

A Biography of Shaykh Badee-ud-Deen Shah Rashidee as-Sindhee

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The following has been transcribed and adapted from a lecture given by Shaykh 'Abdullaah Nasir Rehmaani on the Seerah of Shaykh Badee-ud-Deen Shah Rashidee as-Sindhee (rahimahullaah):

Today, the topic of discussion that I have been given is the Seerah¹ of our Shaykh, Allaamah Badee-ud-Deen Shah Rashidee. It is a coincidence that in the past two days I was in the hometown, or rather in the library of my Shaykh. The Shaykh belonged to an area named Saeedabad, which is approximately at a distance of 70km from Hyderabad. Our annual conference was held there these past two days. This was the 20th year, the series of conferences having been initiated by Shah Sahib himself.

Whenever I visit the hometown of my Shaykh, I feel as if by the departure of one man the whole town has become desolate. It reminds me of the following verses:

Whenever I visit the city of my friend
I don't find my friend, though the city is unchanged

Anyhow, this is a system ordained by Allaah, and it is by this system that the world moves on. Our Shaykh, Badee-ud-Deen (rahimahullaah) was born on the 15th of July 1925. His birthplace is a town named Pir Chando which is at a distance of approximately 70 km from Hyderabad. When Shah Sahib's (rahimahullaah) sixth grandfather in the line of lineage, Syed Raashid Shah, passed away, he left a chanda (flag) and a pagree (turban) to each of his two sons. Shah Sahib's fifth grandfather in the line of lineage, Syed Yaseen Shah, inherited the chanda and the pagree was inherited by his brother. This is how the Rashidee family split into two different families, Pir Chanda and Pir Pagara. Pir Pagara, which has a great deal of importance in Pakistani politics, is from the extended family of Shah Sahib. All of them are from the progeny of Rashid Shah. It can be said that the Pir Pagara family developed a leaning towards politics. Their history of Peeri Mureedi continues on to this day. Conversely, the family of Shah Sahib was more inclined towards religion and knowledge, and this legacy continues by the grace and blessings of Allaah.

Shah Sahib's father, Ehsanullah Shah, was also a scholar and Muhaddith². He laid the foundation of a madrassah³ in his hometown. It is here that Shah Sahib got his early religious education and was able to benefit from different teachers in various subjects. It is during his education here that he developed an interest in Uloom-ul-Hadeeth⁴. He also travelled outside his hometown to nurture this interest and to learn hadeeth sciences from various scholars. Among them are:

Shaykh-ul-Islaam Maulana Thana ullah Amritsaree (rahimahullaah)
Muhaddith Abu Muhammad 'Abdul-Haq Bahawalpuree al-Muhajir ul Makki (rahimahullaah)

¹ - Biography

² - Scholar of the hadeeth sciences

³ - Religious school

⁴ - Knowledge of hadeeth sciences

Shaykh-ul-Hadeeth Allaamah Hafidh 'Abdullaah Muhaddith Roparee (rahimahullaah)
Allaamah Abu Ishaq Naik Muhammad (rahimahullaah)
Allaamah Abu Sa'eed Sharf-ud-Deen Dehlwee (rahimahullaah)

It is from Allaamah Abu Sa'eed Sharf-ud-Deen Dehlwee (rahimahullaah) that Shah Sahib received an ijazah⁵ and sanad⁶ in hadeeth. All of the above Mashaayikh were under the direct tutelage of Shaykh-ul-Qul Miyan Nazeer Hussain Muhaddith Dehlwee (rahimahullaah). This is one way in which our Shaykh, Badee-ud-Deen (rahimahullaah) was a student of Shaykh-ul-Qul Miyan Sahib. The sanad of Shaykh-ul-Qul Miyan Sahib is famous as has been noted in various books. I have read and seen this sanad and after reading and doing some research I found out that this sanad can be traced to Imaam al-Bukhaaree in seventeen ways. And if we take one particular sanad of Imaam al-Bukhaaree which is from the tareekh of Imaam Makki, then the sanad of Shaykh Badee-ud-Deen (rahimahullaah) can be traced back to the prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) in 20 ways.

