

MUHADDITH AL A'ZAM AL HIND

Life & Works of Muhaddith al A'zam Sayyid Muhammad Ashrafi Jilani Kichochavi

Muhaddith al A'zam Makhdum al Millat

Sayyid Muhammad Muhaddith Ashrafi Jilani Kichochavi

{1311 – 1381 A.H / 1894 – 1961 C.E}

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Muhaddith al A'zam, Makhdum al Millat, Siraj al Hind, Rayis al Mufasssirin, Imam al Manazirin Sayyid Muhammad Muhaddith Ashrafi Jilani bin Rayis ul Hukama Sayyid Nazar Ashraf Ashrafi Jilani was born on the 15th of Dhil Qadah, Wednesday in the year 1311 A.H/ 1894 C.E at Jais, Rae Bareilly in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh.

His father was a renowned Sufi and Persian poet and an excellent Physician whose authority was well known and respected among the elite of his field.

His Teachers

Muhaddith al A'zam had the privilege of studying under the five great Sunni Hadith stalwarts of India such as Shaykh Lutfullah Aligarhi, who prefixed the word 'Allama' before the name of Muhaddith al A'zam in the 'Sanad' {Certificate of Graduation}, Shaykh ul Muhaddithin Wasi Ahmad Muhaddith Naqshbandi Surati, Bahr ul Ulum Mufti Abdul Bari Farangi Mahali, Mujaddid al A'zam Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Muhaddith Quadri Bareilvi and Shaykh Muti'y ur Rasul Muhammad Abdul Muqtadar Usmani Quadri Badayuni.

The Title of Muhaddith al A'zam

It was the peerless Muhaddith and teacher of Muhaddith al A'zam Shaykh Muti'y ur Rasul Badayuni who gave the title of 'Muhaddith al A'zam' to him at the young

age of 17 years at Badayun along with a special ‘Sanad’ of Hadith which indicates Muhaddith al A’zam’s extraordinary Knowledge and calibre. It is also important to note that it was the same Shaykh Muti’y ur Rasul Badayuni who gave and addressed Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Quadri as the ‘Mujaddid’ {Reviver} of 14th Islamic century.

Baiyah & Khilafah

Muhaddith al A’zam became the Murid {Disciple} of his noble uncle – Alim ar Rabbani Arif ul Haqqani Wayiz al Lasani Sultan ul Manazirin Sayyid Ahmad Ashraf Ashrafi Jilani ibn Shaykh ul Mashaik Shabiha Ghawth al A’zam Ala Hazrat Sayyid Ali Husayn Ashrafi Miyan in the Quadriya Chishtiya Ashrafiya tariqah and received Khilafah from him. He also had Khilafah in the Quadriya Barkatiya Razviya tariqah from Imam al Akbar Ahmad Raza Khan Quadri Bareilvi.

Among his close aides were Imam Ahl us Sunnah Sarkar e Kalan Sayyid Mukhtar Ashraf Ashrafi Jilani Kichochavi, Imam Ahl us Sunnah Mufti al A’zam Mufti Mustafa Raza Khan Quadri Bareilvi, Sadr ul Afazil Sayyid Nayimuddin Ashrafi Muradabadi, Manazir al A’zam Mufti Hashmat Ali Khan Quadri Razvi, Taj ul Ulama Mufti Umar Nayimi Ashrafi, Shaykh ul Hadith Abdul Mustafa Naqshbandi A’zami, Mujahid al Millat Sayyid Habib ur Rahman Quadri Ashrafi Orisavi, Peer Jamat Ali Shah Muhaddith Naqshbandi Alipuri, Peer Sayyid Didar Ali Shah Muhaddith Naqshbandi Alwari, Malik ul Ulama Sayyid Zafaruddin Muhaddith Quadri Razvi Bihari, Sadr ush Shariyah Mufti Amjad Ali Quadri Razvi A’zami, Imam Ahl us Sunnah Sayyid Ahmad Saeed Kazmi Chishti Sabri, Hafiz al Millat Mufti Abdul Aziz Quadri Ashrafi Muhaddith Mubarakpuri, and Qayid al Ahl us Sunnah Abdul Hamid Quadri Badayuni, etc.

