

Review of the Jihadi and Mystical Services of Maulana Muhammad Shoaib Tordheri

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Abstract:

Allah has promised to protect Islam. That is why Allah created scholars and Sufis in different periods that served Islam and preached Islam. The preaching and propagation of Islam in India is due to these Sufis. They left their territories and came to India. One of these scholars and Sufis is Maulana Muhammad Shoaib Tordheri, known as Shaikh Sahib. He was the Shaikh of Moulana Abdul Ghafoor (Swat Babaji), that is the most famous Sufi in Swat Khyber Pakhtonkhwa and Shaikh of the Moulana Abdul Rahim Saharan Puri. Moulana Muhammad Shoaib was not a scholar and sufi, he was also a mujahid. He was martyred while fighting against the Sikhs in 1823 A.D. He wrote a book about Sufism. In his book he wrote about seeratul Nabi and companion of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. After that he discussed circumstances and sayings of Sufis of the all four series (Naqshbandia, Qadria, Cheshtia and Saharwardia) of Sufism. He also described the attributes of the perfect Peer.

Key words: Jahadi, Tordheri, Sufis, Swat Babaji

Introduction

The spread of Islam in the Indian subcontinent owes a lot to the efforts done by the mystics and clerics who left their homes and came to the sub-continent with the devotion to teach Islam to the people of the area. They worked on the hearts of the people and purified them and helped them to understand and embrace Islam. Among such servants of Islam is Shiekh Moulana Muhammad Shoib Tordheri who is famously known as Sheikh al Mashaikh. He is one of the most important figures of the way of Salook and Tasawuf and is considered among the little known and unnoticed heroes of Islam whom very few people could recognize but who lent great services to Islam and to the people of the area by helping them embrace Islam and to mold their lives according to the teachings of Islam. The peculiar thing about him was that he was not only scholar of the religious knowledge which dealt the apparent and open aspect but he also was well versed in the aspect of religious knowledge that dealt the issues of inner self of a person and which could not easily be noticed or judged by many. At the same time he was a great freedom fighter who fought against the Sikhs who had invaded the area very recently. He fought against them adroitly and bravely and did not refrain from sacrificing his life for the cause of freeing his land from the clutches of the Sikhs. There is another point worth knowing

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about him and that is that many well-known Ulema were his *Khilfai* having taken oath of loyalty with the preaching from him. Among such people is the name of Abdul Rehman Sawati whose *Khilfa* was Shah AbudulRehman Sahanpuri. From him (Shah AbudulRehman Sahanpuri) many big Ulema of the sub-continent had learned teachings of Islam and who became one of the major sources of the spread of light of Islam in the sub-continent. Till date his spiritual chain of the well-being of the public is continued and hundreds of thousands of people are benefiting from this chain of spiritualism.

Family Back Ground

It was a matter of pride for him that he too was a Mujahid like his father and grandfather. His grandfather, Sheikh Muhammad Rafique was a big mujahid of his time and he was commonly known as Akhond Ghazi baba bin Ali was a mystic and a preacher who had miracles under his control. He came from Qnqdahar to India along with Ahmad Shah Abdali in 1760 in order to wage Jihad against the invading forces. He participated in the famous battle of Pani Pat against the marhattas and defeated them in the battle. After this he reached Lahore in the presence of Sheikh Suri Lahori. There he took oath on his hand and left the wealthy and attractive life style and embraced mysticism and life of hardship and devotion instead. So he dwelled at the place known as Khand and devoted his life for the service of people and to help them correct themselves internally and externally. After some time he went back to Afghanistan and participated in Jihad over there and embraced martyrdom there in Afghanistan on 6th Rajab Thursday. His tomb is there in the Kunar province of Afghanistan in a big graveyard at the place of Manzogai and he is famously known as Ghazi Baba.¹

