

**SELECTIONS
FROM
THE HOLY QUR'AN AND AHADITH**
(with Full Vowel-Pointed Arabic Text)

Translated & Compiled by :
**'ABDUL HAMEED SIDDIQI
'ABDUR RAHMAN SHAD**

KAZI PUBLICATIONS
121-Zulqarnain Chambers,
Ganpat Road, LAHORE (PAKISTAN)

All Rights Reserved

**No Part of this book may be reproduced by any means,
nor transmitted, nor translated into any other language
without the written permission of the Publisher.**

Ist Edition May, 1981 1000

2nd Revised Edition Sept. 1985

**Copyrights May, 1981
Kazi Publications, Lahore**

***Printed at :*
Mashriqi Printing Press, LAHORE**

CONTENTS

Introduction		V
CHAPTER 1	Belief And Action	3
CHAPTER 2	Knowledge	19
CHAPTER 3	Purification	31
CHAPTER 4	Major Sins And Minor Sins	43
CHAPTER 5	Virtues And Good Manners	55
CHAPTER 6	Prayer	75
CHAPTER 7	Fasting	89
CHAPTER 8	Charity And Zakat	101
CHAPTER 9	Mutual Rights And Obligations	115
CHAPTER 10	Lawful And Unlawful Food	131
CHAPTER 11	Business and Monetary Transactions	141
CHAPTER 12	Jihad	155
CHAPTER 13	Hajj and 'Umra	167
CHAPTER 14	Marriage	181
CHAPTER 15	Divorce	193
CHAPTER 16	Government And Administration of Justice	205
CHAPTER 17	Death, Burial S And Mourning	219
CHAPTER 18	The Day of Judgment	231
CHAPTER 19	Life After Death	245
CHAPTER 20	Heaven And Hell	261
Isnad Index		271
General Index		275

INTRODUCTION

The Holy Qur'ān is the Word of Allāh revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) through the medium of an arch-angel Jibrā'il and transmitted verbatim, whereas the *Aḥādith* or Traditions are delivered in the language of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). An other distinction between the Holy Qur'ān and the *Hadith* is that while the former is the text, the latter is its annotation or explanation in detail with reference to the context.

The Holy Qur'ān and the *Hadith* are no doubt two separate entities but they are both so closely related to each other that we cannot think of their independent existence. It is through the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) that the Holy Qur'ān has been vouchsafed to us and it is in his august personality that we find its visible expression. The Holy Qur'ān and the *Hadith* are thus the two foundations upon which is raised the structure of Islam; the one being the Word of Allāh, and the other being its elucidation in the form of traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). The Holy Qur'ān says :

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظَاهِرَهُ عَلَىٰ الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ

“He it is Who hath sent His Messenger with the Guidance and the Religion of Truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religions.” (9 : 33)

This verse bears ample testimony to the fact that the fountain-head of True Guidance and Religion is the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) since he has been entrusted with the responsibility of showing to the mankind the Right Path and the way to Salvation, as desired by the Almighty Allāh. He is the trusted Messenger of Allāh on earth and it is through him that mankind has been able to

know His Will with all its implications. He is the final recipient of revelation amongst the prophets of Allāh, and as such he is Divinely authorized to explain its practical implications with the help of his words and deeds. The Holy Qur'ān says :

بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالذُّبُرِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ
إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ط

“And We have revealed to thee the Reminder that thou mayest make clear to men that which has been revealed to them, and that haply they may reflect. (16 : 44)

The exposition of the Qur'ānic injunctions is thus one of the main responsibilities of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) which he had to undertake on the authority of the Lord Who had revealed to him the Holy Qur'ān. This task of exposition and elucidation has a divine sanction behind it as the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) does not speak or act of his own accord. We have been told in clear terms that he neither said anything nor did anything of his own accord ; whatever he said and whatever he did emanated from Allāh. The Holy Qur'ān affirms :

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ط

“Nor doth he speak of (his own) desire.”
(53 : 3)

قُلْ إِنَّمَا آتَيْتُم مَّا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ مِنْ رَبِّي ط

“Say : I follow only that which is revealed to me from my Lord.” (7 : 203)

عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَىٰ ط

“Which One of mighty powers hath taught him.” (53 : 5)

وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوهُ تَهْتَدُوا ط وَمَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ ط

“If ye obey him, ye will go aright. But the

Messenger hath no other charge than to convey (the message) plainly." (24 : 54)

أَنْ يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ط

"They say : We hear and we obey. And such are the successful." (24 : 51)

These verses indicate that the Holy Qur'ān enjoins obedience to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Those who do not follow the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) are condemned as follows :

وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصَلِّهِمْ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ط

"And whoso opposeth the Messenger after the guidance (of Allāh) hath been manifested unto him, and followeth other than the believers' way, We appoint for him that unto which he himself hath turned, and expose him unto hell—a hapless journey's end." (4 : 115)

وَمَا كَانَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ إِذَا فُضِيَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ أَنْ يَقُولُوا سَاءَ مَا عَصَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ قَدْ ضَلَّ صَلَاةَ رَبِّنَا ط

"And it cometh not a believing man or a believing woman, when Allāh and His Messenger have decided an affair (for them), that they should (after that) claim any say in their affair ; and whoso is rebellious to Allāh and His Messenger, he verily goeth astray in error manifest." (33 : 36)

وَمَنْ يُعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَالِدًا فِيهَا فِيهَا مَوْلَىٰ لَهُ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ء

"And whoso disbelieveth Allāh and His Messenger and transgresseth His limits, He will make him enter Fire, where such will dwell for ever ; his will be a shameful doom." (4 : 14)

The Qur'ān, therefore, makes it clear that it is an act of hostility on the part of a person to ignore or cast aside the elucidations made by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) of the Commands of Allāh.

Further, whatever was done by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) is assumed to be an act of Allāh. The Holy Qur'ān says :

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ ؕ

“Verily, those who swear allegiance unto thee (Muḥammad), swear allegiance only unto Allāh. The Hand of Allāh is above their hands.” (48 : 10)

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ
وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَى ؕ

“Ye (Muslims) slew them not, but Allāh slew them. And thou (Muḥammad) threwest not when thou didst throw, but Allāh threw.” (8 : 17)

These verses clearly prove that whatever the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said and whatever he did was directly inspired by Allāh. All his sayings and deeds are thus divinely inspired, and in them alone can one find the real meaning and the true significance of the Will of Allāh.

