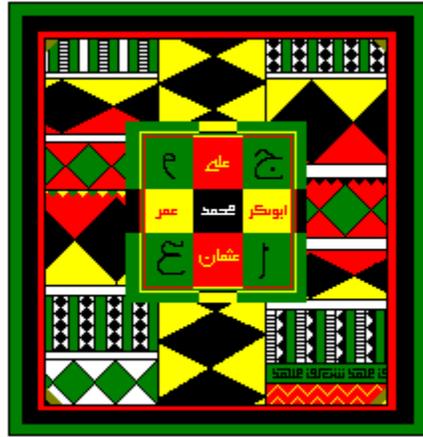


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The Advice to the Friend Concerning the Judgments of Earning A Living

Amir ul-Mu'mineen

Muhammad Bello ibn Shehu Uthman

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Forward

There is no god except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

This is a translation of Tanbeeh as-Saahib 'ala 'l-Ahkaam al-Mukaasib of the great teacher and leader Muhammad Bello ibn *Shehu* Uthman. It delineates the social practices of the African people of the great Islamic Empire of Sokoto. It is a book by African Muslims for them and the world. It is evidence, which explodes the myths that European history has given of the African Muslim as being shiftless and lazy. These myths put forward by them have been nothing more than overt political attempts to justify the enslaving of people who were ethically far superior to themselves. Their 'history' of us was their feeble attempts to show that the African was and shall always be incapable of responsible self-government. Hence, the African Muslim shall always be in need of the benevolent civilization of the 'white man'.

Unfortunately, Africans have fallen into the trap of this standard because of the lack of **KNOWLEDGE OF SELF**. And when I say self-knowledge, I do not mean the 'fantasy' of the Nile valley kingdoms, nor am I talking about the *jaahili* kingdoms of 'shango' or the 'dogon', and definitely not the meta-historical myths of 'the tribe of Shabazz'. When I discuss '**KNOWLEDGE OF SELF**' I refer to the lucid high civilization generated by African Muslims for over 13 centuries. This is the self-knowledge that African Muslims and the rest of the Muslim world have been intentionally kept from knowing and examining. This is the only part of our history that can be used as an activating element to restore our humanity and self-determination; in a time when European and *kaafir* civilization is on the decline. The legacy left by our Muslim ancestors is an open blueprint for us to move towards the obligation of human dignity and self-determination and eventual self-governance.

This book is concerned with earning a living, business and, to some extent, the purpose of economics. It uncovers the hypocrisy of those Muslims who sit at home and do nothing to provide for themselves and family, who use the excuse of sufi 'asceticism' to justify divorcing themselves from being in the middle of active change and development of themselves, their families and society. Fortunately, the author of this book was a staunch Sufi and member of the famous Qadiriyya, Khalwatiyya and Shadhiliyya brotherhoods, but unlike the corrupt 'mystics' of these times, he was thoroughly aware of the responsibility to family and society.

The asceticism of *Sultan* Muhammad Bello included not taking funds from the public treasury, even though he was the ruler of an empire, which included the wealth of more than fifty city-states. He only consumed what he earned from the labor of his hands. It is reported that he made grass mats and went and sold them in the markets alongside his subjects. This was a time when the so-called founding fathers of America had African slaves laboring without pay to enrich them and make that nation one of the richest nations of the world.

In this work, Muhammad Bello points out the inherit honor in work and earning a living. You can say that this book predated the so-called 'protestant work ethic' that some Muslims here in America are too eager to sanction and glorify. This is a book of *Muslim work ethic* and it was written by an African Muslim in Africa during the height of slavery in America. Why our 'imams' glorify the work ethics of Protestants is hard to say; especially when both European Protestants and Catholics were directly involved with the buying and selling of Africans in order to work for them. Where is the 'ethics' in this? And when did these Protestants, Baptists and Catholics find the time from their plantations to develop this so-called 'work ethic'? These ideas are no more than myths - just like the myth that African Americans were lazy and shiftless while

at the same time being forced to labor night and day to build their mythical empire. If what we say sounds prejudice, we make no apologies. Four hundred years of slavery and exploitation along with being completely stripped of our Islamic heritage is enough as an incentive for protest.

This excellent book was written in 1818 at the height of the African Jihad movements of the 19th century. During this same period, Europe and America were involved with the denuding of African wealth and sons.

The outline of this small work is designed in such a way to make it easy to comprehend its contents. Muhammad Bello, like his father before him, always began by giving the proofs for his opinions from the Qur'an, then the *Sunna*, then the early community and finally he mentions his own opinion based upon the above opinions. This methodology of writing has been the pattern of all *tajdeed* (reform) movements from the earliest times up until now.

The founders of the Sokoto Islamic Empire considered themselves the *mujaddids* (reformers) of the 19th century. And history bears witness that they were responsible for renewing all the sciences of al-Islam and establishing just Islamic rule. Not every Muslim activist is a scholar, and not every scholar is capable of executing Islamic government. Yet, dynamic activism, scholarship and just government were the hallmarks of the state generated by Muhammad Bello and his companions. The translation of this work was completed while I was in the Republic of Sudan (hafadhaha Allah) in 1989 and was first published on my return to the US in 1990.

The **Sankore Institute** is honored to present the *Tanbeeh as-Saahib* to you in order that you may compare the ethics of our Muslim ancestors with the 'ethics' of our Christian enslavers. Perhaps the old myths can die along with the demise of the societies they help bolster. And out of its' dust there can arise a community calling to all that is right, commanding the good and forbidding evil, filling the earth with justice and equity just as it had been previously filled with oppression and economic injustice.

Muhammad Shareef bin Farid
Founding Director of SIIASI

Introduction

The author of this concise but excellent work was Shaykh Muhammad Bello ibn ‘Uthman ibn Fuduyi. He was born in a town called Marnona, in present day Niger, on October 1195/1780. His father was the famous Shaykh and founder of the Islamic Empire of Sokoto and his mother was Hawwa the daughter of one of the local Fullani clans of Marnona, *Malam* Adam. Thus Muhammad Bello was born into a very learned family. He was born during the time when his famous father, Shaykh Uthman, was conducting his preaching tours throughout Hausaland.

Shaykh Muhammad Bello first received his teachings of the recitation and memorization of the Qur’an from his father Shaykh Uthman. From his father he also learned the fundamental books of *tawheed* (divine unity), jurisprudence and Sufism (purification of the heart). His father then turned Muhammad Bello over into the hands of his uncles, the most influential of them being Shaykh Abdullahi ibn Fuduyi. From the age of 7 until the age of 24 Muhammad Bello’s learning and character were molded by the piety and intellectual brilliance of his parents and numerous aunts and uncles.

Among the uncles from whom Muhammad Bello took his knowledge were Abdullahi ibn Fuduyi, Alfa Umar, Shaykh Ibrahim ibn Fuduyi and Shaykh Abu Bakri ibn Fuduyi. He also studies with some of the teachers of his father; like Shaykh Abdullahi Ghanga, Shaykh Muji, Shaykh Muhammad Mandjara and Shaykh Muhammad Sanbo.

Among the books that Muhammad Bello studied with his teachers was al-Ajrumia, Qatri an-Nadi, Bulugh al-Arab and Alafiyya of ibn Malik concerning the grammar of Arabic language. He studied al-Akhdariya, al-Ashmawiyya, Jam’u al-jawaami’, al-Karaashi, al-Kawkab as-Saati’, al-Mukhtasar, al-Qaraafi, Risaalah of Ibn Abi Zayd, and Waraqat Imam al-Haramayn concerning jurisprudence. He read Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Alfiyat al-Iraqi and Alfiyat as-Sanad concerning the Prophetic traditions and its sciences. In the science of *tawheed*, he studied the six books of Imam Sanusi. He also studied other books concerning poetry, rhetoric, prosody, Qur’anic recitation, and history.

Muhammad Bello was the third man to take the oath of allegiance from his father, Shaykh Uthman, in 1803. Shaykh Uthman appointed him as one of his chief advisors and also minister of defense. By 1808, the community of Shaykh Uthman had conquered the whole of Hausaland. The next year Muhammad Bello moved his army to Sokoto, where he made his headquarters. In 1811, Muhammad Bello wrote his famous historical work called Infaq al-Maisur Fi Dhikri Bilaad at-Takrur. This book was a history of the tribes of West Africa, their empires, scholars and righteous men. It comprised the period of the Songhai Empire up until 1811. This work is a source book for Islamic history in Africa and it gives the most accurate accounts of the establishment of the Sokoto Empire.

In 1812 Shaykh Uthman decided to divide the empire into two administrative regions. The eastern region, whose headquarters was in Gwandu, was headed by the brother of the Shaykh, Abdullahi. The western region was placed under Muhammad Bello.

On Sunday night, 20th of April, 1817, Shaykh Uthman ibn Fuduyi, may Allah be pleased with him, died at the age of 63. Muhammad Bello was unanimously appointed as Caliph of the state that same year. It was the following year, in 1818, that he wrote this treatise (Tanbeeh as-Saahib). It was written in order to inspire his subjects towards social responsibility. Muhammad Bello was concerned with the tendency among many of the ascetics of the society to neglect their responsibilities to themselves, their families and toward the broader community. He utilized clear verses from the Qur’an, sound Prophetic traditions and the words of the early

community and the wise men in order to illustrate that true piety consists of taking care of the economic needs of ones family, the nearest of kin and the needy and destitute.

Because of the insecurity that set in as a result of the death of his father, Muhammad Bello employed his keen intellect to rally the Muslims around the call of social responsibility through economics. He was able to use that same call to summon them towards defense of the state, being that *jihad* was the best means in view of earning a living. There is no doubt that this small book succeeded in uniting his community and inspiring them towards responsibility to the society as history bears witness.

