

# O Slaves of Allāh! Help Me! <sup>1</sup>

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**“When one loses his means of transport in a (deserted) land, he should call: ‘O slaves of Allāh! Help me recover (my transport),’ for there are many of Allāh’s attendants on this earth. They will help you recover it.”**

Al-Tabarānī said:

“Ibrahim Ibn Naila al-Asbahāni narrated to us from al-Hasan Ibn `Umar Ibn Shaqīq from Ma`rūf Ibn Hasan al-Samarqandi from Sa`id Ibn Abi Arūba from Qatāda from Abdullah Ibn Burayda from `Abdullāh Ibn Mas`ūd that he said: “The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

**“When one loses his means of transport in a (deserted) land, he should call: “O slaves of Allāh! Help me recover (my transport)” for there are many of Allāh’s attendants on this earth. They will help you recover it.””<sup>2</sup>**

Abū Ya`la has narrated it like this <sup>3</sup> as well as Ibn al-Sunnī. <sup>4</sup> (Nūriddīn) al-Haythamī said after quoting Abu Ya`la and al-Tabarānī:

“The chain contains Ma`rūf Ibn Hasan who is *da`if*” <sup>5</sup>

The same was said by al-Hāfidh al-Busīrī. <sup>6</sup> Al-Hāfidh Ibn Hajar (al-Asqalānī) said, after ascribing it to Ibn al-Sunnī and al-Tabarānī:

“There is *inqitā* (discontinuation) in the chain between Ibn Burāyda and Ibn Mas`ūd.” <sup>7</sup>

Nonetheless, the Hadīth has supporting routes which transform it from a weak Hadīth to a *hasan* (fair) one which is acceptable and actable upon.

## Firstly

Regarding what al-Tabarānī transmitted through the route of `Abdul Rahmān Ibn Sharīk who said his father related from Abū `Abdullāh Ibn `Isā from Yazīd Ibn `Alī from `Utba Ibn Ghazwān from the Prophet ﷺ that he said:

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<sup>1</sup> Mahmūd Mamdūh, *raf al-mināra bi-abadiib al-tawassul wal-ziyāra* (Raising the Lighthouse with the Hadīths of Seeking Means and Visitation [of the Prophet ﷺ])

<sup>2</sup> al-Tabarānī, *mu`jam al-kabir* (10/267)

<sup>3</sup> Abū Ya`la, *musnad* (9/177)

<sup>4</sup> Ibn al-Sunnī, *`amal al-yawmi wal-layla* (p.162)

<sup>5</sup> al-Haythamī, *al-majmū` al-ṣawā'id* (10/132)

<sup>6</sup> al-Busīrī, *mukhtasar Ithāf al-sadatul muhrab* (notes to *matālib al-aliyya*, 3/239)

<sup>7</sup> Ibn Hajar, *takbrīj al-adhkār (sharh ibn allan*, 5/150)

***“When one of you loses something or desires assistance while in a land where no person of assistance (is available) he should say ‘O slaves of Allāh! Assist me; help me,’ for indeed Allāh has many slaves who we do not see.”***

Al-Tabarānī added:

“and this has been acted upon”.<sup>8</sup>

I say: The chain contains *daʿf* (weakness) and *inqitā*. Al-Hāfidh al-Haythamī said:

“al-Tabarānī narrated it and its narrators have been declared reliable although there is weakness in some of them; except that, Zayd Ibn `Alī did not meet `Utba.”<sup>9</sup>

Al-Hāfidh (Ibn Hajar) restricted (his comments) on its defects to (pointing out) the *inqitā* (and not mentioning the weakness of the narrators) saying,

“al-Tabarānī transmitted it with a *munqatī* (discontinued) chain from `Utba Ibn Ghazwān, as a *marfūʿ* (traceable i.e. to the Prophet ﷺ) narration.”<sup>10</sup>

## Secondly

Regarding what Ibn Abī Shayba related:

