

Chapter – 38

Imam Muslim

(819 - 875 AD)

His name is Muslim, Kunniya is 'Abul Hassan, and the title is Asakeruddin. He lived in the city of Nishapur, Khorasan. He was born in 204AH/819AD. His father's name is Hajjaj al-Qashiri. The al-Qashir tribe is said to belong to Arab. In the periods of the well known "Four Caliphates" his ancestors used to attain prominent places.

Imam Muslim's parents were religious, so his early training was in the same color. In his childhood he also enjoyed very religious atmosphere in Nishapur. Imam Raheev and Imam Zahri were among the prominent Islamic scholars of that time. He also achieved great knowledge from Muhammad bin Yahya al-Dholi, a renowned teacher of Hadith in Baghdad. In addition to this, he also studied Hadith from Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, 'Abdullah Qari, Qutaiba bin Saeed, 'Abdullah bin Musailamah and many other teachers. He also have traveled to several countries to seek knowledge.

After completing his education, he returned to Nishapur and met Imam al-Bukhari. Imam Muslim was very interested in Hadith from the beginning. After meeting Imam al-Bukhari, he was so impressed that he made Imam al-Bukhari as a leader for his whole life.

Since Imam Muslim was more influenced by the personality of Imam al-Bukhari, so following in his footsteps, he worked to compile and edit the correct hadiths. First he collected some 300,000 hadiths, then compiled his own book

containing 4,000 of them. The name of this book is "*Sahih Muslim*". This book is considered to be an excellent collection of correct hadiths. Rather, some have given preference even over "*Sahih al-Bukhari*". Abu Razi and Abu Hatim, who are among the great Muhadditheen, have testified to the glory and higher status of Imam Muslim. Imam Muslim also wrote many other books, besides the Sahih Muslim. Among them, which are prominent, are Al-Masnad al-Kabir, Alar-Rijal, Jame Kabir, Kitab al-I'lal and Kitab al-Wijdan.

During the compilation of hadiths, Imam Muslim had highly regarded the continuity of the narrations and the authenticity of the narrators, means their personal reputation. Moreover, he put a lot of emphasis on getting the whole words of the hadith closer to the original. That is why the numbers of hadiths in his book, Sahih Muslim, is relatively low. Although Imam Muslim established a standard for himself for editing his book, yet he did not invalidate the rest of his collected hadiths.

Imam Muslim was a great teacher as well. Among his students, who were later considered as great scholars are Abu Hatim Razi, Musa bin Haroon, Ahmad bin Salamah, Abu Isa Tirmizi and Abu Bakr bin Khamisa.

Although Imam Muslim himself was a Mujtahid (*keen researcher*), but he usually followed Shafi'i belief, and some have even called him related to Maliki belief.

He was a very pious and devoted person. His superior character can be judged by virtue of the fact that he did never indulge in backbiting for anyone. Abu Saima was one of Imam's close associates. He remained close to Imam Muslim for more than 15 years. He says, "*I have never heard Imam Muslim lying or saying anything filthy.*"

The memory of Imam Muslim was very unusual. All of his contemporaries highly regarded for his remarkable memory. Imam Sahib died at about 56 years of age.