Mere transmission of the Book of Allāh to the people faithfully and sincerely does not exhaust the Prophet's functions. On him lies the responsibility of explaining the real purport of the Qur'ānic teachings and then giving them a visible shape so that mankind may see, along with the injunctions of Allāh, the process of their transformation into reality and the outward forms in which they are to be crystallized. Words alone, however powerful and however pointed, cannot be fully comprehended unless these conjure before our minds definite forms and shapes. Similarly, precepts, however valuable, can be best understood only when these are supported by living examples. The Holy Qur'ān says :

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمُ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا

“And whatsoever the Messenger giveth you, take it. And whatsoever he forbiddeth, abstain (from it) (59 : 7)

What this verse implies is that the commands and prohibition of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) are not to be treated in the spirit in which are taken the wise sayings of sages or philosophers or the verdicts of rulers. The words and deeds of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) are, indeed, the perfect expressions of the highest wisdom ever conceivable, but this alone does not completely fulfil the demands of belief in prophethood. The basic point in this belief is that one should affirm with full confidence that it is Allāh Who speaks through the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and whatever he says by way of spiritual guidance or practical legislation is Allāh’s Command, and thus we must follow him in every walk of life with a view to achieving the favour of Allāh and salvation in this world and in the life Hereafter. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) is no doubt, a human being, but his leadership is divinely inspired and none can be called a Muslim who does not accept this basic doctrine of the Holy Qur’ān. Allāh says :

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحِبَّبِكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“Say (O’ Muḥammad, to mankind) : If you love Allāh, follow me ; and Allāh will love you and forgive you your sins. Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.” (3 : 31)

It is by following the Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) that we can achieve cherished goal of winning Allāh’s favour. The Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) occupies a unique position in the chain of prophets (peace be upon them). Being the Last of a long chain of prophets he was made by Allāh a perfect model of human-kind and was sent as a

Messenger for the whole mankind. His august personality, therefore, combined all that was best in morals and manners and he was the very embodiment of all that was preached and enjoined in the Holy Qur'ān. This is why the Holy Qur'ān has declared the sacred life of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) as a model pattern for the Muslims :

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ
وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ ط

“Verily in the Apostle of Allāh you have the best example for everyone who looks forward towards Allāh and the Day of Judgment.” (33 : 21)

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ط

“And thou standest on an exalted standard of character.” (68 : 4)

The Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) is therefore, a glittering example for all to follow. His sacred life throughout was without any blemish and was a wonderful exposition of all that was virtuous. In reality his life is a true picture of the Qur'ānic teachings. The world has never produced and can never produce a man of his stature and quality. Thus he stood out a model for every Muslim to follow.

It is remarkable that his career covered all possible spheres of life such as that of a preacher in a mosque, as a worldly man amongst his family and friends, as a man of piety, as a leader, as a soldier, a reformer, a politician, a statesman, an administrator and finally as a ruler of a vast kingdom. He had the privilege therefore, of not only laying down rules and regulations of guidance in all such capacities but he also gave a practical demonstration of all these rules. It is these sayings and doings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) that form the subject-matter of *Hadith*.

It is only from the Holy Qur'ān and the authentic record of the *Aḥādith* that we can obtain full view of this

model pattern. Thus next to the Holy Qur'ān the *Hadith* is the second source of the Islamic *Shari'ah* of social and personal behaviour, because the commandments of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) are as binding on the believers as the Commands of Allāh. The Holy Qur'ān says :

وَمَا كَانَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا
أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ ۗ

“Whenever Allāh and the Apostle have decided a matter it is not for a faithful man or woman to follow a course of their own choice.” (33 : 36)

Right from the time of the Companions down to this day there has been consensus of opinion amongst the Muslims that whatever is authentically transmitted to us from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) be it in the form of the Qur'ānic revelation or his commands, or his explanations and enunciations of the Will of Allāh, is the only reliable source of the Islamic *Shari'ah*.

Under the circumstances if the *Hadith* is discarded, the Holy Qur'ān cannot be protected from misinterpretation. Along with the Qur'ān, therefore, its interpretation (*Hadith*) should exist and they have to go side by side. To illustrate this point let us take one of the pillars of Islam, *viz.*, the *Salāt* or Prayer. The Qur'ānic injunctions are as follows :

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ وَذُلْفًا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ ۗ

“And establish regular Prayers at the two ends of the day and in some watches of the night.” (11 : 114)

حِفْظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوَسْطَىٰ ۗ

“Be guardian of your Prayers, especially the middle Prayer.” (2 : 238)

In these verses some indication is given of the times of Prayer but it is not explicit and does not give further details about the daily five-time Prayers observed by all Muslims,

viz., the *Fajr* or Morning Prayer, the *Zuhr* or Midday Prayer, the *‘Aṣr* or Afternoon Prayer, the *Maghrib* or Sunset Prayer and the *‘Ishā* or Night Prayer. Further, the division of the Prayers into *Fard*, *Sunnah*, *Nafl*, *Wājib*, then the number of *rak‘at*, the way in which the Prayer is to be performed, the several postures of Prayer *i.e.*, standing, bowing, sitting, prostrating, the recitations at each stage and several other details can be had only from the *Aḥādith* or Traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Thus when the Holy Qur’ān said “establish Prayer”, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) explained what it really meant by his practical performance and demonstration so that after him there should be no need for clarification.

Coming to *Zakāt* the Qur’ānic injunction simply is “pay the *Zakāt*” and it was the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) who gave the rules and regulations for its payment, collection and distribution. These are but two examples. Similar is the case with other rituals. Thus, following the *Ḥadith* brings a homogeneity in the performance of these devotional duties among all the Muslims of the world. Who could explain the meaning and interpretation of the Holy Qur’ān better than the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself to whom the Qur’ān was revealed and to whom special “wisdom” was given? There are so many verses of the Qur’ān in which it has been made clear by Allāh that it is not only the Qur’ān which was revealed to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) but “Wisdom” was also vouchsafed to him :

وَأَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ ط

“And remember Allāh’s favour to you and that which He has revealed to you of the Book and Wisdom admonishing you thereby.” (2 : 231)

وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُ ط
وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا ط

“And Allāh revealeth unto thee the Book and the Wisdom and teacheth thee that which thou knowest

not. The Grace of Allāh towards thee hath been Infinite." (4 : 113)

Here the point to note is that *Wisdom* has been described as something separate from the Book. And what else can *Wisdom* be except the elucidations and enunciations of the Will of Allāh by the Holy Prophet? If the Holy Qur'ān embodies the Will of Allāh, the authentic records of the *aḥādith* embody its practical implications which are called *Wisdom* and which it was the duty of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to vouchsafe to humanity as was his duty to vouchsafe the Qur'ān to the human race :

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ
يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن
كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ط

"Assuredly Allāh conferred a favour on the believers when He raised unto them an Apostle from amongst themselves reciting to them His revelations and purifying them and teaching them the Book and the Wisdom." (3 : 164)

Thus reciting of Lord's revelation, purifying the souls of the people, teaching the Book and explaining the Wisdom contained therein—all these are the different aspects of the prophetic ministry and all of them are the timeless expression of the Will of Allāh.

