

The Book of Knowledge

Of the Imaam, the Haafidh:

Abu Khaithama Zuhair Ibn Harb An-Nasaa'ee [Died 234H]

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TEXT OF THE BOOK

*In the Name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy
And my success is due to none but Allaah*

The Shaikh, the Imaam, the 'Aalim (scholar), the Zaahid (ascetic) 'Izz-ud-Deen Abul-Hasan 'Alee Ibn Muhammad Ibn 'Abd-il-Kareem Al-Juzree – may Allaah support him – informed us in the month of Ramadaan of the year 614H in the city of Mausil (In northern Iraq) from the home of his brother, saying: The Shaikh, the Imaam, the 'Aalim Majd-ud-Deen Abul-Faraj Yahyaa Ibn Mahmood Ibn Sa'ad Al-Asfahaanee informed us, saying: The Shaikh, the Imaam Abul-Fath Isma'eel Ibn Al-Fadl Ibn Ahmad Ibn Al-Akh-sheed As-Sarraaj informed us in the year 518H and in the year 522H, saying: Shaikh Abu Taahir Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn 'Abd-ir-Raheem informed us, saying: Abu Hafs 'Umar Ibn Ibraaheem Al-Kitaanee Al-Muqree informed us, saying: Abul-Qaasim 'Abdullaah Ibn Muhammad 'Abdul-'Azeez Al-Baghawee informed us that:

1. Abu Khaithama Zuhair Ibn Harb narrated to us, saying: Wakee' reported to us, saying: Al-A'amash reported to us from Tameem Ibn Salamah from Abu 'Ubaidah that he said: 'Abdullaah [Ibn Mas'ood] (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) said:

“Aspire to become a scholar or a student of knowledge, and do not aspire to become anything other than that.”

2. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Ishaaq Ibn Sulaimaan Ar-Raazee stated: I heard Handhala report from 'Awn Ibn 'Abdillaah that he said:

“I said to 'Umar Bin 'Abd-il-'Azeez: 'It was said (to me): If you are able to be a scholar, then be a scholar. And if you are not able to do so, then be a student of knowledge. And if you are not able to be a student of knowledge, then love them. And if you can't love them, then do not hate them.' So 'Umar said: '*SubhaanAllaah!* (Glory be to Allaah!) Allaah has indeed made a way out for this person.”

3. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from Al-A'amash from Tameem Ibn Salamah from Abu 'Ubaidah that he said: 'Abdullaah [Ibn Mas'ood] (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) said:

“Whosoever Allaah intends to do good for, He gives him understanding of the Religion.”⁵

4. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Mu'awiyah Ibn 'Amr reported to us, saying that Zaa'idah reported from Al-A'amash from Tameem Ibn Salamah from Abu 'Ubaidah on the authority of 'Abdullaah [Ibn Mas'ood] that he (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) said:

“O people, learn! Then whoever learns, must act (upon what he knows).”

⁵ This report is authentically attributed to the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim transmitted it from Mu'awiyah (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*).

5. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyainah reported to us on the authority of 'Aasim Ibn Abee An-Najood on Zur Ibn Hubaish that he said:

“I went to Safwaan Ibn ‘Assaal Al-Muraadee, so he said: ‘What did you come for?’ I said: ‘In search of knowledge.’ So he said: **‘Verily, the angels lower their wings for the seeker of knowledge, out of contentment for what he seeks.’**”⁶

6. Abu Khaithama reported to us, saying: Muhammad Ibn Khaazim reported to us, saying: Al-A'amash reported to us from Shimr from Sa'eed Ibn Jubair on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbaas (*radyyAllaahu ‘anhu*), that he said:

“Indeed, every creature, even the fish in the sea, asks forgiveness for the one who educates people about the good (i.e. Islaam).”⁷

7. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: 'Abd-ur-Rahmaan Ibn Mahdee reported to us, saying Bishr Ibn Mansoor reported to us from Thawr from ‘Abd-ul-‘Azeez Ibn Adh-Dhibyaan that he said: 'Eesaa Ibn Maryam said:

“Whosoever learns, then knows, then acts, then this is considered something grand in the kingdom of the heavens.”

8. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying Muhammad Ibn Khaazim reported to us, saying: Al-A'amash reported to us from Shaqeeq from ‘Abdullaah [Ibn Mas'ood] (*radyyAllaahu ‘anhu*), that he said:

“Learn, for indeed none of you knows when he will be needed by the people.”

9. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Mu'aadh Ibn Mu'aadh reported to us, saying: Ibn 'Awn reported to us from Al-Ahnaf that he said: ‘Umar [Ibn Al-Khattaab] (*radyyAllaahu ‘anhu*) said:

“Acquire understanding (of the Religion) before you are given positions of authority (for then it will be too late).”⁸

⁶ This hadeeth is found in *Sunan At-Tirmidhee* and other collections, and he (At-Tirmidhee) authenticated it. Some of the reporters stop it as being the saying of a companion only, while others raise it to a saying of the Prophet (*sallAllaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*). It takes the ruling of *marfoo'* (raised to a saying of the Prophet) without a doubt. This is because such a statement is not being said according to ones opinion and view, as has been stated by Ibn 'Abd-il-Barr in *Jaami' Bayaan-ul-'Ilmi wa Fadlihi* (1/32-33).

⁷ This report is authentically attributed to the Prophet (*sallAllaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*). At-Tabaraanee transmitted it in *Al-Awsat* from the hadeeth of Jaabir (*radyyAllaahu ‘anhu*) and At-Tirmidhee from the hadeeth of Abu Umaamah (*radyyAllaahu ‘anhu*) and he said it was *saheeh*.

⁸ **Translator's Note:** This advice is to acquire knowledge before taking a position of leadership, for when someone is in that position, it becomes difficult to seek knowledge due to the time and effort that is required for that position. And also, when one is in a position of leadership, no doubt, he will need to have knowledge in order to make the right decisions.

10. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Muhammad Ibn Khaazim reported to us, saying: Al-A'amash reported to us from Shaqeeq from 'Abdullaah [Ibn Mas'ood] (*radyaAllaahu 'anhu*), that he said:

“By Allaah, any individual that issues a ruling (*fatwa*) to the people for every matter they ask him of, is truly insane.” Al-A'amash (one of the narrators) said: “Al-Hakam said to me: ‘Had I heard this hadeeth from you yesterday, I would not have issued *fataawaa* (on that day) for much of the instances in which I did issue *fataawaa*.”

11. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Muhammad Ibn Khaazim reported to us, saying: Al-A'amash reported to us from Rajaa Al-Ansaaree from 'Abd-ur-Rahmaan Ibn Bishr Al-Azraq that he said:

"Two men entered from the gates of Kinda while Abu Mas'ood Al-Ansaaree was sitting in a gathering. One of the two men said: 'Is there any man here that can judge between us?' A man from the gathering said: 'I can.' So Abu Mas'ood grabbed a handful of pebbles and struck him with it. Then he said to him: 'Indeed, it used to be hated that one would rush to give a ruling.'"

12. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Muhammad Ibn Khaazim reported to us, saying: Al-A'amash reported to us from Saalih Ibn Khibaab from Husayn Ibn 'Uqbah that Salmaan (*radyaAllaahu 'anhu*) said:

“Knowledge that is not spoken of is like a treasure that is not spent.”⁹

13. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from Al-A'amash who said: It has reached me that Mutarrif Ibn 'Abdillaah Ibn Ash-Shikheer said:

“The virtue of knowledge is more beloved to me than the virtue of performing worship. And the best of your religious qualities is *al-war'* (piety).”¹⁰

14. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from Al-A'amash from Sulaim from Hudhaifah that he (*radyaAllaahu 'anhu*) said:

“It is enough of knowledge for an individual that he fear Allaah. And it is enough of a lie for him to say: ‘I seek Allaah’s forgiveness and repent to Him’ yet he goes back to doing it.”

⁹ The chain of this narration is *jayyid* (good). It is also established in *marfoo'* form. Ahmad and At-Tabaraanee reported it from two paths on the authority of Abu Hurairah (*radyaAllaahu 'anhu*). The author (Abu Khaithama) has transmitted one of these two, as shall come later under number 162. Ibn 'Abd-il-Barr also reported it from the hadeeth of Ibn 'Umar (*radyaAllaahu 'anhu*).

