CHAPTER - II

REVELATION OF THE QUR’ĀN AND IMPORTANCE OF THE HADITH
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The Holy Qur'ân is the last and final Divine scripture, the inspired, uncreated and eternal word of Allah, revealed to Muhammad (PBUH), His last prophet, through the archangel Gabriel, in Arabic language, specially the Quraishite dialect, over a period of twenty three years, beginning from 610 A.D. and ending in 632 A.D.

The Holy Qur'ân is understood both as a spiritual touchstone and literary archetype. Its literary style is inimitable (sura, 2:23) and content is unapproachable for human being. It contains various subjects on juridical and canonical, rituals and precepts about prayer and fasting, pilgrimages and marriages, the divisions of inheritance and panel law. There are legends from the Bible or other sources and there are numerous exhortations to monotheism, to repentance, as well as threats of punishment on the day of judgement.¹

On the other hand, Hadith is meant by all that which the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) spoke, did and approved. It plays the important role after the Holy Qur'ân in all the spheres of language and literature of classical Arabic as well as Islamic law. Because the Qur'ân is the fountain head of Muslim law and absolute final authority while Hadith is the first and foremost interpretation of the Qur'ân. As for the content of the Qur'ân is concerned, it represents all the necessary things (Sura, 6:38), while the tradition of the Prophet does not leave to explain them. In support of this statement, the Holy Qur'ân says: (و انزلنا اليك الذكورتين للناس ما نزل اليهم و لعملهم يتفكرون) (And we have sent down to you (the Prophet) the message (the Qur'ân) that you may
**explain clearly to the people what is sent for them and that they may ponder over it.** (Sura, 16:44). From the above mentioned Qur’anic verse, it has been clear that the Prophetic Traditions are the absolute commentary of the Qur’an. Because, the Prophet of Allah did not speak anything from his end rather what he spoke that was form the inspired words of Allah and in this regard, the Holy Qur’an says: "Nor does he say (aught) of (his own) desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him." (al-Qur’an, 53:2-3). From the above mentioned discussion, it has been observed that "Inspiration" has been conspicuous in two kinds: the first one, which has been dictated by the archangel, Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (Sura, 2:97-8; 26:192-4) is called (*wahy al-matlu*). "The Recited Inspiration" and the Qur’an has been produced by this type of inspiration. Another one is an indirect inspiration of Allah, which may be compared to the example of the Prophet Moses who had a talk with Allah at the mountain *Tir*, where only sound or voice was heard from a tree, but the sender was invisible (sura, 7:155), and it is called (*wahy ghair al-matlu*). "The Unrecited Inspiration". The Prophetic tradition is composed of *wahyu ghair matlu*, which also happened in the dream of the Prophet (PBUH).

**Difference between the Qur’an and the Hadith:**

1. The Holy Qur’an is the word of Allah and it was revealed to His messenger, Muhammad (PBUH) through the angel, Gabriel. Besides, Allah proclaimed an open challenge in the Qur’an to the people of Arab World that they can never produce any ten chapters similar to the Qur’an or only a chapter like it; but the language of hadith neither has any challenge nor any inimitable character, since it is the product of the Prophetic words, deeds, and approvals.

2. The Holy Qur’an is a miracle for an everlasting period and its protection is ensured by Allah from any kind of changes up to the day of resurrection.
(sura, 15:9); but the Hadith is unlike to the Qur'ān.

3. To adapt the Qur'ān with meaning is forbidden, but in matters of hadith, adaptation is permissible if the meaning remains aright.

4. The holy Qur'ān consists of verses (āyāt) and chapters (sūwar), but in case of hadith, such type of system has not been maintained.

5. It is incumbent on the worshiper to recite the Holy Qur'ān in salah (Islamic prayer ritual) as well as its recitation is also considered as 'ibāda (prayer or divine service); whereas the perusal of hadith is not regarded so, but its peruser may be rewarded by Allah.

6. Touching the Holy Qur'ān is forbidden for the bodily unpurified person as well as its recitation in a position of being affected with major ritual impurity like the woman who is discharging menses. On the other hand, it contradicts to the matter of hadith, because being in a state of minor impurity, he or she is permitted to touch the Hadith without any abhorence, but it is detested in a state of major ritual impurity.

The discussion on the Qur'ān and the Hadith shows that the Holy Qur'ān is the word of Allah, directly revealed to the Prophet through Gabriel. On the other hand, Hadith is the product of indirect inspiration done to the Prophet which is regarded as the first and foremost explanation of the Qur'ān. Again it appears from the specific type of Hadith in which the Prophet (PBUH) sometimes repeated the words of Allah along with his voices, is called hadith al-qudsi (The Holy Tradition). Concerning the components of hadith al-qudsi, the major scholars are of the opinion that the meaning of tradition belongs to Allah, but the words are spoken by the Prophet. On the other hand, some other scholars add in this connection that both word and meaning of “The Holy Traditions” are of Allah.

The Prophetic traditions (al-Hadīth al-nabawī) deal with all the problems of the human life, whereas the holy traditions (al-Hadīth al-ṣaḥīḥ)
have the greatness, but most of them appear in regard to admonitions and maxims.

Implication of the Term al-Qur'an:

The term 'al-qur'an' "The Reading" or "Recitation" is the word of Allah revealed as inspiration to Muhammad (PBUH) through the archangel Gebriel.

This Holy Book of Islam is regarded by the Muslim people as the true word of Allah, which is also supposed to have been eternal and heavenly essence in the original form as well as uncreated words of Almighty. Although it has been reproduced as the earthly written scripture, the Holy Qur'an itself declares as "the well preserved tablet", (al-lawh al-mahfuz).

The term Qur'an is often translated as "reading or recitation" is said to have been derived from the verb qara'a means to read or to recite, but there is probably etymologically linked to syriac word ‘qeryana’ means reading, used for the scriptural lessons in the Syrian church, as well as another linkage has been found to the word of Hebrew ‘migra’ means "recitation". In this connection, further it has been observed that some Muslim commentators are of the opinion that it comes from the Arabic verb qarana "to put together" or "bind together" thus giving the approximate translation of a "coherent recital" or a scripture bound in the from of a book. As a verbal noun (ج) of the form Qur'an (قرآن) carries the connotation of a 'continuous reading'

Concerning the implication of the term, al-Qur'an, professor Nicholson claims openly to give the explanation to the same as follows: "Koran is derived from the Arabic root qara'a ‘to read’ and means ‘reading aloud’ or ‘chanting’. This term may be applied either to a single Revelation or to several recited together or, in its usual acceptation, to the whole body of Revelations which are thought by Moslems to be, actually and literally, the word of God.”

