

THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF HUMANITY:
ON THE SUPERIORITY OF KNOWLEDGE

SAMPLE

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The Enlightenment of Humanity

ON THE SUPREMACY OF KNOWLEDGE

تبصرة الأنام في أن العلم هو الإمام

TABSIRAT AL-ANAM FI ANNA AL-'ILM
HUWA AL-IMAM



Shaykh al-Islam

AL-HAJJ IBRAHIM B. 'ABD-ALLAH NIASSE

Translated by

TALUT B. SULAIMAN DAWOOD AL-TIJANI

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Publisher's Foreword

It is with great pleasure that Allah has granted us the opportunity to finally translate and publish this important book. In fact, the impetus to make this publication available to the English speaking community started in 2013 when Imam al-Fayda Shaykh Tidiane Aliou Cisse gave an amazing speech to the students at the Muhammad Schools of Atlanta.

In this speech, the Shaykh encouraged the students to strive in the acquisition of knowledge for the sake of worshipping God better and becoming productive citizens in the community. He emphasized the fact that knowledge precedes all, and the most knowledgeable people will inevitably become the rightful leaders.

The Shaykh promised the students that he would commission the translation of this book so that they could understand the proofs, presented by Shaykh Ibrahim, as to why knowledge is the leader. After the talk, I immediately sought the Shaykh's permission to undertake the translation and publishing of the work. Alhamdulillah, permission was given and here we finally present its completion to you.

May Allah guide and benefit all those who read and act upon this book, and upon its author, may the pleasure of Allah continue to shine on him. We thank Imam Shaykh Tidiane Cisse for entrusting us with the task of bringing this book out in English and we ask Allah to bless the Shaykh for his efforts towards presenting to the world the magnificent treasures of knowledge which are the works of Shaykh al-Islam, al-Hajj Ibrahim Niasse. *Amin*

May Allah, give us Himself

IBRAHIM A. DIMSON

SAMPLE

Preface

*In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful
May Allah bless our Master Muhammad, the Opener, the
Seal and his family, in accordance with his grandeur and
immense worth.*

﴿بَلْ هُوَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَمَا
يَجْحَدُ بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَّا الظَّالِمُونَ﴾

Rather, it is verses within the breasts of those who have
been given knowledge. And none reject Our verses
except the wrongdoers.

[AL-'ANKABUT, 49]

All praise is due to Allah, who revealed the *Qur'an as a Guidance of mankind, and Clear Signs of Guidance and a Criterion*. And He is the Beneficent who *created mankind. And taught him speech*. And may blessings and peace be upon to whom was revealed *Say: May Lord! Increase me in knowledge*, the best of the descendants of 'Adnan. May Allah be pleased with the Companions who have covered us in the shade of belief and excellence. And may He be pleased with those who followed them, the people of felicity, success and satisfaction, and all those who follow them in excellence until the Day of the excellent requital. They are those who stood against adversity and transmitted the knowledge that they received. Thus,

the men and jinn sought guidance from their light. They spent their nights in worship and brandished their swords struggling against ignorance, misguidance and disbelief. May the satisfaction of Allah be upon them as long as day and night follow each other in succession.

To proceed:

The slave in need of Allah ﷻ, who is ignorant and aware of his ignorance, the servant of knowledge, Ibrahim b. al-Shaykh al-Hajj Abdullah b. al-Sayyid Muhammad (may support him and benefit the Muslims by him. Amin!) says:

When I witnessed that the majority of the people of this era have been deluded by the ease of the time, such that they became distracted from the religion, knowledge, action and the Qur'an, by desires, the ego and Shaytan, I composed this letter exhorting my children and brethren, especially those whose fathers and ancestors were people of knowledge and gnosis, and as a sincere counsel to them. And Allah is the source of help. And I am only able to succeed through Allah. And upon him is all reliance and dependence. I have named it, "The Enlightenment of Humanity: On the Superiority of Knowledge [*Tabsirah al-Anam fi anna al-'Ilm Huwa al-Imam*]." And I have divided into a prologue, three chapters and an epilogue:

Prologue: On Superiority in the Religion Being Earned and Not Simply Accorded by Lineage

