

Khatam Sharif

In Honour of the Venerable
Hadrat Allama Muhammad Iqbal Sahib رحمته

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“The divine pen, is the hand of the friend of Allah, he writes what he wants.”

Mian Muhammad Bakhsh رحمته

*The aged vault of heaven heard. ‘There is someone somewhere,’ said he.
The planets spoke, ‘Here on these ancient heights someone must be,’
‘Not here,’ said the moon, ‘It must be someone from the earth below,’
Spoke the Milky Way, ‘It must be someone hidden here we do not know.’*

“Astaghfirullah,” the angels cried, “What blasphemy is this?”

There was uproar in the heavens as more and more angels crowded together in disgust.

Sayyiduna Ridwan عليه السلام, the gatekeeper of paradise, ran through the crowd and asked, “Why are you gathered here? What is all this commotion?”

The angels replied, “O master, if you listen carefully you will hear this that someone somewhere is spouting poison to its own Creator. This voice is certainly not coming from the heavens but from the world below.”

Sayyiduna Ridwan عليه السلام ordered all to be silent and then listened attentively for a moment. “O my God! How is this possible? Can this really be the son of the same Adam عليه السلام that I dismissed from heaven? What arrogance he has to speak to the Lord of the worlds in such a manner!”

“Pardon my rudeness, O master,” one of the angels interrupted, “but if this voice is indeed from the son of Adam عليه السلام then what he is saying is in fact all true. Listen carefully and you will see that his complaint is valid after all.”

The angels remained silent as they listened to the complaint from the son of Adam عليه السلام:

Shikwa

“May my mouth be filled with dust! No longer will I listen to the nightingale’s lament. O Lord, since You have given me a tongue and a voice, so I will speak and make my complaint heard. We are renowned for our obedience to You, but as we have praised You, now be ready to hear our complaint.

Indeed You have always existed, but who was aware of You? Just like a breeze spreads the scent of flowers, it was we, Muslims, that spread Your name. Before us, some worshipped stones and others bowed to trees, they all worshipped only what they could see and touch. Who then turned their belief towards an unseen God?

Jews and Christians inhabited this world of Yours as did many other different nations, yet no one spread Your glory. Even Your house, the *Ka'ba*, housed three hundred and sixty idols. Your message was violated, the truth twisted by Your own very people. Tell me O Lord, who was it then that raised their swords in Your name and put things right?

Indeed it was we!

We are the ones who gave Your *adhan* inside the churches of Europe and the deserts of Africa. We neither feared nor were dazed by any great regime or empire. We continued to spread Your name even when covered under the shade of swords.

We are the ones that dedicated our lives to fight and die for the glory of Your name. So tell me O Lord, did we do this to gain *duniya* or for Your pleasure? If we pursued *duniya* then we would have built the idols and not smashed them!

We were obedient to You and crushed all those that rose against You. Let alone going against swords, we remained steadfast even when facing cannons!

*On every human heart the image of Your oneness we drew,
Beneath the dagger's point, we proclaimed Your message true.*

O Lord, who was it that destroyed the gate of *Khayber* and the Eastern Roman Empire? Who was it that put out the flame of the fire worshippers in Persia? Who was it that brought Your *dhikr* back, reminding people of the one true God? Which other nation has spent its lives in this pursuit? Whose *takbir* woke people up to this reality of Your oneness? Whose awe did the idols fear, as they trembled upon hearing the mere name of Muslims and fell proclaiming Yours?

Such was our obedience that even in the midst of raging battles; we turned towards Your house to pray. In one row we stood, Sultan and slave alike standing side by side and made no distinctions as we stood before You.

Let alone spreading Your message through the lands, we even rode our horses into the sea! So tell me O Lord, did we ever return unsuccessful? Did we ever shame You?

We are the ones that destroyed falsehood from this earth and freed mankind from the chains of slavery. We adorned Your *Ka'ba* with our prostrations and held Your holy book to our hearts. Yet despite all this, You complain that we are not faithful. Surely O Lord, if we are not faithful, then You too are doing little to win our hearts!

Without a doubt there are many other nations with all kinds of people within them; sinful, humble, arrogant, and idle whilst some who are even clever. There are all sorts of them and indeed thousands that despise Your very name! Yet, all Your mercy falls on their shoulders, and on Muslims falls Your wrath. Tell me O Lord, is this fair?

The idols in the temples shout that the Muslims have all gone, they rejoice because the protectors of the *Ka'ba* are no more. O Lord, are You not aware that the disbelievers are laughing at us? Do You no longer care for the message of Your oneness?

I do not complain, though You have given great wealth to those that do not even have the manners to speak properly, but You have graced Your enemies with paradise and all pleasures on Earth, whilst given to Your believers, the Muslims, a mere promise of this after death! Tell me O Lord, why is it that You no longer look upon us with that same affection?

We are the ones that made endless sacrifices, and spilled our blood to spread Your holy name, yet You take away our power, our *khilafah*. You once gave this world to us, but now You give it to Your enemies. They taunt and ridicule us with their laughter and

we are disgraced everywhere we go. O Lord, is this the reward we get for dying in Your name? How then can You complain that many have started worshipping idols?

