



THE LIFE OF IMAM AL-BUKHARI AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC SCIENCE

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Abstract: *This article discusses the life of the great scholar of hadith, Imam al-Bukhari, his great contribution to the science of hadith, the scholar's role and significance in the development of Islamic science. It also analyzes the role of his works in the science of hadith today.*

Keywords: *hadith, sunnah, reliable sources, hadith narrator, reliable collection, narrator, authentic hadith, weak hadith, kunya.*

Nowadays, the study of the lives of historical figures is gaining importance in ensuring harmony between religion, science and spirituality, especially in protecting the younger generation from the influence of invalid ideas. The life, scientific heritage and personality of ***Imam al-Bukhari*** (may Allah have mercy on him), the pride of the Islamic world, not only serve as a guide to the development of religious sciences, but also play an important role in the education of today's modern society.

Imam al-Bukhari is a great hadith scholar, one of the most respected figures among Islamic scholars. The book of authentic hadiths he collected and selected serves as a reliable source for Muslims to this day. Every page of ***Imam al-Bukhari***'s life is an example of *honesty, sincerity, research, faith and dedication to knowledge*. Especially for today's youth, his early education, the education he received from his mentors, and the fact that he left his homeland and traveled throughout the Muslim world to collect hadiths are examples of *patience, perseverance and devotion to knowledge*. In addition, ***Imam al-Bukhari***'s life is an example for us in *scientific honesty, human humility and devotion to faith*. These



characteristics are of great educational importance in today's era of moral crises, especially in raising young people to be perfect human beings. His patience in acquiring knowledge, his pursuit of truth, and his courage in rejecting false hadiths should be an example for every Muslim.

The great scholar *Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari* (810-870 CE, 194-256 CE), who held a unique position in the science of hadith in the Islamic world, stood out from others with his sharp mind, high perception, and extraordinary memory. He was born in the month of *Shawwal* of the year *194 CE*, that is, *in the year 810 CE*, in the city of *Bukhara*, which was considered the scientific center of Mowarounnahr[2;33].

His father *Ismail ibn Ibrahim* was one of the most knowledgeable people in the science of hadith of his time, a man who earned his living through honest labor and was known for his piety. There are narrations about him listening to hadith from **Imam Malik** and writing them down[1;64].

This undoubtedly left *Muhammad ibn Ismail* with a love and interest in the science of hadith. *Imam al-Bukhari* lost his father when he was still a child. Historical sources state that he was around two or three years old when his father died. His mother devoted her full attention to her son's upbringing and guided him with love and care. At the same time, she was a religious and intelligent woman who greatly contributed to *Muhammad ibn Ismail's* spiritual and scientific development.

According to historical accounts, he lost his eyesight in his youth, but due to his mother's sincere prayers, Allah restored his sight[4;9]. This event is considered a divine blessing and a unique miracle in the life of *Imam al-Bukhari*. From his youth, *Imam al-Bukhari* paid great attention to studying not only the texts of hadiths, but also their chain of narration - **the isnad**. The people lived at his time described his strong memory as follows: *"Imam Bukhari could hear hundreds of hadiths in one gathering, memorize them immediately, and narrate them clearly along with their isnads"*[3;71].

This high scientific ability served as a solid foundation for him to memorize thousands of hadiths, sort them out, and create his great scientific works. Although



Imam al-Bukhari received his initial education in the city of *Bukhara*, his boundless passion for knowledge led him to travel far. When he was sixteen, he set out on a journey to perform the *Hajj*, and stayed in *Mecca* and *Medina*, where he seriously engaged in scientific research. In particular, in these two holy places, he learned from the famous hadith scholars of his time and benefited from their experience. In particular, in *Medina*, he thoroughly studied the basics of classifying hadiths by their isnads, distinguishing chains of narration, and critical approach. He lived there for several years and began writing his first work, "*Tarix al-Kabir*", which he completed at the age of 18.[6;98]