After receiving ijazah from the scholars, Shah Sahib returned to his hometown and started da'wah and teaching in Sindh. This was a time when da'wah of Qur'aan and Sunnah was full of hardships, especially in Sindh. In those days almost everyone was associated with one peer or the other and it was their 'aqeedah⁷ that if they give presents to their peer in the form of animals etc. then this is enough for their salvation. They believed that by doing so, the peer would take care of their affairs of this world and the hereafter. This was a dangerous ignorance and Shah Sahib voiced out against this uncompromisingly. Initially, he busied himself with teaching and taught a lot of the scholars of Sindh especially in hadeeth alongside his work in the field of da'wah.

Shah Sahib had an astounding memory. He memorised the Qur'aan while an adult in 1948 in just 3 months. The fact that he memorised such a lengthy book in just 3 months can only be considered a miracle of a wali⁸. Shah Sahib once told us that he was going for some event on a camel from Saeedabad, and it was while sitting on this camel that he memorised Soorah Noor.

Shah Sahib was in a way the first alim or mubbaligh⁹ to have done da'wah work in his area. As mentioned earlier, the Sindh province was and still is home to some of the worst forms of Jahiliyyah. In light of this, it was very difficult to do da'wah work there. However, Allaah gave him tawfeeq¹⁰ and even though he had to face many dangers, he went on with da'wah work.

There were assassination attempts, and many a times his opponents would complain to the governments and hence creating problems for him. He was banned from speaking in public and put under house arrest on several occasions. All of this was the propaganda of his opponents that made da'wah work difficult in its incipient stages. There were few people with proper 'aqeedah. Our Shaykh once told us that he was waiting at a train station so that he may go back to his town, when he saw a man praying at the station with his hands on his chest and also performing

⁵ - Permission to teach hadeeth

⁶ - Chain of narrators of hadeeth

⁷ - Creed

⁸ - Friend of Allaah (subhaanahu wa ta'aala)

⁹ - Preacher

¹⁰ - To enable someone

rafaulyadein¹¹. Shah Sahib was really pleased to see an Ahlul Hadeeth and decided to meet him. At that very point, the train arrived. The train for his town came once a day. So he could either take the train and go back, or meet the man at the station in which case he would have to stay there for another day. But the Ahlul Hadeeth were so few that he decided to leave the train and meet his Ahlul Hadeeth companion. However, if you visit Sindh now you will see that the Ahlul Hadeeth are great in number, and that the da'wah of Tawheed is everywhere. Shah Sahib told us that when he began Salafi da'wah in Sindh, there was not a single Ahlul Hadeeth Masjid in the province apart from a couple in Karachi and Hyderabad. However, when our Shaykh passed away, there were about 700 mosques in the province. Now the total has increased to about 850 Alhamdulillah. These are the blessings of Allaah, and the fruits of the work Allaah enabled him to do.

As mentioned earlier, on several occasions there were assassination attempts on our Shaykh's life. Even though he had to face severe opposition at times, he demonstrated patience and steadfastness throughout. I'll now talk of one incident out of the many that occurred during his da'wah work. The Shaykh was invited to give a lecture at a village that only had a few Salafi's in it. The Shaykh went to the village walking a long distance since there were not that many means to commute otherwise at the time. When the Shaykh arrived at the village, the Imaam of the local Masjid opposed his visit. The Imaam gathered the feudal leaders and popular personalities of the village on his side and arrived at the Masjid with sticks and shovels and told the Salafi's that they will not let them proceed with their programme. Nonetheless, the Salafi's had a firm resolve to go ahead with the schedule even if that entailed much sacrifice. However, Shah Sahib (rahimahullaah) forbid them from doing so since that would be detrimental to their da'wah. One of the attendees suggested that they to hold the lecture in his house. So the Shaykh proceeded to his house and sat on the rooftop with his two or three companions sitting in front of him. The Shaykh started his lecture and since Allaah had bestowed him with a loud voice, his lecture could be heard in the surrounding houses. The propaganda was that the Shaykh speaks out against the Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam). However, what they heard was completely different from the rumours that were spread about him. He was presenting the Qur'aan and ahaadeeth of the Nabi (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam). So one person came from the surrounding area to listen to him, then another, and another, and people kept coming from wherever his voice could reach. Shah Sahib kept lecturing for hours and hours and as a result of that, almost the whole village became Ahlul Hadeeth. This event is a testimony of the patience of the Shaykh. In the initial stages of da'wah, one has to go through a lot of hardships and difficult situations. Allaah ta'aala gave the Shaykh taufeeq to remain steadfast.

