

Critical Analysis of Waheed al-Zaman's Methodology in his Book "Asrār al-Lughā" to write "Ghareeb al-Hadith"

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Abstract

The knowledge of Ghareeb al-Hadith (odd & difficult words of Hadith) is important and difficult art in the Hadith sciences. According to Mohaddiseen, the unawareness of that skill is considered as a major deficiency. Many books have been written on the topic of Ghareeb al-Hadith. Due to the tremendous significance of this skill, the commentators of Hadith put in the best struggle to elaborate the odd and complicated words of Hadith in their commentaries. Allama Waheed al-Zaman has solved this issue of Ghareeb al-Hadith meticulously in his eminent commentary of "Asrār al-Lughā". In Indo-Pak subcontinent, this was the first book written in Urdu language. He has opted different methodologies for this purpose. His most comprehensive method to describe Ghareeb al-Hadith is to elucidate the meaning of words and then he quotes the sayings of the experts in the fields of Ghareeb al-Hadith. At the end, he also gives his own point of view. However in some places, he depends on the opinions of experts and does not his comments. In this article I will try to express and explain on research basis the definition of Ghareeb al-Hadith, its importance, difference between Ghareeb al-Hadith and Hadith al-Ghareeb, and critical analysis of methodology of Waheed al-Zaman to compile his book.

Keywords: Ghareeb al-Hadith, explanation, Waheed al-Zaman, Asrār al-Lughā.

1. Introduction

Thousands of scholars and knowledgeable persons have tried to explore the message of Allah and the message of Holy Prophet (PBUH) to the Ummah, and are still continuing. One of the sciences under which scholars have tried is the Hadith. The words and acts of the Prophet (peace be upon him) are termed as Hadith in the term of the majority of Muhadithin. The most important source of the Qur'anic law is the hadith. Moreover, the important source to understand the Quran is Hadith. The Hadith itself

specifies the difficulties in the Qur'an, the details of its words and explanation of the concepts. But understanding the aims and depth of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) requires a higher understanding of the Arabic language for the Arabs themselves. So it is not difficult to guess for non-Arabs to assess the linguistic value and significance of the hadith.

Allah created His Last Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) in this region of the earth in which the inhabitants had a great proud on their language. Because of their own language, they used to call themselves Arabs i.e. the most elegant of Arab. And the other nations who cannot speak Arabic, used to be called dump. In such an environment, Allah Almighty sent the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) and gave him the kind of wisdom like comprehensive words that amazed the great intellectuals of Arabia. The communication of Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is called Hadith in the term, which is the second major source of religion, otherwise the Qur'an and its understanding are based on this Hadith. Because the Prophet was al-Arab, sometimes He used to say comprehensive words that were not commonly spoken by the Arabs, which is a miracle to His words. Such miracle words are called "Ghareeb ul hadith" in the words of the Prophet (PBUH).

In view of the importance of the Hadith e Rasool (peace be upon him), the Muhadithin-e-Azam focused on it. So, using their abilities in explaining Ghareeb ul Hadith, make it easier for a common reader to understand Hadith. In this regard, different books were also written on the knowledge of Hadith, and while the narrators of Hadith, it was well out of this important duty. Among the scholars who worked on the subject of Ghareeb ul Hadith, our aim is the unique knowledgeable personality of the subcontinent who first wrote the Ghareeb ul Hadith by working in Urdu language and is still considered to have his own unique status in terms of this service. I mean Allama Waheed Zaman, who wrote this scientific treasure in the name of "Asrar ul Lughah" for the people of the region (Sub-continent). Which is now published in the modern edition with the name of "Lughat ul Hadith" (Dictionaries Hadith).

The Qur'an and Hadith are primary sources of Islamic teachings. The Scholars of religion has been serving Islam particularly Allah's message and Prophet's Sunnah through their extensive research contributions and written works. The science of Hadith is one of the Islamic sciences that discusses Prophetic Hadith for distinguishing strong Hadith from Weak Hadith. Hadith is defined as:

"ما أضيف إلى النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم من أقواله أو أفعاله أو تقريره أو صفة خلقية أو خلقية"

"That which is attributed to the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) as regards words, actions or tacit approvals, physical features, and characteristics" (At-Tahaan, 2011, 19).

The Hadith is the major source of the Qur'anic interpretation and provides understanding of the Qur'anic verses. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) was distinct in his speech as mentioned in a Hadith:

"كَانَ كَلَامُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- كَلَامًا فَضْلًا يَفْهَمُهُ كُلُّ مَنْ سَمِعَهُ."

