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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
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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.
The identity of Ahle hadeeth

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 (I) The famous Sahabi Abu Sa’eed Khudri (R.) (d. 74 A.H.) seeing any young Muslim would say delightfully,

‘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
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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...

(I would not narrate any hadith, if I could know earlier about what is happening now, save that hadith, 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 hadithes 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 i.e. the leader of Ahlur

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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, ِذا صَحِّ الْحَدِيثَ فَهُوَ مَذْهِبِي ِ 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), ‘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,

‘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.
6. Abdul Wahhab Shar’ani, Meezanul Kubra (Delhi : 1286 A.H.) P. 1/60.
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Sahheeh 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, ‘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 hadeethes 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 Mankhoool 8 the Imams of their teacher Imam Abu Haneefah. 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

8. Sharhu Veqayah-Muqaddamah (Delhi : 1327 A.H.) P. 28, the last line; Do. Deobond Print. n.d. P. 8.
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Ahle hadeeth scholars including Shah Waliullah Dehlavi. Not only Fiqhi or things of practical matters but also Usooli-Fiqh i.e. the sources of canon laws accepted by Imam Abu Haneefah, have been opposed by his two grand disciples. 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 respective 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 Khuzaaimah (223-311), Imam Daraqutni (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

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 Hazm Andalusi (d.456 A.H.) said,

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‘Ahlul 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’is (c) The Ahle Hadeeth (d) The followers of them among Faqeehs (jurists) through ages till today (e) The general people irrespective of the east and the west, who became their followers’.

Through this it has been understood that, not only the honoured Sahabis, Tabe’is, Muhadditheen and the Faqeehs, who followe the Hadeeth, were titled as Ahle Sunnat wal Jama’at or Ahlul Hadeeth; 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, ‘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, ‘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


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

(َلا تَزَالُ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْأُمَّةِ ٌ يَقِيمُونَ الْحَقَّ َوَيَضْرِبُونَهُمْ مِّنْ خَلْقِهِمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَ هُمْ كَذَلِكَ، ِرَوَّاهُ مُسَلِّمُ.)

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.’ 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,

(وَقَلِ الْحَقَّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ مَنْ يَكُونُ فَسَّاءَ فَلْيَكُفِّرْ وَمَنْ يَأْتِيَ فَلْيَكَفْرَ إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَا لِلطَّالِمِينَ نَارًا.)

(Oh Prophet! say, the truth comes from your

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, "Knowledge has no power to decide the ultimate goodness or badness of things." 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,

‘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

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Hell except one.' The Sahabis asked 'which one is that group?' The Prophet (sm) replied, 'the group, who will be on which I myself and my Sahabis belong to'. In a narration of Hakem, it is said, 'on which I myself and my Sahabis are today'. In another narration it is said, 'That is the *Jama'at*.' What is meant by that *Jama'at*, Ibnu Mas’ood (R) says in answer, ‘Which is belong to the Truth is called *Jama'at*, even you would be alone’. Now we shall hear the opinions of the past religious scholars and Salaf-i-Saleheen i.e. pious predecessors about which one is that righteous *Jama'at* or the Naji group.

**Which one is the Naji group?**

(الفرقة الناجية ما هي)

1. Ali Ibnul Madini (161-234 A. H.), the teacher of Imam Bukhari (194-256) says,

2. Sanad Hasan, Albani, Saheeh Tirmizi H/2129;Ibid, Silsila Saheehah H/1348; Hakem, P. 1/129; Albani, Mishkat H/171, Ch: 'Iman', Para: 'To hold the Kitab and Sunnah'.

3. Abu Daud, Mishkat H/172, Ch: 'Iman', Para: 'hold the Kitab and Sunnah'.

Jahmites

Qazi Ayaz says, ‘They are not a group any better than Hambal (64-241). If they are not Ahle hadith, then I do not know who are they?’

Imam Ahmad (118-217 A.H.) and Imam Ahmad bin Hambal (64-241) said, ‘If they are not Ahle hadith, then I do not know who are they?’

If they are not Ahle hadith, then I do not know who are they?’

Imam Ahmad meant here, the Ahle Sunnah and those who belonged to the Mazhab of Ahle hadith’.

Ahle hadith, those who take care of the regulations of Rasool (sm) and who stand in favour of the Ilm. Otherwise, we can hope nothing of Sunnah from the Mutazilites, Rafezites (Shi’aites) Jahmites, Murjites and Ahlur Rai. The Lord of the universe has appointed this victorious group as the custodian of the religion and as to be faithful followers of the Sahabis and Tabe’iis, they have been saved from the evil designs of the obstinates. They are the forces of Allah! Verily, the forces of Allah are successful’ (Sharf 5).

1. Yazeed bin Haroon (118-217 A.H.) and Imam Ahmad bin Hambal (64-241) said, ‘If they are not Ahle hadith, then I do not know who are they?’

2. Imam Bukhari also held a strong vision on this matter.

3. Imam Shafe’ii (150-204 A. H.) says, ‘I do not have any group better than Ahle hadith. They do not know anything but Hadeeth’.

4. Tirmizi, Mishkat H/6283 (in its explanation); Fathul Bari, 13/306, H/7311 (its explanation), Silsila Saheehah H/270 (its explanation); Sharf. 15.


When I see an Ahle hadeeth, then as if I see the Prophet (sm) alive' (Sharf 26).

4. The famous Tab'e'ii Abdullah Ibnul Mubarak (118-181 A.H.) says,

‘To me, the Naji group is the Jama'at of Ahle hadeeth. The strongest among the people on Siratul Mustaqeem (the straight path of Allah) are Ashabul Hadeeth’ (Sharf 15,33).

5. Imam Abu Yousuf (113-182 A.H), the chief disciple of Imam Abu Haneefah (Rh) once seeing some Ahle hadeeth in front of his door, became elated and said, ‘There is none on the earth who are better than you’ (Sharf 28).

6. Ahmad Ibnu Sareeh used to say, ‘أَهَلُ الْحادِيثِ أَغْلَمُ دَرْجَةَ مِنْهُ’ ‘For staying established on the original sources, the dignity of Ahle hadeeth is far above than that of the Faqeehs (Jurists)’. 21

7. Imam Abu Daud (202-275 A.H.) says, ‘إِلَّا أَنْ أَذْكَرْ أَحَدَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْحَدِيثِ’ ‘If the Ahle hadeeth Jama'at would not have been on the earth, then Islam would have been extinct (Sharf 29).

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8. Once Uthman Ibnu Abi Shaiba, seeing some people of Ahle hadith in a troublesome condition remarked that

‘An impertinent one of Ahle hadith is better than a devoted one of other groups’ (Sharf 27).

9. Caliph Haroonur Rasheed (193 A. H.) used to say,

‘I have found four things in four groups: (a) I have sought Kufr (Infidelity) and I found it in Jahmites (Fatalist). (b) I have sought bad arguments and qurarl and I found it in Mu'tazilites (c) I have sought falsehood and I found it in Rafezites (Shi'aites) (d) I have sought truth and I found it in Ahle hadeeth (Sharf 31).

10. Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani Al-Baghdadi (470-561 A. H.) famed with Bara peer, after narrating about Ahle Sunnat wal Jama'at as a Naji group and describing that why the Bid'atis (innovators) are ever angry to them says,

‘You know that the Bid'atis have some particular signs by which they can be sorted out. The sign of Bid'atis is to abuse the Ahle hadeeth and to address them in various rubbish name. These are nothing but fanaticism and out-burst of their heart-burning against the followers of Sunnah. Because, Ahlus Sunnat wal
**Jama’at** has no other name but one, that is **Ahle hadeeth**. All these rebukes of the **Bid’atis** (Innovators) are not applicable to the **Ahle hadeeth**. As the rebukes of the **Kafirs** (Infidels) of Makkah to the Prophet (sm) as Magician, Poet, Mad, Insane, Know of future etc. were not applicable to Him (sm).\(^2\)

11. Ahmad Ibnu Sinan al-Qatan (d.259 A. H.) says,

\[\text{ليَسَ في الدُّنيا مَتَدَعَ إلَّا وَ هُوَ يَبْعَضُ أَهْلَ الحَدِيثِ، فَإِذَا اتَّبَعَ الرَّجُلُ نِزْعَـتَ خَلَاوَةَ أَحْدِيثَ مِنْ قَلِيْهِ.}\]

‘There is not a single **Bid’ati** on the earth who does not maintain malice inside him against **Ahle hadeeth**. When anyone does any **Bid’at**, the taste of **hadeeth** would be snatched out of his heart.\(^3\)

12. Imam Ahmad Ibnu Taimiyah (661-728 A. H.) says,

\[\text{مِنْ المَعْلُومَ لِكُلِّ مِنْ هَٰذَا جَهَرَةً أَنَّ أَهْلَ الحَدِيثِ مِنْ أَخْطَمَ النَّاسِ يَجْحَدُ بِهَا عَنْ أَفْسَالِ النَّاسِ صَلَّى الله عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمَ وَ طلَّبَ أَعْلَمَهَا وَ أَرْثَبَ النَّاسَ فِي إِثْمَانِهِ وَ أَبْعَدَ النَّاسَ عَنِ اثْبَاعِ هَٰوَى يَخَالفَهَا . . . فَهُمُ الَّذِينَ حُلِّمَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الإِسْلَامِ كَأَهْلِ الإِسْلَامِ فِي أَهْلِ النَّاسِ.}\]

‘It is a known fact to a person of even a little experience that the **Ahle hadeeth** are most searching people to the sayings and knowledge of the Prophet (sm) and are more willing to follow these, and are more away from following instinct which he

\[^2\] Abdul Qadir Jeelani, Kitabul Guniah alias Guniatut Talebeen (Egypt: 1346 A.H.) P. 1/90.

\[^3\] Abdur Rahman Sabooni, Aqeedatus Salaf Ashabil Hadeeth (Kuwait: Darus Salafiyah 1404 A.H.) P. 102.
opposes it... Their position among the Muslim, as the position of the Muslim among the nations. 24

13. Imam Yahya Ibn Sharf Nabawi Ash-Sha'ee (631-676 A.H.), the best commentator of Sahih Muslim says, 'This group may be those of different order among the heroic Mujahid, Faqeeh, Muhaddith, Zahid (worshippers who abstain from worldly matters) and one who enjoins what is right and forbids what is wrong, who are engaged in establishing the laws of almighty Allah. It is not compulsory that all of them have to be assembled in a particular place, but they may be scattered in several places of the world. 25

14. Hafiz Imamuddeen Isma’eel Ibn Katheer (701-774 A.H.) in explaining the verse, 'يُومَ نَدْعُوُا كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ بِإِمَامٍ مِّمَّمُهم' (when we shall call all the communities with their leaders) in his world-famous Tafseer, he quoted the saying of a great scholar of the past who said, ‘This is the highest honour for Ahle hadeeth that their only Imam is Muhammad (sm).’ They will be called in the name of their Imam at the Day of Resurrection.

