

Hazrat Shah Ghulam Ali Dehlvi ?????????? ???? (by Tahir Ghaffari)

Written by Anwar-un-Nabi (?????????? ???? ???? ????)

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He was the Mujaddid of 13th century of the Hijri calendar. A Mujaddid is the highest post of Awliya who revives the religion of Islam at the start of every century, and all the Awliya of that century get benefited from his Fayd (spiritual blessings).

Hadhrat Sh^h Abdull^h Mujaddid^h Naqshband^h, more popular with the name Shah Ghul^m Ali Dehlav^h, may Allah sanctify his soul, was the most prominent Sufi Shaykh of India in the early 13th Hijri century. A great scholar of Islamic sciences and the ultimate Shaykh of the Mujaddidi Sufi order, he was the immediate spiritual successor of Hadhrat Mirz^h Mazhar Jⁿ-e-Jⁿ, may Allah sanctify his soul, who is known to be one of the earliest poets of modern Urdu as well as a renowned Sufi master.

He had mastered all the Sufi methods and was the greatest Shaykh of all Sufi orders in India at that time. He was a master of all Islamic sciences such as Hadth and Fiqh, and was the Mujaddid of the 13th century AH. He was the chief Qutb under whose command are all the saints of the world. He was the Qayy^m of his times.

He was born in 1156 A.H / 1743 C.E., in Patiala (currently in Indian Punjab). His father Sayyid Abdul Lat^f Bat^{lvi}, may peace be upon him, was a great ascetic and Sufi of the Q^{dri} tar^{qa} (method) and a disciple of Shaykh N^h siruddⁿ Q^{dri}.

Just before his birth, his father had a vision that Hadhrat Ali al-Murtadh^h, may Allah be pleased with him, came to him and asked him to name his to-be-born son as **Ali**. Accordingly, he was named Ali at birth, but later he changed it to Ghul^m Ali (meaning Slave of Ali). His uncle, however, named him **Abdull^h** as commanded by the Messenger of Allah, may peace and blessings be upon him. Today he is known with both the names, although **Ghulam Ali** is more common.

He had a sharp memory and memorized the Holy Quran in just a month. His father wanted to make him a disciple of his own shaykh Hadhrat N^h siruddin Q^{dri}, and called him to Delhi for this purpose. When he reached Delhi, soon the Shaykh passed away and his father then allowed him to take any Shaykh as he wanted. He used to go to Suhbat (company) of many Shaykhs in Delhi, and after two years, at the age of 22, he did Bay^h (initiation into a Sufi tariqa) with Hadhrat Mirz^h Mazhar Jⁿ-e-Jⁿ, may Allah be pleased with him, who was the greatest Sufi master in Delhi at that time. Famous author and Sufi scholar Shah Wali-Allah Dehlavi commented about Shaykh Jⁿ-e-Jⁿ that he is the greatest among the Awliya today in the whole world, and I can^t find a like of him in all the seven continents.

He was initiated by his Shaykh in the Q^{dr} silsila (chain or dynasty) but was trained in the Naqshbandi tar^{qa}. This created confusion in him, as he says I was doubtful if my being trained in the Naqshbandi tar^{qa} would displease Sayyidina Ghaus al-**am**, may Allah be pleased with him (who is the founder of the Q^{dri} tar^{qa}). One day I saw in a dream that Hadhrat Ghaus al-**am** is sitting in a house, and Hadhrat Sh^h Naqshband is sitting in a neighboring house. I wish to go to Shah Naqshband, and Hadhrat Ghaus al-**am** permits me to go there, saying the objective is only the God (not seeking a specific tar^{qa}).

After serving his Shaykh and getting spiritual training for fifteen years, Shah Ghul^m Ali purified himself and got perfected in all the Sufi orders, and received Ij^{zah} (authority) from his Shaykh and became his chief khal^{fa}, and later, his spiritual successor.

Sufi lineage

He received Ij^{zah} from his Shaykh in several Sufi orders, mainly the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi tariqa. He was the foremost Shaykh of this tariqa in his time, with no equal in any part of the world. Indeed, he was the Mujaddid (revivor) of the 13th century After Hijrah, as proclaimed by him in his Malf^{zat} and acknowledged by majority of Islamic scholars. He was also trained and perfected in other major Sufi orders, specially the Q^{dri} and Chishti orders, the most prevalent in India

after the Naqshbandi. Many prominent Shaykhs of other orders used to consult him in spiritual matters, as he was the ultimate guide in all orders in Delhi.

