

Seats of Scholars Under the Shades of Scrolls

Abu Hanifa

→ Allah mentions virtues and blessings given to prophets. Allah reminds Prophet (peace be upon him), "He taught you those things that you would have not known. And indeed the virtues and blessings of Allah upon you are great."

- Knowledge is blessing from Allah. We have to be thankful for it.
- This blessing is given to some and not others. We have to be thankful to Allah for such a blessing.
- Ali (ra) said: It is enough to understand nobleness of knowledge such that people who were given no knowledge go around saying I have knowledge. And they become happy when they are told that they have knowledge. Ignorance is so disgraceful that those who are ignorant would say that they don't know.
- Gatherings Allah mentions (hiligul thikr) – gatherings where Allah is remembered. scholars remember Allah in hiligul thikr. Attaa said, "Gatherings of knowledge. People remind one another of halaal and haraam and of selling and buying."
- Knowledge: If one wants to burn structure will start from the roots not the top. Heat rises. Causes max damage. structure will collapse. Kufaar Attack prophet ← root of Islam. They have no problem believing in Allah but have issues believing in the Prophet (peace be upon him). They also attack Sahaban - carriers of knowledge. Takes away our sunnah. They also attack Ulamaa - pass knowledge to us. When one separates people from knowledge, the people become blind and are on their own. [Enters Fitnah – Ardo]

→ Abu Hanifa – His name was An-Numan ibn Thabit:

- His fiqh went furthest and adopted by many nations. People don't have an appropriate picture of him and may belittle his legacy. They say he said this and that and made this mistake and that mistake.
- If one wants to study Islam, s/he has to get advice from scholars. Ask those who have been successful acquiring what you are looking for. E.g Imaam at Masjid who has studied Islam in a traditional setting. You will notice that they will tell you to start studying the Quran. Emulate their example

→ Abu Hanifa did not have lecture style teaching. He had a think tank (Majlis of knowledge) – A group of people all knowledgeable in their respective fields. They get together and discuss issues. One of the students of Abu Hanifa, ibn Karaam, narrated that he was with Waki' ibn Jaraah when someone said Abu Hanifa was wrong in this. Waki' said, how can he make a mistake when his Majlis of knowledge has Abu Yusuf, Zufur and Muhammad ibn Hassan in Qiyaas and ijtihaad, how can he make a mistake when Yahya ibn Zakaria, hafs ibn Qiyaa and Hibaan bin Ali and Mandal ibn Ali are knowledgeable of hadith sitting with him, Khassim ibn ma'an is there in his halaqa and knows what he knows in the Arabic knowledge, Daud ad-Daai Alfudhai ibn Yaadh are there in his class who have Zuhd and taqwa, because if he does make a mistake, they will not allow him to make a mistake. They will raise their hands and correct him.

- In their circle of knowledge someone will throw a question and they will all attack the question and discuss and then the time for Abu Hanifa begins and they will be quiet. They will listen and take notes on the various fields - Hadith, fiqh, taqwa, Arabic language, Zuhd (spirituality)

*Benefits from teaching style

→ Abu Hanifa constantly learning himself from his students.

→ Respect for opinions, all the different fields worked together

- Laid down foundations in the fiqh. Abu Hanifa the first fiqh to go forward. First one to index fiqh. He had a group of scholars with him.

→ Following madhaahib. Two ways to look at it:

1) No madhab - get rid of all the legacy of fiqh from scholars and start from scratch. Will come to same conclusion as them or will probably do a worse job than they did.

2) Learn legacy of fiqh scholars left behind and then continue where they left off. Learn the proofs they left behind, understand what they said and then continue. E.g Imaam Shaafee – student of imam Malik and student of students of Abu Hanifa and then moved forward with it so much so that he had his own personality later.

→ In Abu Hanifa's Halaqaat, if they were gathered in a Halaqa and then encountered an issue to which they didn't have an answer, he would say, "this is due to a sin I committed." He would then get up and start praying to Allah and make istighfaar.

(Knows that knowledge does not come to sinners). He will pray until the issue hits him, When he gets the answer, he will thank Allah (SWT) because he would take it as a sign that Allah forgave him if he was able to come to the conclusion. He made a connection between knowledge and Allah SWT.

