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## **The Book Ihyaa' 'Uloomud-Deen In the Scales of the Scholars and Historians**

[Being a translation of Kitaab Ihyaa' 'Uloomud-Deen fee Meezaanil-'Ulamaa' wal-Mu'arrikheen]

Translation by Abul-Hasan Daawood al-Britaanee

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Version 1.0

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All praise is for Allaah, we praise Him and seek His aid and ask for His forgiveness, and we seek refuge in Allaah from the evils of ourselves and from our evil actions. He whom Allaah guides, there is none can lead him astray, and he whom Allaah misguides, there is none can guide him. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, Alone, having no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger.

To proceed:

This is a small treatise, singular in its subject - if Allaah so wills. I have gathered in it some of the sayings of the people of knowledge' (Investigating all of them would have been something difficult for the researcher, so maybe what I have quoted will be sufficient for the one who reflects) - the imaams, the scholars and the historians - about a book which is well-known among the people in general, the educated, the scholars and the ignorant, and it is the book *Ihyaa' 'Uloomud-Deen* of Shaykh Aboo Haamid al-Ghazzaalee, whom Allaah caused to pass away in the year 505H -*rahimahullaah wa 'afaa'anhu*.

These sayings which I have gathered and the texts which I have quoted here are all on one of the two sides of the scales - that of correction and amendment and that is the unknown page in the knowledge of this book!!

As for the other side of the scales, it has already been made heavy by the older and newer writers. So of old, Shaykh 'Abdul-Qaadir al-'Aydaroos wrote his book, 'An Announcement of the Excellent Qualities of *al-Ihyaa'*', and it is in print and is well known.

Of recent times, the book has received much praise, such as that from Shaykh Sa'eed Hawwaa who advises people to read it [*Afaaq ut-Ta'aaleem* (p.77)] and he holds it to be from the source books for Islaamic morals [*Jundullaah* (p. 1191)], etc. All of this is in fulfillment of what Shaykh al-Bannaa said in describing his call as being truly *Soofee*, and (Sa'eed) Hawwaa is not saying something new in speaking of *al-Ihyaa'* but rather following Shaykh Hasan al-Bannaa (*rahimahullaah*), since he used to study it after the attendance of the *Soofee Tareeqah* of the *Hasaafiyyah* [*Mudhakkiraatud-Da'wah* (p.29)] to the extent that he

was affected by that in his general behaviour. [*Mudhakkaraat...* (p.321)]. Rather he regarded it to be the greatest encyclopedia of Islaam (!), and one of his ambitions was that he would be able to write an explanation of this book. He actually began to do that since he started a weekly lesson of its explanation in his house for a group of his companions, and he was careful to write down every lesson which he gave from it in a note book, and he had not used to do this for his other lessons. However, he was not able to complete it [*al-Ikhwaanul-Muslimoon: Happenings...* (1/61) and (2/347J)].

Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (*rahimahullaah*) spoke both in praise and in criticism of this book when he was asked about it and the book called *Qootul-Quloob*, as occurs in *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (10/55) He (*rahimahullaah*) replied after analysing it in a scholarly and admirable manner. So it is good that I should quote it in full. (Other quotes from him will be brought later if Allaah so wills.) He said, "The book *Qootul-Quloob* and the book *al-Ihya* both speak on the same topic of the actions of the heart such as, 'patience', 'thankfulness', 'love', 'reliance' and '*tawheed*', etc.

Aboo Taalib (he is of Makkah and wrote *Qootul-Quloob* which is in print and well-known) is more knowledgeable as regards *Hadeeth* and reports and the sayings of the *Soofee* scholars of the heart and others compared to Aboo Haamid al-Ghazzaalee, and his (Aboo Taalib's) words are more correct and precise, and further away from *Bid'ah* (innovation in the Religion), even though there are weak and fabricated *ahaadeeth* (plural of *Hadeeth*) in *Qootul-Quloob* and many rejected things.

As for what is stated in *al-Ihya* about the destructive affairs such as his talk about 'pride', 'vanity', 'ostentation', 'envy'. etc., most of it is taken from al-Haarith al-Muhaasibee's book *ar-Ri'yaayah* - and part of it is acceptable, part to be rejected, and parts of it are disagreed about!

"*Al-Ihya* contains many beneficial points, but it contains objectionable subjects, since it contains corrupt talks of the philosophers about *Tawheed*, Prophethood, and the Hereafter. Mentioning the 'knowledge' of the *Soofees* is like taking an enemy of the Muslims and dressing him up in Muslim clothes.

The scholars of the Deen (religion) have criticised Aboo Haamid (al-Ghazzaalee) for this and said: He was made ill by *ash-Shifaa* (The Cure) of Ibn Seenaa (Avicenna) in philosophy. [One of the books of logic as mentioned in *Kashf uz-Zunoon* (2/1055), and see what Ibn Taymiyyah says about it in *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (13/238).

It contains many *ahaadeeth* and reports which are weak, rather fabricated (*mawdoo'*), and it contains many mistakes and lies of the *Soofees*.

