

Tazkiyah Essentials Presents

HADHRAT SHAH SAHIB

*A Brief Biography of Hadhrat Sayyid Alauddin
Shah Sahib Jilani*

COMPILED BY JUNAID MUHAMMAD IBRAHIM

*Dedicated to the 'Ulema of Deoband and the Mashaayikh
of Naqshband*

Compiler's note

Alhamdulillah, a short biography of Hadhrat Sayyid Alauddin Shah Sahib Jilani is now available in the English language. Hadhrat Shah Sahib was a notable figure from the Subcontinent that lived in the past century. However, little is known about him to the English speaking audience. Thus, the need was felt to compile a short biography on him. This biography is by no means exhaustive and I believe it does not fully do justice to Hadhrat Shah Sahib's life. Yet, to fulfil the need, this task was undertaken.

For this short biography, a number of resources have been used which include:

1. Majaalis Nasiriyyah - Compilation of discourses of Hadhrat Aqdas Mawlana Hafiz Muhammad Nasiruddin Khan Khakwani
2. The discourses delivered by Shaykhul Hadith Hadhrat Aqdas Mawlana Ghulam Fareed Sahib.
3. Mawaaiz Nasiriyyah - A short biography of Hadhrat Shah Sahib had been included in the start of the book.
4. Taareekh Khanqah Musazai Shareef

A glossary has also been attached at the end to provide translations of some of the Arabic/Urdu terms not translated within the biography itself.

Finally, I would like to specially thank my Shaykhayn (two shaykh's); the fragrance of the akaabireen of Deoband, the pride of the mashaayikh of Naqshband, the reviver of the Sunnah, Hadhrat Mawlana Hafiz Muhammad Nasiruddin Khan Khakwani; and the pious servant of Allah, Khalifa of

Hadhrat Khakwani, Shaykh al-Hadith Hadhrat Mawlana
Ghulam Fareed Sahib.

May Allah forgive my shortcomings and accept this work.
Aameen.

Birth and Lineage

Hadhrat Shah Sahib was born in 1909, in Karnal, in India, to a religious household from the Jilani family. His parents named him Alauddin after Hadhrat Alauddin Sabir Kaliyari, a prominent South Asian Sufi Saint of the Chishti Silsilah. He was famous by the name Shah Sahib. Be it the mashaayikh or his mureedeen, all would refer to him as Shah Sahib.

Hadhrat Shah Sahib was a Sayyid (from the family of Rasulullah (صلى الله عليه و سلم)). His lineage connects to the prominent Hanbali scholar and Sufi Saint, Hadhrat Shaykh Sayyid Abdul Qadir Jilani. Thus he would say, “I am a true Jilani Sayyid.”

Education

Hadhrat Shah Sahib received his initial religious studies and tutoring in the recitation of the Quran in the local mosque. He passed his matric exam from Karnal and then took up employment as a librarian in Sadiq College, Bahawalpur, Punjab. Meanwhile he continued with his private studies. In 1934, Hadhrat Shah Sahib passed his BA from Punjab University and enrolled in Law in University. However, after studying for a year, he left and returned to Karnal. After the partition of the Indian Subcontinent and the formation of Pakistan, he studied the translation of the Quran and its tafseer under the great scholar and spiritual master, Mawlana Abdullah Behlwi. He also studied the laws of Sarf and Nahw under Mawlana Abdullah Behlwi.

Hadhrat Shah Sahib's In-Laws

In August 1935, Hadhrat Shah Sahib wedded the daughter of his maternal uncle, Hadhrat Haji Abdul Qayyum Sahib Abbasi of Panipat, India. Haji Sahib, his respected wife, and

his whole family had given bayah to Mawlana Mushtaq Ahmad Ambethwi (d. 1941) who was a well-known scholar and saint of Silsilah Chishtiyyah. After his demise, the whole household gave bayah to Hadhrat Khwaja Muhammad Saeed Qurayshi Hashmi Sahib, a prominent Shaykh of the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi Silsilah. Hadhrat Khwaja Sahib used to visit the place of Haji Sahib.

