



The Three Qurṛā' & Their Ruwāt

by Saba Shaikh



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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by Saba Shaikh

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Recite With Love

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Editor's Foreword

All praises are due to Allah, Most High, who revealed His book to His beloved Prophet ﷺ and has preserved it through unbroken chains of transmission, allowing it to reach us generation after generation as it was revealed. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon His beloved Messenger ﷺ, his family and his companions.

Studying the biographies of the *qurrā'* is an important part of any *qirā'āt* program's curriculum. At Recite With Love, we use Qārī Saleem Gaibie's book *Narratives on the Seven Great Readers* to go through the biographies of the Imams of *qirā'āt*. It is an excellent resource and a beautifully written work. May Allah reward the author immensely for writing it. *Āmīn*. As respected Qārī Sahib's work does not include the biographies of the three additional Imams whose readings are studied by students when they complete *Ashara Ṣughrah*, I asked my dear student, *Ālimah* Saba Shaikh to prepare this document on the biographies of the remaining three *qurrā'*: Imams Abū Ja'far, Ya'qūb and Khalaf, and their *ruwāt* .

To write this work, I asked her to rely on two secondary sources only. The information about the three *qurrā'* and their *ruwāt* presented here was taken from *Tadhkirah al-Qurrā'* by Dr. Qārī Muḥammad Ilyās al-A'ẓamī in Urdu and *Tarikh al-Qurrā' al-Asharah* by Shaykh 'Abd al-Fattāḥ al-Qāḍī in Arabic. Verifying the sources from which these two scholars derived the biographical details of these *qurrā'* was not within the scope of this work.

I am very grateful to *Ālimah* Saba for agreeing to take on this project and for seeing it to completion. I pray that Allah *Ta'ālā* accepts this work from her, blesses her with many more, and makes it of immense benefit to all those who come across it. *Āmīn*.

Saaima Yacoob

January 2022/Jumādā al-Thānī 1443

Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ

His full name is Yazīd ibn al-Qa‘qā‘ al-Makhzūmī al-Madanī. He is more well known by his patronym (*kunyah*) Abū Ja‘far. He is one of the ten imams of *qirā’āt* who were also one of the *tābi‘īn*. Born very close to the illustrious period of the companions of Rasūl Allah ﷺ, Imām Abū Ja‘far was the freed slave of Abū al-Hārith al-Makhzūmī.

He had the virtue of learning from several Companions, including ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Ayyāsh ibn Abī Rabī‘ah, ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Abbās and Abū Hurairah ؓ. Abdullah ibn ‘Ayyāsh ibn Abī Rabī‘ah recited to Ubayy ibn Ka‘ab ؓ. While ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Abbās and Abū Hurairah ؓ recited to *Kātib al-Wahī*, Zaid ibn Thābit ؓ. Both Zaid ibn Thābit and Ubayy ibn Ka‘ab ؓ recited to Rasūl Allah ﷺ. In this manner, the *sanad* (chain of transmission) of Imam Abū Ja‘far to Rasūl Allah ﷺ only has two links.

It is also said that Imam Abū Ja‘far ؑ recited to Zayd ibn Thābit ؓ himself. In his childhood, he was brought to *Umm al-Mu‘minīn*, Umm Salamah ؓ, and she placed her blessed hand on his head and made *duā’* for Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى to have mercy on him and to bless him. His virtues also include praying behind ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Umar ؓ. Even before receiving his freedom (63 AH), Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ was teaching *qirā’ah* in Madinah.

Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ was known as the Imām of *qirā’āt* and an exemplary Qārī. Yaḥyā ibn Mu‘īn ؓ states that Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ was the Imām of *qirā’āt* in Madīnah, and so was more commonly remembered by the term Qārī. He was also *thiqā* (trustworthy), and considered *ṣālih al-ḥadīth*, but would transmit very few narrations. Ibn Mujāhid Aṣma‘ī ؓ said that there was no one in Madīnah who recited as well as and as close to the *sunnah* as Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ. Imām Mālik ؓ said that Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ was a pious and upright person and was a teacher of Qur’ān and *qirā’āt* in Madīnah.

