Lesson 22

Point Number 25

And the most excellent one of this nation and of all nations after the Prophets1 sallawatullahi `alayhim ajma`een is Aboo Bakr then `Umar then `Uthmaan. This is what is reported to us from Ibn `Umar that he said, “We used to say whilst Allaah’s Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam was amongst us that the best of the people after Allaah’s Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam is Aboo Bakr and `Umar and `Uthmaan and the Prophet sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam would hear that and he would not criticise it.”2

The Explanation:

The most excellent generation is the generation in which Allaah’s Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam was raised, then those who followed them, then those who followed them. And they are al-quroon al-mufaddalah (the most excellent generations). And the most excellent ones from the most excellent generations were: the sahaabah (Companions) radiaAllaahu `anhum. Then the Companions themselves, they vary in degree of excellence. And the most excellent of them was Aboo Bakr as-Siddeeq, the one who believed in him when he first came (as a Messenger). He supported him and defended him and he spent from his money to help him, and he would accompany him until his death. Then he became the khaleefah (caliph) after him and he fulfilled this role in the best way, and Allaah established the Religion through him after the feet of the people had been shaken by the death of the Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam. So Allaah made him as firm as the mountains so that the nation became firm on account of him, and He rebutted the apostates through him and the disbelievers, and he consolidated Islaam after the passing away of the Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam. Then he passed away and he was buried along with the Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam. So he was his Companion in life and in death and he was his companion in the cave.

He the Most High said:

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1 Translator’s side point: There is a slightly different wording in some of the editions. Some versions have: “The best of this nation after the passing away of its Prophet.”

2 Translator’s side point: This statement is reported by al-Bukhaariyy (no. 3,655 and 3,698) reported from Ibn `Umar radiaAllaahu `anhumaa.
When the two of them were in the cave, when he said to his companion, do not grieve, Allaah is with us.

(Sooratul-Towbah (9), aayah 40)

So he is the most excellent one of the nation. Then he is followed by `Umar ibnul-Khattaab radiyAllaahu `anhu, the second of the khulafaa; then he is followed by `Uthmaan radiyAllaahu `anhu; then he is followed by `Aliy radiyAllaahu `anhu. They are the four Rightly Guided Khulafaa, may Allaah be pleased with them and cause them to be pleased.

Then the rest of the ten most excellent ones about whom it was testified that they will be in Paradise. And they are the four Rightly Guided Khulafaa and Sa`d ibn Abee Waqqas, Sa`eed ibn Zayd ibn `Amr ibn Nufayl and `Ammir ibnul-Jarraah and `Abdur-Rahmaan ibn `Owf. So they are the ten who are promised Paradise. The Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam bore witness for them of Paradise, so they are the most excellent ones from the Companions. The Prophet sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam said,

“`Abboo Bakr will be in Paradise and `Umar will be in Paradise and `Aliy will be in Paradise and `Uthmaan will be in Paradise and `Alhah will be in Paradise and `Az-Zubayr will be in Paradise and `Abdur-Rahmaan ibn `Owf will be in Paradise and Sa`d ibn Abee Waqqas will be in Paradise and Sa`eed ibn Zayd ibn `Amr ibnul-Jarraah and `Abdur-Rahmaan ibnul-Jarraah will be in Paradise.”

Then after them: those who were the people of the Battle of Badr, then those who were present at the Bay`atur-Ridwaan (the `pledge of those who earned Allaah’s pleasure’).
from the Muhaajireen and the Anṣaar, then those who accepted Islaam and performed the *hijrah* before the Conquest, they are more excellent than those who accepted Islaam and migrated after the Conquest. So they vary in degree of excellence *radiyAllaahu `anhum* in accordance with their precedence in accepting Islaam and with their position in Islaam. And they (all of the Companions) have the general virtue which cannot be reached by anyone else, and it is *as-suḥbah* (Companionship) to Allaah’s Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam and *al-hijrah* (to perform the emigration). And the Muhaajiroon (those who were in Makkah and then they emigrated to al-Madeenah) they are more excellent than the Anṣaar (the Muslims of al-Madeenah). This is a virtue which is general to all of them (Companionship); no-one who came after them can reach it. So they are the most excellent of the generations and the best of the generations, may Allaah be pleased with them and may He cause them to be pleased.

So whoever attacks them or hates them then he is a disbeliever in Allaah, because Allaah has extolled them, Allaah has praised them and chose them for Companionship of His Prophet Muhammad sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam. So the person who makes an attack upon the Companions or declares them to be disbelievers or belittles them is a disbeliever in Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, denying the truth of Allaah and His Messenger; because Allaah, the Most High, said:

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\text{(Explanation)}
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And the first and foremost [in believing in Allaah and His Messenger] from the *Muhaajiroon* (emigrants) and *Anṣaar* (helpers) and those who followed them exactly [in faith and in emigrating, seeking His Pleasure], Allaah is pleased with all of them, and they are pleased with Him.

