

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

ختم شریف

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رحمة الله عليه

Hadrat Sayyid Adam Banori رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ

Introduction

Throughout creation, every believer has yearned for the Prophet ﷺ. This deep longing often manifests itself in different forms. Whether it is through devotional poetry or strong adherence to his ﷺ Sunnah. Some yearning enables certain lovers to see him in a dream, while for some very fortunate people, it can lead them to see him ﷺ in a wakeful state. Due to the special position that the Prophet ﷺ holds, seeing him has a profound effect on any beholder. Can you imagine seeing him in a dream, let alone in a wakeful state? Is that even possible?

Within the Ahl al-Sunnah Wa'l Jama'ah there is a difference of opinion on whether Prophets can be seen in a wakeful state or not. From amongst the learned people that believe it is possible, are the likes of great scholars such as Imam Ghazali رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْهِ، Imam Jalal al-Din Suyuti رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْهِ and Imam Bayhaqi رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْهِ. Their opinions are based on evidences from the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

Firstly, they cite the verse from Surah al-Baqarah, in which Allah states:

*“And say not of those who are slain
in the way of Allah, that they are dead.
Nay, they are living, though you perceive it not.”*

– Holy Qur'an 2:154

Allah almighty is saying in this ayah, do not consider the martyrs to be dead; their bodies are alive, in a way which we cannot comprehend. If the state of being alive after the pronouncement of death can be established for martyrs, is this not applicable for Prophets, who are much higher in rank? Without doubt, this most certainly is applicable for the Prophets.

Furthermore, the Prophet ﷺ categorically said that all Prophets are alive in their graves, for the earth has been forbidden to consume their bodies. And this was proven true during the Prophet ﷺ's miraculous night journey to Jerusalem. On route, the Prophet ﷺ saw Prophet Moses praying in his grave. We can therefore, firmly establish that it is undeniably possible to see any Prophet in a wakeful state. Of course, this is not an honour that is afforded to everyone. Rather, this is a great privilege that Allah bestows upon His elect Friends. One such friend of Allah, who had the fortune of seeing the Prophet ﷺ in a wakeful state, was Hadrat Sayyid Adam Banori رضى الله عنه. Sayyid Adam was a great lover of the Prophet ﷺ and had an immense connection to him ﷺ, which, as we journey through his life in the following section, will become apparent.

Sayyid Adam Banori رضى الله عنه

Sayyid Adam's lineage traces back to the Prophet ﷺ through Imam Husayn رضى الله عنه. He was born during the Mughal period in 1589 (979 AH) in Banor, in Indian Punjab. His family initially migrated from Arabia because of the Abbasids persecution. During the Mongol period, they relocated to India. Prior to his birth, Sayyid Adam's father Sayyid Ismail رضى الله عنه had a dream about the Prophet ﷺ who came and rubbed his hand on his chest. A short while after this dream, his wife became pregnant. Subsequently, his father considered this as a gift from the Prophet ﷺ who had transmitted something to him. Sayyid Adam's mother was also pious; she had a dream in which a lamp was hanging from her ceiling, emitting a lot of light. She mentioned this to her husband, who interpreted it as their child would bring much light into this world.

As his parents were already receiving blessings from the Prophet ﷺ through dreams, Sayyid Adam's life was destined to be one comprising of such blessed experiences, aided by his heritage and his pious parents. Although this was a springboard for Sayyid Adam to attain these sacred occurrences, he furthered the potential of these experiences by purifying his heart, benefitting numerous people, adhering to the sunnah and leading an exemplary life.

Sayyid Adam's father and his family were involved with the military and the Mughal government. He was trained in various arts, horse-riding, archery, all of which was typical of all the people who resided in Banor. In addition to these arts, Sayyid Adam had a fondness for calligraphy from his youthful age; a skill he then chose as a profession and practised with proficiency. Due to his mastery in this art, he acquired a job in the Mughal government as a calligrapher and became one of the top three calligraphers of his time. Just as his great ancestor, Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, was a great calligrapher, Sayyid Adam adopted this trait exceptionally, thus made his living from it. Moreover, he was a gifted individual whose fearless nature enabled him the ability to even control a wild elephant. He was extremely hardworking and disciplined, but despite all his training, he never missed non-obligatory prayers; he was very pious from an early age.

