

The Purity of the Prophet's Lineage ﷺ

Abridged and translated from Mulla 'Alī al-Qārī's
al-Mawrid al-rawī fi mawlid al-Nabī ﷺ
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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

ALLAH MOST HIGH has purified this noble lineage from the fornication of the pre-Islamic period of ignorance [*jāhiliyya*]. This is reported in many acceptable reports. Al-Bayhaqī reported in his *Sunan* that Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Nothing of me hailed from the fornication of *jāhiliyya*. I was only born through the union of Islam.’”

Al-Qaṣṭalānī said, “The word [used here,] *al-siffāh*,[. . .] means fornication. The intended meaning of it here is when a woman sleeps with a man for a period of time and then gets married to him afterwards.”

Ibn Sa‘d and Ibn ‘Asākir both reported from Hishām b. Muḥammad b. al-Sā‘ib al-Kalbī, who reported from his father who said, “I accounted for five hundred grandmothers of the Prophet ﷺ [when tracing his noble lineage], and I did not find a single fornicator among them or anyone else who engaged in the practices of *jāhiliyya*!”

‘Alī b. AbīTālib رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, “I was born in wedlock and I was not transmitted through the loins of a fornicator from the time of Ādam until I was born to my mother and father. I was not touched by any of the fornication of *jāhiliyya*.” This was narrated by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu‘jam al-awsaṭ*, Abū Nu‘aym, and Ibn ‘Asākir.

Abū Nu‘aym also reported from Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه in a raised [*marfū‘*] tradition, “None of my forefathers ever committed fornication, and Allah continued to transmit me from the pure loins of fathers to the pure wombs of mothers. Never would a family line branch out in two except that I was in the best of the two.”

Ibn ‘Abbās also reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, commenting

on the verse “*And your movement among those who prostrate themselves*”: “From one Prophet to another until I became a Prophet.” This was narrated by al-Bazzār, and Abū Nu‘aym has a similar report. . .

Ibn Mardawayh reported that Anas ؓ said, “The Prophet ﷺ delivered a sermon and said, ‘I am Muḥammad, the son of ‘Abd-Allāh, the son of al-Muṭṭalib, the son of Hāshim, the son of ‘Abdal-Manāf, the son of Quṣay, the son of Kilāb, the son of Murra, the son of Ka‘b, the son of Lu‘ay, the son of Ghālib, the son of Fihir, the son of Mālik, the son of al-Naḍr, the son of Kināna, the son of Khuzayma, the son of Mudrika, the son of Ilyās, the son of Muḍar, the son of Nizār. Never have the people split into two family lines save that Allah has placed me in the best of them. I have come from two parents and was untouched by anything that was prevalent in the time of *jāhiliyya*. I was born in pure wedlock and [my family line has] been free from fornication from the time of Ādam until I was born of my mother and father. I am the best of you in self and lineage.’”

Aḥmad and al-Tirmidhī narrated (and al-Tirmidhī declared it authentic) from al-‘Abbās b. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib who said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘When Allah created the creation, He placed me among the best of His creation. When He split them up He placed me among the best of the two groups. Then He created the tribes and placed me in the best tribe. When He created the souls He placed me in the best of them. Then He created the houses and placed me in the best house—I am therefore the best of you in house and in self.’” This means he was the best of them in pedigree and personality and self.

Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, al-Ṭabarānī, Abū Nu‘aym, al-Bayhaqī, and Ibn Mardawayh all narrated that Ibn ‘Umar ؓ said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Allah created the creation and chose from the creation the Children of Ādam. From the Children of Ādam He chose the Arabs, and from the Arabs He chose Muḍar. From Muḍar He chose the Quraysh and from the Quraysh He choose Banū Hāshim. Then He choose me from Banū Hāshim—so I am the choicest of the choicest.’”

Ibn Sa‘d narrated from Qatāda who said, “We were told that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘When Allah wishes to send a prophet, He looks at the best tribe among the inhabitants of the earth and sends a man to the

best of them.”

In a raised report from Zayn al-‘Ābidīn ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, from his grandfather ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, it is reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, “I was a light in the presence of Allah [*baynyadayAllāh*], the Exalted and Majestic, fourteen thousand years before the creation of Ādam. When Allah created Ādam, He placed that light in his loins, and I was continually transmitted from loin to loin until I settled in the loins of ‘Abd al-Muṭṭālib.”

Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ cited a similar report in his *al-Shifā*, without a chain, from Ibn ‘Abbās: “Quraysh was a light in the presence of Allah Most High one thousand years before the creation of Ādam. That light glorified Allah and the angels glorified Allah with their glorification, and when Allah created Ādam, He placed that light in Ādam’s loins. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘So Allah caused me to descend to the earth within Ādam’s loins, and then He placed me in Nūḥ’s loins, and then cast me into Ibrāhīm’s loins, and Allah continued to transmit me through noble and pure loins until I was born to parents who had never committed fornication.’”