Many of the contemporary historians describe Muhammad Bello as being extremely just and equitable. He advised his many *Amirs* to close the frontiers and protect the roads; to establish justice and execute the *shari'ah*; to avoid insulting, striking, imprisoning or killing anyone without valid grounds from the law; to guard against bribes, illegal taxes and lavish spending. He admonished them to keep company with the righteous and the learned and to listen to their advice; to obey the Caliph; help the wayfarer and the poor and to assist in maintaining al-Islam and the overall security of the state.

Shaykh Muhammad Bello was a scholar, military leader and statesman. Under his rule the Sokoto Islamic Empire covered over ten thousand square kilometers. About this Muhammad Bello has said in his own words:

“When Allah blessed us to take control of this land we appointed in every region a governor, to make the people adhere to the Qur’an, the *Sunna* and the *Shari'ah*; to forbid the doing of deeds contrary to the *Shari'ah* and to abolish their satanic customs and innovations. For this reason, the land has become a pure fountain for those who come and go, for the settled and the nomad. Everyone is secure in his passage through our land, the routes are opened and traffic has increased. This land now does not fear anything but Allah, ta’ala, and our thanks are to Him.”

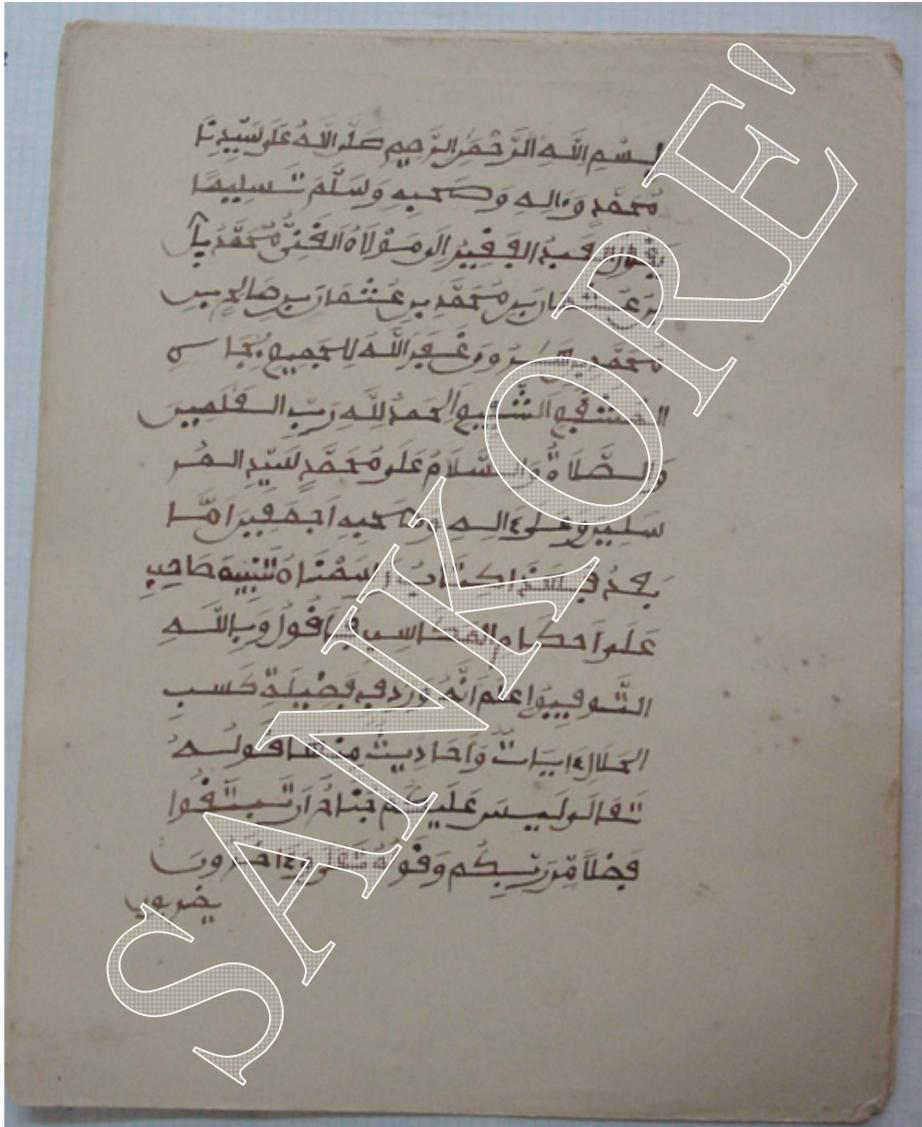
Shaykh Uthman said in his book called Najm al-Ikhwaan, addressing all those who followed him, “Occupy yourselves with the reading of the books of my son, Muhammad Bello, because he is mostly concerned with the political affairs of this community...” This small treatise is one of 114 books written by Shaykh Muhammad Bello. He wrote books concerning every branch of the sciences of al-Islam. He also acted as the physician for the empire, haven written over 20 books on medicine. He was a prolific writer who was known for writing books on horse back while on his way to conduct *jihad*. His most famous works, as Shaykh Uthman pointed out, were those concerning politics, governance and economics.

Bello derived the inspiration for his books from the Qur’an, the *Sunna*, the *Ijma'a*, and from the works of his illustrious father and uncles. He was therefore sure of their success and the correctness in enforcing what was in them. Undoubtedly the sanctions given by these authorities which he so often quoted helped to win acceptance for his policies and to generate enthusiasm for the *jihad* which he often conducted. From the earliest times of the *jihad*, Bello was fond of living in the frontier that separated the lands of Islam and the lands of disbelief. In fact, he was responsible for building the majority of these frontier towns, called *ribaats*, during

the early days of the *jihad*. One of these *ribaats* was a town called Wurno, where Muhammad Bello made his headquarters during the last ten days of his rule.

Shaykh Muhammad Bello died on the 26th of October 1837 after a seven-month illness at the age of 56, in Wurno where he is presently buried. Muhammad Bello was the second Caliph of a chain of caliphs whose rule still remains to this very day in both Northern Nigeria and in the Republic of the Sudan. We ask Allah to benefit us by them, to give them victory over their enemies and to help all of the Muslims against those who disbelieve, Ameen.

Muhammad Shareef ibn Farid
Sankore' Institute of Islamic – African Studies
December 29, 1990
Houston, Texas



Folio 2 of manuscript B of the Tanbeeh 's-Saahib of Sultan Muhammad Bello digitized from the archives of the Center of Islamic Studies at the University of Shaykh Uthman Danfodio, Sokoto, Nigeria

Tanbeeh as-Saahib
‘Ala ‘l-Ahkaam al-Makaasib

**The Advice to the Friend Concerning the
Judgments of Earning A Living**

In the name of Allah, the Universally Compassionate, the Individually Merciful. Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon [our master Muhammad and his Family and Companions, abundantly.]¹

Says the poorest slave of his Self-Subsistent Lord; **Muhammad Bello bin Uthman bin Muhammad bin Uthman bin Salih bin Muhammad bin Harun**² (may Allah forgive all of them by the rank of Muhammad the Interceding Prophet who will be sought after for intercession).

All praises are due to Allah, the Sustainer of the Worlds. Peace and blessings be upon Muhammad the master of Messengers and upon his Family and Companions all of them.

To continue: this is the book, which we have transcribed, called:

Advice to the Friend **Concerning the Legal Judgments of Earning a Living.**

Qur'an:

I say, and success in this is from Allah. Know that there have been many verses and traditions related concerning the virtue of earning the permitted (*halaal*). From these are the words of ta'ala³:

{لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ}

“There is no harm on you to seek after the bounties of your Lord”⁴

¹ In manuscript A the scribe wrote: “May Allah send blessings upon the Generous Prophet, and upon his family, Companions and sincere partisans.” This indicates that the beginning of any manuscript by an author starts where the scholar says: ‘So-and-so says:...’. The words that precede this are actually the words of the scribe. It is for this reason there occurs incongruities in this area between manuscripts

² He was Abu Ali Baba **Muhammad Bello** ibn *Shehu* Uthman ibn *Fuduye`* Muhammad ibn Uthman ibn Salih ibn Harun ibn Muhammad Ghurtu ibn Muhammad Jubba ibn Muhammad Sanbu ibn Maasiraan ibn Ayyub ibn Buuba Baba ibn Abu Bakr ibn **Musa Jokolli** ibn *al-Mujaddid Imam Dhimbu*. Bello’s mother was Hawwa, the daughter of the learned *Shaykh* Adam ibn Muhammad Agh.

³ The proof of the obligation to adhere to the Qur’an is in the words of ta’ala, “And this is a bless scripture which we have revealed, so follow it.” [6:155]. Its proof from the Sunnah is the words of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, “Verily I have left for you two admonitions. They will never mislead the one who takes hold of them. They are plain speech and silence. For plain speech is the Qur’an and silence is death.” [See *Ihya as-Sunnah WA Ikhmaad al-Bid’a* of Uthman ibn Fudiyu, www.siiasi.org.]

⁴ Qur’an 2:198 *Imam* al-Qurtubi said in his *al-Jaami` Li Ahkaam`l-Qur’an*: “The expression ” *harm*” in the above verse means sin (*ithm*) and it is the subject noun of the negative verb: “There is no”...Being that Allah ta’ala ordered that the rites of pilgrimage be free of sexual intercourse, corruption and argumentation, He then gave license to conduct commerce by His words: “There is no harm on you to seek after the bounties of your Lord.” Whenever the expression: “seeking after the bounties” is utilized in the *Qur’an* it means commerce and business, and it is mentioned at least five times in the sacred text. Allah ta’ala says in the chapter called *Juma`a*: “Then disperse in the earth seeking the bounties of Allah.” The evidence from the prophetic traditions that this verse deals specifically with business and commerce is what was related by al-Bukhari on the authority of Ibn Abass said: “The `Ukaadh Mujanna and Dhu’l-Majaaz were the market centers during the days of *Jaahiliya*, as a result the Muslism consider it a sin to do business during the scared rites of pilgrimage before and after the adorning the sacred *ihraam*, so Allah ta’ala revealed: ‘There is no harm on you to seek after the bounties of your Lord’, regarding the rites of pilgrimage.” Thus, since conducting commerce during the pilgrimage is permissible and does not take a person away from the remembrance of Allah, then conducting commerce in other times is more appropriate.

