

# إِضَاعَةُ الْوَقْتِ

## Wasting Time

### From an Islamic Perspective

*"The two feet of the slave will remain standing on the Day of Judgement until he is asked about four things. About his life, how did he spent it? About his youth, how did he use it? About his wealth, how did he earn it and what did he spend it on? And about his knowledge, what did he do with it?"*

Prophet Muhammad

## Wasting time

Wasting time is a disease today that many people have been infected by. Even the *muwahhidūn* indulge in an abundance of time-wasting every single day. The Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*) said:

نِعْمَتَانِ مَعْبُودٌ فِيهِمَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ الصِّحَّةُ وَالْفَرَاغُ

***"There are two blessings that many people do not take advantage of; Good health and free time."***

(Sahīh Al-Bukhārī)

Useless activities – such as surfing the internet, checking social media and watching videos with no benefit in – claim hours and hours from the lives of the Muslims. These hours will become a regret for the Muslims in the *ākhirah*.

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal – *radiAllāhu 'anhu* – said:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : لَيْسَ يَتَحَسَّرُ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ إِلَّا عَلَى سَاعَةٍ مَرَّتْ بِهِمْ لَمْ يَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِيهَا

***"The Messenger of Allah (sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam) said: 'The people of paradise will not regret anything except an hour that passed them by, in which they did not remember Allah.'"***

(At-Tabarānī and Al-Bayhaqī – classified as *da'īf*)

Al-Munāwī – *rahimahullāh* – said in explanation of this *hadīth*:

(ليس يتحسر أهل الجنة على شيء) مما فاتهم في الدنيا (إلا على ساعة مرت بهم لم يذكروا الله عز وجل فيها) أي احتسابا وتقربا إليه وذلك لأنهم لما عرضت عليهم أيام الدنيا وماذا خرج لهم من ذكر الله تعالى ثم نظروا إلى الساعة الأخرى التي حرموا فيه الذكر مما تركوه من ذكره فأخذتهم الحسرات لكن هذه الحسرات إنما هي في الموقف لا في الجنة كما بينه الحكيم وغيره والغرض من السياق أن تعلم أن كل حركة ظهرت منك بغير ذكر الله فهي عليك لا لك

***"'The people of paradise will not regret anything', from what have passed them by in dunyā 'except an hour that passed them by, in which they did not remember Allah the Mighty and Majestic.' This means: Expecting a reward (from Him) and seeking nearness to Him. And this is because when the days of dunyā are presented to them and what has come from them of***

*remembrance of Allah the Exalted, and then they look at the other hours in which they forbade the remembrance of that which they left of His remembrance. Then they are overtaken by regrets, but these regrets are in the standing and not in paradise, just as Al-Hakīm and others than him have clarified. And the intention of this context is to learn that every movement which appears from you without the remembrance of Allah, then it is against you and not for you."*

(Fayd Al-Qadīr p. 390)

And Abū 'Amr Al-Awzā'ī – *rahimahullāh* – said:

لَيْسَ سَاعَةٌ مِنْ سَاعَاتِ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا وَهِيَ مَعْرُوضَةٌ عَلَى الْعَبْدِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَوْمًا فَيَوْمًا وَسَاعَةٌ فَسَاعَةٌ ، وَلَا تَمُرُّ بِهِ سَاعَةٌ لَمْ يَذْكُرِ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى فِيهَا إِلَّا تَقَطَّعَتْ نَفْسُهُ عَلَيْهَا حَسْرَاتٍ ، فَكَيْفَ إِذَا مَرَّتْ بِهِ سَاعَةٌ مَعَ سَاعَةٍ وَيَوْمٌ مَعَ يَوْمٍ [ وَكَيْلَةٌ مَعَ كَيْلَةٍ ] .

*"There is not an hour from the hours of dunyā except that it will be presented for the slave on the Day of Judgement, day after day, hour after hour. And not an hour passes him by in which he did not remember Allah in it, except that his soul is about to be ripped apart due to regret. So how if hour after hour and day after day [and night after night] passes him by?"*

(Hilyah Al-Awliyā)

Al-Hasan Al-Basrī – *rahimahullāh* – said in a letter which he wrote to 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azīz:

لَوْ أَنَّ مَدْفُونًا فِي قَبْرِهِ قِيلَ لَهُ هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا أَوْلَاهَا إِلَى آخِرِهَا ، بَجَعَلُهَا لَوْلَدِكَ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ يَتَنَعَّمُونَ فِيهَا مِنْ وِرَائِكَ ، فَقَدْ كُنْتُ وَلَيْسَ لَكَ هُمْ غَيْرُهُمْ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْكَ أَمْ يَوْمٌ تُتْرَكُ فِيهِ تَعْمَلُ لِنَفْسِكَ لِأَخْتَارِ ذَلِكَ ، وَمَا كَانَ لِيَجْمَعَ مَعَ الْيَوْمِ شَيْئًا إِلَّا اخْتَارَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْهِ رَغْبَةً فِيهِ وَتَعْظِيمًا لَهُ ، بَلْ لَوْ اقْتَصَرَ عَلَى سَاعَةٍ حُرِّبَهَا وَمَا بَيْنَ أَضْعَافِ مَا وَصَفْتُ لَكَ وَأَضْعَافِهِ يَكُونُ لِسَوَاهُ إِلَّا اخْتَارَ السَّاعَةَ لِنَفْسِهِ عَلَى أَضْعَافِ ذَلِكَ لِيَكُونَ لِعَيْرِهِ ، بَلْ لَوْ اقْتَصَرَ عَلَى كَلِمَةٍ يَقُولُهَا تُكْتَبُ لَهُ وَيَبِينُ مَا وَصَفْتُ لَكَ وَأَضْعَافِهِ لِأَخْتَارِ الْكَلِمَةَ الْوَّاحِدَةَ عَلَيْهِ ، فَانْتَقِدِ الْيَوْمَ لِنَفْسِكَ وَأَبْصِرِ السَّاعَةَ وَأَعْظِمِ الْكَلِمَةَ وَاحِدًا الْحَسْرَةَ عِنْدَ نُزُولِ السَّكْرَةِ

*"If it was said to buried person in his grave: 'Here is the dunyā from its beginning to its end, which you can make for your children with which they could live a life of comfort and luxury after you, then you would not have anything to worry about after them. (Would this be) more beloved to you or a day where you would be left to make deeds for (the benefit of) yourself?' Then he would verily*

choose that (i.e. the last mentioned). And he would not bring anything together with that day except that he would choose the day over it, longing for it and having a high opinion of it. Even if it was shortened to an hour and he was made to choose between it and the double of what I have described for you along with the double of it for someone besides him, except that he would choose the hour for himself over the double of it (i.e. the *dunyā*) for it to be for someone else. Even if it was shortened to one word he could say which would be written for him and between what I have described for you and the double of it, then he would verily choose the one word over it. So give a judgement over the day for yourself, see the hour, hold the word at high esteem and beware of the regret when the agony (of death) befalls.”

(Hilyah Al-Awliyā)

So all these quotes show how the believer hurtfully will regret his wasting of time in *dunyā* and wish that he would spend his hours in the worship of Allah. The Muslims vary in strength and ability, but what all are capable of – men and women, big and small, weak and strong – is remembering Allah the Exalted.

It is narrated under the authority of ‘Abdullāh ibn Busr – *radiAllāhu ‘anhu*:

أَنَّ رَجُلًا قَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ شَرَائِعَ الْإِسْلَامِ قَدْ كَثُرَتْ عَلَيَّ فَأُخِيرُنِي بِشَيْءٍ أَتَشَبَّهُتُ بِهِ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَا يَزَالُ لِسَانُكَ رَطْبًا مِنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

“That a man said: ‘O Messenger of Allah. Verily the laws of Islam have become too many for me. So inform me of something that I can adhere to.’ The Messenger of Allah (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*) said: ‘Keep your tongue wet with the remembrance of Allah.’”

(Sunan At-Tirmidhī)

As for the ways that people waste their time, then this differs from person to person. So each Muslim must identify the activities in his or her life that brings about no benefit – neither in *dunyā* nor *ākhirah* – and try to reduce the time spent on these as much as possible.

Ibn Al-Jawzī – *rahimahullāh* – said:

نسأل الله عز وجل أن يعرفنا شرف أوقات العمر ، وأن يوفقنا لاغتنامه . ولقد شاهدت خلقاً كثيراً لا يعرفون معنى الحياة : فمنهم من أغناه الله عن التكسب بكثرة ماله ، فهو يقعد في السوق أكثر النهار ، ينظر إلى الناس ، وكم تمر به من آفة ومنكر ! ومنهم من يخلو بلعب الشطرنج ! ، ومنهم من يقطع الزمان بكثرة الحديث عن السلاطين ، والغلاء والرخص ،

إلى غير ذلك : فعلمت أن الله تعالى لم يُطْلِع على شرف العمر ، ومعرفة قدر أوقات العافية ، إلا مَنْ وَفَّقَهُ وأهمه اغتنام ذلك ، ( وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ )

*“We ask Allah to teach us the how honored the time of life is, and that He gives us success to benefit from it. I have verily seen many people who do not know what the meaning with life is. Among them are those whom Allah has made free from having to earn for a living due to his great fortune. So he sits in the market most of the day and looks at people. And how much harm and evil does not pass him by. And some of them play chess. And some of them cuts off the time by speaking much about the rulers, raise in prices and discounts, and other things than these. So I learned that Allah does not make anyone aware of how honored time is and knowing the value of good times, except the one whom He has given success and inspired to benefit from it.*

وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ

**“And none is granted it except the owner of the great fortune.” (Fussilat 41:35)**

(Sāid Al-Khātir)

There are two things to take notice of in this quote:

- 1) That people differ in the way that they waste time. As Ibn Al-Jawzī – *rahimahullāh* – mentions; some sit in the market, some play chess, some speak much about irrelevant things etc. So it is up to the believer to identify his or her own type of time-wasting and eliminate it as much as possible.
- 2) Regarding his words about the man who sits in the market most of the day: ‘*And how much harm and evil does not pass him by.*’ We compare this with the one who spends a lot of time looking at news, social media or videos with irrelevant content. How much harm and evil is he or she not exposed to – even though the intention is not to look at or hear forbidden things, such as seeing the ‘*awrah* of people or listening to music. When this is the case then it is no longer time-wasting, rather time-wasting combined with committing *harām* (forbidden acts).

