

SANKORE'



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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ وَصَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلٰی سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا

SANKORE'

**Sawq al-Umma  
Ila Ittiba`'s-Sunna**  
with its commentary

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**In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful,<sup>1</sup> may Allah send blessings and peace upon our master Muhammad and upon his family and Companions and give them much peace.<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful; it is what Allah has willed and there is no power nor might besides Allah the Exalted the Mighty, and may Allah bless our master Muhammad, whose light preceded the creation and whose appearance is a mercy to all the worlds; to the number of all things that have passed from Allah's creation and to the number of all those things that persists; to the number of those blessed and those wretched; with a blessing which engulfs all enumeration and encompasses all limits; with a blessing which has no threshold, end or termination; with a blessing which is eternal with the eternity of Allah and persists with His continuity; and upon his family and Companions and give them much peace. Says the one prone to errors due to the abundance of his ignorance and unrelenting ungrammatical tongue, whose hopes have been shattered due to the deficiency of his actions and erroneous fearful awareness; who has become pathetic due to the repugnance of his bad deeds and sinful conduct; the most destitute of the servants in dire need of his Independent and Praiseworthy Lord – Abu Alfa Umar Muhammad Shareef bin Farid one of the once *lost* from the descendents of our benevolent father Ibrahim; *and* then *found* by the blessings of our master Muhammad upon both of them be the best blessings and most perfect peace. This is an annotation composed as footnotes upon the: Sawq'l-Umma Ila Ittiba` as-Sunna of my spiritual master, my doctrine of belief, my lamp, my support, my spiritual path, my guide and proof, the reviver of the *Sunna*, the knower of Allah, the nucleus of the spiritual poles, the *Imam* of the *Awliyya*, the light of the age, the renewer of the religion, the Sword of Truth, *Amir'l-Mu'mineen Shehu* Uthman ibn Muhammad ibn Uthman, known as Dan Fuduye`, may Allah ta`ala engulf him in his mercy Amen. Throughout this annotation I will henceforth refer to him as 'the *Shehu*'. I have composed this commentary in order to make manifest what I have extracted from the secrets of this revered book as well as the spiritual openings embodied in adherence to the *Muhammadan Sunna* in order to disseminate its sublime blessings and overflowing advantages. I have named it: The Desire for Illumination and Completion of Blessings Through A Commentary Upon the Mobilization of the Umma Towards Following the Sunna. I ask Allah ta`ala that He make it purely for His Generous sake. He is enough for me and He is the Best of Guardians. I say and with Allah is my support: the *Shehu* may Allah be merciful to him said in the beginning: "In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful." This is the well known *basmalla* which comprises the Most Immense Name of Allah, which if called upon by It is answered and if asked by means of It is given and in which is gathered the sciences of the first and the last. *Wazir Abd'l-Qadir ibn Gidadu*, the government advisor said in Bast al-Fawaa'id wa Taqreeb al-Maqaasid: "Our master the learned Abu'l-Abass Ahmad ibn Abd'l-'Aziz said in his commentary upon the Mukhtasar: 'The reason that texts are initiated with the *basmalla* is in imitation of the Wise *Qur'an*, the *Sunna* of the Generous Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, imitating what was related from him upon him be blessings and peace in the best of the narratives, and in conformity with the actions of the best of the spiritual masters and the informed examples. As for the *Qur'an* it begins in its expression and transcription with the *basmalla* in the *Faatiha* and all of *Qur'anic* chapters. As for the *Sunna* it is well known in the prophetic traditions that he may Allah bless him and grant him peace began all of his correspondences with the *basmalla*.'" He, upon him be blessings and peace ordered us to recite it in the beginning of all our affairs as it has been related by Abd'l-Qadir ar-Rawahi in his al-Arba`een on the authority of Abu Hurayra: "Every affair of importance which is not begun with the name of Allah is severed." In another narration: "...it is cut off." And in another: "...it is dissolved." The views regarding the *basmalla* are an unfathomable sea whose limit cannot be attained and whose end cannot be reached. The scholars have stipulated that whoever desires to study knowledge, it is necessary to understand the objectives connected to the knowledge of the *basmalla*. For the merits of the *basmalla* are innumerable. For those who desire to know some of its merits should peruse the Qira'l-Ahibaa of the knower of Allah *Shaykh* Muhammad Tukur ibn Muhammad and the Bast'l-Fawaa'id of the above mentioned government minister *Waziri* Abd'l-Qadir ibn Gidadu.

<sup>2</sup> The *Shehu* may Allah be merciful to him said: "may Allah send blessings and peace upon our master Muhammad and upon his family and Companions and give them much peace" imitating his words, may Allah bless him and grant him peace as it was related by at-Tabarani in his al-Awsat on the authority of Abu Hurayra: "Whoever send blessings upon me in a book there will always remain an Angel seeking forgiveness for him as long as my name is in that book." For the original meaning of sending blessings is making supplication as a specific act of worship based upon the dynamics of those sending blessings. This prophetic tradition means that whoever writes the sending of blessings upon the

**Says** the poor slave in need of the mercy of his Lord – **Uthman ibn Muhammad ibn Uthman** – known as **Dan Fuduye`**; (may Allah engulf him in His mercy, Amen.)<sup>3</sup>

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Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace in his composed book or letter, that there will always remain an Angel making supplication for his forgiveness for the duration that the name of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace remains in that book or letter. Regarding this also is what he upon him be blessings and peace said: “Whoever sends blessings upon me in a book, then there will be good fortune for what is in it.” Some of the latter Maliki scholars uphold the view that those addressed in its meaning are those who write the sending of blessings upon him in their book or letter; or it means those who recite the actual blessings which is already recorded in a book or letter. This latter interpolation is broader and inspires more hope, while the former interpolation is more apparent and stronger. This is what is intended here by the saying: ‘may Allah bless him and grant him peace.’ Some of the scholars have said that the meaning of sending blessings upon him may Allah bless him and grant him peace in a book is writing it accompanied with articulating it in order to obtain by that the reward mentioned in the aforementioned prophetic traditions. *Shaykh* Shihab`d-Deen Ahmad al-Khafaji said in his *Naseem`r-Riyaad*: “One of the traditionist once said: ‘I used to transcribe the sending of blessings only, and then I saw the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace in a dream and he said to me: ‘Will you not perfect the sending of blessings upon me in your book?’ Thereafter, I never transcribed it without also verbally sending blessings and peace upon him.” The author, may Allah be merciful to him mentioned the sending of blessings upon the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace in this blessed book 225 times. For this reason I have made it a litany which I recite at the beginning of studying it and at its completion.

<sup>3</sup> The meaning of the statement of the *Shehu*, may Allah be merciful to him: “Says the poor slave in need of the mercy of his Lord” is giving recognition to his complete absence of ability in every respect in his essence and non essential qualities. Allah ta`ala says: “*O mankind you are impoverished and Allah is the Independently Rich the Praiseworthy.*” *Shaykh* al-Hatimi said: “The impoverished one is he who is in need of everything and nothing is in need of him. In the opinion of the realized ones the impoverished one is the pure absolute slave, whose state in the reality of his existence is the same as his state in the reality of his non-existence.” *Shaykh* Ibn al-Hajj said regarding the impoverished one: “He is the one who has left worldly affairs behind him and has turned towards his Hereafter in preoccupation with his Lord; and has embarked upon the correction of his soul and purifying it of ‘otherness’. For each heart in which there resides other than Allah is in the realm of abandonment and dejection. And in each heart in which nothing resides besides Him, glory be to Him the Exalted there occurs spiritual openings, Self manifestations and intimate converse in his secret in congruence with the strength of his spiritual state.” The *Wali* Abu Yazid al-Bustami, may Allah be merciful to him said: “The Absolute Being once said to me: ‘Draw near to Me with that which is not Mine: humiliation and impoverishment’.” *Shaykh* Ahmad ibn `Ajiba, may Allah be pleased with him said: “As for the truly dependent and impoverished he is deficient of everything except Allah. He has rejected everything which preoccupies him from Allah. It is for this reason that the masters of this station say: ‘The truly impoverished one is he who does not control nor is he controlled.’ This means that he does not own any created thing and no created thing owns him. The prerequisites of the person of this station are four: [1] elevated spiritual purpose; [2] excellent service; [3] extolling that which is sacred; and [4] piercing determination.” The meaning of the words of the *Shehu* may Allah be merciful to him: “Uthman ibn Muhammad ibn Uthman known as Dan Fuduye`, is that he was *Amir`l-Mu`mineen*, Abu Muhammad Sa`d, **Uthman ibn Muhammad** 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 ibn *Imam* Dambube` at-Turuude` al-Fulati as-Sudani, the Renewer. He was known in the language of Hausa as ‘Dan Fodio’. The meaning of “dan” in the Hausa language is the ‘son of’. The meaning of ‘fuduye`’ in the language of Fulbe` is ‘the jurist’, which means that his father, Muhammad was a majestic scholar famous for his learning and fearful awareness. As for the mother of the *Shehu*, 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-Baar 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. See the introduction for a concise summary of his life. The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may Allah be merciful to him: “...may Allah engulf him in His mercy, Amen” ‘may He plunge or inundate him in

