

## Educational Thoughts Emphasized by Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi

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### **Introduction:**

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi is recognized as **Mujaddid Alif saānī** Was son of Shaikh Abd-al-Ahad Makhdum, who was a truthful Muslim for all time worried to obtain spiritual illumination from saints. Shaikh Abd al-Ahad meet Shaikh Allah Dad at Ruhtas and Sayyid Ali Qawam at Jaunpur. He learn a lot of teachings from both and after that come back to Sirhind and live there till his death. He teaches many books on philosophy to his trainees. He was also a recognized power on jurisprudence. He qualified supremacy in philosophy and religious imminent, but he is not at all pursued him if he establishes him different from Sunnah. He was such a passionate and true devotee of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and his wisdom that he in no way left a Sunnah unpracticed. (1)

Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi takes birth in 971/1563 at Sirhind. His name was Ahmad and last name was Badr al-Din. In his early childhood he was send to a school where he memorized the Holy Quran by heart. Then used for extensive times he was trained by his father. Afterward he goes to Sialkot and there learned a few more courses below the leadership of Kamal Kashmiri. He as well deliberate some works on Hadith from Yaqub Kashmiri. In childish age of seventeen he was mastered in Islamic science and began teaching to others. He went Agra and met abu al-Fadal and Faidi. On his path to home he was got married to the daughter of a dignified named Sheikh Sultan of Thanesar. On his comeback with the help of his father he developed spiritual relationships with the Qadriyya and Chishtiyya Schools of Mysticism. He learned fundamentals of Sufism from his father. He was very influenced by his father.

He started long appreciated pilgrimage after his father's death. On his arrival at Delhi he became the follower of Khawajah BaqiBillah. He completed his Naqshbandi training under the guidance of Khawajah BaqiBillah. During the period of 1028/1618 and 1032/1622 he spent one year in the jail of Gwalior and the further three with royal leader Jahangir

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and his military. He did not bow in front of Emperor so he has to face prison. But with the passage of time Jahangir felt his mistake and released him. Two years previous to his casualty he was permitted to go to his house at Sirhind and he pass away on the morning of 28th Safar 1034/10th1624.

He is called Mujaddid because he purified Islam and re-establishes its traditional accepted belief. His bravery took stand against anti-Islamic practices produced in a religious rebirth in India.

### **Concept of Knowledge:**

During the tenth/sixteenth century (A.D) Plato-Aristotelian philosophy, established supremacy throughout the world, especially in Iran and India. Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindl affirmed that, the existence of pure and unmixed intellect was beyond the bounds of possibility. He demonstrated that, the so-called pure intellect could not attain the knowledge of Truth in an objective manner, even if it was assisted by inner enlightenment and self-purification.

A huge accomplishment of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi as a Reformer of faith exist of his representative the ineffectiveness of knowledge increase through logical process, as well as religious insight. To break through the metaphysical facts, such as: the mystical knowledge of Allah, His characteristics, the definitive truth and actuality of existence, etc. He explained that the awareness gained throughout either of these bases was neither away from doubt nor free from fault. He emphasized that the accurate knowledge of Allah could be getting through exposure awarded to the prophet. It engaged a higher place in contrast to intelligence in the similar way as: intellect was better to sensory awareness. So, the understanding of Allah and the accurate way of great worship could be recognized from the prophets only. (2)

The great Mujaddid also sighted that the antique Greek philosophers had dedicated serious blunders in understanding the factual nature and qualities of Allah. This was for the reason that, there was nothing like wholesome intellect nor there be present any pure spiritual instinct or delighted motivation, free from all inherent and extrinsic persuade, He said that, the spiritualist and theosophists had mistakes like the philosophers, for the reason that they failed to recognize that intelligence and theosophy were together similarly useless to get at the knowledge pertaining to Allah. (3)

The Shaikh also acknowledged that the unpolluted intellect was a myth. Human intelligence was prejudiced by slanted factors, like one's thinking and concepts, external proceedings and circumstances. So, the stand-point of intelligence was for all time colored by one's subjective awareness and objective explanation. Thus, the Mujaddid established that, the intellect was a faulty medium to find out the final truth. Also draw a line

of separation between the distillation of self and also heart and clarify the cause for making a difference between the two.

