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الدنيا ظل زائل

Life is a Fading Shadow

By

**Abdul-Malik bin Muhammad
bin Abdul Rahman Al-Qasim**

Translated by

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In the Name of Allâh,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Publishers Note

All the praises and thanks are due to Allâh, the *Rubb* of the worlds, and may Allâh exalt the mention of the Prophet Muhammad, the chosen, the trustworthy, and the mention of his Household and all of his Companions.

We are presenting this book '*Life is a Fading Shadow*' which is compiled by the well-known scholar Abdul Malik bin Muhammad bin Abdul Rahman Al-Qasim. The compiler has produced in this book a good collection of excerpts from the writings of the Imams of this Muslim *Ummah*.

As is clear by the name of the book, it is based on the fact that the life of the world is nothing but a passageway, so a Muslim should strive for the destination in the Hereafter.

We are captured by the charms of this world and happen to indulge in the worldly affairs so much that we forget our main obligation and ultimate destination. This book is a good endeavor to remind of this absolute fact and turn us from the deceptions of satanic intuitions.

May Allâh help us all to perform our duties well and in a perfect manner so that in the Hereafter we may be able to attain success. — *Amin!*

Abdul Malik Mujahid
General Manager
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Introduction

All thanks are to Allâh, Who made this life a transient passageway and the Hereafter an everlasting life, and may Allâh's peace and blessings be on the most honorable of all Messengers and Prophets, our Prophet Muhammad.

When one contemplates how eager the people of this life are to live and enjoy it and strive hard with delight to collect its temporary possessions, one feels amazed and astonished. Do they consider this life the ultimate goal and the only life to live? They act as if they were created to collect material possessions and strive hard to earn life's riches. They have forgotten a Day during which they will go back to Allâh.

'Life is a Fading Shadow,' is a booklet in which we collected the thoughts that those¹ who were before us gave to the life of the world, those who were certain that it was a passageway that ends with the lasting journey to Reckoning and the Day of Judgment. This book is a reminder of the Hereafter and the ultimate destination. It should provide those who travel this journey with sufficient provision. We ask Allâh to make our hearts, statements and actions sincere for the sake of His Honorable Face.

**Abdul Malik bin Muhammad
bin Abdul Rahman Al-Qasim**

¹ From our *Salaf*: the Companions, the second and third generations of Islam, and the scholars of Islam who followed their righteous path and way.

Reality of the Worldly Life

Allâh said describing this life:

﴿ إِنَّمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا مَتَّعٌ وَإِنَّ الْآخِرَةَ هِيَ دَارُ الْقَرَارِ ﴾
[غافر: ٣٩]

"Truly, this life of the world is nothing but a (quick passing) enjoyment, and verily, the Hereafter that is the home that will remain forever." (40:39)

Allâh also warned against the trial that one's wealth and children represent:

﴿ وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴾
[الأففال: ٢٨]

"And know that your possessions and your children are but a trial and that surely, with Allâh is a mighty reward." (8:28)

Allâh disallowed one from longing for the wealth and material riches that other people have:

﴿ وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ﴾
[طه: ١٣١]

"And strain not your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to various groups of them (polytheists and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh), the splendor of the life of this world, that We may test them thereby." (20:131)

There are many *Âyat* (Verses) in the Qur'ân that admonish this life. Rather, most of the Qur'ân contains references that belittle this worldly life and discourage people from indulging in it, while calling them to the Hereafter. Therefore, we do not need to repeat these Verses since this subject is amply mentioned in the Qur'ân.¹

¹ *Al-Ihyâ'*, vol. 3, p. 216

Here is the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ described the significance, he placed on this life when he said:

«مَا لِي وَلِلدُّنْيَا! إِنَّمَا مَثَلِي وَمَثَلُ الدُّنْيَا: كَمَثَلِ رَاكِبٍ قَالَ فِي ظِلِّ شَجَرَةٍ، ثُمَّ رَاحَ وَتَرَكَهَا».

“What have I to do with this life? The parable of me and this life is the parable of a rider who rested in the shade of a tree and then departed.” (This *Hadith* was collected by Ahmad bin Hanbal, At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and Al-Hakim, and Al-Albani¹ rendered it authentic)

The Messenger ﷺ also encouraged preparing for the Hereafter and in taking provisions from this life for the

¹ Shaikh Muhammad Nasir Ad-Din Al-Albani, one of the great scholars of Islam and the most distinguished scholar of *Hadith* in our time. His scientific works in-defense of the *Sunnah*, *Hadith*, analogy, and criticism of *Hadith* collections with regards to their authenticity, or lack of it, were spread over half a century of blessed books and articles and thousands of lectures recorded on tape-recorder. He died this year after a long illness and his loss was felt throughout the Muslim World, which saw his over 200 books transferred to its various parts and beautify just about every library and personal collections of Islamic books. May Allâh grant him his mercy for his services to Islam in general and the knowledge of *Hadith* and *Fiqh* in specific, and give his students and students of knowledge everywhere the patience in their moment of grief and the dedication to continue his honorable mission. Indeed, there is no other scholar who lived in our time who was instrumental in resurrecting the knowledge of *Hadith* and *Sunnah* more than Al-Albani did. But, he died and joined his great friend and brother, the scholar of Islam Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz bin Baz who also died this year. It is a sign of the imminence of the Hereafter that Allâh takes away knowledge by taking away the scholars. May Allâh reward them for their efforts and join them together in Paradise, like brothers facing each other on thrones.

