

The Nobility and Reliability of the Prophet's Companions

Lecture 5: Applied Reconciliation of Apparent Conflicts in Salaf Narrations

Speaker: Dr. Muhammad bin Al-Husain Baqshish • **Event:** Toronto Islamic Lecture Series • **Dates:** Safar 7-11, 1447 AH / August 1-5, 2025 CE

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1. Introduction to Applied Methodology & Reconciliation

In this fifth and final lecture of the seminar series, Dr. Muhammad bin Al-Husain Baqshish shifts the academic focus from theoretical rules of transmission to Al-Tatbiq al-Amali (the applied methodology) of reconciling the reports of the Salaf. Having established the universal integrity of the Companions, their high status, their regional legal peaks, and the validity of their independent reasoning, a final vital question remains: How do scholars deal with scenarios where a Companion's fatwa, actions, or reports appear to conflict in the outward text (Zahir al-Ta'arud) with an authentic, established Prophetic Hadith? The Sheikh explains that according to the rigorous standards of Hadith specialists, an apparent conflict does not lead to the dismissive rejection of either source. Instead, it triggers a systematic process of reconciliation, uncovering the valid scholastic excuses behind the Companion's deviation while preserving the absolute, infallible authority of the Prophetic text.

2. Epistemological Excuses: The Case of Forgetfulness (Nisyan)

Dr. Baqshish highlights Ibn Taymiyyah's fifth category of excuses in his seminal work Raf' al-Malam 'an al-A'immah al-A'lam: a Companion or scholar might have heard and narrated an authentic Prophetic Hadith but completely forgot it at the time of issuing a legal ruling. Because they are human and not individually infallible, forgetfulness is a natural trial. To illustrate this, the Sheikh deconstructs the famous historical incident involving Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab and Ammar ibn Yasir. During a military dispatch (Sariyyah), both became majorly impure (Ajnaba) and could not find water. Umar chose not to pray until he found water, while Ammar rolled his body in the pure earth like an animal (tamarragha fi al-sa'id kama tatamarraghu al-dabbah), assuming that dry ablution must cover the entire body. Upon their return, the Prophet corrected them, stating that striking the hands once on the ground and wiping the face and hands was fully sufficient. Let the student observe the later dialogue during Umar's Caliphate:

"O Amir al-Mu'minin! Do you not remember when we were on that journey, and you did not pray while I rolled in the sand and prayed? When we informed the Prophet, he said: 'It was sufficient for you to do this...' If you wish, by the right of obedience to you that Allah has placed upon me, I will never narrate this Hadith again." Umar replied: "No, we entrust you with what you have been entrusted with (Bal nuwallika ma tawallayt)."

— Dialogue between Ammar ibn Yasir and Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab, Sahih Muslim

3. The Hadith Science of "One Who Narrates and Forgets"

From this momentous event, the scholars of Hadith, led by Al-Hafidh Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi in *Al-Kifayah fi 'Ilm al-Riwayah*, formulated a distinct sub-discipline in the sciences of transmission: **"The Chapter of One Who Narrates and Forgets"** (Bab man haddatha wa nasiya wa dhukira fa-lam yatadhakkar). The key question is whether the narration of the student or the subsequent witness (Ammar) is accepted when the primary teacher or authority (Umar) completely forgets it. The established standard of the Muhaddithin is that **the positive assertor is prioritized over the negator** (Al-Muthbit muqaddamun 'ala al-Nafi). Umar did not accuse Ammar of lying; rather, due to his pious caution, he permitted Ammar to continue propagating the Sunnah even though Umar's own memory had failed him. This reveals the extreme scrupulousness of the Companions: they placed the preservation of the Prophet's words above personal prestige.

4. Jurisprudential Case Study 1: Interruption of Prayer (Qat' al-Salah)

The Sheikh presents the first applied conflict where a Mawquf statement appears to oppose the Marfu' Sunnah. This concerns whether any passing entity invalidates and cuts the prayer of a Muslim who has not placed a Sutrah (prayer barrier).

Jurisprudential Topic	The Mawquf Opinion (Companion)	The Marfu' Prophetic Sunnah	Scholarly Reconciliation
Interruption of Prayer (Qat' al-Salah)	Ali ibn Abi Talib and Uthman ibn Affan: "Nothing breaks or cuts the prayer of a Muslim; only repel what passes in front of you as much as possible." (Sunan Sa'id bin Mansour, Authentic)	Abu Dharr, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, and Ibn Umar: The Prophet declared that a donkey, a woman, and a black dog break the prayer if no barrier is placed, as they are accompanied by a devil. (Sahih Muslim)	Proximity to the Prophet did not guarantee that every Companion memorized every ruling. Ali and Uthman were unaware of this specific restriction; hence, the Marfu' Prophetic text remains the primary, binding authority as held by Imam Ahmad and Ibn Taymiyyah.

5. Jurisprudential Case Study 2: The Frequency of Tayammum

The second example of apparent conflict involves the practice of Abdullah bin Umar (recorded authentically in *Daraqutni* and *Bayhaqi*) who insisted on performing Tayammum (dry ablution) for every single obligatory prayer, even if he had not invalidated his state of purity. In contrast, the general Prophetic instruction given to Imran bin Husain regarding the traveler in Janabah is: "Upon you is the clean earth, for it is sufficient for you" ('Alayka bi-sa'id, fa-innahu yakfik). The Prophet did not place any single-prayer restriction on him.

