
Water Protection in Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattvi Teachings

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Abstract

This paper reflects the principles of saving and protecting water from environmental pollution according to the Islamic teachings. Of course, it highlights those principles as presented in Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattvi teachings. Also, it expresses Makhdoom Thattvi's significant contributions to Islamic knowledge, especially in Quranic interpretation, Hadith, and Fiqh, while promoting Shariah and eradicating un-Islamic practices in Sindh. His efforts strengthened the beliefs of Ahl-e-Sunnah and played a crucial role in the religious revival of Sindh during his time. In Islamic teachings, water is considered one of the greatest blessings given to man, and life springs from it. Preservation of water is, therefore, a responsibility that can hardly be overemphasized. Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattvi, a renowned Sufi and scholar of Sindh, strongly laid emphasis on water conservation and environmental protection in his literature.

This paper examines his teachings in the present challenges and looks forward to finding solutions to problems of water scarcity, pollution, and sustainable development. The study illustrates how the teachings of Islam, coupled with Thattvi's teachings, contribute to reducing environmental issues in today's world.

Keywords: Water Conservation, Environmental Protection, Islamic Teachings, Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattvi, Water Pollution, Sustainable Development, Modern Environmental Challenges

Introduction

Now environmental conservation and prevention of water pollution have emerged as the most urgently needed things in today's world. Increasing population, industrial development, and the haphazard exploitation of

natural resources are now affecting human survival and ecology. Water pollution for example has endangered human beings as well as the environment. In view of Islam, it is his righteousness to describe water as a great reward, hence the preservation of water has been highlighted as an important task. The counseling that Muslim scholars provide is of great significance in this regard. Makhdoom Muhammad Thattvi, who was a famous scholar of Sindh, also emphasized the title of water conservation and its utilization in his teachings. His thoughts and advice are the best examples of solving problems in the current situation. This research shall seek the problems of water pollution and their importance against the lessons of his teaching within new world challenges.

Historical Background

Sindh has always been a great center of Islamic civilization in the subcontinent, where the lights of knowledge and wisdom have been kindled and Islamic teachings have flourished. Sufi scholars and saints of this region have always remained active in serving Islamic teachings and the faith. Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattvi was an important intellectual figure who, apart from working on religious issues, also promoted the public towards social and moral principles. His teachings not only had the fundamental tenets of Islam but also included guidelines to protect the environment, to conserve water, and for better use of natural resources. He thought it wrong to be wasting Allah's blessings and that human beings should be responsible in the use of natural resources.

Environmental Awareness and Water Pollution

Water is one of the elementary needs for humans. While life can't be pictured without air, it is equally unable to be depicted without water. The significance and use of water not only means the survival of humans but also all forms of life. Such a need for water calls for an adequate supply of fresh and crystal-clear water everywhere in the Earth. If water gets polluted, then instead of sustaining life, it brings death.

Water pollution occurs when substances are added to water that render it useless. The substance causing water impurity consists of garbage that is heaped on streets, roads, and other areas in developed towns from homes, quarters, and tuck-shops, the drainage system, the cities and chemical manure and poisonous pesticides meant for crop farming. When these contaminants enter water resources, which include streams, canals, rivers, and the ocean, then the waters become polluted. Other sources of water pollution come from major industrial establishments or the rupture of oil carriers and shipping vessels carrying radioactive industrial effluent, besides the nuclear plants' rejection of recycled water into open seawater. Some animals contribute to spreading water pollution.

In irrigating, when such water from industrial factories is used, the grains and vegetables produced from that water get consumed by humans. People develop various diseases including skin disorders. When contaminated water from populations is mixed in clean water streams, levels of ammonia, phosphates, and nitrates are increased in the water, and oxygen levels begin to decline, posing significant threats to aquatic life. Similarly, oil and harmful products that find their way to the water through accidents by ships cause the killing of aquatic animals. Dirt and sand particles that fall in the water affect the canal, river, or lake flow, while rubbish causing pollution in the water brings difficulties to aquatic lives that make such water problematic to crops and trees.