It appears from another reliable source that the term Qur'an
implies recitation, lecture, discourse etc. since the Book of Allah is assumed
to be a strong and consisting of living voices. If it is heard in the oral
recitation with original tune, then it will be undoubtedly appreciated.\(^{10}\)

Grammatically the word *Qur'\(\text{\'an}\) has been observed as verbal
noun ( مصدر ) as well as a common noun ( اسم الجنس ), which lexically
means “reading” with a traditional pronounciation. It appears from a verse of
the *Qur'\(\text{\'an}\) that the term *Qur'\(\text{\'an}\) is also used for other holy books like ( نور 14 )
“Old Testament”.\(^{11}\)

The definite article ‘*al’ is preceded to the term *Qur'\(\text{\'an}\) and
thus *al-Qur'\(\text{\'an}\) has to mean the certain Divine Book of Allah. In matters
of entitlement to the heavenly book, *al-Qur'\(\text{\'an}\), two inferences may be drawn
as follows:

1. The Holy *Qur'\(\text{\'an}\) is the Divine constitution and the Book of guidance
for the human-being of all ages. Because, it makes a perfect relation
between itself and its followers along with an encouragement to get the
*Qur'\(\text{\'an}\) by their hearts to the greater extent than that of the printing
on the pages of papers. Generally the tongues of people have been
engaged in the recitation of the Holy *Qur'\(\text{\'an}\). Moreover, innumerable
huffaz (those who learn the *Qur'\(\text{\'an}\) by heart) have been committing
the *Qur'\(\text{\'an}\) to their memories and this tradition has become the best
practice to protect and preserve it in their hearts. Millions of peoples
have been excercising the Qur'\(\text{\'anic phrases as hymn songs in }
devotion and ritual performance by their continuous recital. From the
above mentioned discussion, it may be noted that such a holy book has
been appropriately entitled as *al-Qur'\(\text{\'an}\).\(^{12}\)

2. By the revelation of the Holy *Qur'\(\text{\'an}\), the chain of guidance has reached
the perfect point, which was started with the Prophet Adam (PBUH) and
ended with the last Prophet, Muhammad(PBUH). So, all the basic
teachings of guidance are treasured and protected in the Holy Qur'ān. Presently, nobody will get the success to perceive the actual teachings and mission by reading the past heavenly books, but possibility lies only with the Qur'ān to know the same extent. As a matter of fact, the Holy Qur'ān is itself a sufficient treasury of versatile knowledge, excluding all the past heavenly scriptures. From this point of view, such a heavenly scripture is deserved to be entitled as al-Qur'ān. Moreover, it bears the sense of accumulated knowledge.¹³

To clarify the discussion on the term, al-Qur'ān, some inferences have been drawn in support of the linguistic analogy and the Qur'ānic views as follows:

1. The word, Qur'ān is etymologically a verbal noun and it bears the meaning of “Reading” due to being its relation to the root qara'a (ق - ر - ء) “to read”.¹⁴ Because, the term has been used in the Qur'ānic verses as a verbal noun ( مصدر).

2. In some verses of the Holy Qur'ān, it has come into view that the term, Qur'ān is also used as a proper noun for the heavenly book al-Qur'ān, which is often pronounced as al-Qur'an al-Karim (القرآن الكريم) or al-Qur'an al-Majid (القرآن المجيد).¹⁵

3. The observation shows that the said term has also been used for other heavenly book of Allah (al-Qur'an,13:31). Moreover, in one of the verses of the Holy Qur'ān, it has been indicated that the term is also meant for the Divine Book (توراة) “Torah” i.e. Old Testament (Surah,15:91). From this point of view, mention may be made that the term, Qur'ān is a common noun (اسم الجنس).¹⁶

4. It is known to all that al-Qur'ān is a definite divine book of Allah. But some attributory names like synonym words with the Qur'ān have been noticed in the same as designated by the Almighty Himself Viz.
Under different circumstances, a lot of attributory synonymical words with the Holy Qur'an have been designated by the Almighty in order to specify some distinctive qualities for the book al-Qur'an. In this context, Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūtī (d.1505 A.D.) has mentioned fifty five particular synonym words with the Holy Qur'an in his book, (al-itqān fi 'ulūm il-Qur'ān) and thus the term al-Qur'ān has been distinguished in the text of the book as follows:

1. Al-kitāb : The Book
2. Al-Mubīn : The Enlightener
3. Al-Qur'ān : The Reading
4. Al-Karīm : The Good
5. Al-Kalām : The Word
6. Al-Burhān : The Proof
7. Al-Nūr : The Light
8. Al-Huda : The Guidance
10. Al-Furqān : The Distinguisher
11. Al-Shifā' : The Health
13. Al-Zikr : The Reminder
15. Al-‘Ali : The Lofty
16. Al-Hikmah : The Wisdom
17. Al-Hakīm : The Philosopher
18. Al-Muhaymin : The Preserver
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<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Arabic Title</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Al-Muṣṭdiq</td>
<td>The Establisher of truth</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Al-Habl</td>
<td>The Rope</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>Al-Sirātul Mustaqīm</td>
<td>The Straight Path</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>Al-Qāyim</td>
<td>The Strong</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Al-Qauulu‘l-Fāṣl</td>
<td>The Distinguishing Speech</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>Al-Nabā’u l-‘Aẓīm</td>
<td>The Exalted News</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>Aḥsanul Ḥadith</td>
<td>The Good saying</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>Al-Masānī</td>
<td>The Repetition</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>Al-Mutashabiha</td>
<td>The Uniform</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>Al-Tanzil</td>
<td>The Revelation</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>Al-rūḥ</td>
<td>The Spirit</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>Al-Wahy</td>
<td>The Inspiration</td>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>Al-‘Arabi</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>Al-Baṣā’ir</td>
<td>The Enlightenment</td>
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<td>33.</td>
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<td>The Explanation</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>Al-‘Ilm</td>
<td>The Knowledge</td>
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<td>35.</td>
<td>Al-Ḥaqq</td>
<td>The Truth</td>
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<td>Al-Hādī</td>
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<td>Al-‘Azab</td>
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<td>38.</td>
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<td>Al-Urwatu‘l Wusqa</td>
<td>The Farm Handle</td>
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<td>40.</td>
<td>Al-Ṣidq</td>
<td>The Righteous</td>
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<td>41.</td>
<td>Al-‘Adl</td>
<td>The Justice</td>
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<td>42.</td>
<td>Al-Amr</td>
<td>The Order</td>
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<td>43.</td>
<td>Al-Munāḍī</td>
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<td>45.</td>
<td>Al-Majīd</td>
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<td>46.</td>
<td>Al-Zabūr</td>
<td>The Psalm</td>
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In the realm of the Arabic language and literature, the Holy Qur'an has occupied a unique position which no other book in the world has ever been able to do so. The literary history shows that the Arabic language and literature has been originated from the Holy Qur'an and having been developed to its utmost extent, become powerful in the Arab world.

The linguistic and prose style of the Qur'an has modelled the Arabic language and literature to a great extent. The Holy Qur'an is not composed in poetical form, but its prose style is rhythmical and rhetorical, which is deemed to be rhymed prose. It has set the standard of the Classical Arabic which is followed closely everywhere in the Arab world as a written or spoken language irrespective peoples of different dialects. As such, every conservative Arabic writer of the modern age does not hesitate to imitate and cite model verses of the Qur'an in their writings. In addition, the Qur'an is the basic and fundamental source to the development of religio-philosophical and linguistic sciences like (Jurisprudence), (science of inheritance), (science of rhetoric) and (science of figure of speech) along with other branches of literature.

In brief, the Noble Qur'an has played a vital role in the overall evolution of the Arabic language and literature. Arabic grammar, lexicography.
history, tradition, exegesis and theology owe their inception to the central interest in the Qur'ān. It deals with various subjects of Political, Social, Economic, religious, and judicial etc. Needless to say that the Holy Qur'ān is the most potent as well as the unique production in the world’s literature.