He received authority in the Naqshbandi tariqa from his Shaykh Mirza Mazhar J?n-e-J?n?n, who received it from Hadhrat Noor Muhammad Bad?y?n?, who received it from Hadhrat H?fiz Muhammad Mohsin Dehlavi, who received it from Hadhrat Khw?ja Saifuddin F?r?qi Sirhindi, who received it from his father Hadhrat Khwaja Muhammad Ma?soom F?r?qi Sirhindi, who received it from Hadhrat Imam Rabb?ni Mujaddid Alf Th?ni Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi F?r?qi, may Allah sanctify their souls and bless us with their Fayd.

He received permission in the Q?dri and Chishti Sufi orders from his Shaykh Mirza Mazhar J?n-e-J?n?n, who received it from Khwaja Muhammad ?id San?mi, who received it from Shaykh Abdul Ahad Sirhindi, who received it from Shaykh Muhammad Saeed F?r?qi Sirhindi, who received it from his father Imam Rabbani Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, may Allah sanctify their souls.

His Character

He was extremely humble and modest. One time, a street dog entered his home. The Shaykh prayed to God: Who am I to ask for the intercession of your friends? O God! Please forgive me for the sake of your creation (the dog).

Some people would take (steal) his books and then come back to him to sell the same books. He would laud those books and buy from them. If someone pointed out that the books were from his library and stamped, he would not listen.

Well known Indian politician and educator Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (d. 1898) was also associated with the Shaykh during his early life. He has written that my father and elder brother had Bay?ah with the Shaykh, and the Shaykh loved my family and considered my father as his son. Sir Syed has highly admired him in his writings. He reports:

At least five hundred persons used to live in Hadhrat?s shrine, and the expenses of their food and dress were born by the Shaykh, even though there was no fixed income for the shrine. Allah was providing from the Ghayb (Unseen). Even more, the Shaykh was so benevolent and generous, he never refused anything to the supplicants. He gave away whatever was asked for. He used to sell any expensive gifts and spent the amount on the fakirs. He would wear whatever they wore, and would eat whatever they ate. (Sir Syed Ahmed Khan)

Sir Syed further writes, he used to recite ten aj? (para in Urdu, thirtieth part of the holy Quran) from the Quran after Fajr, and then would do Mur?qaba along with his disciples. After Ishr?k (early morning prayer after sunrise), lessons of Had?th and Tafs?r would start. Whenever he heard the name of the Prophet, may peace be upon him, he would get excited and a strange spiritual state would prevail over the attendees.

He did not sleep in the night except, sometimes, for a few moments due to the overwhelming of sleep when he would lie down on his Musalla (praying place). He never slept over a bed for many years. He had an old carpet, over it a Musalla usually made of bulrush where he would pray day and night, while his disciples would encircle him in Halqa. His trust on God made him free of the offerings of the elite. Many rich persons including the king wanted to financially support the kh?naqah, but he never accepted.

With all his simplicity and freedom, he never acted against the Sunnah, rather followed the Shariah and Sunnah in the smallest of matters. He would not like people acting against the Sunnah to visit him.

Teachings

He said, the seeker of *Zoq* and *Shoq* (feelings of emotional enthusiasm) and visions and miracles is not the seeker of God. The seeker must only seek God alone, and anything that comes in the way must be negated, and he should affirm that I have no other goal but the Pure Being.

He said, there is no hardship in my tar?qa, but there is *Wuq?f Qalbi* which means one should always keep the heart heedful of the Exalted Being (God) and should protect it from the past and present dangers (harmful and

useless thoughts).

He said, Zak?at is obligatory after the passage of a year, but I pay it as soon as I get any income (according to the recommended practice in Hanafi Fiqh).

Miracles and Visions

Numerous miracles (Kar?am?t) and spiritual visions are narrated about him. His supplications were immediately accepted. His prayers cured the sick and his talk cured the hearts. He knew what was in the minds of the listeners, and would talk according to that. His greatest miracle was his curing the hearts from spiritual diseases and purifying the souls from the worldly dirt. Some of his visions and miracles are presented here.

He said, one night I called **Ya Rasool-Allah** (O Messenger of Allah), and heard a reply **Labbaika Y? Abdun S?le** (I am present O pious slave).

