

Hazrat Baba Farid Ganjshakar (R.A.)

A Biography of the Sufi Saint of the Chishti Order

Compiled and Edited by [Your Name]

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Preface

This eBook is a comprehensive biography of Hazrat Khwaja Fariduddin Masood Ganjshakar, fondly known as Baba Farid or Ganjshakar, a revered saint of the Chishti Order of Sufis in India. The text draws from authentic sources to narrate the life, teachings, miracles, and spiritual legacy of this illustrious figure whose influence continues to inspire millions. This work aims to preserve and share the profound spiritual wisdom and exemplary life of Baba Farid for readers worldwide.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Hazrat Khwaja Fariduddin Masood Ganjshakar, popularly known as Baba Farid or Ganjshakar, was one of the most brilliant personalities of the Chishti Order of Sufis in India. Following the untimely demise of Hazrat Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki, Baba Farid assumed the mantle of spiritual leadership within the Chishti Order, guiding countless souls toward divine truth and enlightenment.

Chapter 2

Family and Lineage

During the turbulent political conditions in Afghanistan, marked by wars between the Ghazni and Ghauri dynasties (548–584 A.H.), Hazrat Sheikh Shuaib and his son Hazrat Jamaluddin Suleman, Baba Farid's father, migrated from Kabul to Lahore, then to Kasur, Multan, and finally settled in Khotwal (now Chawli-Mashaikh), a village near Multan. Hazrat Jamaluddin married Bibi Qursum Khatoon, daughter of the pious Maulana Wajihuddin Khijwandi, a descendant of Hazrat Abbas-bin-Abdul Muttallib, who had also migrated from Kabul to Kot-Kiror near Multan.

Bibi Qursum was renowned for her piety. A notable incident recounts a thief who lost his eyesight upon entering her home but regained it through her prayers after pledging to abandon theft. This event led to the thief and his family embracing Islam, earning the village the name Chawli-Mashaikh. Hazrat Jamaluddin and Bibi Qursum had three sons—Hazrat Aizazuddin, Hazrat Baba Fariduddin Ganjshakar, Hazrat Najibuddin Mutawakkal—and one daughter, Bibi Hajra (Jameela Khatoon), mother of Hazrat Makhdoom Alauddin Sabir Kaliyari.

Chapter 3

Birth and Miracles

Hazrat Baba Farid was born on the night of 29th Sha'baan, 569 A.H. (1179 A.D.), in Khotwal. His birth was marked by divine signs, indicating his future as a great saint. One miracle involved his mother, Bibi Qursum, who, during pregnancy, desired to pluck plums from a neighbor's tree without permission. The unborn Baba Farid caused her severe pain, preventing the act, later revealing this to her astonishment.

Another miracle occurred at his birth, coinciding with the uncertainty of Ramadan's start due to cloudy skies. A dervish prophesied that if the newborn (Baba Farid) did not take his mother's milk that night, it would confirm the moon's sighting. True to the prophecy, Baba Farid abstained from milk until Iftaar, signaling the start of Ramadan, a practice he maintained throughout the month.

Chapter 4

Education and Spiritual Training

After losing his father at an early age, Baba Farid's mother took charge of his education. By age seven, he completed his initial religious education in Khotwal and was sent to Multan for higher studies under Maulana Minhajuddin, mastering the Quran, Hadith, Fiqh, Philosophy, and Logic. During this time, Hazrat Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki visited Multan, recognized Baba Farid's potential, and accepted him as a disciple. Baba Farid later traveled for 18 years (593–611 A.H.) across Ghazni, Baghdad, Jerusalem, Mecca, and Medina, gaining wisdom from renowned Sufi saints like Hazrat Shahabuddin Suhrawardi.

Chapter 5

Spiritual Practices and Chilla

Baba Farid’s spiritual rigor was exemplary, particularly through his practice of Chilla-e-Makoos, a 40-day devotion where he hung upside down in a well, performed under strict conditions in Masjid Hajj, Multan. Another significant chilla was at Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti’s shrine in Ajmer, known as “Chilla Baba Farid,” preserved to this day. His ascetic lifestyle included daily fasting, nightly prayers, and distributing all wealth to the poor, embodying the Sufi principle of detachment from worldly possessions.

Chapter 6

Miracles and Karamat

Baba Farid's life was replete with miracles, including transforming a merchant's sugar into salt and back, turning a brick into gold for a devotee, and healing ailments through divine intervention. His spiritual insight allowed him to foresee events, such as saving a disciple's brother from death and warning others of impending dangers, demonstrating his profound connection with the divine.

Chapter 7

Teachings and Philosophy

Baba Farid's teachings emphasized divine love (Ishq-e-Elahi), repentance (Toba), and detachment from worldly desires. He defined a true Sufi as one who renounces the self, overlooks others' faults, and remains devoted to God. His sayings, such as "Do not satisfy the demands of the physical self, for the more you satisfy it, the more it demands," reflect his emphasis on spiritual purity and contentment.

Chapter 8

Family and Legacy

Baba Farid married three times, fathering several children, many of whom died young. His surviving sons, like Hazrat Badruddin Suleman, carried forward his spiritual legacy. His chief disciple, Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya, and other Khalifas spread the Chishti Order across India, establishing sub-orders like Nizamia and Sabiria.

Chapter 9

Death and Mausoleum

Hazrat Baba Farid passed away on 5th Muharram, 661 A.H. (1262 A.D.), in Pakpattan, during prostration, uttering “Yaa Hayyo Yaa Qaiyum.” His mausoleum, constructed under Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya’s supervision, is a marble shrine in Pakpattan, visited by thousands. His annual Urs, celebrated in Muharram, draws pilgrims worldwide, with the Bahishti Darwaza opened once yearly.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

Hazrat Baba Farid Ganjshakar's life exemplifies the pinnacle of Sufi spirituality, marked by devotion, humility, and service to humanity. His teachings and miracles continue to guide spiritual seekers, and his mausoleum remains a beacon of divine light. May his legacy inspire us to pursue divine love and righteousness.

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