



THE EARLY LIFE OF HAZRAT KHWAJA MUINUDDIEN CHISHTI AJMERI

Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh

Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddeen Chishti Ajmeri (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) was born in 536 A.H. in a place called Chisht, which is in Sistan, East Persia. Both his parents were Sayyid and he was both Hassani and Hussaini. His father was Hazrat Khwaja Ghiyasuddeen Hasan (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) whose noble lineage is traced to Hazrat Imam Hussain (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh), and his mother was Bibi Ummul-Wara (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anha) also known as Bhabi Mah-e-Noor, a descendant of Hazrat Imam Hassan (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh). [*Masaalik Saalikeen*]

He was born at a time when the Muslim world, especially Sistan, was in turmoil, experiencing bloodshed and plunder at the hands of the non-Muslims. Due to this his father one day decided to leave Sistan for a safer place and hence migrated to Neshapur. He bought an orchard with a windmill in the vicinity of Rewand with the intention to settle there. However, the destruction of the barbarous Tartars and other rebels soon spread to this city as well, and fields were being destroyed, Ulama and Sufis were mercilessly being murdered, honour of the women was brutally being outraged, girls and boys were being taken as slaves, and mosques, hospitals and educational institutions were being destroyed.

While Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddeen Chishti (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) was trying to cope with all this at a very young age, his beloved mother passed away. Soon thereafter his dear father passed away as well in the year 551 A.H. and this young orphan was left alone to fend for himself in a world full of hatred, murder and greed. However, he bore this period with courage and exemplary forbearance, and worked hard in looking after his father's orchard, trimming and watering the plants with his own hands. He often plunged himself into deep thoughts about these ugly events in order to try to come to some definite conclusion about his own future course of life.

Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddeen Chishti (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) already showed signs of his rare piety and sacrifice for others from the time of his infancy. Whenever any woman with a baby came to see his mother, and if the baby cried for feeding, he used to make a gesture to his mother to feed the crying baby from her own breast. When his mother would do this, it would please him very much. At the age of 3 he used to share his own food with his playmates. Once he was going to the Eid-gah for the Eid Namaaz in rich clothes. On the way he saw a blind boy in rags. He pitied the boy so much that he at once gave him some of his own clothes and led him to the Eid-gah with all due affection.

As mentioned earlier, Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddeen Chishti (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) used to ponder for hours over the ugly scenes of the massacre which he had been witnessing with great pain for several years ever since his childhood. His interest in worldly life was diminishing fast and inwardly he longed to be away from such a vicious world, if he could manage to see a way out. One day, at the age of fifteen, he came across a Majzooab Wali by the name of Shaikh Ibrahim Qandoozi (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh), who happened to come to his orchard. Khwaja Muinuddeen Chishti (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) was watering the plants at the time and when he saw the Shaikh he welcomed him enthusiastically and after kissing his hands reverently, made him sit under a shady tree. He then brought a bunch of fresh grapes and requested Shaikh Ibrahim (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) to eat it. The Shaikh complied with the request and seemed to admire the manners

and gesture of the young Khwaja Muinuddeen's (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) hospitality. He at once perceived with his intuitive power that his host was inwardly worried and upset, had a spark of divine love in his heart and was an ardent seeker of the Truth. Overwhelmed by the pleasure of this understanding, the Shaikh brought out a piece of bread from his wallet and after chewing it, put it into the mouth of Khwaja Muinuddeen (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh). No sooner had he eaten it, than the veil of all worldly imagination was lifted from his mind and he found himself in quite a strange world, radiating with Divine Manifestation. When Khwaja Muinuddeen (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) recovered from this extraordinary experience he found that Shaikh Ibrahim Qandoozi (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) had disappeared. [*Siyarul Arifeen*]

The immediate inspiration of this miraculous experience with Shaikh Ibrahim Qandoozi (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) was that Khwaja Muinuddeen (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) renounced the world. He wasted no time in selling his orchard and the windmill along with all his other worldly belongings and distributed every piece of the sale proceeds among the poor and the needy. He then bade farewell to his dear and near ones and left Neshapur for Bukhara in search of religious knowledge and moral education. He decided to go to Bukhara because the famous universities in Baghdad and Neshapur had suffered damage due to the ravages of continuous wars and plunder, but Bukhara still had some of the best educational institutions and learned Ulama of that time. [*Siyarul Arifeen*]