After the demise of Hadhrat Khwaja Sahib, they gave bayah to his khalifa, Hadhrat Sufi Ali Nawaz, who was a pious personality. After a short time, Hadhrat Sufi Sahib gave ijazah and khilafah to Haji Abdul Qayum Sahib. The demise of Haji Sahib occurred in Lahore in 1966, and he is buried close to Hadhrat Mawlana Ahmad Ali Lahori, a great scholar and saint of the Qadiriyyah Silsilah.

Livelihood of Hadhrat Shah Sahib

Hadhrat Shah Sahib worked as a librarian in Sadiq college, Bahawalpur. He passed his BA examinations in 1934 and in 1935, a few months after his marriage, he left for Kabul, Afghanistan. He worked as a translator in Kabul. He would translate from Farsi and Pashto to English and from English to Farsi and Pashto languages. He thus gained total proficiency in Urdu, Farsi, Pashto, and English languages.

Later, on his tableeghi travels (undertaken to propagate the teachings of Islam) to Europe and America, Hadhrat Shah Sahib's proficiency in these languages proved to assist in the spreading of the Shariah. After a stay of three years in Kabul, he moved for official reasons to Chaman, Balochistan, Pakistan. After the partition, he moved with his whole family to Lahore, Pakistan. He returned to Chaman for his work, but in 1953, he fully moved to Lahore.

Meeting with Hadhrat Khwaja Sahib

Hadhrat Shah Sahib's life took a turning point when he met Hadhrat Khwaja Muhammad Saeed Qurayshi Hashmi through an extraordinary expiry of events.

Hadhrat Khwaja Sahib was blessed with a visit of Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم in a dream, who instructed him to go to Panipat, India. On the other hand, Hadhrat Shah Sahib also had a dream where he was being rescued by a saint who informed him that he was sent by Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم to save his friend i.e. Hadhrat Shah Sahib.

After a few days, Hadhrat Khwaja Sahib arrived at Panipat. The father-in-law of Hadhrat Shah Sahib, Haji Abdul Qayyum Sahib, took Hadhrat Shah Sahib to his Shaykh. Hadhrat Shah Sahib, at that particular time, had lowered his eyes out of respect. Hadhrat Khwaja Sahib called Hadhrat Shah Sahib closer and asked him, "Son. Have you seen a dream?" Hadhrat Shah Sahib narrated his whole dream. Hadhrat Khwaja Sahib asked him, "Son. If that saint was to come in front of you, would you recognize him?" Hadhrat Shah Sahib raised his eyes and he recognized Hadhrat Shah Sahib. He said, "Hadhrat. That saint is you." This led to Hadhrat Shah Sahib giving bayah to Hadhrat Khwaja Sahib in 1943. During the time of bayah, Hadhrat ordered him, "Son. After me, give bayah to Hadhrat Sufi Sahib (Sufi Ali Nawaz Sahib)." He also ordered Hadhrat Sufi Sahib to take care of Hadhrat Shah Sahib.

After one and a half years of the bayah, Hadhrat Khwaja Sahib passed away in 1944 and was buried in Panipat. As per the instructions of Hadhrat Khwaja Sahib, Hadhrat Shah Sahib

gave bayah to Hadhrat Sufi Ali Nawaz Sahib and remained with him.

The Ijazah and Khilafah of Hadhrat Shah Sahib

Owing to suhbah (companionship) of Hadhrat Sufi Ali Nawaz Sahib, the days and nights of Hadhrat Shah Sahib changed and he was honored with the nisbah of the Salaasil Aaliyah Naqshandiyyah Mujaddidiyyah, Chishtiyyah, Qadiriyyah. In the short span of four years, Hadhrat Sufi Ali Nawaz Sahib granted him ijazah and khilafah. After the partition of the Indian Subcontinent, Hadhrat Sufi Ali Nawaz migrated to Muzaffargarh, Pakistan, and he passed away there due to an epidemic of small pox. After the partition of the Indian Subcontinent, Hadhrat Shah Sahib had not met Hadhrat Sufi Sahib. After the passing away of Hadhrat Sufi Sahib, Hadhrat Shah Sahib was worried about his islaah. Thus he spent some time in the servitude of Mawlana Abdullah Behlwi under whom he studied different Islamic sciences and repeated his sulook (spiritual journey). Hadhrat Shah Sahib then turned to the great Naqshbandi shaykh Hadhrat Mawlana Abdul Ghafoor al-Abbasi al-Madani who was the senior khalifa of Hadhrat Mawlana Fadhl Ali Qurayshi.

