



# About The Renowned Recitation Imam Asim Ibn An-Najud

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**Abstract:** The article discusses the life and scholarly activities of the famous Qur'anic reciter, Asim ibn Abu al-Najud al-Kufi. He is recognized as one of the leading scholars in the fields of recitation and grammar, and was a prominent reciter among the Tabi'in of his time. Valuable information about Asim's life, his intellectual legacy, related narratives, and his contemporaries is presented. Additionally, the article discusses his notable students and their contributions to recitation. The significance of the science of recitation and its role within the Muslim community, as well as the differences between shazz and mutawatir recitations, are also elaborated upon.

**Keywords:** Qur'anic Recitation, Asim Ibn Al-Najud, Tabi'in, Grammar Science, Reciter Imams, Mutawatir Recitation, Shazz Recitation, Islamic Teachings, Muslim Scholars.

## Introduction

"Qira'at" (الْقِرَاءَات) is the plural form of "qira'ah" (قِرَاءَةٌ), which means "to gather," "to add," "to read," or "to recite." In terminology, it refers to the various styles of recitation by Quran reciters (imams).

During the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), many companions were pioneers in the science of recitation. Imam Dhahabi states in his work "Tabaqat al-Kubra": "Among the companions, the most famous in teaching the Quran were seven: Uthman, Ali, Ubayy, Zayd ibn Thabit, Ibn Mas'ud, Abu Darda, and Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (may Allah be pleased with them). For example, several companions learned Quran recitation from Ubayy (may Allah be pleased with him), including Abu Huraira, Ibn Abbas, and Abdullah ibn Suwaib (may Allah be pleased with him). Ibn Abbas also learned recitation from Zayd."

## Methodology

These companions taught the science of recitation to many Tabi'in from various cities. Later, several pioneers also emerged among the Tabi'in in this field. All of them are connected through an uninterrupted chain to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him).

For instance, from the city of Medina: Ibn Musayyab, Urwah, Salim, Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz, Sulayman, Ata ibn Yasir, Mu'adh ibn Harith, Abdullah ibn Hurmuz, Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri, Muslim ibn Jundub, Zayd ibn Aslam, and from Mecca: Ubayd ibn Umayr, Ata ibn Abu Rabah, Tawus, Mujahid, Ikrimah, Ibn Abu Mulayka, and others. From Kufa: Alqamah, Aswad, Masruq, Ubayda, Amr ibn Shurahbil, Harith ibn Qays, Amr ibn Maymun, Abu Abdurrahman al-Sulami, Said ibn Jubayr, Nakhai, Shabi, and others. From Basra: Abu Aliya, Abu Rajo, Nasr ibn Asim, Yahya ibn Yamur, Hasan, Ibn Sirin, Qatadah, and others. From Sham: Mughirah ibn Abu Shihab al-Makhzumi (a friend of Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him) and Khalifah ibn Sa'd (a friend of Abu Darda (may Allah be pleased with him)) learned the science of recitation from the companions and became skilled and renowned in recitation.

In the latter part of the first century and the second century of Hijra, several scholars among the Tabi'in began to organize the various recitations. They were able to establish the science of recitation as an independent field, just as other Islamic sciences were. This was necessary due to the demands of the time. As a result, the number of great masters whom people would travel to study with among the Tabi'in increased. During that time, it was agreed among scholars that the recitations of the ten imams, who were trustworthy and devoted to learning and teaching the science of recitation throughout their lives, are connected through an uninterrupted chain to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and that these recitations are mutawatir. Among these recitation imams, two notable students transmitted these recitations.

