

THE AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

The full name of the famous Imam **Al-Hâfiz Ibn Hajar Al-‘Asqalâni** is Abul-Fadl, Shihâbuddin **Ahmad bin ‘Ali bin Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Ahmad Al-Kinâni Ash-Shâfi‘i**. Ibn Hajar Al-‘Asqalâni was **born on the 10th of Sha‘bân, 773 H.** in **Egypt**, where he also grew up. He *memorized the Qur’ân* at the age of **nine**. He also memorized *Al-Hâwi*, the book *Mukhtasar* of Ibn Al-Hajib, and other books. He traveled to **Makka** and listened to the teaching of its *‘Ulama*. He admired the knowledge of *Hadith* and began to acquire it from the great *Sheikhs* in Hijâz, Ash-Shâm, Egypt and stayed with **Az-Zain Al-‘Irâqi** for ten years. He also studied under **Al-Balqeeni, Ibn Al-Mulaqqin** and others. Many eminent *Sheikhs* of his time approved his knowledge and allowed him to give religious verdicts and teach.

He had learned the two sources (*Qur’ân* and *Hadith*) from **Al-‘Izz bin Jamâ‘a**, *al-Lughah* (the language) and *al-‘Arabiyyah* (Arabic) from **Al-Majd Al-Fairooz Aabâdi** and **Al-‘Amâri**, literature and poetry from Al-Badr Al-Mushtaki and writing from a group (of teachers). He also recited some parts of the Qur’ân in all **the seven styles of recitation** before At-Tanookhee.

He occupied himself with the promotion of the knowledge of *Hadith*, so he dwelt in its study, teaching, writing and giving *Fatawa* (religious verdicts). He also taught *Tafsîr* (interpretation of the Qur’ân), *Hadith*, *Fiqh* (jurisprudence) and preached at many places like *Al-Azhar, Jâmi‘ ‘Amr* and others. He also dictated to his students from his memory. Many highly educated people and distinguished scholars traveled to him to acquire from his vast knowledge.

Ibn Hajar Al-‘Asqalâni **authored more than 150 books** — most of them being in the studies of *Hadith* — which flourished during his lifetime, and the kings and princes exchanged them as gifts. His book most worthy of mentioning is *Fath Al-Bâri* — the commentary of *Sahih Al-Bukhâri*, which he **started in the beginning of 817 H.**, after finishing its introductory part in **813H.**, and completed the whole commentary in **Rajab 842 H.** After the completion of the commentary, he had a gathering attended by the Muslim dignitaries and spent 500 Dinar on it. Then some kings requested it and paid 300 Dinar.

Ibn Hajar became the *Qâdi of Egypt*, and then **Ash-Shâm** was also added to his jurisdiction which he held for more than **twenty-one years**. He was against holding the office of the *Qâdi* at first, until the Sultan assigned to him a special case. Then, he accepted to substitute for Al-Balqeeni, when he begged him very much to preside for him as *Qâdi*. Then, he substituted for others until he was assigned to hold the office of **Chief Qâdi** on 12 Muharram, **827 H.** He then left, but had to return to the office of the Chief *Qâdi* seven times until he left it finally in **852 H.** which is the year in which he **died**.

As concerns his **personality**, Al-‘Asqalâni was humble, tolerant, patient and enduring. He was also described as being steadfast, prudent, ascetic, selfless, generous, charitable and a person praying and fasting voluntarily. On the other hand, he was said to be used to making light jokes and telling of humorous rare stories. He also had **good manners** in dealing with all the *Imams*, of the earlier generations and later generations, and with all those who sat with him, **whether old or young**.

Ibn Hajar **died** after the *‘Ishâ* prayer on Saturday, **8th Dhul-Hijja, 852 H.** May Allah reward him generously.

The Author's Introduction to the Book

Praise is to Allah for his apparent and concealed bounties at all times, and peace and blessings be upon His Prophet and Messenger Muhammad, his family and companions who strove steadfastly in the path of serving Allah's religion, and their followers who inherited the knowledge — for the *'Ulama* are the heirs of the Prophets — and may they be honored, whether they be *Waarith* (those who inherit) or *Mawrooth* (those who are inherited from).

To proceed; this is a **concise book** comprising the **Hadith evidence sources of the Sharia Rulings**, which I have **compiled meticulously**, so that the one who memorizes it excels among his peers; it may assist the beginner student, and the learned one seeking more knowledge may find it indispensable.

I have indicated at the end of every Hadith the Imâm who collected it, in order to fulfill the trust to the (Muslim) *Ummah*. Therefore, *As-Sab'a* (the Seven) stands for Ahmad, Al-Bukhâri, Muslim, Abu Dâ'ud, An-Nasâ'i, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Mâjah. *As-Sitta* (the Six)^[1] stands for the rest excluding Ahmad. *Al-Khamsa* (the Five)^[2] stands for the rest except Al-Bukhâri and Muslim, or I may say *Al-Arba'a* (the Four)^[3] and Ahmad. I mean by *Al-Arba'a* (the Four) all except the first three (i.e. Ahmad, Al-Bukhâri and Muslim), and by *Ath-Thalâtha* (the Three)^[4] I mean all except the first three and the last one. I mean by *Al-Muttafaq 'alaihi* (the Agreed upon)^[5] Al-Bukhâri and Muslim, and I might not mention with them anyone else; and whatever is besides these (seven collectors) is clear [i.e. clearly mentioned by name].

I have named it (this book) ***Bulûgh Al-Marâm min Adillat Al-Ahkâm*** [Attainment of the Objective of (Collecting) Evidences For Legal Rulings]; and I pray to Allah not to render, what we have learned, a calamity against us; but may He guide us to act according to what pleases Him - the Glorified and Exalted One.

بلوغ المرام، الحافظ ابن حجر العسقلاني 852هـ.

[1] By Six he means: Al-Bukhâri, Muslim, Abu Dâ'ud, An-Nasâ'i, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Mâjah.

[2] By Five he means: Ahmad, Abu Dâ'ud, An-Nasâ'i, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Mâjah.

[3] By Four he means: Abu Dâ'ud, An-Nasâ'i, At-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Mâjah.

[4] By Three he means: Abu Dâ'ud, An-Nasâ'i and At-Tirmidhi.

[5] By 'the Agreed upon' he means: *Ahadith* accepted and agreed to by both Imam Bukhâri and Imam Muslim.

The Most reliable *Hadith* is that one which has been narrated by Bukhâri and Muslim. Secondly is the *Hadith* which has been narrated only by Bukhâri. Third in reliability is that which has been narrated by Muslim alone. *Ahadith* narrated by An-Nasâ'i, At-Tirmidhi, Abu Dâ'ud, Ibn Mâjah and Muwatta' of Imâm Mâlik are graded thereafter in the line of reliability, and then comes the place of *Ahadith* mentioned in other books. This established order of reliability should be followed where there is a contention.