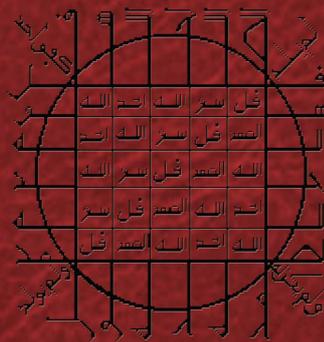


TARIQ AL JANNA

The Path of Paradise



By

Shehu Uthman Dan Fodio

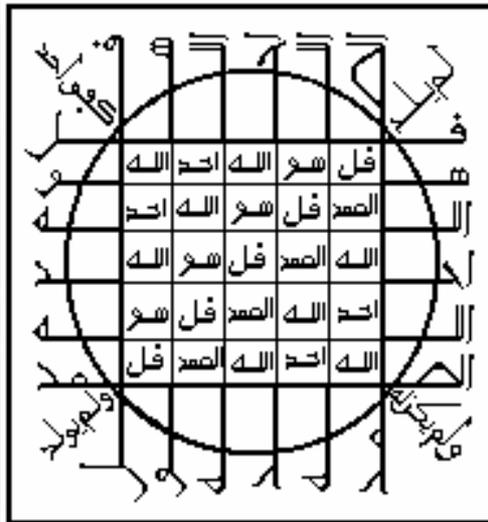
Arabic Text Written and Translated with Introduction by;
Abu Alfa Umar Muhammad Shareef bin Farid

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TARIQ 'L-JANNA The Path to Paradise



by:

Shaykh Uthman Dan Fodiyo
(1754-1817)

Arabic text edited, annotated and translated with an introduction by:
Abu Alfa Umar MUHAMMAD SHAREEF bin Farid

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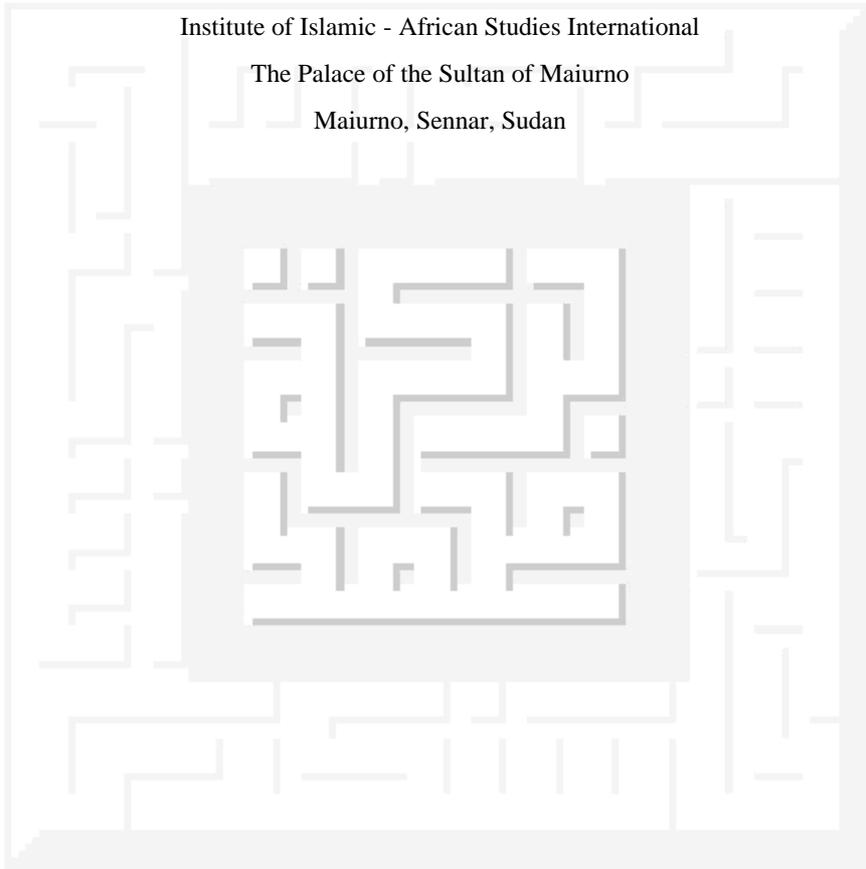


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The Palace of the Sultan of Maiurno

Maiurno, Sennar, Sudan

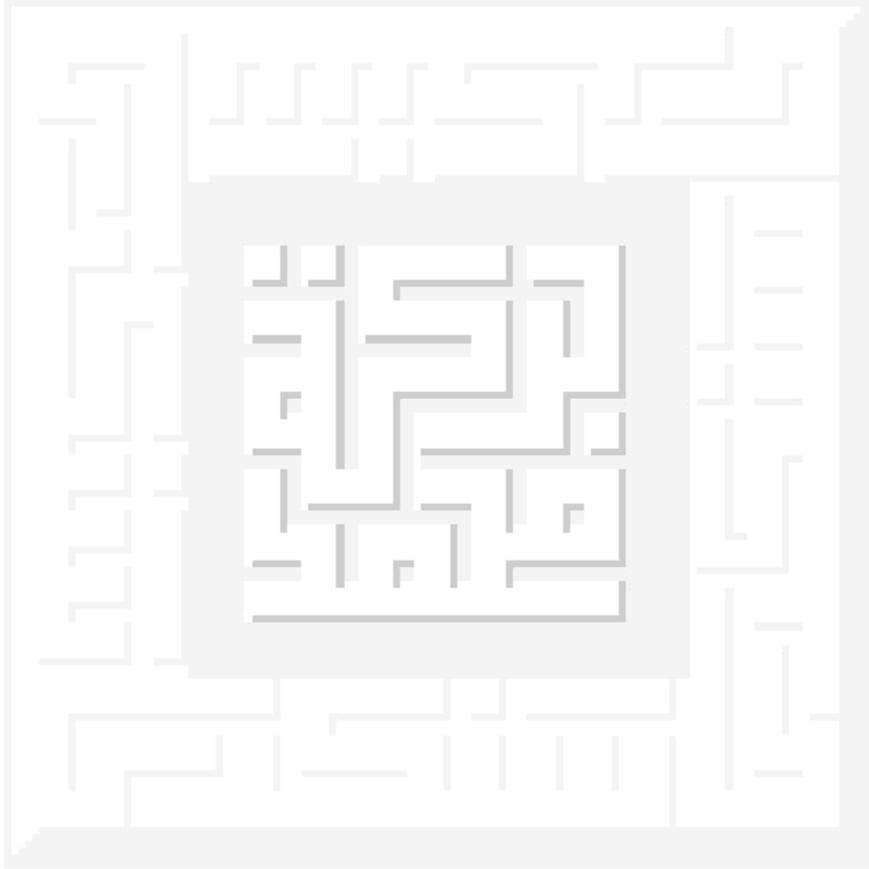


Institute of Islamic-African Studies International

**To the Muslim Captives in CMF/ State Prison;
Solano State Prison and every Muslim inmate in every
Correctional Institution in these United States of America.**

" يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا، وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ. "

"O you who believe! Be patient and out do them in patience and remain steadfast as in a fortress, and have fearful awareness of Allah, that you may be successful."



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Introduction

In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful. May Allah bless our master and chief Muhammad, his family and Companions and give them peace.

The Life of *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye'

In 1774, a young Turudbe Fulani man named *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye' began a social revolution that would change the entire map of Western, Central and Eastern *Bilad's-Sudan*. *Shehu* Uthman began his career by traveling throughout the villages and metropolises of Hausaland, calling the people to the religion of Islam. His methodology of reforming Hausaland included going to the markets and singing *Fulfulde'* and *Hausa* songs to writing Arabic texts addressing the many social ills which effected the people. The blameworthy characteristics, which he rose to correct, were: the persistent pagan customs that prevailed among Muslims and non-Muslims alike; the heretical innovations that the evil scholars allowed to proliferate among the people; the injustice of the rulers; and the illicit behavior and immorality that afflicted family and community life.

Shehu Uthman initiated the practice of teaching as he learned.¹ Thus, around him there emerged a cadre of learned colleagues who shared his zeal for erudition and reform. Among these colleagues were his brother Abdullahi, his best friend Umar Kammi, and many of his sons and daughters - like Muhammad Bello, Muhammad Sanbu, Khadija and Nana Asma'u. Whenever the *Shehu* recognized that an issue was unresolved or not clear to his colleagues, he would set out immediately to compose a book dealing with the fundamentals of that issue. Thus, around him grew a very learned group of men and women, who were inspired to spread education and reform as the *Shehu* had done. Murray Last quotes a Hausa poem that gives an accurate picture of the extent of the social revolution that the *Shehu* had created in Hausaland at that time,

"Verily a cloud has settled on Allah's earth
A cloud so dense that escape from it is impossible
Everywhere between Kordofan and Gobir
And the cities of the Kindin (Tuareg)
Are the settlements of the dogs of the Fulani
Worshipping Allah in all their dwelling places
In reforming all districts and provinces

¹ _Abdullahi Dan Fuduye', *Tazyin'l-Waraqaat*, trans. Mervyn Hiskett, (Ibadan University Press, Ibadan), 1963, 27.

Ready for the future bliss
So in this year of 1214 they are following their beneficent theories
As though it were time to set the world in order by preaching."²

From 1774 to 1788 *Shehu* Uthman established himself as a pious and upright scholar dedicated to giving life to the Sunna of Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace and destroying non-Islamic heretical practices. Most of the writings and preaching the *Shehu* was involved with during this period covered the science of *tawhid* (theology), *`aqida* (doctrine), *fiqh* (jurisprudence), and *tasawwuf* (sufism). Among his more outstanding works during this period were Tanbih't-Taulab `Ala Allah Ma`ruf bi'l-Fitra, Sawq'l-Umma li 'Ittiba`u s'-Sunna and al-Amr bi'l-Ma`ruf wa'n-Nahyi `an'l-Munkar. As a result of his dedication and steadfastness he accumulated a multitude of students and scholars as supporters.³ This also brought him to the notice of the rulers throughout Hausaland. At the end of the year of 1788, the *Shehu* was summoned along with all the scholars of the country by Bawa the ruler of Gobir during the *`id* prayer celebrating the end of *Hajj* season.⁴ According to Professor el-Misri, Bawa intended to assassinate *Shehu* Uthman.⁵ However, this plan failed and the ruler instead presented the *Shehu* with 500 mithqals of gold. *Shehu* Uthman's response to this was;

"Neither I nor my *jam`aat* are in need of your money. However, we want five 'cloaks' from you. [1] To allow me to invite the people to Allah in your land. [2] Not to stop anyone who intends to respond to my invitation. [3] To treat every person wearing the turban or a veil with respect. [4] To free all political prisoners. And [5] not to burden your subjects with unjust taxes."⁶

The ruler Bawa acquiesced to all of *Shehu* Uthman's demands and then said as the *Shehu* got up to leave, "Do you see that Fulani man? After me their will no longer be any king over Gobir, with the exception of common village heads."⁷ During this meeting more than one thousand scholars accompanied

² _Murray Last, The Sokoto Caliphate, (Longman, London), 1977, p.11.

³ _Abdullahi Dan Fuduye', p.86.

⁴ _Gidado ibn Laima, Rawd'l-Janaan, manus., f. 14.

⁵ _F.H. el-Misri, "The Life of Shehu `Uthman Dan Fodio Before the *Jihad*", Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, II:4, December 1963, p. 436.

⁶ _Gidado ibn Laima, Raud, f.7.

⁷ _Ibid., f.7-8.

Shehu Uthman, giving some indication of the amount of support he held among the intellectual community of Hausaland. Soon after this event during the same year Bawa the ruler of Gobir died and his son Yakubu was appointed as ruler of Gobir.⁸

Though *Shehu* Uthman had composed more than fifty works during this period, his most outstanding work of this time was a book he wrote when he reached the age of 41 in 1795 called *Ihya's-Sunna wa Ikhmad'l-Bid`a*. This text became his *magnum opus* and it propelled him above all the scholars of his time, earning him the title of *mujjaddir* (reformer) of the twelfth Islamic century. The *Ihya* became the handbook for most of the revolutionaries of *Bilad's-Sudan* and was his largest work, covering all aspects of theology and law.⁹ It must be pointed out here that the Muslims believed at that time that there had been eleven *mujjaddirs* (reformers) whose job was to revive the *Sunna* of Prophet Muhammad and give life to his religion. These were foretold to come at the head of every century.¹⁰

During this same period Yakubu the ruler of Gobir died and his brother Nafata was appointed as ruler.¹¹ It is during his reign that *Shehu* Uthman began to face intense hostility and opposition to his mission. As a result, Nafata repealed all of the concessions made by his father Bawa to the *Shehu*. According to Muhammad Bello, Nafata passed the edict forbidding anyone to preach except the *Shehu*, forbidding anyone to convert from his father's religion, ordering all who had converted to Islam to return to their previous religion, and forbidding anyone to wear the turban or veil.¹² These edicts were

⁸ _ Abd'l Qadir ibn al-Mustafa, *Raud'l-Afkaar*, manus. ff. 8-9.

⁹ _ F.H. el-Misri, ed., *Bayan Wujub'l-Hijra `Ala'l-Ibaad of Shehu Uthman Dan Fodio*, (Khartoum University Press, Khartoum), 1978, p.23.

¹⁰ _ The 12 *mujjaddirs* were: [1] Umar ibn Abd'l-Aziz; [2] Imam Muhammad ibn Idris; [3] Imam Abu'l-Hassan'l-Ash`ari; [4] Shaykh Muhammad ibn at-Tayyib al-Baqillani; [5] Imam Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazzali; [6] Imam Fakr ad-Din ar-Razi [7] Imam Ibn Daqeeq; [8] Imam Siraj'l-Deen Umar ibn Rasin al-Balqini; [9] Shaykh Jalal'l-Deen Abd'l-Rahman as-Suyuti (some of the African scholars say Muhammad ibn Abd'l-Kareem al-Maghili was the *mujaddir* of the ninth century); and [10] Nur'l-Deen Ali ibn Muhammad al-Ujhuri; [11] Shaykh Ahmadu Baba al-Timbukti (Ahmadu Baba claimed that his teacher Modibo Muhammad Baghyugu was the *mujaddir* of the eleventh century); and then [12] SHEHU UTHMAN DAN FUDUYE'.

¹¹ _ J.A. Burdon, *Northern Nigeria: Some Notes on Certain Emirates and Tribes*, (London, 1909), p.66.

¹² _ Muhammad Bello, *Infaq'l-Maysur*, (Abu Bakr Gummi, Cairo), 1964, p.69.

designed to reintegrate the *Shehu's* community back into the jurisdiction of Gobir and to break the increasing influence, which *Shehu* Uthman had over the people of Hausaland.

In 1797, the *Shehu* wrote a series of poems in Fulfulde' encouraging his followers to wear the turbans, veils and to start collecting weapons, because all of these practices were apart of the Sunna of the Prophet.¹³ This marked the beginning of the break with the Habe authorities. Throughout Hausaland the Fulani, Hausa, Nupe and other supporters of the *Shehu* began gathering weapons and preparing for the *hijra* from under the jurisdiction of the disbelievers. By 1803, *Shehu* Uthman had written his Masa'il'l-Muhimma pointing out among many issues: the obligation to make *hijra* from the lands of the disbelievers; and more importantly, the obligation of all Muslims taken the oath of allegiance to an *Amir*. He demonstrated in this work that it was not permissible for any Muslim to be left alone without being under the oath of allegiance to an *Amir* or Caliph. The precedence that he relied upon was the Qur'an, the *Sunna* and the consensus of opinion of the scholars. He said:

"I say, and success is with Allah, that entering under the oath of allegiance (*bay`at*) to an *amir'l-mu'mineen* is an obligation upon every Muslim, if he finds one. Muhammad ibn Abd'l-Karim al-Maghili said in his Ajwiba where he replied to the inquiries of the *Askia* (Muhammad Toure); 'It is not permissible (*laa yahilu*) for a group (*ta'ifa*) among the Muslims that they be left to themselves. Allah ta`ala says; 'Hold firm to the rope of Allah all together, and do not become disunited.' It has been related in the *Sahih* of Imam Muslim on the authority of Ibn Umar, that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said, 'Whoever removes his hand from obedience, will meet Allah on the Day of Judgment without any proof. And whoever dies and the oath of allegiance is not over his neck, has died the death of *jahiliyya* (disbelief).' In this is what is sufficient as an answer to this problem."¹⁴

This work was written to guide the jama`aat during a time of the greatest tension between them and the Habe authorities. The key policy, which emerged

¹³ _ F.H. el-Misri, p.23.

¹⁴ _ Uthman Dan Fuduye', Masaa'il'l-Muhimma, manus., ff.2-3.

as a fundamental principle in dealing with oppression, was the theme of *hijra - jihad*. This theme was an attempt to imitate the classical response made by Prophet Muhammad and his community in 622 A.D., when they made their famous *hijra* from Mecca to Medina. Soon after this *hijra* Prophet Muhammad declared the *jihad* against the disbelievers of Mecca and was granted a major victory in the battle of Badr.¹⁵ The *hijra -jihad* theme would be repeated over and over again throughout the history of the expansion of Islam in Asia, Africa and in Europe. In Africa this dual theme became fundamental principles in the formation of many of the Islamic states, which emerged in the *Bilad's-Sudan*.

After the composing of the *Masa'il*, *Shehu* Uthman composed his manifesto called *Wathiqa ila Jami` Ahl's-Sudan* (A Letter to All the People of the Blacklands). This treatise summed up what had been detailed in the *Masa'il* and it was written to the rulers as well as his supporters. It was written in the form of a 'declaration of independence', summarizing in thirty-nine points, all the fundamental aspects of the *hijra -jihad* theme.¹⁶ The following is a summation of the first twenty-three arguments of the 'declaration of independence' outlined in the *Wathiqa*. Citing them is important because the themes discussed in them will be echoed throughout the history of the Caliphate up until 1903.

"I say, and success is with Allah, realize O brothers!: [1] that commanding the good is obligatory by consensus (of the Qur'an, the *sunna* and the agreement of the scholars); [2] that forbidding indecency is obligatory by consensus; [3] that emigration (*hijra*) from the lands of the disbelievers is obligatory by consensus; [4] that taking the believers as protecting friends is obligatory by consensus; [5] that appointing and *amir'l-mu'mineen* (commander of the believers) is obligatory by consensus; [6] that obedience to him and his representatives (*nuwwaab*) is obligatory by consensus; [7] that *jihad* (struggle) is obligatory by consensus; [8] that appointing *amirs* (governors) over the countries is obligatory by consensus; [9] that appointing judges (*qudaa*) is obligatory by consensus; [10] that they (the judiciary) discharge and implement the precepts of the *shari`a* is obligatory by consensus; [11] that the judgment of a country is based upon the judgment of its ruler (this is by consensus) - if its ruler is Muslim then the country is a land of Islam - if its ruler is a disbeliever then the country is a land of disbelief which makes it obligatory to emigrate (*hijra*) from it; [12]

¹⁵ _ Cyril Glasse', The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam, (Harper-Colins, New York), 1989, pp.156-7.

¹⁶ _ F.H. el-Misri, p.24.

that fighting the disbelieving ruler who has never *said La ilaha illa Allah* (there is no deity except Allah) is obligatory by consensus; [13] that taking the government from him is obligatory by consensus; [14] that fighting the disbelieving ruler who has never said *La ilaha illa Allah* because of the custom of his land nor has he claimed Islam is obligatory by consensus; [15] that taking the government from him is obligatory by consensus; [16] that fighting the apostate ruler who has left the religion of Islam for the religion of disbelief is obligatory by consensus; [17] that taking the government from him is obligatory by consensus; [18] that fighting the apostate ruler who has not left the religion of Islam because he outwardly claims Islam, but he mixes the acts of Islam with the acts of disbelief (like most of the rulers of Hausaland) is obligatory by consensus; [19] that taking the government from him is obligatory by consensus; [20] that fighting the Muslims who keep to themselves without entering under the oath of allegiance to an *amir* from the *amirs* of the believers when they have been invited to the oath of allegiance and they refuse is obligatory by consensus; [21] that declaring a Muslim to be disbeliever because of acts of innovation (*bid'a*) is forbidden by consensus; [22] that declaring a Muslim to be disbeliever because of acts of disobedience (*ma'aasi*) is forbidden by consensus; [23] that remaining in the lands of war is forbidden by consensus."¹⁷

This document is perhaps the most important work produced by *Shehu* Uthman because all the rest of his works are a commentary or detailing of the above. It was a formal announcement of his impending break with the Hausa rulers and a call of support from the Muslims. It was during this same period that the Muslims started collecting weapons.

In 1802 Nafata died and the authority was given to his son Yunfa, who was more oppressive towards the Muslims than his father.¹⁸ The following year because the foiled attempt to destroy a faction of the *Shehu's* community Yunfa attempted to kill *Shehu* Uthman which led to the famous *hijra* from under the jurisdiction of the disbelievers of Hausaland.¹⁹ The community of the *Shehu* fled to a land called Gudu where they appointed him as the *caliph* and *Amir'l-mu'mineen*.²⁰ This appointment was significant because this new dispensation was based upon the belief that *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye' was the eleventh of

¹⁷ _ Uthman Dan Fuduye', *Wathiqat'l-Ikhwaan*, manus., ff.1-2.