Several other recitations are considered shazz. These include the recitations of Hasan al-Basri (d. 110 AH / 728 CE), Yazid al-Basri (d. 202 AH / 818 CE), Amash (d. 148 AH / 765 CE), Ibn Muhaysin al-Makki (d. 123 AH / 741 CE), and others. The majority of scholars state that aside from the well-known mutawatir recitations, it is not permissible to recite from shazz recitations during prayer and in other contexts. This article discusses Osim ibn an-Najud, one of the ten most widely recognized recitation imams in the world. In our country, this recitation has been practiced for centuries. The book "Tuhfat al-Atfal," written on the science of Tajwid, teaches the rules of Osim's recitation. This work was authored by the Egyptian Sheikh Sulayman ibn Husayn al-Jamzuri (Hijri 1160-1209 / Gregorian 1747-1795) in Hijri 1198, Gregorian 1784, in poetic form. Today, this book is taught as an introductory guide to the science of Tajwid in many Muslim countries around the world. In particular, it is taught to students in intermediate and higher Islamic educational institutions in our country.

**Osim ibn Abu an-Najud al-Kufi**  
(Hijri ...-129 / Gregorian ...-747).

**General Information:** His full name is Abu Bakr Osim ibn Bahdala Abu an-Najud al-Kufi. There is no exact information about his birth date. His ancestors were not Arabs but were freed slaves from the Banu Asad tribe.

Osim lived during the Umayyad caliphs: Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan (caliphate period Hijri 73-86 / Gregorian 692-705), Walid ibn Abd al-Malik (Hijri 86-96 / Gregorian 705-714), Sulayman ibn Abd al-Malik (Hijri 96-99 / Gregorian 714-717), Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz (Hijri 99-101 / Gregorian 717-719), Yazid ibn Abd al-Malik (Hijri 101-105 / Gregorian 720-723), Hisham ibn Abd al-Malik (Hijri 105-125 / Gregorian 723-742), and Walid ibn Yazid ibn Abd

al-Malik (Hijri 125-126 / Gregorian 742-743). This period is particularly noted in historical records as a time of conquests in many regions, including Mavaraunahr, Sicily, Sindh, Armenia, Spain, and parts of France.

Furthermore, during Osim's lifetime, knowledge and education flourished in Kufa, leading to the emergence of many scholars in various fields. Among them was Osim himself, who studied under Abu Burda ibn Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, the judge of Kufa, The founder of the school of thought, Abu Hanifa Nu'man ibn Sabit, The hadith scholar Muaz ibn Muslim and the founder of grammar, Abul Aswad Du'al, Ja'far as-Sadiq and Ali ibn Hamza al-Qisai. He was contemporaneous with prominent scholars.

It is narrated that Abu an-Najud is his father's name. In another narration, it is said that his father's name is Abdullah. However, according to Imam Zahabi, the more accurate information is that his father's name was Bahdala. Imam Jazari says, "He (that is, Bahdala) is his mother. However, Imam Zahabi refutes this opinion.

## Result and Discussion

Osim was eloquent and had a beautiful voice, along with a character and manners befitting the Quran. He was a highly devoted ascetic who would remain motionless on the ground while worshiping, like a tree, for long periods. After Friday prayers, he would stay in the mosque until the afternoon to continue his worship. If he had any need, he would immediately enter the mosque to pray, saying, "Now our needs will not be left unfulfilled.

**Scientific Capacity:** He was one of the seven famous mutawatir recitation imams. He was one of the leading scholars in the sciences of recitation (qira'at) and grammar (nahw). After his teacher, Abu Abdur-Rahman Abdullah ibn Habib as-Sulami, the primary role of teaching recitation in Kufa was transferred to him, and he continued the legacy of his teacher. Students from distant cities would travel specifically to seek knowledge from him.

Abu Bakr ibn Ayyash said: "I have heard Abu Ishaq as-Sabi'I say many times: 'I have never seen anyone more proficient in Qur'anic recitation than Asim ibn Abi an-Najud'".

Ahmad ibn Abdullah al-Ijli said: "Asim ibn Bahdalah was a master of the Sunnah and Qur'anic recitation. He was a leader in the knowledge of the Qur'an. He went to Basra and taught its people how to recite the Qur'an".

