

THIRTY-SIX

SHAYKH SHĀH ‘ABD AL-RAḤĪM FĀṬIMĪ



DATE OF DEATH: 27th Dhū ‘l-Qa‘da 1246 AH

PLACE OF BURIAL: Pangtār Mulk Wilāyat

Shaykh Shāh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Fāṭimī, who was from a sayyid [descendant of the Prophet] family in Afghanistan, was the spiritual mentor of Shaykh Miā Jī Nūr Muḥammad Jhanjhānawī. He travelled to India to acquire the knowledge of Taṣawwuf and spirituality.

He pledged allegiance to a saint of Panjlāsa of Punjab called Shaykh Shāh Raḥm ‘Alī Sādhori in the Qādiriyya order and attained perfection in *sulūk* through his teachings. After the demise of Shaykh Shāh Raḥm ‘Alī Sādhori, Shaykh Shāh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Fāṭimī moved to Amroha where he pledged allegiance to Shaykh Shāh ‘Abd al-Bārī, one of the high ranking saints of the Chishtiyya order, and also perfected *sulūk* according to his order.

When Shaykh Shāh ‘Abd al-Bārī passed away he came to his own area, Lohari, UP, and began his work.

SHAYKH SAYYID AḤMAD SHAHĪD

Shaykh Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd’s tour of those areas, including Saharanpur and Thānabhawan, was the cause of a great revolu-

tion. What a great tour it must have been! It reminds one of the spiritual efficaciousness of Khwāja Mu‘īn al-Dīn Chishtī ؒ centuries later. Thousands of non-Muslims embraced Islām during his travels and millions of Muslims pledged allegiance to him.

His tours covered the areas of UP, Punjab, and all areas of the Sarhad province. Not only would they focus on pledging allegiance and spiritual guidance, they would also lay emphasis on enjoining the good and forbidding evil.

Shaykh Shāh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Wilāyatī ؒ pledged allegiance to Shaykh Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd ؒ himself and also sent for [his disciple] Shaykh Miā Jī Nūr Muḥammad Jhanjhānawī ؒ, who was giving water to his horse at the time, and who [upon hearing the message] went into a profound spiritual state. Both shaykh and disciple became attendants of Shaykh Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd ؒ, although Shaykh Shāh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Wilāyatī ؒ is considered from the prominent saints.

Shāh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Wilāyatī ؒ had an attendant called ‘Abdullāh Khān who himself had acquired immense spiritual efficacy through his spiritual struggles and exercises. If someone would come to him asking for amulets [taweez] because they were childless, he would write out amulets for them and also tell them whether they would have a daughter or a son. Allāh Most High had favoured him immensely, for whatever he said would transpire. He has many well-known miracles to his name.

‘Abdullāh Khān once asked his spiritual mentor (Shāh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Wilāyatī ؒ), “I find one thing quite astonishing. That is that Allāh Most High showed me both your nisba and the nisba of Shaykh Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd ؒ in the form of two sceptres. The more luminous of the two was your sceptre. The sceptre of Shaykh Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd ؒ was dimmer than yours. Hence, if you possess a stronger nisba than him, why did you pledge

allegiance to him? Furthermore, why do you consider yourself amongst his undistinguished attendants?”

Shāh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Wilāyatī ؒ replied, “Never mind *nisba*.” Actually, when he was with his first mentor in Panjlāsa, he began acting upon what he learnt from him. But when Shaykh Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd ؒ arrived, he corrected them by informing them what practices were *bid‘a*, for he was accompanied by great scholars. The most learned scholars of this time were with him. Thousands accompanied him in his expedition and they would seek evidence for everything from the Qur’ān and Sunna. Only then did they realise that the ṣalāh they offered and the fasts they observed were incorrect. He replied, “Never mind *nisba*, it was through him that I learnt the correct [method of] of ṣalāh and ṣawm.”

From this we learn that the *mīlād* celebrated by Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ was a continuation of what was happening previously, and then rectified by Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ؒ. That is why when Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ؒ was questioned about his practices being contrary to those of Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ, he replied, “The allegiance I pledged to Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ was of Taṣawwuf and *sulūk*, not Sharī‘a.”

And this is exactly why Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ؒ issued an edict opposing the written work of Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ based on the ‘Seven Rulings’. The relationship between the shaykh and his disciple remained intact despite their differences.

Quite similarly, Shāh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Wilāyatī ؒ said that his ṣalāh and ṣawm was corrected by Shaykh Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd ؒ, thus he joined his expedition and was martyred at Balakot.

THE PRESENCE OF SAINTS IS LIKE ALEXANDER'S WALL

The entire world's Muslim population, and not only the Muslims of India, are indebted to the family of Shāh Waliyyullāh رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. Presence of saints like Shāh Waliyyullāh Muḥaddith Dehlawī رحمۃ اللہ علیہ is like Alexander's Wall. Just as the wall constructed by Alexander fettered the mischief of Gog and Magog, countless corruptions are held back by the mere presence of saints. Only after saints depart from us and corruptions surge into the world do we realise it was through the blessings of their presence that numerous calamities were held back.

SHĀH WALIYYULLĀH رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Only three years after the demise of Shāh Waliyyullāh رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, it was announced that states including Banaras, Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Ghazipur have been gifted to the East Indian Company. Each one of these states was larger than England.

History records that there was no battle or any type of sale or purchase. The family of Shāh Waliyyullāh رحمۃ اللہ علیہ saw shortly after his demise that state after state was being lost. Finally, the colossal Mogul Empire dwindled till its rule was limited to Delhi alone, and even that was ruled by Bahādur Shāh Ṣafar in the capacity of a servant of the East Indian Company.

Bahādur Shāh Ṣafar was a pious man, but what could the poor man do besides complain to himself? He said:

ظفر اس وقت ہے تو کیوں خاموش غنچہ کے مانند
کہ تجھے یاد آئے یہ اشعار چند

He expresses his complaints in his poems:

دل کے پھپھولے جل اٹھے سینے کے داغ سے
اس گھر کو آگ لگ گئی گھر کے چراغ سے

The Battle of Palāsī was the beginning and end of everything. I mentioned that the Battle of Shāmlī took place in 1857, exactly a hundred years after the Battle of Palāsī which took place in 1757.

Siraj al-Dawla was defeated by the British. Subsequently, a few years later, when Tipu Sulṭān was also defeated, the general there named Ḥārith or Hurayth announced: “Now it is us who rule over India.” Although the entire country was still under Mogul rule, the battle of Palāsī was decisive. Thereafter, all these regions began falling to the East Indian Company.

Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Muḥaddith Dehlawī ؒ saw that they had lost such a great empire with governments falling one after another and that the remaining states (Banaras, Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Ghazipur) were being gifted to them on a plate, thus he prepared his servants.

One of those who pledged allegiance to Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Muḥaddith Dehlawī ؒ was Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd ؒ who started a movement whereby large-scale religious reforms took place. Furthermore, final results lie in the hands of Allāh Most High, but his accomplishments resulted in him achieving martyrdom in the court of Allāh at Balakot. The saint being discussed in today’s gathering, Shāh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Wilāyatī ؒ, was also martyred. Their responsibility was to fulfil their obligation and results lie in the hands of Allāh.

Even Sayyidunā Ḥusayn ؒ had no control over the outcome; it was in the hands of the ultimate Owner. Similarly, Sayyid

Aḥmad Shahīd ﷺ and Shāh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Wilāyatī ﷺ were both martyred at Balakot.

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