“Yazīd Ibn Harūn related to us saying: ‘Muhammad Ibn Ishaq reported to us from Abān Ibn Salih that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

***“When one of your means of transport or camel flees in a (deserted) land, where none can be seen, he should say ‘Assist me O slaves of Allāh,’ for he shall be assisted.”***<sup>11</sup>

This Hadīth is *mursal* (the Tabiʿī drops the Sahabī and narrates directly from the Prophet ﷺ. If it weren’t for the *an’ana* (i.e. instead of saying “he narrated to me”, it is said “from him” which creates the possibility of an unknown narrator in between) of Muhammad Ibn Ishāq, the chain would have been *hasan*. Al-Albānī claimed it had the defect of being *muʿdal* (where two consecutive narrators are dropped and not just one as would be the case with a *mursal* hadith)<sup>12</sup> but this is incorrect because Abān Ibn Sālih was from the younger Tabiʿīn. And Allāh knows best.

## Thirdly

Regarding what al-Bazzār transmitted:

“Musā Ibn Ishāq related to us from Manjab Ibn al-Harith, Hātim Ibn Ismaʿīl related to us from Usāma Ibn Zayd from Abān Ibn Sālih from Mujaḥhid from Ibn `Abbās that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

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<sup>8</sup> al-Tabarānī, *muʿjam al-kabir* (17/117)

<sup>9</sup> al-Haythamī, *al-majmūʿ al-zawāʿid* (10/132)

<sup>10</sup> Ibn Hajar, *takhrīj al-adhkār (sharh ibn allan*, 5/150)

<sup>11</sup> Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-musannaf* (10/424, 425)

<sup>12</sup> al-Albānī, *daʿifa* (2/109)

***“Indeed Allāh possesses Angels besides the Hafadha (the Angels of Protection) who write (of even) the leaf which falls from a tree so when one of you suffers a limp in a deserted land he should call, ‘Assist (me) O slaves of Allāh’”***<sup>13</sup>

Al-Haythamī said:

“Al-Bazzār related it and its narrators are reliable.”<sup>14</sup>

Al-Hāfidh (Ibn Hajar) said:

“The chain is *hasan* and *gharib jiddan* (very rare)”<sup>15</sup>

Al-Hāfidh, restricting himself to saying it is *hasan*, shows he considered Usāma Ibn Zayd reliable for there is difference of opinion over him. Al-Bayhāqī transmitted it in *Shu’bul Imān* on the authority of Ibn Abbās also, but in a *mawqūf* (untraceable) form through Ja’far Ibn Awn from Usāma Ibn Zayd from Abān Ibn Salih from Mujāhid from Ibn `Abbās.

Al-Albānī claimed that the *marfū`* route had a defect because of the *mawqūf* route since Ja’far Ibn Awn (who narrated the *mawqūf* route) is more reliable than Hātim Ibn Isma’il (who narrated the *marfū`* route) so the Hadīth becomes defective due to the discrepancy while the preferred view is that it is *mawqūf*.<sup>16</sup>

### **This is incorrect from two angles:**

1. It is the convention in the science of Hadīth that when there is a contradiction of whether a Hadīth is raised back (to the Nabī ﷺ) or halted, the raised back is given preference in judgement. Imām al-Nawawī said:

“When some of the accurate and reliable narrators narrate (a Hadīth as) *muttasil* (connected) and others (narrate it as) *mursal*; or some (narrate it as) *mawqūf* and other (narrate it as) *marfū`*; or it is (narrated) *mawsūl* (continuous) once and then *marfū`* another time and as a *mursal* or *mawqūf* another time, then the correct approach is as the *mubaqqiqūn* (verifiers) from the *muhaddithūn* (scholars of Hadīth), and it is the saying of the *fugabā* (jurists) and scholars of *usūl* (Islamic jurisprudence) have said and al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī regarded it correct: That the ruling (of the status of the Hadīth) is from the one who narrated it as *mawsūl* or *marfū`* whether the opposing narrations are from more reliable narrators or from more numerous narrators or from narrators with better memory because this is an addition from a reliable narrator and it is acceptable (*ziyāda thiqa wa-hiya maqbūla*).”<sup>17</sup>

