



Ijma'a on the superiority of Shaykhayn

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Ijma'a of sahabah

Ibn Umar narrates that there is ijma'a of all sahabah – migrants and helpers – that Abu Bakr Siddiq is superior in this ummah after RasulAllah ﷺ.¹

Abu Hurayrah says:

We, the group of companions, and we were in a large number, used to say that in this ummah – Abu Bakr then Umar then Uthman are superior after RasulAllah ﷺ.²

كُنَّا مَعَاشِرَ أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ وَنَحْنُ مُتَوَافِرُونَ نَقُولُ
أَفْضَلُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ بَعْدَ نَبِيِّنَا أَبُو بَكْرٍ ثُمَّ عُمَرُ ثُمَّ عُثْمَانُ رَوَاهُ ابْنُ عَسَاكِرَ

There was no need for ijma'a in the presence of RasulAllah ﷺ but this doesn't mean it was forbidden for the sahabah to agree on a matter. This is why the above hadith has been used by Sunni ulama to show ijma'a. Hence, Imam Abd al-Aziz Parharwi says:

The words *كنا نخير* in this hadith elucidate ijma'a.³

قَوْلُهُ ﷺ كُنَّا نَخِيرُ تَصْرِيحًا عَلَى الْإِجْمَاعِ

Imam Ahmad Rida Khan names a chapter, *al-Fasl al-Awwal fi al-Ijma'a* and the very first hadith he cites is of ibn Umar.⁴

Mulla Ali Qari cites from ibn Umar:

There is ijma'a of all migrants and helpers that in this ummah, Abu Bakr is the greatest. Then Umar, then Uthman.⁵

¹ Bukhari, #3697; Abu Dawud, #4627

² Maram al-Kalam, p.46, Parharwi

³ Ibid.

⁴ Matla' al-Qamarayn, p.67

وَعَنْهُ قَالَ اجْتَمَعَ الْمُهَاجِرُونَ وَالْأَنْصَارُ عَلَى أَنْ خَيْرَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ بَعْدَ نَبِيِّهَا أَبُو بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرُ وَعُثْمَانُ

The agreement of the four imams

Imam Abu Hanifah states:

After RasulAllah ﷺ, superiority is for Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman, then Ali.⁶

أَفْضَلُ النَّاسِ بَعْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ أَبُو بَكْرٍ الصِّدِّيقِ ﷺ ثُمَّ عُمَرُ بْنُ الْخَطَّابِ ثُمَّ عُثْمَانُ بْنُ عَفَّانَ ثُمَّ عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ

The imam has mentioned the sign of Ahlu's Sunnah that Shaykhayn are considered superior and the two sons in law are loved. Hence, this matter was qatyi [definitive] according to the imam, hence why its denier is outside Ahlu's Sunnah.

Muhammad Hashim Thathawi writes:

These words of the imam are evidence that whoever considers Ali superior to Shaykhayn goes out of Ahlu's Sunnah.⁷

فِي كَلَامِهِ دَلَالَةٌ عَلَى أَنَّ مَنْ فَضَّلَ عَلِيًّا عَلَى الشَّيْخَيْنِ فَهُوَ خَارِجٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ السُّنَّةِ وَالْجَمَاعَةِ

Imam Malik cites the hadith لو كنت متخذا خليلا and says:

Superiority is for Abu Bakr then Umar. Is there any doubt in it?⁸

أَبُو بَكْرٍ ثُمَّ عُمَرُ ثُمَّ قَالَ: أَوْ فِي ذَلِكَ شَكٌّ؟

Hence, Imam Malik considered the matter definitive [qatyi]. Yes, he maintained silence on the superiority between Uthman and Ali but later retracted from that too.⁹

If a narration is found from Imam Malik on the superiority of Fatimah, then certainly it is about partial superiority of being the daughter of RasulAllah ﷺ.