Additionally, along with his expertise in Qur'anic recitation, Asim was also among the distinguished scholars of Kufa in the field of nahw. Abu Bakr ibn Ayyash said, "Asim was a scholar of grammar, and he spoke with eloquence". Elsewhere, he added, "Asim was one of the most eloquent people, known in his time for his prominence and strength in knowledge among scholars".

Tabi'in revered him. In particular, when he returned from a journey, Abu Wa'il (Shaqiq ibn Salama) would kiss his hand and seek his blessing.

**Teachers:** Asim met several companions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and learned from them. He was among the lesser Tabi'in. For instance, he met Hārith ibn Ḥassan al-Bakri(p.a.), He also met Rifā'ah ibn Yasribī at-Tamīmī (may Allah be pleased with him). Both of these individuals were companions of the Prophet.

Three notable teachers of 'Ūsīm were Abū Abdur-Raḥmān as-Sulamī, Zirribn Ḥubaysh al-Asadī, and Sa'd ibn Iyyās ash-Shaybānī. They learned Qur'ān recitation from

Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd (may Allah be pleased with him), while Abū Abdur-Raḥmān as-Sulamī and Zirr ibn Ḥubaysh learned from Uthmān ibn 'Affān and Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib (may Allah be pleased with them). Abū Abdur-Raḥmān as-Sulamī, in turn, received his knowledge from Ubayy ibn Ka'b and Zayd ibn Sābit.

Ḥafs ibn Sulaymān, who is another well-known narrator of 'Ūsīm, said: "'Ūsīm told me, 'I learned the recitation that I am teaching you from Abū Abdur-Raḥmān as-Sulamī'"

**His Students:** After the death of Abu Abdurrahman as-Sulami, Asim became the primary recitation imam of Kufa. Many renowned scholars learned the science of recitation from him. Among them were Abu Bakr ibn Ayyash, Hafs ibn Sulayman (whose riwaya, or mode of recitation, is followed by most of the world's Muslims), and al-A'mash. As-Sakhawi said, "Forty-eight leading imams and scholars narrated recitations from him".

The science of recitation was learned from him by Abu Amr ibn al-Ala al-Basri, Hamza ibn Habib az-Zayyat, Khalil ibn Ahmad al-Farahidi, Sufyan ath-Thawri, Sufyan ibn Uyaynah, Hammad ibn Zayd, Hammad ibn Salamah, and others.

**His Rank in Hadith Science:** Asim was skilled in the science of hadith as well. He narrated hadiths from Abu Abdur-Rahman as-Sulami, Zirr ibn Hubaysh, and others. Two of his prominent teachers, the great Tabi'in Ata ibn Abi Rabah and Abu Salih as-Samman, also narrated hadith from him.

However, his rank in hadith was not as prominent as in the science of recitation. Despite the fact that his hadiths have been "takhrij" in the six authentic hadith collections, scholars of hadith differed on whether to accept his narrations. There was no consensus (ijma') on his hadith narrations

## Conclusion

Ahmad ibn Hanbal said: "He was among the trustworthy scholars, but al-A'mash's memory was stronger. Shu'bah preferred to take hadith from al-A'mash over him."

Muhammad ibn Sa'd said: "He was trustworthy, but he made many errors in his hadith narrations".

**Death:** Asim passed away at the end of the year 129 AH (747 CE), three years before the fall of the Umayyad dynasty and the rise of the Abbasid state. This is confirmed by Ibn al-Jazari[30], and this seems to be the correct date. Some sources, however, mention 128 AH as the year of his death. There are conflicting reports regarding the place of his death. While most narrations indicate that he died in Kufa, Ahwazi mentions that he passed away in the city of Samawa in Sham (Greater Syria) and was buried there.