Other than this, there were numerous instances in the life of the Shaykh where graves were flattened. He was often challenged and accepted to debate with people of various groups. A lot of people would become Ahlul Hadeeth at these debates and at times even scholars. A testimony to this is a debate that took place in Larkana during which Maulana Hayatullah Laashaaree (hafizahullah) turned Ahlul Hadeeth. He is still amongst us today and is 130 years old having turned Ahlul Hadeeth at the age of approximately 100 years. Before this he used to teach fiqh¹² for about 70 years in

¹¹ - To raise both hands upto the shoulders

¹² - Jurisprudence

various Hanafi madaris but now is Ahlul Hadeeth with a very strong and deep grounding in 'aqeedah and is busy with da'wah work alhamdulillah.

Our Shaykh also lived in Saudi Arabia for about 5 years giving duroos at the Haram in Makkah Mukarramah. His duroos were on Tafsir ibn Kathir and Saheeh al-Bukhaaree. Other than those, he also gave a dars in al-Muhallah by Ibn Hazm. For some time after that he gave dars at Daar al-Hadeeth, Makkah, after which he lectured for 2 years at Mahd-ul-Haram al-Makki for which Shaykh 'Abdullaah bin Humaid specially requested him. It was his duroos there that earned him worldwide acclaim. Some of his lectures there were in Arabic and some in Urdu. These were extremely popular among the taalib-ul-'ilm¹³ and they would travel for far and wide to attend these. They had an ilmi environment that cannot be described in words. There are two duroos that he delivered at the Islaamic University of Madeenah that became very popular among the masses. One of them was against tasawwuf¹⁴ and the other on the virtues of the people of Hadeeth. Both of these were presided by Shaykh bin Baaz (rahimahullaah), as a matter of fact, it was he who invited Shah Sahib to give the duroos. Shaykh Naasir-ud-Deen al-Albaanee (rahimahullaah) was also present and praised the duroos given by Shah Sahib. The Ulamaa there were surprised at his religious acumen and especially by his command over hadeeth sciences. They were also impressed by the number ahaadeeth he had memorised with isnaad and references.

The Shaykh also holds a special position in 'ilm-ul-rijaal¹⁵. The greatest attestation to this are the words of Shaykh Thana ullah Amritsaree (rahimahullaah) at a conference before the independence of Pakistan. This conference was attended by many of the famous Mashaayikh of the Indian subcontinent and was presided by our Shaykh Badee-ud-Deen (rahimahullaah). At the beginning a speech given by Maulana Thana ullah Amritsaree (rahimahullaah), he said: "I feel privileged to be speaking at an event presided by the Imaam of 'ilm-ul-rijaal." Being given such a tazkiyah¹⁶ from your teacher (who is one of the foremost scholars of the subcontinent) is indeed an attestation to the abilities of the Shaykh. He was indeed the flag holder of Tawheed and Sunnah in the province and we think that Allaah brought him to this world for this purpose.

Throughout his time in Sindh there were very few days that he would actually spend at home. He used to give duroos¹⁷ almost everyday in some village or city. At times he would be away from home for more than a week, giving a lecture in one village and then straight away proceeding to another to do likewise. He used to give each of these duroos with zeal and zest and made sure he paid due attention to the aspects which required him to do so. His da'wah sessions especially gained widespread acclaim in the desert area of Thar. Most of his travelling there involved extreme exhaustion and even those who go there today and with ample resources will not deny this. However, the Shaykh sometimes used to spend about a month in a go in these regions calling people towards Tawheed and Sunnah. Resultantly, there are literally hundreds of villages in the Thar area which are completely Ahlul Hadeeth.