In the pursuit of knowledge, *Imam al-Bukhari* traveled to many countries. He visited the centers of knowledge such as *Hijaz, Basra, Kufa, Baghdad, Damascus, Egypt, Merv, Nishapur* and *Ray*, where he studied the science of hadith in depth. During these travels, he heard hadiths from thousands of narrators and learned from them. Historical sources state that he studied with more than **1,000 teachers**, including such great figures in the science of hadith as *Yahya ibn Ma'in, Ali ibn al-Madini* and *Ahmad ibn Hanbal*. Historical sources state that the number of hadiths that *Imam al-Bukhari* heard was more than **600,000**. Nevertheless, he included in his most famous work, "*Al-Jome' as-Sahih*", only **7,275 hadiths** that were considered reliable, of which **2,602** are unique texts, not duplicated. Before writing each hadith in this rare book, *Imam al-Bukhari* performed a deeper purification than ablution - **ghusl**, performed **two rak'ahs of nafl prayer**, and asked Allah to guide him, inspire him, and help him. [5;46] This clearly demonstrates not only his scientific prudence, but also his deep spiritual and moral approach.

After completing his scientific travels abroad and returning to *Bukhara*, *Imam al-Bukhari* began to spread the teaching of hadith there. However, his activities in this regard were not approved by the emir of Bukhara, *Khalid ibn Ahmad Zuhli*. As a result, he was forced to leave his native land and moved first to *Poykent*, and then to the village of *Hartang* near Samarkand. This great hadith scholar, who devoted his entire life to science, served not only his own, but also others - students and the needy. He donated *five hundred dirhams of his income*



from business to the poor and students of science every month. Bukhari did not indulge in excessive spending and luxury in his personal life, being a humble and simple-minded person.

Imam al-Bukhari created **more than 20 works**, some of which have survived to this day. The most famous of them is “*al-Jome’ as-Sahih*” (“The Authentic Collection”), a collection of hadiths that has been translated into many foreign languages. This rare work was also translated into **Uzbek** and published in **4 volumes** between **1991** and **1996** and in **2 volumes** in **2008**.

The work “*al-Adab al-Mufrad*” (“Masterpieces of Manners”), compiled by *Imam al-Bukhari*, is a rare collection of hadiths of high moral and educational value. It contains a total of **1322 hadiths** and **reports**, and this work has been published several times around the world. The Uzbek translation of this collection was first published in *Tashkent* in **1990**.

The work “*Kitab al-Kunya*” (“The Book of Kunyas”) written by *Imam al-Bukhari* on the kunyas of narrators was published in *India* in **1940**. “*at-Tarih al-Kabir*” (“The Great History”), which contains biographies of narrators of hadith, was published in **9 volumes** in *Turkey*. Some manuscript copies of this work are kept in the *Hyderabad* library.

Another important source belonging to *Imam al-Bukhari* is “*at-Tarih as-Saghir*” (“The Small History”), which is considered one of the important scientific sources on the history of hadith. This work was published in **India** and **Cairo**.

Imam al-Bukhari is also the author of many works, such as “*Kitab al-Fawaid*” (“Book of Useful Things”), “*al-Jome’ al-Kabir*” (“The Great Collection”), “*Khalq af’al al-‘ibad*” (“On the Deeds of the Servants of Allah”), “*al-Musnad al-Kabir*” (“The Great Musnad”), “*at-Tafsir al-Kabir*” (“The Great Commentary”), and “*Kitab al-Hiba*” (“The Book of Gifts and Donations”)[3;51]. Although some of them have not survived to this day, some are kept in libraries in various countries of the world.

Among *Imam al-Bukhari*’s other works, the book “*Tafsir al-Quran*” (“The Interpretation of the Qur’an”), dedicated to the interpretation of the *Qur’an*,



deserves special attention. His scholarly legacy is widely used as the main source and guide to the *Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him)* in madrasas and higher religious educational institutions throughout the Muslim world[5;72].

In conclusion, studying the life and scholarly legacy of *Imam al-Bukhari* not only enriches our religious knowledge, but also becomes an important tool in choosing the right path in today's complex world, maintaining stability in social life, and educating the younger generation in high spirituality. Therefore, studying the biography of *Imam al-Bukhari* is extremely relevant and necessary today. In our time, various extremist movements are trying to instill false beliefs in young people, taking advantage of spiritual gaps. In such circumstances, a deep study of *Imam al-Bukhari's* legacy, understanding his scientific criteria based on reliable hadiths, and educating young people in a healthy faith are of great importance. His critical approach and strict conditions for accepting hadiths can also serve as a unique model for today's scientific analysis methodology.

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