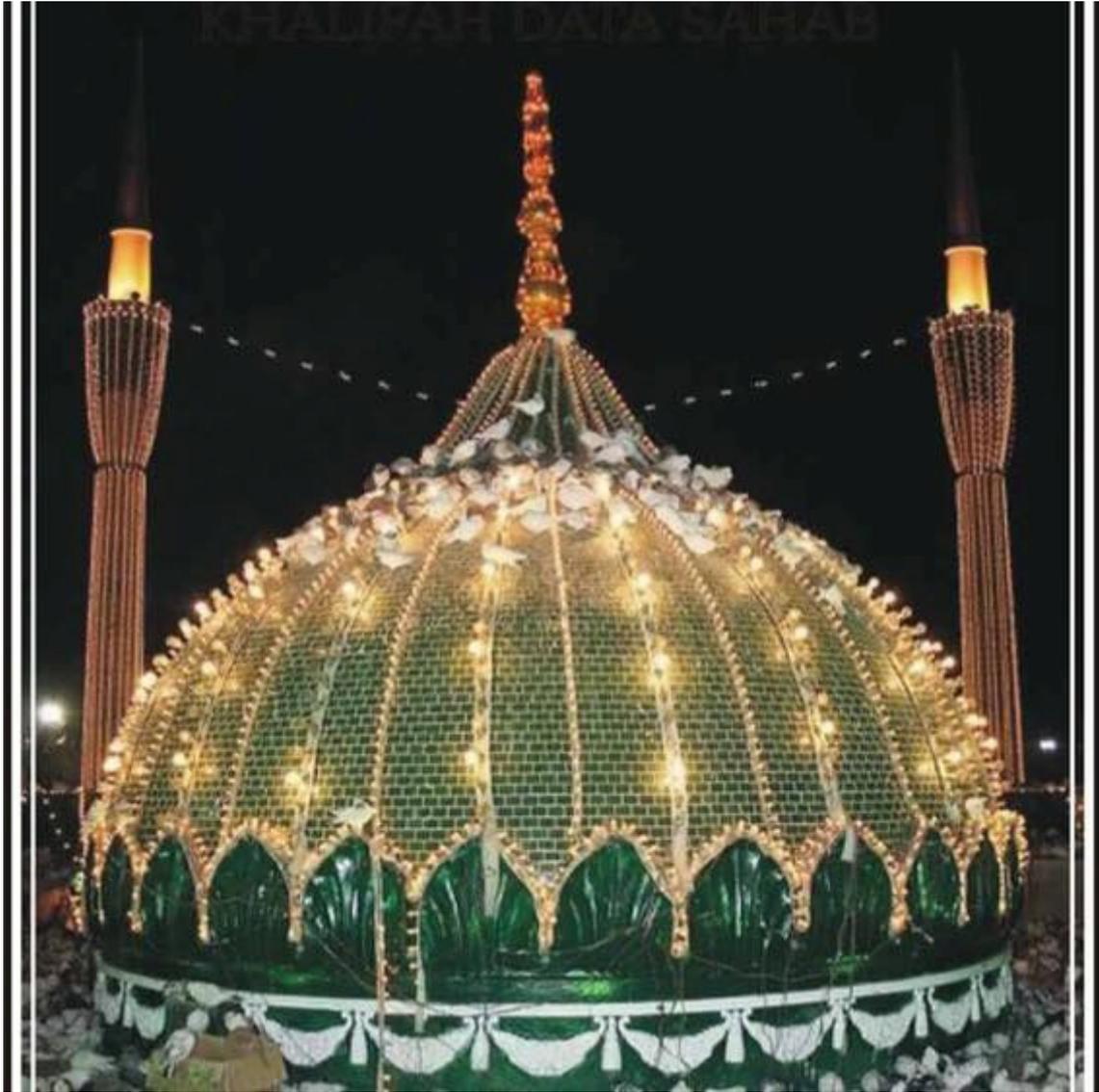


In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate



An introductory biography on  
Hazrat Sayyiduna Ali ibn Uthman al-Hujwiri  
**Daata Ganj Baksh**  
*Rahmatullah Alayhi*  
400 A.H./1010 C.E.- 465 A.H./1072 C.E.