Imam Shafiyi says:

Whether its khilafah or superiority, in both cases we begin with Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman, then Ali.¹⁰

⁵ Mirqat, 1:334

⁶ Fiqh al-Akbar, p.61-2

⁷ al-Tariqat al-Ahmadiyyah fi Haqiqat al-Qat'a bi al-Afdaliyyah, p.6

⁸ al-Sawayiq al-Muhriqah, p.57; Maram al-Kalam, p.46; Fath al-Mughith, 3:127

⁹ Tadrib al-Rawi, 2:197; al-Sawayiq al-Muhriqah, p.57; al-Istiyab, p.538

¹⁰ al-Ityiqad Bayhaqi, p.336; Fath al-Bari, 7:13, Maram al-Kalam, p.46

فِي الْخِلَافَةِ وَالتَّفْضِيلِ نَبْدًا بِأَبِي بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ وَعُثْمَانَ وَعَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ

Imam Shafiyyi has cited the ijma'a of all sahabah and tabiyyin on the matter.¹¹

To then present poetry of Imam Shafiyyi against his position of ijma'a is certainly impermissible.

The belief of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal according to Yahya Balkhi [with a sahih chain]:

Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal would mention the order of superiority as: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali.¹²

عَنْ حَامِدِ بْنِ يَحْيَى الْبَلْخِيِّ قَالَ كَانَ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَنْبَلٍ يَذْهَبُ فِي التَّفْضِيلِ أَبُو بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرُ وَعُثْمَانُ وَعَلِيٌّ

Ijma'a of Sufis

There is ijma'a of all Sufis that the first is Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman, then Ali.¹³

وَأَجْمَعُوا عَلَى تَقْدِيمِ أَبِي بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ وَعُثْمَانَ وَعَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ

Ijma'a of scholars of Ahlu's Sunnah

Imam Nawawi writes:

Ahlu's Sunnah are agreed that superior amongst the sahabah is Abu Bakr then Umar.¹⁴

اتَّفَقَ أَهْلُ السُّنَّةِ أَنَّ أَفْضَلَهُمْ أَبُو بَكْرٍ ثُمَّ عُمَرُ

Sayyid Mir Abd al-Wahid Bilgrami says:

There is ijma'a of Ahlu's Sunnah that after the prophets, Abu Bakr Siddiq is superior in all creation. After him, Umar. After him, Uthman and after him, Ali.¹⁵

Imam Suyuti says:

There is ijma'a of Ahlu's Sunnah that after RasulAllah ﷺ, Abu Bakr is superior. Then Umar, then Uthman, then Ali then the asharah mubash'sharah. Then the people of badr, then

¹¹ al-Iyitiqad Bayhaqi, p.369; Takmil al-Iman, p.56

¹² al-Sunnah li al-Khilal, p.607

¹³ al-Ta'arruf li Madh'hab Ahl al-Tasawwuf Abi Bakr Muhammad ibn Ishaq, p.62

¹⁴ Sharh Muslim, 2:272

¹⁵ Sab'a Sanabil, p.56

uhud, then the people who pledged allegiance at Ridwan then all other sahabah. Abu Mansur Baghdadi has cited ijma'a according to the same order.¹⁶

أَجْمَعَ أَهْلُ السُّنَّةِ أَنَّ أَفْضَلَ النَّاسِ بَعْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ أَبُو بَكْرٍ ثُمَّ عُمَرُ ثُمَّ عُثْمَانُ ثُمَّ عَلِيٌّ ثُمَّ سَائِرُ الْعَشْرَةِ ثُمَّ
بَاقِي أَهْلِ الْبَدْرِ ثُمَّ بَاقِي أَهْلِ الْبَيْعَةِ ثُمَّ بَاقِي الصَّحَابَةِ، هَكَذَا حَكَى الْإِجْمَاعُ عَلَيْهِ أَبُو مَنْصُورِ الْبَغْدَادِي

Imam Suyuti has not just cited the ijma'a for the superiority of Shaykhayn but has said there is ijma'a for all the other groups of sahabah too. Now tell us, if superiority depends only on the order of khilafah, then from where will you establish khilafah for asharah mubash'sharah, people of badr, uhud and other sahabah?

