



A BIOGRAPHY OF IMAAM MUWAFFAQUD-DEEN `ABDULLAAH IBN AHMAD IBN QUDAAMAHAH - *rahimahullaah*

1. HIS LINEAGE: He was Aboo Muḥammad, `Abdullaah ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Qudaamah ibn Miqdaam ibn Naṣr ibn `Abdill bnaah ibn Hudhayfah ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya`qoob ibn al-Qaasim ibn Ibraaheem ibn Ismaa`eel ibn Yahyaa ibn Muḥammad ibn Saalim ibn `Abdillaah ibn `Umar ibn al-Khattaab-radiyallaahu `anhu.

al-Qurashee; al-Maqdisee; al-Jammaa`eelee, then ad-Dimashqee; as-Saalihee; al-Hanbalee, 'Muwaffaqud-Deen'.

al-Qurashee: in ascription to the tribe of Quraish, since he was descended from `Umar-radiyallaahu `anhu-who was `Adawee (i.e. from the sub-tribe of Banoo `Adiyy who were part of Quraish).

al-Maqdisee: His family's ascription to 'Baytul-Maqdis' (Jerusalem) since they lived close to it.

al-Jamaa`eelee: In ascription to the village of Jammaa`eel where he was born; and it is a village on the hills of Nablus-a city about 40 miles north of Jerusalem in present day occupied Palestine.

ad-Dimashqee: In ascription to Damascus (in Syria) which is where his family migrated to, and where he lived for most of his life, and where he died.

as-Saalihee: In ascription to the mosque of Saalihiyyah.

His brother Shaikh Aboo `Umar said: "They ascribe us to 'as-Saalihiyyah' because we settled at the mosque of Aboo Saalih, not that we were righteous people (saalihoon)." [And this is from piety since they were indeed a family of righteousness and rectification.]

al-Hanbalee: in ascription to the Hanbalee madhhab, i.e. that he learned and was an expert in the madhhab, i.e. that he learned and was an expert in the principles and details of Fiqh followed by the students of Imaam Ahmad ibn Hanbal. [and he was not a blind follower.]

'Muwaffaqud-Deen': an honorific title meaning 'one guided to and granted attainment of correctness in the Religion.'

2. HIS BIRTH: He was born in the month of Sha`baan in the year 541H in the town of Jammaa`eel.





3. HIS FAMILY: He was from a family who were noble in their lineage, their knowledge, and their piety.

His father: Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Qudaamah was born in 491H and died in 558H. He was one of the righteous scholars; famous for knowledge, zuhd and worship. He was the Khateeb of the mosque of Jammaa`eel. He educated his children and taught them the Qur.aan, and the hadeeth, and correct manners.

He died when Muwaffaqud-deen was about 17 years old, so his elder son Muhammad ibn Ahmad-who was known as Aboo `Umar-continued his upbringing and education.

4. HIS EARLY YEARS, AND HIS SEEKING KNOWLEDGE, AND HIS TRAVELLING TO SEEK KNOWLEDGE:

For the first ten years of his life he remained with his family in Palestine, and he began memorization of the Qur.aan.

Then in 551H his father performed Hijrah with the family, fleeing from the invading Christians, and migrated to Damascus.

In Damascus he completed memorization of the Qur.aan, and he memorized a large number of ahaadeeth.

Then he memorized 'Mukhtasar al-Khiraqee'-on the Fiqh of Imaam Ahmad. (Then later in life he wrote an explanation of it in 9 volumes, called 'al-Mughnee).

He remained in Damascus for 10 years, and at the age of twenty he began his journeys in search of knowledge.

-In 561H: he travelled to the main city of knowledge and of the scholars at that time-Baghdaad. He was accompanied by his maternal cousin al-Haafiz `Abdul-Ghane al-Maqdisee;

He inclined towards the study of Fiqh and his cousin towards hadeeth, however they accompanied each other to the lectures and acquired both;

There he studied with many of the scholars, amongst them: Shaikh `Abdul-Qadir al-Jeelaanee (D. 561H), Ibnul-Battee, and Ibnul-Manniyy.

He remained in Baghdaad for four years. He studied 'Mukhtasar al-Khiraqee' under `Abdul-Qadir al-Jeelaanee, and then the Shaikh died 50 nights after his arrival; then they studied under Ibnul-Jawzee; then he remained with Ibnul-Manniyy, and learned the Fiqh of





the Hanbalee madhhab with him, and its principles, and the different sayings of the scholars- and he excelled in that.

He then returned to Damascus.

- In 567H he again travelled to Baghdaad where he remained for a year.

