

RIYĀD AL-ṢĀLIHĪN
AS A STANDARD TEXTBOOK
OF *HADĪTH*

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Dedicated

to

my mother **ZAITHUN KHAN**

for encouraging me to study Islam

and

BUZMI IKHWANUS SAFFA

for financing my entire studies in Pakistan

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INTRODUCTION

Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn (*Garden of the Righteous*) is a compilation of *Aḥādīth* (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad - s.a.w.s.) by the celebrated Shāfi'ī jurist, Abū Zakariyā Yaḥyā ibn Sharaf al-Nawawī (d. 676/1277).

Although he authored no less than 28 books, *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* is his most popular work. This collection is prescribed as a text book in the curriculum of all the major Dār al-'Ulūms and institutions of higher Islamic learning all over the world. This book is equally popular among the lay Muslims also.

Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn comprises such *Aḥādīth* which have a bearing on the socio-ethical values of Muslim society. However, interestingly, this work has also been used as a standard source book for *Hadīth* and Islamic juridical studies.

In view of its immense popularity and wide readership, various Muslim scholars have chosen to translate *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* into both English and Urdu. However, surprisingly no one has as yet done any serious study to evaluate the academic value of this work and to investigate the reasons for its popularity and indispensibility as a source of *Hadīth*. Thus the objectives of my study are to:

- a) evaluate the academic standing of al-Nawawī;
- b) analyse the special features and characteristics of *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn*;
- c) investigate the reasons for its popularity;
- d) evaluate its academic standing and value as a source book of *Hadīth*.

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter one deals with the life and works of Imām al-Nawawī; chapter two discusses the status of *Ḥadīth* in Islam; chapter three touches upon the compilation and special features of *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn*; chapter four sheds light on some of the major Urdu and English translations of *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn* and in chapter five an evaluation of *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn* as a *Ḥadīth* textbook placed in perspective.

The transliteration system used throughout this dissertation appears on page 72 and for the benefit of those who are not conversant with the Arabic language, a glossary of Arabic terms has been included on page 74.

Chapter One

LIFE AND WORKS OF *IMĀM AL-NAWAWĪ*

Abū Zakariyā Yaḥyā ibn Sharaf ibn Murrī al-Ḥizāmī al-Nawawī, hereinafter referred to as *Imām al-Nawawī*, was born in 631 AH/1233 CE in Nawā¹, a township of al-Ḥurān in the south of Damascus, the capital of present-day Syria.

1.1 HIS PARENTS

Sharaf b. Murrī, the father of *Imām al-Nawawī*, was a merchant, trading in Nawā. He was a pious and saintly figure. He passed away nine years after the demise of his son, *Imām al-Nawawī*, at the age of over 70 years². There is no mention of *Imām al-Nawawī*'s mother's name in any of the biographies that have been consulted, except that she also survived her son's death. His family life is obscure and not much details are available. It appears that *Imām al-Nawawī* was the only son of his parents.

1.2 HIS CHILDHOOD

From early childhood, *Imām al-Nawawī* was interested in the study of the *Holy Qur'ān*. He was not keen in playing with other children. The legend has it that *Shaykh Ṣāliḥ*

1. Al-Subkī, 'Abd al-Wahhāb b. 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Kāfī. *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyah al-Kubrā*. Cairo. 'Īsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, n.d., p. 400.

2. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī. *Al-Imām al-Nawawī*. Damascus. Dār al-Qalam. 1975, p. 19.

Yāsīn (d. 687/1309) a visiting *ṣūfī* (mystic) of Morocco, saw *Imām* al-Nawawī in his childhood and predicted the future scholarly status and piety of the lad to his father.¹

1.3 EDUCATION

At the age of 18, *Imām* al-Nawawī left Nawā for Damascus with his father. On reaching Damascus, he met the *Imām* of the Grand Mosque (*al-Jāmi' al-Umawī*) of Damascus, *Shaykh* Jamāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Kāfī (d. 689/1311). This *Shaykh* introduced him to the academic circle of the grand *Muftī* of Syria, Tāj al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ibrāhīm, popularly known as Ibn al-Farkāh (d. 690/1312). *Imām* al-Nawawī approached the *Muftī*, his first tutor, to arrange for his living quarters as was the case with other students who came to Damascus to study. Ibn al-Farkāh referred him to al-Kamāl Ishāq al-Maghribī (d. 650/1272), the great *Muḥaddith* (traditionalist) at the institution of learning, *al-Rawāḥiyah*. *Imām* Al-Nawawī took up temporary residence at al-Rawāḥiyah and later on moved to another institution of higher Islamic learning, al-Ashrafiyyah. This institution was so named because it was built by King Muẓaffar al-Dīn Musā b. 'Adīl al-Ashrafī in 630/1252. It was at *al-Ashrafiyyah* where he later assumed professorship, after completing his studies, a post which he held till his last days.²

By that time, Damascus, the capital of Syria, had become the centre of Islamic learning since the day when *Hadrat* Abū al-Dardā' (d. 32/654), a prominent Companion (r.a.) of

1. Al-Ṣiddīqī, Muḥammad Bin 'Alī Bin Muḥammad 'Allān. *Dalīl al-Fāliḥn li Turuq Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn*. Cairo. Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, n.d., p. 7.

2. Al-Arna'ūt, 'Abd al-Qādir. *Al-Adhkār al-Nawawiyyah*. Damascus. Dār al-Mallāh. 1971, p. 6.

the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s.). *Hadrat* Abū Dardā's (r.a.) proper name was Uwaymir ibn Amīr al-Anṣārī (d. 32/654) arrived as a missionary disseminating Qur'ānic learning and knowledge of *Hadīth* (Prophetic tradition). *Hadrat* 'Umar the second caliph deputed him to Syria as a juro-consultant and was noted for his brilliance.

Damascus was the capital of the Umayyad dynasty and this city produced such great luminaries of Islam, the likes of Abū Idrīs al-Khawlānī (d. 80/682), a juro-consultant and a *Tābi'ī*, Makhūl al-Dimashqī (d. 118/720), also a juro-consultant, 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz (d. 101/703), a scholar and *Umayyad* Caliph who is considered as the fifth Pious Caliph, and 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Awzā'ī (d. 157/759) who was also a juro-consultant of great repute.

Imām al-Nawawī was a very industrious student covering twelve lessons a day. He would spend the remaining portion of the day reading, writing and consulting his superiors. His curriculum included the following subjects: two lessons in *al-Wasīṭ* (which relates to *al-Fiqh*); a lesson in *al-Muhadhdhab* (which also relates to *al-Fiqh*); a collective study of *al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim* (ie. in *Hadīth*); lessons in Arabic grammar, syntax, etymology, logic, *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* (Principles of Jurisprudence), Encyclopaedia of Narrators of Traditions of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.), and '*Ulūm al-Dīn* (Islamic Sciences).¹

1. *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn*. Urdu translation by 'Abid al-Raḥmān. Karachi. Muḥammad Sa'īd & Sons, n.d., p. 26.

1.4 HIS TEACHERS

Imām al-Nawawī was privileged to study under the tutorship of leading *Muhaddithūn* (scholars of *Hadīth*) and *Fuqahā'* (Muslim jurists). Some of the renowned scholars under whom he studied various disciplines are listed below:¹

<i>FIQH</i> (Jurisprudence)	<i>HADĪTH</i>
1. Ibn al-Farkāh (d. 690/1291)	1. Ibrāhīm ibn 'Īsā (d. 668/1269)
2. 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Nūh (d. 654/1254)	2. Ibrāhīm ibn 'Alī Hafṣ
3. 'Umar ibn Asad	3. Zayn al-Dīn Abū al-Baqā' (d. 663/1264)
4. Abū al-Ḥasan Salār (d. 1271 AH)	4. Raḍī ibn Burhān

<i>USŪL AL-FIQH</i> (PRINCIPLES OF JURISPRUDENCE)	GRAMMAR
1. 'Umar ibn al-Bandar (d. 672/1273)	1. Aḥmad ibn Sālim (d. 664/1265)
	2. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Tayy (d. 672/1273)

At one stage during his student career, *Imām* al-Nawawī contemplated studying Medicine, but he experienced gloominess enwrapping his heart. This caused him to reflect upon what he was experiencing and he received an inspiration from *Allāh* (SWT) that the cause of his state of dejection was his pre-occupation with *al-Qānūn* (*The Cannon*) a book on Medicine by Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) (d. 428/1037). He sold the book and abandoned the idea of studying Medicine. He then concentrated his efforts towards

1. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., pp. 35-40.

the study of Prophetic Tradition and Islamic Jurisprudence. From then on, he felt at ease and his heart was illuminated.¹

1.5 HIS STUDENTS

Imām al-Nawawī taught at *al-Ashrafiyyah*, a well known Islamic institution of Islamic learning in Damascus. Some of his notable students were the following:²

1. Ibn al-‘Attār who was nicknamed *Mukhtaṣar al-Nawawī* (ie. miniature al-Nawawī, because of his close association with *Imām* al-Nawawī).
2. Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm
3. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī Bakr
4. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Sa‘d Allāh
5. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Khāliq
6. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abbās
7. Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-Darīr
8. Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Sālim
9. Jibrā‘īl al-Kurdī
10. Sālim b. Abī al-Dur
11. Sulaymān b. ‘Umar (*al-Qādī*)
12. *Qādī* Ṣadr al-Dīn Sulaymān b. ‘Umar

1. Jalāl al-Dīn ‘Abd-al-Rahmān al-Suyūtī (d. 911/1505). *Al-Minhāj al-Sawī fī Tarjamat al-Imām al-Nawawī*. Beirut. Dār Ibn Ḥazm. 1988 p. 35.

2. Al-Daqr, ‘Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., pp. 104-105.

13. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad
14. 'Alī b. Ayyūb b. Mansūr
15. Yahyā b. al-Fādil
16. 'Abd al-Raḥīm b. Yūsuf al-Samhūdī
17. *Al-Qādī* Diyā' al-Dīn 'Alī b. Sālim
18. Shams al-Dīn al-Bayṭār
19. Shihāb al-Dīn al-Arbadī
20. 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī
21. Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ 'Umar b. Kathīr

All the above pupils of *Imām* al-Nawawī were jurists of repute.

1.6 **IMĀM AL-NAWAWĪ: THE ṢŪFĪ (ASCETIC)**

Imām al-Nawawī was extremely absorbed in his literary pursuit and this hardly left him any time for his worldly concerns. He would partake of only one meal late in the evening and would drink a glass of water before dawn. He observed fast quite regularly. His life was that of a scholar cum-ascetic. *Imām* al-Nawawī's father supported him financially. He refrained from eating of any fruit grown in Damascus because the majority of orchards were on endowment properties and some of the lands belonged to minors and the disabled which were under government protection.¹

1. Jalāl-al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī. *Al-Minhāj al-Sawī fī Tarjamat al-Imām-al-Nawawī*. Beirut. Dār Ibn Ḥazm. 1988 p.46

Imām al-Nawawī's *ṣūfī* leanings and concern for the purification of the soul became abundantly evident from three of his works, namely, *Kitāb al-Adhkār* (*Book of Supplications*), *Bustān al-ʿArifīn* (*Garden of Mystics*) and *Riyād al-Ṣalihīn* (*Garden of the Righteous*). His spiritual master was *Shaykh* Muḥammad Yāsīn al-Marākashī (d. 687/1309). According to al-Dhahabī, *Shaykh* Muḥammad Yāsīn was, in his early life, a scholar of Qur'ānic recitation and was noted for his spiritual insight. He lived to the ripe age of 80. However, there is no mention of the *Ṣūfī* order into which he initiated his disciples.¹

After the demise of Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Shāmah ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ismāʿīl al-Maqdisī (d. 665/1257) who was a juro-consultant, historian and traditionalist, *Imām* al-Nawawī was appointed rector of *al-Ashrafiyyah*. The salary which *Imām* al-Nawawī received was either donated to *al-Ashrafiyyah* or books were purchased with it and donated to the *Dār al-Hadīth* (Faculty of *Hadīth*). After a while he refused to accept any form of remuneration from *al-Ashrafiyyah*.²

1.7 SOME OF HIS MONUMENTAL WORKS

Imām al-Nawawī began his writing career at around 660/1262, producing no less than 36 scholarly works. Twenty-six of his major writings have so far been published. He has a brief commentary on *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ* (a well known collection of *Hadīth*) of *Imām* al-Bukhārī and *Kitāb al-Sunan* of *Imām* Abū Da'ūd.³ His enormous literary contribution

1. *Al-Minhāj al-Sawī fī Tarjamāt al-Imām al-Nawawī*, op.cit. p. 46.