**All praises are due to Allah** who has raised the supports of the *Sunna* and exalted its lamps; who has diminished the existence of heretical innovation and exposed its “lights”; who has made plain the evidences of the Divine Reality and manifested its secrets; and who has eclipsed the paths of falsehood and obliterated its influences.<sup>4</sup>

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It'. It has been related by at-Tabarani on the authority of Usama ibn Shareek that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “There is no one who will enter Paradise by his actions.” They said: “Not even you?” He said: “Not even me, unless Allah completely engulfs me in His mercy.” Abu `Ubayd said: “The meaning of his words: ‘completely engulf me’, means to completely enclose, to completely envelope and to completely conceal me with It.” There is no doubt that this was the case because Allah ta`ala said about him, upon him be blessings and peace: “*And We have not sent you except as a mercy to all the worlds.*” If the ‘mercy of Allah’ is an intimation to the Prophet of mercy, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, then the meaning of his words: ‘may Allah engulf him in his mercy’ means may he envelope him in the character of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, enclose him in his *Sunna*, and inundate him in the overflowing of his lights, and Allah knows best.

<sup>4</sup> The meaning of the words of the *Shehu* may Allah be merciful to him: “All praises are due to Allah” is following the pattern set by the Mighty Book, for the *Qur’an* begins with His exalted words: “*All praises are due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds*” and imitating by that his words may Allah bless him and grant him peace: “Every affair of importance which is not begun with: All praises are due to Allah, and sending blessings upon me is severed.” The *Shehu* may Allah be merciful to him said in his *Kitab’l-Wird*: “It is a duty upon us to praise Allah with the praise that is fitting Him as an incumbent obligation without limit.” The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may Allah be merciful to him: “...who has raised the supports of the *Sunna*”, the expression ‘support’ comes from a piece of wood normally used to properly establish a house. In the prophetic tradition of Umm Zar`a: “My husband is an elevated support.” What is meant by the support of the house is its nobility, as it was mentioned in the *Lisan’l-Arab*. Thus, the meaning of his words is: All praises are due to Allah who has raised the scholars of the *Sunna* who give life to the *Sunna*, honor it and teach it to the people in every age and place.” The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may Allah be merciful to him: “...and exalted its lamps”; the plural of lamp, is a signal usually placed between two limits. Shamr related on the authority of al-Asma`i: “A lamp is a sign or signal lamp placed upon the road or between the boundaries of two lands, made either of mud or earth.” In the prophetic tradition on the authority of Abu Hurayra may Allah be pleased with him: “Islam has its landmarks and supports”; that is to say that it has signs and laws by which is it known. Thus, the meaning of his words: “...and exalted its lamps” is that Allah is the One who has exalted the right acting scholars who clarify the distinguishing boundaries of the *Sunna*, by means of their spiritual states, their actions and teachings. All praises are due to Allah for that. The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “... who has diminished the existence of heretical innovation and exposed its “lights”; is that heretical innovation is an invention which has been innovated in the religion after the perfection of the religion. Ibn as-Sikeet said: “Heretical innovation is every invented matter.” Ibn al-Athir said: “Innovation are two kinds: innovations of guidance and innovations of error. The innovations of guidance includes those about which the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: ‘Whoever enacts an excellent *sunman* will have the reward of all the people who act upon it’; as Umar ibn al-Khatib, may Allah ta`ala be pleased with him said regarding the collective standing in congregational night prayers during *Ramadhan*: ‘This is a blessed innovation.’ Innovations of error are those reprehensible matters which have become a convention but are not known to be apart of the *Sunna* or from the principles of the *shari`a*, as he upon him be blessings and peace said: ‘The most evil of matters are invented matters. For every invention is a heretical innovation and every heretical innovation is error and every error and its companion is in the Fire.’” As-Shafi` said: “Innovations are two kinds: praiseworthy and blameworthy. That which conforms with the *Sunna* is praiseworthy and that which conflicts with it is blameworthy.” Some of the scholars divide innovations based upon the five legal divisions within the *shari`a*, as it will be explained clearly Allah willing. Thus, the meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be with him: “... who has diminished the existence of heretical innovation”; is all praises are due to Allah who has diminished false innovations which are those which are forbidden and reprehensible that conflict with what Allah and His Messenger have ordered, and with the principles established in the foundations of the *shari`a* by means of the scholars of the *Sunna* from the ancient past and after them. The meaning of his words: “...and exposed its ‘lights’; means that forbidden or reprehensible heretical innovations resemble guidance and the illumination of the *shari`a*, but are in



**Peace and blessings be upon Muhammad** who elucidated the methods of the Divine realities and erected its secrets; and who commanded to follow the *Sunna* and to adhere to its traditions; and upon his family and Companions, all of them; and also upon the masters of the *Taabi'uun* and the right acting scholars.<sup>5</sup>

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reality not from it. Abu Adnan said: "The heretical innovator is the one who comes with a matter which has resemblance, but which in reality has no beginning prior to it." Thus, the 'lights' of heretical innovations are in reality obscurities which look as if they are from the light of the religion but in fact are not. Thus, the scholars of the *Sunna*, may Allah ta'ala be pleased with them are those who distinguish between truth and falsehood; and between the *Sunna* and heretical innovations. They are those who clarify heretical innovations as such and diminish the darkness of their obscurities which resemble the lights of the *shari'a* and the *Sunna*, and then make the former contemptible in the hearts of the people. The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: "...and who has made plain the evidences of the Divine Reality and manifested its secrets"; the phrase 'evidences' is from the singular of a proof which acts as a witness. Ibn Sayyidih said: "The witness is a scholar or one who knows and who clarifies what he knows." Thus, in reality the evidences are the Knowers of Allah who know their Lord by what has been firmly established with them in their gnosis and spiritual unveilings of Him and His creation. For Allah ta'ala is the One who clarifies His knowledge in their hearts, illuminates their inner vision and manifests His secrets upon their tongues. The reality of any matter means the absolute certainty regarding its affair and contains the truth of it and its necessities. Thus, the meaning of 'Divine Realities' in the language of its People are direct knowledge from Allah and the mystical sciences which are in conformity with the *shari'a*; for spiritual realities without the *shari'a* are false. The meaning of the *Shehu* words, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: "...and who has eclipsed the paths of falsehood and obliterated its influences"; is that the pluralities of falsehoods are that which are diametrically opposite the truth. Allah ta'ala says: "*The Truth has come and falsehood perishes. Indeed falsehood by its very nature perishes.*" Thus, falsehood is everything which conflicts with the realm of truth which comprise: the judgment of reason, the text of the *Qur'an*, the text of uninterrupted prophetic traditions and the consensus of the scholars of the *Sunna*, may Allah be pleased with them, as the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him said in his *Fat'h'l-Basa'ir*. Abu 'Ubayda said: "There is coming a time of intense falsehood." This means a time in which there will appear many evil scholars who will present to the people in an excellent light those injustices, heretical innovations and disobediences which they have embellished, and will transform these falsehoods into 'truths' and remain silent regarding the real truth even though they have the ability to speak out. Thus, it is Allah who eclipses the paths of falsehood and obliterates its influences by means of the scholars of the *Sunna* who clarify the Truth and teach it to the people.