And there are the words of ta`ala:

{وَأَخْرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ}

“And others⁵ of you should travel through the earth seeking after the bounties of Allah”⁶ And there are the words of ta`ala:

{فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ}

“And when the prayer is completed⁷, disperse through the earth and seek after the bounties of Allah”⁸

And there are the words of ta`ala:

{أَنْفِقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ (أَيَّ بِالْتِجَارَةِ) وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ (أَيَّ بِالزَّرْعَةِ)}

“Expend from the good that you have earned (by means of trade) and from what We have produced for you from the earth (by means of farming)”⁹

⁵ Here ends folio 2 of manuscript B which I digitized from the archives of the Center of Islamic Studies, Shaykh Usman Danfodio University, Sokoto, Nigeria.

⁶ Qur'an 73:20 The complete verse: *And others of you should travel through the earth seeking after the bounties of Allah and yet others who fight in the Way of Allah.* Here Allah ta`ala equivocates the rank of the one who struggles in the way of Allah (*mujaahid*) and the person who earns permissible wealth in order to expend on himself or his family, and gives both the attributes of spiritual excellence (*ihsaan*) and superiority (*ifdaal*). This is a proof that earning wealth is in the same rank and station with *Jihaad* because it is joined with it in the same verse. It has been related that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him grant him peace said: “There is no one who gathers foodstuff from one land and delivers it to another and sells it based upon the normal cost, except that he is in te same station with Allah as the station of the martyr.” Then he, may Allah bless him and grant him peace recited the verse: *“And others of you should travel through the earth seeking after the bounties of Allah and yet others who fight in the Way of Allah.”* Ibn Mas`ud once said: “Any man who brings merchandise into a city from the cities of the Muslims while remaining patient and reckoning his soul, and then sells the commodities at normal cost, he will have a station with Allah equal to that of the martyr.” He then recited the verse: *“And others of you should travel through the earth seeking after the bounties of Allah.”* Ibn Umar said: “Allah has not created a death more beloved to me than dieing in the Way of Allah, except dieing while my flanks in the saddle seeking after the bounties of Allah by traveling through the earth.”

⁷ Here ends folio 2 of manuscript A which I digitized from the archives of the Center of Islamic Studies, Shaykh Usman Danfodio University, Sokoto, Nigeria.

⁸ Qur'an 62:10 This was revealed regarding the *Juma`* prayer and means when the *Juma`a* prayer is complete then it permissible to disperse in the earth for purposes of commerce and to dispose of one's needs. Thus, here: *“and seek after the bounties of Allah”*, means seek after the provision and wealth of Allah that He has written for you. It is for this reason that the scholars say that the best time to travel for purposes of businesses is just after the *Juma`a* prayer for what is in that hour from the license and permission from Allah ta`ala. Subsequently, when *Imam`Araak* ibn Malik has prayed the *Juma`a* prayer he would then get up to leave and stop at the door of the *masjid* and recite the following: اللهم اني اجبت دعوتك وصليت فريضتك وانتشرت كما امرتني فأرزقتني من فضلك وانت خير الرازقين O Allah verily I answered Your call, prayed Your obligatory prayer, and now have dispersed as You ordered me, so provide for me from Your bounty for You are the Best of Providers.” However, some of the scholars differ regarding the objective of *“seek after the bounties of Allah”* after *Juma`a*, because some of the scholars say that it means seeking after wealth the next day on Saturday, such *Imam* Ja`far ibn Muhammad al-Baqir ibn Ali Zayn `l-Aabideen. While others say it means seeking knowledge, such as Sa`id ibn al-Musayyib. Their evidence being what was related on the authority of Anas ibn Malik that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said regarding the verse: “This was not revealed in order to seek after worldly matters, but in order to disperse and visit the sick among the Muslims, be present at the graves and visit the brothers for the sake of Allah.” It is for this reason that *Imam* Malik said that the imperative verb in the verse *“disperse”* is simply permission from Allah for people to conduct business and it is not an a command which constitutes and obligation. *Imam* at-Tabari said in his *Jaami`l-Bayaan*: “The expression: *“...and disperse in the earth...”*, means if you like, for this is simply a license (*rukhsa*) from Allah for you in that.

⁹ Qur'an 2:267 *Imam* at-Tabari said: “His expression: *‘Expend’* means give the obligatory alms such as the *Zakat`l-Fitr* and the yearly *zakat* on one's accumulated wealth, as well as voluntary acts of charity. His words: *“...from the good that you have earned,”* means give the alms the best that you have earned from the transactions of commerce

Sunna:

And as for the traditions (*ahadith*)¹⁰ there are the words of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace:

((عَلَيْكُمْ بِالتَّجَارَةِ فَإِنَّهَا تِسْعَةُ اعْشَارِ الرِّزْقِ))

“Trade is obligatory upon you, for it is nine-tenths of the provision of Allah.”¹¹ And there is his saying, may Allah bless him and grant him peace:

((إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ أَنْ يَكُونَ الْعَبْدُ مُحْتَرَفًا))

‘Verily Allah loves that his servant be gainfully employed (*muhtarif*).’¹²

Ijma’a (consensus):

It was related that Jesus (may peace be upon him) once met a man and asked him,

مَا تَصْنَعُ؟

“What do you do for a living?” He answered, “I am occupied with worship.” Jesus then asked:

مَنْ يَفُوتُكَ؟

“Then who provides for your livelihood?” He answered, “My brother does.” Jesus then replied:

أَخُوكَ أَعْبُدُ مِنْكَ

“Then your brother¹³ is more of a worshipper than you.”¹⁴

as well as from what you have manufactured and produced from gold, silver and other commodities. The expression: “...the good...” means from that which is permissible (*halaal*) but also which is the highest quality of your commodities and wealth. *Imam* Mujahid said: “*Expend from the good that you have earned*”, means from permissible commerce (*at-tijaarat’l-halaal*) and that His words: “...and from what We have produced for you from the earth”, means the fruits, vegetables and grains which the Allah produces from the earth. *Ali ibn Talib* said: “This verse was revealed regarding the obligatory alms. A person used to collect the fruits of his harvest, placing the best of his produce in one division and the damaged produce in another. When a person in need of alms or when the authorities came to collect the *zakat* on his wealth he would give from the damaged harvest. Subsequently, Allah ta’ala revealed: ‘*Expend from the good that you have earned and from what We have produced for you from the earth and do not single out the contemptible from it to expend*’.”

¹⁰ The proof for the obligation to follow the traditions, is in the words of the Allah ta’ala, “*And whatever the Messenger gives you, take it. And whatever he forbids you, abstain from it.*” [59-7] The proof for the same in the *Sunna* is in the words of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, “*Take hold of my Sunna and the Sunna of the Caliphs after me. Hold to it stubbornly.*”

¹¹ This prophetic traditions was related by *Ibrahim al-Harbi* on the authority of *Nu’aym ibn Abd’r-Rahman*. *Imam al-Iraqi* said that the mean of this narration are reliable. *Abu Hatim ar-Razi* said that the prophetic tradition was *mursal*, since *Nu’aym ibn Abd’r-Rahman* was of the second generation (*at-Taabi*).

¹² *Imam al-Minawi* said in his *Fayd’l-Qadir*: “*Seeking after permissible wealth is obligatory after the performance of the obligatory acts of worship. Thus, the prophetic tradition means that Allah love to see a servant exhausted from seeking after permissible wealth.*” The *Hujjat’l-Islam al-Ghazzali* said: “*When a man is a family provider, gainfully employed and has a profession with the sole purposed of establishing the rights of his family, then his earning that which is permissible is better for him than worshipping with his body, especially when he joins his earning with the remembrance of Allah ta’ala.*” Allah ta’ala says: “*They are men whom neither business or commerce preoccupies them from the remembrance of Allah.*”

¹³ Here ends folio 3 of manuscript B..

¹⁴ The reason that *Shaykh Muhammad al-Amin ibn Adam* said that the reason that *Sultan Muhammad Bello* related the narrative from Jesus the son of Mary, upon them peace was that he is considered the Master of those were ascetic in the life, who had turned completely from it world, as it is related that he, upon him be peace ordered all of his disciples to be ascetic in the world and said: “*Any of you who builds a house it is as if he had built a structure on the waves.*” Although, Jesus, did not censure the worship of the man, he clarified that whoever made it possible for person to worship Allah by providing for their needs, then is more of a worshipper. This is because the brother got the reward of his brother’s worship as well as obtained the additional reward of making it possible for his brother to worship.

Abu Hudhayfa¹⁵ once said:

خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ لَمْ يَدَعْ دُنْيَاهُ لِآخِرَتِهِ وَأَخْرَتَهُ لِدُنْيَاهُ

“The best of you is he who does not give up his worldly affairs for his Hereafter nor gives up his Hereafter for his worldly affairs.”

[Ibn Mas’ud¹⁶ once said:

إِنِّي لَأَكْرَهُ أَنْ أَرَى الرَّجُلَ فَارِعًا لَا فِي أَمْرِ دُنْيَاهُ وَلَا فِي أَمْرِ آخِرَتِهِ

“Verily I hate to see a man idle, neither occupied with his worldly affairs nor being occupied with his Hereafter.”¹⁷

‘Umar ibn al-Khataab¹⁸ once said:

لِحِرْفَةٍ أَحَدِكُمْ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَنْ يَكُونَ سَبَهْلًا، أَيْ بَيْعِ الْجِرْفِ وَهُوَ حَبُّ الرَّشَادِ

“Truly the profession of one of you is better than him being aimless; even if it means him being in a profession of trade like selling peppergrass seed.”