Imam ibn Hajar Makki says:

There is ijma'a of the whole ummah on the superiority of Shaykhayn. If it is asked what is the basis of this ijma'a? Then I say it is the Quran and numerous hadith but ijma'a is binding upon every individual whether its basis is known or not. This is because Allah ta'ala has saved this ummah from agreeing upon misguidance. The verse is very clear in this regard:

ويتبع غير سبيل المؤمنين نوله ما تولى و نصله جهنم و ساءت مصيرا

Then this order of superiority was abided by in selecting them as khulafa.¹⁷

This passage of Imam ibn Hajar makes it clear that the superiority of the first three khulafa was established beforehand and khilafah was granted to them accordingly.

This warning of *ويتبع غير سبيل المؤمنين* makes us ask the tafdil: no one gave a warning of hell to believers in the superiority of Shaykhayn whereas believers in the superiority of Ali are being scared of hell using this verse. What is the way of caution?

Shaykh Abd al-Haq Muhaddith Dihlawi writes:

Imam Shafiyyi said: not a single person amongst the sahabah and tabiyyin denied the superiority of Shaykhayn and their being foremost. If there is disagreement, then it's only regarding Ali and Uthman.¹⁸

ابو ثور از شافعی روایت می کند که یکی از صحابه و تابعین در تفضیل ابوبکر و عمر و تقدیم ایشان اختلاف نکرد

Imam Nawawi has cited ijma'a of Ahlu's Sunnah on the superiority of Shaykhayn.¹⁹

امام نووی میگوید که افضل اصحاب علی الاطلاق ابوبکر است بعد از ان عمر باجماع اهل سنت

¹⁶ Tarikh al-Khulafa, p.37

¹⁷ Al-Sawayiq al-Muhriqah, p.59

¹⁸ Takmil al-Iman, p.56

¹⁹ Ibid.

He writes with reference to Dhahabi:

Eighty people have narrated from Ali regarding the superiority of Shaykhayn and the hadith is mass transmitted [mutawatir].²⁰

He then writes:

Ali said: Whoever gave me superiority over Abu Bakr and Umar; I will give him eighty lashes as the punishment for slander.²¹

He then writes:

There are so many sermons of Ali in praise of Abu Bakr and Umar that after learning which even a rebel cannot escape them. If the scholars of Ahlu's Sunnah quote nothing but these sermons to prove superiority of Shaykhayn and even its being qatyi, then that would suffice.²²

گر علماء اہل سنت و جماعت در فضیلت ابو بکر و عمر بیکہ در قطعیت آن بہمان اکتفا نمایند و استدلال کنند کافی وافی بود

He then writes:

There are three signs of Ahlu's Sunnah: superiority of Shaykhayn, loving the sons in law and wiping over socks. These three are the hallmarks of Ahlu's Sunnah and people of innovation do not believe them.²³

گفته اند کہ علامات اہل سنت سه چیز است۔ تفضیل الشیخین و محبة
الختین و المسح علی الخفین ابو بکر و عمر مرا فاضل دانستن و علی و عثمان مرا
محبت داشتن و جواز مسح موزہ مرا اعتقاد کردن۔ این سه چیز نشانہ اہل سنت و
جماعت است کہ اہل بدعت بدان قائل نیستند۔

We have seen above that Shaykh Abd al-Haq believes in the ijma'a of superiority of Shaykhayn, that it is qatyi and that its denier is outside Ahlu's Sunnah.

