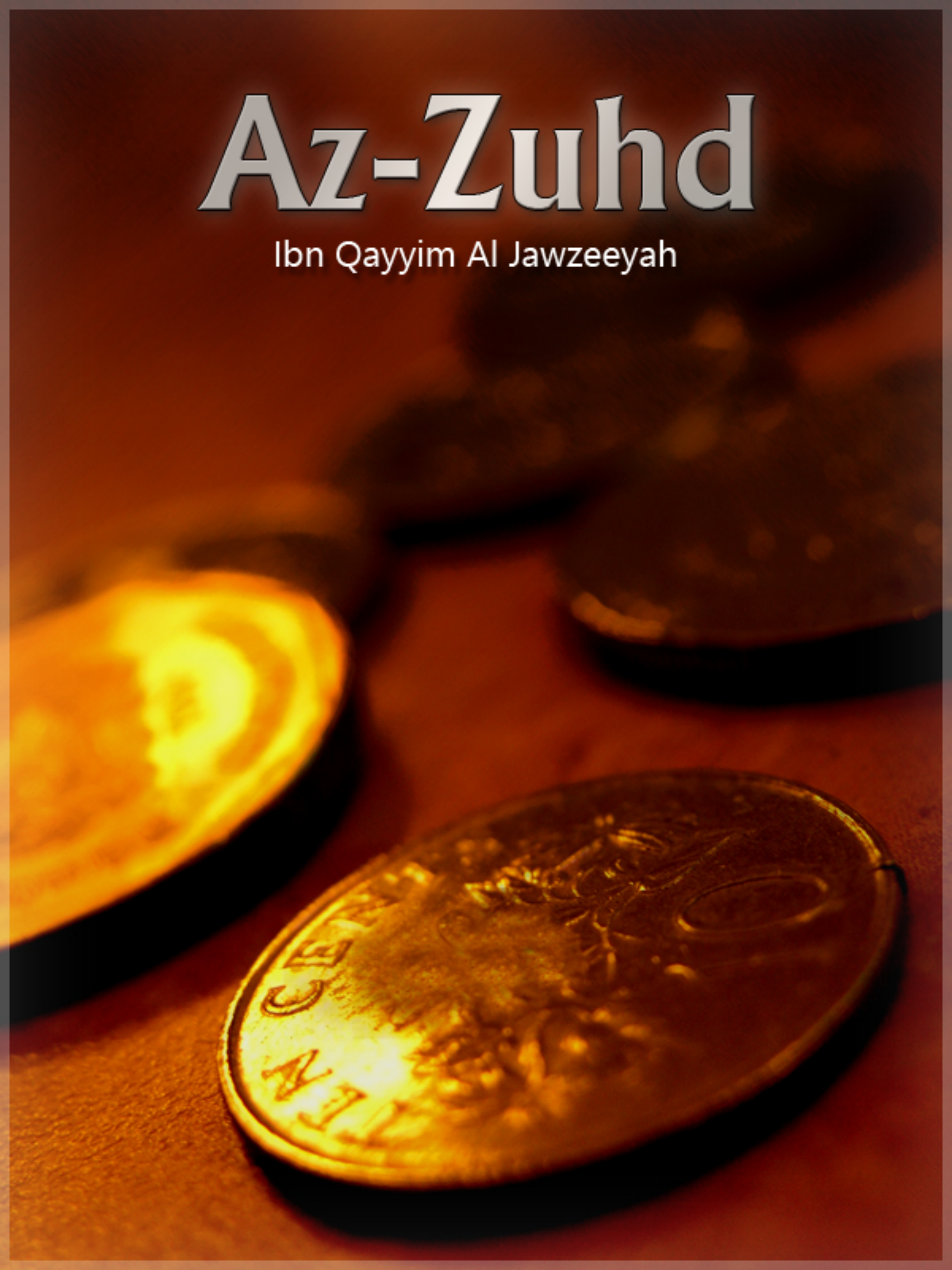


Az-Zuhd

Ibn Qayyim Al Jawzeeyah



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A series on the purification of the soul

الزهد

Az-Zhud

Renouncing Worldly Pleasures in Order to Gain Nearness to Allah

من كتاب مدارج السالكين

Extracted from the book

Al Madaarijus Saaliqeen

لطبيب القلوب ابن قيم الجوزية

By the great doctor of the hearts

Ibn Qayyim Al Jawzeeyah

Translated by Taalib ibn Tyson Al Britaanee

ترجمة طالب ابن تايسون البريطاني

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Author's Biography

His name is Shams Al Deen Abu Abdullah Muhammed Ibn Al Qayyim, commonly known as Ibn Qayyim Al Jawzeeyah.

