

THE DĀR AL-ḤADĪTH AL-ASHRAFIYAH AND
SHAYKH BADR AL-DĪN AL-ḤASANĪ

THE DAR
AL-HADITH &
SHAYKH BADR
AL-DĪN AL-ḤASANĪ



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Introduction

The acquisition and imparting of Islamic knowledge is a religious obligation and an act of worship and the seeker of this knowledge is regarded as being on the path of Allah ﷻ. Over the centuries, this understanding and approach to knowledge has resulted in Muslims establishing amazing centres of knowledge that became beacons of scholarship and landmarks of the Islamic legacy. Some of these centres and institutions, that have gained the recognition of many, are the prestigious al-Qarawiyyīn in Fez, Morocco, that is over 1000 years old and was established by Fāṭimah al-Fihri in 859; and al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, which is also over 1000 years old and was established in 970.

There are other institutions about which many of us have very little or no knowledge, but we have most certainly heard about the scholars who were associated with these institutions. Almost every student of Islamic Studies has heard about Imām al-Nawawī and al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr. Have we wondered where such illustrious scholars were based and where they imparted their knowledge?

The following is an attempt to shed some light on one of these institutions and some of the scholars associated with it, with a special focus on Shaykh Badr al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī, one of the last scholars in this line of scholarship. Much of the information on this institution is based on the work of one of my esteemed teachers, Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Muṭī' al-Ḥāfiẓ, who is also a famous historian from Damascus.

We often speak and read about the great leaders like Nūr al-Dīn and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and other leaders who were affiliated to the Ayyūbī family. Not only were these men statesmen and military geniuses, they also patronized knowledge by building numerous institutions. One of these leaders was the noble king, Mūsā, known as al-Malik al-Ashraf. The city Damascus received their attention and scholarship flourished as a result. It is for this reason that the Andalusian scholar, Ibn Jubayr, who visited the city in 570 AH (1175 CE) said that there is no excuse for any student of knowledge

who fails to go to Damascus, because everything was easy, convenient and conducive to studying.

Al-Malik al-Ashraf built two institutions dedicated to the study of ḥadīth. The first one, Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Jawāniyah was for students of the Shāfiʿī madhhab. It opened in 630 AH (1233 CE) under the grand Shaykh Abū ʿAmr ibn al-Ṣalāḥ. The other one, Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyah, was for students of the Ḥanbalī madhhab. It was built in 634 AH (1237 CE) and its grand Shaykh was ʿAbdul Raḥmān ibn Abī ʿUmar al-Maqdisī. Al-Malik al-Ashraf was a righteous and sincere king, therefore, the effects of his work have remained to this day, in the form of historical mosques like Jāmiʿ al-Tawbah and the Dār al-Ḥadīth.

The Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyah was a special institution. It contained the blessed sandal of the Prophet Muḥammad. Illustrious scholars like Imām al-Nawawī and al-Subkī were affiliated to it. Many important reference books were authored in this institution. Therefore, it deserves our attention.

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn also deserves special attention because every aspect of his life was special. One would be amazed at his tarbiyah and self-discipline. His life functioned like clockwork. His ʿibādah (devotion) was awe-inspiring: his perpetual fasting, his ṣalāḥ and his dhikr. He was also blessed with many karāmāt. His knowledge was also phenomenal. This can be seen in the calibre of his students, as well as in his lessons that captured the attention of all those present. His character and personality was undoubtedly impeccable. His advice and contributions to society captured peoples' hearts. He also lived through the era of five Ottoman Sultans and played a vital role in the resistance against French colonisation. Thus, he was a complete and comprehensive personality who, in the words of some scholars, was a mujaddid (reviver) of the religion in his time.

This book aims to provide a brief introduction to the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyah and the scholars who served as Grand Shaykhs of the institution. It then focusses on the life of Shaykh Badr al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī by discussing his education, his teaching, his books, some of his students and some noteworthy incidents from his life.

Establishment of the Dār al-Ḥadīth

This institution is situated in the ‘Asrūniyah Market of Damascus. Construction began in the year 628 AH (1231 CE) and it was officially opened on the night of the 15th Sha’bān in 630 AH (1233 CE). According to historians like Ibn Kathīr, this area used to have a public bath. The king, Al-Malik al-Ashraf, purchased it and had the institution built in two years. The bath was demolished and a residence was constructed for the shaykh. The first grand Shaykh was Taqī al-Dīn ibn al-Ṣalāḥ. The king also allocated various endowments (awqāf) for this institution.

The king passed away in 635 AH (1237 CE). He was responsible for bringing the blessed sandal of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ to this place. (Ibn Kathīr 13/158, al-Ḥāfiẓ 2001:25-26).

The institution was a lovely, beautifully decorated building that had two rooms on either side, one on the right of the miḥrāb, wherein there were copies of the Qurān, and another room on the left, wherein the sandals of the Prophet were kept. A person was appointed to maintain and look after this room and the blessed sandals. He received a salary of about 40 dirhams. It was his responsibility to open this room on Mondays and Thursdays so that people could derive blessing by touching them. The historians mentioned that these blessed sandals had been in the possession of the noble wife of the Prophet ﷺ, Maymūnah bint al-Ḥārith al-Hilālīyah. After her death, they passed to her heirs until they eventually reached the children of Abū al-Ḥadīd. The sandals remained with them until the last person in the family passed away. He had 30 000 dirhams and the blessed sandals. His two sons decided that one of them would take the money, while the other would take the sandals. Al-Malik al-Ashraf eventually asked the latter permission to take some blessings from the sandal and even asked him to cut off a piece for him. Al-Malik al-Ashraf eventually agreed to give the owner of the sandal an entire village in exchange for it.

There is also a view that the person who had the sandal requested that it be given to al-Malik al-Ashraf after his death. Eventually, this king took over the region of Damascus where he built the Dār al-Ḥadīth and where he had the sandal placed in the room. It was placed in a special case with elaborate silk around it. It remained in the Dār al-Ḥadīth until Timurlane took the one (left foot) from the Dār al-Ḥadīth and the other (right foot) from al-Madrasah al-Dimāghiyah. (al-Hafiz 2001: 30-31).

According to a report compiled in 1990, the building comprised 18 rooms: 7 on the lower level and 11 on the upper level. It also had an ablution facility and a courtyard. It had a dome on the western side, a miḥrāb and a wooden pulpit. However, all that remains of the original structure is the plaque on which the waqf declaration is written.

Abū Shāmāh stated that in the year 637 AH (1240 CE) the institution was plundered by Shirkuwah and his army. He said that in 650 AH (1252 CE) the place had looked deserted. Ibn Kathīr also mentioned that in 699 AH (1300 CE) the Tartars catapulted and damaged various areas of the city, including the Dār al-Ḥadīth.

When the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyah was established, al-Malik al-Ashraf included a library that contained many important books and references for use by students. In addition, many of the shuyūkh who taught at the Dār al-Ḥadīth authored books that they endowed to the institution. It is mentioned that Imām al-Nawawī never used the salary that was assigned to him for his personal use. Instead, he purchased books with the money and endowed them to the institution. Furthermore, many scholars endowed their personal libraries to the institution.

As time passed, the state of this institution deteriorated. By 1200 AH (1786 CE), it was in a really bad state. It ended up in the control of a lady until Shaykh Yūsuf Badr al-Dīn al-Maghribī had arrived in 1260 AH (1844 CE). He loved the institution because of its illustrious history and was determined to revive it. When the lady heard about his intention, she rented the place to a Christian man who sold wine in a part of it. The Shaykh presented numerous proofs to the court to convince it that the place belonged to the Muslims. He was hoping to regain the rights to the institution without any fee, but his efforts were in vain. When Shaykh Yūsuf became somewhat despondent, he left Damascus and travelled to Constantinople (Istanbul) where he met Shaykh al-Islam, ‘Arif Ḥikmet Bik. Shaykh ‘Arif took a liking to the shaykh and even studied some Islamic texts under him. It was during this time that the leader, ‘Abdul Qādir al-Jazā’irī, was released and he settled in Damascus. In about 1265 AH (1849 CE) Shaykh Yūsuf returned to Damascus. ‘Abdul Qādir al-Jazā’irī bought the place with his own money and declared it a waqf for the Shaykh and his progeny.

In 1330 AH (1912 CE), a fire broke out in the market place behind the Dār al-Ḥadīth, resulting in a part of the institution being destroyed. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn's library was also affected and many of his manuscripts were burnt. Some well-wishers contributed to its renovation. In 1952 CE, Shaykh Maḥmūd Rankūsī worked tirelessly to renew and renovate the place and to establish an Islamic institution. He was assisted by some businessmen. They worked to try to organize the administration, teaching and facilities of the institution. Thus, a Sharī'ah primary school was established that included a boarding facility. It commenced with 15 students. All their needs were met and a group of doctors voluntarily provided medical care for the students. (al-Ḥāfiẓ 2001:46-50, 294).

Shaykh Abū al-Khayr al-Maydānī addressed the teachers and students twice a week. Shaykh Maḥmūd Rankūsī was the principal, although he also taught. Shaykh Maḥmūd had a general lesson that was attended by some students and businessmen. During these lessons, books like al-Targhīb wa al-Tarhīb; Ḥayāt al-Ṣaḥābah; Sirah Ibn Hishām; Arba'in al-Arba'in by al-Nabhānī; Marāqī al-Falāḥ; al-Ikhtiyār; al-Lubāb Zād al-Ma'ād; and Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī were taught.

After the demise of Shaykh Maḥmūd, the administration was taken over by Shaykh Ḥusayn Ṣa'biyah who graduated from Ma'had al-Fatḥ al-Islāmī and remained in the company of Shaykh Maḥmūd for about 18 years. Some of the graduates have gone on to become senior scholars. These graduates include: Shaykh Walī al-Dīn Farfūr (d. 1441 AH (2020 CE)), 'Abdul Ghanī al-Kharsah, and others.

Grand Shaykhs of the Dār al-Ḥadīth

Even though this institution was built hundreds of years ago, its administration was excellent and the standard of education was exemplary. The entire institution was declared a waqf by the king. The land and the properties around it or attached to it were also awqaf. The income they generated was utilized in some way to maintain the place.

After all the necessary maintenance requirements were taken care of, the remaining funds were utilized in the following manner:

The imam received 60 dirhams monthly and he was required to lead the five daily ṣalawāt and the tarāwīḥ in Ramaḍān, and to teach the correct recitation of the Qur'an. He was required to have memorized the seven qirā'āt.

The shaykh who was the muḥaddith received 90 dirhams monthly, while his family received 50 dirhams monthly as long as they lived.

The caretaker of the blessed sandal received 40 dirhams monthly and, after his death, this amount was given to his descendants as long as they continued to exist.

Every month 100 dirhams was allocated to 10 Qurrā who were specialists in the seven qirā'āt. Each received 10 dirhams, while the person assigned to read the ḥadīth was given 24 dirhams monthly.

The caretaker of the books was given 18 dirhams every month, while the mu'adhdhin received 20 dirhams, the door-keeper received 15 dirhams, and the two administrators received 30 dirhams. The shaykh was permitted to distribute the 30 dirhams between them according to their duties. If he felt that one administrator was enough, he could suffice with one.

An additional 1000 dirhams was allocated annually to be used for other necessary tasks.

Funds were allocated to buy paper, ink and other requirements for those responsible for transcribing the hadith and the Qur'an.

Some funds were allocated to those who wrote the lessons to be used for themselves and not as a means to make money.

Any excess funds, up to a maximum of 1200 dirhams, were spent on those dedicated to the study of hadith. Thus, if anyone memorized a book of ḥadīth, the shaykh was permitted to award him a prize. If someone appeared to be a promising, hardworking student, and it was hoped that he would become a good scholar, the shaykh could make arrangements for his support.

If a shaykh from outside the Levant visited the Dār al-Ḥadīth and he had a high chain of transmission that was sought after, he was permitted to stay in the Dār al-Ḥadīth and 2 dirhams were allocated to him daily. When he completed reading a book, he was given 30 dinars (1 dinar = 7 dirhams). If he resided within the greater Syria, and there was a need to bring him to the Dār al-Ḥadīth, he could be granted up to a maximum of 10 dinars.

If there was a need to spend more than what was stipulated, the shaykh could do so, drawing from the funds that were available in the waqf.

The administrator could arrange a meeting once every five nights and use the funds to purchase food and other necessities, like oil for the lamps, etc. The funds were also used to prepare food for the month of Ramaḍān for all those who resided within the Dār al-Ḥadīth. (al-Ḥāfiẓ 2001: 38-42).

One of the conditions stipulated when the Dār al-Ḥadīth was declared a waqf was that there ought to be scholars dedicated to teaching the Qur'an and the science of qirā'āt. The main Qārī was required to teach and supervise at least ten others who would master the seven qirā'āt. Many illustrious scholars of the Qur'an were affiliated to the Dār al-Ḥadīth. One of these was the renowned scholar, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Jazarī (d.833 AH (1430 CE)).

Anyone who was appointed to lead the five daily ṣalawāt and the tarāwīḥ was required to have memorized the Qur'an along with the seven qirā'āt. The first imām was Sharaf al-Dīn al-Sisī, who was a contemporary of Abū Shāmah and a student of Imām al-Sakhāwī.

One of the main requirements for any scholar to assume the position of grand shaykh was that he had to combine riwāyah and dirāyah. (Itr 1988: 30-34). The term 'riwāyah' refers to the science that deals with the narration, precision and wording of the Prophet Muḥammad's statements, his actions, his tacit approvals and his descriptions. Some scholars have included statements, etc. that are attributed to the Ṣaḥābah and the tābi'in. This science also involves a study of the chain of transmission to establish whether the narration is authentic or not.

The term 'dirāyah' refers to the science that is also known as 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth or Usūl al-Ḥadīth or 'Ilm al-Ḥadīth. This science deals with the

details regarding the chain of transmission (sanad) and the text (matn). It involves knowledge of the narrators and whether the sanad is continuous or broken and thus the scholar is able to determine whether the narration is acceptable or not.

The following discussion enumerates the most prominent Grand Shaykhs of the Dār al-Ḥadīth and some of their written works, and describes some of the lessons that were conducted there. When al-Malik al-Ashraf officially opened the doors of the Dār al-Ḥadīth in 630 AH (1233 CE), he appointed the erudite scholar, Shaykh Abū ‘Amr ibn al-Ṣalāh as the Grand Shaykh. His successor had to be a scholar who combined riwāyah and dirāyah.

About one month after the Dār al-Ḥadīth had opened its doors, a prominent scholar, al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Mubārak al-Zabīdī (d. 631 AH (1234 CE)) arrived in Damascus. He was a guest of al-Malik al-Ashraf who heard the entire Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī from him within a few days. Thereafter, the king accommodated him at the Dār al-Ḥadīth and people flocked to hear him read Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, especially after they had heard about his high chain of transmission. Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥajjār, one of his famous students, heard Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī from him. It was from the latter that countless people from the Levant and Egypt heard Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī in around 730 AH (1330 CE). This means that a hundred years had passed between him having heard the book from al-Zabīdī and transmitting it to others.