Today, water pollution has emerged as a plague, so a person who has pure drinking water is considered blessed to live in this world. According to modern science research, the consumption of contaminated water kills 2.2 million people per year. The global population residing in regions or nations experiencing water scarcity is increasing. This figure is predicted to increase to 66% by 2025.(Environment and Islam, 2003)

Islamic Teachings for Eliminating Water Pollution

It provides exemplary guidance to prevent water pollution. Water is essential in the universe and protecting it has been one of the major aspects of Islamic teachings. The special instructions of Islam not only give measures to keep the water free from pollution but also leave eternal imprints for humanity to prevent water pollution. If the Lord's commandments to avoid water pollution are heard through an open heart, perhaps the idea of pollution never existed.

There are two major causes of water pollution: one is the wastage of water, and the other is the inclusion of dirt and pollution in clean water. Islamic teachings provide ideal solutions to avoid these factors contributing to water pollution.

The excessive use of clean water is a major cause of water pollution. Considering the value and importance of water, Islam prohibits its unnecessary wastage. Undoubtedly, water is a great blessing from Allah, and its usage is the best means of expressing gratitude for His blessings. However, exceeding limits in its use is discouraged. All of Allah's creations are intended for humans to fulfill their needs, but guidance is given to adopt moderation in their use and to avoid extravagance.

Every drop of clean water matters and should not be wasted. The Holy Quran advises believers to enjoy all the blessings that the universe has to offer, without unnecessary waste. The verse says: "Eat and drink but be not excessive. Indeed, He does not like the excessive." (Al Qur'an 4:31, n.d.)

The greatest injustice and ingratitude towards the blessings of Allah is making indiscriminate use of his natural resources without any rule or regulation. Gratitude for blessings is manifested when they are protected. Thus, Allah has given a very apt example in the Holy Quran of a town that was living in peace and was obtaining sustenance from every quarter. But when the inhabitants of that town were unthankful to Allah for such blessings, He made them taste the punishment of hunger and fear.

Water is most prominent in Islam in terms of purity, cleanliness, and human existence. Its sanctity and use are emphasized in the Quran and Hadith. For instance, Allah says in the Holy Quran: "And we created every living thing from water." (Al Qur'an 21:30, n.d.)

This verse simply means that water is a foundation of life and that its usage should be cautious and responsible. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also emphasized preventing wastage of water in different Hadiths. He said in one Hadith: "Do not waste water, even if you are at a flowing river." (Ibn Majah, 1999)

This Hadith is teaching that even in plentiful water, wastage should not be allowed. In view of this tradition, Islam has socially forbidden and declared morally evil the act of wasting water.

The life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is a perfect example for all of humanity, and success in both this world and the Hereafter lies in following his Seerah (life and teachings). If a person lives his life concerning water usage by taking inspiration from the character of the Prophet ﷺ, the issue of water pollution might cease to exist. The extent of the Prophet ﷺ's caution in water consumption can be understood from the amount of water he used. The Prophet ﷺ himself would perform ablution with less than a liter of water, using just one mudd, and he would perform a full bath using only one sā' of water. (Bukhari, 1999)

According to modern measurements, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would use a total of one mudd of water, equivalent to 554 grams or 688 milliliters, for ablution, and a total of one sā' (four mudds), equivalent to 2175 grams or approximately three and a half liters, for a full bath. Today, it is hard to imagine how so little water could be enough for bathing, especially when the Prophet ﷺ had long hair, which would require more water. In fact, the Prophet ﷺ was teaching humanity the principle of minimal water consumption, a lesson so profound that even those who today discuss water pollution as a critical issue cannot fathom using so little water in their own lives. (Hullaq, 2007)

The concept of "Sadd al-Dhara'i," blocking the means, in Islamic jurisprudence and principles seems to be the deletion of evil or harmful factors at the very roots. Preventing water pollution and optimum usage of it

enforces this principle of "Sadd al-Dhara'i," which talks about evil causes being removed. Another well-known principle of Islamic law is "La Darar wa La Dirar," which says that harm or injury is not permissible. Any activity that causes harm to others must be abandoned. In this regard, addressing water pollution can be in complete harmony with the spirit of Islamic teachings. (Hasan, 2000)

