

CHAPTER ONE

IBN ABĪ AL-DUNYĀ: HIS LIFE AND WORKS

1.1 Introduction

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā is an epithet for the Muslim Hadith scholar Abū Bakr ‘Abdullah Ibn Muḥammad Ibn ‘Ubayd Ibn Sufyān Ibn Qays Al-Qurashī Al-Baghdādī. He was born in Baghdad in 208 AH/823 CE during the period of the Abbasid Caliph Al-Ma’mūn (d. 218 AH/833 CE), the son of the famous Abbasid Caliph Hārūn Al-Rashīd (d. 193 AH/808 CE). This period is known as the golden age of Islamic civilization (750-846 CE). According to Ibn Shākir Al-Kutbī (1973: 1/494–495) in his book *Fawāt Al-Wafayāt*, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was the tutor of several Abbasid princes who later became Caliphs. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā adopted the *Hambalī* school of thought. He was a deeply spiritual man and someone who was seriously concerned about his society and Ummah as a whole. He was known for his ascetic life, and numerous scholars transmitted Hadith reports on his authority.

According to Najim ‘Abd Al-Rahmān Khalaf (1997: 94), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā had left behind a sum of two hundred and seventeen (217) books written in various fields of science. However, not all of his works are extant today. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā is considered one of the earliest and most prolific writers who developed many genres. For example, he is one of the earliest that developed the afterlife genre. He covered the different stages of the hereafter and presented descriptions of the upper worlds in short treatises. His work draws attention to three main ways by which the living can learn about the dead (Meri, 2006: 18).

In this chapter, the life and creative characteristics of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā are explored in detail. The stages of his life starting from childhood, family and surrounding environment are examined and analyzed. The chapter aims at studying the impact of all these factors on Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's personality and achievements.

1.2 The Life of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā

1.2.1 Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's Social Life

Social relationships are an essential aspect of every human being's life. Differences among people and societies are meant in order for people to be introduced to each other. Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an: "People, We created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into races and tribes so that you should recognize one another" (Al-Qur'an. Al-Ḥujurāt 49:13)³. Also, people are in need of each other and it is not possible for a person to live in isolation without showing any need for others, be it a physical need or a social need. Allah (SWT) says in the Qur'an: "We are the ones who give them their share of livelihood in this world and We have raised some of them above others in rank, so that some may take others into service" (Al-Qur'an. Al-Zukhruf 43:32)⁴.

Islam, through its teachings and its doctrines, urges people to interact with each other socially. There are numerous Qur'anic āyahs and Hadiths that encourage social interaction and dispraise unsociability. An example is provided in the following Hadith, "The believer who mixes with people and bears their annoyance with patience will have a greater reward than the believer who does not mix with people and does not put up with their annoyance"² (Hadith. Ibn Mājah. *Sunan Ibn Mājah*. Kitāb Al-Fitan: Bāb Al-Ṣabr 'alā Al-Balā': 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar: #3273). In the quoted Hadith,

² Hadith Ṣaḥīḥ (*Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Mājah*: #3273).

the Prophet (SAW) refers to the superiority and preferability of the Muslim who decides to mix with people and shows patience towards them over those who choose to be isolated. Being alone surely affords peace of mind and saves individuals from getting into troubles and disagreements. However, those who choose to live alone will definitely miss out on many advantages and benefits of being socially integrated. Such people will not only miss the benefits of being with others, but also deprive others from taking advantage of their own skills and goodness. Therefore, Islam does not only dislikes isolation, but it has gone further by setting great rewards for actions that are based on benefitting people. The reward granted for benefitting an individual or the society is even sometimes greater than the reward granted for performing the ritual worship practices of Islam. For instance, the Prophet (SAW) said: “The best of people are those who are most useful to others”³ (Hadith. Al-Qadā’ī. #1234). In another Hadith, the Prophet (SAW) says: “The one who strives to support the widow and the poor is like a striver for the cause of Allah, or like the one who constantly performs night prayer and observes fast without breaking it” (Hadith. Al-Bukhārī. Kitāb Al-Nafaqāt: Bāb Faḍl Al-Nafaqah ‘ala Al-Ahl: Abū Hurayrah: #5353). This Hadith shows the importance of helping others especially when they are in desperate need of assistance. The Prophet (SAW) in the following Hadith elaborates the strong connection between a person’s actions and their reward in the hereafter, He (SAW) says: “Whoever removes a worldly grief from a believer, Allah will remove from him one of the griefs of the Day of Resurrection. And whoever alleviates the need of a needy person, Allah will alleviate his needs in this world and the Hereafter. Whoever shields [or hides the misdeeds of] a Muslim, Allah will shield him in this world and the Hereafter. And Allah will aid His slave so long as he aids his brother” (Hadith.

³ Hadith Ḥasan (Al-Albānī: #3289).

Muslim. Kitāb Al-Dhikr wa Al-Du‘ā’ wa Al-Tawbah wa Al-Istighfār: Bāb Faḍl Al-Ijtimā‘ ‘ala Tilāwat Al-Qur’an wa ‘ala Al-Dhikr: Abū Hurayrah: #2699). All these Hadiths encourage Muslims to interact in a positive and friendly manner with each other and to show patience and decency towards their differences and behaviours. Islam has well defined the different types of relationships among people and perfectly organized it so that people can get along with each other in harmony. For instance, Allah (SWT) says in the Qur’an: “help one another to do what is right and good; do not help one another towards sin and hostility” (Al-Qur’an. Al-Mā’idah 5:2)⁵. Allah (SWT) also says: “Believers, no one group of men should jeer at another, who may after all be better than them; no one group of women should jeer at another, who may after all be better than them; do not speak ill of one another; do not use offensive nicknames for one another. How bad it is to be called a mischief-maker after accepting faith! Those who do not repent of this behaviour are evildoers” (Al-Qur’an. Al-Ḥujurāt 49:11)⁶. Another moral set by Islam to regulate social interacting is found in the following Hadith related by ‘Abdullah Ibn Mas‘ūd: “If you are three, two should not converse secretly to the exclusion of your companion for that hurts his feelings” (Hadith. Muslim. Kitāb Al-Salām: Bāb Taḥrīm Munajāt Al-Ithnayn dūna Al-Thālith bi-Ghayrī Riḍāh: #2184). Also, some of the Muslim’s rights upon the other are mentioned in the narration of Abū Hurayrah on the authority of the Prophet (SAW) who says: “A believer owes another believer five rights: responding to greetings, visiting him in illness, following his funeral, accepting his invitation, and saying ‘yarḥamuka Allah (May Allah have mercy on you),’ when he says ‘al-ḥamdu lillah (Praise be to Allah)’ after sneezing” (Hadith. Al-Bukhārī. Kitāb Al-Janā’iz: Bāb Al-Amr bi-Itibā‘ Al-Janā’iz: #2184).

In general, interacting with people may be achieved through many ways. Interaction may be done directly face to face or indirectly through reading, writing, watching, listening, or by using images and other technological means, etc. Also, a social interaction may take place between two people, two groups, two societies, or between an individual and a group of people or so. According to Sukkar (2011: 24), social communication refers to the process, in which thoughts and experiences are conveyed and knowledge is exchanged positively between oneself and among individuals and groups through messages between a sender and a receiver.

Social interaction may be achieved verbally or through written communication. Body language and gestures may play a role as well. Either verbally or through writing, the success of communication depends on mastering the skills needed for each type. Therefore, one may achieve a great deal of influence through one type whereas fail in the other. And other people may achieve success in both types. According to Sukkar (2011: 19–34), verbal and written communications are of two types: personal and mass communication. Verbal communication at the personal level usually takes place face to face between two people expressing ideas or thoughts, delivering messages or convincing each other regarding ideas. The verbal speech between the good man from the city and Prophet Mūsā (SAW) mentioned in the Qur'an is an excellent example of personal verbal communication: "Then a man came running from the furthest part of the city and said, 'Moses, the authorities are talking about killing you, so leave- this is my sincere advice'" (Al-Qur'an. Al-Qaṣaṣ 28:20)⁷. Similarly, verbal mass communication holds the same objectives as personal communication. One good example of this type of communication is found in the Qur'an: "Then, from the furthest part of the city, a man came running. He said, 'My people, follow the messengers'" (Al-Qur'an. Yāsīn 36:20)⁸. In this ayah, the faithful

man came from a very far place holding a strong desire to convince his people to follow the messengers. Therefore, a face to face communication took place between him and his people.

On the other hand, written communication has its own tools which differ from verbal communication. Written communication seems to be more formal and does not include gestures or body language because it depends on the written form of the language to convey the message. For example, it has been narrated on the authority of Anas that the Prophet of Allah (SAW) wrote to Chosroes (King of Persia), Caesar (Emperor of Rome), Negus (King of Abyssinia) and every (other) despot inviting them to Allah, the Exalted (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: 1774). Written communication may also occur between an individual and a larger group of people. A good example for this kind of written communication is the Prophet's (SAW) reconciliation with Suhail Ibn 'Amr, which is part of a long Hadith narrated by Al-Bukhārī (Ibn Hajar, 2001: 388–392). As narrated by Al-Miswar Ibn Makhramah and Marwān that “The Messenger of Allah (SAW) went out in the year of *Al-Hudaybiyah* (reconciliation)- the narrator narrated a long hadith which contained, ‘this is what Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdullah has reconciled with Suhail Ibn ‘Amr, to stop fighting for ten years during which time people will live safely, and refrain from fighting one another....’”

In his MA thesis, Sukkar (2011: 38–80) suggests four types of communication depending on the social state of the receiver. The first type deals with social relations at the level of the family, being parents, wife, children and relatives. Another type of communication examined by Sukkar is the social communication with the habitual visitors of the Mosque, being neighbours, friends, scholars and the whole of the Muslim society. People with special needs are not being forgotten and they include

prisoners and families of martyrs, people with disabilities and orphans. Finally, the forth type of communication is devoted to the non-Muslims.

In this section, the social relationships, at the two levels: private and public, of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā are discussed in detail.

1.2.1.1 Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's Personal Life

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was born in Baghdad in 208/823. He was raised in a well-educated family who was interested in Islamic sciences and praised scholars. His father, Muḥammad Ibn Ubayd, was a scholar and a narrator of Hadith himself. Therefore, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was much influenced by his father's scholarly life and benefited a lot from his knowledge and advice. By following the Hadiths narrated by Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā, it can be noted that he has narrated numerous Hadiths on the authority of his father. This shows the long period that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā accompanied his father, which allowed him to receive this large amount of knowledge and spread it later on. It also indicates the close and friendly relationship between Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and his father, who spared no time in raising his son to grow great and beneficial to his society and Ummah. This means that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's father was a man of theory and practice, which allowed him to raise his son in a manner of creativity and sustainment.

According to Khalaf (1997: 57), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's father encouraged him to sit and listen to the most known scholars of his time before reaching the age of maturity. Other sources mention that he began to make regular visits to scholars independently before reaching the age of ten (Ibn Ḥajar, 1908: 6/13). He listened to scholars such as: Sa'īd Ibn Sulaimān Al-Wāsiṭī (d. 229 A.H.), Abū 'Ubayd Al-Qāsim Ibn Sallām (d. 224 A.H.) and Khālid Ibn Khiddāsh Al-Baṣrī (d. 223 A.H.). Due to

this, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā managed to obtain a high chain of narrators in the Hadiths he narrated. He also shared the teachers of the authors of the six most famous books in Hadith.

Due to Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's interest in knowledge, his unlimited ambition and endeavour for learning, along with the ideal family life he lived and his scholarly father, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's creative and sustainable personality was formed. Unfortunately, sources did not mention anything concerning other members of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's family such as his mother, brothers or sisters (if any), wife or children. However, it can be said that, undoubtedly, without the encouragement of the mother and the patience of the wife, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā would not have reached the status he achieved nor would he have succeeded in the way he did. This is because the family is the very first and most important part of every success story.

1.2.1.2 Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's Interpersonal Relations

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā succeeded in maintaining good relationships with his society. Being a faithful Muslim, he was aware of all the benefits of being social and the disadvantages of boycotting people. This is simply reflected in his efforts in reform at many and various levels. He even went further in reforming the society by accepting to be one of the Abbasid princes' private tutors, which is a very sensitive position. Although, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā has devoted a book on *Al-'Uzlah wa Al-Infirād* (i.e., loneliness and privacy), but the loneliness described in this book is different (see 1.4.2.2).

According to the previous long introduction on social communication, it is clear that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā has nearly fulfilled all the requirements required for successful social interaction. As for direct and indirect communication, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā

practiced face-to-face communication with his students as well as his teachers and through his tutor sessions with some of the Abbasid princes. Indirect communication can be found in his numerous works that were actually published to put a hand on some of the society's inefficiency in a step to grab their attention and urge them to start treating it. In the following story, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā uses written communication with his students although he was able to apologize to them directly. But this variety of communication with a sense of humor sometimes seems to be more efficient. 'Umar Ibn Sa'd Al-Qarāṭisī (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1992: 12/342) related that one day while they were waiting at Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's door the sky rained. Then a female servant came to them with a written message in her hand. He opened it and found the following verses of poetry written by Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā to them:

Oh my dearest friends, I miss you,
and so my ears and eyes,
How could I forget you and my heart I left by you,
sadly the rain has kept me away from meeting you⁴

Variation in styles and types of communication will lessen boredom and introduces the information in a more acceptable way. In addition to that, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā kept in touch with various social segments of his time. Starting from the top, he was the tutor of several Abbasid princes and communicated with the Caliph. On the family level, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā had a great relationship with his father, who was to him a parent, a teacher, an adviser and a companion.

Either face to face or indirectly, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā communicated with almost all segments of his society. For example, he communicated with the family as a whole

أنا مشتاقٌ إلي رؤيتكم يا أخلائي وسمعي والبصر⁴
كيف أنساكم وقلبي عنكم؟ حال فيما بيننا هذا المطرُ

and in separate throughout his book *‘Al-‘Iyāl’* (the book of family). He communicated as well with desperate and weak individuals through his books *‘Al-Aḥzān’* (sadness), *‘Ḥusn Al-Ẓan bi-llah’* (good expectation from Allah), *‘Al-Riḍā ‘an Allah bi Qaḍā’ih’* (being pleased with Allah’s decree), *‘Qaḍā’ Al-Ḥawā’ij’* (fulfilling the needs) and *‘Al-Faraj ba’d Al-Shiddah’* (relief after harshness). Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā communicated with the highest authority in the society through his book *‘Tārīkh Al-Khulafā’* (the history of caliphs). Also, he communicated with slaves through his book *‘Al-Mamlūkīn’* (slaves), with elders through his book *‘Al-‘Umr wa Al-Shayb’* (age and grey hair) and with investors and traders through his book *‘Iṣlāḥ Al-Māl’* (restoration of wealth). He communicated with pious and righteous Muslims, to encourage them keep steadfast on this path and urge the others to join them, through many books such as *‘Al-Awliyā’* (the pious worshippers of Allah) and *‘Al-Tahajjud wa Qiyām Al-Layl’* (to arise from sleep for prayer). He communicated with delinquents through these books: *‘Al-I’tibār wa A’qāb Al-Surūr wa Al-Aḥzān’* (lessons and the sequences of happiness and sadness), *‘Al-Ahwāl’* (the horrors) and *‘Al-‘Uqūbāt’* (punishments).

