

315492 - Are Sins Justifiable because the Sahabah also Sinned?

the question

Some of the Sahabah committed some major sins, although their faith was stronger than ours. Does this mean that it is more likely that we will commit major sins, because our faith is weaker than their faith? Or is this analogy invalid? How should we respond to one who commits major sins and says that the Sahabah also committed major sins?

Summary of answer

If a Muslim slips up, he must hasten to repent sincerely and not try to justify his mistake by referring to the mistakes made by some of the Companions, because they would immediately repent and would not persist in sin.

Detailed answer

Such talk stems from the [deceit of the devil](#), by means of which he makes sins seem insignificant to people, so that they will get carried away in sin and not repent from it.

This notion is false on several counts:

- The perfect [example for the Muslim is the Prophet](#) (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

Allah, may He be Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.} [Al-Ahzab 33:21]

Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

This verse is an important principle, which is following the example of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) in his words, deeds and character. Hence Allah commanded the people to follow the example of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be

upon him) on the day of Al-Ahzab, in terms of his patience, steadfastness, perseverance, striving in Jihad and awaiting help and support from his Lord, may He be glorified and Exalted, and may Allah send blessings and peace upon him constantly until the Day of Judgement. (End quote from Tafsir Ibn Kathir, 6/391)

By the same token, we must adhere to what he brought of commands and prohibitions.

Allah, may He be Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from. And fear Allah ; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.} [Al-Hashr 59:7]

Whoever goes against his prohibitions has failed to achieve the level of piety (Taqwa) that is required of him, and he has exposed himself to the punishment of Allah, may He be Exalted.

- The Muslim is enjoined to [follow the Companions](#) (may Allah be pleased with them) in their good deeds, and not otherwise.

Allah, may He be Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{And the first forerunners [in the faith] among the Muhajirin and the Ansar and those who followed them with good conduct - Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great attainment.}”[At-Tawbah 9:100]

Muhammad ibn Ka`b Al-Quradhi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“And those who followed them with good conduct” – this is an condition that is required of those who follow them, which is that they should follow them in their good deeds and not their bad deeds. (End quote. See: Ad-Durr Al-Manthur, 4/272; and Tafsir Al-Baghawi, 4/88)

So the Muslim should strive to follow the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) in their good deeds, so that he may be included among the people mentioned in the verse quoted above. As for any errors that they (may Allah be pleased with them) made, we are not enjoined to follow them in that.

Among the good deeds of theirs in which the Muslim should follow their example is the fact that if they made any mistakes, [they would hasten to repent](#), and [their repentance was so great and sincere](#) that Allah erased their sins thereby. The Hadiths that speak of that are very well known, such as the repentance of Ma'iz and of the Ghamidi woman (may Allah be pleased with them).

So the Muslim should strive to [obey Allah](#), may He be Exalted, and to keep away from disobeying Him. Then if he slips up, he must hasten to repent sincerely and not try to excuse himself by referring to the mistakes made by some of the Companions, because they would repent and would not persist in sin.

- Even though some of the Companions committed some major sins, that did not happen very often; in fact it was rare. In most cases, they (may Allah be pleased with them) adhered to the command of Allah and strove hard to attain His pleasure. So why would this person, referred to in the question, ignore what was usually the case with the actions of the Companions, and try to use that which rarely happened as an excuse?

Moreover, if he is sincere, then let him do what they did: they used to hasten to repent, and [they did not persist in sin](#), as noted above.

Then let him follow the example of the one who surrendered her life for the sake of Allah, and [admitted the sin of adultery] so that the punishment would be carried out on her.

Then let him follow their example with regard to worship, attitude, effort, striving, acts of charity, fasting and voluntary prayers at night.

In his attitude and actions, let this poor man strive to emulate the attitude and actions of the Companions.

Then let him see, in that case, whether the devil will try to entice him with such notions!

And Allah knows best.