

REVERED ELDERS

PART –1

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**HAZRAT
SAYEED-BIN-MUSAYYIB (R.A.)**

Hazrat Sayeed-bin-Musayyib (R.A.) was a great scholar among our respected elders. He lived in Madinah and was respected much for his scholarship. He was not a mere knowledgeable person. He practiced what he had learnt from the glorious Qur'an and the traditions of the holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He followed these great sources even in very small matters. He lived while many companions of our beloved Prophet (peace be upon him) were alive. He studied the holy Qur'an and Hadith from those companions. He was known for his devotion to the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and what he learnt from them. Since he acted on whatever he learnt of the Islamic religion, he turned into a highly trusted and true Muslim. The great companions of the Prophet also liked him much for his devotion and practices. Hazrat Abu Hurairah (R.A.), one of the companions, was impressed by Hazrat Sayeed so much that he got his daughter married to him. He was known for a great number of good qualities. We shall refer here to one such characteristic.

Hazrat Sayeed-bin-Musayyib (R.A.) was grateful to Allah, the Almighty, for making him the father of an equally noble daughter. She was very intelligent.

When he started coaching her, she learnt Qur'an and Hadith in few days alone. Like her father, she also strived to practice whatever she learnt from the Qur'an and the traditions of the holy Prophet. She soon earned a name for her scholarship and its practical application. She was very beautiful. She was also known for her aristocracy. By this we mean that her father belonged to Quraish dynasty. This

was a highly respected dynasty of Arabia. Thus she possessed four great characteristics.

1. She was from a highly respected dynasty.
2. She was very beautiful.
3. She was a great scholar.
4. She was highly religious.

It means she followed and practiced the instructions of the religion fully.

Soon her fame reached Caliph Abdul Malik. He was a great ruler. He wanted to make her his daughter-in-law. He sent a nobleman to Hazrat Sayeed-bin-Musayyib (R.A.) with the proposal. But Hazrat Sayeed rejected the proposal of the Caliph. He flatly refused to get his daughter married to the prince. Everyone was surprised. Just think! How comfortable would be the life in a royal family. Attendants and maids would be at service always. The girl could rule in riches. Food, jewellery, dress and all comforts would be at her beck and call. She could be the sole authority. This was how the kings and princes live.

But Sayeed-bin-Musayyib (R.A.) did not like all this due to the absence of one great attribute. He believed that Abdul Malik was not a true Caliph. He took the Caliph to be a tyrant, whose commanders were also ruthless and brutal. One such chief was Hajjaj-bin-Yusuf. The Caliph liked Hajjaj for his barbarity. How could Sayeed-bin-Musayyib let his daughter live in such environment? Abdul Malik was sore about the rejection. He applied pressure. He even teased Sayeed. But Sayeed-bin-Musayyib had the tradition of the great Prophet (peace be upon him) which states that people would marry on the basis of family, wealth, scholarship and beauty but one should seek marriage where there is piety. Obviously he would be a tyrant who is not pious. Certainly Sayeed-bin-Musayyib would not establish kinship with a despot like Abdul Malik. He believed that the comforts of this world are transitory. In fact this is the truth. The pleasures and comforts are those of the Hereafter alone.

The true Muslim would strive to perform good deeds and to please his Lord by following His commandments. Hazrat Sayeed was a true Muslim and he liked true Muslims alone. Even the daughter was like her father.

When the atrocities of the king increased, Sayeed-bin-Musayyib thought it proper to get her daughter married as soon as possible. Can you imagine how he chose the groom for his daughter? There was a very good student among his pupils. His name was Wada'ah. Wada'ah was absent from the classes for quite sometime. When he returned, Sayeed enquired Wada'ah.

“Where were you all these days?”

The student replied:

“I was absent since my wife breathed her last.”

“Why did you not inform me? I too would have joined the funeral prayer,” the teacher remarked.

Wada'ah was silent. When he got up to depart, Hazrat Sayeed asked: “Have you thought of a second marriage or not?”

“Sir, I am quite poor. Who would give his daughter in marriage to me?” The student replied.

On hearing this, the teacher said; “I would.”

So he got up and instantaneously performed the marriage of his scholar daughter with Wada'ah, whose hand the Caliph had sought for the prince. He never enquired about the family, nor the possessions of Wada'ah. Neither did he care for his personality. He was well aware that Wada'ah was a very pious student.

After the *nikah* Wada'ah returned home. He did not declare that he got married. Perhaps he thought that he should speak about the marriage when the bride will enter the house. Just look! Wada'ah got married in the clothes which he had worn to the school. Neither he, nor the bride wore

any new dress specially got stitched for the occasion. It was also possible that if he had informed about the marriage at that time, people would have made fun and a fool of him.

Well, listen to what happened later.

Soon it was evening. Hazrat Sayeed-bin-Musayyib (R.A.) took his daughter along with him and proceeded to the residence of his son-in-law. He reached the house. Wada'ah was on fast that day. He had broken his fast and was about to start taking his food. He asked from inside. "Who is at the door?"

"Sayeed!" was the reply. Wada'ah never thought that it would be his father-in-law, for he knew that Hazrat Sayeed would not move out of his residence except for the prayers at the mosque close by. He took Sayeed to be some stranger. He opened the door and was dazed to see his teacher there. After exchanging the salutations, he pleaded. "You could have called me, Sir. Why did you take the trouble? What can I do for you, Sir?"

The teacher said: "Look, when you have a wife, she should be with you at your house. I have brought her. Here she is. Take her in!"

The newly married bride was standing behind her father clad in her everyday clothes. There was no bridal dress or jewels on her. She had walked on foot all along with the father to her husband's residence. Hazrat Sayeed-bin-Musayyib (R.A.) led the daughter inside the residence and returned from the door saying, *As-salam-o-alaikum*.

Wada'ah was quite ecstatic. He had to inform others now. His mother was at the neighbour's house at the moment. When she learnt about the happening, she hurried home. She looked at the daughter-in-law and was quite happy. Wada'ah realised that this daughter of Hazrat Sayeed-bin-Musayyib was the hafiz of the the Glorious Qur'an, a scholar of the traditions and was fully aware of the characteristics of a good wife as prescribed by Allah and His Apostle.

This was Hazrat Sayeed-bin-Musayyib (R.A.).

Now pause and ponder. Do Muslims of today think on such lines at the time of performing the marriage of their sons or daughters? In fact the present day Muslims have moved away from the path of their religion and venerable elders! People now-a-days think of getting their wards married in rich families. Piety is only a secondary or no consideration. Wealth and riches, whether earned legally or illegally, constitute the main criteria. The partner should be quite handsome even if he is a devil intrinsically. Do you know how marriages are performed? Money is lavishly spent. All sorts of rituals are adopted for the sake of mere name. Many a time the parents are seen crying for the non-payment of heavy loans raised at the time of marriage. This is certainly the plight of all those who do not heed the commands of Allah and His great Messenger and who do not practice piety!

Our great Prophet (peace be upon him) has said that the best marriage is one where the least is spent. Keep this tradition in view and imagine how best Hazrat Sayeed-bin-Musayyib (R.A.) got his daughter married. Let Allah shower His blessings on him and on all those who follow His commandments. Ameen!



Hazrat

Ibrahim-bin-Yazid Tayyami (R.A.)

There were two great scholars. Both had similar names. Even the name of their fathers were common. The only difference was that they belonged to two different clans. One was Ibrahim-bin-Yazid Tayyami and the other was Ibrahim-bin-Yazid Nakhai. Tayyami and Nakhai were names of clans to which they belonged. Both were the disciples of companions of Prophet Muhammed (S.A.W.). They were very pious and God fearing.