Ibn Jammāz ؓ said that Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ practiced the fast of Dāwūd ؑ for a long period of time i.e., he would fast every alternate day. When a student enquired about it, he said that the purpose of this was for

the reformation (*iṣlāḥ*) of his *naḥs* (base desires) and to train it towards the worship of Allah ﷻ. It is also said that Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ would devoutly offer eight units (*raka‘āt*) of prayer with four *salām* (four, two *raka‘* prayers) in the middle of the night, each with *sūrah al Fātiḥa* followed by one of the *ṭiwāl sūrahs*.¹ Then he would supplicate for himself, his students, all the Muslims, and all those who recited in his *qir‘ah* before him and after him.

Sulaymān ibn Jammāz narrates that he came to Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ when he was in his last moments. He saw that Imam Abū Ḥāzim al-A‘raj, along with some of his colleagues, came to visit Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ. They called out to him but did not receive a reply as Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ had already passed away. Imām Shaybah ibn Niṣaḥ, his son-in-law and a *qārī* as well, was also present there. He asked those in the gathering if they wanted to see something extraordinary. Everyone answered in the affirmative, and Imām Shaybah uncovered the chest of Imām Abu Ja‘far ؑ. At this point they saw that there was a circular portion of his chest which was white as milk. Seeing this Imām Abū Ḥāzim al-A‘raj, and all his companions, exclaimed that “By Allah! This is light of the Qur’ān.”

Imām Ishāq al-Musayyibī narrates that Imām Nāfi‘ ؑ said, when Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ was being given *ghusl* (after he passed away), the people there witnessed an imprint of a page from the *muṣḥaf* in an area between his chest and heart. And without a doubt the people there knew that this was the light of the Qur’ān.

Sulaymān ibn Sulaymān al-‘Umrī ؑ said that he saw Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ in his dream and he was on the roof of the Ka‘bah. Imām Sulaymān called out to Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ at which Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ asked him to convey his greeting to his brothers and students and inform them that Allah ﷻ joined him with the martyrs who are alive and receive His bounties. Abū ‘Abd Allah Muḥammad ibn Isrā‘īl Qaṣā‘ ؑ in one of his works stated that after Imām Abū Ja‘far ؑ passed away, someone saw him

¹ *Sūrah al-Baqarah* to *Sūrah al-Taubah*. Esmail, *Tashīl al-Rusūm*, 36.

in his dream in an extremely beautiful form. Imam Abū Ja‘far عليه السلام asked him to tell his students and all those who recite in his *qirā’ah*, that Allah تبارك وتعالى has forgiven them, and has accepted the Imam’s supplications for them. He also added that he should command those that recite in his *qirā’ah* to religiously offer a few *raka‘āt* of *tahajjud* prayer in the middle of the night.

According to the most authentic transmission, Imām Abū Ja‘far عليه السلام passed away in 130 AH in Madīnah. Apart from this there are four other opinions which state his date of passing as 127AH, 128 AH, 129 AH, and 132 AH.

Teachers

Imām Abū Ja‘far عليه السلام learned and transmitted the *qirā’ah* from three auspicious Companions عليهم السلام: ‘Abd Allah Ibn ‘Ayyāsh ibn Abī Rabī‘ah Makhzūmī, ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Abbās عليه السلام and Abū Hurairah عليه السلام. Some are of the opinion that Imām Abū Ja‘far عليه السلام also learned from Zaid ibn Thābit عليه السلام. However, Imām Dhahabī رحمته الله says that this is incorrect.

Students

Numerous students benefitted and learned from Imām Abū Ja‘far عليه السلام. Some of them include:

- Imām Nāfi‘ ibn Abī Nu‘aym عليه السلام
- Sulaymān ibn Muslim ibn Jammāz عليه السلام
- ‘Īsā ibn Wardān عليه السلام
- ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Zaid ibn Aslam عليه السلام
- Ismā‘īl ibn Abī Ja‘far عليه السلام (son of Imām Abū Ja‘far عليه السلام)
- Ya‘qūb ibn Abī Ja‘far عليه السلام (son of Imām Abū Ja‘far عليه السلام)
- Maymūnah bint Abī Ja‘far عليه السلام (daughter of Imām Abū Ja‘far عليه السلام)

Imām Ibn Wardān ؓ

He is ʿIsā ibn Wardān ؓ. His patronym is Abū al-Ḥārith. His year of death, according to Ibn al-Jazarī, is around 161 AH. He was known as an Imām and expert of *qirāʾāt* of his time and was a scrupulous and authoritative narrator. Ibn Zaid ibn Aslam ؓ states that his father Zaid ibn Aslam ؓ would say to Imām Ibn Wardān ؓ, “learn from all your brethren (i.e. all the *shuyūkh* and teachers of that time) just as Imām Abū Jaʿfar ؓ and Imām Shaybah ibn Niṣāḥ ؓ would learn ten verses from each Shaykh (i.e., they would recite a little to each Shaykh).