Ibn al-Ṣalāh (d. 643 AH (1246 CE)) authored and even dictated his book, ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth, at the Dār al-Ḥadīth. He commenced it in Ramaḍān 630 AH (1233 CE) and completed it in Muḥarram 634 AH (1237 CE). He read and taught Sunan al-Kubrā by Imām al-Bayhaqī in 757 sittings and completed the book in 635 AH (1238 CE). The classes on the 8th volume were attended by 93 scholars of ḥadīth (muḥaddith) who heard it over a duration of 90 sittings. (Abū Ghuddah 1992:103). The following details have been preserved: the names of the people who heard the book and their conditions; those who did not miss a single session; those who attended but spoke during the reading; those who used to write; those who fell asleep during the reading; the place where the reading took place; and Ibn al-Ṣalāh’s handwriting, which serves as testimony and approval of the gathering and the precision of the scholar. These gatherings varied in length depending on the Shaykh, his time and the extent of the discussions that followed the recitation.

Abū Shāmah (d. 665 AH (1267 CE)), who authored Sharḥ al-Shāṭibiyah, al-Rawḍatayn fī Akhbār al-Dawlatayn, al-Bā’ith ‘alā inkār al-Bidah’ wa al-Ḥawādith, and other books, described his first lesson at the Dār al-Ḥadīth. He said that Qāḍī Ibn Khalikān and other scholars and dignitaries from the city attended on the first day. He said it was a magnificent gathering

enveloped by peace and the attentiveness of those present. He cited the opening khuṭbah of his book, entitled al-Mab'ath, along with the ḥadīth and its chain of transmission and numerous lessons derived from it.

Imām al-Nawawī (d. 676 AH (1278 CE)) taught both Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Muslim at the Dār al-Ḥadīth, along with a portion of Sunan Abī Dāwūd, al-Risālah al-Qushayriyah, Ṣafwat al-Tasawwuf, al-Ḥujjat 'alā Tarīk al-Maḥajjah by Naṣr al-Maqdisī, and Sharḥ Ma'ānī al-Athār by al-Ṭaḥawī.

The righteous scholar, Imām al-Fāriqī (d. 703 AH (1304 CE)) must also be mentioned for his efforts in renewing the Dār after the incidents that occurred in 699 AH (1300 CE).

Ibn al-Wakīl (d. 716 AH (1316 CE)) read and taught parts of Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim.

Imām al-Zamalkānī (d. 727 AH (1327 CE)) also taught. He is the author of a book entitled al-Amal al-Maqbūl fi Ziyārat al-Rasūl, which is a critique of the work of Ibn Taymiyah.

Imām al-Mizzī (d. 742 AH (1342 CE)) taught in the Dār and also held the position of Grand Shaykh. He authored and taught the books, Tahdhīb al-Kamāl and al-Aṭrāf. His wife assisted him by teaching the women and children in the Dār.

The learned Shāfi'ī scholar, Imām Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī, also taught at the Dār. Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn (d. 842 AH (1439 CE)) also served as a Grand Shaykh. Another famous scholar, Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH (1373 CE)), who was a student and son-in-law of Imām al-Mizzī, also taught many books at the Dār.

Some prominent and renowned scholars from Egypt served as teachers at the Dār al-Ḥadīth. They included Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, al-Balqīnī, Ibn Jamā'ah, and Ibn Ḥajr al-'Asqalānī.

From time to time, various sessions were held during which books of ḥadīth were recited. The gatherings were attended by the senior scholars of Damascus, the scholars of the Dār and even children, so that they could attain a strong chain of transmission. However, after the 10th century AH, a number of fuqahā assumed the role of head Shaykhs and thus the study of ḥadīth decreased. This continued until it was revived by Shaykh Yūsuf and 'Abdul Qādir al-Jazā'irī.

The scholars who assumed the position of Grand Shaykh of the Dār al-Ḥadīth were:

- Abū 'Amr ibn al-Ṣalāh. He served in this role for about 13 years. He passed away in his home at the Dār in 643 AH (1246 CE) and the ṣalāh al-Janā'azah was performed in the Umayyad Mosque.
- 'Imād al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad 'Abdul Karīm ibn Qāḍī Jamāl al-Dīn Abī al-Qāsim 'Abdul Ṣamad al-Harastānī (d. 662 AH (1264 CE)). He was buried on Mount Qasyūn in Damascus.

- Abū al-Qāsim ‘Abdul Raḥmān ibn Ismā’īl al-Maqdisī (Abū Shāmah) (d. 665 AH (1267 CE)). He was buried outside the al-Farādīs Gate of Damascus. He studied under Ibn Qudāmah (d. 620 AH (1223 CE)), Fakhr al-Dīn Ibn ‘Asākir (d. 620 AH (1223 CE)), ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Sakhāwī (d. 643 AH (1246 CE)), and Sayf al-Āmidī (d. 631 AH (1234 CE)).
- Muḥyī al-Dīn Abū Zakariyā al-Nawawī (d. 676 AH (1278 CE)). He displayed signs of piety and brilliance from a young age. He was about 19 years old when he was taken by his father to Damascus to study. He completed twelve lessons every day with his shuyūkh, He authored a number of books, including Sharḥ Muslim, Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn, al-Adhkār, Sharḥ al-Muhadhdhab, and others.
- Zayn al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad ‘Abdullah ibn Marwān al-Fāriqī (d. 703 AH (1304 CE)). One of his teachers was the female scholar, Karīmah. He was buried in his family graveyard in al-Ṣāliḥiyah.
- Ṣadr al-Dīn Abū ‘Abdullah Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Wakīl (d. 716 AH (1316 CE)). He was renowned for his amazing skill and ability in research, along with his exceptional wit and memory. He passed away in Cairo. He engaged in interesting debates with Ibn Taymiyah.
- Kamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Ma’ālī Muḥammad ibn al-Zamalkānī (d. 727 AH (1327 CE)). He served as a Qāḍī in Aleppo and was summoned to Egypt by the Sultan. He died before reaching Egypt but was buried in Cairo. He authored some books in response to Ibn Taymiyah with regard to visiting the Messenger of Allah and on divorce.
- Kamāl al-Dīn Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad Kamāl al-Dīn Abī Bakr al-Sharīshī (d. 718 AH (1318 CE)). He served this institution for 8 years. He was a Shāfi’ī scholar, although his father was a famous Mālikī scholar. He passed away on his way to perform Ḥajj.
- Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf ibn al-Zakī ‘Abdul Raḥmān al-Mizzī (d. 742 AH (1342 CE)). He served in this position for about 25 years. Ibn Kathīr described his illness and his demise. The ṣalāh al-janāzah was led by Imām Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī and he was buried next to the grave of Ibn Taymiyyah. He was an amazing scholar. Al-Subkī said that a reader would read ahādīth to him the whole day, with different chains of transmission and different narrators, and he never made a mistake and was never inattentive. Scholars like al-Subkī, al-Birzālī, al-Dhahabī and Ibn Taymiyyah narrated from him. The Ḍāhiriyyah

Library in Damascus had a copy of a register containing details of a ḥadīth reading of Sunan al-Daārqutṭnī under the supervision of Imām al-Mizzī that took place in 737 AH (1337 CE). It was conducted over 20 sittings and the register contains the names of the scholars and students who attended. Some of the sittings were attended by Imām al-Mizzī's wife, Ḥabībah. (al-Ḥāfiẓ 2001: 115).

- Taqī al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn ‘Abdul Kāfi al-Subkī (d. 756 AH (1355 CE)). He assumed the position after al-Mizzī. There were two candidates, al-Subkī and al-Dhahabī. It was agreed that al-Subkī be appointed because it was certain that he was Ash‘arī, while there was some doubt about al-Dhahabī. Towards the end of his life, he returned to Egypt where he passed away. He served as a teacher in Egypt, and a teacher and judge in Damascus.
- His son, Tāj al-Dīn Abū Naṣr ‘Abdul Wahhāb al-Subkī (d. 771 AH (1370 CE)). He went to Damascus with his father. He studied under many scholars, including Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-Jazarī, Zaynab bint al-Kamāl and Fāṭimah bint al-‘Izz. Shams al-Dīn Ibn al-Naqīb granted him ijāzah to teach and pronounce fatāwā when he was only 18 years old. He was imprisoned for about 80 days after which he returned to Egypt. He returned to Damascus and assumed various roles as khaṭīb, qāḍī and teacher.
- His brother, Abū Ḥāmid Aḥmad ibn al-Subkī (d. 773 AH (1372 CE)). He taught at numerous institutions in Damascus and studied under many scholars. He performed ḥajj and ‘umrah many times. He passed away in Makkah and is buried in al-Ma‘allā.
- His brother, Tāj al-Dīn. He assumed the role for a second time until he was removed and imprisoned.
- Sirāj al-Dīn al-Bulqīnī (d. 805 AH (1403 CE)) He arrived from Egypt. He had studied there extensively and received ijāzah from al-Mizzī and al-Dhahabī. He studied with Abū Ḥayyān and al-Bahā ibn ‘Aqīl. He taught at numerous institutions and even assumed the position of qāḍī in Damascus.
- Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (assuming the role for a third time).
- Jamāl al-Islām ‘Imād al-Dīn Abū al-Fidā Ismāīl ibn ‘Umar ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH (1373 CE)). He studied under many renowned scholars, among them Qāḍī Ibn Shahbah. He also studied under al-Mizzī and

Ibn Taymiyyah. He was an exceptional scholar who also authored many books in tafsīr, ḥadīth and history.

- Kamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim ‘Umar ibn ‘Uthmān al-Ma’arrī (d. 783 AH (1381 CE)). He served as a qāḍī in various cities, such as Tripoli and Aleppo. He heard a substantial amount of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī from Ibn al-Shiḥnah.
- Bahā al-Dīn Abū al-Baqā Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdul Barr Sadīd al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 777 AH (1376 CE)). He grew up in Egypt where he studied and taught. Thereafter he moved to Damascus with Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī. He served as a qāḍī in Egypt and in Syria. He served the Dār al-Ḥadīth for a little more than 2 years. He was buried on the Qāsyūn.
- His son, Walī al-Dīn Abū Dhar ‘Abdullah ibn Muḥammad al-Subkī (d.785 AH (1383 CE)). He was born in Cairo where he studied and thereafter moved to Damascus where he studied under Abū al-‘Abbās al-Jazarī, Zaynab bint al-Kamāl and al-Mizzī. He also served as a qāḍī in Egypt and in Syria. He is buried on the Qāsyūn.
- Burhān al-Dīn Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abdul Raḥīm ibn Jamā’ah (d.790 AH (1388 C.E)). He was born in Cairo and served as a khaṭīb in al-Quds and studied under many scholars including al-Mizzī and al-Dhahabī. He also served as a qāḍī for some time. He is said to have compiled a tafsīr of about 10 volumes.
- Sarī al-Dīn Abū al-Khaṭṭāb Muḥammad ibn Jamāl al-Dīn al-Sulamī (d.799 AH (1397 CE)). He was the grandson of Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī. He served in this position for 9 months until he was removed by al-Nāsirī.
- Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn Zayn al-Dīn Abū Ḥafs ‘Umar ibn Muslim al-Qurashī (d.793 AH (1391 CE)). He taught in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. He travelled to Cairo and returned to Damascus where he served as a qāḍī.
- His father, Zayn al-Dīn al-Qurashī (d. 792 AH (1390 CE)). He served as a mufti and taught at various institutions. He passed away in prison.
- Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr al-Qaysī ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn (d. 842 AH (1439 CE)). He was an excellent scholar who taught and authored various books, including al-Mawlid al-Nabawī in three parts, Iftitāḥ al-Qārī

li Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, and others. He is buried in al-Farādīs near his father's grave.

- Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Ismā'īl al-Ḥisbānī (d.815 AH (1412 CE)). Some of the scholars complained about him. Thereafter, he left his position and went to al-Quds and thereafter to Egypt. He returned to Damascus where he passed away.
- 'Alā al-Dīn 'Alī ibn 'Uthmān al-Şayrafī (d.844 AH (1441 CE)). He studied in Damascus under al-Bulqīnī and al-Irāqī and other scholars. He authored some books, including Natā'ij al-Fikr fi Tartīb Masā'il al-Minhāj 'alā al-Mukhtaşar.
- Aḥmad ibn 'Alī ibn Ḥajr al-'Asqalānī (d.852 AH (1448 CE)), the renowned Shāfi'i scholar and specialist in ḥadīth. He was born in Cairo and spent some time in Makkah, benefiting from its scholars. He spent about 100 days in Damascus during which a great amount of ḥadīth was read to him. He authored more than 150 works and passed away in Cairo.
- Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Khaydarī (d.894 AH (1489 CE)). He was from Damascus and studied there. Assuming the role as head teacher of the Dār al-Ḥadīth after Ibn al-Şayrafī, he was known for his memory and intelligence. He passed away in Cairo.
- Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Winā'ī (d.849 AH (1445 CE)). He was a Shāfi'i scholar who had memorized various texts, including Jamu' al-Jawāmi' and Alfiyat Ibn Mālik. He served as a qāḍī in Cairo and in Damascus, and taught in a number of institutions, including the Dār al-Ḥadīth.
- Najm al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Khaydarī (born in 862 AH). He was a scholar from Damascus who taught at Al-Azhar in Cairo. He served the Dār al-Ḥadīth as well. Ibn Tūlon described a ḥadīth reading that took place with Najm al-Dīn al-Khaydarī in 904 AH (1499 CE) during which the ḥadīth al-musalsal bi al-awwaliyah and selections from about 70 books were read in the presence of many senior scholars.
- 'Abdullah ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ba'li, Ibn al-Sharā'iḥī (d.820 AH (1417 CE)). He was from Ba'labak and travelled to Damascus and Cairo. He assumed the role as a teacher at the Dār al-Ḥadīth.