He was born in the year 691H (1292-1350 Ce) and was raised in a house of knowledge and excellence at a time when knowledge flourished. He studied under many scholars of his time.

He was known as an eminent scholar of the Quraan, *Hadith*, Arabic Language, *Fiqh* and its *Usool* (foundations). He was known for his inspiring and moving writings. He was born in Damascus where he studied with his teacher Ibn Taymiyyah for sixteen years who had a great impact upon him. He later became his most distinguished student and authored over sixty books.

He had many known students such as Ibn Katheer, Ibn Rajab, Shamsud-Deen Muhammed Ibn Adbul Qadir, Imaam Ath-Thahbi, Taqiy'ed-Deen As-Subki and Ibn Abdul Haadi among others. He passed on to the Mercy of His Lord 13th Rajab in the year 751H (1350 CE)

الزهد

Az-Zhud

Renouncing Worldly Pleasures For Gaining Allah's Closeness

INTRODUCTION

Preoccupation with this world is very apparent in our times, when material greed and the desire to acquire more worldly goods have become widespread. Muslims today are exerting much energy in trade, commerce and the accumulation of shares. As such they have completely forgotten about the salvation of their souls. One of the most important tasks for which Prophet Muhammad was sent to this nation was, for the purification of the soul.

Allah says about Prophet Muhammad's task:

الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ

**He it is Who sent among you the unlettered one a Messenger
(Muhammad) from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses,
purifying them and teaching them the Book and the Wisdom. And verily
they had been before in manifest error**

(Suratul Jamu'ah 2)¹

This verse shows one of the reasons why the Honourable Prophet was sent (i.e. for the purification of the soul.)

¹ Shaykh Naasir As-Sa'di says in his great *Tafsir* about this noble verse:

The Honourable Prophet was sent to teach mankind (how to purify their souls) by having noble manners and to prevent them from despicable, debased and low vices (i.e. preventing them from the deeds which corrupt the soul and encouraging the deeds which purify and bring about its salvation.)

Tafsir Al Kareem Mur' Rahmaan, p862 Suratul Jamu'ah, Muwas'sa'sa' Risaala.

Zuhd (doing without the pleasures of the world in a hope of gaining closeness to Allah the Exalted and High) is one of the greatest ways to purify the soul.

Living simply means you should restrain your desires from worldly things in the hope of receiving something better instead.

In order to achieve this more easily you should realise that the things which people yearn for in this world are in fact worthless when compared with what we hope to achieve in the next life.

If we know that what Allah has will remain and that the life to come is better and more lasting, then we realise that the life of this world is really like a piece of ice left out in the sun, it soon melts and vanishes.

The next life however essentially never vanishes. We must learn to withdraw from the life of this world even though we may still have a great desire for it in our hearts.

The self is always preoccupied with the life of this world, even though we struggle with it and try to restrain from it.

We must learn to detach ourselves from this world and to do without it.

Once someone called out to Ibn Al Mubarak saying “O *Zaabid!*” (O the one who has renounced the world)

Ibn Al Mubarak replied:

“The real *Zaahid* is Umar ibn Abdul Azeez² for indeed he rejected the tremendous pleasures and riches of this world that were placed at his feet, where as I have very little to give up.”³

O dear brothers and sisters may Allah guide me and you. We must learn to withdraw from the life of this world even though we still have a great desire for it.

The self is always preoccupied with the life of this world, so we must struggle with it and try to restrain and detach ourselves from it to the point where we are able to do without it.

As our righteous predecessors, have often quoted this verse of poetry:

O people who take pleasure
In a world that will vanish,
Falling in love
With a fading shadow
Is sheer stupidity!⁴

One of the things to which this life can most easily be compared to is a shadow, it appears to be permanent but in reality it is in a constant state of growing smaller or larger, and when you try to chase it and catch it- you cannot!

