are included by both authors, are considered reliable by critics. Likewise, Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad (d. 213/828),<sup>26</sup> the tutor of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, and Yazīd ibn Hārūn (d. 206/821)<sup>27</sup>, narrator of Abū Dāwūd's narrative, as well as his author's teacher Muḥammad ibn Ḥarb (d. 255/869),<sup>28</sup> are among narrators much lauded by critics. Therefore, this narrative is most likely to be authentic.

As is seen, the ḥadīth in this narrative is also stated upon the view of 'Ubādah ibn al-Şāmit that "*witr* prayer is obligatory." On the other hand, there are some different points compared to the narrative "Ubādah → al-Mukhdajī" via al-Imām Mālik that constitutes a basis for our study. For example, the expression "كُنَّهْنَ" in the version by al-Imām Mālik is indicated with "أَفْتَرَضَهُنَّ" in this narrative.

Nevertheless, the phrase "مَنْ أَحْسَنَ وَضُوءَهُنَّ وَصَلَّاهُنَّ لَوَفَّتِهِنَّ وَأَمَّ رُكُوعَهُنَّ وَحُشُوعَهُنَّ" after the first clause seems much more important in terms of the difference of the narrative. Indeed, this difference may play an important part as to indication of the text, since this phrase replaces the expression "أَمْ يُضَيِّعُ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْئًا" in al-Imām Mālik's narrative. Therefore, the flow and indication of the text in this narrative is no longer about "whether *ṣalāb* is performed;" instead, it focuses on "how *ṣalāb* should be performed."

In the version of al-Imām Mālik, the guarantee granted to performers of five daily *ṣalāb* is indicated with "أَنْ يُدْخِلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ", whereas herein the narrative articulates it as "أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لَهُ."

As for the final clause of the ḥadīth, the aspects "under the will of Allah" are related as "إِنْ شَاءَ عَذَّبَهُ وَإِنْ شَاءَ أَدْخَلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ", namely, "Allah may either torment or put him in His heaven," in al-Imām Mālik's version; nonetheless, the latter narrative formulates the sentence as "إِنْ شَاءَ عَفَّرَ" "إِنْ شَاءَ عَذَّبَهُ", namely, "Allah may forgive or punish at His will."

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*Kitāb al-jarḥ wa-l-ta'dīl*, V, 263; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-tbiqāt*, V, 74; al-ʿAsqalānī, *Kitāb Tabdhīb al-Tabdhīb*, VI, 208.

<sup>26</sup> For further information about Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad, see al-ʿAsqalānī, *Kitāb Tabdhīb al-Tabdhīb*, II, 315.

<sup>27</sup> For further information about Yazīd ibn Hārūn, see *ibid.*, XI, 321.

<sup>28</sup> For further information about Muḥammad ibn Ḥarb, see *ibid.*, IX, 95.

### C. Structure of Chain and Text in “‘Ubādah ibn al-Ṣāmit → Abū Idrīs al-Khawlānī” Line

The most notable feature of this line is that the ḥadīth is not reported as the word of Prophet Muḥammad (*marfūʿ*) but is attributed to Allah (*qudsī*). Abū Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī (d. 204/819) quotes the following narrative chain:

The ḥadīth, which is reported via the chain “the Prophet → ‘Ubādah ibn al-Ṣāmit → Abū Idrīs al-Khawlānī → al-Zuhrī → Zam‘ah ibn Ṣāliḥ”, reads as follows:

... عَنْ أَبِي إِدْرِيسَ الْخَوْلَانِيِّ، قَالَ: كُنْتُ فِي مَجْلِسٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِيهِمْ عِبَادَةُ بَنِي الصَّامِتِ فَذَكَرُوا الْوِتْرَ فَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ: وَاجِبٌ وَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ: سُنَّةٌ فَقَالَ عِبَادَةُ بَنِي الصَّامِتِ: أَمَا أَنَا فَأَشْهَدُ أَنِّي سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: أَتَانِي جِبْرِيلُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى فَقَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَقُولُ: إِنِّي قَدْ فَرَضْتُ عَلَى أُمَّتِكَ خَمْسَ صَلَوَاتٍ، مَنْ وَافَى بِهِنَّ عَلَى وَضُوئِهِنَّ وَمَوَاقِيْتِهِنَّ وَرُكُوعِهِنَّ وَسُجُودِهِنَّ فَإِنَّ لَهُ عِنْدِي بِهِنَّ عَهْدًا أَنْ أُدْخِلَهُ بِهِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ، وَمَنْ لَقِيَنِي قَدْ انْتَقَصَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ شَيْئًا أَوْ كَلِمَةً شَبَّهَهَا فَلَيْسَ لَهُ عِنْدِي عَهْدٌ إِنْ شِئْتُ عَذَّبْتُهُ وَإِنْ شِئْتُ رَحِمْتُهُ.

... Quoted from Abū Idrīs al-Khawlānī, who said: I was at a gathering of Companions of Rasūl Allāh. ‘Ubādah ibn al-Ṣāmit was among them. They talked about the status of *witr* prayer. Some said it was *wājib*, while some claimed it was *sunnab*. Thereupon, ‘Ubādah ibn al-Ṣāmit said: I testify that I heard the Prophet saying as follows: Djibrīl came to me from the seat of Allah and said: O Muḥammad! Thus says Allah Ta‘ālā: I made it *farḍ* for your community [*ummah*] to perform five daily prayers. Whoever performs these prayers completely, by paying attention to ablution, time, *rukūʿ*, and *sujūd*, he will obtain a guarantee before Me that I will put him in Heaven. Whoever does one of these incompletely – or he said something similar –, he will have no guarantee in My presence; I will either torment or have mercy on him.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Al-Ḥumaydī, *Musnad*, I, 467.

The ḥadīth is quoted from ‘Ubādah ibn al-Sāmit by Abū Idrīs ‘Ā’iḍ Allāh ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Khawlānī (d. 80/700),<sup>30</sup> both al-Khawlānī and his disciple Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī are among best known and most reliable narrators of ḥadīths. On the other hand, Zam‘ah ibn Šāliḥ, who is the teacher of al-Ṭayālīsī, has been subject to the criticisms of scholars.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, this line of the ḥadīth can be considered weak in terms of narrative chain.

The ḥadīth text from this line differs from al-Imām Mālik’s narrative principally for the emphasis on “ablution, time, *sujūd*, and *rukū‘*” while performing five daily *ṣalāh*. In addition, according to this text, the persons who will not obtain a guarantee from Allah because they default in fulfilling this prerequisite will be subject to “torment or mercy,” while al-Imām Mālik’s version describes their situation as “torment or position in Heaven.”

#### D. Structure of Chain and Text in “Abū Qatādah ibn Rib‘ī” Line

Another divine ḥadīth on the same theme is reported via a narrative by Abū Qatādah ibn Rib‘ī. Ḥadīth is transmitted by Abū Dāwūd and Ibn Mājah through this line.<sup>32</sup> The text, narrated by Abū Dāwūd, reads as follows:

... إِنَّ أَبَا قَتَادَةَ بْنَ رَبِيعٍ أَخْبَرَهُ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: إِنِّي فَرَضْتُ عَلَى أُمَّتِكَ خَمْسَ صَلَوَاتٍ، وَعَهْدْتُ عِنْدِي عَهْدًا أَنَّهُ مَنْ جَاءَ يُحَافِظُ عَلَيْهِنَّ لَوْ قَتَلْتَهُنَّ أَدْخَلْتُهُ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَنْ لَمْ يُحَافِظْ عَلَيْهِنَّ فَلَا عَهْدَ لِي عِنْدِي.

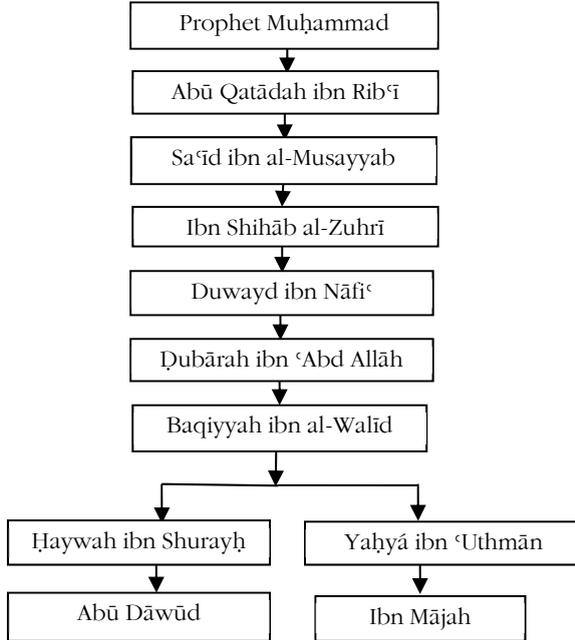
<sup>30</sup> For further information about Abū Idrīs al-Khawlānī, see al-Bukhārī, *al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*, VII, 83; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Kitāb al-jarḥ wa-l-ta’dīl*, VII, 37; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-thiqāt*, V, 277; al-‘Asqalānī, *Kitāb Tabdhīb al-Tabdhīb*, V, 74.

