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Mission of the Prophets

He it is Who raised among the inhabitants of Mecca an Apostle from among themselves, who recites to them His communications and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom, although they were before certainly in clear error. (***Surah Jum'ah 62:2***)

Quranic verses like the one quoted above and traditions of Ahlul Bayt show that the primary aim of sending the Prophets was to teach and train the people and to purify them.

These two things themselves have a special aim. Training and purification of self is indispensable to the perfection of humanity.

They are so closely related to each other that they cannot be separated. Both of them are required to achieve the perfection of human beings. Without them, humanity will not reach to perfection. If this were not true the Almighty Allah would not have made the aim if His Prophets as such.

Training and self-purification means knowledge and action

1) Training: Training denotes the missionary program sent by Allah and it is related to Him.

And teaches them the Book and the Wisdom. (***Surah Jumah 62:2***).

This portion of the verse shows that training is related to two things, 'Book' and 'Wisdom'. Actually both are one and the same. 'Book' means the knowledge of the Holy Quran and wisdom denotes the secret of the creation of the Universe. In other words 'Book' is the codification of religious law and 'Wisdom' means the realities connected with creation of the universe and it is related to natural factors. For example the Almighty has created the universe. Now this is not a religious command.

Therefore, one who intends to acquire perfection and righteousness must strive for Quranic knowledge. One should study it and act upon it. The verses regarding the oneness of Allah, His names, attributes and Divine acts must be studied with concentration and through this exercise we must strengthen our basic beliefs. We must also pay attention to the laws of Shariah. We must perform obligatory acts and

shun prohibited ones. We must also ponder on the verses with regard to Day of Judgment. Through these verses each one of us must create a longing for Paradise and a fear of Hell. In this way a man is gradually persuaded to perform good deeds and distance himself from evil deeds.

There are many verses of the Quran concerning wisdom and which cannot be understood by the five senses of man. A study of these verses indeed tells man regarding his origin and his destination. What is the aim behind the creation of man and other creatures? And why they subsequently leave the world? What is the purpose of designing and devising the long caravan of creatures and created things? The reply to the questions is the foundation of Quran.

Knowledge sans actions or a fruitless Branch

2) Purification: The second aspect or component of the mission of the Prophets is to purify men from evil behavior and spiritual defects. In other words, results have to be achieved both in the matter of belief as well as deeds. Knowledge and belief and good deeds together make the soul pure of bad morals and evil. They purify the soul. Faith is a field and action is the seed. Even if the best quality seeds are sowed in a barren land and watered too, there will be no results.

Not only this, even the seeds will be wasted. The soil and the seeds must be compatible for maximum benefit. Similarly if the soil is fertile but it is not sowed with seeds, it will not be able to put forth any vegetation or fruits.

The fruit of knowledge and deeds is the reform of soul and purification of soul from dirt. The actual aim of knowledge and deed is purification of soul.

If the causes of disease are not removed from the body the disease will worsen instead of being cured. This the actual import of the Quranic verses. Regarding the hypocrites, it says:

There is a disease in their hearts, so Allah added to their disease and they shall have a painful chastisement because they lied. (***Surah Baqarah 2:10***).

In the same way Allah says,

And We reveal of the Quran that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers, and it adds only to the perdition of the unjust. (***Surah Bani Israel 17:82***).

Body and Soul

Thus we come to know that the teaching of Quran is related to two things, wisdom and self-purification, and wisdom denotes the secrets of creation and belief of the affairs related to the Hereafter. In other words wisdom is the recognition of truth and self-purification is related to the permissible and the prohibited. Beliefs and actions, both are the result of Quranic teachings, and the combined result of both

of them is self-purification. Self-purification also has two stages.

The first stage is outward and apparent purification and the second is internal and hidden. In order to purify the soul and to obtain the proper results of beliefs and actions, it is necessary to remove obstacles and all those things that nullify the effects of beliefs and actions. This apparent self-purification is achieved through cleansing the organs and limbs and by worship and obedience. That is, the physical body is involved in this stage, whereas the internal purification is related to the absolute cleansing of the soul.

Sins related to the body and soul

Self-purification through organs and limbs denotes keeping away from Greater sins. Unless and until one avoids the Greater sins one should not have the assurance that his deeds will be accepted.

The Holy Quran has clearly mentioned:

Allah only accepts from those who guard (***against evil***). [1]1

Also, the Almighty Allah has made self-purification the path for achieving guidance and righteousness. Allah says,

Those who believe and do not mix up their faith with iniquity, those are they who shall have the security and they are those who go aright. [2]2

Anything that is beyond the limits of injustice and away from the straight path is injustice. Thus no one must have any trait that is evil according to reason or that which the Shariah prohibits. If one is apparently a believer but has one of those evil traits, his belief will not serve any purpose because he has mixed up his faith with some sort of injustice.

At another place, Allah says,

And whoever is preserved from the niggardliness of his soul, these it is that are the successful ones. [3]3

Thus it means that if someone is, God forbid, a miser, he is away from salvation even though he might be a believer. This very fact has been mentioned in the traditional reports: “A miserly believer is nearer to the fire of Hell than a generous infidel.” This tells us that till the time we remove each and every evil trait from our character we cannot become perfect human beings and would not be able to achieve real salvation.

Duty of the religious Scholars

The successors of the prophets should continue the program of teaching and self-purification. During the occultation of Imam az-Zaman (Twelfth Imam) this important duty rests on the independent religious jurisprudents (*Mujtahids*) and just jurists. Quranic verses and traditions inform us that education and self-purification requires two necessary conditions. First of them is derivation of Islamic Law (*Ijtihad*) and the other is justice. The concerned verse says,

And it does not beseem the believers that they should go forth all together; why should not then a company from every party from among them go forth that they may apply themselves to obtain understanding in religion, and that they may warn their people when they come back to them that they may be cautious?[4]

In the same way a tradition says, "It is incumbent for the people to obey the religious jurisprudent (*Mujtahid*), who controls his self, guards his religion, opposes his carnal desires and obeys the commands of his master."

On the basis of this, the leader and guide must have achieved the limits of belief in foundations of faith and should have reached perfection in it. So that he makes the people gain divine recognition (*Ma'arifat*) and make their beliefs firm. In the same way he should be well versed with the laws of religion so that he can advise people regarding their duties and prohibitions. He must also be purified of immoral qualities so that he can serve as an example and people may benefit from his words and behavior.

