

"The turtle-dove sings its lament at dawn, and weeps. My tears disturb her sleep and her tears disturb mine. When she and I complain, we understand not each other. But I know her grief and she knows mine."

Abul-Hasan an-Nuri

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY:

Birth Name: Bahauddin Naqshband Bukhari

Born in: Bukhara

Born in: the year 1318

In depth:

Shah Bahauddin Naqshband was born in the village of Qasr al-Arifan near Bukhara in the year 711 AH/1317 CE.

He is reported to have had miraculous powers even during his childhood. When he was still a youth, Sheikh Muhammad Baba as Samasi, a Sheikh of the Naqshbandi Tariqa, asked for him and to fulfill this request he went to the village of Samas in order to serve him.

Of this period of time, Shah Bahauddin says:

"Rising in the morning, at least three hours before Fajr I would perform the Sunnat prayers and thereafter in the position of sajda (prostration), I'd ask Allah to give me the power to carry the pain of His Divine love. Thereafter I would pray Salat ul Fajr with my Sheikh. It seems that my Sheikh was aware of my supplication, for he told me, "You will have to change your method of supplication as Allah Almighty does not like His servants to ask for difficulties. He might, however, in order to test his creatures give them some difficulties. This is different. The servant should not ask to be in difficulties because this will not be showing proper respect to Allah. Therefore, change your supplication and instead say "to this weak servant of Yours, oh my Lord grant Your pleasure".

"After the death of Sheikh Muhammad Baba Samasi, I went to Bukhara and also got married there. I lived in Qasr al-Arifan near Sayyid Amir Kulal in order to serve him."

It is related that Sheikh Baba Samasi had, a long time ago, told Sayyid Amir Kulal to take good care of Shah Bahauddin Naqshband.

Shah Bahauddin relates of a vision that he had:

“When I was in seclusion with a friend of mine, the heavens suddenly opened and a great vision came to me.

In this vision I heard a voice say, “Leave everyone and come to Our Presence alone”. I began to tremble and ran away from that place to where there was a river and threw myself into it. I washed my clothes and then prayed two rakaat’s of prayer in a manner that I had never prayed before as I felt that I was praying in the very Divine Presence. Unveiling was taking place in my heart and it was opening to everything. The entire universe vanished and I was not conscious of anything other than praying in His Divine Presence”.

There is also a very unusual story about this very great saint Shah Bahauddin Naqshband.

Shah Bahauddin Naqshband relates about this incident, “At the beginning of my state of attraction I was asked as to why I was entering on this path. I answered “so that whatever I say and want will happen” and I was answered, “It cannot be like that, whatever We say and whatever We want is what will happen” to which I replied, “I cannot agree to that. I must be able to say and to do whatever I like; if this is not going to be the way then I have no need for this path”.

Then I received the answer, “No, it is whatever We desire to be said and whatever We desire to be done, that must be said and done”. To this, I replied again “whatever I say and whatever I do should be the way”.

After this I was left alone. For fifteen days I was left alone. This made me go into a deep state of depression. Then suddenly to my joy I heard a voice saying, “Oh Bahauddin, it is as you wish. We will grant to you whatever that you wish”. I asked for my wish which was “Give me a way which will lead all who travel on it directly to the Divine Presence.” Then I experienced a great vision and heard “You have been granted what you have asked for”.

This story is unusual as everyone complies with the Divine Orders and does not ask for what they wish. Generally it would be considered discourteous to refuse to accept the Divine Orders and insist on wanting what one wants. Yet after the initial refusal Shah Bahauddin was granted his request. It may be that because he asked on behalf of others and not for himself that what he wanted was granted. This then was the consideration that Shah Bahauddin Naqshband had for others and this, we assumed was the reason that this request was granted.

There is another interesting story about how Shah Bahauddin Naqshband was tested by his Sheikh. This test was a heavy one.

