



The Sunnah: A Source of Knowledge and Civilization II

# Education and Economy in the Sunnah

Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi

# التربية والاقتصاد في السنة

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**EDUCATION & ECONOMY  
IN THE SUNNAH**

**Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi**

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# Preface

After the Glorious Qur'an comes the Sunnah to be the second fundamental source of *Shari`ah* (Islamic Law) to explain and interpret the Glorious Qur'an and to provide the practical aspect of the Divine Law:

﴿And We have sent down unto thee (the Prophet) the message, that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them and they may give thought.﴾

(16: 44)

﴿You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah an excellent (of conduct).﴾

(33: 21)

Islam, as a comprehensive way of life, came with a full system encompassing all aspects of human life with the aim of achieving welfare and good interest of man in this present life and in the Hereafter.

As a matter of fact, the Sunnah as a fundamental source of *Shari`ah* is concerned with achieving this very aim to make the life of human beings sound and healthy whether spiritually, morally or physically.

Actually, we hope that you have fully realized - from our previous book *Hygiene in the Sunnah* - how the Sunnah cares about hygiene in an all-embracing and wonderful manner.

Here in this book *Education and Economy in the Sunnah*, we proceed further trying to grasp the great concern and care of the Prophetic Traditions in these two serious areas.

Specialists in education and economics will surely be surprised, even astonished when they go on reading the Prophetic instructions and teachings concerning these important aspects of man's life.

Nevertheless, for a Muslim, there is no wonder for he repeatedly reads in the Glorious Qur'an the verse that goes:

*﴿Nor does he (the Prophet) speak out of caprice. It is nothing but a Revelation revealed (Qur'an). He (Muhammad) was taught by one mighty in power (the Angel Gabriel).﴾*

(53: 3-5)

We should know, however, that this book is a translated part of the precious Arabic book *Al-Sunnah: Masdarun Lil Ma`rifati Wal Hadarah* (The Sunnah: A Source of Knowledge and Civilization) by the great scholar, Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi. On our part, we thank and appreciate the great efforts made by Dr. Nansy Ewis in translating this precious book.

*Finally, all praise and thanks are due to Allah without  
Whose Help and Guidance nothing can be accomplished*

*General Director*

*Sheikh Muhammad `Abdu*

## Chapter One

### *The Sunnah and Education*



## *The Sunnah and Education*

I have studied the issue of knowledge, learning and teaching in the light of the Sunnah<sup>(1)</sup>, i.e., through the two main divisions of the *hadiths* of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him): The Sound *Hadith* (*Hadith Sahih*)<sup>(2)</sup> and the Good *Hadith* (*Hadith Hasan*).<sup>(3)</sup> This study came out in my book *The Prophet and Knowledge*, and I could see how the Prophet (Peace be upon him) - even though being illiterate - cared about knowledge and praised scholars. He even set basics for the morals that should control the behavior of scholars and guide them through (the process of teaching). This study also shows how the Sunnah was way ahead in establishing the best rules and the greatest educational values that many people - even among the Muslims - still believe they are an outcome of modern contemporary studies that no body came to know but the West.

You will find proof of what I am saying in the following titles:

1. Learning and related manners.
2. What is obligatory for each Muslim to learn.

- 
1. Sunnah refers to the sayings, deeds or consent of Prophet Muhammed (Peace be upon him).
  2. A Sound Hadith is one which has been handed down from Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) by truly pious persons who have been distinguished for their integrity.
  3. A Good Hadith is one whose narrators do not approach the same degree of the narrators of the *Sahih* in their memory and moral excellence.

3. Observing the right *Niyyah* (intention).
4. Continuous seeking of knowledge.
5. To be patient with the problems associated with seeking knowledge.
6. Treating the teacher with dignity and asking questions in a polite manner.
7. Caring of the Muslim Society about the scholars and stressing their esteem.
8. Solidarity of the society in teaching its members.
9. Welcoming the student and being cheerful with him.
10. Being merciful and sympathetic towards the student.
11. Rewarding the good students and praising them.
12. Feeling pity towards the mistaken ones.
13. Assuming a gradual attitude in teaching and making things easy rather than difficult.
14. Taking individual differences and variations into consideration.
15. Being moderate (in the amount being taught) and avoiding putting the student in a state of boredom.
16. Making good use of practical situations for the sake of education and guidance.
17. Making use of educational aids.
18. Choosing the best modes (like similitude, giving examples, telling stories).
19. Attracting the student's attention by asking questions and leading live conversation.

You shall find under each of these titles: Prophetic directions, educational instructions and awakening remarks portrayed in the sayings of the Prophet, deeds and consent of the Prophet that shed a light on the Prophet's attitude towards education.<sup>(1)</sup>

There are more specialized studies, that show the educational aspects of the Sunnah in a more detailed manner.<sup>(2)</sup>

Whoever delves deeper into the Sunnah, will find an incomparable source of information in that field.

### **Taking individual variations into consideration**

Here, I will just concentrate on shedding light on one authentic educational or teaching value or principle that the Sunnah offered. This principle is taking into consideration the variations between people; whether individual, environmental, or differences according to species.

What is right for one person is not necessarily right for another, and what is suitable for a certain environment is not necessarily suitable for the other. What is right for a certain group or sex is not necessarily right for another, also what could be right for a certain period of time or age is not always suitable for other times or ages.

A clever teacher, is one who gives every human being - whether individually or in groups - his share of knowledge which suits him most and which is right for him to take. This share is also given in a suitable amount and at the time which is most beneficial for the student.

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1. See our book *The Prophet and Knowledge*, p. 85-154, Mu'ssasat Ar-Risalah, Beirut and Dar AS-Sahwah, Cairo.

2. See *The Prophetic Attitude Towards Education*, Dar Al-Wafa', Egypt.

The chief and principal teacher of humanity - Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) - was the best to take these factors into consideration from both aspects theoretical and practical.

There are several proofs that these variations were actually and practically taken into consideration by the Prophet (Peace be upon him):

1. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) gave different advises to different individuals - who asked for them - depending on their character.
2. The Prophet gave different answers and *Fatwas* (judicial or legal opinion) to the same inquiry, depending on the condition of the questioner himself.
3. The behavior and attitude of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) was sometimes different according to the differences between the people he dealt with.
4. Commandments and obligations of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) were not always the same, taking into consideration the differences and abilities of the person he was commanding.
5. Sometimes he accepted certain attitude or behavior from certain individuals that he would not accept from others due to difference of circumstances.

### **1. Different prophetic advises to different individuals**

Many people asked the Prophet (Peace be upon him) to give them advice whether limited or unlimited - in terms of collective statements -, that would bring them closer to Paradise and keep them away from the Hell-fire. He gave them different answers:

To some he said:

« تعبد الله ولا تشرك به شيئاً ، وتقيم الصلاة ،  
وتؤتي الزكاة ، وتصل الرحم »

*"You should worship Allah, associating nothing with him, you should perform the Prayers, pay the Zakah regularly, and keep good relations with relatives".*

To others he said:

« اتق الله حيثما كنت ، وأتبع السيئة الحسنة تمحها ،  
وخالق الناس بخلق حسن »

*"Fear Allah wherever you are, and follow up a bad deed with a good one and it will wipe it out, and behave well towards people".*

To others he said:

« قل : آمنت بالله ثم استقم »

*"Say: I believe in Allah, and thereafter be upright".*

To others again he said:

« لا تغضب »

*"Do not get angry", and he added 10 more.*

And the Prophet (Peace be upon him) took into consideration the condition of the person seeking the advice, and gave each of them what he needed most. So, he dealt with the questioners the same way a doctor would deal with his patients, giving each the kind of medicine he needs most.