Along with that it also contains sayings of the Shaykhs of the *Soofees* who have knowledge and are upright regarding actions of the heart, being in accordance with the Book and the *Sunnah*, and other things concerning worship and behaviour, which also conform to the

Book and the *Sunnah*, such things being more than that which is to be rejected. Therefore the opinions of the people vary and they differ about it." [End of what he says - *rahimahullaah*]

Nothing has persuaded me to write this book except sincere advice for the sake of Allaah and for His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and the Muslims, and hope, to correct the paths taken and to straighten people's thinking and direction, particularly since ignorance of the Islaamic Sciences have become widespread which is, by Allaah, one of the greatest disasters. Finally, I ask Allaah, the Sublime and Most High and I seek His favour by my love for the greatest of His Messengers(*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) that He should write for me recompense and reward. Verily He it is who hears and answers, and our final word is that all praise is for Allaah, Lord of all creation.

Signed: Abul-Haarith 'Alee Ibn Hasan Ibn 'Alee 'Abdul-Hameed

### **1) AT-TURTOOSHEE (d.520H)**

He said in writing to 'Abdullaah Ibnul-Mudhaffar about al-Ghazzaalee:

"When he wrote his book, he called it *Ihyaa 'Uloomud-Deen*, and talked about the sciences of the states of things and ways of the *Soofees* in it, but he was neither well acquainted with them nor well-informed about them, so he fell headlong, and thus did not fall either among the scholars of the Muslims or within the conditions of the *Soofee* ascetics.

He filled his book with lies upon the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), and I do not know of any book upon the surface of the earth which attributes more lies to the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) than this one! He molded it with the opinions of the philosophers and concepts held in the *Rasaa'il Ikhwaanis-Suffaa*. They (the *Ikhwaanus-Suffaa*) are a people who regard Prophethood as a level that can be acquired, and the Prophet is in their view no more than a noble person with excellent character who avoided what is ignoble and took hold of his own soul until he had it under control so that no desire overcame it, nor bad manners overtook it, then he took control of nature with those manners."

Then he says:

"Allaah honoured Islaam and made clear its proofs and established its clear signs, and has cut off the excuses of the creation with its clear proofs and decisive evidences which pierce the brain.

The one who seeks to aid the religion of Islaam with the opinions of the philosophers and views of the people of logic is like the one who seeks to purify water with urine!!

He (al-Ghazzaalee) brings talk which should cause thunder and lightning and which awakens the desires and fills it with longing, so that when the souls do desire it, he says:

"This is from the hidden knowledge -and it is not permissible to write it in the book", or he says, "This is from the secret of *Qadr* (Pre-Decree) which we have been forbidden to look into". This is the practice of the *Baatiniyyah* and the people who have doubts and suspicions regarding the Religion of Allaah. who profit themselves from that which is present and preoccupy the souls with that which is not, so it causes turmoil to the beliefs of the heart and weakens that upon which the *Jamaa'ah* is united. Thus if a person firmly believes that which he wrote in his book then his being a *Kaafir* (disbeliever) is not unlikely, and if he does not believe it then how misguided he will still be!

As for what I have mentioned about it being destroyed by the fire, then if it is left, it will spread among the people and among those who do not know the deadly poison it contains, and it is to be feared that they would believe in the correctness of the misguidance therein. So it was burnt in analogy to the *Mushafs* (copies of the *Qur'aan*) which the Companions (*radiyallaahu 'anhum*) burnt which had different wordings or missing aayaat (verses of the *Qur'aan*). Do you not see that if they had not burnt those *Mushafs* and they had spread among the people then each person would have memorized what he received of them, and they would then perhaps disagree, fight and cut off relations with one another?

I have resolved to take to it and remove all of its errors and make clear its mistakes and point them out one by one, and there is in the rest of the book sufficiency for our brother Muslims and righteous people. Most of those who fall in love with this book are good people but who have no idea what is demanded by intellect and the principles of the religion, nor do they understand matters of belief in Allaah or the truth about His attributes."

## **(2) AL-MAAZAREE (d.536H)**

Al-Haafidh adh-Dhahabee says in *Siyar A'laamun-Nubalaa* (19/340) ...and Imaam Muhammad Ibn 'Alee al-Maazaree as-Saqilee speaks about *al-Ihya* in a way that shows his prominence as an Imaam. He says:

'There have been repeated requests to know our position regarding the book called *Ihya* '*Uloom ud-Deen* and I said that the opinions of people differ about it. A group seeks to publicise it and stick blindly to that, a group warns the people against it and causes them to flee from it, and a group who burn it.

The people of the East have also written to me, asking about it, and I have not previously read except parts of it. So if Allaah extends my life, I shall spend time upon it and remove the confusion the peoples hearts. Know that I have seen the students of it, and all of them

relate to me a part of its condition which take the place of seeing with ones own eyes, so I will briefly mention his condition and that of his book, and some of the positions of the people of *Tawheed* and of the *Soofees*, and the people of allusions and philosophy, since his book wavers between all of those!"