Hajjaj-bin-Yusuf was the ruler of that time. He was notorious and tyrant Governor. He had killed many noble and pious persons. Ibrahim-bin-Yazid Nakhai (R.A.) was one among those who regarded him as dictator and unIslamic ruler. When this information reached Hajjaj, he ordered to arrest of Ibrahim-bin-Yazid Nakhai (R.A.). After hearing this news Ibrahim-bin-Yazid Tayyami (R.A.) was shocked and thought of saving the life of great scholar Nakhai (R.A.). Working out some plans Tayyami (R.A.) was passing through the streets. Suddenly soldiers of Hajjaj stopped him and asked, "Who are you?" Tayyami replied : "I am Ibrahim." "What is your father's name?" enquired the soldier. "My father's name is Yazid." Listening this name, soldiers immediately arrested Tayyami in place of Nakhai.

They put him in jail and tortured him. He was kept starving, plunged him into water and put heavy chains in his legs. He faced all the excessess to save his friend and great scholar Nakhai. He did not disclose his identity that he was Tayyami. At last he died in the prison. Hajjaj had dreamt in the same night that a great person had expired whose place in the heaven was reserved. Next morning he

noted the death of Tayyami.

This is a great example of sacrifice and concern for others.
Particularly towards eminent scholars.



Hazrat
Hafiz Hasheem-bin-Basheer (R.A.)

Bukhara is a town in east Turkistan (now Uzbekistan). A cook, Basheer, lived there some 1300 years ago. Basheer was an expert cook. He prepared very delicious dishes. Fish delicacies were his speciality. He was much in demand by the aristocrats, nobles and rulers. They paid him high for his services.

It is the human tendency that men desire their son also to adopt the same trade in which they have succeeded and earned lot of money. They want the son to lead an easy life by earning more. Basheer was no exception. He had a very intelligent son. His name was Hasheem. Basheer wanted Hasheem to become a great cook. He made the son to work along with him. But Hasheem had other likings. Seeking knowledge was his passion. Hasheem-bin-Basheer desired to get a knowledge of the holy Qur'an and Hadith.

Hasheem was a very dutiful child. He never disobeyed his father. He used to learn the art of cooking from his father regularly and then rushed to the scholars of the Qur'an and Hadith in his spare hours. He used to recite the holy text of the Qur'an and to listen to Hadith. Whatever he studied and listened, he memorised. He had a very good memory. It was Allah's grace that he would not forget what entered his memory once.

Young Hasheem enjoyed another privilege. At that time quite a number of noble and qualified scholars who had learnt Qur'an and Hadith from the learned companions of Prophet (S.A.W.) were alive. Among them was Qazi Abu Shaibah (R.A.) who was the Chief Qazi. He had established a school. Hasheem started attending that school. This came

in the way of his cooking engagements. The father was sore that the son was not taking up such work which would fetch him money. Despite the displeasure of the father he was keen about education. He attended the school regularly and learnt Qur'an and Hadith from the Qazi.

Once Hasheem fell ill and did not attend the school for long. Qazi enquired about him and learnt that he was bed-ridden. Qazi decided to call on him. Along with Qazi, other teachers also accompanied to see him. All these teachers liked Hasheem since he was a brilliant, obedient and hard working student. When this team of learned men reached the residence of Basheer, the cook was amazed. The arrival of the great Qazi and his companions at the door of a poor cook was a great honour. The news spread like wild fire. People gathered around the house. They commented :

“How lucky is Basheer that such great persons have arrived at his residence!”

Basheer was excited. Qazi sat by the side of Hasheem, enquired about his health, prayed for him and returned.

After the departure of the Qazi, Basheer addressed his son :

“My boy, I used to prevent you from getting educated. Now I will not do so. Never did I know that you will attain such a status that Qazi would grace my residence. Even great rulers take Qazi's visit as an honour.”

This pleased Hasheem much. After his recovery from the illness he spent more time at the school. His devotion towards learning multiplied. He travelled far and wide to seek more knowledge. Whenever he heard that a particular person knew a Hadith of the great Prophet (S.A.W.), he would approach the person and would seek the text and source of the Hadith. Then he would memorise the Hadith as narrated and would start practicing it.

Yes! He would apply it in his daily life. For this purpose only he used to be in continual search of traditionalists and travelled to Makkah, Madinah, Basra, Kufa, Baghdad and several other places. He met great scholars. He even met Hazrat Amr-bin-Deenar (R.A.) and studied Hadith from him. He was known as Hafiz Imam Hasheem and students thronged around him for seeking knowledge. He started delivering discourses at Baghdad. Among his students were included the following great personalities of Islamic thought, jurisprudence and philosophy.

- a- Imam Malik (R.A.), one among the four Imams.
- b- Imam Ahmed-bin-Hambal (R.A.), another Imam.
- c- Imam Hammad (R.A.), the teacher of Imam Abu Haneefa(R.A.).

Imagine how scholarship does elevate a person to the highest rank. Hafiz Hasheem-bin-Basheer (R.A.) was the son of a cook but he was regarded as a great scholar of Islamic world. In fact great is one who possesses more knowledge and practices accordingly.

The Glorious Qur'an says:

“Great is one who fears more to Allah.”



**Hazrat
Khwaja Hasan Basri (R.A.)**

Khwaja Hasan Basri (R.A.) was one of our great ancestors. One reason for his veneration was that Ummul Momineen Hazrat Umme Salma (R.A.) had fed him with milk. He enjoyed the privilege of visiting all the Ummahatul Momineen and of learning Qur'an, Hadith and noble principles from them. He learnt a lot from the companions of Prophet (S.A.W.) also. He was hardworking and wise. So he attained the status of a scholar in a very short period. He did not rest with becoming a scholar. He put into practice what he learnt from the holy Qur'an and Hadith and also delivered the knowledge to others.

Basri was concerned deeply about the accountability of the Hereafter and the displeasure of Allah. He never desired to displease Allah by any of his actions. He did not like to be grouped with evilmen. For this reason alone, he always performed such actions which would be approved by Allah. He never thought of amassing wealth or living for pleasure. He often remarked that men forget Allah when they become rich. A tyrant ruled the state during his life time. He had earned bad name for his cruelties. His name was Hajjaj-bin-Yusuf. Once Hajjaj got a palace constructed. It was a magnificent piece of architecture, decorated profusely and majestically. He opened the palace for public observation. People thronged the palace. They were impressed. All praised it for its majesty and appeal.

Hajjaj noticed that all the citizens visited the palace except Hazrat Khwaja Hasan Basri. He sent for the saint. Khwaja Hasan did not like to go. But he went there on the advice and persuasion of his well wishers. He observed the palace, its decorations and its splendour. He came out of the palace.

Hajjaj asked :

“Khwaja Saheb, Did you observe any defect in the palace? If there is one, tell me and it shall be rectified.”

Khwaja Hasan replied :

“Yes, there is one defect. Quite a prominent one!”

“What’s it?” Enquired the ruler.

The great man said :

“A day dawns when this grand palace and its splendid belongings will turn stale and old and then it will go down and will not exist. Wise is the person who builds such a palace which will neither rot nor get destroyed.”

He was obviously referring to the palaces in the paradise, which will be awarded to pious persons by Allah.

Hajjaj got irritated but could not find fault with the saint openly. He just muttered :

“This person is a fool.”

How daring were our great elders! They never hesitated to speak the truth even before mighty rulers. If we claim to be their followers, we should not fear anyone. This would happen when we fear Allah only. Once the fear of God rules the mind, the fear of all kinds disappear. Neither greed would capture us!



Lesson - 5

Hazrat Qazi Shuraih (R.A.)

Qazi is the judge who decides litigations in the court. He should be unbiased and unprejudiced. He should decide cases independently without favouring anybody. No pressure, influence or temptation should hold him back from passing just verdicts. He should fear only God. He will be punished on the Day of Judgement if he passes wrong verdicts intentionally or under the influence of any external force or for personal favour.

Judges and Qazis who have inherent fear of the Day of Judgement decide litigations and suits in a best way. There have been many such Qazis in the past who have passed judgements against the kings and Caliphs without any fear. They never yielded to any pressure, bribe or inducement. We shall present two or three verdicts of one such Qazi. He was Qazi Shuraih (R.A.).

