



# Imam Ahmad Rida and refuting the Shi'a<sup>1</sup>

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The saviour of Ahlu's Sunnah, Imam Ahmad Rida Baraylawi, refuted the Shi'a as he had refuted other misguided sects. Generally, there are two groups amongst the Shi'a:

1. Those that consider the first three Khulafa radiyAllahu 'anhum to be rightly guided, but they believe Ali radiyAllahu 'anhu to be greater than them – they are the *Tafziliya*.
2. Those that do not consider the first three Khulafa to be rightly guided and label them Ghasib [those that take wrongfully]. They consider Ali radiyAllahu 'anhu to be Khalifa bila fasl and they disparage many companions, especially Amir Mu'awiya radiyAllahu 'anhu. They are also adamant that Abu Talib accepted Islam.

Imam Ahmad Rida wrote numerous monographs and treatises refuting the Shi'a including:

1. Radd al-Rafadah [1320] – refuting the Rafidis that a Sunni can neither inherit from nor marry them.
2. al-Adilla al-Ta'ina fi Adhan al-Mala'ina [1306] – refuting the Rafidi adhan and the belief of Khalifa bila fasl.
3. I'ali al-Ifada fi Ta'ziyati al-Hind wa Bayan al-Shahada [1321] – the ruling on Ta'ziya and the transmitting the Shahada.
4. Jaza'a Allah 'Aduwwa bi Ibanihi Khatm al-Nubuwwa [1317] – refuting the Mirza'is and Rafidis.
5. Ghayat al-Tahqiq fi Imam al-Ali wa al-Siddiq [1331] – research on the first rightly guided Khalifa.
6. al-Kalam al-Bahi fi Tashbih al-Siddiq bi al-Nabi [1297 – Arabic] – the similarities of Siddiq Akbar with the Prophet sallAllahu 'alaihi wasallam.
7. al-Zulal al-Anqa min Bahri Sabqat al-Atqa [1300] – the tafsir of the verse *Inna akramakum indallahi atqakum* and the qualities of Siddiq Akbar radiyAllahu 'anhu.

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<sup>1</sup> The original can be read at <http://tinyurl.com/vfjhcep>

8. Matla' al-Qamarayn fi Ibanati Sabqat al-Umarayn [1297] – a detailed work on the precedence of Shaykhayn.
9. Wajh al-Mashuq bi Jalwat Asma' al-Siddiq wa al-Faruq [1297] – the names of Shaykhayn that are in the hadith.
10. Jam'a al-Qur'an wa Bima 'Azawhu al-Uthman [1322] – how the Qur'an was gathered and why Uthman radiyAllahu 'anhu is specifically called *Jami' al-Qur'an*.
11. al-Bushra al-Ajila min Tuhafa Ajila [1300] – refuting the Tafziliya and insulters of Amir Mu'awiya radiyAllahu 'anhu.
12. Arshu al-I'zaz wa al-Ikram li Awwali Maluk al-Islam [1312] – the merits of Amir Mu'awiya radiyAllahu 'anhu.
13. Dhabbu al-Ahwa'i al-Wahiya fi Babi al-Amir Mu'awiya [1312] – answering the insulters of Amir Mu'awiya radiyAllahu 'anhu.
14. Ahlam al-Sahabati al-Muwafiqin li al-Amir Mu'awiya wa Umm al-Mu'minin [1312] – which companions were with Umm al-Mu'minin and Amir Mu'awiya.
15. al-Ahadith al-Rawiya li Madhi al-Amir Mu'awiya [1313] – the hadiths that mention the merits of Amir Mu'awiya.
16. al-Jaruhu al-Walij fi Batni al-Khawarij [1305] – refuting the Tafziliya and the transgressive.
17. al-Samsam al-Haydari 'ala Humqi al-'Ayyari al-Muftari [1304] – refuting the Tafziliya and the transgressive.
18. al-Ra'ihatu al-'Anbariya 'an al-Jamrati al-Haydariya [1310] – the issue of Tafzil and Tafzil in all aspects.
19. Lam'at al-Sham'a li Huda Shi'at al-Shan'a [1312] – answering 7 questions on Tafzil and Tafsir.
20. Sharh al-Matalib fi Mabath Abi Talib [1316] – proving from 130 books of Tafsir and 'Aqida that Abu Talib did not accept Islam.

Apart from these, he wrote numerous monographs and odes in praise of Ghawth al-A'adham. These too are refuting the Shi'a because they do not believe in the Ghawth because he believed in the merits of the companions.

### **Debate with Tafzilis**

In 1300, the Tafziliya of Bareilly, Badayun, Sanbhal and Rampur colluded and announced a debate against Imam Ahmad Rida. They elected Mawlana Muhammad Hasan Sanbhali, author of *Tansiq al-Tatam fi Masnad al-Imam* and others as the debaters. In those days, Imam Ahmad Rida was under the treatment of a new doctor who first prescribed medicine of one kind and was to prescribe a purgative at a later date. With the help of this doctor, it was

agreed that the debate would be organised for the day before the purgative is given. This way, Imam Ahmad Rida will refuse to partake in the debate due to debility, otherwise, the doctor will advise against it anyway. But, Imam Ahmad Rida accepted the challenge. The doctor sternly advised against it but the Imam replied:

I am ready to die during the debate and am not willing to live after refusing to partake.<sup>2</sup>

Even in this state, he sent 30 questions to Mawlana Muhammad Hasan Sanbhali who showed true honesty by admitting that anyone with a Tafzili 'aqida cannot answer these questions. He mounted to his carriage and returned home. Details of this incident can be seen in *Fath Khaybar* [1300].

Mawlana Zafar al-Din Bihari writes regarding Mawlana Sanbhali:

Thereafter, he wrote a marginalia to *Sharh 'Aqayid* entitled *Nadhm al-Farayid* in which he supported the Ahlu's Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Hayat-e-A'la Hazrat, 1:13, Mawlana Zafar al-Din Bihari

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.