143615 - A brief look at Abdul-Qadir Jilani and Moinuddin Chishti, and their ‘aqeedah (doctrine)

the question

Could you tell me about the historical figures Shaykh Abdul-Qadir al-Jilani and Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti? Because there are many of their followers around the world, hence I want to know how close they were to the path of truth?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

1.

Abdul-Qadir al-Jilani

His full name is Abu Muhammad ‘Abd al-Qaadir ibn Abi Saalih ‘Abdullah ibn Jangi Dost al-Jeeli al-Hanbali.

2.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qaadir was born in Jeelaan (Jilan) in Tabaristan, in 471 AH; he died in 561 AH.

3.

He learned from Abu Ghaalib al-Baaqillaani, Ahmad ibn al-Muzaffar and Abu’l-Qaasim ibn Bayaan.

As-Sam‘aani, al-Haafiz ‘Abd al-Ghani and Shaykh Muwaffaq ad-Deen ibn Qudaamah narrated from him.

4.

Imam adh-Dhahabi (may Allah have mercy on him) said of him: The shaykh, imam, scholar, ascetic (zaahid), ‘aarif (devoted worshipper), Shaykh al-Islam, ‘Alam al-Awliya’ (The most prominent of the close friends (awliya’, sing. wali) of Allah).

Siyar A‘laam an-Nubala’, 20/439

Imam as-Sam‘aani (may Allah have mercy) said of him: ‘Abdul-Qaadir was one of the people of Jilan, the imam and shaykh of the Hanbalis of his time, a scholar, righteous, religiously committed, charitable; he remembered Allah a great deal (dhikr), was always deep in thought and was quick to weep.

See: Siyar A ‘laam an-Nubala’, 20/441

Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said: He had a dignified bearing, and he kept quiet except for enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil; he had very little interest in worldly gain (i.e., he was an ascetic); miracles were attributed to him; his followers and companions spoke a great deal about him and narrated from him his words, actions and miracles, but most of the reports about his miracles are exaggerated. He was righteous and pious, and wrote books called al-Ghunyah and Futooh al-Ghayb, in which there are good things and in which he also quoted da‘eef (weak) and mawdoo‘ (fabricated) hadeeths. To sum up, he was one of the leading shaykhs.

Al-Bidaayah wa’n-Nihaayah, 12/768

5.

Some students decided to research the ‘aqeedah (doctrine) and life story of Jilaani, as did Shaykh Sa‘eed ibn Musfir in his book Shaykh ‘Abdul-Qaadir Jilani wa Araa’uhu al-I‘tiqaadiyyah wa’s-Sufiyyah (Shaykh Abdul-Qadir Jilani and his doctrinal and Sufi beliefs), which was his doctoral thesis in Umm al-Qura University [in Makkah]. Summing up his research, he said:

Firstly: Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qaadir al-Jilaani was Salafi in his ‘aqeedah (beliefs), in accordance with the methodology of Ahl as-Sunnah wa’l-Jamaa‘ah in all matters of ‘aqeedah, such as issues of faith, Tawheed (affirming the Oneness of Allah), Prophethood, and the Last Day. He also affirmed that it

is obligatory to obey those in authority, and that it is not permissible to rebel against them.

Secondly: He was one of the leading Sufi shaykhs during their early stages, when their concepts were moderate and closer to the Sunnah, and in most cases were based on the Qur'an and Sunnah, with a particular focus on deeds of the heart (spirituality).

Thirdly: with regard to his learning the sciences of tasawwuf from shaykhs who lacked knowledge based on the Qur'an and Sunnah, such as his shaykh ad-Dabbaas, who was illiterate and could neither read nor write, he – may Allah have mercy on him – fell into some mistakes and practised some innovations in worship, but these slips are superseded by the vast number of his good deeds. Nobody is infallible except the Prophets; all others are subject to error, and if the volume of water reaches two large vessels, it cannot be contaminated by impurity (as stated in the books of fiqh).

Fourthly: most of what is attributed to Shaykh 'Abd al-Qaadir al-Jilani of miracles (karaamaat) are exaggerated, and some of them are not soundly narrated. Of those that may be accepted, they either come under the heading of insight (firaasah) or of miracles (karaamaat) which Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah believe may happen, subject to shar'i guidelines that are explained in the appendix to this thesis. End quote.

Shaykh 'Abd al-Qaadir al-JIlaani wa Araa'uhu al-I 'tiqaadiyyah wa's-Sufiyyah, p. 660, 661

See also the answers to questions no. 12932, 45435

Secondly:

With regard to Mu'een ad-Deen Chishti (Moinuddeen Chishti):

1.

His full name is: al-Khawaja Mu'een ad-Deen Hasan ibn al-Khawaja Ghiyath ad-Deen al-Sijzi, who is known as "Ghareeb Nawaaz" ("the helper of the poor" or "the giver to the poor").

2.

He was born in Sistan – in north-eastern Iran – in 536 AH and he died in 627 AH.

3.

He is one of the most famous awliya' ("saints") in northern India – if not the most famous of them – and his grave is one of the most shrines frequently visited by Sufis and those who believe in myths; it is even visited by Hindus!

4.