Compilation of Greater Sins, an Important Step

Thus the first duty of the scholars is to make people aware of the permissible and the prohibited. This is a very important task. But so far we didn't have any comprehensive book in Persian that deals with the Greater sins in detail, so that the general public may have access to it. This blessing was in the fortune of Ayatullah Dastghaib Shirazi.

After devoting a number of years the Ayatullah has completed the magnum opus named *Greater sins.* Eager and truth perceiving public has accorded a great welcome to this book. Thousands of copies of this book have been published in two editions. A new deluxe edition is planned for the future.

Qalbe Saleem (Immaculate Conscience) and Gunahane Kabira (Greater Sins)

Fortunately the aim of the respected author is to guide people and help in the purification of their souls. After completing *Gunahane Kabira* he was busy in writing a book that deals with the sins of the heart, that being the second important stage of religious guidance. Actually the book, *Qalbe Saleem* is a sequel

to *Gunahane Kabira*. The collection of topics and arrangement of the subject matter was entrusted to me and by the Grace of Allah, the book is complete and published in a good format.

Responsibility of the Respected Readers

I consider it my duty to remind that those who are interested in such material have an important responsibility. They must propagate this book among their family and friend circles and help in propagation of religion. They can fulfill the duty that is made obligatory on them by religion and conscience. It is the best method of Commanding Good and Prohibiting Evil.

I also thank all those who have cooperated in preparation and publication of these books. I hope they will continue to extend their help and encourage writers and publishers.

Sayyid Muhammad Hashim Dastghaib.
Tehran 1st Zilqad 1392 A.H.
8 December 1972 A.D.

IntroductionIntroduction
Qalbe Saleem
(**Immaculate Conscience**)

The day on which property will not avail, nor sons. Except him who comes to Allah with a heart free (***from evil***).[5]5

Sin of the Heart

Human beings are made up of a physical body and a soul. Everyone has a visible existence and an invisible entity. Also, man is either righteous or evil-minded. Whether righteous or evil, the character of man consists of two aspects. One aspect of his character becomes visible through his physical body.

For example a person prays, fasts, performs Hajj or gives charity. Or he may be involved in sinful activities like drinking, gambling and fornication etc. All these types of deeds are performed and become apparent through his physical body. Another aspect of human character is connected with his inner dimensions and thoughts. For example, belief (Iman), love, fear, hope, satisfaction or for example, disbelief, hypocrisy, hatred and pride. All these aspects become apparent only when a person wants to make them apparent.

Evil deeds that are related to physical body are also prohibited by Almighty Allah. It is obligatory for every person to be aware of all such evils and to refrain from them. In the same way evils of the heart are also sinful and Allah Almighty has commanded us to shun them. We must be cognizant of evils of thoughts and heart also. We must also refrain from such deeds and try our best to keep our hearts free from such sins.

Quran and the sins of the heart

The Almighty has warned against sinful thoughts in a number of places in the Quran. For example, in Surah Baqarah Allah says:

But He will call you to account for what your hearts have earned, and Allah is Forgiving, Forbearing.[6]6

In the same chapter a person who hides testimony is referred to as a sinner of the heart. The Quran says:

And do not conceal testimony, and whoever conceals it, his heart is surely sinful.[7]

Also:

And whether you manifest what is in your minds or hide it, Allah will call you to account according to it.[8]8

Similarly, in Surah Bani Israel, the divine words say,

Surely the hearing and the sight and the heart, all of these, shall be questioned about that.[9]9

It means that the eyes will be questioned for what they have beheld, the ears for whatever they heard and the heart for all the thoughts it harbored. Furthermore, in Surah Nur, Allah states:

Surely (***as for***) ***those who love that scandal should circulate respecting those who believe, they shall have a grievous chastisement in this world and the hereafter; and Allah knows, while you do not know***.[10]10

This verse has refrained us from desiring that evil may befall the people of belief (Muslims). It is a sin of the heart and earns a terrible chastisement. In the same way Allah says in Surah Anam:

And abandon open and secret sin.[11]

Some commentators of the Holy Quran have mentioned that apparent sins are those that are related to the physical being and hidden evils are perpetrated in ones heart.

Thus, whenever evils and sins are discussed in Quranic verses and traditions, the sins of the heart are also included.

Sin of the Heart or inner disease

The evils of the heart are compared to disease of the heart in a number of places in the Quran:

There is a disease in their hearts, so Allah added to their disease. [12]12

The above verse is speaking about the hypocrites.

Paradise is the abode of only those who possess a perfect heart

When a heart is clean and purified from all sorts of sins and evils, it is known as the “perfect heart” or in other words the correct or whole heart; a healthy heart. It is supposed to be the basis of righteousness. The verse of Surah Shuara says:

The day on which property will not avail, nor sons. Except him who comes to Allah with a heart free (from evil). [13]

Like wealth, all the worldly things are not beneficial in each and every circumstance. They are useful only in some few situations. For example, wealth profits us only during our lifetime, but after death what we require is a perfect and sinless heart. Without such a heart we cannot gain anything. One of the names of Paradise is 'Abode of peace' (*Darus Salaam*)

They shall have the abode of peace with their Lord. [14]

However, the exegesis of Quran mentions that “*Darus Salaam*” means the abode of those who shall be safe from every kind of disease and affliction. Consequently, those who are afflicted with the maladies of sins will have to remain in the infirmary of Hell till they are cured of every affliction and regain spiritual health.

Only after undergoing this process can they qualify to enter Paradise. But there are some diseases that are incurable, like disbelief, hypocrisy and enmity with Allah and holy personalities. People afflicted with such diseases have to remain in Hell forever.

What is ‘disease of the heart’?

Just as the physical body is either healthy or diseased, in the same way heart is also healthy or sick. Physical health implies that all the organs work perfectly for the purpose they have been created for. The opposite of this implies physical disease.

That is, when the organs do not perform their duty properly and when their specialty and capability is no more, it is said that the body is sick. This results in discomfort and life becomes difficult. In the same way a healthy heart is one that possesses all the human qualities and emotions. It should have absolute and correct divine recognition (*Ma’arifat*) and it must be restful as far as the divine truths and beliefs are concerned, and it must be pure from all evil and animal feelings.