¹⁸ _ Abd'l Qadir ibn al-Mustafa, ff.8-9.

¹⁹ _ Muhammad Bello, pp.67, 130.

²⁰ _ Murray Last, p.23.

the 12 righteous Caliphs that Prophet Muhammad foretold about. There are two Prophetic traditions narrated in Sahih Muslim that deals with this subject. The first one was related from Jabir ibn Samr, who said;

"My father and I once visited the Prophet when we heard him say, 'This affair (i.e. the glory of the religion and rectifying the condition of the Muslims) will not cease until there has come twelve Caliphs.' He then said something, which I did not hear. I asked my father what he said. He replied, 'He said all of them will be from the Quraysh'."²¹

The second tradition is similar, except now the 12 Caliphs are connected to governance (*wilayat*). It was related by the above-mentioned Jabir ibn Samr, that he heard the Prophet say on the Friday evening that al-Aslami was stoned;

"The religion will continue firm and unflinching until the coming of the Hour, or until there is appointed over you twelve Caliphs. Each of them will be from the Quraysh."²²

According to Abdullahi Dan Fuduye'²³, Muhammad Bello²⁴ and many of the Fulani historians, the Turudbe' clan of the Fulani were descended from the Companion of Prophet Muhammad, Uqba ibn Nafi', who conquered North Africa and came with his army as far as Massina in the *bilad's-sudan*.²⁵ He allegedly married a Fulani girl named Ba`ajo Manga, and fathered the Turudbe' clan of the Fulani. Whether this claim can be verified outside the claims of their historians is outside the domain of this study. The point being made here is that those who gave the oath of allegiance to *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye', did so with the belief that he was from among the Quraysh, allowing them to also believe that he was among the twelve righteous caliphs mentioned above. These Caliphs included Abu Bakr as-Sadiq (632-634), Umar al-Faruq (634-644), Uthman ibn Afan (644-656), Ali ibn Abi Talib (656-661), al-Hassan ibn

²¹ _ Muslim ibn Al-Hajjaj al-Nisaburi, as-Sahih, (Isa al-Babi al-Halbi Publishers, Cairo), 1962, Vol.2. p.121.

²² _ Ibid., pp.121-122.

²³ _ Abdullahi Dan Fuduye', Tazyin'l-Waraqaat, trans. M. Hiskett, (Ibadan University Press, Ibadan), 1963, p.97.

²⁴ _ Muhammad Bello, Infaq, p.21.

²⁵ _ John R. Willis, ed., Studies in West African Islamic History, (Frank Cass, London), Vol.1, pp.114-115.

Ali (661-661), Mu`awiyya ibn Sufyan (661-680), Abdallah ibn az-Zubayr (683-692), Umar ibn Abd'l-Aziz (717-720), al-Muhtadi Bi'amrillah (869-870), At-Thaahir Billah (1225-1226), and *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye' (1803-1817). Each of these men was responsible for establishing justice, equity and reviving the religion.

Soon after the *hijra* of *Shehu's* community and the oath of allegiance were given to him, Yunfa raised an immense army from among his jurisdiction and from other rulers who could muster forces. *Shehu* Uthman appointed his illustrious brother Abdullahi as general of the armies (*amir'l-jaysh*) of the Muslims.²⁶ The two opposing forces met at a place called Tabkin Kwotto. Murray Last gives the account of the first confrontation between the *Shehu* and Yunfa:

"The Muslims were outnumbered and ill equipped to face the heavy cavalry. With only a few horses, they had to rely on their bows. On one flank the lake, which now had water, covered them; the ground itself, though flat for miles before the ridges in the east, favored the Muslims by being wooded. The advantage in morale was also theirs: facing destruction if they were captured, expecting the reward of martyrdom if they died, convinced Muslims and refugees from a pagan state, they had the Shaykh, the most powerful Muslim in Gobir, to encourage and pray for them. Conversely, the supernatural power, which the Shaykh was, credited . . . Thus with superior morale, the Muslims began the battle and charged the enemy. Although the Gobirawa overlapped both Muslim wings and drove them into the center, the center held: being bunched together was little hindrance, since each man with his bow could be effective. The Gobirawa were eventually turned back in a rout.²⁷

Muhammad Bello compared the battle of Tabkin Kwotto to the celebrated battle of Badr in which the forces of Prophet Muhammad completely defeated the disbelievers of Mecca.²⁸ This battle manifestly improved the chances of success for the jama`aat of the *Shehu*, strengthened their morale immensely and sapped that of their enemies. Because the Muslims had the disadvantage of numbers and equipment, the victory at Tabkin Kwotto was seen as due to Allah's intervention on the side of the Muslims. Abdullahi Dan

²⁶ _ Abdullahi Dan Fuduye', p.109.

²⁷ _ Murray Last, p.26-27.

²⁸ _ Muhammad Bello, p.77.

Fuduye' describes the joy and confidence which the Muslims enjoyed as a result of their victory over the forces of Yunfa.

"And there was nothing, except I saw that their waterless cloud
Had cleared away from the sun of Islam which was shining
By the help of Him who helped the Prophet against the foe
At Badr, with an army of angels gathered together.
And many a great man our hands flung down,
And axes cleft his head, spilt asunder.
And many a brave warrior did our arrows strike down,
And our swords; birds and hyenas cover him;

...
And we are an army victorious in Islam,
And we are proud of nothing but that.
Tribes of Islam - and Turudbe is our clan
Our Fulani and our Hausa all united,
And among us other than these, certain tribes joined together
For the help of Allah's religion - made up the union.

...
None can destroy what the hand of Allah has built.
None can turn back the command of Allah when it comes.
Allah's promise has been completed and the victory of His religion:
There remains nothing but thanks to Him, and humble prayer."²⁹

The jama`at of *Shehu* was exceedingly pleased with their victory over the forces of Yunfa. However, *Shehu* Uthman went into spiritual retreat and he saw a startling vision of the Prophet. In this vision he saw the expected Mahdi who would save Islam, the coming of the *zaman'n-nasara* (the hour of the Christians), and the *hijra* of the faithful from Sokoto to the Nile River and the Hijaz to meet the Mahdi. He saw that the people of the *ribat* and their successors, the true followers of the *Shehu*, would go on the journey to the east guided by the light and *baraka* of the *Shehu*. The apostates, collaborators and deceivers would not go and would remain in the west, settling among the Christian European's jurisdiction until the anti-Christ came out against them.³⁰ The *Shehu* came out and informed his people not to rejoice because his green flag would be a passport to victory for 100 years, and exactly at the end of one century the 'hour of the Christian's' would emerge and eclipse the Sokoto Caliphate in the west.³¹ It was during this period that he wrote his famous

²⁹ _ Abdullahi Dan Fuduye', pp.110-111.

³⁰ _ Abu Bakr Atiku ibn Uthman Dan Fuduye', Risaalat ila Jama`at Gwandu, manus.,ff. 23-31.

³¹ _ A.H.M. Kirk-Greene, p.24.

'Song of the Journey to the East', where he described in detail the very route of the *hijra* and disclosed its time:

"When the ruler of the Muslims goes to Mecca, we must pray,
and make ready our goods to go with him.

...

We pray to the Lord, the King of the worlds, when we start,
that we may obtain provision of the journey from the disbelievers.
With our wives, our children, all our servants and our wealth,
we Muslims will flee together.

We will travel too without thirst or hunger; we will rejoice in that
which is sweet one with another.

By the power of Allah, and the blessing of our saint (*Shehu* Uthman),
He will bring us to the place where a share shall be granted to all.
When we start from here we travel diligently, we follow it, we travel
east as far as Adamawa.

When we start from Adamawa we come to the country of Bagu, we put
down our goods.

May Allah bring us to the town (on the Nile) without lack of anything;
with joy we shall meet with the Arabs."³²

The subjection of *Bilad's-Sudan* by the British and the French in the last decade of the nineteenth century caused the mass *hijra* towards the east as *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye' foretold. According to the eschatological beliefs of the Hour of the Christians would be one of the signs of the end of the world and the key cause for making the final *hijra* to meet the Mahdi.³³

From 1804 to 1808 *Shehu* Uthman was able to bring under his jurisdiction all the regions of Hausaland. His main helpers in these wars were his brother Abdullahi and his son Muhammad Bello. From 1810 to 1815 the *Shehu* moved to Sifawa from Gwandu, where he amplified his lectures and teachings. His stay in Sifawa was the most intellectually productive period for the Caliphate. While there, the *Shehu* would hold lectures every morning and evening. Some days he would lecture on the Quranic interpretation, Quranic recitation, the circumstances surrounding the revelation of certain verses, and the jurisprudence of the Qur'an. He would lecture on the science of Prophetic traditions, discussing the whole range of the six sound collections of traditions, and the methodology of drawing out judgments from these. On appropriate days the *Shehu* would lecture on the circumstances of death, life in the graves,

³² C.H. Robinson, *Specimens of Hausa Literature*, (London, 1896), pp. 64-6.

³³ Umar al-Naqar, *The Pilgrimage Tradition in West Africa*, (Khartoum University Press, Khartoum), 1972, p. 132.

the resurrection and Day of Judgment, and the hell fires and Paradise. Some days he would teach on the corruption that would fill world and the injustice which would lead to the appearance of the Mahdi, the Anti-Christ, the return of Jesus ibn Maryum, and the conditions of the Last Days. Some days were singled out for the study of the science of the purification of the soul (*tasawwuf*) and the methodologies of spiritual advancement. Other days the *Shehu* would entertain questions on jurisprudence and pass legal judgments. On Thursday nights the *Shehu* would teach against injustices and oppression in the Caliphate, against extortion from the poor and against the corruption of government officials.³⁴ While in Sifawa, *Shehu* Uthman composed eleven of his most thought provoking and revolutionary works.

In 1812 *Shehu* Uthman retired from active rule and appointed his brother and son at the head of the new empire. Abdullahi was placed over the western capital in Gwandu and Bello was placed over the eastern capital at Sokoto.³⁵ In 1815 *Shehu* moved from Sifawa to Sokoto where he concerned himself with writing to consolidate the Caliphate or to check the limits of the various Amirs. *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye' died two years later on Sunday night 20 April 1817, at the age of 63.³⁶ Thus, the Sokoto Caliphate had been born out of the fundamental principles of *hijra* and *jihad*, and this theme will be repeated throughout the history of the empire as an eschatological belief saving them from the onslaught of the British invaders. The history of the Caliphate of Sokoto demonstrates a keen awareness on the part of the rulers of the events, which would lead to their destruction. Thus, the rulers attempted to implement policies, which would counter the blameworthy characteristics in the government, which *Shehu* Uthman foretold about. For this reason some mention must be given to the rule of the Caliphs after the *Shehu* up until the appearance of the 'hour of the Christians' in 1903.

After the *Shehu* died the *ba`yat* was given to his son, Muhammad Bello and for one-hundred years the *Khilafat 's-Sokotiyya Uthmaniyya* continued to provide a dome of Islam for the entire western *Bilad's-Sudan*. In 1903, just as the *Shehu* had foretold, the British invaded their blessed lands. The then *Amir'l-Mu'mineen* Muhammadu at-Taahiru, the twelfth *Khalif* after the *Shehu* refused

³⁴ _ Murray Last, p.58.

³⁵ _ Muhammad Bello, p.190.

³⁶ _ Gidado ibn Laima, f.75

to collaborate with the British. He chose the *hijra* from under the jurisdiction of the European Christians. The British, led by Lord Lugard, hastily appointed another ruler named Muhammad ibn Ali, who would yield to European hegemony. Later, the British forces caught up with at-Taahiru and his people in the town of Burmi and killed him along with thousands of his followers. However, before the massacre at-Taahiru, appointed his youngest son, Muhammad Bello Maiurno as the *Khalif* responsible for leading the mass exodus of Hausa, Fulani and other Muslims to the place foretold by the *Shehu* on the Blue Nile. Maiurno followed the exact route, which the *Shehu* described, from a vision some one hundred years earlier. Maiurno settled more than five hundred villages in the Sudan with the town of Maiurno being the epicenter.

Many Fulani, Hausa and others West African Muslims in the Sudan regard the present *Sultan* of Maiurno, *al-Hajj* Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad at-Taahiru ibn Muhammad Bello Maiurno as the rightful *Sultan* of Sokoto. They also believe in another prophecy of *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye', that there will eventually emerge a great Islamic federation founded on the Nile connected to the Awaited *al-Mahdi*. From the town of Maiurno they believe that the descendents of the *Shehu* will return and recover their rule in Sokoto. Every Ramadan at the Eid festival, *Sultan* al-Hajj Abu Bakr receives the *bay`at* and tribute from Fulani and Hausa Muslims from as far as Chad and Ethiopia. In the United States there are at least seven *Amirs* formally connected with the *Sultan* of Maiurno, who are responsible for disseminating the teachings of *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye' in the western hemisphere.

The Basic Research: The Perfection of Character

This age of the death of real knowledge and the promotion of ignorance demands this concise but significant work of the illumined scholar/warrior ***Shehu Uthman Dan Fudiye'***. This age where information is currency and the human species has been relegated to the shelves in the mass market - necessitates a return to what our illumined scholars have called the 'basic research'.

This 'basic research' concerns the transformation of the self or soul (*nafs*) from the darkness of the passions and whims to the light of direct witnessing of the Lord of the Worlds. It is for this reason that Imam al-Ghazzali said, "This knowledge is the goal of all knowledges." In fact the master of men and *jinn*, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said; "I have only been sent to perfect excellent character." If the transformation of the character is the sole reason for the sending of the Messengers, then the outward

actions are a means to that end and not an end in itself. Here the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and the righteous ancestors have delineated for us the reality of the human species. His reality is in the transformation of his inner nature from the prison of his infantile whims of selfishness, rancor, jealousy, and arrogance to the freedom and open space of humility, generosity, tolerance and compassion. It is by means of this inner transformation that Allah transforms the outer circumstances.

In a Prophetic tradition, Allah says upon the tongue of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, ". . . There is nothing more beloved to Me than My servant performing what I have obligated upon him. My servant increases in superogatory acts until I love him. When I love him, I become the sight by which he sees, the hearing by which he hears, the hand by which he grasps and the feet by which he walks...". This tradition indicates the pattern by which human beings are made or formed. It is the pattern which Allah ta`ala described in the noble verse; "In the Messenger of Allah you will find an excellent pattern." He is the perfect man, the primal man, the Overman upon which the human creature becomes human and disengages himself from his lower animal nature. Allah ta`ala says, "There has come to you a messenger from your own souls. Dear to him what afflicts you and deeply concerned about you. To the believers he is kindhearted and merciful." In his as-Shifa Imam Abu Musa Qadi Iyad said of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "He was patient with whoever sat with him or came near him wanting something, so that it was that person who was the first to leave. When anyone asked him for something, he would either give it to him or say something kind to him. His good character and excellent nature embraced everyone so that he was like a father to them. They were equal in respect of what they were apportioned by him. Ibn Abi Hala described him saying, 'He was always joyful with an easy disposition. He was gentle, neither gruff nor rude nor clamorous nor obscene nor nagging nor excessively complimentary.'" Allah ta`ala describes the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace saying, "We have not sent you except as a mercy to all the worlds." Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Tahir said in explanation of this verse, "Allah imbued Muhammad with mercy, so that his very being was mercy and all his qualities and attributes were a mercy to all creatures. Whoever is touched by any aspect of his mercy is saved in both worlds from every hateful thing and obtains everything he loves."

Allah's Vicegerents

It is this primal pattern, this original human nature which is endangered in these times. The present dominant consumer culture has made war against the human being, has gutted him out and filled him with the clamor and noise of the market places. The modern technocratic society which Shaykh al-Murabit calls 'Pharoanic' has made the human species a slave to its own products. Allah ask the question on the tongue of the Prophet Abraham, "Do you worship what your hands manufacture!?" Again Allah ask the question, "Have you not seen those who have taken their passions as their lord!?" Imam al-Ghazaali, may Allah be merciful to him said in his Mukaashfat 'l-Quluub, "The corrupt soul is an idol. For whoever follows his corrupt soul is worshipping an idol." The entire modern society is built upon consumption, the worship of consumption, the worship of the consumer and the thing consumed. The idols of modern society are more numerous than the 360 idols which our master Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace had to clean from the House of Allah. It is this pervasive culture which has made humanity an endangered species. It has been related on the tongue of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "Mercy to my vicegerents." It was asked, "Who are your vicegerents, O Messenger of Allah?" He said, "Those who give life to my *sunna* and teache it to the people. Whoever gives life to my *sunna* has given life to me. Whoever gives life to me will be with me in Paradise." It is clear from this tradition that we learn that what is imperiled is the inner core of the human species. The excellent traits which gives mankind his humanity is being bartered away on the new slave block of the consumer society. Shaykh al-Murabit said in The Way of Muhammad about the real human being; "He has become the vanishing man - the imperilled creature of our polluted planet - the man of inner luminosity who is outwardly a fountain of generosity, peace, encouragement to others, guidance and strength; the man whose whole behavior and energy is united and in harmony with the Divine transaction of existence." The Shaykh also said in his Kufr about the natural form of man, "...should it disappear then with it would disappear the possibility and actuality of human beings fulfilling their highest and unique function. Thus, they would in losing this, lose the function of humanness itself, and the species would be mutant, altered and the human project destroyed forever. This galaxy would be dead, as the terminitary is dead with the demise of its highest function, the queen termite."

The Protected Friends of Allah (*awliyya Allah*)

The struggle against the *kafir* culture of consumerism begins with the self or soul. Allah ta`ala says. "Allah will not change what is with the people

until they transform what is within their souls." This is the 'basic research' which has given victory to those who attained victory from Allah. It was not by means of technology or technique. It was not by means of advanced weaponry or cutting-edge methodologies that the Muslims triumphed over their enemies. It was simply by means of the protecting friendship (*wilaya*) which they earned from their Lord. Allah ta`ala says, "Indeed the protected friends of Allah there is no fear on them nor do they grieve, those who believe and are fearfully aware of Allah." This is the basic belief which every Muslim must have regarding Allah's protected friends (*awliya*). This is true in accordance with the words of Allah ta`ala on the tongue of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "Whoever shows enmity towards one of My protected friends (*waliyan*), then I have readied war for him."

It has been related in a Prophetic tradition by Imam as-Samraqandi in his book called Kitaab 'l-Abdaal, "Ali ibn Abu Taalib, may Allah ennoble his face asked the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, about the substitutes (*abdaal*). He said, "They are sixty men." He then asked, "O Messenger of Allah, describe them for me." He said, "They are not close-minded in their views, nor are they heretical innovators and nor are they among those who exceed the usual bounds. They have not attained what they have by much prayers, fasting nor alms. They have only attained it by the **generosity** of their souls, the **blamelessness** of their hearts towards others, and their **giving sincere advice** to the leaders. O Ali! they are as rare in my community as red sulfur!" In a tradition by Abu Dharr, may Allah be pleased with him; "When prophecy passed away, since the Prophets were the pillars (*awtaad*) of the earth, Allah substituted in their place . . . men from among the community of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, who are called the substitutes (*abdaal*). A man among them does not die except that Allah causes to emerge in his place a man who replaces him. They are the pillars (*awtaad*) of the earth. Thirty of them are upon the very heart of Abraham, upon him be peace. They have not superseded people by much fasting, alms nor prayer - but by means of **true piety**, the **sincerity** of their **intention**, **blameless hearts** towards others and **giving sincere advice** to the Muslims. They seek after the pleasure of Allah ta`ala by means of patience, **benevolence**, **intelligence**, **leniency** and **humility** without humiliation." Imam al-Hassan al-Basri said, "If it were not for the substitutes Allah would cause the earth to disappear."

The Miracles of the *Awliyya*

Realize reader that I will not attempt to be apologetic about the fundamental beliefs of the Muslims concerning the miracles of the Prophets

(*mu`ijzaat*), the miracles of the *awliyya* (*karamaat*) and the mysteries of the unseen kingdoms (*aalam 'l-ghayb*). Being apologetic is the methodology of the modernists who are ashamed of the beliefs of the Muslims in the face of 'enlightened modern technocratic ratiocination'. The inward capitulation of the modernists Muslims to euro-centric materialists thinking occurred long ago. They denied the realities of the unseen and affirmed the magical, irrational and fetishist theories of the *kufaar*. They have rejected Allah's miraculous actions and believed in the 'miracles' of western technology.

Allah ta`ala says, "This is the Book in which there is no doubt. It is a guidance for those who are fearfully aware (*mutaqeen*). Those who believe in the unseen (*al-ghayb*) establish the prayer and spend out from what they have been provided." It is the unanimous agreement of the scholars of *tafseer* that the meaning of, "...those who believe in the unseen.", means those who believe in what sensory perception cannot ascertain and measure. This includes belief in Allah, His Attributes and Names; belief in the Hereafter (like death, the punishment and blessing of the grave; the questioning in the grave; the resurrection from the graves; the gathering of mankind in one place; the weighing of actions; the reckoning; the giving of books; the intercession of the Prophet; the fountain of the prophet; the crossing over the Bridge over Hell; the Hell Fires; the eternity of Hell with its inmates except for those who believed in the unity of Allah; the Paradise; the eternity of Paradise with its people; and the vision of Allah by the believers in Paradise); belief in the Prophets and Messengers (like their truthfulness, veracity, and infallibility; **their miracles**; and the existence of non-essential human qualities being permissible to them); belief in the Angels; belief in the existence of *Jinn* and *Shayateen*; the belief in the veracity of the *shari`a*. Also included among the matters of the unseen is the news which has come to us from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace in the unbroken chains of sound transmission concerning the signs of the end of time (*`alamaat 's-saa`*). These include the alteration of the human condition where injustice, ignorance and corruption would spread; the demise of justice, righteousness and knowledge; the appearance of the Mahdi from the family of the Prophet; the appearance of the *Dajjal* and his tribulations; the descent of Jesus the son of Mary to kill the *Dajjal* and renew the religion of Muhammad; the appearance of *Juj* and *Majuj*; the appearance of the beast which will speak to mankind; the lifting up of the Qur'an from the face of the earth; the rising of the sun from the west; and the first shout from the Trumpet announcing the Day of Judgement and the destruction of the cosmos.

