

## **Imam Abu Hanifa a Great Islamic Scholar**

**<sup>1</sup>Dr. Naseem Akhter**

Associate Professor, Department of Islamic Studies  
Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar, Pakistan-  
[khtr\\_nsm@yahoo.com/](mailto:khtr_nsm@yahoo.com) [naseemakhter@sbbwu.edu.pk](mailto:naseemakhter@sbbwu.edu.pk)

**<sup>2</sup>Dr. Sohail Akhtar**

Lecturer in History  
Department of History & Political Science Ghazi University Dera  
Ghazi Khan (Pakistan)- [sakhtar@gudgk.edu.pk](mailto:sakhtar@gudgk.edu.pk)

**Hira Khan**

Lecturer, The University of Lahore, Lahore, Pakistan-  
[hira.khan@ais.uol.edu.pk](mailto:hira.khan@ais.uol.edu.pk)

### **Abstract**

Noman Bin Thabit famous as Imam Abu Hanifa is considered one of the most important jurists of Islam among all School of thoughts. He is also called Imam-e-Azam. Imam Abu Hanifa is known as a great intellectual of his time and he was the contemporary personage of Abbasid caliph Jaffer Al-Mansour. Imam Abu Hanifa formed Hanfi School of thought and his fiqah is considered as largest among all in the entire Muslim World. This paper is a brief study about his intellectual work.

**Key Words:** Imam, Fiqah, Hanfi, Jurist, Kuffa, Abbasid, Caliphate.

### **Discussion**

Imam Abu Hanifa was a noble personality of Islam during the early century of Islam. He was born in 80 AH at Kuffa during Umayyad Rule. Hazrat Imam-e-Azam Abu Hanifah has a very high standing in Islamic jurisprudence. His real name is Numan Bin Thabit . He was born in Kufa in 80 A.H. 699 A.H. The real name was Noman Bin Thabit and he died in 150 AH during the reign of Abu Jaffer Al-Mansour. Imam Abu Hanifa was a great Scholar and intellectual of Islam and he served a lot in the promotion of Islamic jurisprudence, as he was the torchbearer of Islamic principles. <sup>1</sup>

He studied jurisprudence from his teacher Hamad bin Abi Sulaiman. The first class of your teachers are the Companions of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) and you are

unique in that you are submissive. He acquired the knowledge of Hadith from the Companions. Imam Azam made a special trip to three places to acquire the knowledge of Hadith. You acquired knowledge of hadith first in Kufa because you were a resident of Kufa and Kufa was a great center of knowledge of hadith. It is as if he was born in the house of knowledge of Hadith, studied there, became the heir of the greatest knowledge of Kufa, Imam-e-Azam himself. The second place was Haramin Sharifin. From where you derived hadiths and the third place was Basra. Imam Abu Hanifa got knowledge from about 4 thousand teachers.

In ijtehad, he was among the Muslim at the highest level to which others were unable to reach.<sup>ii</sup> In jurisprudence, Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa's foundation is so high that most of the great hadiths, jurists and the public, whether in favor or against, all agree on his jurisprudential perfection and are effusive in their praise and description of his quality and wealth. Imam Shafi said,

<sup>iii</sup>ومن اراد الفقه فهو عيال على ابي حنيفة

The hadiths narrated by Imam Abu Hanifa during the lesson were collected by the students along with the words "Hadathana" and "Akhbarna" etc. The name of Imam Abu Hanifa's teaching material is "Kitab al-Attiq", which was compiled in the second century of Hijri. Compilation of books was not very common till this time. "Kitab al-Asar" is the first book of this period which provided the guiding principles of order and interpretation for the later Muhaddiths. Allama Shibli Numani has identified several versions of "Kitab al-Asar"; But four versions are popular. Among these manuscripts, the book narrated by Imam Muhammad gained the most fame and popularity.

Once a dispute arose between the disciples of Hazrat Imam Azam (may Allah have mercy on him) and Imam Shafi'i (may Allah

have mercy on him). Each group claimed the excellence of its Imam. Hazrat Imam Abu Abdullah (may Allah have mercy on him) decided between the two and said to the Companions of Shafi'i: First, count the teachers of your Imam. When they were counted, there were 80. Then he said to the Hanaf: Now you count the teachers of your Imam. When they counted, it was found that they were four thousand. Thus, the number of teachers decided the dispute. He was an Imam in both fields of jurisprudence and hadith.- Hafiz Muhammad Din Yusuf Damaschi says that Imam Abu Hanifa is one of the greatest and best guardians of hadith. Imam Abdullah bin Mubarak says. Had I not become a disciple of Imam Abu Hanifah, I would have remained ignorant like ordinary people.