2. Al-Arna'ūt, ʿAbd al-Qādir, op. cit., p. 4.

3. Al-Daqr, ʿAbd al-Ganī, op. cit., p. 112.

is highly commendable considering his untimely demise at the early age of 46. *Imām al-Nawawī* has undoubtedly carved a niche for himself amongst Muslim traditionalists and jurists. Some of his popular literary works are:¹

1.7.1 *Minhāj Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (Way to the Commentary on Ṣaḥīḥ of Imām Muslim ibn al-Hajjāj al-Qushayrī (d. 261/883)*

This commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim* was completed in 674/1276. Besides being written in a language which is accessible to both scholars and students, this commentary expounds upon every aspect of *Ḥadīth* and the Science of *Ḥadīth*. Some of the sub-topics which this commentary deal with are: *Aḥkām al-'Uṣūl* (Rules of Principles) of *Ḥadīth* and *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence) and *Furū'* (Details of *Fiqh*), '*Ādab* (Literature), Asceticism, Principles of *Sharī'ah* (Principles of Law), *Asmā' al-Rijāl* (Biographies of Narrators), '*Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth (Principles of the Science of Prophetic Traditions)*: explanation of vocabulary, simplification of terms, reconciliation between conflicting reports, grammatical analysis of constructions of sentences and expounding upon the practical aspects of a *Ḥadīth*. However, one notes that *Imām al-Nawawī* has maintained brevity in his entire commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*² and does not delve into lengthy deliberations.

1. Al-Ṣiddīqī, Muḥammad Bin 'Alī Bin Muḥammad 'Allān, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

2. Al-Nawawī. *Al-Kāmil li al-Nawawī*. Karachi. Aṣḥāḥ al-Matābi'. 1956, p. 11.

1.7.2 *Rawḍat al-Ṭālibīn wa 'Umdat al-Muṭṭiyīn (Garden of the Seekers and Help for the Deliverers of Legal Opinions)*

This is an abridged version of *al-Sharḥ al-Kabīr* of *Imām 'Abd al-Karīm al-Rifā'ī* (d. 603/1225). The book deals with the various aspects of *Shāfi'ī* jurisprudence. It gained prominence amongst students and scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence alike. Many commentaries have been written on *al-Rawḍah* by eminent scholars, thereby adding to the value of the book. A second edition of *al-Rawḍah* was published by *al-Maktab al-Islāmī*, Beirut, in 1985, in twelve volumes.

1.7.3 *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn (Path for the Students)*

This is one of *Imām al-Nawawī*'s most consulted books on *Shāfi'ī* jurisprudence. Like *al-Rawḍah*, *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* is a synopsis of 'Abd al-Karīm ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Karīm al-Rāfi'ī's *al-Muḥarrir (The Liberator)*. Numerous scholars such as Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn Abī Bakr ibn 'Irām (d. 820/1442), Abu al-Ma'ālī Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn 'Abd-al-Wāḥid (d. 863/1485), and Taqī'-al-Dīn 'Alī ibn 'Abd al-Kāfi al-Subkī (d. 739/1361) have written commentaries on this work of *Imām al-Nawawī*. Al-Subkī entitled his commentary *al-Ibtihāj (The Delight)* and commenting on *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* states:

This book, in this period and time, is a source of help for students and numerous jurists in their quest for a School of Thought.¹

1. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

Burhān al-Ja'barī (d. 832/1454) has this to say:

How excellent has this *Imām* of asceticism and piety brought forth for us from the decrees of jurisprudence a path (*minhāj*), the words of which are like shining necklaces of pearl strewn on gardens adding lustre to the beauty.¹

Shams al-Dīn ibn al-Mūṣalī (d. 774/1367) has presented his commentary of this work in poetry form.² *Al-Minhāj* was completed in the year 669/1271 and it was only published in 1958 by Muṣṭafā Bābī al-Halabī in Cairo.

1.7.4 *Bustān al-'Ārifīn (Garden of Mystics)*

As evident from the title of the book, the central theme of *Bustān al-'Ārifīn* is the purification of the *rūh* (soul) and character building. In its table of contents, the following topics are listed:

- a) sincerity of intention;
- b) essence of sincerity and veracity;
- c) self-sacrifice;
- d) miracles of saints and their achievements;
- e) documented transmissions of miracles of saints;
- f) elegant narratives.

1. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 83.

2. ibid, p. 85.

The book is well documented with Qur'ānic verses and *Aḥādīth*. Every narration is supported by a reliable chain of narrators. The book makes good reading for students of *taṣawwuf* (Islamic Mysticism).¹

1.7.5 *Al-Adhkār al-Muntakhabah (Selected Litanies)*

Imām al-Nawawī wrote *al-Adhkār* in the 665/1267. It is divided into 396 long and short chapters and deals with the significance of *adhkār* (sing. *dhikr*). It deals with supplications to *Allāh* (SWT) for various occasions. These supplications have been extracted from the *Holy Qur'ān* and *Hadīth*.¹

Some of the great *Muḥaddithūn* (scholars of Prophetic Tradition) such as Shīhāb al-Dīn Aḥmad in 'Alī ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī (d. 852/1454) and Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad Shams al-Dīn al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1504) used to dictate *al-Adhkār* to their students. Jalāl-al-Dīn 'Abd-al Rḥman al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1513) abridged *al-Adhkār* and named it *Tuḥfat al-Abrār (Gift of the Pious)*. The most extensive commentary on *al-Adhkār* was done by Muḥammad 'Allān al-Ṣiddīqī (d. 1057/1659).

1.7.6 *Al-Irshād wa al-Taqrīb (Guidance and Conciliation)*

It is an abridged form of '*Ulūm al-Ḥadīth (Sciences of the Prophetic Tradition)* by the great traditionalist Abū 'Amr ibn al-Ṣalāḥ. The first version of this work was entitled

1. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 92.

2. Al-Arna'ūt, 'Abd al-Qādir, op. cit., p. ii.

al-Irshād (The Instruction) and its second version was named *al-Taqrīb wa al-Taḡṡīr li Ma‘rifat Sunan al-Bashīr al-Nadhīr (The Conciliation and Briefing of the Knowledge of the Traditions of the Messenger in relation to Good News and Admonishment)*. This book deals with the Science of Prophetic Tradition. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṡī wrote a commentary on *al-Taqrīb* and entitled his commentary *Tadrīb al-Rāwī. (Training of the Narrator)*.¹

1.7.7 *Al-Arba‘īn (Forty Ḥadīth)*

Al-Arba‘īn is a famous compilation of forty sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.s.). According to *Imām* al-Nawawī, each *Ḥadīth* in this compilation has a bearing on aspects of Islamic principles and beliefs. The reasons he gives for undertaking the compilation of this work are: (1) there are numerous sayings of Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.s.) which emphasize the merits of memorising forty *Ḥadīth*. (2) He cites that scholars like ‘Abd-Allāh ibn Mubārak (d. 181/760), Abū Bakr Aḥmad al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī (d. 458/1037), Muḥammad ibn Aslam al-tūsī (d. 242/821) had all compiled their own separate collections of forty *Ḥadīth* and that was how he received inspiration from them to compile his *Al-Arba‘īn*.

Imām al-Nawawī’s *al-Arba‘īn* has been translated in both English and Urdu. This work is taught in most Institutions of Islamic learning, both in South Africa and abroad in the Indo-Pak subcontinent and even in Middle Eastern countries, as an introduction to *Ḥadīth* for beginners.

1. Al-Daqr, ‘Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., pp. 91-92.

1.7.8 *Manāqib al-Shāfi'ī* (Outstanding Features of Imām al-Shāfi'ī)

This work is in effect an abridged version of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī's (d. 458/1060) *Manāqib al-Shāfi'ī* which was originally in two volumes. Imām al-Nawawī reduced it into one volume.¹ The book gives factual details about the life and works of Imām al-Shāfi'ī (d. 204/820).

1.7.9 *Al-Majmū'* (The Collection)

Al-Majmū' is regarded as one of the greatest books written about *Shāfi'ī Fiqh* (jurisprudence of the *Shāfi'ī* School). Unfortunately due to his untimely demise, Imām al-Nawawī could not complete this work and managed only to complete nine volumes. A Shafi'ī scholar Al-Taqī' al-Subukī (d. 771/1373) attempted to complete the remainder of *al-Majmū'*, but death did not allow him to do so. He succeeded in adding three volumes to the existing ones. These volumes deal with principles of sales up to the section covering profits. Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, Beirut, has published *al-Majmū'* in twenty volumes. Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, a great traditionalist (d. 748/1370) regards *Al-Majmū'* as an extremely excellent work. 'Imād al-Dīn Ismā'il ibn al-Kathīr (d. 774/1376), the great historian and commentator on the *Holy Qur'ān*, states in his *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah* that he had not come across any book written by a classical Muslim scholar that could be compared to *al-Majmū'*.² Some of the special features of *al-Majmū'* are:

1. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 93.

2. ibid, p. 93.

- i. *Imām al-Nawawī* comments on the Qur'ānic verses and relevant *Ahādīth* and their classifications. He then gives a simplified grammatical breakdown of words and also comments on the life of the narrators.
- ii. He explains and simplifies the principles of jurisprudence.
- iii. He discusses issues upon which scholars agree or disagree and pinpoints the most acceptable of the two views.
- iv. He discusses the views of scholars, pointing out any irrelevant viewpoint, and subjects such a view to severe criticism.

1.7.10 *Sharḥ al-Talkhīṣ (The Abridged Commentary)*

Imām al-Nawawī attempted to write a commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari* as he himself states in the preface of his commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. He does not give any reason for his commentary. He managed only to comment upto the chapter entitled *Kitāb al-'Ilm* (The Book of Knowledge) and thereafter death overtook him.¹

1.7.11 *Sharḥ al-'Ījāz (The Concise Commentary)*

This work was an attempt made by *Imām al-Nawawī* to write a commentary on the *Sunan of Imām Abū Dā'ūd*. However he only managed to cover upto the *Kitāb al-Wudū'* (The Chapter on Ablution).²

1. Al-Arna'ūt, 'Abd al-Qādir, op. cit., p. 10.

2. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 99.

1.7.12 *Tahdhīb al-Asmā' wa al-Lughāt (Refinement of Names and Vernaculars)*

This book is more of a lexicon dealing with grammatical analysis of Arabic and foreign words that appear in *Mukhtaṣar al-Muzanī*, *al-Muhadhdhab*, *al-Wasīṭ*, *al-Tawdīḥ*, *al-Wajīz* and *al-Rawḍah*. *Mukhtaṣar al-Muzanī (Al-Muzanī's Brief Exposition)* was written by one of the students of *Imām al-Shafi'ī*, *Ismā'īl ibn Yaḥyā al-Muzanī* (d. 264/879). Basically all these books deal with *Shafi'ī* Jurisprudence. *Imām al-Nawawī* regarded his *Tahdhīb al-Asmā' wa al-Lughāt* to be of utmost importance to students of all disciplines because the depth he goes into explaining technical words.¹

1.7.13 *Tanqīḥ Sharḥ al-Wasīṭ (Reexamination of the Median)*

Al-Wasīṭ is one of *Imām al-Ghazālī*'s writings on the *Shāfi'ī* School of Jurisprudence. It is regarded as very reliable source of information in the realm of *Shāfi'ī* Jurisprudence. *Imām al-Nawawī*'s *Tanqīḥ Sharḥ al-Wasīṭ* is a commentary on a major portion of that book.²

1.7.14 *Al-Khulāṣah fī Aḥādīth al-Aḥkām (The Essence of Prophetic Tradition Related to Islamic Rulings)*

This book deals with juristic principles deduced from Prophetic Traditions. In this work, *Imām al-Nawawī* covers upto the section on *Zakāt* (The Poor Due). According to some Muslim scholars this book is a must for *Muhaddithūn*, especially the *Fuqahā'* (jurists).³

1. *Imām al-Nawawī*. *Al-Majmū'*. Beirut. Dār al-Fikr al-Arabī, n.d., p. 17.

2. *Dalīl al-Fālihīn li Turūq Riyād al-Sālihīn*, op. cit., p. 9.

1.7.15 *Al-Īdā' fī al-Manāsik (Elucidation on the Rituals)*

This work deals with the rituals of *Hajj* (Pilgrimage). It has one chapter especially dedicated to matters related to women. 'Alī ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad al-Ḥasan (d. 911/1533) has written a commentary on this book and Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Ḥajar al-Makkī (d. 974/1596) has appended extensive marginal notes to this work.¹

1.7.16 *Al-Tibyān fī Ādab Ḥamalāt al-Qur'ān (Explanation of Etiquette Pertaining to the Scholars of the Holy Qur'ān)*

According to *Imām* al-Nawawī he undertook to compile the above treatise after witnessing the dedication of the people of Damascus for the study of the *Holy Qur'ān*. As its name suggests, this treatise deals with the ethics of handling and recitation of the *Holy Qur'ān*. This book was published in 1993 by Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, Beirut.

1.7.17 *Al-Taḥrīr fī Alfāz al-Tanbih (A Treatise On The Terms That Appears In The Book Al-Tanbih)*

This book deals with grammatical explanations of words and juristic terminologies that appear in *al-Tanbih* (Caution) of Abū Ishāq al-Shirāzī. Certain technical words used by Abū Ishāq al-Shirāzī are beyond the comprehension of students and thus *Imām* al-Nawawī had to explain and simplify those terms. *Imām* al-Nawawī's *Tadhīb al-'Asmā'* and *Al-Taḥrīr fī Alfāz al-Tanbih* enhance his status as an expert lexicographer.²

1. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 100.

2. *Al-Minhāj al-Sawī fī Tarjamat al-Imām al-Nawawī*, p. 62.