Last life, especially since this life occupies its inhabitants: Allâh's Messenger ﷺ said:

«كُنْ فِي الدُّنْيَا: كَأَنَّكَ غَرِيبٌ، أَوْ عَابِرُ سَبِيلٍ».

“In this life, be like a stranger or a passerby.” (Al-Bukhâri)

Moreover, when realizing how eager people are for this life and their vitality in collecting its passing delights, one should remember the Prophet's statement:

«إِذَا رَأَيْتَ اللَّهَ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - يُعْطِي الْعَبْدَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى مَعَاصِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ، فَإِنَّمَا هُوَ اسْتِذْرَاجٌ».

“If you see that Allâh the Exalted and Most Honored gives the slave from (the splendor) of this life what he likes, even though he is a sinner, then know that it is Allâh's gradual punishment.” (Ahmad and Al-Baihaqi).

Those who are fond of this life, with its passing enjoyment, and work hard to collect its processions, will be too busy to worship and obey Allâh and to fulfill their Islamic duties and responsibilities perfectly and on time. The Prophet ﷺ said:

«اِقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ، وَلَا يَزِدَادُ النَّاسُ عَلَى الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا حِرْصًا، وَلَا يَزِدَادُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا بُعْدًا».

“The Last Hour has drawn near, yet people are ever becoming eager for this life and drawing away from Allâh.” (Al-Hakim)

It is permissible to collect wealth from pure and lawful resources and spend it lawfully and without extravagance; this is an act of worship with which the Muslim draws close to Allâh. If one collects the riches of this life from

unlawful resources and spends his wealth on unlawful means and ways, then it is the worst provision that will accompany him to the Fire.

Yahya bin Mu'adh said:

"I do not order you to abandon this life, but to abandon sin. Disinterest in this life is a virtue, but abandoning sin is a religious obligation. Surely, you are more in need of establishing the obligations, than collecting virtues and minor good deeds."

Dear Muslims, this life, in which the son of Adam dwells, has obvious riches and delights such as clothes, foods, drinks, etc. All these aspects provide the necessary provisions and sustenance for one's journey back to Allâh. Mankind needs these provisions, but just in the right amounts and from lawful resources; such are the praised believers who take from this life what they are allowed and permitted. Those who take more than what is necessary, in greediness, will become among the admonished ones. Indeed, even though greed collects wealth, it turns what is essentially useful into the harmful that busies one from seeking his benefit and earning what is useful in essence. This is just like a man in a caravan – who travels in the desert; he brings his animal to the water resource and takes good care of its drinking, food and covering it with garments or adornments of various colors. He does all this, while unaware that the rest of the caravan has already left him and departed on its way. This man will end up all alone in the desert and fall prey to wild beasts. We should also assert that one is ordered to take from this life what is necessary for his survival; one's body and means of livelihood are necessary for him to sustain his life. The middle and best way, is the safest way: taking the necessary provisions for one to continue the journey through this life. If what one takes from this life is a part of what

he desires but lawful and from lawful resources, then giving the heart what it desires in this case helps it fulfill its need and satisfy its right.¹

'Aun bin Abdullah said:

"Both this life and the Hereafter are in the heart just like the two sides of a scale: whichever is heavier will outweigh the other."²

No doubt, those who obey Allâh and fulfill His Orders with regards to this life, will enjoy great goodness; giving charity, spending on his rightful needs, helping spread Islamic knowledge, building mosques, and so forth. For this type, this life's possessions become a blessing from Allâh, Who directs them to spend their wealth in a way that benefits them in the Last Life. In contrast to this better mannerism, Al-Hasan was once asked about, who will be screaming in horror the most on the Day of Judgment, meaning from Allâh's torment. He said:

"A man whom Allâh had granted bounties, which he used in the disobedience of Allâh."³

It is a fact that mankind covets money and collecting gold and silver. From the time they are born until they die, people strive to amass wealth, until their life reaches its end and conclusion. They should realize that life goes through a circle of deprivation and abundance, from wealth to poverty, from happiness to sadness. Change is the core of this life and this is the way Allâh created it, until the Day when He decides that this life ends and is terminated. In this context, we can understand this wisdom from 'Umar رضي الله عنه:

¹ Mukhtasar Minhâj Al-Qâsidin, p. 211

² Tazkiyatun-Nufus, p. 129

³ Al-Hasan Al-Basri, p. 47