Undoubtedly this lofty honour at the Day of Resurrection will be for those who in this worldly life have remained steadfast and have given highest regard to the holy Quran and Sahih hadeeth by all means and have not given preference to any other Ism, Qias or Rai. Oh Allah! give us strength to be real ‘Ahle hadeeth’ a title given by the Prophet (sm) and include us in that group. Ameen!

The Outward signs of Ahle hadeeth

(شُعَارُ أَهْلِ الْحَدِيثَ)

Imam Abdur Rahman Sabooni (372-449 A.H.), in narrating the outward signs of the Ahle hadeeth, says (1) They abstain from all kinds of intoxicating drugs it may be more or less (2) They remain ever careful to say every Farz salat in the first hour of the appointed time (3) They consider it compulsory (Wajib) to read SuraFatihah behind the Imam (4) They consider most essential to perform all the Rukans i.e. pillars of salat like Ruku (bending from standing) Sujood (keeping forehead with nose on the ground), Qiam (standing), Qu’ood (sitting) etc. slowly and peacefully in Salat and without which, they consider Salat will not be correctly said (5) They become strongest followers of the Prophet (sm). Sahabis and Salaf-i-Saleheen, in every sphere of life (6) They hate the innovators (Bid’atis). They do not associate with innovators and do not have to make unnecessary altercations with them on religious matters. They always keep their ears shut from them, so that their useless arguments may not create any misgiving in their minds.

We say, the greatest sign of Ahle hadeeth is that, they are uncompromising followers of Tawheed against the Shirk in respect of Aqeedah (faith) and they are uncompromising followers of Sunnah against Bid’at in the field of practice. This is to mention that, to become a Ahle hadeeth, it is not a condition to be the progeny of a Ahle hadeeth father, similarly there is no distinction of blood, race, language or region in this regard. Rather any Muslim who follows unconditionally the decisions of the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth and tries to lead his entire life on it, will be regarded as Ahle hadeeth. Undoubtedly the real

identity of *Ahle hadeeth* lies in one’s unadulterated faith and practice, not in his acquaintance of father as well as his education & knowledge, money & resources or his social status.

**Ahle hadeeth and Ahlur Rai**

(*أهل الحديث وأنى الرأى*)

*Ahle hadeeth* means the follower of *Hadeeth*. *Ahlur Rai* means the follower of *Rai* (human wisdom). Those who seek solutions of all problems of life on the basis of the holy *Quran* and *saheeh Hadeeth* are known as *Ahle hadeeth*. On the other hand... those who take solutions of the problems of life from *Fiqhi Usool* i.e. the formulas of practical laws made by any earlier scholar, they, according to Shah Waliullah, are known as *Ahlur Rai*. They do not seek *Hadeeth* of the Prophet (sm) and *Athar* of *Sahaba-i-Keram* in making solutions to any problem, rather they try to solve it by making comparison with any *Fiqhi* decision or any *Fiqhi* principle given by an earlier *Mujtahid Faqeeh* and bring out its various branches and sub-branches with the help of *Qias* i.e. analogical method. In this way, they follow in about all steps the *Usool-i-Fiqh* designed by their Imam or *Faqeeh*. As a result, in many cases they give preference the *Rai* of a person above *saheeh Hadeeth*.

On the other hand, the *Ahle hadeeth*, in every case gives preference to the decision of the holy *Quran* and *saheeh Hadeeth* above others and rejects the person’s *Rai* which opposes the *Hadeeth*. **They do not appraise the Quran and**

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Hadeeth on the basis of Rai, but they appraise Ray on the basis of the Quran and Hadeeth. They give preference to Wahi (revelation) above Rai i.e. human wisdom and consider Rai as explanatory for Wahi. They do not reject Hadeeth on different pleas, at the time when they find any Rai of self or any person they follow contradicts to the Hadeeth; rather they bow before the decision of Hadeeth in all respect. The Ahle hadeeth believes in Ijtihad and considers it permissible to do by all competent Ulama of all ages. They believe in such type of Ijtihad or Rai and Qias which are based on the holy Quran, saheeh Hadeeth and Ijma-i-Sahaba.

For this reason Imam Malek, Shafe’ii, Ahmad, Ishaque, Imam Bukhari and others, the best Faqeehs and Mujtahids of the Ummah are called Ahle hadeeth, not Ahlur Rai. On the other hand, due to lack of sufficient collections of Hadeeth, Imam Abu Haneefah (Rh) became more dependants on personal Rai and Qias, for which he was reckoned as Imam of Ahlur Rai i.e. the leader of the followers of Rai. As the world famous historian and social scientist of Morocco Abdur Rahman Ibnu Khaldoon (732-802 A.H.) says,

(The wave of logic also touched the scholars of Ahle Sunnat). As a result, the Fiqh became divided into two main streams by the name of ‘Ahle hadeeth’ and ‘Ahlur Rai’. One of these was the Tareeqah of the followers of Rai and Qiyas. They were mostly the inhabitants of Iraq. The second one is the Tareeqah of Ahle
Ahle hadeeth movement What and Why?

hadeeth. They were the inhabitants of Hijaz (Makkah-Madina). Very few numbers of Hadeeth were there in Iraq. For which they devoted to Qiyas more and they also acquired proficiency in this regard. Therefore, they have been regarded as Ahlur Rai i.e. the followers of Rai. The leader of this group was Abu Haneefah in whose name a Mazhab has been set up.29

This is to note that this is Iraq where the fabrication of Hadeeth has begun first. Hinting to this, Imam Ibnu Shihab Zuhri (50-124 A.H.) says, A hadeeth of a half cubit, issued from here, becomes one cubit in length when comes back from Iraq. Imam Malek (93-179 A.H.) has termed Iraq as a 'factory of hadeeth adulteration' (تَارِيخُ الْمَبْطُورِ). That is one saheeh Hadeeth after much additions and subtractions is circulated from here adulteratedly.30

Imam Abu Haneefah (Rh) was the inhabitant of the city of Kufa in Iraq and his chief disciples were from there. For this reason his followers are named as Hanafee, Kufi, Ahlur Rai, Ahlul Kufa, Ahlul Iraq etc.

Taqleed-i-Shakhsi: The term Taqleed (التَّقَلِيد) owes its origin to Qaladah (القَلاِدَة). The meaning of that is ‘necktie’. The dictionary meaning of Taqleed is, tying a rope to the neck. The terminological meaning is ‘To accept the decision of anyone without document in the matter of Shari'ah’. On the other hand, the dictionary meaning of Ittiba' 29. Abdur Rahman Ibn Khaldoon, Tareekh (Bairut: Muassasatul A'lami, n.d.) Muqaddamah P. 1/446. 30. Dr. Mustafa Saba'ii, As-Sunnah (Bairut: Al-Maktabul Islami, 4th edition 1405/1985) P. 79.
Ahle hadith movement: What and Why?

is ‘to follow the foot prints’. The terminological meaning is ‘لَا تَفْلَعْ وَقُولٌ عَلِيَّ مَعَ ذَلِيلٍ’.

‘To accept the decision of anyone with document in the matter of Shari'ah’. Taqleed is the following of Rai and Itteba‘ is the following of document. This is to mention that to accept any verdict of an Alim (scholar) based on authentic documents is not a Taqleed, but it is Itteba‘. Similarly, when any authentic document will be available against the opinion of an Alim, then to follow the document against that personal opinion is called Itteba‘. There was no trace of Taqleed in the days of honoured Sahabis and Tabee‘is. But to follow their opinions, based on documents are misrepresented by some as Taqleed. Whereas the basic difference between Ahle hadeeth movement and other Islamic movements is Taqleed-i-Shakhsi i.e. blind worshipping of a person.

The Taqleed in vogue came into existence after the 2nd century hijra. Thereafter in the 4th century hijra, different Taqleedi Mazhabs, in the name of different Imams were introduced. Shah Waliullah Dehlavi (1114-1176 A.H./1703-1762 A.D.) says:

‘إِعْلَمْ أَنَّ الْمَهْدَ كَانَ كَلِلَّ الْمَهْدَةَ الرَّابِعَةِ عِنْدَ مَجْمَعِيَّ مِنْ عَلَيْ النَّقْلِيَّةِ الْحَخَاصِ...’

‘You know that the Muslims before the 4th century hijra, were not gathered on Taqleed exclusively of any Mazhab of a particular scholar’... Whenever faced any problem, they would have to take solution from any Alim and in doing so it would have not been verified ones own Mazhab.

To describe the condition in the last part of the 3rd century hijra, Hafez Shamsuddeen Zahabi (673-748 A.H.) says, ‘At this time so many leading Ulama of Ahlur Rai (Hanafi) and Mutazila,

31. Shah Waliullah, Hujjatullahil Baligah P. 1/152-53 Ch: Description about the position of the people of 4th century hijra and later on’. 

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Shi’ah and the scholars of Kalam (logician) who were regarded as the pillars, were present, who used to lead their lives on logical arguments and keep away the way of Salafi-Saleheen, who would strongly hold the Hadeeth of the Prophet (sm). At this stage Taqleed among the Faqeehs took its birth and deterioration of Ijtihad began.  

Imam Ghazzali (450-505 A.H.) says, after the end of Khulafa-i-Rashdeeen, the Islamic Khilafat went under the control of such people who were totally inexperienced in the laws of Shari’ah. As a result they became dependant on the Faqeehs for all matters and they were being called into different posts of the Government office. So, people began to learn Ilm then as a means to attain honour and power. Some of the Muslim scholars began to write books on Kalam (logic). Many subtle arguments were initiated there. At this time the rulers became interested in holding debates for establishing superiority of each other of Hanafee and Shafe’ii. As a result, the scholars joined in the competition for and against to prove the greatness of controversial matters of those two Mazhabhs and made much debates and wrote so many books and booklets. In this way, they consider it a basic object to find out the microscopic significance of their respective Mazhab. This is still in existence. We do not know what is there in our fate in future (Abridged).

Thereafter Shah Waliullah Dehlavi says, ‘(Oh reader) at the present time you would find Muslims of almost all areas of the world that they follow the school of thought of a particular Mujtahid scholar of the past. They think that, if they diverge the scholar even from a single matter (Mas’ala), it is likely that they

may be ousted from the Muslim millat. It seems that the scholar is as if a Prophet, who has been sent to him (ﷺ) and to follow him has been made compulsory for him. Nevertheless, the Muslims before the 4th century hijra, had never been the followers of a particular Mazhab.  

The method of inference according to the methodology of Ahle hadeeth:

Shah Waliullah Dehlavi in describing the method of inference accepted by Ahle hadeeth scholars for deriving the law of Islamic shari‘ah, says, (1) they stick to the holy Quran about a particular matter when they get clear instruction in it and they do not consider it proper to turn their face to anywhere (2) for any matter, when the instruction of the Quran is not clear, the Sunnah will decide it. Whether that Hadeeth is well circulated to all or not, whether the Sahabis and Faqeehs practised that Hadeeth or not. On a particular matter, if any Hadeeth is available then the Athar of any Sahabi or Ijtihad of a Mujtahid against it will not be acceptable (3) After utmost efforts if any Hadeeth is not available on a particular matter, the Ahle hadeeth would follow the decision of any Jama’at (group) of Sahabis or Tabe’iis. In this context they do not give priority to any particular group, city or dweller of a particular area. (4) If the Khulafa-i-Rashedeen and the Faqeehs are in one opinion about a matter then they consider it sufficient (5) But if there is difference of opinion, they accept the decision of one who is most educated, pious and sharp in memory or accept the most popular decision widespread among them (6) When two opinions are found equal in status, they consider both of them acceptable (7) But when they fail in it, then they consider the general orders of Kitab and Sunnah and its hints and objects.