He told that, one who support prophet hood from the core of his heart, really possesses sufficient causes for his assurance. Thus, recognition of prophetic knowledge, according to one's intelligence, actuality amounted to its refusal. He also enlightens that, not anything in the prophetic wisdom was in opposition to human reason or intellect. However, the knowledge of Infinite Being can be attained only from the messengers of Allah, who are invested with the responsibility, of prophecy and initiated into the secret of Allah's nature and attributes, and the kingdom of heavens and the earth. Allah communicates His commandments to them, tells them of His likes and dislikes, and makes them mediators between Him and other human beings.

They are, in truth and reality, the greatest blessing of Allah, as they make available that invaluable knowledge which cannot be acquired through years of philosophical deliberations or mystical meditations and penance and self- purification. In Al-Qur'an' it has been mentioned as grace of Allah: "This is of the reward of Allah unto us and unto mankind: but most men are not thankful." Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi had a thorough knowledge of philosophy and mysticism. Moreover, he was aware of the worth and merit of prophetic attainments. He expounded the myth of philosophers and mystics by critically analyzing their mistaken proposition, which not only proved his deep knowledge of these disciplines, but also provided the base for his reformative endeavor. (4)

I quote here his a few Maktubs in which his views on the subject are clearly stated; Letter to Khwaja Ibrahim: "Thanks to Allah that He graciously led us to Islam and made us a follower of Muhammad (PBUH). The Prophets of Allah are a blessing of His to humanity. It was through these prophets that Allah instructed us, possessing a limited and imperfect intellect, about His nature and attributes. He acquainted us of His quit essence, taking due care of the inadequacy of our understanding and told us of His likes and dislikes along with the things detrimental or beneficial for us in this world and the world here after. Had these intermediaries not been there between us and Allah, human intellect would have failed to demonstrate the existence of the Creator of the world and had also been helpless in determining His competence and power.

The philosophers of antiquity prided in their wisdom, denied the existence of the Creator of this universe, and attributed the occurrence of everything to time, which shows their gross ignorance. The discourse about the Lord of heavens and the earth between Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and Nimrud, which finds a mention in the Qur'ān, is known to one and all."

Similarly, Pharaoh had told the chiefs of Egypt: "I know not an Allah for you except me". And threatened Moses (peace be upon him) in the words : "If you take an Allah other than me, I shall place you among the prisoners.(5)

### **Aims of Education:**

According to the point of views of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, education develops mind and give confidence to students to spot light on all belongings of enduring value. He supposed that the endeavor of education should be going toward the search for accurate ideas and natural growth because the search for truth demands individual discipline and resolute nature. He always had stressed the importance of mind over matter. The important thing is to arrive at truth, and truth cannot be ever-shifting. He thought that reality is everlasting and perfect; do consider that fact is considerable and moderately everlasting. His aim of education is to favor the studies of religion.

His highest aim of education is to search the truth through the study of religion and that truth will have over whelming spiritual implications. The investigation for truth is a seeking of God, and accurate education lead towards God. A close study of the life and works of the Mujaddids of Islam will bear proof to the fact, that the following should be the variety of aspects for the restoration of Islamic education. Analysis of the present illness: to scrutinize thoroughly the conditions and circumstances of the time and determine exactly where, how and to what degree lack of knowledge has creep in, where its root is and what location Islam occupy at the time.

System for improvement: to conclude exactly wherever to hit the blow so as to smash the Un-Islamic authority and allow Islam to take grasp of life as entire. Judgment of one's boundaries and assets: to approximation and gauge the power at one's discarding and settles on the row of accomplishment for bring out reforms. (6)

### **Academic revolution:**

To correct the judgment, ethical view points and thinking of the public into the Islamic ways, improvement the organization of education and revitalize the Islamic approach and sciences in general.

### **Practical reforms:**

To eliminate evil traditions, cleanse ethics, restart the spirit of enthusiastic the Shari' a, and arrange men fit for Islamic guidance.