(Sooratut-Towbah (9), *aayah* 100)

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\text{(Explanation)}
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4Translator’s side point: The Bay’atur-Ridwaan happened in the 11th month Thul-Qa’dah of the 6th year
Indeed, Allaah was pleased with the believers when they gave their bay‘ah (pledge) to you (O Muḥammad) under the tree.

(Sooratul-Fath (48), aayah 18)

His saying, “This is what is reported to us from Ibn `Umar that he said, ‘We used to say whilst Allaah’s Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam was amongst us that the best of the people after Allaah’s Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam is Aboo Bakr and `Umar and then `Uthmaan.’”

As for Aboo Bakr and `Umar then this is ijmaa’ (consensus) about that. As for the level of excellence between `Uthmaan and `Aliyy then that is a point of disagreement. Some of them preferred `Uthmaan and some of them preferred `Aliyy radiyAllaahu ta`aalaa `anhumaa wa ardaahumaa (may Allaah be pleased with both of them and cause them to be pleased). But as for Aboo Bakr and `Umar then these two are the most excellent of this nation by consensus, ijmaa’ of the Muslims; this is with regard to virtue. As for with regard to the khilaafah (Caliphate) then there has to be this (correct) order: Aboo Bakr and then `Umar and then `Uthmaan and then `Aliyy. So whoever accuses the khilaafah (Caliphate) of one of them then he is astray (daal).

Shaykhul-Islaam (Ibn Taymiyyah) said in al-Waasitiyyah: “Whoever attacks the khilaafah of one of those then he is more astray than a domesticated donkey,” because he has gone against the ijmaa’ (consensus) of the Muslims. Because the Muslims agreed in consensus upon giving precedence to Aboo Bakr for the khilaafah, then upon giving precedence to `Umar after him, then to `Uthmaan and then to `Aliyy. So a person who gives precedence to `Aliyy and says he had more right to the khilaafah even than Aboo Bakr, and who says that khilaafah after the Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam should have gone to `Aliyy because he was the appointed successor of the Messenger and he was the real khaleefah but Aboo Bakr and the Companions, they wronged him and seized the khilaafah from him, this is to declare the whole nation astray – and Allaah’s refuge is sought - and it is contrary to the texts which occur with regard to the order of those khulafa‘.

So the order with regard to the khilaafah is a point of ijmaa’ (consensus), but as for the order with regard to superiority between `Aliyy and `Uthmaan, that is a point of disagreement. And what is correct is that `Uthmaan was more excellent because the Companions, and amongst them was `Aliyy radiyAllaahu `anhu, they chose him as a khaleefah; they chose `Uthmaan as a khaleefah to succeed Allaah’s Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam. And `Aliyy was present and the Companions chose `Uthmaan. The fact that the Companions chose `Uthmaan is a proof that he was more

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5 Reported by al-Bukhaariyy (no. 3698) as a narration of Ibn `Umar radiyAllaahu `anhumaa.
excellent.  `Abdur-Rahmaan ibn `Owf said “I saw that the people do not take anyone else as being the equal of 'Uthmaan.”  So this shows he was more excellent.

(Imaam al-Barbahaaree continued)

Then the most excellent of the people after them were: `Aliyy and Talhah and Az-Zubayr and Sa`d ibn Abee Waqqas and Sa`eed ibn Zayd and `Abdur-Rahmaan ibn `Owf and Aboo `Ubaydah `Aamir ibnul-Jarraah. And all of them were suitable to be the khaleefah.

Then the most excellent of the people after them were the rest of the Companions of Allaah’s Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam, the first generation amongst whom he was sent, the first Muhaajiroon and the Angaar; and they are those who prayed towards the two qiblahs (directions of Prayer).

The Explanation:
Meaning the most excellent of the Companions after the three khulafaa· are the rest of those ten who were given the glad tidings of Paradise, and they are those whom the author mentioned.

His saying, “All of them were suitable to be the khaleefah” – meaning the people of the shoorah (council) whom `Umar radiiAllaahu `anhu entrusted with choosing the next khaleefah after him. Because `Umar, when he was dying, appointed a council to choose the caliph so that the matter would rest with those who remained. Because each one of them was fitting to be a khaleefah, so he referred the affair to them, and they chose `Uthmaan radiiAllaahu `anhu.

His saying, “The first generation,” from the most excellent generations, and they were the generation in which the Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam was sent and they believed in him.

And the word al-as.haab (Companions) is the plural of sahaabiyyun; and a sahaabiyy (a Companion) is whoever met the Prophet sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam as a believer in him and he died upon that.

- So a person who believed in the Prophet sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam but he did not meet him, then he is not a Companion such as an-Najjaashiyiyy (the King of Abyssinia). He is counted as being from the taabi`een, the Successors.

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6 Reported by al-Bukhaariyy in his Saheeh (no. 7207) from al-Miswar ibn Makhrama radiiAllaahu `anhu
• As for one who met him but did not believe in him then he is not a Companion because the *mushrikeen* (people of *shirk*) and the disbelievers met the Prophet *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* but they did not believe in him.