During this time, he met numerous pious people. A *faqir* once gave him some *dhikr*, which he performed, and it had an auspicious effect on him. It was due to this *dhikr* that he had a dream in which he saw the moon fall onto his lap.

Sayyid Adam's love for pious people was such that whenever he heard about holy people, he visited them. The first famous Darwish he met was Shah Muhammad Shattari رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. This Shaykh said to him, '*Son, I'm going to be involved in some controversial issue, do not leave me at that time.*' As was predicted, what Shaykh Shattari said came to fruition and all his followers left him, apart from Sayyid Adam, who stayed loyal to him.

Another mark of his loyalty was when the Shaykh told him: "*Have a large pot made of food and accompany me to the marketplace.*" During that period, the Shaykh had such a terrible reputation that nobody wanted to be seen walking with him. Nonetheless, Sayyid Adam carried this large pot on his head and walked through the streets, as the Shaykh had ordered. Unshaken, Sayyid Adam performed this duty with certainty; unconcerned by what people may or will think of him. As a result of this, Shaykh Shattari was pleased that Sayyid Adam had passed this test of loyalty.

Following this, Sayyid Adam met Haji Khidr Khan رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, the first Naqshbandi shaykh that he encountered when visiting Shaykh Baha al-Din Zakariyya رحمۃ اللہ علیہ in Multan. Haji Khidr Khan was an Afghan and a Khalifa of Imam-i-Rabbani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. There was an instant spark between both men; Sayyid Adam began associating with him and Haji Khidr Khan initiated him in the Qadri and Chishti orders. Upon mentioning his spiritual experiences to Haji Khidr Khan, Sayyid Adam was told, '*My Son, you have surpassed me. The experiences you talk of are beyond my comprehension. Go to my master (Imam-i-Rabbani) in Sirhind, to receive guidance from him for further spiritual development.*'

Subsequently, he travelled to Sirhind Sharif to meet Imam-i-Rabbani. However, Imam-i-Rabbani was in Ajmer Sharif, so he travelled there to benefit from him. When Sayyid Adam finally met Imam-i-Rabbani, he described his experiences, all of which pleased Imam-i-Rabbani. However, Imam-i-Rabbani told him that the spiritual stage he was at was just the beginning of the spiritual path. Sayyid Adam was under the impression that these were high spiritual stages, however Imam-i-Rabbani assured him that this was the stage of a novice.

Sayyid Adam had progressed at such a rate, he remarked: '*I reached fanaa (annihilation) of the Shaykh in a very short period. Wherever I looked, I saw Imam-i-Rabbani; I couldn't even see myself.*' It was at this stage that Imam-i-Rabbani told him to leave the army and worldly matters and then instructed him to focus solely on his spiritual journey.

After spending only six months with Imam-i-Rabbani, Sayyid Adam was given *khilafah* and then sent back to Banor. Imam-i-Rabbani was so delighted with the progress that Sayyid Adam had made and what he had accomplished that he gave him many glad tidings. He cited to him: "*You should be grateful for what you have achieved. It is uncommon nowadays.*" Sayyid Adam later attested to what Imam-i-Rabbani had said upon their initial meeting when discussing his

earlier ‘apprentice-like’ experiences. Back then, he thought Imam-i-Rabbani was trying to deflate his ego, however “when I went through the training with him, I realised my earlier experiences were nothing compared to what I experienced in Imam-i-Rabbani’s presence”, he remarked.

When Imam-i-Rabbani passed away, Sayyid Adam went to Lahore to another deputy, Mawlana Tahir Bandagi رحمته الله. He stayed with Mawlana Bandagi, who also gave him *ijazah* in the Qadiriyya order. It was in Lahore that Sayyid Adam continued his spiritual training. Following this period, the number of people taking part in the *langar* sharif (communal food) increased into the thousands. Later in life, he had a vast following and was very prominent amongst the Afghans.