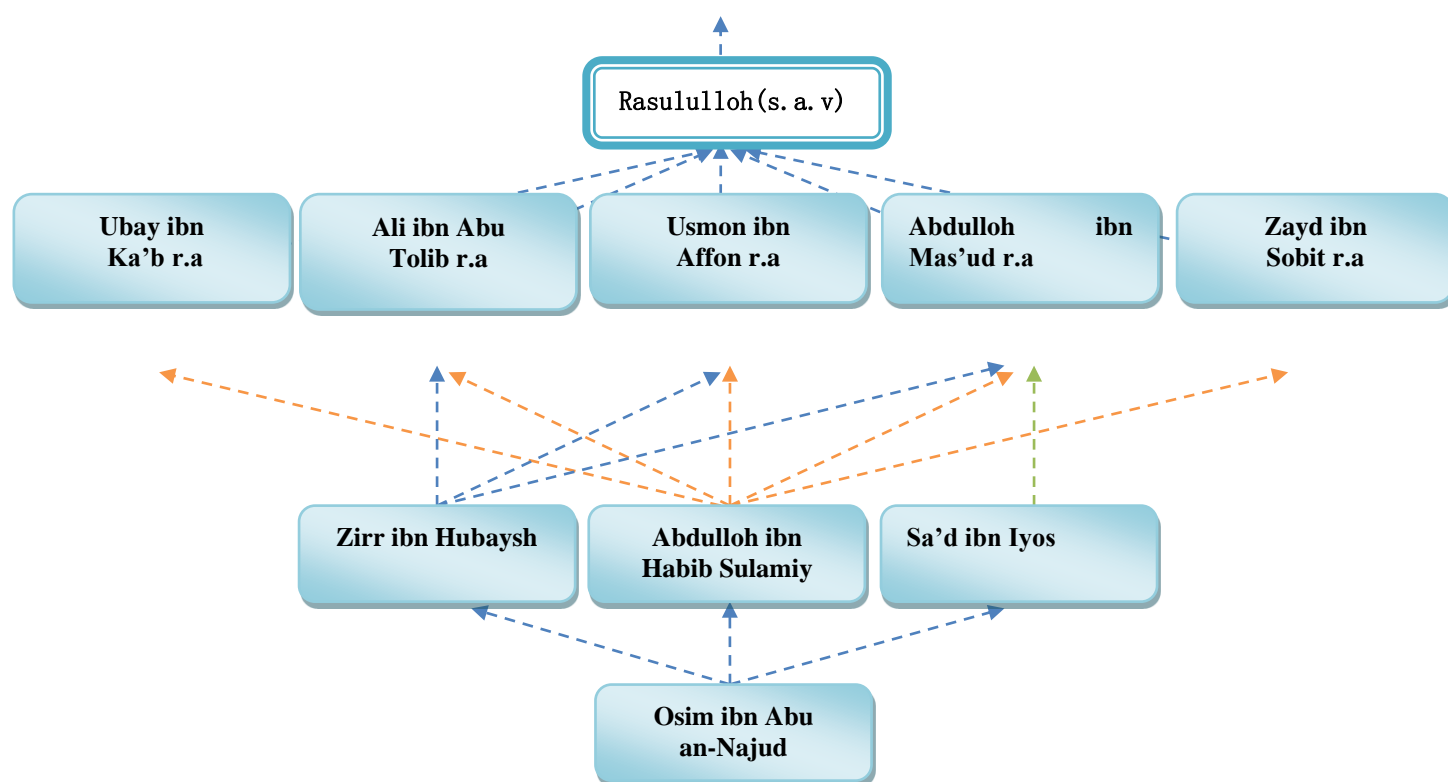
Abu Bakr ibn Ayyash said: "When Asim was on his deathbed, I visited him. He lost consciousness, and when he regained it, he recited the following...":

ثُمَّ رُدُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ مَوْلَاهُمْ الْحَقَّ لَا لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَهُوَ أَسْرَعُ الْحَاسِبِينَ

He then recited the verse. "Then they will be returned to Allah, their true Master. Surely, His is the judgment, and He is the swiftest of reckoners"

## THE GENEALOGY OF ASIM IBN ABU AN-NAJUD IN RECITATION

Jibril (a.s.)



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