

FORTY

SHAYKH KHALĪL AḤMAD SAHĀRANPŪRĪ ؒ



DATE OF BIRTH: late Ṣafar 1269 AH
PLACE OF BIRTH: Ambhetta
DATE OF DEATH: 15th Rabīʿ al-Thānī 1346 AH
PLACE OF BURIAL: Baqīʿ, Madīna Munawwara

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ was the spiritual mentor of Shaykh Zakariyyā ؒ. He was born approximately one hundred years before me, give or take two or three years. He was born in a time when Muslims had lost control of India.

FAMILY OF SAINTS

The family of Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ in Ambhetta was referred to as the “family of saints” (*pīronh ka khāndān*). Shāh Abū 'l-Ma'ālī ؒ was a great saint and the stories of Shāh Bhīkan ؒ are renowned. His disciples used to come from Ambala. It was commonly known as the region of saints, as Sayyid Ḥasan 'Askarī, the spiritual mentor of King Ṣafar (India's last king), was from the family of the saints of Ambhetta.

It is said that when King Ṣafar was captured and exiled to Rangoon [Burma], his spiritual mentor, Sayyid Ḥasan 'Askarī

remained in hiding in Ambhetta for a while. As a result, the father, uncle and entire family of Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ were also arrested and questioned in relation to the whereabouts of Sayyid Ḥasan ‘Askarī, as he was the father-in-law of one of Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī’s ؒ paternal-cousins. Thus, the whole family was imprisoned.

Sayyid Ḥasan ‘Askarī could not bear to see people suffering due to him, so he discreetly went and handed himself over to the police. He was later hanged. There was a tree in the wilderness close to Delhi, notoriously known for being where Indians were hanged in order to save bullets.

It is said that fifty-six thousand scholars were executed by hanging. It was an official order in Delhi for many days that anyone with a beard should be killed.

EDUCATION

Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ was born in a time of disorder when the Mogul Dynasty was nearing its demise. He studied partly in Ambhetta. As he was closely connected to the royal family, which obviously affects the families associated, he was enrolled at an English school in his childhood.

Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ studied English at the school for a while and thereafter, as Allāh Most High had made him of a sound disposition and was to employ him for the service of sacred religious knowledge and ḥadīth, he himself developed an aversion to this knowledge and thus left it, turning towards religious knowledge.

His maternal uncle, Shaykh Shāh Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Ṣāḥib, was the first headteacher at Deoband. The founder was Shaykh Qāsim Nanotwī ؒ, but the first ever headteacher was Shaykh Shāh

Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Ṣāḥīb. Six months after the inauguration of Dar al-‘Ulūm Deoband, the foundations of Maẓāhir al-‘Ulūm were laid at Saharanpur. Maẓāhir al-‘Ulūm was founded under the name of Madrasa ‘Āliya Islāmiyya ‘Arabiyya by Shaykh Maẓhar Ṣāḥīb.

Shaykh Maẓhar Ṣāḥīb was also a maternal uncle of Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ. Thus, one of his uncles was the headteacher at Deoband and the other was the founder of Maẓāhir al-‘Ulūm. Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ initially studied for a few years at Deoband with one of his uncles, whereafter he went to Saharanpur to study the books of the final years.

DAWN OF HIS TEACHING CAREER AND BAY‘Ā

After graduation, he taught at Deoband for six years before moving on to teach at Saharanpur for the remainder of his life. He had abandoned studying English and began his study of Arabic even before moving to Saharanpur, and now he felt a desire to traverse the path of Taṣawwuf.

Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ sought the advice of Shaykh Qāsim Nanotwī ؒ about his desire to pledge allegiance to someone but not being sure of whom to. He told him he had him [i.e. Shaykh Qāsim Nanotwī ؒ], Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ؒ, and two other saints in mind. Shaykh Qāsim Nanotwī ؒ gave him a lengthy lecture stating, “At this moment in time, there is nobody greater than Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ؒ, thus you should pledge allegiance to him.” Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ then requested Shaykh Qāsim Nanotwī ؒ to speak with Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ؒ on his behalf.

Later, when Shaykh Qāsim Nanotwī ؒ once travelled to Gangoh, Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ also arrived there and reminded him of the promise he had made to speak

with Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ؒ on his behalf. Hence, he spoke to Shaykh Ganoghi and Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad pledged his allegiance.

THE ENTIRE ḤARAM WAS FILLED WITH LIGHT

Allāh Most High made him excel to such an extent that he once went on ḥajj. Shāh Muḥibullāh Ṣāḥib, one of the saints of Makka Mukarrama of that time, was looking down and reading *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt* in the Ḥaram, with Shaykh al-Islām Shaykh Ḥafar Aḥmad Thānawī ؒ (of Pakistan) by his side. Suddenly, he left what he was doing and said, "What has happened? The entire Ḥaram has been filled with light."