The pious son of Shikh Rafiq Ahamad, Moulana Rafi al Qadar famously known as Hafiz Gul Baba and Gari Shah Baba came from Kundah to Toor Dher. He memorized al Quran by heart and was very pious man like his forefathers were. He was a great scholar, a pious man and a great Mujhid of his time. From his early life he started participating in jihdi activities along with his father. Therefore, he mastered the art of fighting for freedom from his very early age. Apart from Jihad he had great liking for seeking knowledge and teaching of it. Therefore he benefited from a number of highly qualified and big scholars of his time and period. Moulana Muhammad Hashtangri is among his best and worth mentioning teachers. He would spend the time spared from Jihad, learning and teaching in worship and meditation. There is no doubt that Allah has chosen him to work for the spread of His religion Islam and he had a prominent position among his peer and contemporary religious scholars. Miansb would respect him a lot and mostly he would personally visit him.²

He was not only a person who held and used sword but he was well versed in using his pen also for his literary and preaching purposes. He was a great orator as well. He delivered many sermons in order to correct the people, connect them with Allah and to motivate them for jihad. He delivered sermons, wrote advices and also produced work of good quality in the field of jurisprudence. His jurisprudential work under the title of "Hazar Masail/One thousand Issues" is an important work in the Pashto language in the given field. He spent his whole life in the service of people and Islam and at last he met

his Lord. Hazrat Sheikh was born in the area of Kundah and he received his early education at the same place. Because he was born in a noble and pious family, he showed indication of the same right from his early life. Once in his childhood his father took him to Mia Muhammad Umar Chamkani. Hazrat put his hand on his head and told him that in the coming time he would become a great spiritual leader. Similarly, once Hazrat Sheikh Umer visited his father and when he found him (Muhammad Shiob) missing, the sheikh inquired about him from his father. His father told him that he was out with children and should be playing with them. When the Hazrat Sheikh Umer went out to the place where the children were playing, he found that the young Muhammad Shoib was not playing and mixing with other children. He had rather covered himself in a shawl and was reciting Darood Sharif. This recitation of Darood Sharif became integral part of his being and at last it became his love. He would recite it thousands of times daily. ³

His Early Education

He took his early education from his father when he memorized the holy Quran from him. Afterwards he studied Saraf, Nahaw, Fiqh, Hadith and Tafseer from his father. After this, for further education his father sent him to his special pupil Mumammad Qadri Sarbai to Umerzai Charsadda. There he learnt all the religious knowledge that dealt with apparent life and its issues and aspects. ⁴

Teaching and Preaching

He stayed with his Shaiokh and completed the lessons of this noble chain and connection. He completed Chilas and did mujahida and Riyazat. He never became oblivious of the remembrance of Allah after becoming a murid. He strictly followed the noble Islamic Sharia. He never went against the tradition and ways of the holy prophet PBUH. His face would always illuminate with the light of brightness and shine of Allah. As has been stated by Nasrullah sahib his face would always shine like a moon and whoever would see his face once, would not go to other mentor. When he completed his education, his mentor sent him to Tor Dher as his Khilifa or second in command in that area. His biography does not tell the exact time he spent along with his teacher and mentor Hazrat Hafiz Muhammad Qadri in UmerZai. His sons also could not provide any solid information about this till the time of writing these lines. Anyways, having learnt knowledge and skill about the internal and external aspects of human life and spirituality, he returned to his home town Tor Dher. Here he would engage himself in Zikar, worship, Riyazat, mujahida and muraqiba on the one hand and in the teaching, preaching and arrangement of teaching for the seekers of knowledge on the other hand. He not only had his own permanent center of learning but would also encourage people to help out establish temporary centers of learning in the nearby villages and bazars so that need of seekers of knowledge could be met. After freeing from his regular and permanent teaching job, he would arrange gatherings for general masses and would deliver sermons in order to advise them to do well. People in great number would participate in these gatherings and would benefit from his presence. In his sermons he would advise people to follow Islamic Sharia and the ways of the holy prophet PBUH. Hafiz Ghulam Farid writes that he would also write down *Fatawa* or religious rulings regarding different matters.