34. Shah Waliullah, Tafheemat-i-Ilahiyah (Bijnour U.P. India. 1355/1936) P. 151.
Thereafter they look for a reference of a similar past example or anything nearest to it. They do not follow any traditional *Usool* or canon laws for it. Rather they follow the opinion which they understand fairly and which soothes their heart goodly. 

**Causes for the spread of Hanafi School:**

The main cause behind the rapid spread of Hanafi school was political. Abu Yousuf (113-182 A.H.) the chief disciple of Imam Abu Haneefah (Rh) owing to be the chief justice of the Khilafat, during the reign of caliph Mahdi, Hadi and Haroonur Rasheed (158-193 A.H.) through the *Fatwas* and decisions of Hanafi school spread widely and was established in Iraq, Iran and central Turkistan and in all places of the Khilafat. Pointing towards this fact Shah Waliullah Dehlavi says, 'This was the reason for the spread of his Mazhab everywhere.' Abdul Hai Lukhnawi (1264-1304/1848-86) also supported this view and said, ‘He who first spreads over the Ilm (Fiqh) of Abu Haneefah to the different corners of the world and establishes his decisions (*Mas’ala*)'.

Like all other countries of South Asia, Islam came to Bangladesh during the time of the Prophet (sm) and Khulafa-i-Rashedeen through Arab merchants and *Muhaddith Ulama* (scholars of *Hadeeth*). Before the emergence of different schools, that Islam was an unmixd Islam based on *Hadeeth*. So,
undoubtedly they were *Ahle hadith*. Later on with the conquest by Ikhtiaruddeen Muhammad Bakhtiar Khilji, a *Hanafi* general in 602 A.H./1201 A.D., through Turkish *Hanafi* Ulama and *Ma'rifati Faeqers* (Sufis) who came with him at that time and later, Islam spreads here in Bengal being aided mainly by political patronization, which was mostly full of *Shirk* and *Bid'at*. Though *Ahle hadith* movement had been continued at that time through the efforts of *Muhaddith* Sharfuddin Abu Tawama (d.700 A.H./1300 A.D.) of Sonargaon and his disciples. This is to mention here that through this renowned *Muhaddith* coming from Bukhara (Russia), the teaching of *Saheeh Bukhari* and *Muslim* was started in Bangladesh for the first time in this Sub-continent. For long 22 years he gave teaching on *Saheehayn* (*Bukhari and Muslim*) at Sonargaon (the then capital of Bengal).

It can be said that mainly for his efforts *Ahle hadith* movement in this country got wider circulation. Later on, after exchanging hands from Turks, Mughals, Shi’aites, Pathans, Afghans and other groups, Islam that stabilized in this country, became a hotchpotch *Islam* mixed with *Shirk*, *Bid’at* and various superstitions. Needless to say that, no significant change has yet been effected till today.

**The principles of Imam Abu Haneefah (Rh):**

Imam Abu Haneefah (Rh) has prohibited strongly the blind following (*Taqleed*) of his *Rai* and declared in unequivocal voice that whenever any *saheeh hadith* is available then that would be my *Mazhab* (See footnote 3). Therefore, Abdul Wahhab Sha’rani Hanafi (898-973 A.H.) says,

*‘If Imam Abu Haneefah would have been alive in the (golden) age (third century hijra) of Hadeeth collection and compilation then he would have accepted these and would have rejected all...***
the Qiyas i.e. decisions by analogical deduction he had given so far, and the Qiyas would have been less in his Mazhab also, as has been in other Mazhabs (Schools of thought)... What have been said that Imam Abu Haneefah would give preference to Qiyas over documents, are the saying of his Muqallids i.e. his blind followers, who have considered it indispensable to practice on the Qiyas of the Imam and have rejected Hadeeth which have been proved authentic after the death of the Imam. The Imam is not responsible for this matter, but his blind followers would be held responsible'.

Virtually the Qiyas of Ahlur Rai in opposite to the Ahle hadeeth is dependant on the Usool-i-Fiqh i.e. the formulas of practical law made by their respective Mazhabi scholars, not on the Hadeeth.

Division among Mujtahids:

The famous scholar of the 6th century hijra, Abul Fath Muhammad bin Abdul Kareem Shahrastani (479-548 A.H.) says,

Mazhabs would have been less in his i.e. the formulas of practical law made by their respective scholars, not on the Hadeeth.

38. Abdul Wahhab Sha'rani, Meezanul Kubra (Delhi Print. 1286 A.H.) P. 1/73.
The Mujtahid Imams of the Ummah are divided into two quarters, not in any third quarter and they are Ashabul Hadeeth and Ashabur Rai (Ahle hadeeth and Ahlur Rai). The Ahle hadeeth are the inhabitants of Hejaz (Makkah-Madina)... They are called Ahle hadeeth, because they had all out aims to collect and compile the Hadeeth and they made documents (Quran and Hadeeth) as the basis of Ahkam i.e. rules and regulations of Shari'ah. They do not turn to explicit or implicit Qiyas whenever they get any Hadeeth or Athar... On the other hand, the Ahlur Rai are the inhabitants of Iraq. They are the followers of Abu Haneefah Nu'man bin Thabit (80-150 A.H.)... They are called Ahlur Rai, because they give more importance on inquiring the cause of Qiyas and on the inner meaning of the rulings of Quran and Hadeeth and build up the basis of related incidents on that. Sometimes they give preference to explicit Qiyas over the Hadeeth which are categorically Khabar-i-Wahid.

To express the view in favour of the principles of Ahle hadeeth, Abu Muhammad Ali Ibnu Hazm Andalusi (d.456 A.H.) an European scholar of spain of the 5th century hijra says in unambiguous language that ‘the unanimous decision or Ijma of the Sahaba, Tabe’iin and Tabe-Tabe’iin from first to last is that all the decisions of any one of them should not be followed. Therefore, it is for the knowledge of that person, who has accepted all decisions of Abu Haneefah or Malek, Shafe’ii or Ahmad and did not leave any word of them or did not pay heed to others and did not care for the commands and prohibitions of the Quran and Sunnah, he undoubtedly have opposed the consensus of Ummah (Ijma). No person with such a principle was available in the three praised ages of the

Sahaba, Tabe’iin and Tabe-Tabe’iin. That person has gone outside the path of the Mumins (Believers). Oh Allah! Save us from that state’.⁴⁰

Now we have to think, whether we solve our problems of life on the basis of revelation, the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth or on the basis of man-made Fiqh? Whether we prefer Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Daud, Nasaii or prefer a specific Mazhabi Fiqh, like Qudoori, Sharah Beqayah, Hidayah and Alamghiri, which are all created later on? Whether we shall be followers of Hadeeth or of Rai? This is to know that the chain of coming of the Prophets has been closed and the revelation (Wahi) has been stopped. There is no change of the Quran and saheeh Hadeeth. But the Rai, in all ages confronts the change, it has been changing today and will be changed in future. At present, the young muslim society has been gradually proceeding towards following the Rai of the heterogeneous groups. As a result, the muslim society at present are divided into hundreds following the opinions of so many scholars. The only way to make this large disorganized Ummah united and driven them towards welfare, is just to return to the Quran and saheeh Sunnah leaving aside everything. To surrender unconditionally to the decisions of the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth. The Ahle hadeeth movement has been directed towards this pious object through ages and still today is being directed and will be directed in the future Insha Allah.

The Jama‘at of Ahle hadeeth for ages

(جماعة أهل الحديث في مر العصر)

Ahle hadeeth movement What and Why

Sahabis and Tabeeis were the Ahle hadeeth of the early age of Islam. All which places are conquered by them and all to whom they preached Islam and all such Muslims of the then world were Ahle hadeeth. After the 37th hijra, when the Bid’atis began to appear, the Ahle hadeeth against them began to be known with different name with distinct features. Thereafter, in the 4th century hijra for creation of various Mazhabs on the basis of Taqleed, there appeared in the Muslim world other Mazhabs along with Ahle hadeeth. For example, the famous Muslim geographical explorer Shamsuddeen Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Maqdesi had go out to travel the Muslim areas of the world in the 4th century hijra. He has given some accounts of the then Ahle hadeeth inhabited areas of the world in his famous book of travel Ahsanut Taqaseem fi Ma’rifatil Aqalim. He says, ‘the people of Hijaz i.e. Makka and Madina were Ahle Sunnah (P.96) and most of the Faqeehs and Qazis in Baghdad, the Abbasid capital were Hanafis (P.127). Practices of the people of Damascus, the Umayyad capital and that of Syria had been on the Mazhab of Ahle hadeeth (أصحاب الحديث) (There is no place for Mutazilites as well as Maleki and Daudi here (P.179-80).

Then at 375 A.H. Maqdesi came to Mansura at Sind, the then Muslim capital of India. He told about Mansura (Karachi) that most of the inhabitants (Muslim) there were Ahle hadeeth (أصحاب الحديث) and there was an Imam of Daudi Mazhab there, named Qazi Abu Muhammad Mansuri, who have written many valuable books. The people of Multan were Shi’aites.
Ahle hadeeth movement: What and Why?

There were a few Hanafi Faqeehs in every city. None was there who is a Maleki or Mutazilites or Hambali in Mazhab.  

Historian Abu Mansoor Abdul Qahir al-Baghdadi (d. 429 A.H.) after a half century later than Maqdesi, in narrating about the position of Ahle hadeeth in the then world wrote, 

‘All the Muslim inhabitants of the borders of Rum, Algeria, Syria, Azarbaijan, Babul Abwab (central Turkistan) were on the Mazhab of Ahle hadeeth. Similarly all the Muslims of Africa, Spain and the people of the countries behind the Western sea, were Ahle hadeeth. In the same way all the inhabitants of Yamen on the coastal belt of Abisinia (Ethiopia) were Ahle hadeeth. But among the people of the border area of central Turkistan towards Turkey and China, there were two groups: one was Shafe‘ii and the other was the followers of Abu Haneefah.  

It is proved by the above statements of Maqdesi and Abdul Qahir Baghdadi that in spite of strong political domination and Mazhabi oppression of the Mutazilites and Ahlur Rai empowered by the Caliphate of Baghdad, the staying majority in number of the Ahle hadeeth people in Makka, Madina including Syria and in

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42. Abdul Qahir Baghdadi, Kitabu Usooluldeen (Istambul: Dawlah press 1346/1928) P. 1/317.
Europe, Africa, Soviet Russia, Middle East, Near East and in important cities of the far East and at a distant land like Sindh up to the 5th century hijra, is really a matter of surprise.