¹⁵ He was Abu Abdallah **Hudhayfa ibn Hislu al-Yemani** ibn Jabir al-Abassi among the notables of the companions of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace used to inform Hudhayfa of the names of the hypocrites and detailed for him the trials and tribulations that would happen to the *Umma*. Az-Zuhri narrated on the authority of Abu Idris that he heard Hudhayfa say: “By Allah! I am the most knowledgeable of people of every tribulation which will be between my time and the Hour!” He also said: “The people used to ask the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace about the good, while used to ask him about the evil out of fear of falling into it.” Ibn Jurayj related on the authority of Zaadan that once Ali ibn Abi Talib was asked about Hudhayfa and he said: “He knows the hypocrites and if he is asked about the mysterious and complex issues he will be found to be the most knowledgeable.” Abu `Awana related on the authority of Abu Yahya who said that once a man came to Hudhayfa and asked him: “What is hypocrisy?” He said: “That you speak about Islam but do not act upon it.” Umar later appointed him as the *Amir* of Mada’in where he remained until after the killing of Uthman. Umar once compelled him by asking: “Am I one of the hypocrites?” He said: “No, and I will not vindicate anyone else after you.” He died about forty days after the death of Uthman.

¹⁶ He was Abu Abd’r-Rahman **Abdallah ibn Mas’ud** ibn Ghaafil ibn Habib ibn Shamkhi ibn Faar ibn Makhzuun ibn Saahila ibn Kaahil ibn al-Harith ibn Tamim al-Hudhali. He was a leader among the *muhajiruun*, an erudite jurist and one of the foremost vanguard of the 313 Companions who fought at the Battle of Badr. He was among the protected allies of the Bani Zuhra. He was from among the *nujaba* of the scholars among the Companions who had attained and transmitted much knowledge. Qays ibn Hazim said: “He was extremely dark skinned and very thin.” `Ubaydallah ibn Abdallah ibn `Utba said: “He was very short, thin and extremely dark skinned.” Nuwafi`u, the freedman of Ibn Mas’ud said: “Abdallah was the most generous of men who wore white garments and those fragrant of them who wore perfumes.” He died in the year 32 of the *hijra*.

¹⁷ What is between the brackets is missing in manuscript A.

¹⁸ He was Abu Hafs *Amir’l-Mu’mineen* **Umar al-Faruq ibn al-Khattab** ibn Nufayl ibn Abd’l-`Uzza ibn Riyah al-Qurayshi al-`Adiy, may Allah be pleased with him. During the early days of Islam he was severe against the Muslims. He then accepted Islam and his entrance into the faith was the cause of the opening for many Muslims and a relief from hardship. It has been related by Abu Ya`ala on the authority of Ibn Umar who said that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “O Allah give honor to Islam by the most beloved of the the two men to You: either by Umar ibn al-Khattab or by Abu Jahl ibn Hisham.” Allah chose Umar ibn al-Khattab because he was the most beloved of the two to Him.

Abu Qilaaba¹⁹ once said [to a man]²⁰:

لِأَنَّ أَرَاكَ تَطْلُبُ مَعَاشَكَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ أَرَاكَ فِي زَوَايَا الْمَسْجِدِ

“That I see you seeking after your livelihood is more beloved to me than to see you²¹ sitting in the corners of the *masajid* (mosques).”

It was related that al-Awzaa'i²² once encountered Ibrahim ibn Adhaam²³ carrying a bundle of firewood around his neck. Al-Awzaa'i said to him, “O Abu Ishaq! Where are you going with that? Your friends will suffice you with what you need.”²⁴ He replied:

دَعْنِي عَنْ هَذَا يَا أَبَا عَمْرٍو فَإِنَّهُ بَلَّغَنِي أَنَّهُ مَنْ وَقَفَ مَوْقِفَ²⁵ مَذَلَّةٍ فِي طَلَبِ [وَجَبَّتْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةُ]²⁶

“Leave me with what I am doing, O Abu ‘Amr, for verily it has been related to me that whoever falls into a humiliating situation while seeking after the permitted (*halaal*), [then Paradise is obligatory for him.]”

¹⁹ He was **Abu Qilaba** Abdallah ibn Zayd ibn `Amr ibn Natil ibn Malik al-Jurmi al-Basri. He was an *Imam* in knowledge and *Shaykh'l-Islam* of his age, extremely reliable; who had collected many prophetic traditions. He established a school in Basra that was a center for students from distant lands. *Imam* Yahya said of him: “He was among the jurist who possessed astute reasoning. I witnessed him to be most judicious of men, the most solitary of men, but the hardest of them to part from. I do not know of any person in this city who was more learned in the science of adjudication, judgment and the judiciary than Abu Qilaba.” He lived during the rule of Umar ibn Abd'l-Aziz and died in Syria in the year 104 of the *hijra*.

²⁰ This is missing in manuscript B.

²¹ Here ends folio 3 of manuscript A.

²² He was Abu `Amr Abd'r-Rahman ibn `Amr ibn Yuhmad **al-Awzaai**. He was born on Balbak during the time of the Companions in the year 88 of the *hijra*. He was the *Shaykh'l-Islam* of his time and the foremost leader of the scholars of Syria. He was a person of spiritual excellence, reliable, benevolent and constituted a legal proof due to the abundance of knowledge, prophetic traditions and jurisprudence he had gathered. Al-Abass ibn al-Walid the son of the *Khalifa* said: “I never saw my father amazed by anything in this world's life, like he was amazed at al-Awzaai. He used to say: ‘Glory be to You O Allah! You do whatever You will! Al-Awzaai` was an orphan and completely destitute under the guardianship of his mother. You transferred him from country to country and thus Your wisdom played out for him and caused him to reach him where I can see him! O my son all the kings and their sons are incapable of acting in the accordance with the courtesies with which al-Awzaai` disciplined himself. I never heard from him a single word except that I was in dire need of listening to it due to the firmness of it. And I never saw him laugh even once until he died’.” Isma'il ibn `Ayyaash said: “I heard the people say in the year 140 that al-Awzaai` today is the foremost scholar of the entire *Umma*.” *Imam* Malik said: “Al-Awzaai` is an *Imam* who should be followed.” He died in the year 157 of the *hijra*.

²³ He was Abu Is'haq, **Ibrahim ibn Adham** ibn Mansuur ibn Yazid ibn Jaabir al-`Ajali. He was a spiritual model an *Imam*, a Knower of Allah and the master of the ascetics. His father and mother made the pilgrimage to Mecca and it was there that he was born. It is said that he was from the nobility because his father possessed much wealth, servants, ships, and hunting falcons. Once when Ibrahim was hunting while jogging on his horse, he heard a voice from above him say: “O Ibrahim what is this frivolity? ‘Do you think that We created you for frivolity?’ Fear Allah and take hold of the provision for death.” Immediately, he came down from his mount, discarded the world from his heart and entered into the desert. During this time he would consume only grain and vegetables. While he was in the wilderness he met a man who taught him the Great Name of Allah with which he supplicated Allah ta'ala. As a result he met al-Khidr who said to him: “Your knowledge is that of my brother Prophet Dawud.” He kept company with at-Thawri and al-fudayl ibn `Iyaad and eventually settled in Syria.

²⁴ Here ends folio 4 of manuscript B.

²⁵ This word is missing in manuscript B.

²⁶ The words between the brackets are missing in manuscript B.

Abu Sulayman ad-Daaraani²⁷ once said:]²⁸

[مَنْ بَاتَ تَعْبَانًا فِي كَسْبٍ] ²⁹ الْحَلَالِ بَاتَ وَاللَّهُ عَنْهُ رَاضٍ، وَمَنْ طَلَبَ الدُّنْيَا اسْتِعْفَافًا عَنِ [الْمَسْئَلَةِ وَاسْتِغْنَاءِ عَنِ] ³⁰ النَّاسِ وَتَعَطَّفًا عَلَى جَارِهِ لَقِيَ اللَّهَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَوَجْهُهُ كَالْقَمَرِ لَيْلِ الْبَدْرِ

[“Whoever becomes exhausted from earning the permissible]³¹, Allah will be pleased with him. And whoever seeks this world in order to be free from begging and in order to be independent of people and in order to compensate his neighbors by that, will meet Allah on the Day of Judgment and his face will be luminous like the full moon.”

Abu Sulayman ad-Daaraani also said:

لَيْسَ الْعِبَادَةُ عِنْدَنَا أَنْ تَنْصِبَ قَدَمَيْكَ وَغَيْرَكَ يَفُوتَكَ وَلَكِنْ اِبْدَاءُ ³² بِرَغِيْبِكَ فَأَحْرَزْهُمَا ثُمَّ تَعَبَّدْ

“To us, true worship is not planting your feet and allowing others to take care of you. But true worship is to begin your day by seeking after your daily bread, then taking account of yourself, then after that setting about to worship.”

²⁷ He was Abu Sulayman Abd'r-Rahman ibn Ahmad ibn `Atiyya al-`Anasi ad-Daarani, the notable *Imam* and leading ascetic of the time. He was born at the beginning of the year 140 of the *hijra*. He took knowledge from notable scholars such as Sufyan at-Thawri, `Alqama ibn Suwayd, and Abu al-Ash`hab. He used to say: “Sometimes there occurred in my heart an anecdote from the People of Allah, however I would never accept it unless it had its evidence from the two just witnesses, the Book and the *Sunna*.” He also used to say: “The foundation of every good is having fear of this world’s life. The key to this world’s life is being satiated with food while the key to the Hereafter is hunger.” He also once said: “The one who is firm with Allah regarding his daily provision, Allah will increase him in good character, forbearance and decrease from his heart satanic whispering during the prayer.” He died in the year 215 of the *hijra*.

