



The treasure of Allamah Al Muallimi, the Imam Ad Dahabi of our time.

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Abstract

Allamah Abdul Rahman bin Yahya Al Muallimi was originally from Yemen, but stayed around twenty-five years in the Indian Sub-continent, researching manuscripts and compiling works in classical style, especially in the science of hadith. His works were hidden from the world until recently, but once published reached twenty-five volumes. These works show his genius and exceptional scholarly capabilities. He revived the science of hadith, giving it a new life especially through his masterpiece work At Tankeel. He is famous all-round the globe now due to what he has left behind. This is a small introduction to him and his twenty-five-volume treasure, first time in the English language.

Keywords: manuscripts, classical style, hadith, at tankeel.

I. INTRODUCTION

This name is hardly known to even students of knowledge in the sub-continent, while he had spent two and a half decades of his life in the subcontinent, serving knowledge through numerous ways. He's also called as the Imam Dahabi of our time, anyone who busies himself with the sciences associated with Islam, especially Hadith has to go through some of his works. He's known for his masterpiece At Tankeel throughout the globe, his style of writing, depth of research and clarity of objectives reflects in all his works, may Allah be pleased with him.

He's Al Allamah Al Muhadith Abdul Rahman bin Yahya Al Muallimi Al Yamani. He was born in the year 1312 hijri(1895 ce), in the area of Muhakara in San'aa, Yemen. His tribe has been attributed to the tribe of Abu Bakr As Sideeq(Allah is pleased with him), however he himself didn't agree to this, favouring a different opinion in the footnotes on the book Al Ansaab¹ of As Sam-aani.

He was born in a scholarly family, starting the journey of knowledge with the Glorious Qur'an, reciting it upon his father, who was a scholar and one of his relatives, memorizing and learning writing it.

Then going on to study Arabic grammar for a short period of time from his brother Muhammed bin Yahya². Later the Shaykh did a thorough study of Mugnee Al Labeeb of Imam Ibn Hisham Al Ansari for almost an year.

The Shaykh took from the books of his respected father a manuscript of Al Minhaaj of Imam An Nawawi, and recited some of it upon Al Allamah Jaleel Ahmad bin Muhammad Al Muallimi.

The Shaykh had also mastered the science of inheritance at a young age.

He had many other teachers³ with whom he studied different sciences, such as;

- 1) Shaykh Al Allamah Sayid Muhammad bin Ali Al Idreesi.
- 2) Shaykh Al Allamah Salim bin Abdul Rahman.
- 3) Shaykh Al Allamah Abdul Qadir As Sideeqi.

The life of the Shaykh can be broadly divided into three stages:

- 1) First in his home country of Yemen,
- 2) Stay in Deccan in the Indian sub-continent (1345hj to 1371hj), and
- 3) Lastly his stay in the holy city of Mecca (1371hj to 1386hj), before travelling to the Indian subcontinent he had a brief stay of about a year in Indonesia (1344).

The last two parts of the life of the Shaykh were his real voyage on the tides of knowledge, i will shed a little light on the works that the Shaykh produced during this 40-year period (1345hj to 1386hj).

The publication of the works of the Al Allamah was taken up by the muhaqqiqeen of Dar Aalam Al Fawaid situated in the holy city of Mecca, the story dates back to the great scholar of Arabia, Al Allamah Bakr Abu Zaid's wish of serving four giants of this Ummah by putting life into their works by publishing them and bringing to light the lost and hidden treasures of knowledge, two of them from the 8th century hijri, Shaykh Al Islam Ibn Taymmiah and his unique student Imam Ibn Al Qayyam, and two contemporary 14th century hijri giants, Al Allamah Muhammad Al Ameen As Shinqiti and Al Allamah Abdur Rahman bin Yahya Al Muallimi. This giant project took twenty long years for completion, handful of the best muhaqqiqeen, producing a treasure of hundreds of volumes filled with oceans of knowledge, with a highly superior methodology of publication under the direct guidance of Al Allamah Bakr Abu Zaid, may Allah have mercy upon him.

From among these treasures is the 25-volume treasure, the sweat and blood, the hard work of 40 long years, of the Shaykh the muhadith Al Allamah Abdur Rahman bin Yahya Al Muallimi, the Imam Dahabi of our era, may Allah reward him with the best of rewards.

This treasure starts with Al Madkhal, the first volume, it deals with the introduction to the treasure, biography of the Shaykh and some of the letters he wrote.

Below is a summary of the entire treasure, which will act as an introduction to the works of the Shaykh contained in it.

Volume two and three;

Rafu al Ish'tibaah.

Deals with the issues of Aqeedah/doctrine.

Volume four;

Tahqeeq Ul Kalam, written in Indonesia 1344hj. Contains three issues:

- 1) Al Ijhtihad wa At Taqleed,
- 2) As Sunnah wa Al Bid'ah,
- 3) An Nida lil gayebeen wa al mawta.

Volume five;

Imaara-tu-al Quboor fi Al Islam.

Volume six;

Contains ten treaties related to the issues of Aqeedah/doctrine.

Volume seven;

Contains seventeen treatises on At Tafseer. It contains the exceptional treatise Irtibaat Al Aayat fee Surat Al Baqarah, this is one of a kind in this field, a must read for everyone. This treatise shows the strength of Alammah Al Muallimi in the sciences related to the Qur'an.

