

SANKORE'



Institute of Islamic - African Studies International

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا

Chapter Two

On the Obligation of Giving Sincere Advice to the Ruler¹

Realize that giving sincere advice to the Muslims, especially the leaders, is among the practices (*sunnah*) of the Messengers. It has been related in a prophetic tradition narrated by Muslim² on the authority of Tamim ad-Daari, may Allah be pleased with him³ that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said:

((الدِّينُ النَّصِيحَةُ))

“The deen is sincere counsel.”⁴ It was said to him, “With whom, O Messenger of Allah?” He said:

¹ Probably one of the best texts composed on the concept of sincere advice (*naseeha*) due to its conciseness was that composed by *Shaykh* Abdullahi ibn Fuduye' called an-Nasaa'ih Fi Ahammi al-Masaalihi which he authored on a Thursday, the 20th of *Jumad 'l-Akhir* in the year 1242 A.H. (1826 C.E.). He arranged the text into an introduction and five chapters. In the introduction *Shaykh* Abdullahi explains the general meaning of the prophetic tradition cited below, and in the five subsequent chapters he explains what each of the five categories mean and entail. He clarified that his book was a summarization of *Shaykh* Abu'l-Abass Ahmad ibn Ahmad Zaruuq famous text called an-Naseehat'l-Kaafiyya. Allah willing we will present this wonderful text of *Shaykh* Abdullahi to the reader so that you can have a more comprehensive understanding of the principle of sincere advice.

² For a brief biography *Imam* Muslim see the introduction footnote # 18, www.siiasi.org. This prophetic tradition was also related by Ahmad in his Musnad, Abu Dawud, and an-Nisaa'i' on the authority of Tameem ad-Daari, as well as at-Tirmidhi and an-Nisaa'i' on the authority of Abu Hurayra, and Ahmad in his Musnad on the authority of Ibn Abass; by al-Bukhari in his Tarikh and at-Tabarani in his al-Awsat on the authority of Thawbaan; by al-Bizaar on the authority of Ibn Umar

³ He was Abu Ruqayya **Tamim ad-Daari** ibn Uus ibn Kharija ibn Sawd ibn Jadheema al-Lakhami al-Filistini ad-Daari. He reached Medina in the ninth year of the *hijra* and accepted Islam from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. When he accepted Islam he said to the Prophet: “O Messenger of Allah, indeed Allah will manifest you over the entire earth. Grant me a village from the house of Lahm.” He said: “It is yours.” And he had it written for him. Later, Tamim came with this letter to Umar and showed it to him who said: “I was a witness to this letter, so see that it is fulfilled.” *Imam* al-Layth related that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said about this land grant: “There will not be against you a subsequent repeal of this.” Thus, it is a land grant which remains in their hands to this day. He narrated many prophetic traditions and was known for his intense worship of Allah and recitation of the Book of Allah. Among his merits is that Allah ta'ala revealed: “*And those who possess knowledge of the Book.*” Qatada said that this verse was revealed about Salma, Ibn Salaam and Tamim ad-Daari. Ibn Sireen said: “The *Qur'an* was gathered during the time of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace by Ubayy, Uthman, Zayd and Tamim ad-Daari.” Abu al-Muhliiba said: “Tamim ad-Daari used to seal the *Qur'an* every seven days.” Al-Munkadir ibn Muhammad related on the authority of his father who said: “once Tamim ad-Daari slept one night failing to wake up for the night prayers, and as punishment for he did he went for an entire year standing the whole night in prayer.” He died in the year 40 of the *hijra*.

⁴ In the narrations of Ahmad on the authority of Tamim ad-Daari its states: “Verily the religion is sincere advice: to Allah, His Book, His Messenger, to the leaders of the Muslims and the common among them.” In the narration of at-Tabarani on the authority of Thawbaan it states: “The head of the religion is sincere advice to Allah, His religion, His Messengers, His Book, to the leaders of the Muslims and to Muslims in general.” In the narration of at-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Hurayra

((اللَّهُ وَلِكِتَابِهِ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِأَيِّمَةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَعَامَّتِهِمْ))

“With Allah, His Messenger, His Book, the leaders of the Muslims and their common people.”⁵