1.7.18 *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā'* (Ranks of The Jurists)

Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā' deals with the biographies of the jurists belonging to the Shāfi'ī School of Jurisprudence. This work is an abridged version of Abū 'Amr b. Silāh's *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyat*. In this work, every jurist is listed according to his rank and file. *Imām* Al-Nawawī passed away leaving behind a draft manuscript of this work which was later compiled in a book form by his student al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Jamāl al-Mizzī.¹

1.7.19 *Al-'Umdah fī Taṣḥīḥ al-Tanbīh* (The Basic Issue in the Correction of the Advice)

Al-'Umdah is one of the earliest compilations of *Imām* al-Nawawī. He has put to pen his observations on *al-Tanbīh* which is the work of the great Muslim jurist, Abū Ishāq al-Shirāzī. 'Umar b. 'Alī b. Aḥmad b. Muḥqin al-Anṣārī praises the efforts of *Imām* al-Nawawī in the compilation of this work.²

1.7.20 *Mukhtaṣar Usud al-Ghābah* (An Abridgement of the Biographies of the Companions of the Prophet - s.a.w.s.)

This is an abridged version of the work of the classical Muslim traditionalist Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Athīr al-Jazarī entitled *Usud al-Ghabah* which deals with *Ma'rifat al-Sahābah* (Knowledge of the Companions of the Prophet). This book acquaints the reader with some major Companions (r.a.) of Prophet (s.a.w.s.).

1. *Dalīl al-Fāliḥīn li Turūq Riyād al-Sāliḥīn*, op. cit., p. 9.

2. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 90.

1.7.21 *Al-Masā'il al-Manthūrah (Scattered Problems)*

This work represents a compilation of *Imām* al-Nawawī's *fatāwā* (legal opinions) which was compiled by his pupil 'Alā al-Dīn b. al-'Attār.¹ This book has been published by Dār al-Kutub al-Islamiyah, Beirut.

1.7.22 *'Adab al-Muftī Wa al-Mustaftī (Etiquette of the Doctor of Law who gives Legal Opinion and One who asks for Legal Opinion)*

It is a book pertaining to the ethical code which is binding upon a *muftī* and the one who is seeking legal opinion.²

1.7.23 *Takhmīs al-Ghanā'im (One fifth of the Booty)*

This book expounds on *Imām* al-Nawawī's conflict with the Shāfi'ī jurist Ibrāhīm b. Tāj 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ibrāhīm, popularly known as Ibn al-Farkāh (d. 729/1351), concerning the issue of slave-girls brought in as captives of war by Mālik al-Zāhir Baybars, a *Mamlūk Sultān* (1260CE -1277CE), of Syria. Ibn al-Farkāh acknowledged in his *Fatāwā* the permissibility of distributing slave-girls amongst the citizens as war-booty. *Imām* al-Nawawī, on the other hand, strongly opposed this view and was of the opinion that slave girls cannot be utilised as consorts if they did not fall under the *khumus* (one fifth of the booty which goes to the State).³

1. *Al-Minhāj al-Sawī fī Tarjamat al-Imām al-Nawawī*, p. 65

2. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 93.

3. ibid, p. 93 and 113.

1.7.24 *Al-Tarkhīs fī al-Ikrām Wa al-Qiyām (Permission for Honouring and Standing)*

This work deals with the merits of standing as a mark of respect in honour of Muslim scholars and pious Muslim personalities. In this work, *Imām* al-Nawawī discusses the rationale and the ethics of such practice and advocates the permissibility of standing up when any scholar enters the place where one is seated.

1.7.25 *'Ādab al-Istisqā' (Etiquettes Concerning Prayer for Rain); Ru'ūsul Masā'il (Primary Issues); and Tuḥfat al-Tullāb al-Faḍā'il (Gifts for the Seekers of Merits)*

All these three works are held to be extracts from his other work entitled *Sharḥ al-Muhadhdhab*. *'Ādab al-Istisqā'* deals with the rules pertaining to the manner in which the prayer for rain should be conducted and the supplications to be made. *Ru'ūsul Masā'il* deals with various Islamic juridical issues. *Imām* Al-Nawawī has, in these works, cited *tafsīr* (exegesis), *Ḥadīth*, and *Fiqh* sources in order to lend support to what has been discussed in them. He has also included in these works grammatical analysis of words and terminologies.¹

1.7.26 *Daqā'iq al-Minhāj Wa al-Rawḍah (Finer Points of the Path and the Garden)*

The writing of this book was accomplished in 669/1271. This work contains additions to the contents of *Imām* al-Nawawī's two previous works, namely, *Minhāj al-Tālibīn*

1. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 94.

and *al-Rawdah*. In this work, he discusses the finer points that were previously discussed in both books.¹

1.7.27 *Riyād al-Ṣalihīn Min Kalām Sayyid al-Mursalīn (Garden of the Righteous from the Sayings of the Master of the Messengers)*

This epic compilation of *Hadīth* is *Imām* al-Nawawī's most popular work both amongst scholars of Prophetic Tradition and laymen alike. This work will be discussed in detail in chapter three of this dissertation.

1.8 **HIS TRAVELS**

Since the time *Imām* al-Nawawī left Nawā, he settled in Damascus where he lived for 28 years. After he finally settled in Damascus, he continued to visit his family in Nawā occasionally. He travelled to Makkah twice for the Pilgrimage. His great admiration for *Imām* Muḥammad Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī took him to Cairo to visit his tomb and on beholding the dome of the tomb of *Imām* al-Shāfi'ī, he stopped and retraced his steps in respect for that great scholar, without entering the mausoleum.²

1.9 **HIS DEMISE**

It seems that *Imām* al-Nawawī had a premonition of his death. Towards the end of his life he started visiting the graves of his mentors. He paid a visit to his colleagues and

1. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 94.

2. ibid, p. 181

some of the great masters of learning and thereafter he returned to his home town, Nawā. From Nawā he travelled to *al-Quds* (Palestine) and visited the tomb of Prophet Ibrāhīm *Khalīl Allāh* (friend of *Allāh*) (a.s.).¹ Then he returned to Nawā where he took ill for a short period of time after which he recovered. However, four days after his recovering from his illness, he passed away on a Thursday night, 24 *Rajab*, 667/1269 at the age of 46 as a celibate. His tomb is frequented by people in Nawā where he eternally rests.²

1.10 ASSESSMENT BY HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Imām al-Nawawī gained recognition amongst his contemporaries for his scholastic acumen, his piety, dedication and unflinching devotion to the dissemination of Prophetic Traditions. In what follows are the views expressed by some of his contemporaries:

‘Alā al-Dīn ibn Dā’ūd ibn Sulaymān ibn Sulaymān ibn al-‘Attār (d. 724/1346) wrote the following:

My *Shaykh*, my mentor, the *Imām* and author of valuable and praiseworthy books, the unique master, observant of fast and prayer, an ascetic in his worldly outlook, inclined towards deeds of the hereafter. He was a research scholar, very particular of his duties and responsibilities; a *ḥāfiẓ* (one who has committed to memory) of Prophetic Traditions, knowing each and every category thereof, including unfamiliar

1. It is to be noted here that there is popular belief that Prophet Ibrāhīm (a.s.) was buried in Palestine. However, there is no historical evidence of his actual burial site.
2. Al-Daqr, ‘Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 191.

words and its meanings, and had full grasp of the meaning of the *Hadīth*. He was the propounder of the *Shāfi'ī* School of Islamic Jurisprudence and the defender of its principles..."¹

Abū 'Abd al-Raḥīm Muḥammad ibn al-Hasan ibn Ismā'īl al-Akhmimī (d. 684/1506) expressed the following sentiments:

Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn treaded the path of the *Ṣaḥābah*. I do not know anyone in our age who has lived up to this standard of piety amongst scholars besides him."²

Al-Shaykh Quṭb al-Dīn al Yuninī (d. 726/1348) who was a historian had this to say:

Imām al-Nawawī was unique in knowledge, piety, devotion, and austere living. He had many confrontations with the King al-Zāhir in the ministering of justice. The king is reported to have said, 'I fear this man.'³

Tāqī al-Dīn 'Alī ibn 'Abd al-Kāfī al-Subkī (d. 756/1378) himself a renowned *Shāfi'ī* scholar remarked:

After the *Tābi'īn* (successors of the Companions - r.a.), the masses did not fervently follow anyone as they followed al-Nawawī.⁴

1. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 169.

2. *Al-Minhāj al-Sawī fī Tarjamat al-Imām al-Nawawī*, op. cit., p. 27.

3. *ibid*, p. 27.

4. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 174.

Tāj al-Subkī ‘Abd al-Wahhāb ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Kāfī (d. 771/1393), the son of the Tāqī al-Dīn ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Kāfī al-Subkī, made the following observation:

The leader of his age, unique of achievements in his era, the blessing of the period.
He had no parallel in his religious practices, his knowledge, piety and godliness.
His intentions were noble and his actions dedicated to *Allāh*.¹

It is evident in the light of the comments cited above that *Imam* al-Nawawī was a scholar of outstanding repute.

1. Al-Daqr, ‘Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 175

Chapter Two

STATUS OF *HADĪTH* IN ISLAM

The *Holy Qur'ān* is the final code of guidance for mankind and it was revealed to the last and final messenger of *Allāh* (SWT), Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.s.), over a period of 23 years from 610-632 C.E. The *Hadīth* (sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad - s.a.w.s.) supplement the divine commandments, and serves as an exposé to the injunctions revealed in the *Holy Qur'ān*. Such injunctions which concern the realm of beliefs are absolutely explicit, whereas injunctions related to the implementation of certain rituals like *ṣalāt* (the compulsory five daily prayers), *zakāt* (the compulsory poor due), *sawm* (fasting during the holy month of *Ramadān*) and *hajj* (pilgrimage to Makkah) etc., require both theoretical and practical elaboration and explanation which the *Aḥādīth* (sing. *Hadīth*) of the Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.s.) provide in much greater details.¹

2.1 DEFINITION OF *HADĪTH*

Hadīth is a verbal noun derived from the verb *haddatha* which means to narrate, speak, talk, discuss or converse. From this we gather that *Hadīth* literally means a communication, word, narration, story, or conversation. However, the term *Hadīth* in the Islamic terminology refers to any report which concerns the Prophet's (s.a.w.s.) sayings or practices. Technically, therefore, the term *Hadīth* stands for what was transmitted by the *ṣahābah* concerning the deeds, sayings and tacit approval of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.).¹

1. Aḥmad, Khurshīd. *Islāmī Nazariyā-i-Hayāt*. Karachi. Technical Printers. 1972, p. 361.

2.2 HADĪTH AND SUNNAH

Closely connected to the term *Hadīth* is the term *Sunnah*. *Sunnah* (pl. *Sunan*) is a verbal noun derived from the Arabic root verb *sanna* which means to prescribe, introduce, enact, establish (a law or custom).¹ Hence the term *Sunnah* literally means a trodden path, a way, course, rule, mode or manner of acting, or conduct of life, whether good or bad. The technical meaning of the term *Sunnah* is the practice and way of life of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.). According to the *Fuqahā'* (Muslim jurists), *Sunnah* stands for the established, non-compulsory religious practice without its being *fard* or *wājib* (compulsory).

Although the two terms *Hadīth* and *Sunnah* are used interchangeably there is a technical difference between these two terms. *Hadīth* is the narration or report which may or may not contain the practice of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.), while *Sunnah* is the practice of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.).

'*Allāmah* Tāhir Fattānī, a traditionalist, defines *Sunnah* as "the road and life pattern and in the context of the *Shari'ah* it signifies the commands of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and his prohibitions and recommendations both in terms of speech and action in areas where the *Qur'an* is silent or its injunctions require explanation."²

Since the source of knowing the *Sunnah* is *Hadīth*, many *Muhaddithūn* have named

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1. Nadvī, Sayyid Sulaymān. *Khutabāt-i-Madrās*. Karachi. Urdu Academy Sindh, n.d., p. 63.
 2. Cowan, Milton J. *Hans Wehr - A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*. New York. Spoken Languages Inc. 1976. 3rd Edition, p. 161.

their compilations of *Ḥadīth* as *al-Sunan* (sing. *Sunnah*). For example, *Kanz al 'Ummāl fī Sunan al-'Aqwāl wa al-'Af'āl* (*Treasure of Workers in the Traditions Regarding Words and Actions*) of *Shaykh 'Alā al-Dīn al-Muttaqī* (d. 955/1577); *Kitāb Sunan Abī Dā'ūd* (*The Book on Traditions*) of *Imām Sulaymān b. al-'Ash'ath* (d. 182/804); and *al-Sunan al-Sughrā* (*The Minor Traditions*) and *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* (*The Major Traditions*) of *Imām Aḥmad b. Shu'ayb b. 'Alī* (d. 905/1527), etc.

Here it ought to be pointed out that establishing the source of *Sunnah* as having its basis in the *Ḥadīth*, ie. the sayings, actions and approval or otherwise of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.), establishes the fact that besides the *Holy Qur'ān*, the *Ḥadīth* also constitutes the second primary source of the *Sharī'ah* (the Islamic Canonical Law). *Imām al-Nawawī* confirms this in the introduction of his *Commentary* on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of *Muslim*:

The proof of what I have mentioned is in the fact that our *Sharī'ah* is based on the Holy Book and Prophetic Traditions which contain both words and the practice of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and both of which became the second original source of Islamic Law.¹

At this juncture, it is necessary to point out that there are two types of *Hādīth*, one that has direct bearing on matters of religious observances (*al-'Ibādāt*) like *ṣalāt* (the compulsory five daily prayers), *zakāt* (the compulsory poor due), *sawm* (fasting during the holy month of *Ramadān*) and *ḥajj* (pilgrimage to Makkah), and personal transactions

1. Nadvī, Muḥammad Ja'far. *Maqām-i-Sunnah*. Lahore. Idārat Thaqāfāt-i-Islāmiyyah. 1984, p. 50.

2. *Al-Imām al-Nawawī. Al-Kāmil li al-Nawawī*. Karachi. Aṣaḥḥ al-Matābi'. 1956, p. 11.