It was said regarding the reason for his embracing Sufism that whilst Mu'een ad-Deen Chishti was watering his plants in his garden, he was visited by a Sufi man whose name was Shaykh Ibraaheem Kunduz. The young man Mu'een ad-Deen Chishti approached him and offered him some fruits, and in return Shaykh Ibraaheem Kunduz gave him a lock from his beard and asked him to eat it! The "saint" Mu'een ad-Deen did so, and he became enlightened and found himself in a strange world. After this incident he disposed of his garden and all his possessions, and distributed his wealth to the poor. He renounced this world and went to Bukhara to seek knowledge.

5.

Chishti travelled to many places, then he decided to go to India because of a dream in which the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) instructed him to do so. So he went to India and stayed in Lahore, then after a short while he went to Ajmer – in the region of Rajasthan – where he settled and where he died.

6.

He is the founder of the innovated Sufi order that is known in India as the Chishtiyyah – after the town of Chisht in Herat, in north-western Afghanistan.

7.

The order of Mu'een ad-Deen is no different from other innovated Sufi orders; indeed, some of

these orders hold beliefs that constitute kufr (disbelief).

In this order there is something that they call al-muraaqabah al-chishtiyyah (the Chishti meditation). This means spending half an hour a week at the graveside. The mureed (Sufi disciple) covers his head and recites dhikr, saying “Allahu haadiri Allahu naaziri (Allaah is with me, Allah is watching over me).”

Undoubtedly this is an innovation and misguidance; indeed there is a fear that it may open the door to ascribing partners to Allah, may He be exalted, because the Sufi may be influenced by the occupant of the grave, and his thinking, meditation and focus may be for him, which comes under the heading of major shirk.

Thirdly:

The scholars of the Standing Committee were asked:

I hope that you will do us the honour of writing for us some brief comments on Sufism and Sufis, what Sufism is, what their beliefs are, the opinion of Ahl as-Sunnah wa’l-Jamaa‘ah concerning them, and what one who is of Ahl as-Sunnah wa’l-Jamaa‘ah should do, or how he should interact with them if these Sufis insist on their beliefs, and they think that they are following truth even after the facts have been explained to them and have become clear to them.

They replied:

The word Sufism is derived from “soof”, meaning wool, because they wore garments made of wool, and that is linguistically more likely and closer to the reality of their way of life. With regard to the view that the word Sufism is derived from “as-suffah” because they are similar to the poor Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them), who used to gather by the suffah (bench) in the Prophet’s mosque, or that it is derived from “safwah” (purity) because of the purity of their hearts and deeds, all of that is wrong and is not correct, because the adjective derived from suffah is suffi, and the adjective derived from safwah is safawi. These two meanings are not applicable to them, because in most cases their beliefs are corrupt and they follow a lot of innovations.

All the Sufi orders (tareeqahs) or that which is called tasawwuf (Sufism) nowadays are full of actions that are innovated and constitute shirk, or the means that lead to it, as well as corrupted beliefs that are contrary to the Qur'an and Sunnah, such as seeking the help of the dead and the aqtaab (sing. qutb, meaning a holy man or saint) by saying "Madad ya seedi (Help, O my master)", or "Madad ya Sayyidah Zaynab (Help, O Lady Zaynab)," or "Madad ya Badawi (Help, O Badawi)" or "Ya Dasooqi (O Dasooqi)" and other cries for help to the shaykhs and "saints", believing that they can see into people's hearts and that they have knowledge of the unseen and what the hearts conceal, and that they have secret powers that enable them to do extraordinary things, and calling upon Allah by names that He did not call Himself, such as "Hu Hu Hu" and "Ah Ah Ah."

The Sufis have innovated awraad (sing. wird) and du'aa's (supplications) that are not prescribed in Islam. They take a pledge from their disciples (mureeds) that they will mention Allah in their rituals and worship by particular specific divine names, in unison, such as saying "Allah, Hayy (Every-Living), and Qayyoom (Self-Sustaining)." They repeat it every day and night, and they do not recite other names of Allah except with the permission of their shaykhs, otherwise they would be disobeying their shaykhs and would be afraid of the servants of these names. They do all of that whilst swaying, bowing, rising, dancing, singing and clapping, and other actions for which there is no basis and that are not known in the Book of Allah or the Sunnah of His Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

No Muslim should sit in their gatherings and he must avoid mixing with them, so that he will not be influenced by their corrupt beliefs, lest he fall into the same shirk and innovation that they have fallen into. He should advise them and explain the truth to them in the hope that Allah will guide them at his hands, whilst affirming those matters in which they are in accordance with the Qur'an and Sunnah, and denouncing those matters in which they go against them. In doing so he must adhere to the methodology of Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah, so as to protect his religious commitment. Whoever wants to know about the Sufis and their beliefs in detail should read Madaarij as-Saalikeen by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah and Hadhihi hiya as-Soofiyyah by 'Abd ar-Rahmaan al-Wakeel.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn Baaz, Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez Aal ash-Shaykh, Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan, Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd.

Fataawa al-Lajnah ad-Daa’imah, vol. 2, 88-90

See also the answer to question no. 20375 for the ruling on joining Sufi orders.

And Allah knows best.