

The Companions Of Abu Hanifa (ra)

http://www.muftisays.com/blog/Seifeddine-M/527_04-11-2010/the-companions-of-abu-hanifa-%28ra%29.html

Khatib al-Baghdadi relates through his chain that Ibn Karama said,

"We were once in the company of Waki' ibn al-Jarrah when someone made a remark that Abu Hanifa has erred. Waki' said, 'How can Abu Hanifa err when he has in his company the likes of Abu Yusuf, Zufar, and Muhammad with their power of analogy (qiyas) and inference (ijtihad); the likes of Yahya ibn Zakariyya ibn Abi Za'ida, Hafs ibn Ghiyath, and Hibban and Mandal, sons of 'Ali with their memorization and understanding of hadiths; Qasim ibn Ma'n with his understanding of the Arabic language; and Dawud ibn Nudayr al-Ta'i and Fudayl ibn 'Iyad with their abstinence (zuhd) and piety (wara'). How is anyone who has such people as his companions and sitting partners able to make a mistake? Even if he was to make one, they would surely quide him.'" [1]

Imam Tahawi related that Asad ibn al-Furat said,

"The companions of Abu Hanifa who compiled and recorded the works (of his school) were forty. Those in the forefront were Abu Yusuf, Zufar, Dawud al-Ta'i, Asab ibn 'Amr, Yusuf ibn Khalid al-Samti, Yahya ibn Abi Zakariyya ibn Abi Za'ida, who was there scribe for thirty years..."

After quoting the above two statements, the greath hadith scholar Zufar Ahmad 'Uthmani comments:

"Whoever has hadith masters (huffaz) of this caliber as his main students, to whom the hadith scholars have bowed their heads in recognition of their memorization (of hadiths) and extensive knowledge, then how is it possible to have narrated only a few hadiths?" [2]

Many jurists would narrate their hadiths in the form of "**religious rulings**," which meant that they had fewer "**formal narrations**." However, this cannot be used as a reason for criticism, since the task of the jurist is to process the hadiths and derive rulings from them.

It is therefore incorrect to critisize any great jurist on the basis of his not being aware of hadiths, especially someone of Imam Abu Hanifa's caliber.

Notes:

[1] Tarikh al-Baghdad 14:247

[2] I'la' al-sunan 19:331