AHLE HADEETH MOVEMENT

WHAT & WHY?



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Contents

(المحتويات)

1.	Introduction to 1st English edition	4
2.	The Identity of *Ahle hadeeth*	6
3.	Ahle Sunnat wal-Jama'at	10
4.	Which one is the *Naji* group	14
5.	The outward signs of *Ahle hadeeth*	20
6.	*Ahle hadeeth* and *Ahlur Rai*	21
7.	*Taqleed-i-Shakhsi.*	23
8.	The method of inference according to the methodology of *Ahle hadeeth*	26
9.	Causes for the spread of the *Hanafi* school	27
10.	The Principles of Imam Abu Haneefah (Rh)	28
11.	Division among *Mujtahids*	29
12.	The *Jama'at of Ahle hadeeth* for ages	32
13.	*Ahle hadeeth* against sectarianism	35
14.	*Ahle hadeeth* and *Ahle Sunnah*	37
15.	Are all the Muslims of the world *Ahle hadeeth*?	39
16.	Consequence of *Taqleed*	41
17.	Characteristics of *Ahle hadeeth*	45
18.	The movement for unity	51
19.	The unadulterated Islamic movement	56
20.	Why is *Ahle hadeeth* movement?	59
21.	The necessity of *Ahle hadeeth* movement	60
22.	*Ahle hadeeth*: In the eyes of others	61
23.	Questions and Answers	62
24.	*Ahle hadeeth*, at a glance	69

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Introduction to 1st English edition

Ahle hadeeth movement is the oldest and unadulterated movement among all Islamic movements of the world. To bring the people of the world under the essence of the holy Quran and *Saheeh Hadeeth*, the puritan movement which has been continued from the age of the honoured *Sahabis* is called *Ahle hadeeth* movement. The aim of this movement is to gain the satisfaction of almighty Allah. It's foundation is only the holy Quran and *saheeh Sunnah*. Since the 1st publication in July 1979, this book has been rendering a very important role in promoting *Ahle hadeeth* movement in Bangladesh. The honourable *Author* has put tremendous effort to do an almost impossible task of consisting a difficult and vast subject in this short book and to hand it over towards the people in lucid and simple language. Later on, in 1992, he has earned the creditable degree of Ph.D. from the University of Rajshahi on his thesis entitled with ***Ahle hadeeth movement: its origin and development; with reference to the south Asian region*** written in language of Bangla. Full of sources, replete with research materials, this valuable thesis has been published as a particular book (pages 538) by 'Hadeeth Foundation Bangladesh' in 1996. *Falillahil Hamd* (all praises for Allah).

The 4th edition of this book at 2002 A.D. was translated first in 2004 A. D. by Sohrabuddin Ahmad, Assoc. Prof. (Rtd) Dept. of Islamic History & Culture, University of Rajshahi by the direct instruction of the *Author*, which had not been published. Then

after a long time after thorough revision by the learned *Author* this 1st english translation of 4th Bangla edition is published by the grace of Allah almighty. It is to note that this is the 2nd English publication of H. F. B. after the 1st publication of the renowned book of the *Author* '*Salatur Rasool (sm)*'.

We shall consider our efforts successful if the book can create a clear insight about *Ahle hadeeth* movement and if the necessity of *Ahle hadeeth* movement is deeply felt among the readers. Oh Allah! Give us *Tawfeeq* (strength) so that we can lead our entire life in the light of the holy *Quran* and *saheeh Hadeeth*. *Ameen!*

May Allah bless the Author and his descendants and forgive his deceased parents and accept this book as means of salvation for us all in the life hereafter. Ameen!!

Kind regards

Muhammad Abdul Lateef

Secretary

Hadeeth Foundation Bangladesh.

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

نحمده ونصلي علي رسوله الكريم أما بعد :

The identity of Ahle hadeeth

(تَعَارُفُ أَهْلِ الْحَدِيْثِ)

In Persian possessive case *Ahle hadeeth* and in Arabic possessive case *Ahlul hadeeth* as per dictionary meaning is 'the follower of *Hadeeth'*. In terminology, it denotes to the unbiased follower of the holy *Quran* and *saheeh Hadeeth*. Only the person, who in every sphere of life, accepts the decision of the holy *Quran* and *saheeh hadeeth* unconditionally and tries to build up his total life according to the way of the last Prophet (sm) and the *Sahaba-i-Keram*, is identified with this name.

