CHAPTER TWO

EDUCATION AND CAREER OF MUHAMMAD BIN AL-HASAN AL-SHAYBANI

Teachers
Students
Death
Teachers:

Muhammad bin al-Hasan al-Shaybani studied Islamic jurisprudence, Hadith, Arabic language and international law (siyar) under a number of teachers. Muhammad initially learnt the holy Quran by heart and started to participate in the lessons of Arabic language and narration of tradition since Kufahat that time was a centre of Arabic Sciences and Hadith and Figh. He spent in the way of knowledge a lot of money and time and worked hard. He himself has written, "My father left thirty thousand dirhams behind him. I spent fifteen thousand for the sake of Arabic grammar and poetry and remaining amount for Hadith and Fiqh". As for his devotion to knowledge is concerned, Ibn Sama'ah has reported that Muhammad had ordered his family members not to bother him about the routine life, otherwise his mind might deviate. They should ask all things from his agent as it would be a source of his satisfaction and minimized his griefs.

The person who is so devoted to the acquisition of knowledge his struggle must not go in vain.

When Muhammad was only fourteen years of age he attended the circle of Abu Hanifah. Allah bestowed on him the love and understanding of Shariah.
when he memorized the Holy Quran completely. In the
circle of Abu Hanifah he tried to seek the knowledge
in all its respects. After four years of his close
attachment and devotion Abu Haneefah died. He then
completed the course of jurisprudence with the same
devotion in the circles of Abu Yusuf. He secured
insight in Qiyas and Ijtihad and devoted himself for
the same. These two great teachers played a key
role in promoting the expertise of jurisprudence in
the mind of Muhammad. His biographers do not mention
other teachers in the field of Fiqh except the two
above mentioned scholars.

His teachers in the field of Hadith are
however described. Their list along with their places
is given below:

In Kufah

Abu Hanifah Al-Numan bin Thabit
Ismail bin Abu Khalid al-Ahmasi
Sufyan bin Sa'id al-Thawri
Mish'ar bin Kidam
Malik bin Mughwal
Qays bin al Rabi
Umar bin Dharr
Bukayr bin 'Amir
Abu Bakr al-Nahshali Abdullah bin Qattaf
Muhill bin Muhriz al-Dabbi
Abu Kudaynah Yahya bin al-Muhalla al-Bajali
Abu Qurwah Urwah bin al-Harith al-Hamadani
Ibn Zuhayr al-Ala bin Zuhayr

In Madina

Malik bin Anas Abu Amir, the jurist of Hijaz or the jurist of the Islamic Ummah as Shamsuddin al-Zahabi has declared. (9) A number of scholars have narrated the traditions from his channel. He, inspite of all did not occupy the office of Mufti though seventy learned scholars acknowledged his ability and qualification. He spent all his long life in the city of Madina till he died in 179 A.H./A.D. during the caliphate of Harun al Rashid. His position in the sciences of Hadith and Fiqh was so remarkable that Imam Shafii has declared, "when the scholars would be counted, Malik would surely be treated as a star. No person has obliged me more than Malik" (10). That is why a number of scholars from East and West travelled to seek knowledge from him. Among them the most popular were Muhammad bin al-Hasan and Shafii. (11)

When al-Muatta started to be popularized during the early period of Al-Mahdi, Muhammad travelled to Imam Malik and accompanied him three years. he heard seven hundred Hadiths (Musnad) from
him. In this journey he heard from all the scholars of Madina in addition to what he had already heard in his previous journeys. (12)

Kitab al-Muatta had near about 22 versions different in size and volume. Al-Darqutni has discussed some of these versions in a book he composed on the differences and similarities in these versions. (13) Al-Muatta with the narrations of Muhammad bin al-Hassan is counted as the best of these versions, because he had heard from Imam Malik with serious deliberation in the span of three years and also because he mentioned all the traditions of a chapter, usually discussing whether the jurists of Iraq agreed with them or not. He also mentioned those traditions on the basis of which jurists of Iraq disagreed. When Muhammad heard al-Muatta he thought proper to criticise some of the opinions expressed there in. He consequently wrote his book Al-Hijaj which is famous for his argument against the jurists of Madina. (14)