He recited to Imām Abū Jaʿfar ؓ and Imām Shaybah ibn Niṣāḥ ؓ and after them to Imām Nāfiʿ ؓ. He was also a companion of Imām Nāfiʿ ؓ in that they both recited to Imām Abū Jaʿfar ؓ.

In this way he is linked through recitation to two Qurṛāʾ of the ten Imāms of *qirāʾāt*, Imām Nāfiʿ ؓ and Imām Abū Jaʿfar ؓ.

Teachers


- Imām Abū Jaʿfar ؓ
- Imām Shaybah ؓ
- Imām Nāfiʿ ؓ

Students


From his numerous students, three are most well-known. They took the recitation of the Qurʾān from him *ʿardan*, meaning by reciting it to him, and not just by listening to him.

- Ismāʿīl ibn Jaʿfar ؓ
- Qālūn ؓ
- Muḥammad ibn ʿAmr ؓ

Imām Ibn Jammāz




He is Sulaymān ibn Muslim ibn Jammāz al-Zuhrī al-Madanī . He is called al-Zuhrī because he was a freed slave of Banū Zuhrah. His patronym is Abū Rabīʿ.

He was known as *Shaykh al-Qurrāʾ* and was a well acknowledged *muqri*. He was considered an expert in the recitation of the Qurʾān and worthy of acknowledgment and respect.

Imām Ibn Jazarī  mentions in *Ghāyah al-Nihāyah*, that Imam Ibn Jammāz passed away a little after 170 AH. He states the same in *al-Nashr*.



He would teach according to the *qirāʾah* of both Imām Abū Jaʿfar and Imām Nāfiʿ, and was said to be very particular in giving both *qirāʾāt* equal priority in teaching and transmitting.

Teachers

- Imām Abū Jaʿfar 
- Imām Shaybah 
- Imām Nāfiʿ 

Students

From his numerous students, two of the most well-known are:

- Ismāʿīl ibn Jaʿfar 
- Qutayba ibn Mihrān 

Imām Ya‘qūb ؓ

He is Ya‘qūb ibn Ishāq ibn Zayd ibn ‘Abd Allah ibn Abī Ishāq al-Ḥaḍrami al-Baṣrī ؓ, an Imām of the people of Baṣrah and a great *muqrī*. His *kunya* was Abū Muḥammad. He was known as a trustworthy, pious, and upright scholar. In Baṣrah, after Imām Abū ‘Amr ؓ, it was Imām Ya‘qūb ؓ who was the most knowledgeable in *‘ilm ul qirā’āt*. For many years he was the Imām of the Jāmi‘ Masjid of Baṣrah. Imām Abū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī ؓ says that Imām Ya‘qūb ؓ was second to none in proficiency of the Qur’ān, various aspects of the science of *qirā’āt*, Arabic grammar (*naḥw*), as well as transmission of *aḥādīth* by the jurists. ‘Allāmāh Abū ‘Amr al-Dānī says that after Imām Abū ‘Amr al-Baṣrī, the common people of Baṣrah adopted Imām Ya‘qūb’s *qirā’ah*. Furthermore, he says that he heard his teacher, Ṭāhir ibn Ghalabūn ؓ, say that the Imām of the Jāmi‘ Masjid of Baṣrah recited in the *qirā’ah* of Imām Ya‘qūb ؓ.

Imām Ibn Abī Ḥātim ؓ says that Imām Aḥmad ibn Hanbal ؓ was once asked about Imām Ya‘qūb ؓ, to which he replied that he was a very truthful person. His own father, Abū Ḥātim, had expressed the same opinion about Imām Ya‘qūb ؓ. Furthermore, scholars like Imām al-Sijistānī ؓ were his students.

Ibn al-Jazarī ؓ states that not only was Imām Ya‘qūb ؓ an expert and scholar in Qur’ān and Naḥw, but also his father and grandfather were great scholars of these sciences in their respective times. Marwān ibn ‘Abd al-Malik ؓ states that he heard Abū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī ؓ say that Imām Ya‘qūb ؓ was from a household that had great knowledge of the Qur’ān, Arabic language and rhetoric. Growing up in such a household surrounded by knowledge of the Qur’ān and other sciences made him superior in his knowledge to the other *qurrā’*. Abū al-Qāsim al-Hudhalī ؓ says that there was no one like Imām Ya‘qūb ؓ during his time. He was pious, upright, extremely God-conscious, and God-fearing.

