

# وصية الإمام الصابوني

(٤٤٩-٣٧٣)

## **The Will of Imaam as-Saabooni**

**(373 - 449 AH)**



## Biography of Imaam as-Saabooni<sup>1</sup>

### 1. His name

He was al-Imaam, al-allaamah, al-mufasssir, al-muhaddith, Shaykh al-Islaam Abu Uthmaan Isma'eel bin Abdir Rahmaan bin Ahmad bin Isma'eel bin Ibraheem bin 'Aabid bin 'Aamir an-Naysaaboori as-Saabooni.

### 2. His birth

He was born in Yooshanj, a part of Haraah, in the middle of Jumaadi al-aakhirah in 373 after the Hijrah.

### 3. From his teachers:

- ◊ al-Haakim Abu Abdillah Muhammad bin Abdillah, al-Haafith an-Naysaboori – the author of the Mustadrak of the Saheehain
- ◊ Abu Taahir Muhammad bin Fadl bin Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Khuzaymah
- ◊ Abu Mansoor Muhammad bin Abdillah bin Hamshaad, the scholar and ascetic
- ◊ Abu at-Teeb Sahl bin Muhammad as-Sa'oolooki ash-Shaafi'ee.

### 4. From his students:

- ◊ Abu Bakr Ahmad bin Hussain al-Bayhaqi
- ◊ His son Abu Bakr Abdur-Rahmaan bin Isma'eel bin Abdir-Rahmaan as-Saabooni
- ◊ Abu Muhammad 'Abdul-Azeez bin Ahmad al-Kuttaabi
- ◊ Abu al-Qaasim Tameem bin Abi Saeed al-Jurjaani
- ◊ Abul-Hassan 'Ali bin al-Hassan bin Sisri.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken, with some abridgement, from the Biography in the book 'Aqeedatu salaf Ashaabil hadeeth, printed by Daar al-Minhaaj.

## 5. His life

His father, Abdur-Rahmaan Abu Nasr, was from the great preachers of Naysaaboor but was killed due to partisanship.

Approximately seven years after, his son Isma'eel [Imaam as-Saabooni] took his father's place in preaching. The scholars of the era would attend his gatherings and the Imaam Abu at-Teeb Sahl bin Muhammad as-Sa'oolooki took it upon himself to raise him. He attended his gatherings and praised him, as did many of the scholars of the age, like the ustaath Abu Ishaaq al-Isfiraayeeni and the ustaath Abu Bakr bin Furook.

Other Imaams would attend his reminders and be astounded with his intelligence, sharpness, the eloquence of his speech (in Arabic and Persian) and his memorisation of ahadeeth until he reached maturity and became a man. And he continued to develop until he reached the rank that he reached.

He was busy at all times with extensive worship and acts of obedience. He excelled in chastity and protection of the soul. He was well-known for praying well and standing at length in Qunoot.

And from that which is related on him is that which was reported by al-Hassan bin Abil Hurr, that he entered Salmaas after his Hajj with his brother Abu Ya'laa and he gave a sitting every day and the people were infatuated with him. I heard Abu Uthmaan saying, when he was bidding them farewell, "O people of Salmaas! I have been preaching among you for a month, during which time I have been explaining an aayah. Were I to stay among you for an entire year, I would have no need to go on to study any other, and all praise is for Allaah."

He used to, may Allaah have mercy upon him, respect ahadeeth and give importance to the asaaneed. The faqeeh Abu Saeed as-Sikri said, reporting on some of the righteous whose word he trusts, that as-Saabooni said, "I haven't seen a single report or narration in a sitting [of knowledge] except that I have its isnaad. I have never ever entered the library except in a state of having wudhoo. And I have never narrated a hadeeth, or headed a gathering, or taught a lesson except in a state of having wudhoo."

## 6. His death

He died, may Allaah have mercy upon him, at 'Asr on Thursday the third of

Muharram of 449 after the Hijrah, having contracted an illness.

## **7. The scholars' praise of him**

Abu Bakr al-Bayhaqi said, 'The Imaam of the Muslims in truth and Shaykh al-Islaam in honesty Abu Uthmaan as-Saabooni related to us...'