When scholars talk of Shaykhayn, they cite ijma'a and qatyi. But when some scholars mention Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali together, they mention jumhur [majority] and dhann [speculation]. Here, their indication is towards the superiority between Uthman and Ali – that that is dhanni. Hence, we now present an example of this from the words of Shaykh Abd al-Haq from his Takmil al-Iman:

Know that the majority [jumhur] of Ahlu's Sunnah are upon the order that I have mentioned but Imam Malik adopted silence on the matter of Uthman and Ali.²⁴

²⁰ Takmil al-Iman, p.56

²¹ Ibid, p.62

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid, p.78

بدانکہ جمہور اہل سنت و جماعت بریں ترتیب اندک مذکور شد
و مروی از امام مالک و غیرے وے توقف است میان عثمان و علی رضی اللہ عنہما

The reason for using the word *jumhur* is because the evidences regarding Uthman and Ali are somewhat contradictory – not that the word *jumhur* applies to the superiority of Shaykhayn which is *ijmayi* and *qaty*. In *Sharh Fiqh al-Akbar*, Mulla Ali Qari has given a formidable clarification:

The superiority of Shaykhayn is agreed upon by Ahlu's Sunnah and the order between Uthman and Ali is agreed by the majority of Ahlu's Sunnah.²⁵

و تفضیل ابی بکر و عمر رضی اللہ عنہما متفق علیہ بین اهل السنة، و هذا الترتیب بین عثمان و علی رضی اللہ عنہما هو ما علیہ اکثر اهل السنة

Mulla Ali Qari says:

Abu Bakr is superior to all awliya, the first and last; and there is *ijma'a* of the whole ummah on this. There is no scope for rafidi denial here. RasulAllah ﷺ himself made him his khalifah in the prayer which emphatically proves his truth, veracity and khilafah.²⁶

فہو افضل الاولیاء من الاولین و الآخِرین و قد حکى الإجماع علی ذلک و لا عبرة بمخالفة الروافض ہنالک، و قد استخلفہ علیہ الصلوٰۃ و السلام فی الصلوٰۃ فكان هو الخلیفۃ حقاً و صدقاً

This passage is a killer blow to *tafdilis*:

1. *Ijma'a* of the whole ummah on superiority of Abu Bakr
2. Superiority being to do with *wilayah* [spirituality] not political
3. *The greatest saint from the first and last* – words which cause an earthquake upon the rafidis
4. Deeming them rafidis who deny the superiority of his *wilayah*
5. Using the fact that he was made khalifah in prayer as proof of his right to khilafah
6. Using the words *haqqan wa sidqan* that destroy the difference between spiritual and political khilafah

All of these points are mentioned in this one passage. Allah ta'ala reward Mulla Ali Qari with the best recompense.

Shah WaliyAllah Muhaddith Dihlawi writes:

During the election of the khalifah, sahabah used these words for Abu Bakr: *khayr al-ummah, afdal al-nās, ahaqqu bi al-khilafah, ahaqqu bi hādihā al-amr*. The jurists amongst the sahabah deemed him superior in the ummah and due to this superiority, he was adjudged

²⁴ Takmil al-Iman, p.56

²⁵ Sharh Fiqh al-Akbar, p.63

²⁶ Ibid, p.61

rightful khalifah. All remaining sahabah adopted silence and accepted this and thus, ijma'a of sahabah was established on the superiority of Abu Bakr.²⁷

He also writes:

The superiority of Shaykhayn is qatyi in the ummah. After reading all the hadith, I have reached the conclusion that their superiority is based on four things:

1. To be upon the elevated stations of *siddiq* and *shahid*.
2. Helping RasulAllah ﷺ, spreading Islam in its early days, being worthy of the words, *amann al-nās alayya Abu Bakr* and Umar being the *honour of Islam*.
3. These two personalities completing the tasks that are the missions of prophethood and RasulAllah ﷺ seeing dreams about the two.
4. Them both being granted elevated ranks in the hereafter and being the leaders of the elders of paradise. Staying in the highest palaces, being raised first, a special light for Abu Bakr and Umar meeting Allah ta'ala.²⁸