→ After the time of the Prophet SAW, the Sahaba did not keep the knowledge to themselves and we all have a responsibility to follow that legacy. They understood from La illaha ila Allah Muhammad Rasulullah that they were not going to go home and watch TV till they died. That was not the legacy that they left behind. They were not going to complain about the situation of the Muslims and then keep watching basket ball and foot ball games after that. They were not going to live their lives while their neighbours never heard about Islam. That was not possible for them. So we have the Ulamaa from the Sahaba going forward. E.g Abdullah bin Masud (ra) and their students going to Iraq, Zaid ibn Thabit (ra), ibn Umar (ra) and their students in Madina, teaching that legacy of fiqh that they learned from the Prophet (SAW). Ibn Abbas (ra) in Makkah. The knowledge was inherited from one to the other and that was the inheritance of the prophets. Ibn Masud was in Iraq

→ Abu Hanifa's teacher was Hammad ibn Abi-Sulayman (Rahimahu Allah). Abu-Sulayman (Hammad's father) used to see Hammad go to Ibraheem ibn An-Nakhai (RA). Hammad used to take care of Ibraheem an-Nakhai. If Ibraheem An-Nakhai needed wudhu water, Hammad will get for him, will cook for him, take his garbage out etc. When Hammad's father saw him take the garbage out, he said don't do that. You are humiliating yourself. Free people don't take other people's garbage out. They can do it for themselves. When An-Nakhai passed away, people from every where came knocking on Abu Sulayman's door. He came out with a candle and saw a crowd gathered outside his house, people from all over Iraq. They said to Abu Sulayman, "we are not looking for

you but your son Hammad". Abu Sulayman then said to his son, "I now know what taking the garbage out has done for you. I understand it now". Hammad reached the level that he did, being the teacher of Abu Hanifa and sharing in the reward of the legacy of the fiqh (insha Allah) because of Khidmatt-ul-Ulamaa (taking care of the Ulamaa). When we spend time with the ulaama outside of the lecture, that is when we learn the etiquettes and the adhaab and more than just the lecture. This point is not understood very well these days.

- When imam Shaafee studied with imam Malik that was his goal. How to go home with him and be his servant (his Khadaam) in order to benefit completely from his knowledge.

→ Abu Hanifa wa originally from Kabul, Afghanistan. His grandfather became Muslim at the time of Umar (RA). They moved to Kuffa where his father had a clothing store, which Abu Hanifa inherited.

- Important. Lesson: Abu Hanifa was the son of a business man but still became an imam. How did that come about? There was a special customer. One day. Ash-Sha'bi who was a great scholar came in and saw Imam Abu Hanifa, a young boy. He noticed the strong intelligence of the young boy. He said to him, "why don't you study Islam?" Why don't you go to this teacher and that teacher and study fiqh?". H dropped the seed of advice.

Lessons from this:

1) We don't know who Allah (SWT) is going to bless with the knowledge. If you have ever taught in a weekend school, you'll notice that it is not the student who brings the Apples for the teacher every morning who will lead the ummah. More often than not, you'll notice that the student who gets the most detentions will grow up to be the leader of the ummah. This is because Allah chooses, we don't.

→ Abu Hanifa took care of his students. If he noticed students who were intelligent but were getting distracted from their studies, he will encourage them and take care of them, even financially.

→ When Abu Hanifa was 16 years old, he would go to Makkah and Madina and perform hajj. He did that every year after that till he died. During one of those visits, he saw people gathered around a person. He asked his father who the person was and his father told him that it was Abdullah ibn Harith, one of the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him). So he was meeting with the scholars at that young age.

Side note: Muhammad Alshareef mentioned meeting Abdullah Basfar (Quran reciter) when he was younger and said to himself, I wanna be just like him when I grow up.

- Scholars were connected to who should be their role models at a young age.

→ Abu Hanifa started off being very strong in debate. Iraq at the time was known of its problems. There were many different types of groups that liked to talk and Abu Hanifa started off by debating with them. There were mu'tazilites, the khawarijs, Atheists, extremist of the shia etc. Abu Hanifa spent his time explaining and defending the truth.

→ Our da'wah shouldn't be based on refutation alone. Refutation by itself is not the way of the prophets. The Prophets told people to worship Allah alone and have no other illah besides Allah. They didn't wait for misconceptions. Misconceptions came after the da'wah was established

→ A time came when Abu Hanifa stopped doing the debates and stopped arguing with the people. His students started doing debates and arguing with the secularists. Abu Hanifa forbade them to do this. His son Hammad, who was a scholar also asked him, How can you forbid us when you used to do this yourself. Abu Hanifa said to him: " We used to argue, and it was as if the birds were on our heads (i.e. their nervousness and fear that their friend will slip in his argument and became Kaafir due to what he is saying.)"