- Ḥusayn ibn ‘Abdullah al-Sāmīrī (d. 831 AH (1428 CE)). He taught at the Dār al-Ḥadīth for a while.
- Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-‘Uthmānī, Ibn al-Mat harrah (d.840 AH (1437 CE)). He was a Shāfi’ī scholar from Cairo who studied with scholars like Ibn al-Mulaqqin and al-Bulqīnī. He taught at the Dār al-Ḥadīth and at al-Ṣalāḥiyah in al-Quds.
- Maḥmūd al-Tamīmī. He was a Shāfi’ī scholar who taught at the Dār al-Ḥadīth for a while.
- ‘Alī ibn Ismā’īl, commonly known as Ibn ‘Imād al-Dīn, (d.971 AH (1564 CE)). He studied under Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqā’ī. He also studied the qirā’āt under Taqī al-Dīn al-Qārī, and tafsīr and Arabic with Ibn Tūlon and various other scholars. He taught at numerous institutions, including the Dār al-Ḥadīth.
- Abū al-Faṭḥ Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ribī’ al-Mālīkī (d.975 AH (1568 CE)). He was of Tunisian origin but came to Damascus in his youth. He visited the grave of Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn ‘Arabī frequently. He served the Dār al-Ḥadīth even though he was a Mād likī scholar.
- Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Aḥmad al-Ṭībī al-Muqrī (d.979 AH (1572 CE)). He was a specialist in the qirā’āt and the other sciences. He taught at the Umayyad Mosque for more than 30 years, and also served as a teacher at the Dār al-Ḥadīth.
- Ismā’īl ibn Aḥmad al-Nābulī (d. 993 AH (1585 CE)). He was a Shāfi’ī scholar and mufti from Damascus. He was proficient in Persian and Turkish. He authored books such as Ḥāshiyat ‘alā Mughnī al-Labīb, Ḥāshiyat ‘alā Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī and Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn. He taught at a number of institutions, including the Dār al-Ḥadīth.
- Muḥammad al-Ḥijāzī (d. 1020 AH (1611 CE)). He studied under the scholars in Makkah, Madinah and Damascus, and taught at the Dār al-Ḥadīth.
- ‘Abdul Ḥaqq ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥijāzī (d. 1020 AH (1611 CE)). He studied under his father and a few other scholars, and excelled in the rational sciences. He passed away about 21 days after his father.
- Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Maydānī (d. 1033 AH (1624 CE)). He studied under many scholars, including Ismā’īl al-‘Ajlūnī. He travelled

to Egypt where he remained for approximately 9 years. He returned to Damascus where he taught at the Dār al-Ḥadīth.

- ‘Abdul Ḥayy ibn ‘Abdul Bāqī al-Muḥibbī (d. 1073 AH (1663 CE)).
- ‘Abdul Qādir ibn Muṣṭafā al-Ṣafūrī (d.1081 AH (1671 CE)). He was also an accomplished Shāfi’i scholar. He travelled to Egypt where he benefited from the scholars. Upon returning to Damascus, he taught at various places, including the Dār al-Ḥadīth.
- ‘Abdul Qādir ibn Bahā al-Dīn, Ibn ‘Abdul Hādī (d.1100 AH (1689 CE)). He was a Shāfi’i scholar who excelled in fiqh and uṣūl al-dīn. Moreover, he was proficient in the natural sciences and mathematics. He authored a number of books and travelled with Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān al-Maghribī al-Sūsī to Rome. He returned to Damascus and taught at the Dār al-Ḥadīth.
- Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Kāmīlī (d. 1131 AH (1719 CE)). He taught at the Dār al-Ḥadīth and also delivered his public sermons in the mosque.
- Sa’dī ibn ‘Abdul Qādir al-‘Umarī (d. 1147 AH (1735 CE)). He was from Damascus and received ijāzah from Shaykh ‘Abdul Ghanī al-Nābulṣī. He also taught at the Dār al-Ḥadīth.
- Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-‘Imādī (d. 1167 AH (1754 CE)). He was the mufti of Damascus and also taught at the Dār al-Ḥadīth.
- Yūsuf al-Maghribī al-Ḥasanī (d. 1279 AH (1862 CE)). His lineage is linked to the righteous scholar, ‘Abdul ‘Azīz al-Ṭabbā. He was born in al-Maghrib and raised in Egypt where he studied under its scholars, including Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Bājūrī, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣāwī (d. 1241 AH (1826 CE)), ‘Abdullah al-Sharqāwī (d. 1227 AH (1812 CE)), and Muḥammad al-Amīr al-Saghīr (d. 1253 AH (1837 CE)). He lived in Madīnah and Makkah for a while, and benefited from scholars like Zayn al-‘Ābidīn Jamāl al-Layl Bā ‘Alawī (d. 1235 AH (1820 CE)) and Shaykh ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-Rasūl al-‘Aṭṭār (d. 1247 AH (1832 CE)) respectively. Thereafter he travelled to Damascus, where he studied under Shaykh Sa’īd al-Ḥalabī, ‘Abdurrahmān al-Kuzbarī (d 1262 AH (1846 CE)), Muḥammad ‘Ābidīn (d. 1252 AH (1836 CE)), the author of al-Ḥāshiyat, and others. He had two sons, namely Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn and Aḥmad Bahā al-Dīn (d. 1329 AH (1911 CE)).

He authored a few books, including a commentary on Mawlid al-Ddiyir entitled Faṭḥ al-Qadīr. He composed several poems, in

cluding a poem on Durrat al-Ghawwās by al-Ḥarīrī; one entitled Fann al-Rasm al-‘Arabī; and another entitled al-Taḥdīth ‘an Nāzilāt Dār al-Ḥadīth, which was about 400 verses in length. He granted ijāzah to many scholars, including Shaykh Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdul Ghani ‘Ābidīn (d. 1307 AH (1890 CE)) and Shaykh Abū al-Khayr ‘Ābidīn (d. 1343 AH (1925 CE)).

In Madinah, he composed a qaṣīdah known as al-Ṭawassuliyah in praise of the Prophet Muḥammad. It begins with the following:

اليك رسول الله وجهت وجهتي
لأنك باب الله في أي محنة

وأنت ملاذ العارفين بأسرهم
إذا ما استغاثوا سيما يوم حسرة

*Ilayka Rasūlullah wajjahtu wijhati
li annaka bābullah fī ayyi miḥnat*

*Wa anta malādh al-‘Ārifin bi asrihim
idha ma istaghāthū simā yawm ḥasrat*

To you Rasūlullah I direct myself
Because you are the door to Allah in every calamity

And you are the safe haven of all the gnostics
whenever they seek help, especially on a heartbreaking day”

Shaykh Yūsuf came into contact with Sultan Maḥmūd II through his friend, Shaykh ‘Ārif Ḥikmet. When the Sultan requested a teacher to teach Arabic to his son, ‘Abdul Majīd, Shaykh ‘Ārif chose Shaykh Yūsuf. It was Shaykh Yūsuf who took on the task of reviving the Dār al-Ḥadīth along with his friend, ‘Abdul Qādir al-Jazā’irī. After great efforts, they resumed teaching at this illustrious institution in 1274 AH (1858 CE). His son, Badr al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī, is the focus of this book.

- ‘Abdul Qādir al-Jazā’irī (d.1300 AH (1883 CE)). He was born and studied in Algeria. He is said to have memorized most of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. He took the Naqshbandī Order from Shaykh Khālīd al-Naqshbandī. Along with his father, he fought the French and reF

sisted their efforts to colonize the country. The French betrayed him and he spent some time in prison. He eventually went to Paris with his family. Thereafter he went to Turkey where he met Sultan ‘Abdul Majīd. Eventually, he decided to settle in Damascus. Along with Shaykh Yūsuf, he assumed the task of reviving the Dār al-Ḥadīth. He purchased the land from the Christian man and declared it a waqf in 1272 AH (1856 CE). On the first of Rajab 1274 AH (1858 CE), he conducted the first class on Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī at the Dār al-Ḥadīth, and completed the book on the last day of Ramadān. In 1279 AH (1863 CE), ‘Abdul Qādir performed ḥajj with Shaykh ‘Abdul Ghani al-Maydānī and Shaykh Salīm Ḥamzah. He took the Shādhilī Order from Shaykh Muḥammad al-Fāsī in Makkah. He visited Turkey in 1281 AH (1865 CE), and met Sultan ‘Abdul ‘Azīz.

- ‘Abdul Ḥakīm ibn Muḥammad Nūr al-Afghānī (d.1326 AH (1908 CE)). He was born in Kandahar, Afghanistan, and set out at an early age to acquire knowledge. He travelled to India, Makkah, Madinah, and al-Quds, and finally settled in Damascus. He lived in a modest room at the Dār al-Ḥadīth. Known for his piety and abstinence, he disliked fame and spent almost all his time engaged in worship, study, teaching and writing. He authored a few books, including a commentary to Kanz al-Daqa’iq. Shaykh Abū al-Khayr al-Maydānī, Shaykh Abū al-Khayr al-Tabbā’ and Shaykh Maḥmūd al-‘Aṭṭār are among his famous students.
- Aḥmad Bahā al-Dīn ibn Yūsuf al-Ḥasanī (d.1330 AH (1912 CE)). He was the brother of Shaykh Badr al-Dīn. He studied under the scholars in Damascus, including his brother. He was closely attached to Shaykh Īsā al-Kurdī al-Naqshbandī (d. 1331 AH (1913 CE)) and taught at the Dār al-Ḥadīth.
- Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn ibn Yūsuf al-Ḥasanī. His bibliography is set out in detail below.

Scholars' descriptions of the blessed sandal and the Dār al-Ḥadīth

Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Rashīd al-Fihrī (d. 721 AH (1321 CE)) visited the Dār al-Ḥadīth. After seeing and touching the blessed sandal, he composed the following lines of poetry:

هنيئا لعيني أن رأّت نعل أحمد
فيا سعد جدي قد ظفرت بمقصدي

وقبلته أشفي الغليل فزادني
فيا عجبا زاد الظمأ عند موردي

ولله ذاك اليوم عيدا و معلما
بمطلعه أرخت مولد أسعدي

عليه صلاة نشرها طيب كما
يجب ويرضى ربنا لمحمد

*Hanīan li ‘aynī an ra’at na’l Aḥmad
fa yā Sa’d qad ẓafartu bi maqṣidī*

*Wa qabbaltuhu ashfī al-ghalīl fa zādani
fa yā ‘ajaban zād al-ẓama’ ‘inda mawridī*

*Wa Allahi dhāk al-yawm idan wa ma’laman
bi maṭla’ihi arakhta mawlid as’adī*

*Alayhi ṣalātun nashruhā ṭibun kamā
yajib wa yardā Rabbunā li Muḥammad*

Congratulations to my eye for having seen the sandal of Ahmad
O Saʿd I successfully attained my goal

And I kissed it and cured my ailment and it increased me
increased the thirst at the water hole

By Allah that day is an Īd
by the break of its dawn

Upon him are salutations
Just like our Lord loves and is pleased for Muhammad”

Imām Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 756 AH (1355 CE)) lived in the Dār al-Ḥadīth in 742 AH (1342 CE). He used to go out at night to perform tahajjud, and liked to rub his face on the place where Imām al-Nawawī sat while conducting his lessons.

Imam al-Subki said:

وفي دار الحديث لطيف معنى
على بسط لها أصبو و اوي
عسى أني أمس بجر وجهي
مكانا مسه قدم النووي

*Wa fi Dār al-Ḥadīth laṭīf ma'nā
'alā baṣṭ lahā aṣbū wa awā*

*'asā annī amuss bi ḥur wajhī
makānan massahu qadam al-nawāwī*

There is a subtle meaning in the Dār al-Ḥadīth
I crawl on its floors

Perhaps the warmth of my face could touch
a place that was touched by al-Nawawī's feet

(al-Subki 8/395-400)

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn

This section draws on the following sources:

- Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyah bī Dimashq by Dr. Muḥammad Muṭī'i al-Ḥāfiẓ.
- Al-'Iqd al-Farīd al-Jāmi' li Mutafarriqāt al-Asānīd by Shaykh 'Abdul Wāsi' al-Wāsi'ī.
- Rijāl min al-Tārīkh by Shaykh 'Alī al-Ṭanṭawī.
- Al-'Allāmah al-Dā'iyah wa al-Muṣliḥ al-Ijtimāi' al-Muḥaddith al-Akbar Shaykh Badr al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī by Māzin al-Mubārak.
- Tarjamāt al-Shaykh Badr al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī by Shaykh Maḥmūd al-'Aṭṭār.
- Al-Durar al-Lu'lu'iyah fi al-Nu'ūt al-Badriyah by Shaykh Maḥmūd Rankūsī.
- Al-Muḥaddith al-Akbar kamā 'Araftuhu by Ṣāliḥ al-Farfūr.
- Personal communications with my honourable and dear teacher, Shaykh Muḥammad Abū al-Hudā al-Yaḳūbī, who is from Damascus.

Genealogy and birth

His full name is Muhammad Badr al-Dīn ibn Yūsuf ibn Badr al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī al-Maghribī. His lineage connects with the righteous Shaykh 'Abdul 'Azīz al-Tabbā' and goes through him to Sayyidinā al-Ḥasan, the grandson of the Prophet Muḥammad (al-Ḥāfiẓ 2001: 222). Shaykh al-Tabbā' was a student of Shaykh al-Jazūlī, the compiler of Dalā'il al-Khayrāt. The family migrated from Marrakesh in Morocco (al-Maghrib) to Egypt and eventually settled in Damascus, Syria.

He was born in his father's home adjacent to the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyah in 1267 AH (1850 CE). His parents were righteous people. His father, Shaykh Yūsuf (d. 1279 AH (1862 CE)) was an erudite scholar who studied extensively with many scholars in Egypt, Makkah, Madinah, Baghdad and Tunisia, and was instrumental in reviving the Dār al-Ḥadīth. He conducted a lesson in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus.

His mother, ʿĀishah bint Ibrāhīm ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Kuzbarī, was a virtuous woman whose lineage was also linked to the Prophet Muḥammad. Members of her family were known to have memorized ḥadīth and some were renowned teachers in the Umayyad Mosque.

When Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn was born, his father took him to Shaykh Muḥammad Ḍabyān al-Kaylānī (d. 1288 AH (1871 CE)) to complete the taḥnīk and to call the adhān in his ear.

Education

His father was very particular about his upbringing and education, so he taught him the basics, including reading, writing, elementary mathematics, and memorisation of the Qurʾān. He memorized the Qurʾān when he was about 7 years old. When his father sensed that his death was close, he said: "I leave you to Allah, O Badr al-Dīn". He was about 12 years old when his father passed away. Thereafter, he was raised and looked after by his mother and his maternal uncle, Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Kuzbarī.

He practically confined himself to his father's room, which was attached to his home, where he read profusely and memorized extensively. He acquainted himself with Shaykh Abū al-Khayr al-Khaṭīb (d. 1308 AH (1891 CE)) who guided him and advised him to memorise Alfiyah in Arabic grammar, al-Shāṭibiyah, Alfiyah al-Ḥadīth by al-ʿIrāqī, and other didactic texts. During this period, he memorized about 12,000 verses of poetry in different subjects. Shaykh Maḥmūd Rankūsī was of the view that he memorized 20,000 verses. Shaykh Muṣṭafā al-Shaṭṭī, the mufti of Doma, went with his father to visit Shaykh Abū al-Khayr al-Khaṭīb. They saw a young boy facing the qiblah. Shaykh Abū al-Khayr asked them if they knew the young boy. They replied that the boy was none other than Shaykh Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn, the son of Shaykh Yūsuf, who was 12 years old and had already memorized 12,000 verses of poetry in the different sciences.

Thereafter, his teacher occupied him with the commentaries and explanations of these verses. He excelled but at the same time preferred isolation from as young as 13 years old. Some say he isolated himself for about 7 years, while others claim it was 10 years, and yet others say it was 17 years. These different time spans could refer to two periods of isolation, as some

biographers and scholars have said. The first probably commenced when he was about 18 years old. During this period, he memorized Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Muslim with the chains of transmission. Some say that he had possibly memorized all the six books of hadith along with the chains of transmission. Shaykh Maḥmūd Rankūsī was of the view that he memorized al-Muwaṭṭāʾ of Imām Mālik and Musnad of Imām Aḥmad as well. He knew the details of the narrators as well. He authored his commentary to Ghurāmī Ṣaḥīḥ before he was 20 years old. Furthermore, he read the commentaries on these books and memorized a large amount of poetry. He wrote comments on whatever he read.

Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Saqqā (d. 1298 AH (1881 CE)) from Egypt is also regarded as one of his important teachers. He mentioned Shaykh Ibrāhīm when giving ijāzah to others. His other teachers include: Shaykh ʿAbdul Qādir ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Khaṭīb (d. 1288 AH (1871 CE)) and Shaykh Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī al-ʿAdawī (1303 AH (1886 CE)).

Teaching

He began teaching during his period of isolation from the young age of 15. His lessons may be divided into three categories:

1. The lessons conducted in the mosques. He taught ḥadīth on Sunḍay and Thursday nights between Maghrib and ʿIsha. In 1298 AH (1881 CE), he was given the official task of teaching at the Umayyad Mosque, and these lessons continued for about 56 years. The classes reminded people of the glorious days of the past when the illustrious scholars had taught. Shaykh Badr had a profound impact on his audience, and he was able to relate the topic of the lesson to contemporary situations.
2. His special lessons - specialized academic gatherings for a small number of students. They began with the Arabic language, fiqh, usūl al-Fiqh, mathematics, algebra, astronomy, engineering and chemistry. He often taught complex and difficult texts, like Ḥāshiyat al-Izmirī ʿalā al-Mirʿāt, Ḥāshiyat ʿalā al-Talwiḥ; al-Muṭawwal by Maṣʿūd al-Taftazānī (d. 792 AH (1390 CE)), which is a commentary of Talkhīṣ al-Miftāḥ by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī (d. 739 AH (1339 CE)); Ḥāshiyat ʿalā Sharḥ al-Nasafiyah by al-Khiyālī; Tahrīr al-Qawāʿid al-Manṭiqiyah fi Sharḥ al-Shamsiyah by Quṭb al-Dīn al-Tahtānī (d. 766 AH (1365 CE)); al-Ishārāt by Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 766 AH (1365 CE)), and other books. These books were part of the curriculum that was taught by illustrious scholars like Shaykh Bakrī al-ʿAṭṭār

(d. 1320 AH (1902 CE)) and Shaykh Salīm al-‘Aṭṭār (d. 1307 AH (1889 CE)). These lessons prepared the next generation of scholars who would serve Islam and the community. Some of his students were: Shaykh Bahjat al-Bayṭār; Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Farfūr; Shaykh Muḥammad al-Mubārak; Shaykh Mahmūd Rankūsī; Shaykh Ḥāshim; and ‘Abdurrahmān and Suhayl al-Khaṭīb. Some students were fortunate to have individual and private lessons with him. They were Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Īd al-Ḥalabī, Shaykh ‘Abdul Wahhāb dībs wa zayt, and Shaykh ‘Abdul Karīm al-Rifā’ī.

3. Public lessons conducted from his home accommodating about 50 people. These lessons aimed to prepare society to deal with modern challenges. They commenced after Maghrib and ended a short while after ‘Ishā. One of the students read from a book and the Shaykh explained the text. He welcomed questions and answered them with in-depth explanations. These lessons were very popular and anyone who visited Damascus endeavoured to attend them. Some of the scholars from other countries attended these lessons while scholars like Shaykh Muḥammad Bakhīt al-Mutī’ī (Mufti of Egypt), Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Abduh (Egypt) and Shaykh Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (Egypt) may have attended his lesson after ‘Asr.

He had a loud voice which drew people to his lessons and within a short space of time, all the other lessons ceased and everyone had gathered around him. He spoke in a clear and eloquent tone. When he sensed that there were some who may have been envious of him, he abandoned these lessons and withdrew to his room and was never seen outside for about 7 years. During this period, he read and memorized extensively.

After he reached the age of 30, he began conducting public lessons at the Jāmi’ al-Sadāt. He narrated a ḥadīth from al-Bukhārī from memory along with its chains of transmission. When the crowd became too large, this lesson was moved to Jāmi’ Sinān Bāshā.

On Monday and Friday nights, he taught from Maghrib until ‘Ishā. When the place became too congested, the lesson was moved to the Umayyad Mosque. The first lesson there took place in 1292 AH (1875 CE), and he commenced with the first ḥadīth from Ṣāḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. People were amazed at his vast knowledge during this lesson, which included a very useful introduction to the science of ḥadīth. Thereafter, he dealt with the commentary and explanation that covered the rational and transmitted sciences. He discussed the laws relating to the hadīth and he cited the views of the different madhabs regarding the application of the principles of law (uṣūl al-fiqh). He even discussed aspects of language, tafsīr, tawḥīd and

philosophy. If there was a need, he included medical and mathematical facts relevant to the ḥadīth. He supported arguments by reference to ḥadīths and at times he would quote as many as 100 other narrations. The lesson ended with a supplication for the ummah and for the people in authority. Thereafter, the lesson continued every Friday after ṣalāh al-Jumu'ah until the adhān of 'Aṣr.

Specialists in mathematics and medical doctors frequently attended his lessons. After listening to him, they would remark: "We dedicated our lives but still have not reached the level that the Shaykh has reached". After attending the Shaykh's lesson during which he explained the ḥadīth about the believers who will see Allah on the Day of Qiyāmah, a doctor commented that the Shaykh did not omit anything regarding the categories of the eye. He explained how a person sees and what the early medical practitioners and philosophers had said about the eye. He did this by making reference to the person and the book.

These lessons continued even when there were senior government officials in the crowd. After the lesson, crowds thronged around him, eager to derive blessings (barakah) from touching his hand. People walked behind him and he turned to the right and left greeting the people and responding to everyone according to their respective need until he had reached his room at the Dār al-Ḥadīth.

He also conducted special lessons from his room at the Dār al-Ḥadīth attended by serious students who desired to study a specific book or were interested in a specific subject. Some of these were recognized scholars of the city. Between one and about ten students would attend. The classes commenced after sunrise and ended after 'Aṣr, with several groups attending in succession. The Shaykh adopted a traditional style of teaching, with a student reading the book most of the time, and the Shaykh reading occasionally. He explained and clarified every issue, at times elaborating it in great detail. He cited variations of a single ḥadīth, discussed the narrators, the actual meaning of the hadith, the fiqh relating to the ḥadīth, and any relevant natural or scientific aspect. He questioned the students to determine their levels of understanding, even requesting them to repeat the explanation.

He taught many books. In the Dār al-Ḥadīth, he focused on teaching the lengthier works in the religious sciences, rational subjects, mathematics and astronomy. He believed that these books raise the aspirations and improve the students' ability to understand and enable them to counter modern queries and challenges.

One should not be surprised that the Shaykh taught mathematics, algebra, chemistry and engineering along with the major works of ḥadīth,

fiqh and uşul al-fiqh. His engineering and astronomical tools were on his table, alongside his books.

Al-Ustadh al-Mubāarak stated that he studied various mathematical theories from the book *Khulāṣat al-Ḥisāb* by Bahā al-Dīn al-Āmili with Shaykh Badr al-Dīn.

Shaykh ‘Abdul Razzāq al-Bayṭār (d. 1335 AH (1916 CE)) said he was fortunate to have attended lessons conducted by Shaykh Badr al-Dīn. He studied *al-Taqrīr wa al-Taḥbīr* by Ibn al-Hummām, which is a book combining Ḥanafī and Shafī’ī uşul al-fiqh. He said that Shaykh Badr al-Dīn discussed issues from the book from memory. Despite his vast knowledge, he was cautious in uttering words of divorce and haram and any word or statement that even hinted at something negative about a person.

Another scholar, Shaykh Maḥmūd Yasīn, described his lesson with Shaykh Badr al-Dīn. He said he commenced reading *Jāmi’ al-Tirmidhī* with him on Friday, 8 Ṣafar 1335 AH (1917 CE) and completed it on the 16th Rabī’ al-Ākhir 1337 AH (1919 CE), and towards the end of Rabī’ al-Awwal 1339 AH (1921 CE), he completed *Sunan Abī Dawūd*. When he completed *Sunan Ibn Mājah* on the 5th of Jumadā al-‘Ulā 1340 AH (1922 CE), he commenced *Kanz al-‘Ummāl*. He was eager to document the Shaykh’s comments and eventually did so.

Shaykh ‘Alī al-Ṭanṭāwī (d. 1420 AH (1999 CE)) said that Shaykh Badr al-Dīn had the ability to change the focus of the lesson at any time, especially when he saw a need for it. Once, the renowned scholar and mufti of Egypt, Shaykh Muḥammad Bakhīt al-Muṭī’ī (d. 1354 AH (1935 CE)) stood at the side of the gathering and the people made way for him to enter. He sat hesitantly. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn immediately changed the focus of the lesson to uşul al-fiqh, discussing the specific aspects in detail for about two and a quarter hours. . Shaykh Bakhīt was perplexed and amazed. When the lesson ended, he wished to kiss the Shaykh’s hand but the Shaykh disliked this practice. Shaykh Bakhīt said: “There is no one in this world today like you”.

Shaykh ‘Alī al-Ṭanṭāwī said that the students were so eager to document whatever they heard the Shaykh say, that some had probably compiled ten volumes of notes. However, all that remains are those transcribed by Shaykh Suhayl al-Khaṭīb, which amount to about 106 lessons in about six volumes, and those written by Shaykh Muḥammad Hāshim al-Khaṭīb, which amount to about 20 lessons in about four notebooks. Shaykh Maḥmūd Beirūti has published transcripts of some of the Shaykh’s lessons in his book on Shaykh Badr al-Dīn.

Even a famous historian, litterateur and politician like Shakīb Arsalān (d. 1366 AH (1947 CE)) was amazed at the Shaykh’s knowledge and style when

he attended a lesson during which the Shaykh discussed good character with special reference to the life of the Ṣaḥābī, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib.

The salient features of Shaykh Badr al-Dīn’s lessons were the following. He did not read from a book but rather conducted the lessons from memory. This ensured that those present were more attentive.

- He varied the academic content, providing those present with a high level of understanding, and this appealed to different categories of people in society.
- He responded to questions regardless of how many and how diverse they were, which was another indication of his vast knowledge.
- He carefully selected the topic of the lesson, ensuring its relevance to the people’s situation at the time, and addressed matters that he felt the people needed to know, or that were necessary to bring to their attention.
- He had the ability to combine knowledge of ḥadīth, fiqh, the natural sciences, and the essential supporting sciences.

The following are some of the books that were read to Shaykh Badr al-Dīn:

- Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī
- Tafsīr al-Naysābūrī
- Tafsīr al-Kashshāf
- Sharḥ al-Sanūsiyah al-Kubrā (Tawḥīd)
- Sharḥ al-Sanūsiyah al-Sughrā (Tawḥīd)
- Ḥāshiyat al-Amir ‘alā al-Jawharah (Tawḥīd)
- Ḥāshiyat al-Bājūrī (Tawḥīd)
- Sharḥ al-‘Aqāid al-Nasafiyah (Tawḥīd)
- Jamu’ al-Jawāmi’ (Uṣūl al-fiqh) and its commentaries
- Sharḥ Musallam al-Thubūt (Uṣūl al-fiqh)
- Sharḥ al-Taḥrīr (Uṣūl al-fiqh)
- Al-Sirājiyah and its commentaries (Inheritance)

- Sharḥ Mukhtaṣar Ibn al-Ḥāḥib
- Sharḥ al-Maqāsid by Mas'ūd ibn 'Umar and al-Mawāqif by 'Abdub rrahḥmān al-Ījī ('Ilm al-Kalām)
- Al-Kalanbāwī 'alā al-Dawānī, also known as Shaykh Zādah Muḥyī al-Dīn.
- Ḥāshiyat 'alā Sharḥ al-Dawānī 'alā al-'Aqā'id al-'Aḍuḍiyah
- Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (Ḥadīth)
- Al-Zawājir (Ḥadīth)
- Sharḥ Mishkāt al-Maṣābih by Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī (Ḥadīth)
- Taysīr al-Wuṣūl (Ḥadīth)
- Nawādir al-Uṣūl by al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī (Ḥadīth)
- Sharḥ al-Shifā by Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī (Ḥadīth)
- Sharḥ al-Bājūrī 'alā al-Shamā'il (Ḥadīth – Shamā'il)
- Ihyā 'Ulūm al-Dīn
- Al-Risālat al-Qushayriyah
- Sharḥ al-Ḥikam by Ibn 'Ajībah
- Al-'Uḥūd al-Kubrā and al-Sughrā
- Al-Minan by al-Sha'rānīAl-Hidāyah (Fiqh)
- Faṭḥ al-Qadīr (Fiqh)

Shaykh 'Abdul Wāsi' al-Wāsi'ī studied a few of the books mentioned above with Shaykh Badr al-Dīn. In addition, he also studied al-Sa'd 'alā al-Izzī (sarf), al-Finārī and its commentaries (logic), al-Khulāṣah (mathematics), Sharḥ Ṭā'iyah al-Sulūk ilā Malik al-Mulūk (zuhd), and Sharḥ Manzūmat Ibn al-Hā'im (algebra).

Some senior scholars said that he read and taught Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī from memory with no notebook in front of him. Other prominent scholars acknowledged his ability and knowledge. One example is Shaykh Salīm al-'Aṭṭār (d. 1307 AH (1890 CE)), who was also a famous teacher of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. He was one of the leading scholars of the Umayyad Mosque

and produced many illustrious scholars. Shaykh Salīm sent two of his students, Shaykh ‘Abdul Muḥsin al-Ustuwānī (who later became a qāḍī) and Shaykh ‘Atā Allah al-Kasm (who later became a mufti) to find out about Shaykh Badr al-Dīn’s lessons. They returned with a positive report and Shaykh Salīm said to them: “Do not disregard people for what they are worth. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn is indeed the Shaykh of the Jāmi’ (al-Umawī) despite his young age”.

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn taught by his conduct and showed his students how to deal with new issues about which the ‘ulamā had opposing views. He disliked disagreement that resulted in conflict. During his time, the issue of smoking presented itself to the ‘ulamā and there were varying views about it. Many scholars attended his lesson at the Umayyad Mosque on a Friday after Jumu’ah. During his lesson, he dealt with the topic at length from the perspective of uṣūl al-fiqh, and analysed the views of those who were inclined to permissibility of smoking, those who regarded it as disliked (makrūh), and those who regarded it as prohibited (ḥarām). He seemed to incline towards the view that it is makrūh. Before the lesson ended he gave some important advice for anyone faced with these kinds of situations. He advised that the person awake early, before Fajr, and perform Ṣalāh (tahajjud), and thereafter supplicate to Allah to remove this difficult situation, because Allah responds and answers the call of the one who calls unto Him. The Shaykh disliked speaking to people in a harsh tone, instead he displayed mercy and compassion to people who were afflicted by some kind of difficulty. He always opened the door to the acceptance and mercy of Allah for them by encouraging them to seek forgiveness (istighfār) and repent (tawbah). He was never pleased with conflict amongst the ‘ulamā.