Realize reader that among the matters of the unseen which has been established in the Book of Allah and the *sunna* of His Messenger is the belief in the miracles of the protected friends of Allah (*karaamaat 'l-awliyya*). It is not permissible for any Muslim to reject this. Our Muslim scholars are agreed that whoever rejects this is a corrupt innovator because its proofs are conclusive. The fundamental principle which the scholars are agreed upon about this is: that which permits there to be miracles (*mu`ijiza*) for the Prophets also permits there to be miracles (*karaama*) for the protected friend (*wali*). This is because the One who created the miracles for the Prophets is the One who creates miracles for the *wali*. These miracles are from Allah as an authentication to the Prophet and *wali* for what they claim and it stands as a clear proof against those who deny them. Allah shows His honor to his servants from among the Prophets and *awliyya* as a sign of His love for them and their special rank with Him. Allah out of His favor to them breaks the norms of creation by doing with creation which is not normally done. Allah ta`ala says; "That is a favor which He gives to whomever He wills. Allah is the Possessor of Tremendous Bounty." For there is nothing impossible to Him, not whether bringing into existence or leaving in non-existence. "He does whatever He pleases", in His creation far above what the intellects can grasp which breaks the norms of creational realities.

The evidence of the miracles of the Prophets is well known and firmly established in the Book of Allah ta`ala. Whoever denies these miracles has denied the veracity of the Book of Allah and has become *kaafir*. The miracles of Jesus the son of Mary giving life to the dead, curing leprosy and the blind, and the bringing down of the table spread for his disciples has been established by the Qur'an. The miracles of Moses parting the Red Sea, defeating the magic of Pharaoh's magicians, providing water for the twelve tribes and bringing plagues upon the people of Pharaoh has been established in the Qur'an. The miracles of our master Muhammad splitting the moon, giving life to the dead, water flowing from between his fingers, increasing of the food, healing the wounded during battle, giving sight to the blind, and many others have been established in the Qur'an and the sound historical narrations. No one denies this except those who are ignorant or corrupt innovators. Shaykh Abu Taahir al-Qazuweeni said, "Realize that the conclusive proofs of the foundation of the prophethood of the Prophets are miracles. These are actions which Allah creates by breaking the creative norms at the hands of the demand of a Prophet which gives acknowledgment to his claim as a Prophet." As for the miracles of

the *awliyya* who are not Prophets nor Messengers, this has also been established by the Qur'an and the *sunna*.

The Qur'an

Allah ta`ala says concerning one of the champions of truth (*siddeequun*) and a follower of Prophet Solomon, upon him be peace, whose name was Asaf ibn Barkhiya ; "He who possessed knowledge of the Book said, 'I will bring it (the throne of Bilqis) to you before your glance returns to you.'" Thus, a man who was neither a Prophet or Messenger brought the throne of the Queen Bilqis from Abyssinia to Jerusalem faster than the blinking of an eye. This was by the divine permission of Allah ta`ala, so what can the rejecters say about the miracles of the *awliyya* after reading this Quranic verse?!

Allah says concerning the people of the Cave, "And when you withdraw from them and that which they worship besides Allah, then seek refuge in the Cave, your Lord will spread for you His mercy and will prepare for you a resting place in your affliction. You might have seen the sun when it rose move away from their cave to the right, and when it set, go past them on the left while they were in the cliff of the cave. That was one of the signs of Allah. He whom Allah guides is guided aright, and He whom He sends astray, he definitely cannot find a guiding friend. You would have thought them awake although they were asleep, and We caused them to turn over to the right and the left, while their dog stretched out his paws on the threshold. If you had observed them closely you would have definitely turned away from them in flight and you would have been filled with fear of them. In the same way We awakened them that they might question one another. A speaker among them said, 'How long have we stayed?' They said, 'We have stayed a day or some part of a day.' Others said, 'Your Lord knows best how long you have stayed. Now send one from among you with this silver coin of yours to the city, and let him see what food is purest there and bring a supply of it. Let him be courteous and let no man know who you are. If they could come to know who you are, they would stone you or turn you back to their religion, then you will never prosper. In like fashion We disclosed to them that they might know that the promise of Allah is true and that as far as the Hour is concerned, there is no doubt about it. When they disputed over their affair among themselves saying, 'Lets build over them a building, their Lord knows best about them. ' Those who won their point said, 'We shall definitely build a place of worship over them.' Some say, 'They were three, their dog was the fourth', and some say, 'Five, their dog the sixth,' guessing at random, and some say, 'Seven, their dog the eighth. Say: 'My Lord

is best aware of their true number. None knows them except a few, so do not argue about them except outwardly and do not ask any of them to narrate anything about them." Allah ta`ala continues the narration by saying, "It is said that they stayed in the Cave three hundred years and add nine. Say: 'Allah is best aware of how long they stayed. To Him belongs the unseen (*ghayb*) of the heavens and the earth."

Therefore realize that their sleeping three-hundred and nine lunar years in the Cave without food or drink was a miracle. Their turning left and right in order not to injure their sides was a miracle. Their being awoken after sleeping three-hundred years was a miracle. Their returning to their people, who at one time did not believe in Allah nor the resurrection of the dead, as a proof of the truthfulness of Allah's promise was a miracle. And finally, the fact that few knew of their true number was also a miracle. The youth of the Cave were neither Prophets nor Messengers, yet Allah ta`ala demonstrated a clear miracle with them as a sign of His power and omnipotence.

Allah ta`ala says concerning Mary the mother of Jesus and her guardian Zakariya, "And her Lord accepted her supplication with a full acceptance and gave her an excellent growth, and He made Zakariyya her guardian. Whenever Zakariyya went into the sanctuary where she was, he found that she had food. He said, 'O Mary! Where does this food come from?' She said, 'It is from Allah. Allah gives without measure to whomever He pleases.'" It is clear here that Mary was not a Prophet nor Messenger, yet Allah out of His bounty brought food into Mary's sanctuary without mediation. According to the tradition Allah brought her summer food in the winter time and winter food in the summer time which He brought out of non-existence as a bounty from Himself. There are many narrations which Allah ta`ala has revealed in His Qur'an as a proof of the miracles of His protected friends. What we have narrated above is sufficient as a proof for those who are guided.

The Sunna

It has been related in the Saheeh of al-Bukhari on the authority of Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr, "The people of the raised pavilion (*Saffa*) were people of destitution, so the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said, 'Whoever has food for two let him take one of them as the third. Whoever has food for four let him take one of them as the fifth. . .' Verily Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, came with three of them as guest." The tradition goes on to explain. "We did not take a portion from the food except that what was left on the plate was more than before. This continued until the food

increased of its on accord and became more than it was originally. Abu Bakr looked at that and said to his wife, 'O sister of the Banu Firaas! What is this!' She said, 'No!? By the coolness of my eyes! The food now is three times more than it was in the beginning!' They then ate from it and then sent it to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant peace. It was mentioned that he too ate from it." In this sound narration Abu Bakr was not a Prophet nor Messenger, yet Allah at`ala manifested His miracles at his hands.

In the same way Allah manifested His miracles at the hands of Umar ibn al-Khattaab as was narrated by the knower of Allah, the erudite of the Abyssinians, as-Sayyid Isma`il ibn Mahdi al-Gharbani in his Nafas 'r-Rahmaan Fimaa Li Ahbaab Allahi Mina `Uluwi as-Shaan; "Umar ibn al-Khattaab was one Friday giving the *khutba* upon the *minbar* of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, when suddenly he saw the enemies and the Muslims at the very extreme of the country of the Persians. The enemy armies desired to move up the mountain in order to defeat the Muslims and inflict harm upon them. The *amir* of the *mujahiduun* at that time was Saariya ibn Hassan, may Allah be pleased with him. Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, while he was giving the sermon, suddenly shouted, 'To the mountain O Saariya!' Saariya heard the voice of the *Amir 'l-Mumineen* Umar and he with the army of the Muslims moved up the mountain. It was by means of this maneuver that the Muslims attained victory and defeated the disbelievers." Here Allah manifested two miracles upon the hands of Umar ibn al-Khattaab: [1] the ability to see a distance which was more than a months travel; and [2] the ability of Saariya to hear the voice of Umar from that same distance. This is an extraordinary achievement, but more amazing than that is the modern Muslim today who will doubt that while at the same time he believes in the voice he hears on the radio from America and London and in the images that he fills his mind with from the cable television of America. Thus, he believes in the abilities of created beings and rejects the omnipotence actions of the Creator .

Among the miracles of Umar ibn al-Khattaab, may Allah be pleased with him is that Amr ibn al-`As wrote to him saying that one of the blameworthy things which he found in Egypt is that the Nile river required every year that a young virgin girl be thrown to her death in it in order for the Nile to flow continuously. Umar wrote to `Amr saying, "Islam dispels what comes before it". Umar also sent to him a small piece of paper upon which was written "In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful. To the Nile of Egypt from the slave of Allah Umar ibn al-Khattaab. To continue: If you flow by your own accord then we have no need from you. However, if you flow by the power of

Allah, then flow in the name of Allah!" Umar ordered `Amr to throw the piece of paper in the Nile. He threw it in there and the Nile flowed properly and that night exceeded its normal current by sixteen cubits. Thus it will continue to flow properly until the Day of Judgement. This is from among the greatest of miracles by which souls that are deadened with doubt are revived. This miracle personifies the excellence of the omnipotence of Allah ta`ala. For when someone obeys Allah, every thing obeys him.

It has been related in the Nafas 'r-Rahmaan that, "A man was walking in the road when a woman passed him whom he thought was exceedingly beautiful. He then turned and stole a glance of her beauty. When he finally entered upon Uthman ibn Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, Uthman said, "What is wrong with a people that when they enter my home and I see upon their eyes the traces of adultery!?" This miracle of Uthman was a validation of the tradition narrated by al-Hakim and al-Bazzari on the authority of Anas, may Allah be pleased with him when the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said, "There are slaves of Allah who recognize people by their facial features." Imam al-`Azizi said, "They are shown what is in their inner natures and states by means of their physiognomy." This was the reality of the miraculous station of Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him. For he was drowned in the sea of witnessing of Allah until He favored him by removing the cover from his sight where he saw the internal nature of people!

Our master, Amir 'l-Mu'mineen Ali ibn Abi Taalib, may Allah ennoble his face, was known for his exceptional miracles. Among these is what was related from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, when on the day of Khaybar, he said, "I will give the flag to a man whom Allah and His Messenger love. Allah will conquer it by his hands and he will not flee." It was as the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said. The freedman of the Prophet, Abu Raafi` said, "We went out with Ali ibn Abu Taalib, may Allah be pleased with him, when the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace dispatched him with his flag against Khaybar. When he reached near the fortress, its people came out against him and he engaged them in battle. One of the Jews struck at him and knocked his shield from his hands. Ali then grasped the door of the fortress, which was made from iron and used it as a shield. It remained in his hand as he fought the Jews until Allah conquered the fortress by his hands. After Ali had conquered Khaybar he threw the door a distance of eighty feet behind his back." Al-Bayhaqi related that after Ali cased the door aside seventy men gathered to return the door back to its place and found it difficult. Ibn Hajr said in his as-Sawaa`iq 'l-Muharaqa that Ali said, "I

did not snatch the door of Khaybar from its place by bodily power but by divine power."

The Consensus (*al-ijmaa`u*)

The scholars of the *sunna* are agreed that it is permissible for miracles (*karaamaat*) to appear upon the hands of the protected friend of Allah (*awliya'Allahi*). Only the Mu`tazila differ with the Muslims in that regard. Spiritual miracles are the foundation of sensory miracles. That is to say that any outward manifestation of breaking the creational norms is the result of the breaking of the norms of the animal soul. Some of the protected friends of Allah believe that the only real miracles are spiritual inward miracles because it is conceivable that sensory breaking of norms could appear upon someone whose uprightness has not been perfected. Further, they could manifest upon the hands of those who have no uprightness at the foundation like magicians and sorcerers. Sensory breaking of norms are known to occur upon the hands of Christian monks and priests. These acts may appear as miracles because they break creational norms, however in the language of the people of Allah, these acts are called enticements (*istidjraaj*).

Shaykh Ahmad ibn Ajiba, may Allah be merciful to him said in his al-Iqaadh 'l-Himmam Fii Sharh 'l-Hikam , "Sensory miracles (*karaama hassiya*) are those by which Allah causes the servant to break the sensory normative laws; like walking upon water, flying in the air, cutting across the earth, causing water to spring forth, procuring sustenance, having knowledge of the unseen and other miracles which break the normative laws of creation. Spiritual miracles (*karaama ma`anawiyya*) consist of: the servant standing upright with his Lord outwardly and inwardly; the removal of the veil from his heart until he knows his Master; being triumphant over the corrupt soul and denying its passions; the strengthening of his certainty and his tranquility and serenity with Allah." Shaykh Abd 'l-Wahaab as-Sha`rani, may Allah be merciful to him said in his al-Yawaaqeet wa 'l-Jawaahir, "Realize that breaking creational norms come in many forms. What we intend here by the breaking of norms can only be attained by one who is firmly established upon the *shari`a* of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. If not then the breaking of norms is simply an intrigue (*makr*) and an enticement (*istidraaj*) which emerges from a direction where the person is unawares." Shaykh Muhyideen Ibn al-`Arabi, may Allah be merciful to him said in his al-Futuhaat 'l-Makiyya, "The breaking of creational norms (*kharq 'l-`adat*) cannot be considered miracles (*karaamaat*) except for the one who has broken the creational norms of his soul by taking it

out of its low customary nature into being completely attached to the values of the *shari`a* in all movements and stillness."

Shaykh Abu Taahir 'l-Qazweeni, may Allah be merciful to him said, "Realize that every miracle whether prophetic are upon the hands of a protected friend comes from Allah in reality. He is the one who creates inability and ability. Actions which break creational norms are only called miracles from the perspective of scope and metaphor, not from the perspective of divine reality...These actions which break creational norm are the traces of Allah's divine power and omnipotence." Shaykh Abu 'l-Hassan 's-Shadhili, may Allah be merciful to him said, "There are two types of all encompassing miracles:

- [1] the miracle of belief through the increase of certainty (*yaqeen*) and direct eye-witnessing;
- [2] the miracle of actions by adherence and compliance and avoiding pretensions and deception.

Whoever is given these two and then yearns for anything else, then he is a deceiver and a liar; or one who has erred in his knowledge and correct actions... Every miracle which is not accompanied with the pleasure of Allah, is only a deception and an enticement to the person; or he is deficient, destroyed or ruined." Shaykh Abu 'l-'Abaas 'l-Mursi, may Allah be merciful to him said, "The important thing is not that the earth is physically rolled up where suddenly a person can be in Mecca or any other land instantly. But the important thing is that the blameworthy traits of the soul be rolled up where a person is instantly with his Lord."

Shaykh Ahmad ibn 'l-Ajiba said, may Allah be merciful to him, "Real miracles are two kinds:

- [1] being upright in the religion;
- [2] obtaining the perfection of certainty

As for sensory breaking of norms, if the person who has them is upright outwardly and inwardly then it is obligatory to esteem him for his miracles. This is because these miracles stand as a witness of the slaves perfection. However, if the person possessing actions which break creational norms is not upright, then no consideration should be given to him." It is for this reason that our Imam as-Shaafi`, may Allah be pleased with him said, "Even when you see the heretical innovator flying in the air, do not accept him." Imam Layth ibn Sa`ad, may Allah be pleased with him said, "Even when you see the heretical innovator walking upon water, do not accept him."

The Miracles of *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye'

The author of this blessed book, *Shehu Uthman Dan Fuduye'*, may Allah ennoble his secret and provide us with his *baraka*, was one of the spiritual pillars (*awtaad*) of this earth. He combined in his character an ample quantity of the light and character of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. His son and Amir 'l-Mu'mineen, Muhammad Bello said about him in his Infaaq 'l-Maysuur Fi Taarikh Bilaad 't-Takruur (Successful Investment Concerning the History of the Lands of West Africa), "Allah favored us in these times by manifesting this *Imam* and *Khalifa*, the *Mujaddid* of this religion on behalf of creation, the giver of life to the *sunna* of the chosen one Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, the disperser of knowledge and the remover of distress - my father **Uthman ibn Muhammad** - the lordly scholar, the perpetual support, the axis of the time, the proof of the age, emblem of this world, ascendent of the highest ranks, the well of direct knowledge of Allah and the tall shading tree of select sciences and subtle secrets. The scholars of this age are submerged in the seas of his knowledge and the wise men of this time take from the niche of his light. The protected friends (*awliyya*) in this age turn around the *ka`aba* of his secrets and the knowers in this time have stopped at the *`arafat* of his presence. . .may Allah prolong his life and make his ending excellent. Allah our Master blessed us with establishing the *jihaad* in these lands of the Blacks by means of His blessings. He assisted us with His forces and made us strong by means of His victory, until we witnessed the authority of His overwhelming dominion and the strength of His vanquishing of His enemies. We witnessed the assistance which only Allah gives to His protected friends (*awliyya*). We saw with our own eyes the most astonishing and extraordinary miracles which He gives to His protected and intimate friends - which would increase the believers in faith and throw the disbelievers down in humiliation, defeat and loss."

This small tract by Sultan Muhammad Bello indicates the superb character of *Shehu Uthman Dan Fuduye'*. It also indicates that the victory which Allah blessed him with was directly connected to the inner transformation which the *Shehu* ignited in the lands of the Blacks. He removed the clouds of obscurity away from Allah's divine unity in the hearts of the people. He gave life to the *sunna* of the Prophet and extinguished the heretical innovation which the Africans had invented in their lands. He taught them the individual obligations and submerged them into the collective obligations. By him the Africans were guided to obedience of Allah and ignorance and darkness was removed from them. Through the *Shehu* many of the common people entered into the religion in large numbers and many of the evil scholars and

disobedient Muslims repented. His brother, the Amir of Gwandu, Abdullahi Dan Fuduye' said,

"Uthman who has come to us in darkness
and has removed from us every intense uncertainty.
He invited to the religion of Allah and in that did not fear
the criticism of the blamer or the one who gossips
Many *sunnan* have you brought to life,
many errors snuffed while blazing fiercely like live coals
You rose in a land whose customs had become excessive
and which conflicted with the *sunna* of the joyous Prophet."

Our teacher the great scholar and friend of Allah, the present Wazir of Sokoto - Shaykh al-Junayd ibn Muhammad al-Bukhari said in his famous Tuhfat 'l-Ikhwaan about the superb character of the *Shehu*,

"Realize that our Shaykh Uthman
May his Lord eternally be pleased with him
Grew up firmly establishing the religion of Allah
By means of his vast character he was a servant of Allah
His nature was generous and he was firm
in the religion and sins never overcame him
He never feared the criticism of the blamer
in spreading the religion of Allah among the cities
And among the villages and the deserts - everywhere
He led the community from its errors
He showed reverence towards the elders and the young
and mercy to them, his character was that of a protector
The people of his time all of them agreed
they had never seen one more excellent than him in character
And one of his blood brothers was asked about him
'By what means did that man of Allah supersede
All other men?', And the answer was that, 'He
did not supersede them with acts of worship, but
I saw from him character which was not matched
in its excellence, by anyone - not even by comparison!
Except the Prophet, for he is better than
all created beings and he possesses every sublime state
In a poem of his in his own language
his reason for composing it is well known
He said in it that he never confronted
a person with evil or with what that person would dislike
He was patient with the offenses of people
From those who hated him and those who accepted him"

The scholars are agreed that it was by means of the above mentioned character traits that Allah provided the *Shehu* with his many dazzling miracles.