That is because of the love they had for their brother, they were afraid that he will slip in his argument and fall in to kufur). "...But for you, it is the opposite. You are arguing and hoping in your heart that the person you are arguing with will be mistaken and will slip and fall into kuffur. You are hoping for it. Whoever hopes that their companion slips, truly has made the intention for their companion to become kaafir. And whoever wants their companion to fall into kuffur has fallen into kuffur before their companion has fallen into kuffur." Abu Hanifa said that later on when you saw the lives of the people who were arguing with them, they had gone into extremes in their deen. If you look at their actions, they were not people who feared Allah. Their actions were confused, they don't follow the Quran, they don't follow the sunnah, they don't follow what the u'lamaa had mentioned. They just followed their hawaa (their desires). So he said he looked at this and looked at the legacy of the U'lamaa from the Sahaba, their teachers, he found that debating was not a tradition they indulged in so I left it.

→ 3 stages to our da'wah .Replying to misconception is the third state.Fard ayn to invite people to Islam. Call to Islam with Hikma. Wisdom is to know Islam. Once you learn Islam correctly, pass on to the people in the best way. Teach people in the most beautiful and refined way. Argue with them in a way that is better. (ud'u ila sabeeli rabik bil hikma , wal mau'idhatu hasana, wa jaadil hum bilate hiya ahsan ...)

[16:125. Invite (mankind, O Muhammad SAW) to the Way of your Lord (i.e. Islâm) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine Inspiration and the Qur'ân) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. Truly, your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His Path, and He is the Best Aware of those who are guided.]

→ Abu Hanifa stayed with sh. Hammad for 18 years, to the point he was hand in hand with his teacher. He was as taking care of Hammad (RA). He will make dua for his teacher every time he made dua for his parents. If he went somewhere he will ask permission from his teacher. Abu Hanifa also prayed for his students.

*Make dua for those students who make trouble in the weekend school.

→ Abu Hanifa was tall, handsome and wore nice cloths. He used to wear musk. Before you see him, you'll smell his misk. The imams would wear their finest cloths when speaking about Islam. That was the etiquette of speaking about Islam and what the

Prophet said. Allah blessed them with wealth and it showed in the way they carried themselves. They would grant nobility to the ilm they were carrying.

→ He will find the situations of the strongest students and take care of them. E.g. took care of the one of the students, imam Abu Yusuf financially.

→ If the scholars had doubt in their wealth, they would be the quickest to stay away from it. Abu Hanifa had an enormous amount of clothing that he asked his worker to sell to someone else. He told his worker to tell the customer that the entire bulk had a problem. When the person sold the whole shipment, he sold it for 30, 000 dirhams. When Abu Hanifa asked him if he told the buyer that there was a problem with the clothing, the man said that he forgot. And since the customer had taken the clothing and left, Abu Hanifa did not touch a single dinar from that money and gave out all of it in sadaqa. This is because didn't know which one was the one taken in haraam since the person wasn't told of the problem with the items in the sell.

-Also, imam an-Nabawi would not eat certain fish from the river because he didn't know if the fish eat certain food that the khalifa threw in the water that was acquired in a non halaal way. So he will not eat fish in that city. Some scholars will also say do not burry me here because that land may have been acquired unjustly by the Khalifa.

→ It is narrated from Abu Hanifa by one of his students (Abdu Razaq) that sometimes you could see the remnants of tears on his face. You could tell that Abu Hanifa was someone who was constantly crying behind closed doors because of tears on his cheeks and the redness of his eyes. He would constantly cry for the sake of Allah.

→ Abu Hanifa's mother asked him a question. He gave her a fatwa and she told him that she did not want to ask him but another shaykh in the masjid. Abu Hanifa (ra) took his mother to another shaykh whose name was Zur'a, who used to teach in the same masjid. The shaykh gave her the same answer that Abu Hanifa gave and she was pleased with that answer.

→ Abu Hanifa was told by the Khalifa to become the Qadhi (judge) but he refused. It was a time of heavy politics and fitnah in the khalifa system. The Khalifa said to him that if you don't become the qaadhi (judge), we will beat you for refusing it and you will be tortured. The u'lamaa being tortured for standing for the haqq is not something new. What saddened Abu Hanifa most in this ordeal was when the guard would hit him in the face and his face would become bruised, bloody and swollen. This is because his mother would see this and cry and he would be saddened by his mother's sadness and crying. Sometimes she would say to him, "knowledge like this that brings you to this end is most deserving to be thrown away." Abu Hanifa would reply to her, "O mother, if I wanted the dunya, I could have it. But I didn't do this for the dunya. I was looking for the pleasure of Allah (swt). And Allah (swt) would know that I didn't back down on this knowledge and I didn't sell my deen." All the scholars went thru this. When imam Ahmed was being beaten, he would remember what Abu Hanifa went thru. So he had an example in the scholars that came before him.