*We gave our hearts to You, took the rewards You did bestow;
But hardly had we taken our seats, You ordered us to go.*

Your gatherings have gone and those who cried all night longing to be close to You have dispersed too. Throughout the ages, lovers and true *mu'mins* came, and You dismissed them with the order to come tomorrow. And now even if You search for those radiant faces, You will find that they have long gone.

The passion and *ishq* of Layla and Majnu is still here. We are the same nation, with the same Prophet ﷺ. So why have You deserted us? What is the meaning behind this stance?

Tell me O Lord, Did we leave You? Did we leave Your Messenger ﷺ? Did we say that we no longer believe? Have we left Your faith and started to worship idols? Have we left the way of Salman al Farsi رضى الله عنه or Owais Al Qarani رضى الله عنه? We still possess the same passion and fire in our hearts, and we still hold firm the life of Sayyiduna Bilal رضى الله عنه as a lesson.

We confess that our *ishq* is not as powerful as those Muslims from the past. Our hearts are not as accepting, nor have we the same zeal. We also admit that we may not be as loyal, but tell me O Lord, though it is not something that should be said, You too are not exactly loyal either! Sometimes You are on our side and then You side with the enemy!

On the hill of *Faran*, during the last sermon of Your messenger ﷺ, You said that You have completed the *deen* of Islam. In this single gesture you won thousands of hearts and ignited the passion within them. We too possess the same hearts, why then don't You light this fire in us? Without this love we are not the same, our hearts are ruined as You no longer reside in them. Those that do not even believe in You, are the ones who have taken charge of destinies. We, Muslims, are sitting helplessly as observers, waiting for our fate to be written by their hands.

*Rekindle in Your moth the passion to burn itself in the flame:
Bid the old lightning strike, brand our breasts with Your name.*

O my Lord, passion and love is ready to be ignited. Every bud in this garden is longing to bloom. All that is needed is Your tune. The mountain of *Tur* is ready to be burnt once again. We are like a bird without wings, give us the strength and power to fly. That which has become rare, O my Lord, make that love common in us again. Alas, there is no joy in living nor in dying. The only pleasure that remains is to drink our own blood and swallow this pain. May these words pierce the hearts of many and make them once again thirst for You."

The angels protested upon hearing this complaint, "What bad manners! The son of Adam ﷺ has become so arrogant, that he is even upset with Allah almighty! Is this the same Adam ﷺ that we bowed to and who is now complaining to his Creator? The Muslims may have done all of what he is saying and man may have excelled in acquiring knowledge and understanding, but he certainly lacks humility! This is surely no way to address the Lord of creation."

Sayyiduna Ridwan رضى الله عنه was shocked to hear that this was indeed the voice of the descendant of that same being he had expelled from the Heavens. "Has man become so powerful that he has attained the ability to get his voice all the way up here? Has this pinch of dust learned to fly?"

For more than three years this lament from the son of Adam ﷺ travelled from the earth piercing the heavens becoming the cause of great commotion, both on the earth and in the

heavens. Until finally this complaint obliged a response from the Almighty. A reply was heard in answer to the *shikwa* from Allah almighty Himself:

Jawab e Shikwa

“This *shikwa* is indeed very powerful, for it has now created a dialogue between man and God.

Indeed I am the Most Generous and always willing to give, but nobody is asking to take. I am willing to show the way, but nobody is seeking. There are no longer amongst you those that shine like diamonds. Not one of you has that same yearning. This clay is not the same earth from which another Adam ﷺ can be created. But if there were anyone deserving of this honour, I would indeed open new worlds for him and raise him in splendour!

Your hands are weak and lack *jazba*, and your hearts are full of *ilhad* (away from Islam) and have no space for Me. You have brought shame to the name of My messenger ﷺ. Idol destroyers like Ibrahim ﷺ have gone, whilst leaving the breed of Azar, the idol makers to thrive. You say you have demolished all idols, yet you have created a new world with a new *Ka'ba* and new idols.

There were days when the Muslims were devout and regarded Me to be sublime. I was your beloved and it was I that you only knew. But now you complain and call Me untrue! So go and pledge your insincere faith and confine My messenger's ﷺ teachings to some other deity.

Such is your insincerity that you want no restrictions, and you despise waking in the early hours of the morning. You do not love Me, you love your sleep. The holy month of Ramadan is a burden on your carefree nature. Is this your loyalty? A nation is known by its faith, where then is your religion? If nothing binds you together, then you are like the worthless rocks and not the glorious stars. You would gladly sell the graves of your ancestors for the pleasures of this world, then what would stop you from trading in gods made from stone?

*The only people in the world of every skill bereft are you.
The only race which cares not how it fouls its nest are you.*

You say that you are the ones who removed the falsehood from this world; you freed mankind from the chains of slavery. You destroyed the idols in My *Ka'ba* and then adorned it with your prostrations. You say that you are the ones who put My Qur'an close to your hearts and spread My message. Nay, not by you, but by your ancestors was all this done. You are nothing but mere beggars waiting idly for tomorrow to bring you a better day!

You say that paradise and all its pleasures have been given to disbelievers here on earth, whilst the Muslims are told they will get it after they die! Beware of your words even when complaining. From the beginning of time, this is their destiny. The pleasures of paradise are for those who conduct themselves as Muslims. Indeed you are born Muslims but your behaviour is disgraceful! There is no longer amongst you a Musa ﷺ who then has the capacity to see Mount Tur's celestial fire.

