

## Chapter 47

### Revering the Names of Allāh & Changing One’s Name as a Result

On the authority of Abū Shurayḥ who said that he used to have the honorific of Abū'l-Ḥakam. The Prophet ﷺ said to him, “Allāh is al-Ḥakam and with Him lies the judgment.” He said, ‘When my people would dispute about something they would come to me and I would judge between them and both parties would be happy.’ He said, “This is truly something good. What children do you have?” He replied, ‘Shurayḥ, Muslim, and `Abdullāh.’ He asked, “Who is the oldest?” He replied, ‘Shurayḥ.’ He replied, “Then you are Abū Shurayḥ.” This was recorded by Abū Dāwūd and others.<sup>1</sup>

#### Issues:

1. Revering the Names and Attributes of Allāh, even if one does not actually intend their meanings.
2. Changing names as a result.
3. Choosing the oldest son for one’s honorific.

#### Commentary

The author says, “Chapter: revering the Names of Allāh and changing one’s name as a result.”<sup>2</sup>

---

On the authority of Abū Shurayḥ who said that he used to have the honorific of Abū'l-Ḥakam. The Prophet ﷺ said to him, “Allāh is al-Ḥakam and with Him lies the judgment.” He said, ‘When my people would dispute about something they would come to me and I would judge between them and both parties would be happy.’ He said, “This is truly something good. What children do you have?” He replied, ‘Shurayḥ, Muslim, and `Abdullāh.’ He asked, “Who is the oldest?” He replied, ‘Shurayḥ.’ He replied, “Then you are Abū Shurayḥ.”

---

“*Abū Shurayḥ*,” the author of *Khulāṣah al-Tadhīb* said, ‘He is Abū Shurayḥ al-Khuzā`ī, his name is Khuwaylid ibn `Amr and he accepted Islām on the Day of Conquest. He narrated twenty ḥadīths, two of which are recorded in Bukhārī and Muslim, and one other is recorded by Bukhārī. Reporting from him are Abū Sa`īd al-Maqburī, Nāfi` ibn Jubayr, and others. Ibn Sa`d said, “He passed away in Madīnah in the year 86H.”’ The commentator said, ‘His name is Hāni` ibn Yazīd al-Kindī as stated by al-Ḥāfiẓ.’ It is also said that his name was al-Ḥārith al-Ḍabābī as stated by al-Mizzī.<sup>3</sup>

“*The honorific*,” ar: *kunyā*. A *kunyā* is a title starting with Abū or Umm or the likes,<sup>4</sup> an agnomen, *laqab*, is something other than this such as Zayn al-`Ābidīn etc.

“*Allāh is al-Ḥakam and with Him lies the judgment*,” He, Glorious is He, is al-Ḥakam, the Judge, in this world and the Hereafter. He judges between His creation in this world through His revelation which He sent down to His prophets and messengers. There is no issue except that Allāh has a ruling regarding it contained in the revelation sent to His Prophet: the Book and wisdom. For the majority of the scholars of this nation, Allāh has made the knowledge of most of it easy; and they cannot unite upon misguidance. Hence, even though the scholars differ about various rulings, one of them has to be correct. Whoever Allāh has granted strength of understanding, and given the ability to glean the correct view from the opinions of the scholars, will find it easy by His grace and favour.<sup>5</sup>

“*With Him lies the judgment*,” in this life and the Hereafter<sup>6</sup> as Allāh, Most High, says,

“The judgment concerning anything you differ about is Allāh’s concern.”<sup>7</sup>

“If you have a dispute about something, refer it back to Allāh and His Messenger, if you have faith in Allāh and the Last Day. That is the best thing to do and gives the best result.”<sup>8</sup>

Referring to Allāh for judgement is to go to His Book, and referring to His Messenger for judgment is to go to him during his lifetime, and to his Sunnah after his death.