Then he (al-Maazaree) said:

"...and in *al-Ihya* there are many baseless things, and the habit of the abstemious is not to say, "Maalik said", and "Ash-Shaafi'ee said", except when that is established from them! He approves of things which he builds upon that which has no basis, such as cutting the finger-nails starting with the forefinger due to its excellence over the rest of the fingers, since it is the one for making *tasbeeh* (glorifying Allaah), then that he should cut the middle one next to it, since it is on the right, and finish with the right thumb, and he reports a narration about it. (Adh-Dhahabee comments on this, saying: it is a fabricated narration) He (al-Ghazzaalee) says, "He who dies after attaining puberty not knowing that the Creator had no beginning, then he dies a Muslim according to *Ijmaa'* (consensus)."

And so one who is lenient about reporting *ijmaa'* about something like this - about which it is more probable that the *ijmaa'* is the exact opposite - is not worthy of being given credence to what he relates. I found him saying in the first part that he has knowledge which it is not possible to put in a book!! So if that refers to that which is false and baseless then that is true, and if it refers to true knowledge - which is what he intends without a doubt - then why does he not put it into the book? Since if he understands it, then what is to prevent others from understanding it?!"

Adh-Dhahabee says in *as-Siyar* (19/330): I have seen al-Maazaree's book "A Disclosure and Notification of the Book *al-Ihya*" and it begins:

"All praise is for Allaah who gave the truth light and ascendancy, and destroyed falsehood and removed it..."

Then al-Maazaree quotes some things for which he censures Aboo Haamid (al-Ghazzaalee) saying:

"I am amazed at a group of Maalikees who regard Maalik as their Imaam who flee from limitation and avoid putting down a regulation even if there is a narration or an analogy to be made, out of cautiousness and piety and being careful about giving *fatwaa* (religious verdict) which the people will have to follow, and then they approve of a *fatwaa* from a man who bases it upon that which is baseless and it contains many reports from the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), patching together the authentic with that which is not authentic, and likewise that which he reports from the *Salaf* (the pious predecessors - the Companions and those who followed in their footsteps) and cannot all be authentic, and he quotes 'inspirations' of the 'saints' and outpourings of the sincere, which are

deemed great, but he mixed the beneficial with the harmful, such as ascriptions which it is not permissible to ascribe due to their repugnance...(to the end)"

Adh-Dhahabee says in the biography of al-Maazaree in *as-Siyar* (120/1071):

"He is the author of a refutation of *al-Ihya* wherein he explains its errors and philosophy, and he did justice therein -may Allaah have mercy upon him."

### **(3) ABOO BAKR IBN AL-'ARABEE (d.543H)**

Adh-Dhathabee says in *as-Siyar* (119/3371):

In the chapter about '*Tawakkul*' in *al-Ihya* there occurs:

"And all the provision and longevity, and belief and disbelief, which Allaah has divided amongst His creation, then all of it is totally just, and it is not possible for there to be anything better or more complete, and if that were possible and He, the Exalted, being able, did not create it, then it would be miserliness and oppression."

The answer to that is that he is greatly mistaken in believing in the generality of His power/ability and denying that those created things connected to it can be limited in their extent, but rather the planning/creation alone of this created world is limited. This philosophical opinion by which the philosophers refer to the heart of the matter and ascribe the perfection to life, for example, and existence to hearing and seeing it there does not remain in the heart any way to that which is correct. The *Ummah* is united against that belief, and all of them without exception say: What He is able to do is unlimited, as for everything that is decreed. not everything is actually present, since the ability is there.

This is an error - may Allaah not establish it, and a mistake for which there is no foundation (Al-Muqbilee in *al-Abhaathul-Musaddadah* (p.542) comments on this saying of al-Ghazzaalee: "Since that in fact contains a limitation of Allaah's power, and the intellect tells that there is no limit to His power or knowledge).

### **(4) AL-QAADEE 'IYAAD (d.544H)**

He said:

And Shaykh Aboo Haamid (al-Ghazzaalee) possesses -repugnant information and in producing shocking works he went beyond bounds in the way of Soofism, and devoted himself to supporting them, and became a caller to that, and wrote well-known books on that (He refers to *al-Ihya* as is shown by what comes after).

He was reproached for parts of that and the minds of the *Ummah* came to have a low opinion of him. Allaah knows that which is hidden about him, and here in the West the order of the *Sultaan* (ruler) and the ruling of the scholars is that it should be burnt and kept away from, so that was done..."

#### **(5) IBN AL-JAWZEE (d. 597H)**

He says in *al-Muntazim* (9/169-170):

"He began to write the book *al-Ihya* in *al-Quds* and finished it in Damascus, however, he wrote it upon the way of the Soofis and did away with the rules of *Fiqh* in it. For example, regarding effacing of honour and fighting the self, he mentions that a man wished to efface his own honour, so he entered a public bath and put on someone else's clothes, then he put his own clothes on top of them and went out walking slowly so that the people could catch him. So they took them back from him and called him 'The Thief of the Public Baths'.

