

Abstaining from Thinking Ill of the Sahabah RADI.

Q: Imaan-101 : Someone stated in a lecture that rather than getting busy with the burial proceedings when a Sahabi once passed away, the other Sahabah RADI. started discussing about the fact that the deceased had never performed any salaah, nor fasted, nor carried out any good deed. When Rasulullaah SAW. arrived and questioned the reason for the neglect shown towards the deceased, the Sahabah RADI. informed him of their discussions. To this, Rasulullaah SAW. asked, "Think well. There must have been some good deed that he carried out." One of the Sahabah RADI. then informed them that the person had once stood guard all night over the Muslims and their belongings. Rasulullaah SAW. then instructed the Sahabah RADI. to proceed with the burial arrangements.

The question I wish to ask is this narration authentic, which appears to degrade the deeds of a companion of Rasulullaah SAW.

Answer: This narration appears in Mishkqat as follows: Hadhrat Ibn Aa'idh RADI. narrates that Rasulullaah SAW. once joined a funeral procession (to lead the Janaazah salaah). When the body was placed down (for the salaah to commence), Hadhrat Umar RADI. said, "Please do not lead the salaah for this person because he was a Faajir (a grave sinner)." Turning to the Sahabah RADI. Rasulullaah SAW. asked, "Has any of you seen this person carry out any action of Islaam?" Someone responded by saying, "He stood guard one night in the path of Allaah." Rasulullaah SAW. then led the salaah and as he threw a handful of sand into the grave, he said, "While your companions think that you are amongst the inmates of the Fire, I testify that you are from amongst the dwellers of Jannah." Rasulullaah SAW. then addressed Hadhrat Umar RADI. saying, "O Umar! You will not be questioned about the deeds of people, but you will be questioned about Islaam."

Allaam Teebi RAH. states in his commentary of this Hadith that Rasulullaah SAW. meant to tell Hadhrat Umar RADI. that on occasions such as this, he ought to mention the good that people have done and not the bad. In fact, Rasulullaah SAW. did mention on one occasion, "Speak only good of your deceased." Rasulullaah SAW. therefore prohibited Hadhrat Umar RADI. from mentioning the evils of people because the basis of a person's fate (after death) is determined by his Islaam.

Hadhrat Umar RADI. apparently knew of some misdeed that the deceased had committed, on account of which he told Rasulullaah SAW. not to lead the Janaazah salaah. To contradict this, Rasulullaah SAW. enquired about some good deed that the person had carried and when someone attested to this, Rasulullaah SAW. proceeded to lead the salaah. In fact, then even confirmed that the deceased is headed for Jannah (so that no one harbours ill thoughts about him). Rasulullaah SAW. then cautioned Hadhrat Umar RADI. against mentioning the wrongs of the deceased, since the Janaazah salaah of every Muslim is to be performed, as stated in another Hadith in which Rasulullaah SAW. said, "Perform the Janaazah salaah of every pious and sinful person."

Nowhere does this Hadith state, nor can it be understood from the Hadith, that the deceased had never performed salaah, nor fasted, nor carried out any good deed. Such behaviour can never stem from a companion of Rasulullaah SAW.

And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

Fatawa Rahimmiyyah (vol. 1)