For full twenty-three years, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) poured his Wisdom along with the reciting of the Qur'ān. Thousands of cases were brought to him for decision and thousands of men came to ask him the questions pertaining to morality and conscience, religion, spiritual and social life and he answered their questions forthwith on the spot without faltering and without hesitation and he is not known ever to have made a mistake. How did he manage it? Through intellect? Certainly not, since intellect is not immune to error. He did it with *Hikmat* (Divine Wisdom) and that was why his judgements and decisions were free from errors. It is, therefore, the height

of folly to discard this source of Divine Knowledge which is contained in the *Sunnah*.

Such is the incalculable importance of this 'Wisdom' of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) that the Muslims have been ordained not only to recite the Qur'ān but to recite the 'Wisdom' also :

وَاذْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلَىٰ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ ط

“And bear in mind that which is recited in your houses of the revelations of Allāh and the Wisdom.” (33 : 34)

It should be borne in mind that it is from the authentic record of the *aḥādith* that we can understand some of the Verses of the Qur'ān which furnish elaborate background to them. We quote below some of the Verses :

فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ زَيْدٌ مِنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَاكَهَا

“So when Zaid had performed the necessary formality (of divorce) from her, We gave her unto thee in marriage.” (33 : 37)

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ۖ أَن جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَىٰ ط

“He frowned and turned away because the blind man came unto him.” (80 : 1, 2)

لَا تَقُمْ فِيهِ أَبَدًا ۚ لِمَسْجِدٍ أُتِيَ عَلَىٰ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْ أَوَّلِ يَوْمٍ أَحَقُّ
أَنْ تَقُومَ فِيهِ ۚ فِيهِ رِجَالٌ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَتَطَهَّرُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُطَهَّرِينَ ط

“Never stand (to pray) there. A place of worship which was founded upon duty (to Allāh) from the first day is more worthy that thou shouldst stand (to pray) therein, wherein are men who love to purify themselves for God loves all who purify themselves.” (9 : 108)

What can we understand from the above-mentioned Verses unless we know their background and the context in which these were revealed ? If the records of the *aḥādith* are

not available, the meanings and implications of these Verses would not be clear to us.

Moreover, many of the religious practices to which the Holy Qur'ān referred later on had already been introduced by the Apostle of Allāh (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). We give two examples in support of this contention :

The funeral prayer and the congregational prayer of Friday are the two important acts of devotion which have vital social significance in the Muslim Community. And both these had been introduced by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) before any reference had been made about them in the Qur'ān. The words of the Qur'ān bear ample testimony to this fact :

وَلَا تُصَلِّ عَلَىٰ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَاتَ أَبَدًا وَلَا تَقُمْ عَلَىٰ قَبْرِهِ ۗ

“And never offer prayer for anyone of them (hypocrites) who dies, and never stand by his grave.” (9 : 84)

So is the case with the congregational Prayer of Friday :

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِن فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ۗ

“But when the Prayer is ended, then disperse in the land and seek of Allāh's bounty and remember Allāh much that ye may be successful.” (62 : 10)

All these facts prove beyond any shadow of doubt that the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) is an integral part of the Islamic *Shari'ah* and whatever has been transmitted to us as the *Sunnah* is as binding on the Muslims as the injunctions contained in the Qur'ān. The Muslims have always been fully conscious of it as is evident from the following *Hadith* :

It is narrated on the authority of 'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd (Allāh be pleased with him) that he said : Allāh curses those who pluck hair from their faces and who make spaces between their teeth for beauty

thus changing that what God has created. Then this news reached a woman of Banū Asad who was called Umm Ya'qūb and she used to recite the Holy Qur'ān. She came to 'Abdullāh and said : This news has been brought to me that you curse those who tattoo and those who pluck hair from their faces and those who get them plucked and those who make spaces between their teeth for beauty and thus changing that what Allāh has created. Thereupon 'Abdullāh said : Should I not curse those whom Allāh has cursed, and this is what is found in the Book of Allāh. Thereupon, the woman said : I have read the Qur'ān from cover to cover but I did not find anything like it therein ; 'Abdullāh said : Had you read the Qur'ān, you would have definitely found it, that Allāh, the Exalted and Glorious, said : Take whatsoever the Messenger gives you and abstain from whatsoever he forbids you. ¹

This *Hadith* which has been narrated on the authority of an eminent Companion, 'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd (Allāh be pleased with him) clearly shows the utmost importance which the early Muslims attached to the Commands of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

The modern scholar of Islam, Muḥammad Asad, while discussing the importance of the *Sunnah* states :

“The *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muḥammad is, therefore, next to Qur'ān, the second source of Islamic Law of social and personal behaviour. In fact we must regard the *Sunnah* as the only valid explanation of the Qur'ānic teachings and the only means to avoid dissensions concerning their interpretation and adaptation to practical use. Many Verses of the Qur'ān have allegorical meaning and could be understood in different ways unless there was some definite system of interpretation. And there are, furthermore, many items of practical importance

1. *Sahih Muslim*, Kitāb-ul-Libās wa'l Zināh, Chapter : *Tahrim Fi'il al-Wasilah*, etc.

not explicitly dealt with by the Qur'ān. The spirit prevailing in the Holy Book is, to be sure, uniform throughout; but to deduce from it the practical attitude which we have to adopt is not, in every case, an easy matter. So long as we believe that this Book is the Word of God perfect in form and purpose, the only logical conclusion is that it never was intended to be used independently of the personal guidance of the Prophet which is embodied in the system of the *Sunnah*.¹

The following sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) explain the position, which he intended to assign to the law of *Hadith* or *Sunnah* :

“That which the Prophet of Allāh hath made unlawful is like that which God himself hath made unlawful.”

“When I enjoin anything concerning religion, receive it; but when I say something about the affairs of the world, then I am merely a human being.”

“Verily the best word is the Word of Allāh, and the best rule of life is that delivered by His Prophet Muḥammad.”²

Jābir (Allāh be pleased with him) reports that the Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said in his Farewell Pilgrimage, I am leaving two things amongst you after my death. If you hold them fast, you will never go astray from the right path. The one is the Holy Qur'ān and the other is my *Sunnah* or *Hadith*. Following *Hadith* therefore, is as important as following the injunctions of the Qur'ān, without which the religion of Islam would be incomplete and would create dissensions among the believers.

1. Muḥammad Asad, *Islam at the Crossroads*, pp. 117, 118.

2. *Mishkāt*, Book I, Chapter VI.