### **Power of Ijtihad:**

To understand the basic beliefs of religious conviction, judge fashionable civilization and its tendency from the point of view of Islam, and determine the changes to be effected in the existing patterns of

social life under the Shari'a, with a view to attaining its ends and enabling to assume world-leadership in the reformed social set-up. An ideal Mujaddid can be only such a person, who achieves all the qualities and objectives detailed above to prove himself a true and real successor to the heritage of the Prophets. He checked the propagation of un-Islamic beliefs, made large scale arrangements for education of the masses, and drew attention of the intelligentsia towards the sciences of the Qur'an, Hadith and Fiqh, and thereby succeeded in generating a powerful intellectual movement, which eventually, produced men like Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Malik, Imam Shafi'ee and Imam Ahmad.

He revived the true spirit of practicing the Shari'a, discarded painting and discouraged all ease-loving tendencies that had taken root among the people during the monarchic rule. Viewing the deviating tendencies from the Prophet (SAW) and the pious Caliphs, he realized the necessity of collecting and preserving the genuine traditions of the Prophet (SAW). He commissioned a board, headed by Ibn-shihab Zuhury to collect and compile an authentic compendium of Hadith. He also wrote an official letter to Abu Baker IbnHazm, the governor of Mddina with the order that: "See, whatever is the traditions of the Prophet (SAW) and writes it; because, I am afraid of that the knowledge may be destroyed and the 'Ulamà would depart". (7)

### **Curriculum/ Content:**

pecial features of the Curriculum/Content in the form of the Maktubat of Imam Rabbani:

- a) This is the most important work of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi giving expression not only to his heart-felt affections, sentiments and thoughts but also his researches in the realm of spiritual realities.
- b) It bears witness to his intellectual gifts and the originality of thought which have made him known as the Alf Sani
- c) It is a unique book written by an Indian scholar which has been rated highly by the scholars of other countries of the world.
- d) It is also one of the most esteemed and popular works in the circles of Sufis, many of whom have made it the principal book of study. Till to-day, neither its contents nor its literary style has grown stale with the passes of time. (8)

According to Mujaddid Curriculum and Content must emphasize students to pounder about their purpose of life in religious context at any stage of life. Quran is a complete science and this scientific knowledge must be given to every Muslim student. Quran, Fiqh, Hadith, and Sharia are the curriculum for a Muslim according to Mujaddid. He has written to LalaBaig: "May Allah boost the intelligence of honor of Islam in you and

us. Since a century, such humbleness has make bigger Islam that the infidels become Muslim, not satisfied with concerning pagan instructions in the Islamic county, are annoying to totally wipe out Islamic teaching, so that even Islam and the conditions Muslim should not stay. If any Muslims go behind any ritual of Islam he is beheaded." (9)

### **Teacher's Characteristics/Traits/Competencies:**

The writings of Mujaddid are a fortune of ambiguity and knowledge, each word illuminating his internal anguish and enthusiasm of faith. He desired that Muslims should turn out to be accurate Muslims and he was active till the final for its success. Allah is all judicious and knowing. He says: "Allah knows the best with whom to put his message". He has talk about in his guide, Ithbat e Nubuvvat: "I am scrutinizing that the loop of unce rtainty and refutation is widening. The medical doctors themselves have fallen sick and the creatures of Allah areapproaching their end. I searched the attitude of each of them and inquired of them on their uncertainties." He was in the favor that all teachers should follow the traits of Holy Prophet (Peace Be upon Him) because he is the best reformer and teacher of this universe. It is conclude from his writings that a teacher must be Caliph of Allah Fearful to Allah Knowledge of Quran and Fiqh True follower of Sharia Having no concern with worldly desires Every task of teaching for the will of Allah Have grasp knowledge about the science of Quran User of innovative methods in Islamic perspective Having spiritual knowledge Having Sufi training. He described the facts of the world of huge control and systematized the teachings. The character, religious status, and miracles of a renewed (Mujaddid) of religion, through God's facilitate, make possible the opening of new paths. There is no suspicion that this was a past achievement of support in the progress of Sufi training and education.(10)