Some partial reports were composed by the blind supporters of Muhammad bin al-Hasan and Hanafi school of thought in general. They forged such stories and myths that might not be attached with the character of the Ulama in general and with Imam Malik in particular. (15)
Muhammad heard traditions from other teachers like
Ibrahim bin abi Yahya
Ubaidullah bin Umar bin Sulayman
Muhammad b.Hilal
Al-Dahhak bin Uthman
Ismail bin Rafe
Muhammad bin Abdur Rahman bin Abi Zeb and
Khaytham bin 'Arak. (16)

In Makkah

Sufyan bin Uyaynah al-Kufi (domiciled in Makkah)
Zakariya bin Ishaq and
Abdullah bin Abdur Rahman bin Ya'la
al-Thaqafi al-Taifi. (17)

In Basarah

Abu al-Awwam Abdul Aziz bin Al-Rabi
Al-Basari
Hisham bin Abi Abdullah
Al-Rabi bin Sabih
Abu Harra Wasil bin Abdur Rahman and
Said bin Abu urubah

In Wasit

Abbad bin al-Awwam
Shuban bin al-Hajjaj and
Abu Malik Abdul Malik al-Nakhai (18)
In Syria
Abu Amar Abūr Rahmān al- Awsāi
Muhammad bin Rāshid al-Mukhulī
Ismail bin Ayyash al-Himāsi and
Thawr bin Yazīd al-Dimashqī (19)

In Khurasan
Abdullāh bin al-Mubārak (20)

In Yamamah
Ayyūb bin utbah al-Tāyimī (21)

Muhammad bin al-Hasan has narrated the traditions on the authority of even those who were his companions or those who had less knowledge than him since it was the tradition of the days. (22)

He learned the Arabic language and its various branches from Al-Kasai who in his turn benefitted from Muhammad’s skill in jurisprudence. Abu Hafs has narrated that Muhammad bin Umar Waqīḍī used to come to Muhammad and teach him his Al-Maghāzī while Muhammad taught him his al-Jāmi al-Saghir. (23)

Disciples
Muhammad bin al-Hasan soon became very popular and composed a number of books on various issues and problems. The people from the remotest regions rushed
to him in order to understand Islamic Shariah since he had acquired the status of a Mujtahid. He always maintained his association with Abu Hanifah as a mark of gratitude to him, and it did not lower his statuture.

It is very difficult to gather information about all students of Muhammad. Therefore I will mention only some of his famous companions and students. They are:

Abu Hafs Al-Kabir al-Bukhari, Ahmad bin Hafs al-Ijali
Abu Sulayman Musa bin Sulayman al-Jurjani, through whom the six authentic books of Hadith spread in the world. (24)

Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Idris al-Shafii (25). His learning from Muhammad bin al-Hasan is an established fact. He accompanied his teacher with full conviction, copies his manuscripts and spent sixty dinars for them. He preserved all that he heard from his teacher. Al-Zahabi in his book Tarikh al-islam has quoted that Abu Ali al-Sawwaf heard Ahmad bin al-Hasan saying that I heard Abu Ubaid saying: I saw once Imam Shafii who was about to receive fifty dinars from Muhammad bin al-Hasan. He already had received fifty dirhams from him. Muhammad ordered Shafii,' if you are desirous to have knowledge attend
my circle punctually'. Abu ubaid said, I heard Shafii saying: I wrote down the saying of Muhammad as much as a camel could carry. When Muhammad bestowed money on Shafii, he said with affection, 'Do not feel embarrassed'. He responded, 'Was it so, I could never accept any amount from you.' This was the attitude of Muhammad towards his pupils. (26)

Imam Shafii said, 'No person has bestowed upon me in respect with jurisprudence more than Muhammad bin al-Hasan. he used to speak,' Allah bestowed on me with the help of two personalities; with Ibn Uyaynah in the matters of Hadith and with Muhammad bin al-Hasan in Fiqh.