Sahaba-i-Keram are the honoured group of the 1st rank, who used to be called by this name. As (1) The famous *Sahabi* Abu Sa'eed Khudri (R.) (d. 74 A.H.) seeing any young Muslim would say delightedly,

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ أَنَّهُ كَانَ إِذَا رَأَى الشَّبَابَ قَالَ: مَرْحَبًا بِوَصِيَّةِ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَمَرَنَا رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ نُوَسِّعَ لَكُمْ فِي الْمَجْلِسِ وَأَنْ نُفَهِّمَكُمُ الْحَدِيثَ فَإِنَّكُمْ خُلُوْفُنَا وَأَهْلُ الْحَدِيْثِ بَعْدَنَا–

'I am giving you thanks (*Marhaba*) as per advice (*Wasiat*) of the Prophet (sm). The Prophet (sm) has directed us to make our meeting (*Majlis*) wider for you and to make you understand

Hadeeth. Because, you are our next generation and the next *Ahle hadeeth*.[1]

(2) The famous *Tabe'ii* Imam Sha'bi (22-104 A.H.) used to regard the Jama'at of *Sahaba-i-Keram* as *Ahle hadeeth.* As once he said, لَوِ اسْتَقْبَلْتُ مِنْ أَمْرِيْ مَا اسْتَدْبَرْتُ مَا حَدَّثْتُ إِلاَّ مَا أَجْمَعَ عَلَيْهِ أَهْلُ الْحَـــدِيْثِ– 'I would not narrate any *hadeeth*, if I could know earlier about what is happening now, save that *hadeeth*, on which the *Ahle hadeeth* i.e. *Sahaba-i-Keram* was unanimous in their opinion.[2]

(3) All the disciples of *Sahaba-i-Keram*, *Tabe'iis* and *Tabe Tabe'iis* were *Ahle hadeeth.* Ibnu Nadeem (d. 370 A.H.) in his book *Kitabul Fihrist,* Khateeb Baghdadi (392-463) in his book *Tareekhu Baghdad* in the 12th and 14th volume and Hebatullah Lalkaee (d. 418 A.H.) in his book *Sharhu Usoolil I'tiqad* have given long list of the names of *Ahle hadeeth* scholars of the *Muslim* world up to their time. Besides these, there is a separate book also on the dignity of *Ahle hadeeth,* written by Khateeb Baghdadi entitled with *Sharfu Ashabil Hadeeth*.

(4) Imam Abu Haneefah (80-150 A.H.), Imam Malek (93-179), Imam Shafe'ii (150-204) and Imam Ahmad bin Hambal (164-241), all were *Ahle hadeeth*. Since the *hadeethes* were not so much collected during his time, Imam Abu Haneefah had to depend mostly on *Rai* and *Qias* (i.e. analogy and deduction) for which he has been called اِمَامُ أَهْلِ الرَّأْيِ i.e. the leader *of Ahlur*

1. Abu Bakr al-Khateeb Baghdadi, Sharfu Ashabil Hadeeth (Lahore: Ripon press, no date), P. 12; Hakem called it Saheeh and Zahabi supported him. Al-Mustadrak P.1/88; Albani, Silsila Saheehah H/280.
2. Shamsuddeen Zahabi, Tazkeratul Huffaz (Beirut: Darul Kutubil Ilmiyah, n.d.) P. 1/83.

Rai'. He did not leave behind any book written by himself. Rather he has given his *Wasiyat* (death-time advice) to his disciples with this that, إِذَا صَحَّ الْحَدِيْثُ فَهُوَ مَذْهَبِيْ *Iza Sahhal Hadeethu Fahua Mazhabi* (when a Hadeeth will be proved as authentic that is my *Mazhab*).[3]

(5) Once he said to his chief disciple Abu Yousuf (113-182 A.H), لاَ تَرْوِ عَنِّي شَيْئًا فَإِنِّيْ وَ اللهِ مَا أَدْرِيْ مُخْطِئٌ أَنَا أَمْ مُصِيْبٌ 'Do not narrate anything on behalf of me. By Allah I do not know whether I am incorrect in my decisions or correct.[4]

(6) In another occasion he rebuked him on seeing him to write his statements as,

وَيْكَ يَا يَعْقُوْبُ ! لاَ تَكْتُبْ كُلَّ مَا تَسْمَعُهُ مِنِّى فَإِنِّي قَدْ أَرَى الرَّأْيَ الْيَوْمَ فَأَتْرُكُهُ غَدًا، وَ أَرَى الرَّأْىَ غَدًا وَ أَتْرُكُهُ بَعْدَ غَدٍ –