¹⁰ This statement is established in *marfoo'* form as a saying of the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). At-Tabaraanee reported it on the authority of Ibn 'Umar and Hudhaifah (*radyaAllaahu 'anhum*). Al-Mundhree declared its chain to be *hasan*. Al-Haakim reported it from Sa'ad Ibn Abee Waqqaas (*radyaAllaahu 'anhu*) and he as well as Adh-Dhahabee authenticated it.

15. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: 'Abd-ur-Rahmaan Ibn Mahdee reported to us, saying: Sufyaan reported to us from Al-A'amash from 'Abdullaah Ibn Murrah from Masrooq that he said:

“It is sufficient knowledge for an individual that he fear Allaah. And it is sufficient ignorance for an individual that he be amazed by his (own) knowledge.”

16. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from Al-A'amash from Maalik Ibn Al-Haarith that Abu Khaalid, a shaikh from the companions of ‘Abdullaah [Ibn Mas’ood] (*radyAllaahu ‘anhu*), said:

“One day we were in the masjid, when Khibaab Ibn Al-Arat came and sat down. Then he remained silent, so the people said to him: “Indeed, your companions have gathered with you so that you may narrate hadeeth to them or command them.’ So he said: ‘And what should I command them with? Perhaps I will command them with something that I do not do myself.’”

17. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Wakee' reported to us, saying Abu Sinaan Sa'eed Ibn Sinaan reported to us, saying: 'Antaza narrated to me, saying: I heard Ibn 'Abbaas (*radyAllaahu ‘anhu*) say:

"No individual treads a path by which he seeks knowledge, except that Allaah makes easy for him his path towards Paradise by it." ¹¹

18. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Wakee' reported to us from Mi'sar from Ma'in Ibn 'Abd-ir-Rahmaan who said: ‘Abdullaah [Ibn Mas'ood] (*radyAllaahu ‘anhu*) said:

“If you have the ability to be the one receiving the hadeeth (as opposed to giving it), then do so.”

19. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Wakee' reported to us from Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyainah from 'Amr from Yayhaa Ibn Ja'dah that he said:

“People would go to Salmaan and listen to his (narration of) hadeeth. And he would say: ‘This is good for you and bad for me.’”

20. 'Abdullaah narrated to us, saying: Abu Khaithama reported to us, saying: Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyainah reported to us from Yoonus from Al-Hasan (Al-Basree), that he said:

“If a man sits amongst people, and they perceive him to be ignorant, while in fact he is not ignorant, then this is truly the Muslim who possesses understanding (of the Religion).”

21. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from 'Ataa Ibn As-Saa'ib from 'Abd-ur-Rahmaan Ibn Abee Laylaa, that he said:

¹¹ Its chain of narration is *jayyid* (good) in *mawqoof* form (i.e. saying of a Companion). It is also authentically attributed to the Prophet (*sallAllaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) from the hadeeth of Abu Hurairah (*radyAllaahu ‘anhu*). Muslim and others have transmitted it and it will occur later in this book under number 25.

“I met one hundred and twenty of the Companions of Allaah’s Messenger (*sallAllaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) from the Ansaar. There was not one from among them who would be asked about something, except that he loved that his brother replace him (in that matter) and he would not narrate a hadeeth except that he loved that his brother replace him.”

22. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Sufyaan reported to us from Az-Zuhree that he said:

“Urwah used to gather the people together (in one place) to listen to his hadeeth.”

23. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Sufyaan reported to us saying that 'Amr (*radyyAllaahu ‘anhu*) said:

“When 'Urwah entered Makkah, he said: ‘Come to me and take (hadeeth) from me.’”

24. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Mu'awiyah Ibn 'Amr reported to us, saying: Zaa'idah reported to us from Al-A'amash from Maalik Ibn Al-Haarith from 'Abd-ur-Rahmaan Ibn Yazeed that he said:

"It was once said to 'Alqamah: 'Won't you sit in the masjid so that the people may gather around you and ask you questions and so that we may sit with you? For indeed, they ask individuals that are lower than you (in knowledge).' So 'Alqamah said: 'Indeed, I hate that people walk behind me saying: This is 'Alqamah! This is 'Alqamah!'"