Introduction of Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattwi

Sindh is a small part of the Indian subcontinent, but historically, culturally, and intellectually, its history has always been unique. The history of Sindh is historically recognized, and books on history and personalities testify to the significant contributions of Sindh and its people in the world of knowledge. Renowned Sindhi scholars and men of letters are well known in fields such as tafsir (exegesis), hadith, fiqh (jurisprudence), history, and literature, and their names are honored in the pages of history. Islam first entered the subcontinent through Sindh, which established an atmosphere of monotheism, prophethood, and brotherhood here. Everywhere, mosques, mihrabs, pulpits, and madrasas were built, where distinguished individuals, scholars, speakers, and pious people began teaching the message of monotheism and prophethood to the people of Sindh and the region.

Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thatvi in the house of Abdul Ghafur was born on 10th Rabi' al-Awwal 1104 AH, corresponding to 19th November 1692, in Bathoro. (Wafai, n.d.) Makhdoom Thatvi received his education in Persian, Arabic, and memorization of the Quran from his noble father. (Thatvi, n.d.) He attained a certificate of completion from Makhdoom Ziauddin. (Mehr, n.d.) During his journey to the Haramain (the Holy Cities of Makkah and Madinah), he obtained a certification in the science of Hadith from Sheikh Abdul Qadir Makki and Sheikh Abu Tahir Muhammad Madani. (Sheikh, n.d.)

Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim was proficient in Arabic, Persian, and Sindhi languages simultaneously. He addressed scholarly and complex issues with great precision and sound reasoning. His speeches and writings were highly comprehensible yet filled with strong arguments. In his era, he extensively wrote on all the issues that arose and did justice to them. He composed poetry in all these languages and authored approximately 350 books in them. In his time, no other scholar or writer possessed such mastery over multiple languages or the distinction of authoring so many books. (Qadri, 2002)

The person who is born and lives in a particular land naturally loves that land. During the time of Makhdoom thatvi, someone wrote a book opposing Sindh and its people. Makhdoom thatvi promptly responded to this book and wrote a great encomium about Sindh, which describes the

greatness of Sindh. This was a special characteristic of Makhdoom Thatvi, as no scholar before him had written a book in this manner to express love for the homeland and the glory of Sindh. Additionally, another unique feature of Makhdoom thatvi' was that in the preface of each book, he would always write "Sindhi" alongside his name.(Qadri, 2002)

Makhdoom Thatvi's nature was dignified and self-respecting, and he was free from flattery, bias, and malice. Therefore, the element of truth and righteousness was prominent in his writing, speeches, and words. He even wrote letters to the rulers of his time about religion and truth. He offered constructive criticism on intellectual issues with the scholars of his time, but it is incorrect to label someone who speaks the truth as biased. Since Makhdoom Thatvi's life was in accordance with principles and Shariah, and his actions and words were adorned with truth, he never indulged in favoritism or unnecessary concern for anyone. He remained steadfast in his principles of truth until the end. Although some people leveled false accusations against him in this regard, Makhdoom thatvi's commitment to truth remained one of his significant qualities.

Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattvi's contribution for revival of Deen

Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattvi was a great scholar, a perfect saint, and a devoted lover of the Prophet ﷺ. He was steadfast in adhering to Shariah. Thus, he took on the responsibility, in accordance with the commands of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, to enlighten others with his knowledge and to teach the creation of Allah the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. He consistently strived to enjoy good and forbid evil. Makhdoom Thatvi dedicated his days and nights to upholding the Shariah rulings and spreading the message of righteousness. He never hesitated to speak the truth, regardless of criticism or opposition, as truthfulness requires one to remain fearless and uncompromising in the face of challenges.

Since the Holy Quran is the source of all religious knowledge, Makhdoom Thatvi dedicated significant attention to Quranic sciences, including Tafsir (interpretation), the virtues of the Quran, Qira'at (recitation), and Tajweed (pronunciation rules). He authored numerous books on these topics. In this way, he laid the foundation for the Sindhi translation and interpretation of the Quran.