Refusal, doubt, jealousy, malice, miserliness, unsuitable friendship or enmity and in the same way,

needless fear or hope etc. are different types of heart diseases. These ailments shall be discussed in detail in this book, all of which are against the nature on which man is created. This nature is known as 'The First Nature' (*Fitrat-e-Awwaliya*).

Amirul Momineen Ali (a.s.) says, "The human body has six conditions: Health or sickness, death or life, sleep or wakefulness. In the same way the human soul also has these conditions. Life of soul is its knowledge and ignorance is its death. Sickness of soul is it being involved in doubts and its health is firm belief. Stupor of the soul is that it is heedless while wakefulness is its awareness."[15]

Imam Ali (a.s.) also says in Nahjul Balagha, "Beware! One of the calamities is hunger. And worst than that is physical sickness. More terrible than physical malady is the sickness of heart. And beware! One of the bounties is wealth. And better than wealth is physical health. More preferable than physical health is the piety of the heart." This implies that the heart must be purified from all kinds of dirt and sins.

Harmful effects of the diseases of the Heart

When a particular part of the body is sick the whole body is under terrible pain and life becomes difficult. Similarly when one is afflicted with a spiritual malady one feels remorse in his worldly life also. He continues to be afflicted even after his death, about which the Shariah has informed in advance. Life becomes difficult due to spiritual maladies and sometimes he is even inclined to commit suicide.

The above discussion shows that incidence of suicide, especially among the youth, that is on the increase day by day, is a consequence of these spiritual diseases. The best prevention is to keep the heart pure from defects. How this can be achieved shall be explained in this book.

For example when we have a toothache we do not enjoy anything. All pleasures become tasteless in such condition and life becomes unbearable. In the same way ignorance, malice, pride, jealousy, arrogance, vanity and all other spiritual maladies have similar effect, like the jealous person who is always filled with remorse. Anger tortures the person himself. So much so that he even loses sleep. He is ever burning within by seeing that another person has obtained a particular status. He is ever waiting for the time when that person is again deprived of that bounty. Quite often a jealous person fails to recognize his wishes and perishes in the fire of jealousy.

Science and research has established that psychological disorders affect the physical body and result in physical maladies. Heartache and diseases also affect physical organs. The human body is affected by it and the organs fail to perform their designated functions. Rather, the effect of every disease is the same.

Physical sins are caused by diseases of the Heart

Heart is the ruler of the Kingdom called human body. The tongue moves in compliance with the commands of the heart. Similarly all the voluntary actions are related to it. Obviously, when the heart is

sick and uncontrollable, the words and deeds of that person are in complete disorder. He will perform improper actions and utter rubbish, and his actions shall be against human nature.

They shall deviate from humanity and path of religion. Thus whatever sin a person commits, it is due to spiritual ailments. Therefore, reason dictates and religion commands us to make every effort to cure the disease of our heart. We must care more for the well being of our heart.

When the heart is in a bad shape the body is affected. The army commits injustice when the king is a weakling.[16]16

Amirul Momineen Ali (a.s.) says, "People of *Ma'arifat* (recognition) see that the worldly people are more concerned about physical death. While more serious is the death of their hearts within their living bodies."[17]

Physical death deprives the person of a few days of worldly pleasures. Those pleasures had also been accompanied by thousands of discomforts. However, the death of the heart and conscience deprives one of righteousness forever. The pure eternal pleasures turn their back towards him and man cannot spend a purified life of a human being, whether in this world or in the Hereafter.

Therefore we must not take the spiritual maladies lightly and we must not be careless with regard to their cure. Just as carelessness is unsuitable with physical diseases in the same way reason dictates that we pay utmost attention to such spiritual maladies, because they are more dangerous. Physical diseases can lead to death while spiritual diseases make one afflicted with eternal degradation.

Depravity of the Society

Different types of evils are increasing day by day in the society. Thinking upon the root cause of this we realize that all corruption, depravity and crimes are due to a type of psychological disease. And the same psychological disease or weakness instigates man to commit inhuman acts. Every type of unrest, robberies, unbridled passion, sensuality, drinking, drugs, destruction of family life, divorces, hard–heartedness, anger, suicide etc are due to one or the other kind of psychological disorders. In other words it is due to the lack of human feelings.

It is the responsibility of the government to take concrete steps for the psychological health of its subjects. Today psychological cure is more important than physical health. Sophisticated hospitals, clinics and medical colleges are established for physical aliments. Huge pharmaceutical companies are built to produce medicines. Numerous research laboratories are engaged in discovering new medicines. All of them aim to seek the cure of human sufferings. They are very much the need of the hour. But why are we oblivious of the psychological and spiritual ills?

Man is always caught in the trap of psychological diseases and in this same condition reaches the jaws of death. Why do people not take any step to save humanity from perdition? Rather, they act in the

opposite way.

Knowingly or unknowingly, various propagandas are being carried out to destroy psychological health. Efforts are made to kill humanity and morals and to trap the human society in the quagmire of sensuality, unbridled passions and wantonness.

Jealousy, an Example

News reports mention that Swiss doctors have instituted a committee to find the cure of jealousy. This shows that doctors consider jealousy an ordinary disease that is harmful for human beings. Just as they are in search of new cures of tuberculosis and cancer in the same way they strive to arrive at a cure for jealousy.

We do not know, how and through which method these doctors have begun their research. Whether they shall be successful in their endeavor or not? Anyway a dignified thought process has been initiated and this alone is a cause for hope. People are aware of the disease of jealousy since times immemorial, but they have not been able to find the cure for it. They are unaware of the medicine that can cure this disease, which has destroyed families and made family life Hell. So much so that except for Islam even the other religions have nothing to offer against this terrible malady.

Ethical and moral schools are also ineffective. Humanity is continuously burning in this fire of conscience. Jealousy has taken hold of its victims like an evil spirit. We believe that jealousy is worse than cancer. Within a year cancer kills hundreds of people, but jealousy can destroy millions in a second. Most battles in history originated in jealousy.

Alexander had the quality of a crocodile. He used to look upon his contemporary kingdoms with a jealous eye. He had also invaded Iran. One of the factors that instigated him was jealousy.

