

Spiritual Diseases: Remedy

Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi, former President of the Islamic Society of North America, stated in his Khutbah at the Islamic Society of Orange County, California, USA on 25 Jumada Awwal 1424 A.H./25 July 2003:

“Almighty Allah says: **“By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it; and its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right; truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it!”** (Ash-Shams: 7-10). **“But those will prosper who purify themselves.”** (Al-A`la: 14). We human beings do not have only our body and mind; we also have a soul. The soul is sometimes described as spirit (*ar-ruh*) or heart (*al-qalb*). We know that our heart has physical functions, but there is no scientific evidence to prove that it does not have any spiritual functions. The soul probably resides in the heart or is attached to it. The soul is the inner dimension of our being. It is related to the body and mind as well, but it has its own being and existence, most probably, in or near the heart.

Spiritual health is as important as physical and mental health, if not more so. On the physical and mental health depend our meaningful life and success in this world, but on the spiritual health depends our success and salvation both in this world and in the hereafter.

In his book *Ihya' `Ulum ad-Din* (Revival of the Sciences of Religion), Imam al-Ghazali says that every organ of our body has a function; when it fails to do its functions, it means it is not well. The function of the soul or the spiritual heart is to know its Creator, to love Him and to seek closeness to Him. If the heart fails in this function then we must know that it is sick.

It is important to know the ailments that make the heart weak and sick. In the language of the [Qur'an](#) it is not only the eyes that get blind; the hearts also become blind.

“Do they not travel through the land, so that their hearts may thus learn wisdom and their ears may thus learn to hear? Truly it is not their eyes that are blind, but their hearts that are in their breasts.” (Al-Hajj: 46)

The Qur'an has spoken in many places about the sickness (*marad*) of the hearts. Allah says in the Qur'an:

Suspicion comes from lack of trust and confidence in others. Allah says in the Qur'an, **"Some suspicion is sin"** (Al-Hujurat: 12). Suspicion creates cynicism and takes away hope and optimism. Suspicious persons or cynics are those who, when they see actions and hear some words that have the possibility of being positive or negative, they take the negative and evil. Suspicion sometimes also leads to violence. It is good to be cautious and careful, but we must keep our attitude positive. If we want to be trusted we must trust others as well.

Anger is given to human beings as a mechanism for self-defense, but if it is not properly controlled it becomes very destructive. In the Hadith it is called "fire." The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said that when you get angry change your environment, change your position, and drink some water. Imam Ghazali said, "Love of Allah extinguishes the fire of anger." Stinginess is a terrible disease. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) taught us to seek Allah's refuge from stinginess. Stinginess stems from selfishness, materialism, and too much love of this world. It means lack of care and consideration for others. It holds people from fulfilling their duties and recognizing the rights of others. It leads sometimes to cheating and dishonesty. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, **"Be aware of stinginess. It destroyed many nations before you. It made them to shed the blood of each other and misappropriate what was sacrosanct."** ([Reported by Muslim](#))

Love of *jah* (i.e., the extreme desire for money, power, position and fame) is another major disease of the heart. This is also called in the Qur'an and Hadith as "love of this world" (*hubb ad-dunya*). In a Hadith it is reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, **"Two hungry wolves in a herd of sheep are not as destructive and harmful as the love of money and extravagance are for the religion of a person."** (Reported by At-Tirmidhi)

The cure for this is to remind oneself always that this world is *fitnah* (a test and trial) and the real world is the Hereafter. Spiritual health comes with our sincere devotion to Allah with prayers, reading the Qur'an, and being in the company of good people. May Allah keep us all in good physical, mental and spiritual health. Ameen."