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Email: [jurnalhadis@kuis.edu.my](mailto:jurnalhadis@kuis.edu.my) Web: [www.journal.kuis.edu.my/hadis/](http://www.journal.kuis.edu.my/hadis/)

## ***CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF WAHEED AL-ZAMAN'S METHODOLOGY IN HIS BOOK "ASRĀR AL-LUGHA" TO WRITE "GHAREEB AL-HADITH"***

**Muhammad Akram Hureri**

Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia; PWWB Lhr  
(WWHSS Multan). E-mail: [mahurary@gmail.com](mailto:mahurary@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*The knowledge of Ghareeb al-Hadith (odd & difficult words of Hadith) is an important and difficult art in the Hadith sciences. According to Muhadithin, 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. In the end, he also gives his 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.*

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## 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 continuing. One of the sciences under which scholars have tried is the Hadith. The words and acts of the Prophet (PBUH) 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 critical 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. Nevertheless, understanding the aims and depth of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) 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 tremendously proud of their language. Because of their language, they used to call themselves Arabs, i.e. the most elegant of Arabs. Furthermore, the other nations who cannot speak Arabic used to be called dump. In such an environment, Allah Almighty sent the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and gave him the kind of wisdom like comprehensive words that amazed the great intellectuals of Arabia. The communication of Prophet (PBUH) is called Hadith in the term, which is the second primary 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).

Keeping in view the importance of the Hadith, the Muhadithin 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 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 al-Hadith*, our aim is the unique knowledgeable personality of the subcontinent who first wrote the *Ghareeb al-Hadith* by working in Urdu language and is still considered to have his unique status in terms of this service. I mean Allama Waheed al-Zaman, who wrote this scientific treasure in the name of *Asrar al-Lugha* for the people of the region (Sub-continent), which is now published in the modern edition with the name of *Lughat al-Hadith* (Dictionaries Hadith).

The Qur'an and Hadith are primary sources of Islamic teachings. The Scholars of religion have been serving Islam particularly Allah's message and Prophet's (PBUH) 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 reliable 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 خَلْقِيَّة أو خُلُقِيَّة"

“That which is attributed to the Prophet (PBUH) 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 an understanding of the Qur’anic verses. The Prophet (PBUH) was distinct in his speech as mentioned in a Hadith:

"كَانَ كَلَامُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ- كَلَامًا فَصَلًّا يَفْهَمُهُ كُلُّ مَنْ سَمِعَهُ."

“The speech of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) 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 al-Zaman, who had written his book on *Ghareeb al-Hadith* named as *Asrār al-Lughā*. In the new addition, it was published with the name *Lughat al-Hadith*. Allama Waheed al-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-Lughā* as:

"ومن أحسن 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 excellent 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 traveler” (al-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 النزوح عن الوطن والاعتراب، ورجل غُرب، بضم الغين والراء و غريب : بعبد عن وطنه، الجمع غرباء، والائنتى، غريبة"

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

Similarly, *ghareeb* means stranger person, who is far away from the country as al-Fayoomi (1992: 607) wrote:

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

*It is mean that the sun was setting in the place of sunset; likewise, " غرب الشخص " is said when a person has moved away from his homeland.*

Technically, *ghareeb* denotes difficult words in the sentence, which are not easily comprehensible as Al-Khitābi (1982, 1/70) 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.*

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 al-Hadith*, mentions two reasons:

"احدهما ان يراد به بعيد المعنى غامضه لا يتناوله الفهم الا عن بعد ومعاناة فكر والوجه الاخر ان يراد به الكلام م من بعدت به الدار ونأى به المحل من شواذ قبائل العرب"

*There are two reasons for the name Ghareeb al-Hadith: First, it refers to equivocal words that are 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 the reader or listener can understand and comprehend definitely. *Ghareeb 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 second main source of the religion of Islam. It is fact that the meaning of the Prophet (PBUH) is dependent on words, how can one reach the true meaning if the meaning of the Hadith is not known? that is why al-Khatibi says about the importance of this knowledge:

"فواجب على من داب في طلب الحديث ولهرج يتبع طريقه"

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

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

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

*"Ask the scholars of Ghareeb al-Hadith, because I dislike to talk about Hadith of the Prophet (pbuh) with assumption and make a mistake"* (Al-Shakir, 1979, 160).

