



**THE CONCEPT OF ZUHUD AND IT'S RELATION  
TO MODERN LIFESTYLE**

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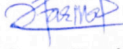
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## AUTHOR DECLARATION

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

I hereby declare that the work in this academic project is my own except for quotations and summaries which have been duly acknowledged.

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الله عليه والسلام وعلى آله أصحابه ومن تبعهم إلى يوم الدين...

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## ABSTRAK

Kajian ini membincangkan tentang konsep zuhud dan hubungannya dalam gaya hidup moden. Di dalam kajian ini mengandungi lima bab. Bab pertama dalam kajian ini membincangkan tentang kertas kerja kajian. Manakala dalam bab yang kedua, penulis membincangkan tentang pengertian zuhud dari segi bahasa dan istilah serta tujuan hidup zuhud di dalam kehidupan. Selanjutnya, melalui bab yang ketiga penulis menghuraikan tentang konsep zuhud serta hubungannya dalam kehidupan masa kini. Manakala dalam bab yang keempat penulis mengemuka dan menghuraikan beberapa tokoh zuhud dalam Islam. Dalam bab yang kelima mengandungi penutup, komentar dan cadangan. Melalui kajian ini, penulis telah menggunakan beberapa kaedah atau metodologi iaitu kaedah induktif, pemerhatian, temubual dan kajian perpustakaan iaitu dengan mengumpul maklumat dan data-data yang berkaitan dengan tajuk. Daripada kajian yang dijalankan, penulis mendapati konsep zuhud mempunyai hubungan yang kuat di dalam kehidupan moden tetapi ianya perlu difahami dengan jelas dan teliti.

## **ABSTRACT**

This research mainly discusses about the concept of zuhud and it's relation to modern lifestyle. In this research contains five chapters. In the first chapter of research discussed about the proposal. Than, in the second chapter the writer discuss about the meaning of zuhud from the literally and technically and the purpose of zuhud in life. Therefore, through the third chapter, the author explains about the concept of zuhud and its relation to modern lifestyle. Furthermore, in the chapter fourth author is list out and explain about the zuhud prominent figure in Islam. While in the fifth chapter contains about the conclusion, comment and suggestion. Through in this research, writer used a several technique or methodology namely inductive technique, observation, interview and library research to collect all of data and information that relate with topic. From this research, we can say that the concept of zuhud has a strong relation with the modern lifestyle but it must deeply understanding by the society.

## ملخص البحث

يتناول هذا البحث "فكرة الزهد وصلتها بأساليب الحياة المعاصرة". ويتكون من فصول خمسة. وعرضت الكاتبة في الفصل الأول مقدمة لخطة البحث. وفي الفصل الثاني ناقشت معنى الزهد لغة وإصطلاحاً وبينت أهداف أساليب الزهد في الحياة. وفي الفصل الثالث موضوع الزهد وصلته بنمط الحياة الحديثة. وفي الفصل الرابع أمثلة من الزهاد في تاريخ الإسلام وفي الفصل الخامس خلاصة البحث وتوصيات واقتراحات. وقد اعتمدت الكاتبة على منهج استقرائي والإهتمام والحوار ودراسة مكتبية بحيث جمعت المعلومات والدراسات المتصلة بالموضوع ثم قامت بتحليلها. وقد اتمت من دراستها إلى نتيجة هي أن لفكرة الزهد صلة وثيقة للحياة المعاصر لكن ينبغي أن تفهم هذا الفكرة على الوجه الصحيح.

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## GLOSSORY

Comprehensive	Including or dealing with all or nearly all elements or respect of Something
Classification	The action or process of classifying something according to shared qualities or characteristics. The classification of disease according to symptoms.
Globalization	Develop or be developed so as to make possible international influence or operation with communication globalize capital markets, building facilities overseas is part of the strategy company of every company aims to globalize.
Materialism	A tendency to consider material possessions a physical comport as more important than spiritual values.
Tassawuf	The word for spiritual insight
Modern	Adjective of or relating to the present or recent times as opposed to the remotest past the pace of modern life.
Hedonis	The ethical theory that pleasure (in the sense of the satisfaction of desires is the Highest good and proper aim of human life.
Universal	Affecting or done by all people or things in the world or in particular group.
Potential	Having or showing the capacity to become or develop into something in the future.
Quality	The standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind or the degree of excellence of something.
Khuluq	Way of life a person character, disposition, nature, habitual, behaviors.
Khulwah	Privacy a man and woman being alone together in a situation where there is no fear of intrusion by anyone else, so that an opportunity

exists for sexual intimacy. In Islam Only the members of one's immediate family are allowed to be in privacy with the ladies of that family. For other males, there should be a chaperon present. This does not indicate lack of trust but is intended as a protection.

- Maqam                      A station the state arrived at when the servant of Allah has acquired inner certainty.
- Ahwal                      It is a technical term in Sufism, referring to spiritual states of ecstasy or illumination achieved by the help of Allah, as one progresses along the Sufi path.
- Muslim                     Any person who has accepted Islam by submitting his or her life to the will of Allah.
- Sufism                     Sufism is often called Islamic mysticism but the Muslim never seeks a mystical way of life just for its own sake. Sufi highlights the need for personal purification and piety through constant awareness and love of God and honest and humble self-knowledge. Sufis often choose a way of life based on ascetics and meditation on the transient nature of all forms of existence as apposed to the divine creator.
- Zahid                      see zuhud. One who does without no longer needing or desiring what he/she does without so the avoidance of it is not a struggle or denial.

**TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM FOR THE ARABIC WORDS  
TRANSLITERATION SCHEDULE**

1.	<u>Alphabet</u> <u>Arabic Letter</u>	<u>Latin Letter</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
	ء	‘	fa’r
	ب	B	burd
	ت	T	tall
	ث	Th	thawb
	ج	J	jidār
	ح	H	halīb
	خ	Kh	khādim
	د	D	dīk
	ذ	Dh	dhahab
	ر	R	rafīq
	ز	Z	zamīl
	س	S	salām
	ش	Sh	sha <sup>‘</sup> b
	ص	s	sakhr
	ض	d	dayq
	ط	t	ṭāzij
	ظ	z	zalim
	ع	‘	‘aql
	غ	gh	ghulām
	ف	f	Fīl
	ق	q	qalb
	ك	k	kalām
	ل	l	lubb

<u>Arabic Letter</u>	<u>Latin Letter</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
م	m	Māl
ن	n	najm
هـ	h	hawl
و	w	waraq
ي	y	yamm

## 2. Short Vocal

<u>Arabic Letter</u>	<u>Latin Letter</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
_____	a	kataba
_____	i	<sup>◌</sup> alima
_____	u	ghuliba

## 3. Long Vocal

<u>Arabic Letter</u>	<u>Latin Letter</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
ا	ā	<sup>◌</sup> ālīm, fatā
ي	ī	<sup>◌</sup> ālīm, dā <sup>◌</sup> ī
و	u	<sup>◌</sup> ulum, ad <sup>◌</sup> u

## 4. Diphthong

<u>Arabic Letter</u>	<u>Latin Letter</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
و	aw	nawm
ي	ay	layl
ي	iyy	Shafi <sup>◌</sup> yy (at the end)
و	uww	<sup>◌</sup> uluww (at the end)

## 5. Exception

- a. The Arabic letter ء (*hamzah*) at the first words were transliterate into ‘a’ not ‘.

Example: أكبر                      Transliteration: akbar (not ‘akbar)

- b. The Arabic letter ة (*ta’ marbutah*) at the words without ا (al) that was continued to another words that was begin with ا (al) at the early, were transliterate into ‘t’.

Example: مكتبة الإمام

Transliteration: maktabat al-imām

However, if there are words that have ال (*al*) or at the root word or to the last words, this *ta' marbutah* were transliterate into '**h**'.

Example: المكتبة الأهلية

Transliteration: al-maktabah al-ahliyyah

قلعة

qal<sup>h</sup>ah

دار وهبة

dār wahbah

## ABBREVIATION

Abd	Abdul
B	Bin
Dr	Doktor
Hj	Haji
Hlm	Halaman
Ibid	Ibidem ( Pada Tempat Yang Sama )
Mohd	Muhammad
n.a	No. Author
n.d	No Date/ Year
no.pb	No publisher
P	Page
S.A.W	Sollallahu Alaihi Wasallam
S.W.T	Subhanahu Wa Taala
Sdn Bhd	Sendirian Berhad
Vol	Volume
&	And
YADIM	Yayasan Dakwah Islam Malaysia
IKIM	Institut Kefahaman Islam Malaysia
JAKIM	Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia
UKM	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
KUIM	Kolej Universiti Islam Malaysia

# CHAPTER ONE

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Mysticism is one of the Islamic knowledge, which is familiar among the Muslims today. Its contributions towards knowledge have more or less increased the Islamic references that are still being used by the researcher as the main source be it among the Muslim authors or the non-Muslims.

It is based on this phenomenon that Mysticism has become one of the dominant aspects in spreading the ideology of Islam. There are two main elements in this process that are the canvassers who carry the research of analyzing mysticism and the people who practice mysticism and simultaneously become the role model of those who are not in this field. The people who practice mysticism are the previous Muslim theologians such as Al-Sarraj, Al-Qushayri and other famous theologians who are very loyal in practicing mysticism in their lives.

As the results of their journey through mysticism, they had left some collection of books that they wrote. The books are Al-Luma', Al-Risalah, Al-Qushayriyyah and what not. Basically, their writings are about the remedy of spiritual disease by practicing mysticism and hence, these methods has been proven effective where it can cured and purified humans heart that can lead to close proximity to Allah S.W.T.

The ascetic will go through certain stages in the process of healing human's soul that are known as *maqamat* and *ahwal* before he reach the final aim that is Allah. Among the *maqam* and *ahwal* that the ascetic has to exempt are repentance, willingness, be grateful, love, piety, patience, surrender to God's will and what not. Apart from that, the ascetic has to restrain him from committing sinful acts (*mazmumah*) such as greedy, laying or

too much devotion towards worldly things, which will lead to the destruction of his pleasant deeds (mahmudah).