1.2.2 Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā’s Surrounding Environment

It can be deduced from the biography of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā, that he lived all his life in Baghdad and had not travelled outside his hometown, except for several internal travels (Khalaf, 1997: 78–79). This means that the influence of the surrounding environment on Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā is mainly concerned with that of his motherland. Ibn Khaldūn (Al-Lubānī, 2009: 25) claims that every society holds general psychological aspects that distinguish its people and forms their personality. For example, in a civilized society people are distinguished with special

characteristics and psychological traits, whereas bedouins are distinguished with different characteristics.

1.2.2.1 The Political Status During Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's Life

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā lived an approximate total of seventy-three years (208-281/823-894), which falls within the period of the Abbasid Caliphate (132-656 AH/750-1258 CE). Historians divide the Abbasid dynasty into two main eras: the first Abbasid age (132-232 AH/750-846 CE) and the second Abbasid age (232-656 AH/846-1258 CE). The first Abbasid age, which is referred to as the age of strong and competent Caliphs, was ruled by ten Caliphs whereas the second age, which marks the beginning of the Abbasids weakness and gradual decline, was ruled by twenty-seven Caliphs (Al-‘Asīrī, 1996: 177). Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's life was a mixture of the two eras of the Abbasid dynasty. He lived twenty-four years within the first Abbasid age and around forty-nine years within the second.

The Abbasid Caliphate was the third after the two Islamic Caliphates, the Rāshidūn (i.e., the rightly guided) and the Umayyad Caliphates, to succeed the Prophet Muḥammad (SAW). The Abbasids overthrew the preceding Umayyad dynasty (41-132 AH/661-750 CE), which was based in Damascus, in 132 AH/750 CE. Then they reigned as the Abbasid Caliphate until brought down by the Mongol invasion in 846 AH/1258 CE. The Abbasid Caliphate first centered in Kufa, but in 146 AH/763 CE the capital was moved to Baghdad, which was founded by the Abbasid Caliph Al-Manṣūr (Mu'nis, 1987: 153). The Abbasids maintained an unbroken line of Caliphs for over three centuries, consolidating Islamic rule and cultivating great intellectual and cultural developments in the Middle East in the golden age of Islamic civilization.

When Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was born in 208 AH/823 CE, the Abbasid dynasty was at the peak of its strength within the period of the Islamic golden age. The Abbasid leadership had to work hard in the last half of the 8th century, under several competent Caliphs and their viziers to overcome the political challenges created by the far distant nature of the empire (Brauer, 1995: 7–10). The most famous Abbasid Caliph, Hārūn Al-Rashīd who ruled a total of twenty-three years (170-193 AH/786-808 CE) had managed to maintain his dynasty power and prosperity at its height (Ṭaqqūsh, 2011: 157–161). It was particularly during the governance of Al-Mansūr, Hārūn Al-Rashīd and Al-Ma'mūn, that the reputation and power of the dynasty was created (Hoiberg, 2010: 10). However, the reign of Hārūn Al-Rashīd and his son Al-Ma'mūn was considered to be the apex of the Abbasid dynasty (Magnusson & Goring, 1990: 2).

Within the first Abbasid era, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was a coeval of three Caliphs, namely: Al-Ma'mūn (198-218 AH/813-833 CE), Al-Mu'tasim (218-227 AH/833-841 CE) and Al-Wathiq (227-232 AH/841-847 CE). Al-Ma'mūn was much more like his father, Hārūn Al-Rashīd, but he was more farsighted and forbearing (Al-'Ish, 1977: 77–78). According to Al-Tabarī, Al-Ma'mūn managed with his son, Al-'Abbās, to conquer several fortresses in Cappadocia, a semi-arid region in central Turkey (quoted in; Ṭaqqūsh, 2011: 167). Al-Ma'mūn was a veteran politician who was marked, like his father, with many achievements. He gathered scholars at Baghdad, whom he treated magnificently and with tolerance. He sent an emissary to the Byzantine Empire to collect the most famous manuscripts there, and had them translated into Arabic (Lee, 1999: 51–58). As part of his peace treaty with the Byzantine Emperor, Al-Ma'mūn was to receive a number of Greek manuscripts annually, one of these being Ptolemy's astronomical work, the *Almagest* (Angelo, 2009: 78). He conducted, in the plains of Mesopotamia, two astronomical operations intended to determine the value

of a terrestrial degree. The crater *Almanon* on the moon is named in recognition of his contributions to astronomy (Wilkinson, 2010: 208). Al-Ma'mūn's record as an administrator is also marked by his efforts toward the centralization of power and the certainty of succession. The *Bayt al-Hikmah* (i.e., House of Wisdom), which was established during his father's reign, had flourished during his time (Goldschmidt, 2002: 78). During his reign, alchemy greatly developed and the pioneers of the science were patronized by him. Also, Al-Ma'mūn was a pioneer of cartography having commissioned a world map from a large group of astronomers and geographers. Many geographers, many astronomers and many scholars of mathematics made this map. The map shows large parts of the Eurasian and African continents with recognizable coastlines and major seas. It depicts the world as it was known to the captains of the Arab sailing dhows which, with planks secured by palm-fiber ropes rather than nails, used the monsoon wind cycles to trade over vast distances. Western historians recognise that by the 9th century, Arab sea traders had reached Canton, in China. Al-Ma'mūn's map illustrates how far the Muslim cartographers departed from earlier world views. The maps of the Greeks and Romans reveal a good knowledge of closed seas like the Mediterranean but little understanding of the vast ocean expanses beyond (Recknagel, 2004: n.p.). Muslim scholars and the major Islamic law schools became truly defined in the period of Al-Ma'mūn. His simultaneous opposition and patronage of intellectuals led to the emergence of important dialogues on both secular and religious affairs, and *Bayt Al-Hikmah* became an important center of translation for Greek and other ancient texts into Arabic. This Islamic renaissance spurred the rediscovery of Hellenism and ensured the survival of these texts into the European renaissance (Ṭaqqūsh, 2011: 167).

One of the most noteworthy achievements of Al-Ma'mūn is that he was the first Abbasid Caliph to consider the Caliphate of higher interest to the extent that it should be concerned with the people's benefit and goodness rather than being merely inherited. Due to this, Al-Ma'mūn disinherited his son Al-Abbās from taking over the Caliphate, although he was a distinguished commander, and appointed his brother Al-Mu'taṣim as his successor Caliph believing that he was more adequate and competent than his son (Al-'Asīrī, 1996: 191).

In (218 AH/833 CE), Al-Mu'taṣim was given the pledge of allegiance right after the death of his brother Al-Ma'mūn. According to Al-'Ish (1977: 88), Al-Mu'taṣim was a very strong man that used to carry tons of loads and fight his enemies bravely as a skillful knight. Ibn Ṭabā Ṭabā (quoted in; Ḥasan, 1996: 65) described Al-Mu'taṣim as a brave man who had a considerable opinion. In (221 AH/835 CE), Al-Mu'taṣim founded the city of Samarrā, a new capital one hundred and forty kilometers away from Baghdad, as a new settlement for him and his Turkish soldiers (Al-Dūrī, 1997: 200). In 223 AH/838 CE, Amorium, which was the birthplace of the ruling Byzantine dynasty and one of the Byzantium's largest and most important cities, was conquered by the Abbasid campaign led personally by Al-Mu'taṣim (Ṭaqqūsh, 2011: 169). After the death of Al-Mu'taṣim (d. 227 AH/842 CE), came his son, Al-Wāthiq, the last Caliph of the first Abbasid era. Al-Wāthiq's Caliphate marks the end of the Islamic golden age and the beginning of the Abbasid dynasty's decline. Al-Wāthiq continued to rule the Abbasid dynasty bringing the Turk soldiers close like his father did. One of the most political pitfalls of Al-Wāthiq was his death without naming a successor behind him, which caused some political disturbance. However, he was a great patron of scholars (Al-'Ish, 1977: 89–90).

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā lived a longer period within the second Abbasid era. He witnessed the caliphate of seven Caliphs, namely: Al-Mutawakil (232-247 AH/847-861 CE), Al-Muntaşir (247-248 AH/861-862 CE), Al-Musta‘in (248-252 AH/862-866 CE), Al-Mu‘taz (252-255 AH/866-869 CE), Al-Muhtadī (255-256 AH/869-870 CE), Al-Mu‘tamid (256-279 AH/870-892 CE) and Al-Mu‘taḍid (279-289 AH/892-902 CE). In the second era, the power of the Abbasid dynasty slowly weakened in the face of independent governors, called *emirs*, and a military that controlled the Caliphs. However, the dynasty regained some of its power during the ruling of the three Abbasid Caliphs (256-295 AH/870-908 CE): Al-Mu‘tamid, Al-Mu‘taḍid and Al-Muktafī (Ṭaqqūsh, 2011: 171–172). The political status during the reign of these Caliphs was almost the same as weakness had found its way through the dynasty. Only the last three Caliphs showed faithful efforts to gain back the dynasty’s power and prosperity. In spite of that, a major uprising against the Abbasid Caliphate took place during Al-Mu‘tamid’s Caliphate and lasted for a period of over fourteen years (255-270 AH/868-883 CE). The Zanj rebellion was centered near the city of Basra, southern of Iraq, before it was defeated during the Caliphate of Al-Mu‘taḍid (Al-‘Ish, 1977: 107–116).

According to this brief preview of the political status of the Abbasid Caliphate during Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā’s time, it is clear that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā lived in a state of political stability at the beginning of his life (until the beginning of his twenties) unlike his final days. However, the few years of political stability Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā had lived, as well as other previously mentioned factors were the corner stone in building his scholarly personality. Since the first years of a human being’s life are the most crucial and sensitive years that shape one’s character, ethics and manners, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā received all that was necessary for his characteristics to be developed

as a reformer and a renowned scholar. Political stability usually leads to flourishing at various levels such as, economics, society and science. Thus the states of stability and instability were clearly reflected in the themes Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā chose for his works.

1.2.2.2 The Golden Age Of The Islamic Civilization And Its Impact On Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā

Notably, the three Caliphates that succeeded the Prophet Muḥammad (SAW), Al-Khulafā' Al-Rāshidūn (i.e., the rightly guided), the Umayyads and the Abbasids (until the end of the Abbasid Caliph Al-Wāthiq Bi-llah in 232 AH/847 CE), were considered as the general Islamic empire. In other words, during these three Caliphates, The entire Islamic world was one empire ruled by one Caliph (Mu'nis, 1987: 151).

The Islamic civilization spread further under the Abbasids. One of the earliest and most important changes that took place during the Abbasid dynasty was to move the capital of the Islamic empire from Damascus to Baghdad. Baghdad was founded as the new Islamic capital on the banks of the Tigris River in 146 AH/763 CE during the rule of the Abbasid Caliph Al-Manṣūr (137-158 AH/753-774 CE). The city was circular in shape, and designed from the beginning to be a great capital and the center of the Islamic world (Al-ʿAsīrī, 1996: 183). Under the Abbasids, Baghdad became the largest and most cultured city in the world. During this period the Muslim world became an intellectual center for science, philosophy, medicine and education as the Abbasids championed the cause of knowledge. At that time, the Muslim world was a cauldron of cultures which collected, synthesized and significantly advanced the knowledge gained from the ancient Roman, Chinese, Indian, Persian, Egyptian, North African, Greek and Byzantine civilizations (Gregorian, 2003: 26–38). In virtually

every field of endeavor— in astronomy, alchemy, mathematics, medicine, optics and beyond— the Caliphate’s scientists were in the forefront of scientific advancement (Huff, 2003: 48).

The fifth caliph of the Abbasid dynasty, Hārūn Al-Rashīd, is remembered as one of history’s greatest patrons of the arts and sciences. Under his rule, Baghdad became the world’s most important center for science, philosophy, medicine, and education. The massive size of the caliphate meant that it had contact and shared borders with many distant empires, so scholars in Baghdad could collect, translate, and expand upon the knowledge of other civilizations. The successors of Al-Rashīd, especially his son al-Ma’mūn, continued his policies of supporting artists, scientists, and scholars. Al-Ma’mūn founded *Bayt Al-Hikmah*, the House of Wisdom, in Baghdad. A library, an institute for translators, and in many ways an early form of university, *Bayt Al-Hikmah* hosted Muslim and non-Muslim scholars who sought to translate and gather the cumulative knowledge of human history in one place, and in one language— Arabic. At *Bayt Al-Hikmah*, important ideas from around the world came together. The introduction of Indian numerals, which have become standard in the Islamic and Western worlds, greatly aided in mathematic and scientific discovery. Al-Bayrūnī and Abū Nasr Mansūr— among many other scholars— made important contributions to geometry and astronomy. Al-Khwārizmī, expanding upon Greek mathematical concepts, developed Algebra. Ibn Al-Haytham made important contributions to the field of optics, and is generally held to have developed the concept of the scientific method. A number of very practical innovations took place, especially in the field of agriculture. Improved methods of irrigation allowed more land to be cultivated. Crops and farming techniques were adopted from far-flung neighboring cultures. Such Islamic innovations continued, even when the Abbasid Caliphate fell into chaos.

Although Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā had lived in a political age that started strong then weakened, he lived in a great scientific age in which the Islamic sciences developed magnificently. According to Nicholson (2010), during the Islamic golden age “It seemed as if all the world from the Caliph to the humblest citizen suddenly became students” (p. 281). One of the most observant features of the Islamic golden age was its effective defense of the Sunnah (Mu’nis, 1987: 152). Interest in the sciences of Hadith was at its peak, which explains the great number of scholars and students in various fields, especially in Hadith, during that time. Among the most renowned scholars of this period were: Al-Bukhārī, Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, Muslim, Al-Nasā’ī, Ibn Majah and ‘Alī Ibn Al-Madini. The four jurisprudential schools of thought also grew and established at that time. Many books on Quranic sciences, Prophetic biography, Arabic and history were published (Al-Nadwī, 1994: 18–19). In his book *‘A Literary History of the Arabs,’* Nicholson (2010: 281) describes how knowledge was imported and compiled:

In quest of knowledge men travelled over three continents and returned home, like bees laden with honey, to impart the precious stores which they had accumulated to crowds of eager disciples, and to compile with incredible industry those works of encyclopaedic range and erudition from which modern science, in the widest sense of the word, has derived far more than is generally supposed.