It is said that he set the throne of Jamshed on fire and this fire reached upto the door and walls of the palace. Alexander witnessed this scene while enjoying wine, and he was laughing aloud in joy tempered with anger. That is, the flames of jealousy emitted from his mouth. Studies reveal that the fire of jealousy burnt forever in his heart.

The massacre and atrocities committed by Hitler in the Second World War were also rooted in jealousy. According to a writer Hitler was a very jealous person. He could not bear to see someone wearing better clothes than him. He used to be jealous of the person and in some way or the other he managed to destroy that dress. Hitler is supposed to have said in an interview, “I cannot bear to become aged and see young people occupying my position.”

An expert of history is of the opinion that the large-scale destruction perpetrated by Hitler was due to jealousy. He used to cool the flames of his jealousy by such gestures.[18]

It is good to know that a group of Swiss doctors are paying attention to a psychological disease. However, they should know that the cure of this disease and illnesses like it, is beyond human capacity. Only the Almighty Allah is aware of every apparent and hidden thing.

If Allah gives divine opportunity (*Tawfeeq*) it may be possible to derive the cure from the spiritual doctor and the heavenly book that is the Holy Quran. Every type of psychological disease and its cure is mentioned in the Quran.

It is also mentioned in the above report that, “Religious teachings and laws cannot take effective steps with regard to the cure of jealousy.”

If they mean to say that people have not made an effort to seek the cure from religious teachings it is correct. Otherwise there is no defect or deficiency in the Quranic teachings. Which Muslim has sincerely tried to learn Quranic sciences and act fully upon its laws, and in this way obtain the cure of his psychological ills?

Allah will definitely bestow a cure if one acts upon the Quranic teachings in totality after understanding them. The psychological diseases common in Muslims and their decadence is due to the fact that they have turned away from the laws of Quran.

Whatever is there is due to our unregulated and unwieldy body. Otherwise your being was not shorter than anyone's height[19].

A Healthy soul and a Healthy Body

We have to follow a set of rules for maintaining physical health. One of the points is that there are some extra parts that must be separated from the human body. For example the unborn child in its mother's womb has these extra things that are removed after it is born. Like the covering membrane enveloping the whole body, the umbilical cord through which it derives nourishment from its mother and the foreskin of the penis that is removed in circumcision. These are the things that can be dangerous to health if not removed after the child is born.

In the same way there are some additional qualities that accompany the human soul by divine wisdom. They are beneficial to men only under special circumstances. These special occasions are specified by reason and Shariah. For example, ignorance, greed, miserliness, injustice, haste and the spirit of confrontation etc. All these are present in man since his inception as confirmed by the Holy Quran:

Surely he is unjust, ignorant.[20]

Surely man is created of a hasty temperament.[21]

and whoever is saved from the greediness of his soul, these it is that are the successful.[22]

Man is created of haste.[23]

And man is most of all given to contention.[24]

In the same way man is described as possessing other evil traits also. He is most ungrateful (*Surah Zukhruf 43:15*), very niggardly (*Surah Bani Israel* (*7:100*), very prone to despair (*Surah Hud 11:9*), easily frightened (*Surah Ma'arij 70:20*) very hasty (*Surah Bani Israel 17:11*) etc. The Quran has also described the infidels to be blind, dumb, deaf and worse than quadrupeds. For example,

Surely the vilest of animals in Allah's sight are those who disbelieve...[25]25

And also,

Deaf, dumb (and) blind, so they do not understand.[26]26

Quran has mentioned many such kinds of spiritual diseases and their cure shall be described in detail in this book. For the time being we should know that these qualities could be put to use only as far as reason and Shariah permit. We must strive to bring them under control if they exceed these limits.

Like for instance, miserliness is very much present in man. However, it should be restricted only for circumstances that man abstains from spending a single penny in illegal acts. He must also not waste money or spend it in useless things. He must be miserly in spending his life and wealth in any way other than those approved by Allah. He should not however prove to be a miser when he has to spend all this in the way of Allah.

You are given the axe to cut wood not that you hit the people on their heads.[27]

Cleanliness of the Body from the food consumed

A portion of the food consumed by human beings is able to become a part of their body and the rest is ejected in urine and stool. Some food ingredients are responsible for the growth of nails and hair and some get evaporated in the form of sweat. The fats that accumulate in the body are derived from specific food components and they are deposited on the internal walls, sometimes causing difficulty in breathing.

The human body cleans itself continuously so that its well being is assured. We should trim our nails at least once a week. We must also shave the armpits and groin. Use of soap is necessary to remove oily substances on our body, otherwise our health shall be in peril.

In the same way, our clothes, houses, atmosphere and our food must be free of dirt and contamination.

Spiritual Hygiene is also Important

Just as cleanliness is necessary for physical health it is a must to purge the soul of psychological diseases in order to assure its well being. Spiritual diseases cause waywardness and depravity. They deprive man of righteousness. We must try to immunize ourselves against such ailments. To achieve this we must act upon the method recommended by the Quran.

Man becomes so busy in worldly preoccupations that he tends to forgo the remembrance of Allah and the Hereafter. He becomes so engrossed in quest of physical well being and material needs that he falls into heedlessness and depravity. Such people are few whom Allah praises in the following words,

Men whom neither merchandise nor selling diverts from the remembrance of Allah.[28]28

A number of methods are taught by Quran to avoid heedlessness and the best among them is the five times daily prayer. The Almighty Allah says,

And keep up prayer for My remembrance.[29]29

Prescription

We must try to ensure that whatever we see, hear or receive through the use of our organs should not be harmful to our soul. But how can we know whether it is harmful or not? Well, the Islamic Shariah has informed us that we must act on a perfect reason and the divine law. We must abstain from every activity that causes spiritual ills. We must perform every action that is beneficial in getting rid of the diseases present in our soul and cause the soul to scale greater heights of perfection.

Materialist man has no spiritual cure

Physical diseases are such that can be perceived and recognized by the five senses of man. The Almighty Allah has provided their cure in this material world itself that man can obtain if he tries well enough or experiments on them.

The cases of spiritual diseases are different. The soul itself cannot be perceived by man with his five senses. The soul is not a material thing. Thus its diseases too do not have a material base. A layman cannot diagnose these spiritual diseases. It is beyond human capacity to have complete control over the working of the soul. Apart from this, no man is aware of the secrets of the soul and the cure for spiritual ills.

