

# SIX MAIN BOOKS of ḤADĪTH

the term *ḥadīth*—refers to the sayings (*qawl*), actions (*fiʿl*) and tacit approval (*takrīr*) of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

The six main books of ḥadīth are:

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (صحيح البخاري) of Imam Muhammad b. Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī (d. 256, aged 62). The full title of this work is: *al-Jāmiʿ al-musnad al-ṣaḥīḥ al-mukhtaṣar min ʿumūr Rasūlillāhi wa sunanihi wa ayyāmihī. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* is regarded as the most authentic book after the Qurʾān, academically and historically. It took the *imam* sixteen years to compile this.

The number of *ahādīth* in the book come to 9082 but without repetition it goes down 2602.

The book has been translated into many languages.

The most famous commentaries on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* are: (1) *al-ḥāfiẓ* Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī's (d. 852), *Fath al-Bārī*; the first volume has been translated into the English language, (2) Imam Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAynī's (d. 855), *Umdat al-Qārī*; and, (3) Imam Aḥmad al-Qasṭallānī's, *Irshād al-Sārī*; and, in Urdu the most famous of its commentaries is al-Saʿīdī's, *Niʿmat al-Bārī*, in sixteen volumes.

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (صحيح مسلم) of Imam Abu'l Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj (d. 261, aged 57). He spent nearly fifteen years compiling this. The full title of this work is: *al-Musnad al-ṣaḥīḥ al-mukhtaṣar min al-sunan*.

The number of *ahādīth* in the book come to 3033 according to Muhammad Fuwād ʿAbd al-Bāqī.

The most famous commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* is that of Imam al-Nawawī (d. 676), *al-Mīnhāj fī sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. It is worth mentioning that the headings of the sub-chapters in Muslim are not written by Imam Muslim but by al-Nawawī. The most celebrated of its commentaries in the Urdu language is al-Saʿīdī's, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.

Among his teachers you have: Zuhayr b. Ḥarb, Saʿīd b. Maṣūrah, Imam al-Bukhārī, Ibn Maʿīn and Ibn Abī Shaybah.

Among his many students you have: Imam al-Tirmidhī, Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī and Ibn Khuzaymah.

Talking of a meeting between Muslim and al-

Bukhārī, Aḥmad b. ʿAbduh said: Muslim came to Bukhārī and kissed him on his forehead, and said, “Let me kiss your feet, O Master of the Hadith masters...”

3. *Sunan Abu Dāwūd* (سنن أبي داود) of Imam Abu Dāwūd Sulaymān b. al-Ashʿath al-Sijistānī (d. 275). A devout student of Imam Aḥmad. Abī Ḥātim says, “Imam Abu Dāwūd was the imam of the world in his knowledge, preservation and memorization, understanding, [and] piety...”

4. *Jāmiʿ al-Tirmidhī* (جامع الترمذي) of Imam Abu ʿIsā Muhammad b. ʿIsā al-Tirmidhī (d. 279, aged 70). Also known as *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*.

The most notable of its commentaries includes, al-Qāḍī Abu Bakr ibn al-ʿArabī al-Ishbīlī's (d. 543), *al-ʿĀḍat al-aḥwadhī bi sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ al-tirmidhī* in 8 volumes.

Among his teachers you have Aḥmad and Abu Dāwūd.

His other works include: *al-Shamāʾil al-muḥammadiyya* (الشمائل المحمدية).

5. *Sunan al-Nasāʾī* (سنن النسائي), also known as *al-Sunan al-Ṣughrā* (السنن الصغرى), of Imam Aḥmad b. Shuʿayb al-Nasāʾī (d. 303).

Among the commentaries penned is that of Imam Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911), *Zahrur rabāʿ ʿalā al-muḥtabāʿ*.

It is said that al-Nasāʾī fasted every other day throughout his life as Prophet Dāwūd, *upon him be peace*, did.

6. *Sunan Ibn Māja* (سنن ابن ماجه) of Imam Abu ʿAbdullah Muhammad b. Yazīd, better known as Ibn Māja al-Qazwīnī (d. 273, aged 64).

The number of *ahādīth* in the book come to 4341.

The most famous of its commentaries is of al-Mughlatāʾī (d. 762), *al-Iʿlām bi sunanihi ʿalayhīs-salām*, which is incomplete and unpublished.

The hadith masters have praised the arrangement of *Sunan Ibn Māja*.