Migration towards Changlai

Because the time period of Shiekh Muhammad Shoib was politically very instable and non-satisfactory and there was anarchy everywhere, people were suffering badly, there was no mental peace for Shiekh Muhammad Shoib like the case was many other pious people at that time. He would feel bad about the anarchy and lack of unity among Muslims but could do very little practically. Therefore, having developed sophistication from the cruelty of the Sikhs, he left his home town of Tor Dher and migrated to the Changlai area of the districts Sawabi. This place is ten miles away from Sawabi and is located in the hills of KhadoKhail. He built a mosque over there and decided to live his remaining life over there. He resumed his beloved activity of teaching and learning over there and provided with a chance to the seeker of knowledge who came from far off area to gain knowledge from him. Along with his teaching activities, he continued with sermons and offering his advices to the people. Thus he continued to bring people back to Allah and to tell them to obey Him alone and leave the sinful life they had indulged in. He brought people back to the right path and connected them with Allah. When he would be free from his teaching and preaching he would go to hill top which was approximately one and a half mile away from the village and would get busy in Zikar (remembrance of Allah) and muraqiba.

There was blood of his *Ghazi* grandfather and a *Mujahid* father running in veins of Shiekh Muhammad Shoib which was inflaming him to fight for freedom. To tell the truth was his essence and his love for Jihad what he was made off. He was not convinced to live a life of compromise and to save himself. He was not of the opinion to live what the situation demanded. He rather believed in creating scenarios and situation that were suitable to him. Therefore, he continued preaching to join jihad and to tell a spade a spade. He continued inviting people for jihad along with his other sermons and preaching. In accordance to the prevailing situation he started paying visits to different places in order to mobilize practical jihad against the invaders and cruel dominant class of rulers. He had deeply studies the strategies and activities of the then Sikh government. One of his sons Moulana Saaduddin famously known as Da Kunir Baba Qudas has also sacrificed his life while fighting against the Sikh government. So, it was natural that Shiekh Muhammad Shoib was preparing his ranks to fight the Sikhs and he was getting anxious for that.

His and his followers and *Khulafaz* preaching visits to different parts of Swat, Sawabi, Bunir and Mardan ignited the spirit of Jihad among the common masses of Afridis, Khattaks, Gadons and Yousafzai Pashton and people started join the jihad movement in big number. When he saw that strong people of the Kohistan belt were ready to join jihad and to test their strong bodies and wills against the cruel government of the Sikhs, he declared Jihad. When the news of the Jihad being started by the Pashtons of the NWFP reached Afghanistan a Barakzai leader of the clan Sardar Muhammad Azim also was ready to join the jihad. He was already awaiting such news from somewhere and he was ready to participate in the jihad along with his army. Therefore, he left Afghanistan along with his army and joined the jihad in battle of Newshehra.⁵

The cruelty of the Sikhs had challenged the self-respect and ego of the Afghans. They were angry at the indifferent attitude of the rulers like Yar Muhammad Khan and Dost Muhammad Khan and they started to prepare to wage jihad at their own. The religious scholars and Ulema of the region started preaching and military visits of the area and they started work to mobilize the masses and to organize them for jihad. Shiekh Muhammad Shoib and his followers and *Khulaf* were at the forefront of such efforts and they did whatever was possible for them to do. On the other hand Barak Zaid tri e took a bold step when they sent their brother Abdul Samad to Yousafzai tribes in order to mobilize them and organize them for the looming jihad and to encourage and boost the Yousafzai, Khattak and Afridi tribes to bravely participate in jihad. Hence the brave people under the leadership of the scholars and Ulema marched towards the bank of the River Kabul near PirSabaq in Nowshehra where Muhammad Azeem Khan along with his brother Dost Muhammad Khan was already present. Ranjit sing sent Sardar Karak sing along with general lord to fight and stop Azeem Khan on the other side of the river. He himself took position on this side of river along with Rinjit sing and generWintora.