The Almighty Allah says regarding this that He has chosen a few persons and gave them the information of these unseen matters. He has appointed them as spiritual doctors and guides of humanity. And Allah appointed the Prophet Muhammad (S), the last Prophet as the chief of all these holy personalities.

The prophets are like the shepherds for the people. They are the guides in every aspect of life. Our Prophet is the leader of these prophets. He is the first and the last in this affair. The Almighty Allah has bestowed a favor on humanity by sending him.

Certainly Allah conferred a benefit upon the believers when He raised among them an Apostle from among themselves, reciting to them His communications and purifying them, and teaching them the Book and the wisdom.[30]

Here the word 'purifying' indicates the purging of all types of spiritual diseases from the heart, the details of which are being presented in this book. It is well understood from this verse that the aim of sending prophets is to illuminate the human hearts by the light of wisdom, to purify the soul from every uncleanness and to embellish them with all the great virtues. The Messenger of Allah (S) himself states, "I have been sent for the perfection of morals."

Quran, The Message that Bestows life

The Book sent by the Merciful Lord through His exalted Prophet contains natural and spiritual laws. It has the message of life and teachings that enliven the hearts.

The Almighty says,

O you who believe! Answer (the call of) Allah and His Apostle when he calls you to that which gives you life.[31]31

And

Is he who was dead then We raised him to life and made for him a light by which he walks among the people, like him whose likeness is that of one in utter darkness whence he cannot come forth?[32]32

"O living heart! You do not know who is a dead one! A corpse is one who does not remember Allah!"[33]

The Holy Quran says,

Whoever does good whether male or female and he is a believer, We will most certainly make him live a happy life.[34]34

The hearts, which are dead due to disbelief and hypocrisy, turn to belief and the real life if the solid proofs of Quran convince them. Thus it is this Quran, which is a cure for the hidden ailments.

And a healing for what is in the breasts.[35]

At another place the Quran says,

Say: It is to those who believe a guidance and a healing.[36]

And also,

And We reveal of the Quran that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers.[37]

Thus the Holy Quran is the absolute cure. It cures the spiritual diseases of its followers It is a clear mercy too. It bestows its believers with well being, health and fortitude. It teaches them to acquire good morals. It commands them to live peacefully in the society and obtain its benefits.

Refutation of a wrong notion

Due to lack of knowledge some people say: “The sins of the heart are such that they are committed widely.” They say that it is not possible for human beings to escape them. Therefore it is not our duty to avoid them. That is, it is not necessary to avoid them under the law of Shariah. Hence there is no divine chastisement for such things. Some people also say, “These are only moral teachings and it is not certain whether they are prohibited by Shariah.”

A Wrong Notion

The sins of the heart are those improper thoughts that often occur to people. It is not possible to prevent them from occurring to us. Therefore such matters do not fall within the purview of religious obligations and they do not carry divine chastisement.

However, there is a difference between the “Sin of the heart” and “thoughts.” The sins of the heart are such that one can prevent them from entering ones heart. If they are already present in ones heart they can be removed, while thoughts cannot be prevented.

For example you see a Muslim man at a wine shop. A thought comes to you that he is an alcoholic and he is there to purchase wine. This thought has entered your heart involuntarily. Now it depends upon you to give this thought a permanent place in your heart. You begin to think bad of the person and label him a drunkard and a transgressor. Thinking bad about a Muslim is a sin of the heart.

If you desire you can at once realize that it is a satanic instigation. You can justify the circumstances of that man. You can say that 'perhaps he has come for some other important errand'. 'May be that he is waiting for someone'. You can rid your heart of evil thoughts by finding such justifications.

Or for example, you see someone having possession of a new bounty. A thought strikes you immediately: Why did he get this bounty? If you at once realize that it is a satanic thought and by the light of your faith and knowledge you discard it from your mind there would be no sin on you. Involuntary thoughts are altogether among the forgiven deeds. Whenever a thought like this occurs to you, you must at once say to yourself that, 'Allah has given him these bounties. It is according to divine wisdom. To

object to a divine act is equal to disbelief. Allah is having the power to give a similar or better bounty to me also.'

However, if you give a permanent place to this thought in your heart and wish that the person loses that bounty, you become afflicted with a sin of the heart, namely, jealousy.

Or for example, you have been hurt by a word or action of another person. Now it is possible for you to ignore it, forgive him or to take a suitable revenge. But if instead of this you become inimical to him and you hurt him more than he has harmed you, you shall be involved in the sin of the heart that is known as malice.

Thinking bad of someone, jealousy and malice, as you have seen are such things that find a permanent place in your heart. And it is within your powers to allow them to settle in your heart or not. It is also upto you whether you let them remain in your heart or throw them out. A passing thought, even if it is based on disbelief, is pardonable because it was involuntary and there is no sin for it.

To be cautious of Satanic whisperings is a sign of belief

It is mentioned in *Usul al-Kafi* that in the time of the Messenger of Allah (S) the Satan put an evil thought in the heart of a person. He said, “Who has created you?” “Allah”, replied this man. “Who has created Allah?” asked the Satan. This person was very aggrieved and worried due to this thought. He came to the Messenger of Allah (S) and said, “I am finished!” and then he narrated the details. The Holy Prophet (S) said, “By Allah! This is pure belief (Iman).”

That is, since he feared divine retribution, it showed that he was cautious of the Satan's whispering. Therefore it is a proof of belief and actual belief itself.

There are many traditions in *Usul al-Kafi* that imply that there shall be no punishment for unsuitable thoughts. These narrations state that one can avoid evil thoughts by reciting 'Laa ihaaha illallaah' (There is no God except Allah). Another tradition mentions a command to recite Allah's remembrance by saying “Aamanna billahi wa rasulihi, wa laa hawla wa laa quwwata illa billaah.” (We believe in Allah and His Messengers and there is no power and might except by Allah).

Our discussion so far has shown us that the sins of the heart are the things that remain behind in the heart and we have control over them. They are not like passing thoughts. This book shall prove the illegality of each of these sins from the point of view of Islamic law.