²⁸ The words between the brackets are missing in manuscript B.

²⁹ The words between the brackets are missing in manuscript B.

³⁰ The words between the brackets are missing in manuscript B.

³¹ The words between the brackets are missing in manuscript A.

³² In manuscript A this word is ابدلا instead of ابدأ.

Sufyan ath-Thawri³³ once said to Sulayman ibn Abi Naajia:

يَا أَبَا دَاوُدَ عَلَيْكَ بِحِرْفَةٍ³⁴ فَإِنَّ عَامَّةَ مَنْ أَتَى أَبْوَابَ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنَّمَا أَتَاهُمْ مِنَ الْحَاجَاتِ³⁵

“O Abu Dawuud, a gainful profession is obligatory upon you, because generally those who come to the doors of the scholars, come to have their needs fulfilled.”

It has been related³⁶ that Luqman once said to his son:³⁷

يَا بُنَيَّ إِسْتَعْنِ بِكَسْبِ الْحَلَالِ عَنِ الْفَقْرِ فَإِنَّهُ مَا أَفْتَقَرَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا أَصَابَتْهُ ثَلَاثُ خِصَالٍ³⁸: رِقَّةٌ فِي دِينِهِ، وَضَعْفٌ فِي عَقْلِهِ، وَذَهَابٌ مَرَوْتِيهِ، وَأَعْظَمُ مِنْ هَذِهِ الثَّلَاثِ: اسْتِخْفَافٌ³⁹ النَّاسِ بِهِ

“O my son, make yourself independent of poverty by means of permissible earnings; for verily no one becomes destitute except that he is afflicted⁴⁰ by three characteristics. The first is

³³ He was Abu Abdallah **Sufyan at-Thawri** ibn Sa'id ibn Masruq ibn ibn Habib ibn Rafi' ibn Abdallah ibn Mawhiba ibn Ubayy ibn Abdallah ibn Munqidhi ibn Nasri ibn al-Harith. He was born in the year 97 of the *hijra*. He first studied prophetic traditions with his father, Sa'id ibn Masruq at-Thawri one of the most reliable traditionist of the people of Kufa. He was the *Shaykh'l-Islam*, the *Imam* of the traditionist, and master of the right acting scholars of his time. He was a *mujtahid* who authored the *al-Jaami*. *Imam* ibn al-Mahdi said: “My eyes have not seen scholars greater than four men. I have not seen one greater in memorization than at-Thawri, nor more severe in asceticism than Shu'ba, nor more intelligent than Malik, nor more counseling to the *Umma* than Ibn al-Mubaarik.” Bishr al-Hafi said: “Sufyan was to our times like Abu Bakr and Umar were to their times.” He died in the year 160 of the *hijra* at the age of 63. *Imam* Hudhayfa al-Mar'ashi said that Sufyan once said: “That my leaving behind 10 thousand *dirhams* that I will eventually be reckoned for by Allah is more beloved to me than being in need of people.” *Imam* Rawaad ibn al-Jaraah said that Sufyan once said: “Wealth use to be something reprehensible, but these days it is the shield of the believer.” A man once saw him carrying golden dinars and said to him: “O Abu Abdallah is someone like you holding on to golden dinars?!” He said: “Be quiet! For if it were not for these the kingdom itself would be detrimentally altered.” He is reported to have said: “True asceticism is not eating harsh foods or wearing rough clothing. Rather, true asceticism is shortening your false hopes and being watchful for death.” It is clear from the above that Sufyan at-Thawri felt that the scholars should be people of independent wealth, not relying upon the generosity of others in order that their legal decisions would be free of distortions due to bribery as well as to expend for the benefit of the poor and destitute. The proof for this is his words related by *Imam* Yahya ibn Yamaan: “Wealth is a sickness for this *Umma* and the scholar is the doctor of this *Umma*. For when the scholar chains this sickness to himself, then how can the people be cured?”: Thus, it is clear that Sufyan felt that wealth in the hands of the scholars is to be used for the benefit of the oppressed, the destitute and impoverished in the society, not for themselves.

³⁴ In manuscript A it says بالحرفة.

³⁵ In manuscript A it say الحاجة.

³⁶ Here ends folio 5 of manuscript B.

³⁷ He was Luqman al-Hakim (the Wise or the ‘Doctor’) ibn Baa'uura ibn Naahura ibn Taarih as Muhammad ibn Is'haq gave his lineage. It is said that he was Luqman ibn 'Anqaa ibn Siruun a Nubian from Ailat as as-Suhayli cited. Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib said that he was a Blackman with thick lips from among the Blacks of Egypt whom Allah had given wisdom but had not made him a Prophet. This is the majority opinion of the scholars that he was a sage (*waliy*) but was not a prophet; although 'Akrama and as-Sha'abi held the view that he was a prophet. The correct view is that he was an expert in the science of medicine whom Allah ta'ala had given wisdom, jurisprudence in religion and intelligence. He also acted as a judge among the Bani Isra'il. He was 'black' with prominent lips; as Ibn Abass and others narrated. It has been related in a prophetic tradition from Umar who said: “I heard the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace say: ‘Luqman was not a prophet. However he was a servant of Allah who reflected often and possessed excellent certitude. He loved Allah ta'ala and He loved him. Thus, Allah favored him with wisdom and singled him out by making him a vicegerent who had the ability to judge according to the Truth. He lived to be one thousand years old.’” Dr. Abdallah at-Tayyib said that Luqman was the Nubian scribe, master builder and physician of ancient Egypt, known as Imhotep (‘the one who comes in peace), who designed and built the first pyramid in Saqqara in Upper Egypt, and was known in Greece as Asclepius, and was worshipped there as ‘the god of medicine’. We seek refuge with Allah from ignorance.

³⁸ In manuscript A it says خلال.

³⁹ In manuscript A it says استخفاف.

⁴⁰ Here ends folio 4 of manuscript A.

laziness concerning his religion. The second is weakening of his reason. The third is loss of mental scope in his goals. But worse than these three is the contempt of people towards him.”

One of the wise sages once said:

حَفْطُكَ لِمَا فِي يَدَيْكَ أَوْلَىٰ بِكَ مِنْ طَلْبِ مَا فِي يَدِ غَيْرِكَ

“First preserving what is in your hands is better than you seeking after what is in the hands of others.” Another of the wise sages also said:

خَصْلَتَانِ لَا تَزَالُ بَخَيْرٍ مَا حَفَظْتَهُمَا: دِرْهُمُكَ لِمَعَاشِكَ وَدِينُكَ لِمَعَادِكَ

“Two characteristics will always remain good as long as you protect them: your wealth which preserves your livelihood and your religion which preserves your Final Destiny.”

Qays ibn `Aasim⁴¹ once said to his son:

يَا بُنَيَّ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمَالِ وَاصْطِنَاعِهِ، فَإِنَّهُ مَنبَهَةٌ لِلْكَرِيمِ⁴²، وَيَسْتَغْنِي بِهِ عَنِ اللَّئِيمِ، وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَمَسْئَلَةَ النَّاسِ فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ
أَجْرِ كَسْبِ الرَّجَالِ

“O my son, wealth and its production is an obligation; for it is the stimulus for being generous and generosity is that which makes you safe from the Grievous Punishment. And beware of begging from people.⁴³ For truly begging is the last and lowest level of earning for real men.”

This is further illustrated by the poetic verse that is often recited:

مَا أَعْتَاضَ بَازِلَ وَجْهِهِ بِسُؤَالِهِ * عَوْضًا وَلَوْ نَالَ الْغَنَىٰ بِسُؤَالِ
وَإِذَا السُّؤَالُ مَعَ النَّوَالِ قَرْنَتْهُ * رَجَحَ السُّؤَالُ وَخَفَّ كُلُّ نَوَالِ

“The one who loses face by begging will never gain recompense,

Even if he obtained much riches through begging.

For when begging and the things obtained are joined and compared,

All things attained will be diminished in comparison to the predominance of begging.”

In short, the neglecting of earning a living is mere idleness and blameworthy uselessness, according to the *shari`a*. This is in accordance with the words of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace:

((إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْغِضُ الصَّاحِبَ الْفَارِغِ))

“Verily Allah is angry with the complete idle person.”

⁴¹ He was Qays ibn `Aasim ibn Asyad ibn Ja`una ibn al-Harith ibn `Aamir ibn Numayri ibn `Aamir ibn Sa`sa`at an-Numayri. He was a Companion of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace who when he came to accept Islam, the Prophet wiped his face and said: “O Allah give him *baraka* and his companions.”

⁴² In manuscript A it says *الكريم* without the prefixing of the genitive particle *اللام*.

⁴³ Here ends folio 6 of manuscript B.

Chapter One Concerning The Legal Judgment of Earning A Living

Obligatory Earnings:

As for the legal judgment of earning a living, it is that it is obligatory (*fard*)⁴⁴; because it is the reason for establishing that which is obligatory. And that is his nourishment, the nourishment of his family⁴⁵ and the discharging of his debts. So realize that the earnings which are minimally required here are those which are sufficient for himself, his family and the discharging of his debts. These are an obligation. Have you not seen what has been related⁴⁶ concerning the debt and the Divine Threat (for not discharging it), in the saying of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace:

((إِنَّ أَعْظَمَ الذُّنُوبِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يَلْقَاهُ عَبْدُهُ بَعْدَ الْكِبَائِرِ الَّتِي نَهَى اللَّهُ عَنْهَا أَنْ يَمُوتَ الرَّجُلُ وَعَلَيْهِ دَيْنٌ لَا يَدْعُ لَهُ
قَضَاءً))

“Truly the most immense of sins with Allah, which Allah has forbidden the slave to meet Him with after the major sins, is that a man dies while he has an impending debt and he has left nothing for its discharge.”⁴⁷ This was related by Abu Dawud.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ **Fard** – obligation. Obligation in the language of the *Shari'ah* means acts whose performance necessitates reward and whose neglect necessitates punishment. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said, “Allah ta'ala has laid down obligations, so do not neglect them. He has set boundaries, so do not overstep them. He has prohibited things, so do not violate them. About some things He was silent – out of compassion for you, not forgetfulness – so do not seek after them.”