Ibn Al-Jawzī – *rahimahullāh* – also said:

وكان عثمان الباقلاني دائم الذكر لله تعالى، فقال إني وقت الإفطار أحس بروحي كأنها تخرج لأجل اشتغالي بالأكل عن الذكر. وأوصى بعض السلف أصحابه فقال: إذا خرجتم من عندي فتفرقوا لعل أحدكم يقرأ القرآن في طريقه. ومتى

اجتمعتم تحدثتم. واعلم أن الزمان أشرف من أن يضيع منه لحظة، فإن في الصحيح عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه قال: من قال سبحان الله العظيم وبحمده غرست له بها نخلة في الجنة. فكم يضيع الآدمي من ساعات يفوته فيها الثواب الجزيل، وهذه الأيام مثل المزرعة، فكأنه قيل للإنسان. كلما بذرت حبة أخرجنا لك ألف كر، فهل يجوز للعاقل أن يتوقف في البذر ويتوانى.

*"And 'Uthmān Al-Bāqilānī used to always make dhikr to Allah. And he said: 'Verily at the time of eating I feel like my soul is about to exit (my body) due to being busy with eating from the remembrance (of Allāh).'*

*And some of the salaf would give advice to their companions, so he would say: 'When you leave me then divide yourselves. Perhaps will one of you read the Qurān on his way. But when you are gathered you speak.'*

*And know that the time is more honored than you should waste even a moment of it. It is verily narrated in the Sahīh from the Prophet (sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam) that he said:*

مَنْ قَالَ : سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ ، غُرِسَتْ لَهُ نَخْلَةٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ

***"The one who says: 'SubhānAllāh Al-'Adhīm wa Bihamdihi', for him a tree will be planted in paradise."***

*So how much does the human waste of hours where abundant of rewards passes him by. And these days are like a field, and it is as if it was said to the human: Every time you sow one seed, then we will let thousands of them emerge for you. Is it thereafter allowed for the sane person that he stops sowing and becomes slow (in reaping the reward)?"*

(Sāid Al-Khātir)

It takes only two seconds to mention the remembrance which will guarantee the believer a tree in paradise.

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ

***SubhānAllāh Al-'Adhīm wa Bihamdihi***

Yet many people forsake this – and many other types of remembrance which contains huge rewards and benefits both in *dunyā* and *ākhirah* – while they spend several hours on things that does not benefit them in anything.

The believer is encouraged to decrease his or her amount of time-wasting and to be mindful of the day where the slaves will stand before their Lord the Most High.

The Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*) said:

لَا تَزُولُ قَدَمَا عَبْدٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَتَّى يُسْأَلَ عَنْ أَرْبَعِ خِصَالٍ : عَنْ عُمُرِهِ ، فِيمَ أَفْنَاهُ ؟ وَعَنْ شَبَابِهِ ، فِيمَ أَبْلَاهُ ؟ وَعَنْ مَالِهِ ، مِنْ أَيْنَ اكْتَسَبَهُ ؟ وَفِيمَ أَنْفَقَهُ ؟ وَعَنْ عِلْمِهِ ، مَاذَا عَمِلَ فِيهِ ؟

*"The two feet of the slave will remain standing on the Day of Judgement until he is asked about four things. About his life, how did he spend it? About his youth, how did he use it? About his wealth, how did he earn it and what did he spent it on? And about his knowledge, what did he do with it?"*

(Ibn Hibbān and At-Tirmidhī)

So let the hours of your life be for you on the Day of Judgement and not against you. And discipline your soul to enjoy the remembrance of Allah instead of finding pleasure in what brings about no benefit.

Ibn Al-Qayyim narrated that Ash-Shafi'ī –*rahimahullāh* – said:

صَحِبْتُ الصُّوفِيَّةَ . فَمَا انْتَفَعْتُ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا بِكَلِمَتَيْنِ ، سَمِعْتُهُمْ يَقُولُونَ : الْوَقْتُ سَيْفٌ . فَإِنْ قَطَعْتَهُ وَإِلَّا قَطَعَكَ . وَنَفْسُكَ إِنْ لَمْ تَشْغَلْهَا بِالْحَقِّ ، وَإِلَّا شَغَلَتْكَ بِالْبَاطِلِ .

*"I accompanied the sūfiyyah and I did not benefit from them in anything but two words. I heard them say: The time is a sword, either you break it or else it breaks you. And your soul, if you don't busy it with the truth then it will busy you with the falsehood."*

(Madārij As-Sālikīn)

And all praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all the worlds.

And may the peace and abundant blessings be upon Muhammad, his family, his companions and those who follow his guidance until the Day of Judgement.