<sup>5</sup> The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: "Peace and blessings be upon Muhammad who elucidated the methods of the Divine realities and erected its secrets"; the meaning of blessing (*salaat*) in the Arabic language is asking mercy and making supplication for someone or something. *Shaykh* Abdullahi ibn Fuduye` said in his *Ta'leem'l-Anaam*: "Sending blessings upon the Prophet at least once in a lifetime is an obligation (*farḍ*) - like bearing witness to his Prophet-hood (*an-nubuwwa*). This is in accordance with Allah ta'ala's words, "*O you who believe send blessings upon him and give him peace abundantly.*" Doing it more than once is highly recommended (*manduub*) in the *Sunna* of Islam and among the customs of its people. It is a confirmed *Sunna* and it is recommended to do it in the last *tashahhud* of the prayer (*as-salaat*), during the night hours before dawn, at the mentioning of his name, when his name is mentioned in a book, and during the call to prayer (*al-adhan*)." The plural phrase 'methods' is a path and a clear elucidation. Allah ta'ala says: "*For each We have made a law and methodology.*" Al-'Abass, may Allah ta'ala be pleased with him said: "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace did not die until he had left you upon a clear methodological path." Which is to say that he left them on a spiritual path that was plain and clear; thus the meaning of his words, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: "...methods of the Divine realities" are the paths to gnosis of the Absolute Being. Abu'l-Qasim al-Junayd, may Allah be pleased with him said: "All of the paths have been closed except in following the footprints of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace." Abu Hamza al-Baghdadi, may Allah be pleased with him said: "There is no guide upon the path to Allah ta'ala except in following the Beloved, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Whoever makes his soul adhere to the courtesies of the *Sunna* Allah will illuminate his heart with the light of direct experiential knowledge of Allah. For there is no spiritual station more noble than following the Beloved Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace in his commands, deeds, words and character." The meaning of his words, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: "...and erected its secrets"; is that he is the one who built it and generated it

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because all the Divine realities began with him, upon him be the best blessings and most perfect peace; for he is the breaking of the dawn of the lights of Divine Oneness; he is the rising of the sun of the secrets of Lordship; he is the splendid moon of the eternal realities; he is the bridegroom of the presence of universal compassion; he is the mine of the secrets of Allah and the interpreter of His proofs; he is the point of the emergence of the knowledge of Lordship; he is the first gleam of the Divine Secrets; he is the final goal of those who have spiritual aspirations; he is the guide of those lost among the spiritual wayfarers; he is the gathering of the realities of faith; the mountain of the manifestations of spiritual excellence; the place of descent of the secrets of mercy; the mediator of the covenant of the Prophets; the vanguard of the armies of the Muslims; the commander and chief of the Prophets and Messengers; and the most superior of all creation. O Allah send blessings and peace with the most successful, the most prosperous, the most perfect, the most correct, the purest, the most fulfilling, the soundest, and most superior blessings, and most generous benevolence and greetings upon Your servant, messenger and prophet, our master Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “and who commanded to follow the *Sunna* and to adhere to its traditions”, that is to say that Allah ta`ala ordered us in His Mighty Book and our master Muhammad, ordered us in many of his words. For Allah ta`ala says: “*And what the Messenger gives you take it and what he forbids you leave it, and fear Allah, verily Allah is Severe in punishment.*” In a narration of *Qadi`Iyad* in his *as-Shifa* on the authority of Abu Hurayra that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “Whoever obeys me, has obeyed Allah, and whoever disobeys me has disobeyed Allah.” He also said in it that he, upon him be peace said: “When I forbid you something then avoid it and when I order you to do something then do it as much as you are able.” It has been related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and at-Tirmidhi on the authority of al-`Irbaad ibn Sariya who said that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “Obligatory upon you is my *Sunna* and the *Sunna* of the rightly guided *Khalifs*. Hold to them stubbornly. And beware of invented matters, for every invented matter is a heretical innovation and every heretical innovation is error.” He upon him be blessings and peace said: “My *Umma* have been commanded to take hold of my words, to obey my commands, and to follow my *Sunna*. Whoever is content with my words, is then content with the *Qur`an*.” And other than these from the words of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace regarding the command to follow his *Sunna* and adhere to its traditions; as the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him will clearly clarify in this blessed book. The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “...and upon his family”; is what *Qadi`Iyad* said in his *as-Shifa*: “There is unanimous agreement regarding the permissibility of sending blessings upon other than the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.” Among these being his family as the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “O Allah make Your blessings and *baraka* be upon the family of Ahmad”; meaning by that himself. The meaning of his family includes his wives and descendents. It is said that it means those who follow him. It is said that it means his *Umma*. While the soundest opinion is that they are the people of his household to whom it is forbidden to give the obligatory alms, but to whom are granted the fifth of the spoils of war. These include the core of the Banu Hashim and the Banu Muttalib. These are the ones whom Allah chose from His creation after His prophet, blessings of Allah be upon him and all of them. In the prophetic tradition: “The obligatory alms is not permissible to be given to Muhammad and the family of Muhammad.” Ibn al-Athir said: “There is disagreement regarding the family of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace to whom it is forbidden to give the obligatory alms. The majority of the scholars hold that this refers to the people of his household, which include his wives, children, Ali ibn Abi Talib and his children and descendents from Fatima the daughter of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, Ja`far ibn Abi Talib and his children, `Aqil ibn Abi Talib and his children, al-`Abass ibn Abd`l-Muttalib and his children; and al-Harith ibn Abd`l-Muttalib and his children.” The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “...and Companions, all of them”; is that blessings upon all the companions. This is also a proof for the permissibility of sending blessings upon other than the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace as *Qadi`Iyad* said: “In a tradition of Ibn Umar that he used to send blessings upon the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, Abu Bakr and Umar, may Allah be pleased with both of them. This was mentioned by Malik in the *al-Muwatta* from a narration of Yahya al-Andalusi.” For the Companions of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace are every man and woman from among men and *jinn* whom Allah designated with seeing the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, listening to him, accepting *Islam* during his time, even if their companionship with him upon him be blessings and peace was a single day. The *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him said in his *Ihya as-Sunna*: “Allah `izza wa jalla chose them in order to establish His *deen* and to exalt His word... Allah `izza wa jalla singled them out with seeing

To continue:<sup>6</sup> This is the book called

## Sawq'l-Umma Ila Ittiba` 's-Sunna (The Mobilization of the *Umma* Towards Following the *Sunna*)<sup>7</sup>

their Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, with witnessing him, and with witnessing the descent of the *Qur'an* upon them fresh and brand-new. They took it directly from the mouth of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, at the same time he took it from the mouth of Jibril, upon him be peace. Allah also favored them with fighting along side the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace; assisting him and protecting him; with degrading disbelief and destroying it; and with elevating the light of Islam and exalting it. He ta`ala singled them out with memorizing the *Qur'an*, which descended from the heavens little by little. Allah thus made them suitable for memorizing it until they left nothing of it, not even a single letter. They then gathered the *Qur'an* together and made it easy for those who would come after them. They conquered the lands and regions on behalf of the Muslims and prepared the way for them. They also memorized the traditions of their Prophet in their hearts and authenticated them from what was sure to come of colloquial Arabic, mistakes, forgetfulness and heedlessness.” The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “...and also upon the masters of the *Taabi'uum*”; is as he said in his *Ihya's-Sunna*: “They are the ones whom the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, testified to with moral excellence and virtue by his saying: “The best generations are my generation, then those who follow them, and then those who follow them.” Because of that, there is no need for those who come after them to establish anything from the principles of the *shari`a*. On the contrary, everyone who comes after them are bound to their tradition (*muqallad*), for the most part, and are followers of them. Thus, if there emerges a *fiqh* other than their *fiqh* or if there emerges a utility other than their utility, then all of that will be rejected. That is the *deen* of Allah which we are required to adhere to; and whatever contradicts that is heretical innovation (*bid`a*) and error (*dalaala*) which will be cast back at its perpetrator without being accepted.” The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “... and the right acting scholars”; are those who act by their knowledge. Among them were *Imam* Malik ibn Anas, *Imam* Abu Hanifa Nu`maan, *Imam* Muhammad ibn Idris as-Shafi`, and *Imam* Ahmad ibn Hanbal, may Allah ta`ala be merciful to them. The *Imams* are in unanimous agreement regarding these four *Imams* that they were the *Imams* of the *madhaahib*. The *Shehu*, may Allah be merciful to him said in his *Tawfeeq al-Muslimeen*: “Each one of them were *mujtahid* in the religion, and their *madhaahib* are paths which connect to Allah ta`ala.” He also said a little before that: “Verily the scholars of the *Sunna*, may Allah be pleased with all of them are agreed that whoever adheres to a *madh`hab* from these *madhaahib* will reach Allah safely and that *madh`hab* will connect them to Paradise.” Included in this supplication is every scholar who follows them and adheres to their opinions. The *Shehu* opened this book from his words: ‘All praises are due to Allah’ until his words: “The right acting scholars”; with the same expression with which the Knower of Allah, *Shaykh* Ahmad Zarruq, may the mercy of Allah ta`ala be upon him opened his book *Umdat'l-Mureed as-Saadiq*. He was Abu'l-Abass Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Isa al-Burnusi al-Fasi as-Shadhili, who was known as Zarruq and as Burnus. He was born during the rising of the sun on a Thursday, the 18<sup>th</sup> of *Muharram* in the year 846 A.H. His mother died three days after his birth and his father followed her in death five days later; and his maternal uncle died soon after that. Thus, seven days did not pass until he had no one to rely upon besides Allah ta`ala. He composed innumerable works. He, may the mercy of Allah be upon him, died in the year 899 A.H. and he was buried in Misrata, in the desert on the edge of Birqa, may Allah ennoble his spirit and flow upon us his *baraka*. *Shaykh* Ahmad Zarruq had tremendous influence upon the ideas of *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye`, may Allah ta`ala be pleased with both of them. For each of them stood to eradicate heretical innovations which the people had invented particularly in the area of *tasawwuf*, and in the remainder of the sciences in general.