There is no other way

The cure of spiritual diseases and the well being and health of the heart are not such that some person should consider them easy or ignore them. It requires a great effort. One has to fight against self. Sometimes we have to forgo pleasures. It is not that we disregard those pleasures. Rather, at that time

we are sacrificing a lesser pleasure for something much higher and pleasurable. All this becomes necessary for a pure human life. In order to reach such heights we have to consider difficulty as ease and consider problems to be bounties.

Consider grief as comfort because the aim has become higher. You perceive hyena's eye around the flock of sheep as if it is a mother of pearl.

A person with a healthy heart spends his life in peace and ease. He achieves the satisfaction of his Lord. The worldly grief is compensated by spiritual delights. When a person with a peaceful heart departs from this world he begins a life that is absolutely restful and filled with pleasures. He is offered such bounties as the eye has never seen, the ear never heard and no one has even imagined them. He achieves a real kingdom. Whatever he desires is at once presented to him.

And when you see there, you shall see blessings and a great kingdom.[38]

An Astounding Fact

How surprising that man goes to great lengths to assure his physical health and well being. He spends a great part of his wealth on it and even takes bitter medicines and gets himself operated. But he does nothing for the well being of his heart. He pays no heed to the cure of his spiritual diseases. The matter of spiritual health is much more important than physical health. But man makes no effort to get this cure. He ignores the advice of Allah and the Prophet regarding these internal ailments.

He is completely heedless. Whatever worldly discomforts he has to suffer due to spiritual diseases, he resigns himself to them. He considers the punishment that awaits him in the Hereafter to be distant. He has no faith in it. The doctor says: This disease could prove fatal and he believes it at once.

Till his last moments he strives to be cured. But when Allah and the Prophet say, “The spiritual diseases are indeed fatal!” It is surprising that man is not prepared to accept that he is prone to harm of spiritual illnesses. Even if there had been a slightest risk, reason would have compelled him to take precautionary measures.

Allah only tells you to abstain from wine in this life. The doctor only tells you to avoid sweets when you have jaundice.

You do not forgo a prohibited act for the sake of religion when Allah says. But for the sake of physical health you forgo a permissible thing?[39]39

The curtain of heedlessness will be removed at the time of death. Man shall see himself and his diseases. But at that time he shall find no cure for them. No matter how much he entreats Allah, no matter how much he repents, it shall not be of any use.

Lest a soul should say: O woe to me! For what I fell short of my duty to Allah.[40]

Prescription is not a cure

Some Muslims think that it is sufficient to recite the formula of Faith. They think that it is enough that the Holy Quran is a heavenly and a religious book. They keep it on a shelf. On a high shelf. They do not read its verses with introspection. They do not act upon its exalted method of living. However, if a doctor writes a prescription one does not act in this way. That is, keep it in the pocket and feel content with it or keep it on a high shelf. One does not rest till one purchases the medicines prescribed in it and till one takes them. It would certainly be illogical to go to a doctor, get a prescription from him and just sit at home. Common sense prevents such behavior.

Disbelief is not the only Spiritual Disease

There are some other Muslims who act upon some of the Quranic commands. For example they offer prayers, keep fasts etc. But there is no soul of life in their actions. They ignore other teachings of the Quran. Over and above this, they consider themselves owners of 'Qalbe Saleem' (an immaculate conscience).

They think that divine retribution prescribed for spiritual diseases concerns only the disbelievers. Due to this wrong notion they become proud and continue in this compounded ignorance forever. (Compounded ignorance is that they are ignorant of their ignorance!)

They have a mistaken notion that the only spiritual disease is Disbelief. It is only one of its kinds. There are many other spiritual ailments and Quran has mentioned their cures in various places.

Despite being a Muslim, one can be afflicted with spiritual diseases. The following two verses are sufficient to prove this statement.

If the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease and the agitators in the city do not desist, We shall most certainly set you over them.[41]

And that those in whose hearts is a disease and the unbelievers may say: What does Allah mean by this parable?[42]

As you see both these verses mention Muslims who have disease in the heart, which is why they are mentioned separately along with the disbelievers and hypocrites.

Now who is that Muslim who has never been a target of changing thoughts and satanic whisperings? Who has remained steadfast in Allah's service and never looked towards or attracted by evil? Who could claim to be absolutely pure of selfish desires? All these are some of the diseases of the heart, and polytheism is just one of its kind. Allah says,

And most of them do not believe in Allah without associating others (with Him).[43]43

It is related from Imam Baqir (a.s.) that "associating" in this verse implies associating in obedience. On one hand people believe in the Oneness of Allah and consider Him alone worthy of worship. But on the other hand they obey the Satan also. They become obedient to him in performing sinful acts. Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) says, "Indeed this verse is aimed at more than two-thirds of the people."[44]44

Who is that Muslim who has remained free all his life from jealousy, malice, pride and greed? The Holy Quran has mentioned the spiritual ailments. Thus it is obligatory upon all Muslims to study them. In addition to the Quran they must also pay attention to the sayings of the Prophet's Progeny (Ahlul Bayt). They should act upon the laws framed by the scholars based on Quran and traditions. Beware, that the chance of repentance passes away.

Lack of belief is real ignorance

Such diseases that are compared to blindness, dumbness and deafness by the Holy Quran afflict a heart that is bereft of faith,

Deaf, dumb (and) blind, so they do not understand.[45]

That is, the hearts of those whose ears are incapable of hearing the truth, whose tongues cannot speak truth and whose eyes cannot see the reality.

The Quran also says,

And whoever is blind in this, he shall (also) be blind in the hereafter.[46]

This verse and other such verses inform us that in the Hereafter the apparent form of people will be the same as their inner form. For example,

On the day when hidden things shall be made manifest.[47]

Thus one who has not seen Allah with his inner eye, has not trusted the truth and has not aligned himself with the right way, in the Hereafter, too, he shall not be able to see Allah's bounties. In the same way one who has not perceived truth by the ears of his heart and has not accepted it, he would not be able to hear the pleasurable bounties of Paradise and its inmates.

Such hearts do not have a healthy faith. Hearts bereft of faith are sick. The Almighty says,

There is a disease in their hearts.[48]

So a seal is set upon their hearts.[49]

Nay, on the hearts there are locks.[50]

Nay! Rather, what they used to do has become like rust upon their hearts.[51]51

They are as cattle, nay, they are in worse errors.[52]

Surely the vilest of animals in Allah's sight are those who disbelieve.[53]

A disbeliever is worse than animals

The superiority of men over animals is that Allah has given human beings the capacity to perceive the truth. He can heed advice and act upon it. One who does not use this ability is deprived of the status of a human being. All that remains in him is a beast or an animal.

