

**Dear Mumins!**

Islam, the last one of the divine religions, has taken into consideration material needs of the human along with spiritual needs and accordingly has given some orders and advice. Even in the 7th century, it laid down many principles that would help people live a prosperous life by getting rid of poverty and misery. And it also

already established a comprehensive "labor and commercial law" in the 8th and 9th centuries. In contrast with this, "even in the 10th and 11th centuries, The Church in Europe did not have any activity to encourage people to be saved from the misery they were in. Instead, it tried to maintain the existing situation. According to The Church, the aim of working was not to become rich but only for preserving the status at the time when people were born until they would die. Pursuing richness used to be regarded as "drowning in marsh of greed." Destitution was divine in origin and had been predestined by God. Wealthy ones were supposed to get rid of their riches through benevolence. Extra yields and crops should have been warehoused (should not have been sold) and should have been handed out free. Lending, whether through interest or murabaha, was something to be hated.<sup>1</sup>

**My Dear Brothers and Sisters!**

Islam declares that the normal situation of people on the earth is not destitution and scarcity but affluence with the boons of the Lord, the most Generous.<sup>2</sup> Everything on the earth has been created for humans, for their benefit.<sup>3</sup> Beyond this doctrine, Islam also has insistently encouraged people to work and to

engage with trade, which is a significant key of prosperity. As it is well known, our beloved Prophet (s.a.w.) Himself was a tradesman and He expressed that "nine-tenths of the sustenance (rizq) is derived from trade."<sup>4</sup> Besides, the following hadiths concerned with work have been narrated from Him: "No one has ever any food which is better than which he had earned through working with his hands. And verily Allah's Nabi Dawud (a.s.) used to eat that which he earned with his hands."<sup>5</sup> "It is better for any one of you to carry a bundle of wood on his back and sell it than to beg of someone whether he gives him or refuses."<sup>6</sup> And the hadith al-qudsi – "I am the third with two partners as long as one of them does not cheat the other"<sup>7</sup> – that Abu Hurairah (r.a)



narrated also urges to incorporate in business.

On the other side, our scholars have systematized "zakat," which is one of the most crucial worships in our religion, with the purpose of reducing the misery to the utmost and providing social solidarity in the community. Furthermore, they have developed the institution of waqf. In this context, let us remember what Abu Hanifah (r.a.) said: "I like much better that the zakat is given to one fellow and that one becomes rich." He meant that it is better to help one person to prosper and escape from misery instead of distributing the wealth among many people in insignificant portions. How meaningful an approach this is.

Let us learn our religion that regulates both our worldly and otherworldly life and guides us to the path of happiness, and apply it in our life in a best way. Let us not forget that no one who follows the teaching of Islam would be unhappy either in this world or in the hereafter.

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Henri Pirenne, Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to: An-Nûr, 32; At-Taubah, 28; Al-Isrâ, 31, Al-Fajr, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to: Al-Baqarah, 29.

<sup>4</sup> Faizu'l-Qadîr, III, 244-245.

<sup>5</sup> Bukhârî, Buyû', 15.

<sup>6</sup> Muslim, Zakat, 107.

<sup>7</sup> Abu Dawud, Buyû', 27.