Researched by Shahid Hussain  
Leicester, UK (2014)

### **Name and family lineage (*Silsila Nasab*)**

His name is Ali, his *Kunniyat* (patronym) is Abul Hasan and his father's name is Uthman ibn Ali or Bu Ali. His regional link is al-Jalabi sum al-Hujwiri. Jalab and Hujwayr are two areas in the region of Ghazni in modern day Afghanistan.

He is a direct descendant of Sayyiduna Imam Hasan ibn Ali (may Allah be pleased with him). His genealogical chain goes back eight generations to Sayyiduna Mawla Ali (Karramallah wajhu).

- 1 Hazrat Sayyid Ali ibn
- 2 Hazrat Sayyid Uthman ibn Ali
- 3 Hazrat Sayyid Ali
- 4 Hazrat Sayyid Abdur Rahman
- 5 Hazrat Sayyid Shah Shujaa
- 6 Hazrat Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali
- 7 Hazrat Sayyid Hussain Asghar
- 8 Hazrat Sayyid Zayd Shaheed
- 9 Hazrat Sayyiduna Imam Hasan (Radi Allahu Anhu)
- 10 Hazrat Ali al-Murtaza (Karramullah wajhu)

May Allah be pleased with them all

### **His birth**

Most historians are of the opinion that he was born at the start of the fifth Islamic century, in the year 400 AH/1010 CE.

### **Place of birth**

His father was from Jalab and his mother from Hujwayr. When his father passed away he then moved to Hujwayr his mother's home town hence why he is known as Jalabi sum al-Hujwiri. His father is buried next to Daata Sahib's maternal uncle Taaj ul Awliyaa (may Allah shower His mercy upon him). His family was well known for its asceticism and piety. Dr. Mawlana Muhammad Shafi writes that the grave can be found in Ghazni today.

## **Silsila Tariqat**

His *Murshid* or spiritual guide was Hazrat Abul Fazl Muhammad ibn al Hasan al-Khuttali (may Allah shower His mercy upon him). His chain reaches Sayyiduna Mawla Ali (Karramallah wajhu) through nine personalities. They are:

- 1 Hazrat Sayyid Ali Hujwiri
- 2 Hazrat Abul Fazl Muhammad ibn al Hasan al-Khuttali
- 3 Shaykh Abul Hasan Hisri
- 4 Shaykh Abu Bakr Shibli
- 5 Shaykh Junaid Baghdadi
- 6 Shaykh Siri Saqti
- 7 Shaykh Mahroof Karki
- 8 Shaykh Dawood Ta'i
- 9 Shaykh Habib Ajami
- 10 Shaykh Hasan al-Basri
- 11 Hazrat Mawla Ali (Karamullah wajhu)

May Allah be pleased with them all.

The other scholars and guides he gained inner and outer knowledge from include:

Shaykh Abul Qasim ibn Ali ibn Abdullah Gurgani

Shaykh Abu Sa'id Abul Khayr

Shaykh Abul Qasim Abdul Karim ibn Hawazin al-Qushayri

Imam Abul Abbas Ahmed ibn Muhammad al-Ashqani (may Allah be pleased with them all)

His guide's spiritual chain was Junaidiya and Daata Sahib was proud of being of that chain. Professor Schukovski writes that the Junaidiya chain's school of thought was that of sobriety (*Sakr*) as is in opposition to that of Shaykh Bayazid Bistami's position of intoxication (*Sahv*). Hazrat Sayyid Ali Hujwiri wrote the following about his *Murshid*:

“In Tariqat he is my guide and model of imitation. He is a great scholar of the sciences of *Tafsir* and Hadith and in Tariqat followed the way of Shaykh Junaid (may Allah shower His mercy upon him). Hazrat Abul Fazl Muhammad ibn al Hasan al-Khuttali, Shaykh Abu Amr Qazwini and Shaykh Abul Hasan were his contemporaries. Shaykh al-Khuttali spent sixty years in hermitage; hence he had become anonymous to the world. He did not adapt Sufi

clothing or practices and was vehemently opposed to it. I have not seen a man of Allah more awe inspiring than him. He said, “*Ad dunya yaym walana fihi sawm*” i.e. “The life in this world is a day and we are fasting on it.”

