

THIRTY-EIGHT

ḤĀJĪ IMDĀDULLĀH MUHĀJIR MAKKĪ ﷺ



DATE OF BIRTH: 22nd Ṣafar 1233 AH

PLACE OF BIRTH: Nānota

DATE OF DEATH: 12th or 13th Jumādā 'l-Ukhrā 1317 AH

PLACE OF BURIAL: Jannat al-Ma'allā, Makka Mukarrama

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

ḤĀJĪ Imdādullāh Muhājir Makkī ﷺ was the spiritual mentor of Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ﷺ. He was born in Nānota and named Imdād Ḥusayn by his family members. However, his name, Ṣafar Ahmad was deducted from the year of his birth 1233 AH, just as scholars well-versed in history deduce, such as 786 from *Bism Allah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim*. When he began studying, his teacher may not have been fond of Imdād Ḥusayn and thus began calling him Imdād Ilāhi. Ultimately, Allāh Most High made a fourth name renowned: Imdādullāh. To date he is known by this name.

He acquired his primary and secondary education in his own locality. Some have written that he studied up to *Kāfiya* [a book on Arabic syntax (*nahw*)], but this may be incorrect, as Shaykh Zakariyyā ﷺ has stated in his biography of ḤĀJĪ Imdādullāh ﷺ that he studied *Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ* under Shaykh Shāh Qalandar Ṣāhib.

SHAYKH SHĀH BALLĀQĪ ﷺ

After reaching this stage in his acquisition of exoteric knowledge, his inclination towards esoteric knowledge became predominant until he increasingly became distant to exoteric knowledge. Finally, he became totally dedicated to acquiring esoteric knowledge, according to the wisdom of Allāh and as was also divinely indicated to him.

He once had a dream wherein he saw that he was sat in a gathering with one of his ancestors, Shāh Ballāqī ﷺ, and the Prophet ﷺ was also present. Shāh Ballāqī ﷺ took his hand and put it in the blessed hand of the Noble Prophet ﷺ. He ﷺ then took his hand and put it in the hand of another saint, Shaykh Miā Jī Nūr Muḥammad Jhanjhānwī ﷺ. However, Ḥājī Imdādullāh ﷺ had only heard of him, having never seen him and thus did not recognise him. He had only seen him in the dream and was not told who he was.

SHAYKH QALANDAR ṢĀḤIB ﷺ

The following morning he related the dream to his teacher, Shaykh Qalandar Ṣāḥib ﷺ, stating that he did not recognise the saint in whose hand the Noble Prophet ﷺ placed his hand. He described the saint to his teacher who, upon listening to the dream, very incisively instructed him to go to Lohari, saying, “Perhaps you will fulfil your objective there.” He thus left for Lohari immediately.

SHAYKH MIĀ JĪ NŪR MUḤAMMAD JHANJHĀNWĪ ﷺ

As his gaze fell on the face of Shaykh Miā Jī Nūr Muḥammad Jhanjhānwī ﷺ, he said to himself, “This is the very saint whose hand the Prophet ﷺ placed my hand in.” Before he could even mention anything, Shaykh Miā Jī Nūr Muḥammad Jhanjhānwī ﷺ remarked, “You are astonished by your dream?” Shaykh Miā Jī Nūr Muḥammad Jhanjhānwī ﷺ already knew why Ḥājī Imdādullāh ﷺ had come.

A DREAM

Just as Ḥājī Imdādullāh ﷺ had not seen Shaykh Miā Jī Nūr Muḥammad Jhanjhānwī ﷺ in real life before the Noble Prophet ﷺ directed him towards him, which was confirmed after waking up, an incident in exactly the same manner occurred with Ḥājī Imdādullāh ﷺ and one of his disciples. The disciple was in India while Ḥājī Imdādullāh ﷺ was in Makka Mukarrama. He had heard that Ḥājī Imdādullāh ﷺ is a great saint with learned scholars as his disciples. Now, he began thinking about how difficult it will be to reach there and pledge allegiance to him, but someone encouraged him to at least give it a try. Travelling for ḥajj by sea was a perilous endeavour in those days, but nonetheless, he finally began preparing to travel.

A SPECIAL JUMPER

Amongst all the bare necessities for travelling he must have packed, he had prepared something very unique. How much love must he have possessed!

He used to rear goats and whenever a kid was born to a goat, he would remove its wool and store it away, quite similar to how we shave the hair of our newborns and perform ‘aqīqa on the seventh day after birth. What would he do with the wool?

He decided to have a jumper made for Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ and take it with him. But because he thought Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ may not like the usual wool in the markets, he collected the wool taken from kids and had cloth made from it. How soft must it have been? Such cloth was not available anywhere in the world, especially considering the love which went into its preparation. Thereafter, he prepared a jumper made from this cloth and set out.