"The speech of the Messenger of Allah (Peace Be Upon Him) was distinct, and everyone who heard it understood it" (Abu Dawud, 2007, Hadith No. 4839).

The Muhaditheen has termed the distinctive words of Hadith as "Ghareeb al-Hadith", which can not be understood by non-Arab people without its explanation. Therefore, Ghareeb al-Hadith defined as literally, "obscure and difficult to understand" and technically, "obscure wordings that occur in the matn (content) of a Hadeeth" (*At-Tahaan, 2011, 19*). Nevertheless, the religious scholars provided awareness and interpretation of these words to facilitate students and readers of Hadith literature. Therefore, they made written contributions in the form of books and their interpretations. In Indo-Pak subcontinent, the scholars extensively contributed to this science among other sciences of Hadith. Among them were Allama Waheed ul Zaman, who had written his book on Ghareeb al-Hadith named as "Asrār al-Lugha". In the new addition, it was published with the name "Lughat al-Hadith". Allama Waheed ul Zaman was a student of Shaykh Syed Nazeer Hussain Dehlvi, and had obtained chain of Hadith from him (Lakhnawi, 1999, 8/814). Abdul Hay Lakhanvi writes about Asrār al-Lugha as,

"ومن احسن كتبه وحيد اللغات في غريب ومفرداته وهو كتاب جليل جمع الفوائد."

"Among the best books of him [Waheed al-Zaman] is 'Waheed al-Lughat Fi Ghareeb al-Hadith', which is distinctive and contains great benefits" (Lakhnawi, 1999, 8/814).

2. Definition and Classification of Ghareeb al-Hadith

Ghareeb is an Arabic word, which means stranger as mentioned in a Hadith:

"كُنْ فِي الدُّنْيَا كَأَنَّكَ غَرِيبٌ أَوْ عَابِرٌ سَبِيلٍ."

"Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a traveller" (Bukhari, Hadith No. 6416).

Literally, Ghareeb means farness from people or the nation as described below:

"الغرب: الذهاب والتنحي عن الناس والغربة والغرب: النوى والبعد، والغربة والغرب التزوح عن الوطن والاعتراب، ورجل غُرب، بضم الغين والراء و غرِيب : يعبد عن وطنه، الجمع غرباء، والاثني، غرِيبَة"

The substance of the poor Ghareeb to the Ghurb (غرب), which means coming away and taking people away, (رجل غرب) is said to be someone who is away from his homeland Its plural comes from (غربا) and feminine from (غرِيبَة). (Ibn Manzoor, 1416H, 1/638).

Similarly, Ghareeb means stranger person, who is far away from country as al-Fayoomi (1412H) wrote:

"غربت الشمس ، أى توارث فى مغيبها و غرب الشخص بضم الراء أى بعد عن وطنه فهو غريب"

Its mean that the sun was set in the place of sunset, likewise, "غرب الشخص" is said when a person has moved away from his homeland. (al-Fayoomi, 1412H, 607)

Technically, Ghreeb denotes difficult words in the sentence, which are not easily comprehensible as Al-Khitābi wrote:

"الغريب من الكلام اما هو الغامض البعيد من الفهم الغرب من الناس ، اما هو البعيد عن الوطن المنقطع عن الأهل"

The word Ghareeb in a Sentence means that are beyond comprehension, as it is difficult to know the details of the person who has gone away from his homeland and family. (Al-Khitābi, 1982, 1/70).

What is the reason for naming Ghareeb ul Hadith? In this regard, Allama Hamad bin Mohammed al-Khattabi (d. 388 AH), in his book "Ghareeb ul Hadith", mentions two reasons:

"أحدهما ان يراد به بعيد المعنى غامضه لا يتناول فهمه الا عن بعد ومعاناة فكر والوجه الآخر ان يراد به الكلام م من

بعدت به الدار ونأى به الخ من شواذ قبائل العرب"

There are two reasons for the name Ghreeb al-Hadith: First, it refers to equivocal words that is not comprehensible with ease; Second, it refers to uncommon words Arab tribes use in their conversation, which are far away from comprehension. (Al-Khitābi, 1982, 1/71).