→ We live in a time when the people don't understand what the scholars went through for this knowledge and so they will say things like, "the hadith is so clear, Abu Hanifa made a mistake."

→ Imam Abu Hanifa read Quran every day. Some narrations say every day he finished or every 3 days

→ He gave sadaqa every day. Taking of his students and the needy in the community.

→ He went for Hajj for 55 years (From the age of 16 until he died) and frequently went for Umra

→ He was a person of Qiyaam-ul-layl

→ A man came to Imam Abu Hanifa and shouted angrily at him saying, "Ya muhtada, ya zindeeq" (O you innovator, O you zindeeq (kafir, one who had gone in to extremes in his religion)). Imam Abu Hanifa responded to him, "Ghafar Allah laka [May Allah (swt) forgive you]. Allah (swt), the One who knows the heart and what is in the intention, knows of me opposite of what you said. I have not turned to anyone except Allah, after knowing Allah (swt). I don't hope for anything except Allah's mercy, and I don't fear anything, except the punishment of Allah." After saying "I don't fear anything except the punishment of Allah (swt)" he (Imam Abu Hanifa) started to cry and could not continue. The person said to him, "Forgive me for what I said." Abu Hanifa said, "If someone speaks out of ignorance (lay people) and they don't know what they are saying, I forgive them. But if the person has knowledge, they know what they are saying, then they have a burden on their back for what they have said (i.e. accountable for what they say). When that person back bites on the scholars, something is left in their heart, something bad and evil that can eventually take over that person's heart."

- That is the danger of a person spending their time speaking about this person and that person.

- When you see accusations like that against the scholars, don't think it is something new and that the people of the past didn't do it. There were always ignorant people who spoke ill of the scholars

- Notice Imam Abu Hanifa's response to the person. He said, "may Allah forgive you for what you have said." He didn't say it sarcastically or to humiliate the person. We should learn how to respond like that.

→ Imam Abu Yusuf (student of Imam Abu Hanifa) was asked about Imam Abu Hanifa by the Khalifa. Abu Yusuf said that he knows to be very quiet. When he is asked a question, he would be like a flowing river, teaching and explaining. But in between the questions, when it was not time for a lesson he was quiet and busied himself with his own thoughts. Abu Yusuf said that in all the years I have studied with Imam Abu Hanifa, I've known him to be someone who is concerned with his own mistakes. He took the time to say, "what have I done wrong." He didn't concern himself with the mistakes of others. When the Khalifa heard this he said, "These, indeed, are the etiquettes and characteristics of the righteous."

→ In the Hanafi fiqh, you will notice that they would sometimes say something is wajib and not fard. For example, they would say Witr is wajib and not fard. Someone who does not understand the difference between wajib and fard may say, why do they always say wajib? It is fard and there is no difference. There is a reason why they do

this and they learned it from their teachers. They don't want to say something is fard and that the person who leaves it would go to hell fire, when the scholars have differed on that issue. So, in their humbleness to Allah, they would say something like Makroo or Makroo Tahrimiyya. Others would say, what do you mean Makroo, it's haraam. This comes from a legacy of humbleness to Allah, humbleness to the Quran and Sunnah to avoid saying something that may be wrong about.

→ **Fard kifaaya** – Someone in the community has to do it. E.g. Washing the body of the deceased. Salaatul Janaza.

→ **Mustahab kifaaya** – Is there such a thing? E.g. Saying Assalaamu alaykum. What if no one did it?

Mustahab – something that is encouraged but if you don't do it, you are not punished for it.

Ibn Taymiyyah (RA) said that there is such a thing as **Mustahab kifaaya**. If the entire community does not establish this action, they will be blame worthy. They would be sinful. So someone in the community has to do it. His daleel (proof, evidence) that he gave was the example of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) at the time of war. They would be on the outskirts of a village or city and the Prophet (peace be upon him) would delay the attack till Fajr salah. If the Adhaan is given, the mission is aborted. If the Adhaan is not given, meaning people didn't come for the Fajr prayer, they were supposed to be considered kufaar and they were to be fought and killed in that battle. So the key thing here is the Adhaan. The Adhaan is Sunnah, but Prophet (peace be upon him) used it to differentiate if the people were Muslims or kaafir. So the Adhaan here is Mustahab kifaya. Someone in the community has to do it. Mustahab kifaya becomes Fardh kifaya on congregational scale. Someone has to do it.

→ Al A'mash, a hadith scholar, said to imam Abu Hanifa, "if knowledge and being a great scholar was about the number of halaqaat you attended and the number of I'jaza you have, I would have been more knowledgeable than you. But rather it is a gift from Allah and Allah blesses whom he wishes."