A little after 375 A.H, the administration of Mansura went over to the Isma‘eeeli Shi‘aites. On the other hand, from 602 A.H./1201 A.D, the Ahlur Rai Hanafi administration was started in Delhi and Bengal wherefrom the original Arabic rule had been ended up and the administration of the Sub-continent went over sometimes to the Ghaznavites, sometimes to the Afghans and sometimes to the Turks. As a result, due to political niggardliness at one hand and at the other hand the narrowness of Taqleedi Ulama, the ignorance of the people and scarcity of Ahle hadeeth Ulama, the Ahle hadeeth movement in India became gradually feeble.

In the 12th century hijra, by the special grace of almighty Allah, through strong arguments and sharp writings of Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlavi (1114-1176 A.H.), a spirit of following Hadeeth impartially was created among the people and later on, by his sons and through the Jihad movement initiated by his Mujahid grandson Shah Isma‘eel Shaheed (1193-1246 A.H.), a social revolution was started in the whole of India, which brought a flow tide in Ahle hadeeth movement. About six crores of Ahle hadeeth people at present, living in different corners of the Indian Sub-continent are the products of that movement. In whose flesh, blood, bones and marrows there are still alive the bloody memories of the wars of Balakot, Bansher kella, Mulka, Sittana, Ambala, Chamarqand, Asmast and Andaman along with the tortures of Jail, hanging, confiscation of properties, exilement for life, indescribable oppression of Kalapani and the unstained marks of blood of the martyrs and victors (Ghazis) are remained shining till today. So the unalloyed monotheistic Jama‘at of Ahle hadeeth, burnt with the
Ahle hadeeth movement: What and Why?

The flame of tortures and oppressions, is the name of the successors of eternal Jihad and the name of that eternal caravan of martyrs, who are determined to sacrifice everything for paying highest priority to the Quran and Sunnah. Allah says, ُّّلاَ تَهْيَا وَلاَ تَفزُّوَا وَأَنْتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ‘do not be weak, nor be sorry, you are the best, if you are believers (A-le Imran 3/139).

Ahle hadeeth against sectarianism

Do not be weak, nor be sorry, you are the best, if you are believers (A-le Imran 3/139).

The command of Allah was, َّوَا حُصِّنُوا بِحِجَالِلِلْهِ جَمِيعًا وَلاَ تَفزُّوا ‘And hold fast all of you together by the rope of Allah and be not divided among yourselves’ (A-le Imran 3/103). But a little after demise of the Prophet (sm), the Muslims involved in grouping and division among them. As a result, the downfall became hastened.

The cause of division among the Muslims basically was four: 1. Inducement of the Jews and Christians. 2. Clash of political interests. 3. Influx of various foreign customs and philosophical thinking. 4. difference of opinion in the explanation of Shari’ah.

As the first cause, stated above we notice that, during the later part of the Caliphate (23-35 A.H.) of the 3rd caliph Uthman (R), Abdullah bin Saba, the son of a Negro Jewish mother became a Muslim outwardly. (2) Later on, by his evil design two groups of Sabaii and Uthmani were created first among the Muslims. Thereafter, the great caliph Uthman (R) was brutally murdered by the hands of the rebel Sabaii group. Later on, for political conflict between Ali (R) and Mu'awyah (R), the Kharijites and Shi'aites groups were originated and by the hands of extremist
Kharijites, the 4th caliph Ali (R) was killed. (3) At this time, people of different corners of the world with different creeds began to be converted to Islam. They could not fully shake off their old traditional beliefs and practices which related to their past generations over the ages. As a result, many foreign creed and custom crept into the Muslim society, which later on began to be used as Islamic convention and the followers of those Bid’ati practices and their oppositions began to be reckoned in different names. (4) In this way various foreign philosophical thoughts also supplied water to create various groups among the Muslims.

For example, during the rule of the Umayyad caliph Abdul Malik Ibnu Marwan (65-86 A.H.), one namely Susan, a Christian of Basra in Iraq, became outwardly a Muslim, but he turned to be a Murtad (apostate) later on. Through his instigation one named Ma’bad, for the first time created a new order named Qadaria in the Muslim society who deny Taqdeer (fate). Later on, in its opposition there created another deviated order called the Jabrites who were totally fatalist.

In this way, different groups with various opinions created in different times took the form of separate Mazhabs in the latter days. Furthermore, there have been several orders (Tareeqas) and sub-orders among the followers of these Mazhabs. As a result, the history of sectarian division within Islam began to be prolonged as an woeful curse.

But it is a matter of surprise that the followers of all the Mazhabs and Tareeqas stated above, tried to prove their accepted Fatwas (verdicts) from the Quran and Sunnah. Those verses of the Quran and those Hadeethes of the Prophet (sm) would have been in favour of their Mazhab’s decision, they would accept them delightfully. But those would have against their views, they would try to explain them indirectly or they
would have rejected them claiming as Mansookh (order withdrawn). The Shi‘aites for political gain, have already made about three lacs of fabricated hadeeth in describing the dignity of Ali (R). The so-called Quran created by them known as Mushaf Fatima, against the holy Quran, which is known as Mushaf Uthmanee, is three times bigger, in which they claimed that there was not a single letter of the Quran in vogue. In this way, the supporters of religious and political groups like the Umayyads, Abbassids, Shi‘aites, Hanafees and Shafe‘is have made how many fabricated hadeeth in pursuit of their own Mazhabs & groups and in protest of their oppositions, that it becomes out of estimation.

**Ahle hadeeth and Ahle Sunnah**

(أهل الحديث و أهل السنة)

Hadeeth means message and Sunnah means custom. Terminologically, the word, deed and approvals of the Prophet (sm) are called Hadeeth. Though according to the dictionary meaning there is some difference between Hadeeth and Sunnah, but there is no difference in terminology and application. Because, the subject matters of both are the same and everything attained its written form through Hadeeth. So the terms 'Ahle Sunnah' and 'Ahle hadeeth' have been used in

43. Dr. Mustafa As- Saba‘ii, As-Sunnah, P. 81.
44. Ihsan Ilahi Zaheer, Ash-Shi‘a Was-Sunnah (Lahore: Idarah Tarjumanus Sunnah, n.d, P. 80-81.
Ahle hadeeth movement What and Why?

Hadeeth and Fiqh at the same meaning. But in later days, the name Ahle hadeeth got an especial recognition against Ahlur Rai.

Since 37th of hijra, some adulterations took place in the pure water of Islam. But the sacred efforts of honoured Sahabis and Tabe’ii’s could prevent its expansion to some extent. To keep the Muslim Unmah free from all these turmoils they took utmost care and started to call themselves as Ahle Sunnah and Ahle hadeeth against the innovators (Bid’atis). Thereafter, the followers of Truth as their supporters also mentioned themselves as Ahle hadeeth. As the famous Tabe’ii Muhammad Ibnu Seereen (33-110 A.H.) says,

‘People did never ask for the chain of narrators or the sources of any Hadeeth before it. But when the age of turmoil appears, then people began to ask, at first you give the names of the narrators. Thereafter, if it was found that the narrator was from Ahle Sunnah then the Hadeeth narrated by him was accepted. But if he belonged to Ahl-i-Bid‘at then the Hadeeth narrated by him would have not been accepted. Therefore Imam Ibnu Taimiyah (Rh) says,

‘Long before the birth of Abu Haneefah, Malek, Shafe’ii and Ahmad, an old Mazhab of Ahle Sunnat wal Jama’at was well-

known. That was the Mazhab of the honoured Sahabis, who had directly received IIm (knowledge) from their Prophet (sm).\(^3\) The Jama’at of Sahaba was known as Ahle hadeeth, which we have been known earlier with reference to the statements of the Sahabi Abu Sa’eed Khudri, Imam Sha’bi, Ibnu Hazm Andalusi and by other scholars (see footnote 1, 2, 11).

In different books of Hadeeth and in reliable books of Fiqh, the Ahle hadeeth have been described as Ahle hadeeth, Ashabul Hadeeth, Ahle Sunnah wal Jama’at, Ablul Athar, Ahlul Haq, Muhadditheen etc. As the followers of Salaf-i-Saleheen,\(^4\) they are also known as Salafi. In the countries like Egypt, Sudan, Srilanka etc. the Ahle hadeeth are known as Ansarus Sunnah; in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and in others as Salafi; in Indonesia Jama’at-i-Muhammadiah and in Indo-Pak subcontinent it is known as Muhammadi and Ahle hadeeth. Though their adversaries call them in bad names as La-Mazhabi (having no Mazhab), Rafadani, Wahhabi, Ghair Muqallid etc.

**Are all the Muslims of the world Ahle hadeeth?**

No one can be a Muslim by denying or disobeying totally the Quran and Hadeeth. So, in a sense all Muslims of the world are Ahle hadeeth. But if carefully observed, then it will be noticed that the groups, Mazhabs and Tareeqahs among the Muslims have been created so far and are going on till today, all have been structured according to the personal thoughts of any

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\(^3\) Ahmad Ibnu Taimiyah, Minhajus Sunnah (Bairut: Darul Kutubil Ilmiah, n.d.) P. 1/256.

\(^4\) Sahaba, Tabe’een and the Scholars of Hadeeth of the past are regarded as Salaf-i-Saleheen. Author.
Ahle hadeeth movement What and Why?

In this way, for each Mazhab there have been written separate books of Fiqh. The followers of each Mazhab collect Fatwas from their own books of Fiqh and follow them, considering them as infallible rules of Shari'ah. They do not have any time to verify whether there is any guidance for and against it in the Quran and saheeh Hadeeth. Rather in most cases, the blind faith works in their mind that there can be no instructions at all in the Quran and Hadeeth, which are against their respective Fiqh of their Mazhab & Tareeqah.

This was also better than never, if the condition did not go down so much. For whatever reason it may have been, some Ulama and Peer at present, give such unprecedented Fatwas, which have even no relation with the books of Fiqh of their own Mazhab, let alone the Quran and Hadeeth. As the Peer-worshiping, grave-worshiping, Meelad, Qiyam, Kulkhani, Chehlam, Haiyatun Nabi (ever-living of the Prophet), Allah has no physical shape, he is omnipresent etc. which are in faith & practice of our society, had neither been approved by Imam Abu Haneefah (Rh) nor by the best books of his Mazhab. But the simple minded people out of blind faith and to obey there Ulama consider these innovated rituals as the real functions of Islam. In this way, they become victims of Shirk and Bid'at at the different occasion. The consequence of which is nothing but the Hell. Rather when any righteous fair-minded Alim presents before him a saheeh Hadeeth of the Prophet (sm) for his rectification, he becomes enraged with him and as the last weapon he brings the references of their ancestors or the past Imams and Peer-Aulias saying that, ‘Did they not know that?’ Though, he had no clear idea of those persons about their Taqwa (Allah-fearing), religiosity and their adherence to the Quran and Hadeeth. Nevertheless, that person does not think for a while, that the religion is totally dependent on Wahi of
Ilaah (revelations of Allah). There is no scope of a person or his personal opinion here.