Volume eight;

Taqeeb aala tafseer surat al feel.

This is a refutation of one of scholars on the Tafseer of Surat Al feel, followed by the Tafseer of the said surah.

Volume nine;

Contains three treatises related to the refutation of the book At Taneeb of Al Kawthari.

Volume ten and eleven;

At tankeel bi maa fee taneeb al Kawthari min al abateel. The masterpiece, first of its kind, not just a book but a science in itself, a must have and study for all students of knowledge. The book can be broadly classified into four parts;

- 1) Fundamentals.
- 2) Narrators.
- 3) Fiqh issues.
- 4) Faith/Aqeedah related issues.

This book showed the world the status of Allamah Al Muallimi in the field of knowledge, especially hadith. I say this book is to him what At Tareeqh Al Kabeer was to Imam Al Bukhari, may Allah have mercy upon him.

One of the Shuyookh told us many years back on the outskirts of Mecca Al Mukarammah;

"Learn manners from this work of Allamah Al Muallimi".

It no doubt teaches a student that practically.

Volume twelve;

Anwaar Al Kashifa, this book uncovers the irregularities and misinterpretation present in the book Azwaa ala As Sunnah. A must read in the section of Aqeedah, it contains pearls related to the science of hadith too.

Volume thirteen;

Kitab Al wuhdaan.

Contains three hundred and thirteen narrators from whom only one person has narrated. Masterpiece in the science of narrators.

Volume fourteen;

Selected biographies (of narrators) from Meezan Al Aitedaal of Al Hafiz Az Dahabi and Tahzeeb At Tahzeeb of Al Hafiz Ibn Hajr.

Volume fifteen;

Fourteen treatises related to hadith and its sciences. A must study for students of hadith.

Volume sixteen, seventeen, and eighteen;

More than thirty treatises related to fiqh/jurisprudence covering a vast scope of the subject, highly useful for both students and scholars.

Volume nineteen;

Five highly useful treatises related to Uthool Al fiqh.

Volume twenty;

Contains treatises related to nahw/grammar, lughah/language and adab/literature.

Volume twenty-one;

Contains an index used for referencing of poetry. Shows how well versed the Allamah was in literature, poetry and language.

Volume twenty-two;

Contains sermons and admonitions.

Volume twenty-three;

This volume deals with the science of tahqeeq un nusoos, the science of studying/reading the manuscript and publishing it through modern means like printing. This is one of the most reputed and difficult sciences to deal with, requiring a very high level of specialization. The Allamah was at par with the leading muhaqiqeen of his time like Ahmad Shakir, may Allah have mercy upon him. The Allamah swam through this sea through his twenty-five year long carrer at Dairatul Maarif Hyderabad Deccan and then at Maktab Al Haram Al Makki, in the holy city of Mecca.

Volume twenty-four;

These are benefits taken from the personal dairies, works, and travel logs of the Shaykh, that he penned down during different stages of his life.

Volume twenty-five;

Contains the different prefaces that the Allamah has written for his works and on classic texts, that are not published within these twenty-five volumes. The prefaces of the priceless tahqeeq of At Tareekh Al Kabeer of Imam Al Bukhari and Al Jarr wa At Tadeel of Imam Ibn Abi Hatim are present in this volume.

The above twenty-five volumes contain the works of the Allamah. Along with his personal works he did tahqeeq upon numerous classical works and published them, some of them are worth mentioning, such as;

- 1) At Tareekh Al Kabeer of Al Bukhari, Dairatul Maarif Hyderabad Deccan, 1360-78hj.
- 2) Al Maani Al Kabeer of Ad Dainoori, Dairatul Maarif Hyderabad Deccan, 1367-69hj.
- 3) Tareeqh Jurjaan of Al Sahmi, 1370hj.
- 4) Al Jarh Wa At Tadeel, Dairatul Maarif Hyderabad Deccan, 1371-1373hj.
- 5) Tazkirat al Huffaz of Ad Dahabi, 1375-77hj.
- 6) Al Muwazah of Al Khateeb, Dairatul Maarif Hyderabad Deccan, 1378-79hj.
- 7) Al Ansaab of As Samaani, published after the death of the Allamah, Dairatul Maarif Hyderabad Deccan, 1386hj.

These are just a few to mention. The style of writing, uniqueness of methodology, strength of argument, beauty of conclusion, vastness of context and a high and thorough foundation is found throughout his works, he was not someone who had just titles written with his name, his works reflect who he was.

I remember one of the Shuyookh telling me, in mecca, that once a renowned scholar came to visit maktab al haram al mecci, he sat down and someone poured tea for him and left, the scholar asked for Al Allamah Al Muallimi since he had come to meet him especially, someone in the room said:

هو من صب الشاي!

(He's the one who poured the tea!).

This great mountain of knowledge, passed away in the year 1386 hijri in the holy city of Mecca and was buried there.

May Allah grant him high status in jannah, aameen.

References

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4. At Tareekh Al Kabeer of Al Bukhari, Dairatul Maarif Hyderabad Deccan, 1360-78hj.
5. Muqadimmah Al Jarh Wa At Tadeel, Dairatul Maarif Hyderabad Deccan, 1371-1373hj.
6. Muqadimah Al Muwazah of Al Khateeb, Dairatul Maarif Hyderabad Deccan, 1378-79hj.