His death took place in 460 Hijri at Baytul Jinn which is a place between Damascus and Banyaar. At the time of death his head was in the lap of his Murid and disciple Hazrat Sayyid Ali Hujwiri.

### **Title of Daata Ganj Baksh**

His famous title is Daata Ganj Baksh. Some are of the opinion that this title was given to him five centuries after his demise i.e. in the ninth Islamic Century. Others have commented that according to his book *Kashful Asrar* this title became popular during his lifetime. The truth of the matter is that with his arrival in Lahore he was already well known and acquainted with the title of Daata Ganj Baksh and this remains true till this very day centuries after his passing away from this mortal world. The words of Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti (1141-1230CE) which is known throughout the world professes to this title

سچ بخش فیض عالم مظہر نور خدا  
ناقصان را پیر کامل کاملاں را رہنما

*Ganj baksh faiz e aalam mazhar e noor e khuda  
Naakisara peer e kamil kamila ra rahnuma*

The 'treasure of forgiveness', whose blessing is all over the world, is a manifestation of the  
Light of Allah

He is the perfect master for the spiritually destitute; the guide of the perfect!

### **His journeys, education and spiritual training and upbringing**

He gained knowledge and spiritual training from the following people:

Hazrat Abul Fazl Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Khuttali

Shaykh Abul Qasim Abdul Karim ibn Hawazin al-Qushayri

Imam Abul Abbas Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Ashqani

Shaykh Abu Sa'id al-Khayr

Shaykh Abu Ahmad al-Muzaffar ibn Ahmad ibn Hamdan

Abul Abbas Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Qassab

Shaykh Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn al-Misbah al-Saydalani  
Shaykh Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali al-Dastani  
Shaykh Abul Qasim ibn Ali ibn Abdullah Gurgani

May Allah be pleased with them all

He spent most of his life journeying in pursuit of knowledge and spiritual enhancement. He travelled extensively and his journeying is mentioned in his classic *Kashful Mahjub*. The places he visited include modern day Iraq, Syria, Iran, Azerbaijan, the Holy Hijaz and many of the current central Asian states. In Khurasan alone he met three hundred shaykhs. He was particularly influenced by Hazrat Shaykh Abul Hasan ibn Saliba, Shaykh Abu Ishaq Shahriyar, Khwaja Ahmad Hamadi Sarkisi and Shaykh Ahmad Najjar, may Allah be pleased with them all.

He engaged in intense *Mujahada* and *Riyadat* (see *Kashful Mahjub*). Moreover, he was a great scholar in his own right by keeping company of the men of knowledge of his time. Indeed he has been called Imam and *Makhdum* (the served one). Allama Muhammad Iqbal refers to him as *Makhdum*:

*Sayyid Hujwayr Makhdum Umam  
marqada au peer sanjira haram  
kaak Punjab azdam au zinda gasht  
Subha ma az mehar au tabiinda gasht*

### **Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh's arrival in Lahore**

The famous and oldest account of Sayyid Imam Daata Ali Hujwiri's arrival in Lahore is narrated by Hazrat Nizamudin Awliya (may Allah shower His mercy upon him). He says that Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh and Shaykh Hussain Zinjani Lahori were spiritual brothers i.e. initiation and allegiance to the same shaykh. Shaykh Hussain Zinjani was already residing in Lahore when Daata Sahib's Murshid told him to go to there. Daata Sahib reached Lahore at nightfall and the gates to the city had been closed. He spent the night outside the city gates. When he woke up the next morning he saw the gates open and a funeral procession. He enquired whose funeral it was and discovered it was that of his colleague, Shaykh Zinjani Lahori. He then fully understood the command of his Murshid.