With such a great movement for knowledge and science, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā lived the most crucial years of his life on a plateau from which his endless journey for learning and knowledge sharing started.

1.3 Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's Educational Background And Creative Abilities

1.3.1 Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's Educational Background And Scientific Status

As mentioned earlier, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā grew up very knowledgeable. His father's intensive care and guidance, as well as Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's interest in knowledge and willingness to learn equipped him with a great deal of knowledge and good manners. Added to all of that was his early start of learning, the surrounding environment and the competence of his teachers. Due to all the above-mentioned features of his environment and personality, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā managed to obtain a wide range of knowledge in various fields of sciences in addition to Hadith.

According to Al-Dhahabī (1985: 13/397), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's teachers were many. He gave a brief count of ninety-four of them as examples. His teachers include: Al-Mizzī (1980: 16/72–75) alphabetically counts a hundred and nineteen of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's teachers. Furthermore, Khalaf (1997: 64) states that the number of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's teachers, whom he listened to directly, were around two hundred and fifteen, who are mentioned in two books, *'Al-ʿIyāl'* and *'Al-Ṣamṭ wa Ādāb Al-Lisān.'* He lists thirty of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's most influential teachers who had an outstanding impact on his scholarly personality as well as his manners (pp. 33–41):

1. Muḥammad Ibn ʿUbayd Ibn Sufyān: Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's father and his first and most influential teacher. He benefited mostly from his father in the field of Hadith and asceticism. He narrated many Hadiths on the authority of his father. The apparent theme of his father's Hadiths was asceticism. According to Al-Khaṭīb Al-Baghdādī (2001: 3/644), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā narrated on the authority of his father sound Hadiths.
2. Muḥammad Ibn Al-Ḥusain Al-Burjulānī: One of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's early teachers. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was one of his students since he was ten years old.

Al-Burjulānī was well known in the field of asceticism and piety. He wrote many books concerning these topics. He had two main impacts on Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā. The first was in the field of asceticism and good manners and the other was in the school of thought. As Al-Burjulānī was influenced by Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal and his school of thought and so he encouraged Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā to visit him frequently and listen to him. Similarly, Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal used to praise Al-Burjulānī and when he was asked about something of asceticism he used to direct the asker to meet Al-Burjulānī (Ibn Abī Ḥatīm, 1952: 7/229). According to Al-Dhahabī (1985: 11/112), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā narrated many narrations on the authority of his teacher Al-Burjulānī.

3. Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal Al-Shaybānī: One of the most renowned scholars of his time. He had a great influence on his society and the Muslims of his time. Many people benefited from his knowledge, including Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā. He accompanied him for a long time and benefited a lot from his jurisprudence and asceticism. He learnt from him ways of human reform through Hadiths of asceticism and piety. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was influenced by Aḥmad's book '*Al-Zuhd*' (i.e., asceticism) and so he wrote a book about this topic holding the same title. He used to ask him jurisprudential opinions while he was at the age of twenty. He narrated many Hadiths on his authority.
4. Abū 'Ubayd Al-Qāsim Ibn Sallām: He was one of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's early teachers. His books were well recognised by people. He was a man of faith and reform. According to Abū Bakr Ibn Al-Anbārī (Al-Subkī, 1976: 2/154), "Abū 'Ubayd, may Allah's mercy be on him, used to divide the night into three: he prays in one third, sleeps in the other and writes books in the last." Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā had accompanied his teacher Abū 'Ubayd for a long time

and benefited much from him. The main influence of Abū ‘Ubayd on Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was his fondness of disciplining and educating the youths. Abū ‘Ubayd himself was the tutor and discipliner of the family of prince Harthamah Ibn A‘yan (Al-Dhahabī, 1985: 10/493). Ibn Sa‘d (1968: 7/355) says that Abū ‘Ubayd was a discipliner and a man of grammar and Arabic as well as an excellent seeker of Hadith and Islamic jurisprudence. Therefore, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā became later on a great discipliner who was given the responsibility of educating and disciplining the sons of Caliphs. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā had also learnt from Abū ‘Ubayd the proper standard Arabic and so he used to teach the sons of Caliphs ‘*Al-Faṣīḥ*’ which is a book on good Arabic usage written by Abū Al-‘Abbās Tha‘lab.

5. Abū ‘Abdullah Muḥammad Ibn Sa‘d Kātib Al-Wāqidi: The author of the famous book ‘*Al-Ṭabaqāt Al-Kubrā*.’ He was known by his wide knowledge and familiarity with Hadith narrations. He also wrote on both topics of Hadith and Islamic jurisprudence. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā narrated on his authority and benefited from him in the field of history and narrations. Due to this, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was interested in history and biographies as he wrote in these two fields. According to Ibn Shākir Al-Kutbī (1973), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was “one of the trustworthy writers of reports and biographies” (p. 2/228).
6. Abū Al-Ḥasan ‘Alī Ibn Al-Ja‘d Ibn ‘Ubayd Al-Baghdādī: One of the trustworthiest Hadith narrators. Al-Dhahabī (1985: 10/466) states that it is said that Al-Ja‘d kept for sixty years fasting one day and breaking his fast on the other. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā had the chance to accompany him for a long time and had received from him a high chain of narrators. He received from him Hadiths with only four narrators between him and the Prophet (SAW). In his

book '*Al-Ṣamt wa Ādāb Al-Lisān*,' Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā narrated around forty-one narrations on the authority of Al-Ja'd, which points out to the large number of narrations he received from him (Khalaf, 1986: 37).

7. Abū 'Uthmān Sa'īd Ibn Sulaymān Al-Bazzāz: The earliest teacher of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's teachers. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā accompanied him for a long time and obtained a high chain of narrators. He narrated six narrations on his authority in '*Al-Ṣamt wa Ādāb Al-Lisān*' (Khalaf, 1986: 37–38). He died when Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was seventeen years old.
8. Abū 'Alī Al-Ḥasan Ibn Al-Ṣabbāḥ Ibn Muḥammad Al-Bazzār: According to Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (Al-Khaṭīb Al-Baghdādī, 2001: 7/331), he said "there is not a day for Ibn Al-Bazzār that comes without doing good... We used to sit and study until the teacher comes out while Ibn Al-Bazzār is praying." He was a man of asceticism and worship. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā listened from him and met him many times. Due to this, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was influenced by his asceticism and knowledge, similar to his other teachers and he narrated many Hadiths on his authority (Khalaf, 1986: 40).
9. Abū Muḥammad Khalaf Ibn Hishām Ibn Tha'lab Al-Baghdādī: He is one of the authenticated narrators of Qur'anic narrations. He is one of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's early teachers who Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā accompanied for a long time. He benefited Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā in two main fields: the Qur'an and Hadith. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā recited the Qur'an to his teacher Khalaf and managed to write three books in this domain: '*Al-Waqf wa Al-Ibtidā*,' '*Al-Waṣl wa Al-Faṣl*' and '*Hurūf Khalaf*.' Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā also narrated Hadith with a high chain of narrators on his authority (Khalaf, 1986: 41).

10. Maḥmūd Ibn Al-Ḥasan Al-Warrāq Al-Baghdādī: He is an Iraqi poet. Al-Dhahabī (1985) refers to him saying, “Baghdādī is an excellent poet. He composes poetry in the field of sermon” (p. 11/461). According to Khalaf (1986: 42), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā met Al-Warrāq at an early age. Due to this, as well as to the long time spent by both, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was influenced by Al-Warrāq’s talent in poetry. He narrated many of his poems in his books. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā himself learnt how to compose poetry like his teacher. He wrote poetry in various fields, especially sermons and wisdoms. Therefore, it is hard to read a book of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā without finding lines of poetry here and there.

In addition to these most influential teachers of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā, there are many more teachers who taught Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and had their impact on him in one way or another. However, the researcher finds it sufficient for the topic of this thesis to stop at these ten. More information on Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā’s teachers can be found in the previously mentioned sources.

Due to the wide variety of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā’s teachers in educational background, age, knowledge and field of science, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā grew up with a distinguished encyclopaedic background. He obtained a great deal of knowledge in more than one field of science. Although he is well known as a Hadith scholar, but in fact, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā has noted participations in other fields. His works are the best evidence of his diversity in educational background. There are five main fields of science that can be deduced from Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā’s works, which reflect his educational background:

1. Hadith: As previously mentioned, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā started to learn Hadith when he was at the age of ten. He paid great attention to the

purpose of studying Hadith. He listened a lot and met many scholars in the field, and as a result he received a great sum of knowledge from them. According to Al-Dhahabī (2004: 5/297), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā took Hadith from his consorts as well as from those who were younger than him. Reaching this point indicates Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's great interest in Hadith and his truthful willingness to listen and record every Hadith possibly found, regardless of whether it came from elders or those younger than him.

2. Narrations of the Qur'an: Being the other main source of the teachings of Islam and the Word of Allah, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā paid good attention to reciting and studying the Holy Qur'an. He even went further by learning other authenticated narrations of the Qur'an. As stated previously that among Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's teachers was Abū Muḥammad Khalaf Ibn Hishām Ibn Tha'lab Al-Baghdādī, one of the authenticated narrators of the Qur'an narrations. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā accompanied him for a long time and benefited from him. Due to this, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was among the first who devoted a separate book for the Qur'an narration of Khalaf, entitled: '*Ḥurūf Khalaf*.' He also participated with his other books in the field of Qur'anic sciences such as these two books: '*Al-Waqf wa Al-Ibtidā*' and '*Al-Waṣl wa Al-Faṣl*' (Khalaf, 1997: 69).

3. Language and literature: Since his early youthhood, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā met his teacher Abū 'Ubayd Al-Qāsīm Ibn Sallām who was a discipliner and a specialist in standard Arabic. Therefore, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā learnt Arabic and excelled in it. According to Al-Kutbī (1973: 1/494–495), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā used to teach the sons of Caliphs '*Al-Faṣīḥ*' which is a book on

good Arabic usage written by Abū ‘Al-Abbās Tha’lab. This book is considered one of the main sources for learning standard Arabic.

As for literature, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā’s early meeting with Al-Warraḡ as well as their long companionship allowed Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā to grow up with a fondness for and competence of poetry. He wrote poetry in various fields, especially on sermons and wisdoms. Al-Dhahabī (as cited in Khalaf, 1997: 70) described Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā as a litterateur.

4. History and biography: like the other fields of sciences mentioned earlier, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā spent faithful efforts to learn history and biography. According to Khalaf (1997: 72), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā started doing so when he was younger than twenty years old. He got the opportunity to accompany one of the most renown scholars in that field, Abū ‘Abdullah Muḥammad Ibn Sa’d Kātib Al-Wāqidi, who is the author of the famous book *‘Al-Ṭabaqāt Al-Kubrā’* and was known by his wide knowledge and narrations. Al-Kutbī (1973) says that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was “one of the trustworthy writers who wrote on Hadith and biography” (p. 1/494). Alike, Ibn Al-Nadīm (1997: 230) states that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was well acquainted with Hadiths and narrations. Many scholars later on quoted from his books in this field, such as: Ibn Al-Jawzī who quoted around fifty quotes in his book *‘Al-Miṣbāh Al-Muḍī’ fī Khilāfat Al-Mustaḍī’*, Al-Khaṭīb Al-Baghdādī in his book *‘Tārīkh madīnat al-salām*, Ibn ‘asākir in *‘Tārīkh Dimashq’* and Ibn Kathīr in *‘Al-Bidāyah wa Al-Nihāyah’* (Al-‘Umari, 1985: 159–162).
5. Asceticism and piety: This field is the most prominent among the other fields Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā took focused on and wrote about. Since an early

age, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was influenced by his teacher Al-Burjulānī who was well known in the field of asceticism and piety. Aḥmad Ibn Hanbal was as well one of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's close teachers who had great impact on him in that field. According to Ibn Al-Jawzī (1992: 12/342), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā wrote over one hundred books in the field of piety. Similarly, Khalaf (1986) counts one-hundred and two books of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā in the field of piety and heart softening (p. 89–102). To mention but a few, '*Muḥāsabat Al-Nafs*,' '*Qisar Al-Amal*,' '*Al-Faraj ba'd Al-Shiddah*,' '*Al-Zuhd*,' and '*Al-Tahajjud*.'

6. Islamic jurisprudence: Among the works of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā that have reached us were on Islamic jurisprudence. According to (Khalaf, 1986), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā wrote eleven books in this field (p. 88–89). For example, he wrote on '*Al-Uḍḥiyah*' (the sacrifice), '*Dham Al-Muskir*' (censure of liquor), '*Dham Al-Ribā*' (censure of usury), '*Al-Rahā'in*' (the pledge), '*Al-Qiṣās*' (retaliation), '*Ṣadaqat Al-Fiṭr*' (charity of Eid Al-Fiṭr) and '*Al-Fatāwā*' (jurisprudential opinions). Thus, writing this number of books in such detailed topics of Islamic jurisprudence would not have been possible without a fair knowledge of each one of them.
7. Islamic doctrine: According to Khalaf (1986: 87–88), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā wrote ten books in the field of Islamic doctrine. For instance, '*Ṣifat Al-Jannah*' (the description of paradise), '*Ṣifat Al-Nār*' (the description of hell fire), '*Al-Ba'th wa Al-Nushūr*' (the Day of Judgment), '*Dalā'il Al-Nubūwah*' (prophetic evidence) and '*Al-Qubūr*' (graveyards). Similar to the demonstration of his prowess in Islamic jurisprudence, composing this number of books in Islamic doctrine shows a fair background of the topic.

Furhtermore, it is important to point out the view of some scholars about Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's status and authenticity in Hadith transmission. It is clear that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā has occupied an honorable status not only among scholars but also among people from different categories. At the political level, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was favorable to be the private tutor for several Abbasid princes as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Students, on the other hand, showed great interest in attending Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's lessons and used to make frequent visits to his house to listen and learn Hadith from him. The great number of students Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā had reflects their interest and confidence in his scholarly knowledge. This is reflected in the saying of Yūsuf Ibn Taghrī Bardī (n.d.), who said: "people after him his dependents with regard to the disciplines he has compiled and many people narrated on his authority" (p. 3/86).