The *Hadith* which in the religious sense stands for the report of actions or approval or disapproval of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) has always been a subject of keen interest for the Muslims since the time of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). His companions who were mostly Arabs, had wonderful memory and could immaculately retain whatever they saw in the Prophet's life or whatever they heard from him. In view of the basic importance of Allāh's Messenger's acts and deeds, his commands, prohibitions and meaningful silence that he observed in certain matters, it is quite conceivable that some of the Muslims began to record the *aḥādith* during his lifetime. 'Abdullāh b. 'Amr b. al-'Aṣ (Allāh be pleased with him) recorded thousands of the Prophet's sayings in *Ṣahifa* which goes down in history as *Ṣahifa as-Ṣadiqa*. Ḥaḍrat 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) had another *Ṣahifa* which contained certain laws and was named *Al-Qadaya*. Jābir bin 'Abdullāh (Allāh be pleased with him) had another *Ṣahifa* later referred to by Qatāda. 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās is reported to have collected traditions in more than one book. Again the *Ṣahifa* of Hammām bin Munabbih is recognised as based on the writings of Ḥaḍrat Abū Huraira (Allāh be pleased with him). Then there were Collections of the *Aḥādith* of Ḥaḍrat Rafi' bin Khadij, Ḥaḍrat Samura bin Jundab and Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd (Allāh be pleased with them). These are the blessed names of some of those Companions who kept a record of the Prophet's sayings and discourses, judgments and verdicts on different issues and his actions and deeds in all sets of circumstances.

The study of the records of the *aḥādith* and the life-history of those who maintained them proves beyond any shadow of doubt that the preservation of the *Ḥadith* was not an after-thought, conceived long after the death of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). The practice of recording of the *aḥādith* was started in right earnest during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and this task was done by his noble Companions with a keen sense of devotion.

A certain Mālik and his wife were very devout Medinite

Muslims. On the arrival of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) in their town, they offered their young son, Anas, to be a personal servant to him. For almost a decade, Anas lived day and night with him. The boy was very intelligent, and had also learnt reading and writing, thanks probably to the battle of Badr when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked the prisoners of war to ransom their persons by service, namely teaching ten boys each to read and write. Anyhow, Anas (Allāh be pleased with him) says : "Every now and then I took down in notes interesting points from what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said in his discourses and other occasions of conversation ; and I used to read these notes over to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) whenever I found him having leisure, and after he had corrected them, I made a fair copy of them for my own record." In fact he accumulated a big roll of such notes, and in his later life he used to show it to his curious pupils, who flocked to listen to the *Hadith* from him.

'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aṣ (Allāh be pleased with him) has another instance to tell about what had happened to him : One day I said to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) : "O' Messenger of Allāh, you say many nice things in your sermons, but with the lapse of time I forget many of their details. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) replied : Take help from your right hand, meaning thereby that I should write. I dared not take notes of the *Hadith* before, but ever since I have tried to record all that interested me from the sayings and doings of the Prophet." This compilation was named by the author as *Sahifa Sadiqa* ; and it passed on as a valuable legacy from ancestors to the descendants. In fact we find his grandson dictating to his pupils with this book in hand.

These and several other instances refer to the recording of the *Hadith* in the very lifetime of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) by the people who had first-hand knowledge of the same.

There is another category in which the testimony is first-hand. This is when the Companions of the Prophet

write or dictate their memoirs after the death of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), when apparently there was increasing demand for such literature.

Thus we have the memoirs of Ḥaḍrat ‘Ā’isha (wife of the Prophet), of ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd, of Ibn ‘Abbās, of Ibn ‘Umar, of Abū Huraira (Allāh be pleased with them), and many others. There are cases when the memoirs of different Companions were prepared under the auspices of the government.

The works of the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and his Companions were amalgamated in the larger works of the *Tābi‘ūn* (the Followers of the Companions of the Prophet) and the works of these latter have been conserved in the still larger compendia of Imām Ibn Hanbal, Imām Bukhāri, Imām Muslim etc.

Thus there is no link missing, the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) were preserved at first-hand, and have come down to us in a manner worthy of all faith and trust. To safeguard against reporting of forged traditions, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) warned that whosoever shall attribute to him any thing which was not said by him, his resting place shall be in Hell. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said :

“Be on your guard about tradition from me, except what you know ; for he who tells a lie about me deliberately will certainly come to his abode in Hell.”

Of course the intellectual capacities of the different Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), the circumstances and the context of different traditions and many other factors are of great scientific importance ; but for them we have a special science, the *Uṣūl Ḥadīth wa Rijāl*, that marvellous invention and even monopoly of the Muslims, which gives full guidance in this respect. We are not concerned with it here. What we

wanted was to show that a large part of the words and deeds of the Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) were not recorded, as is sometimes supposed, several centuries after his death but in his own lifetime ; and by those who had first-hand knowledge of the facts related, and that these first-hand records have come down to us in a tolerably trustworthy manner.

No doubt, the personal element in oral transmission has its own importance and merit ; a trustworthy and learned witness personally testifying that "I saw or heard this or that" has undeniably a far superior and weightier reason to be believed than any written record which is obviously subject to falsification and other less reprehensible modifications and mistakes on the part of the copyist. Had the Islamic tradition remained only orally transmitted, it would not in the least have diminished its credibility. But as we have seen, the traditions of the Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) have been doubly fortunate, in that they have been recorded to a large extent in black and white by witnesses who had a first-hand knowledge of the facts related, combined with the personal elements in the manner of transmission which has been peculiarly Muslim.

The Criteria for Accepting the Veracity of a Hadith

Side by side with the collection of the *ahādith* was initiated their critical scrutiny so that the genuine traditions may be sifted from the concocted ones. Mr. Muḥammad Asad, a renowned Muslim Scholar, in his book entitled "*Islām at the Crossroads*" writes :

"The fact that there were numberless spurious *ahādith* did not in the least escape the attention of the *Muhaddithun*, as European critics naively seem to suppose. On the contrary, the critical science of *ḥadith* was initiated by the necessity of discerning between authentic and spurious, and the very Imāms Bukhāri and Muslim, not to mention the lesser Traditionists, are direct products of this critical attitude. The existence, therefore, of false *ahādith* does not prove anything against the system of

ḥadith as a whole.”¹

The traditionists and the jurists have formulated sound principles in the light of which the genuineness of the *Ḥadith* can be fully established. These principles related to both parts of the *Ḥadith*: *Isnād* (chain of transmission) and *Matn* (text). The trustworthiness of those through whom the *Ḥadith* is transmitted *i.e.*, *Isnād*, can be reliably judged with the help of *Ismā' ar-Rijāl*, a science which critically scrutinises the lives of the narrators of the *ahādith*. Those who understood this work showed perfect impartiality and honesty, thoroughness and minuteness and objectivity in recording the details of their life. Similarly, laws were also framed to test the genuineness of the text (*matn*). The reliability of a narrator may be taken as an external evidence and criticism of the text may be treated as an internal evidence for establishing the authenticity of a *ḥadith*. A *ḥadith* which admirably stands this thorough search and scrutiny and is proved to be authentic is a part and parcel of Divine Injunctions and is binding on a believer.