This narration is also found in other sources. 431 AH therefore is the correct date for the arrival of Daata Ganj Baksh in Lahore from Ghazni at the behest of his Murshid Shaykh

Hazrat Abul Fazl Muhammad bin al Hasan al-Khuttali (may Allah shower His mercy upon him).

### **The political climate during the times of Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh**

The Abbasid Caliphate was ruling from Baghdad during the time of Sayyid Daata Ganj Baksh Ali Hujwiri.

Ahmad Al Qadir Billah (991-131CE; 381-422H)

Abu Jafar Al Qa'im Ba'amrillah (1031-1075CE; 422-467H)

Abul Qasim Al Muqtadi Billah (1075-1094CE; 467-487H)

Abul Abbas Al Mustazhir billah (1094-1118 CE; 487-512H)

The Fatamids were ruling Egypt during the reign of al-Qadir Billah and in Iraq the Buwayid (a Shia sect) were ruling. During the reign of Qa'im Ba'amrillah, Sultan Tugrul Saljouki (d. 455 AH) established the Seljuk dynasty by disposing the Buwayid regime. The Seljuk's were of Ahle Sunnah wal Jamaat and strengthened Islam immensely. In Ghazna Mahmood Ghaznawi (971-1030CE) was raiding India from time to time.

The Seljuk rulers from 400-500 AH were:

Tugrul Beg (1037-1063CE; 429-455AH)

Alp Arslan (1063-1072CE; 455-465AH)

Jalal Ad Dawlah Malik Shah (1072-1092CE; 465-485AH)

Nasir din Mahmud (1092-1093CE; 485-487AH)

Rukn Ad Din Barkiyaruk (1093-1104CE; 488-498AH)

Mu'izz ad Din Malik Shah II (1105 CE 498-511AH)

The Prime Minister of Alp Arslan, al-Malik Tusi (d. 485 AH) established in 458 AH the famous Madrassa Nizamia in Baghdad. Abu Ishaq Shirazi and Imam al-Ghazali (may Allah be pleased with them) both were chairs of this famous institution of learning. It was in these times that Hasan ibn Sabah, leader of the Batiniya sect was active. The famous Sufis and Gnostics of this time and region included Khawaja Abul Hasan al-Kirkani, Shaykh Abul Qasim ibn Ali ibn Abdullah Gurgani, Shaykh Abul Qasim Abdul Karim ibn Hawazin al-Qushayri, Khawaja Abdullah al-Ansari and Shaykh Abu Sa'id Abul Khayr (may Allah be pleased with them all). This was a time of relevant political and spiritual calm despite the

presence of the Buwayids, Fatamids, and Karamta's. As we have seen this was a time of spiritual renewal and Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh in Khurasan alone met three hundred Shaykhs.

Sultan Mahmood of Ghazna raided India several times through Lahore but never included it within his empire. In 412 AH, Lahore's Raja Inderpal was defeated and Sultan Mahmood included the city within his realm and gave the city a governor. The rulers of the Ghaznawi Empire during the lifetime of Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh were Sultan Mahmud Ghaznawi, Masud Maudood; Masud II, Ali, Abdul Rashid Tugrul and Farkzaad Ibrahim. The governors of Lahore in this timer period were Malik Ayaz, al-Yaruk and Ahmad Nayaal Takeen. Qazi Abul Hasan Ali Shirazi was Qazi of the time.