Imam Ahmad Rida Khan writes:

Those who know, know; and succeeded if they accepted it – and whoever didn't know it he should know now that the superiority of Sayyid al-Mu'minin, Imam al-Muttaqin, AbdAllah ibn Uthman Abi Bakr Siddiq Akbar and Amir al-Mu'minin Imam al-Adilin Abu Hafs Umar ibn al-Khattab Faruq A'zam over Imam al-Wasilin Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn Abi Talib Murtada AsadAllah, may Allah ennoble his countenance – rather over all sahabah – is an aqidah of ijma'a.²⁹

He also writes:

There is refutation in this of those tafdilis who falsely claim to be Sunni. These people have concocted the explanation with regard to the order of superiority that it means worldly khilafah and being expert in politics and governance, commanding armies and all such matters that relate to running an empire. This saying of tafdilis is wrong and khabith [impure]. It is absolutely against the ijma'a of the sahabah and tabiyin. Superiority actually refers to abundance of reward, closeness to the Lord and honour with Allah ta'ala.³⁰

وَفِيهَا رَدٌّ عَلَى مَفْضَلَةٍ
الزَّمانِ الْمُدَّعِينَ السَّنِيَّةَ بِالزُّورِ وَالْبُهْتَانِ حَيْثُ أَوْلُوا مَسْئَلَةَ تَرْتِيبِ الْفَضِيلَةِ بِأَنَّ مَعْنَى
الْأَوْلَوِيَّةِ لِلْخِلَافَةِ الدُّنْيَوِيَّةِ وَهِيَ لِمَنْ كَانَ أَعْرَفَ بِسِيَاسَةِ الْمُدُنِ وَتَجْهِيهِزِ الْعَسَاكِرِ
وَعَبْرَ ذَلِكَ مِنَ الْأُمُورِ الْمُحْتَاجِ إِلَيْهَا فِي السَّلْطَنَةِ وَهَذَا قَوْلٌ بَاطِلٌ خَبِيثٌ مُخَالَفٌ
لِاجْتِمَاعِ الصَّحَابَةِ وَالتَّابِعِينَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُمْ بَلِ الْأَفْضَلِيَّةُ فِي كَثْرَةِ الثَّوَابِ
وَقُرْبِ رَبِّ الْأَرْبَابِ وَالْكَرَامَةِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى

²⁷ Izalat al-Khafa, p.311

²⁸ Izalat al-Khafa, p.302

²⁹ Matla' al-Qamarayn, p.67

³⁰ al-Mustanad al-Mu'tamad, p.197-8

We have presented and sufficed at only eleven references regarding the ijma'a of the ummah. Otherwise, there are many more references present.

We have seen those hadith that prove that Shaykhayn were superior in the ummah even before being granted khilafah. The hadith of Bukhari contains the words that Umar spoke to show Abu Bakr's right over khilafah: *sayyiduna wa khayruna wa ahabbuna ila RasulAllah ﷺ*.³¹

Ali himself said:

Allah considered Abu Bakr better than us and gave him wilayah over us.³²

The words of *Ghunyat al-Talibin*:

He had superiority over his contemporaries.³³

Imam Shafiyi saying:

After RasulAllah ﷺ the people were in terrible difficulty. They found nobody beneath the sky better than Abu Bakr so they bowed their necks towards him.³⁴

فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا تَحْتَ أَدِيمِ السَّمَاءِ خَيْرًا مِنْ أَبِي بَكْرٍ فَوَلُّوهُ رِقَابَهُمْ

The words of *Sawayiq al-Muhriqah*:

The order of superiority was maintained and khilafah was granted to them in the same order.³⁵

The words of *Mirqat*:

The order of superiority became the order of khilafah.³⁶

فَإِذَا ثَبَّتَ هَذَا فَقَدْ ثَبَّتَ اسْتِحْقَاقَ الْخِلَافَةِ

The words of *Matla' al-Qamarayn*:

The khilafah of Siddiq was due to his superiority.³⁷

The words of *Fatawa Mihriyyah*:

The rightful deputy to prophets is only that person whose internal state most closely matches the internal state of the prophets.³⁸

³¹ Bukhari, #3668

³² Mustadrak, #4756

³³ p.182

³⁴ Tarikh al-Khulafa, p.54

³⁵ p.59

³⁶ 11:334

³⁷ p.76

³⁸ p.145

The words of *Bahar e Shariat*:

Their khilafah was according to the order of their superiority.³⁹

Read all these passages carefully. Research scholars have clarified to the greatest degree that not only are Shaykhayn superior, but the very reason for their precedence in khilafah was this superiority.

To say that there is no difference amongst the four or who are we to ascertain their rank? Such words can form part of poetry but don't hold any weight in research and Islamic beliefs. We haven't chosen their ranks – rather, they have been determined by the Quran, Sunnah and ijma'a.

Is the ijma'a qatyi [definitive] or dhanni [speculative]?

The superiority of Abu Bakr is mujma' alayh on the basis of the Quran and Sunnah. Some marfu' hadith are mutawatir in this regard. During his khilafah, Ali himself mentioned the superiority of Shaykhayn in order and if someone had any speculation regarding it, he staunchly rebuked them in the presence of jurist sahabah. Not a single one of them objected and these reports have reached tawatur.⁴⁰

فقہائے صحابہ حاضر بودند و از کسی منع و اعتراضی ظاہر نہ شد و این آثار بحد تواتر رسیدہ اند

The saying of Ali *خير هذه الامة ابو بكر ثم عمر* is mutawatir and eighty people have narrated it from him.⁴¹

This belief has been mass transmitted by the whole ummah and even today, Friday sermons worldwide announce the superiority of Shaykhayn and the spiritual unveilings [mukashafat] of Sufis support this. Ammar ibn Yasir رضي الله عنه says: Whoever gives superiority to any sahabi other than Abu Bakr and Umar then he has deemed all the migrants and helpers are sinners.⁴²

Imam Sufyan Thawri has said the same.⁴³

The hadith of the punishment of the slanderer proves the definitiveness [qatyi] of the issue too because hadd punishments are not given for denying speculative [dhanni] matters. Shah Abd al-Aziz Dihlawi writes:

These words explicitly demonstrate that this issue is qatyi because it is established by ijma'a that punishment are not meted upon dhanni matters.⁴⁴

³⁹ 1:38

⁴⁰ Izalat al-Khafa, p.313

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Tabrani Awsat, #832

⁴³ Abu Dawud, #4630

⁴⁴ Fatawa Azizi, p.383

RasulAllah ﷺ said: try to ward off hudud.

Despite this, Ali ؑ instigating the hadd upon deniers of the superiority of Shaykhayn is proof of its being qatyi.⁴⁵

This is why leading scholars and even imams of aqidah have deemed superiority to be qatyi, foremost of whom is Imam Abu'l Hasan Ashari. Numerous scholars have written:

Imam Abu'l Hasan Ashari said: The superiority of Abu Bakr and Umar over the ummah is qatyi.⁴⁶

عَنِ الْأَشْعَرِيِّ أَنَّ تَفْضِيلَ أَبِي بَكْرٍ ثُمَّ عُمَرَ عَلَى بَقِيَّةِ الْأُمَّةِ قَطْعِيٌّ

The aqidah of Shah WaliyAllah is the same. He writes:

The whole ummah agree that the superiority of Shaykhayn is qatyi.⁴⁷

افضليت شيخين در ملت اسلاميه قطعي است

Imam Abd al-Aziz Parharwi says:

Those who deem this aqidah dhanni are mistaken. Saying this ijma'a is speculative is having a bad opinion of the salaf. The fact of the matter is, the sahabah were unanimous in their belief of superiority of Shaykhayn because they had heard explicit hadith from RasulAllah ﷺ on the matter. Hence, where is the speculation?⁴⁸