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

"ان علم الحديث من أشرف العلوم الاسلامية قدراً ، وانه أحد أقطاب الاسلام التي يدور علىها."

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

*Ghareeb 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 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 فيه ليس 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 لقللة استعمالها."

*"Hadith al-Ghareeb is a narration that has been narrated by one reporter; whereas Ghareeb al-Hadith deals with text of the Hadith, i.e. the words that contain hidden meanings although they are in multiple narrations"* (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 *Gharaib al-Quran*, many books have been written on the subject of *Ghareeb al-Hadith*. Following are the famous books written on *Ghareeb al-Hadith* by the scholars:

- i. كتاب أبي عبيدة معمر بن المثنى - ابو عبيده معمر بن المثنى ( 209هـ )
- ii. كتاب أبي الحسن النضر بن شمیل - ابوالحسن النضر بن شمیل ( 204هـ )
- iii. غريب الحديث - ابو عبيده القاسم بن سلام ( 224هـ )
- iv. غريب الحديث - عبد الله بن مسلم بن قتيبة الدينوري أبو محمد ( 276هـ )
- v. غريب الحديث - العلامة خطابی ( 388هـ )

- .vi غريب الحديث - العلامة ابو عبيد ال هروى (401 هـ)
- .vii الفائق فى غريب الحديث - معتزلى مفسر جار الله زمخشري (538 هـ)
- .viii غريب الحديث - أبو الفرج عبدالرحمن بن علي بن محمد إبن الجوزي (597 هـ)
- .ix النهاية فى غريب الحديث - ابوالسعادات مجد الدين ابن الاثير (606 هـ)
- .x مجمع بحار الانوار فى غرائب التنزيل و لطائف الاخبار - علامه طاهر پٽنى

## 6. Introduction to *Asrār al-Lugha*

In Arabic, the complete name of the book *Lughat al-Hadith* by Waheed al-Zaman) is "اسرار اللغة مع انوار اللغة الملقب به وحيد اللغات" which is known as *Lughat al-Hadith* in the present era. The first five volumes of this book were published in 1907 by Maktaba Ahmadi, Lahore and was titled "انوار اللغة ملقب به وحيد اللغات". Its revised version was published in 1916 in Banglore 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 *Lughaat Hadith* in Urdu and collect the *Hadiths of Ahl-e-Sunnah and Imamiyah* 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 al-Lugha*

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

- i. النهاية فى غريب الحديث والأثر - أبو السعادات المبارك بن محمد الجزري
- ii. مجمع بحار الأنوار فى غريب التنزيل ولطائف الأخبار - محمد طاهر الصديقي الفتني
- iii. القاموس المحيط - محمد بن يعقوب الفيروزآبادي
- iv. الصحاح تاج اللغة وصحاح العربية - إسماعيل بن حماد الجوهري
- v. محيط المحيط - بطرس البستاني

.vi	منتهى الارب - عبدالرحيم بن عبدالكريم
.vii	مجمع البحرين - علامه مظفر الدين احمد
.viii	الدر النشير فى تلخيص النهاية - جلال الدين عبد الرحمن بن أبى بكر السيوطي
.ix	الغريبين فى القرآن والحديث - أحمد بن محمد الهروي أبو عبيد
.x	الفائق فى غريب الحديث - محمود بن عمر الزمخشري
.xi	المغرب
.xii	شرح النهج العجيب - لابن أبى الحديد
.xiii	لسان العرب - محمد بن مكرم بن منظور الأفرقي المصري

## 8. Methodology of *Asrār al-Lugha*

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

- i. Following language scholars, it is arranged in an alphabetic pattern.
- ii. In this book, the word begins from the first line of the page.
- iii. In order to facilitate poorly educated people, the sentences have been written using circumflex.
- iv. The revision of chapters has not been done.
- v. The sentence arrangement has been done by keeping the first letter as a chapter and second letter as sub-chapter.
- vi. All meanings of the word have been written in this book.
- vii. The Hadith sentence containing the word has been written with its translation and interpretation.
- viii. The words morphological analysis have been given.
- ix. The book mentions exegesis and instruction of Hadith.
- x. To elaborate points of differences, he followed four Imams.
- xi. It contains a bibliography of the scholars of language.
- xii. This book contains common words from "محيط المحيط".
- xiii. The literal meaning of Hadith has been taken from "بحار الانوار".
- xiv. It contains a summary of the book "الدر النشير".
- xv. The most of "الفائق" by Allama Zamakhshari, has been translated into Urdu.
- xvi. It contains Imamiyya hadiths sources of terminologies from the books "مجمع البحرين و مطلع النيرين".