¹³ - Student of knowledge

¹⁴ - Sufism

¹⁵ - The study of the reporters of hadeeth

¹⁶ - Permission

¹⁷ - Islamic lectures

I have been fortunate enough to study under the Shaykh since 1982 till his passing away in 1996. When I returned from Imam Muhammad bin Saud University in 1982, I contacted the Shaykh straight away and have often had the chance to stay in his company till his death. What did I see during this time? I saw that Shah Sahib was a Muhaddith, memorizer of hadeeth with asaneed and at the very least he used to know in which book and chapter you could find a particular hadeeth. It was the habit of Shah Sahib not to let go of a new book till having read it from cover to cover. And since he had a tenacious memory, he memorised everything he read. He always corroborated his stance by using evidences from the Qur'aan and Sunnah. I remember vividly that at a dars in Hyderabad, a Hanafi stood up and asked him to prove the manner of his prayer using evidences only from Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim. So at that time Shah Sahib explained each and every step of Salaah, from takbeer-e-tahreema¹⁸ to Salaam, using evidences only from the aforementioned books and that also by memory.

While travelling, Shah Sahib either answered questions that were posed to him or when he saw that his companions are silent, he busied himself with the recitation of the Qur'aan. At times I saw that when he left his house for a journey which was to last 3, 4 or 5 days, he used to begin reciting the Qur'aan, and when he would be returning we used to hear him reciting some of the last Soorah's, i.e. he used to finish reciting the Qur'aan on a journey which lasted just 3 or 4 days. He used to establish Qiyaam-ul-Layl¹⁹ throughout his life; no matter how late he came back from an event, he used to make sure that he got up for tahajjud. At times if he feared that he would not be able to wake up, he would pray Qiyaam-ul-Layl and then go to bed. When on a journey, he used to pray Qiyaam-ul-Layl on whatever he was riding on, as is proven from the Sunnah.

The Shaykh travelled to various countries such as the US and some European states. I feel honoured to have accompanied the Shaykh on some of his overseas trips especially the one to Kuwait. During the time that he time spent there, the Shaykh would be fully occupied with knowledge-based activities. After fajr, he would give a dars on Bukhaaree after which he used to rest for a while. Dars-e-mustallah from 11 in the morning till dhuhr, and then duroos after dhuhr, 'asr and maghrib. And the people who used to drive him from one place to another in between these duroos used to read books from Shah Sahib during these journeys. Many of the major scholars of the region took ijaazah in hadeeth from him. When the news that Shah Sahib was in Kuwait reached Saudi Arabia, a lot of the scholars and students from there travelled to Kuwait so as to meet him and benefit from him. All throughout this month, Shah Sahib only used to rest a couple hours a day, the rest of this time was either spent giving duroos or answering questions. We used to be amazed at how Allaah enabled him to do so much work for Islaam. This is the blessing of Allaah that he bestows upon whomsoever He wills.

All of this is because Shah Sahib blessed by Allaah with an ocean of knowledge. Whenever we used to read from the Shaykh or listen to his lectures, we used to see the characteristics of the 'Aaimah²⁰ in him. Amongst others, we saw in him the reasoning skills of Hafiz Ibn Hazm (rahimahullaah), the descriptive skills of Ibn al-Qayyim (rahimahullaah) and the power of proof of Imaam ibn Taymiyyah

¹⁸ - To say Allahu Akbar when beginning the salaah

¹⁹ - The night prayer

²⁰ - Scholars of the highest calibre

(rahimahullaah). When we used to study hadeeth or talk about asaaneed we used to see in him the likeness of major scholars in the field of Jarh wa Ta'deel²¹. Allaah blessed him with all these qualities and hence people all throughout the world would benefit from his 'ilm. Because of the efforts of the Shaykh, the zeal and fervour with which people learn 'aqeedah, hadeeth and Sunnah, we do not see it anywhere else in Pakistan.

Shah Sahib's library is indeed an exemplary one. There are between fifteen and twenty thousand books in this private library that include manuscripts and books some that run into several volumes. In his heart he had a special place for books; if he came across a new book he would try to buy it despite limited financial means. Some books people would give him gratuitously; he used to be very pleased when he received these gifts. If you open up a book from his library you will often see that it is filled with notes in the margin area and at other places. At times these notes would criticise or corroborate what was written and at other times it would just be an elaboration of the points mentioned. There are about 150 of our Shaykh's own books and publications. Most of these are in Arabic while the rest are in Urdu and Sindhee. Shah Sahib (rahimahullaah) had an equal command over all three of these languages. Furthermore, Allaah had also blessed him with some proficiency in understanding and speaking Persian. Some of his books are in such esoteric Arabic such that even Arabs are unable to understand them unless they have a dictionary with them. For example, his book al-Ujool which mentions 80 meanings of kalimah al-Ujoos; understanding this book is not an easy endeavour. A lot of Arab Ulamaa have been astounded by the book, and found it hard to believe that an ajmee²² alim could write such a book. There is another book which he wrote on 'aqeedah, only using words which do not have any dots in them. It is about 80 pages long and there are words in it that are even difficult to find in Arabic dictionaries.