'Be careful Oh yaqub (Abu yusuf)! Do not take down whatever you hear from me. Because, what I decree today, I cancel that tomorrow, and what I decree tomorrow, I take it back after tomorrow'.[5]

All of the four Imams directed people not to follow them blindly *(Taqleed)* in religious matters and to practise those instructions laid down in the *saheeh Hadeeth*.[6] For this, they were *Ahle hadeeth* undoubtedly. But their blind followers, defying the instructions of their *Imams*, in spite of getting

3. Ibnu Abedeen, Shami, Margin, Raddul Muhtar (Beirut : Darul Fikr 1399/1979) P. 1/67; Abdul Wahhab Sha'rani, Meezanul Kubra (Delhi : 1286 A.H.) P. 1/30.
4. Abu Bakr al-Khateeb Baghdadi, Tareekhu Baghdad, 13/402.
5. Op. cit. Thesis P. 179, F. N. 48.
6. Abdul Wahhab Shar'ani, Meezanul Kubra (Delhi : 1286 A.H.) P. 1/60.

saheeh Hadeeth later on, have kept them aside, on various pleas and followed blindly the *Rai* of their respective *Mazhabi* scholars and their writings on *Fiqh* and *Fatawas*; they, in fact, have turned into the followers of the *Rai* of numerous *Ulama*. For this, the followers may be held responsible, but not the *Imams*. For this reason, the famous Hanafee scholar Abdul Wahhab Sha'rani (898-973 A.H.) has said, فَالْإِمَامُ مَعْذُوْرٌ وَ أَتْبَاعُهُ غَيْرُ مَعْذُوْرِيْنَ 'the *Imam* has plea, but the followers have not'.[7]

The *Imams* have plea because they have openly admitted that, they did not know many *hadeethe*s and they have advised all to follow the *saheeh Hadeeth* whenever they would get it. But the followers have no plea because even after getting *saheeh Hadeeth* they did not accept it and did not practise it. Rather this blind faith has been imprinted in their mind that the Imam or *Peer* they follow, knows everything. There is no possibility of his committing any mistake. Even thinking that, he may commit any mistake is an utter disregard to him. So, by all means they keep trying to prove the validity of the *Rai* of the Imam or Mazhabi *Fatwa*. For this, they do not care, even if it requires rejecting the *saheeh Hadeeth*.

Nevertheless Imam Gazzali (450-505 A.H.) told in his book *Kitabul Mankhool* أَنَّهُمَا خَالَفَا أَبَا حَنِيْفَةَ فِيْ ثُلُثَيْ مَذْهَبِه Imam Abu Yusuf and Muhammad (Rh) contradicted at least two-third of *Fatwas* of the Mazhab of their teacher Imam Abu Haneefah.[8] Besides, the *Fatwas* in vogue, in the names of four Imams and especially all the *Qiasi Fatwas* narrated in the Hanafi *Fiqh* or most of them are not of Imam Abu Haneefah, as has been opined by many

7. Op. cit. P. 1/73.
8. Sharhu Veqayah-Muqaddamah (Delhi : 1327 A.H.) P. 28, the last line; Do. Deobond Print. n.d. P. 8.

scholars including Shah Waliullah Dehlavi.[9] Not only *Fiqhi* or things of practical matters but also *Usool-i-Fiqh* i.e. the sources of canon laws accepted by Imam Abu Haneefah, have been opposed by his two grand disciples.[10] So, the *Mazhabs* that are in existence in the name of Imam Abu Haneefah and other Imams are virtually the creations of the *Ulama* of their respactive *Mazhabs* in the latter days.