Mentioning such things as this for followers to learn from is disgusting because it is judged so according to *Fiqh*. When there is a guardian for public baths and a person steals, his hand is cut off, and it is not permissible for a Muslim to offer an action for which they would be sinful if they did it!

He mentions that a man bought some meat and found that his soul felt shy to carry it to his house, so he tied it round his neck and walked to his house. This is also totally repugnant and there are many similar things for which this is not the place.

I have gathered together the mistakes of the book and called it "A Notification to the Living Regarding the Errors of *al-Ihya*", and I have pointed some of them out in my book *Talbees-Iblees!*

(Also) what he mentions in the book of marriage that 'Aa'ishah said to the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*), "You are the one who claims that you are the Messenger of Allaah!"

That is impossible! Verily the reason for his turning away from the requirements of *Fiqh* in that which he quotes is that he accompanied the Soofis and regarded their condition to be the goal, and he said, "Indeed I have taken the way from Aboo 'Alee al-Farmadhee and I followed what he directed me to as regards daily worships and continual *dhikr* (remembering Allaah) until I passed those difficulties and became burdened with heavy tasks, and I did not attain that which I sought.'

Then he looked into the book of Aboo Taalib al-Makkee and into the sayings of the older Soofis, and that completely allured him away from what is demanded by *Fiqh*.

He mentioned in his book *al-Ihya*a a lot of fabricated and weak *ahaadeeth*, and that was due to his insufficient knowledge of narrations - so would that he had submitted them for examination to those who knew- but rather he reported them like one who gathers wood at night (i.e.,blindly).

Some people have become infatuated with the book *al-Ihya*a - so I informed that person of its shortcomings and wrote to him, taking out that which needed to be deleted and adding that which was appropriate."

He (Ibnul-Jawzee) said in *Saydul-Khaatir* (p.374) about his (al-Ghazzaalee's) historical mistakes:

"And I have seen in the book *Ihya*a '*Uloomud-Deen* of al-Ghazzaalee that which bewilders regarding mixing up of *ahaadeeth* and history, so I have collected his mistakes in a book."

(He mentioned (p. 399) *Ihya*a '*Uloomud-Deen* amongst those books which contain stories of hidden horrors and unauthentic *ahaadeeth* and things which are contrary to the *Sharee'ah*).

He (Ibn al-Jawzee) said in *Talbees-Iblees*:

"Aboo Haamid al-Ghazzaalee came and composed for them the book *al-Ihya*a upon the way of the people, and he filled it with baseless *ahaadeeth*, not knowing their baselessness, and he spoke about hidden knowledge and left the laws of *Fiqh* and said, "That which is meant by the stars and the sun and the moon which Ibraaheem (*salawaatullaahi 'alayhi*) saw is lights which are the veils of Allaah the Great and Glorious, and not the known objects"! This is the same as the talk of the *Baatiniyyah*!"

He (Ibn al-Jawzee) said in *Minhaajul-Qaasideen* (p.3 of its abridgement):

"Know that in the book *al-Ihya*a are dangerous things only known about by the scholars, and the least of them are the baseless and fabricated *ahaadeeth*, and those which only trace back to the Companions which he relates as being from the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*)himself, and verily he merely reported them as he found them, not that he invented them; and it is not allowed to worship using a fabricated *Hadeeth*, nor to be taken in by a made up wording.

How can it be sanctioned for you to pray prayers of the day and night and the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) never said a single word about them!?

How can you allow your hearing to be invaded by the talk of the *Soofees* which he gathered and encouraged that it be acted upon so much as cannot be counted. As regards his talk



about obliteration of the self, continuance, ordering people to suffer starvation and going out touring for no purpose, and entering desolate areas without any provisions, and other things, I have revealed their faults in my book *Talbees-Iblees* and I will write a book for you mentioning its corruptions without forsaking its benefits."

#### **(6) AN-NAWAWEE (d.676H)**

An-Nawawee was asked about *Salaatur-Raghaa'ib* which is done on the first *Jumu'ah* of *Rajab*, whether it is *Sunnah*, a desirable action or an innovation. So he answered:

"It is an evil and strongly censured innovation."

Then he said:

"And do not be misled by the large number of people who perform it in many lands, nor by its being mentioned in *Qootul-Quloob* or *Ihyaa 'Uloomud-Deen* and their like, since it is a baseless innovation (*al-Mi'yaarul-Maghrib* (1/300) of al-Wanshareesee).

#### **(7) IBN TAYMIYYAH (d.728H)**

He says in *Dar' Ta'arudul 'Aql wan-Naql* (5/347):

"Aboo Haamid (al-Ghazzalee) mentions a long talk in his book *al-Ihyaa* about Outer and Hidden knowledge. He said, "A group explain away that which relates to Allaah's attributes and leave alone that which relates to the Hereafter upon its obvious meaning, and prevent its being interpreted. They are the Ash'arees -that is their later scholars who agree to the author of *al-Irshaad*. The *Mu'tazilah* go further to the point that they explain away His being, the Hearing and the Seeing, and also seeing Him and the *Mi'raaj*, and that He is not a body. They explain away Punishment of the Grave, the Scales and the Bridge, and a large number of things connected to the Hereafter, but they consent to the raising up of the bodies and Paradise and that it contains eatables."