Imam Shafi'i says: All praise is due to Allah who helped me in the knowledge of jurisprudence through Imam Muhammad bin Hasan Shaibani (a disciple of Imam Azam). Along with the knowledge of jurisprudence, Imam Azam Abu Hanifa had a very high position in worship, discipline, asceticism and piety. Imam Abdullah bin Mubarak says that Imam Abu Hanifa performed Fajr prayer after ablution of Isha for 45 years and performed fifty-five Hajj. Qazi Baghdad Hazrat Hussain bin Amara, when Imam Azam was giving bath to Imam Abu Hanifa, he said, May Allah have mercy on him. You have been fasting for 30 years and awake at night for 40 years.

Imam Abu Hanifah was a tabi-bi and none of his contemporary jurists and Muhadditheen were blessed with this great honor and blessing.

Imam Muhammad bin Idris Shafi'i (may Allah be pleased with him) says:

النَّاسُ عِيَالٌ فِي الْفِقْهِ عَلَيَّ أَبِي حَنِيفَةَ مَا رَأَيْتُ أَحَدًا أَفْقَهُ مِنْهُ<sup>iv</sup>

The one who criticizes Abu Hanifa is either jealous of his knowledge or ignorant of the status of knowledge.

Imam Yazid bin Haroon himself says that I have written and acquired knowledge from a thousand teachers, but by God Almighty, I have not seen anyone who is more pious and protective of my language than Abu Hanifah.

كُتِبَ عَنِ الْفِ شَيْخٍ حَمَلَتْ عَنْهُمْ الْعِلْمَ نَمَارَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ فِيهِمْ أَشَدُّ وَعَاً مِنْ أَبِي حَنِيفَةَ وَلَا أَحْفَظُ لِلْسَانَةِ

Hazrat Fazeel Bin Ayaz says that Imam Abu Hanifah was not only the jurist of his time, but the jurisprudents of his time were the Imams of his time - he was unparalleled in piety and piety due to his wealth and wealth. He was a helper of the poor and the needy - he did not let whatever Imam Masar bin Kdam said, no one gets jealous except for the two of Kufa. Imam Abu Hanifah and his jurisprudence, the other Sheikh Hasan bin Saleh and his asceticism and contentment. misfortunes came his way.<sup>vi</sup>

أَخْبَرَنَا الْخَلَالُ، قَالَ: أَخْبَرَنَا الْحَرِيرِيُّ، أَنَّ النَّخَعِيَّ، حَدَّثَهُمْ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سَلِيمَانُ بْنُ الرَّبِيعِ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا هَمَامُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ مَسْعَرَ بْنَ كَدَامٍ، يَقُولُ: أَخْبَرَنَا الْخَلَالُ، قَالَ: أَخْبَرَنَا الْحَرِيرِيُّ، أَنَّ النَّخَعِيَّ، حَدَّثَهُمْ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سَلِيمَانُ بْنُ الرَّبِيعِ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا هَمَامُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ مَسْعَرَ بْنَ كَدَامٍ، يَقُولُ: مَا أَحْسَدَ أَحَدًا بِالْكُوفَةِ إِلَّا رَجُلَيْنِ: أَبُو حَنِيفَةَ فِي فِقْهِهِ، وَالْحَسَنُ بْنُ صَالِحٍ فِي زَهْدِهِ

The problem is that the Muqtadi do not recite Surah Fatiha or any verse of the Holy Quran in the prayer, the imam recites and everyone remains silent, this is also the creed of Imam Abu Hanifah. Once many people gathered and came to Imam Abu Hanifa and said: You prevent the worshipers behind the Imam from reciting the Quran, we will argue with you.

خطيب البغدادي رحمه الله نے کہا:

أخبرني التتوخي، قال: حدثني أبي، قال: حدثنا محمد بن حمدان، قال: حدثنا أحمد بن الصلت، قال: حدثنا بشر بن الوليد، قال: سمعت أبا يوسف، يقول: ما رأيت أحدا أعلم بتفسير الحديث ومواضع النكت التي فيه من الفقه من أبي حنيفة<sup>viii</sup>.

Imam Abu Yusuf says, "I have not seen anyone who knows the interpretation of hadith and who is more knowledgeable about jurisprudence and their adaptations than Imam Abu Hanifa".