Collection and Compilation of the Qur'ān:

(a) Revelation:

The Almighty Allah revealed the Holy Qur'ān to Muhammad (PBUH) through the archangel, Gabriel. The inception of its revelation was the month of Ramadān /August, 610 A.D. at the cave of Hira where he used to go for praying Allah. Since that day his prophecy was awarded at about 39 years, 3 months and 16 days / 40 years, 6 months and 16 days of his age according to solar/lunar years. He was inspired first with the first five verses of Surah 'Alaq (96:1-5) and the chain of revelation came to an end with the last two verses of Surah Tauba* in 632 A.D. Thus the Holy Qur'ān was revealed in piece-meal over a period of more than twenty two years. During this period, he stayed about 12½ years at Makkah where he was inspired with about 90 chapters (suwar) and 10 years at Madina where he received revelation of about 24 chapters. As a result, 114 chapters have been the contents of the Qur'ān.23 But, according to some scholars: it consists of 114 (one hundred and fourteen) chapters (suwar) of which 86(eighty six) were revealed in about thirteen years at Makkah and 28 (twenty eight) in the remaining ten years at Madina. “Speaking about the consistency of the Qur'ān, Professor Hitti observes: “The words (77934), the verses (6236) and even the letters (323,621) have been painstakingly counted.”24

* According to another report, the last inspiration (wahy) is said to have been the last verse of the Surah Nisā’. Furthermore, another information adds that the verse related to ribā (usury) of the Surah “Baqara” (i.e.2: 275-6) is the last verse of the Holy Qur'ān.
(b) Collection:

As discussed above, the Holy Qur'ân came down to the Prophet of Islam bit by bit over a period of twenty three years beginning from the month of Ramadân, 610 A.D. and ending in 632 A.D. Sometimes only one or a few verses revealed and sometimes as may as ten. When the prophet received a divine message, he recited it to his companions who were present there, and they committed it to memory, partially or fully, according to their individual retentive powers. In addition to the ordinary companions, there were also particular recorders of the revelation, known as the “kuttâb al-wahyi”, who put them down on leafless palm-branches, stone slabs, bones, ribs of sheep and camel and several other objects answering to the purpose. In context, Hazrat Uthmân (R.A., d. 656 A.D.) reports: “Different chapters (suras) used to reveal to Muhammad (PBUH) while anything came down to him, at once he called on someone who used to write Qur'ânic verses and said to him: keep these verses in the so and so chapters” (Tirmidhi).

It is worth-mentioning that the Qur'ânic verses and chapters were arranged in such a order as the archangel, Gabriel delivered from his memory to Muhammad (PBUH) and made the Prophet practised in every of Ramadân. A tradition mentions about the above mentioned statement as it goes: “Because Gabriel (Jibrâ’il) used to meet him (the Prophet) in every night of the month of Ramadân till he let the Qur'ân hear in the presence of the messenger of Allah.” (Bukhârî, chapter on the Qur'ânic merits).

It is learnt from the verse of the holy Qur'ân that Allah keeps responsibility to protect the same and accordingly has directed His messenger, Muhammad (PBUH) to have its recital intact in accordance with Gabriel's delivery (sura, 75:17-8). That's why, Gabriel had to recite the Qur'ân competely up to which revealed to the Prophet in a year specially in the month of Ramadân.
(c) Compilation:

It is learnt that the system of the Qur’anic revelation stopped about three months or exactly eighty one days before the demise of the Prophet (PBUH). In fact, during his life time, the Holy Qur’an was not compiled, because, its necessity was not felt seriously. But, as soon as the Prophet (PBUH) passed away, the wars of Apostacy Movement broke out in Abu Bakr (R.A.)’s caliphate (A.D. 632 - A.D. 634), which led to the heavy toll of the Qur’an readers (huffaz) in the battle of al-Yamamah, located in the northern Najd (633 A.D.) Earlier a good number of huffaz were also fallen in the massacre of Bir Ma’una. Under such circumstances, the prominent companions of the Prophet (PBUH) were afraid of such kind of loss of huffaz (those who committed the Qur’an to memory) because, which might cause an extinction of the Holy Book from the surface of the earth. At this juncture, ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab (R.A.) pressurized Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.) to collect and preserve it. At first, the caliph Abū Bakr hesitated to collect the dispersed parts of the Qur’an and put them together. Because, the Prophet had not done so in his life time. So, ‘Umar (R.A.) persuaded the Caliph time and again to comply with the proposal that the collection of the Qur’an would be an excellent work. Finally, Abu Bakr agreed to the matter for doing so while his heart was opened by Allah. A young and energetic Ansari Arab named Zaid b. Thabit, one of the Qur’an scribes, was appointed by the caliph to collect the scattered parts of the Qur’an and put them together. Accordingly, Zaid put down on pieces of leather, leafless palm-branches and flat bones all that had been previously recorded or lay preserved in memories. These pieces were collected together and put under the custody of Abu Bakr and after his death, were entrusted to the caliph ‘Umar (R.A.). Again after his demise, the collection was left in the care of his daughter Hafsah (R.A.) who was one of the widows of the Prophet (PBUH).
It is worth mentioning that the compilation of the Holy Qurʾān was necessitated during the reign of the third Caliph `Uthmān b. `Affān (R. 644–656 A.D.). Because, a dangerous situation arose with the variations in the recital of the Qurʾān, while Islam spread far and wide, the Muslim army occupied important towns in the conquered lands. Regarding this derogatory affair, Hazrat Anas b. Malik reported that Husaifah came to `Uthman, and he had fought with the people of Syria in the conquest of Armenia, and had fought with the people of Syria in the conquest of Armenia, and had fought in Azarbaizan, with the people of al-`Iraq, and he was shocked at the different ways of people reading the Qurʾān. And Husaifah said to Uthman: “O’ Uthman! assist these people, before they differ in their books”. Then Uthman sent a person to Hafsah, ordering her to send those portions which she had, saying, “I shall have a number of copies of them taken, and will then return them to you.” And Hafsah sent the portions to Uthman, and `Uthman ordered Zaid Ibn Thabit Ansari and Abdullah Ibn Al- Zubair, and Sa’id Ibn Al-’As, and Abdur Rahman Ibn al-Haris Ibn Hisham, and they were all of the Quraish tribe, except Zaid Ibn Thabit and Uthman, and he said to the three Quraishites, when you and Zaid Ibn Thabit differ about any part of the dialect of the Qurʾān, then you should write it in the Quraish dialect, because it came not down in the language of any tribe but theirs. Then they did as `Uthman had ordered; and when a number of copies had been taken, `Uthman returned the leaves to Hafsah. And Uthman sent a copy to every quarter of the countries of Islam, and ordered all other leaves to be burnt.  