Likewise, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā held a good reputation among scholars. He is considered one of the well-known respectable *Ḥafīẓ* in Hadith⁵. Among the numerous Hadith scholars who addressed him as *Ḥafīẓ* were: Ibn Hajar (1908: 6/12), Ibn Kathīr (1986: 11/71) and Al-Mizzī (1980, 16/72). Ḥasan Ibrāhīm (1996: 3/24–25) stated in his book '*Tārīkh Al-Islām*' that the period of Caliph Al-Mu'taḍid witnessed the rise of many writers, intellects and poets, to mention especially Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā. Ibn Abī Ḥātim praised him noting that he had listened to and wrote on the authority of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā with his father and that his father was asked about Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and said: "a veracious person from Baghdad" (Ibn Abī Ḥātim, 1952: 5/163). Moreover, Ibn Al-Jawzī (1992: 12/341) pointed out to some scholarly based characteristics of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā, being well mannered, reliable and veracious. Al-Dhahabī (1955)

⁵ A *Ḥafīẓ* literally means the 'protector' or 'keeper.' In Islamic contexts it refers to someone who has memorized the whole Qur'an and/or many Hadiths. Also, this title is usually only given to those who have excelled in this field of science and held wide knowledge about it (Khalaf, 1997: 81).

also praised him in his famous book '*Tadhkirat Al-Ḥuffāẓ*' saying: "The Hadith narrator, the scholar and the veracious one" (p. 2/677). As for his wide scope of knowledge, Ibn Al-Nadīm (1997: 230) reported that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was an expert in reports and narrations. Ibn Kathīr (1986: 11/71), as well, refers to Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's wide knowledge saying: "The writer in every field of knowledge, the famous one for his many useful writings, in purification and other fields." Also, Ibn Shākir Al-Kutbī (1973) said that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was "One of the trustworthy writers of reports and biographies" (p. 2/228).

1.3.2 Main Characteristics Of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's Personality And His Creative Abilities

1.3.2.1 Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's Personality: Main Characteristics

Based on what has been introduced earlier about Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's biography, it seems that his personality was formed based on three main factors: His family, especially his father, his teachers and the surrounding environment. Thus, every factor among those helped Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā to acquire noble characteristics, which played a role in shaping his morals and creative abilities. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's main personal characteristics can be traced as follows:

1. Firmness and courage

According to Al-Kutbī (1973: 1/494–495), Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā related that once while he was teaching Al-Muktafī '*Al-Faṣīḥ*' book, Al-Muktafī made a mistake so he pinched his cheek painfully and left. Then the manservant followed Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and said: it is said to you that hearing detestable things is not a proper way of disciplining. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā said: Glorified be Allah! I do not say detestable things neither to my student nor to my people. Then the manservant came to him with a

paper and said: it is said to you that you are right and when Saturday arrives you shall come as usual. When Saturday came Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā met Al-Muktafī as usual and said: O prince, you say about me what I have not said? Al-Muktafī replied: yes my tutor, who does what should not have been done, is said about him what has not been said.

This story clearly shows the firmness of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and his faithful efforts in disciplining and teaching people despite them being from the common or the ruling family. It indicates Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's loyalty in work and his seriousness in scholarly matters away from bias and favour. Although Al-Muktafī was the son of the Caliph, this had not kept Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā from taking a courageous action, a painful pinch on the cheek of the prince, which he believed was worthy. It also shows the credibility of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and the trust of the Caliph, Al-Mu'taḍid, which was his personal tutor as well one day, in him. Al-Mu'taḍid chose to believe the tutor of his son, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā, over his son Al-Muktafī and paid less attention to what had happened between the two in favour of good disciplining.

2. Humbleness and sense of humor

Among Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's personal features is his humbleness and sense of humor. Despite his firmness and seriousness in teaching, he managed to build a successful relationship with his students based on respect and friendship with a sense of humor. The social and scholarly status of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā did not interfere with his truthful desire to be much closer and lenient as it could be with his students as it is manifested in the story of the visit of his students to his house mentioned earlier in this chapter⁶.

⁶ The story can be reviewed on pages 28–29.

3. Emotional Intelligence

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was an influential and beloved personality. He had the ability to influence the feelings of people and change their mood from happiness to sadness and vice versa. This feature is found within a long story related by Al-Khaṭīb Al-Baghḍādī (2001: 11/293–294) in his famous book '*Tārīkh Madīnat Al-Salām*.' The story says that Al-Muktafī who is the son of Al-Mu'taḍid, the Abbasid Caliph, used to dislike tutors. But when Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was asked to become his personal tutor he liked him and was pleased with him. So when Al-Mu'taḍid saw this he called for Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā to see him. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā says: then I was brought and seated very near to the chair of the Caliph. I started telling tales of the Caliphs and their sermons so he cried heavily. Then I switched to bedouins anecdotes and he began to laugh loudly.

This story shows Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's well acquaintedness with the tools needed to access peoples' hearts and achieve their satisfaction. Although Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was meeting Al-Mu'taḍid for the first time, he was still able to switch his mood from grief to joy. Like a professional psychologist, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā dealt successfully with Al-Muktafī and his father and maintained his scholarly status without losing respect or being involved in favouritism.

4. Charisma

Charisma usually refers to the personal trait by which a person has the ability to attract and influence the people around him/her. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā had a highly influential personality. Examples for this feature of his are many. For instance, his tutoring for prince Al-Muktafī and the refusal of the latter for other tutors. Also, the story when he met the Abbasid Caliph, Al-Mu'taḍid, mentioned in the previous point.

5. Patience and tolerance

Patience and tolerance are two main personal traits without which success is limited or cannot be achieved. When it comes to knowledge and learning, patience and tolerance are even more necessary. It is said that if one devotes all of himself for knowledge then he may gain some, otherwise he will gain none. Thus, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was involved in the process of learning since he was a child at the age of ten. Although at this age playing is the more expected activity, through patience, tolerance and enthusiasm, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā managed to sit for knowledge and he kept doing so until the last day of his life.

6. Knowledge

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā is known mostly as a Hadith scholar by the many great works he left behind. However, he was very knowledgeable in a number of different fields as well. He had the ability to learn and publish many works in different fields of science, such as: history, Qur'anic narrations, jurisprudence, asceticism and literature.

7. Self esteem and confidence

The story mentioned earlier in point four of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā with the Abbasid Caliph, Al-Mu'taḍid, and his son, Al-Muktafi, indicates the confidence of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā in his knowledge and manner of administering discipline without fearing the results of his disliked action by Al-Muktafi. Thus, this confidence of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was a definite outcome of his positive self-esteem. Another example of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's self-confidence is his evaluation and opinion of some of his teachers that were taken into consideration by Hadith scholars (Khalaf, 1997: 70).

8. Independence

As mentioned earlier, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā used to sit with his teachers for learning around the age of ten (Khalaf, 1997: 57). Thus, a boy of such a small age

being motivated to learn with endurance and patience as well as tolerance and courage to meet scholars on his own, shows with no doubt the independence and self-motivation of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā.

1.3.2.2 Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's Creative Traits

As previously discussed in the introduction, there is not yet a unified definition for the term creativity, nor a set of fixed characteristics of a creative person. However, there are common features that are believed to be found in almost every creative personality. But, not all features are necessarily found since the types of creativity vary and the way creativity is perceived also varies. According to a study provided by Kerr (2009), "there are different personality traits among groups of creative people and that these traits may influence the domain in which an individual is able to be creative" (p. 186). Further, Kerr (2009: 185–187) lists a number of researchers who have interviewed, examined and explored the lives and personalities of creative individuals and have published lists of common traits. For example, John Dacey and Kathleen Lennon identified ten personality traits that contribute to the creative process: tolerance for ambiguity, ability to think outside of the box, ability to imagine how things can be used outside of their intended purpose, flexibility that allows for change, willingness to take risks, preference for disorder and complexity, willingness to delay gratification, freedom from gender role stereotyping, capacity to endure frustration and overcome obstacles and the courage to pursue creative endeavours despite consequences. On the other hand, Chales Vervalin identified: openness to experience and emotions, freedom from inhibitions and stereotyped thinking, aesthetic sensitivity and flexibility. Morris Stein believes that the creative person is an aggressive achiever, motivated by a need for order, self-sufficient, intuitive, self-

assertive, curious and empathic. Moreover, Frank Barron described creative people as having independence in judgment, greater expression of impulses and a preference for complexity. Teresa Amabile added deferment of rewards, self-motivation and perseverance when frustrated.

Furthermore, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (Kerr, 2009: 186) studied creative individuals and provided a list of ten paradoxical traits of creative people: having a great deal of energy, but also being quiet and at rest, tendency to be smart and naive at the same time, the ability to combine playfulness and discipline, alternating between imagination and reality, being both introverted and extraverted, being both humble and proud, avoidance of rigid gender role stereotyping, being both rebellious and conservative, having a passion for work and the ability to view it objectively and an openness that allows for both suffering and joy. Also, in this regard, Runco & Pritzker (1999: 170–173) provided a table of fifteen categories of positive traits: awareness of creativity, original, independent, risk-taking, energetic, curious, sense of humor, attracted to complexity, capacity for fantasy, artistic, open-minded, needs alone time, intuitive, emotional and ethical. Thus, among the creative abilities that were found in Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's personality through the analysis of his biography are the following:

1. Fluency:

Fluency means the ability to produce a great number of ideas or problem solutions in a short period of time. A suitable example for Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's fluency is his quick reaction and problem solving when his students were awaiting him outside his door and the rain suddenly began to fall, which meant it was not possible for them to take a lesson at the time due to the 'open to sky' nature of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's house. So, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā sent them a written message carried by a female servant.

The message contained an apology written in the form of a poem, which shows the ability of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā to react quickly according to the situation and in a creative manner.

2. Flexibility

Flexibility means the ability to cross boundaries and make remote associations. The surroundings in which Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā lived varied from strength to weakness. This shows his flexibility to cope with the different incidents positively. His biography, in addition to the numerous works he had left behind, reflect the amount of effort he exerted for the sake of correcting the path of his people when they needed an advice. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā succeeded in taking his role as a reformer without the need to clash with his opponents. This indicates his flexibility and smoothness in dealing with contradicting issues, which is a feature that may not be found in many other reformers.

3. Originality:

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā is considered one of the earliest and most prolific writers who developed many genres. For example, he is one of the earliest that developed the afterlife genre. He covered the different stages of the hereafter and presented descriptions of the upper worlds in short treatises. His work draws attention to three main ways by which the living can learn about the dead (Meri, 2006: 18).

4. Elaboration:

Elaboration usually refers to the amount of details associated with an idea. It focuses more on the solution or idea and develops it further. It means that if a creative person is given just a general idea for a task or solution, he or she can figure out the steps required to complete it. This trait is clearly found in Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's ability

to come up with many ideas and solutions to the problems he addressed in his society. This trait is strongly reflected in his works, through their titles, subtitles and contents.

5. Sensitivity to problems

This trait of creative people along with other primary abilities was suggested by Guilford (1950) in his model of the 'structure of intellect' (Harold & Michael, 1994: 247). Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's sensitivity to problems was reflected in his works. In it, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā tried to address several problems Muslims were suffering from. Each problem is defined well, and appropriate solutions and techniques are usually introduced. For example, one of his works was devoted to asceticism. In it Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā intended to draw the attention of people towards the importance of asceticism while living in prosperity and luxury in order to obtain a balanced life.

6. Redefinition

Redefinition is one of the features of creative people introduced by Torrance and Goff (1989: 142). It refers to the ability to redefine or perceive things in a different way from the usual established or intended way. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā showed many examples of redefinition through his works. The methodology used and the wording of the headings as well as the themes chosen for his works all show his ability to redefine concepts and ideas. For instance, one of his works was entitled as '*Islāh Al-Māl*' meaning 'reformation of money.' Thus, such combination of '*islāh*' and '*al-māl*' has not been used before, and in fact, it gives lots of shades of meanings rather than the usual combination. For example: '*ḥifẓ al-māl*' (i.e., reservation of money).

7. Objectivity

Objectivity of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā can be found in the incident that occurred between him and prince Al-Muktafī (Al-Kutbī, 1973: 1/494–495) where Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā had to pinch Al-Muktafī's cheek for a mistake he made while reading '*Al-*

Faṣīḥ' book. This incident clearly shows the objectivity of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and his seriousness in scholarly matters away from bias and favour. Although Al-Muktafī was the son of the Caliph, this had not kept Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā from taking a courageous action, a painful pinch on the cheek of the prince, which he believed was worthy.

8. Intuition

Creative intuition is the ability to quickly identify valuable or useful creative ideas without conscious thought. As with all intuition, it is described as instantaneous without any conscious understanding of how the mind created the idea. The phenomenon is associated with creative professions or people who are known for creativity in regular professions. Further, intuition can encompass the ability to know valid solutions to problems and decision making. An example of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's quick reaction and problem solving is the incident mentioned earlier in this chapter⁷, when his students went to visit him while rain started pouring and he had to cancel their lesson without hurting their feelings or disparaging their efforts and concerns.

9. Commitment and self-motivation

This trait helps the creative person to become deeply involved in the task at hand and to be willing to work hard and to keep on working. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā began his endless journey for knowledge at the age of ten. Since then he put great effort in learning and spreading out knowledge using all the possible ways and techniques to achieve his aim.

10. Intelligence

Intelligence and creativity are often being linked together. According to Ḥasan (1996), during the ruling period of the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mu'taḍid many genius writers, thinkers and poets appeared, among whom was Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā (p. 3/24).

⁷ For more details refer back to pages 28–29.

He also noted that they were amongst the great historians of their time (p. 25). This indicates the intelligence of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā in various fields of science.

11. Open mindedness

This trait may be expressed through the approval of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā to become the tutor of several Abbasid princes. This is because such responsibility is not usually sought by the religious, as they fear of being payed off or having to teach or say something by force, which they do not believe in or approve of. In spite of that, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā thought of the positive and bright side of this job as well as his responsibility towards this very important and powerful segment of the society. His biography shows his faithfulness and firmness in doing so without fearing anyone but Allah (SWT). It also shows the fruits of his decision when later prince Al-Muktafi became the Caliph.

1.4 Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's Achievements

1.4.1 Positions Held By Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā

Unfortunately, references have mentioned little about the positions held by Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā. However, it appears that the most significant position he held was as the private tutor for several Abbasid princes, some of whom later became Caliphs (Al-Kutbī, 1973: 1/494–495). Thus, it could be said that the role of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā in this position can be considered a political, scientific and an educational position. That is, some of the princes he taught have become Caliphs later on such as, Al-Mu'taḍid and his son Alī Ibn Al-Mu'taḍid (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1992: 12/341). On the other hand, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā used to teach the princes some sciences such as '*Al-Faṣīḥ*,' which is a book on good Arabic usage written by Abū Al-'Abbās Tha'lab (Al-Kutbī, 1973: 1/494–495). This book is considered one of the main sources for learning standard

Arabic. Also, the position of private tutor was not limited to scientific matters; in fact Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā took the role of disciplining the princes whom he taught. This role is clearly shown in the incident mentioned earlier between him and prince Al-Muktafi.