A poet once said:

*The Divine safeguarded Muḥammad’s honor
And due to his name, his forefathers were protected
Eschewing fornication, they were untouched by shame
From Ādam all the way to his father and mother*

Al-Bukhārī narrated from Abū Hurayra who reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, “I was sent from the best generation of the Children of Ādam and transmitted until I appeared in the generation I am in.”

Al-Sakhāwī said:

The Messenger ﷺ is the master of the first and the last and the angels brought nigh. He is the master of the creation. He is the Beloved of the Lord of the Worlds who was exclusively given the Greatest Intercession [*al-Shafā‘a al-‘Uzmā*] on the Day of Judgment. He is our liegelord Abū al-Qāsim, Abū Ibrāhīm, Muḥammad, the son of ‘Abd Allāh, the

son of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib (whose name was Shayba al-Ḥamd). It is said that the reason his grandfather is called ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib is because his father Hāshim said (as he was on his deathbed in Mecca) to his brother al-Muṭṭalib, “Go find your servant in Yathrib.” It is also said that Shayba’s uncle, Muṭṭalib, came with him to Mecca with Shayba riding behind him; and because that is a subservient manner of riding, Muṭṭalib was asked about him, to which he replied, “He is my servant.” He was too shy to say that Shayba is his nephew, but once they settled, it became clear that he was. He [ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib] was the first of the Arabs to dye his hair black. He lived for one hundred and forty years.

[ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib was] the son of Hāshim, whose name was ʿAmr. He was called Hāshim because when his people suffered drought, he would break [*yahshim*] the bread used for *tharīd* [a meat and bread dish].

He was the son of Manāf, the son of Quṣay. The name Quṣay is a diminutive form of the word *qaṣiyy*, which means remote. He was given this name because he was far away from his family in the lands of Quḍāʿa when his mother Fāṭima was pregnant with him.

Quṣay was the son of Kilāb. The name Kilāb is either derived from the verbal noun [*maṣdar*] of *mukālaba*, such as the phrase “*kālabt al-ʿaduwamukālabatan*,” i.e., “I stormed the enemy,” or it is from the *kilāb*, i.e., the plural of the word dog [*kalb*]. The Arabs took plurals as proper names in order to give the impression of large numbers as if they were wild animals. Once, a Bedouin Arab was asked, “Why do you all give your children the worst names, such as Kalb [dog] and Dhiʿb [wolf], but give your servants the best names, such as Marzūq [the recipient of sustenance] and Rabāḥ [the profitable]?” The Bedouin replied, “We name our children for the sake of our enemies and we name our servants for our sake.” They mean that their sons are a multitude against their enemies and as arrows through their throats, and it is for this reason the Arabs chose these kinds of names.

Kilāb was the son of Murra. . . . Murra was the son of Kaʿb, who was the first person to name the [sixth day of the week] *Jumuʿa* [Friday]. Before Kaʿb changed its name, Friday was called ʿUrūba. Kaʿb used to

deliver speeches on that day and the Quraysh would assemble to listen to him speak. He is the first person open a speech with, “*Amma ba‘d*” [to commence:] and it is possible that he predicted the appearance of the Prophet ﷺ and informed the Quraysh that he is from his offspring and commanded them to follow him. . . .

Ka‘b is the son of Lu‘ay, whose name is a diminutive form of *al-Lay’*. Lu‘ay is the son of Ghālib, who is the son of Fihr. . . . His name is also Quraysh and it is unto him that the tribe of Quraysh ascribes itself. Those who are not from his descendents are not Qurayshī; instead they are Kinānī. This is the soundest view and it is unto him that the Quraysh are ascribed.

Fihr is the son of Mālik, the son of Naḍr. It is said that Naḍr was given as a nickname because of the resplendence of his face [*naḍāra*]. His actual name is Qays and many consider him to be the head of Quraysh.

Naḍr is the son of Kināna. . . . He is Abū Qubayla the son of Khu-zayma. Khuzayma is the son of Mudrika. . . and Mudrika is the son of Ilyās. According to [the philologist] Ibn al-Anbārī, his name is spelled with a *kasra* vowel-mark on the articulated *hamza*. Others, however, such as Qāsim b. Thābit, say that it is spelled with a silent *hamza* and a definite *lām*, like the name of the well-known Prophet [Ilyās] which means the opposite of hope [despair]. Al-Suhaylī said: “This is the soundest view. It is reported that he [Ilyās] would hear the Prophet’s *talbiya* for the Hajj [i.e., saying *labbayk Allāhumma labbayk*] ﷺ from his loins.” Al-Suhaylī also reported in *al-Rawḍ* [*al-unuf*] that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Do not insult Ilyās for he was a believer.”