In those days, Hadhrat Madani had migrated to and had settled in the blessed city of Madinah, Saudi Arabia. When he resided in Madinah, Hadhrat used to spend some months in Pakistan for his tableegh journey. In 1958, it was probably Hadhrat Madani's first trip when Hadhrat Shah Sahib arrived at Karachi to welcome him. They met there and consequently, Hadhrat Shah Sahib gave bayah to Hadhrat Madani. On each of Hadhrat Madani's travels to Pakistan, Hadhrat Shah Sahib would stay in his company. Hadhrat Shah Sahib took

maximum advantage of the company of his shaykh, and he also handed over his jamaat to him. Hadhrat Madani was very happy with Hadhrat Shah Sahib and he gave him the title 'Saadi of the time' and he used to consider him his support.

It was on the second or third trip when Hadhrat Madani gave ijazah and khilafah to Hadhrat Shah Sahib during the annual ijtema of Miskeenpur Shareef (khanqah of Mawlana Fadhl Ali Qurayshi). After this, the focus of Hadhrat Madani towards Hadhrat Shah Sahib greatly increased. On his final trip, he handed the responsibility of being the imam during salaah to Hadhrat Shah Sahib. Hadhrat Madani used to say regarding Hadhrat Shah Sahib that, "For the one who has given bayah to Hadhrat Shah Sahib, it is as if he has given bayah to me."

Establishment of Khanqah Dar as-Salaam

In 1961, in the presence of Hadhrat Madani, Hadhrat Shah Sahib laid the foundation of Khanqah Dar as-Salaam in Sheikhpura, Pakistan. Hadhrat Madani was pleased upon seeing the place for it was ideal for the training of the saalikeen. After Hadhrat Madani's departure to Madinah, Hadhrat Shah Sahib left Lahore to reside in the khanqah. In 1963, Hadhrat Shah Sahib laid the foundation of the Annual Ijtema, which through the grace and blessing of Allah continues to date. The two grandsons of Hadhrat Shah Sahib, Sayyid Muhammad Irfaan Shah Sahib Jilani and Sayyid Muhammad Aamir Shah Sahib Jilani, are involved in the running of the khanqah.

The Ibaadah and Riyaadhah of Hadhrat Shah Sahib

Hadhrat spent most of his entire life in ibaadah. however, there passed a period of twelve years where he would spend the entire night in the remembrance and worship of Allah. He

would mention, “When I would tire from the recital of the glorious Quran, I would begin dhikr. When I would tire from doing dhikr, I would begin reading the Shajrah Shareef or some other book. When I would complete salaah, I would engage in dua and munaajaat until the fajr aadhaan.”

Hadhrat Shah Sahib mentioned that when he paid a visit to (the mazaar) of Hadhrat Khwaja Baqi Billah, a thought came to him that he should learn about the life of Hadhrat Khwaja Baqi Billah. Upon searching, he found a book in a bookstore. In it was written that it was the habit of Hadhrat Khwaja that after isha salah at night, while sitting, he would engage in muraaqabah. If sleep overpowered him, he would get up, do wudhu, and perform two units of salaah, and then he would continue his muraaqabah. Like this, he would sit the entire night and engage in muraaqabah and dhikr. Hadhrat Shah Sahib said, “I (Hadhrat Alauddin Shah) thought, what do you lack? Are you an old man?” He was young at that time, 35 years of age. So he chose the same method but he would stand and spent the entire night in dhikr.