Abdul-Ghafaar al-Faarisi said, 'The ustaath Abu Uthmaan as-Saabooni, Shaykh al-Islaam, al-mufassir, al-muhaddith, the preacher, the most distinguished of his era in his way. He gave sermons to the Muslims for seventy years. He was a haafith, who had heard and written much. He was keen upon seeking knowledge and was provided with status in the religion and worldly life. He was accepted by those who agreed and those who differed. It was consensus that he was without parallel, a sword of the Sunnah and refuter of bid'ah.'

## **8. From his works:**

- ♦ 'Aqeedatu Salaf Ashaabil Hadeeth
- ♦ al-Intisaar
- ♦ ad-Da'waat
- ♦ Al-Fusool fil Usool
- ♦ Al-Arba'oon hadeethun
- ♦ al-Mi'atain

# The Will of Imaam as-Saabooni

As mentioned by Ibn as-Subkee in *Tabaqaatush ash Shaafi'iyah al Kubraa*, vol. 2, p. 124

• He bequeathed, and bore witness that there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allaah, alone, with no partner – one self-sufficient lord, who never took a wife or partner and whose dominion none share; the First and the Last; the Most High and the Most Near; the ever Living and the One Who sustains and protects all that exists; the Ever-living after His creation has perished; the One who is aware of His worshippers; the Knower of the intricacies of the unseen; the One who is aware of the innermost workings of the hearts; the One who begins and repeats; the Oft-forgiving, full of love; the owner of the glorious Throne; the Doer of whatsoever He wishes;

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾

There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer  
[as-Shura: 11]

He is our patron and what an excellent patron and excellent giver of aid.

• He bears witness to all of that, along with the Shahaadatain, confessing to that with his tongue with correct belief, truthfulness and certainty. He endures it despite the disapproving deniers and reckons it for the Day of Recompense,

﴿يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ (88) إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ﴾

The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, except him who brings to Allah a clean heart [clean from Shirk (polytheism) and Nifaq (hypocrisy)]

[Ash-Shu'ara: 88-89]

﴿يَوْمَ لَا يُغْنِي مَوْلَى عَنْ مَوْلَى شَيْئًا وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ﴾

The Day when Maulan (a near relative) cannot avail Maulan (a near relative) in aught, and no help can they receive

[Ad-Dukhan: 41].

• He bears witness that Muhammad sall Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam is His slave and messenger, whom He sent with guidance and the True religion to make it victorious over all other religions, even if the polytheists detest it.

- He bears witness that the Paradise is true and that which Allaah, the Blessed and High, has prepared for his awliyaa' is true.
- He asks his Noble patron, may His loftiness be glorified, to make it his shelter and abode, out of His excellence and virtue.
- He bears witness that the Fire, and that which Allaah has prepared in it for His enemies, is true. He asks Allaah, His patron, to save him and take him away from it and to make him from those who are saved from it. Allah said,

﴿فَمَنْ زُحِرِحَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ﴾

And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception (a deceiving thing)

[Aal-Imran: 185]

- He bears witness that his prayer, sacrifice, living and dying are for Allaah, Lord of the creation, with none sharing in it – and with this he was ordered and he is from the Muslims and all praise is due to Allaah, Lord of all creation.
- He is pleased with Allaah as a lord; Islaam as a religion; Muhammad as a prophet and the Qur'aan as an imam – upon this he lived and upon it he will die, in sha Allaah.
- He bears witness that the angels are true; the prophets are true; that there is no doubt in the Hour and that Allaah will resurrect those in the graves.
- He bears witness that Allaah, the exalted and most High pre-decreed what good happens; commanded it; Loves it and is pleased with it; willed it [to happen] from the doer and promised a good reward for doing it. Also, that He pre-decreed what evil befalls but isn't pleased with it and doesn't love it but He willed it to happen from the doer, without being pleased with it or loving it, may He be exalted high above what the oppressors say. And He is to be glorified above ordering sin or loving and being pleased with it. And He is exalted over the slave ordaining something that He did not ordain, or something manifesting itself from the slave that He did not will or decree.
- He bears witness that the Qur'aan is the Book of Allaah, His Speech and revelation and it is not created. It is that which is written in the Mus-hafs; recited upon tongues; memorised by hearts and heard by ears. Allaah said,