Because of following Hadeeth without being biased to any particular *Mazhab*, Imam Bukhari (194-256 A.H.), Imam Muslim (204-261), Imam Nasaii (215-303), Imam Abu Daud (202-275), Imam Tirmizi (209-279), Imam Ibnu Majah (209-273), Imam Ali Ibnul Madini (161-234), Imam Ishaq bin Rahwayih (166-238), Imam Abu Bakr Ibnu Abi Shaibah (d.235), Imam Daremi (181-255), Imam Abu Zur'a Razi (d.264), Imam Ibnu Khuzaimah (223-311), Imam Dara qutni (305-385), Imam Hakem (321-405), Imam Baihaqi (384-458), Imam Muhius Sunnah Bagavi (436-516) and such other world-famous Imams and honoured Muhadditheen and their disciples and followers were all *Ahle hadeeth.*

Ahle Sunnat wal Jama'at (أَهْلُ السُّنَّةِ وَالْجَمَاعَةِ)**:**

The followers of *Sunnah* of the Prophet (sm) and of the *Jama'at* of *Sahabis* and *Tabe'iis* are known as *Ahle Sunnat wal Jama'at*. To identify the *Ahle Sunnat wal Jama'at*, the world-famous scholar of Spain, the 5th century's Imam Abu Muhammad Ali Ibnu Ahmad Ibnu Hazm Andalusi (d.456 A.H.) said,

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9. Shah Waliullah, Hujjatullahil Balighah (Cairo : 1355 A.H.) P. 1/160; Saleh Fullani, Iqazu Himam P. 99; In the reference of Talveeh, Molla Moin Sindhi, Dirasatul Labeeb (Lahore : 1284 A.H.) P. 183, 290, 291; Abdul Hye Lucknowbi, Nafe' Kabeer P. 13 etc; See Thesis P. 180, F. N. 59,60.

10. (فَإِنَّهُمَا يُخَالِفَانِ أُصُوْلَ صَاحِبِهِمَا) Subki, Tabaqatush Shafe'iyah Kubra (Beirut : Darul Ma'rifah, n.d.) P. 1/243.

وَأَهْلُ السُّنَّةِ الَّذِيْنَ نَذْكُرُهُمْ أَهْلَ الْحَقِّ وَ مَنْ عَدَاهُمْ فَأَهْلُ الْبَاطِلِ فَإِنَّهُمُ الصَّحَابَةُ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ وَ كُلُّ مَنْ سَلَكَ نَهْجَهُمْ مِنْ خِيَارِ التَّابِعِيْنَ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ أَهْلُ الْحَدِيْثِ وَ مَنْ تَبِعَهُمْ مِنَ الْفُقَهَاءِ جَيْلاً فَجَيْلاً إِلى يَوْمِنَا هذَا وَ مَنِ اقْتَدَى بِهِمْ مِنَ الْعَوَامِ فِى شَرْقِ الْأَرْضِ وَ غَرْبِهَا رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِمْ-

'*Ahle Sunnah*, whom we called *Ahlul Haq* (righteous) and their oppositionists as *Ahlul Batil* (followers of untrue) are : (a) The Sahaba (b) Their followers of best *Tabe'iis* (c) The *Ahle hadeeth* (d) The followers of them among *Faqeeh*s (jurists) through ages till today (e) The general people irrespective of the east and the west, who became their followers'.[11]

Through this it has been understood that, not only the honoured *Sahabis, Tabe'iis, Muhadditheen* and the *Faqeehs*, who followe the *Hadeeth*, were titled as *Ahle Sunnat wal Jama'at* or *Ahlul H-adeeth*; but the general mass, who follow their path, were also used to be reckoned in all ages as *Ahle hadeeth* and still today they are being called by the same name. Allah says, وَمِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا أُمَّةٌ يَهْدُوْنَ بِالْحَقِّ وَ بِهِ يَعْدِلُوْنَ 'And of those whom we have created, there is a community who guides (others) with truth and establishes justice therewith' *(A'raf 7/181)*. He says in another place, قَلِيْلٌ مِنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّكُوْرُ 'The few of my slaves are grateful' *(Saba 34/13)*.

Those verses of the Quran show that, there had always been a group of righteous people amongst the *Ummah* of every Prophet, and likewise they are also today; though a few in

11. Ali Ibnu Hazm, Kitabul Fisal fil Milal wal Ahwa wan Nihal (Beirut : Maktaba Khaiatt 1321/1903) with the book of Shaharastani 'Al-Milal' 2/113; Kitabul Fisal (Beirut : Darul kutubil 'ilmiyah, 2nd edn. 1420/1999) 1/371, Chapter 'Groups among muslims'.

number. Some Prophets would be recognized as true only by a single man of his *Ummah*.[12] The Prophet (sm) made a forecast about his *Ummah* and said,