² He was the great grandson of Umar Bin Khataab on his mother's side and the grandson of Umayyad Khaleefah Marwan. He was known for his great piety and fear of Allah and his *Zuhd*, for refer reference see *Ta'theebul Ta'theeb* by Al Hafiz Ibn Hajr v 3 p239-240 Muwussasa Tul Risaalah

³ Ibn Qayyim *Tazkiya Tul Nufuus Chapter* of Doing Without the Life of this World p66 in English by *Al Firdous Ltd, London*

⁴ *Ibid*, page 137

The one who loves the life of this world and prefers it to the next life is the lowest of creation and the least intelligent. Such a person prefers illusion to reality.

Whoever is preoccupied with this life, Allah will make poverty apparent in his eyes, and whoever is preoccupied with the next life, Allah will place wealth within his heart.

Brothers and sisters, seekers of the truth, know that love for the life of this world leads to over-emphasising its importance, when it is insignificant in the sight of Allah, the Exalted.

One of greatest wrong actions is to attach importance to what Allah considers trivial. The one who has great love for the life of this world is the one who suffers the most. His is suffering in the life of this world itself as a result of his striving to achieve worldly gains and his competing with its people over it, and He also suffers in his grave because he missed out in this life and regrets his lost opportunities, for now he is on his way to meet his Lord Allah in such a state that he wishes he will never meet him.

So dear brothers and sisters love for the life of this world makes the servant become preoccupied with it and prevents him from undertaking actions that will benefit him in the next world.

Allah has condemned it (i.e. this life). He dislikes and disapproves of it, except for whatever it contains that is duly His. Whoever loves what Allah condemns, dislikes and disapproves of, has left himself open to confusion and temptation,

as well as to His disapproval and anger.

Brothers and sisters, the more we love the life of this world the more we make it our main goal in our lives. So we will utilise all ways and means in order to acquire it, which in fact distracts us from remembering Allah and distracts us from the next life. Allah has provided these things for us in order to lead us to Him and the next life. We have become rebellious against what Allah intended us to strive to achieve.

We make the means an end in itself, and we use the means that should lead to the next life to acquire the pleasure of this world, and this is a great perversion of what these means were intended for.

The Holy Prophet as well as teaching us how to pray, has taught us how to fast, how to perform *hajj* as well as *umrah* and the likes. He has also taught us how to get closer to our Lord.

One of these ways was through purification of the soul (i.e. *Zuhd* in abstaining from the life of this world). We must learn, not only to follow the conduct of the Prophet in ritual acts of worship but also in spiritual acts of worship which consist of purifying ones soul (*Zuhd*), which is something many of us have neglected, except those whom Allah has mercy upon.

We must go back to the way our noble Prophet lived his life and how he was with regards to his Lord, and how he instructed his *Ummah* (Muslim nation) with regards to the *Zuhd*.

In a slow process and over a long period of time, I have come to realise that this is from one of the biggest problems in my life (i.e. *Zuhd* abstaining from

the life of this short world with the hope of gaining closeness to Allah the Exalted and High). I therefore thought it necessary to try with Allah's help, to purify my soul from this disease. And in my search for the purification of my soul I came across many beneficial works in Arabic, which have not yet been translated into English by some of the greatest scholars *Islam* has ever seen.

All the praises are due to Allah, because He guided me to this work, which I found in my search, journey and quest for the betterment of myself and for the revival of my soul.

When I acknowledged my weakness, I also acknowledged that my beloved brothers and sisters are, also with regret, sharing in the same suffering that I am.

I thought it befitting then, to address the problem we were all facing, being that we are trying to become more repentant and better upon our religion. I ask Allah that this work is a proof for me and not against me. I ask Allah by His greatest Names, that He make it be of benefit to my brothers and sisters, indeed He has the power to do all things. I would like to thank Sulimaan Bin Haroon for assisting me with this work and thank those who have helped me in going over this work and I ask Allah to reward you all greatly and I thank my beloved mother (Umm Taalib) who has carried me this way and is still carrying me (by the grace of Allah) and also my noble sister who has helped my mum to also carry me. All footnotes were added by me, I would like to thank our brother Dawood Stanley for correcting this work, Lastly I thank my close brother Abdul Haqq kufi for requesting from me to put some stuff up on their website and also Khalid at SalafiManhaj admin, may Allah reward them all.