Although the first Persian translation of the Quran in the subcontinent was done by Makhdoom Sarwar Noah Halai (d. 998 AH), the initiation and honor of translating and interpreting the Quran in the Sindhi language came through the pen of Makhdoom thatvi. His work, Tafsir Hashimi, holds great importance, as it is a remarkable interpretation of the last part of the Quran written in his mother tongue, Sindhi. In Salah (prayer),

every individual specifically recites short surahs from the last part ("Amma") of the Quran. For this reason, Makhdoom Thatvi began his interpretation with this final part.(Qadri, 2002)

Makhdoom thatvi adhered to the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) throughout his life. To enhance his knowledge of Hadith, he traveled to the sacred lands of Hijaz, where he became a distinguished scholar of Hadith before returning to his homeland. Most of his books are based on evidence derived from the sayings of the Prophet (PBUH). Among his notable works is *Hayat al-Qari bi Atraf al-Bukhari* and other writings, highlighting that after the Quran, the Sunnah of the Prophet is the complete guide and the perfect model for humanity.

In matters of Islamic jurisprudence, Makhdoom Thatvi was regarded as the reformer (Mujaddid) of his time. There was no fiqh-related issue that he did not address with his scholarly insight and expertise. He authored numerous treatises on fiqh, ranging from concise writings to comprehensive works. His *Bayaz Hashimi* is a renowned masterpiece and is considered a monumental work in Islamic jurisprudence, often described as an encyclopedic contribution to religious knowledge.

Sufism spiritually completes a person and strengthens faith in the Hereafter. It nurtures the inner world of the heart, and both external knowledge and inner wisdom are essential. Makhdoom Thatvi took the oath of allegiance (bay'ah) and received the leadership (khilafat) in the Qadri order. Although being associated with Sufis is considered a blessing, during Hazrat Makhdoom thatvi's time, some Sufis introduced innovations (bid'at), superstitions, and un-Islamic practices under the name of Sufism, causing confusion within the tradition. This is why he disapproved of the way of those Sufis who did not observe the principles of Sharia. Instead of following Sharia, they made excuses and devised tricks. Makhdoom Thatvi was not a dry jurist (faqih); he was a scholar who had both spiritual affiliation (nisbat) and leadership (khilafat). He consistently explained the true spirit and essence of Sufism, clarified its reality, and made efforts to eliminate un-Islamic practices. By issuing orders, he eradicated innovations. Alongside being a learned scholar, he was a pious Sufi, one who was both spiritually enriched and a guide for others.(Qadri, 2002)

Makhdoom Thatvi played a significant role in strengthening the beliefs of the Ahl-e-Sunnah and reviving the commandments of Islam. Through his efforts, remarkable achievements were accomplished that became clear evidence of the support and promotion of religion. Many polytheists and enemies of Islam benefitted greatly from his teachings and were blessed with the gift of faith. He corresponded with rulers like Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah, making appeals to them for the strengthening of

religion and having various decrees issued through them. His presence was nothing less than a rare gem for the Muslim community.

Makhdoom Thatvi's scholarly stature and religious services were not only acknowledged by the common people and scholars but also deeply admired by the rulers of his time. Once, Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhoro visited Makhdoom Thatvi and was so impressed by his God-given abilities that he issued an order appointing him as the Sheikh-ul-Islam of Sindh. His writings and religious decrees (fatwas) were considered the final authority in government departments. (Ayan Daud Poto, 1959)

In 1908, an atmosphere of irreligiosity began to spread in the city of Thatta. People started to drift away from the practices of Islam, and adherence to prayer diminished significantly.

Observing these circumstances, Makhdoom Thatvi informed Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhoro of the situation through a written request, detailing the un-Islamic practices taking root. Upon reviewing his detailed report, Mian Ghulam Shah issued orders to government officials, scholars, and police officers to eliminate un-Islamic practices as per Makhdoom Thatvi's guidance, promote Shariah, and ensure the implementation of his decisions. Khan Bahadur Muhammad Siddiq writes that after Mian Ghulam Shah's decree, Makhdoom Thatvi established the rule of Islamic principles and Shariah in and around the city. All innovations (bid'ah) were eradicated, and the mosques once again became vibrant and populated. (Qani Thatvi, n.d.)

In this way, Makhdoom Thatvi brought about a great reformatory revolution through government directives. Thousands of people strengthened their relationship with the One God, and an Islamic society was once again established in Sindh.

