

WEEKLY BOOKLET:355



Love For The WORLD

ENGLISH

The difference between
piety and poverty

The meaning of dunya

Perfection in zuhd

Ranks of zuhd

Presented by: (DA'WAT-E-ISLAM)

AL-MADINAH-TUL-ILMIA

Islamic Research Center

دنیا کی محبت

Love For The World

This booklet was written in Urdu by Dawat-e-Islami's Islamic Research Centre (*Madinat al- 'Ilmiyya*). **Translation Department (Dawat-e-Islami)** has translated it into English. If you find any mistake in translation or composition, please inform the Translation Department on the following postal or email address with the intention of earning reward.

Translation Department (Dawat-e-Islami)

Aalami Madani Markaz, Faizan-e-Madinah, Mahallah Saudagran,
Purani Sabzi Mandi, Bab-ul-Madinah, Karachi, Pakistan

UAN: ☎ +92-21-111-25-26-92 – Ext. 7213

Email: ✉ translation@dawateislami.net

Love For The World



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Ist Publication: Dhū al-Ḥijjah - 1445 AH - (June, 2024)
Translated by: Translation Department (Dawat-e-Islami)
Publisher: Maktaba-tul-Madinah
Quantity: -

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Maktaba-tul-Madinah

Aalami Madani Markaz, Faizan-e-Madinah Mahallah Saudagran,
Purani Sabzi Mandi, Bab al-Madinah, Karachi, Pakistan

✉ **Email:** maktabaglobal@dawateislami.net – maktaba@dawateislami.net

☎ **Phone:** +92-21-34921389-93

🌐 **Web:** www.dawateislami.net

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ
أَنَابَعْدُ فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Dua for reading this book

Recite the following dua before you read a religious book or begin an Islamic lesson; you will remember whatever you study **ان شاء الله**.

اللَّهُمَّ افْتَحْ عَلَيْنَا حِكْمَتَكَ وَاذْشُرْ
عَلَيْنَا رَحْمَتَكَ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

O Allah! Open the doors of knowledge and wisdom for us and have mercy on us! O He Who is the Most Glorious and Honourable! (Al-Mustatraf, vol. 1, p. 40)

Note:

Recite *shalāt* upon the Holy Prophet **صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ** once before and after.

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Love for this World

Attar's prayer

O Allah Almighty! Whoever reads or listens to the 22-page booklet *Love For The World*, do not make them dependent on anyone besides You, remove love for this world from their hearts, make them a true devotee of Your Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and forgive them without accountability.

أَمِيرُنْ بِجَاهِ خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

An excellent litany for blessings in sustenance

A man once mentioned his poverty and destitution to the final Prophet of Allah, our master Muhammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ. The Greatest Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied, “Give salam when you enter the home, regardless if anybody is inside or not, then present your salam to myself and recite Al-Ikhlāṣ once.”

By doing this, Allah Almighty opened the doors of sustenance for this person, allowing him to even benefit his neighbours and family.¹

¹ Al-Qawl al-Badī', p. 273

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صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ

The world in disguise

The Tābi‘ī Ḥumayd b. Hilāl رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ narrates how ‘Alā’ b. Ziyād رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ said:

Once in my dream, I saw people chasing after something. I too engaged in pursuit of it. When I finally saw what it was, I discovered it was an old woman, hunched over with broken teeth. She wore various forms of jewellery and luxurious clothing.

“Who are you?” I asked. “I am the world”, she replied. I then said, “I ask Allah Almighty to place hatred for you in my heart.”

She exclaimed, “If you hate wealth, you will naturally develop hatred for me.”¹

Duniya ko To Kiya Janay yeh Bis Ki Ghanth Hai Harrafah

Surat Dekho Zalim Ki Tau Kaisi Bholi Bhali Hai

Shehad Dikhaye Zehar Pilaye, Qatil, Da`in Shohar Kash

Is Murdar Pe Kiya Lalchaya, Duniya Dekhi Bhali Hai

¹ Imam Aḥmad’s Al-Zuhd, p. 265, hadith 1429

Imam Aḥmad Razā Khān's poetry about the world

Imam Aḥmad Razā Khān رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ discussed the deception and illusory nature of this world in his poetry. A summary of select couplets are hereby presented:

O slaves of Allah Almighty! What do you know of this world? It may appear unassuming, yet it is a bowl of poison. It is cunning and deceptive. Its cruelty is such, that it makes venom look like honey, and it kills whoever loves it. This world is polluted and ruined. There is no benefit in attaching one's heart to it, and this is something tried and tested.

