

MIFTAAH SEMINAR

TRANSOXIANA: THE LAND OF SCHOLARS



Mufti Muhammad Ibn
Adam Al-Kawthari

SESSION 2

Scholars Hailing from Uzbekistan

- Previously Uzbekistan was part of a region. There were five to six regions, with Khurasan being one of them.
- In Khurasan there were cities. Today, some still have the same name, like Bukhara, Samarkand and Termez. These cities gave birth to some of the most prominent Islamic scholars.
 - Bukhara
 - In the Abbasid time, Bukhara became the center of scholarship, culture, art and religion for the Islamic world.
 - The economy was thriving here as the Silk Road was a center of trade and the land is a major grower of cotton and a producer of natural gas. People came from around the region and traded in Bukhara.
 - It is the birthplace of distinguished hadith scholar, Imam Bukhari, otherwise known as Muhammad Ibn Ismail.
 - Imam Bukhari is known for Sahih al-Bukhari, or its full name al-Jaami' al-Sahih al-Musnad al-Mukhtasar min Hadithi Rasooli-Ilahi wa Sunanihi wa Ayyamihi, The Abridged Collection of Ahadith with Connected Chains Regarding the Sayings of the Prophet SAW.

- He was born near the Kalyan mosque, and lived and studied in Bukhara but eventually travelled 13,000km in one journey to different parts of the world just to learn and collect the hadith from different people.
- Imam Bukhari had transmitted hadith from over 80,000 narrators. Out of 600,000 ahadith, he compiled 7,275 ahadith in Sahih.
- He was tested in the latter part of his life. He moved to Nishapur where he was well received but was forced as there were people that were jealous of him. They spread rumors that Imam Bukhari was spreading false information about the religion.
- After Nishapur, he returned to his home city of Bukhara. However, he was pressured by the governor to give private lessons to his son due to their higher social class, to which he refused and was expelled.
- He traveled to Samarkand, and on his way there he settled in a small village just outside of Samarkand, called Kharteng.
- In Kharteng, he made a powerful dua, "Oh Allah, the Earth, despite its vastness, is becoming narrow and troubling me greatly, so take me back to You".
- On the first night of Shawwal while he was traveling to Samarkand, Imam Bukhari developed an illness and passed away in the village of Kharteng.
- Another famous scholar from Bukhara was Baha-ud-Din Naqshband Bukhari, the founder of what would become one of the largest Sufi Sunni orders, the Naqshbandi.

- **Samarkand**

- Samarkand is one of the oldest cities of Central Asia and one of the largest.
- It was noted as a center of Islamic scholarly study and the birthplace of the Timurid Renaissance. In the 14th century, Timur (Tamerlane) made it the capital of his empire and the site of his mausoleum, the Gur-e Amir.
- Many scholars came from here, such as, Hanafi jurist and Quran commentator, Abu al-Layth al-Samarqandi and Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi who was a jurist, theologian, and scriptural exegete, as well as Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi, a famous Turkic poet and Sufi mystic.
- It was also the resting place of Kusam Ibn Abbas – the cousin of the Prophet SAW, who brought Islam into Uzbekistan. He was said to resemble the Prophet SAW in features the most.
- Timur's grandson Ulugh Beg built a madrasah in Samarkand, which became the first building in the architectural ensemble of Registan. He invited a large number of astronomers and mathematicians of the Islamic world to this madrasah.
- Under him Samarkand became one of the world centers of medieval science. He was very skilled in mathematics and astronomy.
- He built the Ulugh Beg observatory with its main instrument as the wall quadrant, which had no equal in the world.
- Islamic astronomers who worked at the observatory include Ghīyāth al-Dīn Jamshid al-Kashi, Mu'in al-Din al-Kashi, Salah al-Din Qadi Zada Rumi, and Ali Qushiji.

- **Termez**
 - Termez is one of Central Asia's oldest towns, located a little to the north, bordering Afghanistan.
 - It is notable as the site of Alexander the Great's city Alexandria on the Oxus, as a center of Early Buddhism, as a site of Muslim pilgrimage, and as a base of Soviet Union military operations in Afghanistan.
 - Imam Tirmidhi or Abū ʿĪsā Muḥammad Ibn ʿĪsā as-Sulamī aḍ-Ḍarīr al-Būghī at-Tirmidhī, was a significant figure in Islam that was born here.
 - He wrote al-Jami` as-Sahih (known as Jami` at-Tirmidhi), and Shama'il Muhammadiyah (known as Shama'il at-Tirmidhi).
 - Termez also gave birth to prominent scholars who worked in all Islamic sciences, especially Quranic exegesis and jurisprudence, collection and scientific study of hadiths, theory and practical application of Sufism.
 - Some prominent Sufi teachers are associated with Termez and all sciences progressed in Termez in close contact with other main centers of learning and science in the Islamic world.
 - Hakim-at-Termizi, also known as Muhammad ibn `Isa at-Tirmidhi, was one of the great early authors of Sufism, who hailed from Termez.
- Tashkent
 - Historically known as Shash in ancient times, but today, it is the capital of Uzbekistan.

- The city was an important center for trade along the Silk Road and continues as a prominent export center to Eastern Europe for silk, cotton, textiles, and etc. It is the main economic and cultural center of Central Asia.
- Many prominent scholars of Islamic sciences such as hadith and jurisprudence came from here during the Golden Age of Fiqh Science (Islamic law).
- The earliest written copy of the Holy Quran is found here at the Muiy Mubarak Library at Khast Imam square.
- The Uthman Quran on display is stained with the blood of the third Caliph Uthman Ibn Affan who was martyred while reading it in 655.
- It is now home to a number of the religious sites and historical monuments in Uzbekistan like the Hazrat Imam mosque, Tillya Sheikh Mosque and Barak Khan Madrassah.
- In 2007, Tashkent was named the cultural capital of the Islamic world by the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Other Prominent Scholars from Uzbekistan

- Imam as-Shashi or Imam Nidhamul Din Ash-Shashi, who wrote one of the best books in the Usul Fiqh of the Madhhab Hanafi, Usul ash-Shashi.
- Burhan al-Din al-Marghinani, author of al-Hidayah, which is considered to be one of the most influential compendia of Hanafi jurisprudence (fiqh).
- Abu al-Mu'in al-Nasafi, who is considered to be the most important Central Asian Hanafi theologian in the Maturidite school of Sunni Islam after Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi.
- Abu Hafs Umar al-Nasafi, who is a jurist, theologian, mufasssir, muhaddith and historian.