3. Significance and Types of Ghareeb al-Hadith

The words constitute the sentences for conversation. Therefore, it is important to choose suitable words so that reader or listener can understand and comprehend definitely. Ghreeb al-Hadith has its significance because it is relating to Prophetic Hadith, and better understating of Hadith is possible when it can be translated precisely. The importance of this knowledge can be gauged from the fact that it is also related to most unwell known and inappropriate words in the Hadith. The Hadith of the Prophet is the 2nd main source of the religion of Islam. It is fact that the meaning of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is dependent on words, how can one reach the true meaning if the meaning of the Hadith is not known?, that is why al khatabi says about the importance of this knowledge

"فواجب على من داب فى طلب الحديث ولهج يتبع طريقه"

It is the primary duty of a student to understand and comprehend words of Hadith appropriately. (Al-Khitābi, 1982, 1/71).

In view of the importance of this knowledge, the scholars of the past era used very careful words in Hadith about the words of the 'Ghareeb', and refrained from saying anything about it Imam Ahmad (d. 241H) was asked about Ghreeb al-Hadith, he answered:

"سلوا أصحاب الغريب فإن أكره أن أتكلم في قول رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بالظن فأخطئ."

"Ask the scholars of Ghreeb al-Hadith, because I dislike to talk about Hadith of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) with assumption and make mistake" (Al-Shakir, 1979, 160).

Allama Ibn al-Aseer (606 AH) writes about the importance of this knowledge:

"ان علم الحديث من أشرف العلوم الإسلامية قدراً ، وانه أحد أقطاب الإسلام التي يدور على ها."

The science of Hadith is among unique Islamic sciences, which provides basis to Islam (Ibn al-Aseer, 1979, 1/3).

Ghreeb al-Hadith can be divided into two categories:

- i. Recognition of Words of Hadith.
- ii. Recognition of Meaning and Concept of Hadith.

Allama Ahmed Mohammed Shakir says that:

"ويجب على طالب الحديث اتقانه، والخوض فيه صعب، والاحتياط في تفسير الالفاظ والنبوية واجب."

Indeed, a student of Hadith science should get expertise in this field and because the science belongs to Prophetic words hence, the words should be interpreted carefully (Al-Shakir, 1979, 160).

Hafiz Ibn al-Salah (d. 643 AH) writes about the importance of this knowledge:

"يقبح جهلة باهل الحديث خاصة، ثم باهل العلم عامة، والخوض في ه لىس بالهين."

It is an act of disgrace to be ignorant about this art for a student of Hadith science (Ibn Salah, 1974, 272).

4. Difference between Ghareeb al-Hadith and Hadith al-Ghareeb

The terms Ghareeb al-Hadith and Hadith al-Ghareeb clarify the differences between them. However, to provide an understanding, the terms can be distinguished as follow:

"حديث الغريب: هو ما ينفرد بروايته راوٍ واحد؛ غريب الحديث: هو ما وقع في متن الحديث من لفظة غامضة بعيدة من الفهم لقلة استعمالها."

"Hadith al-Ghreeb is a narration that has been narrated by one reporter; whereas Ghreeb al-Hadith deals with text of the Hadith i.e. the words that contain hidden meanings although they are in multiple narration" (Al-Shakir, 1979, 141; Al-Sanaani, 1997, 412-413; Ibn Salah, 1974, 137).

5. Books on Ghareeb al-Hadith

Scholars of Hadith especially and the scholars of the 'Salaf generally took great interest in it and like the Gharib ul Quran, many books have been written on the subject of Gharib ul Hadith. Following are the famous books written on Ghreeb al-Hadith by the scholars:

(١) كتاب أبي عريدة معمر بن المثنى - ابو عريده معمر بن المثنى (٢٠٩ هـ)

(٢) كتاب أبي الحسن النضر بن شمىل - ابو الحسن النضر بن شمىل (٢٠٤ هـ)

- ٣) غريب الحديث - ابو عبيده القاسم بن سلام (٢٢٤ هـ)
- ٤) غريب الحديث - عبد الله بن مسلم بن قتيبة الدينوري أبو محمد (٢٧٦ هـ)
- ٥) غريب الحديث - العلامة خطابي (٣٨٨ هـ)
- ٦) غريب الحديث - العلامة ابو عبيد الهروي (٤٠١ هـ)
- ٧) الفائق في غريب الحديث - معتزلي مفسر جار الله زحمشري (٥٣٨ هـ)
- ٨) غريب الحديث - أبو الفرج عبدالرحمن بن علي بن محمد ابن الجوزي (٥٩٧ هـ)
- ٩) النهاية في غريب الحديث - ابوالسعادات مجد الدين ابن الاثير (٦٠٦ هـ)
- ١٠) مجمع بحار الانوار في غرائب التنزيل و لطائف الاخبار - علامه طاهر پٹنئی