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn’s approach to knowledge may be summarized as follows:

- He encouraged people to acquire knowledge and supported this with numerous ḥadīth from the Prophet Muḥammad.
- He visited various schools and interacted with the teachers, even those who taught other subjects like mathematics.
- Everyone, including the youth, was welcome in his lessons.
- He encouraged the students to question the scholars.
- He reminded the students about the etiquette and conduct of a student of knowledge.

- He stressed that the ‘ulamā should not abandon the community and isolate themselves from it, and he emphasised the necessity to impart knowledge. He sent some of his students to serve as imams and teachers in Beirut.
4. He stressed the need to publicize knowledge. In his time, this was done in newspapers.

His efforts bore fruit and some of his students had study-circles in the mosques and others established their own institutions (madrassa), resulting in an academic revival in the city.

His students¹

Many past scholars preferred developing people intellectually and spiritually to writing many books. Some said that their students were their legacy. Although Shaykh Badr al-Dīn did author some works, his students are a wonderful testimony to his knowledge and personality. However, as mentioned by Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ya‘qūbī, his students may be divided into four categories:

1. Those who studied with him in the early days of his life, like Shaykh Tāhir al-Atāsī.
2. Those who studied with him from around 1320 AH (1902 CE) and went on to become great scholars. They included people like Shaykh Hāshim al-Khaṭīb, Shaykh ‘Alī al-Daqr, Shaykh Muḥammad al-Hāshimī, and others.
3. Students of the scholars mentioned in the second category who eventually also attended lessons that were conducted by Shaykh Badr al-Dīn. These included scholars like Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Farfūr, Shaykh Ḥasan Ḥabannaka, Shaykh ‘Abdul Karīm al-Rifā‘ī, Shaykh Fakhr al-Dīn (Shaykh Badr al-Dīn’s grandson), and others.
4. Those who attended gatherings in the last few years of Shaykh Badr al-Dīn’s life. They may have attended some gatherings and received ijāzah from the Shaykh. These include Shaykh Salīm al-Ḥammāmī, Shaykh Fātiḥ al-Kettānī, and others.

¹ There are short biographies of a number of these scholars in the books: Muslim scholars of the 20th and the 21st Century. The latter was published by DTI, Cape Town. A few have been posted on: www.seekersguidance.org

One of his students, Shaykh Maḥmūd al-‘Aṭṭār (d. 1362 AH (1944 CE)) said that Shaykh Badr al-Dīn was sought after by scholars from everywhere, who were eager to take ijāzah from him. He was the Proof of Islam and the Protector of the Sharī‘ah in his time. Therefore, it is very difficult to enumerate the people who received ijāzah from him. Many were prominent scholars. Shaykh Maḥmūd al-‘Aṭṭār was a renowned scholar of fiqh and uṣūl al-fiqh who had studied under Shaykh Badr al-Dīn and accompanied him for more than 40 years. He attended his private and public lessons and received ijāzah from the ‘ulamā in Egypt, Makkah, Madinah and India. Many prominent ‘ulamā were his students.

Shaykh Yaḥyā al-Maktabī (d. 1378 AH (1958 CE)) was born in Damascus. His father was a Ḥanafī jurist. He memorized the Quran when he was young and studied with the scholars. Remaining closely attached to Shaykh Badr al-Dīn in the Dār al-Ḥadīth and in his home, he served as imām, khatīb and teacher in the institution. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn loved him and he diligently fulfilled all the tasks and responsibilities that were assigned to him by his Shaykh. He had a copy of the Shaykh’s ijāzah which he gave to people.

Shaykh Abū al-Khayr al-Maydānī (d. 1380 AH (1961 CE)) was a famous Naqshbandī scholar who was born in Maydān, a suburb of Damascus. He attended lessons by Shaykh Salīm al-Masūti, who encouraged him to acquire religious knowledge and gave him the good news that he would eventually grow up to be the shaykh of Syria. He studied Ḥanafī fiqh and various other subjects until his shaykh directed him to continue studying with Shaykh ‘Abdul Ḥakīm al-Afghānī with whom he studied al-Hidāyah. He studied with the Shaykh for four years. He took the Naqshbandī Order from Shaykh ‘Isā al-Kurdī and eventually married his daughter. In addition to being appointed head of the ‘Ulamā League, he also taught the six books of hadith and numerous other books. Furthermore, he taught at the Dār al-Ḥadīth and was regarded by some scholars as one of the ‘abdāl of his time. He passed away in Ramaḍān in 1380 AH (1961 CE).

Shaykh Muḥammad Rafīq al-Sibā’ī (d. 1403 AH (1983 CE)) was born in Homs where he obtained his initial education. He eventually enrolled at the French Faculty of Medicine where he studied for three years. Thereafter, he studied at the Faculty of Medicine in Damascus for two years. Instead of practicing as a doctor, he served Shaykh Badr al-Dīn and lived in one of the rooms at the Dār al-Ḥadīth. He passed away in 1403 AH (1983 CE) while uttering the words, “Allah, Allah, Allah”.

2 Abdāl: This refers to one of the categories of the awliyā (the friends of Allah). There are narrations that indicate that there are 40 abdāl and Ibn ‘Ābidīn has a treatise on the topic titled: Ijābat al-Ghawth bi Bayān ḥāl al-Nuqabā wa al-nujabā wa al-abdāl wa al-awtād wa al-ghawth.

Shaykh Maḥmūd Rankūsī (d. 1405 AH (1985 CE)) went to Damascus when he was about 12 years old. He settled at the Dār al-Ḥadīth eager to study with Shaykh Badr al-Dīn. He also studied under some of the Shaykh's students. He authored a treatise on the life of Shaykh Badr al-Dīn and another on Shaykh Abū al-Khayr al-Maydānī.

Shaykh Maḥmūd Rankūsī was in the Dār al-Ḥadīth on one occasion, when some scholars entered and questioned Shaykh Badr al-Dīn about a certain matter concerning fiqh. He directed them to Shaykh 'Atā al-Kasm (d. 1357 AH (1938 CE)) who was the mufti at the time. The questioner went to Shaykh al-Kasm and returned without an answer. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn then directed him to Shaykh Maḥmūd al-'Aṭṭār, a senior Ḥanafī scholar. The questioner went to him and returned without an answer. The Shaykh merely said: *lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billah* (There is no power and might except with Allah).

and asked for a certain book. He then said: "Open the book and count 16 pages, and then requested the questioner to count 6 lines". The questioner read what was written and then remarked: "O Mawlānā! This is Shāfi'ī while I am Ḥanafī..."

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn replied: "*lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billah*" (There is no power and might except with Allah). Ya Ba, You and I and the general public, our madhhab is the madhhab of our mufti. And this (the author of the book) is our mufti". This is an indication of his humility. Despite his vast knowledge, he did not make a claim to being a mujtahid.³

Prior to coming into contact with Shaykh Badr al-Dīn, Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Farfūr (d. 1407 AH (1986 CE)) loved philosophy, especially the books by Imām al-Ghazzālī. He was so fond of Imām al-Ghazzālī that he dreamt about him. He subsequently attended a lesson by Shaykh Badr al-Dīn with his teacher, Shaykh Muḥammad Hāshim al-Khaṭīb (d. 1378 AH (1958 CE)). He, Shaykh Ṣāliḥ, questioned the Shaykh about philosophy. The Shaykh spoke at length about the philosophy of the Greeks, Romans, Indians and Persians. He then discussed the types and objectives of philosophy for more than ninety minutes. Furthermore, he spoke about the prominent philosophers, pointed out the differences between their approaches. He said it is not permissible to declare all philosophers disbelievers, because there are true believers among them, namely those who follow the the Prophetic example. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn once said: "Certainly the Imām (al-Ghazzālī), the Proof of Islam, Abū Ḥāmid, addresses the mind and the heart". Shaykh Ṣāliḥ studied the Islamic sciences, mathematics, engineering, the natural

³ Mujtahid: Refers to the scholar who has the knowledge and ability to extrapolate and deduce legal rulings from the detailed evidences of the Sharī'ah. The process is known as ijtihād. The imams of the 4 madhhabs are examples of mujtahid's.

sciences, and much more with Shaykh Badr al-Dīn, for a long time. He even composed poetry that he read to the Shaykh, which pleased him.

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn was very concerned about the affairs and well-being of students seeking Islamic knowledge. There was a place known as al-Takiyah al-Sulaymānīyah in Damascus, which consisted of rooms endowed to students. Meals and other basic essentials were provided to students. It was built during the time of Sultan Sulaymān (the Magnificent). However, it was eventually managed and controlled by the authorities, who used it as accommodation for medical doctors. When the thirst and desire for Islamic knowledge increased due to the efforts of Shaykh Badr al-Dīn and others, the number of students increased and they had no place to live. The students approached him and asked if they could reside in these rooms because they were originally built for them. The Shaykh said the rooms were endowed for students of Islamic knowledge, so they were more deserving of them than the doctors. He said the government could find alternative accommodation for the doctors. As a result, a number of students settled in these rooms and the doctors had to leave.

The following are some of the Shaykh's famous students who were prominent 'ulamā:

(Note: This list is a combination of scholars from the four categories mentioned earlier.)

- Shaykh Ṭāhir al-Atāsī (d. 1359 AH (1940 CE)).
- Shaykh Amīn Suwayd (d. 1355 AH (1936 CE)). He was not a student of Shaykh Badr al-Dīn in the real sense. He may have attended some gatherings. He had his own shuyūkh and was an excellent scholar of fiqh and uşūl al-fiqh.
- Shaykh Muḥammad Yaḥyā al-Maktabī (d. 1377/78 AH (1958 CE)).
- Shaykh Maḥmūd Yāsīn (d. 1367 AH (1948 CE)).
- Shaykh Maḥmūd al-‘Aqqād (d. 1394 AH (1974 CE)).
- Shaykh Muḥammad Ārif al-Juwayjātī (d. 1395 AH (1975 CE)).
- Shaykh Ārif al-Dowjī al-Şawwāf (d. 1370 AH (1951 CE)).
- Shaykh Tawfiq al-Ayyūbī (d. 1351 AH (1932 CE)).
- Shaykh ‘Abdul Muḥsin al-Ustuwānī (d. 1383 AH (1963 CE)).

- Shaykh ‘Abdul Razzāq al-Ustuwānī (d. 1363 AH 1943 CE)).
- Shaykh Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn ‘Ābidīn (d. 1402 AH (1981 CE)).
- Shaykh Salīm al-Kuzbarī (d. 1331 AH (1913 CE)).
- Shaykh Muḥammad Suhayl al-Khaṭīb (d. 1402 AH (1981 CE)).
- Shaykh Muḥammad al-Mubārak (d. 1402 AH (1982 CE)).
- Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī (d. 1332 AH (1914 CE)).
- Shaykh ‘Abdul Qādir al-Mubārak (d. 1365 AH (1946 CE)).
- Shaykh Bahjat al-Bayṭār (d. 1396 AH (1976 CE)).
- Shaykh ‘Alī al-Daqr (d. 1362 AH (1943 CE)).
- Shaykh Hāshim al-Khaṭīb (d. 1378 AH (1958 CE)).
- Shaykh ‘Abdul Qādir al-Qaṣṣāb (d. 1360 AH (1941 CE)).
- Shaykh ‘Abdul Karīm al-Rifā’ī (d. 1393 AH (1973 CE)).
- Shaykh Muḥammad Rāghib al-Ṭabbākḥ (d. 1370 AH (1951 CE)).
- Shaykh ‘Abdul Qādir Badrān (d. 1346 AH (1927 CE)).
- Shaykh Muḥammad Shakahshirū, Abū Ibrāhīm al-Kosā (d. 1391 AH (1971 CE)).
- Shaykh Muḥammad Kāmil al-Habrāwī (d. 1346 AH (1927 CE)).
- Shaykh ‘Abdul Wahhāb al-Ḥāfiẓ dībs wa zayt (d. 1389 AH (1969 CE)).
- Shaykh Muḥammad Abū al-Yusr ‘Ābidīn (d. 1401 AH (1981 CE)).
- Shaykh Muḥammad Sharīf al-Yāqūbī (d. 1362 AH (1943 CE)). He was not a student of Shaykh Badr al-Dīn in the real sense but may have attended some of his gatherings. He had his own shuyūkh and excelled in tafsīr, Māliki fiqh, and sirah. He was a student of the Shādhilī Order.
- Shaykh Aḥmad Naṣīb al-Maḥāmīd (d. 1421 AH (2000 CE)).
- Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Ghalāyīnī (d. 1377 AH (1958 CE)).
- Shaykh Muḥammad Makkī al-Kettānī (d. 1393 AH (1973 CE)).

- Shaykh Muḥammad Saʿīd al-Burhānī (d. 1386 AH (1967 CE)).
- Shaykh Muḥammad ʿĀrif ʿUthmān (d. 1385 AH (1965 CE)).
- Shaykh Ḥasan Ḥabannaka al-Maydānī (d. 1398 AH (1978 CE)).
- Shaykh Aḥmad al-Ḥabbāl (d. 1430 AH (2009 CE)). He was known for serving the Shaykh and for his abundance of ibādah and salutations upon the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ.

The following are scholars from other countries who studied under Shaykh Badr al-Dīn or sought ijāzah from him:

- Shaykh ʿAbdul Ḥayy al-Kettānī (d. 1382 AH (1963 CE)) (Morocco).
- Shaykh ʿAbdul Wāsiʿ al-Wāsʿī (d. 1379 AH (1960 CE)) (Yemen).
- Shaykh Muḥammad Dwesh al-Ālūsī (d. 1357 AH (1938 CE)) (Baghdad, Iraq).
- Shaykh ʿAbdul Qādir al-Shalabī (d. 1369 AH (1950 CE)). He was a Ḥanafī mufti in Madinah but hailed from Tripoli.
- Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Jaʿfar al-Kettānī (d. 1345 AH (1927 CE)) (Morocco).
- Shaykh Muḥammad al-Zamzamī ibn Muḥammad ibn Jaʿfar al-Kettānī (d. 1371 AH (1952 CE)).
- Shaykh Muṣṭafā Najā (d. 1350 AH (1931 CE)). He was the mufti of Beirut.
- Shaykh Muḥammad Effendī al-Kistī (d. 1350 AH (1931 CE)). He was a qāḍī in Beirut.
- Shaykh Muḥammad al-ʿArabī al-ʿazzūzī, (d. 1382 AH (1962 CE)) (Lebanon).
- Shaykh Muḥammad ʿAbdul Jawād al-Qāyātī, (d. 1320 AH (1902 CE)) (Egypt).
- Shaykh Muḥammad al-Hāshimī (d. 1381 AH (1961 CE)). He was from Tilmisan, Algeria, but settled in Damascus.
- Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Tūnusī (d. 1353 AH (1954 CE)) (Tunisia).