I (Ibn Taymiyyah) say, explaining away the Scales and the Bridge, and Punishment of the Grave, and the Hearing and the Seeing is the saying of the *Mu'tazilah* of Baghdaad and not those of Basrah.

Aboo Haamid says:

"The philosophers go even further and explain away all that is narrated about the Hereafter explaining it to refer to states of the mind and soul and 'tastes' of the mind."

Till he says:

"And they are the ones who go too far in interpreting, and the correct limit for interpreting is between the two and it is fine and obscure. None can reach it except those guided to it, who understand matters due to divine light, not due to what they hear [narrations]. Then the way to the secrets of the affairs are revealed to them and they look at what is reported and its wordings, then that which they see with the light of certainty they accept, and that which goes against it, they interpret it. As for the one who takes all those matters from that which is narrated, then they cannot put a foot forward."

I (Ibn Taymiyyah) say, this talk means that nothing is to be gained from the narrations from the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) about affairs of knowledge, but rather every person reaches that with what he attains of divine insight and light and hidden knowledge! These are two principles of apostasy since every possessor of 'illumination' if he does not weigh it according to the Book and the *Sunnah* then he enters into misguidance."

He (Ibn Taymiyyah) also says in *Dar'ut-Ta'arud* (7/ 149) after having quoted at length from *al-Ihya* and refuted it, adding:

"Aboo Haamid (al-Ghazaalee) does not have the knowledge of the Prophetic narrations and those from the Salaf which the scholars of them do, and they distinguish between the authentic and the weak. Therefore he quotes in his book fabricated *ahaadeeth* and plain lies, which if he knew that they were concocted, he would not quote."

He (Ibn Taymiyyah) (*rahimahullaah*) says in *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (17/362) where he talks about the names of Allaah and His attributes, the sayings of the philosophers:

"Aboo Haamid mentions in *al-Ihya* the saying of those philosophers who interpret away that they went too far in their interpretation, and that the Hanbalees went too far in sticking to the textual wording, and he quotes Ahmad Ibn Hanbal as saying that which he did not say. And he did not know what Ahmad said, nor what others of the *Salaf* said about this, nor what occurs in the *Qur'aan* and the *Hadeeth* about it!"

## **(8) ADH-DHAHABEE**

He says in *Siyar A'laamun-Nubalaa* (19/339):

"As for *al-Ihya*, then it contains a large number of baseless *ahaadeeth*. There is much good in it if only it did not have in it the manners, ways and ascetism of the philosophers and misguided Soofees. We ask Allaah for beneficial knowledge. Do you know what is beneficial knowledge? It is that which the *Qur'aan* came with and was explained by the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) by his words and actions..."

Then he (adh-Dhahabee) says:

"Beware of the views of the worshipping philosophers, and the ways of the people of numbers, and the hunger of the monk, and the light-headedness of the companions of seclusion, since all good is in the following of the liberal and straight way. So would that they called upon Allaah for help - O Allaah guide us upon the Straight Path."

He (adh-Dhahabee) (*rahimahullaah*) says in *Meezaanul-I'tidaal* (1/431) in the biography of al-Haarith al-Mahaasabee after having quoted Aboo Zur'ah's forbiddance of the reading of al-Haarith's books:

"Then what would be the case if he saw the works of Aboo Haamid (al-Ghazzaalee) at Toosee about that? Since *al-Ihya* quotes so many fabricated narrations!"

### **(9) TAAJUD-DEEN AS-SUBKEE (d.771H)**

He says in *Tabaqaatush-Shaafi'iyyah* (4/1451) in the biography of al-Ghazzaalee:

"In this chapter I have gathered all that occurs in *al-Ihya* as regards *ahaadeeth* for which I can find no *isnaad* (chain of transmitters)"

The collector of this book then said:

"Then he quoted and I counted around 943 *ahaadeeth*, but as for that which has an *isnaad* but is however, weak or fabricated, then it would perhaps reach many times that number as well."

As-Subkee said (4/127) in replying to the criticisms of at-Turtooshee and al-Maazaree to *al-Ihya*:

"And as for the criticism that some of the *ahaadeeth* of *al-Ihya* are weak/baseless, then it is well known that al-Ghazzaalee was not fully competent therein, and most of the narrations and reports in *al-Ihya* were scattered throughout the books of the scholars of *Fiqh* and the Soofees, and he did not bring the chain of narrations for a single *Hadeeth*..."