Imam Abu Hanifa: How can argue alone with so many people? Yes, if you want, choose one of you who will speak to me on behalf of everyone and his words will be heard by all of you. The people accepted this saying of Imam Sahib with great joy. Imam Abu Hanifa: When you accepted this, the debate ended. Just as you made one person the representative of all, in the same way the Imam is the representative of all the worshipers in the prayer and his recitation is the recitation of all. The whole crowd turned back in surprise. In fact, his bold answer was a delightful interpretation of a hadith of the Holy Prophet, which means that when the imam recites the Qur'an, the rest of the worshipers should remain silent. Imam-e-Azam explains his method of ijtehad and deduction as follows: "I first derive the ruling of a problem from the Book of Allah, then if I do not find that problem there, I take it from the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). If I can't find it there, then I accept the opinion of any of the sayings of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) and do not accept the opinion of others except their opinion. At this time I also do ijtehad like these people.

The teacher of Imam Muhammad bin Ismail Bukhari, may God bless him and grant him peace, Imam Makki bin Ibrahim, may God bless him and grant him peace, says that Imam Abu Hanifa was the greatest scholar of his time. The teacher of Imam Shafi'i, may God have mercy on him, Imam Waqi', may God have mercy on him, says

that I have not found anyone more jurisprudent than Imam Abu Hanifah. Shaykh al-Islam Yazid bin Harun, may God have mercy on him, among the sheikhs of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, may God have mercy on him. I heard whoever found him among contemporary scholars saying that he had never seen a jurist greater than Imam Abu Hanifah. Imam al-Muhaddeen Yahya bin Saeed al-Qattan says that by Allah, Imam Abu Hanifah is the greatest scholar of what has come from God and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in this Ummah.

Ibn-e-Katheer said about Imam Abu Hanifa, "You have found the blessed time of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) and you have had the honor of visiting Hazrat Anas bin Malik (may Allah be pleased with him)"- "One saying is that you have visited Hazrat Anas bin Apart from Malik (Radi Allahu Anhu), he has also visited other Companions (Radi Allahu Anhum) and some have said that he has narrated traditions from seven Companions (Radi Allahu Anhum).<sup>ix</sup>

Ibn-e-Kaseer said,

لامام فقيه العراق احمد الائمة الائمة الاسلام والسادة الاعلام احمد ارکان العلماء احد  
الائمة الاربعة ، اصحاب مذاهب المتبوعة

His famous books were following,

الفقه الأكبر، الفقه الأبسط، العالم والمتعلم، رسالة الإمام أبي حنيفة إلى عثمان البتي، وصية  
الامام أبي حنيفة

Imam Shuba, may Allah have mercy on him, also said that by Allah, he had a good understanding and a good memory. <sup>xi</sup>

According to Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah, the biggest field of jurisprudence was the interpretation of beliefs, the second major field of jurisprudence was rulings, which is generally considered to be the whole jurisprudence among us, and then the field of fiqh al-nafs, which was called Wajdaniyat and Sufism. This was also part of

our jurisprudence and our curriculum. Sufism, ethics, intuition, the conditions of the heart, purification of the heart with faith, explanation of circumstances, these things were also a part of jurisprudence. But what happened was that later the beliefs took the color of science and other matters took the form of Sufism, so this division arose in our country. But beliefs, Sufism and ethics are separate things from jurisprudence, this was not the case during the time of Imam Sahib. For Imam Sahib, all these fields were actually fields of jurisprudence.

Muhaddith Abdul Razzaq says that we were present with Hazrat Muammar. At that time, Imam Abdullah bin Mubarak came and we heard this from Imam Muammar, he was saying that I do not see anyone who has more expertise in jurisprudence than Abu Hanifah, who can show the way of salvation for the creatures through jurisprudence and speculation. And I have not seen anyone more careful than Abu Hanifah who is willing to prepare a disaster for himself by introducing something of doubt into the religion of God Almighty ,while Allama Dhahabi writes him as Imam-ul-Azam, Faqeeh al-Iraq, Imam Mutura, Scholar, Amil Mutqa and Kabir al-Shan..<sup>xii</sup>

According to Ibn-e-Khaldoon,

<sup>xiii</sup>ومقامه فى الفقه لا يلحق شهدله بذلك اهل جلد ته خصوصاً مالك و الشافعى اه

"His position in jurisprudence is so high that no one else can be his example and his contemporary scholars have acknowledged his excellence, especially Imam Malik and Imam Shafi'i."