Shah Bahauddin Naqshband relates this incident, "Once I was in a state of divine attraction, where I was not conscious of myself and I was moving about not knowing what I was doing. At nightfall I found myself bleeding in both my feet which were torn and pricked with thorns. Then I felt that I should go to the house of my Sheikh, Sayyid Amir Kulal. It was biting cold in the night and the night too was dark with no moon or stars. To prevent the cold I had nothing on me but an old leather cloak. Then I arrived at my sheikh's house and saw him together with his friends and followers. He saw me and told his followers, "take him out of my house, I do not want him in my house", so the followers came and put me out of the house. I could not bear it".

"I felt that my ego was going to defeat me and that it would take over my feelings by trying to poison me concerning the trust I had in my Sheikh. How could I carry this disgrace and humiliation? Then the Divine Mercy came upon me which made me able to carry this insult in the cause of Allah and in the cause of my Sheikh. I firmly told my ego, "I am not going to allow you to make me lose the love and trust for my Sheikh".

"I then felt a deep depression overcome me. I held fast to the state of humbleness, put my head down on the entrance of my Sheikh's house and swore that I would not remove it from there until he accepted me one more time. I could feel the snow and the cold wind going right through my bones which were making me shiver and tremble in this cold dark night.

There was not even the light of the moon or the stars for consolation and warmth. I almost froze. It was only the warmth of the love that I had for Allah Almighty and my Sheikh that kept me warm."

"I waited in this condition until the break of day. Then my Sheikh stepped out and without seeing me his foot trod on my head. When my Sheikh saw that this was me, he quickly took me into his house and with great concern and care, he started pulling out the thorns from my feet, he said "Oh my son, you have been today dressed with the dress of happiness and the dress of Divine Love. This dress which you have been adorned with neither my Sheikh before me nor I have been dressed in such a manner. Allah is happy with you and the Prophet Muhammad is happy with you. The Saints of the Golden Chain are also all happy with you".

"While pulling the thorns out of my feet and washing my wounds my Sheikh poured into my heart such knowledge that I had never before experienced. Then in a vision I saw myself entering into the secret of Muhammadur Rasulallah. This was entering into the secret of the verse that is the Reality of Muhammad. Thereafter this led me on to enter into the secret of La ilaha illallah which is the secret of the Uniqueness of Allah. This in turn led me to enter the secrets of Allah Almighty's names and attributes that are in the secret of the Oneness of Allah. It is not possible for words to explain this state. This can only be experienced by tasting through the heart".

Shah Bahauddin Naqshband was trained by Baba as Samasi and Sayyid Amir Kulal both of whom are great Sheikhs of the Golden Chain of the Naqshbandi order. He was also trained by another very big Grandsheikh of this very same Golden Chain. This incident is referred to by Shah Bahauddin Naqshband in the following story, "At the start of my journey on the Sufi way I used to wander at night from one place to another in the suburbs of Bukhara. In order to learn a lesson from the dead I used to visit many cemeteries in the darkness of night and this was also specially during the winter. One night I went over to visit the burial place of Sheikh Ahamed al Kashghari and to recite fatiha for him. When I went to his grave I found there two men waiting for me. I had never met them before. They had a horse with them. They made me sit on the horse and tied on my belt two swords, then they directed this horse to the tomb of Sheikh Mazdakhin. We then dismounted from our horses and entered the tomb and the mosque of this sheikh and started meditation.

