The Amazing Memory of Imãm Bukhãri (rahmatullãhi alayhi)

Each and every person is aware of the great Imãm Bukhãri (rahmatullãhi alayhi). One of the things he was famous for was his extraordinary memory. During his time, Baghdad was a great centre of learning, filled with brilliant scholars, scientists, mathematicians, astronomers, doctors and students. When the scholars of Baghdad heard about a man who could remember almost anything, they wondered if it was really true. They decided to invite Imãm Bukhãri to their city and arrange a very difficult surprise memory test.

The scholars came up with a tricky plan. They took one hundred real Ahãdeeth and secretly mixed them up. They changed some of the words and mixed up the names of the people who had narrated the Hadeeth. Then, they divided these one hundred scrambled Ahãdeeth among ten men, giving each man ten mixed-up Ahãdeeth to read aloud.

On the day of the big event, thousands of excited people gathered in the town square to watch. The first man stood up and read his first trick Hadeeth to Imãm Bukhãri. Imãm Bukhãri listened politely and calmly said, "Not known to me." The man read his second trick Hadeeth and Imãm Bukhãri gave the same answer. In fact, as all ten men took turns reading all one hundred trick Ahãdeeth, Imãm Bukhãri gave the exact same answer every time: "Not known to me." Many people in the crowd began to whisper. Some thought Imãm Bukhãri did not know the Ahãdeeth or had forgotten them. But the great scholars understood what was happening. They realized that Imãm Bukhãri was saying "not known to me" because he knew the mixed-up versions were incorrect and were not genuine Ahãdeeth.

When all ten men had finished, Imãm Bukhãri smiled gently and called the first man back. Without looking at any books or writing down a single note, Imãm Bukhãri repeated the ten scrambled Ahãdeeth exactly as the man had read it. He pointed out the mistakes and then recited the original correct version. He did the same with the second person, then the third and then all the way through the one hundred mixed-up Ahãdeeth. He did not miss a single one! He had not only remembered the correct Ahãdeeth, but had also remembered every wrong version after hearing each one just once. Everyone was amazed by his remarkable memory.

(Adapted from: Imãm Bukhãri: His Life & Works pg.28)

Moral

- Patience Under Pressure: Even when people were testing him and were whispering doubts, Imãm Bukhãri stayed quiet, calm and kind. He did not get angry or brag; he waited patiently for his turn to speak.
- Humility in Knowledge: Even though Imãm Bukhãri was a great scholar, he did not show off. He used his amazing memory to protect the truth and help others learn with a humble heart.

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