When the war started the Afghans fought bravely and cut the opponent army like nothing. They caused the opponent army unbearable damage and loss. A Hindu writer GulshanLalChohra writes that Afghans showed brilliance in the battle field so much so that they made the Sikhs retrieve on their foot. HazratShiekh Muhammad Shoib himself participated in this battle and he faced Phola Sing in a one on one fight. He killed him and sent him to hell. When the Sikhs were about to completely retrieve, Ranjit Singh himself came to lead the whole army. This help from the freshmen strengthened losing army and they organized themselves once more. While it was getting dark, the Afghans embraced defeat at the hands of the large and organized army of the Sikhs. Thousands of mujahidin embraced martyrdom in this battle. The bravery and fighting skills displayed by Shiekh Muhammad Shoib in this battle will never be forgotten and will always be remembered. He got seriously injured in this battle and was brought back to Ghangalie. He could not recover from these serious injuries and died on Rajab 16, 1238 H/ 14 March 1823. He was the real stimulus of the TehrikMujahid of Syed Ahmad Shaheed. Before his martyrdom he advised his nephew that he should be bathed at the home of his maternal grandfather and his funeral should be offered at the open ground of Shah Mansoor. The same were observed.

Bayat and Khilafat

When he completed the knowledge that deals with apparent the inner attraction lured him strongly so that he became anxious to gain inner knowledge as well. According to Hafiz GhulamFarid he saw the holy Prophet PBUH in his dream who indicated to him to go to his teacher Hafiz Muhammad Qadri to seek knowledge of the inner and spirituality from him. Therefore, he once again turned to his teacher to get the knowledge of inner self and spirituality after having attained knowledge of exterior life from him. He aimed at achieving steps of *Salook* and *Tasawuf* with ease and smoothness. But Hafiz Muhammad did not pay him much attention because on the one hand he was too busy with his activities of teaching and on the other hand he was a man who possessed much emotion and who

took pride in the knowledge of the apparent life that he was distributing and spreading among his pupils. He was much disheartened and was about to leave the presence of his teacher when the teacher noticed him. The teacher also could not bear to lose his precious pupil and he immediately told him not to leave his presence. He told him that the one (The holy Prophet PBUH) who have ordered you to come here to me has also ordered me to me to accept you and to take under my guidance and patronage. He told him not to worry any more. This made the two flowing rivers combine together and the processes of Jazab and Injizab started, the student started benefitting from his teacher quickly. The teacher not only took the pupil under his patronage and offered him his hand in Bayat but offered him the jewels and the secrets of the apparent and hidden both. The pupil too responded by learning all the precious lessons from his teacher. He learnt ways of the *Silsila Qadria Junidia* and *Naqashbandia Mujajdia*. He also got busy in the Zikar, worship and Riyazat. When he went pass the steps of the *Salook Hazrat Hafiz Muhammad Qudas* offered him permission and *Khilafatin* both the chains of mysticism. He has mentioned his Bayat taking in *Mirat al Awlia*.⁶ According Abdul Haleem Asar Afghani he was a murid of Mian Muhammad Umer Chamkani⁷.

Famous Khulafa

According to Shah Qadri his followers and muridin exceeded few thousands and his Khulafa alone were in hundereds. These followers of him took his mission of preaching, inviting people to Allah and forbidding from sins, preaching and participating in jihad and spread the chain of mysticism in the way of Qadiria to the peak.⁸ One big name among his Khulafa is that of Hafiz Moulana Abdul Ghafoor Swati who is famously know as Swat Baba gee⁹. This has been explained and asserted by the historian of Swat also when he wrote that Swat baba gee left his home in search of a Kamil Pir and crossing Peshawar he reached Tor Dher. There he went to see Hafiz Muhammad Shoib and took his Bayat. He remained there in his presence from 1819 till 1821.¹⁰

It is mentioned in Tazkira Ulema e Swabi that some hours before he died he asked for Hafiz Abdul Ghafoor Swati to come to him. He asked him to lay down on his chest and then the process of Jazab and Injizab started. Thus he transformed the connection of all the fours chains of mysticism unto him and made him his Khilifa e Mjaz. Allah bestowed the humanity with benefits of immortality through the mystic chain carried by Hafiz Abdul Ghafoor¹¹. Shah Abdul Rahim also became his Khilfa who himself was big mentior and Murshid from who many big scholars of Deaband benefited a lot¹².