طالب بن تايسون البريطاني

Taalib Ibn Tyson Al'Britaani

الأردن - عمان

'Ammaan, Jordan

March 6 2007

المقدمة:

إن الحمد لله ، نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ، ونعوذ بالله من شرور أنفسنا ومن سيئات أعمالنا ، ومن يهده الله فلا مضل له ، ومن يضلل فلا هادي له ، وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له ، وأشهد أن محمدا عبده ورسوله .

Indeed all praises are due to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from our evil souls and our wrong doings. He whom Allah guides, no one can misguide and He whom He misguides, no one can guide.

I bear witness that there is no true god except Allah alone without any partners. And I bear witness that Muhammed is His 'Abd (servant) and Messenger.

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ)

**“O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared
and die not except in a state of submission.”**

(Aali-Imraan 102)

(يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا
وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا)

“O mankind! Be dutiful to Your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from him created its mate, and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual rights and do not sever the relations of the wombs (Kinship) Indeed, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you.”

(An-Nisaa 1)

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا)

“O you who believe! Fear Allah and say just words. He will direct you to do good deeds and forgive you your sins. He who obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly achieved a great victory.”

(Al-Ahzaab 70-71)

أما بعد :

فإن أصدق الحديث كتاب الله ، وخير الهدي هدي محمد ، وشر الأمور محدثاتها ، وكل محدثة بدعة ، وكل بدعة ضلالة وكل ضلالة في النار .

Verily, the best speech is Allah's Speech and the best of guidance is Muhammad's guidance and the worst matters (in creed or worship) are those innovated (by the people), for every innovated matter is a *bid'ah* (prohibited innovation), and every *bid'ah* is an act of misguidance that (whoever initiated it) will reside in the fire.⁵

A full discussion of the various reports of this sermon is provided by Shaykh Al Albani in his booklet, "*Khutba tul Haajah*", published by Al-Maktab ul Islaami, Beirut.

⁵ Muslim

الزهد

ZUHD

Renouncing Worldly Pleasures For Gaining Allah's Closeness

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

“You alone we worship you alone we ask for help”

(Suratul Faatiha 5)

Allah says in the noble *Qur'aan*:

مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ

“Whatever is with you, will be exhausted, and whatever is with Allah (of good deeds) will remain.”

(Suratul Nahl 96)

Allah the Exalted also says:

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُوَ وِزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ ثُمَّ يَهَيِّجُ فَتْرَاهُ مَصْفُورًا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَامًا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ

“Know that the life of this world is play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and

children, as the likeness of vegetation after rain, thereof the growth is pleasing to the tiller; afterwards it dries up and you see it turning yellow; then it becomes straw. But in the hereafter (there is) a severe torment (for the disbelievers-evil doers,) and (there is) Forgiveness from Allah and (His) good pleasure for the believers-good doers) whereas the life of this word is only a deceiving enjoyment.”

(Suratul Hadeed 20)

Allah also says about this *Dunya* (life of this world):

إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ النَّاسُ وَالْأَنْعَامُ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَخَذَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَازَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَا أَنَّهُمْ قَادِرُونَ عَلَيْهَا أَتَاهَا أَمْرُنَا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَاهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَن لَّمْ تَغْنَ بِالْأَمْسِ

“Verily the likeness of (this) worldly life is as the rain which We send down from the sky, so by it arises the intermingled produce of the earth which men and cattle eat until when the earth is clad with its adornments and is beautified, and its people think they have all the power of disposal over it, Our Command reaches it by night or day and We make it like a clean-mown harvest, as if it had not flourished yesterday!”

(Suratul Yunus 24)

Allah also says:

وَاصْرَبْ لَهُمْ مَثَلُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَحَ هَشِيمًا تَذْرُوهُ الرِّيَّاحُ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقْتَدِرًا الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا

“And put forward to them the example of the life of this world, it is like the water (rain) which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingles with it, and becomes dry and broken pieces, which the wind scatters. And Allah is able to do everything. Wealth and children are the adornments of the life of this world. But the good righteous deeds that last, are better in your Lords sight for reward and better in respect of hope.”

(Suratul Kahf 45-46)

Allah the Exalted also says:

قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِمَنِ اتَّقَى

“Say: “Short is the enjoyment of this world, The Hereafter is (far) better for him who fears Allah.”

(Suratu Nisaa 77)

Allah also says:

بَلْ تُؤْتِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى

“Nay, you prefer the life of this world. Although the Hereafter is better and more lasting.”