Needless to say, that the above excuses were the main arguments of the superstitious bigots of all ages, which have been told to all the Prophets in the different ages. For opposing these blind superstitions, the established self-interested powers of the society had tortured the prophets unutterable, had thrown them alive into the blazing fire and compelled them to migrate from the country in peniless condition. Still today they are continuing their tortures on the devoted followers of the last Prophet (sm).

**Consequence of Taqleed (blind following):**

It makes our body trembled with fear when we think about the consequence of blind Taqleed and the custom-worshiping. One side there remain those of followed Imams or peers having possibility of mistakes with them and on the other side there remains the infallible Imam of the both world, Imam of Muttaqeen and Imamul Mursaleen the last Prophet Muhammad (sm), the messenger of Allah. One side there remain the traditional customs and rituals in the name of religion and on the other side remain the holy regulations of the last Prophet (sm). May Allah save us, if this is the practical situation, then which sky will give him shade, which earth will give him shelter and the Shafa‘at of which Prophet he will desire?

Being entangled with the illusive ties of Taqleed (blind following), people have turned their faces from impartial following of saheeh Hadeeth. Now it has been the main concern that how much great his Imam is! And how much big the party he belongs to!! As a result of excessiveness of Mazhabi Taqleed and for the conflict between Hanafis and Shafe‘is and for the conspiracy of Shi‘aite Minister, the Abbasid caliphate of Baghdad
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had been destroyed in 656 A.H./1258 A.D. by the attack of Halaku Khan. Later on, during the reign of Bahri Mamlook Sultan, Ruknuddeen Baybaras (658-676 A.H./1260-1277 A.D.) of Egypt, there were appointed for the first time separate Qazi’s for four Mazhabs at the Egyptian capital, which became a common practice for the whole Muslim world since 665 A.H. ... and any statement or decision, though it was proved by the Quran and saheeh Hadeeth would be forbidden if it is not in accordance with the rules of four Mazhabs. During the period of Burji Mamlook Sultan, Farj bin Barqooq (791-815 A.H.) in 801 A.H, in order to please the Muqallid Ulama and the people of them, four Musallas for four Mazhabs were built separately at the four sides of the house of the holy Ka’ba, the heart of the Muslim unity. In this way, due to bad effect of Taqleed, the division of the Muslim community took a permanent shape. In 1343 A.H, king Abdul Aziz A-le Sa’ood the founder of the present Saudi ruling family demolished those four Musallas. As a result, all the Muslims at present have blessed with the good fortune to say their prayers unitedly according to the rule of the Quran and Hadeeth at the Musalla of Ibraheem (A) behind one Imam’ (Ph.D. thesis p.89). Falillahil Hamd (All praises for Allah).

As a worldly consequence of this religious Taqleed, in the name of various Mazhabs and Tareeqas, we have been divided into groups within our brethren. On the other hand, due to heterogeneous Taqleed we have, in the name of progress, been the blind followers of the Kufri (anti Islamic) doctrines introduced by the Jews, Christians and of the unIslamic coalitions as the Secularism, Nationalism, Capitalism, Democracy, Socialism etc.

In order to worship of the Nationalism based on language and territory, the united ‘Islamic Khilafat’ has been broken down now into fifty six feeble Muslim states. With the slogan of
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Multiparty democracy, a country has been thrown into disunity and disorderliness from within and through this there has been manipulated the anti-Islamic conspiracy of remaining a country in a permanently weakness. Due to divided environment of the Government and opposition politics, the fire of unpeace and disorder has been burning from Bangabhaban (President House) down to the huts and slums. Our national unity has been smashed. The united Islamic Khilafat of the Muslim world i.e. the political and economic strength of the Muslims has been destroyed.

Now the Muslim states have been turned into subservient of the Judio-Christian and anti-Islamic axis powers. In bygone days, Damascus, the capital of Umayyad Khilafat (41-132 A.H./661-750 A.D. = 90 yrs), Baghdad the capital of the Abbasid Khilafat (132-656 A.H./750-1258 A.D. = 509 yrs), Granada, the capital of Spanish Ummayad Khilafat (92-897 A.H./711-1492 A.D. = 781 yrs), Cordova, Seville the greatest seats of learning of the then world and 'the wonder of the world', now all are nothing but the subject of the history. Ghazni (Kabul) and Delhi, the centers of Muslim administration of India (351-1273 A.H./962-1857 A.D. = 895 yrs) are now the lost chapter of history. Lastly Istanbul or Constantinople, the capital of the Uthmani Khilafat (700-1342 A.H./1300-1924 A.D. = 624 yrs) and Turkey has turned today into a 'Sickman of Europe', a matter of jokes for the Jews and Christian world. Egypt, the country of the great general Salahuddin Ayubi (564-589 A.H./1169-1193 A.D. = 25 yrs) the conqueror of the Crusade, is now a friend of the Jewish state of Israel.

Now the Muslims, the followers of Islam, a religion of peace, are burning with the flame of unhappiness. But why? Who is the responsible for it? Is it Islam or the Muslim? Medicine or the patient? Certainly the fault is not with the medicine.
Because this medicine is severally examined. Moreover, the non-Muslims are more clamorous with the praises to the worthiness of Islam. Therefore, the fault lies with the patient who does not know the use of it. We the people who have kept medicine on the shelf and had counted the beads of rosary of medicine but did not take it, or did not learn the proper method of use or after knowing a little had surmised the rest or we have made it a ‘mixture’ by other ingredients according to what we please with.

As a matter of fact, this pathetic consequence of the Muslims is due to their detachment from the teachings of the Quran and saheeh Hadeeth, the basic sources of Hidayat (righteous guidance of Allah). For this reason, the youths of modern times, being foiled to get proper solution of the age, from the Quran and saheeh Hadeeth are gradually being inclined to the materialistic philosophy. Seeing the various outward shapes of Mazhabs and Tareeqas within Islam, they are in doubt about the Islam itself. Seeing the glamour of Darghah, khanqah and Halqa-i-Zikr or hearing forceful slogans of Islam in procession and in the gorgeous stage of luxurious politics, they estimated Islam wrongly. They are considering it as a supporter of Capitalism and an instrument of exploitation. But is it the Islam that was left by the reliever and saviour of humanity the last Prophet (sm), Abu Bakr (R), Umar (R), Uthman (R) and Ali (R)? Surely it is not. To get it back we must shake off those foreign-imitated Isms and must turn back to the central essence of the teachings of the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth. But the question is: Do we want to get it cordially?

**Characteristics of Ahle hadeeth**
Now think about ‘Ahle hadeeth’. It is not the name of a particular Mazhab (party) as usual, not also a doctrine or ism adopted by a person. Rather, it is the name of a path (way). That path is the path of last Wahi (revelation) sent down by Allah i.e. the path of the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth. The ultimate destination of this path is Jannat (Heaven). All the spiritual and worldly guidance of mankind are preserved in this straight path. The Sahaba-i-kiram, Tabe’iin-i-Ezam and Salaf-i-Saleheen had always invited people to this path. So Ahle hadeeth characteristically is the name of a Da’wat or a movement. This movement is the movement for establishing unadulterated original character of Islam. This movement invites all people of the world, especially the Muslim Ummah, divided into so many Mazhabs and Tareeqas, to return back leaving aside all sorts of narrowness and bigotry, and to be united at the root of Islam, i.e. the teachings of the holy Quran and Sunnah of the last Prophet Muhammad (sm), which is the guarantee of eternal peace. This movement has acquired its momentum centering round the infallible guidance of the Kitab and Sunnah. This movement did not grow up on the strength of personal philosophy of a Faqeeh, Mujtahid, Wali-Aulia (saint), Imam or any scholar of the Ummah. The workers of this movement have no other book of guidance except the holy Quran and Hadeeth. They have no other unerring Imam except Muhammadur Rasoolullah (sm). They have no other Mazhab or way to follow but Islam. They have no definite book of Fiqh. They pay due respect to the Imams of the four prevailing Mazhabs. Despite of being influenced by any kind of blind devotion or blind hatred to any, they, without hesitation in open mind, readily accept those decisions of different Mazhabs, which are in
consonance with or most closest to the Quran and saheeh Hadeeth. But they consider it wrong and illogical to accept all things of right and wrong of a particular Mazhab and to do Taqleed i.e. follow them blindly.

There is no place for sainthood among them, nor there is any headache for attaining salvation through the pleading of any Peer or to gain their 'Foiz' (blessing). They need not to take the dust of feet of any Peer baba or Shadhu baba in order to cure a disease or to win a case and so on. They do not make any vow (manat) to the grave of any Aulia (saint) or do not have to any certificate of being a ‘Mureed’ (disciple) of any Peer.

Ahle hadeeth, the true believers on Tawheed, in their weal and woe only seek help from Allah, beg shelter to Him, weep only before Him and make Sadaqah only to earn His pleasure. Keeping firm reliance on the fate, be good it or bad, they make the best of their effort. For the salvation in the life hereafter, they only take the Amals (righteous deeds), that are approved by the Shari’ah and free from Shirk and Bid’at as the only means (Waseelah) of salvation, which would be performed as fully devoted to Allah. They keep themselves away from all those words and deeds which bears any slight spot of Shirk and Bid’at. They do not believe any person as a possessor of Ilamul Ghaib (knowledge of unseen). They do not consider anyone infallible except the prophet (sm). They do not think that Muhammad, the last Prophet (sm) is created out of Noor (light) or he is a Noor Nabee (Prophet of light); but they consider Him as a being created out of clay like all human being. They do not believe any person to do good or bad to himself, nor to any other. Even an alive person can not do good or bad to others without the will of Allah. They consider it a open Shirk to lay in prostration to the grave and to make vow there, to offer garlands, candles and to cover the grave with ghilaf and to
bathe it, sending *Nazar-Niaz* (gifts) there, slaughtering cocks and goats for fulfilling *Hajats* (objectives), seeking salvation through the deceased laid into the grave and to pray before him etc. In the same way, the false thinking of the presence of the soul of the Prophet (sm) in lacs of *Meelad Mahfil* at the same time at the various corners of the world and then standing (Qiam) all with honour to him and giving *Salam* to him etc. is considered to them as most hated and gravest sin like that of imagining the qualities of the creator in a human being. Similarly to observe silence standing in honour to any deceased, offering flowers and wreaths to *Shaheed Minars* and Mausoleums made by selves, lightening ‘*Mangal Pradeep’* (lamp of fortune), ‘*Shikha Wanirban*’ (undying flame), ‘*Shikha Chirantan*’ (eternal flame), preparation of oil paintings of different persons, Photographs, statues and sculptures and paying respect to all of these, are according to them, modern forms of ever-while nasty *shirks* of fire and idol worshipping of the days of ignorance (*Jahliyah*).

