

# ṢAḤĪḤ AL-BUKHĀRĪ

*The Early Years of Islam*

BEING THE HISTORICAL CHAPTERS OF  
THE *KITĀB AL-JĀMI' AṢ-ṢAḤĪḤ*  
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TRANSLATED AND EXPLAINED

by

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DAR AL-ANDALUS  
GIBRALTAR



## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

WELL over four decades have passed since this volume was first published. Issued in five instalments by Arafat Publications in Lahore between December 1935 and May 1938, it was to represent the beginning of a gradual publication of my complete work on the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* projected for the following five or six years.

But man proposes and God disposes. The outbreak of the Second World War interrupted the publication. Just as it was about to be resumed, in the summer of 1947, the chaos and the inter-religious holocaust which followed upon the partition of the Indian subcontinent and the establishment of Pakistan (for which I myself had worked and striven since 1933) resulted in a great personal loss – to me as to so many others. Since the end of the war I had been living in the eastern (now Indian) part of the Punjab; and at the outbreak of the partition troubles the manuscripts of nearly three-quarters of my annotated translation of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* were barbarically destroyed. With my own eyes I saw a few scattered leaves of those manuscripts floating down the river Ravi in the midst of torn Arabic books – the remnants of my library – and all manner of debris; and with those poor, floating pieces of paper vanished beyond recall more than ten years of intensive labour.

And yet. . . .

Although a resumption and repetition of that wantonly destroyed labour was and remained out of the question, it gradually dawned on me that my work on the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* was not totally lost. On the contrary, I realized with growing conviction that the ten years spent on analyzing, translating and clarifying the *Ṣaḥīḥ* were a God-willed preparation for a work which for a very long time had represented an enticing dream to me: a new rendering into English of the message of the Holy Qur'ân and a commentary based on the principle that the doors of *ijtihâd* have never been and never could be closed to man's searching intellect. I had always known that absolute familiarity with the science of *ḥadīth* was an indispensable pre-condition for any independent approach to the Qur'ân. Thus, irrespective of whether my work on Al-Bukhârî's *Ṣaḥīḥ* was fully published or not, it was bound to bear fruit in the form of my dreamed-of commentary on the Holy Qur'ân.

By the grace of God, that dream has at last been fulfilled, and my life-work completed and published under the title *The Message of the Qur'ân*; and any scholarly reader of that work will easily recognize how much of the spirit of *ḥadīth* – and, hence, of the immortal labour of Al-Bukhârî – has gone into my interpretation of the Word of God.

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For technical reasons connected with the photographic reproduction of the first edition of this work, it has become necessary to omit Abû Sufyân's story of his meeting with Emperor Heraclius, as well as Ibn an-Naṭûr's account of the Emperor's reactions to the message of Islam. Both these accounts are found at the end of the first chapter of the original.

MUHAMMAD ASAD

Tangier, Ṣafar 1401 H. (January 1981).