1.4.2 Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's Students

Due to Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's early interest in sciences and knowledge as well as to his utmost endeavor to attend scholarly lessons (*ḥalaqāt*) and get the most benefit of his teachers, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā became a great source of knowledge to his people and the Muslims of his time. Many people from different places travelled to meet Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and benefit from the wide knowledge he had. Also, the long life granted to Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā (he lived around seventy-three years) helped a great number of students to get the chance to meet him and learn from him directly. In his book *Tārīkh Bilād Al-Rāfidayn*, Al-Khatīb Al-Baghdādī (2001: 11/295) he relates on the authority of Abū Al-Ḥasan, the Judge, that on the day Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā died Abū Al-Ḥasan went early morning to Ismā'īl Ibn Ishāq (a judge as well) and said to him: "With many condolences, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā has died." He replied: "May Allah have mercy on Abū Bakr, with him died a lot of knowledge." Yūsuf Ibn Taghrī Bardī (n.d.) refers to the wide knowledge of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and to the great number of students he had saying: "People after him are his dependents with regard to the disciplines he has compiled and many people narrated on his authority" (p. 3/86). Moreover, Al-Dhahabī (1985: 13/399–400) gives an example of twenty-seven names of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's students in his book *Siyar A'lām Al-Nubalā'*. Whereas, Al-Mizzī (1980, 16/74–75) alphabetically counts fifty-five of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's students in his well known book *Tahdhīb Al-Kamāl*.

Notably, among Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's students was his teacher Al-Hārith Ibn Abī 'Usāmah (Al-Dhahabī, 1985: 13/399). Also, many renowned jurists and Hadith scholars found during Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's time have actually listened to him earlier and later became among their time and society's ideals. To name but a few: Ibn Abī Ḥātim (d. 327 AH), Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 AH), Al-Qāsim Ibn Asbagh (d. 340 AH), Ibrāhīm Ibn Al-Junayd (died before him in 270 AH), Abī Bishr Al-Dulābī (d. 310 AH), Abī Al-'Abbās Ibn 'Uqdah (d. 322 AH) and many more others (Khalaf, 1997: 89). As mentioned earlier, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was the tutor of several Abbasid princes who some later became Caliphs (Ibn Shākir Al-Kutbī, 1973: 1/494-495). Unfortunately, many of those Abbasid princes' names were not mentioned in any of the sources available at hand. Rather, many sources referred to this by noting that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was the tutor of many sons of Caliphs without going into detail (such as, Al-Khaṭīb Al-Baghdādī, 2001: 11/293; Al-Mizzī, 1980: 16/72 and Ibn Ḥajar, 1908: 6/12). Except for two princes: Al-Mu'taḍid and his son 'Alī Ibn Al-Mu'taḍid (known as Al-Muktafī billah), which were mentioned together or separately in some sources (Al-Dhahabī, 1985: 13/400; Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1992: 12/341 and Ibn Taghrī Bardī, n.d.: 3/86). However, the possible reason behind mentioning the names of Al-Mu'taḍid and his son Al-Muktafī rather than the others could be due to their popularity. Also, among Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's distinctive students was Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Ishāq Al-Baghdādī who was known as the writer⁸ of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā (2001: 6/58).

The wide variety of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's students, which covered almost all social classes, reflects the great influence of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā on his society in all ranks. It also shows his endeavors for and concern about conveying the teachings of Islam to everyone in the society to benefit them and bring betterment to their lives.

⁸ Every scholar at that time used to have his own writer who writes what the scholar says.

Being the tutor of several Abbasid princes indicates that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was well known among his people and that the knowledge he had and the personality he manifested qualified him to handle such a sophisticated task that was not to be handled by anyone unless with certain criteria. Bearing in mind that the sons of Caliphs would themselves eventually become Caliphs one day and rule the land clearly shows the influential and desirable personality of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā. According to Al-Dhahabī (1985), when Al-Mu‘taḍid became Caliph he spread justice and lessened inequity (p.13/467). Also, Ismā‘īl, the jurist, relates that one day he went to Al-Mu‘taḍid who gave him a book in which all the controversial opinions of the Muslim scholars were gathered and authorized according to each one’s evidence. So Isma‘il said to Al-Mu‘taḍid: the writer of this book is an atheist. He replied: aren’t these Hadiths correct? I said: Hadiths are narrated as they are, but who permitted alcohol did not permit fixed-time marriage, and who permitted fixed-time marriage did not permit music and alcohol, and so every scholar has a pitfall. Thus, he who gathers every scholar’s pitfall and acts accordingly will lose his faith. Then Al-Mu‘taḍid ordered for that book to be burnt (Al-Dhahabī, 1985: 13/465). Like his father, Al-Muktafī Billah who was chosen to be Caliph in 289 A.H. had a good reputation among his people. Although he did not live long (he died in his thirties) (Al-Dhahabī, 1985: 13/479–485), Al-Muktafī Billah succeeded in obtaining his people’s confidence. He gave back the properties his father took from people to build a castle (Khalaf, 1997: 78) and was the Imām of Muslims in Eid Al-Aḍḥā prayer (Al-Dhahabī, 1985: 13/480).

Notably, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā continued his teaching process and sat to teach his students until his last days. Although above his seventies, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā taught

many students during the year he died in such as, ‘Abd Al-Raḥmān Ibn Aḥmad Al-Khuttalī and Ibn Jirāb Ismā‘īl Ibn Ya‘qūb Al-Baghdādī (Khalaf, 1997: 58).

In his book ‘*Al-Ṣamt wa Ādāb Al-Lisān*,’ Khalaf (1986) mentions thirty of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā’s students with a brief introduction for each (pp. 74–82):

1. Al-Ṣaffār: known as Abū ‘Abdullah Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdullah ‘Aḥmad Al-Ṣaffār. He listened to Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā in Baghdad and benefited from his works. He was influenced by Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā’s way of life and was known as the ascetic. Like his teacher, he managed to have works of his own.
2. Ibn Ṣafwān: Known as Abū ‘Alī Al-Ḥussayn Ibn Ṣafwān Ibn Ishāq. He was a friend of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā as well as one of his students. He accompanied him and benefited from his works. He was also the narrator of many of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā’s books such as, *Al-Ṣamt wa Ādāb Al-Lisān*, *Mujābī Al-Da‘wah*, *Al-Faraj ba’d Al-Shiddah*, *Dham Al-Maskir*, *Dham Al-Fuḥsh*, *Dham Al-Ghaḍb*, *Al-Yaqīn* and *Al-Dhikr*.
3. Qāsim Ibn Aṣḥab Ibn Muḥammad Abū Muḥammad Al-Qurṭubī. He listened to Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and benefited from him. He wrote a book on the ‘*righteousness toward parents*.’
4. Al-Jallāb: Known as Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Al-Raḥmān Ibn Ḥamdān Al-Jazzār. He listened to Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and learnt a lot from him. He became one of the ideal role models of his time and had many students.
5. Al-Najjād: Known as Abū Bakr Aḥmad Ibn Salmān Ibn Al-Ḥasan Al-Baghdādī. He was one of Iraq’s well-known scholars. He listened to Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and was the narrator of some of his books such as the book of ‘*Shukr*’ (thankfulness). He learned asceticism and piety from Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā. He used to fast everyday and break his fast on a loaf of bread and

keeps the leftover. And when Friday night arrived he would give his share of bread as a charity and eat his leftovers.

6. Al-Jammāl: Known as Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdullah al-Baghdādī. He accompanied Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā for a long time and studied with him his works and benefited from his knowledge and goodness. Then he travelled to Samarkand where he narrated many of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā’s books.
7. Al-Khuttalī: Known as Abū ‘Abdullah ‘Abd Al-Raḥmān Ibn Aḥmad Ibn ‘Abdullah Al-Baghdādī. He listened to Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and benefited from his books and knowledge. He was among those who accompanied Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā during his last days. He learned from him how to be a good writer. He also had the major accomplishment of memorizing fifty thousand Hadith.
8. Ibn Al-Marzubān: Known as Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn Khalaf Ibn Marzubān Al-Baghdādī. He listened to Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and benefited from him in the field of asceticism. He wrote two books entitled: ‘*Al-Mutamanīn*’ [the wishers] like his teacher Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā who has a book of the same title and ‘*Akhbār Al-Shu‘arā*’ [reports on poets].
9. Al-Lunbānī: Known as Abū Al-Ḥasan Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn ‘Umar Al-Aṣbahānī. He was in Baghdad and learned a lot from Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā. He accompanied him for a long time. He narrated Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā’s book ‘*Al-Ishrāf alā Manāqib Al-Ashrāf*.’
10. Al-Daynūrī: Known as Abū Bakr Aḥmad Ibn Marwān Al-Mālikī. He listened to Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and benefited from his works and was the narrator of some of them such as: ‘*Al-Bukā’ wa Al-Tahajjud*,’ ‘*Al-‘Uqūbāt*’ and ‘*Al-Saḥāb wa Al-Ra‘d wa Al-Barq*.’

11. Al-Qarāṭisi: Known as Abū Bakr ‘Umar Ibn Sa’d Ibn ‘Abd Al-Raḥmān. He accompanied Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā for a long time and narrated many of his books such as, ‘*Muḥāsabat Al-Nafs*,’ ‘*Al-Khā’if*,’ ‘*Al-Wara*,’ ‘*Al-Hawātif*,’ ‘*Qisar Al-Amal*,’ ‘*Al-Qubūr*,’ ‘*Al-Awābid*’ and ‘*Dhikr Al-Mawt*.’ He used to visit Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā regularly at his house to benefit from him. He was among those students who visited Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā for a lesson and received an apology from him in the form of a polite, friendly poem due to the rainfall.
12. Ibn Mājah: Known as Abū ‘Abdullah Muḥammad Ibn Yazīd Al-Rab’ī Al-Qazwīnī. He is a well-known Hadith narrator and the author of *Sunan Ibn Majah*.
13. Ibn Abī Ḥātim: Known as Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Al-Raḥmān Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Idrīs Al-Rāzī. He was very knowledgeable and an ascetic. He is the author of ‘*Al-Jarḥ wa Al-Ta’dīl*.’
14. Abū Muḥammad Al-Ḥārith Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Abū ‘Usāmah Al-Tamīmī. He was one of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā’s students as well as one of his teachers.
15. Ibn ‘Uqdah: Known as Abū Al-‘Abbās Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Sa’īd Al-Kūfī. A renowned Hadith scholar and the author of many works.
16. Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Ya‘qūb Al-Hamadhānī Al-Turābī. He was among the famous scholars who were trustworthy and beneficial to others.
17. Abū Al-Tayyib Muḥammad Ibn Humayd Ibn Muḥammad Al-Sāmīrī. A well-known Hadith scholar who lived long.
18. Ibn Al-Jarrāb: Known as Abū Al-Qāsim Ismā‘īl Ibn Ya‘qūb Ibn Ibrāhīm Al-Baghdādī. A trustworthy scholar of Hadith.

19. Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn Ishāq Ibn Khuzaymah Al-Sulamī Al-Naysābūrī.
One of the most famous Hadith scholars and the author of more than one hundred and forty books.
20. Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdullah Ibn Ibrāhīm Al-Baghdādī Al-Bazzār.
He was trustworthy and good in writing books.
21. Abū Ja‘far ‘Abdullah Ibn Ismā‘īl Ibn Ibrāhīm Al-Baghdādī. He lived long and was trustworthy.
22. Abū Al-Ḥusain ‘Abd Al-Ṣamad Ibn ‘Alī Ibn Muḥammad Al-Baghdādī. A trust worthy Hadith scholar.
23. Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad Al-Bukhārī. A trust worthy Hadith scholar.
24. Abū Al-Ḥussain Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Ja‘far Al-Jawzī Al-Baghdādī. A trust worthy Hadith scholar.
25. Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm Ibn Mūsā Al-Jawzī. A trust worthy Hadith scholar.
26. Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm Ibn ‘Abdullah Ibn Al-Junayd Al-Khuttalī. He listened to Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and died before him. He has works on asceticism.
27. Abū Bishr Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Ḥammād Al-Anṣārī. An excellent Hadith scholar.
28. Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad Ibn ‘Amr Al-Baghdādī. A trust worthy Hadith scholar and the *musnid* of Iraq.
29. Abū Sahl Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdullah Al-Baghdādī. A trust worthy Hadith scholar and the *musnid* of Iraq. He used to write poetry.
30. Wakī‘: Known as Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn Khalaf Ibn Ḥayyān Al-Baghdādī. A Hadith scholar and a jurist. He wrote many useful books.

1.4.3 Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's Written Works

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was a prolific writer who composed around two hundred and seventeen (217) books covering various fields of knowledge and science. He wrote in Qira'āt (methods of recitation) such as: *Ḥurūf Khalaf*, Hadith, linguistic and literature, history, biography, doctrine and asceticism. In addition to this, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā, in many of his works, is considered one of the earliest, if not the first, who developed different types of genres. To mention but a few, *kitāb Al-Manāmāt* (book of dreams), *Qīṣar Al-Amal* (shortening long hopes), *Man 'Asha Ba'd Al-Mawt* (those who survived after death), *Al-'Iyāl* (the family), *Al-Ṣamt wa Ādāb Al-Lisān* (silence and ethics of the tongue) and *Iṣlāḥ Al-Māl* (restoration of Wealth). His book, which is of close relevance to my topic, *Muḥāsabat Al-Nafs wa Al-Izrā' 'Alayhā* (Self-accountability and Admonishment), is considered the earliest work to be written in such a genre. Except for one book entitled *Ādāb Al-Nufūs* (self-discipline) written by Al-Ḥārith Al-Muḥāsibī (d. 243 AH). But this book is not *musnad* (i.e., contains continuous chain of narrators) unlike Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's.

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's high standing as a scholar and a creative reformer is attested by his intellectual output and the positive testimonies of many notable scholars. Ibn Kathīr (1986) says of him that he was a "conservator and a compiler in every discipline, well-known for his many beneficial works" (p. 11/71). Likewise, Al-Khaṭīb Al-Baghādī (2001) who says he was, "The compiler of books on piety and heart softening" (p. 11/293). As for Al-Kutbī (1973) he says that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was "One of the trustworthy writers on Hadith and biographies" (p. 1/494). Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā wrote many works in the various Islamic sciences, with a marked predilection for ethico-spiritual themes. Notably, each work of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's is a masterpiece on its own. Almost all of his works include a limited number of

attributed Hadiths (*marfū*)⁹. But, in general, his works consist of four main categories: Hadiths (known as *al-akhbār*), *Al-Mawqūfāt*¹⁰, *Al-Maqṭu'āt*¹¹ and poetry.

1.4.3.1 Published Works On Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā:

- Muḥammad Khair Ramaḍan Yūsuf (1994). *Fihris Al-Aḥādīth allatī Rawāhā Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā*. Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm.
- Fāḍil Ibn Khalaf Al-Ḥummādah Al-Raqqī (2012). Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā Muḥaddithan wa Muṣliḥan. In *Mawsū'at Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā* (1st vol., pp. 1–576). Riyadh: Dār Aṭlas Al-Khaḍrā'.
- Ibtisām Marhūn Al-Ṣaffār (2014). *Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā: Maṣādiruhu wa Mu'allafātuhu ma'a Taḥqīq Kitābihi Al-Faraj ba'd Al-Shiddah*. Beirut: Dār Al-Muqtabas.