(*al-mu'āmalāt*), such stipulations relating to inheritance and, maintenance, etc., in which case adherence to the instructions of the *Hādīth* becomes obligatory (*fard*). The second type of *Hādīth* pertains to personal etiquettes, advices on general issues, etc., which are optional in nature.

It may be appropriate also to point out that there are basically three types of Sunnah.

1. *Al-Taqrīr*: This is the strongest type of Sunnah because it is established by the practice of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and also the deed (*ta'āmul*) of the *Ṣahābah* (r.a.). Under this category are included all that the *Ṣahābah* (r.a.) did in the presence of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and he either approved it or disapproved it. For example, the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) did not stop them from practising 'azl (coitus interruptus), but stopped them from wearing gold and silk.¹
2. *Al-Fi'l*: This signifies the practical teachings of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) in the form of demonstration like the method of *wuḍū* (ablution), *ṣalāt* (obligatory prayers); the mode of observing *siyām* (fasting) and the manner of performing *ḥajj* (pilgrimage), etc.²
3. The personal action of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) which was not imposed upon his followers, e.g., his personal habits, mode of dressing, manner of eating, his likes and dislikes.

1. Al-Naysabūrī, Muslim ibn Ḥajjāj. *Ṣahīḥ Muslim*. Karachi. Nūr Muḥammad Aṣaḥḥ al-Maṭābi'. 1956. Vol. 2, pp. 193 and 195.

2. Al-Sibā'ī, Muṣṭafā. *Al-Sunnah wa Makānatuhā fī al-Tashrī' al-Islāmī*. Damascus. 1398/1978, p. 47.

Out of the three abovementioned *Sunnah*, the first two categories are binding on the Muslim community. The last category constitutes the personal privilege of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and if any Muslim omits to observe it, he/she will not be held accountable. However, if one upholds it with the intention of following the practice of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.), one will be rewarded accordingly.

From what has been discussed above it is evident that the *Hadīth* enjoys paramount importance in the life of every Muslim. It serves to guide them in all walks of life and teaches them how to practically uphold and implement the commandments of *Allāh* (SWT). It is indispensable as far as Muslims are concerned. Neglecting the *Aḥadīth* is tantamount to neglecting the vast treasure of information which helps one in the understanding of the *Holy Qur'ān*.

Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.s.) conveyed to the people what was revealed to him in the form of the *Holy Qur'ān* and from the very outset it was never confused with his own personal pronouncements which were from the very beginning termed as *Hadīth*.

The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) is reported to have said: "Do not write what you hear from me besides the *Qur'ān*" and this was a precautionary measure to safeguard his words from being confused with the verses of the *Holy Qur'ān*. But when his Companions (r.a.) clearly understood the difference between the Qur'ānic revelation and the Prophet's (s.a.w.s.) sayings, this restriction was later lifted.

2.3 MISSION OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (S.A.W.S.)

The *Holy Qur'ān* spells out the mission of the Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.s.) in the following citations:

"We have sent thee not, but as a Mercy unto all the worlds." (21:107)

The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) is a mercy in the sense that his personal conduct also serves as light which dispels the darkness of ignorance.

"Blessed is He who sent down the Criterion to His servant, that he be a warner to all the worlds." (25:-1)

As a warner, the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) instructed people in the dos and don'ts of Islam which are duly preserved in the *Ḥadīth*.

"It is He who has sent amongst the unlettered an Apostle from among themselves, to rehearse to them His signs, to sanctify them, and to instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom." (62:2)

This verse has practical implications which has a direct bearing on the *Ḥadīth*. The word *ḥikmah* (wisdom) which appears in the above passage, is explained by al-Qaṭādah ibn Di'āma (d. 117 A.H.), a renowned traditionalist, to be synonymous to *Sunnah* (Prophetic

tradition);¹ while al-Mujāhid is of the view that it means "understanding of the *Holy Qur'ān*."² In *Lubāb al-Ta'wīl fī Ma'ānī al-Tanzīl* (*The Essence of Interpretation in the Meanings of the Revelation*), popularly known as *Tafsīr al-Khāzin* (*The Commentary of Abundance*), the word *ḥikmah* is defined as "knowledge of the *Holy Qur'ān* and acting upon it."³ Dr Muṣṭafā al-Sibā'ī mentions that *Imām* Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī was of the opinion that *ḥikmah* means the *Sunnah* (Tradition) of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.). In this regard he states:

Here, it is not permissible to imply from the term *ḥikmah* anything else other than Tradition of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) because it is mentioned separately from *al-Kitāb* (the Book). Surely *Allāh* (SWT) has ordained the obedience of His Messenger (s.a.w.s.) and imposed strict observance of his injunctions. Furthermore any statement declared as *fard* (obligatory) is done in reference to the *Kitāb* and *Sunnah*. *Allāh* (SWT) has linked faith in the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) to faith in Him. Inevitably one also has to accept the pronouncements of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) as binding.⁴

In other words, therefore, *ḥikmah* is other than the *Holy Qur'ān*. The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) taught his Companions (r.a.) the *Kitāb* and *ḥikmah* (i.e. wisdom which is the practical interpretation of the *Holy Qur'ān* by the Prophet - s.a.w.s.). It is in effect what *Allāh* (SWT) has inspired to the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) concerning the mysteries of the divine

1. Aḥmad, Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad bin. *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*. Karachi. Aa al-Matābi', n.d., p. 19.

2. *ibid*, p. 19.

3. Ibrāhīm, 'Alā al-Dīn Muḥammad bin. *Tafsīr al-Khāzin*. Beirut. Muḥammad Amān Damj, n.d., p. 86.

4. *Al-Sunnah wa Makānatuhā fī al-Tashrī' al-Islāmī*. *op. cit.*, p. 50.

injunctions and the Laws of the *Shari'ah*. This is interpreted by Muslim scholars as the *Sunnah*.¹

2.4 THE LINK BETWEEN THE *HADĪTH* AND THE *HOLY QUR'ĀN*

The *Holy Qur'ān* is the revealed Book of Guidance and the *Hadīth* supplements the dictates of the *Holy Qur'ān*. In many instances, the *Holy Qur'ān* spells out the divine commandments without providing the details as to how these commandments ought to be implemented. It is the *Hadīth* which provides the necessary details. For example, the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) explained how the *wuḍū'* (ablution) is to be performed and how to offer the *ṣalāt* (the five times compulsory daily prayers). Thus the responsibility of expounding, explaining and elaborating upon the divine revelation was duly assigned to the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and the words that he uttered are, according to *Holy Qur'ān*, divine inspiration to him:

"Nor does he say (aught) of (his own) desire, it is no less than inspiration sent down to him." (53:3-4)

Commenting on the above verse *Imām al-Suyūṭī* states:

The *Aḥādīth* of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) were also not spoken of his own accord, instead they were revealed to him. Revelation is of two types: a) *wahī jallī* - (i.e. manifest,

1. *Al-Sunnah wa Makānatuhā fī al-Tashrī' al-Islāmī*. op. cit., p. 50.

clear); and b) *wahī-khafī* (i.e. hidden and concealed)." The manifest revelation refer to the *Holy Qur'ān* and concealed revelation refers to the *Aḥādīth*.¹

The status which the *Holy Qur'ān* accords to the personal pronouncements of the Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.s.), hence his *Aḥādīth*, can be deduced from the following Qur'anic citations:

"So take what the Apostle assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you." (59:7)

Imām al-Suyūṭī is of the view that the above verse generally applies to all what the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) assigns to believers. In its general application this verse includes the issue of the spoils of war.²

"You have indeed in the Apostle of Allāh a beautiful pattern of conduct." (33:21)

Here too the personal conduct of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) is divinely endorsed for emulation. Believers have to mould their lives in accordance with the Prophetic lifestyle as enshrined both in the *Holy Qur'ān* and *Ḥadīth*.

1. *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, op. cit., p. 437.

2. *ibid*, op. cit., p. 455.

"It is not fitting for a Believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allāh and His Apostle, to have any opinion about their decision. And he who disobeys Allāh and His Apostle, he is indeed on a clearly wrong path." (33:36)

For the believers, the decisions of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) are ever binding upon them. It acts as an acid test for their faith.

"He who obeys the Apostle, obeys Allāh." (4:80)

Obedience to Prophet (s.a.w.s.) is in actuality obedience to Allāh (SWT). One has to submit to the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) in toto to qualify as a true believer.

"Say: If you (O Muslims!) love Allāh, follow me (practically, as your ideal of human perfection) Allāh will love you and forgive you your sins. For Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (3:31)

The proof of divine love coupled with the reward of forgiveness hinges on one's willingness to follow the Prophet (s.a.w.s.).

"But no, by your Lord, they can have no (real) faith, until they make thee judge in all disputes between them, and find in their souls no resistance against your decisions, but accept them with the fullest conviction." (4:65)

The way to *Allāh* (SWT) is enhanced by accepting the role of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) as arbiter in all affairs of one's life.

"O you who believe! Obey Allāh and His Apostle, and turn not away from him when you hear (him speak)." (8:20)

One has to pay heed to the words of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.), any display of disregard to the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) could be detrimental to one's faith:

"Nor does he say (aught) of (his own) desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him." (53:3-4)

The speech of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) does not stem from any other source but divine inspiration. As a result thereof, we affirm the divine nature and source of the *Hadīth*. This is duly attested by *Allāh* (SWT) in the above verse.

"Then let those beware who withstand the Apostle's order, lest some trial befall them, or a grievous penalty be inflicted on them." (24:63)

The role of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) as the expounder of the law is evident from the above verse. He is commissioned by *Allāh* (SWT) to decide on matters mundane and spiritual affecting the life of the believers. His decisions bear the seal of approval from *Allāh* (SWT). Abiding by his decisions augurs well for the believers. This means that the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) taught and commanded people to do as he instructed them to without

which none of the religious obligations could be correctly performed. Thus it is to be emphasised that any contempt or disregard directed towards the Prophet's (s.a.w.s.) pronouncements, or any attempt to discredit his decrees could result in disbelief and in rendering one liable for severe chastisement in the hereafter.¹ Thus the status that *Ḥadīth* enjoys as a supplementary to the *Holy Qur'ān* needs no further elaboration and elucidation.

1. *Anwar-i-Ḥadīth*, op. cit., 172.

Chapter Three

COMPILATION AND SPECIAL FEATURES OF *RIYĀD AL-ṢĀLIHĪN*

3.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

During the time that *Imām* al-Nawawī lived, Damascus, the capital of Syria was under the rule of the Mamlūk *Sultān* Baybars (1260-1277 C.E.). He fortified Syria against enemy attacks and even dealt a final blow to the Syrian Assassins (1272 C.E.). The assassins belonged to the Shi'ite Ismā'ilī sect. This murderous sect was founded by Ḥasan Ṣabāh. He acted on behalf of the Fatimides of Egypt. His task was the destruction of legitimate authority by poison and the dagger. They operated from Jabal, Kuhistan and Syria. Nizām al-Mulk (d. 1091 C.E.), the vizier of the Seljuk *Sultān* Malik Shāh (d. 1181 C.E.) was murdered by the Assassins. The Mongols were wiped out in 1260 and even the Franks were constantly repelled by the distinguished general Baybars.¹

During the Crusade, Baldwin invaded Damascus. The Franks maintained their presence in Syria for a period of time. The Zangid *Sultān* 'Imād al-Dīn Zangī (d. 1146) drove the Franks out of Damascus. With their presence in the Middle East, the Franks constantly harassed the frontiers of Syria. They were constantly repelled by the forces of *Sultān* Baybars.

While the power and wealth of Iraq shrank with the destruction caused by the Mongol

1. Hitti, P.K. *History of the Arabs*. London. Mc. Millan Education. 1985, p. 448.

invasions and the end of the Abbasid Caliphate (1258 C.E.), some dynasties were able to establish a stable order, unchallenged by powerful forces from outside the settled Islamic world, in particular the Hafsiids in Tunis (1228 - 1574 C.E.), a successor state of the Almohad (*al-Muwahhidūn*) Empire and the Mamluks in Egypt and Syria (1250 - 1517 C.E.), a self-perpetuating military elite which had grown up in the service of the previous dynasty, the Ayyubids.¹

Cultivation was carried on over a wide area, the government servants were able to bring in the surplus wealth that was generated from the rural areas to the cities, and "urban production and trade flourished within the framework of a generally accepted *Sunnī Shari'ah* (School of Law). A certain symbiosis was maintained between ruling groups and urban population".²

This period of peace and stability was due to the successful military campaigns of the Ayyubids and Baybars against the Crusaders and the Tartars. The Crusaders from Europe had nothing to offer to the Muslims in terms of culture in view of the fact that the Crusaders were bankrupt in terms of culture and morals.³ Againsts this background, *Imām al-Nawawī* undertook to compile his *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* which dealt with the Islamic pattern of life in order to prevent the followers of Islam from inculcating the effects of foreign influence, through the inevitable interaction between people of divergent cultures.