- Shaykh ‘Ashiq Ilāhī al-Mirtī (d. 1360 AH (1941 CE)) (India).
- Shaykh Ḥusayn al-Waṣṣābī (d. 1393 AH (1973 CE)) (Yemen).
- Shaykh Aḥmad al-Ghumārī (d. 1380 AH (1961 CE)) (Morocco)
- Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Rāwī (d. 1365 AH (1946 CE)) (Baghdad, Iraq).
- Shaykh Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī (d. 1371AH (1952 CE)) (Turkey). He met the Shaykh but did not receive ijāzah from him.
- Shaykh ‘Abdul Sattār al-Hindī al-Makkī (India, Makkah).
- Shaykh ‘Abdul Qādir al-Shalabī (d. 1369 AH (1950 CE)) (Tripoli, Lebanon).
- Shaykh Aḥmad ibn al-Ma’mūn al-Balghithī (d.1348 AH (1929 CE)) (Morocco).
- Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Azam ibn Ḥusayn al-Bakrī.

Books

During his period in seclusion, he is assumed to have authored between forty and fifty books and treatises. His student, who was also the Mufti of Homs, Shaykh Ṭāhir al-Atāsī (d. 1359 AH (1940 CE)) mentioned most of his books in a qasidah. Most of these comprised that which his students had documented during his lessons. One of his students, Shaykh Suhayl al-Khaṭīb, was the fastest at transcribing during the lessons. Some of his books are the following:

- Al-Budūr al-Jaliyah fī Sharḥ al-Manzūmat al-Sanūsiyah
- Ḥāshiyat ‘alā Uṣūl Ibn al-Ḥājjib
- Ḥāshiyat ‘alā Tafsīr al-Jalālayn
- Ḥāshiyat ‘alā Sharḥ Ādāb al-Baḥth wa al-Munāzarah
- Ḥāshiyat ‘alā Sharḥ al-ḤafnīḤāshiyat ‘alā al-Shamsiyah
- Ḥāshiyat ‘alā al-FinārīḤāshiyat ‘alā ‘Aqā’id al-NasafīḤāshiyat ‘alā ‘Aqā’id al-‘UḍaḍḤāshiyat ‘alā Kitāb al-Muṭawwal
- Ḥāshiyat ‘alā Nukhbat al-Fikr

- Ḥāshiyat ‘alā Naẓm al-Sullam
- Al-Durar al-Bahiyah fī Sharḥ al-Manẓūmat al-Bayqūniyah. This was published for the first time in 2008.
- Rawḍ al-Ma‘āni li Sharḥ ‘Aqīdah al-‘Allāmah al-ShaybānīSharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-BukhārīSharḥ ‘alā al-Shamā’il
- Sharḥ ‘alā al-ShifāSharḥ ‘alā Sirah al-‘IrāqīSharḥ al-Khulāṣah fī al-Ḥisāb
- Sharḥ ‘alā al-Qaṭr (Ghāyat al-Marām ‘alā Sharḥ al-Qaṭr li Ibn Hishām)
- Sharḥ ‘alā al-Mullā Jāmī (Grammar)
- Sharḥ ‘alā Mughnī al-Labīb
- Sharḥ ‘alā al-Sirājiyah
- Sharḥ ‘alā Muqnī al-Afkār
- Sharḥ ‘alā Lāmiyat al-Afa’al
- Sharḥ Qasīdah Ghurāmī Ṣaḥīḥ (Muṣṭalaḥ al-Ḥadīth). This was first published by the famous publisher, Būlāq, in 1286 AH (1969 CE) when the Shaykh was only 19 years old. It has been published again more recently.
- Sharḥ ‘alā Qaṣīdah al-Burdah
- Fayḍ al-Wahhāb fī Muwafaqāt Sayyidinā ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (a commentary on the work by al-Suyūṭī). This was published under Shaykh Rankūsi’s supervision in 1404 AH. Many of his books were destroyed in the fire that ravaged the Ḥamīdiyyah Market in 1330 AH (1912 CE). Others were concealed because his students felt that this was in accordance with Shaykh Badr al-Dīn’s wishes as he erased his name from anything that he wrote.

His travels

He travelled to the city of Homs in 1290 AH (1873 CE) where a number of scholars read to him and he granted them ijāzah. He travelled to Egypt when he was about 25 years old. While he was there, he met Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ashmūnī (d. 1321 AH (1909 CE)) and Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Saqqā. He

received ijazah from them. He travelled to the Hijaz twice, and also to al-Quds. During ḥajj, many scholars, including a large number from India, were eager to meet him and read various books to him. When he visited the Prophet Muḥammad during his last ḥajj in 1333 AH (1915 CE), it was a Friday. He took a bath, wore his best clothes and then entered the masjid. People gathered around him, but he did not speak to anyone until he left. The scholars and students who were present sought ijazah from him. Even King Ḥusayn (d. 1350 AH (1931 CE)) sent his four sons to welcome and receive the Shaykh on the outskirts of Makkah and prepared a special place for him to stay in his palace. When the Shaykh arrived in Makkah, the King went out personally to welcome him, but he stayed with the family of Hāshim.

An interesting incident occurred during his trip to the Hijaz. The train he was travelling on broke down on the way. The heat of the desert was harsh but it did not deter the Shaykh. It was the time of zuhr and so the Shaykh and some other passengers disembarked to perform ṣalāh. They commenced and were about to go into ruku' when the train started to move. The people broke their ṣalāh and rushed to board the train while the Shaykh remained engaged in ṣalāh. The train travelled for a while before some passengers realized that the Shaykh was not on the train. They informed the person in charge and they returned only to find him still in ṣalāh. They waited until he had finished. He boarded the train without showing signs that he was even aware that he had been alone in the desert for a period of time.

His family

In 1295 AH (1878 CE), he married Ruqayyah, the daughter of the pious scholar, Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn al-ʿĀnī (d. 1290 AH (1873 CE)). The marriage was blessed with eight children: two sons and six daughters.

One of his sons, Ibrāhīm ʿIṣām al-Dīn, was born in (1306/7 AH 91889/90 CE)). He was a scholar who was raised under the care and guidance of his father. He studied under many of his father's students, like Shaykh Maḥmūd al-ʿAṭṭār. He even received ijāzah from the Egyptian scholar, Shaykh Muḥammad Bakhīt al-Muṭīʿī. His friends and colleagues included Shaykh Muḥammad al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn (d. 1377 AH (1958 CE)), Shaykh Tāj al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī, and Shaykh Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn al-Tūnusī.

He married the Shaykh Maḥmūd Ḥamzawī's niece and was blessed with a child, Muḥammad Fakhr al-Dīn (d. 1407 AH (1987 CE)). He passed away in 1335 AH (1917 CE), when he was still young, after succumbing to an illness. That night, after the lesson, Shaykh Badr al-Dīn sat in his home receiving people who were offering their condolences. However, when the

time approached for him to study and complete his awrad, he stood up, placed Shaykh Maḥmūd Yāsīn in his place and left. He was not deterred by some of the senior members of the community who may have been present. His greater concern was to fulfill the rights of Allah through his teaching.

His other son, Muhammad Tāj al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī, was a scholar who served as President of Syria. He was born in Damascus in 1307 AH (1890 CE). He was raised under the care of his father and also studied under some of his father's students. He received ijāzah from Shaykh Muḥammad Bakhīt al-Muṭī'ī, Shaykh 'Abdul Ḥakīm al-Afghānī, and Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Ja'far al-Kettānī. He served as an editor for the al-Sharq newspaper. King Fayṣal appointed him as the director of academic affairs in 1920, until he eventually became the official qāḍī of the capital. During this period, he also taught uṣūl al-fiqh, personal law and inheritance at the Law Institute. In 1347 AH (1928 CE), he was appointed as the president of the country, a position he held until 1931. He travelled to Europe to explain the situation in his country. He remained in Paris for some time. In 1360 AH (1941 CE), he was involved in forming Parliament until Syria announced its independence in the same year. He passed away in 1362 AH (1943 CE).

His daughters were all known for their exceptional character, piety and love of good. The first one, Asmā, was a righteous woman who took care of the house after her parents had passed away. The second was Bahiyah (d. 1387 AH (1968 CE)), who was known for her excessive worship, devotion, asceticism and giving of ṣadaqah. The third daughter, Sārah, was known for her piety. The fourth one, 'Āishah, married Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb. The fifth one, Shafīqah, married Salīm al-'Ānī. The last one, Salmā, married her cousin, Yūsuf.

His grandson, Muḥammad Fakhr al-Dīn, was born in Damascus in 1329 AH (1911 CE). Because his father passed away in 1335 AH (1917 CE), he was taken care of by his grandfather. He studied under his grandfather and some of his students. He eventually became the head of the fatwa administration under the head mufti, Shaykh Muḥammad Shukrī al-Ustuwānī. In 1382 AH (1963 CE) he was appointed as the general director of fatāwā and religious education. This was during the era of the head mufti, Shaykh Abū al-Yusr 'Ābidīn. He held numerous other positions, including being the dean of the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafīyah. He even taught at the Dār al-Ḥadīth. He was loved and respected by all, including the scholars. He passed away in 1407 AH (1987 CE).

Demise

On the 20th Rabī' al-Awwal 1354 AH (1935 CE), he bid farewell to the ummah. Some scholars maintain that he mentioned his wasiyah about two days before he passed away. On that day he said: "May salām be upon the ummah of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and we seek forgiveness from Allah for anything that we may have done while we were on earth in respect to the ummah, as far as not fulfilling their rights and offending them. We ask Allah to use them for that which pleases Him and to turn the plans of the sinners and disbelievers away from them. We leave them in Allah's care in matters of their din and in worldly matters and we ask Him to assist them in their din, in which is their means of success, and in their worldly affairs, because it is where they reside, and to assist them in the affairs of the Hereafter, which is their final abode...". He went on to advise them to dedicate themselves to seeking knowledge and to respect the ulama. He concluded by greeting everyone.

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn passed away on Friday, 27 Rabī' al-Awwal 1354 AH (1935 CE) after performing ṣalāh al-Duḥā. Shaykh 'Abdul Muḥsin al-Ustuwānī (d. 1383 AH (1964 CE)) announced the news of his passing.

The Shaykh maintained his high aspirations and worship until his last days. Experiencing great discomfort and pain for over a month before his demise, he eventually stopped eating for about one week before he passed away and sufficed with a little milk. Almost all of the inhabitants of Damascus went out for his funeral, which was announced over the minarets and from the pulpits. Some estimated the crowd was more than 150,000 people. Ṣalāh al-Janāzah was performed at the Umayyad Mosque at around 16:30 and his body reached the al-Bāb al-Saghīr cemetery at 19:00, where he was buried next to his wife and son, Shaykh Tāj al-Dīn. Due to the large crowds, ṣalāh al-Janāzah was performed multiple times as well as in many of the mosques. His waṣiyah was read from the pulpit of the Umayyad mosque by Shaykh Rafīq al-Sibā'ī.

His character, daily routine, role in the community, and personal anecdotes

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER

He radiated nur that was noticeable from a distance. He was fair in complexion, and his hair was light or blondish. The mark of piety clearly embellished his forehead. He donned a light yellowish turban over a red Turkish hat and wore a cloak (jubah) with broad sleeves. He wore sandals that resem-

bled the sandals of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. In fact, a few years before he passed away, he informed Shaykh Rankūsī that he had been wearing the same clothing for 55 years. His walk was one of awe and respect, and he only cast his gaze on the place where he would next place his foot. Reticient in nature, he was very humble, especially with his students, the poor and the destitute. He disliked anyone kissing his hand and when he sensed that someone was going to do that, he quickly withdrew his hands under his sleeves.

Unaffected by fame and recognition, he disliked large numbers of students walking behind him. He was patient and forbearing, and never became angry except if something violated the character of Islam, like backbiting or slander. He never engaged in gossip or slandered anyone, and such behaviour was not permitted in his gatherings. He did not permit any worldly talk in the mosque, regardless of the identity of the person speaking. However, even when he was angry, the most he said was:

لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله

There is no power and might except with Allah

Lā hawla wa lā quwwata illā billah

The Shaykh preferred to walk through the narrow, somewhat concealed alleys of the city, rather than through the main streets. He did this to avoid the market places, protecting his gaze from anything prohibited, as well to avoid large crowds of people who were eager to follow him. He also avoided anything that was doubtful lest it led to something prohibited (ḥarām).

HUMILITY AND DISLIKE FOR FAME

When he faced the leaders, his humility was coupled with honour and dignity, and nothing and no one was able to force him to do that which he did not want to do. He excused himself and did not accept an invitation from the Czar of Russia and the Ottoman Sultan, ‘Abdul Ḥamīd.

Despite his vast knowledge, he disliked pronouncing fatwas unless it was really necessary. Very often, he would direct the questioner to one of his students to respond or to a book wherein the answer could be found. At times, he even requested four students to respond with answers from each of the four madhhabs respectively. This developed their self-confidence. Likewise, he disliked leading ṣalāh, and is not known to have ever led it. Although he always performed salah in congregation, he preferred

to follow one of his students. Many official positions were offered to him, but he refused all of them. He adopted this position so that he remained independent. He was thus able to speak the truth and was never regarded as a “government scholar”. He displayed this independence in his life by not relying on a salary. He lived off a portion of the agricultural land that he inherited from his father. His brother, Shaykh Bahā al-Dīn, took care of affairs at home.

An interesting incident in this regard is that when the constitution was announced during the time of Sultan ‘Abdul Ḥamīd, news spread throughout Syria that the people were going to pledge their support to Shaykh Badr al-Dīn as the Khalīfah, and that the following Friday, the imāms would announce this from the pulpit. This news was published in some newspapers and also reached the politicians in Turkey, who were deeply concerned. The Interior Minister, Raūf Bāshā, who was the Commissioner in Egypt, contacted the Governor in Damascus, Nāẓim Bāshā, who was in al-Quds at the time. He instructed him to return to Damascus and investigate the matter. The Governor, who loved Shaykh Badr al-Dīn, returned to Damascus to investigate. When the news reached Shaykh Badr al-Dīn, he simply said: “There is no need to be concerned. I am not interested in positions and neither am I seeking status”. He ensured that all actions were done exclusively for the pleasure of Allah.

A scholar once defended the Shaykh’s position on certain matters. He met with the Shaykh and informed him about what he said and that he did that for his sake. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn replied: “If you did that for my sake, then don’t dirty your shoes for my sake”. (implying that the actions must be done to please Allah and not anyone else).

HIS DAILY ROUTINE

Shaykh Maḥmūd Yāsīn and Shaykh Maḥmūd al-‘Aṭṭār said that the Shaykh prayed Fajr in the Umayyad Mosque at its earliest time, and after completing some of his litanies (awrād), he proceeded to his room at the Dār al-Ḥadīth. Scholars and students flocked around him and accompanied him. When he reached the Dār al-Ḥadīth, he turned to face them and then requested them to supplicate (duā). He greeted them and entered his room where he completed his awrad. Thereafter, he performed ṣalāh al-Duḥā, which he never omitted, even during his travels to the Hijaz and on the day he passed away. After lying down for a short while, he commenced his lessons.

