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Sawq's-Siddiqeen

**The Mobilization of the Champions
of Truth**

By

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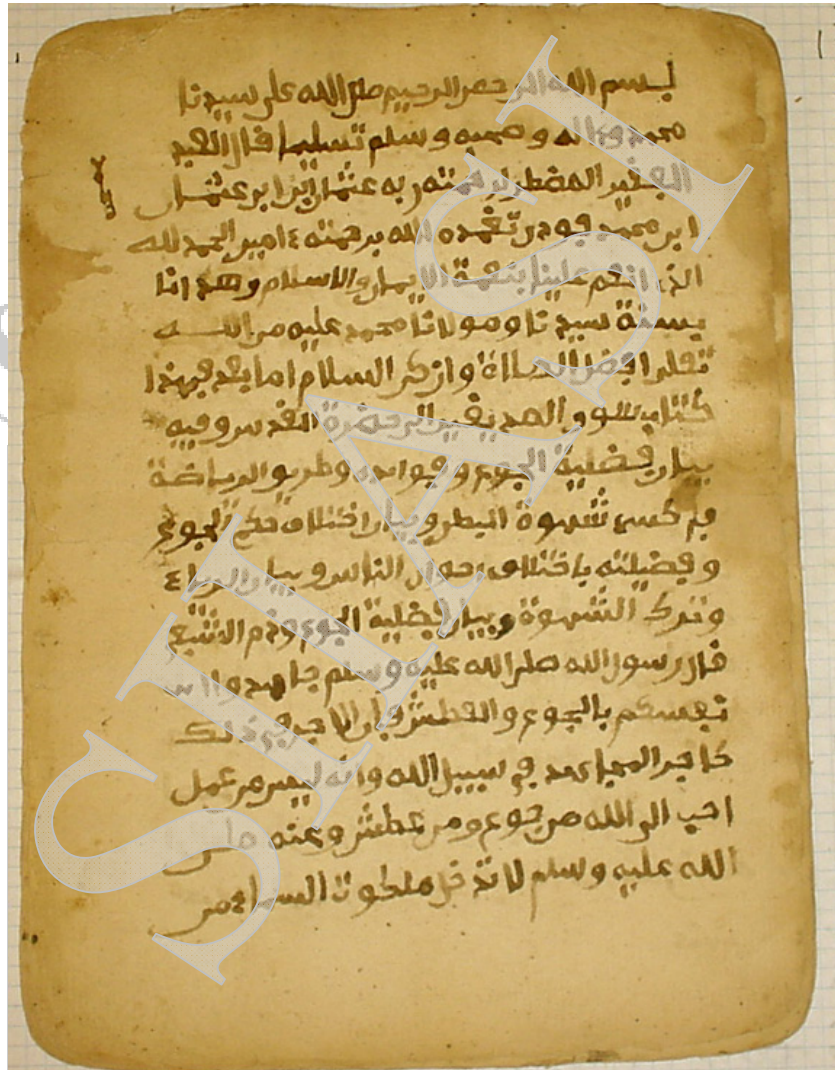


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Folio 1 of manuscript Sawq as-Sidiqeen of Shehu Uthman ibn Fuduye` from the archives of Amir`-
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا

In the name of Allah the beneficent the Merciful, may Allah bless our master Muhammad, his family and Companions and give them peace. Says the poor slave in need of the mercy of his Lord – **Uthman ibn Muhammad Fuduye' ibn Uthman**, may Allah engulf him in His mercy – Amen¹.

All praises are due to Allah who has blessed us with the blessing of *Iman* and Islam, and who has guided us by means of our master and chief Muhammad, from Allah ta'ala be the best blessings and most perfect peace.² To continue – this is the book called:

¹ He was Abu Muhammad Uthman ibn Muhammad Fuduye' ibn Uthman ibn Saalih ibn Haarun ibn Muhammad Ghurdu ibn Muhammad Jubba ibn Muhammad Sanbu ibn Maysiran ibn Ayyub ibn Buba Baba ibn Abu Bakr ibn Musa Jokolli at-Turuude'. This Musa Jokolli was one of the sons of *Imam* Dhimbu, who fled with his ethnicity, the people of *Turuudi* to the lands of Konni. They are originally from the lands of Futa Toro and their origin is from the Christians of *Ruum* or from the *Banu Isra'il*. The armies of the Companions reached them and their king accepted Islam and married his daughter to Uqba ibn Nafi', the Companion, military commander and *Amir* of the west. It was from this marriage that the famous Fulbe` ethnicity called *Turuudi* were born. As for the mother of the author, she was Hawwa bint *Sayyidat* Fatima bint Muhammad as-Shareef ibn Abd's-Samad ibn Ahmad as-Shareef ibn Ali al-Yanbui` ibn Abd'r-Razaq ibn as-Saalih ibn al-Mubaarik ibn Ahmad ibn Abu'l-Hassan Ali as-Shadhili ibn Abdallah ibn Abd'l-Jabaar ibn Tamim ibn Hurmaz ibn Hatim ibn Qusay ibn Yusef ibn Yusha' ibn Wardi ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Isa ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hassan as-Sabt ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib and Fatima az-Zahra the daughter of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace and upon his pure family and pleasing Companions.

² From the style of the language of the opening of this text it is clear that it was composed between 1790 and 1804 during the middle period of the reform movement established by the *Shehu*, which began in 1774 until his death in 1817. The specific target was his son, *Shaykh* Muhammad Sanbu who requested the *Shehu* to put in writing some principles on the methodology of disciplining the soul through hunger and fasting. *Shaykh* Abd'l-Qadir ibn Mustafa informs us in his *Bayaan at-Ta`abudaat* that as a result of applying the discipline of the text at the hands of his father, *Shaykh* Muhammad Sanbu ibn *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye' had attained the station of champion of truth (*siddiqiyya*) at an early age. The general target audience of this text were the many spiritual disciples of the *Shehu* who were apart of his close assembly in Degel just before the *hijra* in 1804. Among them were *Shaykh* Umar Kamuni, *Shaykh* Muhammad Yero, *Shaykh* Abdullahi Mujjin Mahwi, *Shaykh* Muhammad Kari`angha, *Shaykh* Muhammad Tukur, *Shaykh* Ali Dhimbu, *Shaykh* *Shaykh* Muhammad ibn al-Bukhari, *Shaykh* as-Sayyid Ibrahim, *Shaykh* Umar Ghurba, the wife of the *Shehu* A`isha Iyya Gharka bint *Shaykh* Muhammad Sanbu; and others. *Shaykh* Umar Ahmad Zaruq said that another important beneficiary of this text was the *Shehu*'s eldest son, Muhammad Sad, who died in the year 1791, which means the text was probably composed between 1789 and 1790. At the time of the composition, *Shaykh* Muhammad Sanbu was about 17 years old and *Shaykh* Muhammad Sa`d was about 20 years old.

Mobilization of the Champions of Truth into the Presence of Sanctity³

³ My teacher *Shaykh* Umar Ahmad Zaruq said that the title chosen by the *Shehu* indicates the target audience of the text and objective. The title of the text indicates that the *Shehu's* objective was to mobilize those in his *Jama`at* who desired to attain the station of *siddiqiyya* or who had already reached this high station, as to how they could enter into the Presence of Sanctity (*qaddasiyya*) through the discipline of fasting and the decrease of consumption. As for the station of *siddiqiyya*, it is the station of non-action and the negation of action, because the Champion of Truth follows the path of pure belief without causative factor or proof in the same manner that Abu Bakr as-Sideeq believed in the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace without causative factor or secondary evidence, but through pure and unadulterated belief. It is for this reason that Abu Bakr as-Sideeq said: "True comprehension (of Allah) is recognition of the inability to comprehend Him." This is the essence of transcendence and results from a heart which attains what cannot be attained through proactive deeds. It is for this reason that the Umar ibn al-Khataab said about him: "If the belief of Abu Bakr were to be weighed with the belief of the people of the earth, his would out weigh theirs." The station of Champion of Truth was granted to Abu Bakr before the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace was sent as a Messenger. It was related by Ibn Jurayj on the authority of Ibn Abass that Abu Bakr as-Sideeq became the companion of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace when he was eighteen years old and the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace was twenty something years old. During that time they both traveled to Syria for commerce, when they reached a camp in which was a lote tree under which the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace sat for shade. Abu Bakr went on to visit a nearby monk by the name of Bahira to ask him some question. The monk said to him: "Who is that man sitting in the shade of that lote tree?" He said: "That is Muhammad ibn Abdallah ibn Abd'l-Muttalib." He then said: "By Allah! That is a prophet! It was foretold that no one would take shade under that lote tree after Jesus the son of Mary except Muhammad." It was then that absolute certainty (*yaqeen*) and sincere acceptance (*sidq*) entered into the heart of Abu Bakr, so when prophethood was eventually granted to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, simply accepted and followed him." It was related by ad-Daylami on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: "I did not present Islam to anyone except that he had some uncertainty; but not Abu Bakr. He did not hesitate." The station of Champion of Truth was given to Abu Bakr even before he was created, because it was related by ad-Daylami on the authority of Umm Hani' that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace once said: "O Abu Bakr! Verily Allah has named you the champion of truth (*as-sideeq*)."⁴ It has been related by ar-Raafi' on the authority of Salman that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: "When Allah created the Throne, He had transcribed on It by a Pen made of Light, whose length filled between what is in the east and west: 'There is no deity except Allah, Muhammad in the Messenger of Allah. By means of him I take and by means of him I give. His *umma* is the best of communities and the best among them is Abu Bakr the Champion of Truth'." According to the beliefs of the *Ahl's-Sunna wa'l-Jama`at* there is no person that comes between Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace and Abu Bakr. This is because between the station of prophethood and the station of *sidiqqiya* there is no other spiritual station. The Champion of Truth follows the Path of Belief with out any hesitation or objection to the one he follows nor does he make a decision after the one he follows has decided a matter. That is the nature of the spiritual station of the Champion of Truth as Abu Bakr as-Sideeq said: "I have never left anything that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, used to do except that I have done it; being afraid that if I left anything from his commands that I would go astray." As for the Presence Sanctity (*hadrat'l-qadassiyya*) it is the realm of transcendence, uniqueness, inaccessibility and inimitability which cannot be comprehended from any mode of expression or understood by any known symbolic expression. It is the realm of the Divine Essence in its incompatibility and disconnection from all except Itself, before the Self Manifestation of His Names and Attributes and the subsequent emergence of the multitude of divine, celestial and terrestrial realities which emerged from Them. It is for this reason that It cannot be obtained through proactive deeds such as prayer, alms, or any other undertaking which is considered and action. Because the Presence of Sanctity (*hadrat 'l-qaddasiyya*) is the reality of His transcendence: "There is nothing like Him"; which requires an action that is not like any other action and which in fact is considered a non-action or negation of action, and that is by means of hunger and fasting. Thus, by means of non-action or the emptiness of the negation of action which fasting and hunger demand, a person is able to enter into the Presence of the Transcendence of 'there is nothing like Him.' *Shaykh* Abdullahi ibn Abi Bakr al-`Aydaruus said about this is his al-Kibreer: "The knowers of Allah and all of

In this text I have placed the clarification of four issues: [1] An explanation of the merits of hunger and its benefits; [2] An explanation of the path of spiritual training by breaking the passions of the stomach; [2] An explanation of the divergent judgments of hunger and its merits in accordance with the different states of mankind. [3] An explanation of showing-off and avoiding passions in hunger. [4] An explanation of the merits of hunger and the evils of satiety.