<sup>31</sup> Zam‘ah ibn Šāliḥ has been subject to criticism for being “weak,” “unstable,” and a “fabricator of ḥadīths.” According to some critics, his narratives cannot be considered evidence in serious problems such as religious provisions [*aḥkām*]. Moreover, it is emphasised that the ḥadīth he quotes from al-Zuhrī is weak and includes many mistakes. For further information about this narrator, see al-Bukhārī, *al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*, VII, 83; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Kitāb al-jarḥ wa-l-ta’dīl*, III, 624; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-thiqāt*, V, 277; al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i’tidāl*, II, 81; al-‘Asqalānī, *Kitāb Tabdhīb al-Tabdhīb*, III, 292.

<sup>32</sup> Abū Dāwūd “al-Ṣalāh,” 9; Ibn Mājah, “al-Ṣalāh,” 194.

Abū Qatādah ibn Ribʿī reported to him: Rasūl Allāh said this is how Allah Taʿālā spoke: I made it *farḍ* for your community [*ummah*] to perform five daily prayers, and guaranteed heaven for whoever performs them appropriately, paying attention to prescribed times. As for those who do not perform them in the respective time, they have no guarantee in My presence.

The collection of authors to have reported the ḥadīth constitutes the following scheme:



Apart from their masters, the chains of two authors consist of the same persons. Baqīyyah ibn al-Walīd (115-197/733-812) is one of them, but critics approach him rather in suspense.<sup>33</sup> There are also

<sup>33</sup> There are various assessments about Baqīyyah: “He is reliable if he reports from reliable narrators, but he also reports from unknown sheikhs;” “he is reliable if he reports from well-known narrators, but ḥadīths he quotes from unknown narrators are of no value;” “do not listen to his ḥadīths about religious provisions [*aḥkām*], but you can listen to his ḥadīths regarding *thawāb* and similar issues;” “he is reliable if his report includes the expressions *akbbaranā* or *ḥaddathbanā*; in case he uses *ʿan*, then his ḥadīths cannot be evidence, since he tries to conceal his deficiencies.” In light of this last argument, Baqīyyah is quoted with “حَدَّثَنَا” in Ibn

some criticisms about his teacher Ḍubārah ibn ‘Abd Allāh (ضبارة بن عبد (الله بن أبي السليك).<sup>34</sup> For Duwayd ibn Nāfi‘, Ibn Ḥibbān states that “he is a true narrator of ḥadīths (*mustaqīm al-ḥadīth*), on the condition that his sources are reliable.”<sup>35</sup> Abū Ḥātim, on the other hand, calls Duwayd a “sheikh.”<sup>36</sup>

Herein, the narrative includes a smaller number of details than the elevated narrative reported by al-Imām Mālik via the “‘Ubādah → al-Mukhdajī” line. As a matter of fact, the narrative herein only emphasizes that “one cannot obtain a guarantee in the presence of Allah” in case the mentioned prerequisite is not fulfilled. Al-Imām Mālik’s narrative, however, provides more details and points out to the possible consequences of a lack of such guarantee, indicating that “Allah may either torment him or put him in heaven.” In our view, the most important difference between these two narratives is that the latter expresses “attention to prescribed times of prayers” as a prerequisite for “obtaining guarantee of heaven in the presence of Allah.” The other possibility is highlighted with the clause “وَمَنْ لَمْ يُحَافِظْ” وَعَلَيْهِنَّ فَلَا عَهْدَ لَهُ عِنْدِي,” literally, “whoever does not perform them (in a timely manner) shall have no guarantee in My presence.” This final

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Mājah’s version and with “عن” in Abū Dāwūd’s version in the reports of the ḥadīth herein. For detailed information about Baqīyyah ibn al-Walīd, see al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i’tidāl*, I, 331; al-‘Asqalānī, *Kitāb Tabdhīb al-Tabdhīb*, I, 416.

<sup>34</sup> For example, Ibn ‘Adī (d. 365/976) mentions six narratives from Ḍubārah ibn ‘Abd Allāh, including the ḥadīth herein, before saying: “I do not know any other narrator than Baqīyyah” (see Abū Aḥmad ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Adī al-Jurjānī, *al-Kāmil fī ḍu‘afā’ al-rijāl*, ed. Yaḥyá Mukhtār Ghazzāwī, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. [Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1988], IV, 101). If this assessment is correct, we will have to conclude that Ḍubārah is “unknown” (*majbūl*). Nevertheless, al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1347) states that “Baqīyyah and others have reported narratives from him,” and thus opposes to the view of Ibn ‘Adī in a sense. However, al-Dhahabī also dubs Ḍubārah a “loose narrator” (see *Mizān al-i’tidāl*, II, 322). According to Ibn Ḥājar, all ḥadīth examples provided by Ibn ‘Adī are considered “deniable” (see *Kitāb Tabdhīb al-Tabdhīb*, IV, 388. وذكره ابن عدي في (الكامل وساق له ستة احاديث مناكير).

<sup>35</sup> Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-thiqāt*, VI, 292.

<sup>36</sup> See Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Kitāb al-jarḥ wa-l-ta‘dīl*, III, 438. Ḥadīth reported by a narrator who is dubbed “sheikh” is included so as to search whether there is another chain and thus to ensure reliability upon comparison (see Aydınlı, *Hadis Istılabları Sözlüğü*, 298).

issue is articulated in al-Imām Mālik's version with "وَمَنْ لَمْ يَأْتِ بِهِنَّ" to indicate the *ṣalāh* itself and the deeds that constitute it.

### E. Structure of Chain and Text in "Ka'b ibn 'Ujrah → Sha'bī" Line

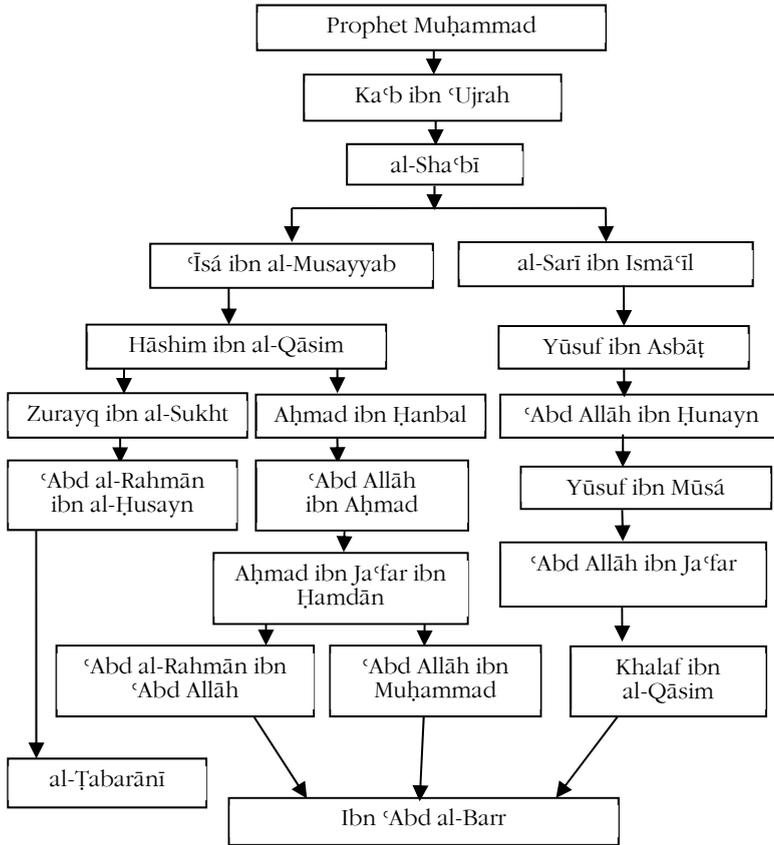
Herein, the chain is reported by Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, al-Ṭabarānī, and Ibn 'Abd al-Barr.<sup>37</sup> Ibn 'Abd al-Barr quotes this ḥadīth from three masters. Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal's version of the narrative is as follows:

... عَنْ كَعْبِ بْنِ عُجْرَةَ قَالَ بَيْنَمَا أَنَا جَالِسٌ فِي مَسْجِدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مُسْنِدِي ظُهُورِنَا إِلَى قِبْلَةِ مَسْجِدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَبْعَةَ رَهْطٍ أَرْبَعَةَ مَوَالِينَا وَثَلَاثَةَ مِنْ عَرَبِنَا إِذْ خَرَجَ إِلَيْنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ صَلَاةَ الظُّهْرِ حَتَّى انْتَهَى إِلَيْنَا فَقَالَ مَا يُجْلِسُكُمْ هَاهُنَا قُلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ نَنْتَظِرُ الصَّلَاةَ قَالَ فَأَرَمَ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ رَفَعَ رَأْسَهُ فَقَالَ أَتَدْرُونَ مَا يَقُولُ رَبُّكُمْ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ قُلْنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ قَالَ فَإِنَّ رَبُّكُمْ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَقُولُ مَنْ صَلَّى الصَّلَاةَ لَوْفَتِهَا وَحَافَظَ عَلَيْهَا وَلَمْ يُضَيِّعْهَا اسْتِخْفَافًا بِحَقِّهَا فَلَهُ عَهْدٌ عَلَيَّ عَهْدٌ أَنْ أُدْخِلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَصِلْ لَوْفَتِهَا وَلَمْ يَحَافِظْ عَلَيْهَا وَضَيَّعَهَا اسْتِخْفَافًا بِحَقِّهَا فَلَا عَهْدَ لَهُ إِنْ شِئْتُ عَذَّبْتُهُ وَإِنْ شِئْتُ عَفَرْتُ لَهُ.