The *wazir* of the Sokoto Caliphate, Gidado ibn Laima said in his Rawdat 'l-Jinaan, " Among the *Shehu's* miracles is that his close companion, Umar al-Kammu, used to love to partake of *goro* (cola nuts). He then came to the *Shehu* one day and said, "I don't have any *goro*." The *Shehu* then said, "Come with me." He then left the village with him after the *asr* prayer and they walked for a while until they saw a forest full of *goro*. The *Shehu* then said, "Take whatever you need." Umar then took what he needed and they returned to their homes. When Umar al-Kammu woke up the next morning, he went after the *subh* prayer and followed the path which they had taken the previous day. He continued walking until he could not go any longer. He then was forced to return to the village and said to the *Shehu*, "I followed our trail of the previous day, but I did not find anything of which I saw, so I had to return." The *Shehu* then said, "Is it possible for you to reach as far south as Gonja?" Gonja is a locale and a heart for most of the *goro* of Hausaland, between it and Degel is a journey of three months. "

Waziri Gidado continued, "Among his miracles is a woman among the Hausa encountered highway robbers from among the Tuareg who saw that she was traveling alone and with her were clothe which she intended to sell. She said to herself, "If Allah saves me from these (robbers), I will take three thousand coins as a present to the *Shehu*." When they saw her, they said to her, "Who is with you?" She replied, "My husband." They then looked behind her and saw an imposing man coming up behind her with his weapons. They then allowed her to go on. When they had departed she looked behind her and there was no one. She then took three thousand coins to the village of the *Shehu*. However, when she reached there, she placed one thousand in her house and took two thousand to the *Shehu*. She found him in one of his lectures and informed him of what had happened (leaving out the part about the amount of coins she had promised him). But the *Shehu* said to her, "Where is the one thousand which you took out?" She said, "It is in my house." He smiled and said, "Well, go and bring it to me!" Among this genre if miracle was that the *Imam* and scholar Zangi desired from the *Shehu* a ram for the seventh day naming ceremony (*`aqiqah*) for his new born. The *Shehu* told him, "Go back home and look under your prayer mat, you will find what you desire." He then returned, looked under it and found there three thousand coins beneath the mat. Among this genre also was that the *Shehu* came out to his lecture to give a sermon to the people. That same night he saw a storm cloud approaching. The *Shehu* said to the storm clouds, "Do you wish to prevent me from preaching?" Then the storm clouds withdrew from around his lecture, but it rained in every direction around him.

The *Shehu* continued to preach until he had finished. Among the same genre was the brother of the Qadi Datu, Abdullahi al-Kunawi, who informed me that he was captured by the enemies who took his weapon, stripped him of his clothes and intended to kill him. He then said, "*Shehu!* I would love now that Allah could show me some of your miracles!" Suddenly the enemies began saying, "If we were to kill this single man it would not keep us from fighting their people. Killing him and leaving him alone is the same." They then returned his clothing and his weapons and released him. When Allah conquered the land, Abdullahi came to the *Shehu* at his place at the village of Gwandu and informed him of what had happened. After that, Abdullahi al-Kunawi, became one of those who accompanied the *Shehu* as a disciple and went through spiritual training at his hand. As a result of this he was given transcendent mastery of the sciences of the spiritual realities until he obtained an abundant share in that regard."

Shehu Uthman Dan Fuduye' mentioned the miraculous gifts he was given as a result of disciplining the soul (*riyaadat 'n-nafs*) in his *Kitaab 'l-Wird*. In this small tract the *Shehu* delineates the self discovery and self-knowledge which he attained at the age of thirty-six which resulted from struggling against the corrupt self. He says:

"When I reached the age of thirty-six, Allah removed the covering from my eyes. He removed the burden from my hearing and smell. He removed the dullness from my taste. He removed the density from my hands and the heaviness from my feet. I could then see the far like the near and hear the far like the near. I could then smell those who worshipped Allah with the sweetness of their scent and the stinch of those disobedient with the foulness of their odor. I could then recognize the permissible by taste before it reached my throat and I could recognize the forbidden in the same manner. I could then take with my two hands what was far from me while remaining in my place. I could then walk with my feet the distance which a fleet horse could not travel in years. This was a favor from Allah which He gives to whom He pleases. I was then acquainted with my entire physiognomy: every organ; bone; nerve; muscle; and hair follicle. I was made to understand each of these from their distinctive grade and its function."

Allah ta`ala also favored *Shehu* Uthman with inward spiritual miracles. Among his miracles of the inward were: comprehension by means of the light of Allah; contentment with the decree of Allah; forsaking the management of affairs; and being firmly established wherever Allah established him without choosing. Among his miracles were: his attaining knowledge for the sake of Allah and benefiting the people by it; doing without in this world; yearning for that which is with Allah; humility; being patient with the roughness and

backwardness of people; and never returning evil for evil. The *Shehu* planted the seeds of excellent character deep in the earth of obscurity until Allah manifested him before the world. Allah then gave him the miracles and blessings of: commanding the good and forbidding evil; attainment of the spiritual rank of *Imam 'l-Awliyya* (leader of the protected friend of Allah) at the age of 41 in the same way our master Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace attained the station of *Imam 'l-Mursaleen* (leader of the Messengers) at the same age. He described this miraculous occurrence in his Kitaab 'l-Wird:

"When I reached the age of forty, five months and some days, Allah drew me to Himself. And I found in His presence the master of men and *jinn*, our master Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. With him were the Companions, the Prophets and the protected friends (*awliyya*). They welcomed me and sat me in the center of their assembly. Then the savior of men and *jinn*, my master Abd'l-Qaadir 'l-Jaylaani came with a green cloak which was edged with the statement - **laa ilaha illa Allah Muhammadur Rasuulu Allah** - and a turban which was edged with - **qul Huwa Allahu Ahad**. He then gave these to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, who then placed them upon his breast for some time. He then gave them to Abu Bakr 's-Sadeeq, then to Umar 'l-Faaruuq, then to Uthman Dhi 'n-Nuurayn, then to Ali (may Allah enoble his face), then to Prophet Yusef (upon him be peace. Yusef then returned them to my master Abd'l-Qaadir 'l-Jaylaani. He was then ordered by all present to place the turban upon me. They said, 'Dress him and place the turban upon him and name him with the name which has been designated to him. He then sat me in front of him, dressed me and placed the turban upon me. He then called me the *Imam 'l-Awliyya* (the Leader of the Protected Friends). He then commanded me to the good and forbade me indecency. He then girded me with the *Sayf 'l-Haqq*(the Sword of Truth) and ordered me to unleash it against the enemies of Allah. He then commanded me what he commanded me."

The *Shehu* was blessed with making the emigration at the age of 52 from under the political jurisdiction of the disbelievers at Kebbi to Gudu (the same age which our master Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace made his emigration from Mecca to Medina). He was blessed with: being chosen as *Amir 'l-Mu`mineen*; establishing the *jihad*; conquering the lands of the Blacks and appointing of regional *Amirs*; establishing the Sokoto Caliphate in accordance with the rules of the *shari`a*; and finally he was blessed with the miracle to be taken from this earth at the age of 63, the exact age which our master Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace was taken from this earth. In his famous Fulfulbe' poem called *Yimre' Tanasabuje'* (The Song

of Comparison), the *Shehu* shows gratitude to Allah for the blessings of resemblance to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and his comparison to the *Mahdi*. In it he mentions many other miracles and blessings which Allah ta`ala bestowed upon him as a favor from Himself.

***Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye's Last Testament to His Community**

The *wazir* of the Sokoto Caliphate, Gidado ibn Laima said in his Rawdat 'l-Janaan, "*Shehu* Uthman came out to one of his lectures on a Wednesday after the *maghrib* prayer. He asked Allah ta`ala to allow us to obtain his *baraka*. When he sat down upon his blessed lecture seat, he greeted the people with the best of greetings and then said: "I have come out to inform you of five things by which you will obtain the *baraka* of this age. This is because the *mujjadid* after the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, must of necessity come every century. Thus, everyone who lives during his time will not obtain any benefit from him except with five conditions. **The first** condition is that he must love the *mujjadid*, for whoever does not love him will not accept his teachings. **The second** one is that he should exalt and esteem him, for whoever does not esteem him cannot except his teachings. **The third** is he must always consider him on the truth, for whoever does not consider the *mujjadid* on the truth will not accept his teachings. **The fourth** is that he must throw his own intellect and opinion behind him or place it in his pocket, and except everything that the *mujjadid* says and act in accordance with it. **The fifth** is that he should consider every scholar during his age below the rank of the *mujjadid* and not place anyone above him and not give any consideration to the teachings of any shaykh who disagrees with his teachings. Whoever has gathered together these five conditions in himself will definitely obtain benefit and *baraka* from him and he will be a means (*waseela*) between him and between Allah and His Messenger. And if he does not, then he will have no *waseela*, we seek refuge with Allah." The *Shehu* then said; "O Muslims! be grateful to Allah! For whoever among you accepts my teachings and acts in accordance with them I will come with him tomorrow to Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. I will be a proof against everyone who does not accept my teachings with Allah. This is in accordance with His words `azza wa jalla; "*On the Day when all people will be called by their Imam.*" In this is sufficient as a summation of the miracles (*karamaat*) of the *Shehu*. His praiseworthy and pleasing characteristics and his marvelous and universal *baraka* cannot be enumerated except by Allah. So what we have laid out in this

book from its beginning until now, will be sufficient for he whom Allah has given inner vision. May Allah continue to guide us and you."

The **Path to Paradise** delineates the science of spiritual purification regarding character transformation (*tasawwuf li 't-takhallaq*) which he calls the science of secrets (*'ilm 'l-asraar*). The *Shehu* commences with the methodology of repentance (*tawba*) to Allah from every outward sin. Repentance was and will remain the door by which Adam and his descendants return to Paradise and by means of which they attain the station of *khalifa*. The *Shehu* then renders in a clear and succinct fashion nine chapters which clarify the methodology of the transformation of the inner self. The **Path to Paradise** is an explanation of the means (*waseela*) to the end (*nihaaya*). The means (*waseela*) are repentance (*tawba*), awareness (*taqwa*), uprightness (*istiqama*), austerity (*zuhud*), solitude (*'uzla*), piety (*wara`a*), fear (*khawf*), hope (*raja'*), contentment (*ridaa'*), surrender (*tasleem*), sincerity (*ikhlaas*), tranquility (*tamaa'neena*), watchfulness (*maraaqaba*), gratitude (*shukr*) and praise (*hamd*). Each of these stations has its specific science, action and spiritual state which the *Shehu* explains in a very simple manner in order for the novice or the specialist to attain the highest stations with Allah ta`ala.



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The **SANKORE' INSTITUTE** is honored to present this excellent work **Tareeq'l-Janna** (the Path to Paradise) of **Shehu Uthman Dan Fuduye'** to the reader. It is his commentary upon the teachings of Imam Abu Hameed al-Ghazaali on the sciences of the transformation of the character. *Shehu* Uthman considered al-Ghazaali to be one of the sole authorities in this science. The other authoritative source being Imam al-Muhaasibi. The *Shehu* also wrote a book delineating the teachings of Imam 'l-Muhaasibi called **Mulakhas Min Asraar Kalaam Shaykh 'l-Faqeeh 'l-Muhaasibi** (A Summary of the Secrets From the Teachings of the Shaykh and Jurist al-Muhaasibi).

The **SANKORE' INSTITUTE** invites the reader to learn and act upon what the *Shehu* has laid out for him in this concise but blessed book. For the African Muslim and non-Muslim reader, this book enables you to communicate with one of your own righteous ancestors whom Allah blessed with success and victory in this life and success in the next. For the non-African Muslim, this book is a chance for you to examine the spiritual ingredient which enabled the Muslims in Africa to be resilient in the face of imperialism and colonization when the rest of the Muslim world had capitulated inwardly and outwardly to foreign domination. It is also a chance for you to put in practice that most foretelling of the prophetic traditions, "Hearing and obeying is obligatory upon you, even if there be placed over you an Abyssinian whose head is like a raisin." For the novice (*mureed*) and traveler (*saalik*) on the path to Allah, this book will facilitate your spiritual journey and make traveling the path easy. Shaykh Abu Hamza 'l-Baghdadi said, "Whoever knows the path of truth, traveling it is made easier for him." This book can act as a guide until you are blessed to place your hand in the hands of one who has completed the path. For the teaching Shaykhs and the realized guides this book is a proof for you and a banner which delineates your arrival at what Allah has given you from His bounty. May Allah increase us with the like of you as long as the earth spins on its **axis**.

We ask the readers who may attain some benefit from this work to give sincere prayers for its author **Shehu Uthman Dan Fuduye'** and to include us, our wives, children, teachers and leaders in your sincere prayers of forgiveness (*magfira*), pardon (*`afwu*), mercy (*rahma*) and well-being (*`aafiya*) in this life as well as the next - and to save us from the torment of the Fire! It has been related by Ibn Abi Shayba, Imam Muslim, Abu Dawuud and Ibn Maja on the authority of Abu 'd-Darda' that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said, "Verily the supplication of the believer for his brother who is not present is answered. At his head is an Angel who is entrusted with his

supplication. Each time he supplicates for the good of his brother, the Angel says, 'Ameen! and the like of that for you !'."

O Allah we ask you by Your names which encompasses all things, send Your best blessings and most perfect peace upon our master and chief Muhammad to the number of Your creation and as long as the day follows night. O Allah be pleased with his pure family and each of his companions. O Allah illuminate the grave of our teacher and leader *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye' and be merciful to each of those who inherited the authority after him. O Allah be merciful to his descendents in Sokoto, especially Sultan Ibrahim Dasuki and Waziri Junayd ibn Muhammad 'l-Bukhari and all those connected with them. O Allah be merciful to the descendents of the *Shehu* in Maiurno on the Blue Nile and give them what You promised them on the tongue of the *Shehu*. O Allah protect and prolong the authority of *Amir'l-Mu`mineen* al-Hajj Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad 't-Taahiru and ennoble the secret of our Shaykh and guide Imam Muhammad al-Ameen ibn Adam. O Allah be merciful to Your protected friends (*awliiya*) who are present in these times and be merciful to us by means of them. O Allah forgive every **muslim** (male and female), every **mu'min** (male and female) and every **muhsin** (male and female) and protect them from the afflictions of this world and the next. O Allah be merciful to the entire *umma* of Muhammad and assist them against the disbelievers with Your help and assistance. There is no power nor might except with You and You have power over all things! Ameen

Abu Alfa Umar MUHAMMAD SHAREEF bin Farid

Muslim Chaplain of the California Medical Facility & Vacaville State Prison

8 Dhu 'l-Hijja, 1417 (16 April, 1996)

Fairfield, California

Institute of Islamic-African Studies International

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم وعلى الله تعالى سيدنا محمد وآله وصحبه
 وسلم تسليما: قال الأثير الملقب بالرحمة ربه العكس
 طره أفلة الفعل والتشريف المشهور عن حيث كنيته عثمان بن محمد
 بن عثمان الجليل بن نسيب المالكي مذهبنا الأشعري اعتقادنا الحمد لله
 رب العالمين الثلاثة والسلام على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم
 وهذا الكتاب طريق الجنة من أسرار كلام ابن حامد الفخر الرازي
 الله تبارك وتعالى في التوفيق يا أخاه عليك أو لا وفك الله بطلب
 العلم وعليه المدار واعلم أن العلم والعبادة جَوْهَرَانِ
 جلوهما انزلت الكتب وارسلت الرسل لا بد للعباد أن يعرفوا
 عن كل ما لا يعرفون من نهيهم لكره القيادة لا تحل إلا بالعلم
 بلزم إذا تقدم علم النافع ثم اعلم أن كل من طلب العلم
 ليصرفه وجوه الناس إليه في تجارتهم بأبهة تظهر قلبه
 من غيبي وحسد وكبر ورئاسة وعجب وجب الدنيا ليحبل
 لك العلم النافع يا أخاه العلوم التي طلبها فرينة
 على كل مسلم ثلاثة علم التوحيد وعلم الشريعة وعلم
 السر نذنه به ما يتفلسف بالقلب ومسا عليه واما أحدهما

يجب

Folio 2 from the Tariq'l-Janna of Shehu Uthman ibn Fuduye` digitized from the archives of Center of Islamic Studies at the University of Shaykh Uthman Danfodio, Sokoto Nigeria

SANKORE'



Tariq 'l-Janna

The Path to Paradise

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In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful. Abundant peace and blessings of Allah be upon our master Muhammad and upon his Family and Companions. The poor slave in need of the mercy of his Lord; the one whose desires have become shattered due to the deficiency of his good deeds and the paucity of his *taqwa*³⁷; the one who is in great anxiety over the wickedness of his actions - **Uthman ibn Muhammad ibn Uthman** - Fullani by lineage³⁸; Maliki by *madhhaab*³⁹; and al-`Ash'ari by *aqeeda*⁴⁰: says.

All praises are due to Allah the Lord of the worlds, and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. To continue: this is the book called

THE PATH TO PARADISE

This book is a comprehensive study of some of the secrets of Abu Haamid al-Ghazaali, may Allah be merciful to him⁴¹.

³⁷ **taqwa** - 'fearful awareness' - it means to have acute awareness of the limits of Allah. It comprises observing the commands of Allah and avoiding the prohibitions of Allah.

³⁸ The Fulanni were one of the earliest of the African ethnic groups to embrace Islam. They along with the Malinke Dyula have been responsible for the spread of Islam throughout the Sahel belt of Africa. The Shehu's Fulanni kindred was the Torodbe. His house was the Alibawa and his family was the Fodiawa of Hausaland.

³⁹ Imam Abu Abdullah **Malik ibn Anas** (716-795) - compiler of the earliest collection of prophetic traditions called al-Muwatta. He was known as the Imam of the Land of Emigration and responsible for preserving the legal rulings and behavior of the People of Medina.

⁴⁰ Imam Abu 'l-Hassan al-Ash`ari (873-935) - the leading defender of the beliefs (*aqeeda*) of the People of the Sunna against Helenistic, Jewish and Christian impingement upon the theology of the Muslims. He was considered as the **mujaddid** of the third century after *hijra*.

⁴¹ Imam Abu 'l-Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazzali (1058-1111) - he was known as the 'Proof of Islam' and was responsible for reviving the religious sciences of Islam during his time. He reunited the sciences of jurisprudence with the sciences of spiritual purification. His greatest work was his Ihya` Uluum 'd-Deen for which he was universally declared the **mujaddid** of the fifth century after the *hijra*.

SANKORE'

On Seeking Knowledge (*taalib'l-`ilm*)



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I say and success is from Allah, my brothers first it is obligatory upon you to seek knowledge. This is due to the fact that all things are dependent upon knowledge. Realize that knowledge (*al-`ilm*) and worship (*al-`ibaada*) are two essential fundamentals. It is due to knowledge and worship that the heavenly books were revealed and the Messengers were sent. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the servant to possess some share of each of these two important matters. However, sound worship (*al-`ibaada*) can never occur except by means of knowledge (*al-`ilm*).

It is for this reason that it is necessary to give beneficial knowledge (*al-`ilm an-naafi`*) preference over worship. After this you must know that anyone who seeks knowledge in order to turn the faces of people towards him, then his trade has become unprofitable. Therefore, purify your hearts from hatred (*ghillin*), envy (*hasad*), pride (*kibr*), showing-off (*riya'*), conceit (*`ujub*), and love for this world (*hubb 'd-dunya*); this is in order that you can truly gain beneficial knowledge.

O brothers - Verily the knowledge which is obligatory upon every Muslim to seek after are three: [1] the science of divine unity (*`ilm at-tawheed*); [2] the science of the law (*`ilm 's-shari`a*); and [3] the science of secrets (*`ilm 's-sirr*). What we mean by the science of secrets are those sciences which relate to the heart and its spiritual endeavors. We will, if Allah desires, clarify what is obligatory to know from each of these sciences.⁴²

The obligations which are incumbent upon you from the science of *tawheed* is to know as much as is necessary to help you understand the foundations of the *deen* (*usuul 'd-deen*). However, the knowledge of the branches of *tawheed* and its minute details are not obligatory upon you to know.

The obligations which are required for you to perform are thus incumbent upon you to know. This is in order that you may accomplish them properly. These obligations include purification (*tahaara*), fasting (*sawm*), and prayer (*salaat*). As for as pilgrimage (*hajj*), *zakaat*, and struggle (*jihaad*) are concerned - these sciences are only incumbent upon you to know at the time they become obligatory for you to perform. Again, this is in order to accomplish them properly. However, when they are not obligatory upon you to perform, then knowing them is also not obligatory.

⁴² For a thorough understanding of these sciences which are an obligation upon every Muslim see our forthcoming translation of Shaykh Uthman Dan Fodiyo's *Umdat 'l-Bayaan Fi 'l-Uluum Allati Waajibaat 'l-Ala 'l-Ayaan*.

The knowledges which are obligatory upon you to know from the science of secrets are those knowledges which are obligatory (*wajab*) upon the heart and those which are forbidden (*nuhiya*) for it - in order to acquire esteem for Allah, sincerity, sound intention, and the soundness of action. In general, it is this knowledge which will be discussed in this abridged book.

This is the delineation of what is incumbent upon the servant to acquire from knowledge. There are many who can acquire all that is obligatory upon them from knowledge in a short time, while others continuously waver in that for more than seventy years. So realize that the whole matter of seeking knowledge is in the hands of Allah `izza wa jalla.

Success is with Allah



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SANKORE'

On Repentance (*at-tawba*)

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Repentance (*tawba*) is incumbent upon you for two reasons. [1] It is necessary in order to acquire success in obedience, because the misfortune of sins causes two types of deprivations: [a] withholding a person from doing good deeds, [b] withholding a person from having zeal and eagerness in obeying Allah. [2] Repentance is necessary in order for your worship to be accepted by Allah. This is because the Creditor never accepts a gift in return for a payment of a debt.⁴³

The things which will prompt you towards repentance are three: [1] remembrance of the result of shameless sins; [2] remembrance of the severity of Allah's punishment; and [3] remembrance of the frailty of your own bodies. If you were to persist in the remembrance of these, it would induce you towards sincere repentance (*at-tawba an-nasuuh*). The bounds of repentance in the heart from sins are entirely out of esteem for Allah `izza wa jalla and being on one's guard against His wrath. One does not repent out of desire for worldly matters, out of fear of people, or out of desire for praise or fame.

