

Imam Dardir: A short introduction

His Life

His full name is Shaykh Ahmad ibn Ahmad ibn Abi Hamid al-'Adawi al-Maliki, al-Azhari al-Khalwati, Ahmad Dardir. He was born in the village of Banu 'Adi, so named because the Banu 'Adi tribe, descendants from Quraysh, settled in that particular city.

His noble lineage returns to the 2nd Caliph of Islam, Amir al Mu'minin, Umar ibn al-Khataab.(may Allah be pleased with him) He was named Dardir because when the Arabs arrived in the city of Banu 'Adi, there was a noble, respected, and pious man who was known as Dardir. It is from him that Imam Ahmad was dubbed Dardir.

He was born in 1127 Hijri, and was a Hafiz and Qaar'i of Qur'aan. The seeking of knowledge was beloved to him and he was one of the foremost of students at al-Azhar. He studied with the most eminent luminaries at the prestigious university. He studied the science of hadith with the notable Shaykh Muhammad al-Dafrawi, not to mention the great Shaykh Ahmad al-Sabbagh.

He obtained mastery in the science of *fiqh* with Shaykh 'Ali al-Sa'eedi al-Ghadawi. He kept constant company with his teacher until his prominence and mastery (in fiqh) became manifest.

He then decided to tread the path of spirituality and immersed himself in the sciences of the soul. He took the path with Shaykh Shams-al-Din al-Hifny, and ascended in the Khalwati Sufi Order. He eventually obtained *ijaaza* from Shaykh Shams-al-Din in dhikr and the Khalwati Sufi Order, until he became one of the most distinguished spiritual leaders of the order.

Some of his noted students include:

- Shaykh Shamd al-Din Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ahmad 'Arafat al-Dasuqi
- Abu al-Khayraat Mustafa al-'Aqaabawy, who is known for completing the superb commentary on "Aqrab al- Masaalik".

- Abu 'Abbas Ahmad al-Saawi
- Abu Falaah Salih ibn Muhammad ibn Salih al-Sibaa'i
- Abu Rabi' Sulayman ibn Muhammad al Fayoumi

Imam Ahmad Dardir's works include:

1. Sharh Mukhtassir al-Khalil
2. Aqrab al Masaalik, of the Maliki Madhhab
3. Sharh al-Saghir Mukthassir al-Khalil
4. Nadhm al-Kharida al-Saniyya 'ala Aqidat al-Sunniya
5. Tuhfat al-Ikhwaan fi aadab 'Ahl al 'Irfaan fi' Tasawwuf
6. Sharh 'ala Wird al-Adhkaar (written by Karim al-Din al-Khalwati), just to name a few.

Imam Ahmad's Attributes

Imam Ahmad spent his time studying the intellectual and traditional sciences. He was nicknamed "*Shaykh of the Muslims*" and "*The Blessing of Allah's Creation*." He was a pure-hearted Sufi and a man of asceticism, a Sunni and defender of truth. He was known as a guardian of Muslims from sins and immorality and was not intimidated by men of worldly rank and honor. He was master of the spiritual sciences and a man of amiable and affable comportment.

When his teacher, Shaykh 'Ali, passed away, Imam Dardir was appointed as the leader of the Maliki scholars. He was the Shaykh of Egypt in worldly and spiritual matters. He would command to good and exhort against evil and was a shepard amongst his people. He was always concerned with the promotion of truth to the people around him and always sought to do good and guide mankind.

Many miracles became manifest at his blessed hands, hence why he was named, "The Father of Blessings." Many of these miracles were attested to by multiple historical sources.

He was famous for being from the people of divine acceptance. Due to his scrupulous approach to eating halaal, it was said that when he raised his hands and supplicated, Allah would answer him. He never ate food in which there was doubt regarding its permissibility. He

always ascertained the source of his food and all that he consumed, to ensure that he only ate that which Allah deemed lawful.

It is also mentioned that when the Ottoman Governor had forced the people into (slave) work and closed the gates of his castle, Imam Ahmad approached the castle with the people and stood praying for the safety of the people. Once he raised his hands to the sky, the locks of the gates immediately fell and the people entered the castle. They continued until they reached the treasury of the governor. And every time the people encountered a lock, the imam would merely raise his hands and the locks would fall.

The Imam's Death

He returned to his lord in the 6th of Rabi al Awwal in the year 1201 (hijri), which was December 27th, 1786. The entirety of al-Azhar prayed his funeral prayer and was buried next to the tomb of Shaykh Yahya ibn Uqb. His resting place is now known as Masjid 'Aamir. May Allah shower his infinite mercy upon him and enoble him with a high rank in paradise.