Narrated from Ka'b ibn 'Ujrah, who tells as follows: "We were a group of seven with four freedmen [*mawālī*] and three Arabs, sitting with our back on the Qiblah wall of al-Masjid al-Nabawī. We saw Rasūl Allāh coming for noon prayer. He stopped before us and asked: 'Why are you sitting here?' 'We are waiting for *ṣalāh*, O Rasūl Allāh,' we replied. He remained silent for a while before saying: 'Do you know what your Lord commands?' 'Allah and His Messenger knows better,' we replied. 'Your Lord speaks thus,' he went on: 'Whoever performs *ṣalāh* in a timely and continuous (*وَحَافَظَ عَلَيْهَا*) manner, and does not omit anything about *ṣalāh* due to disdain, then he will obtain the guarantee in My presence for heaven. And whoever does not perform *ṣalāh* in a

<sup>37</sup> Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 85; Abū l-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Muṣjam al-awsaṭ*, ed. Abū Mu'adh Ṭāriq ibn 'Iwaḍ Allāh ibn Muḥammad and Abū l-Faḍl 'Abd al-Muḥsin ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ḥusaynī (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥaramayn, 1995), V, 92; id., *al-Muṣjam al-kabīr*, ed. Ḥamdī 'Abd al-Majīd al-Salafī (Cairo: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah, 1983), XIX, 142; Abū 'Umar Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abd al-Barr al-Namarī, *al-Tambīd li-mā fī l-Muwāṭṭa'* min *al-ma'ānī wa-l-asānīd*, ed. Muṣṭafā ibn Aḥmad al-'Alawī et al. (Rabat: Wizārat 'Umūm al-Awqāf wa-l-Shu'ūn al-Islāmiyyah, 1967), XXIII, 292-293.

timely and continuous manner, but ruins them by undervaluing their rule, he will have no guarantee; I may either torment or forgive him'."



The collection of chains of authors that report the ḥadīth constitutes the following scheme:

As the scheme reveals, the common name in this line is al-Sha'bī. 'Āmir ibn Sharāḥīl al-Sha'bī (d. 103/721) is one of the most reliable and best-known personalities in ḥadīth discipline.<sup>38</sup> Ḥadīth is quoted from al-Sha'bī by his two disciples, al-Sarī ibn Ismā'īl and 'Īsā ibn al-Musayyab. Al-Sarī ibn Ismā'īl has been subject to criticism by

<sup>38</sup> For detailed information about 'Āmir ibn Sharāḥīl al-Sha'bī, see al-Bukhārī, *al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*, VI, 450-451; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Kitāb al-jarḥ wa-l-ta'dīl*, V, 324; al-'Asqalānī, *Kitāb Tabḍīb al-Tabḍīb*, V, 68.

scholars.<sup>39</sup> ʿĪsā ibn al-Musayyab, another disciple of al-Shaʿbī, has also been discredited.<sup>40</sup>

This line has some striking features in textual terms. Two narratives of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, al-Ṭabarānī, and Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, who prefer the “al-Shaʿbī → ʿĪsā ibn al-Musayyab” line, are almost identical. Nevertheless, the narrative quoted by Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr from his master Khalaf ibn al-Qāsim through the “al-Shaʿbī → al-Sarī ibn Ismāʿīl” line does not include a depiction of Kaʿb ibn ʿUjrah sitting at al-Masjid al-Nabawī or of other people around him; instead, the text begins directly with the section “Rasūl Allāh came near us.”<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, the most important difference in textual indication of the narrative herein is that it includes the expression “وحافظ عليها” in the “al-Shaʿbī → ʿĪsā ibn al-Musayyab” line after the clause “من صلى الصلاة لوقتها.”

In light of these differences, Kaʿb ibn ʿUjrah’s report does not emphasize the “five times” of *ṣalāb*, unlike the “ʿUbādah → al-Mukhdajī” line, which is the basis of our study. In addition, according to this line, the prerequisites for “obtaining a guarantee of going to heaven in the presence of Allah” are “continuous *ṣalāb* (وحافظ عليها)” and “respect for their times” (لوقتها). The divine will for those who do not fulfil these conditions is given as “torment or amnesty.” However, the “ʿUbādah → al-Mukhdajī” line articulates it as “torment or position in heaven.”

## II. Views on Content and Indication of the Ḥadīth

In terms of the identification of indication, the most notable parts of the ḥadīth herein are the expressions “فَمَنْ جَاءَ بِهِنَّ” “مَنْ أَتَى بِهِنَّ” and “فَمَنْ لَقِيَهِ بِهِنَّ” which mean conditions for “obtaining the guarantee by Allah for heaven” and “مَنْ جَاءَ بِهِنَّ قَدْ ائْتَمَّصَ مِنْهِنَّ” “وَمَنْ ضَيَّعَهُنَّ” “من لم يأت بهن”

<sup>39</sup> Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal actually says about this narrator that “He is not strong in science of ḥadīth,” indicating that “People abandoned his ḥadīths.” According to Yaḥyá ibn Maʿīn, he is “weak” and “of no value.” Abū Dāwūd and al-Nasāʾī claim he is “abandoned in ḥadīth” [*matrūk al-ḥadīth*]. For detailed information on this narrator, see al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-ʿitidāl*, II, 117; al-ʿAsqalānī, *Kitāb Tabḍīb al-Tabḍīb*, III, 399.

<sup>40</sup> Indeed, Yaḥyá ibn Maʿīn, Abū Dāwūd, al-Nasāʾī, and al-Dāraquṭnī consider this narrator “weak,” whereas Abū Ḥātim and Abū Zurʿah say “He is not strong in ḥadīth.” For detailed information about this narrator, see al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-ʿitidāl*, III, 323.

<sup>41</sup> Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *al-Tamīd*, XXIII, 292-293.

”وَمَنْ أَنْقَصَهُمْ مِنْ حَقِّهِمْ شَيْئًا“ or ”وَمَنْ لَقِيَهُ وَقَدْ انْتَقَصَ مِنْهُمْ شَيْئًا“, ”شَيْئًا“ which mean “not to fulfill stipulated duties.” Indeed, given the construction and wording of the text, the pronoun “هَمْ” may indicate both five daily prayers and its essentials such as submission to Allah, *rukūʿ*, *sujūd*, and especially prescribed time. Consequently, there are two different perspectives on the indication of this ḥadīth.

### A. The Argument “The doom of abandoners of *ṣalāb* is left to the will of Allah”

Many scholars attribute these expressions, which constitute the basis for an indication of the ḥadīth, to the five daily prayers themselves, and claim the emphasis is on “complete performers of these prayers” or “who (partially or entirely) abandon five daily prayers.” Consequently, the ḥadīth is assumed to be among most important evidence that the abandoner of *ṣalāb* will not be excluded from the sphere of Islam. According to these scholars, the expression “إِنْ شَاءَ” literally, “if He wills” in the final part is an obstacle for establishing a relation between the abandonment of *ṣalāb* and unbelief since the disbeliever cannot be considered in this concept and will thus definitely go to Hell. The person, whose outcome is at the discretion of Allah, is a Muslim having committed a major sin (*kabīrah*).

The foregoing interpretation is essentially grounds for the argument that the “deed is not a part of faith.” Indeed, authors who interpret the ḥadīth deal with the problem pursuant to this principal rule. Some examples of such an interpretation may provide more explicit information for the identification of the meaning ascribed to the ḥadīth.

