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## Mujaddad Alf Thani

(1564 - 1524 AD)

His real name is Sheikh Ahmed. Kunniya is Abul Barkat, and the title is Badruddin. He was born on June 26, 1564AD, in the city of Sirhind, East Punjab. He is Farooqui. His father's name is Makhdoom Abdul Ahad. His father was an eminent scholar and author of well-known books named, *كنوز الحقائق* and *رساله تشهد*. He was an eminent tourist as well. The lineage of Sheikh Ahmad goes to Farrukh Shah al-Farooqui, a prominent elder of Kabul.

Sheikh Ahmed got his early education from his father. He got benefited from other scholars of Sirhind as well. After that, he also learned from a large list of teachers of the country. Out of them, Mullah Abdul Hakim Sialkoti, Yaqoob Surfi Kashmiri and Qazi Bahlol Badakhshani are on top of the list. In the hadith, his teacher was Sheikh Abdur Rahman bin Fahd, who belonged to a famous Hijaz family.

Sheikh Ahmed belonged to a wealthy family, but when he got married to another rich family, he became more wealthy person. His wife's father, Sheikh Sultan Thanesri, was a great scholar and Chief of the area. Since he was extremely against the religious policy of the Emperor Akbar, therefore Sheikh Sultan was hanged under the king's orders.

Sheikh Ahmed was about 20 years old when he came to Akbarabad and stayed there for a long period. During this stay, he had the opportunity to meet several times Abul Fazal and

Faizi, the famous personalities of the Emperor Akbar's court. Although his thinking was quite different from the two, he certainly had the opportunity to sit in their meetings and learn different perspectives on academic and intellectual issues and increase his knowledge. His first book, رساله اثبات النبوة, is thought to be the result of the discussions of the same meetings. Hazrat Sheikh Ahmed, like his father-in-law, disagreed with Akbar's religious policy. So he did a lot of criticism in his book. The second famous book of the Sheikh is ردّ روافض and it was written against the Shi'a faith.

Just 25 days after the execution of Sheikh Ahmed's father-in-law, his own father, who was also his religious mentor, died. So he was shocked by these two tragedies. In 1599AD, he met Hazrat Khawja Muhammad Baqi Billah. This series of meetings with him soon led to the pledge of allegiance with him. With the attention of Hazrat Khawja Baqi Billah, Sheikh Ahmad achieved many destinations of Tareeqat in a short span of time.

He lived in Lahore, besides Sirhind. Whenever he used to go to Delhi to meet his mentor, he would stay there. In Lahore, many people entered into the circle of regard for Sheikh Ahmed. In Sirhind he also set up a regular teaching system, but his writings were the most prominent things that reinforced and promoted the religion in the area. In his first two books the color of his knowledge was dominant. However, in his third work رساله تهليله, Sufism became important, and in his later writings it prevailed more deeper. مبداء ومعاد and معارف الدنيه are the writings on Ma'rifat in which law's of Shariat and Tareeqat have been emphasized.

After the death of Emperor Akbar in 1605AD, Jahangir took the throne. Akbar was keen to bring a new religion but

there was no such foolish thing with Jahangir. But during this period Sheikh Ahmed had to face another problem. From the first day in Jahangir's court there was Iranian dominance, who were the hardliner of Shi'a faith as well. Incidentally, his anti-Shi'a book "ردّ روافض" already existed. Thus creation of a network of conspiracies began. It reached to that point that the matter was conveyed to the Emperor Jahangir and it was made to believe him that Sheikh Ahmed has claimed to be the innovator of a new religion. Moreover, thousands of people are in his circle and it would not be surprising if its effects could be harmful to the government. Consequently, Emperor Jahangir invited Sheikh Sahib through the Chief of Sirhind. He tried to convince Jahangir with his explanations, but the conspiracy had worked. As such the Sheikh was imprisoned in the Gwalior jail where he had spend three years. Beside that he was also deprived of his property and his precious library.

Hazrat Sheikh Ahmed spent all his life for the promotion of the Sharia, for the Naqshbandiyah methodology, for creating harmony in the region and for opposing the innovation in religion. He emphasized on respect for Islam. The Emperors and members of the empire were also addressed for this. With his courage he fiercely opposed the lawlessness against Islam. This led to the general revival of Islam. Sheikh Ahmed's services to the religion and Muslim nation is so prominent that he is called "Mujaddad Alf Thani" (*The person who revives religion after every thousand years*).