This recension of the Qurʾān produced by the khalifah `Uthman has been handed down to us unaltered; and there is probably no other book in the world which has remained fourteen centuries with so pure as the text of the Qurʾān.
Implication of the Term of al-Hadith:

(a) Linguistic implication:

The term, ḥadīth implies modern or new and it is antonym with qadīm, “antique”; and ḥudūth means novelty and it is antonym with qudma, “precedence”. In this context, ‘Allama Jauhari further adds that the word, ‘ḥadīth’ (narrative) is synonym with ‘khabar’ (information). According to the linguist, al-Farra, the term ‘uḥdutha’ is in singular number and ‘aḥādīth’ is its plural. So, it appears from a general opposition that the word ‘aḥādīth’ is plural of both the words, ‘uḥdutha’ and ‘ḥadīth’.33

Apart from this, a renowned scholar speaks of the term, ‘ḥadīth’ that when it takes the morphological form in the measure of تفعيل (taf’īl) as حديث - يحدث (ḥaddatha>uḥaddithu), then it means “to talk”. Furthermore, it has been exemplified as مار فلان احد وثة (sāra fulān uḥdutha “someone became conversant”), that is to say: أكثروا فيه الاحاديث (aktharu fihi al-aḥādīth, “they did frequently conversations about him”). But this term, in relation to things, implies المحدث (al-muhdath, “the recent, modern”) Here example may be given as و حدث الشيء (wa ḥadutha al-shayu. “something became new”), and استحدثت أمرًا (wa istahdathat amrā) “(some one) renewed a thing”).34

The new Encyclopaedia Britannica holds the term “al-ḥadith”, thus: “The term ḥadīth derives from the Arabic root (ح – ث – د) meaning ‘to happen’, and so ‘to tell a happening’, ‘to report’, ‘to have, or give, as new’, or ‘to speak of’. It means traditions seen as narrative and record. From it comes sunnah (literally, a “well-trodden path”, i.e. taken as precedent and authority or directive), to which the faithful conforms in submission to the sanction that ḥadīth possesses and that legalists, on that ground, can enjoin.”

(b) Terminological implication:

The matter of technical definition of al-ḥadith has come to appearance
after the prophecy of Muhammad (PBUH). In this context, ‘Allama Sakhâwî has put forward an excellent definition in true sense of the terminology that the term, *al-hadith* is meant all that which were assigned to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) i.e. his sayings, doings, approvals and his moral and natural manners in every sphere of wakefulness and sleep.

The best definition of the Noble Hadith has come in recognition with what ‘Allama al-Sakhawi defined, since it was made in relation to the stage “after the prophecy”. This is due to the fact that in matters of identifying ‘*al-hadith*’, there may come some informations (أخبار) and conduct (سيره) of the earlier period of Muhammad (PBUH)’s prophecy. In this connection, mention may be made that before the award of prophecy, the Prophet (PBUH) had the practice of prayer and devotion at the “cave of Hira” as well as his excellent conducts and pre-prophethood activities have the relevance in the present time and situation, which may benefit to the Muslim nations and the greater world society. In addition, his pre-prophethood noble characters and beautiful socio-religious activities have the reliability to perceive his prophecy and truthfulness. But these affairs are not designed to accept and prescribed to follow the pre-prophethood activities. In this respect, the Muslims have agreed to abide by the practices (sunna), imposed on them only after the prophecy.

It is indicated above that the term, *hadith* means information, talk, modern, new, narrative, tradition etc. and all these are of the lexical implications. But, to have technical implication, the definite article ‘al’ is proceeded to ‘*hadith*’ i.e. الحديث (*al-hadith*) which is synonymically translated as “The Prophetic Traditions”. In addition to this, *al-hadith* is also referred to the account of the Prophet’s companions or successors, generally called as الحديث الأثر (الآثار) (الحديث al-athâr). Furthermore, sometimes the term سنة (sunnah, plural سنن (sunan) is used to mean the “Prophetic Traditions” referring to the
normative customs of the Prophet (PBUH).

In a nutshell, the term *al-hadith* stands for the whole range of Muhammad (PBUH)'s prophetic life. Clearly speaking, it includes such references as his admonitions pertaining to religious and mundane behaviour, his religious activities, his observations, his explanations of the Qur'anic verses, his reactions to the different conditions, his apostolic career, wars, dealing with friend and foe, his speeches, correspondence with Arab and non-Arab monarchs, his documents, his solutions to the intertribal affairs, his economic condition, and his private and marriage life.

According to literary value, *al-hadith* has been placed just next to the Qur'an. It is a direct commentary of the Holy Qur'an and deals with various subjects like political, social, economical, historical and judicial. The Prophet of Islam had a keen interest in the purity of Arabic language. As he declares himself to be the most eloquent among the Arab nationals, his sayings and orations are rightly considered as the best specimen of the Arabic language.

(c) *'Ilm al-Ḥadith*:

 علم الحديث ("ilm al-ḥadith") is the science of the Prophetic Traditions. The written account of the sayings and activities of the Prophet and of his companions is regarded as *al-ḥadith* which has resulted in the production of voluminous compilations of the Prophetic Traditions. So, the subject which deals with discussion, explanations and researches of the traditions is called *'ilm al-ḥadith*. According to some scholars, *'ilm al-ḥadith* is such a science by which the basic principles of the chain of authorities (i.e. اسناد, *isnād*) and the text (منان, *matan*) are comprehensively known. In this context, Allama 'Ainī and Shaykh Kirkání have added their views in the exegesis of that the science of the Prophetic Traditions deals with the sacred sayings, blissful activities and nice concerns of the Messenger of Allah.
(d) Entitlement to the Hadith:

That which science acquaints with the Prophet Muhammad's sayings and activities, his approval to the role of his companions and the truthful informations about their methods of practices, is entitled as the Hadith. Here, mention may be made that the term *al-Hadith* has been a technical word for the Prophetic Traditions and its reference appears in the Holy Qur'an as it says:

> ﷲ أَمَنَّا لَكُمْ نَعْمَةً وَآمَنَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ نَعْمَةً وَرَضِيتْ لَكُم**•**

> (This day have I perfected for you your faith and completed my blessings upon you and have accepted for you al-Islam as religion.)

Again Allah says addressing to the Prophet:

> ﷲ لِسَانِي لَكِنَّكَ رَبِّي فَهُدْثَи

> (Is for the blessing of thy Lord (completed), so, you speak (report).)

Here, an inference has been drawn that Allah has completed His grace and fulfilled His blessings through the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) unto his followers. As such, he is directed to speak of the Almighty's all sorts of incomparable graces with the endeavour of "report". In such way, the Prophetic Tradition has been entitled as "al-Hadith".

(e) Collection of the Hadith:

During the life time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), only a few number of companions had attempted at writing Hadith, since the literacy rate was very small in the early stage of Islam. Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) disallowed hadith-writing that he feared of mixing up the Qur'anic verses with the Hadith or a rival Qur'an might thus come into being. In this context, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) declares:

> ﷲ لَا تَكُتِبْنَا عَنِّي وَمَنْ كَتَبَ عَنِّي غَيْرَ الْقُرْآنِ كُلِّمَهُهُ

> "Don't write from me and who has written from me except the Qur'an, he should obliterate it."