<sup>6</sup> The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “To continue”: It is said that this expression: ‘to continue (*amaa ba`d*)’ is a mark of the beginning of speech, and Prophet Dawud, upon him be peace was the first to initiate it. It is said that this speech marker is a sign understood to mean the commencement of judgment. Abu'l-Abass said: “The meaning of: ‘to continue (*amaa ba`d*)’ is ‘to continue with what was being discussed from speech’, so-and so, to the end of one’s speech.”

<sup>7</sup> The expression ‘mobilization’ takes its root from ‘to urge on camels’ or other animals like them, which means to lead them or to drive them forward. Allah ta`ala says: “Every soul will come with what drives it and witnesses against it.” That which will drive the soul means that which will urge it to its place of Gathering. He, upon him be peace said in a prophetic tradition: “The Hour will not be



**My objective in writing it** is to give life to the *Sunna* of Muhammad. Due to the laxity in the zeal of the people of these times, I have limited this book to

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established until there emerges a man from the people of Qahtan who will urge the people on (*yasuuq 'n-naas*) by means of his staff.” That is to say, that this individual will correct the affairs of the people, they will be obedient to him and act in accordance with his commands. This meaning is further corroborated by his utilization of the phrase ‘stick’, in order to indicate that he will be appointed as an authority over them, and that they will be obedient to him. Thus, the meaning of ‘mobilization of the *Umma*’ is motivating the *Umma* and leading them towards following the *Sunna*. The meaning of ‘*umma*’ in this regard refers to all the Muslims, their elite and common alike, from the time of the *Shehu* until the appearance of the Awaited *Mahdi* in the End of Times. The meaning of ‘*Sunna*’ is the natural disposition of a thing. The plural form ‘*sunnan*’ means a praiseworthy and virtuous path. The origin of the phrase ‘*Sunna*’ is from ‘a way’ (*tareeq*), which comprises the primordial way of a people; which thus becomes a pattern to be followed by those who come after them. The *Shehu*, may Allah ta`ala be merciful to him said in his *Ihya 's-Sunna*: “Ahmed ibn Ali ibn Abd'r-Rahmaan al-Manjuri said in his commentary upon the *Minhaj 'l-Muntakhib*: “The *sunna* linguistically means a way (*at-tareeqa*) and a custom (*al-'aadat*). The *Sunna* technically is a word which is a combination of a form of worship (*al-'ibaadat*) and a form of proof (*al-adaalat*). The *Sunna* with regard to worship are the supererogatory acts which the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, practiced constantly, or it was understood by it that it was to be done continuously, even when its cause was not recurrent - like the eclipse prayer (*salaat 'l-khusuuf*). And some of the Companions added: and it was publicly demonstrated to be done in congregation (*jama`at*). The *Sunna* with regard to proof is meant here everything which proceeded from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, (other than the *Qur'an*) pertaining to words, deeds or decisions. It is in accordance with this meaning that the realized ones (*al-muhaqqiqeen*) explained it’. In the *Minhaj al-Muntakhib* it says: “That about which Muhammad, the master of mankind, was silent, his words, his deeds which were done always, or that in which he had made a decision - that is the *Sunna*’.” Thus, the meaning of the title: “the Mobilization of the *Umma* Towards Following the *Sunna*” is that he placed in it all of the prophetic traditions essential for urging the *Umma*, if they remain obedient to them and act in accordance with them, to the praiseworthy, virtuous and spiritual pleasing Path. It is conceivable that the title indicates a more transcendent meaning than that because the Arabs call the dowry (*mahr*) to be handed over to a bride ‘*sawq*’, since whenever they desire to marry, they customarily lead camels and sheep to the bride as a dowry. Thus, the phrase ‘*sawq*’ (mobilization) is substituted for the phrase ‘*mahr*’ (dowry), even when the dowry does not consist of camels and sheeps. Subsequently, among the possible meanings of the book’s title is that it and what it contains is like a wedding dowry for the entire *Umma* which they send forward in order to marry the *Muhammadan Sunna*; for which the the natural issue or offsprings of this marriage is: military victory, economic sufficiency, and political sovereignty. It is also conceivable that the meaning of the title is an indication of the humility of its author, because one of the meanings of ‘*sawq*’ is ‘to come at the tail-end of something – or to defer’ (*mu'akhir*), like when you say: “He came at the tail-end of the army”; which means that he traveled behind it. This is similar to how, the walking of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace was described: “He used to follow behind his Companions”; which means that he would let them go ahead of him and he and walk behind them out of humility, not allowing anyone to walk behind him. For, the *Shehu*, may Allah ta`ala be merciful to him, only placed in this book, the prophetic traditions of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace; he did not mention his own opinions in it nor the opinions of any of the jurists; as if he were intentionally putting forward the *Sunna* and placing his own opinion behind it out of humility it and as a legal inference and argumentation for his established methodology; similar to what *Imam* Malik did in the *al-Muwatta* and al-Bukhari in the *al-Jaami' as-Saheeh*. For, *Sultan* Muhammad Bello ibn *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye`, *Waziri* Gidadu ibn Layma, *Shaykh* Abd'l-Qadir ibn Mustafa and others from among the learned and scholars of the followers of the methodology of the *Shehu* agree that this blessed book was one of the proofs that the *Shehu* attained the rank of *ijtihaadiyya* (independent judgment) and *mujaddadiyya* (social reformation). As a consequence, when it is studied from the perspective of what he narrated in it from its prophetic traditions, their meanings, jurisprudence, and foundations will come to recognize and understand this, as it will be explained Allah willing. This book is an incitement to the Muslims to follow the *Sunna* outwardly and inwardly, and it emboldens them to adhere to its traditions in these Last Days in which tribulation and ignorance have increased as it was foretold in what was related by at-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Hurayra on the authority of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace who said: “The one who holds strongly to my *Sunna* during the corruption of my *Umma* will have the reward of one hundred martyrs.”



mentioning just the prophetic traditions (*al-aḥaadith*) which will clarify in summation what has been related in the tradition of Jibril, upon him be peace, regarding *Islam*, *Iman*, and *Ihsan*; which with respect to worship make up the whole of the religion. I have only<sup>8</sup> added in this book the prophetic traditions concerning the issue of military struggle (*jiḥaad*), which remains the sole means by which the religion is protected.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Here ends facsimile 2 of the Arabic manuscript.