حدثنا أحمد بن داود قال : حدثنا إسماعيل بن سالم قال : حدثنا محمد بن الحسن قال : حدثنا أبو حنيفة قال : حدثنا عطاء بن أبي رباح ، عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إذا طلع النجم رفعت العاهة عن أهل كل بلد<sup>xiv</sup>

Ahmad bin Dawud, may God have mercy on him, narrated the hadith to us. Narrated the hadith, he said that Ata bin Abi Rabah,

may God have mercy on him, narrated this hadith to us from Hazrat Abu Huraira, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, may God bless him and grant him peace, said: When the star rises, all the people of the city suffer is taken-

Jafar bin Rabi, may God have mercy on him, says, "I have been in the service of Imam Sahib for five years. I have not seen a silent person like him. When a question of jurisprudence was asked, he would open up and become a river of knowledge." Abdullah bin Abi Dawud, may God have mercy on him, says. It is obligatory upon the people of Islam to pray for Imam Abu Hanifa (may God have mercy on him) after his prayers. Shaafi al-Mazhab Muhaddith Khatib Tabrizi (may God have mercy on him 743 AH) collected Mishku-ta Sharif and then wrote a book on the man called Al-Ikmal. Although he did not quote any hadith from Imam Sahib, but he mentions him for blessing, he says, "Imam Abu Hanifah, may God have mercy on him, was a great scholar."<sup>xv</sup>

Apart from this, the author of Sahih al-Bukhari, the most accurate book after the Holy Quran, Imam Muhammad bin Ismail Bukhari and other great hadith scholars, may God have mercy on him, were students of his students. He was very intelligent and sharp memory person. His asceticism, piety, understanding and wisdom were very famous. You finished Quran 7 thousand times in your blessed life. For 45 years, read all five prayers with one ablution, finished the entire Holy Quran in two *nafls* of the night, the great Imam Abu Hanifa, may God have mercy on him, spread knowledge during the day and worshiped at night, there are countless corners of his blessed life. Imams of Hadith mention and say that on one side Imam Abu Hanifa was the ocean of knowledge and on the other side are the mountains of asceticism, piety and purity.



Shaddad Bin Hakam, says: "I have not seen any scholar better than Abu Hanifa." Makki bin Ibrahim, may God have mercy on him, says: "Abu Hanifa, may God have mercy on him, was the greatest scholar of his time." Mullah, who is more jurisprudent than Abu Hanifa and prays better than him, "Nazar bin Shamal used to say, "People were unaware of the knowledge of jurisprudence, Abu Hanifa woke them up. While Muhaddith Yahya bin Saeed al-Qattan, may God have mercy on him, says, "We cannot lie in front of God, indeed, we have not listened to anyone in jurisprudence more than Abu Hanifah, may God have mercy on him, so we adopted most of his sayings."<sup>xvi</sup>

ن جرح و تعديل اور امام ابو حنيفه رح

قال أبو يوسف ، قال أبو حنيفة " لا ينبغي للرجل أن يحدث من الحديث ، إلا ما يحفظه من وقت ما سمعه . "

The Abbasid caliph Abu Jafar Mansoor advised Hazrat Imam-e-Azam Abu Hanifa (RA) to be the judge of the country. could not accept, due to which you were imprisoned in 146 Hijri. In this way, Imam Azam Abu Hanifa (RA) who did not accept the position of Qazi only because of the fear of Allah Almighty, Imam Azam Abu Hanifa (RA) offered his life so that the caliph of the time could not make any decision according to his will. Due to which the true Creator, Allah Almighty will not angry. Due to the scholarly fame of Imam Azam Abu Hanifa, education continued even in the prison, and scholars like Imam Muhammad learned from him in prison. Allah gave him poison. When Imam-e-Azam Abu Hanifa (RA) felt the effect of poison, he prostrated himself and died in this state at the age of 70 and seventy years on 2nd Sha'ban-ul-Muzam 150 Hijri. About 50,000 and fifty thousand people read the funeral prayer of Imam Azam Abu Hanifa (RA). In 375 AH, a large mosque was built near this cemetery under the name of "Jaami-ul-Imam-ul-Azam" which still exists today. In 150 AH, the Companions A great

Muhaddith, a rare and rare Fiqh, who transmitted narrations from the nobles and great subjects, has left this world.<sup>xvii</sup>

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