

THE TOMB OF HADRAT BABA FARID GANJ SHAKKAR: (A SOURCE OF HARMONY AND INTERFAITH AMONG MUSLIMS AND SIKH COMMUNITY)

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Abstract:

Fariduddin Masud Ganj Shakkar was a great mystic (Sufi) master for his time period. He was born in A.D.1175 in Kothewal, which is a small village. This is ten kilometres away from Multan, Multan is a prominent and chronological city of Punjab. This city is of the great mystics (Sufis). Many mystics were born here, and they spread their spiritual education for producing harmony and peace among people. Hadrat Baba Farid was one among them, who served his entire life to produce peace and harmony among human beings. In real meaning, he was a great poet and religious scholar. Which conveyed his message of harmony among people through his poetry. He is alive and will be alive for his good deeds, in the hearts of people at the end of this globe. Hadrat Baba had died in A.D. 1266 in Pakpattan, Pakpattan is a village of Punjab and now, his Urs (death's anniversary) is celebrated in first Muharram (Islamic month), almost six days, every year. Thousands of visitors and pilgrims come to the tomb, from all over the country and as well as, from the whole world. It can be said, that it is a sign of love with mystic (Sufi) master, because, people have a spiritual connection with him. Therefore, after reaching the tomb, the visitors and pilgrims express their sacred feelings by reciting the Quran and praying for resting Baba Farid's soul. This is an expression of affection, believe and respect, which is present in the hearts of his followers in this contemporary era too. The paper is described that how the great mystic (Sufi) worked for unity and humanity. It is depicted that how the tomb of the mystic plays a significant role in spreading love, respect and religious tolerance in people of all faiths.

Keywords: *Fariduddin Masud, Mystic (Sufi), Tomb, Spirituality, Message of peace and harmony.*

1. Introduction:

Fariduddin Masud was a great mystic (*Sufi*) of his time, he conveyed the message of love, peace and harmony through his poetry among people. In real meaning, he is a spiritual guide, who produces warmth and love". (1) He was known as Baba Farid Ganj Shakar Bakhsh. His lineage joins with Hadrat Umar (May Allah Be Pleased with him), the second caliph of Islam. Once a time, Ibne Battuta, who was a great Arab traveller, visited this mystic (*Sufi*) saint, and he was impressed by *Sufi* master's best ethics. Ibne Battuta said that "he is a great mystic (*Sufi*) and the best symbol of love and harmony for people". Baba Farid got his early education in Multan. At that time, Multan had a high position for the Islamic education, where, Fariduddin joined his teacher Qutbud Din Bakhtiar Kaki, Bakhtiar Kaki was also a famous mystic (*Sufi*). Fariduddin Masud performed the first Hajj of his life with his parents in little age (sixteen years). After completing his education, he moved to Delhi, where, he enhanced his spiritual capabilities by getting Islamic doctrine. Later, he went to "Hansi, Haryana", Hansi is a district in the Indian state of Haryana, but, when Qutbud Din Bakhtiar Kaki died in A.D.1235, then, Farriduddin left Hansi

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and he became the successor of Bakhtiar Kaki and stayed in "Ajodhan" it is an old name of Pakpattan, (*Pakpattan*, Pakistan). He had three wives and eight children (three daughters and five sons). His wife Hazaba was the daughter of Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud. Baba Farid spent his whole life according to the Islamic teachings. Humility and integrity were the part of his nature, that made him respectable and honourable among his followers. Allah (SWT) gifted him, a great intellectual quality, unique style of the statement and perfect ascetic character. He was a great mystic (*Sufi*) master, therefore, he always gave respect to humanity. His first preference was to maintain peace and harmony among people. For achieving this aim, he struggled throughout his life. (2) He met with Allah (SWT) in A.D.1266, and he was buried in Pakpattan, Punjab. Pakpattan is a small village of Punjab and the Punjabi language is spoken in this province. His time period consisted during 11th to 12th centuries. Now his *Urs* (death's anniversary) is celebrated in the first Islamic month (Muherramul Haraam), almost six days, every year, in *Pakpattan*, Pakistan. Thousands of visitors and pilgrims come to his tomb, from all over the country and as well as, from the whole world too. Which shows the affection and love of followers for Baba Farid. This draft consists of some sections, such as, Introduction is discussed in the first section, the literature review is described in the second section, the research methodology is explained in the third section, in the fourth section, the analysis is elucidated regarding the tomb of Baba Farid, that it is a source of interfaith and international relations with Pakistan and in last, a conclusion is explained.