<sup>9</sup> The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “My objective in writing it is to give life to the *Sunna* of Muhammad”; some of the knowers of Allah have said: “Your end is in your beginning;” just as the fruit of a thing is the result of what was planted. For he upon him be blessings and peace said as it was related by al-Bukhari on the authority of Umar ibn al-Khattab: “Verily actions are based upon their intention and a person will only have what he intends. Thus, whoever emigrates to Allah and His Messenger, his emigration is to Allah and His Messenger. Whoever emigrates for some worldly matter in order to seize upon it; or for a woman in order to marry her, then his emigration is for what he emigrated for.” Thus, the objective and intention of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him in composing this blessed book was in order to give life to the Muhammadan *Sunna*. He said in his *Ihya’s-Sunna*: “Whoever has as an objective to revive the *Sunna* of Muhammad and to remove satanic innovation for the purpose of offering sincere advice to the Muslims, Allah will be responsible in aiding him. However, he whose aim is to bring shame upon people and be preoccupied with their faults, Allah will question him and reckon with him. For whoever pursues the faults of his brother, Allah will pursue his faults until he exposes him, even if he be in the recesses of his home. Believers ask for excuses while hypocrites pursue the faults of others and Allah helps a person as long as he helps his brother.” It has been related by at-Tirmidhi on the authority of `Amr ibn `Awf al-Medini that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “Whoever gives life to my *Sunna* which has died after me will have the reward like the one who acted upon it from among the people, and that will not diminish anything from the reward of the people in anything. Whoever advances a heretical innovation in which Allah and His Messenger are not content with, will have the sin of everyone who acts in accordance with it from among the people, and that will not diminish anything from the recompense of the people.” Al-Asbahani said in his *Targheeb* as well as al-Al-Kai said in his *Sunna* that he upon him be blessings and peace said: “The mercy of Allah be upon the vicegerents.” It was said: “What are your vicegerents?” He said: “Those who give life to my *Sunna* and teach it to the people. Whoever gives life to my *Sunna* has given life to me. Whoever gives life to me will be with me in Paradise.” It has been related by ad-Daylami on the authority of Ali ibn Abi Talib who said: “There are no words except with actions. There are no words and actions except with intention. There are no words, actions, and intention except by giving life to the *Sunna*.” The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “Due to the laxity in the zeal of the people of these times”; refers to the enthusiasm of the people of his time and those of these times of ours which are more deficient; due to this it is from the mercy of Allah ta`ala that the scholars make their books concise due to the deficiency of people’s spiritual zeal. It has been related by al-Bukhari on the authority of az-Zubayr on the authority of `Adiy who said: “We came to Anas ibn Malik and complained to him about what we had been experiencing from al-Hujaj. He said: ‘Be patient for there is no time which is coming except that which comes after it will be worse than it, until you encounter your Lord. I heard this from your Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.’” It has been related by Abu Hurayra on the authority of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace who said: “A time is approaching in which knowledge will be seized, tribulation will appear, and niggardliness will be encountered and the increase in upheavals.” They said: “What are upheavals?” He said: “Slaughter!” In the narration of al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurayra also on the authority of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “A time is approaching in which wealth will decrease, niggardliness will be encountered, and tribulations will appear and many upheavals.” They said: “O Messenger of Allah, what kind?” He said: “Slaughter! Slaughter!” Apart of the *baraka* of this book is that the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him made it concise due to the deficiency of the enthusiasm of the people of his time and these times of ours. He said in his *Najm’l-Ikhwan*: “Be preoccupied O brothers with reading the books of the scholars of your time because they are more knowledgeable of the most important affairs in them. It is their responsibility to put in detail what had been generalized in the books of the earlier scholars, because the books of each generation are a detailing of those generations that preceded them. For this reason each scholar takes reliance upon the books of his time while at the same time finding entirely what he needs in his religion from the books of those before him.” Thus, the *Shehu* limited it to what he said, as a mercy from Allah ta`ala to us. The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “I have limited this

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book to mentioning just the prophetic traditions (*al-ahaadith*) which will clarify in summation what has been related in the tradition of Jibril, upon him be peace, regarding *Islam*, *Iman*, and *Ihsan*; which with respect to worship make up the whole of the religion.” The prophetic tradition referred to is what was narrated by Muslim on the authority of Umar ibn al-Khattab who said: “We were once with the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace when a man dressed in exceedingly white garments with very black hair appeared. There were no traces of travel upon him nor did anyone know him. He came until he sat in front of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, placing his knees firmly against his and then placed his hands upon his thighs and said: “O Muhammad inform me about Islam.” The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “Islam is that you bear witness that there is no deity except Allah, that Muhammad is His Messenger, that you establish the prayer, give the alms, fast *Ramadhan* and make pilgrimage to the House if you have the ability.” He said: “You have told the truth.” Umar said: “We were amazed that he would ask a question and then corroborate the answer.” He then said: “Inform me about belief (*al-imaan*).” He said: “It is that you believe in Allah, His Angels, His Heavenly Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and that you believe in the decree: its good and evil.” He said: “You told the truth.” He then said: “Inform me about spiritual excellence (*al-ihsaan*).” He said: “It is that you worship Allah as if you see Him and if you do not see Him, He sees you.” He then said: “Inform me about the Hour.” He said: “The one questioned knows no more about it than the one questioning.” He then said: “Inform me about its signs.” He said: “It is when the servant girl give birth to her mistress and you see the naked, barefooted and destitute competing with one another to build tall buildings.” He then said: “He then left, and I sat for a time when he upon him be blessings and peace said to me: ‘O Umar do you know who the questioner was?’ I said: ‘Allah and His Messenger know best.’ He said: ‘Indeed it was Jibril who came to you to teach you your religion’.” In the narration of al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurayra, may Allah be pleased with him that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace was once sitting among the people, when a man came to him walking. He then said to him: “O Messenger of Allah what is belief (*al-imaan*)? He said: ‘Belief is that believe in Allah His Angels, His Messengers, the Meeting with Him, and the you believe in the Resurrection of the Hereafter.’” He then said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, what is Islam?’ He said: “It is that you worship Allah and not associate anything with Him, establish the prayer, give the obligatory alms, and fast *Ramadan*.’ He then said: ‘O Messenger of Allah what is spiritual excellence (*al-ihsaan*)?’ He said: ‘Spiritual excellence is that you worship Allah as if you see Him and if you do not see Him, He sees you.’ He said: ‘O Messenger of Allah when is the Hour?’ He said: “The one questioned knows no more about it than the one questioning. However, I will relate to you regarding its signs. It is when the woman gives birth to her mistress, for that is from among its signs. When the naked and barefooted become the leaders of the people, for that is among its signs; which are five which no one knows except Allah. ‘Indeed with Allah is the knowledge of the Hour, and He is the One who sends down the downpour of rain, and He knows what is in the wombs.’ Then the men departed. He then said: ‘Return him to me!’ They then went to bring him back to him but they could not find anyone. He then said: ‘That was Jibril. He came in order to teach the people about their religion’.” The *Shehu* said in his *Umdat ‘l-Ulama*: “The religion which our Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace came with has its foundation and its branch. As for its foundation it is *al-Iman* and the science which authenticates *al-Iman* it is the science of the foundation of the religion. As for its branch it is divided into two divisions: an outward branch and an inward branch. As for the outward branch it is *al-Islam* and the science which authenticates *al-Islam* it is the science of the *shari`a*. As for the inward branch it is *al-Ihsan* and the science which authenticates *al-Ihsan* it is the science of the *haqeeqa*. Thus, *al-Iman*, *al-Islam* and *al-Ihsan* is the entirety of the religion.” It is for this reason that he limited this book to those prophetic traditions which clarify for us what is belief (*al-imaan*), and peaceful surrender (*al-islam*); which are the foundation of the religion, and the outward branch. As for the spiritual excellence (*al-ihsaan*) or the inward branch of the religion it is subsumed in the text. That is to say that the science of secrets and that which is related to the hearts and its gnosis is subsumed in the rectification of belief and in the realization of outward surrender. For doctrine of beliefs and jurisprudence are the foundations of spiritual purification. There is no path to the Divine Realities except by first establishing the prerequisites which comprise belief (*Imaan*) and outward surrender (*Islam*). Spiritual excellence (*Ihsaan*) is subsumed in them and Allah willing it will be extracted in the commentary. The meaning of the words of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “I have only added in this book the prophetic traditions concerning the issue of military struggle (*jihad*), which remains the sole means by which the religion is protected”; that is to say that the preservation of the religion cannot occur except by establishing it. Establishing the religion cannot occur except by means of military struggle (*jihad*), and what stands in its place such as emigration

**I have only cited** in this book the traditions of the two authentic collections (*as-Saheehayn*): al-Bukhari and Muslim due to the consensus of the *Umma* regarding their acceptability. However, the expressions from the narrations of al-Bukhari are more prominent in this book than those of Muslim, even though both contribute to what is largely desired in meaning. The reason for this is that al-Bukhari is considered more authentic than Muslim in the view held by the majority of the scholars. Another reason is that I have the narration of al-Bukhari by direct transmission (*sama'an*), unlike the narrations of Muslim, although I have license (*ijaazat*) to transmit it.<sup>10</sup>

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(*hijra*), truce (*sulhi*), a social contract, (*mu`aahida*) commanding the good and forbidding evil and other than these; all of which are subsumed under military struggle.