The verses that have been revealed by Allah swt regardless of being Makiyyah or Madaniyyah talk a lot about human's approach. One of the issues is that a comparison between the truth and reality of life. The reason for the revelation is mainly to guide mankind undergoes the worldly challenges. As Allah says in His Holy Quran:

إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنْ السَّمَاءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ النَّاسُ  
وَالْأَنْعَامُ حَتَّى إِذَا أَخَذَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَازَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَا أَنَّهُمْ قَادِرُونَ عَلَيْهَا أَتَاهَا أَمْرُنَا  
لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَاهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَنْ لَمْ تَغْنَبِ بِالْأَمْسِ كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ!

This verse explains about life, which is being compared to a natural occurrence in this world that is the infinite rain. Generally, we do know that rain benefits humans and animals tremendously. The drops of rain could assist humans in agricultural activities where by the outgrowth of their crops would fascinate them. However, rain could also be the mean of Allah to obliterate mankind.

(Al-Quran. Yunus: 10:24)

The last statement of the previous paragraph is actually the further explanation on the concept of life that needs to be contemplated by humans. Man needs a lot of time to inculcate faithful characters in his soul, to worship and also to fight in the way of Allah. Man has to prepare himself completely by comprehending the knowledge of Allah in order to gain the blessings of Allah. On the other hand, man does not need a longer time to divert his belief. By only uttering a few words is enough to indicate his ingratitude.

Thus, it is important for mankind to truly understand the concepts of life and at the mean time expand the ideology of God by putting the aspect of ascetic as the basis of life. This concept of ascetic concerns about human's manners towards God while worshipping God and the guidelines in carrying the tasks that have been assigned to mankind. Therefore, humans need very strong inner selves to restrain themselves from the seducing devil.

Unfortunately, many people thought that ascetic way of life is a life of the uncivilized. They judge that such life is not suitable in this modern Muslim's community and they reject ascetic way of life because to them, such a life could annihilate one's future and Muslim's community could be left far behind in terms of modernization.

The number of people who really understand the Islamic concepts is decreasing in Muslim's community today particularly among the youngsters. Their daily lives is getting apart from religion, consequently because of too much devotion in the worldly things, wealthy, freedom, temporarily assessment and neglecting the commands of Allah. This situation can be obviously seen through their way of thinking, way of life, way of dressing and what not. This makes some people fail to differentiate between a Muslim and a non-Muslim.

In order to ensure that Muslims practice the ascetic way of life today, the caller and knowledgeable people in Islam have to show a positive development in practicing piety in life. This way of life could give the strength and firmness to the community in facing the variety of challenges in life. Even though people often misinterpret ascetic way of life negatively and as a decline of the society, in an ideal point of view, it is the perfect way of life that has brought Islam into prosperity in the early age of Islam.

## **1.1 Problem Statement**

Now a day, Muslim society cannot practice A Zuhud in our life and they are most to focus the world only. Therefore how the effectiveness and implication this concept in Muslim life and forgetter a hereafter.

Actually, The Muslim society must have a maintained their life at world and earthly. The blissfully at earthly forever blissful. Beside that, the Muslim society also cannot to practice this concept really. They think zuhud is focused only to earthly. As a finally the Muslim society must have understand to perform this concept in themselves.

## **1.2 Research Background**

Based on the writer reading, there is no research ever been done on this topic. However, there is a working paper presented by Prof. Zakaria Stapa entitled “The Concept of Piety In Muslim’s Community and Its Relation to the Malaysian Muslim’s Lifestyle Today”. This working paper however only discusses the concept of piety in general similarly to the Islamic traditions and the Sufis point of view.

Apart from that, there is a research, which focuses on the concept of piety and stinginess. This issue can be found in the educational course prepared by Khairol Azman b Mohd Ismail to fulfill the condition of receiving Degree in UKM, entitled “Piety and Stinginess: One Comparison”.

Jalilah Abdullah and Hasnita Jaafar have also discussed the concept of piety in Anis magazine, October 2003, pg. 89. They explain the meaning of ascetic as concerning worldly things moderately. Meaning that, it is not wrong to search for wealth as long as it is spent properly to suffice the necessities, in giving charity and in other deeds that are permissible by the side of religion.

According to Hassan Basri, ascetic is giving up position, concentrating more to God, surrender to God's will, fear Allah, always be thinking and contemplating about his inner self.

Moreover, according to Dato' Ishak Baharom, former Selangor mufti, ascetic that is said as giving up the world means, the world that leads humans to carelessness. However, if the worldly life could bring humans near to Allah that is the best one.

### **1.3 Research Scope**

*Zuhud* or ascetic is one part of Islamic Mysticism. It is good element and need to practiced Muslim society. The topic of research the concept of *zuhud* in Muslim society. Beside that, writer discuss about background of *zuhud*, meaning of *zuhud*, the purpose life of *zuhud*, the concept of *zuhud* in modern lifestyle, the ascetic prominent figure in Islam and furthermore conclusion.

### **1.4 The importance of research**

This research is carried out based on the writer's awareness on the fewer number of Muslim's involvement in the field of mysticism. Where by, we do acknowledge that there is no easy way to be near to Allah regardless of learning and understanding this knowledge thoroughly. Besides, this research could help society to comprehend the real concept of piety and practicing it in this modern life.