The benefit of your nation is one and its loss is one too. Your Prophet ﷺ is one. Your *deen* is one and *imaan* is one. Your *Ka'ba*, Allah and the Qur'an are one. Then is it too much to ask for you Muslims to be one? You have created differences and are divided into sects and castes. Is this your true progress?

Who abandoned the way of My messenger ﷺ? Whose eyes have been blinded by temptations of different civilisations? Who has turned from the teachings of their pious ancestors? Your hearts no longer have that passion and your spirits have no feeling. Alas, for there is nothing of the message brought by My beloved ﷺ left in you.

It is the poor that adorn the mosques at prayer times. They keep fasts and suffer the pangs of hunger. They are the ones that still mention Allah and His prophet ﷺ. The rich are so drunk with their wealth that they do not even know My name! You are still alive because of the poor, it is because of them that you are not disgraced.

There is neither life nor any passion in the words of your leaders. The *adhan* has become nothing but a ritual, since it has become deprived of the spirit of Bilal رضي الله عنه. It is now heard with the ears and no longer with the hearts. The philosopher yet remains, but the convincing argument for the Creator is no more. The mosques are crying relentlessly as the worshippers with the virtues of true believers have gone.

You argue that Muslims are being wiped out and will soon cease to exist, but I ask, when did true Muslims ever exist? You are more interested in living like Christians and Hindus. It is such a pitiful state that even the Jews are ashamed to see Muslims like you! You claim many titles and desire to be known as this and that, but I ask, though you may be a Sayyid, a Mirza, an Afghan and so on, but are you a Muslim?

Those Muslims you talk about, they always spoke the truth and upheld justice. They were courageous, fearing no one but their Lord. Generosity and humility was embedded into their every action. They were kind, understanding and forgiving throughout their lives. All you do is drink the wine of indulgence, whilst leading the life of strife. Yet you dare call yourselves Muslims! Is this the Muslim way of life?

You have neither taken Ali's رضي الله عنه pledge of poverty nor Uthman's رضي الله عنه path of generosity. What kinship of the soul can there be between you and them. They were respected throughout the worlds, whilst you are despised by forsaking the true path!

Much work still needs to be done, as the world has not yet comprehended reality; the work begun by the *Sahaba* needs completing and My light is yet to be spread. You may only be a waves murmur but with the love for My messenger ﷺ, turn yourself into a raging ocean. With this power of *ishq* and the name of Muhammad ﷺ, go forth into the world and transform all darkness into light.

If it was not for this flower, the nightingale would not be singing and if it was not for this distributor of Divine love there would be no *Tawhid*. His name ﷺ is the pillar that sustains the heavens and makes the pulse of life beat warmly in your veins, without him you would not be.

Allah almighty then concluded His response to the *shikwa* by giving to the son of Adam عليه السلام the solution and secret to all success, through which he could determine his own destiny as he wished. This key was of course His beloved messenger ﷺ.

*With reason as your shield and the sword of love in your hand,
O My Servant! The world will be at your command.
The cry, "Allah-o-Akbar", is a fire that destroys all except God.
If you are a true Muslim, your destiny is to grasp whatever you aspire.
If you remain faithful to Muhammad ﷺ, I shall always be with you,
What is this miserable world? The pen and the tablet of destiny will be in
your hands.*



Shikwa, 'The Complaint' was first recited by Allama Iqbal رحمته الله in 1909, at a gathering of the 'Anjuman i Himayat i Islam' in Lahore. It represented the complaint of the son of Adam عليه السلام made to his Lord lamenting the state of the Muslims. It created a sensation, just as it was passionately accepted, it was equally criticised. What many failed to comprehend was that within this complaint surfaced the concept of how to become a perfect believer no matter when, or where in the world one may reside.

More than three years later, in 1913, Allama Iqbal Sahib رحمته الله recited the *Jawab e Shikwa*, 'The Answer to the Complaint.' This was written as a response from Allah almighty to the complaint made by the son of Adam عليه السلام. Allama Iqbal explains that words which stem from the heart are pure and sacred, and when spoken they take immediate effect. The *shikwa* was a complaint lodged deep within his heart and with the wings of sincerity, these words were able to soar into the divine presence and be heard.

Through the *Jawab e Shikwa*, Allama Iqbal رحمته الله presents the solution to the pitiful state of Muslims in a very concise and simple manner. Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi رحمته الله gives this same message in his *Mathnawi* as does Sayyiduna Imam Busiri رحمته الله in his *Qasidah al Burdah*. Allama Iqbal رحمته الله emphasises this solution in the last verse as if it were a command from Allah almighty. He explains that since Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم is the point of everything in existence, it is only with his love in our hearts that we will be able to shape our destinies. The key to all success is the love for the one in whose honour everything is created; the essence of our lives, Allah's beloved, Sayyiduna Muhammad Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Through the *Shikwa* and *Jawab e Shikwa*, Allama Iqbal رحمته الله shows the state of the Muslims as reflected in the Divine mirror. He awakens the Muslims to face reality and realise the defects and errors of their ways in comparison to that of their ancestors. He highlights that it was the principles and characteristics of those true Muslims which attracted Divine mercy and support. In this manner he forces them to awaken their consciousness and raise their aspirations by adopting the qualities of those true Muslims and become Allah's deputies on earth, perfect believers, *Mard e Mu'mins*.