Chapter One: On the Superiority of Knowledge and the Scholars

Chapter Two: On the Blameworthiness of Ignorance

Chapter Three: On the Etiquettes of Students and Teachers and Some of the Benefits Connected to Books and Having Love and Concern for Them

Epilogue: On the Encouragement to Establish Schools for the Purpose of Spreading Knowledge

Prologue

You should know, may Allah increase you and us exponentially in knowledge, strength and soundness of perception and understanding, that a person's superiority, for which he may become a forerunner in the religion, is obtained through effort, not lineage alone. And seeking precedence in the religion by way of Imamate or Shaykhhood, on the mere strength of lineage is trifling. And it is not accepted by anyone possessed of intellect. When commenting on the words of Allah ﷻ *And We made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another*, after some words, Imam Fakhr al-Razi said:

These words contain an implicit evidence proving that nobility is not obtained through lineage. That is because tribes recognize one another due to their lineage to a certain person. If that person is noble, then you assume that they have a right to boast [of their lineage]. If he is not a noble person, then you assume they don't have the right to boast of that.

A man is boasted of either due to the superiority of his lineage or due to the superiority of his actions. As for superiority due to lineage, it eventually ends. But, when it comes to superiority due to actions, the religious, jurist who is noble and generous becomes like the one for whom people boast. But how can a person boast take pride in his father or grandfather over someone who caused him to obtain such good as made him superior to that father or grandfather.

However, that is not the case when a person is a descendant of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. For, one cannot approach the excellence of the Messenger, such that

he would say, "I am like your father." Nevertheless, the Prophet ﷺ affirmed the nobility of those connected to him through works. And he negated it for one who wishes to attain nobility through lineage alone. [He said], "We Prophets are not inherited." And he said, "The Scholars are the heirs of the Prophets. We are not inherited through lineage. Rather, we are inherited through works."

And I have heard that one of the Shurafa of the land of Khurasan had the closest lineage to 'Ali ؑ. However, he was a transgressor. And in the same town, there was a freed black slave who had excelled in knowledge and action. And people would incline towards seeking blessing from him. And it happened one day that he exited his house headed towards the Mosque. And people were following him. And the Sharif crossed paths with him and was drunk. People began to drive him away and distance him from his path. But, he overcame them and clung to the garments of the Shaykh. And he said to him, "O, black man! O, you with a trunk and hooves! O, disbeliever, son of a disbeliever! I am the son of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. I am humiliated while you are magnified. I am cursed while you are ennobled. I am despised, while you are honored."

So, the people intended to beat him. But the Shaykh said, "No. That is tolerated from him for the sake of his grandfather. And striking him is unlawful due to his grandfather. However, o, Sharif! My inner reality has been illuminated while yours has been darkened. And people see the light of my heart before they see the blackness of my face. I beautified myself and followed the path of your father. But you followed the path of my father. When people saw me upon the path of your father and you on the path of my father, they assumed that I was the son of your father and that you were the son of my father. So, they treated you as they would treat my father. And they treated me as they would treat your father."

And the author of “*Asas al-Iqtibas*” has said:

Nobility is obtained through excellence and etiquette, not through origin and lineage. About this, Allah ﷻ has said: *No relationship will there be among them that Day, nor will they ask about one another.* And He said: *Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most Godfearing.* And it has been narrated in a hadith: “Those of you who were best in the era of ignorance are the best of you in Islam, if they have understood the religion.”

It has also been narrated: “By Allah! None of you has any superiority over another, except by his actions.” And: “Good conduct, generosity and religiosity are sufficient for a man.”

And a number of aphorisms and proverbs have been related regarding this. Among them: “Nobility is obtained through excellence and etiquette, not through origin and lineage.” And, “One ennobles his lineage through excellent etiquette.” And, “A man is judged by his own excellence, not by the excellence of his father. And, “Nobility is obtained through high aspirations, not by ancient wombs.” And, “Speak with your etiquette, not with your [noble] lineage.” And, “Your honor is protected through your etiquette.” And, “That a person has etiquette is better than his acting.” And, “If someone lacks nobility himself, the nobility of his father will not benefit him.” And, “If someone lacks etiquette, his noble lineage will not benefit him.” And, “Etiquette is one of the two supports.” And, “Etiquette is a path to every excellence and means to every nobility.” And, “Studying at an early age is like engraving on a stone.” And, “If someone teaches his children etiquette, he will disappoint his enviers.” And, “If someone is not refined as a child, he will have no authority in his old age.” And, “Etiquette is taught by parents, while piety is from Allah ﷻ.” And, “If someone cannot bear the humbleness of study for an hour, he will remain in