→ Countries that follow Hanafi fiqh: Iraq, Persia (Iran etc) Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, China, Turkistan, Damascus, Japan, Egypt, Almaghrib, Spain, Europe in its entirety. This is because the Ottoman empire took the Hanafi fiqh as their government madhab.

→ So what was the secret of imam Abu Hanifa, how did his legacy reach far and wide?

He said, "I only arrive at what I arrive at by praising Allah and thanking him. Any time I found a new piece of knowledge or learned something new or found a new wisdom, I said alhamdulillah. And so Allah increased me in that knowledge."

Quran 14:7 : "... Lain shakartum la azeedanakum ..." ["If you give thanks (by accepting Faith and worshipping none but Allâh), I will give you more (of My Blessings)]

Imam Malik

- Allah subhanahu wata'ala blesses certain people, one of these people is Imam Malik
- Why Imam Malik began studying the deen:
 - He used to play with birds when he was younger. One day his father asked a question and imam Malik couldn't answer it and his older brother got it right. His father told him that the only reason he didn't the answer is because he wasted his time playing. Imam Malik was hurt and when to his mother crying. From that day on his mother decided to send him to school.....from there he began his journey in seeking knowledge.
- His mother chose one of the best teachers for him.
 - A man called Rabi'atu al-ra'y (Rabi'a the thinker or the one who has opinions) because he was a thinker.
- Something that all the imams had in common is that they were all thinkers.
- At that time the profession of the people in Iraq was argumentation.
- Imam Malik disliked argumentation. He had **hayba**.
- Why did imam Malik pray two raka'as when the boy commended him to pray? "wa ida qila lahum irka'u la yarka'un"
- His opinion was that you should not pray two rak'as at the masjid after asr as tahiyat almasjid.
- He was of +the opinion that Ijamaa ahl almadina (the culture of the people that lived in madina, they were the children of the sahaba) was proof.
- He was very strong in establishing the sunna in Madina. He prevented a man from putting a shawl down to pray on it. So people won't take that as Sunna, because people used to come from all over the world to take the culture of the sahaba.
- His students used to attend his classes to take note of his character.
- He used to take a peace of thread, every time the sheikh mentions a hadith he memorize it and tie a knot...and then he would go home and count the knot and narrate the ahadith to himself. If there were any knots missing he knew he was missing a hadith.
- He took over the family business when he was young, because he was busy studying. Therefore, he lived years in poverty, but did not give up seeking knowledge.
- One of the people that took care of him was Imam Layth. Imam Layth was always close to him and used visit him every time he came to madina. He helped him out financially when there was no one helping. Even though they had different opinions, they were good friends.
- Imam Malik used to run his own halaqa, and didn't let people run. Hisham ibn Amaar's story with Imam Malik.
- The story of the man and imam al-Shafi'i.....what happened? What is the significant of the story?
- Imam Malik spent 30 years of studies with his teacher. He sought his teacher's permission before he started his own halaqa.

- When he came to narrate a hadith he would dress up with the most beautiful cloths. He was handsome and as he got older he had more beauty. He was not a loud person; it might be hard for you to hear him.
- He was taken by the sultan and beaten (until his arm was dislocated) because he gave the fatwa that if a man was forcefully divorced from his wife that divorce doesn't count.
- He wrote the almuwata and at that same time a lot of other scholars started writing their own muwata too, but today only imam malik's muwatah exists.
- As he got older he stopped coming to the Halaqas, following Janaza, visiting the sick...and no one knew about it.

Imam Shafi'ee

- Student of imam Malik
- Studied with students of imam Abu Hanifa
- Came to a point he went further with the knowledge and improved on what he learned – corrected inconsistencies and mistakes that he saw.
- He held the opinion that ijma' was a proof of Islamic law – If there is an issue that the ummah has agreed to in its entirety and then that time passes, the fact that the entire ummah agreed on one opinion is a proof of Islamic law
 - He had proofs for this opinion from the statements of the Prophet (peace be upon him). E.g. "The hand of Allah is with the congregation, and whoever goes on their own or steps a way from that jama'a, has gone on their own into hell fire." As well as other ahadith
 - A man came to Imam Shafi'ee and asked him what his proof for ijma' was from the Quran. Imam Shafi'ee said he didn't have one. The man said to him, "I'll give you 3 days to come up with the proof, otherwise you should keep quiet". Imam Shafi'ee went home and secluded himself for 3 days. After 3 days, he came out and the students could see the swelling on his feet and they could see the tiredness in his face. He told the man, " the proof is, Qawlahu ta'ala, **Waman yushaqiqi alrrasoola min ba'di ma tabayyana lahu alhuda wayattabi'a ghayra sabeeli almunineena nuwallihi ma tawalla wanuslihi jahannama wasaat maseera.**" [If anyone contends with the Messenger even after guidance has been plainly conveyed to him, and follows a path other than that of the believers, We shall leave him in the path he has chosen, and land him in Hell,- what an evil refuge!] which is a proof of ijma' and shows that if the ummah has agreed on an opinion and someone chooses a path other than that of the believers, then that person is a person of hell fire. The man said, ahsant (very good) and went a way but didn't know what imam Shafi'ee went through to get the Ayah as a proof. When imam Shafi'ee was asked the question, he went home and started reciting the entire Quran in Salaah. And for the 3 days he was in seclusion, day after day after day, he kept reciting the entire Quran searching for the proof. His focused on understanding Allah's words in order to get the proof.
- Even as a student, he had a brilliant mind. If someone would come to imam Malik to ask a question, he would still follow out to know what the answer was. Sometimes he would come to a different conclusion than what imam Malik's was