"While meditating I saw in a vision the wall facing the kabah come crashing down. A big made man was seated on a huge throne. He was gigantic. I felt familiar with him as if I had met him before. Whichever way I turned my face I would see this person. Around this person were both my Sheikhs Baba Samasi and Sayyid Amir Kulal together with a large crowd. I felt a love for this huge man and at the same time I felt afraid of him. I had awe and fear of his presence and love and attraction for his beauty. I was asking myself who could this great and gigantic man be. Suddenly I heard a person from the crowd around this man saying "this man is your Sheikh and he looked after you on your spiritual path. He looked at your soul when it was still an atom in the Divine Presence. You have been under his training. His name is Abdul Khaliq Al Gujadawani and the crowd that you see around him are the Saints who carry his great secrets, the secrets of the Golden Chain. Then this Sheikh began to point to each Sheikh and say, "this is Sheikh Ahmed, this is Arif Rawakri, this is Sheikh Ali Ramitani, this is your Sheikh Baba as Samasi who gave you his cloak during his lifetime. He asked me, "Do you know him". I replied "Yes". Then he said, "The cloak that he gave you is still in your house, and with his blessings Allah Almighty has removed from you many troubles".

"Then another voice said "the Sheikh who is sitting on the throne will be teaching you something that you will need while traveling on this path. I asked them whether they would allow me to touch his hand. This was allowed and I took his hand. Then he began to tell me about the path, its beginning, middle and end". He said, "You have to adjust the wick of yourself so that the light of the invisible can be strengthened in you and its secrets can be seen. You have to show constancy and you have to keep firmly the Divine Law of the Prophet Muhammed in all your states". He also said, "You have to dispense with comfort and keep away from innovation and make your kiblah the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad . You have to go into and investigate the life of the Prophet Muhammed and his companions. You must ask people to read and to follow the Quran both during the day and night and to do the compulsory prayers and all the sunnah worship.

Do not overlook even the tiniest thing of the Prophet Muhammad's deeds and good works".

“As soon as Abd al-Khaliq al-Ghujadawani (ral) finished, his khalifs told me “so that you can be certain of this vision he will be sending you a sign”. He was told that certain things and incidents would happen and as to what he had to do, as and when they happened.

Likewise these incidents took place in the manner described to him and Shah Bahauddin also acted in the manner that he was instructed to act, thus fulfilling the truth of this vision. He was also asked to take the cloak of Azizan to Sayyid Amir Kulal. After this vision ended I went to my house on the next day and looked for the cloak and asked my family as to its whereabouts. They told me, “it has been here for a long time”, and brought and gave it to me. I started crying inside when I saw the cloak.

After the fulfillment of all the things that was said in his vision, as ordered I took the cloak of Azizan to Sheikh Sayyid Amir Kulal (ral) and gave it to him. After some silence Sheikh Amir Kulal told me, “I was told about this cloak of Azizan last night and that you would bring it to me. I have been ordered to keep it in ten different layers of covering”. He then asked me to come into his room and taught me and placed in my heart the silent zikr. I was asked to keep to this zikr day and night. I kept to this silent zikr which is the highest form of zikr. I also went to the external scholars to study the Divine Law and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad and also to study about the character of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. I followed the orders that were given to me in my vision and my life took on a big change. All what was taught to me by Sheikh Abd al-Khaliq al-Gujadawani (ral) in the vision benefited me and bore fruit. His spirit always accompanied me and taught me”. Sheikh Abd al-Khaliq al-Ghujadawani (ral) was also one

of the masters of Shah Bahauddin Naqshband although he lived a long time before the time of Shah Naqshband. This connection is known as the Uvaisi Connection which means that the guide is spiritually connected and guides, although he is from another time. Sheikh Abd al-Khaliq al-Ghujadawani (ral) is also a Master of the Golden Chain of Masters.

Shah Bahauddin Naqshband (ral) also followed and learned from Mawlana Arif ad-Din Karani for a period of seven years. After which he followed Mawlana Kuthum Shaykh for many years. He also kept the company of Dervish Khalil Ghirani about whom he said, “in his company new unseen knowledge was opened to my heart and he always looked after me, praised me and lifted me up”. There was another lover of Allah about whom Shah Bahauddin Naqshband talks, “He ordered me to help and serve the poor and needy

and to help the broken hearted. He asked me to be humble and to keep to tolerance. He also told me to take care of animals and to cure their deceases and to clean their wounds and also to help them find their food”.

