

The Prophet's Denial of Exaggeration and Extremism

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Abstract

This paper addresses a very important topic, namely the Prophet Muhammad's stance towards individuals prone to extremism and exaggeration, and how he refuted their excessive and extreme practices. The researcher employed examples from the Prophet Muhammad's practical Sunnah, in which he rebuked such groups of people, to highlight the dangers of extremism and the necessity of adhering to moderation and balance as promulgated by the middle-path Islamic Sharia, as described by Allah in His book. The paper discusses the Prophet Muhammad's guidance on this issue through these evidences and their stipulations. It concludes with several findings, including: the Prophet Muhammad refutes those who are extreme and exaggerate in their religion; he set himself as an example and model of perfect religiosity, moderation; true religiosity, righteousness, and moderation are achieved by following him, without extremism in religion; and that an excellent and distinguished example is realized in the Prophet Muhammad in all religious and worldly matters, as he is the embodiment of moderation and balance, utterly distant from extremism, excessiveness, and radicalism.

Keywords: Denial, The Prophet, Extremism

INTRODUCTION

Given that the Prophetic Sunnah serves as a source of legislation alongside the Holy Quran in the implementation of all religious laws, through the sayings, actions, approvals, and life of our Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, as Allah Almighty says: "And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty" (Al-Hashr: 7); and He said: "There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often" (Al-Ahzab: 21).

In a hadith narrated by Abu Huraira, may Allah be pleased with him, he said: The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "I have left among you two things; you will never go astray as long as you hold onto them: the Book of Allah and my Sunnah, and they will not be separated until they come to me at the Pond".⁽ⁱ⁾

Therefore, it is incumbent upon Muslims to consider the practical prophetic methodology practiced by our Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, in all his states, including the issue of warning against extremism, rigor, and fanaticism, and denouncing those who exhibit any of these traits. Correct and true actions are only those that follow his methodology, as indicated in the hadith: "Whoever performs an act that is not in accordance with our matter, will have it rejected"⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

The excellent and distinguished example is embodied in the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, in all religious and worldly matters. He is the path of moderation and balance, and is far removed from extremism, excessiveness, and radicalism.

Due to the importance of recognizing the dangers of extremism, the necessity of denouncing it, and how the Prophet, peace be upon him, strongly condemned it, this scientific paper presents some examples from his Sunnah in denouncing those who showed any form of extremism or rigidity, and how he dealt with them. This is to clarify to everyone that his Sharia came with moderation and balance, the easy-going Hanifism, and is distant from extremism and excessiveness.

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this paper, I adopted the inductive and analytical approach:

The inductive approach involved surveying the books of Prophetic Sunnah to identify the authentic hadiths in which the Prophet, peace be upon him, condemned extremism and rigor. This included extracting them from their sources.

The analytical approach, on the other hand, entailed analyzing these Prophetic texts by clarifying their authenticity levels, interpreting their obscure parts, and elucidating what they indicate regarding the issue under study.

Research Terms

Extremism (Al-Ghuluw): Ibn Al-Athir said, "Beware of extremism in religion," meaning being too rigorous and exceeding the limit. This is based on the hadith, "And the bearer of the Quran is not extreme in it nor neglectful of it." He stated this because it is from his morals and the etiquette he commanded, which include moderation in all matters, and the best of matters are those in moderation. Both extremes in moderation are reprehensible... The origin of extremism (Al-Ghuluw) is elevation and exceeding the proper measure in everything. It is said: I made something expensive or I overpriced something, and I was extreme in it (I did Al-Ghuluw) if I exceeded the limit in it. ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

Rigor (Al-Tashaddud): Ibn Al-Athir mentioned, "Whoever is too harsh in religion will be overwhelmed by it," meaning he will struggle against and resist it, and he burdens himself with worship beyond his capacity. Rigor (Al-Mushaddadah) is to struggle excessively. ^(iv)

Evidence on the Research Topic

The First Evidence: Aisha - may Allah be pleased with her - reported: The Prophet, peace be upon him, permitted something, but some people abstained from it. When this reached the Prophet, peace be upon him, he gave a sermon after praising Allah and then said, "What is the matter with people who abstain from something that I do? By Allah, I am the most knowledgeable among them about Allah and the most fearing of Him". ^(v)

Explanation of the Hadith: "People abstained from it": meaning they left it and distanced themselves from it, not practicing the leniency granted in it. ^(vi)

Al-Karmani said: They mistakenly believe that their abstention from what I have done is closer to piety before Allah, but this is not as they imagined because I am the most knowledgeable about what is closer to piety and most deserving of being followed in it. This includes encouragement to follow him and prohibits delving into matters and condemns abstaining from the permissible, promoting good social relations by sending reproof and disapproval without specifying individuals. ^(vii)