In the first supplication of *Sahifa Sajjadiya* Imam Zainul Abideen (a.s.) says, "And were they to be such, they would certainly have gone beyond the bounds of humanity into the frontiers of beastliness. They would have conformed to the description which He has given in His Unique Book, saying, "What are they except like brutes or even more aberrant from the way?"

The Dead

The Holy Quran refers to the disbelievers as dead men. It says,

Surely you do not make the dead to hear, and you do not make the deaf to hear the call when they go back retreating.[54]54

We should know that belief is the nourishment of the soul. If the body does not get proper nourishment it's shape and capabilities deteriorate. If this continues the capacities are destroyed completely. This ultimately leads to death.

The same can be said for a soul that lacks belief. Lack of belief causes this soul to become afflicted with spiritual diseases. In comparison to this his humanity becomes weak. He becomes heedless of a pure and spiritual life. Till finally the human being in him dies and he becomes involved in eternal perdition.

Death of the Soul

There is a great difference between physical and spiritual death. When the physical body dies its physical discomfort is over. Just like a bird that escapes from a cage. However, even after the death of the soul its pain does not terminate. Not only one is troubled by the spiritual ailments one is also tortured by the bad morals that are the consequences of this.

Then therein he shall neither live nor die.[55]

He shall be involved in a life-death struggle. He would not die so that he could get rid of the pain.

Neither would he get a life of comfort.

The Holy Quran also says,

Is he who was dead then We raised him to life and made for him a light by which he walks among the people, like him whose likeness is that of one in utter darkness whence he cannot come forth?[56]

Similarly the verse,

Whoever does good whether male or female and he is a believer, We will most certainly make him live a happy life.[57]

These verses prove that apart from this animal life man also has another kind of purified life. One must obtain such a life. Traditions have compared it to the spirit of faith (Ruhul Iman). One who posses this life remains forever in peace and safety and in such a well being that there is no existence of fear or terror. He gains everlasting joy and happiness.

Why should he not be pleased? He can see, hear and feel such things, as the other people are incapable of. A person whose humanity is alive is submerged in the sea of divine friendship in this world and the Hereafter. He remains happy due to his proximity to Allah.

More Ugly than a Monkey!

As we have mentioned, the outward appearance of man shall resemble his inner self. Everyone will be raised in his spiritual form. All those who are evil in this world and possess beastly qualities, those that are beyond the frontiers of humanity and lack the spirit of belief or a purified life, they shall be deprived of the real elegance on the Day of Judgment.

They shall be raised in terrible forms. Muhaddith Faiz has quoted a tradition in his book *Ainul Yaqeen,*

"People shall be raised in such terrible forms that monkeys and pigs are better."

For more details please refer to my book *Ma'ad.*[58]

Peaceful life and a comfortable Hereafter

If someone asks: You say that the life of the faithful is pure in both the worlds. A believer always remains in comfort, bounties and happiness. On the other hand the disbeliever is involved in grief and calamities! He is a prisoner of selfish desires. He is in everlasting depravity and sorrow. But we see that many faithful people are involved in various calamities, difficulties and problems. While on the other hand a large number of infidels spend their life in affluence and comfort?

The reply to this objection is that the heart of a believer is like a garden. A believer has to face material difficulties in the world. But he is not aggrieved of these problems. These thorns only prick the body and are confined within the boundaries of the garden. However, the garden of the heart has no place for these thorns. Even in this material world the soul of the believer is safe from all calamities.

Those are they who shall have the security and they are those who go aright.[59]

The sole desire of a believer in this world is that his Lord should be pleased with him. Such a person does not despair due to failures and material setbacks. He considers only Allah as his guardian and the guardian of others. He recognizes the power, wisdom and mercy of Allah. He considers Allah his Master and considers himself His slave.

That is because Allah is the Protector of those who believe, and because the unbelievers shall have no protector for them.[60]

Thus a believer does not become sorrowful and aggrieved by the difficulties of this worldly life. They do not even make him angry. Allah keeps the hearts of the believer peaceful in this world also.

He it is Who sent down tranquility into the hearts of the believers.[61]61

Hope in Allah, the strongest support for a believer

A believer always faces adversity with determination. He does not stumble, nor does his feet tremble. He does not fall down on this path. He knows that behind every calamity is hidden wisdom and he alone shall be eligible for the benefit of this hidden wisdom. All that he hopes from Allah is that He removes this difficulty or in this way recompenses it so that even the physical pain does not remain for him.

If you suffer pain, then surely they (too) suffer pain as you suffer pain, and you hope from Allah what they do not hope.[62]

That is, you hope for salvation from problems, forgiveness and rewards, but the unbelievers have no such hopes. They remain forever in the darkness of hopelessness.

The disbeliever's heart is a Horrible Ruin

The heart of a believer is not worried of problems and difficulties. Only they affect his physical and apparent body. Whereas all the happiness that faithless people achieve is limited to their apparent selves. Rather their hearts are such terrible ruins that they are never inhabited by such pleasures. The darkness of their hearts cannot be dispelled by their sensual desires. Their hearts remain restless, uncomfortable and sorrowful.

Actually these desires are the coverings of the heart. The interior of these hearts is filled with dread and

horror. An infidel tries to remain engrossed in worldly matters so that he could forget his internal ache. However, these desires cause a lot of burning in the wilderness of his heart. They increase the desolateness of his heart. It is another matter if he keeps himself ignorant of this reality. When the activities of this world come to an end such people will taste the horrifying and terrible Hell.

The Quran says,

Certainly you were heedless of it, but now We have removed from you your veil, so your sight today is sharp.[63]

That is, now you are seeing things that you did not even imagine before.

The Unbeliever's dread will never end

The unbeliever has to bear the difficulties in this world also. He remains forever in poverty or disease. The enemy always has an upper hand on him. Whenever he is not busy in the fulfillment of his carnal desires he sits down in shame and despair. Everywhere he sees the darkness of disbelief and hopelessness.