Shah Bahauddin Naqshband refers to another incident regarding the cloak of Azizan. "One day I was in my garden and around me were my disciples. I was wearing the cloak of Azizan. I suddenly felt overwhelmed by heavenly blessings and attraction and I felt that I was adorned and dressed with Allah Almighty's attributes. I began shaking in a way that I had never experienced before so much so that I could not remain standing. I then saw a great vision in which I was totally annihilated and I could not see anything other than the Existence of my Lord.

Then I saw myself coming out from His Divine Presence reflected through the mirror of Muhammad ur Rasoolullah which was in the form of a star in an ocean of light without beginning and without end. My external life ceased to be and I saw the meaning of la ilaha illallah Muhammad ur Rasoolullah. This in turn led me to the meaning of the Essence of the name "Allah" which led me to the Absolute Unseen which is the Essence of the name "Huwa" (He). As soon as I entered this ocean my heart stopped beating and my life ended. I was in the state of death. All those around me started crying thinking that I had

died. However after about six hours I was ordered to return to my body. I could see my soul re-entering my body slowly and then the vision ended".

Shah Bahauddin Naqshband also says that he received secrets from all sides and specially from Uways al-Qarani (ral) who he says influenced him to give up worldly things and to attach himself to spiritual matters. He says, "I did this by keeping to the sunnah and the orders of the Prophet Muhammad until I began spreading the unseen knowledge and the granted secrets from the Unique Oneness that no one before me had ever shared".

There is another interesting story related by this great Saint Shah Bahauddin Naqshband regarding his spiritual power. He says, "I went one day into the desert with one of my sincere disciples named Muhammad Zahid. We started digging with a pick axe and working but at the same time also discussing very deep states of knowledge. We threw away the pick axes as we got deeper and deeper into this subject. Then he suddenly asked me, "to what limit does worship reach," I replied, "worship reaches to such a level that you will be able to point out at someone and say "die" and then he will die." As I said this I unconsciously pointed at Muhammad Zahid. When I said the word "die", to my horror he fell down dead. From sunrise up to mid day the time passed and he still remained dead. At mid day it got very hot and the body started deteriorating due to the intense heat. I did not know what to do and was afraid and confused. All I could do was pull him towards the shade under a tree. I then sat down and started thinking and contemplating as to what I should do in this situation. Suddenly Divine Inspiration came to me and I said pointing to him "Oh Muhammad Live!" three times. To my joy his soul slowly started to return to his body and then he gradually returned to his original state. I quickly went to my Sheikh and told him about this incident to which he replied, "Oh my son, Allah Almighty has given you a secret which he has not given to anyone else".

In his last days Shah Bahauddin Naqshband was confined mostly to his room. Many were the people who came to see him. Crowds thronged to see him as his illness became graver. When his time began to draw near he ordered the sura yasin to be recited. When this was finished he raised his hands to Allah Almighty and then also raised up his finger and recited the Shahada Kalima, bearing witness to the One God and the messenger hood of the Prophet Muhammad . With this his soul returned to Allah.

The date was the 3rd of Rabi-al-Awwal, 791 AH/1388 CE, on a Monday night. As he had requested, he was buried in his own garden. Regarding this a great Saint of the time Abd al Wahab ash-Sharani said, "when the sheikh was buried in his grave a window to paradise was opened for him, making his grave a paradise from heaven. Two beautiful spiritual beings came and greeted him saying, "We have been waiting to serve you from the time that Allah created us and now the time has come for us to serve you," to which Shah Bahauddin Naqshband had replied, "I am not in need of looking at anything other than Him. I do not need you, I need Him".

This is how the passing away and the burial of this great Sheikh has been described. Such was the greatness of the Pir or the Pillar of the most distinguished Naqshabandi Tariqa. This Tariqa was before his time called "Siddiqiya". After Shah Bahauddin Naqshband, however it came to be known as the Naqshbandiyya Tariqa.