(Suratul Ghashiyah 16-17)

Allah also says:

وَلَا تُمَدَّنْ عَيْنُكَ إِلَى مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى

“And strain not your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to various groups of them (polytheist and disbelievers in the oneness of Allah,) the splendour of the life of this world that We may test them thereby. But the provisions (good reward in the Hereafter) of your Lord is better and more lasting”

(Suratu Ta-Ha 131)

Allah the Exalted also says:

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَهَا لِنَبْلُوهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَإِنَّا لَجَاعِلُونَ مَا عَلَيْهَا صَعِيدًا جُرُزًا

“Verily! We have made that which is on the earth as an adoration for it, in order that We may test them (mankind) which of them is best in deeds. And Verily! We shall make all that is on (the earth) a bare dry soil (without vegetation or trees.”

(Suratul Kahf 7-8)

Allah the Exalted also says:

وَلَوْ أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا لِمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ لِيُوتِيَهُمْ سُفُفًا مِنْ فضةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ وَلِيُوتِيَهُمْ أَبْوَابًا وَسُرُورًا عَلَيْهَا يَتَكَبَّرُونَ وَزُخْرُفًا وَإِن كُنَّا لَمَّا مَنَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

“And were it not that all mankind would become of one community (all disbelievers, desiring worldly life only,) We would have provided for those who disbelieve in the Most Beneficent (Allah,) silver roofs for their houses, and elevators (and stair-ways etc of silver) whereby to mount. And for their houses, doors (of silver,) and thrones (of silver) on which

they could recline. And adornments of gold. Yet all this (i.e. the roofs, doors, stairs, elevators, thrones etc of their houses) would have been an enjoyment of this world And the Hereafter with your Lord is only for the pious and righteous person.”

(Suratul Zukhruf 33-35)

In many places the Holy *Qur'aan* refers to one renouncing the life of this world and informing us of the lowliness, worthlessness, insignificance and it finally coming to an end. At the same time He (Allah) encourages the believers, exhorts them by placing in them an awaking desire for the next life and explaining the pleasures and delights of an everlasting bliss.

So if Allah wants good for His slave, He shows His slave the reality of this debased and fleeting life. So which of the two should take precedence over the other, this life or the next?

Many have defined the meaning of *Zuhd*. Some of these are;

I heard Ibn Taymiyyah say about *Zuhd*:

Zuhd is to leave alone those things that will not benefit you in the next life.

الورع And *Wara'a* (piety), is to leave the things you fear might harm you in the next life.

And this so far has been the best explanation, of the meaning of *Zuhd* and *Wara'a*.

Sufiyyaan At-Thu'Ree said about *Zuhd*:

Zuhd is to have limited amount of expectations (very few hopes.) and Zuhd isn't eating rough foods as many think or wearing a cheap gown or cloak.

And with regards to *Zuhd*, Allah the Exalted says in holy the Quraan:

لِكَيْ لَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ

“In order that you may not be sad over matters that you fail to get, nor rejoice because of that which has been given to you. And Allah likes not prideful boasters”

(Suratul Hadeed 23)

So *Zuhd* here in this verse is defined as, not being overjoyed with the glitters of the life of this world (in having these things) and not to regret things that have passed you by.

Ibn Ja'laal said:

Zuhd is to know that this life is temporal which will pass away. Neither should it be magnified in ones heart nor should much focus be placed on it. Instead one should turn away from it.

It is said Zuhd means to refrain from this Dunya (world), without showing off.

Ja'need also said:

Zubd means to free the heart from always wanting.

The great Imaam, Imaam Ahmed said:

Zubd is not to have too many expectations.

And also Imaam Ahmed said:

Zubd in this world is not to be overjoyed with what one possesses and not to be distressed by turning away from it. So he (Imaam Ahmed) was asked about a man, who had one thousand Dirhams. Could such an individual be considered Zaa'bid? (I.e. one who renounces this world?) So, Imaam Ahmed said: Yes. But with one condition, that is, if his wealth increases he doesn't become too joyful and if it decreases he doesn't become distressed and unhappy.

The great Ibn Mubaarak said regarding *Zubd*:

It is having trust in Allah, and being content in times of poverty.

Also Abdul Waahid Ibn Zaid said:

Zubd can be practised by one, even if he only has one deenar or dirham.

