

Chapter – 70

Shah Waliullah

(1703 - 1762 AD)

Shah Wali Allah's real name is Ahmed. He was born on February 21, 1703AD. His father's name is Shah Abdur Rahim, who was from Mairath, India. He was a spokesman for the Naqshbandiyah Chain in his time. The lineage of Shah Sahib reaches to Hazrat 'Umar from his father and to Imam Musa Kazim from his mother.

Sheikh Ahmed got his early education from his father. At the age of 5, he started going to school. In two years, he learnt by heart the Quran. From his seventh year he started offering regular prayers and keeping Fast in Ramazan. He studied Persian and Arabic. Then he studied the other subjects like Jurisprudence, Logic, Hadith and the knowledge of debate and speeches (علم الكلام). He learnt the Hadith from Maulana Afzal Sialkoti, but he went to Madinah and got its certificate from Sheikh Abu Tahir bin Ibrahim Madani. Sheikh Abu Tahir was a big fan of Shah Waliullah's thoughtfulness. Shah Sahib had pledged allegiance to his father at the age of fifteen.

His real job was teaching. He used to teach mostly Hadith. He was constantly involved in writing and compilation of books as well. People were less familiar with Arabic at that time, while Persian was the official and educational language. Thus, in view of the understanding of the Quran among the people, Shah Sahib translated Quran into Persian text. The scholars of that time declared his act of translation as a

disrespect for the Quran. And the opposition became so severe that his life was in danger. Due to this, Shah Sahib had to leave Delhi for some time. But eventually he succeeded in convincing people that the Quran has not come from God just to wrap it in a silk tufts or read it like a parrot. But the purpose of revealing is that we should read, understand, then think about it, and then build our lives in the light of Quran. So gradually the opposition diminished. Rather, as a result of his struggle and by the time. the path of translation into Urdu and other languages has also been paved.

In order to preach Quran, Shah Waliullah did not persuade on its translation only but also he wrote books on the knowledge of Quran's Tafseer. For this subject, his book named as, " الفوز الكبير فى اصول التفسير " is significant to mention. He also worked a lot on the issue of the abrogation of some Quranic Verses. Initially, the number of abrogated Verses were reported to be close to 500. Allamah Al-Suyuti had set this number to 21. But Shah Waliullah's research limited it to five Verses only. Later, Maulana Abdul Qadeer Siddiqui worked on this issue and according to him not a single Verse of Quran has been abrogated. --- See Tafseer Siddiqui - Its Fruits: Chapter - 82 on this Guldustah website.

In various governments of the Mughal Empire, due to the importance of Qazi and Mufti, the knowledge of Logic and Jurisprudence gained prominence whereas attention to the Hadiths was diminished. Consequently, after Quran, Shah Wali Allah did a lot of work on Hadith as well. He was a big fan of Imam Malik 's Hadith book, " Mauta". Therefore, Shah Sahib wrote its translation and explanation in both Persian and Arabic languages. These books were more scholarly, so it benefited to most scholars. Considering this, he compiled short Hadith's books for the general public as well. Apart from the hadith, he had also worked on the topic of Ijtihad and Following (تقليد). Shah Sahib wrote many books on Sufism as well. His most

famous book is "حجة الله البالغة", in which he explained the facts and mysteries of the Sharia. According to Maulana Shibli, this book, in fact, is the main spirit of the knowledge of debate and speeches (علم الكلام).

The greatness of Shah Wali Allah in the religious sphere of India is mostly due to his intellectual and religious services. But there are other reasons for his value as well. First of all, he did not portray any particular group of Scholars and Sufis, but he always tried to understand the perspectives of different groups and then bring harmony in them. Shah Sahib wrote several books on the issues which led to the Shi'a Sunni differences, and clarified the facts. In his book, "ازالة الخلفاء", he commented on the right of Caliphate in detail. Similarly, there was the problem between Sufi and Faqih or Sufi and Mullah. Shah Sahib used his personal experiences to resolve the differences between Sufism and Jurisprudence. He worked with justice and moderation to resolve differences between the believers of various Fiqh.

In India, Maratha movement against Muslims too had taken hold at that time. Realizing this, he invited Ahmad Shah Abdali to come to India and push out the Muslims from this danger. Therefore, in 1761AD there was a decisive battle between the forces of Ahmed Shah Abdali and the Marathas, on the field of Panipat, in which the Marathas were totally defeated. --- Because of such policies of Shah Waliullah he is known as "Hakim-ul-Ummah".