the darkness of ignorance forever.” And, “Everything has an expertise. And the expertise of nobility is etiquette.” And, “And for everything, there is a glue [that holds it together]. And the glue of honor is etiquette.” And, “Feed your heart etiquette, like a fire is fed kindling.” And, “If one does not acquire wealth by his etiquette, he will at least acquire beauty.” And, “If someone’s lineage lowers him, he will be raised by his etiquette.” And, “If someone doesn’t have a noble lineage, his etiquette will cause him to catch up to those who do.” And, “A believer is judged by how he stands, not by how he was planted; by where he is found, not by where he was born.” And, “If someone has plentiful good manners, he will be ennobled, even if he is ignoble; and people’s need for him will be increased, even if he is a pauper.” And, “Excellent etiquette covers an ugly lineage.” And, “Etiquette acts in place of lineage.”

And the following couplets have come, regarding this:

Of what benefit is inherited nobility. A pearl yields no profit,
By simply weighing it, without seeking to earn its price,

And a man darkens only himself,
Even if he has numerous, illustrious and noble ancestors.

And:

If tree bears no fruit, though it is of a fruit-bearing,
Species, then people will prepare it to be fuel.

And:

Be a noble through yourself, not through your origin,
For, birthright is not sufficient for nobility.

And:

Indeed, precious stones, pearls and gold,
Should be sacrificed for precious etiquette.

And:

O, my son! If you are considerate when you are young,
One day, when you are old, you will be considered.

And:

What a person memorizes in his childhood,
Remains, like an engraving upon a dry stone.

And:

I have no intelligence nor noble lineage to lean on,
I am neither a freed slave nor an' Arab,
If some are able to boast of their lineage to someone,
I boast only of my etiquette.

Regarding *Sahih al-Bukhari*, in “The Chapter on the Excellence of Knowledge, His words ﷺ *Allah raises the believers among you and those who have been given knowledge in degree. And Allah is fully aware of what you do* and His words ﷺ *My Lord! Increase me in knowledge,*” Al-Hafiz [Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani] has said:

This verse has been explained that Allah raises the knowledgeable believer over the believer who isn't knowledgeable. And his being raised in degree indicates superiority, because what it means is an increase of his reward. And by that he is raised in degree. And their elevation are both spiritual and physical. It is spiritual in the life of this world, through his having a high stature and good report. And it is physical in the Hereafter by his having a high station in Paradise.

And it has been narrated in Sahih Muslim that nafi' b. Abd al-Harith, who was appointed by 'Umar as a collector in Makkah, met the latter in 'Ufan. 'Umar said to him, "Who did you appoint to take your place?" He said, "I left Ibn Abza, one of our freed slaves." 'Umar said, "You appointed a freed slave?" He replied, "He is a reciter of the Book of Allah and a scholar of the religious obligations." 'Umar said to him, "Verily, your Prophet has said, "Allah raises some people by this Book and lowers others."

Zayd b. Aslam has said about His words ﷺ *And We raise in degree whomever We will*, "In knowledge." Regarding His words ﷺ *My Lord! Increase me in knowledge*, they are explicit regarding the superiority of knowledge, because Allah ﷻ did not command His Prophet ﷺ to seek increase in anything, except in knowledge. The meaning of "knowledge," in the verse, is knowledge of the Sacred Law that results in knowledge of the obligations of the morally responsible person in the matter of his religion, whether in terms of worship or dealings, as well as knowledge of Allah and His Attributes, and his obligation to uphold his command and declare Him free of all defects. And that all revolves around explanation of the Qur'an and jurisprudence.

