

The Quran and its Message

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سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ

Salamun Alaikum (Peace be upon you)

HADITH QUDSI

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Hadith Qudsi also known in English as 'Divine sayings', 'sacred sayings' or 'sacred hadith' are differentiated by the corpus of 'regular' Hadith in that their sanad (support) is traced back to God Himself. In other words rather than the Prophet communicating something to companion A, the sanad in a Hadith Qudsi allegedly stretches back and initiates from God Himself

God ----> Prophet ----> Companion A -> B -> C -> D -> E -> F -> x-> Hadith compiler

In this way, the Hadith Qudsi are regarded by Muslims as 'revelations' which are extra-Quranic and of great importance.

What is unknown to many Muslims is that the 'Hadith Qudsi' not only require a 'sanad' but its 'isnad' (supporting) is as late **if not later** than regular Hadith. Therefore, the Hadith Qudsi is subject to the same time gap before its compilation and to the same question of authenticity.

For example, Imam Bukhari's collection was not allegedly completed till as late as 846 CE, over 220 years after the death of the Prophet.

There are simply no Hadith Qudsi recorded contemporaneously with the Prophet or through immediate successive generations of which we have extant sources or compilations that have been known to exist. The weakness of the transmission of the Hadith Qudsi attracts the same level of criticism (if not more) by certain scholars who view them as nothing more than pious frauds.

Such is the irrelevance of the Hadith Qudsi even to Oriental scholars **who are known for their criticism of Hadith**, that it finds little or no attention devoted to it in scholarly discussions. Even Ignaz Goldziher (heavily criticised by traditional Muslim scholars) makes no mention of Hadith Qudsi in his critical study of the Hadith literature [1]

As noted by a Harvard University scholar:

"These are apparently a rather late phenomenon in Islam. The oldest collection that the present writer has found dates only from the first third of the sixth/twelfth century. One may, however, reasonably suppose that perhaps here as elsewhere the collecting of materials antedates the oldest extant manuscripts."

The scholar then cites an annotated chronological list of Arabic collections of the Hadith Qudsi that he has identified in his analysis. He further notes:

"...On the basis of the three printed Sunni collections examined (those of Ibn al-'Arabi, Muhammad al-Madani, and 'Ali al-Qari), such works apparently draw primarily upon the 'classical' and other later Hadith compendia; e.g., Malik's Muwatta, Ibn Hanbal's Musnad, and the standard "six books" of Hadith, plus works of men like at-Tabarani (d. 360/971), ad-Daraqutni (d. 385/955), al-Bayhaqi (d. 458/1066), and others.

Because of the almost uniformly peitistic, sermonic, mystical, and eschatological content of the Divine Saying both early and late, such collections of Sayings appear to have been compiled less for pragmatic purposes of a legal or doctrinal nature than as acts of pious scholarship, much as one has been wont in Islam to make collections of forty "most beautiful" hadiths. This is at least the case with the collection of Ibn al-'Arabi, Mishkat al-anwar, which was compiled, according to the author's own prefatory remarks to the work, in accordance with the Prophetic Tradition: "Whoever preserves for my community forty hadiths of the sunnah, I shall be intercessor for him on the Day of Resurrection." [2]

FINAL THOUGHTS

The Hadith Qudsi are late collections and have not been compiled contemporaneous to the Prophet's life. They are centuries removed from the time of the Prophet and are subject to the same question of authenticity (if not more) as is the general corpus of Hadith.

The Quran however provides no authority to believers to any other source for religious guidance except for itself.

006:114

"Say: "Shall I seek for **judge** other than God? - when He is the One who has sent to you the Book, **explained in detail (Arabic: Mufassalan)**." They know full well, to whom We have given the Book, that it has been sent down from your Lord in truth. Never be then of those who doubt"

The Prophet was instructed to warn with the Quran alone

006:019

"Say: "What thing is most weighty in evidence?" Say: "God is witness between me and you; **THIS QURAN HAS BEEN REVEALED TO ME BY INSPIRATION, that I may warn you and all whom it reaches.** Can ye possibly bear witness that besides God there is another God?" Say: "Nay! I cannot

bear witness!" Say: "But in truth He is the one God, and I truly am innocent of (your blasphemy of) joining others with Him"

050:045

"We know best what they say; and you are not one to overawe them by force. **So admonish with the Quran such as fear My Warning!**"

If the Prophet invented any other sayings in God's name, then the warning to him was clear:

069:044 And if the messenger were to invent any sayings in Our name

069:045 We should certainly seize him by his right hand

069:046 And We should certainly then cut off the artery of his heart

069:047 Nor could any of you withhold him (from Our wrath)

Regardless of the clear verses from the Quran, many are content to source religious guidance from Hadith in the name of God ordained religion.

031:006

"But there are, among men, those who **purchase idle (Arabic: Lahwal) tales (Arabic: Hadith)**, without knowledge, to mislead from the path of God and throw ridicule (on the path): for such there will be a humiliating penalty"

031:007

"When Our **verses (Arabic: Ayat(ina))**' are recited to such a one, he turns away in arrogance, as if he heard them not, as if there were deafness in both his ears: announce to him a grievous penalty"

Related Article:

- (1) [Islamic Secondary Sources](#)
- (2) [Historical Sources](#)
- (3) [God Has Warned Believers to Only Follow the Quran](#)
- (4) [The Quran Stands Alone As Sole Religious Guidance](#)

REFERENCES

- [1] GOLDZIHHER. I, (Muhammedanische Studien) Muslim Studies Volume II Edited by S.M.Stern: Translated by C. R. Barber and S.M.Stern (George Allen & Unwin Ltd)
- [2] GRAHAM. W.A, Divine Word and Prophetic Word in Early Islam: A Reconsideration of the Sources, with Special Reference to the Divine Saying of Hadith Qudsi, Religion and Society 7, General Editors: Leo Laeyendecker, University of Leyden and Jacques Waardenburg, University of Utrecht, Mouton & Co 1977, Page 67

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