Once Hazrat Omar (R.A.), the second Caliph, purchased a horse. He wanted to ascertain the capacity of the horse. He handed it over to a person to ride the horse. During the run the horse got hurt and became defective. Hazrat Omar (R.A.) wanted to return the horse. The owner refused to take it back saying :

“I cannot take back the horse now !”

Hazrat Omar (R.A.) filed a suit in the court. The case came before Qazi Shuraih (R.A.).

The Qazi ruled that the horse became defective after the conclusion of the deal, hence it could not be returned.

The verdict was against the Caliph. The Qazi had no fear of the great Caliph. Caliph Omar (R.A.) was much pleased

with the Judgement. He immediately elevated Shuraih as the Chief Qazi of Kufa.

Qazi Shuraih (R.A.) had a son. He entered into a deal with another person. But suddenly a conflict arose between the parties. The boy was on the wrong side. He thought he should approach the court. "My father is in the chair" was his consolation. However he thought it appropriate to consult his father before filing the suit. He went to his father for opinion and added, "if I am sure of winning the suit, I shall file it."

Qazi Shuraih (R.A.) thought for a moment and then advised the boy to go ahead and file the case. The boy filed the suit and the Qazi Shuraih (R.A.) decided the case against the boy. The son got hurt and protested :

"If you had hinted me earlier, I would not have approached the court."

Qazi replied :

"My son, if I had hinted earlier, you would have settled the matter with your friend on unspecified terms. Then you would have been branded unjust and opperssor."

He added :

"Dear son, you are certainly more dear to me than any one else in the world, but God is more dear than you."

He passed another great verdict: Hazrat Usman (R.A.) succeeded Hazrat Omar (R.A.) and Hazrat Ali followed him. Once the armour worn by Hazrat Ali (R.A.) fell off somewhere. A Jew picked it up. When Hazrat Ali saw it with the Jew, he claimed it. But the Jew refused to hand over saying "it is mine." It was evidently a lie. The Jew was bold enough to lie since he had no fear of the Almighty. Hazrat Ali filed the suit. Hazrat Shuraih was the judge then also.

Qazi Shuraih asked the Jew:

“On what grounds do you say armour is yours?”

The Jew said :

“You see, it is with me. What more proof you require about its ownership ?”

Qazi Shuraih turned towards Hazrat Ali and asked:

“Do you have any witness for your claim?”

Hazrat Ali presented his son Hazrat Hasan and his servant Qumber as witnesses.

Qazi Shuraih opined:

“The testimony of the son is not acceptable. Get someone else.”

Hazrat Ali could not produce any one else as his witness. The Qazi declared:

“The deposition of the son in a suit filed by the father is not valid. There should be at least two witnesses for proving the claim. Since Ali could not get a second witness, let the Jew keep the disputed armour with him.”

Thus Hazrat Ali lost the suit. But he was very happy on the wise decision pronounced by Qazi Shuraih. Hazrat Ali was the Caliph and such a just verdict had been pronounced by the Qazi whom he had appointed. But can you imagine how the Jew reacted to the verdict? He was stunned. He was moved by it to such an extent that he embraced Islam. He told Hazrat Ali :

“This armour belongs to you only. Please take it back. How true and great is your religion wherein a Qazi passes a verdict against the chief of the state.”

Hazrat Ali was so pleased by this development that he gave the armour to the Jew as a gift.

Many more such judgements were passed by the great Qazi who remained in the chair for sixty long years. Can you guess how could Qazi Shuraih decide complicated suits so wisely, amicably and authoritatively? The reason is simple. Qazi Shuraih had acquired the religious knowledge very devotedly and followed it to the core. He had imbibed the knowledge of Qur'an, Hadith and Fiqh from the companions of the great Prophet Muhammed (P.B.U.H.). Among his tutors were included close associates or companions of the Prophet like Hazrat Omar (R.A.), Hazrat Ali (R.A.), Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood and Hazrat Zaid bin Sabit (Thabit)(R.A.).

The next point: Qazi Shuraih feared God and none else. He was very sensitive towards the accountability of his deeds before Almighty on the Day of Judgement. It was this fear that made him fearless to pass verdicts against the Caliph and his son. It is said that no one could beat his records as the best judge.



Hazrat
Imam Muhammed (R.A.)

We are very lucky to have ancestors who were learned and farsighted. If they were not there, we would not have got first hand and practical knowledge of our obligations towards God. Because of them we came to know how to say our daily prayers, fast during Ramadhan, perform ablution before prayer, perform Haj and to distinguish between the permitted (*Halal*) and the forbidden (*Haram*).

Some of such leading scholars are Imam Malik (R.A.), Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.), Imam Shafai (R.A.), Imam Ahmed bin Hambal (R.A.), Imam Ibn Yusuf (R.A.) and Imam Muhammed (R.A.).

Slavery was common in earliler times. The masters used to treat their slaves very badly. The slaves were considered as commodities to be sold freely in the market. They lived at the mercy of their masters who were free to maintain them as they wished. They were put to hard labour daily. They were neither fed nor dressed properly. But Muhammed came to their rescue by declaring that:

“Slaves and servants are also human beings. They should be treated as you treat your own brothers and sons and they should enjoy fully their own rights.”

The beloved companions of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) followed the instructions both in word and spirit and treated their slaves like their own sons. In later days others followed these companions. They too started paying attention to the well being of their slaves and maids.

Thus a new era started for the slaves and servants with assurance to get educated. Many a wise and noble scholars

arose from among the slaves. All this revolution was a blessing from Allah, the Creator, and the divine teachings of Islam. Many slaves turned to be noble rulers, valiant soldiers, learned scholars and able administrators. We are proud of them because we got honour in society due to them.

Hazrat Imam Muhammed (R.A.) was a great scholar. He was the son of a slave called Hassan. Hassan lived in Harista located near Damascus. He served Banu Sheebaan tribe as a soldier. He travelled along with the army to a township called Waasta where Muhammed was born in 132 A.H. At that time many of the companions and their disciples were alive.

Imam Muhammed was a very brilliant boy. He was eager and devoted to learn Qur'an and Hadith. His father, Hassan, earned quite a lot of wealth. When he expired, Imam got a legacy of 30,000 Dinar. This whole amount he spent in seeking knowledge of his desired subject. He would go to places wherever he would find a renowned scholar or Imam and would devote himself to learn more from him. Noted among them were Imam Malik and Imam Abu Hanifa.

Imam Muhammed was very handsome and was having good manners. When his father took him to Imam Abu Hanifa he was very much pleased. He soon discovered that the boy was highly talented, hardworking and devoted. So he also took pains to teach him.

By the grace of Allah, Imam Muhammed completed his studies in his 20th year alone and started coaching others.

In his search for knowledge, Muhammed travelled upto Madinah and went to Imam Malik (R.A.) for learning all the Ahadith which Imam Malik (R.A.) had collected. On his first visit he posed a question to his would be teacher:

“Sir, please guide me in this matter. A person is unclean. He has to take a bath. Water is inside the mosque. One should not enter the mosque when unclean. It is time for prayer. He wants to

perform the prayer in time. How can he take water from the mosque?”

Imam Malik replied :

“He cannot enter the mosque in unclean condition.”

Imam Muhammed submitted :

“That’s true, Sir, but the time for prayer is running out.”

There upon Imam Malik said :

“All right, you only tell me what should the person do?”

Imam Muhammed suggested :

“The person should perform *Tayammum* outside the mosque then enter the mosque, take water for bath and after the bath offer the prayer.”

Imam Malik was pleased to hear the solution and was more pleased to know that the young man was Imam Muhammed, the student of Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.). Imam Muhammed stayed for three years. Imam Malik was happy with the intelligence of the Imam. He handed over all the (Ahadith) that he had collected to Imam Muhammed and in turn got 700 (Ahadith) from the disciple. Imam Muhammed had become a great scholar whom the other great scholars of the time accepted.

