109845 - A brief answer about those who ridicule the hadiths of al-Bukhari

the question

I live in a western country, where there are some groups of Muslims of considerable size of different trends, nationalities and colours, but in general there is ignorance about Islam, its rulings and many other issues pertaining to Islam. What I found strange is that some of the brothers here – may Allah guide us and them – are among those who cast doubts on the prophetic hadiths, especially those are narrated in *Sahih al-Bukhari*. These include: “Then our Lord will lay bare His Shin and every believing man and woman will prostrate to Him, and there will be no one who used to prostrate to show off and seek a reputation and want to prostrate, but his back will become solid”; and the hadiths which say that Allah will manifest Himself to His slaves on the Day of Resurrection and they will see Him; and the hadith about the conversation with Allah, “…Allah will bring the believer close until He places His concealment over him and screens him [from the people], then He will say: Do you admit such and such a sin, do you admit such and such a sin? He will say: Yes, O Lord, until, when he has admitted his sins and thinks that he is doomed, He will say: I concealed them for you in the [previous] world and I forgive you for them today. Then he will be given the record of his good deeds. As for the disbeliever and the hypocrite, it will be called out before the witnesses: These are the ones who lied about their Lord; may the curse of Allah be upon the wrongdoers”; the hadith about mut`ah marriage; and the hadith about the woman who offered herself in marriage to the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

I hope that you can kindly send an appropriate response so that I can refute the arguments of these ignorant people who spread doubts and may cause some of the Muslims to go astray.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

There is no sin worse than disbelief, and the one whose level of intellect causes him to shed

doubts on these noble and sound hadiths and ridicule them is causing people to laugh at his level of stupidity, for the heretic ridicules everything; he ridicules Allah, His Messenger, His angels, His Books and the Last Day. So it is pointless to discuss details of creed (`aqidah) with him, when he does not believe in the fundamentals of creed.

If we try to refute the argument of everyone who ridicules verses or hadiths, then our lifetime – even if it is long – will not be sufficient to follow and refute everyone, and we would not be able to silence the voices of the haters who propagate their evil notions that are based on ignorance.

As for those who claim to be Muslims yet they do not recognise the legacy, history, culture and values of the ummah, and they conceal themselves behind slogans such as rationality and enlightenment – by Allah, we see them as no more than people who are telling of how ignorant and blind they are. They boast about their intellects that have produced nonsense but they are in thrall to some hateful orientalists, so they repeat every evil and foul idea that the orientalists utter, because they are infatuated with the illusion of rationality, to the extent that every ignorant person who wants to propagate his ill-thought-out ideas attributes himself to rationality, when he is the furthest he could be from sound rationale.

All the criticism referred to in this question may fall into three categories:

The first category:

Criticising the many hadiths that were narrated about details of what will happen to people in the place of gathering, at the sirat and in various stages of the Day of Resurrection.

We will respond in general terms by noting the following points:

1.All of these hadiths speak of an unseen realm of which we do not know the essence and true nature, except by way of a few symbolic details that the verses and authentic hadiths refer to. If someone ridicules them, it is not unlikely that he will also ridicule what is mentioned in the Qur’an about some of the events of the Day of Resurrection, how the heavens will be rolled up, how the mountains will be removed and become like carded wool; and what it says in the Qur’an about the

Lord, may He be Exalted, coming to bring people to account and judge between them, how He will question them about every minor and major sin, and many other things which, if someone ridicules any of them, his disbelief will become obvious to everyone, near and far, and his heresy will become clear. We would have to debate with him in a different way.

As for the one who quotes authentic hadiths which were narrated by dozens of trustworthy narrators, which the scholars transmitted and the imams approved of them, then he ridicules their contents on the grounds that he, with his “brilliant mind,” has found something wrong with a particular hadith that no one ever noticed before – he is deceiving people in an outrageous manner. Otherwise, let him tell us about the Lord, may He be Glorified and Exalted: how does He have power over all things, how does He have knowledge of all things; how is He the First with nothing before Him, and the Last with nothing after Him? If his response is that he submits to what it says in the texts because his limited intellect is unable to speak about matters of the unseen, then in that case, we say to him: you should accept that your limited intellect is unable to understand the details that are mentioned in the authentic Prophetic Sunnah about the events of the hereafter, otherwise you will be contradicting yourself.

2.Moreover, what is the thing that you find irrational that is mentioned in these hadiths? What is there that could prevent the believers from seeing Allah, may He be Glorified and Exalted, and what is there that could prevent Him from showing people one of His attributes that is befitting to His Majesty, as there is nothing like unto Him, may He be Glorified, in His Essence and Majesty, and He is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing?