The writer also hopes that the society would accept mysticism as an institution that could teach mankind particularly Muslims towards a perfect way of life which has been resembled in the Quran. The reason why is that some of the Muslims today have criticized and underestimated the ascetic as not a true Muslim. They also insisted for this group to leave their ascetic way of life and move upwards along with the modernity.

Hence, the writer feels that this research is important to be carried out because the incorrect thinking and judgment on this ascetic group needs to be corrected in order to determine the modern Muslim's community does not neglect the law of the religion.

Besides that, this research is also important to remind the Muslim's society to safeguard the pure traditions that contained in this field of mysticism.

### **1.5 The objective of the research**

The writer chose to study this topic because of some important objectives that need to be considered of. As we know, the inculcation of ascetic in Muslim's community can make them the best society towards globalization.

Firstly, the writer wants to expose the true progression of ascetic based on the Al-Quran and Sunnah. The reason why is that the writer sometimes met a group of people who he cannot detect whether they are ascetic or not.

Secondly, the writer wishes to call the Muslim's community to adopt this concept in daily life. The society today focuses more on worldly life instead of the life in the hereafter. Through this research the writer wishes to explain that even though we practiced a modern way of life, we could combine it with the ascetic way of life that is the life of the Sufis.

Thirdly, the writer finds the sources related to mysticism in Malay language or English language are very few. Most of the sources are written in Arabic.

Finally, the writer hopes that the research can provide new information and increase the Muslim's awareness on the advantages of the concept of piety and its practice.

## 1.6 Research methodology

The writer uses variety of methods in analyzing the facts related to this research those are:

### (1) Deductive

- It is a process of gathering the facts that are related to this concept and then make a conclusion based on the best examples. Therefore, the writer will use other alternatives to acquire the information, such as:

#### a) Library

There are so much information could be found in the library basically through books, magazines, journals, newspapers and much more. The writer has made a research in several public libraries:

- Library of the College of Islamic University Malaysia
- National Library
- Islamic Public Library, Islamic Center, Kuala Lumpur
- Kedah Public Library, Alor Setar
- Tun Sri Lanang Library, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

#### b) Interview

### (2) Inductive

- It is a process of elaborating certain facts, which the writer feels need to be elaborated. This is the method the writer will use in evaluating the accuracy of some facts.

### (3) Observation

- It is used by the writer to collect more information on the concept of piety in modern society.

# CHAPTER TWO

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE DEFINITION OF ZUHUD (ASCETIC) IN ISLAM

#### 2.1 Literally

Generally, the word *zuhud* is taken from an Arabic word, *al-zuhd*. It is a derivation from the words *zahida*, *yazhadu*, *zuhdan*, which means the opposite word of like and devoted to the worldly matters.

Where as in English, the word *zuhud* is known as *ascetic*, which means practicing renunciation and neglecting all the worldly matters such wealth and delight (Oxford Dictionary). The word *zuhud* nonetheless means hatred towards something and leaving something.

Besides, *ascetic* could also means replacing the desire with something good. The utterance *ascetic* does not only mean leaving wealth and cursing it but also neglecting the worldly things. Allah swt has stated in His Holy Book in surah An-Nisa' verse 77. (Minhajul Qashidin, the road of the guided one).

Islamic Encyclopedia explains *ascetic* as not interested or even does not love the worldly pleasure but more devoted to gain the pleasure of the hereafter. The reason why is that in the Quran, it is affirmed that the hereafter is much better than this impermanent world. *Ascetic* is also a reminder for those who dedicated themselves too much to the life in this world until they tend to forget about The Almighty God and the life hereafter (Indonesian Islamic Encyclopedia, Iain Syarif Hidayatullah).

Where by *ascetic* through the study of mysticism is known as a very important *maqam* (final or station) for the Sufis in their spiritual journey.

According to Al-Ghazali, ascetic is avoiding the inclination towards something. Some of the scholars believe that ascetic is leaving the leisure life and pleasure in this world for the sake of achieving contentment in the hereafter. It is also means to vacant the heart from something which is desired by both hands. Thus, the genuine meaning of ascetic could be concluded as leaving something that is loved most and turn away from it for something else.

In the study of mysticism, ascetic is represented as leaving the feeling of love towards worldly matters because of craving for something in the hereafter. This is because the highest stage of ascetic is parting something that is being loved for the sake of Allah.

Al-Jurjani explains that ascetic is throwing away the self-inclination towards worldly things. Based on Al-Palembi's point of view, ascetic can be understood in three meanings that are leaving something for something better and ideal, neglecting worldly matters for the sake of gaining happiness in the hereafter and abandoning the bliss of world because of his or her infinite love towards Allah. (Othman Napiah, 2001).

Goldziher, R.A Nicholson and L. Massignon try to translate the word ascetic through ascetics but it is still imperceptible and it is too general. The utterance explains on the responses of the member of ascetic towards the components contained in ascetic such self-neglecting, self-avoiding and keeping aside the delightful matters.

Therefore, the most comprehensive definition of ascetic is the one that is stated in the Islamic Encyclopedia, which suggests that ascetic is restraining one self from committing sinful acts and anything, which is related to it.