His God-consciousness and ascetism were of a remarkable level. Once, while he was praying, his overgarment was stolen from his shoulders and he did not notice it. Later, while he was still in prayer, it was returned and placed on his shoulders again. He did not notice this either. This is an example of how deeply devoted and engrossed Imām Ya‘qūb ؑ would be in his worship.

Similarly, regarding his high-ranking status and authority in Baṣrah, it is reported that Imām Ya‘qūb ؑ was the person who would capture and imprison criminals, and he would be the one to set them free.

According to Imām Bukhārī ؑ, he passed away in the month of Dhū al-Hijjah, 205 AH, at the age of 88. Interestingly, his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather ؑ also passed away at the age of 88 respectively.

He wrote a book named *al-Jāmi‘* in which he documented and collected the general differences with regards to the *qira’āt* and referred every *ḥarf* towards who read it. He also wrote a book named *Waqf al-Tamām* related to the science of *waqf* and *ibtidā’*.

Teachers

He recited to the teachers below, meaning that he took *qirā’ah* from them ‘*ardan*. He had also received recitation through listening (*samā’*). Those names have not been included here.

- Abū Mundhir Sallām ibn Sulaymān al-Ṭawīl al-Muzanī ؑ
- Abū Yaḥyā Mahdī ibn Maymūn ؑ
- Abū al-Ashhab Ja‘far ibn Hayyān ‘Uṭāridī ؑ
- Shihāb ibn Sharīfah ؑ
- Yūnus ibn ‘Ubayd ؑ
- It is also said that Imām Ya‘qūb ؑ recited to Imām Abū ‘Amr al-Baṣrī ؑ. This is not far-fetched to say as when Imām Abū ‘Amr ؑ passed away in 154 AH, Imām Ya‘qūb ؑ was 37 years old.

Imām Ya‘qūb ؓ himself said that he recited the Qur’ān to Abū Mundhir Sallām al-Ṭawīl ؓ in one and a half years and to Shihāb ibn Sharīfah ؓ in 5 days.

Students

He had numerous students. These are some of them:

- Zayd ibn Aḥmad ؓ (he was also the nephew of Imām Ya‘qūb ؓ)
- Rawḥ ibn ‘Abd al-Mu’mīn ؓ
- Abū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī ؓ
- Muḥammad ibn al-Mutawakkil ؓ also known as Ruwais ؓ
- Ayyūb ibn al Mutawakkil al-Anṣārī al-Baṣrī ؓ
- Abū ‘Amr al-Dūrī ؓ
- Aḥmad ibn Shādhān

Imām Ruways ؓ

He is Muḥammad ibn al-Mutawakkil al-Lu'lu'ī al-Baṣrī. His patronym is Abū 'Abd Allah and his *laqab* is Ruways, and he is more commonly known by Ruways. He was an Imām of *qirā'āt*, a *muqri*, an expert reciter and well known. 'Allāmah al-Dānī ؓ says that Imām Ruways ؓ was one of the most proficient and expert students of Imām Ya'qūb ؓ.

Imām al-Zuhri ؓ says that he asked Imām Abū Ḥātim ؓ whether Imām Ruways ؓ recited to Imām Ya'qūb ؓ. He replied in the affirmative and said that Imām Ruways ؓ recited to Imām Ya'qūb ؓ together with him and had made several completions of the Qur'ān with Imām Ya'qūb ؓ. During the time that he was reciting to Imām Ya'qūb ؓ, his teacher would praise his recitation by saying, "O you who stays close, you have recited well, or you have done well." Ibn al-Jazarī ؓ says that Imām Ruways ؓ would do *iqāmah* for the clan of Banū Māzin. Also, he deems Imām Ruways's authority in transmission credible just as other transmitters. Imām Ruways ؓ passed away in 238 AH.

Teachers


Imām Ya'qūb ؓ



Students

Many students transmitted from him. Among them were:

- Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Hārūn al-Tammār ؓ
- Abū 'Abd Allah al-Zubayr ibn Aḥmad al-Zubayrī al-Shāfi'ī ؓ






Imām Rawḥ

He is Rawḥ ibn ‘Abd al-Mu’min al-Hudhalī al-Baṣrī al-Naḥwī . Hudhalī because he was a freed slave of the tribe of Hudhayl. His patronym is Abū al-Ḥasan.