Al-Dawoodi said: Abstaining from what the legislator has permitted is among the greatest sins. ^(viii)

The Second Evidence: Anas bin Malik reported: Three men came to the houses of the wives of the Prophet, peace be upon him, asking about the worship of the Prophet. When they were informed, they considered their worship insufficient and said, "Where are we from the Prophet, peace be upon him, as Allah has forgiven his past and future sins?" One of them said, "As for me, I will pray all night long." Another said, "I will fast all year round and not break my fast." A third said, "I will abstain from women and never marry." The Prophet, peace be upon him, came to them and said, "Are you the ones who said such and such? By Allah, I am the most fearful of Allah and the most dutiful among you. Yet, I fast and break my fast, I pray and sleep, and I marry women. Whoever turns away from my Sunnah is not of me". ^(ix)

Explanation of the Hadith: "Considered their worship insufficient": meaning they deemed it to be minimal, a mutual feeling of it being inadequate. ^(x)

"The group": refers to a man's family and people, and a group of men is less than ten. It is said: up to forty,

and it does not include a woman, nor is it singular in terms from.^(xi)

Al-Qurtubi said: This hadith warns against excessive rigor in religion and taking on hardship .^(xii)

Ibn Hajar mentioned: It hints at the path of monasticism, for they are the ones who innovated hardship as described by Allah Almighty, and He criticized them for not adhering to what they had vowed. The Prophet's way is the easy-going Hanifi path; he breaks his fast to gain strength for fasting, sleeps to gain strength for night prayer, and marries to satisfy desire and preserve chastity, and to increase progeny.^(xiii)

The Third Evidence: Aisha - may Allah be pleased with her - reported: Uthman bin Maz'un's wife, Khawla bint Hakim, visited Aisha and appeared disheveled. Aisha asked her what was wrong, and she replied that her husband would pray all night and fast all day. When the Prophet, peace be upon him, entered, Aisha mentioned this to him, and he confronted Uthman saying, "O Uthman, monasticism is not prescribed for us. Do you not take me as an example? By Allah, among you, I am the most fearful of Allah and the most observant of His limits".^(xiv)

Explanation of the Hadith: "Disheveled": refers to being unkempt and neglecting adornment.^(xv)

"Monasticism": originates from Christian monasticism, derived from fear. They engaged in monastic practices by withdrawing from worldly affairs, renouncing worldly pleasures, and living in seclusion, deliberately enduring hardships, including self-castration, wearing chains around their necks, and other forms of self-torture. The Prophet, peace be upon him, rejected this for Islam and prohibited Muslims from it.^(xvi)

Discussion of the Evidence

These hadiths demonstrate the moderate approach adopted by the Prophet, peace be upon him, through divine guidance, as mentioned in the Quran: "And thus we have made you a moderate community" (Al-Baqarah: 143). This approach applies to all his actions and situations. Accordingly, we find that he - peace and blessings be upon him - condemned those who were excessively rigorous and extreme in their religion, maintaining his approach without personally reproaching people for what pertains to his own patience towards the ignorance of the ignorant and the rudeness of the Bedouin. Instead, he presented and beautified [the teachings] because the goal was reform along with concealment. He set himself as an example and model of perfect religiosity, as in the hadith reported by Aisha - may Allah be pleased with her - when people abstained from something he permitted, he said: "What is the matter with people who abstain from something that I do? By Allah, I am the most knowledgeable among them about Allah, and the most fearing of Him," highlighting that abstaining from what the legislator has permitted is a grave sin, contrary to his method. Sheikh al-Islam said: How can it be legislated for us to abstain from something that the Prophet - peace be upon him - did? It is proven that he condemned those who abstain from what he does, saying: "What is with people who abstain from things I permit? By Allah, I am the most fearing of you to Allah and the most knowledgeable of His limits".^(xvii)

Similarly, in the hadith reported by Anas bin Malik about the three men, he underscored the danger of extremism with his statement: "Whoever turns away from my Sunnah is not of me". And in the story of Uthman bin Maz'un when he advised him against monasticism and celibacy, correcting his mistake, he said: "O Uthman, monasticism was not prescribed for us. Do you not take me as an example? By Allah, among you, I am the most fearful of Allah and the most observant of His limits". Ibn Habira said: Extremism is delving deep and scrutinizing things excessively, as destruction is tied to it. This is what the ignorant read without the foundation of Sharia, similar to what Christians innovated with monasticism, which was not prescribed for them but was an innovation seeking Allah's pleasure. They did not maintain it properly; thus, whoever innovates something in religion or scrutinizes and burdens the servants of Allah with what Allah did not permit and the Messenger of Allah did not legislate, then he is the one doomed and carries the sin of anyone he destroys with his extremism.^(xviii)

These examples clearly illustrate his prohibition of all forms of extremism and rigor, highlighting the dangers and calling for his moderate and balanced approach, which is best for this life and the hereafter, and more likely to be accepted by souls and to ensure the continuity of action.