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ

The meaning of *dunyā*

Imam Jawharī said:

The literal meaning of *dunyā* is “near”. The reason for this is either because it is closer to mankind in contrast to the Hereafter, or as it is closer to the heart due to the desires and pleasures it entails.¹

¹ Islah-i-Amal, vol. 1, p. 128

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The implications of loving this world

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, “An immense sin for which people do not ask Allah Almighty forgiveness for, is love for this world.”¹

Another blessed hadith mentions, **حُبُّ الدُّنْيَا رَأْسُ كُلِّ خَطِيئَةٍ** – “Love for the world is the root of every sin.”²

The scholar ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf al-Munāwī رحمه الله عليه writes in *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*:

It is proven from experience and observation that love for this world calls towards every open and hidden sin, especially those centred around worldly matters. Whoever is besotted with this world loses himself in it, despite them knowing well of its impurity and imperfection.

Love for the world first leads to doubtful matters, then to that which is disliked (*makrūh*), and ultimately to haraam. In extreme cases, it can even lead to disbelief. In fact, all people who rejected their Prophets عليهم السلام disbelieved because of their love for the world.

¹ Firdaws al-Akhbār, vol. 1, p. 402, hadith 2990

² Ibn Abī Dunyā’s Mawsū‘ah, vol. 5, p. 22, hadith 9

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This is the root of every sin, which is why it is said this world is Satan’s alcohol. Whoever drinks from it will only sober up at the time of death, whilst feeling remorse and shame. Loving this world is destructive. Love for it will not be exit from the hearts of most people, except for a few.¹

Imam Ghazālī رحمه الله عليه said, “Just as love for this world is the root of every sin, hatred for it is the root of every good.”²

Worldly love and its types

Some elements of the world are associated with disbelief, some with sin, and others with negligence. Conversely, some elements revolve around the very essence of faith. Abū Jahl’s world was one of disbelief. The Companion ‘Uthmān’s رضي الله عنه link to the world was based on the essence of faith.

The world of Qārūn and Fir‘awn was one of disbelief. Prophet Sulaymān’s عليه السلام association with the world was purely due to faith. If attachment to this world is rebukeable if it revolves around desires and anything Satanic. Yet, if one’s attachment to the world is premised on faith and for the sake of Allah Almighty, it is praiseworthy.³

¹ Fayḍ al-Qadīr, vol. 3, p. 487, under hadith 3662 Summarized

² Al-Taysīr bi-sharḥ Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaghīr, vol. 1, p. 492

³ Tafsīr Na‘īmī, vol. 4, p. 287

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Mufti Aḥmad Yār Khān Naḥimī رحمۃ اللہ علیہ stated:

A worldly life is that spent fulfilling the desires of the *nafs* (carnal self). A life spent preparing for the Hereafter is not considered worldly, despite the fact one lives in the world itself.

A worldly life is one thing, but living in the world is another. Life in this world will end, but a life spent in this world for the Hereafter will not finish.¹

Categories of those pursuing this world

1. Those who pursue the wealth of this world to maintain good ties with relatives and help the poor; they are considered generous. If their actions correlate with their intention, they will gain reward.

Despite this, it is said such people lack intelligence, as an intelligent person does not desire something which will change his state to an unknown condition after acquiring it.

People who acquire wealth with this intention should learn from the story of Tha'labah mentioned below.²

¹ Achē Burē Amal, p. 72

² Achē Burē Amal, p. 65

The story of Tha'labah

An individual by the name of Tha'labah requested the Greatest and Final Prophet ﷺ to pray for him to become wealthy. Having been granted knowledge of the unseen by Allah Almighty, the Greatest and Final Prophet ﷺ replied, "O Tha'labah! A little wealth you can give thanks for is better than a great amount for which you cannot."

Presenting himself before the Holy Prophet ﷺ again, Tha'labah made the same request; "I take oath by He Who sent you as a true Prophet! If He grants me wealth, I will give everyone their due right."

The Greatest Prophet ﷺ prayed for him, so Allah Almighty blessed his sheep in so much, that the city could not accommodate them all. Tha'labah took them with him to the wilderness and left Madinah entirely, resulting in him missing out on attending congregational and Jumu'ah salah.