﴿وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّىٰ يَسْمَعَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ﴾

And if anyone of the Mushrikûn (polytheists, idolaters, pagans, disbelievers in the Oneness

of Allâh) seeks your protection then grant him protection, so that he may hear the Word of  
Allâh (the Qur'ân)  
[At-Taubah: 6]

And He said,

﴿بَلْ هُوَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ﴾

Nay, but they, the clear Ayât [i.e the description and the qualities of Prophet Muhammad  
sall Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam written in the Taurât (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)] are  
preserved in the breasts of those who have been given knowledge  
[al-Ankaboot: 49]

He said,

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ﴾

Verily, those who recite the Book of Allâh  
[Fatir: 29]

He said,

﴿إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ وَقُرْءَانٌ مُّبِينٌ﴾

This is only a Reminder and a plain Qur'ân  
[Ya-Seen: 9]

• He bears witness that imaan is belief in that which Allaah ordered belief in with the heart;  
affirmation of that which Allaah ordered to be affirmed with the tongue; action in  
obedience to that which Allaah ordered to be done with the limbs and refraining from that  
which has been censured – whether they be actions of the heart, tongue or limbs.

• He bears witness that Allaah, the Most High, is over His Throne and that He rose over it, as  
He explained in His Book in His saying,

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ  
الْعَرْشِ﴾

Indeed your Lord is Allâh, Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days, and then He  
rose over (Istawâ) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty)  
[Al-Araf: 54]

And His saying,

﴿ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ الرَّحْمٰنُ فَسَلِّ بِهٖ خَيْرًا﴾

Then He rose over (Istawâ) the Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty). The Most Gracious (Allâh)! Ask Him (O Prophet Muhammad SAW, concerning His Qualities, His rising over His Throne, His creations, etc.), as He is Al-Khabîr (The All-Knower of everything i.e.

Allâh)

[al-furqan: 59]

and in other ayaat [and ahadeeth of] the messenger in that which has been reported on him, sall Allaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, without asking how He rose over it, or without using one’s own action, understanding or guess to establish how – as asking how the attributes of our Lord are is disallowed. The Imaam of the Muslims of his era, Abu Abdillah Maalik bin Anas, may Allaah be pleased with him, said, when asked about how the rising over the Throne happened, ‘The rising over the Throne is known; the how is unknown; imaan in it is obligatory; questioning about it is an innovation and I think you are an apostate’ and ordered him [the questioner] out of the masjid.

• He bears witness that Allaah is described with lofty attributes – those which He described Himself with in His Book and upon the tongue of His messenger. He does not negate any of these, nor does he believe they bear any resemblance to the characteristics of His creation. Rather, he says that His attributes are not similar to the attributes of His subjects, just as His self/essence bears no semblance to the essence of the created [beings]. May Allaah be far exalted over what the Mu’atila and the Musha’bihah say.

• And the path he takes with regards to the ayaat that mention the attributes of al-Baari and the narrations that have been authentically related on the messenger of Allaah sall Allaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, like the ayaat saying that the Lord will come on the Day of Standing; those saying He will come in the shadow of the clouds<sup>2</sup>; creating Aadam with His Hand; His rising over His Throne; His descending each night to the lowest Heaven; laughing; secret counselling; His protecting those He talks to on the Day of Standing, and other than this, is the path of the Salaf us Saalih and the imaams of the religion – accepting them as they are, once their authenticity has been confirmed, leaving them upon their apparent meanings, believing in them and submitting to them. And, in addition to this, being ware of asking how with regards to them and making similitudes between them and the creation; leaving off those things that could lead to rejecting them; not accepting them or changing the meanings with an understanding that is not accepted, nor has been given any authority to by Allaah, or that which did not pass upon the tongues of the Sahaaba, the taabi’een, or the Salaf us Saalih.