Abi Sulimaan Daa'raani said:

Zubd means, to leave those things that distract you from Allah the Exalted and High, and many other Ulama (Scholars) have also said this statement.

Also Ruweem Ju'naid said regarding *Zuhd*:

It is to belittle the Dunya (this life) and to wipe away its traits from ones heart.

Thew Nune said about *Zuhd*:

Zuhd is controlling ones Nafs (one desires.)

Imaam Ahmed said *Zuhd* can be defined in three ways:

- (1) In leaving the *Haraam* (impermissible things.) This is related to the common people.
- (2) Leaving the preferred things even though *Halaal*. This is for specific types of people from the upright and steadfast.
- (3) Leaving the things that distract you from Allah. This is the *Zuhd* of the knowledgeable ones.

Imaam Ahmed's statement is the same as what we have mentioned previously by other *Ulama* (Scholars) but he explains it more in detail.

So there are six things that if the slave possesses them, he deserves the title of *Zaahid* (one who renounces the world):

- (1) Moderation in spending ones wealth.
- (2) Lack of desire for leadership.
- (3) Moderation in ones appearance.

- (4) Not engaging too much with the people.
- (5) One learning to control his desires.
- (6) Moderation in things not concerning Allah

And this doesn't mean refusing leadership such as being a King and the likes, because Prophet Dawood (David) and his son, Prophet Sulaymaan were of the noblest kings ever to walk the earth, but both had renounced this world and at the same time possessed great wealth, women and things of this world.

Prophet Muhammad, who also had renounced this worldly life had nine wives.

Ali Ibn Abee Taalib, Abdul Rahman Ibn Awf, Zubeer and Uthmaan were all noble men known for renouncing this (short) life. And at the same time, these men were known to be wealthy men.

Hasan Ibn Ali was known amongst the companions to be one who renounced this (short) life regardless of the fact that he loved woman and to married them.

Also Ibn Mubarak was know for his *Zuhd*, even though it was known that he possessed great wealth.

And Layth Ibn Sa'ad was known to be of those who practised *Zuhd*, though he possessed great wealth.

That which seems to be the best out of the sayings of the best definition of the word *Zuhd* (renouncing the world), is the statement of the great imaam of the *Sunnah*, Hasan Al Busri who said:

Zuhd is not by making the permissible impermissible or by wasting ones money. But, rather Zuhd is that you acknowledge that what Allah the Exalted has (i.e. prepared for the doers of good) is better then what you have (i.e. what you possess)

The *Ulama* (Scholars) have differed weather or not one could practise *Zuhd* in our age and time?

Abu Hafs said regarding *Zuhd*:

There will not be any Zuhd except in the permissible things (i.e. one being moderate in the permissible things) and there are no permissible things in this Dunya/ life.

Many people (Scholars) differ with this definition by Abu Hafs and said rather opposite to this!

They say that there are permissible things in this *Dunya*/life, and also a lot of impermissible things (meaning that taking something of this life should only be out of necessity like one being in the desert having no food and due to necessity, being forced to eat the meat of a dead animal, you should just eat what is necessary and so is the case with this life.)

Yusuf Ibn As'bar said:

If I were informed that so and so had reached the level of Zaabid, that Abu Thaur did or that they had reached the level of Abu Dar'dar in Zuhd or the level of Sulaymaan or Mikdaad or the likes of these noble companions of the prophet Muhammad, then I would

regard this individual as being one who practises Zuhd.

Because the *Halal*/permissible things in our times are not clear but if you do Haraam, Allah will punish you.

A group of Scholars have said no, rather, *Zuhd* can only be in the permissible things (i.e. even though these things are permissible, it is recommended to leave and abstain from these things alone), as for the impermissible things, then there is no *Zuhd* because one has to abstain from these things.

Another group of scholars have disagreed with the fact that *Zuhd* cannot be an abstinence from the permissible things. They say, rather, *Zuhd* can only be achieved by abstaining from the impermissible.

They say as for the permissible things, then these are things Allah has favoured and He has bestowed upon His slaves, and He loves to see His Favours that He grants to His slaves apparent on them.

He loves to see His slaves thankful and to use His bestowed Favours upon them in ways which will aid the slave upon obedience to Him and also the slave uses it as a means to assist himself getting to *Jannah*/paradise.