• And a person who met him and believed in him but then left Islaam then his Companionship is annulled/rendered null and void if he dies upon apostasy. As for if he repented, then Allaah accepted his repentance and his Companionship is restored.

And therefore al-Haafiz ibn Hajar rahimahullaah, in his book an-Nukhbah⁸, said, in definition of a Companion, “(He is) whoever met the Prophet *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* whilst believing in him and he died upon that, even if apostasy occurred in between (his meeting the Prophet *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* and his dying), in the correct saying.”⁹ Meaning in the most correct of the two sayings of the scholars.

The second saying is that it abolishes his Companionship even if he repents because apostasy renders deeds which are before it null and void.

His saying “*The first generation, those amongst whom he was sent amongst the first Muhaajiroon and the Ansaar and they are those who prayed towards the two qiblahs.*” The Muhaajiroon (those who emigrated from Makkah) have precedence in mention over the Ansaar, so this shows that the Muhaajiroon have greater excellence through the excellence of performing *hijrah* (migration) in the cause of Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, because they left their homelands and their wealth. And Allaah, the Majestic and Most High, mentions the Muhaajiroon before the Ansaar in many *aayahs* just as He, the Most High, said:

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\text{وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ مِنَ الْمُهاجِرِينَ وَالْأُنْصَارِ}
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*And the first and foremost ones from the Muhaajiroon and the Ansaar.*

*(Sooratut-Towbah (9), *aayah*100)*

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⁷ Translator’s side point: He lived in the time of the Prophet but he was in a separate land. He heard about the Prophet *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* and he believed in him but he was not able to get to him and meet him.

⁸ Translator’s side point: a book regarding sciences of *hadeeth*

⁹ Nukhbatul-Fikr with the explanation Mullaa `AlIyy al-Qaaree
For the poor and needy ones from the Muhaajireen, those who were forced out from their homes and their wealth; they left seeking the bounty from Allaah and His pleasure and they aid the Religion of Allaah and His Messenger. They are the true ones.

(Sooratul-Hasr (59), aayah 8)

Up until His saying:

And also those who resided before them in al-Madeenah and believed.

(Sooratul-Hasr (59), aayah 9)

Meaning the Anṣaar. So He gives precedence to a mention of the Muhaajireen over the Anṣaar.

Allaah certainly guided the Prophet and the Muhaajiroon and the Anṣaar to turn to Him.

(Sooratut-Towbah (9), aayah117)
This shows that the Muhaajiroon have greater excellence than the Ansaar. And Ansaar is the plural of Ansaariyy, and they are believers from (the tribes of) Ows and Khazraj, the people of Madinah, those who gave the pledge to the Messenger ﷺ at al-`Aqabah. He ( ﷺ) migrated to them and they aided him and supported him and sheltered him and sheltered the Companions ﷺ along with him. He, the Most High, said with regard to them, the Ansaar:

(Explaination)

And those who resided in al-Madinah before them and believed, they love those who emigrate to them and they do not find in their chests any resentment on account of what they had been given and they give precedence to them over themselves even though they themselves were in need. And whoever is saved from the avarice of his self then they are the successful ones.

(Sooratul-Hashr (59), aayah 9)

To begin with they were called al-Ows wal-Khazraj (the tribes of Ows and Khazraj). Then when they gave the pledge to the Messenger ﷺ to aid him (nugrah), he called them al-Ansaar (the aiders or the helpers), meaning the aiders of the Messenger ﷺ.

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It haful-Qaaree bit-Ta’leeqaat `alaa Sharhis-Sunnah

by Shaykh Saalih ibn Fowzaan al-Fowzaan rafizahullaah

Volume 1, Pages 199-207

Translated by Aboo Talhah Daawood Burbank, rahimahullaah
Points discussed by Shaykh Saalih al-Fowzaan hafizahullaah in this excerpt include:

- an explanation of
  - the most excellent generations (al-quroon al-mufaddalah)
  - the most excellent generation
  - the most excellent ones from the most excellent generations
  - the varying levels of excellence of the Companions of Allaah’s Messenger sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam

- proofs for the excellence of the Companions

- proofs to show that the Muhajireen had excellence over the Ansaar

- hadeeth about the ten Companions promised Paradise

- those who attack the Companions

- the Muslims agreed that the khilaafah should go first to Aboo Bakr, then `Umar, then `Uthmaan then `AliyyradiyAllaahu `anhum

- there was only difference about who was more excellent out of `Uthmaan and `AliyyradiyAllaahu `anhumaa

- what is correct is that `Uthmaan was more excellent than `Aliyy because he was chosen to be the khaleefah over `Aliyy, radiyAllaahu `anhumaa

- how `Uthmaan radiyAllaahu `anhu came to be chosen to be the khaleefah

- the definition of a Companion