Contemplate, then, the words of our Master, 'Umar, "Verily, your Prophet has said, "Indeed, Allah raises some people by this Book and lowers others,"" and the meaning will become clear to you. As for today, it is as al-Burzali has said:

The paths to knowledge have been obscured in this time. And its realities have been inverted. The platform of the Sacred Law has been taken away from those who deserve it and given to those who do not deserve it. And that is either due to fame that the latter has, or because of the platform of his father, or similar reasons, such that he is given the platform through inheritance. The commentators of "*Al-Risalah*" have said that one of the innovations

over which there is agreement as to its unlawfulness, is that an ignorant person should be given precedence over the scholars, or that the platform of the Sacred Law should be inherited by a person for whom it is not permissible.

That was narrated by al-Mahdi in his comments on “*Al-Rasmuki*.” Likewise, in “*Ruh al-Bayan*,” the author said, when commenting on His words ﷺ *Those who have gone astray will not harm you, if you are guided:*

Throughout his wayfaring, the disciple should not incline towards any of sincerity who wish that he should accept them and administer their spiritual training. Nor should he, by that, be deluded into thinking that he is a Shaykh that should be followed so that he may complete the seeker’s wayfaring on the path with completion and connection. But, if his Shaykh deems that he is on the level of Shaykhhood, and he affirms, with a real indication, him in the station of spiritual education and inviting people, then [and only then] he will be a guide and director for the disciples in full measure.

For Allah ﷻ has said *And for every people, there is a guide.* But, as for our time, the situation has become such that one who has never been a disciple claims Shaykhhood. And he informs the ignorant and wayward of his [supposed] Shaykhhood, out of eagerness to spread his mention and his fame, and to increase his disciples. They have converted this great affair and the immense praise [of the Shaykhs] into an infant’s game and the laughter of Shaytan. They even appoint successors for him. Every time one of them passes, they elect his son to replace him, whether or not he is significant. And they place upon him the mantle and seek blessing from him. And they place him on the pedestal of the Shaykhs. And this is a great trial. Perhaps this path has been annulled and its traces obscured. And Allah knows best.

And this is supported by what Imam al-Fakhr al-Razi said, when explaining His words ﷻ *And let me guide you to your Lord so you would fear [Him]*. He said:

Those who say that knowledge of Allah is only attained through a guide adhered to this verse as a proof. And they said that it is explicit in stating that [the guide] directs towards knowledge of Allah. Then, they said that there are two matters that serve as evidence that this is the greatest objective for the dispatching of Messengers. The first is that his words, *Will you not be purified?*, comprise all things for which a Messenger is necessary. And this includes guidance. So, since he repeated [guidance] afterwards, it is known that that is the greatest objective in the sending of Messengers. The second matter is that Musa closed his address with that. And that indicates that it is the most noble objective in the sending of Messengers.

After some more discussion, he then said:

This verse indicates that knowledge of Allah precedes obedience to Him, because He mentioned guidance. He then followed it with fear and made the latter an indication of the former. This is comparable to His words ﷻ, at the beginning of [Surah] al-Nahl: *That they should warn that verily there is no God but Me. So, be Godfearing.* And His words in Surah TaHa: *Indeed, I am Allah. There is no God but Me. Then, worship Me.*

Then, He said:

This verse also indicates that fear of Allah is only attained through knowledge [of Him]. He said ﷻ: *Only the knowledgeable from among Allah's worshipers fears Him.* "The knowledgeable," here, refers to those who have knowledge of Him. And this verse indicates that fear of Allah is the foundation of all good, because if someone fears Allah, all kinds of good will emanate from him. But, if he feels

safe [from Allah], he will feel at liberty to perform every evil act. And in this same vein, we have the words of the Prophet ﷺ, “If someone fears Allah, they set out before dawn. And whoever sets out before dawn, reaches home.”

And it is also supported by the following, from Sahih al-Bukhari:

Chapter: That Knowledge Comes Before Words and Deeds. This is due to His words ﷺ: *And know that there is no god but Allah.* Thus, He started with knowledge. And that the scholars are the heirs of the Prophets. They inherited knowledge. So, whoever takes that knowledge has taken an ample share. And if someone travels a path seeking knowledge, Allah will facilitate for him a path to Paradise. And He ﷺ has said: *Only the knowledgeable from among Allah’s worshipers fears Him.* And He said: *Only those who know understand it.* And He said: *If we had only listened or reasoned, we would not be of the companions of the blaze.* And He said: *Are those who know the same as those who do not know?.*

And the Prophet ﷺ said, “If Allah wills good for someone, He grants him deep understanding of the religion.” And he said, “Knowledge is only attained through study.” And Abu Dharr has said, “Were you to put a sword upon this (pointing towards the back of his neck), and I thought that I could utter one word that I heard from the Prophet ﷺ before you would strike me, I would surely utter it.” And Ibn ‘Abbas ؓ said, “You scholars should be Rabbaniyyun.” And it is said that a Rabbani is the one that educates people in the knowledge that is easiest, before he educates them in that which is more difficult.

