

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

THE Syrian city of Aleppo – also known as ‘the city of scholars’ – is considered by many to be the cradle of traditional Islamic scholarship. One of the greatest scholars it has ever produced was the Friend of Allāh ﷺ, Imām ‘Abdallāh b. Muḥammad Najīb Sirājuddīn al-Ḥusaynī al-Ḥalabī ؒ, an extraordinary saint who dedicated his entire life to the service of Islām.



His qualities were many and his skills outstanding. Imām ‘Abdallāh was a renowned spiritual master, an expert in jurisprudence, a Ḥāfiẓ and scholar of Ḥadīth as well as a brilliant exegete of the Qur’ān. He was most famous, however, for his immense and intense love for our Master Muḥammad ﷺ, the Messenger of Allah.

A descendant of the Prophet’s ﷺ grandson, our Master Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib ؑ on his father’s side, Imām ‘Abdallāh was born into an honorable and pious family on the verge of the collapse of the Ottoman Sultanate in 1923 CE. During his childhood, Imām ‘Abdallāh was surrounded by the love and care of his father, the esteemed Shaykh Muḥammad Najīb Sirājuddīn al-Ḥusaynī ؒ who was himself a spiritual master and a leading jurist, exegete of the Qur’ān and scholar of Ḥadīth. Imām ‘Abdallāh began his pursuit of knowledge at an early age and memorized the Qur’ān when only thirteen years old under the guidance of his father. At that time, he was studying Ḥadīth at the Islamic school of al-Khasrawiyya. There he studied under leading scholars of the time such as the great jurist Imām

Muḥammad Ibrāhīm al-Salqīnī ؒ, the Saintly Sūfī Shaykh ‘Isā al-Bayanūnī ؒ, Shaykh ‘Umar Mas‘ūd al-Ḥarīrī ؒ, Shaykh Fayḍallāh al-Ayyūbī al-Kurdī ؒ, Shaykh Aḥmad al-Shammā‘ ؒ and several other prominent scholars. Imām ‘Abdallāh also frequented other scholars who did not teach at his school, such as the jurist Shaykh Aḥmad al-Kurdī ؒ and Shaykh Muḥammad Sa‘īd al-Idlībī ؒ. As he remained in their proximity, the great scholar of Ḥadīth and leading historian of Aleppo Shaykh Muḥammad Rāghib al-Tabbākh noticed his intelligence and intense devotion to the pursuit of knowledge and he decided to become his mentor.

He continued his studies under the supervision of his father, Shaykh Muḥammad Najīb Sirājuddīn who always attracted large crowds to his lessons. In this environment Imām ‘Abdallāh was given the opportunity to further develop his skills and increase his knowledge and his fame as a scholar soon spread throughout Aleppo. He began teaching Islām in various mosques, such as the Ḥamawī mosque where he tutored one hour in the morning, four times a week. Soon he was asked to teach at various colleges including the Sha‘bāniyya school. He also taught many courses and lessons in various mosques including his own where he continued to impart knowledge upon the masses even when the funds that provided his payment were stopped. Then came one year in which his father’s age prevented him from continuing his classes. Imām ‘Abdallāh, still only twenty-two years old, carried the heavy load of succeeding his father as a scholar. The demands of the public and the high level of his father’s classes made this a great test for him, but by the Grace of Allāh ﷻ he succeeded in it, and honouring this responsibility caused the admiration of the public for him. Following the vacuum caused by the closing of the Sha‘bāniyya Islamic school, Imām ‘Abdallāh felt the need to found a large Islamic school in Aleppo that would take charge of training future scholars and preachers.

He decided to revive religious teaching by founding the School of Islamic Teachings in 1958 CE. Its program combined legal courses, Islamic spirituality, the life and qualities of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as well as the sciences of Ḥadīth. In addition, he founded a Qur'ānic school whose mission it was to teach its students the Majestic Qur'ān. Generous scholarships were granted to the pupils in order to encourage the preservation of this knowledge.

Imām ‘Abdallāh was known to be generous and helpful towards the poor, lenient towards the pupils of his school, and famed for his humility and devotion. As Imām ‘Abdallāh became the leading scholar of Aleppo, he conveyed in his classes the quintessence of Islamic legislation and spirituality. In a moving voice, he often spoke of love towards the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and the duty to follow his excellent manners. He promoted love for the Sunnah and revived it in his behaviour and exhortations. Shaykh Dr. Nūruddīn ‘Itr mentions that he was “*extremely scrupulous and avoided any doubtful thing.*”

Imām ‘Abdallāh was truly in love with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. He did not cease pointing out his qualities, his ethics and the nobility of his status in nearness of Allāh ﷻ, and did not accept anyone to be given the importance of our Master Muḥammad ﷺ. In light of this incredible love Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Shāghūrī ؒ once called him, “*the Pole of Prophetic love of our times.*”

Imām ‘Abdallāh wrote nearly thirty books dealing with Islamic spirituality, creed, ethics and the noble manners of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, the sciences of Ḥadīth and Tafsīr of the Qur'ān. Perhaps his most famous work, however, was the book of which we have the translation before us today, *Our Master Muḥammad the Messenger of Allah* ﷺ.

Imām ‘Abdallāh’s students were numerous, many of them becoming prominent scholars themselves such as his son Shaykh Dr. Aḥmad Sirājuddīn, his nephew and son-in-law Shaykh Dr. Nuruddīn ‘Itr, Shaykh Dr. Sāmīr al-Nass, Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Awwāmāh and Shaykh Muḥammad al-Nīnowy, may Allah preserve them.

Following a surgical operation carried out toward the end of his life, the health of Imām ‘Abdallāh deteriorated. On the 4th of March 2002 CE (1422 H) he returned to his Lord. The news of his passing was announced throughout the Muslim world and covered it with a veil of sorrow. Imām ‘Abdallāh b. Muḥammad Najīb Sirājuddīn al-Ḥusaynī al-Ḥalabī ؒ was buried in the Sha‘bāniyya complex, next to the graves of its Ottoman founders. May Allah sanctify the noble Imām’s secret.