Realize that sins are summed up in three divisions. [1] Leaving the obligations (*tark'l-waajibaat*) of Allah ta`ala like the prayer (*salaat*), fasting (*sawm*), *zakaat*, atonement (*kafara*) or others from these. You should make up as much of that as is possible. [2] The sins which occur between you and Allah subhaanahu, like drinking wine (*sharab'l-khamr*), playing wind instruments (*darab'l-mazaamir*), devouring compounded interest (*riba*), and the like. You should have regret for that and be determined in your heart to never return to the like of that. [3] The third are sins which occur between you and other slaves of Allah. These sins are the most difficult of sins and are divided into those which were committed against someone's property (*maal*), self (*nafs*), honor (*ird*), women (*hurma*), and *deen*. You should resolve those which are possible to resolve from what was mentioned.

As for those which are not possible to resolve, you should return to Allah with humiliation (*tadara`u*) and sincerity (*sidq*) in order that Allah may be pleased with you on the Day of Rising. After that you should go and

⁴³ This means that our obedience to Allah is a debt which we owe Him. The word debt (*dain*) has the same linguistic root as the word *deen* (way of life). Thus, your way of life is Islam. Whoever adheres to the bounds of Islam by performing the obligations and avoiding the prohibitions will have paid back His debt to Allah in a timely fashion. Whoever falls short will have forfeited his contract with Allah and may be required to repay Him in the form of the torment at death, in the grave, on the Day of Rising, in the Reckoning and during the torment of the Fire. Allah is the sole King of the Day of Requital.

wash your garments, make the complete bath (*ghusl*), and pray four *rak`ats*. Then place your face upon the earth in a place which is free of the watchful gaze of all except Allah subhaanahu wa ta`ala. Throw dust upon your head and roll your face, which is the most honorable of your limbs, in the dirt - with tears flowing, sorrowing heart, and with a loud voice mention every one of your sins, one by one if possible. Then you should rebuke and reprimand your disobedient soul (*nafs*) by saying: "O self! Are you not ashamed?! Will you not repent?! Can you withstand the punishment of Allah subhaanahu wa ta`ala?! Do you have anything which can endure the wrath of Allah `izza wa jalla?!" You should mention this over and over again.

Then with tears flowing you should raise your hands to the Merciful Lord and say, "My Allah! Your rebellious slave has returned to Your door. Your disobedient slave has returned to correction. My Allah! Your sinful slave comes with his excuses. So pardon me by Your generosity. Accept me by Your bounty. Look down upon me with Your mercy. O Allah! Forgive me for what has past from sins and protect me from what remains of my years. Truly all good is in Your hands and to us You are the Kind and Merciful."

Then make the supplication of distress and hardship (*du`a as-shidda*), which is: "O Discloser of the greatest of matters! O Goal of the aspirations of the distressed! O He who when He desires a matter, says to it, Be! And it is! Our sins have besieged us and You are the One who stores them. O Gatherer of every distress! I am seeking Your preservation in this moment, so relent towards me. Verily You are the Relenting the Merciful. O He who is not preoccupied with hearing from hearing others! O He who is not hendered by those who ask! O He who is not annoyed by the insistence of those who are insistent! Let us drink the coolness of Your pardon and the sweetness of Your mercy. Verily You have power over all things."

You should then make the prayer upon the Prophet⁴⁴, may Allah bless him and grant him peace and ask forgiveness for all the believing men and women. When you have done this and returned to the obedience of Allah `izza wa jalla, it is then you will have repented with a sincere repentance. You will have left sins being purified of them like the day your mother gave birth to you. Allah subhaanahu wa ta`ala will love you and pour down upon you His reward and recompense. He will make descend upon you innumerable blessings

⁴⁴ *Allahumma salli `ala sayyidina Muhammadin wa `ala aali sayyidina Muhammadin wa sallam.* (Allah! Send blessings and peace upon our master Muhammad and upon the family of our master Muhammad.)

(*baraka*) and mercy (*rahma*). You will have earned trust (*amnun*), and sincerity (*al-ikhlaas*) and be saved from the torment of disobedience (*ghussati al-ma`asi*) and its affliction in this world and the Hereafter. Allah is the Sole Owner of success and guidance is from His bounty and favor.

Success is with Allah



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SANKORE'

On Doing-Without (*az-zuhd*)

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Doing-without in this world (*zuhud fi 'd-dunya*) is incumbent upon you for two reasons. [1] The first is in order for your worship to be well established and increased. Craving for this world preoccupies you from Allah in your outward form by actively seeking after it, or in your inward by your earnest desire for it and the evil whispering of the self. And each of these prevent true worship. The soul (*an-nafs*) is one and the heart (*al-qalb*) is one. When any one of them becomes occupied with a thing, it becomes cut off from its opposite. [2] The second reason is in order to increase the value and worth of your actions.

If you were to say: "What is the meaning of doing-without in the world and what is its reality?" Realize that doing-without is in two parts: [1] doing-without in what is decreed (*zuhd maqdur*) for the slave; and [2] doing-without in what is not decreed for the slave.

As for that doing-without which is decreed for the slave, it is in three things: [1] not to crave for what has been lost from this world; [2] severance from what one has accumulated from it; and [3] not yearning for it nor amassing it.

As for doing-without which is not decreed for the slave, it is emotional coldness in the heart towards this world and what is in it. One can only be able to induce coldness in the heart for it if he has put forward the premiss that he is doing it for the sake of Allah ta`ala and out of esteem for His reward. Realize that the most difficult of matters is not having the desire for this world in one's heart. How many people are there who have left this world in their outward but are still craving for it and delighting in it in their inward. Whoever is able to be firmly established in doing-without, there is none more wealthy than he from the bounties of Allah subhaanahu wa ta`ala. For if he is able to ward off craving and choosing this world from his heart, then this has only come about from the bounties of Allah the Generous `izza wa jalla. Further, that which will incite you towards doing-without is remembrance of the transitory nature of this world (*afaat ad-dunyaa*). An excellent word concerning that is that this world is the enemy of Allah `izza wa jalla, and you are His lover. For whoever loves a thing, hates its enemy.

If you were to say: "What is the judgement of doing-without (*hukmu 'z-zuhd*) in this world? Is it obligatory (*al-fard*) or superogatory (*an-naflun*)?" Realize that doing-without in what is forbidden (*al-haraam*) is obligatory and doing-without in what is permissible (*al-halaal*) is superogatory.

If you were to say: "It goes without saying that we must have enough of this world which will suffice us in our livelihood. So how can we do-without that?" Realize - that doing-without is obligatory in that which is superfluous (*al-fuduul*). Since the superfluous are those things in which there is no need for in the proper condition of one's physical constitution. What is intended here by necessities are those things that will give you the proper constitution and strength in order that you may worship Allah ta`ala, not just for the sake of eating, drinking and enjoyment.

If Allah ta`ala if wills He can provide for your needs by means of some causative factor. If He wills He can provide for you without any cause in the same way He provides for the Angels. Further, if He wills He can provide for you by means of something resulting from you, by your seeking after it or by your acquisition. If He wills he can provide for you by something other than that, by producing it for you without your seeking it or earning it. In that case you are not in need of seeking nor desiring this world. However, if you are not strong enough for that, and you have strong desire for it and you must seek after it, then you should intend to take from this world what is sufficient to give you strength to worship Allah subhaanahu wa ta`ala without following after your passions and appetites.

Success is with Allah



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SANKORE'

On Keeping Apart From People *(at-tafarrud `an'l-khalq)*



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Then realize - O brothers - that keeping apart from people is incumbent upon you for two reasons. [1] The first is that people preoccupy you from the worship of Allah subhaanahu wa ta`ala. [2] The second reason is that showing-off (*riya'*) and adorning oneself (*tazayyuna*) for people corrupts what you have attained from the worship of Allah, if Allah subhaanahu has not protected you from that.

Realize - O brothers - that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, depicted the time in which seclusion from people would be necessary and he explained the characteristics of that time and the attributes of its people.⁴⁵ Thus, he, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, commanded that solitude during that time would be incumbent. There should be no doubt that he, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was the most knowledgeable of affairs and the most sincere towards us in advice. After him, the pious ancestors (*as-salaf as-saliheen*), may Allah be pleased with all of them, were in unanimous agreement upon cautioning people against the evils of their time and its people. As a result, they preferred seclusion (*al-`uzla*), instructed others concerning that, and enjoined it upon them. There can be no doubt that they were the most discerning of people and the most sincere of people during their time. It is also clear that times have not gotten better. On the contrary, times have gotten worst. This you can see with your own eyes.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ It has been related in *Saheeh* of al-Bukhari on the authority of Hudhaifa ibn al-Yamaani who once said to the Prophet, may Allah bless him peace, "The people used to ask about the good, but I used to ask about the evil out of fear of falling into it. I once said, "O Messenger of Allah, trully Allah ta`ala brought us this good (referring to the Prophet). Will there be any evil after this good?" He , may Allah bless him and grant him peace said, "Yes." I then said, "Will there be any good after that evil?" He replied, "Yes, however it will be tainted." I asked, "What will be its taint?" He replied, "There will be people who will guide others without my guidance. You will approve of some of their deeds and you will disapprove of others of their deeds." I then asked, "Will there be any evil after that good?" He replied, "Yes, there will people at the gates of Hell inviting people. Whoever answers their invitation will be thrown into the Hell Fires by them." I said, "Will you describe them to us , O Messenger of Allah?" He said, "They will be from our people and they will speak our language." I then said, "What do you order me to do when such a state does occur in my life time?" He said, "Hold closely to the community of the Muslims and their leader." I then said, "What if there is no community of Muslims nor a leader?" He replied, "Then avoid (*`atazziluu*) everyone of those sects even if you have to take hold of the trunk of a tree until death overtakes you like that."

⁴⁶ The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, is reported to have said as it has been related in the *Saheehs* of Muslim and al-Bukhari, "No time will come except that the time after it will be more evil than it." It has been related by Abu Nu`aim al-Haafiz from

If you were to say: "Explain to us the judgement of seclusion and solitude (*hukmu 'l-`uzla wa 't-tafarrudu*) from people, and the limits (*al-hadd*) which are obligatory from it." Realize that the people in this domain are divided into two kind. [1] A man whom the people have no need of with regard to knowledge (*al-`ilm*) and explaining legal judgements (*bayaani hukmin*). For such as him, solitude from people is foremost except during the times of *jumu`a* prayer, congregational prayer, the *Eid* prayers, pilgrimage (*al-hajj*), the learning circles of the Sunna, or taking care of one's needs of livelihood. Other than that, he should conceal his person from people and stick constantly to his residence where he is not known nor knows others. If he desires to cut himself off from people positively, that will not be possible except by two matters. [a] Either he must betake himself to a place where the above obligations are not required (*laa talzamuhu hadhihi al-faraa'id*), like the mountain tops, and the depths of valleys. [b] Or he must know for a certain that the requirements of the above obligations which make it incumbent upon him to mix with people are of greater importance to him than his leaving them. However, the middle way is the best, which is he should partake with the people in that which they are commanded by Allah to perform. [2] As for the second man, he is a person who is an example and a model regarding knowledge (*qudwa fi 'l-`ilm*). People are in need of him in the concerns of their *deen* in order that he may explain the truth (*bayaana haqq*), refute heretical innovation (*radda `ala mubtadi'in*), or invite to that which is good (*da`awa ila khair*) by his words and deeds. It is not possible for that man to seclude himself from the people. On the contrary, he should establish himself (*yansabu nafsuahu*) among them, giving sincere advice to the slaves of Allah, assisting the *deen* of Allah ta`ala, and explaining the judgements of Allah ta`ala (*mubayyinana li ahkaami illahi*). However, in order to keep their company he is in need of two matters: [a] extensive knowledge (*ilmun taweelun*), long patience (*sabrun taweelun*), brilliant insight (*nadhrun lateefun*), and seeking Allah's assistance at all times; [b] he must keep to himself if there is someone with them, then along with that he must set aside for himself a special private allocation of pure worship.

If you were to say: "What would you say about being present in the learning circles of the scholars of the Hereafter?" Realize that this path is the

the tradition related by Hudhaifa ibn al-Yamaani, may Allah be pleased with him. The Messenger of Allah, (P.B.U.H.) said, "Among the signs of the nearness of the Hour are seventy-two characteristics. . ." This alone is enough proof about the evils of the time and the need for withdrawal from people except when necessary. [See our forthcoming translation of Uthman Dan Fodiyo's, *Tanbeehu'l-Umma `Ala Qurbi Hujuumi Ashraati'l-Saa`ati*.].

most perfect path in the general concerns of the people of knowledge and independent judgement (*ahl'l-`ilm wa'l-ijtihaad*).

If you were to say: "What is the legal judgement of the scholar who has reached the level of independent judgement (*mujtahid*) who desires to withdraw from keeping company with the scholars of the Hereafter and their lectures in order to correct what he sees in himself?" Realize that those lectures are like fortresses in which the *mujtahid* is able to fortify himself from highway robbers and thieves. Withdrawing is like going into the desert wastelands where the horsemen of the devil (*fursaan as-shayaatin*) circulate. In that case, the weak at heart can only adhere to the fortress. As for the man who has strong penetrating insight (*al-qawiyyu al-baseeru*) whom the enemies cannot overcome, it is the same whether he is in the fortress or the desert wastelands. There is nothing against him if he withdraws, except that being inside the fortress is more cautious in every case. For being present among the men of Allah ta`ala (*rijaalullahi*) and being patient with the hardships of companionship (*mashaqqati 's-suhba*) is foremost. However, nothing prevents the strong hearted who have reached the furthest limit in uprightness (*al-qawiyyu al-baaligh mablagha'l-istiqaama*) from withdrawing himself and being in solitude from people.

If you were to say: "What would you say about visiting the brothers in Allah `izza wa jalla, and maintaining close relations with companions for the purpose of coming together for the acquisition of learning and *dhikr*?" Realize that that is apart of the intrinsic contents of worship of Allah. However, it must be done with two conditions: [1] that it not be a lot of people; and [2] that showing-off (*riya'*), adorning one's self (*tazzayun*), talking nonsense (*qawl'l-laghwi*), and slander (*al-ghaiba*) must be avoided at all cost. That which will assist you in enduring seclusion from people is three matters: [1] engaging wholly at all times in worship; [2] severance of craving what people possess; and [3] remembrance of what you have learned from the destructive qualities of people.

And success is with Allah.



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SANKORE'

On the War Against the Devil
(muhaarabatu 's-shaytaan)

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Making war against the devil and subjugating him (*qahrahu*) is incumbent upon you because of two characteristics: [1] because an enemy is never convinced until you are utterly destroyed; [2] because the devil is naturally disposed to enmity towards you, and is forever firmly planted to make war against you. If this is the case, how is it if you are making determined and strenuous effort (*mujtahid*) in worshipping Allah, and inviting people to the door of Allah suhaanahu wa ta'ala by your words and deeds? For that is diametrically opposed to what is in the favor of the devil. It is like when you have become fortified and unrelenting in your heart out of anger and fury against the devil, he has also fortified himself to kill you. In that case, with the rest of mankind the devil has a general enmity, while with you he has a special enmity. Along with that, the devil has two helpers in his unrelenting fight against you: [1] your self (*nafs*); and [2] your corrupt passions (*hawaa*). Further, you are preoccupied (*mashghuul*) with other matters, while the devil is idle (*faarigh*) with nothing to do except to fight you. He sees you but you cannot see him. You forget about him, but he never forgets about you. For this reason you must make war against the devil and subjugate him, or you will never be safe from corruption.

If you were to say: "With what can I make war with the devil, and with what can I subjugate him?" Realize that that can be accomplished in two ways. [1] The first is that you realize that the strategy in warding him off is by seeking refuge with Allah ta'ala (*al-isti'aadhatu bi illahi*). For the devil is a mere dog, whom Allah ta'ala has placed under your control. [2] The second is that you realize that standing upright to ward off and oppose him occurs after your seeking refuge with Allah, because He alone will suffice you against his evils - not you alone. Realize that making war against the devil and subjugating him can be done by three things: [1] being in constant *dhikr* of Allah with your tongue and your heart⁴⁷; [2] showing disdain and attaching no importance to the invitations of the devil, not letting them attach to your heart, and not following them; [3] by realizing and recognizing his schemes and tricks (*makaa'idihii wa hiyalihii*).

⁴⁷ The best *dhikr* is saying **Laa ilaha illa Allahu wa Muhammadun rasulallahi**; seeking forgiveness from Allah - **Astaghfir Allaha'l-`Adheem**; or the prayer upon the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. See our forthcoming translation of Muhammad Bello's *Tanbeehaatu 'l-Wadihaat* for the merits and methodology of *dhikr* as established in the Qur'an and in the sound traditions.

If you were to say: "How can we recognize them?" Realize that his schemes are like secret whispers which take the form of arrows which he shoots. And his tricks are like snares which he uses to deceive others. The secret whisperings (*al-wasaawis*) of the devil are made clear by means of knowledge of notions (*bi ma`rifati 'l-khawaatir*) which occur; and his tricks are made clear by the knowledge of his schemes (*bi ma`rifati 'l-makaa'id*).

All notions (*al-kawaatir*) which occur to the mind are divided into four kinds. [1] The first kind are those notions which come from Allah ta`ala without mediator. Some of these notions come with good, they come to enoble and are always coupled to proofs (*ilzaaman li'l-hujjat*). When they are unfavorable, they come as a trial during affliction. The signs of notions from Allah in both cases may seem to originate from two distinct aspects. However these notions are connected to one aspect. [2] Some notions come by means of an Angel (*malak*). These notions only come with what is good, because they are designed to give sound counsel and guidance (*naasihun murshidun*) and nothing else. The signs of these type of notions are that they are recurrent (*mutaraddidan*) since they act as advisors which enter with you into every situation and expose you to all kinds of advice hoping for your response and desiring good for you. [3] Some notions come by means of devils (*shaytaan*). These notions only come with evil (*sharr*) and temptation (*ighwaa'an*). The signs of these types of notions are that they are recurrent and perturbing (*mutaraddidun mudtaribaan*). [4] Some notions come by means of the corrupt passions of the self (*hawaa n'-nafs*). These notions only come with evil and with which there is no good in it, causing affectitious behavior or injustice. Its signs are that these notions are always leaning towards and intent upon carnal appetites (*as-shahawaat*) and lust (*al-ladhaat*) by any means. Four more types of notions can be added to these. [1] Notions which come with good which are subsequent to personal spiritual endeavor (*ijtihaad*) or those notions which are unfavorable subsequent to sins (*dhanbun*). These notions are from Allah. [2] Notions which come with evil but are weakened by the *dhikr* of Allah, or those which come with evil at the outset but not as a result of any sin. These are from the devil. [3] Notions which come with good at the outset. These are from the Angels. [4] Notions which come with evil but cannot be weakened by the *dhikr* of Allah, these notions are from the corrupt passions of the self (*hawaa'n-nafs*).

Then you should realize that if you desire to distinguish between good notions absolutely in order to follow them and evil notions absolutely in order to avoid them, then the scales to weigh this are three. [1] The first scale is the

*shari`a*⁴⁸, for whatever notions are in conformity with the *shari`a* is good. [2] The second scale is imitating and following the righteous. Whatever notions conform to them is good. [3] The third scale is opposing the self in its notions. Whatever its tendencies has an aversion to is good. In this way you can recognize the opposite of each one of these. This is the limit of what will necessitate you recognizing Satan as he appears in the notions which come to one's mind. Therefore, do your best in examining this as much as you are able because it is from the most subtle of sciences and the most noble of secrets. Allah is the One who gives success by His bounty.