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<sup>2</sup> See Surat al-Baqarah: 210 [Translator’s Note]



• He prohibits, on the whole, wading into rhetoric and delving into it and in busying oneself in that which the Salaf disliked, prohibited and warned against. Arguing its points; delving into its intricacies and wandering about in its darkness all leads to ruining of the hearts and with it fear of the Lord. Huge doubts regarding Him result; barakah is lost; it leads to falsehood and argumentation in the religion; the proliferation of hearsay with regards to the Lord, the Most High – may He be high exalted over what the oppressors say. And all praise is due to Allaah, who has guided us to His religion and the Sunnah of His prophet sall Allaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam.

• He bears witness that the Qiyaamah is true and that everything that has been related in the Book and authentic narrations with regards to its signs, conditions and that which we have been promised and that which has been prepared for us in it, is true and we believe in it. We believe in Allaah and His messenger, in that which they have told us about, such as: the Hawd [pool]; the scale; the Siraat; the reading of the books; the taking to account; the questioning; the suggesting; the standing; the crowd going to the paradise or fire, with the promised intercession promised to the people of Tawheed and other than this that has been clarified and written in the books collecting the authentic narrations.

• And he bears witness to all this with the witnesses and He seeks Allaah the Most High’s aid in being established upon these testifications until death, so that he dies among the ranks of the Muslims, believers and monotheists.

• He bears witness that Allaah blesses His awliyaa with radiant faces, looking at their Lord, seeing Him with their eyes in the Hereafter. They are not harmed by seeing Him, nor will their vision pass through Him, nor will there be any inequity of their seeing Him<sup>3</sup>. And he asks Allaah the Most High to make his face from those faces and protect him from all trials, evils and ills and to grant him all that he wishes by His virtue and hopes by His Excellence.

• He bears witness that the best people after the messenger of Allaah is Abu Bakr, then ‘Umar, then ‘Uthmaan and then ‘Ali bin Abi Taalib– may Allaah be pleased with them all; he asks Allaah to have mercy upon all the sahaaba and take care over them and he seeks forgiveness for them – and similarly, for his [the prophet’s] family and wives, the mothers of the believers. He asks Allaah to join him with them and hopes that Allaah will do this – for it was deemed authentic in his view, via numerous chains of narration on the messenger of Allaah sall Allaahi ‘alayhi wa sallam, that he said, ‘A person is with whom he loves.’

• He advises those who survive him – his children, brother, family and friends and all those who accept his legacy from the general masses of the Muslims, to bear witness to all that he bears witness to; to fear Allaah as He should be feared and not to die except that they are Muslims.

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<sup>3</sup> i.e. they will all see Him clearly, without obscuring one-another [Translator’s Note].

## ﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ ﴾

Truly, Allâh is with those who fear Him (keep their duty unto Him), and those who are Muhsinûn (good-doers) [An-Nahl: 128].

- He advises them to rectify their children; to keep good ties of relation; to do good towards neighbours, relatives and brothers; to know the rights of the elders and to have mercy upon the young.
- He forbids them from having enmity and hatred toward one-another and to cut off relations and have malice toward one-another. He enjoins them to be brothers, aiding each other upon goodness; to hold tightly to the rope of Allaah and not to differ; to follow the Book and Sunnah and that which the scholars of the ummah and imaams of the religion were upon – such as Maalik bin Anas, ash Shaa’fi’ee, Sufyaan ath Thawree, Sufyaan bin ‘Uyainah, Ahmad bin Hanble, Is-haaq bin Ibraheem, Yahya bin Yahya, and other than them from the imaams of the Muslims and scholars of the religion, may Allaah be pleased with them all and join us with them in the shade of Toobah and pool of the worshippers.
- Isma’eel bin Abdir Rahmaan as-Saaboonee bequests all of this to his children, family, friends and his associates.
- He advises that when death, which is undoubtedly a calamity, approaches him, and he asks Allaah the good of the day in which it falls and the good of the night in which it will fall and the good of the hour in which it will fall and the good in the hour before and after it, to be clothed in good clothes – clean and pure. They should put an imaamah on him, as he used to tie during his life and in the same manner in which it was tied during his life – the tail of which should hang between his shoulders. He should be laid out lying on his back, facing the qiblah. His children should sit at his head. Copies of the Qur’aan should be put in their rooms and they should read Qur’aan aloud.
- He urges them not to allow any female close to the place he is laying – whether it be a relative, family member or someone with whom he had marital connections with – or to enter a house in which he is in.
- Similarly, he urges them to allow men to enter upon him at that time. Rather, they should instruct the brother(s), dear and other than them to sit in the study and not enter the house. They should help in reciting the Qur’aan and making dua for him – it may be that Allaah the Most High eases the trials of death for him and make easy the transition to death upon Islaam, the sunnah and in peace and good health.

