

Defence of Al-Aqra' bin Haabis the noble Companion

Translated by Rasheed ibn Estes Barbee

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Translator's note: The hadeeth mentioned in the question is as follows:

عن أبي هريرة - رضي الله عنه - قال قَبِلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الْحَسَنَ بْنَ عَلِيٍّ وَعِنْدَهُ الْأَقْرَعُ بْنُ حَابِسٍ التَّمِيمِيُّ جَالِسًا. فَقَالَ الْأَقْرَعُ إِنَّ لِي عَشْرَةَ مِنَ الْوَالِدِ مَا قَبِلْتُ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا. فَنَظَرَ إِلَيْهِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ثُمَّ قَالَ " مَنْ لَا يَرْحَمُ لَا يُرْحَمُ "

The Messenger of Allaah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)¹ kissed Al-Hasan bin Alee while Al-Aqra' bin Haabis at-Tameem was sitting beside him. Al-Aqra' said, "I have ten children and I have never kissed anyone of them," The Messenger of Allaah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) cast a look at him and said, "**Whoever does not show mercy will not be shown mercy.**"²

Question: Some of the Du'at (callers) when speaking about the hardness of the heart and its heedlessness they use as a proof this hadeeth. And they make Al Aqra' bin Haabis—³(رضي الله عنه) as an example for this blameworthy trait. Thus is it correct to use such as inference?

Shaykh 'Abdul-Muhsin al-'Abbaad (حفظه الله)⁴: Never. It is not permissible to defame his Companions in any way whatsoever. The fact that a person had some unpraiseworthy characteristics during pre-Islaamic days, then Islaam came and his condition was altered by Islaam, and then he knew the rulings of Islaam, then after that he applied them, then there is no doubt the affair is going to change.

But no matter what it is, it is not permissible to go against the noble Companions in any way whatsoever. Rather they should be mentioned with the good befitting to them. And if the person does not mention them with good, then the least he can do is remain silent. This is based upon his statement (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):

¹ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him

² Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim

³ (رضي الله عنه) (rad iyallaahu 'anhu) May Allaah the Most High be pleased with him

⁴ (حفظه الله) May Allaah the Most High preserve him

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مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ، فَلْيُكَلِّمْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ

“Whoever believes in Allaah and the last day, let him speak good or remain silent.”⁵

Although it is obligatory that the hearts and the tongues, all of them are Saleem (proper, sound, healthy) as it relates to the rights of the Companions; may Allaah be pleased with them. As Shaykh al-Islam ibn Taymeeyah—(رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)⁶—said:

وَمِنْ أُصُولِ أَهْلِ السُّنَّةِ وَالْجَمَاعَةِ سَلَامَةُ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاللِّسَانِ لِأَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

And it is from the foundational principles of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa’ah that the hearts and tongues should be sound and proper as it relates to the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

And if something occurred from one of the Companions due to this being a practice he had during pre-Islaamic times, then this should not be taken as pretence to defame him. Rather the person asks Allaah to be pleased with them and he loves them. And that which occurred from him due to what he was accustomed to in pre-Islaamic days should not be a reason for something falling into the person’s hearts against him, or cause him to move his tongue to defame him. Rather his heart should be Saleem, and his tongue Saleem; as Allaah (سُبْحَانَهُ)⁷ mentioned about the Muhaajiroon and the Ansaar in Soorah al-Hasher, and then He mentioned those who came after them with two descriptions; a sound heart and a sound tongue concerning them.

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ

[And those who came after them say: "Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith.]⁸

This is proof of the sound tongue, because they make Du’aa for them. Then also their hearts are sound. And they ask Allaah (سُبْحَانَهُ) to keep them sound. So they supplicate to Allaah to not place in their hearts any hatred for those who have believed.

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ

[And those who came after them say: "Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith.]⁹

This is the soundness of the tongues.

وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا

[And put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed.]¹⁰

⁵ Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim

⁶ (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him

⁷ (سُبْحَانَهُ) (Subhanahu) The Exalted

⁸ سورة الحشر - Soorah al-Hasher [59:10]

⁹ سورة الحشر - Soorah al-Hasher [59:10]

¹⁰ سورة الحشر - Soorah al-Hasher [59:10]

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This is the soundness of the hearts, thus their hearts are Saleem. And they ask Allaah to keep them Saleem, and that there not occur in their hearts any jealousy, hatred, or rage for anyone from the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

And in reality, the one who defames the Companions does not harm them, rather he only harms himself. He hurts himself and he does not hurt them. And the one whom this comes from earns a crime against himself. And it is upon him to distance himself from these matters and to pity himself, and to distance himself from anything that will bring him harm.