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The Remedy of 'The Healing'

Abu 'Atab 'Abd Allah b. Bistami narrated from Ibrahim b. al-Nadr from the son of Maytham al-Tammar of Qazwin, who said: We were in touch with the Imams, who gave this medication to their followers. It is the medication called 'the healing' (*al-shafiya*). It is different from the 'comprehensive medication'. This is for chroic and recent semi-paralysis, chronic and recent facial paralysis, chronic and recent ulcers (*al-dubayla*), chronic and recent coughs, tetanus (*al-kuzaz*), pestilence (*rih al-shauka*), pain of the (neck) eye [*sic*], and film covering the eye (*rih al-sabal*) – which causes hair to grow in the eye. [It is also] for pain of the legs from chronic *al-kham*, for weakness of the abdomen, for the winds which afflict children from flatulence, panic which afflicts a woman in her sleep during her pregnancy, consumption spread by breathing (*al-nafkh*) - and it is the yellow water (*al-ma' al-asfar*) in the belly - for leprosy, every sign of bile and phlegm, for bites (*al-nahsha*), and for those bitten by snakes and scorpions.

Jibra'il, the trusted Spirit, brought it down to Musa b. 'Imran, peace he upon him, when the Pharoah intended to poison the Banu Isra'il and made a day for them on Sunday. The Pharoah prepared many kinds of food for them and set up many tables and put the poison in the food. Musa went forth with the Banu Isra'il - and they were 600,000 – stopping with them at the place of entertainment. He sent back the women and children and advised the Banu Isra'il, saying:

"Do not eat of their food and drink of their drink until I return to you." Then he went among the people and gave them this medication to drink in the amount held by the head of a needle. He knew they would disobey his command and eat the Pharoah's food. Then he went forward, and they went with him. When they saw the tables set up, they hurried to the food and put their hands in it.

Some time earlier, the Pharoah had called Musa, Harun, Yusha' b. Nun, and the elite of the Banu Isra'il, and directed them to a table especially for them. He said: "I have resolved that none will cut the daman other than me or the distinguished people in my kingdom. So eat until you are full." The Pharoah put in the strongest poison time and again. When they finished eating, Musa and his companions left. He said to the Pharoah: "We have left the women and children and the belongings behind us and we are awaiting them." The Pharoah said: "Then the food will be brought back for them and we will honour them as we have honoured those with you. So bring them, and I will feed them as I fed your

companions."

Musa went to the people and the Pharoah turned to his associates and said to them: "You claim that Musa and Harun have cast a spell on us and have shown us by this spell that they are eating something of our food. They have left, and their spell is gone, so gather whomever you are able to, for the remaining food today and tomorrow so that they are separated." They did that, and the Pharoah had ordered food for his companions without any poison in it. He gathered them, and among them were those whom he gave to eat and those whom he did not. Those whom he gave to eat of his food were saved. There perished among the companions of the Pharoah 70,000 men and 160,000 women besides the riding-beasts, dogs, etc. The Pharoah and his companions were amazed at the medicine called 'the healing' that Allah had ordered him [Musa] to give his companions.

Then Allah, the Exalted, revealed this medication to His Prophet, and Jibra'il, peace be upon him, brought down the copy of it: "Take one part of peeled garlic (*thum*). Crush it, but do not grind it finely, and put it into a saucepan or cooking pot, depending on the amount that has been prepared. Then light a low fire under it and pour over it the clarified butter from a cow - an amount enough to cover it. Cook it over a low fire until that butter is soaked up. Then pour it over it again and again until the garlic does not absorb anymore. Next pour over it fresh milk (*al-labn al-halib*), put it on a low fire, and do the same as you did with the fat— let the milk be that of a cow which has recently given birth - until it [the garlic] does not absorb any more milk. Then take honey from the comb (*al-shahd*) and squeeze it out of its comb. Boil it separately and do not let there be any of the comb in it. Pour it on to the garlic and put it on a low fire as you did with the fat and milk.

"Then take ten dirhams of fennel flower and grind it finely. Clean it but do not sift it. Take five dirhams of pepper and marjoram and grind it. Add them to it [the garlic] and make it into a jelly-like (*khabisa*) mixture on the fire. Put it into a clean, empty container, free of any odour. Put in the container some of the clarified butter from a cow and oil the container with it. Then bury it in barley (*sha'ir*) or ashes (*ramad*) for forty days, and the older it is, the better. When he is suffering severely, let the patient take the quantity of a chick-pea.

"One month after this medicine [has been prepared], it is beneficial for throbbing in the teeth and all that is caused by the phlegm, after a quantity equivalent to half a walnut is taken on an empty stomach. After two months, it is good for fever which is accompanied by shivering. The equivalent of half a walnut should be taken before sleep. It is very effective for digesting the food and for every ailment of the eye. After three months, it is good for the black and the yellow bile, excessively heated phlegm, and for the occurence of every illness resulting from the yellow bile. It should be taken on an empty stomach.