And Abu Hamid al-Ghazali ؒ said:

As for the traditional reports [on knowledge], ‘Ali b. Abi Talib ؓ said to Kumayl, “O, Kumayl! Knowledge is better than wealth. Knowledge watches over you, while you

have to watch over wealth. Knowledge is a ruler, while wealth is ruled over. Wealth is decreased by spending, while knowledge increases by spending it.” And ‘Ali ﷺ also said, “The scholar is better than the fasting, struggling person who stands in prayer. When the scholar dies, he leaves a crack in Islam that can only be mended by someone who succeeds him [in his knowledge].” And he said in a poem:

There is no pride except for the people of knowledge.
Indeed, they,
 Are upon guidance and they direct those who seek
 guidance,

The measure of a man is that in which he is most perfect,
 And the ignorant are enemies to the people of knowl-
 edge,

So, obtain knowledge so that you may live perpetually
through it,
 People are all dead; but the people of knowledge are
 living.

Abu al-Aswad said, “There is nothing mightier than knowledge. Kings rule over people, while the scholars rule over kings.” Ibn ‘Abbas ﷺ said, “Sulaiman b. Dawood ﷺ was given the choice between knowledge, wealth and dominion. He chose knowledge. Thus, he was given wealth and dominion together with it.” Ibn al-Mubarak was asked, “Who are mankind?” He replied, “The scholars.” It was said, “Then who are the rulers?” He said, “The ascetics.” It was said, “Then who are the lowly people?” He replied, “Those who consume the world at the cost of the religion.” And he named only the scholars “mankind” because the special quality that distinguishes him from all other animals is knowledge. For, the human being is a human being due to that which is the cause of his nobil-

ity. And that is not due to his bodily strength. The camel is stronger than him. Nor is it due to his size, because elephants are larger than him. And it is not due to his courage either, because animals of prey are more courageous than him. Nor is it due to the amount he eats. The bull has a bigger stomach than him. Nor his copulation. Indeed, the smallest of birds has more sexual prowess than him. Rather, he was only created for knowledge. And one of the scholars has said, "I wish I knew what a person had gained who lacked knowledge. And what a person had lacked who gained knowledge."

And the Prophet ﷺ said, "If someone is given the Qur'an and deems that someone else has been given something better than it, he has degraded that which Allah ﷻ has venerated." And Fath al-Mawsili ؒ asked, "Is it not true that if a sick person is denied food, water and medicine, he will die?" They replied, "Of course!" he said, "This is similar to the heart. When it is denied wisdom and knowledge for three days, it dies."

And he has spoken the truth. For, the nourishment of the heart is knowledge and wisdom. And they are the source of its life, just as the nourishment of the body is food. And if a person lacks knowledge, his heart is sick and it will inevitably die. However, he does not perceive its sickness due to love of the world. And his preoccupation with the world has overcome his senses. This is similar to the way a state of overwhelming fear can overcome the pain of the limbs, even though it is there. But when death removes the encumbrance of the world, he will sense his destruction. At that point he will be overwhelmed with great regret, which, nevertheless, will not benefit him. And this is similar to the way a person who feels safe after having feared, or the one who has sobered from his drunkenness feels the injuries that he incurred to his limbs during his state of drunkenness or fear. And we seek refuge in Allah from the Day of the lifting of the veil.

For people are asleep. And when they die, they wake up.

Al-Hasan ؑ has said, "If the ink of the scholars were to be weighed against the blood of the martyrs, the ink of the scholars would weight more." And Ibn Mas'ud ؑ said, "You must seek knowledge before it is lifted. It is lifted by the death of its narrators. And by the One in whose hands is my soul, those men killed in the way of Allah as martyrs would love that Allah should resurrect them as scholars, due to the nobility that they witness in them. And one is not born a scholar. Rather, knowledge is only obtained through studying."