Religious & Social Activities

Muhaddith al A’zam established a School of Hadith under the leadership of Hadrat Allama Sayyid Muhammad Mir Sahib in Delhi in 1330 A.H at the age of 19 years. He also started the publication of ‘Mahnama Ashrafi’, a monthly Islamic magazine from Kichocha Muqaddasa in 1339 A.H/ 1922 C.E in which he comprehensively refuted the heretical and astray sects of Wahhabiya, Deobandiya, Qadiyaniya and other deviant and blasphemous groups.

Muhaddith al A'zam presided over and governed several Institutions of Ahl us Sunnah wal Jamah like 'All India Sunni Conference' at Banaras, 'Jamiat Raza e Mustafa' of Bareilly which was founded by Imam Ahmad Raza Quadri Bareilvi, 'All India Jamiat e Ulema e Hind' and 'Al Jamiya al Ashrafiya' at Mubarakpur. He also presided over the functioning of 'Dar ul Ulum Ashrafiya' at Behraich, 'Dar ul Ulum Faruqiyah' at Banaras and countless other such Islamic Madrasas.

Islamic & Spiritual Services

Muhaddith al A'zam travelled extensively throughout the Indian subcontinent debating the Wahhabiya and guiding the Muslim Masses towards Religious and economical up-liftment. His contributions to the rise of Muslims and Ahl us Sunnah in political sphere can not be neglected and sacrifices for Independence of India can not be suppressed. Muhaddith al A'zam along with Sadr ul Afazil Sayyid Nayimuddin Ashrafi Muradabadi and his students steered the Muslims out of the great political and religious turmoil after 1920's. His religious travels took him to almost all the states and districts of the subcontinent during which he used to be continuously awake for 2-3 days at stretch, such was the burden of Muslim affairs on him! Muhaddith al A'zam never ceased to travel until his last breath, just before his demise he was on a religious tour of the southern states of India. This meant travelling almost 11 months a year. Only in the holy month Ramazan and the last few days of Muharram, he used to stay at his house in Kichocho i.e. during the Annual Gathering (Urs) ceremony of his ancestors.

It has been widely reported that during these travels and journeys he encountered many Non -Muslims. Such was the personality and piety of Muhaddith al A'zam that more than 5,000 unbelievers embraced Islam and millions of Muslims became his disciples.

Students & Khulafa

Muhaddith al A'zam left numerous spiritual and scholarly students among whom are:

(1.) Imam ul Ma'qulat wal Manqulat Mufti Sulayman Ashrafi Bhagalpuri, former teacher at Jamiya al Ashrafiya, Mubarakpur.

(2.) Shaykh Allama Mufti Afzaluddin Ashrafi.

(3.) Shaykh Allama Sayyid Fakhar Allahabadi.

(4.) Shaykh ul Mashaikh Sayyid Nayim Ashraf Ashrafi Jilani Jaisi, present Custodian of Khanqah al Ashrafiya Ahmadiya, Jais, U.P.

(5.) Mahbub ul Ulama Mufti Muhammad Mahbub Ashrafi Mubarakpuri, former teacher at Jamiya Ashrafiya, Mubarakpur.

(6.) Rayis ul Muhaqqiqin Shaykh ul Islam wal Muslimin Sayyid Muhammad Madani Ashrafi Jilani Kichochavi, Successor and Custodian of Dargah Muhaddith al A'zam.

Allama Mufti Shams ul Haq A'zami and Ashfaq ul Ulama Mufti al A'zam Rajasthan Mufti Ashfaq Husayn Nayimi are also Khulafa of Muhaddith al A'zam in the Quadriya Chishtiya Ashrafiya tariqah.

According to one report Malik ul Ulama Sayyid Zafaruddin Muhaddith Quadri Razvi Bihari also took Khilafa of the Quadriya Chishtiya Ashrafiya tariqah from Muhaddith al A'zam.

Bibliography of Muhaddith al A'zam's Books

Muhaddith al A'zam authored more than 100 books and booklets. The majority of them are in refutation of the Wahhabiya – Deobandiya. In-fact, he conducted more than three major debates with the Deobandiya, the details of which will be presented in another article..Insha-Allah!