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said:⁴

((جَاهِدُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ بِالْجُوعِ وَالْعَطَشِ فَإِنَّ الْأَجْرَ فِي ذَلِكَ كَأَجْرِ الْمُجَاهِدِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَنَّهُ لَيْسَ

مِنْ عَمَلٍ أَحَبَّ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ جُوعٍ وَمِنْ عَطَشٍ))

“Struggle against your *nafs* by means of hunger and thirst; for truly the reward in that is like the reward of the *mujaahid* in the way of Allah. There is no action more beloved to Allah than hunger and thirst.”⁵

He, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said,

((لَا تَدْخُلُ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَاءِ مَنْ مَلَأَ بَطْنَهُ))

“The one who has filled his stomach will not enter the unseen kingdoms of the heavens.”⁶

the *Shaykhs* of *tasawwuf* have said that the most noble word regarding the Divine Unity is what our master Abu Bakr as-Sideeq, may Allah be pleased with him said: Glory be to Him who has not made any way for creation to know Him.” Thus, the negation of comprehension of Allah is the greatest comprehension of Allah. In the same manner that the lack of action or the negation of action which fasting comprises is the greatest form of worship, thus it is associated with Allah, when He said: “Fasting is for Me.”

⁴ The prophetic tradition is *mursal*, that is to say it is narrated by *Taabi`* (Second Generation) without the mention of the Companion. It was narrated by Ibn Abi a-Dunya from a tradition transmitted by Ali ibn al-Husayn in a different rendering.

⁵ The author, *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye` began by citing a prophetic tradition which utilizes the expression: “Struggle against oneself (*jaahiduu anfusikum*)...” as a way of establishing that the seeker has the means within himself to begin the spiritual journey, and that it is not outside of himself or in the hands of anyone else, even the spiritual guide. The beginning of the ‘struggle against the self or soul’ is by first cutting back the amount of food one consumes. The author said in his *Usul’l-Wilaayat*: “There is no cure in the beginning for breaking passions and desires more beneficial than hunger.” He also said in the same text: “In the beginning of the affair when a person finds his soul defiant, full of cravings after corrupt passions leaning towards extremes, then coming to the middle way in disciplining the soul with hunger will bring no benefit. On the contrary, he must go to some extreme in punishing it by means of hunger in the same manner that one punishes a beast by means of hunger and whippings in the beginning until the animal then reaches midway in its training. Then when the animal becomes composed and dependable, it then becomes beneficial to return to training the animal in a median fashion and avoid punishing it.” The desired hunger in the spiritual Path for the one traveling it is hunger which comes by choice through willfully decreasing the excess of what one normally consumes. The purpose is in order to bring stillness and tranquility to outer limbs and inner organs from desiring and seeking after its natural requirements.

⁶ According to *al-Haafidh* al-Iraqi in his *al-Mughni` An Hamali al-Asfaar*: “I have not found a source for this prophetic tradition.” However, support of this prophetic tradition as well as the one mentioned before it is backed by a tradition narrated by Ahmad ibn Hanbal on the authority of Abu Hurayra where the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “If it were not for the Devils who hover around the hearts of the children of Adam, they would be able to examine the unseen hidden kingdoms of the heavens.” In another variant related by ad-Daylami on the authority of Abu Hurayra which carries the same meaning as the once cited by the author where he upon him be blessings and peace said: “Dress yourselves in wool, gird your loins, and consume that which will fill only half your stomachs; then you will be able to enter the unseen kingdoms of the heavens.” It has been related by Ahmad and Ibn Maja on the authority of Asma bint Yazid, that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “Hunger and lying are never joined together in a single person.” Both of these

It was said, “O Messenger of Allah which person is the best?” He, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said:

((مَنْ قَلَّ طَعَامُهُ وَضَحَكُهُ وَرَضِيَ بِمَا يَسْتُرُ بِهِ عَوْرَتَهُ))

“He is the one who curtails his food, his laughter and is satisfied with enough to cover his private parts.”⁷

He, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said:

((أَفْضَلَكُمْ مَنْزِلَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَطْوَالُكُمْ جَوْعًا وَتَفَكُّرًا وَأَبْغَضُكُمْ إِلَيَّ اللَّهُ كُلُّ نَوْمٍ أَكُولٍ وَشَرُوبٍ))

“The best of you in stations with Allah is the one who is the longest in hunger and in reflection. The most hated of you to Allah is the one full of sleep, eating and drinking.”⁸

He, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said:

((إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَبَاهِي الْمَلَائِكَةَ بِمَنْ قَلَّ طَعَامُهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا يَقُولُ: أَنْظِرُوا إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي التَّبَلِيَةَ بِالطَّعَامِ وَالشَّرَابِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَتَرْكَهُمَا، اشْهَدُوا يَا مَلَائِكَتِي مَا مِنْ أَكْلَةٍ يَدْعُهَا إِلَّا بَدَلْتَهُ بِهَا دَرَجَةً فِي الْجَنَّةِ))

“Allah boasts to the Angels regarding the one who curtails his intake of food in this world’s life. He says: ‘Look upon my servant who is tested with food and drink in this

prophetic traditions as well as the one cited by the author, indicates that hunger is one of the keys to opening of the doors of the unseen, unveiling, and direct experiential knowledge of Allah ta`ala. Here ends folio 1 after 17 lines of colophon.

⁷ I was unable to find the source for this prophetic tradition cited by the author. However the other prophetic traditions which have been cited here give support to the soundness of the meaning of the tradition. The tradition indicates that virtue and spiritual status is directly connected to the type and quantity of food that is consumed; the type and nature of one’s attire as well as the extent of one’s levity. However, the reprehensibility of too much laughter does not negate the need for a person being joyful, cheerful and light hearted. It is related that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace always encountered people with a cheerful demeanor; and apart of true belief is bringing joy and cheer to the hearts of the believers. What is reprehensible in the above prophetic tradition is laughter which results from being silly comical, and buffoonery. It is reported that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “I am not a comedian nor are comedians from me.”

⁸ Similarly to the previous cited prophetic tradition I have not found a source for this adaptation of the prophetic tradition cited by the author. However, there have been many prophetic traditions related from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace which support the meaning of the tradition cited. It has been related by Ibn Maja and al-Hakim in his *al-Mustadrak* on the authority of Salman that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “Verily the people who are always sated in this world’s life are those who are most hungry on the Day of Standing.” It was related by at-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abi Jahifa that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “Desist from your burping; for those who are always sated in this world’s life will be those most hungry in the Hereafter.” It has been related by at-Tabarani on the authority of Jaabir ibn Sumra on the authority of Ali ibn Abi Talib who said that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “I asked my Lord azza wa jalla for three traits for my *Umma*. He granted me two and He prevented me from one. I said: ‘O Lord, do not destroy my *Umma* by means of hunger,’ and He said: ‘It is like that.’ I said: ‘O Lord do not subject them to enemies outside of themselves (meaning the idolaters), He said: ‘It is like that.’ I said: ‘O Lord do not make injury to occur between them’, but He did not answer that.” These prophetic traditions and the one cited by the author indicates that spiritual stations with Allah ta`ala are commensurate with emptiness and fullness of the stomach. It is for this reason that fasting and decreasing the intake of food and drink has always been the initial discipline required by those on the spiritual journey to Allah ta`ala.

world's life and he forsakes them. O My Angels bear witness! There is no food which he has forsaken except that I exchange it with a rank in Paradise.”⁹

He, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said:

((لَا تَمَيِّتُوا الْقُلُوبَ بِكَثْرَةِ الطَّعَامِ وَالشَّرَابِ فَإِنَّ الْقَلْبَ كَالزَّرْعِ يَمُوتُ إِذَا كَثَرَ عَلَيْهِ الْمَاءُ))

“Do not kill the hearts with too much eating and drinking. Truly, the heart is like a plot of earth. It dies if too much water is supplied to it.”¹⁰

He, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said:

((مَا مَلَأَ أَدْمِي وَعَاءَ أُشْرًا مِنْ بَطْنِهِ حَسَبِ ابْنِ آدَمَ لَغَمَتَانِ يَقْمَنُ صُلْبُهُ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَا بَدَ فَتَلْتُ لَطْعَامَهُ وَتَلْتُ لَشْرَابِهِ وَتَلْتُ لِنَفْسِهِ))

“The son of Adam fills no container more evil than his stomach. Enough for him is two mouthfuls which helps straighten his back. If he has to eat more then it should be a third for his food, a third for his drink and a third for his breadth.”¹¹

⁹ The meaning of ‘boast’ in this prophetic tradition and in other similar traditions is that Allah ta`ala is actually reminding the Angels of the superiority of the Children of Adam over all creatures and the wisdom behind His commanding the Angels to prostrate to Adam. It is significant that Allah ordered Adam and his wife to refrain from consuming a certain food while in Paradise, because it indicates that certain food consumptions were even prohibited in the Unseen kingdom in order to maintain station with Allah ta`ala. What caused the loss of this station was Adam’s consumption of what he was prohibited. However, this consumption was also apart of the wisdom behind him being sent to the earth as His vicegerent (*khalifa*), and the means for Adam entering the first door of spiritual station, which is the door of repentance. Just as Allah ta`ala forbade Adam to consume certain foods in the Unseen kingdom, and instructed him with wisdom directly from Himself, similarly Allah ta`ala raises the Children of Adam in this life in spiritual stations based upon the decrease of their intake of food, by which Allah ta`ala lifts the veils of the Unseen kingdom, allows them to have access into the wisdom which He instructed Adam, and boast of their stations over the rest of creation, especially the Angels. As *Shaykh* al-Munowi said in his *Fayd’l-Qadeer*: “This prophetic tradition means that Allah is saying to the Angels to look at or examine My servants how they subjugate their souls by fasting in the day, standing at night, and being preoccupied with My worship, over and above being free to enjoy their pleasures, or being expansive in consumption, drink and attire. Look how they prevent their souls from enjoying its lower pleasures for My sake. As for you O Angels, it is not possible for you to overcome the barriers of the rebelliousness of the soul because none of you have been created from mixed and conflicting compound substances as Adam was. Rather you were created from a single constituent, which is light that is innately disposed to obedience of Me.” Thus the boast of Allah ta`ala for Adam is his innate potential for rebellion, and his ability to overcome this innate ability by struggling against his lower nature through hunger, self denial and spiritual struggle.

