

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَمَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ وَلَدِ آدَمَ كَمَا يُحِبُّ وَيَرْضَى بِأَنْ يُصَلَّى 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 Greatness of Imam A'zam

There are many books which have been written about the miracles or Karamah of the great Babas and Majzubs but when it comes to the Karamah of the four A'imma, hardly anything has been written in this regard. In fact, the sad part is that people are even unaware of the actual names of the great 'Ulama and Mujtahideens of Islam.

When famous lecturers speak about miracles and amazing qualities of the great Imams, they hardly take the names of the A'imma Mujtahideen or eminent 'Ulama like Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam Bukhari - *may Allah be pleased with him*. They give the impression that these people were not eminent Awliyah of their era. This has resulted in a scenario where people are actually under the impression that the eminent 'Ulama were not actually Awliyah. As a matter of fact, a large part of this is because of the Jaahil "peers" and "babas" who have made a claim that the 'Ulama are merely people of speech while they are people who are actually the true "Awliyah".

However, when we look at the historical records of early Islam, we will find that some of the greatest Awliyah were some of the greatest ‘Ulama of their period. There are hundreds of examples which can be found in authentic historical records.

Among the greatest Awliyah of their period was none other than Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam A’zam Abu Hanifah - *may Allah be pleased with him* . After all, his students included eminent Saints such as Hadrat Sayyiduna Fudail bin Ayyaz - *may Allah be pleased with him* - and Hadrat Sayyiduna Dawud Ta’i - *may Allah be pleased with him*.

Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam A’zam’s - *may Allah be pleased with him* - full name is Nu’mān bin Thaabit and his famous title is “Imam Azam”. He was born in 80 A.H. and passed away in 150 A.H. and is buried in Baghdad Shareef.

There is no doubt that Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam A’zam - *may Allah be pleased with him* - was from a non-Arab family. His grandson, Hadrat Sayyiduna Ismail bin Hammad - *may Allah be pleased with him* - mentions that they were from Persian descent. At the same time, his grandson mentions that they were never slaves in their family. He mentions that his grandfather was born, Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam A’zam - *may Allah be pleased with him* - was born in Kufah.

He mentions that while he was small, Hadrat Thaabit - *may Allah be pleased with him* - took his son to Hadrat Sayyiduna Ali - *may Allah be pleased with him* - who made a special Du’a for the family and it was through this Du’a, that this shining light of Islam appeared in Islamic history. (Taarik-e-Baghdad)

The great Imam was of medium height and extremely handsome. He used to wear extremely fine clothing. He used to also use attar in abundance. Besides his handsome appearance, he was also extremely kind and generous and spoke extremely softly to those around him. In fact, if there was a group of people, he was the one who spoke the least.

At the beginning, Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam A’zam - *may Allah be pleased with him* - was a businessman and did not have any special inclination towards seeking Islamic knowledge. However, one day, while he was in Kufah, he was seen by the eminent Muhaddith, Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam Shu’ba - *may Allah be pleased with him*, who said

to him, “O Abu Hanifah! I can see the Nur of knowledge in you. Therefore, you should attend the classes of the eminent ‘Ulama.”

When he heard this advice while he was still young, he decided to attend the classes of many eminent ‘Ulama and soon became a master in various faculties of Islamic learning. In fact, Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam A’zam - *may Allah be pleased with him* - soon became such an authority in Islamic Fiqh that the eminent Jurists and Muhadditheen began to refer to him on certain Islamic Jurisprudence issues. They also gave him the title of “Imaamul A’immah”.

He was also very punctual in the classes of Hadrat Sayyiduna Hammad bin Abi Sulayman - *may Allah be pleased with him* - and also gained a great mastery over the Science of Hadith as well with the result that many people became his students in this field.

It is mentioned that at the beginning, the great scholar, Imam Awzaa’i - *may Allah be pleased with him*, was a bit sceptical on some of the issues which Imam A’zam - *may Allah be pleased with him* - had given a decision on. However, when he met the great Imam during the occasion of Hajj, he changed his mind and began to praise Imam A’zam - *may Allah be pleased with him* - after that incident. (Fathul Qadeer; Hujjatullah Al Baalighah)

It is mentioned that once, Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam A’zam - *may Allah be pleased with him* - entered the court of Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam Baqir - *may Allah be pleased with him* - and they discussed a few issues. The great Imam of the Ahle Ba’it was so impressed that after the meeting, he stood up and kissed the great Imam on his forehead. In fact, Imam A’zam - *may Allah be pleased with him* - also spent some time in the blessed company of Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam Muhammad Baqir - *may Allah be pleased with him* - and gained immense spiritual grace and knowledge from these lessons.

He also spent a good portion of his time in the blessed company of Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam Jafer Sadiq - *may Allah be pleased with him* - who was the blessed son of Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam Muhammad Baqir - *may Allah be pleased with him*. In fact, after a few lessons from these great Islamic luminaries, it was seen that this young man was

destined for greatness in Islamic history. Many of the eminent Islamic luminaries were full of praise when they met him.

It is mentioned that no one had the courage to sit in front of Hadrat Sayyiduna Hammad bin Abi Sulayman - *may Allah be pleased with him* - except for Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam A'zam - *may Allah be pleased with him*.

It is mentioned that once his eminent teacher left the classes for some personal work and the young Imam A'zam - *may Allah be pleased with him* - continued to answer the questions of people present. In fact, some of the answers were those which even his teacher had not taught him. When his teacher returned, he presented the sixty questions and his answers to his teacher who agreed with him on forty of them and disagreed with him on twenty of them. When he saw this, he decided that he will remain with his teacher until his last moments on earth and this is what happened. (Taarik-e-Baghdad)

There are certain people who say that the great Imam did not narrate any Hadith from the blessed Ashaab, however, when we look at the number of the blessed Ashaab he met, we find it hard to believe such a thing.

Imam Khaarijah bin Mas'ab - *may Allah be pleased with him* - mentions that, "I had met nearly a thousand eminent scholars, but among them, there were a few who were extremely intelligent and one of them were Imam Abu Hanifah."

Imam Muhammad bin Abdullah Ansari - *may Allah be pleased with him* - has stated that, "The intelligence of Imam Abu Hanifah, his words, his action and his behaviour were clearly seen (as a mark of greatness)." (Taarik-e-Baghdad)

It is mentioned that the great Imam had met nearly twenty two blessed Ashaab and among them was Hadrat Sayyiduna Aanis bin Malik - *may Allah be pleased with him*.

It is also mentioned that he narrated fifty Ahadith from the blessed Ashaab.

The last and final Ashaab to leave this world was Hadrat Sayyiduna Abut Tufail bin Aamir Waasilah bin Abdullah bin Laithi - *may Allah be pleased with him*. It is mentioned that during his yearly visits for Hajj, the great Imam did indeed meet this

eminent Ashaab and certainly narrated Ahadith from him as well. In fact, this last blessed companion passed away in Mecca Shareef.