To resolve this, Dr. Baqshish introduces a vital rule of legal theory (Usul al-Fiqh) which he learned directly from his scholarly mentors in Madinah: **"Leaving off seeking detailed clarification in a state of probability is equivalent to a general statement in speech, and deduction is valid through it"** (Tark al-istifsal fi hikayat al-hal, ma'a qiyam al-ihtimal, yanzilu manzilat al-umoom fi al-maqal, wa yahsulu bihi al-istidlal). Because the Prophet saw the Companion performing Tayammum and did not ask or specify whether it was for one prayer or multiple, the ruling remains general. Therefore, Tayammum acts as a full, temporary replacement for water that temporarily lifts the impurity (Rafi' lil-hadath) rather than merely permitting the act of prayer for a single session. Ibn

Umar's practice was a matter of personal scrupulosity, not a binding legislative restriction.

6. Jurisprudential Case Study 3: Zakat on Women's Permitted Jewelry (Zakat al-Huli)

The debate surrounding Zakat on women's used, permitted jewelry (Al-Huli al-Musta'mal) is one of the most prominent examples of apparent conflict in Islamic law. Dr. Baqshish deconstructs the evidence on both sides of this classical divide:

Historical Phase	Ruling & Command	Textual Evidences	Theological Status
Phase 1: Initial Prohibition	Strict prohibition of wearing gold for both genders; payment of Zakat commanded to purify the asset.	Amr bin Shu'ayb: Prophet warns mother of a girl wearing thick gold bangles of being "bound with bangles of fire." Umm Salamah & Aisha: Warnings of hoarded wealth (Kanz) and rings of fire.	Obsolete and abrogated by the subsequent general permissibility of jewelry for women.
Phase 2: Permanent Permissibility	Gold and silk made completely permissible for women; the obligation of paying Zakat on used jewelry is dropped.	Abu Musa: "Gold and silk are forbidden for males and permitted for females." Companions: Jabir, Ibn Umar, Aisha, Anas, and Asma' did not pay Zakat on used jewelry.	Established, permanent consensus of the majority of the Companions, treating used jewelry like clothing or riding beasts.

Dr. Baqshish supports the masterly reconciliation formulated by **Imam al-Bayhaqi** in his *Sunan al-Kubra*. Al-Bayhaqi proves through chronological abrogation (Naskh) that the warnings of "bangles of fire" occurred during the early period when gold ornaments were strictly prohibited for women. Once the Prophet declared gold and silk permissible for women, the Zakat obligation was dropped. It was no longer considered hoarded wealth, but rather a functional personal item (like clothing or a house), which is universally exempt from Zakat. This explains why Aisha, the very narrator of the "rings of fire" Hadith, did not pay Zakat on the gold jewelry worn by her orphaned nieces in her care (Malik, *Al-Muwatta*). Her own practice is the ultimate proof that she understood the early warning as abrogated.

7. Jurisprudential Case Study 4: The Manner of the Prophet's Pilgrimage

The fourth applied conflict is the apparent discrepancy in the description of the Prophet's Farewell Pilgrimage. Authentic statements from elite Companions like Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Jabir, and Aisha state that the Prophet performed Ifrad (Hajj only). However, other equally authentic reports prove that he performed Qiran (Hajj and Umrah combined) and personally drove 63 sacrificial camels (Badanah) from Medina.

To resolve this, the Sheikh refers the students of knowledge to two monumental masterworks: *Al-Istidhkar* by **Ibn Abd al-Barr** (Vol. 11, pp. 123-136) and *Majmu' al-Fatawa* by **Ibn Taymiyyah** (Vol. 26, pp. 33-96). Both scholars demonstrate that the Companions used the term "Tamattu'" in a broad linguistic sense to include Qiran, as the pilgrim "enjoys" performing both rituals in a single journey. Those who reported Ifrad were referring to the physical actions of the Hajj, which are identical to Qiran because the Umrah is merged into the Hajj. This reconciliation is a masterclass in scholastic justice,

satisfying all authentic chains without discarding a single word narrated by the noble witnesses of Islam.

8. The Ethics of Disagreement & The Golden Rule of Hope (Rajaa')

The seminar concludes with a profound discussion on the spiritual character required of students of knowledge. Commenting on the dialogue of the final session, Dr. Baqshish strongly warns against the extremist view of some of the Mu'tazilah of Baghdad (such as Bishr al-Marisi) who claimed that a mistaken Mujtahid is punished. The Prophet's Sunnah clearly establishes that a sincere scholar who strives and errs is rewarded and excused, not punished. Therefore, we preserve the honor of our scholars and Companions while keeping our absolute adherence to the Prophetic text. As the Sheikh bids farewell to the students assembled in Milton, he leaves them with a beautiful linguistic and theological lesson regarding the distinction between **Wishing** (Tamanni) and **Hoping** (Rajaa'):

"Let the student of knowledge never say: 'I wish (Atamanna) to meet the Sheikh again.' Wishing is linguistically used for the impossible, such as wishing for youth to return. Rather, let him say: 'I hope (Arju) in Allah that we meet again.' For Hope (Rajaa') is always possible, linked with active effort, and anchored in the boundless mercy and favor of Allah."

— Closing Advice of Dr. Muhammad bin Al-Husain Baqshish to Ahrar Sherif and the Students