1. Hourani, A. *History of the Arab People*. London. Faber & Faber. 1991, p. 213.

2. *ibid*, p. 213.

3. Trace, H. *The Crusaders*. London. Bodley Head Ltd. 1962, p. 288.

Imām al-Nawawī compiled *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn* at a juncture in Islamic history when there was relative peace and prosperity. His selection of topics from the relevant *Ḥadīth* collections indicate great concern towards social and spiritual reformation. *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn* serves as an eye-opener to the ephemeral nature of the material world. This work was finally accomplished on 14 *Ramādān* 670A.H./1272 C.E., six years before *Imām* al-Nawawī passed away.¹ Expressing his noble intentions in compiling *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn*, *Imām* al-Nawawī states the following in the preface:

I saw it appropriate to compile a concise book comprising of authentic *Aḥādīth* which should serve as a guide to those who seek salvation in the hereafter and which would prove beneficial to them both in their spiritual and mundane affairs. This work includes exhortations and warnings, and every mode of spiritual discipline derived from the *Aḥādīth* related to austerity, self-mortification, character refinement, purification of the hearts, and such noble objectives as pursued by the ‘*Ārifīn* (Mystics). I have confined myself only to authentic and unambiguous *Aḥādīth* related in the well known authentic compilations of *Ḥadīth*.²

Imām al-Nawawī’s concern, therefore, was to bring the people back on track so that they could experience spiritual upliftment. Due to one’s absorption in material pursuits, the

1. Al-Nawawī, Abū Zakariyā Yaḥyā b. Sharaf. *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn*. Damascus. Dār al-Ma’mūn li al-Turāth. 1396/1976, p. 724.

2. Al-Khīn, Muṣṭafā, et. al. *Nuzhat al-Muttaqīn Shar Riyād al-Ṣālihīn*. Beirut. Mu’assasat al-Risālah. 1413/1992. Vol. 1, p. 18.

ultimate goal of a Muslim's life, which is to seek *Allāh's* (SWT) pleasure and nearness through soul purification, is totally neglected. Concentrating one's total efforts in order to fulfil one's carnal desires will certainly impede one's attainment of eternal bliss. As much as the body requires nourishment for healthy development, the soul also requires replenishing. Spiritual vitality can only be attained through Prophetic guidance. However, it is to be noted here that Islam does not promote monasticism. Islam aims at maintaining equilibrium between the biological needs and the process of attaining eternal salvation through observance of morality.

3.3 ITS SPECIAL FEATURES

Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn is, as mentioned earlier, a compendium of authentic *Ḥadīth*. Its special features are as follows:

3.3.1 ITS STRUCTURE

In all, *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn* comprises of 17 *kutub* (books); 357 *abwāb* (chapters) and incorporates a total of 1 894 *Aḥādīth*. These *Aḥādīth* were carefully selected from the two most authentic compilations of *Ḥadīth*, namely *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣāḥīḥ* of *Imām* al-Bukhārī (d. 256/878) and *Imām* Muslim (d. 261/883), as well as from *al-Muwaṭṭa'* of *Imām* Anas b. Mālik (d. 179/801) and other works which are included as part and parcel of *al-Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah* (*The Six Authentic Compilations of Aḥādīth*).

In order to impress upon the reader that the *Holy Qur'ān* and *Ḥadīth* constitute the

original sources of Islam, *Imām* al-Nawawī has prefaced each book and chapter with relevant verses from the *Holy Qur'ān*. This was deliberately done in order to emphasise the fact that the *Holy Qur'ān* cannot be separated from the *Hadīth*. Furthermore, it is to be noted that *Hadīth* alone or the *Holy Qur'ān* alone will not be of help in expounding the *Shari'ah* rulings. In order to illustrate this, the following examples are cited here:

The first chapter on Sincerity of Motive (*Al-Ikhlās*) is prefaced by the Qur'anic verse:

"And they have been commanded no more than this: To worship Allāh, offering Him sincere devotion." (98:5)

The second chapter on Repentance (*Al-Tawbah*) is prefaced by the Qur'anic verse:

"O You who believe! Turn to Allāh with sincere repentance." (66:8)

The third chapter on Patience (*Al-Ṣabr*) is prefaced by the Qur'anic verse:

"O You who believe! Persevere in patience and constancy: vie in such perseverance." (3:200)

Thus in every chapter of *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn*, *Imām* al-Nawawī has established the Qur'anic basis for the *Aḥādīth* which he has included in his compilation. As already discussed in chapter two, this method of prefacing the chapters with Qur'anic verses further emphasises the important link that exists between the *Holy Qur'ān* and *Hadīth*. Here it

ought to be noted that the details of *Ṣalāh*, rules of fasting, *Hajj* or *Zakāh* are not found in the *Holy Qur'ān*. The *Holy Qur'ān* only cites the broad principles, while the details as to how they ought to be upheld are found in the *Hadīth*.

3.3.2 ITS CONTENTS

Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn covers a fairly broad spectrum of topics which have direct bearing on the spiritual, moral and social aspects of the life of a Muslim. It serves as interesting reading for Muslims in general. It touches upon the duty of a Muslim towards his Creator as well as the various aspects of *al-'Ibādāt* (formal acts of worship) which comprise of the five pillars of Islam, namely, *ṣalāt* (compulsory daily prayers); *sawm* (fasting during the holy month of *Ramadān*); *zakāt* (compulsory charity); and *hajj* (pilgrimage). This is so because, in Islam formal acts of worship are of paramount importance. Based on the principles of monotheism these acts are dedicated solely to the Creator. They help in establishing communication between the '*abd* (servant) and his/her *Rabb* (Cherisher and Sustainer). Polytheism in any form is not tolerated in Islam. *Imām* al-Nawawī, therefore, opens his book with a chapter on *al-Ikhlāṣ* (Sincerity) in order to draw the attention of the reader to the fact that only when one is sincere in one's devotion to the Creator would one then certainly attain purity of worship, thereby resulting in gaining Divine Pleasure.

The main objective of the book is to exhort the Muslim community to uphold sound and noble character and morals, individually and collectively. That is why the bulk of its chapters deal with such issues which pertain to everyday life.

The book also deals with *al-Mu'āmalāt* (social transactions). *Allāh* (SWT) created humankind and blessed them with guidance through the teachings of His Prophets (a.s.). He (SWT) has provided them with laws which assist them to live as human beings interacting amongst themselves as vicegerents of *Allāh* (SWT). These social laws are termed as *al-Mu'āmalāt* and they help to maintain peaceful co-existence in society. Every good deed that helps promote a healthy standard of social life is viewed as an act of worship in Islam. Therefore, *Imām* al-Nawawī selected relevant *Aḥādīth* which touch upon such topics like "cooperation in good and virtuous Deeds"; "sincere advice"; "enjoining good and forbidding evil"; "kind treatment of women"; "excellence of doing good towards parents, wives and children"; and "kind dealings with orphans, girls, the poor; "prohibition of adulteration and cheating"; "prohibition of breach of covenant", and "prohibition of backbiting", etc.

Moreover, *Imām* al-Nawawī also included in his compilation such *Aḥādīth* which deal with *al-Hudūd* (the Penal Code). The Penal Code in Islam constitutes part and parcel of the *Sharī'ah* (Islamic Law) which was divinely revealed to the Prophet (s.a.w.s.). Thus we find that the prescribed punishments of some of the major crimes in Islam like adultery and fornication, defamation, theft, brigandage, apostasy, rebellion and corruption, etc. are also dealt with in this work.

As human beings, we all have shortcomings. *Allāh* (SWT) has provided us with the opportunity to atone for our sins in order that we may attain spiritual upliftment. Thus its penultimate and final chapters deal with *al-Istighfār* (Seeking Forgiveness from *Allāh*) and *Bayān mā A'dda Allāhu Ta'ālā li al-Mu'minīn fī al-Jannah* (Explanation of what

Allāh has in store for Believers in Paradise). These two chapters emphasize upon the reader that one would be eligible to attain the bounties of Paradise only after repenting for one's sins.

3.3.3 ITS CONCISE NATURE

Muslim scholars found *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* to be very useful due to its concise nature and the wide range of topics that it covers. This one volume gave them quick access to the authentic *Aḥādīth*. Thus this work was significant because they no longer had to delve into the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* which ran into volumes to extract the relevant authentic *Aḥādīth* which deal with those topics which are mentioned in *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn*. The aim of *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* is to assist one to strengthen one's belief (*Imān*), to enable one to observe the worship obligations (*al-'Ibādāt*) and to build individual and collective character, ethics and morality (*al-Akhlāq*).

It is interesting to note that *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* also forms part of the curriculum in *Dar-al-'Ulūm* (Higher Institutions of Islamic Learning) in many parts of the World. It was found to be suitable as an introductory textbook on the Prophetic traditions because the relevant topics that it covers gave the students an overview of the broad Islamic teachings. Translations of *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* are also easily available in both English and Urdu.

3.3.4. EXPLANATION OF CERTAIN AḤĀDĪTH

Imām al-Nawawī took pains in explaining certain *Aḥādīth* that he had included in his

work. For example *Hadīth* no. 3 which appears in Chapter 1, namely, "*There is no (Hijrah) migration after al-Fath (the conquest of Makkah in 8/630)...*" is explained by *Imām* al-Nawawī as follows: "One need not migrate from Makkah anymore since it has become *Dār al-Islām* (the place which is under Islamic rule), before the conquest of Makkah by the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) it was *Dār al-Harb* (the place with which the Islamic government was at war)."¹

It may be added here, that this *Hadīth* refers to the sincerity of motive. Worldly considerations alone should not compel a person to undertake an action. When undertaking any act, a believer has to keep sight on Divine Pleasure. During the time of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.), *Hijrah* was a symbol of a compulsory act and was a proof of sincerity to Islam. A believer had to divorce himself/herself from one "period in history" and embrace a brighter future being offered by Islam. In another *Hadīth*, the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) explains that *Hijrah* also means relinquishing the dictates of the baser-self as well as fleeing from a country of persecution for the protection of one's faith.

3.3.5 EXPLANATION OF DIFFICULT WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

Imām al-Nawawī also explained the difficult words and expressions that appear in the *Hadīth* texts. This certainly enables the reader to grasp the full intended meaning of the text. For example, in the fourth *Hadīth* which appears in chapter 5, it is mentioned that Anas (r.a.) said: "You indulge in things which you account as less than a hair, whereas during the time of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) we considered them as *al-mūbiqāt*."

1. *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn*, op. cit., p. 5.

Imām al-Nawawī explains that according to *Imām al-Bukhārī*, *al-mūbiqāt* means *al-muhlikāt* (i.e. fatal or destructive, which in other words imply serious evil or grave sins).¹

Another example that may be cited here is the following *Ḥadīth* which appears in the beginning of chapter 282:2: "Ibn 'Umar (r.a.) relates that the Messenger of *Allāh* (s.a.w.s.) said: 'A woman was tormented on account of a cat which she had tied up till it died. On that account she entered the Fire. She did not give it any drink or food when she had tied it up, nor did she leave it free to pick up nourishment from among *khashāsh al-'ard*.'" *Imām al-Nawawī* then explains that *khashāsh al-'ard* means *hawāmmuhā wa ḥasharātuhā* (i.e. rodents and insects of the earth).¹ Thus throughout the book he has gone out of his way to explain the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions mentioned in the *Ḥadīth*. This certainly facilitates the understanding of the *Ḥadīth*.

3.3.6 CLASSIFICATION OF ḤADĪTH

Scholars of *Ḥadīth* have graded the *Aḥādīth* into two groups i.e. *maqbul* (accepted) and *mardūd* (rejected). *Maqbul Ḥadīth* are divided into two groups, namely, *ṣāḥiḥ* (sound/authentic) and *ḥasan* (agreeable/good). A *Ṣāḥiḥ Ḥadīth* is one which has been narrated by such *ruwāt* (narrators) who were noted for being *'adūl* (just). Moreover, in its *isnād* (chain of narrators), there is absolutely no break. A *Ḥasan Ḥadīth* is such that has been reported by *ruwāt* whose truthfulness and trustworthiness are not under any cloud. As for *Mardūd Ḥadīth*, it is one which has certain defects or weakness in its chain of

1. *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn*, op. cit., p. 613.

2. *ibid*, p. 613.

authorities or text. If any *rāwi* (narrator) in the *isnād* happens to be *majhūl* (unknown) or if there is a discontinuity in the *isnād*, etc. then such a *Ḥadīth* is termed as *da'īf* (weak).

