89915 - The most important Shaykhs of Imam al-Bukhaari (may Allaah have mercy on him)

the question

Who were the most important Shaykhs of al-Bukhaari?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Al-Bukhaari was a Shaykh of Islam, and the leading scholar of hadeeth, Abu ‘Abd-Allaah Muhammad ibn Ismaa’eel ibn Ibraaheem, the author of al-Saheeh and other books. He was born in Shawwaal 194 AH, and he first started to study hadeeth in 205. He memorized the works of Ibn al-Mubaarak when he was a child, and he grew up an orphan.

He compiled books and narrated hadeeth when there was still no hair on his face. He was very intelligent, knowledgeable, pious and devoted to worship.

He was slim, neither tall nor short, somewhat dark skinned.

He used to say: When I reached the age of eighteen, I started to compile cases judged by the Sahaabah and Taabi’een, and their views during the days of ‘Ubayd-Allaah ibn Moosa, and at that time I compiled al-Tareekh by the grave of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) on moonlit nights.

And he used to say: I memorized one hundred thousand saheeh ahaadeeth, and I memorized two hundred non-saheeh ahaadeeth.

Ibn Khuzaymah said: There is no one beneath the canopy of heaven who is more knowledgeable of hadeeth than al-Bukhaari.

He died on the night of Eid al-Fitr 256 AH. End quote.

Summarized from Tadhkirat al-Huffaaz by al-Dhahabi (2/555).

Secondly:

As for his Shaykhs, they were many. Muhammad ibn Abi Haatim narrated that he said:

I wrote from one thousand and eighty persons, all of whom were scholars of hadeeth. End quote, from Siyar A'laam al-Nubala' (12/395).

The importance of his Shaykhs varies according to different considerations: their importance may be due to the high academic status of a Shaykh, or it may be because al-Bukhaari narrated a great deal from him, or because his isnaad is of high quality, or because al-Bukhaari was greatly influenced by him, or there may be more than one reason in the case of a particular Shaykh.

As for his Shaykhs from whom he narrated a great deal in al-Saheeh, and from whom he narrated more than one hundred reports, they are:

'Abd-Allaah ibn Yoosuf al-Tunaysi from whom he narrated more than three hundred reports; 'Ali ibn 'Abd-Allaah al-Madeeni from whom he narrated more than two hundred reports; Abu'l-Yamaan al-Hakam ibn Naafi'; Moosa ibn Ismaa'eel al-Taboodhaki; 'Abd-Allaah ibn Muhammad al-Musnadi; Abu Nu'aym al-Fadl ibn Dukayn; Muhammad ibn Bashshaar who was known as Bandaar; Qutaybah ibn Sa'eed; Salmaan ibn Harb; Abu'l-Waleed Hishaam ibn 'Abd al-Malik al-Tayaalisi; and Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna.

With regard to those from whom he narrated a middling number of reports – less than one hundred but more than fifty – they were:

'Abd al-'Azeez ibn 'Abd-Allaah al-Uwaysi, 'Abd-Allaah ibn al-Zubayr al-Humaydi, Ibraaheem ibn Moosa, Ibraaheem ibn al-Mundhir, Muhammad ibn Yoosuf al-Firyaabi, Muhammad ibn Katheer and Hafs ibn 'Umar.

Among the most important of his Shaykhs who reached the status of imam (prominent figure) in knowledge and religious commitment were:

Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, although he did not narrate from him in al-Saheeh; Ishaaq ibn Raahawayh from whom he narrated nearly thirty reports; Ahmad ibn Saalih al-Masri; Abu Nu'aym al-Fadl ibn Dukayn and others.

Perhaps the one who had the greatest influence on the character of Imam al-Bukhaari and who was held in the greatest esteem by him was Imam 'Ali ibn al-Madeeni (may Allaah have mercy on him), of whom al-Bukhaari said:

I never thought little of myself in the presence of anyone except when I was in the presence of 'Ali ibn al-Madeeni. End quote. Tadhkirat al-Huffaaz (2/428).

al-Dhahabi mentioned in his biography of al-Bukhaari the names of his most famous Shaykhs, and he listed them in order of their homelands. He said in Siyar A'laam al-Nubala' (12/394-396): As for al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar, he listed them in a different order which is also useful, as he said in Hadi al-Saari (479):

They may be listed in five categories:

1-

Those who narrated to him from the Taabi'een, such as Muhammad ibn 'Abd-Allaah al-Ansaari who narrated to him from Humayd; Makki ibn Ibraaheem who narrated to him from Yazeed ibn Abi 'Ubayd; Abu 'Aasim al-Nabeel who narrated to him from Yazeed ibn Abi 'Ubayd also; 'Ubayd-Allaah ibn Moosa who narrated to him from Ismaa'eel ibn Abi Khaalid; Abu Nu'aym who narrated to him from al-A'mash; Khallaad ibn Yahya who narrated to him from 'Eesa ibn Tahmaan; and 'Ali ibn 'Ayyaash and 'Isaam ibn Khaalid who narrated to him from Hurayz ibn 'Uthmaan. The Shaykhs of all of these narrators were from among the Taabi'een.

2-

Those who lived at the same time as these but did not hear from the trustworthy (thiqaat) Taabi'een, such as Adam ibn Abi Iyaas, Abu Mus-hir 'Abd al-A'la ibn Mus-hir, Sa'eed ibn Abi Maryam, Ayyoob ibn Sulaymaan ibn Bilaal, and others.

3-

The middle-ranking ones among his Shaykhs, who did not meet the Taabi'een, rather they learned from the senior followers of the Taabi'een, such as Sulaymaan ibn Harb, Qutaybah ibn Sa'eed, Nu'aym ibn Hammaad, 'Ali ibn al-Madeeni, Yahya ibn Ma'een, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Ishaaq ibn Raahawayh, Abu Bakr and 'Uthmaan the sons of Abu Shaybah, and others. Muslim also took hadeeth from this group.

4-

His fellow students, and those who started to study hadeeth shortly before him, such as Muhammad ibn Yahya al-Dhuhali, Abu Haatim al-Raazi, Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Raheem Saa'iqah, 'Abd ibn Humayd, Ahmad ibn al-Nadr and a number of their peers. He may have narrated from them only things that he missed from his Shaykhs, or that he did not find with anyone else.

5-

People who were his students in the field of hadeeth, and he learned ahaadeeth from them, such as 'Abd-Allaah ibn Hammaad al-Aamili, 'Abd-Allaah ibn Abi'l-'Aas al-Khawaarizmi, Husayn ibn Muhammad al-Qabbaani and others. He narrated a few things from them.

It was narrated from 'Uthmaan ibn Abi Shaybah that Wakee' said: A man cannot be a scholar unless he narrated from one who was above him, and from one who was like him, and from one who was less than him. It was narrated that al-Bukhaari said: He cannot be a complete muhaddith unless he writes down from one who is above him, one who is like him, and one who is less than him. End quote.

See also the answer to question no. 21523.

And Allaah knows best.