As with anyone who gains notability, Sayyid Adam’s prominence became a thorn in the sides of envious men. As he was touring the country, government agents began filling the emperor, Shah Jahan’s ear with untruths; that Sayyid Adam could cause an uprising or insurgency amongst the people. Upon hearing this, the Mughal emperor sent a vizier Sa’d Ullah Khan, and the scholar Mawlana Abdul Hakim Sialkoti to meet with Sayyid Adam when he was in Lahore. Both men came to meet Sayyid Adam, however, when they arrived, Sayyid Adam was in deep meditation so they waited impatiently. As a result, the pair of them did not receive the protocol they desired from Sayyid Adam. They left unhappy and told lies to the emperor about Sayyid Adam. When Shah Jahan heard from them both about Sayyid Adam, he sent an order that he should be expelled from India by way of ordering him to go to Hajj. During that era, the journey to Hajj took months to complete. The emperors used to do this when they felt that somebody was a threat to them.

After being commanded to go to Hajj, Sayyid Adam visited his father’s grave in Agra and then Imam-i-Rabbani in Sirhind Sharif. After that, he returned to his village and appointed his eldest son, Shaykh Ghulam Muhammad رحمته الله, to oversee the *khanqah* (Sufi lodge). Sayyid Adam then journeyed to Bombay to take a ship from the port of Surat to Hijaz. Travelling with him were some of his prominent deputies.

During the same time, Shah Jahan had a dream that the pillars in his palace crumbled. After inquiring about the interpretation of his vision, Shah Jahan was told that, “You have displeased someone who was supporting you.” The emperor immediately realised that the support was indeed Sayyid Adam. With urgency, he sent people with swift horses to stop Sayyid Adam from departing, but the ship had already set sail.

Incidentally, one of Sayyid Adam’s murids who was also going to Hajj that year met the emperor and told him that all the things the emperor had heard were gossip and that the Shaykh had no interest in these matters. He continued to tell him that the Shaykh was not trying to overrun his government, nor incite rebellion. “These people just fed you lies”, he concluded. Consequently, the emperor was remorseful. He sent some gifts for Sayyid Adam and said to the murid: “Please offer these gifts to your Shaykh and ask him to come back quickly after he has performed Hajj.”

Upon arriving in Makkah Sharif, Sayyid Adam performed Hajj. One of his Khalifas, Muhammad Jalal ﷺ, said that during their time in Makkah Sharif, he saw a dream in which the Prophet ﷺ came and said to Sayyid Adam: “*O my son, anyone that shakes hands with you, it is as if he has shaken hands with me; your hand is like my hand, and anyone who is under your shade is under my shade.*”

Back in Banor, before he travelled to Hajj, Sayyid Adam had this very experience but in a wakeful state. Sayyid Adam was sat amongst his murids in *muraqabah*, in Banor when the Prophet ﷺ came and spread his blessed hand, before saying: “*Anyone who has shaken hands with you has shaken hands with me.*” Then the Prophet ﷺ rubbed his hand on the chest of Sayyid Adam, on his head, the back of his head, and shoulders – this entire experience was in a state of wakefulness.

Following this experience, Sayyid Adam wondered whether to tell people of this blessing or not. He pondered on whether to make this information public or keep it unknown. Subsequently, he was undecided; however, later in the day, without any effort, the matter became known, then people flocked from all over to Sayyid Adam and surrounded him.

One of Sayyid Adam’s murids who could not accompany his Shaykh to Madinah Sharif said: “I was still in Makkah Sharif and I set off later after my Shaykh had gone and I was exhausted. I came near Madinah Sharif and I just lay down as I was so tired. Then I saw in a dream that the Prophet ﷺ was holding a gathering with the Companions and Saints. Many different types of fruits were being distributed. When it came to me and I asked for a share of this fruit, the Prophet ﷺ said ‘*Your share is with your Shaykh*’ and then I woke up. When I met my Shaykh, he was delighted and shook hands with me and transmitted some spiritual power to me with the palm of his hand.”

As with all holy people, the level of *adab* (good etiquettes) that Sayyid Adam had is exemplary and noteworthy. On his way to Madinah Sharif, he visited Masjid Quba because this is the Sunnah route to the Prophet ﷺ’s Mosque. On the way, Sayyid Adam performed two raka’at with every step on the road. This took him a day and a half from Quba to Masjid Nabawi Sharif. This act alone is indicative of Sayyid Adam’s pure love for his beloved great-grandfather ﷺ. It is no wonder his deeds, fuelled by his pure heart, attracted the attention of the Prophet ﷺ.