The Greatest Prophet ﷺ enquired about him, to which the Companions عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّضْوَانُ replied that his wealth had increased a lot, so much so that even the desert was not large enough to hold it. The Greatest Prophet ﷺ expressed his disappointment regarding him.

Later, when the Holy Prophet ﷺ sent individuals to collect zakat, people happily paid it. Yet, when Tha'labah was approached, he responded by saying this was a tax and he would

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think about it first. When the individuals came back to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he expressed disappointment at Tha'labah twice before they even said anything.

The following verse was then revealed:

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ عٰهَدَ اللّٰهَ لَئِن اٰتٰنَا مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ لَنَنصَّدَّقَنَّ وَلَنَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَلَمَّآ
اٰتٰهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ جٰهَلُوْا بِهٖ وَتَوَلّٰوْا وَّهُمْ مُّعْرِضُوْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾

And among them there are some who have made a pledge with Allah, "If He grants us from His Grace, then we will most certainly give charity, and we will most definitely be among the righteous." So, when He granted them from His Grace, they were miserly with it, and they withdrew turning their faces away.¹

Tha'labah then eventually arrived with his charity, to which the Greatest Prophet ﷺ said, Allah Almighty forbids me from accepting this." Tha'labah returned disgraced. His wealth was then brought to the first Caliph of Islam, Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه during the latter's caliphate. It was again rejected.

It was again brought forth during the reign of Islam's second caliph, Umar b. al-Khattab رضي الله عنه. The result was the same and

¹ Al-Quran, part 10, Al-Tawba, verse 75-76; translation from Kanz al-'Irfān

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it was turned away. Tha'labah eventually died during the caliphate of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān رضي الله عنه.¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

2. The second type of people chasing this world

The second category of those who pursue this world is further divided into two:

- i. Those who pursue the world wishing to fulfil their desires and gratify themselves with worldly pleasures. Such people are perceived as animalistic.
- ii. Those who pursue the world to show pride before others and stand out due to wealth. Such people thought of as absurd, deceitful, and accursed.²

The fate of those who love this world

Sayyiduna Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنهما said:

On the Day of Judgement, the world will be brought forth as an unsightly old woman with mishappen eyes and whose teeth are protruding forwards. She will be

¹ Tafsīr Nasafī, part 10, Al-Tawba, verse 75

² Achē Burē Amal, p. 67

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directed towards the people, and it will be asked, “Do you recognise her?”

They will reply, “We seek refuge in Allah Almighty from recognising her.”

It will be announced, “This is the world you were proud of. Due to it, you severed family ties, became jealous of one another, and harboured enmity and arrogance.”

The world will then be placed in Hell, and it will say, “My Lord! Where are those who listened to me? Where is my group?”

Allah Almighty shall declare, “Place them alongside it (the world).”¹

Three facets of the world

1. The first facet consists of reward. It is by means of this a person attains goodness and protects himself from evil. This is a believer’s conveyance, a field to harvest for the Hereafter, and halal sustenance that suffices.
2. The second facet entails accountability. Due to this, one does not lack in fulfilling prescribed duties or do anything impermissible in pursuit of the world. Wealthy people fall under this category; accountability

¹ Ibn Abī Dunyā’s Mawsū‘ah, vol. 5, p. 72, number 123

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for them will be of a lengthy duration, and the poor will enter Paradise 500 years before them.

3. The third facet brings about punishment. In this, an individual neglects all necessary duties and involves himself in sin. Whoever this category applies to will find it drawing him closer to Hell and leaving him in a state of regret.¹

The meaninglessness of worldly luxuries

The Companion Abū Dhar رضي الله عنه said:

The Greatest Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم was once in the shade of the Ka'ba when I went to him. When his gaze came upon me, I heard him then declare, "Those are steepest in loss! I take oath by the Lord of the Ka'ba!"

I proceeded to sit near him as he صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم repeated this many times over. I then stood up and asked, "O Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم! May my parents be sacrificed for you! Who are these people you mention?"

The Greatest Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم replied, "They shall be affluent and wealthy individuals, but not including those who spend profusely in noble causes. Their number shall be few."