Imam Muhammed did full justice with his education and propagated his knowledge among all the seekers. Many great Imams were his students. Imam Shafai (R.A.) was also his student. He often commented thus :

“I have not come across a scholar as pleasant, wise and intelligent (intellectual) as Imam Muhammed. His behaviour (character) was as perfect as his physical appearance.”

When Caliph Haroon Rasheed came to know the abilities

of Imam Muhammed he appointed him as the Chief Qazi of his empire. Imam accepted the offer on his own terms. He never got up from his seat when the Caliph visited him and the Caliph was always the first to salute him on such visits.

Once the Caliph entered the court when a number of persons were seated there. All of them got up to pay respect to the king. But Imam Muhammed did not get up. Caliph asked :

“Why did you not pay me respect by getting up.”

Imam replied :

“Whoever desires that others should esteem him, seeks a place in the hell.”

The Caliph hung his head. He sought clarifications in several matters and got very apt solutions to the problems. Once the Caliph sent a heavy purse. The Imam distributed the whole amount among the poor and the needy.

The Imam used to help his poor students also. He cleared debts of many of his students. He was very pleased with Imam Shafai and donated books to him which had to be carried on a camel. Once he saved Imam Shafai from gallows. It so happened that some people revolted against the Caliph. Army was called for and many were arrested. Among them was Imam Shafai also, who was only a by-stander. The Caliph ordered the execution of all arrested persons. Imam Muhammed learnt about the tragic event and got Imam Shafai freed.

Imam Muhammed (R.A.) had written so many books that help us to learn discreetly about our obligations like praying, fasting, giving alms, Haj and discrimination between what is permissible and what is not.

Imam Muhammed breathed his last in 189 A.H. when he was 57 years old. Let his soul rest in peace and let Allah guide us to try to perform what Imam Muhammed did. Ameen.

**Hazrat
Imam Abu Yusuf (R.A.)**

1200 years ago there lived a poor old man in the city of Kufa. His name was Ibrahim. He laboured hard and earned his living. But since he was old, he earned little. His wife used to spin cotton to help her husband in earning. But even the joint income was not sufficient for their livelihood.

The old couple had a son Yaqub by name. When Yaqub became 10 years old, the father thought that he could make his young son earn something so that they could lessen their suffering and misery. He told this to his wife and she took her son to a washerman. The washerman employed the boy but Yaqub did not like the job.

He wanted to learn the teachings of Prophet Muhammed (S.A.W.) and to impart his knowledge to others. He wanted to propagate Islam in the world.

Yaqub left the house everyday on the pretext of attending the job, but he used to reach a school. A very great scholar taught in that institution. The scholar was great Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.).

Yaqub was very regular to school and learnt Islamic teachings. At the end of month the parent asked the boy to get the salary. How could Yaqub get the salary? He had not attended the job at all. So the cat came out of the bag. The mother was hurt. She took the boy to the school and addressed Imam Abu Hanifa thus :

“Sir, this is my son. I spin cotton and rear him up. He was employed in a washerman shop. But instead of attending the job he comes to you. His father has become old and cannot work. Please instruct this boy to earn something so that we all

survive. What benefit will come out of his learning?"

Abu Hanifa (R.A.) smiled and addressed the elderly lady:

"Please leave this boy at my place. You want to feed him plain food while he wants to eat only the delicacies prepared out of Pista oil."

What the Imam implied was that the mother wanted her son to remain an ordinary person while the son was aiming to touch the skies.

The old lady was annoyed and departed cursing the Imam. When she left the place, Imam took upon himself the maintenance of her household. Allah had blessed Imam with quite a profitable business. He used to spend all his earnings on those who were eager to learn more about religion. He started donating quite a large amount to Yaqub's parents. This was great relief for Yaqub. He devoted completely towards studies. He was also blessed with good memory and understanding capacity. He studied by putting heart and soul and soon turned into a great scholar, whom Imam Abu Hanifa trusted. Yaqub was one of the two pupils who inherited the institution and valuable library of Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.) after his death.

Yaqub became very well known after the demise of Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.). Caliph Haroon Rasheed ruled the territory. The ruler respected the scholars greatly. Hazrat Yaqub earned the title of Imam Abu Yusuf during the rule of the Caliph who appointed him as the Chief Justice of the empire. He was the authority to appoint Qazis at places like Iraq, Khurasan, Syria, Egypt etc., where there was Islamic rule.

Imam Yusuf had ready access to the royal court where he was paid rich tributes by the Caliph himself. Any flaw in the decisions of the Caliph were freely pointed out by Imam and the Caliph gladly rectified them. Caliph took Imam often for dining along with him.

One day the delicacy roasted in the oil of Pista came to

the table. Caliph offered it to Imam. Looking at the recipe eyes of Imam Yusuf became wet. Caliph desired to know the reason.

“Early in my life my mother got me employed in the house of a washerman.”

Thus Imam described the whole incident of his childhood and added :

“How true is the prediction of my revered teacher. I have before me the dish prepared in Pista oil. My revered teacher had referred to it.”

The Caliph was moved by the incident and commented: “By God knowledge brings reverence in both the worlds !”



Hazrat

Imam Jafar Sadiq (R.A.)

There was a king. His name was Mansoor Abbasi. He was a powerful king. He was quite conscious of his vast powers. Once he was surrounded by his courtiers and ministers. Some scholars and other learned men were also there. Mansoor was making long claims, when a tiny fly landed on his nose. Mansoor waved his hand. The fly moved away but landed again on the Caliph's face. Caliph waved it off. The fly moved away only to return to the same spot. Caliph waved it off again. Every time the Caliph tried to wave the fly off it returned to take the same place.

Caliph got agitated. He wanted to kill the fly but dared not do so amidst audience. He enquired a scholar to his right :

“Why has Almighty Allah created the tiny fly?”

“To put out the arrogance of the haughty.”

The scholar replied. This bitter comment silenced Mansoor.

Can you guess who this great scholar was? He was none other than Hazrat Imam Jafar Sadiq (R.A.) who was the grandson of Hazrat Ali (R.A.), the beloved son-in-law of our dear Prophet. He was known popularly as Sadiq which means truthful and sincere. Speaking truth without fear was his great attribute. He feared only Allah and none else. He was a great scholar of his times. He had learnt the wisdom of Qur'an and Hadith from close companions of our beloved Prophet (S.A.W.). He even taught others in these sciences. Many renowned scholars like Imam Malik (R.A.), Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.), Imam Abu Sufian Sauri (R.A.) and others were

his students.

May Almighty Allah shower his benevolent blessings on him and lead us all to follow the true path of our great Creator and Sustainer. Ameen!



Lesson - 9

Hazrat A'amir-bin-Shurjeel (R.A.)

Abdul Malik was a very eminent Caliph. He was a scholar too. If he were not a patron of Hajjaj, the tyrant, he would have been considered as one of our revered elders. He was a scholar and sensible person. We shall narrate an incident about his sensibility.

Caliph Abdul Malik delegated a learned person from his court to that of the Roman Emperor. When he presented his credentials to the emperor, he was much pleased and entered into conversation. Simultaneously the emperor put several questions. In fact he was too inquisitive and he enquired about such things which otherwise were unanswerable. However the Arabic scholar answered all queries aptly, deftly and promptly. The emperor was amazed at the authenticity of the scholar and enquired if he belonged to the royal family. The Arab answered :

“No Sir, I am an ordinary person like any other Muslim.”

The king murmured something which was not quite audible. However he wrote a letter, sealed it and handed it over to the scholar with instruction to hand over the letter to the Caliph only.

On his return the scholar handed over the letter of Roman Emperor to the Caliph. After going through the contents Caliph asked the scholar :

“Did you converse with the Emperor?”

“Yes, we did talk with each other,” said the scholar and narrated what all took place at the Roman Court that day. The Caliph listened intently, then handing over the letter to Imam asked him to go through it. The scholar took the letter

and read it. It said :

“When a unique person like the one in my court is present amidst a nation how can that nation overlook him and choose someone else as its ruler — it’s quite surprising !!”

