

Introduction

All praise belongs to Allāh ﷻ, the Master of the universe. Peace, blessings and salutations be upon our beloved leader, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

Islām is a perfect faith. Its teachings are based on divine revelation which is the Qur'ān, and the *Sunnah* which is the words, actions and life of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. Both of these sources are not only divinely protected, but are interconnected – one can only be understood with the help of the other.

For this reason, many Islāmīc scholars dedicated their lives to the study of the *Sunnah* and *ḥadīth*. The *ḥadīth* master, 'Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak ؓ, used to spend much of his time at home. When he was asked whether he felt lonely, he replied, "How can I be lonely when I am with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and his *Ṣaḥābah*." (*Tārīkh Dimishq*) His short but thought-provoking reply aptly explains the sweetness and pleasure derived by those who read and study the blessed words and teachings of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

From the spectrum of *ḥadīth* literature, we have *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn*, which is a collection of *aḥādīth* by Imām Nawawī ؓ, the great scholar of *ḥadīth* and *fiqh* of the seventh century *Hijrī*. It deals with every aspect of Islamic belief and conduct and covers a wide range of topics such as etiquette, manners, morals, supplications, beliefs, worship, human interactions, etc.

It contains *aḥādīth* from the six canonical compilations of *ḥadīth*: *Bukhārī*, *Muslim*, *Tirmidhī*, *Abū Dāwūd*, *Nasai* and *Ibn Mājah*. The fact that the learned Imām sufficed on authentic *aḥādīth*, not only testifies to his superior scholarship in the field, but allows the general reader to benefit from his vast collection.

The compilation contains approximately 1800 *aḥādīth* and 372 chapters. Every chapter commences with a title which provides the content and summary of the *aḥādīth* that appear in that chapter. This is followed by relevant Qur'ānic verses which provide a valuable link between the words of Allāh ﷻ and the words of His Prophet ﷺ. It also serves to contextualise the *aḥādīth* in the framework of Qur'ānic teachings. This systematic presentation is unique to *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn* and makes it an indispensable resource for students, scholars, general readers and ordinary Muslims.

Its acceptance as an authentic and beneficial book of *aḥādīth* can be gauged from its numerous commentaries that have been meticulously compiled by scholars through the centuries. Many Imāms of *masājid* utilise it for daily recitation and it is a popular choice for students and scholars. It is incorporated into the curriculum of numerous *madāris* and universities and is widely accepted throughout the world by people of diverse social backgrounds.

The author's choice of *aḥādīth* perfectly fits the needs of those desiring moral refinement. It forms an ideal basis for spiritual reformation and contains solid foundational principles in the field of character development. Because it is a complete source of guidance and advice, it allows its readers the unique opportunity of obtaining comprehensive knowledge of Islam from a single book. It provides solutions and answers for the reformation of individuals and communities.

The *aḥādīth* quoted in every chapter can safely be regarded as a comprehensive summary of the content of the chapter. They are easy to study and transmit the sweet-smelling aroma that emanates from prophetic traditions. The compilation gives an indication of what is available in the blessed *Sunnah* in terms of advice for engaging in virtuous actions, adopting noble values, and obeying laws.

One who studies this work diligently and sincerely will feel the abundant *barakah*, guidance and spiritual radiance that the compilation has been blessed with. The fact that it so passionately touches the heart and soul, points to the sincerity and selflessness of the author.

For this English commentary, translation of Qur'ānic verses have generally been taken from *Qur'ān Made Easy*. Translations of *aḥādīth* have been compiled with the help of the translation of Moulana Mohamedy, *Gardens of the Righteous*, as well as an online edition by Aisha Bewley. Regarding the commentary of the *aḥādīth*, the following Arabic commentaries were consulted: *Dalīl al-Fāliḥīn*, *Nuzhat al-Muttaqīn*, a commentary by Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas al-Bārabankawi and a commentary by Sheikh Muhammad Ali Sābūni. An Urdu commentary, *Rawḍat al-Şāliḥīn*, was also utilised. Full details of these are provided in the bibliography.

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I would like to request that those who find mistakes or weaknesses in the publication to kindly bring these to the attention of the publisher so that the necessary changes may be effected in future editions.

Finally, we make *du'ā'* that Allāh ﷻ accept this effort and crown it with success. May He make it a source of reward in the Hereafter for the author, publisher and all those who have been associated with it. There is no power and might except in Allāh ﷻ.

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