### **His propagation of Islam and his sayings**

Prior to Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh (may Allah shower His mercy upon him) Shaykh Ismail Lahori (d.448 AH) was spreading the Islamic faith to the people of Lahore but the personality that spread the message of Islam to the whole of the Indian Subcontinent from Lahore was without doubt Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh. He settled in Lahore where we now find his resting place and with his own money brought the adjoining land to build a mosque. From there he would teach people and propagate the Islamic faith to the Lahoris. He kept himself busy in teaching the Qur'an and Hadith to his disciples and followers. His propagation was helped by his kindness and humanity to everyone that came to see him. As a result many people converted to Islam. Thousands of ignoramus people became scholars and morally corrupt people became beacons of light and humanity within their own right. Rai Raju (the Governor of Lahore when Daata Sahib first appeared in Lahore) became a Muslim at his blessed hands and devoted the remainder of his life at his footsteps. He was given the title of Shaykh Hindi. It is said that at the Mizar Sharif (shrine) of Daata Sahib, the Mujawireen (constant attendees of a shrine) are Shaykh Hindi's descendants. The message of Daata Sahib reached far and wide initially from Lahore to the rest of the Punjab and to the Indian subcontinent as a whole. The truth of the matter is that his shrine is the biggest and most significant Mizar in the whole of the Indian Subcontinent (i.e. Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh). This is because some of the leading and well known Awliya of his time and thereafter have paid homage and due respect to him. These personalities include no other than Hazrat Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti Ajmeri Sanjari, Hazrat Baba Fariduddin Masud Ganj Shakar and Hazrat Mujadid Alf-e-Saani Shaykh Ahmed al-Sirhindi (may Allah shower His mercy upon them). If Lahore is known today and is associated by something it is by Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh. Lahore is famously known as *Daata ki Nagri*.

## **Marriage**

The historians disagree about the marital status of Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh (may Allah shower His mercy upon him). Some observers say that his parents got him married twice. After the death of his first wife he remained single for 11 years. He married a second time but she died a year later. Much is not known in detail about the life of Hazrat Daata Ganj Baskh. In *Kashful Mahjub*, the sections about his marriage and separation are very brief so it is hard to ascertain how his life was spent.

## **Passing away**

Historians have also differed on the issue of Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh's year of passing. According to *Safina tul Awliya* it was 454 or 464 AH. In *Samaratul Qudus* it is given as 456 AH. In *Khazinatul Asfiya* it is 464 or 466 AH. R A Nicholson says it was 465 or 469 AH but on his *Mizar Sharif, Jaami Lahori* (may Allah shower His mercy upon him) has written 465 AH. According to Doctor Maulvi Muhammad Shafi, who has researched the names and biographies of those mentioned in *Kashful Mahjub*, Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh was still alive in 479 AH. Abdul Hayy Habibi goes even further and says that he died between 481 and 500 AH. His Urs is marked on 19<sup>th</sup> Safar every year in Lahore with great devotion from people not only from Pakistan but across the world.

## **The Mizar Sharif of Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh**

He passed away in Lahore and is buried where he spent his entire Lahori life in the propagation of Islam. His Mizar Sharif is found on the Western side of the old fortified part of this historic city. The Ghaznawi ruler Sultan Ibrahim Masud Ghaznawi (451/1059-492/1099) was the first to build a shrine over his grave. Since then countless changes, renovations, extensions have taken place on his blessed Mizar and the adjoining mosque. In recent times the Awqaaf of the Punjab Government have taken steps to renovate and beautify even further this holy site. As a result of the Daata Darbar Complex (Phase II), the mosque and Mizar Sharif perimeters reach till the Lower Mall. The complex is adorned and decorated in rich calligraphy of Allah Almighty's Holy names, the names of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and many other verses and sayings. The Daata Darbar Complex can accommodate over 50,000 worshippers at a time. The complex is now well equipped to meet the needs of worshippers and visitors with ample space and facilities.

The Markaz Marif Awliya and Jamia Hujwiriya are part of the Daata Darbar Complex where various religious, spiritual and moral activities take place in various forms, including seminars that take place in a purpose built hall. The University of Punjab have established an "Ali

Hujwiri Chair” in honour of his teachings and works. There is a Sayyid Ali Hujwiri University and there are plans for a hospital.



Daata Darbar complex illuminated at night during the annual Urs Sharif Celebrations

### **His Khulafa (successors)**

He was a scholar and expert of *Tasawwuf* and not a person of Silsila per se hence why he did not initiate his own Silsila. In *Kashful Mahjub* when he talks about wrong and misguided Sufi groups, he says that he wouldn't like for people after him to do wrong things and attach and associate it with him and thus blame him, a clear reason why his Silsila is not in existence today. Shaykh Hindi and his companions Hazrat Abu Sa'id Hujwiri and Hammad Sarksari (may Allah be pleased with them) are his successors and Khalifas. Great Shaykhs like Hazrat Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti, Hazrat Baba Fariduddin Masud Ganj Shagr and Mujadid Alfe-e-Saani Shaykh Ahmad al-Sirhindi (may Allah be pleased with them all) by virtue of their visitations and presence at Daata Sahib's Darbar made them his successors.