He has no hope in the Almighty. Comparing himself to the world he feels degraded. Seeing the condition of his life he becomes sorrowful. He complains with his tongue and this continues till he begins to prefer death and commits suicide thinking that this would relieve him from the worldly difficulties. However, it was a wrong notion. He is not annihilated by physical death. The horror of his heart remains with him forever. There is no escape from all this for a disbeliever while they remain on disbelief.

And whoever turns away from My reminder, his shall be a straitened life, and We will raise him on the day of resurrection, blind.[64]

And those whose hearts are not illuminated by the light of faith they shall be deprived of light in the Hereafter also.

It shall be said: Turn back and seek a light.[65]

Joy and Sorrow

No matter how happy an unbeliever may seem in this life, his heart is always sorrowful and under stress. First of all he cannot fulfill all his desires. Human desires are unlimited. Due to various hurdles he is not able to achieve even one percent of his wishes. That is why he burns forever in the fire of depravation and finds himself surrounded by the difficulties imposed on him by the barriers. Another thing is that he is always fearful of losing the bounties he possesses. He knows that his material treasure is going to be destroyed one day and that it shall be taken away from him by death.

Now it is Allah and the faith in the Day of recompense that can keep a man happy. A believer is content even when there is scarcity of bounties. He doesn't even fear the destruction of his material belongings. He knows that the best of bounties, better than material things is present in his very heart. And that is faith in Allah. Even with regard to the Hereafter he is happy due to the hope he reposes in his Lord.

Say: In the grace of Allah and in His mercy in that they should rejoice.[66]66

Acquire as much belief as possible

From the discussion so far we realize that the greatest treasure for man in this world and the Hereafter is a healthy and a perfect soul and it should not be afflicted with the disease of the absence of faith. In the same way greatest misfortune for man in both the worlds is absence of belief. Thus it is most important for us to strive to gain belief. We should always try to increase our faith.

When the heart is illuminated by faith, most diseases are cured automatically. Lack of faith is a fatal disease of the heart and it causes other spiritual ailments or worsens them. Thus we should keep ourselves safe from this deadly illness.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) is quoted in *Tafsir Safi* explaining the exegesis of the throne verse (Ayatul Kursi): "Allah is the guardian of those who have accepted belief. Allah brings these very people from the darkness into Light. That is, He brings them out from the darkness of sins into the light of repentance and forgiveness." Thus the most important thing is belief. One can keep aloof from every type of evil due to ones faith alone.

Belief means Certainty

It should not remain unsaid that belief means certainty in the necessary facts regarding Tawheed (Oneness of Allah) and Day of Judgment. Such a belief is effective in curing the diseases of the heart and the light of certainty guides man to the truth that Allah is his creator and the Creator of other people. All of us are slaves of the Almighty. Allah has bestowed all that we possess. Everything belongs to Allah.

We all have to return to the Day of Judgment and the world of recompense (Hereafter). One who has faith in these fundamentals is free from diseases like jealousy, greed and enmity. The brilliance and luminosity of the light of certainty dispels all the shadows and ailments. If there remain in us moral ills we should know that either we lack certainty of belief or it is very weak.

Conclusion of this Introduction

Thus anyone who wishes to have a peaceful heart and the best of the world and the Hereafter should achieve certainty regarding the beliefs. It is the cure for numerous diseases. He must give precedence to this over his other desires. The aim of this introduction was to emphasize the importance of certainty for

our respected readers. The foundation of all beliefs rests on certainty.

Therefore we have kept the section on beliefs before the section on morals. If divine assistance continues we shall soon discuss in detail the diseases of disbelief, hypocrisy, polytheism and doubt. We shall also mention their cures and describe the method of achieving certainty. In the next section we shall describe the Moral ills.

1. Surah Maidah 5:27.
2. Surah Anam 6:82.
3. Surah Hashr 59:9.
4. Surah Tawbah 9:122.
5. Surah Shuara 26:88–89.
6. Surah Baqarah 2:225.
7. Surah Baqarah 2:283.
8. Surah Baqarah 2:284.
9. Surah Bani Israel 17:36.
10. Surah Nur 24:19.
11. Surah Anam 6:120.
12. Surah Baqarah 2:10.
13. Surah Shuara 26:88–89.
14. Surah Anam 6:127.
15. Biharul Anwar Vol. 14 Pg.398.
16. Persian Couplet.
17. Nahjul Balagha, Sermon 259.
18. Quoted from the Pars Daily, 63/33.
19. Persian Couplet.
20. Surah Ahzab 33:72.
21. Surah Maryam 70:19.
22. Sura at–Taghabun, 64:16.
23. Surah Anbiya 21:37.
24. Surah Kahf 18:54.
25. Surah Anfal 8:55.
26. Surah Baqarah 2:171.
27. Persian Couplet.
28. Surah Nur 24:37.
29. Surah Taha 20:14.
30. Surah Ali Imran 3:164.
31. Surah Anfal 8:24.
32. Surah Anam 6:122.
33. A couplet of Shaykh Sadi.
34. Surah Nahl 16:97.
35. Surah Yunus 10:57.
36. Surah Ha Mim 41:44.
37. Surah Bani Israel 17:82.
38. Surah Dahr 76:20.
39. Persian Couplets
40. Surah Zumar 39:56
41. Surah Ahzab 33:60.

42. Surah Muddassir 74:31.
43. Surah Yusuf 12:106.
44. Usul al-Kafi.
45. Surah Baqarah 2:171.
46. Surah Bani Israel 17:72.
47. Surah Tariq 86:9.
48. Surah Baqarah 2:10.
49. Surah Munafiqoon 63:3.
50. Surah Muhammad 47:24.
51. Surah Mutafaffefeen 83:14.
52. Surah Araaf 7:179
53. Surah Anfal 8:55.
54. Surah Naml 27:80
55. Surah Alaa 87:13
56. Surah Anam 6:122.
57. Surah Nahl 16:97.
58. Also published in English by Ansarian Publications and available on line at: http://www.al-islam.org/the-hereafter/ [1]
59. Surah Anam 6:82.
60. Surah Muhammad 47:11.
61. Surah Fath 48:4.
62. Surah an-Nisa' 4:104.
63. Surah Qaf 50:22.
64. Surah Taha 20:124.
65. Surah Hadid 57:13.
66. Surah Yunus 10:58

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[1] http://www.al-islam.org/the-hereafter/