When the Prophet ﷺ sent Mu`ādh to Yemen he asked him, “With what will you judge?” He replied, ‘The Book of Allāh.’ He asked, “And if you do not find an answer?” He replied, ‘The Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.’ He asked, “And if you do not find an answer?” He replied, ‘I will strive to make a reasoned judgement.’ He said, “All praise is due to Allāh who granted the messenger of the Messenger of Allāh the accord to do that which pleases the Messenger of Allāh.”<sup>9</sup>

Mu`ādh is one of the most dignified scholars amongst the Companions, and one of the most knowledgeable in the rule of law, the lawful and the prohibited, and knowledge of the rulings of the Book and Sunnah. This is why it was permissible for him to undertake *ijtihād* to arrive at a ruling for something that was not self-evident in the Book of Allāh or the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ. This is not like the case today, and in recent times, where people ignorant of the ruling of Allāh contained in His Book and the Sunnah of His Messenger presume that *ijtihād* is possible for them, when in reality they are far removed from being able to undertake such a task, and thereby go to extremes.

On the Day of Rising, none will judge save Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent. He will come to decide the matter between His servants and He will judge His creation by His knowledge from which nothing is hidden, not even that which was performed in secret,

“Allāh does not wrong anyone by so much as the smallest speck. And if there is a good deed Allāh will multiply it and pay out an immense reward direct from Him.”<sup>10</sup>

The judgment will be carried out with good and bad deeds as the commodity. The oppressed shall take the good deeds of the oppressor commensurate with the severity of oppression, if the latter does not have any good deeds, the bad deeds of the former shall be given to him. Not an atom's weight of wrong will be done to either of the two.<sup>11</sup>

*“He said, ‘When my people would dispute about something they would come to me and I would judge between them and both parties would be happy.’ He said, ‘This is truly something good,’”* meaning – and Allāh knows best – that when the people of Shurayḥ came to know that he was a man of justice who would try to achieve justice, and who would strive to achieve a mutual understanding pleasing to both parties, he gained acceptance and favour amongst them. This is true reconciliation since it is based on trying to accommodate and conciliate both parties, not forcing one or both (to do something against their will), nor resorting to fortune-tellers or the Jews and Christians, nor resorting to the customs of the people of *Jāhiliyyah* in their referring back to their elders or predecessors for verdicts that oppose the Book and Sunnah as occurs frequently today. This is the state of the *īghūts* of today who pay no attention to the ruling of Allāh and His Messenger and instead base their judgments upon their lusts, desires, and personal opinions.

Included in this could be some blind followers who follow a person not allowable to be followed in an opinion causing him to leave the truth which conforms to the Book and Sunnah. The aid of Allāh is sought.

“He said, ‘This is truly something good. What children do you have?’ He replied, ‘Shurayḥ, Muslim, and ‘Abdullāh.’ He asked, ‘Who is the oldest?’ He replied, ‘Shurayḥ.’ He replied, ‘Then you are Abū Shurayḥ,’” this shows that, generally speaking, the oldest child should be given precedence for the honorific, and this point is shown in numerous ḥadīths.<sup>12</sup>

“Then you are Abū Shurayḥ.”<sup>13</sup>

“Revering the Names and Attributes of Allāh, even if one does not actually intend their meanings.”<sup>14</sup>

Allāh knows best.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Abū Dāwūd #4955 and Nasā’ī #5389

The wording of Abū Dāwūd: ...on the authority of Shurayḥ, on the authority of his father, Hāni’ who said, ‘When he came with the delegation from his people to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, he heard them calling him with the honorific, Abū’l-Ḥakam. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ called him and said, “Allāh is al-Ḥakam and with Him lies the judgment, why do you have this honorific?” He said, ‘When my people would dispute about something they would come to me and I would judge between them and both parties would be happy.’ He said, “This is truly something good. What children do you have?” He replied, ‘Shurayḥ, Muslim, and ‘Abdullāh.’ He asked, “Who is the oldest?” He replied, ‘Shurayḥ.’ He replied, “Then you are Abū Shurayḥ.” The narration of Nasā’ī adds, ‘...and he supplicated for him and for Shurayḥ.’

It was ruled ṣaḥīḥ by Albānī, *Irwā’* #2615, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’* #1841

<sup>2</sup> Shaykh Sulaymān, *Taysīr*, said, ‘i.e. changing them because of the reverence those Names are held in, the meaning of reverence is veneration. This is part and parcel of living *Tawḥīd*. One can then adduce that it is also forbidden to be called after such names from the onset, since it is more so the case that this be forbidden (than using the corresponding honorific); however, this only applies to those Names that are specific to Allāh, Most High.’