Of his books, the most important and famous is the Urdu Translation of the Holy Quran 'Ma'arif ul Quran' which was highly praised by Mujaddid al A'zam Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Quadri Bareilvi. Most of his books are now extinct except a few that are in modern print and the rest are in manuscript form.

(1.) 'Ma'rif ul Quran': An excellent Translation of the Holy Quran. In print.

(2.) Tafsir al Ashrafi: Muhaddith al A'zam after completing the Translation of the Holy Quran had started the Tafsir and completed only 3 parts of the Holy Quran until his demise. The Tafsir of the first part of the Holy Quran has been published while the remaining two parts are now extinct.

(3.) Taqwa ul Qulub;

- (4.) Qahar Qahhaar Baro e Nahanjar;
- (5.) Hayat Ghawth al A'lam: Biography of Makhdum Ashraf Jahangir Simnani. In Print.
- (6.) Tahqiq ul Taqlid;
- (7.) Rudaad e Munazarah Kicchocha Sharif;
- (8.) Nawk e Teer;
- (9.) Khuda ki Rahmat;
- (10.) Maqsad al Abrar;
- (11.) Sawanih Ghawth al A'zam;
- (12.) Milad e Ashrafi;
- (13.) Fitnah e Azeem aur Uska Dafeeyah;
- (14.) Sirat al Khulafa;
- (15.) Kitab us Salat;
- (16.) Fatawa al Ashrafiya {2 Volumes};
- (17.) Munafiqin e Islam ka Agaz aur Irtaqa;
- (18.) At Tahqiq ul Bari'y fi Huquq ish Shari'y; This book is on the Legislative Authority & Powers of the Beloved RasulAllah. It was translated by me with extensive notes and Hadith referencing and was published on the 49th Urs of Muhaddith al A'zam Hind by Ashrafiya Islamic Foundation, Hyderabad.
- (19.) Atmam e Hujjat Bar Jand Munkir e Nabuwat;
- (20.) Kama Qala Aqulu fi Radd Ahl il Zalal wal Jahal;
- (21.) Farsh par Arsh; Compendium of Eulogies in Praise of the Beloved Rasul Allah. In Print.
- (22.) Basarat ul Ayn fi An Waqt ul Asr Ba'ad ul Mislain;

(23.) Al Ijazah bil Dua' Ba'ad Salat ul Janazah;

(23.) Dafi' ul Istisfa' an Jawaz ud Dua Ba'ad Salat ul Janazah bin Ijma' or Ahsan ut Tahqiqat fi Jawaz ud Dua' Ba'ad lil Amwat;

(24.) Marqumat Be Misal;

(25.) Shaykh ul Alam;

(26.) Peeran e Peer;

(27.) Sultan ul Mashaikh;

(28.) Sultan ul Arifin;

(29.) Al Fatwa ala Jawaz ut Takbir bil Jahr fi Eid ul Fitr wa Eid uz Zuha;

(30.) Haqqa ke Binaae Lallaha Ast Husayn

(31.) Mukalma Juma' (Rudad Manazarah Banaras);

(32.) Wasaya Shareef Imam al A'zam;

(33.) Eid e Mairaj;

(34.) Jazirat ul Arab wa Arya Nariya;

(35.) Mu'zam ul Abwab fi Bayan Tariq uz Ziyarat wa Isaal us Sawab.

Marriage & Children

Muhaddith al A'zam married at the age of 22 years in 1915 C.E the grand-daughter of 'A'la Hadrat Ashrafi Miyan; that means the daughter of Sultan al Wayizin Alim ar Rabbani Sayyid Ahmad Ashraf Ashrafi Jilani who was also his maternal uncle and spiritual guide (Murshid).

Muhaddith al A'zam was blessed with 6 sons and 2 daughters viz: Sayyid Muhammad Makki Miyan (passed way at the age of 12 years), Sayyid Muhamid Ashraf 'Majzub al Ilahi', Sayyid Hasan Musanna Anwar Miyan, Sayyid Hasanna Miyan (passed away at the age of 5 years), Janashin Muhaddith al A'zam Rayis ul Muhaqqiqin Shaykh ul Islam wal Muslimin Sayyid Muhammad Madani Miyan,

Ghazi al Millat Khatib al A'zam Sayyid Muhammad Hashmi Miyan, Sayyidah Iqbal Banu and Sayyidah Sultana Khatun.

