

### Chapter Three

#### **On A Biography of the Scholars of Baghirma**

**A**mong the *shaykhs* of Baghirma were the scholarly erudite **Sulayman** and his noble son, the prodigy of the age, the spiritual path of the time, the scholarly erudite, the ascetic, the piously scrupulous of deep comprehension - **Muhammad al-Wali**, may Allah be kind to both of them. It is claimed that *Shaykh* Sulayman came from our lands here to the lands of Baghirma and settled among its people. He is from our tribe, the Turudbe Fulani. His son, the noble Muhammad al-Wali authored excellent works, which testify to the profusion of his knowledge, the extent of his embracing of disciplines and his complete familiarity with the sciences. Among them was al-Minhal regarding the science of divine unity (*tawheed*) and his versification of the an-Niqaaaya. Among his works were many hymns and poems. The intellectuals of this land and those surrounding them were mainly concerned with the knowledge of numerology and letters and the science of astrology. They were so submerged in seeking these sciences and craving after them until they abandoned the sciences of the Book, the *Sunna* and the *shari`a* altogether, out of desire for this world's life. The *Shaykh* said about them:

“Who can offer excuses for people occupied with the stars  
corrupters of the *deen* who display every sought of evil?  
They neglect the knowledge of the Revealed Book  
And the traditions complying with the guide of humanity.  
And the sciences of the *shari`a* and jurisprudence which  
brings benefit to a person and protects him from dangers.  
They direct their concerns towards their profits  
In attaining fleeting rubble which will never abide.  
They put forward this world over their Hereafter  
They care not whether this will bring them harm.  
And knowledge of numerology which they consider a device  
By which to obtain wealth and position which is harmful.  
They make it a means to bring near to them  
The children of this world's life persistent in delusion.  
They call it the science of secrets, they lie!  
It is not secret, but is the science of evil!  
Verily the secrets are the sciences which are disseminated  
By the protected friends of Allah the masters of discernment.  
Ask them, ‘Do they know the wisdom of what  
Has been undertaken by the people of inner vision?’  
I swear by my life! It is the hallway of destruction  
And disbelief has been contrived through its expressions.  
What do you think of those who spend their entire life  
In observing the stations of the sun and the moon?  
Block the enticements and ward off evils from  
These things which are the most evil of outlooks.

O servants of Allah! O people of fearful awareness!  
Show your anger to them and avoid them completely!  
They are the corrupters of the *deen* so put out their light  
They are the true enemies of the *deen* in these times.  
And bless O Lord and give peace eternally  
To the Chosen Prophet, the guide of humanity.”  
He took knowledge from *Shaykh* Bakri.

Among those who settled in these lands before the above two *shaykhs* was ***Shaykh Waldeede***. It is claimed that he first settled in the land of Kulunbardi, one of the districts of Birnin Bornu in the direction of the north. He and ***Shaykh al-Wali ibn al-Jarma ‘t-Taarki*** revived the spiritual path and established the truth for the people. This resulted in the people following them until even some of the civil servants of the *Amir* of Bornu, *Amir Umar*, repented at their hands. They were eventually summoned to the court of *Mai Umar* who asked them about their aims. al-Wali ibn ‘l-Jarma informed him saying, “It is not our aim to divide your subjects from you. Our intention is only to guide the people to the spiritual path.” He was ordered to be killed and his blood flowed out and spelled the *kalima ‘s-Shahaada*. *Shaykh Waldeede*’ was released and he made the *hijra* to the lands of Baghirma and settled there until he died. It is claimed that he was born on the road to the pilgrimage. His mother went on the pilgrimage while she was pregnant. She became separated from the company of the pilgrims until she was afflicted with thirst. She gave birth to him during that intense hardship and then died. The child remained in that condition for three days until another company of pilgrims passed. They took up the child and carried him to their country where he grew up. There he studied the Quran and then set out to seek knowledge in the town of Agadez, then to Timbuktu. He then returned to his country where what occurred to him happened. This *shaykh* died after the completion of the year 1000 by a few months and Allah knows best.

It is claimed that he once said to his *jama`at*, “I announce to you the coming of a time of a *wali* from among the *awliyya* of Allah who will appear in these lands. He will renew the *deen*, revive the *Sunna* and establish the religion. Whoever encounters him should follow him. His sign is that he will first make the *jihad* with his tongue until the fortunate people follow him. Then he will make the *jihad* with the spearhead. He will have dominion over these lands and drive out the *Amir* of Bornu from his land in the same way he drove us from our lands, and he will control them.”

All praises are due to Allah that that has happened! We have followed him (*Uthman Dan Fduye*) and we assist him. May Allah make us from among those who are guided, make our affairs end well, extend our lives and make our ending excellent.