And Ibn 'Abbas ؑ said, "Exchanging knowledge with people at night is more beloved to me than spending the night in worship." And the same has been narrated from Abu Hurayrah ؓ and Ahmad b. Hanbal ؒ. And al-Hasan ؑ has said, about His words ﷻ *Our Lord! Grant us good in this world and good in the Hereafter*, that the good of this world is knowledge and worship. And the good of the Hereafter is Paradise. And it was said to one of the wise people, "What kind of things should be possessed?" He replied, "Those things which, if your ship were to sink, they would swim away with you (meaning his knowledge)." And it has been said that, by the sinking of the ship, he meant the perishing of his body through death.

And one of the scholars said, "If someone takes wisdom by the reins, people will take him as an Imam. And if one is known for wisdom, people look towards him with reverence. And al-Shafi'i ؒ has said, "From the nobility of knowledge is that if someone is given the smallest portion of it, he becomes happy. But, if it is lifted from him, he become sad." And 'Umar ؓ said, "You must seek knowledge. For Allah ﷻ has a robe that he loves. And if someone seeks a chapter of knowledge, Allah will dress him in His robe. Thus, if he sins, He will censure him three times, so that He does not have to remove that robe, even if his involvement in that sin is extended to the time of his death."

Al-Ahnaf رضي الله عنه has said, “The scholars are almost lords.” And every honor that is not sustained by knowledge, its ending is humiliation. Salim b. Abi al-Ja’d رضي الله عنه said, “My former master bought me for three hundred dirhams. And he freed me. So, I asked him what profession I should pursue. He replied, “Knowledge.” So, I became engaged in knowledge. And no year has passed, except that the governor of Madinah has visited me. And I did not seek that from him.” Zubayr b. Abi Bakr said, “My father wrote me in ‘Iraq [saying], “Seek knowledge. For, if you are poor, it is your wealth. And if you are rich, then it is your beauty. And that is sufficient.””

And this has also been recorded in the counsels of Luqman to his son. He said, “My son! Press your knees against theirs. For, indeed, Allah ﷻ gives life to the hearts with the light of wisdom, just as He gives life to the earth with showers from the heavens.” And one of the wise people said, “When the scholar dies, the fish in the sea and the birds on air weep for his absence. His face is missed. But his mention is not forgotten. And al-Zuhri رضي الله عنه said, “Knowledge remembrance. And only men who practice remembrance love it.”

And one of the elect has said:

How excellent is knowledge ;and how praiseworthy he who understands,

And how ugly is ignorance ;and how blameworthy the one who is ignorant.

For, it is not proper for a man to articulate an argument,
While his ignorance will negate it one day if he is questioned,

Knowledge is the most noble of things that a man can attain,

If someone has no knowledge, in fact he is not a man,

Study knowledge and act upon it, my little brother,
For knowledge is a decoration for the one who ,with
knowledge ,works.

And Abu al-Nasr al-Mikali has the following couplet:

When the generous person passes and his life comes to an
end,
His eulogy would suffice for a second life.

And Ibn al-Sayyid has the following couplets:

The brother of knowledge lives forever after his death,
Even though his joints are under the earth,

While the ignorant person is dead, while he walks upon the
earth,
He is numbered among the living, while he has in fact
perished.

And he has another couplet:

Gone are those under whose wings one could live,
And I have been left behind like a worn out skin.

And another:

As for the tents, they are like any other tent,
But I consider women of the district different to their
women.

A Rare Jewel

And among the rarest of blessings with which Allah had blessed
al-Mujidd, the author of “Al-Qamus” is the following, which he
reported:

I read, and all praise is due to Allah, the entirety of Muslim,
In the heart of Damascus, Syria, one of the hearts of
Islam,

To Nasir al-Din Imam b. Jahbal,
In the presence of the famous, notable scholars.

And, by the facilitation and grace of God,
We finished the correct reading in three days.