*Ahle hadeeth* believes in their mind and soul the fact that Muhammad (sm), the last Prophet of Allah, did not leave behind any rule of Islam secret to other. But as a perfect and ideal man of all ages, as a builder of complete and perfect character of Islam, during twenty three years of his life of Prophethood through his sayings, acts and behaviour had made explicit all the pros and cons and ins and outs of *Islamic shari’ah* for his *Ummah* and had faithfully and properly brought the entire *Wahi-i-Ilahi* to his *Ummah*. Then at the end of his life, standing at Arafat in the farewell pilgrimage, before tens of thousands of disciples present, making them witness, got direct assurance of Allah about the fulfillment of Islam. Therefore, *Ahle hadeeth* believe that, after getting the complete picture of Islamic way of life in the holy *Quran* and *saheeh Hadeeth*, it is
just like keeping away from simple, straight and clean way of Islam to search for self-made theories of Haqeeqat, Tareeqat, Ma’rifat and so-called Sina-ba-sina Bateni ilm i.e. heart to heart concealed knowledge. At the same time it brings in doubt about the guardianship of the trust of Islamic shari’ah, left by the last Prophet (sm), which is open contrary to Iman.

The Ahle hadeeth believe on Muhammadur Rasoolullah (sm) as the last Prophet and they consider this belief as one of the main rukans (pillars) of Iman. One who denies or refuses this rukan or brings up doubt in it, shall never be a Muslim. Therefore, since no Prophet will come after him, all the Muslim of the world following him are referred to a great nation being identified to the same Millat (Religion). Where there is no scope for any sorts of sectarianism. Ahle hadeeth movement desires to make the whole Muslim Millat as a united great nation under the unique leadership of the last Prophet Muhammad (sm), forgetting all sorts of partisanism, on the basis of the holy Quran and saheeh Sunnah only.

The Ahle hadeeth believe the first four Caliphs as Khulafa-i-Rashideen (Rightly guided Caliphs). They consider it a Gunah-i-Kabeerah (great sin) to show slightest dishonour to them as well as to any Sahabi (disciple) of the Prophet (sm). As they have great regards for the family members of the Prophet (sm), so they also strongly protest Husain-worship in the name of Ta'ziah (mourning) at the month of Muharram.

Ahle hadeeth, the followers of purest Sunnah, would never make any compromise with Bid’at (innovation) in any circumstances. They do never give any indulgence to Bid’at in the name of formalities or customs of the country or Bid’at-i-Hasanah (good innovation) or on the pretext of Hikmah
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(Trick). The most respected person to them is he, who plays an uncompromising role against all kinds of Shirk and Bid’at, directly or indirectly and continues to serve for Tawheed and Sunnah even if at the cost of their lives. As a revolutionary ideal and as a complete code of life, the Ahle hadeeth consider ‘Islam’ as the solution of everything for all ages, and for being Islam as dynamic they consider Ijtihad as most essential in all ages. They also consider Taqleed-i-Shakhsi as must to be shunned.49 They like to say this, that Taqleed-i-Shakhsi is the greatest obstacle for religious and social progress of the Muslim. Because through it we follow blindly the thoughts of a particular man only, the possibility of making errors in it is very certain. We lose the self confidence that a better thought on that matter might have been in the thoughts of others or even within myself. As a direct effect of Taqleed one may follow a wrong ruling issued by a person throughout his life. Though it was most essential to leave that for a Muslim to seek salvation and to follow the Quran and saheeh hadeeth impartially for his personal interest of this life and the life hereafter. It is necessary to say that this is the basic demand of Ahle hadeeth movement through all ages.

In the above short account, the identity of Ahle hadeeth and the characteristic features of this movement have been discussed in brief. Through this it has been clearly proved that all Muslims of the world are not Ahle hadeeth. As because the others follow only those Hadeeth, which are in favour of the Mazhabs of their Imams or Ulama they followed. But the Ahle hadeeth

49. The dictionary meaning of Ijtihad is all-out effort. In the terminological meaning it means such effort to find out as per rule the decision of Shari’ah for the matters which are not received clearly in the Quran, Sunnah and Ijma-i-Sahaba. Taqleed-i-Shakhsi means the blind following of a person in the matters of Shari’ah without any document —Author.
follow only the saheeh Hadeeth impartially. From the above discussion it is also proved that the basic difference between Ahle hadeeth movement and other Islamic movement is Taqleed-i-Shakhsi i.e. following a person blindly. May this Taqleed be of a Mazhab in religious perspective or be of a non-Islamic ism in worldly perspective in the name of progress. Except the submission to the rules of Wahi in all the religious or worldly matters, Taqleed of any sort is to be rejected. Therefore, only the person who submits to the decision of the Quran and saheeh Hadeeth with unbiased mind leaving aside all kind of Mazhabi narrowness and Taqleedi bigotry is named Ahle hadeeth. But it is sorrowful to say that many people today hesitate to do acquainted themselves by this honoured title used by the venerable Sahabis and Muhadditheen.

Many people consider Ahle hadeeth as a competitive group against Taqleedi Mazhabs like Hanafi, Shafe'ii and others or as a group in general like them. But actually those are only the followers of a particular scholar, or a particular school accepted by a particular scholar. On the other hand, those who impartially follow the Quran and saheeh Hadeeth breaking all the bondage of Mazhab and Taqleed, can only be Ahle hadeeth. Because the term of Ahle hadeeth, that is the follower of Hadeeth, does not mean the follower of a person. Therefore, as the Prophet (sm) is the prophet of the whole world, as the Wahi (revelation) sent down to Him is for the welfare of whole of the mankind, so also Ahle hadeeth movement, based on the last Wahi is also devoted to the welfare of all the human being irrespective of race and religion.

At last we wish to put our humble submission that, have anyone ever seen the likeness in Ahle hadeeth which they have seen among others being divided with separate names after making separate Imam, Mazhab, Fiqh and Tareeqah? Therefore,
as the honoured Sahabis, Imams and Muhadditheen can never be identified within a group following blindly a person, similarly the Ahle hadeeth, named by their name accordingly and their followers devoutly cannot be identified as a particular group in the usual sense of the term. Though as a possessor of unique characteristics and open heartedness, the Ahle hadeeth is certainly a separate entity of a Jama’at. For the like characteristics the Jama’at of the honoured Sahabis has also been called as Ahle hadeeth.

The movement for unity

(حركة إتحاد الأمم)

Different Mazhab (group) within Islam has rejected willingly or unwillingly many correct decisions of other Mazhab though supported by authentic documents of Kitab (Quran) and Sunnah, just out of their Taqleedi bigotry. Thereafter, to suppress this narrowness, they have denied those saheeh Hadeethes accepted by other Mazhabs claiming those as Mansookh (abrogated). Or they have tried to give its indirect or wrong explanations or sometimes they have nicely avoided it saying both are correct. They hold the function of khatm-i-Bukhari (the ending ceremony of Saheeh Bukhari) with splendour, but do not obey to the Hadeeth of Bukhari. They feel proud of being a translator of Saheeh Bukhari, but made tricky device in translation. Moreover, they take attempt to slaughter the saheeh Hadeeth against their own Mazhabs with the knife of illogical notes and references. By those people, attacked with the cancer of Taqleedi bigotry has been broken in to the pieces the unity of Islam in the name of Islam itself and that has taken a permanent character now socially.
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Now if anybody really wants Islamic unity and if he desires peace in this world and salvation in the life hereafter by properly following Islamic rules and regulations, then first of all, he will have to break the ties of Taqleed and to refrain from Mazhabi and sectarian narrowness. Thereafter with quite open mind, will have to be the followers of the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth devotedly. This might go against his own Mazhab, own family and society and even against the conventional law of the country. By taking such a hard risk if one can accept the Haq (truth), only then he can hope for getting the Jannat (heaven).

In the early part of the decade of eighty (1980 A.D.) a new formula called ‘Unity with difference of opinions’ was heard. But striving for long two decades (1978-98) begot no result. Because, religious disunity puts deeper impression in the mind of the people than materialistic disunity. For this reason, the differences in Salat, the best of prayer, whether hands to be set on the chest or below the navel, whether to make Raf’ul Yadayin (raising of hands) in ruku and rising from it, whether 6 (six) or 12 (twelve) Takbeers be given in the Salat of Eidayen (two Eids), whether Sura Fatiha is to be read in the Salat of Janazah, whether the Imam and Muqtadis will pray unitedly after salat raising their hands, whether the Azan of Jum’ah is one or two and all such religious questions, have not yet been solved. While the easiest formula of unity in these matters is to accept all those which are proved by saheeh Hadeeth and give up the rest. If both are in saheeh Hadeeth, then the most Saheeh one will be practised or both will be

50. See: Professor Gholam Azam, Islami Aykka Mancha Chai (We want a plot for Unity in Islam) (Dhaka: Jamayat-i-Islami Bangladesh, Central publishing department, February 2000).
practised due to scope and situation. There should not be any rigidity on a particular one. Needless to say, these sorts of differences are apparent in almost all matters in Fiqh.

Many people say, we have no difference in respect of Aqeedah (faith). All the differences are lying in branches and sub-branches only. This claim is totally baseless. Rather, along with the 'Amal (Practice), there is a gulf of differences in Aqeedah as well. For example, it is widely spoken that Allah is an incorporeal being. He is Omnipresent. Whereas the holy Quran says that Allah has got His own form (Swad 38/75, Maidah 5/64 etc.). But there is none to be compared with Him (Shoora 42/11 etc.). He is placed on the ‘Arsh on the Heaven (Toaha 20/5 etc.). But His ‘Ilm (knowledge) and Qudrat (power of doing) are spread over everywhere (Talaq 65/12; Baqarah 2/148 etc.). Some are saying, ‘As many heads, as many Allah’. We are all part and parcel of the Being of Allah (Na’oozubillah). Whereas the Quran gives testimony that Allah is the creator of everything and all the rest are His creation. The creator and creation are never the same (Ra’d 13/16; Nahl 16/17 etc.). Virtually these are the philosophies of the doctrine of non-dual and pantheism of the Iranians and Hindus, which has crept into Muslim society as Sufistic (Mystic) Philosophy in the name of Ma’rifat.

Some say that, Prophet, Rasool, Peers and Saints do not die, but they would only be transferred from the surface of the earth to its inside i.e. to the grave. They remain alive in the graves and possess the power of doing good or bad to their devotees. Whereas, except Allah none can do any good or harm to anybody (Maidah 5/76). Even some of them have been regarded as Zinda Peer (Living Saint). Whereas Allah says, all people including the Prophets and Rasools will die (Muminoon 23/15, Zumar 39/30). They will remain in Alam-i-Barzakh (the
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world under the curtain) till the day of Resurrection (Muminoon 23/100). A group of strong fatalist says, ‘nothing happens by its own, everything that happens is by Allah’, we are nothing but like the dolls. ‘We play as we are played, so what is the fault with the dolls?’ Another group against it says that ‘there is nothing as fate. Man himself is the creator of his fate’. Whereas the straight and simple formula in the matter of Aqeedah is that, the verses of the Quran and the saheeh Hadeethes on the name and qualities of Allah should be accepted in their explicit meaning and to decide everything according to the Maslak (route) of the honoured Sahabis, Tabe’iis and Muhadditheen.