Zubayr reported that Ilyās would speak out against the changes Banū Ismā‘īl made to the sacred traditions of their forefathers. He would exhort them and convince them to adopt his views and they would be pleased with him more than anyone after Udud¹. He is the first person to donate camels to the Sacred House [the Ka‘ba] and the Arabs show great and wise reverence for him.

Ilyās is the son of Muḍar. . . . Some say that he was called Muḍar be-

1. Udud b. Zayd al-Kahlānī from Qaḥṭān. He is one of their forefathers, though nothing is known about the year of his birth or his life details.—Tr.

cause his immense beauty would hurt the hearts of those who saw him. He also had a beautiful voice. One day he fell off his camel and injured his hand. Feeling pain, he called out, “O my hand, O my hand!” [*wā aydāh*], and hearing his pleasant voice, the camel was energized (and that was the basis for *ḥidā* among the Arabs, whereby they sing to drive camels during a journey). He spoke the truth who said that “he [Muḍar] was the first person to use *ḥidā*.” Some of his recorded statements include: “Whoever plans evil shall harvest regret, and he who plants good shall harvest it swiftly.”

There is a report from Ibn ‘Abbās that reads, “Do not insult Muḍar and Rabī‘a [i.e., Muḍar’s brother], for they were both Muslims upon the religion of Ibrāhīm.” In a similar report from Ibn ‘Abbās, there is also mention of Khuzayma, Ma‘add, ‘Adnān, Udud, Qays, Tamīm, Asad, and Ḍibba. It states that they all died upon the religion of Ibrāhīm ﷺ. In yet another narration from Ibn ‘Abbās it reads, “So we only mention them as fellow Muslims are mentioned.”

Muḍār is the son of Nizār. . . . This name is derived from *nazar*, which means uncommon. He was called Nizār because he was a rarity of his time. Some say that he was called Nizār because when his father looked upon him after his birth, he saw the light of Muḥammad ﷺ between his eyes and became extremely delighted. As a result of this delight, his father fed many people and said, “This is all *nazar*,” i.e., this is all miniscule when it comes to what is owed to this newborn.”

Nizār is the son of Ma‘add. . . . It is reported that when Bakhtaṣir invaded the Arab lands, Allah revealed to Armiyā [Jeremiah]—who was Prophet from Banū Isrā‘īl at that time—saying, “Go to Ma‘add and take him out of his homeland to the Levant and take care of him, for Muḥammad, the Seal of the Prophets, shall descend from his children.”

It is also reported that when his offspring were between twenty and forty in number, they raided the camp of Prophet Mūsā ﷺ, but when Mūsā’s forces were alerted and Mūsā was about to drive them back, Allah revealed to him, saying, “Do not supplicate against them.” In another wording of this report Mūsā supplicated against them but it went unanswered until they [Ma‘add’s offspring] raided it three times. Then, Mūsā supplicated, “O my Lord! I invoke You against a folk who have raided us, but You did not answer my supplication against them!”

Allah said, “O Mūsā! My choicest servant in the final days is contained within them.”

Ma‘add is the son of ‘Adnān. There is no difference of opinion regarding the noble prophetic lineage up to this point.

When it comes to the noble prophetic lineage, the only disagreement among scholars is with regard to those who come after ‘Adnān. In fact, there are numerous views at odds with each other. For that reason, when the Prophet ﷺ “would describe his lineage he would not go past ‘Adnān. He ﷺ would not go any further and would instead say, ‘The genealogists lie, for Allah, the Exalted and Sublime, says: “*And many generations in between*” [al-Furqān: 38].” Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ said, “Had Allah willed to teach him [his lineage after ‘Adnān] He would have taught him.”

Ibn Diḥya said, “The scholars have concurred—and consensus is a proof—that the Prophet ﷺ only described his lineage up to ‘Adnān and did not go any further. In *Musnad al-firdaws* it is reported that Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ said, ‘When the Prophet ﷺ would describe his lineage he would not go past Ma‘add the son of ‘Adnān. He ﷺ would not go any further and would instead say, “The genealogists lie.”’ . . .

It is reported that Ibn ‘Umar said, “I can trace my lineage up to ‘Adnān, but we know not those who come after that.” Ibn ‘Abbās said, “There are thirty forefathers between ‘Adnān and Ismā‘īl but they are unknown.” ‘Urwa b. al-Zubayr, “We have not found anyone who knows the lineage after Ma‘add the son of ‘Adnān.” Once [Imam] Mālik was asked about a man who allegedly traced his lineage all the way back to Ādam. Imam Mālik detested that and asked, “Who informed him of that?” And a similar report is mentioned in which he spoke of those who trace their lineage to other Prophets.