## 2. Giving different answers to the same question

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) was asked the same question by different people:

« أى العمل أفضل؟ » ، أو : « أى الاسلام أفضل؟ »

"Which deed is best?" or "Which act in Islam is the best?"

We find that he would give different answers to different individuals:

A. Imam al-Bukhari & Muslim reported on the authority of `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud (May Allah be pleased with him) who said:

سألت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ، أى الأعمال أحب إلى الله؟ فقال : الصلاة على وقتها . قلت ثم أى؟ قال : بر الوالدين . قلت : ثم أى؟ قال : الجهاد فى سبيل الله .

I asked the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him), "Which deed is the most beloved to Allah?" He said: "*The Prayer at its proper time.*" I said: "What next?" He said: "*Being good and kind to your parents (filial piety)*". I said: "What next?" He said: "*Struggling in Allah's Cause*".<sup>(1)</sup>

B. Imam al-Bukhari reported on the authority of a man from Khath`am (the name of an Arab tribe), who said:

أتيت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو فى نفر من أصحابه ، فقلت : أنت الذى تزعم أنك رسول الله؟ قال : « نعم » . قلت : يا رسول الله ! أى الأعمال أحب إلى الله؟ قال : « الإيمان بالله » . قلت : يا رسول الله !

1. Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim, also mentioned in *At-Tarhib Wa At-Tarhib*, hadith No. 3582.

ثم مه؟ (أى : ثم ماذا؟) قال : « ثم صلة الرحم » .  
 قال : قلت : يا رسول الله ! ثم مه؟ قال : « ثم الأمر  
 بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر »

I came to the Prophet (Peace be upon him), while he was sitting among a group of his Companions. I said: "You are the one who claims to be the Messenger of Allah?" He said: "Yes". I said: "O Messenger of Allah, which deed is the most beloved to Allah?" He said: "*Belief in Allah*". I said: "O Messenger of Allah! What next?" He said: "*Keeping good relations with your kinship*" I said: "O Messenger of Allah! What next?" He said: "*Then enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong*".

There is no explanation for giving different answers to the same question, except that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) took into consideration the state of the questioners, and the individual differences that have to be accounted for.

C. Also when the women asked him about *Jihad*, he said:

"لكن أفضل الجهاد : حج مبرور"

"But the best Jihad for you is a blessed Pilgrimage".<sup>(1)</sup>

D. Imam al-Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Musa who said:

قالوا يا رسول الله! أى الاسلام أفضل؟ قال: "من  
 سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده"

They said: "O Messenger of Allah! Which act in Islam is the best." He said: "A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands the other Muslims are safe."

1. Reported by al-Bukhari in the book of *Iman* [Faith].

Imam al-Bukhari also reported on the authority of `Abdullah ibn `Umar that a man asked the Prophet (Peace be upon him):

أى الإسلام خير؟ قال: «تطعم الطعام، وتقرأ السلام  
علي من عرفت ومن لم تعرف»

"Which act in Islam is the best?" He replied: "To feed people and to salute everyone whether he is familiar to you or not".

Here we notice that the second question is the same as the first; even though the words used are different (which act in Islam is the best? which Islam is the best?), but the answer is not the same. As we mentioned earlier, it depends on the state of the questioners or listeners. The purpose of the answer to the first question is giving a warning to the person - who might have the tendency to hurt by hand or tongue - from hurting others. In the second, the attention is directed to awakening the desire in a person, whose benefit to others by words or action is expected, so he is directed to acquire those two qualities (feeding people and saluting them). Those two qualities are specifically mentioned as they were strongly needed at that time, as they were (the Muslims) suffering from poverty and exertion, and also for the sake of bringing hearts of the Muslim into harmony.<sup>(1)</sup>

Moreover, what is more obvious; is giving different answers to the same question in the same case and at the same assembly or gathering.

Imam Ahmad reported in his *Musnad*<sup>(2)</sup> on the authority of `Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn al-`As who said:

كنا عند النبي ﷺ - فجاء شاب - فقال يا رسول  
الله! أقبّل وأنا صائم؟ فقال «لا» فجاء شيخ فقال يا

1. *Al-Fath*, vol. 1, p. 62.

2. This is a book in which he compiled the prophetic *hadiths* according to the names of the Prophet's Companions.

رسول الله! أقبل وأنا صائم؟ قال: «نعم» فنظر  
 بعضنا إلى بعض! فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه  
 وسلم: «قد علمت نظر بعضكم إلى بعض. إن  
 الشيخ يملك نفسه»

We were sitting with the Prophet (Peace be upon him) when a young man came and said: "O Messenger of Allah! Can I kiss (my wife) while I am fasting?" He said: "No". Then came an old man, who said "O Messenger of Allah! Can I kiss while I am fasting?" He said: "Yes". We looked at each other (out of surprise)! The Prophet (Peace be upon him) then said: "I know that you looked at each other (wondering), but an old man has better self-control."<sup>(1)</sup>

This *hadith* is considered one of the legal proofs for the rule set by the scholars: A *Fatwa* (legal opinion) could change according to the difference in state or condition.

### 3. Difference in attitude of the Prophet (Peace be upon him)

We also find that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) treats the Bedouins differently from his close Companions who were taught directly by Him. He would also forgive the Bedouins in matters that he would not forgive his Companions should they do the same thing. He would also encourage those who came into Islam after Fat-h Makkah (the Conquest of Mecca), and also the leaders of the tribes; by giving them more benefits to help strengthen their loyalty to Islam, while he would not do the same with al-Muhajirin (Migrants) and

1. *Hadith* No. 7054, vol, 12. Sheikh Ahmad Shakir said: "Its authority is sound", although Ibn Luhai`ah is mentioned among its transmitters, but he approved him depending on the *hadith* of Abu Dawud reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah on the same meaning.

al-Ansar<sup>(1)</sup> (Helpers). He also treated his Companions differently depending on their status and nature. For example, he would cover his thigh and arrange his clothes when `Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) sought permission, while he would not do the same thing when Abu Bakr or `Umar (May Allah be pleased with them) came in. He actually takes into consideration the extremely modest nature of `Uthman. He used to say:

« ألا أستحي من رجل تستحي منه الملائكة؟ »

*"Should I not show modesty to one whom even the angels show modesty?"*

`A'ishah (May Allah be pleased with her) noticed that and said:

يا رسول الله! مالي لم أرك فزعت لأبي بكر وعمر  
كما فزعت لعثمان؟ فقال: « إن عثمان رجل حيي ،  
وإنني خشيت إن أذنت له على تلك الحال : ألا يبلغ  
إلي في حاجته »

"O Messenger of Allah! Why I did not see you feeling any anxiety in the presence of Abu Bakr and `Umar as you did with `Uthman?" He said: *"Verily `Uthman is a very modest person and I was afraid that if I permitted him to enter in this very state he would not inform me of his need".*<sup>(2)</sup>

Also if one of the eminent people and those highly respected sought permission to see him, he would be very generous with them. On the other hand, if an insolent or evil person walks in, he would

1. The Companions of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) from the inhabitants of Medina who embraced and supported Islam.