But this prohibition went on some years long. After his migration, the Prophet
(PBUH) domiciled at Madina, where he paid a great attention to educate his followers. As a result of which, a good number of people became able to read and write within a very short period, then he gave a permission to transmit *hadith* or record it with a warning: 

"Transmit hadith from me there is no objection and he who lies to me willingly, should follow his abode of hell-fire." [Muslim] ^41

Since the system of writing is the best source of *hadith* preservation and helpful for weak memory, some companions of the Prophet (PBUH) were compelled to record *hadith*. In this connection, the report of Abu Huraira (R.A.) may be mentioned here that a man belonged to Ansār appealed to the Prophet (PBUH): "I hear many speeches from you, but am not able to keep them in my memory"; then the Prophet (PBUH) said to him: (استعن بيمينك و أوما بهد إلی الخط) "Take the help with your right hand and (he) indicated by his hand to the writing." (Tirmidhi) ^41

At the end of his life, the Prophet (PBUH) got prepared a voluminous book of *hadith* with an elaborate discussion on some chapters like (صلوة القرآن) "al-Qurʾān recitation", (صلاة) "prayer", (صوم) "fast", (فطنة) "poor-tax", (زكاة) "wealth tax", (تapollo) "divorce", (عناق) "emancipation", (ذمة) "blood money", (مناكم) "customs", (معن) "punishment", (الكبائر) "great sins" and (فراخ الامخ) "other obligations" and sent it to Amar b. Hajam for the people of Yaman. (Dār al-Qutnī, Darimī, Bayhaqī, Masnad of Ahmad, Muwatta of Imam Malik and Nasâʾī) ^42

The Prophetic Traditions have been protected first with the system of oral transmission and then by recording. As stated above, *hadith* writing or recording continued for better preservation among the companions of the Prophet (PBUH). Here it may be mentioned that Abdullah b. Amar b. 'As used to write what he had heard from the Prophet (PBUH) in view of keeping in his memory. In this respect, Abu Huraira reported, "No body could retain more *hadith* than
me excepting Abdullah b. Amar b. ‘As, because, he recorded but I did’nt.’ This matter proves that Ibn Amar had a collection of hadith, entitled al-Ṣādiqa. It is reported that it consists of one thousand prophetic traditions. After him, some other companions of the Prophet (PBUH) also prepared a good number of as treatises of hadith, namely Sahifa of Sadiq, Sa’d b. ‘Ubâda, Jabir b. ‘Abdullah, and so on, as well as Risala of Samura b. Jundub and Anas b. Malik etc.\(^{43}\)

Latter on, hadith collection or compilation was not encouraged by the Rightly Guided first four Caliphs (632 -660 A.D.). But in the Umayyad period, the preservation of hadith through compilation was firstly made by the order of ‘Umar b. ‘Abdu’l-Aziz (R. 717 - 719 A.D.), since he made an important declaration as follows:

انظروا حديث رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فإني خفت دروس العلم وذهب العلماء

"Observe the hadith of the messenger of Allah, and keep it in black and white, because I am afraid of disappearance of scholars and the lessons of the science (i.e. 'Ilm al-Hadith)."\(^{44}\) Then the order of the Caliph was carried out under the supervision of the Traditionist-cum-jurist Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d.124/741). He was, also one of the legal advisers of the Caliph.

The Abbasid period was the Golden Age of the nourishment of secular and non-secular literature. So, it saw the full-fledged development of the Hadith literature. In matters of hadith compilation, Abu Ja‘far al-Mansûr (R.754 - 775 A.D.) passed an order to Malik b. Anas (d.795 A.D.). So, he compiled al-Muwatta, the first great corpus of Muslim law. Because, it was arranged in accordance with the subject matter of jurisprudence.\(^{45}\)

Afterwards, the ‘Ulamā’ “scholars” met in the contest of hadith collection extensively in the line of jurisprudence. While this trend spread far and wide, the partisans of the different sects and the followers of misguidance fabricated lies to the sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) and made inclusion of false tradition in the negligence of transmitters. Then the Imāms of traditions forwarded
their criticisms to check up the transmitter’s false hadith and tried their level best to adjust hadith from all sorts of fabrication. In this context, Ishaq b. Rahuwia (d.238 A.H.) was the precursor among all the critics of hadith.46

In the 3rd / 9th century, some important musannaf (classified) works were compiled and arranged with sub-sections (عِلاج الإحواء) which made more convenience to the hadith readers. Eventually six classified canonical works achieved priority to other compilations. Among them, sahihayn (الحاکم بالسند) and other four sunan (السند ) are said to have topped in the authenticity and other four sunan (السند ) are also included in the annals of al-ṣīḥāh al-sittah (الصحاب السبعة).

Apart from these six corpuses of Muslim law and tradition, some more works have been added to the Hadith literature and most of them belong to musnad (مَسِنَاد), sunan (سُنَّان) and musannaf (مُسَنَّف) classes of traditions. To highlight them some noteworthy works have been cited below:

(1) Musnad al-Dārīmī (Abdullah b. ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Samarqandī d.868 AD)
(2) Sunan of al-Daraqūṭnī (Abul Hasan ‘Ali b. ‘Umar d.385 / 995)
(3) Al-Bayhaqī (Abu Bakr Ahmad b. Husayn d.458 A.H.)
(4) Kitāb al-Mustadarak of Hakim (Muhammad b. ‘Abdullāh, known as Ibn al-Bayyī d.1014 A.D.)
(5) Musannaf ‘Abd al-Razzaq ( d. 211 A.H. )
(6) Kitāb al-‘Arba‘īn of Abu Bakr al-Ajurrī (Muhammad b. al-Husayn. d. 970 A.D. )

Among these categories of works, Masābih al-Sunnah of al-Baghawi(d.1116 A.D.) , an excellent compilation, was enlarged by Wāli al-Dīn Muhammad b. Abdullah al-Khatib al-Tibrizī (d.1317 A.D.) under the title of Mishkat al-Masābih. It is still a popular work in the realm of
the Hadith literature.\textsuperscript{48}

From the compilations of 16th century, \textit{al-Jam\'i\textsuperscript{49} of 'Allama Suyūtī (d. 1505 A.D.) are considered as precious works of the Hadith literature, since he attempted at bringing the full-fledged contents of ahādīth into the consistency of both the valuable corpora. It is worth mentioning that all the above mentioned \textit{hadith} compilations were prepared according to sunnite dogma. On the other hand, the shi'aite scholars also made a few compilations only with the traditions which traced through 'Ali's family, favouring the advocacy of shi'a claims. The investigation into the shi'aite \textit{hadith} compilations shows that there are five works having high status in the rank of traditions, which have been brought to notice as follows:

2. \textit{kutub al-muhtadin}, compiled by Muhammad b. 'Ali, known as al-Babūya al-Kummi (d. 381/991)
3. \textit{al-tadhīb al-ahkām}, compiled by Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Tūsī (d. 459/1067 or 460/1068)
4. \textit{astābūsar fīma 'alaihim min al-aḥādīth}, compiled by al-Tūsī as a shorter version of his earlier work.
5. \textit{nahj al-balāgha}, compiled by 'Ali b. Tāhir al-Sharīf al-Murtada (d. 436/1044) or by his brother, Rādī al-Dīn al-Baghdādī. This compilation of \textit{hadith} is supposed to be the speeches of Hazrat 'Ali (R.A.).\textsuperscript{49}

It is learnt that the above mentioned compilations are regarded as musannaf type of works covering contents like the sunnite works of Traditions.

\textbf{(f) Discussion on different types of al-Hadith:}

I. According to class and position of \textit{hadith} and the character of those who have handed down the tradition, three categories of \textit{hadith} have been inspected and discussed, in short, as follows:
1) **Hadith al-Sahih**, a genuine or sound tradition, is one which has been handed down by the truly pious persons who achieved integrity in their transmission of hadith. This category of hadith covers the following characters:

(a) It should be handed down with *Sanad al-Muttasil* “connected chain of authority”.