The Conclusion:

So if the permissible things distract the slave away from Allah, then it is preferred for the slave to abstain from them. And if he sees that these permissible acts aid him and strengthen his relationship with Allah, and

increases him in being thankful to Allah, then it is better to continue doing them.

So if the slave were to refrain from doing the above-mentioned things, he would be denying the heart much good, which is in need and want of such nourishment. And Allah knows best.

DEFINITIONS OF ZUHD

The Author of Ma'naazil Saa'ir'reen said regarding *Zuhd*/ Abstinence:

Zuhd means “completely abstaining” from what one desires. Meaning if the slave (craves or) desires a thing he withholds, with the exception of things regarding his Lord. Other than this, one should refrain and should remove the urge from his heart and give up craving for this thing.

As for the meaning “***Completely abstaining,***” then this means, he should pay no attention to what he is yearning for, and he should not be fascinated by his desires.

MEANS AND WAYS TO ACHIEVE ZUHD.

Zuhd can be divided into three categories:

(1) Zuhd/abstaining from doubtful matters.

The slave will not be able to obtain *Zuhd* until he avoids doubtful matters. This will help him to avoid the impermissible matters. Secondly, the slave takes heed of Allah's admonition. Thirdly⁶, he acknowledges his own shortcomings. Fourthly, the slave dislikes, spending his time with the evil, corrupt and sinning folk.

(2) Zuhd/abstaining from the permissible matters.

The Slave of Allah will not be able to obtain *zuhd* until he firstly, becomes moderate in spending. Secondly, he spends his spare time in devotion. Thirdly, he relieves himself from emotional anxiety and lastly he adores himself with the noble mannerism of the holy Prophets of Allah and the truthful ones.

(3) Zuhd/abstaining in matters of Zuhd.⁷

The slave will not obtain *Zuhd* till he first avoids the following; firstly, till the slave gives up disregarding his *Zuhd*. Secondly, the slave even though he actualizes *Zuhd*, he is moderate when he gives and when he leaves. Thirdly, till the slave belittles the *Dunya*/ this world in his heart (i.e. he sees this *Dunya* as something small and of no value in his heart) lastly, that the slave realises, Allah

⁶ These four, avoiding impermissible matters, taking heed to Allah's Admonition and realising ones shortcomings also not spending ones time with the sinners and corrupt. The author will mention shortly on Inshallah.

⁷ The noble author will explain what he means here shortly Inshallah.

is the All-powerful, the giver and the taker.

ABSTAINING FROM THE DOUBTFUL MATTERS:

As for abstaining from the doubtful things, then it is that the slave leaves all the doubtful matters. Such as the slave being between two stations and having the question, ‘is this *Halal* or is this *Haraam*?’ And this is what comes in the *Hadith* of the messenger, when he said:

That which is lawful is clear and that which is unlawful is clear. Between the two are doubtful matters that few people have knowledge about.

Whoever avoids these doubtful matters absolves himself of blame with respect to his religion and his honour. Whoever falls into doubtful things will fall into what is unlawful, just like the shepherd who grazes his flock too close to a private pasture is liable to have some of his flock stray into it. Every king has a private pasture, and Allah’s private pasture is what He has prohibited. Verily, in the body is a small piece of flesh that if it is healthy, the whole body is healthy and if it is sick, the whole body is sick.

This small piece of flesh is the heart.⁸

The doubtful matters are those matters that are between *Halal* and *Haraam*. Allah the Exalted for the right reason, has made every thing with a partition (barrier or screen between it) just like He has made a partition between life and death, (which is called the *barzakh* برزخ or station in between life and death.)

Allah has also made between belief and disbelief a screen or partition, and He

⁸ Bukhari and Muslim and others

has made a screen between *Jannah* and *Naar*/ paradise and the hell-fire. And Allah the Exalted has made a barrier for those doing Hajj, and made partition between *Mina* and *Muzdelifa*.⁹ And He has made a screen (distance) between Mecca and Arafat.¹⁰ And also Allah has made a partition between *fajr* (sunrise) and daybreak and He also has made between the night and day a screen.

Firstly, abstaining from impermissible matters. Meaning one leaving doubtful matters, and one will not be able to avoid doubtful matters, till he first avoids the impermissible matters.

Secondly, the slave takes heed of Allah's admonition. Meaning this could be a reason for the slave to leave doubtful matters. So the slave is warned from turning away from Allah's guidance.