1.4.3.2 Brief Review Of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's Published Works:

In this section, the published works of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā are introduced with details of their editions and the studies made on them along with an abstract for the contents and outline of each work. The works are organized according to the relativity of each book to the main theme of this thesis, which includes: asceticism, piety, softening the heart and purification of the soul.

⁹ An attributed Hadith is a Hadith that is attributed to the Prophet (SAW), but not proven to have a continuous chain of transmitters up to him.

¹⁰ Narrations from the Prophet's companions in terms of their sayings and actions. Known also as '*al-āthār*.'

¹¹ It refers to the narration when the chain of transmitters stops at the *Tābi'ī* (i.e., the followers of the Prophet's companions) in terms of sayings and actions.

1. Al-Ikhlāṣ¹² [sincerity]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā deals with a crucial and sensitive subject with which all of a person's deeds are approved and vice versa. Being truly sincere to Allah in everything said or done needs a lot of effort. Thus, the first and most important result of sincerity is the purification of the soul. The main theme of the book is purification of the soul through sincerity. Like all of his works, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā included in this book Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars. However, verses of poetry were not included unlike Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's usual method in writing. The book was neither given subtitles nor was it divided into clear sections.

2. Iṣṭinā' Al-Ma'rūf¹³ [Art of making good]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā aims at going far beyond the traditional ways of performing the good. He includes various narrations to highlight the amount of creativity that could be used in the field of giving and performing the good. Thus, giving, performing or doing the good is considered good! But, yet it is far beyond the goodness of *making* the good. The main theme of the book is creativity in performing the good. The book includes one hundred and eighty-two (182) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are organized into two chapters pertaining to the merit of performing the good, types of goodness, people who deserve to receive the goodness and the importance of being thankful when receiving any form of good.

¹² This book has been studied by: Al-Ṭabbā' (1992), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

¹³ This book has been studied by: Sa'dāwī (2000), Yūsuf (2002) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

3. Iṣlāh Al-Māl¹⁴ [restoration of wealth]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā focuses on wealth, which is a vital tool for living. He gives a detailed view of all aspects of wealth. He starts his book by introducing the legal ways to earn money, how to maintain it and the proper ways to spend it for the goodness in this life and the afterlife. The book also considers the psychological aspect of purifying the soul through earning, spending and investment. The book includes five hundred and thirteen (513) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to wealth and are organized into seventeen chapters pertaining to the lawful acquisition of wealth, its virtue, types of wealth and livelihoods, practicing moderation, inheritance and the problem of abundant wealth and poverty.

4. Al-I'tibār wa A'qāb Al-Surūr wa Al-Aḥzān¹⁵ [lessons and the sequences of happiness and sadness]

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā focuses in this book on the reality of life that turns about between happiness and sadness. Regardless of the multiple reasons for the happiness or sadness, the book presents both as being tests sent from Allah to his slaves to testify their gratefulness or dissatisfaction. The best protective solution for life turns is to focus on the lifeafter rather than life by way of asceticism. However, achieving balance between the two is the cornerstone. Thus, the main theme of this book is to achieve balance between the focus on the worldly life and the afterlife. It includes seventy-seven (77) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the

¹⁴ This book has been studied by: Al-Quḍāh (1990), Aṭā (1993), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

¹⁵ This book has been studied by: Khalaf (1993), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. The book was not given subtitles nor was it divided into chapters.

5. Al-Amr bi Al-Ma'rūf wa Al-Nahī 'an Al-Munkar¹⁶ [enjoining the good and forbidding the wrong]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā introduces a significant character by which this Ummah was described as the best of the other nations. Allah (SWT) says in the Qur'an: "[Believers], you are the best community singled out for people: you order what is right, forbid what is wrong, and believe in God" (Al-Qur'an, Al-Imrān 3:110)⁹. Through enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong the society may be kept on the right track that Allah has set for it. It shows the unity of the society and the Ummah, which cares about each other and favours the good as well as rejects the bad for everyone. Keeping pace on the track of guidance may not be achieved at all times and ups and downs do occur. Due to this, advice is always needed for the Ummah to stay alive. The book includes one hundred and fifteen (115) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. The book was not given subtitles nor was it divided into chapters.

6. Al-Ahwāl¹⁷ [the book of horrors]

This book focuses on an unseen issue that has an effective role in purifying the soul. It stands as a reminder and an admonishment of the day of resurrection. Similar to hell, which is unseen, the horrors of the day of resurrection are meant for the purpose of having people to fear disobeying Allah's commands. It is based on the notion of recompense and punishment, which both should go in harmony. The horrors

¹⁶ This book has been studied by: Al-Shalāhī (1997), Sa'dāwī (2000), Dār Ibn Ḥazm (2004) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

¹⁷ This book has been studied by: Al-Sayyid (1993), Al-Mubārakfūrī (1993), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

of the day of resurrection and the fact of being asked about everything, urges people not to cheat, harm or oppress anyone. The book includes two hundred and seventy two (272) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars. All the narrations are related to the subject and are categorized into seven subsections pertaining to the description of the day of resurrection and its phases starting from the blow in the horn and until the entrance of paradise.

7. Al-Awliyā'¹⁸ [the allies of Allah]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā focuses the narrations on a group of Muslims that are considered to be very close to their creator, Allah (SWT). Since this group was given the honour of being connected to Allah in the Qur'an (*Awliyā' Allah*), it is no wonder that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā decided to compile a book about Allah's preference for them, their characteristics, purified souls and every good manner they carry. Thus, reaching such a status needs a lot of soul purification. The book includes one hundred and twenty-one (121) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. The book was not given subtitles nor was it divided into chapters.

8. Al-Tahajjud wa Qiyām Al-Layl¹⁹ [to arise from night's sleep for prayer]

This book speaks about the grace of arising from bed after sleep for worshipping Allah and praying. The speciality of *tahajjud* lies in the timing. While night is meant for resting and sleeping, which is the usual case for most Muslims, some find it insufficient to worship Allah only during the day. They tend to wake up after midnight to worship their creator and remember Him while others are sleeping. *Tahajjud* works

¹⁸ This book has been studied by: Jam'iyyat Al-Nashr wa Al-Ta'lif wa Al-Tarjamah (1935), Ibrāhīm (1987), Zaghlūl (1993), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Hummādah (2012).

¹⁹ This book has been studied by: Al-Sa'danī (1994), Al-Ḥārithī (1998), Al-Nadawī (2000), Sa'dāwī (2000), Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (2005) and Al-Hummādah (2012).

a great deal in purifying the soul as this worship is not compulsory upon Muslims and it is performed at the time while people are asleep so hypocrisy may not occur. The book includes three hundred and thirty-eight (338) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars. All the narrations are related to the main theme of the book and are categorized into six subsections pertaining to the description of those who perform *tahajjud*, the grace of arising from sleep for prayer, motivating Muslims to perform *tahajjud* and the recompense from Allah for *tahajjud*.

9. Al-Tawāḍu' wa Al-Khumūl²⁰ [humility and anonymous]

This book is concerned with an essential innate state of a person. *Tawāḍu'* or humility is the state of being humble. The virtue of humility is the opposite of arrogance, pride and haughtiness. All people are equal without any superiority. What distinguishes one from the other in Islam is faith, which only Allah can see deep inside each person's heart. Humility is the portal to good conduct and the foremost means of being near to both the Creator and the created. On the other hand, being anonymous means to dislike being known and famous by way of hypocrisy. All this would undoubtedly enhance the process of purifying the soul. The book includes two hundred and fifty one (251) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized into two chapters pertaining to the description of *tawāḍu'* and *khumūl* and popularity, modesty in dressing, good morals, arrogance and swaggering.

²⁰ This book has been studied by: Al-Ṣaghīr (1988), Aṭā (1989), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

10. Al-Tawbah²¹ [repentance to Allah]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā focuses on importance of repentance to Allah, its merits and reward. *Tawbah* is sought from Allah for committed sins. It is a life transformational process. It paves the way for success: “Believers, all of you, turn to God so that you may prosper” (Al-Qur’an. Al-Nūr 24:31)¹⁰. *Tawbah* also keeps Muslims from hardships and trials. It pleases Allah and helps clear Muslims conscience leading to forgiveness of one’s sins. Therefore, *tawbah* helps greatly in purifying ones soul. The book includes two hundred and eight (208) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars. All the narrations are related to the main theme of the book and are left without any categorization.

11. Al-Tawakkul ‘Ala Allah²² [trust and reliance upon Allah]

This book concentrates on the concept of *tawakkul*, its importance and benefits. *Tawakkul* does not mean to abandon material resources. It always needs the balance between action and trust in Allah (SWT). Trusting and relying upon Allah may instill an enormous amount of peace and contentment in a person and therefore help in the process of one’s soul purification. *Tawakkul* is also an essential part of the completion of one’s faith. The book includes sixty-one (61) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any form of categorization or subtitling.

²¹ This book has been studied by: Ibrāhīm (1991), Aṭā (1989), Sa’dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

²² This book has been studied by: Jam’iyyat Al-Nashr wa Al-Ta’līf wa Al-Tarjamah (1935), Dār Al-Arqam (1984), Ibrāhīm (1986), Al-Dousarī (1987), Zāhir Abū Dāūd & Abdullah Badrān (1988), Al-Hādī (1988), Dār Al-Khair (1990), Al-Laḥḥām (1992), Aṭā (1993), Al-Sawwās & Yūsuf Bidaiwī (1994), Sa’dāwī (2000), Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (2006) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

12. Al-Jū²³ [hunger]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā intends to pull people's attention to the fact that hunger is not as bad as it is thought to be. Contrarily, hunger has many advantages that may be sought. The book ignores the aspects, which focus on the suffering and physical effects of severe hunger. Known by his continuous efforts in reform, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā introduces hunger from a spiritual perspective. Many scholars have spoken about the benefit of hunger in modesty, which opposes full satiation. Among the most beneficial aspects of hunger is the purification of the soul and awakening of intuition, warding off sleep and maintaining continuous wakefulness and facilitating continuous worship. The book includes three hundred and twenty (320) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any form of categorization or subtitling.

13. Ḥusn Al-Ẓan Bi-llah²⁴ [good expectation from Allah]

This book focuses on the merit of expecting good from Allah at all times. Thinking well of Allah manifests itself in believing in the means of salvations granted by Allah (SWT) and not otherwise. That is, thinking and expecting good from Allah usually benefits those who sincerely repent and determine not to return to sins and to spend the rest of their lives in goodness, obedience and righteousness. Then, such a repentant hopes to attain mercy through thinking well of Allah (SWT). Thus, this is how *Ḥusn Al-Ẓan Bi-llah* should be sought. This book entreats the Muslim to be

²³ This book has been studied by: Yūsuf (1997), Sa'dāwī (2000), Al-Sa'danī (2002) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

²⁴ This book has been studied by: Jam'iyyat Al-Nashr wa Al-Ta'līf wa Al-Tarjamah (1987), Ibrāhīm (1988), Muḥammad (1988), Dār Al-Thiqah (1990), Shānūḥah (1993), Aṭā (1993), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

optimistic, to repudiate hopelessness and to strive towards betterment through work, which greatly boosts the purification of the soul. The book includes one hundred and fifty-one (151) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any form of categorization or subtitling.

14. Al-Ḥilm Wa Dham Al-Fuḥsh²⁵ [forebearance and the castigation of obscenity]

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā, in this book, sheds light on the virtue of *ḥilm*, which is among the beloved traits to Allah (SWT). Forebearance governs the other requisite virtues such as temperance, compassion and modesty. It manifests itself throughout the Muslim's life in every ethical dilemma or circumstance. In contrast, anger, which is the opposite of *ḥilm*, is among the most undesirable characters of a person. *Ḥilm* reinforces the process of soul purification in the way that it helps suppress one's wrath and enables people to understand and accept each other in a better way. The book includes one hundred and twenty-six (126) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any form of categorization or subtitling.

15. Dhikr Al-Mawt²⁶ [recalling death]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā relates about six hundred narrations that talk about death from all its aspects. He mentions several issues that are related to or occur before death, while dying and after being dead. For example, he refers to the importance of being prepared for death, the different states of people while dying,

²⁵ This book has been studied by: Jam'iyat Al-Nashr wa Al-Ta'līf wa Al-Tarjamah (1987), Ibrāhīm (1986), Aṭā (1993), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Hummādah (2012).

²⁶ This book has been studied by: Kinberg (1983) and Āl Salmān (2002).

signs of good ending, thinking well of Allah and His mercy and the meetings between the souls of the previously deceased with the newly deceased person. This topic is tightly related to the process of purifying the soul. That is, remembering death with all its concerns and the importance of the good ending encourages people to work hard towards rectitude to achieve this state of success. The book includes five hundred and ninety two (592) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are organized into twenty-five (25) sections; each is given a proper title.

16. Dham Al-Baghi²⁷ [castigation of transgression]

This book focuses on a characteristic that has a great impact on the society as a whole. *Baghi* refers to the transgression and trespassing into the space and the rights of others, whether those rights are of Allah (SWT) or of a human being. It includes iniquity and the desire to exalt without right. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā tries in this small book to show the evil that lies within *baghi*, which should prevent people from performing it in any of its forms. The book also relates narrations that show the punishment and evil end of *Baghi*. The book includes thirty-eight (38) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any form of categorization or subtitling.

²⁷ This book has been studied by: Khalaf (1988), Sa'dāwī (2000), Al-Ḥummādah (2012) and Al-Sa'danī (n.d.).

17. Dham Al-Dunyā²⁸ [castigation of life]

Allah (SWT) says in the Qur'an: "My people, the life of this world is only a brief enjoyment; it is the Hereafter that is the lasting home" (Al-Qur'an, Ghāfir 40:39)¹¹. There are many other Qur'anic āyahs, which dispraise the life of this world and invite people to exploit their efforts for the hereafter. Those who hold on to the false life of the world, yearning for material benefits may be distracted from obedience, worship and performing their religious duties on time and in a perfect manner. It also deprives them from purifying their souls. As narrated in Al-Bukhārī, the Prophet (SAW) urges Muslims to be in this world like a stranger or a wayfarer in order not to loose the right balancing in favouring the hereafter on this world. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā in this book includes four hundred and ninty-seven (497) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of castigating the life and are categorization into three chapters.