¹⁰ *Imam* Muhammad Tahir ibn Ali al-Hindi said that this prophetic tradition has no source for it. However, the prophetic traditions cited in this text support the meaning which this prophetic tradition elucidates. Apart of the wisdom of the above cited prophetic tradition is that the heart and the stomach are two major opposing centers of the physical body. When one is empty its opposite become active. The stomach is the center for the appetites, while the heart is the center of knowledge. When the appetites are being fulfilled and maintained, then its opposite in intuitive cognition is hampered. Similarly when the stomach is made empty through fasting and the decrease of food and drink, the heart becomes activated and the doors of innate cognition are opened.

¹¹ The prophetic tradition which is referred to in the above citation was related by Ibn Maja and al-Hakim in his *al-Mustadrak* on the authority of Salman; and by at-Tirmidhi and Ahmad on the authority of al-Miqdam ibn Ma`d. *Imam* Muhammad ibn Abd’r-Rahman said in his *Tuhfat’l-Ahwadhi*: “He may Allah bless him and grant him peace depicted the stomach as a container which contains household needs as a way of indicating its natural requirements. Then he, upon him be peace depicts the stomach as being the most harmful and malevolent of the containers because when it is full it induces the person to commit acts which conflict with the religion.” When a person fills his stomach, the usual outcome is to sleep, have conjugal relations or become preoccupied in heedlessness because the blood leaves the higher faculties of the brain and heart and descend to the intestines and lower extremities which feed

It has been reported that he, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said:

((إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَجْرِي مِنْ إِبْنِ آدَمَ مَجْرَ الدَّمِ فَضَيِّقُوا مَجْرَهُ بِالْجُوعِ وَالْعَطَشِ))

“Satan flows through the children of Adam like his blood. Therefore constrict his flow by means of hunger and thirst.”¹²

A’isha,¹³ may Allah be pleased with her used¹⁴ to say:

إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَمْ يَمْتَلِ قَطُّ شَبْعًا

“The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace never took his fill of food.”¹⁵

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the lower desires and passions. It is for this reason he, may Allah bless him and grant him peace described the stomach as the most evil of containers when it is full. *Imam* at-[^]Tayybi said: “The true necessity in consumption is not to go beyond what allows the health of one’s body to be established, which ultimately provides strength in order to obey Allah ta`ala. If a person wants to exceed that, then he should stop with the limit set by the division delineated in the prophetic traditions.”

¹² This prophetic tradition was related by Ahmad ibn Hanbal in his *Musnad*, al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud on the authority of Anas; as well as by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud and Ibn Maja on the authority of Safiyya. *Imam* al-Ujuluni said in his *Kashif’l-Khifaa*: “This prophetic tradition is cited in the *al-Ihya* that al-Iraqi said that there is unanimous agreement regarding the soundness of this prophetic tradition, with the exception of the expression: ‘Therefore constrict his flow by means of hunger and thirst’, which is an insertion made by some of the people of *tasawwuf*.” What is important regarding this prophetic tradition and those cited before it is that the author, may Allah be merciful to him gives evidence from the *Sunna* for two-thirds of the Path to Paradise, because the discipline of decreasing the intake of food and drink is the foundation for mastering ten of the fifteen traits of uprightness, which is two-thirds of the Spiritual Path. By decreasing consumption a person is able to [1] acquire sound knowledge and gnosis; [2] enter on the path of repentance as our father Adam was ordered in Paradise; [3] open the door of austerity; [4] assist in obtaining the virtues of solitude; [5] complete the war with Satan; [6] win the struggle against the lower soul which commands to evil; [7] achieve the station of reliance upon Allah regarding provision; [8] easily resign oneself over to Allah in times of hardship; [9] be content with what Allah has proportioned for him of this world’s life; and [10] be patient with whatever afflictions befall him in this life. These ten qualities can all be achieved through decreasing the intake of food and drink, which comprises two-thirds of the traits of uprightness as delineated by the author in his *Usuul’l-Wilaayat* and *Tariq al-Janna*. None of the scholars of the *Sunna* or the People of Allah disagree that what is intended by the decrease of consumption is by means of fasting which has been made lawful by the *shari`a*, by fasting the obligatory fast of *Ramadhan*; by fasting every Monday and Thursday, or three days out of every month, or during the months of *Muharram*, *Rajab*, *Sha`baan*, and *Dhu’l-Hijjah*; or the fast of Dawud. It also includes decreasing what one normally consumes daily until a person reaches just the amount needed to strengthen his body and guarantee his worship of Allah ta`ala.

¹³ She was the Mother of the believers A`isha, the daughter of the *Imam* of the greatest of the Champions of Truth, the *Khalifa* of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace Abu Bakr Abdallah ibn Abi Qahafa Uthman ibn Umar ibn `Amr ibn Ka`b ibn Sa`d ibn Tayim al-Qurayshi at-Taymiya al-Mekiyya. She was the wife of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and the most learned of the female jurist of the *Umma*.

¹⁴ Here ends folio 2 after 17 lines of colophon.

¹⁵ *Imam* Muhammad Tahir ibn Ali al-Hindi said that this prophetic tradition has no source for it. However, the soundness of its meanings have been supported and verified by all the other prophetic traditions cited. It is significant that after citing the prophetic traditions encouraging the decrease of consumption, the author then cites the sayings and narratives of the *Salaf as-Saalih* and other Sages to demonstrate that disciplining the soul by means of hunger and thirst is among the fundamental spiritual disciplines of the Path to Allah ta`ala.

Luqman, the Wise¹⁶ once said to his son,

بينني إذا امتلئت المعدة نامت الفكرة وحرست الحكمة وقعدت الأعضاء عن العبادة

“O my son when the table is full of food then reflection sleeps, wisdom dies and the limbs become too lax to worship.”

Abu Sulayman ad-Darani¹⁷ said:

لأن أترك لقمة واحدة من عشاء أحب إليّ من قيام ليلة إلى الصبح

“That I forsake a single mouthful of food from my meal is dearer to me than standing in night praying until dawn.”¹⁸

SANKORE

¹⁶ He was **Luqman al-Hakim** (the Wise or the ‘Doctor’) ibn Baa`uura ibn Naahura ibn Taarih as Muhammad ibn Is`haq mentioned his lineage on his history. It is said that he was as as-Suhayli cited it, Luqman ibn `Anqaa ibn Siruun a Nubian from Ailat. Sa`id ibn al-Musayyib said that he was a Blackman with thick lips from among the Blacks of Egypt whom Allah had given wisdom but had not made him a Prophet. Thus the opinion of the majority of the scholars is that he was a sage (*waliy*) but was not a prophet; although `Akrama and as-Sha`abi held the view that he was a prophet. The correct view is that he was an expert in the science of medicine whom Allah ta`ala had given wisdom, jurisprudence in religion and intelligence. He also acted as a judge among the Bani Isra`il. He was ‘black’ with prominent lips; as Ibn Abass and others narrated. It has been related in a prophetic tradition from Umar who said: “I heard the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace say: ‘Luqman was not a prophet. However he was a servant of Allah who reflected often and possessed excellent certitude. He loved Allah ta`ala and He loved him. Thus, Allah favored him with wisdom and singled him out by making him a vicegerent who had the ability to judge according to the Truth. He lived to be one thousand years old’.” Dr. Abdallah at-Tayyib said that Luqman was the Nubian scribe, master builder and physician of ancient Egypt, known as Imhotep (‘the one who comes in peace or the ‘muslim’), who designed and built the first pyramid in Saqqara in Upper Egypt, and was known in Greece as Asclepius, where he was worshipped as ‘the god of medicine’. We seek refuge with Allah from ignorance.

¹⁷ He was Abu Sulayman Abd`r-Rahman ibn Ahmad a-Darani. He was born in the beginning of 140 A.H.. He was a noted *Imam* in knowledge and was considered the most ascetic of the people of his age. He studied with such prominent scholars and sages such as Sufyan at-Thawri, Abu`l-Ash`hab, `Alqama ibn Suwayd, and others. One of chief disciples was the renown Ahmad ibn al-Huwara, who said that Abu Sulayman once said: “It is not permissible for anyone who is determined to perform some excellent deed, to act on it until he hears that there is some transmission regarding it.” *Imam* al-Junayd said that Abu Sulayman ad-Darani once said: “Perhaps some day there occasionally falls in my heart a small point from the ideas of the People of Allah. However I refuse to accept it unless it has proof from the two reliable witnesses: the Book and the *Sunna*.” He also said: “The foundation of every good is fear of this world’s life. The key to this world’s life is satiety and the key to the Hereafter is hunger.” He died in the year 205 A.H.

¹⁸ This is because fasting or abstaining from consumption is an action which is like no other, simply because it comprises of what the Chinese sages call *wu wei* (no action) or withholding oneself (*al-imsaak*) from doing any action. In this manner fasting and abstaining from consumption is an action which does not resemble other acts of worship. It has been related by an-Nasai’ on the authority of Abu Amama, who said: “I once came to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace and said: Command me to do an order that I can take from you. He said: “Obligatory upon you is fasting, for it has no likeness.” Allah ta`ala elevates the fasting by negating resemblance or likeness to it in any of the acts of worship. Allah ta`ala attributes fasting to Himself in the negation of resemblance and likeness, because fasting actually is the avoidance of action (*wu wei*), because the negation of likeness to fasting is an attribute of negation, it strengthens the relationship between the one fasting and Allah ta`ala. Allah ta`ala says about Himself: “*There is nothing like Him*.” It is for this reason that hunger and thirst is one of the surest Paths to Allah ta`ala and His gnosis as the author indicates by the following narratives of the *awiliyya*..

Sahl ibn Abdullah¹⁹ used to go twenty or more days without eating. He used to extol hunger and was intense in obtaining it until he used to say:

لا يوافى في القيمة عمل برًّا أفضل من الجوع وترك فضول الطعام والإقتداء بالنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في أكله

“There is nothing which is better in establishing upright deeds than hunger, forsaken excess in food and following the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace in consumption.” He also said:

إنما صار الأبدال أبدالاً لأخماص البطون والصمت والسهرة والخلو والتفكير

“Truly the *abdaal* only obtain the station of *badaliyya* by means of the emptiness of their stomachs, silence, wakefulness, seclusion and reflection.”²⁰

He also said:

رأس كل برّ بين السماء والأرض الجوع ورأس كل فجور بينهما الشبع

“The head of all righteousness between the heavens and earth is in hunger. The head of every corruption between the heavens and the earth is in satiety.”²¹

¹⁹ He was Abu Muhammad Sahl ibn Abdallah ibn Yunis . He was the *Shaykh* of the Knowers of Allah, a prominent *sufi* and ascetic. He was the student of first his uncle Muhammad ibn Sawwar in the sciences of prophetic tradition and jurisprudence. He then made the pilgrimage to the Sacred House and became a disciple of the austere master Dhu'n-Nuun al-Misri. He obtained firm standing in the Spiritual Path, and was renowned for his excellent sermons and beneficial teachings. Many scholars and Muslim sages took transmission from him. Among them were: Umar ibn Waasil, Abu Muhammad al-Jawayri, `Abass ibn `Isaam, Muhammad ibn al-Mundhir al-Hujaymi and others. Sahl was once asked: “Until when should a man stop recording the prophetic traditions?” He said: “Until he dies and then the remainder of his ink should be poured in his grave.” Among his wise sayings are the following: “There is no helper except Allah. There is no guide except the Messenger of Allah. There is no provision except fearful awareness of Allah. And there is no action except being patient with Allah.” He also said: “The ignorant person is dead. The forgetful person is asleep. The disobedient person is drunk. And the person persistent in sin is destroyed.” He also said: “Among the characteristics of the Champions of Truth is that: they do not swear by Allah; they do not slander others; they do not allow others to be slandered with them; they never eat their full; when they make a promise they do not break it; and they never joke around.” Among Sahl’s sayings regarding the merits of hunger is: “Hunger is a secret of Allah on earth, which He only deposits with those who do not display it.” What he means here is that the benefits and advantages of hunger are a secret which Allah withholds from everyone except those who conceal their hunger from other the people. He died in the month of *Muharram* in the year 283 A.H. at the age of 80 years.

