

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

رحمه الله Imam Abu Hanifah

Name and Birth

Numan bin Thabit, better known as Abu Hanifah. Born in 80 A.H. Hadhrat Ali رضي الله عنه made dua for his father and his progeny. He was born in the famous city of Kufa, Iraq. He began his travels in the pursuit of knowledge from an early age and travelled to Makkah, Madina, Basra, etc. He studied under a galaxy of expert teachers. There is probably no Muhaddith in Kufa whose lessons Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله did not attend. Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله hails from the special group of Tabi'in. (Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله saw Anas رضي الله عنه; hence he definitely falls within the special group of the Tabi'in).

Services, Writings etc.

Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله once saw a dream that he was exhuming the grave of Rasulullah ﷺ. Allamah Ibne-Sireen رحمه الله interpreted the dream to mean that he would revive the Sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ. Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله is the first person to have codified and categorized Fiqh. It is for this reason that Imam Shafi رحمه الله used to always remark that: "People are indebted to Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله in Fiqh".

Few of his famous works are:

- Fiqhe-Akbar
- Al Alim Wal Mutaallim
- Musnad Abu Hanifah

Character and piety

Among the sterling qualities found in Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله was:

- High degree of tolerance & Patience
- Generosity & Taqwa
- Extremely generous and would spend lavishly on the Ulama and the poor.

His level of piety was such that he would complete over 60 khatms of the Qur'an in the month of Ramadan. For forty years he read the Isha and Fajr with the same wudhu. In one rak'ah he would read the entire Qur'an. He completed 70,000 Qur'ans at the place where he passed away. He performed 55 Hajj and saw Allah تعالى a hundred times in his dreams.

Demise

Around the year 130 AH, Ibne-Habeerah, the governor of Iraq, tried to win Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله over to his side. He refused this and as a result he was mercilessly flogged and imprisoned. Eventually he escaped to Makkah where he remained engaged in studies for 6 years.

He returned to Iraq in 136 A.H upon the advent of a new government, the Abbasid rule. Initially, he favoured their rule but after having noticed their atrocities, he publicly announced his opposition to them. Thereafter, Mansur, the Abbasid Khalifah offered him the post of Qadhi (state judge); but Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله refused. This greatly unsettled Mansur who then took a vow that he would force Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله to accept the post. However, Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله took a vow that he would never accept the post. He was imprisoned, lashed 110 times, was poisoned and finally passed away in 150 A.H.

When he felt the effects of the poison, he started the Salah and passed away while in Sajdah in Rajab 150 A.H. News of his demise spread like wildfire and thousands flocked to the prison to attend his Janaza Salah. Almost 50,000 people attended.

Incidents from his life

Ibrahim bin Utbah owed somebody 4000 dirhams, but being unable to repay this amount, he stopped meeting people out of shame. A friend of his started collecting to help him discharge the loan, and in this regard, he approached Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله.

Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله said: “Why bother to collect for such a small amount from so many people, I will give the entire sum”. On saying this he granted the whole amount. After his demise, a certain person saw Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله in his dream and asked him how Allah تعالى had treated him. He replied that Allah تعالى had forgiven him. On being asked the reason for this, He replied “People accused me unjustly and Allah تعالى knew that their accusations were unjust. On this basis He forgave me.”¹

It is mentioned in Jami’ bayanul ilmi wa fadlihi that Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله’s mother was Sindhi, that means she was from Hind, because Sindh is in Hind. This might be the reason why his Madhab was widely accepted in Hind.²

Many teachers of Imam Bukhari رحمه الله were Hanafi

One of the special teachers of Imam Bukhari رحمه الله is Ishaq ibn Rahwai رحمه الله. Ishaq ibn Rahwai رحمه الله is the student of Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak رحمه الله and Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak رحمه الله is the Student of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله. Many other teachers of Imam Bukhari رحمه الله are also Hanafi, likes of Abu Asim Nubail رحمه الله, Muhammad ibn Abdullah al-Muthanna al-Ansari Makki ibn Ibrahim Balkhi رحمه الله, there also many other teachers of Imam Bukhari who are Hanafi.³

May Allah’s infinite Mercy be upon his soul.

وصلی اللہ علی النبی الکریم و الحمد للہ رب العالمین

Sajid Ibrahim Sufi, 29th September 2024.

¹ Source used: Great Islamic personalities Part.2 & Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله. Published by: Madrasah Arabia Islamia, Azaadville, South Africa.

² *Ganjina e Ash’ar e Ma’rifat* by Muhaddith-e-Kabir Shaykh Fazlur Rahman Azmi دامت برکاته

³ Hadiyah ud darari page 64 by Muhaddith-e-Kabir Shaykh Fazlur Rahman Azmi دامت برکاته