<sup>10</sup> The meaning of the words of the *Shehu* may the mercy of Allah be upon him: "I have only cited in this book the traditions of the two authentic collections (*as-Saheehayn*): al-Bukhari and Muslim"; as for al-Bukhari, he was Abu Abdallah Muhammad ibn Isma`il ibn Ibrahim ibn al-Mughira, known as al-Bukhari. He was born in the month of *Shawwal* in the year 194 A.H. Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn al-Fadl al-Balhkhi said: "I heard my father say: 'Muhammad ibn Isma`il lost his sight when he was young, and his mother saw Ibrahim al-Khalil upon him be peace in her dream who said to her: 'Allah has returned the sight of your son due to the abundance of your weeping for him or your innumerable supplications'. The next morning Allah returned his sight.'" He thus, became after that among the best of people in the science of prophetic traditions. He was named the *Amir'l-Mu`mineen* in prophetic traditions. He composed his *Tarikh* and authored the *as-Saheeh*, which is considered the most exalted and soundest book which has occurred among the Muslims after the Mighty *Qur'an*. He said regarding it: "I never placed a prophetic tradition in my book except after taking a major ritual bath and praying two *rak'ats*." He also said regarding it: "I composed the *as-Saheeh* in sixteen years and made it a proof for what is between me and Allah ta`ala." An-Najm ibn al-Fudayl said: "I saw the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace in a dream as if he were walking and Muhammad ibn Isma`il was walking behind him. Whenever the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace would lift his foot, Muhammad ibn Isma`il would place his foot in the place from which the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace lifted it." Al-Hassan ibn Muhammad said: "I never saw anyone like Muhammad ibn Isma`il, and Muslim ibn al-Hujaaj did not attain the rank of Muhammad ibn Isma`il." Abu Zayd al-Marwazi said: "I was once sleeping between the *rukun* and the station of Ibrahim, and I saw the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace who then said to me: 'O Abu Zayd, for what reason are you studying the book of as-Shafi` and you are not studying my book?' I then said: 'O Messenger of Allah what is your book?' He said: 'The *Jaami`* of Muhammad ibn Isma`il.'" *Imam* Muslim ibn al-Hijaaj once said to him: "I bear witness that in this world there is no one like you." He then kissed his feet. He died on a Saturday of the night of the *Eid'l-Fitr* during the *isha* prayer and was buried on the day of the *Eid* after the *dhuhr* prayer in the year 256 A.H. he lived thirteen days short of 62 years. As for Muslim, he was Abu'l-Hussayn Muslim ibn al-Hujaaj ibn Muslim ibn Wardi ibn Kawshadh al-Qushayri an-Naysaburi, the author of the *as-Saheeh*. He was born in the year 204 A.H. He was from the scholars of the people and was a repository of knowledge. Abd'r-Rahman ibn Abi Hatim said: "Muslim was reliable among the traditionists." *Imam* Muslim said: "I composed this *al-Musnad as-Saheeh* from three hundred thousand prophetic traditions which I heard directly." Ahmad ibn Salma said: "I was with Muslim when he composed his *Saheeh* in fifteen years and it contains twelve thousand prophetic traditions." *Imam* Muslim said: "I did not place what I placed in this *al-Musnad* of anything except with proof, and I did not omit anything from it except with proof." Abu Abd'r-Rahman as-Salmi said: "I saw the *Shaykh*, and he possessed an excellent face and clothing. He wore an excellent robe and the tail of his turban hung between his shoulders." Muslim died in the month of *Rajab* in the year 261 A.H. while he was fifty something years old. The meaning of the words of the *Shehu* may the mercy of Allah be upon him: "...due to the consensus of the *Umma* regarding their acceptability"; this however is with the exceptions of two prophetic traditions. One is which he narrated in the section regarding superogatory prayers regarding the four *rak'ats* before the *asr* prayer, as he said: "I did not come across the four *rak'ats* before *asr* in the *Saheehayn*; however this was narrated by an-Nisaai' from the prophetic tradition of Ali, may Allah ennoble his face." The second is what he narrated in the Book of the Obligatory Alms where he said: "I have not come across the amount to be given for cattle in the *Saheehayn*." He then narrated a prophetic tradition on this from the narrations of at-Tirmidhi on the authority of Mu`adh. The meaning of the words of the *Shehu* may the mercy of Allah be upon him: "However, the expressions from the narrations of al-Bukhari are more

# SANKORE'

prominent in this book than those of Muslim, even though both contribute to what is largely desired in meaning”; he cited in this book 232 prophetic traditions, 207 from al-Bukhari, 23 from Muslim, one from an-Nisaa’i and one from at-Tirmidhi. The meaning of the words of the *Shehu* may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “The reason for this is that al-Bukhari is considered more authentic than Muslim in the view held by the majority of the scholars (*al-jamhuur*)”; that is to say that the al-Jaami` as-Saheeh which is more famous as the Saheeh al-Bukhari is the first of the six books of prophetic traditions. It is the most sublime of the books of Islam and the most superior of them after the Book of Allah ta`ala. *Imam* al-Bukhari said about it: “I saw the Prophet, upon him be peace and it was as if I were standing in front of him and in my hand was a fan and I was protecting him with it. I then asked one of those who interpret dreams about that and he said to me: ‘You will defend him from liars.’ It was this which prompted me to bring forth the al-Jaami` as-Saheeh.” Ibn Abi Hamza said: “The Saheeh of al-Bukhari is not recited during a time of adversity except that that adversity is removed. It is not carried on a ship and it sinks. When it is completed there is an accepted supplication.” The merits of this collection of prophetic traditions are immense. The numbers of its prophetic traditions are 7275; the numbers of its books are two hundred and something; its chapters are 3400; as the teacher Abdullahi ibn Fuduye` explained in his Siraaj`l-Bukhari. He also said in it: “Its soundness after that of the *Qur`an* is the most superior. Every other book is reliant upon it. It is sounder than the book of Muslim. Due to the conditions in its connectedness, so realize. In the firmness of its encountering, in its impartiality, and its men who are superior to the men of Muslim; although the consensus upholds the citing of what they consider sound with the acceptance of the Absolute Being.” The meaning of the words of the *Shehu* may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “Another reason is that I have the narration of al-Bukhari by direct transmission (*sama`an*)”; because he heard the transmission of the al-Jaami` as-Saheeh from his paternal and maternal uncle *Shaykh* al-Hajj Abu Muhammad Muhammad ibn Raj ibn Modibo Dutti ibn Hamm ibn `Aal ibn Muhammad Jubba ibn Muhammad Sanbu ibn Maasiran, may the mercy of Allah ta`ala be upon him, as he mentioned in his Asaaneed`l-Faqeer. He heard it with the recitation of the *Shaykh* of the entire text in the town of Marnona in the year 1200 A.H. in the month of *Rabi`l-Awwal* (circa 1786 C.E.). He then gave him license in it on the authority of his teacher Abu`l-Hassan as-Sindi al-Medini which he heard by direct transmission of the reading of Abd`r-Raheem al-Mujawir in the Rabat of Qarabish in the Masjid of the Prophet near the Gate where there is transcribed the poem of the servant girl. The *Shehu* also received the license to transmit it from *Shaykh* Abu al-Amana Jibril ibn Umar and from his son, Abu`t-Tawfeeq Umar ibn Jibril ibn Umar. See the introduction for the chain of authorities of the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be upon him in the al-Jaami` as-Saheeh of *Imam* al-Bukhari. The meaning of the words of the *Shehu* may the mercy of Allah be upon him: “...unlike the narrations of Muslim, although I have license (*ijaazat*) to transmit it”; as for the al-Jaami` as-Saheeh of *Imam* Muslim ibn al-Hujaaj, it is the second among the six books of prophetic traditions, and is the second of the Saheehayn which are the soundest of the books after the Book of Allah. The numbers of its prophetic traditions are 7275. The *Shehu* may the mercy of Allah be upon him, received license in it from the above mentioned paternal and maternal uncle, *Shaykh* Abu Muhammad Muhammad ibn Raj, as well as from *Shaykh* Abu al-Amana al-Hajj Jibril ibn Umar and his son *Shaykh* Abu`t-Tawfeeq Umar ibn Jibril ibn Umar. See the introduction for the chains of authority of the *Shehu* may the mercy of Allah be upon him in the Saheeh of *Imam* Muslim.