As soon as the time of Zuh̄r approached, he performed wudu, faced the qiblah, supplicated and performed voluntary ṣalāh. When the adhān for Zuh̄r was called, he performed salah in congregation. After completing

his awrād, he resumed teaching. When ‘Aṣr approached, he got ready and performed salah in congregation and returned to his lessons. During this time he completed two or three lessons. Thereafter, he returned home.

After Maghrib and iftar (when he was fasting), he conducted lessons from his home. They were attended by some students and many members of the public. He delayed ‘Ishā on account of the lesson. After performing ‘Ishā in congregation, he hastened to sleep without engaging anyone in talk. He went to bed engaged in dhikr. He woke early for Tahajjud, and proceeded to the Ummayyad Mosque before Fajr.

He almost never abandoned this routine. His grandson, Shaykh Fakhr al-Dīn, described the way he slept, saying that he never slept on a bed unless it was necessary. He sat on a circular chair made of cotton. If he was really overcome by sleep, he leaned against the wall and dozed off for a while. Thereafter, he rose, made wudū, and resumed whatever he had been doing until sometime before Fajr.

His life was occupied with salah, dua, dhikr, fasting, his lessons, interceding on behalf of someone with the authorities, offering advice (naṣīḥah), visiting the prisons and the graveyard, maintaining family ties, visiting the sick, and bringing people closer to Allah.

He engaged in abundant recitation of the Qur’an and salutations upon the Prophet, and punctually observed all sunnah and nafl ṣalāh, including ṣalāh al-Duḥā, ṣalāh al-Awwābīn and ṣalāh al-Tasbīḥ. He fasted every day of the year, except days on which fasting is prohibited or disliked, or when he was ill.

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Farfūr cited some instances in which Shaykh Badr al-Dīn attended dhikr gatherings, commonly known as the ḥaḍrah, during which the attendees stand holding each other’s hands and chanting words in praise of Allah ﷻ and the Prophet Muḥammad. After one such gathering, he said to those present: “Ya ba, increase in these blessed gatherings and the noble ḥaḍrah, because through it the hearts are united to Allah”.

Shaykh ‘Abdul Wāsi’ al-Wāsi’i was a prominent scholar from Sana, Yemen, who stayed in Damascus for about five years during which he studied under Shaykh Badr al-Dīn. He referred to his teacher as ‘Allāmah al-Dunyā, and described him as someone who fasted perpetually except for the days of ‘Īd. He never engaged in any futile talk and his tongue never ceased remembering Allah. He never permitted anyone to backbite in his gatherings or in his presence. In addition to being an exceptional research scholar, he was very precise, a man of immense taqwā, and a person who preferred isolation. He avoided unnecessary luxuries relating to clothing and his life in general, and disliked fame. He was constantly engaged in dhikr and sending salutations upon the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ even during

the pauses while teaching. He said that out of piety and consciousness of Allah ﷻ, he would never lead anyone in ṣalāh.

He never wrote in his own handwriting. If he needed to intercede for someone with the authorities, he requested his deputy, Shaykh Yaḥyā al-Maktabī, to write on his behalf and he merely endorsed it with his stamp. When the authorities saw his stamp, they immediately complied. When he heard about any family who may have been in difficulty, he sent Shaykh Yaḥyā to assist them on his behalf.

On the days of ʿĪd, scholars, statesmen and the general public visited him. He, however, remained in his room at the Dār al-Ḥadīth and the people approached Shaykh Yaḥyā. He served the guests with sweets and coffee on behalf of the Shaykh. When the visitors were ready to leave, they passed by the Shaykh to greet him and they requested his duas. He responded: *Allahu yuwaffiquna* (May Allah grant us tawfiq).

Shaykh ʿAlī al-Ṭanṭāwī said that Shaykh Badr al-Dīn was the secret strength of Damascus. When they were overcome with trials or tribulations, people approached him and his words always inspired hope. They had a profound effect on the people of Syria and left them fearless. His room was like a sanctuary for the people. It appeared to be from the Umayyad or Abbasid eras, or the time of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī. It did not seem to be a place from the 20th century. When people wished to visit him, they all, regardless of social or political standing, removed their shoes, carried them in their hands, lowered their heads humbly, and sat in front of the Shaykh. They never spoke unless he questioned them or he permitted them to speak. Sometimes, he may have advised them or admonished them.

DEALING WITH THE LEADERS

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn lived at a time when there was a great deal of fear and uneasiness. This was the period of the First World War and the French colonization of Syria. It burdened the Shaykh greatly. He constantly inquired about the well-being of the people. He interacted with the leaders merely to ensure that the public was protected from all forms of oppression. The Ottoman leader in Syria at the time, Jamāl Bāshā, tried to solicit a fatwā from the Shaykh permitting the execution of some civilians. He visited the Shaykh at the Dār al-Ḥadīth, sitting respectfully and humbly in front of him. When he asked the Shaykh for the fatwā, the Shaykh replied that there may be some who are oppressed among the group, so the punishment cannot be meted out because of uncertainty. Jamāl Bāshā denied this, so the Shaykh suggested that he rather ask the mufti. Jamāl Bāshā said that he (Shaykh Badr al-Dīn) was the leader of the ʿulamā. He replied: “May

Allah rectify you! Who said that?” Shaykh Badr al-Dīn then quoted a ḥadīth that is reported by Imām Aḥmad from Abū Hurayrah who said that the Messenger of Allah said: “The duā of an oppressed person is accepted. If he is a sinner, then the consequences of his sin will be on him”. So, if you fear oppression, ask the mufti. Jamāl Bāshā was unhappy because he was unable to obtain a fatwa from the Shaykh. He got up to leave and requested that the Shaykh make dua for him. The Shaykh merely said: “May Allah allow you to do that which is best for the Muslims and may He assist you in establishing justice”.

On another occasion, Jamāl Bāshā attended an iftar function at the Umayyad Mosque which was attended by Shaykh Badr al-Dīn. After the meals were completed, Shaykh Badr al-Dīn addressed the gathering and requested that Jamal Basha act with kindness and compassion and release all prisoners. Jamāl Bāshā did not comply.

When the French general arrived, Shaykh Badr al-Dīn refused to meet him and he prevented the people from paying taxes to the French. Instead, he made the call for jihād from the Dār al-Ḥadīth. He then roamed different areas of Syria encouraging a widespread uprising and a jihād to remove every French soldier from the country. Whenever he went to a town or village in Syria, he went to the main mosque where he conducted a lesson and encouraged the crowd to wage jihad against the French. He was frequently accompanied by Shaykh ‘Alī al-Daqr and Shaykh Muḥammad Hāshim al-Khaṭīb.

Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ashmar and Ḥasan al-Kharrāt (d. 1925 CE) used to meet Shaykh Badr and consult him and they received instructions from him. He used to place his hand on their heads and say to them: “Attach your hearts to Allah. Don’t fear anyone but Allah”.

Shaykh Badr sent a letter with Shaykh Rafīq al-Sibā’ī to General Ann drea requesting that the French stop all injustices against the people of Maydān. The General responded by letter in February 1926 CE, agreeing to the Shaykh’s request.

The French bombed Damascus and this caused immense damage and destruction. A French pharmacist, who was also a spy, was near Shaykh Badr al-Dīn’s home. The Shaykh merely told him: “Is this what you do when you want to rule the country?” The bombing ceased less than half an hour later.

On another occasion, Shaykh Badr al-Dīn requested Shaykh Yūsuf HayD from Bayrūd to come to the Dār al-Ḥadīth. Shaykh Yūsuf arrived only to find the place crowded, with almost all the muftis of Syria present. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn called one by one to his room. When he called Shaykh Yūsuf, he questioned him about the number of French soldiers in

the Qalmūn Mountain area. The Shaykh replied that they did not exceed one hundred in number. The Shaykh also asked Shaykh Yūsuf about the population in the area, so he said there were more than 100,000 people. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn then remarked that it was surely possible that such a large number could defeat the hundred French soldiers. He told Shaykh Yūsuf about a strategic place from which they could attack the French. In this way, the Shaykh encouraged the jihād, monitored the developments, and also provided spiritual nourishment for the fighters.

When the French tried to form an alliance with the Christian community in a part of Damascus and use it as a base to launch an attack, Shaykh Badr al-Dīn visited the Christians and this visit strengthened the Muslim-Christian alliance against the French.

CONCERN FOR THE MUSLIMS

The Shaykh was deeply concerned about the affairs of the Muslims in his country and internationally. He often inquired about the condition of the citizens and even the cost of basic food items. He also worked tirelessly to rid the society of interest (ribā) and other related transactions. Thus, he encouraged people to work and earn a lawful income. According to him, the different professions, as well as trade, were part of the mercy given to the ummah, and were required in order for society to flourish. He also dealt with the consumption of alcohol and regularly addressed the people in his classes about its harmfulness and prohibition.

He was concerned about Muslims globally. Once his grandson went to Ustādh Māzin al-Mubārak's home at the time of Fajr to give his father a letter from Shaykh Badr al-Dīn's wife. The letter appealed to his father not to inform Shaykh Badr al-Dīn about any sad and depressing news from the Muslim world, because he had received sad news the previous evening and had spent the entire night crying in supplication to Allah to relieve the Muslims of their suffering. He had not slept or placed his head on the pillow.

When Sharīf Ḥusayn of Makkah announced his revolution against the Turkish government, the scholars were asked to denounce him. Many scholars issued fatwās complying with this request because they feared expulsion or death. When Shaykh Badr al-Dīn was asked to issue a fatwā in this regard, he said: "When the Unionist government abandons oppression and holds on to the Sharī'ah, then I guarantee you that Sharīf Ḥusayn will stand by your side".

Likewise, when the Turkish authorities began appointing incapable people to religious positions and they issued fatwās without being qualified to do so, Shaykh Badr al-Dīn was quick to respond. He declared that the

appointment of incapable persons to religious positions would result in the disappearance of any semblance of *din* and that the non-Muslims would eventually seize control of Muslim lands. He supported his statement by referring to a hadith from Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī who heard the Messenger of Allah say: “Do not lament over the religion if its affairs are managed by capable people, however lament over it when incapable people take charge”.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE YOUTH

He visited some schools and even attended some lessons. He once visited a school where he attended two lessons, one in Mathematics and the other in Philosophy. He even participated in solving some mathematical problems. This had a profound effect on the teachers and the students. He drew the youth closer to him at a time when many were alienating themselves from the religion. It was a time when the *shuyūkh* were accusing the youth of going astray and being rebellious, while the youth accused the *shuyūkh* of being stagnant. The enemies of Islam benefited from this struggle. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn adopted another approach, which involved being loving and bringing people together.

Whenever he saw a young man in a lesson, he drew him closer and when it was time for *ṣalāh*, he urged him to lead the *ṣalāh*, even though many senior scholars were in the congregation. This would often result in the young man repenting as soon as the *ṣalāh* was over, and joining the company of the students seeking religious knowledge. At times, the Shaykh gave a white turban to one of the youth just before the young man stepped forward to lead the *ṣalāh*. On many occasions, he would intentionally look out for a clean shaven young man and request him to lead the *ṣalāh*. The young man, very shy and somewhat embarrassed, would step forward because Shaykh Badr al-Dīn was behind him, along with many *‘ulamā*. At times, he used to ask one of his students to tell a young man that he (Shaykh Badr al-Dīn) loved him for the pleasure of Allah. These actions had a profound influence on the youth.

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn even visited the prisons and met with the prisoners. He comforted them and advised them to repent and improve their connection with Allah. He urged those who were wronged to exercise patience and he appealed to the authorities to treat the prisoners well and fairly.

DEALING WITH RUMOURS AND BACKBITING

The Shaykh disliked and disapproved of backbiting at all times. He was once invited by the Governor to a gathering that had many prominent

people and scholars in attendance. The Governor began speaking about someone. The Shaykh indicated to him to stop, but the Governor did not take heed and continued speaking. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn stood up and was determined to leave the gathering. When the Governor learned about this, he stopped and apologized.

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn was very eager to correct any misunderstanding or anything that may be a cause of conflict and disunity between people. Once, a rumour reached Shaykh ‘Abdul Razzāq al-Bayṭār that Shaykh Badr al-Dīn had mentioned something bad about him. He hastened to write a letter to the Shaykh, which he hoped to send to him with one of his students. The students were not sure whether they ought to show the letter to Shaykh Badr al-Dīn because they were fully aware that he never permitted any kind of backbiting. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn overheard them and their hesitation and he read the letter. He went to visit Shaykh al-Bayṭār at his home in al-Maydān immediately. Shaykh al-Bayṭār heard about this, so he went out to the street and received him warmly. He invited him to lunch and the Shaykh accepted. The visit ended with each of these scholars realizing the truthfulness of the other, as well as the falsity of the rumour, without either of them even raising the topic. Their respect and reverence for one another increased and Shaykh al-Bayṭār composed a poem praising Shaykh Badr al-Dīn and his vast knowledge and excellent character.

In another incident, some envious people had spread rumours about Shaykh ‘Alī al-Daqr. Shaykh ‘Alī was deeply hurt and remained confined to his home for a long time. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn asked about his well-being and was informed about the rumours. The Shaykh was angry and said: (*lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billah*) There is no power and might except with Allah).

He then asked someone to call Shaykh ‘Alī. When he arrived, Shaykh Badr al-Dīn comforted him, took him by the hand and walked with him through the market place openly praising him and speaking highly about him and his knowledge and piety. Shaykh ‘Alī was very pleased and he returned to his family. Thereafter, he always had a good reputation and was loved and respected by the people.

AFFECTION FOR THE ‘ULAMĀ

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn loved and respected the ulama. On one occasion, when the mufti of Hama, Shaykh Salīm Murād, visited him, he stood up to receive him, kissed his beard and seated him alongside him with great respect and honour. When Shaykh Īsā al-Bayānūnī (d. 1362 AH (1943 CE)), who was from Aleppo, visited him at the Dār al-Ḥadīth, he stood up and

embraced him, kissed him and seated him alongside him and honoured him. Similarly, many senior ulama and awliya attended the lessons that were conducted by Shaykh Muḥammad Salīm al-Ustuwānī (d. 1365 AH (1946 CE)). Shaykh Badr al-Dīn displayed extra affection and attention to them, and listened attentively to the comments that were made by many of the righteous scholars in the hope that they may have been divinely inspired in their understanding and thus he could benefit from what they had to say.

ASSISTANCE AND CONCERN FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn was kind and helpful to everyone. He was deeply concerned about the affairs of the poor and the widows. He was very generous and never turned anyone away. Even though he never entered the government building in his life, he was once approached by a Christian man from Lebanon for help regarding his son. The man's son fled to avoid military conscription and he was found guilty and his punishment was execution. The man was hoping that the Shaykh would appeal to Jamāl Bāshā on behalf of his son. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn wrote a letter to Jamal Bāshā asking him to pardon the boy. Jamāl Bāshā accepted and pardoned all those who were guilty, including the boy.

