

TWENTY-NINE

SHAYKH SHĀH ABŪ SAĪD GANGOHĪ ؒ



DATE OF DEATH: 2nd Rabī al-Awwal or Rabī al-Thānī 1040 AH  
or 1140 AH

PLACE OF BURIAL: Gangoh, district Saharanpur

Shaykh Shāh Abū Saīd Gangohī ؒ was the spiritual mentor of Shaykh Muḥibullāh Ilāhabādī ؒ. He received indications from Shāh ‘Abd al-Quddūs Gangohī ؒ from the unseen that he should go to his authorised disciple, Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Thānīsārī ؒ, to acquire spiritual fortunes. Imagine the distance from Gangoh to Bukhārā, yet, he set out straight away. How must he have reached there? But, by the grace of Allāh Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn was somehow informed of his arrival.

As I previously mentioned, we have lost so much, countries upon countries as well as numerous sciences. Neither does there remain anyone who studies these sciences, nor anyone who knows them. In those days, there were no mobile telephones, so how must they have crossed borders and reached their destination? And, on the other side, they were informed of his arrival; how?

#### REPRIMAND FOR PRACTICES INVOLVING JINN

Once, someone from Batley was possessed by a jinn. I was informed by Brother Rashīd (of Zam Zam Bakery) and another brother from Batley. So, I performed the practice of burning jinn. This took place in 1968 or 1969.

In those days, it would take two to three days for a telegram to reach its destination and telephoning was out of the question. I received a telegram of Shaykh Zakariyyā رحمۃ اللہ علیہ from Saharanpur, a week after my trip to Batley. The Shaykh's telegrams would reach me weekly, and occasionally, twice a week.

In this letter, the Shaykh stated, "I am writing to you regarding a significantly important issue which is that you need to exercise extreme caution. Do not perform the practice of burning jinn." Thereafter, the letter continued with other advices.

Now, when I read this letter I think, "How did the Shaykh come to know?" For, if someone had written to him relating this incident, it would have taken a week to reach him. Travel was not as it is today, because people were only arriving [in the UK, as opposed to going back to India]. There were very few people who had brought their wives and children over. So how must the Shaykh have come to know? Either the jinn complained or the Shaykh saw a vision.

#### SHAYKH NIẒĀM AL-DĪN BALKHĪ رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

In the same manner, Shaykh NiẒām al-Dīn Balkhī رحمۃ اللہ علیہ came to know of the arrival of Shaykh Abū Sa'īd Gangohī رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. Shaykh NiẒām al-Dīn Balkhī رحمۃ اللہ علیہ prepared a reception by setting out with a large crowd. The governor of Balkh who was an advocate of Shaykh NiẒām al-Dīn Balkhī رحمۃ اللہ علیہ also joined them with his ministers to

receive Shāh Abū Saʿīd Gangohī ؒ outside of Balkh. He received a royal reception and was hosted with royalty.

A few days had passed when Shāh Abū Saʿīd Gangohī ؒ said to Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ؒ, “I endured much hardship to come all the way here from Gangoh. I have not come for these royal invitations. I have come to acquire the fortune you acquired and brought from Gangoh from Shāh ‘Abd al-Quddūs Gangohī ؒ.”

This was all he said before everything changed. Prior to this, he was treated with respect acknowledging the fact that he was from the children of their saints. But now, he was instructed, “Go, warm up the bath.” He was assigned the responsibility of warming the bath in a cold region like Balkh.

We would witness a miracle everyday in the presence of Shaykh Zakariyyā ؒ. Once, there was a gathering of three to four thousand people... The chilly winds that blow towards Saharanpur from the snow-covered Himalayas last for forty days. Saharanpur comes after Shāmla which is at the foot of the Himalaya. It is known as the forty-day chill of Saharanpur. People walk donned in their blankets during this period.

I have been seeing Shaykh Zakariyyā ؒ [in my dream] for the last three days, possibly because of these anecdotes. Yesterday I saw that I was sitting with Shaykh Zakariyyā ؒ wrapped in a blanket.

#### ONE BLOW FROM SHAYKH

During this cold period when there was an assembly of thousands of people, someone came to the Shaykh’s i’tikāf area and complained that the wood for the bath was not burning despite much effort. Sometimes, the wood collected for the bath is moist due

to excessive water falling on it, thus it does not catch fire. There could be a number of reasons why it would not catch fire.

There were two or three people appointed to keep the water warm for ablution and bathing at all times. It was an issue concerning thousands, for everyone performed ablution with water filled in jugs from the baths, and they bathed with water filled in buckets. The Shaykh never instructed them to go and fetch more wood from the woodcutter.

Instead, he said, “Go, each of you go quickly and recite Sūra Ikh̄lāṣ seven times, Āyat al-Kursi thrice and invoke peace and blessings upon the Noble Prophet ﷺ and thereafter blow on it. Allāh knows what they must have recited and blew on it, and a blow from Shaykh must have gone, and by the grace of Allāh from that day till the remainder of the [blessed] month, there were no complaints.

#### A TEST FOR COMPLETION

Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ﷺ instructed Shāh Abū Saʿīd Gangohī ﷺ to serve at the baths, warming them by collecting wood and burning them to generate heat. After many years of service, Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ﷺ saw that it was time for completion, for which there had to be a test. So, to test him, Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ﷺ instructed him to look after the horse stable as well.