Hajj & Ziyarah

During his lifetime, Muhaddith al A'zam was blessed with visiting Makkah Mukarramah and Madinah Munawwarah for Hajj and Ziyarah 5 times.

Demise

Muhaddith al A'zam was on the religious tour of Gujrat and other southern states of India when he suddenly fell ill and had to travel back to the northern city of Lukhnow for treatment. This was on the 10th November 1961 and Muhaddith al A'zam stayed at Lukhnow for 44 days to recover from his illness. But, the illness proved fatal and the Giant Sunni Scholar left for Heavenly abode on Monday, 25th December 1961 C.E at 12.30 pm corresponding to 16th Rajab 1381 A.H. Shaykh ul Islam Sayyid Muhammad Madani Ashrafi was very young at that time and was pursuing his Islamic education at Jamiya al Ashrafiya, Mubarakpur.

The Funeral Prayer of Muhaddith al A'zam was led by his cousin and brother in law - Imam ul Ahl us Sunnah Shaykh ul Mashaikh Sarkar e Kalan Sayyid Mukhtar Ashraf Ashrafi Jilani Kichochavi.

Thousands of Scholars and Muslims had gathered from all over the subcontinent to attend the last rites. Muhaddith al A'zam was buried in Kichocha Muqaddasa where a huge dome was later constructed over his grave by his successor Shaykh ul Islam wal Muslimin Sayyid Muhammad Madani Ashrafi Jilani.

Shaykh al Islam Sayyid Muhammad Madani Ashrafi Jilani Kichochavi is the present custodian of the Shrine of Muhaddith al A'zam and has been continuously conducting the annual gathering ceremony (Urs) for the last 49 years on 16th Rajab of every lunar year.

Muhaddith al A'zam was a staunch lover of the Beloved Rasul-Allah~sal Allahu alayhi wa sallam~ as can be judged from his books and compendium of poetry 'Farsh pe Arsh'. His status in the court of Allah Almighty and the Beloved Rasul-

Allah ~sal Allahu alayhi wa sallam~ can also be judged from many incidents and his numerous Karamahs (Marvels).

The Beloved Rasul Allah ~sal Allahu alayhi wa sallam~ blessed Muhaddith al A'zam with his divine 'Ziyarah' 5 times and Muhaddith al A'zam saw him in the state of wakefulness with his naked eyes! This is actually a rare occurrence even for celebrated Awliya-Allah!

It is a fact that Muhaddith al A'zam along with Sadr ul Afazil Sayyid Nayimuddin Quadri Ashrafi Muradabadi and Hakim ul Ummat Mufti Ahmad Yaar Khan Quadri Ashrafi Badayuni are among the few scholars of Ahl us Sunnah wal Jamah whose contributions to Islam have been neglected to a large extent in the Indian sub-continent. It is sad to express that even their books have not been published with due care and they are still counted among the literary and scholarly treasures in libraries. It is our responsibility to bring out these hidden treasures out of oblivion, print them according to modern methods, translate them into modern and international languages and distribute them among the book-starving Ahl us Sunnah masses.

Note: This Biography has been compiled from 'Hayat Muhaddith al A'zam' by Shaykh Zakir Husayn Ashrafi Raj-Mahali, published by Al Ashraf Academy, Raj-Mahal, India. Another Doctoral Thesis was prepared on "The Life, Works & Poetry of Muhaddith al A'zam" by Shaykh Allama Muhammad Farhat Ali Siddiqui Ashrafi, the Khalifa of Rayis ul Muhaqqiqn Shaykh ul Islam wal Muslimin Sayyid Muhammad Madani Ashrafi Jilani Kichochavi and was submitted to the Osmania University, Hyderabad. Dr Farhath Ali Siddiqui Ashrafi was awarded 'Doctorate' last year based upon this thesis. This Phd Thesis also has the distinction of being the First Authorative work on Muhaddith al A'zam or any of the other great Mashaikh of Khanwada e Ashrafiya in India.

Translated & Compiled by Basharath Ali Siddiqui Hanafi Ashrafi,
Ashrafiya Islamic Foundation, Hyderabad, India.