

Chapter – 32

## Imam Abu Yusuf

(732 - 799 AD)

Abu Yusuf was born in the city of Kufa in 113AH/732AD. However, some report that his date of birth is 117AH/735AD. He was by race Ansari. His grandfather Sa'ad bin Habtah was the Companion of the Prophet. His father used to work for living as a labor. So Abu Yusuf could not give preference to education. Rather, he wanted to learn any sort of craft and help his father. Nevertheless, from the very beginning, he had a keen interest in education. As a result of his natural passion he succeeded in reaching Imam Abu Hanifa's teaching classes. When his father came to know he told him, "Son! God has given Abu Hanifa satisfaction through sustenance; Why do you race him?" So Abu Yusuf did quit the school under compulsion. When Abu Hanifa found out then he summoned Abu Yusuf and assured for his constant financial support. After that, his regular education began.

In addition to Imam Abu Hanifa, he was taught by many other Imams. To him, Hadiths was narrated by A'amash, Hisham bin 'Urwa Suleiman Tamimi, Abu Ishaq Shaibani, Yahya bin Saeed, and others. He learnt *سير* (*The spiritual travelling from one state to another state*) and *مغازی* (*The Details of Muslim victories during early Islamic period*) from Muhammad bin Ishaq. He acquired a knowledge of various Jurisdictional matters from Muhammad bin Abi Laila. Allah

had bestowed him understanding and memory so strong that he could study all the arts and sciences of that time. And very soon he became a scholar.

Imam Abu Yusuf achieved his position in the Jurisprudence that the people considered him to be the right hand of Imam Abu Hanifa. Abu Hanifa himself had also recognized his extraordinary abilities. Other Imams also fully acknowledged Abu Yusuf's innovative mind and understanding. Imam A'mash was one of the famous Muhaddith of that time. He once asked Abu Yusuf a problem. He replied. Imam A'mash asked, "*Have you any authentication for it?*" Abu Yusuf said, "Yes! The same hadith that you have once referred for me". Imam A'mash said, "*Abu Yusuf I know this Hadith from the time when you were probably not born yet, but I have understood the true meaning of it today.*"

Imam Abu Yusuf is the first person to write books on Fiqh Hanafi. The archive of the various Jurisdictional question-answers of Imam Abu Hanifa that exists around the world today is the compilations of Imam Muhammad and Imam Abu Yusuf. Although this Fiqh is called "***Fiqh Hanafi***", it is in fact a set of opinions of four persons, namely Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Abu Yusuf, Imam Muhammad and Imam Zafir.

Imam Abu Yusuf had no any connection with the Royal Palace in the life of Abu Hanifa. The first instruction he received from his teacher in this regard was, "*To stay away from the Royals. However, if you were given the opportunity to serve the government, then you must first find out if it fits to your faith and method of work. Never accept any pressure of the Castle force to act against your views.*" It happened so. Caliph Mahdi appointed him as the judge in 166AH/783AD. Even this position continued in the tenure of Hadi, the successor to Mahdi. When the rule of Haroon-ul-Rashid came,

in view of his ability and experience, he promoted him to the position of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the then all Islamic states. This was a position that no one else in the history of Islam ever had. The remarkable thing about Imam Abu Yusuf is that he always performed the duties of the Qazi with great courage and independence and always kept the guidance given by his teacher, Imam Abu Hanifa.

Qazi Imam Abu Yusuf died in 182AH/799AD. He got the wealth of this world as well, and he always spent it in a proper manner. He spent his wealth mostly on the poor and needy people.

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