The ship he travelled on was caught up in a storm a few days into the journey. I previously mentioned that only half of the ships would reach their destination. The rest would be struck by storms, either sinking or ending up at some other coast. The storm was so fierce that everyone on board was sure they were going to drown at any moment.

The disciple of Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ says, “I also clung onto something hard, so I would not see the violent waves. Meanwhile, it was as though I was dreaming when a saint came and consoled me, saying, ‘Why are you worrying?’

I replied, ‘Look at this storm. There is no hope of survival.’

‘No, no, your ship will not sink. Do not be scared and remain calm. Where is my jumper? Give it to me!’”

He had never seen Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ before and, this was the first time he was seeing him in a dream. He had made the jumper exclusively for Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ, and so he understood that it was a glad tiding from him. He says, “I immediately untied myself and told everyone to remain calm as we were not going to sink.” They asked how this was possible when they were seconds away from death. He then related his dream to them.

A short while later, the storm subsided, and the ship continued

on its course till it finally reached Jeddah. Before reaching Makka Mukarrama, he requested his travel companions not to point out to him who Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ was, be it from close or far, and not even by indication. “As I saw him in my dream, I will be able to recognise him myself,” he said.

Hence, he says, “Our group reached Makka Mukarrama and we offered ṣalāh.” At that time, there were four prayer mats, one for each madhhab: Ḥanafī, Mālikī, Shāfi‘ī and Hanbali. He says that when he looked in the direction of the Mālikī prayer mat, he saw Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ standing there. “I approached him offering salām to him and kissed his hands.” In short, he saw Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ in his dream and recognised him in real life.

Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ found the face of Shaykh Miā Jī Nūr Muḥammad Jhanjhānwī ؒ to be extremely luminous, just as he had dreamt. He pledged allegiance to him and began his dhikr and spiritual exercises. Thereafter, Allāh Most High enabled him to excel and reach extremely lofty ranks.

THE SHOP OF MA‘RIFA

As I mentioned, there were three saints in one masjid of Thānabhawan at one time: Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ, Shaykh Muḥammad Thānawī ؒ and Shaykh Dāmin Shahīd ؒ. Scholars referred to this masjid as ‘The Shop of Divine Cognisance (*dukāne ma‘rifat*)’. But, when the storms of turmoil that engulfed India came to Delhi, they also reached Thānabhawan. Who can watch their own house ablaze in flames?

They thus fled from Thānabhawan. Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ spent one and a half years moving and changing his residence on a daily basis. Although he stayed within Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, he

used to move daily. There are many famous miracles that occurred during this period.

And when Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ began moving from here, how could Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ؒ and Shaykh Qāsim Nanotwī ؒ, being his most intimate attendants, possibly leave him? Wherever he would spend the night, they would reach there to meet him, even though the police were constantly searching for him.

Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ was staying at a particular place when someone informed the police of his whereabouts. His host was a land-owner. On that night, a large unit of the police force surrounded the whole area. Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ was very thin and weak. The beds in use there, made of rush-string, were such that they would sink in slightly when one lies on them.

Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ was lying on the bed with his blanket over him. The host straightened the blanket from the side of his head, making it seem like an empty bed with a blanket spread out on it. When the police searched the area, they went straight past the bed, assuming it to be empty. Once the police had left, his companions took him quickly and rushed him to the wilderness.

On another occasion, another informer reported to the police, except that Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ was actually present in front of them during the search. When the police opened the door to the stable where he was staying, they found a bed, water-jug and a prayer mat. They asked the owner of the house why these things were in the stable. He replied telling them that he would pray there if he were tending to his horses and the time for ṣalāh began, whereas in reality it was the room of Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ. The police thought that the information given to them was incorrect and thus they left, but the host saw that Ḥājī Imdādullāh ؒ was in the room and was engaged in ṣalāh throughout. Many other incidents transpired in which Allāh Most High protected him.

Some of the works authored by Ḥājī Imdādullāh ﷺ are:

1. *Ḥāshiya Mathnawī Mawlāna Rūm*
2. *Gidhāe Rūḥ*
3. *Jihāde Akbar*
4. *Mathnawī Tuḥfat al-'Ushāq*
5. *Risāla Dard Gamnāk*
6. *Irshāde Murshid*
7. *Ḍiyā' al-Qulūb*
8. *Waḥdat al-Wujūd*
9. *Fayṣla Haft Mas'ala*
10. *Gulzāre Ma'rifat*

May Allāh Most High safeguard Islām and the Muslims through current turmoils, wherever they may be occurring.

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