2. Reported by Muslim, on the authority of Sa'id ibn al-`As that `A'ishah and `Uthman talked to him. *Hadith* No. 2402.

meet him with a cheerful face and welcoming words, but avoiding false flattery and praising. The reason for this kind of attitude is to create a kind of familiarity with the person, and also to avoid his evil

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) also told Mu`adh (one of his Companions) some good news; that whoever dies believing in *Tawhid* (Oneness of Allah) will go to Paradise. But he would not allow him to tell this good news to others fearing that they would trust in it alone.<sup>(1)</sup>

#### 4. Giving different obligations and commandments

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) used to give each person a kind of obligation, that would suit his ability and character and also that suits his condition.

In an event like the *Hijrah* (Migration) to Medina and hiding in the Cave of Hira', we find that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) asks a number of people to do various tasks, each taking the part that suits him most. Abu Bakr (May Allah be pleased with him) was asked to join the Prophet after saddling the camels (in order to set out on the journey). `Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) was asked to sleep in the Prophet's bed, in expectation of any danger coming across. Asma', the daughter of Abu Bakr (May Allah be pleased with them) was asked to do what suits her, like carrying food and news to the two Companions in the cave.

Likewise, `Abdullah ibn Abu Bakr, `Amir ibn Fuhayrah (May Allah be pleased with them) each had his role. We also find the Prophet (Peace be upon him) gives both of Khalid ibn al-Walid and `Amr ibn al-`As the leadership of some military expeditions (*Saraya*)<sup>(2)</sup>, while

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1. Sahih al-Bukhari, chapter of "Whoever Selected Some People to Teach Them Knowledge". See also *Al-Fath*, vol. I, p. 226.

2. A small army unit sent by the Prophet (Peace be upon him) for *Jihad* without his participation in it.

he asked Hassan ibn Thabit (a famous poet) to defend him (The Prophet) against the defamatory (or scoffing) poems of the Quraysh poets, and that was through using the weapon of poetry which is more intense than swords.

On the other hand he did not answer Abu Dharr when he asked the Prophet to make him a governor as he is known to be strict and hot tempered.

### **5. Accepting certain behavior from some people while rejecting it from others**

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) accepted that some Bedouins would not exceed fulfilling the prescribed duties, that even one of them said:

« والله لا أزيد على هذا ولا أنقص » فقال: « أفلح إن صدق »

"By Allah, I would neither make any addition to this, nor will I decrease anything out of it". The Prophet remarked: "*He is successful if he is true to what he affirms*".

In another *hadith* the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said to his Companions:

« من سره أن ينظر إلى رجل من أهل الجنة؛ فليُنظر إلى هذا »

*"Whoever would be pleased to see one of the people of Paradise, he should look at this man". (The man had no grudge in his heart).*

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) did not say this to anybody else, whether of al-Muhajirin or al-Ansar.

This is verily the attitude of a successful teacher towards his students and companions, to take into consideration their circumstances, general and specific abilities, and conditions of each group. Moreover, each individual should be given the kind of instruction that suits him most. He would not address the young ones the same way as the old, nor the young ladies as the young men. He would not teach the common people the same way as the people of distinction (or the elite), nor would he command the clever the same as the foolish, or the Bedouins as those of the urban areas. Rather, each learner gets what suits his ability and status.

It would show absolute incapability on behalf of the teacher to give all what he knows to everybody with no discrimination between those who understand well and those who don not, those who would benefit of what they learn and those who would be harmed by it.

In one of the *hadiths* of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) he said:

« كفى بالمرء كذباً أن يُحدِّث بكل ما سمع »

"It is sufficient for a man to prove himself to be a liar, that he narrates whatever he learns".<sup>(1)</sup>

Some of the scholars of the Companions of the Prophet (May Allah be pleased with them) warned of the same thing: `Ali says:

« حدثوا الناس بما يعرفون، أتحبون أن يكذب الله  
ورسوله؟! »

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1. Reported by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, *Sahih Aj-Jami` As-Saghir*, No. 4482.

"You should preach to the people according to their mental caliber so that they may not convey wrong things about Allah and His Prophet".<sup>(1)</sup>

Also, Ibn Mas`ud says:

« ما أنت بمحدث قوماً حديثاً لا تبلغه عقولهم : إلا  
كان لبعضهم فتنة »

"Should you preach people such words that they cannot grasp, it will become a danger (or affliction) to some of them".<sup>(2)</sup>

This actually is not considered as if you are concealing any knowledge, rather, it is preaching it to the one who appreciates it. As it is known: certain words are more suitable for certain occasions, and some men are more suitable than others for certain kind of knowledge. A well known wisdom says:

"Don't give wisdom except to those who deserve it or you will be doing injustice to it, and do not keep it from those who deserve it or you will be doing them injustice".

Imam al-Ghazali, in his book *Ihya' `Ulum Ad-Din* says: "Verily it is one of the duties of the teacher to teach his students up to the power of their understanding. The students should not be taught what is beyond their mental caliber, else they will dislike the process of learning, or they will get mixed up. So, in this matter we should follow the Prophet (Peace be upon him), and not teach them all the truth except if we are sure that they will fully understand it. Imam `Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) said: -pointing to his chest - "There

1. Reported by Al-Bukhari, in his *Sahih*, Kitab Al-`Ilm, Chapter of "Whoever Selected Some People to Teach Them Knowledge Preferring Them Over Others Lest They May Not Understand".

2. Reported by Muslim, *Al-Fath*, vol. 1, p. 225.

is much knowledge in it but then there should be some people to understand." So whatever the teacher knows should not all be communicated to the students at the same time. This is if the student understands what he gets, but only is not fit to make use of it, let alone if he does not even understand it! That is why they say: Teach each person according to his own mental caliber, and use his own measure of understanding, so you may be safe of his foolishness, and he would reasonably benefit of what you teach him, or else he will deny what you are teaching because of the difference of standard. Allah (Exalted and Almighty be He) said:

« ولا تؤولوا السفهاء أموالكم »

﴿ Do not give to fools your property ﴾

(4: 5)

This is a warning to safeguard knowledge from those who might be spoiled by it. To give a thing to one who is not fit for it and not to give a thing to one who is fit for it are equally oppressive."

Imam al-Ghazali also says, "It is also the duty of the teacher that he should teach his backward student only such things that are clear and suited to their limited understanding. He should not tell him that there are more sophisticated knowledge that he is keeping from him, as this would make him dissatisfied with the clear knowledge and makes him feel that his teacher is being reluctant in giving him this knowledge. It should be remembered that every man thinks that his intellect is perfect and that he is fit enough to receive the most sophisticated type of knowledge. In brief, you should not go through fine details of knowledge with common people, rather, it is quite sufficient to teach them the prescribed rituals, teach them to be honest in their professions, to fill their hearts with desire in Paradise and fear

from the Hell-fire, exactly as the Qur'an mentioned. He should not put them into doubts that might spoil their hearts and cause problems that might be difficult to solve. This would destroy him and make him miserable.<sup>(1)</sup>

## **Environmental education**

This is one of the most modern and most dangerous branches of education. By environmental education we mean knowledge of the surrounding environment and ways of preserving its various elements from whatever might cause its destruction, pollution or spoiling.