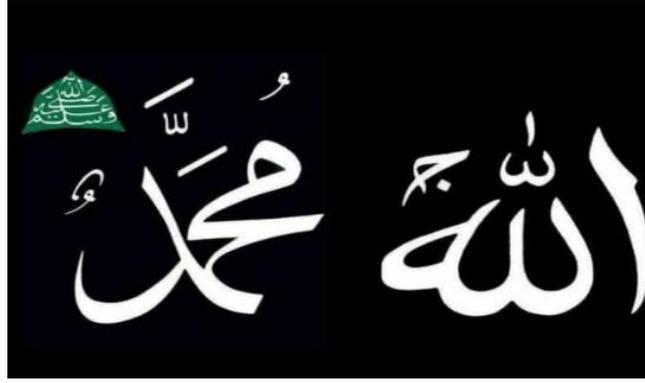
Hadhrat Shah Sahib would say “When I came here after Pakistan was made, the state of jazb used to overcome me. I used to take some food and go away somewhere. I would perform my maamulaat, visit the mazaaraat, and sit at the bank of the Ravi River (a trans-boundary river crossing northwestern India and eastern Pakistan) and do dhikr with four to five companions.” One of the companions Babu Is-haaq Sahib who was a mureed of Hadhrat Mawlana Abdul Maalik Siddiqui narrated this incident that when Hadhrat Shah Sahib would place his glass down after drinking water

the glass would resonate with the sound of “Allah! Allah!” for some time.

One day the son of the great scholar and spiritual master, Hadhrat Mawlana Husayn Ali Sahib of Wan Bachran, visited Khanqah Dar as-Salaam. Hadhrat Shah Sahib honored him greatly and served him very well for he is the son of one of our mashaayikh. When he was about to depart on the morning of the following day, he said, “Shah Sahib. I had come here for a purpose. However, you have made me a peer (spiritual guide).” When Shah Sahib inquired, he said, “I have heard that you possess Ism Aadham, I have come to take that.” Hadhrat Shah Sahib smiled and then said, “Yes, I have it. Mawlana, you also have it but you have not identified it.” He replied, “I do not have it.” Hadhrat Shah Sahib said, “Did Hadhrat (Mawlana Husayn Ali) not take bayah and instruct you (the dhikr) of Ism Dhaat (the name ‘Allah’)? What else can be the Ism Aadham other than this?”

Hadhrat Shah Sahib would say from the depths of the heart, “Allah! I ask of You from You for You.”

Hadhrat Shah Sahib is also known for designing the name ‘Allah’ and that of our beloved Prophet ‘Muhammad’ صلى الله عليه وسلم in such a beautiful way that this masterpiece is found in various mosques all over Pakistan. Pictures of the aforementioned are displayed below.



The Taqwa of Hadhrat Shah Sahib

Hadhrat Shah Sahib would be very particular that the food he ate is halal (lawful). He would not eat food from the market even if it was halal for he would consider it to have some bad qualities in it. Before he set out on journeys, he would have his food packed for him to avoid eating outside food.

He would not accept gifts from everyone. Once a new arrival presented a gift. Hadhrat took the money and kept it aside. When the man was about to depart, Hadhrat added some amount to the value of the gift and returned it to him. Later, when someone enquired about this, Hadhrat replied, “Faqeer does not accept gifts from everyone.” After investigation it was discovered that that he (the new arrival) was involved in Interest-bearing transactions.

In his last days, Hadhrat was suffering from bladder or kidney stones due to which the need for an operation became inevitable. The operation was to take place in Lahore. Doctor Abdul Rasheed was to perform the operation. He prescribed the medicines for the night and also a blood donation. In the morning when the doctor did not find the arrangement for blood donation, he asked “Hadhrat, has there been no arrangement for blood?” Hadhrat replied, “There is no need

for blood. Perform the operation without any blood. In-sha-Allah, it will be okay.” The doctor said, “Hadhrat. I can donate the blood for you.” Upon hearing this, Hadhrat said, “Doctor. What do you think? There is no one to donate blood to me? All these people (referring to his close associates) sitting at the exit; each one of them is ready to donate ten bottles for me. However, doctor, tell me one thing. That person who for his entire life has not drunk tea from anyone’s house (out of fear of it being haraam or doubtful), will he accept someone else’s blood in him?” On hearing these words of Hadhrat, the doctor was shaken and he was very much affected. Alhamdulillah, the operation took place without any blood and the wound also healed fast. However, the doctor was so much affected by Hadhrat’s words, that he began to keep a fist-length beard and he became steadfast in the observance of salaah.