Mard e Mu'min

A *Mard e Mu'min* is the one whose character and personality is of beauty. When listening or speaking with him, one will feel at ease as his aura is sweet and gentle. When describing this perfect believer, Allama Sahib رحمته الله said, "Although he is made of dust, his character is light. His heart is empty for this world and the hereafter. He has very few desires and hopes, but has very high aspirations. His manners and character wins over hearts. His vision is a blessing for everyone."

This believer will never oppose the will of his Lord, but will accept everything that befalls him with gratitude. He does not dwell in the past nor look to the future; he lives in the moment and takes every breath to be his last. Whether sitting with many or in solitude, his heart is in anguish and burns with pain and longing for Allah almighty's pleasure. No matter what situation or temptations befall him, his heart and thoughts remain pure and nothing of this mundane world attracts him. To him this world is nothing but a mirage, as his very essence is to trust in the divine, resulting in his hand becoming His hand. Just as Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم once threw some pebbles at the unbelievers and Allah almighty said in the holy Qur'an, that Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم did not throw, but Allah threw them.

A *Mard e Mu'min* has the support of Allah almighty, and because his will never conflicts with the will of his Lord, his wish will always be fulfilled. Once Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi رحمته الله gave his disciple a task to complete, to which he replied, "Insha-Allah" If God wills

"You Shaytan...you foolish one!" replied Mawlana رحمته الله, "Do you think I have said something which Allah does not will?"

Mawlana رحمته الله explains that when a *Mard e Mu'min* speaks, Allah almighty speaks, although the words come from the mouth of a human being, they are divine.

In another poem Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ states that each breath of a *Mard e Mu'min* is magical as change is taking place, he experiences something new and is taken to different levels of faith and spirituality. Through his speech and character he becomes Allah's proof for existence. Mawlana Jami رحمۃ اللہ علیہ said that when one reaches this state, there is no longer the question of belonging to any group or caste, Allah gives this person such appeal that he is beyond any limitations. To others he may look like a 'reader' of the Qur'an, but in reality he is the Qur'an.

Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ describes many figures throughout the history of Islam that were well known, *Mard e Mu'mins*. He explains to us that a perfect believer does not necessarily have to be a *Pir* or a *Sufi*; it could be anybody who has adorned himself with the beautiful characteristics of the *Sahaba* and beholds the *ishq* for Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم.

When facing final confrontation against the British, Sultan Tipu رحمۃ اللہ علیہ (d.1799) was faced with either giving up his ideals and beliefs, or die honouring them. He said, "It is far better to live like a Tiger for a day than to live like a jackal for a hundred years."

Such was his *khuddari*, integrity, that he was not willing to become a slave or spend one day in the prisons of the British government. In the words of Allama Iqbal رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, he advised his followers, "O believer, you are a traveller in this world, do not sit idly and make this place your abode. A warrior can never have a home; he is like the river flowing through all boundaries and obstacles."

*In the beginning of eternity Sayyiduna Jibra'il علیہ السلام said to me,
'Any heart, which is a slave of the mind, do not accept it.'*

Logic suggests that Sultan Tipu رحمۃ اللہ علیہ should have accepted the compromise and lived the rest of his life in luxuries, but instead he chose to listen to his heart and keep his values and honour, in return for his life. Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ is saying that this is the kind of personality that is needed in this day and age.

Allama Sahib's رحمۃ اللہ علیہ poetry compels us to think that there is a greater good, and that we are a part of the *millat* of this *ummah* (community of the Muslim nation). Though we may not realise what a great civilisation we are a part of, and we may not possess any of the noble qualities of our previous generations, it does not mean that we will never have them. Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ affirms that there is no need to despair because if it was impossible to become a *Mard e Mu'min* in the 21st century, judgement day would already have dawned upon us. The spark within us can still be ignited just as easy as growth happens in barren lands from only a few drops of water.

Qalandar

A Qalandar is a person in whom this spark has already been ignited and the fire of passion burns with the *ishq*, love, for Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم being the fuel. Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ describes a *Mard e Mu'min* as a 'Qalandar' and as the one who has achieved the state of '*mann ki duniya*' (master of the heart's world). Whilst the physical world is fundamentally materialistic, which leads to deception and deviousness, the heart's world is of peace, encompassed with beautiful emotions and states. When one attains this wealth, he has in fact achieved a permanent state of mind.

'In the world of the heart I saw no rule of the West. The Qalandar's words put me to shame when he said, when you bow before others, you neither have a body nor a soul.'

Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ is saying that Muslims complain about how the West is dominating, but what they need to understand is, in the heart's world there is no rule of the West.

Once a local minister was very rude to a *murid* of Bu Ali Shah Qalandar رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, pushing him aside and scolding him to get off the road and clear the way as he was spoiling the scenery. After this disgraceful act the *murid* returned to his Shaykh and handed over his rosary, prayer mat and

walking stick saying, “O Master, take these belongings back as I cannot do this. When a dog of duniya attacks a dog of the inner world the shame is too much to bear.”

After listening to his disciple’s ordeal, Bu Ali Shah Qalandar رحمۃ اللہ علیہ wrote a letter to the Sultan which ordered, “Remove that governor or I will remove you!”

Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ is saying that we no longer are Kings in the inner world. We spend our lives chasing the materialistic outer world, losing our dignity and honour and in doing so we become worthless. Many have posed the question that we live in a time where we are surrounded by the influence of Satan and his followers, so how can we then become Qalandars?

Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ lived in this time, and it did not stop him from becoming a Qalandar. He met and dined with many influential people all around the world and was subjected to many temptations, including fame and vast amounts of wealth for his works. However, no matter what situation he was in, he never forgot or deviated from his purpose. On the other hand he faced many difficulties, and yet, he used each problem as a means of moving closer to his Lord. Nothing worried, or took any precedence within him, as his heart was full of *nur* and guidance.

Upbringing

It was one of Allama Muhammad Iqbal’s رحمۃ اللہ علیہ ancestors who reverted to Islam, as they were originally Kashmiri Brahmans. The first person from the family who became Muslim was called, Baba Lul Hajj رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. He was a follower of Shaykh Nasruddin Rishi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, who was the *khalifa*, deputy, of the founder of the *Rishi* order of Sufism, Shaykh Nuruddin Wali رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. He spent twelve years away from home, where he travelled for *ziyarahs* and *Hajj*. He spent the remainder of his life in the service of his master, Shaykh Nasruddin Rishi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and was even buried next to his Shaykh in *Chirar Sharif*.



Shaykh Nur Muhammad رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

It was Allama Sahib’s رحمۃ اللہ علیہ grandfather, Shaykh Muhammed Rafiq رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, who settled in Sialkot. He had ten sons and each of them died, his eleventh son was called Shaykh Nur Muhammad رحمۃ اللہ علیہ.

Both of Allama Sahib’s رحمۃ اللہ علیہ parents, Shaykh Nur Muhammad رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and Hadrat Imam Bibi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ were extremely pious and God fearing simple folk. Shaykh Nur Muhammad رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was a devout Sufi, initiated in the *Qadriyyah* order. When speaking of his father, Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ would say that he was very steadfast in his worship, as his daily practices would begin early by praying *tahajjud* and then to continue with his *awrad*.

Before Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was born, Shaykh Nur Muhammad رحمۃ اللہ علیہ had a very blessed dream which he related to his wife saying that Allah almighty will bless them with a pious son. Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was born on 9th November 1877 AD in Sialkot, Pakistan. He was named *Iqbal* (fortunate one), by his mother. Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ had one elder brother called, Shaykh Ata Muhammad رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, who was fifteen years senior and four sisters, two older and two younger.

Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ said, “Once a beggar came to our house and started asking for things, I did not want anyone to disturb my father as he was very old, so I told him to go away. He would not listen and kept asking me for things, I lost my temper and broke his begging bowl, which contained flour, wheat and other food that people had given him. He got nothing from me, and what he did have he lost as, I threw it all on the floor.

When my father heard this commotion he came and said, ‘Iqbal رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, what is going on?’ Before I could say anything my father started to cry and said, ‘Iqbal رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, on the day of judgement when everybody is gathered and this faqir goes up to Rasulullah ﷺ and says, ‘I went to Nur Muhammad’s رحمۃ اللہ علیہ house and this is what he did to me,’ how am I going to face Rasulullah ﷺ? You destroyed my whole life’s work.’

My father never beat me for my disgraceful act, but these words he spoke were more than any physical punishment. After that time I never treated anyone in an ill manner again."

During his childhood Allama Sahib's ﷺ father took him to their local *madrassa*, where he was tutored by the Imam with the basic studies. Soon signs of his greatness became apparent to others. On one occasion he turned up late and the *ustad* said, "*Iqbal, dehr say aei ho?*"

Allama Sahib ﷺ was a very young boy at the time and yet replied, "*Iqbal dehr say hee aata hai.*"

Which translates as, '*fortune always comes late (in life).*' This impressed the teacher, as it was a deep and profound concept to understand for a child of that age.

On another occasion, Allama Sahib ﷺ was in class when a *Qalandar* walked directly up to him and kissed him on his forehead. Throughout his life this man of Allah kept in touch with Allama Sahib ﷺ and would frequently visit him. It was during this time that Sayyid Mir Hasan ﷺ spoke with his father and advised him not to leave the young boy in the *madrassa*, but also educate him in other areas as he would bring benefit to many. Sayyid Mir Hasan ﷺ asked his father to leave him in his care and that he would take responsibility to educate him in both Islamic and secular studies.



Sayyid Mir Hasan ﷺ

Initially Shaykh Nur Muhammad ﷺ was reluctant as he wished to bring his son up as an ordinary child. However, Sayyid Mir Hasan ﷺ convinced him that the young Allama Sahib ﷺ needed to learn more than what the mosque was offering, as his purpose was greater than any other child there. Eventually, Shaykh Nur Muhammad ﷺ agreed, resulting in Sayyid Mir Hasan ﷺ becoming an integral part in Allama Sahib's ﷺ upbringing.