Besides, in the name of Haqeeqat, Tareeqat and Ma’rifat there remain four groups of Sufism called Chistia, Qaderia, Mujaddedia and Naqshbandia with their sub-groups of about two hundred sufistic orders in Bangladesh. There is no unity of Aqeedah (faith) and Amal (practice) among themselves. As a result, according to the govt. account of 1981 A.D, there have been created 2 lacs 98 thousands of peer in the country. There are thousands of Mureeds (devotees) of those Peers. There are great difference of Aqeedah and Amal of one Peer with another and with their devotees. So, the condition of 13 crores of Tawheedi Muslims are now like bamboo eaten up by insects. In which there are no strength at all. The only reason for it is: the various types of Shirki Aqeedah and Bid’ati Amal i.e. the polytheistic faith and practices of innovation.

The introducer of these are: firstly, a group of evil minded Ulama (Religious scholars), who have introduced and fostered these for their worldly interests. Secondly, a group of social leaders who helped and guided these. Thirdly, by a class of rich people who for their false hope of getting Jannat, spend easily lots of money and resources behind these. Fourthly, the
Govt. of the country who, in the name of religion, give security to these. To speak the truth, most of the peers and Islamic leaders do not know the true meaning of Tawheed (unity of Allah) or do not know the differences between Sunnat and Bid’at. For that reason, so many Shirk Aqeedah in the society have been favoured in the name of Tawheed, similarly, the innovations in the society have been favoured in the name of Bid’at-i-Hasanah (good innovation). As a result, as if there is no Shirk and Bid’at at all in Bangladesh at present and so, all of those are Tawheed and all are Sunnats and all are Islam. The Ahle hadeeth who protest against these false practices is virtually ‘Bedeen’ (sacrilegious) and la Mazhabi (Having no Mazhab). Ha-sha wa Kalla (Oh Allah! it is never so).

So, unlike the fundamental unity regarding Shirk and Bid’at, the temporary superficial unity for the sake of collecting vote will never be durable. Rather, like a sliced bread the thin ties of selfish unity will be broken into pieces.

It is necessary to make it clear, that the enemies of Islam always prefer ideological or cultural aggression to territorial aggression, Many learned muslim scholar of the country have in the mean time been victims of their aggression and they took the stand against Islam, who are by infiltration into the press media, educational centers, economic sources, different political parties and the very fabric of state administration perpetuating their deceitful objectives. Therefore, we invite the Muslim leaders desirous of unity to pay more attention to the basic matters of Aqeedah (faith).

Ahle hadeeth movement wants to make a united great nation of the Muslim on a single point of submitting all the diverse factions of muslims to the highest authority of the holy Quran and saheeh Sunnah unconditionally. Ibraheem (A) the father of
Muslim nation has been declared alone as an Ummah (community) in the holy Quran (Nahl 16/120). Though in fact, in his age, he was alone and all men including his father and his tribe had disowned him.

So, even today we should grasp the truth (Haq) at all risks and invite everyone with open mind to the path of truth. Whatever great or small in number those people on the right path, would be really a united Jama’at before Allah. Ahle hadeeth movement invites people of the whole world to that straight path and wants to establish that Jama’at pursuing the truth.

Allah says, ‘Oh believers! Fear Allah and always remain with the truthfuls (followers of Haq)’ (Tawbah 9/119).

**The unadulterated Islamic movement**

(الحركة الإسلامية الخالصة)

To establish the Deen (Islam) of Allah on the world of Allah only for Allah, is called truly the Islamic movement. The aim of this movement is to gain satisfaction of Allah. The basis of this, is the holy Quran and saheeh Sunnah. Its only function is to propagate and establish the Kitab (Quran) and Sunnah rightly. In fact, no Islamic movement, where there is found such characteristics properly except in the Ahle hadeeth movement. For that reason, ‘the Ahle hadeeth movement’ is the most pure Islamic movement in the history of the world.

There were Islamic movements in different ages; it is going on still today and will be continued in future. But in the name of Islamic movements, the movements that have been led so far, most of them at the end gained a narrow Mazhabi stamp and
the states and constitutions, they formed, have followed some Mazhabi doctrines instead of following the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth impartially. The final results of it became very terrible. In the past, during the Abbasid rule, the merciless patronization of Mutazili by the ruler Al-Mamun, Mu'tasim and Wasik billah (198-232 A.H.), at present the Islamic republic i.e. Shi'aite republic of Iran and the proposal for a Mazhabi (Hanafi) rule in Pakistan and Bangladesh by a particular Islamic party, bears the clear proof of it. If the word Islam is annexed with any political party, it becomes easier to achieve cheap popularity. But, as all are using Islam as a protecting amulet, just to cover up the party narrowness, the Islamic movement now becomes a labyrinth. So that it would be very difficult to realize to how we would be included in the real Islamic jama'at by joining in which group of Islam.

For which characteristics the honoured Sahabis, in spite of being the best muslim of the golden age, used to recognize themselves as Ahle hadeeth, for the same reason the Ahle hadeeth, without any sort of hide and seek, to establish Quran and Sunnah in its respective dignity, has reckoned their movement as Ahle hadeeth movement. For which the cheap popularity has surely been humbled. But yet, one who will give preference the Truth (Haq) and will follow the true Islam with open mind will be able to be an associate of this movement.

In point of fact, as any Muslim who utters Kalima (Kalima Shahadat) by his lips, cannot be called a Kafir (infidel), whatever

non-Islamic ways he may lead his life. In the same way any movement, conducted in the name of Islam, whatever Shirk and Bid'at may it have contained, it could be called Islamic movement in general sense of term. But in Ahle hadeeth movement does not have to arise any question of mixture at all. Because the only goal of this great movement is to establish the unadulterated original feature of Islam. Thus the workers of this movement become uncompromising fighters in type against all sort of Shirk and Bid'at and un-Islamic efforts. So, having no scope for gaining cheap popularity by pleasing everybody, the number of the adherents to Ahle hadeeth is always lesser in comparison with others. Rather, it can be said that lesser in number is considered as pride for them. Because, the glad tidings confirmed by the Prophet (sm) is fixed only for those valiant Mujahids (i.e. uncompromising persons) who do not care for their oppositionists and enemies and strictly follow the Truth and Justice (Muslim, H/1923). Moreover, as per declaration of the holy Quran, the number of the grateful servants of Allah becomes always very few (Saba 34/13).
Why is Ahle hadeeth movement?

The transparent rays of Islam were overcast with the dark cloud of un-Islamic thought at the ages. Sometimes, that ray has brought peace and welfare to the mankind freely without any hindrance. Sometimes, like the covered sun with cloud by the deep dark of Jahiliat (ignorance) that ray has been hampered to bring out its own light with full glory before the people. The hungry humanity has always longed eagerly to gain it. But it is a great misfortune for us. We the people who took the responsibility of serving it properly to the humanity and earned praise from Allah as the best Ummah as to be ‘Muslim’ and established our highest dignity throughout the world, have betrayed with Islam mostly than all. We have contaminated the clear water of Islam. We have changed its original form by making it up according to our liking. As a result we have lost it after we got it and thus have failed to provide it to others.

To speak the truth, from the very early age of Islam, there has been conducted attack from inside and outside against Islam. Evil efforts have been put to preach and spread many non-Islamic thoughts and foreign creeds and customs clad in Islamic dress. Many muslim have also been misguided by it. It made us recall to the fact that during the holy age of the Prophet (sm), the deceitful conduct of the hypocrites and in the golden age of the honoured Sahabis with the increase of their evil designs the emergence of Shiriki Aqeedah and Bid’ati Amal imported by the new muslims in different areas of the land.

To ensure their separate characteristics from those of the Bid’ati groups, the honoured Sahabis, the devout followers of
unadulterated pure Islam and other righteous Muslims had done acquainted themselves as Ahle hadeeth. They laid down their lives for keeping the Muslim society free from all sorts of non-Islamic philosophy and culture. Under their leadership, various reform movements were conducted. They had devoted their entire efforts to keep the Muslim millat firmly on the basis of Kitab and Sunnah. To speak the truth, for their selfless efforts and movements, Islam as yet could not be totally perverted. Tawheed and Sunnah are still alive with vigour in their home. If Allah wishes (Insha Allah) it will continue till the Day of Resurrection.

The necessity of Ahle hadeeth movement: The piteous condition that the world was facing at the time of the appearance of the last Prophet Muhammad (sm), the present condition of the world is not less bitter than that by any means. For that reason, in the present explosive situation of the world, when humanity is being shattered heavily, when the materialistic philosophies for their inherent weakness are being proved a failure and when the whole world is eagerly awaiting a peaceful ideology; in this very moment, to avail the great responsibility to bring out pure and unmixed feature of Islam before the world, the necessity of Ahle hadeeth movement has been increased manifold than in any other time before.

So, the true followers of Ahle hadeeth movement, remembering their eternal tradition of jihad, will have to come forward with the spirit of the highest sacrifice. By spreading tides of Da’wat and Tableeg i.e. invitation and propagation at home and abroad, people are to be brought back to the original Islam. At last we are inviting Muslims of the world all and particularly the youths to assemble under the banner of unmixed Tawheed and we are making clarion call to run their religious and material life according to the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth.
Ahle hadeeth: In the eyes of others

(Ahl-ul hadith 'anil-muslim)

To introduce Ahle hadeeth, the renowned scholars of the University of Oxford in England, one of the best educational institutions of the present world say:

AHL-I-HADITH: The followers of the prophetic traditions. Who profess to hold the same view as the early Ashab-al-hadith or Ahl-al-hadith (as opposed to Ahl-al-ray). They do not hold themselves bound by 'Taklid'.... But consider themselves free to seek guidance in matters of religious faith and practices from the authentic traditions which together with the Quran are in their view only worthy guide for the true muslims.

The Ahle hadith try to go back to first principles and to restore the original simplicity and purity to faith and practices. Emphasis is accordingly laid in particular on the reassertion of Tawhid and the denial of occult powers and knowledge of the hidden things (Ilm-al-ghayb) to any of his creature. This involves a rejection of the miraculous powers of Saints and of the exaggerated veneration paid to them. They also make every effort to eradicate customs either to innovation (bid'a) or to Hindu or non-Islamic systems.

In all these, their reformist programmes bear a striking resemblance to that of the Wahhabis of Arabia and as a matter of fact their adversaries often nickname them Wahhabis.\(^{52}\)

Q. No.1: **What are the arguments for calling Ahle hadeeth movement instead of calling it Islamic movement?**

**Ans:** Islamic movement is a term of wide meaning. All muslims of Shia’ites, Sunnites, Partnerists (Mushriks) and innovators (Bid’atis) and muslims of different opinions and ways can join any group in the name of Islamic movement. But Ahle hadeeth movement is a term having a special meaning where only the muslim who follow the real Tawheed leaving aside Shirk and Bid’at can take part. Secondly, there is no scope for any muslim who is the follower of Rai, the man-made theory, to participate in the Ahle hadeeth movement. Only those persons who unconditionally follow the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth would participate in the Ahle hadeeth movement. Islam can only be found in the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth and no where else. So, we believe Ahle hadeeth movement as the only one unadulterated Islamic movement in real meaning.