The famous Egyptian Ḥanafī scholar al-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321/933) quotes this ḥadīth under the problem of “whether Muslims, who neither perform nor deny *ṣalāb*, will be excluded from Islam,”<sup>42</sup> adding that the error of “partial or complete abandoning of *ṣalāb*” will not expel a person from Islam; such a misdeed will not make a Muslim an apostate or polytheist.<sup>43</sup>

According to Ibn Baṭṭāl (d. 449/1057), the Andalusian commentator of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, a person who does not fulfil his religious duties

<sup>42</sup> Abū Jaʿfar Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Ṭaḥāwī, *Sharḥ Mushkil al-āthār*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnāʾūṭ (Beirut: Muʿassasat al-Risālah, 1987), VIII, 193.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, 201.

cannot be declared an unbeliever; for him, the ḥadīth “خمس صلوات كتبهن الله ...” is one of the most important evidence of this argument. This ḥadīth, in the view of Ibn Baṭṭāl, indicates that the person in question is not an unbeliever; indeed, an unbeliever can never go to Heaven.<sup>44</sup>

According to Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (d. 463/1017), the renowned Mālikī ḥadīth scholar from Andalusia, one possible conclusion from the ḥadīth herein is that the status of a Muslim is at the discretion of Allah in case he does not perform *ṣalāh* even though he accepts unity [*tawḥīd*] and believes in the rules established by the Prophet. Therefore, the ḥadīth refuses the Mu‘tazilī and Khārijī perspectives (that considers deeds as a part of faith).<sup>45</sup>

Al-Bājī (d. 474/1081), Mālikī jurist and ḥadīth scholar and commentator of *al-Muwatta’* from Andalusia, claims this ḥadīth is a proof that the status of committer of a major sin is decided by Allah, and this is a refutation against those who argue that such persons cannot be forgiven or are unbelievers.<sup>46</sup>

Abū Bakr Ibn al-‘Arabī (d. 543/1148) puts forth similar opinions. For him, the unbeliever is not included within the forgiving will of Allah. Therefore, this ḥadīth is a definite proof against those who claim abandoners of *ṣalāh* can never attain forgiveness.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>44</sup> See Abū I-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Khalaf ibn Baṭṭāl al-Qurṭubī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. Abū Tamīm Yāsir ibn Ibrāhīm, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 2003), VIII, 578.

<sup>45</sup> According to Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, one who avows Islam obtains the title “Muslim” as soon as he adopts the faith only by means of his vow and will, even before performing services such as *ṣalāh* or fast. Such a person can be dubbed disbeliever only if he denies one of these things that provide him with the quality of Muslim (see Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Tambīd*, XXIII, 290). Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr adds the following by pointing to the essential principle of Ahl al-sunnah: “(About the faith of a person who has abandoned *ṣalāh*) the most accurate view through evidence of both reason and Qur’ān and ḥadīth [*naql*] is that such a person is a sinner, having committed a major sin. Nonetheless, the doom of such a person is in the hands of Allah, who may forgive or torment him at His will, as long as such a person avows and accepts *ṣalāh* and does not abandon it due to deliberate denial and arrogance” (see *al-Tambīd*, XXIII, 295).

<sup>46</sup> Abū I-Walīd Sulaymān ibn Khalaf al-Bājī, *al-Muntaqā sharḥ al-Muwatta’* (Cairo: Maṭba‘at al-Sa‘ādah, 1332), I, 221.

<sup>47</sup> Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh Ibn al-‘Arabī al-Ma‘āfirī, *Kitāb al-‘awāṣim min al-qawāṣim*, ed. ‘Ammār Ṭalībī (Cairo: Maktabat Dār al-Turāth, n.d.), I, 263.

Renowned Shāfiʿī ḥadīth scholar Ibn Ḥājar (d. 852/1448) deals with the ḥadīth within the frame of the “status of a person who deliberately abandons *ṣalāb*.” First, he refers to the argument that the “abandoner of *ṣalāb* becomes an unbeliever even if he admits it is a duty.” Then, he shares the argument of the majority of scholars that “such a person cannot be declared as unbeliever,” giving this ḥadīth as one of the strongest proofs of this argument.<sup>48</sup>

Al-ʿAynī (d. 855/1451), Ḥanafī scholar of fiqh and ḥadīth, also considers the ḥadīth herein as evidence that the judgment about the abandoner of *ṣalāb* cannot be same as that of an unbeliever.<sup>49</sup>

According to al-Munāwī (d. 1031/1623), “و من لم يأت بمن” signifies “على الوجه المطلوب شرعا,” literally, “if he does not fulfil them as ordered by religion;”<sup>50</sup> nevertheless, he asserts that the abandoner of *ṣalāb* cannot be declared an unbeliever, that his punishment is not certain and that his outcome is at the discretion of Allah.<sup>51</sup>

For Mālikī scholar al-Zurqānī (d. 1122/1710), the ḥadīth does not consider the abandonment of *ṣalāb* as unbelief; in addition, the person who abandons it is not necessarily tormented or punished. Instead, his fate is to be decided by Allah.<sup>52</sup>

Al-Mubārakfūrī (d. 1283/1866), a commentator of *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, points to the ḥadīth as evidence that “abandonment of *ṣalāb* is not unbelief.”<sup>53</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, XII, 203.

<sup>49</sup> Al-ʿAynī, *Sbarḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ed. Abū l-Mundhir Khālīd ibn Ibrāhīm al-Miṣrī (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 1999), V, 329.

<sup>50</sup> Zayn al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raʿūf al-Munāwī, *Fayḍ al-qadīr sbarḥ al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣagḥīr min aḥādīth al-bashīr al-nadbīr*, ed. Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Salām (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1994), III, 603.

<sup>51</sup> See *Ibid.*, III, 603; al-Munāwī, *al-Taysīr bi-Sbarḥ al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣagḥīr*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Imām al-Shāfiʿī, 1988), I, 1053.

<sup>52</sup> Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Bāqī al-Zurqānī, *Sbarḥ al-Zurqānī ʿalā Muwaḥḥaʿ al-Imām Mālik* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1411), I, 365.

<sup>53</sup> Abū l-ʿUlā Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mubārakfūrī, *Tuḥfat al-Aḥwadh bi-Sbarḥ Jāmiʿ al-Tirmidhī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 2010), VII, 310.

## **B. The Argument, “The doom of those who perform *ṣalāh* without paying attention to its essentials is at the discretion of Allah” and Relevant Evidence**

Certain scholars insist that the ḥadīth herein can be construed in a different manner, with reference to other scholars or through their personal view. For example, Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr says he is in favor of the argument that the “status of abandoners of *ṣalāh* is left to will of Allah,” before adding the counterview with reference to “a group of competent scholars.” According to this group, the persons who are deprived of any guarantee in the presence of Allah with regard to the performance of the five daily prayers are not those who completely abandon *ṣalāh* but those who do not pay the necessary attention to its essentials, such as cleanliness, *rukūʿ*, and *sujūd*, particularly to its prescribed times.<sup>54</sup>

‘Abd al-Muḥsin al-‘Abbād, a contemporary commentator of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, studies the problem of “obedience to the prescribed times of *ṣalāh*,” where he refers to the ḥadīth herein and gives the following interpretation: “Whoever performs five daily prayers by paying attention to their prescribed times obtains a guarantee in the presence of Allah. Whoever does not pay attention to the prescribed times will have no such guarantee in the eyes of Allah; Allah may either torment or forgive him.”<sup>55</sup> Later, in the same book, al-‘Abbād reports that according to some scholars, the expression “يأت بمن” in the ḥadīth is evidence that “a person, who abandons *ṣalāh* due to idleness, cannot be declared an unbeliever,” before adding this expression can also be construed as “not performing prayer as required.”<sup>56</sup>

Al-‘Azīmābādī (1857-1911), another commentator of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, prefers a rather cautionary approach and explains the mentioned section of the ḥadīth as “nonperformance of *ṣalāh* either at all or in required manner.”<sup>57</sup>

<sup>54</sup> See Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Tambīd*, XXIII, 293.

<sup>55</sup> Al-‘Aynī, *Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, III, 173.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, 59.

<sup>57</sup> See, Abū I-Ṭayyib Muḥammad Shams al-Ḥaqq ibn Amīr ‘Alī al-‘Azīmābādī, *‘Awn al-ma‘būd sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ed. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad ‘Uthmān, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Medina: al-Maktabah al-Salafiyyah, 1968), II, 67.