Allama Sahib ﷺ greatly respected and honoured Sayyid Mir Hasan ﷺ throughout his life, as he had become his greatest influence. On many occasions Allama Sahib ﷺ would bring shopping and groceries for his teacher. One day, Sayyid Mir Hasan ﷺ saw Allama Sahib ﷺ walking back with some shopping and said, "*Iqbal ﷺ, I have told you many times not to do this for me, you are my shagird, not nawker.*"

Allama Sahib ﷺ replied, "*Hadrat, I am your shagird nawker.*"

In 1922, the British government offered Allama Sahib ﷺ knighthood for his book, '*Asrare khudi*'. When offered this tribute, Allama Sahib ﷺ said, "*I will only accept this if you give the title of 'shams ul ulama', to my teacher, Sayyid Mir Hasan ﷺ.*"

The officials replied, "*We apologise, but we cannot do this as your teacher has not written any books, and this honour you have asked for can only be bestowed upon an author.*"

Allama Sahib ﷺ responded back with, "*I am his book, I am the proof that he is an author!*" The British government then bestowed this title of '*shams ul ulama*' to Sayyid Mir Hasan ﷺ.

Allama Sahib ﷺ developed a passion for poetry at an early age. Although his family did not have any history or tradition of writing poetry; this was a God given gift. He started writing poetry at the age of fifteen and one of his earliest poems was read in a gathering of prestigious talented poets who all applauded and admired Allama Sahib's ﷺ talent. A couplet from this poem:

*'Allah's generosity and kindness,
picked them up like pearls those drops of tears,
which fell from my eyes from my sinning ways.'*

Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ continued his studies in Lahore, and after successfully graduating he began teaching at the university. He then travelled to England where he studied Law at Cambridge University, after which he travelled to Germany where he completed his PhD. All this was achieved in three years, between 1905 and 1908. He then travelled back to Lahore, Pakistan where he practiced Law. Whether he was living in England, Germany or Pakistan, Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ remained a dervish. Whoever had the pleasure of his association, later would say that he possessed the qualities and attributes of his father.

Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ mentioned, “When I used to return from Lahore to Sialkot, to visit with my mother, she used to be very excited and say ‘mara lal’ee aya’.”

Allama Sahib’s رحمۃ اللہ علیہ mother passed away at the age of 78 in 1914. and his father in 1930. Both his parents are buried in a graveyard in Sialkot, which surrounds the shrine of Imam Ali Haqq رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, the *khalifa* of Baba Farid Ganj Shakar رحمۃ اللہ علیہ.

Whenever Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ visited this area, he would travel by night and arrive around *tahajjud* time. His practice was to first visit the shrine of Imam Ali Haqq رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and do the *Fatiha sharif*, and then to sit near his mother’s grave and recite the holy Qur’an. Whoever had the pleasure of listening to his *tilawat* would cry, as his voice was beautiful and would touch the hearts of the listeners.



Hadrat Imam Bibi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Guidance

Although he had an excellent education and noble upbringing, yet he still lacked a certain purpose in life. Until then his poetry was very diverse and reflecting various different topics and had no sense of direction. It was due to this spiritual wandering that his heart was in anguish and longed for guidance. This wandering was in fact the preparation required for him to reach the state where his heart was ready to accept and take from his true teacher and guide.

The source of this turning of his heart was the occasion where he had a vision of Mawlana Rumi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. It was during one blessed night that he saw Mawlana رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, who appeared to him in an illuminating white dress as radiant as the sun. There was such a powerful aura about him that the whole of the sky lit up with *nur*, and he spoke, “Iqbal رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, do not despair, read my *Mathnawi sharif* and it will give you strength.”

Other than from his father and noble upbringing, Allama Sahib’s رحمۃ اللہ علیہ spiritual influence primarily came from two particular personalities. Although he had been physically initiated into the *Qadiriyyah* order and taken his father as his Shaykh, Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ received significant guidance and direction from Mawlana رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and was continuously blessed with these visions of Mawlana رحمۃ اللہ علیہ throughout his life. In his poetry he affirmed this saying, “My Shaykh and murshid, is Mawlana رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, he is my Pir e Rumi.”

The second source of his devotion and spiritual development is linked to Imam e Rabbani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. Allama Sahib’s رحمۃ اللہ علیہ preference for Imam e Rabbani’s رحمۃ اللہ علیہ way formed the basis of his poetry as he deemed the Mujaddidi path and its teachings to be the most significant and practical way for Muslims. Thus, Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ had a strong link with Sirhind sharif and Imam e Rabbani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. During his childhood his father would take him to the *darbar* for blessings and to make a spiritual link with the *Awliya*. In 1934 Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ wrote in his letter, “I am going to Sirhind sharif, and I will be taking Javed (son) with me. I made a mannah that when he was born, I would take him to Sirhind.”

Later in life, Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ stayed at the shrine for a while, engaging in *muraqabah* and other spiritual practices. Connecting to Imam e Rabbani’s رحمۃ اللہ علیہ personality, he constantly prayed for poverty. In the context of poverty not referring to the absence of materialistic wealth, but in having trust in no one but Allah almighty. Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was asking to be granted *faqr* and to become a man of Allah.

The Awliya look into the hearts of people and after diagnosing the problems they start work on them. It is only after they become clean and reflective as mirrors, can they receive the light of guidance.

Likewise, Allama Sahib رحمته الله is also known as 'Hakim ul Ummah' (Physician of the Nation). Through his poetry, Allama Sahib رحمته الله has looked into the 'heart' of the Ummah and not only has he diagnosed it with a detrimental disease; he has provided the nation a cure and a solution. With this 'remedy' this 'heart' can too become clean and accepting of the divine light and commands. With the spiritual support and inspiration from Mawlana رحمته الله, he wrote vast amount of poems with deep spiritual messages for the reader to benefit from. The prognosis as well as the treatment and solution are manifested throughout Allama Sahib's رحمته الله poetry.