**Therefore, I ask Allah**, the Mighty Lord of the Tremendous Throne, that He make this work purely for His Generous sake and that He make it a proof for us and not against us; may He send down upon us His blessings on the Day of Standing before Him and at the time when mankind decomposes in their tombs; may He by means of this book benefit all that read it, explain it to others, write it down or incite others to it. Lastly, I seek from anyone who come upon this book and gains some benefit from it, that he associate me closely in his devout supplications that Allah may benefit me by it in this world and in the Hereafter; and success is with Allah.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> I recieved license in this book and in the remainder of the books of *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye`, may the mercy of Allah ta`ala be upon him, as well as the books of his companions, and children from my spiritual guide, my support, and lamp, the *Imam* and *Khateeb Shaykh* Muhammad al-Amin ibn Adam Kari`angha ibn Muhammad Tukur ibn Muhammad Sanbu ibn Muhammad Leeli ibn Abi Bakr ibn Sanbu Darneema, may Allah ta`ala be merciful to them, in the town of Maiurno in Sennar in present day Sudan; as he took it from his father *Shaykh* Adam Karia`angha and he from *Shaykh* Musa al-Muhajir, and he from *Imam* Ali ibn Abu Bakr and he from the blessed author, my master, the light of the age, the reviver of the religion, *Amir`l-Mu`mineen* Uthman ibn Fuduye` may Allah engulf him in His mercy, amen. O Allah O Lord of the Immense Throne, O Most Merciful of the merciful, O Most Merciful of the merciful, O Most Merciful of the merciful. O Allah send blessings upon our master Muhammad, Your servant, prophet and messenger, the Unlettered Prophet, and upon his family and companions and give them much peace to the extent of Your Immense Essence in every moment and time. O Allah be content with the spirit of the light of the age, the reviver of the religion, the Sword of Truth, the *Amir`l-Mu`mineen*, *Shehu* Uthman ibn Muhammad Fuduye`, and with our teachers and their teachers the first of them and the last of them. O Allah be merciful to *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye` and gather us together with him in the highest Firdaus in Paradise and among those who are settled in Your Divine Mercy and Pleasure. O Allah be merciful to our *Shaykh* Faruq ibn *Shaykh* Muhammad al-Amin ibn Adam, and be merciful to his father who gave me license in this blessed book, *Shaykh* Muhammad al-Amin. O Allah be merciful to his father and teacher the *Khateeb Shaykh* Adam Kari`angha, and be merciful to his teacher *Imam* Musa, and be merciful to his teacher, the learned jurist and *Khateeb*, *Shaykh* Ali ibn Abu Bakr. O Allah be merciful to his teacher and our *shaykh*, the author, *Shehu* Uthman ibn Muhammad ibn Uthman known as Dan Fodio. O Allah make us live by the life You gave *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye`. O Allah make us die with the death You granted *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye`. O Allah be merciful to *Amir`l-Mu`mineen* *Sultan* of the Blacklands, *Sultan* Maiurno, *al-Hajj* Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad at-Tahir ibn Muhammad Bello ibn Muhammad Attahiru ibn Ahmad Zaruuq ibn Abu Bakr Atiku ibn *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye`; extend his authority and command until it connects with that of *Imam* al-Mahdi. O Allah be merciful to the *Jama`at* of *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye`, his children and descendants wherever they are in the earth. O Allah be merciful to the *Sultan* of Sokoto, the *Wazir*, his assembly and all of the *amirs*, and officials in Northern Nigeria. O Allah make this commentary, annotation and redaction purely for Your Generous sake. O Allah make it a proof for us and not against us. O Allah show us the *baraka* of the work in this life and the Next. O Allah make this book beneficial to us, our wives, children, descendents and their descendents until the establishment of the Hour. O Allah open Your Book and the *Sunna* of Your Prophet to us inwardly and outwardly, and give us the ability to act in accordance with them by the rank of Your Most Holy Essence. O Allah show us the Truth as Truth and give us the ability to follow it and show us falsehood as falsehood and give us the ability to avoid it; make us live among those who revive the *Sunna* of Your Prophet, make us die among them, and resurrect us among them by the rank of Muhammad the Prophet of mercy, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. O Allah forgive us, our parents, all our teachers, descendents, brothers, wives, in laws, loved ones, the *Awliyya* of our times, and all of the *Umma* of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, their men, women, old and young. O our Lord accept the supplication of *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye` and accept our supplications with his by means of the rank of Your Most Holy Essence, and Your Most Beautiful Names, by the rank of Muhammad, the Prophet of mercy, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, his family and Companions, each time the mindful remembers him and each time the heedless forget him, each time the one prostrating prostrates and each time the one bowing bows, O Lord of the Tremendous Throne, O Most Merciful of the merciful, O Most Merciful of the merciful, O Most Merciful of the merciful, and the last of our supplications is: "All praises are due to Allah the Lord of the worlds."

**Realize O brothers** that all good is found in adherence (*itibaa'i*) and all evil is in heretical innovation (*ibtidaa'i*).<sup>12</sup> For this reason, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, spurred all of us on to follow his *Sunna* and to avoid invented matters (*muhdathaat'lumuur*)<sup>13</sup> in many traditions.

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<sup>12</sup> The meaning of his words, may Allah ta`ala be merciful to him: "Realize"; is to realize by means of precise transmission, judicious evidence, experienced tasting and unveiling, for it is not possible to know a thing except by acting in accordance with it. The meaning of his words, may Allah ta`ala be merciful to him: "O brothers"; is my brothers in my *jama`at* and under my supervision; or it means my brothers from among the *Umma* of the Muslims, which is the most preponderant view. The meaning of his words, may Allah ta`ala be merciful to him: "...that all good is found in adherence (*itibaa'i*) and all evil is in heretical innovation (*ibtidaa'i*)"; is a profound axiom from the principles of the religion, which have become well known on the tongues of the right acting scholars from the first and last. Abu Bakr as-Sideeq, may Allah be pleased with him 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." Umar ibn al-Khataab, may Allah be pleased with him once said: "I only do what I saw the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, do." Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him once said: "I will never leave the *Sunna* of the Messenger of Allah for the opinion of any man from among the people." Ibn Abass, may Allah be pleased with him once said: "Merely gazing upon a man from the people of the *Sunna* encourages one to the *Sunna* and prohibits heretical innovation." Abdallah ibn Mas`ud, may Allah be pleased with him once said: "Making mere intention to perform the *Sunna* is better than exerting effort in performing innovation." The master of the *Taabii`uun*, Uways al-Qarni once said: "Take care not to separate from the community, (that is the community which follows the *Sunna* and avoids innovation), lest you be separated from your *deen* while you are unawares and enter into the Fire among the first of those who enter it on the Day of Standing." The *Mujaddid* of the first century of Islam, the *Amir'l-Mu'mineen* Umar ibn Abd'l-'Aziz, may Allah be merciful to him said: "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, made a *Sunna*. And those who possessed the authority after him made a *Sunna*. Taking hold of them is: [1] acceptance of the Book of Allah; [2] exerting one's self in the obedience of Allah and [3] courage concerning the *deen* of Allah. It is not for anyone to change or alter it and do not look into the opinions of those who contradict them. Whoever imitates them is guided and whoever assist them is victorious. Whoever contradicts them *and follows other than the way of the believers; Allah will turn him towards that which he has turned and expose him to Hell - an evil destiny.*" *Imam* Malik, may Allah be merciful to him, used to often recite the following verse: "The best of matters in the *deen* is what is from the *Sunna*. And the worst of matters is invented heretical innovation." He also used to say: "The *Sunna* is the Ark of Noah, whoever gets aboard it will be saved, whoever fails to board it will be drowned." *Imam* as-Shafi`, may Allah be pleased with him used to say: "There is nothing left of the *Sunna* except to follow it." Ahmad ibn Hanbal, may Allah be merciful to him used to say: "No one has words next to the Book of Allah and the *Sunna* of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace." The *Imam* of the cadre of Sufis, our master Abu'l-Qasim al-Junayd al-Baghdadi, may Allah sanctify his secret said: "All the spiritual paths have been sealed up, except imitating the traces of the Messenger may Allah bless him and grant him peace." The Master of the masters of Sufis Abu Hamza al-Baghdadi, may Allah be merciful to him said: "There is no guide to the Path to Allah ta`ala except in following the Beloved, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Whoever makes his soul adhere to the courtesies of the *Sunna*, Allah will illuminate his heart with the lights of direct experiential gnosis of Allah. For there is no spiritual path nobler than following the Beloved, may Allah bless him and grant him peace in his commands, actions, words and character." All of these words are evidence that all the good in this life and the Next is in following the *Sunna* of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and that all evil is in contrived matters of heretical innovations.

<sup>13</sup> Here ends facsimile 3 of the Arabic manuscript.