¹ Achē Burē Amal, p. 64

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“Whoever owns a camel, cow, or sheep, and does not pay their zakat; that animal will come forth larger and healthier on the Day of Judgement, and proceed to gore their owner using their horns and trample with their hooves. This will continue until the accountability of people concludes.”¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Responding to Satan’s trickery

Some people are deceived into thinking regardless of how engaged they are in worldly matters; their heart will not be attached to it. This is Satan’s trickery. How is it possible for someone to dive into a river and not become wet? The likeness of this world is like salt water; the more you drink, the thirstier you will feel. Thinking that worldly riches will bring happiness is foolishness, for how can there be happiness in a place you are not going to stay in forever?²

Avoiding love for the world

Attachment to the world is of two types. The first is haraam, as it makes one absorbed in worldly affairs which lead to punishment in the Hereafter. The second is halal, although it

¹ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, p. 385, hadith 2300

² Khuṭbāt Imam Ghazālī, p. 124

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will act as an obstacle in attaining a high station. This will also lead a person having to face lengthy accountability.

An intelligent person acknowledges that having to stand for a long period on the Day of Judgement is also a form of punishment. In short, whoever is held to account also faces punishment. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said regarding this world, “There is accountability for its halal and punishment for its haraam.”

He ﷺ also mentioned punishment upon the halal of the world, albeit less in comparison to the punishment for haraam. Even without facing accountability, missing out on high ranks of Paradise and feeling grief for this lowly temporary world is also punishment.

As you are in this world right now, take a moment to reflect on the following: when you see people ahead of you in worldly matters, how much sadness develops in your heart, despite knowing these are temporary, meaningless, and impure “privileges?” They have not an atom of purity in them.

In contrast, how much sorrow should be felt at missing out on privileges so they cannot be described? Centuries have past, but these remain standing.

To conclude, answering questions on the Day of Judgement entails waiting, humiliation, fear, risk, and difficulty. All these are a cause for loss in the Hereafter. Whether one has a little of

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the world or a lot, be it halal or haraam, it is accursed if it does not revolve around piety.

This is why Allah Almighty made the Prophets عليه السلام, saints رحمهم الله, and those after who were close to Him, face trials of varying degrees. All of this is a form of goodness bestowed upon them so they receive a great share of the Hereafter.¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Removing love for the world from one's heart

Having concern for the Hereafter and being conscious of it despite being busy with worldly affairs will remove love for the world from your heart. This is what is termed as genuine piety. It brings a person close to Allah Almighty forever.²

In worldly matters, always look at those in a worse scenario as opposed to those in better positions, as Satan always tries to make us look at others who are “better off”.

The Ameer of Ahl al-Sunnah, Mawlana Muhammad Ilyas Attar al-Qadiri once said, “Whoever continuously obeys Allah

¹ Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm, vol. 3, p 272

² Dunyā sē bē-raghatī aūr umeedon kī kamī, p. 29

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Almighty and His Greatest and Final Prophet ﷺ, the world will continuously serve him.”¹

An effective way to do away with love for the world

Imam Ghazālī رحمه الله عليه explains what detaches a person from the world and leads to one distributing their wealth. They are:

- Thinking about the trials and imperfections of this world.
- Remembering the world’s benefit is very little and will come to an end very soon, and that those who pursue it are lowly.
- Acknowledging Allah Almighty has granted you many blessings despite you not having spent in His way according to the amount He granted.

Reflecting on these matters thoroughly will make it easy to detach yourself from the world and give out wealth. Also remember the world is an enemy of Allah Almighty, and you love Him. Whoever loves and befriends someone also considers his enemy to be their own.

The world is rotten. Do you not see its delicious foods go off and start to smell after a short while? The world is masked by pleasant scent, but it is like carrion. Seeing its outward

¹ Amīr-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat kī 786 Nasīhatēn, p. 15

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appearance, the negligent fall for its deception, whilst the intelligent stay away from it.¹

The Ṭabī‘ī Rabi‘ b. Khuthaym رَحِمَهُ اللهُ وَعَلَيْهِ said, “Remove love for the world from your hearts and replace it with love for the Hereafter.”²

The difference between piety and poverty

If the world detaches itself from a person, this is poverty. Yet, if a person detaches himself from the world—whereby if he receives wealth, he dislikes it and thus he stays away from it—then this known as *zuhd*. A person with this quality is referred to as a *zāhid* (someone disinterested in the world).³

The excellence of zuhd

The blessed Companion Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates how the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “Look at those below you and not at those above you. This is splendid advice, so you may not lose any of Allah Almighty’s blessings.”⁴