Characteristics

Allama Sahib رحمته الله adopted his niece and took care of her until she was married. Later in life she wrote about Allama Sahib's رحمته الله mannerisms at home.

"One day, whilst I was cleaning his room I came across a diary, which was written by my chachi, I opened it and managed to read the line, 'his (Allama Iqbal's) disposition (ta'biyat) is like saints,' and before I could read anymore, she came and took it off me.

He loved reading and studying. Many times we would put food onto the table for him and after a while, because he was so absorbed in his book, he would ask if he had eaten.

He was a very relaxed person by nature and when he was around there was no tension. Everybody adored him, especially children. He loved to keep animals as pets. He had pigeons, my chachi had chicks and I had kept a parrot. He was passionate about others well-being, but when it came to his own family he was mast.

Once some young boys were playing cricket and volleyball near our house and they would disturb us with their constant shouting and chasing the ball to our house. My chachi would complain about this to Allama Sahib رحمته الله, who would say to her, 'let them play, at least they are not doing some sinful thing.' Another time she complained about the constant croaking of the frogs all night, Allama Sahib رحمته الله replied, 'people try so hard to wake up at night and Allah has sent us an automatic alarm clock. We should be grateful.'

At home he never spoke in Urdu, but always in the language of his mother, Punjabi. Once somebody corrected him by saying, 'Allama Sahib رحمته الله, you are a great poet, but this word you are saying, it's not said like that.' Allama Sahib رحمته الله replied, 'I am not bothered about grammar, this is how my mother used to say it. I'd rather say it this way.'

Connection With Rasulallah ﷺ

A young Shaykh in Kashmir had a dream about Allama Sahib رحمته الله although he had never met him. He came to Lahore in search of Allama Sahib رحمته الله. Upon arriving at his door, he was received by Ali Baksh, the *khadim*. A little later Allama Sahib رحمته الله came down to meet him.

When the young Shaykh saw Allama Sahib رحمته الله he broke down into tears. Allama Sahib رحمته الله consoled him saying that he would try to help, thinking that maybe he was in need of money.

The young Shaykh replied, "No Allama Sahib رحمته الله, I have not come for anything like that. I am crying because my dream is true, this is exactly how I saw you. I have only come for your ziyarah." He then went onto narrate the following dream:

"Rasulallah ﷺ was waiting and about to lead the Fajar namaz. Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Masud رضي الله عنه stood up to read the iqamah and before he could begin, Rasulallah ﷺ asked him, "Is Iqbal رحمته الله here yet?"

Sayyiduna Abdullah رضي الله عنه looked out of the window and saw a handsome young man with a moustache, walking towards the mosque and replied, “Ya Rasulallah ﷺ, Iqbal رضي الله عنه is coming.”

It was only then that Rasulallah ﷺ gave permission for the iqamah to be called.”

After listening to him, Allama Sahib رضي الله عنه could not contain his emotions and also began to cry saying, “Once someone wrote to me with this advice: ‘If you want to know what your status is in Rasulallah’s ﷺ court (bargah), then read this darud sharif so many times.’ I thought who was I to have any station (maqam) in Rasulallah’s ﷺ bargah, so I did not give the letter the attention it deserved and misplaced it. I now wish that I had followed the instructions of that letter.”

Whilst in Makkah and Madinah sharif, many Hajjis would die from illnesses and minor infections. This was due to the significant poverty and the lack of medication and treatment. Once an individual came to Allama Sahib رضي الله عنه and reported, “Allama Sahib رضي الله عنه, mubarak! The first hospital in Jeddah has been built.” And went onto say, “In every fibre of your being you long for that place. Whenever you hear somebody mention hijaz sharif your passion can be seen and love felt. Sayyiduna Isa عليه السلام had the cure for all ailments, leprosy, blindness and so on. We are ill and Rasulallah ﷺ is our cure, our shifat is in Madinah sharif.”

Allama Sahib رضي الله عنه responded with, “There is life hidden in death, just as reality is hidden in illusion. What is more blissful than dying whilst immersed in the love of Rasulallah ﷺ? Sayyiduna Khidr عليه السلام is eager for this taste (maza), but has not found the pleasure of knowing this or anything like it throughout his long life. My friend, give this glad news to someone else, because I am seeking my death there not cure. You have brought a message of a cure to someone who does not want to be cured. I am ill, but I am happy with this disease, this affliction of love for Rasulallah ﷺ.”

Allama Sahib رضي الله عنه wrote a poem where he was taken into Rasulallah’s ﷺ presence. In a few lines from this poem, Allama Sahib رضي الله عنه wrote, “The angels took me to the presence of the mercy of the world, and so saying this in fact took me to the source of all mercy. Rasulallah ﷺ then said to me, ‘O nightingale, your passion is spread from street to street; the desire in your poetry has great attraction (jazba). What gift have you brought for us?’

I responded with, ‘Ya Rasulallah ﷺ, I find no peace in this world, the life that I am seeking, I cannot find. Although there are thousands of flowers in this world, the flower of loyalty, I cannot find. I have brought this vessel before you like a chalice; it contains something, which cannot even be found in paradise. From this vessel you will see the honour of your nation (ummah).’”

