

Chapter – 44

Mahmood Ghaznavi

(968 - 1030 AD)

Mahmood was the son of Amir Nasiruddin Subuktageen. Subuktageen was enthroned in Ghazni in 976AD. One of the most important tasks of Amir Subuktageen was that he established an important military and government center of Ghazni on the Indian border, which later served as a base for the conquest of the subcontinent. In 979AD, he fought with the Hindu Raja Jaypal, and acquired the territory of Kabul and Peshawar. In addition, he defeated all the emperors of northern India, which later yielded useful results.

Mahmood Ghaznavi took charge in 997AD after the death of his father. He was only 29 years old when he took the office. Immediately after the accession of his throne, Mahmood continued to fight Raja Jaypal and got hold of from Peshawar to Attock. After some time he also fought with Jaypal's son, Anand Pal and thus he reached to Nagarkot and Kangra. He also marched towards Multan. In 1011AD, he invaded the city of Thaniseer.

After this, he also carried out several other attacks, including Mathura, Qanoj and Somnath. In these three campaigns, wherever Mahmud arrived, the residents ran away with his fear. These operations financially proved to be far more profitable than expected. Because, in these places there were plenty of high cost buildings, and there were hundreds of temples that had idols of gold and silver. In these temples there

were very expensive rubies and sapphires as well. Apart from these things, they also had all the valuable offerings that the Hindus offered on these idols on various occasions. It is said that whatever wealth Mahmood got from these places no any Raja had in his treasury equivalent to even 10th part of this wealth. Some historians also state that Mahmood was offered a large sum of money by many Brahmins, but Mahmood did not accept it. The main reason for not accepting this ransom was that he did not want to be called as "idol-seller" instead of being called as "idol-breaker." However, some say it is true that he broke many idols, and the offering of ransom is a fabricated story.

Apart from India, Mahmood also conquered many parts of Central Asia and Persia. The period of the Iranian Empire of Turkey lasted from 1000AD to 1220AD. This highlights the political aspects of the Iranian era. It includes the governments of Ghaznavi, Suljuqi and Khwarizmi families. Among Muslims after the "Caliphate", they had gone for practicing "Monarchy".

Some historians say regarding Mahmood Ghaznavi that the great desire for his life was victory and expansion of his government. There is no doubt that he was the person who did not get even a single defeat in the continuous wars of thirty to thirty-two years, only because of his intelligence and bravery. From Punjab to the Indian Ocean, and from Samarkand to Ray, his name gained fame. It was also a fact that, despite 17 attacks on India, Sultan Mahmood Ghaznavi never established his own government here. Rather he handed over the Lahore Rule to his slave Ayaz.

Islam was the official religion in the state of Mahmood Ghaznavi, but other religions also enjoyed their complete independence. Considering to this aspect it may be known that the frequent conspiracies by the Hindu Raja and Maharaja of

India forced Mahmood to come here many times. His campaigns on Mathura, Qanoj and Somnath were also more political than religion. In his time, no Indian Hindu was in the position of slave, but most of the Hindus here were appointed as caretakers of these areas.

Mahmood Ghaznavi did numerous development works during his tenure. In particular, he provided Ghazni city with all the amenities. He patronized a lot for knowledge and literature in his time. Selected poets, scholars and learned persona always gathered in his court. This aspect had also helped in boosting the name of Mahmood Ghaznavi. Mahmood had a high position in Persian literature. Among the Persian poets who gained recognition in the court of Mahmood, in particular, were Firdausi, Ansari, Isjadi and Farukhi. Under the patronage of Sultan Mahmood, the renowned scholar Abu Rihan Al-Biruni had completed his research on various topics. Al-Biruni also came to India with the help of Mahmood Ghaznavi, and for many years he did numerous research work.

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