### **His works**

Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh was a great writer and poet. His famous works include:

*Kashful Mahjub*

*Diwan-e-She'r*

*Kitab Fana Wa Baqa*

*Israrul Kharq Wal-Mauniyat*

*Birri'ayat Be-Huqooq-Ullah*  
*Al-Bayan Lahal- Al-Ayan Behrul Quloob*  
*Minhajuddin*  
*Sharah-e-Kalam*  
*Kashful Asrar*

Of these books only *Kashful Mahjub* and *Kashful Asrar* are obtainable.

### ***Kashful Mahjub***

Many treatises and books on the subject of *Tasawwuf* had been written prior to and after Daata Ali Hujwiri's masterpiece *Kashful Mahjub*. They include *Kitab al Ri'aya le haqooq Allah*, *Kitab al ma'a al tahrif al madhab ahl al tassawuf*, *Quwt ul quloob*, *al-Risala al-Qushayriya*, *Tabaqaat al-Sufiya*, were written before *Kashful Mahjub* while *Ihya Ulum Uddin*, *Fathul ghayb*, *Saftal safwa*, *Tazkiratul al awliya*, *Awarif al ma'arif*, *Gulshan raaz*, *Mathnawi ma'naawi*, *Fathuhaat Makiyya* and *Fasoos al hukm* were written afterwards. *Kashful Mahjub* stands out amongst this corpus of work on the subject and is the first treatise in the Farsi language on the subject. *Kashful Mahjub* is methodical, comprehensive and thorough in its approach to the issues at hand.

The following sayings epitomise the stature of this book:

1. In the Farsi language this is the oldest book dealing with the subject of *Tasawwuf*.
2. It is counted in the first rank of books in the matter
3. This is a *Murshid Kaamil* –complete guide, and the like of this book in Farsi has not been attained.
4. This book is the most famous and reliable source in this science of *Tasawwuf*.
5. If someone cannot find a spiritual guide i.e. Pir, they should consult this book and treat it as its Pir.

The elders of the Chishti Silsila in the Indian Subcontinent consult and refer to *Kashful Mahjub* and *Awarif al ma'arif* for teachings and guidance with the former having more significance and importance. Hazrat Nizamuddin Awliya (may Allah be pleased with him) gave it the title *Murshid barr haq* –a guide by right. Shaykh Fariduddin Attar referred to *Kashful Mahjub* widely in his book *Tazkiratul al- Awliya*. Khawaja Muhammad Parsa and Khawaja Yaqub Chirki (may Allah be pleased with them both) corroborated and strengthened their works by referring to Daata Ali Hujwiri's work. *Kashful mahjub* has an

elegant methodological writing style that is easy to understand which is full of admonition and after the passing of almost a millennium has relevance in today's world.

Shaykh Tajuddiin Sanbali did the first Arabic translation of *Kashful Mahjub* in the reign of Jehangir. The second and most recent attempt was done by Dr. Asma Abdul Hadi Kandhel and was published in 1974. In the English language, the most famous and widely available translation was done by Doctor Reynold A Nicholson (Cambridge) first done in 1911 and has had twenty editions since. Muhammad Hussain Tasbihi of Iran completed a doctorate in 1985 on *Kashful Mahjub* from Punjab University (Department of Farsi). The Punjab Awqaaf have since established an "Ali Hujwiri" chair at the University of Punjab.

