



Aá,¥mad ibn á,anbal: The True Imam and Defender of Islam!

Description



Imaam Adh Dhahabi mentioned: He was the true Imam and Sheikh of Islam, AbÅ« Ê¿AbdullÄ h Aá,¥mad ibn Muá,¥ammad ibn á,anbal ibn HilÄ l al-ShaybÄ nÄ, originally from Merv, but later settled in Baghdad. He was one of the greatest Imams of Islamic history.

Ibn al-MadÄnÄâ s Praise for Aá,¥mad

Ibn al-MadÄnÄ said:

â Allah strengthened Islam twiceâ first with AbÅ« Bakr al-á¹iddÄq during the Riddah Wars, and then with Aá,¥mad ibn á,anbal during the Mihna (Inquisition).â

Aá,¥madâ s Humility and Detachment from the World

Abû Dâwîd said:

â The gatherings of Aá¸mad ibn á¸anbal were purely for the Hereafter. He never spoke about worldly mattersâ I never saw him mention the dunya at all.â

His Extreme Caution in Financial Transactions

Sulaymān al-Shādhakānā narrated:

â I once witnessed an incredible act of piety from Aá¸mad ibn á¸anbal in Makkah. He had pawned a small vessel (saá¹l) with a baker in exchange for some food. Later, he returned to redeem it, and the baker brought out two vessels instead of one.â

The baker asked:

â Which one is yours?â

Aá¸mad replied:

â I do not know. Consider yourself absolved of any wrongdoing. Keep whatever I gave you.â

But the baker insisted:

â By Allah, this one is yours! I only wanted to test your honesty.â

Yet Aá¸mad refused to take it.

His Practice of Every Hadith He Wrote

Aá¸mad ibn á¸anbal said:

â I never wrote a hadith except that I acted upon it.â

âﻝ Once, I came across a hadith that the Prophet ﷺ was cupped (hijā ma) and gave Abū al-ʿaybah (the cupper) a dinar. So when I underwent cupping, I gave my cupper a dinarâﻝ simply to practice the hadith.âﻝ

How Greek Philosophy Fueled Innovation

Then came al-Maʿmūn, the Abbasid Caliph:

- He was intelligent, articulate, and well-versed in logic.
- He imported Greek philosophy, translated their works, and promoted rationalist theology (kalām).
- This led to the rise of the Jahmiyyah, Muʿtazilah, and extremist Shāʿiʿah.

Aḥmad's Role in Defending Islam

During this era of confusion, Aḥmad ibn ḥanbal stood firm against these corrupt ideas. He was tortured and imprisoned but never compromised on the truth.

Thus, just as Abū Bakr saved Islam from apostasy, Aḥmad saved it from theological corruption.

The Ordeal of the Mihna and the Creation of the Qurʾān

As events unfolded, the Ummah was coerced into accepting the doctrine that the Qurʾān was created, and scholars were put to trial.

But the Mihna (Inquisition) did not last long, for al-Maʿmūn died that same year.

Yet, he left behind an even worse legacy, one that caused great harm to the religion.

The Stance of the Scholars

For centuries, the Ummah had unanimously believed that the Qur'ān is the Speech of Allah, His revelation, and His divine messageâ€ they knew no other belief.

Then suddenly, a new doctrine arose, claiming:

- That the Qur'ān was created,
- That it was merely an object of honor attributed to Allahâ€ just as we say *Bayt Allah* (the House of Allah) or *Nāqat Allah* (the She-Camel of Allah).

The scholars vehemently rejected this doctrine.

During the reigns of al-Mahdī, Hārūn al-Rashīd, and al-Amīn, the Jahmiyyah did not dare to promote their ideology openly.

However, when al-Ma'mūn took the throne, he himself became one of them, publicly adopting their views.

How al-Ma'mūn Was Influenced

Initially, al-Ma'mūn was hesitant about enforcing his doctrine on the people.

According to Ibn al-Jawzī,

He was surrounded by Mu'ītzī figures, who sweetened the idea of the created Qur'ān for him. At first, he hesitated and remained cautious, watching the reaction of the elder scholars. But eventually, his resolve hardened, and he began persecuting those who disagreed.

Abū Ḥammad ibn al-Ḥanbal's Defiance

Abū Ḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ḥāshanjī narrated:

In al-Raqqah, they tried to persuade Abū Ḥammad ibn al-Ḥanbal to accept taqiyyah (concealing one's true belief under duress), citing reports that permitted it.

But Aá¸¸mad rejected this approach and said:

â¸¸ *What will you do with the hadith of KhabbÄ¸ b?â¸¸*

â¸¸ ***Indeed, those before you were sawn in half, but they did not abandon their faith!â¸¸***

â¸¸ *At that moment, we lost all hope of convincing him to compromise.â¸¸*

His Fear of the Whip, Not Death

Aá¸¸mad ibn á¸¸anbal was fearless in the face of imprisonment or execution, saying:

â¸¸ *I do not fear imprisonmentâ¸¸ what is prison but the same as my house?
Nor do I fear being killed by the sword.
The only thing I fear is the trial of the whip!â¸¸*

Upon hearing this, a fellow prisoner reassured him:

â¸¸ *Do not worry, O AbÄ¸ Ê¸AbdullÄ¸ h. It is only two lashes, and after that, you will not feel the rest.â¸¸*

This comforted him and eased his distress.

The Legacy of Aá¸¸mad ibn á¸¸anbal

Despite the intense persecution, he remained steadfast. His resistance saved Islam from distortion, just as AbÄ¸ Bakr had saved it from apostasy after the Prophetâ¸¸ s passing.

Thus, Aá¸¸madâ¸¸ s resilience in the Mihna remains one of the greatest tests of faith in Islamic historyâ¸¸ a reminder that truth must be defended, even in the face of tyranny.

May Allah have mercy on him and grant us the strength to uphold the truth as he did!

Wa Sallallahu â¸¸ Alaa Nabiyyinaa Muhammad

(See Siyar Aâ¸¸ laamin Nubalaa: 11/177)

Category

1. Bid'ah

Date

10/15/2025

Date Created

04/08/2025