Hadhrat Shah Sahib’s Steadfastness On the Sunnah and Shariah

Hadhrat Shah Sahib spent his entire life in the steadfastness on the Sunnah and Shariah. All the time this concern would suppress him that ‘No work done by myself should be in opposition to the Sunnah and I am not humiliated in front of the entire world on the day of Resurrection. He would observe the Sunnah in all his actions, be it day or night. He would encourage those people attending his majlis on the following of the Sunnah and steadfastness on the shariah, and he would say, “People become desirous of kashf and karamaat and they consider seniority and piety in these, however the actual piety and seniority in the steadfastness upon the Sunnah. Kashf and karamaah are not the objectives.”

Hadhrat Shah Sahib would say, “If I do not do the tarbiyyah, do not teach adab, do not say the right thing, and save myself from what would people say, then tomorrow wherever you’ll go, people would say that his (i.e. the khalifa or mureed’s) tarbiyyah has not been done.”

In Miskeenpur Shareef (during the annual ijtema), where all the jamaat’s of various khulafaa would assemble and many mashaayikh would be present, the jamaat of Hadhrat Shah Sahib would stand out for their adab. Mawlana Abdul Malik Sahib would say, “The jamaat of Shah Sahib is very disciplined.” Many mashaayikh would also desire that their jamaat be like this.

The Passing Away of Hadhrat Shah Sahib

Hadhrat Shah Sahib passed away in October 1993 corresponding to 1414 AH. His janazah prayer was led by his successor, Hadhrat Mawlana Hafiz Muhammad Nasiruddin Khan Khakwani. Due to the large numbers that attended the janazah prayer, it had to be prayed on the field outside the khanqah. Hadhrat Shah Shaib is buried in the courtyard of Khanqah Dar as-Salaam.

Before Hadhrat Shah Sahib passed away, he had delegated his jamaat of khulafaa and mureedeen to his most capable successor, Hadhrat Mawlana Hafiz Muhammad Nasiruddin Khan Khakwani. May Allah have mercy on Hadhrat Shah Saheb and may He grant our Hadhrat Shah Sahib a place in al-Jannat al-Firdaws. Aameen.

Glossary

Akaabireen: Elders

Adab: Etiquette

Aadhaan: Call to prayer

Bayah: Oath of allegiance to tread the spiritual path under a Shaykh

Dua: Supplication

Faqeer: The destitute (at the door of Allah)

Haraam: Unlawful or prohibited

Ibaadah: Worship

Ijaazah: Authority to initiate people into the tariqah (spiritual path)

Ijtema: Gathering

Islaah: Spiritual rectification

Jamaat: Circle of khulafaa and mureedeen

Janazah: Funeral

Jazb: Divine attraction

Karaamah: Miracles

Kashf: Unveiling of spiritual mysteries

Khalifa (pl. khulafaa): Successor

Khanqah: Place for spiritual training

Khilafah: Successorship

Maamulaat: Prescribed daily recitals

Majlis: Gathering

Mazaar (pl. mazaaraat): Graves of the pious saints

Munaajah (pl. Munaajaat): Supplication

Muraqabah: Meditation
Mureed (pl. Mureedeen): spiritual disciples
Nahw: Arabic Syntax
Nisbah: Connection
Peer: Spiritual Guide
Riyaadhah: Spiritual exercises
Saalik (pl. Saalikeen): Those treading the spiritual path
Salaah: Prayers be it obligatory or voluntary
Sarf: Arabic Morphology
Shaykh (pl. Mashaayikh): Spiritual guide
Shajrah Shareef: the line of authority for a particular Shaykh
going back all the way to our beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم
Silsilah: A spiritual order
Tableegh: Propagation of Islam
Tafseer: Commentary/exegesis of the Quran
Tarbiyyah: Nurturing of the etiquette and character.
Tariqah: Spiritual path
Taqwa: Piety