As for the tricks of Satan against you they are seven. [1] He obstructs you from doing acts of obedience (*at-taa`at*). Repel him, if Allah protects you, by realizing that you are in need of these acts of obedience in order to gather provision from this life for the next life which will have no ending. [2] He commands you to procrastinate (*tasweef*) in acts of obedience. Repel him, if Allah protects you, by realizing that your appointed time is not in your hands and that you could die at any moment. [3] He commands you to rush (*`ujlat*) in acts of obedience by suggesting to you, "Hurry! In order that you can do so-and-so!" Repel him, if Allah protects you, by realizing that few acts of obedience done with perfection is better than many done incompletely. [4] He commands you to perfect your worship in order to be seen of men (*itmaamih riya'an*). Repel him, if Allah protects you, by realizing that the sight of Allah is enough for you over the sight of men. [5] He whispers arrogance and pride (*`ujbu*) in your heart by saying, "Who is greater and more precise than you in obedience?" Repel him, if Allah protects you, by realizing that your acts of obedience to Allah is a blessing (*minna*) from Allah, not from yourself. If it were not for the bounty of Allah, you would not be able to establish any act of obedience, which are nothing next to the blessing of Allah ta`ala. [6] This is the greatest of his tricks, he says to you, " Make strenuous effort in keeping your obedience of Allah secret (*sirr*). Soon He will make your acts manifest before the world!" Repel him, if Allah protects you, by realizing that you are the slave of Allah and that He alone is your Master. If He wills, He will manifest you (*adh'haraka*); and if He wills, He will keep you concealed (*akhfa*). If He wills, He will make you important (*khateer*); and if He wills, He will make you insignificant (*haqeer*). That is for Him to decide, and you should not care whether He manifest your good deeds to people or not, because there is nothing in their

⁴⁸ The *shari`a* is the divine law of Allah. It includes all the obligations and prohibitions established by Allah in His Book or by the Prophet in his Sunna.

hands worth seeking after. [7] He suggest in your heart, "There is no need for you to perform acts of obedience to Allah. Truly, if you were created and destined to be among the people of bliss (*sa`idan*), then there is no danger in you neglecting acts of worship. And if you were created and destined to be among the people of wretchedness (*shaqiyyan*), then there is no benefit in doing them. Repel him, if Allah protects you, by realizing that you are a slave (*`abdun*). And that it is the duty of a slave to obey the commands as is the rights of slaveness (*`ubuudiyya*). Allah is the Sustainer (*rabb*) and He knows the rights of lordship (*rubuubiyya*). Thus, these acts of obedience will benefit you in every way if you were created and destined to be among the people of bliss. It will benefit you by increasing your reward (*bi ziyaadatu 't-thawaab*). And if you were not created and destined for bliss, then in no way will Allah punish you for acts of obedience. These acts of obedience will not harm you. For to be entered into the Fire while you are obedient to Allah (*mutee`un*) is more precious to you than you being entered into the Fire while you are disobedient (*`aasin*). And how is it possible for you to be entered into the Fire when the promise of Allah is true and His words are truthful. For He has promised a tremendous reward for acts of obedience. Whoever meets Allah ta`ala while he has faith (*imaan*) and obedience (*ta`aat*) will never enter the Fire, and he has duly earned the Paradise by the promise of Allah the Truthful and not by any act. It is in that meaning that Allah has informed us by His saying, *"All praises are due to Allah who made good to us His promise and has made us inherit the earth. And we may abide in the Paradise wherever we please. Excellent is the reward of those who work."*⁴⁹ Therefore my brothers, wake up! It is as He said. So seek the aid of Allah alone, and seek refuge with Him. All matters are in His hands, and from Him alone is success. And there is no power nor might except with Allah the Exalted the Great.

Success is with Allah



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⁴⁹ Qur'an - 39:74

SANKORE'

On the Struggle With the Self
(mujaahidat 'n-nafs)

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It is incumbent upon you, my brother, to struggle against the self (*mujaahidatu 'n-nafs*)⁵⁰ and to be on guard against it for two reasons. [1] The self is an enemy which is inside of the house. [2] The self is an enemy which is loved, and human beings are naturally blind to the faults of the beloved.

If you were to say, "What is the cure of the self (*'ilaaju 'n-nafs*)?" Realize that the cure is a way placed between two ways. [1] you strengthen the self in proportion to what good deeds you do; and [2] you weaken its rebellion and restrain it to the extent that you do not persist in rebellious deeds. Then know, my brother, that the self is conquered and broken by three things: [1] denying passions (*man`u 's-shahwat*); [2] taking on the most exacting of worship; and [3] seeking the assistance of Allah.

If you do not do these, there will be no escape from the evils of the self. We have mentioned above that the self can be constrained with the bridle of fearful awareness (*taqwa*). The phases of fearful awareness (*manaazilu 't-taqwa*) are three: [1] fearful awareness from idolatry (*taqwa `an 's- shirk*); [2] fearful awareness from heretical innovation (*taqwa `an 'l-bid`a*); and [3] fearful awareness from disobedience (*taqwa `an 'l-ma`asiya*). Imam al-Ghazaali added to these the fearful awareness from excess (*taqwa `an 'l-fuduul*). The confines of fearful awareness is to avoid everything in which there is feared a danger to one's *deen*.

If you were to say: "Explain in detail to us this meaning concerning the self so that we may recognize how to bridle it with *taqwa*." I say that the details of how to bridle it are that you must establish in yourself a strong and firm intention (*bi quwwati 'l-`azmi*) to prohibit the self from every disobedience; and to protect the self from every excess (*kulli fuduul*). As for that which is unavoidable, to he who desires to have fearful awareness of Allah (*yattaqiya Allah*), is that he must restrain the five limbs because they are the roots. They are the eyes, the ears, the tongue, the heart, and the stomach. One should guard them by preserving them from what danger is feared for them in the matters of the *deen* like disobedience (*ma`siya*), prohibitions (*haraam*), excess and extravagance (*fuduul wa israaf*) in permissible things. If you succeed at

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⁵⁰ *an-nafs* - 'the soul' or 'self' - according to the Qur'an it is the only subtle part of mankind which he can be transformed either positively or negatively. Allah says, "Allah will not transform a people until they transform what is in thier *nafs*[13:11]"

preserving these limbs, it is hoped that it will be enough for the rest of the pillars of the self.

You must protect your eyes for three reasons. [1] Allah `izza wa jalla says, "*Say to the believers to lower their gaze.*"⁵¹ [2] The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Gazing at the beauties of women is a poison arrow from the arrows of Iblis. Whoever avoids it, Allah will make him drink the sweetness of worship and its secrets." [3] The eyes were created for gazing upon the Being of Allah izza wa jalla⁵².

You must protect your ears from corrupt singing (*ghina'u*) and from excessive talk for two reasons: [1] the listener shares in the sin of the speaker; and [2] the stirring up of the desires and whispering in the heart.

You must protect your tongue because it is the strongest in defiance for five reasons. [1] The crookedness of the limbs results from it being crooked. [2] The loss of one's time comes from its utterances. [3] The leaving of one's good deeds to the one to whom you slandered if its utterances were slanderous. [4] The lack of safety from the disasters of this world because of its utterances. [5] The deserving of the punishment of Allah, if you said words which were forbidden. You must preserve the tongue also from permitted speech (*al-mubaah*) for four reasons. [1] The two noble scribes (*al-kiraamu 'l-kaatibayn*)⁵³ become preoccupied with that in which there is no good. [2] Your book of deeds will be dispatched to Allah `izza wa jalla full of idle talk and none sense. [3] You will have to read it in the presence of Mighty King on the Day of Judgement. [4] You will suffer rebuke and dishonor (*al-lawm wa't-ta`yeer*).

You must protect the heart and rectify it because it is the the greatest of the limbs in importance, the most delicate of them in instructions, and the most difficult in mending. You must do this for five reasons. [1] Allah ta`ala says, "*He knows what is in your souls, therefore beware of Him*"⁵⁴; and other verses

⁵¹ Qur'an - 24: 30.

⁵² The Vision of Allah by the believers is established in the Qur'an and the Sunna. Allah ta`ala says, "*Their faces on that Day will be gazing on their Lord.*"[75: 22] The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, as related by al-Bukhari on the authority of Jaabir ibn Abdallah, "Verily you will see your Lord (may His praises be exalted) with your own eyes."

⁵³ Each human being has two Angels accompanying him at all times. Their names are *Raqeeb* and *Ateed*. They are concerned with recording and preserving all good and bad deeds from the time of puberty until death.

⁵⁴ Qur'an - 2: 235.

like that. [2] The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Verily Allah does not look at your forms nor at your personalities. He only looks at what is in your hearts." [3] The heart is a king and the limbs are its subjects. If it is sound then they are sound. If it is corrupt, then they are corrupt. [4] The heart is a treasure house of every precious wealth, like intelligence (*`aql*), and knowledge (*`ilm*). The like of this treasure is that it be guarded from every sort of impurity. [5] If you look attentively into the heart, you would find in it five conditions which you would not find anywhere else. [a] The devil and the Guardian Angels do not aim for anything except the heart. [b] The heart is always preoccupied and it is the field for two armies: the corrupt passions and its forces; and the intellect and its forces. The heart is forever under the wars between these two armies. [c] Notions are like arrows to the heart. Notions are continuously occurring to the heart, night and day and there is no way to prevent this. [d] The cure (*`ilaaj*) of the heart is very difficult. This is because it is hidden from you. [e] The heart is extremely rapid in its transformation and alteration because of the velocity of its rotation.

If you were to say, "No doubt the matter of the heart is very important; but inform us concerning the significance by which the heart is rectified and about the disasters which corrupt it, so that Allah may give us success in making effort in acting according to that." Realize that the scholars of the Hereafter have mentioned more than seventy praiseworthy characteristics and beneath them are their opposites in blameworthy characteristics. Al-Ghazaali said, "By my life, whoever has made his *deen* the most important thing in his life, has awakened himself from the sleep of heedlessness, and looked into his own soul. Thus, the gathering of all these characteristics will not be hard for him and he will frequently act in accordance with it. This is if Allah gives him success."

We will mention here four blameworthy characteristics which must be mentioned concerning the curing of the heart (*`ilaaju 'l-qalb*). These are from the refutation of the worshippers (*madaahidu 'l-`aabideen*). And there are four praiseworthy characteristics which compensate for these by which worship is well ordered and by which the heart is mended. The four root destructive qualities of the heart are: [1] false hope (*amal*); [2] haste (*isti`jaal*); [3] envy (*hasad*); and [4] arrogance (*kibr*). These are the foundations of the corruption of the heart. As for the outstanding root traits (*manaaqib*) which are opposite to these, they are: [1] limiting expectations (*qasru 'l-amal*); [2] being circumspect in matters; [3] being sincere towards people (*nasehatu li'l-khalq*); and [4] humility (*tawaadu'i*). These are the foundations of rectification of the heart.

Therefore you should exert effort in avoiding the four destructive qualities and exert the same in obtaining the four outstanding traits. In this way you will be able to prevent your destruction and obtain your desire, if Allah `izza wa jalla wills it.

As for the bounds of false hope (*amal*); it is the will to put off doing something at its proper time. Haste (*`ujlat*) is the heart rushing into a matter at the moment it occurs to one's mind without it being the proper time for it. The desire to see the blessings of Allah ta`ala leave his fellow Muslim is envy (*hasad*). The notion that one's self has an elevated position and that one is excellent is pride (*kibr*). And to follow through with such notions is arrogance (*takabbur*). The converse of these evil qualities are its opposite good qualities. Therefore beware of these qualities at all cost. If you prolong false hope (*amal*) there will spring up in you four things. [1] You will neglect worship of Allah, because you will say, "I will do it in the future. I still have time." [2] You will postpone repentance, because you will say, "I will soon repent. There are many days ahead and I am still young." [3] You will become greedy in amassing this world and being preoccupied with it from the Hereafter. This is because you will say, "I fear poverty in my old years and perhaps then I will be too weak to earn a livelihood. Therefore I must garner those things necessary for old age." [4] Your heart will become hard, because when you persists in false hope you will never remember death and the grave. By forfeiting false hope you will obtain the opposite of these four in excellent qualities.

As for haste and rushing into matters, it is the place where disobedience occurs (*al-mawqi`u fi 'l-ma`asi*) and it causes four calamities also. [1] The first of these is that the servant intends to reach a high station in excellent deeds, uprightness and strenuous spiritual endeavor; but perhaps he rushes in attaining it when it is not the right time for it. Thus, he will either become exhausted (*yaftura*) and lose hope (*ya'isu*) and leave strenuous endeavor (*yatruka 'l-ijtihaad*). Thus the spiritual station which he desired will become withheld from him. Or he may exceed the bounds in his spiritual exercise and exhaust his self, thus becoming cut off from the desired spiritual station. He will forever be like one being excessive in extra acts of worship or being deficient in lack of worship. Each of these are the result of haste and rushing matters. [2] The second of these is that the servant has a pressing need (*haaja*) so he supplicates Allah ta`ala concerning it with much supplication (*yukthiru 'd-du`a*) until he demands a quick reply before its proper time. When he does not find what he desires, he becomes frustrated and loses hope until he leaves supplicating for his needs and thus his needs become withheld from him. [3] The third of these

is that some person acts unjustly towards a servant and as a result he becomes infuriated and rushes to making supplication against that person. Thus, he may destroy his fellow Muslim by reason of his supplication. Or perhaps he goes beyond the limit and as a result falls into disobedience. [4] The fourth of these is that the foundation of worship is piety (*wara`a*). Thus when the servant is in haste he begins devouring that which is forbidden (*haraam*) and that which is dubious (*shubhat*); as a result true piety escapes him.

As for envy it is that which corrupts one's obedience to Allah and it is the cause of errors. It is the one single sickness which destroys many of the Qur'anic reciters and scholars, not to speak of the common people and the ignorant. Envy causes five calamities: [1] the corruption of one's obedience to Allah; [2] the doing of disobedience; [3] exhaustion from doing good deeds without obtaining any benefit; [4] blindness of the heart; and [5] excommunication from the presence of Allah.

Pride is a destructive trait which ruins a person immediately. It is unlike the remainder of bad traits which endanger you indirectly. Pride endangers you directly and at the foundation. When pride becomes strong and prevails over an individual there is nothing he can do to control it. We seek refuge with Allah ta`ala from that. Pride causes four calamities: [1] alienation from the Lord of Truth and blindness of the heart from inward knowledge of the signs of Allah; [2] the wrath of Allah; [3] disgrace in this life; and [4] the Fire and punishment in the next life. This is only some of what we have presented concerning these four destructive traits (false hope, haste, envy and pride) which cause calamities. However, to the intelligent person who has made the matter of his *deen* his sole concern, in just one of them is enough as a warning. May Allah give us success at attaining his mercy. Success is with Allah

Protection of the Stomach

You must guard your stomach from: [1] the forbidden (*haraam*) and dubious (*shubhat*); and [2] from excess (*fuduul*). Enthusiasm for the worship of Allah entails first investigating the forbidden and dubious for three reasons: [1] being wary of the Fires of Hell; [2] eating the forbidden and the doubtful is an impediment and does not give success in one's worship; [3] Eating the forbidden and the dubious is rejected not acceptable by Allah ta`ala.

As for permissible food which is excessive, eating it causes ten calamities: [1] hardness of the heart; [2] affliction in the limbs; [3] decreased comprehension of knowledge; [4] decreased worship; [5] loss of the sweetness of worship; [6] danger of falling into what is dubious and forbidden; [7] preoccupation of the heart and body; [8] severe agony during death; [9] loss of reward in the next life; and [10] obstructions on the Day of Reckoning. From these ten calamities, the first of them is sufficient in conveying the message.

And success is with Allah



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SANKORE'

**On Taking Precaution
in Acquiring One's Daily Provisions**



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It is obligatory upon you to take precaution concerning one's daily provision (*ihitiyaat fi 'l-quut*) in order not to fall into what is forbidden and dubious. Then you should limit your provision to that which is sufficient for the worship of Allah.

If you were to say, "What provision is forbidden and dubious?" Realize that some of the scholars have said, "That which of a certain belongs to someone else or that which of a certain is forbidden according to the *shari`a*, - these then are absolutely prohibited." However, if you are not certain of that, but you are overcome with doubt whether or not the thing belongs to someone else or whether it is forbidden or not - then these things are suspicious (*shubhat*). Others say that the absolutely prohibited (*al-haraam 'l-mahdu*) is that which is known to be prohibited or when one is overcome by doubt about it. As for when the forbidden and the suspicious are equal until your doubt about it continues, with neither one of them outweighing the other in your mind, then that is suspicious. This opinion is foremost with al-Ghazali. Avoiding provision which is forbidden is an obligation, while avoiding provision which is suspicious is apart of fearful awareness with Allah (*taqwa*) and piety (*war'a*).

If you were to say, "What would you say concerning accepting stipends from the rulers in these times?" Realize that the scholars differ concerning that. Some of the people say everything which has not been verified as forbidden (*haraam*), then it is alright to take from it. While others say, it is not permissible (*laa yahillu*) to take that which it has not been verified as being permissible, because the majority of what the rulers possess is forbidden. Yet, some people say it is permissible for the rich and the poor to take stipends when it has not been verified as forbidden or not, due to the fact that the responsibility falls upon the giver. Again, others say none of the wealth of the rulers is permissible for the rich or the poor, because the rulers are unjust oppressors (*dhaalimuun*) and most of their wealth is forbidden. The judgement of a thing is based upon the majority. Thus, it is incumbent to avoid it. Others say that in that which it is not clear if it is forbidden, then it is permissible for the poor but not the rich, unless the poor knows that its source is illegal (*`ainu'l-ghasbi*). Al-Ghazali said, "It is near impossible to give a legal decision (*al-fatwa*) concerning this question."

If you were to say, "What is the judgement of accepting the financial gifts (*silaat*) of the people of the market places and others?" The answer to that whoever it is clear that he is an upright person (*al-salaah*) there is no harm in accepting his charity (*sadaqa*), but if it is not then do not accept it from him.

Realize that herein inheres two matters: [1] the judgement of the *shari`a* which is that you can take from whom it is clear that he is upright and do not search into the source of it unless it is certain that the wealth is apparently illegal or forbidden; and [2] the judgement of piety which is that you not take anything from anyone, until you have investigated it thoroughly and you become absolutely certain that there is nothing suspicious about it in any way, if not return it.

If you were to say, "It seems that there is a contradiction in the judgement between piety (*war`a*) and the *shari`a*." Realize that the *shari`a* is established upon ease, while piety is established upon strictness (*tashdeed*) and precaution (*ihitiyaat*). Piety is from the *shari`a* and both of them are from one foundation, except that the *shari`a* has two judgements: [1] the judgement of permissibility (*hukmu'l-jawaaz*); [2] the judgement of what is more preferable and most precaution (*hukmu'l-afdal wa'l-ahwaat*). The first is called the judgement of the *shari`a* and the second is the judgement of piety.

If you were to say, "If it is permissible to investigate into everything, as an excuse for the pious person in all matters; then there is no doubt he will reach the furthest limit in obedience." Realize that the path of piety is severe. For whoever intends to travel its path it is incumbent upon him to be patient with the endurance of great difficulties and hardships. If not then it will never be perfected for him. It is for that reason that many of the people of piety make for the mountains of Lebanon and other places like that. They then confine themselves to eating herbs and fruits in which there is no doubt in any way. Therefore, if you desire the highest stations of piety, then take their path. However, if you are firmly established among the people and you must eat what normally circulates among them, then be like one who is dead and do not accept to eat their food except out of necessity. And even that should be only what is sufficient enough to help you towards the obedience of Allah.

If you were to say: "What is permissible and what is the limit of the superfluous which results in reckoning and obstruction from Allah? And what is the sufficient amount that if the servant takes it, it will be correct courtesy (*adab*) towards Allah?" Realize that the conditions of the permitted (*ahwaal'l-mubaah*) are in three divisions. [1] The servant takes what he needs in order to be boastful, in order to amass wealth, or for showing-off. This kind definitely necessitates the punishment of the Immense Fire. [2] The servant takes what is permissible just out of passion itself. This kind necessitates reckoning and obstruction from Allah. [3] The servant takes from what is permitted in accordance with the set amount which will assist him in the worship of Allah

ta`ala. This kind is excellent (*khair*), good (*hasanat*) and correct courtesy (*adab*) and there is no reckoning for it nor is there any punishment for it. On the contrary, it is the very cause of reward and praise from Allah.

Then realize that sincerity in guarding these correct courtesies towards Allah requires the discernment of the inner-eye (*baseera*) and the intention that he will in no way take from this world except as a device to help in the worship of Allah ta`ala. Thus, if he forthwith forgets the remembrance of the clear evidence, then the above deduced intention should suffice him. O brother! There are four kinds of dangers which it is necessary to abandon and be on one's guard against them. They are: [1] this world; [2] people; [3] the devil; and [4] the *nafs*. For everyone who has been destroyed has been destroyed as a result of these evils. Then, realize this, for it is the root, that worship (*al-`ibaada*) has two parts: [1] the performing of acts of obedience (*fi`l-ta`at*); [2] avoiding acts of disobedience (*ijtinaab`l-ma`asi*).

Thus, the primary concern of the beginner should be fasting during the day and standing in prayer at night. The primary concern of those who possess inner discernment (*uuli`l-basa`ir*) is that they should preserve their hearts from being attached to anything other than Allah, preserve their stomachs from excessive food, preserve their tongues from non-sense, and preserve their eyes from gazing at that which does not concern it. Then if you have realized that apart of attaining the uppermost rank is the one who has obtained obedience and avoided disobedience. In this case he has attained safety and much booty. If he, on the other hand, can only obtain one, then let it be the avoiding of disobedience. For then he will be safe, although he will not attain any booty. However, if he does not obtain either, then he is destroyed all together.

And success is with Allah



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SANKORE'

**On the Four Barriers Which
Preoccupy One from Worship of
Allah and the Four Traits Which
Suffice Them**

**Reliance (*tawwakul*); Resignation (*tafweed*);
Contentment (*ridaa*) & Patience (*sabr*)**

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It is necessary upon you to beware of the barriers which preoccupy you from the worship of Allah ta`ala. These barriers are four: [1] means of subsistence (*rizq*); [2] hazards (*akhtaar*); [3] that which is decreed (*qada'u*); [4] misfortunes (*masa'ib*) along with hardships.