<sup>3</sup> It would seem that this is a mistake. Abū Shurayḥ al-Khuzā’ī is a different Companion to this one. This one is Abū Shurayḥ al-Ḥārithī and this is the only ḥadīth of his to be found in the Six Books. Cf. Nāṣir al-Fahd, *Tanbīḥāt ‘alā Kutub Takhrīj Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*, pg. 40

Shaykh Sulaymān, *Taysīr*, said, ‘His name is Hāni’ ibn Yazīd al-Kindī. al-Ḥāfiẓ said, “It is also said that he is al-Ḥārithī al-Ḍabābī as stated by al-Mizzī. It is also said that he is al-Madhḥijī and other titles have also been mentioned. He was a Companion and came to live in Kūfah.”

<sup>4</sup> Such as a description as in Abū’l-Faḍl or Abū’l-Khayr, or something that one is well known for such as Abū Hurayrah, or it could be used as a proper name such as Abū Bakr and Abū ‘Amr. Cf. Qārī, *Mirqātu’l-Mafātīḥ*, vol. 8, pg. 524 #4766

<sup>5</sup> Shaykh Sulaymān, *Taysīr*, said, ‘This proves that it is prohibited to call oneself by the Names of Allāh that are specific to Him, and proves that it is prohibited to name oneself with that which may indicate lack of reverence to them such as using the honorific, Abū’l-Ḥakam and the likes.’

<sup>6</sup> i.e. from Him does the ruling commence and to Him does it finally return. Cf. Qārī, *Mirqātu’l-Mafātīḥ*, vol. 8, pg. 524, ‘Aẓimabādī, *‘Awnu’l-Ma’būd*, vol. 13, pg. 296

<sup>7</sup> *al-Shūrā* (42): 10

<sup>8</sup> *al-Nisā’* (4): 59

<sup>9</sup> Abū Dāwūd #3592-3593

It was ruled ḍa’if by Bukhārī, Tirmidhī, ‘Uqaylī, Dāruqutnī, ibn Ḥazm, ibn Ṭāhir, ibn al-Jawzī, Dhahabī, Subkī, ibn Ḥajr, and others. Cf. Albānī, *al-Ḍa’if* #881

---

<sup>10</sup> *al-Nisā'* (4): 40

<sup>11</sup> Muslim #2581 records on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ asked, “Do you know the bankrupt person is?” They said, ‘A bankrupt man amongst us is one who has neither dirham with him nor wealth.’ He said, “The bankrupt person of my nation would be he who comes on the Day of Resurrection with prayers and fasts and Zakāt but he hurled abuses upon this person, brought calumny against that person, unlawfully consumed the wealth of that person, shed the blood of that person, and beat that person. So his good deeds would be credited to the deeds of those people [by way of retaliation] and if his good deeds fall short to clear the account, their sins would be added to his and he would be thrown in the Fire.”

Muslim #2582 records on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “All rights will be restored to their owners on the Day of Judgment. Even a hornless goat that is butted by a ram will have justice.”

<sup>12</sup> Baghawī, *Sharḥu'l-Sunnah*, vol. 12, pg. 344, ‘It is best for both a man or a woman to take an honorific after the oldest son, if he has no son then the oldest daughter. Umm Salamah’s name was Hind and she took her honorific after her son, Salamah. Umm Ḥabībah’s name was Ramlah and she took her honorific (after her daughter) Ḥabībah.’

<sup>13</sup> Ibn `Uthaymīn, *al-Qawl al-Mufīd*, vol. 3, pg. 21, said, ‘The Prophet ﷺ changed the name for two reasons: 1) Allāh is al-Ḥakam, so if it said, “O Abū'l-Ḥakam,” it could be like saying, “O Abū Allāh.” 2) This person was given this honorific because he met the quality described therein; as such it was not merely a name and therefore correlated to the corresponding Name of Allāh. It was a name whose meaning was actually intended, and as such it became a case of sharing with Allāh, Glorious and Most High, and it was for this reason that the Prophet ﷺ gave him the other honorific.’

<sup>14</sup> Ibn `Uthaymīn, *al-Qawl al-Mufīd*, vol. 3, pg. 22, said, ‘This is problematic because if a person does not intend the meaning, it is permissible, unless it be a Name that is specific to Allāh such as Allāh, al-Raḥmān, Rabb al-`Ālamīn etc. These Names can only ever be used for Allāh. As regards those names that are not specific to Allāh, others can take that name so long as they do not believe that the meaning is applicable to them, i.e. they are using it as a name and nothing more. This is why there were some Companions who had the name al-Ḥakam\* and the Prophet ﷺ did not change it since it was only ever intended by that person as a name. Other Companions were called al-Ḥakīm\*\* and the Prophet ﷺ endorsed it.’