He is also reported to say, 'No person has greater benevolence upon me in the matters of knowledge or worldly affairs than Muhammad. he used to ask Allah to have mercy upon Muhammad in general. This is a clear proof how much he respected Imam Muhammad. (27)

The imaginary forged disputes, therefore, had no relevance to the attitude of any pupil to his teachers. How could it be then true in the case of the dignitaries like Shafii and Muhammad bin al-Hasan. The love and affection between the two are well known. (28)
Among other students are included:
Abu Ubaid Qasim bin Sallam al-Harawi
Ali bin Mabad bin Shaddad al-Daqqi
Mu'alla bin Mansoor al-Razi
Abu Bakr bin Abi Muqatil
Asad bin al-Furat al-Qirwani, Compiler of
the Maliki School,
Muhammad bin Muqatil al-Razi, the teacher
of Ibn Jarir Tabari
Yahya bin Ma'in al-Ghatfani
Abu Jafar Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Mahran al-Nasawi
Shuayb bin Sulayman al-Kisani
Ismail bin Tawbah al-Qazwini

Abu Bakr Ibrahim bin Rustam al-Razi
Abu Zakaria Yahya bin Salih al-Wahazi
al-Himasi
Abu Musa Isa bin Aban al-Basari, Thenrrator of
arguments on the authority of his teacher, the writer
of Kitab al-Hijaj al-kabir, Kitab al-hijaj al-Saghir,
Kitab al-Radd ala al-Marisi wa al-Shafii, Shufyan bin
Sahban al-Basari, the writer of Kitab al-'Ilal. (29)

Isa bin Aban also studied jurisprudence with him and
accompanied him for a long time.

About the mutual narration and benefit the case of
Waqidi is an example in the sense that Muhammad bin
Umar al-Waqidi narrated on the authority of Mubam and the latter did the same on the authority of al-Waqidi. (30)

Death

Muhammad bin al-Hasan died in 189 A.H./A.D. according to Ibn al-Khayyat (31) and Al-Khatib (32). The year 188 A.H. also has been quoted as the year of his death but it is wrong. (34)

According to Al-Saymari through the channel of Ibrahim bin Arafah al-Nahawi, Muhammad bin al-Hasan and Al-Kasai died in Ray in 189 A.H. On this tragedy harun al-Rashid commented: Fiqh and Arabic language both are buried today in Rayy.

It is also said that Al-Kasai died two days after death of Muhammad bin al-Hasan. According to other sources they died on the same day. (35)

Al-Kardari has written in his book 'Al-Manaqib' that Abul Hasan Ali bin Musa al-Qummi described that Muhammad was buried at a hill of Tabrak- a fort in Rayy, near to the house of Hisham bin Ubaidullah al-Razi where he had stayed as a guest, while Al-Kasai was buried in a village Ranbawayh. The distance between the two graves was of four Farsakhs. The camp of harun al-Rashid with the
Islamic army was at a distance four Farsakhs far from it.\(^{(36)}\)\) Al-Zahabi mentioned that Hisham bin Ubaidullah Al-Razi said, 'I was with Muhammad when he was about to die. He suddenly began to weep. I asked, Do you weep while you are a great scholar? Do you think Allah has stopped me to participate in the holy war? He replied,' what do you think if Allah would ask me on the day of judgement: what for have you gone to Rayy? For participating in jihad or seeking my pleasure? What will I answer then? Then he died.\(^{(37)}\)

Saymari narrates on the authority of: Ahmad bin Abu Raja through the channel of his father that I saw Muhammad bin al-Hasan in a dream. I asked, what happened to you? he replied, Allah granted me His forgiveness. I asked 'what for?' he said, I was told that due to the knowledge I possessed I was granted forgiveness. I asked, 'what about Abu Yusuf'? he replied, 'He is placed at a higher degree than I further enquired about Abu Hanifah. He responded. 'He is in the highest rank.'\(^{(38)}\)