¹ Minhāj al-‘Ābidīn, p. 30

² Fayḍ al-Qadīr, vol. 3, p. 487, under hadith 3662

³ Iḥyā’ al-‘Ulūm, vol. 4, p. 234

⁴ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, p. 1211, hadith 7430

Salmān al-Farīsī رضي الله عنه, also a Companion, once said, “When a person becomes disinterested with the world, his heart is illuminated with wisdom, and his body aids him in worship.”¹

Three levels of zuhd

Ibrāhīm b. Adham رحمة اللوعليه proclaimed:

Zuhd has three levels. One level is obligatory, which is to stay away from that Allah Almighty has declared haraam. The second level is of safety, whereby one abstains from anything doubtful. As for the third level, it is for attaining excellence, and this is where one leaves even that which is halal. This is an exceptional level of zuhd.²

Signs of piety

1. Not rejoicing over one’s assets, and not being sad about something you do not have. This indicates piety in matters relating to wealth.
2. Perceiving someone who criticises you and someone who praises you as equal. This signals piety in relation to rank.

¹ Minhāj al-‘Ābidīn, p. 29

² Mukāshafat al-Qulūb, p. 242

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3. Having attachment to Allah Almighty and experiencing the joy of being immersed in obedience to the Creator.¹

Types of zuhd

An increase in worship and its quality are the by-products of zuhd. It is important for the one in pursuit of worship to not have interest in the world. Zuhd itself is of two types:

1. Discretionary: this involves not desiring something you do not have, distributing that which you do have, and not pursuing the world and its luxuries. Anyone who has these three qualities is pious.

Cultivating the third quality — not pursuing the world and its luxuries — is very difficult. Many people ostensibly seem to have this trait, yet, love for this world bites at their hearts, leaving them in a struggle. The greatness of piety stems from this aspect of not pursuing the world.

2. Non-discretionary: piety of this type is based on the heart being void of worldly interest and worldly thoughts. When a person pursues discretionary piety by not desiring what he does not have, giving away what he has, and not pursuing worldly luxuries, his heart

¹ Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm, vol. 4, p. 298

becomes void of worldly interest. The world appears insignificant to such a person, and worldly matters do not come to mind; this is what non-discretionary piety is.¹

Ranks of zuhd

1. Where a person shows disinterest in the world but with difficulty. Despite one's desires, he does away with the world. Such a person is a *mutazahhid*. It is possible that by persevering in this manner an individual attains piety.
2. Happily detaching yourself from the world. This means to consider the world inferior, and because of this, to do away with one's desires. For example, to happily take one gold coin instead of two.

This is not difficult for somebody with this trait. Yet, such a person's attention also constantly remains on the world and his *nafs* (as he thinks he has forsaken something significant). Although this is also piety and zuhd, it bears risk of loss.

3. This is the greatest rank, in which a person readily takes on zuhd and extensively exerts effort in doing so. Here, the individual is not phased in the slightest about having walked away from the world, for he knows it is

¹ Minhāj al-‘Ābidīn, p. 29

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insignificant and holds no importance when compared to the Hereafter.

The greatness of this rank is in becoming indifferent to everything to please your Lord. The driving force behind accomplishing this is yearning to behold Allah Almighty and understanding the renunciation of every other bounty.

In addition to nikah, one should acquire food, clothing, and residence based on one's needs. This is true zuhd.¹

How to acquire this

Zuhd entails avoiding anything that is futile, extra and unnecessary. There should only be sufficient energy and strength that will enable one to worship and obey Allah Almighty. Eating and drinking for the sake of it or merely for enjoyment is not our objective. Allah Almighty has power to keep you alive without apparent means, just as angels are alive without any materialistic means.

Allah Almighty also has ability to keep you alive with that which you have, or by granting something which you cannot imagine. If you remain steadfastly pious, you will not need to rely upon striving for worldly gain to remain alive.

¹ Lubāb al-Iḥyā', p. 333

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If you have not reached this level of zuhd, then search for it with the intention of becoming righteous and preparing provision for the Hereafter.