Awareness of Water in the Teachings of Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattwi

Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattvi enlightened not only Sindh but the entire Arab world as an intellectual icon. During his period, the ruler Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhoro issued a decree giving Makhdoom Sahib the power to stop any un-Islamic, heretical, or blasphemous practice taking place in Sindh. He was the Chief Justice (Qazi-ul-Qudat) of his time. The legal authenticity of scholars' fatwas, from Thatta to northern Sindh, was made possible with Makhdoom Sahib's seal of approval.

Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattwi presented water as a precious blessing in his teachings and emphasized its careful use. He taught people to use water only to the extent required and never waste it in any other way. His teaching included guidelines for water one should utilize for ablution or bath, which allowed that valuable resource to be saved. Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattwi also introduced the "Hashmi Koza", which was

a specific amount of water used for ablution. (Qadri, 2002) Its purpose was to ensure that people used a prescribed quantity of water as laid down by Islam during acts of purification. The "Hashmi Koza" is a perfect example of precaution through Islamic teachings that avoid wasting water.

This is one initiative that reflects his insight and foresight. His intention was not only to adhere to religious commandments but also to make the public conscious of using water properly. Today, in the face of water pollution, intrusion of seawater into the land, and industrial waste contamination, Makhdoom Sahib's teachings are relevant and full of insight. The steps he took during his time to prevent water pollution remind us that he was aware of the dangers that might fall in the future. He wanted to make the people of earth aware of the fact that water is being used excessively and the pollution perpetrated and later cause a deprivation of this life-giving resource from future generations.

Solution of Current Environmental Issues in the teaching of Thattwi

In the modern era, scarcity and water pollution are serious issues. In this world, water scarcity, industrial pollution and contamination of rivers and seas are a challenge today. The outcome of such polluted water impacts human health as well as the environment of other living beings. Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattwi teaches the solution to these problems by saying that it is a moral and religious duty to avoid the overuse of water and pollution. His teachings remind us that we are putting our future in danger without the proper and effective use of water.

His teaching has shown us the need to act against all the causes of pollution of the water bodies and all measures aimed at safeguarding them. His message bears relevance to the contemporary world as it explores the significance of conserving water and protecting the environment. His teaching also told us that some small acts can be used in everyday life to conserve water through preventing waste, preventing pollution of water sources and through sanitation. Today, there are principles like Hashmi Koza which take care of water conservation meaning that one can be environment friendly and still use modern methods. His lessons give us the direction on how to adapt water conservation in terms of changes in people's daily schedule, minimizing water use, and preventing pollution of water resources. This will encourage us in incorporating all these teachings to our daily lives to safeguard this important resource for the future generations and this generation as well.

The water conservation and environmental awareness ideas of Makhdoom Thattwi provide a remarkable understanding of how we can cope with the environmental challenges of the contemporary world. His

endeavors to stress the spiritual and practical necessity of protecting natural resources, especially water, are in sync with our current global ecological disasters. Through his calls for the respectful use of water in religious rituals and in every life, he established the principles under which faith and environmental protection are coupled. His activities, for example, regulating the use of water by producing tools such as the "Hashmi Kozas" are evidence of his future-oriented approach to conservation which is still very much valid today.

Creating public awareness campaigns that focus on his teachings as a timeless wisdom, it is possible to close the gap between the historical wisdom and today's needs. Makhdoom Hashmi's ideas, which are a kind of spiritual survival kit, are significant in the process of not only the preservation of life but also the creation of a life that has already been jeopardized. For this purpose, the culture and tradition that underlines the unity of these two paradigms are crucial. All the texts above are not quotations, they are my comments.

By these means, scholars can take up the philosophies of Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattwi in today's world, and this will enable them to perform the religious duties, live a socially responsible life and to cut back on the environmental degradation process.

Conclusion

Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattwi's attempts to the environment were successful in its time develops the history of environmental problems. His thoughts and instructions persuade us that the preservation of water resources and the environment are the only environmental conservation, and water management are a must. Embracing his lessons and strategies will help us not only to the environmental crisis but also to start here a positive transformation in the context of Islamic teachings.

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