

SHAIKH AHMAD SIRHINDI

Q. How the reform movement of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi influenced the history of Muslim India?

Ans. Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi's also known as Mujaddid Alf Sani. He took birth at Sirhind in East Punjab on June 26, 1564. He got his early education from Sirhind and Sialkot. He also memorized Quran, Hadith & Tafseer. He was prominent disciple of Khwaja Baqi Billa. He got spiritual training from Baqi Billa, who encouraged his tremendous spiritual activities. Baqi Billa also predicted about Sheikh,

"He will turn into a light which will illuminate the whole world".

He was received Naqshbandia orders from his father. He did reform movement for Muslims of India. He died on 10th Dec, 1624.

Title he got "Mujadid Alf-Sani" because of 1000 years were completed to Islam & mujadid means "reviver", as he was devoted his life for Islam propagation.

• AREA OF CONCERNS/ And his Reforms:

Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi was a religious scholar. Hence, his teaching were focused on bringing reforms in the religious thought of the Muslims of India. He gave priority to Wahdat-ul-Shahud instead of Wahdat-ul-Wajood. Wahdat-ul-~~Shahud~~ Wajood was introduced by Akbar, he gave new concept that no difference is in b/w man & creature. But Sirhindi said God & man are not the same entity; God is the creator & man, his being. He got high place in the muslim world by introducing Wahdat-ul-Shahud.

He strongly opposed polytheism and preached of monotheism, Tauheed; oneness of Allah. His preaching helped neutralize Akbar's un-Islamic decrees. In this regard, he wrote Letters to Jahangir. In his letter to Hindu Huney Ram, he wrote,

"Ram & Krishan & such like personalities who Hindus worship are humble creations of God. They were born of their parents. Ram was son of Jasereth. Lazmin was his brother. He was Sita's husband. When Ram could not protect his own wife, how could he help others? How can the creator & the creatures be considered as one."

He kept explaining the teachings of Islam to the king, and his efforts bore fruit. This way, many unlawful practices & inter-religious

marriages were banned. Likewise, many banned Islamic rituals were unbanned; cow slaughter, Azan, & jizya.

AKbar was abolished Jizya and pilgrimage Tax, ^{SAS} were all re-legitimized. Such was the impact of Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi on his contemporaries. Moreover his efforts can be witnessed by how he changed the thoughts of the brainwashed Muslims, SAS showed Muslims the right way of practicing Islam with the help of Quran and Sunnah.

"He the guardian of the estate of millah in India whom Allah awakened at the right time."

- Iqbal (Punjab Ky Peer-zado k naam)

In short, Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi rejuvenated Islam in the Muslims civilization of the Sub-continent in such a holistic way that he is remembered as "Mujaddid Alf Sani" - a reformer of 2nd Millennium.

Sheikh Ahmad became very popular among the common masses, when he started ridiculing Din-i-Ilahi that was introduced by Mughal Emperor, Akbar the Great, on the name of moderation and merging people towards one God. These were the circumstances in which Sheikh debuted his work. King Jahangir also belonged to the same category of Kingship of Akbar but he keeping in view the public response against Akbar, the attitude of Akbar Jahangir also changed. All these changes towards (He wrote powerful writings & criticized religious dogmas, denounced Akbar's policies by writing letters).

Muslims & King Jahangir were due to Sheikh as he spent 20 years of his ~~age~~ life in the King Jahangir's life. His educational zeal and ideological zest were the key points. Sheikh's efforts made Muslims realize their diff. from other nations of the subcontinent.

Sheikh Sirhindi defined and clarified the diff. b/w Islam and Hinduism. In order to save Muslims separate identity, he advocated Muslims exclusiveness and separateness. He adopted a stern action against Hindus. Idols were broken, a cow was slaughtered, Khutba was read at the ~~time~~ conquest of fortress of Kangra. It shows he brought the Two-Nation concept, according to which Hinds and Muslims are

as *Maktubat e Imam Rabbani*), addressing his contemporaries becuz of their authority over the people. His speech had such an effect that the King himself declared prostration before himself illegal. Moreover, the tone of Administration changed, his teachings also had a great impact on change outlook of Muslim's nobility and upper classes in general. He said that Muslim rulers should distance from Hindus. Hindus must be expelled from court and other positions. The influence of SAS in the subcontinent has been too great.

"The mission of the *Majidi* which filled a large space in the religious and political history of the Muslim community of the 17th century was undoubtedly success."

(Yasin, A social History of Islamic India,

King Jahangir arrested him due to his actions but later on he came to know his fault.
* SAS arrest & release is more important than his political impact. *

His efforts bore fruit, Muslims realize that they would not be able to co-exist with other nations especially Hindus, who could threaten their cultural, religious, and social values.

Conclusion:

Thus, SAS was a great political reformist, religious reformist and he proved himself a God-sent help, a guide in the true sense of word. He faced trials & tribulations, but his firm faith & empathy for Muslims never let him ^{bow} down.

"Sirhindi is the spiritual guardian of Muslims of sub-continent." (Iqbal)

He enlightened the Muslims deteriorating situation in sub-continent & they were

able to practice Islam in its
True spirit. ^{due to} His efforts, ~~in~~ whole
society came under the flag of
Islam & impacted on Mughal
Emperors.