18. Dham Al-Muskir²⁹ [castigation of intoxicant]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā relates narrations about the evil and harmfulness that lies in all intoxicants. He also includes narrations that show the prohibition of intoxicants. Islam takes an uncompromising stand towards intoxicants and forbids their consumption in either small or large quantities. Intoxicants are undoubtedly harmful and adversely affect the mind and the body. They also cloud the mind, cause diseases, waste money and destroy individuals, families and communities. The book includes seventy-three (73) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars with verses of

²⁸ This book has been studied by: Ibrāhīm (1988), Aṭā (1993), Almagor (1994), Al-Sawwās (1999), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

²⁹ This book has been studied by: Khalaf (1989), Al-Sa'danī (1992), Al-Sawwās (1992), Shu'aib (1999), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any form of categorization or subtitling.

19. Dham Al-Malāhī³⁰ [castigation of pastimes]

This book points out all that is a pastime, which deprives the Muslim from worshipping Allah (SWT) and drags Muslims to a bad ending. Using the word ‘*malāhī*’ in its wider sense, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā denounces not only music but instruments of diversion like: backgammon, chess and pigeon-flying. He also includes narrations on sexual perversions. The book consists of one hundred and seventy-seven (177) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized into eleven sections.

20. Al-Riḍā ‘An Allah Bi Qaḍā’ih³¹ [being pleased with Allah’s decree]

This book is concerned with the issue of the importance for every Muslim to be pleased with Allah’s decree. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā collected over one hundred narrations in this book that address the importance of being pleased with Allah’s decree, the aspects with which Muslims may reach this state of contentment, the reward for being pleased with Allah’s decree and some examples of those who achieved contentment with Allah’s decree. In fact, this book is considered to be one of the various books of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā, which contribute to the ultimate state of purifying one’s soul. Once the believer realizes that there is no control or power over the blows of fate, his/her only recourse is to submit to Allah’s decree and strive to actualize a state of total contentment. The book consists of one hundred and forty (104) narrations of Hadiths,

³⁰ This book has been studied by: Aṭā (1987), Zaghlūl & Abdullah (1993), Salīm (1995), Sa’dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

³¹ This book has been studied by: Al-Silafī (1990), Ibrāhīm (1990), Al-Lahḥām (1992), Aṭā (1993), Zaghlūl & Abdullah (1993), Salīm (1995), Sa’dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any form of categorization or subtitling.

21. Al-Riqqah Wa Al-Bukā'³² [sensitivity of the heart and weeping]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā concentrates on weeping, which results from a spiritual state following a certain form of worship, like praying, reciting the Qur'an or remembering Allah by oneself. The book starts with 'weeping out of fear from Allah and its reward' and ends with examples from those who wept out of fear from Allah. The book consists of four hundred and twenty-eight (428) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized under twenty-two titles.

22. Al-Ruhbān³³ [the monks]

This book talks about the group of people who are members of a religious order, who live in a monastery, away from the rest of the society. They are usually bound by vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. This book is considered among Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's missing books. Only some narrations were found and published.

23. Al-Shukr³⁴ [thankfulness]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā relates over two hundred narrations on being thankful to Allah (SWT). It includes topics such as the grace of being thankful, its status, its reward and some examples of thankful people. It also shows how Muslims

³² This book has been studied by: Al-Sa'danī (1996), Al-Kadish (1998), Yūsuf (1998), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

³³ This book has been studied by: Al-Munajjid (1956) and Yūsuf (2012).

³⁴ This book has been studied by: Tāḥūn (1978), Al-Badr (1980), Aḥmad & Amīn (1983), Al-Sawwās & Al-Arnā'ūt (1985), Al-Taṇṭāwī (1992), Zaghlūl (1993), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

can be thankful to Allah and in what way. The book consists of two hundred and four (204) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized under two chapters without titles or subheadings.

24. Al-Ṣabr wa Al-Thawāb 'Alayh³⁵ [patience and its reward]

This book is focused on one essential behaviour that is needed throughout this changeful life. Without patience even religious duties cannot be successfully performed. Due to this, Allah (SWT) has set an endless reward for the patient ones. Also, being patient while performing Allah's duties as well as being patient while putting all the effort to keep away from Allah's prohibitions greatly helps to purify the Muslim's soul. The book includes topics on patience such as the grace and status of patience, types of patience, the result of being patient and its reward. The book consists of one hundred and ninety-six (196) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any form of categorization or subtitling.

25. Al-Ṣamt wa Ādāb Al-Lisān³⁶ [silence and ethics of the tongue]

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā focuses in this book on the faults or problems of the tongue and the grace of silence. Due to the seriousness of the subject of the book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā devotes more than seven hundred narrations to cover the important topics related to the tongue and its problems. The book also cover topics such as the importance of guarding one's tongue against saying anything wrong or bad, the grace

³⁵ This book has been studied by: Yūsuf (1997), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

³⁶ This book has been studied by: Khalaf (1986), Aāshūr (1988), Al-Hūwaynī (1990), Aṭā (1993), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

of silence, castigation of backbiting and talebearing, keeping secrets and promises and speaking the truth. Hence, all these behaviours if made available will enhance the process of purifying the soul and allow the Muslim to be closer to his Creator. The book includes seven hundred and fifty-nine (759) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized into six chapters with subheadings in each chapter.

26. Al-‘Uzlah Wa Al-Infirād³⁷ [loneliness and privacy]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā introduces the merits of loneliness and privacy. The dislike of social loneliness has been discussed earlier in this chapter. But, loneliness in this book is of a different kind. Loneliness, or solitude could be positive in the case when socializing deprives the person from being productive at any level or performing his/her religious duties properly. This may occur, especially, when social relations are non-beneficial and are merely a waste of time. Solitude also helps to reinforce the process of soul purification because it allows the person to rethink about his sayings and doings and to consider his religious progression. The book includes two hundred and three (203) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized into two chapters without subheadings.

27. Al-‘Uqūbāt³⁸ [the punishments]

This book is focused on the reasons and types of punishments that occur due to people's sins and disobedience of Allah. Over three hundred narrations were gathered to point out the issue. The book includes topics such as reasons and types of Allah's

³⁷ This book has been studied by: Āl Salmān (1997), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

³⁸ This book has been studied by: Yūsuf (1997), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

punishment, examples of Allah's punishment of individuals, nations, angels and animals and the importance of asking Allah for His forgiveness and regretting the committing of sins. Within this notion of reward and punishment, Muslims may succeed in purifying their souls from everything that may hinder its clearness and sincerity to Allah (SWT). The book includes three hundred and sixty (360) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other according to the theme of each narration without any categorization or subtitling.

28. Al-'Umr Wa Al-Shayb³⁹ [age and grey hair]

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā devotes this book to emphasize on the value of time and age in one's life. He collect approximately ninety narrations in this book distributed over three chapters. The first chapter shows the grace of long life, especially when it is accompanied with good deeds. The second chapter refers to the respect that should be shown from the youth towards the elders and the lessons drawn from being old and growing grey hair. The last chapter describes the state of being old and weak after youth and strength. The book includes ninety one (91) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized into three chapters without titles or subtitling except for the last chapter, which was titled as: A Chapter on Elderliness.

³⁹ This book has been studied by: Khalaf (1992), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

29. Al-Ghībah wa Al-Namīmah⁴⁰ [backbites and talebearing]

This book deals with two bad qualities: backbiting and talebearing. The danger of these characteristics on individuals and societies lies in its destructive results through sowing enmity, evils and discord among people. The book, through its narrations, gives a description to backbiting and talebearing. It includes topics such as the result and punishment of backbiting and talebearing, the responsibility of Muslims towards backbiting and double tongued people. The book includes one hundred and sixty-four (164) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized into eleven chapters with an appropriate titling for each.

30. Al-Faraj Ba'd Al-Shiddah⁴¹ [relief after hardship]

The theme of this book brings back hope and calls for optimism. It is based on the notion of the tranquility of Muslims through their strong faith in Allah's will and good destiny. This belief helps Muslims to pursue their life with peace of mind, optimism and calmness through thick and thin. In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā collects more than one hundred narrations on topics such as: types of difficulty, ways to bring relief after hardship and the power of *du'ā'* (supplication), examples of people who experienced relief after hardship and the reward of showing patience in hardship. The book includes one hundred and forty-one (141) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and

⁴⁰ This book has been studied by: Umar (1989), Khalaf (1989), Aṭā (1993), Sa'dāwī (2000), Al-Hummādah (2012) and Maḥmūd (n.d.).

⁴¹ This book has been studied by: Al-Aāl & Imād Firrah (1986), Aāliah (1987), Al-Sawwās & Abd Al-Qādir Al-Arnā'ūt (1992), Aṭā (1993), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Hummādah (2012), Al-Ṣaffār (2014), Al-Anṣārī (n.d.) and Ibrāhīm (n.d.).

later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any categorization or subtitling.

31. Faḍā'il Shahr Ramaḍān⁴² [merits of *Ramaḍān*]

This book is concerned with issues related to the Holy month of *Ramaḍān*. Unlike his other books, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā places the narrations of this book into groups according to its jurisprudential matters. The book includes issues such as the grace of *Sha'bān* (the month preceeding *Ramaḍān*), the grace of *Ramaḍān*, getting up from sleep for praying and waking up for *suḥūr* (a pre-dawn meal). The book includes sixty-three (63) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized into three subheadings according to the jurisprudential issues related to *Ramaḍān*.

32. Faḍā'il 'Ashr Dhī Al-Ḥijjah⁴³ [merits of 'ashr *dhī Al-Ḥijjah*]

This booklet focuses on the merits of 'ashr *dhī Al-Ḥijjah*, its reward, types of worship that may be performed during these blessed days and the grace of the *Day of 'Arafah* and the reward of fasting this day for non-pilgrims. It includes nineteen (19) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any categorization or subtitling.

33. Qiṣar Al-Amal⁴⁴ [shortening long hopes]

This Book deals with a topic that is of immense importance in a materialistic society. It discusses the importance of reducing long hopes for the sake of working

⁴² This book has been studied by: al-Manṣūr (1995), Al-Sa'danī (1997), Al-Nadawī (2000), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

⁴³ This book has been studied by: Al-Miṭairī (2011) and Al-Ṣā'idī (2012).

⁴⁴ This book has been studied by: Yūsuf (1995), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

hard for the afterlife, which is the true everlasting life. We live in a consumer-based world, which may distract us from being concerned about the afterlife. The antidote to this is ‘Qīṣar Al-Amal’, reducing long hopes. This book can be an effective antidote to our materialistic lives. The book consists of three hundred and forty nine (349) Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. The book is divided into three main sections. The first section consists of hundred and eight (108) reports without subheadings. It introduces the importance of shortening long hopes. The second section consists of ninety-three (93) reports that lack subheadings as well and talk mainly about the initiation of good work. The last section consists of hundred and forty-six (146) reports with three subheadings in which some techniques and treatments to prevent long hopes are provided.

34. Al-Qanā‘ah Wa Al-Ta‘affuf⁴⁵ [contentment and abstinence]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā collected more than two hundred narrations to deal with greediness through two greatly positive traits: contentment and abstinence. The book introduces topics such as the grace of abstinence, castigation of asking needs from others, seeking livelihood with calmness and being contented with Allah’s destiny, asking Allah (SWT) for one’s needs rather than asking the people and censure of greed. The book includes two hundred and ten (210) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized under four main headings.

⁴⁵ This book has been studied by: Ibrāhīm (1989), Sa’īd (1992), Aṭā (1993), Sa’dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

35. Kalām Al-Layālī Wa Al-Ayyām⁴⁶ [talks of nights and days]

This is one of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's creative topics that have not been written about before. It is based on the talks of days and nights to human beings by way of a sermon and what humans think of day and night. It points out the importance of time and the necessity of making use of it properly as life, no matter how long, is short. The book includes seventy (70) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any categorization or subtitling.

36. Al-Mutamannīn⁴⁷ [wishers]

This book is another masterpiece of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's creativity in choosing the topics and in writing. The main topic of this book had never been compiled in one book before. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā intends through his writings to put his hand on problems he finds in his society and wished to treat them with lots of creativity and friendliness. The whole book is devoted for 'wishes' of different people, with different statuses and different backgrounds. Whether good or bad, people wish what is usually a reflection of their inner state. Therefore, getting to know what great people wish is not less important. The book includes one hundred and fifty-nine (159) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any categorization or subtitling.

⁴⁶ This book has been studied by: Yūsuf (1997), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

⁴⁷ This book has been studied by: Yūsuf (1997), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

37. Mujābū Al-Da‘wah⁴⁸ [those who have their supplications answered]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā gathers more than one hundred narrations on people who had their supplications answered by Allah (SWT). The examples given in this book are various. The book includes one hundred and thirty-six (136) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any categorization or subtitling.

38. Muḥasabat Al-Nafs wa Al-Izrā’ ‘Alayhā⁴⁹ [self-accountability and admonishment]

This book is among the most important and beneficial published works of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā. The issue of taking account of oneself is a crucial matter to keep Muslims on the right track. *Muḥasabat al-nafs* includes processes such as retrospection, assessment, accounting and reckoning. Honest self-criticism is an important way to purify the soul and enlighten it with tranquility and success. Sins are a fact of life and all human beings are sinful. However, what makes the difference is repentance, which usually comes after taking account of oneself. The book includes topics such as the importance and result of taking account of oneself, working for the hereafter, starting with oneself, the soul and life, the soul and paradise, to work hard in this life and to seek comfort in the hereafter and some examples of people who took account of themselves. The book includes one hundred and forty-nine (149) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related

⁴⁸ This book has been studied by: Sharaf Al-Dīn (1972), Office of Editing (1984), Aṭā (1986), Ibrāhīm (1987), Alwān (1993), Ḥamdān (1993), Sa’dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

⁴⁹ This book has been studied by: Abī Hurayrah & Awaḍ (1986), Ibrāhīm (1987), Al-Sharqāwī (1988), Sa’dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

to the subject of the book and are categorized under six main title headings, except for the first that was not given a title.

39. Al-Muḥtaḍirīn⁵⁰ [moribunds]

The experience of death is one that every human being will go through. Unfortunately, it is not an optional choice nor can it be retried. This book is not a book of horror or for story time. The choice of the topics and narrations all point out to the continuous intentions of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā for reform. Talks of death usually help to soften the heart and purify the soul. Among the topics mentioned in this book are: good expectation from Allah on the deathbed, condolence of oneself for patience on deathbed, poetry on the bed of death, the saying of the Prophet (SAW) on the deathbed and the princes and kings. The book includes three hundred and sixty-nine (369) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized under nine main headings with appropriate titling.

40. Mudārāt Al-Nās⁵¹ [politeness to people]

This book is about morals and good relations with people. It discusses how to deal with people in politeness and according to each one's state, status, etc. Once more, this book was the first of its kind when it was composed. It is a very sophisticated book that leads to good and skilfull social relationships. The topics included in this book are: politeness with people and showing patience towards their harm, ingratiation with people, politeness through smiling and easiness, relations with good manners, politeness through lenience and good speech, being cautious with people to prevent their harm, reconciliation among people, politeness of husbands to

⁵⁰ This book has been studied by: Yūsuf (1997), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

⁵¹ This book has been studied by: Yūsuf (1998), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

their wives and politeness of wives to their husbands. The book includes one hundred and seventy-six (176) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized under ten main headings with appropriate titling.

