

Q:- Give an account of life and services of Shah Waliullah. How did he save Indian Muslims from political annihilation and Religious degeneration?

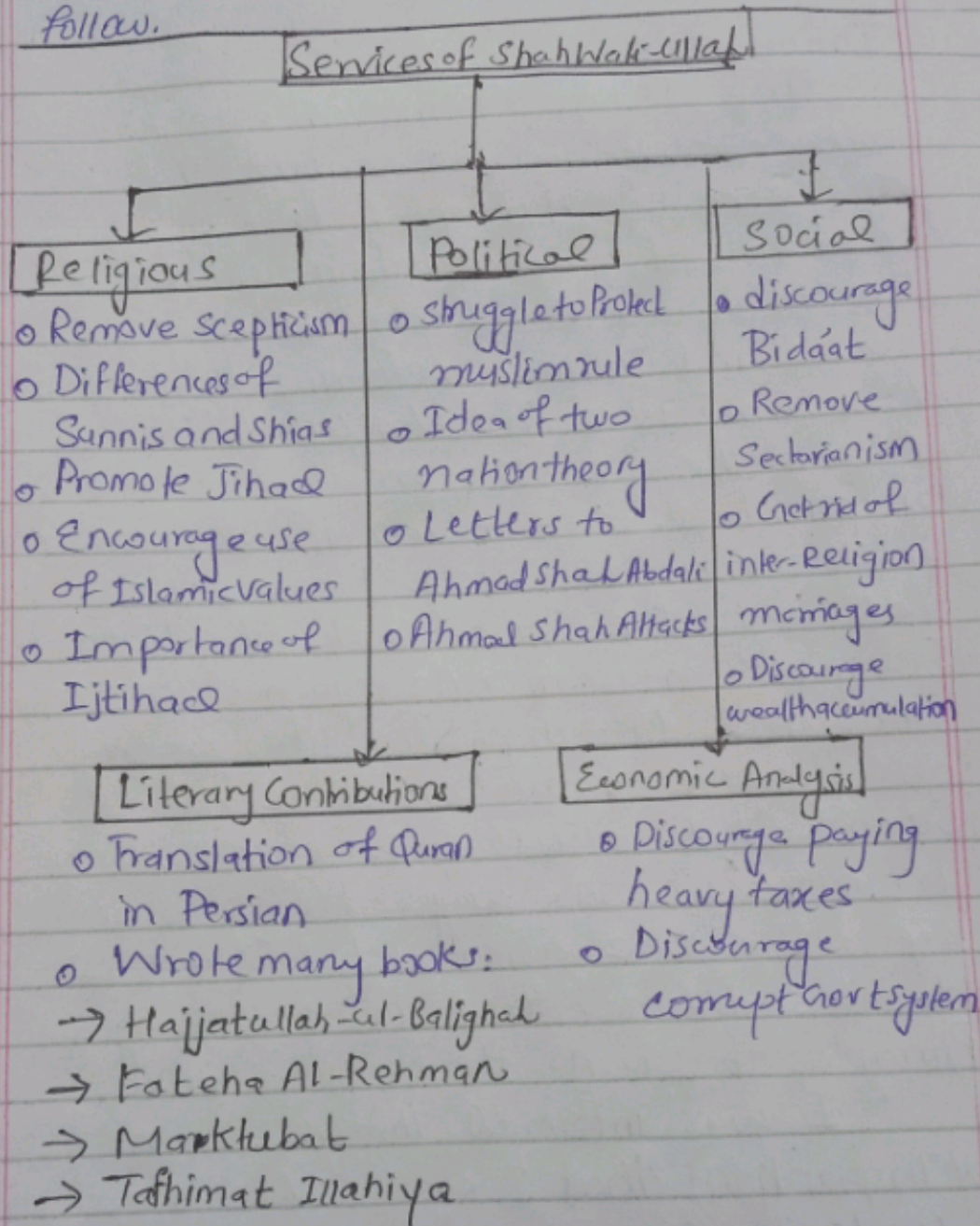
Introduction:

The decline of muslim rule has been observed in 18th century. The successors of Aurangzeb left the muslims of subcontinent in sinister condition. In this scenario, a religious, social and political reformist had arisen. His name was Shah Waliullah. He nipped the islamic's prevalent innovations in the bud. He removed the sectarianism in the muslim society. He wrote letters to the Ahmad Shah Abdali to safeguard muslim rule against the Sikhs and Marathas. The life, property and honour of muslims were not secure. Shah Waliullah presented Islam in more rational way. He stressed upon the true assence of sufism and dictated Ulema to work according to Principles of Islam. He himself wrote:

"I was informed through ilham (inspiration) that I would have to understand and undertake this responsibility. The time has come when every injunction of the sharia and the general instruction of Islam should be presented to the world in a rational manner."

Contributions of Shah Waliullah:

Contributions of Shah Wali-ullah in different spheres of life areas follow.



1) Religious Services:

The luxury of Akbar and Shah Jahan led the so-called Ulama to discuss dogmatic intricacies in terms of reasons.