It is to be noted here that most of the *Aḥādīth* which *Imām* al-Nawawī has included in his *Riyād al-Sālihīn* are from the two most authentic collections of *Ḥadīth*, namely, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and they are all regarded *Ṣaḥīḥ* and thus there was no point for him to mention that such *Aḥādīth* are *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Therefore, he only mentions the source of the *Aḥādīth* i.e. either from *al-Bukhārī* or *Muslim* or from both *al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim* (i.e. *muttafiqun 'alayhi* - i.e. unanimously agreed upon it). However, wherever *Imām* al-Nawawī has included *Aḥādīth* from other sources like *Sunan of al-Tirmidhī* or *Sunan al-Nasā'ī* or *Sunan Abī Dā'ūd*, *Imām* al-Nawawī makes a point of giving the opinions of the *Muḥaddithūn* (scholars of *Ḥadīth*) with regard to the status of these *Aḥādīth*, i.e. whether they were graded as *ṣaḥīḥ* or *ḥasan*. Two examples may suffice to illustrate this point:

1. The following statement is made on the status of *Ḥadīth* no. 1707 in chapter 302 after the recording of this particular *Ḥadīth*: Buraydah (r.a.) relates that the Messenger of *Allāh* (s.a.w.s.) said, "He who swears by his integrity is not of us." (This is a *Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth* and it has been reported by Abū Dā'ūd with a sound chain of authorities).
2. Likewise, the status of *Ḥadīth* no. 18 which appears in the second chapter entitled "Repentance" is also mentioned after this particular *Ḥadīth*: Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān

ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb (r.a.) relates that the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said, "*Allāh*, the Lord of Honour and Glory, will accept the repentance of a servant of His till his death-rattle begins." (Reported by al-Tirmidhī, who said that this is a good *Ḥadīth*).

3.3.7 JURIDICAL CLASSIFICATIONS

Imām al-Nawawī also gives the juridical classifications of certain actions and deeds i.e. whether they are *wājib* (obligatory); *ḥarām* (forbidden); or *mustahab* (commendable) as opening statements of the headings of certain chapters. For example, chapter 17 is entitled "The Obligation (*Wujūb*) of Obeying the Decision of *Allāh*, and What Will Be Said By One Who Is Called To Do So And Commanded To Do Good And Refrain From Evil;¹ chapter 26 is entitled "On Prohibiting (*Tahrīm*) Injustice and Cruelty And Commanding to Repel them;"² and chapter 131 is entitled "The Commendable Act (*Istihbāb*) of Greeting When Entering One's House."³ These juridical classifications help the reader to understand the nature of a particular act or behaviour being discussed in the respective chapters.

3.3.8 OMITTING THE LONG *ISNĀD*

In practically all compilations of *Ḥadīth*, the *isnad* (chain of authorities) are prefixed to the *matn* (text) of the *Ḥadīth*. This makes it cumbersome upon the reader in that he/she has to read the names of all the reporters of a particular *Ḥadīth* before coming to the

1. *Riyāḍ al-Ṣālihīn*, op. cit., p. 45.

2. *ibid*, p. 92.

3. *ibid*, p. 270 and p. 45.

actual text of *Ḥadīth* itself. *Imām* al-Nawawī, in his compilation, has chosen to omit the long *isnād* and has chosen to include only the name of the first *rāwī* (narrator/reporter) who heard the particular *Ḥadīth* directly from the Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.s.).

It may be appropriate here to explain further the relevance of *isnād* (sing. sanad). Here it ought to be pointed out that since *Ḥadīth* (saying of the Prophet - s.a.w.s.) was transmitted orally from the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) to his *Ṣaḥābah* (r.a.) and they in turn transmitted whatever they heard from the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) to others who were either *Ṣaḥābah* or *Tābi'ūn* (ie. those who never saw the Prophet - s.a.w.s., but met the *Ṣaḥābah*). The *Tābi'ūn* then subsequently transmitted the *Ḥadīth* to the *Tab' Tābi'ūn* (ie. those who neither met the Prophet - s.a.w.s., nor the *Ṣaḥābah* - r.a.). The practice of reporting the *Ḥadīth* was to quote the name of the persons whom the *Ḥadīth* was heard from and tracing the link to the Prophet (s.a.w.s.). These people then came to form what is termed as the *isnād* (ie. chain of authorities). An example of *isnād* is the following: Ādam bin Abī Ilyās narrated to us; Shu'bah narrated to us; 'Abd al-'Azīz bin Ṣuḥayb said: I heard 'Anas bin Mālik (may *Allāh* be pleased with him) say that the Messenger of *Allāh* (s.a.w.s.) said, "Take *suhūr* (the pre-dawn meal during the month of *Ramadān*) as there is blessing in it."¹ This same *Ḥadīth* is included by *Imām* al-Nawawī by omitting the entire *isnād* and is thus recorded: 'Anas (may *Allāh* be pleased with him) said that the Messenger of *Allāh* (s.a.w.s.) said, "Take *suhūr* (the pre-dawn meal during the month of *Ramadān*) as there is blessing in it."²

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, English trans. by Muḥsin Khān, vol. 2, p. 80.

2. *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn*, op. cit., p. 482.

3.3.9 PROVIDING THE FULL NAMES OF CERTAIN REPORTERS OR *RUWĀT*

Certain *ruwāt* (narrators/reporters) that appear in the *isnād* of a *Hadīth* are mentioned in most compilations of *Hadīth* by their *kunyah* (appellations or nicknames) only. *Imām* al-Nawawī, on the other hand, took the trouble of identifying them by providing their full names. For example, he states that the real name of Abū Dujānah (r.a.) is Simāk bin Kharsah¹ (d. 12/633) who was a famous *Ṣahābi* who was martyred in the battle of Yamāmah which took place in 12/633 against the imposter, Musaylimah, during the *Khilāfāt* of Abū Bakr (r.a.). The real name of Abū Hurayrah (r.a.) (d. 56/679) is given by *Imām* al-Nawawī as ‘Abd al-Raḥmān bin Ṣakhr². He was a famous *Ṣahābi* who had memorised and reported the most number of *Hadīth* which are 5 374 *Aḥādīth* in all. As for the real name of the first Caliph of Islam, Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (r.a.) (d. 13/634), *Imām* al-Nawawī mentions it fully as ‘Abd Allāh bin ‘Uthmān bin ‘Āmir bin ‘Umar bin Ka‘b bin Sa‘d bin Tayyim bin Murrah bin Lu‘ayy bin Ghālib al-Qurashī al-Taymī.³

1. *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn*, op. cit., p. 40.

2. *ibid*, p. 6.

3. *ibid*, p. 53.

Chapter Four

MAJOR TRANSLATIONS OF *RIYĀD AL-ŞĀLIHĪN*

Riyād al-Şālihīn's popularity as a textbook of *Hadīth* can be assessed from the fact that Muslim scholars, in order to make it accessible to all Muslim students, scholars and lay Muslims alike, undertook to translate it into two widely read languages, namely Urdu and English. Every translation is a sincere attempt on the part of the translators to introduce this august compendium of *Hadīth* to the Urdu and English speaking readership. The writer of this dissertation has not come across any Turkish or Persian translations of *Riyād al-Şālihīn*.

4.1 URDU TRANSLATIONS

The major Urdu translations of *Riyād al-Şālihīn* which the writer of this dissertation had access to are as follows:

4.1.1 *Riyād al-Şālihīn* - Urdu translation by 'Ābīd al-Rahmān Şiddīqī. This Urdu translation was published by Muḥammed Sa'īd and Sons, Karachi, Pakistan, in two volumes. The date of its publication has not been mentioned.

Special features of this Urdu translation are as follows:

- a) It received a favourable review by an eminent scholar of *Hadīth*, namely,



the late *Mawlānā* Muḥammad Mālik Kandahlvī son of *Mawlānā* Idrīs Kandahlvī, well known jurist of *Dār al-'Ulūm* al-Islāmiyah, Ashrafabād, Tando Allāh Yār, Pakistan, who later on moved to Jāmi'ah Ashrafiyah, Lahore.

- b) The preface has been written by 'Ābid al-Raḥmān Ṣiddīqī. He introduces *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn* and deals quite elaborately on the status of *Hadīth*. He also gives a brief biography of *Imām* al-Nawawī.
- c) The translation includes a short preamble by *Mawlānā* Subḥān Maḥmūd of *Dār al-'Ulūm* Karachi. In it, he highlights the pains that the translator and publisher underwent in order to bring that particular translation in print form.

Some of its shortcomings are as follows:

- i. The *Qur'ānic* references which appear in the Urdu translation are incorrectly cited since the verse numbers are totally omitted. This makes it difficult to cross check the relevant verses. For example, on p. 80, he translates the first verse and the reference is given as follows (*Hadīd*, *pārā*¹ 27). On page 117, the reference for the *Qur'ānic* verse is given as (*Baqarah*, para 2).
- ii. Explanations of difficult Arabic words and expressions are retained in the

1. *Para* is an Urdu word which denotes part in reference to the *Qur'ānic* text. The *Holy Qur'ān* is divided into 30 parts which are known as *ajzā'* (pl. of *juz*).

original Arabic and no attempt was made to translate them. This makes it difficult for someone who does not know Arabic to grasp their meanings. However, the translator has commented on certain *Aḥādīth* and tried to simplify certain Arabic terms. For example, on p. 79 he comments on the implication of truthfulness and on p. 206 he explains the term *mursal*.

- iii. The real value of ‘Ābid al-Raḥmān Ṣiddīqī’s Urdu translation of *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* lies in the fact that he has included the entire Arabic texts and Urdu translations, side by side.

4.1.2 *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* - Urdu translation by *Mawlānā* Muḥammad Ṣiddīqī Hazarwī was published in 1986 by Ḥamīd and Company Printers, Lahore, Pakistan, in two volumes.

Special features of this Urdu translation are as follows:

- a) It includes the publisher’s note.
- b) The preface deals with *Imām* al-Nawawī’s biography and it touches upon some of the topics that are covered in *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn*. For example, it is stated that *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* comprises of *Aḥādīth* dealing with the rights of *Allāh* and the good deeds that draw a person nearer to the Creator such as repentance, forbearance, sincerity and contemplation etc. It also mentions that it contains *Aḥādīth* which deal with both the meritorious and abominable acts. Some of the meritorious acts comprise

of the recitation of the *Holy Qur'ān*, Fasting, *Jihād* (striving in the path of *Allāh*) and the acquisition of knowledge, etc. As for some of the abominable acts that ought to be refrained from are backbiting, gossiping and spying on each other, etc.

- c) It includes a brief introduction of the translator which has been written by *Mawlānā Muḥammad 'Abd al-Hakīm Sharaf Qādarī* of *Jām'iah Radwiyah*, Lahore, Pakistan.

In this Urdu translation the Arabic text is also retained side by side and the Qur'ānic verses are quoted in full and the references of both chapters and verse numbers are given. However, the flaw in *Mawlānā Muḥammad Siddīqī's* Urdu translation of *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn* is that *Imām al-Nawawī's* commentary and footnotes have totally been omitted. This deprives the reader of *Imām al-Nawawī's* scholarly opinion and explanations that would assist one in understanding the Arabic expressions.

4.1.3 *Zād-i-Safar (Provision for a Journey)*

This work is an Urdu translation of *Imām al-Nawawī's Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn* and was accomplished by Amat Allāh Tasnīm who died a few years ago and was the sister of the late renown Mulim scholar, *Mawlānā Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī Nadvī* (d. *Ramadān* 2000). It was published in 1983 by *Maktabat-i-Islām*, Lucknow, India, in two volumes.

Special features of this translation are as follows:

- a) Its introduction has been written by the renowned Muslim scholar, *Mawlānā Muḥammad Manzūr Nu'mānī* (d. 1997), who was the editor of *al-Furqān*, a leading Urdu monthly journal.
- b) The illustrious Muslim scholar, *Mawlānā Sayyid Sulaymān Nadvī* (d. 1953) wrote the preface in which he discusses the utility of the book.
- c) The translation carries many valuable footnotes.
- d) Every *Hadīth* quoted in the relevant chapters carry a sub-title making it easier for the reader to grasp the contents of the relevant *Hadīth*. She is the only translator who has resorted to this technique. For example, in the chapter on Contemplation she adds the following subtitles: The fear of *Allāh* (p. 58); the remembrance of *Allāh*, asking Him and seeking His help (p. 58); and disregard of certain deed (p. 59), etc.

Some of its shortcomings are as follows:

- i. While the Qur'ānic references are cited in full, only the numbers of the chapters are mentioned and hence it makes it difficult to cross check the relevant verses since the numbers of the verses are not given.
- ii. Throughout the translation the Arabic text has been omitted. Thus one cannot refer to the actual Arabic text to verify the translation and to understand the text fully. No reason has been given for this omission.
- iii. Although the translation makes easy reading for the layman, it is not of much interest to scholars or to those who know Arabic.

4.2 ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

The major English translations of *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn* which the writer of this dissertation had access to are as follows:

- 4.2.1 *Gardens of the Righteous (Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn)* - English translation by the late Qādiyānī scholar Muḥammad Zafrullāh Khān was published in 1975 by Curzon Press Ltd., London, England, in one volume. He gives no reason for his undertaking the translation *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn*.

Special features of this English translation are as follows:

- a) It consists of a foreword by C.E. Bosworth, a famous European scholar.
- b) Its introduction is by the translator himself, ie. Muḥammad Zafrullāh Khān.
- c) It contains a brief note on invocation of blessings on the Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.s.). He states that the words of invocation are expressly set out in the manuscript, but are omitted in the print in order to accommodate the text to the modern reader .
- d) The translation carries a useful subject index at the end.

