213227 - The story of the Sahaabi who used to make the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) laugh

the question

I saw a clip on YouTube entitled the funny Sahaabi, which quoted a number of hadiths about this Sahaabi who was called an-Nu‘aymaan ibn ‘Amr al-Ansaari (may Allah be pleased with him). I was confused after listening to this clip, because the first hadith that the shaykh quoted was about the story of the Sahaabi when he borrowed some fruit and gave it to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), then he refused to give it back or pay its price, so the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) paid instead of him and smiled.
How sound is this hadith?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It was narrated by Abu Ya‘la in his Musnad (176), Abu Nu‘aym in al-Hilyah (3/228) and ad-Diya’ in al-Mukhtaarah (92) from ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that a man had the nickname Himaar (donkey) and he used to give the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) a gift of a vessel of ghee and a vessel of honey. When the owner thereof came to ask him to pay for these things, he would bring him to the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and say: O Messenger of Allah, give this man the price of his goods, and the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) would do no more than smile and give instructions that he be paid. One day he was brought to the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) having drunk alcohol. A man said: O Allah, curse him, how often he is brought to the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)! But the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Do not curse him, for he loves Allah and His Messenger.”

Abu Nu‘aym said after quoting it: It is saheeh and proven.

Al-Buwaysiri said in Ithaaf al-Khayarah (3/398): This is a saheeh isnaad.

Al-Haythami said in al-Majma‘ (4/148): It was narrated by Abu Ya‘la and its men are the men of as-Saheeh.

Al-Bukhaari narrated a shorter version in his Saheeh (6780), which is as follows:

It was narrated from ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab that there was a man at the time of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) whose name was ‘Abdullah, but his nickname was Himaar (donkey), and he used to make the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) laugh. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had had him flogged for drinking, then he was brought one day and he commanded that he be flogged, and a man who was there said, “O Allah, curse him, how often he is brought [for this reason]!” But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Do not curse him, for by Allah what I know about him is that he loves Allah and His Messenger.”

See also the commentary on the hadith in Fath al-Baari and in al-Isaabah fi Tamyeez as-Sahaabah (6/366):

He (may Allah be pleased with him) would do that by way of joking with the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and wanting to make him happy, and the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) would approve of that and laugh, and would not criticise him for it, and he would pay off on his behalf what he had bought and given to him as a gift, and he knew that he only did that out of love for the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

And Allah knows best.