They were confused and failed to furnish the religious grounds to the rational one. Total absence of unity and harmony among ulema kept them at daggers drawn.

o Scepticism and Rationalism:

Scepticism and Rationalism affected the people censoriously. Doubts were created in their minds about the truth of religion. Furthermore, the muslims were divided into Hanafi, Shafi, Sunni, Shia etc.; sects. Shah Waliullah Presented true philosophy before them, brought it near to their understanding and showed them that proper philosophy is one which is enshrined in the teachings of Islam. He made a serious effort to iron out the differences of Shia and Sunnis. He made serious efforts to iron out the differences of Sects. He rendered meritorious services for the good of the muslim community.

o Teachings of Quran and Sunnah:

Shah Wali-ullah forbade the People to avoid blind taqlid rather than consulting the Quran and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). In his outstanding book Hajjatullah-al-Baligha, he told the people to live their life according to the codes of the Quran. As many books were written on the traditions and they were not free from interpolations. He arranged Hadiths topic-wise to

make it very easy for Muslims to seek guidance. He, therefore, has placed Muwatta, Sahih of Bukhari and Sahih of Muslims in the first class. In the second class, he has included Jami of Tirmizi, Sunan of Abu Dawud and Sunan of Nasai while the third class is assigned to traditions.

o Jurisprudence:

Shah Waliullah had deep insight into the intellectual decadence of Muslims. He strongly advocates the merging together of Shafi and Hanafi schools. In case of conflict between them, he suggested Al-Muwatta of Imam Malik. The reason is that after the holy Quran, Muwatta is the most correct record of traditions and during research on the science and traditions, it is necessary to consult it, as without consulting it, he says, the door of independent thinking (Ijtihad) is completely closed at present.

o Literary Contributions:

Literarily, he wonders with the help of his writings by presenting a new modern version of Islam. He wrote around one hundred books in Urdu and Persian, which opened a new era of literature for the subcontinent. First, one of his remarkable contributions is translating the holy Quran into Persian. He also wrote the book "Hujja Allah al Baligha" in which he mentioned

steadfast in his endeavours.
the facts responsible for the downfall
of muslims. Also, he wrote a book
called "Rayyuz" Al Harmain". In this
book he described his dream in which
he was told about his change.

He published another book named
"Khilafat al Khulafa". The main idea behind
this book was to end the misunderstanding
between Shia and Sunnis His two small
treaties Luma'at and Sa'at give
another guidance. In the knowledge of
the natural Philosophy and Godhead,
says Sayyid Abd-ul-Hayy al-Hasani,
"Shah Waliullah has excelled
both Farabi and Ibn Sina."

o Shah Waliullah's concept on Jihad:

He emphasises the necessity of the
continuation. He quotes verses and
Traditions one after another. "The perfect
law, he says, is one which commands
its followers for Jihad." He recommends
that the muslims should be strong
and Prosperous. He said:

"A nation which is devoid of the
spirit of Jihad and unwilling
to give life in fight is indeed
impotent and such a nation
could not survive for a long."

The writings of Shah Waliullah
replete with the lessons of Jihad.

2) Political Contributions of Shah Waliullah:

Politically, his foresight and wisdom created a political enlivening of Muslims, and despite being an Islamic Scholar, he emerged as Political leader of Muslims. He worked tirelessly for the protection of Muslim rule. He did not rely on the incompetent Mughal rulers. He wrote letters to the heads of Muslim states and made them aware of the situations of the subcontinent.

o Letters to Ahmad Shah Abdali:

He foresighted that if Sikhs and Marhattas are not tackled properly, they will ruin the identity of Muslims. The assault of Nadir Shah ruined Delhi and made it vulnerable for more attacks. Finding no other way to cope with this critical situation, he wrote a letter to Ahmad Shah Abdali through Najib-ud-Dawlah to attack India. He wrote:

"We appeal to you in the name of God to divert your attentions to this affair and to earn the glory of waging a holy war and rescue the Muslims from the hands of Unbelievers. The undertaking should not resemble the invasion of Nadir Shah who destroyed the Muslims and left the Marhattas intact."

Ahmad Shah Abdali made a

colossal attack on India. The battle took place in the plains of Panipat. The Marhattas, despite their military might, suffered a smashing defeat.

o Causes of chaos of Muslim society:

Political decline had made the country bankrupt. Exploitation of the rich and exuberant lifestyle, jagirdari systems, heavy taxes and anarchy collapsed the country economically. In his book *Hajjat-ulah-il-Balighah* he pinpointed the causes of chaos and decay of muslim society. He said:

"A corrupt government, which neglects satisfying the basic needs of life, should and must be overthrown by every hook and crook. If it is allowed to continue, its corruption will spread like a cancer; first in some members of the administration, which, if it is not cut out from its very root, will go on spreading till the whole body will disintegrate."

Conclusion:

Conclusively, recuperating Islam in the Indian subcontinent in the 18th century was only possible through selfless struggle of Shah Waliullah. He rejuvenated Islamic values by eliminating differences among sects. However, his political services by stopping the growing threat of Marathas, sikhs and Hindus

proved fruitful. He wrote fifty-one books to carry the legacy for future generations. Nonetheless, his work for socio-political and economic uplift for the people and the empire is still written in golden words.

"What defines us is how well we rise after falling."