⁴⁵ Here ends folio 5 of manuscript A.

⁴⁶ Here ends folio 7 of manuscript B.

⁴⁷ This prophetic tradition was related on the authority of Abu Musa al-Ash'ari. It was also related by Ahmad ibn Hanbal. *Imam* al-Minawi said in his commentary upon the *al-Jaami's-Sagheer* called *Fayd'l-Qadeer*: “The meaning of his words, may Allah bless him and grant him peace: ‘Truly the most immense of sins...’, means the most immense or greatest of them upon the Scales. His words, may Allah bless him and grant him peace: ‘...with Allah, which Allah has forbidden the slave to meet Him with’, means that Allah can meet him on the Day of Judgment while he is burdened with it. The meaning of his words, may Allah bless him and grant peace: ‘...after the major sins’, means after those sins which have been clearly delineated in the *Qur'an* and the *Sunna*. His words, may Allah bless him and grant peace: ‘...is that a man dies while he has an impending debt and he has left nothing for its discharge’, because it is a sin between him and another human, which cannot be removed except by the forgiveness of that human or after much difficulty as a result of the loss of good deeds and the procuring of the bad deeds of the one he is debt to.”

⁴⁸ He was Abu Dawud **Sulayman ibn Dawud** at-Tayalisi al-Jaarudi al-Faarisi al-Asadi az-Zubayri. He was born in the year 202 of the *hijra*. He was the freedman of the clan of az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwam and resided in the city of Basra. Al-Khateeb Abu Bakr said: “It is said that Abu Dawud composed his text called the *as-Sunnan* early on and showed it to Ahmad ibn Hanbal who praised it and upheld its excellence.” Ibn Sa'd said that he was extremely reliable and had collected innumerable prophetic traditions. Abu Bakr ibn Dasat said: I heard Abu Dawud say: ‘I have transcribed of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace five hundred thousand traditions. I have extracted from them and placed in this book (the *Sunnan*) four thousand traditions, of which I have mentioned those that are sound, resemble them and are close to them. However, sufficient for humanity in their religion from these are four prophetic traditions. The first, his saying, may Allah bless him and grant him peace: ‘Every action is by its intention’. The second is: ‘Apart of the excellent Islam of a person is leaving what does not concern him.’ The third is: ‘A believer will never be a true believer until is pleased for his brother what he is pleased for himself. And the fourth is: ‘The permissible is clear and forbidden is clear...’. Ahmad ibn Muhammad Yaseen said: ‘Abu Dawud was among the leaders in Islam of the preservers of prophetic traditions of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. His knowledge, his legal analysis and his chains of authority were among the highest levels due to his asceticism, uprightness and scrupulous piety. He was a literal knight in the science of prophetic traditions. He died in Basra on the 10th of *Shawwal* 275 of the *hijra* when he was 72 years old.’

It was also related by at-Tirmidhi⁴⁹ and an-Nasaa'i⁵⁰:

((إِنَّ أَطْيَبَ مَا أَكَلْتُمْ مِمَّنْ كَسَبْتُمْ))

“The best of what you have consumed is what you have yourselves earned.”⁵¹

Highly Recommended Earnings:

As for the highly recommended forms of earning (*al-kasbu al-mustahabu*)⁵²; the legal judgment on it is that it is additional to what is minimally required. This earning is in order to provide for the destitute and in order to be used to strengthen family ties. This additional earning is the reason by which one is able to obtain the reward for the highly recommended (*mustahab*) acts. Therefore, it is called highly recommended earnings. This is in accordance with the words of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.⁵³

((السَّاعِي عَلَى الْأَرْمَلَةِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ كَالْمُجَاهِدِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكَالَّذِي يَقُومُ اللَّيْلَ وَيَصُومُ النَّهَارَ))

“The one who is generous towards the widow and the destitute is like the fighter in the way of Allah, like the one who stands⁵⁴ the night in prayer and like the one who fasts the whole day.”⁵⁵

⁴⁹ He was Abu Isa **Muhammad ibn Isa** ibn Surat ibn Musa ibn ad-Duhaak at-Tirmidhi. He was born in the year 210 of the *hijra*. He was a famous traditionist and author of the *al-Jaami*, the *al-Ilal* and the famous *as-Shimaa'il al-Muhammadiyah*. Abu Ali Mansur ibn Abdallah al-Khaalidi said: ‘Abu Isa once said: ‘When I composed the book (the *al-Jaami*), I then showed it to the scholars of the Hijaz, Iraq, and Khurasaan and they were all pleased with it. Whoever has this book in his home, it is as though he has a Prophet speaking in his home.’ Al-Haakim said: ‘I heard Umar ibn `Ulak say: ‘When al-Bukhari died there was no one left in Khurasaan like Abu Isa in knowledge, memorization, scrupulous piety and asceticism. He wept until he went blind.’ He died on the 13th of *Rajab* in the year 279 of the *hijra*.

⁵⁰ The name an-Nisaa'i' is missing in manuscript B. He was Abu Abd'r-Rahman **Ahmad ibn Shu'ayb** ibn Ali ibn Sinan ibn Bahr an-Nisaa'i' al-Khurasani. He was *Shaykh al-Islam*, the famous traditionist and author of the *as-Sunnan*. He was born in the year 215 of the *hijra*. He was a sea of knowledge in the sciences with comprehension, meticulousness and deep insight into the science of the narrators and proficient in the composing of beneficial text.

⁵¹ This prophetic tradition was related on the authority of A`isha, may Allah be pleased with her. *Imam* Muhammad ibn Abd'r-Rahman said in his *Tuhfatal Ahwadh*: “The best of what you consume”, means the most permissible or the most wholesome of what you consume; “...is what you have yourselves earned”, means from what you have earned without any intermediate person because it is the nearest to reliance upon Allah. This however, includes those earnings which come by way one’s children as well because in another narration the prophetic tradition is completed with his words, may Allah bless him and grant him peace: “And the wealth of children is from your earnings as well.” Al-Minawi said: “This is because the child judgment is the same as its parents it is for this reason that the child was called metaphorically ‘earnings’. In another narration by Ahmad: ‘Verily the child of a man is from the best of his earnings, so consume from their wealth as you like.’ This is stated even more succinct in the tradition of Jabir: ‘You and your wealth belong to your father.’ Ibn Raslaan said that the particle of ownership in the prophetic tradition means permissibility not actual ownership.” Thus it is permissible for the father to consume the earnings of his children, not obligatory.

⁵² *Al-Mustahab* – highly recommended. These are acts that are not obligatory, hence there is no punishment if they are neglected. But there is great reward for performing them. [See *Ihya as-Sunna* of Uthman ibn Fuduye' www.sijasi.org].

⁵³ This prophetic tradition was related by Ahmad, al-Bukhari, Muslim, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nisaa'i', Malik and ibn Maja on the authority of Abu Hurayra.

⁵⁴ Here ends folio 8 of manuscript B.

⁵⁵ *Imam* an-Nawwawi said the meaning of: “The one who is generous (*saai*)” means the person who earns wealth and expends it; “...towards the widow...”, she is the woman who is not married and this is regardless if she was married before or not. She is the woman whose husband separated from her. Ibn Qutayba said the widow is the woman who has become destitute and has lost her provision due to the loss of her husband. Some say that she is considered widow only if she has lost her means of provision, while al-Qari said: “The general meaning of widow in the tradition embraces those women who are wealthy and destitute who had lost their husbands.” The meaning of: “...and the destitute”, is the one who has no wealth or has little. “...is like the fighter in the way of Allah”, in reward

And further, further by his words, upon him⁵⁶ be blessings and peace:⁵⁷

((وَالصَّدَقَةُ عَلَى الْمِسْكِينِ صَدَقَةٌ وَهِيَ عَلَى ذِي الْقَرَابَةِ إِثْنَانِ صِلَةٌ وَصَدَقَةٌ))

“Charity towards the destitute is genuine charity, and when it is given to the nearest of kin it constitutes maintaining the ties of kinship as well as charity.”⁵⁸ These two traditions were related on the authority of Ibn Maja.⁵⁹

And realize that highly recommended earnings are better than superogatory acts of worship (*nafli* ‘l-‘*ibaadati*)⁶⁰. This is because superogatory worship benefits oneself only, while the benefits of earnings comprise oneself as well as others. About this the Prophet once said:

((خَيْرُ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ))

“The best of the people is he who brings benefit to the people.”⁶¹

And the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said:

((تَبَاهَتْ الْعِبَادَةُ)) قَالَ: ((الصَّدَقَةُ أَفْضَلُ))

due to taking care of the needs of the widow and destitute and ameliorating their affairs. For expending wealth on their behalf is like warrior in his *jihad* because wealth is the brother of the soul, which when either are expended it goes against the desires of the lower self showing contentment with what is with Allah. “...like the one who stands the night in prayer and like the one who fasts the whole day”, which means one who fast and never breaks his fast and the one who prays without stopping, and Allah knows best.

⁵⁶ Here ends folio 6 of manuscript A.

⁵⁷ This prophetic tradition was related by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nisai, Ibn Maja and al-Hakim on the authority of Salman ibn `Aamir.