## **The Qur'an cares about the environment**

It is quite striking to the fair researchers how the Qur'an and Sunnah cared about the environment. For example, the Qur'an says:

﴿ أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ ﴾

﴿ *Do they not look at the camels how they are created* ﴾

(88: 17)

Here the Qur'an mentions camels rather than other animals. The reason behind that is to attract the attention to this remarkable animal and calling people to contemplate about its structure, properties and benefits, as it is the closest of the grazing live-stock to the Bedouins who are addressed directly by the Qur'an.

The Qur'an speaks repeatedly of grazing live-stock (camels, sheep, cattle) rather than other animals that might exist in other areas. The reason is that it wants to attract the attention of the addressed people to the animals present in the surrounding environment in order to make

1. *Ihia' `Ulum Ad-Din*, vol. I, p. 57. 57, Dar Al-Ma`rifah, Beirut.

use of them; be grateful to the Bounties of Allah, to eat its meat and drink its milk.

﴿ خَالِصًا سَائِغًا لِلشَّارِبِينَ ﴾

﴿ Pure milk palatable to the drinkers ﴾

(16: 66)

Also, to enjoy their sight when you are leading them in the morning and bringing them back in the evening.

﴿ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا جَمَالٌ حِينَ تُرِيحُونَ وَحِينَ تَسْرَحُونَ ﴾

﴿ And wherein is beauty for you, when you bring them home in the evening and as you lead them forth to pasture in the morning ﴾

(16: 6)

The same is mentioned in the Qur'an about the bees, their homes, various kinds, nutritive and medical values in a Surah called "The Bees".

Likewise, the Qur'an talks about the date-palm, grapes, crops of diverse flavor, the olive and the pomegranate similar and different. Here, the Qur'an stresses on two important aspects:

### 1. Enjoying its beauty:

﴿ انظُرُوا إِلَى ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَيَنْعِهِ ﴾

﴿ Look at their fruits thereof when they bear fruit and upon its ripening. ﴾

(6: 99)

2. Making use of its substance, but paying the due *Zakah* prescribed by Allah.

﴿ كُلُوا مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَآتُوا حَقَّهُ يَوْمَ حَصَادِهِ وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا ﴾

﴿Eat of their fruit when they bring fruit, but pay the due thereof (its Zakah according to Allah's Order) on the day of its harvest. But be not extravagant.﴾

(6: 141)

It was repeatedly mentioned in the Qur'an: Forbidding from spoiling the earth after Allah (Exalted and Almighty be He) has created it suitable and well prepared for the vicegerent. It announced that Allah does not like spoiling or those who spoil in life, this includes spoiling environment, polluting it or being aggressive with it. Also it is forbidden to abuse it in any way that would make it deviate from the purpose Allah created it for. This would be like showing ingratitude to Allah, that would cause vengeance from Allah, and becomes like a warning to those who perpetrated this, that severe penalty will almost come upon them as what happened before to the `Ad and the Thamud and those who came after them.

﴿الَّذِينَ طَغَوْا فِي الْبِلَادِ . فَأَكْثَرُوا فِيهَا الْفَسَادَ . فَصَبَّ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّكَ سَوْطَ عَذَابٍ . إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمِرْصَادِ﴾

﴿Who did transgress beyond bounds in the land (in the disobedience of Allah) and made therein much mischief. So your Lord poured on them different kinds of severe torment. Surely your Lord is Ever-Watchful﴾

(89: 11-14)

This is like the punishment that came upon the Saba' who did not appreciate the bounties that Allah gave them; the fertile land, the fresh pure water, the sweet-smelling gardens, and they showed reluctance, neglected the land and wasted their source of bounty. Allah (Exalted and Almighty be He) said:

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَأٍ فِي مَسْكِنِهِمْ آيَةٌ جَنَّتَانِ عَنْ يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالٍ كُلُوا  
 مِنْ رِزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لَهُ بَلْدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ وَرَبٌّ غَفُورٌ . فَأَعْرَضُوا  
 فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَيْلَ الْعَرِمِ وَبَدَّلْنَاهُمْ بِجَنَّتَيْهِمْ جَنَّتَيْنِ ذَوَاتِي  
 أُكُلٍ خَمْطٍ وَأَثَلٍ وَشَيْءٍ مِنْ سِدْرٍ قَلِيلٍ . ذَلِكَ جَزَيْنَاهُمْ بِمَا  
 كَفَرُوا وَهَلْ نُجَازِي إِلَّا الْكَفُورَ﴾

﴿Indeed there was for (the) Saba' a sign in their dwelling place. Two gardens on the right hand and on the left (and it was said to them): Eat of the Provision of your Lord and be grateful to Him, a fair land and an Oft-forgiving Lord. But they turned away from the obedience of Allah, so We sent against them Sayl-Al-`Arim (flood released from the dam) and we converted the two gardens into gardens producing bitter bad fruit and tamarisks and some few lote-trees. Like this We requited them because they were ungrateful disbelievers and never do We requite in such a way except those who are ungrateful disbelievers.﴾

(34: 15-17)

## The Sunnah cares about the environment

The Sunnah also cares about nature and its elements in a more detailed way. It is well known that the Qur'an states the fundamentals and general rules, while Sunnah is more explicit and gives more details through its detailed rules and different branches.

We shall see when we talk about the sanitary aspects, a lot that is related to the environment like prohibition from urination in still water, or relieving oneself where people walk or in their shade (where they take shelter and rest), or in the main sources of water, this would provoke the Curse of Allah, the Angels and righteous people

One of the marvelous issues that was mentioned in the Qur'an and was assured by the Sunnah, is training the Muslim, should he assume the state of *Ihram*<sup>(1)</sup> for the purpose of performing *Hajj* or *Umrah*, he should show respect towards the animals and plants of the environment. He should not kill wild game, nor cut down trees. Allah (Exalted and Almighty be He) said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ ﴾

﴿O You who believe! kill not game while you are in a state of *Ihram*.﴾

(5: 95)

Also all the sacred boundary of Mecca is (protectorate environment) no animal is touched except that which hurts, and no plant is touched except when necessary.

### **The Sunnah protects nature**

A professor of environmental science and means of protecting nature would find many *hadiths* that would support him in his field and help him succeed in his task, when he talks to people about these important aspects in the name of religion, supported by the *hadiths* of the Prophet (Peace be upon him). For example Abu Dawud reported in his book of Sunnah *Sunan* this *hadith*:

« من قطع سدره صوب الله رأسه في النار »

"Whoever cuts down a lute-tree, Allah (Exalted and Almighty be He) would direct his head to the Hell-fire."<sup>(2)</sup>

1. A state in which one is prohibited to practice certain deeds that are lawful at other times.
2. Abu Dawud, *Sunan*, Kitab Al-Adab, chapter of "Cutting a Lute-tree" No. 5239. Also reported by al-Bayhaqi in his *Sunan* and mentioned in *Sahih Aj-Jami' As-Saghir*.

What is meant by a "lute-tree" is the well known tree which is a plant that grows in the desert, tolerates thirst, resists heat, people rest in its shade, eat its fruit when they travel across the desert, looking for pastures and grass or for other purposes.

This threat to be thrown in the Hell-fire for whoever cuts down a lute-tree, indicates the assurance to protect the basic elements of nature as they provide a balance between creatures, and any violation towards any of its elements would cause the loss of some important elements necessary for the life of man and animals as well.