The scholar read the letter and felt that it is possible that the Caliph might put him to death. So he said to the Caliph:

“O Caliph, if the Roman Emperor had seen you he would not have written like this and if I had read this letter, I would not have presented it to you.”

Caliph Abdul Malik retorted :

“Actually the emperor has hinted me to kill you so that later my subjects should not adore you to the extent that they revolt against me and make you their ruler!”

The Romans who were present in Malik’s court reported the happenings to their king when he said :

“Yes, that exactly was what I had hinted at!”

Do you know who this scholar was! He was Hazrat A’mir bin Shurjeel (R.A.) who is renowned as Imam Sho’abi. He was the disciple of the honourable companions of the beloved Prophet (S.A.W.). He had obtained Islamic knowledge from 500 companions. He had travelled to far off places to seek this knowledge. He was with Imam Abdullah bin Omar (R.A.) for one full year who was the greatest traditionalist of the time. He was blessed with a reasoning mind. He was a persuasive and influential speaker too. These qualities had endeared him to Caliph Abdul Malik. Hajjaj was known for his stern and oppressive rule. Even he was a devotee of Imam Sho’abi and respected him.

Caliph Abdul Malik very often utilised his services in diplomatic and conciliatory missions with other rulers. It was he who influenced Imam Abu Hanifa to take up learning.

It is known what status Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.) attained in the science of Fiqh and Shariah. Let Allah shower His blessings on them and award us such intellect and intelligence. Ameen!



Lesson - 10

Hazrat

Rabee'ah (R.A.)

Abu Abdur Rahman Ferookh was a respectable and pious Muslim in Madinah. He was a brave warrior and always willing to go on Jihad expeditions. Once he left his residence on one such venture and returned only after 27 years. At the time of departure he handed over 30,000 Dinars to his wife. She gave birth to a male child some two or three months later. The wife was a very prudent and wise woman. She took upon herself the responsibility of bringing up the son completely. She always kept him neat and clean. She fed him on time. She made him sleep on time. She inculcated in him the offering of Salath (prayer).

When he could talk, she taught him Kalima, how to offer Salath (prayer) and arranged for its regular performance. She sent him to the best teachers for studies. There were a number of such learned persons who had directly benefitted by contact with the companions of the beloved Prophet (S.A.W.).

The boy was equally responsible and responsive. He obeyed the mother implicitly. He studied devotedly and very soon he became proficient in the study of the holy Qur'an, hadith and other branches of knowledge. By 27 years, he turned into a full fledged scholar. He earned name and fame. A large number of students from all over Arabia gathered at Madinah to get educated from him. They turned out to be great Imams. Among them were included Imam Malik (R.A.) and Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.) also.

Twenty seven years had passed. Abu Abdur Rahman Ferookh returned from his holy striving in the field of propagating the true religion. He stood at the door of his

house and tapped the door. The young scholar son was present in the house. He appeared at the door. How can the father recognise the son who had taken birth two to three months after he had left the house. He had not seen the boy at all. When a youthfully bright boy appeared at the door, he was taken aback. He questioned :

“Who are you? How can you live in my house?”

So saying he put aside the youth and tried to enter the house. The boy checked him and said :

“Sir, who are you and why are you trying to force yourself in my house?”

A funny situation developed. Isn't it? The son was checking the father to enter the house saying that the elderly person should act sensibly and must not enter in aliens house. And the father claiming to be the owner of the house was demanding to know how the young man could occupy his house and wanted to take him to the court and imprison him for trespassing.

As the quarrel developed, people gathered around them. Imam Malik heard about it and came running to the spot. Other learned persons also gathered at the scene. They all supported their teacher. Imam Malik addressed the elderly Ferookh.

“Sir, if you are in need of a house, please seek shelter some where else. Claiming ownership of other's property is not proper and justified.”

Ferookh replied :

“Wonderful, you must know that this house belongs to me alone. I am Abu Abdur Rahman Ferookh.”

The wife of Abu Abdur Rahman was inside the house. She was getting agitated by the altercation outside the house. When she heard that the elderly person outside was claiming to be Abu Abdur Rahman Ferookh, she came out of the

house. She looked at the person and recognised her husband. She said :

“Yes, he is really Abu Abdur Rahman.”

Turning to her son, she said :

“Here is your father!”

The matter was settled. People returned to their homes happily. Father embraced his son. The son took the father respectfully inside the house. Father and son partook the meal. Father was tired. He lied down and was soon in deep sleep. When he got up, he started talking to his wife. After a while, he asked her :

“While proceeding on my venture, I had given you 30,000 Dinars (gold coins). Are they safe or you have spent them all?”

The wife replied :

“Do not worry, I have invested that money in a very profitable venture”.

“Where?” He asked.

“Look, the time is up for prayer. Please go, offer the Namaz and return. I shall tell you?” She answered.

Ferookh went to the nearby mosque. He offered the prayer. He observed that immediately after the prayer, people started sitting in an orderly manner aside. He too sat a little distance away.

Soon discourse on Qur’an and Hadith started. The person who delivered it was none other than the young scholar son of Abu Abdur Rahman Ferrookh. Among the listeners were Hazrat Imam Malik (R.A.), Hazrat Hasan Bin Zaid (R.A.), Hazrat Ibn Abi Ali (R.A.) and other learned persons. It was certainly the blessing of Allah that so young a person enjoyed the privilege of delivering such scholarly deliberations.

At a stage a student posed a question. All eyes turned

towards the speaker. Ferookh also looked at him. He felt the speaker to be his own son. But soon he discarded the thought saying to himself

“How could my son reach that status? Where could he study for reaching that status?”

He was in a dilemma. He could not bear the anguish! He asked :

“Who is this virtuous young scholar?”

“He is Rabiah Bin Abi Abdur Rahman Ferookh”
was the reply.

“Oh, he is my son”.

Ferookh was ecstatic. He said to himself :

“All this is benevolence of Allah. He has bestowed this greatness to my son.”

He returned home and said to his wife :

“I beheld your son in such esteemed status today that many great personalities might envy!”

The wife then asked :

“Now, tell me, what do you like? Those thirty thousand Dinars or this prestige of your son? I have invested all your money in our son’s education.”

Ferookh replied :

“By God, I do like my son attaining such a high position. You have spent the money for the most right cause!”

Do you not think this episode to be quite interesting?

At that time when Hazrat Rabee’ah (R.A.) was living, Abul Abbas Saffah was ruling the country. He was a mighty king. When he heard of the erudition and scholarship of Hazrat Rabee’ah, he invited him to his court and offered the post of

the Chief Justice. Hazrat Rabee'ah was not happy with the ruler for certain of his evil practices. So he declined the offer. Huge remuneration was offered. But Hazrat Rabee'ah did not accept it. In fact Allah had favoured the scholar with plenty of wealth which he freely spent on his students. He used to meet the needs of his students very generously so that the students could devote to their studies without any tension or diversion. Besides his disciples, he used to help others and was very charitable. He distributed his wealth so freely that at times he had to borrow money.

Hazrat Rabee'ah (R.A.) possessed many other virtues also. That's why he is considered as a great noble soul. In fact the Qur'an attributes greatness to such souls who are most pious, fear Allah and abstain from all evil doings. Hazrat Rabee'ah was one of such pious men. Let Allah bless him. Ameen!



**Hazrat
Abdullah-bin-Mubarak (R.A.)**

Khurasan is a province in Iran. Maru is a town in Khurasan. Banu Hanzala was a tribe living in Maru. These tribesmen had a garden. They had employed a watchman for this garden.

His name was Mubarak.

Though a servant, Mubarak was a very noble person. He was pious and offered prayer regularly, five times a day. He was true, honest and kept himself away from evil.

Here is an incident about his honesty. Just read it and whenever you are in such a situation, act as Mubarak acted.

Once the owner of the garden asked the watchman to fetch a sour pomegranate from the garden. Mubarak went to the garden, plucked a fruit and brought it to the owner. That turned out to be a sweet fruit. The owner got wild. He chided him :

“You are looking after the garden for all these days and you cannot differentiate a sour pomegranate from a sweet one?”