After four months, it is good for the darkness in the eye and the spirit which seizes a man when he is walking. It should be taken at night before he sleeps. After five months, violet oil or vinegar oil should be taken with the equivalent of half a lentil mixed with the oil. The person suffering from continual headache should inhale it. After six months, the equivalent of a lentil of it should be taken. The person suffering

from migraine should inhale it, with violet oil, from the side on which his illness is. That should be done before breakfast, in the first part of the morning.

“After seven months, it is beneficial for wind which is in the ears. Put it drop by drop into the ear, taking the equivalent of a lentil of it with the oil of roses, at the first part of the morning when he is asleep. After eight months, it is beneficial for yellow bile and for the illness from which there is a fear of canker. It should be drunk with water and mixed with any oil you wish. That should be done before breakfast, at sunrise.

“After nine months, it is beneficial, Allah willing, for vertigo (*al-sadar*), for excessive sleep, talking (*al-hadhayan*), trembling during sleep, dread (*al-wajal*), and panic. It should be taken with the oil of radish seeds (*bizr al-fujl*) on an empty stomach for anxiety (*al-balbala*), internal fever (*al-humma al-batina*), and confusion of the mind (*ikhtilat al-‘aql*). Take the equivalent of a lentil of it with vinegar. For whiteness in the eye, drink it in any way you want on an empty stomach before sleeping.

“After eleven months, it is beneficial for the black bile which seizes the person with fear and temptation. Take the equivalent of a chick-pea with the oil of roses and drink it on an empty stomach, and drink the equivalent of a chick-pea of it without [any oil] before sleep. After twelve months, it is beneficial for recent and chronic semi-paralysis, when the equivalent of a chick-pea should be taken with marjoram water. Anoint the feet with olive oil and salt before sleeping and do the same thing the next night. Abstain from vinegar, milk, legumes, and fish. Eat with the [medication] whatever you wish.

“After thirteen months, it is beneficial for ulcers, laughing for no reason, and playing with one’s beard. The equivalent of a chick-pea of it should be taken and mixed with rue water and drunk in the first part of the night. After fourteen months, it is beneficial for all poisons, even if the poison has been drunk. Take the seeds of egg-plant (*al-badinjan*) and grind it. Then boil it on the fire, strain it out, and drink it with the equivalent of a chick-pea of this medicine, once or twice or thrice or four times with tepid water. Do not take it more than four times and drink it at dawn.

“After fifteen months, it is beneficial for bewitchment, *al-hamma*, cold [in the belly], and winds. Take the equivalent of half a hazelnut, boil with pure water. Give it to drink when the person has gone to bed, and do not give it at night or the next day until he has eaten a lot of food. After sixteen months, he should take the cquivalent of half a lentil and mix it with fresh rainwater which has fallen that day or night, or with hail. Apply it around the edges of the eyes of the person who has been blind for some time or become blind recently. Apply it in the early morning and late evening, and before sleeping, for four days; he will be cured. If not, apply it for eight days, and I have not seen it reaching eight days without the person being cured, by the will of Allah, the Mighty and Sublime.

“After seventeen months, it is beneficial Allah, the Mighty and Exaltcd, willing, for leprosy. Take the oil of the trotters (*al-akari’*) - the trotters of the cow, not of the sheep - with the equivalent of a hazelnut of the medicine. It is beneficial before bed and before breakfast. Take of it the quantity of one grain and anoint

your body with it, rubbing vigorously. Take a little of it and inhale it with olive oil or the oil of roses. That should be done at the end of the day, in the bath.

“After eighteen rnonths, it is beneficial, Allah the Exalted willing, for leprosy (*al-bahaq*) which resembles vitiligo (*al-baras*), except that if the affected area is cut, it bleeds. Take of the medicine the equivalent of a chick-pea and mix it with walnut oil or bitter almond oil (*duhn lawz murr*) or pine-nut oil (*duhn sanaubar*). Drink it after dawn, and inhale a fair amount of it with that oil, and rub it on the body with salt.”

He said: “These ingredients, which have been mentioned previously, should not be altered in their amount and application, because if they are contradicted they will disagree with the person and will not be beneficial at all.

“After nineteen months, take the seeds of a sweet pomegranate and squeeze out the juice, and take the quantity of one grain of colocynth (*al-hanzala*). Drink it for forgetfulness (*al-sahw*), amnesia (*al-nisyan*), excessively heated phlegm, and recent and chronic fever, on an empty stomach with hot water. After twenty months, it is beneficial, Allah willing, for deafness. It is beneficial with storax water. Extract its water and pour the equivalent of a small lentil into the ear; he will hear. If he still cannot hear, make him inhale of that water the equivalent of a lentil on the next day. Pour on the top of his head the remainder of the errhine (*al-sa’ut*). When a person suffering from pleurisy becomes very ill and his tongue is extended, take sour-grape seeds and give the patient this medicine to drink, for it will be beneficial and will relieve him of his illness. The older it is, the better, and a lesser amount of it should be taken.”

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