²⁰ The *abdaal* or *budalaa* (the substitutes) are seven Muslim sages, some say thirty, while some say forty. Among their unique characteristics is that when anyone of them travels from their place a body resembling their form is substituted in their place so that no one will know that they had left. This is the original meaning of the expression ‘substitute’ (*badal*). Some of the *awliyya* say that the expression is a comprehensive term which also embraces those who have mastered the science of substituting blameworthy attributes with praiseworthy attributes. The *Abdaal* are spiritually upon the heart of Ibrahim, upon him be peace; and in every age their numbers do not increase or decrease. The function of their spiritual station is to manifest the ultimate sphere by the tongue of vastness in supplications; as *Shaykh* Muhy’-d-Deen Abd’l-Qaadir transmitted in his *Hizb’l-Kabeer* and others; or as *Shaykh* Abu’l-Hassan as-Shadhili transmitted in his *Hizb’l-Bahr* and others; or as *Shaykh* Abdullahi ibn Fuduye` transmitted in his *Wird’l-Adhkaar*; or as the author himself transmitted in his renown *Munaajaat*. All of these sages were among the *Abdaal* and posited the secret of their stations in the above mentioned supplications. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “The *budalaa* are forty sages...Each time one of them dies Allah substitutes in his place another sage. When the Affair comes, the souls of all of them will be seized. It is at that moment that the Hour will be established.”

²¹ Clearly here the author indicates that the entire spiritual path and all the virtues, spiritual stations, knowledge and unveiling which result from it is comprised in hunger and decreasing consumption;

He said:

مَنْ جُوعٌ نَفْسَهُ أَنْقَطَعَتْ عَنْهُ الْوَسْوَاسُ

“Whoever makes his *nafs* hungry has cut it off from satanic whisperings.” He said:

اقْبَالَ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْعَبْدِ بِالْجُوعِ وَالسَّقَمِ وَالْبَلَاءِ

“Allah accepts the actions of the servant by means of his hunger, sickness and affliction.” He said:

أَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ هَذَا الزَّمَانَ لَا يُنَالُ أَحَدٌ فِيهِ النَّجَاةَ إِلَّا بِذَبْحِ نَفْسِهِ وَقَتْلِهَا بِالْجُوعِ وَالصَّبْرِ وَالْجِهَادِ

“Realize that in these times no one can obtain salvation except by slaughtering his *nafs* and killing it by means of hunger, patience and spiritual struggle.” He said:

مَا مَرَّ عَلَى وَجْهِ الْأَرْضِ أَحَدٌ شَرِبَ مِنْ هَذَا الْمَاءِ حَتَّى رَوَى فِلسَمٍ مِنَ الْمَعْصِيَةِ وَإِنْ شَمَرَ اللَّهُ،

فَكَيْفَ وَشَبَعَ مِنَ الطَّعَامِ؟

“There has not passed across the face of this earth one who has drank from this cold water and then remained safe from disobedience,²² even when he is grateful to Allah. So how is it with one who fills himself with food?”

Abd’l-Wahid ibn Zayd²³ swore by Allah.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَا صَفَّى أَحَدًا إِلَّا بِالْجُوعِ وَلَا مَشَى الْأَوْلِيَاءُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ إِلَّا بِالْجُوعِ وَلَا طَوَيْتَ لَهُمُ

الْأَرْضَ إِلَّا بِالْجُوعِ وَلَا وَأَلْهَمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْجُوعِ

“Truly Allah does not purify anyone except by means of their hunger. Truly the protected friends of Allah do not walk upon water except by means of their hunger. The earth is not rolled up for them except by means of their hunger. Allah has not made them His protected friends except by means of their hunger.”²⁴

while every evil in the heavens and the earth emerge from consumption and consumerism. It is for this reason that consumption and being enslaved by the need to consume is considered by some of the *awliyya* to be a form of idolatry and polytheism. Consumerism is the common denominator which unifies the entire global community regardless if the individual nation claims to be ‘judeo-christian’, ‘socialist’, ‘communist’, ‘islamic’, ‘jewish’, ‘democratic’ or ‘secular’. The one strain that interconnects these global communities is the religion of consumerism, consumption and being enslaved to the production process. It is the sole cause of social competition, social envy, class arrogance, crime, international political and economic crisis.

²² Here ends folio 3 after 18 lines of colophon.

²³ He was Abu `Ubayda Abd’l-Wahid ibn Zayd al-Basri. He was a spiritual exemplar, ascetic and the *Shaykh* of those dedicated to worship. His spiritual perfection was magnificent. Misma`u ibn `Aasim said: “I once was present in a lecture given by Abd’l-Wahid which was so influential in the heart that four men died in his assembly.” He is reported to have said: “You should consume bread with a little salt because it gets rid of fat in the body totally; and it increases certainty.” For forty years Abd’l-Wahid prayed the *subh* prayer with the ablution he made for *isha* prayer. He died in the year 150 A.H..

²⁴ Here the author indicates that purification (*safaa*) of the character from blameworthy traits; and purifying the heart of destructive qualities comes about as a result of fasting and decreasing consumption. This spiritual transformation is considered by the elite of the *awliyya* to be the greatest miracle; because it comprises breaking the habits of the lower self and transforming the habitual nature. One of the sages once said: “If you want to see miracles then work miracles in your self.” Another said: “If you desire the breaking of natural laws, then break your own natural habits.” He also indicates that the outward miracles such as walking on water, flying, cutting across great distances of the earth in a moment, (which most *awliyya* consider insignificant miracles, because the malevolent *jinn* and certain animals share in these abilities); also result from decreasing consumption and hunger. In fact, the station of protected friendship with Allah (*wilaayat*) is arrived at and maintained by means of hunger and decreasing consumption. The son of the author, the perfected sage *Shaykh* Muhammad Sanbu ibn

An Explanation of the Merits of Hunger and the Destruction of Satiety

Perhaps you may say there is an immense bounty in hunger, but what is its origin and what is its causative factor? Realize that in hunger are ten advantages.

The first advantage: is hunger causes the purity of the heart (*safa' 'l-qalb*) and provides penetrating inner-vision (*nafaadh 'l-baseera*), while satiety produces stupidity (*balaada*) and blindness of the heart (*`amaa 'l-qalb*).

The second advantage: is hunger induces gentleness of heart (*riqqat 'l-qalb*), it produces a type of clarity which makes the heart prepared for the perception of the delights of intimate conversation with Allah (*idraak ladhat 'l-munaajaat*) and prepares the heart for the effects of remembrance of Allah (*at-taatheer bi'dhikr*).

Abu Sulayman once said:

أحلى ما تكون العبادة عليّ إذا الصق بطني بظهري

“The sweetest form of worship occurs when my stomach is so empty that it reaches the back.”²⁵

He also said:

القلب إذا جاع وعطش صفاً ورقاً وإذا شبع عمى وبأدا

“The heart becomes purified and gentle as a result of hunger and thirst. It becomes blind and dissipates as a result of satiety.”

The third advantage: is hunger produces remorse (*inkisaar*), humility, (*ad-dhill*) and the reduction of the size of the stomach (*zawaal 'l-batan*). In the absence of hunger it produces an evil which instigates rebellion (*tughyaan*) and heedlessness of Allah ta`ala (*ghafla*). Nothing makes the soul more contrite and humiliates it more than hunger. When hunger occurs the soul becomes tranquil and still for its Lord²⁶ and it becomes humble to Him.

The fourth advantage: is hunger causes a person not to forget the afflictions of Allah and His punishment; and he does not forget the people who are afflicted with hardships. Satiety, on the other hand, makes a person forget about those who are hungry. Hunger causes a person to be reminded of the afflictions of the Hereafter. His

Shehu Uthman ibn Fuduye` who had attained the highest ranks among the Champions of Truth would go forty days without eating or drinking, and there were no signs of weakness or debility in him as he would carry on fulfilling the daily rights for his family, and dependents. His chief disciple *Shaykh* Abd'l-Qadir ibn Mustafa said that Allah ta`ala has unveiled to him the mysteries of the Guarded Tablet and innumerable secrets from the world of the Unseen as a result of his fasting habits. The master of our master, *Shaykh* al-Habib Abdullahi ibn Abi Bakr al-`Aydaruus said in his *al-Kibreet'l-Ahmar*: “The *shaykhs* of *tasawwuf* are agreed that their affair is built upon: decrease of food; the decrease of speech; the decrease in sleep and solitude from people.”

²⁵ This is because fasting is purely for Allah ta`ala and He rewards it directly from Himself, as it has been related by *Imam* Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayra that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said that Allah *azza wa jalla* said: “Every action of the son of Adam is for him except fasting, it is for Me. I am the One who reward for it. Fasting is a protection. When one of you is fasting he should not behave obscenely nor go into a rage. For when someone curses him or fights him, he should say: ‘I am fasting’. I swear by the One in whose Hand is the sole of Muhammad, the unpleasant smell from the mouth of the one fasting will be more pleasant to Allah on the Day of Judgment than the fragrance of musk. The one fasting will have two joys: when he breaks his fast he will be joyous with his eating, and when he meets his Lord, he will be joyous with his fasting.” The meeting with Allah ta`ala on the Day of Judgment does not negate or preclude the meeting and encounter with Allah through spiritual unveiling and gnosis. It is this recompense and ‘sweetness’ that *Shaykh* Abu Sulayman indicates in the above statement.

²⁶ Here ends folio 4 after 18 lines colophon.

thirst reminds him of the severe thirst that people will suffer at the plains of the Day of Judgment. His hunger makes him remember the hunger which the people of the Fire will suffer until their hunger will induce them to eat from the accursed tree of *Zaquum* and blazing coals (*dareem*) and to drink from dark murky mire (*ghusaaq*) and vile drink (*maheen*). This remembrance is the initial reason that Allah has decreed affliction to touch the Prophets and the *awliyya* (the protected friends).

The fifth advantage: is considered the most important advantage. It is that hunger shatters the appetite for disobedience completely (*kasara shahawaat 'l-ma'aasi*); and it conquers the soul that commands to evil (*istilaa'u 'n-nafs 'l-amaara bi's-suu*). This is because the origin of all acts of disobedience (*mansha 'l-ma'aasi*) is corrupt passions (*as-shahawaat*).