- In 573H he travelled to Makkah to perform Hajj, and he met the people of knowledge there; amongst them al-Mubaarak ibn at-Tabbaakh.

Then after performing Hajj in 574:-

-Then from Makkah he travelled to Baghdaad-where he again remained for a year.

-Then from Baghdaad he returned to Damascus where he started to write works on many branches of knowledge, the most famous of his works being ‘al-Mughnee.’

5. HIS SHAIKHS:

-His Shaikhs included:

1. His father Ahmad ibn Qudaamah al-Maqdisee (491-558H),
2. His elder brother Aboo ‘Umar Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Qudaamah al-Maqdisee (528-607H),
3. Shaikh ‘Abdul-Qaadir al-Jeelaanee (471-561H),
4. Abul-Fath Nasr ibn Fityaan ibn Matr Ibnul-Mannee (501-583),
5. Abul-Fath Ibnul-Battee (477-564H),
6. Fakhrun-Nisaa. Shuhdah-the daughter of the Muhammad Aboo Nasr Ahmad ibn al-Faraj Ad-Deenawaree -(>480-574H),

Shaikh Badr ibn ‘Abdillaah al-Badr- hafizahullaah- in his introduction to his checking of Ibn Qudaamah’s book ‘Ithbaat Sifatil-`Uluww’ gathers a list of his Shaikhs numbering 67, and then said: “and many others besides them.”

6. HIS STUDENTS: Amongst them:

1. al-Bahaa.ul- Maqdisee (d. 624H) who wrote ‘al-`Uddah Sharh al-`Umdah’.
2. Diya.ud-Deen al-Maqdisee (d. 643H)
3. the son of his brother: Shamsuddeen ibn Qudaamah (d. 682H)





4. al-Haafiz al-Mundhree (d. 656H)-who wrote many works, including; ‘Mukhtasar Saheeh Muslim’, ‘Mukhtasar Sunan Abee Daawood’, at-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb’... Shaikh Badrul-Badr gathers the names of 44 of his students and then says: “And many others.”

7. HIS PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISTICS: His student ad-Diyaa. al-Maqdisee said; “He was of full height, white, with a bright face, large distinct eyes; he was so handsome that it was as if his face gave off-light; he had a broad forehead and a long beard; a straight nose and his eyebrows joined. He had a small head, slender arms and legs; and a thin body; and full senses and faculties.

He was extremely intelligent; and behaved in a fine manner...”

Ibnul-Najjaar said: “al-Muwaffaq was the imaam of the Hanbalees in the main congregational mosque of Damascus. He was fully reliable, an evidence (in narrating), noble. He had plentiful virtues; and he kept away from anything not befitting; he was pious, a worshipper.

He was upon the way of the Salaf. Light and dignity could be seen upon him. A man would take benefit from seeing him even before hearing his speech.”

Ibn Katheer said: “He used to engage in optional Prayers between the two night Prayers close to his place of Prayer. Then when he had prayed the `Ishaa. Prayer he would return to his house of the street of ad-Duwalla`ee by the bank of the river .He would take back with him those he could from the poor and needy, and they would eat with him, and his primary house was upon Qaasiyoon...”

ad-Diyaa. said: “he was fine in his manners: he would hardly ever be seen except that he was smiling: He would relate incidents and joke. I heard al-Bahaa. say; When the people read with him he would joke with us, and be cheerful and at ease.

Once they complained to him about some children who studied with him, so he said; “They are children. They have to have some play, and you used to be just like them.”

And al-Bahaa. described him as being courageous, and said: “He used to go forward to the enemy, and he was wounded upon his hand; and he used to take part when the army and the enemy were firing at each other.”

ad-Diyaa. said: “He used to pray with ‘Khushoo`’ (humility and attentiveness). He would hardly ever pray the Sunnah prayer before Fajr and after `Ishaa. Except in his house; and between the two night Prayers he used to pray four rak`ahs, reciting: ‘as-Sajdah’, ‘Yaaseen’, ad-Dukhaan’, and ‘Tabaarak.’ He would hardly miss out on them. He used to





stand in Prayer in the last hours of the night reciting 1/7th of the Qur.aan. He would sometimes raise his voice and he had a beautiful voice.”

8. SCHOLARS' PRAISE OF HIM:

Aboo `Amr ibn as-Salaah said: “I have not seen the like of al-Muwaffaq.”

Aboo Bakr ibn Ghaneemah-the muftee of Baghdaad-said: “I do not know anyone in our time who has reached the level of ijtihaad except for al-Muwaffaq.”

Sibt ibn al-Jawzee said: “He was an imaam in many fields. After his brother Aboo `Umar and al-`Imaad, there was no one in his time who had greater ‘zuhd’ or piety than him. He had a great deal of ‘hayaa.’ (sense of shame), and he remained aloof from this world and its people.