[Al-Aloosee says in *Ghaayatul-Amaanee* (2/268):

"Then as-Subkee replied to some of the criticisms of al-Maazaree and at-Turtooshee with answers which were inaccurate as is his habit in blindly supporting the people of his *madhhab*, and even so he was not able to deny al-Ghazzaalee's ignorance of *Hadeeth*."

## **(10) IBN KATHEER**

He says in *al-Bidaayah wan-Nihaayah* (12/174) about al-Ghazzaalee:

"And in this period he wrote his book *Ihya' Uloomud-Deen* and it is an amazing book containing many of the branches of the knowledge of the *Sharee'ah*, and mixed with it are some agreeable things from Soofism and actions of the heart. However, it contains many *ahaadeeth* unheard of, and those which are weak and contradict authentic ones as well as fabricated *ahaadeeth*, just as there are in other books about those, used as evidence for things which are *Halaal* or *Haraam*; and the book which is written for softening the hearts and for inciting to good and inspiring fear of the evil, then their matter is easier compared to other books.

Abul-Faraj Ibnul-Jawzee, and then Ibnus-Salaah denounced him very strongly, and al-Maazaree wanted his book to be burnt, and likewise did the people in the West, and they said, "This book is a revival of the knowledge of his *Deen*. However, for our *Deen*, then its revival is that of its knowledge in the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger", as I have reported in his biography in *at-Tabaqaat*, Ibn Shukr declared many parts of *Ihya' Uloomud-Deen* to consist of false reports and he showed their falsity in a useful book, and al-Ghazzaalee used to say, "I have only a small stock regarding *Hadeeth*...."

## **(11) ABUL-'ABBAAS AL-QABBAAB (d.779H)**

He said within his reply to a question about Soofism and its ways:

"I have not ceased to hope that Allaah would send some people who have good knowledge and know about this way, that they would abridge the book *al-Ihya'*, since it is a book which has collected many branches of knowledge for which there is a need and are not found in other than it. Particularly those hidden things and preoccupying things which destroy actions, and knowledge of weaknesses of the soul and how to cure them -and so about that it is something to be desired.

However, it is polluted by his using *ahaadeeth* which are weak in their chains of narration which will harm the ignorant when he meets Allaah, because he believes that all of it is correct, having nothing wrong!

The most serious of these in my view is that he has filled it with talk concerning 'inspired' knowledge, which is what Shaykh Aboo Muhammad al-Fishtaalee called 'hidden knowledge', since it contains things whose seriousness is hidden from many, and because most of them are hidden, it will not harm the general masses to hear them since they will not be able to understand them." [*al-Mi'yaarul-Maghrib* (11/122) of al-Wanshareese].

### **(12) SAALIH IBN MAHDEE AL-MUQBILEE (d. 1108H)**

He says in *al-Abhaathul-Musaddadah fee Funoon Muta'addidah* (p.412):

"Ibn 'Abbaas says in the long *Hadeeth* reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim about the *Khilaafah* that 'Umar promised to speak when he first stood to speak in al-Madeenah. He said, when it was the day of *Jumu'ah*, the people hurried to go out after the sun had risen. Ibn 'Abbaas regarded that as being extremely early, and there is nothing reported authentically from the *Salaf* about going out (for *Jumu'ah*) earlier than that. So do not be misled by that which al-Ghazzaalee and his like rave about regarding going out (for *Jumu'ah*) during the night or on the day before (*Yawmul-Khamees* i.e.. Thursday)."

[We mention as a sideline what al-Muqbilee also said in *al-'Alamush-Shaamikh* (p.400) that he saw the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) in a dream and that he angrily forbade him from his preoccupation with al-Ghazzaalee's book *al-Ihya* and asking him, "Have I not informed you of the guidance?"].

### **(13) 'ABDUL-LATEEF AL-HANBALEE (d. 1297H)**

'[His biography is found in *Mu'jamul-Mu'allifeen* (6/11) and the text of his saying is to be found in *ad-Durarus-Sunniyyah* (2/345), and see the statements of the offspring of Shaykh Muhammad Ibn 'Abdul-Wahaab(*rahimahullaah*) in *ad-Durar* (2/170).

He said in a letter which he sent to some of his brothers who read *al-Ihya* and read it to various people from among the general public and to others:

"You have caused them to hear what *al-Ihya* contains of the deviated distortions and misguided corrupt interpretations, and ramblings containing mortal poison, and philosophy(!) about the basis of the *Deen*! Allaah the Exalted has made it obligatory to follow His Messengers and to cling to the way of the believers and there is no establishment of Islaam without this firm foundation.

In *al-Ihya* he followed the way of the philosophers and the people of rhetoric in many of the matters pertaining to divinity and that upon which the *Deen* is based. He clothed philosophy with the bark (clothing) of the *Sharee'ah* until the gullible and ignorant thought them to be truths from the *Deen* with which the Messengers came and the Books were sent down so that the people entered Islaam because of it, but in reality it is pure evil-smelling philosophy which the scholars know, and all those who follow the way of the people of knowledge in the cities and lands would spit at it.