Do not embark upon this journey to fulfil your desires or find pleasure, because this will be considered as an action performed for your Hereafter if your intention is sound. This way, your zuhd will remain safe from negative effects.¹

1. At times, fearing Hell and the punishment therein becomes a reason for zuhd. This is known as the zuhd of the khā'ifīn.
2. The delight of the Hereafter and its blessings can lead to one taking zuhd on. This is the zuhd of the rājīn, and it is greater than the first category.
3. The third type is best, in which zuhd is attained by not focussing on anything other than Allah Almighty, and when the nafs leaves everything other than Him due to thinking of it as insignificant. This is zuhd in its original essence.²

¹ Minhāj al-'Ābidīn, p. 32

² Khuṭbāt Imam Ghazālī, p. 191

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A state greater than zuhd

Considering it to be of equal merit whether you have wealth or not; this is a state even greater than zuhd.

A person with this quality does not feel happy when attaining money nor feel harmed, and his state is the same even when he does not receive anything. In fact, such a person's state becomes like that of Lady 'Āishah رضى الله عنها, when someone gifted her a hundred thousand dirhams, which she accepted and distributed the very same day.

Her maid said, "Had you kept one dirham from the wealth you distributed today to purchase meat, we could have had that for iftār." Lady 'Āishah رضى الله عنها replied, "Had you reminded me, I would have done so."¹

A person should be called *mustaghni* if he had the whole world in his possession but it causes him no harm, because he thinks of wealth as a treasure from Allah Almighty as opposed to it being in his possession. This person does not see any difference between the wealth being owned by him or someone else. He is not concerned about having or not having money.²

Perfection in zuhd

Giving equal value to wealth and water is a sublime level of zuhd

¹ Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm, vol. 4, p. 235

² Ibid

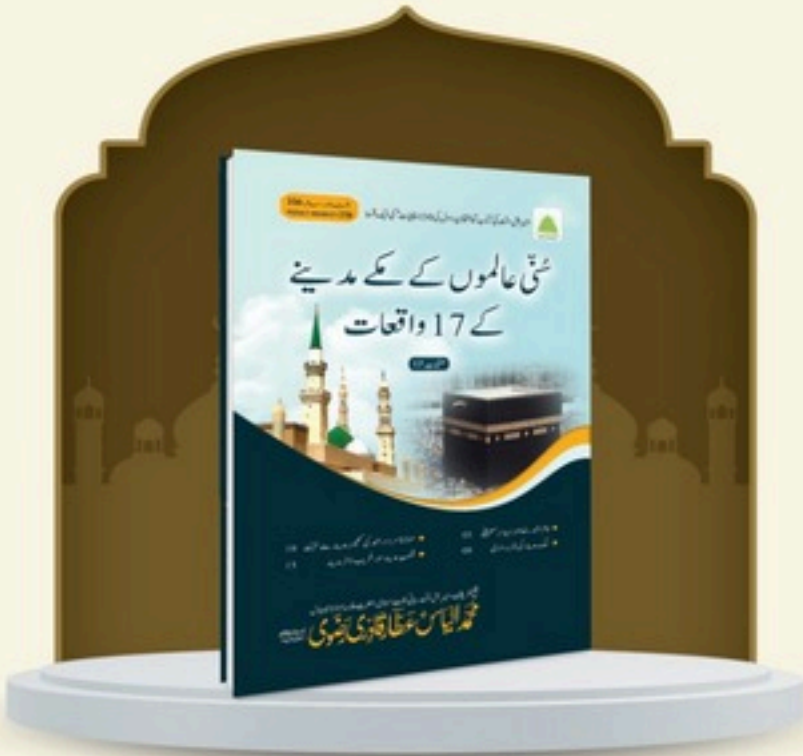
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in matters of wealth. For a great amount of water to be near a person does not harm him, as evident when looking at someone who lives along a shore. Similarly, a little amount of water is also not harmful so long as there is enough available to suffice one's needs. Water is indispensable to humans; neither do we despise a lot of water, nor are we neglectful of it. Rather, we say that we will drink it according to our needs, give it to others to drink, and not be stingy in this regard.

Wealth should also be seen in a similar light by people; having it or not having it should not affect them. When a person gains cognizance (*ma'rifah*) of Allah Almighty and is honoured with entrusting his affair to Him (*tawakkul*), he becomes certain he will receive sufficient sustenance for as long as he lives, just like he receives water.¹

¹ *Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm*, vol. 4, p. 237

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978-969-722-627-6



01082497



فیضانِ مدینہ، محلہ سوداگران، پرانی سبزی منڈی کراچی

UAN +92 21 111 25 26 92 0313-1139278

www.maktabatulmadinah.com / www.dawateislami.net

feedback@maktabatulmadinah.com / ilmia@dawateislami.net