He also instructed the lady appointed for sweeping the horse dung from the stable to throw some of it from her dung basket onto the serving guest [Shāh Abū Saʿīd Gangohī ﷺ] when she carried it away. The following day, the Shaykh asked her what had happened, she replied, “He became ever so angry at me and said

“If it were Gangoh, you would have found out.” The Shaykh realised that his mindset of being the son [of a saint] still remained.

Shaykh Zakariyyā ؒ states that Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ؒ was intending to purify the inner-self of Shāh Abū Saīd Gangohī ؒ. He states that these ailments of the heart are removed in the same manner they come. They tend not to go by excessive ṣalāh and other endeavours in worship. The ailments come because of people and the respect and reverence shown by people, with remarks like “He is the son of so and so saint,” “He is a saint,” “He is big,” “He is a scholar,” “He is an orator,” “He is a great Qārī,” it tends to come from the praise of people.

On the contrary, if one were to tell everyone to smack him on his head, as a disciple once asked his spiritual mentor, “Shaykh! From your speech on pride, I feel fretful that I may have this ailment inside me.”

The Shaykh replied, “Yes indeed, you do carry it.”

He asked, “So, what is its remedy?”

The Shaykh replied, “Take a basket full of walnuts and sit at the entrance of the masjid. Announce to everyone that passes that anyone who hits a shoe on my head, I will give him a walnut.” This is how one is relieved of it. The more one is praised and esteemed, it develops, and the more he is disgraced and dishonoured, it lessens.

Pride is Dangerous

Who could tolerate something as impure as dung being thrown on them by a dung-sweeper? So, Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ؒ said that that the attitude of “I am the son [of a saint]” has still not left Shāh Abū Saīd Gangohī ؒ. Hence, he kept him with him in his service. Thereafter, he instructed the dung-sweeper to throw dung on him again as she previously had.

The following day, she came and reported back to Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ؒ that Shāh Abū Saīd did not speak this

time, but he did look at her angrily. Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ؒ said, “Not yet, there is still a hint of it left.”

Look at how dangerous pride is through the utmost exertions that becomes necessary, hence, it was concluded that if he is intolerant of [of dung being thrown on him] then, a hint of pride still remains in him.

Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ؒ took service from him for a little longer and then instructed the sweeper to throw all the dung from the basket onto him. The same day she reported back to him by saying that she pretended to trip near him with the basket in her hand dropping all the dung onto him. However, she said that to my amazement he began crying and putting the dung back into the basket, saying, “Sorry, I sat in the wrong place causing you trouble as you fell. You are not hurt are you?”

Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ؒ said, “Now the mission is accomplished,” and called him.

Up until then, the service taken from him would make anyone think that he was not a scholar, rather an average worker. Some workers are respectable, but he was made to serve in a way which would not demand any respect. Warming the baths and cleaning the dung was to totally cleanse him of any pride.

#### SELF-CONCEIT

Thereafter, when Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ؒ saw that he had completed his duty he prescribed him dhikr and other endeavours. But, the more dhikr and other worship one performs it is usually aimed at others knowing of it. One recites thousands of salutations upon the Noble Prophet ﷺ to be commended by others. Remarks like, “Today I had a headache, so I could not recite my daily fifteen juz’,” are only an excuse to inform others to impress

them and to earn respect. Hence, there is a great cancer that can develop from consecutively performing ḥajj, umra, optional ṣalāh and recitation of the Holy Qur’ān in abundance.

#### CURE FOR SELF-CONCEIT

When Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ؒ saw that he was spiritually advancing by means of his dhikr and other endeavours, and that he was experiencing kashf, he feared it could well create conceit in him. It could lead him to consider himself pious, which should not be the case.

After kashf, he advanced further as miracles began appearing. Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ؒ thought it wise to engage him in more difficult work. So, apart from his dhikr and other practices, he took him hunting. Hunting dogs run as far as their leashes allow them to go.

Dogs are normally familiar with the voices of those who have trained them. They stop and return upon hearing their voices. But, Shāh Abū Sa’īd Gangohī ؒ was not from them. He was told “to keep hold of the leash until we let them loose on the prey.”

The hunting dogs were healthy and strong whilst he was weak and enfeebled after prolonged spiritual struggles. Hence, when the dogs began running, he lost control, and they dragged him as they sprinted towards their prey, leaving him smeared with blood all over.

When they returned that night, Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Balkhī ؒ had a dream in which Shāh ‘Abd al-Quddūs ؒ addressed him, saying, “Niẓām al-Dīn! You are his spiritual mentor and have the right to take as much struggle and exercise off him as you wish. But, I did not get you to do this much.”

As soon as he awoke that morning, he called for Shāh Abū

Sa'īd Gangohī ﷺ and hugged him, saying, "You have acquired the fortune you came from Gangoh for." Thereafter, he granted him *khilāfa* and sent him back to Gangoh.

May Allāh Most High enable us to value these treasures of fortune.

اللهم صل على سيدنا ونبينا وشفيعنا وحيينا وسندنا ومولانا محمد وبارك  
وسلم، سبحن ربك رب العزة عما يصفون وسلام على المرسلين والحمد لله رب  
العلمين