⁵⁸ *Imam* Muhammad ibn Abd'r-Rahman said this prophetic tradition shows that giving charity to those nearest in kin is superior because it constitutes two good deeds, which is no doubt superior to one good deed. *Imam* as-Sindi said that this prophetic tradition is an incitement to give alms to one's relatives and to have concern for their general welfare. *Imam* Ibn Hajr said that expending wealth on the nearest of kin is not necessarily superior to expending wealth on the destitute because keeping the ties of kinship is an obligation and not a superogatory act. Thus, expending wealth on the destitute and the nearest of kin are equal in reward because they are both superogatory acts, but in addition to this, that expended for the nearest kin also constitutes the obligatory act of keeping the ties of kinship.

⁵⁹ He was Abu Abdallah **Muhammad ibn Yazid**, known as **Ibn Maja**. He was an expert in *Qur'an* exegesis, a traditionist and jurist. He was the author of the *as-Sunan*, the *at-Taarikh*, and *at-Tafseer*. He was born in the years 209 of the *hijra*. He was extraordinary in his memorization of prophetic traditions, verifying their authenticity and truthful in their transmission. He died on Tuesday, the 22nd of *Ramadhan* in the year 273 of the *hijra*.

⁶⁰ *Nafli* – superogatory. This means all acts of worship that are not obligatory and are performed in accordance with the *Qur'an*, the *Sunna* and the principles established by the righteous ancestors (*as-salaf as-saalih*). Abd al-Waahid ibn Aashir said in his *Murshid al-Mu'een*, “He should guard the obligations, which are his capital. And the extra acts of worship (*nafla*) are his profit, by them he befriends Allah.”

⁶¹ *Imam* al-'Ajluni said: “It is not known who narrated this prophetic tradition with this wording, or whether it is a prophetic tradition or not. However, its meaning is sound because there is a prophetic tradition which testifies to that which narrates: ‘The creation is the dependents of Allah and the most beloved of them to Allah are those of them who are most beneficial to His dependents.’” There is also a similar prophetic tradition related by *Imam* as-Suyuti in his *al-Jaami` as-Sagheer* on the authority of Jaabir ibn Abdallah that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “The best of people are those who are the most beneficial to the people.” *Imam* al-Minowi said: “This means by showing kindness towards them through his wealth and social standing. Humanity are the servants of Allah, and thus the most beloved of them to Him are those who are most beneficial to His dependents from creation. This means that the noblest of them to Him are those who bring the most benefit to humanity, by blessings which they bring to them are dangers which they ward off from them, either in the religion or in worldly affairs. This meaning of this prophetic tradition embraces the just *Imam* because he is the best of the people after the Prophets because those affairs which have general and universal import and those social dangers which affect them generally can only be effectively resolved by him. In this manner the just *Imam* is beneficial to the servants as well as the land. He stands as the representative or vicegerent of the Prophet in ameliorating the affairs of creation and by making supplications on their behalf to the Lord of Truth. By him their religion and worldly affairs are established.”

“Vie with one another in worship.” And he said: “The best form of worship is almsgiving.”

Permissible Earnings:

As for the lawful or the permitted earnings (*al-kasbu al-mubaahu*)⁶², they are earnings that are a surplus to that which is need to provide for the destitute and that which is used to strengthen family ties. Rather, lawful earnings are those which enable one to procure luxuries, adornments and comforts; like constructing fine buildings, spacious rooms,⁶³ buying war captives and hiring servants. This is in accordance with the words of Allah ta`ala:

{قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ}

“Say, who can prohibit the fineries of Allah that He has brought forth for His servants and the good things from provision.”⁶⁴

This is also in accordance with the words of the Messenger of Allah, upon him be blessings⁶⁵ and peace.⁶⁶

⁶² *Mubaahu* – permitted. These are acts for which there is neither punishment nor reward for doing them or neglecting them. [See *Ihya as-Sunna* of Uthman ibn Fuduye` www.siiasi.org]

⁶³ Here ends folio 9 of manuscript B.

⁶⁴ Qur’an 7:32 The ‘*fineries of Allah*’ has many interpolations with the scholars of *Qur’anic* exegesis. *Imam* al-Qurtubi said: “Fineries here means nice attire if the person has the means to do so. While some scholars say it means all types of clothing, and this is based upon the prophetic traditions on Umar that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: ‘If Allah extends for you His blessings then be expansive’. This prophetic tradition proves that it is essential for people to wear clean and neat clothing and to groom themselves for social occasions, holidays, when meeting people and when visiting brothers in the faith. Abu’l-`Aliya said: ‘The Muslims in the past used to groom themselves well when they went to visit one another’.” It is reported that the nephew of Ma`ruf al-Karkhi, Abu Muhammad, once visited Abu’l-Hassan ibn Yaasaar and he (Abu Muhammad) was wearing coarse wool. Abu’l-Hassan said to him: “O Abu Muhammad have you purified (*sawafta*) your heart or have you just dressed your body in the symbol of purity? Purify your heart and where what the people wear.” *Imam* at-Tabari said: “The causative factor of the revelation of the above *Qur’anic* verse was that in the days of *Jaahiliya* when people came to the House of Allah they would make *tawwaf*, they would make the clothes they were wearing prohibited. If they found someone to give them other clothing they would wear them, if not they would make the *tawaf* in the nude. Thus, Allah ta`ala revealed: ‘Say, who can prohibit the fineries of Allah that He has brought forth for His servants and the good things from provision’.” Ibn Abass said about this verse: “The Muslims and disbelievers share in enjoying the good things from provision, in consuming delicious, wholesome food, in wearing fine clothing, and in marrying good women in this world’s life. However, in the next life single out these blessings in the Hereafter to those who believe, and the idolaters will have nothing from that.” *Imam* al-Qurtubi said: “This verse proves that not everything which the self craves for is blameworthy nor is everything which people adorn themselves with or enjoy from luxuries is reprehensible. The prohibition in all of that revolves around what the *shari`a* prohibits, or when these are utilized as a means of showing off. Essentially, humans like to be seen as appealing, and although this is a share of the ego, yet there is no blame in that. It is for this reason that the ancient *fitra* and the *Sunna* for humans is to groom the hair, look in mirrors and adjust the *turban* and to take a bath and dress nice when going out. There is nothing reprehensible in that nor is there blame for the one who does it. It has been related by Makhul on the authority of A`isha who said: ‘A group of Companions of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace visited him and were waiting for him at the door of the home. When he desired to go out to meet them he stopped at a vase in which was some water in which he looked in order to groom his beard and hair. I then said to him: ‘O Messenger of Allah, does someone like you do such a thing?’ He said: ‘Yes, for when a man goes out to his brothers he should dress and prepare himself because verily Allah is the Beautiful and He loves beauty’.” It is related in the *Saheeh* of Muslim on the authority of Ibn Mas`ud that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace once said: “He who has even an atoms weight of arrogance in him will not enter Paradise.” Then a man said: “What of a man who loves that his clothing and shoes be good quality?” He replied: “Verily is Beautiful and He loves beauty. Arrogance is showing dissatisfaction with the Truth and showing contempt towards people.”

⁶⁵ Here ends folio 7 of manuscript A.

((نِعْمَ الْمَالُ الصَّالِحُ لِلرَّجُلِ الصَّالِحِ))

“Truly the most blessed and upright wealth is that which belongs to the upright man.”⁶⁷

Reprehensible earnings (*al-kasbu al-makruh*)⁶⁸

However some say that this surplus wealth is reprehensible (*makruh*), because perhaps this wealth could be the sole reason that leads to oppression, disobedience, the proliferation of wealth, hoarding and immorality.

Forbidden Forms of Earning a Living (*al-kasbu al-haraam*)⁶⁹

As for the forbidden means of earning a living, they are earnings that obviously lead to immorality, hoarding, proliferation, arrogance and vanity (even if it is from those earnings which are permissible). This is because this earning becomes the sole reason by which one is able to establish that which is unlawful (*haraam*).

⁶⁶ This prophetic tradition was related by Ahmad, Abu Ya`ala, Muslim, al-Bukhari in his Tarikh, Abu `Awaana, Ibn Habaan, al-Hakim, and at-Tabarani in his al-Kabeer and his al-Awsat on the authority of `Amr ibn al-`Aas.

⁶⁷ In the narration related by Ahmad, al-Bukhari, Abu `Awaana, Ibn Habaan and al-Hakim it states that `Amr ibn al-`Aas said: “Once the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace dispatched me ordering me to take my good clothing and weapons saying: ‘O `Amr, I want to dispatch you over an army in which Allah will enrich you with spoils and keep you safe.’ I then said: ‘I did not accept Islam out of desire for wealth.’ He then said: ‘Truly the most blessed and upright wealth is that which belongs to the upright person.’” Ka`b ibn Malik desired to expend all of his wealth for the cause of Allah and the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace is reported to have said to him: “Save some of your wealth, for saving it is good for you.” *Shaykh* Ahmad ibn Nasr ad-Dawudi said: “Poverty and wealth are both trials from Allah by which He shows which of His servants are grateful or patient, as Allah ta`ala says: ‘*Verily We have placed upon the earth fineries as a trial to see which of them will perform good deeds*’; and by His words: ‘*We will test you with harm and good as a trial*’. It is also established that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace used the seek refuge from the evils of the trials of poverty and from the evils of the trials of wealth.” Thus, whenever poverty is praised in the *Qur`anic* verses or prophetic traditions it is speaking of poverty where a person has enough to suffice his needs, not absolute destitution. Likewise in those *Qur`anic* verses and prophetic traditions where wealth is condemned, the condemnation revolves around wealth which induces the blameworthy traits of arrogance, showing off, stinginess and hoarding, not wealth itself. *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye` said in his Ihya as-Sunna: “The overall objectives and the welfare of the *deen* cannot occur except by establishing the pre-eminence of the government in the hearts of the people. People during the time of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, had innate magnitude and this magnitude was the *deen*. This continued until the proper order of government became defective and the generation of the Companions passed away. Then a generation appeared that did not attach greatness to government except by outward appearance. So emphasizing the outward appearance became incumbent, in order that the overall welfare could be maintained.” This decision also applies to the quality of the *masaajid*, the value of Islamic *dawa* material as well as the nature and types of conduits used to propagate the faith. In all these the same principle of excellence, value, quality and superiority applies.