6. Introduction to Asrār al-Lughā

In Arabic, the complete name of the book (Lughat ul Hadith by Waheed ul Zaman) is “اسرار اللغة مع انوار اللغة الملقب به وحيد اللغات”, which is known as Lughat al-Hadith in present era. The first five volumes of this book was published in 1907 by Maktaba Ahmadi, Lahore and was titled “انوار اللغة ملقب به وحيد اللغات”. Its revised version was published in 1916 in Bangalore by Allama Waheed al-Zaman and was named as “اسرار اللغة الملقب به وحيد اللغات”. Finally, it was published under the title “لغات الحديث” (Lughat al-Hadith) by Numani Kutub Khana, Lahore, Pakistan in 2005 and was edited by the publisher to make easy interpretations where were necessary. Allama Waheed al-Zaman has mentioned the reason and objective of writing this book as,

“It was an inspiration from God to write a book on Lughat Hadith in Urdu and collect the Hadiths of Ahl-e-Sunnah and Imaniyah in order to provide interpretation of Hadith Shareef to all students; so that they can remove their doubts and difficulties about meanings [of Hadith]” (Nadvi, V. 48, 3/76).

7. References of Asrar ul Lughā

Allama Waheed al-Zaman had used the following reference books to compile his book “Asrār al-Lughā”. It is known from revealing his wide range of knowledge and the hard work, he has put into compiling this book.

- ١) النهاية في غريب الحديث والأثر - أبو السعادات المبارك بن محمد الجزري
- ٢) مجمع البحار
- ٣) القاموس المحيط - محمد بن يعقوب الفيروز آبادي
- ٤) الصحاح تاج اللغة وصحاح العربية - إسماعيل بن حماد الجوهري
- ٥) محيط المحيط
- ٦) منتهى الارب
- ٧) مجمع البحرين
- ٨) الدر النثرية في تلخيص النهاية
- ٩) الغريبي

- (١٠) الفائق في غريب الحديث - محمود بن عمر الزمخشري
 (١١) المغرب
 (١٢) شرح النهج العجيب
 (١٣) لسان العرب - محمد بن مكرم بن منظور الأفرقي المصري

8. Methodology of Asrār al-Lughā

Allama Waheed al-Zaman had adopted a facilitating methodology in his book “Lughāt al-Hadith” that a beginner student can easily understand Ghreeb al-Hadith. Following points underpinned his methodology in Lughāt al-Hadith:

- 1) Following language scholars, it is arranged in an alphabetic pattern.
- 2) In this book the word begins from the first line of the page.
- 3) In order to facilitate poorly educated people, the sentences has been written using circumflex.
- 4) Revision of chapters has not been done.
- 5) The sentence arrangement has been done by keeping first letter as chapter and second letter as sub-chapter.
- 6) All meanings of the word has been written in this book.
- 7) The Hadith sentence containing the word has been written with its translation and interpretation.
- 8) The words morphological analysis has been given.
- 9) The book mentions exegesis and instruction of Hadith.
- 10) To elaborate points of differences, he followed four Imams.
- 11) It contains bibliography of the scholars of language.
- 12) This book contains common words from “محيط المحيطة”.
- 13) The literal meaning of Hadith has been taken from “بحار الانوار”.
- 14) It contains summary of the book “الدر النشيرة”.
- 15) The most part of “الفائق” by Allama Zamakhshri, has been translated into Urdu.
- 16) It contains Imamiyya hadiths sources of terminologies from the books “مجمع البحرين و مطلع الذيرين”.
- 17) Allama Waheed al-Zaman includes his own views and stands distinctive in his opinion at various palaces. Because of his views and opinions, it is told about him ‘Shaia’ and ‘Wahabi’.
- 18) He has been argued as a “Shia” or “non-traditional” scholar because of his opinions.
- 19) The book contains topics in an alphabetic pattern with translation in Urdu.
- 20) It contains critique on the scholars of language.

The 'Asrar ul Lughā' of Allama Waheed-ul-Zaman is available with new name nowadays as the 'Lughat ul Hadith'. A few examples of his methodology are given.