A similar statement was made by Shaykh Faqīr Muḥammad Ṣāḥib, a khalīfa of Shaykh Muḥammad Thānawī ؒ, when my cousin brother (paternal aunt's son) Brother Yūsuf Warāchiya went to visit him in hospital. Shaykh Faqīr Muḥammad Ṣāḥib used to cry excessively. He used to perceive the divine light that descends on the Holy Ka'ba for those performing ṭawāf or offering ṣalāh. He himself used to say that he could perceive the divine light descending for each individual person [around the Holy Ka'ba]. He would have his sight constantly fixed on the Holy Ka'ba at all times, with tears flowing from his eyes.

So, Shaykh Muḥibullāh left the book [*Dalā'il al-khayrāt*] he was engaged in reading and said, "What has happened? The entire Ḥaram has been filled with light." Shaykh al-Islām Ḥafar Aḥmad Thānawī ؒ was left amazed and enquired, "What is it? Have you seen something?" Meanwhile they noticed Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ approaching them. As Shaykh Muḥibullāh met with him, he said, "Ask him [Shaykh Ḥafar Aḥmad Thānawī ؒ]"

what I was just mentioning to him. I was engaged [in reading] when I perceived the whole of Ḥaram filling with light.”

It was during this trip that Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī   received *khilāfa* from Ḥājī Imdādullāh  . Although he pledged allegiance to Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī  , he got to meet Ḥājī Imdādullāh   and also received *khilāfa* from him.

Allāh Most High selected Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī   to serve in every field; be it in the field of jihād and elevating the word of Allāh, in politics or refuting falsehood. The best foundational books on refuting falsehood have been written by him. He wrote *Miṭraqat al-Karāma ‘alā Madh’hab al-Imāma*. He authored works refuting Shiahs and all deviant sects. He also compiled fatāwa [religious edicts].

REFUTING DEVIANT SECTS

Those who saw Muftī Maḥmūd Gangohī   here, well his temperament of refuting falsehood stemmed from Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī  .

When Shaykh al-Hind [Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandī]   passed away, Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī   was attending a debate with Shiahs in Amroha. It was there that he received news of the death of Shaykh al-Hind  .

THREE SUPPLICATIONS

At the time of Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī’s   birth, Muslims were losing control of India. In the later years of his life when he migrated to the Holy Lands of Makka Mukarrama and Madīna Munawwara, he found the conditions there to be

deteriorating too. For many years, the route between Makka Mukarrama and Madīna Munawwara had become perilous. All travellers would either be looted or killed, apart from the odd group who would luckily reach their destination safely.

Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ states that when he presented himself at the *Multazam* [portion of the Holy Ka'ba from the Black Stone until the door of the Ka'ba], he supplicated, "O Allāh! The Master of Both Worlds ؑ said that You answer all supplications which are made at this place, thus I supplicate before you asking for three things."

Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ says regarding himself that Allāh Most High once offered him three things: "Do you desire for fame or children?" He replied, "O Allāh! I desire children."

When I myself decided on marrying for a second time, I considered my decision to be correct, for it was the same thing Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ asked from Allāh.

So, Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ؒ offered three supplications at Multazam. Firstly, he supplicated Allāh, begging, "O Allāh! Makka and Madīna are both your Ḥarams [sanctified lands] but people are unsafe here. Establish an exemplary government which will establish peace and safety." Consequently, Allāh Most High established safety and the Saudi family took control. The lands are secure even to date, and may Allāh keep it so until the Day of Judgement.

The second supplication was in relation to the completion of *Badh al-Majhūd* [commentary of Sunan Abi Dāwūd]. As he had lost his eyesight, he supplicated, "O Allāh! Let me complete *Badh al-majhood* myself in my lifetime."

The third supplication was that Allāh Most High grant him death in Madīna Munawwara and allow him to be buried in al-Baqī'. All three supplications were answered. May Allāh Most

High also answer our prayers by virtue of Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ﷺ.

Some of the works written by Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ﷺ are listed below:

1. Urdu translation of *Qāmūs*
2. *Hidāyat al-Rashīd ila Ifḥām al-‘Anīd*
3. *Al-Barāhīn al-Qāṭi‘a ‘alā Ḥalāl al-Anwār al-Sāṭi‘a*
4. *Maṭraqat al-Karāma ‘alā Madh’hab al-Imāma*
5. *Al-Muhannad ‘alā al-Mufannad (Al-Taṣdīqāt li daf ‘al-Talbīsāt)*
6. *Tanshīṭ al-Adh’hān fī Tahqīq Maḥall al-Adhān*
7. *Itmām al-Ni‘am*
8. *Badhl al-Majhūd fī Ḥal Abī Dāwūd*