A handsome youth, who renounced the world in his early teens, was seen walking all alone on the Neshapur-Bukhara highway amidst jungle and animal life, without a friend, without a penny in his pocket and without any present or future hope of provision for his livelihood, resolutely determined to seek the Truth. The worry and discontentment of his earlier years had suddenly changed into a perfect contentment immediately after a Divine Vision received through the help of a Majzooob Wali. He seemed to be very happy with his apparently gloom lot. At this stage however, he did not know that one day he would be one of the greatest Awliya Allah in the history of Islam, who would turn the tables of the evil world, who would apply the balm of solace and salvation to the wounds of the afflicted humanity, and who would cause the downfall of pride and arrogance of the mightiest monarchs of his time to end the sufferings of the oppressed.

While in Bukhara, Khwaja Muinuddeen (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) received his education in all the oriental sciences and literature from many learned Ulama of that time, prominent of whom was Maulana Hissamuddeen Bukhari (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh), from whom he received his Jubba (cloak) and Dastaar-e-Fazilat (turban of learning), which was the two highest academic diplomas or 'robes of learning' of that time. [*Dalilul Arifeen*]

Having completed his education in Bukhara, Khwaja Muinuddeen (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) went to Samarqand which was also a great seat of learning in those days. There too he attended many leading institutions to perfect his knowledge in theology, philosophy and grammar. The years of his education in Bukhara and Samarqand are reported to be between 552 A.H. and 561 A.H.

After equipping himself with the best available education that he could obtain, Khwaja Muinuddeen (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) now diverted his attention to the spiritual side of his training. He now needed a spiritual guide and decided to leave Samarqand in quest of such a master, starting on a journey in the southern parts of the country towards Baghdad. On this journey, he came to the town of Haroon where one of the greatest Sufi Saints of his time, Hazrat Khwaja Usman Harooni (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) lived. This great Wali had a resounding fame

which attracted scores of people from far and near for their spiritual enlightenment and religious and moral training under him.

One day Khwaja Muinuddeen (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) decided to present himself before this great Wali. When he approached Hazrat Khwaja Usman Harooni (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh), he kissed the ground with all due reverence and pleaded, "Huzoor, may I request you to enlist me as one of your humble and devoted mureeds?" Hazrat Khwaja Usman Harooni (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) at once perceived with his intuitive powers that Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddeen (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) was the fittest candidate to join the circle of his disciples, and granted his request without hesitation.

Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddeen Chishti (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) says in his own words about the spiritual initiation which took place thereafter:

"I had the honour of appearing before Hazrat Khwaja Usman (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) when many other spiritual luminaries were also present. I lowered my head in solemn reverence. Khwaja Usman (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) asked me to offer two rakaats of namaaz. I did it. He then directed me to sit facing the Ka'bah. I did it. He then asked me to recite Surah Baqarah. I did it. He told me to repeat Durood Shareef 21 times and to say 'Subhaanallah' 60 times. I did it. After that he stood up, took my hand in his own and looked towards the heaven saying, "Let me present you to Allah Ta'ala." After that he cut off my hair with a scissors and then put a special Topi on my head and asked me to sit down. He then asked me to repeat Surah Ikhlas one thousand times. I did it. He then said, "Among our followers there is only one day and one night's Mujahida, hence go and do it today." Accordingly I spent one day and one night in prayers and reappeared before him. He asked me to sit down and repeat Surah Ikhlas one thousand times again. I did so. "Look towards the heaven", he then told me. When I raised my eyes towards the heaven he enquired, "How far do you see?" I said up to the Arsh. He then told me, "Look below." I did so. He again enquired, "How far do you see?" I said up to Tahtus-Sara (abyss). He then asked me to sit down and repeat Surah Ikhlas one thousand times and I did it. He then told me, "Look towards the heaven." When I did so, he enquired as to how far I could see now. I said up to Hijaab-e-Azmat (Dazzlement of Allah Ta'ala's Glory). He then asked me to close my eyes and I did so. After a moment he told me to open my eyes and I did so. Then he showed me his two fingers and enquired, "What do you see through them?" I said I see 18 000 Aalameen (worlds). When he heard this he said, "Now your work is over." Then he looked towards a brick lying nearby and asked me to pick it up. When I did so, I found some dinars (gold coins) under it. He asked me to go and distribute it among the poor and needy which I did. I was then instructed to remain with him for some time." [*Aneesul Arwah*]

May Allah Ta'ala grant us true love for the Awliya Allah and the Taufeeq to follow their teachings, Ameen.