- but still would have the respect to speak and discuss things with imam Malik and Imam Malik would go back on his opinion.
- Reached a level where even the kings and the Sultan's would get jealous – due to the number of followers he had
 - One day, imam Shafi'ee was walking thru the soq (the market place) and he had a whole entourage, something even the Khalifa wouldn't have. A Christian came up to him and stopped imam Shafi'ee and everyone that was following him, saying to him, "you Muslims say, the dunya is the prison of the believer and the paradise of the disbeliever [hadith]. How can this be so when you Muslims have all these things in this dunya (i.e all the followers, knowledge, wealth etc) and I am a non-Muslim and I have nothing. How can it be my paradise?"
 - Imam Shafi'ee said to him, for the believer, when he compares this dunya to what Allah has in store for him, no matter what that person had in this dunya, he will know that he was imprisoned by the dunya, because of the blessings awaiting for them from Allah. But the non-Muslim, the kafir, when he sees what is in store in hell fire, he will know that what he had in this dunya was his paradise. The fact that he could eat and sleep etc, that was his paradise. Imam Shafi'ee then offered him the chance to make the dunya his prison and not his paradise. The man accepted saying, "La illah ila Allah Muhammad rasulullah." [He became Muslim].

→ Was tall and strong [recurring characteristics in the scholars]

→ Was very athletic. Was good in archery, spears, etc – learned this in his path of seeking knowledge

→ Was a powerhouse thinker, a madrasa by himself in his intellect

→ Truthful – Even though student of imam Malik, he isn't a Maliki. He was truthful to the knowledge that he had and not going to the madhab extremism that other people had.

→ In that extremism, some people in Iraq (Abu Hanifa' fiqh), people in Madina and other places (Imam Malik's fiqh), would reject the sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) because of their madhab. Didn't learn this from the imams but brought it on themselves. So, when imam Shafi'ee would go to Iraq, the extremists there will attack him for his comments against the Hanafi fiqh. When he would go to Egypt, people there would attack him also for his comments against the Maliki Fiqh. But he was the student of these imams.

→ Example of Madhab extremism... some have certain slogans. Extreme Malikis would say jokingly, "Al Khaleel wa in khaalafa daleel". [We would follow Khaleel even if he goes against the daleel (evidence in the Quran and the sunnah)] --- This isn't what the teachers of those madhabs taught.

→ Imam Shafi'ee journeyed very far very wide. Travelled a lot. In the Quran, "Qul seeru fil ardh..." [Tell them to go travel the land] When traveled to Egypt, in the 5 years he stayed there, rewrote all his writing due the new knowledge he acquired.

→ His name was Muhammad ibn Idrees ibn Alabas ibn Shafi'ee.

→ Was born in the year 150AH the same year imam Abu Hanifa passed away.

→ He was born in Ghaza, Filistine (Palestine). His Parents came from Makkah. His mother was from the tribe of Quraysh. Because they were poor, they moved around because they were looking for business opportunities. From Filistine, they moved to Syria then back to Makkah.

→ His family was poor. In Makkah, his mother took him to Masjid alHaram, the ka'ba trying to find him a place to study. They didn't have money to pay for the classes. So imam Shafi'ee would sit next to teachers and memorize everything they say. When the teacher goes away, he would gather all the little kids and narrate to them everything the teacher said. So the teacher took him as a teaching assistant to control the younger kids who would give the teacher trouble.

→ Because his family was poor, couldn't afford to buy paper. So he would memorize everything the teacher said.