The first barrier which preoccupies you from the worship of Allah is fear of the means of subsistence. That which should suffice you with regard to the means of subsistence is reliance (*at-tawakkil*) upon Allah. Thus reliance upon Allah sub'hannahu is necessary for you under all conditions in the occasion of means of subsistence and during pressing needs for two reasons. [1] The first reason is in order to solely occupy oneself with worship. [2] The second is that neglecting worship is among the greatest of dangers. This is because Allah has proven to us that the means of subsistence is just like the process of creation by His words, "*Allah has created you and then He has provided for you.*"⁵⁵ In the above verse Allah ta`ala initially promises one's daily means of subsistence and then not being content with a promise, He guarantees it. Not being content with a guaranty, He ta`ala then swears. Not being content with that He ta`ala commands the means of subsistence and then He conveys it and He then warns. Thus the one completely reliant upon Allah (*al-mutawakkila*) pursues all worldly affairs in accordance with the strength of his inner vision (*baseera*) and the perfection of his certainty (*kamaal yaqeen*) in the promise of Allah sub'hannahu. Thus, he does not pay attention to humans who attempt to frighten him or to any devils who attempt to deceive him. Will you not consider, my brother, the people of zeal and determination among the children of this world's life. Either a person is a ruler who is constantly threatened with war upon his kingdom. His kingdom is either maintained or it is destroyed. Or a person is a trader who is forced to give himself over to one of two matters. Either the loss of life or the gaining of profits. As for the children of the Hereafter, for their capitol is reliance upon Allah (*at-tawakkulu*) with what He ta`ala has decided for them. They have become devoted to the worship of Allah ta`ala and have become firmly established in their keeping apart from people. They have embarked boldly into the deserts and as a result have become the kings of the earth, who travel wherever they desire. Every place has become like one single place to them and all times have become like one single age to them.

⁵⁵ Qur'an - 30:40

As for the reality of reliance upon Allah ta`ala (*at-tawakkulu*), it is that you realize that the subsistence of your physical constitution is from Allah `izza wa jalla, not by any other than Allah, nor from any ephemeral thing from this world (*hutaam mina ad-dunya*), nor by any cause from the means of subsistence (*sabab mina'l-asbaab*). As for the incentives towards reliance upon Allah, it is the guaranty of Allah ta`ala and the perfection of His knowledge, omnipotence and His being absolutely free of the attributes of creation like forgetfulness and impotence. As for the proper application of reliance upon Allah; it has three situations [1] concerning your allotted share (*qisma*); [2] regarding assistance (*nusra*); [3] regarding daily needs (*haaja*) and means of subsistence (*rizq*). Realize that Allah is solely responsible for each of these situations, however in accordance with how firmly established your intention is to worship Him. Realize that the means of subsistence are in four divisions [1] that which has been guaranteed (*madmuun*). It includes that which is the bodily nutriments and that by which the constitution is maintained excluding all secondary causes: [2] that which is allotted (*maqsuum*); [3] that which is under one's control (*mamluuk*); [4] that which has been promised (*maw`uud*). As for that which has been allotted, it has been inscribed upon the Guarded Tablet; "This is what so-and-so will eat at a particular time, no more no less. This is what he will drink at a particular time, no more no less. This is what he will wear at a particular time, no more no less." As for that which is under one's control, everyone only controls the wealth from this world in accordance with what Allah has decreed. As for that which has been promised, it is that means of subsistence which Allah ta`ala has promised to those who are fearfully aware of Him with the condition of his fearful awareness being for that which is permissible (*halaal*) without him striving for it.

If you were to say; "Is it necessary for us to seek after the means of subsistence in all circumstances?" Realize that the means of subsistence which is guaranteed for us, like bodily nutriments and maintenance, it is not possible for us to seek after that. These are among the given acts of Allah sub'haanahu with His servants, like life and death. As for the means of subsistence which has been allotted, it is not necessary to seek after it since there is no need for the servant to concern himself with that. All of his needs have been guaranteed from Allah and is among the responsibilities of Him.

If you were to say; "This means of subsistence which has been guaranteed has causative factors. Is it necessary for us to seek after the causative factors of the means of subsistence?" Very Allah ta`ala has guaranteed for us our means of subsistence without the precondition of our

seeking after it or earning it. It has been clarified to you that seeking after means of subsistence and its causative factors is not a necessary matter.

If you were to say; "Is it possible for me to enter into desolate regions of the earth without provisions?" Realize that if you have a vigorous heart with Allah and firmly established in the promise of Allah, then enter. However, if this is not the case, then be like the common people. For whoever behaves with Allah in accordance with what is customary with the people, Allah will act with him with what is customary with Him.

If you were to say; "As for the one who is completely reliant upon Allah (*mutawakkil*) is it necessary for him to carry provision with him in his travels?" Realize that perhaps he carries provision although it is not attached to his heart. Since he must have his means of subsistence and in it is his bodily maintenance while his heart is attached solely to Allah ta`ala. Perhaps he carries provision for other intentions; like being of assistance to the Muslims and the like. The point is not whether he should take provision or not, but the point is the condition of his heart and to what or whom it is attached.

If you were to say; "Which is better; taking provision or leaving it?" Realize that if you are unaccompanied and possess a vigorous heart with Allah, then forsaking provision is foremost. However, if you want to be of assistance to the Muslims then taking provision is foremost. And success is with Allah.

The second barrier which preoccupies you from the worship of Allah is the fear of hazards. That which will suffice you with regard to it is leaving matters over to Allah (*al-tafweed*). It is necessary for you leave all matters over to Allah sub'hanahu for two reasons: [1] it brings tranquility to the heart; [2] it gains righteousness and good in the future.

If you were to say, "Explain to us the meaning of leaving matters over to Allah and its proper application." Realize that leaving matters over to Allah is the desire that Allah will protect your interest where there may be no safety from hazards. As for its proper application with respect to superogatory acts or permitted acts required to protect your own interest - then it is not at all necessary for you to desire that. On the contrary you should only utilize such superogatory and permissible acts for your own interest in exceptional cases. This can only be conditioned by the will to bring about good and well being. When your desires are limited by these exceptional cases then this is the essence of leaving matters over to Allah. As for the incentive to this is concerned, it is remembrance of the inherent dangers in most affairs and the possibility of destruction and corruption underlining them. The impetus to this is

remembrance of your own impotence and inability in protecting yourself from the traumas associated with hazards.

If you were to say: "What are the hazards which necessitates leaving matters over to Allah?" Realize that hazards are two types: [1] dangers which you have doubt whether they will occur or will not, or those which you question whether you will encounter them or not. These type of dangers requires that you treat them as exceptions with regard to your intention and hopes. [2] Dangers which embody your destruction, in that you do not envision any benefit in it for your soul. This is the type of danger which is in need of leaving it over to Allah.

If you were to say; "Can leaving matters over to Allah really secure you from destruction and corruption when this world is actually a place of trials and tribulation?" Realize that most people only leave matters over to Allah in order to differ and rectify them.

The third barrier which preoccupies you from the worship of Allah is fear of the decree and its varieties. That which will suffice you against it is contentment (*ar-rida'u*). Contentment with the decree of Allah ta`ala is necessary for you for two reasons. [1] The first is it frees you so that you can be occupied with the worship of Allah. This is because if you are not content with the decree, your heart will always be distressed and preoccupied saying, "Why was it not like that?". . .and "Why was that not like this?" [2] The second reason is the inherent danger from falling into the anger of Allah which results from being dissatisfied (*sukhtu*).

If you were to say; "What is the meaning of contentment with the decree of Allah?" Realize that contentment means abandoning dissatisfaction and frustration. Dissatisfaction and frustration means calling to mind other than what Allah has decreed as if it were foremost and more important to him in what he is not even sure whether that thing is harmful or beneficial. That is the condition concerning that.

If you were to say; "Is not evil (*sharr*) by the decree of Allah? So how can a servant be content with evil?" Realize that contentment is necessary with the decree of Allah, but the decree of evil is not in its essence evil. Evil is what has been decreed (*maqdiyu*) and is not the decree (*qada`u*) itself.

That which has been decreed (*maqdiyaat*) are four kinds: [1] blessings (*ni`ma*); [2] difficulties (*shidda*); [3] good (*khair*); and [4] evil (*sharr*). As for blessings it is obligatory to be content with them. One must be content with the One who decreed them (*qaadi*), the decree (*qada`u*) and what has been decreed (*maqdiyu*). He must be grateful because it is a blessing. As for difficulties, it is obligatory to be content with them for the same above mentioned reason. In

addition, he must be patient with them because they are difficulties. As for good, it is obligatory for one to be content concerning it for the same reason. In addition he must call to mind the favors (*minna*) which result from it because it is from the good. As for evil, it is obligatory to be content with it for the same above reasons, however the contentment here is with the fact that it has been decreed not content with the evil itself. Then realize that these affairs concern the heart.

The fourth barrier which preoccupies you from the worship of Allah is fear of hardships (*shada'id*) and afflictions (*masaa'ib*). That which will suffice you against these is patience (*sabr*). Patience is obligatory upon you in every situation for two reasons. [1] The first reason is that patience enables you to reach the desired aim of worship. This is due to the fact that every level of worship is built upon patience. When someone intends to worship Allah and is exclusively intent upon that, then he is met with obstacles, difficulties, trials and burdens: nay worship itself is an inconvenience. This is so since it is not possible to perform worship except by the containing and coercing the soul (*nafs*) against difficult affairs. Then you must completely immerse yourself in worship so that the worship should not become tainted. Then you must persist in actions which are the most strenuous in order to keep the soul in check. Realize that this place is a place of trials which goes hand in hand with ordeals. These ordeals are divided into hardships and afflictions like the death of family members, near relatives, brothers, and companions. Other ordeals include those which effect the soul, like sickness, infirmities, people fighting you and craving what you possess, slandering you, lying upon you and the wasting away of one's wealth. For each one of these afflictions there is a particular distress. Realize that the one who seeks after the Hereafter has the hardest of afflictions. For the one who is nearest Allah ta'ala has the most afflictions in this life. Realize O brothers! if you desire to cut across the path to the Hereafter, then you should situate in your soul four colors or qualities: [a] white death which is hunger (*juu`u*); [b] red which is negating Satan; [c] black which is avoiding people; and [d] green which is circumstances which occur one after the other. [2] The second reason that patience is obligatory upon you is that it contains the good of this world's life. O brothers it is incumbent upon you to break these four above mentioned barriers. If not then just one of the barriers will preoccupy and prevent you from the worship of Allah. Realize that the most consequential and most difficult of the four is the barrier of fear of the means of subsistence (*rizq*). This is because it drives the heart of the common people away from the door of Allah ta'ala. The Prophets and the scholars have persisted in warning the

common people against it, however they continue to be misguided: nay they continue to fear what they will lose from this world of sustenance and livelihood. The root of all of these are: [1] the paltry attention they give towards the signs of Allah and His creation; [2] failing to give attention to the words of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace; [3] failing to give attention to the teachings of the righteous; [4] complying with the whisperings of Satan; [5] inclining to the words of the ignorant; and [6] being deceived by the customs of the heedless. This continues until Satan becomes established in them and corrupt customs become stamped in their hearts. This is due to the weakness of their hearts. As for those who possess inner vision (*uulu'l-basaa'ir*) and strenuous effort (*ijtihaad*), they are not concerned with any of the causative factors of this earth's life. They have taken their protection under the firm rope of Allah and they are not carried away by the false whisperings of Satan, mankind nor their own souls. For when Satan, their own souls or mankind whisper to them; they enact strong defense and opposition. They continue in this manner until the people turn away from them, Satan withdraws from them and their own souls yield to them. Realize O brothers that the only way to establish such struggle (*muhaahadaat*) is through the strength of knowledge (*quwwat'l-ilm*) and the light of certainty (*nuur'l-yaqeen*). You have learned O brothers the guarantee which Allah gives in sustaining your physical constitution without cause. Likewise, you have learned about the strength of the ascetics (*zuhhaad*) during their travels and their walking night and day. Among them are those who do not eat for ten days, some do not eat for a complete month and some do not eat for two months at a time. Each one acts in accordance with his own spiritual strength.

As for leaving matters over to Allah (*tafweed*) you should learn two fundamentals. [1] The first is that you should realize that having a choice in affairs (*ikhtiyaar*) cannot rectify anything except for the One who is the most knowledgeable of affairs from all its situations, its outward, its inward; its modes; and its termination. If you are not such a One then there is no assurance in your choosing, since sometimes corruption and destruction has something of good and betterment in it for the servant. The conclusion is that this is an all-encompassing knowledge which only the Lord of the Worlds can dispose of. [2] The second fundamental is that even if a man was to say to you; "I will take care of all your needs and welfare." Even if that person was to you the most knowledgeable of the people of the time, the most capable of them and the most truthful which would cause your heart to rest - you will still have to leave your and his affairs in the hands of the Lord of the Worlds. This is because He alone

is the manager of affairs (*yudabbiru 'l-amr*) from the entire heavens to the earth. He is the One who teaches every knower. He alone enables and shows mercy to every merciful person. He alone enriches every rich person. The choice still remains for you to leave all affairs over to Allah.

As for contentment with the decree of Allah (*rida bi'l-qada'i*), you should consider two gratifying fundamentals: [1] contentment frees the heart from baseless concerns and occupies it with the rewards of Allah and His pleasure; [2] what is inherent in dissatisfaction from the immensity of dangers and harm. One of the righteous told the truth when he was asked; "What is slaveness (*'ubudiyya*) and lordship (*rububiyya*)?" He responded; "The Lord decrees and the slave is content. If it were not the case, then there would be no lordship nor slaveness."

As for patience (*sabr*) it is the cure and its drink is disliked but blessed. It attracts every benefit and wards off every harm. This is because every intelligent person knows that the soul hates taking a real cure. Realize that patience is four kinds: [1] patience during obedience; [2] patience against disobedience; [3] patience against the excesses of this world; and [4] patience in the face of trials and afflictions.

We ask Allah to favor us with the best of His success. For all affairs are in His hands and He is the most merciful of the merciful. There is no power nor might except with Allah the Exalted the Mighty.

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SANKORE'

**On the Incentives Towards the
Worship of Allah
Fear (*khawf*) & Hope (*raja*) at all
times**

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It is incumbent upon you, my brother, to adhere to the incentives of worship of Allah. They are fear (*al-khawf*) and hope (*ar-rajaa'u*). As for fear is concerned, it is obligatory to adhere to it for two reasons: [1] it holds one back from committing disobedience (*al-ma'asi*); and [2] it prevents one from becoming vain because of one's obedience (*at-ta'at*), which would then lead to his destruction. As for hope is concerned, it is obligatory to adhere to it for two reasons also: [1] hope incites one to obedience; and [2] it makes it easy for you to endure hardships and difficulties.

If you were to say, "What is the reality of fear and hope?" Realize, that fear and hope both stem from a sort of inclination (*khawaatir*) which is outside of the capacity of the servant. However, what is inside the servants capacity are the prerequisites (*muqaddimaat*) of fear and hope. The perimeters of fear (*haddu'l-khawf*) is a tremor which occurs in the heart as the result of a reprehensible opinion lodged in the mind. The perimeters of hope (*haddu'r-rajaa'u*) is the delight of the heart with the knowledge of the bounties of Allah, glory be to Him the Exalted, and the vastness of His mercy. The prerequisites of fear (*muqaddimaat 'l-khawf*) are four: [1] remembrance of the sins which have passed; [2] remembrance of the severity of the punishment of Allah; [3] remembrance of the weakness of your own soul; [4] remembrance of the omnipotence of Allah ta'ala whenever He wills and however He wills. The prerequisites of hope (*muqaddimaat 'r-rajaa'u*) are also four: [1] remembrance of the priority of Allah's bounties upon you without any precursor or intercessor on your behalf; [2] remembrance of what He has promised from the abundance of His reward without any actions on your part meriting it; [3] remembrance of the extent of His present blessings regarding the affair of your religion and worldly affairs without you deserving it are even asking for it; and [4] remembrance of the vastness of the mercy of Allah.

Realize O brothers that fear and hope is an equitable road which lie between two destructive roads. These two roads are absolute assurance (*amnu*) and absolute hopelessness (*ya'isu*). Realize that it will never be possible for this soul which is recalcitrant and lazy against all good to travel the road of fear and hope except by preserving three fundamentals. [1] The first is calling to mind the words of Allah ta'ala which incite yearning (*targheeb*) and which incite terror (*tarheeb*). [2] The second is calling to mind Allah words regarding His seizure (*akhdhu*) and His pardon (*`afwu*). [3] The third is calling to mind His recompense of His servants in the Next Life with reward (*thawaab*) and punishment (*`eqaab*).

Among the Quranic verses which incite yearning is His words; "*Do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Verily Allah will forgive all sins.*"⁵⁶ And by His words; "*Who can forgive sins except Allah.*"⁵⁷ And by His words; "*He is the Forgiver of sins and the Acceptor of repentance.*"⁵⁸ And by His words; "*He is the One who accepts repentance from His servants and He pardons errors.*"⁵⁹ And by His words; "*Your Lord has prescribed for Himself mercy.*"⁶⁰ And by His words, "*My mercy is more extensive than anything.*"⁶¹ These verses and there like are among the verses which encourage hope in Allah's mercy. The verses which incite fear of Allah are like Allah's words; "*O My servants fear Me!*"⁶² And by His words; "*Do they think We have created them uselessly?*"⁶³ And by His words; "*Does mankind think that he will be left to no end?*"⁶⁴ These verses and there like are among those verses which incite fear of the punishment of Allah. The verses which gather together fear and hope are like Allah's words; "*Inform My servants that I am Forgiving Merciful...*"⁶⁵ In the same verse He continues, "*...and that My punishment is the Mighty Chastisement.*"⁶⁶ And by His words; "*He is severe in punishment...*"⁶⁷ In the same verse he continues, "*...and He is extremely forbearing, there is no deity except Him.*"⁶⁸ And by His words; "*Allah warns about Himself...*"⁶⁹ In the same verse He continues, "*...and Allah is benevolent to His servants.*"⁷⁰ More astonishing than that is His words; "*Whoever fears the Compassionate One in secret.*"⁷¹ Here Allah connects fear (*khashiya*) with His name the Compassionate (*ar-rahmaan*) and not with His names the Oppressor (*al-*

⁵⁶ Qur'an - 39:53

⁵⁷ Qur'an - 3:135

⁵⁸ Qur'an - 40:3

⁵⁹ Qur'an - 42:25

⁶⁰ Qur'an - 6:54

⁶¹ Qur'an - 7:156

⁶² Qur'an - 39:16

⁶³ Qur'an - 23-115

⁶⁴ Qur'an - 75:36

⁶⁵ Qur'an - 15:49

⁶⁶ Qur'an - 15:49

⁶⁷ Qur'an - 40:3

⁶⁸ Qur'an - 40:3

⁶⁹ Qur'an - 3:30

⁷⁰ Qur'an - 3:30

⁷¹ Qur'an - 50:33

jabaar), the Avenger (*al-muntaqim*), the Proud (*al-mutakabbir*) and the like - in order that fear can be associated with mercy. This is because the foundation of mercy comes as a result of actions motivated by fear. Regarding fear one should call to mind what Allah did with Iblis and Bal`am. Regarding hope one should call to mind what Allah did with the magicians of Pharaoh and the people of the Cave and their dog.

The third fundamental of fear and hope is to call to mind what Allah has promised His servant and what He has threatened them with in the Next Life. Here we will mention to you some of its conditions in order to increase your fear and hope. Among these is death (*mawt*), the grave (*qabr*), the judgement (*qiyaama*), paradise (*janna*) and the fire (*naar*).

As for death (*al-mawt*), call to mind the condition of two men. The first of them was related from Ibn Shubruma. Once he entered with as-Sha`bi onto a person who was ill. With him was a man who was reciting to him the *shahada* of "**laa ilaha illa Allah**". Then the sick person spoke saying; "I will not forsake it!" he recited the *shahada* and then encouraged all who were with him to adhere to it. He informed them that they were the most deserving of the people of the *shahada*. Then as-Sha`bi said, "All praises are due to Allah who has redeemed our companion." The second of them was related in a story where one of the disciples of al-Fudayl was near the time of death. Al-Fudayl ibn `Iyaad entered upon him and sat near his head. He then recited the chapter called *Yaseen*. The man then said; "O teacher, do not recite that chapter!" Al-Fudayl then fell silent. After a bit, al-Fudayl recited the *shahada* saying; "Say - **laa ilaha illa Allah!**" The man said; "I will not say it and I am free of these words." It was on these words that he died. Then al-Fudayl entered his home and weep for some forty days without ever leaving his home. After some time he saw the man in his sleep being dragged to the Hell Fires. He then said to him; "By what means did Allah remove gnosis from you, seeing that you were the most knowledgeable of my disciples?" He said, "By three things: backbiting; envy; and drinking wine."

As for the grave (*al-qabr*) and the condition after death, I will mention the state of two men which have been narrated by one of the righteous. He said, "I saw in my sleep Sufyan at-Thawri after he had died. I said to him, 'How is your state, O Abu Abdallah?' He turned away from me and said; 'This is not the time for honorific names!' I then said again; 'How is your state, O Abu Abdallah?' He then recited this verse:

'I saw my Lord with my own eyes and He said to me,
'Congratulation for My contentment is with you, O son of Sa`id!

You were standing in prayer when the night had become dark
With tears yearning and an intent heart
So here you are! So choose which ever palace you desire!
And visit Me for verily with you I am near!"

The second man was seen chained-up after his death. It was said to him; "What has been done with you?!" He recited the following verses:

"The time that we used to play with has turned from us,
And this time now plays with us!"