The Mother of the Believers, A'isha, may Allah be pleased with her²⁷ said:

أول بدعة حدثت بعد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الشبع

“The first heretical innovation (*bid'a*) which occurred after the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace was satiety.”²⁸

The sixth advantage: is that hunger helps ward of sleep (*dafa` an-nawm*) and causes a person to be persistent in wakefulness (*dawaam 's-sahar*). This is because whoever drinks a lot, it induces excessive sleep. It is for this reason that one of the *shaykhs* once said to a group of his disciples:

يا معاشرۃ المریدین لا تأکلوا کثیرا وتشرّبوا کثیرا وترقدوا کثیرا وتحسی کثیرا

“O assembly of seekers! Do not eat a lot or you will drink a lot. This will induce you to sleep a lot. This will in turn induce you to forfeit a lot.”

At least seventy of the Champions of Truth (*siddiqeen*) have agreed that too much sleep is the result of too much drink.

The seventh advantage: is that it assist a person in being unrelenting in worship of Allah ta'ala (*al-mawaadhibat `ala 'l-'ibaada*). Eating much prevents much worship.

²⁷ She was the Mother of the Believers, A'isha, the daughter of the *Imam*, the great Champion of Truth and *Khalifa* of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, Abu Bakr Abdallah ibn Abu Qahafa Uthman ibn Umar ibn `Amr ibn Ka'b ibn Sa'd ibn Tayim of the tribe of Quraysh, the clan of Taymi and born in Mecca. She was the wife of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace and was unanimously the most learned and jurisprudential women of the Islamic *Umma*. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “Half of the religion is from A'isha.” She had memorized more than 1,210 prophetic traditions. Of these, al-Bukhari and Muslim both agreed upon the veracity of 174 A.H...

²⁸ What is amazing about this narration from the Mother of the Believers, may Allah be pleased with her is that, just as consumption was the initial cause of the fall of our parents Adam and Hawa from Paradise; likewise over consumption was the first heretical innovation to emerge after the passing of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. She described over consumption as a heretical innovation to indicate that decreasing consumption of food and drink is apart of the essence of the Living *Sunna*.

Abu Sulayman ad-Darani indicated that there were six destructive traits because of satiety when he said:

من شبع دخل عليه ست أفات: فقد حلاوة العبادة، وتغذر حفظ الحكمة وحرمان الشفقة على الخلق أنه إذا شبع ظن الخلق كلهم شباعا وثقل العبادة وزيادة الشهوات وإن سائر المؤمنين يدورون حول المساجد والشابع يدورون حول المزابل

“There are six drawbacks that results from satiety.²⁹ [1] It results in the loss of the sweetness of worship. [2] It results in the impossibility of preserving divine wisdom. [3] It results in the hindrance in having compassion for people because when a person is full he considers that every person is full as well. [4] It results in aggravation during worship. [5] It results in the increase of corrupt desires. [6] It results in the remainder of the believers frequenting the places of worship while the person with a full stomach frequenting the toilet.”

The eighth advantage: is that decreased eating leads to a healthy physiognomy (*sihhat'l-badan*). Once the saying of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace: “A third of the stomach should be for food. A third should be for drink. And a third should be for air.” – was mentioned to one of the People of the Book. He became amazed at these words and said:

ما سمعتُ كلام في قلة أحكم من هذا فإنه من كلام حكيم

“I have not heard any words which are so few but possess as much wisdom that these. They are words of medicinal wisdom.”

The ninth advantage is that hunger helps reduce financial expenditure (*khiffat'l-ma`uuna*). This is because whoever is used to eating little, it will suffice him to have a modest income. While the one who is accustomed to eating his fill, his stomach will become like a debtor that every day demands: ‘What will you eat today?’ Thus, he will be compelled to enter into all sorts of pursuits. In sum, the causative factor behind people being destroyed lies in their avarice for worldly things. The causative factor behind their avarice for worldly things is due to their desire for food and sexual desire. In eating less, it closes all these doors. These doors are the doors to Hell. By closing these doors, the doors to Paradise are opened.

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said:

((أديموا قرع باب الجنة بالجوع))

“Persist in knocking on the door of Paradise by means of hunger.”³⁰ Thus, whoever is satisfied with a single loaf of bread each day will be satisfied in the remainder of his desires as well.³¹ He will thereafter be a freeman, independent of people, free of burden and uninhibited to worship Allah. He will join those about whom Allah ta`ala says:

{رَجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ}

“Men whom neither business nor trade distracts them from the remembrance from Allah.”³²

²⁹ Here ends folio 5 after 18 lines colophon.

³⁰ *Imam al-Iraqi* said that this prophetic tradition has no source for it and that it was actually said to Ai`sha, may Allah be pleased with her: ‘Persist in knocking on the door of Paradise.’ She then said: “With what?” He said: “With hunger.”

³¹ Here ends folio 6 after 19 lines of colophon.

³² *Qur'an/ Nuur- 24: 37.*

The tenth advantage is that hunger causes a person to be firmly established in the virtue of self-sacrifice and giving his surplus food in charity to the orphans and those destitute. Consequently, he will be among those who will be shaded by his charity on the Day of Judgment as it has been related in the traditions. Once the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace looked upon a man with an overweight stomach and pointed to his stomach with his fingers and said:

((لو كان هذا في غير هذا يكون خيرا لك))

“If this was elsewhere it would have been better for you.”³³ That is, if you had sent it forward for your Hereafter and used it to put forward others before your self.

It was related on the authority of al-Hassan,³⁴ who said:

³³ This prophetic tradition was related by Ahmad ibn Hanbal and at-Tabarani on the authority of Ja`dat who said that a man once saw the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace in his dream; so he, upon him be peace sent for him to relate his story. When he came he had a huge stomach. The Prophet, upon him be peace then pointed at his stomach and said the above mentioned prophetic tradition. According to the scholars of the *Sunna*, as the author cited, the prophetic tradition is an admonishment of obesity, and being fat. It also shows the compassion of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace in giving advice by speaking indirectly and referring to the stomach and what it contained as: “If this was elsewhere...”. This was the custom of the Prophet may Allah bless him and grant him peace to advise with mercy, compassion and leniency.

³⁴ He was Abu Sa`id al-Hassan ibn Abi'l-Hassan Yasaar al-Basri, may Allah be pleased with him. He was the freedman of Zayd ibn Thabit al-Ansari. His father, Yasaar was among those made captive in the battles against Maysan. He resided in Medina, was freed and married woman by the name of Khayra there during the reign of Umar ibn al-Khataab. It was during the two years prior to the death of Umar, that he and his wife gave birth to al-Hassan, may Allah be merciful to him. Umm Salama used to send the mother of al-Hassan to take care of some needs, and he would cry because he was still an infant. Umm Salama would then allow al-Hassan to feed from her breast. She would also bring him out to the Companions of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace when he was young, who would supplicate for him. She once brought him out to Umar and he made supplications for him saying: ‘O Allah give him understanding in the religion, and make him beloved to people.’ Hurayth ibn as-Sa`ib said that al-Hassan said to him: ‘I used to enter the houses of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace during the reign of Uthman. I used to touch the walls with my two hands, at a time when I was a young boy who had attained the age of responsibility.’ He participated in many *jihad* campaigns and was appointed to the role of chancellery and scribe under the ar-Rabi`a ibn Ziyad in Khurasan. He was the master of the people of his time in knowledge and action. Mu`atamar ibn Sulayman said: “My father once said to me: ‘Al-Hassan was the *Shaykh* of the people of Basra’.” Sulayman al-Tayyimi said: “Al-Hassan was all inclusive and comprehensive. He was learned, elevated, jurisprudential, reliable, sound, trustworthy, worshipping, ascetic. He possessed much knowledge, was eloquent, handsome, and eye-catching.” As-Sarra ibn Yahya said: “Al-Hassan used to fast the days that the moon was white, the sacred months and every Monday and Thursday.” Abu Sa`id ibn al-Arabi said: “Those who generally wanted to learn about asceticism and being solitary from people would go to al-Hassan and listen to his teachings... He has a special assembly in his home in which he would only discuss in it the teachings of asceticism, solitude and the sciences of the inward. If anyone asked him a question outside of this, he would become annoyed and say: ‘We have secluded ourselves with our brothers in order to give mutual reminder’. As for his assemblies in the masjid, he would teach about the prophetic traditions, jurisprudence, the sciences of the *Qur`an*, linguistics, and the remainder of the sciences. Sometimes he would be asked about an aspect of spiritual purification (*tasawwuf*) and he would answer.” Awfa said: “I never saw a man more knowledge of the Path to Paradise than al-Hassan.” Qatada once said: “There was no person who was more perfect in his manliness than al-Hassan.” He also said: “The earth will never be void seven individuals, by whom the people of the earth attain their rain and by whom they are defended. I have always considered al-Hassan to be one of the seven.” Abu Ja`far Muhammad al-Baqir once said: “That is a person whose speech most resembles that of the speech of the Prophets” He once said regarding the words of Allah: “*Have you not seen those who have taken their passions as their deity?*” This refers to the hypocrite who does not crave after any wrong thing except that he commits it.” He also said: “The

والله لقد أدرکنا أقواما لکان الرجل منهم یمسو وعنده من الطعام ما یکفیه ولو شاء لأکله کله،
فیقول والله لا أجعل هذا کله فی بطني حتی أجعل بعضه لله

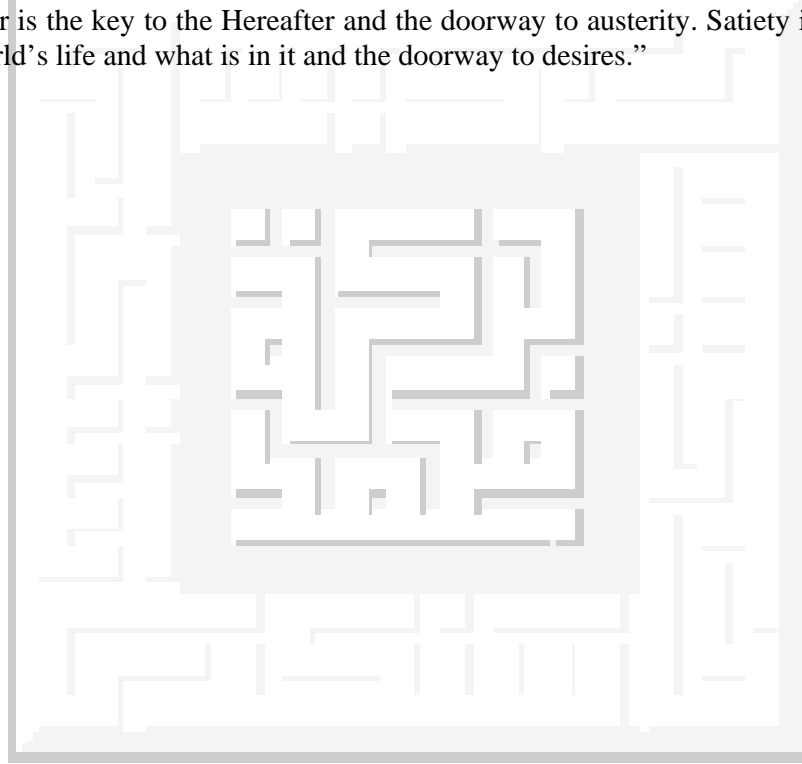
“I swear by Allah I have encountered people among whom were men that when evening came had enough food which would suffice them and if they liked could have eaten all of it. However, they would say instead: ‘By Allah, I shall not give this all to my belly until I have given some of it for the sake of Allah.’”