→ Recognized the importance of the Arabic language when was younger. Even at the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) the Arabs had the tradition of sending their kids to the Bedouins to learn proper Arabic. Imam Shafi'ee went to the tribe of Hudhayl (Arab tribe that was nomadic). Lived with them for 10 years, learning the language. He also learned his athletic ability (archery, spear etc) from them, because that was their livelihood. He acquire his language ability from them.

- E.g. of the benefits of such a language, the word "Faadir" in the verse "Faadiru-samawatii wal ardh." Ibn Abbas (RA) said he didn't know what the word meant until he heard an Arab woman say about her son, "anna fadartu". He realized that she meant, this is my son I originated him (meaning I originated [gave birth?] him and raised him up). So he understood what Allah meant by, "faadiru-samawati wal ardh" That is Allah originated the heavens and the earth and raised and created them. Imam Shafi'ee learned the Arabic language like this. So when certain things would come up in the Ayaat or the ahadith, he wouldn't be confused by them as others would be because of his strength in the Arabic language.

→ Another recurring theme in the lives of the imams is the role of the mother and their relationship with and respect for their mothers. We saw this with imam Malik and also imam Abu Hanfa. Whenever imam Shafi'ee would go to study with a new teacher, he would seek his mothers counsel and opinion. Even though he was getting older and new who the better teacher was to study with, he would still respect and honour her with those questions.

→ When he was 20 years, people started telling him to start his own halaqaat and give his own fatawa because he had reached a level of knowledge where people were telling him, "you be the teacher, become the shaykh now".

- *In our societies today, the masajid and the madrasas are opening up at a speed faster than we are producing scholars. So people who don't even come close to the level of knowledge of imam Shafi'ee are being pushed into Khutbah and teaching positions. And no doubt, a lot of harm happens there. This doesn't mean people shouldn't educate others, but rather that they should educate themselves, get stronger in their deen and then educate others (a two step process: Fard for them to get stronger in their deen and fard for them to teach it to others)*
 - Imam Shafi'ee was not ready to take up that role and give fatawa because he believed he still had a lot to learn. He had not gone to Iraq yet. In fact, he had not even studied in Madina yet (he was still in Makkah). One of the great teachers in Madina that he had about was imam Malik. Imam Shafi'ee, 20 years old at the time, borrowed a copy of the Muwatta and memorized the entire muwatta before actually going to class. He also had a beautiful voice and his I'raab and tashkeel (Arabic grammar and pronunciation) when he would read something was so precise and beautiful. This is because he had spent all those years in the desert with the Bedouins learning proper Arabic.

→ His mother tried to get him a Wasita (middle man[connections?]) to get him into imam Malik's classes. She spoke to her Ameer who wrote a letter to the Ameer of imam Malik. When imam Malik got the letter, he said it is not going to do anything. He rejected the Wasita because he believed that was not the way to acquire knowledge. The Ameer went with imam Shafi'ee, who was 20 years old at the time, to imam Malik. At the time, imam Malik was in his 70s. Although he rejected the letter, imam Malik did recognize the intelligence of imam Shafi'ee. And as imam Shafi'ee narrated later on, when he would recite the Muwatta to him, every time he was ready to stop, he would ask him to continue, because imam Malik loved to hear how imam Shafi'ee recited the ahadith. In a matter of only a few days, Imam Shafi'ee was able to recite the whole Muwatta to imam Malik. [Ardo's gem, keeping your brain active when you are young benefits you when you get older. The risk for diseases like Alzheimer's is less for those who kept their brains active through memorization and other activities when they were young (under 40) than those who don't. The Kuffaar suggest things like cross word puzzles and so on to keep challenging your brain. We can memorize and ponder over Allah's words and the words of the Rasul (peace be upon him) to get these dunya benefits in addition to the benefits we get in the akhirah]

→ Another recurring theme - imam Malik took care of imam Shafi'ee just like imam Abu Hanifa took care of his strong students. The scholars were encouraging smart children in the community to keep studying. If they needed help, they were there to help them.

→ The kind of khulookh (manners) that were taught to even young children by the scholars (story of young Shaykh Waleed Basyouni and Shaykh Uthayman and the shawl). Importance of living and getting tarbiya from the Ulamaa. Extension of this: Welcome new Muslims to your homes and to your lives so that they can grow in their Islam rather than get their Islam from just books and lectures.

→ Imam Shafi'ee had interest in Medicine and the Sciences.

→ After studying with imam Malik for 9 years, imam Shafi'ee sought permission from imam Malik to go to Iraq and learn from the U'lamaa there.

→ In Madina, imam Shafi'ee learned the fiqh of imam Malik and now he was going to Iraq where the fiqh of imam Abu Hanifa was predominant. He didn't have the madhab extremism that was prevalent at the time but learned and continued from where the others left off.