### **Women Education:**

He has written a message in a row into eight pages to a spiritual lady, which is the 41 message in the first volume, in which are mentioned all innovations and vices in which women-folk are usually occupied, such as esteem for the society of the idolaters, looking for the help of organism further than Allah for the concern of small-pox and other diseases, trust in ghosts and devils, making a swear to any idol, slaughtering animals at shrines, fasting in the name of some saints and pious ladies and breaking the fast by habits not authorized by the Sharia, etc. sheikh Ahmad sirhindi is in the view that women seek to avoid public attention and organize education in secret According to him women must get Islamic education because they have to brought up their children so that they may train them in religious

context. Women must study the lives of Sahabiat and the wives of Hazrat Muhammad (SAW).

In the relationship with the non- Muslim world ,the Ahmad have been occupied in depicting Islam as a broadminded, humane and a progressive faith, thoroughly distorted by non- Muslims. This feature of Ahmadi teaching is fit in line with that of modernist Muslim thinkers, although in other matters, such as the privacy of women the Ahmadi follow the customary point of view.

### **Methodology of commands:**

The concepts propounded by the enormous Mujaddid on the nature of intelligence cognition and religious motivation caused a excitement in the thinker and religious circles and opened the means to the latest method of inductive way of judgment. In fact, it was a notion attempting basic rebuilding of ideas by rejecting the common principles of thought and established mental impersonation of the then intellectual, spiritual and religious circles. Mujaddid gave instructions to people by writing letters in spiritual context. He wrote many Maktubs to many of his disciples with proper guidance and required instructions. These Maktubs served as link between him and his outside disciples. These kept them alive of the activities of the Shaikh in the Fort and let them to perform duties and responsibilities entrusted to them by the Shaikh. They in turn used to circulate these Maktubs in hundreds and thousand copies among the people.(11)

On the one hand, it aroused true Islamic spirit in the minds of the people and on the other, it generated hatred against the king for unduly detaining the Shaikh, which deprived them from his direct blessings. It created a man discontentment, particularly among the religious minded courtiers of Jahangir. Dignitaries like 'Abdur Rahim Khan Khanan, Khan i Azam, Sayyid Sadr Jahan, Khan Jahan Lodi were displeased by the action taken by Jahangir. Some sporadic insurrections are also connected by some chronicles with this event. Here is the English translation of Maktub written by Mujaddid at Gwalior Maktub to Mir Muhammad Nu 'man, he says: "Had the divine grace not come to my aid with constant flow of ecstatic transports and spiritual rewards, this weakling might have been pushed to the verge of despair and lost all hope".

Praise be to God who blessed me with a sense of security in the midst of calamity; gave me honor through persecution; helped me to endure the hardships and to offer my thanks to Him; and included me in the ranks of those who follow in the footsteps of the prophets and love the pious and the elects. May God shower His blessings on His messengers and those who

follow them Content vs. Method: His content was based on Quran, Fiqh, Hadiths, Sunnah. (12)

His main focus was on religion. He used to say that Quran is a pure science so in its presence there is no need of natural science because natural science just gives materialistic approach to individuals who creates disharmony amongst societies and contradictions prevails everywhere. Only Islamic teachings can unify the individuals so content based on Quran and Fiqh can provide harmony to society. "It is a historical fact that the system of law devised by these Imams became the law of the Muslim countries till today. It had also an unusual significant effect in that, it opened up for the Muslim thinker's new lines for codification of Islamic rule. The head of lawful systems devised later on could have differed from it, in their methods of inference, but they were all inspired by and based on this method." (13)

His brave position against anti-Islamic practices resulted in a spiritual rebirth in India. The technique adopted by him to attain his point was uniformly bold. He skilled groups of disciples and sent them to every Muslim country and to the different cities of India to spread the factual strength of Islam. He particularly asked them to make people understand the significance of the Quran, and Sunna and arrange them to counter the forces of deviation to watch and make others to study the belief of Islam. He wrote several letters, to the enormous men of the Muslim world, was known as Maktubs, and in which he discussed harms connected with Islam and its continuation. (14)

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