These ten are the advantages of hunger. Under each are subsumed innumerable other advantages. For hunger is a tremendous treasure with regard to the advantages of the Hereafter.

It is for this reason that one of the *Salaf* said:

الجوع مفتاح الأخرة وباب الزهد والشبع مفتاح الدنا وما فیها وباب الرغبة

“Hunger is the key to the Hereafter and the doorway to austerity. Satiety is the key to this world’s life and what is in it and the doorway to desires.”



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hypocrite is the one who say to himself: ‘The greater part of the people are many, and I will eventually be forgiven, so there is no harm against me.’ Thus he commits evil actions and entertains false hope regarding Allah.” Al-`Awwam ibn Hawshab said: “Al-Hassan only resembled the Prophet.” He died in the first part of the month of *Rajab* in the year 88 A.H.

An Explanation of the Path of Spiritual Training by Breaking the Passions of the Stomach

Realize that the spiritual disciple³⁵ has four ranks with regard to his stomach and what he consumes.

The First Rank

The first rank is that he only eats that which is permissible (*halaal*), for worship done while eating that which is forbidden is like building structure upon the waves of the sea. There remain three perspectives, which are specific to eating. One should estimate the quantity of food one eats, whether great or small. One should estimate the time it takes to eat, whether slow, or fast. One should designate the type of food for both satisfaction and avoiding.

The Second Rank

As for the second rank in reducing the intake of food, the way of training oneself is by means of gradualness. Whoever is accustomed to eating much and suddenly changes to eating a little, his constitution will not be able to sustain it due to the considerable hardship it will cause. It is necessary, therefore to gradually proceed a little at a time. This is by reducing his customary amount of food little by little. If he, for example, eats two loaves of bread and he desires to restrict himself to one loaf, then he should divide the two loaves into thirty parts. In addition, by eating one less part a day he can be able to eat one loaf of bread a day at the end of the month without harm or noticeable effect. If he likes he can do this by means of a scale or through his own estimation.

This method has four degrees. The highest is when one forces himself to the amount of food sufficient for the subsistence which without he could not persist. Sahl ibn Abdullah, who chose this degree said:

استعبد الله الخلق بثلاثة بالحياة والعقل والقوة، فإن خاف العبد على إثنين وهو الحياة والعقل
أكل وأفطر وإن كان صائما، وإن لم يخف عليهما بل على القوة ينبغي أن لا يبالي ولو ضعف
حتى صلا قاعد، وروى إن الصلاة قاعدا مع ضعف الجوع أفضل من صلاته قائما مع قوة
أكل

“Allah has made people worship Him through three things: through life; through reason; and through strength. When the servant fears for the two, which are his life and reason, he will eat and break his fast if he was fasting. If he does not fear for³⁶ these two, but rather fears for his strength, he should pay no heed even if he became weak to the point of making his prayer sitting. For it has been narrated in a prophetic tradition that the prayer performed while sitting and being hungry is better than praying standing with one’s strength from eating too much.

The second degree is when one forces oneself by means of training to eat only a *mudd* daily, which is a one loaf and a half of bread. For most people this is approximately one third of the stomach to almost another third. There then remains the last third as mentioned by the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant

³⁵ Here ends folio 7 after 18 lines of colophon.

³⁶ Here ends folio 8 after 18 lines of colophon.

him peace. Such was the custom of Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, who used to eat seven or nine morsels of food daily.

The third degree is when one forces oneself to reduce the quantity of food to one *mudd*, which is two and a half loaves. For most people this is in excess of a third of the stomach and is nearly two-thirds. There only remains a third left for drink and nothing for the remembrance of Allah. In certain prophetic narrations the words, "...and a third for remembrance", is substituted for the words, "...and a third for the breadth."

The fourth degree is to exceed a *mudd*, beyond, which resembles overindulgence and violates the saying of Allah ta`ala:

{وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا}

"And do not be extravagant."³⁷ This applies to most people, since the quantity of the need for food varies based upon one's individuality, age, and the profession which one is preoccupied with.

Here we will mention a fifth way, which may not be endured,³⁸ however it nevertheless constitutes an error. It consists in only eating when one is truly hungry and restraining one's hand during mere gluttony. In most cases, however, a person who has not set a limit for himself of one or two loaves is unable to truly know when genuine hunger resembles deceptive appetites. People have described genuine hunger and its signs. The first is that the soul does not desire some fatty ingredient with bread, but rather eats bread alone, whatever its form, with appetite. For whenever the soul desires to eat a particular kind of bread or it desires some fatty ingredient with it, this is not genuine hunger. It has been said that one of its signs is that when one spits, no flies gather on the spittle because it does not contain any residual oils or fatty substances. This is a proof that the stomach is empty. The realization of this in its entirety is very difficult; therefore, the disciple should determine a quantity for his soul, which will not weaken him from the worship of Allah, which will occur with the reverse. It should be a limit that he stops at when he reaches it even when his appetite persists.

Overall, it is not possible to truly determine the correct amount of food due to the differences of people spiritual states and individual constitutions. Certainly, the sustenance of many among the Companions was a mere *Sa`a* (about ten loaves of bread per week). Thus, they ate a half of a *mudd* every day, which conforms to what we mentioned concerning the quantity for a third of the stomach.

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³⁷ *Quran/ al-Anaam* – 6: 141.

³⁸ Here ends folio 9 after 18 lines of colophon.

Abu Dharr, may Allah be pleased with him³⁹ said:

طعامي في كل جمعة صاعا مشعير على عهد رسول الله والله لا أزيد عليه عليه حتى القاه
فإني سمعتُ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: ((أقربكم مني مجلسا وأحبكم إليّ من مات
على هو عليه اليوم))

“My food consists of a *sa`a* of barley every week in accordance with the custom of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Moreover, by Allah, I will not exceed that until I meet him again.⁴⁰ For verily I heard the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace say: “The nearest of you to me and the most beloved of you to me will be those who die in the state that he is in today.”

Abu Dharr, may Allah be pleased with him used to also say, admonishing some of his Companions:

قد غيرتم وخبزتم المرقق واختلف عليكم بأنواع الطعام ولم تكونوا في عهد رسول الله صلى
الله عليه وسلم

“You have changed. You now sift your barley flour, make fine bread and now eat a variety of dishes. You did not do this during the time of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.”

³⁹ He was Abu Dharr Jundub ibn Junada ibn Sufyan ibn `Ubayd ibn Haraam ibn Ghifaar ibn Mulayl ibn Damra ibn Bakri ibn Mudlag ibn Murra ibn Abdu Manaat ibn Kinana. He was among the *nujaba* of the Companions of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace and the fourth person to accept Islam, returned to his people who accepted Islam at his hands; and came to Medina after the *hijra*, adhered to and fought side by side with the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Abu Ma`shar as-Sindi said: “In the days of *jaahiliyya* Abu Dharr was a monotheist who never worshipped idols.” He was exceedingly brave, and would single handedly seize caravans before Allah entered Islam into his heart. After he accepted Islam he would seize the caravans of the idolaters and only returned the goods of those who recognized the oneness of Allah and the messenger-ship of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. He gave legal decisions during the time of Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman. He was very dark skinned, huge, stout with a thick beard. He was a leader in the realm of austerity, truthfulness, knowledge, and actions. He spoke the truth regardless of the cost and did not fear regarding Allah the criticism of the critic. He was present when Umar conquered *Bayt`l-Ma`qdas* in Jerusalem. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “May Allah be merciful to Abu Dharr. He came alone; he will die alone; and he will be resurrected alone.” Eventually Abu Dharr was exiled to Rabadha, and when death approached he gave his last testament to his wife and servant saying: ‘When I die you two should wash my body, wrap me in the burial cloth and place me on the road. The first riders to come along say to them: ‘This is Abu Dharr.’ When he died they did what he had ordered. Then there appeared some riders who almost passed him, among them was Abdallah ibn Mas`ud in a caravan of the people of Kufa. He said: “What is this?” It was said: ‘It is the deceased remains of Abu Dharr.’ Then Ibn Mas`ud suddenly began to weep and said: ‘Indeed the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace spoke the truth when he said: ‘May Allah be merciful to Abu Dharr. He came alone; will die alone and will be resurrected alone.’ He then dismounted and took care of the remains himself until it was properly buried.’ He died in the month of *Dhu`k-Hijja* in the year 32 A.H.

⁴⁰ Here ends folio 10 after 18 lines of colophon.

The daily sustenance of the People of the *Suffah* was a *mudd* of dates, which was shared between two of them.⁴¹ Al-Hassan used to say:

المؤمن يكفيه الكف من الخشب والقبضة من السويق والجرعة من الماء، والمنافق يأكل

ويشرب بلغا بلغا لا يطوى بطنه لجاره ولا يورث أخاه بفضله

“What will suffice a believer is a handful of dry dates (*al-khashab*), a fistful of parched barley (*as-saweeq*) and a single guzzle of water (*al-jur`a mina`l-maa`*). While the hypocrite eats and drinks again and again, not restraining his stomach for his neighbor’s sake and not preferring his brother to himself in his surplus food.”

Sahl ibn Abdullah said:

لو كانت الدنيا دما لكان قوة المؤمن منها حلالا

“If the world were made of blood, still the daily sustenance of the believer would be permissible.” That is to say, the believer eats when it is necessary and only enough to maintain his constitution.”

The Third Rank

The third rank concerns the time of consumption and the extent to which it should be delayed to maintain the constitution. This also has been arranged into four degrees.

The highest degree is that one should go three days or more without food. Some disciples who desire to discipline their souls make continual fast (*at-ta`y*), rather than restricting the amount of food, until they went without food continually for thirty to forty days. There were many among the notable scholars who practiced this. Among them were Sahl⁴² ibn Abdullah, Abd`r-Rahman ibn Ibrahim, Ibrahim at-Tamimi, and Sulayman al-Khawwaas. Abu Bakr as-Sadiq, may Allah be pleased with him in the beginning of his affair would go without eating for six days on end. Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr used to go continuously without eating for seven days. All this they did in order that hunger might assist them along the way of the Hereafter.