He had two sons. The elder one, Moulana Saad Uddin was pupil and *Khalifa* of his father and he was commonly known as Daknir Baba. He was a well versed fellow who spent much time in worship, meditation and Riyazat. He embraced martyrdom in 1815 while fighting against Sikhs. His tom is in Jaba, Attock. This place is situated at a distance of three miles from the Attock Bridge. He has four sons; 1) Sheikh Badruddin who is Khalifa of his grandfather, 2) Sheikh Moulana Qutab al Zaman who is Khalifa of Shiekh Muhammad Shoib Tor Dheri and who is a pious man and a noble person, 3) Sheikh Abdul Haq and 4) Sheikh Allama Zain al A'bidi. All the four sons were *Khulafa* of their grandfather i.e. Shiekh Muhammad Shoib.¹³

Writing on the Topic of Mysticism

He had had a prominent place in the connection and chain of Salook and Tasawuf and was not only a qualified scholar but was an authentic teacher and a mujahid as well and was considered among the best mystics of his time. His depth of knowledge in the field of mysticism can be understood from his famous book *Miraat al Awlia*. This was originally written in Persian language the Urdu translation of which is now available under the title of *Kashif al Awlia*. Moulana Wali al Nabi of Bika has translated the original work from Persian into Urdu. In this book he initially wrote about the importance and benefits of the life of the holy prophet PBUH, his pious followers and his noble wives and then he discussed different aspects of Tasawuf and related issues of it. Next he discussed the life history of all the four Imam of the four chains of Tasawuf. Similarly, he discussed life stories of the other scholars and leaders of the Tasawuf who did not follow the four known chains of the connection and rather had a chain of method of their own. Along with these he has mentioned the conditions and situation of *KamilPir* whom everybody seeks. He has discussed many terminologies of the chain of Tasawuf and its different standings one may come across. One can say that this book is a valuable source to study the life history of the holy prophet PBUH and to understand Sofisim¹⁴. Professor GhulamNasir has written a Ph. D dissertation on this book¹⁵

Endnotes

¹Abdul HaleemAsar Afghani, RohaniRabita, Bajur, DarulIshaa', pp. 960

²Shah Muhammad Shoib, Miraat al Awliya, 2014, pp. 44

³Ibid, pp. 47

⁴ZialluahJadoon, TazkiraUlemaSawabi, Nawar Khan Foundition, 2015, pp. 543

⁵Hafiz GhulamFarid, Ahwal al Arifin, Lahore, Nazir Sons Publications, 1986, p. 67

⁶Shah Muhammad Shoib, Miraat al Awliya, 2014, pp. 53

⁷Ibid, pp. 51

⁸Ibid, pp. 105

⁹Abdul HaleemAsar Afghani, RohaniRabita, Bajur, DarulIshaa', pp. 960

¹⁰Amir Shah Qadri, TazkiraUlemawaMashaikhSarhad, Peshawar, University Book Agency, 1971, p. 142

¹¹Abdul HaleemAsar Afghani, RohaniRabita, Bajur, DarulIshaa', pp. 960

¹²ZialluahJadoon, TazkiraUlemaSawabi, Nawar Khan Foundition, 2015, pp. 543

¹³Shah Muhammad Shoib, Miraat al Awliya, 2014, pp. 53

¹⁴WaliUnnabi, MuqadamatMirat al Awlia, Sawbi, 2014. P. 112

¹⁵BahawalMoulana Muhammad Salih Jan Nabiraho Muhammad Shoib Tor Dheri