As for the judgement (*al-qiyaama*), contemplate Allah's words; "*The Day when We will gather those who feared to the Compassionate hospitably and marshal the guilty to Hell as a destiny.*"⁷² As for the paradise (*al-janna*) and hell fires (*an-naar*), consider these two verses of Allah ta'ala; "*Their Lord will give them to drink from a pure beverage.*"⁷³ And His words; "*O our Lord! take us out of it! Indeed you threatened us but we were among the unjust. He will say, 'Be silent in there and do not speak!'*"⁷⁴ Yahya ibn Mu`adh once said, "I do not know which of the two calamities is worse: the loss of paradise or entering into the hell fires. As for the paradise no one can abstain from it. As for the Fire no one can endure it. In every case the loss of the Gardens of Ease is better than the boundaries of Hell."

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⁷² Qur'an - 19:85

⁷³ Qur'an - 76:21

⁷⁴ Qur'an - 23:108

SANKORE'

**On Driving Away the Two
Impediments: Showing-Off (*ar-riya*)
& Arrogance (*al-`ujb*)**

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Realize that it is incumbent upon you my brother to drive away impediments. The first impediment is showing-off (*ar-riyaa'u*) and the means to ward it off is by means of sincerity (*al-ikhlaas*). This is in order that your actions can be accepted.

If you were to say: "Inform us of the reality of sincerity and showing-off?" Realize that sincerity is in two divisions: [1] the sincerity of actions (*ikhlaas'l-`amal*); and [2] the sincerity of seeking after the Hereafter (*ikhlaas talabi'l-akhirati*). As for the sincerity of actions, it is actions done with the desire to draw near to Allah *`izza wa jalla*. As for the sincerity of seeking after the Hereafter, it is desire for the benefits of the Hereafter by doing good deeds. Al-Fudayl said, "Sincerity is to be in perpetual watchfulness (*al-muraaqaba*) for Allah ta`ala and to be unconcerned with all good fortune (*hudhuudh*)." That is the most perfect of explanations. The opposite of sincerity is showing-off (*ar-riyaa'u*), which is to desire the benefits of this world by doing actions of the Hereafter. Then realize that showing-off is two sorts: [1] out right showing-off (*riyaa'u mahduun*); and [2] mixed showing-off (*riyaa'u takhleet*). Out right showing-off is desire for benefits of this world and nothing else. Mixed showing-off is desire for the benefits of this world along with the benefits of the Hereafter.

If you were to say: "What is the proper place for sincerity in any act of obedience?" Realize that actions are divided into three kinds: [1] outward acts of worship (*al-`ibaadaat 'dh-dhawaahir*); [2] actions of the inward (*al-`amaal'l-baatinatu*); [3] permissible acts (*al-mubaahaat*). There must be sincerity in the first two, and in the last sincerity is in seeking reward by doing it.

If you were to say: "Is every action in need of its own individualized sincerity?" Realize that there is disagreement in that. It is said that sincerity is obligatory in every individual action. It is also said that it is permissible for extending the sincerity to include many acts of worship together.

If you were to say: "If a person desires by his actions good from Allah ta`ala and he does not desire anything from people, whether praise, renown or benefits; is that apart of showing-off?" Realize that that is out right showing-off with respect to what is desired not with respect to whom he desires it from. For if your desire from doing good deeds is some worldly benefit, then that is showing-off, regardless if he desire it from Allah ta`ala or from people.

If you were to say: "If the objective for the worldly matter which he desires from Allah ta`ala is in order to demonstrate abstinence from people and

as an instrument in the obtaining of worship of Allah ta`ala; is that then showing-off?" Realize that this and everything which helps connects you with the matters of the Hereafter is not showing-off. Likewise, if you desire by that: to have esteem and regard for people; the love of the *shaykhs* and leaders; or your aim in that is to be firmly established in conformity with the method (*madh'hab*) of Truth; opposing the people of heretical innovation (*ahl'l-bid`a*); spreading knowledge; or encouraging the people towards the worship of Allah (without in any way aiming by that the seeking of high rank for oneself, or any worldly aim) - then all of that is nothing but praiseworthy intention (*niyyaat mahmuudat*). Nothing from the direction of showing-off enters into that at all, when the objective is truly for the matters of the Hereafter.

The second impediment is conceit (*al-`ujb*). It is incumbent upon you to avoid it for two reasons: [1] it veils you from the path of success; and [2] it corrupts upright deeds by something other than Allah ta`ala. The opposite of arrogance is the remembrance of divine favors (*dhikr'l-minnat*). This means the remembrance that these favors are by the success of Allah, sub'hannahu, that He alone is the one who gives you honor, exalts His rewards for you and decrees them. This remembrance is obligatory (*fard*) during the occasions of arrogance. It is superogatory (*nafl*) in other times. Realize also that people with regard to arrogance are in three classes. [1] A class who are arrogant in every state. These are the *Mu` tazila*⁷⁵ (who using the tools of Hellenistic philosophy believed that the Qura'n was created), and the *Qaddariyya*⁷⁶ (who believed in the doctrine of free will). [2] A class who are rememberers of the divine favors of Allah in all states. They are the ones who are striving to be upright and there is nothing in their actions of arrogance. And [3] a class who are intermixed, which are the majority of the people of the *sunna*, who are sometimes conscious and some times heedless.

As for the inducements for avoiding showing-off, it is that you remember the words of Allah ta`ala, "*He has created the seven heavens and from the earth the like thereof. He it is who descends the command between them gradually, so that you may know that Allah has power over all things and*

⁷⁵ *Mu` tazila* - this heretical sect emerged during the conflict between Caliph Ali and Talha. They held the view that any Muslim who committed a grave sin was neither believer nor disbeliever. They later held the views that the Qur'an was created and believed in the concept of free will over predesitnation.

⁷⁶ *Qaddariyya* - this heretical sect like the *Mu` tazila* upheld the notion of free will or the capacity of humans to choose or deny Allah by which they delimit the power of Allah over the will of humanity.

that He encompasses all things in knowledge."⁷⁷ It is as though Allah ta`ala said; "I have created the heavens and the earth and what is between them. I have sufficed your own eyes to know that I am all-knowing and omnipotent. You pray two *rak`ats* with all that is in them of shortcomings and deficiency. Yet you are not satisfied with My sight upon you, with My knowledge of you, nor My praise and thanks to you. Eventually, you love that people compliment you and love you for all that. Will you not use your intellect?!"

Another inducement against showing-off is that you call to mind whether it is possible for a person who possessed a priceless jewel worth hundreds of thousands to sell it for worthless coins?! Would this not be a considerable loss? In short, the pleasure of Allah (*ridwaan Allahi*) is greater, since the pleasure of Allah is better than what is this world's life, the Hereafter and what is in them.

Another inducement against showing-off is that you call to mind that if the people on whose account you are doing the good deed knew that you were doing it for them - they would be angry with you. If you do not act for the sake of Allah and the intention in your actions is to seek the pleasure of people, then Allah will turn their hearts away from you and He will arouse in their souls a distaste for you. In this matter the only thing you will obtain is the anger of Allah ta`ala and the anger of people all together.

As for the incentives to shunning arrogance, it is that you call to mind that the actions of the servant is simply a lot which emerges for him as a result of Allah's pleasure and acceptance. If you were to stand for the sake of Allah ta`ala in the night He would give you what your mind has never imagined. Rather, if you were to just give one hour to Allah in which you prayed two moderate *rak`ats*, or even a single breath being mindful of Him, He would give that to you. You should call to mind worldly kings when he gives someone a gift of clothing or food for his engagement in some service, the person usually sacrifices his very spirit in service to the giver of the gift when the king is challenged by his enemies. You should also call to mind how the Prophets, Angels and friends of Allah (*awliyya*) fall on their faces in prostrate to Him in their service to Him. When the poor wretched person is given divine permission (*adhina*) to join the Prophets, Angels and *awliyya* in divine service, he obtains assistance out of the great estimation he has of this divine service. O brother! conceal your good deeds in the same way that you conceal evil deeds. If you desire to arrive at the door of Allah, then it is incumbent upon you to be

⁷⁷ Qur'an - 65:12

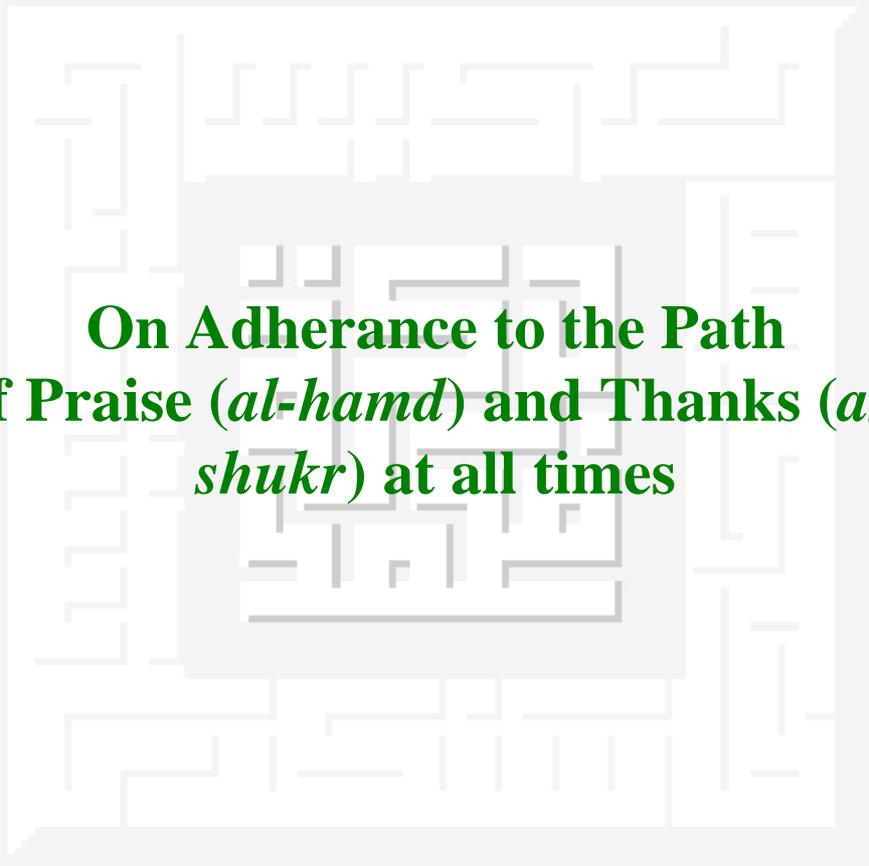
in humility, destitution and keep to His door with entreaties and weeping all night and day. Seek the assistance of Allah because He is the best of Helpers. There is no redemption from this affair except by His mercy. He is the Most Merciful of the merciful and there is no power nor might except with Allah the Exalted the Mighty.

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SANKORE'



**On Adherence to the Path
of Praise (*al-hamd*) and Thanks (*as-
shukr*) at all times**

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It is then incumbent upon you, my brother, after embellishing yourself with what is desired from the worship (*al-`ibaadaat*) which will make you safe from destruction - is giving praise and thanks.

This is for two reasons: [1] in order to make blessings continual; and [2] in order to obtain increase. As for making blessings continual and persistent, realize that giving thanks (*as-shukr*) is the yoke of blessings (*an-ni`mat*) and by means of it blessings are made perpetual. By neglecting gratitude it causes blessings to disappear. Allah ta`ala says, "*Allah does not change what is with a people until they change what is with their nafs.*"⁷⁸ As for obtaining increase of blessings, Allah ta`ala says, "*If you are grateful, I will increase you in blessings.*"⁷⁹

Realize that blessings (*an-ni`mat*) are in two divisions: [1] worldly (*ad-dunyawiya*); and [2] religious (*ad-deeniya*). As for worldly blessings they are two sorts: [1] the blessings of obtaining well-being (*ni`matu naf`i*); [2] the blessings of dispelling evil (*ni`matu daf`i*). The blessings of obtaining well-being is when you receive worldly advantages and benefits. Realize that benefits are of two kinds: [1] those which maintain a duly proportioned constitution - like its stability and vitality; and [2] those which allows pleasure and gratification - like food, drink, attire, marriage, and its like. The blessings of dispelling evil is that which keeps away from you heinous acts (*al-mufaasid*) and disadvantages (*al-madaarra*). These blessings are of two kinds: [1] that which deals with the *nafs* because they keep you safe from the evils of the age, its afflictions and the remainder of its misfortunes; [2] they defend you from what may afflict you from the dangers of a multitude of impediments, or from what is intended for you from the evils of men, *jinn*, beast of prey, vermin, reptiles and the like. As for religious blessings, they are of two sorts: [1] the blessings of success (*ni`matu 't-tawfeeq*); [2] the blessings of protection (*ni`matu'l-`ismat*). As for the blessings of success it is your: [1] first being successful at entering into *Islam*, [2] following the *sunna*, and then [3] adhering to obedience. As for the blessings of protection it is your being protected from: [1] disbelief (*kuf`r*) and idol worship (*shirk*); [2] from innovation (*bid`a*) and error (*dalaal*); and [3] from the remainder of acts of disobedience (*al-ma`asiyya*).

⁷⁸ Qur'an - 13:11

⁷⁹ Qur'an - 14:7

The explanation of the wisdom of that cannot be enumerated except by the Master the All Knowing who has favored you with His blessings, as He, jalla wa `alla says, "*If you were to try and enumerate the blessings of Allah, you could not number them. Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.*"⁸⁰ Realize that the continuance and persistence of all these blessings from all the domains which they come which none of your thoughts and aspirations could ever reach is linked to one single thing - and that is giving thanks (*as-shukr*) and praise (*al-hamd*). This single trait contains all of these merited values and it has all of these benefits. Realize that the one who holds to giving thanks and praise to Allah without the least heedlessness has obtained a rare jewel. Allah is the Owner of success by means of His bounty.

If you were to ask: "What is the reality of giving thanks and praise?" Realize, that the scholars have made a distinction between the two. They have said that giving praise (*al-hamd*) is among the outward forms of saying 'sub'hanna Allah' and 'laa ilaha illa Allah'. As for giving thanks (*as-shukr*), it is obedience with every bodily limb to the Lord of creation.

If you were to say: "What is the proper place of giving thanks?" Realize that the proper place for giving thanks is during blessings. "You explained that blessings are either religious or worldly. As for the misfortunes and afflictions of this world in one's person, family, and wealth - is it incumbent upon us to give thanks for these too?" There are two opinions concerning this. [1] The first is that it is not incumbent, except when misfortunes are considered apart of the blessings of Allah ta`ala. Then it is incumbent to give thanks for blessings connected with misfortunes without giving thanks for the actual misfortune. [2] The second opinion is that it is incumbent because these misfortunes are not in reality misfortunes based upon the proof of what it brings of benefit, much like a disliked remedy for curing a fearful sickness, in order to bring health back to the body.

If you were to say: "Is giving thanks for misfortune better, or is being patient with misfortune better?" Realize that it has been said that giving thanks is better based upon the proof of the words of Allah ta`ala, "*Few among My slaves are thankful.*"⁸¹ Thus, by this verse He ta`ala has made them the elite of the elite (*akhass'l-khawaass*). It is also said that being patient is better because it is among the greatest of toils, which results in the greatest of rewards and the

⁸⁰ Qur'an - 16:18

⁸¹ Qur'an - 34:13

highest stations. Allah ta`ala says, "*Verily We will compensate those who are patient with a reward which cannot be enumerated.*"⁸²

Imam al-Ghazzaali said, "Know that the one who is grateful (*shaakir*) in reality is so only because he is patient; and the patient one in reality is patient only because he is thankful." You should meditate upon two roots: [1] Blessings (*ni`mat*) are only given to those who recognize the actual worth of blessings. He who recognizes its worth is one who is grateful. [2] Blessings are deprived from those who do not recognize the true worth of blessings, who deny them and fail to show thanks for them. It is incumbent upon you to take pains in recognizing the true worth of all blessings, since Allah bestows the blessings upon you in the religion. Be aware of being ruined by this world's life and its rubble. Realize in reality that if you had been created from the beginning of the world and if you were to give thanks for the blessings of *Islam* from the first moment until the end of time - you would still not be able to give the thanks which is due Allah. However, it is incumbent upon you to take pains to your fullest ability in giving thanks for Allah's blessings.

O brother! the affair of giving thanks and praise to Allah is easy for the one whom Allah makes it easy. It is upon the servant to make strenuous effort (*ijtihaad*) and it is upon Allah to give the guidance (*hidaaya*). Allah ta`ala says; "*Those who struggle in Us, We will guide him to our ways. Verily Allah is with the doers of good*"⁸³

Success is with Allah



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⁸² Qur'an - 39:10

⁸³ Qur'an - 29:69

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Synopsis
On the Miracles and Blessings
of the Path to Paradise

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Onoble brother! if you are successful at traveling this path, then there will be subjected to you forty blessings - twenty in this life and twenty in the next life. As for the twenty in this life, they are [1] Allah will remember you with His praises; [2] He will be grateful to you; [3] He will love you; [4] He will be your guardian; [5] He will be the guarantor of your means of subsistence; [6] He will be your helper; [7] He will be your intimate friend; [8] He will give honor to your soul and you will not be afflicted by humiliation; [9] He will raise your spiritual zeal and resolution; [10] He will enrich your heart; [11] He will guide your heart by means of His light to sciences and secrets; [12] He will expand your breasts until it will not become constricted by anything from the tribulations of this world; [13] He will give you prestige; [14] He will place love for you in the hearts of people; [15] He will give you universal *baraka* by which the earth which you walk upon, the place where you sit and the people who accompany you will receive *baraka*⁸⁴; [16] He will subject to you everything from the sea to the dryland of the earth, until if you desired you could fly in the air, walk upon water, or cut across the vast earth in a moment; [17] He will subject to you all the animals - like the like; [18] you will not ask Allah for anything, except that He will give it to you; [19] you will receive leadership and influence at the door of the Lord of Might, which will cause creation to take you as a means to Allah ta`ala, due to your service to Him, they will succeed in their needs to Allah because of your esteem and *baraka*; and [20] your supplications will be answered from Allah ta`ala, and even if you were to think of something you would find it in front of you. These will be your miracles in this life.

As for the twenty miracles in the next life, they are: [1] the torment of death will be made easy for you; [2] your *imaan* will be established for you; [3] your spirit will be brought out with good news and joy; [4] the announcement of eternity in the Paradise; [5] life in the secret for your spirit and body because of the splendor of your death; [6] safety from the questioning of the grave and being given the answers; [7] the widening and illumination of your grave; [8] the entertainment and honoring of your spirit and soul and your being among the company of the brethren of righteousness; [9] your being gathered with honor and nobility when being brought out of your grave, while the Angels will greet you with vestments and crowns of honor; [10] the illumination of your

⁸⁴ *baraka* - 'blessings'. An invisible energy which Allah has placed within certain individuals and objects created to bring about good for creation.

face; [11] safety from the terror of the Day of Standing; [12] the taking of your book of deeds in your right hand; [13] the reckoning will be made easy for you; [14] the Scale will be made heavy for you; [15] your being brought to the Fount of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace; [16] allowance to cross the Bridge (*as-siraat*) over Hell; [17] receiving the intercession of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace; [18] an eternal kingdom in Paradise; [19] the greatest satisfaction; [20] the meeting without howness of the Lord of the Worlds, the Sole Deity of the Worlds of the First and the Last, *jalla jalaaluhu*. These will be your miracles in the Next Life.

With the ending of the above this book has been completed, in which I earmarked some of the secrets of the teachings of **Abu Haamid al-Ghazzali**, may Allah ta`ala be merciful to him; and inundate us with his *barakat*. All praises are due to Allah with all the praises which are due Him, that which I know and with that which I do not know; in accordance with all of His blessings, those I know and those I do not know. O Allah! bless, grant peace and give *barakat* to our master Muhammad, his family, wives, and descendents - with blessings, peace and *barakat* which has no ending to it just as there is no end to his perfections. Peace and blessings upon him after whom there will be no prophet.

All praises are due to Allah.



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The name **SANKORE'** is taken from Black Africa's oldest Islamic educational institution located in the ancient city of Timbuktu. This institution was the spiritual and intellectual center of the *Bilad 's-Sudan* for more than seven centuries. The **SANKORE'** mosque/university was the symbol of the spirit of Islamic Africa. It was the guardian of its morals and the formulator of its political hopes and cultural aspirations. This university made its distinctive mark upon every Islamic nation which emerged in Black Africa, from the 14th century until the 19th century. Our master and guide, Waziri Junayd of Sokoto once said, "Knowledge is universal and eternal but it has a social and cultural stamp. It also has a purpose and commitment to a particular world view. It therefore cannot be neutral." History has shown that Africans in the Diaspora and at home have been branded with a social and cultural stamp which is not their own. This is the result of the lack of SELF KNOWLEDGE and the assimilating of knowledge foreign to its true heritage.

The **Sankore' Institute of Islamic-African Studies International (SIASI)** is the intellectual arm of the present *Amir 'l-Mu'mineen* and *Sultan* of Maiurno of the Blue Nile - al-Hajj Abu Bakr ibn Attahiru, the 16th ruler after *Shehu* Uthman dan Fuduye', may Allah be pleased with all of them. By means of his support and *baraka* the institute has been able to do this great work. The goals of **SIASI** are to rediscover the authentic purpose, commitment and particular world view of Islamic Africa and to revive the learning which gave it its unique social and cultural stamp. In short, the **SIASI** is, with the help of Allah ta'ala, preserving and extending the intellectual heritage of the Sankore' university/mosque of the 15th century; making this legacy viable for the electronic age and for the benefit of Muslims and Africans the world over.

Shaykh Muhammad Shareef

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