Prof. Zakaria Stapa divided ascetic into two definitions that are the general definition and the specific definition. Generally, ascetic is meant as throwing or rejecting of something. Hence, a Muslim who wanted to be an ascetic person must release himself from all the negative tendencies. (Zakaria Stapa, 1997)

It is obviously shown that an ascetic life is the life of seeking God's mercy by being moderate in life. It is one of the alternatives to have all the impermanent pleasure of the world. Moreover, an ascetic life could express human attributes and increase the faith in Allah. For that reason, such a life could convey an eternity love towards Allah in the heart of a Muslim who always thought of Allah.

From the evaluation of the writer, it can be concluded that the meaning of ascetic literally consists of three elements, which are hatred or disliking towards something, parting worldly things and the purpose to get near to Allah.

## **2.2 Technically**

After comprehending the literal meaning of ascetic, the writer would now try to explain the meaning of ascetic in the technical term. What is meant by the technical meaning of ascetic is that the definition which is adopted from the scholars or famous Sufis and also from knowledgeable people such as al-Ghazali.

One thing that has to be kept in mind is that each and every single person of Sufis member has his or her very own definition of ascetic. We would not get the same definition between the Sufis member for they would give different description on ascetic.

According to Imam al-Ghazali in *Ihya Ulumuddin*, ascetic is adapting worldly things sufficiently. It is one of the gracious attributes and the highest one in terms of Islamic spiritual matter (*Ihya Ulumuddin*, 1992). Besides that, ascetic can also be referred to the situation and characteristic of someone who leaves his or her possession instead of denying something, which is not belong to him or her. Thus, someone who does not own anything could not be ascetic. Meaning that ascetic urged one's strength to turn his or her back to something that is owned by him or her. It is a delightful matter that could happen in one's daily life. Apart from that, ascetic does not only mean disliking worldly matters

or turning away from it. Ascetic focuses more to someone attitude who does like and even love worldly life.

In other words, the characteristic of ascetic life in Islamic point of view is not something, which is *rabbaniyah* in attribute that is to say solely focusing on worldly matters. However, it actually depends on someone who could bring the definition of ascetic into reality. An ascetic person will put a thorough effort in his or her work but at the same time does not allow the worldly things to surmount his or her heart in which it could be a factor of not obeying the commands of Allah.

Thus, an ascetic person must know how to manage the situation where he or she possesses something which is worldly in attribute. He or she should have overcome the trial by evaluating it not only by heart but also through a deep contemplation. By that, ascetic in Islamic point of view refers to the characteristic and situation of a person who successfully released him or her self from the confinement of human's desire (Yadim Journal).

Apart from that, an ascetic life not only can craft a purified soul but it is also a route to love and to approach a close relationship with Allah swt. Our beloved Prophet had said: -

ازهد في الدنيا يحبك الله. وازهد فيما في أيدك الناس يحبك الناس.

Meaning: -

*“Be ascetic in life for Allah would love you, be ascetic towards the things that are owned by other man for they would also love you.”*

(Narrated by Ibn Majah and Tabrani)

In fact, the definition of ascetic in this technical meaning is difficult to elaborate because it is a spiritual practice that is hard be explained in detail through common methods and the practice is based on human senses. According to the members of mysticism, ascetic means attribute of ignoring something that brings satisfaction to human's desire and

senses or neglecting something that is permissible by taking it moderately so that it can ponder more on the real spiritual aspects.

Where as theologians deem that an ascetic attribute is convey as disliking worldly matters and turns away from it i.e. leaving the worldly joy and replacing it with satisfaction of the hereafter. On the other hand, the Syariah members judge ascetic as avoiding one self from being defeated by wealth, not being fanatic by the worldly property, accepting the gift of Allah with open heart, giving priority to the life after death, choose to live in a modest way, hardworking, patient in preventing sinful acts and steer clear of begging.

From this definition it can be understood that ascetic in characteristic does not mean totally giving up the worldly things. In fact, these people regard worldly life as the best way to prepare themselves perfectly for the life in the hereafter. Islam in reality does not recommend Muslims to live in suffer. So, all the gifts of God in this world should be accepted with full gratitude because our lives contained precious values that have to be thanked to Allah. Besides, our lives in this mortal world are like a ‘farm’ for us to organize ourselves with valuable deeds that will be brought to the world after. Islam also does not encourage mankind to reject the content in this world but at the same time it does not support mankind to live in hardship (Ahmad Suzani b. Jaafar, 1996).

Islam actually does not forbid mankind to accumulate the property of wealth as long as it is based on the guidelines that have been declared by the religion’s law. It is for the sake of humans themselves as Prophet Muhammad s.a.w said: -

الزهادة في الدنيا ليست بتحريم الحلال ولا اضعاءة المال ولكن الزهادة في الدنيا ان تكون بما في يدالله اوثق منك بما في يديك وأن تكون في ثواب المصيبة اذا أنت أصبت بما ادغب منك فيها لو انما بقيت لك.