(b) The transmitter should be fit for reliability and trustworthiness from the end of justice and character.

(c) He should have soundful power of learning by heart and keen understanding.

(d) He should be free from *shāḍh* (irregularity).

(e) He should be further free from *mu' allal*, “defectiveness or subterfuges”

2) **Hadith al-Hasan** (حديث الحسن), a mediocre, good tradition, is one that the narrators of which do not approach in moral excellence to those of the *sahih* class. In such tradition, all the conditions of *sahih hadith* are found, but shortcoming occurs in the protection of memory of the chain of narrators.

3) **Hadith al-Da'if** (حديث الضعيف), a weak or infirm tradition, is one whose narrators are of questions having no pious transmitters there.

II. With reference to the original relators of the hadith:

1) **Hadith al-Marfu'** (حديث المرفوع), an exalted tradition is a saying, or an act, related or performed by the Prophet himself and handed down in the tradition.

2) **Hadith al-Mauquf** (حديث الموقف), a restricted tradition, is a saying or an act related or performed by one of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH).

3) **Hadith al-Maqṣūr** (حديث المقوض), an intersected tradition is a saying or an act related or performed by one of the *tābi‘īn*, or those who conversed with the companions of the Prophet.

III. With reference to the links in the chain of the narrators of the tradition, a *hadith* is either متصل (connected) or منقطع (disconnected). If the chain of narrators is complete from the time of the first utterances of the saying
by or performance of the act recorded to the time that it was written down by the collector of traditions, then it is متّعل; but if the chain of narrators is incomplete, it is منقطع.

IV. With reference to the manner in which the tradition has been narrated, and transmitted down from the first:

1) Ḥadīth al-Mutawātir (حديث المتعاثر), an undoubted tradition, is one which is handed down by numerous distinct chains of narrators, and which has been always accepted as authentic and genuine, no doubt ever having been raised against it. The learned doctors say that there are only five such traditions; but the exact number is disputed.

2) Ḥadīth al-Mashhūr (حديث المشهور), a well known tradition, is one which has been handed down by at least three distinct lines of narrators. It is called also mustafid or diffused. It is also used for tradition which was first recorded by one person, or a few individuals, and afterwards became a popular tradition.

3) Ḥadīth al-ʿAzīz, a rare tradition, is one related by only two lines of narrators.

4) Ḥadīth al-Gharīb, a poor tradition, is one related by only one line of narrators.

5) Khabar al-Wāhid or ʿāhād (خبر الواحد أو أحد), a single saying, is a term also used for a tradition related by one person and handed down by one line of narrators.

6) Ḥadīth al-Mursal(حديث المرسل)is such a tradition, in the chains of which transmission no companions have been found between the tābiʿūn and the Prophet (PBUH). It is worthmentioning that any collector of mursal hadith, such as al-Bukhari and like others, records with the assertion, "The Prophet of Allah Said”.

7) Riwāyah (روایة), is a hadith which commences with the words "it is related", without the authority being given.

8) Ḥadīth al-Mauḍūʿ (حديث الموضوع), is an invented tradition, in the chain
of such type of tradition’s transmission no reliable narrators are available and its untruth is beyond dispute.\(^{52}\)

**Different Texts of al-Hadith:**

In view of collection and preservation of *hadith*, some distinguished ‘traditionists’ (محدثون) made a good number of compilations and such type of noble endeavour appeared first in A.H.3rd / A.D. 9th century.\(^{53}\) With such initiatives taken by *hadith* scholars, there produced different texts of *hadith*, which made an emergent progress in the materials of Islamic theology and Arabic literature.

An attempt has been made here to focus on different texts of *hadith* in matters of the texts of the Hadith literature, *الصحاب الستة* (Six Canonical Books belonging to *jāmi‘* and *sunan* classes of *hadith*) have occupied a unique position and become unparallel to other texts of *hadith*. Therefore, to highlight the overall picture of *hadith* literature, only “The Six Canonical Books” have been undertaken here to discuss as follows:

1. **Jāmi‘ Şahîh al-Bukhârî** (الأجْمَّع الصحيح للبخاري):

Abu ‘Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Ismâ‘îl ibn Bardizbah al-Bukhârî (A.H.194 - 256 / A.D.810 - 870) is the author of this valuable compilation. His Book *kitâb al-jâmi‘ al-sâhih* is universally admitted as an authentic work due to the consideration of its chain of transmission (*isnâd*) and the main text (*matan*). It has occupied a unique place in the awe and esteem of Muslims as a work of great historical import and deep piety.\(^{34}\) He began the study of the traditions at the early age of eleven and in his sixteenth year, made the pilgrimage and attended the lectures of the most famous teachers of *hadith* in Makkah and Madina. Afterwards, he went to Egypt in search of *hadith* and continued it for the next sixteen years, of which five were spent in Basra, in wandering through all Asia. After his return to Bukhara, he started sifting the traditions, which he brought together in his travel; only a small part of it he dared to use as an authentic teaching
of the Prophet (PBUH).\footnote{55} Within a period of sixteen years of his editorial pains and scrutiny, he included only 7,397 (seven thousand three hundred and ninety-seven) traditions with full isnād out of 600,000 memorized items. He also allowed repetition of hadith of which net total was 2,762 and arranged the whole into 97 chapters (ابو اب) and 3,450 sub-chapters (كتاب). In later times, al-Bukhārī's \textit{al-jāmi' al-sahih} achieved the reputation of sacred book, but it is little inferior to the holy \textit{Qur'ān}. So his work has made the greatest influence over the Muslim people.\footnote{56} Concerning his death and burial shrine, an information has added that the Governor of Khurāsān had banished him to Kharteng, a village in the vicinity of Samarkand, where he took his last breath and was buried on the 30th Ramadan, 256 A.H. / 31st August, 870 A.D. Further, the people of then period were attracted by his excellent scholarship and personality; so, even after his demise, his tomb is still visited by pilgrims who accord him the next rank in Islam after the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).\footnote{57}

(2) \textit{Sahih of Imām Muslim} (الصحيح للمسلم بن الحجاج):

Imām Muslim Ibn al-Hajjāj, a contemporary of Imām Bukhārī, also made another \textit{Sahih} compilation. Born at Nishapur, one of the places of Khurāsān in 202 A.H. / 817 A.D., he died in 261 A.H. / 875 A.D. and was buried at Nasirabād, a suburb of Nishapur.\footnote{58}

Imām Muslim started learning hadith at the age of 12 years and traveled widely to collect hadith in Arabia, Egypt, Syria and Iraq, where he heard traditions from the famous authorities such as Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Harmala ibn Yahya, a pupil of Imam Shafi'ī, Ishaq ibn Rahuya and so on. Accordingly, his self-collected traditions reached up to 300,000, out of which his \textit{Sahih} was composed.\footnote{59} Concerning the number of his accepted traditions for \textit{Sahih}, 'Allama Tāhir al-Jaza’irī and Shaykh ibn Salah remarked that “the \textit{Sahih} of Imām Muslim consists of 4,000 (four thousand) traditions only, if the repetition of hadith is not counted.” On the other hand, some scholars gave adverse views
with different numbers in matters of his sifting traditions, but it is certain that the
Sahih of Imâm Muslim has contained larger numbers of traditions than the Sahih
of Imâm Bukhârî. It is reported that the transmitters of his Sahih are counted as
218 (two hundred and eighteen) only from those who belonged to the Prophet's
companions, whereas the Sahih of Imam Bukhari consisted traditions of 208
(two hundred and eight) transmitters only. Among all of them, only 149 (one
hundred and forty nine) transmitters are found common in both the
corpuses. Furthermore, it has come to notice that among all of them, only 55 (fifty
five) transmitters narrated up to 100 (one hundred) or more than hundred tradi-
tions.60 Despite the famous work, al-Jâmî' al-Sahih, Imam Muslim wrote a good
number of books on fiqh, traditionists and biography, but none of which seems to
have been survived. In fact, his Sahih made him renowned and gave him the
highest honour and privileges in comparison to his all other compilations.61