Thirdly, realising ones shortcomings. This means that the slave acknowledges between him and his Lord that he has many faults, and is falling very short with regards to his duties towards to his Lord.

And maybe with regards to the people, he is not falling short, and this not something disliked (i.e. that the slave can conceal his faults and shortcomings from the eyes of the people). In fact this is what is recommended of the slave (to conceal his faults), but what is dispraised is that the slave sins and falls into error due to the people (i.e. the slave falls into bad company and as a result he embarks many sins).

⁹ Two places in *madinah* that the one doing *Hajj* must visit. Refer to 'This is how the Messenger preformed *Hajj*' by Shaykh Bin Baz and also 'The rights of *Hajj* and *Ummra*' by Shaykh Al Albani and also '*Hajj* and *Tawheed*' by Dr.Saleh As'Saleh.

¹⁰ Ibid

Fourthly, the slave dislikes spending his time with the corrupt and sinning folk.

ZUHD/ABSTINENCE IN THE PERMISSIBLE THINGS:

As for the slave being moderate in spending, then the slave tries to spend only on what he will be in need of. He doesn't refrain from the essentials such as his nourishment for his body, his clothing, his abode, marriage and the likes.

If the slave becomes so busy in the worldly activities accumulating wealth with all of his time, much of his time will be wasted and he will barely make time for devotion to his Lord and Sustainer. The slave should take advantage of any time he has and devote himself to his Lord.

Because like is said: time is like a sword, if you do not cut it will cut you. (i.e. if you do not take control of it, it will take control of you. Meaning by cutting you.)

Secondly, that the slave spends his time in devotion. So the slave should use all of his time to get closer and closer to his Lord. Meaning through his nourishment (his food, his drink and his world possessions), marriage, sleep, or through resting, the slave brings himself closer to his Lord, but with the condition that the slave makes his intention to do these things for his Lords sake, hoping to be rewarded for doing them and refraining from doing the things that invoke His anger upon His slave.

Thirdly, the slave must relieve himself from emotional anxiety. The slave tries

to prevent those things that will cause distress and agitation in his heart due to the affairs of this life, be it hope, love, fear, hatred, or his labouring. So the slave will not taste the sweetness of *Zuhd* until he relieves himself from anxiety and distress of the heart. So the slave's heart should not be troubling him, and indeed *Zuhd* relieves the slave's heart from this.

Fourthly, the slave adorns himself with the mannerisms of the holy Prophets and the truthful ones. The slave should try to adorn himself with the way of the best of Allah's creation, the Prophets, because from amongst all of the people they knew best how to live a life of *Zuhd* in this *dunya*/life.

ZUHD IN MATTERS OF ZUHD:

Firstly, the slave gives up disregarding his *Zuhd*/ abstinence of this world. The slave should never underrate his striving in abstaining from all of the aforementioned things that one is advised to refrain from.

Secondly, when the slave actualises *Zuhd* he is moderate in his giving and leaving. The slave should be balanced when he is giving for the sake of Allah and also when he is leaving something for sake of Allah. So if he takes something, he is moderate in doing so and when the slave leaves something, he also shows modesty. Making the balance between the two is a virtuous noble deed that has a high station in regards to giving and taking in Islaam. This is regardless of whether or not these deeds are deemed small and insignificant in the eyes of the people.

Thirdly, the slave belittles the *dunya* in his heart. The slave should belittle the life of this world in his heart and as equally as with his giving and leaving, he makes the balance between it and his love for this world. So the slave will realise and notice that the more he shuns this *dunya* and turns away from it, the more Allah the Exalted raises the slaves rank and nobility (station to the foremost rank among His Slaves).

And this is because the slave realised its true worth, he made it become something of little value in his eyes and heart, so Allah the Exalted raises his rank to that of high excellence.

Lastly: That the slave realises that Allah is the giver and the taker. The slave should realise that Allah, He is the giver (i.e. the provider) and the only one who takes (the one who possesses all), so even if the slave is giving, it is in fact Allah who has allowed this to happen by His Choice, so He is the Giver.

So if the slave receives any good, be it whatever, then the slave should acknowledge that this has come to him by way of his of his Lord (i.e. his Lord has bestowed this upon him).

So whatever does not come to the slave, know that Allah has not decreed that for him.