The unblemished character of the narrator (*Al-Rawi*) is a condition precedent to the acceptance of a tradition as genuine. For this purpose, occupation, honesty and particularly the reliability of his memory had to be studied. Not only his memory should be good but it must have the power of retention which implies also that he should have properly heard the words of the speaker, understood their meaning and reproduced them with accuracy at the time of narration. He should be a man of learning. He should not have committed any crime, told a lie, given false evidence, and should not be guilty of carelessness or indifference. His religious beliefs and learnings should be understood, his piety, impartiality and truthfulness considered, before accepting what he says. This sort of critical examination of the authorities is known as *Jarh wat-ta'dil*. *Jarh* is the process by which a witness is declared unreliable while *ta'dil* is the process by which he is declared reliable.

1. Muḥammad Asad, *Islam at the Crossroads*, p.p. 127, 128.

Thousands of traditionists (*Muhaddithin*) spent their lives in gathering every detail of the lives of the transmitters of traditions about the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Due to their painstaking researches, the science of *Ismā' ar-Rijāl* developed to such an extent that through it one can learn about the lives of at least 100,000 persons involved in reporting *ahādith*.

Sometimes the chain of authorities may be complete and yet on account of non-satisfaction of the conditions laid down for narrators the tradition may be rejected. A tradition which is contradictory to the text of the Qur'ān, or violating a well-known tradition, or is something repudiated by the Companions, will not be accepted. There is another very important test whereby the authenticity of a *Hadith* may be judged, and it is the test that the application whereof was commanded by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself. "There will be narrators", the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) is reported to have said, "reporting *hadith* from me, so judge by the Qur'ān; if a report agrees with the Qur'ān, accept it, if otherwise, reject it."

As already stated, *hadith* is but an explanation and interpretation of the Qur'ān and hence the Qur'ān must have precedence over the *Hadith*. For example, during the Caliphate of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him), a woman named Fātimā bint Qais told Ḥaḍrat 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) that when her husband divorced her, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) did not tell him to provide her maintenance allowance. Ḥaḍrat 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) said: "We cannot leave the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) on the report of a woman, about whom we do not know whether she remembered or forgot." Again, on hearing a tradition reported on the authority of Ibn 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him), Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) did not accept it and remarked, "You or your transmitters do not tell lies, but sometimes one misunderstands."

Classifications of Hadith

The *Muhaddithin* have classified *Hadith* into following categories in order to establish the rank and degree of reliability of tradition :

1. *Hadith-i-Nabvi* : A simple saying of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) which must be borne in mind as nothing but inspired, commencing with the words : “ ”
2. *Hadith-i-Qudsi* : A saying of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) having reference to Divine Direction starting with the words : “ ”

The following *hadith* transmitted on the authority of Abū Dharr Ghifāri (Allāh be pleased with him) in which Allāh's Apostle (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) conveys the message of Allāh in His very name, is an example of *Hadith Qudsi* :

“O’ my servants ! I have made oppression unlawful for Me and have forbidden this oppression for you also. Therefore, don’t oppress one another. You all go astray, except one whom I direct to the right path. Hence beg guidance from Me only. (*Muslim*)

On the basis of investigation, the *Hadith* has been classified under the following three main categories :

1. *Sahih* (Sound) : Sound or most authentic tradition in which there is no weakness either in regard to the chain of transmission (*snād*) or in regard to the text (*matn*). The *Isnād* or authorities should be carried uninterruptedly to the Companion or the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) in the case of a *Ṣaḥīḥ Hadith*.

It must be remembered in this connection that the authenticity of *Ṣaḥīḥ aḥādith* has been fully established by the Scholars of *hadith* as regards the purity of text (*matn*) and the

soundness of the chain of transmission (*Isnād*). The old scholars have standardized all of them and have performed this work with such precision, objectivity and skill that it is difficult to improve upon it. We can now safely depend upon them for guidance in all important matters of life.

2. *Ḥasan* (Approved) : Sound but a little less authentic than the first category. This is like a *Ṣaḥīḥ* tradition except for the fact that some of its narrators are found to have a defective memory as compared to narrators of *Ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*.
3. *Da'if* (Weak) : A tradition in which there is some defect either in the chain of transmission, or in proper understanding of the transmitter, or its contents are not in perfect agreement with Islamic beliefs and practices. It is in fact a tradition of weak or less reliable authority. However all traditions called *da'if* are not rejected. Those which exhort people to do good or which narrate incidents may be quoted. Abū Dāwūd quite often used *da'if* traditions when he could find nothing better to illustrate the point with which he was dealing.

According to the chain of narrators the *Hadīth* is classified as under.

1. *Muttasil or Mausul* (Contiguous) : A tradition which has got successive narrators without an interruption.
2. *Mutawatir* (Continuous) : A tradition reported by a large number of people in different times, so as to make it impossible for any falsehood to creep into it.
3. *Mashhur* (Well-known) : A tradition which is handed down by at least three different reliable authorities, or according to another view, a tradi-

tion which, although widely disseminated later, was originally transmitted by one person in the first generation.

4. *Gharib* : The *Hadith* in the chain of transmission of which the number of narrators is reduced to one at any stage is known as *Gharib hadith*.

Imām Tirmidhi has used two special terms in regard to *hasan* and *gharib aḥādith* for further categorization of these :

(a) *Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ*

(b) *Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ Gharib*

- (i) *Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ hadith* is one which according to Imām Tirmidhi stands at a higher level than mere *hasan*, but at a bit lower level than *Ṣaḥīḥ*.
 - (ii) *Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ* is at times qualified by the word *gharib* when the link of transmission is joined to another at certain point by one transmitter only. Obviously, it is *hasan* in regard to its soundness and *gharib* in regard to its chain of transmission.
5. *Mu'allaq* (Suspended) : Where one of the narrators at the beginning of a tradition is missing.
 6. *Mursal* (Forwarded) : If the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) are found missing from the chain of transmission and a *Tabi i* (Successor of the Companion) transmits it from Allāh's Apostle (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), such a *hadith* is called '*Mursal*.'
 7. *Mudallās* (Hidden) : Where one or more narrators are suppressed.
 8. *Munqati'* (Disjoined) : A tradition in which either a link in the chain of transmission is found missing or an unknown narrator is found to join the links.

9. *Ma'addal* (Perplexing) : Where two successive narrators are missing in between.
10. *Mauḍu'* (Forged) : Where there is a suspicion of fabrication. It is the opposite of *Ṣaḥiḥ*.
11. *Matrūk* (Discarded) : Where narrators are accused of falsehood in matters other than the narration of the tradition.
12. *Munkar* (Disapproved) : A tradition in which a weak transmitter of *aḥādith* opposes one who is quite authentic and reliable as a narrator of *ḥādith*.
13. *Ma'rūf* (Celebrated) : This is opposite of *Munkar*.
14. *Shadh* (Isolated) : A tradition in which a comparatively less authentic narrator of *ḥādith* opposes one whose account is more authentic than his.
15. *Marfu'* (Traced directly) : A tradition which can be traced back to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) directly without any defective transmission.
16. *Mauqūf* (Delayed) : Traditions which go up to the Companions who uttered them.
17. *Maqtu'* (Severed) : Traditions which go up to the *Tabi'in* or successors of the Companions.
18. *Muttafiq 'alaih* (Agreed upon) : Traditions accepted and agreed to by both Imāms Bukhāri and Muslim who are universally acknowledged as the most truthful compilers of the *Ḥādith*.