Ibn Hajr al-Haytami said in his al-Fat’hu ‘l-Mubeen⁶ regarding the above words: ‘... the leaders of the Muslims (*al-a’immat al-muslimeen*)’, these are the

the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “The religion is sincere advice”; and he repeated it three times. *Imam* Muhammad ibn Abd’r-Rahman said in his Tuhfat’l-Ahwadhi: “He repeated it three times for reasons of emphasis and also to indicate the concern that one should have for its importance.” In fact, in any prophetic tradition where the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace repeats something three times it is to show that the matter is extremely important and should be given top priority in the heart of the Muslims. *Imam* al-Jaziri said in his an-Nihaaya: “Sincere advice (*naseeha*) is a word which expresses in general the desire for good for the person to whom advice is being given. There is no other single word which is able to express this meaning other than the word *naseeha*. The etymological root of the word linguistically means ‘clearness or frankness (*khuluus*).” *Imam* Abu Sulayman al-Khataabi said: “Sincere advice is the desire for good for the one to whom advice is being given.” He also said: “Sincere advice is a comprehensive word whose meaning is to gain control of that portion which brings good to the one to whom advice is given. This word, *naseeha* is a succinct noun and comprises conciseness of speech. For there is no single word in the Arabic language which fulfills the expression in the meaning of this word...The Arabic language does not have a word which gathers together the good of this world and Next as the word *naseeha* (sincere advice.)” *Imam* an-Nawwawi said: “The word *naseeha* is taken from the mending (*nasaha*) that a man does to his clothing when he sews them. Thus, the Arabs resembled the actions of the one giving advice to a person, to one who makes corrections in worn clothing. It is also said that the word is taken from the purification (*nusihat*) of honey when it is being screened of wax. Thus, the Arabs resemble the purification of speech from all forms of deception to the cleaning of honey of extraneous matter.” *Shaykh* Abdullahi ibn Fuduye’ said in his an-Nasaa’ihi: “Realize that sincere advice is a part of *Imaan*, and the achievement of sincere advice is among the signs of absolute certainty. The most ignorant of people is he who causes his soul to be forsaken until he enters his grave. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: ‘The intelligent man is the one who restrains his soul and acts for what will come after death. The stupid man is the one who follows the corrupt passions of his soul and entertains false hope regarding Allah’. He upon him be blessings and peace said: ‘The religion is sincere advice.’ They said: ‘With whom O Messenger of Allah?’ He said: ‘With Allah, His Messenger, His Book, the common among the Muslims and their elite’.”

⁵ *Shaykh* Abdullahi ibn Fuduye’ said in his an-Nasaa’ihi: “Sincere advice with the Allah is by following His commands, giving victory to his religion, and surrendering to Him in His judgments. Sincere advice to His Messenger is by following his *Sunna*, honoring those near him, and by showing compassion for his *Umma*. Sincere advice with His Book is by being attentive to Its verses, following Its commands, and perfecting Its recitation. Sincere advice to the common among the Muslims is by rushing to take care of their affairs, by establishing their respect, and by giving assistance to them in all their circumstances whether in bringing benefit or warding off dangers. Sincere advice to the elite among the Muslims is by being obedient to the *amirs* except in that which there is unanimous agreement regarding its prohibition; by having belief and confirmation in the scholars except in those matters which are not guided by knowledge; and by surrendering to the ascetics in those matters in which there is no objection.” What *Shaykh* Abdullahi meant by the ascetics (*fuqara*) are those servants of Allah ta’ala who have turned completely from this life and have withdrawn from their hearts everything besides Allah ta’ala.” *Imam* Muhammad ibn Abd’r-Rahman said in his Tuhfat’l-Ahwadhi: “Sincere advice with Allah is soundness of belief regarding His Oneness and sincere intention in His worship. Sincere advice with His Book is acceptance of It and acting in accordance with It. Sincere advice with His Messenger is acceptance of his prophethood and messengership, and compliance with what he commands and prohibits. Sincere advice to the leaders is by obedience to them regarding the truth and not revolting against them with the sword when they act tyrannical. Sincere advice to the common among the Muslims is by guiding them that which has their general welfare in it.” *Imam* an-Nawwawi said commentary upon the Saheeh of Muslim: “This prophetic tradition contains an immense affair, for around it revolves the entirety of Islam. As for those scholars who say that these words are one of four prophetic traditions which gather the entire matters of Islam, it is not as they claim. Rather, the entire affair of Islam revolves around this prophetic tradition alone.”