He was an acclaimed reciter, an authority in transmission, reliable and a well-known personality. He was one of the most prominent, proficient and reliable students of Imām Ya‘qūb . Imām Bukhārī  relates from him in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

He passed away in either 234 or 235 AH.


Teachers

Imām Ruwais  took *qirā’ah* from Imām Ya‘qūb  by reciting it to him (‘*ardan*), and he transmits only the differences in readings (*ḥurūf wa ikhtalāfāt*) from Aḥmad ibn Mūsā  and ‘Abd Allah ibn Mu‘ādh  who were students of Imām Abū ‘Amr al Baṣrī .



Students

- Al-Ṭayyib ibn Ḥamdān al-Qāḍī 
- Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Wahb al-Thaqafī 
- Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan ibn Ziyād 
- Aḥmad ibn Yazīd al-Ḥulwānī 
- ‘Abd Allah ibn Muḥammad al-Za‘farānī 
- Muslim ibn Maslamah 
- Al-Ḥasan ibn Muslim 

Imām Khalaf

His biography can be found as the *rāwī* of the sixth *Qārī*, Imām Ḥamza  in the book *Narratives on the Seven Great Readers* by Qārī Saleem Gaibie on page 57.

His two most prominent students:

- Imām Ishāq 
- Imām Idrīs 

Imām Ishāq ؓ

He is Ishāq ibn Ibrāhīm ibn ʿUthmān ibn ʿAbd Allah ibn Yaʿqūb al-Marwazī, later al-Baghdādī, al-Warrāq. His patronym is Abū Yaʿqūb. He is known as al-Warrāq because he was the scribe of Imām Khalaf ؓ, along with being the narrator of his *qirāʾah*. An expert and skilled reciter, he would only recite in the *qirāʾah* of Imām Khalaf ؓ. After the passing of Imām Khalaf ؓ, Imām Ishāq ؓ became his successor in his recitation. He passed away in 286 AH.

Teachers

- Imām Khalaf al-Bazzār ؓ
- Walīd ibn Muslim ؓ

Students

- Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allah ibn Abī ʿUmar al-Naqqāsh ؓ
- Ḥasan ibn ʿUthmān al-Burṣāṭī ؓ
- ʿAli ibn Mūsā al-Thaqafī ؓ
- His son, Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ؓ
- Ibn Shanabūdh ؓ

Imām Idrīs ؑ

He is Idrīs ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Haddād al-Baghdādī. His patronym is Abū al-Ḥasan. He was a master in the science of *qirā’āt*, reliable, and held authority in it. He is also praised as a *mutqin*, i.e, a strong Ḥāfiẓ.

He learned from Imām Khalaf ؑ, not only his *qirā’ah* but also his *riwāyah* from Imām Ḥamza ؑ.

Imām al-Ḥadīth, Imām Dāraqūṭnī ؑ (306-385 AH), was once asked about Imām Idrīs ؑ. He praised him saying that Imām Idrīs ؑ was not just *thiqāh* (rigorous/thorough), but his status was higher than that, i.e., he was extremely sound and reliable.

He passed away on the 10th of Dhū al-Hijjah, 292 AH at the age of 93 or 94.

Teachers

- Imām Khalaf ibn Hishām ؑ
- Muḥammad ibn Ḥabīb al-Shamūnī ؑ

Students

- Imām Abū Muzāḥim Mūsā ibn ‘Ubaydullah al-Khāqānī ؑ
- Imām Muḥammad ibn Ishāq al-Bukhārī ؑ
- Imām Abū Bakr al-Naqqāsh ؑ
- Aḥmad ibn Mujāhid ؑ (transmits through listening (*samā’*) only)
- Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Shanabūdh ؑ
- Muḥammad ibn ‘Ubaydullah al-Rāzī ؑ
- Aḥmad ibn Būyān ؑ
- Al-Ḥasan ibn Sa‘īd al-Muṭawwī‘ī ؑ

My beloved ‘Ālimah Saba had completed this work at the end of the blessed month of Ramadan, 1442 AH. Unfortunately, I was unable to edit it until much later. I pray that Allah Ta‘āla forgives me for the delay and rewards my dear Saba for her patience and that He, Most High, grants this work an immense acceptance and makes it a *ṣadaqah jāriyah* for her, her parents, and all her teachers. *Āmīn*.

الحمد لله رب العالمين

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