A Subtle Indication

My father, 'Ali al-Qari had a copy of "Al-Jamharah" in the author's own handwriting. He had been offered three hundred mithqals in exchange for it. But he refused. However, he was afflicted by a severe need. So, he sold it for four hundred mithqals. And he wrote upon it the following couplets:

I enjoyed its company for twenty years and I sold it,
And my grief and my longing for after it,

I had not anticipated selling it,
Even if that had kept me in the prison of debts,

However ,with inability ,need and young,
Children, upon them began my hunger,

I said: And I don't possess anything else of worth,
The intense words of a saddened heart,

And perhaps their needs, o, Umm Malik,
Like a beautiful caress from their Lord.

And he sent it to the person who had bought it .The latter sent it back with forty more dinars.

And may Allah have mercy on Sahnun for his words:

I wish I knew, if my appointed term should come to me,
Who would receive my books afterwards,

Will they, after me, be in the possession of an ignorant
person,
Being dealt with coarsely and without etiquette,

Or will it be a guided man who seeks not to exchange,
Them, for the world's weight in gold.

And how excellently Shaykh Muhammad Fal b. Baba al-'Alawi
al-Tijani ؒ spoke when he said:

If a young man passes away, leaving behind wealth and
books,

And he is a person who has children, preserve the
books,

For if the books are destroyed, the wealth will follow,
And this one will not be a son; nor the other his father,

For, wealth is an inheritance held up by the Sacred Law,
But if you look, in reality, they are not his children,

Rather, if the son takes care of what he is responsible for,
Of the noble things of his father, only then is his lineage
confirmed.

And Qadi Muhammad Abdullah b. al-Mustafa al-'Alawi has said:

Attaining Shaykhhood without performing acts,
Similar to the acts of the Shaykh is from obscurity,

It is not an inheritance like the allotment of wealth,
It is gained only by a person's deserving it,

Upon that, all you children of Shaykhs,
I have sworn. And my oath is not false.

And studying at a young age is like engraving on a stone. How-
ever, that does not negate that, once old, and does not know the
sciences, one should study. Indeed, Malik ؒ was asked, "When
is it blameworthy to study?" He responded, "When ignorance is
praiseworthy." And he also said, "Learning is from the cradle to
the grave."

And the author of "Lisan al-'Arab" has said:

Abu Sakhr al-Husali has said:

I desire of my love, 'Ulayyah, that we should be,
Upon a boat in the sea without anyone else,

Indeed by He who makes cry and causes to laugh! by He,
Who causes to die and brings to life! By the one whose
command is the Command,

She has left me in enchanted loneliness. If I were to see,
Two expressions of intimacy from her, not beset by
anxiety,

When she is mentioned, my heart finds rest in her remem-
brance,
Just as the bird shivers when it is wet by a drop of water,

My hand almost became wet when I touched her,
And green leaves almost grew from her sides,

I communed with you until it was said "He would never
experience discomfort",
And I visited you until it was said "He has no patience",

O, love of her, increase my intensity every night,
O, comforting days, your appointment is the gathering,

I was amazed at the swiftness of life when we were together,
But when that which was between us ended, it was as if
life had stopped.

Al-Mustamli related from Shaykh Abu Muhammad b. Bari (may Allah ﷻ have mercy on them both), that when the Shaykh dictated us his couplet, "In her garments grow green leaves," he laughed. Then, he said, "This couplet was the reason I studied Arabic." We asked him, "How so?" He replied:

My father, Bari, mentioned that he saw in a dream, before he was blessed with me, that he held in his hand a long spear on whose tip was a lamp. And he tied it to a rock in Jerusalem. He

was informed by that, that he would be granted a son who would make him famous through knowledge and teaching. And when I was born, and I reached fifteen years of age, Zafir al-Haddad and Ibn Abi Husaynah visited his shop. My father was a bookseller. And both of them were famous for literature. So, my father recited the following couplet:

My hands have nearly become clammy since I have not
touched her,

Green leaves grow from in the ends of her garments.

But he pronounced a letter with the wrong vowel. They both laughed at him due to his pronunciation. So, he said to me, “My son! I am awaiting the interpretation of my dream. Perhaps Allah will make me famous through you.” So, I asked him, “Which science do you deem I should study?” He said, “Study grammar, so that you can teach me.” So, I would study with Abu Bakr Muhammad b. Abd al-Malik b. al-Siraj ؓ. Then I would come and teach him.

And what we have mentioned is sufficient. And Allah is the One who grants success.