\* Such as al-Ḥakam ibn al-Ḥārith al-Sulamī, al-Ḥakam ibn Sa`īd ibn al-`Āṣ, and al-Ḥakam ibn `Abdullāh al-Thaqafī.

\*\* Such as Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām, Ḥakīm ibn al-Ḥārith al-Ṭā`ifī, and Ḥakīm ibn Ṭulayq al-Amawī.

<sup>15</sup> Baghawī, *Sharḥu'l-Sunnah*, vol. 12, pp. 343-344, said, ‘Abū Dāwūd said, “The Prophet ﷺ changed the names al-`Āṣ, `Azīz, `Atalah, Shayṭān, al-Ḥakam, Ghurāb, Ḥubāb, Shihāb who he named Hishām, Ḥarb who he named Silm, al-Muḍṭajī` who he named al-Munba`ith, and a piece of land that was referred to as `afirah, he referred to as *khaḍīrah*. The (people of) Sh`ib al-Ḍalālah he called Banū Rushd and he called Banū Mughwā, Banū Rasad.” Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī said, “He changed al-`Āṣ disliking the fact that it carried the meaning of disobedience whereas the character of the believer is one of obedience and submission. He changed `Azīz because nobility belongs to Allāh and the quality of the believer is that of humility and submissiveness. `Atalah means severity and harshness whereas the attribute of the believer is that of gentleness and softness. Shayṭān is derived from *shayṭāna* which means to be far removed from good, and it is the name given to a filthy rebellious person from the Jinn or man. al-Ḥakam refers to a judge whose judgment is never rejected and this quality can only deservedly apply to Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent, one of whose Names is al-Ḥakam. Ghurāb is derived from *ghurb* which means far away and it is also the name of filthy animal whose acts and food is vile, and the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ allowed its killing when in the state of *iḥrām* and outside it. Ḥubāb is a type of snake and it is reported that it is the name of Shayṭān. Shihāb is a blazing flame, and fire is a punishment of Allāh. `Afirah refers to a piece of barren land which grows nothing whatsoever and so he called it *khaḍīrah*, green, by way of optimism in the hope that it would become fresh and green.”’

---

Cf. Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan* #4956 except that the last sentence reads, ‘...He called Sh`ib al-Ḍalālah, Sh`ib al-Hudā, Banū al-Zīnah he called Banū al-Rishdah, and Banū Mughwiyah he called Banū Rishdah,’ and Khattābī, *Ma`ālim al-Sunan*, vol. 4, pp. 118-119, and ibn Ḥajr, *Fath*, vol. 10, pg. 706

In general the case is as `Ā`ishah (RAH) said as is recorded by Tirmidhī #2841, “The Prophet ﷺ would change a name carrying a bad meaning.” Abū`l-Shaykh, *Akhlāq al-Nabī*, pg. 273, records that Abū Hurayrah (RA) said, “The Prophet ﷺ would change a name carrying a bad meaning to one carrying a good meaning.” Cf. Baghawī, *Sharḥu`l-Sunnah*, vol. 12, pp. 342

Ibn Ḥajr, *Fath*, vol. 10, pg. 706, said, ‘Ṭabarī said, “It is not desirable to have a name carrying a bad meaning, nor a name pronouncing the purity or integrity of oneself, nor a name whose meaning is abusive...even if the names are proper names for people and the actual quality (implied in their meaning) is not meant. The reason why it is disliked is that a person could hear the name and think that it was a quality of that person. This is why he ﷺ would change a name to that which, if a person was called by it, would be truthful...the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ altered a number of names, but what he altered was not so as to prohibit the usage of the original name, but rather by way of choice... it is in this sense that the Muslims allowed calling a person who was ugly, Ḥasan, and a person who was corrupt, Ṣāliḥ. The proof for this is that he did not force Ḥazn when the latter refused to change his name to Sahl at his ﷺ suggestion. Were it to have been an obligation, he ﷺ would not have accepted his decision when he said, ‘I will not change a name with which my father named me.’”’ The narration referred to is recorded by Bukhārī #6190-6193.