The people of knowledge and insight have warned against looking into it, or approaching its hidden or manifest things. Further, some of the scholars of the west who were knowledgeable of the Sunnah ordered it to be burnt and many of them called it *Imaatat 'Uloomud-Deen* (Killing of the Knowledge of the *Deen*). Ibn 'Aqeel stood up strongly in censuring and denouncing it and in revealing its weaknesses and follies, and asserted that many of its subjects were pure heresy (atheistic), because of which the actions of a person who believes in that would not be accepted (by Allaah)."

#### **(14) MAHMOOD SHUKREE AL-AALOOSEE (d. 1342H)**

He reported a large number of talks of some of the scholars about al-Ghazzaalee and his book *al-Ihya* in *Ghaayatul-Amaanee* (2/370-371), then added in conclusion:

"This place is not wide enough for the talk about Aboo Haamid and the criticisms of him, and what we have mentioned is sufficient.' [Reported by al-Aaloosee in *Ghaayatul-Amaanee* (2/369.370).

What is surprising is that some of the ignoramuses who claim to possess knowledge and righteousness -and he lacks both of them- dress themselves up in their clothes and has wrapped on his turban and let loose his beard, so that the unlearned one lacking in knowledge thinks him to be a Shaykh upon his chair wearing his turban. He finds a good market among the people because of what he gives them as regards admonition from lies and delusions and finds that there are no one to oppose him from those grazing animals, in the same way that a person who wishes may say what he likes among the graves (without fear of being contradicted), until as a consequence he became one of the prominent scholars, without it being known that he was more ignorant than a three day old baby!

Someone mentioned *Ihya* '*Uloomud-Deen* and greatly praised it and gave it all possible acclaim, so I said to him that it contains fabricated *ahaadeeth*, and questions of philosophy outside the *Sharee'ah*, and opinions totally against the Prophet's *Sunnah*, because of which the scholars who are trusted regarding their knowledge do not give the book any weight, to the extent that some of them have written books explaining the state of the *ahaadeeth* in it. So he looked at me mistrustingly and his wicked soul almost passed away and he said, "How can you say that when az-Zubaydee has written an explanation of it and checked the sources of its *ahaadeeth* and explained its secrets?" So I said to him, "Az-Zubaydee is not a scholar of this subject nor a man of this field, but rather he has some knowledge of the language and related fields, so that what he says about the sciences relating to reporting *ahaadeeth* is not given credence. Moreover, he was a fanatical grave-worshipper who called others to their *bid'ah*. When he heard that he turned away and departed and paid no attention to what I said, so I said, "The workers come to me from their mines; And it is not my fault if the cattle don't understand."

The word of truth these days is very heavy upon the hearers, specially to the misguided and the innovators, so the upright today must be in accordance to the truth and follow the guidance."

#### **(15) IBN HAMDAYN AL-QURTUBEE**

He said:

"Verily some of those who give warning and claim for themselves knowledge of *Fiqh* and then absolve themselves of it being in love with the *Share'ah* of al-Ghazzaalee and the sect of the Soofees, have published a paper calling for the blind acceptance of the book of Aboo Haamid (al-Ghazzaalee), the leader of their innovation. So what does he (the author) say about his (al-Ghazzaalee's) objectionable and repulsive sayings and the misguiding writings which conflict with the *Deen*?

He (the author) claims that this knowledge is from the secret knowledge which they have about the secrets of divine lordship. Their 'knowledge' is such that no one uncovers its head, nor does anyone gain by achieving it, except he who walks towards it proudly, being indifferent to its misguidance. This has raised its own flag for them and set out its own rulings..." [*Siyar A'laamun-Nubalaa* (19/332)]

#### **(16) IBNUL-QATTAAN**

He says in his book called *Nazmul-Jumaan feema Salafa min Akhbaariz-Zamaan*:

"...when *Ihyaa 'Uloomud-Deen* reached Qurtubaa (Cordova) they spoke ill of it and disapproved of many things in it, specially their *Qaadee* (judge) Ibn Hamdayn who did more than disapprove to the extent that he declared the disbelief of its author. He encouraged the *Sultaan* with that and used his scholars as evidence. So they agreed that it should be burnt. Thus 'Alee Ibn Yoosuf ordered that in accordance with their judgement and it was burnt in Qurtubaa by the west gate in the courtyard of the mosque after covering it with oil. A large group of prominent people were present during its burning and orders were sent out for it to be burnt throughout his territory. This burning continued throughout the land of Morocco in that time." [*al-Mi'yaarul-Maghrrib* (12/185)]

#### **(17) MUHAMMAD NAASIRUD-DEEN AL-ALBAANEE (Present day)**

He (*hafidhahullaah*) says, in speaking of his copy of the book *al-Mughnee 'an Hamliil-Asfaar fil Asfaar fee Takhreej maa fil Ihyaa min Akhbaar*, regarding his early life in seeking knowledge:

"I was much affected by it (*al-Ihyaa*) in that which relates to behaviour, sincerity, keeping away from vanity, because of the chapters and sections which I read by Allaah's design and decree, during which I used to extract from it the *ahaadeeth* which al-Haafidh al-'Iraaqee supplied sources for and checked. That often lead me to read the chapter in which al-Ghazzaalee quoted those *ahaadeeth*, and so I greatly benefited from that. However, all praise be to Allaah, I was not affected by his Soofism and his 'inspirations' and his interpretations which took him away from the position of the *Salaf* in many of the thoughts and beliefs, such as his denial of Allaah's ascension over the Throne, and his saying that Allaah imposes upon His servants that which they cannot bear, and similar things, which carried him away due to his immersion in metaphysics/rhetoric and the wanderings of the Soofees."