Meaning:

*“Ascetic in this world is not by forbidding the permissible and not by throwing away your property. But, ascetic in this world is that you believe in what is owned by Allah is more than yours. And if you are given difficulties in life, you willingly let it bare on you for you would get the reward.”*

Adopting from Ibn Taimiyah’s point of view, ascetic is parting matters that do not bring any benefit to the life of the hereafter (Indriaty Ismail, 1997). Meaning that, giving up property and position in order to practice a devoted life to the hereafter. Apart from that, ascetic is also defined as a pious person who does not prioritized worldly matters. According to the scholars of mysticism, ascetic is a characteristic that does not bother worldly matters such as eating, drinking, clothes, and facilities, but in a way, taking all the necessities of life in a sufficient amount in order to get close to Allah. An ascetic person is usually one who is not hot tempered and greedy but it is someone who is patient and peace in facing any trials or challenges in his or her life (zygnemateles, 1996).

Based on the several definitions that are mentioned above, it vividly shows how difficult it is to define the utterance ascetic in precise manner. However, it can be concluded from the definitions given that ascetic is an attribute or situation, purposely to avoid, neglect, leave and turn the heart from the pleasant life. Consequently, it is for the sake of obeying all the commands of Allah and focusing whole attention to the act of worshipping Allah in order to get near Him.

Nevertheless, the characteristic of ascetic actually lies in one’s heart and it all depends to the ascetic person. For that reason, we could summarize ascetic as being the attribute system in human’s body.

### 2.3 The Purpose of Living in Zuhud (Ascetic) Way of Life

Islam encourages a life, which is universal and comprehensive based on the concepts of God. As it has been explained before, an ascetic life is a life of seeking God's mercy and it is not a life, which only focuses on the spiritual aspects or other aspects that emphasize on the spiritual values without bothering to focus on other aspects.

In reality, Islam recommends a general life that combined both the worldly matters and also the hereafter. The purpose of such recommendation is to enhance mankind to be more optimistic solely towards Allah. Meaning that, mankind must only depend on Allah regardless of them being in contentment life or difficulties. As Allah declares in the Al-Quran: -

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا  
إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ !

Meaning: -

*Say: "O my servants who have transgressed against their souls! Despair not of the Mercy of God: for God forgives all sins: for He is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.*

(Al-Quran. Az-Zumar: 39:53)

Giving up the compassion of Allah could damage a Muslim's faith. Moreover, an ascetic life is purposely to lead a Muslim to live in modesty and not beyond the limits that have been drawn by the Syariah laws. Apart from that, it explains the real meaning of one's life. As contained in one of the al-hadith narrated by Muhammad Fadhlah bin Ubaid Al-Ansari r.a who listened Prophet Muhammad s.a.w said: -

طوبى لمن هدى للاسلام وكن عيشة كفافا وقنع...

Meaning: -

*It is lucky for a person to have a right guidance in Islamic teachings, for his or her life would be in modesty and sufficient with what he or her owns*

Where as in another hadith, Prophet Muhammad s.a.w has visualized the way to be moderate in life. Prophet Muhammad s.a.w said: -

من أصبح منكم آمناً في سرية معاني في جسده عنده قوت يومه فكأنما حيزت له الدنيا بحذا  
فيرها.

Meaning:

*A person who feels peaceful in the morning, healthy in his physical body and has enough food for a day is like the whole world has been gathered for him.*

(Narrated by At-Tirmidhi)

Prophet Muhammad s.a.w himself practices modesty in his life and he admits whatever that has been given by Allah in his family living. As Ibn Abbas r.a narrated: -

كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يبيت الليالي المتتابعة طاوياً وأهله لا يجدون عشاءً وكان  
أكثر خبزهم خبز الشعير!

Meaning: -

*There are times when Prophet Muhammad s.a.w and his family have nothing to eat but bread and wheat flour (poem).*

However, it does not mean that Prophet Muhammad s.a.w is an indolent person who lives in poverty. He actually wanted to teach his populace and mankind in whole that a leader

does not have to own wealth and properties. What is essential is that a leader must be rich in his mind and soul in order to develop the tasks that have been assigned to him.

Besides, an ascetic life teaches Muslims to be grateful to whatever existence towards whatever that has been given by Allah to them devoid of begging sympathy from other people. As Allah says: -

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا !

Meaning: -

*Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not niggardly, but hold a just (balance) between those (extremes);*

(Al-Quran.Al-Furqan: 25:67)

Additionally, this concept of ascetic could educate mankind to make efforts, to work hard and also to generate a concept of submission to Allah besides seeking for His blessings. This statement is confirmed in the Al- Quran where Allah says: -

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ !

Meaning: -

*And when the Prayer is finished, then may ye disperse through the land, and seek of the Bounty of God: and celebrate the Praises of God often (and without stint): that ye may prosper.*

(Al-Quran.Al-Jumaah:62: 10)

It is also through an ascetic life that we are expected to remember death. The reason why is that death is a guaranteed reality to all beings. Every being would taste the death regardless of being rich or poor. As Allah says: -

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُؤَفَّفُونَ أَجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْعُرُورِ!

Meaning: -

*Every soul shall have a taste of death: and only on the Day of Judgment shall you be paid your full recompense. Only he who is saved far from the Fire and admitted to the Garden will have attained the object (of Life): for the life of this world is but goods and chattels of deception.*

(Al-Quran.Al-'Imran:3: 185)

An ascetic life could change a stubborn soul into tenderness. It also reminds man to think about death often by which it does not instruct man to forget the peaceful life in this world but to teach man to work hard even though he knows that his death would approach someday. It is through this concept that human is recommended to spend in the way of Allah. Islam has its own trading system. It is meant to guide human from being betrayed, unjust activities, bribery and usury in which it can lead human to disdain. As Allah s.w.t says: -

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ أُحْصِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِي الْأَرْضِ يَحْسَبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ تَعْرِفُهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ لَا يَسْأَلُونَ النَّاسَ إِحْفَافًا وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

!