On another occasion conflict erupted between the Muslims and the Christians. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn hastened to prevent it from becoming uncontrollable. He visited some churches. Eventually, along with 'Abdul Qādir al-Jazā'irī, he was instrumental in bringing a peaceful end to the situation. He received many letters of appreciation for his role, including letters from Christian religious figures in Damascus and Beirut. This incident made him even more famous and resulted in an invitation from the Russian leader to attend a function. He excused himself and did not attend. He even apologized and did not accept Sultan 'Abdul Ḥamīd's invitation. However, when an ordinary man from Damascus invited him at a time that coincided with the Sultan's invitation, he accepted.

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Farfūr and Shaykh Muḥammad Hāshim al-Khaṭīb were studying a treatise on the astrolabe with Shaykh Badr al-Dīn when a group of Christians from one of the villages of Horan came. They entered, greeted him and kissed his hand and one of them remarked in a jovial manner: "O Mawlānā! Your cheeks are not red and neither are your eyes black, so why do we love you?" The Shaykh smiled and said: "I don't know". He continued being friendly with them until they were ready to leave before which they requested his duā.

The following incident also testifies to his humility and good character. Three of his students, namely Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Farfūr, Shaykh Muḥammad

Hāshim al-Khaṭīb and Shaykh Muḥammad Suhayl al-Khaṭīb, met in his room after a lesson. A young student named Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Rumayḥ, whom the Shaykh loved, was present. He asked Shaykh Badr al-Dīn to intercede for all those present on the Day of Qiyāmah. The young student said: “O master! (Shaykh Badr al-Dīn), promise us, that the one who is saved will not abandon his brother”. The Shaykh agreed to this promise and when they were done, Shaykh Badr al-Dīn reminded them and said: “Don’t forget that whoever amongst you is saved, must not abandon me on the Day of Qiyāmah”.

HIS APPROACH IN ENJOINING GOOD AND FORBIDDING EVIL

One of his students informed him about a prostitutes’ home that had reopened its doors. The student requested that the Shaykh reprimand and address them in a harsh tone. This did not happen. Instead, the Shaykh gave the student two gold coins, knowing very well that ‘Īd was close. He asked the student to give the two coins to the lady in charge of the place. He told the student to ask her to distribute the coins among the women who worked for her as an ‘Īd gift, on condition that they take a bath (ghusl), perform two rak’ahs and supplicate for the Shaykh. When the lady did that, the women wept loudly and some announced their repentance (tawbah). Shaykh Badr al-Dīn’s wisdom resulted in a positive outcome.

In this regard, Shaykh Badr al-Dīn was very particular about the role of women in society and regularly addressed aspects related to the way they dressed, the way the public interacted at the public toilets, and the responsibility people had in this regard.

SOME MIRACLES (KARĀMĀT) ATTRIBUTED TO HIM

Shaykh Maḥmūd Rankūsī mentioned that he would question the Shaykh about a certain issue that they were studying in some of the books. The Shaykh would respond, saying: “Ask the author”. Shaykh Maḥmūd used to respond: “He passed away a long time ago”. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn would reply: “Don’t you see him next to you?”

He would frequently say to his students: “Do you hear the Prophet’s response to your greeting when you greet him in tashahhud *al-Salāmu ‘alayka ayyuha al-Nabī wa raḥmatullah wa barakātuh?* (May the peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you, O Prophet)”

Shaykh Maḥmūd asked: “And does anyone hear that?” Shaykh Badr al-Dīn replied: “There are people, if the Messenger of Allah is absent from them for even a moment, they will die”.

On another occasion, Shaykh Maḥmūd was in a group who was studying Sharḥ al-Raḍī ‘alā al-Kāfiyah in Arabic grammar. Some of the seniors suggested that he ask the Shaykh to substitute it with another text because this text was long and they could not complete it. They asked Shaykh Maḥmūd to make this request because he was the youngest. So, Shaykh Maḥmūd suggested to the Shaykh that he substitute the book with another one. The one they were studying was too long. He said they may die without completing the book. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn responded: “Who said this? I am the last person to teach this book and you, O Maḥmūd, will be the last to complete the book with me”. It was exactly as he had said. Shaykh Maḥmūd was the last and only person to have completed the book with the Shaykh over a period of four years.

Another incident involved Shaykh Maḥmūd al-Ashqar, who broke his hand and it put in a cast. When the cast was removed, the doctors informed him that gangrene had spread in his hand, so it would have to be amputated. He told the story to Shaykh Badr al-Dīn, asking him to supplicate (dua) for him and to treat him using ruqiyah. The Shaykh smiled and informed him that his hand would heal. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn placed his hand on Shaykh al-Ashqar’s hand and recited for about twenty minutes. Shaykh al-Ashqar returned home and woke the next morning with no pain or discomfort in his hand. It was as if there had never been any gangrene and as if it had never broken. He went to the Dār al-Ḥadīth, where he met Shaykh Badr al-Dīn and began kissing his sandals and jumping for joy. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn merely said:

Allahu yuṣliḥuka (May Allah rectify your affairs) and he was crying. This took place in the presence of Shaykh Hāshim al-Khaṭīb and Shaykh ‘Alī al-Daqr.

Shaykh Maḥmūd al-Ashqar related that on one occasion while he was on his way to work in the market (sūq al-khayyāṭīn), a thought crossed his mind, namely which of the two scholars, Shaykh Badr al-Dīn or Shaykh ‘Abdul Ḥakīm al-Afghānī, was greater in knowledge and rank (piety). The two scholars were in the Dār al-Ḥadīth in rooms across from each another. Shaykh al-Ashqar immediately diverted from his path and went towards the Dār al-Ḥadīth. When he entered, he found the two scholars standing at their rooms, each pointing at the other.

Statements attributed to him

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn encouraged the acquisition of knowledge in its broader sense, which included subjects like mathematics, astronomy and other languages. In fact, he said: “Indeed, learning anything that will contribute

to the advancement of the Muslims is compulsory”. In this regard, he was once asked about travelling to Europe to study those subjects that may benefit Muslims or spread Islam. He responded and said that if that was the purpose, it was compulsory to do so.

He was a true example of the following saying by the ulama: “Whoever acts upon what he knows, Allah will teach him that which he never knew”. He told his students: “Ḥadīth is not studied only to be memorized, but to be practiced”. He also said, “A person is not considered to be one who holds to the Quran and Sunnah as long as he does not intend to act upon it”.

He said further: “Do you know what it means to be a learned person (‘alim)? The ‘alim is one who regards himself as incapable of anything, turns his attention to Allah, and speaks fulfilling the command of Allah. Allah honours the alim with an opening (faḥḥ)”. “Verily, ṣadaqah is for the poor and the destitute.” (Sūrah al-Tawbah, 60).

The majority of scholars are of the opinion that it is permissible to act on a weak ḥadīth, especially in matters relating to establishing virtues, (faḍā’il) and to use it as a means of encouragement or to warn people against something. However, it may not be acted on in matters relating to that which is lawful and unlawful (ḥalāl and ḥarām). Shaykh Badr al-Dīn was of the view that a hadith is usually regarded as weak because of its chain of transmission and not because of its text. So there is no harm in using it to admonish others and to take heed of its warnings, thus benefiting from it, provided the following two conditions are met: Firstly, it does not go against a ruling established by an authentic ḥadīth or a well-known ruling. Secondly, its wording is not attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad.

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn revered teaching the din and even taught on the day of ‘Īd. When questioned about it, he merely said: “This is ‘Īd! This is ‘Īd!” (referring to the teaching). Shaykh Maḥmūd Rankūsī visited the Shaykh in his last days when he was very weak and ill. Acting on doctors’ instructions, his family did not permit many visitors, and no one was allowed to read a text to him. Shaykh Maḥmūd said that the Shaykh would drag himself into a sitting position. Shaykh Maḥmūd informed him that his family were unhappy about this, so he said: “If I abandon the lesson, I get sick. When I read I feel better. Do you want me to get sick? So don’t stop him from the lesson”.

A number of prominent ulama like Shaykh Muḥammad al-Makkī al-Kettānī and Shaykh Abū al-Yusr ‘Ābidīn listened to him and conveyed what he said. They said, “He encouraged the acquisition of all forms of knowledge including other languages. He acted on weak ḥadīths, provided that the conditions were met, and provided that it was not fabricated (mawḍū‘). He held the view that the books of ḥadīth and shamā’il are not merely read for

barakah, but to be acted on. If they are not, then the very knowledge will be a proof against the person.

He also said that the zakāh of knowledge is to act upon it and to promote it among the people. The door of ijtihād is open, but only for people like Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, Imām al-Shāfi‘ī, Imām Mālik and Imām Aḥmad, not for people like us. Whoever is like them, will reach what they have reached, while whoever makes a claim to that which he does not have, will be proven false”.

In order to obtain abundance in one’s home and in sustenance, he advised one to read:

اللَّهُمَّ أصلح ديني ووسع لي في داري وبارك لي فيما رزقتني

Allahumma aṣliḥ dīnī wa wassi’ lī fī dārī wa bārik lī fimā razaqtanī

“O Allah! Correct the affairs of my religion and expand my home for me and bless me in what you have sustained me with”

Or in another narration

اللَّهُمَّ اغفر لي ذنبي ووسع لي في داري وبارك لي في رزقي

Allahumma ighfir lī dhanbī wa wassi’ lī fī dārī wa bārik lī fī rizqī

“O Allah! Forgive my sins and expand my home for me and bless me in my sustenance.”

Shaykh Badr al-Dīn believed that the key to the Muslims’ victory over the French was in verse 200 of Sūrah Āl-‘Imrān:

يأيتها الذين امنوا اصبروا وصابروا وابطوا واتقوا الله لعلكم تفلحون

“O you who have iman, be steadfast, be supreme in steadfastness, be firm on the battlefield and have taqwā of Allah, so that hopee fully you will be successful.”

Yā ayyuha aldhina amanū isbirū wa ṣābirū wa rābiṭū wa ittaqū
Allah la’allkum tufliḥūn

The ‘ulamā’s reverence for him

Shaykh Mūsā Kāzīm (d. 1920 CE), the senior scholar of Turkey, said: “He is the pivot (quṭb) of the Muslim world”.

Shaykh al-Sayyid al-Kabīr al-Kettānī (d. 1909 CE) said: “For the last 500 years there has been no one like him”.

The mufti of Egypt, Shaykh Muḥammad Bakhīt al-Muṭī’ī (d. 1354 AH (1935 CE)) said: “If he were in Egypt, then the scholars would have carried him above their heads”. When he met the Shaykh in Damascus, he said, “You are here in Syria where they don’t realise your worth. If you come to Egypt, the entire country would boast about you and the ulama of al-Azhar will study with you”.

Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Ashiq Ilāhī Mirathī (d. 1360 AH (1941 CE)) described him as a quṭb and the light/sun of guidance.

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Farfūr (d. 1407 AH (1986 CE)) said: “People have not seen anyone like him. And it is seldom that someone like him can be replaced. It is indeed true what some have said: ‘He exhausted those after him.’”

Shaykh Muḥammad Kāmīl al-Qaṣṣāb (d. 1373 AH (1954 CE)), the head of the Jamiyatul ‘Ulamā of Damascus, said that he had travelled the Muslim world, visiting countries like Egypt, India, Yemen, and different parts of Syria and Iraq. He had heard the lessons of the ‘ulamā, but had never heard anything like Shaykh Badr al-Dīn’s lesson.

Shaykh Muḥammad Sa’id al-Ḥamzāwī al-Ḥusaynī (d. 1978 CE) said that, for a long time, Damascus had not known anyone like him, whether from amongst the ‘ulamā or from amongst the sufis. Therefore, everyone obeyed him - the men and women, the general population and its leaders, and the young and old. A mere indication from him was like a word, while a word from him was a ruling, and a ruling was received by the people with delight.

Shaykh Muḥammad al-Makkī al-Kettānī (d. 1393 AH (1973 CE)), the son of the renowned scholar and muḥaddith, Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Ja’far al-Kettānī, said that his father invited Shaykh Badr al-Dīn and some of his students to their home for a meal. When the meal was over, Shaykh Badr al-Dīn wished to make wudū and stood up but was unable to find his sandals. Shaykh al-Makkī was shy and uncomfortable when he saw this, so he went to ask his father about the sandals, only to find him wiping one of the sandals, with the intention of acquiring barakah, while his wife was doing the same with the other sandal. He returned the sandals to Shaykh Badr al-Dīn after he had requested all his children to do the same.

Another incident was related by Shaykh Sa’id al-Ḥalabī (d. 1367 AH (1948 CE)) about one of his outstanding students, Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Abidīn, the author of the famous Hāshiyah. He said that while Shaykh Muḥam-

mad was teaching in Jāmi' Banī Umayyah, he would suddenly stand, sit, stand, and then sit after a while and continue the lesson. When the class was over, the students asked him about his conduct. He said that while he was teaching, Shaykh Badr al-Dīn's son passed by and he was too ashamed to sit, so he stood out of respect for him. When the son returned after a while, he stood again. He did this out of loyalty to his father as it was the least he could do as a sign of respect for the family.

The famous Moroccan scholar, Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Ja'far al-Kettānī (d. 1927 CE), praised Shaykh Badr al-Dīn in the following two lines of poetry:

لبدر الدين فضل ليس يخفى
تضيء به الليالي المدهمة

يريد الحاسدون ليطفئوه
ويأبى الله إلا أن يتمه

*Li Badr al-Dīn faḍl laysa yukhfā
tuḍī bihi al-layālī al-mudlahimmah*

*Yurīd al-ḥāsīdūn li yuṭfiūhu
wa ya'bā Allah illā an yutimmahu*

Badr al-Din has virtue that is not hidden
It illuminates the dark nights

The envious people wish to extinguish it
And Allah wishes to complete it.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the ummah will always face trials and challenges. However, it is by virtue of the grace and mercy of Allah ﷻ that there will always be individuals who renew matters of the din and restore some of its former glory. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn did not call people to rebel or revolt against the Ottoman Empire, which was at its weakest. Instead he called towards correcting the wrong and offering advice to the leaders with special attention to Islamic religious knowledge. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn was a true manifestation of the verse in Sūrah al-Baqarah: “And fear Allah and Allah will teach you.”

Anyone who looked at the Shaykh’s life would think that, as it was confined to his home, the masjid and his room at the Dār al-Ḥadīth, his thoughts and perceptions did not transcend these boundaries. However, anyone who really knew and studied his life closely, would soon realise that his thoughts were with the Muslim world, which was, to an extent, depicted in his walks in the market place and the alleys of the city.

He was a man who fulfilled the role of an entire community, thus it is befitting that he was described as: “The new moon that rose in an era of darkness, stagnation and trials”. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn personified the meaning and spirit of Islam in all its spheres and revived the dīn in the hearts, minds and lives of people. There is no scholar in Damascus except that he is a student of his student. His legacy continues to live on through his students and their legacies.

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