عَنْ ثَوْبَانَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمَ: لاَ تَزَالُ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِى ظَاهِرِيْنَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ لاَ يَضُرُّهُمْ مَنْ خَذَلَهُمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِىَ أَمْرُ اللهِ وَ هُمْ كَذَالِكَ، رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ–

(La tazalu taefatum min Ummati Zahireena 'alal haqqi la yazurruhum man khazalahum hatta yatia amrullahi wahum kazalika)

Meaning: 'A group among my Ummah will remain ever victorious on truth. The givers up will not be able to cause any harm to them, thus the Day of Resurrection will arrive, but they will remain in that position.[13] That means, though very few in number, there shall exist a righteous group who will remain on the route of truth till the Day of Resurrection and they are the victorious group. This is to note that in the *hadeeth*, the victorious group has meant those who are victorious in the Day of Requital, not that worldly victory as per general sense. None among *Nooh, Ibraheem, Musa, 'Isa* (peace be upon them) were victorious in this world. Yet they were the real victors, righteous, and the most ideal men of Universal humanism. Now where will be available this truth? Almighty Allah declares in this regard, وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيَكْفُرْ إِنَّـــا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا– (Oh Prophet! say, the truth comes from your

12. Muslim, Mishkat H/5744, Chapter: 'Fazail and Shamail'.
13. Saheeh Muslim, 'Imarat' Ch: 33, Para: 53, H/1920; See the explanation of this Hadeeth, Sharah Nawavi, (Deoband) P. 2/143; Bukhari, Fathul Bari H/71, Ch: 'Ilm' and the commentary of H/7311, Ch: To hold Kitab and Sunnah'; Albani, Silsila Saheehah, commentary of the H/270.

Lord. Thereafter, whoever desires he may believe or whoever desires he may disbelieve. We have prepared Fire (Hell) for the infidels' *(Kahf 18/29)*. In the light of the above verse, we believe that any Ism, *Mazhab* or *Tareeqa* which is a brain child of man, can never give the source of ultimate truth. This truth can only be found in the revelations of almighty Allah, which have been preserved in the holy Quran and *saheeh Hadeethes*. Pointing towards it, Shah Waliullah Dehlavi, the preceptor of India said, فَلَيْسَ لِلْعَقْلِ حُكْمٌ فِى حُسْنِ الْأَشْيَاءِ وَ قُبْحِهَا 'Knowledge has no power to decide the ultimate goodness or badness of things'.[14] So, in exchange of everything, those who will follow the holy *Quran* and *saheeh Hadeeth* in all steps of life, will be according to the forecast of the Prophet (sm) the righteous among the *Ummah* and they are the *Naji* group i.e. who attains salvation at the Day of Judgement. As the Prophet (sm) says,

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَيَأْتِيَنَّ عَلَى أُمَّتِى مَا أَتَى عَلَى بَنِى إِسْرَائِيلَ حَذْوَ النَّعْلِ بِالنَّعْلِ حَتَّى إِنْ كَانَ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ أَتَى أُمَّهُ عَلاَنِيَةً لَكَانَ فِى أُمَّتِى مَن يَّصْنَعُ ذَلِكَ وَإِنَّ بَنِى إِسْرَائِيلَ تَفَرَّقَتْ عَلَى ثِنْتَيْنِ وَسَبْعِيْنَ مِلَّةً وَتَفْتَرِقُ أُمَّتِى عَلَى ثَلاَثٍ وَسَبْعِينَ مِلَّةً كُلُّهُمْ فِى النَّارِ إِلاَّ مِلَّةً وَاحِدَةً قَالُوا وَمَنْ هِىَ يَا رَسُوْلَ اللهِ قَالَ مَا أَنَا عَلَيْهِ وَأَصْحَابِى رَوَاهُ التِّرْمِذِىُّ وَ فِىْ رِوَايَةٍ لِّلْحَاكِمِ فِىْ مُسْتَدْرَكِهِ: مَا أَنَا عَلَيْهِ الْيَوْمَ وَ أَصْحَابِىْ، حَسَّنَهُمَا الْأَلْبَانِىُّ–

'As was the condition of *Banu Israeel*, similar will be the condition of my *Ummah*, same as a pair of shoes. The *Banu Israeel* were divided into 72 groups and my *Ummah* will be divided into 73 groups. Each of those groups will lead to the

14. Shah Waliullah, al-Aqeedatul Hasanah (Delhi: 1304 A.H./1884 A.D.) P. 5; Thesis P. 113; F. N. 11(a).