Thus, Islam emphasizes how important it is to practice congregational concept or living in community that is mutual cooperation between one and another in the way of Allah. Apart from that, the actual purpose of life is not to possess wealth solely because the

wealth in this world is impermanent in attribute. That is why Islam supports Muslims to feel sufficient with what they got. Prophet Muhammad s.a.w explained in related to the matter: -

انفق ينفق عليك...

Meaning: -

*Do spend in the way of Allah for Allah would spend it upon you.*

An ascetic life promotes Muslims to hate worldly matters and to love the hereafter. By that, it does not mean giving up all the properties in this world but in fact being not too extreme in pursuing all the wealth until one forgets his or her responsibilities to Allah s.w.t.

Man has to be cautious in determining him not to be deceived by the false trials in this world for he would be the slave of this fake world if he follows his misleading desire. Allah has affirmed in His Noble Book: -

إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّبَكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّبَكُمُ بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ...

Meaning: -

*O mankind! Do your duty to your Lord, and fear (the coming of) a Day when no father can avail aught for his son, nor a son avail aught for his father. Verily, the promise of God is true: let not then this present life deceive you, nor let the Chief Deceiver deceive you about God.*

(Al-Quran. Luqman: 33)

This world could betray human until he or she fail to remember the boundaries of life and forget his or her own dignity. Islam always reminds Muslims not to be misleading by the worldly wealth for it is only a mortal one. Allah s.w.t says: -

أَلْهَاكُمْ التَّكَاثُرُ. حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ. كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ.

Meaning: -

*The mutual rivalry for piling up (the good things of this world) diverts you (from the more serious things), Until ye visit the graves. But nay, ye soon shall know (the reality).*

(Al-Quran Al-Takathur: 1 – 3)

Furthermore, Islam also reminds Muslims not to be greedy. The reason why is that through the concept of ascetic, Muslims are taught to be familiar with the good values such as generosity and to help each other. Allah s.w.t says: -

وَأَمَّا مَنْ بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَى. وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَى. فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْعُسْرَى. وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا تَرَدَّى!

Meaning: -

*But he who is a greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient, And gives the lie to the Best, We will indeed make smooth for him the path to Misery; Nor will his wealth profit him when he falls headlong (into the Pit).*

(Al-Quran.Al-Layl: 8 – 11)

Hence, it is obviously shown to us that the concept of ascetic must be practiced in one's life as a Muslim because through this concept that human can know and inculcate a praiseworthy attribute in his or her soul and at the same time getting him or her self closer to Allah s.w.t.

## 2.4 Signs of Zuhud (ascetic)

Being ascetic is considered praiseworthy in Islam. It can only be possible by pure determination to get close to the Creator. Therefore, Islam had listed out few signs or attributes to acknowledge those who practice ascetic.

Imam Al-Ghazali in one of his books stated among few signs of ascetic is not entertained by wealth yet could care less without them as compared to others. On the contrary, our society in modern life had a produce somewhat new culture, where one would feel jealous and rivalry would exist when he sees other's fortune and luck. This element is very dangerous in our community for it is very contagious and may cause diversion among Muslim. Hence, this vice should be cured to prevent the biggest consequences, the collapse of Muslims unity (Muhammad Uthman El-Muhammady, 1990).

In additional, those who are ascetic are very generous and never failed to feel happy to spend their wealth and properties to the needy in order to help them as much as possible. Ascetic had taught human to willingly leave the pleasant, beautiful and promising world. Consequently, it is not something to wonder if the followers are somewhat hate the world because for them, the present life is capable of distracting the real purpose of being here at the first place.

My next point would be a constant submission to the Creator. It can be perceived through two aspects; the first is ascetic is not blinded by his current belongings while the other is just being happy with what he has (Ibid 1982). We can also recognize an ascetic man through his attitudes and everyday life. This kind of people would not express their happiness or make it vocal on whatever pleasant things ever happened to them, for example, the status, position, possessions per se. As mentioned by Allah in Al-Karim: -

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

Meaning: -

*In order that ye may not despair over matters that pass by no exult favors bestowed upon you. For gold loved not any vainglorious boaster.*

(Al-Quran. Al-Hadid: 57: 23)

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In overall, based on the mentioned signs written and explained above, we can identify ascetic followers and understand the meaning of being one. Nevertheless, because of the modern life traits, recognizing them is a bit difficult. Men these days are more into worldly life, which in the end made them unintentionally or not, neglect the authentic and blessed way of life.

## 2.5 Level of ascetic

Based on Al-Palembani, ascetic can be classified into three stages that are: -

- 1) Level of Mubtada' (Beginning)
  - Those who are inclined towards worldly matters but very determined to fight its temptations.
- 2) Level of Mutawasit (Intermediate)
  - Those whom hearts are no longer influenced and attached to love the world.
- 3) Level of Mumtaha
  - Those who are called "arifin" or people that knows Allah by heart. This signifies the world has no longer any meaning for them as their hearts are focused to submit themselves to Allah.