Thus, the Sunnah, was way ahead all the contemporary groups and parties all over the world that call for preservation of green areas in the deserts and elsewhere, and they condemn those who kill the trees, and the slaughtering of the green land due to the ignorance of man and his greediness.

﴿إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا﴾

﴿He was unjust (to himself) and ignorant (of its results)﴾

(33:72)

I came across some traditionalists (Scholars of prophetic *Hadith*) who overlook the immediate meaning of the *hadith*, which is understood from the general expression "whoever cuts a lute-tree". Some interpreted the meaning of the *hadith* as: the kind of tree meant here is the lute-tree on the sacred boundary of Mecca (and not any other lute-tree), as if they found the threat of the Hell-fire to be too much for cutting down a lute-tree, so they adopted this interpretation that has no proof. The basic rule in understanding the prophetic *hadith* is to adopt the obvious and direct or general meaning, unless there is a proof otherwise.

Luckily, Abu Dawud who reported the *hadith* disagreed with this interpretation and went the right way when he was asked about it, he said: "This *hadith* is brief, what is meant is: whoever cuts down a lute-tree in the desert, that animals and wayfarers use as shelter, and he does that reluctantly and unjustly, and without having any right whatsoever in doing so, Allah will direct his head to the Hell-fire".

### **The Sunnah cares about afforestation and green areas**

The caring of the Sunnah about afforestation and green areas is incomparable. The *hadiths* of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) rank implanting a tree very highly and makes it one of the most righteous deeds, that gets a person closer to Allah (Exalted and Almighty be He). It is considered a continuous source of charity for the person, as long as man, birds or animals are benefiting from it.

Imam Muslim reported on the authority of Jabir (May Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

« ما من مسلم يغرس غرساً ، إلا كان ما أكل منه له  
 صدقة ، وما سرق منه له صدقة ولا يرزؤه أحد إلا  
 كان له صدقة إلى يوم القيامة »

*"Never a Muslim plants a tree but he has the reward of charity for him; for what is eaten out of that is charity, what is stolen out of that is charity, none incurs a loss to him but it becomes a charity on his part until the Day of Resurrection".*

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Abu ad-Darda' that a man passed by him while he was planting a tree in Damascus, he said to him:

« أتفعل هذا ، وأنت صاحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ؟ ! قال : لا تعجل عليّ ، سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول : « من غرس غرساً ، لم يأكل منه آدمي ولا خلق من خلق الله ، إلا كان له به صدقة »

"You! the Companion of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) are doing that yourself?" Abu ad-Darda' said to him: "Do not be haste against me, I heard the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) say: *Never a Muslim plants a tree, wherever a human being or any other creature eats out of it, it is a charity for him.*"<sup>(1)</sup>

It seems that this man who objected to what the Companion of the Prophet was doing, sees that planting a tree signifies caring for worldly life and showing a desire for its pleasures, while the Companion of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) should be an ascetic person. So, how would Abu ad-Darda' do that being one of the students of the great Prophet (Peace be upon him) who knows the insignificance of this life and the necessity to renounce its pleasures?

The Companion of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) clarified to him that he was taught in the prophetic school the importance of planting and sowing and converting this uncultivated land into a green garden. Also that one is rewarded by Allah (Exalted and Almighty be He) for that, and any work that is done for cultivation of earth is a form of worship to Allah.

1. Mentioned by Al-Hafizh Al-Mundhiri in *At-Tarhib Wa At-Tarhib* and said it is a good Sound *hadith*, meaning that the other *hadiths* mentioned in the same chapter support it. See also *hadith* No. 1578, from our book *The Selected of At-Tarhib Wa At-Tarhib*.

## The Sunnah cares about animal wealth

The Sunnah also cared about animal wealth. Imam Ahmad, an-Nasa'i, ad-Darimi and al-Hakim, all of them reported a *hadith* narrated by `Abdullah ibn `Amr (May Allah be pleased with them), who said that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

« ما من إنسان يقتل عصفوراً فما فوقها بغير حقها ،  
إلا يسأله الله عز وجل عنها » قيل : يا رسول الله!  
وما حقها؟ قال : « أن يذبحها فيأكلها ، ولا يقطع  
رأسها ويرمي بها »

*"Never a human being kills a sparrow or any bird bigger in size, without fulfilling its right, he would be asked by Allah about it." They said: "O Messenger of Allah! what is its right?" He said: "He should slaughter it then eat it, and should not cut its head and throw it away."*

In addition, Imam Ahmad, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Hibban reported on the authority of ash-Sharid (May Allah be pleased with him) who said: "I heard the Prophet (Peace be upon him) say:

« من قتل عصفوراً عبثاً : عَجَّ إلى الله يوم القيامة،  
يقول يا رب! إن فلانا قتلني عبثاً، ولم يقتلني  
منفعة »

*"Whoever kills a sparrow in vain, it would come yelling complaining to Allah on the Day of Judgment, and saying: O Allah, this person killed me in vain and for no use or benefit that he wished for."<sup>(1)</sup>*

1. See also our commentary on the *hadith* No. 857 from the previous reference.

### **What do we get out of those two *hadiths*?**

A jurist would deduce that it is prohibited to kill an animal except to eat it, that is why al-Mundhiri in his book *At-Targhib Wa AT-Tarhib* [Invitation and Intimidation] classified the two *hadiths* under "Intimidation of Cruelty to Animals and Killing Them Except for Food."

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals would learn from the two prophetic *hadiths* that we should show respect to these living creatures and preserve their lives and not to touch them except for a real and just need.

Environmentalists would learn from them the necessity to preserve the elements of nature and stop fooling around and causing its extinction for no urgent need or necessity.

An economist would see that the *hadith* clearly draws the attention to the importance of preserving the wealth resources (all kinds of resources) and not wasting them by fooling around, i.e., for no economic benefit. An animal which is suitable for human consumption, if killed and not eaten, this means that a part of the national wealth is lost - no matter how little it is - and for no just public welfare.

An ethicist would learn from the *hadith*, the comprehensiveness of the Islamic morals, the great area of responsibility it comprises, as it is not confined to man, rather it spreads to contain each living being; whether animal, bird and also some *hadiths* mention preserving materials.

Likewise, the educationalist. The Islamic education goes far beyond religious education, that is confined - in many minds - to teaching articles of faith, and worship. Rather, it is an education that encompasses all human activities: spiritual and materialistic, religious and secular, individual and social, theoretical and practical.

## Islam preserves living races from extinction

One day I spoke to a specialist in environmental studies and I mentioned to him how Islam cares about environment and its improvement and preservation, and I gave him examples that prove that. He was astonished and admired what I told him. He asked me: "Can we find in legal sources what reassures the idea of preserving some kinds of animals or birds or else from extinction?"

I said to him that we find this clearly emphasized in the *hadiths* of the Prophet (Peace be upon him), that even one *hadith* says clearly:

«لولا أن الكلاب أمة من الأمم لأمرت بقتلها ، فاقتلوا  
منها الأسود البهيم»

*"If dogs were not one of the nations that exist, I would have ordered you to kill them, but only kill the jet-black dog."*<sup>(1)</sup>

This *hadith* indicates a very important universal fact that the Qur'an emphasized, that all other non-intellect living creatures have their own private social structure, that distinguishes them from the others and forms a kind of link between them. The Qur'an expressed it as follows:

﴿وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَّمٌ  
أَمْثَالِكُمْ مَا قَرَّبْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ﴾

1. Reported by Abu Dawud (No. 2845), at-Tirmidhi (No. 1489), An-Nasai` (No. 4285), Ibn Majah (No. 3204), all of them mentioned it in the book of (Hunting). Imam At-Tirmidhi said: It is a Good *hadith*. Al-Albani also mentioned it in *Sahih Aj-Jami` As-Saghir* and reported by At-Tabarani in *Al-Awsat* on the authority of `A'ishah. It is Also reported by at-Tabarani in *Al-Kabir* and *Al-Awsat* and by Abu Ya`la on the authority of Ibn `Abbas. `Al-Haythami said: It is a Good *hadith*, *Al-Majma`*, vol. 4, p. 43.