⁶⁸ *Makruh* – undesirable or reprehensible. These are acts in which there is reward for leaving them, but there is no punishment for doing them. [See Ihya as-Sunna of Uthman ibn Fuduye` www.sijasi.org]

⁶⁹ *Haraam* – forbidden. These are acts in which there is reward for leaving them and punishment for performing them. [See Ihya as-Sunna of Uthman ibn Fuduye` www.sijasi.org]

Chapter Two

Concerning The Best Means Of Earning A Living And Conclusion

Jihaad (Military Struggle):

The best means of earning a living is through *jihaad*.⁷⁰ This is because it is universally beneficial for what is in it of keeping the Islamic social order from being destroyed, the maintaining of the defense against the evils and injustices of disbelief by extinguishing its fire from endangering the Muslims.

Tijaarah (Commerce):

The next best means of earning a living is through trade and business (*tijaarah*).⁷¹ This is because of the benefit of trade occurs every hour and reoccurs every moment at all times. Since social efficiency results from trade, it has universal benefits and application. Further, trade has more obvious benefits than agriculture, because the benefits of agriculture only occur during specific times and seasons of the year.

Ziraa'at (Agriculture):

The next best means of earning a living is through agriculture (*az-ziraa'ati*).⁷² This is because it is a major endeavor in order to establish the firmness of material existence. Precisely,

⁷⁰ **Jihaad** – "...according to al-Kharashi: '*Jihaad* is of four types: a *jihaad* of the heart, which is combating Satan and driving away forbidden desires from one's self; *jihaad* by word which is enjoining the good and forbidding evil; a *jihaad* with the hand, which is waged by the *amirs* to check the evil-doers through beating and chastisement according to their discretion. This type includes enforcing the prescribed punishments. And *jihaad* with the sword, but when the term is used unrestrictedly it means only *jihaad* with the sword.'" [See Bayaan Wujuub al-Hijrah 'Ala 'l-Ibbaad of Uthman ibn Fudiyu]. It has been related by Ahmad and at-Tabarani on the authority of Ibn Umar that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: "Allah has placed my provision beneath the shade of my spear." In a similar narration related by ad-Daylami on the authority of Abd'r-Rahman ibn 'Utba on the authority of his father on the authority of his grandfather that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: "Verily Allah azza wa jalla sent me with the Guidance and the religion of Truth. He did not make me into a farmer, a businessman or one who surveys the markets; but He placed my provision beneath my spear." It is well known that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace used to conduct long distance trade before he was commissioned as a Prophet, however this prophetic tradition indicates that he changed this custom after he was commissioned and it gives evidence of the superiority of *jihaad* over commerce and agriculture as a means of earning wealth. Here ends folio 10 of manuscript B.

⁷¹ **Shehu** Uthman ibn Fuduye' said in his Umdat'l-'Ulama: "Commerce is established by His words, may He be exalted: '*Allah has made trade permissible for you and has prohibited compounded interest*'. And His words: '*Except if there is present trade which is on going between you.*' And His words: '*Do not consume one another's wealth illegally, except if there is commerce between you which you are content with*'." In the same text, the **Shehu** said: "Buying, selling and the fulfilling of debts has been established by what has been related in the Saheeh of al-Bukhari on the authority of Jabir ibn Abdallah, may Allah be pleased with them that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: 'May Allah be merciful to a man who is generous when he purchases, sells and demands the repayment of a debt'. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace was asked: 'Which means of earning is the best?' He responded: 'The wealth that a man earns by his own hands and every acceptable trading transaction'. This was related by at-Tirmidhi from a tradition related by Rifaa' ibn Raafi', may Allah be pleased with him. Its soundness was verified by al-Haakim."

⁷² Allah ta'ala says: "*He it is who has made the earth into a bed for you and the heavens a canopy, and has sent down water from the heavens and brings out produce which is a provision for you.*" Allah ta'ala says: "*He it is who made the earth for you a smooth place of repose and traced in it roads for you; and He sends down from the heavens water and brings out as a result paired vegetations of choice. So consume and herd your flock, verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.*" And similar innumerable verses.

because the firmness of the material existence is established by proper nourishment and food, by clothing and apparel. And this cannot occur except through agriculture; it being also one of the means from among the essential means of subsistence.

Nuj`at (Herding):

Finally,⁷³ the next best means of earning a living is searching for grazing lands.⁷⁴ This is also because essentially, it is one means among the means of subsistence.

⁷³ Here ends folio 8 of manuscript A, as well as folio 11 of manuscript B.

⁷⁴ Allah ta`ala says: *“And livestock He created for you, from which you find warmth, other advantages and from them you take your consumption.”* Allah ta`ala says: *“And there is a lesson for you in livestock, from which We give you to drink from what is in their stomachs of pure milk produced from between its feces and its blood, delicious for those who drink.”* And other similar verses which are innumerable.

This is the conclusion of what we desired to compile for you in this work. And it was a scholarly work miraculously accomplished in one hour, from the hours of Monday, the second day of *Ramadan*, in the year **AR-RUSHD** from the Prophetic *Hijrah*.⁷⁵ May Allah give the most abundant blessings and the best peace upon the Companion of the *Hijrah*. All Praise is due to Allah in the beginning and in the end. And peace and blessings of Allah be upon the Generous Prophet [and upon his Family and Companions. Ameen]⁷⁶

⁷⁵ The expression, *ar-rushd* in Arabic, means ‘rationality, conscious awareness, consciousness, right guidance and in some sense ‘maturity’ or ‘the age of consent’. Thus, the author may Allah be merciful to him is indicating in a metaphorical sense that the time in which he composed the text was a time in which the people of the state were obligated to use their balanced judgment and pragmatic awareness when it came to the issue of earning a living and the procuring of wealth. According to the science of cipher (*ilm l-jifr*) the expression *ar-rushd* comprises five letters: *alif*, *laam*, *raa*, *sheen*, and *daal* whose equivocation in this science is 1, 30, 1000, 200 and 4 respectively, which equals the year 1235 of the *hijra*. Thus, the text was composed on Monday, the 2nd of *Ramadhan* 1235, which corresponds to the 12th of June, 1820. This date is significant because it was during this same year that many of the regions began to revolt from under the central of the Sokoto Caliphate. Even former trusted scholars, such as *Malam Abd’s-Salaam* broke away due to dissatisfaction with his allotment just before and after the death of the *Shehu*, where part of the land under his jurisdiction was given over to *Shaykh Abdullahi ibn Fuduye’*. *Abd’l-Qadir ibn Mustafa* indicated this in his *Rawdat’l-Afkaar* (see www.siiasi.org) when he said: “All of the disbelievers revolted against the Muslims, fighting them, taking captives, seizing military fortresses and recapturing lands. It was during this time that the unfortunate affair and revolt of *Kalanbaina* took place. Verily we belong to Allah and to Him is our final return.” In *Kalembaina* were some of the followers of the late *Abd’s-Salaam* who revolted and resisted the forces of *Shaykh Abdullahi ibn Fuduye’* for more than two years from 1235 to 1237 *hijra* [circa 1820 to 1822 C.E.]. It was not until the combined forces of Caliph *Muhammad Bello ibn Shehu*, the military commanders *Abu Bakr Atiku ibn Shehu*, *Muhammad al-Bukhari ibn Shehu* and *Muhammad ibn Abdullahi ibn Fuduye’* who assisted *Shaykh Abdullahi ibn Fuduye’* against the people of *Kalembaina* and defeated them. What is significant is that many of the scholars and notables of the *Jama`at* due to the loss of the *Shehu* had turned their backs from the world, and saw his death as a sign of the nearness of the appearance of the Awaited *al-Mahdi*. Many of the disciples began to eschew the desire of wealth, earning a living as well as active participation in government affairs and *jihad*. It was during this time that formerly self-effacing individuals who had given themselves over to worship and spiritual isolation and retreat began to be given prominence in the eyes of the scholars and notables. Men who had clearly shunned any post and position in government were now in the spot light due to the desire of people of that time to prepare for *Mahdi* by giving up the management of affairs. It was during this time that the ascetic and reclusive *Shaykh Muhammad Sanbu ibn Shehu* caught the notice of the people and attracted a large following of disciples, although he himself preferred solitude and isolation from people, as his chief disciple *Shaykh Abd’l-Qadir ibn Mustafa* indicated in his *Bayaan at-Ta`abudaat*. This was happening at a time when the Sokoto Caliphate was being plagued by internal strife and revolts in every region. Thus, *Sultan Muhammad Bello* saw the need to compose a text which reminded the scholars, the notables and the ascetics alike that true piety comprised of taking care of the social responsibilities such as earning a living for one’s family, earning wealth essential for taking care of the poor and destitute of the society, for building roads, renovating *masaajid* and constructing institutions of learning. But more importantly, was the dire need for accumulated wealth to be used to squash the many revolts which had proliferated in 1820. In other words the pragmatic governmental need for a ‘War Fund’ gave precedence over the individual desire for personal spiritual advancement. This was the causative factor which prompted the authorship of this concise but excellent text by *Sultan Muhammad Bello*, may Allah be merciful to him and allow us to inherit his *baraka..*

⁷⁶ The words between the brackets are missing in manuscript B. After the above transcription the scribe wrote: “It is complete with the praise of Allah and the best of His assistance, and blessings and peace be upon the best of His creation, his family and Companions – Ameen.” In manuscript A the scribe wrote: “O Allah give us success in following the *Summa* of Your Prophet, Muhammad, by his rank blessings and peace on him –Amen Amen.” In the left hemistich of manuscript A, the scribe gave his names by saying: “This book was transcribed by Umar.”

SANKORE'



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