In fact, the credit of his Sahih is that it differs from other collections of canonical works. Because, the chapters (الكتب) of his Sahih are not
divided into sub-chapters (الابواب), whereas the Sahih of Imam Bukhari cons-
sists of tarjamatu'l bab (ترجمة الباب) over the books (الكتب). In addi-
tion, the Sahih of Imam Muslim has a peculiar arrangement in the traditions,
which bears a close connection for corresponding ideas of fiqh. As a matter of
fact, the groups of traditions have been provided with superscriptions in the Sahih
of Imam Muslim and this matter may be compared with the tarjamatu'l
bab (ترجمة الباب) of the Sahih of Imâm Bukhârî.62

It has been observed that Imâm Muslim paid an especial attention
to the isnâd of his Sahih, which is often followed by different isnâds dealing with
an introduction of the same or slightly different text. Such type of new isnâd is
implied in the text by the letter h (tahwil or hawala “changed”). Imâm Muslim
how far possible, tried his level best to place the exact words of isnâd and matan
in a hadith. It is admitted that Imâm Muslim arranged his Sahih with the
transparent and authentic traditions, which led to the development of *hadith* literature. For this distinguished character, he was highly praised.

It is worth mentioning that a preface has been made in his *Sahih* for discussing the criteria of *hadith*. The work consists of 52 books dealing with the common subjects of *hadith* and is ended with a chapter on the Qur’anic *tafsir*.

(3) *Sunan Abî Dâwûd* (سنن ابی داود):

It is one of the Canonical Books of the Prophetic traditions, compiled by Abu dawûd Sulayman ibn al-Ash’ath. He came of a family of Azd tribe in A.H.202 / A.D.817 in a place, named Sajistan in the vicinity of Qandahar and Chist. Another report has added that his birthplace is Sajistan, a famous area of Khurasan, although some scholars are of the opinion that it is one of the villages of Basra, but this notion is incorrect. Concerning his birthplace, another source informs that it is Sistan (Arab called it as Sajistan), surrounded by Hirat in the north, Makran in the south, Sindh in the east, and Kuhistan in the west. He died in Shawwal 275 / February 889. He spent most part of his life in Baghdad and he was engaged there in compiling his *kitâb al-sunan*. In the pursuit of knowledge and collection of *hadith*, he traveled far and wide through the countries of Iraq, Khurasan, Egypt, Syria, Hijaj, Arabian peninsula and so on. He approached many scholars and traditionists and received permission from them for transmission of *hadith*. It is reported by hâfiz Ibn Hajar that the number of teachers of Imam Abu Dâwûd were almost 3,00 (three hundred) and among them Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Ishaq ibn Rahuya, and Abu Thûr were of the famous legists and traditionists. His other teachers like Yahya ibn Mu’tin, Hisham ibn Abdul Malik Tayalisi, Abû Bakr Ibn Abi Shayba and Uthman ibn Abi Shayba were of the famous critics on the subject as well as Imams of traditionists. It is a notable factor that like the authors of canonical books, Imâm Tirmidhi and Imâm Nasâ studied *hadith* under Imâm Abû Dâwûd. Imâm Ahmad ibn Hanbal, who was hâfiz.
teacher, happened to transmit only one hadith from him. Later on, Imām Abū Dāwūd made up his mind to permanently settle at Basra, because it was a great centre for knowledge and erudition as well as the residential place of many legists and traditionists.66

Due to his strong memory, he committed thousands of hadith in his mind. Once it was declared that he collected a mass of 500,000 traditions, out of which he compiled the Kitāb al-Sunan with the selection of 4,800 traditions. Among his contributions, the Kitāb al-Sunan is the prominent work, which has occupied the rank of distinction in the realm of canonical books of the Hadith literature. It is interesting to note that Imām Abū Dāwūd once submitted his Kitab al-Sunan to his respected teacher, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, then he was compelled to give his approval to the work as an authentic compilation of hadith. Undoubtedly, the work consists of sound traditions, those which seem to be so, and those which are nearly so. His work has been entitled with the generic title of sunan and it deals mainly with the ordained matters, or allowed, or forbidden by law. It has received high praise. In this connection, Abu Sa’id ibn al-‘Arabi remarked that “anyone who knew nothing but the holy Qur’ān and this Noble Book would have acquired sufficient knowledge.”67 Above all, sunan Abi Dāwūd bears an extraordinary quality, which can not be had in all other canonical books. The compiler tried his utmost to arrange the work with the traditions comprising the witnesses of the legists. So, it occupies the rank of authentic traditions just after the sahihayn in the domain of the Six Canonical Books.68

(4) Jāmi‘ Tirmidhī (جامع الترمذي):

As a canonical book, Jāmi‘ Tirmidhī has played an important role in the realm of hadith literature. It was compiled by Abu ‘Isā Muhammad ibn ‘Isā ibn Sawra ibn Musā ibn Dāhāk al-Sulmi al-Bughī. He was born at Tirmidhī, an ancient city on the upper Amū Darya, in the year of A.H.209 / A.D.822. Latter on, he became familiar with a surname, al-Tirmidhī after the name of his teacher.
birthplace. Regarding his demise, it is reported that he passed away in A.H. 279 / A.D. 892 at a place named Bugh, which was at a distance of 6 (six) leagues (farsakh) from Tirmidh.

No clear cut information has come to us about the institution and place, where from he took his primary education. But it is supposed that he would have acquired his early education in Khurasan, or Tarasoxiana, because, there were many seats of learning there at then period. Afterwards, he traveled widely through Khurasan, Kufa, Basra, Iraq and Hijaj in order to collect the Prophetic Traditions. He learnt and received hadith from Imâm Bukhârî, Imâm Muslim and Abû Dâwûd al-Sijistanî. As a learner, he was very intelligent and had excellent memory. So, Imâm Bukhârî considered him as his best and able pupil among all other disciples. His other teachers, from whom he received transmission and collected hadith, were Qutayba ibn Sa‘id, Mahmud ibn Ghaylân, Muhammad ibn Bashshar, Ahmad ibn Muni‘ and Sufiyan ibn Wâki‘. In this connection, an information further adds that the traditions, compiled in Jâmi‘ Tirmidhî, reached to him from the Prophet (PBUH) through the chain of transmission with three stages in minimum, and ten in maximum.

It appears from overall reports made by historians that Imâm Tirmidhî contributed a good number of works to the field of hadith literature. From the works of his compilation, only three books have come down to us and they are as follows:
1) جامع أو سنن الترمذي
2) شمائل الترمذي
3) كتاب الغلام

But the renowned historian, Ibn al-Nadîm (d. 995 A.D.) has left out the book, *shamâ‘il al-Tirmidhî* (شمال الترمذي) and added in that place *kitâb al-târîkh* (كتاب التاريخ) in his statement.