He said, one night I slept before Isha. The Messenger of Allah, may peace and blessings be upon him, came (in vision) and commanded me not to sleep before offering Isha.

One of his disciples Zulf Shah said, **When I was traveling to Delhi in order to take Bay?ah with the Shaykh, I lost my way in a desert. Suddenly a saint showed up and guided me to the right way. I asked, who are you? He said, I am the one to whom you are traveling. This happened twice.**

A person was coming to him from Bukhara through Kabul. His camel drowned while crossing the Attock river with all its loaded stuff. He wished that if his camel comes out from the river alive and loaded, I will pay the Niaz of the Shaykh (Niaz is a kind of charity whose reward is intended for someone else, specially a Shaykh or Prophet). With the grace of Allah, the camel came out. When that person came to the Shaykh and told him this miracle, the Shaykh asked him if he had paid the Niaz. He said yes, I have.

Legacy

His tar?qa and Fayd spread to the near and far. People would come to him to seek the love of Allah from every corner of the world. Many people including scholars came to him from all corners of India, from Persia and Transoxiana, from Turkish and Kurd areas and from the Arab world. Mawlana Kh?lid al-Baghdadi, who was a Kurd, came to him and received Khilafah within nine months. He spread the tar?qa to hundreds of thousands of people in the Middle East and Turkish nations.

Hadhrat Shah Ghul?m Ali once said, **my Fayd has reached farthest countries, our Halqa (meaning gathering of the followers of his tariqa) is held in Makkah and Madinah Munawwara, similarly our Halqa is held in Baghdad, Rome and Maghreb; and (he said smilingly) Bukhara is like our ancestral home.**

He was the Mujaddid of 13th century of the Hijri calendar. A Mujaddid is the highest post of Awliya who revives the religion of Islam at the start of every century, and all the Awliya of that century get benefited from his Fayd (spiritual blessings).

Today, majority of the active brotherhoods in the Naqshbandi order trace their lineage to the Shaykh. Those in the Turkey and Iraq connect to him through Maulana Khalid Baghdadi, and those in the Persian countries and the Indian subcontinent through Hadhrat Hafiz Abu Saeed Faruqi. The Naqshbandi tariqah is the most spiritually alive tariqah today, and it is foretold by the Shaykhs of this tariqah that Imam Mahdi, may peace be upon him, will also belong to the noble tariqah of Naqshbandiyah.

Demise

He wished for Shah?dah (martyrdom) but did not supplicate to God for this, as the Shah?dah of his Shaykh Hadhrat Mirza brought immense suffering for the people (probably as a sign of Allah's displeasure).

This great Imam and Qutb passed away to the eternal world on 22 Safar 1240 A.H. (October 1824) at the age of 84. He was buried next to his Shaykh in the Kh?naqah Mazhariya in Delhi, India. At the time of death, he was holding famous book of Hadith **J?mi al-Tirmidhi** on his noble chest. His funeral prayer was offered in the J?mi mosque of Delhi, led by his chief khalifa Hadhrat Hafiz Abu Saeed and attended by thousands.

His Khulafa and Successor

He granted Ij?zah to many of his followers, most of them became

prominent Sufi Shaykhs. Thirty eight names of his deputies are known and narrated in his biographies. His deputies spread to most of the Islamic world at the time, who spread the Naqshbandi tariqah in India, Arabia, Persia, Turkey and Africa. Some of the most prominent names among his Khulafa are listed below:

- Hadhrat H?fiz Sh?h Ab? Saeed F?r?q? Mujaddidi Naqshbandi, who was appointed by the Shaykh to be his successor in the kh?naqah in Dehli. He lived around nine years after the Shaykh and trained thousands of followers after him. He died in 1250 A.H. and is buried in Kh?naqah Mazhariya in Delhi.
- Hadhrat Sh?h Ahmad Saeed F?r?q? Mujaddidi, son of Shah Ab? Saeed Faruqi, who received Khilafah from Shah Ghul?m Ali, and succeeded him after the demise of his father. Due to his popularity in Indian Muslims and his leading role in the 1857 rebellion against the British colonialists, the government wanted to prosecute him, and so, he migrated to Madinah al-Munawwara in later part of his life where he died there in 1277 A.H.
- Mawl?n? Kh?lid al-Baghd?d? Kurdi Shahrazuri (Baghdad, Iraq), died 1242 A.H. / 1827 C.E. He is the most well-known from his Khulafa, as he spread the Naqshbandi tariqah in the Middle East and Turkey and vast numbers of people including renowned scholars and eminent Shaykhs were initiated in the tariqah through him.
- Hadhrat Sh?h Ra?f Ahmad R?ft Faruqi Mujaddidi R?mpuri (Bhopal, India, d. 1253 A.H.)
- Mawlana Sayyid Ism?eel Madani (Madinah, Saudi Arabia)
- Hadhrat Mawlana Ghul?m Mohiudd?n Qusoori (Qusoor, Pakistan, d. 1270 A.H.)
- Maulana Bash?rat-Allah Behr?ichi
- Maulana Shah Gul Muhammad Ghaznavi (Bukhara, Uzbekistan)
- Maulana Muhammad Shareef (Sirhind, India)
- Maulana P?r Muhammad (Kashmir)
- Maulana J?n Muhammad Herati (Herat, Afghanistan)
- Shaykh al-Haram Maulana Muhammad J?n (Makkah, d. 1266 A.H.)

Writings
 Fifteen works of writing are attributed to the Shaykh, apart from two collections of Malf?z?t (transcribed sayings) written by his khulafa. His authored works include:

- Maq?m?t-e-Mazhar? (?????? ?????), the best and complete biography of his shaykh Mirza Mazhar J?n-e-J?n?n, may Allah be pleased with him, written in Persian in around 1211 A.H.
- d?h al-Tar?qat (?????? ?????????), written in 1212 A.H., about Adhkar, terms and principles of the Naqshbandi tariqah. [Persian text with Urdu translation here](http://www.maktabah.org/item/2303-idah-ut-tariqat)
- Ahw?l-e-Buzurg?n (?????? ?????????), written after 1225 A.H. This is a biographical work with biographies of some great shaykhs.
- Maq?m?t Mujaddid Alf Th?ni (?????? ????? ???? ?????). This treatise contains description of the merits and high spiritual achievements of Imam Rabbani Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, may Allah be pleased with him.
- Tar?q Bay?h wa Azk?r
- Tar?qah shar?fah Sh?h-e-Naqshband
- Ahw?!

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Sh?h-e-Naqshband <em style="line-height: 1.3em;">Ris?lah Azk?r
<em style="line-height: 1.3em;">Ris?lah Mur?qib?t <em style="line-height: 1.3em;">Radd Aetir?z?t, contains refutations of the defiance of Hadhrat Imam Rabbani by Shah Abdul Haqq Dehlavi, who later repented from his claims but some other people used his writings to refute Imam Rabbani Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, may Allah be pleased with him. <em style="line-height: 1.3em;">Radd Mukh?lif?n Hazrat Mujaddid <em style="line-height: 1.3em;">Ris?lah Mashgh?liyah <em style="line-height: 1.3em;">Kam?!t Mazhari, authored in 1237 A.H. / 1821 <em style="line-height: 1.3em;">Sulook R?qiyah Naqshbandiyah <em style="line-height: 1.3em;">Mak?t?b Shar?fa, his 125 letters collected by his khalifa Hadhrat Shah Rauf Ahmad Raaft Mujaddidi, may Allah be pleased with him. This has been published multiple times. <p>◆</p> <p>His Malf?z?t were collected by two of his Khulafa. The first, called Durr al-Ma◆?rif, was written by Hadhrat Shah Rauf Ahmad Raaft in 1231 A.H., and the second which contains Malf?z?t of forty days, was written by Khwaja Ghul?m Mohiuddin Qusoori, may Allah be pleased with them both.</p> <p>May Allah grant us a share from his blessings and make us follow his footsteps.</p> <p>Sources</p> <p> <em style="line-height: 1.3em;">Faiz Naqshband, Urdu translation of <em style="line-height: 1.3em;">Durr al-Ma◆?rif, the sayings of Shah Ghulam Ali Dehlavi, written by Shah Rauf Ahmad Raaft Mujaddidi and translated by Maulana Abdul Hakeem Khan <em style="line-height: 1.3em;">Maq?m?t Mazhari, Urdu translation by Iqbal Ahmed Mujaddidi, published by Urdu Science Board Lahore, second edition 2001 Short Biography in Urdu by Mukhtar Ahmed Tahiri, published in Attahir [www.islahumuslimeen.org] </p> <p>Notes</p> <p>Published in Maktabah.org, by Tahir Ghaffari</p>