

**A Brief Biography of
Al-Shaykh al-Muḥaddith Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān
Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī**

He was born in the city of Ashkoderā, then the capital of Albania in the year 1332 H (1914 C.E.) into a poor family. His father Ḥājj Nūḥ Najjātī al-Albānī had completed *al-Sharī‘ah* studies in Istanbul and returned a scholar to Albania. After Albania was taken over by atheism the family migrated to Damascus. In Damascus, Shaykh al-Albānī completed his initial education and was then taught the Qur’an, *Tajwīd*, sciences of Arabic language, *Fiqh* of the Ḥanafī *Madhhab* and further branches of the *Dīn* by various Shaykhs and friends of his father.

He also learnt from his father the art of clock and watch repair—and became highly skilled and famous for it and derived his earnings through it. He began to specialize in the field of *Ḥadīth* and its related sciences by the age of 20—being influenced by articles in al-Manār magazine.

He began to work in this field by transcribing al-Ḥāfiẓ al-‘Irāqī’s monumental *al-Mughnī ‘an Ḥaml al-Asfār fī al-Asfār fī Takhrīj mā fī al-lḥyā’ min al-Akḥbār* and adding notes to it.

He delved further into the field of *Ḥadīth* and its various branches despite discouragement from his father. Furthermore, the books he needed were not to be found in his father's library which was composed mainly of various works of Ḥanafī *Fiqh*; and since he could not afford many of the books he required, he would borrow them from the famous library of Damascus—al-Maktabah al-Zāhiriyyah or sometimes from book sellers.

He became engrossed with the science of *Ḥadīth* to the extent that he would sometimes close up his shop and stay in the library for up to twelve hours, breaking off his work just only for prayer; he would not even leave to eat, but would take two light snacks with him.

Eventually the library authorities granted him a special room for his study and a key for access to the library before normal opening time. Often, he would remain at work from early morning until after 'Ishā' prayer. During this time he produced many useful works, many of which are still waiting to be printed.

The Shaykh's studies of *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet (ṣ) had a great effect on him and resulted in his turning away from blind following of his former *madhhab* and instead to accept and act upon the Book and the *Sunnah*, with the understanding of the pious predecessors (*al-Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*). This naturally meant he was sometimes at variance with some of the local Shaykhs who blindly followed the Ḥanafī *madhhab*, and likewise with the local Ṣūfī Imāms and innovators who began to oppose him and incite the common people against him by calling him a Wahhābī deviant. He was, however, encouraged by some of the noble Shaykhs of Damascus who urged him to continue. Amongst them Shaykh Bahjat al-Baijār, Shaykh 'Abd al-Fattāḥ, and Tawfīq al-Barzah.

The Shaykh therefore faced much opposition in his efforts to promote *Tawhīd* and the *Sunnah* but he bore this with patience and perseverance. After some time he started giving two weekly classes attended by students and university teachers, in which he taught various books of *ʿAqīdah*, *Fiqh*, *Uṣūl* and *Ḥadīth* sciences. He also began organizing monthly journeys for *Daʿwah* purposes to the various cities of Syria and Jordan.

After a number of his works appeared in print the Shaykh was chosen to teach *Ḥadīth* in the new University of al-Madīnah, Saudi Arabia, for three years from 1381 to 1383H, during which he was also a member of the University board. After this, he returned to his former studies and work in al-Maktabah al-Zāhiriyyah leaving his shop in the hands of one of his brothers.

He visited various countries for *Daʿwah* and lectures, amongst them Qatar, Egypt, Kuwait, the Emirates, Spain and England. He was forced to emigrate a number of times moving from Syria to Jordan, then Syria again, then Beirut, then the Emirates, then again to Amman, Jordan where he resided till his death on 22 Jamadil-Akhir, 1420 H (2 October, 1999). His works—mainly in the field of *Ḥadīth* and its sciences number over 100.

His students are many and include many Shaykhs of the present day amongst them: Shaykh Ḥamdī ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Salafī, Shaykh Muḥammad ʿĪd ʿAbbāsī, Dr. ʿUmar Sulaīmān al-Ashqar, Shaykh Muḥammad Ibrahīm Shaqrah, Shaykh Muqbil Ibn Hadī al-Wadīʿī, Shaykh ʿAlī Khushshan, Shaykh Muḥammad Jamīl Zāinī, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿAbd al-Ṣamad, Shaykh ʿAlī Ḥasan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd al-Ḥalabī, Shaykh Salīm al-Hilālī and Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿAbd al-Khāliq.