Canonical Books of Hadith and Brief Life-sketches of their Compilers

The compilation of *aḥādith* is divided into three categories :

1. The first one includes *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and *Muwattā'* of Imām Mālik.

2. The second one includes *Jāmi'* Tirmidhi, *Sunan Abū Dāwud*, *Musnad* Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and *Nisā'i*.

3. The third category consists of those *aḥādith* which include all types of weak traditions. Their chains of transmission have some missing links in them *e.g.*, *Musnad* of 'Uthmān b. Abi Shaiba, *Musnad* of Tayalsi, *Musnad* of 'Abdullāh b. Muḥammad b. Abi Shaiba. Only the learned scholars can derive benefit from them.

Out of the above categories, the most authoritative books on *ḥadith* are the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhāri (194-256 A.H.) and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim (202-261 A.H.). In addition, four other books are also recognized as authoritative (completing "The Authentic Six" books of *ḥadith* - *Ṣiḥaḥ Sittah*). These are known as the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd (202-275 A.H.), *Jāmi'* Tirmidhi (279 A.H.), *Musnad* of Nisā'i (215-303 A.H.) and *Sunan* of Ibn Mājah (209-273 A.H.).

It is important to note that none of the books of *ḥadith*, including "*Ṣiḥaḥ Sittah*", were commissioned by any authoritative body, as no such body exists in Islam. They were collected on the initiative of the individual compilers. Each one of them had to be critically examined and accepted by the community before being recognized as an authoritative work. This applied to the works of Bukhāri and Muslim, just as it did to the others.

Here we give brief life-sketches of some well-known compilers of books of *Ḥadith* :

1. Imām Abū Hanifa

The full name of Imām Abū Hanifa is Abū Hanifa an-Nu'mān ibn Thābit ibn Zautha al-Kūfi. He was born at Baṣra in 80 A.H. and died at Baghdād in 150 A.H. His father Thābit was a silk dealer in the city of Kūfa, and it is said that his grandfather Zautha, was a native of Kabul. Imām Abū Hanifa learned jurisprudence from Imām Abū Ja'far of Baghdād. His public lectures in Kūfa soon gave him name as a great scholar and people flocked daily to hear him and to question him on the ritual and on the law. Imām Abū Hanifa had two renowned disciples, Imām Muḥammad and Imām Abū Yūsuf who were the main personalities to expound his law. It is mostly their views of the great master's teaching that now form the basis of the Hanafi School of Thought. The Imām Abū Yusuf have preserved for us in his *Kitāb al-Kharaj* the chief views of his master.

Imām Abū Hanifa was a very pious and God-fearing man. When Caliph Al-Manṣūr offered him the post of Chief Qāḍi he declined as he did not wish to shoulder such a heavy responsibility. Yazid b. 'Umar b. Hubaira, the Governor of Kūfa, had him flogged for this refusal and his persistence landed him in prison where he eventually died. It is generally believed that he was poisoned at the instance of the Caliph.

2. Imām Malik ibn Anas

The Imām Abū 'Abdullāh Mālik ibn Anas was born at Medina in 94 A.H. (716 A.D.). He lived in the same place and received his earliest impressions of Islam from Sahl ibn Sa'd, the almost sole survivor of the Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). He was considered to be the most learned man of his time, and his self-denial and abstinence were such that he usually fasted four days in a week. He enjoyed the advantages of a personal acquaintance with the Imām Abu Hanifa although differing from him on many important questions regarding the authority of the Traditions. His pride, however, was at least equal to his literary edowments. In proof of this, it is related of him that when the great Caliph Hārūn-ur-Rashid came to Medina to visit the Holy Shrine of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), Mālik having gone forth to meet him,

the Caliph addressed him, "O' Mālik ! I entreat as a favour that you will come every day to me and my two sons, Amin and Māmūn, and instruct us in traditional knowledge." To which Imām haughtily replied, "O' Caliph, science is of a dignified nature, and instead of going to any person, requires that all should come to it." The story further says that the Caliph with much humility, begged his pardon, acknowledged the truth of his remarks, and sent both his sons to Mālik, who seated them among his other pupils without any distinction.

In his latter days his mind was so much absorbed in the immensity of the Divine attributes and perfections, as to lose sight of all more insignificant objects. Hence he gradually withdrew himself from the world, became indifferent to its concern and after some years of complete retirement died at Medina in 179 A.H. (795 A.D.). His book, known as *Muwatṭā'*, is the first Collection of *Ḥadith* and one of the most authoritative books of tradition and *Sunnah*. His principal pupil was ash-Shāfi'i.

His practice at the beginning of every recitation of a tradition was to perform ablution, dress neatly, apply perfume to demonstrate the sanctity of his action. Imām Shāfi'i expressed that in the firmament of traditionists Mālik glittered as a Star.

3. Imām ash-Shāfi'i

Imām Muḥammad ibn Idris ash-Shāfi'i was born at Askalon in Palestine in 150 A. H. He was of the same tribe as of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and is distinguished by the appellation of al-Imām-ul-Muṭṭalibi or Quraish Muṭṭalibi because of his descent from the Prophet's grandfather 'Abdul Muṭṭalib. He derived his patronymic ash-Shāfi'i from his grandfather Shāfi'i ibn as-Sā'ib. His family was at first among the most inveterate of Prophet's enemies. His father, carrying the standard of the tribe of Hāshim at the battle of Badr, was taken prisoner by the Muslims, but released on ransom, and afterwards became a convert to Islam. Ash-Shāfi'i is reported by Muslim scholars to be the most accurate of all the traditionists, and if their accounts be well founded, nature had indeed endowed him

with extraordinary talents for excelling in that species of literature. It is said that at seven years of age he had committed to memory the whole of the Qur'ān, at ten he knew by heart the *Al-Muwattā'* of Imām Mālik and at fifteen he obtained the rank of Mufti. He passed the earlier part of his life at Gaza, in Palestine; there he completed his education and afterwards removed to Mecca. He came to Baghdād in 195 A.H., where he gave lectures on the traditions, and composed his first work entitled *al-Usūl* or "Fundamentals." From Baghdād he went on a Pilgrimage to Mecca and from thence afterwards passed into Egypt, where he met with Imām Mālik. It does not appear that he ever returned from that country, but spent the remainder of his life there in the composition of his later works. He died in Cairo in 204 A.H. He is said to have been the first who reduced the science of jurisprudence into a regular system, and to have made a systematic collection of traditions. Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal remarks that until the time of ash-Shāfi'i men did not know how to distinguish between the traditions that were in force and those that were cancelled. His first work was, as before-mentioned, *al-Usūl* or "Fundamentals", containing all the principles of the Muslim civil and canon law. His next literary productions were the *Sunan* and *Musnad*, both works on the traditional law, which are held in high estimation among the Muslims. His tomb is still to be seen at Cairo where the famous Ṣalah-ud-Din afterwards (587 A.H.) founded a college for the preservation of his works and the propagation of his doctrines. The Mosque at Hirah was built by Sultān Ghiyās-ud-Din for the same purpose. Imām ash-Shāfi'i is said to have been a person of acute discernment and agreeable conversation. His manners were mild and ingratiating, and he reprobated all unnecessary moroseness or severity in a teacher, it being a saying of his that whoever advised his brother tenderly and in private did him a service, but that public reproof could only operate as reproach. His principal pupils were Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and az-Zuhairi.

4. Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal

Imām Abū 'Abdullāh Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal was born in Baghdād in 164 A.H., where he received his education under

Yazid ibn Hārūn and Yazid ibn Sa'id. On ash-Shāfi'i coming to Baghdād in 195 A.H., Ibn Hanbal attended the lectures delivered there by that Imām, and was instructed by him in the traditions. In process of time he acquired a high reputation from his profound knowledge of both the civil and spiritual law, and particularly for the extent of his erudition with respect to the precepts of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) of which it is said that he could repeat above a million. He was a man of great piety and uncompromising opinions and was therefore imprisoned by Caliph Al-Mu'tasim because he adhered to his own views on certain points of divinity and refused to subscribe to the opinions finding favour at the court. For this hard usage, indeed, he afterwards received some satisfaction from al-Mutawakkil, the son of Mu'tasim who, upon succeeding to the throne, set the persecuted Imām at liberty, receiving him at his court with the most honourable marks of distinction and offering him a compensatory present of 1000 pieces of gold, which, however, he refused to accept. After having attained the rank of Imām, he retired from the world and led a recluse life for several years. He obtained so high a reputation for sanctity, that his funeral was attended by 800,000 men and 60,000 women ; and it is asserted as a kind of miracle, that on the day of his decease no fewer than 20,000 Jews and Christians embraced Islam. The Hanbali School of Thought had a strong following in 'Irāq and Syria until the Ottoman Conquest. The well-known mystic and sufi Sheikh 'Abdul Qādir al-Jilāni of Baghdād belonged to the Hanbali School of Thought. In the 18th century it was revived (under the name of *Wahabism*) in Central and Northern Arabia and is now the dominant School in that country. The *Wahabis* are supposed to follow (to some extent) the teachings of Imām Ahmad ibn Hanbal. His *Musnad* contains about 30,000 traditions selected from 750,000. His collection of *Aḥādith* is not arranged according to subject-matter but under the name of the Companion to whom a *Hadith* is ultimately traced. He had several eminent pupils, particularly Ismā'il al-Bukhāri and Muslim Ibn Dāwūd.

5. Imām Bukhāri

Imām Bukhari was born on 13th Shawwal in the year 194 A.H., in Bukhāra in the territory of Khurāsān (West Turkistān). His real name is Muḥammad bin Ismā'il bin al-Mughirah al-Bukhāri.

His father died when he was still a young child and he was looked after by his mother. At the age of ten he started acquiring the knowledge of *Hadith*. He travelled to Mecca when he was sixteen years old accompanied by his mother and elder brother. It seemed as though Imām Bukhāri loved Mecca and its learned religious scholars for he remained in Mecca after bidding farewell to his mother and brother. He spent two years in Mecca and then went to Medina. After spending a total of six years in al-Hijāz which comprises Mecca and Medina, he left for Basra, Kūfa and Baghdād and visited many other places including Egypt and Syria. He came to Baghdād on many occasions. He met many religious learned scholars including Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal.

Owing to his honesty and kindness and the fact that he was trustworthy he used to keep away from the princes and rulers for fear that he may incline to say things to please them.

Many a story has been told about Imām Bukhāri in his struggles in collecting *Hadith* literature. He travelled to many different places gathering the precious gems that fell from the lips of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). It is said that Imām Bukhāri collected over 30,000 *Aḥādith* and he himself memorised 200,000 of which some were unreliable. He was born at a time when *Hadith* was being forged either to please rulers or kings or to corrupt the religion of Islam.

It was a great task for him to sift the forged *Aḥādith* from the authentic ones. He laboured day and night and although he had memorized such a large number he only chose approximately 7275 of which there is no doubt about their authenticity.

Before he recorded each *Ḥadith*, he would make ablution and offer a two *rak'at* prayer and supplicate his Lord (Allāh). Many religious scholars of Islam tried to find fault in the great remarkable collection of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* but without success. It's for this reason they unanimously agreed that the most authentic book after the Book of Allāh is *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*.

Imām Bukhāri died on 1st Shawwal in the year 256 A.H., and was buried in Khartank, a village near Samarkand.

6. Imām Muslim

The full name of Imām Muṣlim is Abu'l-Ḥusain 'Asākir-ud-Din Muslim b. Hajjāj al-Qushayri al-Naisābūri. "Muslim" as his *nāsba* shows that he belonged to the Qushayri tribe of the Arabs, an offshoot of the great clan of Rabi'a. He was born in Naisābūr (Nishāpūr) in 202/817 or 206/821. His parents were religiously devoted persons and as such he was brought up in a pious atmosphere. This left such an indelible impression on his mind that he spent the whole of his life as a God-fearing person and always adhered to the path of Righteousness. He was in fact a saint of high calibre. His excellent moral character can be well judged from the simple fact that he never indulged in backbiting, a very common human failing.

Imām Muslim travelled widely to collect traditions in Arabia, Egypt, Syria and 'Irāq where he attended the lectures of some of the prominent Traditionists of his time : Ishāq b. Rawaih, Aḥmad b. Hanbal, Ubaydullāh al-Qawāriri, Qutaiba b. Sa'id, 'Abdullāh b. Maslama, Harmalah b. Yahya, and others.

Having finished his studies, he settled down at Nishāpūr. There he came into contact with Imām Bukhāri and was so much impressed by his vast knowledge of *Ḥadith* and his deep insight into it that he kept himself attached to him up to the end of his life. He was an ardent admirer of another great teacher of *Ḥadith*, Muḥammad b. Yahya al-Dhuhli and attended his lectures regularly, but when the difference of opinion between Muḥammad b. Yahya and

Imām Bukhāri, on the issue of creation of the Holy Qur'ān, sharpened into hostility, Imām Muslim sided with Imām Bukhāri and abandoned Muḥammad b. Yahya altogether. He was thus a true disciple of Imām Bukhāri.