He replied :

“Yes Sir, I do not know which pomegranate is sweet and which is sour.”

“What? Have you not tasted any fruit of the garden?” asked the owner.

“No Sir, not even once.” said Mubarak.

“Why?” questioned the owner.

“Sir, you have hired me to look after the garden. You

have not permitted me to eat the fruits. If I were to eat them I would be committing theft and betray honesty?" replied Mubarak.

On hearing this, the owner was dumb struck. He could not imagine that his servant would be so noble, loyal and honest. He was delighted. Back home, he narrated the incident to his family members. They were also glad because they were all honest and noble.

The owner had a beautiful and noble daughter. The owner consulted Mubarak regarding marriage of her daughter.

Mubarak remembered a tradition of the holy Prophet (S.A.W.). The beloved Prophet (S.A.W.) has exhorted his followers not to look for wealth, status or features of the person while choosing the match but go for the person who is pious, fearing Allah and religious. He repeated the tradition before the employer.

The owner and his family were also quite religious and pious. They liked the advice very much. How could it not appeal to them when it was the advice of our beloved Prophet (S.A.W.). The owner told his wife :

"For our daughter, Mubarak seems to be the most apt match. What do you say?"

"Certainly," replied the wife, "Mubarak is very honest and fears Allah. He will treat our daughter as Allah has ordained. And that is good for our daughter! Let us go ahead!"

So the two were married! The owner never cared that Mubarak was a mere servant, was not wealthy, neither he came from reputed family, nor is very handsome. He only considered his adherence to faith and honesty.

This was certainly an auspicious marriage. Both husband and wife were noble, honest and pious. Allah blessed them with a son who earned great name as a reputed scholar who uplifted the status of the established religion of Allah. The

son was named as Abdullah. Later he came to be known as Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak (R.A.).

The child was born nearly 1300 years ago, when the disciples of the companions of the great Prophet (S.A.W.) known as *Taaba'i* were alive. Many great scholars of Qur'an and Hadith were among the *Taaba'in*.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak (R.A.) was very keen to learn more about the Book of Allah and the Traditions of the Prophet (S.A.W.). He was quite intelligent and had enviable memory. Once heard or read, he would never forget. Once he attended a discourse by a great scholar. By merely listening, he memorised it to the extend that he repeated the whole discourse word to word. People were amazed. This was the blessing of Allah. It is Allah who bestows respect and honour on whomever He desires. His fame as an accomplished scholar spread far and wide soon. He was adored wherever he went.

Even his tutors paid tributes to Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak.

Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (R.A.) was one of his tutors. Once a Khurasani (a man from Khurasan) posed a query about the holy Qur'an to him. The master said :

“You have a very great scholar in Khurasan alone and you have come to me to solve the problem.”

Perplexed the Khurasani enquired further.

“Who is there in our Khurasan so learned? What is his name?”

Replied the master :

“Abdullah bin Mubarak. There is no scholar now who can compete with him?”

Hazrat Imam Malik (R.A.) was also one of his tutors. He also believed in the scholarship of Abdullah bin Mubarak and showered praise on him.

People respected him more than a king. Once he went to the city of *Raqqa*. At that time Caliph Haroon Rasheed was also camping at that place. The king was seated with his wife in the palace overlooking a vast field outside. Suddenly he observed that people were running in a particular direction. There seemed to be no end to the crowd. The queen asked Haroon :

“Why is this crowd? Where are all these people going”?

She got the reply :

“The greatest scholar of Khurasan Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak (R.A.) is arriving here. People are running outside the city to receive him.”

There upon the queen commented.

“To tell the truth, king is this scholar. Haroon Rasheed is nothing before him. You do not gather people without the help of police and army!”

Although Hazrat Abdullah was an eminent scholar, he never traded his scholarship. Nor collected money in the name of his erudition (scholarship). He was a cloth dealer and earned quite a profit through his business. He did not spend this huge profit on his own self. He distributed it among the poor, destitutes, orphans and students of Qur'an and Hadith. He patronaged the seekers of knowledge since he wanted that they should not go hither and thither for fulfilling their needs and wants and stick to their endeavour devotedly and whole heartedly.

Clearing the debts of debtors is a very rewarding act. Our beloved Prophet (S.A.W.) has drawn the attention of affluent Muslims towards this benevolent action. Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak (R.A.) was particular about performing this noble task. Once a person said that he owes seven hundred. Hazrat Abdullah offered him seven thousand.

Once one of his students was arrested and jailed for not discharging his loan. When Hazrat Abdullah heard about it, he sent ten thousand to him and left the place immediately. The student could not find who the benefactor was. All these beneficial activities were to please Allah and never for earning name and fame. So he wanted that no one should come to know about them. However it was not quite possible to conceal. Once he participated in Jihad and had an encounter with non-believers. He fought bravely and challenged their three gallant (brave) warriors who met their end at his hands. During the whole operation he had concealed his face. All were inquisitive about this brave warrior. A person ventured to pull off his mask and found Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak (R.A.).

Hazrat Abdullah was an illustrious scholar, great warrior and distinguished donor. Men respected him most. But he was never proud. He disapproved his praise and silenced the appreciators.

He expired in his 63rd year. Our Prophet (S.A.W.) had also lived for 63 years. People commented thus : Hazrat Abdullah observed all the practices of the holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and so Allah granted him also the age the Prophet (S.A.W.) lived for.

He expired on 13th of Ramadhan, 181 AH. People mourned his death. When Caliph Haroon Rasheed learnt about the event he was also affected much. He said :

“It is a pity that the most exalted among the scholars of the times has departed.”

Many great scholars and Imams were among his students. Some of these reputed scholars are Imam Ahmed bin Hambal (R.A.), Yahyah Bin Moin (R.A.), Abu Bakr bin Shaibah (R.A.), Habban Bin Moosa (R.A.) and Abdur Rahman bin Mahdi (R.A.). Let Allah bestow upon us such strength to perform as was granted to them. Ameen!

**Hazrat
Rabee-bin-Khaseem (R.A.)**

Hazrat Rabee bin Khaseem (R.A.) was one of the disciples of the beloved companion of our dear Prophet (S.A.W.) (*Tabayaeen*). He is popularly known as Hazrat Rabee (R.A.). He was a very noble and revered person. It was the opinion of several companions that if he had lived during the times of the beloved Prophet (S.A.W.) he would have liked him most.

He studied Qur'an and memorised traditions with great devotion and effort. Above all he practised what he learnt. He was very discreet in his actions, as he wanted never to break either the divine laws or the Sunnah. He offered prayer with great devotion and conscious effort. He often forgot himself in serving others. Serving and helping others was a craze for him. The veracity of this statement can be gauged from the following incident.

Once his wife prepared a special dish for him. She wanted that he should relish it. So she brought it to him. When Hazrat Rabee saw a delicious dish, he started praising it acknowledging through phrases of *Alhamdulillah*. Then he slipped out of the house with this delicious food. He took it to his neighbour where a mentally handicapped person lived. He presented the dish to him and then came back after wiping his mouth clean. The wife was surprised and said :

“What an irony! I prepared the dish for you and you fed it to a mad person who does not know what it was.”

He replied :

“Doesn’t matter. Allah knows what it was.”

Do you not think that he performed a very noble act and also spoke great truth while replying to his wife’s query. This act certainly entitled him for a reward in the other world. Reflect and find that when we perform to please Allah, He will be pleased. The pleasure of Allah is the most valuable duty of a Muslim. We pray Allah, help us in seeking consent and pleasure of Allah.



Hazrat Safwaan (R.A.)

Hazrat Safwan bin Saleem Zuhri popularly known as Hazrat Safwan (R.A.) was one of the disciples of the companions of the Messenger of Allah. He was a native of Madinah.

Hazrat Safwaan (R.A.) feared Allah very much. He was very pious. He abhorred evil. He had no desire or enticement. Many affluent persons and the king wanted to offer him donations, but he never accepted them. He was happy and contented in his poor status. For him the most valuable riches was offering prayer. Many anecdotes are available about his virtuous life. One such incident is described here.