From this, we learn that true religiosity, righteousness, and moderation are achieved by following him, peace be upon him, and avoiding extremism in religion. Its impact is widespread, and its harm affects both the doer and others. The remedy for this is Sharia knowledge. Al-Nawawi said: Only those who are knowledgeable about what they command and forbid can issue commands and prohibitions. This varies depending on the matter. If it concerns clear obligations and well-known prohibitions, like prayer, fasting, adultery, alcohol, etc., all Muslims are knowledgeable about them. However, if it involves the nuances of actions and sayings related to scholarly discretion, laypeople should not engage in or denounce such matters; this is reserved for scholars.^(six)

RESULTS

The Prophet, peace be upon him, condemned those who are overly strict and extreme in their religion, and he set himself as an example and model of perfect religiosity and moderation.

True religiosity, righteousness, and moderation are achieved by following him, peace be upon him, without extremism in religion. The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, is an excellent and distinguished example in all religious and worldly matters, embodying the approach of moderation and balance, and is completely distant from extremism, strictness, and radicalism.

The effects of religious extremism are far-reaching, and its harm affects both the perpetrator and others. The remedy for this is Sharia knowledge.

Part of his methodology, peace be upon him, involves questioning those who commit wrongdoings and repeating this process, ensuring that those who err are not left without teaching or correction of their deviations. Instead, they are guided towards what is right.

Furthermore, his approach includes gentleness and discretion, and the denouncement of wrongful acts without targeting individuals.

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FOOTNOTES

It was included by Al-Daraqutni in Al-Sunan, No. (149), Al-Bazzar, No. (8993), and Al-Hakim, No. (319), and he authenticated it.

It was included by Muslim in his Sahih No. (1718).

Al-Nihayah fi Gharib al-Hadith wal-Athar (3/382).

Previous source (2/451).

It was included by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih, Book: Manners, Chapter: He who does not confront people with reproach, (8/26/6101), and Muslim in his Sahih, Book: Virtues, Chapter: His knowledge, may God bless him and grant him peace, of God Almighty and the intensity of his fear of Him, (1/ 958/2356), both on the authority of Al-A'mash, on the authority of Muslim bin Subaih, on the authority of Masruq, on the authority of Aisha, with it, and the pronunciation is by Al-Bukhari.

Al-Nihayah fi Gharib al-Hadith wa al-Athar (5/43).

Al Kawakib Al Darari (21/224).

Al-Taridh li Sharh Al-Jami' Al-Sahih (33/59).

Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih, Book: Marriage, Chapter: Encouragement to marry, according to the Almighty's saying: "So marry such women as please you" (An-Nisa: 3) verse, (7/2/5063), on the authority of Humaid bin Abi Humaid Al-Taweel, And Muslim in his Sahih, Book: Marriage, Chapter: The desirability of marriage for one who yearns for it and finds provisions for it, and the preoccupation of one who is unable to provide provisions with fasting, (1/549/1401), from a proven path, both on the authority of Anas bin Malik, and the wording is by Al-Bukhari.

Al-Nihayah fi Gharib al-Hadith wal-Athar (4/104).

Al-Nihayah fi Gharib al-Hadith wal-Athar (2/675).

Al-Mufhim when I am confused about summarizing the book of Muslim (6/152)

Fath al-Bari (9/105)

Narrated by Abd al-Razzaq in his Musannaf (6/167/10375), and from his path by al-Tabarani in al-Kabir (9/25/8319), and by Ibn Hibban in his Sahih (1/185/9), and Ahmad narrated it in his Musnad (43/334/26308).), and Abu Dawud in his Sunan (1/165/1369), connected , It was included by Abd al-Razzaq in his Musannaf (7/150/12591), and by Ahmad in his Musnad

(43/70/25893), mursal, The hadith: Its chain of transmission is authentic, its men are the men of the two Sahih books, and Ibn Hibban authenticated it, Al-Albani said: This is an authentic chain of narration based on their condition: Irwa' al-Ghaleel (7/79).

Sharh Al-Sunnah by Al-Baghawi (4/266).

Al-Nihayah fi Gharib al-Hadith wa al-Athar (2/280).

Al-Fatawa Al-Kubra (1/228).

Disclosing the Meanings of Al-Sahih (2/99)

Sharh Muslim (2/23).

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