Other than this there are a lot of other books that he authored, the most important one being in the area of Tafsir. He started writing this Tafsir in Sindhi because there was no Salafi Tafsir written in it. He went ahead despite a lot of people requesting him to write it in Arabic since it will have a worldwide market. The Shaykh said I am not looking for fame; rather I want to write a Tafsir from which people of this area can benefit. The Shaykh was only able to write this Tafsir till Soorah Yoosuf after which he passed away. Nine volumes of this Tafsir have already been published, the first one being the preamble; the Tafsir of Soorah Fathiha is over 600 pages. It is expected that the rest of the Tafsir will be completed and published in 15 volumes inshaa'Allaah. This Tafsir has been written according to the Salafi Manhaj. It is free from dh'aeef²³, ghareeb²⁴ or israelite traditions. What is special about this Tafsir is that it has been attempted to explain each ayah with ahaadeeth and that each explanation highlights the Salafi creed.

Once Shah Sahib received a letter with 5 questions from Multan inquiring about tawassul²⁵ and the Sufi concept of wahdatul wajood²⁶. Shah Sahib began writing the answer to these five questions and this answer took the shape of a 600 page book which got published by the name of Tawheed-e-Khaalis. When Shah Sahib

²¹ - Declaring someone to be weak or strong in narrating Hadeeth

²² - Non Arab

²³ - A weak hadeeth

²⁴ - A hadeeth which has just one narrator in one generation

²⁵ - Seeking means of nearness to Allaah

²⁶ - Pantheism; this deviant belief is held by many Sufi sects

(rahimahullaah) was told about its publication, he expressed a desire for it to be translated into Arabic. I have translated about 300 pages; may Allah give me the tawfeeq to complete its translation. This book will be inshaa'Allaah a gem in 'aqeedah and these two issues in particular.

Shah Sahib did not pay much attention to matters of this world, he owned land which ran over hundreds of acres but did not oversee the work on these fields since that would mean distancing himself from 'ilm. So he would sublet that land and receive a percentage of the earnings from the land, but never allowed himself to be detracted from his mission. Those who have met him are well aware of his high standing in 'ilm. Shaykh al-Albaanee once told the people of America to invite the Shaykh and benefit from his 'ilm. Other Shuyookh who have also praised him include Shaykh bin Baaz and Shaykh Rabee'.

Allaah enabled him to work in the fields of da'wah, research, teaching and other fields with which one can serve Islaam. I would say his life was a reflection of the hadeeth: "In every age, there will be people who will uphold this Deen." Hence there will be people who will continue to learn, teach and spread the correct understanding of this Deen and oppose those who go against it. Allaah blessed Shah Sahib with these characteristics; all throughout his life he presented the concept of Tawheed in its pure form. I pray that Allaah make the Shaykh a manifestation of the du'aa made by the Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) at Mina: "Ya Allaah brighten the face of the believer who listens to my hadeeth, memorises it and spreads it." I advise myself and all of you to form a relationship with hadeeth; it is the basis of fahm-e-Deen²⁷, fahm-e-'aqeedah²⁸ and fahm-e-Manhaj²⁹. May Allaah give us all tawfeeq.

The Shaykh passed away in Karachi on 8th January 1996 and was laid to rest in his ancestral hometown of Pir Chanda. A multitude of people arrived from various parts of the country for his funeral in Saeedabad, as a matter of fact, after we finished the funeral prayer, another one had to be arranged because another crowd had arrived.

May Allaah enable to us to follow this path as well, and make us one of those who uphold the Qur'aan and Sunnah and act upon it.

²⁷ - Understanding of religion

²⁸ - Understanding of creed

²⁹ - Understanding of the correct methodology