

Week 6: Hadith II — Six Sound Hadith Collections, Hadith Qudsi, and Relationship with the Quran (Detailed)

1. Six Sound Hadith Collections (Al-Kutub as-Sittah)

What are Hadith Collections?

- Hadith collections are books compiled by Muslim scholars to record the sayings, actions, approvals, and characteristics of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).
 - These collections help Muslims understand Islam beyond the Quran by showing how the Prophet practiced and explained the religion.
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Why are Six Collections Called “Sound” or “Authentic”?

- Because the Hadiths they contain were carefully **verified for authenticity (Sahih)** through strict criteria involving the chain of narrators (Isnad) and content (Matn).
 - These six collections are considered the most reliable and authoritative among Sunni Muslims.
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The Six Sound Hadith Collections: Details

Collection Name	Compiler	Description and Importance
Sahih al-Bukhari	Imam Muhammad al-Bukhari	Most authentic collection. Took 16 years to compile. He applied strict conditions on the narrators’ reliability and continuity of chain. Contains ~7,000 Hadiths including repetitions.
Sahih Muslim	Imam Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj	Second most authentic. Similar strict methodology as Bukhari but with a different arrangement. Contains ~4,000 Hadiths. Used for legal rulings and theology.
Sunan Abu Dawood	Abu Dawood al-Sijistani	Contains Hadiths focused on legal and practical rulings (Fiqh). About 4,800 Hadiths. Some weaker Hadiths included but clearly indicated.

Collection Name	Compiler	Description and Importance
Sunan al-Tirmidhi	Imam al-Tirmidhi	Known for comments on Hadith authenticity and includes some unique Hadiths. Useful for jurisprudence. Contains ~3,900 Hadiths.
Sunan al-Nasa'i	Imam Ahmad al-Nasa'i	Emphasizes authenticity and includes detailed narration chains. Contains ~5,700 Hadiths.
Sunan Ibn Majah	Ibn Majah	Contains some weaker Hadiths but still important for study. Covers many topics including worship and social issues. About 4,300 Hadiths.

Criteria for Authenticity (Sahih Hadith):

- **Continuity of chain (Isnad):** Each narrator must have met and received knowledge from the previous narrator without gaps.
- **Integrity and reliability of narrators:** Narrators must be truthful, just, and accurate in memorization and narration.
- **Text (Matn) consistency:** Content must not contradict the Quran or other verified Hadiths.

Importance of the Six Books:

- Provide a **comprehensive understanding** of Islamic beliefs, rituals, ethics, and laws.
- Used by scholars to issue **fatwas** (Islamic legal rulings).
- Serve as guidance on **how to practice Islam** in daily life.

2. Hadith Qudsi (Sacred Hadith)

What is Hadith Qudsi?

- A **Hadith Qudsi** is a **special category** of Hadith where the **Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)** **quotes the words of Allah** but not in the exact wording of the Quran.

- Unlike the Quran, which Muslims believe is the exact word of God revealed verbatim, Hadith Qudsi are divine messages conveyed in the Prophet's own words.
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Characteristics of Hadith Qudsi:

Feature	Description
Source	Words of Allah revealed to the Prophet but narrated in his own wording.
Content	Spiritual lessons, divine mercy, forgiveness, love, or commands.
Status	Highly respected but not equal to the Quran's divine status.
Role	Provides deeper insight into Allah's attributes and relationship with humans.
Examples	"Allah says: 'My mercy prevails over My wrath.'"

Examples of Hadith Qudsi

- "Allah the Almighty said: 'O My servants! I have forbidden oppression for Myself and have made it forbidden amongst you, so do not oppress one another.'"
 - "Allah says: 'I am as My servant thinks I am.'"
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Importance of Hadith Qudsi:

- Strengthens the believer's **spiritual connection** with Allah.
 - Offers **hope and reassurance** about Allah's mercy and justice.
 - Helps Muslims understand **divine attributes** not detailed in the Quran.
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3. Relationship Between Hadith and Quran

Understanding their Relationship:

Aspect	Quran	Hadith
Nature	Literal words of Allah revealed verbatim.	Sayings, actions, approvals of the Prophet.
Authority	Supreme and final source of Islamic law.	Secondary source; explains and supplements Quran.
Content	Principles, laws, stories, guidance.	Details of implementation, explanations, examples.
Language	Perfect Arabic language, unchanged.	Spoken language of the Prophet; varied styles.
Preservation	Memorized and written down during and after the Prophet's life.	Collected, verified, and compiled later.
Role in Islam	Foundation of faith, worship, ethics, law.	Provides practical application and elaboration.

How Hadith Explains Quran:

- The Quran commands Muslims to **pray**, but does not explain the method in detail — Hadith describe how to perform **Salah (prayer)** step-by-step.
- The Quran forbids **theft**, and Hadith explain the **punishment and legal process** related to theft.
- The Quran instructs Muslims to fast in Ramadan; Hadith explain **how to fast properly** and the exceptions allowed.

Complementarity of Quran and Hadith

- Quran is like the **blueprint**, and Hadith are the **building instructions**.
- Hadith help clarify Quranic verses that are general or ambiguous.
- Both must be studied together to fully understand Islam.

Summary Table

Topic	Details
Six Sound Hadith Collections	Six primary authentic books of Hadith: Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Abu Dawood, Sunan al-Tirmidhi, Sunan al-Nasa'i, Sunan Ibn Majah.
Hadith Qudsi	Divine messages from Allah in the Prophet's own words, not part of the Quran but highly respected.
Quran and Hadith Relation	Quran is the highest source; Hadith explain and detail Quranic teachings and Islamic practices.

Additional Notes for Students

- Memorize the names and compilers of the Six Sound Hadith collections.
- Understand why Hadith collections vary in authenticity.
- Be able to explain why Hadith Qudsi is special and how it differs from the Quran.
- Appreciate the complementary role of Hadith in interpreting the Quran.