### **The contents of *Kashful Mahjub***

Chapter	Title
1	On The Affirmation Of Knowledge
2	On Poverty
3	On Sufism
4	On The Wearing Of Patched Frocks
5	On The Different Opinions Held Concerning Poverty & Purity
6	On Blame ( <i>Mulamat</i> )
7	Concerning Their Imams Who Belonged To The Companions
8	Concerning Their Imams Who Belonged To The House Of The Prophet
9	Concerning The People Of The Bench ( <i>Ahl-e-Suffa</i> )
10	Concerning Their Imam Who Belonged To The Followers ( <i>al-Tabi'un</i> )
11	Concerning Their Imams Who Lived Subsequently To The Followers Down To Our Day
12	Concerning The Principal Sufis Of Recent Times
13	A Brief Account Of Modern Sufis In Different Countries
14	Concerning The Doctrine Held By The Different Sets Of Sufis
15	The Uncovering Of The First Veil: Concerning The Gnosis Of God ( <i>Ma'rifat Allah</i> )
16	The Uncovering Of The Second Veil: Concerning Unification ( <i>Tawhid</i> )
17	The Uncovering Of The Third Veil: Concerning Faith
18	The Uncovering Of The Fourth Veil: Concerning Purification From Foulness
19	The Uncovering Of The Fifth Veil: Concerning Prayer ( <i>Salat</i> )
20	The Uncovering Of The Sixth Veil: Concerning Alms ( <i>Zakat</i> )
21	The Uncovering Of The Seventh Veil: On Fasting ( <i>Sawm</i> )
22	The Uncovering Of The Eighth Veil: Concerning The Pilgrimage

- 23 The Uncovering Of The Ninth Veil: Concerning Companionship, Together With Its Rules And Principles
- 24 The Uncovering of the Tenth Veil: Explaining Their Phraseology and The Definitions Of Their Terms and The Verities Of The Ideas Which are Signified
- 25 The Uncovering Of The Eleventh Veil: Concerning Audition (*Sama*)

### **The teachings of Daata Ganj Baksh**

Hazrat Daata Ganj Baksh (may Allah be pleased with him) holds a superior rank in the field of Islamic knowledge and superiority. He is a possessor of a reputable rank in the field of Sufism. His name without doubt ranks along with those of Imam al-Qushayri, Imam Abdur Rehman Salmi, Imam al-Ghazali and Sayyiduna Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani (may Allah pleased with them all) in this field and his masterpiece *Kashful Mahjub* holds a significant place in the field of *Tasawwuf* along with al-Qushayri's *Risala* and al-Ghazali's *Ihya*. *Kashful Mahjub* in short is a comprehensive yet concise encyclopaedia in the field of *Tasawwuf*.

Here are just some teachings we find from Daata Ganj Baksh drawn mainly from *Kashful Mahjub* and *Kashful Asrar*

1. The *Nafs* (ego, self) is like a stray dog. It needs to be beaten severely and flayed until it is cleansed.
2. Struggle against the *Nafs* (ego, self) is the *Asl* (essence) of all worship and the Kamal of the mujahid.
3. The greatness, lofty rank and eminence of the prophets of Allah are attained not only through the miracles they possess but through their defence and protection from sins.
4. An *Aarif* is also an *Aalim* but it isn't necessarily true that an *Aalim* is an *Aarif*.
5. The most difficult thing for man is the recognition of Allah.
6. The elderly should be inclined towards and take admonition from the young on account of their youth and fewer sins, and the youth should take heed from the elderly on account of their longer time and devotion spent in Allah's worship.
7. There is no better way of attaining *Faqr* and *Ma'rifat* (i.e. knowledge and Gnosticism) by travelling the earth.
8. The companions of the *Dunya* (i.e. the hands, feet and eyes) appear to be our friends but are in actual fact our foes.
9. Ten things consume ten other things, (i) Repentance eats up sins, (ii) Lying eats up your *Rizq* (sustenance), (iii) Backbiting/slandering eats up your good actions, (iv) Grief eats up age, (v) Charity removes calamities (vi) Anger eats up intellect, (vii) Regret eats up generosity i.e. regretting giving money in charity and then regretting it.

(viii) Pride eats up knowledge (ix) Goodness eats up badness (x) Justice eats up injustice

10. Love for wealth should be considered a punishment and it should be given towards the poor and needy instead. Do this before the day the bugs of the grave will eat and devour your rotting body.

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