﴿There is no a moving (living) creature on earth nor a bird that flies with its two wings, but are communities like you. We have neglected nothing in the Book.﴾

(6: 38)

This similarity mentioned in the Qur'an does not necessarily mean similarity in everything, rather what is meant here is similarity in one aspect, which is forming a nation (like humans). Each nation has its own structure and respect. It is the Wisdom of Allah in creating these creatures and giving them what make them rather peculiar from other races and nations.

The nation of the ants is not like that of bees or of spiders. The nation of dogs is not like cats or jackals. As long as it is a nation, it should not be exterminated as that contradicts the Wisdom of Allah (Exalted and Almighty be He) in creating it.

That is why we find this *hadith* about dogs even though some people could be harmed by them or at least by some kinds of dogs, so some might think of setting a campaign to exterminate the dogs to get rid of them, so none would remain. This *hadith* came to deny this thought, and oppose this kind of thinking giving a reason that is much higher than the logic predominating at the time when this *hadith* was said. But, we have to remember that the person who said this *hadith* the Prophet (Peace be upon him) does not speak of his own desire:

﴿إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَى﴾

﴿It is only an inspiration that is inspired.﴾

(53: 4)

Imam Abu Sulayman al-Khattabi says as an explanation of this *hadith* in his book *Ma`alim as-Sunan*: "It means he did not like exterminating any nation, or execute a generation of creatures until it

is all destroyed and none of it remains, because every creature that Allah created has a wisdom for its existence and even an aspect of welfare. He says the Prophet (Peace be upon him), if it is so, that you can not kill all of them, then kill the evil ones which are the jet-black dogs, and keep the others to use for guarding. It is said that some jet blacks are evil."<sup>(1)</sup>

I mentioned this briefly to the professor of environmental science, who said: "It is unbelievable that we have such precious treasures and we do not know much about."

I said to him: "We have lots and lots of these treasures, but hidden treasures usually need someone to inspect for them - where they are expected to be found - put away the dust and stones covering them, as the Archaeologists do when they dig into the depth of the earth to find these treasures hidden under the ground or among the dust and stones. He, who works hard gets what he desires, and there is always a reward for each hard worker."

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1. See *Ma`alim As-Sunan* by al-Khattabi, *Mukhtasar As-Sunan* by al-Mundhiri and *Tahdhib As-Sunan* by Ibn al-Qayyim, edited by Ahmad Shakir and Muhammad al-Fiqi, vol. 4, p. 132, 133, al-Maktabah al-Athariyyah, Pakistan, copied from the version of *as-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah*, Cairo. The jurists have different opinions concerning the killing of dogs, the preferred one states that, it is not permitted to kill dogs except what causes harm or damage. The texts give permission to keep them for purposes of hunting, guarding animals and plants. This rule is applied for other lawful interests such as guarding houses and the like as Ibn `Abd al-Barr said, see the above-meationed *Mukhtasar as-Sunan*.

## Chapter Two

### *Economy in the Light of the Sunnah*



## *Economy in the Light of the Sunnah*

Economists who study the Sunnah, come across a great deal of values and recommendations, as well as several commandments and laws. These relate to various areas, such as production, consumption, distribution, or market transactions. It is not possible to discuss all of these, here, in detail. This would require several higher studies in which specialized theses led to Masters and Ph. D. degrees (in each of these fields).

Some of our Muslim brothers have written a glossary of economic terms mentioned in the famous books of Sunnah; such as the book of Muhyi ad-Din `Atiyyah which is called *The Glossary of Economics*. I have also seen a draft for a more detailed project about the economic texts in the Qur'an and Sunnah, done by the famous scholar Dr. Mundhir Qahf. It is a great piece of work, but needs some revision before it is published. I have actually written a report about it, years ago, for the Center of Islamic Economic Studies at the University of King `Abd al-`Aziz in Jeddah.

### **General principles**

Sometimes you would find economic principles within Prophetic *hadiths* concerning creed, such as the *hadith* reported by al-Bukhari

and Muslim on the authority of Ibn `Umar in the book of *Iman* (Faith). The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

« أمرت أن أقاتل الناس حتى يشهدوا أن لا إله إلا الله ، وأن محمداً رسول الله ، ويقيموا الصلاة ، ويؤتوا الزكاة ، فإذا فعلوا ذلك عصموا مني دماءهم وأموالهم ، إلا بحق الإسلام ، وحسابهم على الله »

*"I have been commanded to fight people till they declare (testify) that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and they establish Prayer, and pay Zakah (Alms). And if they do so, their lives and property are guaranteed protection on my behalf - unless they do acts that are punishable in accordance with Islam - and their reckoning will be with Allah."*<sup>(1)</sup>

You may also find these economic rules within Traditions concerning worship. The most prominent area, however is in those Traditions concerning *Zakah* (the third pillar of Islam), and the sister of Prayer in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Prayer is the main pillar of Islam and *Zakah* is its bridge. When you talk about *Zakah*, one immediately thinks of *Zakah* of Property (*Zakat-ul-Mal*) in its different forms. But there are other forms of *Zakah* which were detailed by the Sunnah, such as the *Zakah* upon cattle and sheep, and the *Zakah* to end Fasting (*Zakat-ul-Fitr*).

You also find economic advises in Traditions of purification, such as the Tradition reported on the authority of Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) saw Sa`d performing ablution and said to him:

1. Agreed upon, *Al-Lu`lu` Wa Al-Marjan*, No. 15.

« ما هذا السرف؟ » قال : أو فى الماء إسراف يا رسول الله؟ قال : « نعم وإن كنت على نهر جار »

"What is all this extravagance?" Sa`d said: "Is there extravagance in using water?" The Prophet (Peace be upon him) replied: "Yes, even if you are taking water from a running river."<sup>(1)</sup>

Moreover the supplication that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) used to say while performing ablution:

« اللهم ! اغفر لى ذنبى ، ووسع لى فى دارى ، وبارك لى فى رزقى » فسئل : ما أكثر ما تدعو بهذه الدعوات ! يا رسول الله ؟ قال : « وهل تركن من شيء؟ »

"O Allah, forgive my sins, make my house spacious and bless me in my sustenance." A man asked him: "Why do you supplicate so often in these words? He replied: "Is anything left out?"<sup>(2)</sup>

You also find relevant economic indications in invocations and supplications to Allah, such as:

« اللهم ! إنى أعوذ بك من الجوع فإنه بئس الضجيع »

"O Allah! I seek refuge in Thee from hunger which is the worst companion".<sup>(3)</sup>

« اللهم أنى أعوذ بك من شرفتنه الغنى ، اللهم ! إنى أعوذ بك من شرفتنه الفقر »

1. Narrated by Ibn Majah in the Book of Purification on the authority of `Abdullah ibn `Umar, No. 425.
2. Reported by At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, also by Ahmad and at-Tabarani, in *Al-Awsat*, also by Abu Ya`la and Ibn as-Sini on the authority of Abu Musa in the *Sahih of Aj-Jami` As-Saghir*, No. 1265.
3. Reported by Abu Dawud, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, the previous reference, No. 1283.