25. Jareer and Ad-Dareer¹² narrated to us from Al-A'amash from Abu Saalih from Abu Hurairah (*radyyAllaahu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (*sallAllaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) said:

“Whoever treads a path, seeking knowledge by it, Allaah will make easy for him his path towards Paradise. And whoever has his actions cause him to proceed slowly (towards Paradise), then his lineage will not cause him to proceed any faster.”

26. Abu Khaithama Zuhair narrated to us, saying: Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyainah reported to us from 'Amr from Yahyaa Ibn Ja'dah that he said:

"Umar wanted to write down the Sunnah. Then it was prescribed to the people: 'Whoever has anything from that (in his records), then let him erase it.'"¹³

¹² Ad-Dareer is the nickname of Muhammad Ibn Khaazim, Abu Mu'awiyah. Muslim has transmitted this hadeeth from this path of narrators (18/71-72) in *marfoo'* form. Then he reported it from different paths on the authority of Al-A'amash.

¹³ Its chain of narration is *munqata'* (broken), for Yahyaa Ibn Ja'ada never met 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattaab. In fact it is even held that he never met Ibn Mas'ood, and he died ten years after that of 'Umar.

You must know that there was an old dispute amongst the *Salaf* with regard to recording the prophetic hadeeth. Among them were those who forbade it and among them were those who allowed it. There will follow in this book, many narrations regarding both of these sides. Then the matter settled in favor of the permissibility of

27. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyainah reported to us from Ibraaheem Ibn Maisarah from Taawoos that he said:

"When someone would write to Ibn 'Abbaas asking him on a certain matter, he would respond to the person that brought him the message, 'Inform your companion that the answer to this issue is such and such. Indeed, we do not write anything down on paper, except for letters¹⁴ and the Qur'aan.'"

28. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Ibn Fudayl reported to us from Ibn Shabramah on the authority of Ash-Sha'bee that he said:

"I never wrote black (ink) in white (paper). Nor did I ever hear a hadeeth from someone and then want him to repeat it to me again (due to the memory)."

29. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Ibn 'Uyainah reported to us from Ibn Abee An-Najeeh from Mujaahid that he said:

"(Allaah says): '**And make us leaders of the *muttaqoon***' [Surah Al-Furqaan: 74] '(This means) we take their example and follow them (Prophet and Sahaabah) such that those who come after us will follow our example.'"

30. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from a man from Laith from Mujaahid that he said:

"(Allaah says): '**And He made me (‘Eesaa) blessed wherever I may be.**' [Surah Maryam: 31] 'This means He made me one who teaches good.'"

writing down the hadeeth – rather in favor of its obligation. And this was based on the Prophet's command mentioned in more than one hadeeth, such as his saying: "**Write for Abu Shaah.**" Al-Bukhaaree reported this hadeeth.

And from the matters that are well known is that it is the hadeeth that contains the explanation for the general aspects of the Qur'aan as well as the detailed aspects of its rulings. And if it were not for the hadeeth, we would have no way of knowing how to perform the prayer, observe the fast, as well as fulfill the other pillars and acts of worship, upon the way that Allaah intended for us. And whatever is essential for an obligatory matter to be fulfilled, becomes itself obligatory. Indeed a people from this era have gone astray for they believe that the Qur'aan is sufficient for them over the hadeeth. This is in spite of Allaah's saying: "**And we revealed to you the Reminder so that it could explain to the people what was already revealed to them (from before).**" [Surat-un-Nahl: 44] Thus, Allaah informs us that there is something that is explained, which is the Qur'aan, and something that is explaining, which is the Messenger (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and his hadeeth. Furthermore, his (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) saying in the authentic and famous hadeeth: "**Indeed I was given the Qur'aan and something equal to it**" confirms this.

¹⁴ This refers to the letters that the Messenger of Allaah (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) used to write to some individuals and to certain tribes. Refer to *Zaad al-Ma'aad* (1/30). This narration on Ibn 'Abbaas (*radyyAllaahu 'anhu*) has an authentic chain.

31. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from Mugheerah that he said:

"It was said to Sa'eed Ibn Jubair: 'Do you know of anyone that is more knowledgeable than you?' He said: 'Yes, 'Ikrimah.' So when 'Sa'eed was killed, Ibraaheem [An-Nakha'ee] said: 'He did not leave behind him anyone equal to him.' When news of the death of Ibraaheem reached Ash-Sha'bee, he said: 'Is this individual dead?' It was said to him: 'Yes', so he said: 'If I had said so, I would have been announcing the death of knowledge. He did not leave behind him anyone equal to him. And what is remarkable is that he preferred Ibn Jubair over himself. I will inform you about that. Indeed he was born to a family with much knowledge in their household, so he took hold of that understanding. Then he sat with us and memorized the best of our hadeeth (and combined that) with the understanding of the members of his household. So who can equal himself to him?'"

32. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyainah reported to us, saying: Ayyoob At-Taa'ee reported to us, saying I heard Ash-Sha'bee say:

"I have not seen one person from all of mankind as far as the horizon spreads that was more desirous of seeking knowledge, than Masrooq."

33. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Hushaim reported to us, saying: Sayaar reported to us from Jareer Ibn Hayyaan that he said:

"A man¹⁵ traveled to Egypt just for this one hadeeth and he did not stop his journey to settle down, until he returned back to his home. (The hadeeth was) **'Whosoever conceals (the faults of) his brother in this world, Allaah will conceal his faults on the Day of Judgement.'**"

34. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Sufyaan reported to us from Ibn Juraij that he said:

"Naafi' dictated (hadeeth) to me."

35. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from 'Abd-ul-Malik Ibn 'Umair from Warraad, the scribe of Al-Mugheerah that he said:

"Al-Mugheerah dictated (hadeeth) to me. And I recorded it with my hand."¹⁶

36. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: 'Abdullaah Ibn Numair reported to us from Al-A'amash that he said:

"Ibraaheem [An-Nakha'ee] would mention an obligatory matter or a hadeeth and then say: 'Memorize this, for perhaps you may be asked about it someday during your lifetime.'"

¹⁵ He is 'Uqbah Ibn 'Aamir and he traveled to see Maslama Ibn Mukhallid, who was in charge of Egypt (at that time) as occurs in the *Musnad* (4/104).

¹⁶ Its chain of narration is *saheeh* (authentic). Muslim has transmitted it in his *Saheeh* (2/95).

37. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Abu Mu'awiyah reported to us, saying: Al-A'amash reported to us from Ibraaheem [An-Nakha'ee] that he said:

"They (Sahaabah) would hate that a man reveal what he had with him (of knowledge)."

38. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: 'Uthaam Ibn 'Alee Al-'Aamiree reported to us, saying: I heard Al-A'amash say:

"I never heard Ibraaheem state his opinion for a matter, ever."

39. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Ibn Yamaan reported to us from Ash'ath from Ja'far from Sa'eed Ibn Jubair that he said:

"(Allaah says): **'Those who are miserly and enjoin miserliness upon the people.'**¹⁷ (Ibn Jubair said): 'This is concerning knowledge.'"

40. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Jareer reported to us from Laith¹⁸ that he said:

"When four people (or more) would sit in a gathering with Abul-'Aaliyah, he would get up (and leave)."

41. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Al-Waleed Ibn Muslim reported to us, saying: 'Abdullaah Ibn Al-'Alaa narrated to me, saying: I heard Mak-hool say:

"I belonged to 'Amr Ibn Sa'eed Al-'Aasee or Sa'eed Ibn Al-'Aas (as a slave). He gave me away as a present to a man from Hudhail in Egypt. So he benefited me by doing so. I did not leave from Egypt until I thought that there was no knowledge within it except that I had heard it. Then I went to Al-Madeenah. And I did not leave from there until I thought that there was no knowledge within it, except that I had heard it. Then I met Ash-Sha'bee and I did not see the likes of him (before). May Allaah have mercy on him."

42. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Al-Waleed Ibn Muslim reported to us, saying: Tameem Ibn 'Atiyyah Al-'Ansee narrated to me, saying: I heard Mak-hool say:

"I used to visit Shurayh frequently every month. And I would never ask him on any matter, for I would suffice from what I heard of him from his passing of judgements."

43. Abu Khaithama narrated to us, saying: Al-Waleed Ibn Muslim reported to us, saying: Sa'eed Ibn 'Abd-il-'Azeez reported to us from Mak-hool that he said:

¹⁷ Surat-un-Nisaa: 37

¹⁸ He is Ibn Abee Saleem and he is *da'eef* (weak).