What reason is there to ridicule the idea of people crossing the sirat in a manner commensurate with their deeds, or the idea of sinners being brought forth from Hell through the intercession of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)? Let the one who claims that all these things are impossible tell us why it is impossible, according to sound rational thinking, and let him explain to us on the basis of his “definitive” proof, and not by means of foul speech and ridiculing the minds of readers.

The second category:

Ridiculing the hadiths which say that mut`ah marriage was permitted at the beginning of Islam.

We would like to explain to this ignorant mocker that mut`ah marriage at the beginning of Islam was a kind of marriage that was based on specific conditions and stipulations, and it was not a kind of messing about or an immoral action in disguise, because it was done with the consent of the woman's guardian in the presence of witnesses; it was announced openly and there was a dowry; and there was consent between the two parties; and all the rulings on regular marriage were applied to it, such as attributing any child born to the husband, rights of inheritance between the spouses, definition of who became a mahram to either spouse, divorce and `iddah, and so on, exactly like any marriage that is done in accordance with Islamic teachings today, which is based on people's customs and Islamic teachings.

Imam al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Whoever says that mut`ah means that the man says to the woman: "I marry you for one day" and the like, on the basis that there will be no `iddah for you, no rights of inheritance between us, no divorce, and no witnesses to the marriage, that is the essence of zina, and it was never permitted in Islam.

End quote from *Al-Jami` li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, 5/87.

The only difference between mut`ah marriage and regular marriage is stipulating a time limit and a date when the marriage will end, after which both spouses have the choice: if they wish, they may separate or they may continue the marriage for as long as Allah wills. There was a reason to permit mut`ah marriage at the beginning of Islam, and there are many reports which explain that reason, the strongest of which is the report in which al-Hafiz ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said: These reports strengthen one another, and the conclusion to which they lead is that mut`ah was a concession that was in the case of a single man who was travelling.

End quote from *Fat-h al-Bari*, 9/172.

Whatever the case, this type of marriage was abolished and Islamic teachings disallowed it after

the particular circumstances because of which it was permitted were no longer applicable. Many authentic hadiths state that it is prohibited, and the four imams and all the scholars are agreed that it is not allowed. In fact, in the same hadith that this objector mentions, Imam al-Bukhari states in his report (5119) that this type of marriage was abolished:

It was narrated that Jabir ibn `Abdillah and Salamah ibn al-Akwa` said: We were with an army when the envoy of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) came to us and said: "You have been given permission to do mut`ah marriage, so go ahead and do it…"

Abu 'Abdillah [i.e., Imam al-Bukhari] said: 'Ali said, narrating from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), that it was abrogated.

See: *Fat-h al-Bari* by al-Hafiz ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him).

3.As for the hadith about the woman who offered herself in marriage to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), we wonder what is wrong with that; is it shameful or disgraceful or something to be ridiculed if a chaste, believing, righteous woman asked the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) to marry her, so that she might attain high status in Islam by being married to the leader of the messengers, and be a wife to the best of creation in this world and the hereafter? Is a woman to be blamed if she expressed her desire to marry the best of Allah's creation, the leader of the first and the last? Doesn't she have the right to look for that which would make her happy and raise her in status in this world and the hereafter? Is it anything prohibited or objectionable that this righteous woman did, or is the only aim to impugn and ridicule for the sake of confusing people and causing trouble?

As for our believing in what is narrated in *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*, that does not come under the heading of blind imitation or accepting without checking; rather it is belief that is based on research and thorough examination of all the narrators and the chains of narration and texts of the hadiths in these two *Sahih*s, which took thousands of pages, hundreds of years and dozens of scholars, both classical and contemporary. All of that proved – with no room for doubt – the soundness of the scholarly consensus on accepting these two books, and agreement that they are

more sound than any other books of hadith. One of the first of these studies was Ibn Hajar's Introduction to his book *Fat-h al-Bari*, which is entitled *Hadi as-Sari*, in which he spoke at length about the bases and foundations on which Sahih al-Bukhari was built, and which led the scholars to accept that it is sound and proven.

This is a brief answer. As for giving a lengthy and detailed answer, we would need to know the identity of the one who says these bad things, so as to tailor our answer to his background and beliefs. However, we do not advise our Muslim brothers to waste their time in refuting these smart alecks who present specious arguments. But if there is a reason which dictates that there should be a debate and argument with them, it must be done on the basis of evidence and proof, and not merely shouting and waffling.

And Allah knows best.