- xvii. Allama Waheed al-Zaman includes his views and stands distinctive in his opinion at various palaces. Because of his views and opinions, it is told about him ‘Shaia’ and ‘Wahabi.’
- xviii. He has been argued as a “Shia” or “non-traditional” scholar because of his opinions.
- xix. The book contains topics in an alphabetic pattern with translation in Urdu.
- xx. It contains a critique of the scholars of language.

The *Asrar al-Lugha* of Allama Waheed al-Zaman is available with a new name nowadays as the *Lughat al-Hadith*. A few examples of his methodology are given.

ذًا Moulana Waheed al-Zaman writes about the grammatically (Sarfi) changes in this word that it is an indication noun to indicate towards nearby singular. *Zalika* or *Zanika* (ذالك/ ذانك) for a far-thing. Here *Za* (ذ) is an indication and *kaf* (ك) is for addressing, and *lam* or *hamza* (لام/ همزة) denotes the distance. Sometimes hay for threat (هائسے تنبيه) is used on *Za* (ذ), so it becomes *Haza* (هنا). Similarly, *Zalikuma* and *Zalikum* (ذالكماو ذالكم) are used if the addressee is two or more than two. Here Moulana denies this theory without referring to speaker (متكلم) of that view (Waheed al-Zaman, 2005, 05/02).

انت is discussed here on divorce by-laws (fiqh) bases. If someone says before (ان دخلت الدار) and adds then (ان دخلت الدار فانت طالق) 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).

خبث: He explains the Pure and *Najis*, as 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 نوء خبث) 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, the price of a dog, earning of cupping, and the gift of palmist is also considered as *Haram* (illegal) (Ibid, 883/01).

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

بدعة: He writes about the fiqh of this word *bidah* (بدعة) is every new thing without any prior example. He also tells us its gender, its feminine is (بدعة), the plural is (بدع). *Bidah* has two types *Hasnah* and *Sayyeh* (سيه/ حسنه). 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 al-Hadith* in Urdu; this is a testimony to Allama Waheed Al-Zaman’s ability. *Lughāt al-Hadith* was the first

Urdu book in *Ghareeb al-Hadith*. It was not an easy task to write in the field of *Ghareeb al-Hadith*. However, Allama Waheed al-Zaman has done it successfully. Following are the characteristics of this book:

- i. This book has been written for beginners in the field of Hadith.
- ii. The phrases contain reflection of grammatical states which are beneficial for both beginners and experts.
- iii. The terminology has been translated using easy and understandable vocabulary, which provides easy approach to alternative words in Urdu.
- iv. 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.
- v. The book provides a collection of the meaning of the terminology using old and modern words in order to give extensive understanding.
- vi. The author has used Hadith, historical events, personal observations, and experiences to elaborate on the terminologies.
- vii. The author's methodology has preserved the historical, social, economic, and political events of Arabic and Indo-Pak civilization.
- viii. The book also contains sayings of scholars, rulers, poets, and writers explaining backgrounds of the sayings.
- ix. The author critically analyzed the viewpoints of linguistic scholars.

Followings are a few examples of these characteristics:

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 10. Conclusion

The present study presents an overview of Allama Waheed al-Zaman's methodology in his book *Asrār al-Lughā* to write down *Ghareeb al-Hadith*. This is a unique book written in Urdu language to provide awareness and understanding of *Ghareeb* words used in the Prophetic Hadith. The author has provided meaning to

Hadith terminology in an alphabetical manner so that a beginner and expert can get benefits and improve one's understanding of *Ghareeb 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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