"O Allah! I seek refuge in Thee from the trial of affluence. O Allah! I seek refuge in Thee from the trial of poverty"<sup>(1)</sup>

« اللهم إني أعوذ بك من فتنة المحيا والممات، وأعوذ بك من المأثم والمغرم ( والمغرم: الدين ) » فسئل : ما أكثر ما تستعيذ من المغرم! يا رسول الله! قال: « إن الرجل إذا غرم حدث فكذب ، ووعد فأخلف »

"O Allah! I seek refuge in Thee from the trials of life and death. O Allah! I seek refuge in Thee from sin and from debt". He was then asked: "O Prophet of Allah! Why do you seek refuge so often from debt?" He said: "When a man incurs debt, he tells lies (when he talks), and gives promises, which he does not fulfill".<sup>(2)</sup>

« اللهم أنى أسألك القصد فى الفقر والغنى »

"O Allah! I beseech Thee equanimity in affluence and poverty"<sup>(3)</sup>

« اللهم! إني أسألك الهدى والتقى، والعفاف والغنى »

"O Allah! I beseech Thee for guidance, piety, chastity and contentment"<sup>(4)</sup>

You could even find instructions, relating to the field of economics, in the Traditions of Funerals, as in the *hadith* reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) used to restrain from offering Prayer (Funeral Prayer) to God, for those who died while being in debt and did not leave enough money to settle it.

1. Reported by al-Bukhari and by Muslim in the Book of Remembrance and Supplication. *Al-Lu'lu' Wa Al-Marjan*, No. 345.

2. Agreed upon on the authority of `A'ishah, *Al-Lu'lu' Wa Al-Marjan*, No. 345.

3. Reported by an-Nasa'i and al-Hakim on the authority of `Ammar ibn Yasir, *Sahih Aj-Jami' As-Saghir*, No. 1301.

4. Reported by Muslim, at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud, *Sahih Aj-Jami' As-Saghir*, No. 1275.

We also find economic principles within the *hadiths* of morals and behavior, as in the Traditions concerning the prohibition of *Khamr* (Alcoholic drinks and drugs), cursing those who consume it, and those who participate in its production whether directly or indirectly. There are nine categories of people (related to *Khamr*) that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) cursed.<sup>(1)</sup> Likewise, cursing the one who accepts interest, the one who pays it, the one who records it and the two witnesses to it.<sup>(2)</sup> Furthermore, the Prophet (Peace be upon him) distanced the believers from those who cheat in transactions:

« من غش فليس منا »

"He who deceives is not of us"<sup>(3)</sup>

And declaring as being sinful, he who keeps goods: The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

« لا يحتكر إلا خاطيء »

"None keeps goods till the price rises but a sinner"<sup>(4)</sup>

The Prophet also distanced believers from those selfish ones who only live for themselves, and care not about neighbors or relatives: The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

« ليس المؤمن بالذى يشبع وجاره إلى جنبه جائع »

1. Reported by Abu Dawud and al-Hakim on the authority of Ibn `Umar: "Truly, Allah has cursed *Khamr* and has cursed the one who consumes it, the one who serves it, the one who sells it, the one who buys it, the one who produces it, the one for whom it is produced, the one who carries it and the one for whom it is carried and the one who earns from the sale of it.", *Sahih Aj-Jami`* No. 5091.
2. Reported by Ahmad and Muslim on the authority of Jabir, *Sahih Aj-Jami` As-Saghir*, No. 5090.
3. Reported by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, *Mukhtasar Muslim* by Al-Mundhiri, No. 1235.
4. Reported by Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Dawud, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah on the authority of Ma`mar ibn `Abdullah, *Sahih Aj-Jami` As-Saghir*, No. 325.

*"He is not one of the believers, who eats his fill, while his neighbor, next to him, goes hungry".<sup>(1)</sup>*

There are also several Traditions concerning "Holy Wars" (*Jihad*), that have some economic principles; such as the prohibition of stealing from the booty, spoliation in the booty before its division, and defalcation of public funds. A relevant Tradition says:

« يغفر للشهيد كل ذنب إلا الدين »

*" All the sins of a martyr are forgiven except debts".<sup>(2)</sup>*

### **Urging production, its improvement and preserving its sources**

An economist would find in the Sunnah numerous Traditions, that urge and encourage production in its various fields: Of that is planting and cultivation:

« ما من مسلم يغرس غرساً أو يزرع زرعاً ، فيأكل منه طير أو إنسان أو بهيمة : إلا كان له به صدقة »

*"When A Muslim plants a plant or cultivates a crop, no bird, human being or animal eats from it without its being accepted as a (rewardable) charity for him".<sup>(3)</sup>*

It also encourages skills and crafts, the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

« ما أكل أحد طعاماً قط خيراً من أن يأكل من عمل يده ، وإن نبي الله داود كان يأكل من عمل يده »

1. Reported by al-Bukhari, al-Hakim, al-Bayhaqi and At-Tabarani.

2. Reported by Muslim on the authority of Ibn `Umar, *Mukhtasar Muslim* by al-Mundhiri, No. 1084.

3. Agreed upon from *hadith* of Anas, *Al-Lu'lu' Wa Al-Marjan*, No. 1001.

"No one earns his food better than the one who worked with his hands and the Prophet of Allah Dawud (David) earned his food by working with his hands".<sup>(1)</sup>

« لأن يأخذ أحدكم أحبله ، فيأتي بحزمة من الحطب  
على ظهره فيبيعها ، فيكف الله بها وجهه : خير من  
أن يسأل الناس أعطوه ، أو منعه »

"It is better for a person to take a rope and bring a bundle of fire wood on his back to sell, so that Allah (the Exalted) preserves his dignity, than to beg from people who may give him or who may abstain from assisting him".<sup>(2)</sup>

Moreover, we find other Traditions that urge improvement of Production and perfecting it. Of these Traditions, those reported by Muslim and al-Bayhaqi

« إن الله كتب الإحسان على كل شيء »

"Verily Allah has decreed that everything should be done in a good way".<sup>(3)</sup>

« إن الله يحب من أحدكم إذا عمل عملاً ، أن يتقنه »

"Verily, Allah loves, should any of you performs an act, that he should do it in a perfect way."<sup>(4)</sup>

1. Reported by al-Bukhari on the authority of al-Miqdam ibn Ma`d Yakrib. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) was asked: "Which way of earning a living is best? He said: "A man earning his living with his hands, and every business transaction which is approved (Blessed) ". Reported by at-Tabarani in *Al-Kabir* and *Al-Awsat* and all its trasmitters are trustees, as al-Mundhiri said, *Al-Muntaqa*, No. 943.
2. Reported by al-Bukhari on the authority of az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwam.
3. Reported by Muslim on the authority of Shaddad ibn Aws.
4. Reported by al-Bayhaqi in his book *Branches of Iman*, on the authority of `A'ishah, *Sahih Aj-Jami` As-Saghir*, No. 1880.