Q. No.2: **Unlike the majority muslims, isn't the movement in the name of Ahle hadeeth an effort to make a crack in greater Muslim unity?**

**Ans.** There is slogan for unity in the country. But there is nothing such greater Muslim unity in reality. The reason behind it is that, those who advocate the unity could not place any acceptable basis for this greater unity. As a result, in the name of Islamic movement and in the name of various Mazhabs and Tareeqas, innumerable Islamic parties have been formed in the country. Besides, there are countless number of parties and
groups in the name of politics yet. These are not called cracks by anybody. But these are rather praised in the name of plurality and multiparty democracy. *Ahle hadeeth* movement has cordially invited the muslims of all the groups and factions to be united with only one object of unconditionally accepting the decision of the holy *Quran* and *saheeh Hadeeth*. So, *Ahle hadeeth* movement may be called the only platform for greater unity of the muslims where a formula has been explicitly placed for the muslim unity acceptable to all.

The **second** thing is that, the number is never a measuring rod of truth. The holy *Quran* has forbidden the *muslims* to become worshippers of number (*An'am 6/116*). Rather, be it small or great in number, they have to remain always uncompromising in following the Truth (*Haq*) under all circumstances. The Muslims believe in the holy *Quran* and *saheeh Hadeeth* as the only measuring rod of infallible truth.

The *Ahle hadeeth movement* wants to materialize only that belief. The majority portion of the people throughout the ages, have rejected the invitations to the Truth (*Haq*), and also they will do the same today. So in fear of condemnation of the majority, will the slaves and followers of truth leave the path of Truth and will be merged into the processions of the falsehood ones? Therefore, while considering the greater unity for a greater issue, should remember the instruction of the holy *Quran* to be united in jama’at with the followers of Truth (*Tawbah 9/119*).
Q.No.3: Is it possible to achieve political power through Ahle hadeeth movement in Bangladesh? If not, then how the building of life on the basis of the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth, as claimed by the Ahle hadeeth will be materialized?

Ans. To bestow the Political power on any, depends entirely on the will of almighty Allah. Before the emergence of different Mazhabs, in the whole Muslim areas of the world and even up to 375 A.H. in the then Islamic capital of India at Mansura in Sind, the Ahle hadeeth was on the political power. During the 8th and 9th century hijra, the Ahle hadeeth ruled over Gujrat and the Deccan in India. Who can assure that Allah will not bestow upon them such power once again? This is to remember that it is incumbent on us to invite all to the path of Deen (Islam) and to try our best to make it victorious everywhere. In fact, if the Da’wat is accepted, Allah in exchange may place, in any way, His Deen to the power of administration.

Q.No.4: Implementation of Islam is not possible without the state power. So the Prophet (sm) migrated to Madina and established Islamic state at first. Then He established Islam.

Answer: This talk is not realistic. Islam is a natural religion for mankind. It is not conditional with state power ever. Though undoubtedly a helpful agent. In all circumstances Muslim will try their best for it.

Secondly: How far it is realistic to think that without political power, it is quite impossible to build up life according to the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth? Political power is, of course, necessary for enforcing certain basic clauses of criminal and economic laws like that of blood for blood, cutting hands of a thief, to punish for unlawful sex, and to stop all kinds of
monetary transactions with ‘interest’ by the order of the Government. Any Muslim ruler is bound to do all these acts. He will be held responsible to Allah for not observing these laws. The general Muslims and Islamic organizations will go on with their efforts to rectify the ruling authorities and they themselves will try their best to lead their lives according to the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth. After building opinion of the people in favour of this law, they will try to enforce Islamic laws through stand mechanism. It has to be remembered always that Islam is the universal religion. It is Islamic state or not, either majority or minority, Muslims under all circumstances, will have to lead their lives according to the instructions of Islam. For this reason, it is not a compulsory pre-condition to establish Islamic states everywhere and it is not always possible. Allah did never give responsibility to anybody beyond his capabilities (Baqarah 2/286). Moreover, Allah does not like any one who is highly ambitious and creator of indiscipline (Qasas 28/83).

Thirdly, In the conventional democratic politics, people are the source of sovereign power. On the other hand Allah is the source of sovereign power in Islamic politics. The decisions of majority at the parliament are final in democratic politics. One the other hand in Islamic politics, the laws of Wahi (revelation) are considered final. This is a matter of regret that those who are engaged in politics even in the name of Islamic movement are also believers of the democratic principles i.e. the decision by the majority is final, which is laid down by the British government. For that reason they declare with loud voice that ‘it is natural to reorganize administration of the country according to the Mazhab in which the supporters are larger in number’. Right or wrong is not a matter, only majority is sufficient. But we observed staring with amazement that in
Pakistan a Sunni majority country created in the name of Islam, the first Governor General Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan were Shi’aites and the law Minister Zafrullah Khan was a non-Muslim Qadiani. The will of Allah was materialized in this way.

**Fourthly,** Now-a-days the Islamic political parties, to form coalition with secular political parties are considering it as Hudaibiah treaty of the Prophet (sm). Rather the Rasool (sm) did not compromise with any Tagutee (Man-made) laws on that day. He had tied with treaty cutting the word ‘Rasoolullah’ from the end of His name only. Nevertheless, the leaders of Islamic parties are hamparing real Islamic movement for future being partner of the government and compromising innumerable Tagutee laws. By this way the blame is being imposed only upon the Prophet (sm). It is needless to say that there is no compromise with the usual Shirki politics like this; rather our politics is to change it by changing opinions of the people through motivation works.

The workers of *Ahle hadeeth movement* consider two things as their responsibility. **First**, To forward a plea before almighty Allah on the Day of Resurrection, by observing fundamental responsibility of inviting people to the path of Allah. **Second**, to prepare proofs for Allah against impertinent slaves, so that they may not be able to place before Allah any excuse that they have not been invited to.

And two things they totally leave to Allah alone. If He wishes, he will materialize it earlier or if He prefers, may do it later. **One** of these is to receive Hidayat (righteous path) of the people. **The second one** is the establishment of His Deen on the position of authority in the world. To earn those two things, we consider that one should always try to make
necessary reforms of Aqeedah and 'Amal (faith & practice) of the people by following the political philosophy of Islam of social revolution. Because, the Prophets have given more importance on the change of society than on the change of Government. We also want to follow the way of the Prophets. Because, the change of the Government is never possible without the change of society. And if it is done, it cannot make any permanent influence on the society. As could not be made during the six hundred and fifty years of Muslim rule in India and one hundred ninety years of Christian-English rule in Bangladesh.

Q.No.5: All the groups, involved in Islamic movement are correct. Therefore, joining in any group is sufficient.

Ans. We believe that in every particular matter the correct point is single one, not more than that. We believe that the decision of the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth is the only correct thing and all the rest are incorrect. So we assume that at present for turning back the workers of Ahle hadeeth from their real Islamic movement to the adulterated ones, such kind of deceitful word i.e ‘both this and that are correct’ has been brought out.

Q.No.6: What is the political philosophy of Ahle hadeeth?

Ans. To conduct the creature according to the rule of the creator.

Q.No.7: According to Ahle hadeeth what are the basic principles of making law for the country?

Ans. (1) To accept almighty Allah as the source of sovereign power. (2) To accept the laws of almighty Allah as the standard of infallible truth (3) to consider the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth as the basis of making law. (4) To make Ijtihad on
matters which are not apparent according to the holy Quran, saheeh Hadeeth and Ijma-i-Sahaba. (5) To solve the problems appeared following the Maslak (route) of Muhdidtheen.

Q.No.8: What is the aim and object of Ahle hadeeth movement?

Ans. To earn the satisfaction of Allah by preaching and establishing unmixed Tawheed and by following properly the Kitab and Sunnah in all spheres of life. The social and political aim of Ahle hadeeth movement is to make all out reforms of the society through the reforms of Aqeedah and Amal.

Q.No.9: What are the working systems of Ahle hadeeth movement?

Ans. The working system of Ahle hadeeth movement are two:
(1) To give Da’wat to the path of Allah. (2) To fight against those who oppose to Alllah. This Jihad will be through sacrificing the life, properties, time, labour, speaking, writing and organizational efforts i.e. through all out legal methods. In a word, the working system of Ahle hadeeth movement are two: Da’wat and Jihad (Invitation and Fight).

Q.No.10: What type of society desires Ahle hadeeth movement?

Ans. Ahle hadeeth movement desires such an Islamic society where there would not be any foreign Ism in the name of progress nor would be any Mazhabi narrowness in the name of Islam.

May Allah give strength of building lives in the light of the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth to all Muslim brothers and sisters. Ameen (May Allah grant it)!
Ahle hadeeth : at a glance

1. Who is an Ahle hadeeth? (أهل الحديث في لمحاة)

It is the name of a person who unconditionally follows the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth.

أَلَّذِي يَتَبَعُ الْقُرآنَ وَالسَّنَةَ الصَّحِيحَةَ فِي جَمِيعِ نَواحيِ الْحَيَاةِ مِنْ غَيْرِ شَرْطٍ

2. What is Ahle hadeeth movement? (حركة أهل الحديث ما هي؟)

It is the name of an unadulterated Islamic movement running from the age of the honoured Sahabis, to assemble the people of the world to the basic essence of the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth.

هَذِهِ حَرَكَةٌ إِسْلَامِيَّةٌ خَالِصَةٌ مِنْ زَمِنِ الصَّحَابَةِ رضي الله عنهم إلى اليوم هذا التي تدعو الناس إلى الاعتصام بالكتب والسنة الصحيحة

3. Ahle hadeeth movement for why? (حركة أهل الحديث لماذا هي؟)

The Ahle hadeeth movement is necessary to lead the human society, enclosed in the bonds of their self made Mazhabs, doctrines, Isms and Tareeqas, to the path of infallible truth, given by Allah and shown by the Prophet (sm).

حَرَكَةُ أَهْلِ الْحَدِيثِ مُهْمَةٌ جَدِيدَةٌ لِإِنْهَاةِ النَّاسِ إِلَى الْحَقِّ الْحَالِصِ مِنْ الْكِتَابِ وَالسَّنَةِ الصَّحِيحَةِ وَإِلَزَامِهِمْ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ وَالْطَّرْفِ وَالْفَرْقِ الْحَالِدَةِ
4. Our invitation (دعوتنا)

Come on! build up our lives on the light of the holy Quran and saheeh Hadeeth.

Nous désirons une telle invité – un Hadeeth authentique et la lumière de la sainte Koran.

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نَرْجِعُ أَنْ لَقَدْ ظَحَلَ الْإِلَهَامُ الذِّي لَا تَلِبَ مَعَهُ الْأَحْيَاءُ الْجَانِّيَةُ

Nous désirons une telle société – pas d’Islam moderne et pas d’Ismaéli niaiserie en nom de progrès.

We desire such an Islamic society where there would not be any foreign Ism in the name of progress nor would be any Mazhabi narrowness in the name of Islam.

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سَبِحْنَا اللَّهَمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ أَشْهَدْ أَنَّ لَا إِلَـٰهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ أَكْرَمُ الرَّحْمَٰنُ الرَّحِيمُ

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ وَالْوَالِدِينِ وَلِلْمُؤمِنِينِ يَا مُؤْمِنَّى مََّآ يَقْبُومُ الْحَسَابُ

The End