One of the scholars said:

من يطوي أربعين يوما من الطعام ظهرت قدرة الملكوت أي كوشف ببعض الأسرار الإلهية

“Whoever goes continually without eating food for forty days will have discernible to him a measure of the unseen kingdoms (*al-malakuut*), that is, some of the divine secrets will be unveiled to him.”⁴³

⁴¹ The *Suffah* was a place of shade within the *masjid* of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace where the destitute and poor would sit. The People of the *Suffah* were according to the prophetic tradition: “The destitute among the emigrants.” As well as the poor and destitute who were not from among the *Muhajirun* who take their residence in the shade of the *masjid*. They were, thus a mixed group from diverse ethnicities who were considered by some as the dredges and out cast of the society and its plebeians.

⁴² Here ends folio 11 after 17 lines of colophon.

⁴³ The reason behind the composition of the text was a request made by Muhammad Sanbu to his father to elucidate the methodology of disciplining the soul by means of hunger. It is the above mentioned transmission that lay at the foundation for the spiritual Path followed by *Shaykh* Muhammad Sanbu ibn *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye`. *Shaykh* Abd`l-Qadir ibn Mustafa said in his *Salwat`l-Ikhwaan*: “He was disciplined by the hand of divine assistance when he was young until there dawned upon him the gleams of illumination at the beginning of his mature years. For he took the light of the Lord of Truth to His presence as his guide until harvest of sainthood yielded to him in humiliation. The spiritual state of this master was initially in concealment and in not manifesting the limits of the divine realities, until his spiritual state became immense, his illumination increased and his secrets broke out and his affair

It was narrated that one of the people of this group once passed by a Christian monk who reminded him of his own spiritual state. As a result, he wanted this monk to accept Islam and leave the deception that he was in. He spoke with him for some time until the monk said to him that the Messiah once went forty days continuous without eating or drinking and that this was a miracle, which could only proceed from a Prophet. The Sufi said to him: "If I were to fast for fifty days would you then leave what you are on, enter the religion of Islam, realizing it to be the truth and that you were on falsehood?" He responded: "Indeed." Therefore, he sat down and did not leave his sight until fifty days had passed without him eating any food or drink. He then said: "I will exceed this amount also." He then went continuous without food or drink until he reached sixty days. The monk was astonished at this and said: "I never⁴⁴ considered anyone could exceed the Messiah." That was the cause of his acceptance of Islam. This is an exalted degree of discipline which few are able to attain.

The second degree is to go continuously without eating or drinking for two to three days. This is not unnatural; rather it is attainable and can be reached by means of effort and strenuous struggle.

The third degree, which is the lowest, is to restrict oneself to one meal in the day and night. This is the least one should do and everything beyond it constitutes extravagance and persistence in satiety until he never experiences hunger. This is the state of those who live in luxury (*al-mutrafeen*) and is far from the path of the *Sunna*. It has been related on the authority of Abu Sa`id al-Khudri⁴⁵ that when the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace would eat during the daytime, he would not eat at night. When he ate at nighttime, he would not eat during the day. It is reported that the *Salaf* only ate one meal per day. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace once said to A`isha, may Allah be pleased with her:

((إياك والإسراف فإن أكلتين في يوم من السرف))

"Beware of excessiveness, for eating two meals a day is apart of excessiveness."⁴⁶

became manifest to the spiritually elite as well as the common people. Among the specific outstanding merits that occurred to me from him was that I never encountered him except that my spiritual resolution was increased...He was an immense ocean from which poured oceans, rivers, rivulets...The spiritual station of this master in sainthood was a station which was only appropriate for one who attained it. He had reached the highest limit in spiritual struggle and discipline. He would go for forty days straight without eating or drinking, but with that his natural strength would not dissipate. On the contrary, he would go and come taking care of the expenditure of his dependents...He would carry his commodities to the market to sell, and then return carrying goods back to his home. His austerity and personal piety reached an elevated rank. The most of this worship consisted of sleeplessness, hunger and doing remembrance of Allah secretly by means of his heart, but not in superogatory acts of worship, nor in litanies. Along with that he was among the People of fixed spiritual station."

⁴⁴ Here ends folio 12 after 17 lines of colophon.

⁴⁵ He was **Abu Sa`id Sa`d ibn Malik** ibn Sinaan ibn Tha`laba ibn `Ubayd ibn al-Abjar ibn `Awf ibn al-Harith ibn al-Khazraj **al-Khudri**. He was a prominent leader among the Companions of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, a military commander as well as a *mufti* of the city of Medina. He was present in the Battle of the Trench, the 'Oath of Fealty', and was among the jurist who exercised independent judgment (*ijtihaad*). Handhala ibn Abu Sufyan narrated on the authority of his teachers: "That there was no one during the time of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace who was more knowledgeable than Abu Sa`id al-Khudri." Baqi ibn Mukhlad narrated in his *Musnad`l-Kabeer*: "Abu Sa`id al-Khudri collected about 1170 prophetic traditions." He died in the year 74 of the *hijra*.

⁴⁶ This prophetic tradition was related by ad-Daylami and Abu Nu`aym. In the narration of ad-Daylami that A`isha said: "Once the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace saw that I had eaten twice during the day and he said: 'O A`isha! Do you wish that your stomach will preoccupy

Whoever is able to reduce his meals to once per day, it is highly recommended for him to eat it during the predawn hours. That is, he should eat it after he has performed his night prayers (*at-tahajjud*). In this way, he will be hungry during the day while he fasts and during the night while he stands in prayer. Consequently, his soul will be reconciled to a known mealtime and will not struggle against him before its proper time.

If the heart of the person fasting craves⁴⁷ for food after the *maghrib* prayer to the extent that his heart becomes too distracted during the night prayers, then it is best that he divide his food into two. If, for example, his normal intake of food consists of two loaves, he should take one loaf when breaking the fast (*inda al-fitra*) and one loaf during the predawn hours (*inda as-sahr*). This is in order to make his soul tranquil and keep his body light for the night prayers (*at-tahajjud*). Likewise, he will not suffer excessive hunger during the day because of the predawn breakfast. Thus, the first loaf helps him stand during the night prayers and the second loaf assists him in the fasting.

There is no harm for whoever fast one day and eats the next day, that he eat during the *dhuhr* time in the day he is not fasting, and during the predawn time (*as-sahr*) on the day he is fasting. As a consequence, this is the way to schedule one's eating habits, whether by approximation or abstention.

The Fourth Rank

The fourth rank concerns the variety of foods one eats and by avoiding fatty ingredients. The custom of the spiritual traveler on the path of the Hereafter (*saalik tareeq 'l-akhira*) is to always renounce fatty ingredients, rather he should renounce all appetites, for each delicious thing that a man desires and eats leaves behind it a vanity (*battran*) in the soul and a hardness (*qaswa*) in the heart. Thus, any pleasurable appetite for the delights of this world's life emerges in the heart and he grows fond of it and hates death and the final meeting with Allah. Consequently, this world's life becomes like Paradise to him and death becomes to him like a prison. However, when he prevents his soul from indulging in its appetites and restrains it, and forbids it to partake⁴⁸ in the delights of this world's life, then it becomes like a prison to him and death becomes a liberation from it. Yahya ibn Mu`adh⁴⁹ indicated this when he said:

يا معشر الصديقين جوعوا أنفسكم لوليمة الفردوس فإن شهوة الطعام على قدر جوع النفس
“O company of the champions of Truth! Make yourselves hungry in order to partake of the banquet of *Firdaus*, for the passion for food is in proportion to one's causing oneself to hunger.”

you? Eating twice in one day is from extravagance, and Allah does not love those who are extravagant.”

⁴⁷ Here ends folio 13 after 18 lines of colophon.

⁴⁸ Here ends folio 14 after 18 lines of colophon.

⁴⁹ He was Yahya ibn Mu`adh ar-Razi al-Waa`idh. He was among the most notable of the teachers who was renown for his excellent speech and famous sermons. Among his most famous statements: The spiritual ranks are seven: [1] repentance; then [2] austerity; then [3] contentment; then [4] fear; then [5] passionate yearning; then [6] love; and then [7] direct experiential knowledge.

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said:

((شرار أمتي الذين غدوا بالنعيم ونبئت عليه أجسامهم، إنما همتهم ألوان الطعام وأنواع اللباس
يشتدقون بالكلام))

“The most evil of my community will be those who are nourished on luxuries, so that their bodies are developed from it. Their sole concern will be for various kinds of foods and attire and they will affect eloquence in their speech.”⁵⁰

The *Salaf* showed great fear of eating delicious foods because they considered it to be among the signs of misfortune (*‘alaamaat ‘s-shaqaawah*), to the extent that it was narrated that Wahab ibn Manabah⁵¹ said: “Two Angels met in the fourth heaven. One of them said to the other: ‘Where have you come from?’ He replied: ‘I commanded a fish to be brought from the ocean to such-and-such a Jew, may Allah curse him, who desired it.’ The other Angel said: ‘I commanded that some oil be spilt that such-and-such servant desired.’ For this reason Umar, may Allah be pleased with him refrained from drinking cold water with honey.

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said:

إذ سددت كلب الجوع برغيف أو كوز من ماء القراح وعلى الدنيا وأهلها الدمان

“When a person’s excessive hunger is satisfied with a single loaf of bread and a glass of pure water, then destruction be upon this world and its people.”⁵² By this he was indicating that the purpose of eating is to ward off the pangs of hunger and its harm, and not to take pleasure in delights of this world’s life.

Musa al-Ashji once said:

تشتهي نفسي ملحا منذ عشرين سنة ما أكلته

“My soul has desired⁵³ the taste of salt for more than twenty years but I have never eaten it.”

⁵⁰ This prophetic tradition was related by Ibn Abi ad-Dunya and al-Bayhaqi in his *Shu`b'l-Imaan* on the authority of Fatima az-Zahra with a slightly different variant from what was cited by the author. In another narration related by Abu Ya'ala in his *Mushad*, and Ibn `Asaakir on the authority of Abu Hurayra he, upon him be blessings and peace said: “Verily the most evil of my community will be those who will be nourished on luxuries and these luxuries will germinate in their bodies..” In the variant of the same tradition related by ad-Daylami on the authority of Ibn Abass, he upon him be blessings and peace said: ‘The most of evil of my community will those who will be raised on and surrounded with luxuries; those who will consume the best of foods; and dress in the finest of attire. These are the most evil of my community in truth. And a man who flees from the unjust *Imam* is not disobedient. Rather it is the unjust *Imam* who is disobedient, since there is no obedience to a created thing in disobedience to Allah.’

⁵¹ He was Abu Abdallah Wahb ibn Munabbah ibn Kaamil ibn Seej ibn Dhi Kibaar al-Anbari al-Yemeni ad-Dimari as-Sana'i. He was a learned *Imam* in knowledge who was well versed in historical narratives and tales of the ancients. He was born during the reign of Uthman ibn Afan in the year 34 A.H.. He was among the leaders of the Second Generation of Muslims who was appointed as judge of Sana'. He was reliable and trustworthy. Al-Muthna ibn as-Sabaah said: “Wahb ibn Munabbah remained for forty years and he never denounced anything which possessed a soul. I remained for twenty years and he never made an ablution between the *‘isha* and *subh* prayers.” Wahb once said: “I have read thirty books which were revealed to thirty Prophets.” He died in the month of *Dhu'l-Hijja* in the year 113 A.H..