This second meaning, which can be ascribed to the ḥadīth, seems more remarkable. In other words, the status of a person with regard to *ṣalāb* is left to the will of Allah if he undervalues or overlooks its essential elements, or performs *ṣalāb* without due diligence, without the necessary will or in idleness. Certain factors lead us to consider this second meaning as more probable:

### **1. Relations among Various Texts of the Ḥadīth and Other Narratives Supporting a Certain Meaning**

In ḥadīth studies, it is a common case that the wording in a certain narrative of a ḥadīth is explained by means of details mentioned in other narratives of the same ḥadīth. In this regard, aside from the oldest and therefore our basic version through al-Imām Mālik, the clause we consider to be the main actor in identifying the indication of the ḥadīth herewith is quoted as follows: “لَمْ يَنْتَقِصْ مِنْ حَقِّهِنَّ شَيْئًا” literally “not to reduce anything over the rule of these *ṣalābs*”<sup>58</sup> or “مَنْ أَحْسَنَ وَضُوءَهُنَّ” literally, “Whoever performs ablution for these prayers and also performs *ṣalāb* completely by paying attention to its prescribed times and completely accomplishing its *rukūʿ* and *sujūd* ...”<sup>59</sup> or “مَنْ صَلَّى الصَّلَاةَ لَوَقْتِهَا وَحَافِظًا عَلَيْهَا” namely, “who performs *ṣalāb* in a timely and continuous manner.”<sup>60</sup> In our view, this point alone can provide a sufficient idea of the indication of the ḥadīth. On the other hand, it is worth noting that the text, which is reported with the wording “... مَنْ أَحْسَنَ وَضُوءَهُنَّ” and through the line of “Ubādah ibn al-Şāmit → ‘Abd Allāh al-Şunābiḥī,” is the only version that can be considered “authentic” among all the narratives of the same ḥadīth.

There are some other data supporting this prior meaning. For example, emphasis on the following ḥadīth reported by Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī points to our preferred view:

<sup>58</sup> Al-Ḥumaydī, *Musnad*, I, 375; Ibn Abī Shaybah, *al-Kitāb al-muṣannaḥ*, II, 91; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 377; Abū Dāwūd, “al-Şalāh,” 9.

<sup>59</sup> Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 377; Abū Dāwūd, “al-Şalāh,” 9.

<sup>60</sup> Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 85; al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Muʿjam al-awsaṭ*, V, 92; id., *al-Muʿjam al-kabīr*, XIX, 142; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Tamīd*, XXIII, 292-293.

من حافظ على الصلوات الخمس بركوعهن وسجودهن ووضوئهن ومواقيتهن، وعلم أنهن حق من عند الله عز وجل، دخل الجنة- أو قال: وجبت له الجنة- وفي رواية قال: حرم على النار.

Whoever continues performing *ṣalāb* with attention to its *rukūʿ*, *sujūd*, ablution, and prescribed times in the awareness that it is a duty before Allah goes to Heaven; he might also have stated that “Heaven becomes obligatory for him,” and according to another narrative, “Hell becomes *ḥarām* for him.”<sup>61</sup>

In terms of the selected wording, meaning, and indication, this narrative completely corresponds with the ḥadīth in the study herein.

We can also examine the thought of Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn (d. 110/728) through his words on how Abū Bakr and ʿUmar propagated Islam:

نبئت أن أبا بكر وعمر كانا يعلمان من دخل في الإسلام "تؤمن بالله ولا تشرك به شيئاً وتقيم الصلاة التي افترض الله عليك لمواقيتها فإن في تفريطها الهلكة وتؤدي الزكاة طيب النفس بها وتصوم رمضان وتحج البيت وتطيع لمن ولاه الله أمرك وتعمل لله ولا تعمل للناس.

As I am reported, Abū Bakr and ʿUmar taught the following to persons who embraced Islam: “You believe in Allah and consider nothing His equivalent. You perform *ṣalāb*, declared *farḍ* by Allah, in their prescribed time. Indeed, their omission leads to destruction. You give *zakāb* willingly. You fast in Ramaḍān and make the pilgrimage to al-Kaʿbah. You obey the ruler assigned by Allah in order to accomplish your affairs. You work and conduct deeds not for man, but for Allah.”<sup>62</sup>

According to ʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿūd (d. 32/652) and renowned pupil al-Masrūq (d. 63/682), the expression “الحفاظ على الصلاة” in Qurʾān verses and ḥadīth means “performance of *ṣalāb* in obedience to its prescribed times.” Thus, the word “السهو” about *ṣalāb* means “performance of *ṣalāb* outside its prescribed time.” According to al-

<sup>61</sup> Abū l-Faraj Zayn al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī, *Fatḥ al-bārī fī sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. Abū Muʿādh Ṭāriq ibn ʿIwaḍ Allāh ibn Muḥammad (Jeddah: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 1422), III, 30.

<sup>62</sup> Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *al-Tambīd*, XXVIII, 294. To compare, see Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, III, 30.

Masrūq, “all relevant words, such as حافظون، دائمون، ساهون، are about the prescribed times of *ṣalāb*.”<sup>63</sup> Therefore, the emphasis on this final narrative concerns “the points to consider” about performing *ṣalāb*; in other words, “nonperformance” is not an issue.

Consequently, there actually are certain narratives that support the meaning that we prioritize in terms of content. Therefore, the argument “abandoners of *ṣalāb* may be forgiven by Allah” should also be supported by similar data directly related to the abandonment of *ṣalāb*. Nevertheless, the defenders of this argument apparently mention certain Qurʾān verses that provide a broader framework, talking about the possibility of forgiving “sins” in general. We will dwell on such evidence but first glance at the Qurʾān’s verses and ḥadīths that concretely indicate the consequences of abandoning *ṣalāb*.

## **2. Certain Qurʾān Verses and Ḥadīths on Punishment for Abandoning Ṣalāb**

*Ṣalāb* is included and emphasized not only in Islam but also in earlier religions. Indeed, *ṣalāb* is associated with almost all prophets mentioned in the Qurʾān;<sup>64</sup> moreover, it is particularly stated that prophets with religious texts perform *ṣalāb*.<sup>65</sup> Some ḥadīths mention

<sup>63</sup> For related narratives, see Ibn ʿAbd al- Barr, *al-Tamībīd*, XXVIII, 294-295.

<sup>64</sup> Commandments by Allah for Ibrāhīm (Abraham) and Ismāʿīl include “Cleanliness of al-Kaʿbah for those who perform *ṭawāf*, *ṣalāb*, *rukūʿ*, and *sujūd*” (Q 2:125; Q 22:26). Thereupon, Ibrāhīm has prayed for the continuity of himself and his descendants in *ṣalāb* (Q 14:37, 40). For Ismāʿīl, one of the reasons he earned the assent of his Lord is that he ordered his family to perform *ṣalāb* (see Q 19:55). In a ḥadīth, the Prophet Muḥammad reports that Sārah, wife of Ibrāhīm, also performed *ṣalāb* (al-Bukhārī, “al-Anbiyāʾ,” 11). In addition, Isaac, Lot, and Jacob are other prophets ordered to perform *ṣalāb* (Q 21:73). The earliest commandments to Moses are also about *ṣalāb* (Q 20:14). According to a Qurʾān verse, Moses and Aaron are ordered through revelation to prepare houses for their tribes in Egypt, to build places for *ṣalāb* in these houses and to perform *ṣalāb* in the appropriate way (see Q 10:87). Dāwūd is another prophet whose *ṣalāb* is emphasized both in the Qurʾān and ḥadīth (Q 38:24). For the ḥadīth, see al-Bukhārī, “al-Tahajjud,” 7; id., “al-Anbiyāʾ,” 40. Shuʿayb, Luqmān, Zachariah, and Jesus are also ordered that *ṣalāb* be performed (See Q 11:87; Q 31:17; Q 3:39).

<sup>65</sup> Q 98:5.

*ṣalāb*-performing Jews,<sup>66</sup> Christians,<sup>67</sup> and Sabians.<sup>68</sup> According to the Qurʾān, polytheist Arabs carried out certain acts under the name of *ṣalāb* as worship.<sup>69</sup>

*Ṣalāb* is probably the most important worship in Islam. As a matter of fact, the word *ṣalāb* in the sense of “prayer” is mentioned in over eighty Qurʾān verses.<sup>70</sup> No other service is mentioned as much in the Qurʾān. Again, *ṣalāb* is the service about the performance of which there is the highest number of explanations in the Qurʾān and Sunnah.

The Qurʾān and ḥadīths give a clear account of the outcome of the abandoners of *ṣalāb*. Some relevant statements include the following:

And when it is said to them, “Bow [in prayer],” they do not bow. Woe be that Day to the deniers [of the orders of Allah]!<sup>71</sup>

<sup>66</sup> “There was a Jew called Ibn Hayyabān in Damascus. Many years before Islam, he came to us and settled among us. We have never seen anyone performing *ṣalāb* for five times better than him.” (see Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā [Mecca: Maktabat Dār al-Bāz, 1994], IX, 114. In a ḥadīth, Muḥammad says as follows: “Oppose the Jews; they do not perform the prayers with their shoes on.” (see Abū Dāwūd, “al-Ṣalāh,” 88).