Ibn al-Hādī has clarified this.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> al-Bazzār, *musnad* (*kashf al-astār* 4/33-34)

<sup>14</sup> al-Haythamī, *al-majmū` al-zawā'id* (10/132)

<sup>15</sup> Ibn Hajar, *takbrij al-adhkār* (*sharh ibn allan*, 5/151)

<sup>16</sup> al-Albānī, *da`ifa* (2/109)

<sup>17</sup> al-Nawawī, *sharh sahib muslim* (*muqadama* 1/32)

<sup>18</sup> [It appears to be] Ibn `Abdul Hādī, *al-tanqih* (1/350); Egypt

2. Hātim Ibn Ismaʿīl is not alone in narrating the hadith in *marfū`* form; rather, Muhammad Ibn Ishāq has also done so as has been previously discussed as in the case of the supporting narration of `Abdullāh Ibn Mas`ūd as mentioned first.

What should have been said is that Abān Ibn Sālih would narrate it *marfū`* some times and at other times he did not feel it necessary to narrate it *marfū`* as it is seen similarly very often. And Allāh knows best.

Therefore the claim of this hadith being defective by al-Albānī because the *manqūf* would replace the *marfū`* holds no weight; he only did so to repel the meaning of the Hadīth and to dispose of it with whatever means even if it meant going against the principles of Hadīth; may Allāh forgive.

From what has preceded, it has been acknowledged that the Hadīth is jayyid (good) and *maqbul* (acceptable) and that the third supporting narration has a hasan chain itself, and Allāh knows best.

### Benefit

When a Hadīth is mentioned with a *da`if* chain it becomes acceptable, either *sahih* or *hasan*, when the Ummah has accepted it; as for when some of the scholars have practised it like the Hadīth at hand their action strengthens the report.

Al-Hāfidh al-Bayhaqī said, after narrating the Hadīth on *salāt al-tasabih*:

“`Abdullāh Ibn al-Mubārak would do it and it has been passed down by the pious and this strengthens the *marfū`* Hadīth.”<sup>19</sup>

A similar statement was made by his Shaykh al-Hākim.<sup>20</sup>

The Hadīth has been acted upon and practiced by the scholars:

- `Abdullāh Ibn Imām Ahmad said, “I heard my father say:

‘I did five Hajjs: two on camel and three on foot, or two on foot and three on camel and when I lost my way when walking I would say “O slaves of Allāh! Guide us towards the (correct) route,” and then I continued a little before I found myself back on the (correct) route’

or as it was said by my father”.<sup>21</sup>

- After Abūl Qāsim al-Tabarānī transmitted it, he said:

“This has been acted upon.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> al-Bayhaqī, *al-sunan al-kubra* (3/52)

<sup>20</sup> al-Hākim, *al-mustadrak* (1/320)

<sup>21</sup> al-Bayhaqī, *al-masā`il*; and *shū`b al-imān*

<sup>22</sup> al-Tabarānī, *mū`jam al kabir* (17/117)

- Imām an-Nawawī, after mentioning this Hadīth:

“One of our *kibar* (major scholars) in knowledge related to me that he lost his means of transport, which I presume was a mule, and he was aware of this Hadīth and said (the *du`a*) so Allāh brought to him his animal immediately.”

“I was once with a group of people and my animal fled and the people failed (to find it) and I said (the *du`a*) and I found the animal immediately without any means but this statement.”<sup>23</sup>

**The upshot is one who is researching can take two paths in strengthening this Hadīth:**

1. Using the supporting evidences, so this Hadīth becomes hasan and there is no doubt in this.
2. It is strengthened due to the practice of the Ummah.

One of these paths (the latter) is stronger than the other (the first).

And Allāh knows best.

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<sup>23</sup> al-Nawawī, *al-adhkar* (p.133)