It is interesting to note that the Jâmi‘ al-Şahîh of Imâm Tirmidhî
has been more famous and accepted by all than any other books of his compilations. According to some scholars, the *Jami* of Imâm Tirmidhi is an important book of *hadith* literature and it is preferred to other works of traditions for two remarkable features as follows:

1) It contains critical comments on *asânîd*.
2) It points out the difference between all mazhabs.

It is worth mentioning that Imâm Tirmidhi has cited both the aforesaid features after every tradition. It has been further observed that its two chapters namely *manâkib* and Ibn al-Mâja.

Speaking of the merits of the *Jami* *al-Tirmidhi*, Shah `Abd al-'Azîz (b. 1746- d. 1823 A.D.) has pointed out that the *Jami* *al-Tirmidhi* is undoubtedly, an excellent work of *hadith* and better than all other books of *ahâdith al-nabi* in view of some reasons and distinct characteristics as follows:

1) It has a systematic method without repetition of traditions.
2) It displays mazhabs of the legists with their evidences.
3) It mentions the kinds of its *hadith* i.e. صحيح (sound), حسن (good), ضعيف (weak), غريب (poor tradition) and معلل (defective tradition).
4) It acquaints us with the name of transmitters along with their titles and surnames and imparts other benefits, which are connected with علم اسماء الرجال (a science describing complete conditions of transmitters).

It is worth mentioning that Imam Tirmidhi certified his own work, *Jâmi* in such a way that he had brought forward his book before the scholars of Iraq, Hijaj and Khurasan, then they praised the work with the following comment:

"*In which house this book is available, perhaps, the Prophet (PBUH) is speaking there.*"
As for the authentic tradition is concerned, *Sunan al-Nasâʾi* has occupied a remarkable position in the annals of *ṣiḥāḥ al-sutta* (The Six Canonical Books) and its rank has been identified after the position of *Sahihayn* and *Sunan* of Imam Tirmidhi and Imam Abu Dâwûd. It was compiled by Abu ‘Abd al-Rahman Ahmad ibn Shu’aib Ibn ‘Ali Ibn Bahr Ibn Sinan who was born in A.H.215 / A.D. 830 at Nasâ’, a famous city of Khurâsân. The author of this *Sunan*, is known as *al-Nasâʾi* after the name of his birthplace. As such, his work has been entitled as *Sunan al-Nasâʾi*.76

At 15 (fifteen) years old, Imam Nasâʾi, firstly, went to Baghdad for hearing *hadith* from Qutayba ibn Saʿid (d.240 A.H.) and consecutively remained there at the house of his teacher for 1(one) year and 2(two) months long. Likewise, he learnt traditions from other distinguished scholars and traditionists of then time, for which he made an extensive travel through Khurasan, Hijaj, Iraq, Syria, Egypt and Arabian peninsula. Latter on, he started living in Egypt and went on writing there.77

Since Imam Nasâʾi was gifted with strong memory, he collected a huge number of traditions and became a reputed *ḥāfiz* of *hadith*. He contributed a good number of works on the Prophetic Traditions. His name and fame spread far and wide due to the compilation of the *Kitâb al-Sunan*, known as *Sunan al-Sughra* or *Mustaba* or *Mustana*, which he made with only *sahih* traditions sifting from his earlier work, entitled *Sunan al-Kubra*. It is necessary to mention that at the behest of *Amir* of Ramla (Palestine), Imam Nasâʾi had to reproduce the later work only consisting of the authentic traditions. But his former work was composed with both the *sahih* and *hasan* traditions.78

It appears from the *Sunan al-Nasâʾi* that it has 51 (fifty one) chapters, each of which has been again subdivided into *abwâb*. As for the subject matter is concerned, a considerable space has been kept for the traditions which deal with the ceremonial duties (*ʿibâdât*). It occupies an
especiality in *ihbās, nuḥl, rukbā* and *ʿumrā* (forms of bequest, donation etc.) which do not occur in any other compilations of traditions, although a tiny part of the materials appears in them under different captions. On the other hand, it has lacked some chapters like eschatology (*fīṭān, qiyāma* etc.), hero-worship (*manākib*) and the *Qurʾān*.

Once Imām Nasāʾī was beaten severely in the mosque of Damascus by the Umayyad partisans. As the wound mortified him seriously, he died in A.H.303 / A.D.915 at Ramla (Palestine) and was buried there. In this regard, another information adds that he was brought to Makkah where he took his last breath. Then he was buried at a place located between Safā and Marwah.

(6) **Sunan Ibn Māja** (سنن ابن ماجة)

The *Sunan Ibn Māja* is one of the distinguished works of the Prophetic Traditions. Its rank has been identified with the sixth position among the Six Canonical Books (*al-sihāh al-sitta*). It was compiled by Abu ‘Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Yazid al-Rabāʿī al-Qazwini, who was born in A.H.209 / A.D.824-5 and died on Monday 22nd Ramadan 273 A.H. / 887 A.D. The author of this compilation is well-known as “Ibn Māja”, while Māja was the nickname of his father. In search of traditions, Ibn Māja left for Khurasan, Syria, Iraq, Hijaj, Egypt, Basra, Kufa, Makkah, Rāi etc. to learn *ḥadīth* from many authorities. No sooner he had spent 21-22 years of his age in acquiring his early education at Qazwin, a famous city and a great centre for learning and erudition of the country of Iraq and Iran than he started travelling through different countries to collect *ḥadīth* from the year, 230 A.H. / 844-5 A.D.

Ibn Māja is basically remembered and honoured for his compilation of *ḥadīth*, entitled *kitāb al-sunan*. The investigation into the contents of the *Sunan Ibn Māja* has shown that it contains about 4,000 (four thousand) traditions in 32 (thirty two) chapters and 1,500 (one thousand and five hundred) sub-chapters. Of course, some scholars
are of the opinion that it contains many weak (ضعيف) traditions. So, it is considered inferior even to the sunan al-Nasāʾī. In addition, it is reported by some scholars that its consisting numbers of traditions are more than the earlier five compilations of hadith, but there is no authenticity of this information.82

In the discussion of the different texts of the Hadith literature, it may be summed up with a brief conclusion that the six canonical books (السَبعة السَّبَعُ) have played a key role in the realm of the Arabic language and literature. Since the Prophet (PBUH) is regarded as the most eloquent speaker among the Arab nationals, the purity of Arabic language lies in the Hadith literature. It has been observed that the overall development of the Arabic language and literature depends on the linguistic style of the Prophetic Traditions. So, it may be stated that after the holy Qurʾān, the Hadith literature has been the second evolutionary source for the Arabic language and literature.

The different texts of the Hadith literature have been critically identified with their specific ranks. It is known to all that the texts of al-sihâh al-sitta have topped the position among all other hadith compilations. In matters of ranking, the sahihayn (i.e. Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim) have achieved the first and second position, Sunan Abi Dāwūd the third, Jāmiʿ Tirmidhi the fourth, Sunan Nasāʾī the fifth and Sunan Ibn Māja the sixth. This order of ranking of al-Sihâh al-Sitta has been supported by most of the scholars.

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