On the other hand, Al-Ghazali divided ascetic to three stages. It is where the highest ascetic is leaving all matters that involve only the world. By meaning, the person would isolate himself from all figures of comfort ness, whether in the form of status, possession and positions. A lower stage would be ascetic from public properties only, holding back status and respects from community. In other words, the person is isolating himself not entirely from everything. Lastly, the third stage of ascetic lifestyle is leaving worldly

matters based on the capability of self with no force by anyone. This is because ascetic life is only for those who want to cleanse and clarify their souls and therefore keeps their eyes and hearts on the blessing of Allah (Ibn Idris Al-Qari, 1994).

As a conclusion, we know that an ascetic person has his own position at the side of Allah swt.

## CHAPTER

## THREE

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### THE CONCEPT OF ZUHUD (ASCETIC) IN MODERN LIFESTYLE

#### 3.1 The Definition Of Modern Lifestyle

Before the writer explains and elaborates in detail about this concept in modern life style, it is essential for us to know first what is meant by modern life style. In Oxford dictionary, life style is defined as the way of someone's life or a group of community. Where as the word modern means new and intended to be different from traditional style (Noresah bt. Baharom, 2000).

In *Kamus Dewan*, there is no such word of life style but for style it is defined as characteristic, attribute, the design of life, shape, power, energy, and ways and so on. On the other hand life means living or breathing, moving, having a soul and a home. So, when both words are combined it can be accomplished that life style means design, attribute and one's characteristic as long as he or she is still alive and possesses his or her own home in this world.

Apart from that, one's life style involves every aspect of trait and daily surrounding. It included garments, residential, transportations, education, occupation, time management, the way of thoughts, relationship, social life and what ever that may happen in one's life be it willingly or unwillingly. Therefore, this way of life does not only concerns physical matters and environment, but also clothes, hairstyle, foodstuff and what not that has been stated before. Where by mentally, it concerns more on choosing the best option or the way we think in making any decisions. Consequently, these mental qualities are more important from the others because it is through contemplation that one could construct the best alternative.

Furthermore, it is this modern life style that leads humans and races towards the lust of the worldly life and sooner or later their lives would be sinking in the brawl of fighting for wealth. Gunnar Myrdal, in Asian Drama vol 1,61-62 has attributed modern man as efficiency, diligence, orderliness, punctuality, frugality, scrupulous, honesty, preparedness for changes, alertness to opportunities, energetic, enterprise, integrity and self-reliance, cooperativeness, willingness to take long view and to forgo short term profiteering.

Islam however has designed its own way of life. Islamic life style covers the aspects with modern life style. Yet, there are slight differences between the two in terms of one's idea and belief in the Day of Judgment or in other words, the day of the doom. The reason why is that as Muslims, we believe that there is no deity worth to be worshipped other than Allah and the Prophet Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. Nonetheless, every Muslim has his or her own responsibilities towards his or her self and also towards other people like family, neighbours and other Muslims community. Hence, all the responsibilities that have been assigned will be asked by Allah because Islam is a flexible religion instead of being rigid in revealing the truth and good quality of life values. We as Muslims need to be acquainted with the rights that are given by Allah to us. As Allah says in His Book:

الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ!

Meaning:

*The truth comes from God alone. So be not of those who doubt.*

(Al-Quran.Al-Imran:3: 60)

Allah and His Messenger s.a.w have reminded the people about time so that humans would employ it in the best manner. This is because the values of man in the hereafter is determined based on his or her activities in this world and his or her fate in the hereafter is resolute by his or her choice in managing the time during his or her living.

وَالْعَصْرِ (١) إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ (٢) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ  
وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ (٣)

Meaning:

*By the token of time through the ages. Verily man is in loss. Except such as have faith and do righteous deeds and join together in the mutual teaching of truth and of patience and constancy.*

Al-Quran. Al-Asr: 1-3)

From the verse stated above, Allah has clarified and emphasized on the aspects of time and occasion. Allah has arranged the time smoothly unendingly and without any interruptions. There might be some of us who feel that the time has never been enough but Allah has structured it in the best plan and it depends on humans to plan and manage it. Through Islamic way of life, Muslims are encouraged to be sportive. Some rumors say that Muslims cannot be involved in sports because it is feared that if they joined sports they would expose their *aurah*. This judgment is absolutely incorrect in Islam because Islam itself in the first place gives confidence to its followers to exercise as long as it is on the basis of the guidelines that have been affirmed by the *Syariah*. Muslims are also reminded about the importance of living in a community.

Thus, it can be concluded that Islamic way of life means obeying all the commands of Allah, avoiding all His prohibitions and emulating all attributes of the Prophet. Moreover, it can be understood that Islamic way of life is depended on time. Although time would change, the Islamic characteristics and values of life style would not be changing and it would be just the same as Allah revealed it. Consequently, we need to play an important role in order to maintain the subsistence of Islam and it's surviving so that it would not get polluted. Besides, we need to apply all the development from the technologies that we have today in order to shape a good *akhlak* towards true Muslims.