He wrote many books and treaties on *Hadith* but the most important of his work is the collection (*Jami'*) of his *Saḥih*. Some of the commentators of *Aḥādith* are of the opinion that in certain respects it is the best and most authentic work on the subject. Imām Muslim took great pain in collecting 300,000 traditions and then after a thorough examination of them retained only 4,000, the genuineness of which is fully established.

Imām Muslim has to his credit many other valuable contributions to different branches of *Ḥadith* literature and most of them retain their eminence even to the present day. Amongst these *Kitāb al-Musnad al-Kabir 'Ala al-Rijāl*, *Jami' Kabir*, *Kitāb al-Asmā' wa'l-Kuna*, *Kitāb al-'Ilal*, *Kitāb al-Wijdān* are very important.

Imām Muslim had a very wide circle of students who learnt *Hadith* from him. Some of them occupy a very prominent position in Islamic History, e.g., Abū Hātim Rāzi, Mūsā b. Hārūn, Aḥmad b. Salama, Abū 'Isā Tirmidhi, Abū Bakr b. Khuzaima, Abū 'Awāna, and Hafiz Dhahabi.

Imām Muslim lived for fifty-five years in this mortal world. Of this short span of his life he spent most of his time in learning *Ḥadith*, in its compilation, in its teaching and transmission. He always remained absorbed in this single pursuit and nothing could distract his attention from this sacred task. He died in 261/875 and was buried in the suburbs of Nishāpur.

7. Abū Dāwūd

His full name is Sulaimān ibn al-Ash'ath al-Sijistāni. He was born at Baṣra in 202 A.H. and died in 275 A.H. He is the compiler of one of the six authentic books of traditions, called the *Sunan Abū Dāwūd* which contains 4,008 traditions, said to have been carefully collected from 500,000. Jurists

have acclaimed this collection as a very authentic one, next to the *Sāḥihs* of Imām Bukhāri and Muslim. It took him 20 years to compile this work. There is another book on *Hadith* by him called the *Musnad*.

8. At-Tirmidhi

The full name of at-Tirmidhi is Abū 'Isā Muḥammad ibn 'Isā ibn Saurah at-Tirmidhi. He was born at Tirmidh on the banks of the Jaihun in 209 A.H., and died in 279 A.H. (892 A.C.). His popular work on *hadith* called *Jami'* is one of the six authentic works on *hadith*.

9. Ibn Mājah

The full name of Ibn Mājah is Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn Yazid ibn Mājah al-Qazwimi. He was born in 209 A.H., and died in 273 A.H. (886 A.D.). He was a celebrated Ḥāfiz of the Qur'ān and is known as the compiler of the *Kitāb-us-Sunan* or "Book of Traditions." This work is counted as one of the Six *Sāḥihs*, or authentic Collections of *Hadith*.

10. An-Nisā'i

The full name of an-Nisā'i is Abū 'Abdur Raḥmān Aḥmad b. Shu'aib b. an-Nisā'i. He was also a leading traditionist and his *Sunan* forms one of the six authentic books of *Hadith* held in high veneration. He was born in 214 A.H., and died in 303 A.H. He was buried in Mecca.

A few words may be said about this compilation which comprises gleanings from the Holy Qur'ān and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). The compilers believe that there are many who would be eager to acquaint themselves with some of the salient features of the Holy Qur'ān and the Traditions. These gleanings take the reader into the very heart of them.

Translation is itself a very difficult task, and it becomes still more difficult when difference in the genius of two languages is immeasurably vast. The Arabic language is rich, colourful and vigorous, and is best fitted to express thoughts

and concepts with conciseness because of the extraordinary flexibility of its verbs and nouns. English, on the other hand, is essentially a language of under-statement. Moreover, every language is a framework of symbols expressing its people's particular sense of life-values and the particular way of their perception of Reality. No good translation can, therefore, be successfully attempted unless the translator is able to produce within himself the conceptual symbolism of the language in question.

The renowned scholar Mr. Muḥammad Asad writes :

“When we look at the long list of translations - beginning with the Latin works of the high Middle Ages and continuing up to the present in almost every European tongue-we find one common denominator between their authors, whether Muslims or non-Muslims : all of them were - or are - people who acquired their knowledge of Arabic through academic study alone : that is, from books. No doubt, some of the translators of the Qur’ān whose work is accessible to the Western public can be described as outstanding scholars in the sense of having mastered the Arabic Grammar and achieved a considerable knowledge of Arabic literature but this mastery of grammar and this acquaintance with literature cannot by itself, in the case of a translation from Arabic and especially the Arabic of the Qur’ān, render the translator independent of that intangible communion with the spirit of the language which can be achieved only by living with and in it.

This does not, however, mean that a non-Arab can never understand Arabic in its true spirit ; it means no more and no less than that he cannot really master it through academic study alone, but needs, in addition to philological learning, an instinctive “feel” of the language”.

Luckily, the late Prof. ‘Abdul Ḥamid Siddiqi, the learned translator of this compilation, had the full command of both the languages, Arabic as well as English, the one

translated from and the other translated into. He rendered into English *Saḥīḥ Muslim and Mishkāt-ul-Masābih* which won the appreciation of the Muslim masses within and outside the country. He also started rendering of the Holy Qur'ān into English but could hardly complete half of the work when he returned to the Mercy of Allāh. Mr. Siddiqi, besides being an eminent Scholar and an authority on Islamic literature, had the privilege of studying the Western literature and of having deep insight in religions and ideologies other than Islam. As such the late Translator was very competent to do this work. The English rendering of the gleanings from the Holy Qur'ān and the *Aḥādīth* is thus faithful and accurate. We hope that the reader will like it.

May Allāh accept this humble effort of the late Translator and shower His choicest blessings upon him in the life Hereafter. *Amin !*

LAHORE

10th May, 1981

Muhammad Iqbal Siddiqi

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are highly obliged to Dr. Ihsān Elahi Rana, an eminent Scholar, who revised the whole of the manuscript. His guidance has been of great help to us.

We are also obliged to Mr. Muḥammad Saeed Siddiqi who helped us in the revision of translation by critically examining the manuscript and giving us valuable suggestions in improving the rendering.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Hāfiz 'Abdul Ghaffār and Mr. Muḥammad Tufail Zaigham for reading the Arabic Text of this compilation.

To Mr. Riaz Ahmad Abid we are particularly indebted who wrote the Arabic *Matn* (Text) with great calligraphic skill.

Mr. Zubair Ahmad typed the manuscript with great skill and we are thankful to him.

For the Introduction of this Compilation we are wholly indebted to Mr. Muḥammad Iqbal Siddiqi. It deals with the definition of *Hadith*, its practical value and importance to a Muslim living in a Society, its Classification, its narration and its science and technique.

We are grateful to Mr. Ashfaq Ahmad, Mashriqi Printing Press, Lahore, for his help in the printing of this book.

May Allāh reward them all.

Muḥammad Ikrām Siddiqi
PUBLISHER

