

Shaikh Muhammad Ibn Abdillah As-Sumalee Author: 'Umar bin Muhammad As-Subayyal & Hasan 'Abd-ur-Rahmaan Al-Mu'allim

All praise be to Allaah alone and may the peace and blessing be on the best of His creation, Muhammad, and on his family and Companions. To proceed:

Muhammad 'Abdullaah As-Sumaalee was a teacher in Al-Masjid Al-Haraam and in the Daar-ul-Hadeeth Al-Khairiyyah in Makkah. He was a noble scholar and a knowledgeable Muhaddith. I attended his classes on Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree and other subjects, which he gave in Al-Masjid Al-Haraam during my first years of seeking knowledge from 1397H to 1398H. I benefited from his knowledge and from his good manners and character. He was highly proficient - specifically in the Science of Hadeeth and it's Terminology.[1] He was well grounded and strong in his knowledge of the Science of narrators and chains of narration, as well as other Islamic sciences and the Arabic language.

Allaah granted benefit through his teaching in Al-Masjid Al-Haraam and in Daar-ul-Hadeeth. Many students of knowledge from various parts of the world were produced from him. He, may Allaah have mercy on him, gave great importance to rectification and fearing of Allaah along with humbleness, gentle character, abstinence, piety and a rejection of this worldly life. He would not preoccupy himself with things other than Islaamic knowledge, worship and obedience (to Allaah), up until the time He returned to His Lord. May Allaah shower him with His vast mercy and contentment, and may He accept him among His righteous servants. And we ask Allaah to give him a high place in Paradise, with the pious. Verily Allaah is the One who hears and answers the supplications.

And may the peace and blessings of Allaah be on our Prophet, Muhammad, his family and his Companions.

Stated by Shaikh 'Umar Ibn Muhammad As-Subayyal, Imaam of Al-Masjid Al-Haraam

His Place of Birth and his Early Upbringing:

The Shaikh, the Muhaddith, Muhammad Ibn 'Abdillaah Ibn Ahmad As-Sumaalee traced his lineage back to the village of Amaadin in Ogaden, which is in western Somalia, an area currently being occupied by Ethiopia. [2]

Shaikh Muhammad Ibn 'Abdillaah As-Sumaalee was born at the beginning of this (20th) century, around 1910 or so.[3] This is because the Shaikh remembers seeing the Somali Mujaahid known as Sayyid Muhammad 'Abdullaah, and he was a little older by then. And Sayyid Muhammad died in the year 1919.

His Quest for Knowledge:

He sought knowledge from his early youth since he was seven or eight years old. He began by memorizing the Qur'aan and read it to Shaikh Hasan. Then he read the book Safeenah An-Najaa, which is a book on Shaafi'ee Fiqh to Shaikh 'Abd-ur-Rahmaan 'Awl. Then he read the book Al-Minhaaj, on Shaafi'ee Fiqh, to Shaikh Haaj 'Alee Tam'asee. Then after that, he read from the text of Al-Ajroomiyyah to Shaikh Muhammad Noor Hirsee concerning Arabic grammar, as well as its explanation by Al-'Ashmaawee, then Milhat-ul-'Iraab, then Laamiyyat-ul-Af'aal concerning Arabic morphology.

After the Shaikh completed his studies with the scholars of his land, he decided to travel to other lands in search of knowledge, following the way of his pious predecessors (i.e. the Salaf). His first travel was to Ethiopia, to the regions known as JakJakaa and Faafan, which took a distance of ten day's journey from his country. At that time he was twenty years old. He studied the book Nadhm Al-'Umarbatee with Shaikh Muhammad Mu'allim Husayn, and he studied Laamiyyat-ul-Af'aal and Milhat-ul-'Iraab with Shaikh 'Abd-un-Noor. He also studied the books Qatr-un-Nadaa and Alfiiyah Ibn Maalik with Shaikh Aruboo. Then he studied the science of Bayaan with Shaikh 'Alee Jawhar and then with Shaikh Hasan Ibn Ash-Shaikh Hasan. His stay in Ethiopia lasted about two years.

During his journey back home, the Shaikh became very sick due to the difference of foods between Somalia and Ethiopia. His paternal aunt tended to him, nursing him. When he recovered from his sickness, he became determined to travel again, so his aunt gave him an ox, which he sold and used the money to travel to Djibouti.

There he read the book Safeenah An-Najaa to Shaikh 'Alee Jawhar but he did not finish it. And his stay did not last for more than two months, for he traveled by sea towards Yemen. The waves and the currents of the sea threw their ship back and forth until they feared for their lives, and it was such that the Shaikh swore that he would not ride by sea again. They arrived at the city of Zabeed in Yemen and stayed there for three months. There he studied the book As-Safeenah concerning Shaafi'ee Fiqh. Then he traveled to the area of Qatee' and remained there for a month listening to Al-Minhaaj concerning Shaafi'ee Fiqh in the presence of Shaikh Yahyaa, the Muftee of the lands of Qatee'. Then he moved to the city of San'aa and studied the sciences of the Arabic Language there. So he studied the books Qawaa'id-ul-'Iraab, Qatr-un-Nadaa, Al-Jawhar-ul-Maknoon, Al-Alfiyyah and Al-Ashmoonee. He rejected the beliefs of the people of that land, which was Zaydee (a sect of the Shi'ah), and said to them: "I am a Shaafi'ee." But they did not let him continue studying his madh-hab. Then, one of the teachers there, Al-Ustaadh Yahyaa Al-'Eesaa advised him to study the Science of Hadeeth.