Therefore, it is not just important to produce anything, but it should be produced in good quality in order to withstand the market competition. Also, it is not necessary to produce any goods that could be sold, even if they were harmful to people, whether that be in their religion or in their worldly life. That is why the Muslim Community should not produce intoxicants or drugs, or any substance that causes pollution to the environment. Also it is not allowed that they produce any harmful substances to the human life or health.

The Sunnah is very strict with regards to making use of every substance, that could be beneficial, even if it seems to be of insignificant value to ordinary people. That is why the Prophet (Peace be upon him) disapproved of what his Companions did, when they left a dead sheep without making use of its skin. He said to them:

« هلا أخذتم إهابها فانتفعتم به؟ » قالوا: إنها ميتة.  
قال: « إنما حرم أكلها »

"Why did you not take its skin to be tanned and use it?" They said:  
"But it is dead". He said: "What is prohibited is eating it".<sup>(1)</sup>

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) prohibited slaughtering a milch sheep (all dairy cattle) as was reported in several Traditions. This action would result in wasting its milk for no good reason, as other sheep could be slaughtered instead. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

« إياك والحلوب »

"Beware of killing a milch animal"<sup>(2)</sup>

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1. Agreed upon by al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn `Abbas, *Al-Lu'lu' Wa Al-Marjan*, No. 205.
  2. Reported by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, *Mukhtasar Muslim*, No. 1306.

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) also commands preserving animal wealth. Animals should not be exposed to means of infection or catching disease from one another through mixing around the watering place. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

« لا يوردن ممرض على مُصِحَّ »

*"The ill should not go to those who are healthy".<sup>(1)</sup>*

The ill: refers to the owner of the sick camels. The healthy: that person whose camels are healthy.

If the sick camels mix with the healthy ones, the healthy ones may get infected. This would eventually result in destroying animal wealth, or at least, in causing an insufficiency of production.

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) also denied that the fertile soil should remain without being cultivated. Either its owner should cultivate it himself, or lend it to his Muslim brother to cultivate if he does not have the energy or ability to cultivate it. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

« من كانت له أرض فليزرعها أو ليمنحها أخاه »

*"If anyone has a land, he should cultivate it or lend it to his brother".<sup>(2)</sup>*

## **Rationalization of consumption**

An economist would also find a great number of Traditions with regard to rationalization of consumption, such as:

1. Agreed upon on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, *Al-Lu'lu' Wa Al-Marjan*, No. 1436.
2. Agreed upon on the authority of Jabir and Abu Hurayrah, *Al-Lu'lu' Wa Al-Marjan*, No. 993, 994.

« كلوا وأشربوا وتصدقوا والبسوا في غير سرف ولا مخيلة »

"Eat, drink, pay charity (Sadaqah), and wear clothes so long as neither extravagance nor pride is mixed up with it".<sup>(1)</sup>

« إن الذي يأكل أو يشرب في آنية الذهب أو الفضة، إنما يجرجر في بطنه نار جهنم »

"Whoever eats or drinks in gold or silver utensils is indeed filling his stomach with the fire of Hell".<sup>(2)</sup>

« إذا آتاك الله مالاً ، فليُرَ أثر نعمته عليك وكرامته »

"Since Allah has given you wealth, let Him see the effects (signs) of His Favors and Bounties upon you".<sup>(3)</sup>

« اللهم ! إني أسألك القصد في الفقر والغنى »

"O Allah! I beseech Thee equanimity in affluence and poverty".<sup>(4)</sup>

One of the most impressive Traditions of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) with regard to rationalization of consumption is:

« إذا سقطت لقمة أحدكم ، فليمط عنها الأذى وليأكلها ، ولا يدعها للشيطان وليسأل أحدكم الصحفة ، فإنكم لا تدرون في أي طعامكم البركة »

1. Reported by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, al-Hakim on the authority of Ibn `Amr, and classified as Good, *Sahih Aj-Jami` As-Saghir*, No. 4505.

2. Reported by Muslim on the authority of Umm Salamah, *Sahih Aj-Jami` As-Saghir*, No. 1692.

3. Reported by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, an-Nasa'i and al-Hakim on the authority of the father of Abu al-Ahwas, *Sahih Aj-Jami` As-Saghir*.

4. Reported by al-Nasa'i and al-Hakim on the authority of `Ammar ibn Yasir, *Sahih Aj-Jami` As-Saghir*, No. 1301.

*"If anyone of you drops a mouthful, he should remove anything filthy on it and eat it, and not leave it for the Devil, and when he finishes food, he should lick his fingers (and the tin-plate), for he does not know in what portion of his food the blessing lies".<sup>(1)</sup>*

Lick the tin-plate: means he should follow any traces of food in the utensil and lick it with his fingers, to finish what is left. This means that whatever is left out of food should not be wasted and thrown in the garbage, while some people might be in need of that thrown amount of food or even less than that.

Also, one should not underestimate any of the Bounties of Allah no matter how little they are. Even if it is a mouthful that drops from a person, he should pick it up, remove anything filthy on it and eat it. He should not let it be wasted without making use of it. This wasting of things is what the Tradition meant by saying: "and do not leave it for the Devil". Anything that we do not benefit from, would go to the Devil.

You might say, what is the value of a mouthful that drops from a person? or what is the value of what is left in a plate? If you consider the whole nation East and West, with each person eating three meals: in the end this would be estimated as tens of millions of mouthfuls.

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) also talked about the bedding one needs at home, and he directed Muslims, to economize in that aspect, and restrict oneself to the immediate necessities only: He said:

« فراش للرجل ، وفراش لامرأته ، وفراش للضيف ،  
والرابع للشيطان »

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1. Reported by Muslim and others on the authority of Anas.

*"There should be a bedding for a man, a bedding for his wife, the third one for the guest and anymore than that would be (as an extravagance) for the Satan".<sup>(1)</sup>*

### **In the field of distribution**

The economist would find in the field of Distribution, several Sound and Good Traditions reported in the various collective books of Sunnah. There are several Traditions on the obligatory Alms (*Zakah*), other obligations and rights of other people apart from *Zakah*, recommended (voluntary) charity, praised preference (of others to oneself), wills and inheritance.

There are other well known Traditions that enforce solidarity and sharing feelings of mercy for each other, specially in case of helping the needy, aiding the ones in trouble, relieving those in distress, postponing the debt to the time of ease for those who are in straitened circumstances.

Other Traditions command justice, forbid injustice, enjoin seeking Halal (lawful) earning, and warn strongly against unlawful earning, particularly interest, gambling or hoarding (of goods), and likewise.

### **Market transactions**

Here again an economist would find himself with a great deal of Traditions concerning: Trade and business transactions, payment in advance and pure sale (*Sarf* sale; this term is used for a special kind of sale, that means a pure sale, of which the articles opposed to each other in exchange are both representatives of price as gold for gold or silver for silver), usury (interest) and loan, partnership and stock

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1. Reported by Muslim on the authority of Jabir, *Mukhtasar Al-Mundhiri*, No. 1353.

exchange, share-cropping, agency and surety, pledge and seizure, leasing and gifts, and different sorts of commercial exchange and business relations.

In our book "The Role of Morals and Values in Muslim Economy", a researcher would find a great deal of Traditions in different areas of economy, but it is by no means inclusive of all what was reported in the Sunnah.





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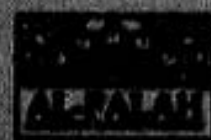


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