



Smart Revision

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

COMPARISON BETWEEN REFORMERS

Q: Compare and contrast the achievements in movements for the reform of Shah Waliullah and Syed Ahmad Barelvi? [7-14]

ANS: Shah Waliullah and Syed Ahmad Barelvi Shaheed were two figures who made efforts for the revival of Islam in the Sub-Continent. Both had large number of followers. Shah Waliullah lived during 18th century, While Syed Ahmad Shaheed worked during the early 19th century.

Shah Waliullah's main effort and emphasis was on preaching true Islam. He taught and preached in his father's Madrasa and produced a large number of followers who spread his message. He wanted to get rid the Muslim society of un-Islamic ideas and practices which had crept in them. A great scholar, Shah Waliullah translated the holy Quran into Persian and wrote a large number of books so that the Muslims could understand true Islam.

The same was the effort of Syed Ahmad Shaheed. He also wished that Muslims should come to true Islam and give up superstitious ideas and un-Islamic ways and practices. Syed Ahmad was not a scholar he did not write any books or letters to the people as Shah Waliullah did. But Syed Ahmad took practical steps to create a Muslim state where Islamic law and Islamic way of life should prevail. He was of the opinion that the revival of Islam was not possible without political power.

Syed Ahmad got the Idea of Jihad from Shah Waliullah. Syed Ahmad organized the Jihad movement and raised a large contingent of Mujahidin who had great enthusiasm about the revival of Islam. For fighting against non-Muslims forces Shah Waliullah had invited Ahmad Shah Abdali but Syed Ahmad himself took up arms defeated the Sikh forces at Okara and enforced Islamic law in the Peshawar region. His Movement culminated in pure Jihad in which he was martyred.

Both the movements had similar objectives of glorification of Islam. Apparently both failed in bringing out the revival of Islam or Muslim power in India. The political power ultimately went into the hands of the British and the Muslim went on decline. But the impact of both the movements was long lasting because they developed a sense of awareness among the Muslims that efforts should be made to achieve this goal.



Q: What were the attempts of revival of Islam in Sub-Continent during 18th and 19th centuries? [7-14]

ANS: Shah Waliullah, Syed Ahmad Bareilvi Shaheed and Haji Shariat Ullah were the three reformers who made efforts for the revival of Islam in the Sub-Continent. Their works for Islam is given as follows:

Shah Waliullah thought deeply about the problems faced by Muslims. He saw that the decline of Mughal Empire and Islam was due to the fact that the Muslims had left the true path of Islam. So, Shah Waliullah translated the Holy Quran into Persian which was the language of educated Muslims at that time. He also wrote an account about the first four Caliphs of Islam in a way in which it was acceptable to both Shias and Sunnis. He hoped that this would help to heal the division between them. Shah Waliullah wrote letters to the rulers of Muslim states asking them to unite and rise against the non-Muslim forces. He invited Ahmad Shah Abdali to deal with Marathas who were threatening Muslims in Punjab and N.W.F.P. Ahmad Shah Abdali defeated Marathas at the battle of Panipat in 1761 so that they were never able to rise again.

Syed Ahmad was greatly impressed by the preaching and thoughts of Shah Waliullah. He joined the private army of Nawab Amir Khan of Tonk state where he learnt the art of war. He also learnt about the European weaponry including the art of artillery.

Syed Ahmad Shaheed started preaching true Islam (as Shah Waliullah did). But he was of the opinion that there should be a political power behind the preaching for the revival of Islam and Muslim power in India. He founded the Jihad Movement for the restoration and revival of Muslim power in India. His main objective was the establishment of an Islamic state on proper Islamic principles. Also the aim of the Jihad Movement was to liberate the Muslims of the Punjab and N.W.F.P from the Sikh rule. Syed Ahmad's example continued to inspire the future Muslim generations.

The efforts of Haji Shariat Ullah were also very important. Haji Shariat Ullah started the faraizi movement to restore the pride of the Muslims and to remove what he thought were the Hindu practices had crept into their worship. The faraizi movement was important because it gave encouragement to the Muslims at the time when they were demoralized by the oppression they suffered from the Hindus and the British. It brought about a spiritual revival which led to a revival in the Islamic religion in East Bengal. Hindu influences were removed from the Islamic practices. It also had an important political and economic impact. The Bengal peasants became united against the harsh treatment they received. They became aware of their rights and the political unity began to grow amongst them.

