

Chapter – 56

Abul Hassan Shazli

(1196 - 1258 AD)

Sheikh Abul Hassan was born in Morocco. He was named as 'Ali at his birth. But later on, due to his Kunniya, he started to be called Abul Hassan. Genetically, he was among the descendants of Hazrat Hassan bin 'Ali. In his childhood, the government of Egypt called his father, Abdullah bin Jabbar, to Egypt and given the administration charge of Alexandria. At the same time, his father was given the responsibility of running a village called Shazla and the surrounding area near Alexandria. So with the reference of Shazla Sheikh was called Abul Hassan Shazli.

Among the teachers of Abul Hassan, the name of Abu Madyen Suhaib Talismani was more prominent. Abul Hassan was so much fond of studies that at his young age his sight became very weak. At that time, he was very much interested in listening the religious speeches and sermons. He used to hear the sermons of the Khliphas of Hazrat Junaid. Tourism was also included in his hobbies. He had performed Hajj many times. Traveling to different places had greatly enhanced his knowledge. The important thing was that even during the journey, he remained engaged with offering prayers and always tried to seek eternal concord and spiritual harmony with Allah. The name of his religious mentor is Sheikh Abdul Salam. The companionship of his mentor also provided him with inner-self training.

At the time of his early education, Abul Hassan started feeling the condition of a mendicant in himself and he began to lose the interest in his worldly luxuries and appearances. Instead, he felt growing interest in Islam and its teachings. Then the increasing thoughts of the Hereafter also made him a perfect pious. Despite all this, he never let the control of moderation go through his hands. There is one event worth mentioning in this regard. He once saw a person who was keen in worship but did not pay full attention to his family, rather they were treated with disrespect. He met him and told that dervish (*pious person*) has four attributes. The first adjective is to love the little ones, the second is to serve the elderly, the third is to seek justice from own self, and the fourth attribute is not to get self-appreciation from others. That person liked the words of Abul Hassan and then he followed them.

Abul Hassan Shazli founded a chain in Sufism, known as the "Shazlia Chain". Even though he had not written any voluminous book, yet one can find his many supplements and collections of prayers. The "Duae Hizbul Bahr" and "Duae Hizbul Nasr" that he has written are passionately read by the people belonging to the chain of Tareeqat.

The people attached to the Shazlia Chain believe that the their group was chosen in لوح محفوظ (*the Preserved Tablet*). Means, from the very beginning they were destined to join this circle. Secondly, their intuitive nature rapidly changes into consciousness. That is, their worldly pursuits do not exclude them from the daily life. In addition, they say that in all ages whoever قطب (*leading personality*) will be, he will essentially be from Shazlia Chain.

- ❖ Here are the five basic teachings of Shazlia Sect:
 - To Fear Allah in Manifest and in Inward.
 - To observe the Sunnah in words and actions.

- To keep themselves away from the world for piousness.
- In all small and great things, maintain the Content of Allah.
- Whether it is grieve or rejoice, turn to Allah alone.

Abul Hassan Shazli wanted his followers to be involved in their own activities and then engage in worship as much as possible. Like the other Sufis, Abul Hassan Shazli intended to go towards فنا في الله (*Annihilation for the Almighty*). and for that he had to engage himself in devotion and worship. If any of his inspiration found against the Sunnah, then he would have preferred the Sunnah.

When people used to see Hazrat Shazli asking for Allah's Forgiveness all the time, they would be surprised that such a perfect person always go for repent. When its reason was asked, he said, *"I do not know which of the actions Allah accepts and rejects, therefore, a continuous process of seeking forgiveness is necessary."* On this, the questioner said, *"If the heart and conscience are satisfied, then the acceptance of the deeds becomes certain."* He said, *"These are untrustworthy things. It is not wise to believe on them. Therefore, one must fear Allah all the time. Repentance and forgiveness are not only necessary for the actions, but also a request for relief from Allah, and also a strategy to avoid future sins."*