• He advises that when he expires and he answers the call of his Lord and his soul departs from his body that his burial should be hastened; his eyes closed; his limbs spread out and shrouded. His face should not be uncovered for it to be seen except by the one washing him when he takes him to the place of washing – may Allaah make that carrying blessed for him, have mercy upon him and forgive him the evil actions he has put before Him.

• He bequests that no wailing should be done over him and that his close friends, relatives and those beloved to him, male and female, should be prevented from shaving their hair off and ripping their clothes. They should not cry for him – save the crying of a sad heart and tears that cannot be suppressed. As for making supplications of woe unto the shaytaan; the slapping of cheeks; shaving and tearing out of hair and the ripping and tearing of clothes, he distances himself from those who do such actions, as did the prophet sall Allaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam.

• He wills that the preparation [of the body] should not be delayed – its preparation, the washing, shrouding and carrying to the grave. It should not be delayed. And if death occurs in the morning, or at zawaal time, the preparation of the body should not be left to the following day. Nor should any deceased be left with the family during the night – rather the matters that need to be done should be hastened. It is carried to the grave after having been washed an odd number of times, with the last wash containing camphor. He should be shrouded in three white cotton sheets if possible. If not, then three white sheets – with no gamees or imaamah. The garment should be incensed with incense an odd number of times, not even, before it is noticed. And walking with the body is to be done speedily – as the prophet sall Allaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam ordered.

• It should be taken for the prayer to the maydaan al-Hussain. His son Abu Nasr should lead the prayer, if present. If he cannot, the affair of leading the prayer goes to his brother Abu Ya’la.

• He should then be returned to the study to be buried therein – where his father, the shaheed, may Allaah be pleased with him, is.

• He should be buried in a grave. He should not be buried in a coffin, nor placed in one when carried for prayer. He should be placed in the grave in white shrouds that do not contain any silk whatsoever. [the area within] The grave should not be clayed, nor plastered. Upon it, water should be sprinkled and a small stone placed.

• They should remain at the graveside for the time that a slaughtering could take place and its meat distributed so that they know that the messengers of the lord have left and they ask Allaah at the head of his grave to grant him the promised establishment of the believers in the saying of the Most High:

﴿يَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ﴾

Allâh will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm in this world (i.e. they will keep on worshipping Allâh Alone and none else), and in the Hereafter

[Ibrahim: 27]

- They should seek forgiveness for him, his parents and for all the believing men and women and Muslim men and women.
- And he is not to be forgotten but rather remembered with dua for him - for indeed, once the believer dies, they are like the sunken and speechless, awaiting a righteous dua to reach them.
- And none of the women or maids should be allowed to uncover their heads or mourn at that time. Rather, all should busy themselves with dua and seeking forgiveness – for it may be that Allaah makes that time easy for him and facilitates the leaving of Munkar and Nakeer from his grave, saying to him, ‘Sleep the sleep of the newlywed, for there is no fear for you’ and open a door from the doors of paradise, out of Allaah’s excellence and virtue, so that he may be successful and possess a great reward and meet a spirit and meet a Generous and Merciful lord.

**Here ends the will of Abu Uthmaan as-Saabooni**

**May Allaah envelop him in His Mercy**