41. Al-Maraḍ wa Al-Kaffarāt⁵² [sickness and penance]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā collected more than two hundred narrations on sickness and how it stands as a penance for sins. He views sickness from the Islamic perspective relating narrations on the reward of accepting the sickness with satisfaction and on what to say when visiting someone who is sick. The book also includes topics on the reward for those who visit the sick and the ethics of visiting. It includes two hundred and sixty-two (262) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any categorization or subtitling.

42. Makā'id Al-Shayṭān⁵³ [plots of Shaitan]

The subject of this book is very important. Although the narrations gathered for this topic are not so many (less than one hundred), it has succeeded in conveying the intended message. In spite of the fact that the plot of the Satan is weak, unfortunately many Muslims fall into his trap. The Satan tends to use many strategies and techniques to achieve his aim. Therefore, knowing these tactics is very important for every Muslim to avoid falling victim to his plots. In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā includes topics such as: the nature of Satan, his plots and tactics and how to be

⁵² This book has been studied by: Al-Nadawī (1991), Bidaiwī & Jalāl (1992), Al-Sa'danī (1996), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

⁵³ This book has been studied by: Ibrāhīm (1991) and Sa'dāwī (2000).

protected from him. The book includes seventy-nine (79) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any categorization or subtitling.

43. Al-Ham wa Al-Ḥuzn⁵⁴ [worries and sadness]

This book deals with worries and sadness from a different angle that may not be caught at first. It focuses on sadness and worries that occur when a Muslim feels ashamed and blameful due to his sins and negligence of Allah's commands. These worries and sadness are considered positive and they lead to purification of the soul and repentance. The book contains many examples of worried and sad people who either got involved into sins or were frightened of Allah's punishment and the Day of Judgment. The book includes one hundred and seventy-nine (179) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any categorization or subtitling.

44. Al-Hawāṭif⁵⁵ [the callers]

This book is another masterpiece of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's works that has not been written about before. It introduces narrations on people who encountered voices coming from graveyards, or while supplication or from the Jinn. The book includes one hundred and seventy-seven (177) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are

⁵⁴ This book has been studied by: Ibrāhīm (1991), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

⁵⁵ This book has been studied by: Ibrāhīm (1988), Aṭā (1993), Al-Zaghālī (1995), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

categorized under three main headings entitled: callers of graves, callers of supplication and callers of Jinn.

45. Al-Wajal wa Al-Tawaththuq bil‘amal⁵⁶ [fear and working hard]

This book is concerned with the importance of fearing Allah (SWT) and working hard to succeed and achieve Allah’s pleasantness. It consists of only seven (7) narrations without any titling. The seventh narration, which covers almost the whole book, talks about the story of Antonus, the tourist.

46. Al-Wara⁵⁷ [pious]

Wara’ in Islam means to leave everything whose rightness is doubtful in order to avoid falling into the forbidden. It is one result of fearing Allah (SWT). The book includes topics such as: pious in sight, pious in hearing, pious in smell, pious in tongue, pious in violence, pious in stomach, stories of pious people, pious in selling and buying and the reward of pious people. The book contains two hundred and thirty-one (231) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized under twelve main title headings.

47. Al-Yaqīn⁵⁸ [certainty]

This book is concerned with certainty. Its importance for belief is like that of the soul to the body. The book includes topics such as: the importance of certainty, fruits of certainty, supplications and examples of people’s certainty. It consists of forty-three (43) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s

⁵⁶ This book has been studied by: Āl Salmān (1997), Yūsuf (1997), Sa’dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

⁵⁷ This book has been studied by: Al-Hmūd (1988), Beik (1988), Al-Sa’danī (1993), Al-Arabī (1998), Sa’dāwī (2000), Al-Jābī (2002) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

⁵⁸ This book has been studied by: Zaghlūl (1987), Ibrāhīm (1988), Aṭā (1993), Sa’dāwī (2000), Al-Sawwās (2004) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any categorization or subtitling.

48. Makārim Al-Akhlāq⁵⁹ [the noble qualities of character]

When Allah (SWT) wants to dispense His grace on someone, he places in his heart the desire to walk the paths leading toward self-purification, and gives him the power to correct the characteristics of his soul. Allah decreed that success in this life and the hereafter, is judged by the degree of purification of the soul and the degree to which the noble character of beings will be reached. It is therefore the duty of every Muslim to seek to achieve the noble character and emulate their Prophet (SAW), who said: "I have been sent only to perfect noble character." Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā realizes the importance of character refinement and emphasizes the traits and qualities that every Muslim should seek to acquire. This book demonstrates how the Prophet (SAW) and the people of piety from his nation embody each of these traits, and tells the reader how to personify the turn. It includes four hundred and eighty-eight (488) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized under an introduction and nine main headings with appropriate titling and contents.

49. Şifat Al-Jannah⁶⁰ [paradise: a descriptive account]

This book focuses on the psychological aspect that is based on the concept of recompensation and punishment. Thus, the two scales should be balanced. If recompensation outweighs punishment, there will be reliance, overstepping Allah's

⁵⁹ This book has been studied by: Ibrāhīm (1990), Al-Sawwās (1999), Aṭā & Shams Al-Dīn (2000), Sa'dāwī (2000), Uyūn (2002), Al-Ḥummādah (2012), Abd Al-Raḥīm (2014) and Al-Ḥūt (2015).

⁶⁰ This book has been studied by: Al-Ṭanṭāwī (1994), Salīm (1996), Al-Asāslah & Khalaf (1997), Sa'dāwī (2000), Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (2004) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

boundaries and overindulgence in life desires. Similarly, if punishment outweighs recompensation, there will be desperation with which performance of good deeds will become very weak and may even stop. Allah (SWT) says: “And do not cause corruption to the earth after its reformation and call Him in fear and hope” (7: 56). The book works on purifying the individual’s soul through encouraging individuals to work hard and comply with Allah’s commands for a happy and bright ending. It includes three hundred and sixty four (364) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars. All the narrations are related to the main theme of the book.

50. Şifāt Al-Nār⁶¹ [hellfire: a descriptive account]

This book handles part of the psychological aspect, which disparages Allah’s commands and his prohibitions. It works on purifying the individual’s soul through fear and highlighting the miserable ends of those who do not comply with Allah’s commands. Allah says in the Qur’an: “[Prophet], tell My servants that I am the Forgiving, the Merciful, but My torment is the truly painful one” (Al-Qur’an. Al-Ḥijr 15:49–50)¹². Sufyān Ibn ‘Uyaynah is quoted in this book saying: “Hell is created as a mercy, for Allah injects its fear in his creatures that they might refrain from bad deeds” (Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā, 1997: 95). The book includes two hundred and sixty two (262) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars. All the narrations are related to hell and are categorized into ten subsections pertaining to the description of hell, the chastisement of its inmates, its mountains, valleys, weapons, animal, food and drink.

⁶¹ This book has been studied by: Yūsuf (1997), Abbās (1998), Al-Sa’danī (2000), Sa’dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

51. Al-Qubūr⁶² [graves]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā took his time in collecting a great number of narrations that are all related to graves and death. Due to the importance of this subject, many scholars were reported to quote from it. Also, it is said that Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā was the first to compile a book on this kind of genre. The book includes topics such as drawing lessons from funerals, writings found on some graves, the Day of Resurrection and deceased people that delivered advice in the graveyards. The book includes three hundred and sixty-two (362) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized under six headings without subtitling.

52. Kitāb Al-‘Iyāl⁶³ [the book of family]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā made a great effort in giving a thorough understanding of the role of each member of the family. Unlike other works, Kitāb Al-‘Iyāl discussed all the main aspects, rather than focusing on some of them, needed to raise a healthy, positive and interactive family. The book examines religious, financial, social, emotional, sexual, educational and moral aspects of the family. It devotes separate sections to boys and girls to shed light on their differentiations and separate needs at some points. It also studies the different stages of childhood starting from very early stages before pregnancy and until teenage. It consists of six hundred and seventy four (674) Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry.

⁶² This book has been studied by: Kinberg (1983), Al-Amūdī (2000), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Hummādah (2012).

⁶³ This book has been studied by: Khalaf (1990/1997), Al-Sa'danī (1994), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Hummādah (2012).

53. Al-Ikhwān⁶⁴ [Brotherhood]

This book deals with a vital social aspect of people, brotherly rights and relations. All Muslims in the world are brothers and sisters by the unity of Islam. Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā in this book first sheds light on the significance and status of brotherhood. Then, he gives examples of intimacy among brothers and the rights of each brother upon the other. The book consists of two hundred and twenty eight (228) Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. It is divided between sixteen (16) sections.

54. Al-Ishrāf fī Manāzil Al-Ashrāf⁶⁵ [traits of nobles]

In this book, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā highlights the traits and noble character of the nobles within society. He aims through his book to encourage the Muslims to follow such exemplars and make the most benefit of their good character. Like his other books, Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā included around five hundred and twenty (520) narrations distributed among Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars. The book was not given subtitles nor was it divided into chapters.

55. Ḥilm Mu'āwiyah⁶⁶ [Mu'āwiyah's forbearance]

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā devotes this book to show one of Mu'āwiyah's most recognised qualities. It is said that friends and critics alike have recognised his quality of *ḥilm*. The book includes thirty-nine (39) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later

⁶⁴ This book has been studied by: Al-Ṭawālbaḥ & Khalaf (1988), Aṭā (1988), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

⁶⁵ This book has been studied by: Khalaf (1990), Ibrāhīm (1990), Aṭā (1992), Qaṣṣāb (1993), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

⁶⁶ This book has been studied by: Hazāimah & Yāsīn (2000), Ṣāliḥ (2002) and Al-Zubaidī (2006).

scholars with few verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any form of categorization or subtitling.

56. Al-‘Aql wa Faḍluh⁶⁷ [the intellect and its merits]

This book talks about the merits and status of the human mind from the Islamic perspective. It also pays attention to two types of the mind and the correct ways to maintain proper thought and the tools that may distort it and hinder its great role. It outlines the limits of the human mind and that it is similar to any other human ability that once overused may give contrary results. The book includes one hundred and two (102) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any categorization or subtitling.

57. Qirā Al-Ḍayf⁶⁸ [hospitality to guests]

This book focuses on hospitality to guests. It includes topics such as ethics and morals of hospitality and handling visitors, the status and reward of good hospitality and examples of the generosity of some people. The book includes sixty-seven (67) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any categorization or subtitling.

⁶⁷ This book has been studied by: Al-Kawtharī (1946), Al-Ṣaghīr (1988), Ibrāhīm (1988), Zaghlūl & Abdullah (1993), Aṭā (1993), Sa’dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

⁶⁸ This book has been studied by: al-Manṣūr (1997), Sa’dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

58. Qaḍā' Al-Ḥawā'ij⁶⁹ [fulfilling the needs of others]

This is one of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's most beneficial books. It is concerned with a characteristic that helps to tighten the relations among people and keep them away from selfishness. Doing things for others for the pure sake of helping them creates positivity in the society. The book includes one hundred and seventeen (117) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized under three main headings, entitled: the grace of doing good, asking honorable people for the good and being thankful to those who do the good.

59. Al-Maṭar wa Al-Ra'ad wa Al-Barq wa Al-Rīḥ⁷⁰ [rain, thunder, lightening and wind]

This book is written on issues of weather from an Islamic perspective. It contains topics such as how rain, thunder, lightening and wind are sent as a mercy from Allah (SWT) or as a punishment. Also, what should be said when each one of them occurs and many other related topics. The book includes one hundred and eighty-two (182) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized under four main headings according to the title of the book.

⁶⁹ This book has been studied by: Ibrāhīm (1988), Al-Laḥḥām (1992), Abd Al-Mun'im (1993), Aṭā (1993), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Yūsuf (2002).

⁷⁰ This book has been studied by: Al-Amūdī (1997), Sa'dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

60. Maqtal ‘Alī⁷¹ [Assassination of Alī]

This book mentions over one hundred narrations that are related to the assassination of Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (RA). It includes narrations on his grace, how he was assassinated, his will, his age when he was killed and how and where he was buried. The book includes one hundred and thirty-nine (139) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are categorized under ten entitled headings.

61. Al-Manāmāt⁷² [dreams]

This book is devoted to dreams. It includes many narrations (more than three hundred) on dreams that are dreamt by different people. It focuses on the type of dreams, which are related to dead people and their state and status after death and that how news of the living reaches them. The book includes three hundred and forty-four (344) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet’s companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any categorization or subtitling.

62. Man ‘Āsha Ba‘d Al-Mawt⁷³ [those who survived after death]

This book is again one of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā’s unique works. It talks about a rare phenomenon that happens to dead people. He relates many narrations about dead people coming back to life. Although this sounds weird and impossible, but Muslims

⁷¹ This book has been studied by: Al-Ṭabṭabā’ī (1987), Al-Maḥmūdī (1990), Ṣāliḥ (2001), Al-Qazwīnī (2002) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

⁷² This book has been studied by: Ibrāhīm (1989), Aṭā (1993), Sa’dāwī (2000) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

⁷³ This book has been studied by: Kinberg (1983), Al-Dirwīsh (1986), Jāb Allah (1987), Aāshūr (1987), Al-Anṣārī (n.d.), Al-Dimashqī (1993), Bayḍūn (1993), Aṭā (1993), Sa’dāwī (2000), Al-Fiqqī (2006) and Al-Ḥummādah (2012).

believe that Allah (SWT) is capable of doing anything if He wills. The book includes sixty-three (63) narrations of Hadiths, anecdotes, aphorisms and stories from the Prophet's companions, their successors and later scholars along with verses of poetry. All the narrations are related to the subject of the book and are placed one after the other without any categorization or subtitling.

1.5 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's life, personal abilities and achievements. The first section gave an overall view of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's social life, the personal and interpersonal ones. It has also covered the political and educational climate during the life of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and the impact it had on him. Further, the second section was devoted to the scientific life of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and his personal traits and creativity. It introduced his educational background and scientific status among scholars along with their scholarly opinions of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā. Then, it derived a number of Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's personal traits and creative abilities based on the information provided in this chapter. The chapter concludes with mentioning Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā's main achievements ranging from: the positions he held, his students and his written works.

The next chapter will discuss in depth one of the main themes of this thesis which is purification of the human soul. The chapter mainly reviews purification from the Islamic perspective. Starting with the status of the soul in Islam, its purification and the goal and fruits of it. It then goes a step further to outline the methodology of purification in Islam. It also touches upon the relationship between purification of the soul with spirituality and Islamic mysticism.