

Ibn Rajab (090593)

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## Ibn Rajab

Zayn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, known as **Ibn Rajab** (d. 795/1393), was a *ḥadīth* scholar born, according to the most authoritative biographical accounts, in Baghdad in the year 736/1335–6. He lived during the reign of the Mamlūks (648–923/1250–1517), which was characterised by a concentration of scholars in Syria and Egypt, a steady output of written scholarship, and numerous schools and centres of higher learning supported by official patronage and private endowments.

From an early age, Ibn Rajab showed scholarly inclinations, thanks, in part, to the religious family into which he was born. He benefited enormously from the tutelage of his grandfather ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 742/1341), who was a jurist (also nicknamed “Rajab,” as he was born in the month of Rajab), and from his father Aḥmad (d. 774/1372), who was a specialist in variant readings of the Qur’ān and took a particular interest in *ḥadīth*. Ibn Rajab’s piety was the driving force behind his extensive travels through the

Islamic metropolises of learning in Egypt, Mecca, Palestine, and Baghdad, during which he studied various Arabic and Islamic disciplines from the notable scholars of the time, such as Ibn al-Khabbāz (d. 756/1354), al-‘Alā’ī (d. 761/1359), Ibn Hishām (d. 761/1360), and ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Jamā’a (d. 767/1365). Like most scholars of his time, he used his *ḥajj* journeys also for learning and development. Many of his teachers, especially in his early years, were also teachers of his father, as they travelled together seeking knowledge from well known scholars, another testament to the influence of Ibn Rajab’s father upon his inclination to seek knowledge and learning. Following his *ḥajj* journey in 763/1361, he settled permanently in Damascus.

Ibn Rajab was as an ardent adherent of the Ḥanbalī school of law but studied under specialists in various disciplines who belonged to other schools of law. This augmented and consolidated the learning he had received under his father and grandfather. The person who connected Ibn Rajab to the Damascene circle of Ḥanbalī *ḥadīth* jurists was Ibn al-Qayyim

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