2. Literature Review:

Baba Farid has a famous personality in the world of Sufism. He was a great man, therefore, he always conveyed the message of peace and harmony among people through his poetry. Many books, magazines and research articles have been written on his life and poetry. "Syed Naseer Ahmed Jami" has described all the stages of Baba Farid's life, in his book "Hadrat Baba Farid Ganj Shakar" in very beautiful and soft way. After studying this book all scenes related to his life come before the eyes of a reader. Due to which, a reader takes more interest in reading this book. (3) "Hadrat Muhammad Amin Sajid" has thrown light on Baba Fareed's life, in his book "Hadrat Baba Farid Ganj Shakar (RA) and Bahashti Darwaza", and explained significant events of this great mystic (*Sufi*). The writing style of the author is very simple and easy, that maintains the interest of a reader from start to end. (4) One other book is "Faizan-e-Baba Fareed Ganj Shakar (RA)", in which a complete historical biography of Fariduddin Masud has been described, this is a comprehensive book about the life of Ganj Shakar (RA). (5) Another research scholar, " Dr Qamar Hashmi" has written a book from the name of, "Kalam-e-Khuwaja Ghulam Farid" on the poetry of Farid. This book is a collection of the poetry of Ganj Shakkar. The poetry has been explained in a beautiful way. He advised his followers, in his poetry for good ethics, peace and kindheartedly. He always said welcome to everyone, who wanted to come to him. He treated with everyone in a good manner. Even then, he gave respect and honour to his opponents. His poetry is very attractive and lessons able, in which, he explained the truth of the world in clear and simple wording. His poetry has a deep thought regarding the fact of the world. That is why, the rhymes of Baba Farid are famous in people for true wording, its lovely and interesting style. (6) The followers came to meet Baba Farid in his life, from all over Pakistan, as, Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan and they got the spiritual education from him. He had an attractive personality, such as his speaking style was very simple and interesting, he always spoke in a humble way. He won the hearts of many people, because of his nice and polite way of talking. Every year, many followers come to Pakistan from all over the world to visit the tomb of Farid. Especially, the Sikh community has a high respect for this tomb, which shows their affection and love for Baba

Farid. They used to give respect and honour to him, like Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak was a religious leader of Sikh community and they consider him, as a messenger (prophet) and "Granth Sahib" is a Holy Book of Sikh community, which Guru Nanak has written by his hand. More than half part of the "Granth Sahib" is consisted on the poetry of Baba Farid. All the above literature is very significant, to provide considerable information about Fariduddin Masud, such as research articles, magazine, books and newspapers. But the important thing is that, there is not any book or research article on the theme, "the tomb of Hadrat Baba Farid Ganj Shakkar: (a source of harmony and interfaith among Muslim and Sikh community)", this holy place is playing very important role, to make the environment more peaceful and nonviolent for Muslims and non-Muslims in Pakistan.

3. Research Methodology:

The present paper is based on descriptive research. In this paper, the material is collected in different ways, as; books, journals, magazine, research articles, newspapers and research dissertations. Furthermore, the different website had also been read for this purpose. The primary and secondary both sources were used to make this draft and personally had been visited of this shrine to collect material. The interviews were taken from different people.

4. Analysis of the Problem:

The analysis of the information is done in this draft regarding the tomb of Hadrat Farid Ganj Shakkar and his Holy place, which is a vital source of the international relations among people.

4.1. Fariduddin Masud was a Great Mystic (Sufi):

Baba Farid was a great mystic (*Sufi*) and a spiritual guide. He spread unity, peace and harmony among people through his teachings (poetry). He was against sectarianism, racism and linguistic prejudice. He motivated people for unity and harmony through divine love. According to Baba Farid, this divine love is the most powerful force to create peace and tranquility among human beings, therefore, it should be realized in the heart of everyone. This sense solves all the worldly problems of human beings, specifically, it stops the growing power of extremism and terrorism. We can say, that the spiritual world is full of love and peace, where the hearts of everyone gets relaxation after awareness from the feeling of divine love. The aim of the teachings of divine love is, to create a peaceful environment, which fulfilled from the religious tolerance and patience. With passage of time, a number of pious and chosen person of Allah (SWT) have tried to converse this actuality among human beings despite the diversity of the language and time. Allah (SWT) says: "Whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell, wherein he will abide eternally, and Allah has become angry with him and has cursed him and has prepared for him a great punishment".(7) This verse shows, that Islam is a peaceful religion, its teachings are regarding peace, brotherhood, equality and harmony. Therefore, in Islam, all the negative activities are not appreciated. Mystics (*Sufis*) are pious men of Islam. So how, they can take on the diverse way from the Islamic teachings. Therefore, a mystic (*Sufi*) can play a very important role to make the environment more peaceful. Baba Ganj Shakkar has played a vital role in his time period, to create a peaceful atmosphere among people.