**Among them are his words**, may Allah bless him and grant him peace: “Verily the most excellent discourse is the Book of Allah and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. The worst of matters are invented affairs. Every invented thing is an innovation. Every innovation is error and every error and its doer shall be in the Fire.”<sup>14</sup> Jaabir ibn Abdallah has related this and its source is from Muslim.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> The meaning of his words, upon him be blessings and peace: “Verily the most excellent discourse is the Book of Allah” is an expression extracted from the words of Allah ta`ala: “Allah has revealed the best of Discourses as a Book”; due to Its brevity and Its comprehension which contains every spiritual good. Subsumed in the meaning of ‘most excellent’ is ‘veracity’ (*sidq*) as it was stated in another narration: “Verily the most truthful of discourse is the Book of Allah.” The meaning of ‘His discourse’ is His speech as it was stated explicitly in another narrative where he said: “The best speech is the Speech of Allah.” The meaning of his words, upon him be blessings and peace: “...and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace”; is that the expression ‘conduct’ (*hadyi*) where the letter *haa* is inflected with *fat’ha* and the letter *daal* is inflected with the *sukuun*, means ‘manner’ or ‘path’. In some narrations the expression is pronounced ‘*huda*’, with the letter *haa* inflected with *damma* and the letter *daal* inflected with *fat’ha*; which means guidance that is diametrically opposed to error. Thus, the expression refers to his manner of behavior, pleasing spiritual path and balanced comportment; which was stated explicitly in another narration: “The best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad”; or in another narration: “The most superior guidance is the guidance of Muhammad.” All of this is evidence that the *Sunna* of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace is the Real Path to Allah ta`ala and to His gnosis. This is in conformity with what Abu’l-Qasim al-Junayd, may Allah be pleased with him once said: “The paths to Allah, all of them, have been closed except in following the traces of the Messenger may Allah bless him and grant him peace.” The meaning of his words upon him be blessings and peace: “The worst of matters are invented affairs”, where the plural of ‘invented affairs’ refers specifically to those issues which have no original verifiable foundation within the *shari`a*. These inventions are called heretical innovations as al-Qurtubi mentioned. That is to say, that they are heretical innovations which contradict the Book, the *Sunna* and the consensus of the *Umma*. The meaning of his words, upon him be blessings and peace: “Every invented thing is an innovation. Every innovation is error;” is a general statement which in essence refers to the majority of innovations. The linguists say: “It means everything that is done which had no prior precedence.” Some of the scholars said that innovations are five divisions: those that are obligatory, highly recommended, prohibited, reprehensible and allowable. Those that are obligatory include the organization of the proofs of the scholastic theologians in order to refute the ideas of the atheists, the heretics and those who resemble them. Those that are prohibited and reprehensible are apparent and they are what were meant by his words upon him be peace: “Every invented thing is an innovation. Every innovation is error.” It is for this reason that Umar ibn al-Khataab said regarding the issue of the *taraaweeh* prayer: “This is a blessed innovation.” He named it an innovation (*bid`a*) based upon the outward form in which it had been established. It is for this reason that is not permissible to object to every innovation of anyone except when it is known that what the person has done is a prohibited heretical innovation whose prohibition is agreed upon or he has committed a reprehensible heretical innovation whose reprehensibility is agreed upon. The meaning of his words, upon him be blessings and peace: “...and every error and its doer shall be in the Fire”; is every heretical innovation, that is say, every invented matter econsidered to be a forbidden heretical innovative error or reprehensible one that has no foundation in the *shari`a*, will be in the Fire. This is the same for the bearer of the same who does so merely to fulfill his passions or lower desires. This is contrary to those invented matters which have their foundation in the *shari`a*, either through legal analogy with its parallel in the *shari`a* or other than that from the legal sources.

<sup>15</sup> He was Abu Abdallah Jaabir ibn Abdallah ibn `Amr ibn Hiram ibn Ka`b ibn Salma al-Ansari al-Khazaraji as-Salmi al-Medini. He was an a jurist, an immense *Imam*, *mujtahid* and traditionist. He was a Companion of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace from among the people of the *Ba`ayat`r-Ridwaan*. He was present at during the night of *al-Aqaba* with his father and was the youngest of the seventy Ansaar at that time. He was also among the 1400 individuals of the People of Hudaibiyya about whom the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “Today, you are the best people on the face of the earth.” He was present at the Battle of Badr and was eighteen years of age at the time. He was present at Uhud, the Battle of the Trench and the Oath of Allegiance given under the tree. He transmitted abundant knowledge from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. He also narrated from Abu Bakr, Umar, Ali, Abu `Ubayda, Mu`adh ibn Jabal, az-

**There are also his words**, as it has been related in the Saheeh of al-Bukhari and of Muslim on the authority of A'isha, may Allah be pleased with her:<sup>16</sup> “Whoever introduces into this matter of ours that which is not from it will be rejected.”<sup>17</sup> **In the narration** of Muslim it says:<sup>18</sup> “Whoever does an act which is not in accordance with our matter will be rejected.”<sup>19</sup>

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Zubayr and many others beside them. He was the *mufti* of Medina during his time. He was the last of those who were present in the second *al-'Aqaba* to die. He lived 94 years and died in the year 78 A.H.

<sup>16</sup> She was *Umm'l-Mu'mineen* A'isha al-Qurayshiyya at-Taymiyya al-Makkiyya, the daughter of the *Imam*, the greatest 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 Taym. She was the wife of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace and was without dispute the most learned woman of the jurist of the *Umma*. The extent of her prophetic narrations reached 1210. Al-Bukhari and Muslim agree upon the veracity of 174. Al-Bukhari transmitted 54 isolated traditions from her while Muslim transmitted 69.

<sup>17</sup> The meaning of his words, upon him be blessings and peace: “Whoever introduces into this matter of ours that which is not from it”; that is to say, if he begin something in this clear perfect affair which requires no additional inventions; and refers to anything which is not from the Book and the *Sunna*, either by clear evidence, inexplicable expression or through legal extraction. The *Shehu* said in his *Ihya*: “As for the derivatives of the foundations (*tafree` l-usuul*) which emerge from it, they are not included in the things to be rejected - like [1] the writing down of the *Qur'an* in book form, [2] the *madh'habs* which have been established upon the best reflection of the *fuqaha* who exercise independent judgment (*mujtahid*) by tracing their branches back to the sayings of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace; [3] the composed books on the subject of grammar, arithmetic, the obligations and other than these from the sciences which find its origin and are built upon the teachings and orders of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. None of the above sciences are included among the things which the above tradition rejects.” The meaning of his words, upon him be blessings and peace: “...will be rejected” is as the linguists say, that rejection in this prophetic tradition means that the invented matter will be rejected and not accepted because it is a falsehood which has no legal support. This prophetic tradition is an immense principle from the principles of the Islam and comprises the comprehensive speech of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. It is explicit in its rejection of every heretical innovation and contrivance. It is the foundation of holding to the Book and the *Sunna* and the rejection of passions and heretical innovations. The traditionist and *Imam* Abu `Amr Abd'l-Barr said: “Every person who invents a matter in the religion will be driven away from the Pond the Prophet, such as the *Khawarij*, the *Rawafid*, and the remainder of the followers of their whim and passions.”

<sup>18</sup> That is to say, that it is related from the narrations of the al-Jaami` as-Saheeh of Muslim on the authority of A'isha bint Abu Bakr may Allah ta'ala be pleased with them. This is the first of the prophetic traditions cited from him by the *Shehu*, may the mercy of Allah be with him.

<sup>19</sup> The meaning of his words upon him be blessings and peace: “Whoever does an act”; is that whoever contrives an act, or whoever does an act which was contrived by someone else. The meaning of his words upon him be blessings and peace: “...which is not in accordance with our matter”, means ‘our judgment and permission; or it means which is not in accordance with the *Sunna* of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, the *Sunnan* of the Rightly Guided *Khalifs*, and right acting scholars after him. The meaning of his words upon him be blessings and peace: “...will be rejected”; is that it will be thrown back at him and not accepted because it is not from the matters of the *shari`a*. This prophetic tradition is among those traditions which is it is necessary to memorize and act in accordance with in showing the fallacies of the rejecters, and which should be disseminated in order that others can take as evidence. The *Shehu* said in his *Ihya's-Sunna*: “Perhaps the perpetrators of an innovation which others had invented before them, might say: ‘I have not invented anything.’ Then this prophetic tradition should be cited in order to refute him; which is the most overt way to answer every person who invents matters in the *deen* - regardless if he be the inventor himself or if someone else invented it before him.” This prophetic tradition is a foundation from the foundations of the *shari`a*. It is for this reason that he cited this prophetic tradition and the two before it in the introduction of the book.