Allama Sahib رضي الله عنه was in fact alluding to the events that took place in Tripoli. One of these incidents was about a lady named Fatimah رضي الله عنها, who became one of the greatest martyrs of the time. So Allama Sahib رضي الله عنه is saying that he has brought Rasulallah ﷺ the blood of the martyrs of Tripoli as a gift.

Faqir Syed Wahiduddin رضي الله عنه writes in his book *Rozgar e faqir*, “Once Allama Sahib رضي الله عنه was in a very joyous mood, I took advantage of this opportunity and asked him, ‘Dr Sahib رضي الله عنه, how do you come up with these verses?’

He replied, ‘Once I was invited to the annual function of a college in Lahore by the principal, Dr Lucas, and at the end of the program a few of us sat down for tea. Dr Lucas came up to me and said; ‘Don’t run away after tea as I need to speak with you on an important matter.’

Afterwards, he came and took me to one quite corner and asked, ‘Iqbal رضي الله عنه tell me this, was the message of the Qu’ran revealed in a general gist, and because the Prophet ﷺ knew Arabic he composed the verses, or was it revealed verse by verse?’

I replied, it was revealed verse by verse. Dr Lucas looked at me amazed and said, ‘How could a well-educated man like you believe that the verses were actually revealed?’

I replied, 'Most definitely Dr Lucas! I assure you. It is in my personal experience that poetry is revealed to me. Then how is it not possible that divine verses are revealed to the Prophet ﷺ!'

Although Syed Maghfur Shah Qadri رحمۃ اللہ علیہ had never met Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ personally, he had great love and affection for him and his works. Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ had committed Allama Sahib's رحمۃ اللہ علیہ entire work to memory. So during his speeches he would mesmerise the audience with his melodious recitation. Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was eager to meet Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, but as he lived in a far and rural area he did not see this happening easily. However, little did Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ know that contrary to living in the world and dealing with important figures, Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was a Qalandar whose doors were open day and night. This *ashiq* of Rasulullah ﷺ was unaware of formalities such as times and appointments.

Whenever he travelled to a new region, Shah Sahib's رحمۃ اللہ علیہ practice was to visit the major shrine of that area. During his travels in 936, Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ visited Lahore. At *dhur* time he went to Data Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ for *haziri* and *ziyarah*. He did *muraqabah* and felt in his heart as though he was being told to go immediately to Allama Sahib's رحمۃ اللہ علیہ home.

Half an hour before *maghrib*, Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and his *khadim* arrived at Javed manzil. As they were approaching the house, they saw Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ standing in the veranda. Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ thought of introducing himself when Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ said, "Welcome Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, I was waiting for you."

Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ narrates, "I was shocked to see this, as I had never been introduced and had never met him. Since no appointment was made, how could he be waiting for me? Upon entering his room, I was further surprised to see the simplicity of Allama Sahib's رحمۃ اللہ علیہ living arrangements. As soon as we sat Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ request me to recite something. So I recited the following few verses of Mawlana Rumi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ.

*'Syed o sarvar muhammed nur e jann
'Leader and commander, Muhammad ﷺ the light of the soul
Mehtar o behtar shafi e mehrban
Perfect and best merciful intercessor
Mehtarin o behtarin e anbyia
The best of all the Prophets
Juz Muhhamad nist dar arz o sama
There is nothing like Muhammad ﷺ in the world or in the heavens.'*

Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ cried and I continued by reciting some verses from Sachal Sarmast Faruqi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. Upon hearing this he burst into tears and cried uncontrollably. After a while I asked, "Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, what is behind this secret that we have never met before and yet you said you were waiting for me."

He replied "Shah ji رحمۃ اللہ علیہ there is nothing to it, it's just that last night I did *ziyarah* of Data Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and whilst showing me your face he said, 'At *Maghrib* time I am sending you a simple dervish from the Qadri *tariqah*, look after him well.' Your distinguished Qadri style hat was a sure sign for me and as soon as you came close to this house, I was able to recognise you.

At the end of this meeting Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ asked Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ to do *du'a* for him. Allama Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ began crying and asked Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ to do the *du'a*, after which Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ took leave.

Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ always remembered this meeting with great excitement and often used to cry. He would say, "How unfortunate, that our nation was not able to appreciate Allama Iqbal رحمۃ اللہ علیہ in his lifetime."

Death

In 1933, after returning from a trip to Spain and Afghanistan, Allama Sahib's ﷺ health deteriorated. After suffering for many months from a series of protracted illnesses, his end was sudden and very peaceful. He breathed his last in the early hours of April 21, 1938, in the arms of his *khadim*, Ali Baksh, leaving behind a host of mourners all over the Islamic world. There was a faint smile playing on his lips, which reminded all, the signs of a *Mard e Mu'min*.

Allama Muhammad Iqbal Sahib's ﷺ shrine is located in the space between the entrance of the *Badshahi Masjid* and the Lahore Fort.



Grave of Allama Muhammad Iqbal ﷺ.
outside the Badshahi Mosque, Lahore.

*The departed melody may return or not!
The zephyr from Hijaz may blow again or not!
The days of this Faqir has come to an end,
Another Visionary may come or not!*

Al-Fatiha