<sup>67</sup> According to certain ḥadīths, a Christian called Jurayj performed *ṣalāb* in the house of worship and went on his *ṣalāb* even though his mother beckoned him; al-Bukhārī, “al-Anbiyā’,” 50; Muslim “al-Birr wa-l-Ṣilāh,” 2.

<sup>68</sup> Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373) indicates that, according to Q 2:62, Sabians “recited Psalms, performed *ṣalāb* heading towards Qiblah and fasted every year.” See Abū l-Fidā’ ‘Imād al-Dīn Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Umar Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-‘aẓīm*, ed. Sāmī ibn Muḥammad al-Salāmāh (Riyadh: Dār Ṭībah li-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzī‘, 1999), I, 286.

<sup>69</sup> Q 8:35. In addition, a ḥadīth in Muslim’s *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* includes the following conversation between Abū Dharr and Unays:

- ... O son of my brother! I used to perform *ṣalāb* three years before meeting Rasūl Allāh.

- To whom?

- To Allah!

- Where did you head?

- Wherever my Lord turned me! I perform night prayer; at the end of the night, I lie down until sun beats down on me” (see Muslim, “Faḍā’il al-ṣaḥābah,” 28).

<sup>70</sup> Muḥammad Fuʾād ‘Abd al-Bāqī, *al-Mu‘jam al-mufabbras li-alfāz al-Qurʾān al-karīm* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1364), 412-413.

<sup>71</sup> Q 77:48-49.

And your Lord says: "Call upon Me; I will respond to you." Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell and be rendered contemptible.<sup>72</sup>

In another verse, Allah introduces some prophets such as Adam, Noah, and İbrâhîm as "ones upon whom Allah bestowed favor, guided, and chose," before indicating "they fell in prostration when the verses of Allah were recited to them." Nevertheless, the ensuing verse is even more relevant for our subject. Indeed, it dwells upon the behaviors of descendants of these prophets, and the consequences of such behavior:

But there came after them a successor who neglected prayer and pursued desires; [so] they are going to be meet evil (*gbayy*).<sup>73</sup>

The expression "neglected" (أَضَاعُوا) in this verse is interpreted in two ways, namely, as "complete abandonment" and as "performance outside prescribed times."<sup>74</sup> This is important in correcting our understanding of the terms "ضَيَّعُوا"<sup>75</sup> and "مُضَيَّعٌ"<sup>76</sup> that are mentioned in some narratives of the ḥadīth herein and that matter with regard to its indication. The following incident told by Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742) may provide an idea of the meaning of the foregoing term: In Damascus, I went to Anas ibn Mālik, who was weeping. "Why are you crying?" I asked. He replied: "I see that *ṣalāb* is the only thing preserved from the time of Rasūl Allāh. But today, even *ṣalāb* is being neglected."<sup>77</sup> With "neglect," Anas ibn Mālik points out that Umayyad rulers, al-Ḥajjāj above all, perform prayers without respecting its prescribed times. Anas came to Damascus, the center of the Caliphate, for his complaint about this issue and met Caliph al-Walid ibn ʿAbd al-Malik.<sup>78</sup> On the other hand, one may interpret "neglect of *ṣalāb*" as

<sup>72</sup> Q 40:60.

<sup>73</sup> Q 19:58-59. For the use of "الغي" as a valley or river in hell, see Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān fi taʾwīl al-Qurʾān al-maʿrūf bi-Taḥsīn al-Ṭabarī*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir (Beirut: Muʿassasat al-Risālah, 2000), VIII, 218.

<sup>74</sup> See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿaẓīm*, V, 243.

<sup>75</sup> For example, see Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 393.

<sup>76</sup> Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXVII, 85; al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Muʿjam al-awsaṭ*, V, 92; al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Muʿjam al-kabīr*, XIX, 142; Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *al-Tamīd*, XXIII, 292-293.

<sup>77</sup> Al-Bukhārī, "Mawāqīt al-ṣalāh," 6; Muslim, "al-Masājid," 283.

<sup>78</sup> Al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, II, 13; al-ʿAynī, *ʿUmdat al-qārī*, VII, 334.

“complete abandonment” for a more cautious and tolerant attitude in favor of Muslims. Thus, the verse means “abandoners of *ṣalāh*, namely, those who do not perform it with no reasonable excuse, shall be put in *ghayy*.” Nevertheless, even according to such an interpretation, the verse apparently does not allow for the meaning ascribed to the *ḥadīth* herein as to such a sin. Indeed, as we will examine in more detail, the framework established by the Qurʾān and Sunnah requires the fulfilment of various prerequisites for forgiving of sins.

In a *ḥadīth* reported by Abū Hurayrah, the consequence of neglecting prostration due to arrogance and disdain are as follows: “When the sons of Adam recite the verse of prostration and fall in prostration, Satan weeps and moves away and says: Woe to me! The sons of Adam have accepted the duty of prostrating and immediately fell in prostration. Therefore, Heaven is theirs. I was ordered to prostrate, but I refrained from it. Therefore, Hell is mine.”<sup>79</sup>

According to a report by ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ, “one day, Rasūl Allāh talked about *ṣalāh* and said: *Ṣalāh* becomes brightness, evidence, and the way to salvation for the one who continues to perform *ṣalāh*. Whoever does not continue to perform *ṣalāh* lacks such brightness, evidence, and salvation; such a person will be together with Croesus, Pharaoh, Haman, and Ubayy ibn Khalaf on the Day of Judgment.”<sup>80</sup>

Another *ḥadīth* goes as follows: “On the Day of Judgment, a subject will be questioned about his prayers first. If his prayers are complete, he attains salvation and wins. If he has not fulfilled some duty, Allah will say: Behold if my subject has performed *ṣalāt al-taṭawwuʿ*! His prayers will make up for any lack in his duties. This is how his other deeds will be evaluated.”<sup>81</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Muslim, “al-Īmān,” 33.

<sup>80</sup> Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, II, 169; Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd ibn Ḥumayd ibn Naṣr al-Kissī, *al-Muntakhab min Musnad ‘Abd ibn Ḥumayd*, ed. Ṣubḥī al-Badrī al-Sāmarrāʿī and Maḥmūd Muḥammad Khalīl al-Ṣaʿdī (Cairo: Maktabat al-Sunnah, 1988), 139.

<sup>81</sup> Al-Tirmidhī, “al-Ṣalāh,” 305. At the end of the *ḥadīth*, al-Tirmidhī makes the following assessment: “There is a narrative from Tamīm al-Dārī in this regard. The narrative of Abū Hurayrah (which I quoted) is *ḥasan gharīb* in this regard. Nevertheless, the *ḥadīth* is also reported from another line than from Abū Hurayrah. There is also a narrative from Tamīm al-Dārī.”

The expression, “accomplishment of lacking duties with *şalāt al-taṭawwuʿ*” is interpreted by scholars in three different ways. For some, it means the elimination of lack in submission, recital, and prayers in a prayer by *şalāt al-taṭawwuʿ*. According to others, this expression means “elimination of deficiencies of lack of duties and conditions in *şalāb* by means of *şalāt al-taṭawwuʿ*.” Still others claim that “lack of duties” means “nonperformance of some *şalāb*.”<sup>82</sup> The first two interpretations support the meaning we ascribe to the ḥadīth, whereas the third has an opposite sense. Nevertheless, any related conclusion should rather take into account all relevant Qurʾān verses, ḥadīths, and predecessors’ views. In addition, we believe it is controversial to replace “*farḍ*” *şalāb* with “*nāfilah*” (supererogatory prayer). In fact, for some narrators, this ḥadīth completely or partially does not belong to the Prophet Muḥammad, particularly the section “accomplishment of lack in *farḍ* via *taṭawwuʿ*.”<sup>83</sup> Therefore, this ḥadīth requires a detailed

<sup>82</sup> For these comments, see al-Mubārakfūrī, *Tuḥfat al-Aḥwādī*, II, 384.