Sulaiman Bin Abdul Malik the Caliph appointed Hazrat Umar Bin Abdul Azeez as the governor of Madinah city. Hazrat Umar Bin Abdul Azeez was a God fearing person. He was close to men who loved Allah. Thus he was quite intimate with Hazrat Safwaan (R.A.).

Caliph Sulaiman visited Madinah once. It was time for the noon prayer (*Zuhr*). He went to the mosque for offering the prayer. Hazrat Umar Bin Abdul Azeez accompanied him. In a corner of the mosque Hazrat Safwaan was in meditation. Caliph Sulaiman saw him. He looked intently for several minutes and then enquired the governor :

“Who is this venerable person? He seems to be a godly man.”

Hazrat Umar bin Abdul Azeez replied :

“He is Safwaan bin Saleem Zuhri (R.A.). Indeed he is a godly man. He has acquired the knowledge

of the religion directly from the companions of the beloved Prophet (S.A.W.). Abdullah bin Umar (R.A.), Anas bin Malik (R.A.) and similar companions were his guides and teachers. Even his students include great scholars and religious persons.”

Caliph had already heard about Hazrat Safwaan. He called his attendant and asked him to present 500 Dinars to Hazrat Safwaan. The attendant took the purse of 500 Dinars and placed it in front of Hazrat Safwaan and said:

“The Caliph has presented this purse for you. He is present here alone.”

Safwaan (R.A.) looked at the attendant and said :

“You are mistaken. This must have been sent to someone else.”

The attendant replied :

“No, Sir, it is for you. Are you not Safwaan?”

He said:

“Of course my name is Safwaan, but still, why not you get the clarification and come.”

The attendant had gone a little away when Hazrat Safwaan slipped from the mosque holding his slippers in hand, and did not enter the mosque as long as the Caliph was inside it. Sulaiman was stunned! How reliant on Allah were our venerable predecessors! Let Allah guide us to walk on their foot prints!



Hazrat
Abu Muhammed Yahya Undalusi (R.A.)

Arabian sea is along the western shores of our country stretching upto Arabia and other West Asian countries. If we travel in a ship in this sea westward, we enter another sea. It is called Red Sea. As we move up in the northern direction, we reach a port. It is Jeddah. It is at this town that Haj Pilgrims from our country as well as from other countries land, whether they travel by sea or air. From Jeddah they proceed to Makkah and Madinah by land transport.

If we move still north from Jeddah in Red Sea, we pass through Suez Canal into another sea called Mediterranean Sea. Travelling to further west this sea takes us to an European country called Spain. It was earlier called as Undalus. It is about 4000 miles away from us. Muslims ruled Undalus for around 700 years. During their reign many great scholars inhabited Undalus. Hazrat Abu Muhammed Yahya Undalusi (R.A.) is the most famous of those scholars.

Pious persons always fear Allah and they never divert from the right path of Allah. The gracious Qur'an exhorts :

“Among you the most noble is one who is more pious.”

Muslims do not classify human beings on the basis of profession, wealth and family. In their view great is one who is more God fearing and pious.

Hazrat Yahya (R.A.) was the son of a slave but was very pious and he was also a great scholar. So Muslims revered him and accepted his verdicts.

He laboured hard to get educated. In his times travel was

not as easy and comfortable as it is now. There were no air, railways or bus facilities. Of course there were ships, but they were quite slow and uncomfortable. To travel from Undalus to Jeddah involved months through sea travel and almost a year by road. Under these circumstances Abu Yahya took up journey of thousands of miles and that too by foot.

Eminent scholars and Imams were stationed at Makkah, Madinah, Kufa and Basra in those days. Imam Malik (R.A.) was imparting lessons in Hadith at Masjid-e-Nabavi in Madinah. Hazrat Yahya was of 18 years old when he reached Madinah through Makkah by travelling for months. Of course he had stayed for a short period at Makkah seeking knowledge from reputed Makkan teachers before enlisting with Imam Malik at Madinah for lessons in Hadith.

One day while the class was in full swing suddenly there were cries :

“Look here is an elephant, an elephant !”

Elephant was a rarity in Arabia. People had not witnessed any elephant. Every one ran out to see the elephant. But Hazrat Yahya sat with Imam Malik and did not move from his seat. Imam Malik asked :

“Even in Undalus elephants do not exist. Why did you not go to see one?”

He replied :

“Sir, I have come all the way to get education in Qur’an and Hadith and not for seeing an elephant.”

Imam Malik was much pleased and branded him as “wise”.

When one is so devoted, work hard and is endowed with intelligence by Allah, then imagine how eminent one would be. Hazrat Yahya also attained such proficiency in religious studies in a short period with his devotion, and blessings of

Allah. He returned to Undalus. His reputation had already reached there. The people received him whole heartedly and gathered around him in masses to seek instructions. Hazrat Yahya spread the knowledge of Qur'an and Hadith in all parts of Undalus.

Amir Abdul Rahman bin Alhakm was the ruler at that time. He paid high tributes to eminent scholars. When he heard of Hazrat Yahya, he invited him to his court and offered the post of Chief Justice. But Hazrat Yahya declined the offer saying :

“I have not studied Qur'an and Hadith for seeking employment or for earning money. I want to spread knowledge to all corners of Undalus and convey the word and wisdom of Allah and Allah's Messenger to one and all.”

Amir Abdur Rahman did not fret or frown by this reply. His devotion towards the scholar was enhanced. Others also followed their ruler. Hazrat Yahya was a practical man. He practiced what he had studied and what he preached. He acted on what Qur'an and Hadith permitted and abstained from what has been forbidden. In Islam a person who possesses true scholarship and performs in strict according with his learning commands great respect and occupies the most exalted position. Such a servant does not fear anybody except Allah. Even when the king desires a favourable verdict, he always tells what is rightful according to divine order. Hazrat Yahya admonished the king specially for his wrong doings.

Once during Ramadhan Amir Abdur Rahman broke his fast intentionally. Breaking the fast intentionally demands severe penalty (*Kaffara*). The penalty is one has to either free a servant or feed 60 destitutes or fast continuously for two months without any break.

Amir Abdur Rahman was highly repentent for breaking the fast. He called for a meeting of scholars and religious

leaders to seek advice for seeking forgiveness from Allah. He first sought the opinion of Hazrat Yahya who immediately suggested that the king should fast for two months continuously. All the other scholars kept mum on the opinion of Hazrat Yahya. When they came out of the court, they wanted to know why Hazrat Yahya advocated this alternative. They pleaded:

“Sir, when a person breaks the fast the penalty is either freeing a servant or feeding 60 destitutes. Why have you put the king into hardship by suggesting the third alternative of continual fasting of two months? It will be an ordeal for him.”

Hazrat Yahya replied :

“For this very reason I have suggested this method. I do not want that he should repeat this misdeed. Freeing a servant is very easy for the king. He has plenty of money. Ordinarily also he feeds quite a large number of persons with his money. If I had suggested these easy methods, he would have made it a practice to breakfasts and pay penalty by these easy methods. Now if he fasts for two months without a break he would come to know the consequences of wrong doings and will not repeat them.”

All the scholars agreed and said :

“You are right. You have suggested the most appropriate method of Kaffara.”

How sagacious, farsighted and virtuous were our revered elders. Let Allah make us strong enough to follow them in word and action so that Allah be pleased with us as He was with them. Ameen!



**Hazrat
Abdullah-bin-Taus (R.A.)**

Abu Jafar Mansoor was a mighty and renowned Caliph. He was very strict. He would punish severely such of the persons whose utterance did not please him. Still there were several brave and true Muslims who would not shirk from speaking truth even in front of such rulers as Abu Jafar. Hazrat Abdullah bin Taus (R.A.) was one such revered person. His father Hazrat Taus (R.A.) was a celebrated Traditionalist (*Muhaddis*). Hazrat Abdullah had learnt Traditions from his father.

