139540 - On which finger did the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) wear his ring?

the question

On which finger did the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) wear his ring? To the best of my knowledge, I think that it was the forefinger. Is this correct? May Allah reward you with good.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The fuqaha' (may Allah have mercy on them) differed as to where the ring is to be worn –on the right hand or the left hand? And there are two views:

The first view is that it is to be worn on the left hand. This is the view of the Hanafis, Maalikis and Hanbalis.

It says in Radd al-Muhtaar (5/230), which is a Hanafi book:

"On the left hand" – it should be worn on the little finger, not any of the others, and not on the right hand. What may be understood from al-Qahstaani in al-Muheet is that it is permissible to wear it on the right hand, but that is the custom of the Raafidis. End quote.

It says in Haashiyat al-'Adwi 'ala Kafaayat at-Taalib (2/360), which is a Maaliki book:

The favoured view of the majority, including Maalik, is that the ring is to be worn on the left hand; this is what is recommended. Maalik used to wear it on his left hand. End quote.

Abu’l-Waleed al-Baaji (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Ahl as-Sunnah are unanimously agreed that rings are to be worn on the left hand. This is the view of Maalik. It is makrooh to wear a ring on the right hand. He said: One eats and drinks and does other things with the right hand, so how can he pick up the ring with his left hand then put it on his right hand? End quote.

Al-Muntaqa Sharh al-Muwatta’ (7/256)

It says in Kashshaaf al-Qinaa‘ (2/236), which is a Hanbali book:

Wearing the ring on the little finger of the left hand is better than wearing it on the little finger of the right hand. This was stated in the report of Saalih and al-Fadl, and it is more soundly proven. He regarded as da‘eef the report of al-Athram and others about wearing the ring on the right hand.

Ad-Daaraqutni and others said: What is narrated is that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to wear his ring on his left hand. End quote.

They quoted a number of things as evidence for that:

1. It was narrated that Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The ring of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) was worn on this – and his pointed to the little finger on his left hand. Narrated by Muslim (2095).

2. The action of most of the Sahaabah. It was narrated by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his Musannaf (6/68) with his isnaads from Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmaan, al-Hasan, al-Husayn, Ibn ‘Umar, al-Qaasim, Saalim, and others among the salaf, that they used to wear their rings on their left hands.

3. Wearing it on the left hand is easier for one who wants to pick it up with his right hand in order to make a seal with it. Most rings were worn for the purpose of making a seal, so wearing the ring on the left hand is more appropriate for this purpose.

4. Wearing it on the right hand is the way of the Raafidis, and what is recommended is to differ from the followers of innovation.

The second view is that it is to be worn on the right hand. This is the view of the Shaafa‘is.

Imam an-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The correct and well-known view is that wearing it on the right hand is preferable, because it is an adornment, and the right hand is more noble (and more deserving of adornment). End quote.

Al-Majmoo‘ (4/462)

They quoted a number of things as evidence for that:

1. It was narrated from Naafi‘ that ‘Abdullah told him that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) acquired a ring of gold and he put it with the stone turned towards his palm when he wore it. Then the people acquired rings of gold, so he ascended the minbar and praised and glorified Allah, then he said: “I acquired it, but I will not wear it (any more).” Then he threw it away, and the people threw their rings away. Juwayriyah said: I think he wore it on his right hand. Narrated by al-Bukhaari (5876). In a report narrated also by Muslim (2091), it states clearly that he wore it on his right hand.

2. It was narrated from Anas ibn Maalik (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) wore a ring of silver on his right hand, in which there was an Abyssinian stone, and he used to put the stone facing towards his palm. Narrated by Muslim (2094).

3. It was narrated that ‘Abdullah ibn Ja ‘far (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to wear his ring on his right hand. Narrated by Ahmad in al-Musnad (3/265); classed as hasan by the commentators in the edition published by Mu’sasat ar-Risaalah. Imam al-Bukhaari said concerning it: This is the soundest report that has been narrated from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) concerning this matter. End quote from Sunan at-Tirmidhi (no. 1744)

4. At-Tirmidhi said: Concerning this matter there are reports from ‘Ali, Jaabir, ‘Abdullah ibn Ja‘far, Ibn ‘Abbaas, ‘Aa’ishah and Anas. The hadith of Ibn ‘Umar is a hasan saheeh hadith. End

quote.

5. They also quoted as evidence the proven report from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) that he liked to start on the right when putting on his shoes, combing his hair, purifying himself, and in all his affairs. Narrated by al-Bukhaari (168). Wearing a ring comes under the heading of adornment, in which it is mustahabb to start on the right.

They responded to the evidence given for the first view by noting that the hadiths which state that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) wore his ring on his right hand are more sound and more numerous, so they should be given precedence over others.

Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Wearing it on the right hand is preferable because there are more hadiths that speak of that. End quote.

Tuhfat al-Muhtaaj (3/276)

Imam an-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) responded to their giving as evidence the fact that wearing it on the right hand is one of the customs of the Raafidis by saying: In most countries this is not one of their customs; even if it were one of their customs, I would not give up wearing it on the right hand. How can a Sunnah be abandoned just because a group of innovators do it? End quote.

Al-Majmoo‘ (4/462)

With regard to the majority quoting as evidence the fact that some of the Sahaabah wore their rings on their left hands, the response is that it has been narrated from other Sahaabah that they wore their rings on their right hands, as was narrated by Ibn Abi Shaybah in al-Musannaf (6/65) from Ibn ‘Abbaas, Ja‘far ibn Muhammad, and ‘Abdullah ibn Ja‘far. In fact, al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It was narrated from Abu Bakr and ‘Umar, and a large number of the Sahaabah and the Taabi‘een

after them, among the people of Madinah and others, that they wore their rings on their right hands. End quote.

Fath al-Baari (10/372)

Some of the scholars are of the view that it is prescribed to do both: to wear rings on the right hand and on the left, so as to follow all the hadiths that have been narrated.

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The hadiths differ as to whether (the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)) wore his ring on his right hand or on his left hand. The isnaads of all of them are saheeh. End quote.

Zaad al-Ma'aad (1/139)

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The correct view is that it is Sunnah to wear rings on both the right hand and the left. End quote.

Ash-Sharh al-Mumti' (6/110)

Secondly:

With regard to defining on which finger it is mustahabb to wear one's ring, it is the little finger, as was narrated in the Prophetic Sunnah.

It was narrated that Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) acquired a ring, and said: "We have acquired a ring, and we have engraved something on it, but no one else should engrave anything on his ring." He (Anas) said: I remember seeing it gleaming on his little finger.

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (5874). He included it in a chapter entitled: Chapter on wearing the ring on the little finger.

In fact it was narrated that it is not allowed to wear it on the middle finger or forefinger, as in the hadith of ‘Ali ibn Abi Taalib (may Allah have mercy on him) who said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) forbade me to wear a ring on these two fingers – and he pointed to the middle finger and the one next to it. Narrated by Muslim (2078)

And Allah knows best.