هُوَ مِنْ سَوِيِّ الظَّنِّ بِالسَّلَفِ بَلْ أَجْمَعَ الصَّحَابَةُ عَلَيْهَا لِأَحَادِيثِ الَّتِي سَمِعُوهَا مِنَ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ فَأَيْنَ الظَّنُّ؟

At another place, he writes:

The superiority of Abu Bakr is qatyi according to Imam Abu'l Hasan Ashari whereas Qadi Baqillani and Imam al-Haramayn deem it dhanni. But whoever looks at the hadith that have reached tawatur and the ijma'a of the earlier generations, he will understand that truth is with Ashari. And why not, as he is the Imam of Ahlu's Sunnah and a formidable researcher and a predecessor to his opponents. Therefore, he was more aware of the hadith and ijma'a than others. This is also supported by the saying of Imam Malik when he was asked, 'who is superior after RasulAllah ﷺ?' He said, 'Abu Bakr then Umar. Is there any doubt in this?'⁴⁹

⁴⁵ al-Zulal al-Anqa, p.95

⁴⁶ Sawayiq al-Muhriqah, p.57; al-Yawaqit wa al-Jawahir, p.437; Maram al-Kalam, p.46

⁴⁷ Izalat al-Khafa, p.301

⁴⁸ Maram al-Kalam, p.47

⁴⁹ Ibid, p.46

Imam Dhahabi writes:

There is ijma'a of Ahlu's Sunnah that amongst all sahabah, asharah mubash'sharah are superior and amongst them, Abu Bakr. Then Umar, then Uthman, then Ali. And no one can doubt this except an innovator [mubtadiy] hypocrite [munafiq] and impure [khabith].⁵⁰

اجمعت علماء السنة ان افضل الصحابة العشرة
المشهود لهم و افضل العشرة ابو بكر ثم عمر بن الخطاب ثم عثمان بن عفان ثم علي
ابن ابي طالب رضی الله عنهم اجمعين، ولا يشك في ذلك الا مبتدع منافق خبيث

Imam Ahmad Rida Khan writes:

When the ijma'a is qatyi, then what need to speak about the issue of superiority of Shaykhayn being qatyi? This is the madh'hab of us and our mashayikh of tariqah and shariah.⁵¹

The hadith of ibn Umar has the words *كنا نقول و رسول الله حي*. *Kunna* is plural and some narrations contain the words *ونحن متوافرون*. Scholars have proven ijma'a using these words.⁵² Then the word *قول* shows that the ijma'a was qawli [verbal] which proves it being qatyi. It is this very hadith based on which scholars have decided that the issue of superiority is qatyi. If someone attempts to show the ijma'a is sukuti [silence] then that too isn't damaging to us as the sukuti ijma'a of sahabah is very near being qawli. We too have taken precaution and declared tafdilis outside Ahlu's Sunnah and not kafirs.

Those hoping to deny the issue as being qatyi by debating the qawl and sukut of sahabah but the words of hadith *حي رسول الله* and those of Tabrani *فلا ينكر علينا* have taken this ijma'a even beyond the divine throne and given the veracity of 'he speaks not aught of his own desire'!

The same ijma'a is established in the heavens too. What's pleasing is that RasulAllah ﷺ himself is with the sahabah in this ijma'a and Allah ta'ala is with the ijma'a of the angels. The hadith states: Allah and the believers refuse anyone except Abu Bakr.⁵³

Despite such strong evidences, look at the cautiousness of research scholars that they didn't deem a denier of the ijma'a as a kafir but an innovator. Meaning, its denier is not a kafir but outside Ahlu's Sunnah.



⁵⁰ al-Kabayir, p.236

⁵¹ Matla' al-Qamarayn, p.81

⁵² Maram al-Kalam, p.46

⁵³ Sahih Muslim, #6181