ذ: Moulana Waheed ul Zaman Writes about the grammatically (Sarfī) changes in this word that it is an indication noun to indicate towards nearby singular. Zalika or Zanika (ذالک/ذانک) for a far thing. Here is Za (ذ) is indication and kaf (ک) is for addressing, and lam or hamza (همزہ/لام) denotes the distance. Sometimes hay for threat (ہائے تنبیہ) is used on Za (ذ), so it becomes Haza (هذ). Similarly, Zalikuma and Zalikum ((ذالکماو ذالکم)) is used if the addressee are two or more than two. Here Moulana denies this theory without referring to speaker (متکلم) of that view. (Waheed ul Zaman, 2005, 05/02)

بدا: Is discussed here on divorce by laws (fiqha) bases. If someone says before (انت طالق) and adds then (ان دخلت الدار) is conditional like (ان دخلت الدار فانت طالق), if you entered in that house then you will be divorced. So whatever he starts from, the result is same. (ibid, 114/01)

حيث: He explains the Pure and Najis, like he said about water (اذا بلغ الماء قلتين لم يحمل خبثا) When water is around two drums then Najis vanishes. He quoted a Hadith about medicine (نهى عن كل دواء خبيث) Prophet PBUH forbade from every najis medicine. Impure means the Haram (illegal) like pork, wine, dead animals and also forbade from bad taste because it is disliked. Onions, radish and garlic is considered as worse vegetables (شجرة خبيثة). Moreover earning of Adultery girl, price of a dog, earning of cupping and gift of palmist is also considered as Haram (illegal). (Ibid, 883/01)

هلوا: Here (هلم) is used more in Arabic and it is comes in various hadiths. It is verbal word, Same usage for singular and plurals. The people of Bani Tamim say it: هلم، هلي، هلا، هلوا. Its means : Come Here Come early!

بدعة: He writes about fiqh of this word bidah (بدعة) is every new thing without any prior example. He also tells us its gender, its famine is (بدعة), the plural is (بدع). Bidah has two types Hasnah and Sayyeh (حسنه/سيه). He Adds some proofs of hadiths for Bidah Hasnah. (Ibid, 117/01)

9. Characteristics of Waheed al-Zaman's Methodology

Writing work becomes more difficult at this time when it is started from the new topic. Before this book, there was no book on Ghareeb ul Hadith in Urdu, this is a testimony to Allama Waheed Al-Zamana's ability. Lughāt al-Hadith was the first Urdu book in Ghreeb al-Hadith. It was not an easy task to write in the field of Ghreeb al-Hadith. However, Allama Waheed al-Zaman has done it successfully. Following are the characteristics of this book:

1. This book has been written for beginners in the field of Hadith.
2. The phrases contains reflection of grammatical states which are beneficial for both beginners and experts.

3. The terminology has been translated using easy and understandable vocabulary, which provides easy approach to alternative words in Urdu.
4. The book contains comprehensive words morphology and Hadith interpretation. To explain the word of the hadith, the author has accumulated a collection of ancient and modern words and phrases.
5. The book provides collection of the meaning of the terminology using old and modern words in order to give extensive understanding.
6. The author has used Hadith, historical events, personal observations and experiences to elaborate the terminologies.
7. The author methodology has preserved the historical, social, economic, and political events of Arabic and Indo-Pak civilization.
8. The book also contains sayings of scholars, rulers, poets, and writers explaining backgrounds of the sayings.
9. The author critically analyzed the viewpoints of linguistic scholars.

Followings are a few examples of these characteristics:

جربى واذرح: He writes about Hoze Kosar that the two corners are as far from each other as Jarba and Izrah (جربى واذرح). These are two places in Syria. (Waheed ul Zaman, 2005, 13/02)

ابواء: It is a hill between Makkah and Madinah. A village nearby in also called Abwaa. (Ibid, 13/01)

ذكر: He explained male baby is produced while discussing different punctuation (اعراب) of Zakr (ذكر). (Ibid, 20, 21/02)

فارس وعذيب: He writes describing with an example (كان اذا مسالخ فارس الى العرب العذيب) that 'Azaib' and 'Faris' are names of places. (Ibid, 340/02)

ابىن: Abeen is the name of a village. (Ibid, 13/01)

نزول: The story of battle between Hajjaj bin Yousuf and Abdullah bin Zubair RA is discussed.

Conclusion

The present study present an overview of Allama Waheed al-Zaman's methodology in his book "Asrār al-Lughā" to write down "Ghreeb al-Hadith". This is a unique book written in Urdu language to provide awareness and understanding of Ghreeb words used in the Prophetic Hadith. The author has provided meaning of Hadith terminology in alphabetically manner so that a beginner and expert can get benefits and improve one's understanding of Ghreeb al-Hadith. Moreover, the book offers an inclusive approach to Hadith terminology utilizing Sunni and Shia books without emphasizing the authenticity of Hadith.

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