So Shaikh Muhammad began to memorize *Buloogh al-Maraam* and memorized 500 hadeeths from it. Then he began to study the book Subul-us-Salaam (the explanation of *Buloogh al-Maraam*) with one of the well-known Shaikhs. Among his teachers of the Arabic Language in Yemen, were Shaikh Lutfee, Shaikh 'Alee Fiddah and Shaikh Kabasee. Then the Shaikh desired to go to Egypt to seek knowledge, but at that time World War II started and all of the sea routes were closed.

Then the Shaikh met a man that had come from Makkah, so he asked him about how Makkah was. The man responded to him, saying: "O Muhammad, there is a school in Makkah in which they teach hadeeth. It is called Daar-ul-Hadeeth." So the Shaikh was pleased with this and traveled to Makkah from San'aa towards the end of 1359H along with other people going to Hajj. Shaikh Yahyaa entrusted the leader of the Hajj trip with him. So he gave him a riding animal and the journey lasted a month from San'aa to Makkah. He reached Makkah in 1360H and enlisted in the Daar-ul-Hadeeth school.

In Daar-ul-Hadeeth, Shaikh Muhammad Haamid Al-Fiqee met Shaikh Muhammad Ibn 'Abdillaah and asked him: "Where did you come from O Muhammad?" So he told him: "I came from Somalia in search of the noble hadeeth." So he was greatly impressed and said: "The Khuraafees (a deviant sect) and the followers of (sufi) orders eat and fill themselves, but the students of Hadeeth do not find anything."

So he took him to a shelter whose caretaker was from the ashraaf (those whose lineage can be traced back to the Prophet) and said to him: "This person seeks the hadeeth of your forefather." So he would reserve two loaves of white bread for him every day.

The Shaikh continued seeking knowledge in the Haram and in Daar-ul-Hadeeth. He studied under Shaikh 'Abd-ur-Razzaaq Hamzah Al-Misree, Shaikh Abu As-Samah, Imaam of the Haram, Shaikh Sulaymaan Ibn 'Abdir-Rahmaan Al-Hamdaan, teacher of Tawheed and Hadeeth at Al-Masjid Al-Haraam, Shaikh Abee Sa'eed Al-Pakistani, Shaikh Muhammad Sultaan Al-Ma'soomee, Shaikh Abu Muhammad 'Abdul-Haqq Al-Haashimee, and Shaikh Ibn Maani'.

From the most particular of his teachers was Shaikh 'Abd-ur-Razzaaq Hamzah,[4] whom he studied and read the Six Books of the Sunnah with, as well as *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* and *al-Bidaayah wan-Nihaayah*, but he didn't complete it. Upon seeing the Shaikh's eagerness and great concern for seeking knowledge, Shaikh 'Abd-ur-Razzaaq Hamzah began to esteem him and love him more than his own children.

Shaikh 'Abd-ur-Razzaaq's method in teaching hadeeth was that he would read the chain of narration and then ask his students about the name, kunyah and laqab of the reporter. So if they didn't know, they would have to research it in their books.

After studying for two years in Daar-ul-Hadeeth, he was appointed as teacher of Arabic Language, which he would do while still studying Hadeeth. The Shaikh graduated from Daar-ul-Hadeeth in 1975 and achieved the high approval (*Ijaazah 'aaliyah*) and the degree of Mujtahid in the assigned subjects. Then he was appointed as a teacher in the Islaamic University of Madeenah and there a number of students of knowledge studied under him.

Afterward, he was appointed as a teacher in the Haram of Makkah until the year 1406H when he broke his leg. But he remained employed as a teacher and was given permission to teach at home. And he would teach in his home until the time he passed away.

His Abstinence and Piety:

The Shaikh was one who abstained from worldly luxuries, who was careful of what he received and took and was very modest. He did not know anything of the dunyaa for he had abandoned the worldly life after it had been presented to him. Among the examples of this is the following story: He used to live in one small apartment, and when it was said to him: "Shall we not look for another apartment for you", he responded by saying: "Do you want people to say that Shaikh Muhammad is greedy?"

And one time when he broke his leg and was not able to go to the Haram to teach, he refused to accept the stipend that he normally would take (for teaching). So Shaikh Muhammad Ibn 'Abdillaah As-Subayyal, head of the affairs of the Haramayn, said to him: "The pious and wicked both take this money, and you have more right to it. So whoever comes to you, then teach him in your home."

His Students:

A number of students studied under the Shaikh, the number of which cannot be counted, whether in the Daar-ul-Hadeeth center or in Al-Masjid Al-Haraam or in the Islamic University.