khulafa or their representatives (*nuwwaab*) regarding what accords with the truth. This includes praying behind them, making the *jihad* with them, giving the obligatory alms (*sadaqa*) over to them when they request it when they are just. It also includes avoiding withdrawing from obedience to them even when they are oppressive. It includes making supplication for their correction and assisting them, admonishing them and reminding them of Allah and His judgments. It includes giving excellent preaching to them, but with compassion and kindness. It includes teaching them about those things they may be heedless of and about that, which may have not reached them concerning the rights of the Muslims.⁷ It includes making the hearts⁸ of the people fond of showing obedience to the ruler and avoiding deceiving them with lies and undue praise. It includes being sincere towards the scholars (*al-`ulama*) by accepting what they have related, following them in the judgments, having good opinions of them, lauding them, showing respect for them and fulfilling what is obligatory for them based upon the rights which are known to be unanimous among them.”

At-Tartushi⁹ said in his *Siraaj`l-Muluuk*:¹⁰ “Sincere council to the leaders means assisting them in what they are responsible to establish, admonishing them during their heedlessness, guiding them during their slips, and teaching them what they are ignorant about. It also means warning them about those who desire to harm them, informing them of the character of their actions¹¹, encouraging them to pursue

⁶ The *al-Fat`h`l-Mubeen* is a commentary upon the *al-Arba`een* of *Imam* an-Nawwawi by the above mentioned *Shaykh* Ahmad ibn Hajr al-Haythami [d. 974 A.H.].

⁷ This principle is extremely important today in a globalize society where the some subjects of a *Sultan* and those under his authority live in distant lands, sometimes under the political jurisdiction of the non-Muslims. It is in these circumstances that the regional *amirs* and jurist who reside in that land are obligated to inform the *Sultan* about the real social, political and religious concerns of that community. The principles of the social contract (*mu`ahida*), emigration (*hijra*), military struggle (*jihad*), and their feasibility in these times cannot be held back from the *Sultan*. The role that international law plays in the protection of national minorities and the rights that international law provide for national minorities to be associated with their members outside of the nation-state in which they reside as well as the cultural, intellectual and linguistic rights which states are required to provide in order to guarantee to the protection and proactive participation of national minorities within the state. All of these concerns are obligations which the *Sultan* must be aware of because without them, then those under his jurisdiction would be in a collective state of disobedience.

⁸ Here ends folio 14 of manuscript B after 18 lines of colophon.

⁹ He was Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-Waleed ibn Khalf ibn Sulayman ibn Ayyub al-Fihri al-Andalusī at-Tartushi al-Maliki. He was a learned scholar, jurist, spiritual exemplar and the *Shaykh* of the Maliki school of thought during his time. Ibn Shakwaal said: “He was a learned *Imam*, ascetic, scrupulously pious, extremely humble, possessed little of this world and was content with what was sufficient.” Ibrahim ibn Mahdi said: “Our *Shaykh* Abu Bakr’s asceticism and worship was more extensive than his knowledge.” In addition the above mentioned *Siraaj`l-Muluuk*, at-Tartushi composed works on the prohibition of singing, on asceticism, on differences of opinion among the jurist, on heretical innovations and inventions, on filial piety, on the principles of jurisprudence as well as on answering questions put to him by the Jews of Egypt. He was the strongest opponent against the *Ihya` Uluum `d-Deen* of *Imam* al-Ghazali. He died in Alexandria, Egypt in the month of *Jumad `l-Ulaa* in the year 125 of the *hijra*

¹⁰ The *Siraaj`l-Muluuk* by the above mentioned Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-Waleed al-Qurshi al-Fihri al-Maliki at-Tartushi is a collection of the biography of the Prophets, the narratives of the *awliyya*, the admonitions of the scholars, the wisdom of the sages, and the extraordinary tales of the *khalifs*. He composed the text for al-Ma`muun ibn al-Batanikhi one of the *wazirs* of Egypt. It is arranged into sixty four chapters. According to the scholars a ruler never hears from this text except that he orders it to be transcribed, nor does government minister listen to it, except that he makes it his constant companion. By studying the text the wise man can dispense with researching into the lives of the sages, and the rulers can dispense with having to consult *wazirs*.

¹¹ Here ends folio 10 of manuscript A after 25 lines of colophon.

the needs of their subjects, remedying their shortcomings in taking care of the needs of their subjects, helping them in all words against them, and opposing those hearts that are against them.”

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