Some of its shortcomings are as follows:

- i. The Arabic text is completely discarded and no reason is provided for this

- omission.
- ii. Introductory remarks at the beginning of the chapters to explain the theme of the chapter have been ignored. For example, chapter 53, p. 99 entitled "Combining Hope and Fear", the following introductory remarks are omitted: "Know that it is accepted that a servant (of *Allāh*) while in good health should have both fear (of *Allāh*) and hope (for the mercy of *Allāh*). Both the fear and hope should be in equal proportion. In a state of illness, he should rely totally on the mercy of *Allāh*. This is based on the principles of the *Sharī'ah* as evident from the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*."
 - iii. The *Aḥādīth* which have been repeated in the original Arabic work has been omitted and only their numbers are mentioned. For example, on p. 21 the *Ḥadīth* which is repeated is mentioned as *Ḥadīth* 68, etc.
 - iv. *Kunyah* (appellations) of the *ruwāt* are discarded. For example, in *Ḥadīth* 2, p. 1, in the original Arabic work the name of the Prophet Muḥammad's (s.a.w.s.) wife 'A'ishah (r.a.) is preceded by *Umm al-Mu'minīn Umm 'Abd Allāh*, but these appellations do not appear in the translation.
 - v. References to the status of the *Aḥādīth* as mentioned in the original Arabic work do not exist in the translation. For example, after the citation of *Ḥadīth* 66 on p. 21 the status of the *Ḥadīth* which is given in the original Arabic work as *ḥasan* is not mentioned in the translation.
 - vi. The accepted transliteration pattern has not been adhered to. For example, the name Yazīd has been transliterated as Yathrid.¹ The *Ṣaḥābī* Abū Bakrah (r.a.) has been transliterated as Abū Bakarah. The *al* which prefix

- Thaqafī has been omitted and Thaqafī has been transliterated as Thaqfī.
- vii. The contents' page as it appears in the original Arabic work has been totally omitted. In its place a new contents' page has been affixed at the beginning of the translation which contains the following headings:
Forward - Introduction - Translation - Index.

4.2.2 *Riyād al-Sālihīn* - English translation by S.M. Madanī 'Abbāsī was published in 1984 by Idārat 'Ishā'at-i-Dīniyāt, New Delhi, in two volumes.

Special features of this translation are as follows:

- a) It contains a lengthy preface which deals with the importance of *Sunnah* (tradition), the preservation of *Hadīth* (Prophetic discourse) and a brief introduction to *Riyād al-Sālihīn* by the translator himself.
- b) It also contains a short biography of *Imām* al-Nawawī in which his educational career and achievements are highlighted.
- c) The Arabic text is retained alongside the translation.
- d) References to the Qur'ānic chapters and verses are provided.

Some of its shortcomings are as follows:

- i. At certain places the translator uses Urdu words without translating them from Urdu into English.
- ii. *Kunyah* (appellations) of the *ruwāt* have been deleted.
- iii. The translation contains only a few explanatory notes.
- iv. The accepted transliteration pattern has not been followed.

4.2.3 *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* - English translation by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Shād was published in 1988 by Kazi publications, Lahore, Pakistan in two volumes.

The special features of this translation are as follows:

- a) It carries an acknowledgement by Kazi Publications.
- b) The translation contains an index of the Qur’ānic Verses mentioned in the text.
- c) It also carries an index of the *isnād* (chain of authorities).
- d) The Arabic text is retained alongside the translation.

Some of its shortcomings are as follows:

- i. The last page of the contents has been erroneously bound in between the pages of the Introduction in volume 1.¹
- ii. Pages of the introduction are wrongly collated and some are even missing. For example, page ix of the introduction is followed by p. xiv.

1. For example see *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* - Eng. trans. by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Shād. Lahore. Kazi Publications. 1988. Vol. 1, p. viii.

- iii. It carries a write up by Muḥammad Iqbāl Ṣiddīqī, the opening passages of which are missing.
- v. It has a translator's note which is also misplaced making the reading of this translation cumbersome.
- vi. *Kunyah* and even proper names of the *ruwāt* have been left out.
- vii. The translation does not carry any explanatory notes or commentary.
- viii. In most instances construction of sentences are grammatically incorrect.
- ix. The captions at the beginning of every chapter has been shortened and the juridical classifications of the *Aḥādīth* have been omitted

4.3.4 *Gardens of the Righteous (Riyād al-Ṣālihīn)* - English translation by Muḥammad Saghīr Ḥasan Ma'sūmī (d. 1997) was published in 1992 by National Hijra Council Islamabad, Pakistan and printed by Matbū'āt al-'Arabiyyah, Lahore, Pakistan in one volume.

The special features of this translation are as follows:

- a) It contains a foreword by Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada.
- b) The preface is by the translator himself.
- c) It includes a brief biography of the *Imām* al-Nawawī.
- d) Notes on the art of transliteration and abbreviations are provided.
- e) It contains a detailed table of contents.
- f) The Arabic text is retained alongside the translation.
- g) An exhaustive index appears at the end of the translation.

- h) The Qur'ānic verses and *Aḥādīth* are numbered, facilitating easy reading.

Some of its shortcomings are as follows:

- i. There are errors in the transliteration of Arabic expressions. For example, the Arabic expression in *Ḥadīth* no. 1163.2 which appears on page 306 is transliterated as *Taraqahū* instead of *tarahu* and is explained as '*alāhu laylan* instead of *atāhu laylan*. *Atāhu laylan* is then translated as "he visited them at night" instead of "he visited him at night".
- ii. In a number of instances the classification of *Ḥadīth* is only transliterated but not translated into English. For example, after *Ḥadīth* no. 456.10, in brackets the following appears (Tirmidhī who called it *ḥasan*)
- iii. It is replete with typographical errors. Thorough fare on p. 1 should be written as one word; and the word dirhams appears as dirhems on p. 79.

Chapter Five

EVALUATION OF *RIYĀD AL-SĀLIHĪN* AS A *HADĪTH* TEXTBOOK

It was during the lifetime of the Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.s.) that Muslims became aware of the fact that the *Holy Qur'ān* and *Hadīth* constitute the two inseparable original sources of Islam. Interestingly, these two original sources in due course gave rise to other branches of Islamic disciplines like *al-Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence), *al-Tafsīr* (Qur'ānic Exegesis), *al-Nahw* (Grammar), *al-Tārīkh* (History), *al-Sīrah* (Life of the Prophet - s.a.w.s.), *al-Akhlāq* (Ethics) etc.

5.1 THE RECORDING OF *HADĪTH*

The Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.s.) used to educate and teach his *Ṣaḥābah* on a platform (*Ṣuffah*), hence the term '*Ahl al-Ṣuffah* (Companions of the Platform). This *Ṣuffah* forms part of *al-Masjid al-Nabawī* (The Prophet's - s.a.w.s. - Mosque) and exists to this day in *al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*. Here some of them used to spend hours learning about Islam directly from the Prophet (s.a.w.s.). Abū Hurayrah (r.a.- d. 56/679) actually was so enthusiastic in his quest for knowledge that he spent all his time recording in his memory many *Aḥādīth* which he heard directly from the Prophet (s.a.w.s.). That is why he was able to report the largest number of *Hadīth*.

At this juncture, it is necessary to reiterate the fact that the sayings of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) played a fundamental role in expounding the injunctions of the *Holy Qur'ān*.

Hence, while the *Holy Qur'ān* was being revealed to the Prophet (s.a.w.s) and written down by the scribes of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.), there were Companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) who actually wrote down and collected the *Aḥādīth* for their personal use. This led to the compiling of several private collection of *Ḥadīth*. For example, Abū Hurayrah (r.a.) confirms that he had memorised the most *Aḥādīth*, but 'Abd Allāh b. 'Amr b. al-'Ās (r.a.) was the one who actually wrote down the *Aḥādīth* he heard from the Prophet (s.a.w.s.). His personal handwritten copy was entitled *al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Ṣādiqah (The Truthful Tract)*.¹ Abū Hurayrah (r.a.), on the other hand, dictated a selection of *Aḥādīth* which pertains to Islamic morals to his disciple Hammām b. Munabbih and entitled it *al-al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Ṣaḥīḥah (The Correct Tract)*. This collection was later edited and published by Dr Muḥammad Hamīdullāh.² The *Muṣannaḥ* of 'Abd al-Razzāq was published recently. Likewise, *Ḥadrat* 'Alī (r.a.), the fourth Pious Caliph, had in his possession a *Ṣaḥīfah* in which he had recorded the *Aḥādīth*.³

The enthusiasm to record the *Aḥādīth* did not cease after the demise of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.). For example, 'Urwah (r.a.), the student of *Ḥadrat* 'Ā'ishah (r.a.), recorded the *Aḥādīth* he heard from *Ḥadrat* 'Ā'ishah (r.a.). It is even mentioned that many years later, the Ummayyad Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz (d.101/720) issued a governmental decree to his governors ordering the compilations of *Aḥādīth* handed down from the Companions (r.a.) lest they could be lost for ever.⁴ However, it ought to be mentioned

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1. Azami, M.M. *Studies in Ḥadīth Methodology and Literature*. Indianapolis. American Trust Publications. 1977, p. 10.
 2. Hamidullah, M. *Ṣaḥīfah Hammām ibn Munnabih*. Hyderabad. Gemini Printers. 10th Edition. 1979.
 3. Hāshimī, Sayyid Muḥammad. *Anwār-i-Ḥadīth*. Karachi. Rashid & Sons. 1985, p. 76.
 4. *ibid*, p. 138.

that the first systematic compilation of *Hadīth* was actually undertaken by *Imām* Mālik b. 'Anas (d. 179/795) entitled *al-Muwatta'* (*The Trodden Path*) and thereafter other compilations appeared including *al-Sihāh al-Sittah* (*The Six Authentic Compilations of Hadīth*).

It ought to be noted here that the enthusiasm for the compilation of *Hadīth* never ceased. Many later scholars took great pains in compiling condensed works of selected and important *Aḥādīth* for the benefit of those who did not have the necessary skills and time to consult the bulky and voluminous collections of *Hadīth*. For example, we find that a Muslim scholar, namely, Abū Muḥammad al-Husayn al-Baghawī (d. 516/1122) compiled his famous *Maṣābiḥ al-Sunnah* and some two hundred years later another Muslim scholar by the name of Walī al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Tabrizī (d. 749/1348) revised and enlarged upon *Maṣābiḥ al-Sunnah* and entitled his work *Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābiḥ*. Later on when Islamic institutions of higher learning were established throughout the Muslim world, many of these *Hadīth* compilations formed an integral part of the curriculum.

5.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF *RIYĀD AL-ṢĀLIḤĪN*

The importance of *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* is evident from the fact that a cross section of people do benefit from it, irrespective of the school of thought which they are affiliation to. It is thus a book that is acceptable to all Muslims.

5.2.1 THE SCHOLAR

A scholar's interest in *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn* lies in the fact that *Imām* al-Nawawī has collated *Ṣaḥīḥ* (sound) *Aḥādīth* from the authentic sources such as *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, *Sunan al-Nasā'ī*, *Sunan Abī Dā'ūd*, and included them in a single corpus saving the scholar time in finding a particular *Ḥadīth* relevant to their research or discourse. Likewise, each chapter is supported by relevant verses from the *Holy Qur'ān*. Moreover, *Imām* al-Nawawī included the classification of *Ḥadīth* after mentioning the sources and this is extremely useful to the scholar. Furthermore, this particular compilation of *Ḥadīth* enlightens the scholar on the socio-ethical system of Islam, principles of Islamic economics, rituals, guidelines on Islamic politics, character building and guidelines on soul purification etc.

5.2.2 THE STUDENT

A student too benefit tremendously from *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn*. *Imām* al-Nawawī provides an explanation of all difficult words and phrases and this certainly helps the students to grasp the full meaning of the text of the *Ḥadīth*. Moreover, since *Imām* al-Nawawī makes cross references to the variations of the text from other sources, it gives the students a broader outlook on the topic under discussion. Furthermore, it serves as an introduction to *Ḥadīth* literature and it evokes within the student a passion to further his studies in the field of Prophetic Traditions.

5.2.3 THE LAYMAN

For the layman *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* provides interesting reading for it covers a vast number of relevant topics that have a bearing on the moral and social aspects of Islam. It also acquaints the layman with his/her duties towards the Creator and his/her fellow human beings in general. It also spells out what is permissible and prohibited for Muslims to indulge in. Hence, for the layman, it is a very useful work as it deals with the basic teachings of Islam.

5.3 COMMENTARIES ON *RIYĀD AL-ṢĀLIḤĪN*

Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn has, since its compilation, evoked a lot of interest in the Muslim world. The writer of this dissertation has in his possession two such commentaries. 'Allāmah Muḥammad 'Alī b. Muḥammad 'Allān al-Ṣiddīqī (d.1057/1659) was the first renowned scholar that undertook to write a commentary on *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn*. His commentary is entitled *Dalīl al-Fāliḥīn li Turuq Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn (The Guide for the Successful to the Paths of the Gardens of the Pious)*. This commentary was finally published in 1984 by *al-Maktabah al-'Ilmiyyah*, Beirut, in four volumes. This commentary discusses grammatical construction of words, it deals with the opinions of leading scholars when making a point and it includes a biographical sketch of the Companions (r.a.) of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.). Another commentary also exists which has been written by a group of Muslim scholars, namely, Dr Muṣṭafā Sa'īd al-Khin, Dr Muṣṭafā al-Bughā, Muḥyī al-Dīn Mistaw, 'Alī Shirjī and Muḥammad Amīn Luṭfī. It is entitled *Nuzhat al-Muttaqīn Sharḥ Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn (Gardens of the Pious - A Commentary of the Gardens*

of the Pious) and was published in 1413/1992 by Mu'assasat al-Risālah, Beirut, in two volumes.