<sup>83</sup> For example, al-Dārimī, who allows for the ḥadīth in his book, states: “I do not know anyone other than Ḥammād ibn Salamah (who is mentioned in the chain) who reported this ḥadīth as *marfūʿ*” (see al-Dārimī “al-Şalāh,” 91). Al-Nasāʿī, another author reporting the same ḥadīth, provides this passage: “On the Day of Judgment, a subject will be questioned about his prayers first. If his prayers are complete, he attains salvation and wins.” Then, he provides the following information: “Ḥammām (who is included in the ḥadīth chain) said as follows: ‘If there is any lack in *farḍ* ...’ I don’t know whether this sentence belongs to my teacher Qatādah or if it is a part of an actual ḥadīth” (see al-Nasāʿī, “al-Şalāh,” 9). Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal reports the ḥadīth, before adding: “Yūnus ibn ʿUbayd (who is included in the chain) said: ‘I guess (أحسبه), (my teacher) al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, also mentioned the Prophet Muḥammad in the chain” (see *Musnad*, XIX, 173). At the end of his quotation, al-Bayhaqī informs that “al-Thawrī reported this as *mawqūf* by means of Dāwūd” (see al-Bayhaqī, *Sbuʿab al-īmān*, ed. Abū Hājar Muḥammad al-Saʿīd ibn Basyūnī Zaghūl [Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 2000], III, 180). In a later chapter, al-Bayhaqī quotes the following version of the ḥadīth: “On the Day of Judgment, a subject will be questioned about his prayers first. If his prayers are complete, he attains salvation and wins.” (see *Sbuʿab al-īmān*, III, 182). Ibn Abī Shaybah is another author to report this version (see *al-Kitāb al-muṣannaḥ*, XIV, 146). Ibn Abī Shaybah also explains that the final phrase, “this is how his other deeds will be evaluated,” belongs to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, a narrator of the ḥadīth. The author then adds the version without the passage belonging to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (see *al-Kitāb al-muṣannaḥ*, II, 404-405). Ibn Abī Shaybah also allows for the

separate study, given the different opinions regarding the structure of its wording, chain, and indication.

In light of the foregoing information and comments, the abandonment of *ṣalāh* without excuse, that is, due to total idleness, is classified at least as a “major sin,” if not as unbelief (*kufīr*) or polytheism (*shirk*). Actually, in his *Kitāb al-kabāʾir* about major sins in Islam, al-Dhahabī has dedicated the fourth chapter to the abandonment of *ṣalāh*.<sup>84</sup> At this stage, we need to examine “forgiving sins” in Islam.

### 3. The Problem of Forgiving Sins

There is much evidence of the possibility that Allah may forgive the sins of Muslims. For example, Q 39:53 reads: “Say: ‘O My servants who have transgressed against themselves by sinning! Do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful.’” This verse alone indicates that the benevolence and mercy of Allah is great enough not to allow for despair. As a matter of fact, the verse includes the word “all” (جَمِيعًا) in a general and absolute sense. Nonetheless, this expression should not be considered a guarantee by Allah. Indeed, the Qurʾān verses and ḥadīths about sins and their forgiveness offer a classification among sins and stipulate different conditions for each one. Actually, Allah says: “Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills.”<sup>85</sup>

Therefore, this verse is the second proof on which is based the view of commentators of the ḥadīth therein that “abandoners of *ṣalāh* are left to the will of Allah; He may forgive or torment them.”<sup>86</sup> Based on the introduction style, this group of scholars considers abandonment of *ṣalāh* among sins less than *shirk* and therefore subject to forgiveness.

On the other hand, we have to admit this verse has a general meaning. Evidently, the Qurʾān and Sunnah often opt for the allocation of the universal or restriction of the absolute. Therefore, a simultaneous and collective assessment of all relevant Qurʾān verses

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version completely expressed by Tamīm al-Dārī (see *al-Kitāb al-muṣannaʿ*, XI, 41; XIV, 108).

<sup>84</sup> Al-Dhahabī, *Kitāb al-kabāʾir* (Beirut: Dār al-Nadwah al-Jadīdah, 2010), 17.

<sup>85</sup> Q 4:48, 116.

<sup>86</sup> For example, see Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *al-Tamīb*, XXIII, 295.

and ḥadīths is required. In our opinion, both issues in the abovementioned verse, more precisely, the nonforgiving of *shirk* and forgiving of other sins, are not “absolute or definitive” and depend on certain conditions. Indeed, it is stated that polytheists, who “should be killed wherever found,” will become religious fellows in case they repent, perform *ṣalāh*, and give *zakāh*.<sup>87</sup> The same is true for forgiving sins other than *shirk*. Above all, the expression “لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ” at the end of the verse should have a meaning. Thereupon, Allah will make a classification between committers of sins other than *shirk*, and all of them will not attain forgiveness. There is surely no power to restrict His will; He may forgive all sinners at will without exception. Nevertheless, various Qurʾān verses highlight other distinctions about forgiving sins:

If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove you your lesser sins (*sayyiʿāt*).<sup>88</sup>

Those who avoid the major sins and immoralities, only committing slight ones. Indeed, your Lord is vast in forgiveness.<sup>89</sup>

These verses divide sins other than *shirk* in two, namely, “major” and “slight,” and commands one to avoid major sins to forgive the lesser ones.

Evidently, a Muslim may also commit a “major” sin pursuant to his self and desire. Nevertheless, their forgiving should not be directly attributed to Allah and they should not be considered absolute and final. In contrast, the person should be aware of his error, repent sincerely, and be determined not to repeat it. The conditions for forgiving major sins are expressed in the Qurʾān via the expression *taubah naṣūḥ* (sincere repentance):

O you who have believed! Repent to Allah with sincere repentance. Perhaps your Lord will remove from you your misdeeds (lesser sins).<sup>90</sup>

The forgiving of lesser sins is also stipulated under certain conditions, asking the sinner to display an effort. Indeed, according to the foregoing Qurʾān verses, avoidance of major sins is a precondition for forgiving lesser sins. There are dozens of ḥadīths about relevant

<sup>87</sup> Q 9:1-11.

<sup>88</sup> Q 4:31.

<sup>89</sup> Q 53:32.

<sup>90</sup> Q 66:8.

necessary efforts, which include performing two *rak'abs* of *ṣalāh* following ablution, celebrating Ramaḍān nights with faith and expectations from Allah, worshipping throughout Laylat al-Qadr, praising Allah after meals, saying “*āmīn*” at the end of the al-Fātiḥah prayer recited by imām, and making a pilgrimage without inappropriate words and deeds.

In light of the foregoing, one cannot merely take refuge in the mercy of Allah and expect His forgiveness unless due effort is displayed for atonement. First, the sinner should display necessary effort and then submit such effort to Allah to expect His forgiveness and be included in the sphere of amnesty. Due to its specific character, abandonment of *ṣalāh* requires a great deal of such effort. Indeed, both Qur'ān verses and ḥadīths inform about concrete punishments against this offense. Therefore, if we are to understand the ḥadīth herein as “the abandoner of *ṣalāh* is left to the will of Allah; He may punish or forgive him” without any prerequisites, such an understanding will first of all contradict these verses and ḥadīths. Nonetheless, such a view is inconvenient, since it may “lead Muslims to laxity.” For us, Islam prevents Muslims from heading toward such idleness under any excuse about performing *ṣalāh* by means of certain measures and facilities granted for believers.

#### **4. Certain Facilitations and Details concerning the Performance of *Ṣalāh***

As described above, *ṣalāh* is the most mentioned deed/worship in the Qur'ān and ḥadīths. In most of these data, solutions are provided for possible excuses regarding its performance. In this regard, it is possible to shorten *ṣalāh* during a voyage,<sup>91</sup> to unify multiple *ṣalāhs* (for madhhabs other than Ḥanafī),<sup>92</sup> to perform *tayammum* in case no

<sup>91</sup> Q 4:101.

<sup>92</sup> Ḥadīth works include many ḥadīths on practices applied by the Prophet Muḥammad about gathering. Some include *jam'* in wartime, peacetime, 'Arafāt and al-Muzdalifah, while some include details such as rain, occupation, and handicap (illness). For these ḥadīths, see al-Bukhārī, “al-Wuḍū',” 40; “al-Ṣalāh,” 93-94; “Mawāqīt al-ṣalāh,” 12, 18; “Taḥṣīr,” 6, 13-16; “al-Taḥajjud,” 30; “al-Ḥajj,” 83, 93, 96-97; “al-'Umrah,” 20; “al-Jihād,” 136; “al-Manāqib,” 23; Muslim, “al-Ṣalāh,” 249, 252; “Ṣalāt al-musāfirīn,” 42-58; “al-Ḥajj,” 285-290; “al-Faḍā'il,” 10; al-Tirmidhī, “al-Ṭahārah,” 95; “al-Ṣalāh,” 24; “al-Jum'ah,” 42; Abū Dāwūd, “al-Ṭahārah,” 109-111; “al-Ṣalāh,” 101; “al-Safar,” 5, 10; “al-Manāsik,” 56, 59; al-Nasā'ī, “al-Ṭahārah,” 136;

water is available for ablution,<sup>93</sup> to perform *ṣalāb* sitting or even lying if one cannot stand,<sup>94</sup> moreover, there are explications as to how to perform *ṣalāb* in conditions of warfare.<sup>95</sup>

Such ease about the performance of *ṣalāb* is evidently one of the most important indicators of Allah's love, compassion and mercy toward Muslims. On the other hand, such ease also means that *ṣalāb* should be performed under any circumstances without making excuses. As a matter of fact, two conditions that may prevent the timely performance of *ṣalāb* are sleep and oblivion.<sup>96</sup> However, one must remember that both of these excuses are involuntary and unconscious.