He (al-Albaanee) says in *Silsilatul Ahaadeethud-Da'eefah* (1/18):

"And how many *ahaadeeth* there are in *al-Ihyaa* which he asserts as coming from the Messenger (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and about them al-Haafidh al-'Iraaqee and others say: "They have no basis!"

### **(18) MAHMOOD MAHDEE ISTAANBOOLEE (Present day)**

He (may Allaah make him fortunate) says in his introduction to *Tahdheeb Maw'idhatul-Mu'mineen* (p.6) explaining what he did in his book:

"One of the most important things we have done to complete the book is to have mentioned a chapter on *Jihaad*, since Imaam al-Ghazzaalee did not mention that topic in spite of its importance. It is one of the most important pillars of Islaam after belief in Allaah the Exalted and his opponents have rebuked him for that, particularly since he lived in the time when the crusaders and the Tartars attacked the Muslim lands and occupied some of them, and killed many thousands of their inhabitants. [See *al-Bidaayah wan-Nihaayah* (12/156) and *al-Kaamil fit-Taareekh* (8/189) to see the baselessness of the defense that Sa'eed Hawaa tries to put up in his *Jawlaat* (p. 145- 146) for this question].

### **CONCLUSION:**

Some writers have mentioned the names of the books that have been written in refutation of or in annotation of or in order to give sources and checking of the *ahaadeeth* of *al-Ihyaa*, and so I will mention them without going into lengthy explanations.



- 1) Ibnul-Munayyir al-Iskandaree wrote *ad-Diyaa'ul Mutalaalee fee Ta'aqqubil-Ihyaa lil-Ghazzaalee*. mentioned by az-Zubaydee in *Sharhul-Ihyaa* (1/33).
- 2) al-Haafidh al-'Iraaqee wrote three books of *takhreej* (authentication) of *al-Ihyaa*.
  - a. *Ikhbaarul-Ihyaa bi Akhbaarul-Ahyaa*, and it is a lengthy book.
  - b. *al-Kashful-Mubeen 'anit-Takhreej Ihyaa 'Uloomid-Deen*.
  - c. *Al-Mughnee 'an Hamlil-Asfaar fil-Asfaar fee Takhreej maa fil-Ihyaa min Akhbaar*, and it is abbreviated [It is well-known and printed along with *al-Ihyaa*] these three are mentioned by Ibn Fahd in *Lahzul-Alhaaz* (p.230-231).
- 3) al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr wrote *al-Istidraak 'alaa Takhreejil-Ihyaa* of his shaykh, al-'Iraaqee mentioned by al-Haafidh as-Sakhaawee in *al-Jawaahir wad-Durar* (no. 1532).
- 4) al-Haafidh al-Qaasim Ibn Qutloobughaa wrote *Tuhfatul-Ahyaa feemaa faata min Takhreejil-Ihyaa* mentioned by Haajee Khaleefah in *Kashfuz-Zunoon* (1/24).
- 5) Abul-Hasan Ibn Sukkur wrote *Ihyaa Mayyitil-Ihyaa fir-Radd 'alal-Kitaabil Ihyaa*.
- 6) Shaykh 'Abdul-Haqq al-'Uthmaanee wrote *Tadhkiratul-Asfiyaa'm bitasfiyatil-Ihyaa*, mentioned by Dr. Jameel Ahmad in his book *Harakatut-Ta'leef billughatil-'Arabiyyah* (p.425).
- 7) Shaykh Taqiyyud-Deen al-Hisnee wrote *Takhreejul-Ahaadeethil-Ihyaa*, mentioned by as-Sakhaawee in *ad-Daw'ul-Laa'inee* (11/81).
- 8) Our brother Shaykh 'Abdullaah as-Sabt has written a book particularly about the errors of *al-Ihyaa* which he indicated in his book *Sofiyyaat Shaykhul-Azhar* (p.43).

To proceed:

So this is what I have found from the sayings of the scholars and historians about the book *Ihyaa 'Uloomid-Deen* of al-Ghazzaalee. So if I have been correct in that which I chose then it is by Allaah's grace and mercy. And if I have erred then it is due to my own shortcomings and errors, and I seek the forgiveness of Allaah the Great, in the beginning and the end, and outwardly and inwardly; indeed He is Most Forgiving. Most Merciful and our final call is that all praise is for Allaah Lord of all creation.