5.4 COMMENTS BY SOME PROMINENT SCHOLARS ON *RIYĀD AL-ṢĀLIHĪN*

Some prominent Muslim scholars have expressed their views on the *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn*.

'Abd al-Ghanī al-Daqr states:

There are many books of *Hadīth* that have been compiled dealing with religious exhortations and reflections, but none has gained such popularity and authority as *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn*. It is a magnificent book, very beneficial, gainful and abundantly blessed.¹

Muḥammad Sa'īd, the publisher of one of the Urdu translations of *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn* done by 'Ābid al-Raḥmān Ṣiddīqī made the following comments:

Imām Yahyā b. Sharaf al-Nawawī's compilation is a link in such a chain (of religious books) in which the panacea for the collective and individual ailments of Muslims has been provided in the light of the *Qur'ān* and *Hadīth*.²

Mawlānā Hāmid al-Raḥmān Ṣiddīqī in his preface of the Urdu translation of *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn* by 'Ābid al-Raḥmān Ṣiddīqī makes the following comments:

1. Al-Daqr, 'Abd al-Ghanī, op. cit., p. 85.

2. *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn*. Urdu trans. by 'Ābid al-Raḥmān Ṣiddīqī, op. cit., p. 3.

... Another outstanding feature of *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* is that both the layman and the scholar stand to benefit equally from it. It contains (*Aḥādīth* on) character building, reformation and soul purification. In the opinion of scholars, after the commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no other writing of *Imām* al-Nawawī has gained such prominence as *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn*.¹

Mawlānā Muḥammad Mālik Khandahlvī, the illustrious son of the great scholar *Mawlānā* Idrīs Khandahlvī, penned down the following statement:

Imām al-Nawawī's *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* is an excellent compilation which has been used by scholars and *Muḥaddithūn* over the centuries for the purposes of propagating the *dīn* (the faith) and effecting changes in the sphere of conduct and morals.²

Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azīz Rabāḥ and *Shaykh* Aḥmad al-Daqqāq expressed the following:

The most beneficent, the most circulated and the most publicised work among the professional and layman is *Imām* al-Nawawī's *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn* because firstly, it caters for the spiritual and social needs of the masses and secondly, due to the eminence of the author amidst scholars of his era.³

1. *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn*. Urdu trans. by 'Ābid al-Raḥmān Ṣiddīqī, op. cit., p. 20.

2. *ibid*, p. 17.

3. Rabāḥ, 'Abd al-'Azīz and al-Daqqāq, Aḥmad. *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn*. Damascus. 1396/1976, pp. ii and iii.

‘Allāmah Sayyid Sulaymān Nadvī (d. 1953) had this to say:

Riyād al-Ṣālihīn is one of the contributions of *Imām* al-Nawawī to this *ummah* (community). It is an excellent book on conduct and morals. The *Imām* has shed light on good deeds and meritorious acts in the light of the *Qur’ān* and authentic *Aḥādīth* ... Studying this book motivates the reader in the direction of good deeds and cautions him against evil.¹

Mawlānā Muḥammad Ṣiddīqī Hazarvī, the Urdu translator of *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn* states:

This book of *Imām* al-Nawawī is most beneficial and spiritually stimulating. The book details the lifestyle of the pious and presents a programme based on the *Qur’ān* and *Hadīth* for the consumption of a believer.²

Mahmūd Hasan Rabī‘ writes:

Riyād al-Ṣālihīn is one of the most priceless compilations on religious exhortations which includes every aspect of spiritual training. What has enhanced its beauty and excellence is the selection of authentic *Aḥādīth* from prominent sources.³

1. *Zād-i-Safar*, op. cit., p. 4.

2. *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn*. Urdu trans. by Hazarvī, Muḥammad Ṣiddīqī. Lahore. Hamid and Company Printers. 1986. Vol. 1, p. 5.

3. *Dalīl al-Fālihīn li Turuq Riyād al-Ṣālihīn*, op. cit., p. 5.

5.5 RIYĀD AL-ṢĀLIHĪN AS A ḤADĪTH TEXTBOOK

In the recent past, a number of scholars have undertaken to have *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn* published anew in Arabic in the Middle Eastern countries. One such publication appeared in Beirut under the supervision of *Shaykh* Ḥasan Tamīm and it also carries a brief biography of *Imām* al-Nawawī. Another such edition was printed in Damascus and *Shaykh* ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Rabāh and *Shaykh* Aḥmad Yūsuf Daqāq have taken great pains in including in it an assessment of the standard and quality of the *Aḥādīth* which are found in *Imām* al-Nawawī’s work. They regard *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn* to be an important contribution and acknowledge that it is the most widely consulted and circulated work. *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn* has always been recognized as a *Ḥadīth* textbook. To this day *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn* remains an integral part of the syllabus of many Islamic institutions of higher Islamic learning in the Indo-Pak subcontinent. In the various *Dār al-‘Ulūms*, it is prescribed for beginners so as to initiate them to *Ḥadīth* literature. For example, at the Aleemiyah Institute of Islamic Studies, Karachi, Pakistan, it is included as a textbook in the second year syllabus.

In South Africa, it is heartening to note that *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn* also forms an integral part of the syllabus in the following Islamic institutions: *Dār-Arqam*, Educational Institute of the Muslim Judicial Council, Cape Town, *Dar al-‘Ulūm* Pretoria, based in Laudium, *Dar al-‘Ulūm* Newcastle, *Dar al-‘Ulūm* Azaadville, *Dar al-‘Ulūm* Zakariyā, and the *Sunnī Jam‘iyat al-‘Ulamā* of South Africa includes it in its ‘*Ālimah* (women scholars) classes conducted in Chatsworth, Durban.

Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn continues to be widely read and it is undoubtedly regarded as an essential *Ḥadīth* textbook because of its concise nature, dealing with the basic teachings of Islam without delving into unnecessary and irrelevant details, hence its popularity.

CONCLUSION

The *Holy Qur'ān* is the prime source of guidance for mankind revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s.) and as already explained in this dissertation, the *Holy Qur'ān* is not self explanatory in most instances. Therefore, Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s.) practically demonstrated the message contained in the *Holy Qur'ān* and verbally elucidated its injunctions that were beyond the comprehension of the new adherents of Islam. As a result his pronouncements also attained primary status and constitutes a source of the *Sharī'ah*.

His *Ṣahābah* (r.a.) followed by ardent seekers of Prophetic Traditions left no stone unturned in their zest for committing to memory and preserving the sayings of their Master (s.a.w.s.) during the golden era of Islamic History. Their endeavours gave birth to '*Ulūm al-Hadīth* (Science of Prophetic Traditions). This science laid down stringent principles which made it difficult for bogus or fabricated *Aḥādīth* to be left undetected. Hence Muslims are not at the mercy of pseudo-scholars for the explanations of such matters which pertain to *īmān* (faith).

This study was primarily undertaken in order to bring out the importance of *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn* as a *Ḥadīth* textbook and to point out the prominence it gained over the years. It may be relevant to point out here that *Riyād al-Ṣālihīn* evoked the interest of Muslim scholars by virtue of the fact that it was compiled by *Imām* al-Nawawī who was and is still venerated as a reputable Muslim scholar. He devoted his entire life in the quest of knowledge and in purifying his soul.

Riyād al-Sālihīn is certainly an important textbook of *Hadīth*. This can be deduced from the following facts: Firstly, a number of commentaries on it has been written; secondly, it has been translated into other languages such as Urdu and English; thirdly, it is included in the curriculum of Islamic educational institutions in the Indo-Pak subcontinent, the Middle East and South Africa; and finally it has received favourable comments from reputable Muslim scholars. One can, therefore, conclude that *Riyād al-Sālihīn* is an important *Hadīth* textbook. Had it not been so, it would not have sustained its popularity to this day.

TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

Arabic Letter	Transliteration	Short Vowels	
ا	ʾ	اَ	a
ب	b	اُ	u
ت	t	اِ	i
ث	th		
ج	j	Long Vowels	
ح	ḥ		
خ	kh	اَ	ā
د	d	اُ	ū
ذ	dh	اِ	ī
ر	r		
ز	z	Diphthongs	
س	s		
ش	sh	اَ وِ	aw
ص	ṣ	اَ يِ	ay
ط	ṭ	اَ يِ	iyy
ظ	ẓ	اَ وِ	uww
ع	ʿ		
غ	gh	ق ا ر د و	Letters
ف	f	پ	p
ق	q	چ	ch
ک	k	ژ	zh
ل	l	گ	g
م	m		
ن	n		
و	w		
ه	h		
ت	t		
ي	y		

GLOSSARY

<i>'Abd</i>	-	servant
<i>Abwāb</i> (sing. <i>bāb</i>)	-	chapters
<i>Adab</i>	-	etiquette
<i>Af'āl</i> (sing. <i>fi'l</i>)	-	actions
<i>Ahkām</i> (sing. <i>ḥukm</i>)	-	rules
<i>Ahl</i>	-	People
<i>Akhlāq</i>	-	character
<i>Alfāz</i> (sing. <i>lafz</i>)	-	Words
<i>'Ālim</i> (pl. <i>'Ulamā'</i>)	-	scholar
<i>Aqwāl</i> (sing. <i>qawl</i>)	-	words/opinions
<i>'Ārifīn</i> (sing. <i>'ārif</i>)	-	Mystics
<i>Bashīr</i>	-	giver of glad tidings
<i>Bayān</i>	-	explanation
<i>Bustān</i>	-	garden
<i>Dalīl</i>	-	guide/"proof"
<i>Daqā'iq</i> (sing. <i>daqīqah</i>)	-	finer points
<i>Dār-al-Ḥarb</i>	-	abode of war (a country with which the Islamic government is at war)

<i>Dār-al-Islām</i>	-	abode of Islam (where Islamic law prevails)
<i>Dhikr</i> (pl. <i>adhkār</i>)	-	litanies
<i>Dīn</i>	-	code of life
<i>Dirham</i>	-	silver coin
<i>Fadā'il</i> (sing. <i>fadl</i>)	-	merits/virtues
<i>Fard</i>	-	obligatory
<i>Fatāwā</i> (sing. <i>fatwā</i>)	-	legal opinions
<i>Fiqh</i>	-	Islamic Jurisprudence
<i>Fuqahā'</i> (sing. <i>faqīh</i>)	-	jurists
<i>Furū'</i> (sing. <i>far'</i>)	-	details
<i>Ghanā'im</i> (sing. <i>ghanīmah</i>)	-	booty
<i>Hadīth</i> (pl. <i>Aḥādīth</i>)	-	saying of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.)
<i>Ḥadrat</i>	-	respectful title
<i>Ḥāfiẓ</i> (pl. <i>ḥuffāz</i>)	-	one who memorises the <i>Qur'ān</i>
<i>Hajj</i>	-	pilgrimage to Makkah
<i>Harām</i>	-	prohibited
<i>Hasan</i>	-	good

<i>Hijrah</i>	-	migration of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) to Madīnah
<i>Hikmah</i>	-	wisdom
<i>Hudūd</i> (sing. <i>ḥadd</i>)	-	penal code
<i>‘Ibādah</i>	-	religious observance/worship
<i>Ikhhlās</i>	-	sincerity
<i>Īmān</i>	-	belief/faith
<i>Isnād</i> (sing. <i>sanad</i>)	-	chain of authorities
<i>Istighfār</i>	-	seeking forgiveness from <i>Allāh</i> (SWT)
<i>Jannah</i>	-	Paradise
<i>Juz’</i> (pl. <i>ajzā’</i>)	-	part
<i>Kitāb</i> (pl. <i>Kutub</i>)	-	book
<i>Kunyah</i>	-	appellation/nickname
<i>Manāqib</i> (sing. <i>manqabah</i>)	-	outstanding traits/features
<i>Masā’il</i> (sing. <i>mas’alah</i>)	-	problems/issues
<i>Mu’āmalāt</i>	-	social transactions
<i>Muftī</i> (pl. <i>Muftiyūn</i>)	-	one who gives legal opinion
<i>Muḥaddith</i> (pl. <i>Muḥaddithun</i>)	-	scholar of <i>Ḥadīth</i>
<i>Mu’min</i> (pl. <i>Mu’minūn</i>)	-	believer

<i>Radi Allāhu 'Anhu</i> (r.a.)	-	may <i>Allāh</i> be pleased with him.
<i>Rāwī</i> (pl. <i>ruwāt</i>)	-	narrator
<i>Ramadān</i>	-	ninth month of the Islamic calender, the month of fasting
<i>Ṣahābah</i> (sing. <i>Ṣahābī</i>)	-	Companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.)
<i>Salla Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam</i> (s.a.w.s.)	-	may peace and blessings of <i>Allāh</i> be upon him (a form of blessing for the Prophet)
<i>Subhānahu wa Ta'ālā</i> (SWT)	-	May He be Exalted (used for God)
<i>Sharī'ah</i>	-	Islamic Law
<i>Ṣūfī</i>	-	Muslim mystic
<i>Sunnah</i> (pl. <i>Sunan</i>)	-	way/practice of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.)

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