

Chapter – 27

Khawja Hassan Basari

(642 - 728 AD)

Khawja Hassan was born in Madinah Munawwara in 21AH/642AD. At the age of 14 he moved to Basra, after which almost all of his life was spent there. That is why Basari is attached with his name. Since he was a jewelry trader, he was also called as Hassan Lului (*a man of pearls*). His Kunniya is Abu Saeed. Father's name is Musa Rai' who was a freed slave of Zaid bin Thabit. Mother's name is Sharifah. she was the servant of Um-al-Mu'minin Hazrat Um Salama. Seeing his beauty, 'Umer Farooq suggested his name as Hassan.

Hassan Basari was a special student of Imam Hassan. Whereas he pledged allegiance to Hazrat 'Ali Murtaza and became his spiritual caliph. He has also enjoyed the association of several Companions of the Prophet. Therefore, he was prominent in the Sharia knowledge and its practice. Imam Zahri says that if we look at the great scholars of that period, we see the famous name of Al-Musaiyab in Madinah, Mak'uhal in Syria, Sh'abi in Kufa and Khawja Hassan in Basra. Hassan Basari was the lover of piety. He was not only a devoted worshiper and lived in isolation, but often cried out in his loneliness for the fear of Allah. He was always worried for the widespread bad things of that period and he remained attentive for that all the time. That is why he never liked to laugh. Undoubtedly his personality was unique in this respect..

Allah made Hassan Basari as an enormous orator. He used to deliver great sermons. It was his routine to arrange meetings for his sermons at least once a week. His words also had a lot of impact and acceptance, therefore thousands of people have benefited from these meetings. His mentor Hazrat 'Ali has always appreciated him after listening to his sermons. An incidence related to this is that once 'Ali Murtaza went on a visit to Basra, he stopped all the orators and Zakirin from giving sermons in the mosque, but Hassan Basari was allowed to continue. This happening also shows the greatness of Khawja Hassan Basari.

Hassan Basari initially used to sell jewelry. He also made a lot of money in this business. But when love for the Almighty dominated, he gave away all his wealth in the name of Allah and remained completely cut off from the world. He also attracted other people to worry about the Hereafter instead of this world. But it did not mean that he taught people to live in isolation. Its actual purpose was to stop the battle of power among Muslims, and from everywhere the prevailing bloodshed should stop. He wished to create such situation that people should give supremacy to religion instead of giving preference to the world affairs.

In the era of Khawja Hassan Basari, devoted worshipers, righteous and self denying persons have received the title of "Sufi". Later on in their follow up other devotees were born, who organized the approach of Sufism and started writing books and doing other efforts for its promotion. Allamah Ibn al-Jawzi says that the ancient Sufis used to teach the Quran, Hadith, Jurisprudence and Tafseer (*elucidation of Quran*). They encouraged people to study the Sharia. They themselves followed the Book of Quran and Sunnah, and urged others to follow it. So Allamah al-Jawzi recognized the personality of

Khawja Hassan Basari and gave him the position of "*Imam of the ancient Sufi community*". Moreover, it is also known that all the streams of mysticism (*Sufism*) started with Khawja Hassan Basari, and through him it reached up to Hazrat 'Ali.

The attitude of Khawja Hassan Basari towards differing believes always remained very reconciling. He used to say that both intolerance and violence in religion are the elements for ending Islam. It is said that, once a person came to him and asked whether the Kharijee rightly consider a perpetrator of large sins as "Kafir"? Before he could give any answer, two of his disciples, 'Amr bin 'Ubaid and Wasil Atta, began to say that it is permissible to declare them as Kafir. At this point, Khawja Hassan Basari said to both of them, "اعتزل عنا" means, "*You guys get out of here*". After this incident, the Mu'tazilah faction (*rationalist school of Islamic theology*) formed as a regular sect.

Khawja Hassan Basari died in 110AH/728AD. His shrine near Basra is still there as a source of inspiration.

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