Once Caliph Mansoor invited to his court both Hazrat Malik and Hazrat Abdullah bin Taus, who was in his prime youth. They all sat together. After sometime Caliph Mansoor addressed Hazrat Abdullah:

“Quote a tradition you have learnt from your illustrious father.”

Hazrat Abdullah had several Ahadith at the tip of his tongue. He chose one that upset the Caliph. He said :

“My father had told me this Hadith that on the doom’s day that severe torture would befall on that person who was made the king and he turned out to be a tyrant.”

Caliph Mansoor could not hide his wrath. He turned red with rage. Imam Malik (R.A.) feared that the Caliph would order execution of Hazrat Abdullah.

After a while, the Caliph asked Hazrat Abdullah Bin Taus to hand over the pen and ink pot. Hazrat Abdullah ignored him and did not give the pen and pot. He again asked for it. This time also he did not heed the request. When Hazrat

Abdullah did not rise from his seat on repeating the order third time, the Caliph turned wild and asked:

“Why are you not handing me over the pen and the ink pot.”

Hazrat replied :

“You are in rage. I am afraid you may pass an order under the influence of anger for which you might be answerable to Allah on the Doom’s Day and it is possible that I might also be questioned for handing over the pen and inkpot.”

On hearing this the king asked both of them to leave the court immediatly. “We also like to.” They commented and left the court.

Hazrat Imam Malik (R.A.) often commented :

“That day I realised how staunch, true and great is the son of Hazrat Taus.”

How daring were our revered ancestors! They were afraid of none but God. We wish we also tread their path! Ameen!



**Hazrat
Imam Sufyan Sauri (R.A.)**

Qaqa'a bin Hakeem relates that once when he was seated with Caliph Mahdi, Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (R.A.) appeared in the court. He had been sent for by the Caliph. He entered the court, saluted the king in as casual a manner as any Muslim salutes another with *As-salam-o-Alaikum* and took his seat.

While saluting, neither he bent forward nor raised the hand and he did not take permission while sitting as was the custom of the court. Mahdi smiled and said :

“O Sufyan, afraid of me, you keep running hither and thither and think that if we want to illtreat you, we will not be able to do so. Now you tell me, are you not in our control. If we desire and order, you will be abused and humiliated.”

Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (R.A.) replied :

“If you treat me as you are saying then the King of kings (Allah) who is all-powerful and controls everything and who segregates truth from untruth, will pass a similar judgement.”

At that time Rabee, the son of the Caliph was standing behind Mahdi, sword in hand. The reply of Hazrat Sufyan infuriated him. He said to the Caliph :

“Amirul Momineen, this rude person is scorning your majesty. Permit me to execute him.”

Mahdi turned to his son and said :

“You are unfortunate. You do not know what attributes men possess. If you kill him, all of us

would be punished. For his uprightness I am appointing him as judge at Kufa — such a judge on his judgements there will not be any appeal.”

Caliph Mahdi then wrote the appointment letter, handed it over to Hazrat Sufyan Sauri and arranged for his departure to Kufa.

On the way Abu Sufyan Sauri absconded, threw the order in Euphrates river and went under cover for the rest of his life. The Caliph failed to trace him till the last!



Hazrat
Imam Waqadi (R.A.)

Many of our revered ancestors are more popular with their surname rather than their real name. Surname is a family name. It may denote a personal characteristic, profession, native place etc. For example we have a highly revered narrator of Traditions of the holy Prophet (S.A.W.). The volume of his collection of Ahadith is called Bukhari Sharief. He lived in Bukhara of Uzbekistan. Hence he became renowned as Imam Bukhari. By producing Bukhari Sharief Imam Bukhari has done outstanding and unique (unrivalled) service of the religion. You must have heard of Zunnoon Misri (R.A.). Once he was caught in great trouble. He was saved by divine help through fishes. In Arabic language 'Noon' means fish. Hence he was referred as "Zun-noon" meaning "related to fishes". He was born in a town of Egypt which is called *Misr* in Arabic. Hence Misri shows him as belonging to Egypt.

Similarly there are many more persons who are recognised by their surnames and who have performed notable achievements to their credit in the field of religion and social services.

Imam Waqadi (R.A.) is also known by his surname. 'Waqad' was the name of his grandfather. This relationship paved the way for him to be known as Imam Waqadi. He was born at Madinah 130 years after the migration of our beloved Prophet (S.A.W.) from Makkah. Many of the disciples and kith and kin of the companions were alive in his period.

Hazrat Waqadi had an inborn eagerness to know the details of the life of our beloved Prophet Muhammed (S.A.W.). He took it on himself to collect the authentic details and

has produced several books on the subject. These books have been written in a very interesting style and manner. Hence they are read with much interest and devotion. He used to approach the children and grand children of the companions, question about the happenings, make notes and would compile them later. He was particularly interested in knowing about the encounters between the Prophet (S.A.W.) and the non-believers. These compilations filled his house fully. Waqadi was thus considered as an authority. Not only general public but even Caliph Mamoon Rasheed and his minister Barmakki were his fans and respected him.

Besides writing books, he had several other creditable attributes. He delivered very fine speeches. He would remember whatever he heard. The most prominent of all characteristics was his generosity and magnanimity. One who serves others through donating money is generous. For this reason his pockets would be always empty. One very interesting incident of his magnanimity is famous. This has been narrated by him alone.

He wrote :

“It was nearing Eid celebration. There was nothing in my house. I should have arranged for new clothes at least for the children. They were crying for it. When I could not bear their suffering I thought of a plan. I went to a friend. He was a merchant. I described my need to him. He had a lakh and two hundred worth currency all clean packed in canvas bags. He handed over all these bags to me. I returned home with these bags I offered my thanks to Almighty. I was about to open the bags when the door bell rang. A Hashmi friend was waiting for me. He seemed to be worried. He said that he had borrowed some money and today is the day when he had promised to return the loan. “If I do not clear, then I do not

know what would happen.” His discomfiture pained me. I thought I could be of some help. I suggested my wife : “You see, my Hashmi friend is in distress. Why not we share. Let fifty percent go to him and we could manage with the other half.

My wife replied :

“What would your friend do with mere half of what we have now. Your friend is not literate but he has given you such a huge amount. You are highly educated and you want to get rid of your Hashmi friend only on half of what you possess. This is unjust!”

“So on the advice of my wife I handed over all the bags to him”.

“Now the affair took an interesting turn. The total capital of the merchant friend was these bags alone, which he had given me. Suddenly he had to meet an exigent commitment for which he needed quite some money. He set out to procure the required money. The Hashmi was also his friend. He approached him and told him of his need. Hashmi passed on all the bags to him. The merchant was taken aback to see the very same bags which he had given me. He came running to me. We had to come out with the happenings. Then we decided that since all the three are in need of money, the available amount should be shared among us equally and we shared the amount. This news reached the ears of Yahya Burmakki who was the minister of Caliph Mamoon Rasheed. He sent for me and enquired. He was very glad that the three of us acted in such a sagacious way. He handed over ten thousand Dinars (golden currency) to me and

instructed that I must hand over 2000 Dinars to the merchant and another 2000 to Hashmi friend. In the remaining amount my share is also 2000 Dinars and the remaining 4000 Dinars must be passed on to my wife since she proved to be more generous and magnanimous than myself.”

Waqadi (R.A.) was a very celebrated scholar. Everyone venerated him. Caliph Mamoon appointed him as Qazi of Baghdad. He would have earned a lot. But he met his expenses by earning through his own effort. He was trader of wheat. However he would spent beyond his capacity. So he also entered into partnership business and would meet the expenses of his house through the share he would get from the partnership business. He never saved any money. He would give alms and charity with whatever he got. When he died, he had no money for meeting the last rites expenses. Caliph Mamoon Rasheed came to know. He arranged for his burial.

Such generosity is exemplary. It should be adopted by one and all. Let us pray that all facilities are made available to us and let us hope to follow the foot prints of our revered elders.