His educational gatherings would be constantly frequented and attended by the elite amongst the noble scholars, such as:

1. Shaikh Muhammad Ibn 'Abdillaah As-Subayyal, the head of the affairs of the Haramayn and the Imaam and khateeb of Al-Masjid Al-Haraam
2. Shaikh Yahyaa Ibn 'Uthmaan Al-Makkee Al-Hindee, from the scholars of Hijaz
3. Shaikh Muqbil Ibn Haadee Al-Waadi'ee, the Muhaddith of the lands of Yemen, who described his Shaikh in his book "Al-Muqtarah fee 'Ilm-il-Mustalah" as "the most knowledgeable person about the Science of Hadeeth in the area of Hijaz."
4. Shaikh 'Umar Ibn Muhammad Ibn 'Abdillaah As-Subayyal, Imaam and Khateeb of Al-Masjid Al-Haraam
5. Shaikh Ahmad Wulu Al-Habashee
6. Shaikh Muhammad Hasan Al-Jaysh [5]

Those who received an Ijaazah (religious certification) from him:

They are a large number. Amongst the most famous of them are: 'Abd-ur-Rahmaan Al-Hudhayfee, Shaikh Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn 'Uthmaan Al-Mani'ee, Shaikh Musaa'id Al-Humaid, Shaikh Rabee' Ibn Haadee Al-Madkhalee, Shaikh

Muhammad Al-Madkhalee, Shaikh Usaamah Al-Qoosee and Shaikh Wasiyullaah Muhammad 'Abbaas.

The Beginning of his Terminal Sickness and his Death:

The beginning of his last sickness was at the start of the month of Sha'baan, when he began feeling great sluggishness. On Saturday, he made a lot of supplication, and from his supplications was: **"O Allaah, let me live if life is better for me, and let me die if death is better for me."**

Then on Monday morning, he fainted and was taken to a hospital. The Shaikh regained consciousness the next day and a large group of his students came to visit him. He made a final request that Shaikh Muhammad 'Abdullaah As-Subayyal lead the prayer over him. Then he fainted again after that and from then on it was customary that he would recover and then go into unconsciousness again and again for some days. We ask Allaah that He make that as a means of purifying him and raising him in levels.

The Shaikh finally died on Sunday night, the 3rd of Ramadaan 1420H. And his Janaazah funeral prayer) was prayed the next day, Monday, in Al-Masjid Al-Haraam after 'Ishaa. He was buried in the Al-'Adl cemetery, in the vicinity of his brother (in Islaam) Shaikh 'Abdul-'Azeez Ibn 'Abdillaah Ibn Baaz, may Allaah have mercy on both of them.

Source: Al-Asaalah Magazine: Issue 27 (pg. 79-82)

Footnotes:

[1] **Translator's Note:** His student, Shaikh Muqbil Ibn Haadee Al-Waadi'ee described him as: "And from my teachers (mashaayikh) in the Haram of Makkah, whom I benefited from greatly was Shaikh Muhammad Ibn 'Abdillaah As-Sumaalee, for I used to attend his classes for almost seven months or more. And he was an *ayah* (manifest sign) with regard to the Knowledge of the Narrators of the two Shaikhs (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim). I benefited immensely from him in the Science of Hadeeth." [*Tarjamah Abee Abdir-Rahmaan*: pg. 24]

[2] **Translator's Note:** Ogaden is a large area of land in west Somalia that borders with Ethiopia. It was taken over by the Ethiopian government and to this day is occupied by their forces. There is still fighting going on between Somalis and Ethiopians with regard to liberating Ogaden. May Allaah assist the Muslims there.

[3] **Translator's Note:** We estimate this to be around 1328H and Allaah knows best

[4] **Translator's Note:** Shaikh Ibn 'Abd-ir-Razaaq Hamzah was born in 1311H and died on 1392H (1893 - 1972). He was born in a small lightly populated village in Qalyubiyyah (a province) in Lower Egypt. He studied there in Al-Azhar University and then traveled to Saudi Arabia in 1344H. He was put in charge of giving the khutbah and leading the prayers (Imamate) in the Prophet's Mosque in Madeenah. Then he moved to Makkah and was appointed a teacher in Hadeeth and Tafseer. He specialized in Hadeeth and its sciences and was in charge of printing a number of books, such as *Ikhtisaar 'Uloom-il-Hadeeth* of Ibn Katheer, *Mawaarid-udh-Dhamaan* of Al-Haythamee and *al-Kabaa'ir* of Adh-Dhahabee. He also wrote books, a majority of which were refutations of some books, such as his works: *Dhulumaat Abee Rayaa*, which is a critique of the book "*Adwaa 'alaa as-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah*" of Mahmood Abu Rayya in which there is disparaging of the Sunnah and some of the Companions. Another book he wrote was *ash-Shawaahid wan-Nusoos*, which is a criticism of the book "al-Aghlaal" by 'Abdullaah Al-Qaseemee. And he also wrote "*al-Muqaabilah baina al-Hudaa wad-Dalaal*." He died while in Makkah, may Allaah have mercy on him.

[5] **Translator's Note:** The noble Shaikh, Muhammad Amaan Al-Jaamee also benefited from his classes while in Saudi Arabia. Refer to his biography.