On the first day in Madinah Sharif, Sayyid Adam went to the sacred chamber. He sat at the feet side when suddenly the Prophet ﷺ physically appeared and greeted him. Sayyid Adam shook and embraced the blessed hands of the Prophet ﷺ in a wakeful state. He then summoned his murids so that he may pass on the blessings he had just received. Through this, he was fulfilling what the Prophet ﷺ said to him back in his village in Banor – “*Anyone who has shaken hands with you has shaken hands with me.*”

As we established in the introduction, such a phenomena is undoubtedly possible. Sayyid Adam’s intimate connection with the Prophet ﷺ enabled him to not only see the Prophet ﷺ in countless dreams, but to also physically embrace his blessed touch.

This was not the first nor the last occurrence of a Shaykh greeting the Prophet's ﷺ physical form. Tens of thousands of people witnessed the famous Shaykh Ahmad al-Rifa'i رحمه الله kissing the blessed hands of the Prophet ﷺ which stretched forth from his blessed resting place. Amongst the eye-witnesses were, Ghawth al-A'dham, Shaykh Abd al-Qadir Jilani رحمه الله.

In total, Sayyid Adam stayed twenty months on this journey. Every time he asked permission from the Prophet ﷺ to return to Banor, the Prophet ﷺ responded: “*O Adam, you are my neighbour, stay here.*” Thus, he did not receive permission to leave. A short while later, he fell ill then passed away. He was buried in Jannat al-Baqi near the resting place of Sayyiduna Uthman ibn Affan رضي الله عنه. Sayyid Adam Banori passed away at *Tahajjud* time on 13th Shawwal 1053 Hijri (25th December 1663). In Madinah Sharif, he became known as ‘Shaykh ul-Hind’.

Sayyid Adam Banori had a powerful impact on the people who sat with him and associated with him. Amongst the murids of Sayyid Adam are scholars and shaykhs, whose lineage continues to this day. Some of Sayyid Adam's khalifas stayed in Madinah Sharif for some time, continuing their work, while the others returned.

Many other khalifas who had served Sayyid Adam with devotion, including his knowledgeable family, continued to spread the path in other parts of the world. Additionally, the people who sat in his company would feel the impact of the Prophet ﷺ even if they could not see him. Such was his lasting effect on people, which continues even till this day.

Conclusion

The highest level that *awliyah* can reach is to serve the nation of the Prophet ﷺ; as this is the most dearest thing to him ﷺ. Sayyid Adam's life was a true testament to this; he lived his life in true devotion to serving and benefitting the nation of the Prophet ﷺ.

Much of what lies on the other side of fortune depends on the hunger for that fortune or the longing and aspiration to attain it. Many times in life, we hear the inspirational phrase “*If you don't ask, you don't get*” – meaning: if there is no insistence or longing from the heart to attain or get something, then it will not happen or come to you. In this instance, seeing the Prophet ﷺ.

Ultimately, seeing the Prophet ﷺ is a grant from Allah ﷻ. That is why saints and sinners alike have seen him. The Prophet ﷺ either visits a person because he or she has a pure heart, so as to increase their capacity or give a gift; or the person needs guidance, help or saving them from a spiritual catastrophe. Although having a pure heart attracts the attention of the Prophet ﷺ, it does not entitle a person to see the Prophet ﷺ.

Whilst the reality of seeing the Prophet ﷺ exists, there are a those who deny its possibility; citing incoherent reasons and clutching at illogical straws. Nevertheless, these experiences still occur.

Something so often characterised as unattainable by many, is in fact attainable. However, a pure heart and good deeds do not guarantee a visit from the Prophet ﷺ; it is a grant, a gift, an honour from Allah. Reciting abundant salawat and racking up extra prayers does not entitle one to summon him. Nonetheless, the hope for it should never be extinguished from one's heart. With longing, we should keep the flutter of anticipatory butterflies in our chests, just as Sayyid Adam Banori رَحِمَهُ اللهُ did.

Al-Fatiha.