⁵² This prophetic tradition was related by ad-Daylami, al-Bayhaqi in his *Shu`b* and Ibn `Addiy in his *al-Kaamil* on the authority of Abu Hurayra.

⁵³ Here ends folio 15 after 19 lines of colophon.

It has been related on the authority of Ahmad ibn Khalifa who said:

نفسى منذ أربعين سنة ما تطلبت منى إلا الماء وحده حتى تروى فما رويتها

“My soul for the past forty years has desired from me only enough cold water to quench its thirst, yet I have not given it even that.”

It has been related that a person given to much worship of Allah invited one of his brothers over and served him a single loaf of bread. His brother turned the loaf over in order to choose the best part of the bread. The one given to much worship said:

مه! أي شيء تصنع أما علمت أن في الرغيف الذي رغبت أكله كذا وكذا حكمة وعمل فيه كذا وكذا صانع؟ لا يستدير الرغيف ويوضع بين يديك حتى يعمل فيه ثلاث مائة وستون صناعاً، أولهم ميكائل وآخرهم الخباز، (وإن تعدوا نعمة الله لا تحصوها)

“What are you doing? Do you not know that the part of the loaf you are rejecting contains much wisdom and that a great many forces were at work to make it? It has been related that no loaf is rounded and set before you until three hundred and sixty forces have been at work on it, the first being Mikaa’il and the last being the baker himself. “If you were to try and enumerate the bounties of Allah you could not.”⁵⁴

However, whoever is unable to avoid what he craves should at least not become heedless of his own soul and not become immersed in his corrupt passions. Sufficient as a proof of the extravagance of a person is that he eats all that he desires.

It is highly recommended for a person not to go to sleep while he is full. By doing so he will gather together two types of heedlessness: the increase of laziness and the hardening of the heart. On the contrary, he should pray or sit and engage in the remembrance of Allah ta`ala. This is nearer to gratitude based upon the prophetic tradition:

((أذبيوا طعامكم بالصلاة والذكر ولا تناموا عليه، فتقسوا قلوبكم))

“Melt away your food with prayer and remembrance of Allah, and do not sleep while you are sedated or it will harden your hearts.”⁵⁵ The least that a person should do in that case is to pray four *rak`ats* or glorify Allah at least one hundred times. Thus, when Sufyan at-Thawri⁵⁶ became sedated at night,⁵⁷ he would give life to that night with prayer.

⁵⁴ *Qur’an/ Ibrahim – 14:34.*

⁵⁵ This prophetic tradition was related by at-Tabarani in his *al-Awsat*, al-Bayhaqi in his *Shu`b’l-Imaan*, Abu Nu`aym in his *at-Tibb*, and Ibn as-Sina in his *at-Tibb* on the authority of A`isha, however using a slightly different variant from the expressions cited: “Melt away your food by means of remembrance of Allah and prayer; and do not sleep on it or your hearts will be come hardened.”

⁵⁶ He was Abu Abdallah **Sufyan at-Thawri** ibn Sa`id ibn Masruq ibn ibn Habib ibn Rafi` ibn Abdallah ibn Mawhiba ibn Ubayy ibn Abdallah ibn Munqidhi ibn Nasri ibn al-Harith. He was born in the year 97 of the *hijra*. He first studied prophetic traditions with his father, Sa`id ibn Masruq at-Thawri one of the most reliable traditionist of the people of Kufa. He was the *Shaykh`l-Islam*, the *Imam* of the traditionist, and master of the right acting scholars of his time. He was a *mujtahid* who authored the *al-Jaami`*. *Imam* ibn al-Mahdi said: “My eyes have not seen scholars greater than four men. I have not seen one greater in memorization than at-Thawri, nor more severe in asceticism than Shu`ba, nor more intelligent than Malik, nor more counseling to the *Umma* than Ibn al-Mubaarik.” Bishr al-Hafi said: “Sufyan was to our times like Abu Bakr and Umar were to their times.” He died in the year 160 of the *hijra* at the age of 63. *Imam* Hudhayfa al-Mar`ashi said that Sufyan once said: “That my leaving behind 10 thousand *dirhams* that I will eventually be reckoned for by Allah is more beloved to me than being in need of people.” *Imam* Rawaad ibn al-Jaraah said that Sufyan once said: “Wealth use to be

An Explanation of the Divergent Judgments Regarding Hunger and Its Merits Based Upon the Different States of People

Realize that what is desired is that a person reach a state of moderation (*al-aqda 'l-wasit*) in diet because:

((خير الأمور أوسطها))

“The best of affairs is the middle course”.⁵⁸ What we have related concerning the merits attached to hunger may suggest that what is desired in that is excessiveness (*al-ifraat*). However, this is definitely not the case because the person of knowledge realizes that moderation is required

Therefore, realize that the best course is that one eats to the extent that his stomach is not heavy, but enough not to feel the pangs of hunger. For the objective in eating is the preservation of life. Although a heavy stomach prevents worship of Allah ta'ala, at the same time, the pangs of hunger preoccupies the heart from it as well. What is required is that one eats enough food that it does not leave an effect so that he can resemble the Angels, who are too sacred for heavy food consumption or hunger. The ultimate goal for man is to emulate them.

As for the beginning of the affair when the soul has a tendency to be defiant, craves after the satisfaction of its desires and leans towards excessiveness, then the median course will be of no benefit. On the contrary, it is necessary to go to great lengths in punishing the soul with hunger, in the same manner that one goes to great lengths in punishing a riding beast with hunger and striking in the beginning until it becomes moderate in its temperament. Once the animal has attained a state of solace and stability, then one can avoid punishing and hurting it.

The custom of Ibrahim⁵⁹ al-Khawwaas was to engage in every form of spiritual exercise (*riyaada*) that he instructed his disciples to perform, so that they would not think he was ordering them to do something that he did not do himself. When the strong man devotes himself to spiritual exercise and reforming others, he must descend to the level of the weak in order that he might resemble them and be gentle when motivating them towards the ultimate delight. This is the reason for the severe trials suffered by the Prophets and the protected friends (*awliyya*).

something reprehensible, but these days it is the shield of the believer.” A man once saw him carrying golden coins and said to him: “O Abu Abdallah is someone like you holding on to golden coins?!” He said: “Be quiet! For if it were not for these the kingdom itself would be detrimentally altered.” He is reported to have said: “True asceticism is not eating harsh foods or wearing rough clothing. Rather, true asceticism is shortening your false hopes and being watchful for death.” It is clear from the above that Sufyan at-Thawri felt that the scholars should be people of independent wealth, not relying upon the generosity of others in order that their legal decisions would be free of distortions due to bribery as well as to expend for the benefit of the poor and destitute. The proof for this is his words related by *Imam* Yahya ibn Yamaan: “Wealth is a sickness for this *Umma* and the scholar is the doctor of this *Umma*. For when the scholar chains this sickness to himself, then how can the people be cured?”: Thus, it is clear that Sufyan felt that wealth in the hands of the scholars is to be used for the benefit of the oppressed, the destitute and impoverished in the society, not for themselves.

⁵⁷ Here ends folio 16 after 19 lines of colophon.

⁵⁸ This prophetic tradition was related by al-Bayhaqi in his *Shu`b'l-Imaan* on the authority of `Amr ibn al-Haarith where the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “There true affair lies between the two matters. The best of affairs is the middle course.”

⁵⁹ Here ends folio 17 after 18 lines of colophon.

An Explanation of the Evil of Extreme Showing –Off (*ar-riya`l-muttraf*) for the One Avoiding Eating From His Cravings, Even When He Decreases His Intake of Food

Realize that two immense evils enter into avoiding passions, which are greater in harm than eating with one's passions.

The first one is that the soul is unable to avoid some of its passions. On the contrary, the soul craves for these passions but does not want to be known to crave after them, so it hides it by eating in seclusion what he would never eat while with people. This is a form of hidden polytheism (*as-shirk `l-khafiy*). You see some of them purchasing those foods that they crave for and locking themselves in their homes, while pretending to be among those who do without (*az-zaahideen*). However, this necessitates him deceiving himself. Further it behooves him not being deceived by the enticements of Satan when he says: "If you manifest that fact that you have cravings for food then others will follow you in that. So you should conceal that as a way of correcting others."

The second one is that he is able⁶⁰ to avoid eating based upon his cravings, however he is happy to be known for that and he loves the fame from reducing his passions. As a result he rejects a weak passion (*shahwa da`ifa*) which is the passion of eating while at the same time he obeys a passion that is stronger than that which is the passion of rank (*shahwat`l-jaah*). These subtle passions are more important in bringing spiritual good to a person, thus breaking these types of passions is more vital than breaking the passions of food. This is the path in punishing the soul for these subtle passions. In summation, whoever avoids the passions of food while falling into the passions of showing-off is like the one who flees from a scorpion and runs into the jaws of a snake; because the passions of showing-off is more dangerous than the passions of food. Here ends the book called **Sawq's-Siddiqeen** with the praise of Allah and the best of His help.⁶¹ Blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah may Allah bless him and grant him peace.⁶²

⁶⁰ Here ends folio 18 after 18 lines of colophon.

⁶¹ As mentioned earlier, the overwhelming evidence indicates that the *Shehu* composed the text between the years of 1789 and 1790 as a result of a request from his son *Shaykh* Muhammad Sanbu and others who desired to master the discipline of hunger and delimiting consumption. This period in which the *Shehu* composed the text was the middle period of his reform movement just before the *Jama`at* began to collect weapons, disassociate themselves from the disbelievers and make the *hijra* to Gudu. This indicates that apart of the process of gaining political autonomy from under the jurisdiction of the disbelievers is an intensive process of self discipline. The People of Allah believe that Allah acts by within creation by means of His creation. That is to say that when Allah ta`ala wishes to establish His vicegerent (*khilaafa*) and authority (*amr*) upon the earth He first prepares them through personal spiritual discipline and through the raising of their spiritual resolution (*himma*). He makes them into 'super-empowered individuals' who have the ability to project their spiritual power to anything and anybody, affects and changes the object at will. However, the secret of the subjugation (*taskheer*) is connected innately to the recognition of their emptiness, inability and impoverishment. Allah ta`ala says: "It was not you who threw when you threw, but it was Allah who threw." Once the Sage comprehends his inability he also has access to the Omnipotent Abilities of the Absolute Being. The recognition of one's absolute emptiness and inability can only come from the efficacy of decreasing consumption, hunger and fasting. The result of the discipline which the text provided to the Muslims of the central *Bilad's-Sudan* was the breaking of the authority of the disbelievers and the establishment of the Order of Allah on earth, under the Flag of the Sokoto Caliphate. I completed the translation and editing of this text with praise of Allah and the best of His assistance, on Saturday, the 21st of *Sha`baan*, 1429 (August 23, 2008) for the benefit of the *Jama`at* of *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye` and the rest of the Muslims in preparation for the vast opening of the month of *Ramadhan*.

⁶² Here ends folio 19 after 16 lines of colophon.

SANKORE'



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