### Conclusion

*Ṣalāb* is a type of worship ordered in all revealed religions. Pursuant to information in the Qur'ān, *ṣalāb* is included among the doctrines of almost all prophets. In this regard, Islam lays stress insistently on *ṣalāb*, encourages it through the Qur'ān and ḥadīths, and points out details about its performance.

In a ḥadīth to encourage Muslims for *ṣalāb*, the Prophet says: "Allah made it *farḍ* to perform five daily prayers. Whoever performs them without any compromise and undervaluing its rules, he will have a guarantee before Allah for Heaven. Whoever does not fulfil them ( وَمَنْ )

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"al-Ḥayḍ," 5; "al-Ṣalāh," 12, 18, 20; "al-Mawāqīt," 42, 44-48; "al-Manāsik," 207, 210; "al-Adhān," 18-20; Ibn Mājah, "al-Ṭahārah," 117; "al-Iqāmah," 74; "al-Manāsik," 59, 60, 84.

<sup>93</sup> Q 4:85; Q 5:6. Tayammum is also mentioned in ḥadīths. For example, see al-Bukhārī, "al-Tayammum," 236.

<sup>94</sup> For a narrative about how the Prophet performed *ṣalāb* sitting, see al-Bukhārī, "Mawāqīt al-ṣalāh," 398.

<sup>95</sup> The related verse reads as follows: "And when you are among them and lead them in prayer, let a group of them stand [in prayer] with you and let them carry their arms. And when they have prostrated, let them be [in position] behind you and have the other group come forward which has not [yet] prayed and let them pray with you, taking precaution and carrying their arms. Those who disbelieve wish that you would neglect your weapons and your baggage so they could come down upon you in one [single] attack. But there is no blame upon you, if you are troubled by rain or are ill, for putting down your arms, but take precaution. Indeed, Allah has prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating punishment." See Q 4:102.

<sup>96</sup> See al-Tirmidhī, "al-Ṣalāh," 18.

(لَمْ يَأْتِ بِهِنَّ), however, shall have no such guarantee in the presence of Allah; Allah may either torment or put him in his Heaven.”

The earliest source to include the foregoing expression in this ḥadīth is *al-Muwattaʿa* by al-Imām Mālik. Accordingly, al-Imām Mālik’s version constitutes the basis of our study. In addition, a collection of narratives in this and other sources reveals three different chains or lines of report as to the generation of Companions. Among them, only the “‘Ubādah → ‘Abd Allāh al-Ṣunābiḥī” line can be considered authentic. The others lack authenticity due to the detected flaws (*ḍaḥḍ*) of narrators. However, given the mutual support between lines, these may also be considered *ḥasan* and even attain the level of *ṣaḥīḥ li-ghayrihī* [authentic on the strength of another].

Ḥadīth is reported with wording differences that are due to meaning and report and that generally do not change its indication. Nevertheless, certain narrative differences may lead to significant changes in the indication of ḥadīth. Indeed, pursuant to certain versions, “the way to obtain a guarantee before Allah” is “to perform ablution appropriately, to fulfill *ṣalāb* in prescribed times with attention to bows and prostrations in total submission to Allah,” or to “perform *ṣalāb* with due diligence on ablution, prescribed times, bows, and prostration,” or “to perform *ṣalāb* with respect to its prescribed times.” In addition, in some narratives, a person “who does not respect prescribed times and neglects it” “will not obtain guarantee before Allah.” Such expressions stipulate the performance of five daily *ṣalāb* “as ordered” in order to obtain the guarantee for Heaven or forgiveness of Allah. Those who do not perform *ṣalāb* in this way have no such guarantee; their outcome is at the discretion of Allah. Therefore, the context herein does not include “the abandoning of *ṣalāb*.” Consequently, this problem is not included within the indicative context of ḥadīth. Nevertheless, in the text reported by many ḥadīth experts and preferred by scholars regarding “faith-deed relations,” the “performance” or “nonperformance” of *ṣalāb* can be considered as the separation point in terms of guarantee. Actually, many scholars have opted for this interpretation.

In consideration of and pursuant to the collective evaluation of wording differences, the ḥadīth herein stipulates performance of *ṣalāb* “as required” as the prerequisite for a guarantee before Allah of Heaven or forgiveness. Essentially, the expressions within the ḥadīth are sufficient to deduct this meaning via its assessment as a whole.

On the other hand, it will be very useful to refer to other data available for identifying the indication of such a text. For us, such an examination will reveal the controversial character of an opposite interpretation. The approach that “whoever does not perform five daily *şalāb* is left to the will of Allah” contradicts the general perspective of Islam as to “forgiving sins” and within the particular framework of punishments foreseen for abandoning *şalāb*.

The persons who ascribe the latter meaning to this *ḥadīth* will consider abandoning *şalāb* at least a “sin,” if not *şirk* or unbelief. Indeed, it is impossible to claim that the abandonment of *şalāb* is not a sin in spite of so many relevant Qur’ān verses and *ḥadīths*. Actually, many scholars agree that abandoning *şalāb* without excuse is a “major sin.” However, relevant data in Islam suggest that the forgiving of sins is not absolutely left to the will of Allah but that an effort is demanded from the sinner in order to make up for or correct his error. For major sins, this effort is called *taubah naşūb*. Moreover, *ḥadīths* even about forgiving “lesser sins” begin with the expression “whoever does ...;” therefore, they stipulate certain deeds and worship for forgiveness.

In our opinion, the argument that “the status of abandoners of *şalāb* is left to the will of Allah” contradicts the Qur’ān verses and *ḥadīths*, where the punishments foreseen for the unexcused abandoning of *şalāb* are explained. The Qur’ān and Sunnah point on many occasions to the insistence on the commandment of *şalāb* and how great a sin it is to abandon prayer. In light of the foregoing data, the deliberate abandoners of *şalāb* will lose their afterlife, go to Hell and be thrown in the *gbayy*. Therefore, these Qur’ān verses and *ḥadīths* do not state that abandoners of *şalāb* will be definitely left to the will of Allah, but that they will be severely punished. The opposite interpretation, however, argues that the status of the mentioned abandoners is left to Allah, and thus forgiveness is possible. In case we prefer this meaning, we must refer to *ta’wīl* for reconciliation with the foregoing religious data. However, the principle in Islamic studies is to focus on the simple and apparent meaning of a text, in other words, on the first thing that springs to mind. *Ta’wīl* is applicable only when the apparent meaning contradicts other reports or reason. However, there is no textual or reasonable objection against the interpretation of the mentioned *ḥadīth*, as “the status of those who do not fulfill prayer with attention to its essentials is left to will of Allah.” Nevertheless, it is possible to put *ḥadīth* to *ta’wīl* and to claim, for example, that the outcome of the abandoners of *şalāb* is left to the will of Allah in case they do not repent

or do not take any steps to make up for their fault. In such a situation, the ḥadīth shall have no specific emphasis, and no information will be added to that already available. Each ḥadīth, however, is a separate asset. For us, the message of this ḥadīth is “do not perform *ṣalāb* in haste and in a perfunctory manner.” Nonetheless, if we amend it and add “if they do not repent,” even such an addition will not contribute to our mindset. After all, Qurʾān and ḥadīths already inform us that repentance is a valid compensation for every offense whatsoever, including *shirk*.

Despite the foregoing, efforts to ascribe the interpretation of “status of those who do not perform *ṣalāb* is left to the will of Allah” to this ḥadīth are related to the argument that “deed/worship is not a part of faith” and to the effort to find evidence for this argument. Most scholars, who allow for the ḥadīth herein, mention it within the latter context. It is a different point of debate and study whether such an argument is right or wrong, or what the presented evidential proof actually indicates on the matter. In our opinion, the ḥadīth herein is misinterpreted; it is inaccurate to focus on this misinterpretation and consider it evidence for the relations between deed and faith. Indeed, the emphasis on the ḥadīth herein is not on the consequence of the “nonperformance” of *ṣalāb* but on the consequence of “not performing *ṣalāb* appropriately.”

Assessment of the ḥadīth herein in the context of relationship between faith and deed and the attribution of the aforementioned misinterpretation is also open to criticism due to the possibility of encouraging Muslims to laxity regarding *ṣalāb*, one of the five pillars of Islam. In our opinion, during the last centuries, the condition of Muslim society has been closely related with the understanding of the relationship between faith and deed in general, and the perceptions of *ṣalāb*, the most essential and prior example of deeds, in particular.

## **DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

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