

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَنِ الرَّجِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَمَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ وُلُودِ آدَمَ كَمَا يُحِبُّ وَيُرِضِّي بَأْنُ يُصْلِّي عَلَيْهِ

Allah Almighty, in Whose Name we begin, The Most Compassionate,

The Most Merciful

All Praise is due to Allah Almighty, Countless Peace and Blessings be upon
His Beloved Messenger – *may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him* – his family & his
companions – *may Allah be pleased with them all*

The Memory of Imam al-Ambaari

During their lifetime, they were a means of beauty in this world and after their passing, they became a means beauty for whichever treatise they have been mentioned in. It is reported that Imam Abu Bakr bin Al Ambaari - *may Allah be pleased with him* - was also one of those blessed Saints and scholars in Islam. His every moment in this world was spent in the acquisition of knowledge. He also understood many a long and arduous journey to achieve this objective. He was born in 271 A.H.

Imam Abu Bakr bin Al Ambaari - *may Allah be pleased with him* - had such a great thirst for knowledge which was difficult to explain. He was such a blessed individual that he never allowed anything no matter how good looking that object may be to come in between his knowledge and his Ibadah.

It is mentioned that one day while Imam Abu Bakr bin Al Ambaari - *may Allah be pleased with him* – was walking in the bazaar, his eyes fell on a female slave. Obviously, a human being would be attracted to such. The leader of the region was also someone who was his ardent admirer. When the Khalifah heard that the Saint had displayed attraction for this female slave, he purchased her and sent her to the Saint's residence. However, as Imam Abu Bakr bin Al Ambaari - *may Allah be pleased with him* – informed his male servant to kindly take this female servant back to the Khalifah. When the female slave asked him the reason for this, he replied that through her presence, his mind moved away from the acquisition of knowledge and hence he considered her a distraction.

When the Khalifah heard about this incident, he remarked, “The thirst and desire for knowledge which is found in this person is certainly not found in the heart of anyone else at this period.” (Taarik Baghdad)

As we can see, Imam Abu Bakr bin Al Ambaari - *may Allah be pleased with him* – was one of those blessed individuals in history who spent his entire life in serving knowledge and spreading it. He chose this life over a married life. Shaikh Abul Fatah Abu Ghadah in his treatise, “Al Ulama Al Arab” writes that, “Merely to preserve and protect his memory and his knowledge, he never consumed rich and expensive food. This was in spite of the fact that the rich and famous respected him and could have arranged this for him on a daily basis. Because of knowledge, he refrained from the company of females even though there were females who were good looking that used to visit his house. In the field of Zuhd, refraining from female company and in knowledge he was certainly a unique individual in his era. He had no children except leaving us thousands of pages of amazing knowledge.” (Al Ulama Al Arab)

Imam Al Ambaari - *may Allah be pleased with him* – memorised nearly three hundred thousand couplets which pertained to Qur’anic knowledge.

All the books written by him in the field of Arabic grammar, Arabic syntax, Tafseer and poetry were all written from memory. He never wrote a book while looking at another book.

It is mentioned that once, one of the female slaves of the Khalifah asked him the interpretation of a certain dream which she had seen. Since he had not previously studied this faculty, he gave her an excuse at that moment and promised that he will reveal it later. He then memorised the entire treatise of Shaikh Kirmani in one single night and then gave her an interpretation of her dream.

One day, Imam Abu Bakr bin Al Ambaari - *may Allah be pleased with him* - became very ill and his father was extremely worried. People also came to give him solace. However, looking at the amount of books which were on the books shelves in the room, his father mentioned to people, “Why should I not be concerned about this son of mine who has memorised all of these books which you see on these books shelves?”

Abul Hasan Arudi narrates:

Once Imam Al Ambaari and I were sitting around the table of Khalifah Raadi billah. Imam Abu Bakr had already informed the cook of what he wanted to eat. The only thing that was prepared for him was a piece of dry meat. The rest of us were eating special and expensive dishes. However, Imam Abu Bakr was eating the same simple piece of dry eat. After the main course, a special sweet dish was brought but he refused to accept this.

Thereafter, we were given special clothing to sleep in so that we could be protected from the heat, but Imam Abu Bakr slept in his own clothing. Until Asr, he did not drink anything. After Asr, he called his servant and asked for some plain water from a mud container. The rest of us drank ice water. I also became a little irritated and asked the Khalifah why he had called us while this person was present. When the Khaifah asked me the trouble, I mentioned that this was such a special human that he never allowed anything to come between him and his Nafs. In other words, he preferred nothing for himself. I also mentioned that in this way, this person could also kill himself. When the Khalifah heard my words, he began to laugh and mentioned, “He finds joy in this type of behavior. This has become his habit and these things have become such objects which have not damaged his life.”

I then approached him and said, “O Abu Bakr! Why do you do such things to yourself?” He replied, “I do this to maintain my memory.”

I then said to him that his memory was certainly very famous among people and also asked him how many books he had memorized. He replied that he had memorised books which could fit into thirteen containers. Mohammed bin Jafer admits that he had never met someone before who had memorised such a large amount of books.

It was his habit also that at times he used to take a date and hold it to his nose and say to it, "Certainly you are very delicious but the knowledge which Allah Almighty has blessed me with, that is even more excellent than you."

The strange thing is that when all types of foods were placed in front of him just before he could pass away, he consumed whatever he wanted. He then remarked to people that this seemed to be a sign of impending death which proved to true because he passed away a few days later. (Al Ulama Al Arab)

Imam Hamza bin Daqaaq mentions that besides having such an amazing memory, he was also noted for his Zuhd and he was an extremely modest person.