4.2. Work For Unity and Harmony:

Baba Farid was a good man, who conveyed the message of tolerance and tried to gather the people on the platform of harmony and peace. When we turned over the pages of history, then many facts come before us that he played the most important role to propagate Islamic teachings through his knowledge, profound thinking and practical life. That's why that the hearts of many people converted to Islam through his teachings. Dr Abdul Majeed Sindhi said in these words: that "the training of commendable attributes of Muslims was made possible only because of

these saints and chosen people. They created brotherhood, equality, tolerance, love of peace among different societies as well as sects. A healthy society with peaceful tolerance came into being". (8) Another place he said: that "A unique view of unity (harmony) of all and sundry, friends and foes was to be seen. No criticism, no veiled reference, no controversial dialogues and no heartbreaking approach. The discussion (words spoken) was the feeling of every heart, a person came with a broken heart, but left with a happy or delighted heart, a person with no possession left with overflowing possessions, a tired or weary looking person departed fresh and energetic. In short, the company of saints served as a shade tree for the footsore passengers of deserts". (9) Baba Farid's teachings conveyed a lesson of endurance and religious tolerance regarding the feeling and honour of mankind. This is a reality of his personality that he was a great theologian, he did not seek religious knowledge to impress religious scholar (ulema) but to practice it in his day to day life. He used to say: "the aim of acquiring knowledge of the religious law is to act upon it and not to harass people".(10) As a poet he left everlasting effects on the minds of people and it was his great achievement. Baba Fareed's poetry was a means of creating a congenial moral atmosphere and purge society of evils. He wrote excellent poetry in Arabic, Persian, Punjabi and local Hindavi dialect. But his Punjabi and Hindavi poetry became immortal. Shaikh Farid was the first poet in Punjabi literary tradition to herald an essentially humanistic poetry. (11) According to Ganda Singh opines: "His message of the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man delivered to the people in their own language went right home into their hearts and attracted them to his presence and views". Baba Farid used to say: "do not use a harsh word for anyone, for the True Lord abides in all and break not the heart of anyone as they are priceless gems" and "Humility and sweetness are the essences of all human virtues". Once he told a visitor: "Do not give me a knife, give me a needle. The knife is an instrument for cutting and the needle for sewing together".(12) His teachings show that he was a great and kind person. His poetry is full of the message of love and peace. He was an excellent religious scholar, a famous poet and a mystic saint. He offered his services for social welfare during his whole life. He tried to eliminate the differences of cast, colour and race among mankind. This is a very great success for him, that he bunched up people at one platform for harmony. He always used polite and soft words to convey his message, which proved that the message of him was a key to success to motivate the people towards Allah (SWT). Syed Irtaza says, in his words, "He taught morality and high manners, kindness and friendly living to his followers and set an example for that". (13) If we say about Baba Farid that he was a great poet and religious scholar, it will not be false. He offered his services for the goodness of mankind and to maintain the peace, during his whole life. He was a true man. He always worked for humanity.

5. Conclusion:

This is a reality of the contemporary time, that dissatisfaction and uncertainty are growing with the passing of time among nations and societies. Nowadays, it is very common, that the hearts of people are being broken with disgraceful behaviour and are being created anxiety in the environment. It can be said, that, this is a cause of the ignorance of Islamic teachings. Due to which, we are going to fall down and facing problems. So, we should change our behaviour and should follow the Islamic teachings. Then, we would be able to bring peace to society. The aim of Islam is, to establish peace and harmony among mankind. Mystic (*Sufi*) is a pious and religious personality of this society, therefore the meaning of the word mystic (*Sufi*) is also, love, respect, sincerity, patience and tolerance. A mystic (*Sufi*) produces a sense of compensation in the hearts of people, from his good behaviour, nature, personality and talking style and change the personality of people and motivated them towards Allah (SWT). Mystic (*Sufi*) keeps

continuing his struggle for harmony and peace. Similarly, Baba Farid showed devotion during his all life to maintain peace in the environment. He was a great person in our society, who motivated his followers towards harmony and unity, that was a great work of him. His poetry is full of the lesson of unity, harmony, love, respect, truth, sincerity, humanity, honesty and peace. He has gone from this world, but, he has left the message of love, peace and harmony in the hearts of his followers. If we consider the present arena, we are going towards materialism, terrorism and lawlessness, it is needed to encourage the message of peace and harmony, which is given by Baba Farid and people like him. If social people and our organizations (institutions) achieve this task, it would not be beneficial only for the peace of the entire world, rather, it would contribute to removing the jealousy at the national level. Baba Farid is such a highly respected personality, who guided thousands by straying people to their destination. He was a mystic, a fiery poet and a great scholar. His thought was a message of life, which was depended on hope, enthusiasm and good action. That is why thousands of people come to pray at his tomb from all over the country and the world too. Especially the Sikh community comes at the tomb of Farid, to pray and to request about fulfilling their wishes. Sikhs gave respect to Baba Farid, similar to Guru Nanak. We cannot deny from this reality, that in this contemporary era, the tomb of Baba Farid is an important source of interfaith and international relations among people.

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