→ In Iraq, he met Muhammad ibn Alhassan, one of the greatest students of imam Abu Hanifa. They used to debate on Fiqh issues. Their fiqh backgrounds were different. When they disagreed, it was a disagreement of brotherhood. The back and forth debating on issues helped them grow in their knowledge.

- In order for someone to grow, they have to be challenged. E.g. Playing tennis: if you are good at playing tennis and just play with a person who has never played before, they will just hit the ball far and your skills will get worse. As you play better people, you get stronger in your tennis skills. Similarly, if you are in a community where the majority are just lazy, they don't do any sort of Islamic activities, any body who does Halaqa on Friday nights thinks he is imam Abu Hanifa or imam Shafi'ee (the greatest scholar that ever came) because he is comparing himself to the laziness around him. People don't get stronger like that. You have to challenge yourself with those that are better than you. When you are challenged, your da'wah activities will get stronger.

→ Another recurring theme – The scholars protected their tongues from backbiting on people. For example, someone would say to imam Shafi'ee, "so and so is a liar" That is he lied against the Prophet (peace be upon him). Imam Shafi'ee would tell them, "don't say he is a liar, but rather his hadith is not authentic). The focus is on the issue and not the person. This is the correct way of establishing dialogue. Perhaps the person would repent and not make up things in the future.

→ Another recurring theme – The imams were constantly learning. Even after they established their own halaqaat and became the teachers, they didn't stop learning and just teach what they already knew. We saw this with imam Abu Hanifa, imam Malik and now imam Shafi'ee. For example, imam Shafi'ee's classes would be over by dhuhur time and he would spend the rest of the day studying and writing his books.

→ His teaching style was a combination of Ahlul hadith (predominant in Madina) and Ahlul ra'I (predominant in Iraq)

Imam Ahmed

People don't realize how protected Islam was until they study the sciences.

Imam Ahmed grew up in Baghdad

His father died when he was young

His mother used to wake up before qiyam al-layl to boil water for her son, so he can make wudu in the last part of the night

She woke up that early so her son can get the front seats in the masjid halaqah

She used to wait for him until around dhuhr time to take him home

His mother chose the best teachers for him

The imam was raised in a household that didn't have too much wealth. Even though he was poor, he never accepted social assistance from people.

For job, he would:

- Carry luggage
- Carry bags-so he can ride with people
- Copy text books for people " Is there any books you would like me to write for you"

Imam Al-Shari' I was 15 years older than Imam Ahmed. Imam Ahmed used to study with him.

Imam Ahmed worked hard (went east and west) to compile the Ahadith---he was very close to hadith.

Imam Ahmed said that "there wasn't a single hadith that I narrated and compiled except that I tried my best to act upon it".

His son Abdullah was a scholar. Both he and his son would play a hadith ball.

- One of them would narrate the hadith and the other would narrate the isnad.

All the Ulama used to act as they wanted their children to be.

The Ulama spent their time in qiyaam al-layl and ibadah.

- Imam Ahmed once put water for one of his students to make wudu for qiyam al-layl. In the morning the water was still there. Imam Ahmed was shocked and said "Ajaban min talibi ilmin la yaqum al-layl" (I'm amazed and schocked at students of knowledge who don't get up pray qiyaam-ul-layl)

Imam Ahmed was the opinion that said camel meat break the wudu.

Imam Ahmed was focused on compiling the ahdith not the fiqh issues. The books that are written were from the people (his students) asking questions and compiling it.

Imam Ahmed was on time mocked in front of his son.

Khalifat Almu'tasim:

- Ordered that imam Ahmed to be beaten, because he said the Quran is the speech of Allah.
- Imam Ahmed was beaten 80 lashes and still prayed dhuhr standing after that.
- For his determination imam Ahmed became a simple for people who follow the Sunna.
- Imam Ahmed said that he only felt up to 20 lashes and after that it became numb and he didn't even feel it.

- Hassan ibn 3ofah, started crying. Imam Ahmed told him why you are crying, I didn't lose my iman. Why should I care if I lose myself after that? And he recited (qul lan yusibana ilaa maa kataba allahu lana).

Imam was offered the chance to become a qadhi (government official), and he refused for fear to be forced to oppress the people.

Imam Abdirazaq recalls one time imam Ahmed made a mistake in the Salah. (people started asking why did he do that, doesn't he know), they realized later that it is because he didn't eat for three days.

His son asked him one time "When is the rest?" Imam Ahmed said "With the first step we enter jannah.

Imaam Ahmad said to Maruthi (one of his students), what will I say to all this people waiting to take notes. I will rather lose my life than misguide all these people