He was easy and mild-mannered, humble, and he had love for the poor. He was fine in manners, generous and giving, whoever saw him then it was as if he had seen one of the Companions; and it was as if light came from his face. He was plentiful in worship.”

Shaikhul-Islam Ibn Taimiyyah said: “After al-Awzaa`ee no one entered Shaam having more ‘Fiqh’ knowledge and understanding of the Religion than al-Muwaffaq.

ad-Diyaa. al-Maqdisee said: “He was an imaam with regard to the Qur.aan and its explanation; an imaam in the knowledge of hadeeth and its problematic matters; an imaam in Fiqh-indeed the outstanding scholar of his time in that; an imaam in knowledge of the disagreements of scholars; the outstanding scholar of his time in Laws of Inheritance; an imaam in ‘Usoolul-Fiqh’; an imaam in Arabic Grammar; an imaam in mathematics; an imaam in the movements and positions of stars and planets.

Ibn Rajab al-Hanbalee said: “The ‘Faqeeh’, the ‘Zaahid’, the Imaam. Shaikhul-Islam. The singular exception scholar.”

al-Haafiz Ibn Katheer said: “Shaikhul-Islam. An Imaam. An outstanding scholar. There was not in his time, indeed even for a long time before him, anyone having greater knowledge of Fiqh than him.”

Ibn Rajab said: “He used to closely follow the texts in the matter of ‘al-Usool’ (Fundamentals and belief) and in other than it. He did not hold applying any acts of worship for which there was no narration.

He used to order affirmation of the texts, and leaving them as they are-with regard to what occurs in the Book and the Sunnah from ‘as-Sifaat’ (Allaah’s attributes): not altering them,





not declaring how they are, not distorting the meaning; not interpreting them away with ‘ta.weel’, and not negating them.”

9. HIS DEATH:

He died-rahimahullaah-on Saturday, the day of `Eidul-Fitr, in 620H, at the age of 79 in his home in Damascus.

His funeral which had a huge attendance was held the next day and he was buried on the hill of Qaasiyoon.

10. HIS WIFE, SLAVE-GIRLS AND CHILDREN:

He married his paternal cousin Maryam bint Abee Bakr ibn `Abdillaah ibn Sa`d al-Maqdisee.

They had a number of children:

(al-Majd) `Eesaa,

Muhammad,

Yahyaa,

Safiyyah, and

Faatimah.

Then he took a slave girl, and then another.

Then he married `Izziyyah- who died before him.

All his sons died in his lifetime, and none of them had offspring except for `Eesaa- who had two righteous sons, however both of them died without any offspring.

So the Shaikh had no remaining progeny.

11. HIS WORKS:

Dr. `Alee ibn Sa`eed al-Ghaamidee lists his works and they come to 38 in number.

Amongst his printed works are:





‘al-Mughnee’ in Fiqh, (9 volumes);

‘Rawdatun-Naazir’ in ‘Usoolul-Fiqh’ (2 volumes);

‘Kitaabut-Tawwaabeen’ (1 volume);

‘Dhammut-Ta.weel’ (Booklet);

‘Ithbaat Sifatil-‘Uluww’ (1 volume with checking of Shaikh Badrul-Badr-hafizahullaah).

‘Lum`atul-I`tiqaad’

(Printed along with the explanation of Shaikh Ibn `Uthaymeen-rahimahullaah- and translated and printed with the title:

‘Sufficiency in Creed.’)

And (printed with the explanation of Shaikh al-Fawzaan-hafizahullaah):-

Sources:

- (1) ‘Ikhtiyaaraat Ibn Qudaamah al-Fiqhiyyah’ of Dr. `Alee ibn Sa`eed al-Ghaamidee;
- (2) The biography of the author included in Shaikh al-Fawzaan’s explanation of ‘Lum`atul-I`tiqaad’;
- (3) The biography compiled by Shaikh Badrul-Badr in his checking of ‘Ithbaat Sifatil-‘Uluww’.

References:

- (1) ‘Siyar A`laamin-Nubalaa.’ (22/165-173) of Dhahabee;
- (2) ‘al-Bidaayah wan-Nihaayah’ (13/99-101) of Ibn Katheer;
- (3) ‘Shadharaatudh-Dhahab’ (5/88-92) of Ibnul-`Imaad;
- (4) ‘Dhayl Tabaqaatil-Hanaabilah’ (2/133-149) of Ibn Rajab;
- (5) ‘al-Mughnee’ verifiers introduction (1/6-37).

[Translated by Aboo Talhah Daawood ibn Ronald Burbank]