Notes and References

1. Al-Kauthari, Bulugh al-Amani, p. 5;
   Al-Zahabi, Manaqib Abu Hanifah wa Sahibayh, p. 51.
(3) Al-Kauthari, op.cit., p. 5.
(4) Abu Haneefah al-Numan bin Thabit born around in 80 A.H. at Kufah. His grandfather came from Persia to Kufah as a slave. His master then declared him free. He belonged to the tribe Taym Allah. His father Thabit born free in this tribe. Abu Hanifah heard from a number of the followers of the holy companions and learned from them at Kufah. He probably had seen some of the holy companions, but did not narrate on their authority. Among his teachers are Abu Umar al-Shabi (d. 104 A.H.), Ata bin Abu Rabah (d.114 A.H.), Hammad bin Abu Sulayman (d.120 A.H.), Hammad had influenced his juristic knowledge a lot. He attended him about 18 years. It is narrated that the student became incharge of the study circle when his teacher Hammad was on his journey to Basarah. After his return back the learned teacher pointed out twenty wrong answers amongst the sixty answers made by Abu Haneefah. He then decided only to attend the lectures of his teachers and not to deliver any lecture till the death of his teacher. Among his pupils. Muhammad bin

(5) Al-Kauthari, op.cit., p. 6. Abu Yusuf Yaqub bin Ibrahim bin Habib al-Kufi was amongst
the descendants of the companion Sad bin Hitah. He was born in 113 A.H. in Kufah. He studied from Hisham bin Urwah, Abu Ishaq al-Shaybani, Sulaman al-Timi and Muhammad bin Ishaq. His teachers in jurisprudence were Muhammad bin Abdur Rahman bin Abu Layla and Abu Haneefah. After some time he confined himself in the lectures of Abu Haneefah. He devoted all his time to the noble cause. His family, then complained to Abu Haneefah for the lack of feeding. Encouraging the student's talent Abu Haneefah set apart a scholarship to meet the expenditure of the family. Abu Yusuf was later on appointed the judge of Baghdad during the period of Hadi. He remained in the office till his death. It is said that he was the first person who was entitled Qazi al-Quzat. Abu Yusuf though in his juristic thought recognized the Qiyas and subjective opinion, was different from his teacher Abu Haneefah, because he had given due importance to Hadith. He composed forty books most of them are missing. The most important books available are Kitab al-Kharaj, Kitab al-Makharij fi al-Hiyal, Kitab al-Aathar etc. He died in 182 A.H. For more

(6) Al-Zahabi, Al-Manaqib, p. 50.

(7) Al-Kauthari, p. 8.

(8) Ibid.


(11) Al-Kauthari, op.cit., p. 10.

(12) Ibid.

(13) Ibid., p. 11.

(14) Ibid., p. 13.

(15) For the details of these myths and unholy attacks on Imam Malik see, Al-Kauthari, op.cit., pp. 11-14.

(16) Ibid., p. 8.
(18) Ibid.
(19) Ibid.
(20) Ibid.
(21) Ibid.
(23) Al-Kauthari, op. cit., p. 9.
(24) One of the four Imams born in 150 A.H. in which Abu Haneefah died. He learned jurisprudence from Muslim bin Khalid al-Zanji at Makkah. He then travelled to Madinah while he was a child of fourteen years. He then heard Al-Muatta from Imam Malik. He also heard from Ibrahim bin Muhammad Abu Yahya al-Aslami. He then travelled to Makkah and heard from Ibn Uyaynah. He then travelled to Yaman to perform some administrative duties accompanying some rulers. He was accused to have some incilination towards Alavids. He was carried to Iraq in 184 A.H. See Al-Kauthari, op. cit. p. 20; Fuad Sizkin, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 165-166; Al-Shirazi, Tabaqat al-Fuqaha, pp. 48-50; Ibn Abul Barr, Al-Intiqa, pp. 65-121; Ibn Hidayah, Tabaqat al-Shafiayah, p.
(26) Ibid, p. 23 (with the slight modification).
(29) Al-Saymari, Akhbar Abu Haneefah wa Ashabih, p. 128.
(30) Al-Kauthari, op.cit., p. 10.
(31) Ibid, p. 70.
(33) Al-Kauthari, op.cit., p. 70.
(34) Al-Saymari, op.cit., p. 127.
(38) Al-Saymari, op.cit., p. 129.